

**Memorial Bible reading: (Daytime events: Nisan 15)
Matthew 27:62-66 (Events after sunset: Nisan 16) John
20:1**

Monday, April 18

Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?—1 Corinthians 15:55.

God inspired some of Jesus' disciples in the first century to write about the heavenly hope. The apostle John explained: "We are now children of God, but it has not yet been made manifest what we will be. We do know that when he is made manifest we will be like him." (1 John 3:2) So anointed Christians do not know what they will be like when they are raised to heaven with spirit bodies. However, they will see Jehovah when they receive their reward. The Bible provides some information about it. The anointed will be with Christ when he brings "to nothing all government and all authority and power." That includes "the last enemy, death." Finally, Jesus—along with his rulers—will subject himself and all things to Jehovah. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28) What a climax that will be! w20.12 8 paragraph 2

Memorial Bible reading: (Daytime events: Nisan 16)
John 20:2-18

Tuesday, April 19

I have hope . . . that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.—Acts 24:15.

Loyal Christians who do not have the hope of living in heaven with Christ also have the hope of a resurrection. The Bible says that the apostle Paul and others who go to heaven share in “the earlier resurrection from the dead.” (Philippians 3:11) Does that not suggest that another resurrection would follow? That would be in harmony with what Job said about his future. (Job 14:15) “Those who belong to the Christ during his presence” will be in heaven with Jesus when he brings to nothing all governments and all authority and power. Even “the last enemy, death,” will be brought to nothing. Certainly, inherited death will no more afflict those raised to heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:23-26) Those with an earthly hope can derive hope from Paul’s words as found in today’s text. Clearly, no unrighteous person can enter into heaven, so those words point to a future resurrection on earth. w20.12 6-7 paragraphs 18-19

Wednesday, April 20

*[Christ] loved me and handed himself over for me.—
Galatians 2:20.*

We may wonder, ‘How can I know for sure that Jehovah has not given up on me?’ In a sense, by asking that question, we also answer it. Decades ago, *The Watchtower* stated: “We [may] find ourselves stumbling and falling many times over some bad habit that has bitten more deeply into our former pattern of life than we had realized.... Do not conclude you have committed the unforgivable sin. That is just how Satan would like you to reason. The fact that you feel grieved and vexed with yourself is proof in itself that you have not gone too far. Never weary of turning humbly and earnestly to God, seeking his forgiveness and cleansing and help.” Before becoming a Christian, the apostle Paul committed a number of serious sins. Paul remembered what he had done. (1 Timothy 1:12-15) But he viewed the ransom as a personal gift to him. Paul thus avoided the trap of excessive guilt and focused on giving Jehovah his best from that point forward. *w20.11 27* paragraph 14; 29 paragraph

Thursday, April 21

If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching, and it will be given him.—James 1:5.

Satan presents us with many temptations to do wrong. How do we respond? It is easy to rationalize. For example, we might reason: ‘Well, I would not be disfellowshipped for doing this, so it must not be that serious.’ Such reasoning is deeply flawed. We do better to ask ourselves such questions as these: ‘Is Satan trying to use this temptation to divide my heart? If I give in to wrong desires, would I bring reproach on Jehovah’s name? Would this action draw me closer to my God, or might it distance me from him?’ Meditate on such questions. Pray for wisdom to answer them honestly, without self-deception. Doing so can be a real protection. It can help you to reject temptation firmly, as Jesus did when he said: “Go away, Satan!” (Matthew 4:10) Remember, a divided heart is of little value. w20.06 12-13 paragraphs 16-17

Friday, April 22

I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think, but to think so as to have a sound mind.—Romans 12:3.

We humbly submit to Jehovah's standards, realizing that Jehovah always knows what is best for us. (Ephesians 4:22-24) Humility moves us to put Jehovah's will above our own and to consider others superior to us. As a result, we enjoy good relationships with Jehovah and fellow believers. (Philippians 2:3) If we are not careful, though, we could be influenced by people in Satan's system who are proud and selfish. Apparently, this was a danger to some in the first century C.E., for the apostle Paul wrote to the Romans: "I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think, but to think so as to have a sound mind." Paul acknowledged that we need to think something of ourselves. However, humility will help us to keep a balanced view of ourselves and will help us avoid thinking too much of ourselves. w20.07 2 paragraphs 1-2

Saturday, April 23

The land had no disturbance and there was no war against him.—2 Chronicles 14:6.

In King Asa's day, the time of peace eventually came to an end. A huge military force—one million strong—came from Ethiopia. Its commander, Zerah, was confident that he and his army could defeat Judah. However, Asa trusted, not in numbers, but in his God, Jehovah. Asa prayed: "Help us, O Jehovah our God, for we are relying on you, and in your name we have come against this crowd." (2 Chronicles 14:11) Although the Ethiopian army had almost double the number of soldiers, Asa acknowledged Jehovah's power and ability to act in behalf of His people. And Jehovah did not disappoint him; the Ethiopian army suffered a humiliating defeat. (2 Chronicles 14:8-13) Although we do not know in detail what the future holds for us as individuals, we do know that any time of peace God's people enjoy will be temporary. In fact, Jesus foretold that in the last days, his disciples would "be hated by all the nations."—Matthew 24:9. w20.09 17-18 paragraphs 14-16

Sunday, April 24

I take pleasure . . . in insults.—2 Corinthians 12:10.

