



# WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

THE RIDGEWAY LONDON NW7 1RN

TELEPHONE 020 8906 2211

November 1, 2003

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

Pioneers are a valuable asset to every congregation. They contribute to a zealous evangelizing spirit and increased theocratic activity, they are fine examples in whole-souled service, and they strengthen the bonds of friendship and brotherly love in the congregation. Pioneers who are whole-souled are desirable to Jehovah and they should feel that they are precious to the shepherds of the congregation. (Haggai 2:7) Do the pioneers in your congregation sense that they are precious to you and that their efforts in the ministry are appreciated? What can we do to assist them?

**Know each pioneer's circumstances:** Follow the example of Jehovah and Jesus who are approachable and make each of us feel well cared for. (Proverbs 8:31; 1 Peter 5:7) While elders should concentrate on helping those who are in spiritual need, those doing well, including the pioneers, appreciate encouragement. Pioneers need to know that we are aware of their circumstances and should feel our concern and support for them. One of the best ways to show we care is to spend time with them. You are busy and have many pressing responsibilities. Nevertheless, perhaps you can combine the time spent with pioneers with other theocratic activities. For example, it has been suggested that each elder try to work in field service with every pioneer at least once a year. Did you accomplish that goal last year? Is that one of your goals this year? Can we invite a pioneer to join our family in the ministry? If circumstances allow, can a pioneer occasionally sit in on our family study or participate in another family activity? All that this would entail is some advance planning. But the benefits will be great to us as shepherds and it assures the pioneers of our concern and interest in them personally.

Pioneers are expected to meet the hour requirement unless an urgent unforeseen circumstance arises. If the circumstances of a pioneer changes and he is consistently unable to meet the hour requirement, it would be a loving-kindness to consider with him the possibility of discontinuing the pioneer service until he is again able to meet the requirements. Help him appreciate that Jehovah wants us to find joy in our ministry by doing what our circumstances allow.—Mark 14:3-9; please see July 1998 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert, paragraphs 15-20.

**Attend pioneer meeting:** As of November 2001 a fine provision was made for elders to attend the special three-hour pioneer meeting held each year in conjunction with the circuit assembly. It has been reported that in some areas few elders take advantage of this arrangement. This is an ongoing arrangement. If the service overseer or other member of the Congregation Service Committee is unable to be there, the body of elders should select another elder to attend. Of course, when a pioneer elder will be attending no one else needs to be selected. The elder who is present should take notes on the entire programme. Thereafter, the presiding overseer should include on the agenda for the next elders' meeting about 10 minutes for the brother who attended the session to share a few highlights with the entire body of elders.

**Be enthused about the Pioneers Assist Others programme:** The Pioneers Assist Others programme was instituted so that the congregation could benefit from the experience of

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the pioneers. Travelling overseers report that this programme is not being utilized to the extent that it could due to some having the feeling that the arrangement is only for the spiritually weak. The programme is for those who have the potential to make progress in the ministry from the assistance being offered. There are ones who have known the truth for years but would appreciate help in certain features of the ministry. Can we help them see the benefit of working with a pioneer in the programme? (Proverbs 27:17) Some publishers do very well in placing literature yet are hesitant in making return visits or in starting Bible studies. Others start Bible studies with ease but feel that they are having difficulty reaching the students' hearts and motivating them to apply what they are learning. Experienced pioneers may be requested to offer help in these areas. Individuals whose circumstances might allow them to pioneer could be benefited from further association and encouragement by a pioneer through the Pioneers Assist Others programme. If a publisher has already had an assignment in the programme and could benefit from further assistance, you may arrange for them to receive another assignment.

The service overseer should provide a brief report of the progress of the programme at each quarterly elder's meeting, keep a record of those that have received assistance, and generate enthusiasm among all for the programme. For example, publishers that have benefited from the programme and pioneers with positive experiences might be interviewed on a Service Meeting part. The Pioneers Assist Others programme is designed to help publishers improve their skills in the ministry and is not to take the place of the assistance that Congregation Book Study overseers give to inactive or irregular ones. It was not intended as a means to give attention to those who are weighed down with problems.

**Encourage the pioneer spirit:** The pioneer spirit is essentially a heart condition that manifests itself as having a positive attitude toward the command to preach and make disciples, being fully committed to showing love and concern for people, being self-sacrificing, and taking pleasure in spiritual things, not material things. Do we auxiliary pioneer whenever possible and encourage our children to have the pioneer spirit? Do we take the initiative in our daily routine of life to give an informal witness? Do we talk about field experiences and points we enjoyed at the meetings or in personal study so that we can impart thoughts that are positive and encouraging? As elders, our example can do much to promote zeal in others.—Hebrews 13:7.

Pioneers are precious and so we want to do what we can to encourage and assist them. We must spend time with them so we know their circumstances. An elder should attend each pioneer meeting held in conjunction with the circuit assembly and prepare a report for the other elders. The entire congregation will benefit from a Pioneers Assist Others programme that is well maintained. And we can do much to promote the pioneer spirit. All of such zealous activity will help to accomplish the most important work being undertaken today under angelic guidance—preaching the good news of the Kingdom.—Revelation 14:6, 7.

Your brothers,

*Watch Tower B. & J. Society*  
OF BRITAIN

Note to the Congregation Service Committee: As soon as possible this letter should be read in its entirety with the body of elders. Accompanying this letter is an outline for the December meeting with the regular pioneers. Please arrange for two elders to conduct this meeting. The elders should prepare well so that the meeting will be of encouragement to the pioneers. Other elders are encouraged to attend.