

## HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Knowing God involves more than knowing facts about him. We must become intimately acquainted with Jehovah's deeds and qualities and act in harmony with that knowledge. Motivate listeners to come to know Jehovah well and gain his approval

### **COMING TO KNOW GOD "MEANS EVERLASTING LIFE"** (4 min.)

Those who come to know Jehovah God and his Son have the prospect of everlasting life **[Read John 17:3]**

Gaining life requires more than just acknowledging that God exists or knowing a few facts about him (Jas 2:19)

Our claiming to know God and Jesus does not automatically make our worship acceptable (Mt 7:21-23)

The Samaritans had some knowledge of Jehovah, but they worshipped 'what they did not know'  
(Joh 4:22-24; *w02* 7/15 15 ¶1-3)

### **HOW CAN YOU COME TO KNOW JEHOVAH?** (10 min.)

*Read the Bible regularly;* take note of and meditate on God's qualities, feelings, decisions, and actions (Ps 77:11, 12)

As you read, ask yourself, 'What does this teach me about Jehovah?' (*cl* 312 ¶7-8)

*Strive to imitate Jehovah* when you make decisions (Eph 5:1)

When you see the positive results of making godly decisions, you will gain insight into *why* Jehovah feels as he does about the way he wants us to live our lives

*Speak to Jehovah often in prayer* (*w14* 2/15 25 ¶18-21)

Ask Jehovah to help you to grow in knowledge of him and to apply what you learn (Lu 11:13; *w11* 12/15 16-17 ¶18-19; *w04* 12/15 14-15 ¶12-14)

*Develop a close personal relationship with Jehovah*

Those with such a relationship are aware of Jehovah's loving interest in them and realize that their actions affect him (*w15* 4/15 22-23 ¶14, 16; *w11* 7/1 10)

Abraham is an example of one who cultivated a friendship with God (Jas 2:23; *w14* 2/15 21-22 ¶3-5)

### **DEMONSTRATE THAT YOU KNOW GOD** (13 min.)

Obedying God's commands is an essential part of knowing him **[Read 1 John 2:4]**

The ancient nation of Israel often disobeyed God

Although they did not forget Jehovah's identity, their actions revealed that they did not really know Jehovah (Ho 4:1, 6; *it-2* 181 ¶3; *jd* 57-59 ¶4-6)

In contrast, King Josiah "upheld justice and righteousness," showing by his actions that he knew God (Jer 22:15, 16; *jr* 140-142)

We show that we know God when we follow his guidance in *every* aspect of life, even in such personal matters as family life (*lv* 41-43 ¶12-14)

A husband should show Christlike love for his wife, both in public and in private (Eph 5:28, 29; *w09* 5/15 19-20)

A wife should respect her husband's authority and help him fulfill his role as family head (Eph 5:22; *w09* 7/15 9 ¶8-10)

Children should follow Bible laws and obey their parents, even when out of their sight (Eph 6:1-3; *yp2* 136-141)

Associate with those who know and love Jehovah

We would distance ourselves from Jehovah if we were to choose associates whom he rejects (Ps 15:1-5)

This includes those we invite into our home through entertainment (Ps 97:10)

When we love those whom Jehovah loves, we demonstrate our love for God (1Jo 4:8)

When we demonstrate that we truly know God, we become known by him in return (Ga 4:9; 2Ti 2:19; *w11* 9/15 25 ¶1-4)

### **THOSE WHO KNOW GOD ENJOY BLESSINGS** (3 min.)

Our being known by God means that he recognizes us with approval

Jehovah loyally cares for those who are known by him (2Ch 16:9a; *w14* 4/15 31 ¶17-20)

By coming to know Jehovah now, we have the prospect of knowing him for eternity

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



# WILL YOU BE A SURVIVOR OF THE LAST DAYS?

## *Note to the speaker:*

Convey the urgency of our times. Prove conclusively that we are living in the last days. Motivate audience to take positive action in order to be among the survivors

### **WE MUST BE CONCERNED ABOUT SURVIVING THE LAST DAYS** (2 min.)

Jehovah's Witnesses teach worldwide that we are living in the last days

Are these *really* the last days of this present system of things? Is there proof? What is needed for survival? In the first century, Jesus warned of the imminent destruction of the Jewish system of things

We can learn from those who recognized the last days of that system and survived

### **JESUS FORETOLD THE END OF THE JEWISH SYSTEM OF THINGS** (7 min.)

Jesus warned of events preceding the end of the Jewish system **[Read Matthew 24:1-8]**

He told his disciples to flee when they saw Jerusalem "surrounded by encamped armies" (Lu 21:20-22; *w15* 7/15 14-15 ¶1-3)

History confirms that Jesus' prophecy had a fulfillment in the first century (*w07* 4/1 8-11)

Romans under Cestius Gallus came in 66 C.E. and then withdrew, which gave Jesus' disciples an opportunity to flee (*w12* 4/15 25-26 ¶13-15)

In 70 C.E., the Romans returned and brought the last days to a destructive climax

Those who heard Jesus' prophecy had ample proof of its fulfillment, and faithful disciples took action and kept living

Jesus also foretold that many would lack discernment and would not heed the warning

**[Read Luke 19:43, 44]**

### **PROPHECY ABOUT CONCLUSION OF SYSTEM APPLIES TODAY** (7 min.)

History proves that much of Matthew 24 had an initial fulfillment from 33 C.E. to 70 C.E. (Mt 24:4-22)

Jesus' prophecy has seen a greater, global fulfillment since the establishment of God's Kingdom in 1914 (*g* 10/12 26-28)

Revelation chapter 6 points forward to the crowning of Jesus at a time of war, food shortage, and plague on earth (*w14* 1/15 28-29 ¶4-7)

Book of Revelation was written a quarter of a century after the end of the Jewish system of things

Agreement between Matthew 24 and Revelation 6 proves that Matthew 24 would also have a *future* fulfillment

Thus, both the Bible and history show that the major fulfillment of Matthew 24 is occurring now

### **FURTHER PROOF THAT WE ARE LIVING IN "THE LAST DAYS"** (6 min.)

Another prophecy about "the last days" is found at 2 Timothy 3:1-7 **[Read verse 1]**

Paul describes actions and attitudes prevalent in the last days **[Discuss 2 Timothy 3:2-5]**

Paul was *not* referring to the last days of the Jewish system of things (*w94* 4/15 10-11 ¶14-17; *it-2* 206 ¶6)

This prophecy applies now (*w14* 1/15 29-30 ¶8-13; *w06* 9/15 5-6)

Bible prophecy thus clearly establishes that we are living in the last days of this system of things

### **ACTION IS REQUIRED IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE THE LAST DAYS** (8 min.)

Despite proof, ridiculers abound, as they must have in Jerusalem just prior to its destruction in 70 C.E. (2Pe 3:3, 4)

It is absolutely essential that we show by our godly conduct and devotion that we realize that we are living deep in the last days of Satan's world **[Read 2 Peter 3:11, 12a]**

Many who learn that destruction is impending need to make changes in their life

Jehovah's Witnesses are happy to assist them by means of a free study of the Bible

For those already serving Jehovah, it is imperative that they keep alert and not be preoccupied with the cares of daily life (*w06* 12/15 18-19 ¶17-18)

Now is the time to take action and remain steadfast so that we may be survivors **[Read 2 Peter 3:14]** (*w10* 7/15 9 ¶10-11)

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# MOVE AHEAD WITH JEHOVAH'S UNIFIED ORGANIZATION

## *Note to the speaker:*

Build appreciation for the heavenly and earthly parts of Jehovah's organization. Motivate the audience to become part of Jehovah's organization in order to move ahead with it for all eternity!

### **JEHOVAH IS A GOD OF ORGANIZATION** (6 min.)

The physical heavens teach us that Jehovah is a God of organization (Job 38:31-33; *w11* 7/1 26-28)

Stars are organized into galaxies; galaxies are organized into clusters and superclusters (*w14* 5/15 22 ¶3)

Faithful spirit creatures are organized (Ps 103:20, 21; Da 7:10)

Jehovah's people on earth are also organized (1Co 14:33, 40)

### **JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION IS UNIFIED** (10 min.)

The heavenly and earthly parts of Jehovah's organization are unified in carrying out his will

They cooperate in declaring the good news to all sorts of people (1Ti 2:3, 4; Re 14:6, 7; *bt* 57-59 ¶14-18)

This has meant the translation of the good news into hundreds of languages

Jehovah's purpose is to unify all creation in heaven and on earth [**Read Ephesians 1:8-10**] (*w12* 7/15 27-28 ¶3-5)

The first stage involves gathering "the things in the heavens," anointed ones who will rule with Christ in heaven

The second stage involves gathering "the things on the earth," those who will dwell in Paradise on earth

How can we personally contribute to the unification now taking place?

Work along with Jehovah's arrangement for unifying his intelligent creation [**Read Ephesians 4:1-3**]

Cultivate humility, mildness, patience, and love, qualities that contribute to unity and peace

By contrast, pride of nation, race, tribe, and culture is divisive (*w15* 5/15 15-16 ¶4-8)

Such pride can be overcome, allowing a person to enjoy unity with Jehovah and his organization (Pr 16:5; Jas 4:6)

### **JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION IS DYNAMIC** (8 min.)

Ezekiel saw a magnificent vision of the heavenly part of Jehovah's organization (Eze 1:1-28; *w13* 4/15 23-24 ¶6)

Jehovah's celestial chariot can move with lightning speed and change direction instantly (Eze 1:12-19)

Jehovah is the glorious Rider of the chariot and directs its movement with his powerful holy spirit

What evidence is there that Jehovah also directs the earthly part of his organization?

Organizational refinements [**Read Isaiah 60:17**] (*kr* 120-125 ¶11-18)

Numerical growth [**Read Isaiah 60:22**] (*kr* 96-97; statistics from the latest *Yearbook*)

### **KEEP ADVANCING WITH JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION** (6 min.)

While it is true that those who make up the earthly part of Jehovah's organization are imperfect, how much better to focus on the miracle of our peaceful, united brotherhood! (Ps 48:12-14; Mic 2:12; *w15* 7/15 9 ¶13)

We experience this unity when we gather at conventions, assemblies, and congregation meetings

After the destruction of Satan's system, only one organization will exist in heaven and on earth—Jehovah's organization!

Very soon, universal peace and harmony will reign

Those who choose to side with the rebel Satan and his organization will cease to exist

Jehovah's organization will continue advancing throughout eternity

The rapid progress now taking place will accelerate with the earthshaking events soon to come (2Pe 3:10-13)

Scrolls will be opened in the new world, revealing additional details about God's purpose for mankind (Re 20:12; *re* 298-299 ¶14)

May it be our resolve to move ahead forever with Jehovah's unified organization!

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# EVIDENCE OF GOD IN THE WORLD AROUND US

## *Note to the speaker:*

Creation and the Bible provide evidence of God's existence. Additionally, the dramatic changes made by some who have come to know and serve Jehovah point to wisdom and power beyond any human source. Motivate listeners to act on this evidence and to accept Jehovah's guidance in their life

### **IT IS IMPORTANT TO EXAMINE EVIDENCE OF GOD'S EXISTENCE** (2 min.)

Many people doubt the existence of God or reject his existence outright

Nevertheless, there is much evidence for the existence of a Creator

Whether we believe in the existence of God profoundly affects the meaning of our lives (*g* 3/15 4 ¶1-4)

### **CREATION GIVES EVIDENCE OF A CREATOR** (14 min.)

The orderliness of the physical world gives evidence of a purposeful Designer

An orderly system cannot come into existence on its own [**Read Hebrews 3:4**]

Tremendous energy was used to bring the universe into existence

The universe is highly organized (*w11* 2/15 6-7 ¶5-7)

Jehovah God is the Source of both the energy and the orderliness we see in the universe (Isa 40:26, 28)

The physical properties of the universe are fine-tuned to support life (*g* 12/09 5-7; *ct* 17-21)

Anything that is fine-tuned requires an intelligent person to do the tuning

Our solar system and the earth are precisely located and designed to support life (*w13* 10/15 8 ¶6-7; *ct* 22-24; *lc* 4-7)

The origin and complexity of living things cannot reasonably be attributed to chance (*g* 1/15 4-5)

Scientists cannot explain how the complex molecules (i.e. RNA and proteins) needed for a cell to live and replicate came to exist simultaneously (*lf* 4-7)

Evolutionists claim that more complex life forms arose from simpler ones

In reality, no living cells are simple (*lf* 8-12)

The marvelous information storage capacity of DNA points to a Designer (Ps 139:14-16; *g* 11/11 4-6; *lf* 15-17)

### **CREATION REVEALS GOD'S QUALITIES** (5 min.)

Observing creation can give us insight into the personality of Jehovah God [**Read Romans 1:20**]

Jehovah's *wisdom* can be seen in the natural cycles that renew the earth (*w13* 10/15 8-9 ¶8-9; *lc* 8-9)

God's *justice* is reflected in the conscience that he placed in all humans (Ro 2:14, 15; *w07* 10/15 20-21 ¶5-8)

Jehovah's foremost quality is *love*

Although many ignore God or deny his existence, his love is evident in how he provides for all (Ac 14:16, 17)

### **THE BIBLE GIVES EVIDENCE OF A DIVINE AUTHOR** (7 min.)

The Bible's record of accurate prophecy gives evidence of God's existence (Isa 46:9, 10)

Details of the conquest of Babylon were prophesied some 200 years in advance (*g* 11/07 9)

The timing of Jesus' appearance as Messiah and details of his earthly life were accurately foretold (*g* 7/12 22-24)

Unlike other ancient books, the Bible is accurate when it touches on scientific matters (*g* 2/11 22-23)

The Bible's wise counsel has the power to transform people [See the *Watchtower* series "The Bible Changes Lives"]

This shows that we have a caring Creator who has communicated with mankind (Isa 48:17, 18)

### **LET THE CREATOR GUIDE YOUR LIFE** (2 min.)

By learning and applying Bible principles, you can personally benefit from Jehovah's guidance (Ps 19:7-11)

In the near future, Jehovah will end wickedness and restore the earth, accomplishing his original purpose (Re 21:5)

Now is the time to come to know Jehovah and learn to do his will

Those who do so can enjoy everlasting blessings

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## REAL HELP FOR THE FAMILY

### *Note to the speaker:*

Warm, loving family relationships require time and effort, but they are achievable. Present a realistic view of challenges to family happiness. Instill confidence that problems can be solved by applying Bible principles

### **GOD WANTS YOUR FAMILY TO BE HAPPY** (3 min.)

All families yearn to be happy, yet some are plagued by hurtful speech, disrespect, disloyalty, and a lack of warmth

Such problems reflect common traits of “the last days” (2Ti 3:1-5)

Jehovah God has provided guidance for families because he wants them to be happy (Isa 48:17, 18)

When Bible counsel is applied, even difficult family problems can be overcome

### **UNSELFISHNESS IS THE KEY TO A HAPPY FAMILY** (8 min.)

Selfishness is at the root of many family problems

Satan promotes the idea that self-interest leads to happiness

In reality, greater happiness comes from giving (Ac 20:35)

Unselfish love is a powerful uniting bond **[Read Colossians 3:14]**

Genuine love is not merely an emotion; it is displayed by unselfish actions (1Co 13:4-7)

An unselfish husband puts his family’s needs and interests ahead of his own **[Read Colossians 3:19, 21]**

In public and in private, he treats his family with dignity, being gentle and kind

An unselfish wife supports her husband and works hard for the welfare of the family

**[Read Colossians 3:18]**

Children who are not self-willed but obedient contribute to a peaceful, happy home

**[Read Colossians 3:20]**

### **CHALLENGES TO FAMILY HAPPINESS CAN BE OVERCOME** (16 min.)

A household may be religiously divided, or perhaps not all family members apply Bible counsel

Jehovah will bless those who promote peace despite unfavorable circumstances (Col 3:23, 24)

A believing mate can influence the unbelieving spouse positively (1Pe 3:1, 2; w10 5/15 13-14 ¶6-10)

At times, children may be slow to respond to parental training or even rebel against their parents

Maintain open communication with children, be a good listener, and reason patiently (g 10/11 16-20; g 8/07 8)

Parents should not give up but patiently and firmly continue assisting their children (Ga 6:9)

Some families have deeply entrenched bad habits, such as arguing and using unkind speech

Such habits can be overcome by applying Bible principles **[Read Colossians 3:12]**

Learn to handle disagreements and problems in a peaceful way (w08 5/1 10-12; g 2/13 4-5)

Be patient, recognizing that forming new habits takes time

Resolve to let go of resentment over past wrongs **[Read Colossians 3:13]**

If trust between marriage mates has been damaged, it may be possible to restore it

Perhaps one mate has viewed pornography or has developed an inappropriate emotional bond outside the marriage

To begin repairing the damage, the offending mate needs to change his or her behavior and apologize (Col 3:5, 9)

Marriage mates can continue to rebuild trust by cultivating openness and honesty

Adultery is a serious betrayal of trust

An innocent mate must weigh carefully the decision whether to forgive or to divorce (Mt 5:32)

If forgiveness is extended, both mates must work together to strengthen the marriage (w12 5/1 12-15)

### **STRENGTHEN YOUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR FAMILY** (3 min.)

By words and actions, show that you are committed to making your family life a success (g 6/15 8-9)

Strong commitment provides a firm foundation for resolving problems

Jehovah God will bless your efforts (Pr 16:3)

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# THE FLOOD OF NOAH'S DAY AND YOU

## *Note to the speaker:*

Allow the Bible to convince the audience that (1) the Flood was a real, historical event, (2) Jehovah will destroy the present wicked world, and (3) survival depends on our cultivating and demonstrating faith like that of Noah

### **THE GLOBAL FLOOD WAS A HISTORICAL EVENT** (7 min.)

The Bible is our authority, and it teaches that the Flood was a real event

The Bible contains specific details regarding the Flood account (Ge 7:11; 8:4, 13, 14)

Jesus, the Son of God, provided eyewitness testimony (Mt 24:37-39; *w03* 5/15 6 ¶7)

Evidence exists that is consistent with the Flood account: (1) geologic evidence, (2) fossil evidence, and (3) the prevalence of flood legends (*w08* 6/1 8; *w02* 3/1 4; *g* 5/09 16-17)

Why does it matter whether the Flood really occurred?

### **DESTRUCTION OF AN UNGODLY WORLD SETS A PATTERN FOR OUR DAY** (12 min.)

Jesus compared “the days of Noah” to “the presence of the Son of man” **[Read Matthew 24:37]**

What conditions existed prior to the Flood? What parallels do we see in the time of the end?

*Pervasive apathy* (Mt 24:38, 39)

Today, people often ridicule those who preach the good news (2Pe 3:3, 4)

*Demonic influence* (Ge 6:1, 2; *w08* 6/1 5 ¶2-4)

Many television programs and movies reflect a fascination with spiritism

In many lands, people annually celebrate festivals of the dead on nearly the same date when the Flood destroyed wicked humans (*w02* 3/1 4 ¶2; *rs* 181 ¶1-2)

*Sexual depravity* (Ge 6:4; *w03* 12/15 16 ¶10-12)

Today, pornography, premarital sex, adultery, and homosexuality are commonplace (Ro 1:26, 27)

*Widespread violence* (Ge 6:11; *w03* 12/15 16-17 ¶13-15)

Today, the news media often feature headlines of violent acts (2Ti 3:3, 13)

How will Jehovah respond to the wickedness on the earth in our day? **[Read 2 Peter 3:5-7]**

He will destroy ungodly people, cleansing the earth of all unrighteousness (2Pe 3:13)

### **IMITATE NOAH'S FAITH IN ORDER TO SURVIVE** (7 min.)

To survive the coming destruction, we must imitate the faith of Noah **[Read Hebrews 11:7]**

He built an ark and was “a preacher of righteousness” (2Pe 2:5)

We too must be engaged in “holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion” (2Pe 3:11, 12)

We must avoid preoccupation with personal pursuits (Mt 24:38, 39)

Noah had the necessary faith and courage to be different from an ungodly world (Ge 6:9; *w08* 6/1 6)

Being different requires courage

Ask yourself, ‘Does my conduct silently condemn the world’s corrupt behavior?’ (1Pe 4:3, 4)

Why could Noah have such strong faith that Jehovah’s word would come true? (Ge 6:13, 17)

Noah likely knew of prior prophetic expressions from Jehovah that had come true (Ge 2:16, 17; 3:16-19)

### **DO NOT MISS THE PURPOSE OF THE FLOOD ACCOUNT** (4 min.)

Jehovah inspired Moses to record the Flood account for our benefit

This account no doubt strengthened Moses’ faith for the challenges he faced later in life

We can read and meditate on this inspired Bible account to strengthen our faith

Not only is it a call to action but it is a reminder that Jehovah will soon deliver us from a world of unrighteousness (2Pe 2:9)

Very soon, in harmony with Jehovah’s purpose, obedient mankind will have the opportunity to fill the earth, make it a paradise, and live on it forever (Ge 1:28; 9:1)

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## IMITATE “THE FATHER OF TENDER MERCIES”

### *Note to the speaker:*

Define mercy, using the Scriptures. Use Bible examples to show how Jehovah and Jesus demonstrated mercy. Finally, consider ways that we can imitate Jehovah’s mercy

### **WHAT IS MERCY?** (5 min.)

Mercy is at times associated with the pardoning of error, but more often it refers to expressions of kind consideration toward those in need (Ps 103:3, 4; *w07* 9/15 22 ¶7; *w04* 11/1 12 ¶13-14; *cl* 225 ¶15)

Showing mercy requires two elements: (1) *feelings* of compassion or pity and (2) *actions* to provide needed relief

### **JEHOVAH IS THE SOURCE OF TENDER MERCIES** (10 min.)

Compassion and mercy emanate from Jehovah and are part of his nature [**Read 2 Corinthians 1:3**] (*w08* 9/1 18, ftn.)

His tender feelings for those in need are like those of a mother for her newborn child (Isa 49:15)

His mercy is impartial (Lu 6:32-36)

He makes the sun rise and the rain fall “on both the wicked and the good” (Mt 5:45)

The Bible provides numerous examples of Jehovah’s mercy toward the Israelites as a group (Ps 78:38-41)

He was often “moved to pity” when they cried out for help, even though their own mistakes led to their situation (Jg 2:17, 18; 3:7-9, 12-15)

However, his mercy reached its limit with the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel when they continued in their wayward course (Ho 1:6, ftn.; *w05* 11/15 18 ¶8-9)

When individuals repent and change their course, Jehovah is willing to forgive and extend mercy (Ex 34:6, 7)

This does not mean that his justice is tempered by his mercy; God’s justice and mercy are perfect, and they work together in complete harmony (*w07* 9/15 24 ¶14)

Jehovah showed mercy to David, who committed grievous sins but repented (Ps 32:1-5; 51:1-4)

Perhaps forgiveness was shown in part because of David’s mercy toward Saul (*w12* 11/15 23 ¶10)

### **JESUS PERFECTLY IMITATED HIS FATHER IN SHOWING MERCY** (8 min.)

Jesus demonstrated why mercy is important and how to show it properly

We must show mercy to maintain a good relationship with Jehovah (Mt 9:13; *jd* 146-147 ¶13)

Our motives for extending mercy must be pure in order to please Jehovah (Mt 6:1-4)

Mercy requires positive action (Lu 10:29-37; *w07* 9/15 26 ¶1-2)

Like Jehovah, Jesus displayed mercy on every suitable occasion

He was not devoid of emotion when he performed miracles

Rather, he demonstrated tender feelings of compassion (Mt 20:30-34; Mr 1:40-42; *w08* 8/15 15 ¶15)

Jesus’ tender feelings for others prompted him “to teach them many things” (Mr 6:34)

### **CONTINUE TO BE MERCIFUL IN IMITATION OF JEHOVAH** (7 min.)

Jehovah wants us to respond to his mercy by being merciful to others [**Read Luke 6:36**]

In what ways can we do so?

Be forgiving in imitation of Jehovah (Mt 18:23-35)

Comfort others in their trials with words of encouragement [**Read 2 Corinthians 1:4**] (*w08* 9/1 18 ¶6; *w98* 2/15 26 ¶5)

Do good to others, and share what you have with them (Heb 13:16; 1Jo 3:17, 18)

Help to fill the spiritual need of others by sharing the good news with them

When we show mercy to others, Jehovah will show mercy to us (Mt 5:7; Jas 2:13; *w07* 9/15 25 ¶19)

We will also have the satisfaction of knowing that we are imitating our merciful God (Ps 116:5)

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# LIVING TO DO GOD'S WILL, NOT OUR OWN

## *Note to the speaker:*

Explain how mankind came under slavery to sin and how one can be set free by exercising faith in Christ's ransom. Appreciation should move us to demonstrate our faith in the ransom by how we live

### **A SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE PERMEATES MODERN SOCIETY** (3 min.)

A measure of independence is desirable, for no one wants to be completely dependent on other humans  
However, today's world is dominated by an unbalanced, irreverent spirit of independence from God

Satan is the source of this pervasive spirit (Eph 2:2)

This demonic spirit impels people to rebel against all authority and any restraints imposed on their desires  
(*lv* 53-54 ¶7-8)

### **TRUE FREEDOM INVOLVES DEPENDENCE ON GOD AND JESUS** (10 min.)

The vast majority of humans believe that they are free, but they are actually in slavery to sin

#### **[Read Romans 6:16]**

Some are raised in lands where the concept of being a sinner is unfamiliar; others simply do not believe in sin (*w11* 6/15 8-9 ¶9-12)

The Bible teaches that Adam and Eve were real people who were created free from sin

They had the prospect of everlasting life if they obeyed God (Ge 2:16, 17)

By his disobedience, Adam willfully chose independence from God and became a sinner (1Ti 2:14)

Adam lost the prospect of everlasting life for himself and all his offspring (Ge 3:19; Ro 5:12)

Jehovah God lovingly arranged for a ransom to set mankind free from sin and death **[Read Romans 6:23]**

The ransom provides a basis for forgiveness of sins; we must exercise faith in it (*w10* 8/15 13-14 ¶8-11)

Because of the ransom, we can enjoy true freedom and the prospect of everlasting life

### **LIVE DAILY TO DO JEHOVAH'S WILL** (14 min.)

All should show appreciation to the Source of life, Jehovah God, and to his Son, Christ Jesus, who gave his life in behalf of mankind (Mt 20:28; Ac 17:26-28)

We show our appreciation by choosing to do God's will instead of our own **[Read 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15]**

Doing God's will requires that we take steps to become dedicated, baptized Witnesses of Jehovah if we have not yet done so

It is not enough merely to enjoy Bible teachings and associate with those who do God's will

The steps to baptism include repenting of our sins and rejecting bad practices (*w13* 3/15 17, box)

Dedication to God involves willingly disowning ourselves (Mt 16:24; *w05* 3/15 11-12 ¶8)

After we have made such a dedication in prayer, we should symbolize it publicly by water baptism  
(Mt 28:19; Ro 10:10)

Whether we are baptized or are progressing toward baptism, we must continuously reject a selfish course

*Flee from sexual immorality* **[Read 1 Corinthians 6:18-20]**

Avoid associations and entertainment that promote unclean thoughts and conduct (Eph 5:3; *g* 9/13 5)

*Do not strive for wealth or develop a love for material possessions* (1Ti 6:9, 10)

Jesus said that we "cannot slave for God and for Riches" (Mt 6:19-24)

In imitation of Jesus, we should use our time and energy to help others

Help them come to know the truth about Jehovah God and his Kingdom (Mt 9:36-38)

Willingly and humbly assist others, and help care for their needs (Joh 13:3-5, 12-15; *w15* 2/15 8-9 ¶14-16)

### **STRENGTHEN YOUR RESOLVE TO LIVE FOR GOD'S WILL** (3 min.)

We need to remind ourselves constantly of our dependence on God and Jesus

Acknowledge in prayer that our life is from God and our hope for the future depends on our faith in the ransom

Make decisions, not as an independent person, but as a servant of the true God

By strengthening our determination to do God's will, we can enjoy everlasting blessings **[Read Romans 6:22]**

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]





## BE A HEARER AND A DOER OF GOD'S WORD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to see the vital need to listen attentively to Jehovah's instruction, get the sense of it, and apply it. Emphasize the need to pay attention to how we listen when studying or attending meetings

### **"LET THE ONE WHO HAS EARS LISTEN"** (6 min.)

Jesus repeatedly urged the crowds who heard him to *listen* (Mt 11:15; 13:9, 43; 15:10)

Many today have heard at least some of the Bible's message, but as in Jesus' day, relatively few pay attention

Such ones may be hindered by various prejudices, human philosophies, or distractions

Humbly listening to God's Word is of vital importance for salvation

We must take in knowledge about Jehovah God and Jesus Christ (Joh 3:16; 17:3; Ro 10:17)

We must look to God's Word for guidance in all matters (Mt 4:4)

### **HEARERS MUST ALSO BECOME DOERS OF THE WORD** (7 min.)

It is not sufficient merely to take in Bible knowledge; we must apply what we learn [**Read James 1:25**]

With help from God's spirit, we can overcome strongly entrenched practices (1Co 6:9-11; *w10* 4/15 9 ¶11)

Appreciation for Jehovah and divine teaching provides motivation to make changes (Isa 48:17, 18)

[Relate an experience from the *Watchtower* series "The Bible Changes Lives"]

To enjoy Kingdom blessings, we cannot do merely what *we think* is pleasing to God (Mt 7:21-23)

Many who claim to follow Jesus do good works, but not the work assigned by God (*cf* 185-186 ¶10-12)

### **DOERS OF THE WORD SHARE THE KINGDOM MESSAGE WITH OTHERS** (8 min.)

Jesus said that he came into the world to "bear witness to the truth" (Joh 18:37)

He was commissioned by his Father to proclaim and teach God's Word (Lu 4:18-21)

He went throughout Galilee and Judea teaching and making disciples of appreciative hearers (Mt 9:35-38)

Jesus commissioned his followers to preach the good news of the Kingdom and make more disciples (Mt 10:5-7; 28:19, 20; Lu 10:1, 2, 8, 9)

Early Christians taught the same Kingdom message that Jesus did (Ac 28:30, 31)

Jesus foretold that Christians would eventually preach throughout the inhabited earth (Ac 1:8; *it-2* 744)

Jesus compared those who hear the Kingdom message and respond favorably to "fine soil" (Mt 13:18-23)

Such ones 'bear fruit and produce,' that is, they also become Kingdom proclaimers

Sharing in the preaching of the good news is an essential part of doing God's will (Ro 10:13-15)

Today, Jehovah's Witnesses are fulfilling Jesus' command to proclaim God's Kingdom

This global "harvest" work is more urgent than ever before (Re 14:14-16; *kr* 88-89 ¶5-6)

### **"PAY ATTENTION TO HOW YOU LISTEN"** (6 min.)

Despite the urgency of our times, it is possible to fall into the trap of becoming "hearers only" (Jas 1:22-24)

The apostle Paul warned Hebrew Christians about becoming 'dull in their hearing' (Heb 5:11)

Take advantage of all provisions Jehovah makes through his organization for our spiritual welfare

Jesus actively leads the Christian congregation; he uses "the faithful and discreet slave" to provide spiritual food (Mt 24:45-47; *w13* 7/15 20 ¶2)

Christian meetings and publications assist us to study God's Word so that we are "completely equipped for every good work" (2Ti 3:14-17)

Cultivate and maintain a regular program of family worship and personal study

By continuing to make full use of these provisions, we 'pay attention to how we listen' (Lu 8:18)

### **THOSE WHO APPLY GOD'S WORD WILL BE BLESSED** (3 min.)

Jesus described the two outcomes facing all people today (Mt 7:13, 14)

Now is the time to act on Jesus' sayings [**Read Matthew 7:24**]

Those who do so find peace and true happiness despite living in a troubled world (*w06* 5/15 27-30 ¶4-16)

Obedience to God's Word brings Jehovah's approval and the prospect of life everlasting

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# BE HONEST IN ALL YOU SAY AND DO

## *Note to the speaker:*

Motivate the audience to imitate Jehovah, “the God of truth.” Emphasize the benefits of honesty, including gaining Jehovah’s friendship and bringing honor to him

### **DO YOU VIEW HONESTY AS GOD DOES?** (5 min.)

To be honest means to be truthful and to deal with others in a straightforward, honorable way, free of deceit

Sadly, deceit and dishonesty are widespread in today’s world (2Ti 3:5, 13; *g* 10/10 3)

As a result, some believe that they must also resort to dishonesty (*g* 1/12 4-5)

Jehovah is “the God of truth”; Satan is “the father of the lie” (Ps 31:5; Joh 8:44)

Jehovah views dishonesty as a very serious matter (Pr 6:16, 17; Re 21:8)

Anyone professing to be a true worshipper of God must be honest in all things [**Read Hebrews 13:18**]

We want to honor Jehovah by imitating his truthfulness

### **BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF** (5 min.)

Imperfect humans often deceive themselves (Pr 16:25; Jer 17:9)

All of us will render an account for our actions, good or bad (1Ti 5:24, 25; Heb 4:13)

We should pray earnestly for Jehovah to search through us, correct us, and lead us [**Read Psalm 139:23, 24**]

We should humbly evaluate ourselves and be determined to make any needed changes (Jas 1:22-25)

We should approach Christian elders if we need additional help or if serious sin is involved (Jas 5:14, 15)

### **BE HONEST IN THE FAMILY AND WITH OTHERS** (16 min.)

Honesty should be a hallmark of every Christian family

A husband and wife must be open and honest with each other yet also gracious and kind (Eph 4:25-27, 29-32)

Honest mates do not view pornography or cultivate secret relationships (Ps 26:4)

Parents must teach their children to be honest in all they say and do

Parents can use Bible examples, good and bad, to teach the importance of honesty (Ge 43:12; Jos 6:17-19; 7:11-25; 2Ki 5:14-16, 20-27; *lv* 162-163 ¶7-8)

They must also teach by example (Ro 2:21)

Honesty should be evident in how we treat other people, including fellow Christians

We do not speak untruths about others or spread malicious gossip (Le 19:16; Pr 6:16, 18, 19)

We do not distort the truth or give a false impression in order to avoid discipline or gain some advantage

We cannot allow cultural norms or the prevailing views of society to weaken our resolve to be honest

Honesty should govern our dealings in the secular world

Jehovah detests dishonest business practices [**Read Proverbs 11:1**] (*lv* 168 ¶15)

We must honor our word even when it becomes difficult (Ps 15:4; Pr 6:1-5)

We must interact honestly with government authorities (Mt 22:21; Ro 13:1, 7; *w16.05* 30-31; *lv* 169 ¶16)

Those who conduct business honestly find that doing so is practical and beneficial (*g* 1/12 6)

### **REWARDS OF HONESTY** (4 min.)

Honesty results in a good conscience and a good relationship with others (*wp16.1* 7)

Our honesty may attract other people to the truth (2Co 6:4, 7; *w13* 5/15 11 ¶15)

Honesty leads to gaining Jehovah’s friendship (Ps 15:1, 2; Pr 3:32)

Jehovah promises to care for those who reject greed and maintain their honesty (Heb 13:5, 6)

Jehovah, who cannot lie, has promised everlasting life to those who faithfully adhere to Bible principles (Tit 1:2)

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## “NO PART OF THE WORLD”—IN IMITATION OF CHRIST

### *Note to the speaker:*

Discuss Christ's example. Help the audience to understand in practical ways what it means to be no part of the world, using local examples where possible

### “NO PART OF THE WORLD”—WHY? (5 min.)

In imitation of Jesus Christ, Christians must be “no part of the world” **[Read John 17:16]**

The “world” in this context refers to unrighteous human society alienated from God (*it-2* 1209-1210)

The world is under the control of Satan the Devil (1Jo 5:19)

The spirit of the world incites people to reflect the Devil's traits (Joh 8:44; Eph 2:1-3)

It encourages rebellion against Jehovah's standards (Ga 5:19-21)

### JESUS SHOWED US HOW TO REMAIN “NO PART OF THE WORLD” (12 min.)

Jesus rejected involvement in politics (Joh 6:15; 18:36)

We must remain politically neutral (*lv* 52, box)

Jesus shunned materialism (Mt 8:20)

We must seek God's Kingdom first and learn contentment (Mt 6:31-33; 1Ti 6:8)

Jesus did not allow the world to influence him in any way (Joh 14:30)

We must not love the world or the things in it (1Jo 2:15, 16)

Jesus showed us by example how to reject the world's enticements (*w13* 8/15 24-26 ¶7-12)

He did not allow physical desires to dominate him (Lu 4:1-4)

He was not ensnared by what he saw (Lu 4:5-8)

He refused to make a showy display (Lu 4:9-12)

Let God's Word direct your thinking and actions, as Jesus did (*w13* 8/15 26-27 ¶13-17)

Use it to fight temptation (2Co 10:3-5; *w11* 1/15 22-24 ¶5-10)

### CONQUER THE WORLD, AS JESUS DID (8 min.)

Those who are “no part of the world” become objects of its hatred (Joh 15:18, 19)

Jesus assured us that it is possible to conquer the world **[Read John 16:33]** (*w03* 3/15 4-6)

Jesus' followers conquer pride

Jesus taught his followers to be humble and willing to serve others (Lu 22:24-27; Joh 13:3-5, 12-15)

We must resist the worldly desire for personal prominence (*w12* 12/15 6-7 ¶9-12)

We must also avoid the snare of exalting sports figures or entertainers

Jesus' followers conquer hatred

Fear, ignorance, and prejudice cause divisions in the world

By contrast, self-sacrificing love unites Jesus' true followers (Joh 13:34, 35; 15:12, 13; 1Jo 3:15)

Jesus taught that Christians should love even their enemies (Mt 5:43-45)

Faith is essential if we are to conquer the world **[Read 1 John 5:3, 4]**

We must have faith that Christ is ruling as King and will soon destroy this wicked world

Such faith will help us to remain firm in our resolve to obey God's commands and not to adopt this world's ways and thinking

### THIS WICKED WORLD IS SOON TO END! (5 min.)

Soon, the ruler of this world will no longer be able to mislead mankind (Joh 16:11; Re 20:1-3)

His world and its desire will disappear forever! **[Read 1 John 2:17]**

Make it your resolve always to do God's will

Memories of the struggle to remain “no part of the world” will fade as the blessings to come are realized (2Co 4:17, 18)

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# YOUR VIEW OF AUTHORITY MATTERS TO GOD

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to appreciate that the Supreme Authority, Jehovah God, wants us to respect authority that he permits to exist. We must demonstrate respect in our attitude and actions

### **WHY RESPECT AUTHORITY?** (5 min.)

Disrespect for authority continues to increase during these “last days” (2Ti 3:1-3)

People often show little respect for any type of authority

At times, such disrespect is a reaction to the abuse of authority (Pr 28:15; 29:2; Ec 8:9)

God’s Word teaches us to show respect for those who have authority over us [**Read Proverbs 24:21**]

Laws and authority contribute to peace and order (1Co 14:33, 40; *lv* 39-40 ¶9-10)

### **SHOW RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY IN THE FAMILY** (6 min.)

Jehovah organized the family arrangement so that all members would benefit (Eph 3:14, 15)

Jesus set a perfect example for husbands, wives, and children

A Christian husband must honor and love his wife (Eph 5:25-29; 1Pe 3:7; *w09* 7/15 8 ¶4-7)

He makes sacrifices for the family and provides spiritual instruction

A Christian wife must show deep respect for her husband (Eph 5:24, 33; *w09* 7/15 9 ¶8-10)

She too has authority, but she is cooperative and supportive (Pr 1:8)

Obedient children please Jehovah and their parents (Pr 23:15, 24, 25; Lu 2:51; *w09* 7/15 11 ¶16-18)

### **SHOW RESPECT FOR “THE SUPERIOR AUTHORITIES”** (6 min.)

Jehovah requires us to show respect for governmental authorities [**Read Romans 13:1, 2**] (*w10* 1/15 24 ¶3; *lv* 44 ¶18)

These authorities serve as deterrents to disorder and crime (Ro 13:3, 4)

We should obey the laws of “the superior authorities” on account of our conscience (Ro 13:5)

We receive other benefits from these public servants (Ro 13:6, 7; *w11* 9/1 22 ¶2-3)

Showing due respect for government officials brings glory to God (Mt 5:16; *lv* 45 ¶19-20)

### **SHOW RESPECT FOR THE SUPREME AUTHORITY** (8 min.)

Jehovah God is the Supreme Authority (Ps 83:18)

He always exercises his authority in the best way for all his subjects (De 10:17, 18)

Obedience to Jehovah must come before obedience to any other authority (Mt 22:21)

When commanded to do what God forbids or when commanded to stop doing what God requires, servants of Jehovah do not obey (Ex 20:4, 5; Da 3:16-18; Mt 28:19, 20; Ac 5:28, 29)

Even in such circumstances, we show respect for secular authorities (1Pe 3:15; *ed* 20, box)

We show respect for Jehovah by submitting to those who take the lead in the congregation [**Read Hebrews 13:17**]

Even though elders are imperfect, rebelling against them would show disrespect for Jehovah’s authority (Nu 16:1-3, 28-35; 26:9; *w12* 10/15 13-14 ¶4-8)

### **JEHOVAH’S AUTHORITY WILL LAST FOREVER** (5 min.)

Jehovah has established the Messianic Kingdom with his Son ruling as King (Re 11:15)

Human rulership will soon be eliminated (Da 2:44; Mt 6:9, 10; *kr* 8-9 ¶8-9)

The Kingdom will bring peace and justice to the earth (Ps 72:7, 8, 12-14, 16; *kr* 26-27)

Subjects of the Kingdom will have such great respect for Jehovah’s authority that police will not be necessary in the new world (*g02* 7/8 12)

At the end of the Thousand Year Reign, Christ will hand the Kingdom over to Jehovah (1Co 15:28)

If we learn now to subject ourselves to Jehovah’s authority, we can enjoy living under God’s refreshing rule forever (Ps 37:27-29)

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## A GODLY VIEW OF SEX AND MARRIAGE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Discuss this topic with dignity and candor. Help the audience to see the wisdom of cultivating self-control and following Jehovah's loving and balanced guidance

### **SEX AND MARRIAGE—LOVING GIFTS FROM OUR CREATOR** (5 min.)

Today, the world puts much emphasis on sex; many feel free to do whatever they desire

It is reasonable to look to the One who originated sex and marriage and examine his view

The first human couple were brought into honorable marriage by God himself (Ge 2:21-24)

Natural sexual relations between husband and wife were ordained by God (Ge 1:27, 28)

Sex was not all-important; mates were to enjoy each other's companionship, support, and complementary qualities (Ge 2:18)

Marriage based on God's standards brings many blessings

Marriage mates gain much pleasure from giving to each other (Ac 20:35)

Marriage creates a stable, beneficial setting—legally, socially, and morally—for raising children

Both married and single people benefit by controlling their sexual desires [**Read Colossians 3:5, 6**]

Sexual desire should be satisfied only within Jehovah's arrangement for marriage

### **GODLY ADVICE HELPS TO MAKE MARRIAGE A SUCCESS** (12 min.)

Bible laws and counsel on sex and marriage reflect God's love

Sexual relations between mates should likewise reflect unselfish love [**Read 1 Corinthians 7:3-5**]

When a husband and wife have real concern for each other, sexual relations can bring satisfaction to both (1Pe 3:7; *w12* 5/15 5 ¶10; *w89* 6/1 14 ¶18)

Jehovah has decreed that sexual relations be limited to one's own marriage mate [**Read Hebrews 13:4**]

Adultery shows gross disrespect for God (Ge 39:9)

Adultery brings grief to those committing it and to all affected by it (Pr 6:27-29, 32)

Marriage mates are wise to avoid anything that could lead to adultery (Mt 5:27-29; *w15* 1/15 24 ¶4-7)

Jehovah purposed for marriage to be a lasting bond (Mt 19:4-6)

Jehovah hates divorce (Mal 2:14-16; *jd* 126-127 ¶5-7)

Some in *extreme* situations have opted to separate, but they are not free to remarry (1Co 7:11; *lv* 219-221)

If a mate is guilty of sexual immorality, the innocent mate may get a Scriptural divorce [**Read Matthew 19:9**]

Such a decision is a personal one that requires careful thought (*g* 2/10 4-8)

Appreciating the seriousness of marriage and divorce helps mates to make a success of marriage

### **GOD'S VIEW OF SEX BENEFITS SINGLE PEOPLE** (10 min.)

God's law forbids sexual immorality of all types [**Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5**] (*w08* 12/15 9 ¶10)

This law is a loving protection against physical and emotional harm (*w15* 5/15 17-18 ¶13-16; *w07* 4/1 5-6)

By remaining chaste, single ones maintain a good conscience

Homosexuality, although accepted by many in Satan's world, is condemned by God (1Co 6:9, 10)

Youths can resist wrong desires and "flee from sexual immorality" (1Co 6:18; *yp2* 231-236)

Those who have engaged in sexual immorality can gain God's approval by adjusting their thinking and stopping the wrong conduct, as did some who became Christians in the past (1Co 6:11)

The practice of masturbation is an unclean habit that reinforces self-centered attitudes

With Jehovah's help, the practice can be stopped (*yp1* 178-182)

To win the fight, a person must strictly avoid pornography and anything else that fuels wrong desires (Ps 101:3)

Parents should discuss these matters with their young ones and impart God's view

Do not wait until children have been exposed to immoral ideas from schoolmates or others

### **PEACE AND HAPPINESS COME FROM HAVING GOD'S VIEW** (3 min.)

Jehovah would not ask us to follow a course that would be impossible or that would diminish our happiness

Accepting and following God's direction helps us to escape problems and sorrows [**Read Psalm 19:9-11**]

Married people can have the satisfaction of a chaste and loving marriage

All Christians—married and single—can enjoy a clean conscience, enduring peace of mind, and the prospect of living forever

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## A CLEAN PEOPLE HONORS JEHOVAH

### *Note to the speaker:*

Explain why it is necessary and beneficial for servants of Jehovah to be physically clean and free from defiling habits. Uphold Jehovah's high standards while adapting the material to local needs and circumstances

### **WE MUST BE HOLY BECAUSE JEHOVAH IS HOLY** (3 min.)

Jehovah is a holy God (*it-1* 1127-1128)

Everything that he does for mankind is righteous and beneficial; it is an honor to serve such a God  
Jehovah requires that his worshippers likewise be holy [**Read 1 Peter 1:15, 16**]

In the Bible, holiness is frequently linked with cleanness (*Le* 10:10)

If we claim to worship Jehovah but refuse to conform to his standard of cleanness, we bring reproach upon him

In addition to being spiritually, morally, and mentally clean, we must also be physically clean (*1Co* 10:21; *Eph* 5:5; *Php* 4:8)

### **BE PHYSICALLY CLEAN AND ORDERLY** (12 min.)

Jehovah commanded the ancient Israelites to be physically clean (*Ex* 19:10, 11; 29:4; 30:18, 19)

The Israelites had to maintain the cleanliness of their camp (*De* 23:12-14)

The laws God gave them reflected his holiness and were an expression of his care for his people (*Ps* 33:12)

Modern-day servants of God should keep their bodies and clothing clean (*lv* 90-92 ¶14-16)

We should be orderly in all aspects of life [**Read 1 Corinthians 14:33, 40**]

Our homes and automobiles should be clean and orderly, inside and out

We should contribute to the cleanliness of our community by disposing of waste properly (*g* 12/07 10, 11)

We rightly avoid sloppy, extreme styles of dress that reflect the spirit of this system of things (*Ro* 12:1, 2)

Our dress and grooming should reflect "soundness of mind" even in our leisure time (*1Ti* 2:9, 10)

We may need to set aside personal preferences for the sake of the consciences of others (*w12* 8/15 13 ¶8)

Our being clean and orderly reflects well on Jehovah God and the message we bear (*Mt* 5:16)

### **KEEP FREE FROM "EVERY DEFILEMENT OF FLESH AND SPIRIT"** (10 min.)

Appreciation for Jehovah's loving care moves us to shun defiling practices [**Read 2 Corinthians 7:1**] (*2Co* 6:17, 18; *lv* 93-95 ¶20-21)

*Smoking, alcohol abuse, and drug abuse* show disrespect for Jehovah, the Giver of life (*Ps* 36:9; *lv* 95 ¶22-24)

We cannot give whole-souled service to God while damaging our mind and body (*Mt* 22:37; *w14* 6/1 5; *w10* 1/1 5)

*Obscene and abusive speech* is unclean and has no place among those who profess love for God (*Col* 3:8; *lv* 136-139 ¶9-14)

Strongly entrenched bad habits can be overcome with God's help (*Php* 4:13)

Jehovah's Witnesses provide Scriptural advice and support to those who want to break free of such habits (*g* 5/10 4-9; *g* 5/09 8-10)

Many have been helped to put away bad practices and now enjoy clean lives [Give one or two examples from the *Watchtower* series "The Bible Changes Lives"]

### **MAINTAIN YOUR CLEAN STANDING BEFORE GOD** (5 min.)

Examine yourself regularly to ensure that Satan's world is not beginning to influence you (*2Co* 13:5; *Jas* 1:23-25)

Choose associates who will help you to remain clean (*1Co* 15:33; *w06* 3/15 23 ¶8-10)

Do not give up if you stumble in your efforts to be clean in Jehovah's sight

Approach Jehovah on the basis of the ransom and ask for forgiveness and help (*1Jo* 2:1; *cl* 159-160 ¶7)

Your continued efforts will result in God's approval and blessing (*2Pe* 3:13, 14; *w03* 7/15 13 ¶13-15)

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## **“WORK WHAT IS GOOD TOWARD ALL”**

*Note to the speaker:*

Explain how we can imitate Jehovah's goodness by caring for others in practical ways. Emphasize that goodness is an aspect of the fruitage of God's holy spirit

### **JEHOVAH TEACHES US BY EXAMPLE HOW TO DO GOOD TO OTHERS (5 min.)**

Jehovah God is the greatest example of goodness (Mr 10:18)

Goodness is moral excellence; it is expressed in good and beneficial acts toward others (*it-1* 986)

Earth abounds with God's provisions for our comfort and happiness

Through his Word, the Bible, Jehovah instructs us how to live wisely and how to cope with problems (Isa 48:17, 18)

He provides loving support and assistance (Ps 55:22; Isa 41:10, 13)

Jehovah is pleased when we do good to others [**Read Hebrews 13:16**]

God's spirit can help us to imitate his goodness (Ga 5:22)

### **DO GOOD TO YOUR FAMILY (7 min.)**

We should certainly do good to those closest to us—our families

We live at a time when natural love for family is in decline (2Ti 3:3)

Family relationships should be characterized by feelings of tender care (Eph 5:33; 6:4)

Parents are responsible for providing materially for their dependent children; grown children, in turn, are obligated to provide for aging parents and grandparents (Mr 7:10-13; 1Ti 5:4, 8)

Lavishing excessive material gifts on children can be harmful and shows a lack of genuine goodness (*g* 1/13 11)

Parents must instruct their children with love (De 6:6, 7; *w15* 11/15 4-5 ¶3-6; *w14* 4/15 18-19 ¶4-7)

We can show goodness to unbelieving family members by sharing Bible truth with them (*w14* 3/15 3-6)

We will achieve the best results by being tactful and respectful (1Pe 3:1, 2, 15)

### **DO GOOD TO FELLOW BELIEVERS (6 min.)**

We should especially do good to our fellow believers [**Read Galatians 6:10**]

Jesus said that his true disciples would be recognized by the love they show to one another (Joh 13:34, 35)

We treat fellow believers with kindness and forgive them when they sin against us (Eph 4:31, 32)

Our goodness should extend to those whose background differs from our own (2Co 6:11-13; *w09* 11/15 20-22 ¶5-10)

When our fellow believers are in need materially, we come to their assistance (Jas 2:15, 16; *kr* 209-210)

### **DO GOOD TO THOSE YOU DO NOT KNOW (8 min.)**

Many today care only for themselves or, at most, for their own family and friends (Mt 5:46, 47)

Some fail to show goodness to others because of racial, national, tribal, or social differences

Jesus corrected such erroneous thinking (Lu 10:29-37)

We obey Jesus' command to treat all people as we wish to be treated [**Read Matthew 7:12**]

[Make appropriate local application]

Our good treatment of others does not depend on how they treat us (Mt 5:44, 45; Ro 13:8-10)

### **DO GOOD TO OTHERS BY KINGDOM PREACHING (4 min.)**

The primary way we do good to others is by helping them to know Jehovah and to do his will

Some religious organizations engage in charitable works but neglect Jesus' commission to proclaim God's Kingdom (Mt 7:21-23; 24:14; *cf* 185-187 ¶10-13)

Such works may be sincere, but they do not satisfy spiritual needs or help people to gain everlasting life

Make it your goal to speak about Jehovah and his Kingdom at every appropriate opportunity

Even if you have just begun to learn the truth from the Bible, you can share what you have learned with others

Demonstrate impartiality by speaking boldly “to people of all sorts” (1Co 9:20-23)

Be assured that Jehovah God will bless and reward the goodness you show to others (Pr 11:25)

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# KEEP GROWING IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

## *Note to the speaker:*

Encourage the audience to strengthen and deepen their relationship with God. Motivate them to train their conscience and grow to spiritual maturity

### **A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS POSSIBLE** (4 min.)

From creation's beginning, Jehovah laid the basis for humans to have a good relationship with him

He placed man in perfect surroundings, with the prospect of endless life (Ge 2:9, 15-18)

Humans were created with the ability to reflect God's qualities, such as love and justice [**Read Genesis 1:27**]

Despite human sin and imperfection, God still invites humans to enjoy a good relationship with him (Jas 4:8)

### **TRAIN YOUR CONSCIENCE** (10 min.)

To have a good relationship with God, we must conform our conduct to his righteous standards

God gave humans the conscience as an aid in doing what is right [**Read Romans 2:14, 15**] (*lv* 15-17 ¶3-7)

We must train our conscience so that it guides us correctly (*it-1* 501 ¶2)

When properly trained, our conscience alerts us when our actions are out of harmony with God's standards and warns us in advance of actions that could harm our relationship with God

By means of Bible laws and principles, Jehovah directs us in a way that emphasizes our need to use our conscience

The Bible explicitly identifies some things as morally wrong, giving us laws against these (1Co 6:9, 10)

Our obedience to Bible laws, especially when unobserved by humans, shows our attitude toward the Lawgiver

Most matters must be decided on the basis of Bible principles; this calls for greater use of the conscience

Principles are fundamental truths that act as moral guides (*w02* 4/15 19 ¶4-6)

Analyzing Bible principles teaches us about Jehovah's personality and thinking

Learning and applying principles takes more effort than following a list of rules

Our sensitivity to principles reveals to Jehovah what is in our heart (*w02* 4/15 19-21 ¶7-12)

### **ADVANCE TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY** (10 min.)

After baptism, make it your goal to advance to spiritual maturity [**Read Hebrews 5:14-6:1**] (*it-2* 355)

Strive to understand deeper Bible truths (*w09* 5/15 9-10 ¶5-6)

Allow God's Word to guide you completely (*w09* 5/15 10-11 ¶7-11)

Failure to do so can result in ongoing spiritual weakness (Heb 5:11-13)

Spiritually mature ones accept and apply the full range of Christian truth [**Read Ephesians 4:13, 15**]

They put away any lingering traits of their former personality (Eph 4:22-24)

They are wholly united in thought with fellow believers (*w01* 8/1 13-14 ¶6-11)

In contrast, a spiritual babe lacks stability and sound judgment (Eph 4:14)

As we grow from spiritual childhood to adulthood, we draw closer to Jehovah God

We are protected from the pitfalls of Satan's world (1Co 14:20; *w09* 5/15 12 ¶14-16)

We reflect Jehovah's image more and more as our thinking aligns more closely with his

### **CONTINUE TO GROW IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (6 min.)

Reaching spiritual maturity does not end our spiritual growth

Timothy was a mature Christian, yet he was urged to make advancement (1Ti 4:15)

He could reflect God's image to a greater degree in his attitude, speech, and conduct (1Ti 4:12, 13)

Constantly add to your knowledge of God and your appreciation for his ways (Ps 25:4, 5)

Continue to make improvement in producing the fruitage of the spirit (Ga 5:22, 23)

You will gain great satisfaction as your relationship with God grows stronger

Those having a good relationship with God have the prospect of strengthening that relationship for eternity

There is no end to what we can learn about Jehovah (Ro 11:33)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]





# GLORIFYING GOD WITH ALL WE HAVE

## *Note to the speaker:*

Explain why we should glorify God and how doing so should affect our entire life. Help those newly associated to appreciate that members of the Christian congregation do not promote themselves or seek their own glory

### **JEHOVAH DESERVES TO BE GLORIFIED** (6 min.)

Glorifying God involves giving him “worshipful praise, honor, and thanksgiving”

Jehovah God is more worthy of being glorified than anyone else [**Read Revelation 4:11**]

Mighty spirit creatures willingly give glory to Jehovah (Re 7:11, 12)

How much more should humans give God glory! (Ps 8:3-9)

The majority of people are blinded by Satan, the god of this selfish world (2Co 4:4)

Instead of glorifying God, many elevate themselves and seek glory from others (Joh 12:43; Ro 1:20, 21)

How can we give God the glory that he properly deserves? (Ps 96:7, 8)

### **IMITATE JESUS' EXAMPLE OF GLORIFYING GOD** (12 min.)

Imitate Jesus' humility (Php 2:5-8)

Jesus refused to seek his own glory, even when Satan tempted him to do so (Mt 4:5-10; *w11* 5/15 18 ¶10-11)

Jesus acknowledged his Father as the Source of his teachings and powerful works (Joh 7:16; 14:10)

We rightly give credit to Jehovah for our abilities and accomplishments (1Co 4:7)

Jesus was willing to perform menial tasks for others (Joh 13:3-5)

Imitate Jesus' love of righteousness (Heb 1:9)

Many self-willed people defiantly ignore God's moral laws (Ro 1:24, 28, 32; 2Pe 2:10)

We honor Jehovah by acknowledging his right to shape us and by obeying his commands (Isa 64:8)

Jehovah is glorified when others praise our good conduct (1Pe 2:12)

Imitate Jesus' whole-souled devotion to God (Joh 4:34; 8:28, 29)

Use your life to do God's will, not your own (Mt 16:24; Ro 12:1, 2; *w06* 4/1 23 ¶9)

Share the Kingdom good news with others [**Read John 15:8**] (Mt 28:19, 20)

By doing good to others, you may move them to glorify God (Mt 5:16; *w08* 5/15 5-6 ¶12-16)

### **HOW WE CAN GLORIFY GOD WITH ALL WE HAVE** (8 min.)

Our love for Jehovah should move us to use *all we have* to glorify him [**Read Mark 12:30**]

We each have various assets that we can use to glorify God—for example, talent, education, strength, experience, time, or material things (Pr 3:9)

It is not how much we have that glorifies Jehovah but how we use what we have (Lu 21:1-4)

Jehovah is aware of our individual circumstances and limitations (Ps 103:14)

If you have opportunities to expand your service or to take on congregation responsibilities, use such opportunities to benefit others and glorify Jehovah

Never become proud of your abilities or privileges or seek your own glory (Pr 16:18; 25:27)

Avoid self-promotion and do not become focused on position (Mt 23:10-12)

### **GLORIFYING GOD LEADS TO BLESSINGS** (4 min.)

Your efforts to glorify God will be rewarded

You will gain the satisfaction that comes from glorifying the One “most worthy of praise” (Ps 145:3)

Jehovah will, in turn, draw close to you and give you glory (Ps 73:23, 24; 138:6; *w13* 2/15 25-26 ¶2-5)

You will gain the prospect of glorifying Jehovah forever (Ps 86:12)

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# MAKE JEHOVAH YOUR STRONGHOLD

## *Note to the speaker:*

Explain that making Jehovah our stronghold involves all aspects of life. By submitting to God's guidance and trusting in him fully now, we can enjoy his favor and hope to be preserved through the great tribulation

### **FUTURE SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON MAKING JEHOVAH YOUR STRONGHOLD** (6 min.)

The Bible foretells a coming time of "great tribulation" (Mt 24:21)

The great tribulation will begin with the destruction of false religion (*w15* 7/15 15 ¶4)

A coalition of nations will attempt to annihilate God's people (*w15* 5/15 29-30)

All humans opposed to Jehovah God will be destroyed (Re 19:11-21)

Who will survive those fear-inspiring events?

Only those who have the right stronghold

A stronghold is a fortified place, one of security or survival

During the great tribulation, the majority will seek the protection of human organizations (Re 6:15-17; *w15* 7/15 16 ¶7)

Only those "seeking refuge" in Jehovah will survive [**Read Nahum 1:6, 7**]

If we want Jehovah to be our stronghold in the future, we must make him our stronghold now

### **WORK HARD TO GAIN JEHOVAH'S APPROVAL** (14 min.)

To gain Jehovah's approval, we must willingly submit to his guidance in all aspects of life (Pr 3:5, 6)

We should not rely on our own thinking or adopt the prevailing attitudes of this world (Pr 14:12)

*Uphold God's moral laws and principles*

To enjoy God's favor, we must be morally upright [**Read Proverbs 10:29**]

Those who make Jehovah their stronghold shun "sexual immorality" and "hurtful desire" (Col 3:5)

Single Christians do not view dating as mere recreation (*yp2* 14-20)

If they date, they are careful to avoid unclean conduct (1Th 4:4-7; *w15* 1/15 32 ¶16)

Married Christians refuse to flirt with or to cultivate an inappropriate relationship with someone not their mate

*Do not put material pursuits ahead of your relationship with God*

Some view material wealth as their refuge, but such thinking is faulty [**Read Proverbs 18:11**]

Jesus said that it is impossible to "slave for God and for Riches" (Mt 6:24)

Those trusting in Jehovah honor their business agreements and do not resort to dishonesty (Pr 11:1; Heb 13:18)

*Make the doing of God's will your priority*

Do not be so fully absorbed in family life, pleasures, or recreation that you neglect to do God's will

Recognize the urgency of the times in which we live (1Co 7:29-31; *w15* 10/15 20 ¶7-8)

### **RELY ON JEHOVAH DURING TIMES OF DIFFICULTY** (7 min.)

Jehovah can especially prove to be our stronghold when we experience trials [**Read Psalm 37:39, 40**]

If you are coping with *serious health problems*, look to Jehovah for wisdom and support

Paul and Timothy served God loyally, yet they experienced sickness and physical problems (Ga 4:12-15; 1Ti 5:23)

While not miraculously curing Paul or Timothy, God helped them to carry on in his service (Php 4:13)

If you are troubled by *conflict with a fellow believer*, humbly seek Jehovah's guidance

Respond to the situation in a way that promotes peace (Col 3:13; *lv* 33-34 ¶16-18)

If you face *opposition or persecution*, trust in God to strengthen and deliver you

Be confident that Jehovah hears your cries for help (Ps 18:2, 6)

Opposers are no match for Jehovah's ability to rescue those trusting in him (Ps 18:16-19)

### **JEHOVAH WILL PROVE LOYAL TO THOSE MAKING HIM THEIR STRONGHOLD** (3 min.)

Jehovah is able to satisfy our daily needs now, and he assures us of the prospect of everlasting life

By means of the resurrection, God will prove loyal to those who are faithful until death (Ac 24:15, 16)

If you really make Jehovah your stronghold now, you will be able to rejoice forever (Ps 5:11, 12)

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# YOUR FUTURE—HOW CAN IT BE KNOWN?

## *Note to the speaker:*

Explain the prophecy of Daniel chapter 2 with clarity and enthusiasm. Build the audience's confidence in fulfilled prophecy, and thus encourage them to have faith in prophecies yet to be fulfilled. At appropriate points during your talk, use the artwork provided with this talk outline on jw.org to illustrate the contents of Nebuchadnezzar's dream

### **KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE HAS GREAT VALUE** (3 min.)

Most people are very interested in what the future will bring

[Briefly give a few examples, such as attention to weather forecasts or future economic conditions]

If we could know with certainty what the future holds, it would likely affect how we live now

To benefit from knowledge of the future, we must be willing to adjust our decisions accordingly

### **JEHOVAH GOD REVEALS THE FUTURE** (16 min.)

In his inspired Word, the Bible, God provides accurate information about the future [**Read Isaiah 42:9**]

Daniel chapter 2 contains an exciting prophecy that involves our future

This prophecy was given some 2,600 years ago, when Babylon was the dominant world power (Da 2:1-13)

Its fulfillment greatly affected servants of God in the past and will continue to do so in the future

In a dream, King Nebuchadnezzar saw a huge image that was to come to a disastrous end (Da 2:31-35)

God revealed to Daniel the meaning of the king's prophetic dream (Da 2:14-30)

Daniel explained that the king's dream involved a succession of world powers

Daniel identified Nebuchadnezzar, representing the Babylonian Empire, as "the head of gold" (Da 2:36-38)

The Medo-Persian Empire proved to be the chest and arms of silver (Da 2:39a)

In 539 B.C.E., the Medo-Persian Empire overthrew Babylon

Daniel's interpretation regarding Greece, the abdomen and thighs of copper, was also accurate (Da 2:39b)

"The first king," Alexander the Great, was followed by his four generals (Da 8:20-22)

The fourth kingdom, depicted by the iron legs of the image, proved to be the Roman Empire (Da 2:40)

Ironlike Rome shattered the Jewish revolt and crushed Jerusalem in 70 C.E.

The feet of mixed iron and clay represent the Anglo-American World Power (Da 2:41-43; *w12* 6/15 16 ¶9)

The Anglo-American World Power grew out of the Roman Empire and began operating as a united world power at the time of World War I (*w12* 6/15 15 ¶5, ftn.)

This portion of the prophetic dream is being fulfilled now

### **GOD'S KINGDOM ALONE WILL STAND FOREVER** (4 min.)

The final portion of Nebuchadnezzar's dream shows what the near future will bring

In the dream's conclusion, a stone cut out of a mountain crushes the image [**Read Daniel 2:44, 45**]

The "mountain" represents God's universal sovereignty; the "stone" is the Messianic Kingdom

God's Kingdom will crush the kingdoms represented by the dream image (*w12* 6/15 17, box)

Revelation reveals that the Kingdom will eliminate *all* human governments (Re 16:14; 17:12-14)

The past fulfillment of portions of Daniel chapter 2 should give us confidence that the remaining portion will soon be fulfilled

### **SHOW YOUR FAITH IN GOD'S PROMISES FOR THE FUTURE** (7 min.)

Living under the rule of God's Kingdom will be a delight

Perfect laws will unite mankind in peace

An abundance of food will replace famine and malnutrition (Ps 72:7, 8, 16)

All will enjoy perfect health (Isa 33:24)

Even death will be brought to an end (Joh 5:28, 29; Re 21:3, 4)

Now is the time to show by your actions that you believe in and support God's Kingdom (Mt 7:24-27)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



# IS IT TIME FOR GOD TO RULE THE WORLD?

## *Note to the speaker:*

Clearly present the Scriptural evidence that God's Kingdom was established in 1914, and explain what the Kingdom will do in the near future

### **MANKIND NEEDS BETTER RULERSHIP** (4 min.)

Why do human governments fail to meet the needs of their subjects? (Pr 29:2)

Man has neither the right nor the ability to govern himself successfully (Jer 10:23)

His efforts to do so have led to much injustice and suffering (Ec 8:9, 11)

The Bible foretells that God's Kingdom will soon replace human rule (Da 2:44; 7:13, 14)

When did God's Kingdom begin ruling, and when will it take full control?

### **DANIEL CHAPTER 4—A PROPHETIC DREAM ABOUT RULERSHIP** (5 min.)

Jehovah caused King Nebuchadnezzar to have a dream about rulership (Da 4:10-17)

God inspired Daniel to interpret the dream [**Read key portions of Daniel 4:20-27**]

The dream was initially fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar himself (Da 4:28-37; *dp* 82-94)

The dream emphasizes that Jehovah God has the right to determine who will rule mankind

### **THE DREAM FORETELLS THE RULE OF GOD'S KINGDOM** (16 min.)

The prophecy has a larger fulfillment in connection with the establishment of God's Kingdom (*it-1* 132-135)

What reason is there to suggest that the dream is more than just an interesting story about the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar?

(1) The dream was given at the *time* when God had just allowed his earthly kingdom to be overthrown

(2) The *person* to whom the dream was given was the very one used by God to cut off rulership in Jerusalem

(3) The *theme* of the dream is God's right to rule over the entire "kingdom of mankind" (Da 4:17, 25, 32)

(4) The dream's *context*, the book of Daniel, repeatedly points forward to the rule of God's Kingdom

(5) Daniel's prophecies would not be fully understood until "*the time of the end*" (Da 12:4, 8, 9)

In the larger fulfillment, the tree represents Jehovah's rulership

For a period of time, Jehovah's rulership had been represented by the Israelite kings who ruled in Jerusalem (1Ch 29:23)

Jehovah promised David that one of his descendants would rule forever (2Sa 7:16)

Ezekiel foretold that the earthly representation of God's rulership would be cut off and that God would later appoint a new Ruler [**Read Ezekiel 21:26, 27**]

In 607 B.C.E., Jehovah used Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem; this marked the beginning of the "seven times" during which God's rulership would be interrupted (Da 4:16)

How long would this time period last?

[**Read Luke 21:24**] Jesus said that Jerusalem, representing God's rulership, would "be trampled on . . . until the appointed times of the nations" were fulfilled (*w06* 7/15 6 ¶1-4)

"The appointed times of the nations" are the same period as the "seven times" of Daniel chapter 4

Jesus indicated that "the appointed times of the nations" were still ongoing during his earthly ministry, so the "seven times" could not be seven literal years counted from 607 B.C.E.

"Seven times," or seven Biblical years, are equal to 2,520 days (*w06* 7/15 7 ¶1-2)

Applying the rule of "a day for a year" and counting 2,520 years from 607 B.C.E. brings us to 1914 C.E. (Nu 14:34; Eze 4:6)

In 1914, Jesus began ruling in heaven as the appointed King of God's Kingdom

As a descendant of King David, Jesus is "the one who has the legal right" to rule (Eze 21:27; Lu 1:32, 33)

### **GOD'S KINGDOM WILL SOON TAKE FULL CONTROL** (5 min.)

Events since 1914 confirm that God's Kingdom has been established (Mt 24:3, 7-14; *w15* 6/15 22-24 ¶12-14)

Jesus is now ruling "in the midst of [his] enemies," and he will soon "complete his conquest" (Ps 110:2; Re 6:2)

Rule by God's Kingdom will bring blessings to obedient mankind (*w14* 10/1 5-7)

Now is the time to take your stand in support of God's Kingdom

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# CHERISH YOUR PLACE IN THE KINGDOM ARRANGEMENT

## *Note to the speaker:*

Build appreciation for what the Kingdom is accomplishing and our privileged place in it. Encourage new ones to qualify as Kingdom citizens and thus experience the blessings soon to come

### **GOD'S KINGDOM NOW RULES** (7 min.)

What is God's Kingdom?

God's Kingdom is a heavenly government that will replace all other governments and will cause God's will to be done in heaven and on earth (Da 2:44; Mt 6:9, 10; *w12* 6/15 17, box; *kr* 26-27)

Bible prophecy and world conditions indicate that the Kingdom was established in heaven in 1914 (Re 11:15)

Jehovah's Witnesses would be happy to explain to you the Scriptural evidence (*bhs* 217-220)

The heavenly Kingdom has already proved to be far superior to human governments in the way it cares for its subjects on earth spiritually and physically [Briefly mention examples of disaster relief (*kr* 211, 218-219, boxes)]

### **THE KING AND HIS CORULERS** (8 min.)

Christ Jesus has been appointed as King and Judge [**Read Isaiah 9:6, 7**] (Joh 5:22)

Unlike imperfect human rulers and judges, he cannot be corrupted (Isa 11:1-3)

Jesus will have 144,000 corulers [**Read Revelation 14:1**]

While on earth, the remaining anointed ones help humans to gain God's approval (2Co 5:20)

They will serve as kings and priests after their resurrection to heavenly life (Re 20:6)

Anointed Christians cherish their place in the Kingdom arrangement (Php 3:14)

### **LOYAL SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM** (10 min.)

God's Kingdom will have earthly subjects; these include those who will be spared when all who oppose God's Kingdom are destroyed (Re 7:9, 13, 14)

Jesus' illustration of the sheep and the goats helps us to understand what is required for survival [**Read Matthew 25:31-33**] (*w15* 3/15 26-27 ¶6-7)

Sheeplike ones loyally support Christ's brothers, the anointed [**Read Matthew 25:34-40**]

Supporting the anointed in the global preaching work requires active *participation* (Mt 28:19, 20; *w15* 3/15 28-29 ¶11-15)

Cherish your opportunity to be a Kingdom citizen (Php 1:27, ftn.; *w12* 8/15 11-13 ¶1-6)

Learn the language, study the history, and know the laws of the Kingdom

Regularly attend meetings, assemblies, and conventions

Adhere to Kingdom standards of righteousness by applying what you learn (Zep 2:3; *kr* 110-112 ¶4-13)

### **KINGDOM BLESSINGS WILL LAST FOREVER** (5 min.)

The "good news of the Kingdom" is being proclaimed during these last days (Mt 24:14)

Soon everyone living on earth will be united under Kingdom rule

Divine education is already uniting millions of earthly subjects of the Kingdom (Isa 2:2-4; 1Co 1:10)

Resurrected ones will have an opportunity to become subjects of the Kingdom (Joh 5:28, 29; Ac 24:15)

Take your stand now for God's Kingdom

By doing so, you will be assured of eternal blessings (Re 21:1-4; *re* 301-303 ¶1-5)

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## ARE YOU BENEFITING FROM JEHOVAH'S PROVISIONS?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to appreciate the value of Jehovah's spiritual feeding arrangement. Motivate newly interested ones to take full advantage of all available spiritual provisions

### **A CONTRAST BETWEEN SPIRITUAL ABUNDANCE AND SPIRITUAL FAMINE** (4 min.)

Jehovah God provides abundantly for all who want to know the truth and gain his approval

In the Bible some of these provisions are described as "food" because they nourish us spiritually (Heb 5:14)  
The Bible foretells the spiritual abundance of Jehovah's people in our time (Isa 2:2, 3; 25:6)

In contrast, other people are starving spiritually [**Read Isaiah 65:13, 14**] (Am 8:11)

### **HOW DOES JEHOVAH PROVIDE FOR HIS PEOPLE?** (4 min.)

To be well-fed spiritually, we must recognize the channel that Jehovah is using today

Jehovah has appointed Jesus Christ as head of the Christian congregation (Mt 28:18; Joh 6:26, 27; Col 1:18)

Jesus has appointed "the faithful and discreet slave" to provide spiritual "food at the proper time" [**Read Matthew 24:45-47**] (*w13* 7/15 20-22 ¶2, 8-10)

### **WHAT PROVISIONS HAS JEHOVAH MADE?** (7 min.)

*God's Word* is a foremost provision (Ps 119:105; Joh 17:17; 2Ti 3:16)

The Bible explains current world conditions and reveals what the future will bring (2Ti 3:1; Re 1:1)

God's Word teaches us how to "put on the new personality" (Eph 4:23, 24; Heb 4:12)

*Holy spirit* helps us to understand God's Word and to produce righteous fruitage (Ga 5:16, 22-25)

Loyal *elders* instruct and assist us (Eph 4:8, 11, 12)

The members of the faithful and discreet slave are guided by God's Word and spirit as they supply additional provisions

*Bible-based publications* are prepared and translated into hundreds of languages

Spiritual instruction is available on [jw.org](http://jw.org) and JW Broadcasting

*Meetings, conventions, and assemblies* regularly instruct us and provide encouraging association (Heb 10:24, 25)

*Traveling overseers* visit and strengthen congregations (Ro 1:11, 12)

### **SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION FOR JEHOVAH'S PROVISIONS** (10 min.)

Make full use of all that Jehovah provides

Be willing to make adjustments and sacrifices to take advantage of spiritual provisions (Mt 13:44-46)

The Israelites had to put forth effort to assemble for pure worship

Jehovah promised to help and bless those who exerted themselves to put spiritual interests first (Ex 34:24; *w98* 9/1 20 ¶5)

Imitate Jesus by putting spiritual things ahead of physical things (Joh 4:31-34)

Daily partake of Jehovah's spiritual provisions (Jos 1:8; Ps 119:97)

Avoid a critical attitude toward Jehovah's provisions

The Bible contains warning examples of those who had a complaining spirit (Nu 21:5, 6; 3Jo 9; *w99* 8/15 26)

Jehovah uses imperfect men to assist us spiritually; despite their imperfection, such men are worthy of our respect (1Th 5:12, 13; Heb 13:17)

### **FEED EXCLUSIVELY AT JEHOVAH'S TABLE** (5 min.)

Jehovah is not dispensing spiritual food through multiple organizations with conflicting teachings (Eph 4:4, 5)

We cannot feed at Jehovah's table and at the same time share in false worship (1Co 10:21)

False religion has failed to provide spiritual nourishment (2Ti 4:3, 4)

Stay with those who look to Jehovah, who satisfies the needs of his servants (Ps 145:15-18)

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# LIFE DOES HAVE A PURPOSE

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help those who may be skeptical of our Creator's existence to reason on the evidence pointing to a purposeful Designer. Motivate the audience to align their lives with God's purposes

### **WE WANT TO KNOW IF LIFE HAS A PURPOSE** (2 min.)

Compared to the vastness and age of the universe, our lives may seem insignificant (*w15* 6/1 5; *w14* 5/15 22 ¶3)

The Bible writer David had similar thoughts (Ps 8:3, 4)

As we contemplate the wonders of life, we understandably want to know whether life has a purpose

Why are we here? Do our lives matter?

### **WHAT IS GOD'S PURPOSE FOR THE EARTH?** (8 min.)

Our existence is not the result of blind chance; there is a Creator [**Read Isaiah 40:26, 28**]

When we examine Jehovah God's creation, we see evidence of purposeful design

Our solar system and the earth are precisely located to support life (*lc* 4-7)

The earth's natural cycles are designed to renew the environment (*lc* 8-9)

Jehovah created the earth to be a beautiful, permanent home for mankind [**Read Isaiah 45:18**] (Ps 115:16)

God will not allow the earth to be destroyed by man or by a natural disaster (Ps 104:5; *g* 12/14 15)

### **WHAT IS GOD'S PURPOSE FOR MANKIND?** (14 min.)

The marvelous design of the human body indicates that we were created for a purpose (*g* 2/10 23-25)

Unlike the animal creation, humans are capable of knowing and worshipping their Creator

Humans were created in God's image and were thus endowed with unique qualities [**Read Genesis 1:27**]  
(*g* 5/13 15)

God purposed for humans to live forever on the earth (*w06* 2/15 16 ¶3)

Jehovah placed the first humans in a beautiful paradise, the garden of Eden; he assigned them to care for the earth, populate it, and extend the Paradise [**Read Genesis 1:28**]

Jehovah intended for Adam and Eve to enjoy a loving, personal relationship with him (*w01* 7/1 7 ¶1)

Adam and Eve had everlasting life before them, as long as they chose to obey God (*Ge* 2:15-17)

Why is the earth not a paradise now?

God gave humans the gift of free will, but Adam and Eve misused that gift (*Ge* 3:6)

Adam failed to cultivate love for God (*w08* 10/1 27)

As a result of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden, and they eventually died (*Ge* 3:23; 5:5)

All of Adam's children inherited imperfection and death (*Ro* 5:12)

God, who is almighty and cannot lie, illustrated that his purpose cannot fail, by using natural cycles that he had created [**Read Isaiah 55:10, 11**]

Soon he will remove wickedness and restore the earth and obedient mankind (Ps 37:10, 11, 29; *Re* 21:3, 4)

God will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth" (*Re* 11:18)

### **GOD'S PURPOSE CAN GIVE MEANING TO YOUR LIFE** (6 min.)

People engage in a wide variety of pursuits in an effort to find meaning in life

Those who pursue pleasure, wealth, or fame usually find themselves disappointed (*Ec* 2:1-11)

Your life will truly have purpose if you choose to live it in harmony with Jehovah God's purposes

Despite being a descendant of Adam, you can enjoy a good relationship with God (*Jas* 2:23; 4:8)

Choose to use your free will wisely by obeying God and doing his will [**Read Ecclesiastes 12:13**]

By doing so, you will find meaning and satisfaction in life (*w11* 11/1 21)

When God fulfills his original purpose for the earth and mankind, you will be able to enjoy a purposeful life forever (Ps 37:34)

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## WHAT GOD'S RULERSHIP CAN DO FOR US

### *Note to the speaker:*

It has become obvious that changes are needed. God's rulership will lift man from his present desperate situation. Those who support God's rulership will have a fine reward

### **PEOPLE DESIRE A CHANGE, BUT WILL THEY CHANGE TO GOD'S WAY?** (4 min.)

Many people are unhappy because of injustice, crime, wars, hatred, and sickness

They ask, "Why doesn't God stop these things now?" (*w89 10/15 21-2*)

To stop these things would mean to change systems, institutions, and customs; would this be welcomed?

We see much opposition toward those who seek a change for people's betterment (*g88 5/8 5-8*)

There are constant fights between ecologists and industrial managers, between those wanting to save the environment and those who want "progress"

For real happiness and cooperation, people must be willing to change to do what is right

God's way provides guidance so that humans can exercise free will wisely (*Ro 2:4*)

Jehovah is not waiting for men to ask him to be their Ruler (*Ps 2:1-6; w79 1/15 6*)

He is carrying out a program that will culminate in his rule being undisputed in all the earth

### **RULERSHIP BY GOD, NOT MAN, IS BEST FOR US** (4 min.)

Man was not created to dominate other men (Read *Ecclesiastes 8:9; Jeremiah 10:23*)

Man-rule always leads to oppression; have you not seen that to be true? (*gm 187-8*)

God's wisdom and his knowledge of his creation qualify him to know exactly what mankind needs (*Isa 40:12-14*)

He knows every detail of our bodies and our personalities (Read *Psalms 139:3, 4, 16*)

If He is the best Ruler for mankind, why has God let man exercise rulership?

God is not unconcerned, but he purposes to act at the exact time that will benefit the greatest number of people living now and those who lived in the past (*2Pe 3:9; w80 3/1 4*)

### **WHY HAS GOD ALLOWED SUFFERING ON EARTH?** (8 min.)

The original man, from whom the human race sprang, was a son of God, perfect, willingly acknowledging God's rulership (*rs 371-2; it-2 160 ¶1*)

Adam had perfect moral qualities and a capacity for developing greater knowledge of and love for Jehovah and closer relationship with him (*it-2 604 ¶2, 3*)

God no doubt regularly provided instructions for Adam (*w89 8/1 11-16*)

As Adam and his offspring would work to subdue the earth, he would have to continue to love his Creator and to receive instructions from God

Adam and Eve had all things necessary to enjoy life (*w89 8/1 19-20*)

Out of simple gratitude, they rightly owed loyalty and obedience to God

On the part of perfect humans, as Adam and Eve were, any sin would be a deliberate one—an act of rebellion against God (*it-1 45 ¶7*)

A perfect person who sinned would be unreliable, not trustworthy (*Lu 16:10*)

'The tree of knowledge of good and bad' was representative, or symbolic, of Jehovah's sovereign rulership, and it marked the limit of man's domain, or authority (*Ge 2:17; it-2 1011 ¶1, 2; 1124 ¶1, 2*)

Partaking of the tree would mean that one withdrew from subjection to God

The course Adam took raised the question: Would *anyone* in God's family remain loyal under all pressures and temptations?

Eating of the tree was more than mere disobedience; it was a challenge before the universe as to the rightfulness of God's sovereignty, or rulership (*it-2 1010 ¶6*)

The book of Job describes the challenge, or issue, that Satan raised (*Job 1:9-11; 2:4; it-2 1011 ¶3*)

Job served on God's side of the issue and did not lose out by remaining loyal to God

### **ADAM, BY SINNING, HURT THE ENTIRE HUMAN RACE** (7 min.)

Satan first approached Eve to start a rebellion against God (Read *Genesis 3:1-6; 1 Timothy 2:13, 14*) (*w86 8/1 11-12*)

Eve was deceived, believing what the serpent claimed would come true

Adam showed he no longer loved God sufficiently or appreciated what God had given him (*Ge 3:12*)

He lost faith and deliberately rebelled

"In the day" that he sinned, Adam died spiritually; his physical body also began to deteriorate (*Ro 3:23; 5:12, 14*)

All humankind descends from Adam, so all are imperfect, dying sinners; also, all have actually committed sins themselves

God put Adam and Eve out of the garden, but he allowed them to have children

Some of these children have proved faithful to God under test

When the great issue of God's sovereignty is finally settled, never again will wickedness and suffering be allowed to disturb the universe (*ce* 193-6)

How, though, could God help humankind out of their sad, dying state?

#### **GOD COMES TO MANKIND'S RESCUE** (8 min.)

Mankind needed help, but God could not merely say, 'I forgive your sins'

He could not simply ignore sin, for that would be unjust

For God to help mankind, a legal problem presented itself—how to forgive sinners (*w89* 3/1 21-2)

Man was helpless, sold under sin (Ps 49:7; Ro 7:14)

God could not negotiate directly with condemned, sinful people

He had to act in justice while he helped the human race by showing mercy (Ro 3:23-26)

Through God's kind and legal arrangement, his Son provided opportunity for mankind to gain life, at the same time settling the issue of the rightfulness of God's rulership (*Lmn* 18-20)

Jesus was born and lived as a perfect human (Read Hebrews 7:26)

Satan never got Jesus to sin in thought, word, or action

Christ's giving his life as a sacrifice provided a basis for faithful men to be declared righteous (*it-1* 604-5)

Jesus has served as the Advocate for God's servants since his resurrection (Read 1 John 2:1, 2)

Jesus becomes "Eternal Father" by means of his ransom sacrifice (Isa 9:6; *ws* 163-6)

He 'gets children' because God accepts his ransom sacrifice as a guilt offering

All who take hold of Jesus' ransom in faith can become his children

#### **CHRIST'S RANSOM OVERCOMES SIN WITH ALL ITS EFFECTS** (4 min.)

Through the application of the value of the ransom sacrifice, all who desire to will be able to gain perfection and everlasting life (Joh 3:17-21, 36)

Those who fail to get life will be those who reject Jehovah's rule and its righteousness (Re 20:7-9)

God's name will be sanctified and his sovereignty vindicated, fulfilling the description in Psalm 150 (Give gist)

At the end of the thousand years of Christ's Kingdom rule, he turns the Kingdom back to the Father, together with the rehabilitated human race

Mankind then will be sons of God, like Adam in Eden, and they will be tried in the final test (1Co 15:24; *it-2* 170)

#### **YOU CAN BE CONFIDENT OF A REWARD** (10 min.)

Life—everlasting life—is a free gift of God

We cannot earn life by our own works, for our works are not righteous (*su* 98-9)

Life is a reward to those expressing faith in and being obedient to Christ as God's King

Our objective should be to gain the friendship of God

Why are you favored with hearing and understanding these things when millions of others are not?

God looks into the heart and recognizes anyone sincerely seeking him

He draws a person to him when he sees that circumstances are right (Relate Acts 8:25-36)

All of those whom God has looked upon favorably have a purpose in life and must not be negligent (Read 2 Corinthians 6:1, 2)

To neglect the object of our learning the truth would result in loss of the reward

After a person learns the truth and is fully convinced as to God's rulership and purpose and his own place in it, he fulfills one of God's requirements by being baptized in water (*w82* 2/15 28-30)

He ought to make this decision altogether on his own

A person should recognize that at baptism he is only a spiritual babe and should continue to study and make unceasing efforts to reach maturity (1Co 14:20)

It is not selfish to look forward to the reward because Jehovah is appreciative and is the Rewarder of those earnestly seeking him (Col 3:24; Heb 11:6)

We should appreciate the marvelous opportunity of serving God now (Mt 24:14)

We are in position to stand on the side of God's sovereignty and to proclaim the Kingdom despite opposition

Also may have opportunity to serve as part of "the foundation" of the "new earth" (Isa 51:16; 65:17)

A person should not become 'overrighteous' simply because he has accepted God's rulership and has been kindly blessed by God to see His purposes (Ec 7:16; Mt 7:1, 2)

Happy integrity keepers should always try to be helpful to others, looking forward to the joy of living under God's rulership, which will provide everything we need (Php 4:19)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read)



## RESISTING THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

For the third section below, identify the characteristics of the spirit of the world by opening to and using the *Reasoning* book, pages 390-3. Cover each point carefully, reasoning on the scriptures cited and using the additional references to reinforce your development

### **THE SPIRIT OF SATAN'S WORLD IS OPPOSITE TO GOD'S SPIRIT, OR ACTIVE FORCE** (7 min.)

It is impossible to have a good relationship with God while having "the spirit of the world" (1Co 2:12)

The spirit of the world is the selfish and sinful activating force that motivates the world of unrighteous human society

Those who have the world's spirit have certain basic attitudes that are common to the present system of things of which Satan is god (*rs* 389)

Spirit of Satan's world includes hatred of truth, works of the flesh, and opposition to all of Jehovah's right ways (Ga 5:19-21; 2Ti 3:1-5)

All worshippers of Jehovah must resist the spirit of the world and the course of conduct that it inspires (1Jo 2:15)

They cultivate the fruitage of God's holy spirit (Ga 5:22, 23)

Christians do not "speak what proceeds from the world" (1Jo 4:1-6; *w83* 10/15 19 ¶11-13)

### **SATAN USES THE EVIL WORLD TO OPPOSE TRUE WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH** (12 min.)

Religious part of evil world is Babylon the Great, which is used by Archdeceiver to blind and confuse mankind

All nations have been made drunk with her wine of false doctrines and spiritual fornication (Re 18:2-4; *re* 261-4)

Greedy commercial system, or big business, is another part of Satan's evil world

He uses this to develop spirit of covetousness and materialism in men's hearts (Lu 12:15; *pe* 210 ¶9)

The political element of Satan's world will actually battle against the Lamb of God in due time (Re 17:12-14)

Striking force of political system is the violent military establishment, which has caused the senseless killing of millions

The entire world of Satan is corrupted morally (Ro 1:24-27)

Jehovah's servants manifestly can have no share in it

Satan has blinded the nations to the truth of God's Word, and they are walking in mental darkness (Eph 4:17-19; *pe* 210 ¶10)

Sports, entertainment, and recreation have been allowed to degenerate into degrading, competitive, and often harmful activities

Added to these excesses are overeating and overdrinking, revelries, and loose conduct (1Pe 4:3, 4; *g89* 11/8 3-11; *g83* 10/8 6-8; *w79* 6/1 3-4)

Satan uses all such manifestations of spirit of world in his fight against God's people and their worship of Jehovah (1Jo 5:19; Re 12:9, 12, 17; *rs* 390)

### **WHAT ARE SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD AGAINST WHICH WE NEED TO BE ON GUARD?** (*rs* 390-3) (22 min.)

Breaking free from the spirit of the world requires getting to the root of the matter

One must reflect *God's* spirit and genuine love for his ways (1Co 2:12)

It is necessary to guard against attitudes that betray the spirit of the world:

(1) Doing what one wants to do, without regard for the will of God (*rs* 187-91; *w85* 11/1 5-7)

(2) Reacting to situations on the basis of pride

(3) Manifesting a rebellious attitude toward authority (*g74* 2/8 4-5; *w72* 261-4, 268-9)

(4) Giving free rein to the desires of the fallen flesh (*w85* 8/15 13-14; *w79* 6/1 6-8)

(5) Allowing one's life to be dominated by the desire to possess what one sees (*w88* 8/15 4-7)

(6) Showing off one's possessions and supposed attainments (*w86* 7/15 13 ¶18)

(7) Giving vent to one's emotions in abusive speech and violent acts (*w83* 2/1 7)

(8) Basing one's hopes and fears on what humans are able to do

(9) Giving to humans and things the worshipful honor that belongs to God

### **FIND TRUE HAPPINESS IN OBEYING JEHOVAH** (4 min.)

Jehovah provides us with gladness of heart by teaching us his Word and helping us to follow his right principles for living

He grants his people great blessings in using them to save the lives of others by preaching and teaching his Word

Obedient ones are generally protected from the harmful effects of bad association, loose living, use of tobacco, drug abuse, and drunkenness (Pr 10:22)

They keep busy and happy by preaching the good news

Evil world will be destroyed, dragging down with it all who support it and have its spirit (2Pe 3:7, 12; 1Jo 2:17)

All who are of Satan's world carry on sin and do not qualify for endless life (1Jo 3:8)

Children of God truly hate Satan, his wicked works, and whole evil world, but they love doing God's will

With Jehovah's help they are determined to fight against and gain victory over spirit of this world (1Jo 4:4, 6)

Those awaiting the new heavens and earth will conform their lives to the instructions of God's good spirit and Word (2Pe 3:13, 14, 17, 18; 1Jo 3:9, 10)

Those loving Jehovah will live clean, upright lives in order to gain his approval and to receive life everlasting in his righteous new world (Pr 2:21)

As a people, they go into the whole world preaching and teaching the good news so that others also may find the way to life (Mt 28:19, 20)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## DOES GOD COUNT YOU PERSONALLY IMPORTANT?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Try to deepen appreciation for the fact that Jehovah is interested in each one of us. We demonstrate interest in him by studying his Word and by praying regularly.—Jas 4:8

### **UNIVERSAL LAWS PROVE THAT GOD IS INTERESTED IN MANKIND** (8 min.)

Some people have said that God is dead—that is, he is far off, uninterested in human affairs

Others have said that God may have some interest in the universe but that he does not condescend to hear an individual or take a personal interest in him

There are many things that we observe daily that prove a personal interest on the part of God and show a definite purpose (*ce* 129-41; *lp* 98-107)

These things point to the fact that God's purpose is progressively working out for mankind's benefit

Physical laws are indispensable to continuance of life on earth

Constant, consistent operation of physical laws proves that God is not far off

Scientists, some of whom may ridicule the idea of faith, themselves put faith in the reliability and constancy of the physical laws governing the universe

The laws governing procreation reveal a good purpose on God's part toward humankind

Moral laws are just as inescapable and are vital to purposeful life

Very bad results have come from breaking moral laws (Read Romans 1:26-31)

Religious hypocrisy is the most reprehensible form of violation of God's moral laws (2Ti 3:5)

God purposes to bring all intelligent creation into full harmony with his moral laws so that there will no longer be violations

It is clear from a consideration of God's universal laws that he has an interest in mankind, but can we say that he gives consideration to each individual?

### **WILL GOD GIVE ATTENTION TO EACH INDIVIDUAL?** (12 min.)

To God, "each one of us" is of significance (Ac 17:26, 27)

Christ "tasted death for *every* man" (Heb 2:9)

By his sacrifice, Christ purchased mankind, who were "sold under sin" (Ro 7:14)

Individuals need to be brought back into good relationship with God

Jesus has authority to judge men (Read John 5:27-30)

Should a person feel that he is too bad, too far gone, to have hope of receiving help from God? (*w*90 2/15 23 ¶4, 5)

Consider Isaiah 1:18 and the apostle Paul's experience (1Ti 1:15, 16)

Conversely, it is a sad mistake for a person to think that he can win God's favor just because he is "good" or is doing "powerful works" (Mt 7:22, 23; Mr 10:18; Ro 3:10; 4:2, 3; 10:1-3)

To discouraged persons we can say that Jehovah's love toward those who diligently seek him is far greater than any love we might express (Read Romans 8:38, 39)

Jesus, while on earth, showed he has the same loving attitude toward humankind (Mr 1:40, 41)

To get an understanding of God and his ways, we must have help from him

He opens up one's mind to understanding (Joh 6:44)

No one can understand God without the help of his spirit (1Co 2:11, 12)

God's interest in each individual is seen in His provision of the resurrection (*Lmn* 20-1; *lp* 116-19)

In order to resurrect a person, God has to have full details about that person so that the individual will indeed be the *very same personality* that he was before his death

God will perform the resurrection through Christ, who was himself resurrected

Since God is interested in every one of us, we can expect that he would arrange matters so that we can know what his purposes are. But has he?

### **WE CAN KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD** (12 min.)

Jesus told his disciples that they could know the truth (Read John 8:31, 32)

He knew that he had the truth because he had been with God for ages before coming to earth

The apostles knew the truth because they learned it from the Hebrew Scriptures and from Christ

We can know the truth because we have the writings of the apostles and their associates

The record of the Bible is indispensable for getting God's view and for understanding his principles

The Bible, being written by men under God's inspiration and dealing with the lives of men and women, is more warm, appealing, and realistic than if it were written by angels

God oversaw its production in every aspect and guarded against inaccuracies or mere ideas of men (*si* 10 ¶19, 20)

We have in the Bible the words of Jesus, who was a witness to the truth of God's Word

The Bible has been preserved as God's truth (*gm* 12-24)

Bible is perfect in that it gives the person of faith all he needs to be *completely equipped* (2Ti 3:15-17)

It is also perfect in the sense that it is ample for faith leading to salvation

While the Bible is a communication from God to us, we can communicate with God in prayer

A person today should recognize God and approach him through Christ, acknowledging that the petitioner is a sinner needing help (*w90* 1/15 4, 6)

What are proper subjects for prayer? (Read 1 John 5:14)

*Anything* that has to do with our relationship with God or that will affect us spiritually

Answers will come in the form of guidance through the Bible, our brothers, and God's dealings

We must be persistent in prayer

Two questions naturally arise: Do we personally have faith that God is interested in us? Will he bring his purpose to pass?

**FROM THE BEGINNING GOD HAS BEEN WORKING PROGRESSIVELY TOWARD THE FULFILLMENT OF HIS GOOD PURPOSE** (13 min.)

The progressive work of God cannot be seen without faith

Those who view things without faith do not see God's purpose working out—matters appear exactly the opposite to them

In 66 C.E. the Romans under Cestius Gallus surrounded Jerusalem and then withdrew. Those in Jerusalem who had faith in Jesus' words fled; those without faith stayed. Later, the Roman troops returned and destroyed those who had stayed (Lu 21:20, 21)

Persons with faith see beyond deceptive outward appearances; they have "the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld" by the ordinary person not having faith (Heb 11:1)

Jehovah has taken time to educate men about his government and to lay a foundation for faith

The Almighty has provided these necessary things:

- (1) A knowledge of the principles of his government
- (2) A demonstration of his qualities
- (3) An unmistakable identification of the Messiah, the King

God selected the nation of Israel to become a demonstration of his principles and qualities

*Israelite* history demonstrates what happens when God's laws are obeyed or disobeyed; *world* history reveals the outcome to those without divine law (Eph 4:17-19)

Israel was selected because of God's love for Abraham (De 7:7, 8)

God still supplied necessities to the other nations but did not deal with them

Jehovah also used faithful Jewish men to write the Hebrew Scriptures (Read Romans 3:1, 2)

God was working out matters to provide the "seed," preparing a positive identification of him and making patterns of things to come (Ge 3:15)

During his service on earth, Jesus carefully selected those who would be very close to him in his Kingdom

The training and testing of the 144,000 during the past 1,900 years has proved that those selected are persons who will be everlastingly loyal (Re 14:1-4)

Merciful rulers are assured for the "new earth" (2Pe 3:13)

Christ himself was tested in all respects, and he understands human makeup and problems (Heb 4:15)

With a heavenly kingdom, there must be earthly subjects (*ws* 164-8; *lp* 140-3)

There must be a nucleus to survive the destruction of this corrupt system of things (Re 7:9, 14)

Survivors will be joined by and able to teach millions who will be resurrected

God is interested in billions who have lived previously (Read 2 Peter 3:9)

We can and should study God's Word and serve Jehovah diligently, showing appreciation for his interest in us and looking forward to life under his Kingdom government

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## GETTING MARRIAGE OFF TO A GOOD START

### *Note to the speaker:*

Source material for this outline can be found in chapters 1-3 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. Do not, however, read to the audience directly from the book. Keep your information fresh and up-to-date by the use of additional, more recent material. Open the Bible frequently, and read directly from it as your authority

### **REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY ARRANGEMENT** (4 min.)

Many human needs are satisfied in the family circle (Ec 4:9-12; highlight close relationship of parents and children)

God had a good purpose in establishing the family arrangement (Ge 1:27, 28; 2:15)

History shows the importance of the family, even to national survival

A spirit is now spreading that endangers the family (g83 5/22 14)

### **SELECTING YOUR MATE FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE** (9 min.)

Jehovah's counsel is the foundation for happy marriage (Mt 7:24-27)

Even those already married can benefit from review of points; can help in own marriage and better equip you to help others

So that your marriage will be a happy one, know yourself and your needs when choosing a mate (g83 9/22 16-19; g83 10/8 20-2; yp 236-41)

There are questions you should ask yourself to discover your reasons for marrying: 'What do I want out of marriage? What are my needs—physically, emotionally, spiritually? What are my values, my goals and my methods of reaching them?'

Incompatibility is a cause for unhappiness in many marriages (g85 7/22 29)

Questions to consider relative to compatibility include: What type of work will husband do? Where will you live? How much money is needed to meet practical needs? Who will handle the budget? Will the wife need to work? What are each one's feelings about sex, children, the relationship with in-laws, and so forth? (Pr 15:22)

Similar backgrounds are an aid to compatibility

Real love versus infatuation (yp 242-51)

'I can change him/her'—an attitude to avoid

### **COMMITMENTS THAT SHOULD BE MADE IN MARRIAGE** (10 min.)

You need to appreciate the commitments involved in marriage (Ge 2:23, 24)

What the woman must think about when choosing a man to marry: 'Am I willing for him to be my head?'

What the man must consider when selecting a wife: 'Do I love her as I do myself?'

Commitment based on love and respect will be more lasting than passion

Other important factors to consider before marriage

It is not the outward appearance that counts but what he or she is in "the secret person of the heart" (1Pe 3:4; 1Sa 16:7; yp 255, 258-60)

Marrying someone "in the Lord" is vital (1Co 7:39; De 7:3, 4; w89 11/1 18-22)

Count the cost before making a commitment as serious as marriage (Lu 14:28, 29)

If serious differences persist, may be best to call off the courtship (yp 256-7)

There is value in listening to the counsel of older persons (Job 12:12; Pr 3:5, 6)

### **ADJUSTMENTS AFTER MARRIAGE ARE USUALLY NECESSARY** (4 min.)

Good to appreciate that adjustments may be needed in order for Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10 to be fully realized

To make such, need to be flexible, willing to bend

Recognize that you are not alone in making adjustments; both of you will be doing it out of love

Taking into consideration partner's sexual needs and views will help you to adjust in that area and avoid selfishness (g82 8/8 5-6)

### **COPING WITH DISAGREEMENTS IN THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP** (12 min.)

No two persons will agree on everything

Imperfection will cause disagreements, and we must accept and cope with the weaknesses of our mate (Pr 19:11)

It is unkind and tactless to make unfavorable comparisons of our mate with others

Some modern psychologists advocate that couples quarrel to bring differences out into the open, but the Bible shows that their counsel is unwise (Pr 17:14)

Keeping communication open between marriage mates is the key to resolving difficulties (g86 1/8 3-5)

There is a right way and a wrong way to bring up problems (Pr 18:13)

At times one's partner may have tensions that must be understood and allowed for (Pr 17:17)

Jealousy poses dangers to calm communication (Pr 14:30)

Sometimes outsiders may be helpful in resolving disagreements

Pride hinders communication and the resolution of difficulties, but pride shrivels if we remember our insignificance and possess a sense of humor

A guiding principle in coping with disagreements should be, "Return evil for evil to no one" (Ro 12:17; 1Pe 2:23)

Be faithful to yourself and the principles of doing what is right

Returning good oftentimes stops "the evil" (Ro 12:21)

**REVIEW THE SCRIPTURE TEXTS IN THE REVIEW BOX ON PAGE 38 OF *FAMILY HAPPINESS BOOK***  
(6 min.)

By applying these principles, you should be able to get marriage off to a good start

Always be optimistic. Avoid unrealistic expectations. Keep your sense of humor. Be flexible. Really get to know your partner

With Jehovah's blessing, you can have a mature, enduring, and happy marriage

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## SHOW RESPECT AND LOVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Source material for this outline can be found in chapters 3 and 11 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. Do *not*, however, read to the audience directly from the book. Keep your information fresh and up-to-date by the use of additional, more recent material. Open the Bible frequently, and read directly from it as your authority

### **RESPECT AND LOVE ARE VITAL ASPECTS OF A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE** (4 min.)

Almost all of us are concerned about marriage (our own or those of ones we love); we do well to consider how vital respect and love are in a successful marriage

Respect may be demanded, but to come from another's heart, it must be earned

Jesus earned respect as a teacher by his manner of teaching (Mt 7:28, 29)

Let us examine role of husband in connection with respect in marriage

The wife is told to respect her husband; how can the husband merit it? (Eph 5:33)

### **THE WAYS A HUSBAND EARNS HIS WIFE'S DEEP RESPECT** (14 min.)

By exercising proper headship

Examples of loving headship are found in Jehovah's headship over Christ and Christ's headship over the congregation (Mt 11:29; Heb 10:7; *w89* 5/15 11-13)

Husband should follow these examples (Eph 5:25-29, 33)

When the husband is domineering, the wife's submission to him can be a hardship

If husband refuses to take the lead and make needed decisions, the wife's submission is difficult and she may feel forced to take over to get things done

The husband is to be steady and strong in making decisions but should take into consideration the views of his wife

By being a good provider

The husband is to provide materially for his wife (1Ti 5:8)

In providing materially, the man is not to go to extremes and become materialistic, involving his family in that snare (1Ti 6:7-10)

He must balance his providing materially with the more vital need of making spiritual provision for his family (1Ti 6:17-19; *w83* 6/1 18)

By showing his wife honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one (1Pe 3:7)

In sexual relations (*w83* 6/1 21)

By maintaining good personal hygiene, or cleanliness

Never treating her as inferior just because she may be physically weaker (Eph 5:28; *w89* 5/15 13-14; *w86* 8/15 16 par. 12)

Manifesting awareness of her emotional makeup and her desire to feel needed, to be talked to, to be remembered, to be told that she is loved (*w89* 7/15 31; *w83* 6/1 20)

But what about the wife? And how does love—which we mentioned as vital—fit in?

