

- Song 17 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Jesus Loved People”:** (10 min.)
Mt 8:1-3—Jesus demonstrated exceptional compassion for a leper (*nwtsty* study note on Mt 8:3)
Mt 9:9-13—Jesus loved those who were despised by others (*nwtsty* study note on Mt 9:10)
Mt 9:35-38—Love for people moved Jesus to preach the good news even when he was tired and to pray for God to send more workers (*nwtsty* study note on Mt 9:36)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Mt 8:8-10—What can we learn from Jesus’ conversation with the army officer? (*w02* 8/15 13 ¶16)

Mt 9:16, 17—What point was Jesus making with these two illustrations? (*jy* 70 ¶16)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Mt 8:1-17

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Invite the person to the meeting.
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *bhs* 47 ¶18-19

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 145
- **‘For a Certainty God Made Him Lord and Christ’ —Part 1, Excerpt:** (15 min.) Discussion. After reading Matthew 9:18-25 and watching the excerpt, ask the following questions:
How did Jesus show that he cared for the sick woman and for Jairus?

How does this account affect the way you view Bible prophecies about the future under Kingdom rule?


What are some ways that we can imitate Jesus’ love for people?

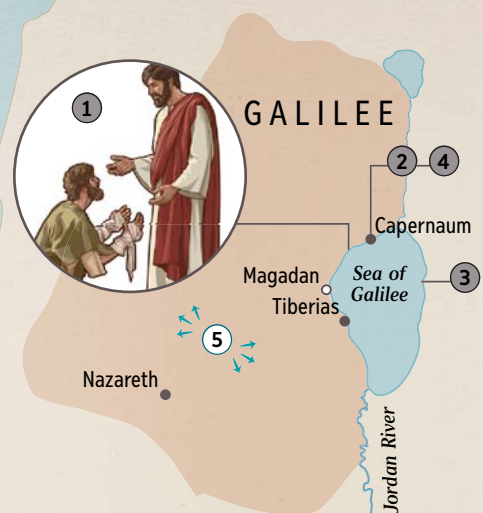
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 5
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 95 and Prayer

MATTHEW 8-9 | Jesus Loved People

Matthew chapters 8 and 9 cover a portion of Jesus’ ministry in the region of Galilee. When Jesus healed people, he showed his power, but more important, he showed his great love and compassion for others.

- 1 Jesus healed a leper.—Mt 8:1-3
- 2 Jesus healed an army officer’s servant.—Mt 8:5-13
He healed Peter’s mother-in-law.—Mt 8:14, 15
He expelled demons and cured people who were suffering.—Mt 8:16, 17
- 3 Jesus expelled unusually fierce demons, sending them into a herd of swine.—Mt 8:28-32
- 4 Jesus healed a paralytic.—Mt 9:1-8
He cured a woman who had touched his garment, and he resurrected Jairus’ daughter.—Mt 9:18-26
He healed the blind and the speechless.—Mt 9:27-34
- 5 Jesus toured the cities and villages, curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity.—Mt 9:35, 36

 How can I show more love and compassion to those around me?



1. Kind and patient, perfect in love,
Was Christ, who came down from above.
He took care of our needs
With words and by deeds;
He gave of his time and his love.
He would keep the lowly in mind
By healing the sick, deaf, and blind.
To his royal commission he proved true
And willingly said: “I want to.”

2. We now try to follow his way
In all of our dealings each day.
We are loving and kind
To all whom we find;
We help them to learn and obey.
We respond to friends when in need;
We love them in word and in deed.
So if widows and orphans should ask you,
Then readily say: “I want to.”

man who built his house on the rock.^a **25** And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and lashed against that house, but it did not cave in, for it had been founded on the rock. **26** Furthermore, everyone hearing these sayings of mine and not doing them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.^b **27** And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and struck against that house,^c and it caved in, and its collapse was great.”

28 When Jesus finished these sayings, the effect was that the crowds were astounded at his way of teaching,^d **29** for he was teaching them as a person having authority,^e and not as their scribes.

8 After he came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. **2** And look! a leper came up and did obeisance* to him, saying: “Lord, if you just want to, you can make me clean.”^f **3** So stretching out his hand, he touched him, saying: “**I want to! Be made clean.**”^g Immediately his leprosy was cleansed away.^h **4** Then Jesus said to him: “**See that you tell no one,ⁱ but go, show yourself to the priest,^j and offer the gift that Moses appointed,^k for a witness to them.**”

5 When he entered Ca-per’na-um, an army officer came to him, pleading with him^l **6** and saying: “Sir, my servant is laid up in the house with paralysis, and he is suffering terribly.” **7** He said to him: “**When I get there, I will cure him.**” **8** The army officer replied: “Sir, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but just say the word and my servant will be healed. **9** For I too am a man under authority, hav-

8:2 *Or “bowed down.”

1315

ing soldiers under me, and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it." **10** When Jesus heard that, he was amazed and said to those following him: "I tell you the truth, with no one in Israel have I found so great a faith.^a

11 But I tell you that many from east and west will come and recline at the table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of the heavens;^b **12** whereas the sons of the Kingdom will be thrown into the darkness outside. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be."^c **13** Then Jesus said to the army officer: "Go. Just as you have shown faith, so let it come to pass for you."^d And the servant was healed in that hour.^e

14 And Jesus, on coming into Peter's house, saw his mother-in-law^f lying down and sick with fever.^g **15** So he touched her hand,^h and the fever left her, and she got up and began ministering to him. **16** But after it became evening, people brought him many demon-possessed ones; and he expelled the spirits with a word, and he cured all who were suffering, **17** in order to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: "He himself took our sicknesses and carried our diseases."ⁱ

18 When Jesus saw a crowd around him, he gave the command to depart for the other side.^j **19** And a scribe came up and said to him: "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go."^k **20** But Jesus said to him: "Foxes have dens and birds of heaven have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head."^l **21** Then another of the disciples said to him: "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."^m **22** Jesus said to him:

MATTHEW 8:10-34

“Keep following me, and let the dead bury their dead.”^a

23 And when he went aboard a boat, his disciples followed him.^b **24** Now look! a great storm arose on the sea, so that the boat was being covered by the waves; but he was sleeping.^c **25** And they came and woke him up, saying: “Lord, save us, we are about to perish!” **26** But he said to them: **“Why are you so afraid,* you with little faith?”^d** Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and a great calm set in.^e **27** So the men were amazed and said: “What sort of person is this? Even the winds and the sea obey him.”

