

- Song 73 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“They Kept Speaking God’s Word With Boldness”:** (10 min.)

Ac 4:5-13—Although “uneducated and ordinary,” Peter and John did not hold back from defending their faith before rulers and scribes (*w08 9/1 15, box; w08 5/15 30 ¶6*)

Ac 4:18-20—Despite threats, Peter and John refused to stop preaching

Ac 4:23-31—First-century Christians relied on Jehovah’s holy spirit for boldness (*it-1 128 ¶3*)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)

Ac 4:11—In what way is Jesus “the chief cornerstone”? (*it-1 514 ¶4*)

Ac 5:1—Why did Ananias and Sapphira sell some of their property? (*w13 3/1 15 ¶4*)

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) Ac 5:27-42

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. The person raises an objection that is common in your territory.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. The person tells you that he is not a Christian.
- **Second Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 82
- **“Worldwide Benefits of Cart Witnessing”:** (15 min.) Discussion by the service overseer. Play the video (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY). If the congregation does public witnessing locally using a table or cart, show the display to the audience. Outline local arrangements. If time allows, relate or reenact a good local experience. Explain how publishers can have a share.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy chap. 43 ¶8-18*
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 64 and Prayer

ACTS 4-5 | They Kept Speaking God’s Word With Boldness

**4:5-13, 18-20, 23-31**

What qualified the apostles to be teachers? What enabled them to speak with conviction and boldness? “They had been with Jesus,” the Great Teacher, and had learned from him. (Ac 4:13) What are some lessons that we can learn from Jesus that will help us to be effective ministers?

Match the following scriptures with the appropriate lesson.



SCRIPTURES	LESSON
• Mt 6:33; Mr 6:31-34	• Rely on Jehovah
• Mt 10:18-20; 21:23-27	• Base your teaching on the Scriptures
• Mt 21:15, 16; Joh 7:16	• Do not let others intimidate you
• Mt 21:22; Lu 22:39-41	• Put the ministry ahead of personal interests

## *Grant Us Boldness*

(Acts 4:29)

1. As we tell about the Kingdom,  
As we witness for your name,  
There are many who oppose us  
And who try to bring us shame.  
But instead of fearing men,  
It's really you we must obey.  
So we beg you now for your spirit;  
O Jehovah, hear what we pray.

*(CHORUS)*

*Grant us boldness as we witness;  
Help us overcome our fear.  
Give us confidence and courage  
So that all the world may hear.  
Armageddon draws ever near,  
But until that great day is here,  
Grant us boldness as we witness.  
This is our prayer.*

2. Even though we may be fearful,  
You remember we are dust.  
Your assurance to support us  
Is a promise we can trust.  
Give attention to the threats  
Of those who persecute and blame.  
May you help us all to continue  
As we boldly speak in your name.

*(Chorus)*

## Acts chapters 4 and 5

<sup>4</sup> While the two were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came up to them.

<sup>2</sup> These were annoyed because the apostles were teaching the people and were openly declaring the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. <sup>3</sup> So they seized them and took them into custody until the next day, for it was already evening. <sup>4</sup> However, many of those who had listened to the speech believed, and the number of the men became about 5,000.

<sup>5</sup> The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup> along with An'nas the chief priest, Ca'ia·phas, John, Alexander, and all who were relatives of the chief priest. <sup>7</sup> They stood Peter and John in their midst and began to question them: "By what power or in whose name did you do this?" <sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with holy spirit, said to them:

"Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup> if we are being examined today about a good deed to a crippled man, and you want to know who made this man well, <sup>10</sup> let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Naz·a·rene', whom you executed on a stake but whom God raised up from the dead, by means of him this man stands here healthy in front of you. <sup>11</sup> This is 'the stone that was treated by you builders as of no account that has become the chief cornerstone.'

<sup>12</sup> Furthermore, there is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved."

<sup>13</sup> Now when they saw the outspokenness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were astonished. And they began to realize that they had been with Jesus. <sup>14</sup> As they were looking at the man who had been cured standing with them, they had nothing to say in answer to this. <sup>15</sup> So

they commanded them to go outside the San'he-drin hall, and they began consulting with one another, <sup>16</sup> saying: "What should we do with these men? Because, for a fact, a noteworthy sign has occurred through them, one evident to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. <sup>17</sup> So that this does not spread any further among the people, let us threaten them and tell them not to speak to anyone anymore on the basis of this name."

<sup>18</sup> With that they called them and ordered them not to say anything at all or to teach on the basis of the name of Jesus. <sup>19</sup> But in reply Peter and John said to them: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves.

<sup>20</sup> But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." <sup>21</sup> So after they had threatened them further, they released them, since they did not find any grounds for punishing them and on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God over what had happened. <sup>22</sup> For the man on whom this miracle of healing had been done was more than 40 years old.

<sup>23</sup> After being released, they went to their own people and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

<sup>24</sup> On hearing this, they raised their voices with one accord to God and said:

"Sovereign Lord, you are the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them, <sup>25</sup> and who said through holy spirit by the mouth of our forefather David, your servant: 'Why did nations become agitated and peoples meditate on empty things? <sup>26</sup> The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers gathered together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one.' <sup>27</sup> For truly both Herod and Pontius Pilate with men of the nations and with peoples of Israel were gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, <sup>28</sup> to do what your hand and counsel had determined beforehand to

occur. <sup>29</sup> And now, Jehovah, give attention to their threats, and grant to your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness, <sup>30</sup> while you stretch out your hand for healing and while signs and wonders occur through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

<sup>31</sup> And when they had made supplication, the place where they were gathered together was shaken, and they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness.

<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and not even one of them would say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. <sup>33</sup> And with great power the apostles continued giving the witness about the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and undeserved kindness was upon them all in large measure. <sup>34</sup> In fact, no one was in need among them, for all those who owned fields or houses would sell them and bring the value of what was sold, <sup>35</sup> and they would deposit it at the feet of the apostles. In turn distribution would be made to each one according to his need. <sup>36</sup> So Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Bar'na-bas (which means, when translated, “Son of Comfort”), a Levite, a native of Cy'prus, <sup>37</sup> owned a piece of land, and he sold it and brought the money and deposited it at the feet of the apostles.

**5** However, a man named An-a-ni'as, together with his wife Sap-phi'ra, sold some property. <sup>2</sup> But he secretly held back some of the price, with his wife's knowledge, and he brought just a part of it and deposited it at the feet of the apostles. <sup>3</sup> But Peter said: “An-a-ni'as, why has Satan emboldened you to lie to the holy spirit and secretly hold back some of the price of the field? <sup>4</sup> As long as it remained with you, did it not remain yours? And after it was sold, was it not in your control? Why have you thought up such a deed as this in your heart? You have lied, not to men, but to God.” <sup>5</sup> On

hearing these words, An·a·ni'as collapsed and died. And great fear came over all those who heard about it. <sup>6</sup> Then the younger men rose, wrapped him in cloths, carried him out, and buried him.

<sup>7</sup> Now after an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. <sup>8</sup> Peter said to her: "Tell me, did you two sell the field for so much?" She said: "Yes, for that amount."

<sup>9</sup> So Peter said to her: "Why did you two agree to make a test of the spirit of Jehovah? Look! The feet of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." <sup>10</sup> Instantly she collapsed at his feet and died. When the young men came in, they found her dead and they carried her out and buried her alongside her husband. <sup>11</sup> So great fear came over the whole congregation and over all those hearing about these things.

<sup>12</sup> Moreover, through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders continued to occur among the people; and they would all meet together in Sol'o·mon's Colonnade. <sup>13</sup> True, none of the others had the courage to join them; nevertheless, the people were speaking highly of them. <sup>14</sup> More than that, believers in the Lord kept on being added, great numbers both of men and of women.

<sup>15</sup> They even brought the sick out into the main streets and laid them there on small beds and mats, so that as Peter would pass by, at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup> Also, crowds of people from the cities around Jerusalem kept coming, carrying sick people and those troubled with unclean spirits, and they were one and all cured.

<sup>17</sup> But the high priest rose, and all those with him, who were of the sect of the Sadducees, and they were filled with jealousy.

<sup>18</sup> And they seized the apostles and put them in the public jail.

