

Monday, April 4

Christ suffered for you, leaving a model for you to follow his steps closely.—1 Peter 2:21.

Jesus set the perfect example of obeying Jehovah. So one important way that we obey Jehovah is by following Jesus' steps as closely as possible. (John 8:29) To keep walking in the truth, we must be convinced that Jehovah is the God of truth, that everything he tells us in his Word, the Bible, is true. And we must also be convinced that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Many today doubt that Jesus has been anointed as King of God's Kingdom. John warned that there were "many deceivers," who could mislead those who were not prepared to defend the truth about Jehovah and Jesus. (2 John 7-11) John wrote: "Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?" (1 John 2:22) The only way we can avoid being deceived is by studying God's Word. Only if we do that will we come to know Jehovah and Jesus. (John 17:3) And only then will we be convinced that we have the truth. w20.07 21 paragraphs 4-5

Tuesday, April 5

Be determined not to put a stumbling block . . . before a brother.—Romans 14:13.

One way we can avoid becoming “a stumbling block” to our fellow runners is by yielding to their preferences whenever possible instead of insisting on our rights. (Romans 14:19-21; 1 Corinthians 8:9, 13) In this important way, we are not like a runner in a literal race who strives to gain the prize just for himself. Those runners think primarily about their own interests. So they may try to push their way to the front of the pack. By contrast, we are not competing against one another. (Galatians 5:26; 6:4) Our goal is to help as many as possible to cross the finish line with us and gain the prize of life. So we try to apply the inspired counsel to “look out not only for [our] own interests, but also for the interests of others.” (Philippians 2:4) In the race that we run, Jehovah has kindly offered his people a guaranteed reward for completing the race—everlasting life either in heaven or on a paradise earth. w20.04 28 paragraph 10; 29 paragraph 12

Wednesday, April 6

These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation.—Revelation 7:14.

Millions of Christian men and women will survive into the new world. Those survivors on earth will be eyewitnesses to another victory over death—the resurrection of billions of people who died in the past. Just imagine the joy when that victorious event occurs! (Acts 24:15) And all those who prove completely loyal to Jehovah will be victorious even over inherited death. They will be able to live forever. Every Christian now alive should be grateful for the reassuring words that Paul wrote to the Corinthians regarding the resurrection. We have every reason to show that we accept Paul's urging to be fully occupied now "in the work of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 15:58) If we loyally and actively share in that work, we will put ourselves in line to experience a future filled with joy. That future will be more wonderful than anything we can imagine. It certainly will confirm that our labor has not been in vain in connection with the Lord.

w20.12 13 paragraphs 16-17

Thursday, April 7

Their armies gathered together to wage war against the one seated on the horse and against his army.—Revelation 19:19.

If we view the prophecies of Ezekiel 38:10-23; Daniel 2:43-45; 11:44–12:1; and Revelation 16:13-16, 21 as speaking about the same time period and events, it appears that we can expect the following developments. Sometime after the start of the great tribulation, “the kings of the entire inhabited earth” will form a coalition of nations. (Revelation 16:13, 14) That coalition becomes what the Scriptures call “Gog of the land of Magog.” (Ezekiel 38:2) That coalition of nations will make one final all-out assault on God’s people. Speaking of this time, the apostle John saw a storm of unusually large hailstones raining down on God’s enemies. That symbolic hailstorm may take the form of a hard-hitting judgment message delivered by Jehovah’s people that provokes Gog of Magog into attacking God’s people with the intention of wiping them off the earth.—Revelation 16:21.

w20.05 15 paragraphs 13-14

Friday, April 8

If you, although being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those asking him!—Luke 11:13.

God's active force is a gift we should treasure. We can deepen our appreciation for holy spirit by reflecting on what that spirit has accomplished in our day. Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he told his disciples: "You will receive power when the holy spirit comes upon you, and you will be witnesses of me ... to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) With the backing of holy spirit, some eight and a half million worshippers of Jehovah have been gathered from every corner of the earth. Also, we enjoy a spiritual paradise because God's spirit helps us to cultivate beautiful qualities, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, and self-control. These qualities make up "the fruitage of the spirit." (Galatians 5:22, 23) What a precious gift holy spirit is! w20.05 28 paragraph 10; 29 paragraph 13

Saturday, April 9

Since death came through a man, resurrection of the dead also comes through a man.—1 Corinthians 15:21.

For a number of reasons, we can assume that those greeting resurrected individuals will be able to recognize their loved ones. For instance, based on resurrections that have already occurred, it seems that Jehovah will re-create people so that they look, speak, and think in the same way as they did shortly before they died. Remember that Jesus likened death to sleep and the resurrection to being awakened from sleep. (Matthew 9:18, 24; John 11:11-13) When people awaken from sleep, they look and sound the same as when they went to sleep, and they retain their memory. Consider the example of Lazarus. He had been dead for four days, so his body had begun to decay. Yet, when Jesus resurrected him, his sisters immediately recognized him, and Lazarus obviously remembered them.—John 11:38-44; 12:1, 2. *w20.08* 14 paragraph 3; 16 paragraph 8

Sunday, April 10

Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb.—Revelation 7:10.

The difference between the anointed and the other sheep is not their value to God. Both groups are equally precious to him. After all, he paid the same price, the life of his dear Son, to purchase both the anointed and the other sheep. The difference between the two groups is that they have different hopes. Both groups must remain loyal to God and Christ. (Psalm 31:23) And remember, God's spirit can work with equal force on all of us. This means that Jehovah supplies his holy spirit to each individual according to what is needed. Jehovah has given each of his dedicated servants a wonderful hope for the future. (Jeremiah 29:11) The Memorial of Christ's death gives each of us a grand opportunity to praise God and Christ for what they have done for us so that we can enjoy unending life. The Memorial is without question the most important occasion for true Christians to meet together. *w21.01* 18 paragraph 16; 19 paragraph 19

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“How to Be a Good Friend”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

1Sa 21:12, 13—What can we learn from David’s actions? (w05 3/15 24 ¶4)

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 min.) 1Sa 22:1-11 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Return Visit: (2 min.) Make a return visit on someone who showed interest and accepted the Memorial invitation. (6)

Return Visit: (5 min.) After the conclusion of the Memorial talk, initiate a conversation with someone you invited and answer a question he raises about the program. (12)

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iff* lesson 04 point 3 (20)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 85

“Who Are Your Online Friends?": (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Be Social-Network Smart* (video category TEENAGERS).

Welcome Our Guests: (5 min.) Talk by the service overseer based on the article in the March 2016 *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*. Outline the local progress that has been made in the campaign. Refer to the Memorial Bible reading schedule on pages 10 and 11, and encourage all to prepare their hearts for the Memorial. (Ezr 7:10) Provide necessary reminders regarding local arrangements for attending or viewing the program.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* Summary of Clarifications, questions 1-4

 How to Be a Good Friend

Comfort and encourage your friend when he is distressed (1Sa 20:1, 2; w19.11 7 ¶18)

Warn your friend when there is danger (1Sa 20:12, 13; w08 2/15 8 ¶7)

Defend your friend when he is slandered (1Sa 20:30-32; w09 10/15 19 ¶11)

Jehovah’s people have many opportunities to develop good friendships. To have a friend, we must be a friend. Whom would you like to befriend in the congregation?



