

- Song 88 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “Discipline—Evidence of Jehovah’s Love”: (10 min.)

Heb 12:5—Do not give up when disciplined (w12 3/15 29 ¶18)

Heb 12:6, 7—Jehovah disciplines those whom he loves (w12 7/1 21 ¶3)

Heb 12:11—Although sometimes painful, discipline trains us (w18.03 32 ¶18)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

Heb 12:1—How does the example of “a great cloud of witnesses” encourage us? (w11 9/15 17-18 ¶11)

Heb 13:9—What does this verse mean? (w89 12/15 22 ¶10)

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 115
- Enduring Despite . . . Our Own Imperfections: (5 min.) Play the video. Then discuss the following questions:
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In what ways has he been disciplined?

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HEBREWS 12-13 | Discipline—Evidence of Jehovah’s Love

12:5-7, 11

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- Trials or persecution that Jehovah allows. —w15 9/15 21 ¶13; it-1 629



Make Me Know Your Ways

(Psalm 25:4)

1. We're gathered together, Jehovah our God,
Accepting your warm invitation.
Your Word is a lamp that lights up our pathway,
The source of divine education.

(CHORUS)

*Teach me your ways, and make me understand;
Incline my ear to hear your wise command.
Cause me to walk in ways of truth and right,
And make your law my principal delight.*

2. Unreachably high is your wisdom, O God;
Your judgments we find reassuring.
Your Word is a source of unending wonder;
Your sayings of truth are enduring.

(Chorus)

Hebrews 12-13

12 So, then, because we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also throw off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such hostile speech from sinners against their own interests, so that you may not get tired and give up.

⁴ In your struggle against that sin, you have never yet resisted to the point of having your blood shed. ⁵ And you have entirely forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons: “My son, do not belittle the discipline from Jehovah, nor give up when you are corrected by him; ⁶ for those whom Jehovah loves he disciplines, in fact, he scourges everyone whom he receives as a son.”

⁷ You need to endure as part of your discipline. God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? ⁸ But if you have not all shared in receiving this discipline, you are really illegitimate children, and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, our human fathers used to discipline us, and we gave them respect. Should we not more readily submit ourselves to the Father of our spiritual life and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time according to what seemed good to them, but he does so for our benefit so that we may partake of his holiness. ¹¹ True, no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but it is painful; yet afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

¹² Therefore, strengthen the hands that hang down and the feeble knees, ¹³ and keep making straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but, rather, may be healed.

¹⁴ Pursue peace with all people and the sanctification without which no man will see the Lord. ¹⁵ Carefully watch that no one fails to obtain the undeserved kindness of God, so that no poisonous root springs up to cause trouble and many are defiled by it; ¹⁶ and watch that among you there is no one who is sexually immoral nor anyone who does not appreciate sacred things, like E'sau, who gave up his rights as firstborn in exchange for one meal. ¹⁷ For you know that afterward when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for although he earnestly tried to bring about a change of mind with tears, it was to no avail.

¹⁸ For you have not approached something that can be felt and that has been set aflame with fire, and a dark cloud and thick darkness and a storm, ¹⁹ and the blast of a trumpet and the voice speaking words, which on hearing, the people begged that nothing further should be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not bear the command: "If even a beast touches the mountain, it must be stoned." ²¹ Also, the display was so terrifying that Moses said: "I am afraid and trembling." ²² But you have approached a Mount Zion and a city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, and myriads of angels ²³ in general assembly, and the congregation of the firstborn who have been enrolled in the heavens, and God the Judge of all, and the spiritual lives of righteous ones who have been made perfect, ²⁴ and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and the sprinkled blood, which speaks in a better way than Abel's blood.

²⁵ See that you do not refuse to listen to the one who is speaking. For if those who refused to listen to the one giving divine warning on earth did not escape, how much more will we not escape if we turn away from him who speaks from the heavens! ²⁶ At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised: "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heaven." ²⁷ Now the expression "yet once more" indicates the removal of the things that are shaken, things that have been made, in order that the

things not shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, seeing that we are to receive a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us continue to receive undeserved kindness, through which we may acceptably offer God sacred service with godly fear and awe. ²⁹ For our God is a consuming fire.