None of us like to be insulted. However, if our enemies do insult us and we are overly concerned with what they say, we can become discouraged. (Proverbs 24:10) How, then, should we view the insults of opposers? Like the apostle Paul, we can “take pleasure ... in insults.” Why? Because insults and opposition are signals that we are genuine disciples of Jesus. (1 Peter 4:14) Jesus said that his followers would be persecuted. (John 15:18-20) That proved true in the first century. Back then, those influenced by Greek culture viewed Christians as unintelligent and weak. And among the Jews, Christians were considered to be “uneducated and ordinary,” like the apostles Peter and John. (Acts 4:13) Christians seemed to be weak; they had no political influence or military power, and people viewed them as outcasts of society. Did those early Christians allow the negative view of their opposers to stop them? No. w20.07 14-15 paragraphs 3-4

Song 114 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Wait Patiently on Jehovah”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

1Sa 23:16, 17—How can we imitate Jonathan’s example? (w17.11 27 ¶11)

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 23:24–24:7 (10)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Respond to an objection common in your territory. (6)

Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Offer a publication from the Teaching Toolbox. (13)

Talk: (5 min.) w19.03 23-24 ¶12-15—Theme: Be Patient With Those Whom You Teach. (14)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 128

“All Trials Have an Expiration Date”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *A United People in a Divided World* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) rr Summary of Clarifications, questions 5-8

 Wait Patiently on Jehovah

David had an opportunity to end his trial (1Sa 24:3-5)

David viewed his situation from Jehovah’s standpoint and exercised restraint (1Sa 24:6, 7)

David had faith that Jehovah would resolve matters (1Sa 24:12, 15; w04 4/1 16 ¶8)

Like David, we should wait patiently on Jehovah instead of using unscriptural means to end trials.—Jas 1:4; w04 6/1 22-23.



1. Our Sov'reign Lord Jehovah
Is zealous for his holy name.
He fervently desires
To clear it from unrighteous blame.
Through many generations,
Great endurance he has shown;
In loving, kindly patience,
Not weary has he grown.
His will is that salvation
All sorts of people might attain.
Long-lasting, loving patience
By God will not have been in vain.
2. The quality of patience
Will help us on our godly path.
It lets our heart be tranquil,
Protects us from unrighteous wrath.
It finds the good in others,
Always hoping for the best.
It helps us keep our balance
In times when we're distressed.
Along with other virtues
That holy spirit can bestow,
Our patience will assist us
To imitate the God we know.

1 SAMUEL 23-24

23 In time David was told: “The Phi-lis'tines are fighting against Kei'lah, and they are raiding the threshing floors.”

² So David inquired of Jehovah: “Should I go and strike down these Phi-lis'tines?” Jehovah said to David: “Go, strike down the Phi-lis'tines and rescue Kei'lah.” ³ But the men of David said to him: “Look! We are afraid while here in Judah; how much more so if we go to Kei'lah against the battle line of the Phi-lis'tines!” ⁴ So David inquired once again of Jehovah. Jehovah now answered him: “Rise up; go down to Kei'lah because I will give the Phi-lis'tines into your hand.” ⁵ So David went with his men to Kei'lah and fought against the Phi-lis'tines; he carried off their livestock and struck them down with a great slaughter, and David rescued the inhabitants of Kei'lah.

⁶ Now when A-bi'a-thar the son of A-him'e-lech ran away to David at Kei'lah, he had an eph'od with him. ⁷ Saul was told: “David has come to Kei'lah.” Then Saul said: “God has handed him over to me, for he has trapped himself by entering a city with gates and bars.” ⁸ So Saul summoned all the people to war, to go down to Kei'lah and besiege David and his men. ⁹ When David learned that Saul was plotting against him, he said to A-bi'a-thar the priest: “Bring the eph'od here.” ¹⁰ Then David said: “O Jehovah the God of Israel, your servant has indeed heard that Saul intends to come to Kei'lah to destroy the city because of me. ¹¹ Will the leaders of Kei'lah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your servant has heard? O Jehovah the God

of Israel, please tell your servant.” To this Jehovah said: “He will come down.” ¹² David asked: “Will the leaders of Kei'lah surrender me and my men into Saul's hand?” Jehovah replied: “They will surrender you.”

¹³ At once David rose up with his men, about 600 in number, and they left Kei'lah and moved about wherever they could. When Saul was told that David had escaped from Kei'lah, he did not go out after him. ¹⁴ David stayed in the wilderness in places difficult to approach, in the mountainous region of the wilderness of Ziph. Saul searched for him constantly, but Jehovah did not give him into his hand. ¹⁵ David was aware that Saul had gone out to seek his life while David was in the wilderness of Ziph at Ho'resh.

¹⁶ Jon'a-than the son of Saul now went out to David at Ho'resh, and he helped him find strength in Jehovah. ¹⁷ He said to him: “Do not be afraid, for my father Saul will not find you; you will be king over Israel, and I will become second to you; and my father Saul also knows that.” ¹⁸ Then the two of them made a covenant before Jehovah, and David stayed in Ho'resh, and Jon'a-than went to his home.

¹⁹ The men of Ziph later went up to Saul at Gib'e-ah and said: “Is not David hiding near us in the places difficult to approach at Ho'resh, on the hill of Hach-i'lah, which is south of Je-shi'mon? ²⁰ Whenever it pleases you to come down, O king, come, and we will surrender him into the hand of the king.” ²¹ At this Saul said: “May you be blessed by Jehovah, for you have shown compassion to me. ²² Please go and try to find out exactly where he is and who saw him there, for I

have been told that he is very cunning. ²³ Carefully ascertain where all his hiding places are and return to me with the evidence. I will then go with you, and if he is in the land, I will search him out among all the thousands of Judah.”