28 When he came to the other side into the region of the Gad·a·renes', two demon-possessed men coming out from among the tombs* met him.^f They were unusually fierce, so nobody had the courage to pass by on that road. **29** And look! they screamed, saying: “What have we to do with you, Son of God?^g Did you come here to torment us^h before the appointed time?”ⁱ **30** A long way off from them, a herd of many swine was feeding.^j **31** So the demons began to plead with him, saying: “If you expel us, send us into the herd of swine.”^k **32** And he said to them: **“Go!”** With that they came out and went off into the swine, and look! the entire herd rushed over the precipice* into the sea and died in the waters. **33** But the herders fled, and going into the city, they reported everything, including the account of the demon-possessed men. **34** And look! all the city turned out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they urged him to depart from their region.^l

8:26 *Or “fainthearted.” **8:28** *Or “memorial tombs.” **8:32** *Or “steep bank.”

MATTHEW 9:1-25

9 So boarding the boat, he traveled across and went into his own city.^a **2** And look! they were bringing him a paralyzed man lying on a stretcher. On seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic: **“Take courage, child! Your sins are forgiven.”**^b **3** Now certain scribes said to themselves: “This fellow is blaspheming.” **4** Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said: **“Why are you thinking wicked things in your hearts?”**^c **5** For instance, which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk’?^d **6** However, in order for you to know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins—” then he said to the paralytic: **“Get up, pick up your stretcher, and go to your home.”**^e **7** And he got up and went to his home. **8** When the crowds saw this, they were struck with fear, and they glorified God, who gave such authority to men.

9 Next, while moving on from there, Jesus caught sight of a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office, and he said to him: **“Be my follower.”** At that he rose up and followed him.^f **10** Later as he was dining* in the house, look! many tax collectors and sinners came and began dining* with Jesus and his disciples.^g **11** But on seeing this, the Pharisees said to his disciples: “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?”^h **12** Hearing them, he said: **“Healthy people do not need a physician, but those who are ill do.”**ⁱ **13** Go, then, and learn what this means: **‘I want mercy, and not sacrifice.’**^j For I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners.”

14 Then John’s disciples came to him and asked: “Why do we and the Pharisees practice fasting but your disciples do not

9:10 *Or “reclining at the table.”

fast?"^a **15** At this Jesus said to them: "The friends of the bridegroom have no reason to mourn as long as the bridegroom^b is with them, do they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them,^c and then they will fast. **16** Nobody sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old outer garment, for the new piece pulls away from the garment and the tear becomes worse.^d **17** Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins. If they do, then the wineskins burst and the wine spills out and the wineskins are ruined. But people put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."

18 While he was telling them these things, look! a certain ruler who had approached did obeisance* to him, saying: "By now my daughter must be dead, but come and lay your hand on her, and she will come to life."^e

19 Then Jesus got up and, with his disciples, followed him. **20** And look! a woman suffering for 12 years from a flow of blood^f approached from behind and touched the fringe of his outer garment,^g **21** for she kept saying to herself: "If I only touch his outer garment, I will get well." **22** Jesus turned around and, noticing her, said: "Take courage, daughter! Your faith has made you well."^h And from that hour the woman was made well.ⁱ

23 When, now, he came into the ruler's house and caught sight of the flute players and the crowd making a commotion,^j **24** Jesus said: "Leave the place, for the little girl did not die but is sleeping."^k At this they began to laugh at him scornfully. **25** As soon as the crowd had been sent outside, he went in and took hold of her hand,^l and the little girl got up.^m

9:18 *Or "bowed down."

1317

26 Of course, the talk about this spread into all that region.

27 As Jesus moved on from there, two blind men^a followed him, shouting out: "Have mercy on us, Son of David." **28** After he had gone into the house, the blind men came to him, and Jesus asked them: "Do you have faith that I can do this?"^b

They answered him: "Yes, Lord." **29** Then he touched their eyes,^c saying: "According to your faith let it happen to you." **30** And their eyes received sight. Moreover, Jesus sternly warned them, saying: "See that nobody gets to know it."^d **31** But after going outside, they made it public about him in all that region.

32 When they were leaving, look! people brought him a speechless man possessed of a demon;^e **33** and after the demon had been expelled, the speechless man spoke.^f Well, the crowds were amazed and said: "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel."^g **34** But the Pharisees were saying: "It is by the ruler of the demons that he expels the demons."^h

35 And Jesus set out on a tour of all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the Kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity.ⁱ **36** On seeing the crowds, he felt pity for them,^j because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.^k **37** Then he said to his disciples: "Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few.^l **38** Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest."^m

10 So he summoned his 12 disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits,ⁿ in order to expel these and to cure every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity.

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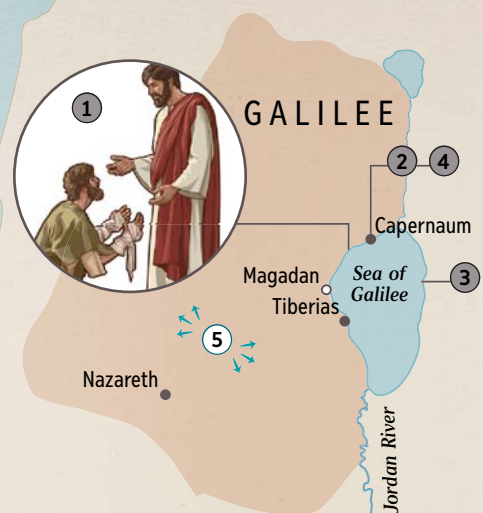
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 How can I show more love and compassion to those around me?



8:2

look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

a leper: A person suffering from a serious skin disease. The leprosy referred to in the Bible is not restricted to the disease known by that name today. Anyone diagnosed with leprosy became an outcast from society until he was cured.—Le 13:2, ftn., 45, 46; see Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; honored him.” People mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures also bowed down when meeting prophets, kings, or other representatives of God. (1Sa 25:23, 24; 2Sa 14:4-7; 1Ki 1:16; 2Ki 4:36, 37) This man evidently recognized that he was talking to a representative of God who had power to heal people. It was appropriate to bow down to show respect for Jehovah’s King-Designate.—Mt 9:18; for more information on the Greek word used here, see study note on Mt 2:2.

8:3

he touched him: The Mosaic Law required that lepers be quarantined to protect others from contamination. (Le 13:45, 46; Nu 5:1-4) However, Jewish religious leaders imposed additional rules. For example, no one was to come within four cubits, that is, about 1.8 m (6 ft) of a leper, but on windy days, the distance was 100 cubits, that is, about 45 m (150 ft). Such rules led to heartless treatment of lepers. Tradition speaks favorably of a rabbi who hid from lepers and of another who threw stones at them to keep them at a distance. By contrast, Jesus was so deeply moved by the leper’s plight that he did what other Jews would consider unthinkable—he touched the man. He did so even though he could have cured the leper with just a word.—Mt 8:5-12.

I want to: Jesus not only acknowledged the request but expressed a strong desire to respond to it, showing that he was motivated by more than just a sense of duty.

8:4

tell no one: Jesus apparently did not want to attract attention simply on the basis of reports about his miracles.

show yourself to the priest: In accord with the Mosaic Law, a priest had to verify that a leper had been healed. This would require that the cured leper travel to the temple and bring as an offering, or **gift**, two live clean birds, cedarwood, scarlet material, and hyssop.—Le 14:2-4, 10, 11.