### **THE HUSBAND IS TOLD TO LOVE HIS WIFE, BUT SHE MUST ACT LOVINGLY IF HE IS TO DO THIS FROM HIS HEART** (8 min.)

She should be a helper, supporting her husband in his decisions

Wife ought to train herself to be capable in performing her wifely duties (Pr 31:27)

She should care for her personal appearance, yet remember that the most important adornment is a fine disposition (Pr 31:20, 26, 30)

The wife, like the husband, is to conduct herself with fairness and consideration in sexual matters (Heb 13:4; *w86* 8/15 16 par. 13; *w81* 8/15 13-15)

### **PITFALLS THE WIFE SHOULD AVOID IF SHE IS TO BE LOVED** (6 min.)

The wife who resorts to weeping to get her way loses her husband's respect (Jg 14:16, 17)

A nagging wife jeopardizes her marriage and kills love (Jg 16:16)

The wife who wants her husband to talk to her should not inhibit his doing so by her conversational habits (Ec 3:7)

A wife who has an unbelieving husband must not preach excessively to him but let her conduct recommend the Christian way (Pr 16:24; 25:11; *w90* 8/15 23; *w90* 2/15 26-7)

### **THE LOVE THAT IS A PERFECT BOND OF UNION IN MARRIAGE** (11 min.)

The Bible provides an inspired definition of love (1Co 13:4-8)

Make love grow

Love, like a muscle, is strengthened by use

Increase love by sharing it

Serving your mate makes love grow

With the conduct outlined above, love can grow whether your mate is a Christian believer or not

**KEEP ON INCREASING RESPECT AND LOVE IN YOUR MARRIAGE** (2 min.)

Husbands, show love and respect in your marriage (1Pe 3:8, 9)

Do not feel that it is enough just to bring home your wages

Continue to deepen your appreciation for your wife

Try to overlook her faults and forgive her weaknesses (Col 3:12-14)

Wives, cultivate deep respect for your husband

Be a true complement to him, supporting him and helping him with his load

Cultivate appreciation for him, and work to make him happy

In this way, you and the entire family will be happy (Ac 20:35)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## RESPONSIBILITIES AND REWARDS OF PARENTHOOD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Source material for this outline can be found in chapters 5-8 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. Do not, however, read to the audience directly from the book. Keep your information fresh and up-to-date by the use of additional, more recent material. Open the Bible frequently, and read directly from it as your authority

### **A HUMAN BABY—FROM CONCEPTION TO TIME OF BIRTH** (12 min.)

All of us have been children and may now have our own; what do we know about this miracle from God?

There are amazing facts and remaining mysteries about reproduction (Ps 139:16; *g92 4/8 13-16*)

The progressive development of the embryo and the fetus is a marvel (Ps 139:13, 15; *w92 8/1 3; g92 1/22 14-17*)

Amazing changes must occur quickly at the time of birth (Ps 139:14)

What important matters should be considered during pregnancy?

How the mother's eating, drinking, and other practices affect the baby (*g89 2/22 9-10*)

Decisions to be made before the baby's birth

Importance of the home atmosphere into which the baby will come (*g88 9/8 6*)

How children are a reward from Jehovah and are to be taken care of (Ps 127:3)

### **ROLES PLAYED BY THE PARENTS** (12 min.)

It is necessary for the roles of the father and the mother to harmonize so that they are well balanced (Php 4:5)

The mother's crucial role

She cares for the baby's physical needs

She must look to the emotional needs of the baby, especially the need for love (1Th 2:7; *g87 5/22 7, 10-11*)

The vital role of the father (*g87 5/22 8-9*)

The father should be involved with the baby and its care from the beginning; his role takes on greater prominence as time passes

He provides material needs and masculine qualities that round out the baby's personality, especially if the child is a boy

He is responsible to provide spiritual training as the child grows (De 6:6, 7; Eph 6:4)

It is the father's responsibility, in cooperation with the mother, to discipline when needed, doing so lovingly and wisely (Col 3:21; Heb 12:7; *g87 5/22 11*)

The father and the mother are partners in the family's affairs (Ec 4:9)

They present a united front in the training and the disciplining of the children (Pr 13:10)

Agreement is necessary in stepfamilies too (*g86 1/8 8-9; w84 10/15 21-5*)

Wise parents work together to make it easy for their children to honor them (Eph 6:2)

Parents work together to create a peaceful home environment for their children

Single parents, with difficult task of being both "mother" and "father," can be successful with Jehovah's help (*w80 9/15 19-20, 25*)

### **TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN FROM INFANCY** (10 min.)

The time to start is right away! (2Ti 3:15; *w88 8/1 12-13; w88 5/1 6; g90 8/22 28*)

Each child is different, and training should be adapted to each one's personality and abilities (*w88 5/1 5*)

Help your children to grow, giving encouragement as they progress and try new things (*g88 9/8 7-8*)

Parents need to explain sex to their children, especially when they ask questions about it (Keep brief; *g92 2/22 3-8*)

From babyhood onward, children learn from the example of others and imitate them

It is vital that parents not only instruct well verbally but also set good examples in conduct (*g87 5/22 11*)

Give your children a set of values that will go with them as they live out their lives in a corrupt world (Eph 4:13-15)

### **THE VALUE OF DISCIPLINING IN LOVE** (10 min.)

There is a wrong and a right view of discipline (Pr 13:24; *g87 5/22 11*)

You should provide guidelines and firm limits for your children (Pr 6:20-23; *w88 8/1 18-19*)

It is necessary that children understand clearly what your guidelines are

When you discipline, it is important that you communicate the reasons for the discipline

When disciplining your children, imitate Jehovah, who disciplines in love (Pr 3:12)

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTHOOD ARE HEAVY, BUT REWARDS ARE SATISFYING** (1 min.)

Parents have the heavy responsibility of providing food, clothing, and a home for their children

Children also need parental *instruction*, correction, and moral guidance

This should be a regular part of family life (De 6:6, 7)

It should begin at infancy (Mr 10:13-16; 2Ti 3:15)

Parents who are diligent in caring for these responsibilities will reap rich rewards and will be proud of their children

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## COMMUNICATION—WITHIN THE FAMILY AND WITH GOD

### *Note to the speaker:*

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### **PARENTS, KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN WITH YOUR CHILDREN** (12 min.)

What is communication? (1Co 14:9)

The teen years can be a time of crisis in communication

The groundwork for good or bad communication is laid from infancy onward when conversing is either encouraged or inhibited (*w88* 8/1 11-12; *w85* 8/15 22-3)

Know the needs of teenagers in order to cultivate communication

Especially at this age, they need to be understood and respected as individuals

Important to them to feel needed and appreciated (*g88* 9/8 9-10)

Have need for more independence, which involves a lessening of some restrictions

Feel strong need for friends their own age outside the family

To communicate counsel, be sure you understand the situation (*w86* 11/1 23)

For youths to have feeling of individual worth and of belonging, work is valuable (Ga 6:4; Tit 3:14; *g88* 9/8 9-10; *g83* 2/8 9-10)

Communicate to youths the Bible's moral code as a guide (Ps 119:9, 63; *w88* 5/1 6; *g83* 2/8 10)

### **CHILDREN, COMMUNICATE WITH AND HONOR YOUR PARENTS** (10 min.)

God commands that parents be honored (Eph 6:2, 3)

Why should children want to do so? (*yp* 11-17, 42-9)

Children should want to communicate with their parents to gain wisdom

From their own experience, children know wisdom comes with the passing of time

Knowing this, and knowing that their parents are much older, children should appreciate the greater wisdom their parents have (Pr 23:22)

Learn to accept authority of stepparent (*yp* 45-9)

Children can learn in a one-parent household too (*g90* 7/8 20-2)

Parents are honored and made happy when children help around the home, and communication is enhanced

There is responsibility to care for parents as they grow old (*w87* 6/1 13-18)

Honoring parents includes caring for them materially if that is necessary (Mt 15:1-6)

Emotional and spiritual needs are also to be provided for

### **MAINTAINING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HUSBAND AND WIFE AFTER THEY ARE OLDER AND THEIR CHILDREN NOT WITH THEM** (10 min.)

After children are grown and have left the home, conditions may arise that jeopardize the closeness of the father and the mother

There is danger of restlessness and boredom because children are gone and there is less work to do

With aging, physical changes occur; some older ones try to become very active socially to prove that they are as young as ever

Some endeavor to prove that they are still potent sexually, get involved in extramarital affairs, and sometimes even divorce and remarry (Mal 2:13-16; *g86* 7/8 8-9; *g83* 2/22 8-10)

There are many blessings from loyally staying together (*g83* 2/8 11-12)

Engage in enjoyable activities that can make your life useful in the later years—helping others, serving God, having spiritual children (2Co 6:11, 12; 1Th 2:19, 20; Heb 13:16; Jas 1:27; *g83* 2/22 10-12)

### **KEEP IN COMMUNICATION WITH GOD FOR YOUR FAMILY'S ETERNAL WELFARE** (8 min.)

As time passes, do not live in the past but rather look to the future

What are the prospects?

For many, the future seems to hold a few short years, then death

For those with faith in God and who serve him, the future means eternal life

By means of ransom, God's original purpose for putting mankind on earth will be fulfilled

Life on a paradise earth, peace, no sickness, no death (Mic 4:3, 4; Re 21:1-5)

What do families need to do now to have these blessings?

Study God's Word, the Bible, individually and as a family (*w86* 11/1 25-6)

Live in accord with Jehovah's will, and tell others of the blessings of Christ's Kingdom

Imagine what blessings on a paradise earth there will be for those families who communicate with God and do his will forever

**FAMILY COMMUNICATION LEADS TO HAPPINESS AND GOD'S APPROVAL** (5 min.)

Families cannot communicate if they do not spend time together

Head of the family must arrange this time for communication

Thought should be given to upbuilding conversation (*sg* 78-80)

Goal should be for family to have meals together

There should be a regular family Bible study (*w*86 11/1 25)

Families should attend meetings and sit together; also enjoy service together

There should be regular family recreation and outings (*Ec* 3:1, 4)

We cannot have God's approval if we do not communicate with him

Jehovah invites us to communicate, to pray regularly (*Ps* 65:2; *Jas* 4:8)

Communication is the formula for good relations with others: parents, children, husbands, wives, people in general, and God

It behooves all of us to become skilled communicators and to keep communicating

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## ARE YOU CONSCIOUS OF YOUR SPIRITUAL NEED?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize the proper way to satisfy one's spiritual need. Provide encouragement and practical suggestions for overcoming obstacles that could prevent spiritual progress

### **ALL HUMANS HAVE A SPIRITUAL NEED** (4 min.)

Jesus indicated that all humans have an innate spiritual need [Read Matthew 5:3]

We desire to find meaning in life and answers to life's deep questions (*w13* 4/1 6)

People attempt to satisfy their spiritual need in a wide variety of ways (*w07* 8/1 3)

Various religious teachings and ideas about spirituality conflict with one another

Logically, they cannot all be true and thus cannot all satisfy our spiritual need

### **HOW TO SATISFY YOUR SPIRITUAL NEED** (13 min.)

Jesus promised that "those hungering and thirsting for righteousness" would be filled [Read Matthew 5:6]

To thirst for righteousness means to desire what is right according to God's standards

Satisfying our spiritual need requires looking to our Creator for guidance

Jehovah God wants people to find spiritual truth (Ps 32:8; Ac 17:26, 27)

God's inspired guidance for mankind is found in the Bible (2Ti 3:16)

Jesus often directed attention to God's written Word (Mt 4:4, 7, 10; Lu 10:25-28)

The Bible is far superior to any other book (*w12* 6/15 27-28 ¶8-9)

To satisfy our spiritual need, we must be diligent students of the Bible and apply its message in our life (Jas 1:22-25)

Because our Creator knows what is best for us, his moral standards promote our well-being (Ps 19:7-10)

When we follow God's guidance, we gain his approval and can become his friends (Ps 15:1, 2; Jas 2:23)

Attempting to fill our spiritual need in some other way will not bring the same satisfaction

Properly satisfying our spiritual need provides us with a sure hope for the future

Jesus said that "the Kingdom of the heavens belongs" to "those conscious of their spiritual need" (Mt 5:3)

A limited number will rule with Jesus in God's heavenly Kingdom (Lu 12:32)

Many more will enjoy everlasting life on a paradise earth under the rule of God's Kingdom (Mt 25:34)

### **OBSTACLES TO SATISFYING OUR SPIRITUAL NEED** (10 min.)

Despite having a spiritual need, many today fail to take the proper steps to satisfy it

As Jesus foretold, some are distracted by everyday affairs of life (Mt 24:3, 37-39)

Examining Bible prophecy can strengthen our conviction that we are living in "the last days" and need to take urgent action (2Ti 3:1-5)

Some hear the Bible's message and initially react favorably to it but then fail to progress spiritually

[Read and discuss the various obstacles described at Matthew 13:3-8, 19-23]

We can overcome such obstacles by strengthening our appreciation for the wisdom of Bible truth (*w03* 2/1 8-13)

Some view the Bible's moral guidance as out of step with modern society or as too difficult to follow

The world becomes more and more permissive concerning moral standards, not because humans are becoming more enlightened, but because wicked spirits have much influence over them (1Jo 5:19; Re 12:9, 12)

With help from Jehovah, it is possible for us to live a clean, happy life in harmony with his righteous standards (1Co 6:11)

### **MAKE IT YOUR PRIORITY TO SATISFY YOUR SPIRITUAL NEED** (3 min.)

Although effort is required to satisfy your spiritual need, such effort leads to happiness (Mt 5:3)

Make it your priority to study the Bible and attend Christian meetings regularly (Mt 6:33)

Help your family members and others to be conscious of their spiritual need and to satisfy it (Re 22:17)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## COPING WITH LIFE'S ANXIETIES

### *Note to the speaker:*

In the section "How God Helps Us to Cope With Anxieties," use experiences from the cited *Watchtower* articles and present this section with a warm manner and kindly tone of voice

### **TODAY'S WORLD FULL OF ANXIETY** (10 min.)

Worldwide today people are restless, fearful, anxious about future (g86 12/8 3-4; g90 8/8 31)

There is growing distrust, lack of confidence in governments and in institutions (g90 8/8 3-9)

Mankind is faced with monumental problems

On one hand, many suffer and worry because of shortages of food, goods, and energy (Mt 24:7)

Cost of living has soared, making it more and more difficult to provide for home and family (Re 6:6)

People in big cities, small towns, and rurals feel this pressure (Briefly mention local evidence and effects of these problems)

On other hand, there is waste of money and resources by governments and individuals

Many refuse to work for living

Bad living habits and failure of money to bring happiness build up tensions, frustrations (1Ti 6:9, 10)

All of this adds to economic and social problems

There is also skyrocketing unemployment and lack of daily necessities

Crushing national and international debt fuels inflation and even threatens the stability of some governments (g89 5/8 8)

For example, in Peru the government announced a "shock program" to control an economy that had seen more than a 2,000,000-percent increase in prices in five years (*The New York Times*, 8/17/90)

Many economists fear the collapse of the worldwide banking system (g86 10/22 7-11)

There continues to be a breakdown in family life, with broken homes, marriage failures, divorces, disobedient children, and loss of parental control

In the United States during 1985, there were 5 divorces—compared with 10.2 marriages—per 1,000 people; in 1986 a report from Moscow indicated that only 37 percent of marriages lasted three years and that 70 percent ended within a decade (w88 11/1 20; g86 7/8 10)

Greedy ones care little for the earth and its resources (g90 3/22 6-8)

Indiscriminate destruction of rain forests is a global concern

Many potential foods, medicines, and household products will be lost even before they can be discovered or developed

One botanist lamented: "We're destroying things we don't even know exist" (g90 3/22 11)

Such exploiters bring about conditions that breed war, terrorism, crime, and famines

### **MISTAKEN EFFORTS AT OVERCOMING ANXIETIES** (7 min.)

Mankind looks in the wrong direction and to wrong sources for overcoming anxieties (w80 7/15 4)

Many turn to drugs such as tranquilizers

But do these drugs relieve anxiety? The Wolfson Unit of Clinical Pharmacology estimates that about a quarter of those taking benzodiazepines for four months become dependent on them

Effects produced: insomnia, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, nausea, blurred vision, and muscle pain (g84 10/8 30)

Others turn to the accumulation of money as the answer

A woman from Canada stated: "I believed that money brought freedom from worry." After she married a financially secure man, she related: "Our financial situation allowed us freedom to enjoy anything the world had to offer . . . , [but] I still worried about money." Why? "We had so much to lose. It seems that the more you have, the less secure you feel. Money did not bring freedom from worry or anxiety" (g88 4/22 3-4)

There are parts of the world where security is thought to come from having large families so that in later years children will care for aged parents (g91 11/8 6, 9)

This also proves to be a false hope as more and more children leave home and loved ones, forgetting to honor their father and mother (Pr 30:11; w85 1/15 12)

Various solutions have been proposed and some tried to conquer environmental problems, but the facts are that the problems continue to worsen (g73 3/8 31)

### **HOW GOD HELPS US TO COPE WITH ANXIETIES** (20 min.)

The primary requirement in overcoming anxieties is to look in the *right* direction for relief (w80 7/15 6)

Remedy will come from Jehovah, not man or his institutions (Ps 3:8; Jer 10:23)

Past examples of those who trusted in Jehovah

Noah and family put confidence in Jehovah, survived Flood; Lot and daughters relied on Jehovah for deliverance from Sodom (Mt 24:37-39; Lu 17:28, 29; Heb 11:7)

Daniel in the den of lions (Da 6:20-22)

Today, and in the immediate future, God offers protection and help (Ps 46:1; Pr 18:10)  
Looking to Jehovah will enable us to be free from anxious care (Heb 13:5, 6)  
Establish right priorities now; make sure of more important things (Php 1:9-11)  
That means storing up “treasures in heaven” (Mt 6:19-21)  
Get a firm hold on the real life; stop being anxious about unimportant matters  
Doing so will enable us to overcome anxiety, fear, and worry (Mt 6:25-31; 1Ti 6:17-19; *w77* 4/1 197-206; *w89* 7/15 10-15)  
Keep life-style simple and wholesome (1Ti 6:6-8)  
In coping with personal problems, it is very important to cast your anxieties on Jehovah  
Illness, depression, guilty conscience, feeling of unworthiness, lack of self-control, persecution, prejudice, day-to-day problems, worry about the future, and personality conflicts are heavy burdens to bear  
Why try to handle them alone? Accept Jehovah’s help (Ps 55:22; *w82* 9/15 23-5)  
Accept help from mature brothers and sisters; talk things out with one you trust  
Supplicate Jehovah, and accept the answers that he supplies (*w88* 2/15 12, 17-18)

**BLESSINGS COME FROM COPING** (8 min.)

“To cope” means to contend or strive with success

This contest will bring relief and escape from constant fear and emotional upsets caused by loss of possessions

Paul counted possessions and position as “refuse” and found joy in serving Jehovah (Php 3:8, 10, 11)

One trusting in Jehovah avoids frustration that comes from failure of material security; will reside in spiritual security and be undisturbed by calamity; will lie down in peace (Ps 4:8; Pr 1:33)

Cannot cope with world problems through human ingenuity (Jer 10:23)

Win struggle by gaining calmer, healthier life now (*g81* 1/8 6-8)

Cope with life’s anxieties by doing the will of God now, with eternal blessings in view (1Co 15:58; 1Jo 2:15-17)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## WHAT IS BEHIND THE SPIRIT OF REBELLION?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Provide insight into why Christians must not become involved in the various rebellious movements and attitudes that emanate from Satan. We need to see that such rebelliousness accomplishes little in the way of establishing a just society and that God's Kingdom is the only practical answer for the many ills that afflict human society

### **WE ARE LIVING IN AN AGE OF REBELLION** (5 min.)

Easy to observe examples of rebellion on a personal level: Many youths rebel against parental authority; wives rebel against husbands (*w84* 10/1 5; *w83* 6/15 6-7)

On a broader scale, there is rebellion against school authorities, police, and government (*g87* 11/22 30; *g82* 5/8 17-18; *tp* 129; *g71* 2/22 16-18)

There are sporadic outbreaks of open rebellion against established order of society (*w72* 261-2; *g90* 8/8 9)  
Spirit of rebellion is so widespread that it touches everyone to some degree

### **IS REBELLION THE ADVISABLE AND MOST BENEFICIAL COURSE?** (5 min.)

History helps to answer whether rebellion is advisable and beneficial

Bible enables us to learn background of rebellion against authority

First, a spirit creature and then two humans rebelled, with disastrous results (*Ge* 3; *lp* 53-61; *it-2* 757)

Later, bad results came from rebellion at Babel (*Ge* 11)

Original spirit rebel still influences mankind and foments a general bad spirit (*Eph* 2:2, 3; *Re* 12:12; *hs* 52-3; *rs* 389-93; *w72* 262)

He is primarily responsible for widespread spirit of rebellion as well as for imperfect conditions that stimulate rebellion among people (*rs* 364-5)

### **WHAT ARE THE MOTIVES BEHIND REBELLION?** (15 min.)

Sometimes those in rebellion are sincere, moved by injustices and problems

Some youths are repelled by hypocrisy and materialism of parents

Wives might rebel against oppressively domineering husbands

People rebel against economic and social systems that produce class distinctions and lack of regard for life (*w89* 11/15 30; *w72* 263-4; *g87* 11/8 4-6)

Selfishness or pride also prompts rebellion

We see an example in Korah (*Nu* 16; *w78* 11/15 13-15; *it-2* 184)

Many youths rebel against parents and authorities because the youths desire their own way or are influenced by sinful inclinations (*g88* 1/8 20-1)

A wife may show prideful independence by disputing with husband publicly, thus rebelling against his authority

Millions today reject basic moral restrictions simply because they want excuse for loose life; become rebels against God, who has high moral standards (*Ps* 119:150; *Eph* 4:17-19)

Whether sincere or selfish, rebellion has failed to solve basic human problems (*Ps* 146:3; *g87* 9/8 23)

Rebellion should be shunned because it is condemned in God's Word (*1Sa* 15:22, 23; *Pr* 24:21, 22; *Ec* 8:2, 3)

Where does the real solution lie?

### **REAL SOLUTION TO PROBLEM OF REBELLION LIES IN SUBMITTING TO GOD'S KINGDOM** (15 min.)

God's Kingdom is only hope for completely eliminating the spirit of rebellion and the injustices that cause it

Under rule of that Kingdom, "the wicked one will be no more" (*Ps* 37:10)

Rather than manifesting the spirit of rebellion, vital that we submit to God's Kingdom now, as shown by our following God's ways outlined in the Bible (*w78* 1/15 18-22; *g76* 10/8 6-7)

Doing so brings many present benefits

Even if youths cannot accept hypocrisy and materialistic goals of parents who are not true Christians, should respect parents' position and obey them (*Col* 3:20; *fl* 161-3; *tp* 138-9; *yp* 13-17)

Rebelling hurts parents and may well hurt self

Obedience is pleasing to Jehovah and may attract parents to the truth

Many successes among those who follow Bible principles prove that wifely respect and relative subjection can bring lasting peace and happiness (*1Pe* 3:1-6; *fl* 54-69; *w89* 11/15 20 ¶19; *w86* 5/1 22-3; *gm* 171-2)

Although true Christians do not promote the established order of society, they do not rebel against "superior authorities" (*Ro* 13:1-7; *tp* 131-5)

Avoid rebellion against God by not opposing governmental arrangement he permits

True Christians have already overcome many of mankind's problems—racism, materialism, family breakdown, war; have purpose in life (*g88* 6/22 8-10; *g85* 12/22 9-11; *g81* 2/22 17-18)

Even now they are actively working for the new system, where injustices will not be permitted (*gm* 162-83; *g78* 10/8 4-23; *g76* 10/8 8-15)

**SERVING GOD IS THE PRACTICAL ANSWER TO THE SPIRIT OF REBELLION** (5 min.)

All are invited to associate with Jehovah's Witnesses to see that many problems over which the world rebels have already been solved among them (*br78* 23-4)

Their success is not a result of guesswork; they are ordinary, imperfect people

Have Scriptures as sure guide on all attitudes and relationships (*rs* 199; *sj* 5, 9-11)

No need to be apathetic regarding present problems

You can learn workable counsel for handling present problems

Can have valid hope that *all* problems will be *permanently* solved in God's new world (1Ti 4:8)

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## ARE YOU “MARKED” FOR SURVIVAL?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Strive to deepen the audience's appreciation for the fact that, to be marked for survival, we need to detest this wicked world and its apostate religion. We must also have the Christian personality and be faithfully doing God's will *at the time the great tribulation breaks out*

### **SURVIVAL IS A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN** (6 min.)

When threatened with disaster, people make real effort to survive (*w81 4/15 30; g75 10/22 31*)

Witnesses have proved that nations are heading for disaster (*g88 4/8 3-16*)

End will definitely come (Hab 2:3; Mt 24:21, 22, 37-39)

Person's conduct and attitude will determine whether he will be destroyed or will survive (Pr 1:31; 2Pe 3:9-14)

Survivors must view matters as God does; what is God's viewpoint?

### **INSTRUCTIVE EXAMPLE FROM DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM, 607 B.C.E.** (18 min.)

Ezekiel's prophecies emphasize the importance of getting God's viewpoint

Those prophecies helped some to survive that destruction of Jerusalem

As is true today, people then were held personally responsible (Eze 7:3)

Most Jews rejected God's viewpoint, decisions (Eze 18:25)

A few Jews proved to be faithful and alert; they took steps for survival

Evaluated conditions and actions in the light of God's viewpoint

Same is necessary for any who expect to survive in our day

By examining what God found detestable in Jerusalem, we are helped to get his viewpoint today

Many attitudes, practices, common today do not have God's approval

Upon evaluation, do we actually have his view?

Ezekiel received vision of detestable things practiced in Jerusalem, and we should learn from this (*w88 9/15 13-14*)

Offenders were Jews supposedly serving Jehovah (*kj 142-6*)

Those people had “symbol of jealousy,” perhaps representing Asherah, Canaanite goddess of fertility (Eze 8:5, 6)

Incited true God to jealousy; he forbade idolatry

Today in Christendom people claim to worship God of the Bible

Include idols, religious symbols, in worship; God's condemnation is the same as in Ezekiel's day

Do we share God's view that these practices are detestable?

Our survival or destruction can hinge on our view

God was and is outraged over worship given to creatures (Eze 8:10-12)

Jews viewed God as being as good as dead

Today many care little about God, yet they are fervent in their devotion to other things

Get enthusiastic about national symbols, sports teams (*kj 147-9; re 194, ftn.*)

Rejecting God as man's Creator, many prefer evolution, Mother Nature, theories (*g61 11/22 5-7*)

How about us? Do we embrace such deceptive views?

Do we have Jehovah's view that the elevating of creatures is something detestable to him?

Self-scrutiny is in order

Apostate Jews worshiped false god Tammuz (Eze 8:14; *kj 150-3; g89 1/22 22*)

Tammuz was a Babylonian deity and lover of the fertility goddess Ishtar

This vision shows how spiritually deadly apostasy is today (*w88 9/15 13-14*)

Churches often give honor and prominence to false gods and goddesses

Worship of Mary (*w89 5/1 20-2; g88 11/8 11-12*)

Worship of Trinity (*rs 405-6; ti 31*)

Worship of saints and relics (*rs 184, 354; w91 11/15 3-4; g73 8/8 26-7*)

Christians are careful to worship the true God exclusively (Ex 20:2, 3; 2Co 6:14-18)

Jews even worshiped the sun (De 4:19; Eze 8:16; *kj 154-8*)

Churches and the clergy fall into similar error even though they do not worship the literal sun

Turn from God and look to modern science, technology, intellectualism, for light

The turn to technology has resulted in pollution, arms race, new morality

Are we enthralled with space accomplishments?

Are we envious of, impressed with, higher education? (*g88 1/22 28*)

Getting and maintaining God's view requires effort

Are you making that effort?

**FOR SURVIVAL A PERSON MUST BECOME ONE OF GOD'S MARKED ONES** (Relate briefly Ezekiel 9:1-11) (*kj* 162-76; *w88* 9/15 14; *su* 94-7) (15 min.)

Literal six men did not do the destructive work on the unmarked ones

The six represent heavenly forces

Destruction in 607 B.C.E. by the Babylonians was with divine approval

Those marked for survival today are ones identified as worshipers of God

Ancient custom was to put literal mark or deity's name on a person's forehead

Symbolic mark indicates that person is a worshiper of Jehovah

Mark is not mere Bible knowledge

Bible scholars and clergy have that; do not serve Jehovah

The mark is evidence that one is dedicated, baptized Witness of God

Has a Christlike personality

Possesses fire-resistant qualities (1Co 3:10-15)

Others observe that the one with the mark is unquestionably a Christian (Eph 4:22-24)

He displays it in treatment of marriage mate, neighbors, schoolmates (*tr* 187-9; *w87* 10/1 4-7)

Has Bible truth made a marked difference in your heart?

Marked one sighs and groans over the bad conditions around us

Not just because of inconvenience but because these bad conditions dishonor Jehovah

Has God's view; actually hates what is bad

All of us have room for improvement in making clear the mark in our lives

**DISPLAY MARK BY HELPING OTHERS TO ACQUIRE HOPE OF SURVIVAL** (5 min.)

Anointed Witnesses have worked to help people earth wide to get God's viewpoint, acquire mark, come in line for survival

God's blessing supports conclusion that he is using them to do marking

All who benefit by getting the mark happily share in spreading God's message

Know that Christian personality is not end in itself

Preaching and teaching Bible is natural outgrowth of such personality

Find joy in helping anointed Christians in marking work (*w88* 9/15 14; *su* 158-9)

**REASON FOR GRATITUDE TO GOD** (1 min.)

Jehovah has assured us that survival is possible; alerted us to need for this mark

We invite your association with Witnesses

Benefit from program of Christian education and activity that helps people to be marked for survival

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## CAN YOU LIVE FOREVER? WILL YOU?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to develop deeper conviction that life in the new world will be marvelous, with real happiness and fascination for each person. To qualify for such marvelous blessings, we must now exercise faith in the ransom provision through Jesus Christ and bring entire life into harmony with God's purpose

### **LIFE—OUR CHOICEST POSSESSION** (4 min.)

All our hopes, plans, and pleasures depend on *life*

There are many things we would like to do, both for those we love and for our own enjoyment

Time goes so fast, life seems so short (*g70 10/8 4-6*)

With extended life—more time—we could vastly add to our accomplishments and happiness

Strange that man, the highest form of earthly life, has shorter life span than some plants and animals (*Mt 6:26; g88 10/8 24-5; ts 23-5*)

Why does the human body grow old and die? Is this inevitable?

### **MAN WAS MADE TO LIVE FOREVER** (9 min.)

Scientists are uncertain why man dies (*g88 10/8 24; g90 4/22 4*)

Some humans live exceptionally long (*g86 8/8 31*)

Bible shows that man's original life span was unlimited (*Ge 2:16, 17; g77 2/22 27-8; g90 4/22 7-8*)

Evidence of brain's capacity and functions and amazing process of cell renewal for entire body indicate man was designed to live forever (*tp 101-2; g88 8/8 16-20*)

Everlasting life would mean restoration to man's original condition of perfection

We conclude, then, that we were evidently designed to live forever, but does that sound desirable to you?

### **LIVING FOREVER IN PERFECTION WOULD NOT BE BORING** (12 min.)

What does "perfection" mean?

Mankind's perfection will be relative, not absolute (*it-2 606-7*)

Is the experiencing of bad needed to appreciate good?

Sickness and suffering lessen our enjoyment of life, not increase it (*ts 144; g70 10/8 14*)

Would we run out of things to do and learn? (*w83 11/15 3-7; ts 145-50; g89 2/8 27; g70 10/8 15-18*)

Possible accomplishments would be unending, not curtailed by death

Most important, we could become better acquainted with God (*Ro 11:33*)

Worshiping him will continually add richness and happiness to life

We would enjoy limitless prospects for happiness from travel and study of earthly creations

Could the earth accommodate all the people?

The earth can accommodate a very large population (*tp 105; it-2 792 ¶7; rs 340*)

It can produce ample food, and government by God will ensure proper distribution (*Ps 67:6; tp 105-6; it-2 792 ¶8*)

Not a matter of speculation; God tells us his purpose for earth (*Ge 1:27, 28*)

### **HOW CAN EVERLASTING LIFE BE OBTAINED?** (12 min.)

While medical science has helped to increase *average* life expectancy, it cannot assure any major increase in life span (*Lu 12:25; g90 4/22 4; g88 10/8 23-4*)

God, the Source of life, tells us why man dies and has already provided the means by which we can obtain everlasting life, the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Help audience to see that this is reasonable, realistic) (*Mt 20:28; Ro 5:12; w90 3/15 3-6; g70 10/8 22-3*)

Christ will become "Eternal Father" of all of those who exercise faith in him and his ransom (*Isa 9:6, 7; g70 10/8 23-4; ws 162-7*)

We can have confidence that as King of God's Kingdom, Jesus will eliminate conditions that make life distressing and will restore obedient men of faith to human perfection (*w89 8/15 19-20; ws 170-9*)

### **WILL YOU LIVE FOREVER?** (8 min.)

That a person *can* live forever in peace and happiness on earth does not mean that he *will*

Vital for each one personally to use wisely the present limited time of opportunity

Bible chronology and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicate that the time left for this unrighteous system is fast running out (*Mt 24; 2Ti 3:1-5; Re 6:1-8*)

Must bring life into harmony with God's Word and keep it that way (*1Jo 2:15-17; g75 1/8 28*)

May have started in this course, but great vigilance needed to continue (*Lu 21:34-36*)

Take advantage of Bible educational provision being carried on by Jehovah's Witnesses that is currently helping many people to prepare for an unending future (Joh 17:3; *w88* 6/15 28-9)

To strengthen yourself to maintain the right course, associate with those who as a group expect to live forever on earth (Heb 10:24, 25; *w90* 5/1 28; *g77* 4/22 15)

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## IS THIS LIFE ALL THERE IS?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Many people see no meaning in their lives. Audience needs to see that our hope for the future, including the resurrection, supports the meaning and purpose of our lives. This hope is sure. We can pursue real purpose in our life now, cultivating this hope and avoiding the world's live-for-today attitude. Last section of talk should especially be directed to new ones and the public

### **FRUSTRATIONS OF THIS LIFE LEAD MANY TO FRANTIC SEARCH FOR MEANING** (6 min.)

Young and old often question and reject age-old goals of mankind

*Wealth* has contributed to anxieties, not always satisfying (Ec 2:4-11; *w77* 59; *w88* 8/15 18; *w86* 6/15 3, 10)

*Fame* is only transitory; people are soon forgotten (Ec 2:15, 16; *w77* 78-9; *w87* 8/15 10-11)

*Power* is temporary; person may be replaced by a rival; surely will end by death (*w76* 626)

*Beauty* also quickly fades (*g86* 1/8 14-15)

Life's accomplishments do not amount to much in eternal time

Soon one is gone and forgotten (Ps 103:15, 16)

This is not a cynical but a realistic view

If this life is all there is, we are not even a drop in stream of time or a speck on scales of eternity (*w73* 325-30; *g87* 1/22 12)

### **HOW THE RESURRECTION HOPE HELPS US** (15 min.)

People have long clung to hope of life beyond death (*g88* 7/8 4-7)

Many believe in doctrines based on immortality of soul (*rs* 379-80; *sh* 52-6)

Some think that good go to heaven; others believe in transmigration of souls, Nirvana (*gh* 103-5; *w90* 5/1 18-19)

Bible shatters all such false teachings (Ec 3:19, 20; 9:5, 10; *w90* 5/1 19-23)

So, is this life all there is? Is there no hope?

Bible assures us that God will resurrect many people (Ac 24:15; *g78* 11/8 3-5; *ts* 166-75; *lp* 116-18)

This is not a fanciful, unfounded hope

Jesus promised resurrection will occur under his Kingdom (Joh 5:28, 29)

He demonstrated that humans can be resurrected (Lu 7:11-17; *w86* 12/15 8-9)

But what about a person long dead, whose body has disintegrated?

God can re-create that person; suitable body and thoughts restored (*vi* 28)

DNA in single cell contains coded instruction for billions of cells (*ce* 48)

Creator of DNA has capacity to remember life pattern of a person if He chooses to do so

This life need not be all there is (*g80* 5/22 5-9; *g67* 6/22 6-7)

Resurrection is a means of accomplishing God's purpose

God purposes for obedient humans to have eternal life in perfection

Such life would have meaning (*w73* 326)

Would not be cut short or frustrated by death (*g70* 10/8 14-17; *w84* 8/15 4; *g90* 4/22 9)

The damage done by Adamic death is not irreversible

Resurrection can take the sting out of death (1Co 15:55)

Helps person to understand one major thing that gives meaning to life (Ec 12:13, 14; *w78* 1/1 31)

### **OUR LIFE TODAY CAN BE ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL** (5 min.)

We live at a time when people can escape ever dying

Now live in 'the conclusion of this system of things' (Mt 24:3; *g88* 4/8 7 [box], 11 [box])

Can enter right into endless life (*ts* 151-65; *w90* 5/1 28)

As to the resurrection, the question is, Will God choose to remember a certain person and resurrect him?

For each of us the question is, Will God find *me* worthy of preservation into the new world under Christ's Kingdom?

If answer is yes, then this life, even now, is *not* all there is

### **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES KNOW THAT LIFE HAS REAL PURPOSE** (9 min.)

They know that this life is not all there is; have confidence in new world

Not groping to find the meaning of life (*g80* 10/22 6-11)

They have found that following God's counsel is best way of life

Apply God's Word in their own lives; results are happy families

One who becomes a Witness is part of a loving congregation of people

Although Witnesses are not living just for the present, they enjoy a rich life (*w73* 401-6)

Love for Jehovah moves Witnesses to obey him despite opposition (2Ti 3:12)

Reporter Milo Komínek in book *Even Under the Sky There Is Hell* (1971) described integrity of Witnesses in Communist labor camps in Czechoslovakia during 1951: "I will always remember with admiration and recognition Jehovahists, mostly young boys, who refused military duty and were condemned for it. Even here they remained in their faith, that work for war is sin, and they refused to work in uranium mines. Commanders of the camps used everything they had at their disposition to force them to do the work, but everything they tried was in vain; most of them would rather die than work in building the Soviet atomic threat. The chief of the camp Palacek made them stand for days in front of headquarters in snowdrifts in the [-]30° C. [-22° F.] winter weather, pouring water on them till they were frozen. It was a terrible sight, which will haunt me till I die" (*w74* 373)

Belief in resurrection strengthens one to be faithful despite danger of death (2Co 1:8, 9; Heb 12:1-3)

Witnesses know that this life is not all there is

**NEED TO CULTIVATE THE RIGHT VIEWPOINT** (10 min.)

Those who know that this life is not all there is should reflect this conviction by their associations and activities

In first century C.E., Christians believed in resurrection

Did not accept pagan teaching of immortality of soul or live-for-today philosophy

But some began to deny the actuality of the resurrection; hence, these adopted the view that this life is all there is (1Co 15:12, 32b; *w82* 4/1 17-18)

Paul strongly refuted this view (1Co 15:3-8, 13-19; *w81* 12/15 18; *w84* 10/1 30-1)

Avoid association with those who deny the resurrection or think that this life is all there is

Such people would urge you to compromise your faith (1Co 15:33; *w88* 6/15 18-19)

They would encourage you to live only for the present (*ts* 12-15)

Jehovah's Witnesses do not live just for the present

Anticipate grand future in new world now near

We invite you to attend meetings regularly at Kingdom Hall and then to qualify to share in our public preaching

This is most worthwhile thing one can do now; it is not in vain (1Co 15:58)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## ARE GOD'S WAYS REALLY BENEFICIAL?

### *Note to the speaker:*

In a warm and convincing manner, help the audience to see how reasonable and beneficial it is to follow God's ways. Emphasize the need to build a close personal relationship with God and to demonstrate full faith in him

### **GOD'S WAYS DIFFER GREATLY FROM THE WAYS OF THE WORLD** (5 min.)

The Bible tells us: "Hope in Jehovah and follow his way" (Ps 37:34)

We follow Jehovah's ways by imitating him and doing what he wants

God's ways are higher than man's ways because His ways are based on love (Isa 55:8, 9; 1Jo 4:8)

Those following God's ways display qualities that distinguish them from those following the ways of the world (Mal 3:18; Joh 17:14-16)

The world's ways reflect the influence of Satan and promote egotism, materialism, racism, sexual immorality, and violence (1Jo 5:19)

How can we learn God's ways?

### **WHAT CREATION CAN TEACH US ABOUT GOD'S WAYS** (6 min.)

God's *love*, *wisdom*, and *power* can be seen in creation (Ro 1:19, 20; *w13* 8/1 11)

God's qualities are reflected in provisions made for all living things (Ps 104:10-15; 145:15, 16)

The design evident in creation reveals *wisdom* and *love* (Ps 104:24)

The unfathomable process that allows the human brain to perceive beauty is a loving gift from God

The universe testifies to God's limitless *power* (Ps 8:3, 4; Isa 40:26)

Physical laws provide the framework that makes life on earth possible and enjoyable (*g* 12/09 5-7)

### **THE BIBLE SHOWS HOW GOD'S WAYS CAN BENEFIT US NOW!** (6 min.)

Creation shows that God wants us to enjoy life; following his ways, as described in the Bible, brings us lasting happiness (Ps 119:18; 128:1)

God's way is for marriage mates to enjoy a close relationship based on love and respect (Eph 5:28, 33)

God's way is that parents first have the truth in their own heart and then inculcate it in their children (De 6:6, 7; Eph 6:4)

God's way is that we speak truth, exercise self-control, show industriousness, and display kindness (Eph 4:25-29, 31, 32)

God's way is for us to be peaceable with all men and to be free of prejudice and hatred (Ro 12:17, 18)

God's way is for us to be respectful and to show a mild and obedient spirit to governmental authorities wherever we may live (Tit 3:1, 2)

### **BUILD A CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (10 min.)

Jehovah invites us to respond to his love by cultivating a close personal relationship with him (Ps 73:28)

Through diligent study of the Bible, we come to know Jehovah and continue to draw closer to him (Ps 119:33-35; Joh 17:3)

By opening our heart to him in prayer, we demonstrate our trust in him (Ps 62:8; 65:2)

As we speak to others about what we are learning, we make Jehovah's name known and bring him pleasure (Ps 105:1)

Strong faith built on accurate knowledge is necessary for a relationship with God; we show our faith by our works (Heb 11:6; Jas 2:24, 26)

Works include attending Christian meetings, which help us to make our mind over and put on the new personality (Ro 12:2; Col 3:10)

[As time permits, briefly relate verified experience(s) showing that Christian meetings play an important role in our spiritual progress (*w07* 5/15 11; *w02* 5/15 8; *w00* 6/1 30; *w93* 8/15 9)]

### **WALK IN GOD'S WAYS—NOW AND FOREVER** (3 min.)

Jehovah urges all to turn away from the ways of the world and learn to follow his ways (Isa 55:6, 7)

Following God's ways brings blessings of peace and prosperity (Isa 48:17, 18)

By walking in God's ways, we can benefit ourselves and others—now and forever [Read Psalm 119:1-3]

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## No. 38 How Can You Survive the End of the World?

NOTE: Clearly establish that the end of the world means the destruction of ungodly people. Help all to appreciate what they must do to survive. Use the artwork provided to illustrate points where indicated

### WHAT IS “THE END OF THE WORLD”? (4 min.)

Many people fear that “the end of the world” will mean the destruction of the earth (Mt 24:3, KJ; g 9/12 4-7)

However, the Bible guarantees that planet Earth will never be totally depopulated or destroyed (Ps 37:29; 104:5; Ec 1:4)

Just as in Noah’s day, *God will destroy the world of ungodly people* (2Pe 3:5-7)

### HOW WILL GOD DESTROY THIS WICKED WORLD? (8 min.)

Jehovah will turn wicked ones against one another (Eze 38:21)

He at times used this strategy to deliver the Israelites (2Ch 20:22-24)

Jehovah will also wield forces of nature to bring unrighteous ones to ruin (Job 38:22, 23; Eze 38:22)

He used natural forces in the past to immobilize the enemy and to destroy his opposers (Jos 10:11; Jg 4:13-16; 5:19-21; w17.04 29-30 ¶6-8)

Jehovah’s Executioner, Christ Jesus, with his heavenly forces will complete the extermination of evildoers (2Th 1:7, 8; Re 2:26, 27; 19:11-16; re 52 ¶18)

These powerful spirit creatures will completely annihilate their earthly foes (2Ki 19:35)

It will be impossible for people to hide from Jehovah’s judgment (Am 9:1-3; Re 6:16, 17)

### WHAT MUST YOU DO TO SURVIVE? (15 min.)

Jehovah’s judgment against wickedness in the days of Noah teaches us how to survive the end of the world

Why did Jehovah keep Noah safe when He brought the Flood on a world of ungodly people?

#### [Read Genesis 6:9]

“Noah was a righteous man,” who “proved himself faultless among his contemporaries” (*it-2* 507 ¶1)

He rejected the violence and immorality of the world around him (Ge 6:4, 5, 11-13)

[Illustrate using artwork of Noah protecting his children from bad influences]

He did not allow the apathy of his contemporaries to influence him (Mt 24:38, 39)

We must keep separate from the world that will be destroyed (1Jo 2:15-17)

“Noah walked with the true God”

He did what Jehovah asked, and he enjoyed a close friendship with God (*ia* 17 ¶3)

We must “walk decently” before our God (Ro 13:11-13)

Noah exercised his faith by building the ark [Read Hebrews 11:7] (*w16.10* 27 ¶7)

He did not procrastinate, even though he did not know exactly when the Flood would come

[Illustrate using artwork of Noah and his family constructing the ark]

He maintained strict obedience (Ge 6:22)

He did not take shortcuts when constructing the ark (Ge 6:14-16)

We must be strictly obedient and not put off in our minds the end of this world (2Pe 3:3, 4)

Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” [Read 2 Peter 2:5]

He helped his family to remain united in sacred service (*w13* 8/1 14 ¶4-5)

We must warn others of the coming end of wickedness (Eze 3:18, 19)

**THOSE WHO SURVIVE THE END OF THE WORLD WILL BE HAPPY (3 min.)**

Imagine how happy and thankful Noah and his family were to be preserved through the Deluge!

How thrilling it must have been for them to step onto an earth cleansed of all unrighteousness! (Ge 8:15-20)

[Illustrate using artwork of Noah and his family leaving the ark]

People of godly devotion will be saved when God destroys this ungodly world (2Pe 2:9; Re 7:9, 10, 14)

May you be among the happy survivors!

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section.

Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pp. 52-55, 166-169]

## BE CONFIDENT OF DIVINE VICTORY!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help your audience to see that it is important not only to know the truth but to be absolutely confident in the message that we bear. What we do with our lives shows whether we have real confidence in Jehovah's coming divine victory or not

### **WHAT DOES "DIVINE VICTORY" MEAN?** (4 min.)

We hear of wars and reports of wars, as Jesus foretold (Mt 24:6, 7; *gm* 136-8; *re* 93-5)

Outcome of a particular battle or war is often uncertain

People and leaders may be confident of victory but meet stunning defeat

What basis for confidence do people really have?

Jehovah's Witnesses widely preach about coming warfare between God's forces and those opposed to divine rulership

Will be part of "great tribulation" (Mt 24:21)

The Scriptures depict complete victory for God's side (Re 6:2; 17:14; 19:11-21)

This will come, just as surely as there is a Divine Ruler

Bible also says result will be elimination of corrupt rulers, exploiting commercialists (Ps 37:10; *g84* 1/22 9)

Divine victory means destruction for many, but what about us?

### **WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM DIVINE VICTORY?** (6 min.)

With a human victor in war, a new rulership is often as bad as or worse than the defeated one

When God is Victor, benefits are complete

He is not motivated by greed for territory or people to exploit

Jehovah is a loving Universal Ruler deserving of our worship (Re 4:11)

God's victory will benefit survivors of great tribulation, those supporting divine rulership (Re 7:14-17)

They will not feel hot wrath of God (*re* 126-7)

Will have God's approval, abundant refreshment; will be able to partake of provisions for eternal life

Bible indicates many other blessings for those benefiting from divine victory (Re 21:3, 4; *re* 303)

Even now we can benefit (1Ti 4:8; *w78* 10/1 29-30; *w81* 5/1 4-8)

Enjoy improved family life because of applying divine principles

Have upbuilding association with people you can trust and who will gladly help you

Attain peace of mind and purpose in life by now sharing in doing God's will (Php 4:6, 7)

To gain these benefits, we must bring our life into harmony with God's standards and take a stand for true worship

Knowing of coming divine victory and possibility of gaining its benefits should move us to a course reflecting confidence

### **DOES YOUR CONFIDENCE REALLY AFFECT YOUR LIFE?** (9 min.)

Easy to feel, 'I *am* confident of divine victory!' Yet, does that confidence really show through in your life?

One might pay lip service to something but not let it affect his life

We will discuss some areas for personal examination; also consider the care needed so that one's confidence is not slowly eroded

The case of Judean king Asa illustrates that one's confidence must be guarded (*it-1* 183-5; *w80* 12/1 28-30)

Asa was zealous for pure worship (2Ch 14:1-8)

Attacked by enemy far outnumbering his army, Asa was confident of divine aid and success (2Ch 14:9-11)

He was not let down (2Ch 14:12, 13)

When later threatened by Baasha of Israel, Asa unwisely relied on human reasoning or bad counsel, resorted to diplomacy and conspiratorial maneuvering (2Ch 16:1-3)

Seer Hanani called attention to erosion of Asa's confidence and foretold bad results (2Ch 16:7-9)

In addition to making sure our confidence really affects our life, we must guard that it does not become eroded

### **MANIFEST CONFIDENCE IN DIVINE VICTORY** (20 min.)

Manifest in your life your confidence that divine victory will *soon* come, though we do not know exact time

Natural to be interested in time factor (Mt 24:3; Ac 1:6)

Jesus gave no set date; urged followers to be active and on the watch (Mt 24:36-42)

If one serves with date as goal, might worry, 'What if it does not occur then?'

Can slowly erode confidence that victory will come at all

We have good reason for confidence that the end is near (Re 12:12)

Understanding this, one's confidence will not erode when nations talk of peace and security (1Th 5:3, 4; w87 5/15 17-20)

Can be certain that God will not delay (Hab 2:3)

Do you manifest confidence by arranging your life accordingly?

In everyday life, do your activities reflect assurance that divine victory over present wicked system will *soon* come? (Jas 2:17)

Do you let anxieties of life or desire for material possessions cause you to lose sight of coming victory and new world? (Mt 13:7, 22)

Food shortages, unemployment, rising cost of living, are problems of great concern to people

We are not immune but should reflect confidence in God's assurance to provide for his people (Mt 6:25-34; Heb 13:5, 6; w78 11/15 18-20; w89 12/15 19-20; w88 2/15 11-12)

We must also watch that world's view that certain luxury items are really necessities is not causing us to live beyond our means (*re* 73; w84 5/15 8-11; g88 4/22 4-6)

Undue concern over material things can cause our vision to be blurred to really important thing—life as approved servants of Jehovah (1Ti 6:17-19)

When our relationship with God is of greatest importance, we will make every effort to strengthen it

Jehovah speaks to us through his Word, revealing his personality, ways, and dealings therein

Are we eager to know what he has to say, to give his sayings more than the usual attention?

Do we really apply ourselves to personal study of the Bible and publications that can help us to understand it? (Pr 2:3-5)

Do we 'buy out the opportune time' to do so? (Eph 5:16)

In the Bible, God makes clear what his requirements are for those who will have his approval

Do we simply take it for granted that whatever we may be doing is all that God requires?

With an earnest desire to bring our lives into full harmony with God's will, do we diligently continue to examine his Word and make application of it to ourselves? (Eph 5:10, 17; Jas 1:22-25)

Do we indifferently procrastinate, or out of a keen awareness of the nearness of the time for the divine execution of judgment, are we giving God's will an important place in our lives now? (2Pe 3:11, 12)

#### **CONTINUE TO BUILD AND MANIFEST YOUR CONFIDENCE IN DIVINE VICTORY (6 min.)**

Make decisions and guide your life with divine victory in mind

This type of soundness of mind is required of all of us (Tit 1:7, 8; 2:2-6)

With soundness of mind and confidence in God's victory, we may victoriously survive approaching end

Meanwhile, we want to keep busy helping others to gain an accurate knowledge of God's truth so that they may be among those who share in the blessings of divine victory

Even if upheavals, strains, and problems come, we will not be thrown off balance

We will be like Habakkuk; he was affected by graphic report of God in day of battle but was determined to exult in Jehovah (Hab 3:16-18)

Let that be our determination too

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## WHAT THE NEAR FUTURE HOLDS!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Jehovah's Witnesses know what the near future holds, but you can help the audience to be more conscious of this. Those who will emerge as survivors must prepare themselves *now* to accept the developing situation and to be quick about adapting to theocratic direction

### **ALL OF US ARE INTERESTED IN THE FUTURE** (6 min.)

Are you not concerned about your future? about that of your family?

What should you study at school? Will you marry? Should you buy a home? Should you start your own business? Should you move to another location?

Certain concerns about the future may seem particularly vital

Will inflation destroy your security? How will you pay rent or buy food? Will food supplies run out? (*g80* 1/22 5-15) Will dangers to your health and safety grow? Can the nations prevent outbreak of wars? (*g90* 5/22 28; *g90* 9/8 7)

Many seek answers from news or financial analysts, politicians, scientists; others turn to astrology, ESP

Bible has much to say about future—not guesses, but true knowledge comes from One who knows accurately (*Isa* 42:9; 46:9, 10)

Foretold wars, crime, food shortages for our generation

What will yet come? How will it affect you? Will your future be happy?

### **GOD'S WORD REVEALS THE NEAR FUTURE** (10 min.)

Fulfillment of composite "sign" shows we are in conclusion of system of things (*Mt* 24:3, 7-14)

Bible enables Christians to be specific as to year of Kingdom's birth in heaven in 1914, events to follow (*tp* 70; *g89* 7/8 20)

Nations now being gathered toward destruction at Har-Magedon (*w90* 5/15 3-7)

Righteous are to be preserved; new earth to follow

What will occur between now and the end? Four basic developments:

(1) International situation that seems to justify cry of peace and security; this will be final signal that world destruction is to begin (*1Th* 5:3; *tp* 85; *g88* 4/8 14; *w91* 9/1 5-6)

(2) Aroused by some development, political element will suddenly turn on and destroy Babylon the Great, world empire of false religion, beginning "great tribulation" (*Re* 7:14; 17:16; 18:8, 21; *w89* 4/15 14-15; *re* 256-7, 269)

(3) Seeing Christian servants of Jehovah dwelling in peace, Satan (Gog) will direct a vicious attack against them by means of the nations (*Eze* 38:11, 16; *kj* 361; *sl* 258-9; *w88* 9/15 25-6)

(4) In reaction, Jehovah will bring final part of tribulation, destruction of all remaining earthly opposers in war of great day of God the Almighty, followed by abyssing of Satan and demons (*Eze* 38:18-22; *kj* 366-7; *sl* 262, 265; *w90* 5/15 6; *w88* 9/15 26)

Then God will usher in new world under Christ's thousand-year Kingdom; near future holds that too

### **THE FUTURE DESCRIBED BY THE BIBLE IS CERTAIN** (8 min.)

Abundant evidence proves Kingdom was born in 1914 (*Re* 12:5, 10)

Christ now ruling as King in heaven, as indicated by Bible chronology (*Ps* 110:1, 2; *w84* 4/15 3-4)

The fulfillment of "sign" of Christ's presence proves that near future includes the complete end of this wicked system (*Mt* 24:3; *w78* 1/15 8-10; *g73* 10/8 16-22)

Near future will include the four developments discussed previously

For true Christians, near future includes survival into new world

Prospect of eternal life in Paradise (*Zep* 2:2, 3; *w75* 681-3)

### **BE READY FOR WHAT THE NEAR FUTURE HOLDS** (9 min.)

With increase of problems, easy to let them command our full attention

Finances, troubles in school, obtaining food, social injustices, political corruption, and so forth, might divert one, obscure vision of future

Can even occur with Christian long in the truth

Instead, increasing problems should make our faith stronger and our hope firm (*Jas* 1:2, 3)

Hope will enable us to resist pressures and distractions

Firm belief that we are now in invisible "presence" of Jesus (*Jas* 5:8; *w75* 9-11)

Must keep awake, await future "coming" that will eliminate all wickedness on earth (*Mt* 24:36-42; *ka* 332-5; *su* 50, 53)

Since we know the near future, should not be shocked by developments

Temporary cry of peace and security will not deceive us (*w76* 441-2; *tp* 85; *w87* 5/15 17-19)

World will be deceived but not dedicated worshipers of Jehovah

There may be vast destruction, bloodshed, as false religion ends  
Likely be upset of food supply, violence between greedy persons  
May be extreme economic hardship for God's servants  
Having been alerted, we will wait on Jehovah (Hab 3:17, 18; *w73* 758-9; *g80* 8/22 5-8)

**YOU CAN ENJOY AN ETERNAL FUTURE** (12 min.)

Great tribulation will rid earth of those who will not serve God (2Th 1:6-9)

Those approved by God will, in near future, enter into a cleansed earth, which will become progressively better

Much work to do in clearing away remains of destruction, preparing places to live, cultivating food (*Eze* 39:9-13; *w89* 8/15 14)

Health will improve

Will not immediately be perfect; nevertheless, a time of increasing delight (*Re* 20:5; *w91* 12/15 12; *re* 290; *rs* 338-9)

We display Christianity now; this helps us cope with problems; same in new system of things

Cultivation of right qualities now will speed post-Armageddon adjustment (*lp* 171-4)

Blessings in past give a pattern for things to come (*lp* 143-56)

Will include health, food, freedom, and satisfying work (*tp* 96-104)

No question of what near future holds; God's promises are sure (*Re* 21:5; *re* 303-4)

What it holds for you depends on what you do now (*tp* 91-3)

Continue to acquire accurate knowledge

Progress toward dedicating yourself to Jehovah, being baptized

If you are already baptized, be whole-souled in promoting true worship

Let your knowledge of near future structure your life now (*w80* 6/1 8-10)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## “STAND STILL AND SEE THE SALVATION OF JEHOVAH”

### *Note to the speaker:*

With Armageddon ahead, help audience appreciate need for faith and obedience. Our survival will depend on our quickness to obey specific instructions

### **MANKIND IS RIGHTLY CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT LIES AHEAD** (5 min.)

Global problems lead some experts to warn that human race is in grave danger (*g90 2/8 31*)

System's collapse will not be from its own problems—overpopulation, famine, pollution, wars, and so forth—but will be at God's hand in “great tribulation” (Mt 24:3, 21)

Final part will be “war of the great day of God the Almighty” (Re 16:14; Joe 3:12, 13)

What will be your position in the approaching divine war? Will you be expected to fight?

What do you teach your children and others about this?

Knowing right view is important, for we want to be prepared and to survive (*w86 12/15 24 ¶14*)

It is God's war, so it is reasonable to look to him for answer

### **WHAT WILL YOU DO IN THAT FINAL WAR?** (16 min.)

During a war individuals often take sides as active fighters

Others try to flee out of battle zone in order to stay alive

War of great day of God will be earth wide, so cannot flee to a neutral zone or nation

Will persons who choose God's side be expected to fight and exterminate wicked?

When Jews were God's people, they had an army and fought theocratic wars when commanded to do so

Jehovah authorized them to battle pagan inhabitants of Promised Land

They did so under Joshua's leadership and with God's help (De 7:1, 2; Jos 10:40-42)

David, too, sought God's direction when leading armies of Israel in war (1Ch 14:10, 16)

Is this the pattern for Christians, indicating we will share in fighting at Armageddon?

Instructive example occurred with Israel under Jehoshaphat (*w84 7/1 13-19*)

When enemy nations approached, he also sought God's guidance (2Ch 20:1, 5, 6, 10-12)

God answered through a Levite named Jahaziel (2Ch 20:14-17)

Thankful for God's guidance, Jehoshaphat obeyed and was victorious (2Ch 20:18, 20)

By Jehovah's intervention, enemy armies turned on one another

This led to mutual slaughter without Israel's having to fight (2Ch 20:22-24)

Israel praised, or blessed, God (Beracah means “blessing”) (2Ch 20:26)

Proves God is able to defeat enemies without his servants having to fight

Is this the pattern for “the war of the great day of God the Almighty”? (Re 16:14)

Christian Greek Scriptures indicate 2 Chronicles 20:17 is the pattern for God's people today

Revelation depicts only armies in heaven as sharing in warfare as supporters of Jesus Christ (Re 17:14; 19:11-16)

Thus, 2 Chronicles 20:17 is counsel we need to take to heart

### **WE MUST FOLLOW GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS** (12 min.)

We have specific instructions from God telling us what we should and what we should not do

Jews back then needed to follow Jehoshaphat's organizational instructions

Could not reason that, since would not need to fight, could stay home to care for family, farm, or business

‘Taking position and standing still’ required as much obedience as if told to fight

Will we, too, follow instructions?

When we see wicked being destroyed, might be tempted to vent feelings of vengeance for past injustices

As to whether we are inclined to leave matters in God's hands, how do we react to injustices now?

Injustices and inequities lead many priests and ministers of Christendom to protest and crusade for changes (*g87 4/22 3-4; w86 7/15 27*)

Are we similarly inclined?

We have not been appointed as executioners (2Th 1:6-9; Heb 10:30)

Bible counsel is to be neutral and to look to God for solution (Joh 17:14, 16)

Instead of talking about what human organizations and groups should do, we ought to direct attention to Kingdom as needed remedy

By doing so, we take our “position” and follow instructions

We are instructed to ‘keep close in mind the day of Jehovah’ (2Pe 3:11-13)

Does your manner of life now reflect belief that day of Jehovah is near?

Do we view serving God as casual, incidental thing or as vital matter worthy of best efforts, putting it first in life, with recreation, employment, hobbies, and so forth, fitted in around it? (*bw* 185)

Are we willing to accept God's timing and handling of matters?

He knows best time for end; no need to try to second-guess him (2Pe 3:8, 9; *bw* 173-6; *w74* 56-7)

Need to keep on with assigned preaching (Ro 10:10, 18)

Some have speculated that at some point we will stop preaching and just sit back, waiting for end

Bible simply tells us to preach until the end comes (*w88* 1/1 25-6, 28-9; *w88* 7/15 10-11)

Others wonder what the content of our message will be as we near "day of vengeance" (Isa 61:2)

We are already presenting strong message; must be alert to theocratic direction as the end nears

We will never quit speaking about God and his purposes

Forever we will recount his deeds and talk about his purposes (2Ch 20:21)

Should now be "intensely occupied with the word, witnessing" (Ac 18:5; *w76* 345-6)

### **STRENGTHEN YOUR CONFIDENCE NOW** (12 min.)

At some periods in their history, Israelites let trust in God slip; never may that be so with us (Isa 30:15)

Work now to fortify your confidence

Outworking of things between now and new world may not be just as we personally expected

If our confidence is strong, we will not be stumbled

Hardships that develop may have impact on us (Hab 3:17; *w73* 758-9)

Could be things that naturally would produce agitation and anxiety

Need to be loyal and patient, 'standing still' with confidence in God (2Ch 20:17, 20; Hab 3:16, 18)

With confidence in success of God's purposes—including purpose to have great crowd survive—we will not be stumbled if unexpected things occur

Nor will we be pressured out of relationship with Jehovah (Heb 10:37-39)

Today and in future we need strength we can draw from being in association with fellow Christians

Ancient Jews under Jehoshaphat marched out as a congregated people (*w84* 7/1 18 ¶16)

Are you part of congregated worshipers now? (Heb 10:24, 25)

Realize that God is even now saving his people (Ga 1:4)

He is helping us to be no part of wicked system

Even if enemy took a Christian's life, God can safeguard that one's everlasting prospects (Mt 10:28)

We need to be on Jehovah's side; do not delay making decision

Includes not only dedication and baptism but imitation of God's ways and obedience to his commands (Jas 1:22)

We will thus be prepared to be among his obedient people, who will apply 2 Chronicles 20:17 during great tribulation

Such ones will see salvation of Jehovah and bless him forever

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## HOW THE KINGDOM OF GOD AFFECTS YOU

### *Note to the speaker:*

Stimulate appreciation for the fact that those who are loyally supporting the Kingdom not only preach the good news of the Kingdom's establishment but live their lives in harmony with the laws of that Kingdom

### **RULERSHIP BY GOD IS FAR FROM THE MINDS OF MOST PEOPLE** (4 min.)

Most people are materialistic in outlook; think only in terms of what men can do (*w71* 99-100, 132; *w79* 7/1 17-18)

When told of God's Kingdom, they usually have in mind something in another world

Mankind's condition shows that we need help here on earth from higher Source; Bible points to that help (*g85* 7/22 3-8)

### **BIBLE DIRECTS ATTENTION TO GOD'S KINGDOM** (10 min.)

Jesus taught followers to pray for God's Kingdom, to seek it first (Mt 6:10, 33)

What is that Kingdom? It is a real government with rulers who exercise authority from heaven

God's purpose is that in time Kingdom will be the only government for all mankind (Re 5:10)

Consistently, Jesus did not get involved in affairs of governments of his day (Lu 4:5-8; Joh 6:15)

He urged obedience to secular law but devoted self to preaching about Kingdom (Mt 4:17; 22:21)

Jesus himself was the Messiah, anointed by God to be King (*w82* 2/1 21 ¶8)

John the Baptizer preached that the Kingdom had "drawn near" (Mt 3:2)

Because Jesus was among them, the Kingdom was 'in their midst' (Lu 17:21; *it-2* 167; *g88* 12/22 24; *rs* 226)

In various ways Jesus demonstrated the scope of authority of Jehovah's Messianic King

By God's spirit, Jesus exercised control over wind and sea, vegetation, fish, and food supplies (Mr 4:39; 8:1-9; 11:20, 21)

Jesus also exercised power over human bodies—healing the blind, deaf, lame, diseased

He raised the dead and expelled demons from those afflicted (Mt 12:28)

By his teaching and example, Jesus made clear the right way to live and worship (Jer 10:23; 1Pe 2:21)

What he taught was not theories of imperfect men but the word of God the Creator, who knows the purpose of our existence (Joh 8:28, 29)

Now raised from dead and exalted to heaven, he can handle all mankind's affairs (Eph 1:19b-21)

A government such as the Kingdom can really solve problems of mankind, and it will (*rs* 227-32)

### **WHEN THE KINGDOM BEGAN TO EXERCISE ITS POWER** (10 min.)

Read Colossians 1:13. Does this refer to a future action or something that had already taken place? (*w78* 3/1 17-20; *it-2* 169)

At that time, the Son was ruling in his kingdom in heaven; true from Pentecost 33 C.E. onward

God's Kingdom had not begun exercising its power over all mankind (*rs* 232)

Over whom was Jesus ruling? According to Colossians 1:1, 2, the holy ones

Christ had indeed begun to rule but only over Christian congregation, not over mankind

Christians' adhering to his rule made them stand out as different from the world

A "little flock" was being taken out from mankind to share in heavenly Kingdom (Lu 12:32)

Establishment of Kingdom to rule over whole earth was yet future (1Co 4:8; Re 12:10, 12)

Daniel 7 describes succession of world powers down to 20th century, and then Daniel 7:13, 14 tells of conferring of authority at time of the end but before destruction spoken of in verse 26

The event described at Daniel 7:13, 14 took place in 1914 in heaven; it involves *all* peoples, national groups, and languages (*w88* 6/15 4-6)

This is the same event that is referred to in the proclamation at Revelation 11:15 (*re* 171)

Now every one of us, all mankind, is directly touched by the activities of God's Kingdom

### **HOW THE ACTIVITY OF GOD'S KINGDOM TOUCHES YOUR LIFE** (16 min.)

Jesus foretold that after his receiving authority over all nations, he would finally separate people as a shepherd separates sheep from goats (Mt 25:31-33)

Over what issue? Their treatment of his "brothers," who preach God's Kingdom (Mt 25:40, 45)

Christ purchased mankind; does not want to destroy them, but gives them opportunity to choose life

To what extent does Jesus go in offering opportunity to mankind?

Greatest educational work in world is being carried on

About 70,000 schools in congregations worldwide train people to teach others about Kingdom; in over 200 lands Witnesses repeatedly go to homes to offer free instruction about Kingdom

Among the most widely distributed books in world are those (Bible, *Truth* book, and so forth) advocating that Kingdom (*g88* 2/8 11; *g90* 7/8 28)

This program of education has continued now for over 70 years; it has reached us, and that is why we are here today

Facts show that, though nations oppose preaching, Christ has been exercising overriding authority in “kingdom of mankind” since 1914 (Da 4:17)

The former Soviet Union tried to keep Witnesses out, but as a result of Russia’s own policies during World War II and after, they unwittingly took thousands of Witnesses into their land and provided free transport for them to areas that had never had a witness before

As a result, tens of thousands have taken stand for God’s Kingdom (*g73 4/8 18; w86 2/1 13-14; g92 2/22 31*)  
Witnesses were severely persecuted in Malawi, but when they fled, hundreds of favorably disposed persons threw in their lot with them

Hundreds studying in refugee camps have been baptized

Illustrates how violent opposition, instead of stopping the work, lets individuals demonstrate with whom they side

How will the further action of God’s Kingdom affect your life? (Da 2:44)

Soon all false religion and political kingdoms of world and their supporters will be destroyed, along with all who persist in being liars, thieves, fornicators, adulterers, or homosexuals

People can change (1Co 6:11)

God’s Kingdom will make earth a paradise, heal mankind, raise the dead, educate in peace (*rs 227-32*)

Question is not merely whether we want to survive or we would like to live under fine conditions in new world

Rather, are we for God’s Kingdom or against it? Do we show in our daily lives that we really want God to rule over us?

#### **SHOWING OUR APPRECIATION FOR GOD’S KINGDOM NOW** (5 min.)

If we really want to live forever as subjects of Jehovah’s Messianic Kingdom, then we need to show it now

Are we vitally interested in God and his laws, a study of the Bible, association with Jehovah’s people?

Do we apply God’s law in our lives, making needed changes to conform to his ways? (Mt 7:21)

Are we helping others to learn about God’s Kingdom? (Ac 20:25, 26; Re 22:17)

The objective of the Kingdom is to restore mankind to a fine relationship with God (1Co 15:24, 28)

Appreciation for that Kingdom will move us to build and cherish such relationship now

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## ARE YOU DOING WHAT GOD REQUIRES OF YOU?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Stimulate audience to put Jehovah's worship in the most prominent place in life and to sense that Jehovah's worship is not burdensome. It is the responsibility of each worshiper to discern God's requirements and meet them

### **NEED TO GIVE SERIOUS THOUGHT TO GOD'S REQUIREMENTS (5 min.)**

We are sincerely interested in understanding God's will; that is why we came to this meeting

Whether longtime students of God's Word or newly interested, we do not agree with outlook of persons who try to ignore God

Evident to us that relying on human philosophies has not brought happiness to mankind

Deplorable condition of human society emphasizes need to turn to God's Word, consider it seriously

God's Word does not encourage us to be complacent, content to say we believe in him (Jas 2:19; *w85* 9/1 3)

Activities and lives of many persons who profess belief in God give no evidence of serious concern about his requirements (Tit 1:16; *pe* 28-33)

Jesus stressed need to be doers of God's will (Mt 7:21)

### **DISCERN WHAT GOD REQUIRES OF YOU (35 min.)**

How can we know what God's will is?

Is our situation so different from that of everyone else that God must speak to us personally?

What we need is in the Bible, along with the publications provided by 'the faithful slave' to guide us in understanding it (Mt 24:45-47; Ac 8:31, 35; 2Ti 3:16, 17)

God's dealings with ancient Israel provide clear indications as to his will for mankind (Ro 15:4)

His requirements for Israel were not oppressive; they resulted in satisfaction in doing God's will (Ps 16:11; Isa 48:17)

Requirements touched every facet of life: thoughts, motivations, relations with fellowmen (Mr 12:28-33)

Do we appreciate how the principles of God's Word provide direction for us?

When bad conditions developed in Israel, it was because of failure to do what God required; we benefit by taking note of what God told them through his prophets, such as Micah

God's disapproval was especially strong against false worship

Jehovah views idolatry by people who profess to belong to him as being as detestable as prostitution (Mic 1:7; *w77* 288)

Priests who claimed to speak in the name of God but who used this as a front for money-making were condemned (Mic 3:11, 12; *kj* 132-3)

We do well to take these lessons to heart

People complain about constant collections and solicitations in church, but do they honor God by membership in an organization that misrepresents God as one who exploits people?

What about graven images, material objects of devotion? Have we 'fled from idolatry'? (1Co 10:14)

Do we idolize our own desires? (Col 3:5; *g79* 4/22 6)

Through Micah, Jehovah also showed that he requires honest business practices (Mic 2:1, 2; 6:11, 12)

Cannot take the view that our business affairs and our homelife need not reflect the high principles of our worship (*w60* 408)

What good is it to go to a place of worship and hear the teachings of God's Word if we do not apply them? (1Sa 15:22)

True worship should affect our lives; should influence what we do in business, at home with our families, in contacts with neighbors

Worship of Jehovah deserves greatest prominence in our lives; are we personally giving it that?

Micah 4:1-4 foretold what would happen in our day, "the final part of the days" (*w81* 7/15 18-22, 25)

There would be people who would exalt their respect for Jehovah's worship above everything else

"Mountains" in ancient times were places of worship

In our day, people have carried on many forms of false worship

There has been an idolizing of various forms of nationalism; some idolize materialistic way of life

Relate experiences showing how people in varied situations have exalted the place of Jehovah's worship in their lives (*yb92* 42-64)

Because of responding to God's Word, the people foretold by Micah were to be peaceable

No amount of pressure from nations could induce them to forsake peace with persons of other nationalities

Would not reflect the animosity that is often evident between races; they acquire the viewpoint of God, who is not partial (Ac 10:34, 35)

Peaceableness would reach into congregations, homes; result is not strife but security

Do we find ourselves in the picture, doing what God requires of us as described at Micah 4:1-4?

Grand future for those who 'walk in name of Jehovah'; have prospect of doing so forever (Mic 4:5)

This implies being dedicated to Jehovah and representing him as one of his worshipers; it involves proclaiming his name and living in harmony with his will (*w05 9/1 14 par. 7*)

Not beyond our ability to serve God acceptably; what he requires is not some grand, showy sacrifice but sacred service and right conduct reflecting a good condition of heart (Mic 6:8; *w88 3/15 19-20*)

*Exercise justice:* Do what is right, fair, and honest; do what God requires; give Jehovah exclusive devotion (*w88 3/15 16-17*)

Jehovah tolerates no rivalry; we must be fully devoted to him, not to inclinations of flesh (Nu 25:5-8)

Safeguard your heart by exercising self-control in what you allow your mind to dwell on

Render acceptable sacred service out of a clean, complete heart (Ps 50:16-18, 23)

*Love kindness:* Hebrew word is also rendered "loyal love"

According to lexicographers: "Loyal adds to *faithful* the idea of wanting to stand by and fight for the person or thing, even against heavy odds" (*w88 3/15 17-19*)

Jesus proved by *obedience* he was loyal to Jehovah (Ro 5:19; Php 2:8)

Like Jesus, our loyalty to Jehovah and to his organization will be tested

Imperfections of our brothers, including Christian overseers, test our loyalty to God's organization

Not justified if we would leave God's organization (Ps 119:165; Joh 6:68)

*Walk modestly with God:* As God's fellow workers, we fear Jehovah and draw primary attention to him (*w88 3/15 19-20*)

Place moderate estimate on own abilities and worth (1Co 3:6, 7; 4:7)

It is especially fitting for you youths to adorn yourselves with modesty (Job 32:6, 7)

Those who apply themselves to do what God requires have sound reason for confidence that God will perform all the things that he has promised (Mic 7:7; *w78 10/1 19*)

He will not fail in his purpose to destroy the wicked system

Jehovah will without fail bring in his righteous new system

**CONTINUE TO MAKE PROGRESS IN THE DOING OF GOD'S WILL (5 min.)**

Do you want to know more about God's will for you?

If you do not yet have a personal Bible study, ask one of Jehovah's Witnesses

Regularly attend meetings with those desirous of doing God's will

If already dedicated, do not be complacent; keep alert to opportunities to serve zealously and to conform ever more fully to God's righteous will (2Pe 3:17, 18; *w66 3/70-1*)

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## KEEP SEEKING GOD'S KINGDOM

### *Note to the speaker:*

Cultivate deep appreciation for the counsel in the Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus showed how to seek the Kingdom. We need to listen to these wise words and to exert ourselves to gain the Kingdom

### **IMPORTANT TO APPRECIATE JEHOVAH'S RULERSHIP (6 min.)**

People everywhere long for righteous rulership, government that can really solve their problems

The problems of finding employment, obtaining ample food, safeguarding our environment, eliminating disease, and overcoming barriers that divide mankind require solutions beyond what men offer (Ec 1:15)

Answer lies with our Creator, Jehovah God, and his Kingdom (*w85 11/15 3-5*)

We need to grasp the extent and nature of Jehovah's rulership

His laws control movements of all heavenly bodies as well as natural cycles that make life on earth possible

Some of his laws that operate for our good do so without thought on our part

As man's Creator, he knows what we really need in order to enjoy full health, long life, happiness

His commands regarding our worship and our relations with fellow humans require us to choose, to show whether we want to obey (*lp 98-105*)

God's commands are not oppressive but are for our good (Isa 48:17)

They enrich our life now and help us gain future life (1Ti 4:8)

People of all nations are being given opportunity now to show whether they really want God's rulership in all matters of life; do they want to live under the government of God?

He is the Creator and the almighty God, and his purpose to express his sovereignty through the Kingdom, a government in hands of his Son, Jesus Christ, cannot be thwarted

Our continued enjoyment of life is at stake because it is an unalterable truth that life is dependent on God (Re 4:11)

Will we personally seek God's Kingdom, giving it the place it deserves in our lives?

### **IN SERMON ON MOUNT, JESUS SHOWED HOW TO SEEK THE KINGDOM (30 min.)**

(Invite all to open Bible and follow as texts are read)

Jesus taught disciples to pray for Kingdom, asking for it to "come" with destructive force against wicked system (Mt 6:10; *w78 8/15 5-6; w89 8/15 12-13*)

Warned that not all who profess faith will gain the Kingdom (Mt 7:21-23; *w90 10/1 23-4; w78 12/1 14-15*)

We need to examine our own position, be sure we really are doing the will of the Father

To succeed in getting life in the heavenly Kingdom with Christ or life as its subjects on earth, we must cultivate the qualities that God approves

God views favorably those who are conscious of spiritual need, mild-tempered, hungry for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peaceable (Mt 5:3-9; *w78 2/1 27-9; w78 2/15 8-10; w78 3/1 4-5*)

Happiness results from cultivating these qualities

To get into the Kingdom, one must have deep regard for God's law—all of it (Mt 5:17-20; *w78 4/1 29-31; w86 10/15 8*)

As long as the Law given by God through Moses was in effect, Jewish followers were to practice it and advocate obedience to it

We must not be like Adam; not willfully disobey in any matter

Neither must we be like Pharisees, who had own brand of righteousness (*w90 10/1 12, 19 ¶14, 15*)

Not merely obey the letter of the Law; must get the spirit of it and act in harmony with it (Mt 5:21, 22; *w90 10/1 13 ¶12, 13; w78 4/15 21-2; w89 7/15 24-5*)

Besides doing what is right, we need to learn to love what is right (Mt 5:27, 28; *w90 10/1 13 ¶14; w78 5/15 28*)

Bible urges us to safeguard the heart

Jehovah wants only willing subjects, those who truly prefer his ways

Important to learn to imitate God in showing love (Mt 5:43-48; *w90 10/1 13 ¶12, 14, ¶18, 19; w78 7/1 5-6*)

This kind of love is not stifled by pride when others are unappreciative but seeks the lasting welfare of others, even those who act like enemies

We must be striving to be at peace with brothers, genuinely loving them, in order to serve God acceptably (Mt 5:23, 24; *w78 5/1 29-30; wt 147 ¶7*)

(Brief review of Matthew chapter 5 based on *w90 10/1 15 ¶20*)

Be careful not to appraise value of our works on the basis of outward appearance (Mt 6:1-6, 16-18; *w90 10/1 15-17; w78 7/15 30-1; w78 9/1 14-15*)

Motive is a key factor—not hypocritical, not seeking attention for self, but bringing honor to God

Jehovah sees what is in our hearts

Be spiritually minded, putting spiritual interests first, not getting diverted by materialistic pursuits (Mt 6:19-21; *w90* 10/1 18; *w78* 9/15 9; *w89* 7/15 13-14)

Proper to care for our material needs; but not proper to become a slave to them, letting them control our life (Mt 6:24; *w78* 9/15 10)

Cultivate trust in God and in his promise to bless our efforts to obtain necessities of life (Mt 6:25-34; *w90* 10/1 18-19; *w78* 10/1 24-6)

**WE NEED TO EXERT OURSELVES TO GAIN THE KINGDOM** (9 min.)

To keep out unworthy ones, God requires that those entering the Kingdom travel cramped road, find narrow gate (Mt 7:13, 14; *w90* 10/1 23 ¶8, 9; *w78* 11/15 29-30)

Do not take view that it is impossible; forgiveness for unintentional sins is available (Mt 6:12-15)

What is required is that we truly love what is right (Mt 7:7, 8; *w90* 10/1 22 ¶6; *w78* 11/1 22)

This will move us to persistent effort, not giving up easily when problems arise

Must build our spiritual house on obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ (Mt 7:24-27; *w90* 10/1 24 ¶13-15; *w78* 12/15 12-13)

Includes imitating Jesus in sharing the good news of the Kingdom with others (Mt 5:14-16; *w90* 10/1 24 ¶12; *w78* 3/15 11)

This is a vital work; others need to hear; those who share in work reap rich rewards

There is a grand future ahead; blessings of God's new world are the answer to every righteous desire of our hearts (Ps 145:13, 16)

Jehovah will provide these things because he wants us to have them (Mt 6:33)

He will bless our efforts to gain them; the question is: Do we truly want not only the blessings of God's Kingdom but also his righteousness?

We need to keep on seeking God's Kingdom by (1) applying ourselves diligently to get acquainted with Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, (2) cultivating love for his ways, (3) putting these into application in our lives, and (4) advocating God's Kingdom to others

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## FOLLOW THE WAY TO LIFE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Develop audience's appreciation for the wise sayings inspired by Jehovah that are contained in the book of Proverbs. We can show wisdom ourselves by listening and applying these inspired sayings

### **LIFE IS A VERY PRECIOUS GIFT** (4 min.)

All of us are concerned with getting the best out of life (*w85* 8/15 11-16)

We desire good health so we can enjoy our life

Frustrating to see the limitations poor health brings

Can thank parents we are alive and have opportunity to do things

It is most important that we thank Jehovah, the One who makes all life possible (Ps 36:9)

He knows the things we need, the way of life that brings greatest happiness, the principles for a successful life, as well as our prospects for the future (Pr 9:10, 11)

Will consider some examples in the book of Proverbs that can help us on the way to life

### **PROVERBS GIVES WISE GUIDE FOR HAPPY LIFE** (20 min.)

How to be liked

Show kindness and trueness (Pr 3:3, 4; 11:17); speak honestly (Pr 3:29); speak mildly and of what is good (Pr 15:1, 2); show loyalty (Pr 18:24)

Making a living

Real success comes with industry and advance planning (Pr 6:6-11); diligence (Pr 10:4, 5); honesty (Pr 11:1); good judgment (Pr 11:15); doing skilled work (Pr 22:29); not putting all our trust in income (Pr 11:28)

Achieving a happy family life

Try to be understanding and tactful (Pr 16:21, 23, 24; 17:1); be forgiving (Pr 17:9, 13); be loving (Pr 10:12); be faithful to mate (Pr 5:15-20); husband should provide well for family (Pr 12:11); wife should care well for family (Pr 31:11, 12, 15, 26-28); train children well (Pr 13:24; 15:5, 20; 22:6, 15; 29:15, 17); show respect for older ones (Pr 1:8, 9; 19:26; 23:22, 24, 25)

Avoiding problems

Morality protects against health problems (Pr 5:3-11; 6:24-33); calmness aids health (Pr 14:30); mildness helps prevent anger (Pr 15:4, 18); do not retaliate (Pr 24:29); avoid drunkenness (Pr 20:1; 23:20, 21, 29-35)

### **FEAR OF JEHOVAH A BASIC REQUIREMENT FOR ETERNAL LIFE** (10 min.)

Are these proverbs just a matter of following common sense to live a good life, or is there something more to life? (Pr 6:23)

Why does Proverbs 1:7 say that fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge?

Listening to Jehovah leads to everlasting life (Pr 3:13-18)

Calls to mind the prospect of everlasting life Jehovah set before perfect man in Eden

How can we gain the prize of life? Just by living a "good life"?

Consider Proverbs 4:4, 10, 11; John 17:3

Doing things Jehovah's way is a requirement for everlasting life

Congregation arrangement and personal Bible study will help us learn what God requires of us (Pr 24:3)

Meetings motivate us to share knowledge of God's Word by engaging in field service (Pr 3:27; 15:7a)

Are helped to come close to Jehovah in personal relationship and prayer (Pr 15:29)

Can gain assistance from elders in congregation (Pr 24:6b)

Should grow in appreciation for our need of God's guidance (Pr 16:9)

We should become teachers of God's Word, holding Bible studies with others (Pr 1:2-6)

Feed sheeplike ones on every occasion, as we have been fed at meetings (Joh 21:15-17)

### **JESUS—THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE** (6 min.)

No one comes to the Father and receives life except through Jesus (Joh 14:6)

Our approach to God depends on our faith in Jesus' sacrifice

Do we want to follow his course of life, even though it may bring opposition, so we can approach the Father, the Grand Giver of everlasting life? Is this way too difficult?

Jesus showed that most people would not follow this course, yet he recommended it (Mt 7:13, 14)

Is this narrow, cramped road so restrictive that it takes the joy out of living now if we are to gain a future reward? Is that what Jesus meant about a cramped road? (*w77* 621-5; *it-2* 168 ¶2)

Jehovah has given us guidelines for successful living that will keep us in the bounds of his favor and headed in the right direction while giving us a full life with no regrets (Pr 4:10-13)

Faithfully follow Jesus' example in preaching and teaching "good news" (Mt 9:35-38; 28:19, 20)

**BE AMONG THE WISE ONES WHO FOLLOW JEHOVAH'S WAY TO LIFE** (5 min.)

How happy we can be to know that Jehovah's way is best!

It is the way not only to a happy life now but to everlasting life under the rule of Christ as Prince of Peace  
While way is open to all, most persons foolishly follow broad way to destruction

Even in days of apostles, many spoke injuriously about this way (Ac 19:9)

Do we want to take our place among those described at Proverbs 6:12-19?

Or do we want to follow wise way that leads to life? (Pr 8:32-35; 22:4)

This includes helping others to learn about the right way also

May we take wise course, Jehovah's way, to everlasting life! (Pr 12:28)

(Additional material may be found in *w80* 2/15 25-9; *w73* 488-94; *w87* 5/15 28-30; *it-2* 703-7. Also, check Scripture indexes for information on specific verses)

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## MAINTAIN YOUR CONFIDENCE FIRM TO THE END

### *Note to the speaker:*

This information is based on Hebrews chapters 3 and 4. Help audience to see how this can help a person discern if in any way he has allowed his confidence in Jehovah's word to waver

### **IN THIS WORLD IT IS HARD TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENCE** (5 min.)

Pressure, opposition, apathy, and discouragement affect all of us

Like apostle John, Christians say: "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus" (Re 22:20)

Would like to see God's will done on earth as in heaven

Must hold firm to the end either of this system or of our own lives (Mt 24:13)

Are we holding on to that confidence?

Strong counsel to help us hold on given in Bible book of Hebrews (*w83 2/15 17-18; w73 213-16; it-1 1077-80*)

Written to Jewish Christians, who were having hard time, many pressures

Some of the Christians were apathetic, some spiritually weak or immature, some overconfident

We do well to listen to that counsel (1Co 10:12)

### **PAUL'S COUNSEL TO HEBREW CHRISTIANS** (30 min.)

(Invite audience to follow in Hebrews chapter 3 for verse-by-verse discussion. Read verse[s], then comment)

Verse 1:

Our strength to maintain confidence comes through Christ

"Consider." Meditate on the love he showed on earth, his sacrifice, his resurrection, and his dignity as apostle (or, "sent one") of God, as great heavenly High Priest, and as Head of congregation (Heb 2:14, 15; *w83 2/15 19-20*)

Consider how your life measures up, contemplating some of Jesus' trials that could have caused him discouragement (Mt 20:20, 21; Mr 3:5; 9:19; Lu 9:46-48; 22:24)

Verses 2-4:

Christ was far superior to Moses, even though Moses did many miraculous things for Israel

At God's direction Christ builds all things, including Christian congregation, which was constructed by him as God's Master Worker (Pr 8:30, 31; *w84 9/15 31; w81 10/1 20*)

Glory goes to Jehovah God as Architect and Creator

Verses 5, 6:

Moses, great as he was, was only a servant in household, but Christ is *Son* of Owner of house, set over household by God (*w84 9/15 31*)

Do we want to support this great household, the congregation of spiritual Israelites?

Must not give out but hold fast freeness of speech and maintain joy, or "boasting"

Verse 7:

Holy spirit (in Psalm 95:7-11) said: "Today"; now is acceptable time

We do not know what tomorrow will bring

Peter urged: 'Keep close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah' (2Pe 3:12)

Means that we should be fulfilling our Christian obligations *every day*

"The day of Jehovah" comes like a thief; our own life might end tomorrow

Verses 8-11:

Israel did things to test God as to whether he would carry out his word (*it-2 350-1*)

By complaining, being unhappy with his provisions, they tested God with regard to how much he would bear, how long his patience would last (Ex 32:1-4; *w86 4/1 23-4*)

Verse 12:

Must examine selves as to what our hearts are, not lose faith, realize God's promises will come true

Bad heart does not appear instantaneously but develops gradually (*w80 12/1 22-3; w89 7/15 22*)

Verse 13:

*Now* is the time for *each* of us to be close to brothers, not complaining or showing weakness, but being *strong* to exhort one another (*w86 4/1 24-6*)

Perhaps you feel weak, but by encouraging another, you get encouragement from God

Sin is very deceptive

Attacks weak points, slips up on us if we get discouraged, apathetic, or negligent or if we become over-righteous, criticize others, and become unsympathetic toward problems of our brothers

Verse 14:

How were you at "beginning," when you started to serve Jehovah God?

Enthusiastic, bold, joyful, confident? Are you still that way? (*w80 8/1 16-17*)

Now, with greater knowledge, have you grown to maturity? If not, why not? Have problems arisen?  
Your knowledge today is greater than when you began, so you are equipped to face greater problems  
If you lack confidence, ask God for help

Verse 15:

It is being said by God *today*, as it was then

We do not hear his voice or that of an angel audibly, but we do have His spirit-inspired Word  
God is not far off from us (Ac 17:27)

Also have brothers all over the earth maintaining confidence as an example to us; they are being blessed

Verses 16-19:

Most who saw miraculous works of God, who had confidence when crossing Red Sea, lost out on Promised Land

Though they still could have regained confidence, they kept complaining; because of their lack of faith God decreed they should die in the wilderness

Only Joshua, Caleb, and the Levites survived to enter God's Promised Land (*it-2* 1016)

The Levites were the only tribe that did not send a man to spy out the land, therefore they were exempt from condemnation upon unfaithful spies and their supporters

Considering what happened to the Israelites does not mean we should be worried or *afraid*

Should be concerned and *watchful*; *only those actually disobedient will fall*, just as they did then

Chapter 4:1, 2:

As individuals, we cannot rightly complain against God

Do we not all enjoy the same spiritual food?

We have same good news, the promise of rest in God's new system of things

All, elders and others, must watch; if some seem to be falling short, encourage them

It may only *appear* these are losing faith, so our approach should be with brotherliness, considering others superior to ourselves, and with awareness that we might also be tempted (Ga 6:1; Php 2:3)

More than hearing the promise is necessary; real faith from the heart needed

Do we think and act with that faith in God's promise as a reality, along with those having faith?

**WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S WORD** (10 min.)

Verse 11:

It takes more than the usual attention now as times become more tense (*w83* 2/15 26)

We have warning example in Israel's lack of faith, loss of confidence

Verse 12:

God's word of promise is sure (*w76* 439)

He has not dropped or neglected it so that it has become dead issue

Jehovah is active, bringing his promise progressively and surely to fulfillment

What is our attitude toward God's word of promise?

God knows our hearts; we are answerable to him

We must not let our confidence weaken, as did Israel

Our action toward God's promise will reveal what we really are (*gm* 175-83; *w88* 5/1 7; *w86* 4/1 6-7)

All of us need to give careful attention to God's promise and all things Bible says in connection with it

More meditation on it will give us *power*; it will make our spirit strong, confident

Verse 13:

Since all things are naked before God, essential to rely on him, becoming his intimate friends

Our accounting is to him alone (*w80* 4/1 27)

Verses 14-16:

Take courage; regain any lost joy; strengthen confidence

Continue publicly confessing our High Priest and King

Approach Jehovah through Jesus for help in our weaknesses

Do so without fear and with full confidence, not relying on our own strength

If we do so, we can be sure we will face the end with strong faith and joy, with full confidence in God's love and the reward he gives (*w89* 2/15 13)

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## “HAVE FAITH IN THE GOOD NEWS”

### *Note to the speaker:*

Deepen audience's appreciation for the fact that each person who expects to be part of the Kingdom arrangement must show this by the way he conducts his life

### **GOOD NEWS IS READILY AVAILABLE** (8 min.)

What would you consider to be the best possible news? world peace? elimination of crime? the end of all pollution? discovery of an economical, inexhaustible energy source?

These things would be good news, but people would still age, get sick, die

Vexing personal and family problems would still trouble us

News that is truly good for all people would have to bring peace of mind and a way to cope with problems now, with hope of elimination even of health problems in the future (*g78 7/8 3-5*)

It is easily seen from history that no man or body of men, no organization or government could be the source of any feature of the good news we need (*Jer 10:23*)

The good news that God the Creator would send would surely not lack any of the factors necessary for our complete welfare and happiness (*Ro 8:31, 32; w75 702*)

Is such good news available?

Yes, and it is not difficult for us to get (*Ac 17:27; 2Pe 3:9*)

Apostle Paul shows that we, as hearers, have good news right at hand, do not have to look exhaustively for it (*Ro 10:6-10; w72 694; g68 11/22 28*)

### **WHAT THE GOOD NEWS IS ABOUT** (12 min.)

Bible speaks of “the good news of God,” “the good news about the Christ,” and “the good news of the kingdom” (*Ro 15:16, 19; Mt 9:35; w79 12/15 5-6; it-1 986-8*)

These three titles fit because the good news, the Source of which is Jehovah God, includes all the truth about which Jesus Christ spoke and the disciples wrote

The good news focuses on the King, Jesus Christ, and his Kingdom (*Mt 6:10*)

Faithfulness in holding on to the good news was counted by Jesus as more important than one's present life (*Mr 8:35*)

Paul recognized that faithfully declaring the good news was vital (*1Co 9:16; 2Ti 1:8*)

Because of taking a stand for the good news, a person might at times suffer loss of possessions or endure persecutions (*Mr 10:29, 30*)

Acceptance of the good news results in salvation; rejection brings destruction (*2Th 1:6-8*)

To the individual who takes hold of the good news, it brings many personal benefits *now* (*1Ti 4:8; enumerate some of the many joys and blessings we now have if we become servants of God*)

The good news promotes truthfulness, which brings the individual many benefits (*w77 620*)

It promotes honesty, with its benefits (*w88 2/15 6-7; w87 11/15 5-6*)

It develops moral uprightness (*w86 7/15 6*)

This brings many benefits, even if some say it is impractical (*g85 11/8 17-19; yp 188-9; w85 8/15 15*)

### **MEN OF OLD COUNTED THE GOOD NEWS MOST PRECIOUS** (15 min.)

Abraham, though not understanding all things about the good news, “rejoiced greatly” when the good news was declared beforehand to him (*Joh 8:56*)

What was the good news in Abraham's day that caused him to rejoice? (*Ga 3:8*)

He had unquestioning faith in Jehovah's promise that nations would be blessed; Abraham *really believed* and acted on that faith (*Ge 15:5, 6; Ro 4:3, 18-22*)

Abraham considered the good news precious and was willing to manifest that, so God loved him (*De 7:7, 8; 2Ki 13:23; Ro 4:11, 12; Heb 11:17-19; w89 7/1 18-23; w87 1/15 13*)

In Moses' day the good news took on an additional aspect: deliverance from Egypt and entry into the Promised Land (*w74 333*)

Moses treasured knowledge of the good news and his share in serving (*Heb 11:24-28; w92 11/15 30; w87 1/15 13-15*)

Abraham, Moses, and other men of old served faithfully even though they knew the reality was in the far distant future (*Heb 11:10, 13-16, 32-39; w87 1/15 13, 16-19*)

In the days of the apostles, the good news took on a new dimension (*it-1 988 ¶4*)

Apostles made plain that after Jesus laid down his life as a ransom, he ascended to heaven and was then sitting at God's right hand (*Heb 10:12, 13*)

They preached the good news of Jesus' return and his Kingdom to come (*2Ti 4:1*)

They had unflinching zeal for this good news (*2Co 11:23-28; w82 12/1 12-22*)

Paul worked tirelessly to give the good news the widest possible proclamation and to build up the congregation

to face what would come against it, particularly the great apostasy

He committed things he knew to faithful men who could carry on the work of the good news after his passing off the scene; tried to teach them *everything* he knew (Ac 20:19, 20; 1Ti 3:14, 15; 2Ti 2:2)

Paul did this even though he knew that he would die before “the day of Jehovah” (2Th 2:2, 3, 7)

The apostle knew that, for each of us, ‘our salvation is nearer now than when we became believers’ (Ro 13:11; 1Co 7:29)

In our day the good news is better and more urgent than ever (*w74 331 ¶13*)

The King is now enthroned! The Kingdom is now established!

The end of this system is imminent! The new world is at hand!

“Good news of the kingdom” is now being enthusiastically preached (Mt 24:14)

“The day of Jehovah” must be kept “close in mind” (2Pe 3:12)

### **IS THE GOOD NEWS A TREASURE TO YOU?** (10 min.)

Each of us can ask ourselves:

‘Am I anxious to learn more about the good news, get the real *sense* of it, apply it in my everyday life, and help others to learn about it?’ (*w79 12/15 8*)

We can increase our faith in and appreciation of the good news by considering more closely the faithful men of past times and the interest angels have shown in it (1Pe 1:10-12; *bw 20-2*)

We are surrounded by many brothers who are just as faithful today as those men of ancient times were and who are receiving blessings by following the good news (*w90 1/1 4-6; w90 7/15 31*)

Greatest honor of all is to represent the Universal Sovereign now in a world that opposes him and to help those who need the good news so much

Never again will such an opportunity exist

We have angelic direction, observation, and backing (1Ti 5:21; Heb 1:14; Re 14:6)

Since you have seen the value of the good news in your life and in that of others, have faith also in the good news when you present it

Realize its transforming power and its ability to soften the hardest hearts and to bring unbounded joy and happiness to those gladly receiving it (Ro 1:16, 17)

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## MEETING THE TEST OF CHRISTIAN LOYALTY

### *Note to the speaker:*

Alert audience that every day our Christian loyalty is challenged by Satan and his world. We must loyally support Jehovah's organization without murmuring or stumbling and be humble and learn to submit to Jehovah's direction

### **WHY KEEPING CHRISTIAN LOYALTY IS A TEST** (8 min.)

Loyalty involves sticking to God's law in every aspect of our life (Read Ephesians 4:20-24)

A person who learns Christ's way recognizes he must change his whole personality (*w71* 543-4; *it-2* 404; *w86* 7/1 20 ¶14)

This involves developing completely different outlook, which comes from a 'new force actuating our mind'

Results in new personality conforming to God's will

Satan is intent on breaking our loyalty

He has devised various "machinations" to break Christian loyalty (Read Ephesians 6:11, 12) (*w76* 465-6; *w88* 9/1 13, 15-17)

The *Kingdom Interlinear* translates Greek for "machinations" as "crafty acts"

Some of the Devil's crafty acts are frontal attacks: threats, acts of violence, and other scare tactics designed to overwhelm and frighten us

Other crafty acts are more subtle: things that appeal to natural desires and selfish inclinations

Every day Christians face tests to their loyalty

These tests will not always involve big issues; Christian loyalty involves doing "all things thoroughly" (Eph 6:13)

Tests involve applying God's law in our family, maintaining a proper view of his organization, and displaying zeal in talking to others about God's purpose

How can we display loyalty in each of these aspects of our life as Christians?

### **BE LOYAL IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE** (13 min.)

Family is Jehovah's arrangement in the earth (Eph 3:15; *it-1* 807 ¶3; *w62* 352)

Need to abide by Jehovah's counsel on regulating family relationships to be loyal

Corrupt environment puts Christian families under test

Many family structures are in decay (*g91* 9/22 3-5; *g80* 4/22 3-7; *g82* 8/8 3-4)

Skyrocketing delinquency and discontent exist among youths (*w88* 4/15 21; *w89* 10/15 29)

Satan promotes prevailing spirit of independence and selfishness in family

Jehovah requires wife to be in subjection (Read 1 Peter 3:3-6)

Applies even if husband is unbeliever (1Pe 3:1, 2; *bw* 77-9; *w89* 5/15 17)

How far does this subjection go? (*Ac* 5:29; Eph 5:24)

Give examples of how Christian loyalty can be put to the test in a divided household

Young women contemplating marriage should face fact of what they will be entering (*Ro* 7:2)

Jehovah directs that husband should 'honor his wife' (Read 1 Peter 3:7) (*bw* 90-2; *w89* 5/15 14)

Must get to know her physical, emotional, and other limitations (*w89* 5/15 13)

Honoring her involves open and free communication

Consider her wishes in certain matters; make decisions according to Scriptural principles

Good example of parents will influence the children

Wifely subjection serves to encourage children to be obedient (Eph 6:1)

Youths are more inclined to 'honor their parents' when father 'honors his wife' (Eph 6:2)

Parents will have "freeness of speech" to guide children when their example is good (1Ti 3:13)

### **KEEPING LOYAL TO JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION** (13 min.)

Jehovah has the right to require loyalty by virtue of his being the Creator, the Supreme King (*Jer* 10:10)

To be loyal to God, one must be loyal to His organization (*w65* 412; *w88* 3/15 18-19)

Scriptures contain numerous examples of persons who demonstrated loyalty to God's arrangement

David, when being pursued by Saul, twice had the opportunity to take Saul's life but refused

It was unthinkable to thrust out his hand against God's anointed one (1Sa 24:1-7; 26:1-12, 23)

When others, stumbling over what Jesus taught, turned away from him, Peter and the other apostles kept loyal (*Joh* 6:66-69)

Though some deviated from the faith, the apostles and most other first-century Christians proved loyal to the Christian congregation (1Ti 1:19, 20; 2Ti 2:16-19)

There are many modern-day examples of individuals who have maintained loyalty to Jehovah and his organization even under difficult circumstances (*w80 8/15 5-10; w80 4/15 6-15; w79 7/15 4-7; yb74 165-9, 182-90; yb89 111-12*)

Be loyal to Jehovah and his organization

Accept from “the faithful and discreet slave” “food at the proper time” (Mt 24:45-47)

Do not stumble over an explanation that may be difficult to understand (Ps 119:165)

Support the decisions and work of the body of elders, recognizing that holy spirit is responsible for their appointment, while recognizing also that they too are imperfect and can make mistakes (Ac 20:28; Heb 13:7, 17; 1Pe 4:8; *w89 9/15 20-5; w74 153 ¶17, 413; w70 213; w64 464-70*)

#### **MAINTAIN LOYALTY IN FULFILLING OUR COMMISSION TO PREACH** (8 min.)

The Christian’s life should be used for God’s will (1Pe 4:1, 2)

God “desires all to attain to repentance” (2Pe 3:9)

Those without truth are considered ‘dead in their trespasses’ (Eph 2:1; 1Pe 4:6)

Preaching is a life-and-death issue

Greatest good we can do for people is make them aware of the good news

Satan tries to distract us from preaching work by “crafty acts”

He appeals to natural desires connected with the old personality (Read 1 Peter 4:3, 4) (*bw 109-11; w90 8/15 17*)

To be zealous in preaching, we must keep a clear picture of actual state of things (Read 1 Peter 4:5, 6)

Time is running out to finish this work (Read 1 Peter 4:7)

#### **HOW TO MEET THE TEST OF CHRISTIAN LOYALTY** (3 min.)

It is now so important to study God’s Word

Must know what God requires of us

Always humbly submit to God’s direction (Read 1 Peter 5:6, 7) (*bw 136-7; w82 9/15 23-5*)

Have faith that Jehovah knows when to bring relief from Satan’s pressures

Be assured that Jehovah cares for you as an individual

Persist in prayers that reflect this attitude

Do not be intimidated by Satan’s maneuvers (Read 1 Peter 5:8)

He cannot overcome those having Jehovah’s protection (Eph 6:10-13)

Jehovah is giving the ‘entire association of brothers’ opportunity individually to prove their loyalty (Read 1 Peter 5:9, 10)

You can look to Jehovah to strengthen you so as to attain present and eternal benefits by meeting this test

Trust in him to strengthen you to meet the test

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## A CLEANSED EARTH—WILL YOU LIVE TO SEE IT?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show that those who desire to enjoy the cleansed earth must strive to be physically, mentally, and morally clean. Help all to examine their attitude and actions. Do these reflect God's clean standards in every aspect of life? Encourage all to live in a way that shows they believe that a cleansed earth will soon be here

### **CLEANNES HAS APPEAL—TO US AND TO GOD** (4 min.)

Pleasure to see well-kept homes in lovely settings

Especially so if we usually see dirtiness, pollution

Have you noticed trend toward more uncleanness, pollution? (*g*90 5/8 4-9)

When most in community are unclean because of poor training, frustration, or hopelessness, this discourages the efforts of others to be clean

Do not beautiful, clean settings also stimulate us to be clean?

