

- Song 136 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Singleness—A Gift”:** (10 min.)
 1Co 7:32—Single Christians can serve Jehovah free from the anxieties associated with married life (w11 1/15 17-18 ¶3)
 1Co 7:33, 34—Married Christians are “anxious for the things of the world” (w08 7/15 27 ¶1)
 1Co 7:37, 38—Christians who remain single in order to pursue spiritual goals “will do better” than married Christians (w96 10/15 12-13 ¶14)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 1Co 7:11—Under what circumstances might a Christian consider marital separation? (lvs 251)

1Co 7:36—Why should Christians marry only when “past the bloom of youth”? (w00 7/15 31 ¶2)

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) 1Co 8:1-13 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching:** (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Scriptures Properly Introduced*, and then discuss study 4 of the *Teaching* brochure.
- **Talk:** (5 min. or less) w12 11/15 20—Theme: Do Those Who Choose to Remain Single Receive the Gift of Singleness in a Mysterious Way? (12)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 37
- **Make a Success of Your Singleness:** (15 min.) Play the video (video category THE BIBLE). Then ask the following questions: What challenge do many single Christians face? (1Co 7:39) How is Jephthah’s daughter a fine example? What does Jehovah give to those walking in integrity? (Ps 84:11) How can members of the congregation encourage single ones? What are some avenues of service available to single Christians?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 61
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 42 and Prayer

1 CORINTHIANS 7-9 | Singleness—A Gift

7:32, 35, 38

Throughout the years, many Christians have come to appreciate that singleness has unique advantages that may allow them to expand their ministry, widen out in their love for others, and draw closer to Jehovah.

FOR MEDITATION: If you are single, how can you make the most of your circumstances?

How can others in the congregation encourage and support single ones?



Top left: witnessing tour across Australia, 1937; **top right:** Gilead graduate arriving at her assignment in Mexico, 1947; **bottom left:** preaching in Brazil; **bottom right:** attending the School for Kingdom Evangelizers in Malawi

136 “A Perfect Wage” From Jehovah

(Ruth 2:12)

1. Jehovah is faithful and fully aware
Of all those who serve him whole-souled.
He knows there are times their devotion and zeal
Result in their loss as foretold.
If you have left houses or fam'ly or friends,
Be sure that our God knows the sum.
He makes it up now with our dear brotherhood
And life in the new world to come.

(CHORUS)

*May Jehovah reward what you have done.
May he provide a perfect wage for you.
May you find refuge beneath his wings.
Jehovah is faithful; Jehovah is true.*

2. At times we may feel that our lot in this life
Has burdened us more than our share.
And sometimes it seems that the cares of the day
Are more than we're able to bear.
The God of all comfort takes note of your need;
You know he's the Hearer of prayer.
His Word and his spirit and true, loving friends
Will bring to you comfort and care.

(Chorus)

I Corinthians 7-9

⁷ Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is better for a man not to touch a woman; ² but because of the prevalence of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife and each woman have her own husband. ³ Let the husband give to his wife her due, and let the wife also do likewise to her husband. ⁴ The wife does not have authority over her own body, but her husband does; likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but his wife does. ⁵ Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent for an appointed time, so that you may devote time to prayer and may come together again, in order that Satan may not keep tempting you for your lack of self-control. ⁶ However, I say this by way of concession, not as a command. ⁷ But I wish all men were as I am. Nevertheless, each one has his own gift from God, one in this way, another in that way.

⁸ Now I say to those who are unmarried and to the widows that it is better for them if they remain as I am. ⁹ But if they do not have self-control, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to be inflamed with passion.

¹⁰ To the married people I give instructions, not I but the Lord, that a wife should not separate from her husband. ¹¹ But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled with her husband; and a husband should not leave his wife.

¹² But to the others I say, yes, I, not the Lord: If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she is agreeable to staying with him, let him not leave her; ¹³ and if a woman has an unbelieving husband and he is agreeable to staying with her, let her not leave her husband. ¹⁴ For the unbelieving husband is sanctified in relation to his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified in relation to the brother; otherwise, your children would be unclean, but now they

are holy. ¹⁵ But if the unbelieving one chooses to depart, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not bound under such circumstances, but God has called you to peace. ¹⁶ For wife, how do you know whether you will save your husband? Or, husband, how do you know whether you will save your wife?