8:5

Capernaum: See study note on Mt 4:13.

army officer: Or “centurion,” that is, one in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army.

8:6

my servant: The Greek term here rendered “servant” literally means “child; youth” and could be used of a slave who was regarded with some degree of affection, possibly a personal servant.

8:11

many from east and west: An indication that non-Jews would have a part in the Kingdom.

recline at the table: Or “dine.” To recline at a table with someone would indicate close fellowship. Jews at that time would never have done this with non-Jews.

8:12

gnashing of their teeth: Or “grinding (clenching) their teeth.” The expression can include the idea of anguish, despair, and anger, possibly accompanied by bitter words and violent action.

8:16

after it became evening: That is, after the Sabbath day ended.—Mr 1:21-32; Lu 4:31-40.

8:17

in order to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: See study note on Mt 1:22.

carried: Or “carried away; removed.” Under inspiration, Matthew here applies Isa 53:4 to the miraculous cures performed by Jesus. The greater fulfillment of Isa 53:4 will occur when Jesus carries away sin completely, just as the goat “for Azazel” carried the sins of Israel into the wilderness on Atonement Day. (Le 16:10, 20-22) By carrying away sin, Jesus would eliminate the root cause of sickness for all who exercise faith in the value of his sacrifice.

8:18

the other side: That is, the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

8:20

Son of man: Or “Son of a human.” This expression occurs about 80 times in the Gospels. Jesus used it to refer to himself, evidently emphasizing that he was truly human, born from a woman, and that he was a fitting human counterpart to Adam, having the power to redeem humankind from sin and death. (Ro 5:12, 14-15) The same expression also identified Jesus as the Messiah, or the Christ.—Da 7:13, 14; see Glossary.

nowhere to lay down his head: That is, no residence that he could call his own.

8:24

great storm: Such storms are common on the Sea of Galilee. Its surface is about 210 m (690 ft) below sea level, and the air temperature is warmer on the sea than in the surrounding plateaus and mountains. Those conditions result in atmospheric disturbances and strong winds that can quickly whip up waves.

8:26

you with little faith: Jesus did not imply an absence of faith but rather a deficiency of faith.—Mt 14:31; 16:8; Lu 12:28; see study note on Mt

6:30.

8:28

region of the Gadarenes: A region on the **other** (the eastern) shore of the Sea of Galilee. It may have been the region extending from the sea to Gadara, which was 10 km (6 mi) from the sea. Supporting this idea, coins from Gadara often depict a ship. Mark and Luke call the area “the region of the Gerasenes.” (See study note on Mr 5:1.) The different regions may have been overlapping.—See App. A7, Map 3B, “Activity at the Sea of Galilee,” and App. B10.

two: The accounts of Mark (5:2) and Luke (8:27) mention only one demon-possessed man.—See study note on Mr 5:2.

tombs: Or “memorial tombs.” (See Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”) These tombs were evidently caves or chambers cut into the natural rock and usually located outside the cities. These burial places were avoided by the Jews because of the ceremonial uncleanness connected with them, making them an ideal haunt for crazed or demonized people.

8:29

torment us: A related Greek term is used of “the jailers” at Mt 18:34, so in this context, the “torment” would seem to refer to a restraining or a confining to “the abyss” mentioned in the parallel account at Lu 8:31.

8:30

swine: Pigs were unclean according to the Law but were raised in this area. Whether “the herders” (Mt 8:33) were Jews violating the Law is not stated. However, there was a market for pork among the many non-Jews living in the Decapolis region, since both Greeks and Romans considered pork a delicacy.

9:1

his own city: That is, Capernaum, Jesus’ home base in the region. (Mt 4:13; Mr 2:1) This city was not far from Nazareth, where he grew up; from Cana, where he turned water into wine; from Nain, where he resurrected the son of a widow; and from the vicinity of Bethsaida, where he

miraculously fed about 5,000 men and restored sight to a blind man.

9:2

look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

seeing their faith: The use of the plural pronoun “their” shows that Jesus noted how much faith the entire group had, not just the paralyzed man.

child: Used by Jesus as a term of endearment.—2Ti 1:2; Tit 1:4; Phm 10.

9:5

which is easier: It would be easier for someone to *say* that he could forgive sins, since there would be no visible evidence to substantiate such a claim. But to say, **Get up and walk** required a miracle that would make plain for all to see that Jesus also has the authority to forgive sins. This account and Isa 33:24 link sickness to our sinful condition.

9:6

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

to forgive sins—: The dash indicates that Jesus stopped in mid-sentence and then powerfully proved his point by publicly healing the man.

9:9

Matthew: See study notes on Mt Title and 10:3.

tax office: Or “tax collection booth.” This could be a small building or a booth where the tax collector sat and gathered taxes on exports, imports, and goods taken through a country by merchants. Matthew’s tax office was located in or near Capernaum.

9:10

the house: Refers to Matthew’s house.—Mr 2:14, 15; Lu 5:29.

tax collectors: See study note on Mt 5:46.

9:13

mercy, and not sacrifice: Jesus twice refers to these words from Ho 6:6 (here and at Mt 12:7). Matthew, a despised tax collector who became an intimate associate of Jesus, is the only Gospel writer to record this quote as

well as the illustration of the unmerciful slave. (Mt 18:21-25) His Gospel highlights Jesus' repeated insistence that mercy is required in addition to sacrifice.

9:14

practice fasting: See study note on Mt 6:16.

9:15

friends of the bridegroom: Lit., “sons of the bridechamber,” an idiom describing wedding guests but especially the friends of the bridegroom.

9:17

wine into . . . wineskins: It was common in Bible times to store wine in animal skins. (1Sa 16:20) Skin bottles were made of the complete hides of domestic animals, such as sheep or goats. Old leather wineskins would become stiff and lose their elasticity. New wineskins, on the other hand, could stretch and swell and thus could withstand the pressure caused by the ongoing process of fermentation of new wine.—See Glossary, “Wineskin.”

9:18

a certain ruler: The name of this “ruler” (Greek, *ar'khon*), Jairus, is given in Mark's and Luke's parallel accounts, where he is called a presiding officer of the synagogue.—Mr 5:22; Lu8:41.

did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; honored him.”—See study note on Mt 8:2.

9:20

flow of blood: Likely a chronic menstrual flow. According to the Mosaic Law, this condition would render the woman ceremonially unclean. As such, she was not supposed to touch others.—Le 15:19-27.

9:22

daughter: The only recorded instance in which Jesus directly addressed a woman as “daughter,” perhaps because of the delicate situation and her “trembling.” (Lu 8:47) By using this term of endearment, a form of address that signifies nothing about the woman's age, Jesus emphasizes his

tender concern for her.

9:27

Son of David: By calling Jesus “Son of David,” these men express their belief that Jesus is heir to the throne of David and thus is the Messiah.— See study notes on Mt 1:1, 6.