Can be sure that Creator, Jehovah God, appreciates clean earth

Made earth with clean, fresh, unspoiled natural beauty

Instituted natural processes designed to keep the earth clean (*g*90 5/8 10-11)

Promised new system of things will be righteous, clean, orderly (2Pe 3:13)

Uncleanness and disorder are contrary to Jehovah's ways and would be source of irritation (Le 19:2)

### **TO PREPARE FOR CLEANSED EARTH, WORK AT CLEANNESS NOW** (14 min.)

Learning from God's ways, Christians need to work at cleanness *now*

Laws given to Israel made them outstanding in physical cleanness, helped protect them from disease (*ce* 204-5; *it*-1 478; *w*89 6/1 16)

Jesus drew on principle of cleanness (Mt 23:25, 26)

May mean much work to overcome past habits, training, surroundings (*g*88 9/22 9-11)

Physical cleanness is of concern to whole family

Entire family, including children, need to work together at cleanness

Includes keeping body and clothes clean (*w*89 6/1 16-17; *g*88 9/22 8-9; *g*71 7/22 25-6)

Parents should start early in teaching children the value and importance of keeping physically clean

In regard to the home, Bible shows that wives especially have responsibility (Tit 2:4, 5)

However, unloving for husband and children to be sloppy, forcing wife to be constantly cleaning up after them (*w*89 6/1 17)

Bible does not require wives to be fanatical about cleaning; need balanced view of its importance

Their success or failure can reflect on Word of God

Automobiles should also be kept neat and clean throughout (*w*89 6/1 18)

Care in these areas is way of showing one's desire to live in cleansed earth

Will be noted by others (home and clothing may not be expensive but will be clean, neat) and is linked to our hope and beliefs (*g*86 12/22 22-3)

We will be developing pattern of cleanness that will fit new world

### **DEMONSTRATING OUR DESIRE TO LIVE IN A CLEANSED EARTH** (16 min.)

Ideal physical conditions alone do not make promised new world

Some people live in beautiful area but are troubled by distrust, fear of crime, loneliness, depression

Lot lived in beautiful location (Ge 13:10)

But moral badness of neighbors in Sodom tormented him (Lu 17:28, 29; 2Pe 2:7, 8)

We are similarly distressed by growing moral badness today

"New earth" will also be morally clean and at peace (2Pe 3:13; *g*84 10/22 9-11)

Bible promises removal of present "heavens" and "earth" (2Pe 3:7, 10; *sl* 297-306; *rs* 113-15)

Governmental "heavens," or systems of rulership, must go

Its "elements" are worldly atmosphere, spirit—definitely unclean (*wt* 175-7)

Do you agree that this current unclean spirit is not in accord with God?

Symbolic "earth," wicked human society, is "discovered"

Jehovah will sear all disguise away as by fire

Will expose the wickedness of ungodly human society, showing it to be worthy of complete destruction (*rs* 114-15)

Being out of harmony with the clean God, it needs to be eliminated

"Works," such as institutions and organizations, often operate at cost to environment, "ruining the earth" (Re 11:18; *go* 181)

Do we show by our keeping separate from the world that we want present system of things to be replaced? (Joh 17:16; *w80* 6/15 5-10)

Are we *morally* and *mentally* clean, or does unclean spirit of world show up in our conduct and thinking?

More is needed than just avoiding immorality, as shown in Law (Illustrate with Leviticus 19:2, 3, 11-18, 29, 33-36; *w89* 6/1 12-13; *w87* 11/1 10-20; *w78* 8/1 30-1)

A gauge of extent to which we want present heavens and earth replaced is whether we still find pleasure (even occasionally) in its uncleanness

Do we have attitude that a little will not hurt? (*w89* 6/1 16)

What about vulgar jokes, suggestive music and dancing, and profanity?

Why let world dictate to us what is enjoyable, desirable, or praiseworthy?

Can others see by our attitude and conduct that we truly believe present heavens and earth are doomed and will soon be replaced?

If we want clean, peaceful new world, what relationships are we cultivating with family and brothers?

We are hanging on to spirit of world if we continue to be critical and jealous, listen to and spread gossip, find fault, and meddle in what is not our concern

Can we truly say we are working at ridding ourselves of world's spirit?

To extent that we are changing, we show we want to live in cleansed earth (Jas 4:1-4, 11)

### **WORK TO REMAIN APPROVED AND READY FOR CLEANSED EARTH** (11 min.)

If we really want cleansed earth, must show that *now*, not later (Read 2 Peter 3:11)

Positive deeds of godly devotion will keep us close to our clean God

Daily life should show that we are devoted to God and are following his ways (Ac 9:36; 1Ti 5:4)

Remain zealous in urging others to learn about cleansed earth

Be ready for Jehovah's day; could come at any time (2Pe 3:12, 17, 18; *sl* 309)

Easy to be distracted by things that a person may think will only temporarily slow him down or deflect him from giving his all

Can ask self: If Jehovah's day were to come very soon, would I be satisfied with what I have been doing?

Our purpose should be to worship Jehovah, be found approved and at peace with him (2Pe 3:14)

Helpful for all of us to sit down and review our situation

Are there areas where improvement in physical cleanness should be made?

Do we in any way reflect the unclean spirit of world?

Are we truly applying ourselves in deeds of godly devotion?

What adjustments are needed?

No question that cleansed earth is coming

Strive to be there by maintaining God's high standard of cleanness

Even if others doubt, we know it will come (2Pe 3:4, 13)

Build up your faith through increased knowledge, prayer, and Christian activities

Make it your resolve to live in a way that shows you are sure a cleansed earth will soon be here

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## DECISIONS YOU FACE—HOW WILL YOU MAKE THEM?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to realize that each one must make his own decisions. Wise decisions always take into consideration God's Word, one's conscience, and one's dedication to God. Once a person makes a responsible decision, he should stick to it and not be constantly changing his mind. Be careful not to make rules for the audience on personal matters

### **AVOID BEING INDECISIVE** (9 min.)

All of us face numerous situations that call for decisions

These may relate to purchases, budgets, employment, health, marriage, relations with people, use of time, entertainment, and so forth

We cannot avoid making decisions

Many people have the tendency to be indecisive

They often want someone else to make decisions for them

The Bible frowns on indecisiveness (Jas 1:7, 8)

The Greek word for indecisive means "two-souled"

We must be whole-souled to Jehovah, fully living up to our decision to serve him (*w79 5/15 22*)

Indecisiveness robs us of time and opportunities (Eph 5:15, 16; *g90 2/8 18*)

Because they would not make a decision, nation of Israel robbed themselves of time they could have spent in worshipping God (1Ki 18:21)

We must learn how to make sound decisions since we cannot go back in time and undo our mistakes (*w82 10/1 3*)

Need to know which decisions it is our responsibility to make (*Ga 6:5; w73 542*)

### **USE WISDOM IN MAKING DECISIONS FOR WHICH WE ARE RESPONSIBLE** (14 min.)

At place of employment, there are decisions one must make

Other matters should be referred to one's employer (Eph 6:5, 6)

In the home, wife makes many decisions every day (Pr 31:11, 16, 18; *it-2 342, 1197*)

Some things must be decided by her husband (*fl 55-6*)

A child also makes many decisions (*fl 151-5*)

These are subject to the approval of his parents (Lu 2:40-42; Col 3:20; *g88 1/8 19-21; yp 11-17; yy 73-9*)

Certain decisions involve Christian conscience

Choice of employment (1Co 10:31; *w82 7/15 26; w72 591-600*)

Entertainment, use of time, decided by conscience (*w79 6/1 3-20; yp 289-303*)

In many cases even though one has the responsibility to make a certain decision, it is a considerate thing to discuss the matter first with others who may be involved (*w89 5/15 12-13*)

### **MAKE WISE DECISIONS BY LOOKING TO GOD FOR DIRECTION** (11 min.)

Not our responsibility to decide right and wrong

Must look to Jehovah, or we will make calamitous decisions (*w87 10/1 11*)

Apply principles found in God's Word (Ps 119:105; Pr 3:5, 6)

Bible's range of counsel unequaled; contains wisdom for every decision we must make (*w90 4/1 13*)

Good grasp of Bible principles necessary if we are to make sound decisions (*w88 10/1 26*)

Learn to locate these valuable principles for daily decisions (2Ti 2:15)

By practice and training, learn to use Bible study publications, and take necessary time to do so

Reasoning on Bible principles each time one is faced with a decision is vital in reaching Christian maturity (Heb 5:14; *w85 5/1 12*)

Helpful to consult mature Christians on serious matters and to avoid making snap decisions (Pr 12:15; 18:1)

But recognize that you personally must make the decision

Turn to God in prayer, seeking his guidance

Consider how your decision will influence your relationship with Jehovah, how it will affect others, how it will affect your own conscience and your future (*w82 7/15 22-7*)

Jehovah expects us to use our intelligence, knowledge, and judgment and to act on what our faith points us to

Decisions may differ from one person to another (*w72 589-91*)

Depends on the progress to spiritual maturity that has been made and on carefully weighing the pros and cons of the matter

**LIVING UP TO OUR DECISIONS** (5 min.)

Some decisions that are proper and in accord with God's will still may be hard to live up to because of problems that arise

Firmness in following through is necessary (*w69 174-9*)

Even when right decisions are made, one may continue for a time to experience effects of wrong decisions made in the past

Good results in increasing measure will come to one who firmly adheres to the counsel of God's Word (Ga 6:9)

**MOST IMPORTANT DECISION: TAKE UP WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH** (6 min.)

Important to recognize obligation to the true God and dedicate life to him (*w93 4/1 4-7; bw 5-14; su 121-8*)

If you have not yet made that decision, urgent to face up to it (Ac 22:14-16; *w89 1/15 14-15*)

If not, may be viewed by Jehovah as "indecisive" sinner (Jas 4:8, 17)

We must be decisive in a right way not merely out of sense of duty but with desire to "draw close to God" (*w79 5/15 22*)

If you have made the decision, vital to follow through on it

Live in full harmony with it (Ro 8:38, 39; *bw 15-28*)

(Other source material: *g90 2/8 18-20; w67 762-6; w63 643-4, 675-6*)

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## IS THE TRUTH TRANSFORMING YOUR LIFE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Build faith in the transforming power of the truth. Give examples of difficult changes people have made in order to please Jehovah. Emphasize that all of us need to keep transforming our lives with the goal of more closely reflecting God's image and thereby glorifying him

### **THE TRUTH HAS TRANSFORMING POWER** (6 min.)

Bible truth has power to accomplish a marvelous transformation of human lives

At Romans 12:2, "be transformed" comes from Greek word *me-ta-mor-pho'o*, indicating a complete change, like the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly (*w90 4/1 16*)

Examples of people in first century C.E. prove the truth can do this (*g78 5/8 27*)

A transformation took place among Christians at both Corinth and Colossae (1Co 6:9-11; Col 3:5-10)

Such a transformation also occurred in the life of the apostle Paul (Compare 1 Timothy 1:13-16 with 1 Corinthians 11:1)

Does the truth have transforming power today?

The prophet Isaiah foretold transformation of human personalities for our day (Isa 11:6-9; *sl 183-94* [note ¶18, 20]; *w83 10/1 4-6*; *it-2 257*)

Many people have made such transformations, making their lives more pleasant and purposeful (*w90 4/1 17*; *w89 10/1 21*; *w88 1/1 5-6*; *w88 5/1 7, 18*; *w85 2/1 25*; *w83 10/1 6-7*)

### **RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION** (10 min.)

All of us have need for transformation (Ro 3:23; 13:11-14)

Motivation comes from the desire to please the Creator and reflect his personality (Col 3:10)

The Bible identifies personality characteristics that have to be shed (Pr 6:16-19)

The Bible describes desirable traits that we should cultivate (Ga 5:22, 23; *w90 4/1 17-18*)

The Bible shows *how* to make the transformation (*w93 3/1 15-18*)

Must first 'make mind over' by feeding mind on God's Word (Ro 12:2; Eph 4:23)

By means of prayer, we can petition God's help through holy spirit (Lu 11:13; 1Jo 5:14, 15)

We can ask for the help of elders in the Christian congregation (Jas 5:14-20; *w89 9/15 17*)

We find, not long lists of rules, but counsel and principles that help us to know what changes are needed

New ones have definite aspects to work on, but there are also areas for attention by those who have been in truth a long time

### **TURNING FROM PRACTICES THAT ABUSE THE BODY AND MIND** (15 min.)

Application of Bible principles helps individuals to turn from practices that abuse the body and mind, thus improving their lives

Alcohol abuse

Although the Bible does not prohibit the moderate drinking of alcoholic beverages, it does condemn drunkenness (Ga 5:21; 1Ti 3:8; 5:23; *yp 262-71*)

Getting the Bible view of alcohol abuse has helped many to turn from such a course (*w86 10/1 24*; *g82 7/22 15*)

Transformation brings benefits in the form of improved health, happier family life (*g87 5/8 6-7*; *g87 11/8 10-11*; *g80 3/8 7-12*)

Smoking and drug abuse

Smoking has a detrimental effect on the body and mind and is, therefore, not in harmony with Scriptural principles (Ro 12:1; *g89 11/8 26-7*; *rs 109-11*)

Scriptural principles show that Christians must avoid all drug abuse (Lu 10:27; Ga 5:20, where Greek word *phar-ma-ki'a*, rendered "practice of spiritism," literally means "druggery"; 2Co 7:1; *tp 158*; *rs 107*; *w73 339, 342-3*)

A desire to live in harmony with such principles has helped many to turn away from drug addiction; this change has brought benefits (*g89 7/8 14-15*; *w88 10/1 29*; *g87 11/22 21-3*)

Sexual immorality

The Bible specifically condemns fornication and uncleanness (1Co 6:9, 18; Ga 5:19-21)

Bible truth has helped many to clean up their lives and thus avoid many painful problems (*yp 181-91*; *w94 5/15 20*)

Transformation would include avoiding not only fornication but also any uncleanness with opposite sex (*yp 193-7*)

### **TURNING FROM WORLDLY THINKING AND ATTITUDES** (10 min.)

Another need for transformation involves overcoming the subtle influence of worldly thinking and attitudes

Changes that Bible truth can help us make include:

Overcoming prejudices or pride regarding race or nationality (Ac 10:34, 35; *w89* 7/1 11-12; *g88* 1/22 27; *g88* 6/22 8-10)

Resisting pressure to be immodest or improper in dress and grooming (1Ti 2:9, 10; *w88* 8/15 17; *w77* 149-50; *g77* 9/22 27-8; *yp* 90-6)

Placing material things and self-interest in proper relationship to God and fellowman (Mt 6:33; 1Ti 6:6-8; *w90* 2/15 6; *w87* 10/1 5-6)

To make such changes requires constant effort because we are continually subjected to influences of the world (2Co 13:5)

Has the truth transformed your life in these areas?

All need to continue working on this

**BENEFITS FROM TRANSFORMATION** (4 min.)

Continued transformation of our lives brings increasing “glory” to Jehovah as we reflect his qualities more closely (2Co 3:18; *w90* 4/1 20; *w76* 327)

Will enjoy real physical and spiritual benefits, proving that even though effort is necessary, the results are worth it

(Review some of the benefits mentioned above)

Present benefits are just a small foretaste of those to come for all who continue to use Bible truth to transform their lives in harmony with God’s will

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## WHO IS YOUR GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Make the point that there are basically just two choices as to whom people worship, Jehovah and Satan. Many who think that they are worshiping God are actually worshiping Satan. Help audience to analyze clearly just where they stand. Prove that false worship is worship of Satan. Help worshipers of Jehovah to be more sure of their convictions

### **THE QUESTION INVOLVES MORE THAN A PERSONAL VIEW** (8 min.)

Most people think that they know the answer to the question, "Who is your God?"

But it involves more than a personal view or feeling (Mt 7:22, 23)

Does the object of your worship actually exist and give proof of godship? (Jer 16:20; *w88* 2/1 16)

Is the form of worship you offer accepted? (Mt 7:21; Ac 7:42, 43)

Many things are worshiped today as gods (*w90* 12/1 4-5; *w88* 2/1 16)

Some people admit they view money, pleasure, or science as their god (Isa 65:11; Php 3:19)

Prominent people, such as political leaders or sports and movie stars, are often idolized (Ac 12:21, 22)

Whatever one covets is a god to that person (Col 3:5)

Hundreds of millions of individuals bow to images (Isa 44:16, 17, 20; *w90* 12/1 4)

But is there some living Being, or God, worthy of being worshiped?

Some claim to worship the God of the Bible but have only a hazy concept of him, not knowing his name or even if he has one, not knowing if he is a person with a body living in a specific place or if he is simply a force existing everywhere

### **THE BIBLE SHOWS THAT THERE ARE REALLY JUST TWO GODS BEING WORSHIPED** (10 min.)

There is only one *true* God (Joh 17:3; *pe* 34-6)

He has a name (Ps 83:18)

He has a spiritual body (Joh 4:24)

He dwells in heaven (1Ki 8:43)

Jehovah is the real, almighty God, the Creator and the One worthy of worship (Re 4:11)

Although many other gods are being worshiped, Bible shows worship of all these other gods is directed to demons (De 32:16, 17; 1Co 10:20)

Hindus recognize 330,000,000 divinities; Shinto writings refer to 8,000,000 gods (*g88* 12/22 21; *it-1* 201, 237, 689)

Since Satan is "the ruler of the demons" and they are said to be his angels, then worship of demons is ultimately worship of Satan (Mt 12:24, 26; Re 12:7; *w90* 12/1 5-6)

He is really the ultimate false god (2Co 4:4)

All worship other than that of Jehovah is false and serves the purpose of Satan

We need to determine whom we are in fact worshiping

We must make sure our worship is acceptable to the true God (Tit 1:16; Jas 1:26)

### **COMMON RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND ATTITUDES IN THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE** (9 min.)

The Bible helps us to see whom we really are worshiping (*g70* 8/22 5-8) (Reason with the audience from the Scriptures)

The Bible condemns certain practices that please the Devil but displease Jehovah

Worship of and through images (Ex 20:4, 5; 1Co 10:14, 19, 21)

Fusion worship (*w90* 12/1 3-4)

Interfaith worship based on the idea that all religions are good (De 12:29-31; Mt 16:6, 12)

Astrology (*g90* 3/8 13-15; *g89* 11/22 3-8)

Ancestor worship (*g89* 3/8 18-19)

Common attitudes found among religious people conflict with God's Word, serving interests of Satan (Eph 2:1-5; *w87* 10/15 3-4)

Take moral liberties as long as you "love" other person or if both are in agreement (*g86* 7/8 3; *g85* 12/8 10)

Condone homosexuality and other perversions (*w89* 4/15 8; *g89* 1/22 7-9; *w87* 11/1 14)

Are concerned primarily with personal interests (business or social), avoiding real involvement in religion (Jas 2:14, 26)

### **YOU CAN BE CERTAIN THAT YOU TRULY WORSHIP ALMIGHTY GOD** (12 min.)

To be certain that your worship is properly directed, you must learn more about Jehovah and be willing to follow his guidance (Ps 25:8, 12, 14; Ac 8:30-35)

Many have learned that God is not triune, not a torturer of sinners, not responsible for wickedness, and so on

But equally important to know God's outstanding qualities

Awe-inspiring God of love, as is seen in his dealings and works (*pe* 37-8; *w89* 12/1 4-7; *w85* 3/15 5-7)

Has perfect standards and encourages such in morals and conduct of worshipers (*pe* 37-8; *w87* 10/15 4-7; *w78* 5/15 5-8)

A God of purpose who will accomplish his will (*Isa* 14:24, 27)

Warm Father who invites humans to have treasured relationship with him (*lp* 113-14)

We can be counted righteous as friends of God (*w85* 12/1 15)

Though imperfect, we can share in the important preaching work God has given his servants today (*1Co* 3:9)

Unquestionably this is the God we should want to worship

**WE CAN PROVE WE WANT JEHOVAH AND NOT SATAN AS OUR GOD** (6 min.)

There are definite ways we can prove that we really want Jehovah and not Satan as our God

Respond to urging to separate from all false worship without delay (*Re* 18:4; *re* 265)

Be personally resolved to continue learning about Jehovah (*Ec* 12:13; *Eph* 4:13)

'Carry on righteousness; love our brothers' (*1Jo* 3:10)

Be no part of world, thus avoiding worship of Satan (*Jas* 4:4)

Keep clearly in mind that there is no middle ground; we can only be on one side or the other (*Jos* 24:15; *Mt* 6:24)

Eternal joy for those knowing Jehovah as God (*Isa* 25:9)

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## DOES YOUR THINKING AGREE WITH GOD'S?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize that because of our imperfection and limitations and because of living in a world alienated from God, it is necessary for us constantly to make adjustments in our thinking to be sure that it conforms to God's thinking. Be willing to make changes personally and to allow God to mold us

### **WHY SHOULD WE THINK IN AGREEMENT WITH GOD?** (5 min.)

All of us at times feel unsure as to best course to take

Human thinking often based on sentiment, guesswork, or limited experience (Pr 16:25)

Strain of coping with life's problems has caused increasing emotional troubles and lawlessness

We need reliable guidance from a higher source (Pr 3:5, 6)

Operation of universe, balance of life processes, design in creation, reflect God's superior wisdom and thinking (Ro 1:20)

He has observed human successes and failures throughout history

As man's Designer, he knows our needs and capacities

The Bible sets out his thinking to guide us in all aspects of life

Will we listen?

### **ATTITUDE TOWARD PEOPLE** (14 min.)

God disapproves of thinking, speech, and practices of world of mankind alienated from him (Pr 2:11-15; *it-2* 1094)

Warns his servants not to cultivate association with such people or to imitate their way of life (Jas 4:4; 1Jo 2:15-17; *w80* 4/1 31; *w80* 6/15 5-7)

Do we agree?

Disagreement indicated by those who indulge in works of flesh, seek worldly associations, are pleasure-seeking, are materialistic (Isa 5:11, 12; Ga 5:19-21; *tp* 125-6; *su* 168)

Such a course results in frustrations

Agreement with God's thinking is demonstrated by faithfulness in seemingly little things (Lu 16:10; *w80* 6/15 9)

Are we influenced by the world in such things as dress and grooming? (*it-1* 655, 1021; *w88* 8/15 17; *w87* 9/15 14-15)

Does the world influence us in the matter of conduct between the sexes? (*yp* 181)

Does our thinking agree with God's in racial, political, social, or other matters?

In order to become one of God's people, a person must break from the world and change his thinking so that it agrees with God's (Eph 4:22-24; *w86* 7/1 20-1; *it-2* 305, 404)

We have excellent first-century examples of those who made such changes: Peter, Saul, Sergius Paulus, and others (*om* 154-5)

The truth can change people

Despite moral condition of mankind, God has made provision for salvation of ones willing to change (Joh 3:16)

Acts of kindness toward worldly people may attract them to the truth (1Pe 2:12; *yb90* 8; *w90* 5/1 31; *w85* 9/15 12)

Reflect God's thinking by showing love and mercy in everyday acts toward others (Ga 6:10)

Do we reflect his thinking, being humbly willing to share good news even with those who lead bad lives, or do we judge some to be unfit and so put forth little effort to help them? (Mt 5:44-48; Ro 5:8; *w81* 7/1 4-6; *w74* 120-5)

### **ATTITUDE TOWARD PARENTS** (12 min.)

'I didn't ask to be born' attitude is common among worldly youths

God tells children to respect and appreciate parents, who brought them to birth and cared for them when young (Eph 6:1-3; Pr 30:11, 17; *fl* 161-8; *yp* 11-17)

Parents may still be providing for children materially and guiding them morally and emotionally

Youths, do you agree with God's thinking in this matter?

Show agreement with God by obeying parents (Pr 23:24, 25)

Even if parents are not in the truth, should respect their position in family and be obedient, provided it does not involve something displeasing to God (Col 3:20; *yp* 13-16; *g87* 7/8 19)

This applies even when child becomes adult (Pr 23:22)

Be considerate of and helpful to parents (1Ti 5:3, 4; *fl* 168-70; *w90* 3/1 20-1; *w87* 6/1 13-18)

Honoring one's parents includes lovingly caring for them in later life as need arises (*it-2* 782)

### **ATTITUDE TOWARD WORK** (10 min.)

Many people disdain work, especially manual labor

Some refuse to work, choosing to live at the expense of the government

God is a productive worker (Ps 104:24; Joh 5:17; *w82* 8/1 12-13)

Are we in agreement with God's attitude toward work?

Must recognize its dignity; avoid laziness (Pr 18:9; 1Th 4:11)

Do not do minimum or be indifferent, but exert self and gain satisfaction from doing good and useful work (Ec 3:13, 22; *g83* 9/8 4-7; *w72* 487)

Industriousness and hard work bring benefits (*g90* 6/8 24-5; *g88* 2/8 31; *g83* 10/22 21-3; *it-2* 119)

Must keep balanced view of secular work (Ec 4:4, 6; *g93* 6/22 9-11; *w87* 10/1 6)

Hard work brings lasting satisfaction and happiness when our lives are centered on doing God's will (*w89* 7/15 4-7)

God has given his servants work to do now, preaching the good news (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20)

Are you sharing in it wholeheartedly? (*w87* 2/1 15-20; *g83* 9/8 8-9; *w78* 6/1 27-9)

Such work brings true refreshment (*w89* 7/15 19-20)

**CONTINUE TO ACT IN AGREEMENT WITH GOD'S THINKING** (4 min.)

Thinking and acting in line with God's Word results in blessings

Brings us in step with way we were designed (Ge 1:26, 27)

Results in more peaceful relations with others, united families, satisfaction from work

Adjusting thinking is progressive (Ro 12:1, 2; *w90* 11/1 29-31)

Changes needed at first, but keep up effort! (Eph 4:23, 24)

God is now molding people for life in new world

Do you respond willingly and make changes when necessary?

Meetings, personal study, wholesome association, can help

Be alert constantly to indications of God's thinking, bringing your own thinking ever more in accord with it

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## BUILD YOUR FAITH IN MAN'S MAKER

### *Note to the speaker:*

Many things can weaken our faith. We must recognize them so that we may keep our faith strong and not allow anything to cause us to lose faith. It behooves us to study examples of those who displayed strong faith in God and imitate them. It is also important that we help others around us to build up their faith

### **VITAL TO BUILD FAITH NOW** (9 min.)

You may say, 'I have faith,' but how strong is it?

Do you recognize what your faith is up against?

Our time is especially marked by loss of faith (*w89 7/15 22-3*)

Many weakening influences: materialistic thinking, anxieties over employment and cost of living, undue interest in political developments or scientific achievements, ideas such as evolution, association with persons who do not live up to Bible standards, escapism through entertainment and sports (*w89 10/1 15-20*)

Have these affected your faith? Will they yet?

Bible emphasizes importance of faith (Heb 11:6)

Cannot take faith for granted

Even in time of apostles, Christians were urged to fight for faith (Jude 3)

How strong is your faith? your family's? (*w86 7/15 21-6*)

Faith is not credulity; it is based on concrete evidence (*it-1 804*)

Many who ridicule Christian faith manifest faith in other ways

Scientists show faith in past discoveries as to "laws of nature"

From farmer to physicist, all exercise faith in stability of natural laws (*Ec 1:5-7; w77 227-31; ce 118-25*)

Takes time and effort to gather convincing evidence as basis for faith (Heb 11:1; *w87 7/15 5*)

As large building is made up of individual building blocks, faith is likewise based on individual "blocks" of evidence carefully lined up in relation to others (*w87 7/15 5*)

Each "block" adds evidence that God exists, is Creator, has purpose for creation

### **ABUNDANT EVIDENCE, "BUILDING BLOCKS," FOR BUILDING FAITH IN GOD** (7 min.)

Knowledge that we have a Maker, a Creator, helps build faith (Ro 1:20; Heb 3:4; *w87 7/15 5*)

Not merely opinion; we know earth exists and that we exist

Paul said that creation itself was basis for faith

Combines with God's word, or message (Ps 19:1-4; Ro 10:17-18)

Revelation from God in the Bible adds to our faith

Abundant proof that Bible is a book inspired of God (2Ti 3:16; *w87 7/15 5-6*)

Harmony of all its writers over span of 16 centuries

True science, including archaeology, has attested to its authenticity and reliability

Testimony of fulfilled prophecies (*w87 7/15 6; ce 216-31; si 344-6*)

Scores of prophecies fulfilled in Jesus alone (*si 343-4*)

Dependability of God's promises serves as reason for us to have faith (Jos 21:43, 45; 23:14)

His deliverance of Israel from Egypt proves he lives up to promises

That event is commemorated by Jews down to today

Was an event engraved on their national conscience

Putting "blocks" together gives foundation for strong faith in God

### **IT IS NECESSARY TO BUILD FAITH ACTIVELY** (9 min.)

Just because you have faith does not mean you do not have to work on it

Anointed Christians were told that lack of faith is "sin that easily entangles" (Heb 12:1; *it-1 805*)

Any of us could weaken in faith; even the apostles asked for more faith (Lu 17:5)

We have many fine examples of those in past who maintained strong faith in God

Noah was one who built faith in our Maker

He saw visible creation as we do

Could see that God's word had come true (Ge 3:16-19)

He did not have Bible or fulfilled prophecies

Nevertheless had faith there would be a flood and displayed that faith by building ark (Heb 11:7; *it-2 507; w89 10/1 11; w87 1/15 12*)

Legends in many lands as to Flood (*gm 116; it-1 328, 610-11; w86 9/15 4-5*)

Yet faith is built, not on legends, but on reliable testimony of God's Word (Lu 17:26, 27; 2Pe 2:5)

Abraham was another outstanding example of faith (Heb 11:8-10; *it-1* 804; *w87* 1/15 12)  
May have received his understanding by personal association with Shem (*it-1* 29)  
Left his home in Ur, “not knowing where he was going” (Ge 12:1-3)  
Boldly declared God’s name (Ge 12:8; 13:18; 21:33)  
Did not return to Ur during famine in Canaan (Ge 12:10; 13:1, 3; Heb 11:15)  
Got circumcised (Ge 17:22-27; *w89* 7/1 19-21)  
Believed in resurrection (Heb 11:19; *it-1* 804)

Do you work to build your faith? Do you work to build that of others?

**WORK TO BUILD YOUR FAITH AND THAT OF OTHERS** (15 min.)

We need healthy faith to please God (Tit 2:2; Heb 11:6; *w89* 10/1 15, 19-20)

Likely your faith has grown since baptism; continue to increase your faith

Cannot be so occupied with helping others that our own faith is neglected

Things we can do: personal study, persevere in prayer, regularly attend congregation meetings, share in works of faith (*w84* 6/1 8-12)

Do you need to give more emphasis to faith-building study?

Must not become so busy with helping others that you neglect reading and meditating on God’s Word

Pray about your faith and the faith of others (Lu 22:31, 32)

Faith will become stronger as we exercise it (Jas 2:22)

Help your family members build faith

Do you give thought as to how you will do this?

Copy example of Abraham, father of those having faith (Ro 4:11)

He taught his household “Jehovah’s way” (Ge 18:19; *w89* 7/1 20)

Parents can help children by reasoning with them on creation (Illustrate with an example or two from *g68* 3/8 3-8; see also *fl* 105)

Children will not have faith just because their parents have it

They too must build faith on solid evidence (*yp* 308)

Need own program of personal study

In divided household, believer can build faith of children (2Ti 1:5)

Your faithful example will also help them build faith

Elders should have in mind building up faith of congregation (Eph 4:11-13)

Not just organizers and teachers of facts

Help others to see that by sharing in preaching, they are displaying and building their faith as did Noah (2Pe 2:5)

Take the lead in works of faith; set fine example (Heb 13:7; *w89* 12/15 21)

**MANIFEST FAITH EACH DAY AS YOU LOOK FORWARD TO FUTURE** (5 min.)

Faith can help us to move mountainlike obstacles (Mr 11:22-24; *w87* 7/15 3-4)

When such obstacles to faith occur on job, in school, in dealing with relatives, or when handling problems, do you show faith in God by doing what he counsels? Is your faith that strong, solid?

Works of faith include more than facing big problems

Also involve what we do every day (Jas 2:14-17, 20)

Jesus likened our time to days of Noah, a man of faith (Mt 24:37-42)

Be like Noah, and constantly build your faith

Be alert, conscious of God’s will, active in preaching

Faith needed now as never before

The time and effort invested in faith are worth it (Joh 3:16)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## WHAT KIND OF NAME ARE YOU MAKING WITH GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Instill appreciation for the value of a good name. Point out that acquiring and retaining such a name takes diligent effort and involves the entire way of life. Emphasize that only names that God approves will be in his book of life

### **ARE YOU CONCERNED WITH MAKING A NAME FOR YOURSELF?** (6 min.)

There may only be a few things you give more attention to than your name and reputation

To maintain self-respect, most people want to be thought well of

Maybe you became indignant when someone reproached your name (Compare Ge 34:25-30)

Bible acknowledges value of good name (Pr 22:1)

How far will you go to make a name?

Some devote whole life to making a name for themselves in politics, business, theater, sports, science

Some will do almost anything to make name for themselves

Those at Babel were willing to disobey God (Ge 11:3, 4)

Have not most of their names long since been forgotten?

This will soon happen to those today who are trying to make a name for themselves

Consider: What kind of name are you making for yourself? How does your name reflect on your family and on the Christian congregation? Will it affect your ability to have privileges in the congregation? Most important, what kind of name are you making with Jehovah? He has a book of life with names in it. Is yours there?

### **WHAT KIND OF NAME ARE YOU MAKING?** (5 min.)

As a baby, you were given a name

Naturally this was of interest to your parents and relatives but of little importance to most others

Was basically a label, for no one knew much about you, whether you would have a fine personality and special talents or would serve God

While someone else gave you a personal name, you give it meaning

Your personal name grows in meaning throughout your life, identifying what kind of person you are (*w81 2/15 20-30*)

Some make a bad name

Judas—traitorous

Nimrod—rebellious

Cain—wrathful and jealous

Are any of us making a name like that?

Others make a good name

The righteous one has a good name with God (Ec 7:1)

God came to know Moses favorably (Ex 33:12, 17)

Could that be said of you now?

### **YOUR GOOD NAME REFLECTS ON OTHERS** (16 min.)

By making a good name, you will also reflect well on your family, on God and his Word, and on the congregation (*w87 2/15 20*)

Christian youths can contribute to good name of entire family by showing principled conduct

Such conduct reflects on reputation of your father, whose name you bear (1Sa 17:55; *it-2 855*)

Good name you have at school may open ways for witnessing to others (Mt 5:16)

Can be a recommendation of you for privileges such as auxiliary or regular pioneer, ministerial servant

Timothy may have been in late teens or early 20's when chosen by Paul (Ac 16:1-3; *it-2 1105*)

Christian women can also reflect well on the Bible (Pr 31:10-31; Tit 2:3-5)

When tempted to gossip about others, consider what name, or reputation, you may be establishing

Having full share in field service while maintaining clean home and caring for children is noticed and appreciated by others (May relate experience of someone taking an interest in the truth for this reason; *w90 2/15 27; yb93 62*)

Good name, or reputation, is necessary for brothers who are to be recommended as elders or ministerial servants (1Ti 3:2, 7, 10; *w90 9/1 24; om 33*)

When your name is mentioned, do others think of you as being lazy, associated with questionable business practices or vile speech, or given to violent temper?

Or, do they think of you as one who lives by Christian standards in morals, in business dealings, in family matters, in neighborliness?

Men, women, and children with this type of reputation are also making a good name with God

**THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING A GOOD NAME WITH GOD** (10 min.)

Far more important to make a good name with God than with schoolmates, fellow workers, in community, or in world in general

Jesus' life demonstrates the importance and benefit of having a good name with God

He concentrated on glorifying and proving faithful to his Father, not putting his own name, personal pleasures, or a secular career first (Lu 22:42; Joh 17:4)

Though God allowed Jesus to be tested to the point of death, He remembered and rewarded him

Resurrected him and gave him a name above all other human names, even above angels (Php 2:9-11; Heb 1:3, 4)

To gain a good name with God, we must recognize what Jesus' name stands for (*it-2* 467; *w83* 1/15 31)

Are we doing this? It is necessary if we are to make a good name with God

When in presence of those who seem to be godless and critical, do we hide the fact that we are witnesses of Jehovah and of Jesus? (Mr 8:38)

Despite vile speech and loose conduct around us, do we conduct ourselves in a way that shows loyalty to Jesus?

By holding fast to his name, we are making a good name with God, as did Christians in ancient Pergamum and Philadelphia (Re 2:13; 3:8; *re* 42, 60)

**IS YOUR NAME IN "THE SCROLL OF LIFE"?** (8 min.)

Eternal life is fine reward God bestows on one who makes a good name with him

Means more than temporary glory of a good name with men

From time of Abel, founding of world of mankind, Jehovah has been writing names in "the scroll of life" (Re 17:8; *it-2* 468)

Worthy ones have names written because during lifetime they exercise faith, pursue righteousness, do God's will—making a good name with God

By putting God's will foremost, we can get our names inscribed in that book even now. Are we working at that?

But, remember, one could have name removed from scroll of life

Names are not indelibly inscribed (Ex 32:32, 33; *re* 58)

Having made good name with God, we should continue faithful so that good name is retained

Finally, individuals so written down will be able to keep their names there permanently (*w87* 9/1 29)

All of us can make advancement in having and keeping a good name with God

Involves whole way of life, personal traits and habits as well as our direct service to God

Whether young or old, strive to have your name inscribed in and retained in God's "scroll of life"

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## **No. 56 Whose Leadership Can You Trust?**

NOTE: Help the audience to understand how Jesus actively leads God's people today, and encourage all to accept Jesus' leadership by becoming baptized disciples. Avoid being critical of specific human leaders or governments. This talk includes artwork and a video

### **WHY HUMAN LEADERSHIP HAS FAILED (3 min.)**

Many today are disillusioned with human leaders

People have been disappointed by political, religious, and business leaders whom they no longer trust

The Bible identifies the reason why human leadership has failed **[Read Jeremiah 10:23]**

God did not create humans with the ability or the right to govern themselves (w12 5/1 6)

### **CHRIST JESUS IS A TRUSTWORTHY LEADER (6 min.)**

The Bible directs our attention to a leader whom we can trust

God has appointed Jesus as "Messiah the Leader," or "the Christ" **[Read Daniel 7:13, 14]**  
(Da 9:25; Mt 23:10)

Christ Jesus is the ideal leader (w09 1/15 3 ¶4-5)

Unlike human leaders, everything Jesus does is motivated by unselfish love (Joh 10:14, 15)

While on earth, Jesus proved his ability as a leader

He cared for crowds numbering into the thousands (Mr 6:39-44)

He compassionately helped the lowly (Mr 1:40-42)

In just three and a half years, he laid the foundation for a global preaching campaign (Ac 1:8)

### **CHRIST JESUS IS AN ACTIVE LEADER (7 min.)**

Having been resurrected to heaven, Jesus continues to lead his followers (Mt 28:19, 20; Col 1:18)

[Optional: Use the artwork provided to illustrate the two points that follow]

He has appointed qualified men to care for the congregation (Mt 24:45; Eph 4:11, 12; j1 lesson 19)

He uses the angels and holy spirit to assist and guide his followers (Joh 16:13; Heb 1:13, 14)

Jesus is now the King of God's heavenly Kingdom **[Read Revelation 11:15]**

He will soon remove rival human rulership from the earth (Re 17:12-14)

### **WILL YOU ACCEPT JESUS' LEADERSHIP? (10 min.)**

Jesus warmly invites each one of us to be his follower; have you accepted that invitation? (Mr 10:21; cf 5-6 ¶1-4)

Jehovah's Witnesses will be happy to help you learn how to follow Jesus [Invite newly interested ones to have a Bible study, and briefly explain how Bible studies are conducted]

How can you show that you have chosen to follow Jesus as your leader?

(1) Strive to imitate Jesus and apply his teachings in every aspect of your life (1Pe 2:21; w09 1/15 4 ¶6)

Put God's will first in your life, just as Jesus did (Mt 6:33; Joh 4:34)

(2) Dedicate yourself to Jehovah God and get baptized **[Read Matthew 16:24]** (Ac 8:12)

[Invite the audience to watch the three-minute video of those who got baptized after once hesitating to do so. After the video is shown, briefly highlight what helped them to overcome obstacles]

### **LET JESUS LEAD YOU TO EVERLASTING LIFE (4 min.)**

By accepting Christ Jesus' leadership and "obeying him," you can receive "everlasting salvation" (Heb 5:9)

Jesus is ready to "complete his conquest" and bring an end to this wicked world (Re 6:2; Mt 24:29, 30)

He is now preparing his followers for survival (Re 7:9, 14)

Under Christ's leadership, you can be part of a new world free from injustice and suffering (2Pe 3:13)

Jesus will lead his followers to perfection and everlasting life

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section.

Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## BEARING UP UNDER PERSECUTION

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help all to see that we should not fear persecution but that we must expect it and be prepared to deal with it. All should fortify themselves to endure. Instill confidence that Jehovah will help us to overcome persecution. Now is the time to be drawing close to God by taking full advantage of his provisions

### **“ALL . . . IN ASSOCIATION WITH CHRIST JESUS WILL ALSO BE PERSECUTED”** (5 min.)

Why now discuss the seemingly unpleasant subject of persecution?

Not done out of morbid interest in suffering or because of trying to frighten anyone into a certain course

Having a balanced view will help us to overcome fear of it

The Scriptures indicate that all Christians will be persecuted (Read 2 Timothy 3:12)

Yet, have you personally experienced such persecution?

We are now in final part of foretold “last days” (2Ti 3:1-5)

Do you think “last days” will end without your experiencing the fulfillment of verse 12?

As with Paul, servants of God today should expect persecution (vs. 11)

Can ask: ‘What sort of persecution might I face, and why?’

Ought to consider our own position with regard to persecution

Just as we experience blessings as Christians, we must also expect persecution (Mr 10:29, 30)

All should want to have insight into what may occur and how we can strengthen ourselves to bear up under persecution

### **PERSECUTION MAY TAKE VARIOUS FORMS** (10 min.)

Persecution comes in various forms, may or may not be physical (*it-2* 609; *w82* 4/15 22-3)

Verbal abuse, ridicule, and insults

Possibly even from one’s own family (Mt 10:34-36)

Often very hard to bear, since it comes from loved ones

Gain victory not only by determination to remain faithful and loyal to God but also by not repaying unjust treatment in kind (1Pe 2:21, 23)

Rather than become angry, patiently wait on Jehovah, and keep trying to ‘conquer the evil with the good’ (Ro 12:17-21)

Apostle Paul was happy to endure insults if this brought praise to God’s name (2Co 12:10; *w85* 11/15 12)

Economic pressures (Re 13:16, 17; *re* 197)

Government bans can lead to loss of employment, homes, and possessions

We do not want to be like some in Corinth congregation who put emphasis on wealth and position (1Co 4:8)

In sharp contrast, Paul showed his willingness to endure much dishonor and suffer physical want, according to whatever circumstances developed in his service to God (1Co 4:9-13)

If persecution forced us out of good job into lowlier work, faith can enable us to bear up and respond in a positive way (Heb 10:32-34)

Physical suffering—including bodily injury, imprisonment, even death (Mt 24:9; Lu 21:12; 2Co 11:24, 25)

We should not torment ourselves with visions of excruciating pain (*w74* 219)

Rather, the fact that suffering may come should stimulate us to get proper view of and make preparation for persecution, no matter what form it takes

Persecution may perplex us momentarily, but Jehovah will always show his faithful servants “the way out”

Not so much to escape the trial but “to be able to endure it” (1Co 10:13; 2Co 4:8-10; *w90* 7/15 19; *w83* 5/1 20; *w76* 473-4)

Though we are weak in ourselves, faith will strengthen us to overcome any persecution or difficulty

Our faith will always be victorious (1Jo 5:4)

### **ANCIENT AND MODERN EXAMPLES OF BEARING UP UNDER PERSECUTION** (15 min.)

Important to remember that we can succeed in face of any persecution

Have basis for courage and confidence—not in ourselves but in God’s love (Ro 8:35-39)

The example of pre-Christian witnesses proves that it is possible to bear up under persecution (Heb 11:35-38)

First-century Christians faithfully endured much persecution (Ac 8:1-3; 9:1, 2)

Victorious ones in past were not supermen but were frail, average humans just like us

If they could endure, we can too

In modern times many have borne up under persecution (Give some examples, preferably local ones. If possible, use: [1] loss of employment or position because of being a Witness; [2] prolonged persecution by being ridiculed, reviled, as is often the case in divided households; [3] physical abuse. Avoid glorifying the person. Stimulate

confidence that we too can likewise endure. Include observations about attitudes that helped persecuted ones bear up, and cite any practical things they did that would help others to endure similar circumstances. If needed, following may be used: *w89 3/1 18; w89 6/15 27; w88 2/15 17; w86 6/1 28-9; w82 4/15 16, 27*)

**PREPARE NOW TO BEAR UP UNDER PERSECUTION** (15 min.)

Fix clearly in mind why you are being persecuted

Mistreatment should not be because of questionable conduct on our part (1Pe 2:19, 20; 4:15, 16; *it-2 610*)

Satan the Devil is the real instigator of persecution (*w82 4/15 23*)

He has raised issues of universal importance in which we are involved (*w83 5/1 13*)

Is Jehovah truly the Sovereign? Nations refuse to recognize that and persecute those upholding his sovereignty (Ac 4:18-30)

Keeping this in mind will help us bear up

Persecution also comes because of Jesus' "name," his role as King of established Kingdom (Mt 24:9; *it-2 61; w83 1/15 31; w83 10/1 22*)

Also, there is the question of whether we personally will maintain integrity under test

If we have shown integrity for years, how pointless it would be to give in because of momentarily severe persecution

Keeping in mind that trial is but "momentary" will help us bear up (2Co 4:17, 18; *it-1 724-5; bw 121*)

During persecution realize that God can be relied on for extraordinary help (1Co 10:13; 2Co 4:7)

Unsurpassed tranquillity can be ours when we are persecuted (*w83 5/1 19*)

Remember to pray (Ac 4:23-31; Jas 1:5, 6)

Keep in mind that God permits such suffering for our ultimate benefit (*bw 115-39*)

Can serve as form of training (*it-1 629; w87 6/15 30-1*)

Prepare now to bear up under any form of persecution (*w85 11/15 11-15; w83 5/1 18*)

We need to take advantage of provisions to strengthen ourselves spiritually

Think of such provisions specifically in terms of preparation to bear up under persecution

Reading the Bible acquaints us with examples of how our brothers in past endured

Meditating on such accounts will help us withstand pressures now and endure further trials later

Become experienced in all facets of the ministry

This will help us continue preaching when under ban (*w85 11/15 12-13*)

Cultivate regular communication with God through daily prayer (1Jo 5:14, 15)

Do not shrink back (Heb 10:39)

Sharpen your vision of hope ahead (Heb 12:2, 3; *it-2 610*)

Concerted effort is needed to strengthen us now and prepare us for whatever may come

We need not live in fear (Mt 6:34)

We have God on our side if we keep close to him

He can and will help us bear up (2Ti 4:17; 1Pe 5:10)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

# WHO ARE THE REAL FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST?

## *Note to the speaker:*

Use Jesus' teachings and example to prove that Jehovah's Witnesses are Christ's true followers. Illustrate the main points with examples suitable to the cultural and religious background of new ones

### **WHY WE NEED TO IDENTIFY THE REAL FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST** (4 min.)

Worldwide, more than two billion people profess to follow Christ (*w12 3/1 3*)

They belong to thousands of denominations that vary widely in beliefs, moral standards, and forms of worship

Jesus said that his genuine disciples would be the ones *doing* his Father's will [**Read Matthew 7:21-23**]

Many others who call him Lord would not merit his approval

Such have been deceived by a counterfeit form of Christianity that has no value

Let us consider four features of true Christianity

### **GENUINE CHRISTIANS RESPECT GOD'S WORD AND LIVE BY IT** (6 min.)

Jesus viewed God's Word as absolute truth [**Read John 17:17**]

He quoted from it, defended it, and explained it (*cf 98-107*)

Jesus and his disciples based their teachings on the Scriptures (Lu 24:45; Ac 17:2, 3)

They did not teach man-made traditions or philosophies (Mr 7:6-8; Col 2:8; *w12 3/1 4*)

Christ's true followers accept the Bible as the authority for their beliefs and practices (1Th 2:13)

Jehovah's Witnesses live in harmony with God's written Word; doing so involves our entire way of life

God is not pleased with those who merely *profess* Christianity

### **CHRIST'S REAL FOLLOWERS MAKE KNOWN GOD'S NAME** (6 min.)

Jesus honored his Father's name and made it known [**Read John 17:6, 26**]

His true followers recognize that only those who call on the name of Jehovah will be saved (Ro 10:13)

The Bible in its original languages included the name of God some 7,000 times

Many Bible translators and church leaders who claim to be Christian have removed the divine name from their versions of the Bible and from their worship services (*w12 3/1 7*)

Jehovah cherishes those who fear him and who treasure his name (Mal 3:16-18)

He has granted his true servants the privilege of being "a people for his name" (Ac 15:14)

His Witnesses, in turn, are pleased to expose teachings that bring reproach on God's name (*w09 11/1 4-9*)

### **TRUE CHRISTIANS ADVOCATE GOD'S KINGDOM AS MANKIND'S ONLY HOPE** (6 min.)

God's Kingdom was the theme of Jesus' ministry [**Read Luke 4:43**] (*cf 81-82 ¶10*)

Christ's true followers make known what God's Kingdom is and what it will accomplish

God's Kingdom is a heavenly government with Christ as King (Isa 9:6, *ftn.*; Da 7:14; Re 11:15)

It will soon rule over the entire earth and bring lasting peace (Isa 9:7; Da 2:44)

Jehovah's Witnesses proclaim worldwide that God's Kingdom is the only hope for mankind (Mt 24:14)

We maintain strict neutrality in all political affairs (Joh 17:16; 18:36)

We live as subjects of God's Kingdom and put its interests first in our life (Mt 6:33)

### **JESUS' GENUINE DISCIPLES ARE IDENTIFIED BY THEIR LOVE** (5 min.)

Self-sacrificing love binds true Christians together; they are a united brotherhood [**Read John 13:34, 35**]

Their love transcends differences in race, culture, and social status (*w12 3/1 6*)

They help one another through trials and disasters

Christ's true followers have love for all people, even those who oppose them (Mt 5:43-45)

They put forth great effort to share their Bible-based hope with others

They refuse to take up weapons against fellow humans (Isa 2:4; Mt 26:52)

### **PROVE YOURSELF TO BE A REAL FOLLOWER OF CHRIST** (3 min.)

It is now more urgent than ever to live as a genuine follower of Jesus (Lu 6:46; Joh 15:8)

God will hold accountable all who falsely claim to follow Christ (2Pe 2:1-3)

Examine further the teachings and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses in the light of God's Word (Ac 17:11)

We hope that you will identify us as Christ's *real* followers and join us in worship that is acceptable to Jehovah God and Christ Jesus

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## YOU WILL REAP WHAT YOU SOW

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show in practical terms what it means to 'sow with a view to the flesh' as well as how to 'sow with a view to the spirit.' Make clear that in either case the outcome is inevitable: We will reap what we sow, even though it may not appear that way initially. Encourage all to 'sow with a view to the spirit,' with everlasting life in view (Ga 6:8)

### **WILL YOU BE HAPPY TO REAP WHAT YOU SOW?** (5 min.)

Living things on earth reproduce after their kind (Ge 1:11, 12, 24, 25)

Have you not seen this with animals and plants?

Farmers depend on this; when sow wheat seed, not expect rice crop

This is also true of human life (Read Galatians 6:7, 8; *g76* 4/8 3-4)

You have no doubt seen effects of both good habits and bad ones on people's lives (Ec 11:9; *w86* 8/1 16-17)

Do you fully believe that you will reap what you are now sowing? Do you reflect this belief in family life, recreation, attitude toward study and field service, conduct in congregation?

Outcome can be either "everlasting life" from God or "corruption" (*w88* 6/15 19-20)

### **CIRCUMSTANCES RELATING TO PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS** (6 min.)

Letter was to real people just like us

Galatians were our brothers, having families, jobs, problems, needs, just as we do; counsel for them can help us

Paul visited there and helped establish congregations in province, so he had genuine love for them (*it-1* 880-2; *si* 217-20; Ac, chaps. 13, 14, 16)

What prompted Paul to write his letter? (*it-1* 882)

He learned that Judaizers were causing problems

The native Galatians tended to be fickle and unsteady, and populace had low moral standards

Purpose of Paul's letter was twofold: to encourage the Galatians to break free from slavery to the Law and to remind them not to go to the other extreme and break free from all restraint (*w82* 11/15 28-30)

His counsel showed that either of the two extremes would be 'sowing with a view to the flesh' and would lead to 'corruption from the flesh'

He encouraged them instead to 'sow with a view to the spirit' because "whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap"

Though living at a different time, do we see value of Paul's counsel for us?

### **USING, BUT NOT ABUSING, CHRISTIAN FREEDOM** (15 min.)

(In developing the remainder of the talk, adapt to needs of congregation. Include practical examples to make points live. For additional information, see *w69* 350-1; *w68* 521-32)

Circumcision and Law not problem now, but what about human "laws"?

Some in the congregation may tend to become extreme in their views on grooming, diet, medical treatment, conduct toward relatives, music, recreation (*w82* 6/15 24; *w82* 7/15 19-20)

May pressure others to follow; act as if any having different view are not mature

This tendency needs to be guarded against, as it is 'sowing with a view to the flesh'

Abusing our freedom in Christ is also 'sowing with a view to the flesh' (Ga 5:13; *it-1* 872; *it-2* 1014; *g79* 6/8 27-8)

Like Galatians, we are surrounded by people of low morals and unrestrained conduct

World likes entertainment that promotes violence, lack of restraint, flirting, casual view of marriage, excessive drinking, abusive speech and action, and so on

Do you allow lawless, independent, selfish thinking of world to infect you? (*w84* 11/15 28-31; *w83* 1/15 7-10; *w83* 10/15 10-15)

Have you thought, "There are no 'rules,' so I can do what *I* want"?

Easy to get that view of recreation, music, conduct, grooming

How seriously do you view marriage vow?

Need to regulate thinking and conduct by love (Ga 5:14, 15, 26)

Ignoring law of love leads to treating others on *fleshly* basis, resulting in hatred and contentions

Do you bear grudges, feed anger? (*w69* 351; *w68* 530)

Do you feel that you are without law, or are you governed by law of love? (Jas 2:8)

To avoid perils of abusing freedom, sow with a view to the spirit

Faith, love, and holy spirit are aids in sowing with a view to the spirit

We need a faith that touches our heart and affects our daily life (Ga 5:6)

Need to keep seeking spirit, responding to its ways and leadings

If in doubt, ask: 'Is this what spirit would lead me to do?'

Might be quite different from own preferences as fleshly man

Sowing with a view to the spirit and properly exercising Christian freedom result in blessings

“Works of the flesh” do not bring lasting happiness or God’s approval (Read Galatians 5:19-21)

With “fruitage of the spirit” filling our life, our entire way will be different (Read Galatians 5:22-25)

If adjustments are needed, we should strive to make them

Is a matter between you and God, but all of us need to be honest with ourselves, realizing that Galatians 6:7, 8 will be fulfilled

**SOW WITH VIEW TO THE SPIRIT BY PUTTING LOVE FOR OTHERS INTO ACTION (12 min.)**

Love should be a real force in our life, not just a pleasant, abstract idea

We manifest love by responding to needs of fellow Christians

Spiritually mature ones have this responsibility (Ga 6:1; *it-2* 400; *w92* 11/15 26-9)

Does not mean being busybodies; yet avoid ‘not get involved’ attitude

May need courage motivated by love to approach another

A person may have ‘burden’ we can help bear (Ga 6:2; *it-1* 376; *w76* 401)

When aiding others, keep in mind own weakness and not feel superior (Ga 6:3, 4; *it-1* 376-7; *w76* 401)

Must bear own load of spiritual responsibility before God (Ga 6:5)

Love is manifested by displaying generosity (Ga 6:6; *it-2* 1073)

Has application in taught ones being willing to share materially with one teaching if he is in need

Some congregations helped care for Paul’s material needs (Php 4:15, 16)

Do we have such love for those devoted to caring for the spiritual interests of others?

While we want to do good to brothers, we should also be doing good to others (Ga 6:9, 10)

Might we tend to put personal pleasure before field service?

Comparing our activities past and present, would we conclude we are tiring out, or are we still doing all we possibly can to save others? (1Ti 4:16)

**BE CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN REAP EVERLASTING LIFE (7 min.)**

Must not let persecution, or threat of it, hinder us

Worry about persecution affected Judaizers in Galatia (Ga 6:12; *it-1* 882)

Urged circumcision so other Jews would not persecute them

We need to be alert to possibility that we may develop similar view

Could in little ways start being more concerned with world’s acceptance

Ask: ‘Am I adjusting my ways to win others or because I actually want world’s approval and acceptance?’ (1Co 9:19-22)

Paul may have had scars, like brand marks on slave, proving his willingness to accept persecution for Christ (Ga 6:17; *it-1* 363; *w90* 11/15 23)

Would we be willing to be so marked and to accept persecution?

Be confident that faithfulness will be rewarded (Ga 6:7-9)

Just how are we sowing? Is our first concern our flesh or the spirit?

Are you confident that your life revolves around spiritual things?

Unlike Galatians, our reward (reaping) is in very near future

How sad if one long pursued truth but then tired out (Ga 6:9)

Now stand on threshold of new world; no time to slack off

Now is the time to reexamine own thinking and ways and see if we can sow to spirit more fully

Soon will be able to delight in result, reaping everlasting life

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## HOW PURPOSEFUL IS YOUR LIFE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate that a purposeful life comes only from having an intimate relationship with Jehovah and living in harmony with his purpose to gather all things together again in the Christ. Make clear how one can achieve this relationship with Jehovah, and encourage all to exert themselves in the most purposeful work in the world, preaching the good news of God's Kingdom

### **WHY ARE WE HERE?** (8 min.)

The life-style of many indicates they lack purpose in life; they are preoccupied with money, recreation, sports, sex, and so on

They seldom think beyond the immediate future

Others caught up in making a living, struggling to eke out a day-to-day existence; they often feel they are on a treadmill

Failing to understand why we are here induces some to live lives of reckless abandon, casting restraint to the wind

Serious people wonder what real purpose in life is. Is it simply to go through a cycle much like the animals, to be born, eat, work, have offspring, grow old, and die, or is there a more noble reason for our existence?

All things brought into existence for some reason. Intelligent humans build, manufacture items for purposeful uses (Heb 3:4)

Through his Word, God tells us the purpose of life

He knows why he put us on earth, and he designed us in harmony with his will (*pe* 73-4)

Getting to know his purpose in creating us is essential if we are to bring our lives into harmony therewith (*lp* 183-4)

Appreciating why we are here elevates us from mere existence to noble, worthwhile life (*g89* 2/8 26-7; *g87* 1/22 10-12)

### **GOD HELPS THOSE WHO KNOW HIM TO LEAD PURPOSEFUL LIVES** (17 min.)

Accurate knowledge of and cooperation with God helps one to have a meaningful life and hope for the future (Joh 17:3)

Though invisible, God invites us to seek to know him (Ro 1:19, 20; Ac 17:26, 27)

God helps us to know him personally by revealing his name

For some, learning name has been first step toward leading purposeful life (*g88* 8/22 21-5; *g86* 7/22 17-20)

Name means "He causes to become"; it identifies Jehovah as the Purposer (Ge 2:4, ftn.; *it*-2 12; *kc* 17-18)

Regular use of name builds intimacy with him

Getting to know the outstanding qualities of God helps us to lead purposeful lives

God not omnipresent but resides in a specific location (1Ki 8:49; Heb 9:24)

His eyes examine the sons of men (Ps 11:4; Pr 15:3)

His cardinal attributes are love, wisdom, power, and justice (Relate briefly how learning these qualities of God has helped many to lead more purposeful lives. See, for example, *w89* 1/15 24; *w88* 7/1 18-22)

To know him is to love and appreciate him and his qualities (Ex 34:6, 7)

God helps those who know him to lead purposeful lives by communicating with them and by listening to their prayers

He provides direction through his written Word along with help of holy spirit to understand it

Spirit helps to search "even the deep things of God," including his purpose for man (1Co 2:10)

Provisions made for needed counsel through elders, congregation meetings, assemblies, publications

He promises to safeguard their hearts and mental powers if they make their petitions known to him (Php 4:6, 7) (Example: *w88* 3/15 6-7)

Greek word rendered "mental powers" has the thought of "purpose" or "device." Thus, God's peace can strengthen our Christian purpose (*w88* 2/15 18)

Obvious that Jehovah helps honesthearted ones to come into a relationship with him and lead purposeful lives (Joh 6:44; *w79* 4/15 14)

He is interested in each individual personally and especially in those sincerely inquiring as to his purpose (1Ti 2:4; *lp* 108-11)

He gives us incentive to direct our lives in a way that pleases him

### **BASIS FOR GAINING MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (13 min.)

As Creator, God has a certain relationship with all people (Ac 17:25, 28)

To fulfill real purpose in life, we need a meaningful, intimate relationship with God (*w79* 4/15 12-16)

Human sinfulness would make a relationship with God impossible if he had not laid basis for it through Christ's death and resurrection (Ro 5:8; 1Pe 2:24)

God himself made first move to make relationship with him possible, but that does not result in automatic intimacy with him

Specific steps are required on our part to gain a close bond with Jehovah as well as a purposeful life

- (1) Must put forth effort to take in *accurate knowledge* that will build faith. (Heb 11:6) In our efforts as disciple makers, endeavor to reach the heart of students so that they will be motivated to lead purposeful life
- (2) Manifest *repentance*, not simply a mental realization that past course was wrong, but show true sorrow (Ac 3:19)
- (3) Make a *conversion*, turning away from wrong practices to a purposeful course in life (Mr 13:10; Ac 26:20; Heb 10:25)
- (4) In time, make a *dedication* to God (Mt 16:24; 1Pe 2:21)
- (5) Make request to God for a good conscience by being *baptized* in symbol of dedication (1Pe 3:21; w89 1/15 13-16, 19-20; w78 11/1 15)

At this point, disciple enters meaningful relationship with Jehovah  
(Briefly summarize above points for the audience)

**IS YOUR PURPOSE IN LIFE IN HARMONY WITH GOD'S?** (7 min.)

Jehovah's purpose regarding his creation is outlined at Ephesians 1:8-10 (w84 2/1 16-20)

Jehovah's great administration is his managerial procedure, or handling of matters, that produces unity (it-1 48)

God's Kingdom is instrument he uses to bring this about

"Things on the earth" now being gathered as a great crowd to form foundation of "new earth" (Re 21:1)

Preaching the "good news" of God's Kingdom and making disciples who will form the "great crowd," then, is most purposeful work one could now share in (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20; Re 7:9)

Man was created to do God's will (Re 4:11)

Does your life-style allow for the fullest share possible in preaching and disciple making?

The extent to which we share in such activity, in accord with our circumstances, will help us to determine for ourselves the answer to the question "How purposeful is your life?"

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## ON WHOSE PROMISES DO YOU RELY?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Instill appreciation for Jehovah as a God who always fulfills his promises. Make clear that we need to keep our word as well. Show the wisdom of trusting in Jehovah rather than in imperfect humans, whose promises often prove to be empty. Motivate all to trust Jehovah and to reach out for the marvelous future that he has promised

### **CURRENT ATTITUDES TOWARD PROMISES** (7 min.)

Political promises held in low esteem because politicians fail to keep them

Either they are not made with intention of being kept or those making them are powerless to do so

Emperor Napoleon I is reputed to have said: "If you want to get on in this world, make many promises, but don't keep them"

The president of the United States declared during the 1940 election campaign: "I shall say it again and again and again: your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars," but already he had committed the United States to a huge program of military aid to Britain and had drawn up plans for a simultaneous war with Germany and Japan (*The New York Times* 7/2/71 p. 33)

In 1988 a candidate for the U.S. presidency said: "The Congress will push me to raise taxes, and I'll say no, and they'll push, and I'll say no, and they'll push again, and I'll say to them, 'Read my lips: No new taxes.'" Then two years later, after he had been elected, he said: "It is clear to me that . . . the deficit problem and the need for a package that can be enacted require . . . tax revenue increases . . ." (*The New York Times* 6/27/90 p. 1)

Religious promises lose credibility when future well-being is promised in return for money contributions

Personal promises often void of any value

Promises broken daily, appointments not kept

"A promise is a promise," a phrase often heard—challenging someone to make good on an undertaking

Promised rewards or services forgotten

Engagements to marry and vows treated lightly and broken

One sociology professor says first marriages have only a 50-50 success rate these days because too many people are saying, "I do," when they really do not

With many, promise is made with idea that it will be kept if convenient

No wonder disillusionments, disappointments, deeply felt hurt, and even anger are added to the ills of humankind today (*w73* 59)

### **THE BIBLE'S VIEW OF PROMISES** (10 min.)

Bible shows that whatever we say should be truthful (Ps 15:2; Pr 12:22; Eph 4:25)

One should carefully think matters out before making promises (Ps 34:13; Pr 20:25; Ec 5:2)

Once promises are made, we should put forth effort to keep them (De 23:23)

Those who fail to make good on their vows (solemn promises) are ranked as stupid or untrustworthy in word (Ec 5:4-6; *w77* 243)

Jephthah proved to be a man of his word, even though it brought great hurt to him (Jg 11:30-35; Ps 15:1-4; *it-2* 28)

An oath is a fortified promise, and a person given to false oaths is subject to condemnation by the Bible's Author (Zec 8:17; *it-2* 516-18)

Joshua did not break his covenant with the Gibeonites even though he later learned that they had deceived him into making it (Jos 9:15-21)

We too should keep our word

We must not make promises and then break them when more appealing opportunities open up to us

Jesus said: "Just let your word *Yes* mean Yes, your *No*, No" (Mt 5:37; *w89* 9/15 28-9)

A person should sincerely mean what he says

Once one's word is given, the keeping of it should be viewed as a sacred duty that must be fulfilled (Jas 5:12)

Another related expression is "covenant," a solemn agreement (*it-1* 520-1)

In effect, any promise made by Jehovah is a covenant, as it is certain to be carried out

People who are false to agreements are classified with those disapproved by God (Ro 1:28, 31, 32)

Zedekiah's breaking of a covenant even with enemy earned God's disapproval (2Ch 36:11-13; Eze 17:11-18; *w77* 454)

### **JEHOVAH SETS THE PERFECT EXAMPLE AS A PROMISE KEEPER** (10 min.)

No promise of Jehovah will ever go unfulfilled (Heb 10:23)

His past record as a Fulfiller of his word is without a single flaw

Joshua and Solomon both testified to this quality of their God (Jos 21:45; 1Ki 8:56)

Jehovah declares: "So my word that goes forth from my mouth will prove to be. It will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it" (Isa 55:11; *w75* 700)

He is well able to make this firm declaration, since he has the unlimited power to bring to pass all his promises (Isa 14:24, 27; *go* 30-1)

His unchangeableness and his undeviating truthfulness are a warranty that what he promises he will carry out (Heb 6:17, 18; *w65* 688-9)

God's loyalty to his own Word is basis for the strong faith and hope of those who come to know him (Ro 4:20, 21)

All his faithful slaves should imitate him

#### **DIVINE PROMISES ALREADY FULFILLED AND THOSE YET TO BE REALIZED** (13 min.)

Like Joshua and Solomon, we also can testify that God has kept all his good promises

Jehovah's promise of a "seed" was fulfilled in Christ (Ge 3:15; 22:15-18; Ga 3:16)

God promised the Messiah, and that One appeared 1,900 years ago (Da 9:24-27)

Jesus promised to establish his Kingdom in the time of the end

We already see the evidence that the King Jesus Christ is with God's people today, directing their work of global witnessing even in the midst of superhuman and human enemies (Re 11:15, 18; 12:10-12)

With eagerness we look forward to fulfillment of all the other promises of God (1Co 15:24-28; Re 17:15-18; *re* 256-8; *w74* 346)

Earth-wide Paradise promised for the blessing of all of God's obedient earthly subjects (Re 21:1-4; *Lmn* 29-30)

Jesus' course of perfect integrity-keeping confirmed and made possible the realization of all of God's promises (2Co 1:20)

#### **ON WHOSE PROMISES, THEN, WILL YOU RELY?** (5 min.)

The promises of imperfect humans cannot be relied on

Men are unable to direct events that affect fulfillment (Ps 146:3, 4; *w88* 4/15 10-12)

Often promises are made with some selfish, ulterior motive, so it is important to heed the counsel at Psalm 118:8, 9

If we trust Jehovah's promises, what a marvelous future awaits us! (2Pe 3:13; *su* 107-12)

We can be sharers in the fulfillment of the Millennial blessings if we exercise faith in Jehovah and imitate his respect for promises

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## THE ONLY CURE FOR SICK MANKIND

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show that sin is the root of all mankind's physical, mental, moral, and social ills and that the only cure is by means of God's Kingdom in the hands of Christ Jesus. Show how the Kingdom will remove the effects of sin, and warn that it will soon act to destroy all who are part of Satan's sick world. Stimulate all to seek spiritual healing now by bringing their lives into line with God's righteous requirements

### **MANKIND IS SICK IN MANY WAYS** (9 min.)

Physical ills: heart disease, cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, tropical plagues, and so forth (*tp* 19-20; *g90* 2/8 28; *g89* 12/8 3-4, 31; *g84* 10/22 7)

AIDS: in Africa (*g92* 8/8 3-4); among children (*g91* 7/22 3-8); in general (*g88* 10/8 2-15)

Mental ills: depression (*w90* 3/1 3-4; *g87* 10/22 2-16); schizophrenia (*g86* 9/8 3-10)

Moral ills: addictions (*g90* 7/22 3-9; *g88* 12/8 3-12); sexual immorality (*yp* 181-2, 184; *g89* 1/22 7-11; *w88* 4/15 3-4, 6)

Social ills: racial prejudice, violence, religious hatreds, political and other forms of corruption, and crime of all sort (*w89* 8/15 3-4; *g89* 4/22 3-6)

Conditions are worsening in spite of man's well-meant efforts

Jesus foretold "pangs of distress" would set in with start of the last days for this system of things (Mt 24:8)

Example of worsening conditions foretold for last days: crime, violence (Mt 24:12; 2Ti 3:3, 13)

Total number of reported serious crimes in the United States increased over 1,000 percent from 1935 to 1980, while the population increased only about 78 percent during same period, and crimes continue to climb (*w90* 10/1 5; *w83* 6/1 6)

Human remedies for mankind's ills are ineffective

Considering the scope and destructiveness of the first world war, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* could, with good reason, say: "Civilization entered on a cruel and perhaps terminal illness in 1914"

While visiting Australia, an official of the World Council of Churches said: "Everyone seems to be looking for some panacea, some cure-all, which will guarantee an escape from all our worries. . . . In my third of a century of contact with most of the world, I have not discovered it."—*Sydney Morning Herald*

Pointing to the deep-seated nature of mankind's ills, one newspaper writer observed: "The kind of violence we are now experiencing tells us that the mind and heart, the very blood cells of society are sick. The institutions that hold civilization together are failing."—*New York Post*

### **THE REASON FOR MANKIND'S ILLS** (8 min.)

Jehovah God is a just, wise, almighty, loving Creator

All of his works, including man, were made perfect (De 32:4)

His purpose for mankind: enjoy life in Paradise, carry out divine will (Ge 1:26-28; 2:15)

Satan rebelled, induced Adam and Eve to join him (Ge 3:1-6)

Mankind since subjected to futility, unable to cope with inherent sin and its ills (Ro 5:12; 8:20, 22)

While it is taught that man evolved, Scriptures make clear the opposite—man was originally a son of God and has degenerated

Archaeologist O. D. Miller observed: "The old doctrine of a subsequent decadence, of a sad degeneracy of the human race, from an original state of happiness and purity, undoubtedly embodied a great, but lamentable truth. Our modern philosophies of history . . . evidently need a new introduction." (*it-2* 303)

Many ask why God has allowed sorrows to continue (Hab 1:2, 3; *ce* 188-96; *rs* 428-9)

Rebellion raised issue of rightfulness and righteousness of Jehovah's universal sovereignty (Isa 33:22)

Involved also issue of creature's being able to keep integrity, as seen from Satan's boast (Job, chaps. 1, 2)

The execution of Satan, Adam, and Eve at time of rebellion would not have settled issue raised by Satan  
Time was needed to prove Satan's boast false (Ex 9:16)

Also time was needed to let man demonstrate his inability to rule self apart from his Maker (Ec 8:9; Jer 10:23)

### **GOD'S KINGDOM IS THE PROMISED CURE FOR SICK MANKIND** (9 min.)

Adam's sin lost life rights for self and his descendants

All imperfect, none able to restore those rights (Ps 49:7-9)

Legal basis for forgiving sin provided in Christ's ransom sacrifice (Mt 20:28; Ro 3:25, 26; *it-1* 606)

Jesus, having God as his Father, was perfect, sinless (*it-2* 56)

Surrendered life for benefit of all who exercise faith (1Jo 3:16)

Jesus rewarded for integrity-keeping by being made King of God's Kingdom

Mankind's cure is to be by means of Kingdom mentioned soon after Adam's sin (Ge 3:15)

Promised Seed to come through Abraham, Judah, David (Ge 22:17, 18; 49:10; 2Sa 7:12)

Solomon's reign foreshadowed Messiah's rule (1Ki 4:25; Ps 72)

Many prophecies pointed to this Kingdom: Ps 2; 45; 110  
Testimony of Jesus Christ: Mt 6:10; Lu 23:42, 43  
Testimony of apostle Paul: Ro 8:20, 21; 1Co 15:24, 25, 28  
Jehovah's Word cannot fail (Isa 55:10, 11)

**JEHOVAH'S ACTS PAVE THE WAY TO MANKIND'S CURE** (15 min.)

Jehovah God certain to act because his name is involved

From Exodus through Ezekiel, over 70 times God says, 'They shall know that I am Jehovah'  
Peace and well-being of mankind depend on sanctification of God's name (*it-2* 16-18)

To cure mankind, Jehovah must eliminate all foes of God and man

Jehovah God executed the wicked in ancient times

At time of the Flood (Ge 6:5-8; 7:23)

Wicked Sodom and Gomorrah were executed (Ge 19:25)

Unfaithful Jerusalem was destroyed twice: 607 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. (2Ki 25:8-11; Lu 19:42-44)

Foreshadowed future destruction of wicked during "great tribulation" (Lu 21:25-27; Re 7:14)

John foretold that "Babylon the Great," world empire of false religion, would be first to go (Re 17:5, 16, 17)

Other parts of Satan's world to follow (Re 19:11-21)

Time is at hand

Present world conditions threaten man's existence (*w90* 7/1 3-4; *g90* 2/8 31)

Fulfillment of Bible prophecies point to our day (Mt 24; Mr 13; Lu 21; 2Ti 3:1-5)

Jesus Christ and 144,000 associates will rule 1,000 years (Re 14:1, 3; 20:4, 6)

Will restore mankind to mental, physical, spiritual, moral perfection (Re 21:3, 4; Isa 11:9; *ws* 174-9)

Also will raise all those in the tombs (those in God's memory) (Joh 5:28, 29; Ac 24:15)

Last enemy, death, to be destroyed (1Co 15:25, 26; *w86* 10/1 13; *ka* 159-60)

**GETTING BENEFITS OF SPIRITUAL CURE NOW** (4 min.)

Take in accurate Bible knowledge (Ps 119:105; Joh 17:3; *w76* 562-3)

Bring life in line with God's righteous requirements (1Pe 3:10-12; *w75* 292-3; *w73* 331)

Seek meekness, seek righteousness (Zep 2:3; 1Ti 4:8; *w82* 4/1 30-1)

Worship the Creator, Jehovah God (Re 4:11; *w90* 12/1 6-7)

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## DO YOU HAVE THE EVANGELIZING SPIRIT?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help all to appreciate that the evangelizing work is the most important work today. Show that hundreds of thousands are now responding to the call to enter the full-time evangelizing work. Urge all who can to take up the full-time evangelizing activity, confident that it is Jehovah's will and that he will sustain them

### **THERE IS NO OTHER EVANGEL EXCEPT FROM GOD'S WORD** (10 min.)

There is only one authentic evangel, of which Jehovah is the Originator (Ga 1:11, 12; w88 1/1 4)

"Evangel" comes from Greek word meaning "good news" or "good message." One who preaches good news of God's Word is rightly called an evangelizer (w88 1/1 3; it-1 770-1)

Good news of release and deliverance was preached by Jehovah to Abraham more than 4,000 years ago (Ga 3:8)

Do you, as a lover of God, have the earnest desire and determination to be an active preacher of God's life-giving good news of truth? (1Co 9:23)

Much encouragement now coming from Jehovah's faithful steward to enter into increased activities as evangelizers, either full-time or part-time (km 2/90 3; km 7/89 1-2; km 10/89 1-2; w88 12/15 25-7)

Many honesthearted ones now associating with evangelizers

Jesus commanded us to make disciples of these, "baptizing them" (Mt 28:19, 20)

Urgent need now is to "do the work of an evangelizer" and help many more to find the way to life (2Ti 4:5; w87 2/1 10-11; w86 1/15 13; w86 4/15 28-30)

### **GOOD NEWS FROM GOD'S WORD MUST NOW BE DECLARED** (11 min.)

Nations now sinking into greater darkness under power and influence of wicked one (Re 12:9)

After Satan was hurled from heaven, good news was that the power and salvation of God's Kingdom had come and the wicked one had only short time remaining (Re 12:10-12)

Main point now is: Are evil ones able to suppress or nullify good news, or will Jehovah's purpose be accomplished? (Mt 24:14)

Settlement of the issue of Jehovah's sovereignty affects all on earth. Conquering Lord Jesus will carry Jehovah's side of issue on to complete victory! (Re 6:2; re 90-2)

In heaven, mighty angels work with Chief Evangelizer to direct the spreading of evangelic message to ends of the earth (Re 14:6; re 204-5)

On earth, Jehovah has millions of willing volunteers; young and old, men, women, and children are now serving as evangelizers

Like young vigorous warriors, as numerous as dewdrops, these zealous workers offer themselves willingly in the day of Christ's "military force" and will go on to sure victory (Ps 110:3; w87 3/15 24)

The grand proclamation will continue until the complete end of this evil system of things (Re 20:1-3; w88 1/1 5-7)

What a glorious prospect! What great reasons for fullness of joy! (w74 329-34)

### **DO YOU PERSONALLY HAVE THE EVANGELIZING SPIRIT?** (18 min.)

Many coming to knowledge of truth in most selfish period of man's history (2Ti 3:1-5; w90 6/15 30)

Love for God is moving them to put aside the spirit of selfishness and to cultivate the unselfish evangelizing spirit (1Ti 4:15; w87 2/1 16-17)

As their knowledge and appreciation of truth increase, they realize that the work of evangelizing is the most important thing in life. It means life to those who accept the truth and death to those who reject it. It also means life to those who make known the truth (1Ti 4:16; w88 7/15 15-20)

Jesus Christ, the prime example of a whole-souled evangelizer, traveled throughout Israel, bringing message of life and light to the people

Majority hated and persecuted him, but he found believers and to them he granted privilege of being his fellow evangelizers or light bearers (Mt 5:14, 16; Joh 8:12)

Jesus' faithful course was a marvelous pattern for all who desire to follow in his steps (Mt 9:35-38; w73 269-73)

Another outstanding example and source of encouragement is the apostle Paul, who likewise became a zealous evangelizer, journeying in Asia Minor and Europe at risk of life (2Co 11:23-27; w87 2/1 11-14; w82 12/1 12-22)

Though rejected by majority, he established and built up congregations of fellow believers in whole territory. Efforts greatly blessed by Jehovah (Col 1:5, 6, 23)

Thousands of present-day evangelizers are devoting their full time to evangelizing work

Gilead School has trained thousands of missionaries who have gone to ends of the earth, bringing good news to thousands more (w89 1/1 13-14; w89 4/1 26-9; w88 10/1 20-5; w84 5/1 20-1; w82 3/1 17)

Others may not be able to attend Gilead or move elsewhere, but can still manifest evangelizing spirit (w74 337)

Discipline and self-sacrifice needed so that we can do our utmost in evangelizing work (2Ti 2:15; w87 2/1 18-20)

**THERE ARE NOW MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE AS EVANGELIZERS** (6 min.)

Because of urgency now, faithful slave is not only encouraging dedication and baptism but also stressing privilege of sharing actively in evangelizing work

Over 100 years ago, call went out from Society for "1,000 Preachers"

Some came forward, and numbers increased slowly

Self-denial of the Nazirites is a fine example for those wholly devoted to evangelizing activity (Nu 6:2-6; w82 3/1 19-20)

Now an average of over 600,000 are accepting the grand privilege to serve as full-time evangelizers, or pioneers (Lu 8:1; 10:1)

Call now goes out for all who can to enter full-time activity as evangelizers. Assurance given that Jehovah will sustain and care for all who volunteer to serve in his willing army of evangelizers (Ps 37:25; Lu 12:22-31)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

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## LOVERS OF PLEASURE OR LOVERS OF GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Explain the subtle danger of allowing love of pleasure to dominate one's life. Point out the devastating effects such a course could have on one's happiness and spirituality. Encourage all to develop a balanced view of pleasure and to earnestly endeavor to keep love for Jehovah in first place

### **WIDESPREAD LOVE OF PLEASURE HAS REACHED EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS** (5 min.)

Scriptures foretold that in last days men would be “lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God” (2Ti 3:1, 4; *w88* 6/15 17)

While many claim to love God, they spend more time in and show greater devotion to pursuit of pleasure than of spiritual things

Many rationalize or try to find excuses for this in effort to justify selfish heart inclinations (Jer 17:9, 10)

Such inclinations inherited from Adam, whose own heart became enticed by selfishness. Manifested on large scale in Noah's day when self-indulgence led to other forms of badness, resulting in destruction of ungodly world (Ge 6:5; 2Pe 3:6)

Christians must be extremely careful that this spirit does not infect them

Pleasure-seeking often leads to drunkenness, drug abuse, immorality, and even untimely death (Ga 6:8)

Only those seeking and loving God have prospect of surviving end of present wicked system (Zep 2:2, 3)

### **SATAN AND THE WORLD PROMOTE LOVE OF PLEASURE** (12 min.)

Jehovah is “the happy God,” taking delight in his perfect works (1Ti 1:11)

Desires his intelligent creatures to be happy also

Our senses are designed to perceive a tremendous variety of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures (1Ti 6:17)

He wants us to enjoy food and drink (Ec 5:18)

Jesus accepted invitations to meals and banquets but kept his spiritual balance; he never became a ‘lover of pleasure rather than a lover of God’ (Lu 5:29; 19:5, 6; Joh 4:34)

Satan and the world exploit our inherited desire to be happy

Jehovah's servants must be on guard for traps urging them to put pleasure first

Solomon gave a realistic view of pleasures (Ec 2:1, 2)

Pursuit of pleasure cannot bring lasting happiness

We should be moderate in the number of social gatherings we attend and the amount of time we devote to them

Take care that wholesome Christian gatherings do not become noisy, boisterous affairs of self-indulgence (2Pe 2:13)

Do not allow gatherings to become occasions of unrestrained merrymaking, heavy drinking, and sensuality (Isa 5:11, 12; 1Pe 4:3)

Wedding receptions, anniversaries, and the like should not be turned into occasions for worldliness (1Co 10:31; *w92* 8/15 15-20; *w84* 4/15 16-22)

The big thing in our life must be practice of true worship, not pursuit of pleasure (*w83* 11/1 24-7)

Guard against satanic reasoning: “Do your own thing”; “Be your own person”; “God knows our weaknesses and understands”; “God loves us and wants us to have a good time”; “It's only normal relaxation,” and so forth (Jude 4)

Satan wants people to live as if there were no tomorrow (Isa 22:13; 1Co 15:32)

Lovers of God, as holy people, should never for one moment forget that “the day of Jehovah” is imminent and the promised new world is at hand (2Pe 3:11-13)

Jesus warned us of the grave dangers of becoming lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God (Lu 21:34-36; *w83* 7/1 3-7; *w77* 520-4)

### **BAD FRUITS OF BEING LOVERS OF PLEASURE** (12 min.)

(Speaker should relate some experiences and examples of how pursuing pleasure has damaged the spirituality of some and resulted in unhappiness for them and their families; *yp* 296-9; *g88* 7/22 24-7; *g86* 2/22 13-17)

Lovers of pleasures have only “a form of godly devotion” (2Ti 3:5)

They become idolizers of sports, theatrical, motion picture, and musical figures (*yp* 220-1; *w72* 754)

They have a form of religion—the creed of hedonism (*w90* 4/15 31; *g72* 1/22 26)

Many have put pleasure in the place of God (*w83* 7/1 3)

In the United States, some refer to pursuit of pleasure as the number-one industry (*g79* 8/22 4)

Pursuit of pleasure does nothing to deepen one's relationship with God (*w82* 3/15 30)

Solomon found that it left him with an empty feeling (Ec 2:3-11; *w86* 7/1 14-15; *w77* 58-9)

Jesus denounced the empty, shallow life of pleasure-seekers who live only for their own comforts (Lu 6:25)

Pleasure seeking may interfere with theocratic activities

Do you allow this to happen? Are you “keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah”? (2Pe 3:12)  
Which do *you* seek first, pleasure or the Kingdom? Whom do you really love—Jehovah or pleasure? (Mt 6:33; Mr 12:30)

Pleasure seeking often takes one into worldly places and bad association (1Co 7:31)

May lead to immorality, drunkenness, drugs (*w88* 6/15 18-19)

Sad consequences include reproof or disfellowshipping

#### **AIDS IN COMBATING LOVE OF PLEASURE** (12 min.)

Prevent problems at social gatherings (*w86* 5/1 18-19; *w77* 524-6)

To avoid social gatherings with worldly overtones, guard against association even with some congregation members (2Ti 2:20-22)

Not obligated to invite those given to excesses (2Th 3:6, 7)

Keep gatherings to reasonable size, and see that Jehovah is honored (1Co 14:25)

Control drinking and music (Eph 5:18, 19; *w84* 4/15 17-22)

Develop the proper view of pleasures (*w92* 8/15 17, 18; *w83* 11/1 24-7; *g78* 4/22 27-8)

Wholesome relaxation is fine (Ec 8:15)

Avoid spending excessive amounts of time in pleasures (*w89* 7/15 11-12)

All things should harmonize with Christian faith (Php 4:8)

Fill life with worthwhile activities

Youth is the ideal time to begin (Ec 11:9, 10)

All should seek joy and satisfaction in spiritual activities

Have you made a disciple? There is no greater joy

Proficiency in ministry brings deep satisfaction

Make God’s work the main course, relaxation the dessert

#### **REWARDS FOR KEEPING PLEASURES IN THEIR PLACE** (4 min.)

Balanced living yields good conscience

Stability and steadiness that help us stay on Christian course (Mt 7:13, 14)

More time for spiritual development and growth

Lovers of God to live forever (1Jo 2:17)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



# HOW TO CULTIVATE PEACE IN AN ANGRY WORLD

## *Note to the speaker:*

Make a tender appeal to victims of injustice to let go of anger and leave their frustrations in Jehovah's hands. Use verified experiences to illustrate the superiority of Christian peaceableness over protest and retaliation

### **THE WORLD IS INCREASINGLY UNSTABLE AND ANGRY** (3 min.)

The Bible foretold that "the last days" would be marked by selfishness and hatred (2Ti 3:1-3)

Some victims of injustice retaliate with violence, fueling further anger (*w07* 4/15 4; *g* 6/11 5-6)  
How can we keep from becoming consumed by anger?

### **ALMIGHTY GOD WILL PERMANENTLY END INJUSTICE** (6 min.)

Jehovah God hates injustice and promises to eliminate it [**Read Psalm 37:10, 11**]

Human political solutions and protest movements are not God's means of bringing justice (Da 7:13, 14)

God will use his Son, Jesus Christ, to remove all who oppress their fellow man (Ps 72:13, 14)

The Bible refers to the time when God will remove the wicked as "the day of Jehovah's anger" (Zep 2:2)

Unlike human anger, God's anger is always justified and never excessive (*it-1* 108)

When God acts, the result will be an "abundance of peace" earth wide

To benefit, we must cooperate with Jehovah's way of correcting injustice (Zep 2:3)

### **BE A PEACEMAKER WHO CONQUERS EVIL WITH GOOD** (13 min.)

[**Read and discuss key portions of Romans 12:18-21**]

*Verse 18: "If possible, as far as it depends on you, be peaceable with all men"*

Show your support for God's solution to injustice by choosing to be peaceable

Avoid association with people who lash out in anger or who advocate vengeance (Pr 22:24, 25)

*Verse 19: "Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," says Jehovah"*

Retaliation is self-destructive and feeds a cycle of hatred (*w09* 9/1 21-23)

Instead of retaliating, strengthen your faith that Jehovah God will act

Imitate Jesus, who had confidence that God would avenge unjust treatment (1Pe 2:23)

*Verse 20: "But 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink'"*

Break the cycle of anger and revenge by looking for ways to do good even to "your enemy"

A primary way to do good to others is to share with them the Bible's hope of relief from injustice (*yb09* 212-213)

*Verse 21: "Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil"*

If you feel powerless before oppressors, do not direct your frustration toward family or friends

Seek support from a mature friend whose thinking agrees with God's (*g05* 2/22 19-20)

Pour out your feelings to Jehovah in prayer (Ps 37:5, 6; 55:22)

*Verse 21: "But keep conquering the evil with the good"*

Be willing to forgive others whenever there is a basis for doing so (Eph 4:31, 32; *g95* 6/8 10 ¶6-7)

Let go of resentment and leave matters in Jehovah's hands (*w13* 6/15 20-21 ¶15-16; *w00* 8/15 5, box)

God's holy spirit can empower a person to overcome deeply rooted anger (2Co 10:4, 5; Php 4:13)

Ask God for help to replace angry thoughts with compassionate, peaceful ones (*w10* 6/15 24 ¶18-19)

### **CULTIVATING PEACE LEADS TO BLESSINGS** (8 min.)

Many have applied Bible principles on peaceableness and enjoyed blessings as a result

They have broken free from a violent course (*g* 6/12 19-21; *g* 6/11 6-7; *g03* 1/8 18-20)

They have enjoyed better health and greater happiness (Pr 14:30; Mt 5:5, 9; *g* 5/06 28-29)

Some have helped former opposers to change (Ro 12:20, ftn; *yb10* 63-64)

Victims of injustice cannot change the past, but they can look forward to a bright future [**Read Psalm 37:8, 9**]

We invite you to continue associating with Jehovah's Witnesses and learning to 'hope in Jehovah'

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## SLAVE FOR THE MASTER OF THE HARVEST

### *Note to the speaker:*

Explain clearly that serving Jehovah as slaves is not oppressive but results in joy. Be positive, and highlight the blessings that come from faithful service

### **JESUS LIKENED HIS DISCIPLES TO SLAVES OF THEIR MASTER, JEHOVAH GOD** (6 min.)

“Slave” and “slavery” evoke negative thoughts for many because of the abuse, hard labor, and loss of freedom that slaves in general have suffered (*w92* 4/1 3, 4)

Christians are referred to as slaves of God because they have been “bought with a price” (1Co 7:23)

By virtue of ransom sacrifice, they have been emancipated from slavery to sin and death and have made themselves available for service to God (Joh 3:16; 2Co 5:14, 15)

Have come under obligation to keep his commands

Like the Hebrew slave who loves his master, Christians should be eager to serve the Master, Jehovah, who has given them life and all its blessings (Ex 21:5, 6; 1Jo 5:3)

Since God is their Master, Christians cannot serve other masters and still be pleasing to him (Mt 6:24)

Jesus set pattern by putting first priority on working for his heavenly Father (Joh 4:34)

All people on earth are in one of two categories—those who serve God as disciples of Jesus and those who do not (Mt 12:30; 1Co 10:21)

### **JEHOVAH GOD IS A LOVING MASTER, WORTHY OF OUR SERVICE** (7 min.)

Jesus showed that Jehovah is a caring and loving Master

On one preaching campaign, Jesus saw the people in great spiritual need and felt pity for them (Mt 9:35, 36; *gt* 49)

He indicated to the disciples that they had a great deal of work ahead of them (Mt 9:37)

Yet, he assured them that “the Master of the harvest,” Jehovah God, would help them to complete the harvest (Mt 9:38)

After telling disciples to ask for more workers, Jesus sent them out to the field with specific instructions (Mt 10:1, 5-15)

They were to preach the Kingdom (Mt 10:7)

Disciples not to get sidetracked by materialism while participating in the harvest (Mt 10:9-11)

Approach each householder with message of peace (Mt 10:12-15)

Those who participated in the work as directed by Jesus experienced much joy and received blessings from their loving Master (Lu 10:17-20)

Harvest work in first century blessed by the Master

On Pentecost 33 C.E., about 3,000 were baptized (Ac 2:41)

Jehovah kept giving the increase (Ac 2:47b; 4:4; 5:14)

Still, more workers are needed—Why?

### **HARVEST WORK IS TO CLIMAX IN TIME OF THE END** (15 min.)

In a forceful illustration, Jesus foretold that harvest work is to come to a climax in the time of the end. Read Matthew 13:24-30 (Mt 13:36-39; *w81* 8/1 16-26; *kc* 102-3)

“The sower” represents Jesus

The “fine seed” represents wheatlike Christians, “the sons of the kingdom,” or anointed Christians (*wt* 178-9)

The first of these were Jesus’ apostles and other disciples who received the gift of the holy spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E. (*w81* 8/1 18)

“The enemy” is “the Devil”

“The weeds” are “the sons of the wicked one”—his hypocritical religious offspring in Christendom (*w81* 8/1 19, 20)

“The harvest” is “a conclusion of a system of things” (*w81* 8/1 22)

We are now in a harvest time

Under angelic direction the wheat is being separated from the weeds (*w81* 8/1 24, 25; *ws* 68)

Their enlightened condition and glorious service cause the wheat class to be “shining as illuminators in the world” (Mt 13:43; Php 2:15)

As “the sons of the kingdom” let their light shine, many others with listening ears are helped to flee from the grip of the weed class

Since the mid-1930’s, the influx of the “great crowd” of “other sheep” has been gaining momentum (Joh 10:16; Re 7:9, 10)

Where do you stand with regard to the fulfillment of Jesus’ illustration of the wheat and the weeds?

Are you supporting the ingathering work being done by the wheatlike anointed brothers of Jesus?

**TODAY WE ARE INVITED TO SLAVE FOR THE MASTER OF THE FINAL HARVEST** (12 min.)

The great harvest work taking place today requires many workers

All true worshipers of Jehovah must participate in preaching and teaching Kingdom truths (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20)

View yourself as an instrument in God's hands (1Co 3:6, 7)

Plant and sow seeds of truth in public ministry

Some will respond; others will not

Literally, thousands are being helped to an accurate knowledge of the truth (Consult current *Yearbook* on latest statistics on number of publishers, home Bible studies conducted, and so forth; relate one or two experiences listed in *Index* under "Field Ministry" to show positive response to preaching work)

Recognize your personal responsibility to participate in the ministry

Just living a good life is not enough; must be active in producing Kingdom fruitage (Ps 34:1; Ac 5:28, 29, 42; 10:42)

Heed Bible counsel to have plenty to do in the work of the Lord (1Co 15:58)

Many associated but not yet baptized

We urge you to consider your personal circumstances seriously

Because end is near, dangerous to keep putting off accepting responsibility and making dedication (*w92* 10/1 20-3)

**JOYS AND BLESSINGS AWAIT THOSE WHO FAITHFULLY SHARE IN HARVEST WORK** (5 min.)

It is a grand privilege to have a share in the great harvest work going on under the direction of the Master of the harvest, Jehovah

The joys and blessings are pictured by ancient Israel's Festival of Ingathering, or Festival of Booths (De 16: 13-15; *it-1* 823)

Just like celebrants of ancient festival, great crowd today are pictured as having palm branches in their hands and joyfully ascribing salvation to God and to the Lamb (*re* 122)

The great crowd have the marvelous prospect of surviving the "great tribulation" and living in new world (Re 7:14; 2Pe 3:13)

These blessings are theirs because "they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" and because "they are before the throne of God" and "rendering him sacred service day and night" (Re 7:15; *re* 126)

You too can enjoy these marvelous blessings by faithfully sharing in the grand harvest work today

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## TAKING TIME TO MEDITATE ON SPIRITUAL THINGS

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to appreciate the vital role meditation plays in the spiritual life of a Christian. Encourage all to set aside quality time regularly to meditate on spiritual things. Stress that proper meditation requires both time and effort, and show the right way to meditate

### **MEDITATION ENCOURAGED IN THE SCRIPTURES** (6 min.)

To know God, one must take in accurate knowledge from Scriptures (Joh 17:3)

Additionally, one should observe God's creative works (*w*90 9/15 15)

After study and observation, a person must meditate seriously in order to know God (Ps 143:5)

Not enough simply to think about things; need to see connection between them and Jehovah (*w*93 9/15 16)

Meditation was essential for Joshua to do well

Joshua had succeeded Moses and was preparing to lead Jehovah's people into the Promised Land in 1473 B.C.E.

Jehovah gave instructions to Joshua (Jos 1:1-9)

As shown in verse 8, Joshua had to meditate constantly on God's Law in order to act wisely and have Jehovah's blessing

Those who meditate on God's Word are pronounced happy (Ps 1:1, 2)

Meditation is a characteristic of those who are righteous and understanding (Ps 49:3; Pr 15:28; *w*79 1/1 28; *w*79 5/1 10)

### **CHRISTIANS MUST NOT BE CONFUSED BY WORLD'S VIEW OF MEDITATION** (8 min.)

Christians must be careful not to confuse proper meditation with worldly concepts of meditation

*Hinduism:* Transcendental meditation (TM) (*g*76 11/8 26-8)

Although some advocates deny religious involvement, usually an altar is involved, as well as a chant in Sanskrit acknowledging Brahma as the Creator; other chants praise the Hindu trinity

Christians acknowledge only Jehovah as Creator (Re 4:11)

We know from the Bible that only God's Kingdom can solve the deep problems of human society (Da 2:44; 7:13, 14)

*Buddhism:* Prescribes meditation but not the kind encouraged by the Bible (*sh* 146-7; *g*74 1/8 16-19)

Buddhists advocate meditating by concentration on a single object, a certain part of the body, or a phrase or riddle

The mind is eventually emptied of all other thoughts and feelings

In time the one meditating may no longer desire life or any pleasure associated with life

Such meditation is not compatible with the Bible, for by emptying the mind of all conscious thought, a person opens himself up to demon influence (Note principle at Matthew 12:43-45; *w*87 3/1 8-9; *w*81 2/15 26)

### **WHAT PROPER MEDITATION INVOLVES** (10 min.)

Meditation is defined as: "The kind of deep, concentrated thinking in which a person seriously reflects on past experiences, ponders and muses over current matters, or thoughtfully contemplates possible future events" (*it*-2 363)

Need to keep mind focused and learn to meditate

Meditation is not daydreaming, allowing mind to drift into idle reverie (*w*84 2/1 27-30)

Must take care that heart does not turn meditations to scheming or planning to satisfy improper desires

For meditation to be beneficial and faith-strengthening, one must avoid speculation

Speculation results in conclusions unsupported by factual evidence; danger in such speculation (Col 2:8; *w*75 380, 389)

Speculative thinking has caused some to fall away from the truth (2Ti 2:18)

Meditating on "empty things," things devoid of all good, can lead one to oppose Jehovah and his servants (Ac 4:25, 26; *it*-2 363)

To meditate properly, one needs to be relaxed, free from anxieties

A person must be alone with his thoughts, not distracted by TV, music, and so forth

Should seek out quiet times and places, perhaps at night (Ps 63:6)

Isaac walked alone in early evening to meditate (Ge 24:63)

Meditation should be focused on beneficial things (Ps 77:12; *w*77 166)

Should not think pensively on devices of wicked (Pr 24:1, 2)

Both the heart and the mind should be involved in meditation (Pr 15:28)

**IMPORTANCE OF MEDITATION ON SPIRITUAL THINGS** (18 min.)

Meditation is necessary for wisdom, important for spiritual advancement

Paul advised Timothy to meditate on his own conduct, ministry, teaching (1Ti 4:15)

The overhasty person usually fails to consider knowledge or give thoughtful consideration (*it-2* 1140-1)

The understanding person meditates to determine the significance of counsel (Job 23:5)

This could have been personal counsel, a talk at a meeting, or an article he has read

Give consideration to consequences of decisions and actions so as to avoid calamity (Ps 73:2, 3, 16-18; *w78* 10/15 14-15)

Israel failed to consider “their end afterward” (De 32:28-30)

Meditate on your relationship with Jehovah (*w77* 165-6)

Weak relationship may indicate lack of deep thinking (Lu 8:11-13)

Meditate to understand Jehovah’s qualities and dealings with a view to making them part of your personality (*w90* 3/1 13-14; *w78* 2/15 28-9; *wt* 28-31 pars. 12-13)

Concentrate on how you fit in with Jehovah’s purpose

Consider past, present, and future activity

Reflecting on past can help you see your mistakes and improve life

Israel’s past sins should have served as a reminder to them (De 9:7)

Remember your former acts of loyalty (Heb 10:32, 33; *it-2* 1089)

Meditate on past course of faithful ones (*w72* 404-5)

Contemplate present and future activity with a view to improving

Think seriously of your goals, your priorities, your conscience

Meditate on how you are using your life now and what you plan to do in future

Decisions may affect your life eternally

Meditation on spiritual things will make you a deeper person

Such meditations will be reflected in your speech (Ps 49:3; Eph 4:29, 31, 32)

**CONTINUE TO TAKE TIME TO MEDITATE ON SPIRITUAL THINGS** (3 min.)

Do not allow fast pace of daily life to keep you from meditating

As Jesus needed solitary periods of prayer and spiritual refreshment, so do you (Mr 6:30, 31; Lu 6:12)

Treasure times set aside for meditation

Regularly meditate on spiritual things (Php 4:8, 9)

Will make you an encouragement and a refreshment to others and will enhance your relationship with Jehovah

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## DO YOU HARBOR RESENTMENT, OR DO YOU FORGIVE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the brothers to root out of their hearts any tendency to take offense and harbor resentment. Help them see how to avoid such feelings and how to dispel them if they do arise. Instill an intense desire to imitate Jehovah in showing love and mercy. Encourage all to put forth every effort to resolve difficulties and to forgive one another from the heart

### **ALL HAVE FAULTS, ARE SINNERS** (6 min.)

No one is without sin, faultless (Ps 51:5; Ec 7:20; Ro 3:23; *it-2* 18)

Eventually all stumble, especially regarding the tongue (Jas 3:2; *w78* 5/15 7)

We are inclined to minimize our own shortcomings

Usually think that others are worse sinners than us (Lu 6:42)

Bible advises being humble, considering others superior to us (Php 2:3)

Must follow example Jehovah sets in being forgiving (Eph 4:32)

### **JEHOVAH DOES NOT HARBOR RESENTMENT** (10 min.)

God has reason to be indignant with us because of our errors

In our sinful state, we constantly fall short of his requirements

Though expressing righteous indignation at times, Jehovah does not “keep resentful” (Ps 103:9)

God forgives those who leave wickedness (Isa 55:7; *sl* 111-12)

Our survival depends on Jehovah’s forgiveness

Examples of Jehovah’s forgiving individuals

King Manasseh offended Jehovah with gross sins, yet was forgiven after repentance (2Ch 33:10-13)

Prodigal son forgiven by father, even welcomed with opened arms

Illustrates Jehovah’s largeness of heart (Lu 15:11-32; *gt* 86)

Paul called himself ‘foremost sinner,’ yet was forgiven and was used extensively as minister of God (1Ti 1:15; *lp* 111-12)

### **DO NOT BE QUICK TO TAKE OFFENSE** (6 min.)

Must not be quick to take offense at what others say about us

Realize that we also sometimes offend others (Ec 7:21, 22; *g89* 7/22 19)

Are we quick to take offense because of pride, taking ourselves too seriously? (Ec 7:9; *w77* 415-16)

When we are misrepresented, often there is no need to make a major point of the matter

Jesus, accused of being a glutton, did not make a big issue of it

Knew that his works would disprove the accusation (Mt 11:19; *it-1* 964)

David turned a deaf ear to argumentative ones (Ps 38:12-15)

Found it best to rely on Jehovah and wait

### **SOME HAVE A TENDENCY TO HARBOR RESENTMENT** (8 min.)

Consider the following hypothetical situation

You have a small personal problem that you confide to a close friend. He promises to tell no one. Later you learn that others know about your problem

How would you feel toward your friend? Would you decide to cut him off? Would you say, “I will greet him but have nothing further to do with him. I will keep my distance”?

