

- Song 56 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Strip Off the Old, and Clothe Yourselves With the New”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Colossians.*]
Col 3:5-9—“Strip off the old personality” (w11 3/15 10 ¶12-13)
Col 3:10-14—“Clothe yourselves with the new personality” (w13 9/15 21 ¶18-19)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Col 1:13, 14—What is “the kingdom of his beloved Son”? (it-2 169 ¶3-5)

Col 2:8—What are “the elementary things of the world”? (w08 8/15 28 ¶9)

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) Col 1:1-20 (2)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching:** (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Accurate and Convincing*, and then discuss study 7 of the *Teaching* brochure.
- **Talk:** (5 min. or less) w04 5/1 19-20 ¶3-7—Theme: How Were Certain Christians “a Strengthening Aid” to Paul? (Col 4:11, ftn.) (7)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 17
- **2018 Teaching Committee Report:** (15 min.) Play the video (video category OUR ORGANIZATION). Then discuss the following questions: How has travel been an integral part of our organization’s activity? How does the WHQ Travel Department save valuable Kingdom funds? What can publishers do to reduce travel costs for the organization? How is the WHQ Travel Department helping delegates who will be traveling to international conventions in 2019?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 73
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 102 and Prayer

COLOSSIANS 1-4 | **Strip Off the Old, and Clothe Yourselves With the New**

3:5-14 ✍

Did you make big changes in your personality when you came into the truth? You can be sure that Jehovah was pleased by your efforts. (Eze 33:11) However, continuous effort is needed in order to prevent traits of the old personality from surfacing and to keep displaying the new personality. Answer the following questions to see areas where you can improve:

- Am I holding a grudge against someone who has wronged me?
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- Have I recently spoken unkindly to anyone or lost my temper?



56 *Make the Truth Your Own*

(Proverbs 3:1, 2)

1. The way of the truth is the best way of living,
 But no one can live your life for you.
 So take the advice that Jehovah is giving;
 Believe what he tells you is true.

(CHORUS)

*Make the truth your own.
 Make it live, yes, make it real.
And then feel the joy
 Jehovah gives you
When you make the truth your own.*

2. The effort you make and the time you are spending
 In service to God and his Kingdom
 Will yield rich results and a life that's unending,
 A life full of good things to come.

(Chorus)

3. Compared with our God, we are all little children
 And need his direction and counsel.
 So walk ev'ry day with our Father in heaven;
 Receive his rich blessing in full.

(Chorus)

Colossians

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through God's will, and Timothy our brother, **2** to the holy ones and faithful brothers in union with Christ at Co-los'sae:

May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God our Father.

3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, **4** since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love you have for all the holy ones **5** because of the hope that is being reserved for you in the heavens. You previously heard about this hope through the message of truth of the good news **6** that has come to you. Just as the good news is bearing fruit and increasing in all the world, so it is also doing among you from the day you heard and accurately knew the undeserved kindness of God in truth. **7** That is what you have learned from our beloved fellow slave Ep'a-phras, who is a faithful minister of the Christ on our behalf. **8** He also made known to us your love in a spiritual way.

9 That is also why from the day we heard of it, we have never stopped praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension, **10** so as to walk worthily of Jehovah in order to please him fully as you go on bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the accurate knowledge of God; **11** and may you be strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may endure fully with patience and joy, **12** as you thank the Father, who made you qualify to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in the light.

13 He rescued us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, **14** by means of whom we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of our sins. **15** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation;

¹⁶ because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and on the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ Also, he is before all other things, and by means of him all other things were made to exist, ¹⁸ and he is the head of the body, the congregation. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might become the one who is first in all things;

¹⁹ because God was pleased to have all fullness to dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all other things by making peace through the blood he shed on the torture stake, whether the things on the earth or the things in the heavens.

²¹ Indeed, you who were once alienated and enemies because your minds were on the works that were wicked, ²² he has now reconciled by means of that one's fleshly body through his death, in order to present you holy and unblemished and open to no accusation before him— ²³ provided, of course, that you continue in the faith, established on the foundation and steadfast, not being shifted away from the hope of that good news that you heard and that was preached in all creation under heaven. Of this good news I, Paul, became a minister.

²⁴ I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and I am undergoing the tribulations of the Christ that are yet lacking in my flesh in behalf of his body, which is the congregation. ²⁵ I became a minister of this congregation in accord with the stewardship from God that was given to me in your behalf to preach the word of God fully, ²⁶ the sacred secret that was hidden from the past systems of things and from the past generations. But now it has been revealed to his holy ones, ²⁷ to whom God has been pleased to make known among the nations the glorious riches of this sacred secret, which is Christ in union with you, the hope of his glory. ²⁸ He is the one we are proclaiming, admonishing everyone and teaching everyone in

all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete in union with Christ. ²⁹ To this end I am indeed working hard, exerting myself with his strength that is operating powerfully within me.

2 For I want you to realize how great a struggle I am having in your behalf and in behalf of those at La-o-di-ce'a and in behalf of all those who have not personally seen me. ² This is so that their hearts may be comforted and that they may be harmoniously joined together in love and may have all the riches that result from the full assurance of their understanding, in order to gain an accurate knowledge of the sacred secret of God, namely, Christ. ³ Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge. ⁴ I am saying this so that no one may delude you with persuasive arguments. ⁵ Though I am absent in body, I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

⁶ Therefore, just as you have accepted Christ Jesus the Lord, go on walking in union with him, ⁷ being rooted and built up in him and being stabilized in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with thanksgiving.