Encourage One Another

(Hebrews 10:24, 25)

1. As we encourage one another
 To serve Jehovah faithfully,
We find the bonds of love are strengthened;
 Fine works bring peace and unity.
The love we find among God's people
 Gives each the courage to endure.
Our congregation is a refuge,
 A place where we can feel secure.
2. A word when spoken at the right time
 Is, oh, how comforting to hear!
We hear these words of consolation
 From friends so faithful and so dear.
How good it is to work together
 With those whose hopes and goals we share!
We seek to strengthen one another
 And help each one his burden bear.
3. As we with eyes of faith are seeing
 The nearness of Jehovah's day,
We need our gathering together
 To keep us walking in the way.
United with Jehovah's people,
 We hope to serve eternally.
So we encourage one another
 To hold to our integrity.

1 SAMUEL 20-22

20 Then David ran away from Nai'oth in Ra'mah. However, he came to Jon'a·than and said: "What have I done? What is my offense, and how have I sinned against your father for him to seek my life?" ² At this Jon'a·than said to him: "It is unthinkable! You will not die. Look! My father will not do anything, great or small, without disclosing it to me. Why should my father hide this matter from me? This will not happen." ³ But David swore further and said: "Your father surely knows that I have found favor in your eyes and would say, 'Do not let Jon'a·than know this or he will be upset.' But as surely as Jehovah is living and as surely as you are living, there is only a step between me and death!"

⁴ Then Jon'a·than said to David: "Whatever you say, I will do for you." ⁵ David said to Jon'a·than: "Tomorrow is the new moon, and I am certainly expected to sit with the king to eat; you must send me away, and I will hide in the field until the evening on the third day. ⁶ If your father misses me at all, then say, 'David begged me for permission to go quickly to his city Beth'le·hem, because there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family.' ⁷ If his response is, 'That is fine,' it means peace to your servant. But if he becomes angry, you can be sure that he is determined to harm me. ⁸ Show loyal love to your servant, for you have brought your servant into Jehovah's covenant with you. But if I am guilty, put me to death yourself. Why turn me over to your father?"

⁹ To this Jon'a·than said: "It is unthinkable to suggest that about you! If I learn that my father is determined to harm

you, would I not tell you?" ¹⁰ Then David said to Jon'a·than: "Who will tell me whether your father gives you a harsh answer?" ¹¹ Jon'a·than said to David: "Come, let us go out into the field." So both of them went out into the field. ¹² And Jon'a·than said to David: "Let Jehovah the God of Israel be a witness that I will sound out my father about this time tomorrow or by the third day. If he is favorably disposed toward David, will I not then send you word and disclose it to you? ¹³ But if my father intends to harm you, may Jehovah do that and more to Jon'a·than if I do not disclose it to you and send you away in peace. May Jehovah be with you, just as he was with my father. ¹⁴ And will you not show me the loyal love of Jehovah while I am alive and even when I die? ¹⁵ Never withdraw your loyal love from my household, even when Jehovah wipes out all the enemies of David from the face of the earth." ¹⁶ So Jon'a·than made a covenant with the house of David, saying, "Jehovah will require it and call David's enemies to account." ¹⁷ So Jon'a·than had David swear again by his love for him, for he loved him as he loved himself.

¹⁸ Jon'a·than then said to him: "Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed, for your seat will be vacant. ¹⁹ By the third day, you will be missed even more, and you must go to the place where you hid the other day and stay near the stone here. ²⁰ I will then shoot three arrows to one side of it, as though I were shooting at a target. ²¹ When I send the attendant, I will say, 'Go, find the arrows.' If I say to the attendant, 'Look! The arrows are on this side of you, get them,' then you may come back, for as surely as Jehovah is

living, it means everything is peaceful for you and there is no danger. ²² But if I should say to the boy, 'Look! The arrows are beyond you,' then go, for Jehovah has sent you away. ²³ As for the promise that we have made, you and I, may Jehovah be between us forever."

²⁴ So David hid in the field. When the new moon came, the king took his seat at the meal to eat. ²⁵ The king was sitting in his usual seat by the wall. Jon'a-than was facing him, and Ab'ner was sitting at Saul's side, but David's place was vacant. ²⁶ Saul did not say anything that day, for he said to himself: 'Something has happened so that he is not clean. Yes, he must be unclean.' ²⁷ And the day after the new moon, on the second day, David's place continued vacant. Saul then said to Jon'a-than his son: "Why has the son of Jes'se not come to the meal either yesterday or today?" ²⁸ Jon'a-than answered Saul: "David begged me for permission to go to Beth'le-hem. ²⁹ He said, 'Please permit me to go, because we have a family sacrifice in the city, and my own brother summoned me. So if I have found favor in your eyes, please let me slip away to see my brothers.' That is why he has not come to the king's table." ³⁰ Then Saul became enraged with Jon'a-than, and he said to him: "You son of a rebellious woman, do you think I do not know that you are choosing to side with the son of Jes'se, to your own shame and to the shame of your mother? ³¹ As long as the son of Jes'se is alive on the earth, you and your kingship will not be firmly established. So now send someone to bring him to me, for he must die."

³² However, Jon'a·than said to Saul his father: "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" ³³ At that Saul hurled the spear at him to strike him, so Jon'a·than knew that his father was determined to put David to death.

³⁴ Jon'a·than immediately rose up from the table in the heat of anger, and he did not eat any food on the second day after the new moon, for he was upset over David and his own father had humiliated him.

³⁵ In the morning Jon'a·than went out to the field for the appointment with David, and a young attendant was with him. ³⁶ And he said to his attendant: "Please run and find the arrows that I shoot." The attendant ran, and Jon'a·than shot the arrow beyond him. ³⁷ When the attendant reached the place where Jon'a·than had shot the arrow, Jon'a·than called out to the attendant: "Is not the arrow beyond you?"

³⁸ Jon'a·than called out to the attendant: "Hurry! Go quickly! Do not delay!" And Jon'a·than's attendant picked up the arrows and came back to his master. ³⁹ The attendant did not understand anything about the matter; only Jon'a·than and David knew what was meant. ⁴⁰ Then Jon'a·than gave his weapons to his attendant and told him: "Go, take them to the city."

⁴¹ When the attendant left, David rose up from a place nearby that was to the south. Then he fell with his face to the ground and bowed three times, and they kissed each other and wept for each other, but David wept the most.

⁴² Jon'a·than said to David: "Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of Jehovah, saying, 'May Jehovah

be between you and me and between your offspring and my offspring forever.”

Then David rose up and left, and Jon'a·than went back to the city.