²⁴ So they left and went to Ziph ahead of Saul, while David and his men were in the wilderness of Ma'on, in the Ar'a-bah to the south of Je-shi'mon. ²⁵ Then Saul came with his men to look for him. When David was told, he at once went down to the crag and stayed in the wilderness of Ma'on. When Saul heard this, he chased after David into the wilderness of Ma'on. ²⁶ As Saul came to one side of the mountain, David and his men were on the other side of the mountain. David was hurrying to get away from Saul, but Saul and his men were closing in on David and his men to capture them. ²⁷ But a messenger came to Saul, saying: “Come quickly, for the Phi-lis'tines have made a raid on the land!” ²⁸ At that Saul stopped chasing after David and went to confront the Phi-lis'tines. That is why that place was named the Crag of the Divisions.

²⁹ Then David made his way up from there and stayed in the places difficult to approach at En-ged'i.

24 As soon as Saul returned from pursuing the Phi-lis'tines, they told him: “Look! David is in the wilderness of En-ged'i.”

² So Saul took 3,000 men chosen from all Israel and went to look for David and his men on the rocky cliffs of the mountain goats. ³ Saul came to the stone sheepfolds along the road, where there was a cave, and he went in to relieve

himself while David and his men were sitting in the recesses at the back of the cave. ⁴ David's men said to him: "This is the day on which Jehovah is saying to you, 'Look! I am giving your enemy into your hand, and you can do to him whatever seems good to you.'" So David rose up and quietly cut off the edge of Saul's sleeveless coat. ⁵ But afterward David's heart kept striking him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's sleeveless coat. ⁶ He said to his men: "It is unthinkable from Jehovah's standpoint that I should do such a thing to my lord, the anointed of Jehovah, by lifting my hand against him, for he is the anointed of Jehovah." ⁷ So David restrained his men with these words, and he did not allow them to attack Saul. As for Saul, he rose up from the cave and went on his way.

⁸ Then David got up and went out from the cave and called out after Saul: "My lord the king!" When Saul looked behind him, David bowed down low with his face to the ground and prostrated himself. ⁹ David said to Saul: "Why do you listen to the words of men who say, 'Look! David is seeking to harm you'?" ¹⁰ This very day your own eyes have seen how Jehovah gave you into my hand in the cave. But when someone said to kill you, I had pity on you and said, 'I will not lift my hand against my lord, for he is the anointed of Jehovah.' ¹¹ And look, my father, yes, see the edge of your sleeveless coat in my hand; for when I cut off the edge of your sleeveless coat, I did not kill you. You can now see and understand that I do not intend to harm you or to rebel, and I have not sinned against you, whereas you are hunting me down to take my life. ¹² May Jehovah judge between you and

me, and may Jehovah take vengeance on you for me, but my hand will not come against you. ¹³ Just as the ancient proverb says, 'From the wicked comes wickedness,' but my hand will not come against you. ¹⁴ After whom has the king of Israel gone out? Whom are you chasing? A dead dog? A single flea? ¹⁵ May Jehovah be the judge, and he will judge between you and me, and he will see and will plead my case and judge me and rescue me from your hand."

¹⁶ At the moment that David finished speaking these words to him, Saul said: "Is this your voice, my son David?" And Saul began to weep loudly. ¹⁷ He said to David: "You are more righteous than I am, for you have treated me well and I have repaid you with evil. ¹⁸ Yes, today you have told me of the good you did by not killing me when Jehovah surrendered me into your hand. ¹⁹ For what man finds his enemy and sends him on his way unharmed? Jehovah will reward you with good because of what you have done for me today. ²⁰ And now look! I know that you will surely rule as king and that in your hand the kingdom of Israel will endure. ²¹ Now swear to me by Jehovah that you will not wipe out my descendants after me and that you will not annihilate my name out of my father's house." ²² So David swore to Saul, after which Saul went home. But David and his men went up to the stronghold.

Song 114 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Wait Patiently on Jehovah”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

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April 18-24 / 1 Samuel 23-24

Song 114 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"Wait Patiently on Jehovah": (10 minutes)

David had an opportunity to end his trial

1 Samuel 24:3-5: Saul came to the stone sheepfolds along the road, where there was a cave, and he went in to relieve himself while David and his men were sitting in the recesses at the back of the cave. David's men said to him: "This is the day on which Jehovah is saying to you, 'Look! I am giving your enemy into your hand, and you can do to him whatever seems good to you.'" So David rose up and quietly cut off the edge of Saul's sleeveless coat. But afterward David's heart kept striking him because he had cut off the edge of Saul's sleeveless coat.

David viewed his situation from Jehovah's standpoint and exercised restraint

1 Samuel 24:6, 7: He said to his men: "It is unthinkable from Jehovah's standpoint that I should do such a thing to my lord, the anointed of Jehovah, by lifting my hand against him, for he is the anointed of Jehovah." So David restrained his men with these words, and he did not allow them to attack Saul. As for Saul, he rose up from the cave and went on his way.

David had faith that Jehovah would resolve matters

1 Samuel 24:12: May Jehovah judge between you and me, and may Jehovah take vengeance on you for me, but my hand will not come against you."

1 Samuel 24:15: May Jehovah be the judge, and he will judge between you and me, and he will see and will plead my case and judge me and rescue me from your hand."

w04 4/1 16 paragraph 8

David refused to harm Saul. Exercising faith and patience, he

was content to leave matters in the hands of Jehovah. After the king left the cave, David called out to him and said: "May Jehovah judge between me and you; and Jehovah must take vengeance for me from you, but my own hand will not come to be upon you." (1 Samuel 24:12) Though he knew that Saul was in the wrong, David did not avenge himself; neither did he speak abusively to Saul or about him. On several other occasions, David restrained himself from taking matters into his own hands. Instead, he relied on Jehovah to set things straight.—1 Samuel 25:32-34; 26:10, 11.

[Image:] David and one of his men hiding in the back of a cave as King Saul walks out. David gestures to the man, who is holding a sword, not to kill Saul.

Like David, we should wait patiently on Jehovah instead of using unscriptural means to end trials.