13 Let your brotherly love continue. ² Do not forget hospitality, for through it some unknowingly entertained angels. ³ Keep in mind those in prison, as though you were imprisoned with them, and those being mistreated, since you yourselves also are in the body. ⁴ Let marriage be honorable among all, and let the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge sexually immoral people and adulterers. ⁵ Let your way of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For he has said: "I will never leave you, and I will never abandon you." ⁶ So that we may be of good courage and say: "Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

⁷ Remember those who are taking the lead among you, who have spoken the word of God to you, and as you contemplate how their conduct turns out, imitate their faith.

⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and forever.

⁹ Do not be led astray by various and strange teachings, for it is better for the heart to be strengthened by undeserved kindness than by foods, which do not benefit those occupied with them.

¹⁰ We have an altar from which those who offer sacred service at the tent have no authority to eat. ¹¹ For the bodies of those animals whose blood is taken into the holy place as a sin offering by the high priest are burned up outside the camp. ¹² Therefore, Jesus also suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people with his own blood. ¹³ Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the reproach he bore, ¹⁴ for we do not have here a city that remains, but we are earnestly seeking the one to come. ¹⁵ Through

him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips that make public declaration to his name. ¹⁶ Moreover, do not forget to do good and to share what you have with others, for God is well-pleased with such sacrifices.

¹⁷ Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over you as those who will render an account, so that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.

¹⁸ Keep praying for us, for we trust we have an honest conscience, as we wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things. ¹⁹ But I especially urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you the sooner.

²⁰ Now may the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus, with the blood of an everlasting covenant, ²¹ equip you with every good thing to do his will, working in us through Jesus Christ what is well-pleasing in his sight, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

²² Now I urge you, brothers, to listen patiently to this word of encouragement, for I have written you a short letter. ²³ I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released. If he comes soon, I will be with him when I see you.

²⁴ Give my greetings to all those who are taking the lead among you and to all the holy ones. Those in Italy send you their greetings.

²⁵ The undeserved kindness be with all of you.

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September 23-29 / Hebrews 12-13

Treasures From God's Word

"Discipline—Evidence of Jehovah's Love": (10 minutes)

w15 9/15 21 paragraph 13

"Those whom Jehovah loves he disciplines, in fact, he scourges everyone whom he receives as a son," wrote Paul. (Hebrews 12:6) Discipline, however, is not limited to punishment. It takes various forms. There are many examples in the Bible of faithful servants undergoing extreme trials that may have involved discipline and that trained them. Think of Joseph, Moses, and David. Accounts of their lives are among the most detailed and vivid of all Bible characters. Reading about how Jehovah was with them throughout their trials and how they came to be used mightily by Jehovah makes us feel all the more Jehovah's care and love for his servants.—Read Proverbs 3:11, 12.

it-1 629

What Jehovah may permit to come upon his servants in the form of persecution can serve as discipline, or training, producing the desirable fruit of righteousness, to be enjoyed in peace after the trial is over. (Hebrews 12:4-11) Even the Son of God was equipped to be a compassionate and sympathetic high priest by reason of the suffering that his Father allowed him to undergo.—Hebrews 4:15.

Hebrews 12:5—Do not give up when disciplined

Hebrews 12:5: And you have entirely forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons: “My son, do not belittle the discipline from Jehovah, nor give up when you are corrected by him;

w12 3/15 29 paragraph 18

Painful counsel. What if we are tempted to look back resentfully at some counsel that we received? This can be not only painful but also debilitating—causing us to “give out.” (Hebrews 12:5) Whether we “belittle” the counsel because we reject it or we “give out” because we accept it and then give up, the result is the same—we do not truly allow the counsel to benefit and refine us. How much better to heed Solomon’s words: “Take hold on discipline; do not let go. Safeguard it, for it itself is your life.” (Proverbs 4:13) Like a driver who obeys road signs, let us accept the counsel, apply it, and move forward.—Proverbs 4:26, 27; read Hebrews 12:12, 13.

Hebrews 12:6, 7—Jehovah disciplines those whom he loves

Hebrews 12:6, 7: for those whom Jehovah loves he disciplines, in fact, he scourges everyone whom he receives as a son.” You need to endure as part of your discipline. God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?

w12 7/1 21 paragraph 3

A loving father disciplines his children, for he cares about the kind

of people they will become. (Ephesians 6:4) Such a father may be firm, but he is never harsh in correcting his children. Similarly, our heavenly Father may at times find it necessary to discipline us. But God's discipline is always given in love and is never abusive. Like his Father, Jesus was never harsh, not even when his disciples were slow to respond to needed correction.—Matthew 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-30.