Do not be hasty in forming conclusions, getting angry (Pr 29:20, 22)

Think: Was the brother just thoughtless? Have you ever done such a thing yourself? Was it perhaps a misunderstanding? Was he perhaps seeking further advice that could be useful to you? Can the matter be minimized, overlooked, and forgiven? Was the keeping of it confidential all that important? Are you quite sure that he was actually the one that transmitted the information to the other person? (Pr 19:11; *g87* 5/8 22-3; *g74* 3/8 3, 4)

The Bible counsels us not to harbor resentment (Le 19:18; *w72* 707)

Harboring animosity can lead to direct hurt to neighbor, even to extreme measures

If we follow a natural instinct, we may come to dislike the person

Dislike nurtured by aloofness can turn to hatred

Hatred is a strong emotion, will damage you (*w87* 7/1 3-4)

You may develop a murderous disposition toward the person (Mt 5:21, 22; *w90* 10/1 13)

It could even lead to taking revenge

How do you handle yourself in such situations? Do you harbor resentment, or do you forgive?

Remaining angry because of the sin of another breaks down human relationships, “stirs up contention” (Pr 29:22; *w*90 9/15 22; *g*80 5/8 24)

Causes marital difficulties and breakdown of the family arrangement

Hinders closeness between brothers in congregation

**DO NOT HARBOR RESENTMENT, BUT BE QUICK ABOUT FORGIVING** (10 min.)

Willingness to forgive is test of genuine love for others

Easier to make gift of material value than to exercise generosity by forgiving (*w*79 9/1 3, 4)

Do we feel that our love is genuine and that we are generous in forgiveness? (Mt 18:21, 22; *w*88 3/1 8, 9)

Exercise a forgiving spirit in the family

Observation made: “A happy marriage is the union of two good forgivers” (*w*79 9/1 4)

Forgive mistakes in a large way

Freely forgive one another in the congregation

Necessary for happiness and encouragement of all, especially in case of a wrongdoer seeking forgiveness

Wrongdoing brings reproach on congregation, affects the spirit of the congregation

All in congregation should express genuine forgiveness for truly repentant ones (2Co 2:5-11; *w*77 693)

Forgive the trouble, reproach, and sorrow that their wrongdoing brought upon the congregation (*w*72 437)

Jehovah does not despise truly repentant ones, sets example we must follow (Ps 51:17; *w*93 3/15 16)

Learn to be quick about forgiving

Do not ascribe evil motive to the actions of others

Try to settle matters immediately (Eph 4:26; *w*90 9/15 21)

Do not return “injury for injury” (1Pe 3:8, 9; *g*80 1/8 4)

Forgiveness promotes peace; vengeance promotes strife

Not only forgive but also forget (*w*92 7/15 29)

**CONTINUE IN THE FORGIVING WAY** (5 min.)

Love enables us to forgive our brothers and continue in Jehovah’s forgiving way (Mt 6:14, 15; 1Co 13:5; *w*90 5/15 19; *w*72 708)

Forgive, and avoid damaging effects vengeance has on self and others (*ce* 206-7)

Avoid associating with those who harbor resentment (Pr 22:24, 25; *g*87 5/8 23)

Imitate Jehovah, the perfect example of one who forgives (Ps 103:3; Eze 18:22)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## RENEWING THE SPIRIT OF SELF-SACRIFICE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help all to see that the spirit of true Christianity is a spirit of giving and self-sacrifice. Encourage them to examine themselves to see if their service to Jehovah fully reflects this spirit. Point out in practical ways how they can cultivate this spirit in themselves and in their children. Warmly appeal to them to imitate the thousands of others who are truly displaying the spirit of self-sacrifice today

### **THE WORLD ENCOURAGES SELF-INDULGENCE, NOT SELF-SACRIFICE** (7 min.)

Everything today is designed to appeal to self

The idea is to get what you can while you can; get the most and the best; you can never get too much

The world uses such expressions as: “I did it my way,” “You have to look out for number one,” “Get yours now,” “The end justifies the means,” “Do your own thing”

Many parents, feeling that they “should be free to live their own lives,” neglect their children (g89 3/22 5)

What are the results of self-indulgence?

Unhappiness, frustration, dissatisfaction, and misery

The Israelites were an example of what happens to the self-indulgent

They murmured, complained, had “selfish craving” (Nu 11:34)

Contributed to unhappiness and brought death for many

World has not learned from that or other experiences in history

People ask: ‘Why be self-sacrificing when no one really cares and the modern world has so much to offer?’

Why disown yourself when people everywhere are doing just the opposite—being self-assertive and demanding more and more for themselves? Why not try to “gain the whole world” or at least a good portion of it? (Mr 8:36)

### **GOD’S SERVANTS ENCOURAGED TO BE SELF-SACRIFICING** (12 min.)

Israel’s blessings depended on their sacrificing the best (Mal 1:14; 3:10)

Jesus was self-sacrificing in leaving heaven (Php 2:5-8)

For this he had great joy (Ps 40:8; Heb 12:2)

He was especially zealous for Jehovah’s service (Mr 1:32-39)

Jesus always sacrificed his own interests in order to please God (Joh 5:30)

Jesus encouraged his disciples to be self-sacrificing (Lu 9:23-25; w90 8/1 16)

Bible shows that they were (Mt 4:20; 19:27)

This means that they gave up certain things in life so as to please God more fully and to put Kingdom interests first

What are some ways in which this is being done by Jesus’ disciples today? (w86 6/15 12)

Sacrificing one’s position in the business community by being identified as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses

Giving up time that could be spent in recreational or materialistic pursuits for meetings and service

Entering full-time service (Ro 12:1, 2; 2Ti 2:15)

Giving up certain worldly entertainment, music, careers (g86 2/22 13-17)

Willing to suffer imprisonment (Ac 5:29; w89 3/1 18; w89 6/15 27)

Being prepared to obey Jehovah’s Word even unto death (Mt 10:28; yb89 119-23; yb88 151-4)

Having a regular share in the ministry (w92 2/1 27-8)

### **ARE YOU A SELF-SACRIFICING PERSON?** (19 min.)

In view of the Bible’s encouragement for Christians to be self-sacrificing, ask yourself: ‘Am I a self-sacrificing person?’

Jesus’ command to ‘seek first the Kingdom’ applies with equal urgency today (Mt 6:33)

Examples of those who endured hardships in the 1930’s and 1940’s show that they had the self-sacrificing spirit (Speaker may relate experiences of Ernest E. Beavor [w80 3/15 8-11], Ilse Unterdörfer [w79 11/1 8-14], or others listed under “Life Stories of Jehovah’s Witnesses” in *Watch Tower Publications Index*)

Thousands of missionaries sent out by Watchtower Bible School of Gilead have left their families and homes

Have sacrificed a so-called normal life in order to preach the good news to the ends of the earth (Mr 10:29, 30; Heb 6:10)

Thousands of others have served as pioneers in their homelands

Many willing to serve in different parts of the country, establishing and building up congregations

Many have served at Bethel homes throughout the earth, providing literature and support for the work in the field

In all of this, we have seen a fulfillment of Psalm 110:3, which gave a glowing description of the self-sacrificing spirit (Read) (w84 5/1 17-22)

Because of this self-sacrificing spirit, we are seeing a fulfillment of Matthew 24:14, Matthew 28:19, 20, and Acts 1:8

It is clear from these scriptures that God's Word commissions all dedicated servants of God to be fully involved in Kingdom service (*w86 1/15 13*)

Are you fully involved?

If you are a parent, are you inculcating in your children the desire to go into the full-time service? (De 6:6, 7)

Or are you and your family largely oriented toward making a better and more comfortable living now?

Jesus warned about "the deceptive power of riches" (Mt 13:22)

Material riches have limitations; they fail when needs are greatest; they cannot provide good health or prevent death

Life does not depend on material possessions (Lu 12:15-21; *w86 7/15 31*)

#### **CULTIVATE THE SPIRIT OF SELF-SACRIFICE** (5 min.)

Do you show a self-sacrificing spirit by serving Jehovah as fully as your circumstances allow?

Can you devote more time to personal Bible reading and study?

Do you study regularly?

Is it possible for you to spend more time in Kingdom work?

How many hours do you spend in recreation or watching television?

Is it properly balanced with Kingdom work? (Eph 5:15, 16)

Are you a parent? The best time for your children to learn the spirit of self-sacrifice is during childhood (2Ti 3:14, 15)

Give them work to do; let them learn that life is not easy (*g90 9/8 6*)

Take time to train them, study with them, discipline them (Eph 6:4; Heb 12:11)

Are you an elder or a full-time minister? Is there something you also could do?

Can you improve the quality of your service?

Can you make yourself a better Christian? (Ga 5:22, 23)

#### **THE COURSE OF SELF-SACRIFICE BRINGS THE GREATER HAPPINESS** (2 min.)

Work for spiritual riches that will never fail (Mt 6:20; *w89 7/15 13-14*)

Apostle Paul showed the superiority of spiritual riches (1Ti 6:17-19; *w88 10/15 21; w86 6/15 5-6*)

Be content with what you have, and serve Jehovah with rejoicing (Ac 20:35)

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## MAKE JEHOVAH YOUR CONFIDENCE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Instill in the hearts of the brothers a deep sense of confidence that Jehovah's ways are best for us. Help the audience to see in practical ways how they can show confidence in Jehovah. Warn of the danger of trusting in self or in human wisdom, and show the sad consequences to which this can lead. Encourage all to put full trust in Jehovah in every aspect of life

### **FIND FAVOR AND GOOD INSIGHT IN THE EYES OF GOD AND OF MAN (Pr 3:1-4) (5 min.)**

Consideration of Proverbs 3:1-26 will show us how to make Jehovah our confidence

Bible knowledge is to be impressed on the heart

All must listen to Jehovah, our Father; youths must listen to parents

Keep mind on the laws of God

“Write them upon the tablet of your heart” by study and by speaking about Jehovah's laws so that they become a part of you (Ps 40:8; *it-2* 483 ¶5; *w86* 11/1 17-18)

Reward will be “length of days and years of life and peace”

Jehovah determines whether one lives forever or passes away

Those applying Jehovah's Word should be free of strife, backbiting, and so forth, and have “peace” (Ga 5:20, 22)

### **TRUST JEHOVAH AND NOT LEAN ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING (Pr 3:5-8) (12 min.)**

Whatever you do, keep Jehovah's laws in mind, seek his guidance

Trust Jehovah, and experience that the Bible guides people in the right way

Trust Jehovah by studying his Word; ponder over what it says; obey its commandments; live by its principles “Trust in Jehovah,” as did Jesus (Isa 8:17, 18) and Paul (2Co 1:9, 10); do not trust in men (Ps 146:3, 4)

Trust Jehovah's direction through his organization, provision of spiritual food, appointment of overseers

Never pit your “understanding” of things, events, arrangements, against Jehovah's direction to you through his Word and organization

“Take notice of him” by acknowledging Jehovah, doing what he says, following his ways

Recognize Jehovah's authority, sovereignty

Be obedient to him even in private matters and in your thoughts

Listen to Jehovah in such matters as ‘marrying only in the Lord’ (1Co 7:39)

He knows best, and you must learn to trust him

Those who trust Jehovah will have success, divine favor

Those who ‘lean upon own understanding’ may fall away and suffer spiritual calamity

Human wisdom is to be avoided

We should not think more of ourselves than is necessary (Ro 12:3)

We should not get off on a tangent because of personal ideas, theories

Should be guided by God's congregational arrangement (Ps 22:22)

The reason so many religions exist today is that people have insisted on leaning on their own understanding (Pr 14:12)

Few have consulted God's Word; they prefer their own opinions

“Turn away from bad,” and you will have a clean conscience

Avoid being overcritical, picking at brothers or congregation

Keep advancing in accurate knowledge, but do not allow pride, fear, or jealousy to motivate you

The study of God's Word as well as application of it in speech, thought, and deed has a favorable effect, is “a refreshment to your bones”

### **HONOR JEHOVAH WITH YOUR BEST, AND ACCEPT DISCIPLINE (Pr 3:9-12) (10 min.)**

Support Jehovah's organization (*w85* 12/1 20-2)

As the Israelites brought their best to Jehovah, so do Christians today

Contribute toward your Kingdom Hall; assist the Society's headquarters and branches as well as the global missionary work (*g89* 1/22 14-15; *w87* 12/15 19-20)

Use your assets to assist the weak and brothers in need (*w84* 12/1 22)

Use them for the good of others; will be of no benefit to you “on the day of fury” (Pr 11:4; *w77* 201)

“Your stores of supply will be filled with plenty” mainly applies to spiritual riches with joy and security that these bring (*it-2* 1038 ¶4)

Accept Jehovah's discipline as an evidence of his fatherly love (*tp* 110)

Jehovah wants us to be obedient to him, as this is in our own best interest

It may be painful and may hit hard but has positive aspect; given with a beneficial end in view

Be thankful that the matter was called to your attention, that someone was interested enough in you to set you straight

Better to be corrected early in a wrong course than to go unchecked (Heb 12:5-7)

Do not be offended when discipline comes (Pr 4:13; 19:20)

Might come from a mature brother, from a parent

Might even come from reading the Bible or *The Watchtower*

View instructions not as arbitrary rules but as evidence of Jehovah's loving interest

Recognize the authority of Jehovah's organization to make changes

Do not fall out of the truth over some adjustment in understanding

#### **VALUE OF GODLY WISDOM IS GREATER THAN MATERIAL GAIN (Pr 3:13-18) (7 min.)**

Wisdom brings happiness, peace, and pleasantness (*w86 6/15 6*)

It gives one the ability to act in harmony with God's purposes

Necessary knowledge can be obtained by a sincere and enlightened study of Bible

Godly wisdom holds the promise of life, riches, and glory

"Its ways are ways of pleasantness," as Jehovah richly blesses those who gain godly wisdom and understanding

"It is a tree of life to those taking hold of it" in that the wisdom has a good effect on present life (*it-2 250 ¶13*)

Can save us untold trouble, including premature death

For example, apply principles regarding alcohol, drugs, rage

To acquire wisdom and discernment, we must put knowledge to work

This requires willingness to apply what is learned

#### **MAKING JEHOVAH YOUR CONFIDENCE RESULTS IN BLESSINGS (Pr 3:19-26) (9 min.)**

Spiritual security will be assured (Ps 91:1-3)

Fear of dangers will be allayed (Ps 91:5, 6)

Sleep will be pleasurable

In some respects sound sleep is a reward for wise living

We will not be afraid of the coming tribulation on the wicked

As Jehovah's Witnesses face the great tribulation, they find encouragement in these words: "You will not be afraid"

We do not expect protection from all physical harm

Jeremiah was not protected from all physical assault (Jer 37:15, 21)

Apostle James was martyred (Ac 12:1, 2)

Jehovah will protect us as a *class* or as an *organization* (Ps 145:20; Mt 10:28)

Individuals may suffer

All of us have confidence in the resurrection (Joh 5:28, 29)

We are confident that Jehovah will not forget us even in death

#### **PURSUE THIS CONFIDENT COURSE IN STRENGTH FROM JEHOVAH (2 min.)**

Continue to make Jehovah your confidence

Rely on God's promises

Serve Jehovah with humility and joy

Read Proverbs 2:20-22

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## HOW TO KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Alert the brothers to the constant danger of being overcome by the spiritual drowsiness that permeates mankind. Give clear direction as to what to do and what to avoid in order to keep spiritually awake. Urge them to be ever more vigilant as the end draws near

### **CHRISTIANS ARE EXHORTED TO KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE** (5 min.)

As the most momentous event of all time, Har-Magedon, approaches, mankind in general is spiritually asleep (*w91 5/1 21; w79 3/15 28-9*)

Fast-moving space age is slumbering, not awake to meaning of world events (Mt 16:2, 3)

In contrast, Christians are exhorted to “awake from sleep” and to “stay awake” (Ro 13:11-14; 1Co 16:13; *it-2 980*)

Not to be deceiving ourselves; we reap what we sow (Ga 6:7, 8)

Face fact that we cannot afford to sleep as the world in general does (1Th 5:6)

### **WHY SOME DO NOT KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE** (10 min.)

Humans in general are preoccupied with things of life and the world around them (Mt 24:37-39; *w89 10/1 12-14; w87 5/15 20; su 50*)

Though Jehovah provides an abundance of spiritual food, most people today fail to take seriously and apply the counsel repeatedly given (*w87 5/1 16; re 21*)

Like people in Noah’s day, they ‘take no note’

Many allow themselves to become spiritually blind and deaf though claiming to be God’s people (Isa 42:18-20)

Thus, spiritually asleep, they take no note (Isa 42:25)

Some are lulled to sleep because the world seems to carry on normally (*w87 5/15 17-19; w76 441-3*)

Economic upturns, lessening international tensions, and so forth, cause them to feel nothing has changed (2Pe 3:4)

They try to ‘make full use of the world’ (1Co 7:31)

Some allow their ears to listen to false teaching (1Jo 4:4-6; *w86 7/15 20*)

They fail to recognize and heed the voice of the Fine Shepherd (Joh 10:4, 5, 16)

### **HOW TO KEEP SPIRITUALLY AWAKE** (15 min.)

Recognize need to remain spiritually awake

“Be vigilant with a view to prayers” (1Pe 4:7)

“Keep on the watch and pray continually” (Mt 26:41)

“Let us stay awake and keep our senses” (1Th 5:6)

“Keep your senses, be watchful” (1Pe 5:8)

“Let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall” (1Co 10:12)

Keep up with “food at the proper time” from Jehovah’s organization (Mt 24:45)

Be determined not to miss a single spiritual meal (Mt 5:3)

Both private study and meeting attendance are urgent for all

Feed on spiritual food with eagerness

Follow theocratic ways, procedures, and policies (*rs 282-4*)

Recognize the organization that Jehovah is using (*wt 131-5*)

Be respectful of and obedient to those taking the lead (Heb 13:17; *w89 9/15 20-5*)

Refrain from criticism or careless talk

Find your place in God’s arrangement and stick to it

Do not quibble about assignments and arrangements (Ro 12:4, 6-8)

Perform well whatever assignments you receive (Ec 9:10)

Trust God’s angels to make changes where necessary (Mt 13:41; Re 1:16)

Persist in prayer (Ro 12:12)

Jesus was outstanding in his constancy in prayer (Mt 14:23; Mr 1:35; Lu 23:46)

Be whole-souled in field ministry and financial contributions

Jehovah has done much for us through his organization

We can show love for him by full support with our time and finances (*w92 1/15 14-16*)

Such support was prophesied (Isa 60:5; 61:5, 6; *w85 3/1 15*)

Show love to all, and act loyally (Eph 4:1-3)

**NOW IS THE CRUCIAL TIME FOR STAYING AWAKE** (12 min.)

Like Jeremiah, faithful and discreet slave sounds out warning (Jer 4:19-31)

Jeremiah was severely pained at calamity he saw coming

He gave warning, but the people took no note (Jer 4:22; *sl* 156)

If they had taken note, they would have survived events of 607 B.C.E.

This generation faces similar calamity

Those who respond to proclamation of Jeremiah class have the reward of a spiritual paradise (Isa 29:17-19; *sl* 150)

*Now* is crucial time because Satan knows his time is short (Re 12:12)

Faced with “the increasing of lawlessness,” our love may cool off (Mt 24:12; *w*84 10/1 31)

Increased vigilance needed to combat selfishness, materialism, fleshly desires

Material prosperity and more leisure time often prove spiritually devastating

Some who survived persecution later fell prey to other traps of Satan

We dare not become overconfident (1Co 10:12)

As Har–Magedon nears, it is especially important to keep awake

There is a special warning to all of us now living at this crucial time (Re 16:15)

Happiness will result from our staying awake (*re* 231-2)

Being awake involves full, alert participation in Kingdom service

Those sleeping will suffer shame, spiritual nakedness, everlasting death (Re 21:8)

**USE TIME REMAINING TO INCITE OTHERS TO SPIRITUAL WAKEFULNESS** (3 min.)

This is harvesttime, which brings added responsibilities

We need to work longer hours; the harvest is urgent (Pr 10:5; *w*78 6/1 18)

Teach others to know Jehovah, to pray regularly (Col 4:2)

At congregation meetings, ‘incite others’ by being prepared to make positive contributions to the meeting (Heb 10:24, 25)

This requires diligent personal study, which is so important in remaining spiritually awake

Keep spiritually awake by paying attention to yourself (Lu 21:34-36; *w*92 5/1 19-23)

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## LOVE IDENTIFIES THE TRUE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the brothers to understand that love, not perfection, identifies the true Christian congregation. Show that since all are imperfect, even responsible brothers make mistakes and need to be forgiven and shown love. Warmly encourage all to display “intense love for one another”—the kind of love that “covers a multitude of sins.” —1Pe 4:8

### **LOVE IS THE IDENTIFYING MARK OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION** (3 min.)

Should we expect all members of the congregation to be perfect?

Were the apostles and early Christians perfect?

Is it really possible for any of us to be perfect today?

Love, not perfection, identifies the true Christian congregation (Joh 13:34, 35)

But some confuse love and perfection, expect too much of others

They use the imperfections of others as excuse for stumbling (*w88 8/15 29-30*)

Do you expect perfection of others? What should you expect to see in the Christian congregation? (Ro 14:4; *w77 714*)

### **WHY LOVE IS THE FOREMOST IDENTIFYING MARK OF TRUE CHRISTIANS** (5 min.)

Love, the “surpassing way,” was more important than special gifts of spirit that first-century Christians had (1Co 12:31; *w78 9/15 17-18*)

Love is even greater than faith and hope (1Co 13:13)

Love sums up entire Law (Ro 13:9, 10; *w90 11/15 14-15*)

Paul reminded Christians that they owed love to one another (Ro 13:8; 1Jo 4:11)

Since love identifies true congregation, we need to learn how to apply love in response to daily situations and problems

To help us do that, let us consider first-century Christian examples

### **FIRST-CENTURY CHRISTIANS WERE NOT PERFECT PEOPLE, BUT THEY SHOWED LOVE** (17 min.)

Imperfections were evident; even among apostles (*it-1 128*)

Jealousy, ambition, and lack of humility showed up on a number of occasions (Mt 20:20-28; *gt 62, 98, 113, 115*)

But why did they act that way?

By inheritance, humans incline to think more of themselves than they ought to think (Ro 12:3)

World tries to cultivate sense of superiority, getting ahead of others

Disciples had been reared in Jewish religion, which stressed position or rank in all dealings (*gt 62; w75 723 ¶4*)

Should not be surprised that at times imperfect humans are disposed to seek position and prestige

Peter, though prominent, had to be corrected several times

Rebuked by Jesus for wrongly motivated thinking (Mt 16:22, 23)

Boasted of his supposed superior faith and standing before other apostles, but then denied Jesus three times (Mt 26:33, 34, 69-75; *it-2 619*)

Refused to follow instructions from God and was corrected (Ac 10:14-16)

Yielded to fear of men, showed partiality to Jewish converts—though having been instrumental in conversion of first Gentiles to Christianity—and was corrected by Paul (Ga 2:11-14; *w90 11/1 31; w75 345*)

Jesus continued to use Peter prominently (Joh 21:15-17)

Peter's deep love and other fine qualities outweighed his imperfections (1Pe 1:22; *w77 437-40*)

Paul, though exemplary in love and devotion, had imperfections

Paul and Barnabas, prominent elders, had “a sharp burst of anger” over small matter and parted company (Ac 15:36-41; *w90 6/15 13-14; w75 344*)

Love prevailed in spite of imperfections in congregation (Read 1 Peter 4:8)

In all these cases of imperfection, love covered “a multitude of sins,” indicating that the disciples ‘had love among themselves’

Philippians showed genuine love toward Paul in spite of his imperfections (Php 4:15, 16; *it-2 631*)

The true mark of love covered over the mistakes of prominent ones, who, we might feel, should have known better

How would you have been affected by the mistakes of the apostles as recorded in the Bible? Would you have stumbled? Or would you have forgiven them in love?

### **CHRISTIAN LOVE COVERS IMPERFECTIONS** (17 min.)

True Christians imitate their Creator in his love for mankind

They do not wait for fellow Christians to be perfect before showing love to them (Ro 5:8; Eph 5:1, 2)

Must have balanced view of our relationship with one another

Because of inherited imperfection, all are inclined to do wrong (Ro 5:12)

Within us is tendency to be envious, to become provoked, to brag, to be unforgiving, and so forth (Jas 3:2)

Though all must work to overcome such tendencies, sinful inclinations *will* find expression among Christians (Ec 7:21, 22; Ro 7:15-20; *g89* 7/22 19)

To expect perfection of our brothers, or of ourselves, is unrealistic and will only bring disappointment

Paul's description of love shows how we can deal with one another in recognition of one another's imperfections (1Co 13:4, 5; *it-2* 277-8; *w93* 10/15 17-22; *w92* 7/15 27-31; *w89* 10/15 18-19)

"Love is long-suffering and kind"

It gladly puts up with the idiosyncrasies and differing opinions of others, is not harsh, but kind, respectful

"Does not become provoked"

There may seemingly be reasons for becoming provoked, but imperfections of others are reasons for applying love

"It does not keep account of the injury"

Yes, there will be "injury," so be ready to show love

Unloving to harbor grudges or review how certain ones have sinned against us (*w78* 9/15 20)

Intense love helps members of the congregation to cover over mistakes committed by overseers, who are also imperfect

Hebrews 13:17 encourages obedience to those watching over us, even though they are imperfect (*w89* 9/15 23)

### **FOLLOW THE WAY OF LOVE DESPITE IMPERFECTIONS** (3 min.)

True congregation no longer identified by gifts of spirit but by love that "never fails" (1Co 13:8; *it-2* 278; *w75* 2/1 95)

Though not condoning wrongdoing, be liberal in showing love that "covers a multitude of sins"

As part of true Christian congregation, heed Peter's counsel: "Above all things, have intense love for one another" (1Pe 4:8)

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## ACQUIRING A HEART OF WISDOM

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to develop a realistic view of problems and pressures that may arise in life. Show how to acquire divine wisdom to cope with these

### **HEART OF WISDOM NEEDED TO COPE WITH PROBLEMS AND PRESSURES OF LIFE** (3 min.)

Mankind short-lived; 70 to 80 years of 'insistence on trouble'; many problems to contend with (Ps 90:10)

Even among God's servants, complaints, problems, and pressures do arise

Complaints by Israelites to Moses culminated in crisis at Meribah (Nu 20:2-13)

First-century Christians experienced difficulties (Ac 11:27-29; Php 4:2, 3)

In view of principle at Ecclesiastes 7:7, we need to acquire godly wisdom

Wisdom combines sound judgment with knowledge (*w82 10/15 22*)

Heart of wisdom could have helped Moses deal with provocation and not be enraged (Read Psalm 90:12) (Ps 106:32, 33)

### **GOD'S SERVANTS HAVE LONG ENDURED INTERNAL PRESSURES** (10 min.)

Israelites endured rule of wicked kings, priests, judges

David 'acted prudently' under wicked King Saul (1Sa 18:10-15)

Samuel served Jehovah faithfully in spite of poor examples of Eli and his sons (1Sa, chaps. 2, 3)

First-century Christians experienced problems, including divisions, internal "wars" and "fights" (Jas 4:1-3; 1Co 1:10, 11)

Revelation chapters 2 and 3 prophetic of future internal difficulties (*w89 4/1 12, 13*)

Problems include loss of first love for Jehovah (Re 2:4), holding fast to wrong ideas (Re 2:14), tolerating sectarianism (Re 2:15) and "Jezebel" influence (Re 2:20), apathy (Re 3:2, 15, 16)

These examples show we should not expect perfection from fellow servants of Jehovah but should acquire heart of wisdom to cope with such problems and pressures

### **HOW PROBLEMS IN EARLY CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION WERE HANDLED WITH A HEART OF WISDOM** (12 min.)

*Circumcision* was an issue among those who still felt it was a requirement (Ac 11:2, 3; 15:1; *w89 2/15 18-20*)

Matter taken to governing body (Ac 15:2)

Unanimous decision made, based on God's Word and evidence of outpouring of holy spirit on those uncircumcised (Ac 15:3, 15-18, 25; *w90 6/15 12-13*)

In spite of decision in 49 C.E., still remained an issue for some, who did not have a heart of wisdom (*w89 2/15 18-20*)

Paul argued against circumcision in letter to Galatians, written about 50-52 C.E. (Ga 5:1-3)

He dealt with the matter again in first letter to Corinthians, about 55 C.E. (1Co 7:18-20)

Advocates of circumcision were dealt with more forcefully in letter to Philippians, about 60-61 C.E. (Php 3:1-3)

Some might have been disfellowshipped to safeguard the congregation (Tit 1:10, 11; 3:10, 11)

*Resurrection* was another much debated issue among first-century Christians

Former Pharisees might have been inclined toward idea of immortal soul (*it-2 625*)

In 55 C.E., some held viewpoint that there was no resurrection (1Co 15:12)

Apostle Paul refuted this, basing his arguments on facts and Scriptures (1Co 15:3-8; *w81 12/15 18*)

In 65 C.E., some who had deviated from the faith held the view that the resurrection had already occurred (2Ti 2:16-18)

Christians warned about association with those who might not have made mind over fully (1Co 15:33; *w93 8/1 16*)

In dealing with these and other problems, Paul showed courage and a heart of wisdom

### **WHAT WILL HELP US TO ACQUIRE A HEART OF WISDOM TODAY?** (17 min.)

Recognize that as in the first century, some today may make strong assertions or express personal views on a wide range of issues (1Ti 1:7)

Paul showed importance of unity and need for being "fitly united" in our worship (1Co 1:10; 4:6)

Adherence to God's Word and guidance provided by "faithful and discreet slave" is course of wisdom (Mt 24:45-47; Ps 19:7)

Not to make issues out of matters that the Bible leaves to conscience (*w77 723 ¶25*)

Recognize that the congregation is not infallible

Truth flows progressively (Pr 4:18)

Jehovah's people do not claim to be *inspired* prophets (rs 136-7)

Not wrong to be interested in Bible chronology insofar as it helps one to remain spiritually awake (Mt 24:3; Ac 1:6)

Yet, eagerness and enthusiasm may lead to premature expectations

Such expectations can serve to reveal true heart condition

Those who serve with improper motive become disgruntled, go back to world for selfish reasons, become spiritually sick (Pr 13:12)

Those with heart of wisdom not disappointed but 'buy out the opportune time,' even increasing their service (Eph 5:15, 16)

Keep a balanced view of elders and others

Avoid unrealistic tendency to expect perfection from others (Ec 7:9, 21, 22)

As a pearl is the result of an irritation, we can develop and grow in humility, love, endurance, and other fruits of the spirit if we accept imperfections of others (Jas 1:2-4)

Should not let situations that Jehovah permits cause us to become enraged against him (Pr 19:3; w77 605-6)

Safeguard heart; trust in Jehovah (Pr 3:5, 6; 4:23)

### **ACQUIRE A HEART OF WISDOM** (3 min.)

Jehovah permits problems and pressures of life so that we may learn patience, humility, loyalty, and dependence on him and prove what is in our hearts (Heb 3:12, 13)

How we respond shows to what degree we have a heart of wisdom and what we may still need to work on

Essential that we humbly maintain viewpoint expressed at Psalm 90:12

Each day check your heart; pray for 'a heart bringing in wisdom'

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## JEHOVAH'S EYES ARE UPON US

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate that God is not indifferent to what individuals do. Show how he reacted to wrongdoings in the past and why. Motivate audience to do what is right in God's eyes

### **MANY PEOPLE ACT AS THOUGH GOD WERE DEAD** (4 min.)

Many, like Eliphaz of old, live their lives as if God were not seeing them or did not care (Job 4:18; Ps 14:1)

Students and employees need to be watched, or they may cheat, steal, or loaf on the job

(g86 6/8 10; g89 10/8 28)

Such things as computer crime, shoplifting, tax fraud, and stealing employer's time have become commonplace (w88 2/15 3-4)

Many people believe that God exists but do not believe that he cares or will take any action

God is no longer a factor in their daily conduct or decision making (sh 329-30)

How much does Jehovah see and care about things on earth? Will he do anything about what he sees?

### **JEHOVAH SEES EVERYTHING** (6 min.)

The Bible leaves no doubt that Jehovah's eyes are upon all of us (2Ch 16:9; Ps 11:4, 5)

Our recognizing that Jehovah keeps watch over the bad ones and the good ones should not make us feel as if we were living in a police state, under suspicion (Job 7:20; Pr 15:3)

Jehovah is watching for our good; capable of seeing every action (Zec 4:10; 1Pe 3:12; it-1 789)

All of this should serve as a warning to us—to be cautious

Wherever we are, we are under observation from heaven

Let us not think we will go unobserved in some secret place, not detected (Eze 8:12)

Jehovah observes the good and the bad that we do and takes them into account (Jer 32:19; Heb 4:13)

What does he see in your case?

Is your way of life approved by Jehovah?

Is Jehovah looking upon you with favor?

### **JEHOVAH SEES THE BAD ONES AND TAKES APPROPRIATE ACTION** (23 min.)

*Stealing* is usually done in secrecy with idea that no one is watching (Joh 3:19, 20)

Achan thought he could keep his thievery secret. Jehovah exposed him and executed judgment (Jos, chap. 7; w86 12/15 19-20)

Thieves are assured of Jehovah's curse as noted in the flying scroll of Zechariah (Zec 5:1-3; pm 210-11)

*Pride and arrogance* not tolerated in God's sight (Ps 5:5)

Uzziah became haughty and usurped a priestly function; was stricken with leprosy by Jehovah (2Ch 26:16-21)

God's punishment on those seeking glory for self was illustrated in his dealing with Shebna, Hezekiah's officer, who was preoccupied with building a glorious tomb for himself. Jehovah saw it and 'pushed him out' of his position and privileges (Isa 22:15-24; it-2 913 [Shebna]; w81 10/1 25-31)

Jehovah will destroy *those speaking a lie* (Ps 5:6)

He takes note of them so that they do not escape punishment (Pr 19:5)

When Gehazi lied as a result of greediness, God did not ignore it but punished Gehazi by afflicting him with Naaman's leprosy (2Ki 5:20-27)

*Harshness, unkindness, ungenerosity* given quick attention by Jehovah in Nabal's case

Nabal was rich but harsh and ungenerous. He would not show kindness to David despite his loving help

David did not need to take any action against Nabal for his unkindness. Jehovah dealt Nabal a mortal blow (1Sa, chap. 25)

Jehovah's hatred of *murder* and even the anger that leads to murder moved him to act quickly in counseling Cain to leave his murderous course. Jehovah then took immediate action after Cain killed his brother (Ge 4: 5-7, 10, 11)

Abimelech killed the sons of Gideon; Jehovah saw it, and justice was meted out by Him (Jg, chap. 9)

Joseph called *adultery* a sin "against God" (Ge 39:9)

Eli's two sons were guilty of immorality and other sins. God determined to put them to death (1Sa 2:12, 22; 3: 11-14)

Zedekiah and Ahab, false prophets, continually committed adultery. Jehovah's judgment: The king of Babylon 'roasted them in the fire' (Jer 29:21-23)

Fornication and adultery still most prevalent sins today

Even servants of God fall prey

Did they think that they could get away with such actions? that no one was seeing?

The Bible shows that God is aware of misconduct and secret sins (w85 4/15 10-20)

These examples prove that Jehovah does not ignore the activity of bad ones but watches with judgment in view (1Ti 5:24)

**JEHOVAH'S EYES ALSO WATCH THE GOOD ONES TO CORRECT, HELP, AND BLESS THEM** (7 min.)

Jeremiah's secretary, Baruch, basically a good man, was sidetracked by *materialistic thinking* at a critical time in Israel's history. God warned Baruch: 'Do not keep on seeking great things for yourself.' (Jer 45:1-5) Jehovah was watching him for his good (*w80 3/1 19-21*)

Cornelius was helped by God because of many *good things he did* (Ac 10:2, 4)

He was rewarded with the privilege of being the first uncircumcised Gentile to be spirit-begotten (Ac 10:44-48)

Even small things we do that are good and may be unnoticed by men are noticed by God

In spite of his severe judgment against the house of Jeroboam, Jehovah gave one of Jeroboam's sons a burial because "something good toward Jehovah the God of Israel has been found in him" (1Ki 14:1-18)

Small contribution of poor widow did not go unnoticed (Lu 21:1-4)

Kind acts are remembered by Jehovah (Mt 26:6-13)

**WILL YOU BENEFIT FROM KNOWING JEHOVAH'S EYES ARE UPON YOU?** (5 min.)

When Jehovah corrects and helps you through organization or elders, do you appreciate his loving watchfulness?

Recognizing that Jehovah is constantly before us and is watching us will help us to keep from doing what is bad and to live as if in Jehovah's presence (Ps 16:8; *w85 9/1 5*)

Teach our children also to recognize that God is aware of our every activity (Ps 11:4)

If we do wrong, God sees it and will make it manifest (Pr 24:12)

If we do what is right, we have divine blessings and a share in upholding God's side of the issue that is now before the universe (Ps 18:20; Heb 6:10)

Above all, our love for Jehovah should make us want to do what is right so that Jehovah's eyes will see good in us (Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## **DO YOU RECOGNIZE JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?**

### *Note to the speaker:*

Explain why Jehovah is the rightful Sovereign, how he lovingly exercises his rulership, and the benefits that one obtains by submitting to His sovereignty

### **JEHOVAH IS THE RIGHTFUL SOVEREIGN OF THE UNIVERSE** (5 min.)

He is supreme in rule and the ultimate Source of all authority and power (Ps 145:13; *it-2* 1008)

Entire creation dependent on him as the Creator and only true God (Ac 17:28; Re 4:11)

He alone is uncreated, without beginning or end (Job 36:26; Re 10:6)

Jehovah's position as Sovereign Ruler and the Almighty must be recognized (1Ch 29:11; Re 15:3)

### **HOW JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY WAS CHALLENGED** (8 min.)

Jehovah's sovereignty remained unchallenged until after the creation of man and woman

It was then that a spirit creature of God saw an opportunity to attack God's sovereignty and tried to establish a rival sovereignty

In garden of Eden, Jehovah lovingly exercised his sovereignty

Created man in His image, to reflect His qualities and personality (1Co 11:7)

Gave man an assignment in harmony with his ability (Ge 1:26-28)

Man would have been happy acting and living in conformity with God's will (Ps 128:1; 144:15b)

The only prohibition served as a test of obedience to God's sovereignty, which Adam would demonstrate by refraining from eating of the 'tree of knowledge of good and bad' (Ge 2:16, 17; *it-2* 1011)

Reasonable test; no bad, improper motives attributed to Adam; no hardship imposed

Only God has right to determine good and bad and the role for his creation (Isa 29:16)

Satan challenged Jehovah's rightful sovereignty (Ge 3:1-5)

The *fact* of God's supremacy and sovereignty not challenged, for no one can take away his supreme authority and power

Challenge was regarding the rightfulness and righteousness of Jehovah's sovereignty, whether exercised in worthy way and in best interest of subjects

Questioned whether God had right to determine good and bad

Assaulted God's truthfulness and goodness, saying, "God knows"

Lyingly asserted that enlightenment, not death, would result from eating forbidden fruit

Also slandered God's servants as to their integrity to God's sovereignty (Job 2:3-5)

### **WHY GOD HAS ALLOWED TIME TO SETTLE THE ISSUE** (10 min.)

Jehovah is not unsure of righteousness of his sovereignty, nor does he have to prove anything to himself

Satan did not challenge God's power, which could have been demonstrated by the immediate destruction of Satan

He counted on God's fairness, thinking that God would be obligated to let him live if he proved his charge concerning the unfaithfulness of God's creatures

Moral issue involved

God gives mankind opportunity and privilege of proving the Devil a liar and of removing the slander from God's name and their own

In allowing Satan to use every means to prove his contentions, God ensured that the issue would be settled once for all time

By withstanding wickedness, those who acknowledge God's sovereignty and serve him faithfully can prove Satan's claims to be false (Pr 27:11)

God's patience gives sinners opportunity to abandon wrong course, subject themselves willingly to God's righteous rule, and prove their love and devotion to God (Ro 9:22-26; 2Pe 3:9; *rs* 429-30)

Issue included God's heavenly creatures, even his only-begotten Son, who always pleased his Father

Sent on assignment to the earth, Jesus, in a totally perfect way, proved the Devil a liar (Joh 14:30; 16:33; *it-2* 1012)

Will eventually bring to nothing all government, authority, and power that stand against Jehovah's sovereignty (1Co 15:24-28)

### **HOW WE CAN INDIVIDUALLY SHOW RECOGNITION OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY** (17 min.)

Diligently study God's Word, the Bible, and seek to obey his will in association with other true Christians (Zep 2:2, 3)

Avoid presumptuousness and a spirit of independence (*it-2* 681)

Let God decide what is good and bad for us; avoid setting own standards

Youths, fight against wanting to be independent of parents or others in authority (Eph 6:1-3)

Wives, fight against wanting to be independent of husbands; show respect, cooperation (Eph 5:22, 23; *fl* 54-69)

Husbands, follow Bible counsel at Ephesians 5:25 and 1 Peter 3:7 (*fl* 40-53)

Show respect for Jehovah's appointed servants, including "faithful and discreet slave" and elders in the congregation (Mt 24:45)

[Contrast Hebrews 13:7, 17 with account in Numbers 12; emphasize that Moses was God's servant]

Stay clear of the influence of the world under Satan's dominion (Eph 2:2, 3)

Be on guard against characteristics of spirit of the world (*rs* 390-3)

Cultivate right motives so that you will obey Jehovah at all times

Follow examples of Noah, Sarah, Moses, Joseph, Job (*wt* 54-7)

Even though we are sinners and cannot act in a perfect way, we must desire to be dependent on God and to make decisions in harmony with his will

Will we follow the voice of God and the example of Jesus? (Pr 3:5; 1Pe 2:21)

#### **FUTURE BLESSINGS FOR THOSE WHO RECOGNIZE JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY (5 min.)**

Now is time to take a stand on side of God's sovereignty (*w91* 3/1 7)

Those who do so out of love and appreciation for Jehovah and a desire to serve him will be set free as "children of God" (Ro 8:21, 22; *w87* 1/1 24, 26, 28)

Our service to him is not a burden (1Jo 5:3)

Those who prove that they want to be dependent on Jehovah will form the nucleus of the "new earth" (2Pe 3:13; *sl* 324-5)

God's Kingdom rule will undo all the damage done by Satan (Da 2:44)

Under God's care, even painful memories will be erased (Isa 14:7; 65:17, 18; *dg* 27-8)

Everlasting life determined by whether we remain dependent on Jehovah or not (Re 20:12, 15)

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# **BIBLE PRINCIPLES—CAN THEY HELP US TO COPE WITH TODAY’S PROBLEMS?**

## **WHY USE BIBLE PRINCIPLES?** (4 min.)

Today, there is a superabundance of advice on virtually every imaginable subject (Col 2:8; *w09* 6/1 3-4)

Whose advice can be trusted for coping with today’s problems?

The Bible provides timeless principles that are superior to anything offered in the world (Pr 19:20)

Let us consider how Bible principles can help us deal with four common problems

## **HOW TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS** (5 min.)

Many today suffer at the hands of thoughtless and self-centered people (2Ti 3:1-3)

Some might be inclined to rebel or to react in like manner

Others adopt the ethic: “What you do not want done to you, do not do to others” (*w04* 6/1 32)

Such attitudes have not brought about peaceful relationships

Rather than simply instructing people not to do bad to others, Jesus stated the principle that we find at Matthew 7:12 [Read]

Applying this principle means treating others respectfully, fairly, and honestly, showing genuine concern for their welfare

Jesus gave excellent advice on how to pursue peace (Mt 5:23-25)

Pursuing peace gives us inner calm and helps us to enjoy happy relationships (Ro 12:18; *w09* 10/15 9 pars. 7-9)

## **HOW TO FIND HAPPINESS** (5 min.)

The popular view is to seek happiness through material things, prominence, or other selfish means (Eph 2:2, 3; *g* 4/06 6)

Such pursuits do not guarantee happiness (Lu 12:15)

Jesus taught his followers that true happiness comes from being generous [Read Acts 20:35]

Those who give generously actually prosper (Pr 11:25)

Includes giving of our time and energy (Pr 19:17)

Giving generously builds strong marriages and happy families (Php 2:3, 4)

By giving of ourselves, we bring comfort to the bereaved, the sick, the elderly, and the depressed (1Th 5:14)

We can find true happiness by showing generosity, knowing that “with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Heb 13:16)

## **HOW TO DEAL WITH ECONOMIC PROBLEMS** (5 min.)

The spirit of this world fosters “the desire of the eyes,” a desire that is never satisfied (1Jo 2:16; Pr 27:20)

Success is often measured in terms of material possessions, but the determination to be rich is ruinous (1Ti 6:9, 10)

The Bible provides wise counsel concerning material things [Read 1 Timothy 6:8]

Contentment involves living within one’s means and keeping a ‘simple eye’ (Mt 6:22; Pr 22:7)

Heeding this inspired advice will help us to avoid incurring heavy debt, which brings anxiety and insecurity (*w03* 12/15 23 par. 17)

Being content helps us to focus on the more important things, such as cultivating a good relationship with God and enjoying a happy and secure family life (Php 1:10; 1Ti 6:17-19)

## **HOW TO ALLAY ANXIETY** (5 min.)

Anxiety may be caused by concerns over family, health, or finances

Self-help guides may offer some good ideas, but they can also give harmful advice that leads to disappointment and serious problems

Practical wisdom is found at Philippians 4:6, 7 [Read]

Prayer brings us “the peace of God that excels all thought”

Rest assured that Jehovah knows our needs and will provide for us

Many anxieties can be avoided or eliminated when we act in harmony with our prayers (Jas 1:5)

In God’s coming new world, all problems that cause anxiety will belong to the past (2Pe 3:11-13)

## **WHAT IS THE KEY TO COPING WITH TODAY’S PROBLEMS SUCCESSFULLY?** (6 min.)

The Bible contains practical advice for coping with our problems (Heb 5:14; *w05* 10/1 13; *w02* 2/15 6, box)

Bible principles always work when applied

Applying Bible principles brings us happiness now and helps us to make wise decisions concerning the future (Ps 128:1, 2; Isa 48:17, 18)

Note practical Bible principles to apply regarding:

Health problems (Pr 14:15, 30)

Money problems (Mt 6:31, 32)

Marital problems (Col 3:14)

Ethnic and racial hatred (Ac 10:34, 35)

Harmful associates (Pr 13:20)

Employment problems (Ps 37:25)

We are pleased to see newly interested ones in attendance

Please speak to one of Jehovah's Witnesses so that arrangements can be made for you to learn more about how to understand these principles and apply them in your life

Following practical Bible principles is truly the course of wisdom now and will result in your own eternal blessing (Ps 19:7)

(Not all cited texts need to be read)

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## FOLLOW THE COURSE OF HOSPITALITY

### *Note to the speaker:*

Highlight how hospitality may be shown and the rewards for doing so. Point out how a hospitable spirit reflects Jehovah's generosity

### **HOSPITALITY NEEDED TODAY** (8 min.)

Basic meaning of hospitality: "The cordial and generous reception and entertainment of guests or strangers"

Greek word literally means "love of (fondness for, or kindness to) strangers" (*it-1* 1149)

We may feel uncomfortable around those we do not know. But "hospitality overcomes the tension and makes of the alien a friend" (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*)

Hospitality is taught as virtue from childhood in many cultures

Bible foretold that this quality would diminish in our day (2Ti 3:1-5; Mt 24:12)

Sadly, hospitality disappearing in many lands today (*g78* 5/22 9-12)

Yet, Christians are commanded to "follow the course of hospitality" (Ro 12:13)

It is a work of faith, especially when directed toward fellow believers (Ga 6:10; 3Jo 5)

It is a requirement of Christian elders (1Ti 3:2; Tit 1:8)

According to the Bible, inhospitable attitude is an indication of spiritual problem and has bearing on acceptability of one's worship (Isa 58:6, 7; *it-1* 1150)

Simple acts of hospitality affect lives

Elderly woman: "I have no fleshly family at all. . . . I take care of myself and have no help from anyone, and, believe me, there is many a time that I could use it. . . . Any attention, no matter how small, touches [me] very much. It is humbly appreciated" (*w79* 5/1 3; see also *w88* 2/1 30)

How can we display hospitality?

### **HOW GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE IMITATED JEHOVAH'S HOSPITABLE WAY THROUGHOUT HISTORY** (15 min.)

Jehovah sets example by richly blessing and generously providing men and women with good things (1Jo 5:14, 15)

Jesus perfectly reflected Jehovah's loving, hospitable way by showing interest in the poor; displayed generosity by using his powers for the benefit of others (Mt 14:14-21; may cite other examples)

Although other peoples displayed hospitality, Jehovah's servants notable in this regard (*it-1* 1149-50)

Care for travelers integral part of living in ancient Israel

Warmly welcomed guests, encouraged them to stay (Ge 18:2, 5-7; Jg 13:15)

Eagerly ran to meet them (Ge 29:13, 14)

Woman of Shunem showed attention to Elisha's needs while he was her guest (2Ki 4:8-11)

Although living conditions and attitudes had changed from ancient times, hospitality still common among first-century Christians

Disciples encouraged to accept hospitality offered by those who responded favorably to Kingdom-preaching work (Lu 9:3-6)

Hospitality shown to Jesus, who had no home of his own (Mt 8:20; Lu 10:38)

Paul confident that Philemon would be hospitable, since this was his manner of living (Phm 21, 22)

Gaius commended for extending hospitality to traveling brothers (3Jo 5-8; *w88* 10/1 18-19)

Outstanding examples of hospitality manifested by early Christians (Ac 2:42-46; 16:15; *w86* 12/1 29)

### **OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPRESS HOSPITALITY TODAY** (17 min.)

Be mindful of material and spiritual needs of fellow believers (*w86* 1/15 21-3)

Do whatever is within your power and ability to do (Pr 3:27)

Do not show partiality toward those who may be better situated financially (Lu 14:13, 14)

Remember less fortunate ones—poor, elderly, shy, young ones

Not necessary to make sumptuous provision

Jesus counseled Martha to be concerned about spiritual portion and not be so distracted with elaborate material provisions (Lu 10:38-42)

When war, natural disasters, persecution, sickness, or other distressing anxieties plunge fellow Christians into need, individually we feel the urge to assist, providing real comfort—not just words of consolation (Jas 2:15, 16; *w86* 10/15 15-21; *w91* 7/15 19; may refer to recent *Yearbook* experiences)

Extend hospitality to visiting or traveling overseers (*w88* 10/1 18-19)

Paul counseled "widen out" in "tender affections" for fellow believers (2Co 6:12, 13)

Avoid cliques, associating only with certain few

Spend time getting to know brothers to become aware of their needs

Work with new ones in field ministry; teach and encourage them

Invite others to your homes for meal, refreshment, some association; can share things with others, provide or send gifts at times (Ac 16:15; Php 4:15-17)

Everyone has responsibility to create warm atmosphere in congregation, with elders taking lead (1Ti 3:2; w86 10/15 16-18)

Scriptural to give special consideration to our brothers (Ga 6:10)

While learning to improve this quality, learn also to accept hospitality appreciatively

Paul appreciated gifts that were given to him, yet did not take advantage of brothers (2Co 11:7-9; w92 12/1 28-9)

Need to be on guard against simony, accepting gifts in return for favors (w86 8/15 15-16)

In harmony with principle stated at Psalm 15:4b, we should not cancel an invitation simply because something better offered

Be alert to needs of those not related to us in the faith

Jesus set pattern of lovingly inviting disciples to 'follow him' in his ministry (Joh 12:26) and for any to come to him for spiritual refreshment (Mt 11:28-30; w89 7/15 17-19)

Love of "strangers" includes our neighbors to whom we preach

Willingness to meet "stranger" at the door in the house-to-house work is a way of expressing our hospitality

Like Jesus, we are inviting them to share a life of happiness, providing for their spiritual needs, giving our care and attention to them

Helping new ones who visit Kingdom Hall feel comfortable, by greeting them, expresses our care and attention

One woman said: "I have never gone to any religious meeting in my life where I felt so welcome." She described thoughtfulness shown by "total strangers" (*km* 3/78 4; or other examples showing importance of demonstrating hospitality at our meetings, such as w89 11/1 30; w88 6/1 6-7; see *Index* under "Kingdom Halls," subheading "experiences")

**"DO NOT FORGET HOSPITALITY"** (5 min.)

Showing hospitality results in blessings for all involved (Pr 11:25)

The hospitality extended by us depends on how strong our love is for others. Paul counseled all to "let your brotherly love continue" and then reminded us, "Do not forget hospitality" (Heb 13:1, 2; w89 12/15 17)

Who knows, you may be entertaining someone in whom Jehovah has pleasure

We should be hospitable because of deep love for Jehovah and fellow humans—showing this quality to all, preaching to our neighbors, and caring especially for those related to us in the faith

"Follow the course of hospitality" (Ro 12:13)

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## SERVE JEHOVAH WITH A JOYFUL HEART

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show how godly joy can overshadow life's trials and help us have an optimistic outlook. Keep in mind that some in the audience may be undergoing trials. Avoid condemnatory statements. Be empathetic and uplifting

### **JEHOVAH WANTS HIS SERVANTS TO BE JOYFUL** (5 min.)

Jehovah is "the happy God" (1Ti 1:11)

He wants his servants to be joyful (Php 4:4)

Does not mean that his people will be in a perpetual state of jubilation but that in even worst of circumstances, can find joy in serving Jehovah

Joy is a fruit of God's spirit (Ga 5:22, 23; 1Th 1:6)

One who has God's spirit can be joyful

Joy derived from good health, youth, and pleasures, and from money and other material things can be short-lived

Solomon found no lasting joy from these (Ec 2:1, 2, 4-8, 11)

In contrast, friendship with God is a source of lasting joy (Ps 64:10)

### **SERVING JEHOVAH GOD IS A SOURCE OF JOY** (8 min.)

Read and discuss Psalm 100

*Psalm 100:1, 2*

Triumphant shout shows our expressions of praise should not be weak but should be vigorous, confident as those of a conquering army

We conquer the world by observing God's commandments (1Jo 5:3-5)

Such accomplishment brings joy

Service to God viewed as invigorating and uplifting, not burdensome

Adds meaning to life, helps one cope with life's problems, pressures

*Psalm 100:3*

Joy comes from knowing him as a person, as God and Creator

Jehovah is like a loving shepherd who cares for his sheep

*Psalm 100:4, 5*

God's qualities (goodness, kindness, faithfulness) provide incentive to offer him thanks and praise

Jehovah has no taint of badness and can be relied upon to time indefinite

We delight to come into his gates and courtyards (includes going to his place of worship)

We are honored to have him as our God; it brings joy

### **EXPERIENCES SHOW THAT WE CAN SERVE GOD WITH JOY IN SPITE OF HARDSHIPS** (12 min.)

Briefly relate experiences:

Brothers in Ukraine (*w91 1/1 13-14*)

Serving Jehovah in war-torn areas (*w91 1/1 28-9*)

Possible to be joyful in spite of health problems and personal setbacks (*w90 7/15 31; w85 6/15 28*)

Overcoming obstacles in order to preach good news results in joy (*w91 1/1 5*)

(For other experiences see recent *Indexes* under "Field Ministry Experiences")

### **WHY SOME LOSE THEIR JOY** (15 min.)

Some lose joy because of public indifference to the message we preach

Natural to want a positive response, but we need to keep things in perspective

Growing number of unresponsive ones to be expected as end draws near (Isa 6:9-11)

Meditating on why we preach can help us maintain joy

Proclaim good news for a witness (Mt 24:14)

To make known Jehovah's name (Ro 10:13-15)

To sound the warning (Eze 3:17, 19)

Need to remember that some seeds of truth may bear fruit later (Ec 11:6; *w88 7/15 13*)

We will reap if we do not tire out in preaching work (Ga 6:9)

Personality problems can cause one to lose joy

Need to have a balanced view of personalities within Christian congregation (*w89 11/15 15-16*)

Be quick to settle differences so that they do not cause you to lose joy (Mt 5:23, 24; Eph 4:26, 32)

Be forgiving; avoid demanding perfection of others (Mt 6:12, 14, 15)

Not Scriptural to compare self with others or try to compete (1Co 12:14-16, 21)

Need to fight tendency to be jealous over progress and privileges of others or to brag about privileges given us (*w90* 12/1 16; *w89* 10/15 18)

No allowance for rivalry with brothers (Ga 6:4)

Persecution and other trials can cause discouragement

Satan persecutes those who have God's approval (1Pe 4:14)

Having Jehovah's spirit is reason to be happy

Consider benefits of enduring under pressure (Jas 1:2-4)

Rely on Jehovah, who will not abandon you (Ro 8:35, 38, 39)

Trials are temporary (1Co 10:13)

Material things do not bring happiness (Lu 12:15)

Pursuit of material things can bring heartache

Proper attitude toward material things brings contentment (1Ti 6:6-12)

**ALLOW JOY TO OVERSHADOW PROBLEMS** (3 min.)

Have plenty to do in the work of the Lord (1Co 15:58)

Many who arrange personal affairs to do more in the ministry experience increased joy

Seek out opportunities to do more—full-time service, moving to areas with a greater need, Kingdom Hall construction, and so forth

Brothers should reach out for the privilege of serving as ministerial servants and elders

All can improve in reading and studying theocratic material

**ANTICIPATE THE EVERLASTING JOY OF GOD'S KINGDOM** (2 min.)

Jesus Christ to bring an end to enemies of God (1Co 15:25, 26)

Blessings of Kingdom rule (Re 21:4)

Surpassing joy for those who have this hope (Ps 100:2; Ro 15:13)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

# **FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD, FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD —WHICH WILL YOU CHOOSE?**

## *Note to the speaker:*

Keeping in mind that this is a talk for the public, tactfully show why and how a true Christian should refrain from loving this world or cultivating its friendship. Highlight the eternal blessings of friendship with God

### **LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP ARE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS** (4 min.)

Creator designed us to need and delight in love and friendship (*g86 9/22 4-7*)

When this need goes unfulfilled, we are unhappy (*g83 4/22 31*)

Bible encourages us to form loving friendships (Pr 17:17; Ec 4:9)

The Bible places a restriction, though, on a different kind of love and friendship

James 4:4 strongly warns against “friendship with the world”

1 John 2:15 tells us not to ‘love the world’

What does this mean? May seem puzzling, especially in view of the fact that both Jehovah and Jesus love mankind (Pr 8:31; Joh 3:16)

### **WHAT IS THE “WORLD”?** (10 min.)

Meaning of Greek word for “world,” *ko'smos*, varies with context (*it-2 1205-7, 1209-10*)

At times it refers to mankind in general: billions of individuals for whom Jehovah wants salvation (2Pe 3:9)

This is “world” referred to at John 3:16 and 6:51

But *ko'smos* may also refer to human society apart from Jehovah’s faithful servants and alienated from Jehovah God, or it may denote the framework, order, or sphere of human life

“World” of alienated human society is ruled by Satan (1Jo 5:19)

Composed of various parts: false religion (Re 17:5); political governments (Re 13:1, 2); commercial system (Re 18:11)

Satan uses each part to mislead people, blinding minds to their greatest need: to cultivate love for and friendship with Jehovah God (Mr 12:29, 30; 2Co 4:4; Re 12:9, 10)

Thus, God’s counsel and standards are widely discarded (2Ti 4:3-5)

Immorality and loose living accepted and promoted (Eph 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

Little wonder, then, that Jehovah tells us neither to love nor to befriend this world!

But how do we heed this warning?

### **HOW DO WE SHUN FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD?** (16 min.)

Of course, not by adopting an aloof, superior attitude

Like Jehovah and Jesus, we love people and view them as potential sheep to whom we owe the very best witness we can give (1Co 9:19-23)

This often involves acts of kindness and neighborliness (Lu 10:30-37; Jas 2:8; *w92 2/15 18, ¶20*)

Humility, not haughtiness, is a mark of true Christianity (Jas 4:6)

To love world or seek its friendship in a way that displeases God means to share in the world’s desires, to harbor its ambitions, to display its prejudices and hatreds, to have the dominant attitude that permeates its decadent society

Shun friendship with the world by resisting “the spirit of the world” (1Co 2:12)

Devil uses this spirit to make the world alluring, to exert subtle influence on our mind and heart

Do you love the things of this world? Are you entertained by things that reflect its complete lack of “moral sense”? (Eph 4:19; *g92 11/8 4-10*)

Such immoral entertainment can lead you to engage in worldly practices and reap the consequences (Ga 6:7)

The world tends to promote materialistic goals, not spiritual ones (Php 2:21; 1Jo 2:16; *w84 10/1 12-13*)

World promotes the goal of climbing the economic ladder

Such ambitions create anxieties, pains (1Ti 6:10)

Jesus cautioned us not to be anxious about even essentials of life (Mt 6:25-34)

‘The deceptive power of riches chokes the word’ (Mt 13:22)

Can happen today as it did in first century (Php 3:18, 19)

World idolizes its celebrities and prominent ones

Overawed by their showy life-styles (1Jo 2:16)

Admire their promiscuous conduct, vulgar speech, grooming

What is your attitude toward such individuals?

The spirit of the world is unloving, merciless, and unforgiving

Imitating that spirit could incur God’s just anger (Pr 16:27)

God rightly condemns “friendship with the world” (Jas 4:4)

One choosing to be a friend of the world is choosing to befriend a very dangerous enemy of God (1Pe 5:8; 1Jo 5:19)

Would a loving parent let a child choose as a close friend one whose habits and way of life would cause the child harm?

Jehovah restricts our associations to protect us (Isa 48:17)

Do we recognize the danger of bad associations? (1Co 15:33)

Friendship with the world is destined to failure, but there is a friendship that endures forever (1Jo 2:17)

### **CULTIVATE THE FINEST FRIENDSHIP OF ALL—WITH GOD** (11 min.)

Imperfect humans can become friends of God, as Abraham was (2Ch 20:7; Jas 2:23)

Jehovah loved Abraham and befriended him (Isa 41:8)

Abraham showed faith and obedience (Heb 11:8-10, 17-19)

Jehovah honored him with privilege of being Jesus’ forefather

Requirements to be a friend of God are outlined at Psalm 15:1-5 (*w89 9/15 26-9*; consider some of the ten points briefly)

Those fitting that description are doing God’s will

They will not totter, for Jehovah, as a true friend, will protect and uphold them

Need to strengthen that friendship now; requires hard work (Jude 3)

What will be our greatest need at time of great tribulation?

Not money, not things of world, but an unbreakable faith

Build faith by persistent prayer, diligent study of the Bible, faithful attendance at meetings, zealous share in field ministry

If we make a gross mistake, we must not yield to any inclination to drop out or quit; that is what Satan wants

Ask elders for help; apply their counsel (Pr 12:15; Heb 13:17)

Can recover from sinful course (Jas 5:13-16)

Jehovah, as a true Friend, will forgive (Isa 55:7)

Follow example of Moses (Heb 11:24-26)

He refused to love the world but kept love for Jehovah strong

Assured of resurrection

### **FRIENDSHIP WITH JEHOVAH LEADS TO ENDLESS BLESSINGS** (4 min.)

Jehovah has taken the initiative in loving us and offering his friendship (1Jo 4:19)

Our hearts move us to show him love and appreciation in response

We show love for God by obeying his laws (1Jo 5:3)

Face persecution rather than violate Jehovah’s laws (Ac 5:29)

We love and uphold his name by our words and actions (Ps 119:132; Isa 43:10-13)

We want to tell others about Jehovah (Ro 10:13-15)

Such friendship leads to present and future blessings (Mr 10:28-30)

God’s friends are guided by his spirit (Ga 5:22, 23)

They have the privilege of becoming “a people for his name” (Ac 15:14)

Our friendship with Jehovah can endure for all time, growing ever closer and more rewarding throughout eternity

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## DOES YOUR HOPE REST ON SCIENCE OR THE BIBLE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Focus attention on the reliability of the Bible. Human solutions based on science are not the answer. Show that there is a solid basis for trusting in the Bible's hope for the future

### **MANY SAY SCIENCE, NOT THE BIBLE, OFFERS HOPE FOR THE FUTURE** (8 min.)

Some think that scientists will in time solve all problems

History proves that science often fails to fulfill its promises

The book *The Experts Speak* attributes the following prediction to John Langdon-Davies, British journalist and Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 1936: "If we are to begin to try and understand life as it will be in 1960, we must begin by realizing that food, clothing and shelter will cost as little as air" (*w86 5/15 3*)

Many unfulfilled expectations (See *g86 11/8 3*)

Some scientists claim that science holds the key to overcoming death and that achieving everlasting life is within their power (*g90 4/22 4*)

Bible, however, encourages us to trust in Jehovah, not man (Ps 118:8)

Creator's power and Godship clearly discernible from physical creation (Ro 1:20)

But only a minority put genuine confidence in God (Ps 31:14)

How do you feel? Is there a solid basis for resting your hope for the future on science? What about the Bible? Can we rely on what the Bible says about the future?

### **IS SCIENCE A RELIABLE BASIS FOR HOPE?** (12 min.)

Many scientific achievements are undeniable and commendable

Many modern inventions have resulted in the elimination of tedious, time-consuming jobs for some

Think of the advantages that come from such inventions as telephone, automobile, airplane, computer

Science and technology are limited and often cause serious problems

Hundreds of thousands die each year worldwide in automobile accidents; millions injured

Scientists have tampered with the environment and its ecological balance

Terms such as "acid rain," "greenhouse effect," and "deforestation" reflect failure of science

Bible accurately predicted this situation (Re 11:18)

Effects of pollution on man's health (*g90 12/22 28*)

Many feel their privacy has been invaded by the use of computers (*g88 2/22 3*)

Many scientists are engaged in military research (*g89 6/8 6*)

Sophisticated weaponry has caused the death of hundreds of thousands

Some scientists have falsified data in an effort to gain prestige and profits and to promote their theories (*g90 1/22 2-15*)

The book *Environmental Ethics* states: "Technology is a servant of only limited usefulness, and highly unreliable. When it does solve a problem, it often creates two new ones—and their side effects are usually hard to foresee" (*tp 16-17*)

Science's track record offers no real solution to age-old problems, such as death, disease, crime, immorality, and war (*w91 6/15 3-5; w90 10/1 4-5; w88 6/15 27*)

### **TRUE SCIENCE CONFIRMS THE BIBLE'S RELIABILITY AND PROVIDES A SOUND BASIS FOR RESTING OUR HOPE ON IT** (13 min.)

The following examples show that the Bible is scientifically accurate and reflects scientific information that was not available through human investigation at the time the Bible was written (*ce 199-207*)

Earth is spherical and is 'hanging on nothing' (Job 26:7; Isa 40:22)

Water cycle (Ec 1:7)

Quarantine (Le 13:46; *it-1 633*)

Effect of emotions on physical organism (Pr 14:30; 17:22)

Scientific information revealed prior to human discovery proves divine inspiration of Bible and testifies as to its reliability

### **REST YOUR HOPE ON THE BIBLE, A SOURCE OF TRUE HOPE** (12 min.)

To have a bright outlook for the future, you need a solidly based hope

The only one who can give such hope is the Creator, Jehovah God

He supplies true hope through the Bible (Ro 15:4)

The Bible shows that the hope for the dead lies in the resurrection (Joh 5:28, 29)

This is a sure hope (Ac 17:31)

The miracle of Jesus' resurrection was confirmed by his subsequent appearance to over 500 persons (1Co 15:3-8; *w86 8/15 19*)

We can safely rest our hope on the Bible

Paul pointed to the sureness of God's word

The "word" that we have heard in this generation is reliable (Heb 4:12; 6:18)

Science can only make calculated guesses about the future, but the Bible foretells the future with accuracy (*w*92 5/15 6-7)

What hope for the future does the Bible give?

God's rule to replace human rule (Da 2:44)

Faithful people will survive world destruction (Zep 2:3)

There will be a new world (Re 21:1-4)

Rest your hope on the Bible, not on science (Ps 146:3, 4)

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## WHO ARE QUALIFIED AS MINISTERS OF GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Contrast the example of Jesus and his disciples with that of Christendom's clergy, who claim to be ministers of God. Show what the Scriptural qualifications for God's ministers are and how God's true ministers today are trained for the Christian ministry

### **JESUS CHRIST QUALIFIED AS GOD'S CHIEF MINISTER** (6 min.)

Baptized in Jordan at age 30, Jesus commenced his ministry (Lu 3:21-23)

At synagogue in Nazareth, he proclaimed his commission (Lu 4:17-21)

Went into all the towns and cities of Israel, preaching, healing, and carrying out his assigned ministry (Mt 9:35, 36)

He came to earth 'not to be ministered to, but to minister' and serve as a lowly house servant, *diakonos* (Mt 20:28)

Set marvelous pattern in this for all who would be his followers

### **INVITATION EXTENDED TO OTHERS TO SHARE IN GOD-GIVEN MINISTRY** (10 min.)

From beginning of his ministry Jesus invited others to join with him and become "fishers of men" (Mt 4:18, 19)

He bypassed the Jewish religious leaders, although these were well educated in the Law (Mt 23:2, 3, 6, 7)

Instead of approving these religious leaders, Jesus actually denounced them (Mt 23:33)

Jesus established no seminaries or schools but took his disciples with him for training in the 'field' (Mt 9:35-38)

Within three years men such as James, John, and Peter were thoroughly trained and sent out as qualified ministers, 'preachers of God's Kingdom' (Mt 10:5-7)

Their teaching and speaking resembled their Master's (Ac 4:13)

How different Christendom's religious leaders are today!

They boast of seminary training, love high-sounding titles, and claim to have divine ordination

Their criticism of God's Word has led to Bible ignorance among their flocks, as surveys show (*w91* 1/15 7; *w89* 7/1 4-5)

Many have become involved in politics, sexual misconduct, and financial scandals

Cannot even agree on what following Jesus' example means

### **SCRIPTURAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR GOD'S MINISTERS** (15 min.)

Who truly qualify to serve as ministers of God? Paul gives the direct answer at 2 Corinthians 2:16b, 17

Scriptures clearly set out necessary steps in order to be adequately qualified as God's minister

One must first take in *accurate knowledge* from God's Word, as apostles and first-century Christians did (Joh 17:3)

Along with such knowledge, *faith* is required (Joh 3:16; Heb 11:6)

To give evidence that one has faith, there must be works of *repentance* over past wrongful course (Ro 2:4)

Then one must turn around or take step of *conversion*, so as to progress in right way leading to God's favor (Ac 3:19)

Must reach point of *dedication*, offering oneself to God to do his will as footstep follower of Jesus Christ (Mt 16:24-26)

To symbolize dedication next step is to undergo water *baptism* in obedience to command by Jesus (Mt 28:19, 20)

All who have taken above steps are qualified from God's standpoint to be ministers of the good news

Baptism constitutes ordination by God as one of his ministers, not college diplomas or letters of recommendation from men

Those who respond to their message and become ministers themselves are their letter of recommendation (2Co 3:1-3)

Having to do secular work to maintain themselves and their families does not nullify their claim to be God's ministers

Apostle Paul made tents; worked with his own hands to provide material necessities but proved himself to be zealous minister of Jehovah (Ac 18:1-4; 20:34)

Jehovah's Witnesses today follow this same Biblical precedent, even those engaging in full-time ministry

### **PRESENT-DAY TRAINING FOR QUALIFICATION AS MINISTERS** (9 min.)

All ministers of Jehovah receive extensive training for the ministry

Five congregation meetings are provided each week for training in skilled use of God's Word (Heb 10:23-25)

Theocratic Ministry School in each congregation provides thorough instruction in effective study methods, public reading and speaking, teaching, and the field ministry. Available to all (2Ti 3:14-16; *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook* can be used to illustrate the extensive scope of subjects covered)

Pioneer Service School has provided valuable training for thousands of full-time ministers earth wide to shine as illuminators (Php 2:15)

Kingdom Ministry School provides advanced training for elders in overseeing and shepherding the congregation of God (Ac 20:28)

Bible School of Gilead in past 50 years has trained thousands of zealous missionaries serving earth wide (Mt 28:19, 20)

Ministerial Training School provides specialized instruction to help qualified brothers expand their service

All these provisions are a part of the Biblical training that qualifies Jehovah's servants to be effective ministers

Paul acknowledged that the 'qualification comes from God' (2Co 3:1-5)

**QUALIFIED MINISTERS NOW BEING USED BY JEHOVAH GOD** (5 min.)

Fact that the good news is being preached in all nations is evidence of God's approval on their efforts (Mt 24:14)

In keeping with example of Ezekiel, who served as a "watchman" to a rebellious nation by warning of God's judgments, Jehovah's ministers today sound divine warning (Eze 3:17-21; 33:2-7; w91 3/15 15)

Jehovah's approved ministers are humble and obedient coworkers with God. One plants, another waters, but God makes it grow (1Co 3:5-9)

God's Word encourages all of us to keep improving as hardworking ministers (2Ti 2:15)

Can then be used to glorify God, save our own lives and the lives of all who listen to the Word of life as proclaimed by the true and approved ministers of God

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## JEHOVAH AND CHRIST—ARE THEY PART OF A TRINITY?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Convincingly demonstrate that both the facts of history and the Bible prove that Jehovah and Jesus are no part of a Trinitarian Godhead

### **ORIGIN OF THE “MYSTERY” OF THE TRINITY** (5 min.)

Early Christians held firmly to inspired Word that the Father was supreme and worthy of all worship (Re 15:3, 4) United also in the belief that Jesus Christ was God’s Son, a separate person and lower in position than his Father (Joh 14:28; Php 2:5, 6)

During second century C.E. unfaithful leaders began to turn to popular Greek philosophies supposedly to convert educated pagans. They especially turned to Platonism (*ti* 11-12)

Philosophies of Plato and teachings of Philo, a Jew, were combined to form the basis for the Trinity doctrine. No Scriptural foundations (*ti* 11)

Brought into the church through a series of church councils and finally adopted in the Athanasian Creed (*ti* 8-9)

### **JEHOVAH—ONE GOD OR PART OF A TRIUNE DEITY?** (12 min.)

Almighty God made name Jehovah known during confrontation with all the pagan gods of Egypt, sixteenth century B.C.E. (Ex 6:3)

After delivering the Israelites, he formed representative nation and commanded them: “You must not have any other gods against my face” (Ex 20:3)

He demanded exclusive devotion to him, the “one Jehovah” (De 4:24; 6:4; Na 1:2)

Centuries later he restated his name and declared that to NO ONE else would he give his glory. Swore by himself that to him alone ‘every knee will bend down’ (Isa 42:8; 45:23)

Israelites were given honor to be his witnesses that, ‘Before me no God formed,’ none after, “I am Jehovah” (Isa 43:10, 11)

Hebrew word for God is *elohim* (plural) which some have said is a compound unity of three persons in one. However, in Hebrew usage *elohim* “is almost invariably construed with a singular verbal predicate, and takes a singular adjectival attribute” (*ti* 13)

Not a plurality of persons, but an ‘intensive plural’ denoting greatness and majesty

Jehovah insisted that he was not to be divided into a group of aspects as did the pagans with the Baals. This would also prohibit the philosophical assignment of him to being part of a trinity of gods (Jg 3:7; *it*-1 229)

Paul acknowledged that there were many pagan gods, but only one (True) God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus. Two different persons, not two gods in one (1Co 8:5, 6)

Jehovah eventually is to become ‘king over all the earth, One king, and his name one.’ All will worship ‘One God and Father who is over all.’ No association with a trinity (Zec 14:9; Eph 4:6)

### **JESUS CHRIST—EXALTED SON, BUT LOWER THAN FATHER** (10 min.)

Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of God (Joh 1:14)

Prehuman existence in heaven as Logos, the Word (Joh 1:1)

Used to create all other things but was ‘firstborn of every creation’ (Joh 1:3; Col 1:15)

Thus, unlike ever existent Father, Jesus had a beginning

Appointed by Father as Chief Agent and Administrator for carrying out Jehovah’s purposes (Col 1:16, 20; 1Jo 4:9)

He is Jehovah’s agent to remedy all problems raised by Satan’s rebellion

Is foundation upon which Jehovah will build the administration to destroy Satan and unite all things (Heb 2:14; Eph 1:8-10)

Appointed as King of Theocratic government by Jehovah (Da 7:13, 14)

Became man’s Redeemer by giving himself as the ransom sacrifice; through him will come resurrection of the dead (Joh 11:25; Ac 10:42; 1Ti 2:5, 6)

Only by authority of Father could Jesus truthfully say, “I am the way and the truth and the life.” (Joh 14:6) He was not the originator or the source

He was highly honored and exalted but not to equality with Father (*ti* 19)

### **NO THREE-IN-ONE EQUALITY BETWEEN FATHER AND SON** (7 min.)

Jesus never claimed equality with Father but declared that his authority came from God (Joh 5:19, 21, 24; 8:28)

He publicly declared that he had ‘been sent forth’ and that his message ‘belonged to him that sent me.’ One who sends forth always greater than one sent (Lu 4:18; Joh 7:16, 18; 13:16, 17)

Jesus, the Son, also learned obedience by the things he suffered. To whom was Jesus obedient? (Joh 7:28; 8:29, 42; Heb 5:8)

As Head of congregation, Jesus always upholds theocratic order, subjecting himself to Jehovah as his Head (1Co 11:3; 15:28)

Jesus always prayed to Father. No need if he himself was God. Did not direct prayers to himself (Mt 4:10; 6:9; Heb 2:12)

No Scriptural support for equality between Father and Son

**WHAT ABOUT BIBLE TEXTS THAT SUPPOSEDLY PROVE OR SUPPORT BELIEF IN THE TRINITY?** (6 min.)

As seen from information presented, Biblical and historical evidence does not support Trinity teaching

Texts used to support Trinity doctrine are commonly misinterpreted or taken out of context (briefly explain)

John 10:30 (Refer to John 17:21, 22 to show what Jesus meant)

John 1:1 (Consult appendix article 6A of *Rbi8*)

John 8:58 (See *ti* 26)

Keep in mind that these texts refer to only two persons, not three

Not one Bible text says that God, Jesus, and holy spirit are the same in substance, power, and eternity

**JEHOVAH WILL RULE IN SUPREMACY FOR ALL ETERNITY** (5 min.)

Events prove that Jehovah took his great power at end of Gentile Times in 1914 and began exercising sovereignty through Messianic Kingdom (Re 11:17)

Graciously invited his faithful and loyal Son to share that Kingdom in which Jehovah is the Supreme One. Honor given to the Son by the Father (Da 4:25; Re 11:15; 12:10)

Lovingly selected 144,000 others from mankind to share the throne with Jesus Christ (Re 14:1; 20:4, 6)

Theocratic order and arrangement is: (1) Jehovah, Supreme Sovereign; (2) Jesus Christ, loyal and exalted King; (3) 144,000 associated kings and priests; (4) all other creatures in submission

No trinity of Gods, no equality with Sovereign Lord Jehovah, all things in heaven and earth harmoniously submitting to Theocratic rule (1Co 15:24, 28)

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## RELIGION'S TIME OF JUDGMENT

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to appreciate that religion is accountable to God. Show clearly why false religion deserves God's adverse judgment and execution

### **SOBERING TO KNOW THAT A FINAL JUDGMENT FACES ALL RELIGION** (6 min.)

To some, this may seem strange. Religion has played major role in every civilization. Through union of Church and State, religion's representatives have crowned or dethroned kings, instigated crusades, and blessed wars. Significantly, a wave of godlessness is now sweeping the world, affecting religion's position

Its exemptions and privileges are increasingly questioned as clergymen become involved in politics, sexual misconduct, and financial scandals

Religion also involved in ethnic conflicts and terrorist acts (*w94 12/15 28; g94 12/22 18-20*)

Surveys show growing apathy toward religion (*w91 12/1 6; g89 2/8 29; g89 1/8 3*)

Robberies of churches show lack of godly fear (*g92 11/8 29; g92 1/8 28*)

These attitudes and actions are portents of what is in store for religion in the near future

Religion is facing the stormiest period of her long history

Christendom, which claims to represent God, stands before God's judgment seat as first to be judged

All other religions judged next

### **TRUE RELIGION AND FALSE TO MEET CONTRASTING JUDGMENTS** (6 min.)

Bible shows that not all religions are equally acceptable to Jehovah

First prophecy points to conflict between true worshipers and false worshipers (*Ge 3:15*)

Jesus speaks of those who worship with spirit and truth and of those who worship 'what they do not know,' and he warns against false Christs, prophets, and apostles (*Joh 4:22, 23; Mt 24:5*)

Paul warns against trying to partake of the table of Jehovah and of the table of demons (*1Co 10:21*)

Disciple James describes form of worship that is futile and that which is clean and undefiled (*Jas 1:26, 27*)

Religion will have to answer to Jehovah and his Son, who has been appointed to do the judging (*Joh 5:22; 2Co 5:10*)

It will be determined plainly who is obedient to his teaching and practicing true religion

Judgment will depend on fruitage produced (*Mt 7:17-20*)

### **GENUINE WORSHIPERS WILL RECEIVE FAVORABLE JUDGMENT** (10 min.)

What fine fruits is true religion expected to produce?

Since God is love, his people would practice and reflect this marvelous quality (*Mr 12:29-31; 1Jo 4:8*)

Genuine disciples of Jesus Christ identified by manifesting self-sacrificing love for one another (*Joh 13:34, 35*)

This fruit, along with other godly qualities, proves they have God's spirit (*Ga 5:22, 23*)

True worshipers respect God's Word, apply its principles in their lives, and use it as basis for teaching others (*2Ti 3:15, 16*)

Jesus came in name of his Father, glorified him (*Joh 5:43, 44; 7:16-18; 17:4*)

His followers glorify, sanctify and walk in Jehovah's name (*Mic 4:5; Mt 6:9; Joh 15:8*)

As followers of Jesus, true worshipers zealously preach Kingdom good news as Christ commanded (*Mt 24:14; Lu 8:1*)

Keep themselves separate from world (*Joh 15:19; Jas 4:4*)

Persecuted, but merit God's approval (*2Ti 3:12; 1Pe 3:14*)

Such fine fruitage is produced by Jehovah's people worldwide

Anointed footstep followers of Christ know from Bible prophecies regarding them that judgment has started with house of God (*1Pe 4:17, 18*)

Christ will soon begin judging people who have his favor (*Mt 25:31-33*)

### **WHY ALL FALSE RELIGION WILL RECEIVE ADVERSE JUDGMENT** (10 min.)

Constitutes part of this wicked system of things under Satanic control, friends of the world and so enemies of God (*Jas 4:4*)

Have turned their backs on God's Word and made his commandments of no effect by their traditions and vain philosophies (*Mt 15:7-9*)

They have refused to recognize the only supreme God, Jehovah, but raised up gods of their own, even a triune god

Jehovah cannot put up with their formalism and insincere prayers, like those of prophetic Sodom and Gomorrah (*Isa 1:10-15*)

They have ignored God's judgment message and have ill-treated and killed his messengers (Compare Matthew 23:29-36)

Under symbol of a great harlot, world empire of false religion responsible for shedding blood, taking sides in numerous wars (Re 17:3-6)

Clear then that all Babylonish religions of East and West have been weighed in Jehovah's judgment balance and found wanting

Only until completion of the proclamation of the judgment message is Jehovah's sword of execution of false religion withheld (Re 14:6-8)

**PROPHETIC FORECASTS OF FALSE RELIGION'S EXECUTION** (10 min.)

Ancient Babylon, in which cruelty and false religion went hand in hand, came to sudden end when it fell in one night to Cyrus the Persian

The mixed forces of the Medes, Persians, and Elamites under Cyrus shattered the boasted invincibility of Babylon

Bible foretells a sudden, complete devastation of Babylon the Great by the "ten horns" (Re 17:15-18; 18:8, 10, 17, 19; *re* 256-8)

Even now, godless, antireligious elements in the United Nations are prevailing. There is growing apathy toward promoting religious freedom, in contrast with other concerns (*g*86 1/8 29)

According to prophecy those feelings and attitudes will one day escalate into drastic measures against all false religion

Godless forces will thereafter concentrate their hatred on and war against the representatives of true religion on earth, but the enemies will come to their end in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" (Re 16:14; 2Th 1:6-10)

Thus true religion will triumph while false religion will disappear forever, like a millstone hurled into the sea (Re 18:21)

**LOVERS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS NEED TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES WITH TRUE RELIGION** (3 min.)

Approaching judgment hour and tribulation for false religion require worldwide warning to be sounded (Re 18:4, 5)

Separation from the world empire of false religion is essential if we are to be hidden in the day of Jehovah's wrath (Zep 2:1-3)

True meekness and righteousness are not to be found in any section of Babylonish religion

Seek safety with the people of Jehovah, who are sounding out the warning of the fast-approaching end of all false religion

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## WILL YOU ESCAPE THIS WORLD'S DESTINY?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Encourage the audience not to ignore the overwhelming evidence that "the great day of Jehovah" is near. Convey the urgency of meeting God's requirements for survival, and stimulate the audience to take action

### **WHY MANY FEAR THE FUTURE** (5 min.)

Onslaught of crime, drug abuse, AIDS, nationalism, ethnic hatred, and deteriorating environment threatens mankind's future (*g93 1/8 4-10*)

The possibility of a nuclear disaster is not a relic of the past

Journalist C. Krauthammer warns: "The end of the Soviet threat does not mean the end of nuclear danger. The real danger is proliferation, and proliferation has just begun" (*w94 8/1 3*)

Thousands of nuclear weapons still exist (*g92 3/22 28*)

Nuclear-reactor accidents and problem of nuclear waste storage pose a serious threat to life

Is annihilation awaiting mankind? What is this world's destiny? If this world's destiny is disastrous, is escape possible?

### **WHAT JEHOVAH GOD HAS DECREED FOR THIS WORLD** (5 min.)

God will not let mankind perish (Isa 45:18)

But God has decreed destruction of *Satan's world* soon in "the great day of Jehovah" (Zep 1:14-18)

Jehovah, a God of love, enlightens his people in advance, and through them others are informed (Isa 42:9; 61:1, 2)

So destruction is not unavoidable (Read Psalm 145:20)

### **RECOGNIZE YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ESCAPE** (12 min.)

Preservation during the "day of Jehovah" requires that we heed Scriptural warnings

But when disaster threatens, people often ignore warnings (*w86 9/15 3-4; w80 12/1 3-4*)

Donald Robinson wrote in his book *The Face of Disaster*: "Large sections of the population . . . simply cannot accept the idea that a disaster is going to befall them. They know that explosions, conflagrations, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, plane and train crashes do occur. That in wartime bombs will fall. However, they cannot bring themselves to admit that such catastrophes will touch them personally. That they, or the ones they love, may be horribly injured, killed. That their private cosmos may be forever disrupted. It is too awful to contemplate. It would require them to adopt a changed set of values, an entirely new frame of reference, and that is more than many people are capable of doing" (Page 58)

Many now do not think a disaster will befall them and are unwilling to make changes, just as the people would not change their life-style despite Noah's preaching (Mt 24:37-39)

Lot's sons-in-law ignored warning of Sodom's end (Ge 19:14)

In both cases, failure to heed warnings and make changes made escape impossible (2Pe 2:5-7)

Noah, his family, and Lot and daughters escaped by heeding warnings and obeying God; Lot's wife disobeyed and died

Jesus Christ indicated that during his presence people would also ignore warnings (Read Luke 17:26-30)

### **DO NOT IGNORE THE CLEAR EVIDENCE** (8 min.)

Will you pay attention to evidence proving that Jesus now is present as King and the "day of Jehovah" is approaching rapidly?

Note some features of the composite "sign" of Jesus' presence (Mt 24:3; read Luke 21:10, 11)

One feature is unparalleled warfare

Some 69,000,000 died in World Wars I and II; millions more have died in wars since 1945

Another feature of the "sign" is "great earthquakes"

During this century, hundreds of thousands have died in earthquakes (*g91 8/8 28*)

"Pestilences" are still another part of the "sign"

In the global 'Spanish flu' of 1918-1919, about 20,000,000 died; diseases abound today (*g94 4/8 31; w83 5/1 3-7*)

Food shortage stalks the earth as part of the "sign"

*The World Book Encyclopedia* says: "Most of the developing nations of Africa, Asia, and Latin America have barely enough food for their people. Millions in these countries go hungry. When food production or imports drop for any reason, famine may strike and thousands or millions of people may die."

Global preaching of good news is a chief feature of the "sign" (Mt 24:14)

Jehovah's Witnesses are doing this in \_\_\_ lands, with over \_\_\_\_ Kingdom proclaimers (Refer to latest *Year-book*)

They also warn of Jehovah's day and point to way of survival

**PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ESCAPE AND SURVIVAL (12 min.)**

Jesus gave instructions that we must now heed to escape calamity

We must keep awake and make supplication (Read Luke 21:34-36)

Flight without delay is vital when disaster threatens

So, as Jesus' followers fled Jerusalem, let nothing hinder your flight to safety among Jehovah's people now (Mt 24:15-18)

Personal escape depends on favorable relationship with Jehovah based on Jesus Christ's ransom sacrifice (Ro 3:23-25)

Must learn God's ways, walk in his paths (Isa 2:2-4)

Dedication to God and baptism are essential

Always keep on guard according to Jehovah's word (Ps 119:9)

Eager study of the Bible and Christian publications a must

Associate with God's people regularly; do not isolate yourself

Deliberately isolating self from God's people may lead to wrong ideas, failure to survive the end (Pr 18:1)

Therefore, "do not stay away from the meetings" (Heb 10:25, *The Jerusalem Bible*)

Must show love for God and neighbor by preaching good news and teaching others about "the Provider of escape" (Ps 18:1, 2)

**YOU CAN BE AMONG THOSE WHO ESCAPE THIS WORLD'S DESTINY (3 min.)**

God will not let all mankind be annihilated

He has purposed an earthly Paradise inhabited by perfect humans

All those not on Jehovah's side will perish in rapidly-approaching "day of Jehovah"

All are now being given the opportunity to escape

Heed Scriptural warnings and counsel and prepare to escape this system's end

If you act now with faith in Jehovah, you can have a bright future with those who escape this world's destiny (Ps 37:37-40)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## GOOD NEWS IN A VIOLENT WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

While commenting on present-day violence, highlight what God's Word says about the origin of violence. Emphasize the hope of a new world of peace that the Bible sets forth. Speak in a positive manner about the Bible-based hope for the future

### **"VIOLENT" APTLY DESCRIBES THE WORLD AROUND US TODAY** (7 min.)

Many of us have (or know people who have) been the victim of violence on a *personal level*

[Here and later, you may use recent local examples]

Violence is so common that our daily activities are affected by it—how to travel, when not to go out, what to avoid

Many families are shattered by domestic violence—child abuse, spousal abuse, incest

United States has been called the murder capital of the industrialized world (*g90 10/22 28*)

Young, old, male, female, may feel as did Job (Read Job 19:7)

On *international level*, assassinations, terrorism, and ethnic conflicts becoming ever more common

Perpetrated not only by criminals but also by political, religious, and other extremists

Many individuals and groups seem to match description of the wicked in Proverbs 4:16, 17 (Read)

Often, peaceful citizens and innocent bystanders are hurt

Leaves people in despair, dreading that worse violence is ahead

To understand what good news is available despite this violence, we need to consider its background

### **WHAT IS THE BACKGROUND OF THIS WORLD VIOLENCE?** (10 min.)

Bible records times of lawlessness and violence in the past and provides insight on the true cause

Examining events of those times can shed light on events today

Violence burst forth prior to Flood (Read Genesis 6:5, 11)

Much of violence must have been caused by depraved angels and their mighty offspring (Ge 6:2, 4)

If you lived before the Flood, how would you have been affected?

Would you have felt it necessary to be tough to survive?

Or, would you have trusted in God as your hope for end of violence?

Encouraging to note that God definitely was displeased with violence

He purposed to end it, and did so (Ge 6:7, 8)

Jerusalem before 70 C.E. was another scene of violence

Jews claimed to worship Jehovah, but leaders tended to divide people into factions, even leading to revolts (Ac 5:36, 37)

God was put in the background, as religious animosities and selfish aims took first place

An "increasing of lawlessness," as foretold, included violent persecution of Christians (Mt 24:12; Ac 7:58; 8:1-3)

Eventually led to violent revolt against Rome, resulting in destruction of entire Jewish system (*it-2 47-8*)

History since then spotted with violent times, climaxing today

Bible shows that the whole world is lying in the hands of Satan, who is trying to control everyone's thinking and actions (1Jo 5:19)

Through the media he promotes 'earthly wisdom,' which is animalistic, demonic, contentious, and vile (Jas 3:15, 16)

Television and movies show people getting stabbed, beaten, raped, shot, vaporized, blown up; violence becomes routine

Effect is well documented—an increasingly violent generation bent on crime (*g87 4/8 30*)

### **DO YOU SHARE GOD'S AND CHRIST'S VIEW OF VIOLENCE?** (8 min.)

Jehovah is plainly on record as opposing anyone loving violence (Read Psalm 11:5)

He has not changed, even though people today accept violence as commonplace

God's Son is "Prince of Peace" and while on earth did "no violence" (Isa 9:6, 7; 53:9)

Gives us reason to expect that when Jesus executes God's judgment against wicked, his actions will be righteous

God is now allowing individuals opportunity to turn from violence in order to gain his approval

Similar to opportunity men of Nineveh were given to turn from 'bad way and violence in their hands' (Jon 3:8)

Having made this change, one should keep in mind counsel at Proverbs 3:31, 32 (Read)

The wicked may gain wealth, prominence, or power, but they do not have blessing of intimacy with Creator

As we see world becoming ever more violent, we might ask: Where are things headed? Is there good news today?

**THOUGH THE WORLD IS VIOLENT, THERE IS GOOD NEWS!** (20 min.)

Seeing the violence and wickedness in Jerusalem, Habakkuk was greatly disturbed (Read Habakkuk 1:2, 3)

Similarly, we could become disturbed and discouraged, feeling that there is no hope, no good news

But there is good news!

First, Jehovah and Jesus are not blind to the present violence

They are high above the wicked and are watching (Pr 15:3)

Complete end of violence and wickedness will come soon, and we can be marked for preservation—certainly that is good news!

Jehovah noted what was taking place in Jerusalem and acted in righteousness, bringing the city to destruction in 607 B.C.E. (Eze 8:17; *kj* 154-6, 165-71)

Prior to Jehovah's forceful intervention, those who were distressed over conditions were marked to be spared (Eze 9:4)

Faithful ones like Baruch, Ebed-melech, and Rechabites survived

People today who are appalled by the world's violence and who want to serve Jehovah in truth can also be spared

There are things we can do to ensure our survival of the end of the violent world—that too is good news!

As violent pre-Flood world met its end, Noah and his family knew what they had to do to survive, and they did "just so" (Ge 6:13-22)

As violence grew in Jerusalem before 70 C.E., Christians, being forewarned, knew what they had to do (Lu 19:43, 44; 21:20, 21)

They not only had to avoid being violent but also had to obey warning—that meant their survival and preservation

Our being delivered from violence today does not mean flight to some special place or simply being a non-violent person

As with Noah and first-century Christians, positive action in line with faith we have gained through studying the Bible will mean our being preserved alive (Heb 10:23-25, 39)

Preservation will be into new world, which will not be marked by wickedness and violence—that is the best of news! (Ps 72:7, 8, 14)

Under Christ's peaceful rule, violence will be no more

Wicked and lovers of violence not allowed to be part of new world, but will be annihilated (Re 21:8)

May your attitude toward violence and your actions in serving God enable you to find a place there (Read Psalm 72:18, 19)

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## PRAYERS THAT ARE HEARD BY GOD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Convince the audience that the true God does hear and act on prayers that meet Bible requirements. Use Bible examples to show how Jehovah answers prayers. You may also consult the Society's *Indexes* under "PRAYER" for modern-day experiences that show how God answers prayers

### **PEOPLE OF ALL RELIGIONS PRAY** (3 min.)

Yet many prayers not answered

Prayers for world peace not being answered (*w92* 3/1 6)

In wartime, both sides pray; one side "wins"

Same true of sports contestants who pray (*g94* 2/8 31)

"No atheists in the foxholes," yet many soldiers are killed (*g66* 7/8 5)

But God hears sincere truth seekers (1Ki 8:41-43; Ac 10:31)

### **NEED TO BE DIRECTED TO TRUE GOD, THROUGH CHRIST, WITH PROPER MOTIVE** (10 min.)

True God, Jehovah; we must call on his name (Ac 2:21)

All other gods vain, powerless (Ps 115:4-8)

Prayers to them futile (1 Ki 18:26-29)

Must be made through Jesus Christ (Joh 14:6; 16:23)

Must be an earnest seeker after God (Heb 11:6)

Love of righteousness essential (Pr 15:29; compare Isa 1:15)

Humility required (Ps 138:6)

Must persevere (Lu 18:1-8)

Not acceptable to memorize and use same words over and over

### **PRAYERS MUST BE FOR RIGHT THINGS AND BE SPECIFIC** (15 min.)

For triumph of righteousness over God's foes (Ps 83:1, 2, 16-18)

For sanctification of God's name (Mt 6:9)

For Kingdom to come, God's will to be done on earth (Mt 6:10)

For prosperity of Kingdom work (Mt 9:38; 2Th 3:1)

For brothers: Those taking lead; those persecuted, ill, aged (Ps 41:1-3; Ac 12:5)

On personal concerns

For forgiveness where we have come short (Mt 6:12)

For wisdom in dealing with certain problem (Jas 1:5-7)

For help in overcoming certain sin or weakness (Jas 5:14, 15)

For privilege of conducting Bible study

For material concerns: Health, employment, and so on

Must be in line with God's will (Mt 26:39; 1Jo 5:14)

### **TO SHOW SINCERITY, CONSISTENCY, MUST WORK AT WHAT WE PRAY FOR** (10 min.)

Jacob's example when faced with meeting Esau (Ge 32:9-21)

David's example when Absalom rebelled (2Sa 15:31-34; 17:8-14)

Not enough just to pray to have the privilege of conducting a Bible study

Be zealous in house-to-house work and making return visits

Be concerned with improving one's effectiveness

Plant and water for God to make it grow (1Co 3:5-7)

### **MEANS THAT JEHOVAH USES TO ANSWER PRAYERS** (5 min.)

His Word and active force (Ps 119:105; Zec 4:6)

Angelic direction and assistance (Ps 34:7)

Human agencies: Society, elders, our brothers

At times his answer may be, No (2Co 12:8, 9)

### **PRAYERS OF FAITH ASSURED OF DIVINE ATTENTION** (2 min.)

Bible reveals Jehovah as Hearer of prayer (Ps 65:2)

God pleased thus to provide communication through Christ

Assures petitioners, prayers will be appropriately considered for best interests (Jas 1:5)

(Note: Society's *Indexes* furnish ample references, such as *w92* 4/15 3-6; *w91* 9/15 3-8; *w88* 3/15 4-7, in support of the above; use above scriptures as time permits)

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## WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Encourage each one to reflect on his or her own personal relationship with God. Highlight what God requires if one is to have divine approval and how one must act in order to receive God's support

### **A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS IMPORTANT** (5 min.)

Historians and anthropologists find that humans have an urge to worship (*sh* 19; *g89* 3/22 6)

Jesus said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need" (Mt 5:3)

As we need wholesome food for physical health, so we need a good relationship with God for spiritual health (*sh* 28)

Things do not always go well, so we need divine help

Facing illness, hardships, may call for more than human strength

Mankind in general is estranged from God (Eph 2:1, 2)

Yet, Enoch and Noah walked with God; Abraham was his friend; David had good relationship (Ge 5:22; 6:9; Isa 41:8; Ps 23:1)

How is your relationship with God? Is there room for improvement?

What are the benefits of a good relationship with God?

### **HOW WE BENEFIT FROM A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (8 min.)

God answers prayers of those who earnestly seek him (Heb 11:6)

Witness missionary in Africa said: "My greatest happiness comes each evening when my mind is still awake, and while alone I can spend some time under the starry heavens walking and talking with Jehovah. This has drawn me closer to Jehovah." (*w73* 174)

Good relationship improves the quality of our life (Cite real-life experiences, like those in *w90* 5/15 21)

Good relationship with God protects us, for we fear to displease him (Ps 97:10)

One who is tempted to commit fornication will realize that giving in will bring reproach and sorrow on oneself and loved ones and will disgrace the Christian congregation (Pr 7:1-27)

Good relationship with Jehovah sustains us (Ps 121:1, 2)

Prevents one from becoming paralyzed by fear of man; gives confidence in God's support no matter what the outcome (*w89* 6/1 6)

How is such a good relationship with God attained?

### **ATTAINING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (7 min.)

Must develop proper fear of Jehovah (Pr 9:10; *it-1* 818)

Then follow these vital steps to a good relationship with God:

- (1) Take in accurate knowledge and comply with it (Joh 17:3)
- (2) Exercise faith in God, Christ, and ransom (Joh 3:16)
- (3) Repentance—heartfelt sorrow over past wrongdoing (Lu 5:32)
- (4) Conversion—turning around, pursuing godly course (Ac 3:19)
- (5) Dedication of your life to God, expressed in prayer (Mr 8:34)
- (6) Baptism in symbol of dedication to Jehovah (Mt 28:19)

If steps not taken, not yet in complete relationship with God, which leads to salvation (*w89* 1/15 15-16)

### **GOOD CONDUCT NEEDED TO MAINTAIN A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (12 min.)

Continue to study Bible, attend meetings (Joh 6:63; Ps 26:12)

Rely on God in earnest, explicit prayers (Php 4:6, 7)

Accept God's direction through his Word, providence, spirit, angels, visible organization (Pr 3:5, 6; 16:9; Re 14:6)

Trust God, responding to his love and other attributes (Ps 107:8)

Humbly accept God's discipline (Heb 12:4-11)

Jehovah may be refining us for later use, as in Moses' case

Be forgiving, or God will not forgive us (Mt 6:14, 15)

Fight tendency to harbor resentment (1Co 13:4, 5)

Love brothers (1Jo 4:20, 21)

Seek to please God even in small matters (Lu 16:10)

Keep integrity to Jehovah (Ps 26:1)

### **GOOD RELATIONS REQUIRE THAT WE BE GOD'S FELLOW WORKERS** (10 min.)

Be interested in God's chief concern—settling issue of sovereignty

Clean life and showing neighbor love in mundane things not enough

Must witness about Jehovah's name and purposes (Isa 43:10)

Cooperate with faithful and discreet slave that directs Kingdom-preaching work (Mt 24:14, 45-47)

Do this work zealously; do not be self-sparing (Lu 13:24)

If you are not yet baptized but want to share in this joyful work, speak with the congregation elders

The more zealous we are in sacred service, the better our relationship with God and the greater our joy (Tit 2:13, 14)

Great satisfaction comes from working with God (1Co 3:6-9)

What else is needed?