¹⁷ Nevertheless, just as Jehovah has given each one a portion, let each one so walk as God has called him. And so I give this directive in all the congregations. ¹⁸ Was any man already circumcised when he was called? Let him not undo his circumcision. Has any man been called while uncircumcised? Let him not get circumcised. ¹⁹ Circumcision means nothing, and uncircumcision means nothing; what means something is the observing of God's commandments. ²⁰ In whatever state each one was called, let him remain in it. ²¹ Were you called when a slave? Do not let it concern you; but if you can become free, then seize the opportunity. ²² For anyone who was called in the Lord when a slave is the Lord's freedman; likewise anyone who was called when a freeman is a slave of Christ. ²³ You were bought with a price; stop becoming slaves of men. ²⁴ In whatever state each one was called, brothers, let him remain in it before God.

²⁵ Now concerning virgins, I have no command from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who had mercy shown him by the Lord to be faithful. ²⁶ Therefore, I think that it is best for a man to continue as he is in view of the present difficulty. ²⁷ Are you bound to a wife? Stop seeking a release. Are you freed from a wife? Stop seeking a wife. ²⁸ But even if you did marry, you would commit no sin. And if a virgin married, such a person would commit no sin. However, those who do will have tribulation in their flesh. But I am trying to spare you.

²⁹ Moreover, this I say, brothers, the time left is reduced. From now on, let those who have wives be as though they had none,

³⁰ and those who weep as those who do not weep, and those who rejoice as those who do not rejoice, and those who buy as those who do not possess, ³¹ and those making use of the world as those not using it to the full; for the scene of this world is changing.

³² Indeed, I want you to be free from anxiety. The unmarried man is anxious for the things of the Lord, how he may gain the Lord's approval. ³³ But the married man is anxious for the things of the world, how he may gain the approval of his wife, ³⁴ and he is divided. Further, the unmarried woman, as well as the virgin, is anxious for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in her body and in her spirit. However, the married woman is anxious for the things of the world, how she may gain the approval of her husband. ³⁵ But I am saying this for your personal advantage, not to restrict you, but to move you to what is appropriate and to constant devotion to the Lord without distraction.

³⁶ But if anyone thinks he is behaving improperly by remaining unmarried, and if he is past the bloom of youth, then this is what should take place: Let him do what he wants; he does not sin. Let them marry. ³⁷ But if anyone stands settled in his heart and has no necessity, but has authority over his own will and has made the decision in his own heart to remain unmarried, he will do well. ³⁸ So also, whoever marries does well, but whoever does not marry will do better.

³⁹ A wife is bound as long as her husband is alive. But if her husband should fall asleep in death, she is free to be married to whomever she wants, only in the Lord. ⁴⁰ But in my opinion, she is happier if she remains as she is; and I certainly think I also have God's spirit.

8 Now concerning food offered to idols: We know we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ² If anyone

thinks he knows something, he does not yet know it as he should know it. ³ But if anyone loves God, this one is known by him.

⁴ Now concerning the eating of food offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world and that there is no God but one. ⁵ For even though there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, just as there are many “gods” and many “lords,” ⁶ there is actually to us one God, the Father, from whom all things are and we for him; and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are and we through him.

⁷ However, not all have this knowledge. But some, because of their former association with the idol, eat food as something sacrificed to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸ But food will not bring us nearer to God; we are no worse off if we do not eat, nor better off if we eat. ⁹ But keep watching that your right to choose does not somehow become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰ For if anyone should see you who have knowledge having a meal in an idol temple, will not the conscience of that one who is weak be emboldened to the point of eating food offered to idols? ¹¹ So by your knowledge the man who is weak is being ruined, your brother for whose sake Christ died. ¹² When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you are sinning against Christ. ¹³ That is why if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat at all, so that I will not make my brother stumble.

9 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? ² Even if I am not an apostle to others, I most certainly am to you! For you are the seal confirming my apostleship in the Lord.

³ My defense to those who examine me is as follows: ⁴ We have the right to eat and drink, do we not? ⁵ We have the right to be accompanied by a believing wife, as the rest of the apostles and

the Lord's brothers and Ce'phas, do we not? ⁶ Or is it only Bar'na-bas and I who do not have the right to refrain from working for a living? ⁷ What soldier ever serves at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who shepherds a flock and does not partake of some of the milk of the flock?

⁸ Am I saying these things from a human viewpoint? Or does not the Law also say these things? ⁹ For it is written in the Law of Moses: "You must not muzzle a bull when it is threshing out the grain." Is it bulls that God is concerned about? ¹⁰ Or is it actually for our sakes that he says it? It was really written for our sakes, because the man who plows and the man who threshes ought to do so in the hope of receiving a share.