Hebrews 12:11—Although sometimes painful, discipline trains us

Hebrews 12:11: True, no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but it is painful; yet afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

w18.03 32 paragraph 18

While discipline may be painful, there is something that is even more painful—the harm that may result from rejecting discipline. (Hebrews 12:11) Consider two examples—Cain and King Zedekiah. When Cain developed a murderous hatred toward Abel, God admonished Cain: “Why are you so angry and dejected? If you turn to doing good, will you not be restored to favor? But if you do not turn to doing good, sin is crouching at the door, and its craving is to dominate you; but will you get the mastery over it?” (Genesis 4:6,

7) Cain did not listen. Then sin overwhelmed him. What needless pain and suffering Cain brought on himself! (Genesis 4:11, 12) The pain of Jehovah's reprimand would have been mild by comparison.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Hebrews 12:1—How does the example of “a great cloud of witnesses” encourage us?

Hebrews 12:1: So, then, because we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also throw off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

w11 9/15 17-18 paragraph 11

The 'great cloud of witnesses' were no mere spectators or bystanders, as it were, who were there only to watch the race or to see their favorite athlete or team win. Rather, they were participants, like runners in a race. And they had successfully run the race and finished it. Though now deceased, they could be thought of as seasoned runners who could encourage newer runners in the race. Imagine how a contestant would feel if he knew that surrounding, or watching, him were some of the most accomplished runners. Would he not be moved to do his best or even to outdo himself? Those witnesses of old could testify that such a figurative race, no matter how strenuous, can be won. Thus,

by keeping closely in mind the example of the “cloud of witnesses,” the first-century Hebrew Christians could draw courage and ‘run the race with endurance’—as can we today.

Hebrews 13:9—What does this verse mean?

Hebrews 13:9: Do not be led astray by various and strange teachings, for it is better for the heart to be strengthened by undeserved kindness than by foods, which do not benefit those occupied with them.

w89 12/15 22 paragraph 10

The Hebrews therefore needed to avoid being “carried away with various and strange teachings” of Judaizers. (Galatians 5:1-6) Not by such teachings but ‘by God’s undeserved kindness can the heart be given firmness’ so as to remain steadfast in the truth. Some apparently argued about foods and sacrifices, for Paul said that the heart was not made firm “by eatables, by which those who occupy themselves with them have not been benefited.” Spiritual benefits result from godly devotion and appreciation for the ransom, not from undue concern about eating certain foods and observing particular days. (Romans 14:5-9) Moreover, Christ’s sacrifice made Levitical sacrifices ineffective.—Hebrews 9:9-14; 10:5-10.

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Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations



INITIAL CALL

Question: How does God feel about those who sincerely seek him?

Scripture: 1Pe 5:6, 7

Link: To what extent does God pay attention to us as individuals?



FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: To what extent does God pay attention to us as individuals?

Scripture: Mt 10:29-31

Link: How do we know that God understands us?



SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: How do we know that God understands us?

Scripture: Ps 139:1, 2, 4

Link: How can God's care benefit us?



[/vs 39-40 ¶19]

WHEN SOMEONE IS DISFELLOWSHIPED

¹⁹ In a loving family, each member does his part to make the others happy. But imagine that one person rebels. Everybody in the family tries again and again to help him, but he rejects the help. He may decide to leave home, or the head of the family may have to ask him to leave. Something similar can happen in the congregation. A person may choose to keep doing things that displease Jehovah and harm the congregation. He rejects help and shows by his actions that he no longer wants to be part of the congregation. He may choose to leave the congregation himself, or he may have to be disfellowshipped. If this happens, the Bible clearly says that we should “stop keeping company” with him. **(Read 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 2 John 9-11)** This can be very difficult if he is a friend of ours or a member of our family. But in a situation like this, our loyalty to Jehovah must be stronger than our loyalty to anyone else.—See Endnote 8.

115 *Gratitude for Divine Patience*

(2 Peter 3:15)

1. Great God, Jehovah, boundless in might,
 You have made known your love of right.
 Badness prevails on earth below,
 Causing us pain, as you well know.
 You are not slow, as men may contend;
 Your time is near for patience to end.

(CHORUS)

*We look ahead with hope renewed,
 Praising your name in deep gratitude.*

2. One thousand years, from your point of view,
 Are like a day when they are through.
 Time now proceeds to your great day;
 It will arrive without delay.
 Though all transgression you do resent,
 Your heart is glad when sinners repent.

(Chorus)

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Enduring Despite . . . Our Own Imperfections, Prolonged Illness, and Persecution

(José María Sánchez Cázares)

I learned the truth as a child and since then have always had to struggle to conduct myself in a way that pleases Jehovah. I don't find it easy to control my temper or to keep calm.

When I first arrived in this country, a brother treated me in an unkind manner and was not very hospitable. Because of this, I started feeling resentment toward him, so much so that when he called me on the phone, I spoke to him very rudely.

My wife had to help me, reminding me that both the brother and I are imperfect and that the feelings I had toward him were not healthy. During that time, I felt awful and really bad about my relationship with Jehovah. Discipline is never a cause for joy, and especially when I receive a letter from the branch correcting and counseling me for something I have not been doing right. It certainly makes me feel uncomfortable. But I try to reflect on the fact that acting in accord with Jehovah's wisdom will bring me blessings.

Prayer to Jehovah, Bible principles, and trusting that Jehovah will give me the needed direction has really helped me. As the Psalms mention, Jehovah is aware "that we are dust." It's as if he were saying to me: "Son, you make so many mistakes, "but I love you anyway. "I can use you in my service, and I know that you will succeed." And, of course, it's possible because Jehovah has always helped his servants—all of them, from Abel down to our day. All of us who are serving him are imperfect people.

REJOICING OVER THE SINNER WHO REPENTS

LUKE 15:1-10

-
- ILLUSTRATIONS OF LOST SHEEP AND LOST COIN
 - ANGELS IN HEAVEN REJOICE
-

At various times during his ministry, Jesus has emphasized the importance of humility. (Luke 14:8-11) He is eager to find men and women who desire to serve God humbly. Up till now, some of them may still be notorious sinners.

The Pharisees and scribes notice that such individuals—people whom they consider unworthy—are drawn to Jesus and his message. They complain: “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” (Luke 15:2) The Pharisees and scribes feel superior and treat the common people like dirt under their feet. Reflecting the contempt they have for such ones, the leaders use the Hebrew expression *'am ha-'a'rets*, “people of the land [earth]” to refer to them.

In contrast, Jesus treats all with dignity, kindness, and compassion. Many of the lowly ones, including some who are known to be practicing sin, are thus eager to listen to Jesus. How, though, does Jesus feel about and respond to the criticism that he is receiving for helping such lowly ones?

The answer becomes clear as he presents a touching illustration, similar to one he earlier gave in Capernaum. (Matthew 18:12-14) Jesus presents things as if the Pharisees are righteous and safe in the fold of God. In contrast, the lowly people are presented as ones who have gone astray and who are in a lost state. Jesus says:

“What man among you with 100 sheep, on losing one of them, will not leave the 99 behind in the wilderness and go after the lost one until he finds it? And when he has found it, he puts it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he gets home, he calls his friends and his neighbors together, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’”—Luke 15:4-6.

What application does Jesus make? He explains: “I tell you that in the same way, there will be more



joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous ones who have no need of repentance.”—Luke 15:7.

Jesus’ mention of repentance must strike the Pharisees. They consider themselves to be righteous and feel they have no need of repentance. When some of them criticized Jesus a couple of years earlier because he was eating with tax collectors and sinners, he replied: “I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners.” (Mark 2:15-17) The self-righteous Pharisees fail to see their need to repent, and thus they bring no joy in heaven. It is just the opposite when sinners truly repent.

Reinforcing his point that the restoration of lost sinners is a cause for great rejoicing in heaven, Jesus presents another illustration, one set in a family home: “What woman who has ten drachma coins, if she loses one of the drachmas, does not light a lamp and sweep her house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the drachma coin that I had lost.’”—Luke 15:8, 9.

The application Jesus makes is similar to the one he made after giving the illustration of the lost sheep. He now says: “In the same way, I tell you, joy arises among the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”—Luke 15:10.

Imagine, God’s angels show deep interest in the restoration of lost sinners! That is particularly significant because the sinners who repent and gain a place in God’s heavenly Kingdom will have a position higher than that of the angels themselves! (1 Corinthians 6:2, 3) Yet the angels do not feel jealous. How, then, should we feel when a sinner turns to God in full repentance?

- ◇ Why does Jesus associate with known sinners?
- ◇ How do the Pharisees view the common people and Jesus’ having dealings with such ones?
- ◇ What lesson does Jesus teach with two illustrations?

Join in the Kingdom Song!

(Psalm 98:1)

1. This is a song, a happy song of vict'ry;
It magnifies the One who is supreme.
The words give hope and prompt all to be loyal.
Come sing with us; enjoy its Kingdom theme:

(CHORUS)

*'Come worship God Before his throne.
His Son is King; Let's make it known!
Come learn this song, this song about the Kingdom;
Bow down to God, and praise his holy name.'*

2. With this new song, we advertise the Kingdom.
Christ Jesus rules; the earth is his domain.
And as foretold, there is a newborn nation:
The Kingdom heirs, who welcome Jesus' reign:

(Chorus)

3. This Kingdom song, all humble ones can master.
The words are clear, their message warm and bright.
In all the earth, a multitude have learned it,
And they in turn still others now invite:

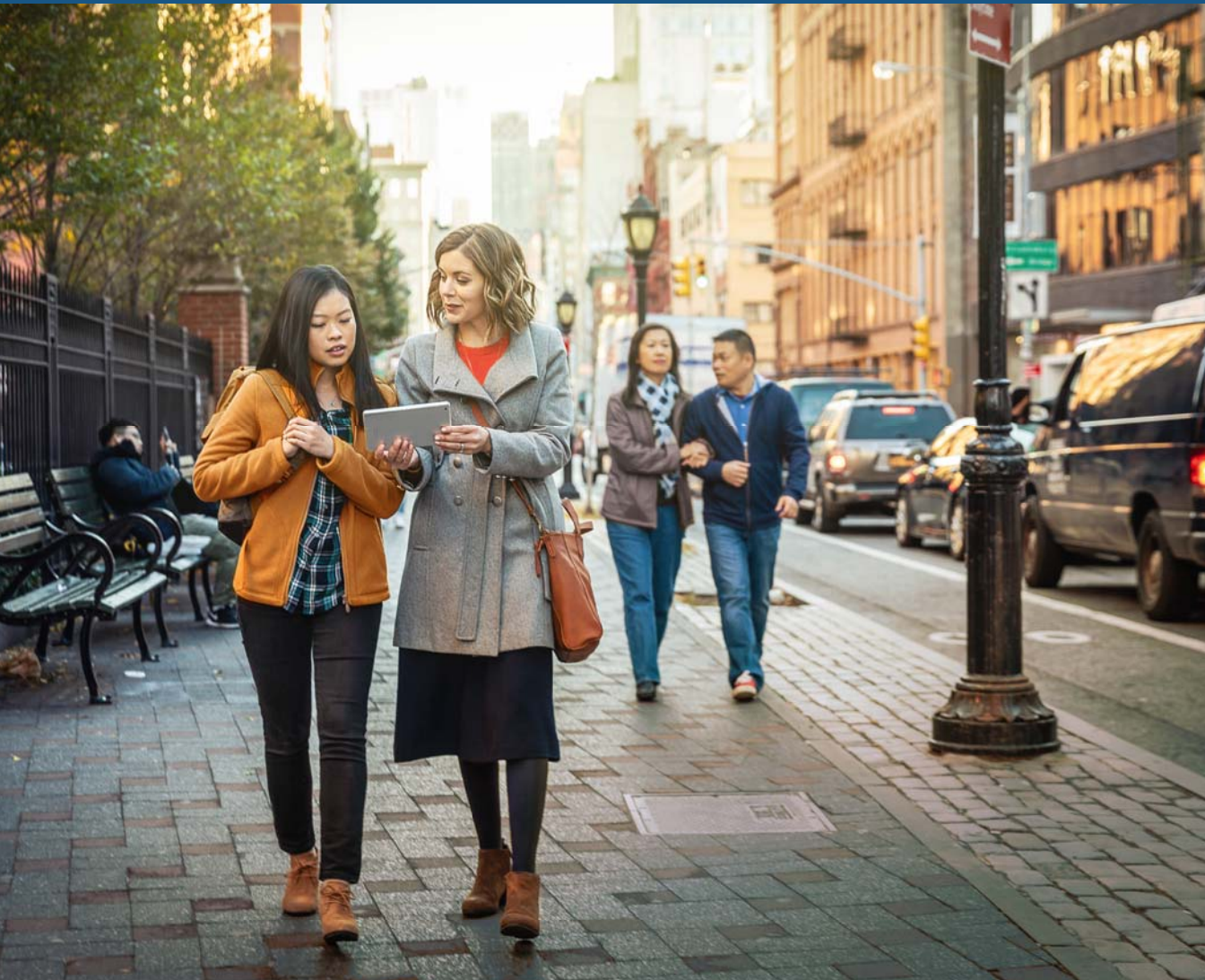
(Chorus)

JULY 2019

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
SEPTEMBER 2-29, 2019

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COVER PICTURE:

Many Kingdom publishers show personal interest in others from non-Christian lands and share with them the practical wisdom found in the Bible (See study article 30, paragraphs 12-13)

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

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“Let Your Light Shine”

(Matthew 5:16)

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

Reaching the Hearts of Nonreligious People

“I have become all things to people of all sorts, so that I might by all possible means save some.”—1 COR. 9:22.

SONG 82

“Let Your Light Shine”

PREVIEW

We may meet nonreligious people more often now than ever before. This article discusses how we might share Bible truth with them and how we can help them to cultivate trust in the Bible and faith in Jehovah God.

FOR thousands of years, the majority of people in the world seemed to have some form of religious belief. But in recent decades a remarkable change has taken place. More and more people do not view themselves as religious. In fact, in some countries the majority of the population describe themselves as not being religious.*—Matt. 24:12.

² Why do a growing number of people consider themselves to be nonreligious?# Some may be distracted by pleasures or anxieties. (Luke 8:14) Some have become atheists. Others believe in God but think that religion is old-fashioned, irrelevant, and incompatible with science and logical thinking. They may hear friends, teachers, or media personalities say that life evolved, but they rarely hear logical reasons for believing in God. Others are repelled by clergy who are greedy for money and power. In some places, governments officially limit religious activity.

* According to surveys, some of those lands are: Albania, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and Vietnam.

EXPRESSION EXPLAINED: In this article, the term **nonreligious** refers to people who either do not belong to an organized religion or do not believe in God.

-
1. What change has occurred in some areas in recent decades?
 2. What might explain why so many people are not religious?

³ Jesus expects us to “make disciples of people of all the nations.” (Matt. 28:19) How can we help non-religious people to learn to love God and become disciples of Christ? We must recognize that a person’s reaction to our message may depend on where he was raised. For example, people with a European background may not respond the same way as may those who come from Asia. Why? In Europe, many know something about the Bible and are familiar with the idea that God created all things. But in Asia, the majority of people know little or nothing about the Bible, and they may not believe in a Creator. The purpose of this article is to help us reach the hearts of all those we meet in the ministry, no matter what their background may be.

MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

⁴ *Be Positive.* Every year, there are nonreligious people who become Jehovah’s Witnesses. Many already had high moral standards and felt disgusted by religious hypocrisy. Others had low moral standards and many had bad habits that they needed to abandon. With Jehovah’s help, we can be sure that we will find those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life.”—Acts 13:48; 1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

3. What is the purpose of this article?

4. Why can we keep a positive attitude?

⁵ ***Be Kind and Tactful.*** Often, people respond well to our message, not because of *what* we say, but because of the *way* we say it. They appreciate it when we are kind, tactful, and genuinely interested in them. We do not force them to hear our point of view. Instead, we try to discern the reasons for their view of religion. For example, we learn that some do not like talking about religion with a stranger. Others feel that it is bad manners to ask a person what he thinks about God. Still others feel embarrassed to be seen reading the Bible, especially with one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Whatever the case, we try to be sensitive to their feelings.—2 Tim. 2:24, ftn.

⁶ What can we do if someone seems uncomfortable when we use such words as “Bible,” “creation,” “God,” or “religion”? We can imitate the apostle Paul and adapt our approach to them. When speaking with Jews, Paul reasoned from the Scriptures. However, when he spoke with Greek philosophers at the Areopagus, he made no direct reference to the Bible. (Acts 17:2, 3, 22-31) How can we follow Paul’s example? If you meet a person who does not accept the Bible, it may be best not to make direct references to it when reasoning with him. If you sense that a person might

5. What often makes people respond well to our message?

6. How did the apostle Paul show that he was adaptable, and how can we imitate him?



Adapt your approach when witnessing to those who are skeptical about the Bible
(See paragraphs 5-6)

be uncomfortable being seen reading the Bible with you, try showing him scriptures in a less obvious way, such as on an electronic device.

7 Be Understanding and Listen. We must try to understand the factors that have influenced the people we meet. (Prov. 20:5) Consider again Paul's example. He grew up among Jews. He surely had to adapt his preaching to Gentiles, people who knew little or nothing about Jehovah and the Scriptures. We might have to do some research or consult experienced ones in the congregation so that we can empathize with and

7. To be like Paul, as described at 1 Corinthians 9:20-23, what might we have to do?

understand the people in our territory.—Read 1 Corinthians 9:20-23.

⁸ Our goal is to find “deserving” ones. (Matt. 10:11) To be effective, we must invite people to express their opinions and then listen attentively. A brother in England asks people for their opinion about how to have a happy marriage, how to raise children, or how to cope with injustice. After listening to their comments, he says, “What do you think of this advice written nearly 2,000 years ago?” Then, without saying the word “Bible,” he shows them well-chosen scriptures on his phone.

REACH THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE

⁹ We can reach the hearts of people who usually avoid talking about God by discussing something that is already close to them. For example, many marvel at nature. So we might say something like the following: “You probably know that many inventions came about when scientists copied things that already existed in nature. For instance, microphone designers study ears, and camera designers study eyes. What comes to your mind when you think of nature? Do you think that it is a marvelous force, a person, or

8. What is one way to start a conversation about the Bible?

9. How might we help people who usually avoid talking about God?

something else?” After listening attentively, we could add: “When engineers learn from the design of ears and eyes, we might wonder whom they are learning from. I was intrigued by something an ancient poet wrote: ‘The One who made the ear, can he not hear? The One who formed the eye, can he not see? . . . He is the One who imparts knowledge to people!’ Some scientists have come to a similar conclusion.” (Ps. 94: 9, 10) We could then show a video from jw.org[®] under “Interviews and Experiences” in the series “Viewpoints on the Origin of Life.” (Look under PUBLICATIONS > VIDEOS.) Or we could give them either the brochure *Was Life Created?* or the brochure *The Origin of Life—Five Questions Worth Asking*.

¹⁰ Most people long for a better future. However, many fear that the earth will be destroyed or be made uninhabitable. A traveling overseer in Norway says that people who are not inclined to talk about God are often willing to talk about world conditions. After greeting people, he says: “What do you think about our prospects for a better future? Does our best hope lie with politicians, scientists, or someone else?” After listening carefully, he reads or quotes a scripture that points to a bright future. Some are intrigued by the Bible’s promise that the earth will last

10. How might we start a conversation with someone who is not inclined to talk about God?

forever and that good people will live on it eternally.
—Ps. 37:29; Eccl. 1:4.

¹¹ We do well to use a variety of approaches with those we meet. Why? Because each person is unique. What attracts one may repel another. Some do not mind discussing God or the Bible, while others respond better to a more indirect approach. In either case, we should take the opportunity to speak to all sorts of people. (Read Romans 1:14-16.) Of course, we keep in mind that Jehovah is the one who makes the truth grow in the hearts of those who are righteously inclined.—1 Cor. 3:6, 7.

SHARING THE TRUTH WITH PEOPLE FROM ASIA

¹² Worldwide, many publishers are meeting people from nations in Asia, including some who come from places where governments have put limits on religious activity. In a number of Asian countries, many have never given serious consideration to the idea of a Creator. Some are curious and accept a direct offer of a Bible study, but others initially hesitate to explore new ideas. What can we do to reach them? Some

11. Why should we try a variety of approaches, and how can we imitate Paul's example, as described at Romans 1:14-16?

12. What can we do to reach people from Asian lands who have not thought about the idea of a Creator?

experienced publishers have success by starting a casual conversation, showing personal interest, and then when appropriate relating how their life improved when they started applying a specific Bible principle.

¹³ Many people are first attracted to the practical wisdom found in the Bible. (Eccl. 7:12) In New York, a sister who visits Mandarin-speaking people says: “I try to take an interest in people and listen to them. If I learn that they are new immigrants, I might ask: ‘How are you settling in? Have you found work? Are the local people treating you well?’” Sometimes this opens the way to introduce a Bible teaching. When appropriate, the sister may add: “What would you say is the key to getting along with people? May I show you a proverb from the Bible? It says: ‘Beginning a fight is like opening a floodgate; before the quarrel breaks out, take your leave.’ Do you think that this advice could help us to get along with others?” (Prov. 17:14) Such conversations can help us to identify people who would welcome further visits.

¹⁴ What about those who tell us that they do not believe in God? A brother with much experience preaching to nonreligious people in the Far East explains:

13. What can attract people to the Bible? (See cover picture.)

14. How does one brother in the Far East help people who say that they do not believe in God?

“Typically, when a person here says, ‘I don’t believe in God,’ he means that he does not believe in worshipping traditional gods. So I usually agree that most gods are man-made and are not real. I often read Jeremiah 16:20: ‘Can a man make gods for himself when they are not really gods?’ Then I ask: ‘How could we tell a real god from man-made ones?’ I listen carefully, and then I read Isaiah 41:23: ‘Tell us what will happen in the future, so that we may know that you are gods.’ Then I show an example of how Jehovah has foretold the future.”

¹⁵ A brother in East Asia uses the following approach when making return visits. He says: “I show them examples of Bible wisdom, fulfilled Bible prophecies, and laws that control the universe. Then I show them how all of it points to a living and wise Creator. When a person accepts the possibility that God exists, I start showing him what the Bible says about Jehovah.”

¹⁶ When we conduct Bible studies with people from nonreligious backgrounds, we must continually build up their belief in the existence of God. (Read Hebrews 11:6.) And we need to help them to build faith in the Bible. This might require that we repeat some

15. What can we learn from the example of a brother in East Asia?

16. According to Hebrews 11:6, why do students need to have faith in God and in the Bible, and how can we help them develop it?

points a number of times. During each study session, we may need to discuss evidence that the Bible is God's Word. This may include a brief discussion of the Bible's fulfilled prophecies, scientific and historical accuracy, or practical wisdom.

¹⁷ We help people to become disciples of Christ by displaying love for them, whether they are religious or not. (1 Cor. 13:1) As we teach them, our goal is to show that God loves us and wants us to love him. Every year thousands who previously had little or no interest in religion get baptized because they have grown to love God. So be positive, and take a loving interest in all sorts of people. Listen to them. Try to understand them. By your example, teach them to be disciples of Christ.

17. What effect can our love have on people?

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 44: A brother witnesses to a fellow hospital worker, who later explores our Online Bible Study Lessons.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- How can we maintain a positive attitude in our ministry?
- How might we reach the hearts of nonreligious people?
- Why should we share the truth with everyone we meet?

SONG 76

How Does It Make You Feel?

76 *How Does It Make You Feel?*

(Hebrews 13:15)

1. How does it make you feel
 when you preach and teach with zeal,
When you know you've done your part
 to reach an honest heart?
Knowing you've done your best;
 then our God will do the rest.
Honest hearts he surely knows—
 all those to him disposed.

(CHORUS)

*It makes us glad, and we rejoice
 to give our heart and mind and voice.
So may our sacrifice of praise
 continue all our days.*

2. How does it make you feel
 when the words you speak appeal
To the ones whose heart is right
 for everlasting life?
Some people turn away,
 others might be led astray.
Still we're glad to bear his name
 and witness just the same.

(Chorus)

3. How does it make you feel,
knowing God's support is real,
And that he's entrusted you
to do the work we do?
Proudly we preach and teach,
using bold but gracious speech,
Searching out deserving ones;
this work will soon be done.

(CHORUS)

*It makes us glad, and we rejoice
to give our heart and mind and voice.
So may our sacrifice of praise
continue all our days.*