<sup>19</sup> But during the night, Jehovah's angel opened the doors of the prison, brought them out, and said: <sup>20</sup> "Go and take your stand in the temple, and keep on speaking to the people all the sayings

about this life.”<sup>21</sup> After hearing this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach.

Now when the high priest and those with him arrived, they called together the San'he-drin and the entire assembly of elders of the sons of Israel, and they sent out to the jail to have the apostles brought before them.<sup>22</sup> But when the officers got there, they did not find them in the prison. So they returned and made their report,<sup>23</sup> saying: “We found the jail locked and secure, and the guards were standing at the doors, but on opening it up, we found no one inside.”<sup>24</sup> Well, when both the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were perplexed about what would come of this.<sup>25</sup> But someone came and reported to them: “Look! The men you put in prison are in the temple, standing and teaching the people.”<sup>26</sup> Then the captain went off with his officers and brought them in, but without violence, because they were afraid of being stoned by the people.

<sup>27</sup> So they brought them and stood them before the San'he-drin. Then the high priest questioned them<sup>28</sup> and said: “We strictly ordered you not to keep teaching on the basis of this name, and yet look! you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you are determined to bring the blood of this man upon us.”<sup>29</sup> In answer Peter and the other apostles said: “We must obey God as ruler rather than men.<sup>30</sup> The God of our forefathers raised up Jesus, whom you killed, hanging him on a stake.<sup>31</sup> God exalted this one as Chief Agent and Savior to his right hand, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.<sup>32</sup> And we are witnesses of these matters, and so is the holy spirit, which God has given to those obeying him as ruler.”

<sup>33</sup> When they heard this, they were infuriated and wanted to do away with them.<sup>34</sup> But a Pharisee named Ga-ma'li-el rose in the San'he-drin; he was a Law teacher esteemed by all the people, and

he gave the command to put the men outside for a little while.

<sup>35</sup> Then he said to them: "Men of Israel, be careful as to what you intend to do about these men. <sup>36</sup> For instance, before these days Theu'das rose up, saying he himself was somebody, and a number of men, about 400, joined his party. But he was done away with, and all those who were following him were dispersed and came to nothing. <sup>37</sup> After him, Judas the Gal-i-le'an rose up in the days of the registration, and he drew followers after himself. That man also perished, and all those who were following him were scattered.

<sup>38</sup> So under the present circumstances, I say to you, do not meddle with these men, but let them alone. For if this scheme or this work is from men, it will be overthrown; <sup>39</sup> but if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them. Otherwise, you may even be found fighters against God himself." <sup>40</sup> At this they took his advice, and they summoned the apostles, flogged them, and ordered them to stop speaking on the basis of Jesus' name, and let them go.

<sup>41</sup> So they went out from before the San'he-drin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name. <sup>42</sup> And every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus.



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Ac 4:18-20—Despite threats, Peter and John refused to stop preaching

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## November 19-25

### Treasures From God's Word

Acts 4:5-13—Although “uneducated and ordinary,” Peter and John did not hold back from defending their faith before rulers and scribes

**Acts 4:5-13:** The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, along with Annas the chief priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and all who were relatives of the chief priest. They stood Peter and John in their midst and began to question them: “By what power or in whose name did you do this?” Then Peter, filled with holy spirit, said to them: “Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today about a good deed to a crippled man, and you want to know who made this man well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you executed on a stake but whom God raised up from the dead, by means of him this man stands here healthy in front of you. This is ‘the stone that was treated by you builders as of no account that has become the chief cornerstone.’ Furthermore, there is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved.” Now when they saw the outspokenness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and ordinary men, they were astonished. And they began to realize that they had been with Jesus.

**w08 9/1 15, box**

#### **[Box.] Were the Apostles Illiterate?**

When the rulers and older men of Jerusalem “beheld the outspokenness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were men unlettered and ordinary, they got to wondering.” (Acts 4:13)

Were the apostles really unlettered, or illiterate? Regarding this assertion, *The New Interpreter's Bible* comments: "These terms are probably not to be taken literally as though Peter [and John] were unschooled and could not write or read. They simply recognize the profound difference in social class between those sitting in judgment and the apostles."

### **w08 5/15 30 paragraph 6**

Acts 4:13—Were Peter and John illiterate or uneducated? No, they were not. They were called "unlettered and ordinary" because they did not attend rabbinic schools for religious training.

Acts 4:18-20—Despite threats, Peter and John refused to stop preaching

**Acts 4:18-20:** With that they called them and ordered them not to say anything at all or to teach on the basis of the name of Jesus. But in reply Peter and John said to them: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard."

Acts 4:23-31—First-century Christians relied on Jehovah's holy spirit for boldness

**Acts 4:23-31:** After being released, they went to their own people and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. On hearing this, they raised their voices with one accord to God and said: "Sovereign Lord, you are the One who made the heaven

and the earth and the sea and all the things in them, and who said through holy spirit by the mouth of our forefather David, your servant: 'Why did nations become agitated and peoples meditate on empty things? The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers gathered together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one.' For truly both Herod and Pontius Pilate with men of the nations and with peoples of Israel were gathered together in this city against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, to do what your hand and counsel had determined beforehand to occur. And now, Jehovah, give attention to their threats, and grant to your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand for healing and while signs and wonders occur through the name of your holy servant Jesus." And when they had made supplication, the place where they were gathered together was shaken, and they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness.

### ***it-1* 128 paragraph 3**

Activity in Christian Congregation. The outpouring of God's spirit upon them at Pentecost greatly strengthened the apostles. The first five chapters of the Acts of Apostles testify to the great fearlessness of the apostles and their boldness in declaring the good news and the resurrection of Jesus in spite of jailing, beatings, and threats of death from their rulers. During those early days after Pentecost, the dynamic leadership of the apostles, under the power of the holy spirit, resulted in amazing expansion in the Christian congregation. (Acts 2:41; 4:4) Their ministry was at first concentrated in Jerusalem, then extended to Samaria, and in time, throughout the known world.—Acts 5:42; 6:7; 8:5-17, 25; 1:8.

## Digging for Spiritual Gems

Acts 4:11—In what way is Jesus “the chief cornerstone”?

**Acts 4:11:** This is ‘the stone that was treated by you builders as of no account that has become the chief cornerstone.’

### ***it-1* 514 paragraph 4**

Psalm 118:22 discloses that the stone rejected by the builders would become “the head of the corner” (Hebrew, *ro’sh pinnah*). Jesus quoted and applied this prophecy to himself as “the chief cornerstone” (Greek, *kephale’ goni’as*, head of the corner). (Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10, 11; Luke 20:17) Just as the topmost stone of a building is conspicuous, so Jesus Christ is the crowning stone of the Christian congregation of anointed ones, which is likened to a spiritual temple. Peter also applied Psalm 118:22 to Christ, showing that he was “the stone” rejected by men but chosen by God to become “the head of the corner.”—Acts 4:8-12; see also 1 Peter 2:4-7.

Acts 5:1—Why did Ananias and Sapphira sell some of their property?

**Acts 5:1:** However, a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, sold some property.

### ***w13* 3/1 15 paragraph 4**

Ananias and his wife sell some property to get money to help the newly baptized ones. When Ananias brings the money to the apostles, he says it is the total amount from the sale. But it is not! He keeps some money for himself! God lets Peter know this, so

Peter tells Ananias: “You have played false, not to men, but to God.” At that, Ananias falls down dead! About three hours later, his wife comes in. Not knowing what has happened to her husband, she also tells a lie and falls down dead.

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 minutes or less) Acts 5:27-42

# ACTS

## Study Notes—Chapter 4

### 4:1

**the two:** Lit., “they,” that is, Peter and John.

**the captain of the temple:** Also mentioned at Ac 5:24, 26. By the first century C.E., this official position was held by a priest who was second in authority to the high priest. The temple captain was in charge of the priests serving at the temple. He also maintained order in and around the temple by means of what may be called a temple police force made up of Levites. Subordinate captains oversaw the Levites who opened the temple gates in the morning and closed them at night. These guards protected the temple treasury, generally kept the crowds in order, and ensured that no one entered restricted areas. There were 24 divisions of Levites. Each division served a week at a time in rotation, twice a year, and likely had a captain who answered to the captain of the temple. The temple captains were men of influence. They are mentioned along with the chief priests who conspired to have Jesus put to death. On the night Jesus was betrayed, they came with their forces to arrest him.—Lu 22:4 (see study note), 52.