¹¹ If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material support from you? ¹² If other men have this rightful claim over you, do we not have it much more so? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we are enduring all things so that we might not in any way hinder the good news about the Christ. ¹³ Do you not know that the men performing sacred duties eat the things of the temple, and that those regularly serving at the altar receive a share from the altar? ¹⁴ In this way, too, the Lord commanded for those proclaiming the good news to live by means of the good news.

¹⁵ But I have not made use of a single one of these provisions. Indeed, I have not written these things so that this would be done for me, for it would be better to die than—no man will take away my grounds for boasting! ¹⁶ Now if I am declaring the good news, it is no reason for me to boast, for necessity is laid upon me. Really, woe to me if I do not declare the good news! ¹⁷ If I do this willingly, I have a reward; but even if I do it against my will, I still have a stewardship entrusted to me. ¹⁸ What, then, is my reward? That

when I declare the good news, I may offer the good news without cost, to avoid abusing my authority in the good news.

¹⁹ For though I am free from all people, I have made myself the slave to all, so that I may gain as many people as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became as a Jew in order to gain Jews; to those under law I became as under law, though I myself am not under law, in order to gain those under law. ²¹ To those without law I became as without law, although I am not without law toward God but under law toward Christ, in order to gain those without law. ²² To the weak I became weak, in order to gain the weak. I have become all things to people of all sorts, so that I might by all possible means save some. ²³ But I do all things for the sake of the good news, in order to share it with others.

²⁴ Do you not know that the runners in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win it. ²⁵ Now everyone competing in a contest exercises self-control in all things. Of course, they do it to receive a crown that can perish, but we, one that does not perish. ²⁶ Therefore, the way I am running is not aimlessly; the way I am aiming my blows is so as not to be striking the air; ²⁷ but I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, so that after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow.

- Song 136 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Singleness—A Gift”:** (10 min.)
 1Co 7:32—Single Christians can serve Jehovah free from the anxieties associated with married life (w11 1/15 17-18 ¶3)
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- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
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- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 42 and Prayer

1 CORINTHIANS 7-9 | Singleness—A Gift

7:32, 35, 38

Throughout the years, many Christians have come to appreciate that singleness has unique advantages that may allow them to expand their ministry, widen out in their love for others, and draw closer to Jehovah.

FOR MEDITATION: If you are single, how can you make the most of your circumstances?

How can others in the congregation encourage and support single ones?



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April 1-7 / 1 Corinthians 7-9

- Song 136 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 minutes or less)

Treasures From God's Word

- **“Singleness—A Gift”**: (10 minutes)

Singleness—A Gift

1 Corinthians 7:32, 35, 38

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For Meditation: If you are single, how can you make the most of your circumstances?

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1 Corinthians 7:32—Single Christians can serve Jehovah free from the anxieties associated with married life

1 Corinthians 7:32: Indeed, I want you to be free from anxiety. The unmarried man is anxious for the things of the Lord, how he may gain the Lord's approval.

w11 1/15 17-18 paragraph 3

A single person often has more time and greater personal freedom than a married person does. (1 Corinthians 7:32-35) These are unique advantages that may allow him to expand his ministry, widen out in love for others, and draw closer to Jehovah. A number of Christians, therefore, have come to appreciate the benefits of singleness and have decided to “make room for it,” at least for a time. Others may not have initially planned for singleness, but when their circumstances changed, they prayerfully reflected on their situation and realized that with Jehovah’s help they too could be settled in their heart. Thus, they accepted their changed circumstances and made room for singleness.—1 Corinthians 7:37, 38.

1 Corinthians 7:33, 34—Married Christians are “anxious for the things of the world”

1 Corinthians 7:33, 34: But the married man is anxious for the things of the world, how he may gain the approval of his wife, and he is divided. Further, the unmarried woman, as well as the virgin, is anxious for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in her body and in her spirit. However, the married woman is anxious for the things of the world, how she may gain the approval of her husband.

w08 7/15 27 paragraph 1

What is meant by “the things of the world” for which a married man or woman is anxious? Paul is referring to the mundane things in life with which married Christians need to be concerned. These include food, clothing, and housing, but exclude the bad things of this world, which Christians shun.—1 John 2:15-17.