**KEEP WORKING TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (3 min.)

Work hard to deepen your relationship with God

Get to know God better through diligent study, meetings

Never take for granted the benefits of good relationship with God

Maintain good communication, never being too busy to pray

Cooperate with 'faithful slave' to have good relationship with God

Keep busy in sacred service, zealously preaching Kingdom message

Sow bountifully and you will reap bountifully (2Co 9:6)

In such ways, taste and see how good God really is! (Ps 34:8)

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## WHY LIVE BY BIBLE STANDARDS?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show clearly how living by Bible standards improves the quality of life. Explain that the problems many suffer are often due to their own failure, intentionally or unintentionally, to apply Bible standards. When considering next-to-last subhead, display different issues of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, and call attention to the practical information therein

### **BIBLE STANDARDS ARE GOD-GIVEN** (5 min.)

Bible has long been acclaimed as God-given guide

Abraham Lincoln, 16th president of the United States: "I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man"

William E. Gladstone, 19th-century British statesman: "The Bible is stamped with a Specialty of Origin, and an immeasurable distance separates it from all competitors"

Napoléon Bonaparte, French emperor: "The Bible is no mere book, but a Living Creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it" (*w92* 5/15 3)

Bible standards endure, for their Source is the Creator, Jehovah (Isa 40:8)

Given by God out of love for his human creation (Isa 48:17, 18)

Encouraged, not forced, to obey God's standards

When heeded, result in peace and happiness (Pr 3:1, 2)

### **WORLD CONDITIONS SHOW FOLLY OF IGNORING BIBLE STANDARDS** (10 min.)

Majority of mankind choose to ignore God's standards (Ps 14:1-3)

Rather than an increase in love and peace, there is growing violence and terrorism (*w90* 10/1 4-5)

Selfishness abounds, resulting in a ruining of the earth

Food, air, water, and soil have been polluted

Although there is enough for all, poverty and food shortages stalk the earth (*g91* 5/8 28)

Moral breakdown has brought added suffering to both young and old (*g92* 1/22 3, 8-9)

Family stability increasingly threatened as divorces soar

Drug addiction has pushed many into immorality and crime

AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases bring misery and snuff out increasing numbers of lives

Greed and materialism "plunge men into destruction and ruin" (1Ti 6:9, 10)

Increasing suicide, especially among youths, demonstrates inability to cope when Bible standards are ignored

Truly, man cannot 'direct his own steps' (Jer 10:23)

### **BIBLE PROVIDES STANDARDS FOR US IN EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE** (15 min.)

No matter who we are or what our station in life, there are Bible standards that apply

Family relationships (Eph 5:22-25, 28, 33; 6:1-4)

Husbands, as family heads, are to love wives as their own bodies and rear children to follow Bible standards

Wives are to be submissive to husbands

Children are to honor and obey parents "in union with the Lord"

Personal relationships

All sexual immorality must be avoided (Heb 13:4)

Dealings to be conducted in honesty and truthfulness

Always do good and try to live peaceably with all (Ro 12:17, 18, 21)

Employer-employee relationships (In principle, see Ephesians 6:5-7, 9)

Employers must treat employees justly

Employees must be conscientious workers

Relationships with governments

Must be subject and give superior authorities their due (Ro 13:1, 5-7)

Standards are summarized by Jesus: Show love for God and for neighbor (Mt 22:37-40)

Love of God will motivate us to abide by his standards (1Jo 5:3)

Neighbor love will motivate us to do good deeds and refrain from things that harm others (Ga 6:10)

### **HELP NEEDED TO LIVE BY BIBLE STANDARDS** (10 min.)

Have to withstand influence of Satan and the wicked world surrounding us

At same time, have to build up appreciation for God and his righteous standards (Ps 119:97)

Requires conscientious effort and diligent study of God's Word (2Ti 2:15)

Be conscious of spiritual need

Buy out time for personal study

Keep seeking God's Kingdom first

Fear of displeasing God will also protect us (Pr 8:13)

Jehovah is wholly righteous; sin displeases him

Will not tolerate willful violators of his righteous standards (2Th 1:8, 9)

Help provided through Jehovah's visible organization

*Watchtower, Awake!* and other publications stress God's standards

Congregation meetings incite us to live by these standards

Elders are ready to give personal help

Get help from holy spirit by prayer (Lu 11:13)

**LIVING BY BIBLE STANDARDS MAKES SENSE** (5 min.)

Bible's axiom is true: We reap what we sow (Ga 6:7, 8)

Can avoid the problems of those who ignore Bible standards

Jehovah sees and deals with us accordingly (1Pe 3:10-12)

Living by Bible standards brings blessings

Means salvation for ourselves and others (1Ti 4:8, 16)

Our course can set an encouraging example for others

Assures a good relationship with Jehovah

Brings benefit of a good conscience

Fulfills purpose for which we were created, bringing glory and honor to Jehovah

Imparts hope of future blessings

Thus, it is the course of true wisdom to live by Bible standards

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## COME, YOU WHO THIRST FOR THE TRUTH!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to see the importance of acting on God's invitation to quench their spiritual thirst. Show in a practical way how to receive spiritual refreshment from God's provisions

### **A UNIQUE INVITATION GOING OUT TODAY ON A WORLDWIDE SCALE** (3 min.)

Invitation in Revelation to take of "life's water" (Re 22:17)

Invitation is remarkable because it emanates from an exalted source through Jesus' anointed followers

These constitute a composite John class (Re 1:1-3)

This wonderful invitation could come only from Jehovah God, whose spirit directed John to pen these words of invitation

Millions who have already accepted the invitation and acted upon it now share in extending it to still others

Religious truth is part of "life's water," which encompasses God's entire provision for the salvation of those who love him

### **FINDING RELIGIOUS TRUTH VITAL TODAY** (6 min.)

False religious teachings abound today

Result is religious defilement, spiritual neglect, and eventual death for worshippers

For instance, doctrine of immortal soul contradicts Bible truth

Is responsible for such religious errors as hellfire, purgatory, transmigration of the soul, and supposed talking with the dead

Bible truth corrects such (Ge 2:7; Eze 18:4; De 18:9-13)

Water of truth refreshes, cleanses from religious defilement, gives hope of eternal life (Eph 5:25-27; Joh 4:10-14)

When properly understood, Bible teaches us how to worship God with spirit and truth (Joh 4:24)

Those responding are washed clean of religious defilement, are refreshed, are set free from spiritual bondage (Joh 8:32)

They rejoice in well-founded hope of life in new world

Invitation still open to take in "life's water"

### **NECESSARY TO CULTIVATE A THIRST FOR RELIGIOUS TRUTH** (15 min.)

Happy are those conscious of spiritual need (Mt 5:3)

Must reject religious error, thirst for truth, and seek knowledge from God (Pr 2:3-5)

Physical thirst must be quenched if we are to live

Likewise, spiritual thirst has to be satisfied for eternal life

Apostle Peter advised that each one "form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word," or thirst for it (1Pe 2:2)

Some do not have this longing; need help to develop thirst

One way that Jehovah's organization works to arouse thirst for truth is by publishing Bible literature

Develop greater thirst for truth by reading publications and by regular study (*w86* 5/15 12-20)

Set aside time to read new publications, and stick to schedule

Study is absorbing if accounts are visualized (Jg 7:19-22)

Associating new points with old also helpful; review ideas

Do not be content with just 'milk of the word' (Heb 5:12-14)

Need to study publications like *Revelation Climax* book

Another way that God's organization helps us develop this thirst is by providing wholesome meetings, assemblies, conventions

Joy results from gathering together (Ne 8:12)

Heed encouragement to be regular at meetings

Make serious, prayerful effort to develop spiritual thirst

Does not come easily, for fleshly and worldly tendencies at enmity with God (Ro 8:6-8; 1Jo 2:16, 17)

People not encouraged to appreciate spiritual need, for Satan tries to blind them (2Co 4:4)

Thus, majority are like poor soil (Mt 13:3-7)

You can be like good soil that is productive (Mt 13:8)

Ask yourself: Do I have a thirst for religious truth?

If you are associating with Jehovah's Witnesses, how much real thirst do you have for accurate knowledge of God's truth?

Do not be like some who associate for years but cling to false teachings, birthday and holiday celebrations, and so forth

Break off association with individuals or organizations that would divert your attention from spiritual pursuits

Even as you cannot live without water, you cannot enjoy eternal life unless you satisfy your need for "life's water"

By study, meeting attendance, and prayer, develop and satisfy thirst for truth

**QUENCHING THIRST FOR TRUTH WITHOUT COST** (15 min.)

Billions today in religious bondage to Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion

They pay out large sums but remain spiritually thirsty (*w88* 2/15 21; *w87* 5/1 10-11; *w86* 12/1 28)

A beauty of true religious knowledge is that it is free

Note this as we read Isaiah 55:1-4

Primarily fulfilled on Jehovah's anointed witnesses (*Man's Salvation* pp. 95-9)

During World War I (1914-18), Babylon the Great got them under her power by means of her worldly par- amours, even as Babylon had taken God's ancient people captive

Anointed Christians looked for end of wicked world; but it did not occur, and they were keenly disap- pointed

Through Jesus Christ, God provided thirst-quenching waters of truth that infused life and hope into his parched people

The Scriptural message was one of deliverance from Babylon the Great by means of the established Mes- sianic Kingdom

Like a river, such religious truth keeps on flowing to millions of people, all without cost

To this day such waters are freely dispensed worldwide in upwards of 200 lands and more than 200 languages (From latest *Yearbook*, cite figures on increase in publishers, Memorial attendance, time dispensing waters of truth, etc.)

**BLESSINGS OF QUENCHING THIRST FOR RELIGIOUS TRUTH** (6 min.)

If you thirst for religious truth, do something about it now

Knowledge of God is beginning to fill the earth (Isa 11:9)

Will continue into the coming Millennium (Da 12:3, 4)

Blessings without end assured under Kingdom rule (Re 22:17)

Now is the time to quench thirst for religious truth

Flee famine-stricken Babylon the Great (Am 8:11, 12)

Join with God's people in spiritual paradise (Isa 49:8-10; Re 7:16, 17; *Revelation Climax* pp. 126-7)

Be eager to drink deeply from "the fountain of the water of life" (Re 21:6b; *Revelation Climax* p. 304)

Come, you who thirst for the truth, drink freely!

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

# REACH OUT FOR THE REAL LIFE!

## *Note to the speaker:*

Explain what the real life is and why all should reach out for it. Motivate those who are holding back from dedication and baptism to take action. With a warm and positive tone, assure interested ones of Jehovah's help and loving concern

### **WHAT IS THE REAL LIFE?** (3 min.)

People pursue various goals that they believe will lead to happiness, security, and a better future

The Bible identifies a superior goal to reach out for called "the real life" [**Read 1 Timothy 6:19**] (*bhs* 203 ¶21)

The real life is everlasting life in perfection (1Ti 6:12)

Many millions will enjoy everlasting life on a paradise earth as God originally intended for humans (Ps 37:29)

It is worth the effort to get a firm hold on this marvelous gift (1Ti 6:11, 17, 18; *bhs* 203 ¶22)

### **WHY MAKE THE REAL LIFE YOUR GOAL?** (6 min.)

Reaching out for the real life results in benefits far superior to any other course we could choose

We *benefit now*, enjoying better family life, greater peace of mind, and a healthier lifestyle [**Read Isaiah 48:17**]

To pursue any other course leads to bitter results (Ec 5:10; 2Pe 2:19)

We gain the prospect of marvelous *future blessings* (Isa 65:21-23)

Focusing on other pursuits is ultimately a waste of time [**Read 1 John 2:17**]

### **HOW CAN YOU GET A FIRM HOLD ON THE REAL LIFE?** (8 min.)

To gain the real life, you must be baptized as a Christian servant of Jehovah God (Ac 8:12; 1Pe 3:21)

Those who get baptized are motivated by love for Jehovah [**Read Matthew 22:37, 38**]

What are the progressive steps that lead to baptism?

*Come to know Jehovah*, and *build faith* in his promises (Joh 17:3; Heb 11:6)

You can receive help by having a Bible study and attending congregation meetings (Ac 8:31; Heb 10:24, 25)

Strong faith will give you confidence that Jehovah will care for you if you follow his direction

As a person grows in his love for Jehovah, he *feels regret* over his past sins and *makes changes in his conduct* (Ac 3:19)

With help from Jehovah and fellow believers, you can succeed in making needed changes (Pr 13:20; 2Co 10:4, 5)

Love for Jehovah should move you to *dedicate your life to him* and put his will above everything else [**Read Matthew 16:24, 25**] (1Pe 4:2)

Those who have dedicated their life to God *get baptized* as a public symbol of their dedication (Mt 28:19, 20)

### **THE REAL LIFE IS NOT BEYOND YOUR REACH** (10 min.)

If you believe God's promises, ask yourself, 'What prevents me from getting baptized?' (Ac 8:35, 36)

Jesus said that some would hold back from pursuing the real life (Mt 13:22; *w02* 4/1 14 ¶21)

Some feel that discipleship is too difficult, or they fear that they will fail (*w06* 4/1 28-29 ¶12-15)

God is not asking too much of us, nor is it too difficult to measure up to his requirements (De 30:11-14)

You can succeed, just as others have

[Play the four-minute video *Reach Out for the Real Life!* which shows Bible students who overcame obstacles and got baptized. After the video, discuss what helped those in the video to make progress. Encourage interested ones that they can likewise succeed]

### **REACH OUT FOR THE REAL LIFE NOW** (3 min.)

Now is the time to reach out for the real life; do not delay!

Soon, this system will end and the common lifestyles that people have striven for will be gone (Mt 24:36-42)

Jehovah God will help you to succeed in getting a firm hold on the real life (Php 2:13; 2Pe 3:9)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## THE MESSIAH'S PRESENCE AND HIS RULE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Prove that Jesus is unmistakably the Messiah according to the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Explain what his return in that role means for mankind, emphasizing the blessings to be experienced by those who accept his role as Messiah

### **THE MESSIAH—A BIBLE-BASED HOPE** (5 min.)

'The world desperately needs a messiah,' said the president of the Club of Rome, a prominent group of intellectuals (*w92 10/1 3*)

He meant a charismatic political, scientific, or religious savior who would rescue mankind from social and economic chaos

Obviously, present world leaders offer no solution to problems of poverty, hunger, environmental disaster, inflation, and so on

Neither is any real deliverer on the horizon

Bible points to Messiah, or Anointed One, as basis for real hope

Term applied to Israelite kings and priests (*it-1 113; w92 10/1 7*)

Came to signify a deliverer who would be king and high priest

First prophetic reference to Messiah made in Genesis 3:15

Verse poetically describes "seed" that would undo wickedness

This means ultimate blessings for all mankind—deliverance!

As centuries passed, God provided further Messianic prophecies

Evidence clearly points to Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah

What proof? How can recognizing the Messiah benefit you eternally?

### **IDENTIFYING THE MESSIAH** (10 min.)

(1) Jesus fulfilled scores of Messianic prophecies (*w92 10/1 9-10*)

Descendant of King David (2Sa 7:12, 13)

Matthew 1:1 identifies him as "son of David, son of Abraham"

Jesus' enemies never challenged his lineage (*it-1 915*)

(2) Jesus specifically identified as the Messiah

Angelic announcement at birth identified him as the one "who is to be your Messiah" (Lu 2:11, *Charles B. Williams*)

In 29 C.E., at Jesus' baptism, Jehovah himself anointed Jesus with holy spirit (Lu 3:21, 22)

Jesus could thus proclaim himself Messiah in harmony with prophecy (Isa 61:1, 2; Lu 4:16-21)

(3) Jesus' appearance as Messiah came at the exact time prophesied at Daniel 9:24-27 (*it-2 899-904; w92 10/1 11-12*)

(As time permits, use quoted items from *w92 10/1 11 par. 11*)

### **WHY MOST REJECTED JESUS AS MESSIAH** (5 min.)

Jewish nation expected a conquering hero who would deliver them from Roman oppression (*w92 10/1 13-14*)

Believed he would usher in Messianic Age at first appearance

Even Jesus' disciples shared this misconception (Ac 1:6)

Jesus' death in public disgrace went against Jewish expectations

Messiah's death as sacrifice foretold at Daniel 9:24-27

His being "cut off" made atonement for and finished off sin; his perfect life given in sacrifice serves as ransom for mankind

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 also spoke of Messiah's sufferings and death

Messiah would "see his offspring" and "prolong his days" (Isa 53:10)

Possible only if Messiah resurrected from the dead (Ps 16:10)

The resurrected, glorified Jesus thus able to return and fulfill rest of Messianic prophecies (Heb 10:12, 13)

### **MESSIAH'S RETURN AND PRESENCE—WHAT IT MEANS FOR US** (15 min.)

"Presence" covers a period of many years, with special attention to earth

Like "the days of Noah" (Mt 24:37-39; *it-2 676-9; w92 10/1 16*)

Jesus indicated this presence would be invisible (Joh 14:19)

True, Revelation 1:7 says, "He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him," but "clouds" suggest invisibility (Ac 1:9; *re 19-20*)

Followers "see" by discerning "sign" Jesus gave at Matthew 24, 25

World events and Bible chronology unmistakably prove Jesus invisibly present since 1914 (Refer to *w90* 10/15 18-19)

True Christians in expectation for some 38 years prior to 1914

Reflected in C. T. Russell's positive announcement (*w90* 10/15 19)

Significance? Messiah now enthroned; Kingdom now rules (Re 12:10)

Yet long-awaited Messianic Age still future

Messiah rules for a time in midst of enemies (Ps 110:1, 2)

Global preaching work being done (Mt 24:14)

Kingdom soon to destroy enemies of Messiah (Ps 110:5, 6)

Messiah will thus settle supreme issue raised by Satan (*it-2* 16)

Will undo all problems resulting from that rebellion (Heb 2:14)

**ENJOY THE BLESSINGS OF MESSIAH'S RULE!** (10 min.)

Prophecy of Isaiah 11 will finally be fulfilled (*w92* 10/1 18-19)

Verses 1-5 describe Jesus' qualities as righteous ruler

Spiritual fulfillment of verses 6-9 to be reflected as Christ, having 'all power in heaven and earth,' directs transformation of earth into global Paradise (Mt 28:18; *ws* 174)

Points to transformation of beastlike personalities now and in future

Also look forward to literal fulfillment in animal realm

Great educational work has already begun; carried on by Jehovah's Witnesses in over 200 lands

Christ in kingly power now standing as "signal"; millions among Gentile "nations" have responded (Isa 11:10)

No false Jewish messiah ever developed such a Gentile following

Have you responded to Messianic signal by embracing Kingdom hope?

Whether yes or no, continue taking in knowledge of Jehovah

Continue to attend meetings and associate with congregation

Dedicated Witnesses must continue steadfast in spreading the knowledge of Jehovah to all who will listen (1Co 15:58)

May we have plenty to do in work of the Lord until Messiah triumphs—to God's eternal glory and to our everlasting good!

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## RELIGION'S ROLE IN WORLD AFFAIRS

### *Note to the speaker:*

Clearly outline false religion's role in world affairs and the divine judgment it is to suffer. Contrast this with the role of true Christianity, which is based on Jesus' teachings and example. Conclude by drawing attention to the Kingdom as the only government capable of solving mankind's problems

### **RELIGION'S ROLE IN WORLD AFFAIRS FORETOLD IN PROPHECY** (5 min.)

Both true religion and false religion play roles now: religion God approves in this "final part of the days" foretold at Isaiah 2:2-4; religion God disapproves (called "Babylon the Great") foretold at Revelation 17:1, 5  
People are being separated at this time

Those who turn to true religion will survive this system's end

All practicers of false religion will be included among those who "will depart into everlasting cutting-off" (Mt 25:41, 46)

Can tell true worshipers from false by their fruits (Mt 7:17, 20)

### **TRUE RELIGION'S ROLE: MUST BE "NO PART OF THE WORLD"** (8 min.)

Friendship with Satan's world means being enemy of God (Jas 4:4)

True religion is practiced by people who obey Jesus' command to keep free from world's political affairs (Joh 15:19)

Historian Edward Gibbon wrote regarding early Christians in the Roman Empire: "It was impossible that the Christians . . . could assume the character of soldiers . . . or of princes" (*History of Christianity*, pp. 162-3)  
Jesus refused political office, loyally stuck to preaching Kingdom (Joh 6:15; 18:36, 37)

Author Malcolm Muggeridge wrote: "Christendom began with the Emperor Constantine. . . . [But] you might even say that Christ himself abolished Christendom before it began by stating that his kingdom was not of this world—one of the most far reaching and important of all his statements" (*The End of Christendom*, p. 14)

Jesus trained followers to preach Kingdom (Lu 10:1, 2, 8, 9)

True Christians have Jesus as model in preaching Kingdom and keeping unspotted from world (1Pe 2:21)

Kingdom preaching worldwide by Witnesses before system's end is another identifying mark of true religion (Mt 24:14)

### **TRUE RELIGION MUST OBEY GOD BY PRACTICING LOVE** (5 min.)

Must obey commandment to love neighbor (Mr 12:30, 31)

God's servants commanded to have no nationalistic or racist divisions worldwide (Ac 10:34; 1Jo 4:20, 21)

Jehovah's Witnesses obey these commands, further identifying them as having true religion (Joh 13:34, 35)

### **WORLD RELIGIONS FAIL TO 'OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN'** (8 min.)

While Christians must be 'in subjection to superior governmental authorities' and "pay back Caesar's things to Caesar," must also 'pay back God's things to God' (Ro 13:1; Lu 20:25)

Where these conflict, must obey God rather than men (Ac 5:29)

Religions of this world do not obey God as Ruler

Do not show love; instead, support nationalistic and racist wars

Are part of Satan's world because of meddling in politics

Roman Emperor Constantine paved the way for an earthly "theocracy" in fourth century C.E. in which, the magazine *Christianity Today* (Oct. 22, 1990) says, "both church and state were branches of one and the same divine government on earth" (Contrast John 18:36)

Jesuit priest Ignacio Ellacuria said Catholic religion tries "to transform this earth into as close a likeness of [the Kingdom of God] as possible" (*Boston Globe*, Nov. 17, 1989)

He and other priests became Marxists (Again contrast John 18:36)

Writer Robert L. O'Connell said of 16th- and 17th-century wars in Europe: "These wars were fought . . . largely along religious grounds. . . . Of all motives for mass violence except perhaps race, religious differences are most effective in undermining a sense of shared humanity and allowing men to behave as if enemies are . . . of another species" (*Of Arms and Men*, p. 124)

Clergyman Harry E. Fosdick admitted: "With one corner of our mouth we have praised the Prince of Peace and with the other we have glorified war" (*The Modern Use of the Bible*, p. 204)

In this century, religious leaders of all denominations have supported wars, leading Catholic to kill Catholic, Orthodox to kill Orthodox, Protestant to kill Protestant

For example, *The New York Times* (Dec. 29, 1966) said: "Local Catholic hierarchies almost always supported the wars of their nations, blessing troops and offering prayers for victory, while another group of bishops on the other side publicly prayed for the opposite outcome"

Religions outside Christendom are also involved in politics and wars

Indian statesman Nehru said: "Religion, in India and elsewhere, has filled us with horror" (*The Great Quotations*, p. 522)

World's religions bloodguilty before God (Isa 1:15)

However, Jehovah's Witnesses have truly 'beaten their swords into plowshares' (Isa 2:4)

In the book *More About Justifying Violence* (p. 23), authors say: "Jehovah's Witnesses have consistently maintained their stand of nonviolent 'Christian neutrality'"

**WORLDLY RELIGION TERMED "BABYLON THE GREAT" IN BIBLE (8 min.)**

This world's religion (Babylon the Great) called a "harlot" in Bible because she has "committed fornication," in effect going to bed with every kind of political organization (Re 17:1, 2)

She is world empire in that she "has a kingdom over the kings of the earth" because of her influence over them (Re 17:18)

Why called Babylon the Great? (See *Mankind's Search for God*, pp. 368-70)

Babylon the Great has led nations into murderous wars and crusades, blessed armies, prayed for victory for their nation or religion

Because of her, 'all nations misled' and 'blood of prophets and all who have been slaughtered on earth' is found in her (Re 18:23, 24)

Why responsible for "all" slaughtered? Because of teaching people to be part of world and supporting nationalism and wars

Worldly religion doomed, for her works detestable to God (Tit 1:16)

Will soon be torn to pieces, to the world's amazement (Re 17:16; 18:9, 10)

This will be punishment from God for her sins (Re 18:5)

**MANKIND'S ONLY HOPE IS GOD'S KINGDOM, NOT HUMAN RULE (6 min.)**

Remedy for world's problems is not to be found in mixing politics and religion, for centuries of false religion's involvement in world affairs has made world not better but worse

Only solution is God's Kingdom by Christ (Mt 6:9, 10, 33)

Kingdom promise will not disappoint, for God cannot lie (Tit 1:2)

Jehovah's Witnesses number more than \_\_\_\_ in over \_\_\_\_ congregations worldwide; they are not involved in politics but teach millions in all lands marvelous hope of Revelation 21:4, 5 (See current *Yearbook* for latest figures)

**NOW IS THE TIME TO HEED THE WARNING OF REVELATION 18:4 (5 min.)**

False religion soon to be destroyed (Re 18:8)

Urgent need to heed God's warning (Re 18:4)

Still time to learn truth, get divine favor (1Ti 2:3, 4)

Shortly after false religion's end, rest of Satan's world will be cut down at Armageddon (Re 19:17, 18)

Take action now and have prospect of seeing this evil system's end and of entering God's new world (Read Psalm 37:34)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)



## “ACTS OF GOD”—HOW DO YOU VIEW THEM?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to see that (1) many so-called acts of God are often caused or made worse by men, (2) true acts of God are often ignored by men to their peril, and (3) we are facing the greatest act of God in all human history

### **PREVALENCE OF DISASTERS, A SIGN OF THE TIMES** (8 min.)

Many feel there have been more disasters lately, and they are right

*New Scientist* (October 5, 1991): “The world can expect more disasters in the 1990s than in past decades . . . There were 523 disasters reported in the 1960s and 767 in the 1970s. By the 1980s, the number had reached 1387”

*1992 Britannica Book of the Year*: “In [the United States] . . . twenty-seven catastrophes during the first six months were the largest number ever recorded before midyear”

*Time* magazine (September 14, 1992) reports that in one month (mid-August to mid-September) a volcano erupted in Alaska; an earthquake struck near Alaska’s Andreanof Islands and another in Kyrgyzstan in the former Soviet Union; Hurricane Andrew slapped the Bahamas, Florida, and Louisiana; Hurricane Iniki hit Kauai in Hawaii; Tropical Storm Polly drenched eastern China; Typhoon Omar raked Guam and the Philippines; flash floods swept the valleys of the Hindu Kush; and tidal waves devastated 200 miles of coastline in Nicaragua

(Can mention any current disasters)

People often refer to such catastrophic events as “acts of God”

Since time immemorial, people have attached special significance to such events, regarding them as expressions of the displeasure and wrath of God or as punishment from him

In China they were viewed as signs of heaven’s displeasure with the ruling dynasty and as portents of political upheaval

The 7.8-magnitude Tangshan earthquake of 1976, which killed 240,000 people, struck just six weeks before the death of former chairman Mao Tse-tung and was interpreted by some as a portent from heaven signaling a new era in Chinese history

Thus, some people are indirectly blaming God for these calamities

When disasters strike, people often cry out against God

Is God really responsible? How do you view the matter?

### **THOUGH BIBLE FORETELLS THEM, DISASTERS NOT ACTS OF GOD** (10 min.)

Jesus, in his great prophecy about “the conclusion of the system of things,” mentioned food shortages, earthquakes, and pestilences (Mt 24:3, 7; Lu 21:11)

The apostle John foresaw food shortage and deadly plague (Re 6:5-8)

Does this mean God causes such events to happen? No!

Being omniscient, Jehovah can foresee outcome of imperfect human endeavors and state beforehand the results (Isa 42:9; 46:9, 10)

Many devastating disasters were results of acts of men

(Use material from *Awake!* of June 22, 1986, pages 17-19, as time permits, but highlight the following three aspects)

Humans misuse natural resources and abuse the environment, making it more prone to disasters

The way people live makes them more vulnerable when disasters strike

Often people ignore warnings, making results more destructive

Clearly, humans have often been responsible for disasters, with heavy losses of life and property

God is not the cause of such calamities

### **WHAT ARE “ACTS OF GOD”?** (12 min.)

Why, then, does Bible speak of God as sending floodwaters, fire and sulfur, and so on, to destroy the wicked?

Were not such disasters “acts of God”?

The term “act of God, in law, is an accident that arises from a cause operating without interference or aid from man,” says *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1991 Edition, Volume 1, page 122

However, the events recorded in the Bible were neither accidents nor intended to make people suffer indiscriminately

All genuine acts of God are righteous and purposeful. (De 32:4; Isa 55:10, 11) They must meet three criteria:

- (1) They are in harmony with God’s purpose
- (2) They are preceded by advance warning from God
- (3) They are accompanied by divine directions for survival

Consider some examples of true acts of God

Describe Noachian Flood, and explain how it meets the above three criteria (Ge 6:5-7:10; 2Pe 2:5)

Describe the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and explain how it was an act of God (Ge 18:20-19:26; 2Pe 2:6-8)

(Use material from *Awake!* of August 8, 1986, pages 6-7)

Failure to acknowledge warning leads to disastrous end (Ex 9:15-17; Lu 17:26-30)

**GREATEST OF ACTS OF GOD YET TO BEFALL MANKIND** (10 min.)

We are facing the greatest disaster ever (Mt 24:21)

Culminates in Armageddon, “the war of the great day of God the Almighty,” not a nuclear holocaust or other man-made disaster (Re 16:14, 16)

It will be selective (2Th 1:8-10)

It will bring present wicked, selfish system of things to its end (2Pe 3:9, 10)

“Great tribulation” will be an act of God unmatched by any other calamity that has ever happened (Isa 28:21)

It will be an indisputable act of God because it meets all the criteria

(1) It is in harmony with God’s declared purpose (Jer 25:31-33; Zep 3:8)

(2) Advance warning is being given worldwide (Mt 24:14; Ac 20:20)

(3) Directions for survival are provided (Zep 2:3; Joh 17:3)

Unparalleled destruction is certain, yet survival is possible (Zep 1:14-2:3)

As with the Israelites at the threshold of the Promised Land, the choice is yours (De 30:15-20)

**BLESSINGS FROM FUTURE WONDERFUL ACTS OF GOD** (5 min.)

After removal of wicked, there will be an abundance of peace (Ps 37:10, 11; 72:7)

All the damage mankind has done to the environment will be reversed (Isa 35:1-7; 55:12, 13)

Poverty, economic and social injustices, will be rectified (Ps 72:16; Isa 65:21-24)

Peaceful, just, and righteous conditions will be brought about by “the very zeal of Jehovah of armies” (Isa 9:7)

They will be the results of the most wonderful acts of God for mankind

You can enjoy the blessings if you heed God’s warning now and take action for survival (Mt 7:24, 25)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

# TRUE RELIGION MEETS THE NEEDS OF HUMAN SOCIETY

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to see that true religion meets human needs. Show that it is based on the Bible and is practiced only by those serving Jehovah. Keep secular sources updated by using reports published in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

### **SPECIAL NEEDS OF HUMAN SOCIETY** (5 min.)

Jehovah God created humans with the need to worship

*The New Encyclopædia Britannica* says: "As far as scholars have discovered, there has never existed any people, anywhere, at any time, who were not in some sense religious." (g89 1/8 4; sh 28)

Human society today also needs divine guidance (Read Jeremiah 10:23)

In view of man's urge to worship and need for divine help, we ask:

Are the world's religions meeting mankind's spiritual needs?

Have religions of this world uplifted human society morally?

Do these religions promote peace, assure family happiness, and give people a satisfying purpose in life?

### **WHAT ARE THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS DOING FOR HUMAN SOCIETY?** (10 min.)

Spiritual needs are not being met; religion is declining (tp 22-6)

Morality is not being affected for the good

By teaching and example, religious leaders are responsible for moral breakdown (g89 1/8 8-9; w87 10/15 3-4; w86 4/15 21; tp 26-31)

Peace is not being promoted, as world's religions often foster war

Author Tom Harpur wrote: "Religion . . . somehow finds ways to condone or ignore violence even when it is itself a prime or underlying cause of it."—*The Toronto Star*, January 17, 1993

Religion's role in war well documented (w88 2/1 17; g88 12/22 20)

Family happiness is elusive for millions despite their religion

Divorce and family disintegration rampant (w84 10/1 4-7)

Purposeful life based on knowledge of God eludes even clergymen

One well-known cleric said: "Why sin? Why suffering? Why the devil? These are questions I want to ask the Lord when I get to heaven."—*U.S. News & World Report*, May 3, 1993

Yet this does not mean that all religion has failed human society

### **WHEN ONE TRUE RELIGION MET HUMAN NEEDS** (12 min.)

Spiritual needs were met by God-given true religion

Adam and Eve worshiped only Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign

Jehovah, their Creator, knew how to give them perfect guidance

Priesthood and temple were not needed in Adam's paradise home, for he could communicate with God intimately

Moral uprightness was required by undefiled true religion

Righteousness was pursued as long as God was worshiped obediently

Sacrifices were unnecessary because humans were then sinless

Peace and tranquillity prevailed

There was no fear of a vengeful deity that had to be appeased

God's love promoted a sense of security (1Jo 4:8)

Family happiness was ensured if Adam and Eve would worship Jehovah God in harmony with divine revelation and guidance

Purposeful and satisfying life was set before Adam and Eve, for they were blessed with rewarding work (Read Genesis 1:27, 28)

False religion began when Satan led the first pair to rebel against God and abandon true worship (Ge 2:17; 3:1-7)

Satan misrepresented Jehovah as being against human interests

To this day, false religion is based mainly on lies (Joh 8:44)

In contrast, however, true religion is meeting human needs today

### **HOW TRUE RELIGION IS MEETING HUMAN NEEDS TODAY** (13 min.)

Spiritual needs are being met for those practicing true religion

Worship is given solely to Jehovah, the only true God (Mt 4:10)

The urge to worship is fulfilled in a close, trusting relationship with Jehovah as his dedicated people (Pr 3:5, 6)

Divine guidance is being received through God's Word and publications of the 'faithful slave' (Mt 24:45; Ps 119:105)

True worshipers also enjoy other blessings (Joh 4:23; w91 5/1 18)  
Are not confused by the Trinity doctrine (Joh 14:28; 1Co 8:5, 6)  
Have faith in Christ and hope of salvation (Joh 3:16; Ac 4:12)  
Realize that man was created by God and did not evolve (Ge 2:7)  
Know soul dies, but resurrection possible (Eze 18:4; Ac 24:15)  
Can explain why sin and suffering now exist (Ro 5:12)  
Are aware that the end of this wicked system is near  
Rejoice in hope of eternal life in God's new system (Joh 17:3)

Moral standards of Jehovah's servants are high because they comply with his righteous requirements (Ps 97:10; Mt 6:33)

Peace is pursued by Jehovah's Witnesses

Are united in true worship as global brotherhood (g90 12/8 8-10)  
Have 'beaten their swords into plowshares' (Read Isaiah 2:4)

Family happiness results from applying God's Word (w93 5/1 4-6)

Bible gives practical guidance in human relations and family life  
Scriptures help family members fulfill their roles (Eph 5:33; 6:1)

Purposeful, satisfying life is common to all practicing true religion

They are active preachers of God's Word (Read Romans 10:10)

Theirs is the joy of helping others spiritually

Never too late for purposeful life in God's service (g91 3/22 9)

**TRUE RELIGION WILL ALWAYS MEET THE NEEDS OF HUMAN SOCIETY** (5 min.)

Because true worship is God-given, it is not declining like false religion, and it will never fail (g89 11/22 20)

True worship will always meet mankind's spiritual needs and will help people to maintain high moral standards

It will continue to promote peace, build happy families, and give those practicing it a satisfying and purposeful life

True religion will also meet man's need for a new world (2Pe 3:13)

That will be a world of endless peace (Ps 37:10, 11; 46:8, 9)

The peace wrecker Satan will ultimately be crushed (Ro 16:20)

For obedient mankind uplifted to perfection on a paradise earth, there will be no more tears, pain, death (Read Revelation 21:4)

What will you do about true religion and its wonderful prospects?

Learn about it, and make it your own if you have not yet done so

Let pure worship give meaning to your life

Make it your aim to be among those who will practice true religion eternally to Jehovah's praise and glory

Embrace and hold fast to the one true religion that meets the needs of human society

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

## THE BIBLE'S VIEW OF SPIRITISTIC PRACTICES

### *Note to the speaker:*

Keep the Scriptural viewpoint of this subject before the audience, recognizing that it is Bible truth that attracts honesthearted ones to Jehovah. Please do not elaborate on specific spiritistic practices. Also, use only experiences that have been published in the Society's literature

### **THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITISM IS WIDESPREAD** (3 min.)

Spiritism involves getting in touch with unseen spirits

Practice of spiritism takes on many different forms

Includes divination, astrology, hypnotism, witchcraft, voodooism, Ouija boards, palmistry, fortune-telling, séances and other forms of supposed communication with the dead (*sp* 21; *sh* 91; *pe* 95-6)

Many believe that a spirit part of humans survives death and can communicate with the living (*sp* 2-3; *rs* 384)

Worldwide there is growing interest in spiritism

Book *Occult Shock and Psychic Forces* comments: "A wide variety of commentators seem to feel we are in a time of unprecedented occult revival" (*w87* 9/1 3)

Politicians, religious leaders, and other prominent people often dabble in spiritism

Condoned and practiced by many in Christendom (*w87* 9/1 3-4)

What is the origin of spiritism? Is it good or harmful? What is the Bible's view of spiritistic practices?

### **LOOKING BEHIND COMMUNICATION WITH THE SPIRIT WORLD** (12 min.)

Bible reveals communication with invisible realm not new

The first man and woman communicated with Creator (Ge 3:8-13)

They did not talk to dead humans but to God who had offered prospect of everlasting life in Paradise (Ge 2:15-17)

Noah was given instructions concerning the Flood (Ge 6:13-22)

Abraham received communication that led to blessings (Ge 12:1-4)

However, not all contact with the spirit world has been beneficial

An evil spirit used serpent to mislead Adam and Eve (Ge 3:1-5)

Rebellious angels in Noah's day misled humans and promoted violence and sexual immorality (Ge 6:1, 2, 11; Jude 6)

In Jesus' day, a man under power of an unclean spirit was miserable and afflicted himself physically (Mr 5:2, 5)

Many involved with spirit world today suffer horrible consequences

Physical and mental torment are common; sexual immorality and even murder not unusual among practitioners of spiritism (*sp* 12, 22)

Spiritistic practices in world around us are not from God

Bible shows that Satan and demons are unseen promoters of spiritism

Satan is the misleading "original serpent" of Eden (Re 12:9)

Acts 16:16-19 reveals "demon of divination," showing demonic backing of "the art of prediction"

Their intent is always to turn people away from Jehovah (De 13:1-5)

Satan lied about never dying; when Adam and Eve died, he promoted the lie that man has immortal soul

Concept of immortal soul and communication with dead can be traced back to ancient Babylon (*sh* 41, 52-3)

Down through centuries Satan's lie has been embellished

Result has been that instead of seeking Creator, many attempt to communicate with dead and practice magical arts (*sh* 77-8)

### **BIBLE CONDEMNS ALL FORMS OF SPIRITISM** (6 min.)

From first to last, Bible writers were inspired by God to condemn spiritistic practices strongly (De 18:10-12; Re 21:8)

Paul states clearly that practitioners of spiritism will not inherit God's Kingdom (Ga 5:19-21)

Why is Bible so adamant on this matter?

Because those involved in spiritism come under influence of demons, who are God's enemies

Spiritism promotes the lie that humans really do not die but have a spirit part that keeps on living

Jehovah, a God of truth, opposes lies (Ps 31:5; Pr 6:16-19)

Told the truth that the dead are unconscious and cannot communicate with the living (Ec 9:5, 10)

Any claimed communication with dead either is a hoax or is in reality communication with wicked spirit forces

Must be careful not to be misled; Satan is subtle and clever (2Co 11:14)

## **HOW TO KEEP FREE FROM HARMFUL INFLUENCE OF SPIRITISM (20 min.)**

To keep free, subject yourself to the true God, Jehovah (Jas 4:7a)

Learn to do his will and keep it foremost

Completely refuse to share in spiritistic customs or practices

Put on the complete suit of armor from God (Eph 6:11-13)

Pray to Jehovah; literally call on his name if under attack by demons (Pr 18:10)

God's name is not a magic charm

We are protected when, by breaking completely free from spiritism and putting full trust in Jehovah, we come to be recognized by him (1Pe 3:12)

Evidence of his help seen in growing numbers of Witnesses who have broken free of spiritism (See *Index* 1986-90, under "Spiritism," subheading "experiences")

Jehovah more powerful than Satan

Serve Jehovah and he will protect you from the demons (*sp* 24)

Must also oppose the Devil (Jas 4:7b)

Cut off any association with known spiritists (1Co 10:21)

Do not bring articles from them into your home (De 7:25)

Follow example of Ephesians who burned their books about magic (Ac 19:19, 20)

Rid yourself of all amulets, charms, "protective" strings, fetishes, books on magic, and anything else connected with spiritism

Never read material that promotes spiritism, such as a horoscope, just to see what it says (Jer 10:2)

Do not watch television or films of hypnotism, séances, and other forms of spiritism

Never let curiosity lead you astray

Reject practice of some who look for signs or omens (De 18:10; Isa 8:19)

Do not expect to receive direct, personal communication from God as did Adam, Noah, or Abraham

God no longer contacts humans by means of dreams, visions, or voices from spirit world

Jehovah has revealed his will through Jesus, and we have a written record of it in the Bible (Heb 1:1, 2)

Now have complete Bible, and it is by this means that God guides and instructs us, making us "completely equipped for every good work" (2Ti 3:17)

Avoid presumptuous efforts to communicate with spirit world; rely on God's Word and organization (Mt 24:45-47)

If in spite of your efforts to stay free, demons test you, as they did Jesus, this is not necessarily indication of God's disapproval

Must persevere and not give up

Demons will not win if we firmly oppose them and stick to Jehovah (Mt 4:10, 11)

## **SERVE JEHOVAH AND REAP RICH REWARDS (4 min.)**

Harmful effects of spiritistic practices identify Satan and demons as unseen forces behind spiritism

They enjoy hurting and deceiving mankind

It is Jehovah who truly loves us

He has made provisions for future blessing, including end to Satan's rule (Ge 3:15; *sp* 22-3)

Sent Jesus to Earth to save mankind (Joh 3:16)

Jesus cured people, expelled demons, and raised dead, providing basis for us to believe in blessings of new world (2Pe 3:13; Re 21:4)

Jehovah never misleads people (Nu 23:19)

He is the source only of good (Jas 1:17)

So shun practices associated with spiritism

Serve Jehovah by applying Bible truth

Have confidence in God's spirit and the power of the truth to safeguard and protect you from spiritism (Joh 8:32)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)

# WHAT IS RELIGION'S FUTURE?

## *Note to the speaker:*

Tactfully help newly interested ones and Bible students see the need to separate completely from false religion and engage exclusively in true worship of Jehovah

### **JEHOVAH GOD CONTROLS THE FUTURE OF RELIGION** (4 min.)

In many lands, religion has lost much of its influence and support [Describe local circumstances]

Nevertheless, many people are still devout members of religious organizations

Others do not actively practice their religion but view it as an important part of their cultural or family identity

Some wonder if religion will die out completely because of declining support and changing attitudes

The future of religion depends, not on human attitudes, but on Jehovah God

Jehovah distinguishes between true worship and false worship [**Read John 4:23, 24**]

Both true religion and false religion can be identified by their fruitage (Mt 7:15-20; Jas 1:26, 27)

Because of its wicked fruitage, false religion will soon be eliminated by God; true religion will thrive for eternity

### **WHAT HAS BEEN THE FRUITAGE OF FALSE RELIGION?** (10 min.)

False religion has hindered people from knowing the truth about Jehovah God and his purpose

It has rejected Bible teachings in favor of human traditions (Mr 7:7, 8; 2Ti 3:16)

It has often adopted modern skepticism and has undermined faith in God and the Bible

It has failed to make Jehovah's name known and has obscured his identity (Joh 17:26)

It has failed to preach the "good news of the Kingdom" and has frequently opposed the efforts of Jehovah's Witnesses to do so (Mt 24:14; *w16.05* 10 ¶7)

False religion has failed to uphold the Bible's moral standards and has contributed to moral breakdown (1Co 6:9, 10; 2Ti 3:5; 4:3, 4; *w01* 11/1 4-5)

False religion has taken sides in political struggles and warfare

It has ignored Jesus' teachings and example (Mt 26:52; Joh 6:15; 17:15, 16)

It shares responsibility for millions of deaths (Re 18:24)

### **HOW WILL GOD DESTROY FALSE RELIGION?** (10 min.)

Given false religion's wicked fruitage, it is no surprise that the Bible describes it in strong terms

False religion is symbolized by a prostitute called "Babylon the Great" [**Read Revelation 17:1, 2, 4, 5**]

This is a fitting description [Explain by using the box "Identifying Babylon the Great" found on page 13 of the November 2012 issue of *Awake!*]

God will soon execute judgment on false religion and destroy it completely

The Bible foretold that false religion would lose influence before its destruction (Re 16:12; 17:15; *w12* 6/15 17-18 ¶16)

It is Jehovah who will put it into the hearts of the political elements of Satan's system to destroy Babylon the Great [**Read Revelation 17:16, 17**] (Re 18:7, 8; *w12* 6/15 18 ¶17)

### **TAKE YOUR STAND FOR TRUE RELIGION** (6 min.)

If you wish to please God, you need to consider your view of false religion

If God disapproves of a religion that you are associated with, would that not also affect how he views you?

Heed the command to get out of Babylon the Great [**Read Revelation 18:4, 5**]

Reject anything that reflects false religion's spirit or influence (*lvs* 98 ¶23)

The foretold "great tribulation" will begin with the destruction of false religion (Mt 24:3, 21; *w15* 7/15 15 ¶4)

After the destruction of Babylon the Great, only the religion that God approves, true religion, will remain

Now is the time to act decisively in support of true worship

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]





## REMAINING BLAMELESS AMID A CROOKED GENERATION

### *Note to the speaker:*

Impress on audience the need to remain blameless from God's standpoint, measuring up fully to his requirements. Help them understand that such is possible for imperfect humans. Being aware of the enticements of this crooked generation will help us to maintain our blameless standing with God

### **SERVANTS OF GOD MUST BE BLAMELESS** (3 min.)

Jehovah's servants have always sought to remain blameless, faultless

Noah was "faultless among his contemporaries" (Ge 6:9)

Jacob was noted for being blameless, in contrast with his brother, Esau (Ge 25:27)

Job was called blameless by Jehovah (Job 1:8)

Zechariah and Elizabeth, parents of John the Baptizer, walked blamelessly before God (Lu 1:6)

Our being blameless gives us a clean conscience, a good relationship with our fellowman, and, above all, a good standing with Jehovah

Emphasizing this, Paul gave clear counsel at Philippians 2:14, 15 (Read)

### **IMPERFECT BUT BLAMELESS** (6 min.)

Can imperfect humans be blameless? Yes

When describing humans, term "blameless" must be viewed as relative, not absolute (*it-1* 337)

To the degree that we measure up to what God expects of us, we are blameless

As already noted, men of faith of ancient times merited being called "faultless" or "blameless"

This was not because they were free from error or wrongdoing, but because, within the limits possible for them to attain, their devotion and loyalty to God were complete, sound

They measured up to what Jehovah expected of humans who, though faithful, were marred by imperfection

Manifested "a complete heart" (or "a perfect heart," *AS, KJ*) toward Jehovah (2Ki 20:3)

Whenever they erred, they humbly accepted correction and discipline (Job 42:1-6; Ps 51:1-4, 7-11)

Despite their errors and weaknesses, they did what God required of them, and God *did not require of them more than they could attain* (*w71* 9/15 565-6)

Jehovah God was pleased with their worship

Comforting to know that he will deal with us in the same understanding way, requiring of us only what we are actually capable of doing

Additionally, we have benefit of ransom sacrifice (Heb 7:25)

### **WORLD TODAY IS CROOKED AND REPREHENSIBLE** (10 min.)

Since Adam's fall, way of majority of mankind has been one of crookedness, disobedience to God

As wickedness mounted, God took action

Jehovah considered earth ruined because of bad conduct of people in Noah's day and swept them away by Flood (Ge 6:11-13; 7:1)

Some 2,400 years later, Jews made up crooked generation that deserved destruction (*w95* 11/1 14)

Rejected Messiah sent by God and impaled him (Lu 17:25)

That Jewish world suffered ruin in 70 C.E.

World today is worse than that of Noah's day and of first century

Wickedness, corruption, and immorality abound among people of this present generation

Collapse of morals, ethics, and principles increasingly evident

Much of problem is due to spiritual degradation of Babylonish religion

Result has been bitter hatred between religious, racial, ethnic, and national groups; much bloodguilt (*w94* 12/15 28-9)

Wrongdoing condoned, even advocated

Horrific weapons, abortion, death-dealing products such as tobacco and drugs allowed and approved

Christians to shun wicked ways of world and remain blameless (Eph 4:17-19; 1Th 5:23)

Satan seeks to trap the unwary, make them lose their blameless standing (1Pe 5:8)

Entertainment industry promotes immoral life-styles, perversions of all sorts, and lack of respect for life and human dignity (*g92* 11/8 5-7)

Video games lure inexperienced into things grotesque and demonic (*g95* 5/8 25)

Greed and ambition are motivating factors that drive the world

If we become accustomed to world's ways, we may become desensitized and start to accept them as normal

How can we successfully resist Satan's influence?

**PUT UP A HARD FIGHT TO BE BLAMELESS** (22 min.)

True lovers of God must be willing to put up a spiritual fight to acquire and to maintain blamelessness amid this crooked generation (Jude 3)

Jehovah requires exclusive devotion, so we must separate completely from all contaminating teachings and practices (2Co 6:14-18; Re 18:4; *kl* 48-52)

Stay clear of all forms of spiritism (De 18:10-14; *kl* 111-17)

Develop a love for what is holy and clean *and* a hatred for what is bad (Am 5:15a)

Be wary of social events that invite worldliness and excesses (1Co 10:31; *w92* 8/15 16-20)

Watch conduct with opposite sex (Eph 5:3, 4)

Respect duly constituted authority as God's arrangement (*w94* 7/1 19-23)

Includes subjection to worldly rulers and payment of taxes (Ro 13:1-7)

Wives to show submission to husbands, children to obey parents (Eph 5:22; 6:1, 2)

Within the congregation, respect to be given the elders and others taking the lead (Heb 13:17)

In turn, those in authority must shun favoritism, nepotism, abuse of power (Jas 2:9; *w86* 8/15 14-18)

Display honesty and integrity in all our dealings (Heb 13:18)

Beware of using sharp business practices, taking advantage of our Christian contacts (*w86* 11/15 15-19)

Avoid lure of materialism and "the love of money" (1Ti 6:9, 10)

Follow course of peace and true Christian love (Ro 12:18-21; Col 3:12-14; *w71* 9/15 567-8)

Pray continually for God's help and for his holy spirit (Lu 11:13; 18:1)

Blamelessness involves not only avoiding a wrong course but actively doing what we should

Maintain spirituality by regular Bible study, meeting attendance (Ps 1:2; Heb 10:25)

Need to be active in proclaiming the good news

Must "look after orphans and widows" and others in need (Jas 1:27)

Use time, resources, and talents to support Kingdom work; uphold Jehovah's name and sovereignty (2Co 8:12; 9:7)

The gap between true Christians and the world must widen continually

Idea is to see, not how close we can come to edge of reprehensibility, but how far we can remain away from it

If we imitate the world or become indistinguishable from it, then we dishonor Jehovah and are not blameless in his sight

Can become stumbling blocks to sincere ones seeking the truth

Even those long in the truth must be careful not to drift away (Heb 2:1)

**JEHOVAH APPROVES HIS BLAMELESS ONES** (4 min.)

In this critical time of the end, important to be found blameless by Jehovah (2Pe 3:14)

Only faultless ones will have his protection and blessing (Ps 15; Pr 2:21, 22)

By remaining blameless amid this crooked generation, we provide an answer to Satan's taunts and bring pleasure to Jehovah (Pr 11:20; 27:11)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## “THE SCENE OF THIS WORLD IS CHANGING”

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to understand the meaning behind rapidly changing world conditions, explain clearly what the near future will bring, and motivate all to take action for survival

### **THIS PAST CENTURY HAS BROUGHT NUMEROUS CHANGES** (3 min.)

Advances in technology, health care, education, transportation, and human rights have benefited many

On the other hand, soaring crime rates, plummeting moral values, mounting drug abuse, skyrocketing divorce rates, spiraling inflation, and escalating terrorism have affected millions

Truly, “the scene of this world is changing” [Read 1 Corinthians 7:31]

The apostle Paul’s expression drew on the image of a scene on the stage of a theater; like actors on a stage, political, religious, and cultural personalities make their appearance, play their roles, and then leave the stage to others (*w04* 2/1 18-19 ¶2-4)

### **THE WORLD ENTERED ITS TIME OF THE END IN 1914** (9 min.)

In previous centuries, changes usually took place over long periods of time

Educators and historians acknowledge that since 1914, the pace of world change has accelerated dramatically (*w04* 2/1 20 ¶9; *w01* 6/1 5 ¶4)

The villain behind the scenes who is responsible for rapidly deteriorating world conditions is none other than Satan the Devil (Re 12:7-9, 12)

World conditions signal the invisible presence of Jesus Christ and the fast-approaching end of this system (Mt 24:3)

Jesus foretold the calamities that would form a sign of the last days (Lu 21:10, 11; Re 6:2-8; *w14* 2/1 5-7)

### **EVENTS LEADING UP TO JEHOVAH’S AWE-INSPIRING DAY** (15 min.)

Bible prophecy indicates that further significant changes will shortly take place

The day of reckoning will come unexpectedly because most people center their lives on personal pursuits and do not really believe that God will intervene in human affairs (Mt 24:37-39; 2Pe 3:3, 4)

Leading up to Jehovah’s day, the nations will make a significant declaration of “Peace and security!”

[Read 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3] (*w13* 11/15 12-13 ¶9-12; *w12* 2/1 9)

Shortly thereafter, Jehovah’s day will begin when the political elements of this world move against false religion to destroy it (Re 17:1, 3, 5, 15-17; *w12* 9/15 3-5 ¶3-7)

The attack on false religion also marks the beginning of the “great tribulation” (Mt 24:21)

Thereafter, the foretold “sudden destruction” of the political elements along with all who oppose God’s Kingdom will take place (Da 2:44; Re 19:11-15)

What might be called the final act is now being played out on the world stage

Jehovah will ring down the curtain on disobedient ones

The day of Jehovah will culminate in the war of Armageddon (Re 16:14, 16)

This wicked system along with its spirit and its ungodly characteristics will be completely obliterated (2Pe 3:10)

Thereafter, Satan himself will be thrown into the abyss (Re 20:1-3)

The earth will be cleansed, and wonderful changes will take place for all who love Jehovah God

### **FEAR NOT, AND HAVE FAITH IN JEHOVAH’S PROMISES** (3 min.)

We encourage all who long for a righteous new world to examine God’s promises and put faith in his inspired Word

Soon the scene of this earth will change permanently for the better

War, crime, violence, and terrorism will be done away with (Ps 37:10, 11; 46:9)

All disease and sickness will belong to the past (Isa 33:24)

All who serve Jehovah God faithfully will live forever (1Jo 2:17)

Be among those who exercise faith in Jehovah’s promises by engaging now in “holy acts of conduct” and performing “deeds of godly devotion” (2Pe 3:11-13)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## WHY YOU CAN TRUST THE BIBLE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to appreciate that the Bible is inspired of God and is a practical and reliable guide provided for mankind. Emphasize how vital it is to adhere to what the Bible says in order to honor God and live a happy life

### **MANKIND NEEDS TRUSTWORTHY GUIDANCE (3 min.)**

People everywhere seek guidance for many reasons

They want to improve their physical and mental well-being and to combat sickness and disease

Their desire is to improve their marriage and their family life

They seek help to make decisions about education, employment, financial matters, and a multitude of other things

Many turn to professional counselors and self-help books

For most the results are far from satisfactory because the guidance they get is usually based on very limited human experience or is not trustworthy

Millions from all ethnic, national, educational, and social backgrounds have found trustworthy guidance that really works

It has made them a peaceful, happy, and united people about whom one editorial stated: "Suffice it to say that if all the world lived by the [Bible] creed of the Jehovah's Witnesses there would be an end of bloodshed and hatred, and love would reign as king." (g93 12/22 13)

Jehovah's Witnesses trust in the Bible and firmly believe that it provides the best guidance in the world

### **WHY YOU SHOULD TRUST THE BIBLE (17 min.)**

Most people who do not believe the Bible have never read it

If they would study the Bible, they would find that it is *always* accurate

Jesus Christ said that God's word, which is recorded in the Scriptures, is the truth (Joh 17:17)

Let us see why the Bible can be considered God's Word of truth

The Bible is historically and geographically accurate

Archaeologist Yohanan Aharoni wrote: "The Bible still remains the main source for historical geography of Palestine during the Israelite period. Its narratives and descriptions reflect their geographical environment as well as the historical events that took place. It contains references to some 475 local geographical names, many of them in contexts which supply pertinent details about the nature, location and history of the place." (g83 7/8 6)

The Bible is scientifically reliable

Although contrary views were held when the books of Job and Isaiah were written, what they say is scientifically accurate

Isaiah correctly referred to the earth as a "circle," or sphere (Isa 40:22)

The Scriptures also stated correctly that the earth hangs upon nothing (Job 26:7)

Unerring prophecies mark the Bible as a unique book

Some Bible prophecies had their fulfillment in the past

A remarkable prophecy fulfilled in the past is found at Daniel 8:3-8; 20-22 (w93 5/15 6)

Other Scriptural prophecies are undergoing fulfillment in this time of the end

One of many prophecies being fulfilled in our day appears at Revelation 17:3, 8-11, written some 1,900 years ago (re 246-8; 251-4)

The "scarlet-colored wild beast" began as the League of Nations, went into the abyss during World War II, and reappeared in 1945 as the United Nations

The seven heads represent the seven major powers that have, each in its turn, taken the lead in oppressing God's people

This Scriptural information does not, of course, authorize any form of disrespect toward governments or their officials

As true Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses show proper respect for governmental "superior authorities" (Ro 13:1)

Honest examination of the Bible clearly gives overwhelming evidence that it is God's Word and a reliable source of instruction and guidance

### **WHY YOU SHOULD BE GUIDED BY THE BIBLE (20 min.)**

The Bible is a 'lamp to our foot and a light to our roadway' (Ps 119:105)

A former student of law at a university in Spain stated: "The university taught me how to study; the Bible taught me how to live" (w94 9/15 27)

The Bible stresses proper values, as well as principles to live by, and it can make even inexperienced ones wise (Ps 19:7, 8)

It exhorts us to be calm, not jealous or quick-tempered (Pr 14:30; *w96* 2/1 31; 12/15 32)

The Scriptures advise us to be moderate in habits (Pr 23:20; 1Ti 3:11; Tit 2:2)

Although the Bible does not promise us perfect health now, it gives us courage to press on and endure in spite of health problems

A woman who continued to persevere in a lifelong battle against cerebral palsy, as well as bouts of depression, declared: "My health may continue to fail, but my trust in God and my relationship with him are my lifelines. How happy I am to be among Jehovah's people and to have his unfailing support!" (*w93* 6/1 31)

The Bible gives practical and workable counsel on how to resolve marital and other family problems

A schoolteacher in Zimbabwe, Africa, wrote: "My wife and I have learned through our hard experience that man's efforts to solve his problems independent of God are futile." (*g97* 4/8 32; *fy* 11)

If we follow the Bible, we will be faithful to our mate and thus avoid the anguish of a broken marriage (Pr 6:32, 33; Eph 5:33)

Because of complying with Bible standards, Christians pursue peace with all people (Ro 12:18; Heb 12:14)

Appreciating the Bible truth that God is not partial helps us to overcome racial and ethnic prejudice (Ac 10:34, 35; *g88* 1/22 27)

We learn from the Scriptures that we are not just some higher form of animal life but that we have the capacity of being spiritually minded (Mt 5:3; Col 3:16, 17)

Accurate knowledge of the Bible can lead us to a happy future

It gives us a real purpose in life, that of service to God

Grateful acceptance of God's Word enables us to have an intimate relationship with Jehovah, the Source of life, truth, and spiritual light (Ps 36:9; 43:3)

It brings us into joyful association with God's people (Ps 144:15b)

Bible truth gives us a life of purpose in Jehovah's service

#### **LET THE BIBLE GUIDE YOU TO HAPPINESS AND TO LIFE** (5 min.)

Recognize the Bible for what it truly is, God's Word (1Th 2:13)

Its counsel benefits us in every way

Scriptural guidance helps us to live a happy, purposeful life

The Bible provides guidance needed to cope with health problems, family difficulties, disasters, and other trials

It holds out a sure hope (Re 21:3, 4)

Above all, the Bible shows us how to serve Jehovah God acceptably (2Ti 3:16, 17)

By following God's sure guide, the Bible, and sticking with his people, you can enjoy eternal happiness (Pr 2:21)  
(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited scriptures need be read or commented on)

## TRUE FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD AND NEIGHBOR

### *Note to the speaker:*

Talk should be given in a very warm and appealing manner. Help audience to appreciate the great privilege and joy of becoming Jehovah's friend and why we should make every effort to know him and please him

### **TRUE FRIENDSHIP IS ROOTED IN LOVE** (3 min.)

A friend and an acquaintance are not the same

As regards trust, affection, respect, and loyalty, friendship goes deeper and demands a higher degree of responsibility

A friend is a person for whom we feel affection and admiration and with whom we enjoy familiarity and fellowship

A dictionary defines "friend" as "one attached to another by affection or esteem"

Close friends are happy to fulfill the responsibilities entailed by a strong personal attachment, realizing that these give them an opportunity to prove their friendship

He who asks for friendship without loyalty and responsibility, in reality wants only an acquaintance and not a friend (*w92 6/1 24*)

Foundation of all true friendships is genuine love, which is an enduring quality that never fails (1Co 13:8)

Acting in love, a true friend is there for you in times of distress and gives counsel in faithfulness (Pr 17:17; 27:9)

Love for God will motivate us to gain his friendship

The Bible reveals what we must do to enjoy true friendship with God and with neighbor

### **BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF TRUE FRIENDSHIP** (10 min.)

Bible contains many examples of true friendship, which we can imitate

Ruth and Naomi had an enduring friendship

Ruth, a non-Israelite, displayed unusual devotion and loyal love to her mother-in-law, Naomi

Though widowed and childless, Ruth refused to separate herself from Naomi (Ru 1:16, 17)

Her love was such that later on, others could say that she was better to Naomi than seven sons (Ru 4:15; *it-2 828*)

David and Jonathan enjoyed a very close friendship

David's faith in God and the courage he demonstrated when confronting Goliath undoubtedly impressed Jonathan (*it-2 102*)

They became true friends, took each other into confidence (1Sa 18:1, 3; 20:17, 42; *w96 3/15 4-5*)

Although heir to the throne of Israel, Jonathan put David's interests ahead of his own (1Sa 20:31, 32; 23:16-18; *w89 1/1 24-5*)

Friendship was unbreakable because both men placed friendship with and loyalty to Jehovah God above everything else

When Jonathan died, David deeply lamented his passing (2Sa 1:25, 26)

Jesus and his faithful disciples maintained an intimate friendship

He revealed knowledge to them about Jehovah God (Mr 4:34)

Their friendship endured many trials and will last forever (Lu 22:28-30; Joh 13:1)

Jesus was willing to die in their behalf (Joh 15:11-15)

### **HOW TO BECOME GOD'S FRIEND** (15 min.)

We do not automatically become a friend of God simply because he is our Creator

Faith is required; we must believe that God is, and we must seek his friendship (Heb 11:6)

Necessary to acquire accurate knowledge of him, his personality, activities, and purposes (Joh 17:3)

Need to develop a reverential fear of Jehovah and show love for him by obeying him (Ps 25:14; 1Jo 5:2, 3)

Trust essential for friendship with God

Without trust, no relationship, be it with humans or with God, can last

Abraham understood this and repeatedly manifested implicit trust in God (Heb 11:8, 9, 17-19)

He was therefore called Jehovah's friend (Read James 2:21-23)

God loves righteousness and requires that his friends also love righteousness (Ps 33:5)

Seek friendship with those who are God's friends, and avoid those who clearly have no respect for godly principles (Jas 4:4)

Be loyal to God and be willing to speak in his defense (Isa 6:8)

Do not keep friendship with God secret; make public declaration for salvation (Ro 10:10)

Communication with God is essential to having his friendship

Talk to God in prayer, and reveal your innermost feelings (Php 4:6, 7)

Listen to God by reading his Word and applying his counsel (*w92 6/1 26*)

Proper use of “unrighteous riches” is also involved in making friends with God (Lu 16:9, 11-13; *it-1* 873)

Placing Jehovah’s worship first in our lives and making wise use of our assets will help us maintain our friendship with God (*w94* 12/1 18)

Friendship with Jehovah is dependent on our efforts to live up to Scriptural prerequisites (*w89* 9/15 26-30; read Psalm 15:1-5)

#### **FRIENDSHIP WITH NEIGHBOR** (12 min.)

Friendship means doing more than just acting friendly

Must be genuine and have best interests of others at heart

Follow Paul’s counsel to do good to all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith (Ga 6:9, 10)

Do good to *all* by sharing Kingdom hope with them (Mt 28:19, 20; Joh 15:14)

While, like Jesus, a Christian shows love toward mankind in general, he gives the kind of love that goes with friendship only to those who are friends of God (2Ch 19:2)

Take initiative in offering proof of friendship (1Jo 4:19)

Be willing to give of self, time, understanding, and material assets (Pr 17:17; *w96* 11/1 15)

Adhere to righteous principles, and be loyal (Ps 97:10)

Do not be quick to listen to gossip (*w96* 9/15 22; 3/15 6)

Be honest with friend who needs to hear truth, and do not resent friend who speaks truth (Pr 27:6; Ga 4:16)

Show kindness, be compassionate and ready to forgive (Col 3:12-14)

Humility and being quick to apologize sincerely will do much to help us maintain our friendships (*w96* 9/15 22-4)

If necessary, be ready to sacrifice life for brothers, as Jesus did [Briefly relate one or two verified experiences] (*g98* 10/22 22; *w96* 11/1 18)

#### **BLESSINGS FROM TRUE FRIENDSHIP** (5 min.)

Friendship with God not unrealistic or unattainable

Abraham became God’s friend

Like him, recognize that obligations to God are much greater than those in a human friendship

Jesus was God’s Son and closest friend (Joh 1:18)

As did Jesus, strive to be pleasing to God in *all* things (Joh 8:29; *w92* 6/1 25)

Pursuing friendship with God brings us into a warm and loving congregation of Jehovah’s worshipers (Ps 27:10; 133:1)

There we find true friends, who also have Jehovah as their Friend

Appreciate that all friendships that will endure forever are based on friendship with Jehovah

Friendship with God brings happiness now and leads to everlasting life in the future

Soon, Jehovah and Jesus will usher their friends into a new world, where all will be true friends (Isa 11:9)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited scriptures need be read or commented on)



## JEHOVAH—THE GRAND CREATOR

### *Note to the speaker:*

Using the facts and figures that are cited concerning the magnitude and variety of Jehovah's creative works, highlight why he is indeed the Grand Creator. Show how we, as part of his creation, can praise him for his creative works and why we should do so

### **JEHOVAH ALONE IS THE CREATOR** (6 min.)

No one else can compare to Jehovah (Read Psalm 97:9)

Described as the "Most High" 50 times in Bible

The great First Cause, he alone is uncreated, without beginning (Re 10:6)

He holds supreme and ultimate position in universe (Ps 113:4, 5)

None of the angels, not even firstborn Son, can be compared to him (Ps 89:6)

Jehovah holds unique position as the *only* Creator of all created things (Ne 9:6; Isa 40:28)

Word "create" from Hebrew verb *ba·ra'*—used only as to Jehovah (Ge 1:1, 21, 27; 2:4; *it-1* 526)

When God speaks to his "master worker" at Genesis 1:26, Hebrew verb '*a·sah'* used; this means "make" and could involve others

"Master worker" a fellow worker, not a cocreator (Pr 8:30; Col 1:15, 16)

Jesus himself credited God with the creation (Mt 19:4-6)

### **JEHOVAH FITTINGLY CALLED "GRAND CREATOR"** (8 min.)

Jehovah also described as "your Grand Creator" at Ecclesiastes 12:1

When other translations only say "Creator," they fail to give complete meaning of original Hebrew text

Word used is in the plural, denoting excellence or grandeur (Job 35:10; Isa 54:5)

Expression "Grand Creator" helps convey Jehovah's incomparable position

Denotes unmatched majesty, dignity; his supremacy and awe-inspiring glory and power

Jehovah's grandness seen in opening statement of Bible (Ge 1:1)

What accomplishment envisioned here—creation of an awesome universe! (*ce* 115-27)

Jehovah has always existed, but matter and energy composing universe have not (Ps 90:2)

Otherwise, expression "beginning" not appropriate

How did "the heavens and the earth" come about by God's will?

Jehovah's "spirit," his active force, behind creation (Ps 33:6; Ge 1:2)

All of God's creations orderly, never chaotic or existing by chance (1Co 14:33; Job 38:1, 4-11, 31-33)

Everything Jehovah creates is perfect—simply grand! (De 32:4)

Do we so acknowledge and show him appreciation? (Ec 3:14; Ps 139:14)

### **THE MAGNIFICENCE OF JEHOVAH'S PRODUCTIONS** (15 min.)

Jehovah's creations not limited to just a few things

Rightly called "Producer of heaven and earth" (Ge 14:19, 22)

First and foremost production was his "master worker"—his "only-begotten Son" (Pr 8:22, 23, 30; Joh 3:16; Re 3:14)

As "firstborn of all creation," he was used by Jehovah in creating all other things (Col 1:15-17; Joh 1:3)

Multitudes of heavenly angels individually produced next (Da 7:10)

Material heavens and earth and all elements then brought into existence (Ge 1:1; Job 38:4-7)

Planet Earth a unique production of Jehovah

Only planet where life is found—supports five million or more different species of plants and animals (*ce* 129; *g87* 7/8 30)

Earth filled with Jehovah's masterful productions

Genesis 1:11, 12—20,000 different kinds of trees; 300,000 species of plants (*w83* 11/15 7; *g89* 1/8 18; *ce* 147-9)

Genesis 1:20—30,000 varieties of fish; 9,000 species of birds; over 800,000 kinds of insects already classified (*ts* 145-6; *w83* 11/15 7; *it-1* 1201)

Genesis 1:24—14,000 kinds of land creatures (mammals, amphibians, and reptiles) (*g70* 10/8 16)

Man is still learning, discovering more species (*g90* 11/8 29)

The more that creation is examined, the more that intelligent design is seen

Grand Creator's works give evidence of his Godship and power (Ro 1:20)

Staggering power found in material universe (*w86* 1/15 16)

A reflection of Creator's dynamic energy (Isa 40:25, 26)

Truly, we can exclaim as did the psalmist (Ps 104:24, 25)

**THE “NEW CREATION” OF JEHOVAH (6 min.)**

God rested on seventh day only from earthly creative works in behalf of mankind (Ge 2:1-3)

Activity far removed from the realm of mankind continues (Joh 5:17)

God continues working out grand things in a spiritual way

“New creation” being formed (2Co 5:17)

Just as Jesus at his baptism became a ‘new creature,’ so at Pentecost, 33 C.E., the “new creation” was born

Each person present was baptized with God’s holy spirit as his spiritual son, became part of the “new creation” (1Pe 1:23)

Other followers of Christ were added, to a total of 144,000 (Re 14:1-5)

“New creation” commissioned to declare “magnificent things of God,” including good news of Kingdom (Ac 2:11)

Future purpose of 144,000: to be associate rulers with Christ Jesus, dispensing Kingdom blessings for mankind (Re 20:4-6)

Grandeur of purpose of “new creation” realized when Isaiah 11:9 fulfilled

How happy we shall be then to benefit from their rule!

Privileged now to share with them in spreading Kingdom good news

**ALL THE CREATOR’S WORKS TO PRAISE HIM (10 min.)**

Jehovah’s purpose is that all his “works” and “loyal ones” will praise him (Ps 145:10)

Inanimate creation gives silent credit to Jehovah as Creator and Designer (*ce* 115-28)

Intelligent creation has privilege to give deliberate credit and praise to God (Read Psalm 145:1-3)

Today, remnant of “new creation” praise Jehovah by singing ‘the song of Moses and of the Lamb’ (Read Revelation 15:2, 3)

As expressed in Moses’ songs, they extol Jehovah as ‘King to time indefinite’ and Avenger against his enemies (Ex 15:1-19; De 31:30-32:43)

Song gladdens hundreds of thousands of others who now acknowledge the One to whom salvation belongs (Re 7:9, 10)

Recognizing their Grand Creator, people of nations join in worshiping God and glorifying his name (Read Revelation 15:4)

As Creator of all things, Jehovah is worthy of all worship and honor (Re 4:9-11)

Will you be among those who join in acknowledging Jehovah as the Grand Creator?

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## PAYING ATTENTION TO THE PROPHETIC WORD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Focus on why we should be interested in Bible prophecy and how it can strengthen our faith. Clearly explain the selected Bible prophecies dealing with future events, and show how we can demonstrate that we are paying attention to them

### **THE BIBLE A BOOK OF PROPHECY (7 min.)**

Most professed Christians have little interest in prophecy

Bible shows even angels interested in future (1Pe 1:12)

Bible unique among sacred writings for its prophetic elements

Contains record of fulfillment of its own prophecies

Many of its prophecies fulfilled, others awaiting fulfillment

What is prophecy? History written in advance, namely, prediction

But word "prophecy" in Bible applies also to any commands, moral teachings, messages of divine origin (De 18:18, 19; Eze 37:9, 10; Lu 7:16; Joh 4:19; Isa 1:1-23)

Bible's prophetic predictions communicated in various ways

By Jehovah's spoken word (Ge 3:15)

By guiding conscious thought and memory (Joh 14:26; 16:13; 2Pe 1:21)

By means of dreams (Ge 41:15; Da 4:5)

By means of visions (Da 8:2)

By means of angels (Lu 1:19, 30, 31)

Prophecies at times have more than one fulfillment

Malachi 4:5 fulfilled in John the Baptizer but also has modern fulfillment in view of Malachi 4:6 (Mt 11:14)

Restoration prophecies were fulfilled after 537 B.C.E., are being fulfilled in present spiritual paradise, will be fulfilled physically under Messianic Kingdom (Ps 126; 2Co 12:4; Re 21:3, 4)

### **WHY WE SHOULD BE KEENLY INTERESTED IN BIBLE'S PREDICTIONS (10 min.)**

Prophecies help us to see where we are in God's timetable

Examples (Mt 24:1-51; 2Ti 3:1-5)

Daniel 9:24-27 helped Jews know Messiah's appearance was close

Fulfilled prophecies strengthen faith in Bible as God's inspired Word

Fulfilled prophecies testify to Jehovah's omnipotence, his omniscience; not only foresees but also has control of future (Isa 46:8-10)

Fulfilled prophecies strengthen our faith in those yet to be fulfilled

Prophecies written for our comfort, hope (Ro 15:4)

### **THE PROPHETIC WORD MADE MORE SURE (10 min.)**

By the transfiguration scene (a vision) (Mt 17:1-9)

The witnesses were Jesus' three closest apostles (Peter, James, and John, as seen from Luke 8:51; Mark 14:33)

By this vision apostles' faith was confirmed by both visual and auditory phenomena (2Pe 1:17-19)

Verse 17: Voice was Jehovah's own voice (one of the three instances when God's voice was heard by humans: Mark 1:11; John 12:28)

Verse 18: Most likely took place on slopes of Mt. Hermon (*w*91 9/15 20)

Verse 19: What prophetic word made sure? Hebrew Scriptures filled with references to Messiah (Lu 24:44; De 18:15; Da 7:13, 14)

To pay attention means to take prophetic Word seriously, exercise faith in it, and let it influence our lives

Who is the "daystar"? Revelation 22:16 identifies it as Jesus Christ

All genuine prophecy not of "private interpretation" (2Pe 1:20)

That is, no prophecy is due to man's interpretation of events

Also, no prophecy is of human origin or release (*Ref. Bi. ftn.*)

All are part of inspired profitable things; not brought by man's will but through operation of God's spirit, even as testified by David (2Sa 23:2), Paul (2Ti 3:16)

Are part of God's utterances by which we live (Mt 4:4)

### **PROPHECIES YET TO BE FULFILLED, TO WHICH WE NEED TO PAY ATTENTION (15 min.)**

Though studying prophecies already fulfilled strengthens our faith, paying attention to those regarding future is vital to our salvation

One such prophecy is found at 1 Thessalonians 5:3 (Read) (*dg* 21 par. 12)

Men making efforts along this line (Refer to any current political efforts, meetings of leaders of major world powers)

We can also expect Revelation 17:16 to be fulfilled soon (Read and explain; see *re* 256-7)

After destroying Babylon the Great, radical political elements will then turn on God's people (Read Ezekiel 38:14-16a)

That will cause Jehovah to step in, fight for his people (Read Ezekiel 38:18-20) (*w*91 8/15 27)

This will mark fulfillment of 'crushing' referred to at Daniel 2:44, 45 (Read)

Out of mountain of Jehovah's universal sovereignty has come the Messianic Kingdom, which will soon destroy Satan's wicked visible organization

This will completely vindicate Jehovah's sovereignty and sanctify his name (Read Ezekiel 38:23)

Next, Satan and his demons will be abysed (Read Revelation 20:1-3a)

The angel doing the binding is Jesus Christ (*re* 287)

Only then can Kingdom blessings flow freely

Then Revelation 21:3, 4 will come into fulfillment (Read)

All the earth will gradually become a paradise

Mankind will be restored to perfection

Jesus' words at John 5:28, 29 will find fulfillment (Read)

The doing of good or bad refers to conduct after being resurrected; term "judgment" refers to an adverse judgment

Paul's words at 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 will become true (Read)

Finally, there will be testing in fulfillment of Revelation 20:7, 8 (Read)

All rebels will be destroyed; all passing the test will be given right to everlasting life

**PAYING ATTENTION TO PROPHETIC WORD INCLUDES TELLING OTHERS** (3 min.)

World of mankind in darkness as to God's purposes (Isa 60:2; Ac 26:18)

Fulfillment of prophecy shows Kingdom blessings are near; we have obligation to make "this good news" known (Mt 24:14)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## YOU CAN FIND JOY IN SERVING GOD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Give the audience a good reason for displaying a joyful spirit in spite of the problems of life. Show how joy, a fruit of God's spirit, is inseparably linked to knowing God and serving him

### **MAN'S DESIRE AND EFFORTS TO FIND JOY** (5 min.)

Every normal person wants to be joyful. The world offers little reason for joy: terrorism, ethnic strife, crime, disease, and the like, are rampant in the world

Example: "Terrorism has become a pitiless war without borders," stated one government official (*g86 6/22 3*)

In 1971, fewer than two dozen persons died in terrorist attacks; in 1983, over 10,000; and now ethnic conflicts and terrorism are the order of the day (*g86 6/22 3; g93 12/22 4-5*)

The world tries to find joy in sports, TV viewing, pleasure trips, materialism, loose life-style

Big business exploits modern technology to create and then fill artificial needs

This frantic race for the joy that man so desires brings no lasting satisfaction. It is all self-defeating selfishness, ending in the dust of the grave (1Ti 6:9, 10; Ga 6:7, 8; Job 17:13, 16)

### **GOD COMMANDS HIS SERVANTS TO REJOICE** (8 min.)

(For this and next subheading, see *w95 1/15 10-15*)

Though some believe it is elusive, joy is possible in this wicked world

Consider Jesus' example (Heb 12:2)

To serve God, Paul says that early Christians "joyfully took the plundering of [their] belongings" (Heb 10:32-34)

There is a spirit in man that has needs beyond material things

Unless these needs are met, no contentment, no joy results. Needs of body and spirit must be met—a balance (Mt 4:4; 5:3)

God's people always have reason to rejoice (Php 4:4; 1Th 5:16)

Joy comes from being spiritual. Can the joy from material possessions compare with the joy derived from our worldwide brotherhood? Can it compare with a kind thought expressed by a spiritual brother? A sympathetic touch, a soft gesture, a warm smile, or a loving act from one you love? A feeling that you really belong to God's family and that he cares for you in your moments of need? This fine relationship with your brothers and Jehovah, the happy God, is what fills you with joy. Jehovah exhorts: "Rejoice in the hope" (Ro 12:12)

### **GODLY JOY NOT DEPENDENT ON EXTERNAL THINGS** (12 min.)

One definition of joy: "A state of happiness" (*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*)

Joy is not just a matter of feeling but is a quality of the heart (Pr 17:22; Ec 2:10)

Is a deep inner sense of delight based on principles and so is lasting

Life and joy not dependent on material things (Lu 12:15; Mt 13:44) (Contrast with unhappy, materialistic world)

Joy is a fruit of the spirit (Ga 5:22)

Knowledge of truth a basis for joy

Understanding God's purpose gives meaning to life, without which we are like "stars with no set course" (Jude 13)

The truth liberates one from "Babylon the Great," a blessing that brings joy (Re 18:2, 4; Joh 8:32)

Worshippers no longer pray before lifeless images that cannot answer (Ps 115:4-8)

Bible knowledge frees one from fear of eternal torment; frees one from bondage to sin (Ro 8:2); frees one from fear of man (Ps 118:6)

God rewards faithful ones by fulfilling promise of everlasting life (Joh 17:3)

### **WHY GOD'S SERVANTS CAN FIND JOY IN SERVING HIM** (15 min.)

(See *w95 1/15 15-20*)

Helping others brings joy (1Th 2:19, 20)

Early Christians rejoiced when persecuted for preaching. Why? Because their suffering was for sake of righteousness (Mt 5:10; 1Pe 4:13, 14)

We also have weighty responsibility to preach the good news, and we can likewise find joy in serving Jehovah. Joy is experienced by those who serve Jehovah in spite of official bans or restrictions on the Kingdom work (*w91 7/1 31*)

Jehovah's servants rejoice today in serving him with endurance (Jas 1:2-4)

God cares for his servants (Mt 6:31-33)

Example: How he especially sustains the pioneers and those in restricted countries (Heb 13:5, 6)

God's servants find joy through fine association with faithful brothers at meetings, in field service, and in wholesome recreation (Ps 133:1; Heb 10:23-25)

To be a part of the worldwide family of Jehovah's worshipers should thrill us! In this world filled with wickedness, how refreshing to associate with brothers who have put on the new personality! (Col 3:8-11) This new personality results in being honest (*w91 6/15 26*, experience from Corsica; *w93 5/1 27*)

Think of when the whole world will be that honest!

Great joy results from making God's heart glad and being assured that he rewards his servants (Pr 27:11; Heb 6:10)

**ONLY WORTHWHILE ACTIVITY IS SERVING JEHOVAH** (5 min.)

Rewarding both for life now and for that to come (1Ti 4:8)

Store up treasures for everlasting life of joy (Mt 6:20; 1Ti 6:19)

So continue to "serve Jehovah with rejoicing. Come in before him with a joyful cry" (Ps 100:2)

Truly, "the joy of Jehovah is your stronghold" (Ne 8:10)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## PARENTS—ARE YOU BUILDING WITH FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Acknowledge that training children is no easy task in these last days. Encourage parents to follow divinely inspired Bible counsel and leave the results in Jehovah's hands. Present practical suggestions on how to apply Bible counsel

### **WHY FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED TO TRAIN CHILDREN** (5 min.)

Child training is a real challenge today

Pressures from immoral world are increasing because of Satan's desperate aim to corrupt human race (1Pe 5:8)

Bad inclinations that are revealed from "youth up" must be countered (Ge 8:21)

Some parents rear a number of children, all of whom turn out well

Testimony to parents' efforts to fulfill their responsibilities

In other families, youths raised in the truth fall away when they get older

What might account for the difference?

Much depends on extent to which parents use fire-resistant materials in building structure of faith in children (Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-13)

Discussion will consider how Paul's counsel can be applied in training of children

Of course, it is a joint project; children have a responsibility to apply in their lives what they learn (*w*98 11/1 13; *w*91 7/1 26-7)

### **WHAT ARE THE FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS?** (13 min.)

At 1 Corinthians 3:12, 13, Paul was contrasting two types of building materials—fire-resistant ("gold, silver, precious stones") and combustible ("wood . . . , hay, stubble") (*w*84 8/1 10-12)

In training children, must build with the fire-resistant materials; what do these represent?

Gold, silver, and precious stones are at times used figuratively in the Bible to represent such qualities as godly wisdom, spiritual discernment, strong faith, loyalty, loving appreciation for Jehovah and his laws (Ps 19:7-11; Pr 2:1-6; 1Pe 1:6, 7; *fy* 55)

These qualities make up the Christian personality structure that we must endeavor to build in our children

Those with such durable qualities will withstand the "fire"

What does the "fire" here represent? (*w*84 8/1 12)

Scripture says *each* one's work will be subjected to "fire"

Not necessarily persecution

Could be any of the pressures or temptations that could destroy one's spirituality—temptation to engage in sexual immorality, invitations to take drugs or abuse alcohol, pressure to share in world's degraded entertainment, the lure of materialism

Parents need to consider: When your children face the "fire," how will they fare? Will they stand firm like a structure built with fire-resistant materials? Or burn up like one built with combustible materials?

Much depends upon whether you have endeavored to build durable Christian qualities in your children

### **HOW TO BUILD WITH FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS** (22 min.)

Of first importance: Parents must *set the right example* (*w*84 8/1 13-14; *fy* 56)

We must have the qualities we want to build in our children

Love for Jehovah has to be in parents' hearts before they can inculcate it into hearts of children (De 6:4-6)

What parents teach and practice must harmonize (Ro 2:21-24)

If we wish to build in our children love for Jehovah and desire to please him, they should see in us by our prayers, speech, and actions evidence of such love and desire

Children pay more attention to what we do than to what we say

Children need *proper instruction* from infancy (Pr 22:6; 2Ti 3:15; *fy* 67-71)

Teach them to pray; example of our own prayers important

Help them know Jehovah intimately, learn about his qualities and ways

Will help them build in themselves a strong feeling of devotion to Jehovah

By your example, let them see wisdom of obeying Jehovah's laws (*w*84 8/1 15-16)

Show them that keeping his laws is in their best interests; will move them to want to please him

Lay Christ as the foundation by teaching children about him

Children should see how Jesus' example and teachings should affect their feelings and actions (1Pe 2:21)

Help them know the qualities and the mind of Christ

Use *good teaching methods* (w01 10/1 8-13; w84 8/1 14-15)

Ask questions to get children to think and reason on what they learn

Use viewpoint questions, such as “How do you feel about this?” or “How can you apply this counsel in your life?”

Such questions can help you to determine what is in child’s heart

Adapt family study to suit needs—problems at school or in home—not just to cover material

The Bible says: “*Listen* to discipline” (Pr 8:33)

Discipline involves instruction and training

Discipline shows that parents care about child (Heb 12:6, 11)

Not to be angry outbursts; such are an evidence of lack of self-control

Be consistent (Mt 5:37; Eph 6:4; *fy* 84)

While others in congregation may help, remember that *your children are your responsibility* when it comes to training

Pray to Jehovah for help to be close to your children and to train them in the right way (Jg 13:8)

Help children benefit from congregation meetings

See that they have their own Bible and necessary literature; sit with them; help them prepare for meetings

Share in field service as a family

### **REWARD FOR BUILDING WITH FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS** (5 min.)

Building fire-resistant qualities in our children brings a reward (Read 1 Corinthians 3:14, 15) (w84 8/1 17)

Paul had the reward of seeing those he aided into the truth enduring in the face of opposition; it testified that he had built well (1Th 2:19, 20)

Similarly, what a joy it will be to see our youngsters stand firm in face of temptations and pressures, to see them endure in the Christian way!

True, individual heart condition is a factor involved in one’s sticking to the truth, but never forget important role played by parental example and training

When children stand firm in the truth, they honor Jehovah and bring joy to parents (Pr 10:1; Ec 12:13, 14)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## GAINING COMFORT IN ALL OUR TRIBULATIONS

### *Note to the speaker:*

Deliver the discourse in a consoling manner with warmth and feeling. Help depressed ones to see that Jehovah cares for them, drawing attention to his means for providing comfort in these “critical times hard to deal with”

### **THE WHOLE CREATION IS IN GREAT NEED OF COMFORT** (4 min.)

All mankind are in much need of comfort (Ro 8:22)

Jehovah's people are also in need of comfort

We live in “critical times hard to deal with” (2Ti 3:1)

Must also contend with our own imperfect flesh (Ro 7:21-24)

Where can we find needed comfort?

### **WHEN FACED WITH TRIALS, TURN TO ‘THE GOD OF COMFORT’** (12 min.)

Jehovah, ‘the God of comfort,’ can help us endure under all conditions and circumstances (2Co 1:3, 4)

His Word written to provide comfort and hope (Ro 15:4)

Son sent as comforter with message of life

Assured mourning ones they would be comforted (Mt 5:4)

Would refresh those “loaded down” (Mt 11:28-30)

Paul found comfort in Jehovah in spite of much hardship throughout his ministry (2Co 4:7, 16-18)

Listed 23 types of trials or persecutions in 2 Corinthians 11:23-27 (*w82 12/1 12-22*)

Paul and Silas could sing praises to Jehovah in spite of cruel persecution for preaching (Ac 16:19-25)

Their garments were torn off, and they were beaten and put in stocks (*vss. 22-24*)

They prayed, sang praises to God for all to hear (*vs. 25*)

Jehovah miraculously freed them (*vs. 26*)

In turn, comforted jailer and family with good news (*vss. 27-34*)

We too can look to Jehovah for comfort and help in all times of need (Ps 55:22; *w92 4/15 26-30; w92 5/1 26-9; w92 5/15 28-31* or other current source)

“I might be isolated from my fellowmen, but no one could isolate me from God. What spiritual strength and comfort prayer brought to me! . . . There are no guns, no walls, no prison bars that can keep the spirit of God from reaching his people! . . . With God's almighty power he is able to make even the most frail of us come off victorious in the face of persecution!” (Missionary in solitary confinement in China) (*w72 9/1 524-5*)

### **HOW WE CAN RECEIVE COMFORT FROM JEHOVAH** (10 min.)

We must accept and apply the help Jehovah extends to us through his spirit, Word, and organization (Heb 13:5b, 6)

Regular study and meeting participation fortify one against Satan's attacks (Ps 1:1-3; Heb 10:24, 25)

Acquaint self with Jehovah's dealings (1Co 10:6, 11)

Meditation anchors truths deep in mind and heart (Php 4:8)

When isolated or faced with sudden trial, draw on principles already learned (Ps 105:5)

Prayers of Jehovah's servants instantaneously heard (2Ch 7:1; Ne 2:4-6; Lu 3:21, 22; Ac 9:11, 12; 10:30, 31)

Regular prayers important (Mt 26:41)

Especially essential in times of tribulation (Ps 77:2)

Keep mental vision of Jehovah before you (Ac 2:25, 26)

As we strive to endure faithfully, he helps and comforts us, as he has his people in ancient and modern times

### **IMITATE JEHOVAH BY COMFORTING OTHERS AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY** (12 min.)

Jehovah comforts and strengthens us that we may encourage and comfort others (2Co 1:4)

Speak consolingly to those who are depressed, lonely, despondent (1Th 5:14; *w90 3/15 26-8*)

Jehovah will not forget their faithful service (Heb 6:9-11)

Lovingly encourage them to take positive view of situations and things they cannot change (1Co 10:13; Heb 12:1-3)

Help them realize ‘God of comfort’ cares (Ps 41:3; 1Pe 5:7)

Even those passing through death's door have prospect of resurrection (Job 14:13-15; *w86 10/1 12-13*)

Bring resurrection hope to those who have lost loved ones in death (Jas 1:27, *ftn.*; Joh 11:23-25)

Knowledge of condition of dead brings comfort (Joh 11:11, 14; Ec 9:5)

Comfort those with broken homes, rebellious children (Ps 27:10; Isa 49:15)

God's Word covers all conditions and circumstances (2Ti 3:16, 17)

**DO YOU APPRECIATE JEHOVAH'S PROVISIONS FOR COMFORTING US?** (7 min.)

Those who respect Jehovah's provisions enjoy strong faith and unwavering hope (1Pe 5:7-10)

Receive comfort even though "laid low" (2Co 7:6; 2Th 2:16, 17)

However, some lose appreciation for Jehovah's ways, go back into world

Perhaps they are stumbled, feel hurt, or have grown weary and "drift away" (Heb 2:1; Ro 14:13)

May feel unworthy of God's goodness because of bad conscience

Others may feel unworthy because of previous bad way of life

Can find comfort in illustration of the prodigal son (Lu 15:11-24)

May feel regret and turn to doing God's will (Mt 21:28-32)

Our desire should be to help willing ones return to God while there is yet time (Ga 6:1)

Will be too late when "great tribulation" begins (2Co 6:1, 2)

Be happy to study with willing ones

Comfort them with deeper understanding of truth (Heb 5:12-14)

Teach them to apply God's Word in their lives

Let us help all draw near to Jehovah not just for present comfort but also for salvation (1Ch 28:9)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## RUINING THE EARTH BRINGS DIVINE RETRIBUTION

### *Note to the speaker:*

Present the Bible-based hope for a restored paradise in a reasonable way. Explain that the loving Creator purposes for man to enjoy life in Paradise and why this has not come about yet. Encourage audience to learn more about God's purpose

### **GARDEN OF EDEN, GOD'S GRACIOUS GIFT TO ORIGINAL MAN** (6 min.)

Beautiful earth prepared in six creative days, designed with man in mind (Ps 115:16; Isa 45:18)

Climaxed by creation of perfect human son (Ge 2:7)

Man, made in God's "image" and "likeness," has capacity for spirituality, unlike animal creation (Ge 1:26)

This "spiritual need" must be fulfilled for happiness (Mt 5:3)

After forming man, God put him in the garden of Eden

Garden of Eden also known as "paradise of pleasure," "garden of Jehovah" (Ge 2:8, ftn.; Isa 51:3)

[Describe: Well watered; river running through, parting to become four large rivers. Water clean, pure, no pollution. All trees "desirable to one's sight and good for food." Endless varieties of flowers, shrubs, vegetation. Beautiful birds, charming animals (not killers), peacefully sharing God-given home (Ge 2:9, 10; *it-1* 676-7)]

Earth to be his eternal home (Ec 1:4)

Creator lovingly provided man with perfect wife as "complement" (Ge 2:18, 22)

First human pair made caretakers of Paradise home, with rich blessings for supreme happiness (Ge 2:15)

As human family increased, blessing would extend throughout entire earth (Ge 1:26-28)

### **PARADISE HOME LOST, RUINATION OF EARTH BEGINS** (12 min.)

Paradise sanctuary lost by rebellion

Eating of forbidden fruit constituted willful rebellion (Ge 2:16, 17)

Human pair evicted from Paradise home, never to return; way back guarded by cherubs (Ge 3:22-24)

Prevented from returning and eating from "tree of life"

"Tree of life" a symbol of Creator's unchanged guarantee of life (*it-2* 247)

However, God never changed his mind respecting his purpose for earth, with man as caretaker (Isa 55:11)

Choosing independence from Creator resulted in imperfection, violence, death (Ro 5:12; *dg* 14-15)

Violence began with death of God-fearing Abel (Ge 4:8-11)

By time of Noah (c. 2490 B.C.E.), earth filled with violence of evil men and "mighty" offspring of depraved angels (Ge 6:4, 5)

Nephilim used their size to bully, contributing to violence

Creator, Jehovah, regretted having made man and felt hurt in heart because of polluted conditions on earth (Ge 6:6)

Flood—divine retribution—brought end to those ruining earth (Ge 6:11-13; *it-1* 609; *w92* 1/15 3)

Shortly thereafter, ruination and pollution began anew with Nimrod, "a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah" (Ge 10:8, 9)

Polluted earth with bloodshed, both animal and human (*it-2* 503)

Known as a man of aggression, he built Tower of Babel and extended his evil domain to territory of Assyria

District of the Jordan, although "like the garden of Jehovah," became polluted by tenants (Ge 13:10; 18:20)

Again, divine retribution was expressed, bringing destruction to Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19:13; Jude 7)

Canaanites later suffered divine retribution for same reason (Le 18:24, 25)

Unfaithful Israel violated God's Sabbath laws and brought ruin to the land

Land polluted by corrupt morals, idolatry, bloodshed, and so forth

Divine retribution came in 607 B.C.E. in the form of destruction and 70-year captivity (2Ch 36:14-21)

### **UNGRATEFUL TENANTS TODAY HAVE RUINED JEHOVAH'S GIFT** (10 min.)

Man has ruined, rather than subdued, earth

After 6,000 years of ignoring God's laws, man threatens to make earth uninhabitable instead of joyful Paradise God purposed

Earth now needs protection from man!

By thoughtlessness and selfishness, man has tampered with delicate balance of nature and brought on catastrophic floods, droughts, pollution, untold misery and death

Some examples are toxic waste dumps, acid rain, overgrazing, deforestation, excessive use of pesticides, radioactive wastes, wars (*g93* 1/22 3-7; *g90* 5/8 3-7)

Air, water, soil, all polluted (*g92* 7/22 24; *g93* 1/8 9-10)

Birds, animals, insects, man, endangered (g92 11/22 28)

“We have probed the earth, excavated it, burned it, ripped things from it, buried things in it, chopped down its forests, leveled its hills, muddied its waters, and dirtied its air. That does not fit my definition of a good tenant. If we were here on a month-to-month basis, we would have been evicted long ago” (Rose Bird, former chief justice of California Supreme Court)

Violent crime, immorality, drugs, bringing earth to brink of calamity

As with ancient Israel, man and nations stand guilty before God for moral and spiritual as well as physical pollution of earth (Isa 24:5, 6)

#### **HOW DIVINE RETRIBUTION WILL SAVE THE EARTH FROM RUINATION (7 min.)**

God has promised the end of all wicked men (Ps 37:10; 2Th 1:6-9)

We do not burn down a house to rid it of pests, rodents, termites; so no need to destroy planet to rid earth of bad tenants

Past examples show what to expect in very near future (2Pe 2:4-9)

Jehovah will soon bring to ruin those ruining the earth (Re 11:18; g93 1/22 9-11)

Some may scoff, but fulfillment sure (2Pe 3:3-7)

Ungodly men will not survive “war of the great day of God” (Re 16:13, 14, 16)

Abysing of Satan and demons will eliminate root cause of pollution and ruination, both spiritual and physical (Re 20:1-3)

#### **MAN'S ETERNAL HOME RESTORED TO A PARADISE (10 min.)**

With polluters (visible and invisible) gone, survivors will work in harmony with Creator's universal rules of conduct

Will restore earth to Paradise condition (Ps 37:34; Lu 23:43; w89 8/15 15-20; w94 4/1 6-7)

Kingdom rule will institute a program of building, planting, educating (Ps 22:26, 27; Re 20:12; re 298-9; w93 2/15 7)

With results of rebellion and independence from God erased, there will be peace between God, man, and animals (Isa 11:6-9; Ps 37:11; 46:9)

God's perfect ecosystem will undergo restoration

Earth will then yield its abundance

All creation will praise Jehovah throughout eternity (Ps 37:29; 150:6)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## HOLD A GOOD CONSCIENCE IN A SINFUL WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the brothers to meet the challenge of developing a godly conscience by first calling their attention to worldly influences that affect the development of a good conscience. Explain how to cultivate a good conscience and the benefits that come from following an internal witness bearer

### **IT IS A CHALLENGE TO HOLD A GOOD CONSCIENCE IN A SINFUL WORLD** (8 min.)

All persons have the faculty of conscience

It is our internal witness bearer, the capacity to judge oneself (*it-1* 500)

Literally means co-knowledge, or having knowledge of something with oneself, the voice of “the secret self” (Ps 51:6; Ro 9:1)

Shaped by training and experience, conscience judges and can excuse or accuse one

This inner moral sense implanted in humans at creation and inborn in people of all nations (Read Romans 2: 14, 15)

The conscience can be abused and rendered an unsafe guide (Tit 1:15, 16)

Majority today have distorted view of what constitutes sin

Increasing trend to ‘do your own thing’ has led to perversions of all kinds

Erosion of moral values has resulted in calloused and seared consciences, with wicked men going from bad to worse (2Ti 3:1-3, 13)

Challenge to hold a good conscience in environment where ‘spirit of the world’ predominates (Eph 2:1-3)

### **EVER-INCREASING DANGER OF BEING INFLUENCED BY WORLD** (12 min.)

Vigilance necessary lest love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness cool off (Ps 37:27; Am 5:14, 15)

Worldly influences build up pressures to follow the crowd and do what pleases self (Pr 1:10, 11, 13)

Never minimize possibility of world’s influence

Can be gradual eroding of standards, so that what was once repulsive is now acceptable or allowable

For example, experiences show that debasing music can influence thought and conduct (Ex 32:1-6, 17, 18; *g93* 2/22 25-7; *g93* 6/8 4-7)

Moral breakdown has become so widespread that gross violators become celebrities and are glorified (*g92* 1/22 3-5)

Danger exists because, although most people acknowledge eroded conditions, they still accept them and contribute to them

Especially dangerous to young people who have not seen anything else and consider such conditions as normal

God’s standards have not changed (Mal 3:6)

If we accept worldly viewpoints, we will lose out (Ro 1:28, 32; 1Co 6:9, 10)

Will become displeasing to Jehovah, who knows all (Heb 4:12, 13)

Can also stumble others (Ro 14:13)

Remember principle expressed at 1Corinthians 8:8-13

Experience: A relatively new sister started to leave a theater because of the offensive content of the movie being shown. She saw an elder, with his family, obviously enjoying the movie. She remained and suffered from a troubled conscience for a long time

Educated conscience will prevent our following course of sinful world (1Jo 2:15-17)

### **TO HOLD GOOD CONSCIENCE, BASE PERSONAL DECISIONS ON ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE** (15 min.)

Christians must “hold a good conscience” despite pressures or opposition (Read 1 Peter 3:16, 17)

Conscience must be enlightened, trained in right standards

Conscience educated by accurate knowledge of God’s Word can correctly assess matters and set them straight (2Ti 3:16)

Consider example of Zacchaeus (Lu 19:1-8)

Extent of accurate knowledge reflected in level at which conscience functions

In almost all persons, it judges guilt after the fact (2Sa 24:10; *w82* 7/15 17)

For persons who appreciate God’s will, conscience legislates against embarking on course of action condemned by God (Ge 39:9)

“A good conscience” encompasses all areas of life (Ac 24:14, 16; Heb 13:18)

Guides one seeking neutral employment (Isa 2:4; *w82* 7/15 26)

Directs as to personal conduct and speech (Ro 12:18; 1Pe 2:12)

Leads to displaying “new personality” (Eph 4:22-24)

Accepts direction from elders and faithful slave class (Heb 13:17)

**THE GOOD THAT RESULTS FROM A PROPERLY TRAINED CONSCIENCE** (10 min.)

Cultivate desire for a good, not weak, conscience

Weak conscience would indicate improper or inadequate training

Good conscience, properly trained, will quickly alert us to dangers

Will keep us from hurting ourselves, having negative influence on others, and displeasing Jehovah

Jesus showed that our conscience should move us to take advantage of opportunities to do unselfish, noble, kind, loving things (Lu 10:29-37)

Properly trained conscience will motivate us to set right example, imitating Christ (1Co 11:1)

We will be concerned as to how others are affected by what we do, even in instances where there is no wrongdoing (Ro 15:1, 2)

We will always seek the congregation's peace (Ro 14:15,19-21; w91 3/1 21-5; w89 2/15 18-20)

Elders will maintain ability to help others (Isa 32:1, 2)

Strong, active, yet good conscience enables God-fearing person to have peace of mind and Jehovah's favor

Will go beyond minimum requirements of rules, fully keeping us from things that bring God's disapproval (w82 7/15 27)

Though living in sinful world, will enjoy relationship that Abraham had with God as "Jehovah's friend" (Jas 2:23)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## OVERCOMING FEAR OF THE FUTURE

### *Note to the speaker:*

The purpose of this talk is to show that if we are doing God's will, we have no need to be fearful about the future. Contrast the bleak future for those who are wicked with the blessings God promises for his faithful people. Instill confidence

### **MANKIND HAS GOOD REASON TO BE FEARFUL OF COMING CALAMITIES** (6 min.)

Almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus foretold the coming of startling events (Read Luke 21:25, 26)

These would occur after the great tribulation had started and would result in anguish of nations, men's hearts failing them for fear of what is coming (Mt 24:29; w94 2/15 20)

This fear will be shared by men of all stations, from Nobel prize winners to man on street

Even now, as we come near the end of this system of things, there is much anxiety over current events and conditions (g93 1/8 4-10, 12)

"Many people have lost their faith in the future, because in virtually every facet of our civilization we are beginning to act as if our future is now so much in doubt that it makes more sense to focus exclusively on our current needs and short-term problems" (Al Gore, in his book *Earth in the Balance—Ecology and the Human Spirit*)

Concerning the destruction of the environment, environmental consultant Norman Myers stated: "No generation in the past has faced the prospect of mass extinction within its lifetime. No generation in the future will ever face a similar challenge: if this present generation fails to get to grips with the task, the damage will have been done and there will be no 'second try'" (*State of the World 1988*)

Terrorism, violence, crime, drugs, immorality, disasters, and diseases mark time of end; like pangs of distress upon pregnant woman (w93 3/1 4-6; w94 7/15 3-4)

Time has come for God "to bring to ruin those ruining the earth" (Re 11:18)

### **WICKED NEED TO FEAR COMING DAY OF JEHOVAH'S ANGER** (15 min.)

Entire wicked world of Satan is marked for destruction (w94 3/1 15-23)

All nations will drink of Jehovah's anger and act like crazed men (Read Jeremiah 25:15, 16)

His judgments likened to 'foaming cup,' a deadly potion (Ps 75:7, 8)

Since 1919, Jehovah's class (anointed remnant) has been calling the attention of the nations to this "cup"

By "expressions inspired by demons," all nations are now being gathered to 'war of great day of God Almighty' (Re 16:13, 14, 16)

Jehovah will send Jesus Christ among them with "sword" of execution at Armageddon (Re 19:11, 15)

Jehovah's "great tempest" will sweep whole earth and put to death all opposers (Read Jeremiah 25:31-33)

Christendom and rest of false religion will be destroyed first in the "great tribulation" (Mt 24:21; Re 18:21)

Governmental rulers, or "shepherds," will howl during "great tribulation" (Read Jeremiah 25:34-38)

As in a chain reaction, the religious leaders and then the political elements are engulfed by "tempest"

The "pasturage" of the rulers, the system of things, gets despoiled

Kings of earth and their armies will fight against Jehovah's Warrior King but will be destroyed by being cast into "the fiery lake that burns with sulphur" (Re 17:12-14; 19:19-21)

Coming day of Jehovah was pictured by extermination of "world of that time" in Deluge, with exception of Noah and family (2Pe 3:6, 7)

Opposers called upon to "kiss the son," Jesus Christ, in order to make peace (Ps 2:9-12; w79 1/15 6-7)

Majority will stubbornly refuse and be broken by the iron scepter of the enthroned Lord Jesus

### **FACING THE FUTURE WITHOUT FEAR** (18 min.)

Those heeding Jehovah's warning need not fear the future

God's anger will not be directed against them (Zep 2:3)

As in times past, God is fully capable of delivering his people (Ex 6:6-8; 15:1-13, 19; 2Pe 2:9)

Those who do God's will have the joyful prospect of survival into the blessings of God's Kingdom

Opposers of God's righteous rule will go off into everlasting cutting-off (Pr 2:21, 22)

Jehovah's government of peace will replace evil world of Satan (Isa 9:6, 7)

Kingdom will accomplish what no man-made government could ever hope to achieve

Its benefits will be everlasting and perfect because it will educate all teachable ones in God's ways (Isa 2:2-4)

Instead of trusting in nuclear or high-tech weapons to bring peace, Jehovah's people are trusting in the mighty Prince of Peace

Rather than ruin the earth, he will provide a paradise

Men will "build houses and have occupancy" and "plant vineyards and eat their fruitage" instead of having their works plundered by enemies (Isa 65:21, 22; 62:8, 9)

Fear of invasion by enemy nations will not exist because Jehovah will 'make wars cease to the extremity of the earth' (Ps 46:9)

He will also destroy all their implements of war

Today, fear is being replaced by love and joy as Jehovah gathers the meek together out of all the nations (Re 7:9, 10)

These even now compose a worldwide brotherhood without national or racial animosities (Joh 13:34, 35; 1Pe 1:22)

(Use statements from news sources, such as those found in the *Index* under "Jehovah's Witnesses, Statements by Others")

**OVERCOME FEAR—ABOUND IN GOOD CHEER AND HOPE** (6 min.)

Entire earth will soon be ruled by the glorious Prince of Peace

He is worthy of our trust; brings everlasting remedies for all sorrows (Read Matthew 12:18-21) (*gt* 33)

All of Satan's violent agents will be removed; no one will need to be in fear of wicked ones again (Pr 2:22)

Put your complete trust in Jehovah and his prophetic Word (Pr 3:5, 6)

Hope of seeing loved ones come back from Sheol as death is swallowed in victory, all tears are wiped away (Isa 25:6-8; *w93* 11/15 6-7)

Find unending life and happiness, when fear will be gone forever (Ps 37:39, 40)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)



## THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NEAR

### *Note to the speaker:*

Explain the difference between the kingdom mentioned at Colossians 1:13 and that which is referred to at Revelation 11:15. Show how Bible prophecy is being fulfilled in our day, proving that full Kingdom rule over earth's affairs is near

### **'REPENT, FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NEAR'** (7 min.)

Your life depends on recognizing that Kingdom of God is near

Messianic Kingdom, a heavenly government headed by Jesus Christ, is an expression of God's sovereignty

Those who desire eternal life must be advocates of that Kingdom

Kingdom was theme of Messiah's ministry (Read Matthew 4:17)

At that time, how had 'the kingdom drawn near'?