James 1:4: But let endurance complete its work, so that you may be complete and sound in all respects, not lacking in anything.

w04 6/1 22-23

The third lesson is that instead of using unscriptural means to change our circumstances, we should wait on Jehovah. The disciple James wrote: "Let endurance have its work complete, that you may be complete and sound in all respects, not lacking in anything." (James 1:4) Endurance should be allowed to have "its work complete" by our permitting a trial to run its full course without resorting to unscriptural means to bring it to a swift end. Then our faith will be tested and refined, and its sustaining power will be revealed. Joseph and David had this kind of endurance. They did not try to work out a solution that might incur Jehovah's displeasure. Instead, they worked to make the best of their situations. They waited on Jehovah, and what blessings they received for doing so! Jehovah used both of them to deliver and to lead his people.—Genesis 41:39-41; 45:5; 2 Samuel 5:4, 5.

We too may face situations for which we could be tempted to seek unscriptural solutions. For example, are you discouraged because you have not yet found a suitable marriage mate? If so, avoid any temptation to disobey Jehovah's command to marry "only in the Lord."

(1 Corinthians 7:39) Are you dealing with problems in your marriage? Rather than give in to the spirit of the world that promotes separation and divorce, work through the hard times together. (Malachi 2:16; Ephesians 5:21-33) Are you having difficulties caring for your family because of your economic situation? Waiting on Jehovah includes avoiding questionable or illegal activities to try to obtain money. (Psalm 37:25; Hebrews 13:18) Yes, all of us must work hard to make the best of our circumstances and put forth effort to give Jehovah something to bless. As we do so, let us be determined to wait on Jehovah for the perfect solution.—Micah 7:7.

Spiritual Gems

1 Samuel 23:16, 17—How can we imitate Jonathan's example?

1 Samuel 23:16, 17: Jonathan the son of Saul now went out to David at Horesh, and he helped him find strength in Jehovah. He said to him: "Do not be afraid, for my father Saul will not find you; you will be king over Israel, and I will become second to you; and my father Saul also knows that."

w17.11 27 paragraph 11

If we cultivate love and kindness in our heart, we will not easily become jealous. God's Word says: "Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous." (1 Corinthians 13:4) To prevent jealousy from taking root in our heart, we must strive to see things from God's standpoint, viewing our brothers and sisters as members of the same Christian body. This will help us to show fellow feeling, in harmony with the inspired counsel: "If a member is glorified, all the other members rejoice with it." (1 Corinthians 12:16-18, 26) Thus, rather than feel jealous, we will be happy when others receive blessings. Consider the example of King Saul's son Jonathan. He was not jealous when David was appointed heir to the throne. Rather, he encouraged David. (1 Samuel 23:16-18) Could we be as kind and loving as Jonathan?

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Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

Talk: (5 minutes) *w19.03* 23-24 paragraphs 12-15—Theme: Be Patient With Those Whom You Teach. (*th* study 14)

***w19.03* 23-24 paragraphs 12-15**

12 Third, *be patient with those whom you teach*. Remember, they may never have considered some of the Bible truths we know very well. And many have a strong emotional connection to their current beliefs. They may see their religious views as uniting them with their family, their culture, and their community. How can we help them?

13 Think of this comparison: What happens when an old, rickety bridge needs to be replaced? Often, a new bridge is constructed while the old bridge is still in use. Once the new bridge is ready, the old one can be torn down. Likewise, before we ask people to give up their cherished “old” beliefs, we may first need to help them build a strong appreciation for “new” truths—Bible teachings that at the outset are unfamiliar to them. Only then will they be ready to abandon their former viewpoint. It may take time to help people make such changes.—Romans 12:2.

14 If we are patient with people in the ministry, we will not expect them to understand or accept Bible truth the first time they hear it. Rather, fellow feeling moves us to help them reason on the Scriptures over a period of time. As an example, consider how we might reason with someone about the hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth. Many know little or nothing about this teaching. They may believe that death is the end of it all. Or they may think that all good people go to heaven. How can we help them?

15 One brother relates an approach that he finds effective. First, he reads Genesis 1:28. Then, he asks the householder where and in what conditions God wanted the human family to live. Most people answer, "On earth, in good conditions." Next, the brother reads Isaiah 55:11 and asks whether God's purpose has changed. Often, the householder will answer no. Finally, the brother reads Psalm 37:10, 11 and asks what mankind's future will be like. Using this Scriptural reasoning, he has helped a number of people to understand that God still wants good people to live forever in Paradise on earth.

1. God's Word and all its promises
Give reason to endure.
The things you've learned and come to love
Are all well-founded and sure.

Be stabilized in holy faith,
Keeping God's day close in mind.
Stand firm in your integrity;
By tests you will be refined.
2. Maintain the love you had at first,
Which somehow could be lost.
Despite the trials you will meet,
Endure no matter the cost.

Whatever test may come your way,
Never yield to doubt or fear.
Jehovah will provide escape,
Our God ever will be near.
3. All those enduring to the end
Are those who will be saved.
The book of life will list their names,
A record clearly engraved.

So let endurance be your aim;
Let it have its work complete.
Jehovah's favor you will know;
With joy you will be replete.



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All Trials Have an Expiration Date



Trials can easily discourage us, especially when they are prolonged. David knew that his trial involving King Saul would eventually end and that he would become king, as Jehovah had promised. (1Sa 16:13) David's faith helped him to be patient and wait on Jehovah.

When under trial, we may be able to use shrewdness, knowledge, or thinking ability to change our situation. (1Sa 21:12-14; Pr 1:4) However, some

difficulties will persist even after we have done all we can in harmony with Bible principles. In such cases, we must exercise patience and wait on Jehovah. Soon he will end all our suffering and "wipe out every tear" from our eyes. (Re 21:4) Whether our relief comes as a result of Jehovah's intervention or because of other reasons, one thing is certain: All trials have an expiration date. This fact can give us a measure of comfort.