1 Corinthians 7:37, 38—Christians who remain single in order to pursue spiritual goals “will do better” than married Christians

1 Corinthians 7:37, 38: But if anyone stands settled in his heart and has no necessity, but has authority over his own will and has made the decision in his own heart to remain unmarried, he will do well. So also, whoever marries does well, but whoever does not marry will do better.

w96 10/15 12-13 paragraph 14

A single Christian who uses his unmarried state to pursue selfish goals is not doing “better” than married Christians. He is remaining single, not “on account of the kingdom,” but for personal reasons. (Matthew 19:12) The unmarried man or woman should be “anxious for the things of the Lord,” be anxious to “gain the Lord’s approval,” and be in “constant attendance upon the Lord without distraction.” This means devoting undivided attention to serving Jehovah and Christ Jesus. Only by so doing are unmarried Christian men and women doing “better” than married Christians.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

1 Corinthians 7:11—Under what circumstances might a Christian consider marital separation?

1 Corinthians 7:11: But if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled with her husband; and a husband should not leave his wife.

Ivs 251

At times, some Christians have decided to separate from their mate even though no immorality has taken place. (1 Corinthians 7:11) In the following situations, a Christian may consider separation.

- Willful nonsupport: A husband refuses to provide for the family materially, to the point that the family is left without money or food.—1 Timothy 5:8.
- Severe physical abuse: Physical abuse to the point that a mate feels that his or her health or life is in danger.—Galatians 5:19-21.
- Absolute endangerment of a person's relationship with Jehovah: A husband or a wife makes it impossible for the mate to serve Jehovah.—Acts 5:29.

1 Corinthians 7:36—Why should Christians marry only when “past the bloom of youth”?

1 Corinthians 7:36: But if anyone thinks he is behaving improperly by remaining unmarried, and if he is past the bloom of youth, then this is what should take place: Let him do what he wants; he does not sin. Let them marry.

w00 7/15 31 paragraph 2

Young people, then, should not rush into marriage when they first experience an awakening of sexual impulses. Marriage requires a commitment, and living up to such a responsibility calls for maturity. (Genesis 2:24) Better it is to wait until one is “past the bloom of youth”—the period when sexual feelings run strong and can distort one's judgment. (1 Corinthians 7:36) And how unwise and sinful it is for an adult desiring to marry to get involved in immoral relations simply because a prospective marriage partner is not available!

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

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study 5)

- Song 136 and Prayer
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Scriptures Properly Introduced

4

SUMMARY: Prepare the minds of your listeners before you read a scripture.



Matthew 22:41-45

HOW TO DO IT:

- **Determine why you are reading the scripture.** Introduce each scripture in a way that draws your listeners' attention to the key point you are making with the verse.



Take the context into account. Attribute quotations to the correct speaker and Bible books to the correct writer.

- **Cite the Bible as an authority.** When you are speaking to people who believe in God, draw attention to the Bible as God's Word, thus crediting it as the highest source of wisdom.

- **Arouse interest in the scripture.** Ask a question that the scripture will answer, pose a problem that the scripture will help solve, or state a principle that the Scriptural account will illustrate.



Take into account what your listeners already know about the subject and the scripture. Introduce even a familiar text in an appealing way, and help your listeners to take a fresh look at it.

Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

- **Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching:** (10 minutes)

Discussion. Play the video *Scriptures Properly Introduced*, and then discuss study 4 of the *Teaching* brochure.

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Questions From Readers

Do Jesus' words found at Matthew 19:10-12 suggest that those who choose to remain single have received the gift of singleness in a mysterious way?

Consider the setting in which Jesus made his remarks on singleness. When Pharisees came to him and brought up the subject of divorce, Jesus made clear Jehovah's standard for marriage. While the Law allowed a man to write out a certificate of divorce for his wife in case he discovered "something indecent" in her, this was not the case from the beginning. (Deuteronomy 24:1, 2) Then Jesus stated: "Whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery."—Matthew 19:3-9.

On hearing this, the disciples declared: "If such is the situation of a man with his wife, it is not advisable to marry." In reply, Jesus said: "Not all men make room for the saying, but only those who have the gift. For there are eunuchs that were born such from their mother's womb, and there are eunuchs that were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs that have made themselves eunuchs on account of the kingdom of the heavens. Let him that can make room for it make room for it."—Matthew 19:10-12.

Literal eunuchs were those who were born such because of birth defects or who were made that way by accident or mutilation. However, there were also those who freely made themselves eunuchs. Though eligible for marriage, they exercised self-control and remained single “on account of the kingdom of the heavens.” Like Jesus, they chose the state of singleness so that they could devote themselves to Kingdom service. They were neither born with the gift of singleness nor granted such a gift. They actually made room for it. That is, they deliberately acquired the gift.