9:35

teaching . . . preaching: See study note on Mt 4:23.

the good news: See study note on Mt 4:23.

9:36

felt pity: The Greek verb *splag·khni'zo·mai* used for this expression is related to the word for “intestines” (*splag'khna*), denoting a feeling experienced deep inside the body, an intense emotion. It is one of the strongest words in Greek for the feeling of compassion.

skinned: The Greek word originally meant “flayed,” or “stripped of the skin,” conveying an image of sheep with their skin ripped apart by wild animals or torn as they wandered among brambles and sharp rocks. The term came to be used figuratively, meaning “maltreated, harassed, wounded.”

thrown about: The image here is of sheep being thrown down, helpless and exhausted, figuratively conveying the idea of the crowd being dejected, neglected, and helpless.

JANUARY 22-28

Digging for Spiritual Gems | MATTHEW 8-9

w02 8/15 13 ¶16

“I Set the Pattern for You”

¹⁶ Similarly, when an army officer—perhaps a Gentile, a Roman—approached and asked Jesus to cure an ailing slave, Jesus knew that the soldier had faults. An army officer of those days would likely have a past littered with many acts of violence, bloodshed, and false worship. Yet, Jesus focused on something good—the man’s outstanding faith. (Matthew 8:5-13) Later, when Jesus spoke to the evildoer who was hanging on the torture stake next to him, Jesus did not rebuke the man for his criminal past but encouraged him with a hope for the future. (Luke 23:43) Jesus knew well that taking a negative, critical view of others would only serve to discourage them. No doubt his efforts to find the good in others encouraged many to do even better.

jy 70 ¶6

Why Do Jesus’ Disciples Not Fast?

Jesus is helping the disciples of John the Baptist to appreciate that no one should expect Jesus’ followers to conform to the old practices of Judaism, such as ritual fasting. He did not come to patch up and prolong an old, worn-out way of worship, a whole system of worship that was ready to be discarded. The worship that Jesus is encouraging is not one that conforms to the Judaism of the day with its traditions of men. No, he is not trying to put a new patch on an old garment or new wine into a stiff, old wineskin.



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

Witnessing near Monrovia, Liberia

●○○ INITIAL CALL

Question: Is the Bible still relevant today?

Scripture: 2Ti 3:16

Link: What is the Bible's message?



○●○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: What is the Bible's message?

Scripture: Mt 6:10

Link: What will God's Kingdom do?



○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: What will God's Kingdom do?

Scripture: Da 2:44

Link: How will this affect the earth?

Starting this month, the midweek meeting will no longer feature three different sample presentations. Instead, the *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook* will have sample conversations consisting of an opening question, a scripture, and a linking question to pave the way for a return visit. Only one sample conversation video will be played per week. Each publisher can decide which publication from our Teaching Toolbox to use and when to introduce it—whether on an initial call or a return visit. In addition, the workbook will contain ideas for two follow-up conversations. This approach will help us focus on our goal of teaching “all those who [are] rightly disposed for everlasting life.”—Ac 13:48.

Student Assignments: Unless the instructions indicate otherwise, students should demonstrate the sample conversations.

18 Jesus was a man who loved people and cared for them. He was kind and easy to talk to. Even children liked to be with him. (Mark 10:13-16) Jesus was always fair. He hated corruption and injustice. (Matthew 21:12, 13) He lived at a time when women didn't have many rights and were not treated with respect. But Jesus always treated women with respect and dignity. (John 4:9, 27) Jesus was also truly humble. For example, one evening he washed the feet of his apostles, something that was normally done by a servant.—John 13:2-5, 12-17.

19 Jesus knew what people really needed, and he wanted to help them. This was very clear when he used God's power to heal people miraculously. (Matthew 14:14) For example, a man with leprosy came to Jesus and said: "If you just want to, you can make me clean." Jesus was moved by this man's pain and suffering. He felt sorry for him and wanted to help him. So Jesus stretched out his hand, touched the man, and said to him: "I want to! Be made clean." And the sick man was healed! (Mark 1:40-42) Can you imagine how that man must have felt?

ALWAYS FAITHFUL TO HIS FATHER

20 Jesus is the best example of obedience to God. No matter what happened or what his enemies did to him, he was faithful to his Father. For example, Jesus did not sin when Satan tried to tempt him.

18. What qualities of Jesus do you like the most?

19. What example shows that Jesus knew what people really needed and that he wanted to help them?

20, 21. How is Jesus the best example of obedience to God?

145 *God's Promise of Paradise*

(Luke 23:43)

1. A paradise our God has promised,
 By means of Christ's Millennial Reign,
When he'll blot out all sin and error,
 Removing death and tears and pain.

(CHORUS)

*A paradise, the earth will be.
With eyes of faith, this we can see.
This promise Christ will soon fulfill,
For he delights to do God's will.*

2. Soon here on earth, as God has purposed,
 His Son will cause the dead to rise.
Then it will be as Jesus promised:
 'You'll be with me in Paradise.'

(Chorus)

3. The Paradise, our Lord has promised,
 And he is now our reigning King.
We daily thank our loving Father,
 And from our hearts, his praises sing.

(Chorus)

- Song 17 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Jesus Loved People”:** (10 min.)
Mt 8:1-3—Jesus demonstrated exceptional compassion for a leper (*nwtsty* study note on Mt 8:3)
Mt 9:9-13—Jesus loved those who were despised by others (*nwtsty* study note on Mt 9:10)
Mt 9:35-38—Love for people moved Jesus to preach the good news even when he was tired and to pray for God to send more workers (*nwtsty* study note on Mt 9:36)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Mt 8:8-10—What can we learn from Jesus’ conversation with the army officer? (*w02* 8/15 13 ¶16)

Mt 9:16, 17—What point was Jesus making with these two illustrations? (*jy* 70 ¶16)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Mt 8:1-17

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Invite the person to the meeting.
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *bhs* 47 ¶18-19

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 145
- **‘For a Certainty God Made Him Lord and Christ’ —Part 1, Excerpt:** (15 min.) Discussion. After reading Matthew 9:18-25 and watching the excerpt, ask the following questions:
How did Jesus show that he cared for the sick woman and for Jairus?

How does this account affect the way you view Bible prophecies about the future under Kingdom rule?


What are some ways that we can imitate Jesus’ love for people?