21 David later came to Nob to A·him'e·lech the priest. A·him'e·lech began to tremble when he met David, and he said to him: “Why are you by yourself and no one is with you?” ² David replied to A·him'e·lech the priest: “The king instructed me to do something, but he said, ‘Do not let anyone know anything about the mission on which I am sending you and about the instructions I have given you.’ I made an appointment with my young men to meet at a certain place. ³ Now if there are five loaves of bread at your disposal, just give them to me, or whatever is available.” ⁴ But the priest answered David: “There is no ordinary bread on hand, but there is holy bread—provided that the young men have kept away from women.” ⁵ David answered the priest: “Women have certainly been kept away from us as on previous occasions when I went out on a campaign. If the bodies of the young men are holy even when the mission is ordinary, how much more so today should they be holy!” ⁶ So the priest gave him the holy bread, because there was no bread there except the showbread, which had been removed from Jehovah’s presence to be replaced by fresh bread on the day it was taken away.

⁷ Now one of Saul’s servants was there on that day, detained before Jehovah. His name was Do'eg the E'dom·ite, the chief of Saul’s shepherds.

⁸ David then said to A·him'e·lech: “Is there a spear or a sword here at your disposal? I did not take my own sword or my weapons with me, because the king’s mission was urgent.” ⁹ To this the priest said: “The sword of Go·li'ath the Phi·lis'tine, whom you struck down in the Valley of E'lah, is here, wrapped up in a cloth behind the eph'od. If you want to take it for yourself, take it, because it is the only one here.” David said: “There is none like it. Give it to me.”

¹⁰ That day David rose up and continued his flight from Saul, and he eventually came to King A'chish of Gath. ¹¹ The servants of A'chish said to him: “Is this not David, the king of the land? Is he not the one they sang about when they danced, saying,

‘Saul has struck down his thousands,
And David his tens of thousands’?”

¹² David took these words to heart, and he became very much afraid of King A'chish of Gath. ¹³ So he disguised his sanity in their presence and acted insane while among them. He was making marks on the doors of the gate and letting his saliva run down his beard. ¹⁴ Finally A'chish said to his servants: “You see that this man is crazy! Why bring him to me? ¹⁵ Do I have a shortage of crazy men that I need to have this one acting crazy before me? Should this man enter my house?”

22 So David went from there, escaping to the cave of A·dul'lam. When his brothers and his father’s entire house heard of it, they went down there to him. ² And all those who were in trouble and in debt and who had a grievance

gathered to him, and he became their chief. There were about 400 men with him.

³ David later went from there to Miz'peh in Mo'ab and said to the king of Mo'ab: "Please let my father and mother stay with you until I know what God will do for me." ⁴ So he left them with the king of Mo'ab, and they stayed with him the whole time that David was in the stronghold.

⁵ In time Gad the prophet said to David: "Do not stay in the stronghold. Go from there into the land of Judah." So David left and went into the forest of He'reth.

⁶ Saul heard that David and the men with him had been found. Saul was then sitting in Gib'e-ah under the tamarisk tree on the high place with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were stationed around him. ⁷ Then Saul said to his servants stationed around him: "Listen, please, you Ben'ja-min-ites. Will the son of Jes'se also give fields and vineyards to all of you? Will he appoint all of you as chiefs of thousands and chiefs of hundreds?" ⁸ All of you have conspired against me! No one informed me when my own son made a covenant with the son of Jes'se! Not one of you has sympathy for me and informs me that my own son has incited my own servant against me to ambush me, as is now the case."

⁹ Then Do'eg the E'dom-ite, who was stationed there over the servants of Saul, answered: "I saw the son of Jes'se come to Nob to A·him'e·lech the son of A·hi'tub. ¹⁰ And he inquired of Jehovah for him and gave him provisions. He even gave him the sword of Go-li'ath the Phi-lis'tine." ¹¹ At

once the king sent for A·him'e·lech son of A·hi'tub the priest and all the priests of his father's house, who were in Nob. So all of them came to the king.

¹² Saul now said: "Listen, please, you son of A·hi'tub!" to which he replied: "Here I am, my lord." ¹³ Saul said to him: "Why have you conspired against me, you and the son of Jes'se, by giving him bread and a sword and by making an inquiry of God for him? He opposes me and waits in ambush, as is now the case." ¹⁴ At this A·him'e·lech answered the king: "Who among all your servants is as trustworthy as David? He is the king's son-in-law and a chief over your bodyguard and honored in your house. ¹⁵ Was today the first time I inquired of God for him? What you are saying is unthinkable on my part! Do not let the king hold anything against his servant and against my father's entire house, for your servant did not know a single thing about any of this."

¹⁶ But the king said: "You will surely die, A·him'e·lech, you along with all your father's house." ¹⁷ With that the king said to the guards stationed around him: "Turn and kill the priests of Jehovah, because they have sided with David! They knew that he was a runaway, and they did not inform me!" But the king's servants did not want to lift their hands to assault the priests of Jehovah. ¹⁸ Then the king said to Do'eg: "You turn and assault the priests!" Immediately Do'eg the E'dom-ite went and assaulted the priests himself. He killed on that day 85 men wearing the linen eph'od. ¹⁹ He also struck Nob, the city of the priests, with the sword; man as well as woman,

child as well as infant, bull, donkey, and sheep, he put to the sword.

²⁰ However, one son of A·him'e·lech the son of A·hi'tub, whose name was A·bi'a·thar, escaped and ran away to follow David. ²¹ A·bi'a·thar told David: "Saul has killed the priests of Jehovah." ²² At this David said to A·bi'a·thar: "I knew on that day, when Do'eg the E'dom·ite was there, that he would be sure to tell Saul. I am personally responsible for the death of everyone in your father's house. ²³ Stay with me. Do not be afraid, for whoever seeks your life seeks my life; you are under my protection."

**TREASURES
FROM GOD'S WORD**

“How to Be a Good Friend”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

1Sa 21:12, 13—What can we learn from David's actions? (w05 3/15 24 ¶14)

What spiritual gems from this week's Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 min.) 1Sa 22:1-11 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

Return Visit: (2 min.) Make a return visit on someone who showed interest and accepted the Memorial invitation. (6)

Return Visit: (5 min.) After the conclusion of the Memorial talk, initiate a conversation with someone you invited and answer a question he raises about the program. (12)

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iff* lesson 04 point 3 (20)

**LIVING
AS CHRISTIANS**

Song 85

“Who Are Your Online Friends?”: (10 min.)

Discussion. Play the video *Be Social-Network Smart* (video category TEENAGERS).

Welcome Our Guests: (5 min.) Talk by the service overseer based on the article in the March 2016 *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*. Outline the local progress that has been made in the campaign. Refer to the Memorial Bible reading schedule on pages 10 and 11, and encourage all to prepare their hearts for the Memorial. (Ezr 7:10) Provide necessary reminders regarding local arrangements for attending or viewing the program.

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Comfort and encourage your friend when he is distressed (1Sa 20:1, 2; w19.11 7 ¶18)

Warn your friend when there is danger (1Sa 20:12, 13; w08 2/15 8 ¶7)

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Jehovah's people have many opportunities to develop good friendships. To have a friend, we must be a friend. Whom would you like to befriend in the congregation?