Building upon what Jesus said, the apostle Paul explained that while all Christians—single or married—can serve God acceptably, single ones who are ‘settled in their heart’ about their status “do better.” How so? Married people must divide their time and energy to please and care for their mate. On the other hand, single Christians can apply themselves to the Lord’s service without that obligation. They consider their position a “gift” from God.—1 Corinthians 7:7, 32-38.

Thus, the Scriptures tell us that a Christian does not receive the gift of singleness in some mysterious way. Rather, he cultivates it by remaining unmarried so as to advance Kingdom interests without distraction. Many today have resolved in their heart to stay single for this reason, and others do well to be a source of encouragement to them.

37 *Serving Jehovah Whole-Souled* (Matthew 22:37)

1. O Jehovah, Sov'reign Ruler,
You are the one I love and obey.
You deserve my full devotion;
You are my God; I'll serve you each day.
Your commands I loyally follow;
How I love reminders from you!

(CHORUS)

*O Jehovah, you are worthy;
Whole-souled devotion I give to you.*

2. Father, all your works exalt you.
Earth, moon, and stars your glory proclaim.
May I also be as faithful,
Using my strength to make known your name.
May I use my whole life to serve you,
Proving to be loyal and true.

(Chorus)

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- Song 37
- **Make a Success of Your Singleness:** (15 min.) Play the video (video category THE BIBLE). Then ask the following questions: What challenge do many single Christians face? (1Co 7:39) How is Jephthah’s daughter a fine example? What does Jehovah give to those walking in integrity? (Ps 84:11) How can members of the congregation encourage single ones? What are some avenues of service available to single Christians?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 61
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 42 and Prayer

1 CORINTHIANS 7-9 | Singleness—A Gift

7:32, 35, 38

Throughout the years, many Christians have come to appreciate that singleness has unique advantages that may allow them to expand their ministry, widen out in their love for others, and draw closer to Jehovah.

FOR MEDITATION: If you are single, how can you make the most of your circumstances?

How can others in the congregation encourage and support single ones?



Top left: witnessing tour across Australia, 1937; **top right:** Gilead graduate arriving at her assignment in Mexico, 1947; **bottom left:** preaching in Brazil; **bottom right:** attending the School for Kingdom Evangelizers in Malawi

JESUS HEALS A DEMON-POSSESSED BOY

MATTHEW 17:14-20 MARK 9:14-29 LUKE 9:37-43

- **STRONG FAITH NEEDED TO HEAL A
DEMON-POSSESSED BOY**
-

When Jesus, Peter, James, and John descend from the mountain, they meet a large crowd. Something is wrong. Scribes are gathered around the disciples, arguing with them. The people are quite surprised to see Jesus, and they run to greet him. “What are you arguing about with them?” he asks.—Mark 9:16.

A man from the crowd kneels before Jesus and explains: “Teacher, I brought my son to you because he has a speechless spirit. Wherever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground, and he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and loses his strength. I asked your disciples to expel it, but they were not able to do so.”—Mark 9:17, 18.

Apparently, the scribes are criticizing the disciples because of their failure to heal the boy,



perhaps ridiculing their efforts. So instead of replying to the distraught father, Jesus addresses the crowd, saying: “O faithless and twisted generation, how long must I continue with you? How long must I put up with you?” These strong words certainly apply to the scribes who have been making trouble for his disciples in his absence. Turning to the distressed father, Jesus says: “Bring him here to me.” —Matthew 17:17.

As the boy approaches Jesus, the demon that possesses him knocks him to the ground and throws him into a violent convulsion. The boy keeps rolling on the ground, foaming at the mouth. “How long has this been happening to him?” Jesus asks the father. He answers: “From childhood on, and often it would throw him into the fire and also into the water to destroy him.” The man pleads: “If you can do anything, have pity on us and help us.” —Mark 9:21, 22.

The father is desperate, because even Jesus’ disciples have not been able to help. In response to the man’s desperate appeal, Jesus gives the encourag-

ing assurance: “That expression, ‘If you can’! Why, all things are possible for the one who has faith.” Immediately the father cries out: “I have faith! Help me out where I need faith!”—Mark 9:23, 24.

Jesus notices the crowd running toward him. With all of these looking on, Jesus rebukes the demon: “You speechless and deaf spirit, I order you, get out of him and do not enter into him again!” In departing, the demon causes the boy to scream and have many convulsions. Then the boy lies there motionless. Seeing this, many people say: “He is dead!” (Mark 9:25, 26) But when Jesus takes the boy’s hand, he rises and is “cured from that hour.” (Matthew 17:18) Understandably, the people are astonished at what Jesus is doing.