Jesus, the heir to David's throne, was anointed as King at his baptism (Lu 1:32, 33; 3:21, 22)

Hence, he could tell Pharisees that the Kingdom (as represented by Christ) was in their midst (Lu 17:20, 21; *rs* 226)

Why did Jesus call upon the Jews to repent? (Mr 1:14, 15)

Repentance was required as to their action in relation to the Kingdom (2Pe 3:9; *w75* 12/15 750-1)

They needed to acknowledge God as their rightful Sovereign and his Son as King designate

Today, people need to repent of activities under Satan's sovereignty and to give full allegiance to God's Kingdom

But do we now have reason to believe that the 'kingdom is near'?

Yes, for Jesus gave thrilling prophecies signaling his return as reigning King

What events lead up to the Messianic Kingdom's complete rule over the earth?

### **JESUS RECEIVED A SPIRITUAL KINGDOM AT HIS RESURRECTION** (8 min.)

Christ first received a spiritual kingdom—"the kingdom of the Son of his [God's] love" (Read Colossians 1:13, 14)

Put to death by enemies, he was raised in spirit to be King of the new nation of spiritual Israelites (Eph 1:20-23; *w91* 8/1 11 pars. 11-13)

This "Israel of God" came into existence with outpouring of holy spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E. (Ga 6:16; Ac 2:1-4)

Those of this Israel were "transferred" into Jesus' spiritual kingdom (*it-2* 169; *rs* 232; *w81* 6/15 26-7)

At Pentecost, Jesus began reigning over spiritual Israel, the congregation of spirit-anointed Christians, not over the world of mankind

The total number of such spirit-begotten ones is to be 144,000 (Re 14:3)

While in the flesh, they engage in "the ministry of the word" as "ambassadors substituting for Christ" (Ac 6:4; 2Co 5:20)

Jesus' rule in 'the kingdom of the Son of God's love' will end when the last one of the 144,000 dies and joins Christ in heaven (*pe* 136)

They must serve faithfully under this spiritual kingdom until death in order to rule with Christ in the heavenly Messianic Kingdom (Re 2:10; 5:9, 10)

### **WORLD RULERSHIP OF "OUR LORD AND OF HIS CHRIST" BEGINS** (8 min.)

Time would come when Jesus would receive power as King of God's Kingdom

He would become ruler in "the kingdom of the world," ruling over all humankind on earth (*re* 171-2; read Revelation 11:15-18)

Jehovah, "our Lord," would then begin to exercise his great power to rule over the world of mankind in special sense

Jesus, "his Christ," would share this world rulership

Resurrected Jesus would sit at God's right hand until it was time to begin Kingdom rule amid his enemies (*ws* 22-3; read Psalm 2:1-6)

Major fulfillment of Psalm 2 has been taking place since the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 (*ws* 24-8)

Birth of male child, or Kingdom, then occurred (Re 12:1, 2, 5)

### **WHAT KINGDOM RULE MEANS FOR OPPOSERS AND FOR SUPPORTERS** (10 min.)

There can be no neutrality regarding Kingdom; we are either for the King Jesus Christ or against him (Lu 11:23)

Messianic Kingdom—the "stone" cut out of "mountain" symbolizing Jehovah's universal sovereignty—will soon crush Satan's world system (Da 2:34, 35, 44, 45; *go* 66-70)

Before that takes place, under satanic influence worldly rulers will try to wipe out Kingdom supporters (Re 12:17)

Jehovah will rescue Kingdom advocates; the King Jesus Christ will destroy their foes at Armageddon (Eze 38:18-22; *ws* 152-9)

Enemies of the Kingdom and of Kingdom witnesses will suffer inglorious defeat (Zec 14:12)

“Great crowd” of Kingdom supporters will survive and enter Millennium with prospect of eternal life (Re 7:9, 14, 17)

**“SIGN” PROVES KINGDOM RULE IS NEAR** (8 min.)

Events show that Christ is present in Kingdom power; thus the end of Satan’s rule is imminent

“Sign” of Jesus’ presence includes events beginning in 1914 (Read Matthew 24:3, 7)

Ride of apocalyptic horsemen is occurring (Re 6:1-8; *re* 89-99)

Grandest proof that Kingdom rule is near is the worldwide preaching work being done by Jehovah’s Witnesses (Mt 24:14)

This is “good news” of the Kingdom already established

Never in history has such Kingdom preaching been accomplished

**REMEMBER THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NEAR** (4 min.)

Jesus urged: “Keep on the watch” (Mt 24:42)

Are you watching? Can you read “the sign” aright?

Fulfillment of “the sign” shows that the Kingdom of God is indeed near—it has already begun ruling!

This means that the destruction of the old system is at hand

Live for the new world, not for the old world

Exert yourself to make your salvation sure (Lu 13:24; 2Pe 3:13-15)

Zealously share with others in proclaiming: The Kingdom of God is near!

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## GOD COMES FIRST IN SUCCESSFUL FAMILY LIFE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Stress that Jehovah, the Creator of the marriage arrangement, logically is the one families should consult for direction. Reason on how a successful family life can be achieved by following Bible principles

### **THE FAMILY IS AN ARRANGEMENT AUTHORIZED BY JEHOVAH** (8 min.)

Jehovah God originated marriage, performed first human wedding (Ge 2:22-24; *it-2* 340)

A basic purpose: reproduce members of human family (Ge 1:27, 28)

Childbearing required organizing of family circle

Formed also a permanent bond of union between man and woman

Closest of human relationships; would be mutually helpful to each mate, a source of great happiness (Mt 19:4-6)

Marriage was normal way of life among Hebrews; no word for “bachelor” in Hebrew Scriptures

Children viewed as blessing; through childbearing, Israel became great and populous nation

Marriage “honorable” among early Christians (Heb 13:4)

Preaching—not childbearing—main Christian commission

Yet, Jehovah showed continuing interest in family by providing counsel for Christian husbands, wives, and children

### **MUST PUT GOD FIRST IN FAMILY LIFE** (12 min.)

God interested in family life of worshipers today

Invites Christian husband and wife to make secure “threefold cord” by including him in their marriage (Ec 4:12)

Similarly interested in welfare of single-parent households (1Ti 5:5)

To receive God’s blessing, must put him first (Ps 127:1)

What putting God first in family means (*w81* 7/1 12-17)

Means being concerned about measuring up to God’s requirements for family members

Practicing kindness and unselfish love is among these requirements (Eph 4:32)

Husband: greater responsibility; should set example and work to encourage wife (Eph 5:28-32)

Many ways to show affection besides saying “I love you”

Express appreciation for wife’s work (Pr 31:28)

Place interests of wife ahead of your own (Php 2:4)

Seek to give, not take (Ac 20:35)

Wife: develop heartfelt submission (1Pe 3:1-6)

Be industrious, trustworthy (Pr 31:10-27)

Children: showing respect for and obedience to parents a divine requirement (Col 3:20)

Putting God first also means having warm, personal relationship with him, giving him pleasure, making his heart glad (Pr 27:11)

Includes gaining experience from God’s Word, keeping spiritual things first (Ps 19:7)

### **KEEPING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN** (10 min.)

Real communication helps families unitedly put God first

Means more than just talking (1Co 14:9; *fl* chap. 11)

Good husband ‘dwells with wife according to knowledge,’ using godly wisdom in exercise of headship (1Pe 3:7)

No family agrees on everything; must learn to accept differences, put up with minor weaknesses (Col 3:13)

Encourage children to be expressive; seek to understand their needs

If parents guard against stifling free expression, can learn much as to children’s needs (*fl* 149)

When communicating counsel and direction to children, make plain that standards are based on God’s Word (Ps 119:105)

Help child learn that greater responsibility goes with greater freedom; more responsibility shown, greater trust (Lu 12:48)

Even if child rebels, keep way open for return; love hopes for best (1Co 13:7)

### **COMMUNICATING WITH JEHOVAH GOD REGULARLY** (10 min.)

Regular family prayer helps keep God first in family; Christian husband takes the lead in this

Wife and children also need to pray for help and guidance

Following Jesus’ model, avoid repetition; let prayers fit occasion (Mt 6:9-13)

When is prayer appropriate?

Pray when in a provoked state (Eph 4:26, 27)

Prayer has healing effect as we seek to forgive others (Jas 5:16)

Pray at mealtimes and nightly before retiring

Heartfelt prayer reflects personal relationship with Jehovah

Mealtime: specific, brief; not rambling, incoherent

End of day: husband should recognize things that arose during day, cover points of concern

Proper subjects for prayer (*it-2* 668-70)

Anything that affects relationship with God (1Jo 5:14)

May ask for direction in maintaining balanced single life or in finding a mate

If married, can prayerfully consider question of having children or seek wisdom in rearing them

God promises to give needed insight (Ps 32:8)

When not sure what to pray for, God's spirit will help (Ro 8:26, 27; *it-2* 405, 670)

**KEEP GOD FIRST AS WHOLE FAMILY SHARES IN REGULAR SACRED SERVICE** (5 min.)

Rendering sacred service helps to fulfill family's present purpose: serving God in faithfulness

Means keeping busy in God's service, study, meeting preparation and participation

Husband should take lead; family more readily yields to his authority

Women who are single parents must also take lead

Those in divided homes should likewise strive to put God first

May result in uniting family (*yb93* 9; *w93* 8/15 6-7)

Praise goes to Jehovah, and blessings come to all of us when we put God first in family life

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## WHAT DOES THE HEALING OF THE NATIONS ACCOMPLISH?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Highlight our need for the Creator's loving provisions for spiritual and physical healing. Show why spiritual healing is of prime importance. Speak enthusiastically and optimistically about the lasting future results of God's great healing program

### **MANKIND IS GREATLY IN NEED OF HEALING** (5 min.)

Healing means restoring health, making sound (*it-1* 1055)

Because of inherited sin and imperfection, mankind is in dire need of both physical and spiritual healing (Ro 5:12)

Disease continues to take human lives

Sinful human society is also in spiritual darkness, alienated from God (Eph 4:17-19)

How will God provide for physical and spiritual healing?

### **GREATEST PHYSICIAN PROVIDES TWOFOLD HEALING** (7 min.)

Jehovah, the greatest Physician, put recuperative powers within the human body (*it-1* 1055)

Though God's human servants have inherited sin and imperfection, he sustains them in ill health (Ps 41:1-3)

Fact that God has also healed some physically in past shows he can do so in future

Restored Job's health after affliction by Satan (Job 42:10)

King Hezekiah was healed and his life prolonged (Isa 38:4, 5)

Jehovah now providing the more important spiritual healing for repentant ones

It restores strength, hearing, speech in a spiritual way (Isa 35:3-6)

We can avail ourselves of benefits of both kinds of healing

Considering what Bible says about physical and spiritual healing will strengthen our faith in God's great healing program

### **JESUS AND APOSTLES DID PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL HEALING** (10 min.)

Jesus Christ cured every sort of disease (Mt 9:35)

It was not the application of Jesus' own power or wisdom that healed the sick (*it-1* 1056)

Jesus did not use hypnotherapy, psychotherapy, or similar methods

He healed by the power of God's spirit (Lu 5:17)

Imagine joy of those cured and of their families (Lu 7:1-10)

Cures Jesus then brought about give us assurance of what he can do in future

Apostles were given authority to cure diseases (Mt 10:1)

Healings gave proof of divine backing, brought great happiness (Ac 3:1-9)

After Christianity was firmly established, such "gifts of healings" passed away (1Co 12:8, 9; 13:8)

When we see the ill or infirm, we may think that physical healing is very important

Of prime importance, however, was Jesus' spiritual healing of minds and hearts

He pitied crowds primarily "because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd" (Mt 9:35, 36)

Jews as a nation rejected Jesus and spiritual healing

Many people now are not conscious of spiritual need and do not see that Jesus' ransom has eternal benefit

May we highly esteem the ransom and spiritual healing

But what is being accomplished in the way of healing today?

### **WHAT PRESENT HEALING OF NATIONS IS ACCOMPLISHING** (6 min.)

Spiritual Israel is spiritually enlightened (1Pe 2:9)

Anointed remnant is spiritually healthy (Heb 12:12, 13)

"Great crowd" exercising faith in Jesus' ransom is being separated for survival into righteous new world

Jesus Christ leads them to waters of life (Re 7:9-17)

Thousands are making a dedication to God, being baptized (Cite statistics from current *Yearbook*)

You can be among those separated for survival of system's end

Take full advantage of divine provisions for spiritual healing

If you do, you can rejoice in present and future accomplishments of Jehovah's great healing program

### **ANTICIPATED SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GREAT HEALING PROGRAM** (12 min.)

Jehovah's great healing program depicted

Ezekiel foretold healing river of life flowing from Jehovah's house (Eze 47:1, 12; *kj* 395-8)

Those refusing to drink will die, but it brings life to those drinking of it  
Along river's banks are trees with fruit and leaves for healing of the nations

Note similar picture as we read Revelation 22:1, 2 (*re* 310-12)

"River of water of life" represents all blessings to mankind through Christ, who takes away sin of world (Joh 1:29)

"Trees of life" furnish healing leaves and fruit to provide needed spiritual and bodily cure

As part of Abraham's seed, 144,000 will share in extending benefits to mankind during Millennium (Ga 3:8, 29; Re 14:1)

Even now, as "big trees of righteousness," anointed remnant preach and thus offer mankind fruits of established Kingdom (Isa 61:1-3)

What are some other future blessings of God's healing program?

Jesus' physical cures foreshadowed his use of Messianic power to heal during Millennial Reign (*it*-1 1056)

No longer need doctors, as physical health is restored

Dead will be resurrected, judged by deeds then (Joh 5:28, 29)

All obedient ones will be brought to human perfection in Paradise (*w*91 12/15 12)

Abundant healthful food then assured (Ps 72:16; 85:12)

Rebellious will not enjoy these blessings, but you can be among righteous enjoying them forever (Eze 18:20, 30-32)

### **SHARE IN PRESENT WORK OF SPIRITUAL HEALING** (5 min.)

As a servant of Jehovah, you have grand privilege to tell others about God's great healing program

Through diligent Kingdom preaching, help them to receive spiritual healing now

Tell the honesthearted about the time near at hand when tears of sorrow will be wiped away (Re 21:3, 4)

Invite them to respond to invitation to partake of waters of life (Re 22:17)

You and those who listen can have prospect of peace, joy, and eternal life made possible by Jehovah's great healing program

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## HOW TO EXPRESS LOVE IN A LAWLESS WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

With warmth and feeling, help the audience to appreciate that love is the prime motive behind the actions of Jehovah and Jesus. Using practical examples, show how 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 can be applied, bringing rich blessings to those who express love

### **WORLD'S LAWLESSNESS DUE TO SELFISHNESS** (6 min.)

Lawlessness, largely due to selfishness, foretold for our day (Mt 24:12; 2Ti 3:1-5)

Crime is like a rising tide (*rs* 237; can add current examples)

Greed, materialism, immorality, racial prejudice, national bigotry exercise powerful influence

Selfishness is “seeking or concentrating on one’s own advantage, pleasure, or well-being without regard for others”—*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*

Clearly, selfishness is unloving; is also self-defeating

Materialists never have enough, are not happy

Dishonest ones pay for crime with bad conscience, maybe imprisonment

Sexually immoral often pay with broken home, disease

Regardless of seeming gains, selfish lawless ones have nothing because they do not have love (1Co 13:1-3)

God’s people should express love, but what does this require?

### **WHAT WE LEARN FROM LOVE EXPRESSED BY GOD AND CHRIST** (14 min.)

Love is the very opposite of selfishness (*it-2* 273-9)

In part, it is “unselfish loyal and benevolent concern for the good of another”—*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*

Bible highlights principled love; involves unselfish devotion to righteousness, active concern for lasting welfare of others

How Jehovah proves to be personification of love (1Jo 4:8)

God’s love evident in things created for our enjoyment

Food not tasteless but delicious; flowers colorful, not drab

Humans were created with ability to taste, see delightful sunsets, appreciate beauty in creation

Jehovah’s greatest manifestation of love was giving his Son for our sins (1Jo 4:10)

God really cares for us (1Pe 5:6, 7)

This is evident in that Jehovah is merciful, his love unailing (Ps 130:3; Ro 8:38, 39)

Jesus Christ too has perfect love

Loved his followers “to the end” (Joh 13:1)

Even when tired, cared for others’ spiritual needs (Joh 4:6-10)

Had pity, cured sick, raised dead (Mt 14:14; Joh 11:30-44)

Surrendered his life for his followers (Joh 10:15)

We should want to imitate God and Christ in expressing love (*w94* 10/1 13)

Should show love for God and others (Mt 22:36-39)

Love among the brothers is identifying mark of Christians (Joh 13:34, 35)

So in what specific ways can we express love?

### **HOW WE CAN EXPRESS LOVE IN THIS LAWLESS WORLD** (20 min.)

(For additional information, please see *w93* 10/15 17-22; *w92* 7/15 28-31; *w85* 3/15 21-3; *fl* 70-80)

Paul shows us how to express love (Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

*Love is long-suffering and kind*

Prompts patient forbearance in unfavorable circumstances

Expressed by helpful deeds at home, toward brothers, in ministry

*Love is not jealous*

Are we resentful if another gets service privilege instead of us?

Do we envy those having more of this world’s goods?

Love will keep us from succumbing to resentment and envy

*It does not brag, does not get puffed up*

Do we boast about our accomplishments, downgrade others?

Love will help us to avoid sinful pride (Pr 21:4)

*Does not behave indecently*

Sexual sins are indecent, as is vulgar speech

If we love God and our neighbor, we will not ‘turn Jehovah’s undeserved kindness into an excuse for loose conduct’ (Jude 4)

Love for God and others makes us speak what is good (Eph 4:29)

Cleanliness of body and home will not be neglected if we are decent and loving

*Does not look for its own interests*

Concern for young, old, infirm, and others is one of the strongest motivating factors in love (1Co 10:24)

Love keeps us from being self-centered, pushing ahead of others, working only “best territory”

*Does not become provoked*

Elders, react lovingly if others are slow to respond to counsel, to turn in reports, are forgetful (Jas 1:19)

None of us should become offended by what others say or do

*It does not keep account of the injury*

Since we need forgiveness, must forgive others (Mt 6:12)

Love will prevent us from harboring grudges (Le 19:18)

*It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth*

We should not enjoy unclean entertainment, books, TV, movies

Instead, rejoice in and yield to influence of Bible truth

*It bears [is covering] all things (“Kingdom Interlinear”)*

Like watertight roof, love covers imperfections (Pr 17:9)

It helps us to refrain from talking about weaknesses of others

*Believes all things*

Love is not gullible but trusting, does not impute bad motives

Trusts in Jehovah God, his Word, and his organization

*Hopes all things*

Love is positive, cheerful, forward-looking

It moves us to pray and work for the best in any situation

Love hopes in all of Jehovah’s promises

*Endures all things*

Love can endure anything Satan does to test our devotion to God

*Love never fails*

Way of love will never end or be lacking (w93 10/15 20)

New knowledge may change what is old, hope is fulfilled, but love remains in fullness; continues to be strengthened

Always display love actively (Col 3:13, 14)

It is a strong bond that might be likened to the powerful bonding agent of the acorn barnacle (w85 3/15 21)

As clothing is held together by many stitches, so may our daily words and deeds prove that we are clothed with love (fl 80)

### **LOVE BRINGS REWARDS NOW AND IN THE FUTURE (5 min.)**

Present blessings experienced by those who express love

Loving generosity brings happiness (Lu 6:38)

By love we attract others to Jehovah’s worship (w92 2/15 18)

If we are loving, can now have peace of mind, self-respect, better family life

Future blessings await those who express love now

God will repay us for showing love to others (Pr 19:17)

Jehovah will not forget love we show for his name (Heb 6:10)

Everlasting life is what Jehovah offers to those who continue to express love in this lawless world

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)



## HOW CAN YOUTHS COPE WITH TODAY'S CRISIS?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Acknowledging the challenges that youths face, appeal to parents in the audience to fulfill their responsibility to educate their children in a godly way. Show the youths present how to cope with life in this system of things, and stress the benefits of living according to God's standards

### **TODAY'S YOUTHS FACE A TIME OF CRISIS—FUTURE IN JEOPARDY** (4 min.)

We live in a crucial time, comparable to turning point for better or worse of very sick patient (2Ki 20:1, 2)

Crisis reflected by youths' use of drugs, suicides, sexual immorality, sexually transmitted diseases, violence (Cite current statistics or brief examples; see *Index* under "Youths")

What will you do—make a turn for the better or the worse?

Even if not young, how do you think youths can ensure happy future?

### **WHY THIS CRISIS EXISTS TODAY** (10 min.)

Breakdown of family life a major factor in the crisis

Many parents fail to spend much time with children (g93 5/22 16-17)

"A recent study by the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research found that working mothers spend an average of 11 minutes daily of quality time (defined as exclusive playing or teaching) with their kids during weekdays and about 30 minutes per day on the weekends. Fathers spend about 8 minutes of quality time with their kids on weekdays and 14 minutes on weekends. Nonworking mothers spend 13 minutes per day of quality time with their children" (*U.S. News & World Report*, October 27, 1986)

Parents may lack strong moral convictions, provide little discipline or sound direction (1Co 14:8)

Normal childhood has often been lost because of parents' spoiling children (g85 7/22 28)

Pampering youths leads to bad consequences (Pr 29:21; g87 2/8 20)

Much of today's education and environment lacks morality, ethics

Many equate success with material possessions or social position

Sexual immorality, homosexuality, and so forth, presented as acceptable

Prominent worldly figures flaunt or promote immorality, show disrespect for authority and traditional standards of living

Influence of television and music on youth a big factor in today's crisis

Much of it glamorizes violence, sex, indifference to suffering

In many lands, by time a youth reaches age of 18, he or she has watched thousands of murders, rapes, other crimes

This tends to desensitize and to brutalize today's youth

Poverty, hopelessness, desperation are also contributing factors

The fundamental reasons for the crisis are given in the Bible

A major reason is that we are in the last days, time of end (Mt 24:3-8)

Paul foretold how last days would affect people, including youth (2Ti 3:1-5)

Mentions key reason for crisis: adults, youths proving false to power of godly devotion because of a lack of fear of Jehovah

True godly devotion results in obedience to God; proving false to its power results in disobedience (Tit 1:16)

Young or old, do you agree these factors produce today's crisis?

Granting that the crisis exists, what can you do about it?

### **PARENTAL EXAMPLE AND TRAINING WILL HELP YOUTHS COPE** (12 min.)

To be effective, parental example must be consistent with Christian teachings

Parents should demonstrate to children that love for God is foremost in lives (De 6:5, 6; Mt 22:37, 38)

To do this, parents should be willing to submit to God's authority and Bible standards

As example, seek God's Kingdom and righteousness first (Mt 6:33)

Parents need to let children see the qualities in them that Timothy saw in his mother and grandmother (2Ti 1:5; 3:14)

It takes effort for parents to buy out time to spend with children

More is required than simply being around them; must communicate or effectively interact with them

Regular listening, talking, playing time vital, providing opportunities for communication (De 6:7)

Strive to develop an interesting, enjoyable study program (w92 10/15 16-18)

Vital that time be spent in wholesome recreation that children enjoy

The goal should be mental-regulating of children, putting mind of Jehovah in them (Eph 6:4)

Means more than just imparting information; need to train child's will and disposition in right ways (*w93* 5/15 18-19)

Truly loving parents will be more concerned about inculcating godly devotion than about children's secular education and material prosperity (Joh 17:3)

**YOUTHS, COPE WITH CRISIS BY PRACTICING GODLY DEVOTION** (15 min.)

To cope successfully, vital to recognize your enemy and resist his efforts

Satan is chief enemy, whole world in his power (1Jo 5:19)

Devil's purpose is to turn you away from Jehovah or to get you to do things that will bring His disapproval

Do not blame your parents for wicked world into which you both were born

Majority of mankind is in disapproved state (Mt 7:13, 14)

Grim harvest is now being reaped (Ga 6:7; refer to statistics given earlier)

You need to resist Satan by practicing godly devotion

Have moral fiber to flee from sexual immorality (1Co 6:18)

Say NO to improper use of drugs as Jesus did (Mr 15:23; *g85* 3/8 16-18)

Reap different harvest—rich rewards—by taking the initiative in doing God's will (1Jo 2:17)

Jehovah offers freedom and purposeful, happy life now for those who serve him unselfishly (Joh 8:32)

Freedom from religious bondage, worldly philosophies, and slavery to one's own fleshly desires (Ro 6:16; 8:5, 6)

Enjoy life of purpose in Jehovah's service (Ro 12:1, 2)

Others serve him faithfully; so can you (1Pe 5:9, 10; cite local examples or use experiences from *w91* 7/15 23-6)

Jehovah's worldwide congregation is composed of hundreds of thousands of zealous youths, like "dewdrops" (Ps 110:3)

**WONDERFUL FUTURE AWAITS YOUTHS WHO DISPLAY GODLY DEVOTION** (4 min.)

Have faith in Jehovah; trust his devoted people

God has promised everlasting life; he cannot lie (Tit 1:1, 2)

Have confidence in and work along with his visible organization

Support meetings, seek counsel of elders (2Ti 2:22)

Preach Kingdom message, which makes God's heart glad (Pr 27:11)

Wonderful, peaceful future awaits upright youths (Ps 37:37)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## APPRECIATING MARVELS OF GOD'S CREATION

### *Note to the speaker:*

Reason with the audience on how the marvels of creation reveal an intelligent Creator and his qualities. Help the audience to appreciate man's insignificance and how he can come to know the Creator's loving purpose

### **MARVELS OF CREATION—AN APPROPRIATE TOPIC FOR BIBLE TALK** (4 min.)

The evolution-creation controversy is still a vital issue

Many reject belief in God and act accordingly (Ps 10:4; 14:1)

Schoolbooks and popular magazines present evolution as fact

Bible writers and Bible characters commented on issue of creation, so this topic is appropriate one for Bible talk today

Creation's marvels reflect God's qualities (Ps 19:1)

The more we know of physical world, the more we are impressed

### **MARVELS OF CREATION REFLECT AN INTELLIGENT CREATOR** (15 min.)

Universe abounds with galaxies of awesome size, energy (*ce* 116-20)

Even though we may not be astronomers, know about galaxies

Organization of universe requires Organizer; laws require Lawmaker (*ce* 122-4; *sh* 336-9; Isa 40:26; 1Co 15:41)

In solar system, sun is a created wonder benefiting us all

Though 93 million miles away, it provides light, heat, energy

Sun is but a candle compared to other stars, yet is right for us

Truly wise persons seek to identify the universe's Creator and Organizer (Heb 3:4; Ge 1:1; Isa 42:5; *ce* 125-7)

The earth God created not only is "a rare, beautiful jewel in space" but is only planet where life is found, and that in abundance (Ps 104:24-27; *ce* 129-30)

Earth is central aspect of universe for us, and it clearly was designed for life by a Creator (*sh* 337)

It is right distance from sun, has interesting and beneficial seasons, vital water and atmosphere, soil that can produce tasty food (Eze 34:26, 27; *ce* 131-41)

"The more we explore the black expanses of space, the more we recognize that our own earth is an exceptional planet—the Garden of Eden of the solar system. There is no other piece of matter within a hundred billion miles that is so richly endowed with variety and beauty . . . A few decades ago the imagination of man endowed the planet Mars with intelligent beings . . . Now the truth is known. If any life exists there, it is microscopic . . . suddenly we are aware that the earth is a very special place. In some ways it may even be unique in the universe"—*The Blue Planet*, by Louise B. Young, (1983) pp. 3-4

Do we see such aspects as evidence of a Creator? (*ce* 151)

Are we moved to consider what the Creator's qualities are and what his will for us is?

### **CREATION AROUND US REFLECTS THE CREATOR'S QUALITIES** (15 min.)

We need to learn more from creation than facts that may awe us; we should learn what creation reveals about the Creator

His principal attributes are reflected in his works

Creation manifests his *power*—*Jeremiah 10:12*

This is apparent in fusion power of stars and our sun, which pour out heat and light because of Creator's dynamic energy (Isa 40:26)

Here on earth there is tremendous power manifested in hurricanes, earthquakes, roots of plants that can split rocks

Even creatures can manifest power, such as elephants and whales

Creation evidences *justice*—*Deuteronomy 32:4*

Most humans reflect a sense of justice; even many children do

Even forms of life not having true sense of justice may exchange useful services

Example: bee gets nectar from a flower but in return pollinates it (*ce* 145-6)

Around us we see manifestations of God's *wisdom*—*Proverbs 2:6*

Is dramatically reflected in creatures made "instinctively wise" (Pr 30:24; *ce* 160-7; illustrate with instinctive ways in migrations or nest building)

Wisdom evident, too, in our bodies, such as human brain (*ce* 168-78; illustrate brain's capacity and compare it with computers)

We have reason to laud our wise Creator

Beyond power, justice, and wisdom, creation attests to God's *love*—*1 John 4:8*

We can discern his love in the God-given instincts of animals and birds in rearing and protecting their young

The bird sits on its nest for weeks, and when the young hatch, both male and female work tirelessly to feed them

**CREATION CAN TEACH US IMPORTANT LESSONS** (6 min.)

Job pointed to creation as source of information (Job 12:7-10)

Jehovah used his creations to teach Job awareness of his limitations and need for humility (Job 38:1-42:6)

David saw from creation man's insignificance and his fear-inspiring design (Ps 8:3, 4; 139:13-16)

Bible provides other lessons that we can learn from creation

In ants Solomon saw a lesson of industriousness (Pr 6:6-11)

From Jehovah's care of birds and flowers we can learn to replace material anxieties with faith in God as provider (Mt 6:26-30)

The human body provides a lesson in the unity present among members of Christ's congregation (1Co 12:12-18)

Greatest lesson creation teaches us: God is all-powerful, all-wise, always just, always loving, one who gave us life (Ps 36:9)

Those who refuse to see this reflected in creation and gratefully worship him are inexcusable in his eyes (Ro 1:20, 21, 28)

**DO YOU SHOW APPRECIATION FOR JEHOVAH'S CREATION?** (5 min.)

If you appreciate God's creation, how will you show it? To whom will you express it?

Should be to Creator of universe (Ge 1:1; Re 4:11; 10:6)

If evolutionists feel any appreciation for these marvels, will they thank "chance" or "the god of Good Luck"? (Isa 65:11)

Jehovah's purpose in creating the earth and its marvels was for man to live on it, care for it, enjoy it, and appreciatively praise him for it (Ge 1:28; 2:15; Isa 45:18; Ps 100)

If the heavens, without speech, voice, or words, praise Him, how much more so should those who have tongues and powers of speech!

God provided lower creatures with instinctive wisdom to guide them, but he gave people the Bible as a primary guide

As free moral agents, we can meet God's requirements for eternal life or we can allow ourselves to be guided by Satan's deceptions, misled into a course resulting in unending death

So how long will you have the privilege of living so as to enjoy Jehovah's marvels of creation? The choice is yours (De 30:19, 20; Jos 24:15; Joh 17:3)

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## HOW TO PROTECT OURSELVES FROM SATAN'S SNARES

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to see the reality of Satan the Devil and his schemes, which should not be taken lightly. Highlight the practical ways in which we can protect ourselves and the rewards for doing so

### **SATAN REAL PERSON, NOT JUST EVIL PRINCIPLE** (4 min.)

Popular belief: Satan not a real person (*w92 12/1 32*)

A snare of Satan to keep control of mankind

Actually, whole world under his control (*1Jo 5:19*)

Bible a source of reliable information regarding Satan

Account of Job 1, 2 shows Satan a real person

Temptation of Jesus also proves Devil is real (*Mt 4:1-11; w88 9/1 13-14*)

### **SATAN'S MOTIVE AND PURPOSES** (6 min.)

Created perfect, but let ambition take over (*Jas 1:14, 15*)

Determined to prove self superior to Jehovah by turning God's intelligent creatures away from Him (*dg 13-14*)

Challenged rightfulness of God's sovereignty (*Ge 3:1-5*)

Motivated by pride (*1Ti 3:6*)

His challenge poses test to all intelligent creatures as to loyalty to Jehovah (*Job 1:9-11; 2:4, 5*)

Why we should be watchful regarding Satan

So that he does not destroy us (*1Pe 5:8*)

To uphold Jehovah's sovereignty, make his heart glad (*Pr 27:11*)

Our vigilance brings reward of everlasting life

### **SNARES THAT SATAN USES** (10 min.)

In these critical last days, Satan misleads many through love of pleasure (*2Ti 3:1, 4*)

Desire of the eyes, desire of the flesh (*1Jo 2:16; w86 5/1 11-12*)

Debased popular music, demoralizing TV and movies

Arouses nationalistic, even religious, fervor in spectator sports

Appeals to pride; caused Eve's downfall (*Ge 3:5, 6*)

Cain, Nimrod victims of pride (*Ge 4:3-8; 10:8, 9*)

Pride of race one of Satan's snares (*g84 11/8 4-5*)

"Man of lawlessness" succumbed to pride (*2Th 2:3, 4*)

Uses power of sexual attraction

Seduced angels (*Ge 6:2; Jude 6*)

Israelites also seduced by women of Moab (*Nu 25:1*)

World's news media, soap operas serve Satan's purpose

Of those disfellowshipped each year, great majority because of sexual immorality

Tobacco, drug addiction are unclean snares (*2Co 7:1*)

False religion also snare of Satan (*1Co 10:20*)

Occultism and curiosity about it another snare (*Isa 8:19, 20*)

Apostates also used by Satan

They capitalize on minor matters and personal grievances (*Mt 24:48-51*)

Fear of man another of Satan's snares (*Pr 29:25*)

### **HOW TO PROTECT OURSELVES FROM SATAN'S SNARES** (20 min.)

Recognize need for protection from Deceiver (*2Co 11:3*)

To protect means to cover, shield, safeguard against harm

Resist Satan at all times (*Jas 4:7*)

Issues raised by Devil must constantly be kept in mind (*rs 363-4*)

Bad things should be abhorred, no matter how pleasurable they may seem to be (*Ps 97:10; 1Co 14:20*)

Jesus set example (*Heb 1:9*)

Spiritual armor must always be worn (*Eph 6:11-18; w92 5/15 21-3*)

*Loins girded about with truth*

Keeping mind occupied with God's truth will help us to resolve questions, will protect us

*Breastplate of righteousness*

Must safeguard heart, have pure motives (*Pr 4:23*)

Jesus warned against our heart's becoming weighed down so that we do not put Kingdom interests first (Lu 21:34, 35)

*Feet shod with good news of peace*

Be patient, tactful in field ministry to overcome opposition Satan stirs up (Lu 10:5, 6)

*Large shield of faith*

Develop this protective armor by Bible study and meditation, association with fellow worshipers

Ridicule, slander, bitter words, sarcasm, falsehood are all quenched by this large shield

Enliven own faith by helping others (Jas 2:26)

*Helmet of salvation*

Hope of salvation is like protective headgear (1Th 5:8)

Strengthen this hope by telling others about it

*Sword of the spirit*

Need to become better acquainted with Bible to expose Satan's crafty acts, false teachings; must use it deftly

Prayer also an aid in protecting selves from Satan's snares

Should include petition, supplication, thanksgiving, praise (Php 4:6, 7)

Fruitage of spirit is strong defense against Satan and works of flesh (Read Galatians 5:19-23)

Love for Jehovah and fellow believers allows no room for works of flesh (1Co 13:4-8)

Mildness mitigates anger, prevents strife (Pr 15:1)

Self-control helps prevent succumbing to works of flesh

Must pummel our body to keep it morally clean (1Co 9:27)

Feeding mind on good things leaves no room for bad thoughts (Php 4:8)

**REWARDS FOR PROTECTING OURSELVES FROM SATAN'S SNARES** (5 min.)

Good conscience because of right conduct (1Pe 3:16)

Joy of contributing to vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty

We provide God with an answer for his Taunter (Pr 27:11)

Keeping our integrity also encourages others to be faithful (Php 1:12-14)

Eternal life in new system of things another grand reward

Anointed Christians will rule as heavenly kings (Re 5:10)

"Great crowd" will survive Armageddon and share in making earth a paradise (Re 7:9-14)

Such rewards can be ours only if we keep up our guard and protect ourselves from Satan's snares (Mt 24:13)

(See also *w88* 9/1 13-18; *w84* 10/15 11-20; *rs* 361-6)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)

## CHOOSE YOUR ASSOCIATES WISELY!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Explain why it is wise to be selective regarding whom we associate with. Contrast the effects of good associates and of bad ones, and encourage all to associate with those who have God's approval

### **ASSOCIATES ARE POWERFUL INFLUENCES** (8 min.)

Associates can influence us for good or bad (Read Proverbs 13:20)

Hebrew word for "stupid" implies being insensible to moral truth

"Wise persons" act with sensibleness and discretion, use sound judgment and avoid dangers

David appreciated the value of good associates (Ps 64:2; 142:7)

He desired Jehovah's friendship, realizing it was not possible if he associated with wicked men (Consider pertinent verses of Psalm 26 and stress their practical value)

David benefited from friendship of Jonathan, some 30 years his senior (1Sa 18:1-4; 23:16-18; w89 1/1 24-5)

Association with wrongdoers has led some to spiritual ruin (1Co 15:33)

Has resulted in immoral conduct and addiction to alcohol, drugs (w93 8/1 19; yp 65-7; g89 4/22 12-14)

Heeding the Bible's straightforward counsel and clear direction on the matter of association will safeguard us from being misled

### **APPRECIATE NEED TO HAVE SPIRITUAL COMPANIONS** (15 min.)

Paul tells of rich rewards from gathering together (Heb 10:23-25)

Even Jehovah, complete in himself, saw value of companionship with others

Surrounded himself with myriads of spirit sons, who received blessings from his association (Job 38:4-7; Da 7:10)

Unfaithful angels who abandoned association with Jehovah lost valuable benefits and future prospects (2Pe 2:4)

True spiritual companionship a protection against depression, doubts, and falling prey to Satan

Satan seeks to devour all sheeplike ones (1Pe 5:8, 9)

Tries to get them isolated from the congregation and involved in worldly pursuits (wt 72-5)

Isolation can result in spiritual sickness, apostasy, and death (Pr 18:1; w54 9/15 568)

Thus, "do not stay away from the meetings" (Heb 10:25, *The Jerusalem Bible*)

Choose exemplary associates among God's people (2Ti 2:20, 21; w93 4/15 15)

Select those who will exert wholesome, uplifting influence on us and our decisions

Work to develop desirable qualities in ourselves so we will be valued associates of others

Be especially guided by Bible principles in choosing marriage mate (w88 11/1 15-16)

Shun developing any romantic interest in one 'not in the Lord' (1Co 7:39)

Consider as a possible associate for life only one who has demonstrated faithfulness and spiritual qualifications

Serious decision, since marriage mates will have lifelong influence on each other

### **AVOID ASSOCIATION WITH WRONGDOERS** (14 min.)

Bible's counsel clearly warns against the bad influence of wrongdoers (Ex 23:2; 1Co 5:6; 2Pe 2:2)

Youths and adults alike need to be selective in choosing companions

Avoid unnecessary association with worldlings (Joh 15:19; 17:14; 1Co 5:9-11)

These may be considered "good" persons, but they have not shown themselves to be "wise persons" who fear Jehovah

Youths wisely avoid association with unbelievers at school proms, in extracurricular activities, and on other occasions (sj 22-5)

Adults similarly follow Christian principles when invited to class reunions, office parties, or other social functions

We must also carefully select reading material, movies, television programs, and so forth (Eph 5:3, 4; Col 3:5-10; yp 283-8)

Identifying with soap opera characters who depict unclean conduct will corrupt good thinking (w82 12/1 3-7)

Apostate literature is aimed at 'corrupting away' our minds and calls for special wariness (2Co 11:3, 4)

Foolhardy to expose ourselves to association with such ones through their literature (2Co 11:13-15; Tit 3:9, 10)

Such literature is poisonous and designed to deceive (1Jo 2:19; 2Jo 8-11; w94 7/1 11-13; w86 3/15 12-14)

Fill lives with godly influences (Pr 4:23; Php 4:8, 9)

### **WALK WITH JEHOVAH AND ASSOCIATE WITH HIS PEOPLE** (8 min.)

Faithful servants of Jehovah have continually sought his association (Pr 3:32; Mic 4:5)

Joseph kept Jehovah before him constantly, resulting in moral protection (Ge 39:9)

Moses was guided by “the One who is invisible” (Heb 11:27)  
Placing Jehovah at his right hand kept David from tottering (Ps 16:8)  
Walking with Jehovah brings many benefits (Php 4:6, 7; *w85* 9/1 5-7)  
Must make appointment to ‘walk with God’ (Am 3:3)  
Develop a close relationship with him (Jas 4:7, 8)  
Wholesome human fellowship provided in Jehovah’s clean organization  
Here we find others wholly devoted to God and producing fruitage of his spirit (Ps 122:1; 1Co 16:17, 18; *w92* 9/15 26; *w89* 6/15 20)  
Do we regularly attend all meetings, assemblies, and conventions with God’s loyal ones? (Ps 119:63)  
Can “widen out” in our association before and after meetings (2Co 6:11-13; *wt* 149-50)  
Our faithful brothers also need to be built up (1Th 5:11)  
Lovingly help them to maintain active association at meetings and in field service  
Like David’s friendship with Jonathan, we can develop similar friendship within the Christian congregation (2Sa 1:26)  
Those whose expressions truly incite us “to love and fine works” are loyal friends (Heb 10:24; Lu 6:45)  
With everlasting life in view, choose your associates wisely!  
(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read)



## HOW TO CONQUER EVIL WITH GOOD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize the wisdom and practicality of conquering evil with good. Show that by using good judgment, we can often avert evil, or at least cope with bad situations

### **ALL OF US ARE AFFECTED BY EVIL** (4 min.)

Evil is anything that results in pain, sorrow, or distress (*it-1 772*)

Many experience evil in form of poor health, accidents, natural disasters, disappointments, injustices, losses of various kinds, hurtful talk, and thoughtless actions of others

Can result in immense suffering, physically and emotionally

When we experience evil, human tendency is to become resentful or blame others, even God

Some retaliate, seeking vengeance, often making matters worse

However, Bible shows it is possible to conquer evil with good (Read Romans 12:21)

Before learning how we can do so, will discuss how evil came about in the first place

### **THE ORIGIN OF EVIL** (10 min.)

After creating the first human pair, “God saw everything he had made and, look! it was very good” (Ge 1:31)

Everything was designed to bring eternal good to mankind

Tree of knowledge of good and bad reminded Adam and Eve of God’s right to determine standards of conduct (Ge 2:16, 17)

If they were obedient, no harm or evil would come to them or offspring

Devil deceived Eve, and then both Adam and his wife disobeyed Jehovah

Thus they allowed themselves to be conquered by evil

As a result, their descendants were left with a legacy of sin and death (Ro 5:12)

Of course, Satan not directly responsible for every incident of evil that befalls mankind

Time and unforeseen occurrence, imperfection, and poor judgment can bring evil results (Ps 51:5; Pr 11:27; Ec 9:11)

Nevertheless, Satan’s influence is clearly one of the reasons why wickedness prevails today as never before

Many are “without love of goodness”—proof that we are living in “the last days” (2Ti 3:1, 3)

Great tribulation is thus imminent; God will intervene to remove wickedness from earth by destroying wicked!

Far from being morally bad, great tribulation will clear the way for ‘new heavens and new earth in which righteousness is to dwell’ (2Pe 3:7, 13)

### **CONQUERING EVIL WITH GOOD** (28 min.)

In meantime must cope with much evil

Evil things, such as crime or accidents, can often be anticipated and avoided or at least be made less serious, by careful forethought (Pr 22:3; *w95 8/15 3-4*)

Often, though, cannot avoid evil; must try to conquer with good

Does not necessarily mean passively enduring mistreatment

Goodness is a positive quality that expresses itself in beneficial acts (*it-1 986*)

Let us now examine specific situations in which we can conquer evil with good [Note to speaker: Develop according to local needs]

#### *Persecution* (2Ti 3:12)

*Conquer* by refusing to compromise and by enduring with joy for the sake of the good news (Ac 5:27-29, 40-42; 1Pe 4:12-14)

By doing good or exercising kindness, may even soften persecutors (Mt 5:44; Ro 12:17-21; *it-1 1051*)

[Relate experience; *yb90 64* or other appropriate published example]

#### *Death of a loved one*

Strong, confusing emotions can arise following the death of a loved one

Grieving is normal, even beneficial (Joh 11:33-35)

However, prolonged grief can be damaging, leading to serious depression (*we 7*)

Can gradually “conquer” overwhelmingly negative emotions by applying practical Scriptural advice (*we 14-19*)

Complete trust in God and hope in his sure promises can also help ones recover (*we 26-31*)

By doing good for others, we avoid ‘isolating ourselves’ and we taste the joy that comes from giving (Pr 18:1; Ac 20:35)

*When others offend us*

Thoughtless words or actions of others can hurt (Pr 12:18)

*Can conquer* bad feelings toward others by forgiving outright or by settling differences quickly and in spirit of love (Eph 4:26, 32; Col 3:12-14)

Conquering evil with good can also include making changes in our own personality so as not to harm ourselves or others

*Hurtful speech and attitudes*

Anger, hatred, slander, and lying disturb peace and unity of congregation (Ga 5:15; Eph 4:31)

By continuing to progress in putting on new personality, one can *conquer* hurtful speech and attitudes with wholesome thinking and speech (Col 3:8-10)

*Misuse of alcohol*

Immoderate use of alcohol can pose both physical and moral dangers (Pr 23:20, 21, 29-35; *it-1* 656)

By overindulging, we bring evil upon ourselves

*Conquer* by moderation or by abstinence

Moderate drinking is possible for many who rely on Jehovah and exercise self-control

Those who have developed a serious dependency upon alcohol need to put forth strenuous efforts to break free of addiction (g92 5/22 6-7)

*Bad associations*

Our emotions and conduct are greatly affected by those we choose as associates (Pr 22:24, 25; 1Co 15:33)

Choosing to mingle with those who are not servants of God can bring calamity (Ge 34:1-3; *w85* 6/15 31; *rs* 189)

*Conquer* by selecting upbuilding associates within congregation

*Love of money*

The love of money can cause one to forget Bible principles (Pr 28:20; 1Ti 6:9, 10)

Could lead one to adopt dishonest business practices or even exploit relationship with brothers for financial gain

Christian *conquers* such 'evils' by fulfilling obligations and avoiding sharp practices (Pr 21:6; Mt 5:37)

Conquers, too, by being content with necessities (Mt 6:33, 34; Heb 13:5)

**REWARDS OF CONQUERING EVIL WITH GOOD (3 min.)**

Brings greater happiness and contentment in life now

We can have satisfaction of knowing we did right thing and are pleasing to God (1Pe 3:10-17)

By conquering evil with good, we glorify God

Evildoers may be moved by our upright example (1Pe 2:12)

Ultimately, those who conquer evil with good will be rewarded with everlasting life and happiness (Ps 37:27)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## LOOKING AT YOUTHS FROM JEHOVAH'S STANDPOINT

### *Note to the speaker:*

Kindly help adults to see youths as Jehovah does and to deal with them accordingly. Warmly encourage youths to appreciate Jehovah's love for them and to respond to it by pursuing theocratic goals

### **JEHOVAH SHOWS LOVING CONCERN FOR YOUTHS** (8 min.)

Genuine Christians are not ignorant of Jehovah's view of youths

He is deeply concerned about the welfare of young ones (Ps 94:6; Isa 1:23)

God's Word provides loving and necessary counsel to both youths and parents and sets forth their respective duties and responsibilities; it can make inexperienced ones wise (Ps 19:7)

There are hundreds of references in the Bible to infants, children, boys, girls, and youths

From these references we learn that Jehovah loves children (Ps 127:3-5)

He has taken measures to care for, educate, and protect them; he has a place for them in his divine arrangement

Jehovah established the family, making provisions for protection, nourishment, and development of humankind from conception onward (Eph 3:14, 15)

*Training and care* by loving, godly parents (Eph 6:4)

*Education* through family arrangement and the congregation (De 6:6-9; 31:12; *it-1* 435)

*Laws* to protect children from abuse (Ex 22:22-24)

### **CHRISTIANS IMITATE JEHOVAH'S VIEW OF YOUNG ONES** (10 min.)

Jesus showed genuine interest in young ones (Mt 19:14)

Godly parents, especially fathers, are to train their children in Jehovah's ways

They should avoid exasperating, or irritating, their children (Eph 6:4; Col 3:21)

Bible principles should guide parents when administering discipline to their children (Consider key points from *g92* 9/8 26-7)

Mature Christians do not look down on youths; rather, the congregation views faithful youths as examples worthy of imitation (1Ti 4:12)

All Christians, including youths, should be treated with respect and dignity

Jehovah values their worship (Ps 110:3)

### **YOUTHS WHO ENJOYED JEHOVAH'S APPROVAL** (9 min.)

Youths have marvelous potential but need to grow, to learn, and to be trained in order to fulfill it (Ps 71:17)

Encouraging examples of faithful youths in Bible times [Highlight how the following youths served Jehovah from youth onward, and specify qualities that endeared them to God]

*Joseph*: Received prophetic dreams from God while still a teenager (Ge 37:2, 5)

He loved righteousness and rejected immorality (Ge 39:7-9)

*Jephthah's daughter*: Devoted and obedient, willing to forsake normal life of Israelite woman (*it-2* 27-8)

*David*: Jehovah's spirit "began to be operative" upon him while he was still "a boy" (1Sa 16:11-13; 17:33)

*Josiah*: King of Judah when eight years old; he respected God's Word and wholeheartedly promoted true worship (*it-2* 117-18)

*Daniel*: Taken to Babylon likely as a teenager, he remained steadfast, loyal, uncompromising (Da 1:8; *it-1* 576)

### **ADMONITION FROM OUR HEAVENLY FATHER, WHO CARES FOR THE YOUNG** (14 min.)

As a loving Father, Jehovah appeals to us and is deeply concerned about our well-being (Pr 4:20-27)

He is fully aware of the bad inclination of heart that all of us must contend with from youth onward (Ge 8:21)

God understands young ones and knows all about the pressures they face from adults, older youths, and peers

He provides loving counsel and beneficial examples to follow

Samuel, though just a boy, developed personal relationship with God and did not allow the disrespectful and immoral conduct of Eli's sons to squeeze him into their mold (1Sa 2:11-26)

Be quick to "flee from the desires incidental to youth" (2Ti 2:22)

Included are immoral sexual inclinations and unrestrained, obsessive pursuit of pleasures, so common today

Resolve in your heart not to pollute yourself with any form of uncleanness (Da 1:8)

Vital to appreciate that all of us, including youths, are accountable to God (Ec 11:9; Ro 14:12)

Involves obedience and respect due parents (Eph 6:1-3)

Youths brought up in the world but now in the truth must continue to resist returning to past ungodly conduct, drugs, immorality

Do not be misled by the attractions of this world or its thinking; they are *temporary* and *dangerous* (1Jo 2:15-17)

Seek to be balanced in all that you do, including entertainment (*w92 8/15 16*)

Develop wholesome interests and beneficial hobbies; avoid entertainment that promotes a rebellious spirit and unclean practices (Ps 101:3; *w92 10/15 16*)

Make your advancement manifest (1Ti 4:15)

Pursue theocratic goals; use provisions designed for youths, such as the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*

Progress in such areas as accurate knowledge of Bible, Christian qualities, and spiritual growth, as well as speaking, reading, and teaching ability

If not yet baptized, be determined to qualify for baptism and to share fully in ministry

**JEHOVAH PROMISES FAITHFUL YOUTHS A SECURE AND HAPPY FUTURE** (4 min.)

From Jehovah's standpoint, youths play a vital role in his purpose

However, this brings with it a weighty responsibility before Jehovah (Ec 12:1)

Show by your works that you appreciate his loving counsel and fatherly warnings

Be good at what you do for God; give him your best! (Compare Proverbs 22:29 with Malachi 1:6-9)

Take the truth seriously, and recognize that your relationship with Jehovah is your most precious possession

He invites you to enjoy a happy, secure future by serving him now (Jer 29:11-14a)

With the loving support, respect, and training of older ones in the congregation, young ones can make a significant contribution to the fulfillment of Jehovah's will (Read Psalm 148:12, 13)

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# CHRISTIAN SEPARATENESS FROM THE WORLD—WHY BENEFICIAL

## *Note to the speaker:*

Make clear to audience just what separateness from the world entails, and in an encouraging manner, point out why maintaining separateness from the world is beneficial

### **SEPARATENESS FROM WORLD, AN IDENTIFYING MARK OF TRUE CHRISTIANITY** (4 min.)

Jesus Christ was “no part of the world”; his disciples must likewise be no part of the world (Joh 17:16)

History confirms that early Christians were known for separateness from world (*rs* 272-4)

God’s standards have not changed; separateness from world is required for Christians today (Jas 4:4)

Jesus asked Father to watch over his disciples as they strive to maintain Christlike separateness from world (Joh 17:15)

True Christians today enjoy God’s guidance and protection, and they benefit themselves and others by remaining separate from world

### **CHRISTIANS KEEP SEPARATE FROM WORLD’S POLITICAL AFFAIRS** (12 min.)

Christians remain neutral as to world’s political affairs (Joh 18:36; *rs* 269-76)

They do not take part in patriotic ceremonies, nor do they get involved in racial conflicts or political controversies

Christians must “be in subjection to the superior authorities,” which exist by God’s permission and serve a good purpose (Ro 13:1, 5-7; *w90* 11/1 10-15, 18-22)

Pay taxes and obey all laws that do not conflict with God’s law (Mr 12:17)

Show respect to those in governmental office, regardless of their personal conduct

Many benefits for those who maintain separateness from world

[Consider specific benefits and published experiences that highlight practical value of Christian’s stand]

### **CHRISTIANS KEEP SEPARATE FROM MORAL DEBAUCHERY OF WORLD** (12 min.)

World is debauched; its view of morals does not match God’s view (*w93* 2/15 13)

From Biblical standpoint, immorality is gross infringement of God’s clearly defined moral code (Ex 20:14, 17; 1Co 6:9, 10)

Worship that is clean and undefiled from standpoint of God must be “without spot from the world” (Jas 1:27)

Must shun unwholesome social activities, debasing music, immoral and violent entertainment, bad association

If member of congregation falls into immorality, that one is helped to repent and turn around (2Co 2:5-8; 1Jo 1:9; 2:1)

Unrepentant wrongdoers to be removed from congregation (1Co 5:11-13)

Benefits from keeping separate from world and observing the Bible’s high moral standards [See “Bible standards” under MORALS in *Watch Tower Publications Index 1986-1995*]

### **PUBLIC MINISTRY IS POSITIVE MARK OF CHRISTIAN SEPARATENESS** (12 min.)

Jesus gave command to preach and make disciples (Mt 28:19, 20)

Early Christians renowned for boldness in preaching publicly and from house to house (Ac 5:28, 42; 20:20)

All Christians should share in preaching to extent possible; it is a Christian commission (Mt 24:14)

Bold and zealous participation in ministry helps us to keep separate from world; it brings tangible, satisfying benefits [See “benefits” under FIELD MINISTRY in *Watch Tower Publications Index 1930-1985* and *1986-1995*. May also use verified local experiences that highlight how active share in ministry has enabled ones to maintain separateness from world]

### **CHRISTIAN SEPARATENESS FROM WORLD BENEFICIAL NOW AND IN FUTURE** (5 min.)

All of Jehovah’s commands have proved beneficial to his people (Read Psalm 19:7-11)

Jesus’ prayer for Jehovah to watch over his disciples has not gone unanswered

Comforting to know that nothing can separate us from Jehovah’s love and that of Jesus Christ (Ro 8:35, 38, 39)

As we maintain separateness from world, we can be assured of Jehovah’s continued loving guidance and protection

Living in world’s last days calls for our increased vigilance to keep separate

Soon old world will go into destruction, and only God’s righteous “new heavens and a new earth” will remain (2Pe 3:7, 13)

Those who do Jehovah’s will and remain separate from the world have the prospect of being rewarded with everlasting life in Paradise (Mt 25:34)

Christian separateness from world will have proved to be to their everlasting benefit

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## WHY SUBMIT TO GOD'S RULERSHIP NOW

### *Note to the speaker:*

Stress the advantages of submitting to God's rulership and the joy that comes from doing God's will

### **SUBMISSION TO GOD'S RULERSHIP IS THE ISSUE** (4 min.)

It is the greatest issue now facing people of all nations (Ps 83:18; Mic 4:1)

According to God's calendar, time is near for momentous change

His purpose is to manifest his power, make known his name, give attention to affairs of the earth for benefit of righteously disposed people (Isa 55:10, 11; Ro 9:17, 18)

### **PEOPLE MUST DECIDE WHAT THEY WILL DO AS TO GOD'S RULERSHIP** (4 min.)

Psalm 24:1 and 89:11 show earth and those dwelling in it rightly belong to Jehovah; he is the Supreme Ruler (Da 4:17, 35)

According to Psalm 89:35-37, Jehovah swore to establish everlasting throne by David and his "seed"

From 607 B.C.E. onward, he allowed Davidic kingship to lapse, to be interrupted for "appointed times of the nations" (Lu 21:24)

In 1914 "appointed times" ended and kingdom of the world of mankind became "kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ" (Re 11:15)

Jesus Christ then accepted kingship from Jehovah (*w*95 11/1 16 par. 2)

So the time is here for people to know about this and why they must decide for or against God's rulership (Re 14:6, 7)

### **HUMAN RULERSHIPS ARE IN A CRITICAL STATE** (4 min.)

Prominent leaders are warning that time is running out for nations to determine how they will resolve their problems (*tp* 11)

Problems include food shortages, crime, ethnic violence, availability of nuclear weapons, pollution, overpopulation, unemployment, and other economic difficulties (*w*94 8/1 3-5; *g*93 4/8 3-5)

What complicates situation is that human rulerships are temporary

Any change occurring in governments or administrations alters commitments and policies, impeding efforts to follow through consistently

Human rulers are limited in what they are capable of doing

Their good intentions may be halted by death, by whims of people voting them out of office, or by a revolution (Ps 146:3, 4)

### **WISE TO SUBMIT TO JEHOVAH'S RULERSHIP** (10 min.)

Nebuchadnezzar had to submit to God's authority (Da 4)

While Babylon was in its heyday, Nebuchadnezzar bragged of his accomplishments, but suddenly all of that changed (Da 4:29-33)

What was the effect on Nebuchadnezzar? (Read verses 34, 35)

Although he never became a worshiper of Jehovah, he had to accept the indisputable reality of Jehovah's rulership

Can see parallels in our time

For example, Hitler boasted that he would set up an empire that would last 1,000 years, yet it came to an end in about 12 years

Even though some rulerships come into power with popular support, they soon turn out disappointing

Another factor showing wisdom of submitting to Jehovah's rulership is that soon the real ruler of this world will be cast out (Joh 12:31)

In 1914, God's Kingdom came to power (Re 12:10)

Jehovah has given Jesus authority (Da 7:13, 14)

Nations and people are called on to submit to God's rulership (Ps 2:1, 2, 12; Zep 2:3)

Wise to do so now, as only short time remains for other rulerships (Da 2:44)

Soon all who refuse to submit will be destroyed and God's rulership will be the only one existing

### **HOW TO SUBMIT TO GOD'S RULERSHIP** (18 min.)

Must not allow prominence, worldly glory, or material wealth to hold us back from making right choice (Pr 16:18; Joh 19:38; 1Jo 2:15, 16; *w*95 5/1 28-9)

Essential to take in accurate knowledge of the truth (1Ti 2:3, 4; *w*97 4/15 28-31)

Have vital contact with God's organization; follow pattern of early Christians (Ac 2:42; 8:26-38)

Make firm decision to become disciple of Christ; symbolize dedication to God by water baptism (Mt 28:19, 20)

Be determined to do God's will, avoiding permissive, lawless spirit of world (Ro 12:2; 1Pe 4:1, 2)

Regularly share with congregation in declaring the Kingdom good news (Lu 9:60; Ro 10:10)

Demonstrate modesty before God and love for what is right (Mic 6:8)

Avoid spirit of arrogance and pride (*it-2* 681-2)

Appreciate need of living no longer for ourselves (2Co 5:14, 15)

**BENEFITS OF SUBMITTING TO GOD'S RULERSHIP** (5 min.)

Now: Become part of international brotherhood, finest group of people on earth—loyal friends in whom we can confide and with whom we can unitedly worship Jehovah (Joh 4:23, 24)

Life with true meaning and the joy of representing Jehovah, helping others to learn the truth

Freedom from illnesses due to immorality or excesses by not following Bible's moral standards

Resources formerly wasted on vices now used to benefit others, resulting in happiness (Ac 20:35)

Freedom to approach Jehovah in prayer and a clean conscience because of having forgiveness of sins

Future: Everlasting life in Paradise; no crime, injustice, oppression

Living under flawless rulership of Jesus Christ among caring people (Isa 11:6-9)

Truly we have every reason to submit to God's rulership now

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



# A WORLDWIDE BROTHERHOOD SAVED FROM CALAMITY

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help all to see clearly what the true Christian brotherhood is and the role it plays in helping individuals escape the coming global calamity

### **IDENTIFYING THE TRUE BROTHERHOOD** (10 min.)

Psalm 133:1 is an exclamation, indicating that true brotherhood is rare and notable

More than blood ties are needed to form a true brotherhood

In recent years, bloody conflicts have taken place among people of similar racial origin

Is there a people among whom true brotherhood and love exist?

Yes; Jehovah's Witnesses are a global "association of brothers" (1Pe 2:17; Isa 43:10, 11, 21)

Even outsiders have acknowledged the strong bond that exists among Witnesses (*w94* 4/15 15)

Their unity is not based on kinship or on some political creed

United by their obedience to God's Word, worldwide they all follow the same Bible standards (Isa 54:13)

Unified by Christian love (Col 3:14)

They are 'true companions' who support one another when distress occurs (Pr 17:17; *ju* 310-15)

Their brotherhood is open to people of all races, nationalities, and backgrounds (Ac 10:34, 35)

Outsiders have commented on racial unity observed at conventions (*yb87* 17)

By means of global preaching work, Jehovah's Witnesses invite all honesthearted ones to become part of this worldwide brotherhood (Mt 28:19, 20; Ac 1:8)

How you respond to invitation is no small matter

Brotherhood will soon survive the greatest calamity ever to befall mankind

### **THE CALAMITY WE MUST ESCAPE!** (6 min.)

Life in our time has been marked by calamity (Mt 24:7, 8)

World war, pestilence, and widespread famine, as well as ecological disasters, earthquakes, storms, and other so-called natural disasters have caused untold suffering for millions [Give recent examples of well-known disasters]

The Bible shows that the worst calamity yet lies ahead (Mt 24:21)

Satan's influence is pushing the nations to the great war against God (Re 16:13-16)

Armageddon is the world situation in which earth's rulers will be unitedly gathered in opposition to Jehovah and to his Kingdom by Jesus Christ (*rs* 44)

God will execute judgment against opposers (Jer 25:31-33)

Is there any way to survive this calamity?

### **SURVIVAL OF A WORLDWIDE BROTHERHOOD FORESHADOWED** (10 min.)

The Bible provides historical precedents for survival (Ro 15:4)

In Noah's day, earth became "filled with violence"; God decreed that he would destroy the wicked (Ge 6:5-7, 11, 12)

The conduct, way of life, and courageous obedience of Noah and his family marked them as different from their violent contemporaries (Ge 6:9; Heb 11:7)

Obedied God's command to build an ark, which carried them safely through global Flood

Jesus indicated that parallel situation would occur in our day (Lu 17:26, 27)

Means there will be survivors! (1Pe 3:20, 21)

Jehovah's saving power again demonstrated by the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt (Ps 106:8-11)

Points to a future deliverance (1Co 10:1, 2, 11)

First-century Christians saved when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 C.E.

Jesus foretold calamity and that 'some flesh' would be saved (Mt 24:15-22; *w96* 8/15, 15-18)

Destruction of Jerusalem points to future "tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning"

As in first century, there will be survivors

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR BEING SAVED WITH WORLDWIDE BROTHERHOOD** (12 min.)

As in past, those who will survive must take certain action

Must call on the name of Jehovah (Joe 2:32; Ro 10:13)

Must exercise faith in God's Son

Involves more than emotional expressions of belief

Must acknowledge Christ as Ransomer of mankind (Mt 20:28; Ro 5:9, 10)

Must acknowledge Jesus as "Lord," observing all his teachings and recognizing his position as Head of congregation (Ro 10:9; Mt 28:20; Eph 1:22)

Not enough, though, simply to have faith

Those seeking salvation today must become part of modern-day Christian brotherhood

First-century converts became 'joined to' fellow believers (Ac 2:37, 40-42, 47)

Since 'God is not a God of disorder,' Christians make up a visible organization (1Co 14:33)

Congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses today work under the direction of a Governing Body of spirit-anointed elders

The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and its affiliates are the legal agencies through which the Governing Body provides direction

Becoming associated with Jehovah's organization is thus an important step in gaining salvation

Can begin doing so by attending meetings and studying Bible-based publications produced by organization

In time, honesthearted ones are moved to make a dedication to God and publicly declare it by water baptism (Ro 10:10)

After baptism, one becomes a part of "whole association" of Christians

### **THE TRUE WORLDWIDE BROTHERHOOD CAN HELP YOU SURVIVE (7 min.)**

People of all races and nationalities are now being gathered for survival (Re 7:9, 14)

Constitute a true global brotherhood, accomplishing what no human brotherhood movement could ever hope to do

People of all races and nations are now learning to live together as one family of brothers and sisters

Are you working to be found among them?

Taking a stand with this brotherhood will require courage

Meet opposition and suffer persecution

Have to cope with own fleshly weaknesses

Be assured, though, that with the help of God's spirit, you can maintain integrity, taking a bold stand against Satan (Isa 40:29-31; Zec 4:6; 1Pe 5:8, 9)

Rewards for keeping integrity are great

Enjoy the unity and peace that exist among true Christians

Foretaste of living on the Paradise earth to come (*kl* 184-5 pars. 12-14)

In God's new world, *everyone living* will be part of the true brotherhood (Ps 37:29, 34; Pr 2:21, 22)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## GLOBAL PEACE—FROM WHAT SOURCE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show how true peace is possible, even though mankind has never attained it. Highlight that the basis for true peace is made clear in the Bible and how Jehovah's Witnesses today give evidence in their lives of what God will do in establishing global peace

### **MULTITUDES YEARN FOR GLOBAL PEACE** (5 min.)

World War I awakened widespread awareness of need for global peace

Need became evident because of destructive capabilities of modern weapons of war

World War II and nuclear threat made need even more urgent (*g96* 4/22 5-6)

Today, people everywhere are alarmed at international terrorism; civil unrest; and political, racial, religious, and tribal upheavals (*g96* 10/8 10; *w87* 5/15 11; *tp* 11)

Loud cries for global cooperation and peace being sounded earth wide (*g96* 10/8 9)

Global peace seen as only alternative to global anarchy

### **GLOBAL PEACE NOT ATTAINABLE THROUGH HUMAN EFFORTS** (15 min.)

Not Jehovah's purpose that man should direct his own step (Jer 10:23)

Sinful inclination of mankind is toward selfishness and greed (Ge 8:21; Ec 8:9)

Human endeavors must be in harmony with Jehovah's purpose and direction (Ps 146:3; Mic 6:8)

Following World Wars I and II, world leaders spoke of peace

However, promises based on treaties, League of Nations, United Nations, political alliances, regional pacts between nations, and other schemes have all failed to put an end to armed conflicts

Instead of promises being fulfilled, conditions have grown progressively worse

For 50 years now, United Nations has been hailed as last hope for peace

Has failed to bring peace, just as did its predecessor, the League of Nations

Statements by world leaders show it is unrealistic to expect United Nations or other political systems to bring global peace (*w95* 10/1 4-5; *g95* 9/8 10; *g91* 9/8 9; *w88* 6/1 27-8; *g87* 6/22 13; *w86* 5/15 27; *g86* 1/22 29)

Record of man's quests for peace and his subsequent failures remind one of what the prophet Jeremiah wrote concerning the disappointment of unfaithful Judah (Jer 8:15)

Whole world lies in the power of the wicked one, and there can be no peace for those who refuse to submit to Jehovah's rule; they remain under Satan's control and influence (Isa 57:21; 1Jo 5:19)

As god of this system of things, Satan the Devil has blinded the minds of unbelievers and thus keeps them in spiritual darkness (2Co 4:4)

Since his ouster from heaven to the vicinity of the earth, he has been misleading all the nations—driving them headlong toward the war of Armageddon (Re 12:9; 16:14, 16)

### **GLOBAL PEACE ASSURED THROUGH JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM RULE** (20 min.)

Jehovah has the power to rid the universe of the great peace disturber, Satan the Devil (Ro 16:20)

The first prophecy pointed to a Kingdom promise of deliverance and restoration of peace (Ge 3:15)

God progressively foretold steps he would take to restore peace to earth (Isa 2:4; 9:6, 7; Da 2:44)

Provided his Son as needed ransom and laid foundation for a Kingdom of peace by installing him as King on heavenly throne (Ps 2:6; 110:1, 2; Lu 1:32, 33; Heb 2:14)

Prepares 144,000 corulers to serve in heavenly government to administer blessings of peace for the earth (Lu 22:28-30; Re 5:9, 10; 14:1)

Outworking of Kingdom arrangement now well advanced; can be seen in restored spiritual estate of Kingdom heirs, with a spiritual paradise already being enjoyed by millions

Worldwide preaching of good news of Kingdom has gathered people into united society worshiping Jehovah under peaceful conditions (Ps 23:1-6; 29:11)

Superiority of Jehovah's Kingdom rule is noted even by those who are not part of Christian congregation [Cite statements of worldly observers extolling superior qualities demonstrated by Jehovah's Witnesses, as published in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* See *Index* under JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES/Statements by Others/qualities]

What Jehovah's Kingdom rule has accomplished among his devoted servants is a foretaste of blessings in store for all obedient mankind in righteous new world (Isa 11:6-9)

Hostility on Satan's part still exists on earth because he is determined to hold on to his rule over fallen mankind (Ps 2:1-3; Re 12:12)

Hostility will end shortly with overthrow of all wickedness (Re 20:1-3; 21:1)

Under peaceful Kingdom rule of 1,000 years, mankind will be restored to perfection on an earthly paradise (1Co 15:24-28)

**GLOBAL PEACE A REALITY FOR THE NEAR FUTURE** (5 min.)

Millions now rightly entertain hope of survival into righteous new world (Re 7:14)

Wicked will perish, while meek ones will find delight in abundance of peace (Ps 37:10, 11)

Not only practical but also urgent that we should now look to Jehovah, the heavenly Source, for global peace  
(Zep 2:1-3; Re 21:1-4)

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## WHY CHRISTIANS MUST BE DIFFERENT

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience see and appreciate the need for us as Christians to be different from people of the world around us, even though we must live in the world and preach to worldly people. By following the counsel of God's Word and the example set by Jesus and the early Christians, we can succeed in doing so

### **MOST PEOPLE SUBMIT TO MORAL STANDARDS OF THEIR CONTEMPORARIES** (2 min.)

Vast majority of people today do not want to be different

They are subject to peer pressure and are quick to follow crowd

This is true of both adults and youths

On learning the truth, we, as Christians, abandon our worldly ways (1Pe 4:2, 3)

This is puzzling to our former worldly friends, and they may deride us (1Pe 4:4)

### **JEHOVAH'S SERVANTS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN DIFFERENT** (15 min.)

Nation of Israel was brought to Promised Land and set apart by God (De 7:6)

Israelites were commanded to keep separate from pagan nations (Ex 23:32, 33)

They had distinctive blue thread above fringes of garments, which set them apart and served as a protective reminder (Nu 15:38-41; *it-1* 655)

First-century Christians followed teachings of Christ, including being "no part of the world" (Joh 15:18-20)

So distinct were they from world around them that Christianity was called "The Way" (Ac 9:2; 19:9, 23)

They were widely recognized as being different (*tp* 123-4)

True Christians today are different

God's name has been called upon them, and they faithfully strive to obey his commandments (Ps 83:18; Isa 43:10, 12)

They endeavor to keep unspotted from world (Jas 1:27)

This difference is evident to sincere onlookers (Joh 13:35; *g94* 12/22 13)

Others may persecute them because of it (2Ti 3:12)

Like Moses, they choose individually to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than have the temporary enjoyment of sin (Heb 11:24, 25)

Christians are subjects of God's Kingdom

Are "aliens and temporary residents" in this world (1Pe 2:11)

Look forward to permanent residence in God's righteous new world (2Pe 3:13)

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we should strive to think and act in harmony with Christian standards

This separates us from the world, emphasizing that we are different

Does not mean that we isolate ourselves and become hermits (Joh 17:15, 16)

Rather, as Jesus' disciples, we are 'sent forth into the world' to make known the truth to others (Joh 17:18)

Christians are to serve as "the light of the world" (Mt 5:14-16; Php 2:15)

Our preaching and disciple-making work is one factor that makes us different (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20)

### **SUCCESSFULLY COPING WITH PEER PRESSURE** (4 min.)

The desire to be popular and be accepted by others is very strong

Even the apostle Peter succumbed at one time (Ga 2:11-14)

How can we successfully cope with peer pressure?

Come to know Jehovah and view him as a friend

Develop a strong love for him and his counsel (Ps 119:9-11, 105)

Associate with those who have the same high standard (Pr 13:20; 2Ti 2:22)

Do not fear men; develop courage of convictions (Pr 29:25)

Christian youths must especially follow this direction

[Illustrate how to cope successfully with the problem of peer pressure while in school (*yp* 73-80)]

### **SPECIFIC WAYS IN WHICH CHRISTIANS ARE DIFFERENT** (20 min.)

Christians must seek first the Kingdom, not material interests

Majority of mankind absorbed in affairs of life, focusing attention on getting as much materially from world as possible

Christians see foolishness of trying to 'make use of the world to the full' and of putting emphasis on things destined to pass away (1Co 7:29-31; 1Jo 2:15-17)

Our focal point is Kingdom, not making a living or acquiring riches in dying world (Mt 6:31, 32)

We should each ask: 'What am I pursuing as a career? Can I pursue wholesome goal of full-time service?'

Note example of the apostle Paul (Ro 11:13, 14)

Christians are not “lovers of pleasures” (2Ti 3:4)

Must be selective in recreation and entertainment

Follow direction recorded at 1 Timothy 4:7, 8 and at 1 Corinthians 10:31

Young people must exercise caution in regard to after-school activities (*sj* 22-5)

Limit size of social gatherings

Large gatherings are difficult to supervise and can have adverse effects on those in attendance, both spiritually and physically (*km* 9/95 2; *om* 136)

Christians maintain wholesome moral standard (Php 4:8)

Standard of world is deteriorating, going from bad to worse

Position that Christians must take is clearly outlined in Scriptures (1Co 6:9, 10; Heb 13:4)

Must control desires of flesh and avoid entertainment or reading material that will tend to excite one

Includes lewd dancing and wild, passion-arousing music, which have become so prominent in world

Associate only with those who have high regard for Jehovah’s righteous laws (1Co 15:33)

Christians are different in dress and grooming

The way we dress identifies us with certain group or class

Elijah was identified by distinctive garment of prophet (2Ki 1:2-8)

Our dress gives an impression for good or for bad (*yp* 90)

Can connect one with what is dishonorable

Are we quick to copy fashions of world that are immodest?

If parents note that their children are being influenced by spirit of world in dress and grooming, they should endeavor to reach their heart and help them see need to adjust

Should set proper example themselves (1Pe 3:3, 4)

Our being modest will protect us from the wicked world, which is alienated from God

#### **BLESSINGS RESULTING FROM FOLLOWING CHRISTIAN STANDARD** (4 min.)

Maintaining the Christian standard and being different from the world bring many blessings

We are able to serve our God with a clean conscience and will have his approval

Will be protected from Satan, the ruler of this world, and his machinations (Joh 14:30; Eph 6:10-13; 1Jo 5:19)

Enables us to remain on the narrow road leading to everlasting life (Mt 7:13, 14)

If we desire Jehovah’s favor and blessing, we must be different!

Never forget, “the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever” (1Jo 2:17)

May that be our happy lot!

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## BASIS FOR CONFIDENCE IN THE BIBLE'S DIVINE AUTHORSHIP

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to reason on the trustworthiness of the Bible. Show how the fulfillment of prophecy and the practical guidance contained in the Bible prove divine authorship. Highlight how Jehovah's Witnesses have benefited by conforming to Bible standards, thus providing a basis for confidence in its divine authorship.

### **DIVINE AUTHORSHIP OF BIBLE QUESTIONED BY MANY** (4 min.)

Many today doubt—or deny outright—Bible's divine authorship

Atheist tract asked readers: "Won't you help get this book [the Bible] out of the hands of our children, out of decent homes, and out of hotel and motel rooms?" (Frank C. Hughes in *Spiritual Guide to Gracious Living*) An atheist author referred to Bible as "fairy tales" (*The Evening Post*, Dec. 11, 1979)

Bishop of Episcopal diocese of Michigan said: "The Bible contains mistakes, inaccuracies and contradictions. It is therefore understandable why the major Christian churches do not view the Bible as infallible." (*The Detroit News*, April 24, 1982)

Catholic nun from Denver, Colorado, said of Bible: "It is embarrassingly human. The human authors show a woeful ignorance of science, history and even theology . . . God did not free the inspired author from the scientific ignorance shared with the people of that time." (*Rocky Mountain News*, Feb. 26, 1982)

Do these opinions have merit? What basis is there for confidence in the Bible's divine authorship?

### **BIBLE WRITERS CLAIMED DIRECTION BY DIVINE AUTHOR** (10 min.)

Bible writer David gave credit to Jehovah for beautiful writings found in Psalms (2Sa 23:2)

Though prophet Daniel did not understand all of what he wrote, many of his prophecies have been fulfilled (Da 12:8)

Prophecies were directed by God's holy spirit (2Pe 1:20, 21)

Apostle Paul said *all* Scripture is inspired of God (2Ti 3:16, 17)

If early Christians had confidence in Bible's divine authorship, should we not also?

Consider how (1) Bible prophecies, (2) Bible principles, and (3) fruitage produced by Jehovah's Witnesses give basis for confidence in the Bible's divine authorship

### **PROPHECIES ARE OUTSTANDING EVIDENCE OF DIVINE AUTHORSHIP** (15 min.)

Consider prophecies fulfilled in Jesus

Psalm 22 contains prophecies about Jesus

Verse 1 foretold Jesus would be forsaken to enemies by God; verses 7, 8 foretold he would be reviled while on stake; verse 16 foretold he would be impaled through his hands and feet; verse 18 foretold that lots would be cast for his garments

All these prophecies were fulfilled more than a thousand years after being written

At the very minimum, there are scores of Messianic prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus (*it-2* 387)

The book *Archaeology and Bible History* says: "The chances of all of these prophecies being fulfilled in one man are so overwhelmingly remote that it is strikingly demonstrated that they could in no wise be the shrewd guesses of mere men." (*ce* 221)

Daniel foretold rise and fall of world powers (Read Daniel 8:5-8, 20-22)

This prophecy was fulfilled more than 200 years later when Alexander the Great died and four of his generals divided up Grecian Empire (*w93* 5/15 6)

Isaiah foretold by name the coming of Cyrus to liberate Jews from Babylonian captivity even before captivity began (Read Isaiah 44:24-28)

Foretold that Babylon's gates would be left open (Read Isaiah 45:1) (*w93* 5/15 5)

Foretold eventual desolation of Babylon (Read Isaiah 13:19; 14:22, 23)

Babylon, completely deserted by 200 C.E., continues desolate to this day, thus confirming accuracy of Isaiah's prophecy (*hp* 28-9)

Prophecies concerning last days of this system fulfilled in our time

Reading 2 Timothy 3:1-5 is like reading headlines in current newspaper

Revelation 6:1-8 fulfilled from 1914 onward (*re* 89-99)

Prophecy establishes divine authorship of the Bible (Isa 46:10)

### **EVIDENCE OF DIVINE AUTHORSHIP IN PRACTICAL GUIDANCE BIBLE GIVES** (10 min.)

Bible serves as light to our path by offering practical counsel in many areas (Ps 119:105)

Helps to remedy economic problems

Condemns laziness, promotes industriousness (Pr 6:6-11; Col 3:23; 2Th 3:10)

Those who are industrious may be more likely to remain employed

Stresses proper values; material things should not be put first in life, nor should they control us (Mt 6:33; 1Ti 6:6-12)

Warns against life-styles that can lead to poverty (Pr 23:20, 21)

Bible counsel can lead to improved mental outlook and physical health

Since the Bible is not a medical textbook, it does not claim the power to reverse chronic mental, emotional, or physical illness

Nevertheless, Bible principles promote emotional and physical health; how?

Bible shows that mental attitude can affect one's physical health (Read Proverbs 14:30)

Bible encourages us to cultivate qualities that are characteristic of "a calm heart" (Pr 16:32; Ro 12:17-21; Eph 4:31, 32)

Bible condemns practices that can adversely affect one's physical health

Cautions against overeating, heavy drinking, defilements of the flesh and spirit (Lu 21:34; 2Co 7:1)

Bible's high moral standards bless us with a measure of protection against certain diseases (Pr 7:5, 22-27; Heb 13:4)

Those who live by the Bible's counsel are benefited (Isa 48:17, 18)

### **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES TESTIFY TO BIBLE'S DIVINE AUTHORSHIP (6 min.)**

Fruitage produced in their lives by adhering to Bible's moral laws and principles proves that the Bible is from divine source

Jesus said one could tell good or bad tree by its fruits (Mt 7:16-20)

Bible principles have helped many to transform their lives (Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

Jehovah's Witnesses are living proof of practicality of Bible standards

A united family, though living in over 230 lands

Not materialistic, they seek God's Kingdom first (Mt 6:33)

They avoid abuse of drugs, including tobacco

Endeavor to lead clean lives by obeying Bible's high moral standards

The fact that Bible counsel *works* is strong basis for confidence in the Bible's divine authorship (Mt 11:19)

Apply Bible counsel in your life; help others to do the same (1Ti 4:16)

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## WHY MANKIND NEEDS A RANSOM

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help your audience to understand and appreciate the need for the ransom. Explain its benefits and the blessings we gain now and in the future from this greatest gift of God

### **WHY A RANSOM WAS REQUIRED** (5 min.)

The ransom is God's greatest gift to mankind (*w91 2/15 10*)

It is the foundation of our hope of everlasting life (Joh 3:16)

The ransom became necessary because of the sin of Adam (Ro 5:12)

Adam's imperfect and sinful descendants could neither provide their own deliverance from death nor ransom themselves (Ps 49:7, 8)

Lovingly, God sent his Son to die as ransom (Mr 10:45)

Belief that Jesus died as a ransom in exchange for sinful mankind is fundamental to true Christianity

Yet, nominal Christians in general are often unable to cite the Biblical source of the doctrine or to explain it (*w91 2/15 4*)

True Christians should not only understand this doctrine but also be able to explain it (Eph 3:18)

What is the ransom? Who provides it? To whom is it paid? What are its benefits?

### **HOW CHRISTENDOM CAME TO REJECT THE RANSOM** (5 min.)

Few of Christendom's clergy today believe in ransom doctrine as the Bible teaches it (*w91 2/15 3-7*)

After death of apostles, church leaders became embroiled in theological disputes (Ac 20:29, 30; 2Ti 4:3, 4)

Could not agree on such questions as: To whom was the ransom paid? Why was such payment necessary?

Some theologians taught that the ransom was paid by God to Satan

Some argued that Christ's death was not a ransom or an equal exchange—that justice demanded the death of someone who was "both God and man"

As this theory became widely accepted, the term "ransom" fell into disuse

Today the ransom is not taught in most churches

Catholic and Protestant theologians continue to place tradition and human wisdom above Scripture (Jer 8:9)

In contrast, the *Watchtower* magazine has been an advocate of the ransom for over 100 years (*ju 47-8, 619-21*)

By letting the Scriptures speak for themselves, we can come to a clear understanding of this doctrine

### **A CORRESPONDING RANSOM** (20 min.)

A ransom is a price paid to buy back or to bring about release from some obligation or undesirable circumstance

In Hebrew Scriptures, word for ransom comes from verb meaning "to cover" (*w99 2/15 13-15; w91 2/15 11-12; it-2 733-4*)

A ransom, or covering, must exactly correspond to the thing it covers, either in form or value

Divine justice thus demands 'soul for soul, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot' (De 19:21)

To ransom, or cover, the life Adam lost, a corresponding perfect life was required (*w91 2/15 12-13*)

A God-man would not correspond to Adam; the death of such a one would not balance scales of justice

Animal sacrifices were inadequate, since humans are superior (Heb 10:1-4)

No imperfect human could provide ransom (Job 14:4)

Jehovah provided ransom by offering Jesus as "a corresponding ransom for all" (1Ti 2:6; *w91 2/15 13-16*)

Since Jesus exactly corresponded to Adam, not necessary to sacrifice millions of individual humans to correspond to each individual offspring of Adam (Ro 5:19; 1Co 15:21, 22)

Jesus made it possible to nullify the death sentence upon Adam's offspring (Heb 2:9)

The destructive power of sin was thus cut off at its source

To whom, though, was the ransom paid? (*w91 2/15 14*)

Psalm 49:7 clearly shows that the ransom was paid "to God"

Although God both provides and receives the ransom, it is not a pointless, mechanical exchange

God's insistence on payment of the ransom affirmed his unchanging adherence to righteous principles

On Nisan 14, 33 C.E., God allowed his perfect and sinless Son, Jesus, to die on a stake, thus paying the ransom price

On the third day after his death, Jesus was raised from the dead as a mighty spirit creature (Ac 10:40; 1Pe 3:18)

Jesus continued his redemptive work by presenting legal value of his perfect human life to God (Heb 9:11, 12, 24)

Jehovah's acceptance of ransom sacrifice became evident at Pentecost 33 C.E. (Ac 2:1-4)

### **BENEFITS OF THE RANSOM ARRANGEMENT** (10 min.)

By means of the ransom, God can reconcile to himself 'the things in heaven and upon earth' (Col 1:14, 20; *w91* 2/15 15-19)

Ransom makes possible "a new covenant" with 144,000 to serve as kings and priests in heaven with Christ (Heb 8:6-13; Re 5:9, 10)

Through them, benefits of ransom gradually applied to mankind during Thousand Year Reign (1Co 15:24-26; Re 21:3, 4)

Ransom also reconciles 'the things on earth'—those with hope of living forever in Paradise

Already "a great crowd" have 'washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb' (Re 7:9-17)

They enjoy being declared righteous as God's friends, as Abraham was (Jas 2:23)

After surviving great tribulation, they will gradually be "set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Ro 8:21)

Ransom can also benefit us in our daily lives

No need for us to be weighed down with feelings of inadequacy

Jehovah does not view us solely in our damaged, imperfect state; he knows what we can be when the restorative powers of Jesus' ransom sacrifice are fully applied (*w90* 2/15 23)

If we err, we need to repent and pray for forgiveness on the basis of the ransom (Ac 3:19; 1Pe 3:21; 1Jo 1:9)

Yes, through our High Priest, Jesus, we can 'approach with freeness of speech to the throne of undeserved kindness for mercy and help at the right time' (Heb 4:14-16)

### **ACCEPT GOD'S UNDESERVED KINDNESS** (5 min.)

The ransom arrangement provides the ultimate proof of Jehovah's love for us (Ro 5:8)

Jesus' love is also made evident by his willingly offering himself as a ransom (Joh 15:13)

All need to show their gratitude to God and Christ for the love displayed

Exercise faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice (Joh 3:16; 17:3)

Show heartfelt appreciation for it by zealous service to God (2Co 5:14)

Tell others about this wonderful provision for salvation (Ro 10:10)

Maintain clean conduct (1Pe 1:14-16)

"Thanks to God through Jesus Christ" for this superlative gift—the ransom! (Ro 7:25)

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## WHO CAN BE SAVED?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate the need to be saved from sin, suffering, and death. Build appreciation for the ransom as you outline the steps that must be taken to benefit from this loving provision. Emphasize that all can endure and thus be saved

### **FROM WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE SAVED?** (4 min.)

Mankind was created with the desire to live forever (Ec 3:11)

Sickness and death were not part of God's purpose for man (*w99* 4/15 5-8)

When he sinned, Adam brought suffering and death upon himself and his future offspring (Ge 3:19; Job 14:4)

Adam no longer possessed perfect life to pass on to his children as an inheritance (*w99* 3/15 9; 2/15 13-14)

All humans keenly feel the effects of Adamic sin (Ro 5:14; 8:20-22)

Even God's faithful servants are not immune (Select excerpts from two or three of the following scriptures: Genesis 27:46; 47:9; 1 Kings 19:4; Jonah 4:8; Romans 7:22-24)

Hence, all need to be saved from slavery to sin and death and need relief from the anxieties that are common to imperfect humans (Job 14:1; Ps 90:10)

### **JEHOVAH'S PROVISION FOR OUR SALVATION** (10 min.)

Adam passed on his sinful condition—and hence death—to all his descendants (Ro 5:12)

Jehovah is “a lover of righteousness and justice,” and his Law to the Israelites demanded that life should be given for life (Ps 33:5; Nu 35:20, 21)

Adam lost *perfect* life; to balance the scales of justice, a *perfect* human life would have to be sacrificed (*w91* 2/15 12-13)

Since we are born in sin, none of us can provide that perfect human life (Ps 49:6-10)

It is as if we have a life-threatening disease and cannot afford to pay for the medical care that will cure it. Jehovah lovingly arranged to redeem sinful humanity while satisfying the demands of justice (De 32:4; 1Jo 4:8; *w96* 3/15 21-2)

After the rebellion in Eden, he announced a provision for salvation, a promise to save repentant mankind (Ge 3:15)

Jehovah arranged for his Son to give his perfect human life in place of the perfect life forfeited by Adam (Joh 10:17, 18; *w99* 2/15 14-16; *ws* 162-4)

Jesus was born without sin; hence, he possessed what Adam had lost—perfect human life

On Nisan 14, 33 C.E., Jesus allowed himself to be put to death by his opposers, thereby paying the price for our sins (1Ti 2:5, 6)

His faithful course made it possible for us to be saved from sin and death (1Co 15:45)

Unlike Adam, Jesus was not a sinner; hence, at his death he still had the right to perfect human life

When he returned to heaven, Jesus presented the value of his sacrifice to Jehovah (Heb 9:24; *w99* 2/15 16)

Jesus purchased sinful mankind

He also became our new Father, a replacement for Adam (Isa 9:6)

### **JEHOVAH GOD IS KEENLY INTERESTED IN OUR SALVATION** (7 min.)

The ransom is an outstanding expression of Jehovah's love and mercy and of his fidelity to his exalted standards of justice (*it-2* 19)

Christ's sacrifice was truly the greatest expression of love ever made (*w87* 2/15 12-14)

Jehovah showed his great love by sending his only-begotten Son (Joh 3:16)

Jesus demonstrated his love by obediently accepting the assignment of becoming mankind's Redeemer (Joh 15:13)

Jehovah desires all to attain to repentance and thus be saved (Ro 2:4; 2Pe 3:9)

He has kept the narrow door to salvation open to all who qualify (Lu 13:23, 24)

### **WHAT WE MUST DO TO BE SAVED** (10 min.)

Many religions teach an oversimplified view of salvation

Some say that simple mental acceptance of Jesus is all that is required (*g90* 5/22 14)

Others hold to the belief of once saved, always saved (*w92* 5/1 15)

Still others teach universal salvation, the idea that God will extend a general amnesty to *all* sinners (*rs* 356-8)

The Bible outlines specific requirements for salvation

First, we must obtain accurate knowledge of God and Jesus (Joh 17:3)

This should lead us to put faith in God (Heb 11:6)

Faith will move us to repent of our sins and turn around in our course of life (Ac 3:19)

Faith will also move us to share what we learn with others, recommending the way of the truth both by our words and by our actions (Mt 5:15, 16; Ro 10:10)

Love for God will move us to dedicate ourselves to him

In private prayer, we tell Jehovah that we are giving ourselves to him to do his will (Heb 10:7)

After making a dedication, we should be baptized (Mt 28:19, 20)

Baptism is for those who are old enough to make a decision to serve God (Ac 2:41)

**ENDURANCE IS VITAL TO OUR SALVATION** (10 min.)

After we have made a dedication, Jehovah will expect us to live up to our promise (Ec 5:4, 5)

Endurance is vital, for the Devil will try to stop us from serving Jehovah (Mt 24:13; 1Pe 5:8)

Endurance involves not only struggling with obstacles but also adhering to “a set way” of right works (Ps 50:23)

We must persist in being doers of the word, not just hearers (Lu 6:46-49; Jas 1:22-25)

The course of endurance is not easy (Mt 16:24; w93 9/15 9-11)

Sometimes we must endure with tears (Ps 126:5, 6)

Even if this is so, it is crucial that we remain steadfast, confident that Jehovah is aware of our endurance and values it (Heb 6:10)

**WE CAN BE SAVED** (4 min.)

Jehovah knows how to deliver people of godly devotion out of trial (1Co 10:13; 2Pe 2:9)

He saved Noah and his family through the global Deluge (2Pe 2:5)

God saved the Israelites and a vast mixed company of non-Israelites from Egypt (Ex 6:6)

He saved Christians from Jerusalem’s destruction in 70 C.E. (Mt 24:15, 22)

Jehovah can also preserve us through the destruction of Satan’s world (Ps 37:29, 34)

Salvation is possible for any who accept God’s provisions for life (De 30:11-14)

Draw close to God in prayer (Php 4:6, 7)

Study his Word regularly (Ps 1:1-3; 94:19)

Stick close to the congregation (Heb 13:17)

All who wish to take life’s water free can be saved (Re 22:17)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DIE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize that death is contrary to God's purpose and that the dead are unconscious. Warmly build appreciation for Jehovah's loving arrangement of the resurrection. Help audience see that heartfelt obedience to God is the key to life without end

### **WHY SHOULD THE QUESTION OF THE HEREAFTER CONCERN US?** (4 min.)

Man was made to live not to die

Scientists find aging and death a puzzle (*g95* 10/22 4-5)

The desire to live on is inherent in man (Ec 3:11)

All humans are dying, including our loved ones (Read Ecclesiastes 3:19, 20)

Death causes pain and suffering to the survivors (Ge 37:33-35; 2Sa 1:11, 12)

Only natural to be concerned about what happens when we die

We need to ask:

What is death?

How did it come about?

Does something in us survive the death of the body?

Is there a future for the dead?

### **WHAT IS DEATH?** (6 min.)

Medically, death may be viewed in different ways (*it-1* 596; *it-2* 246-7)

When a person's heart and lungs stop functioning, he is considered clinically dead

Such a person can be revived if heart and lungs start working again in time

When body cells in life-sustaining organs die, one is biologically dead

Life-force ceases to function in cells, and the dead person cannot be revived

Simply put, death is the opposite of life (*rs* 98)

Death means that all functions of life cease

The Bible clearly describes the condition of the dead

The dead are unconscious (Read Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6)

Death is likened to sleep (Ps 13:3; Joh 11:11-14; *it-1* 597)

The dead are powerless (Isa 26:14)

At death, the person ceases to exist (Ge 3:19; Ps 146:4)

### **HOW DID OLD AGE AND DEATH COME ABOUT?** (10 min.)

Science has no satisfactory answers to what causes aging and death (*g95* 10/22 8-9)

Jehovah God reveals the reason for old age and death (Ps 36:9; 100:3; *ie* 21)

The first human pair were created perfect (Ge 1:31; De 32:4)

God purposed for man to live forever (Ge 2:15)

Obedience was the key to everlasting life (Read Genesis 2:16, 17)

Eve disobeyed God at Satan's prompting, and Adam joined her (Ge 3:1-6; Re 12:9)

This made them sinners (1Jo 3:4)

Consequently, they lost the prospect for everlasting life and began dying (Ge 3:19; Ro 6:23)

Jehovah expelled the first couple from their Paradise home (Ge 3:23, 24)

They passed on to their offspring the death-dealing defect in their bodies (Job 14:4)

Having inherited a sinful condition from our first parents, we today grow old and die (Read Romans 5:12)

### **DO WE HAVE AN IMMORTAL SOUL THAT SURVIVES DEATH?** (10 min.)

What does the Bible teach about the soul? (*ie* 19-20)

The Hebrew word for "soul" usually refers to the entire living being (Read Genesis 2:7) (Jg 16:16; Ps 119:28)

The Greek word for "soul" often refers to the whole person (Joh 12:27; 1Th 5:14; 1Pe 3:20)

The word "soul" also applies to animals (Ge 1:24)

At times, "soul" refers to the life that a person or an animal possesses (Ex 4:19; Pr 12:10; Mt 20:28)

The Bible never describes soul as some immaterial part of a living creature that survives the death of the body

Since "soul" often refers to the person himself, the soul is not immortal (Ge 2:7; Eze 18:4; Mr 3:4; *ie* 22)

Christendom adopted the teaching of the immortality of the soul from Greek philosophy (*ie* 14-16)

When a person dies, "his spirit goes out" (Read Psalm 146:4) (*ie* 24)

"Spirit" refers to the life-force sustained by breathing, which is active in all living creatures (Ge 7:22)

The spirit goes back to God (Ec 12:7)

Only God can restore the life-force, causing a person to come back to life (Ps 68:20)

Will God bring to life our loved ones who have died? (Job 14:14)

**A SURE HOPE FOR THE DEAD** (10 min.)

The Greek word for “resurrection” literally means “standing up again” (*ie* 25-6))

Being infinite in wisdom and perfect in memory, Jehovah can bring a person back to life (Job 12:13)

God empowered prophets Elijah and Elisha to perform resurrections (1Ki 17:17-24; 2Ki 4:32-37)

Jesus Christ resurrected Lazarus (Joh 11:38-44)

Jesus made a promise that all in Jehovah’s memory will be resurrected (Joh 5:28, 29; Ac 24:15; *ie* 26-7)

Resurrection is an expression of God’s love (Joh 3:16)

A small number are resurrected to life in heaven to rule with Christ (Lu 22:28-30; Re 5:9, 10; 14:1, 3)

The vast majority of those who have died will be resurrected to life on earth (Read Psalm 37:29; Revelation 21:3, 4)

Obedient mankind will have the earth as an eternal home (Ps 115:16)

Aging and death will be no more

**A UNIQUE PROSPECT FOR THOSE LIVING IN THE TIME OF THE END** (5 min.)

Very soon Jehovah is going to cleanse the earth of wickedness (Pr 2:21, 22; *ie* 30-1))

We are living in the last days (2Ti 3:1-5)

The survivors of the great tribulation need never experience death (Joh 11:26; Re 7:9-14)

If death overtakes us now, we have the marvelous hope of a resurrection

What must you do now if you want everlasting life in Paradise on earth?

Take in accurate knowledge of God’s will and purposes (Joh 17:3)

Apply what you learn, and build faith (Heb 11:6)

Regularly associate with fellow believers (Heb 10:24, 25)

Share with others what you learn from the Bible (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20)

You too can look forward to everlasting life in a cleansed earth

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## IS HELL REALLY A PLACE OF FIERY TORMENT?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize that Jehovah, as a God of love, has taken the necessary steps to restore obedient mankind to a good relationship with him. Do not ridicule the doctrine of eternal torment; instead, warmly appeal to the audience, helping them to reason on the clear teachings of the Bible

### **WHY WE SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT HELL** (3 min.)

What we believe about hell affects our view of God and our relationship with him

Interestingly, in 1999, Pope John Paul II stated that the word “hell” indicates, not a place, but “the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God” (g00 3/8 29)

Still, many both inside and outside Christendom believe that hell is a place where the wicked are eternally punished and, according to some, tormented by fire (rs 169)

Those who subscribe to such a belief may serve God out of morbid fear rather than out of love (1Jo 4:18, 19)

Such belief can adversely affect our desire to draw close to God (Jas 4:8)

To learn the truth about hell, we need to answer the following questions:

What is the condition of the dead?

What is hell, and why is there so much confusion about it?

What hope is there for those who are in hell?

### **WHAT IS THE CONDITION OF THE DEAD?** (5 min.)

The ancient Hebrews did not believe that a person is conscious after death

Instead, they believed death to be the ceasing of all functions of life (Ps 146:4; Ec 9:5, 10; rs 98)

When Adam sinned, his punishment was, not eternal torment, but a return to a state of nonexistence (Ge 2:17; 3:19)

When a person dies, a disembodied soul does not depart to some netherworld

Rather, the Bible teaches that the soul, or person, simply dies (Isa 53:12; Eze 18:4)

### **WHAT IS HELL?** (5 min.)

In many Bible translations, “hell” is used to render the Hebrew word *She'ol* and the Greek word *Ha'des* (*it-1* 1086; *it-2* 922)

*A Compendious Hebrew Lexicon* states that Sheol is “the common receptacle or region of the dead” (*it-2* 922)

Therefore, hell is mankind’s common grave, not a place of fiery torment (*it-1* 1016)

Because Adam sinned, his future offspring would go to the Bible hell, the common grave, where no life or consciousness exists (Ro 5:12)

Since hell is simply the grave, at death both wicked and righteous ones go there (Ge 37:35; Job 14:13; Ac 2:25-27)

### **WHY IS THERE CONFUSION ABOUT HELL?** (17 min.)

Pre-Christian pagans originated the teaching of torment after death (rs 175)

Early evidence of belief in a fiery hell is found in the religion of ancient Egypt

Ancient Babylonian and Assyrian beliefs paint a mythical netherworld as full of horrors

Dating back to sixth century B.C.E., Buddhism has both hot and cold hells

Does not the Bible speak of “the fiery Gehenna”? (Mt 5:22; rs 173)

Reference to Gehenna appears 12 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures, and the word is often associated with fire

For example, Jesus spoke of the casting of one’s “whole body” into Gehenna (Mt 5:29, 30)

He also admonished his followers to “be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna” (Mt 10:28)

The Valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) was located outside the walls of Jerusalem and was the site of abhorrent idolatrous worship, including child sacrifice

By the first century C.E., Gehenna was used as an incinerator for the refuse of Jerusalem, even the bodies of dead animals and executed criminals being thrown there

Since living humans were not put there, Gehenna is, not a place of fiery torment, but a fitting symbol of everlasting destruction

Does not the Bible speak of torment with “fire and sulphur” (“fire and brimstone,” *KJ*)? (Re 14:9-11; 20:10)

Since the dead are not conscious, this must be symbolic

In the Bible, ‘torment’ can result from humiliating exposure (Re 11:10; rs 172-3)

For some, another point of confusion centers on Jesus’ parable of a rich man who was “existing in torments” while in Hades (“hell,” *KJ*) (Lu 16:23)

Is this account literal, or is it an illustration of something else?