WATCH THE VIDEO *A UNITED PEOPLE IN A DIVIDED WORLD*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What challenges did some Christians in the southern United States experience?

- How did they demonstrate patience and love?

- How did they continue to focus on "the more important things"?—Php 1:10

A United People in a Divided World

My mother always said, “Jehovah did not intend for all of us to look alike.”

In those early days, we would work every house in the county —black families, white families, any color.

At school, there was pressure there to be involved with the racial activity.

We would hear about the problems and the issues. It would be in the news, and you would know what was going on in the South.

Marvin Benford (South Carolina): Some may wonder, ‘How is it that our people, ‘that is, Jehovah’s Witnesses, black and white, ‘could maintain such unity when the world around them was falling apart?’

Samuel Brown (New York): I grew up in central New York —Utica, New York. And I remember in the Kingdom Ministry back in 1956, there were articles about serving where the need is great. They needed some of the black friends to serve in the South.

Mozelle McGee (Delaware): I married my husband, Earl McGee, on June 2, 1956. When we were married, Brother T. J. Sullivan gave a talk at the Hallandale

convention on serving where the need is greater. He encouraged not only families but, he said, newly married couples. And so, we planned for it, and he wrote the branch. We were assigned to Florida, and then in 1962, we started in the circuit work. And our first circuit was in Alabama, and it was not integrated.

William Sims (South Carolina): We served together, Edna and I did, in the pioneer work by assignment. The last assignment was the Society assigning us to North Carolina and then from there to the circuit work. After the first circuit, which was in the Carolinas and Georgia, we were assigned to Gilead.

James Thompson (North Carolina): I got married on April 23, 1949. I've been in full-time service 70 years with my wife. I was assigned to Circuit 18 in Alabama.

Samuel Brown (New York): My first circuit assignment was in Mississippi. It had the reputation as the worst state in the Union for race relations. And then after we got there, there were three civil rights workers who were killed in Philadelphia, Mississippi. That was our circuit. So those were the things we had to deal with.

James Thompson (North Carolina): We were busy in our ministry, so it didn't bother us very much. The black worked the black, and the white worked the white. So, we just obeyed the customary law of staying segregated.

Mozelle McGee: Lots of movements were happening, and people were, you know, very hostile. When there was a march or any tension where we were serving there in Alabama, we wouldn't go to the town on Saturday afternoon to do street witnessing because if there was a rally or something going on, we would just stay in the neighborhood.

James Thompson: A lot were what they used to call back then Freedom Riders, people getting on buses going south, and people coming in to register voters. The fact is, some of the civil rights organizations were set up in Mississippi and going pretty strong. So as a result, they would think that because we were active in going door to door, we could just incorporate civil rights issues and things like that into our work.

William Sims: One of our classmates in the 27th class was a black brother, a fellow student, and we became very close friends there. After we left Gilead, we were going to our assignments and we stopped at a convention in Alabama. And the convention was segregated—one race on one side and one race on another. And it was very difficult—painful—for us not to be able to closely associate with our dear friend.

James Thompson: So we had this talk show on the television. The circuit overseer and I went and also a Catholic priest and an Episcopal minister. So ,the Episcopal minister, a young minister, asked what were we doing about

the marching. So, I told him that we weren't doing anything about the marching. Well, that showed a contrast. I'm black, and he's white. They weren't stopping their marching to help us preach the good news of the Kingdom, so we weren't going to stop preaching the good news of the Kingdom to help them march.

William Sims: The brothers always were interested in each other. So, if there was a black congregation and a white congregation, we had interest and fellow feeling for both.

James Thompson: The rule was we were not to meet together, and we couldn't meet together. But we could talk to one another, and we could visit one another. So, I think there was great support on both sides, black and white brothers, back in those days. If we had a problem getting a facility, for example, they'd have contacts and they could get certain things done. So, basically, we worked together. The congregation started integrating after certain civil rights laws were passed.

James Thompson: We had a big meeting of all the elders, and we worked out the territory assignments and whatever else was necessary to have integrated congregations.

James Thompson: Some friends would feel, and maybe rightly so at the time, that there would be some violence if we integrated. There probably were some Kingdom Halls damaged and things like that as a result. But the fact is,

there was integration going on in other places —in the schools and things like that and in the universities and colleges. And so, it was obvious that if they could do it, then we even more so.

Mozelle McGee: The process of integration was successful because it was under Jehovah's direction.

Marvin Benford: Both black and white, we had the same thing in common: We loved Jehovah. And despite us, Jehovah got it done for us and brought us together. And we have been unified ever since.

James Thompson: Everyone could see that we were united. One brother was working from door to door, black and white, and a lady came to the door (white), and she said she was happy to see this unity take place. She had looked forward to it for a long time.

William Sims: We have formed, with Jehovah's help by means of his holy spirit, a worldwide brotherhood. Granted, they have their imperfections, but it is a brotherhood and something to be truly marveled at.

James Thompson: The brothers began to feel what we knew was true: We're all one organization. They began to feel it. They began to experience it.

Marvin Benford We loved Jehovah, and we loved our brothers, so there you have it. How could you fail to have unity when Jehovah had drawn you together?

Mozelle McGee: Satan is the prime one to divide people. Jesus died for the whole world of mankind, so who would that exclude? No one.

source: https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/#en/mediaitems/VODIntExpEndurance/pub-jwb_202005_4_VIDEO

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

growing season in Jesus' parable of the wheat and the weeds.