### 4:5

**elders:** Lit., “older men.” In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers to physical age (as at Lu 15:25; Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. Here it refers to the leaders of the Jewish nation who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes. The Sanhedrin was made up of men from these three groups.—Mt 21:23; 26:3, 47, 57; 27:1, 41; 28:12; see Glossary, “Elder; Older man.”

## 4:6

**Annas the chief priest:** Annas was appointed high priest about 6 or 7 C.E. by Quirinius, the Roman governor of Syria, and served until about 15 C.E. Even after Annas was deposed by the Romans and no longer held the official title of high priest, he apparently continued to exercise great power and influence as high priest emeritus and was the predominant voice of the Jewish hierarchy. Five of his sons held the office of high priest, and his son-in-law **Caiaphas** served as high priest from about 18 C.E. to about 36 C.E. (See study note on Lu 3:2.) At Joh 18:13, 19, Annas is referred to as “the chief priest.” The same Greek word (*ar·khi·e·reus*) could be used with regard to both the current high priest and a prominent member of the priesthood, including a deposed high priest.—See Glossary, “Chief priest.”

**Caiaphas:** This high priest, appointed by the Romans, was a skillful diplomat who held office longer than any of his immediate predecessors. He was appointed about 18 C.E. and remained in office until about 36 C.E. He was the one who examined Jesus and handed him over to Pilate. (Mt 26:3, 57; Joh 11:49; 18:13, 14, 24, 28) This is the only time he is mentioned by name in the book of Acts. Elsewhere in Acts he is referred to as “the high priest.”—Ac 5:17, 21, 27; 7:1; 9:1.

## 4:10

**the Nazarene:** descriptive epithet applied to Jesus and later to his followers. (Ac 24:5) Since many Jews had the name Jesus, it was common to add a further identification; the practice of associating people with the places from which they came was customary in Bible times. (2Sa 3:2, 3; 17:27; 23:25-39; Na 1:1; Ac 13:1; 21:29) Jesus lived most of his early life in the town of Nazareth in Galilee, so it was natural to use this term regarding him. Jesus was often referred to as “the Nazarene,” in different situations and by various individuals. (Mr 1:23, 24; 10:46, 47;



14:66-69; 16:5, 6; Lu 24:13-19; Joh 18:1-7) Jesus himself accepted the name and used it. (Joh 18:5-8; Ac 22:6-8) On the sign that Pilate placed on the torture stake, he wrote in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek: “Jesus the Nazarene the King of the Jews.” (Joh 19:19, 20) From Pentecost 33 C.E. onward, the apostles as well as others often spoke of Jesus as the Nazarene or as being from Nazareth.—Ac 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 10:38; 26:9; see also study note on Mt 2:23.

**executed on a stake:** Or “fastened on a stake (pole).”—See study note on Mt 20:19 and Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

#### 4:11

**the chief cornerstone:** Or “the most important stone.” The Hebrew expression at Ps 118:22 and the Greek expression used here literally mean “the head of the corner.” Although it has been understood in different ways, it apparently refers to the stone that was installed atop the junction of two walls to hold them firmly together. Jesus quoted and applied this prophecy to himself as “the chief cornerstone.” Just as the topmost stone of a building is conspicuous, so Jesus Christ is the crowning stone of the Christian congregation of anointed ones, which is likened to a spiritual temple.

#### 4:13

**outspokenness:** Or “boldness; fearlessness.” The Greek word *par·re·si'a* has also been rendered “freeness of speech; confidence.” (Ac 28:31; 1Jo 5:14) This noun and the related verb *par·re·si·a'zo·mai*, often rendered “speak boldly (with boldness),” occur several times in the book of Acts and convey an identifying mark of the preaching done by the early Christians.—Ac 4:29, 31; 9:27, 28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26.

**uneducated:** Or “unlettered.” While the Greek term used here (*a·gram'ma·tos*) can mean illiterate, in this context it likely refers

to those not educated in rabbinic schools. It appears that most Jews in the first century could read and write, in part because many schools were held in synagogues. Like Jesus, though, Peter and John had not studied at the rabbinic schools. (Compare Joh 7:15.) The religious elite in Jesus' day felt that these schools were the only acceptable places for receiving a religious education. The Sadducees and the Pharisees no doubt felt that Peter and John were unqualified to teach or to expound the Law to the people. In addition, both of these disciples came from Galilee—an area where most people were farmers, shepherds, and fishermen. The religious leaders and others from Jerusalem and Judea apparently looked down on people from that region and viewed Peter and John as “uneducated” and “ordinary.” (Joh 7:45-52; Ac 2:7) God did not view them that way. (1Co 1:26-29; 2Co 3:5, 6; Jas 2:5) Before his death, Jesus had educated and trained them and his other disciples extensively. (Mt 10:1-42; Mr 6:7-13; Lu 8:1; 9:1-5; 10:1-42; 11:52) After his resurrection, he continued to teach his disciples by means of holy spirit.—Joh 14:26; 16:13; 1Jo 2:27.

#### 4:15

**the Sanhedrin hall:** Or “their Sanhedrin.” The Sanhedrin was the Jewish high court in Jerusalem. The Greek word rendered “Sanhedrin hall” or “Sanhedrin” (*sy·ne'dri·on*) literally means a “sitting down with.” Although it was a general term for an assembly or a meeting, in Israel it could refer to a religious judicial body or court. The Greek word can refer to the people making up the court itself or to the building or location of the court.—See study note on Mt 5:22 and Glossary, “Sanhedrin”; see also App. B12 for the possible location of the Sanhedrin Hall..

## 4:22

**miracle:** Or “sign.” Here the Greek word *se·mei'on*, often rendered “sign,” refers to a miraculous event that gives evidence of divine backing.

## 4:24

**Sovereign Lord:** The Greek word *de·spo'tes* has the basic meaning “lord; master; owner.” (1Ti 6:1; Tit 2:9; 1Pe 2:18) When used in direct address to God, as here and at Lu 2:29 and Re 6:10, it is rendered “Sovereign Lord” to denote the excellence of his lordship. Other translations have used such terms as “Lord,” “Master,” “Sovereign,” or “Ruler (Master; Lord) of all.” Some translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the Hebrew term *'Adho·nai'* (Sovereign Lord), but at least one such translation uses the Tetragrammaton here.

## 4:26

**Jehovah:** In this quote from Ps 2:2, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See App. C.

**his anointed one:** Or “his Christ; his Messiah.” The Greek term used here is *khri·stos'*, from which the title “Christ” is derived. At Ps 2:2, quoted here, the corresponding Hebrew term, *ma·shi'ach* (anointed one), is used. From this term the title “Messiah” is derived.—See study notes on Lu 2:26; Joh 1:41; Ac 4:27.

## 4:27

**whom you anointed:** Or “whom you made Christ (Messiah).” The title *khri·stos'* (Christ) comes from the Greek verb *khri'o*, which is used here. It literally refers to pouring oil on someone. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, it is used only in a sacred and figurative sense, referring to God’s setting a person aside for a special assignment under His direction. This Greek verb also

occurs at Lu 4:18; Ac 10:38; 2Co 1:21; and Heb 1:9. Another Greek word, *a·lei'pho*, refers to the applying of literal oil or ointment to the body, such as when it was used after washing, applied as a medicine, or poured on a body to prepare it for burial.—Mt 6:17; Mr 6:13; 16:1; Lu 7:38, 46; Jas 5:14.

#### 4:29

**Jehovah:** These words are part of a prayer addressed to the “Sovereign Lord” (Ac 4:24b), a term that is rendered from the Greek word *de·spo'tes* and that is also used to address God in a prayer recorded at Lu 2:29. In this prayer in Acts, Jesus is called “your holy servant.” (Ac 4:27, 30) The disciples’ prayer includes a quote from Ps 2:1, 2, where the divine name is used. (See study note on Ac 4:26.) In addition, this request that Jehovah **give attention to their threats**, that is, the threats of the Sanhedrin, uses terms that are similar to those used in prayers recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as at 2Ki 19:16, 19 and Isa 37:17, 20, where the divine name is used.—See App. C.