In a footnote, *The Jerusalem Bible* acknowledges that it is a “parable in story form without reference to any historical personage” (*rs* 174)

What does the parable portray? (*rs* 175)

The rich man represents the Pharisees (Lu 16:14, 22)

Lazarus represents the common Jewish people who repented and became followers of Jesus (Mt 21:28-32)

The deaths symbolize a change in circumstances (Lu 16:16)

Formerly despised ones came into a position of divine favor

Seemingly favored ones were rejected by God and tormented by the judgment messages delivered by those whom they previously despised (Ac 5:33; 7:54)

Bible translators have allowed their personal beliefs to color their work instead of being consistent in their rendering of Sheol and Hades (*rs* 170-1; *it*-1 1086-7)

The real roots of the God-dishonoring hellfire doctrine go deeper than human ideas (*rs* 175)

Satan the Devil, whom Jesus called “the father of the lie,” conspires to slander the God of love, painting him as cruel and vindictive (Joh 8:44)

#### **WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR THOSE WHO ARE IN HELL?** (12 min.)

The doctrine of eternal torment is not compatible with God’s personality (Jer 7:31; *rs* 174)

Death is the penalty for sin (Ro 6:23)

Since death acquits one from sin, it would not be within God’s justice to add eternal torment (De 32:4; Ro 6:7)

God’s judgment of mankind will take place at the final test after the Thousand Year Reign of Jesus Christ (Re 20:7-9, 12, 13; *rs* 338)

Jehovah, the God of love, will undo all the woes of the past (Heb 2:14; *rs* 396; *dg* 27-8)

Those in hell will be released; Adamic death and Sheol (Hades) thus destroyed (Re 20:13-15; *it*-2 923)

Earthly resurrection of those in common grave of mankind will enable them to receive curative benefits of Christ’s rule

These will be taught the truth and given opportunity to live forever in Paradise (Lu 23:43; Ac 24:15)

Earth will be a paradise, as purposed from the start (Ge 1:28; *rs* 285)

Satan, his demons, and all who willfully rebel will be everlastingly destroyed (Re 20:7-10)

#### **WHAT MUST WE DO?** (3 min.)

God has allowed humans to testify that he is a God of love rather than of torment (*ju* 10-12)

Jehovah has extended to us the privilege of becoming his Witnesses

Those who have been enslaved by the doctrine of torment after death must draw close to God and follow his Son (Mt 28:19, 20)

Thus, they can be released from fear of the God-dishonoring teaching that Jehovah torments the dead, who have been acquitted of their sins by death

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## IS THE TRINITY A SCRIPTURAL TEACHING?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show what the Scriptures reveal about the true identity of Jehovah, Jesus, and the holy spirit. Do not ridicule those who believe in the Trinity. Appeal to their sense of reason and love for truth

### **WHY ONE SHOULD EXAMINE THE TRINITY TEACHING** (6 min.)

The Trinity has long been a subject of controversy; supporters say it is founded on the Bible, critics say it is not

Doctrine states that there are three divine persons—the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost

Each is said to be eternal, to be almighty, to be God, and yet together being but one God (*w91 11/1 21; rs 405*)

Is central doctrine of many religions of Christendom (*w91 11/1 19*)

Some non-Christian religions teach a similar doctrine (*sh 115*)

In the past, people were even put to death for denying the Trinity doctrine (*w87 6/15 4; w84 2/1 3*)

Important for us to know whether teaching is Scriptural or not

God requires worship with truth (Read John 4:24)

Need to know whether Trinity doctrine meets this requirement

Can determine this by comparing the doctrine with God's Word of truth (Read John 17:17)

Bible reveals truth about God, Jesus, and the holy spirit

### **ONLY JEHOVAH GOD IS ALMIGHTY** (12 min.)

Bible states that God is almighty and has a personal name (Ge 17:1; Ex 18:11; Isa 42:8; Re 16:7)

Nowhere in Bible is anyone but Jehovah called Almighty (*it-1 970*)

As Creator of all things, Jehovah is uncreated, without beginning (Re 4:11; 10:6; *it-2 13*)

Bible describes him as being "from time indefinite" (Ps 90:2; 93:2)

Only Jehovah is both without beginning and without end (Ps 90:2; 1Ti 1:17)

Both Hebrew and Greek Scriptures state that God is one, a unique Being (*g78 11/22 28*)

"There is no other besides him" (De 4:35; Isa 45:5; *ti 13; it-2 511*)

Even after Jesus' ascension into heaven, apostles continued to present same picture (1Co 8:4-6; 1Pe 1:3; 1Jo 2:1)

Accordingly, L. L. Paine, professor of ecclesiastical history, notes: "The Old Testament is strictly monotheistic. God is a single personal being. The idea that a trinity is to be found there . . . is utterly without foundation. . . . There is no break between the Old Testament and the New. The monotheistic tradition is continued." (*ti 12-13*)

What the Bible says about God—is alone almighty, is alone without beginning, is one God—contrasts with Trinity teaching

### **JESUS—EXALTED BUT NOT EQUAL** (12 min.)

Jesus occupies an exalted position (Php 2:9-11)

Is described as "Mighty God" but never as Almighty (Isa 9:6)

Throughout Greek Scriptures, Jesus is referred to as God's Son but not once as God the Son (*w88 6/1 11-12*)

God himself testified that Jesus is His Son (Mr 1:11; Lu 9:35)

Jesus also stated that he is God's Son (Joh 3:16, 18; 10:36)

Others gave the same testimony (Mt 14:33; 27:54; Joh 1:34)

Jesus called his Father "the *only* true God" (Joh 17:3)

Jesus had prehuman existence but had "origin," or beginning (Mic 5:2; Joh 3:13; *w98 6/15 24; it-2 52*)

Was 'beginning of creation' by God (Re 3:14; *ti 14*)

Is referred to as "firstborn" and "only-begotten Son" (Col 1:15, 16; 1Jo 4:9; *ti 15-16; rs 408*)

Unlike Father, who 'does not die,' Jesus was put to death (Hab 1:12)

Jesus said: "I and the Father are one" (Joh 10:30)

Oneness as to purpose and action (Joh 17:20-23; *ti 24; rs 424*)

Just as Christians belong to Jesus, so he belongs to God (1Co 3:23)

Father and Son not equal parts in one Godhead (Joh 14:28; 1Co 11:3)

In his vision of heavens, Stephen did not see Jesus as being part of triune God but as "at God's right hand" (Ac 7:55, 56)

Two separate individuals were seen (*w88 6/1 14*)

Thus, Jesus is not part of one God (1Co 8:6)

Trinity doctrine conflicts with what Scriptures teach about Jesus—is not almighty, had a beginning, is separate from Jehovah God

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS, NOT A PERSON, BUT A FORCE** (8 min.)

Nowhere in the Bible is the holy spirit described as a person

Daniel in vision sees Father, Son, angels, but not holy spirit as a person (Da 7:9, 10, 13; *w87 6/15 5*)

Stephen saw God's glory and the resurrected Christ, but no holy spirit is mentioned (Ac 7:55; *w88 6/1 14*)

Apostle John describes heavenly vision, depicting Jehovah and Jesus as persons but not holy spirit as a person (Re 4:2; 5:5, 6; *re 76, 83-5; w87 6/15 5*)

The holy spirit has no personal name (*w91 1/15 4*)

Scriptures list holy spirit with other impersonal things (Ac 6:5; 2Co 6:4-6; *w91 1/15 4*)

Bible describes holy spirit as God's active force

When baptized, Jesus received holy spirit (Mr 1:10)

It was the spirit and power of Jehovah that enabled Jesus to do miraculous healing, raise the dead, and control the forces of nature (Lu 5:17; 8:22-25, 49-56; *g99 1/8 27; it-1 1056; it-2 1020*)

Holy spirit is called "God's finger" because it is God's instrument for accomplishing his will (Ex 31:18; compare Matthew 12:28 with Luke 11:20) (*w87 6/15 5; si 10; it-1 832*)

Active force used by God for a variety of purposes (Ps 33:6; 143:10; Isa 30:27, 28; 2Pe 1:20, 21)

Trinity doctrine is irreconcilable with what the Scriptures reveal about the holy spirit

### **MANY BIBLE TEXTS REFUTE THE TRINITY** (4 min.)

At Mark 13:32, Jesus said concerning day and hour of the great tribulation, "nobody knows . . . but the Father"

The Father and Son cannot be equal, the Son not knowing all that the Father knows

Although Trinitarians claim that the Son was limited by his humanity from knowing, they still cannot explain why the holy spirit does not know

Jesus stated at Luke 10:22: "Who the Son is no one knows but the Father; and who the Father is, no one knows but the Son"

Again, since the holy spirit is not a person, it does not know

To say that the Trinity doctrine was later received by tradition, although not taught in the Scriptures, contradicts Paul's words (Read Galatians 1:8)

Clearly, the Bible refutes all facets of the Trinity doctrine

### **ETERNAL BLESSINGS AWAIT THOSE WORSHIPING GOD WITH TRUTH** (3 min.)

We should hate falsehood and love truth (Ps 119:163)

Reject, therefore, falsehood of Trinity doctrine and embrace truth about Jehovah's unique Godship (Ps 86:11)

Through his Word, Jehovah, our "Grand Instructor," shows us the true way ("this is the way") of worshiping him (Isa 30:20, 21)

By adding "walk in it," he urges us to act

Doing God's will by following this admonition, worshiping him with truth, leads to eternal blessings (1Jo 2:17)

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## THE EARTH WILL REMAIN FOREVER

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate both God's gift of the earth and the unchangeableness of his purpose to have a perfect human family dwell on it forever. Emphasize the nearness of that reality, showing that many now living can share in transforming the earth into a permanent Paradise home, to Jehovah's praise

### **THE EARTH—GOD'S BEAUTIFUL GIFT TO MANKIND** (5 min.)

God created the earth and pronounced it "very good" (Ge 1:1, 31)

God gave the earth to mankind as a permanent home (Ps 115:16)

The earth is perfectly and specifically designed for human habitation (Isa 45:18; *g95* 4/22 28; *ce* 130-1)

Scientists have been moved to praise the astonishing design of this gift, and astronauts have described this one-of-a-kind gift as a "jewel in space" (*g95* 11/22 8-10; *ce* 129)

### **HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THE EARTH IS TO BE OUR ETERNAL HOME?** (7 min.)

The earth stands "even to time indefinite," that is, forever (Ec 1:4)

It is to be a flawless, eternal home, capable of sustaining life of humans, animals, and other living things

Designed to last forever, with complex cycles and mechanisms upon which life depends (*ce* 140-1)

God's 'covenant of day and night' provides indirect proof that our earth will remain forever (Jer 33:20, 25, 26; Ge 1:14-19)

His original purpose for Adam and Eve was never abandoned (Ge 1:27, 28; Isa 55:11; *rs* 116; *it-1* 667-8)

### **IS THE EARTH DAMAGED BEYOND REPAIR? WILL IT BE BURNED UP?** (14 min.)

International alarm has been sounded over environmental abuses worldwide (*g97* 1/8 3-4; *w91* 4/1 6-7)

Pollution and other consequences of selfishness are threatening the earth's ability to sustain life (*g95* 10/8 31; *g93* 10/22 11; *g93* 11/8 28)

Population explosion and increased demand for consumer goods have exacerbated problems (*g88* 5/8 5-6)

The environmental damage that has resulted from man's mismanagement of the earth is not beyond repair

Earth's ecosystems have enormous powers of recovery (*w98* 6/15 5)

Jehovah designed the earth with the ability to clean and repair itself (*g90* 5/8 10-11)

Abuse of the earth reveals a deeper spiritual crisis—a selfish disregard by humans for their own progeny and for the Creator's purpose (De 32:5; Ec 7:29; *g93* 1/22 9; *g88* 5/8 7-8)

God will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth" (Re 11:18)

Never will the magnificently designed earth be destroyed, burned up, or made uninhabitable (Ps 93:1; Isa 66:1; Mt 5:35)

That would be unreasonable and would contradict God's stated purpose (Ps 37:29; Jer 27:5)

Jehovah has a quarrel, not with the earth, but with its despoilers, who are soon to be destroyed (Ps 37:9; *g93* 1/22 10-11)

Such Bible expressions as heaven and earth being "reserved unto fire," and the earth "shall be burned up" are often misunderstood as indicating that God will destroy the earth (2Pe 3:7, 10, *KJ*; *g97* 1/8 27; *rs* 113-6)

These expressions are figurative, or symbolic, pointing to the destruction of ungodly human society on earth, as took place during Flood of Noah's day (Ge 6:5-7; 2Pe 3:5-7)

God will save the earth from ruin by destroying this wicked system and abyssing Satan (Re 16:14, 16; 20:1, 2; *rs* 437)

Happily, there will be righteous survivors, who will form the nucleus of "a new earth" (2Pe 3:13; Pr 2:21, 22)

### **THE RESTORATION OF A PARADISE EARTH IS CERTAIN** (12 min.)

God has the power to bring about the needed reversal of conditions, and he will do so shortly (Ro 16:20; Re 21:1-3)

Jehovah has no need to change his original purpose, unlike frail and imperfect humans, whose lives are affected by "time and unforeseen occurrence" (Ec 9:11; Isa 14:24; Mal 3:6)

Though his purpose was interrupted temporarily, it will have certain success (*w98* 6/15 8)

God will first deal with Satan the Devil, the chief desecrater and polluter of the earth (Re 20:1-3; *g88* 5/8 9)

With Satan's influence gone, a glorious new era will begin for the survivors, who will have the joyful task of transforming the earth into a beautiful paradise home (*dg* 22-3)

Wickedness and suffering will be things of the past (Ps 145:16; Re 21:5; *kl* 6-11; *pr* 29-30)

Untold millions—Armageddon survivors, resurrected ones, children yet to be born—will inherit the cleansed earth (Mt 5:5; Joh 5:28, 29; *g87* 7/22 9)

Because of Jesus' ransom, all will have the thrilling prospect of never dying (Joh 11:25, 26; *kl* 68-9)

Christ, with his 144,000 corulers in heaven, will see to it that the prayer for God's will to 'take place upon earth' will be realized (Mt 6:10)

Without any question, the earth will remain forever, and it will be inhabited by obedient humans, as divinely mandated by Jehovah (*w84* 2/15 4)

**GOD'S EARTHLY FOOTSTOOL WILL REMAIN FOREVER—SO CAN YOU (7 min.)**

Jehovah is the infallible Purposer; whatever he mandates will 'prove to be and will have certain success' (Isa 55:10, 11)

The defection of Adam and Eve could not thwart God's purpose to have a populated, paradisaic earth; he would accomplish it without them (Ge 1:28; Nu 23:19)

During Christ's approaching Millennial Reign, Edenic conditions will cover the entire globe, which will be peopled by obedient and happy descendants of the first human pair

For all eternity, the earth will bear a distinction that no other planet will ever enjoy (*ws* 184 par. 10)

God is now gathering peace-loving people worldwide into an international brotherhood, the foundation of a new earthly society, which is to remain forever (*w98* 4/15 19; *dg* 28-31)

Jehovah's Witnesses are happy to help you to learn and to do what is necessary to become part of it (Joh 17:3; 1Jo 2:15-17)

Our beautiful planet Earth is here to stay

It will remain forever—and so can you!

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## IS THERE REALLY A DEVIL?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Using reason and the Bible, help audience to understand the reality of the Devil. Stress how we can protect ourselves against his schemes, and show the benefits of doing so

### **VIEWS PEOPLE HAVE ABOUT THE DEVIL** (5 min.)

Many today believe that the Devil is “no more real than a child’s imaginary monster” (*g90* 1/8 12-13)

Popular view depicts Devil as having horns and tail and carrying a pitchfork

Some modern theologians consider Devil a product of myth, a symbolic personification of evil (*w92* 12/1 32)

Atheists reason that there is no God and likewise, no Devil (Ps 10:4; 14:1)

Christians believe that the Devil is a spirit person, having the whole world under his control (1Jo 5:19)

### **HOW WE KNOW THAT THE DEVIL REALLY EXISTS** (10 min.)

Bible portrays Devil, not as a personification of evil, but as truly an evil person (*rs* 361-6)

The Bible is chief source of evidence that the Devil exists

It uses the word “Satan” 52 times, “Devil” 33 times

Job chapters 1 and 2 recount disputes between Jehovah and the Devil

Jesus repeatedly spoke of the Devil (Mt 25:41; Lu 22:31)

Temptation of Jesus proves that the Devil really exists (Mt 4:1-11; *w88* 9/1 13-14)

Christ’s apostles identified Devil as a person (Eph 6:11; 1Pe 5:8; Re 2:10)

Scriptures explain origin and schemes of the Devil (*rs* 363)

Devil was created perfect; he rebelled in a quest for power to rule over others (*dg* 13-14)

Said playwright Eugène Ionesco: “History would be beyond comprehension if we were to leave out the demonic element”

### **THE DEVIL’S METHODS OF OPERATION** (13 min.)

We are not unaware of the Devil’s subtle designs (2Co 2:11)

Satan appeals to desire of flesh, desire of eyes, and showy display of one’s means of life (Read 1 John 2:16)

Desire of flesh can lead one to immorality

Israelites were drawn into fornication with Moabite women (Nu 25:1-3; 1Co 10:8, 11; *it-2* 419)

Desire of eyes and showy display of one’s means of life can lead people to become slaves to materialistic pursuits (*w86* 5/1 11-12)

Gambling, drunkenness, tobacco and drug addiction are part of Devil’s subtle designs (*rq* 20-1)

TV, videos, movies, music, and the Internet can serve Satan’s purpose

False religion is a snare of the Devil (2Co 4:4; 11:14)

Fascination with the occult, independent thinking, and fear of man are all part of Devil’s “crafty acts” (Eph 6:11, *ftn.*)

### **HOW WE CAN RESIST THE DEVIL AND REMAIN FAITHFUL TO GOD** (12 min.)

Key to successful resistance to the Devil found in James’ twofold counsel (Read James 4:7, 8)

To “oppose the Devil,” must “hate what is bad” (Ps 97:10)

Hate what may seem pleasurable by thinking about the consequences

Halfheartedness and indecision can be deadly

To oppose the Devil, must be alert, watchful

“Draw close to God” through prayer, obedience, and faith (*w97* 11/15 20)

Must take a stand against the Devil and remain “solid in the faith” (Read 1 Peter 5:8, 9)

This requires self-examination to see if we have a weakness that the Devil could exploit (*w88* 9/1 15-18)

Control what you allow into your home through TV and videos (Eph 4:27)

Put on “the complete suit of armor from God” (Eph 6:11)

Includes faith, righteousness, peace, ability to make practical use of the Word of God

Schedule time for daily Bible reading and reflection (Ps 1:1, 2)

Make prayer a regular part of your life (1Pe 3:12; 1Jo 5:14)

Keep abreast of current publications of faithful slave class

Attend and participate in congregation meetings (Heb 10:23-25)

Have a meaningful share in field ministry (Mt 24:14)

Help others come to know of God’s promises for a new world, free of demonic influence

Teach people how to protect themselves now and how to avoid the many snares of the Devil (2Co 2:11)

**BLESSINGS RESULT IF WE OPPOSE THE DEVIL** (5 min.)

Taking a stand against the Devil results in strengthening the Christian brotherhood (1Pe 5:9)

Knowing that the Devil wants to destroy unity of God's people should increase our determination to serve loyally

Living a godly life brings peace of mind and happiness (Php 4:6, 7)

Also brings Jehovah's approval (Pr 27:11)

We can be among those who will survive "great tribulation" (Re 7:14)

Enjoy prospect of everlasting life in new world of righteousness as we experience grand fulfillment of God's purpose (Re 21:3, 4)

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## THE RESURRECTION—VICTORY OVER DEATH!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Build heartfelt appreciation for Jehovah's provision of the resurrection. Emphasize the reality of the resurrection hope and how it should move us to fine works

### **WHY A VICTORY OVER DEATH IS NEEDED** (5 min.)

Religion has often portrayed death as a friend, a mere rite of passage between stages of existence

The Bible portrays death as an enemy—"the last enemy" (1Co 15:26)

Death often cuts down men and women in the prime of life

Death brings pain, shock, grief, loneliness, confusion, and a sense of loss to bereaved friends and family

Death is "the end of all mankind," eventually swallowing up everyone (Ec 7:1, 2)

Despite the efforts of science to battle it, 'death still rules as king' over mankind (Ro 5:17)

Mankind sorely needs a victory over death

### **IS VICTORY OVER DEATH POSSIBLE?** (15 min.)

In order to answer that question, we must first know this enemy, death

Fallacies and superstitions regarding death have enslaved millions of people (Heb 2:15)

The Bible says that death is simply the opposite of life, that the dead have no conscious existence (Ps 146:4; Ec 9:5, 10)

Death is thus compared to sleep (Ps 13:3; Joh 11:11-14)

No "immortal" soul survives death (Eze 18:4)

Man does not possess a soul, he *is* a soul! (Ge 2:7)

When a man dies, he dies as a soul, or person

Bible reveals ultimate cause of death

Man was not made to die; Adam was given prospect of living forever (Ge 2:15-17; 3:22)

Death came about because of Adam's disobedience and spread to all of his descendants (Ge 3:1-6, 19; Ro 5:12)

Our situation is not hopeless

God promises to "redeem" mankind from death, to "swallow up death" (Ho 13:14; Isa 25:8)

What is the resurrection?

Greek word translated "resurrection" literally means "a standing up again" (*w*94 10/15 5)

Resurrection thus involves raising a person from the lifeless condition of death (*w*99 4/1 18)

Jehovah God can easily remember all the details of a person's identity (Mt 10:30)

### **JESUS SHED LIGHT ON THE RESURRECTION** (15 min.)

Ancient men of faith like Job had only a partial understanding of what the resurrection involved

However, Job expressed faith in the resurrection (Job 14:14, 15; *w*98 7/1 13)

Jesus Christ shed light on the resurrection (2Ti 1:10; *w*98 7/1 13-14)

Promised heavenly Kingdom to a "little flock," numbering just 144,000 (Lu 12:32; Re 14:1)

Jesus inaugurated way into heaven by dying and experiencing heavenly resurrection (Ac 2:32; Heb 10:19, 20)

The 144,000 experience a similar resurrection (Ro 6:5)

There is no reuniting of a soul with a physical body—a teaching derived from Greek philosophy (*w*98 7/1 11-12)

They are given incorruptible spirit bodies (1Co 15:43, 44; Php 3:20, 21)

Vast majority of 144,000 have already experienced resurrection; only a remnant remain

Jesus said that he would also bring salvation to "other sheep," who will dwell on earth in Paradise (Joh 10:16; Lu 23:43)

Performed resurrections as a foregleam of what he will do during his Kingdom rule

Resurrection of son of widow of Nain demonstrated compassion Jehovah and Jesus feel toward those who have lost loved ones (Lu 7:11-17; *w*95 3/1 7-8)

Jesus promised to resurrect all in memorial tombs (Joh 5:28, 29)

Includes those who have pursued a righteous course

Includes millions who died before having opportunity to learn and apply Bible truths (Ac 24:15)

Reasonable to conclude that resurrection will be orderly, those having died most recently being among the first ones resurrected (1Co 15:23; *w*98 7/1 23)

No doubt preparations will be made to care for needs of resurrected ones (Isa 65:21, 22; Lu 8:55)

What a thrill to be alive and experience return of loved ones and faithful men of old!

**BENEFITS OF THE RESURRECTION** (10 min.)

The resurrection is one means by which Jesus will “break up the works of the Devil” and bring about fulfillment of God’s original purpose for humans to enjoy eternal life in Paradise (1Jo 3:8)

The hope of a resurrection brings benefits even now

Strengthens us to deal with illness and the prospect of dying (*w94* 7/1 31)

Helps us cope with loss of loved ones (1Th 4:13; *g96* 8/22 26-7)

Gives us courage in the face of the worst adversities (Mt 10:28; *yb99* 68, 144-6, 188-91)

Helps us avoid having a pessimistic, live-for-today attitude (1Co 15:32, 58; *w97* 8/15 12)

By reading the Bible daily and meditating on it, we strengthen our faith in God’s promise of a resurrection (Jude 20, 21)

If we make a good name with God, we are assured of a resurrection (Ec 7:1)

God ‘yearns’ to see faithful departed ones again (Job 14:15)

Like Paul we can say: “Thanks to God, for he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!” (1Co 15:57)

By means of the resurrection, God gains the victory over death

May faith in it move you to become “steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord” (1Co 15:58)

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# THE ORIGIN OF HUMANS—DOES IT MATTER WHAT YOU BELIEVE?

## *Note to the speaker*

Help the audience to appreciate that the teaching of evolution demoralizes humans and offers no hope. Show that the Bible expresses the Creator's view of humans, that it elevates our lives and our thinking, and that it offers a genuine hope

### **THERE ARE VARIOUS BELIEFS ABOUT OUR ORIGIN** (5 min.)

Theory of evolution comes in many versions: natural selection and survival of the fittest, mutations, punctuated equilibrium (*ce* 21-3, 99)

Many Catholic and Protestant clergy accept evolution (*g95* 8/8 5; *w86* 4/1 12, 19)

Bible teaches that we were created “in God's image,” able from the outset to reflect Creator's attributes (Read Genesis 1:27)

Unlike animals, Adam was a “son of God” (Lu 3:38)

Evolution contradicts Bible's account of creation and man's fall into sin

Jesus, who was present at creation, firmly believed the Genesis account, even quoting from it (Pr 8:22-31; Mt 19:4-6; Joh 8:58)

His genealogy goes back to a *man*—Adam (Lu 3:23, 38)

### **OUR BELIEFS ABOUT OUR ORIGIN INFLUENCE US** (7 min.)

Evolution equates humans with animals, affecting the way people think about themselves (*g98* 6/22 7; *g95* 8/8 5-7)

Historians admit that evolutionary thinking changed human attitudes and encouraged animallike behavior (*g98* 6/22 4; *g95* 8/8 5-8)

Evolutionary psychology tries to explain human behavior in terms of evolution theory (*g98* 6/22 3-9)

Premise is that life's primary purpose is to propagate genes by whatever means

Immorality is seen as natural

Parental love is viewed as a gene-inspired ploy to ensure survival of offspring

Some self-help books are based on evolutionary psychology

Yet, even evolutionists fear the possible social consequences of the new psychology

Christians must watch that they do not fall prey to empty deception (Col 2:8)

### **MAJOR FLAWS IN THE EVOLUTION MODEL** (10 min.)

Evolution does not satisfy man's quest for the meaning of life (*g98* 6/22 5-6; *ct* 71-2)

Questions about our marvelous body, especially our brain, remain unanswered (Give examples; *g98* 6/22 6; *ct* 49-72)

Morality and conscience remain a puzzle for evolutionists (*ct* 68-9)

Humans are profoundly distressed by death (*g98* 6/22 7-8)

Darwin predicted that humans “will tend to progress towards perfection” (*g95* 8/8 6)

This prediction has proved to be false

Morals have deteriorated; wars and atrocities have caused unprecedented loss of life, especially since 1914 (*g95* 8/8 7)

In recent times, horrible crimes have been committed in the name of ethnic cleansing (*g98* 10/22 3; *w95* 10/1 5)

### **THE BIBLE'S ANSWERS SATISFY** (10 min.)

Bible recognizes that humans have some things in common with animals

Both humans and animals are souls (Read Genesis 1:20, 21, 24; 2:7) (*rs* 375)

When souls die, man as well as beast go back to the dust, or unconscious nonexistence (Ec 3:19, 20; 9:5)

Unique characteristics set humans apart from animals

Since humans were created in God's image, they can display godly qualities of love, justice, wisdom, mercy (Pr 19:22; Mic 6:8)

Humans thrive on love, God's predominant quality (1Jo 4:8; *g98* 6/22 10-11)

Humans have spiritual needs (Mt 4:4; 5:3)

They have a desire for meaning in their lives, which the Bible satisfies (Ge 1:26, 28; Ps 37:11, 29; Ec 12:13; Re 4:11)

Humans desire to live forever (Ec 3:11)

Human brain was designed to learn forever (Give examples; *g98* 6/22 9)

Condemnation to death subjected humans to futility (Ro 8:20-22)

**WHY WE HAVE A TENDENCY TOWARD WRONGDOING** (6 min.)

Humans were originally created perfect (Read Deuteronomy 32:4)

Sin's harmful effect on our genes, not animal genes, introduced undesirable traits (Read Deuteronomy 32:5; Ecclesiastes 7:29)

We are under "sin's law" (Ro 7:21-23)

Like bad steering alignment that misdirects a car, this "law" inclines us toward wrongdoing (Ge 8:21)

Satan has exploited this inclination, especially during "the last days" (2Ti 3:1-5; Eph 2:2, 3; Re 12:7-10, 12)

We can avoid being a slave to sin's law by responding to God's spirit (Ro 8:12, 13; Ga 5:22-25)

**THE CREATOR OFFERS THE ONLY SURE HOPE FOR THE FUTURE** (7 min.)

According to evolution, chance rules; hence, evolution offers no sure hope for the future

Evolution is harmful because it justifies animalistic behavior and clashes with conscience

Applying "healthful teaching" found in Bible can make us truly happy (Tit 2:1; Lu 11:28)

Only Jehovah offers hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth (Ps 37:11; Isa 25:8; Re 21:3, 4)

Ransom, not gradual evolutionary improvement, will make everlasting life a reality (Mt 20:28; Joh 3:16)

Under Kingdom rule, faithful humans will be relieved of sin and its effects (Ro 8:21; Re 22:1, 2)

Mind and body will be perfected, brought into full harmony with each other and with God's standards

Eventually, all obedient humans will be adopted as earthly sons of God, perfectly imitating the Father (1Co 15:22-26; Eph 5:1, 2)

Put your feet on the path to life now by taking in accurate knowledge of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ (Joh 17:3; Col 1:9, 10)

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## SHOULD CHRISTIANS KEEP THE SABBATH?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize that the Sabbath was a time to rejoice and to praise God. Stress that Christians enter into God's rest by trusting in his promises, putting spiritual interests first, and living in harmony with his ways every day

### **DIFFERING VIEWS ABOUT THE SABBATH** (2 min.)

Many in Christendom regard Sunday as a holy day, and others, Saturday (*g81 1/8 26*)

Such "holy days" have increasingly become simply days of leisure

To understand what the Bible Sabbath means for Christians, we must know what it was originally

### **THE SABBATH WAS GIVEN FOR MAN'S BENEFIT** (15 min.)

The term "sabbath" comes from a Hebrew verb meaning "rest, cease, desist" (*rs 345*)

Jehovah gave the Sabbath as "a sign" between him and the sons of Israel (Read Exodus 31:16, 17)

It was a day set aside by God for his people to rest from labor

The weekly Sabbath was part of a system of sabbaths (*it-2 830-1*)

Observing the sabbaths in a wholehearted way was vital to Israel's existence as a nation

Failure to honor Sabbath laws contributed to the nation's downfall

The land of Judah lay desolate for 70 years to pay back its Sabbath years (2Ch 36:20, 21; *it-2 834*)

Such years provided opportunity for the land to renew itself

The weekly Sabbath was to be a blessing, not a burden (Mr 2:27)

Gave both man and domestic animals rest and refreshment

It was a sacred day, an occasion to attend to spiritual needs (De 5:12)

Reminded Israel of liberation from Egypt, where they had found no rest (De 5:14, 15)

Gave parents time to teach their children about God (De 6:6, 7; *it-2 831*)

A more important aspect of the sabbath arrangement was the opportunity it gave to show faith in Jehovah and his ability to provide (*it-2 831*)

No work was to be done on Sabbath days, and no cultivating during Sabbath years (Le 25:4)

Nation had to rely on Jehovah for provisions (*it-2 830*)

Jehovah was interested in heart appreciation, not perfunctory observance (Read Isaiah 58:13, 14)

Israelites showed faith when they devoted the Sabbath day to Jehovah

He blessed Israelites for obeying out of faith and love

### **THE END OF THE SABBATH SYSTEM** (10 min.)

Over the centuries, Jewish religious leaders added burdensome Sabbath restrictions (*w93 2/15 27*)

Jesus denounced them for voiding the purpose of the Sabbath (Mt 12:1-8; Lu 13:10-16)

The Mosaic Law was replaced by "a new covenant" (Jer 31:31-33; Lu 22:20; Heb 8:13)

Christ's ransom sacrifice took the Mosaic Law "out of the way" (Col 2:13, 14)

Faith in Christ Jesus is now the only basis for righteousness (Ro 10:4; *w93 2/15 29*)

No one can gain God's approval merely by complying with certain rules (*rs 350*)

In the Scriptures no division exists between the Ten Commandments and the rest of the Mosaic Law (*it-2 832*)

Whole system of Sabbaths, including the Sabbath day, ended (Ro 14:5; Col 2:16, 17)

### **CHRISTIANS TODAY BENEFIT BY ENTERING INTO GOD'S REST** (15 min.)

Though Israel failed to enter into God's rest, Christians do so through faith and obedience (Read Hebrews 4:8, 9) (*w98 7/15 18*)

Faith in ransom removes burden of sin, thus easing conscience (Heb 9:14; *w99 5/15 24*)

Dedicated Christians "rest" by putting God's interests first, rather than selfish interests (*rs 349-50*)

Do our utmost to avoid disobeying God (Heb 4:11)

Trust in God, letting nothing interfere with an approved relationship with him (Heb 13:5, 6)

Keep focused on the Kingdom, relegating anxieties to the background (Mt 6:19, 22, 33; *w93 12/15 27*)

Use whatever opportunities are available to praise Jehovah (Eph 5:15, 16)

Christian meetings are part of a healthy spiritual routine (Heb 3:13; 10:24)

Godly families benefit spiritually by using time wisely

Regularly reading and discussing God's Word as a family helps to safeguard children's eternal future (Pr 22:6; Mt 4:4)

**YOU CAN GAIN THE BLESSINGS OF THE SABBATH** (3 min.)

Even now, we can benefit daily by entering into God's rest (*w91 2/15 24*)

Showing faith and obedience will result in blessings, as God promised Israel (De 28:13)

Christ, "Lord of the sabbath," will soon begin his Thousand Year Reign (Mt 12:8; Re 20:2-4)

That reign will be like a period of sabbath rest (*it-2 833*)

Through it, ransom benefits will be fully realized (*w99 4/15 12*)

It will bring complete relief to the earth and to all faithful mankind (Re 21:1-4)

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## THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE AND BLOOD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize that life is a marvelous and sacred gift from God, to be treasured each day and viewed as Jehovah views it. The sanctity of life and blood are linked because blood is intimately involved in the life processes. Show that blood is sacred. (Hebrew and Greek words are included to clarify the various terms used)

### **JEHOVAH GOD IS THE SOURCE OF LIFE** (6 min.)

Life has always existed because Jehovah has always been in existence (Ps 90:2)

He supplied the “dynamic energy” needed to create the universe (Isa 40:26)

Life on earth began when God superimposed the life principle on matter (Ge 1:11, 12, 20, 24; 2:7; *it-2* 246)

Earthly life resulted from a direct command of Jehovah, the Source of life; only life begets life (Ps 36:9)

Jehovah created living souls—animal and human

These souls (Hebrew, *ne’phesh*; Greek, *psy-khe’*) were physical bodies combined with spirit, or life-force (Hebrew, *ru’ach*; Greek, *pneu’ma*); this life was sustained by breathing (Hebrew, *nesha-mah*; Greek, *pno-e’*)

Blood is vital for animal and human life; it carries oxygen and nourishment throughout the body to sustain the life-force

In the Creator’s view, blood stands for life: “The soul [or, life] of the flesh is in the blood” (Le 17:11-14)

God sanctified and blessed human life and blood (Ge 1:28, 31; 9:6, 7)

Should not this influence our thinking and actions?

### **JEHOVAH VIEWS BLOOD AS SACRED** (5 min.)

Knowing that “the soul of the flesh is in the blood,” God ordained that blood could be used only in line with his purpose

After man’s sin, Abel poured out animal blood in sacrifice to God (Ge 4:3-5)

Abel’s sacrifice and faith led to Jehovah’s approving him; Cain’s course of life brought death to Abel and a curse from Jehovah to Cain (Heb 11:4; 1Jo 3:12)

In the past, Jehovah gave specific directions as to how blood was to be used, and often life was directly involved

At the time of the first Passover, in Egypt, the blood on the doorposts of Israelite homes was a means of protecting the firstborn inside from death

Under the Law covenant, God required animal sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins, with blood sprinkled upon the altar (Heb 9:22)

Except for when used in sacrifices, blood was to be poured out upon the ground; reflected recognition that life is from God (Le 17:13)

The blood sacrifices included in the Law pointed forward to a greater sacrifice to come—the ransom (Eph 1:7)

Jesus’ blood was poured out once for all time as a ransom sacrifice for forgiveness of sin, leading to everlasting life

Knowing how and why Jesus died should enhance our appreciation for the role of blood in our salvation

### **JEHOVAH PROHIBITED MISUSE OF BLOOD** (11 min.)

As God indicated to Noah after the Flood, blood is sacred (Ge 9:3-6)

Under the Law, if a man shed another’s blood, a close relative as an “avenger of blood” could put the manslayer to death (Nu 35:21-25)

If death was caused accidentally, the manslayer could flee to a city of refuge for protection (*w95* 11/15 10-13)

First-century Christian governing body reemphasized the prohibition against misusing blood (Acts 15:28, 29; *it-1* 345-6)

When the sanctity of human life is violated by the spilling of blood, bloodguiltiness results

A Christian could become bloodguilty in various ways

By murder or other actions involving loss of life, including the support of bloodguilty organizations (Re 17:6)

By eating or drinking blood, whether as food or in medical treatment (Ac 15:20)

By refusing to preach the good news of the Kingdom, withholding the lifesaving information it contains (Ac 20:26, 27; *it-1* 346-7)

The world treats life as being cheap, which can be seen in its violent crime, wars, and much of what it considers to be entertainment

Abortion, the deliberate expulsion of an embryo or fetus, is often treated as mere birth control or a matter of convenience rather than as disrespect for life (*rs* 25-6)

Human life is precious even during the early stages of development after conception (Ps 139:13-16)

### **RECOGNIZE THE PURPOSE OF LIFE** (6 min.)

Being created “in God’s image,” humans have attributes like God’s and the capacity for spirituality; are able to appreciate and worship their Creator (Ge 1:26, 27)

To hold life sacred, a person must live his life in harmony with God's will (Jas 4:13-17)

We can show respect for the sacredness of life by exercising our spirituality, taking in knowledge of God, obeying his commands, and walking in God's ways (Mic 4:1-5)

This calls for self-sacrifice, 'living no longer for ourselves' (2Co 5:15)

Should put away 'the desire of the flesh, desire of the eyes, and showy display of one's means of life' (1Jo 2:16)

### **SHARE JEHOVAH'S VIEW OF THE SANCTITY OF LIFE AND BLOOD (13 min.)**

Because we view life as sacred, we have God's view of mankind and strive to show love for our fellowman

Involves our sharing Jehovah's concern for mankind in general, not wanting any to be destroyed (2Pe 3:9)

Greatest good that we can do for others is, not helping them medically or socially, but helping them to get in line for everlasting life

We must warn the wicked of their need to turn from their wicked way and accept God's way, which leads to life (Eze 3:18, 19)

We are obliged to avoid anything that could cause bloodguilt, including loss of life to us or to others

Like the psalmist, we fittingly pray that Jehovah deliver us from bloodguiltiness and bloodguilty ones (Ps 51:14)

We should strive to keep separate from every form of false religion (Re 18:4)

Since blood is sacred in God's eyes, it is wrong to drink or eat blood or to eat the meat of an animal that has not been properly bled (Ac 15:28, 29)

When an animal is strangled, speared, shot, or caught in a trap and is not bled quickly, a Christian cannot eat its meat without incurring bloodguilt

True Christians will not accept a blood transfusion (Ac 21:25)

Though nonblood medical management is increasingly being recognized as a valid alternative, a Christian may still come under pressure to accept a blood transfusion, with all the health risks this can involve

Want to live, but will not try to save present life temporarily by breaking God's laws (Mt 16:25)

As those who hold life and blood sacred, Christians are conscious of avoiding needless risk-taking

Make sure cars and homes are safe, and obey traffic and other safety laws

Avoid risking lives just for pleasure and excitement, not sharing in violent sports that deliberately hurt people (De 22:8)

### **SHOW THAT WE HOLD LIFE AND BLOOD SACRED BY OUR LIFE COURSE (4 min.)**

Mold life in harmony with Jehovah's will, and give his law and worship first place (De 30:19, 20)

Involves our making conscious choices, deliberately putting true worship first, not assuming that we can just coast along

Like Christ Jesus, we live our lives in harmony with Jehovah's will, knowing we are accountable to him (1Pe 4:1, 2)

Have concern for fellow servants of God, and help others to gain life (Php 2:17, 18)

Paul did the right and good thing in being poured out in behalf of others; it was a basis for satisfaction in life

We too can derive true happiness and satisfaction from using our lives in Jehovah's service (Ps 16:11)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## DOES GOD APPROVE OF THE USE OF IMAGES IN WORSHIP?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate that we have a great privilege in worshiping Jehovah exclusively and without images. Idolatry is a danger that must be scrupulously avoided

### **THE USE OF IMAGES HAS LONG BEEN PREVALENT** (6 min.)

On the Areopagus in Athens, Paul addressed a difficult audience—people who prided themselves on piety and intellect

He respectfully noted their “fear of the deities” (Ac 17:22)

Paul referred to use of images in worship, prevalent in Athens

The world has hardly changed in this respect (*w92* 2/15 3-4)

Use of images is widespread in many religions (Select examples from *sh* 96, 99, 117, 141, 157, 182)

Christendom uses images and icons

Statues of Madonna, Jesus, “saints,” other objects are used as “aids” in worship (*sh* 33, 277)

Although Paul spoke tactfully to Athenians, he felt “irritated” because “the city was full of idols” (Ac 17:16)

We may wonder: ‘How does Jehovah feel about the use of images in worship? Are they needed, or are they harmful?’

### **IS THERE A NEED TO USE IMAGES?** (6 min.)

Many think that there is a need to use images in worship

Humans, who are physical creatures, often want to see and touch what they venerate; objects seem more real than spirit beings

Jehovah is real; far superior to all physical creation (1Ki 8:27)

He is “the living God,” alive forever (Jer 10:10)

In contrast to much of what we can see and touch, he is changeless, unaffected by the passage of time (Mal 3:6; Jas 1:17)

Unlike any image, he does not need care, maintenance, or support from his worshipers (Jer 10:3-6)

More than that, “he cares for you” (1Pe 5:6, 7)

As the “Hearer of prayer,” he is approachable; we have unlimited access to him (Ps 65:2; 1Th 5:17)

He acts on the prayers of his faithful servants (Jas 5:16)

Clearly, no one could rightly argue that there is a need for images in worshiping the true God

However, the Bible shows that the matter is more serious still

### **WHY JEHOVAH HAS FORBIDDEN THE USE OF IMAGES IN WORSHIP** (12 min.)

The nation of Israel was given an unusual command—not to make a likeness of anything in creation for worship (De 5:8-10)

This command distinguished Israel from the pagan nations, where idolatry had been entrenched since the days of Nimrod (*it-1* 1169)

Jehovah lovingly explains why image worship is wrong

Consider two important reasons

First, it is impossible to make an accurate image of Jehovah (Isa 46:5, 9)

He is a spirit, invisible to human eyes (Ex 33:20)

Idols are completely unlike the living God—they cannot see, hear, feel, or help their worshipers (Ps 115:4-8; Isa 44:9-20)

Second, Jehovah demands “exclusive devotion” (De 5:9)

He is “the only true God” (Joh 17:3)

There is no other being in the universe that should be worshiped (Isa 42:8)

Jehovah is rightly “a jealous God” (Ex 34:14)

When his ancient people practiced idolatry, he viewed this as spiritual adultery (De 32:21; Isa 54:5, 6)

As adultery creates a breach between adulterer and innocent mate, so idolatry distanced the people of Israel from Jehovah

In Bible times, idolatry also produced bad fruitage, such as prostitution and child sacrifice (1Ki 15:12; Eze 23:37)

Not surprisingly, image worship enrages Jehovah

Much of the history of Israel and Judah is a history of calamities brought on by their idolatry (*it-1* 1169-72)

Is there a place for images in worship today?

### **WHAT ABOUT THE USE OF IMAGES AS “AIDS” IN WORSHIP?** (8 min.)

Many in Christendom are well-intentioned; say they do not worship images but use them as aids in worshipping God

Such an argument does not justify idolatry (*w92* 2/15 5-7; *rs* 183-4)

Gentile Cornelius no doubt had good intentions when he knelt before Peter (*Ac* 10:25, 26)

Apostle John did not intend to commit idolatry when he bowed before an angel, yet he was reprimanded (*Re* 19:10; 22:9)

Since both an angel and an apostle refused to accept worshipful acts, could such properly be bestowed on mere idols, which are far inferior?

The goal of all true Christians is to worship Jehovah “with spirit and truth” (*Read* *John* 4:24)

Cannot worship with “truth” if we believe that lifeless objects have powers that they do not possess

Only one has power to intercede between God and man—Jesus Christ (*Joh* 14:6, 14; *1Ti* 2:5)

Cannot worship God acceptably if we depend on something material that his Word condemns

Need to learn to walk “by faith, not by sight” (*2Co* 5:7)

### **HOW CHRISTIANS TODAY “FLEE FROM IDOLATRY”** (8 min.)

The apostle Paul urged: “Flee from idolatry” (*1Co* 10:14)

Command not just to avoid but to “flee”—to run away!

How can Christians today apply that inspired counsel?

If this command is new to us, we need to act upon it (*rs* 185-6)

Keep in mind that not every image is an idol (*g76* 12/22 12-15)

Some decorative depictions of various creations may have long since lost—or never had—any connection with idolatry

Need to take into consideration local community and culture, consciences of others, use to which object is put (*Ro* 14:21)

We would want to rid ourselves of anything that might cost us Jehovah’s blessing and favor (*De* 7:25, 26; *Ac* 19:19)

Christians must continue to “flee from idolatry”

Even covetousness or greed can amount to idolatry (*Col* 3:5)

Greek word rendered “covetousness” can mean “the desire to have more” (*g79* 4/22 6)

The world promotes greed, materialism (*1Ti* 6:10)

Avoid idolizing any sports or entertainment figures

Anything that we place above Jehovah in our life is an idol

Put Kingdom interests first (*Mt* 6:33)

### **WORSHIP THE LIVING GOD WITH JOY** (5 min.)

Jesus promised: “The truth will set you free” (*Joh* 8:32)

Freedom from idolatry is a genuine blessing of pure worship

Idol worship can be expensive and burdensome (Cite an experience of one who was freed; for example, *w92* 1/1 6)

Idolatry tends to promote selfishness—idolaters ask idols for something; pure worship promotes giving (*Jas* 1:27)

Giving leads to genuine happiness (*Ac* 20:35)

Delight in serving Jehovah, “the happy God,” forever! (*1Ti* 1:11)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## DID THE MIRACLES OF THE BIBLE REALLY HAPPEN?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to see that the miracles of the Bible are fully within God's capability and are well attested to by reliable witnesses. Do not belittle or patronize those who are skeptical. Show that Bible miracles alone do not build faith in Jehovah God but are part of the accurate knowledge that does build faith in him

### **MANY DO NOT BELIEVE IN MIRACLES** (4 min.)

Miracles are occurrences that excite wonder, or astonishment, effects that surpass known human or natural powers

Many acts performed by God, although amazing to humans, are merely the exercise of his power (*it-2* 411)

Some theologians disbelieve Bible miracles, contending that they are exaggerations of ordinary events (*w98* 10/15 3; *g84* 2/22 17)

Little wonder that 50 percent of Catholics in France, Italy, and Spain do not believe in the miracles of the Bible (*g96* 4/8 4)

Numerous scientists, philosophers, and others feel that miracles are unscientific and are the result of ignorance and superstition (*w95* 3/1 3; *gm* 72)

However, merely asserting that the miracles did not take place does not prove that they did not (*w91* 10/1 28; *it-2* 411-12)

### **IDENTIFYING MARKS THAT DIFFERENTIATE BIBLE MIRACLES FROM MAGIC** (6 min.)

The Bible's miracles are not fairy tales, exaggerated legends, illusions, or magical feats

Magical feats involve use of charms, secret arts, special staging, or rituals to produce seemingly supernatural effects

Often used to trick observers into believing that practitioner has special powers and to increase his own wealth and fame (*it-2* 293, 413)

Bible miracles are noted for their open and public nature, their simplicity, their purpose and motive

Generally performed without outward display and frequently in response to a chance encounter or request and in an unprepared place (Ex 14:21-31; 1Ki 13:3-6)

Motive of individual performing miracle was not for selfish prominence but for God's glory (Read John 11: 1-4, 15, 40)

Never performed to mystify or just to satisfy curiosity

Always helped others—sometimes in a physical way, always in a spiritual way—turning people to true worship

Jesus' works were done in the open and never to show off (*w95* 3/1 4)

Both his miraculous cures and control over the elements were marked by simplicity (Mr 4:39; 5:25-29; 10:46-52)

He healed all, not failing on pretext that some lacked faith (Read Matthew 8:16; 9:35)

### **EYEWITNESSES CONFIRM BIBLE MIRACLES** (10 min.)

Examining eyewitness testimony and the effect such miracles had on people helps to establish the truthfulness of the events

For example, the miracles performed by Moses and Aaron were public and affected millions (*g74* 4/8 25-6)

The first was demonstrated before Pharaoh, his servants, and his priests and was followed by ten miraculous blows that affected all the land of Egypt (Ex 7:8-12, 19-21; *w96* 1/15 24)

By third plague, even Pharaoh's priests admitted: "It is the finger of God!" (Ex 8:16-19; 9:10, 11)

At Red Sea, Egyptians acknowledged that Jehovah was performing mighty acts in behalf of Israel (Ex 14:25)

When Jesus' resurrection was first reported to the disciples, they refused to believe it (Lu 24:6-11)

Upon seeing the living Jesus, they had to accept that he had indeed been raised from the dead (Lu 24:34-43)

Matthew and John saw Jesus die and also attested to his resurrection (Mt 27:50; 28:16, 17; Joh 21:24; *gm* 82)

Paul and "five hundred brothers" saw the resurrected Christ (1Co 15:3-8)

There are no earthly eyewitnesses today of man's miraculous creation, yet our existence is proof that it happened (*Lmn* 12)

### **THE PURPOSE OF GOD'S MIRACLES** (12 min.)

There are many reasons why Jehovah performed powerful acts that have been called miracles by man

Jehovah's defense of the Israelites proved to the Egyptians that he is God and Sovereign (*w72* 1/15 38-9)

Miracles were often used to establish or confirm the fact that a man was receiving power and support from God (Ex 4:1-9)

Observers came to this correct conclusion about both Moses and Jesus (Ex 4:30, 31; Joh 9:17, 31-33)

Moses, Jesus, and others were known, not as miracle workers, but as teachers and prophets sent by God

Jesus' miracles "made his glory manifest," identifying him as promised Messiah (Read John 2:11) (*it-1* 963-4)

They confirmed that he was the coming Prophet promised through Moses (De 18:18; Joh 6:14)

These powerful works verified Jesus' commission and message and fulfilled prophecy (Joh 5:36-39, 46, 47; 14:11; 20:27-29)

The miracles that Jesus performed were largely related to mankind's problems and illustrated God's interest in his human creation

He healed all types of sickness (Mt 8:14, 15; Lu 6:19; 17:11-14)

He resurrected the dead (Mt 9:23-25; Lu 7:14, 15)

These powerful works proved that he was God's appointed means for freeing mankind from sin and death (Mr 2:5-12)

Miracles used in conjunction with message helped people see that God was backing early Christian congregation (Ac 13:12; Heb 2:3, 4)

In first century, Jehovah's spirit worked mightily, forming congregations and firmly establishing Christianity (Ac 4:4; 16:5; *it-2* 414)

#### **TODAY, MIRACLES NOT NECESSARY TO BUILD FAITH** (8 min.)

Jehovah did not intend that miracles be a permanent feature of Christian worship (Read 1 Corinthians 13:8) (*w97* 3/15 6)

Even if miracles were still performed, it would not convince everyone

Not all who were eyewitnesses of Jesus' miracles were moved to accept his teachings (Joh 11:47, 48; 12:37; *w97* 3/15 4-5)

It is not necessary for God to perform miracles today to prove his existence (Ps 19:1; Ro 1:20)

Faith in God is based on solid evidence of things to come; miracles only play a role in building such faith (Heb 11:1)

We have the entire inspired Scriptures to use as a basis for true faith, not the record of miracles alone (2Ti 3:16)

Faith based on the accurate knowledge of God's Word is neither weak nor shallow; it has substance and is powerful

God's servants today 'walk by faith, not by sight,' convinced that all of his inspired Word is true (2Co 5:7)

As you become better acquainted with the Bible's message, you will not be disappointed because of lack of miracles today

It is only through a study of the Scriptures that those seeking God can truly find him (Isa 55:6; Ac 17:26, 27)

#### **BENEFITING FOREVER FROM JEHOVAH'S FUTURE MIRACLES** (5 min.)

The Word of God is a storehouse of information vital for a successful life now and in the future (1Ti 2:3, 4)

To benefit, we must acquaint ourselves with all of God's dealings recorded therein (Ro 15:4)

The miracles recorded in the Bible help instill confidence in God

They give strong assurance that God cares for mankind and that he can and will protect those who serve him

Many stupendous acts of God are yet to come

Soon he will destroy this wicked system of things (2Pe 3:7; Re 16:14, 16)

Millions who have faith in God and live in harmony with his laws and principles have the hope of living forever in God's new world of righteousness (2Pe 3:13)

There he will heal and bless faithful humankind forever (Re 21:4)

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## LIVE WITH SOUNDNESS OF MIND IN A DEPRAVED WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience appreciate that soundness of mind is required by God of his servants and must be exhibited in all avenues of life. Only in this way can we truly conquer the world as Jesus did and merit God's approval and blessing

### **SATAN'S WORLD IS A WORLD GONE MAD** (5 min.)

Satan's system of things is like a ship being tossed by a stormy sea, badly damaged, out of control, heading for disaster

Shocking violence, terrorism, and sexual immorality plague mankind (*w99* 5/15 32; *w99* 9/1 10; *w97* 7/15 11-12; *g97* 1/8 31)

Many harmed through drug and alcohol abuse (*g99* 11/8 3-14)

This climate of moral decay is promoted by Satan to achieve ruin of mankind (Re 12:12)

To resist successfully the immoral influences of Satan's world, we need to "live with soundness of mind" (Read Titus 2:12)

How do we develop soundness of mind?

### **WHAT LIVING WITH SOUNDNESS OF MIND INVOLVES** (12 min.)

Exercising soundness of mind means more than just exhibiting sanity, mental capacity, or mental stability (*w97* 8/15 17, 22; *w93* 6/1 15-16)

It involves becoming acquainted with the revealed will of God, accepting his principles and judgment as true, obediently reflecting God's thinking in our lives, being balanced

The revealed will of Jehovah is set forth in his spirit-inspired Word (1Co 2:10-13)

By studying, meditating on, and applying God's Word, we learn to think and act in harmony with Jehovah's revealed will (Jos 1:8)

When questions arise, we determine the proper course of action from the Scriptures (Pr 3:5, 6)

We ask ourselves: 'What is God's will in this matter? What course will make Jehovah's heart glad? What would Christ have done in a similar situation? What Bible principles apply?'

Not enough merely to know God's revealed will on matters

Living with soundness of mind involves applying it in our daily lives, quickly adjusting our thinking and course of life when God's will in a matter is apparent

Let us discuss some specific areas in which soundness of mind is vital and what is required on our part

### **ALL MUST LIVE WITH SOUNDNESS OF MIND** (23 min.)

(Read 1 Timothy 3:2, 5)

Soundness of mind is a qualification for all elders because they have the responsibility of directing family members and congregation members

Elders need to know the revealed will of Jehovah and understand the proper application of Scriptural principles (Tit 1:7-9; Heb 5:14)

Their expressions of what is proper and improper should be based on the Scriptures (2Ti 4:2)

Need to be levelheaded and reasonable (Jas 1:19, 20)

Must also be receptive to counsel based on God's Word

(Read Titus 2:2-8)

Family heads should show soundness of mind by arranging a good program of theocratic training for their families

This would include regular family study, along with instruction on building peaceful relationships, good manners, and proper dress and grooming; regular meeting attendance and participation; progressive training in the field ministry (1Ti 5:8)

Christian women are appreciated in congregation

Older sisters told to "recall the young women to their senses to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sound in mind" (*w94* 6/15 20-1)

Sisters show soundness of mind by example and by expressing love for the members of their family

A woman who thinks and acts in harmony with Jehovah's will and who works for the benefit of her husband and children is praiseworthy (Pr 31:10-31)

Modesty in adornment important (1Ti 2:9, 10; *g00* 8/8 19; *g98* 8/8 21)

Young men should show soundness of mind by their fine works, with wholesome speech (1Ti 6:18, 20; *w94* 6/15 21)

Need to make their advancement manifest as they reach out for greater service privileges (1Ti 3:1; 4:15)

Young or old, *all* must show soundness of mind

Should be quick to apply God's direction through his organization in all areas of life (Ps 119:60)

Life-style should manifest appreciation of the urgency of the times (1Pe 4:7)

Would be a mistake selfishly to pursue personal pleasures, feeling that there is plenty of time to correct course

Are you “walking in wisdom toward those on the outside” by avoiding association with the world to the extent possible? (Col 4:5; 1Co 15:33)

Does your choice of entertainment reflect soundness of mind?

Must be “zealous for fine works”—including the work of disciple making (Tit 2:14; Mt 28:19, 20)

**LIVE WITH SOUNDNESS OF MIND, AND CONQUER THE WORLD** (5 min.)

Satan and his organization want to squeeze us into their mold, making us conform to the world (Ro 12:2; w99 4/1 21)

We can successfully resist Satan’s efforts

To do so, we must carefully study God’s Word regularly, draw close to Jehovah, persevere in prayer, attend and participate in congregation meetings, share fully in preaching activity, exercise faith, and hope in Jehovah

By living with soundness of mind, we will not be swallowed up by Satan’s world but will be led along by Jehovah’s Word and spirit

We will not be destroyed with Satan’s organization but will enjoy Jehovah’s gift of everlasting life because we have come to know and do the revealed will of God

Will be able to say, as Jesus did: “I have conquered the world” (Joh 16:33)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## GODLY WISDOM IN A SCIENTIFIC WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

While presenting a balanced view of science and technology, place emphasis on Bible wisdom. Point to spiritual dangers of putting too much confidence in human wisdom

### **MANY LOOK TO SCIENCE TO REMOVE HUMAN WOES** (6 min.)

Science should interest us (*g93 4/8 6-8*)

Products of science, such as electric power, automobiles, airplanes, radio, TV, computers, and medical developments, affect everyone in some way

Many regard the application of scientific knowledge as the principal means of solving man's problems and ushering in health and security (*g98 3/8 3-4*)

Others fear that runaway technology is a threat that will bring social distress, environmental disasters, and political instability

A number of questions arise: What is a balanced view of scientific technology? Can science safely guide our future and provide the solutions to mankind's problems? Does the Bible shed light on this issue?

### **BENEFITS AND DANGERS OF MODERN SCIENCE** (15 min.)

Some technology has proved helpful in various aspects of life

Medicine: increased life expectancy, improved health

Agriculture: increased food supply, improved nutrition

Transportation and communications: global travel and distribution of goods and information made possible

True Christians use helpful technology to advance Kingdom work

Advanced printing and other publishing methods (*w99 8/15 23-4*)

Computers are used in writing, illustrating, and translating Bible-based publications

Automobiles, airplanes, and other modern means of transportation helpful in getting the good news preached in all the earth

Modern construction methods and materials for building Kingdom Halls

Man's application of scientific knowledge has limitations (*g93 6/22 21-4; g00 12/8 18-19*)

Ignorance and the abuse of modern technology have created threats to life and health

Pollution menaces all systems of life on earth

Buildup of weapons for military deterrence continues to threaten mankind's survival

Pursuit of human wisdom has proved spiritually destructive for some

Diverts attention from the Creator to the creation (*Ro 1:25*)

Induces unwarranted confidence in human achievements

Entices people to build lives around things rather than God (*1Jo 2:15-17*)

Significant factor in moral breakdown and social distress

Promotes full devotion to professional careers, fostering family neglect with consequent growth in divorce, delinquency

Wisdom of sinful men has thus proved to be "foolishness," defective, often leading to ruin (*1Co 3:19, 20*)

Scientific knowledge itself is not foolish, but the methods of acquiring it and the application of it often defy godly principles and prove harmful (*it-2 1192-3*)

Where, then, can man turn for sound guidance and protection in this scientific world?

### **GODLY WISDOM A SOUND GUIDE IN A SCIENTIFIC WORLD** (19 min.)

Jehovah's wisdom superior to that of humans (*1Co 1:19, 20*)

His Word helps us recognize limitations of human wisdom (*w00 5/1 8; g98 3/8 10-12*)

Provides standards by which to set realistic priorities

Bible addresses true human needs and problems of earth itself

Foretells a totally different way of life (*Isa 65:20, 21*)

What Kingdom government with Christ as King, not human technology, will do

Restore earth and remove causes of misery (*Re 11:18*)

Provide paradisaic abundance and security for everyone

Bring obedient humans to perfection by dealing with cause of sickness and death (*Ro 5:18, 19; g00 12/8 18-19*)

Unlike human knowledge of science and technology, the Scriptures provide guidance for coping with present conditions

The Bible provides moral standards that harmonize with man's created nature, protecting him from worldly philosophies (*Ro 1:26, 27; 1Co 6:18; Col 2:8*)

The Scriptures contain guidelines for family life that consider the needs of each member

Husband and wife to express deep love, respect (Eph 5:22, 28, 33)

Children learn to trust in Jehovah and devote themselves to God's service, not to vain careers in dying system of things (1Co 15:58; Eph 6:4; g98 3/8 19-21)

God's Word invites us to become part of a unified brotherhood of true friends

The Bible teaches us to love Jehovah, Jesus, and one another (1Jo 4:7-11)

It is vital to recognize that associating with those who lack knowledge of God can destroy hope (1Co 15:33, 34)

Godly devotion opens way to a bright future, thus helping us to be content with present provisions (1Ti 6:6-8)

Time and resources not dissipated by preoccupation with glitter of modern technology

**LET GODLY WISDOM SAFEGUARD YOU FOR A PROSPEROUS FUTURE** (5 min.)

True Christians strive to set their hearts on the future, the new world under God's Kingdom (2Pe 3:13, 17)

Kingdom will remove system that hopes in man rather than in God

Neither human wisdom nor scientific technology will prevent this global change

Establish priorities that harmonize with your hope (Php 1:9-11)

Pattern your life in ways consistent with God's instructions (Tit 2:11-14)

Refuse to be distracted by world's scientific achievements

Cultivate close relationship with loving Creator (Mic 6:8)

Stay close to Jehovah's godly organization

Everlasting life will afford us the opportunity to unravel some of the limitless mysteries of God's creation (Ec 3:11)

In Paradise, true science and godly wisdom will bring much delight

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## WHO REALLY IS JESUS CHRIST?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Emphasize Jesus' central role in God's purpose. Tactfully address mistaken ideas about Jesus that are common in your area

### **MANY DO NOT KNOW WHO JESUS REALLY IS** (4 min.)

Jesus is widely recognized as one of the most influential historical figures (*w05* 3/15 3-4 ¶2-3; *g16.5* 3)

Many in the first century misunderstood who Jesus really was [**Read Matthew 16:13, 14**] (*w01* 12/15 3-4 ¶2)

Some expected him to be a political activist or a philanthropist or to act as a judge (Lu 12:13; Joh 6:15, 26)

Today, many have been misinformed about Jesus and view him as merely a good man, a prophet, or a reformer

Millions who claim to be Christian believe that he is God

What does the Bible say about who Jesus is, why he came to earth, and what he is doing now?

### **WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS?** (12 min.)

The Bible contains a reliable record of Jesus' unique personality, teachings, and works, proving that he was not an ordinary man (Mt 7:28, 29; 9:35, 36; Mr 6:2)

He possessed qualities that are universally appealing (*gy* 317)

His teachings helped his listeners draw closer to God (Mt 6:9-15)

He fulfilled numerous prophecies recorded centuries in advance (*bh* 199-201)

He did not claim to be God; nor did his early disciples believe him to be God [**Read Matthew 16:15, 16**] (Joh 10:36)

Jesus gave God all credit for his teachings and powerful works (Joh 7:16; 14:10)

Jesus had a prehuman existence in heaven (Joh 6:38)

He was the first and only direct creation of Jehovah God; therefore, he is rightly called "the only-begotten Son of God" (Joh 3:18; Col 1:15, 16)

He was sent to earth to teach the truth and to proclaim the Kingdom of God (Mt 4:17; Joh 18:37)

He became the promised Messiah, or Christ, who would give his life in behalf of mankind (Joh 3:16)

Jesus was resurrected to life in heaven, where Jehovah delegated Kingdom authority to him (Mt 28:18; Ac 2:32, 33; *cl* 88-89 ¶6)

### **JESUS CHRIST IS AN IDEAL RULER** (9 min.)

Mankind desperately needs good government (Ec 8:9)

Jesus possesses the qualities and abilities desired in a good leader (*w02* 3/15 6 ¶4; *it-2* 70 ¶5)

He even demonstrated control over weather, disease, and death (Mt 8:1-3; Mr 4:39; Joh 11:43, 44)

Jesus rejected human efforts to make him a king (Joh 6:14, 15)

His Kingdom is no part of the world's political system under Satan's control (Joh 18:36; 1Jo 5:19)

Jesus waited for Jehovah's appointed time to establish the heavenly government (Heb 10:12, 13)

Bible prophecy indicates that Jesus is now ruling in heaven as King of God's Kingdom (Mt 24:3-12)

Jesus will soon carry out on a global scale works like the ones he performed while on earth (Lu 7:21, 22; Re 21:3, 4)

People everywhere are now being invited to become citizens of God's government (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20)

### **GET TO KNOW THE REAL JESUS CHRIST** (5 min.)

The truth about Jesus Christ is a precious gift from Jehovah God [**Read Matthew 16:17**]

You can find happiness and peace now by imitating Jesus' example and applying his teachings in your life (Mt 7:24, 25; 11:28-30; 1Pe 2:21)

The truth about Jesus can benefit you forever (Joh 3:36; 17:3; *bhs* 58-59 ¶18-21)

Make it your priority to get to know the real Jesus Christ—God's provision for life (Joh 14:6)

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## HUMAN CREATION'S GROANING—WHEN WILL IT END?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Be uplifting and optimistic. Stress that right from Adam's rebellion, Jehovah has had matters well under control. Those who in faith cooperate with God's purposes have a wonderful future

### **FUTILITY OF MANKIND'S SITUATION TODAY** (5 min.)

Many today have a sense of futility; they see no real future

All people, rich or poor, suffer sickness and death

Such problems as political instability, polluted environment, overpopulation, crime, and economic insecurity make many wonder if there is any real hope for the future

The apostle Paul well describes man's situation (Read Romans 8:22)

Is any solution in sight? Yes, as Paul explains at Romans 8:18-25

Let us consider the background of what he said

### **SINCE REBELLION IN EDEN, MANKIND HAS BEEN ALIENATED FROM GOD** (8 min.)

Mankind had a perfect start, was not "groaning"

Adam and Eve, made in God's image, were placed in an earthly paradise

All needs were cared for, had stimulating assignments of work, no sickness, prospect of living forever (Ge 1:26-30)

First couple went beyond the bounds God had set for them; they sinned (Ge 3:1-6)

Introduction of sin led to pain, hardship, death; Adam and Eve began to 'groan' (Ge 3:16-19)

Adam passed sin and death on to his children (Ro 5:12)

Life became as Solomon described (Read Ecclesiastes 1:14)

Jehovah gave basis for hope when he promised the Seed (Ge 3:15)

Promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ, who was appointed High Priest and King of God's Kingdom

Jesus gave life as ransom to redeem mankind from sinful state

In a wonderful way by his spirit, Jehovah adopts 144,000 humans to reign as kings and priests with Jesus (Re 20:4)

Paul had all of this in mind when he was inspired to write what is recorded at Romans 8:18-25

He pointed to the way by which mankind would be rescued from futility

We will discuss these verses

### **THE REVEALING OF THE SONS OF GOD** (15 min.)

Read Romans 8:18

"Us" refers to the anointed Christians, of which Paul was one

"Sufferings" are the persecution and hardships they experienced as anointed Christians, culminating in death, as exemplified by Jesus

'The glory to be revealed' is their hope of reigning as kings with Christ in his heavenly Kingdom

Such an assured hope means that for anointed Christians, life has meaning; they have an assured, wonderful future

Read Romans 8:19

"The creation" is mankind in general

"Sons of God" are anointed Christians (Ro 8:16, 17)

"Eager expectation" of pre-Christian men of faith, who longed to learn of salvation linked to revealing of sons of God (1Pe 1:10)

"Revealing of the sons of God" is a vital part of helping mankind as a whole escape futility

"Revealing" comes with great tribulation when Jesus, along with resurrected anointed ones, removes enemies of Jehovah from scene (2Th 1:6-10; Re 2:27)

During Thousand Year Reign, in a new world of righteousness, mankind will continue to have the benefits of Jesus' ransom sacrifice applied to them (2Pe 3:13; Re 22:1-3a)

All faithful mankind will be lifted to perfection, and causes of "groaning" will be removed

This arrangement is God's will, as following verse shows

Read Romans 8:20

Mankind not "subjected to futility" through own will

Humans born after the first sin had no control over Adam's sin, nor did they ask to be born

It was Jehovah who allowed sinful Adam and Eve to have children, thus subjecting those children to futility

This was, however, "on the basis of hope," provided initially through God's promise of a seed

Faithful men of old, although not exempt from problems of humankind, had hope (Heb 11:10)

Read Romans 8:21

Through Jesus' ransom sacrifice, during Thousand Year Reign, mankind will be "set free from enslavement" to sin (Joh 3:16)

At end of thousand years, obedient humans will have been brought to perfection by Jesus and his associate priests

Those who remain faithful through final test will have their names written permanently in the book of life (Re 20:12-15)

"Revealing of the sons of God" will result in faithful mankind's enjoying "glorious freedom of the children of God"

**FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS WAIT IN HOPE** (5 min.)

Read Romans 8:22

Today "all creation keeps on groaning"

All mankind suffer mental and physical corruption

Human efforts at salvation—social, political, economic, or scientific—are doomed to frustration

Read Romans 8:23

Even anointed—those with heavenly hope—'groan within themselves'

They suffer effects of imperfection and need support of holy spirit in praying for help (Ro 8:26)

Although born again as sons of God, they are "waiting for adoption as sons"

Full realization of adoption, their receiving a heavenly reward, depends on faithfulness unto death (Ro 8:17)

Read Romans 8:24

Until anointed go to heaven, Jehovah cultivates in them a firm hope of life in the heavenly Kingdom

Hence, they are "saved in this hope"

Read Romans 8:25

Anointed ones keep on "waiting for it with endurance"

They do not give up, even though their hope has not yet arrived (Heb 12:2, 3)

**AN EARTHLY CLASS HOPES FOR "THE GLORIOUS FREEDOM OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD"** (6 min.)

Romans 8:18-25 is directed primarily to anointed, who look forward to ruling with Christ in heavenly Kingdom

Hope for rest of mankind is a restoration of what Adam lost—perfect human life on a paradise earth (Ps 37:11, 29)

Likely most, if not all, hearing this talk share this hope

Paul's words to the Roman Christians show that salvation of mankind is bound up with the faithfulness of Jesus and his anointed brothers

By now most of 144,000 have 'conquered' and have taken their place in heaven (Re 3:5, 12, 21)

This means that their revealing can begin soon

World conditions bear this out; sign of end of this system of things is clearly evident (Mt 24:3, 7-14, 34)

Soon the revealing of sons of God will bring an end to Satan's world (1Jo 2:17)

In new system of things, they will work with Christ to help mankind regain what Adam lost (Re 21:3, 4)

**BLESSINGS THROUGH "SONS OF GOD" NOW AND IN FUTURE** (6 min.)

The remaining ones of "sons of God" still on earth are a wonderful example of faith

They act as channel for spiritual food even now (Mt 24:45-47)

With this help, "other sheep" exercise faith in Jesus' ransom, hoping to benefit either by resurrection into new system of things or by survival of the end of this system (Joh 5:28, 29; 10:16; Re 7:9, 14)

Our hope is real, although fulfillment is still future

Let us stay close to the anointed by associating with Jehovah's organization, 'keep on waiting with endurance' for the realization of our hope (Ro 8:25)

We will finally be among those "set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God"

(See also *w*99 5/1 4-7; *w*98 2/15 17-22; *w*98 9/15 15-20; *w*97 5/15 14; *it*-1 50-1; *hs* 131-7)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## WHY TAKE REFUGE IN JEHOVAH

### *Note to the speaker:*

Show that true and lasting refuge must be spiritual. Help all to appreciate ways we can increase our reliance on Jehovah. Present the material with warmth and conviction

### **PEOPLE WORLDWIDE ARE SEEKING REFUGE** (5 min.)

Hundreds of millions suffer because of poverty, famine, unemployment, racial and ethnic hatreds, civil and tribal warfare

Millions become refugees in other countries (Use latest verified statistics available; *g96 8/22 3-4*)

In every nation, people seek escape from fear, sickness, family problems, emotional distress, the onslaught of crime, and a sense of hopelessness (*g98 2/22 5; g98 6/8 3-5*)

Fear of death moves millions to seek refuge in a multitude of contradictory beliefs

Whether conscious of it or not, all mankind is seeking refuge

However, all worldly promises of refuge lead to disappointment (Pr 14:12; *w88 4/15 12*)

Where can people go? What kind of refuge do they need?

### **TRUE REFUGE MUST FIRST BE SPIRITUAL** (15 min.)

World focuses on problems affecting humankind; does not recognize real underlying cause

Life and genuine happiness linked inextricably to God and to obedience to his laws (Ec 12:13)

Man was created dependent on God and with spiritual needs

God alone gives meaning to life (Jer 10:23, 24; *g80 5/22 24*)

First human couple willfully turned their backs on Jehovah, abandoned their relationship with him, and rejected him as their refuge (Ge 3:17-19)

Result was ejection from Eden and estrangement from true God

Consequences to humankind are all the woes men seek to escape, such as death, war, crime, famine, emotional and physical imperfection, and suffering (Job 14:1, 2, 4; Ro 5:12)

Some who profess to be Christian are lukewarm in their godly devotion (Re 3:15-17; *re 67-8*)

By failing to satisfy their spiritual needs, they are not taking refuge in Jehovah

We need to examine our priorities

Is our spirituality as well as our relationship with Jehovah in first place?

Are we making Jehovah our refuge?

### **UNFAILING REFUGE CAN BE FOUND ONLY IN JEHOVAH** (20 min.)

Jehovah's name is a strong tower and a refuge, and to 'run into' it for protection requires effort and action (Pr 18:10)

Jehovah's provisions for refuge are inseparably linked to his name, which calls to mind his qualities and purposes (*w93 11/1 5*)

If Jehovah is to be our place of refuge, we must seek his righteousness and live by it (Ps 15:1, 2; Mt 6:33)

Jehovah opens door to refuge through ransom sacrifice of his Son

It can cleanse us of sin and provide way to enter close relationship with God (1Jo 2:1, 2, 4, 5)

Based on Jesus' ransom, we can seek refuge through prayer (Ps 65:2; 66:19)

Whether under outright demon attack, physical affliction, or emotional distress, we can call on God, pour out our hearts to him (Ps 62:8; *w92 4/15 4-6*)

Not just emotional effect, for Jehovah really listens and can provide relief in any situation (Jon 2:2)

Answer may not be what we anticipate, but Jehovah will provide us with relief and calmness of heart if we persevere in prayer (Php 4:6, 7; Jas 1:5, 6)

Jehovah's spirit-directed organization provides refuge

How grateful we are for the straightforward *Watchtower* and *Awake!* articles that give Scriptural counsel to protect us from falling victim to imperfect flesh, demons, and ever-changing worldly wisdom! (Col 2:8)

Jehovah's organization helps us to evaluate counsel from Bible properly

*The Watchtower* has appropriately stated: "Worldly counselors and psychologists can never hope to approach the wisdom and understanding that Jehovah displays. 'His understanding is beyond recounting,' (Psalm 147:5) Rather than lean on the wisdom of prominent men of the world or on our own uninformed emotions, let us look to Jehovah, his Word, and the elders in the Christian congregation for mature advice." (*w93 12/15 13*)

Worldly counselors may be able to help in some circumstances, whereas Jehovah is preeminent as our helper and refuge in all situations

Elders in Christian congregation should be a source of comfort and refuge (Isa 32:1, 2; 1Th 5:14; *w94 1/15 19*)

Congregation meetings provide refreshing refuge (Heb 10:23-25)

(May briefly relate expressions of appreciation for meetings by young, elderly, or disabled publishers who attend regularly and participate actively)

Words and music in songbook and on *Kingdom Melodies* soothe and encourage

Example of this is song number 46 (Col 3:16; *w89* 8/15 32)

Christian ministry brings joy and keeps our minds and hearts focused on truths of God's Word and hope for the future

Frees captives, helps them to take refuge in good news of Kingdom (Isa 61:1; Mt 24:14)

**KEEP ON TAKING REFUGE IN JEHOVAH** (5 min.)

All places of worldly refuge will soon come to nothing (Re 6:15-17; *re* 112)

Only true refuge that guarantees life is Jehovah God

Continue to take in knowledge of Jehovah, apply Bible principles, and maintain a fine personal relationship with him (Ps 57:1)

Jehovah invites all mankind to take advantage of provisions for refuge

Exercise faith in ransom, stay close to God's visible organization

Be determined to continue taking spiritual refuge in Jehovah, for this leads to eternal life on Paradise earth (Ps 37:34, 37-40)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## TRUST IN THE GOD OF ALL COMFORT

### *Note to the speaker:*

Talk should deal exclusively with *Scriptural* comfort and hope. It should be positive and uplifting. Highlight how putting our trust in Jehovah, the power of his Word, his spirit, and the wonderful, all-embracing provision of the ransom sacrifice brings comfort and encourages us to remain firm in the faith during these troublesome last days

### **JEHOVAH PROVIDES NEEDED COMFORT FOR THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM** (7 min.)

All humankind needs comfort (Ro 8:22)

The entire human family experiences many troubles throughout life, and imperfection leads to death (Job 14:1, 2; Ps 90:10)

How grateful we should be that Jehovah is the God of comfort!

His written Word gives comfort and hope (Ro 15:4)

He sent Jesus as Comforter, with encouraging message (Lu 4:18, 19)

Jesus assured mourning ones that they would be comforted (Mt 5:4; *it-1* 1033)

All who are loaded down can come to Jesus for relief and refreshment (Mt 11:28-30)

### **PERMANENT RELIEF TO BE REALIZED SOON** (4 min.)

Bible prophecy shows that God will soon bring an end to sickness, sorrow, and death on this planet (Re 21:3, 4)

No one will grow old, lose loved ones, suffer from depression or discouragement, or experience tragedies in life. The earth will be transformed into a paradise, just as God originally purposed (Isa 45:18; 55:11)

Jehovah God will make all things new (Re 21:5)

These things will take place shortly, but until they do, we need to keep strong spiritually by exercising full trust and faith in Jehovah

### **NOW IS THE TIME TO MANIFEST OUR TRUST IN JEHOVAH** (15 min.)

Never has there been a greater need for humans to show that they love Jehovah and trust in him

Through a study of God's Word, we know that we are living in the final part of the last days (2Ti 3:1-5)

The God of all comfort has made adequate provisions to help us cope and endure in these difficult times (2Co 1:3)

Our being comforted depends on our putting trust in Jehovah's promises and availing ourselves of his provisions

Regardless of our circumstances in life, God invites us to put our trust in him and in his arrangement for comfort and salvation through Christ (2Th 2:16, 17)

Faith in the ransom sacrifice is vital

Value of Jesus' shed blood covers our sins if we are repentant (1Jo 2:1, 2)

Helps us to endure now, since it enables us to have a good conscience and a favorable relationship with God (1Jo 4:14-16)

Is the basis for surviving Armageddon and receiving life in God's new world (Re 7:14)

By trusting in Jehovah, we receive comfort through his promises and the prophecies found in the Bible

We are helped to endure by confidently looking forward to the resurrection and other developments that will bring great relief to faithful humans (Ps 37:9-11; Pr 2:21, 22; Ac 24:15)

By earnestly praying to Jehovah, asking for his spirit, we give evidence that we trust in him (Lu 11:9-13)

We are comforted and greatly strengthened by his answers to our prayers for help according to his will (1Jo 3:22; 5:14)

Rather than remove a trial, God may choose to give us power beyond what is normal so that we can endure it (2Co 4:7-10; *w92* 2/1 32)

Whatever God permits, we can continue to cope by trusting in him, knowing that eventually there will be an end to all that is bad and hurtful (Isa 65:17)

The examples of faithful servants past and present give us courage to press on (*w93* 9/15 11-14)

Jehovah's visible organization provides timely reminders through conventions and assemblies, visits of traveling overseers, and spirit-appointed elders (2Pe 3:1, 2)

How comforting and refreshing it is to benefit from these provisions!

### **IMITATE JEHOVAH BY COMFORTING OTHERS** (14 min.)

Appreciating how God comforts us moves us to comfort others, giving them reason for our hope (2Co 1:4; 1Pe 3:15)

When we bring to others the good news of salvation, we also benefit ourselves (Ac 15:3; 1Co 9:23; *w97* 10/15 19; relate brief published experience or statement that shows how sharing truth brought happiness to Kingdom proclaimer)

To comfort those who have lost loved ones in death, explain what God's Word says about cause of death; share hope of resurrection (Joh 5:28, 29; Ro 5:12; 6:23; *w00* 7/15 10-20)

Give comfort to the sick, and speak consolingly to those who are depressed, lonely, and despondent (1Th 5:14; w99 5/15 25-8; w94 9/15 21-4)

Assure them that Jehovah is tender in mercy and that he does not forget their faithful service (Heb 6:10)

Their circumstances or condition can be viewed as a test of their faith and endurance

There is comfort in knowing that Jehovah will not let them be tested beyond what they can bear (1Co 10:13)

Make use of Society's publications, such as tracts, brochures, and specific chapters in *Knowledge* book

Make clear that Jehovah is never the cause of suffering, that he knows we are dust, and that he does not ask more of us than we can give (Ps 103:10-14)

Show how God invites us to throw our burdens on him (Ps 55:22)

Cultivate wholehearted trust in Jehovah, knowing that he can help us through situations or conditions that may be unchangeable this side of Armageddon (w00 1/15 24; read and explain Proverbs 3:5, 6)

As we comfort others, we will also experience joy (Pr 19:17; Ac 20:35)

**JEHOVAH COMFORTS THOSE WHO TRUST IN HIM** (5 min.)

Jehovah has given abundant evidence of his love for us (Joh 3:16)

His promises will be realized through Christ

Never underestimate the value or the power of the ransom sacrifice

Develop and maintain a close personal relationship with Jehovah by exercising faith in the ransom, by reading his Word, and by persisting in prayer

Imitate Jehovah and his Son by reaching out to comfort others with the Scriptural hope of God's Kingdom

Appreciate that brothers and sisters in all parts of the earth are also coping with problems, trusting in God

We can endure if we really trust in Jehovah (1Pe 5:6-10)

Do not give up; keep eyes fixed on the hope ahead, and rejoice in it (Ac 2:25, 26; 2Co 4:16-18)

Trust in Jehovah with all your heart, and be assured of his loving care

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## A LOYAL CONGREGATION UNDER CHRIST'S LEADERSHIP

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience appreciate that Jehovah requires loyalty of his servants. When contrasting cited Bible examples of loyalty and of disloyalty, emphasize that those who were loyal maintained a right relationship with God. Point out that those who remain loyal to Jehovah can count on his help

### **JEHOVAH HIGHLY FAVORS HIS LOYAL ONES** (4 min.)

Loyalty is kindness that lovingly attaches itself to an object until its purpose in connection with that object is realized (*it-2* 280)

God deals loyally with loyal ones (2Sa 22:26)

Exemplified by way Jehovah dealt with his chief "loyal one," Jesus (Ps 16:10)

Resurrected Jesus and exalted him to His "right hand" (Ac 2:24-28, 31-36)

Placed Jesus as Head of the congregation (Eph 1:20-22; Col 1:18)

Loyal ones are recognized by Jehovah with favor, and he answers their prayers (Ps 4:3)

Because of their loyalty and their confidence in him, Jehovah guards their way and gives them his spirit (1Sa 2:9; Ac 5:32)

Good for us to appreciate what loyalty entails and how we can show it

### **EXAMPLES OF LOYALTY AND OF DISLOYALTY IN THE SCRIPTURES** (17 min.)

Examining Bible examples of loyalty and of disloyalty to God can sharpen our understanding of godly loyalty

Jacob and Esau

Esau "despised the birthright," was more interested in self-gratification than in "sacred things" (Ge 25:34; Heb 12:16, 17)

He did not take seriously God's promises or his relationship with God; he was not spiritually-minded

Jacob had keen appreciation for sacred things, such as the birthright

Jacob's conduct and his attitude toward God's promises resulted in his receiving Jehovah's love (Ro 9:13)

He became an ancestor of Jesus Christ

Moses and Korah

Korah was disrespectful of Jehovah and his organizational arrangement (*w00* 8/1 10-11; *w97* 8/1 8-9)

He spoke abusively of those taking the lead and sought glory for himself (Nu 16:1-3; Jude 11)

Moses deeply respected Jehovah's word and authority, was humble and patient (Ex 18:17-19a, 24)

Although schooled in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, did not have an exaggerated opinion of himself (Nu 12:3; Ac 7:22)

As a faithful prophet, he foreshadowed Jesus (Ac 3:22, 23; Heb 3:1, 2, 5; *w84* 9/15 31)

Phinehas and Balaam

Balaam pursued a selfish course contrary to Jehovah's will, condoned fornication (Re 2:14)

Phinehas was loyal to Jehovah and zealous for the purity of God's congregation, regardless of the number or prominence of the offenders (Nu 25:6-9, 14, 15)

Recorded as an outstanding example of one devoted to righteousness (Ps 106:30, 31)

Jehovah made a covenant with him that the priesthood would remain in his line (Nu 25:10-13)

David and Saul

Saul pushed ahead presumptuously; he did not loyally adhere to Jehovah's word concerning Amalek and its king, Agag

Saul was rejected by God (1Sa 15:17-23)

David, a man agreeable to Jehovah's heart, displayed implicit trust and confidence in Jehovah

Unlike Saul, he humbly acknowledged his mistakes and repented of his gross sins (Ps 51:1-4)

He exhibited deep love for Jehovah and always showed the right heart condition (Ac 13:22)

Served as a forerunner of Jesus (Jer 23:5, 6; Mt 1:1)

### **HOW WE CAN SHOW LOYALTY TO CHRIST AND TO THE CONGREGATION** (20 min.)

Loyal ones submit to theocratic arrangement (1Co 11:3)

Christ, as Head of Christian congregation, deserves the loyalty of all its members (Mt 23:10; Eph 5:23)

All in association with Christian congregation must show similar loyalty to God's arrangement (1Ti 2:8; Tit 1:8)

"Faithful and discreet slave" cares for earthly interests of congregation and is identified by work it does (Mt 24:45-47)

Faithful ones stick loyally to slave class, giving it full support (Mt 25:40; Ac 16:4, 5)

Loyal ones learn from examples in Scriptures (Ro 15:4)

God's loyal servants imitate spirit of Jacob and work hard to be spiritually-minded

Highly esteem and support sacred things, such as God's Word, the meetings, and the preaching work (*w88* 6/15 10-15)

Recognize that Christian congregation is God's instrument and that its purpose is to declare the excellencies of Jehovah (1Pe 2:9, 10)

Jehovah loves humble ones like Moses, and He gives them undeserved kindness (Ro 12:3; Jas 4:6)

Such ones do not promote themselves or become impatient (*w00* 8/1 12)

Guard against speaking abusively of Jehovah's servants and organizational arrangements

Respond to theocratic direction quickly (Heb 13:17)

Loyal Christians manifest spirit of Phinehas

Show loyalty to Jehovah's moral standards and uncompromisingly uphold spiritual purity of congregation (Col 3:5; 2Pe 2:15, 16; 3:11, 14)

Keep separate from the world and its ways (Jas 4:4)

Like David, loyal ones are wholehearted in their devotion to God

Unrelentingly wage spiritual warfare

Quick to exhibit tenderness and compassion to others (Eph 4:32; 1Pe 3:8)

Loyalty will move us to value our relationship with God highly, to serve him faithfully, and to face opposition fearlessly

Will help us develop the tested quality of our faith (1Pe 1:6, 7)

### **PROVING LOYAL TO CHRIST'S HEADSHIP BRINGS REWARDS** (4 min.)

Appreciate benefits of loyalty to theocratic arrangement

Among many blessings is unity in the congregation, which makes for peace and good order (Ps 133:1; 1Co 14:33, 40)

Loyal Christian congregation stands in stark contrast to selfish, disloyal, and divided world of mankind

As prophesied, multitudes now recognize need for attaching themselves to spiritual Israel, the congregation of God (Zec 8:23; Re 7:9, 14, 15)

Always maintain close association with and deep respect for Jehovah's holy congregation

Be submissive to Christ, the Head of the congregation, and to the theocratic arrangement

Be assured that Jehovah and his Christ will always be loyal to their loyal ones (Ps 18:25; 97:10; Pr 2:8)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH OUR GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Build appreciation for Jehovah's unique qualities, and show how we should reflect these

### **THERE ARE MANY FALSE GODS** (8 min.)

Mankind has worshiped many gods

Even today religions, such as Shinto and Hinduism, claim that there are millions of gods (*sh* 97, 191)

Although claiming that their multiple "saints" are not gods, many in Christendom venerate these "saints" in a manner tantamount to worship

There are more subtle forms of worship that involve selfish desires (Ro 1:24-27; Col 3:5)

The object of a person's cravings can easily divert his affection from the Creator, in effect becoming an idol

For example, a person can become a slave to his belly, that is, to fleshly desires, and make these his gods (Ro 16:18; Php 3:18, 19)

"The god of this system of things," Satan the Devil, misleads people into worshiping false gods (2Co 4:4)

### **JEHOVAH, THE INCOMPARABLE GOD, PROTECTS AND DELIVERS HIS PEOPLE** (10 min.)

We are privileged to worship Jehovah, the only true God (1Co 8:5, 6)

There is no God like Jehovah (Ps 86:8)

The psalmist asked, "Who is like Jehovah our God?" (Ps 113:5)

Lifeless idol gods could never protect and deliver (Ps 115:4-8; *w*92 11/15 11)

Egypt's gods did not protect their worshipers (*w*93 7/15 3-5)

Jehovah has shown that he has the power to deliver his people

Jehovah protected the Israelites from extermination while they endured Egyptian bondage

Pharaoh was powerless to block Israel's deliverance (Ex 14:25-28)

By means of the plagues, Jehovah humiliated and executed judgment upon the false gods of Egypt (Ex 12:12; *it*-1 976)

King of Assyria found that Jehovah defended the residents of Jerusalem, delivering them from their foes (2Ki 19:32-35)

Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar had to acknowledge Jehovah's supremacy after the deliverance of the three Hebrews (Da 3:29)

As Protector of his people, Jehovah deserves praise

David praised Jehovah as Deliverer (Ps 35:10)

Our confidence in Jehovah as Protector and Deliverer will sustain us during the "great tribulation," so near at hand (Mt 24:21)

### **JEHOVAH'S UNIQUE QUALITIES ARE REFLECTED IN HIS PEOPLE** (22 min.)

Jehovah's people strive to reflect his wonderful qualities (Eph 5:1)

Consider some examples

*Holiness* is a quality of Jehovah, not of false gods (1Sa 2:2)

It is the state of being holy, spiritually clean (*it*-1 1127-31)

By applying God's Word, we attain holy standing with Jehovah

Though we are imperfect, our yielding to guidance of holy spirit helps us attain holiness in a relative sense

*Love* is Jehovah's principal attribute (1Jo 4:8)

Jehovah displayed his love by making man in his image and likeness, with the capacity for love and for spirituality (Ge 1:26, 27)

Brotherly love identifies followers of God's Son (Joh 13:35)

Love moves us to help others when disaster strikes (*ju* 712)

Out of love, we tell "good news of salvation" (Read Psalm 96:2)

*Power* is an incomparable attribute of Jehovah

God's power and "dynamic energy" are evident in his creation (Isa 40:25, 26)

He helps his people to regain power (Isa 40:28-31)

We rely on God-given strength to carry out his service (2Co 4:7, 8)

*Justice* marks all of Jehovah's ways (De 32:4)

He is the Supreme Judge and Statute-Giver (Isa 33:22)

As God's servants, we must exercise justice (Mic 6:8)

In the new world, Christ and those in administrative capacities under him will always exercise justice (*it-2* 140-1)

Righteousness is a quality of Jehovah closely related to his justice (Ps 119:137; Acts 10:34, 35)

Hebrew and Greek terms carry thought of rectitude, uprightness

We seek Jehovah's righteousness by conforming to his standards (Mt 6:33; *it-2* 809-11)

*Wisdom* in the absolute sense is found in Jehovah (Ro 16:27; *it-2* 1189-95)

A superlative example of his wisdom is the means through which he resolves the rebellion in Eden, eventually wiping out its effects and restoring peace and harmony to his universal family (1Co 2:7)

Jehovah grants wisdom, but we must seek it in faith (Jas 1:5-8)

Christians strive to make wise decisions, not acting unreasonably, but "perceiving what the will of Jehovah is" (Eph 5:15-20; Col 4:5, 6)

For the foregoing reasons and many others, Jehovah is unique and deserves our exclusive devotion (Ex 20:4, 5)

**DECLARE THE GLORY OF JEHOVAH, THE ONLY TRUE GOD** (5 min.)

Jehovah is the Creator and is beyond compare

His Godship and eternal power are perceived in creation (Ro 1:20)

There is therefore no excuse for not serving him

Bible reveals Jehovah's personality to us, especially through accounts about his only-begotten Son (Joh 1:18)

Jehovah has raised up his Witnesses to declare his glory and make his name known (Isa 43:10, 11)

Our hearts impel us to praise Jehovah (Ex 15:11)

With millions of others, let us raise our voices in declaring that there is no God like the Sovereign Lord Jehovah!