Earlier, when Jesus sent the disciples forth to preach, they were able to expel demons. So now, privately in a house, they ask him: “Why could we not expel it?” Jesus explains that it was because of their lack of faith, saying: “This kind can come out only by prayer.” (Mark 9:28, 29) Strong faith along with prayer for God’s empowering help was needed to expel the powerful demon.



Jesus concludes: “Truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard grain, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.” (Matthew 17:20) How powerful faith can be!

Obstacles and difficulties that block progress in Jehovah’s service may seem to be as insurmountable and irremovable as a literal mountain. Yet, if we cultivate faith, we can overcome such mountain-like obstacles and difficulties.

- ◇ What situation does Jesus find upon returning from the mountain?
- ◇ Why were the disciples unable to expel the demon from the boy?
- ◇ How powerful can our faith become?

42 *The Prayer of God's Servant* (Ephesians 6:18)

1. Almighty God, Jehovah, our Father,
 May your great name be sanctified and honored.
 All that you wish you cause to become.
 Great God, in faith we pray for your Kingdom.
 May it come when you decree,
 And its blessings may we see.

2. Thank you, dear God, for each daily blessing,
 Gifts from your hand—good things beyond assessing.
 Source of all life, Provider of light,
 You give us knowledge, wisdom, and insight.
 May we thank you ev'ry day
 As we praise your loving way.

3. While in this world, we have tribulation.
 We look to you for hope and consolation.
 Father, we throw our burden on you.
 Give us the will and strength to continue.
 Help us, please, to do your will,
 And our vows to you fulfill.

JANUARY 2019

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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COVER PICTURE: Millions of people around the world are welcomed to the Lord’s Evening Meal (See study article 5, paragraphs 1-2)

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

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) January 2019 is published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. © 2018 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

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18

Grateful for the Ransom

(Luke 22:20)

1. Today, Jehovah God,
we stand before your throne,
For you showed the greatest love
that could ever be shown.
You gave the gift of your dear Son,
that we might live.
No greater sacrifice than this
could you ever give.

(CHORUS)

*He gave his life to set us free.
His precious blood provides the key.
With all our hearts,
we'll go on thanking you eternally.*

2. It was a willing sacrifice
that Jesus made.
Out of love, his perfect life
was the price that he paid.
We had no hope until he came
to save mankind.
But now our hope is finding life,
leaving death behind.

(Chorus)

What Our Attendance at Meetings Says About Us

*“Keep proclaiming the death of the Lord,
until he comes.”—1 COR. 11:26.*

SONG 18

Grateful for the Ransom

PREVIEW

The Memorial of Christ’s death on Friday evening, **April 19, 2019**, will be the most important meeting of the entire year. What motivates us to attend that event? No doubt, we want to please Jehovah. In this article, we will consider what our attendance at the Memorial as well as at our weekly meetings says about us.

IMAGINE what Jehovah sees when millions around the world gather for the Lord's Evening Meal. He looks at more than just the large number of people; he notices each individual who is present. For instance, he sees those who faithfully come every year. Among them may be individuals who come despite facing severe persecution. Others do not come regularly to other meetings, but they view attending the Memorial as a solemn duty. Jehovah also notices those who may be at the Memorial for the first time, perhaps out of curiosity.

² Certainly, Jehovah is pleased to see that so many attend the Memorial. (Luke 22:19) However, Jehovah is not primarily concerned with the *number* of people who come. He is more interested in the *reason* for their coming; motive matters to Jehovah. In this article, we will discuss a question of vital importance: Why do we attend not only the annual observance of the Memorial but also the weekly meetings that Jehovah provides for those who love him?

1-2. (a) What does Jehovah see when millions gather for the Lord's Evening Meal? (See cover picture.) (b) What will we discuss in this article?

HUMILITY MOVES US TO ATTEND

³ We attend congregation meetings primarily because they are part of our worship. We also attend because we are taught by Jehovah at meetings. Proud people reject the idea that they need to be taught anything. (3 John 9) By contrast, we are eager to be instructed by Jehovah and the organization that he is using.—Isa. 30:20; John 6:45.

⁴ Our attendance at meetings says that we are humble—ready and willing to be taught. On the night of the Memorial of Jesus’ death, we attend this important event not merely because we feel it is a duty but also because we humbly obey Jesus’ command: “Keep doing this in remembrance of me.” (Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.) That meeting strengthens our hope for the future and reminds us of just how much Jehovah loves us. However, Jehovah knows that we need to be encouraged and reassured more than just once a year. So he provides us with meetings each week and urges us to attend them. Humility moves us to obey. We spend a number of hours every week preparing for and attending those meetings.