#### 4:30

**wonders:** Or “portents.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *te'ras* is consistently used in combination with *se·mei'on* (“sign”), both terms being used in the plural form. (Mt 24:24; Joh 4:48; Ac 7:36; 14:3; 15:12; 2Co 12:12) Basically, *te'ras* refers to anything that causes awe or wonderment. When the term clearly refers to something portending what will happen in the future, the alternate rendering “portent” is used in a study note.

#### 4:31

**had made supplication:** Or “had prayed earnestly (pleadingly).” The Greek verb *de'o·mai* refers to the offering of earnest prayer coupled with intense feeling. The related noun *de'e·sis*, rendered “supplication,” has been defined as “humble and earnest

entreaty.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the noun is used exclusively in addressing God. Even Jesus “offered up supplications and also petitions, with strong outcries and tears, to the One who was able to save him out of death.” (Heb 5:7) The use of the plural “supplications” indicates that Jesus implored Jehovah more than once. For example, in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed repeatedly and fervently.—Mt 26:36-44; Lu 22:32.

**the word of God:** This expression appears many times in the book of Acts. (Ac 6:2, 7; 8:14; 11:1; 13:5, 7, 46; 17:13; 18:11) Here the term “the word of God” refers to the Christian message originating with Jehovah God and featuring the important role of Jesus Christ in the outworking of God’s purpose.

#### 4:32

**were of one heart and soul:** This expression describes the unity and harmony among the multitude of believers. At Php 1:27, the expression “with one soul” could also be rendered “with one purpose” or “as one man.” In the Hebrew Scriptures, the expression “one heart” is used at 1Ch 12:38, ftn., and at 2Ch 30:12, ftn., to describe unified desire and action. Also, the expressions “heart” and “soul” are often mentioned together to represent the entire inner person. (De 4:29; 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 26:16; 30:2, 6, 10) The Greek phrase is used here in a similar way and could be rendered “they were completely united in thinking and purpose.” This was in harmony with Jesus’ prayer that his followers be united despite their diverse backgrounds.—Joh 17:21.

#### 4:36

**Son of:** In Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, the phrase “son(s) of” can be used to indicate a prominent quality or characteristic that distinguishes a person or to describe a group of people. For

example, at De 3:18, “valiant men,” or courageous warriors, are literally called “sons of ability.” At Job 1:3, the expression rendered “people of the East” is literally “sons of the East.” The expression “a worthless man” at 1Sa 25:17 renders the literal expression “a son of belial,” that is, “a son of worthlessness.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, those who pursue a certain course of conduct or who manifest a certain characteristic are designated by such expressions as “sons of the Most High,” “sons of light and sons of day,” and “sons of disobedience.”—Lu 6:35; 1Th 5:5; Eph 2:2.

**Son of Comfort:** Or “Son of Encouragement.” The translation of the surname **Barnabas**, given to one of the disciples named **Joseph**. Since Joseph was a common name among the Jews, the apostles may have given him the name Barnabas for practical reasons. (Compare Ac 1:23.) As explained in the study note on **Son of** in this verse, the expression was sometimes used to indicate a prominent quality or characteristic that distinguishes a person. The surname Son of Comfort apparently highlights Joseph’s outstanding ability to encourage and comfort others. Luke reports that Joseph (Barnabas) was sent out to the congregation in Antioch of Syria and began to “encourage” his fellow believers. (Ac 11:22, 23) The Greek verb here rendered “encourage” (*pa·ra·ka·le’o*) is related to the Greek word for “Comfort” (*pa·ra’kle·sis*) used at Ac 4:36.—See study note on **Son of** in this verse.

## ACTS

### Study Notes—Chapter 5

#### 5:3

**emboldened you:** Lit., “filled your heart.” In this context, the Greek expression conveys the meaning “to dare to do something;

to embolden.” It may reflect a Hebrew idiom with the same meaning. For example, at Es 7:5, the Hebrew phrase “has filled his heart to” is rendered “has dared to,” and at Ec 8:11, this idiom is rendered “*the heart . . . becomes emboldened to do bad.*”

## 5:9

**the spirit of Jehovah:** The expression “the spirit of Jehovah” (or, “Jehovah’s spirit”) occurs several times in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Some examples are found at Jg 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6; 15:14; 1Sa 10:6; 16:13; 2Sa 23:2; 1Ki 18:12; 2Ki 2:16; 2Ch 20:14; Isa 11:2; 40:13; 63:14; Eze 11:5; Mic 2:7; 3:8.) The expression “Jehovah’s spirit” is found at Lu 4:18 as part of a quote from Isa 61:1. There and in other Hebrew Scripture occurrences, the original Hebrew text uses the Tetragrammaton together with the word for “spirit.” The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “the spirit of Jehovah” in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts of Ac 5:9 read “the spirit of Lord,” are explained in App. C.

## 5:11

**congregation:** This is the first occurrence of the Greek word *ek·kle·si'a* in the book of Acts. The term comes from two Greek words, *ek*, meaning “out,” and *ka·le'o*, meaning “to call.” It refers to a group of people called together for a particular purpose or activity, so the term well describes the newly established Christian congregation. (See Glossary.) The word *ek·kle·si'a* is used at Mt 16:18 (see study note), where Jesus foretells the formation of the Christian congregation made up of anointed Christians. They are living stones who are “being built up into a spiritual house.” (1Pe 2:4, 5) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term applies not only to the composite group of anointed Christians but also to all Christians living in a geographic area or to Christians making up a local congregation. In the context of Ac

5:11, the term refers to the Christian congregation in Jerusalem.—See study note on Ac 7:38.

## 5:12

**wonders:** Or “portents.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Greek word *te'ras* is consistently used in combination with *se·mei'on* (“sign”), both terms being used in the plural form. (Mt 24:24; Joh 4:48; Ac 7:36; 14:3; 15:12; 2Co 12:12) Basically, *te'ras* refers to anything that causes awe or wonderment. When the term clearly refers to something portending what will happen in the future, the alternate rendering “portent” is used in a study note.

## 5:19

**Jehovah's angel:** Starting at Ge 16:7, this phrase is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “angel” and the Tetragrammaton. When it occurs at Zec 3:5, 6 in an early copy of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge·los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. This fragment, found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert, is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. The reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the expression “Jehovah's angel” in the main text, although available Greek manuscripts of Ac 5:19 read “Lord's angel,” are explained in App. C.

## 5:21

**the entire assembly of elders:** Or “the entire council (body) of elders.” The Greek word *ge·rou·si'a* used here is related to the term *ge'ron* (lit., “old man”), which is found at Joh 3:4. Both terms are used only once in the Christian Greek Scriptures. Some consider the expression “assembly of elders” to be synonymous with **the Sanhedrin**, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem, which was made up of chief priests, scribes, and elders. (See study



note on Lu 22:66.) However, in this context, the two expressions, “the Sanhedrin” and the “assembly of elders,” should apparently be viewed as two entities that were not mutually exclusive. Some members of the “assembly of elders” might officially have been members of the Sanhedrin, while others might have played an advisory role to the Sanhedrin.

**the sons of Israel:** Or “the people of Israel; the Israelites.”—See Glossary, “Israel.”

## 5:24

**the captain of the temple:** Also mentioned at Ac 4:1, 5:26. By the first century C.E., this official position was held by a priest who was second in authority to the high priest. The temple captain was in charge of the priests serving at the temple. He also maintained order in and around the temple by means of what may be called a temple police force made up of Levites. Subordinate captains oversaw the Levites who opened the temple gates in the morning and closed them at night. These guards protected the temple treasury, generally kept the crowds in order, and ensured that no one entered restricted areas. There were 24 divisions of Levites. Each division served a week at a time in rotation, twice a year, and likely had a captain who answered to the captain of the temple. The temple captains were men of influence. They are mentioned along with the chief priests who conspired to have Jesus put to death. On the night Jesus was betrayed, they came with their forces to arrest him.—Lu 22:4 (see study note), 52.