April 4-10 / 1 Samuel 20-22

Song 90 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"How to Be a Good Friend": (10 minutes)

Comfort and encourage your friend when he is distressed

1 Samuel 20:1, 2: Then David ran away from Naioth in Ramah. However, he came to Jonathan and said: "What have I done? What is my offense, and how have I sinned against your father for him to seek my life?" At this Jonathan said to him: "It is unthinkable! You will not die. Look! My father will not do anything, great or small, without disclosing it to me. Why should my father hide this matter from me? This will not happen."

w19.11 7 paragraph 18

Today, our brothers and sisters face a variety of challenges. For instance, many suffer from natural or man-made disasters. When that happens, some of us may be able to welcome these friends into our home. Others may be able to

help financially. But all of us can ask Jehovah to help our brothers and sisters. If we learn that a brother or sister is discouraged, we may not know what to say or how to react. But all of us have much to offer. For example, we can make time to be with our friend. We can listen sympathetically when he or she speaks. And we can share our favorite comforting scripture. (Isaiah 50:4) What matters most is that you are there with your friends when they need you.—Read Proverbs 17:17.

Warn your friend when there is danger

1 Samuel 20:12, 13: And Jonathan said to David: “Let Jehovah the God of Israel be a witness that I will sound out my father about this time tomorrow or by the third day. If he is favorably disposed toward David, will I not then send you word and disclose it to you? But if my father intends to harm you, may Jehovah do that and more to Jonathan if I do not disclose it to you and send you away in peace. May Jehovah be with you, just as he was with my father.

w08 2/15 8 paragraph 7

God expects us to be trustworthy friends. (Proverbs 17:17)
King Saul's son Jonathan befriended David. When Jonathan heard that David had killed Goliath, "Jonathan's very soul became bound up with the soul of David, and Jonathan began to love him as his own soul." (1 Samuel 18:1, 3)
Jonathan even warned David when Saul wanted to kill him. After David fled, Jonathan met him and made a covenant with him. Speaking to Saul about David almost cost Jonathan his life, but the two friends met again and renewed their bond of friendship. (1 Samuel 20:24-41) At their last meeting, Jonathan strengthened David's hand "in regard to God."—1 Samuel 23:16-18.

Defend your friend when he is slandered

1 Samuel 20:30-32: Then Saul became enraged with Jonathan, and he said to him: "You son of a rebellious woman, do you think I do not know that you are choosing to side with the son of Jesse, to your own shame and to the shame of your mother? As long as the son of Jesse is alive on the earth, you and your kingship will not be firmly established. So now send someone to bring him to me, for

he must die." However, Jonathan said to Saul his father: "Why should he be put to death? What has he done?"

w09 10/15 19 paragraph 11

Be loyal. "A true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress," wrote Solomon. (Proverbs 17:17) When composing those words, Solomon may have had in mind the friendship that his father, David, enjoyed with Jonathan. (1 Samuel 18:1) King Saul wanted his son Jonathan to inherit the throne of Israel. But Jonathan accepted the fact that Jehovah had chosen David for this privilege. Unlike Saul, Jonathan did not become envious of David. He did not resent the praise David received, nor did he swallow the slander that Saul spread about David. (1 Samuel 20:24-34) Are we like Jonathan? When our friends receive privileges, are we happy for them? When they suffer hardships, do we comfort and support them? If we hear harmful gossip about a friend, are we quick to believe it? Or, like Jonathan, do we loyally defend our friend?

Jehovah's people have many opportunities to develop good friendships. To have a friend, we must be a friend. Whom

would you like to befriend in the congregation?

Spiritual Gems

1 Samuel 21:12, 13—What can we learn from David's actions?

1 Samuel 21:12, 13: David took these words to heart, and he became very much afraid of King Achish of Gath. So he disguised his sanity in their presence and acted insane while among them. He was making marks on the doors of the gate and letting his saliva run down his beard.

w05 3/15 24 paragraph 4

1 Samuel 21:12, 13. Jehovah expects us to use our mental faculties and abilities to deal with difficult situations in life. He has given us his inspired Word, which imparts prudence, knowledge, and thinking ability. (Proverbs 1:4) We also have the help of appointed Christian elders.

What spiritual gems from this week's Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 minutes) 1 Samuel 22:1-11 (*th* study 5)

Song 90 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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“Who Are Your Online Friends?": (10 min.)

Discussion. Play the video *Be Social-Network Smart* (video category TEENAGERS).

Welcome Our Guests: (5 min.) Talk by the service overseer based on the article in the March 2016 *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*. Outline the local progress that has been made in the campaign. Refer to the Memorial Bible reading schedule on pages 10 and 11, and encourage all to prepare their hearts for the Memorial. (Ezr 7:10) Provide necessary reminders regarding local arrangements for attending or viewing the program.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* Summary of Clarifications, questions 1-4

 How to Be a Good Friend

Comfort and encourage your friend when he is distressed (1Sa 20:1, 2; w19.11 7 ¶18)

Warn your friend when there is danger (1Sa 20:12, 13; w08 2/15 8 ¶7)

Defend your friend when he is slandered (1Sa 20:30-32; w09 10/15 19 ¶11)

Jehovah’s people have many opportunities to develop good friendships. To have a friend, we must be a friend. Whom would you like to befriend in the congregation?





Memorial Invitation Campaign (March 19–April 15)

“We’re happy to invite you to a special event that will be attended by millions of people. It’s the anniversary of Jesus’ death.” Provide a printed or electronic invitation. “This invitation shows the time and location of the event in our area [or how you can attend online]. We also invite you to a special talk the weekend before.”

When Interest Is Shown: Play [or text or email] the video *Remember Jesus’ Death*.

Link: Why did Jesus die?

Initial Call* (March 1-18, April 16-30)

Question: Who is Jesus?

Scripture: **Mt 16:16**

Link: Why did Jesus die?

Return Visit*

Question: Why did Jesus die?

Scripture: **Mt 20:28**

Link: How can we show appreciation for Jesus’ ransom sacrifice?

* You may adjust the question, link, and setting according to local circumstances.



DIG DEEPER

Examine the difference between God's titles and his unique name. Then learn how and why he revealed his name to you.

JEHOVAH



VIDEO: *Many Titles, but One Name* (0:41)

3. God has many titles, but one name

To see the difference between a person's title and his name, **play the VIDEO**, and then discuss the question that follows.

- What is the difference between a title, such as "Lord," and a name?

The Bible acknowledges that people worship many gods and lords. **Read Psalm 136:1-3**, and then discuss this question:

- Who is "the God of gods" and "the Lord of lords"?

Welcome One Another

(Romans 15:7)

1. Welcome to all who gather here this day
To hear God's Word and to learn his way.
Life-giving truth he offers to us all;
With thankfulness of heart, we respond to his call.
2. Thanks to our God for brothers such as these,
Who welcome us and who seek to please.
May we keep holding men of that sort dear,
And now we welcome others who meet with us here.
3. God's invitation reaches all mankind,
That all sincere ones the truth may find.
God by his Son has drawn us to His side.
So welcome one another with hearts opened wide.