3-4. (a) Why do we attend meetings? (b) What does our attendance at meetings say about us? (c) In view of what 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 states, why should we not miss the Memorial?

⁵ Each year, many humble people accept Jehovah's invitation to be taught by him. (Isa. 50:4) They enjoy attending the Memorial, and they start to attend the other meetings. (Zech. 8:20-23) Together, we are delighted to be instructed and guided by Jehovah, "[our] helper and [our] rescuer." (Ps. 40:17) Really, what could be more enjoyable—or more important—than accepting an invitation to be taught by Jehovah and by Jesus, the Son he loves so deeply?—Matt. 17:5; 18:20; 28:20.

⁶ Each year, we make an effort to invite as many as possible to attend the Memorial of Jesus' death. Many humble people have benefited by accepting our invitation. Consider an example. Several years ago, a man received a printed invitation to the Memorial, but he told the brother who handed it to him that he could not attend. However, on the night of the Memorial, the brother was surprised to see that same man walk into the Kingdom Hall. The man was so impressed by the welcome he received that he began attending our weekly meetings. In fact, he missed only three meetings during the entire following year. What helped him to respond in such a positive way? He was meek enough to change his

5. Why do humble people respond to Jehovah's invitation?

6. How did humility help one man to attend the Memorial?

mind. The brother who invited him later said, “He is a very humble man.” Jehovah undoubtedly drew this man to worship Him, and he is now a baptized brother.—2 Sam. 22:28; John 6:44.

⁷ What we learn at meetings and what we read in the Bible can help us to be humble. In the weeks leading up to the Memorial, our meetings often focus on the example of Jesus and the humility he showed in giving his life as a ransom. And during the days before the Memorial, we are urged to read Bible accounts about the events surrounding Jesus’ death and resurrection. What we learn at such meetings and what we read in those Bible accounts deepen our gratitude for the sacrifice Jesus made for us. We are moved to imitate his humble attitude and to do Jehovah’s will, even when it is difficult for us.—Luke 22:41, 42.

COURAGE HELPS US TO ATTEND

⁸ We also try to imitate Jesus in showing courage. Think about the courage he showed on the days before his death. He was fully aware that his enemies would soon humiliate, beat, and execute him. (Matt.

7. How can what we learn at meetings and read in the Bible help us to be humble?

8. How did Jesus show courage?

Your courage in attending Christian meetings gives strength to others
(See paragraph 9)



20:17-19) Still, he willingly faced death. When the time came, he said to his faithful apostles, who were with him in Gethsemane: “Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer has drawn near.” (Matt. 26:36, 46) And when the armed mob came to arrest him, he stepped forward, identified himself, and ordered the soldiers to let his apostles go. (John 18:3-8) What outstanding courage Jesus displayed! Today, anointed Christians and those of the other sheep strive to imitate Jesus in showing courage. How?

⁹ To attend meetings regularly, we may need to demonstrate courage in the face of difficult circumstances. Some of our brothers and sisters attend

9. (a) Why might we need courage to attend meetings regularly?
(b) How can our example affect our brothers who are imprisoned for their faith?



meetings despite being burdened by grief, discouragement, or health problems. Others courageously attend meetings despite strong opposition from family members or governmental authorities. Think for a moment about how our example affects our brothers who are imprisoned for their faith. (Heb. 13:3) When they hear that we keep serving Jehovah in spite of our trials, they are strengthened to maintain their faith, courage, and integrity. The apostle Paul had a similar experience. When he was in prison in Rome, he rejoiced whenever he heard that his brothers were serving God faithfully. (Phil. 1:3-5, 12-14) Shortly before or just after his release, Paul wrote his letter to the Hebrews. In that letter he urged those faithful Christians to let their “brotherly love continue” and never to forsake meeting together.—Heb. 10:24, 25; 13:1.

¹⁰ We show courage when we invite relatives, workmates, and neighbors to the Memorial. Why do we invite such ones? We are so grateful for what Jehovah and Jesus have done for us that we cannot hold back from inviting others to attend the Memorial. We want them to learn how they too can benefit from Jehovah’s “undeserved kindness” by means of the ransom.—Read Ephesians 1:7; Rev. 22:17.

¹¹ When we show courage by meeting together, we also display another precious attribute, one that both God and his Son display in outstanding ways.