## 5:30

**a stake:** Or “a tree.” The Greek word *xy'lon* (lit., “wood”) is here used as a synonym for the Greek word *stau·ros'* (rendered “torture stake”) and describes the instrument of execution to which Jesus was nailed. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, Luke,

Paul, and Peter used the word *xy'lon* in this sense five times altogether. (Ac 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; Ga 3:13; 1Pe 2:24) In the *Septuagint*, *xy'lon* is used at De 21:22, 23 to translate the corresponding Hebrew word 'ets (meaning "tree; wood; piece of wood") in the sentence "and you have hung him on a *stake*." When Paul quotes this scripture at Ga 3:13, *xy'lon* is used in the sentence: "Accursed is every man hung upon a *stake*." This Greek word is also used in the *Septuagint* at Ezr 6:11 (1 Esdras 6:31, LXX) to translate the Aramaic word 'a', corresponding to the Hebrew term 'ets. There it is said regarding violators of a Persian king's decree: "A *timber* will be pulled out of his house and he will be lifted up and fastened to it." The fact that Bible writers used *xy'lon* as a synonym for *stau·ros*' provides added evidence that Jesus was executed on an upright stake without a crossbeam, for that is what *xy'lon* in this special sense means.

### 5:31

**Chief Agent:** The Greek term used here (*ar·khe·gos*) basically means "chief leader; one who goes first." It is used four times in the Bible, all referring to Jesus. (Ac 3:15; 5:31; Heb 2:10; 12:2) Here it is used along with the title "Savior."—See study note on Ac 3:15.

### 5:33

**they were infuriated:** Or "they felt cut." The Greek expression occurs only here and at Ac 7:54. It literally means "to be sawn through" but is used figuratively in both occurrences to describe a strong emotional response.

### 5:34

**Gamaliel:** A Law teacher mentioned twice in Acts, here and at Ac 22:3. He is thought to be Gamaliel the Elder, as he is known in non-Biblical sources. Gamaliel was the grandson, or possibly the son, of Hillel the Elder, who is credited with developing a

more liberal school of thought among the Pharisees. Gamaliel was so highly **esteemed** among the people that he is said to be the first to be called by the honorific title “Rabban.” Therefore, he greatly influenced the Jewish society of his time by training many sons of Pharisees, such as Saul of Tarsus. (Ac 22:3; 23:6; 26:4, 5; Ga 1:13, 14) He often interpreted the Law and traditions in a way that appears to have been comparatively broad-minded. For example, he is said to have enacted laws protecting wives against unprincipled husbands and defending widows against unprincipled children. He is also said to have argued that poor non-Jews should have the same gleaning rights as poor Jews. This tolerant attitude is evident in the way Gamaliel treated Peter and the other apostles. (Ac 5:35-39) Rabbinic records show, however, that Gamaliel placed greater emphasis on rabbinic tradition than on the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, on the whole, his teachings were similar to those of most of his rabbinic forefathers and the religious leaders of his day.—Mt 15:3-9; 2Ti 3:16, 17; see Glossary, “Pharisees”; “Sanhedrin.”

## 5:40

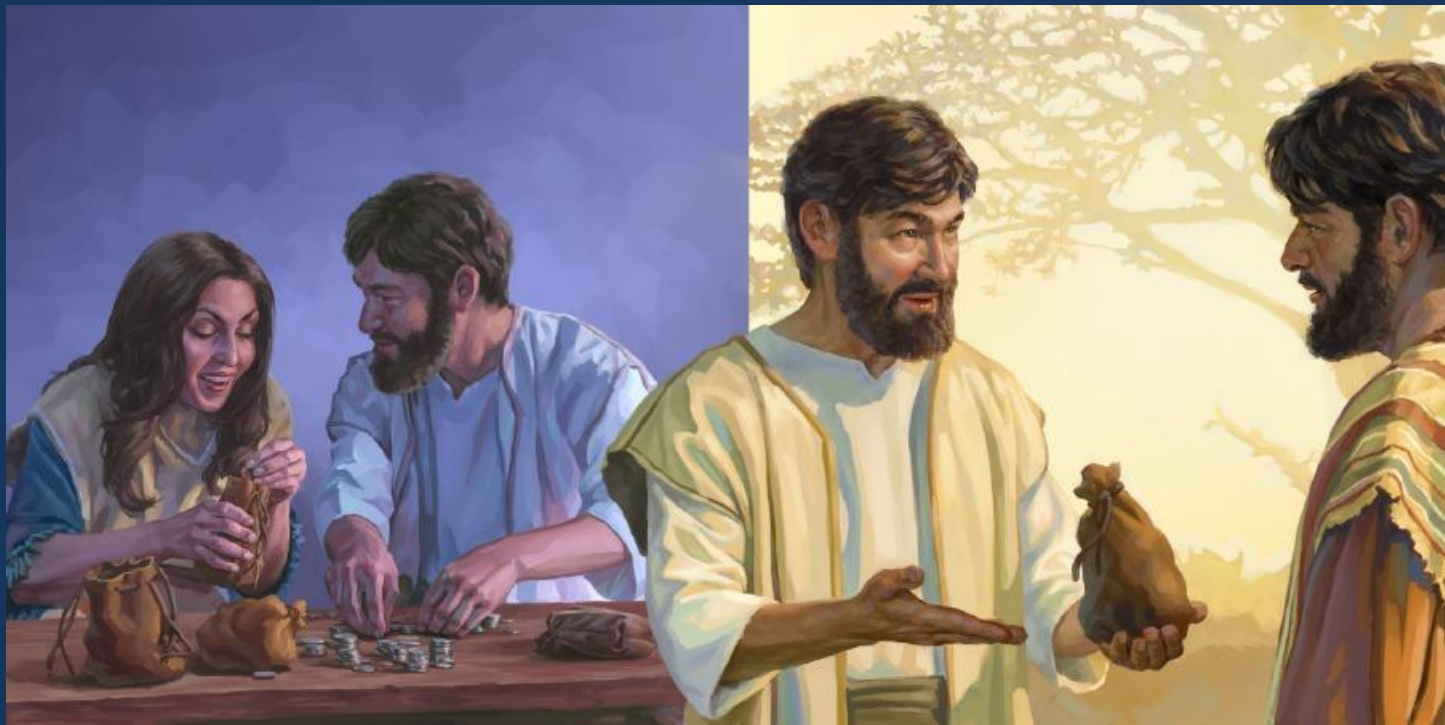
**flogged:** Or “beat.” This beating probably refers to the Jewish punishment of “40 strokes less one.”—2Co 11:24; De 25:2, 3.

## 5:42

**from house to house:** This expression translates the Greek phrase *kat’ oi’kon*, literally, “according to house.” Several lexicons and commentators state that the Greek preposition *ka-ta’* can be understood in a distributive sense. For example, one lexicon says that the phrase refers to “places viewed serially, distributive use . . . from house to house.” (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Third Edition) Another reference says that the preposition *ka-ta’* is “distributive (Acts 2:46; 5:42: . . . house *to* house/*in* the [individual] houses.” (*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, edited by Horst

Balz and Gerhard Schneider) Bible scholar R.C.H. Lenski made the following comment: “Never for a moment did the apostles cease their blessed work. ‘Every day’ they continued, and this openly ‘in the Temple’ where the Sanhedrin and the Temple police could see and hear them, and, of course, also κατ’ οἶκον, which is distributive, ‘from house to house,’ and not merely adverbial, ‘at home.’” (*The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, 1961) These sources support the sense that the disciples’ preaching was distributed from one house to another. A similar use of *ka-ta’* occurs at Lu 8:1, where Jesus is said to have preached “from city to city and from village to village.” This method of reaching people by going directly to their homes brought outstanding results.—Ac 6:7; compare Ac 4:16, 17; 5:28.

**declaring the good news:** The Greek verb *eu-ag-ge-li'zo-mai*, used here, is related to the noun *eu-ag-ge'li-on*, “good news.” In the Christian Greek Scriptures, an important aspect of the good news is closely linked with God’s Kingdom, the theme of Jesus’ preaching and teaching work, and with the salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. In the book of Acts, the Greek verb *eu-ag-ge-li'zo-mai* occurs numerous times, emphasizing the preaching work.—Ac 8:4, 12, 25, 35, 40; 10:36; 11:20; 13:32; 14:7, 15, 21; 15:35; 16:10; 17:18; see study notes on Mt 4:23; 24:14.



Ananias and Sapphira

- Song 73 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“They Kept Speaking God’s Word With Boldness”:** (10 min.)