Song 90 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“How to Be a Good Friend”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

1Sa 21:12, 13—What can we learn from David’s actions? (w05 3/15 24 ¶14)

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 min.) 1Sa 22:1-11 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Return Visit: (2 min.) Make a return visit on someone who showed interest and accepted the Memorial invitation. (6)

Return Visit: (5 min.) After the conclusion of the Memorial talk, initiate a conversation with someone you invited and answer a question he raises about the program. (12)

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iff* lesson 04 point 3 (20)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 85

“Who Are Your Online Friends?": (10 min.)

Discussion. Play the video *Be Social-Network Smart* (video category TEENAGERS).

Welcome Our Guests: (5 min.) Talk by the service overseer based on the article in the March 2016 *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*. Outline the local progress that has been made in the campaign. Refer to the Memorial Bible reading schedule on pages 10 and 11, and encourage all to prepare their hearts for the Memorial. (Ezr 7:10) Provide necessary reminders regarding local arrangements for attending or viewing the program.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* Summary of Clarifications, questions 1-4

 How to Be a Good Friend

Comfort and encourage your friend when he is distressed (1Sa 20:1, 2; w19.11 7 ¶18)

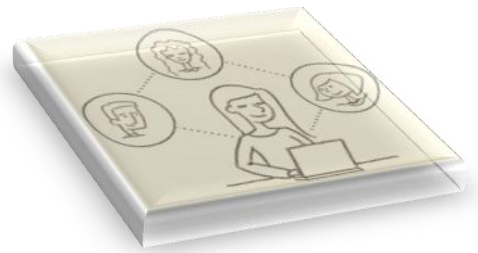
Warn your friend when there is danger (1Sa 20:12, 13; w08 2/15 8 ¶7)

Defend your friend when he is slandered (1Sa 20:30-32; w09 10/15 19 ¶11)

Jehovah’s people have many opportunities to develop good friendships. To have a friend, we must be a friend. Whom would you like to befriend in the congregation?



Be Social-Network Smart



What can you do on a social network? You can connect with people, a lot of people. Share your photos, tell jokes, share your thoughts on, well, just about anything. And see what all your friends are up to. It's pretty easy and that's

the problem. Sometimes it's a little too easy.

You see, a social network may look harmless but once you login, watch out! It can be a dangerous place. So, if your parents allow you to have an account, you have to be smart - social network smart. Follow the front-page rule: don't post anything that you wouldn't want to see on the TV news or the front page of the newspaper. And that includes personal information, like: your phone number, where you live, and where you go to school. Never tell people when you're not home or when you're going on vacation. It may seem harmless, but, that's exactly the kind of information thieves can use to break into your house or even steal your identity.

Now, let's look at your reputation. Your photos and comments say a lot about you. So, if you made a fool of yourself, ask: "Is this how I really want people to view me, not just now, but in the future, like at a job interview?" At

Proverbs 22:1 the Bible says a good reputation is worth more "... than silver and gold."

(Proverbs 22:1) A good name* is to be chosen rather than great wealth; To be respected* is better than silver and gold. Or "A good reputation." Lit., "A name." / Lit., "Favor." (nwtsty/nwt2013)

Don't let that delete key fool you, posting something on the internet is kind of like writing in permanent ink.

Okay, so you're careful about what you share. Now, think about who you're sharing it with. Who are your friends? Some people have hundreds of online friends, some have thousands! So, you may think: "The more friends the better, right?"

Actually, no. That kind of thinking can blow up in your face. You see, when you connect with online friends you're also indirectly connecting with their friends and their friend's friends. That means you may find yourself seeing posts from people you don't even know, people whose morals and beliefs may be different from yours. They may use bad language or post about things you know are wrong. Those just aren't the kind of friends you want to hang around with, not even online.

And, there's another danger. At Psalm 26:4 the Bible warns about people who hide what they are. They pretend to be

someone they're not and may seem super friendly, but they can be dangerous.

(Psalm 26:4) I do not associate* with deceitful men,
And I avoid those who hide what they are.*

Lit., “sit.” / Or “I do not mingle with hypocrites.”
(nwtsty/nwt2013)

So, when it comes to friends, you need to be picky. The safest friends online are ones you already know offline.

There's one more thing to think about, it has to do with your time. Checking out the latest posts can be addictive. So, let's set some limits and don't let your online life get in the way of your real life.

You know, connecting with others online can be fun and safe as long as you look out for all the dangers. So, the next time you log in, be smart, social network smart.

- Song 131 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Esther Acted Unselfishly for Jehovah and for His People”:** (10 min.)
 Es 8:3, 4—Although Esther was safe, she risked her life for others (*ia* 143 ¶24-25)
 Es 8:5—Esther was tactful with Ahasuerus (*w06* 3/1 11 ¶8)
 Es 8:17—Many people became Jewish proselytes (*w06* 3/1 11 ¶3)
 - **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Es 8:1, 2—How was Jacob’s deathbed prophecy fulfilled regarding Benjamin’s ‘dividing spoil in the evening’? (*ia* 142, box)
- Es 9:10, 15, 16—Even though the decree authorized plundering of the spoil, why did the Jews refrain from doing so? (*w06* 3/1 11 ¶4)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** Es 8:1-9 (4 min. or less)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Prepare This Month’s Presentations:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play each sample presentation video, and then discuss the highlights. Afterward, discuss the article “Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Building Your Own Magazine Presentation.”

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 118
- **“Welcome Our Guests”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Invite publishers to relate good experiences that resulted from taking the initiative to welcome visitors attending a past Memorial. Have a reenactment of an outstanding experience.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** *ia* chap. 10 ¶12-21, review on p. 91 (30 min.)
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 69 and Prayer

Welcome Our Guests

On March 23, some 12 million or more visitors are expected to attend the Memorial as our guests. What an outstanding witness they will receive as the speaker discusses Jehovah’s gift of the ransom and some of the future blessings that will result to mankind! (Isa 11:6-9; 35:5, 6; 65:21-23; Joh 3:16) However, the speaker is not the only one who will give a witness on this special occasion. All of us can have a share by warmly welcoming our guests. (Ro 15:7) Here are some suggestions.



- Instead of going to your seat and waiting for the program to begin, welcome visitors and inactive ones with a warm smile and a friendly greeting
- While giving special attention to acquaintances that you personally invited, be alert for others who may be there as a result of the invitation campaign. Invite new ones to sit with you. Share your Bible and songbook with them
- After the talk, make yourself available to answer questions. If time is limited because your congregation must leave to make room for another congregation, make arrangements to visit the person within a few days. If you do not have his or her contact information, you might say: “I’d like to hear what you thought of the program. Is there a way that I can contact you?”