Reasoning behind the change: The captivity of ancient Israel lasted a long time, beginning in 740 B.C.E. and ending in 537 B.C.E. Ezekiel's prophecy describes the bones as "dry" or "very dry," suggesting that those represented by the bones had been dead for a very long time. And the restoration of the bones is described as a gradual process that would take time.

What is the meaning of the joining together of the two sticks?

Scriptures

Ezek. 37:15-17

The Watchtower

July 2016, pp. 31-32

Pure Worship

Chap. 12, pars. 13-14, and box 12A

Previous understanding: After a brief period of disunity during World War I, faithful members of the anointed remnant regained their unity in 1919.

Clarification: The prophecy highlights that Jehovah will cause his worshippers to become one. After 1919,

as time progressed, members of the anointed remnant were joined by an increasing number of those with an earthly hope. Both groups are worshipping Jehovah together as one people.

Reasoning behind the change: The prophecy does not describe one stick that is first torn in two and then later brought together as one. Thus, the prophecy does not describe one group that would be divided and then later be reunited. Instead, it describes how two different groups would become united.

Who is Gog of Magog?

Scriptures

Ezek. 38:2, 10-13

The Watchtower

May 15, 2015, pp. 29-30

Pure Worship

Chap. 17, pars. 3-10

Previous understanding: Gog of Magog is a prophetic name that applies to Satan after he was ousted from the heavens.

Clarification: Gog of Magog refers to a coalition of earthly nations that will attack pure worshippers during the great tribulation.

Reasoning behind the change: The prophetic descriptions of Gog—namely, that he is given as food to birds of prey and given a burial place on earth—suggest that Gog is not a spirit creature. In addition, the attack by Gog parallels what the books of Daniel and Revelation say about the attack by earthly nations on God’s people.—Dan. 11:40, 44, 45; Rev. 17:14; 19:19.

Did Ezekiel see and tour the great spiritual temple that the apostle Paul later explained?

Scriptures

Ezek. 40:1-5

Pure Worship

Chaps. 13 and 14

Previous understanding: Ezekiel’s visionary temple is the same as the spiritual temple that the apostle Paul explained.

Clarification: Ezekiel saw, not the spiritual temple that came into existence in 29 C.E., but an idealized vision of how the pure worship outlined in the Mosaic Law would be restored after the exile. Paul’s inspired explanation of the spiritual temple focuses on the work that Jesus, as the Greater High Priest, accomplished from 29 to 33 C.E. Ezekiel’s temple vision, which

never mentions the high priest, focuses on the spiritual restoration that began in 1919 C.E. We therefore do not look for antitypical meanings in all the detailed features and measurements of Ezekiel's visionary temple. Rather, we ought to focus primarily on the lessons that Ezekiel's vision teaches about Jehovah's standards for pure worship.

Reasoning behind the change: Ezekiel's visionary temple differs from the spiritual temple in important ways. For instance, Ezekiel's temple featured many animal sacrifices; at the spiritual temple, only one sacrifice is offered, "once for all time." (Heb. 9:11, 12) In the centuries before Christ came, it was not yet Jehovah's time to reveal deep truths about the spiritual temple.

“I will certainly sanctify my
great name, . . . and the nations
will have to know that
I am Jehovah.”

EZEKIEL 36:23

PURE WORSHIP

PURE WORSHIP OF
JEHOVAH

RESTORED AT LAST!



96 *God's Own Book—A Treasure*

(Proverbs 2:1)

1. There is a book that by its many pages,
 Brings peace and joy and hope to humankind.
Its wondrous thoughts are charged with such great power;
 It brings life to the “dead,” sight to the “blind.”
That precious book is God's own Holy Bible.
 Its words were penned by men whom God inspired,
By men who truly loved their God Jehovah,
 And by his holy spirit they were fired.

2. They wrote a record true of God's creations,
 How by his might this universe appeared.
They also told how man at first was sinless
 But how his Paradise then disappeared.
They further told about a certain angel
 Who challenged God and spurned his sov'reignty.
That challenge led to sin and man's great sorrow,
 But soon will come Jehovah's victory.

3. The time has come with reason for rejoicing:
 Jehovah rules by his anointed King.
So now we preach the good news of the Kingdom
 And share the hope of blessings it will bring.
Within his book are found these cheerful tidings;
 A sacred banquet feast on which to feed.
It offers peace beyond all human thinking;
 This Living Treasure beckons all to read.

(See also 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.)

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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
APRIL 4–MAY 1, 2022

Study Article 6: April 4-10	2
Do You Trust in Jehovah's Way of Doing Things?	
<hr/>	
Study Article 7: April 11-17	16
"Listen to the Words of the Wise"	
<hr/>	
Study Article 8: April 18-24	29
Does Your Counsel "Make the Heart Rejoice"?	
<hr/>	
Study Article 9: April 25–May 1	42
Imitate Jesus by Serving Others	
<hr/>	
LIFE STORY	53
I Found Something Better Than Medicine	
<hr/>	
DID YOU KNOW?	62
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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102 *“Assist Those Who Are Weak”*

(Acts 20:35)

1. Many are the weaknesses
 That we all possess.
 Still Jehovah cares for us,
 Loves us nonetheless.
He is so merciful;
 His love, so powerful.
 May we show this kind of love,
 Help those in distress.
2. Some at times are weak in faith,
 Strong though they appear.
 By our reassuring words,
 We can calm their fears.
Weak ones to God belong;
 His spirit makes them strong.
 May we feel their pain and cares,
 Help them dry their tears.
3. Rather than condemn the weak,
 We should bear in mind
 How much we can strengthen them
 By our being kind.
May we be diligent,
 Give them encouragement.
 As we lend our kind support,
 Comfort they will find.

Does Your Counsel “Make the Heart Rejoice”?

“Oil and incense make the heart rejoice; so does sweet friendship springing from sincere counsel.”—PROV. 27:9.