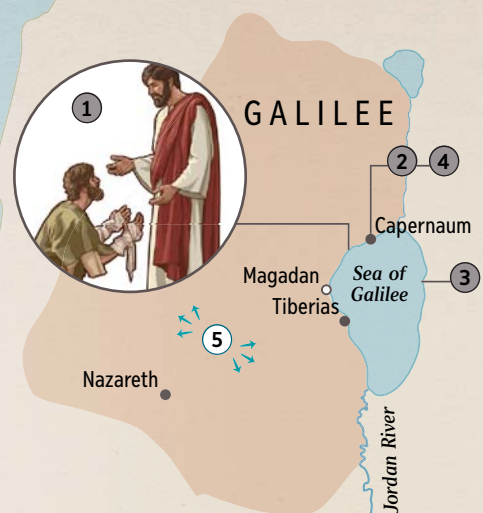
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 5
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 95 and Prayer

MATTHEW 8-9 | Jesus Loved People

Matthew chapters 8 and 9 cover a portion of Jesus’ ministry in the region of Galilee. When Jesus healed people, he showed his power, but more important, he showed his great love and compassion for others.

- 1 Jesus healed a leper.—Mt 8:1-3
- 2 Jesus healed an army officer’s servant.—Mt 8:5-13
He healed Peter’s mother-in-law.—Mt 8:14, 15
He expelled demons and cured people who were suffering.—Mt 8:16, 17
- 3 Jesus expelled unusually fierce demons, sending them into a herd of swine.—Mt 8:28-32
- 4 Jesus healed a paralytic.—Mt 9:1-8
He cured a woman who had touched his garment, and he resurrected Jairus’ daughter.—Mt 9:18-26
He healed the blind and the speechless.—Mt 9:27-34
- 5 Jesus toured the cities and villages, curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity.—Mt 9:35, 36

 How can I show more love and compassion to those around me?



5

JESUS' BIRTH—WHERE AND WHEN?

LUKE 2:1-20

- JESUS IS BORN IN BETHLEHEM
 - SHEPHERDS VISIT THE BABY JESUS
-

Caesar Augustus, the emperor of the Roman Empire, has decreed that everyone must be registered. So Joseph and Mary must travel to the city of his birth, the city of Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem.

Many people are in Bethlehem to register. The only place that Joseph and Mary can find to stay is a stable, where donkeys and other animals are kept. Jesus is born there. Mary wraps him in strips of cloth and lays him in a manger, the place where food for the animals is put.

God must have seen to it that Caesar Augustus made this registration law. Why? Because this made it possible for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem, the hometown of his ancestor King David. The Scriptures had long before foretold that this would be

the city where the promised Ruler would be born.
—Micah 5:2.

What an important night this is! Out in the fields, a bright light gleams around a group of shepherds. It is Jehovah's glory! One of God's angels tells the shepherds: "Do not be afraid, for look! I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have. For today there was born to you in David's city a savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this is a sign for you: You will find an infant wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger." Suddenly, many more angels appear and say: "Glory in the heights above to God, and on earth peace among men of goodwill."—Luke 2:10-14.

When the angels leave, the shepherds say to one another: "Let us by all means go over to Bethlehem and see what has taken place, which Jehovah has made known to us." (Luke 2:15) They go in a hurry and find the newborn Jesus just where the angel said they would. When the shepherds relate what the angel told them, all who hear about it are astonished. Mary cherishes all these sayings and draws conclusions in her heart.

Many people today believe that Jesus was born on December 25. But in the area of Bethlehem, December is rainy and cold. On occasion, it even snows. At that time of the year, shepherds would hardly be out in the fields overnight with their flocks. Also, it is unlikely that the Roman emperor would have required a people who were already inclined to revolt against him to travel for days in the dead of winter to register. Evidently, Jesus was born sometime in October.

- ◇ Why do Joseph and Mary have to go to Bethlehem?
- ◇ On the night Jesus is born, what marvelous thing happens?
- ◇ Why is it not reasonable to think that Jesus was born on December 25?



The Light Gets Brighter

(Proverbs 4:18)

1. The prophets of old sought to learn of the Christ,
The hope of all groaning creation.
God's spirit revealed that Messiah would come,
Providing the means of salvation.

The time has arrived, the Messiah now reigns,
The proof of his presence is clear.
How great is the favor of learning such things;
Into these even angels would peer!

(CHORUS)

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

2. Our Lord has appointed a trustworthy slave,
Through whom He gives food in due season.
The light of the truth has grown brighter with time,
Appealing to heart and to reason.

Our path ever clearer, our steps ever firm,
We walk in the brightness of day.
All thanks to Jehovah, the Source of all truth,
We most gratefully walk in his way.

(Chorus)

NOVEMBER 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
DECEMBER 25, 2017–
JANUARY 28, 2018

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

NICARAGUA

Two Christian sisters share the Bible's message with a merchant in the town of Tipitapa

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4 WEEK OF DECEMBER 25-31

Make a Joyful Sound!

For Jehovah's people, singing has always been an integral part of worship. However, some may feel uncomfortable singing in public. How can we overcome the fear of using our voice to sing praises to Jehovah? This article gives us good reasons to sing out joyfully and offers some suggestions for improving our singing voice.

16 WEEK OF JANUARY 1-7

Are You Taking Refuge in Jehovah?

28 WEEK OF JANUARY 8-14

Imitate Jehovah's Justice and Mercy

We can learn valuable lessons from the arrangement of the cities of refuge in ancient Israel. In the first article, look for ways that sinners can take refuge in Jehovah today. In the second article, see how Jehovah's example helps us to forgive others, respect life, and act justly.

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41 WEEK OF JANUARY 15-21

Reject Worldly Thinking

53 WEEK OF JANUARY 22-28

Let Nothing Deprive You of the Prize

These two articles are based on Paul's inspired counsel to the Christians in Colossae. The first article explains what to do when we hear worldly ideas that may sound appealing or convincing. The second article reminds us of how to avoid attitudes that could deprive us of the blessings that Jehovah has promised.

1. Nations are troubled as never before.
People are fearful of what lies in store.
Firm and immovable we need to be,
Serving our God faithfully.

(CHORUS)

*Steadfast we all need to be;
Far from this world we keep free,
Standing firm to the end,
Unending life we'll see.*

2. Snares of the world and temptations abound.
We can resist if our thinking is sound.
Hating what's bad while we love what is true
Makes us immovable too.

(Chorus)

3. Give to God worship that comes from the heart.
In the Lord's service may we have a part.
Preach the good news, always holding it fast.
Soon the last days will have passed.

(Chorus)



Let Nothing Deprive You of the Prize

“Let no man deprive you of the prize.”
—COL. 2:18.

LIKE the apostle Paul, spirit-anointed Christians today have the precious prospect of receiving “the prize of the upward call of God.” (Phil. 3:14) They look forward to serving with Jesus

1, 2. (a) God’s servants look forward to what prize? (b) What helps us to keep our eyes on the prize? (See opening picture.)

SONGS:
122, 139

HOW DO YOU ANSWER?

How can we protect ourselves against the enticement of immoral desires?

How can love and kindness protect us from being deprived of the prize?

How can we win the prize as a family?

Christ in his heavenly Kingdom and sharing with him in bringing mankind to perfection. (Rev. 20:6) What a wonderful goal such ones have been invited by God to pursue! The other sheep have a different hope. They look forward to gaining the prize of everlasting life on earth—and what a happy prospect that is!—2 Pet. 3:13.