Ac 4:5-13—Although “uneducated and ordinary,” Peter and John did not hold back from defending their faith before rulers and scribes (*w08 9/1 15, box; w08 5/15 30 ¶6*)

Ac 4:18-20—Despite threats, Peter and John refused to stop preaching

Ac 4:23-31—First-century Christians relied on Jehovah’s holy spirit for boldness (*it-1 128 ¶3*)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)

Ac 4:11—In what way is Jesus “the chief cornerstone”? (*it-1 514 ¶4*)

Ac 5:1—Why did Ananias and Sapphira sell some of their property? (*w13 3/1 15 ¶4*)

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) Ac 5:27-42

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. The person raises an objection that is common in your territory.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. The person tells you that he is not a Christian.
- **Second Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 82
- **“Worldwide Benefits of Cart Witnessing”:** (15 min.) Discussion by the service overseer. Play the video (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY). If the congregation does public witnessing locally using a table or cart, show the display to the audience. Outline local arrangements. If time allows, relate or reenact a good local experience. Explain how publishers can have a share.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy chap. 43 ¶8-18*
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 64 and Prayer

ACTS 4-5 | They Kept Speaking God’s Word With Boldness

**4:5-13, 18-20, 23-31**

What qualified the apostles to be teachers? What enabled them to speak with conviction and boldness? “They had been with Jesus,” the Great Teacher, and had learned from him. (Ac 4:13) What are some lessons that we can learn from Jesus that will help us to be effective ministers?

Match the following scriptures with the appropriate lesson.



SCRIPTURES	LESSON
• Mt 6:33; Mr 6:31-34	• Rely on Jehovah
• Mt 10:18-20; 21:23-27	• Base your teaching on the Scriptures
• Mt 21:15, 16; Joh 7:16	• Do not let others intimidate you
• Mt 21:22; Lu 22:39-41	• Put the ministry ahead of personal interests





# Our Christian Life and Ministry

## MEETING WORKBOOK

### Sample Conversations

#### ●○○ INITIAL CALL

**Question:** Where can we find help to deal with grief?

**Scripture:** 2Co 1:3, 4

**Link:** What happens when someone dies?



#### ○●○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

**Question:** What happens when someone dies?

**Scripture:** Ec 9:5, 10

**Link:** What hope do we have for the dead?



#### ○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

**Question:** What hope do we have for the dead?

**Scripture:** Ac 24:15

**Link:** Where will the resurrection take place?

## Sample Conversations-November 2018

### SECOND RETURN VISIT

**Linda (Publisher 1):** On our last visit we left the question what hope is there for the dead. What would you say?

**Jamie (Householder):** I don't know really.

**Linda (Publisher 1):** That's okay; this idea of a hope after death is new to a lot of people. That's not something that most people are taught at church.

**Jamie (Householder):** No, I've never heard anything about that at my church.

**Linda (Publisher 1):** While then I think you may really enjoy reading what the Bible says here, Acts 24:5 would you like to read out loud for us?

**Jamie (Householder):** Okay,

#### **Acts 24:5**

*"And I have hope toward God, which hope these men also look forward to, that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous."*

**Linda (Publisher 1):** Thank you, according to this verse then what hope can we have?

**Jamie (Householder):** It says there's going to be a resurrection.

**Linda (Publisher 1):** Exactly, the word resurrection means a rising up from death. So we can see our dead loved ones again.

**Jamie (Householder):** That would be very nice wouldn't it.

**Linda (Publisher 1):** Of course this leads to the questions where will the resurrection happen, will it be in Heaven or here on Earth? Let's consider the Bible's answer on our next visit together.



*“Let Your Light Shine”*

(Matthew 5:16)

1. Jesus has commanded  
That we shine our light,  
Like the sun, impartial,  
Comforting and bright.  
Through the Holy Scriptures,  
Thoughts of peace are heard.  
May we now reflect his light  
As we teach God’s Word.
2. Let God’s Kingdom message  
Speak to ev’ry heart;  
Let it shine before us  
As we play our part.  
Light from Scripture guides us  
As we bring good news.  
Sharing truth with ev’ryone;  
Truth is theirs to choose.
3. Light from acts of kindness  
Brightens up this world,  
To our words adds beauty  
Like a priceless pearl.  
May our light keep shining  
As we do what’s right,  
Then our works will always be  
Pleasing in God’s sight.

- Song 73 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“They Kept Speaking God’s Word With Boldness”:** (10 min.)

Ac 4:5-13—Although “uneducated and ordinary,” Peter and John did not hold back from defending their faith before rulers and scribes (*w08 9/1 15, box; w08 5/15 30 ¶6*)

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- Song 82
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• Mt 21:15, 16; Joh 7:16	• Do not let others intimidate you
• Mt 21:22; Lu 22:39-41	• Put the ministry ahead of personal interests

## Worldwide Benefits of Cart Witnessing



According to Acts chapter 5, first-century Christians went to the temple, a public place where many people could be found, in order to share the good news. (Ac 5:19-21, 42) Today, we have seen good results from cart witnessing in public places.

WATCH THE VIDEO *WORLDWIDE BENEFITS OF CART WITNESSING*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- When and how did cart witnessing begin?

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- What advantages does a mobile cart often have over a table?

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- What can we learn from the experience of Mi Jung You?

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- How does the experience of Jacob Salomé illustrate the value of cart witnessing?

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- What does the experience of Anni and her husband teach us about how to witness effectively when using a cart?

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## **BENEFITING FROM JESUS' ILLUSTRATIONS**

The disciples have heard Jesus use illustrations before, but never to this extent. They put to him the question: “Why do you speak to them by the use of illustrations?”—Matthew 13:10.

One reason he does so is to fulfill Bible prophecy. Matthew’s account states: “Without an illustration he would not speak to them, in order to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet who said: ‘I will open my mouth with illustrations; I will proclaim things hidden since the founding.’”—Matthew 13:34, 35; Psalm 78:2.

But there is more to Jesus’ use of illustrations. It serves to reveal the attitude of people. Many of them are interested in Jesus simply as a masterful storyteller and miracle worker. They do not see him as someone to be obeyed as Lord and to be unselfishly followed. (Luke 6:46, 47) They do not want to be disturbed in their view of things or their way of life. No, they do not want the message to penetrate that deeply.

In answer to the disciples’ question, Jesus says: “That is why I speak to them by the use of





illustrations; for looking, they look in vain, and hearing, they hear in vain, nor do they get the sense of it. And the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled in their case. It says: ‘. . .The heart of this people has grown unreceptive.’”—Matthew 13:13-15; Isaiah 6:9, 10.

That does not, though, apply to all who are hearing Jesus. He explains: “Happy are your eyes because they see and your ears because they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things you are observing but did not see them, and to hear the things you are hearing but did not hear them.”—Matthew 13:16, 17.

Yes, the 12 apostles and other loyal disciples have receptive hearts. Accordingly, Jesus says: “To you it is granted to understand the sacred secrets of the

- ◇ Why does Jesus speak in illustrations?
- ◇ How do Jesus’ disciples show themselves to be different from the crowds?
- ◇ How does Jesus explain the illustration of the sower?

Kingdom of the heavens, but to them it is not granted.” (Matthew 13:11) Because of their sincere desire to understand, Jesus provides his disciples with an explanation of the illustration of the sower.

“The seed is the word of God,” Jesus says. (Luke 8:11) And the soil is the heart. That is a key to getting the sense of his illustration.

Of the seed sown on the trampled-down soil alongside the road, he explains: “The Devil comes and takes the word away from their hearts so that they may not believe and be saved.” (Luke 8:12) In speaking of the seed sown on rocky ground, Jesus means the hearts of people who receive the word with joy but the word does not take root deep in their hearts. “After tribulation or persecution has arisen on account of the word,” they are stumbled. Yes, when “a season of testing” comes, perhaps opposition from family members or others, they fall away.—Matthew 13:21; Luke 8:13.

What of the seed that falls among the thorns? Jesus tells his disciples that this refers to people who have heard the word. These, however, are overcome

by “the anxiety of this system of things and the deceptive power of riches.” (Matthew 13:22) They had the word in their heart, but now it is choked and becomes unfruitful.

The last type of soil that Jesus comments on is the fine soil. This refers to those who hear the word and accept it into their heart, getting the real sense of it. With what result? They “bear fruit.” Because of their circumstances, such as age or health, not all can do the same; one produces 100 times more, another 60 times more, and another 30 times more. Yes, blessings in serving God come to “ones who, after hearing the word with a fine and good heart, retain it and bear fruit with endurance.”—Luke 8:15.

These words must be particularly impressive to the disciples who have sought out Jesus to get an explanation of his teachings! They now have more than a surface grasp of the illustrations. Jesus wants them to understand his illustrations so that they, in turn, can impart truth to others. “A lamp is not brought out to be put under a basket or un-



der a bed, is it?” he asks. “Is it not brought out to be put on a lampstand?” Thus, Jesus advises: “Whoever has ears to listen, let him listen.”—Mark 4: 21-23.

# 64 *Sharing Joyfully in the Harvest* (Matthew 13:1-23)

1. We live in the time of the harvest,  
A priv'lege beyond all compare.  
The wheat fields stand ready before us,  
And eagerly we have a share.  
With Jesus, our finest example,  
Directing our work in the field,  
How happy and honored we feel each day.  
We joyfully share in the yield.
2. True love for our God and our neighbor  
Now moves us to speed up our pace.  
Both preaching and teaching are urgent,  
For shortly the end we will face.  
The joy we receive is a blessing,  
A gift that Jehovah provides.  
By faith we endure till this work is done  
And joyfully share at his side.

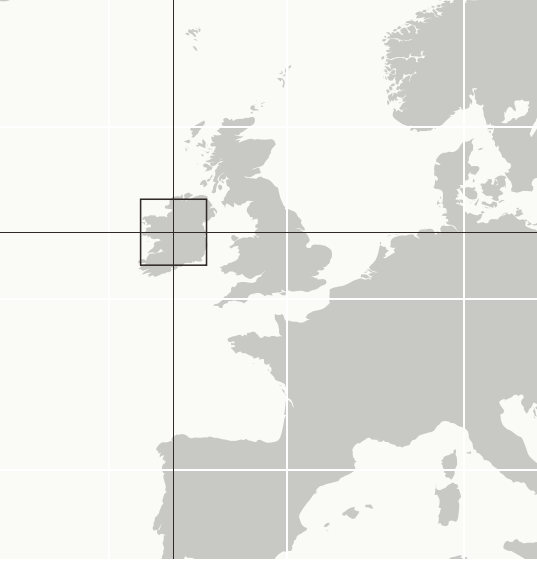
SEPTEMBER 2018

THE  **WATCHTOWER**  
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
**OCTOBER 29–DECEMBER 2, 2018**

**LARGE  
PRINT  
EDITION**



COVER IMAGE:

## IRELAND

Brothers make day trips to the Aran Islands, off the west coast of Ireland, to share the good news with the islanders in the Irish language

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#### **4 WEEK OF OCTOBER 29–NOVEMBER 4**

##### **“If You Know These Things, Happy You Are if You Do Them”**

Knowledge is of little value if not used. But it takes humility to apply what we learn. This article will encourage us to maintain humility by imitating Bible examples of those who preached to people of all sorts, prayed for others, and waited on Jehovah to act.

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#### **16 WEEK OF NOVEMBER 5-11**

##### **Keep Displaying Love—It Builds Up**

In these difficult times, it is easy to become discouraged or overwhelmed by life’s challenges. Jehovah and Jesus help us to cope. But we all have a responsibility to comfort and encourage one another. This article shows how we can build one another up in love.

PUBLISHERS

6,747

BIBLE STUDIES

3,392

MEMORIAL  
ATTENDANCE (2017)

12,082

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of the Holy Scriptures.

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## 29 WEEK OF NOVEMBER 12-18

### Happy Are Those Who Serve “the Happy God”

Jehovah is a happy God who wants his servants to be happy. How, though, can we be happy despite the trials and difficulties of Satan’s world? In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gave very practical advice that can help us to be lastingly happy.

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## 41 WEEK OF NOVEMBER 19-25

### Almighty yet Considerate

## 53 WEEK OF NOVEMBER 26–DECEMBER 2

### Be Considerate and Kind in Imitation of Jehovah

In a world where people are becoming increasingly self-centered, the Christian congregation stands out as a beacon of love. One aspect of that love is consideration for others, the topic of these two articles. First, we will see how Jehovah sets a wonderful example of being considerate of others. Then we will review some practical ways in which we can imitate him.

# 30 *My Father, My God and Friend* (Hebrews 6:10)

1. Life in this world can be hard.

Life in this world can bring tears and pain.  
Still ev'ry day I will say,  
"My life is not in vain."

*(CHORUS)*

*For God is not unrighteous,  
And he remembers the love I've shown.  
So he is ever near me;  
With Jehovah, I'm not alone.  
Yes, God is my provider  
and my protector down to the end.  
Yes, Jehovah is my Father,  
My God and Friend.*

2. Gone are the days of my youth;  
Days of calamity now are here.  
Still through the eyes of my faith,  
My hope is bright and clear.

*(Chorus)*





# Almighty yet Considerate

*“[Jehovah] well knows how we are formed, remembering that we are dust.”—PS. 103:14.*

**POWERFUL** and influential people often “lord it over” others, even dominating them. (Matt. 20:25; Eccl. 8:9) What a contrast with Jehovah! Even though he is the Almighty, he is most

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1, 2. (a) In contrast with powerful humans, how does Jehovah treat people? (b) What will we consider in this article?

**SONGS:**  
30, 10

**WHAT CAN WE  
LEARN FROM THE  
CONSIDERATE WAY  
THAT JEHOVAH . . .**

---

helped young  
Samuel?

---

commissioned  
Moses to lead  
Israel?

---

led Israel out of  
Egypt and through  
the Red Sea?

considerate of imperfect humans. He is kind and thoughtful. He shows regard for our feelings and is attentive to our needs. “Remembering that we are dust,” he never asks more of us than we can give.—Ps. 103:13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> The Bible provides many examples of the considerate way in which Jehovah deals with his servants. Let us focus on three. First, the thoughtful way that God helped young Samuel to deliver a judgment message to High Priest Eli; second, the patient manner in which Jehovah handled Moses’ objections to serving as leader of the Israelites; and third, the considerate way that God led the Israelites out of Egypt. As we reflect on these examples, let us note what they teach us about Jehovah and see lessons we can apply.

## **FATHERLY CONSIDERATION FOR A BOY**

<sup>3</sup> Samuel began “ministering to Jehovah” at the tabernacle at a very early age. (1 Sam. 3:1) One night after Samuel had retired, something most

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3. What unusual thing happened to young Samuel one night, and what question does this raise? (See opening picture.)



unusual happened.\* (Read 1 Samuel 3:2-10.) He heard a voice call him by name. Thinking that it was the voice of the aged High Priest Eli, Samuel obediently ran to him and said: “Here I am, for you called me.” Eli denied doing so. When the same thing happened two more times, Eli realized that it was God who was calling Samuel. So he told the boy how to respond, and Samuel obeyed. Why did Jehovah, by means of his angel, not reveal himself to Samuel on the first occasion? The Bible does not say, but the way events unfolded suggests that consideration for young Samuel was an important factor. How so?

<sup>4</sup> Read 1 Samuel 3:11-18. Jehovah’s Law commanded children to respect the aged, especially a chieftain. (Ex. 22:28; Lev. 19:32) Can you imagine Samuel going up to Eli in the morning and boldly telling him God’s stinging judgment message? Of course not! Indeed, the account tells us that Samuel “was afraid to tell Eli of the vision.” However,

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\* Jewish historian Josephus says that Samuel was 12 years old at the time.

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4, 5. (a) How did Samuel respond to the assignment God gave him, and how did things work out the following morning? (b) What does the account teach us about Jehovah?

God made clear to Eli that He was calling Samuel. As a result, Eli took charge of the situation and told Samuel to speak. “[Do not] hide from me a single word of all that he said to you,” Eli commanded. Samuel obediently “told him everything.”

<sup>5</sup> Samuel’s message would not have been a complete surprise to Eli. It harmonized with that of an unnamed “man of God” who had earlier spoken to the high priest. (1 Sam. 2:27-36) The account involving Samuel and Eli shows us how considerate and wise Jehovah is.

<sup>6</sup> Are you a young person? If so, the account about young Samuel shows that Jehovah understands the challenges you face and how you feel. Perhaps you are shy and find it hard to share the Kingdom message with adults or to stand out as different among your peers. Be assured that Jehovah wants to help you. So pour out your heart to him in prayer. (Ps. 62:8) Reflect on Bible examples of such young ones as Samuel. And talk with fellow Christians—young or old—who may have overcome challenges like those you are facing. Indeed,

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6. What lessons can we learn from the way God helped young Samuel?

they may tell you about times when Jehovah came to their aid, perhaps in ways that they had not expected.

## CONSIDERATION FOR MOSES

<sup>7</sup> When Moses was 80 years old, Jehovah gave him a daunting assignment. Moses was to deliver Israel from bondage in Egypt. (Ex. 3:10) Having served as a shepherd in Midian for 40 years, he was evidently shocked to receive this call. “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” he said. God reassured Moses: “I will prove to be with you.” (Ex. 3:11, 12) He also promised: The elders of Israel “will certainly listen to your voice.” Even so, Moses replied: “Suppose they . . . do not listen?” (Ex. 3:18; 4:1) In effect, Moses contradicted God! But Jehovah remained patient. In fact, he went even further. He empowered Moses to perform miracles, making him the first human on record to have such power.—Ex. 4:2-9, 21.

<sup>8</sup> Moses still tried to excuse himself, claiming to be a poor speaker. In response, God said: “I will

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7, 8. How did Jehovah show extraordinary consideration for Moses?

be with you as you speak, and I will teach you what you should say.” Was Moses at last won over? Evidently not, for he meekly asked God to send someone else. At that, Jehovah rightly became angry. But he was not unyielding. Rather, as yet another gesture of consideration for Moses’ feelings, God appointed Aaron as spokesman for Moses.—Ex. 4:10-16.

<sup>9</sup> What does this account teach us about Jehovah? As Almighty God, he could have frightened Moses into speedy submission. Instead, Jehovah was patient and kind, making an effort to reassure his modest and humble servant. Did this considerate approach work? Absolutely! Moses became an outstanding leader who tried to deal with others in the same mild and considerate way that Jehovah dealt with him.—Num. 12:3.

<sup>10</sup> Lessons we can apply: Are you a husband, a parent, or a congregation elder? If so, you have a measure of authority. How important, then, that you imitate Jehovah by being considerate, kind,

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9. How did Jehovah’s patience and considerate manner help Moses in his assignment?

10. When we imitate Jehovah’s considerate manner, how do we benefit?



Do you imitate Jehovah when dealing with others?

(See paragraph 10)

and patient when dealing with those under your care! (Col. 3:19-21; 1 Pet. 5:1-3) When you strive to imitate Jehovah and the Greater Moses, Jesus Christ, you will be both approachable and refreshing to others. (Matt. 11:28, 29) You will also set an example worthy of imitation.—Heb. 13:7.

## **A FEAR-INSPIRING BUT CONSIDERATE SAVIOR**

<sup>11</sup> When the Israelites left Egypt in 1513 B.C.E., they may have numbered more than three million. Spanning three or even four generations, there

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**11, 12.** As Jehovah led the Israelites out of Egypt, how did he make them feel safe and secure?

What considerate thing  
did Jehovah do for the  
Israelites at the Red Sea?  
(See paragraph 13)



were children, elderly ones, and no doubt some who were infirm or disabled. To lead such a vast crowd out of Egypt certainly called for an understanding and thoughtful Leader. Jehovah, by means of Moses, proved to be such. As a result, the Israelites felt safe as they left the only home they had ever known.—Ps. 78:52, 53.

<sup>12</sup> How did Jehovah make his people feel safe and secure? For one thing, he led them out of Egypt in well-organized “battle formation.” (Ex. 13:18) Such organization surely reassured the Is-





raelites that their God was in control. Also, Jehovah made his presence visibly manifest by means of “a cloud by day and . . . the light of a fire” at night. (Ps. 78:14) In effect, Jehovah was saying: “Do not be afraid. I am with you to guide and protect you.” Indeed, such reassurance was soon needed!

**<sup>13</sup> Read Exodus 14:19-22.** Picture yourself there,

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**13, 14.** (a) What considerate things did Jehovah do for the Israelites at the Red Sea? (b) How did Jehovah show his power over the Egyptians?

trapped between Pharaoh's forces and the Red Sea. Then God acts. The pillar of cloud moves to the rear of the camp, blocking the Egyptians and keeping them in darkness. Your vast camp, however, is bathed in miraculous light! Then you see Moses stretch out his hand over the sea, and a strong east wind opens a wide path to the other side. In an orderly manner, you, your family, and your domestic animals walk out onto the seabed with the rest of the people. Immediately, you notice something odd. The seabed is not miry or frozen; it is dry and quite firm, making it easy to walk. As a result, even the slowest ones cross safely to the other side.

<sup>14</sup> **Read Exodus 14:23, 26-30.** In the meantime, proud and foolish Pharaoh rushes out onto the seabed in hot pursuit. Again, Moses stretches out his hand over the sea. This time, the two congealed walls of water collapse. The sea rushes in from both sides, like two tsunamis on a collision course. Pharaoh and his hordes do not stand a chance!—Ex. 15:8-10.

<sup>15</sup> We see from this account that Jehovah is a God of order—a quality that helps us to feel safe

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15. What does this account teach you about Jehovah?



and secure. (1 Cor. 14:33) Jehovah also shows himself to be a loving shepherd who cares for his people in practical ways. He tenderly embraces them, protecting them from their enemies. How reassuring these truths are to us as we face the end of the present system of things!—Prov. 1:33.

<sup>16</sup> Today, too, Jehovah cares for his people as a group—spiritually and physically. He will continue to do so during the fast-approaching great tribulation. (Rev. 7:9, 10) Hence, whether young or old, sound in body or disabled, God’s people will not panic or cower in fear during the tribulation.\* In fact, they will do the very opposite! They will bear in mind these words of Jesus Christ: “Stand up straight and lift up your heads, because your deliverance is getting near.” (Luke 21:28) They will maintain that confidence even in the face of the attack by Gog—a coalition of nations that will wield far more power than did ancient Pharaoh.

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\* It is reasonable to conclude that some Armageddon survivors will be disabled. When on earth, Jesus cured people with “every sort of infirmity,” thus giving us a preview of what he will do, not for resurrected ones, but for Armageddon survivors. (Matt. 9:35) Resurrected ones will no doubt have whole, sound bodies.

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**16.** How can we benefit from reviewing the way that Jehovah delivered the Israelites?

(Ezek. 38:2, 14-16) Why will God's people remain confident? They know that Jehovah does not change. He will again prove to be a caring and considerate Savior.—Isa. 26:3, 20.

<sup>17</sup> The examples in this article are just some of many that illustrate the kind and thoughtful way that Jehovah cares for, directs, and delivers his people. As you meditate on such accounts, take note of details that reveal even subtle aspects of Jehovah's qualities. Doing so will impress those beautiful qualities more deeply on your mind and heart, strengthening your love for God and your faith in him. The next article will look at ways that we can imitate Jehovah in showing consideration for others. We will focus on the family, the Christian congregation, and the field ministry.

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17. (a) How can we benefit from Bible accounts about the way that Jehovah cares for his people? (b) What will we consider in the next article?

# 10                    *Praise Jehovah Our God!*

(Psalm 145:12)

1. Praise our God! Praise Jehovah God!  
    Make his glorious name known to all!  
    Sound alarm, For his day is near,  
    Help all people hear his warning call.  
    Jehovah decreed that now is the time  
    For his Firstborn to rule as King.  
    Reach out to all people, tell them the news,  
    Tell what blessings our God will bring!

*(CHORUS)*

*Praise our God! Praise Jehovah God!  
    Make his greatness known in all the earth!*

2. Praise our God! Sing it loud and clear!  
    With a joyful song, laud his name!  
    From the heart, From a grateful heart,  
    All his glory boldly we proclaim.  
    Though grand is our God and great are his works,  
    He is humble and good to all.  
    Our merciful Father knows what we need;  
    He responds when he hears our call.

*(Chorus)*