SONG 102

“Assist Those Who Are Weak”

PREVIEW

It is not always easy to give counsel. When we need to do so, how can we offer it in a way that is beneficial and refreshing? This article will help elders in particular to give counsel that appeals to the heart of those receiving it.

MANY years ago, two elders visited a sister who had been missing meetings for some time. The elder who took the lead in the conversation shared a number of scriptures about meeting attendance. He thought that the visit had gone well, but as he and his companion were leaving, the sister said, “You brothers do not have a clue about what I am going through.” The brothers had offered their counsel without asking the sister about her problems and circumstances. As a result, she did not feel that their counsel was helpful.

² Looking back, the elder who took the lead in the discussion says: “At the time, I thought the sister was being disrespectful. But as I thought about it, I came to see that I had shown up with all the appropriate scriptures instead of showing up with all the appropriate questions, such as ‘What has been happening in your life?’ ‘How can I help?’” The elder learned a valuable lesson from that experience. Today he is an empathetic and helpful shepherd.

³ As shepherds, elders are responsible for giving counsel when it is needed. However, there are times when others in the congregation may need to give counsel. For example, a brother or a sister may give

1-2. What did one brother learn about offering counsel?

3. Who in the congregation may give counsel?

Bible-based advice to a friend. (Ps. 141:5; Prov. 25: 12) Or an older sister may “advise the younger women” in such matters as those mentioned at Titus 2: 3-5. And, of course, parents often need to give counsel and correction to their children. So while this article is directed to congregation elders in particular, all of us can benefit by reviewing ways in which we can give counsel that is both practical and motivating and that will “make the heart rejoice.” —Prov. 27:9.

⁴ In this article, we will discuss four questions about giving counsel: (1) What is the right motive? (2) Is the counsel really necessary? (3) Who should give the counsel? (4) How can you give effective counsel?

WHAT IS THE RIGHT MOTIVE?

⁵ Elders love their brothers and sisters. At times, they show that love by counseling someone who is heading down a wrong path. (Gal. 6:1) Before speaking to the person, though, an elder might consider some of the facets of love that the apostle Paul mentioned. “Love is patient and kind. . . . It bears all

4. What will we discuss in this article?

5. How can having the right motive help an elder to frame his counsel in an appealing way? (1 Corinthians 13:4, 7)

things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (Read 1 Corinthians 13:4, 7.) Meditating on those Bible verses will help the elder to examine his motives for giving the counsel and to approach his brother with the proper attitude. If the one receiving the counsel can sense that the elder cares about him, he will be more likely to accept the counsel.—Rom. 12:10.

⁶ The apostle Paul set a good example as an elder. For instance, when the brothers in Thessalonica needed counsel, Paul did not hesitate to give it. However, in his letters to them, Paul first took note of their faithful work, their loving labor, and their endurance. He also considered their circumstances, kindly acknowledging that their life was not easy and that they were bearing up under persecution. (1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:4) He even told those brothers that they were an example to other Christians. (1 Thess. 1:8, 9) How happy they must have been to receive Paul’s warm commendation! There could be no doubt that Paul loved his brothers very much. That is why he was able to give effective counsel in both of his letters to the Thessalonians.—1 Thess. 4: 1, 3-5, 11; 2 Thess. 3:11, 12.

6. What good example did the apostle Paul set?

⁷ What could happen if we did not give counsel in the right manner? An experienced elder observed, “Some react negatively to counsel, not because there is something wrong with the advice, but because it was not given in a loving way.” What can we learn from this? Counsel is much easier to accept when it is given out of love, not out of irritation.

IS THE COUNSEL REALLY NECESSARY?

⁸ Elders should not be hasty about giving counsel. Before offering it, an elder should ask himself: ‘Do I really need to say something? Am I certain that what the other person is doing is wrong? Has a Bible command been violated? Or is it simply a difference of opinion?’ Elders wisely avoid being “hasty with [their] words.” (Prov. 29:20) If the elder is not sure that he needs to counsel someone, he might approach another elder to discuss whether there is a Scriptural issue that has to be addressed.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

⁹ Consider an example. Suppose an elder is concerned about a fellow believer’s choices in dress or

7. Why might someone react negatively to counsel?

8. What should an elder ask himself when deciding whether to counsel someone?

9. What do we learn from Paul about how to give counsel on dress and grooming? (1 Timothy 2:9, 10)

grooming. The elder could ask himself, ‘Is there a Scriptural reason to say something?’ Conscious of the need to be objective, he might ask another elder or mature publisher for his thoughts. Together they might review Paul’s counsel on dress and grooming. (Read 1 Timothy 2:9, 10.) Paul outlined certain broad principles, observing that a Christian’s dress should be appropriate, modest, and sensible. But Paul did not make a list of dos and don’ts. He recognized that Christians have a right to express their individual taste within Scriptural limits. So in determining whether counsel is needed, the elders should consider if the person’s choices reflect modesty and good sense.

¹⁰ We do well to realize that two mature Christians may make different choices, both of which are acceptable. We should not impose our own standards of right and wrong on fellow believers.—Rom. 14:10.

WHO SHOULD GIVE THE COUNSEL?

¹¹ If it is clear that some counsel is necessary, the

10. What must we keep in mind with regard to personal choices?

11-12. If counsel is necessary, what questions should an elder ask himself, and why?

next question is, Who should give it? Before counseling a married sister or a minor, an elder would consult with the family head, who might prefer to care for the matter himself.* Or the family head might ask to be present when the elder gives the counsel. And, as mentioned in paragraph 3, there may be times when it is preferable for an older sister to counsel a younger sister.