2022 Memorial Bible Reading Schedule



SATURDAY, APRIL 9

SUNRISE

SUNSET (Nisan 8 begins)

John 11:55-12:1

SUNDAY, APRIL 10

SUNRISE

SUNSET (Nisan 9 begins)

Matthew 26:6-13

Mark 14:3-9

John 12:2-11

Jesus—The Way, chap. 101

MONDAY, APRIL 11

SUNRISE

SUNSET (Nisan 10 begins)

Matthew 21:1-11, 14-17

Mark 11:1-11

Luke 19:29-44

John 12:12-19

Jesus—The Way, chap. 102

TUESDAY, APRIL 12

SUNRISE

SUNSET (Nisan 11 begins)

Matthew 21:12, 13, 18, 19

Mark 11:12-19

Luke 19:45-48

John 12:20-50

Jesus—The Way, chaps. 103-104

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

SUNRISE

SUNSET (Nisan 12 begins)

Matthew 21:19-25:46

Mark 11:20-13:37

Luke 20:1-21:38

Jesus—The Way, chaps. 105-114

THURSDAY, APRIL 14

SUNRISE

Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16
Mark 14:1, 2, 10, 11
Luke 22:1-6

Jesus—The Way, chap. 115

SUNSET (Nisan 13 begins)



FRIDAY, APRIL 15 • MEMORIAL (AFTER SUNSET)

SUNRISE

Matthew 26:17-19
Mark 14:12-16
Luke 22:7-13

Jesus—The Way, chaps. 116-126

SUNSET (Nisan 14 begins)

Matthew 26:20-75
Mark 14:17-72
Luke 22:14-65
John 13:1-18:27

Jesus—The Way, chaps. 116-126



SATURDAY, APRIL 16

SUNRISE

Matthew 27:1-61
Mark 15:1-47
Luke 22:66-23:56
John 18:28-19:42

Jesus—The Way, chaps. 127-133

SUNSET (Nisan 15 begins)



SUNDAY, APRIL 17

SUNRISE

Matthew 27:62-66

SUNSET (Nisan 16 begins)

Mark 16:1



MONDAY, APRIL 18

SUNRISE

Matthew 28:1-15
Mark 16:2-8
Luke 24:1-49
John 20:1-25

Jesus—The Way, chaps. 134-135

SUNSET (Nisan 17 begins)



SUMMARY OF CLARIFICATIONS

Over the years, *The Watchtower* has adjusted our understanding of several aspects of Ezekiel's prophecy. And this publication, *Pure Worship of Jehovah—Restored At Last!*, contains a number of additional clarifications. See if you can answer the following questions.

What do the four faces of the living creatures represent?

Scriptures

Ezek. 1:4-6, 10; 10:2

Pure Worship

Chap. 4, pars. 5-14

Previous understanding: Each of the four faces of the living creatures, or cherubs, represents one of Jehovah's four cardinal attributes.

Clarification: While each one of the four faces of the living creatures stands for one of the four cardinal attributes of Jehovah, *when viewed together* the four faces embrace *all* the attributes that he possesses. Also, the four faces impress on us the surpassing greatness of Jehovah's might and glory.

Reasoning behind the change: In God's Word, the number four is often used to denote that which is all-embracing, or complete. Hence, when the *four* faces

are depicted *together*, they form more than four individual attributes—they are the foundation of Jehovah’s awe-inspiring personality. Also, each face belongs to a creature that embodies majesty, strength, and mightiness. Even so, all four mighty representatives of creation, as depicted by the four faces of each cherub, are situated *below* the throne of Jehovah. That depiction highlights that Jehovah is the Supreme Ruler over all.

**Whom does the man
with the secretary’s inkhorn symbolize?**

Scriptures

Ezek. 9:2

The Watchtower

June 2016, pp. 16-17

Pure Worship

Chap. 16, par. 18

Previous understanding: The man with the inkhorn represents the anointed remnant. By means of the preaching and disciple-making work, the anointed are now putting a symbolic mark on the foreheads of those who become part of the “great crowd.”—Rev. 7:9.

Clarification: The man with the secretary's inkhorn pictures Jesus Christ. He will mark the great crowd when they are judged as sheep during the "great tribulation."—Matt. 24:21.

Reasoning behind the change: Jehovah has entrusted the judging to his Son. (John 5:22, 23) According to Matthew 25:31-33, Jesus will make the final judgment regarding who are "sheep" and who are "goats."

**Do the prostitute sisters, Oholah and Oholibah,
prefigure Christendom with its division between the
Catholic and Protestant faiths?**

Scriptures

Ezek. 23:1-4

Pure Worship

Chap. 15, box 15A

Previous understanding: Oholah (Samaria, capital of Israel), the older sister, pictures Catholicism; Oholibah (Jerusalem, capital of Judah), the younger sister, pictures Protestantism.

Clarification: These prostitute sisters are not prophetic types of any parts of Christendom. Rather, their existence serves to teach us about how Jehovah feels when those who were once his loyal people commit

spiritual prostitution. His feelings regarding all false religion are similar.

Reasoning behind the change: There is no Scriptural indication that Oholah and Oholibah are prophetic types of Christendom. Israel and Judah were once like faithful wives to Jehovah, but Christendom has never had such a relationship with Jehovah. Further, the comparisons of God's unfaithful people to prostitutes in chapters 16 and 23 of Ezekiel offer hope of reform and restoration. Christendom, as part of Babylon the Great, has no such hope.

Is Christendom the antitype of ancient apostate Jerusalem?

Pure Worship

Chap. 16, box 16A

Previous understanding: Unfaithful Jerusalem is a prophetic type of Christendom. Hence, the destruction of Jerusalem prophetically foreshadowed that of Christendom.

Clarification: Conditions in unfaithful Jerusalem—such as idolatry and widespread corruption—*remind us* of Christendom, but we no longer refer to Christendom as the *antitypical Jerusalem*.

Reasoning behind the change: There is no clear Scriptural basis for such a type-antitype approach. Unlike ancient Jerusalem, Christendom has never practiced pure worship. And while Jerusalem did receive Jehovah's forgiveness for a time, there is no such prospect ahead for Christendom.

How was the vision of the valley of dry bones fulfilled?

Scriptures

Ezek. 37:1-14

The Watchtower

March 2016, pp. 29-31

Pure Worship

Chap. 10, pars. 9-14

Previous understanding: In 1918 the persecuted anointed were brought into captivity to Babylon the Great, experiencing a deathlike condition of near inactivity. That short captivity ended in 1919 when Jehovah revived them as Kingdom proclaimers.

Clarification: The deathlike condition of spiritual captivity lasted a very long time and began much earlier than 1918. It started in the second century C.E. and ended in 1919 C.E. and basically parallels the long

The Light Gets Brighter

(Proverbs 4:18)

1. The prophets of old sought to learn of the Christ,
The hope of all groaning creation.
God's spirit revealed that Messiah would come,
Providing the means of salvation.

The time has arrived, the Messiah now reigns,
The proof of his presence is clear.
How great is the favor of learning such things;
Into these even angels would peer!

(CHORUS)

*Our path now becomes ever brighter;
We walk in the full light of day.
Behold what our God is revealing;
He guides us each step of the way.*

2. Our Lord has appointed a trustworthy slave,
Through whom He gives food in due season.
The light of the truth has grown brighter with time,
Appealing to heart and to reason.

Our path ever clearer, our steps ever firm,
We walk in the brightness of day.
All thanks to Jehovah, the Source of all truth,
We most gratefully walk in his way.

(Chorus)

FEBRUARY 2022

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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Why was it beneficial that both turtledoves and pigeons were acceptable as offerings?	

COVER PICTURE:

Christians from Judea fled across the Jordan River to the city of Pella. Those who had reached the city earlier are distributing food supplies to fellow Christians who have just arrived (See study article 9, paragraph 13)

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3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

(Proverbs 14:26)

1. O Jehovah, you have given us
a hope that we hold dear.
It's a hope we find so thrilling
we want the world to hear.
But at times this life's anxieties
are the cause of fears within,
And the hope that burned so brightly
has suddenly grown dim.

(CHORUS)

*You're our strength, you're our hope,
you're our confidence.*

Whatever we lack, you supply.

*When we preach, when we teach,
we have confidence*

because it's on you we rely.

2. So Jehovah, please instill in us
a heart that won't forget,
For you've always been our comfort
when troubled times we've met.
And these thoughts that lift and strengthen us
can revive that dying flame,
For they fill our hearts with courage
to speak about your name.

(Chorus)

Do You Trust in Jehovah's Way of Doing Things?

“The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness who is never unjust; righteous and upright is he.”—DEUT. 32:4.

SONG 3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

PREVIEW

This article will help us see the need to strengthen our trust in Jehovah and our trust in his earthly representatives. We will also see how doing so benefits us now and prepares us to face future challenges.

TODAY many find it hard to trust anyone in authority. They have observed that the legal and the political systems tend to favor the wealthy and the powerful and to deny justice to the poor. The Bible accurately observes: “Man has dominated man to his harm.” (Eccl. 8:9) In addition, the conduct of certain religious leaders leaves much to be desired, which has caused some people to lose confidence in God. So when a person agrees to study the Bible with us, we face the challenge of helping him to build trust in Jehovah and trust in His earthly representatives.

² Of course, Bible students are not the only ones who need to learn to trust in Jehovah and to trust in his organization. Even those of us who have been in the truth for many years must never lose sight of the fact that Jehovah’s way of doing things is always best. At times, situations arise that may test our confidence in that regard. In this article, we will discuss three areas in which our faith could be tested: (1) as we read certain Bible accounts, (2) when we receive direction from Jehovah’s organization, and (3) when we face future challenges.

1-2. (a) Why do many today find it hard to trust those in authority? (b) What will we consider in this article?

TRUST IN JEHOVAH AS YOU READ THE BIBLE

³ As we read God’s Word, we may have questions about the way that Jehovah dealt with some people and about some of the decisions he made. For example, in the book of Numbers, we read that Jehovah sentenced an Israelite to death for collecting wood on the Sabbath. In the second book of Samuel, we learn that centuries later, Jehovah pardoned King David for committing adultery and murder. (Num. 15:32, 35; 2 Sam. 12:9, 13) We might wonder, ‘Why did Jehovah forgive David for murder and adultery but sentence the other man to death for a seemingly less serious transgression?’ To answer this question, consider three factors that we do well to keep in mind as we read the Bible.

⁴ *The Bible does not always provide all the details of an account.* For example, we know that David was sincerely repentant of his actions. (Ps. 51:2-4) But what kind of person was the man who broke the Sabbath law? Was he sorry for what he had done? Had he disobeyed Jehovah’s laws in the past? Had he ignored or even rejected previous warnings? The

3. How could certain Bible accounts test our trust in Jehovah?

4. How do Genesis 18:20, 21 and Deuteronomy 10:17 strengthen our confidence in Jehovah’s judgments?

Bible does not say. However, we can be certain of this: Jehovah “is never unjust.” (Deut. 32:4) He bases his decisions on all the facts—not on hearsay, prejudice, or anything else that so often distorts human judgment. (Read Genesis 18:20, 21; Deuteronomy 10:17.) The more we learn about Jehovah and his standards, the more we develop trust in his judgments. Even if a Bible account raises questions that we cannot answer at present, we know more than enough about our God to be certain that he “is righteous in all his ways.”—Ps. 145:17.

⁵ *Our sense of justice is tainted by imperfection.* God made us in his image, so we yearn to see people treated fairly. (Gen. 1:26) But because we are imperfect, we can misjudge matters, even when we think we have all the facts. Recall, for example, how displeased Jonah was with Jehovah’s decision to extend mercy to the people of Nineveh. (Jonah 3:10–4:1) Yet, consider the results. The lives of well over 120,000 repentant Ninevites were saved! In the end, it was Jonah—not Jehovah—who needed to be corrected.

⁶ *Jehovah does not owe humans an explanation for*

5. How does imperfection affect our sense of justice? (See also the box “Imperfection Distorts Our View of Justice.”)

6. Why does Jehovah not have to explain his decisions to us?



Imperfection Distorts Our View of Justice

Because we are imperfect, at times we may view matters more harshly or more leniently than Jehovah does. (1 Sam. 16:7) This could make us question Jehovah’s way of doing things. Our situation is like that of a person whose eyeglasses have fogged up. No matter how hard he strains to see things clearly, his view remains distorted. Similarly, if some aspect of Jehovah’s way of doing things is hard to understand, imperfection might be distorting our perception of justice. It is *our* view—not *Jehovah’s* view—that is incorrect.—Ezek. 18:29.

his decisions. True, Jehovah did allow his servants in the past to express their concerns about decisions he had made or was about to make. (Gen. 18:25; Jonah 4:2, 3) And occasionally, he explained his

decision. (Jonah 4:10, 11) Nevertheless, Jehovah is not obliged to explain himself to us. As our Creator, he does not need our approval, either before or after he acts.—Isa. 40:13, 14; 55:9.

TRUST IN JEHOVAH WHEN YOU RECEIVE DIRECTION

⁷ We no doubt wholeheartedly agree that Jehovah always does what is right. The challenge for us, however, might be to trust in his human representatives. We might wonder whether those with a measure of authority in Jehovah's organization really act according to Jehovah's direction or their own. That could have been the thinking of some who lived in Bible times. Consider the examples cited in paragraph 3. A relative of the man who broke the Sabbath law might have wondered whether Moses had really consulted Jehovah before the death sentence was pronounced. And a friend of Uriah the Hittite, whose wife committed adultery with David, might have concluded that David used his position as king to escape the punishment that he so well deserved. The plain truth is that we cannot say that we trust in Jehovah if we do not trust in his earthly representatives—those whom Jehovah trusts.

7. What challenge might we face, and why?

(Philippians 1:10) make sure of the more important things,

⁸ Today Jehovah leads the earthly part of his organization by means of “the faithful and discreet slave.” (Matt. 24:45) Like the first-century governing body, this slave oversees God’s people worldwide and gives direction to congregation elders. (Read Acts 16:4, 5.) The elders, in turn, implement the direction in the congregations. We show that we trust in Jehovah’s way of doing things by heeding the direction we receive from the organization and the elders.

⁹ At times, we may find it challenging to cooperate with decisions made by the elders. For example, in recent years many congregations and circuits have been reorganized. In some cases, the elders have asked publishers to support a different congregation with a view to making the best use of the seating capacity in our Kingdom Halls. If we are asked to join a new congregation, we may find it difficult to leave friends and family. Do the elders receive divine direction that tells them where to assign each publisher? No. And that fact might make it challenging for us to follow the direction we re-

8. What similarity is there between what is reported at Acts 16:4, 5 and how the Christian congregation functions today?

9. When might we find it difficult to cooperate with a decision made by the elders, and why?

ceive. But Jehovah trusts the elders to make such decisions, and we too need to trust them.*

¹⁰ Why should we cooperate with the elders and support their decisions even when the decisions are not what we would have preferred? Because in doing so, we help preserve the unity among God's people. (Eph. 4:2, 3) Congregations thrive when all humbly submit to the decisions reached by the body of elders. (Read Hebrews 13:17.) More important, we show Jehovah that we trust in him by cooperating with those whom he trusts to care for us.—Acts 20:28.

¹¹ We can strengthen our trust in the direction we receive from the elders by remembering that they pray for holy spirit when considering matters that affect the congregation. They also carefully consider relevant Bible principles and consult guidelines provided by Jehovah's organization. Their heartfelt desire is to please Jehovah and to provide the best

* At times, there may be extenuating circumstances that require an individual or a family to stay in their current congregation. See *Our Kingdom Ministry*, November 2002, "Question Box."

10. In line with Hebrews 13:17, why should we cooperate with the elders?

11. What can help us strengthen our trust in the direction we receive from the elders?

care possible for his people. These faithful men know that they are accountable to God for the way they handle their responsibilities. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) Consider this fact: In a world that is divided by race, religion, and politics, Jehovah's people are united in worship of the one true God. This could be accomplished only with Jehovah's blessing on his organization!

¹² Jehovah has entrusted the elders with the weighty responsibility of keeping the congregation clean. If a Christian commits a serious sin, Jehovah expects the elders to determine whether that individual can remain in the congregation. Among other things, they need to find out whether the person is truly sorry for what he did. He may claim to be repentant, but does he truly hate what he did? Is he determined not to repeat the sin? If bad associations led up to the wrongdoing, is he willing to cut off those associations? The elders prayerfully consider the facts in the light of the Scriptures, taking into account the wrongdoer's attitude toward what happened. Then they decide whether the wrongdoer may remain in the congregation. In some cases, he must be disfellowshipped.—1 Cor. 5:11-13.

12. What factors must the elders consider when determining if a person is repentant?

13 How might our trust in the elders be tested? If the person who is disfellowshipped is not a close friend or a relative, we might readily accept the elders' decision. But suppose the disfellowshipped person is a close companion. We might worry that the elders did not consider all the facts, or we might wonder whether they truly judged the matter the way Jehovah would. What can help us maintain the proper attitude toward the decision?

14 We do well to remember that disfellowshipping is Jehovah's arrangement and that it benefits the congregation and may benefit the wrongdoer. If an unrepentant wrongdoer were permitted to remain in the congregation, he could be a corrupting influence. (Gal. 5:9) In addition, he may not recognize the seriousness of his sin, and he may have little incentive to adjust his thinking and actions so that he can regain Jehovah's favor. (Eccl. 8:11) We can be sure that when deciding if a person should be disfellowshipped, the elders take their responsibility seriously. They realize that, like the judges in

13. What concern might we have if a friend or a relative is disfellowshipped?

14. What can help us if the elders' decision regarding wrongdoing affects us personally?

ancient Israel, they “do not judge for man but for Jehovah.”—2 Chron. 19:6, 7.

HOW TRUSTING IN JEHOVAH NOW IS TRAINING US FOR THE FUTURE

¹⁵ As the end of this system of things draws near, we need to trust in Jehovah’s way of doing things as never before. Why? During the great tribulation, we may receive instructions that seem strange, impractical, or illogical. Of course, Jehovah will not speak to us personally. He will likely provide direction through his appointed representatives. That will hardly be the time to second-guess the direction or to view it with skepticism, wondering, ‘Is this really coming from Jehovah, or are the responsible brothers acting on their own?’ How will you fare during that crucial time in human history? The answer might be indicated by how you view theocratic direction *now*. If you trust the direction we receive today and readily obey, you will likely do the same during the great tribulation.—Luke 16:10.

¹⁶ There is another aspect that we would do well

15. Why do we need to trust Jehovah’s direction now more than ever before?

16. How could our trust in Jehovah’s judgments be tested in the near future?



What will help us to trust and obey the direction we receive during the great tribulation?

(See paragraph 15)

to consider—Jehovah’s judgments at the end of this system of things. Right now, we hold out hope for many who are not serving Jehovah, including our unbelieving relatives. But at Armageddon, Jehovah, through Jesus, will make the final decision about their future. (Matt. 25:31-33; 2 Thess. 1:7-9) It will not be up to us to decide who will receive Jehovah’s mercy and who will not. (Matt. 25:34, 41, 46) Will we be able to trust in Jehovah’s judgments, or will they be a stumbling block for us? Clearly, we need to strengthen our trust in Jehovah now so that we will trust him implicitly in the future.

17 Imagine how we will feel in God's new world when we see the results of Jehovah's judgments. False religion will be gone, and so will the greedy commercial system along with the political system that has oppressed people and caused untold misery throughout history. Poor health, old age, and the death of loved ones will no longer be part of our daily experience. Satan and the demons will be confined for a thousand years. The consequences of their rebellion will be gone. (Rev. 20:2, 3) How grateful we will then be that we trusted in Jehovah's way of doing things!

18 Might life in God's new world present some challenges that could test our trust in Jehovah's way of doing things? Consider, for example, what happened shortly after the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt. Some started complaining because they missed the fresh food they had enjoyed there, and they treated Jehovah's provision of manna with contempt. (Read Numbers 11:4-6; 21:5.) Might we have similar thoughts after the great tribulation comes to its end? We do not know

17. How will we benefit from Jehovah's judgments at the end of this system of things?

18. What lessons can we learn from the Israelites' example, as recorded at Numbers 11:4-6 and 21:5?

how much work will be involved in removing the effects of the destruction and in gradually making the earth a paradise. Likely, there will be a lot of work to do and some inconveniences at first. Would we dare to complain about what Jehovah provides at that time? One thing is certain: The more we appreciate Jehovah's provisions *now*, the more likely we will do so *then*.

¹⁹ Jehovah's way of doing things is always right. We need to be convinced of that. We also need to have confidence in those whom Jehovah trusts to carry out his instructions. Never forget the words Jehovah spoke through his prophet Isaiah: "Your strength will be in keeping calm and showing trust." —Isa. 30:15.

19. How would you summarize the main points of this article?

(Acts 17:11) carefully examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

WHAT CAN HELP US IF OUR TRUST IN JEHOVAH'S WAY OF DOING THINGS IS TESTED . . .

■ as we read certain Bible accounts?

■ when we receive direction?

■ as we face future challenges?

(Ps 146:3, 4)

(Isa 2:22)

(Mt 15:14)

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98 *The Scriptures—Inspired of God*

(2 Timothy 3:16, 17)

1. God's Word shines like a brilliant light,
 Guides our feet through earth's dark night.
If we follow it faithfully,
 Surely its truth will set us free.
2. He provides us with words inspired,
 Helps us learn what is required.
Holy writings can motivate,
 Show how to teach and set things straight.
3. By these words from our God above,
 We have come to know his love.
As we read in it ev'ry day,
 God's Word will keep us on the way.