² To help fellow anointed Christians to stay faithful and attain the prize, Paul urged them: “Keep your minds fixed on the things above.” (Col. 3:2) They were to keep in mind the precious hope of receiving their heavenly inheritance. (Col. 1:4, 5) Indeed, contemplating the blessings that Jehovah sets before his people helps all of God’s servants to keep their eyes on the prize, whether they have the heavenly or the earthly hope.—1 Cor. 9:24.

³ Paul also alerted fellow Christians about dangers that could deprive them of the prize. For example, he wrote to the congregation in Colossae about false Christians who were trying to gain God’s favor through works of the Law rather than through faith in Christ. (Col. 2:16-18) Paul also discussed dangers that exist down to this day and

3. Paul alerted fellow Christians about what dangers?

that can deprive us of the prize. For instance, he explained how to resist immoral desires, handle problems with fellow believers, and deal with family difficulties. His counsel on these matters is valuable for us today. Therefore, let us examine some of Paul's loving warnings found in his letter to the Colossians.

DEADEN IMMORAL DESIRES

⁴ After reminding his brothers of their marvelous hope, Paul wrote: “Deaden, therefore, your body members that are on the earth as respects sexual immorality, uncleanness, uncontrolled sexual passion, hurtful desire, and greediness.” (Col. 3:5) Immoral desires can be very powerful and can deprive us of spiritual treasures. One brother who was swept away by immoral desires said after he returned to the congregation, “I was drawn by a force so powerful that I did not turn back until it was too late.”

⁵ It is especially important to be on guard when we are confronted by circumstances that could tempt us to compromise Jehovah's moral

4. Why can immoral desires deprive us of the prize?

5. How can we protect ourselves in dangerous situations?

standards. For example, it is wise for a couple, right from the start of a courtship, to set clear limits for themselves about such matters as touching, kissing, or being alone together. (Prov. 22:3) Morally dangerous situations may also come up when a Christian is away from home on a business trip or when a Christian has to work with someone of the opposite sex. (Prov. 2:10-12, 16) If you find yourself in such a situation, identify yourself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, act in a respectable manner, and remember that flirting can have disastrous consequences. We may also find ourselves at greater risk if we are depressed and vulnerable. At such times, we may yearn for someone who makes us feel needed. We may even become so desperate for emotional support that we will accept attention from just about anyone. If that ever happens to you, turn to Jehovah and his people for help so as not to allow yourself to be deprived of the prize.—Read Psalm 34:18; Proverbs 13:20.

⁶ To deaden immoral desires, we need to reject immoral entertainment. Much of the entertainment industry today has the characteristics of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah. (Jude 7) Industry

6. As to our choice of entertainment, what should we keep in mind?

leaders promote their ideas on morals by presenting sexual immorality as normal behavior, free of painful consequences. We cannot let our guard down, passively accepting any entertainment that is offered. We need to select forms of entertainment that will not hinder us from keeping our eyes on the prize of life.—Prov. 4:23.

“CLOTHE YOURSELVES WITH” LOVE AND KINDNESS

⁷ We all agree that being part of the Christian congregation is a blessing. The study of God’s Word at our meetings and the kind and loving support that we give one another help us to keep our eyes focused on the prize. Nevertheless, at times, misunderstandings may lead to some tension among members of the congregation. If we fail to resolve such problems, they could easily lead to feelings of resentment.—Read **1 Peter 3: 8, 9**.

⁸ How can we prevent resentment from depriving

7. What problems might we face within the Christian congregation?
8, 9. (a) Having what qualities will help us to win the prize?
(b) What can help us to preserve peace if a fellow Christian upsets us?

us of the prize? Paul urged the Colossians: “As God’s chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, humility, mildness, and patience. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely even if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Just as Jehovah freely forgave you, you must also do the same. But besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.”—Col. 3: 12-14.

⁹ Love and kindness can help us to be forgiving toward one another. For example, if we feel hurt by the words or actions of a fellow Christian, we can try to recall occasions when we spoke or acted unkindly. Do we not appreciate the love and kindness of the brothers and sisters who overlooked our errors? (Read Ecclesiastes 7:21, 22.) Especially are we thankful for Christ’s kindness in gathering true worshippers into unity. (Col. 3:15) We all love the same God, preach the same message, and face many of the same challenges. By kindly and lovingly forgiving one another, we contribute to Christian unity and keep our eyes on the prize of life.

¹⁰ Warning examples in the Bible remind us that jealousy can deprive us of the prize. For instance, Cain became jealous of his brother Abel and killed him. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram became jealous of Moses and opposed him. Also, King Saul became jealous of David's success and tried to kill him. No wonder God's Word states: "Wherever there are jealousy and contentiousness, there will also be disorder and every vile thing."—Jas. 3:16.

¹¹ If we cultivate love and kindness in our heart, we will not easily become jealous. God's Word says: "Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous." (1 Cor. 13:4) To prevent jealousy from taking root in our heart, we must strive to see things from God's standpoint, viewing our brothers and sisters as members of the same Christian body. This will help us to show fellow feeling, in harmony with the inspired counsel: "If a member is glorified, all the other members rejoice with it." (1 Cor. 12:16-18, 26) Thus, rather than feel jealous, we will be happy when others receive blessings. Consider the example of King Saul's son Jonathan. He was not jealous when David was appointed heir to the throne.

10, 11. (a) Why is jealousy dangerous? (b) How can we prevent jealousy from depriving us of our reward?

Rather, he encouraged David. (1 Sam. 23:16-18)
Could we be as kind and loving as Jonathan?

WIN THE PRIZE AS A FAMILY

¹² Applying Bible principles can bring peace and happiness to a family and help them to win the prize. What Scriptural counsel for families did Paul give to Christians in Colossae? He stated: “You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord. You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them. You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. You fathers, do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted.” (Col. 3: 18-21) No doubt you will agree that applying Paul’s inspired counsel will still benefit husbands, wives, and children.

¹³ What if you are a wife and you feel that your unbelieving husband does not treat you properly? Would you improve the situation by arguing about his behavior? Even if you succeed in making him do what you want, will you win him over to the

12. Heeding what Scriptural counsel will help us to attain the prize as a family?

13. How could a Christian sister win over her unbelieving husband?



How can we prevent family difficulties
from depriving us of the prize?
(See paragraphs 13-15)



truth? Not likely. But if you show respect for your husband's headship, you can contribute to peace in the family, you will praise Jehovah, and you may even win your husband over to true worship; thus you both may gain the prize.—Read 1 Peter 3:1, 2.

¹⁴ What if you are a husband and you feel that your unbelieving wife does not respect you? Would you move her to show you more respect if you were to shout at her to show her who is boss? Absolutely not! God expects you to exercise headship lovingly, in imitation of Jesus. (Eph. 5:23) Jesus exercises his headship over his congregation with loving patience. (Luke 9:46-48) By imitating Jesus' example, a husband may win his wife over to true worship.