LOVE COMPELS US TO ATTEND

¹² Our love for Jehovah and Jesus compels us to attend meetings. In turn, what we learn at the meetings deepens our love for Jehovah and his Son. At meetings we are regularly reminded of what they have done for us. (Rom. 5:8) The Memorial in particular reminds us of how deep their love is, even for those who do not yet appreciate the ransom. Filled with gratitude, we try to imitate Jesus by how we live each day. (Read 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15.) In

10-11. (a) Whom should we invite to the Memorial? (b) What reason does Ephesians 1:7 give for doing so?

12. (a) How do our meetings deepen our love for Jehovah and Jesus? (b) What does 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15 encourage us to do in imitation of Jesus?

addition, our heart stirs us to praise Jehovah for providing the ransom. One way we can praise him is by making heartfelt comments at our meetings.

¹³ We can show the depth of our love for Jehovah and his Son by being willing to make sacrifices for them. Often, we must make sacrifices of various kinds to attend our meetings. Many congregations hold one meeting at the end of a workday when we are most likely tired. And another meeting is held on the weekend when other people are resting. Does Jehovah notice that we attend our meetings even though we are tired? Certainly he does! In fact, the greater our struggle, the more Jehovah appreciates the love we show for him.—Mark 12:41-44.

¹⁴ Jesus set the pattern for us in showing self-sacrificing love. He was willing not only to die for his disciples but also to live each day in a way that put their interests ahead of his own. For instance, he met with his followers even when he was physically tired or emotionally distressed. (Luke 22:39-46) And he focused on what he could give to others, not on what he could get from them. (Matt. 20:28) When our love for Jehovah and for our brothers is that

13. How can we show the depth of our love for Jehovah and his Son? Explain.

14. How did Jesus set the pattern in showing self-sacrificing love?

Will You Invite Them?

The special public talk “Reach Out for the Real Life!” will be given the week of April 8, 2019. Those who come will learn the answers to these timely questions: What is the real life? How can you get a firm hold on the real life? Perhaps those who hear the special talk will be motivated to attend the Memorial. We hope that among those who attend may be some who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life.”—Acts 13:48.

strong, we will do all we can to attend the Lord’s Evening Meal as well as all other congregation meetings.

¹⁵ We belong to the only true Christian brotherhood, and we enjoy spending as much time as possible inviting new ones to join us. However, we are particularly interested in helping those who are “related to us in the faith” but who have become inactive. (Gal. 6:10) We prove our love for them by encouraging them to attend our meetings, especially the Memorial. Like Jehovah and Jesus, we are deeply moved when an inactive one returns to Jehovah, our loving Father and Shepherd.—Matt. 18:14.

15. Whom are we particularly interested in helping?

¹⁶ In the coming weeks, invite as many as possible to attend the Memorial on Friday evening, April 19, 2019. (See the box “Will You Invite Them?”) Throughout the coming year, may we encourage one another by regularly attending all the meetings that Jehovah provides for us. As the end of this system draws near, we need our meetings to help us remain humble, courageous, and loving. (1 Thess. 5:8-11) With all our heart, let us show how we feel about Jehovah and his Son for loving us so much!—Read John 3:16.

16. (a) How can we encourage one another, and what will our meetings do for us? (b) Why is this a good time of year to remember Jesus’ words found at John 3:16?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Pages 56-57: A brother who is in prison for his faith is encouraged by a letter from home. Knowing that he is not forgotten, he is joyful over receiving the news that his family is also remaining faithful to Jehovah despite the civil unrest in their area.

**HOW DOES OUR ATTENDANCE AT
CONGREGATION MEETINGS SHOW . . .**

■ *humility?*

■ *courage?*

■ *love?*

SONG 126

Stay Awake, Stand Firm, Grow Mighty

126 *Stay Awake, Stand Firm, Grow Mighty*

(1 Corinthians 16:13)

1. Stay awake, stand firm, grow mighty,
Be determined to endure.
Carry on with manly courage,
For the victory is sure.
We obey Christ Jesus' clear command;
Under him we firmly take our stand.

(CHORUS)

*Stay awake, stand firm, and grow mighty!
Carry on right to the end!*

2. Stay awake, and keep your senses,
Always ready to obey.
Stay alert to Christ's direction
Through his faithful slave today.
Heed the counsel of the older men,
Who protect his sheep and truth defend.

(Chorus)

3. Stay awake, remain united
As the good news we defend.
Though our enemies will fight it,
We will preach until the end.
Join the shout of praise throughout the land.
Look! Jehovah's day is soon at hand!

(Chorus)