⁸ Look out that no one takes you captive by means of the philosophy and empty deception according to human tradition, according to the elementary things of the world and not according to Christ; ⁹ because it is in him that all the fullness of the divine quality dwells bodily. ¹⁰ So you have acquired a fullness by means of him, the one who is the head of all government and authority. ¹¹ By your relationship with him, you were also circumcised with a circumcision performed without hands by stripping off the fleshly body, by the circumcision that belongs to the Christ. ¹² For you were buried with him in his baptism, and by your relationship with him you were also raised up together through your faith in the powerful work of God, who raised him up from the dead.

¹³ Furthermore, though you were dead in your trespasses and in the uncircumcised state of your flesh, God made you alive together with him. He kindly forgave us all our trespasses ¹⁴ and erased the handwritten document that consisted of decrees and was in opposition to us. He has taken it out of the way by nailing it to the torture stake. ¹⁵ He has stripped the governments and the authorities bare and has publicly exhibited them as conquered, leading them in a triumphal procession by means of it.

¹⁶ Therefore, do not let anyone judge you about what you eat and drink or about the observance of a festival or of the new moon or of a sabbath. ¹⁷ Those things are a shadow of the things to come, but the reality belongs to the Christ. ¹⁸ Let no man deprive you of the prize who takes delight in a false humility and a form of worship of the angels, “taking his stand on” the things he has seen. He is actually puffed up without proper cause by his fleshly frame of mind, ¹⁹ and he is not holding fast to the head, to the one through whom the whole body is supplied and harmoniously joined together by means of its joints and ligaments and made to grow with the growth that is from God.

²⁰ If you died together with Christ with respect to the elementary things of the world, why do you live as if still part of the world by further subjecting yourselves to the decrees: ²¹ “Do not handle, nor taste, nor touch,” ²² referring to things that all perish with their use, according to the commands and teachings of men? ²³ Although those things have an appearance of wisdom in a self-imposed form of worship and a false humility, a harsh treatment of the body, they are of no value in combating the satisfying of the flesh.

3 If, however, you were raised up with the Christ, go on seeking the things above, where the Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Keep your minds fixed on the things above, not on the things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life has been hidden with the

Christ in union with God. ⁴ When the Christ, our life, is made manifest, then you also will be made manifest with him in glory.

⁵ Deaden, therefore, your body members that are on the earth as respects sexual immorality, uncleanness, uncontrolled sexual passion, hurtful desire, and greediness, which is idolatry. ⁶ On account of those things the wrath of God is coming. ⁷ That is how you too used to conduct yourselves in your former way of life. ⁸ But now you must put them all away from you: wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk out of your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another. Strip off the old personality with its practices, ¹⁰ and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new according to the image of the One who created it, ¹¹ where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, foreigner, Scyth'i-an, slave, or freeman; but Christ is all things and in all.

¹² Accordingly, as God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, humility, mildness, and patience. ¹³ Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely even if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Just as Jehovah freely forgave you, you must also do the same. ¹⁴ But besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.

¹⁵ Also, let the peace of the Christ rule in your hearts, for you were called to that peace in one body. And show yourselves thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of the Christ reside in you richly in all wisdom. Keep on teaching and encouraging one another with psalms, praises to God, spiritual songs sung with gratitude, singing in your hearts to Jehovah. ¹⁷ Whatever it is that you do in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, thanking God the Father through him.

¹⁸ You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord. ¹⁹ You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them. ²⁰ You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. ²¹ You fathers, do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted. ²² You slaves, be obedient in everything to those who are your human masters, not only when they are watching, just to please men, but with sincerity of heart, with fear of Jehovah. ²³ Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as for Jehovah, and not for men, ²⁴ for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the inheritance as a reward. Slave for the Master, Christ. ²⁵ Certainly the one who does wrong will be repaid for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

4 You masters, treat your slaves in a righteous and fair way, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

² Persevere in prayer, remaining awake in it with thanksgiving. ³ At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open a door for the word so that we can declare the sacred secret about the Christ, for which I am in prison bonds, ⁴ and that I may proclaim it as clearly as I ought to.

⁵ Go on walking in wisdom toward those on the outside, making the best use of your time. ⁶ Let your words always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should answer each person.

⁷ Tych'i-cus, my beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow slave in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. ⁸ I am sending him to you so that you will know how we are and that he may comfort your hearts. ⁹ He is coming along with O-nes'i-mus, my faithful and beloved brother, who is from among you; they will tell you all the things happening here.

¹⁰ Ar-is-tar'chus, my fellow captive, sends you his greetings, and so does Mark, the cousin of Bar'na-bas (concerning whom you received instructions to welcome him if he comes to you), ¹¹ and Jesus who is called Justus, who are of those circumcised. Only these are my fellow workers for the Kingdom of God, and they have become a source of great comfort to me. ¹² Ep'a-phras, a slave of Christ Jesus who is from among you, sends you his greetings. He is always exerting himself in your behalf in his prayers, so that you may finally stand complete and with firm conviction in all the will of God. ¹³ For I bear him witness that he makes great efforts in your behalf and in behalf of those in La-o-di-ce'a and Hi-e-rap'o-lis.

¹⁴ Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and so does De'mas. ¹⁵ Give my greetings to the brothers in La-o-di-ce'a and to Nym'pha and to the congregation at her house. ¹⁶ And when this letter has been read among you, arrange for it also to be read in the congregation of the La-o-di-ce'ans and for you also to read the one from La-o-di-ce'a. ¹⁷ Also, tell Ar-chip'pus: "Pay attention to the ministry that you accepted in the Lord, in order to fulfill it."

¹⁸ Here is my greeting, Paul's, in my own hand. Keep my prison bonds in mind. The undeserved kindness be with you.

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July 1-7 / Colossians 1-4

- Song 56 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 minutes or less)

Treasures From God's Word

"Strip Off the Old, and Clothe Yourselves With the New": (10 minutes)

[Play the video *Introduction to Colossians*.]

Strip Off the Old, and Clothe Yourselves With the New

Colossians 3:5-14

Did you make big changes in your personality when you came into the truth? You can be sure that Jehovah was pleased by your efforts. (Ezekiel 33:11) However, continuous effort is needed in order to prevent traits of the old personality from surfacing and to keep displaying the new personality. Answer the following questions to see areas where you can improve:

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Colossians 3:5-9—“Strip off the old personality”

Colossians 3:5-9: Deaden, therefore, your body members that are on the earth as respects sexual immorality, uncleanness, uncontrolled sexual passion, hurtful desire, and greediness, which is idolatry. On account of those things the wrath of God is coming. That is how you too used to conduct yourselves in your former way of life. But now you must put them all away from you: wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another. Strip off the old personality with its practices,

w11 3/15 10 paragraphs 12-13

12 *Which spirit does my personality reflect?* (Read Colossians 3:8-10, 13.) The spirit of the world advances the works of the flesh. (Galatians 5:19-21) A real test as to which spirit influences us comes, not when things are going well, but when they are not, such as if a Christian brother or sister ignores us, offends us, or even sins against us. Additionally, in the privacy of our homes, it may become evident which spirit holds sway. Some self-examination may be in order. Ask yourself, ‘Over the past six months, has my personality become more Christlike or have I slipped back into some bad habits of speech and conduct?’

13 God’s spirit can help us to “strip off the old personality with its practices” and to clothe ourselves with “the new personality.” That will help us to become more loving and kind. We will be inclined to forgive one another freely, even if there seems to be a legitimate cause for complaint. We will no longer react to perceived injustices with outbursts of “malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech.” Instead, we will put forth effort to become “tenderly compassionate.”—Ephesians 4:31, 32.

Colossians 3:10-14—“Clothe yourselves with the new personality”

Colossians 3:10-14: and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new according to the image of the One who created it, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, foreigner, Scythian, slave, or freeman; but Christ is all things and in all. Accordingly, as God’s chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, humility, mildness, and patience. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely even if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Just as Jehovah freely forgave you, you must also do the same. But besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.

w13 9/15 21 paragraphs 18-19

18 For God’s Word to produce in us needed transformation, regularly reading and learning from the Bible is but a beginning. Many people read the Bible from time to time and thereby have come to be quite familiar with what it says. Perhaps you have met such ones as you engage in the field ministry. Some are even able to recite Bible passages from memory. Yet, this may have little effect on their thinking and way of life. What is missing? For God’s Word to influence and transform a person, he must allow it to be “sounded down” into the heart. (Galatians 6:6, footnote.) Hence, we need to spend time thinking about what we are learning. It would be good to ask ourselves: ‘Am I convinced that this is more than just some religious teaching? Have I not seen that it is the truth? Moreover, do I see ways to apply in my own life what I am learning and not view it only as

something I might teach to others? Do I feel that Jehovah is talking to me personally?’ Thinking and meditating on such questions can help us to deepen the feelings we have for Jehovah in our hearts. Our love for him will grow. When the heart is thus touched, positive changes will follow.—Proverbs 4:23; Luke 6:45.

19 Regularly reading God’s Word and meditating on it will motivate us to continue to do what we likely have already done to some extent: ‘Strip off the old personality with its practices and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new.’ (Colossians 3:9, 10) Yes, we can have continued success as we get the real sense and impact of God’s Word. The resulting new Christian personality will help to protect us against Satan’s cunning machinations.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Colossians 1:13, 14—What is “the kingdom of his beloved Son”?

Colossians 1:13, 14: He rescued us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, by means of whom we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of our sins.

***it-2* 169 paragraphs 3-5**

“The Kingdom of the Son of His Love.” Ten days after Jesus’ ascension to heaven, on Pentecost of 33 C.E., his disciples had evidence that he had been “exalted to the right hand of God” when Jesus poured out holy spirit upon them. (Acts 1:8, 9; 2:1-4, 29-33) The “new covenant” thus became operative toward them, and they

became the nucleus of a new “holy nation,” spiritual Israel.—Hebrews 12:22-24; 1 Peter 2:9, 10; Galatians 6:16.

Christ was now sitting at his Father’s right hand and was the Head over this congregation. (Ephesians 5:23; Hebrews 1:3; Philippians 2:9-11) The Scriptures show that from Pentecost 33 C.E. onward, a spiritual kingdom was set up over his disciples. When writing to first-century Christians at Colossae, the apostle Paul referred to Jesus Christ as already having a kingdom: “[God] delivered us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of his love.”—Colossians 1:13; compare Acts 17:6, 7.

Christ’s kingdom from Pentecost of 33 C.E. onward has been a spiritual one ruling over spiritual Israel, Christians who have been begotten by God’s spirit to become the spiritual children of God. (John 3:3, 5, 6) When such spirit-begotten Christians receive their heavenly reward, they will no longer be earthly subjects of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, but they will be kings with Christ in heaven.—Revelation 5:9, 10.

Colossians 2:8—What are “the elementary things of the world”?

Colossians 2:8: Look out that no one takes you captive by means of the philosophy and empty deception according to human tradition, according to the elementary things of the world and not according to Christ;

w08 8/15 28 paragraph 9

What are “the elementary things of the world” against which Paul warned? These are the elements of Satan’s world—basic things or

principles that make up, guide, or motivate it. (1 John 2:16) Included among these are the philosophy, materialism, and false religions of this world.

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) Colossians 1:1-20 (*th* study 2)

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7

Accurate and Convincing



Luke 1:3

SUMMARY: Use trustworthy evidence to help your listeners arrive at the correct conclusion.

HOW TO DO IT:

- **Consult reliable sources.** Base your comments on God’s Word, reading directly from it when possible. If you refer to a scientific fact, a news report, an experience, or other supporting evidence, check in advance that your source is trustworthy and up-to-date.

- **Use sources properly.** Apply scriptures in harmony with their context, the Bible’s overall message, and the publications of “the faithful and discreet slave.” (Matt. 24:45) Use secular sources in accord with the original context and the intent of the writer.



Do not overstate or exaggerate facts and figures. Be careful that “some people” does not become “the majority of people,” “in some cases” does not become “always,” and “possibly” does not become “probably.”

- **Reason on the evidence.** After reading a scripture or citing a source, ask tactful questions or illustrate the point to help your listeners draw their own conclusion.

IN THE MINISTRY: As you prepare to preach, anticipate questions that you might be asked, and research possible responses. If your listener poses a question and you do not know the answer, offer to research the topic and return later.

Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

- **Talk:** (5 minutes or less) *w04* 5/1 19-20 paragraphs 3-7—Theme: How Were Certain Christians “a Strengthening Aid” to Paul? (Colossians 4:11, footnote.) (*th* study 7)

“A Strengthening Aid”

3 Let us go back to about the year 60 C.E. The apostle Paul is in prison in Rome on the fabricated charge of sedition. (Acts 24:5; 25:11, 12) Paul singles out for mention five Christians who stood by his side: Tychicus, his personal envoy from the district of Asia and a “fellow slave in the Lord”; Onesimus, a “faithful and beloved brother” from Colossae; Aristarchus, a Macedonian from Thessalonica and at one time a “fellow captive” with Paul; Mark, the cousin of Paul’s missionary companion Barnabas and the writer of the Gospel bearing his name; and Justus, one of the apostle’s fellow workers “for the kingdom of God.” Paul says of the five: “These very ones have become a strengthening aid to me.”—Colossians 4:7-11.

4 Paul made a powerful statement about the help his loyal friends rendered to him. He used a Greek word (*paregori'a*) translated “strengthening aid,” which in the Bible is found only in this verse. This word has a range of meanings and was used especially in medicinal contexts. It can be rendered ‘solace, alleviation, comfort, or relief.’ Paul needed that kind of strengthening, and those five men provided it.

Why Paul Needed “a Strengthening Aid”

5 It may surprise some to think that Paul, an apostle, needed strengthening. Yet, he did. Granted, Paul had strong faith, and he

had survived much physical abuse, "blows to an excess," "near-deaths often," and other pains. (2 Corinthians 11:23-27)

Nonetheless, he was human, and all humans at one time or another need to receive comfort and to have their faith fortified with the help of others. This was true even of Jesus. During his last night, an angel appeared to him in Gethsemane and "strengthened him."— Luke 22:43.

6 Paul too needed strengthening. When he arrived as a prisoner in Rome, he was not warmly welcomed by people of his own race. These Jews were, on the whole, unreceptive to the Kingdom message. After the principal men of the Jews visited Paul in his place of confinement, the account in Acts states: "Some began to believe the things said; others would not believe. So, because they were at disagreement with one another, they began to depart." (Acts 28:17, 24, 25) How their lack of appreciation for Jehovah's undeserved kindness must have pained Paul! His strong feelings on this matter were evident in the letter he had written a few years earlier to the congregation in Rome: "I have great grief and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were separated as the cursed one from the Christ in behalf of my brothers [the Jews], my relatives according to the flesh." (Romans 9:2, 3) Still, in Rome he did find loyal, true companions whose courage and affection soothed his heart. They were his genuine spiritual brothers.

7 How did those five brothers prove to be a strengthening aid? They did not permit Paul's prison bonds to make them shy away from him. Instead, they willingly and lovingly provided personal services for Paul, performing tasks that he was unable to perform

himself because of his confinement. For example, they acted as messengers and delivered Paul's letters and verbal instructions to different congregations; they brought encouraging reports to Paul about the welfare of the brothers in Rome and elsewhere. They likely obtained needed items, such as winter clothing, scrolls, and writing tools. (Ephesians 6:21, 22; 2 Timothy 4:11-13) All such helpful deeds strengthened and encouraged the imprisoned apostle so that he, in turn, could be "a strengthening aid" to others, including entire congregations.—Romans 1:11, 12.

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

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

Living as Christians

- Song 17
- **2018 Teaching Committee Report:** (15 minutes) Play the video (video category OUR ORGANIZATION). Then discuss the following questions:

How has travel been an integral part of our organization's activity?

How does the WHQ Travel Department save valuable Kingdom funds?

What can publishers do to reduce travel costs for the organization?

How is the WHQ Travel Department helping delegates who will be traveling to international conventions in 2019?

- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 minutes) *jj* chapter 73
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 minutes)
- Song 102 and Prayer

A SAMARITAN PROVES TO BE A REAL NEIGHBOR

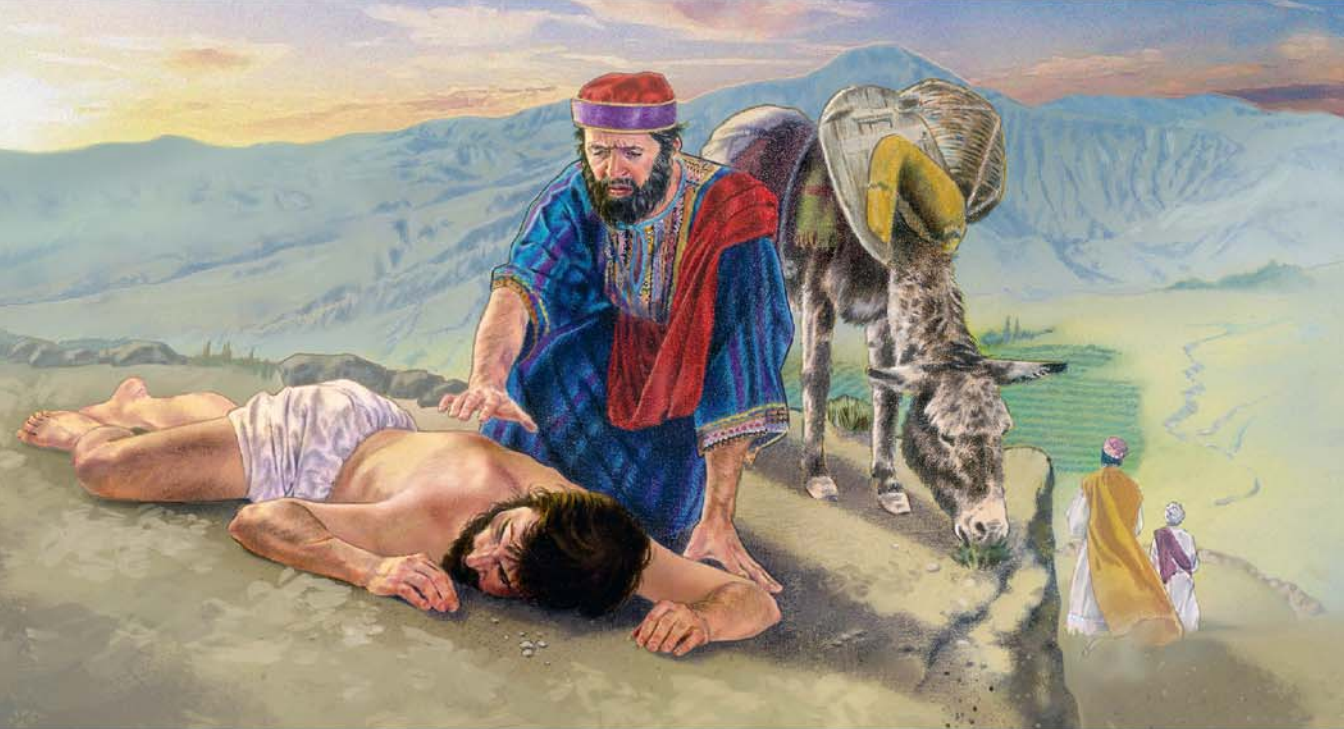
LUKE 10:25-37

- HOW TO INHERIT EVERLASTING LIFE
 - A NEIGHBORLY SAMARITAN
-

While Jesus is still near Jerusalem, various Jews approach him. Some want to learn from him and others want to test him. One of them, an expert on the Law, presents the question: “Teacher, what do I need to do to inherit everlasting life?”—Luke 10:25.

Jesus detects that the man is not simply asking for information. He may be trying to get Jesus to reply in a way that will offend the Jews. Jesus realizes that this man already has a definite viewpoint. So he wisely responds in a way that gets the man to reveal what *he* is thinking.

Jesus asks: “What is written in the Law? How do you read?” This man has studied God’s Law, so he bases his response on it. He quotes from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, saying: “‘You must love



Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’” (Luke 10:26, 27) Is that the answer?

Jesus tells the man: “You answered correctly; keep doing this and you will get life.” But does that end the discussion? The man does not want just a factual answer; he is seeking “to prove himself righteous,” to have confirmation that his views are correct and that he is thus justified in how he treats others. So he asks: “Who really is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:28, 29) That seemingly simple question has deep implications. How so?

The Jews believe that the term “neighbor” applies only to those who keep the Jewish traditions, and it might seem that Leviticus 19:18 supports that. In fact, a Jew may claim that it is even “unlawful” to have fellowship with a non-Jew. (Acts 10:28) Thus this man and possibly some of Jesus’ own disciples view themselves as righteous if they treat fellow Jews kindly. But they may treat a non-Jew unkindly; he is not really a “neighbor.”

How can Jesus correct this view without offending this man and other Jews? He does so by telling a story: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell victim to robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went off, leaving him half-dead.” Jesus continues: “By coincidence a priest was going down on that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the opposite side. But a certain Samaritan traveling the road came upon him, and at seeing him, he was moved with pity.”—Luke 10:30-33.

The man to whom Jesus tells this story certainly knows that many priests and Levite temple assistants live in Jericho. To return from the temple, they must travel down a road some 14 miles. That route can be dangerous, with robbers lurking along it. If a priest and a Levite find a fellow Jew in distress, should they not help him? In his story, Jesus relates that they did not. The one who did was a Samaritan, a man from a people whom the Jews despise.—John 8:48.

How did the Samaritan help the injured Jew? Jesus goes on: “He approached him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. Then he mounted him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said: ‘Take care of him, and whatever you spend besides this, I will repay you when I return.’” —Luke 10:34, 35.

After telling the story, the Master Teacher, Jesus, asks the man this thought-provoking question: “Who of these three seems to you to have made himself neighbor to the man who fell victim to the robbers?” Perhaps the man feels uncomfortable in answering “the Samaritan,” so he replies: “The one who acted mercifully toward him.” Jesus then makes the lesson of his story unmistakably clear, urging: “Go and do the same yourself.”—Luke 10: 36, 37.

What an effective method of teaching! Had Jesus simply told the man that non-Jews also are his neighbors, would the man and the other Jews

listening have accepted that? Likely not. However, by relating a rather simple story, using details that the listeners can identify with, the answer to the question, “Who really is my neighbor?” becomes obvious. The person who proves to be the *real neighbor* is the one who exercises the love and kindness that the Scriptures command us to show.

- ◇ Why might a certain man question Jesus about how to gain everlasting life?
- ◇ Who do the Jews believe are their neighbors, and why?
- ◇ How does Jesus make clear the correct view of who is our neighbor?

102 *“Assist Those Who Are Weak”*

(Acts 20:35)

1. Many are the weaknesses
 That we all possess.
 Still Jehovah cares for us,
 Loves us nonetheless.
He is so merciful;
 His love, so powerful.
 May we show this kind of love,
 Help those in distress.

2. Some at times are weak in faith,
 Strong though they appear.
 By our reassuring words,
 We can calm their fears.
Weak ones to God belong;
 His spirit makes them strong.
 May we feel their pain and cares,
 Help them dry their tears.

3. Rather than condemn the weak,
 We should bear in mind
 How much we can strengthen them
 By our being kind.
May we be diligent,
 Give them encouragement.
 As we lend our kind support,
 Comfort they will find.

MAY 2019

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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COVER PICTURE:

Parents protect their children from sexual abuse by sharing with them appropriate information about sex. To do so, parents use the information that God’s organization has provided. (See study article 19, paragraphs 19-22)

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Great God, Jehovah

(Exodus 34:6, 7)

1. Great God, Jehovah, you are deserving,
Worthy of the highest praise,
Good and just in all your ways.
You have such power, deep love, and wisdom.
You are God to endless days.
2. Father, we feel your tender compassion.
We are dust, and still you care;
Graciously you hear our prayer.
How you sustain us, teach us, and guide us!
Help from you is always there.
3. Heaven and earth now sing of your glory.
Joyfully with voices raised,
We exalt you all our days.
Great God, Jehovah, you are deserving.
Please accept our heartfelt praise.

PART 2 OF 4

Love and Justice in the Christian Congregation

“Go on carrying the burdens of one another, and in this way you will fulfill the law of the Christ.”—GAL. 6:2.

SONG 12

Great God, Jehovah

PREVIEW

This article and the two that follow are part of a series that discusses why we can be confident that Jehovah is a God of love and justice. He wants his people to receive justice, and he comforts those who have been deprived of it in this wicked world.

JEHOVAH GOD loves his worshippers. He always has, and he always will. He also loves justice. (Ps. 33:5) So we can be sure of two things: (1) It pains Jehovah when his servants are treated unfairly. (2) He will make sure that justice is served. In the first article in this series,* we learned that the Law that God gave Israel through Moses was built on love. It promoted justice—justice for all, even vulnerable ones. (Deut. 10:18) That Law reveals how deeply Jehovah cares about his worshippers.

² The Mosaic Law ended in 33 C.E. when the Christian congregation was established. Would Christians be without the benefits of a law that is built on love and promotes justice? By no means! Christians had a new law. In this article, we will first discuss what that law is. Then we will answer these questions: Why can we say that this law is built on love? Why can we say that it promotes justice? Under this law, how should those in authority treat others?

WHAT IS “THE LAW OF THE CHRIST”?

³ Read Galatians 6:2. Christians are under “the law

* See the article “Love and Justice in Ancient Israel” in the February 2019 issue of *The Watchtower*.

- 1. We can be sure of what two things?**
- 2. What questions will we answer?**
- 3. What is included in “the law of the Christ” mentioned at Galatians 6:2?**

of the Christ.” Jesus did not write down a law code for his followers, but he did give them instructions, commands, and principles to live by. “The law of the Christ” includes everything Jesus taught. To understand this law better, consider the following.

⁴ In what ways did Jesus teach? First, he taught people by what he said. His words had power because they conveyed the truth about God, taught the real meaning of life, and pointed to God’s Kingdom as the remedy for all human suffering. (Luke 24:19) Jesus also taught by example. By how he lived, he showed his followers how they should live.—John 13:15.

⁵ When did Jesus teach? He taught during his ministry on earth. (Matt. 4:23) He also taught his followers shortly after he was resurrected. For example, he appeared to a group of disciples—perhaps numbering over 500—and gave them the command to “make disciples.” (Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 15:6) As head of the congregation, Jesus continued to instruct his disciples after he returned to heaven. For instance, about 96 C.E., Christ directed the apostle John to give encouragement and counsel to anointed Christians.—Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:1.

⁶ Where are Jesus’ teachings recorded? The four Gospels record many of the things Jesus said and

4-5. In what ways did Jesus teach, and when did he teach?

6-7. (a) Where are Jesus’ teachings recorded? (b) How do we obey the law of the Christ?

did on earth. The rest of the Christian Greek Scriptures—written by men who were inspired by holy spirit and who had “the mind of Christ”—further help us to understand Jesus’ thinking on matters.—1 Cor. 2:16.

⁷ *Lessons:* Jesus’ teachings cover all aspects of life. So the law of the Christ governs what we do at home, at work or at school, and in the congregation. We learn this law by reading the Christian Greek Scriptures and meditating on them. We obey this law by bringing our lives into harmony with the instructions, commands, and principles found in that inspired record. When we obey the law of the Christ, we are obeying our loving God, Jehovah, who is the Source of all that Jesus taught.—John 8:28.

A LAW BUILT ON LOVE

⁸ A well-made house built on a solid foundation makes those who live in it feel safe and secure. Similarly, a good law built on a solid foundation makes those who live by it feel safe and secure. The law of the Christ is built on the best possible foundation—love. Why can we say that?

⁹ First, *Jesus was motivated by love in everything he did.* Pity, or tender compassion, is an expression of

8. What is the foundation of the law of the Christ?

9-10. What examples show that Jesus was motivated by love, and how can we imitate him?

love. Moved by such pity, Jesus taught the crowds, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and raised the dead. (Matt. 14:14; 15:32-38; Mark 6:34; Luke 7:11-15) Although doing such things consumed much of his time and energy, Jesus willingly put the needs of others ahead of his own. Above all, he showed great love by surrendering his life in behalf of others.—John 15:13.

¹⁰ *Lessons:* We can imitate Jesus by putting the needs of others ahead of our own. We can also imitate him by cultivating tender compassion for people in our territory. When such compassion moves us to preach and teach the good news, we are obeying the law of the Christ.

¹¹ Second, *Jesus revealed his Father's love.* During his ministry, Jesus showed how deeply Jehovah cares about his worshippers. Among other things, Jesus taught the following: Each of us is valuable and precious to our heavenly Father. (Matt. 10:31) Jehovah is eager to welcome back a lost sheep who repents and returns to the congregation. (Luke 15:7, 10) Jehovah proved his love for us by giving his Son as a ransom in our behalf.—John 3:16.

¹² *Lessons:* How can we imitate Jehovah's love? (Eph. 5:1, 2) We view each of our brothers and sisters as valuable and precious, and we gladly welcome back “a

11-12. (a) What shows that Jehovah deeply cares about us?
(b) How can we imitate Jehovah's love?

lost sheep” who returns to Jehovah. (Ps. 119:176) We prove that we love our brothers and sisters by giving of ourselves, such as by helping them in times of need. (1 John 3:17) When we treat others in loving ways, we are obeying the law of the Christ.

¹³ Third, *Jesus commanded his followers to show self-sacrificing love.* (Read John 13:34, 35.) Jesus’ commandment is new because it calls for a kind of love that was not required under the Law that God gave Israel: Love fellow believers as Jesus loved you. That requires a self-sacrificing love.* We are to love our brothers and sisters even *more than* we love ourselves. We must love them to the point of being willing to give up our life for them, as Jesus did for us.

¹⁴ *Lessons:* How do we obey the new commandment? Put simply, by making sacrifices for our brothers and sisters. We are willing to make not just the ultimate sacrifice—giving up our life—but also smaller sacrifices. For example, when we regularly go out of our way to pick up an elderly brother or sister for a meeting,

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** A self-sacrificing love moves us to put the needs and interests of others ahead of our own. We are willing to give up something or deprive ourselves of something in order to help or benefit others.

13-14. (a) As recorded at John 13:34, 35, what did Jesus command his followers to show, and why is this a new commandment? (b) How do we obey the new commandment?

or we willingly give up our own preferences in order to please a loved one, or we take time off from secular work to help with disaster relief, we are obeying the law of the Christ. We are also helping to make our congregation a place where each individual can feel safe and secure.

A LAW THAT PROMOTES JUSTICE

¹⁵ “Justice,” as used in the Bible, basically means to do what God considers to be right and to do so without partiality. Why can we say that the law of the Christ promotes justice?

¹⁶ First, consider how Jesus’ *actions* revealed his

15-17. (a) How did Jesus’ actions reveal his sense of justice?
(b) How can we imitate Jesus?

When we deal lovingly with others,
we are obeying “the law of the Christ”

(See paragraphs 9-14)



sense of justice. In his day, the Jewish religious leaders hated non-Jews, despised common Jews, and disrespected women. Jesus, however, was fair and impartial in dealing with all. He accepted non-Jews who approached him in faith. (Matt. 8:5-10, 13) He preached without prejudice to all, rich and poor. (Matt. 11:5; Luke 19:2, 9) He was never harsh or abusive in his treatment of women. On the contrary, he was respectful and kind to women, including those whom others viewed with scorn.—Luke 7:37-39, 44-50.

¹⁷ *Lessons:* We can imitate Jesus by dealing impartially with others and preaching to all who are willing to listen—regardless of their social or religious background. Christian men follow his example by treating women with respect. When we do such things, we are obeying the law of the Christ.

¹⁸ Second, consider what Jesus *taught* about justice. He taught principles that would help his followers to treat others fairly. Think, for example, about the Golden Rule. (Matt. 7:12) We all want to be treated fairly. Therefore, we should behave fairly toward others. If we do, they may be moved to treat us with fairness. But what if we have been treated unjustly? Jesus also taught his followers to trust that Jehovah will “cause justice to be done for [those] who cry out to him day

18-19. What did Jesus teach about justice, and what lessons do we learn from his teaching?

and night.” (Luke 18:6, 7) That statement is, in effect, a promise: Our just God is aware of the trials we are facing in these last days, and he will cause justice to be done for us in his due time.—2 Thess. 1:6.

¹⁹ *Lessons:* When we follow the principles that Jesus taught, we will treat others in a just way. And if we have been a victim of injustice in Satan’s world, we can take comfort in knowing that Jehovah *will* cause justice to be done for us.

HOW SHOULD THOSE IN AUTHORITY TREAT OTHERS?

²⁰ Under the law of the Christ, how should those in authority treat others? Since love is the foundation of that law, those in authority must dignify those in their care and treat them in a loving way. They must remember that the way of Christ is the way of love.

²¹ *In the family.* A husband is to love his wife “as the Christ does the congregation.” (Eph. 5:25, 28, 29) A husband must imitate the self-sacrificing love of Christ by putting his wife’s needs and interests ahead of his own. Some men may find it difficult to show such love, perhaps because they were not raised in an environment where treating others fairly and lovingly was val-

20-21. (a) How should those in authority treat others? (b) How can a husband show self-sacrificing love, and how should a father treat his children?



Jesus was respectful and kind to women,
including those whom others viewed with scorn
(See paragraph 16)

ued. It may be difficult for them to unlearn bad habits, but they must make these changes in order to obey the law of the Christ. A husband who shows self-sacrificing love gains his wife’s respect. A father who truly loves his children would never abuse them by what he says or does. (Eph. 4:31) Instead, he expresses his love and approval in ways that make his children feel safe and secure. Such a father gains the love and trust of his children.

²² *In the congregation.* Elders must remember that the “sheep” do not belong to them. (John 10:16; read 1 Peter 5:1-3.) The expressions “flock of God,” “before

22. As stated at 1 Peter 5:1-3, to whom do the “sheep” belong, and how are they to be treated?

God,” and “God’s inheritance” remind elders that the sheep belong to Jehovah. He wants his sheep to be treated with love and tenderness. (1 Thess. 2:7, 8) Elders who lovingly carry out their responsibility as shepherds gain Jehovah’s approval. Such elders also gain the love and respect of their brothers and sisters.

²³ What is the role of elders in handling cases of serious wrongdoing? Their role is different from that of judges and elders under the Law that God gave Israel. Under that Law, appointed men handled not only spiritual matters but also civil and criminal cases. But under the law of the Christ, the elders’ role is to handle the spiritual aspects of the wrongdoing. They recognize that the secular authorities have the God-given responsibility to handle civil and criminal cases. That includes the authority to impose such penalties as fines or imprisonments.—Rom. 13:1-4.

²⁴ How do elders handle the spiritual aspects of serious wrongdoing? They use the Scriptures to weigh matters and make decisions. They keep in mind that love is the foundation of the law of the Christ. Love moves the elders to consider: What needs to be done to help any in the congregation who have been victims of the wrongdoing? Regarding the wrongdoer, love

23-24. (a) What is the role of elders in handling cases of serious wrongdoing? (b) When handling such cases, what concerns do elders have?

moves the elders to consider: Is he repentant? Can we help him to regain his spiritual health?

²⁵ How thankful we are to be under the law of the Christ! When all of us work hard to obey it, we help to make our congregation a place where each individual can feel loved, valued, and safe. Still, we are living in a world where “wicked men” have advanced “from bad to worse.” (2 Tim. 3:13) We must not let down our guard. How can the Christian congregation reflect God’s justice when dealing with child sexual abuse? The next article will answer that question.

25. What will the next article discuss?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 8: Jesus observes a widow whose only son has died. Moved with pity, Jesus resurrects the young man.

Page 11: Jesus has a meal in the home of a Pharisee named Simon. A woman, perhaps a prostitute, has just washed Jesus’ feet with her tears, dried them with her hair, and poured some oil on them. Simon disapproves of the woman’s actions, but Jesus defends her.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ■ What is the foundation of the law of the Christ? | ■ What shows that the law of the Christ promotes justice? | ■ How should those in authority treat others? |
|--|---|---|

15 Praise Jehovah's Firstborn!

(Hebrews 1:6)

1. Praise Jehovah's Firstborn,
God's duly appointed King.
He reigns for truth and justice;
Rich blessings his rule will bring.

With dignity and splendor
And love for God's great name,
He'll vindicate Jehovah,
His sov'reignty proclaim.

(CHORUS)

*Praise Jehovah's Firstborn!
All praise God's anointed Son.
Installed upon Mount Zion,
His Kingship has now begun!*

2. Praise Jehovah's Firstborn,
Who died so that we may live.
He humbly paid the ransom;
Our sins God can now forgive.

The bride of Christ awaits him,
Adorned for him in white.
This marriage in the heavens
Will prove God's rule is right.

(Chorus)

