

- Song 80 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Godly Devotion Versus Riches”:** (10 min.)  
 1Ti 6:6-8—The value of “godly devotion along with contentment” (w03 6/19 ¶1-2)  
 1Ti 6:9—The consequences of being determined to be rich (g 6/07 6 ¶2)  
 1Ti 6:10—The pains that result from loving money (g 11/08 6 ¶4-6)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
 1Ti 4:2—How does a person sear his conscience, and why is this dangerous? (lvs 23-24 ¶17)

1Ti 4:13—Why did Paul encourage Timothy to continue applying himself to public reading? (it-2 714 ¶1-2)

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) 1Ti 4:1-16 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. Invite the householder to the meeting. (11)
- **Bible Study:** (4 min. or less) lvs 207-209 ¶20-21 (3)
- **Bible Study:** (5 min. or less) Tactfully discontinue an unproductive Bible study.—See mwb19.02 7. (12)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 37
- **The Cost of Materialism:** (7 min.) Play the video *We Must “Run With Endurance”—Let Go of Unnecessary Burdens* (video category THE BIBLE), and then discuss the lessons learned.
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- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
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1 TIMOTHY 4-6 | Godly Devotion Versus Riches

**6:6-10** ✍

How do the following scriptures indicate that we will be happier if we pursue godly devotion instead of riches?

- Ec 5:10
- Mt 5:3
- Ec 5:12
- Acts 20:35



Many blessings await those who enter the full-time service

Why is it not possible to pursue both godly devotion and riches? (Mt 6:24)

# "Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good"

(Psalm 34:8)

D F#m7 Gma7 G6 G/A A7

Our ser - vice to God we cher - ish; We  
For those in the full - time ser - vice, Rich

D F#m7 G G/A A9

val - ue our priv - 'lege to preach. We  
bless - ings and trea - sures a - bound. By

F#m7 G F#m7 G

buy out the time and give God our best, For  
trust - ing in God to care for our needs, In

F#m7 Bm7 Em7 A7 Dsus4 D

man - y we still need to reach.  
all things con - tent - ment is found.

*“Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good”*

Chorus

G D/F# Em7 A7 D

God's Word in - vites us: 'Come taste and see—

G A/G D/F# E/G# Asus4 A

See that Je - ho - vah is good.'

G D/F# A#° F#+5 F#7 Bm Bm/A

God - ly de - vo - tion brings great - est gain,

G Asus4 A7 Dsus4 D

We know we've done all we could.

ever, she will be kept safe through childbearing,<sup>a</sup> provided she\* continues in faith and love and holiness along with soundness of mind.<sup>#b</sup>

**3** This statement is trustworthy: If a man is reaching out to be an overseer,<sup>c</sup> he is desirous of a fine work. **2** The overseer should therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one wife, moderate in habits, sound in mind,<sup>#d</sup> orderly, hospitable,<sup>e</sup> qualified to teach,<sup>f</sup> **3** not a drunkard,<sup>g</sup> not violent,<sup>\*</sup> but reasonable,<sup>h</sup> not quarrelsome,<sup>i</sup> not a lover of money,<sup>j</sup> **4** a man presiding over\* his own household in a fine manner, having his children in subjection with all seriousness<sup>k</sup> **5** (for if any man does not know how to preside over\* his own household, how will he care for the congregation of God?), **6** not a newly converted man,<sup>l</sup> for fear that he might get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed on the Devil. **7** Moreover, he should also have a fine testimony\* from outsiders<sup>m</sup> so that he does not fall into reproach<sup>#</sup> and a snare of the Devil.

**8** Ministerial servants should likewise be serious, not double-tongued,<sup>\*</sup> not indulging in a lot of wine, not greedy of dishonest gain,<sup>n</sup> **9** holding the sacred secret of the faith with a clean conscience.<sup>o</sup>

**10** Also, let these be tested as to fitness\* first; then let them serve as ministers, as they are free from accusation.<sup>p</sup>

**11** Women should likewise be serious, not slanderous,<sup>q</sup> moder-

2:15 \*Lit., "they." #Or "good judgment; sensibleness." 3:2 \*Or "have good judgment; be sensible." 3:3 \*Or "a smiter." 3:4 \*Or "managing." 3:5 \*Or "manage." 3:7 \*Or "a good reputation." #Or "disgrace." 3:8 \*Or "not deceitful in speech." 3:10 \*Or "tested as to whether they qualify."

## CHAP. 2

a 1Ti 5:14  
b 1Ti 2:9, 10

## CHAP. 3

c Ac 20:28  
Tit 1:5-9  
d Ro 12:3;  
1Pe 4:7  
e Ac 28:7  
1Pe 4:9  
f 1Ti 5:17  
2Ti 2:24  
Tit 1:7, 9  
g Ro 13:13  
h Php 4:5  
Jas 3:17  
i Ro 12:18  
Jas 3:18  
j Heb 13:5  
1Pe 5:2  
k Eph 6:4  
l 1Ti 5:22  
m Ac 22:12  
1Th 4:11, 12  
n Ac 6:3  
Tit 1:7  
1Pe 5:2  
o 1Ti 1:5  
1Ti 1:18, 19  
2Ti 1:3  
1Pe 3:16  
p 1Pe 2:12  
q 1Ti 5:13

## Second Col.

a Tit 2:3-5  
b Heb 3:6  
c Joh 1:14  
Php 2:7  
d 1Pe 3:18  
e 1Pe 3:19, 20  
f Col 1:23  
g Col 1:6

## CHAP. 4

h 2Th 2:1, 2  
2Ti 4:3, 4  
2Pe 2:1  
i Ac 20:29, 30  
2Ti 2:16  
2Pe 2:3  
j 1Co 7:36  
1Co 9:5  
k Ro 14:3  
l Ge 9:3  
m Ro 14:17  
1Co 10:25  
n Ge 1:31  
o Ac 10:15

ate in habits, faithful in all things.<sup>a</sup>

**12** Let ministerial servants be husbands of one wife, presiding in a fine manner over their children and their own households.

**13** For the men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

**14** I am writing you these things, though I am hoping to come to you shortly, **15** but in case I am delayed, so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in God's household,<sup>b</sup> which is the congregation of the living God, a pillar and support of the truth.

**16** Indeed, the sacred secret of this godly devotion is admittedly great: 'He was made manifest in flesh,<sup>c</sup> was declared righteous in spirit,<sup>d</sup> appeared to angels,<sup>e</sup> was preached about among nations,<sup>f</sup> was believed upon in the world,<sup>g</sup> was received up in glory.'

**4** However, the inspired word\* clearly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to misleading inspired statements<sup>#h</sup> and teachings of demons, **2** by means of the hypocrisy of men who speak lies,<sup>i</sup> whose conscience is seared as with a branding iron. **3** They forbid marriage<sup>j</sup> and command people to abstain from foods<sup>k</sup> that God created to be partaken of<sup>l</sup> with thanksgiving by those who have faith<sup>m</sup> and accurately know the truth. **4** For every creation of God is fine,<sup>n</sup> and nothing is to be rejected<sup>o</sup> if it is received with thanksgiving, **5** for it is sanctified through God's word and prayer over it.

**6** By giving this counsel to the brothers, you will be a fine

4:1 \*Lit., "the spirit." #Lit., "misleading spirits."

minister of Christ Jesus, one nourished with the words of the faith and of the fine teaching that you have followed closely.<sup>a</sup>

**7** But reject irreverent false stories,<sup>b</sup> like those told by old women. On the other hand, train yourself with godly devotion as your aim. **8** For physical training\* is beneficial for a little, but godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and the life that is to come.<sup>c</sup> **9** That statement is trustworthy and deserves full acceptance. **10** This is why we are working hard and exerting ourselves,<sup>d</sup> because we have rested our hope on a living God, who is a Savior<sup>e</sup> of all sorts of men,<sup>f</sup> especially of faithful ones.

**11** Keep on giving these commands and teaching them. **12** Never let anyone look down on your youth. Instead, become an example to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness.\* **13** Until I come, continue applying yourself to public reading,<sup>g</sup> to exhortation,\* to teaching. **14** Do not neglect the gift in you that was given you through a prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.<sup>h</sup> **15** Ponder over\* these things; be absorbed in them, so that your advancement may be plainly seen by all people. **16** Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching.<sup>i</sup> Persevere in these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.<sup>j</sup>

**5** Do not severely criticize an older man.<sup>k</sup> On the contrary, appeal to him as a father, to younger men as brothers, **2** to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters, with all chasteness.

4:8 \*Or "exercise." 4:12 \*Or "purity." 4:13 \*Or "encouragement." 4:15 \*Or "Meditate on."

## CHAP. 4

a 2Ti 2:15

b 1Ti 6:20  
Tit 1:13, 14

c Joh 17:3

d Lu 13:24

e Jude 25

f 1Ti 2:3, 4

g Col 4:16  
1Th 5:27h Ac 6:5, 6  
Ac 13:2, 3  
Ac 19:6  
2Ti 1:6

i 2Ti 4:2

j 1Co 9:22

## CHAP. 5

k Le 19:32

## Second Col.

a 1Ti 5:16

b 1Ti 5:8

c Mt 15:4  
Eph 6:2

d Jas 1:27

e 1Co 7:34

f Lu 2:36, 37

g Mt 15:4-6

h Ac 9:39

i 1Ti 2:15

j Heb 13:2  
1Pe 4:9

k Joh 13:5, 14

l 1Ti 5:16  
Jas 1:27

**3** Give consideration to\* widows who are truly widows.<sup>#a</sup>

**4** But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let these learn first to practice godly devotion in their own household<sup>b</sup> and to repay their parents and grandparents what is due them,<sup>c</sup> for this is acceptable in God's sight.<sup>d</sup>

**5** Now the woman who is truly a widow and left destitute has put her hope in God<sup>e</sup> and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.<sup>f</sup> **6** But the one who gives herself to sensual gratification is dead though she is living. **7** So keep on giving these instructions,\* so that they may be irreprehensible. **8** Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith.<sup>g</sup>

**9** A widow is to be put on the list if she is not less than 60 years old, was the wife of one husband, **10** having a reputation for fine works,<sup>h</sup> if she raised children,<sup>i</sup> if she practiced hospitality,<sup>j</sup> if she washed the feet of holy ones,<sup>k</sup> if she assisted the afflicted,<sup>l</sup> if she devoted herself to every good work.

**11** On the other hand, do not put younger widows on the list, for when their sexual desires come between them and the Christ, they want to marry. **12** And they will incur judgment because they have abandoned their first expression of faith.\* **13** At the same time they also learn to be unoccupied, going around from one house to another; yes, not only unoccupied but also gossipers and meddlers in other people's af-

5:3 \*Lit., "Honor." #Or "widows who are truly in need"; that is, with no one to support them. 5:7 \*Or "commands." 5:12 \*Or "their previous promise."

fairs,<sup>a</sup> talking about things they should not. **14** Therefore, I desire the younger widows to marry,<sup>b</sup> to bear children,<sup>c</sup> to manage a household, to give no opportunity to the opposer to criticize. **15** In fact, some have already been turned aside to follow Satan. **16** If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her assist them so that the congregation is not burdened. Then it can assist those who are truly widows.<sup>\*d</sup>

**17** Let the elders who preside in a fine way<sup>e</sup> be considered worthy of double honor,<sup>f</sup> especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching.<sup>g</sup> **18** For the scripture says, "You must not muzzle a bull when it is threshing out the grain,"<sup>h</sup> also, "The worker is worthy of his wages."<sup>i</sup> **19** Do not accept an accusation against an older man\* except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.<sup>j</sup> **20** Reprove<sup>k</sup> before all onlookers those who practice sin,<sup>l</sup> as a warning to the rest.\* **21** I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus and the chosen angels to observe these instructions without any prejudice or partiality.<sup>m</sup>

**22** Never lay your hands hastily on any man;<sup>\*n</sup> neither become a sharer in the sins of others; keep yourself chaste.

**23** Do not drink water any longer,\* but take a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent cases of sickness.

**24** The sins of some men are publicly known, leading directly to judgment, but those of other men become evident later.<sup>o</sup>

5:16 \*Or "widows who are truly in need"; that is, with no one to support them. 5:19 \*Or "an elder." 5:20 \*Lit., "that the rest may have fear." 5:22 \*That is, do not appoint any man hastily. 5:23 \*Or "Stop drinking just water."

## CHAP. 5

- a 2Th 3:11  
b 1Co 7:8, 9  
c 1Ti 2:15  
d De 15:11  
1Ti 5:5  
Jas 1:27  
e 1Pe 5:2, 3  
f Ac 28:10  
Heb 13:17  
g 1Th 5:12  
Heb 13:7  
h De 25:4  
1Co 9:7, 9  
i Le 19:13  
Mt 10:9, 10  
Lu 10:7  
Ga 6:6  
j De 19:15  
Mt 18:16  
k Tit 1:7, 9  
Tit 1:13  
Re 3:19  
l 1Co 15:34  
1Jo 3:9  
m Le 19:15  
Jas 3:17  
n Ac 6:5, 6  
Ac 14:23  
1Ti 3:2, 6  
1Ti 4:14  
o Jos 7:11  
Heb 4:13

## Second Col.

- a Mt 5:16  
b 1Co 4:5

## CHAP. 6

- c Ro 13:7  
Eph 6:5  
Col 3:22  
d 1Pe 2:13, 14  
e 2Ti 1:13  
f Tit 1:1, 2  
g 1Co 8:2  
h 2Ti 2:14  
Tit 1:10  
Tit 3:9  
i 2Co 11:3  
2Ti 3:8  
Jude 10  
j 1Pe 5:2  
k 1Ti 4:8  
l Job 1:21  
Ps 49:16, 17  
m Pr 30:8, 9  
Heb 13:5  
n Mt 13:22

**25** In the same way also, the fine works are publicly known<sup>a</sup> and those that are otherwise cannot be kept hidden.<sup>b</sup>

**6** Let those who are under the yoke of slavery keep on considering their owners worthy of full honor,<sup>c</sup> so that the name of God and the teaching may never be spoken of injuriously.<sup>d</sup> **2** Moreover, let those having believing owners not be disrespectful to them because they are brothers. Rather, they should serve more readily, because those receiving the benefit of their good service are believers and beloved.

Keep on teaching these things and giving these exhortations. **3** If any man teaches another doctrine and does not agree with the wholesome\* instruction,<sup>e</sup> which is from our Lord Jesus Christ, nor with the teaching that is in harmony with godly devotion,<sup>f</sup> **4** he is puffed up with pride and does not understand anything.<sup>g</sup> He is obsessed\* with arguments and debates about words,<sup>h</sup> These things give rise to envy, strife, slander,<sup>h</sup> wicked suspicions, **5** constant disputes about minor matters by men who are corrupted in mind<sup>i</sup> and deprived of the truth, thinking that godly devotion is a means of gain.<sup>j</sup> **6** To be sure, there is great gain in godly devotion<sup>k</sup> along with contentment.\* **7** For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out.<sup>l</sup> **8** So, having food\* and clothing,<sup>h</sup> we will be content with these things.<sup>m</sup>

**9** But those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare<sup>n</sup> and many

6:3 \*Or "healthful; beneficial." 6:4 \*Or "has an unhealthy fascination." \*Or "abusive speeches." 6:6 \*Lit., "along with self-sufficiency." 6:8 \*Or "sustenance." \*Or "shelter." Lit., "covering."

senseless and harmful desires that plunge men into destruction and ruin.<sup>a</sup> **10** For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains.<sup>b</sup>

**11** However, you, O man of God, flee from these things. But pursue righteousness, godly devotion, faith, love, endurance, and mildness.<sup>c</sup> **12** Fight the fine fight of the faith; get a firm hold on the everlasting life for which you were called and you offered the fine public declaration in front of many witnesses.

**13** Before God, who preserves all things alive, and Christ Jesus, who as a witness made the fine public declaration before Pontius Pilate,<sup>d</sup> I give you orders **14** to observe the commandment in a spotless and irreprehensible way until the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>e</sup> **15** which the happy and only Potentate will show in its own appointed times. He is the King of those who rule as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords,<sup>f</sup> **16** the one alone

## CHAP. 6

a Pr 28:20, 22

Jas 5:1

b Mt 6:24

c Pr 15:1

Mt 5:5

Ga 5:22, 23

Col 3:12

1Pe 3:15

d Mt 27:11

Joh 18:33, 36

Joh 19:10, 11

e 2Th 2:8

2Ti 4:1, 8

f Re 17:14

Re 19:16

## Second Col.

a Heb 7:15, 16

b Ac 9:3

Re 1:13, 16

c Joh 14:19

1Pe 3:18

d Mt 13:22

Mr 10:23

e Ec 5:19

Mt 6:33

Jas 1:17

f Ro 12:13

2Co 8:14

Jas 1:27

g Mt 6:20

h Lu 16:9

i 2Ti 1:13, 14

2Ti 3:14

2Ti 4:5

j 1Co 2:13

1Co 3:19

Col 2:8

having immortality,<sup>a</sup> who dwells in unapproachable light,<sup>b</sup> whom no man has seen or can see.<sup>c</sup> To him be honor and eternal might. Amen.

**17** Instruct\* those who are rich in the present system of things<sup>#</sup> not to be arrogant,<sup>^</sup> and to place their hope, not on uncertain riches,<sup>d</sup> but on God, who richly provides us with all the things we enjoy.<sup>e</sup> **18** Tell them to work at good, to be rich in fine works, to be generous,<sup>\*</sup> ready to share,<sup>f</sup> **19** safely treasuring up for themselves a fine foundation for the future,<sup>g</sup> so that they may get a firm hold on the real life.<sup>h</sup>

**20** Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you,<sup>i</sup> turning away from the empty speeches that violate what is holy and from the contradictions of the falsely called “knowledge.”<sup>j</sup> **21** By making a show of such knowledge, some have deviated from the faith.

May the undeserved kindness be with you.

**6:17** \*Or “Order.” #Or “present age.” See Glossary. ^Or “high-minded.” **6:18** \*Or “liberal.”

## THE SECOND TO

## TIMOTHY

## OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Greetings (1, 2)  
Paul thanks God for Timothy's faith (3-5)  
Keep the gift of God ablaze (6-11)  
Keep holding to wholesome words (12-14)  
Paul's foes and friends (15-18)
- 2 Entrust the message to qualified men (1-7)

- Enduring suffering for the good news (8-13)  
Handle God's word aright (14-19)  
Flee from youthful desires (20-22)  
How to deal with opposers (23-26)
- 3 Critical times in the last days (1-7)  
Follow Paul's example closely (8-13)

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Many blessings await those who enter the full-time service

Why is it not possible to pursue both godly devotion and riches? (Mt 6:24)



**July 29–August 4 / 1 Timothy 4-6**

## **Treasures From God's Word**

- **“Godly Devotion Versus Riches”:** (10 minutes)

### **Godly Devotion Versus Riches**

#### **1 Timothy 6:6-10**

How do the following scriptures indicate that we will be happier if we pursue godly devotion instead of riches?

- **Ecclesiastes 5:10:** A lover of silver will never be satisfied with silver, nor a lover of wealth with income. This too is futility.
- **Ecclesiastes 5:12:** Sweet is the sleep of the one serving, whether he eats little or much, but the plenty belonging to the rich one does not permit him to sleep.
- **Matthew 5:3:** “Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need, since the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to them.
- **Acts 20:35:** I have shown you in all things that by working hard in this way, you must assist those who are weak and must keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, when he himself said: ‘There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.’”

Why is it not possible to pursue both godly devotion *and* riches? (Matthew 6:24)

Picture: Many blessings await those who enter the full-time service

#### **1 Timothy 6:6-8—The value of “godly devotion along with contentment”**

**1 Timothy 6:6-8:** To be sure, there is great gain in godly devotion along with contentment. For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having food and clothing, we will be content with these things.

#### **w03 6/1 9 paragraphs 1-2**

A major factor that contributed to Paul's happiness and satisfaction was his sense of self-sufficiency. What, though, does it mean to be self-sufficient? Simply stated, it means being content with the basic

things. Regarding this, Paul told Timothy, his companion in the ministry: "To be sure, it is a means of great gain, this godly devotion along with self-sufficiency. For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things."—1 Timothy 6:6-8.

Note that Paul associated self-sufficiency with godly devotion. He recognized that true happiness comes from godly devotion, that is, from putting our service to God in first place, and not from material possessions or wealth. "Sustenance and covering" were but the means to the end that he could continue pursuing godly devotion. So for Paul the secret of self-sufficiency was to rely on Jehovah, no matter what the circumstances might be.

### **1 Timothy 6:9—The consequences of being determined to be rich**

**1 Timothy 6:9:** But those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and harmful desires that plunge men into destruction and ruin.

#### **g 6/07 6 paragraph 2**

Of course, most people do not die as a result of pursuing riches. Yet, life could easily pass them by while they are lost in their quest. Then, too, the quality of their lives may suffer if job stress or financial strain causes panic attacks, sleeplessness, chronic headaches, or ulcers—health problems that can shorten one's life. And even if a person wakes up to the need to change his priorities, it may be too late. His mate may no longer trust him, his children may already be hampered emotionally, and his health may be ruined. Perhaps some of the damage can be repaired, but it will require a great deal of work. Such ones have indeed "stabbed themselves all over with many pains."—1 Timothy 6:10.

### **1 Timothy 6:10—The pains that result from loving money**

**1 Timothy 6:10:** For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains.

#### **g 11/08 6 paragraphs 4-6**

As we saw in the opening article of this series, people who avidly chase after riches as the key to success are, in fact, pursuing a mirage. Besides inviting disappointment, they invite many pains. For

example, while ardently pursuing wealth, people often sacrifice relationships with family and friends. Others forgo needed sleep—if not because of work, then because of anxiety or worry. “The sleep of a laboring man is sweet, whether he eats little or much; but the abundance of the rich will not allow him to sleep,” says Ecclesiastes 5:12.—*Hebrew Names Version*.

Money is not just a cruel master but a deceitful one as well. Jesus Christ spoke of “the deceptive power of riches.” (Mark 4:19) In other words, riches promise happiness, but they do not deliver. They just create a craving for more. “The man who loves money can never have enough,” says Ecclesiastes 5:10.—*The New English Bible*.

In short, the love of money is self-defeating and ultimately leads to disappointment, frustration, or even crime. (Proverbs 28:20) More closely linked to happiness and success are generosity, a forgiving attitude, moral cleanness, love, and spirituality.

## **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

### **1 Timothy 4:2—How does a person sear his conscience, and why is this dangerous?**

**1 Timothy 4:2:** by means of the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, whose conscience is seared as with a branding iron.

### ***lvs 23-24 paragraph 17***

The apostle Peter wrote: “Maintain a good conscience.” (1 Peter 3:16) Sadly, when people keep ignoring Jehovah’s principles, eventually their conscience does not warn them anymore. Paul said that such a conscience has been “seared as with a branding iron.” (1 Timothy 4:2) Have you ever been badly burned? When that happens, your skin becomes so scarred that you cannot feel anything there. If a person continues to do wrong things, his conscience can become “seared” and, in time, stop working.

### **1 Timothy 4:13—Why did Paul encourage Timothy to continue applying himself to public reading?**

**1 Timothy 4:13:** Until I come, continue applying yourself to public reading, to exhortation, to teaching.

## **it-2 714 paragraphs 1-2**

In the Christian Congregation. In the first century, few possessed copies of the many scrolls of the Bible, making public reading essential. The apostle Paul commanded public reading of his letters at the meetings of the Christian congregations and ordered them to be exchanged with his letters to other congregations so that these also might be read. (Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27) Paul counseled the young Christian overseer Timothy to apply himself to “public reading, to exhortation, to teaching.”—1 Timothy 4:13.

Public reading should be done with fluency. (Habakkuk 2:2) Since public reading is for the education of others, a public reader must thoroughly discern what he is reading and have a clear understanding of the writer’s intention, being careful in reading to avoid giving the wrong idea or impression to the listeners. According to Revelation 1:3, those who read that prophecy aloud, as well as those who hear the words and observe them, will be happy.

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) 1 Timothy 4:1-16 (*th* study 5)

- Song 80 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Godly Devotion Versus Riches”:** (10 min.)  
 1Ti 6:6-8—The value of “godly devotion along with contentment” (w03 6/19 ¶1-2)  
 1Ti 6:9—The consequences of being determined to be rich (g 6/07 6 ¶2)  
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- **The Cost of Materialism:** (7 min.) Play the video *We Must “Run With Endurance”—Let Go of Unnecessary Burdens* (video category THE BIBLE), and then discuss the lessons learned.
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- Ec 5:10
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- Ec 5:12
- Acts 20:35



Many blessings await those who enter the full-time service

Why is it not possible to pursue both godly devotion and riches? (Mt 6:24)



# Our Christian Life and Ministry

## MEETING WORKBOOK


### Sample Conversations

●○○  
**INITIAL CALL** →

**Question:** Is God to blame for our suffering?

**Scripture:** Job 34:10

**Link:** What is the root cause of our suffering?




○○●  
**FIRST RETURN VISIT** →

**Question:** What is the root cause of our suffering?

**Scripture:** 1Jo 5:19

**Link:** How will God undo the damage caused by the Devil?




○○●  
**SECOND RETURN VISIT**

**Question:** How will God undo the damage caused by the Devil?

**Scripture:** Mt 6:9, 10

**Link:** What is the Kingdom of God?



things” and at the same time provide for our family?—Philippians 1:10.

**19 Trust in Jehovah completely.** (Read Proverbs 3:5, 6.) We know that God knows exactly what we need and that he cares deeply about us. (Psalm 37:25; 1 Peter 5:7) His Word tells us: “Let your way of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For [God] has said: ‘I will never leave you, and I will never abandon you.’” (Hebrews 13:5) Jehovah does not want us to worry constantly about providing for our family. Over and over again, he has shown that he can provide for his people’s needs. (Matthew 6:25-32) No matter what our work situation is, we regularly study God’s Word, preach the good news, and attend our Christian meetings.—Matthew 24:14; Hebrews 10:24, 25.

**20 Keep your eye focused.** (Read Matthew 6:22, 23.) This means keeping your life simple so that you can focus on serving Jehovah. We know that it would be foolish to allow money, a nice lifestyle, or the latest gadgets to become more important to us than our friendship with God. So, what will help us to put first things first? We must try our best not to go into debt. If you are already in debt, make a practical plan to lower it or pay it off. If we are not careful, material things could take up a lot of our time and energy, and we may not take time to

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19. How does trusting in Jehovah help us to be balanced about our work?

20. How can we keep our life simple?

pray, study, or preach. Instead of allowing material things to make our life complicated, we want to learn to be content with basics such as “food and clothing.” (1 Timothy 6:8) And whatever our situation, it is good to examine our circumstances from time to time to see how we can serve Jehovah more fully.

**<sup>21</sup> Have the right priorities.** We need to use our time, energy, and material things wisely. If we are

21. Why do we need to decide what has first place in our life?

Serving Jehovah is the most important work we can do





not careful, less important things, such as education or money, will take up our precious time. Jesus said: “Keep on . . . seeking first the Kingdom.” (Matthew 6:33) The choices we make, our habits, our daily routine, and our goals all reveal what has first place in our hearts.

### THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK WE CAN DO

**22** The most important work we have is serving Jehovah and preaching the good news to others. (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) Like Jesus, we want to do all we can in this work. Some have moved to serve where there is a greater need for preachers. Others are learning a foreign language so that they can preach to people who speak that language. Talk with those who have done these things, and ask them about it. They will tell you that their lives have become happier and more meaningful.—**Read Proverbs 10:22.**

**23** Today, many of us have to spend long hours at a job or even at several jobs simply to provide for our family’s basic needs. Jehovah knows this, and he appreciates everything we do to care for our family. So let us all continue to imitate Jehovah and Jesus by working hard, no matter what kind of work we do. And may we remember that our most important work is serving Jehovah and preaching the good news of God’s Kingdom. This will bring us true joy.

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22, 23. (a) What is the most important work we can have as Christians? (b) What will help us to enjoy our work?

## IMPROVING OUR SKILLS IN THE MINISTRY

## Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies



**WHY IMPORTANT:** People must call on the name of Jehovah in order to be saved. (Ro 10:13, 14) Yet, not everyone who agrees to study the Bible wants to live by Jehovah’s standards. We make the best use of our precious time in the ministry by helping those who truly want to make changes to please Jehovah. If a Bible student does not make meaningful progress after a reasonable period of time, we wisely re-direct our efforts to those whom Jehovah is drawing to him and his organization. (Joh 6:44) Of course, if at a future time the person gives evidence of being “rightly disposed for everlasting life,” we gladly resume his Bible study.—Ac 13:48.

**HOW TO DO IT:**

- Commend the student for wanting to gain accurate knowledge.—1Ti 2:4
- Emphasize the importance of applying what he has learned.—Lu 6:46-49
- Kindly discuss Jesus’ illustration of the sower, and ask him to consider what may be holding him back.—Mt 13:18-23
- Tactfully explain why you are discontinuing the study
- Let him know that you will call periodically to encourage him and that the study can resume in the future if he makes progress

**WATCH THE VIDEO, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- What did you learn from the conversation that indicated that the student was not making spiritual progress?

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- How did the publisher help the student appreciate that he needed to make changes?

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- How did the publisher leave the door open for the study to resume in the future?

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Before discontinuing a Bible study, seek Jehovah’s direction in prayer. While taking into account the student’s age or other limitations, look for indications of meaningful progress.

- Does the person keep his appointments to study?
- Does he prepare for the study?
- Does he attend congregation meetings?
- Is he making changes in harmony with Bible principles?
- Does he share with others what he is learning?
- Is he withdrawing from false religion?

# Serving Jehovah Whole-Souled

(Matthew 22:37)

F Gm7 C/Bb Am7 F/A Bbma7 Bb6

O Je - ho - vah, Sov - 'reign Rul - er,  
Fa - ther, all your works ex - alt you.

C7 F/A Dm G7/B G7 C7sus4 C7

You are the one I love and o - bey.  
Earth, moon, and stars your glo - ry pro - claim.

R.H.

F Gm7 C/Bb Am7 F/A Bbma7 Bb6

You de - serve my full de - vo - tion;  
May I al - so be as faith - ful,

C7 A/C# Dm Gm/Bb Bb/C C7 F

You are my God; I'll serve you each day.  
Us - ing my strength to make known your name.

# Serving Jehovah Whole-Souled

Am E7/G# E/D Am/C E7/B Am9 Am

Your com - mands I loy - al - ly fol - low;  
 May I use my whole life to serve you,

C/G Dm/G G7 Gm11 Gm/Bb C7sus4 C7

How I love re - mind - ers from you!  
 Prov - ing to be loy - al and true.

**Chorus**  
 F Gm7 C7/Bb Am7 F/A Bb/D Bbm/Db

O Je - ho - vah, you are wor - thy;

F/C Fma7/C Bb/C C7 Gm/Bb Bb/C C7 F

Whole - souled de - vo - tion I give to you.

- Song 80 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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Why is it not possible to pursue both godly devotion *and* riches? (Mt 6:24)

## We Must “Run With Endurance”—Let Go of Unnecessary Burdens

[We see a brother in a clothing store shopping for a tie.]

Brother: Hi.  
Salesgirl: Can I interest you in one of our suits?  
Brother: OK, that sounds good.  
Salesgirl: I think it would go great with this tie.

[The brother has a suit fitted and leaves the store with several bags. Next he is seen buying himself an expensive high-end new car. He also upgrades the furniture and other items in his home with expensive and lavish alternatives. He invites adult friends over and they play cards.]

[Now the bills have arrived and the brother is thinking out-loud to himself.]

I wish I had listened to the elders. I-I can't believe the interest on these credit cards. There's just no way I can afford this. It didn't seem like it was that much money at the time when I was spending it. Hmm, maybe if I pick up a second job, or, ah, working nights, weekends, I could . . . Hold on a second. Wait! No. What did the text say this morning?

*“Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of greed, because even when a person has an abundance, his life does not result from the things he possesses.” Luke 12:15*

‘Guard against greed.’ It didn't feel like greed at the time. It seemed like these were all things I needed. But if it's starting to crowd out time for Jehovah . . .

[Next we see the brother returning the expensive car. He also replaces the luxury items in his home with more reasonable items. He invites over Witness friends and their families and participates in spiritually uplifting activities.]

[The brother has returned to the clothing store... ]

Salesgirl: Hey.  
Brother: Hey.  
Salesgirl: You're back for more suits?  
Brother: Just this today.

[... but only buys a new tie.]

Salesgirl: All right. Well, you have a good day.  
Brother: Thank you.

[Without having to worry and stress about paying for unnecessary things in his life he is happier and has more time for field service.]

- Song 80 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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## What You Should Know About Sports

Sports—they can be good for you. In fact, at 1 Timothy 4:8, the Bible says that “physical exercise is beneficial.” (Ftn.)

Sports can teach you vital skills, including how to cooperate and communicate with others. But sports can also be bad for you. It all depends on what you play, how you play, and how much you play.

Consider what you play. At Psalm 11:5, the Bible reminds us that God “hates anyone who loves violence.” And some sports are clearly violent. So ask yourself, ‘Does it make sense to be entertained by watching others get knocked around?’

Next, consider how you play. At Philippians 2:3, the Bible says: “Do nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with humility consider others superior to you.”

Of course, nearly every sport involves a degree of competition. But a win-at-all-costs attitude will just take the fun out of the game. And besides, at Proverbs 16:18, the Bible says that “pride is before a crash.” So ask yourself: ‘Do I enjoy playing with overly competitive and prideful people? Then why would I want to be like that?’

Finally, consider how much you play sports—or even watch. At Philippians 1:10, the Bible says: “Make sure of the more important things.” That’s good advice because, let’s face it, putting too much emphasis on sports is like putting too much salt on your food. If you spend too much time watching or playing sports, other things in your life will suffer. That includes your family life, school grades, and the time you need to devote to worship.

In the end, sports shouldn’t be the most important thing in your life. Instead, think of it as the reward you get for taking care of your responsibilities first. That way, you really get the benefits of sports and avoid the pitfalls.

video source: [https://tv.jw.org/#en/mediaitems/docid-502018215\\_1\\_VIDEO](https://tv.jw.org/#en/mediaitems/docid-502018215_1_VIDEO)



# JESUS GIVES COUNSEL ABOUT RICHES

LUKE 12:1-34

As Jesus dines at the Pharisee's house, thousands gather outside awaiting him. He has had similar experiences with the crowds in Galilee. (Mark 1:33; 2:2; 3:9) Here in Judea, many want to see and hear him, showing an attitude quite different from that of the Pharisees at the meal.

What Jesus says first has special meaning for his disciples: "Watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Jesus has given this warning before, but what he saw at the meal shows how urgent this counsel is. (Luke 12:1; Mark 8:15) The Pharisees may try to conceal their wickedness with a show of piety, but they are a danger that needs to be exposed. Jesus explains: "There is nothing carefully concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing secret that will not become known."—Luke 12:2.

Perhaps many of the people crowding around Jesus are Judeans who had not heard him teach in Galilee. Thus, he repeats key thoughts that he expressed earlier. He urges all who are listening: "Do not fear those who kill the body and after this are not able to do anything more." (Luke 12:4) As he has done before, he stresses the need for his followers to trust that God will care for them. They also need to acknowledge the Son of man and realize that God can help them.—Matthew 10:19, 20, 26-33; 12:31, 32.

Then a man in the crowd brings up his immediate concern: "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." (Luke 12:13) The Law says that the firstborn son receives two parts of the inheritance, so there should be no dispute. (Deuteronomy 21:17) It seems, though, that this man wants more than his legal share.

Jesus wisely refuses to take sides. "Man, who appointed me judge or arbitrator between you two?" he asks.—Luke 12:14.

Jesus then gives this admonition to all: "Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of greed, because even when a person has an abundance, his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) No matter how much wealth a man may have, will he not at some point die and leave everything behind? Jesus emphasizes that point with a memorable illustration that also shows the value of having a good name with God:

"The land of a rich man produced well. So he began reasoning within himself, 'What should I do now that I have nowhere to gather my crops?' Then he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my storehouses and build bigger ones, and there I will gather all my grain and all my goods, and I will say to myself: "You have many good things stored up for many years; take it easy, eat, drink, enjoy yourself."' But God said to him, 'Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your life from you. Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?' So it goes with the man who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God."—Luke 12:16-21.

Both Jesus' disciples and the others hearing him could become ensnared by seeking or piling up wealth. Or the cares of life could distract them from serving Jehovah. So Jesus repeats the fine counsel he gave about a year and a half earlier in the Sermon on the Mount:

"Stop being anxious about your lives as to what you will eat or about your bodies as to what you will wear. . . . Consider the ravens: They neither sow seed nor reap; they have neither barn nor storehouse; yet God feeds them.

Are you not worth much more than birds? . . . Consider how the lilies grow: They neither toil nor spin; but I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. . . . So stop seeking what you will eat and what you will drink, and stop being in anxious suspense . . . Your Father knows you need these things. . . . Keep seeking his Kingdom, and these things will be added to you.”—Luke 12:22-31; Matthew 6: 25-33.

Who will be seeking God’s Kingdom? Jesus reveals that a relatively small number, a “little flock,” of faithful humans will be doing so. Later it will be revealed that their number is just 144,000. What is in store for them? They have Jesus’ assurance: “Your Father has approved of giving you the Kingdom.” These will not concentrate on gaining treasures on earth, which thieves could steal. Rather, their heart will be on “never-failing treasure in the heavens,” where they will reign with Christ.—Luke 12:32-34.



- ◇ How does Jesus respond to a question about inheritance?
- ◇ Why is the illustration that Jesus gives worth our serious attention?
- ◇ What does Jesus reveal about those who will be in the Kingdom with him?

# 21

# Keep On Seeking First the Kingdom

(Matthew 6:33)

F B♭ B♭/A Cm/G F7 B♭ Eb/F F7 B♭ B♭/A B♭add9/G B♭/F

Some-thing pre - cious to Je - ho - vah, Bring - ing him such keen de -  
 Why be anx - ious for to - mor - row, 'Will we hun - ger, will we  
 So de - declare the King - dom good news; Help de - serv - ing ones to

E♭ G/D Cm G7 Cm Cm7 Gm7 C7

light, Is his King - dom by Christ Je - sus, Which will set all mat - ters  
 thirst?' For our God will make pro - vi - sion If we seek his King - dom  
 see That their hope is in Je - ho - vah And in his The - oc - ra -

F7sus4 F7 *Chorus* B♭ Dm7/A Gm B♭ma7/F F/E♭ E♭ G7 Cm7 F7

right.  
 first. Keep on seek - ing first the King - dom And Je - ho - vah's righ - teous -  
 cy.

F/B♭ B♭ F7 B♭ B♭/D D° Cm/E♭ E° B♭/F Cm7 F B♭

ness. Sing his praise a - mong the na - tions, Serv - ing him in faith - ful - ness.

MAY 2019

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
JULY 1–AUGUST 4, 2019

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## FEATURED CONTENT ON JW.ORG

### THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES

#### **The Best Prize of My Life**

What moved a professional tennis player to quit a promising sports career to become a full-time minister?

(Go to [BIBLE TEACHINGS > PEACE & HAPPINESS](#).)

### HELP FOR THE FAMILY

#### **How to Show Affection**

How can marriage mates show that they truly care for each other? Four suggestions based on Bible principles can help.

(Go to [BIBLE TEACHINGS > MARRIAGE & FAMILY](#).)

### 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)

Visit the [jw.org](https://www.jw.org)® website, or scan code



# 35 "Make Sure of the More Important Things"

(Philippians 1:10)

D C#m11 F#7/C C7 Am/B B7

How great our need to - day for dis - cern - ment, To  
 And what could be of great - er im - por - tance Than  
 If we take care to do what's im - por - tant, Then

Em7 G/A A7 Dma7 Gma7 G

know the things that are true, To  
 shar - ing King - dom good news, To  
 true con - tent - ment we'll find. The

Em9/C# F#7 Em9/C# F#7

know which things have great - er im - por - tance, To  
 search for those who hun - ger for truth And to  
 peace sur - pass - ing all un - der - stand - ing Will

*Chorus*  
 Bm Em/C# C#° F#/D Bm/D D#° Am7/E F#°

know which things we must do!  
 help them God's way to choose? Love what is  
 guard our heart and our mind.

*“Make Sure of the More Important Things”*

Em7 G/A F#m/A A7 Dma7 Gma7 G6 Gma7

good; Hate what is bad. Make God's heart

Em/C# Em/F# F#7+5 F#7 Bm9 Bm A/B D#° Am7/E F#°

glad; Oh, what rich bless - ings it brings when we

Em7 G/A F#m/A Em/G F#m7 B7b9 Am7/B B7b9

learn, When we dis - cern, And when we

Em7 F#m G6 Gma7/A A7b9 D

do the im - por - tant things!

## SONG 35

“Make Sure of the More Important Things”

## PREVIEW

Jehovah generously gives us an abundance of material to watch, to read, and to study. This article will help you decide what to study, and it offers practical suggestions on how to get the most out of your study sessions.

## Improve Your Study Habits!

“*Make sure of the more important things.*”—PHIL. 1:10.

IT TAKES a great deal of effort to earn a living these days. Many of our brothers work long hours just to provide the necessities of life for their families. Countless others spend several hours each workday traveling to and from their place of employment. Many support themselves by doing hard physical labor. By the end of the day, these hardworking brothers and sisters are exhausted! The last thing many are inclined to do is study.

<sup>2</sup> The fact is, though, that we *must* find time to study—really study—God’s Word and our Christian publications. Our relationship with Jehovah and our everlasting life depend on it! (1 Tim. 4:15) Some rise early every day and study when their home is quiet and their mind is fresh after a night’s rest. Others set aside a few tranquil minutes at the end of the day to take in spiritual food and meditate on it.

<sup>3</sup> No doubt you agree that it is important to find time to study. But *what* should we study? ‘There is so much to read,’ you may say. ‘I find it hard to keep up.’ Some manage to take full advantage of every spiritual provision, but many of our brothers struggle to find the time to do so. The Governing Body is aware of this. For that reason, direction was recently given to reduce the amount of material provided both in print and in digital form.

<sup>4</sup> For example, we no longer publish the *Yearbook of Je-*

1. Why might some not be inclined to study?

2. When do you find time to study?

3-4. What adjustments have been made to the amount of material that is provided, and why?



*hovah's Witnesses*, since many encouraging experiences are available on [jw.org](http://jw.org)<sup>®</sup> as well as on the monthly programs of JW Broadcasting<sup>®</sup>. The public edition of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines are now published just three times a year. These adjustments have not been made so that we will have more time to pursue other activities. They have been put in place to enable us to give careful attention to “the more important things.” (Phil. 1:10) Let us discuss how you can set priorities and how you can benefit fully from personal Bible study.

### SET YOUR PRIORITIES

<sup>5</sup> What should our priorities include? We should certainly spend time each day studying God's Word. The amount of material now scheduled for the congregation's weekly Bible reading has been reduced in order to give us more time to meditate on what we read and to do extra research. Our goal should be, not merely to cover the assigned material, but to allow the Bible's message to touch our hearts and to draw us closer to Jehovah. —Ps. 19:14.

<sup>6</sup> What else should we study carefully? Of course, we want to prepare the material for the *Watchtower* Study and the Congregation Bible Study as well as other material for the midweek meeting. We should also keep up with each issue of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

<sup>7</sup> ‘Fine,’ you may say, ‘but what about

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5-6. What publications should we be sure to study carefully?

7. Should we be discouraged if we cannot keep up with the abundance of features published on our website and on JW Broadcasting?

all the features that appear on our website, [jw.org](http://jw.org), as well as the material that is presented on JW Broadcasting? There is so much!’ Consider an illustration: A great variety of delicious food is available on a buffet at a restaurant. The patrons of the restaurant could never sample everything that is offered. So they choose just a few dishes. Similarly, if you are unable to keep up with everything that is supplied electronically, do not be discouraged. Read or watch what you can. Let us now discuss what is involved in study and how to derive the most benefit from our study.

### STUDY IS WORK!

<sup>8</sup> To study is to read with sustained, purposeful concentration. It is not just a matter of skimming the assigned material and underlining the answers. When preparing for the *Watchtower* Study, for example, first take note of the preview at the beginning of the article. Next, consider the title of the article, as well as the subheadings and the review questions. Then, read the article slowly and carefully. Take note of the topic sentence, which is usually the first sentence of every paragraph. The topic sentence will often alert you to the direction in which the paragraph will be taking you. As you read through the article, think about the way each paragraph supports the subheading and ties in with the general theme of the article. Make a note of any unfamiliar words and of points that you would like to clarify through further research.

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8. What steps might we take when studying *The Watchtower*, and how will doing so benefit you?



Parents, teach your children how to study  
(See paragraph 10)

<sup>9</sup> The *Watchtower* Study is a study of the Bible. Therefore, pay particular attention to the scriptures, especially those that will be read when the congregation considers the material. Take special note of how the key words or phrases in the scriptures support the point being made in the paragraph. Moreover, take time to meditate on the scriptures that you read, and reflect on how you can personally apply them in your life.—**Read Joshua 1:8.**

<sup>10</sup> Understandably, parents want the weekly Family Worship period to be a pleasant experience for their children. However, although parents should always have something definite in mind for family worship, there is no need for them to feel that they must organize special activities or exciting projects each week. While the Family Worship period may be spent watching a monthly program on JW Broadcasting or occasional-

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9. (a) Why and how should we pay particular attention to the scriptures when we study *The Watchtower*? (b) As noted at Joshua 1:8, what should we do in addition to reading scriptures?

10. In line with Hebrews 5:14, why should parents spend time during family worship to teach their children how to study and do research?

ly working on a special project, such as assembling a model of Noah's ark, it is also important for children to be taught how to study. They need to learn how to prepare for congregation meetings, for example, or how to do research on an issue that has arisen at school. (**Read Hebrews 5:14.**) If they spend some time on study projects at home, they will be better equipped to focus on the material presented at congregation meetings, assemblies, and conventions, which may not always feature a video. Of course, the length of each study period will depend on the age and temperament of the children.

<sup>11</sup> Our Bible students also need to learn how to study. When they are new, we are happy to see them simply underline the answers in preparation for their Bible study or for congregation meetings. But we do need to teach our Bible students how to do research and how to do meaningful study on their own. In that way, when problems arise, instead of immediately turning to others in the congregation for help, they will know

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11. Why is it important that we teach our Bible students how to do meaningful study on their own?

how to get practical advice for themselves by doing research in our publications.

### STUDY WITH A PURPOSE

<sup>12</sup> If you are not a studious person, you may not think it possible to learn to enjoy studying. But you can. Start out with shorter periods, and then gradually increase the time you spend. Have a goal in mind. Of course, our ultimate goal should be to draw ever closer to Jehovah. A more immediate goal may be to answer a question that someone has asked or to do research on a problem that we are facing.

<sup>13</sup> As an example, are you a young person in school? Your classmates may all believe in the theory of evolution. You would like to defend the Bible's teaching, but perhaps you do not feel qualified to do so. That calls for a study project! Your aim could be twofold: (1) to strengthen your own conviction that God created all things and (2) to improve in your ability to defend the truth. (Rom. 1:20; 1 Pet. 3:15) You might first ask yourself, 'What arguments have my classmates used in support of evolution?' Then using our publications, do careful research. Defending your beliefs may not be as hard as you think. Most people believe in evolution simply because someone they respect told them that it is true. If you find just a point or two that you can share, you may provide a satisfactory answer to a sincere inquirer.—**Read Colossians 4:6.**

12. What goals might we have when we study?

13. (a) Explain the steps a young person could take to defend his beliefs in school. (b) How can you apply the counsel found at Colossians 4:6?

### DEVELOP YOUR INTEREST

<sup>14</sup> Suppose that at an upcoming congregation meeting we are scheduled to explore the writings of one of the so-called minor prophets, perhaps one with whom you are not very familiar. The first step might be to develop an interest in what that prophet wrote. How might you accomplish that?

<sup>15</sup> First, ask yourself: 'What do I know about the writer of the book? Who was he, where did he live, what was his occupation?' The background of the writer may also explain his choice of words or the type of illustrations he used. As you read the Bible, look for phrases that reflect the personality of the writer.

<sup>16</sup> Next, you will find it helpful to place the writing of the book in the stream of time. You can easily do that by checking the "Table of the Books of the Bible" in the back of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. In addition, you could review the chart of prophets and kings in Appendix A6. If the Bible book you are studying is prophetic, you would do well to find out about conditions that existed at the time of writing. What bad attitudes or practices did the prophet hope to correct? Who were his contemporaries? To get a complete overview, you may need to consult more than one source. For example, to understand more fully what was taking place when the prophet Amos lived,

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14-16. (a) How might you get better acquainted with a Bible book with which you are not very familiar? (b) Using the cited scriptures, explain how you could obtain a more rounded-out picture of the book of Amos. (See also the box "Bring the Bible to Life!")



## Bring the Bible to Life!

By careful study of the Scriptures, we come to see Bible characters as real people who had thoughts and feelings just like ours. Consider some details about Amos.

- ▶ He “took care of sycamore fig trees” and was a sheep raiser who came from a humble background.—Amos 1:1; 7:14.
- ▶ He willingly left his home in Judah to carry out his assignment as a prophet in Israel.—Amos 7:15.
- ▶ He was ordered to stop his preaching work.—Amos 7:10-13.

**Can you relate to Amos?** You may have much in common with other Bible characters too. Bring them all to life through diligent study!

you will benefit by consulting passages in the books of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles, which are listed in the marginal references to Amos 1:1. In addition, you might review the writings of Hosea, who may have been a contemporary of Amos. All these sources would help shed light on the period in which Amos lived.—2 Ki. 14:25-28; 2 Chron. 26:1-15; Hos. 1:1-11; Amos 1:1.

### PAY ATTENTION TO DETAIL

<sup>17</sup> It is good to read the Bible with a healthy dose of curiosity. Suppose, for example, that you are reading the 12th chapter of Zechariah’s prophecy, which foretells the death of the Messiah. (Zech.

17-18. Using the examples in the paragraphs or an example of your own, illustrate how paying attention to seemingly small details can make personal Bible study enjoyable.

12:10) When you come to verse 12, you read that “the family of Nathan’s house” would grieve bitterly at the Messiah’s death. Instead of quickly passing over that detail, you pause and ask yourself: ‘What is the connection between the house of Nathan and the Messiah? Is there any way to get more information?’ You do a little “detective” work. A marginal reference leads you to 2 Samuel 5: 13, 14, where you learn that Nathan was one of King David’s sons. A second marginal reference, Luke 3:23, 31, reveals that Jesus was a direct descendant of Nathan through Mary. (See “Joseph, son of Heli,” study note on Luke 3:23.) Suddenly, you are intrigued! You knew that Jesus was foretold to be a descendant of David. (Matt. 22:42) But David had more than 20 sons. Is it not amazing that Zechariah pinpoints the household of Nathan

in particular as having a reason to mourn the death of Jesus?

<sup>18</sup> Consider another example. In the first chapter of Luke, we read that the angel Gabriel visited Mary and announced regarding the son she was to bear: “This one will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will **rule as King** over the house of Jacob forever.” (Luke 1:32, 33) We might be inclined to focus on the first part of Gabriel’s message, namely, that Jesus would be called “Son of the Most High.” But Gabriel also prophesied that Jesus would “rule as King.” So we ask ourselves what those words of Gabriel might have meant to Mary. Did she take Gabriel’s words to mean that Jesus would replace King Herod—or one of his successors as the ruler in Israel? If Jesus did become king, Mary would be the queen mother, and her family would live in the royal palace. Yet, there is no record that Mary even raised such a possibility with Gabriel; nor do we ever read that Mary asked for a position of favor in the Kingdom, as two of Jesus’ disciples did. (Matt. 20:20-23) This detail reinforces our picture of Mary as an extremely humble woman!

<sup>19</sup> Let us remember that our ultimate goal in studying God’s Word and our Christian publications is to draw closer to Jehovah. We also want to see more clearly “what sort of person” we are and what changes we need to make in order to please God. (**Read James 1:22-25; 4:8.**) At the beginning of each study period, then, we should ask Jehovah for his spirit. We should beg him to help us to benefit fully from the material and to see ourselves as he sees us.

<sup>20</sup> May all of us be like the man of God described by the psalmist: “His **delight** is in the law of Jehovah, and he reads His law in an undertone day and night. . . . Everything he does will succeed.”—Ps. 1:2, 3.

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19-20. As described at James 1:22-25 and 4:8, what are our goals when we study?

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**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS** Page 28: Parents show their children how to prepare for the weekly *Watchtower* Study. Page 30: A brother does research on the Bible writer Amos. The pictures in the background represent what the brother sees in his imagination as he reads the Bible accounts and meditates on them.

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## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- Why is it important to learn how to study?
- What is the connection between our theme text, Philippians 1:10, and our need for personal study?
- How can you develop an interest in a Bible subject?

# Make Me Know Your Ways

(Psalm 25:4)

A F#m C#m G/A A7

We're gath - ered to - geth - er, Je - ho - vah our God, Ac -  
Un - reach - a - bly high is your wis - dom, O God; Your

D F#7+5 Bm Bm/A

cept - ing your warm in - vi - ta - tion. Your  
judg - ments we find re - as - sur - ing. Your

Bm/G# C#7 F° F#m

Word is a lamp that lights up our path - way, The  
Word is a source of un - end - ing won - der; Your

A/B B13 Bm7 E13sus4 E7

source of di - vine ed - u - ca - tion.  
say - ings of truth are en - dur - ing.

# Make Me Know Your Ways

## Chorus

A C#+5 D Bm7

Teach me your ways, and make me un - der - stand; In -

E7sus4 E/D A/C# Bm11 E7

cline my ear to hear your wise com - mand.

G/A A13 Dma7 G13sus4 Dm6/F

Cause me to walk in ways of truth and right, And

A/E D/E E7 A

make your law my prin - ci - pal de - light.