¹² There is another factor to consider. An elder might ask himself, ‘Am I the best person to give the counsel, or would it be better received if it came from someone else?’ For example, a person who struggles with feelings of low self-worth may respond better to counsel from an elder who has dealt with this challenge rather than one who has not. The elder who experienced similar feelings is likely to have greater empathy, and what he says may be more readily accepted. However, all elders have the responsibility to encourage and motivate their brothers and sisters to make any adjustments that the Scriptures require. So when admonition is needed, what matters most is that the counsel is given.

* See the article “Understanding Headship in the Congregation” in the February 2021 issue of *The Watchtower*.

HOW CAN YOU GIVE EFFECTIVE COUNSEL?

¹³ *Be ready to listen.* When an elder is preparing to offer counsel, he should ask himself: ‘What do I know about my brother’s circumstances? What is happening in his life? Could he be facing challenges that I am unaware of? What does he need most right now?’

¹⁴ The principle recorded at James 1:19 certainly applies to those who give counsel. James wrote: “Everyone must be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger.” An elder may assume that he has all the facts, but does he really? Proverbs 18:13 reminds us: “When anyone replies to a matter before he hears the facts, it is foolish and humiliating.” It is

13-14. Why is it important for an elder to listen?



Why should
Christian elders
be “quick to listen”?
(See paragraphs 13-14)

best to get the facts directly from the person himself. That involves listening before speaking. Remember the lesson learned by the elder quoted in the introduction of this article. He realized that instead of beginning the visit with material he had prepared, he should have asked the sister such questions as: “What has been happening in your life?” “How can I help?” If elders take the time to get the facts, they are more likely to help and encourage their brothers and sisters.

¹⁵ *Get to know the flock.* As mentioned at the outset, giving effective counsel involves more than simply reading a few scriptures or offering a suggestion or two. Our brothers and sisters need to sense that we care for them, that we understand them, and that we want to help them. (Read Proverbs 27:23.) Elders should do their best to develop close friendships with their brothers and sisters.

¹⁶ Elders would certainly want to avoid giving the impression that they are all business, as it were, and that they approach their brothers only when something needs to be handled. Instead, they regularly talk with their brothers and sisters, showing personal concern for them as they face challenges. “If you

15. How can elders apply the principle found at Proverbs 27:23?

16. What will help elders to give effective counsel?



What will make it easier for elders to give counsel?
(See paragraph 16)

do that,” observes one experienced elder, “you will build a good relationship. Then when you need to give counsel, you will find it much easier to do so.” And the one receiving the counsel will find it much easier to accept.

¹⁷ *Be patient and kind.* Patience and kindness are especially needed when someone initially resists Bible-based counsel. An elder must guard against the tendency to get irritated if his counsel is not immediately accepted or acted on. Regarding Jesus, it was prophesied: “No bruised reed will he crush, and no smoldering wick will he extinguish.” (Matt. 12: 20) So in his private prayers, the elder may ask Jehovah to bless the one needing counsel and to help him understand the reason for the counsel and apply it. The brother being counseled may need

17. When especially does an elder need to be patient and kind?

time to think about what was said. If the elder is patient and kind, the one he is trying to help will not be distracted by the way the counsel is given, but he will be able to focus on the message. Of course, the counsel should always be based on God’s Word.

¹⁸ *Learn from your mistakes.* As long as we are imperfect, we will not be able to apply the suggestions in this article perfectly. (Jas. 3:2) We will make mistakes, but when we do, we should try to learn from them. If our brothers and sisters can perceive that we love them, they will likely find it easier to forgive us when we offend them by something we say or do. —See also the box “A Note to Parents.”

18. (a) Where giving counsel is concerned, what should we keep in mind? (b) As shown in the picture with the box, what are the parents discussing?



Why should an elder be patient and kind when giving counsel?

(See paragraph 17)



A Note to Parents

At times, it is necessary for parents to counsel their children. In this regard, parents will find it helpful to consider the principles discussed in this article. Before counseling a young one, the parent might ask himself: ‘Do I have to make an issue over this matter? Will I handle the situation in a balanced, loving way, or should I wait until I am not irritated? Do I have all the facts? Is there something happening in my child’s life that I am unaware of? After the counsel is given, will my child know that he has been treated fairly and with love?’ There is never a reason for a Christian parent to treat his children harshly. Remember, Paul said that love is “patient and kind.” (1 Cor. 13:4) After all, our children are part of “the flock of God.” —1 Pet. 5:2; Eph. 6:4.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

¹⁹ As we have seen, it is not easy to give effective counsel. We are imperfect, and so are those whom we counsel. Keep in mind the principles we have considered in this article. Make sure that the counsel is given with the right motive. Also, be sure that the counsel is really needed and that you are the right person to give it. Before offering counsel, ask questions and listen carefully so that you can understand what the person is facing. Try to see things from his perspective. Be gentle, cultivating a warm friendship with your brothers and sisters. Remember the goal: We want our counsel not only to be effective but also to “make the heart rejoice.” —Prov. 27:9.

19. How can we make the heart of our brothers and sisters rejoice?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What is the right motive for giving counsel?
- Who should give counsel?
- How can you give effective counsel?

103 *Shepherds—Gifts in Men*

(Ephesians 4:8)

1. Help in our lives, Jehovah provides,
 Shepherds to tend his flock.
 By their example they serve as guides,
 Showing us how to walk.

(CHORUS)

*God gives us men who have earned our trust,
Men who are loyal and true.
They show concern for his precious sheep;
Love them for all that they do.*

2. Shepherds who love us care how we feel;
 Gently they guide the way.
 When we are hurt, they help us to heal,
 Kind in the words they say.

(Chorus)

3. Godly advice and counsel they give,
 That we may never stray.
 Thus they assist us, God's way to live,
 Serving him ev'ry day.

(Chorus)