¹⁵ Husbands are told: "Keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them." (Col. 3:19) A loving husband honors his wife by listening to her opinions and by assuring her that he values what she says. (1 Pet. 3:7) Although he cannot always do as she asks, he often arrives at a more balanced decision by consulting her. (Prov. 15:22) A

14. What should a Christian husband do if his unbelieving wife does not respect him?

15. How does a Christian man express his love for his wife?

loving husband tries to gain his wife's respect by earning it rather than demanding it. A husband who loves his wife and children is more likely to have a family that happily serves Jehovah and wins the prize of life.

YOUTHS—LET NOTHING DEPRIVE YOU OF THE PRIZE!

¹⁶ What if you are a teenager and feel misunderstood and restricted by your Christian parents? Your frustration might even make you doubt that serving Jehovah is the best way of life. But if you allow frustration to make you give up serving Jehovah, you would soon discover that no one else cares for you more genuinely than your God-fearing parents and your congregation.

¹⁷ If your parents never corrected you, would you not wonder if they really cared about you? (Heb. 12:8) But perhaps it is the way your parents discipline you that upsets you. Rather than fret over the manner of discipline, try to recognize that there may be a reason for the way they act. So keep calm and do your best to avoid overreacting

16, 17. As a youth, how can you avoid becoming overly frustrated with your parents?

to criticism. God’s Word says: “A man of knowledge restrains his words, and a discerning man will remain calm.” (Prov. 17:27) Make it your goal to become a mature person who can take counsel calmly, benefiting from it without worrying excessively about how it was given. (Prov. 1:8) To have believing parents who truly love Jehovah is a blessing. They will surely want to help you to win the prize of life.

¹⁸ The prize before us—whether immortal life in heaven or everlasting life on a paradise earth—is marvelous to contemplate. It is a sure hope, one based on the promise of the Creator himself. Regarding the Paradise earth, God says: “The earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah.” (Isa. 11:9) Everyone then living on earth will be taught by God. That is surely a prize worth striving for. So keep your mind on what Jehovah has promised, and let nothing deprive you of the prize!

18. Why are you resolved to keep your eyes on the prize?



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139 *See Yourself When All Is New*

(Revelation 21:1-5)

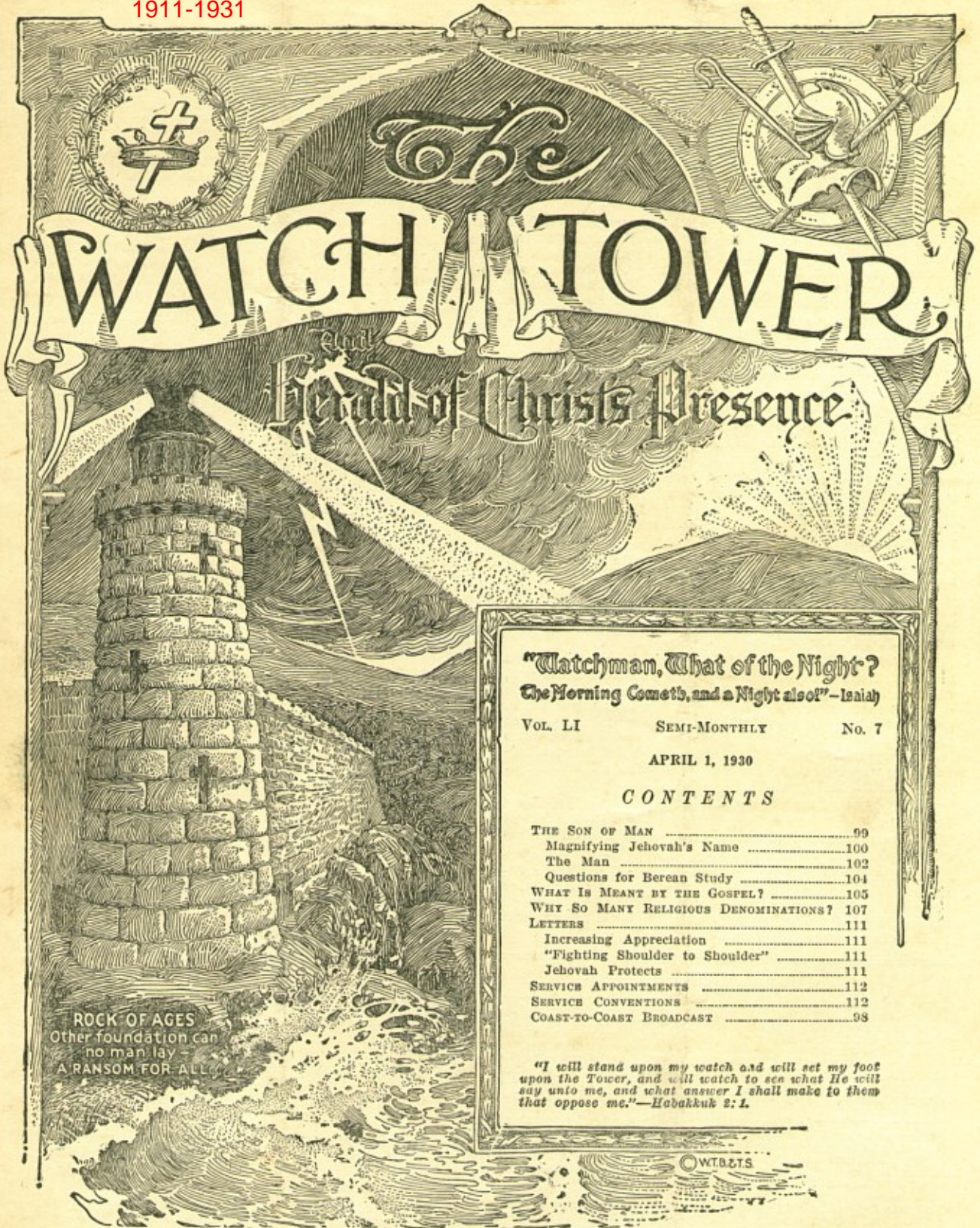
1. Just see yourself, just see me too;
 Just see us all in a world that is new.
Think how you'll feel, how it will be,
 To live in peace, to be truly free.
No evil one will then prevail;
 Rule by our God cannot ever fail.
The time will have come for a new earthly start,
 The song of our praises
 will pour out from our heart:

(CHORUS)

*"We thank you, our God, for all you have done.
 All things are new by the rule of your Son.
The fullness of our heart overflows in our song;
 All glory and honor and praise to you belong."*

2. Now see yourself, and see me too;
 And look ahead to a world that is new.
No sight we see, no sound we hear
 Will cause alarm or give rise to fear.
All has come true, just as he said;
 Now over mankind, his tent is spread.
He now will awaken those sleeping in death;
 Their voices will join ours with
 ev'ry grateful breath:

(Chorus)



ROCK OF AGES
 Other foundation can
 no man lay
A RANSOM FOR ALL

**"Watchman, What of the Night?
 The Morning Cometh, and a Night also!"—Isaiah**

VOL. LI SEMI-MONTHLY No. 7

APRIL 1, 1930

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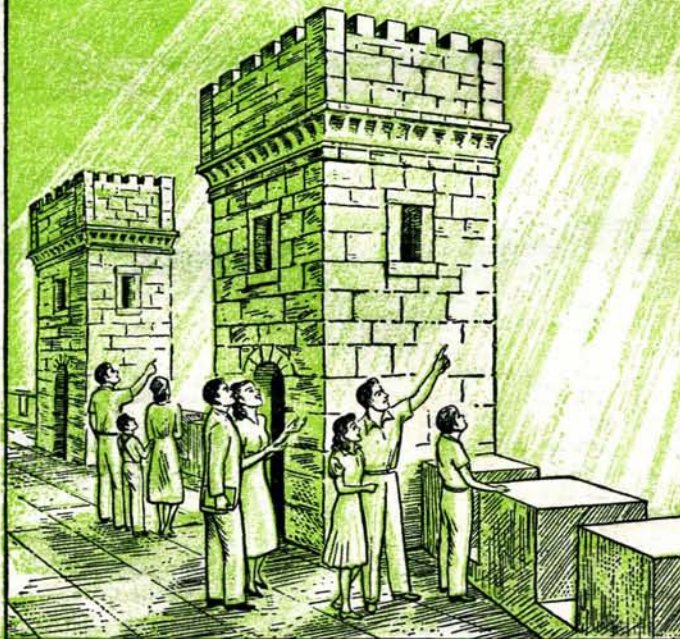
"I will stand upon my watch and will set my foot upon the Tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and what answer I shall make to them that oppose me."—Habakkuk 2: 1.

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Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity: the sea and the waves [the restless, discontented] roaring; men's hearts falling them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. . . . When these things begin to come to pass, then know that the Kingdom of God is at hand. Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.—Luke 21: 25-31; Matthew 24: 33; Mark 13: 29.

The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
Jehovah's Kingdom



"They shall know that I am Jehovah."

- Ezekiel 35:15.

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JULY 15, 1950

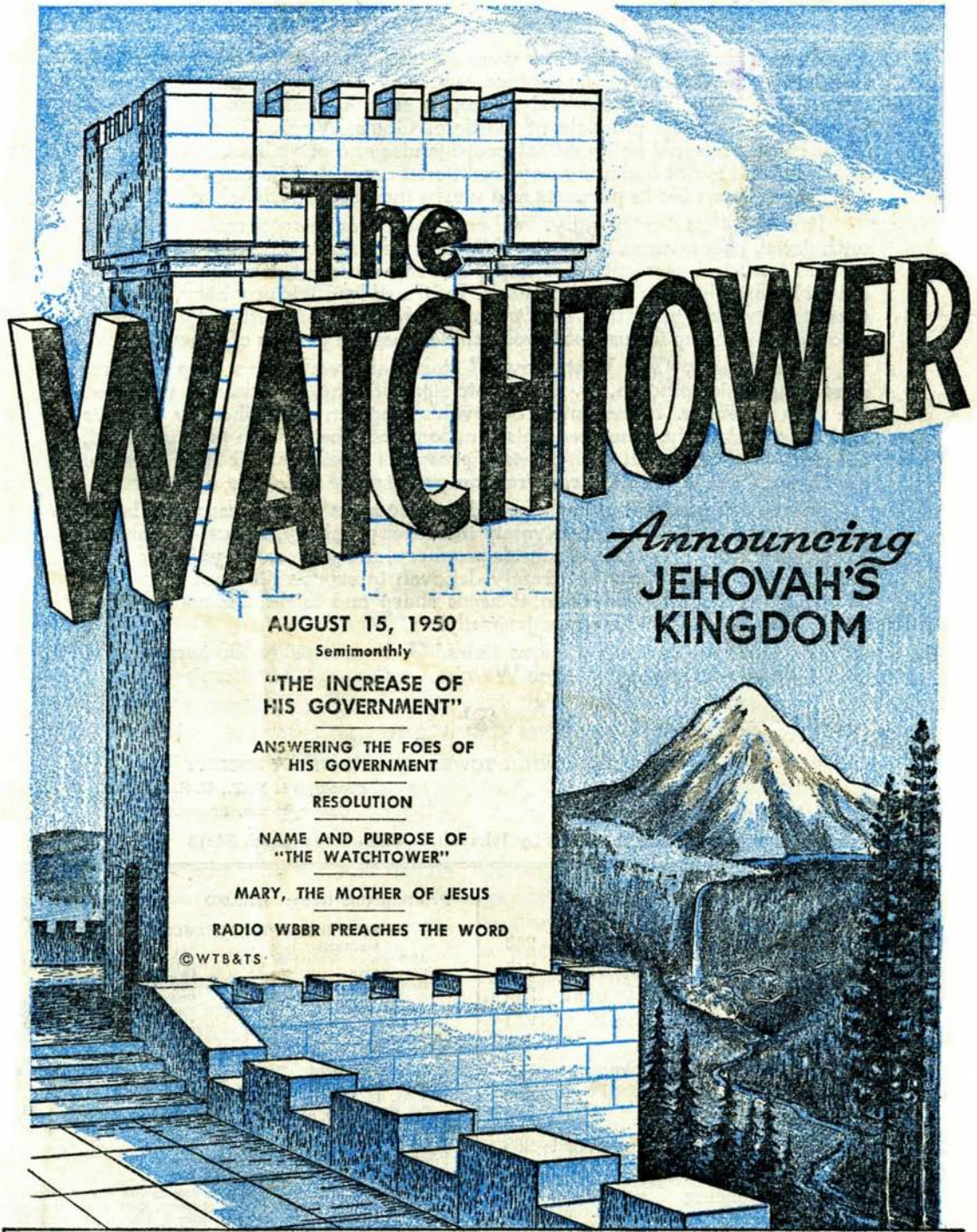
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"YE ARE MY WITNESSES, SAITH JEHOVAH, THAT I AM GOD."-Isa.43:12.

1950-1973



The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

AUGUST 15, 1950

Semimonthly

**"THE INCREASE OF
HIS GOVERNMENT"**

**ANSWERING THE FOES OF
HIS GOVERNMENT**

RESOLUTION

**NAME AND PURPOSE OF
"THE WATCHTOWER"**

MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS

RADIO WBBR PREACHES THE WORD

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"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

1974-1977



The
WATCHTOWER

**A Thousand Years of Relief
for Mankind**

Keeping Courtship Honorable

**"Faith Divorced from Deeds
Is Lifeless as a Corpse"**

JANUARY 1, 1974

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ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM