

- Song 15 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“I Know Your Deeds”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Revelation*.]
Re 1:20—Jesus has full control of the bodies of elders (w12 10/15 14 ¶8)
Re 2:1, 2—Jesus knows what is happening in every congregation (w12 4/15 29 ¶11; w01 1/15 20-21 ¶20)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Re 1:7—How and when will every eye see Jesus “coming with the clouds”? (kr 226 ¶10)

Re 2:7—What does eating of “the tree of life” in “the paradise of God” mean? (w09 1/15 31 ¶1)

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) Re 1:1-11 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (2)
- **First Return Visit:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then introduce and discuss (but do not play) the video *Why Study the Bible?* (3)


LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 4
- **“Jehovah Knows What We Need”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *2017 Teaching Committee Report* (video category OUR ORGANIZATION).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 91
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 151 and Prayer

REVELATION 1-3 | “I Know Your Deeds”

1:20; 2:1, 2

- **“The seven stars”:** Anointed elders and, by extension, all elders
- **“In [Jesus’] right hand”:** The stars are under Jesus’ full control, power, and direction. If someone on a body of elders needs correction, Jesus will see to it that this is done in his own time and way
- **“The seven golden lampstands”:** Christian congregations. Just as the lampstand in the tabernacle radiated physical light, Christian congregations radiate spiritual light. (Mt 5:14) Jesus “walks among” the lampstands in that he oversees the activity of all congregations

 **How does this vision help you . . .**

- When the elders give you direction or counsel?
- If you observe injustices or problems in your congregation?
- To share the good news at every opportunity?



Praise Jehovah's Firstborn!

(Hebrews 1:6)

Eb Gm7/D Cm7 Cm Cm7/Bb Ab Eb/G Fm Abma7/Eb
 Praise Je - ho - vah's First - born, God's du - ly ap - point - ed
 Praise Je - ho - vah's First - born, Who died so that we may

Bb/D Cm11 Bb Bb7 Eb Gm7/D Cm7 Cm Cm7/Bb
 King. He reigns for truth and jus - tice; Rich
 live. He hum - bly paid the ran - som; Our

Ab Eb/G Fm7 Bb7 Eb Eb/G Bb Bbsus4/C Bb/D Bb7
 bless - ings his rule will bring. With dig - ni - ty and
 sins God can now for - give. The bride of Christ a -

Eb D Dsus4/E D/F# D7 Gm
 splen - dor And love for God's great name, He'll
 waits him, A - dorned for him in white. This

Praise Jehovah's Firstborn!

F Fsus4/G F7/A F7 Bb Bb/D Cm Cm/Bb Fadd9/A F

vin - di - cate Je - ho - vah, His sov - 'reign - ty pro -
mar - riage in the heav - ens Will prove God's rule is

Chorus
Bb Eb Gm7/D Cm7 Cm Cm7/Bb

claim. right. Praise Je - ho - vah's First - born! All

R.H.

Ab Eb/G Fm Abma7/Eb Bb/D Cm11 Bb Bb7 Eb Gm7/D

praise God's a - noint - ed Son. In - stalled up - on Mount

Cm7 Cm Cm7/Bb Ab Eb/G Fm7 Bb7 Eb

Zi - on, His King - ship has now be - gun!

R.H.

(See also Ps. 2:6; 45:3, 4; Rev. 19:8.)

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| <p>17 Judgment on "Babylon the Great" (1-18)
 The great prostitute sits on a scarlet-colored beast (1-3)
 The beast 'was, is not, but is to ascend out of the abyss' (8)
 Ten horns to fight the Lamb (12-14)
 Ten horns to hate the prostitute (16, 17)</p> <p>18 Fall of "Babylon the Great" (1-8)
 "Get out of her, my people" (4)
 Mourning over Babylon's fall (9-19)
 Rejoicing in heaven over Babylon's fall (20)
 Babylon to be hurled into the sea like a stone (21-24)</p> <p>19 Praise Jah for his judgments (1-10)
 Marriage of the Lamb (7-9)</p> | <p>Rider on a white horse (11-16)
 Great evening meal of God (17, 18)
 Wild beast defeated (19-21)</p> <p>20 Satan bound for 1,000 years (1-3)
 Millennial rulers with Christ (4-6)
 Satan released, then destroyed (7-10)
 The dead judged before the white throne (11-15)</p> <p>21 A new heaven and a new earth (1-8)
 No more death (4)
 All things made new (5)
 New Jerusalem described (9-27)</p> <p>22 River of water of life (1-5)
 Conclusion (6-21)
 'Come! Take life's water free' (17)
 "Come, Lord Jesus" (20)</p> |
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1 A revelation* by Jesus Christ, which God gave him,^a to show his slaves^b the things that must shortly take place. And he sent his angel and presented it in signs through him to his slave John,^c **2** who bore witness to the word God gave and to the witness Jesus Christ gave, yes, to all the things he saw. **3** Happy is the one who reads aloud and those who hear the words of this prophecy and who observe the things written in it,^d for the appointed time is near.

4 John to the seven congregations^e that are in the province of Asia:

May you have undeserved kindness and peace from "the One who is and who was and who is coming,"^f and from the seven spirits^g that are before his throne, **5** and from Jesus Christ, "the Faithful Witness,"^h "the firstborn from the dead,"ⁱ and "the Ruler of the kings of the earth."^j

To him who loves us^k and who set us free from our sins

1:1 *Or "A disclosure; An uncovering."

CHAP. 1

- a Da 2:28
- b Am 3:7
- Re 7:3, 4
- c Mt 10:2
- Mr 1:19
- Joh 21:20
- d Ps 1:2
- Lu 11:28
- Joh 13:17
- Jas 1:22
- e Re 1:11
- f Re 1:8
- Re 4:8
- Re 11:17
- g Re 4:5
- h Re 3:14
- i Col 1:18
- j Ps 89:27
- 1Ti 6:15
- Re 19:16
- k Joh 15:9

Second Col.

- a Heb 9:14
- 1Pe 1:18, 19
- 1Jo 1:7
- b Ex 19:6
- Lu 22:28-30
- c 1Pe 2:5
- Re 5:9, 10
- Re 20:6
- d Mt 26:64
- Mr 13:26
- e Mt 24:30
- f Isa 48:12
- Re 21:6
- Re 22:13
- g Ex 6:3
- h Mt 24:9
- i Lu 12:32
- j Mt 10:22
- 2Ti 2:12
- k Ro 8:17

by means of his own blood^a—**6** and he made us to be a kingdom,^b priests^c to his God and Father—yes, to him be the glory and the might forever. Amen.

7 Look! He is coming with the clouds,^d and every eye will see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief because of him.^e Yes, Amen.

8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega,"^f says Jehovah^g God, "the One who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty."^g

9 I John, your brother and a sharer with you in the tribulation^h and kingdomⁱ and endurance^j in association with Jesus,^k was on the island called Patmos for speaking about God and bearing witness concerning Jesus. **10** By inspiration I came to be in the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a strong voice like that of a trumpet, **11** saying: "What you see, write in a scroll and send it to the seven congregations:

1:8 *Or "the A and the Z." Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. ^gSee App. A5.

in Eph'e-sus,^a in Smyr'na,^b in Per'-ga-mum,^c in Thy-a-ti'ra,^d in Sar'-dis,^e in Philadelphia,^f and in La-o-di-ce'a."^g

12 I turned to see who was speaking with me, and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands,^h **13** and in the midst of the lampstands someone like a son of man,ⁱ clothed in a garment that reached down to the feet and wearing a golden sash around his chest. **14** Moreover, his head and his hair were white as white wool, as snow, and his eyes were like a fiery flame,^j **15** and his feet were like fine copper^k when glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. **16** And he had in his right hand seven stars,^l and out of his mouth a sharp, long, two-edged sword^m was protruding, and his countenance* was like the sun when it shines at its brightest.ⁿ **17** When I saw him, I fell as dead at his feet.

And he laid his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First^o and the Last,^p **18** and the living one,^q and I became dead,^r but look! I am living forever and ever,^s and I have the keys of death and of the Grave.*^t **19** So write down the things you saw, and the things that are, and the things that will take place after these. **20** As for the sacred secret of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars mean the angels of the seven congregations, and the seven lampstands mean the seven congregations."^u

2 "To the angel^v of the congregation in Eph'e-sus^w write: These are the things that he says who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks

1:16 *Or "face." 1:18 *Or "Hades," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary.

CHAP. 1

a Eph 1:1
 Re 2:1
 b Re 2:8
 c Re 2:12
 d Re 2:18
 e Re 3:1
 f Re 3:7
 g Re 3:14
 h Re 1:20
 i Da 7:13
 j Re 19:12
 k Re 2:18
 l Re 1:20
 m Isa 49:2
 n Mt 17:1, 2
 o Ac 26:23
 Col 1:18
 Re 1:5
 p Re 2:8
 q 1Co 15:45
 r 1Pe 3:18
 s Ro 6:9
 t 1Ti 6:16
 u Mt 16:18
 Joh 6:54
 Joh 11:25
 v Mt 5:16
 Php 2:15

CHAP. 2

v Re 1:20
 w Ac 19:1
 Eph 1:1

Second Col.

a Re 1:12, 13
 b Ac 20:29, 30
 2Co 11:13
 1Jo 4:1
 c 1Pe 4:14
 d Ga 6:9
 e Re 3:19
 f Re 1:20
 g Re 2:16
 h 1Co 11:19
 Re 2:15
 i Mt 11:15
 Re 2:17, 29
 j 1Jo 5:4
 k Ro 2:6, 7
 Re 2:10
 l Re 1:13, 17
 m Ro 14:9
 n 2Co 6:4, 10
 1Ti 6:18, 19
 Jas 2:5
 o Re 3:9
 p Mt 10:28
 q Ro 2:6, 7
 2Ti 4:7, 8
 Jas 1:12
 Re 20:4
 r Re 13:9
 s 1Jo 5:5
 t Re 20:6
 Re 20:14
 Re 21:8

among the seven golden lampstands:^a **2** 'I know your deeds, and your labor and endurance, and that you cannot tolerate bad men, and that you put to the test those who say they are apostles,^b but they are not, and you found them to be liars. **3** You are also showing endurance, and you have persevered for the sake of my name^c and have not grown weary.^d **4** Nevertheless, I hold this against you, that you have left the love you had at first.

5 "Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent^e and do the deeds you did at first. If you do not, I will come to you, and I will remove your lampstand^f from its place, unless you repent.^g **6** Still, you do have this in your favor: that you hate the deeds of the sect of Nic-o-la'-us,^h which I also hate. **7** Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations:ⁱ To the one who conquers^j I will grant to eat of the tree of life,^k which is in the paradise of God.'

8 "And to the angel of the congregation in Smyr'na write: These are the things that he says, 'the First and the Last,'^l who became dead and came to life again:^m **9** 'I know your tribulation and poverty—but you are richⁿ—and the blasphemy by those who call themselves Jews and really are not, but they are a synagogue of Satan.^o **10** Do not be afraid of the things you are about to suffer.^p Look! The Devil will keep on throwing some of you into prison so that you may be fully put to the test, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Prove yourself faithful even to death, and I will give you the crown of life.^q **11** Let the one who has an ear hear^r what the spirit says to the congregations: The one who conquers^s will by no means be harmed by the second death.'^t

12 "To the angel of the congregation in Per'ga-mum write: These are the things that he says who has the sharp, long, two-edged sword:^a 13 'I know where you are dwelling, that is, where the throne of Satan is; and yet you keep holding fast to my name,^b and you did not deny your faith in me^c even in the days of An'ti-pas, my faithful witness,^d who was killed^e by your side, where Satan is dwelling.

14 "Nevertheless, I have a few things against you, that you have there those adhering to the teaching of Ba'laam,^f who taught Ba'lak^g to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality."^h 15 In the same way, you also have those adhering to the teaching of the sect of Nic-o-la'us.ⁱ 16 So repent. If you do not, I am coming to you quickly, and I will war against them with the long sword of my mouth.^j

17 "Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations:^k To the one who conquers^l I will give some of the hidden manna,^m and I will give him a white pebble, and written on the pebble is a new name that no one knows except the one receiving it.ⁿ

18 "To the angel of the congregation in Thy-a-ti'ra^o write: These are the things that the Son of God says, the one who has eyes like a fiery flame^p and whose feet are like fine copper:^p 19 'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and ministry and endurance, and that your deeds of late are more than those you did at first.

20 "Nevertheless, I do hold this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jez'e-bel,^q who calls herself a prophetess, and

CHAP. 2

a Re 1:13, 16

Re 19:15

b Mr 13:9

Re 2:3

c Lu 12:8

1Jo 2:23

d Ac 1:8

e Mt 24:9

f Nu 31:16

2Pe 2:15

Jude 11

g Nu 22:4

h Nu 25:1, 2

Ac 15:28, 29

Eph 5:5

i 2Pe 2:1

Re 2:6

j Re 1:13, 16

k Re 2:7

l 1Jo 5:5

Re 3:12

m Ex 16:15, 31

Ps 78:24

Heb 9:4

n Ac 16:14

o Re 19:12

p Re 1:13-15

q 1Ki 16:31

2Ki 9:22

Second Col.

a 1Co 5:11

Ga 5:19

Eph 5:5

b Re 22:12

c Joh 8:44

d Re 3:11

e Ps 2:8, 9

Mt 19:28

Lu 22:28-30

Re 3:21

Re 20:4

f Re 12:5

Re 19:15

g Re 22:16

CHAP. 3

h Re 1:4

Re 4:5

i Re 1:13, 16

j Jas 2:26

k Lu 21:34

Eph 5:15

1Th 5:6

she teaches and misleads my slaves to commit sexual immorality^a and to eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her sexual immorality.* 22 Look! I am about to throw her into a sickbed, and those committing adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds. 23 And I will kill her children with deadly plague, so that all the congregations will know that I am the one who searches the innermost thoughts* and hearts, and I will give to you individually according to your deeds.^b

24 "However, I say to the rest of you who are in Thy-a-ti'ra, all those who do not follow this teaching, those who did not get to know the so-called "deep things of Satan":^c I am not putting on you any other burden. 25 Just the same, hold fast to what you have until I come.^d 26 And to the one who conquers and observes my deeds down to the end, I will give authority over the nations,^e 27 and he will shepherd the people with an iron rod^f so that they will be broken to pieces like clay vessels, just as I have received from my Father. 28 And I will give him the morning star.^g 29 Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations.^h

3 "To the angel of the congregation in Sar'dis write: These are the things that he says who has the seven spirits of God^h and the seven stars:ⁱ 'I know your deeds, that you have the name* that you are alive, but you are dead.^j 2 Become watchful,^k and strengthen the things remaining that were ready to die, for I have not found your works ful-

2:21 *Greek, *por-nei'a*. See Glossary.

2:23 *Or "the deepest emotions." Lit., "kidneys." 3:1 *Or "reputation."

ly performed* before my God. **3** Therefore, continue mindful of* how you have received and how you heard, and go on keeping it, and repent.^a Certainly unless you wake up, I will come as a thief,^b and you will not know at all at what hour I will come upon you.^c

4 “Nevertheless, you do have a few individuals* in Sar’dis who did not defile their garments,^d and they will walk with me in white ones,^e because they are worthy. **5** The one who conquers^f will thus be dressed in white garments,^g and I will by no means blot out* his name from the book of life,^h but I will acknowledge his name before my Father and before his angels.ⁱ **6** Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations.’

7 “To the angel of the congregation in Philadelphia write: These are the things he says who is holy,^j who is true,^k who has the key of David,^l who opens so that no one will shut and shuts so that no one opens: **8** ‘I know your deeds—look! I have set before you an opened door,^m which no one can shut. And I know that you have a little power, and you kept my word and did not prove false to my name. **9** Look! I will make those from the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews yet are not,ⁿ but are lying—look! I will make them come and bow* before your feet and make them know that I have loved you. **10** Because you kept the word about my endurance,^o I will also keep you from the hour of test,^p which is to come upon the entire inhabited earth, to put to the test those

3:2 *Or “complete.” 3:3 *Or “remember.” 3:4 *Lit., “a few names.” 3:5 *Or “erase.” 3:9 *Or “do obeisance.” 3:10 *Or possibly, “followed the example of my endurance.”

CHAP. 3

- a 2Co 7:11
- b Re 16:15
- c Mt 24:42
Lu 12:37, 39
- d Jas 1:27
- e Re 6:11
- f 1Jo 5:4
- g Re 4:4
Re 19:8
- h Php 4:3
- i Lu 12:8
- j Joh 6:69
Heb 7:26
- k Re 3:14
Re 19:11
- l Isa 22:22
Lu 1:32
- m 1Co 16:9
2Co 2:12
- n Ro 2:28
Re 2:9
- o Lu 8:15
Lu 21:19
2Ti 2:12
Heb 10:36
Heb 12:3
- p 2Th 3:3

Second Col.

- a Re 2:16
- b Jas 1:12
Re 2:10
- c Re 22:3, 4
- d Heb 12:22
Re 21:2
- e Re 14:1
Re 19:12
- f Col 4:16
- g 2Co 1:20
- h Joh 1:14
Re 19:11
- i Joh 18:37
1Ti 6:13
Re 1:5
- j Pr 8:22
Col 1:15
- k 2Co 9:2
- l Pr 25:13
- m Ho 12:8
- n Re 16:15
- o Ps 19:8
- p 1Ti 6:17-19
- q Pr 3:12
- r Re 2:5
Re 3:3
- s 1Jo 5:4
Re 12:11
- t Mt 19:28
Lu 22:28-30
Re 2:26
- u Heb 10:12

dwelling on the earth. **11** I am coming quickly.^a Keep holding fast to what you have, so that no one may take your crown.^b

12 “‘The one who conquers—I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he will by no means go out from it anymore, and I will write upon him the name of my God^c and the name of the city of my God, the New Jerusalem^d that descends out of heaven from my God, and my own new name.^e **13** Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations.’

14 “To the angel of the congregation in La-o-di-ce’a^f write: These are the things that the Amen^g says, the faithful and true^h witness,ⁱ the beginning of the creation by God:^j **15** ‘I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or else hot. **16** So because you are lukewarm and neither hot^k nor cold,^l I am going to vomit you out of my mouth. **17** Because you say, “I am rich^m and have acquired riches and do not need anything at all,” but you do not know that you are miserable and pitiful and poor and blind and naked, **18** I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may become dressed and that the shame of your nakedness may not be exposed,ⁿ and eyesalve to rub in your eyes^o so that you may see.^p

19 “‘All those for whom I have affection, I reprove and discipline.^q So be zealous and repent.’ **20** Look! I am standing at the door and knocking. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and take the evening meal with him and he with me. **21** To the one who conquers^s I will grant to sit down with me on my throne,^t just as I conquered and sat down^u

with my Father on his throne. **22** Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations.”

4 After this I saw, and look! an opened door in heaven, and the first voice that I heard speaking with me was like a trumpet, saying: “Come up here, and I will show you the things that must take place.” **2** After this I immediately came to be in the power of the spirit, and look! a throne was in its position in heaven, and someone was seated on the throne.^a **3** And the One seated had the appearance of a jasper stone^b and a sardius stone,^{*} and all around the throne was a rainbow like an emerald in appearance.^c

4 All around the throne were 24 thrones, and on these thrones I saw seated 24 elders^d dressed in white garments, and on their heads golden crowns. **5** From the throne were coming lightning^e and voices and thunders;^f and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, and these mean the seven spirits of God.^g **6** Before the throne was something resembling a glassy sea,^h like crystal.

In the midst of the throne^{*} and around the throne were four living creaturesⁱ that were full of eyes in front and behind. **7** The first living creature was like a lion,^j and the second living creature was like a young bull,^k and the third living creature^l had a face like a man's, and the fourth living creature^m was like a flying eagle.ⁿ **8** As for the four living creatures, each one of them had six wings; they were full of eyes all around and underneath.^o And continuously, day and night, they say: “Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah”^p

4:3 *Or “a precious red-colored stone.”

4:6 *Or “In the middle with the throne.”

4:8, 11 *See App. A5.

CHAP. 4

- a 1Ki 22:19
- Isa 6:1
- Eze 1:26, 27
- Da 7:9
- Ac 7:55
- b Re 21:10, 11
- c 1Jo 1:5
- d Re 4:10
- Re 5:8
- Re 11:16
- Re 19:4
- e Eze 1:13
- f Ex 19:16
- g Re 1:4
- Re 5:6
- h Ex 30:18
- 1Ki 7:23
- i Eze 1:5-10
- j Pr 28:1
- Isa 31:4
- k Job 39:9-11
- Re 6:3
- l Re 6:5
- m Re 6:7
- n Job 39:27, 29
- Eze 1:10
- o Eze 10:9, 12
- p Isa 6:2, 3

Second Col.

- a Re 1:4
- b Ps 90:2
- Da 12:7
- c Re 5:8
- d Mt 5:16
- Re 14:7
- e Re 19:10
- f Re 5:13
- Re 7:12
- Re 11:17
- Re 12:10
- g Re 10:6

CHAP. 5

- h Re 4:2, 3
- i Ge 49:9, 10
- Heb 7:14
- j Isa 11:1, 10
- Ro 15:12
- k 2Sa 7:8, 12
- Re 22:16
- l Joh 16:33
- m Eph 1:22
- n Isa 53:7
- Joh 1:29
- 1Pe 1:19
- o Joh 19:30
- Re 5:12
- p Re 1:4
- q Ps 47:8
- Isa 6:1

God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is coming.”^a

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanksgiving to the One seated on the throne, the One who lives forever and ever,^b

10 the 24 elders^c fall down before the One seated on the throne and worship the One who lives forever and ever, and they cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

11 “You are worthy, Jehovah* our God, to receive the glory^d and the honor^e and the power,^f because you created all things,^g and because of your will they came into existence and were created.”

5 And I saw in the right hand of the One seated on the throne^h a scroll written on both sides,^{*} sealed tight with seven seals.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice: “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” **3** But no one in

heaven or on earth or underneath the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. **4** I gave way to a great deal of weeping because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. **5** But one of the elders said to me: “Stop weeping. Look! The Lion of the tribe of Judah,ⁱ the root of David,^k has conquered^l so as to open the scroll and its seven seals.”

6 And I saw standing in the midst* of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders^m a lambⁿ that seemed to have been slaughtered,^o having seven horns and seven eyes, and the eyes mean the seven spirits of God^p that have been sent out into the whole earth. **7** At once he came forward and took it out of the right hand of the One seated on the throne.^q **8** When he took the

5:1 *Lit., “inside and on the back.” 5:6 *Or “at the center.”

- Song 15 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“I Know Your Deeds”:** (10 min.)
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Re 2:1, 2—Jesus knows what is happening in every congregation (w12 4/15 29 ¶11; w01 1/15 20-21 ¶20)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Re 1:7—How and when will every eye see Jesus “coming with the clouds”? (kr 226 ¶10)

Re 2:7—What does eating of “the tree of life” in “the paradise of God” mean? (w09 1/15 31 ¶1)

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) Re 1:1-11 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (2)
- **First Return Visit:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then introduce and discuss (but do not play) the video *Why Study the Bible?* (3)


LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 4
- **“Jehovah Knows What We Need”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *2017 Teaching Committee Report* (video category OUR ORGANIZATION).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 91
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 151 and Prayer

REVELATION 1-3 | “I Know Your Deeds”

1:20; 2:1, 2

- **“The seven stars”:** Anointed elders and, by extension, all elders
- **“In [Jesus’] right hand”:** The stars are under Jesus’ full control, power, and direction. If someone on a body of elders needs correction, Jesus will see to it that this is done in his own time and way
- **“The seven golden lampstands”:** Christian congregations. Just as the lampstand in the tabernacle radiated physical light, Christian congregations radiate spiritual light. (Mt 5:14) Jesus “walks among” the lampstands in that he oversees the activity of all congregations

 **How does this vision help you . . .**

- When the elders give you direction or counsel?
- If you observe injustices or problems in your congregation?
- To share the good news at every opportunity?



November 18-24 / Revelation 1-3

Treasures From God's Word

"I Know Your Deeds": (10 minutes)

[Play the video *Introduction to Revelation*.]

Revelation 1:20—Jesus has full control of the bodies of elders

Revelation 1:20: As for the sacred secret of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars mean the angels of the seven congregations, and the seven lampstands mean the seven congregations.

w12 10/15 14 paragraph 8

To avoid that kind of spirit, we can remember that Jesus is pictured in the Bible as having "in his right hand seven stars." The "stars" represent the anointed overseers and, by extension, all the overseers in the congregations. Jesus can direct the "stars" in his hand in any way he feels appropriate. (Revelation 1:16, 20) Thus, as Head of the Christian congregation, Jesus has full control of the bodies of elders. If someone on a body truly needs correction, the One who has "eyes as a fiery flame" will see to it that this is done in His own time and way. (Revelation 1:14) In the meantime, we maintain proper respect for those appointed by holy spirit, for Paul wrote: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you."—Hebrews 13:17.

Revelation 2:1, 2—Jesus knows what is happening in every congregation

Revelation 2:1, 2: "To the angel of the congregation in Ephesus write: These are the things that he says who holds the seven stars in his right hand and walks among the seven golden lampstands: 'I know your deeds, and your labor and endurance, and that you cannot tolerate bad men, and that you put to the test those who say they are apostles, but they are not, and you found them to be liars.

w12 4/15 29 paragraph 11

In the vision recorded in Revelation chapters 2 and 3, the glorified Jesus Christ inspects the seven congregations of Asia Minor. The vision reveals that Christ sees not just general trends but specific situations. In some instances, he even mentions individuals, and in each case, he gives appropriate commendation or counsel. What does this indicate? In the fulfillment of the vision, the seven congregations represent anointed Christians after 1914, and the counsel given to the seven congregations applies in principle to all the congregations of God's people today earth wide. Thus, it is safe to conclude that Jehovah by means of his Son is actively leading his people. How can we benefit from that guidance?

w01 1/15 20-21 paragraph 20

Keeping in step with Jehovah's progressive organization requires that we recognize the God-assigned role of Jesus Christ as "head of the congregation." (Ephesians 5:22, 23) Noteworthy, too, is Isaiah 55:4, where we are told: "Look! As a witness to the national groups I [Jehovah] have given him, as a leader and commander to the national groups." Jesus certainly knows how to lead. He also knows his sheep and their deeds. In fact, when he inspected the seven congregations in Asia Minor, five times he said: "I know your deeds." (Revelation 2:2, 19; 3:1, 8, 15) Jesus also knows our needs, as does his Father, Jehovah. Before giving the Model Prayer, Jesus stated: "God your Father knows what things you are needing before ever you ask him."—Matthew 6:8-13.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Revelation 1:7—How and when will every eye see Jesus "coming with the clouds"?

Revelation 1:7: Look! He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief because of him. Yes, Amen.

kr 226 paragraph 10

Pronouncement of judgment. All enemies of God's Kingdom will then be forced to witness an event that will intensify their agony. Jesus states: "They will see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." (Mark 13:26) This supernatural display of power will signal that Jesus has come to pronounce judgment. In another part of this same prophecy about the last days, Jesus gives more details about the judgment that will be pronounced at this time. We find that information in the parable of the sheep and the goats. (Read Matthew 25:31-33, 46.) Loyal supporters of God's Kingdom will be judged as "sheep" and will "lift up [their] heads," realizing that their "deliverance is getting

near.” (Luke 21:28) However, Kingdom opposers will be judged as “goats” and will “beat themselves in grief,” realizing that “everlasting cutting-off” awaits them.—Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7.

Revelation 2:7—What does eating of “the tree of life” in “the paradise of God” mean?

Revelation 2:7: Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations: To the one who conquers I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.’

w09 1/15 31 paragraph 1

Since these words are addressed to anointed Christians, the paradise here must refer to the paradisaic heavenly realm—the very presence of God himself. The faithful anointed will be rewarded with eating “of the tree of life.” They will receive immortality.—1 Corinthians 15:53.

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) Revelation 1:1-11 (*th* study 5)

- Song 15 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“I Know Your Deeds”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Revelation*.]
Re 1:20—Jesus has full control of the bodies of elders (w12 10/15 14 ¶8)
Re 2:1, 2—Jesus knows what is happening in every congregation (w12 4/15 29 ¶11; w01 1/15 20-21 ¶20)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
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- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Re 1:1-11 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (2)
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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 4
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- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 91
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- Song 151 and Prayer

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 **How does this vision help you . . .**

- When the elders give you direction or counsel?
- If you observe injustices or problems in your congregation?
- To share the good news at every opportunity?



SAMPLE CONVERSATION

(November 2019)

First Return Visit

Ryan (Publisher): Hi Ben, it's me, Ryan.

Ben (Householder): Hi Ryan.

Ryan (Publisher): Great to see you again. How do we go for you?

Ben (Householder): Not bad, thanks.

Ryan (Publisher): That's good. I really enjoyed our conversation the other day and I wanted to get back to you on the question, I left at the end. Why can we trust that God will fulfill his purpose? What do you think?

Ben (Householder): Well, he's God, nobody can stop him.

Ryan (Publisher): True and his track record proves it. This makes me think about what it says here at Joshua 21:45. Would you like to read that out loud for us?

Ben (Householder): Okay:

45 Not a promise failed out of all the good promises that Jehovah had made to the house of Israel; all of them came true.

Ryan (Publisher): Thank you, so what kind of reputation has God whose personal name is Jehovah established?

Ben (Householder): All of his promises came true.

Ryan (Publisher): Right, so if you had a friend who always kept his word, would you believe him if he made you a promise?

Ben (Householder): Of course.

Ryan (Publisher): The Bible is full of promises that God has kept.

Ben (Householder): You know, that makes sense.

Ryan (Publisher) thinking: Ben seems to be receptive to discussing Bible topics. So I think I'll offer him the teach us book.

Ryan (Publisher): What we discussed regarding the purpose of life is found in this little book. "*What Can The Bible Teach us?*" It also contains many other interesting topics such as why so much suffering? This is your copy if you'll read it.

Ben (Householder): Yeah, sure, I'll read it

Ryan (Publisher): The next time I'm here, I'd like to discuss what God has promised for the future. If you want to preview. You'll find some of God's promises on pages 4 and 5 of the book.

Ben (Householder): Okay, Thanks.



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK


Sample Conversations

○○○
INITIAL CALL →

Question: What is the purpose of life?

Scripture: **Ge 1:27, 28**

Link: Why can we trust that God will fulfill his purpose?




○○○
FIRST RETURN VISIT →

Question: Why can we trust that God will fulfill his purpose?

Scripture: **Jos 21:45**

Link: What has God promised for the future?




○○●
SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: What has God promised for the future?

Scripture: **Re 21:4**

Link: How can we experience the blessings that God has promised?



"Jehovah Is My Shepherd"

(Psalm 23)

Bb/F Bb Bb° Bb Bb/D Eb Dm/F F7/A

Je - ho - vah God is my Shep - herd; I'll fol - low where he will
 Re - fresh - ing are all your path - ways, The ways of your right - eous -
 Je - ho - vah, you are my Shep - herd; I fol - low where you will

Bb D7/A D7 C/D D/C Gm/Bb D/A Gm Bb6/D Db7b5

lead. He knows my hopes and my heart's de - sire; He
 ness. For your name's sake ne - ver let me stray From
 lead. You strength - en me, and you give me rest; You

F/C C7 C7sus4 F F7 Bb B°

knows what I tru - ly need. To wa - tered pas - tures he
 walk - ing in faith - ful - ness. In val - leys deep in the
 give all I tru - ly need. As you most sure - ly are

F7/C F F+5 Bb7 Ab/Bb Bb7 Eb

leads me, To plac - es se - cure and blessed. And he
 shad - ows, As - sured by your staff and rod, I will
 liv - ing, So sure is my hope in you. May your

“Jehovah Is My Shepherd”

E^o B \flat /F B \flat

guides me al - ways with loy - al love To
 fear no dan - ger and of last - ing harm, For
 loy - al love and your care for me Pur -

F/A F+5 B \flat F7

where I find peace and rest. He
 you are my Friend and God. I
 sue me my whole life through. Your

B \flat F/C B \flat 7/D A \flat /B \flat B \flat 7 E^o G^o E^o

guides me al - ways with loy - al love To
 fear no dan - ger and of last - ing harm, For
 loy - al love and your care for me Pur -

B \flat /F G^o B \flat /F E \flat F7 B \flat

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 sue me my whole life through.

- Song 15 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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Jehovah Knows What We Need



The faithful and discreet slave gives us food “at the proper time,” indicating that Jehovah, who is directing that slave, knows what we need spiritually. (Mt 24: 45) Among other things, our regional conventions and the midweek meetings give evidence of that.

WATCH THE VIDEO *2017 TEACHING COMMITTEE REPORT*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Who should receive the praise for the timely conventions we enjoy, and why?

- When does work on a convention begin?

- How are the topics for the convention chosen?

- What work is involved in preparing conventions?

- How is the Gilead approach to study built into the midweek meeting?

- How do various departments work together to prepare the meeting workbook?

How do you feel about the spiritual provisions from Jehovah?



2017 Teaching Committee Report

It's a pleasure to relate to you two aspects of the Teaching Committee's work.

First, what does it take to put a regional convention together these days? And second, what can we expect with regard to our midweek meetings?

The Teaching Committee is very grateful to every Bethel department. Each of you has contributed in some way to the spiritually festive events that we enjoy at our conventions and our midweek meetings.

Our conventions have come a long way since 1889. But as you'll see, the improvements must be attributed to Jehovah.

This convention is so beautiful. It moves you to the core. It's a very spiritually enriching experience for all of us. We really see the Governing Body is caring for us. It's amazing!

This sentiment has been echoed for over a century. How is it that year after year people who have been in the truth for decades can say that the most recent convention has surpassed all preceding ones? And how do the brothers who prepare convention programs feel when they hear comments like that? If this were merely the work of humans, they might feel like Caleb as depicted in the 2017 regional conventions. Thankfully, this is not the work of one man. All praise goes to Jehovah for the timely conventions we enjoy. His spirit is working through many willing volunteers. Let's take a brief look at how our conventions are made. It all begins with the theme.

As Brother Morris pointed out at the 2017 regional convention, one-word themes are determined years in advance. That one word will guide those preparing the program.

Dramas—the most labor-intensive part of a program—are developed five years in advance.

To prepare scripts, the Teaching Committee cooperates closely with the Writing Department in working with a team known as the Drama Review Group. These experienced writers develop Scriptural plots that teach lessons in harmony with the convention theme.

Scripts are extensively researched and then sent to Audio/Video Services, or AVS, for production. All of this work has to begin early. But how is the rest of a convention program developed?

Each year, the Teaching Committee carefully considers reports from around the world from Branch Committees and world headquarters representatives. Often, such reports indicate topics that could be addressed on a convention. The Teaching Committee then selects a more specific theme that will serve as the basis for addressing the needs of our worldwide brotherhood. The theme is submitted to the entire Governing Body for approval. Then, work begins on Scripture themes for each day of the convention.

The Friday program lays the foundation: What is the central truth under discussion? Why should we give attention to it now?

Saturday brings admonition on personal conduct, field ministry, and family life.

Sunday often highlights what the Bible says about our future and encourages us to maintain our hope. Once this general framework is established, talks are conceived and additional lines of reasoning are chosen.

Attention is given to how to present ideas in a variety of ways:

Could a Scriptural discussion reach the heart more effectively by means of an interview or a video? This detailed sketch is all worked out before the Teaching Committee assigns teams of writers.

AVS collaborates with the writers in the development of brief videos. The Art Department brainstorms ideas for convention branding. The compiler follows the written content through 70 steps of research, fact-checking, and proofreading.

Then, all of these outlines and scripts have to be translated into the 343 languages in which we hold regional conventions. Translation Services helps teams around the world to overcome challenges with the text.

Composers and arrangers make music tracks for the 18 songs that have been selected and the 6 music-video preludes. Music services also produces and records musical scores for the feature film, the audio drama, and some 40 other brief videos that are used on the program.

But the Teaching Committee's involvement doesn't end here. It provides direction regarding the assigning of speakers, the design of sound systems, the securing of contracts for hotels and venues, the operation of convention departments, and the training of volunteers. Thousands of willing workers are involved, each submitting to the inspired direction in God's Word and the influence of his holy spirit.

The benefits of such collaboration are felt not only at our annual conventions but also at our weekly meetings. It's been two years since the inception of the Our Christian Life and Ministry midweek meeting. How have things been going on that front?

Everything got better: how the brothers and sisters feel about the meeting and how they participate.

There are more videos at the meetings, so I feel closer to the worldwide brotherhood.

I really enjoy what it does for young ones, especially the two-minute parts. You see young ones, even very young children, do a demonstration.

Instead of just underlining to prepare, now I get excited looking for gems.

We really dig into a Bible account. I learn a whole lot more.

After the meeting, we enjoy discussing the gems we discovered.

Every meeting gives you something practical that you can apply the next weekend right away.

Now we don't just read the Bible as a family, but we pay more attention to Jehovah's qualities.

Young ones and new publishers are now less hesitant about sharing their beliefs at the door because they simply do what they learned at the meetings.

Regarding production of the meeting, methods of the Gilead School are employed in the approach to study.

The Gilead approach to study considers context, explanation, and application. Analyzing the context considers the time period, the historical setting, and the writer's intent.

These are built into the Treasures from God's Word and the Introductions to the Bible Books Videos we see at the midweek meetings.

The explanations for the verses are all based on the publications of "the faithful and discreet slave" to ensure accuracy and correct understanding. After all, at Gilead School, students aren't allowed to guess. Once a scripture is explained accurately, then it can be applied properly.

This method of context and explanation followed by application leads to meaningful Bible study.

The Service Committee Office provides input on field service presentations and Living as Christians. The Writing Department gives insight on how to feature our publications.

What will change after January? As announced at the 2017 annual meeting, the public edition of The Watchtower will be published three times a year instead of six. The same will be true for Awake! Also, specific monthly literature offers have been discontinued. Thus, we will enjoy some adjustments in our field service presentations. As you will see, the new focus will be not so much on publications but on conversations.

Clearly, the production of our midweek meetings and regional conventions takes a lot of planning and the cooperation of many willing workers in a variety of Bethel departments. But the positive effects are felt around the world.

All I can say to Jehovah is, "Thank you, Jehovah, for letting me be here."

I feel very grateful to Jehovah for the meetings.

Thank you, Jehovah.

Sometimes Bethel receives letters that go something like this:

"Thank you for your tireless efforts."

Actually, the brothers and sisters working on all these projects are tired. But they never tire of trusting in and cooperating with the One who truly is tireless: the Source of all divine instruction, Jehovah. He alone can replace copper with gold, so that each segment of divine education truly is the best ever.

LAZARUS IS RESURRECTED

JOHN 11:38-54

After Jesus meets Martha and then Mary near Bethany, they go to the memorial tomb of Lazarus. It is a cave with a stone covering the entrance. "Take the stone away," Jesus directs. Martha expresses concern, not understanding what Jesus intends to do. "Lord," she says, "by now he must smell, for it has been four days." But Jesus tells her: "Did I not tell you that if you

would believe you would see the glory of God?" —John 11:39, 40.

So the stone is removed. Jesus then raises his eyes and prays: "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. True, I knew that you always hear me; but I spoke on account of the crowd standing around, so that they may believe that you sent me." Jesus' public prayer shows to ob-



servers that what he is about to do is by means of power from God. Then Jesus cries out with a loud voice: “Lazarus, come out!” And Lazarus does come out, with his hands and feet still bound with burial wrappings and his face covered with a cloth. “Free him and let him go,” Jesus says.—John 11:41-44.

Many Jews who have come to comfort Mary and Martha see this miracle and put faith in Jesus. But others go off and tell the Pharisees what Jesus has done. The Pharisees and the chief priests hold a meeting of the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. That body includes the high priest, Caiaphas. Some of them lament: “What are we to do, for this man performs many signs? If we let him go on this way, they will all put faith in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.” (John 11:47, 48) Though having heard eyewitness testimony that Jesus “performs many signs,” these men are not rejoicing over what God is doing through him. Their prime concern is their own position and authority.

That Lazarus has been raised from the dead is a real blow to the Sadducees, who do not believe in the resurrection. Caiaphas, a Sadducee, now speaks up, saying: “You do not know anything at all, and you have not reasoned that it is to your benefit for one man to die in behalf of the people rather than for the whole nation

to be destroyed.”—John 11:49, 50; Acts 5:17; 23:8.

In view of Caiaphas’ sacred office, God causes him to say this—he does not do so “of his own originality.” Caiaphas means that Jesus should be killed to prevent him from further undermining the authority and influence of the Jewish religious leaders. Yet, Caiaphas’ prophecy points to the fact that by his death, Jesus would provide a ransom, not just for the Jews, but for all “the children of God who were scattered about.”—John 11:51, 52.

Caiaphas succeeds in influencing the Sanhedrin to make plans to kill Jesus. Might Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin who is friendly to Jesus, reveal these plans to him? In any event, Jesus leaves the immediate Jerusalem area, thus avoiding death before God’s appointed time.



-
- ◇ How do those who see the resurrection of Lazarus respond to it?
 - ◇ What reveals the wickedness of members of the Sanhedrin?
 - ◇ Despite Caiaphas’ intentions, what does God have him prophesy?

He Will Call

(Job 14:13-15)

D A/C# D D/F# G/B A/C# D

Life, like a mist, ap - pears for just a day, Then
 Friends of our God, though they may pass a - way, Will

D/F# G A/G G Em Bm/D

dis - ap - pears to - mor - row. All that we are can
 nev - er be for - sak - en. All those a - sleep who

D/C C D/C C Bm Bsus4 Bm

quick - ly fade a - way, Re - placed with tears and sor - row.
 in God's mem - ry stay, From death he will a - wak - en.

Bsus4 Bm/A G A/G G D/F# F#m7 D/F#

If a man should die, can he live a - gain?
 Then we'll come to see all that life can be:

He Will Call

Chorus

Em7 D/F# G A7sus4 A7 G/A A7

Hear the prom - ise God has made:
Par - a - dise e - ter - nal - ly. He will

D A7/E D/F# G A Bm F#m/A

call; The dead will an - swer. They will live at his com -

G Gma7 A/G F#m7 D/F# C/E D7 G Gm/Bb

mand. For he will have a long - ing For the

D/A Em/A A7 D G/A A7 D A7/E

work of his own hand. So have faith, and do not

He Will Call

Musical notation for the first system of the hymn. The key signature is D major (two sharps). The system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: won - der, For our God can make us stand. And

Chords: D/F# G A Bm F#m/A G Gma7 A/G

Musical notation for the second system of the hymn. The key signature is D major. The system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: we will live for - ev - er, As the

Chords: F#m7 D/F# C/E D7 G Gm/Bb

Musical notation for the third system of the hymn. The key signature is D major. The system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: work of his own hand.

Chords: D/A Em/A A7 D

SEPTEMBER 2019

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
OCTOBER 28–DECEMBER 1, 2019

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This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. To make a donation, please visit donate.jw.org.

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

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

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IMITATE THEIR FAITH

“Bound Together in Close Friendship”

How did two people so different in background and age become such close friends? How can their experience help you form friendships today?

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On jw.org, go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > FAITH IN GOD > IMITATE THEIR FAITH.

WAS IT DESIGNED?

The Carpenter Ant’s Antenna Cleaner

This tiny insect needs to keep its antennae clean in order to survive. How does it care for this important task?

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On jw.org, go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > SCIENCE & THE BIBLE > WAS IT DESIGNED?

COVER PICTURE:

The apostle John saw “a great crowd” dressed in white robes and with palm branches in their hands (See study article 39, paragraph 2)

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"I Want To"

(Luke 5:13)

F B \flat /D C/E F Dm C/E C Am

Kind and pa - tient, per - fect in love, Was
We now try to fol - low his way In

Dm C/E F F/A B \flat Dm C Am/C C7/B \flat

Christ, who came down from a - bove. He took
all of our deal - ings each day. We are

F/A Fma7/A B \flat C Am/C C7 Dm Gm

care of our needs With words and by deeds; He
lov - ing and kind To all whom we find; We

C/E F Dm C/E C Am B \flat

gave of his time and his love.
help them to learn and o - bey.

"I Want To"

F Bb/D C/E F Dm C/E C Am

He would keep the low - ly in mind By
 We re - spond to friends when in need; We

Dm C/E F F/A Bb Dm C Am/C C/Bb

heal - ing the sick, deaf, and blind. To his
 love them in word, and in deed. So if

F/A Fma7/A Bb C/Bb Bb C C7 Dm Gm

roy - al com - mis - sion he proved true And
 wid - ows and or - phans should ask you, Then

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

will - ing - ly said: "I want to."
 read - i - ly say: "I want to."

SONG 17
“I Want To”**PREVIEW**

Jesus invites us to come to him. What is involved in accepting his invitation? This article will answer that question, and it will remind us of how we can be refreshed by working along with Christ.

“Come to Me, . . . and I Will Refresh You”

*“Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down,
and I will refresh you.”—MATT. 11:28.*

JESUS made a beautiful promise to a crowd that was listening to him. “Come to me,” he said, “and I will refresh you.” (**Read Matthew 11:28-30.**) This was not an empty promise. Think, for example, of what he did for a woman who was suffering from a terrible sickness.

² The woman desperately needed help. She had gone to many physicians, hoping to find relief. After 12 years of misery, she still had not been healed. According to the Law, she was unclean. (Lev. 15:25) Then she heard that Jesus could cure those who were suffering, so she went to find him. When she found him, she touched the fringe of his outer garment, and immediately she was cured! But Jesus did more than heal her body—he restored her dignity. For example, when talking with her, he used the warm yet respectful term “daughter.” How truly refreshed, or energized, that woman must have felt!—Luke 8:43-48.

³ Notice that the woman went to Jesus. She took the initiative. The same is true today—we must make the effort to “come to” Jesus. At present, Jesus will not miraculously cure the physical sicknesses of those who “come to” him. But he still extends the invitation:

1. As recorded at Matthew 11:28-30, what promise did Jesus make?
2. What did Jesus do for a sick woman?
3. What questions will we answer?

“Come to me, . . . and I will refresh you.” In this article, we will answer five questions: How can we “come to” Jesus? What did Jesus mean when he said: “Take my yoke upon you”? What can we learn from Jesus? Why is the work that he has given us to do refreshing? And how can we continue to find refreshment under Jesus’ yoke?

“COME TO ME”

⁴ One way to “come to” Jesus is by learning as much as we can about the things he said and did. (Luke 1:1-4) Nobody else can do this for us—we must study these accounts for ourselves. We also “come to” Jesus by making the decision to get baptized and become a disciple of Christ.

⁵ Another way to “come to” Jesus is by going to the congregation elders if we need help. Jesus uses these “gifts in men” to care for his sheep. (Eph. 4:7, 8, 11; John 21:16; 1 Pet. 5:1-3) We must take the initiative to ask for their help. We cannot expect the elders to read our minds and know what we need. Consider what a brother named Julian says: “I had to leave my Bethel assignment for health reasons, and one of my friends recommended that I request a shepherding call. At first, I did not think I needed it. But later I asked for help, and that shepherding visit turned out to be one of the best gifts I have ever received.” Loyal elders, such as the two who visited Julian, can help us to know “the mind of Christ,” that is, to understand and imitate his thinking and at-

4-5. What are some ways that we can “come to” Jesus?

titude. (1 Cor. 2:16; 1 Pet. 2:21) This really is one of the best gifts they can give us.

“TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU”

⁶ When Jesus said: “Take my yoke upon you,” he may have meant “Accept my authority.” He could also have meant “Get under the yoke with me, and together we will work for Jehovah.” Either way, the yoke entails work.

⁷ We accept Jesus’ invitation when we dedicate our lives to Jehovah and get baptized. That invitation is open to all—Jesus will never reject anyone who sincerely wants to serve God. (John 6:37, 38) All of Christ’s followers have been given the privilege of sharing in the work that Jehovah has asked Jesus to do. We can be certain that Jesus will always be there to help us do that work.—**Read Matthew 28:18-20.**

“LEARN FROM ME”

⁸ Humble people were drawn to Jesus. (Matt. 19:13, 14; Luke 7:37, 38) Why? Consider the contrast between Jesus and the Pharisees. Those religious leaders were cold and arrogant. (Matt. 12:9-14) Jesus was warm and humble. The Pharisees were ambitious and proud of their high position in society. Jesus discouraged undue ambition, and he taught his disciples to view themselves as lowly servants. (Matt. 23:2,

6. What did Jesus mean when he said: “Take my yoke upon you”?

7. According to Matthew 28:18-20, what work have we been given to do, and of what can we be certain?

8-9. Why were humble people drawn to Jesus, and what questions should we ask ourselves?

REFRESH OTHERS AS JESUS DID

(See paragraphs 8-11)



**BE APPROACHABLE
AND FRIENDLY**



**BE ACTIVE AND
ZEALOUS**



**BE HUMBLE AND
HARDWORKING**

6-11) The Pharisees dominated others through fear and intimidation. (John 9: 13, 22) Jesus refreshed others by loving acts and kind words.

⁹ Have you learned these lessons from Jesus? Ask yourself: ‘Do I have a reputation for being mild-tempered and humble? Do I willingly do menial jobs to serve others? Am I kind to others?’

¹⁰ Jesus created a peaceful, inviting environment for his fellow workers, and he enjoyed training them. (Luke 10:1, 19-21) He encouraged his disciples to ask questions, and he wanted to hear their opinions. (Matt. 16:13-16) Much like plants in a greenhouse, the disciples flourished. They absorbed the lessons that Jesus taught and produced fruit in the form of good works.

¹¹ Do you have a position of authority? If so, ask yourself: ‘What kind of environment do I create at work or at home? Do I promote peace? Do I encourage others to ask questions? And am I willing to hear their opinions?’ Never would we want to be like the Pharisees, who resented those who questioned them and persecuted those who expressed an opinion contrary to their own.—Mark 3: 1-6; John 9:29-34.

“YOU WILL FIND REFRESHMENT”

¹² Why is it refreshing for us to do the work Jesus has given us? There are many reasons, but consider just a few.

¹³ We have *the best overseers*. Jehovah, our Supreme Overseer, is not a

10. What work environment did Jesus create?

11. What questions should we ask ourselves?

12-14. Why is the work that Jesus has given us to do refreshing?

thankless or harsh master. He appreciates the work we do. (Heb. 6:10) And he gives us the power that we need to carry our load of responsibility. (2 Cor. 4:7; Gal. 6:5, ftn.) Jesus, our King, leads by example. (John 13:15) And the elders who shepherd us try to imitate Jesus, “the great shepherd.” (Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:2) They strive to be kind, encouraging, and courageous as they feed and protect us.

¹⁴ We have *the best companions*. No other people have a sense of purpose or a bond of love like ours. Just think: We have the privilege of working with people who have the highest moral standards but who are not self-righteous. They are talented but modest, and they consider others superior to them. They view us not only as fellow workers but also as friends. And that bond is so close that they are willing to give their lives for us!

¹⁵ We have *the best work*. We teach people the truth about Jehovah and expose the lies told by the Devil. (John 8: 44) Satan loads people down with burdens they cannot carry. For example, he wants us to believe that Jehovah will not forgive us for our sins and that we are unlovable. What a crushing burden, and what a terrible lie! When we “come to” Christ, our sins are forgiven. And the truth is that Jehovah loves all of us deeply. (Rom. 8:32, 38, 39) How rewarding it is to help people learn to rely on Jehovah and to see them improve their lives!

15. How should we feel about the work that we are doing?

CONTINUE TO FIND REFRESHMENT UNDER JESUS' YOKE

¹⁶ The load that Jesus asks us to carry is different from other loads that we must bear. For example, at the end of a day of secular work, many feel not only exhausted but also unfulfilled. By contrast, after spending time serving Jehovah and Christ, we feel a deep sense of satisfaction. We may be exhausted at the end of a workday and have to push ourselves to attend a congregation meeting that night. But often we come home from that meeting refreshed and energized. The same is true when we make the effort to preach and to do our personal Bible study. The reward we receive is far greater than the energy we expend!

¹⁷ We must be realistic. Each of us has a certain amount of energy. So we must be careful about what we take on. For example, we could waste energy trying to gather material possessions. Note what Jesus said to a rich young man who asked him: "What must I do to inherit everlasting life?" The young man was already obeying the Law. He must have been a decent man because Mark's Gospel account specifically states that Jesus "felt love for him." Jesus presented the young ruler with an invitation. "Go, sell what things you have," Jesus said, "and come be my follower." The man was torn, but it appears that he could not let go of his "many possessions." (Mark 10:17-22) As a result, he rejected the yoke that Jesus had offered

him and continued to slave "for Riches." (Matt. 6:24) What choice would you have made?

¹⁸ From time to time, it is good for us to reassess our priorities in life. Why? So that we can make sure that we are using our energy wisely. Consider what a young man named Mark says: "For many years, I thought I was living a simple life. I was pioneering, but I was always thinking about money and about making my life more comfortable. I wondered why my life had become a burden. Then I realized that I was mostly seeking my own interests first and giving Jehovah the time and energy that was left over." Mark adjusted his thinking and lifestyle and made himself available to do more in Jehovah's service. "I feel anxious at times," Mark says, "but with Jehovah's help and Jesus' backing, I have overcome my challenges."

¹⁹ We will continue to find refreshment under Jesus' yoke if we do three things. First, **keep the right perspective**. We are doing Jehovah's work, so it must be done Jehovah's way. We are the workers, and Jehovah is the Master. (Luke 17:10) If we try to do his work our way, we will find ourselves fighting against the yoke. Even a powerful bull is likely to injure and exhaust itself if it constantly tries to go in its own direction and fights against the yoke that its master controls. On the other hand, we can do extraordinary things and overcome any obstacle if we follow Jehovah's guidance. Remember

16. How is the load that Jesus asks us to carry different from other loads that we must bear?

17. Why must we be realistic and careful?

18. What should we do occasionally, and why?

19. Why is having the right perspective so important?

that nobody can stop his will from being accomplished!—Rom. 8:31; 1 John 4:4.

²⁰ Second, *act with the right motive*. Our goal is to bring glory to our loving Father, Jehovah. Those in the first century who were motivated by greed or self-interest soon became unhappy and abandoned Jesus' yoke. (John 6:25-27, 51, 60, 66; Phil. 3:18, 19) By contrast, those who were motivated by an unselfish love of God and love of neighbor happily carried that yoke throughout their life on earth, with the prospect of serving with Christ in heaven. Like them, we will remain happy by carrying Jesus' yoke with the right motive.

²¹ Third, *have the right expectations*. We have chosen a life of self-sacrifice and hard work. Jesus warned us that we would be persecuted. But we can expect that Jehovah will give us the strength to endure any challenge. The more we endure, the stronger we will become. (Jas. 1:2-4) We can also expect that Jehovah

20. What should be our motive for coming under Jesus' yoke?

21. According to Matthew 6:31-33, what can we expect Jehovah to do?

will provide for us, that Jesus will shepherd us, and that our brothers and sisters will encourage us. (**Read Matthew 6:31-33**; John 10:14; 1 Thess. 5:11) What more do we really need?

²² The woman whom Jesus cured was refreshed on the very day that she was healed. But she would receive lasting refreshment only if she became a loyal disciple of Christ. What do you think she did? If she did choose to come under Jesus' yoke, imagine the reward—serving with Jesus in heaven! Any sacrifices she had made to follow Christ would pale in comparison with that blessing. No matter what our hope is—living forever in heaven or on earth—how thankful we can be that we have accepted Jesus' invitation: “Come to me!”

22. For what can we be thankful?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 22: In a number of ways, Jesus refreshed others. Similarly, a brother proves to be refreshing to others in various ways.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- How do we “come to” Jesus?
- Why is the work that Jesus has given us to do refreshing?
- How can we continue to find refreshment under Jesus' yoke?

Christ, Our Model

(1 Peter 2:21)

C/E C/G C G7sus4 C C/B F/A G/B

What love Je - ho - vah showed, What good - ness from him flowed,
 Je - ho - vah's Word, he said, Sus - tained his life like bread.
 Like Je - sus, may our days Pro - vide Je - ho - vah praise,

G G/F C/E F C/G F6/A G/B F/C C

When for all man - kind he of - fered his First - born.
 It gave him wis - dom and knowl - edge and in - sight.
 And may his foot - steps be - come our own road - way.

C/E Dm11 C Bm11 E7 Am Cma7/G Fma7 C/E Dm7

Christ took on hu - man form— The Son of man was born—
 His Fa - ther's will - ing slave, A mod - el Je - sus gave;
 Let Je - sus' mod - el be Our path e - ter - nal - ly,

G7 G/D G/F Em7 C/E F C/G G13sus4 G7 C

By his ex - am - ple, God's name he a - dorned.
 To please his Fa - ther would bring him de - light.
 And then God's fa - vor we'll know day by day.