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## USE EDUCATION TO PRAISE JEHOVAH

### *Note to the speaker:*

Present this material in an appealing and reasonable way. Help the audience to focus on the real purpose of life—to know Jehovah and serve him faithfully. Education should enhance our ability and our opportunities to praise Jehovah and should help us to care effectively for our Christian responsibilities

### **EDUCATION IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF CHRISTIAN LIFE** (5 min.)

As true Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses value education highly

Through education, we learn how to treat others (Mt 7:12)

Education equips us to care for our responsibilities, both material and spiritual (1Ti 5:8; *g98* 3/8 19-21)

By means of education, we learn about God and his purposes

Education should be used to help us obey and praise Jehovah (*Ec* 12:13; *g99* 7/22 13)

### **WHERE AND WHEN SHOULD EDUCATION BEGIN?** (6 min.)

Education is defined as “the process by which people acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values, or attitudes” (*The World Book Encyclopedia; it-1* 682)

Education should begin at home, as parents teach their children from infancy (2Ti 3:14, 15; *w99* 2/1 32; *g98* 1/22 8; *w96* 2/1 12)

Children are capable of learning good habits, attitudes, values, and skills at an early age

Many are taught to read before attending school (*w96* 7/15 31; *w88* 8/1 13)

Help young ones to develop a personal relationship with God (*w96* 12/1 15-16)

Teach children good manners, respect for others, and proper moral conduct

Parents have major role in educating their children (See “Questions for Parental Self-Examination” *g88* 9/8 12)

Christian education supplied through the congregation does not absolve parents of their responsibility (*Eph* 6:4)

### **THE BASIC OBJECTIVES OF A BALANCED EDUCATION** (15 min.)

Education should be used primarily to bring praise to Jehovah

Jesus set the example in this regard (*Joh* 7:16-18)

To honor Jehovah, young people should follow Scriptural principles as they apply themselves diligently to their school studies (*Ps* 119:9-12; *Col* 3:23; *w96* 2/1 11-14)

Learn to read well

Master the art of writing clearly

Develop mentally, morally, and spiritually

Acquire practical training for daily life

Parents have the responsibility to guide their children with regard to the amount of secular education to pursue (*w97* 8/15 21)

Any Christian contemplating supplementary education should weigh potential benefits and drawbacks (*g98* 3/8 20)

Motive should not be glory or riches

Objective should be to support ourselves so that we can serve Jehovah as fully as possible in the Christian ministry (*w99* 9/1 16-17; *w96* 12/1 17-19)

### **HOW JEHOVAH EDUCATES HIS PEOPLE** (15 min.)

Jehovah is the greatest Educator

God uses his Word and his visible organization to provide vital education today (*Job* 36:22; *Isa* 54:13; *w00* 5/1 14-16)

Unlike worldly wisdom, Jehovah's teaching is always beneficial to those who follow it (*Isa* 48:17; *w00* 6/1 29-31)

Divine education includes learning to think, reason, speak, obey, cooperate with others, and show love (*Pr* 2:10, 11)

Reading Bible regularly keeps mind and heart focused on the most important things and builds faith (*Ps* 1:1-3; 2Ti 3:16, 17)

Studying Society's publications, such as *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, gives spiritual insight, widens horizons, and expands vocabulary (*w00* 2/15 32; *g00* 5/8 32)

We have thus learned about Jehovah, Jesus Christ, the ransom, God's Kingdom, the new world, hope for the dead, godly conduct, and so forth

Attending congregation meetings provides a person opportunity to make progress in ability to speak and teach (*Mt* 28:19, 20; *w99* 8/1 7)

Participating in the ministry is a valuable education in itself

Helping with Kingdom Hall maintenance, with theocratic building projects, and at assemblies teaches us to plan and to work with others

Jehovah's organization teaches obedience to God, Christ, congregation, parents, "superior authorities" (Ro 13:1; Ac 5:29; Eph 6:1; Php 2:10; Heb 13:17)

Only divine education leads to the real life (1Ti 6:17-19)

**USE EDUCATION TO HONOR THE GREATEST EDUCATOR** (4 min.)

We will always learn from our Grand Instructor (Isa 30:20)

Many new things will be learned from the "scrolls" (Re 20:12; *re* 298-300)

Those whose names are written in "scroll of life" will have benefited from education provided by Jehovah

Jehovah is educating us today to see the universal issue confronting mankind

God's Word and organization help us to evaluate matters in connection with our worship and personal goals

With gratitude to God, we strive to keep a simple eye and seek first the Kingdom (Mt 6:22, 33, 34)

Like Jesus, the Great Teacher, let us use education and all our other resources to praise Jehovah (Isa 2:3, 4)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## TRUST IN JEHOVAH'S SAVING POWER

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help your audience to see that having a personal relationship with Jehovah enables us to cope with problems. Motivate the audience to demonstrate greater trust in Jehovah

### **ALL HUMANS NEED JEHOVAH'S SAVING POWER** (5 min.)

We live in a troubled world (Ro 8:22)

International problems threaten mankind's very existence

War, pollution of the environment, crime, and violence continue

Personal problems and pressures plague people mentally and emotionally

Some suffer the emotional aftereffects of past traumas

Many struggle with health problems, infirmities, old age, financial woes, lack of employment, and economic instability

Loss of joy and peace of mind, even anxiety and depression, result

Such sufferings are common experiences "in the entire association of your brothers in the world" (1Pe 5:9)

Ahead lies a time of trouble of a magnitude never seen before

The rapidly approaching "great tribulation" will test our trust in Jehovah's saving power (Mt 24:21)

### **JEHOVAH'S SAVING POWER DEMONSTRATED IN THE PAST** (15 min.)

During Noah's day the earth became filled with violence (Ge 6:5, 11, 12)

Living in that violent world must have brought great distress to righteous Noah and his family

In time, God brought judgment against that wicked world, wiping it out (Ge 6:13, 17; 7:11, 12)

Noah and his family, however, were preserved (Ge 7:23)

Through righteous Noah, true worship survived the Flood (Ge 8:20; *it-2* 507, 660)

Centuries later, a people known as the Gibeonites also experienced Jehovah's saving power (*it-1* 930-1)

The Israelites had been instructed to exterminate all the Canaanite tribes (De 7:1)

Nevertheless, the Gibeonites had a wholesome fear of Jehovah and sent a delegation to Joshua

By means of a ruse, they made peace with Israel (Jos 9:3-15)

The Gibeonites' faith in Jehovah's saving power became manifest when they were threatened by five Canaanite kings; they appealed to Joshua for help

Using great hailstones and miraculously extending the daylight, Jehovah fought for and saved the Gibeonites (Jos 10:1-14; *it-2* 662)

In the days of Hezekiah and Isaiah, Jehovah delivered his people from Sennacherib and from the taunts and ridicule of Rabshakeh (2Ki 18:17-19:37; Isa, chaps. 36, 37; *it-2* 725-6, 893-5)

Hezekiah trusted in Jehovah and in the power of prayer

Jehovah listened to Hezekiah and assured him through the prophet Isaiah that Jerusalem would be saved

In one night Jehovah's angel put to death 185,000 Assyrians

Sennacherib was later assassinated by his own sons

Rabshakeh's blasphemous taunts against Jehovah came to nothing

The apostle Peter was imprisoned by Herod Agrippa, who intended to have him killed (Ac 12:1-11; *it-1* 1097)

Jehovah's angel freed Peter so that he could continue his ministry (*w90* 6/1 20)

Jehovah assures us that those who call on him in full faith and trust will be saved (Ac 2:21; Ro 10:13)

He has already made provision for our salvation

### **JESUS CHRIST IS JEHOVAH'S INSTRUMENT FOR SALVATION** (10 min.)

Ever since Adam's defection, the human race has suffered the effects of sin and death and has needed Jehovah's saving power (Ro 5:12)

First prophecy in the Bible pointed to Jehovah's means of salvation, a promised "seed" (Ge 3:15)

Just who this "seed" would be and how he would bring deliverance remained a secret for 4,000 years (Ro 16:25, 26; *it-2* 836-7)

Seed proved to be Jesus (Ge 22:18; Gal 3:15, 16)

Jehovah gave sound basis for faith in his Son (Mt 11:2-6)

God's "sacred secret" now to be given the widest proclamation and publication (Col 1:25-28)

The name Jesus means "Jehovah Is Salvation" (Mt 1:21, *ftn.*)

The shed blood of Jesus Christ provides a ransom for mankind's sins (Mt 20:28; *w91* 2/15 10-14; *it-2* 733-6)

Jehovah's love is magnified in that he provided a ransom at tremendous cost to himself (Joh 3:16; Ro 5:6-8)

To benefit, we must trust in this expression of Jehovah's saving power (Joh 3:36)

As Redeemer, Ransomer, and King of God's Kingdom, Jesus will demonstrate Jehovah's saving power during the great tribulation (Mt 24:29-31)

Jesus' Kingdom rule will eliminate the problems brought on man by Adam's sin (Isa 9:6, 7; Re 21:4)

**RECOGNIZING JEHOVAH'S SAVING POWER IN OUR LIVES TODAY** (10 min.)

We can have full confidence when praying to "the One abounding in power to save" (Isa 63:1)

Knowledge of God's will should govern the content of our prayers

Statements regarding the asking of "anything" must be understood according to their context (Joh 16:23; 1Jo 5:14; *it-2* 669)

Spiritual concerns should be the main focus of prayers (Mt 9:36-38; Col 1:9; Jas 5:13)

We can also be confident that Jehovah hears our requests for help when we are mentally or emotionally distressed (Ps 34:18, 19; Php 4:7; *w94* 12/15 32)

Requests for forgiveness are appropriate and should be made on the basis of Jesus' ransom (Eph 1:7)

We can pray for power to continue witnessing (Isa 40:29-31; Acts 1:8; 2Co 4:7)

Jehovah does not need to answer in miraculous way; gives his servants strength, enlightenment, and direction (*it-2* 670)

When we experience suffering, we should not view this as punishment from God, as though he has withdrawn his saving power

Jehovah will never forsake his people (Ps 94:14)

He will provide us with wisdom that helps to protect and preserve us (Ec 7:12; Jas 1:2-5)

"Only our lack of faith and trust in [Jehovah] limits what he will do for us," noted a modern-day servant of God (*w94* 3/1 24)

**JEHOVAH WILL SHOW HIS SAVING POWER IN THE NEAR FUTURE** (5 min.)

Very soon we can expect the great tribulation (Mt 24:21, 22)

Jehovah will preserve "a great crowd" through it (Re 7:9, 14)

It is vital that we recognize the urgency of our day (2Pe 3:11, 12)

Do not allow mundane activities to prevent you from being thoroughly involved in study, meetings, and service (Re 7:15)

Reflecting on accounts of Jehovah's saving power in the past should strengthen our faith in his ability to do the same for us

May all of us live to see Jehovah's saving power, as he declares his name in all the earth (Ex 9:16; *w91* 9/15 17-18)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## DO YOU SHARE GOD'S VIEW OF LIFE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to appreciate fully that life is a grand gift and that we should use it in harmony with the will of the Creator. Emphasize the need to shun the world's callous view of life. On sensitive material, show the value of Bible principles, but avoid being judgmental or condemnatory

### **WHY LIFE IS SACRED** (6 min.)

Jehovah is the Source of all "dynamic energy" needed to create the universe (Isa 40:26; *rs* 88)

Everything material and spiritual, animate and inanimate has come from him (Ge 1:1)

Life on earth began when God superimposed the life principle on matter (Ge 1:11, 12, 20, 24; 2:7; *it-1* 526, 528; *it-2* 246)

God also made procreation and reproduction possible

Humans cannot duplicate the miracle of creating life from lifeless matter

As the Originator and Sustainer of life, Jehovah has the right to say how it should be viewed (Ps 36:9; Ac 17:25, 28; *w92* 8/1 3-4)

He has always considered life to be sacred (Ge 9:3-6; Nu 35:9-34; *rq* 24-5; *it-1* 344; *w97* 1/15 21; *w95* 1/15 5)

Even the life of an unborn child is precious to Jehovah (Ex 21:22, 23)

Animal life is also sacred to the Creator

While animals may be used for food, it is wrong to mistreat them or to kill them just for sport (Pr 12:10)

Our view of life should conform to God's

### **HOW LIFE IS VIEWED TODAY** (8 min.)

When Jehovah created human life, he sanctified and blessed it (Ge 1:28, 31)

Mankind was to reproduce in perfection and out of a clean marriage bond

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they justly deserved the death sentence (Ge 2:17; 3:19)

'In the day they ate' of the forbidden fruit, they died in God's eyes and began their descent into physical death

They no longer enjoyed the quality of life that they did at first

They brought forth offspring in a degenerate condition (*it-1* 480)

They would now die, like the beasts of the field (Ec 3:19)

Sin brought consequences of enormous evil upon the human family (Ro 5:12; *it-2* 964)

Cain showed lack of respect for the sanctity of life when he killed his brother Abel (Ge 4:8)

Nimrod became "a mighty hunter" of animals and humans, in opposition to Jehovah's view of life (Ge 10:9; *w72* 573)

We are now living in the "critical times" of "the last days"

Wickedness has increased (2Ti 3:1-5, 13)

The millions killed by wars and abortions, as well as the rampant violence, are evidence that life is viewed as cheap (*tp* 11-12, 80; *g95* 2/8 28; *g95* 4/22 6; *g92* 6/8 28)

Few today have God's view of life

### **HOW WE CAN SHOW THAT WE HAVE GOD'S VIEW OF LIFE** (18 min.)

Recognize and acknowledge that we of ourselves cannot reverse the damaging effects of sin (Ro 7:24)

However, we can take steps not to be "slaves to sin" (Ro 6:6; Eph 4:17, 22-24)

Appreciate God's esteem for life, reflected in the gift he gave through his Son (Ro 5:19; 6:23)

At great cost and pain, Jehovah arranged to restore human life to perfection through ransom, Kingdom, and resurrection (1Ti 2:3-6)

Jesus plays the central role in these; he is the Chief Agent of life (Ac 3:15)

Our life-style should show great appreciation for the ransom and the opportunity to gain everlasting life

We may have done things out of harmony with God's will, but all is not lost

True repentance can bring forgiveness and acceptance by God (Ac 3:19)

Acknowledge the Source of life and his right to set the standards (Re 4:11)

Living by Jehovah's standards shows that we appreciate the sanctity of life (Isa 2:2-4)

How we live our lives reveals our point of view

Avoid any activity or negligence that would cause bloodguilt

Includes wars of nations, reckless driving, dangerous recreation (De 22:8)

Eschew common attitude toward abortion (*rs* 25-6)

While one would by no means abort an embryo conceived out of wedlock, one should also maintain God's view of sexual morality (*it-1* 1174; *g94* 10/8 22, 24)

Shun world's view that allows immorality and living together without marriage

Show we have God's view of life by responding conscientiously to the direction of his organization

Must be involved in the lifesaving work now being done (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20)

An urgent matter, not to be taken casually (2Pe 3:9-11)

Help as many as possible make the right decision

We thus escape bloodguilt (Ac 20:20, 26)

**BLESSINGS FROM HAVING GOD'S VIEW OF LIFE** (8 min.)

During the Thousand Year Reign of Christ, earthly life will be set free from corruption (*it-2* 248-9)

Christ and his associate rulers will assist mankind spiritually and physically

Life will be elevated to the perfection Adam had prior to sinning

Regeneration will take place (Mt 19:28, ftn; *it-1* 546-7)

Jesus will remove all traces of inherited sin

Those who pass the final test will be able to enjoy perfect life forever (Re 20:7-10)

Adam's possession of perfect life was contingent on his obedience to Jehovah (Ge 2:17; De 32:4)

Because he used his life wrongly, he was never allowed to eat of the tree of life

Those who show that they appreciate God's view of life will have their names permanently written in "the book of life" (Re 20:15; Da 12:1; *re* 298)

They will have proved themselves worthy of the right to everlasting life (*it-2* 251)

**RESPOND NOW TO GOD'S DIRECTION** (5 min.)

Take in knowledge that enables you to obey God (Joh 17:3)

Reject world's irreverent attitude toward life, which is vanity (Ec 6:11, 12; 1Jo 2:15)

Includes spirit of independence to use one's free will to do as one pleases (Eph 2:1, 2)

Use your life in harmony with Jehovah's will (De 30:19, 20)

In prayer, make a dedication to God if you have not already done so (Mr 8:34-38)

Those who have made a dedication must continue to live in harmony with God's direction for use of life

Jehovah loves those who apply his counsel and live up to his requirements

He will abundantly reward all who share his view of life (1Pe 3:10-12)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## ARE YOU WALKING WITH GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience appreciate the need to center their lives on doing Jehovah's will. Emphasize need to develop trust that he knows what is best for us and that walking in his way will safeguard us now and result in eternal blessings

### **WALKING WITH GOD IS A UNIQUE PRIVILEGE** (5 min.)

The Bible uses the word "walking" to denote following a certain course in life (Eph 4:17; 5:2; *it-1* 220)

Those walking with God follow the life course outlined by him and find favor with him (Ge 5:22-24)

They give evidence of strong faith in God (Heb 11:6; *w98* 1/15 13-14)

Courageously, they stand on the side of truth (Php 1:7; *w93* 11/15 12-13)

Walking with God means we allow him to direct our steps in the way that he approves (Jer 10:23; *w98* 1/15 18)

### **RESULTS OF NOT WALKING WITH GOD** (5 min.)

Majority of mankind have pursued a course that is out of harmony with God's will

They have been inclined toward badness (Ro 3:15-18)

Denying Jehovah and his way has resulted in the present deplorable state of human society (Ps 14:1; 2Ti 3:1-5)

Ancient Ephesians were very much like many people today

They were materialistic, unruly, fleshly, proud, superstitious, and so forth (*it-1* 732-5)

Alienated from the life that belongs to God, they were headed for destruction (Eph 4:17-19; 5:5, 6)

Wicked world today rapidly heading toward "the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men" (2Pe 3:7)

### **BENEFIT BY EXAMINING LIVES OF THOSE WHO WALKED WITH GOD** (18 min.)

Noah walked with God (Ge 6:9)

He and his family concentrated on carrying out their God-given assignments (Ge 6:22)

Obvious that they did not perform shoddy work on ark or fail to complete it on time (Ge 7:1, 4, 5, 7)

Noah and family members did not squander time in world that was soon to end

Did not get wrapped up in everyday pursuits common to other people (Mt 24:37-39)

They rejected the immoral, violent acts of their day rather than being entertained by them (Ge 6:5, 11)

Noah had responsibilities in addition to building ark (*w90* 4/15 11-13)

He was a preacher of righteousness (2Pe 2:5)

Had to balance everyday cares with priorities of constructing ark and warning ancient world of its end

Abraham walked with God

He walked by faith, not by sight (Heb 11:8)

Abraham courageously obeyed Jehovah and displayed absolute confidence in him (Heb 11:17-19)

Demonstrated willingness to leave Ur of the Chaldeans, a city of material advantages (Ge 12:1, 4, 5; *it-2* 1141-2)

By faith Abraham "resided as an alien in the land of the promise" and looked forward to "the city having real foundations," God's heavenly Kingdom (Heb 11:9, 10)

Jehovah promised that through Abraham's seed "all nations of the earth" would bless themselves (Ge 22:18)

Noah, Abraham, and other faithful ones of old have a city made ready for them, God's Kingdom, which will rule over the earth

God is pleased to recognize them as his servants; he is not ashamed of them (Heb 11:16)

Jesus walked with God

He is Abraham's Seed and has left a model for all to follow his steps (Ga 3:16; 1Pe 2:21)

Jesus always looked to Jehovah for instruction (Joh 5:19)

Was foremost Preacher of righteousness

Made known that the truth focuses on the Messianic Kingdom of God (Joh 18:33-37)

He never put creature comforts and personal interests ahead of Kingdom interests (Lu 9:58, 62)

Jesus was a reasonable person, not antisocial (Joh 2:1, 2)

Yet, he knew what his priorities were, and he kept to them (Mt 6:33)

### **HOW YOU CAN WALK WITH GOD TODAY** (12 min.)

Walking with God requires establishing priorities as we handle our many responsibilities

Must discern what God's will is for us today (1Jo 2:17)

Like Noah, we should keep the doing of God's will as our first priority

His will is that we preach Kingdom good news (Mr 13:10)

Jehovah approves of the sacrifices we make to advance Kingdom interests and assist others (Heb 13:15, 16)

God's will encompasses our caring for our physical needs and for our family in reasonable way (1Ti 5:8; w97 8/15 19)

Put away old personality and independent attitude promoted by world, and put on new personality created by God (Eph 4:22-24; w93 3/1 8, 10-18)

Qualities of new personality essential to walk with God (Mic 6:8)

Instead of promoting selfish worldly pursuits, new personality moves us to demonstrate our faith and practice godly ways (Jas 2:26)

Acquire the mind of Christ, imitate his attitude, and humbly submit to God's spirit-inspired Word (1Co 2:14-16; Heb 10:7)

In Paul's day some were not stabilized in faith and lacked spirituality

They were easily swayed by unscriptural opinions (Col 2:8)

Vital to keep strict watch on how we walk and to be reasonable, yielding to the will of God (Eph 5:15-17)

**ACT NOW TO ENJOY THE UNIQUE PRIVILEGE OF WALKING WITH GOD** (5 min.)

Imitate faith of Noah and Abraham, and follow in footsteps of Jesus (Heb 12:1-3)

Be like Noah, and concentrate on living and working in way that pleases God and leads to life

Like Abraham, be willing to make sacrifices

Look to "city" that has real foundations, the Kingdom

Imitate Jesus, and live for the doing of God's will (Joh 4:34; 6:38)

Our reward is enjoying the best way of life possible now and prospect of being concealed in coming day of Jehovah's anger (Zep 2:3)

May it be your determination to walk in the name of Jehovah God forever (Mic 4:5)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## IS THIS WORLD DOOMED TO RUIN?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Build confidence that Jehovah will soon act to relieve mankind's current distress. Emphasize the actions that should be taken to ensure survival

### **MANY FEAR FOR THE WORLD'S FUTURE** (4 min.)

Human actions appear to jeopardize mankind's survival now more than at any other time in history

The dangers of global climate change and the threat of nuclear war hang over mankind (*w10* 8/1 3-4)

Economic shocks, brutal violence, and widespread disease give evidence of this system's instability (*g05* 8/8 4-7; *g03* 5/22 6-11)

Is this world doomed to ruin? Yes, it is, but not in the way that many fear

The Bible uses the term "world" to refer both to mankind as a whole and to human society at enmity with God (*it-2* 1210 ¶1)

Although many may fear that mankind will become extinct, God will not cause this or permit it to happen

### **GOD IS AWARE OF MANKIND'S DISTRESS** (5 min.)

Jehovah God is completely aware of mankind's worsening situation (Ps 11:4; Pr 15:3)

He will hold accountable those responsible (Ps 37:37, 38)

Why has God allowed world problems to reach such extremes?

In the garden of Eden, Satan called into question God's way of ruling (*w07* 9/15 4-7)

God has permitted world conditions to reach a point where no one can rightly claim that man has successfully ruled himself independent of God (Jer 10:23)

Present world conditions provide abundant evidence that Satan lied when casting doubt on God's way of ruling

Those who long for relief wonder how and when God intends to act (Hab 1:2, 3)

### **HOW WILL GOD BRING THIS WORLD TO RUIN?** (8 min.)

Jehovah God *will* bring to ruin this present wicked system

When God acts, "people of godly devotion" will be preserved but wicked human society will be eliminated, just as in the global Deluge of Noah's day (2Pe 2:5, 9)

The Bible contains vivid prophecies describing the coming of "the day of Jehovah" [**Read Joel 2:11, 31**]

The expression "day of Jehovah" refers to an awe-inspiring time of destructive judgment in which Jehovah will act against those who oppose him and will rescue those who love him (*it-1* 594-595)

Such 'days' have occurred in the past (*w07* 12/15 11 ¶2)

Those past judgments prove that Jehovah was aware of conditions on earth and took action

In the future, Jehovah will use a heavenly army led by Christ Jesus to destroy this wicked world (Re 19:11-16; *w14* 2/15 6-7 ¶15-16)

Is this coming "day of Jehovah" near?

### **WHEN WILL GOD BRING THIS WORLD TO RUIN?** (8 min.)

The apostle Peter applied the prophecy found at Joel 2:28-32 to "the last days" of his time [**Read Acts 2:16-21**]

At that time, holy spirit empowered Jesus' disciples miraculously to speak in various tongues (Ac 2:4-11)

Joel's prophecy is also undergoing fulfillment during the last days of this system of things

That Jehovah will gather "all the nations" indicates the worldwide scope of his coming day (Joe 3:2)

In fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29, God's spirit has empowered a worldwide proclamation of Jehovah's day

Jesus' prophecy concerning "the conclusion of the system of things" also has two fulfillments (Mt 24:3)

A portion of Jesus' prophecy was initially fulfilled on the Jewish system of things, and it has a global fulfillment on the entire wicked system of things of today

Jesus' words found at Matthew 24:29 are similar to those of Joel 2:31, linking Jesus' prophecy with the coming of Jehovah's day

The sign that Jesus gave, which includes the global preaching work, is now visible earth wide, indicating that Jehovah's day is very near (Mt 24:7-14)

### **YOU CAN SURVIVE THE END OF THIS DOOMED WORLD** (5 min.)

Despite the Bible's clear warning and the global preaching by Jehovah's Witnesses, "Jehovah's day" will take many by surprise (2Pe 3:10)

Now is the time to prepare for Jehovah's day by calling on his name [**Read Joel 2:32**] (*jd* 187 ¶19)

Continue to meet Jehovah's requirements for survival (Zep 2:2, 3; *w01* 2/15 17-19 ¶3-8)

Those who do so are assured of God's protection when he brings this wicked world to ruin (Joe 3:16)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pages 52-55, 166-169]



## JEHOVAH IS “A SECURE HEIGHT” FOR HIS PEOPLE

### *Note to the speaker:*

This talk, based on Psalm 94, should motivate all to want to take spiritual refuge in Jehovah. Enthusiastically build confidence that he is a stronghold for his people individually and collectively. Provide assurance that with Jehovah on our side, we are equal to any test or trial raised against us

### **JEHOVAH IS INCOMPARABLE** (5 min.)

Jehovah God is the Most High (Ps 83:18; *w91* 2/1 11)

He is King to time indefinite (Ps 10:16a; Re 15:3b)

He commands all the heavenly forces (Ps 103:20)

He is the Almighty (Re 11:17)

His power is unlimited (Job 42:2)

No one can stand against him (Da 4:35)

Despite his exalted position, Jehovah is not aloof from humans

He is close to his faithful servants and regards them with tenderness and compassion (Isa 63:9; Jas 5:11; *w92* 11/15 9)

### **JEHOVAH WILL SOON DELIVER HIS PEOPLE FROM THIS UNGODLY WORLD** (15 min.)

The time for God to hold an accounting is approaching (Read Psalm 94:1, 2)

Jehovah resurrected Jesus from the dead as a guarantee (Ac 17:31)

All should take this matter seriously!

Ongoing “crushing” and “afflicting” of God’s people require his intervention soon (Read Psalm 94:3-6)

[Briefly relate one or two Bible examples of Jehovah’s previous acts of vengeance rendered in behalf of his people]

Important to understand why injustices are permitted, including those affecting God’s servants

Must remember that much cannot be changed in this old system (Ps 12:8; Ec 1:15)

Do not conclude that wicked are getting away with badness (Pr 24:19, 20)

Necessary to maintain contentment while waiting on Jehovah to act (Mic 7:7)

Foolish for anyone to conclude that “Jah does not see” (Read Psalm 94:7-11)

Majority today defy Jehovah’s sovereignty

Many discount God as a factor to be considered (Ps 14:1)

Jehovah’s eyes and ears see and hear all that takes place (Heb 4:13)

Some excuse loose conduct as mere sport, or they live a double life, assuming that God does not see or discern their wrongdoing (Ps 10:13; *w97* 3/15 13)

Our lives must demonstrate that we have not been affected, even slightly, by this thinking (*w91* 6/15 19-21)

Jehovah will not tolerate wickedness indefinitely

Rescue of his people from oppression is imminent

‘Touching his eyeball’ will end (Zec 2:8)

By providing escape, Most High will prove to be a “secure height” for his people (Read Psalm 18:2)

### **JEHOVAH NEVER FORSAKES HIS PEOPLE** (15 min.)

Vital to learn God’s thinking, be taught by him (Read Psalm 94:12, 13)

Strive to be one whom Jehovah will never forsake

Do not minimize the importance of attending meetings and studying God’s Word personally

Never belittle correction that Jehovah provides through his Word, his organization, and the elders

There is a great sense of security in knowing the truth

Accurate knowledge provides stability, happiness, hope—even during difficult times (Col 1:9-11)

We have confidence, knowing that Jehovah is now preparing his people for preservation

Never let emotions cause you to react foolishly, concluding that you experience calamities because you have failed Jehovah (Read Psalm 94:14, 15)

Jehovah’s people cannot always avoid the consequences of human imperfection and wickedness (Ec 9:11; Ac 14:22)

We are not immune to adversity (Ps 34:19)

Jehovah God is one Friend who will always be with you, regardless of where you are, who or what is against you (Read Psalm 94:16, 17)

[Briefly relate applicable portions of life story appearing in *w93* 6/1 28-31, or a similar *published* experience]

The peace of God that excels all thought will guard your heart and mental powers (Php 4:7; w94 11/15 22; w94 12/15 32)

This peace is a calmness that comes from having a close relationship with God

Such intimacy gives confidence that regardless of our distress, Jehovah has not abandoned us

Jehovah understands our concerns (Read Psalm 94:18, 19)

Meditation on God's Word will help those suffering to be confident that Jehovah is not unconcerned about the plight of his faithful servants (Ps 145:14)

Negative thinking in the face of tribulation could weaken our faith

Important to call upon Jehovah in fervent prayer, expressing deepest fears and anxieties

Ever loyal, Jehovah can be relied upon to be our "secure height" during times of distress (Read Psalm 9:9)

He promises to be such and cannot lie (Tit 1:2)

**OUR "SECURE HEIGHT" ENSURES THAT ENEMY OPPOSITION WILL FAIL** (6 min.)

No weapon formed against God's people will succeed (Read Psalm 94:20-22)

Opposers are actively trying to 'frame trouble by decree' against Jehovah's Witnesses

This has often resulted in the banning, imprisonment, beating, torture, and even death of God-fearing people (Re 17:6; 18:24) [Briefly relate *published* examples]

Jehovah's Witnesses have not become paralyzed with fear by unfair attacks; they have refused to be silenced

Spiritual paradise flourishes earth wide, with multitudes being added daily

This is possible because Jehovah is our "secure height"! (Read Psalm 59:9)

**SERVE JEHOVAH FAITHFULLY, AND CONTINUE LIVING** (4 min.)

Jehovah will not disappoint you—the wicked will be destroyed (Read Psalm 94:23)

"Jehovah's day," the most fear-inspiring day in all human experience, is impending (2Pe 3:10)

All who have not willingly submitted to God will perish (2Th 1:8)

Respect for his own holy name and love for his loyal servants necessitate that Jehovah execute justice

All who demonstrate complete trust in Jehovah will survive (Read Psalm 62:6)

Serve Jehovah faithfully with your whole heart

Keep him always as your "secure height," and continue living!

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## THE REAL ARMAGEDDON—WHY? WHEN?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to feel the urgency of the times in which we are living. Build their appreciation so that they can see Armageddon as a reality that will soon be upon us. Emphasize the need to act now and stay close to Jehovah's organization

### **WHAT ARMAGEDDON IS** (5 min.)

There are many different ideas regarding Armageddon

At one time it was associated with violent social revolution (*ju* 140)

Some link the term with a natural disaster, such as an asteroid hitting the earth (*g99* 1/22 24, 26; *g99* 9/22 29)

Others regard it as a nuclear holocaust resulting from a war between nations (*w90* 5/15 3; *w86* 2/15 7; *g83* 12/22 3)

Armageddon, or "Har-Magedon," is found in the Bible only once (Read Revelation 16:14, 16)

This term means "Mountain of Assembly of Troops" and refers to the political forces amassed against God (*rs* 44)

The name is fitting because Armageddon is a world situation involving the troops and other supporters of all nations (*rs* 46)

It is the climax of "the great day of Jehovah" (*Zep* 1:14; *Joe* 2:11; *w96* 3/1 16)

Armageddon is God's war—a war fought between Jehovah God and the nations of the earth (*w90* 5/15 4)

Armageddon does not destroy the earth but rids it of wickedness

### **WHY ARMAGEDDON MUST BE FOUGHT** (9 min.)

Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, has the right to rule his creation

The nations have not accepted his Kingdom rule (*Jer* 25:31; *Re* 11:17, 18)

They have rejected his sovereign rule by means of his Son (*Ps* 2:2-6)

Jehovah must destroy the entrenched political opposition to his Kingdom (*Ps* 2:9; *Da* 2:44)

Satan and his demons are behind the rejection of God's rule (*Re* 16:13, 14)

Their influence pushes the nations to the world situation that results in war against God

The "dragon" is Satan in his role as leader over the nations (*Re* 12:9)

"Wild beast" refers to the entire political system by which Satan has dominated mankind (*re* 187)

"The false prophet" is the Anglo-American World Power (*re* 193-4, 230)

"Unclean inspired expressions" are demonic propaganda and remind us of the false promises made by false prophets (*1Jo* 4:1)

Throughout all history, people have given their support, even worship, to the Devil, in opposition to Jehovah (*Re* 13:4; *re* 191)

By means of the war of Armageddon, God's sovereignty will be vindicated (*Eze* 39:7; *w90* 5/15 5-6; *re* 234)

Leading the heavenly forces, Christ exercises his authority to execute those who refuse to support God's Kingdom (*Re* 19:11-16)

### **EVENTS THAT LEAD UP TO ARMAGEDDON** (7 min.)

Prior to Armageddon, "the last days" begin as God's Kingdom starts its heavenly rule (*2Ti* 3:1; *Re* 12:7-12)

Jehovah's Witnesses have published much information to confirm that God's Kingdom began ruling in heaven in 1914

The "good news" of God's Kingdom must be preached in the entire earth (*Mt* 24:14)

This is now being done in over 230 lands

Soon the nations will turn on false religion and destroy her completely (*Re* 17:12, 16)

This will mark the start of the "great tribulation" (*Mt* 24:21; *w99* 5/1 17)

The climax of that tribulation will be Armageddon (*w94* 2/15 19-21)

Between Babylon's destruction and Armageddon, Satan makes one final attack to destroy God's people (*Eze* 38:10-16)

Their spiritual prosperity infuriates him, but Jehovah comes to their defense (*Eze* 38:21-23; *w90* 5/15 6; *dp* 283)

That marks the start of Armageddon (*w97* 3/1 14-15)

### **STAY AWAKE TO ARMAGEDDON'S APPROACH** (15 min.)

Bible prophecy shows that Jehovah's "day" will come suddenly (*Re* 16:14, 15)

Just "as a thief" does, Jesus will come at an unannounced time as Jehovah's Executioner (*1Th* 5:2, 3; *Mt* 24:42, 44; *re* 231-2)

Destruction of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, will come when she least expects it (*Re* 18:7, 8)

The rivalry between the king of the north and the king of the south is nearing its end (*dp* 280)

All that is left to be fulfilled are the final stages of their conflict (Da 11:44, 45)

Disturbing reports that originate with Jehovah will spur the king of the north on to his final attack (*dp* 282-3)

Both kings will meet their end at Armageddon (*dp* 285)

We should not think that Armageddon is far off because some lands have not been fully reached with the good news

There is no reason to expect that we will reach all people in all parts of the earth before Jesus arrives as Executioner (Read Matthew 10:23) (*w97* 8/15 14)

When the great tribulation begins, Jehovah's people will no doubt be at their busiest time of activity (*w76* 689)

Some of the remaining ones of God's spirit-begotten sons will still be on earth when the tribulation breaks out (Mt 24:22; Re 7:1-3; *w97* 8/15 14-15; *re* 116)

The small number of them still with us indicates that the end is close

While still alive and functioning in their united stand against God's people, the wild beast and the false prophet will be destroyed (Re 19:19, 20; *re* 285-6)

Following that, Satan and his demons will be abyssed, removed from all contact with God's Kingdom of righteousness (*re* 287-8)

### **WE MUST ACT NOW TO SURVIVE** (5 min.)

Must not take attitude that Jehovah is delaying (Zep 1:14)

Before Jehovah's day comes upon us, we must take action (Zep 2:2, 3; *g83* 12/22 10-11)

"Seek Jehovah" for his guidance and mercy (Isa 55:6, 7)

"Seek righteousness" by bringing our lives into harmony with his requirements

"Seek meekness" by being humble and willing to make changes

Stay close to Jehovah's organization as information is progressively revealed to us on how to survive Armageddon

"Holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion" are essential (2Pe 3:11; *w97* 3/1 13)

Not knowing the exact time of Jesus' coming to execute God's vengeance keeps us vigilant (Mr 13:32, 33)

Gives us daily opportunities to prove that we serve Jehovah with unselfish motives

### **A GRAND FUTURE AWAITS US** (4 min.)

An exciting event awaits Jehovah's people—the great tribulation will soon begin (*kj* 286)

All will know that Jehovah's Witnesses have not been a false prophet (Eze 33:33)

Armageddon is a good thing, for it will clear the way for eternal peace

Blessings will flow to Jehovah's people, its survivors, as they transform the earth into a paradise that will be free of pollution, pain, tears, and mourning (Re 11:15, 18; 21:3, 4)

If you survive, you can thank Jehovah every day for eternity (Isa 25:8, 9; *w94* 3/1 23)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## **No. 153      Keep Close in Mind the “Awe-Inspiring Day”!**

NOTE: The purpose of this talk is to build up the sense of urgency in the brothers. Be sure to prepare well and to present the material with enthusiasm

### **THE GREAT DAY OF JEHOVAH IS SET ON THE DIVINE CALENDAR (4 min.)**

Individuals often commemorate anniversaries

Nations memorialize historical milestones such as the birth or independence of a country

However, there is another “day” we need to be aware of

This day is yet future, but it will affect every individual on this planet and change the course of human history

The Bible describes this important period in human experience as “the great and awe-inspiring day of Jehovah” (Joe 2:30, 31; Mal 4:5)

During that day, Jehovah will act against his enemies and in behalf of his people

This will occur during “the presence of the Son of man,” but the exact “day and hour” are unknown to humans (Mt 24:36-39, 44)

The following evidence shows that we are now living during Christ’s presence

### **EVENTS THAT MAKE UP THE SIGN OF CHRIST’S PRESENCE (11 min.)**

Jesus foretold that during his presence, there would be global conflicts and other notable developments (Mt 24:3, 7, 8; w08 10/1 6-7)

Since 1914 the world has seen World Wars I and II

In addition, international conflicts, civil conflicts, and terrorism affect and displace millions (w08 5/15 13-14 par. 7; g 6/06 4-6; g01 3/22 4)

Misleading religious elements would appear on the scene (Mt 24:11)

These have risen up, but they have provided no comfort for people or hope for the future (w94 3/1 9-11 pars. 7-12)

Lawlessness and crime would be on the increase (Mt 24:12)

The result has been worldwide fear and insecurity

The Bible describes what people would be like in these “critical times hard to deal with”

[Consider appropriate points from 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13]

Wicked men and impostors “advance from bad to worse, misleading and being misled”

By whom are they “being misled”? [Read Revelation 12:9]

Satan is influencing all those who yield to the spirit of this world (1Jo 5:19)

That Adversary of God and man has but a short time to continue his evil, vicious activities (Re 12:12)

Available evidence points to the nearness of Jehovah’s great and awe-inspiring day for executing his judgments

Jehovah has mercifully arranged for warning of that day to be given worldwide (Re 14:6, 7)

Many pay no heed, just as in pre-Flood world (Mt 24:38, 39)

We should have a sense of urgency about worsening world conditions and what they will lead to

### **WHY IT IS URGENT AND WISE TO KEEP THAT DAY IN MIND (11 min.)**

Words recorded at 2 Peter 3:10-13 are of particular interest [Read and discuss] (w10 7/15 3-5 pars. 1-11)

Global devastation of present system of things will occur

Elements will dissolve in fiery destruction of present symbolic heavens and earth

To keep “close in mind . . . the day of Jehovah” means to be keenly aware of what that day will mean for us individually and for mankind in general

True Christians have prospect of surviving that day

For those not awake to the sign of the times, however, that day will come “as a thief”

Peter exhorts us to engage in “holy acts of conduct” and to perform “deeds of godly devotion” (w10 7/15 7-11)

Such acts and deeds are holy and godly because they are in accord with God’s requirements for Christians [Without setting rules, give examples of holy conduct and of specific deeds connected with sacred service]

**KEEPING JEHOVAH’S DAY CLOSE IN MIND WILL BRING BLESSINGS** (4 min.)

Now is the time to keep Jehovah’s day close in mind and to be found acceptable to him [Read 2 Peter 3:14]

Our hope is to be “concealed on the day of Jehovah’s anger,” to be protected by him (Zep 2: 2, 3)

Having advance knowledge of Jehovah’s day, we should be motivated to enter into and maintain a favorable relationship with God and to be faithful, steadfast in his service (2Pe 3:17, 18)

Doing God’s will now holds out hope of ‘remaining forever,’ of surviving the never-to-be-forgotten day of Jehovah (1Jo 2:17)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 166-169]

## HUMAN RULE—WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience appreciate the importance of trusting in God's Kingdom. Focus attention on the blessings that will come to those who give their allegiance to God's Kingdom now

### **HUMAN GOVERNMENTS FOUND WANTING** (6 min.)

Scales, or balances, have been used throughout the ages to measure things (*it-2* 874)

Value of gold and silver determined using scales (Ge 23:15, 16; Isa 46:6)

Scales are used figuratively to represent accurate judgment (Job 31:6)

When products do not measure up to appropriate standards, the consequences can be serious

Man has experimented with just about every conceivable form of government and political philosophy (*g85* 4/8 3-4)

How have these governments fared?

Monarchies have been found wanting (*g90* 8/22 16, 19)

Aristocracies have been found deficient (*g90* 9/8 24, 26-7)

Democracy has many weaknesses (*g90* 9/22 11, 13-14)

No ruling system has produced a government that satisfies every citizen or meets man's basic needs for living a satisfying and productive life

Some honest men have worked hard to improve things and at times have produced some positive results

Ultimately, they have been unsuccessful because man was not made to rule himself (Jer 10:23)

### **NATIONS HAVE BEEN CALLED TO JUDGMENT BY JEHOVAH** (12 min.)

Jehovah God has called governments for a reckoning

Nations are compared to a film of dust on scales (Isa 40:12, 15)

How have they fared on his scales of justice?

In Daniel's day, Jehovah weighed the dominant political power of the time and found it lacking (Read Daniel 5: 24-28) (*dp* 108-9)

Overnight one rulership was replaced by another (Read Daniel 5:30, 31)

Babylonian World Power was succeeded by Medo-Persia, followed by Greece, Rome, and Anglo-American alliance, spanning a history of some 2,500 years

Some political powers of Bible prophecy are represented by four huge beasts in Daniel chapter 7 (Read Daniel 7:2, 3, 17)

After introducing the four beasts, the prophet Daniel describes a courtroom scene that takes place in heaven (Read Daniel 7:9, 10)

The Ancient of Days, Jehovah, sits to judge these rulerships (Ps 90:2; *w95* 10/15 19-20; *w88* 6/15 3-4; *dp* 144; *it-1* 105)

He finds them meriting annihilation (Read Daniel 7:11, 12) (*dp* 145)

They are allowed to continue for a time, only to be finally destroyed at Armageddon (Re 16:14, 16)

### **GOD'S KINGDOM WILL RULE THE WORLD** (20 min.)

The universal Court gave rulership of the earth to the Messianic Kingdom, which was established in heaven in 1914 (Read Daniel 7:13, 14) (*dp* 145-6)

Since 1914, God's Kingdom and man-made governments have ruled simultaneously

Even now we can weigh them and make a wise choice

Man's rule has failed to protect subjects from such evils as immorality, use of tobacco, and misuse of drugs; Christ's rule does (1Co 6:9-11; 2Co 7:1)

Human governments have not succeeded in educating subjects to live happy and productive lives; Christ's rule teaches us how to live now and forever (Isa 48:17; 54:13)

Rule by mortal man cannot bring lasting benefits; the Messianic Kingdom will (Ps 146:3, 4; Da 7:14)

In the near future, God's Kingdom will destroy all earthly governments, bringing its own righteous rule to the entire earth (Da 2:44)

Consider what that will mean for humanity (*w88* 6/15 6-7; *dg* 22-8)

Crime and violence will end (Ps 37:9, 10)

Racial and national divisions, and the wars they prompt, will disappear (Isa 2:4)

Housing shortages, homelessness, and unemployment will be things of the past (Isa 65:21, 22)

There will be plenty of food for everyone (Ps 72:16)

Perfect health will be restored (Job 33:25; Isa 35:5, 6; Re 21:3, 4)

All the damage done to the human family will be undone (Isa 65:17, 18)

The entire globe will be transformed into a paradise (Lu 23:43)

**HOW WE MUST ACT NOW TO LIVE UNDER GOD'S KINGDOM (7 min.)**

What must we do now to qualify for life under God's Kingdom?

Study the Bible, and submit to the requirements of God's Kingdom (2Co 5:14, 15)

Cultivate godly qualities (Mic 6:8; Zep 2:3; 1Pe 4:8)

Associate with true worshipers (Isa 2:2, 3; Heb 10:23-25)

Zealously share in proclaiming the good news of God's Kingdom (Mt 24:14)

Jesus Christ lives forever, and his government "will stand to times indefinite" (Da 2:44)

By living now according to its laws and principles, we can look forward to everlasting life on a paradise earth (Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

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## HAS BABYLON'S JUDGMENT HOUR ARRIVED?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to understand what is meant by the Biblical expression "Babylon the Great." Impress on them that her judgment is just and soon to occur. Help them to see the urgent need to flee from bloodguilty Babylon the Great before it is too late

### **IDENTIFYING THE SYMBOLIC WOMAN KNOWN AS BABYLON THE GREAT** (8 min.)

Bible describes "Babylon the Great" as "the great harlot" and "the great city that has a kingdom over the kings of the earth" (Re 17:1, 5, 15, 18)

A kingdom over other kingdoms and nations is an empire (*it-1* 240)

Not a political empire, for she commits fornication with the kings of the earth and misleads the nations by her "spiritistic practice" (Re 18:3, 23)

Her devastation by the ten horns of the symbolic scarlet-colored wild beast is mourned by her political and commercial companions (Re 17:16, 17; 18:9-19; *re* 267-8)

She is an enemy of true worship (Re 17:4, 6; 19:1, 2)

All these factors identify Babylon the Great as the world empire of false religion (*re* 235)

Referring to Babylon the Great as a harlot is significant

For example, the nation of Israel was warned that allying itself with the nations of Canaan was tantamount to committing "immoral intercourse ["play the harlot," *Revised Standard*] with their gods" (Ex 34:12-16; *it-1* 240)

Both Israel and Judah were condemned by Jehovah for "prostituting" themselves to the political nations and their gods (Eze 16:15-17, 26-30, 38; Isa 1:21; Jer 3:6-10, 13; Ho 6:10; 7:11; 8:9, 10; *it-1* 1037)

James warned against spiritual adultery through friendship with the world (Jas 4:4)

Babylon the Great, who prostitutes herself to "the kings of the earth," is truly "the mother of the [spiritual] harlots" (Re 17:2, 5; *re* 237-8, 244)

### **THE BLOODGUILT OF BABYLON THE GREAT** (20 min.)

Although the name Babylon the Great shows her to be the spiritual counterpart of ancient Babylon, false religion's bloodguilt predates founding of Babylon by Nimrod (Ge 11:1-4)

False religion must answer for the blood of "all those who have been slaughtered on the earth" (Read Revelation 18:24)

In condemning the religious leaders of Judaism, Jesus showed that false religion began on earth at the time of the original rebellion (Read Matthew 23:33-36) (*w91* 12/1 20)

Satan introduced false religion in the garden of Eden (*g89* 1/8 5)

By falling for Satan's deception and coveting the forbidden fruit, Eve became the first human idolater (Ge 3:6, 17-19; *it-1* 1168)

Satan became "a manslayer," beginning the bloodguilty history of false religion (Joh 8:44; Ge 3:1-5)

The first shedding of righteous blood was by the hand of Cain, an adherent of false religion (Ge 4:8-10)

World empire of false religion deserves Jehovah's executorial judgment (Re 18:8, 20; *re* 256-8)

Her appalling bloodguilt must be avenged (Re 18:24; *re* 245, 270-1)

From Jehovah's standpoint, false religion is also bloodguilty for not teaching the truth (Mr 7:7, 8; *re* 271)

Her flocks have not learned the truth of genuine brotherly love (Mic 4:3, 5; Joh 13:34, 35; Ac 10:34, 35; 1Jo 3:10-12; *w96* 4/15 13-14)

Worshiping according to the truth is a requisite for pleasing God and gaining eternal salvation (Joh 4:24; 2Co 4:3, 4; 1Ti 2:3, 4; Re 21:27; *re* 310)

False religious practices and teachings—such as the Trinity, immortal soul, and hellfire doctrines—dishonor God

Jesus denounced this worship as "vain" (Mt 15:7-9)

Directly or indirectly, Babylon the Great must answer to Jehovah for the blood "of *all* those who have been slaughtered on the earth"

She will be devastated and "completely burned with fire" (Re 16:19; 17:16; 18:8, 17, 21-23; *re* 256, 270)

Judgment on false religion comes "in one hour" (Re 18:10, 17, 19; *w97* 4/1 14; *w89* 4/15 15-16)

### **IS BABYLON THE GREAT'S DESTRUCTION NEAR?** (7 min.)

Composite "sign of [Christ's] presence and of the conclusion of the system of things" has been developing since 1914 (Mt 24:3; *w97* 4/1 5-8; *w93* 3/1 4-6)

Jesus referred to various features of "the sign" as "a beginning of pangs of distress" ("pangs of birth," *Kingdom Interlinear*) (Mt 24:8)

Like pangs of birth, which increase in severity, frequency, and duration, distress of this system intensifies as Babylon's judgment nears (2Ti 3:1, 13; *w83* 4/1 6)

Striking 'manifestation of Christ's presence' is imminent (Read 2 Thessalonians 2:8) (*re* 282)

World events suggest that false religion is now in the target zone for destruction

**ESCAPE BLOODGUILTY BABYLON'S JUDGMENT—FLEE TO SAFETY!** (10 min.)

Need to heed warning of Revelation 18:4 (*w*93 5/1 24)

Since Babylon the Great is guilty of bloodshed to the ultimate degree, one must flee to the antitypical city of refuge (*w*95 11/15 15-20)

Cities of refuge mercifully provided by God under the Law as safe havens for the unintentional manslayer (Read Numbers 35:11, 12)

To benefit from God's mercy today, we must run to and remain within the antitypical city of refuge (Read Numbers 35:26-28)

Guarding against worldly attitudes and enticements and having plenty to do in the work of the Lord can help us remain there (*re* 126)

By continually demonstrating faith in Jesus' sacrifice and availing ourselves of his services as High Priest, we will be spared from execution when Babylon the Great and the rest of this system of things are destroyed (Re 7:9, 10, 14)

End of all false religion will mark the dawning of a new era in God's exercise of sovereignty (Read Revelation 19:1, 2, 6) (*re* 274-5)

Will be followed by the immediate end of the rest of Satan's system of things (Re 19:19-21)

By taking action now and remaining faithful to Jehovah, we will enjoy the blessings of the righteous new world that follows (Mt 24:13; Re 21:1-4)

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## JUDGMENT DAY—A TIME OF FEAR OR HOPE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to clear their minds of any misconceptions regarding Jehovah's righteous judgments. Move them to want to survive the coming day of judgment on this system and enjoy the glorious millennial Judgment Day thereafter

### **JUDGMENT DAY—DISPELLING THE MYTHS** (4 min.)

There are many misconceptions regarding Judgment Day

Some think that everyone will stand before God's throne while a long list of past mistakes and sins is read aloud (*pe* 175)

This widespread myth regarding Judgment Day paints an unappealing picture of God, who "is love" (1Jo 4:8)

Feeling that God will never forget our mistakes does not endear him to us

The Bible, however, shows that Jehovah is a forgiving God who does not "remember" the sins of those whom he forgives (Jer 31:34; Ps 86:5; 103:8-14; *w*97 12/1 12-13)

Others think that God will not judge *anyone* adversely

Bible does not teach universal salvation (*w*76 343)

Jehovah, the righteous Judge, denounces the wicked (Ps 7:8-11)

Does not exempt the wicked from punishment (Ex 34:7; Ec 8:11)

To gain a balanced view, let us consider (1) Jehovah's past judgments, (2) the coming day of judgment, and (3) Judgment Day

There is a difference between the last two, as will be explained in this talk

### **DAYS OF JUDGMENT IN THE PAST—WHAT THEY TEACH US** (12 min.)

To understand why it is necessary for Jehovah to bring adverse judgment, consider what happened before the Flood

Blasphemous false religion evidently began in days of Enosh, Adam's grandson (Ge 4:26; *it*-1 729)

The world had further degenerated by Enoch's day (Ge 5:22-24; Jude 14, 15)

Conditions got worse in Noah's day, during the 600 years before the Flood

Rebel angels, Nephilim, and wicked humans filled the earth with violence, ruining it (Ge 6:1, 2, 4, 11, 12)

Only a day of judgment from Jehovah could end such wickedness

Does Jehovah destroy good people along with bad?

Abraham expressed concern over the impending destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 18:23)

Jehovah's answer shows that he had carefully read the hearts of those people (Ge 18:24-33; 1Ch 28:9)

As was true in Noah's case, a means of escape was given to righteous ones (Mt 24:38, 39; 2Pe 2:5, 7; *w*98 8/1 12-13)

Jehovah lovingly gives the wicked an opportunity to repent, as shown by the example of Nineveh (Eze 18:23, 32; Jon 3:4-10)

Jonah warned that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days

Ninevites repented, and Jehovah spared the city (Jon 4:11)

Jehovah sincerely wants wicked to change, to repent (Eze 33:11)

Jehovah's past judgments teach us that mercy is an integral part of divine justice (*it*-2 376-7)

God's provision of a ransom for mankind's salvation is the most striking example of this (Mt 20:28; Ro 5:18-21)

### **THIS SYSTEM OF THINGS NEARS ITS FINAL DAY OF JUDGMENT** (10 min.)

Prior days of judgment served to 'set a pattern' for the final judgment against this wicked system of things (2Pe 2:6; 3:7)

Final day of judgment is called "the great day of Jehovah" (Zep 1:14-18)

The nations refuse to recognize Jehovah's sovereignty, so their destruction is inevitable (Ps 2:10-12; 110:5, 6)

Jehovah has appointed Jesus to lead the angelic attack against the nations of the earth (Re 19:11-15)

Do we need to dread this fear-inspiring day of judgment?

It is largely up to us (Read Zephaniah 2:2, 3)

Some may be frightened by the word "probably"

Uncertainty lies with humans; Jehovah never changes, always fulfills promises (Jos 23:14; Jas 1:17; *w*92 5/1 15-16)

If we learn from the pattern of earlier days of judgment, we may be assured of Jehovah's protection

Jesus told his followers how to act in the days leading up to the destruction of the Jewish system of things

Keep watchful and busy preaching (Mr 13:10, 37)

Obey Jesus' directions in order to survive (Lu 21:20-22)

If we apply those same principles, we will survive the day of Jehovah and live to see Judgment Day

### **WHAT IS JUDGMENT DAY?** (15 min.)

Apostle Paul informed the Athenians of Judgment Day at Acts 17:31 (Read)

Jesus is a compassionate, impartial, humble Judge (Isa 11:2-4)

Relies on Jehovah's guidance in all judging (Joh 8:16)

Jesus' comments help us to understand when Judgment Day will begin

Spoke of Judgment Day, but did not mean the destruction of this wicked system of things (Mt 11:21, 22; 12:41, 42)

Rather, he associated Judgment Day with the resurrection

Judgment Day is associated with Christ's Millennial Reign, which begins after Armageddon

First, though, old 'heaven and earth'—today's ruling powers and those under their control—will have "fled away" (Re 20:11; 2Pe 3:12, 13)

Then, the dead are resurrected and judged (Re 20:12, 13)

Should not think that Judgment Day is limited to a 24-hour period

Those who judge with Christ rule for 1,000 years (Re 20:4)

So Judgment Day is a "day" of 1,000 years (2Pe 3:8)

Why so long? Answer lies in the way the dead are judged

Bible clearly shows that the basis for judging the dead *cannot* be their deeds before death (Ro 6:7, 23; *rs* 338)

Judgment relates to their deeds after resurrection

New "scrolls" provide basis for judgment, and these scrolls are opened *during* Judgment Day (Re 20:12; *pe* 181)

This explains why Judgment Day has to cover a long time period

Type of judgment depends on life course during Millennium

Many resurrected ones will obey divine instruction; others will refuse (Isa 26:9, 10; *re* 292, 300)

Those who rebel will be executed (Isa 65:20; Re 20:15)

As the 1,000 years progress, obedient humans will be raised to the perfect state once enjoyed by Adam and Eve

At the end of his 1,000-year reign, Jesus "hands over the kingdom to his God and Father" (1Co 15:24-28)

Afterward, there is a final test (Re 20:7-10)

For the resurrected ones who remain faithful to Jehovah, theirs turns out to be "a resurrection of life" (Joh 5:28, 29)

For those unfaithful, it turns out to be "a resurrection of [adverse] judgment"

The outcome depends on our love of Jehovah (*w*98 11/1 18)

### **WHY YOU CAN LOOK TO JUDGMENT DAY WITH HOPE** (4 min.)

Judgment Day—as well as the coming day of judgment upon this wicked system—should inspire hope, not fear

If we die faithful during these last days, we have the sure hope of resurrection to see Judgment Day (Lu 23:43; Ac 24:15)

For many, there is hope of being part of the "great crowd," which survives Armageddon (Re 7:9, 14; Joh 11:26)

Jesus is "judge of the living and the dead" (Ac 10:42)

Will apply the same principles of merciful judgment to "the living"—those of the great crowd, who never experienced death or resurrection

For the faithful, Judgment Day will be a glorious time (Ps 96:12, 13)

Remember, this hope carries the highest guarantee (Ac 17:31)

How vital that we resolve to be there!

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## HOW TRUE CHRISTIANS ADORN DIVINE TEACHING

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate the privilege we have of making Jehovah's teaching shine in all our activities of life. We want others to see that divine teaching provides not just sound principles but an appealing way of life practiced by true Christians today

### **JEHOVAH DELIGHTS IN ADORNING ALL HIS CREATIONS** (6 min.)

Adornment is described as that which is "put on to decorate, beautify, embellish, add luster to, and make the person himself, or that which he represents, pleasing or attractive" (*it-1* 51)

The Scriptures describe Jehovah as being surrounded by beauty (Ps 104:1, 2; Re 4:2, 3)

All of Jehovah's spiritual creations are described as having similar holy adornment, reflecting his glory

Jehovah's heavenly organization of angelic sons has radiant beauty (Eze 1:4-28; Re 12:1)

The New Jerusalem is described as "a bride adorned for her husband" (Re 21:2)

Jehovah's physical creations abound with breathtaking beauty

They are among the pretty things he has made (Ec 3:11)

The starry heavens are "declaring the glory of God" (Ps 19:1)

When Jehovah created the earth, the angels were treated to a spectacular sight (Job 38:7)

A closer look at the earth reveals that he has ornamented his earthly creation with color, variety, intricacy, and majesty (Ps 139:14; Lu 12:27, 28)

[Briefly describe some beauties of creation, such as snowcapped mountains, cascading waterfalls, giant redwood trees, a dazzling array of colorful flowers, animate life forms both large and small]

Jehovah's earthly creations are beautifully adorned and give glory to him (Ge 1:31)

### **HUMANS HAVE THE ABILITY TO ADORN THEIR ENVIRONMENT—BOTH PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL** (5 min.)

Jehovah started first human couple off in the most idyllic surroundings—a beautiful paradise home

He purposed that they use their God-given abilities to adorn the earth by extending the boundaries of Paradise globally (Ge 1:28; 2:15)

Sin marred the beauty of God's human creation

Earth itself came to be ruined before the Flood (Ge 6:11, 12)

The 'ruining of the earth' is taking place in our day (Re 11:18)

Even though imperfect, humans have the capacity to adorn things

Physical adornment: At great cost and effort, humans decorate their homes and adorn themselves

Spiritual adornment: When humans work at spiritual adornment, Jehovah is delighted (1Sa 16:7; 1Pe 3:3, 4)

True Christians have the unique privilege of adorning Jehovah's teachings (Read Titus 2:10)

What does this involve?

### **WAYS YOU CAN PERSONALLY ADORN DIVINE TEACHING** (24 min.)

God's teaching is beautiful, like a precious metal (Ps 12:6)

When we live according to that teaching, we are, in effect, polishing it

We make it shine, or as *The New English Bible* puts it, we "add lustre" to it (Tit 2:10)

Divine teaching is thus made attractive to others

Paul directed Titus to remind Christians in Crete of the many ways they could adorn divine teaching (Tit 2:1-15)

We too can personally adorn divine teaching (*w89* 6/1 15-20)

Consider the following ways

#### *Field ministry*

Strive to improve the effectiveness of our ministry so that we present the Kingdom message in a way that will appeal to honesthearted ones (Ro 11:13)

Keep literature, witnessing cases, and related materials neat and clean

#### *Congregation meetings*

Faithful attendance despite adversity is beautiful to behold (Ps 133:1)

At all meetings, as in the ministry, we should be neatly and appropriately dressed

Take pride in keeping our Kingdom Halls clean and in good order

#### *On secular job and at school*

As Christians, we can adorn divine teaching by being industrious and well-mannered (*w90* 9/15 23; *w73* 187-8; *g94* 7/22 27)

Moral climate at school and in the workplace is often shocking

By our conduct and speech, true Christians stand out as different

### *View of non-Witnesses*

We never want to speak disparagingly of those who do not share our beliefs

A superior attitude will not attract others to worship of Jehovah (*w98 12/1 15*)

### *Physical cleanness*

Cleanness is an identifying mark of true Christians (2Co 7:1)

It identifies God's people as a group, and it should be evident in each of us individually

The appearance of our home should add to the Kingdom message we bear (*g88 9/22 8-11*)

Lavishness not required, but modesty, good taste, and cleanliness should be reflected

Our car should be clean, inside and out, so that its appearance does not detract from our message

We must keep our clothing and our person clean so that our appearance is not a cause for reproach

### *Dress and grooming*

Our personal dress and grooming should befit those "professing to reverence God" (1Ti 2:10)

True Christians are frequently identified by these means

### *Entertainment*

Proper attention to our choice of entertainment will demonstrate our desire to adorn divine teaching

It would reflect badly on Jehovah if his people were to imitate the world while thinking that they are adhering to divine teaching

In all these ways and others, true Christians adorn divine teaching and make the Kingdom message they bear more attractive to others

### **RESULTS OF ADORNING DIVINE TEACHING** (10 min.)

A polisher of gemstones works hard to bring out the beauty of a precious stone

The result is a decorative ornament that the beholders regard with admiration

Likewise, many are attracted to divine teaching because they see its beauty reflected in the lives of Jehovah's worshipers (1Pe 2:12)

There are modern-day examples of faithful Christians who have adorned the teachings of God, making those teachings attractive to observers (See the *Index* under "Jehovah's Witnesses, Statements by Others")

Conventions have often impressed non-Witnesses favorably (*km 5/93 4; g93 12/22 11-12*)

Many who visit Bethel homes around the world are impressed by high standards of Christian living maintained at those facilities (*w97 8/1 9*)

Jehovah is delighted when he sees us working hard to add luster to his teachings (Pr 27:11)

He will be pleased to assign us the work of turning the earth into a global paradise

Those who adorn divine teaching now will be among Jehovah's pretty things that bring honor and glory to him throughout eternity

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## BE COURAGEOUS, AND TRUST IN JEHOVAH

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience appreciate that especially in this time of the end, we must show courage and trust implicitly in Jehovah. Through use of Bible examples and Scriptural reasoning, assure them that we can be confident of God's backing as we carry out our assignment to preach the good news

### **COURAGEOUSLY TRUSTING IN JEHOVAH IS CHARACTERISTIC OF GOD'S PEOPLE** (10 min.)

God's Word encourages trust in Jehovah and gives us many examples to imitate (Pr 3:5, 6)

Enoch and Noah lived in ungodly pre-Flood world

Enoch fearlessly proclaimed God's judgments (Jude 14, 15)

Noah faithfully undertook great building project and warned of Flood (2Pe 2:5)

Moses did not fear the king of Egypt (Heb 11:27)

He trusted in Jehovah and courageously declared God's judgments before Pharaoh time and again (Ex 5:1-3; 9:13-17; 10:3)

Both David and Daniel were firm for true worship from youth onward

Jehovah blessed their courageous stand in face of threats and what appeared to be overwhelming odds (1Sa 17:4-11, 41-50; Da 6:6-10, 16-22)

Jesus Christ did not cower before Satan or his agents

He courageously rejected the Devil, denounced the Pharisees, and always honored Jehovah (Mt 4:10; 23:13-15, 33; Mr 10:17, 18; Joh 7:16-18; w03 3/1 11)

### **JEHOVAH GIVES BASIS FOR US TO TRUST IN HIM IMPLICITLY** (15 min.)

His works and his Word provide foundation for confidence in him (De 32:4; Ps 19:1, 2; Joh 17:17)

Help us appreciate that Jehovah is God of love, truth, and order (1Co 14:33; Tit 1:2; 1Jo 4:16, 19)

The ransom and the resurrection of Christ give guarantee that Jehovah cares for His servants and will not forget them (Mt 20:28; 2Co 5:14; Heb 6:9, 10; w03 3/1 15)

God's Word foretold for final days an international brotherhood worshipping at his spiritual temple (Isa 2:2, 3; w02 7/1 15)

Never before have so many engaged in pure worship as true Christians (Isa 60:22; w01 2/15 26-7)

Foretold abundance of spiritual food and good condition of the heart are in stark contrast with world devoid of spirituality (Isa 65:13, 14; Mt 24:45-47)

Our Scriptural reaction to persecution gives further evidence of Jehovah's backing (Mt 5:11, 12; 1Pe 4:13, 14)

### **FAITH AND COURAGE NEEDED TO COPE WITH WORLD'S ENMITY** (12 min.)

Our being objects of hatred foretold by Jesus (Mt 24:9; w03 3/1 8; w83 5/1 12-13)

This is manifestation of enmity toward Seed of heavenly part of Jehovah's organization (Ge 3:15; w96 6/1 12-13)

We are living in period when attacks on Jehovah's sovereignty and his rule through the Messianic Kingdom are fulfilling the prophetic word (Ps 2:1, 2; Re 12:10, 17)

To endure world's hatred, we must keep on courageously trusting in Jehovah

Jesus, whose death is commemorated annually at the Lord's Evening Meal, trusted in God and conquered the world (Joh 16:33)

Paul, although in prison bonds, continued to preach boldly and encouraged others "to speak the word of God fearlessly" (Php 1:13, 14, 27-29)

Like Jesus and Paul, display courage and unshakable trust, not by means of own strength, but by means of power that comes from God (2Co 1:8-10; w03 3/1 11)

Requires complete reliance upon Jehovah's Word, confidence that his spirit is with us, and courage to keep on declaring the Kingdom good news (Ac 20:20-24)

Appreciate that Jehovah's servants are persecuted, not for doing any wrong, but rather for upholding Jehovah's sovereignty and for being genuine Christians, who are no part of world (Ps 83:18; Mt 10:22; 24:9; Joh 15:18-21; w83 5/1 14-16)

### **NOW IS TIME TO DEMONSTRATE COURAGE AND TRUST IN JEHOVAH** (8 min.)

Our warfare is spiritual, not physical (2Co 10:3-5)

True Christians do not harm others; we recognize that vengeance belongs to God, not to man (Ro 12:19)

Hence, we will continue to be a peaceful and submissive people, obedient to human governments wherever we may live (Ro 12:18; Tit 3:1)

As surely as we will put forth every effort to live quiet and peaceful lives, just as surely we will continue to preach the good news about God's Kingdom (Mr 13:10; 1Ti 2:1-4)

Now is the time to prove our faith and to be courageous, not fearing man (Pr 29:25; Lu 12:4, 5)

Let us do our utmost to share in completing the work of giving a worldwide witness (Mt 24:14)

Our prayer is that as a worldwide association of brothers, we will be courageous and trust in Jehovah right down to the end (Heb 10:39)

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TO BE COVERED IN 45 MINUTES

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## FINDING SECURITY IN A DANGEROUS WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience understand that although we face many dangers today, spiritual calamity is the most serious threat confronting us. Stress the need to rely implicitly on Jehovah for protection. Avoiding satanic snares will help us maintain our spirituality and find refuge in Jehovah

### **BIBLE FORETOLD INCREASING DANGERS FOR TODAY'S CHRISTIANS (3 min.)**

Physical dangers increasing, but all people face these (Mt 24:7, 8)

Christians face greater, subtler danger of spiritual calamity (Heb 10:38, 39)

Spiritual calamity is more serious, as it can lead to eternal destruction (Mt 10:28)

Very real, present danger; some have succumbed (*yb80* 10-11)

Where can we find refuge and protection?

### **PSALM 91 ASSURES US OF SPIRITUAL SECURITY AMID INCREASING DANGERS (7 min.)**

Jehovah warns of danger and provides refuge and protection

Psalms 91 uses symbolic language to describe dangers

[Invite audience to open Bibles to Psalm 91, and note phrases such as “trap of the birdcatcher,” “pestilence causing adversities,” “anything dreadful by night,” “arrow that flies by day” in verses 3, 5, 6, 10, 12, 13]

To avoid these dangers, we must know what they represent

Promised protection assures us that we need not fear [Read Psalm 91:1-3] (*w01* 11/15 15-16)

Satan, the great “birdcatcher,” views us as birds for him to prey upon (Jer 5:26; *it-1* 316)

His traps are usually camouflaged, where least expected

Just as a birdcatcher uses grain to lead a bird into a trap, so Satan appeals to fleshly desires to ensnare humans

Must make Jehovah our refuge, trust in him, take no chances

Like fledgling bird, need to stay under God's wings of protection to escape Satan's lures and maintain our spiritual security [Read verse 4] (*w01* 11/15 17)

By remaining loyal to God and doing his will, we will enjoy his protection (Ps 15:1, 2; 121:5-8; 1Jo 2:15-17)

### **AVOID BEING TRAPPED BY SATAN (30 min.)**

Satan's trap is his visible wicked system of things (1Jo 5:19)

Satan uses “bait” to trap victims—selfish attractions of world, such as wealth, fame, prominence

His system promotes godlessness by wanton excesses and cravings for sensual pleasures, such as by drugs, alcohol, sex

Jehovah helps us not to succumb to Satan's snares (2Co 2:11; Eph 6:11)

One potential threat to spiritual security is “pestilence causing adversities” (Ps 91:3)

Pestilence is deadly disease that spreads quickly

As used here, “pestilence” is symbolic; psalmist links with birdcatcher's trap

Is apparently nationalism, a divisive feature of this world lying in Satan's power (1Jo 5:19)

Arnold Toynbee: “Since the end of World War II nationalism has doubled the number of local sovereign independent states . . . Mankind's present mood is increasingly divisive” (*w01* 11/15 16)

Rulers of mankind have fanned the flames of divisive international strife

“Adversities” in the form of national prejudices, burdensome taxation, and wars have resulted (*w01* 11/15 16; *w79* 11/1 6-7)

How can we be protected from this “pestilence”?

By “dwelling in the secret place of the Most High” (Ps 91:1)

Is “secret place” to world; cannot be seen with the literal eye

Title “Most High” is clue to understanding where it is

“Most High” refers to Jehovah's position as Universal Sovereign

Place of spiritual security is position taken by those on Jehovah's side and thus in “the secret place”

Maintained by strict neutrality (Joh 17:16)

Must be careful not to be drawn into favoring a political side

Comforting to know that Jehovah will take us under his “wings” and protect us (Ru 2:12; Ps 5:11)

By dwelling in God's figurative place of protection, we will not fear any scheme formed against us [Read verses 5, 6]

Evil deeds committed by others will not make us cower in fear (*w01* 11/15 17)

Will not fear “arrow that flies by day,” such as verbal attacks, false accusations, lying propaganda, malicious slander, violent threats, legal actions (*w74* 12/15 754-5)

Jehovah can protect against all such attacks (Isa 54:17)

The figurative “pestilence” produces a spiritually dead state of heart and mind (1Ti 4:1, 2; 6:4, 5)

World of mankind in “gloom” respecting God and his purpose

By remaining in God’s refuge, Christians enjoy spiritual light and do not fear “the gloom”

World thinks it is enjoying the enlightenment and brilliance of its “midday,” its human intellectualism and materialistic views

Such indoctrination destroys spirituality (1Ti 6:20, 21)

‘Under the shadow of the Almighty One,’ and thus shaded from misleading worldly brilliance, those dwelling in security see thousands falling in spiritual death [Read verses 7, 8]

Integrity keepers assured that “it will not come near” them

Protected, we merely see the retribution heaped upon the wicked (Ga 6:7)

Although the world’s security is breaking down, those who make Jehovah their refuge are assured that no calamity will befall them [Read verses 9, 10]

These are the calamities previously described in this psalm

Even “natural” calamities do not destroy our faith and spiritual security (*w01 11/15 19*)

Note that ‘not even a plague will draw near to our tent’

This will be true if we remain no part of the world, including its immorality, materialism, and false religion

A particularly effective snare of Satan is immorality

Demons have been sex-oriented since days of Noah (Ge 6:4)

They delight in promoting immorality through media

The lure of immorality can easily entrap one, as in the case of David (2Sa 11:2-4)

Majority of disfellowshippings due to immorality

We can avoid this snare by safeguarding our spirituality

#### **JEHOVAH, OUR SURE REFUGE AND SALVATION** (5 min.)

Great enemy, Satan, continually tries to stumble God’s servants by wrecking their spirituality

Angels have a command to guard God’s servants [Read verses 11, 12]

Guarded from stumbling spiritually and falling for man-made systems for salvation and from worshiping “the wild beast” and its “image” (Re 13:1-18)

Even ‘stones,’ such as bans against the preaching work, will not stumble us and cause us to fall from divine favor

Like a “young lion,” Satan may make open, frontal attack through powerful worldly agencies or strike from concealment like a hidden “cobra” [Read verse 13]

Need to recognize the source, Satan, and his aim to devour (1Pe 5:8)

If we stay loyal to Jehovah and keep our integrity, he will provide us with escape and a place of refuge [Read verses 14-16]

Calling on the divine name in faith, we will be saved (Ro 10:11-13; *w01 11/15 20*)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## SAFEGUARD YOUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience realize that regardless of our years in the truth, our Christian identity can be compromised. Encourage all who have been serving Jehovah to remain firm as true worshippers. Especially help young Christians who have grown up in Witness families to appreciate the privilege of being identified as Christians and the need to safeguard that standing

### **SERVING AS WITNESSES OF JEHOVAH—A GRAND PRIVILEGE** (4 min.)

It is a blessing to be counted as one whom Jehovah has seen fit to draw into a special relationship with him (Joh 6:44; 2Ti 2:19)

Our identity as worshippers of Jehovah sets us apart from the world (Mal 3:18; Joh 17:16)

We are known for following Jesus' command to preach the "good news of the kingdom" (Mt 24:14)

The love we have for one another distinguishes us as disciples of Jesus (Joh 13:35)

Our outstanding conduct helps us to shine as illuminators in a spiritually dark world (Php 2:15)

However, maintaining our identity as true Christians during these "critical times hard to deal with" is challenging for all and especially for young ones (2Ti 3:1)

### **THREATS TO OUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY** (7 min.)

To continue being recognized by Jehovah as belonging to him, we must keep on our "outer garments," our identity as followers of Christ Jesus (Re 16:15; *re* 231-2)

Our Christian identity can be obscured or lost if we succumb to the world's unhealthy stress on self-interest

Those who do succumb often face an identity crisis

They go through periods of self-doubt, keep reevaluating their goals, and claim they have to "find themselves" or "become their own person"

Such a search for "identity" has sometimes resulted in abandonment of responsibility and sound morals

If we are not on guard, the world's attitudes can affect us

The writer of Psalm 73 began to have doubts about the value of pursuing an upright course (Ps 73:1-14; *w*99 9/1 21-2)

In time, the psalmist gained Jehovah's viewpoint on matters and rekindled his appreciation for his privileges as a worshipper of Jehovah (Ps 73:23-28)

It is essential that we be continually conscious of our identity as Jehovah's Witnesses (Isa 43:10)

A person who does not appreciate who he is and where he stands in relation to the outworking of God's purpose will lack direction in his life (Eph 4:14; Jas 1:6-8; Re 3:16)

### **AS JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, WE KNOW WHO WE ARE** (7 min.)

The Scriptures tell us what our purpose in life is (Re 4:11)

True Christians live to do God's will (1Pe 4:2)

The Bible reveals the values, qualities, standards, and characteristics required of those who want to be identified as Christians (Eph 4:22-24; 1Pe 2:21)

First and foremost, we view ourselves as true worshippers of Jehovah

We have the privilege of being among the latest in a long line of faithful witnesses starting with Abel (Heb 11:4)

Our Christian identity supersedes any ties based on family, race, color, language, or nationality (Ga 3:28)

It also supersedes personal ambitions and desires (Mr 8:34)

Maintaining a personal relationship with God is essential for true Christian identity

You young people cannot expect to be acceptable to God simply because your parents are believers

You must come to love Jehovah on your own (Mt 22:37)

But how can we cope with the many pressures we face to abandon our Christian identity?

### **WITNESSES WHO SAFEGUARDED THEIR IDENTITY** (5 min.)

The Bible contains many examples of those who, in spite of adversity or a young age, maintained their identity as God's worshippers

Josiah enacted long-term religious reforms, repaired the temple, and led the nation back to Jehovah (2Ki 23:24, 25; *w*01 4/15 25-8)

He was not molded by the corrupt legacy left by his father and grandfather

Daniel and the three Hebrews captive in Babylon never forgot their identity as servants of Jehovah

They kept their integrity under pressure and temptation (*dp* 33-45)

Christians today, young and old, must be determined to safeguard their Christian identity

### **FIRMLY ESTABLISH YOUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY** (5 min.)

The Bible encourages us to prove the truth to ourselves (Ac 17:11; Ro 12:2; 1Th 5:21)

This is done, not by experiencing the bad things the world has to offer, but by making a personal study of the Bible, wholeheartedly embracing its teachings, and displaying conduct that evidences we are "firmly set in the truth" (2Pe 1:12)

God's Word will help us to know our own abilities and potential

It will reveal our deepest feelings and motivations (Heb 4:12, 13; Jas 1:22-25)

Setting goals can also help us to use our spiritual gifts to the full (1Pe 4:10)

Make known your identity as one of Jehovah's Witnesses; this can be a protection (w00 11/1 13-14)

Preach to others, and maintain fine conduct to remain separate from the world and resist its unwholesome influence (Pr 20:11; Lu 6:44, 45)

**BLESSINGS RESULT FROM SAFEGUARDING OUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY (2 min.)**

Many blessings result when we safeguard our Christian identity:

The privilege of being recognized by Jehovah (Mal 3:16)

A personal friendship with God (Jas 2:23)

Productive goals and a clear sense of purpose

The hope of an eternal future (Ps 37:9)

By doing the things we have discussed, you can safeguard your Christian identity and reap eternal blessings

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 166-169)



## WHY DID JESUS SUFFER AND DIE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

By skillful use of the Scriptures, help audience to appreciate what was accomplished by Jesus' coming to earth, suffering, and dying on the stake. Explain the ransom as a loving provision of God and Christ. Especially point out to new ones how they can benefit from it

### **YOUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT JESUS** (5 min.)

Most religious artwork depicts Jesus as frail, halo-encircled, effeminate, and melancholy (g98 12/8 5-6)

A close examination of the Scriptures reveals that Jesus was vigorous, manly, joyful, and certainly not sanctimonious (Mr 6:3; Lu 2:52; Joh 2:14-16; Ac 2:26-28)

Just as most religious artwork is misleading, so are most religious teachings about who Jesus was and why he suffered and died

In our quest for accurate knowledge about Jesus, we must turn to a reliable source, the Word of God (Lu 1:1-3; 1Th 2:13; 2Pe 1:16)

Bible-based knowledge about Jesus is vital because it alone can lead us to a happy future and everlasting life (Joh 17:3)

God's Word provides answers to important questions, such as: Who was Jesus? Why was he persecuted? Who was responsible for his suffering and his death? What vital role does his death play in our relationship with God and our hope for life?

### **WHO JESUS REALLY WAS** (5 min.)

Jesus knew who he was and where he came from

He spoke a number of times of his prehuman existence (Joh 3:13; 6:38, 62; 8:23, 42, 58; 17:5)

Before angelic or human life existed, God directly created Jesus in spirit form (Re 3:14)

He was thus God's Son, the firstborn of all creation (Col 1:15-17)

Through him God created all other things, including the earth and the first humans, Adam and Eve

At the appointed time, Jehovah transferred the life of his heavenly Son to the womb of Mary, a Jewish virgin (Lu 1:30, 31, 34, 35; Ga 4:4)

Jesus was born a perfect, sinless human (*it-2* 56)

About 30 years of age, he was anointed with holy spirit, and he was begotten as God's spiritual Son on earth as well as the promised Messiah (Mt 3:16, 17; Lu 3:23; Joh 4:25, 26)

### **WHY JESUS SUFFERED** (15 min.)

Jesus knew that his godly course in life would lead to his being persecuted and finally killed (Mt 16:21)

It was foretold that he would be a victim of the hostility described symbolically at Genesis 3:15

The reason why Jesus suffered involved his upholding of Jehovah's sovereignty despite all the efforts of Satan to break His integrity (*cl* 144)

Jesus settled with dramatic finality the issue of the integrity of God's servants (Heb 7:26; *w91* 2/15 14-15)

Despite being the object of vicious opposition, Jesus fulfilled his commission with dignity, humility, and self-control because of his great love for God (1Pe 2:22, 23)

In this way he proved Satan to be a base liar and conquered the world under the Devil's control (Joh 16:33)

Jesus' sufferings also served to perfect him for his role as High Priest for mankind (Heb 2:10, 18; 4:15)

He was hated because he spoke the truth about God and was no part of the world (Joh 7:7; 8:40; 15:18, 19; 17:16)

Jesus learned obedience by the things that he suffered (Heb 5:8)

At his death he was able to cry out triumphantly: "It has been accomplished!" (Joh 19:30)

### **JESUS DIED TO GLORIFY GOD AND TO SAVE MAN** (15 min.)

Jesus died, not for doing wrong, but for proclaiming the truth and glorifying Jehovah God (Joh 8:46, 47; 17:4)

His foremost desire was to sanctify God's name (Mt 6:9; Joh 12:27, 28)

By remaining faithful to God, Jesus gave the finest evidence in favor of the rightfulness of Jehovah's universal sovereignty (Job 1:6-12; 2:2-6; Re 3:14)

During his short ministry, Jesus demonstrated his love for people by teaching them about God's Kingdom and by healing those who were suffering (Mt 4:23)

His greatest act of love for people was his willingly giving his life as a ransom for mankind [Read 1 Timothy 2:5, 6] (Joh 15:13; *w95* 6/15 14-15)

This was "a corresponding ransom," which means that his perfect life *corresponded* exactly to the perfect life that Adam forfeited for himself and for his offspring when he sinned (Ro 5:12, 18, 19; *w99* 2/15 13-18; *cl* 141-3)

If Jesus had been God or part man and part God, he would not have been a *corresponding* ransom Jesus tasted death for every man (Heb 2:9, 17)

The ransom was provided for the world of mankind (1Jo 2:2)

To benefit from it individually, we must exercise faith in this marvelous and loving arrangement [Read John 3:16, 18, 36]

By accepting the ransom and by obeying Jesus' teachings, we come out from under the wrath of God and into His favor

**TRUST GOD'S WORD, AND FOLLOW JESUS TO LIFE** (5 min.)

The Holy Scriptures paint an accurate picture of Jesus and reveal that "he was full of undeserved kindness and truth" (Joh 1:14)

They verify that Jesus was resurrected from the dead and that he has become "the Chief Agent of life" (Ac 3:15; 1Co 15:3-8)

He is the "one mediator between God and men" (1Ti 2:5)

Jesus has not changed but remains full of mercy and undeserved kindness (Heb 4:14-16)

He invites people of all national origins and ethnic groups to follow him and benefit from his teachings (Mt 11:28-30; 28:19, 20)

A study of the Bible reveals the key identifying mark of Jesus' true followers today [Read John 13:34, 35; 17:25, 26]

Regardless of attitudes that prevail in the world, Jehovah's Witnesses imitate Jesus and manifest love for one another (g98 10/22 6)

To embrace the hope of life eternal, we must study the Bible and learn more about Jesus' role in God's purpose [Read John 20:31]

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

# DELIVERANCE FROM A WORLD OF DARKNESS

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience recognize that in spite of material and scientific advances, this world lies in deep spiritual darkness. Impress on them the need to take in knowledge of the light of truth and to act on it. Build up appreciation for all of God's spiritual provisions

### **MANY FEEL THAT MODERN WORLD IS ENLIGHTENED** (2 min.)

Great progress made during last century

Improved living standards, transportation, communications, and health care (*g93 6/8 19*)

Increased sensitivity to human rights

Extensive research continues in fields of medicine, agriculture, science, technology, and so forth (*w99 10/15 4-5; g89 7/22 10-12*)

### **FACTS SHOW THAT WORLD IS IN DARKNESS** (8 min.)

While progress made in material and scientific ways, there is moral and spiritual decline (*g99 12/8 7-12*)

Conduct once considered antisocial and wicked is now accepted as normal (2Ti 3:1-5)

Sexual immorality rampant

Loyalty to mate, genuine love for family, and respect for life deteriorating

Pleasure-seeking has become a priority

Spiritual darkness engulfs world (*w93 3/1 8-11*)

Foretold to come upon the vast majority of earth's inhabitants (Isa 60:2a)

So-called enlightened lands have produced atheism, evolution, and many other confusing and conflicting ideas and theories

Many are closed-minded about God; they equate God and the Bible with unreasonable teachings of religion in general

Some blindly embrace superstitions and fables and are fleshly, not spiritual, in their thinking and actions (Col 2:8)

Hate has given birth to religious fanaticism, terrorism, and violence worldwide

Conditions today not only resemble those spoken of by Paul at Ephesians 4:17-19 but far surpass them (Read and make application to today's world)

### **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WORLD DARKNESS?** (5 min.)

Bible refers to "world rulers" as the ones responsible (Eph 6:12)

These are, not human governments, but invisible spirit forces that influence men and nations (2Co 11:14; Re 12:9)

Chief force for evil is Satan, who blinds minds through false teachings and hate (Ge 3:4, 5; 2Co 4:4; 1Jo 2:11; 3:10-12)

He is responsible for condition described at Isaiah 60:2a (Read)

His objective is to turn everyone away from Jehovah and the truth (Job, chaps. 1-2)

Demonic methods effective with majority (1Jo 5:19)

Issue is really about Jehovah's sovereignty (Ex 9:16)

### **WHEN WILL WORLDWIDE DARKNESS END?** (5 min.)

God's Word guarantees that this world of darkness will end

Jehovah has denounced works of darkness practiced by nations (1Jo 1:5)

His wrath to be expressed against all of those who continue to walk in darkness (Eph 5:6)

Zephaniah gives graphic description of how Jehovah will end wickedness completely (Read and briefly explain Zephaniah 1:14-18)

Issue of sovereignty to be settled at the end of this system of things, following events foretold in Scriptures (Mt 24:7, 8, 12-14, 21; Re 18:21; 19:19-21; 20:1, 2)

### **YOU CAN LEAVE WORLD'S DARKNESS AND COME INTO GOD'S LIGHT** (20 min.)

Same prophecy that foretold darkness also foretold the light that makes deliverance possible (Read Isaiah 60:1, 2)

Woman represents mother of 144,000 spirit-anointed ones (Ga 4:26)

Arose to shed light from 1919 onward (*ip-2 303-6*)

Flashes of light have been provided for the righteous (Ps 97:11)

Remnant of 144,000 still with us

Governing Body constitutes "slave" assigned to dispense spiritual food (Mt 24:45-47)

Deliverance depends on recognizing God's channel for spiritual enlightenment

As we preach, we reflect the light of truth (Mt 5:14-16; Ro 10:14b; Php 2:15)

Good news of the Kingdom provides opportunity for people to reveal whether they prefer light or darkness

Individuals must "come to the light" (Read John 3:19-21)

Favorable response results in receiving further knowledge through return visits

When Bible study conducted, light has opportunity to penetrate

Isaiah 60:22 now undergoing fulfillment (Read)

Jehovah makes timely provision for enlightenment through congregation arrangements

(Briefly discuss benefits of weekly meetings, and show why all of them are necessary for spiritual growth)

Paul tied matter of assembling together to the approaching day of Jehovah (Heb 10:25; 2Pe 3:10)

Deliverance requires our “walking in the light” (1Jo 1:6, 7)

Must put away “works that belong to the darkness” (Eph 5:8-11)

Cannot practice such and expect Jehovah’s favor (1Co 6:9, 10)

Deliverance also dependent on proclaiming God’s name and purpose (1Ti 4:16)

God’s organization equipped to help you meet all requirements

**WHAT DELIVERANCE FROM DARKNESS WILL MEAN FOR YOU** (5 min.)

This dark world will soon experience great tribulation

Jehovah promises to protect his people (Ps 91:14, 15; Pr 18:10)

Kingdom rule will mean no more darkness, violence, despoiling, and breakdown (Isa 60:18-20)

Righteousness will prevail throughout entire earth (Ps 37:11, 29; Isa 60:21)

Our hope is to survive this world of darkness

Even if one dies now and is faithful, assured of a resurrection

Then all will live in the light of God’s Kingdom forever (Joh 17:3)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## WHY FEAR THE TRUE GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate that as servants of Jehovah, we have the obligation to fear him. Make clear what is involved in demonstrating such fear and the benefits that accrue from doing so

### **BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES EMPHASIZES NEED FOR FEAR OF GOD** (5 min.)

In Ecclesiastes, King Solomon painted a realistic picture of the human situation (Ec 1:13, 14; 2:22, 23)

After showing vanity of life, he highlighted the only way to achieve real, lasting joy (*w97* 2/15 10, 13-18)

Must fear God and keep his commandments (Read Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14)

Solomon's experience taught him that centering life on Jehovah and His worship is the only course that brings lasting happiness and truly helps us cope with anxieties of life

Failure to fear God and show respect for right principles is cause of moral breakdown and rise in crime and violence

Only those who fear God and keep his commandments will survive God's judgment hour (Ec 8:11-13; Re 14:6, 7; *w95* 10/15 9-10, 12)

### **WHAT FEAR OF GOD IS AND HOW TO DEVELOP IT** (13 min.)

Fear of God involves awe and profound reverence for Jehovah and a wholesome dread of displeasing him (*w01* 12/1 14-15; *w01* 7/1 5-6; *g98* 1/8 26-7)

Person fearing God will endeavor to use knowledge in right manner

Such fear will move him to act wisely, to make wise decisions (Php 2:12)

He will not want to do anything to profane God's good name

We demonstrate proper fear of God by avoiding "the works of the flesh" (Ga 5:19-21)

Appreciate that his laws are for our welfare (*w01* 12/1 20)

They protect us from spiritual and physical danger

Even sanctions for violating them are for our good

Fear of God is developed by focusing on spiritual matters

Diligently read and study Bible daily (Jos 1:7, 8)

Value Bible books as letters from God; study and meditate on them earnestly and frequently

Make full and diligent use of publications provided by Jehovah's organization (*w01* 7/1 11)

Regularly attend and participate in Christian meetings

Apply Scriptural knowledge, never failing to do what God wants (Joh 4:34)

Appreciate that we can hide nothing from God, "with whom we have an accounting" (Heb 4:13; Lu 8:17)

Knowing that Jehovah sees all is incentive to observe his commands (Ps 11:4; Pr 15:3)

Can protect us from course that could lead to trouble

Since God is real to us, his authority causes us to have fear

To illustrate: When individuals stand before a human judge, they have a certain fear in view of his position and authority

Fear of God, however, is not solely because of God's power to punish wrongdoers, and it certainly is not due to a dread of hellfire

Such a morbid feeling would discourage us, destroy our hope

The fear of incurring God's displeasure stems from appreciation of his loving-kindness and goodness (*w95* 3/15 10; *it-1* 818)

Knowledge of Jehovah's qualities and all he has done and will yet do for us fuels our desire to please and obey him (Jas 1:17)

### **BENEFITS FROM HAVING FEAR OF JEHOVAH** (10 min.)

The fear of God keeps us alive spiritually

Based on faith, it is tied in with love for God and trust in him

We therefore have no fear of approaching God in prayer (1Jo 4:18)

By praying regularly, we keep close to Jehovah and feel secure

Godly fear drives out fear of man (Ps 112:7; 118:6; *w95* 3/15 19)

Moves us to put Jehovah first and to do right without fear of what others think

Fearless prophets of God did not engage in wrongdoing, even though it was popular (Jas 5:10)

Eliminates morbid fear of death caused by man (*w95* 3/15 20)

The prophets had faith in Jehovah's power to resurrect (Heb 11:32-35)

Awareness of God's power and our faith in resurrection enable us to have courage to overcome fear of man

Fear of God protects us by helping us to avoid bad conduct (*w95 3/15 18*)

Because God was real to Joseph, he refused to sin against him (*Ge 39:9; w01 12/1 22*)

If God is real to us, we will be helped to resist temptation

This will rid us of vexation and calamity (*Ec 11:10*)

Fear of Jehovah produces happiness (*Ps 112:1*)

Keeps us ever appreciative of all Jehovah does for us

If we are humble before Jehovah and accept his standards, we will be rewarded with everlasting life (*Pr 22:4; Ec 8:12, 13*)

**KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE GOD WE FEAR** (15 min.)

Obedience to God's commandments proves we love and fear Jehovah (*1Jo 5:3; w01 12/1 16*)

**MORALITY:** God of love outlines moral standards that promote highest good for those who follow them

Back up godly fear by demonstrating hatred for what is bad (*Ps 97:10; 1Co 6:9, 10; Re 21:8*)

Avoid excessive drinking of alcoholic beverages (*Ro 13:13; w02 4/15 17*)

Abstain from sexual immorality (*Ac 15:20, 29; 1Th 4:3*)

Be honest, do not steal or lie (*Eph 4:28; Col 3:9; Re 22:15*)

Make any changes needed so as to conform to standard of righteousness God has established (*1Pe 4:3*)

Preserve clean course, and manifest godly wisdom (*Jas 3:17*)

**NEUTRALITY:** Adhere to principles of Isaiah 2:2-4; John 18:36

**CHILD TRAINING:** Train children from infancy, for God wants our young ones to fear him (*Pr 10:27; 22:6*)

Be consistent in giving discipline, thus proving your love (*Pr 13:1, 24; 22:15*)

Apply theocratic counsel God gives us (*Eph 6:4*)

**PURSUE PEACE:** Should be grateful that we can associate with peace-loving fellow believers (*Ps 119:63; 133:1*)

Maintain good relations with other Christians (*Ro 14:19; 1Th 5:13*)

Endeavor to "be peaceable with all men" (*Ro 12:18; Jas 3:18*)

**PREACH KINGDOM GOOD NEWS:** We must not keep knowledge of God to ourselves (*Mt 5:14-16; 24:14*)

Often requires that we give priority to the time spent preaching, but we do it out of love for God and fear of him (*Heb 13:15*)

We want others to learn of prospect of everlasting life and requirements for it (*1Ti 4:16b*)

**KEEP PROVING THAT YOU FEAR GOD** (2 min.)

Put Jehovah first in your life

Learn his ways and principles, and obey him above all others (Read *Ecclesiastes 12:13* again)

In fear of God, keep preaching despite persecution (*Joh 15:20; 2Ti 3:12*)

Continue to have wholesome fear of Jehovah for all eternity

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## IS GOD STILL IN CONTROL?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to see that while Jehovah allows us freedom to demonstrate where we stand on the issue of his right to rule, he nevertheless remains very much in control of matters affecting the earth. Build appreciation for Jehovah's way of ruling in order to stimulate desire to seek him and to follow his direction

### **WHY GOD SHOULD BE IN CONTROL** (3 min.)

Have you thought seriously about the significance of Genesis 1:1?

From what did 'God create the heavens and the earth'? (Isa 40:26; *g99* 6/22 6-7; *ct* 89-91; *it-1* 526)

God has the right to exercise control over what he has brought into existence (Ps 36:9; Re 4:11; *bh* 125)

His control works for the good of his creation (Ge 1:31; 2:8, 9, 15; Ps 19:7-11; Mic 6:8)

### **JEHOVAH EXERCISES CONTROL IN A LOVING WAY** (4 min.)

The first humans derived pleasure from every aspect of life

They had no lengthy code of laws to fulfill; God's requirements were simple and easy to abide by (1Ti 1:8-11; *bh* 48; *it-2* 160)

Adam and Eve did not feel that God was constantly supervising or controlling their every action

Jehovah did require that Adam and Eve acknowledge his right to determine good and bad (Ge 2:16, 17; *w03* 1/1 4; *bh* 61)

They had the capacity for such obedience

Obedience did not mean being deprived of anything beneficial

Jehovah's rulership is based on love (*it-2* 275)

He showed his love by making man in His image, with the capacity for love, and by revealing himself to man (Ge 1:26-28)

### **HOW GOD'S RIGHT TO BE IN CONTROL WAS CHALLENGED** (5 min.)

Satan challenged Jehovah's *right* to be in control (*bh* 109)

He insinuated that Jehovah had lied to Adam (Ge 3:1-5; Re 12:9)

By his actions Satan refused to accept Jehovah's rulership

He urged others to follow his rebellion

The Devil also questioned God's *way* of controlling matters

He implied that God withheld benefits from His creatures (*it-2* 963)

Asserted that man could rule himself successfully without God

It would take time to settle the issues raised by Satan (*bh* 110-13)

Satan has been allowed to develop his "world," or "system of things," of which he is the ruler (*bh* 31-2) (2Co 4:4)

"The earth and that which fills it" still belong to Jehovah (Ps 24:1)

During this time, Jehovah has not stepped in to correct every problem (*bh* 112)

One of Satan's ploys is to promote the idea that Jehovah has lost control

Yet, Jehovah has demonstrated his supremacy in earth's affairs

### **JEHOVAH HAS ALWAYS MAINTAINED HIS POSITION AS SOVEREIGN** (12 min.)

Although earth had become a focus of rebellion, Jehovah did not relinquish his dominion over it (Ps 103:19)

During the pre-Flood period, God demonstrated willingness to guide those who sought him, such as Abel, Enoch, and Noah

The Flood was evidence of God's ability to enforce his will

Jehovah's dealings with Abraham and the nation of Israel proved that His sovereignty over earth was still in effect (Ps 105:6-15; *it-2* 161-2)

He exhibited his control by maneuvering Assyria and Babylon to act in fulfillment of his word (Isa 10:5-7; Eze 21:18-23)

When he finally removed his defenses from around his people, it was an expression of his righteous judgment as Sovereign (Jer 35:17)

Though allowing the nation to go into exile, God's power worked to guarantee the fulfillment of prophecy concerning Jesus (Ps 89:3, 4, 35-37; *it-2* 663)

During that time, Jehovah repeatedly demonstrated his ability to protect and preserve individuals who looked to him as their Sovereign (Da 3:13-29; 6:12-27)

Thus, for thousands of years, nothing has ever been allowed to interfere with the perfect outworking of Jehovah's purpose

**THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM CHAMPIONS JEHOVAH'S RIGHT TO RULE** (9 min.)

Jehovah's kingly power over his creation was demonstrated in many ways by his royal Representative

Jesus exercised control over the weather, plants, animals, humans, and spirit creatures (Mt 8:26-32; 9:35; 17:27; 21:19)

This proved that his authority came from the Sovereign (Mt 9:2-8)

Although Jesus' arrest, trials, and execution made it appear that Jehovah had lost control over the situation, in reality these events marked a powerful fulfillment of God's prophecies (Lu 24:19-27, 44; Joh 19:10, 11; *it-2* 169)

God's long-foretold Kingdom in the hands of Christ Jesus is the instrument Jehovah will use to champion his right to rule (Da 2:44, 45)

The Kingdom will reverse all suffering caused by human rule

When the Messianic Kingdom has accomplished its work, it will be handed back to Jehovah (1Co 15:21-28; *bh* 112)

Yet, its accomplishments will endure forever

Jehovah will soon bring an end to all wickedness and will remove Satan's world (Ps 37:9-11; 2Th 1:6-9; 1Jo 2:17; *bh* 94)

**DEMONSTRATE YOUR LOVE FOR JEHOVAH'S WAY OF RULING** (12 min.)

We are involved in the issue of sovereignty (Job 2:3-5; *cl* 124; *it-1* 1210)

Jehovah wants us to serve him willingly, out of love (De 10:12-21; 30:6, 15-20; Isa 1:18-20; *bh* 113-14)

He gives each of us freedom to demonstrate that we prefer his sovereignty and that we allow him to govern our lives

Recognize the authority given to Jesus, and submit to it (*be* 276)

Christ has a legitimate right to our obedience (Ge 49:10; Mt 28:18)

No one else has been granted that right (Jer 10:23; Ac 4:12)

This affects our everyday activities, decisions, and goals

Our obedience to Christ's commands shows that we appreciate and respect Jehovah's sovereignty (*wt* 58-9)

When we do what is right, Jehovah's heart rejoices (Pr 27:11; *w03* 4/15 14-15)

Jehovah blesses those who love his sovereignty (*w94* 11/1 7)

In summary, we have seen that Jehovah has the right to control what is happening on this earth and to direct our personal lives

He exercises such prerogative in love

Because of the first rebellion, Jehovah has allowed Satan and humans to be independent of His rule

However, he has not relinquished his right to control matters

He has exercised that right in harmony with his purpose

By means of the Messianic Kingdom, God will soon reestablish full control of human affairs

Eventually, all those living will acknowledge Jehovah's right to rule (Ps 83:17, 18; Eze 38:23)

(Additional source material can be found in *Insight*, Vol. 2, pp. 159-70, 1008-12, and *Bible Teach*, pp. 8-17, 27-36, 106-14)

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## WHOSE VALUES DO YOU CHERISH?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience appreciate that if we do not have a good relationship with Jehovah, the Giver of life, whatever goals we achieve will be temporary at best. Since our goals depend on what we value the most, embracing the Bible's values is what will bring everlasting rewards

### **MOST SEARCH FOR VALUES THAT GIVE LIFE MEANING** (5 min.)

It is natural to want to achieve something that is worthwhile and brings satisfaction (Ec 2:24a)

Goals are pursued in hope that their achievement will bring contentment and a sense of accomplishment

Our values determine our goals and our priorities

If our values are proper, we will set worthwhile goals and realize them (Php 1:10, 11; w04 7/15 21-3)

If we treasure valueless things and set unworthy goals, we are sure to experience disappointment (Pr 12:11)

It is good to analyze our values to ascertain where they are leading us

### **GOALS SOUGHT BY THE MAJORITY REFLECT THE WORLD'S VALUES** (10 min.)

Many place high value on wealth and thus may set only materialistic goals, such as getting a well-paying job and investing earnings strategically

Lives built around material goals are filled with disappointment (Pr 23:4, 5; 1Ti 6:9, 10; w02 4/15 5-6)

Jesus pointed out the folly of such goals (Lu 12:15-21)

Some place a high value on fame and prominence and may seek to attain recognition through higher education or the cultivation of unique talents or skills

Educational goals stress learning from the worldly-wise

World's wisdom is empty, especially when compared with God's wisdom (1Co 3:18, 19; Col 2:3, 8, 9)

Pursuit of fame engenders a spirit of competition, which is divisive and causes contention (Ga 5:26)

Fame fades, and it cannot give life to its possessors (Ec 2:16)

World places high value on excessive recreation

This reflects their lack of hope (1Co 15:32)

Many act as if they were not accountable for how they use their bodies (2Co 5:10)

Love of worldly pleasures does not bring lasting satisfaction; avid pursuit of such results in emptiness (Pr 21:17)

### **THE EXCELLENCE OF THE BIBLE'S VALUES** (20 min.)

Since everything is valueless without life, the highest values are those associated with maintaining a good relationship with the Giver of life (Ps 63:3; w01 10/15 15-16)

Maintaining that relationship requires:

Taking in knowledge of Jehovah and his purposes, acquiring divine wisdom and understanding (Pr 3:13-18; Joh 17:3)

Doing God's will (Joh 4:34; 1Jo 2:17)

Obedying God's laws and commandments (Pr 3:1, 2; Ec 12:13, 14)

Developing godly qualities (Mic 6:8; Ga 5:22, 23)

Bible values put emphasis on spiritual goals (w04 10/15 3-7)

Whereas the world promotes accumulating riches, the Bible teaches us to be liberal and ready to share (1Ti 6:17-19)

Thus, we set goals to give of our time, energies, and valuable things, seeking God's Kingdom first instead of material things (Mt 6:19-34; w99 4/1 6-7)

Although most humans known by men are soon forgotten, those known by God are remembered, with eternal life in view (Ec 9:15; Mal 3:16)

We therefore aim to make decisions in life that will help us to acquire a good name with God (Ec 7:1; w03 8/15 3)

While the gratification that comes from merrymaking is temporary, the result of pursuing godly values is true joy now and the prospect of eternal happiness

Accordingly, we seek to live and work with others in a spirit of love and unity (Ps 133:1; Col 3:12-14)

### **SEEK VALUABLE THINGS THAT BRING EVERLASTING REWARDS** (10 min.)

Vital that we view things spiritually rather than physically (1Co 2:14-16)

Physical values focus on shortsighted goals that offer little

High value placed on things due to pass away (1Jo 2:15-17)

Lives built around such values will soon end

Spiritual viewpoint reveals what is truly valuable (Php 3:7, 8)

Pursuit of Scriptural values has already brought peace of mind, loving relationships, satisfying work among Jehovah's people (Pr 2:6-9)

Those who treasure Bible values are assured of a happy, secure future (Ps 16:11)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

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## FACING THE FUTURE WITH FAITH AND COURAGE

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate that the fatalistic attitude of living only for the moment is very shortsighted. Explain how faith, based on accurate knowledge of God's Word and his sure promises, can enable us to face the future courageously despite worsening world conditions or personal problems. Emphasize the privilege we have to share our hope with others

### **WHY YOUR VIEWPOINT OF THE FUTURE MATTERS** (7 min.)

Many people, including youths, think seriously about the future (*w01 5/15 3-4; w01 8/15 5-6*)

While acknowledging the reality of crime, disease, pestilence, and war, some try to be optimistic (*g 1/06 5*)

Others become frustrated because of the magnitude of mankind's problems and live only for the moment (*Isa 22:12, 13; ip-1 237*)

Without a firm hope for a better future, people tend to live for the present (*1Co 15:13, 32; w01 11/1 7*)

Since the early Christians may have been influenced by this dangerous attitude, the apostle Paul saw the need to strengthen their faith (*w97 8/15 12; w97 11/1 24*)

He reminded them that Christ's death fulfilled prophecy, thereby heightening their appreciation for spiritual realities (*1Co 15:3, 4*)

This helped them to have confidence in the future

Today, as Jehovah's Witnesses, we are optimistic about the future, but on what is our optimism based?

How does faith enable us to face the future with courage, to handle personal problems now, and to endure persecution and pressures as we serve God?

What can we do to increase our faith and courage?

### **HOW FAITH AFFECTS OUR VIEWPOINT** (16 min.)

Christian faith is real—not blind credulity (*Heb 11:1*)

It is based on solid evidence (*it-1 804*)

The visible universe and its orderliness testify to an invisible Creator and the manner in which he wants things done (*Isa 40:25, 26; Ro 1:20*)

The reliability of God's Word and the accurate fulfillment of its prophecies give further basis for faith in all his promises (*Jos 23:14; Ro 10:17*)

Through Bible study, Jehovah's Witnesses know what God has promised and why nothing can thwart the fulfillment of his Word (*cl 9-11*)

Scriptural truths help us to face the future with confidence

God made the earth to be inhabited (*Isa 45:18*)

He will not let it be destroyed by weapons (*Ps 104:5; Ec 1:4*)

Instead, he will bring about global disarmament (*Ps 46:9*)

God will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth" (*Re 11:18*)

Jehovah will not allow disease to wipe out the human race

Sickness will be removed (*Isa 33:24*)

Health will improve until perfection is reached (*Job 33:25*)

Jehovah has promised to preserve the righteous through the war of Armageddon (*Mt 24:22*)

Since God's very name is linked with the fulfillment of his Word, he will not fail to do what he says

Revelation 7:9, 14 assures us that "a great crowd" must be alive on earth when "the great tribulation" begins

Jehovah will never permit the extermination of his people (*Ps 116:15; cl 73-4; ka 408-9*)

Such Bible knowledge strengthens our faith and gives us courage in the face of present crises

### **PERSONAL PROBLEMS OVERCOME WITH FAITH AND COURAGE** (16 min.)

Everyone faces problems and tragedies that cause anxiety

Many have daily concerns about providing necessities, worry about health care, or experience anxiety about getting married or rearing children

Such matters affect us, but caring for them to the exclusion of spiritual interests is self-defeating (*Lu 8:7, 11, 14; 21:34-36*)

Courageously demonstrating faith in Jehovah's promises ensures sustenance and brings true happiness (*Mt 5:3; 6:33*)

A loved one may die

Faith in the resurrection promise enables us to grieve with hope, unlike unbelievers (*Joh 5:28, 29; 1Th 4:13; cl 287-8*)

Understanding how Jehovah fulfills his Word in our behalf bolsters our courage (*g01 7/22 22-3*)

Christians face outright persecution

We look to “the God who supplies endurance” (Ro 15:5)

Our brothers and sisters in modern times have faced persecution with full reliance upon Jehovah (*w03 9/1* 23-8)

Experiencing Jehovah’s help during trials fortifies us to face the future with faith and courage (Ro 5:3-5)

**SHARE IN TALKING ABOUT YOUR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE** (6 min.)

Knowing what to expect, a person can prepare and thus reduce stress and anxiety

We have a sure hope: God’s ruling Kingdom will soon cleanse the earth (Da 2:44)

We want to share this hope with all others for whom Christ died

Infuse them with confidence in the lifesaving Kingdom truth (Ps 145:7, 11-13)

Help them to learn how they too can face the future with faith and courage

If you are not yet one of Jehovah’s Witnesses, study God’s Word, the only source of reliable insight into the future

Learn about Jehovah God, Jesus Christ, and the Kingdom

Continue associating with God’s people, and you too will be able to face the future with faith and courage (De 31:6)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)

## ACT WISELY IN A SENSELESS WORLD

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help your audience to see how valuable it is to acquire divine wisdom and how significant it is to use godly wisdom in our lives. Stress the blessings that result from safeguarding divine wisdom

### **WE LIVE IN A SENSELESS WORLD** (5 min.)

World boasts of great knowledge, material progress, advanced technology

However, spiritually and morally it plunges deeper and deeper into a morass of ungodliness (2Ti 3:1, 13)

Though supposedly enlightened, world acts senselessly in many ways

Talks of peace, but still maintains deadly armaments (*g04* 3/8 3-9)

Terrorism darkens the lives of millions (*g* 6/06 3-6)

Sexually transmitted diseases and teenage pregnancies abound (*g05* 12/22 11; *g05* 8/8 29; *g04* 10/8 4-7, 28; *g04* 5/22 11-12)

There is a wave of drug abuse (Eph 4:17-19; *g03* 4/8 3; *g99* 11/8 3-7; *g99* 7/8 6-7)

Churches back factions in war, clergy are charged in genocide, priests sexually exploit young people and church covers it up (*kp* 3)

Pursuit of materialism leads to “senseless and hurtful desires” (1Ti 6:9)

Values are distorted (*g03* 6/8 3-9)

How can we act wisely in such a senseless environment?

### **WE MUST TURN TO SOURCE OF TRUE WISDOM** (10 min.)

Jehovah is Source of true wisdom (Pr 2:6)

He views world’s wisdom and reasonings, which run counter to his, as foolish and futile (1Co 3:19, 20)

Reading the Bible daily, meditating on it, and applying its counsel will help us benefit from God’s wisdom (Jos 1:7, 8; Ps 1:1, 2)

God’s Word can make us wise for salvation and equip us for every good work (2Ti 3:15-17)

It guides us in way we should go (Isa 30:21; *w03* 2/15 31)

Bringing our life into harmony with God’s will and ways is the wise course to take (Isa 48:17, 18)

Jehovah’s standards always promote the highest good for those who follow them

Godly wisdom is a gift from Jehovah and should be safeguarded (Pr 3:21)

Applying divine wisdom, we can have a better life now and “get a firm hold on the real life” (1Ti 6:19)

### **ACTING ON COUNSEL OF GOD’S WORD IS COURSE OF WISDOM** (20 min.)

To embrace Jehovah’s wisdom, we must get sense of what we read and act upon it (Pr 2:2-5; Jas 1:22-25)

Should heed counsel to keep uncontaminated by remaining separate from the world (Jas 1:27)

Remain neutral in all worldly affairs (Joh 17:14)

Refrain from doing what is bad; pursue peace (Ro 12:9, 18; 1Pe 3:11)

Allow no place in lives for hatred, greediness, shameful conduct, obscene jesting (Pr 10:12; 1Co 6:9-11; Eph 5:3-5; 1Jo 3:15)

Following counsel of God’s Word is a protection (Ec 7:12)

Enables us to turn away from ‘empty speeches and falsely called knowledge’ (1Ti 6:20, 21)

Helps us avoid path of immorality and shame and protects us from sexually transmitted diseases, illegitimate pregnancies, and the heartache that accompanies these (Pr 5:1-14)

Keeps us separate from political controversies that often result in violence and harm (Joh 17:16; Jas 4:4; *w02* 11/1 14-19)

Frees us from anxiety, allowing us to practice godly devotion with contentment (Mt 13:22; Tit 2:11-14; Heb 13:5)

Helps us avoid problems, pitfalls, and the calamity soon to befall this senseless world (Pr 22:3)

Prevents us from following men, thus avoiding tragedy (Mt 15:14; *w04* 1/15 3-7)

Failure to heed Jehovah’s direction and warnings will lead to calamity (*w03* 1/1 8-11)

We can act wisely in senseless world only if we follow Bible counsel (Ps 32:8; *w03* 7/15 21-3)

### **URGENT NOW TO ACT WISELY** (10 min.)

End of senseless world draws near (1Co 7:29; 1Pe 4:7; *w03* 12/15 14-19; *w00* 1/15 12-14)

Will Jehovah find us acting wisely and in line for survival into his new system? (2Pe 3:11-14)

Wise course is to take stand on Jehovah’s side, uphold his sovereignty, and find refuge in his name (Pr 18:10; 27:11)

Keep Kingdom interests first (Mt 6:33)

Youths, learn skills that will help to sustain you in sacred service (*w05 10/1 30-1*)

Limit business and recreational pursuits (1Ti 4:8; 2Ti 2:3, 4; *w06 3/1 17-21; w06 2/1 6*)

Continue to reject ungodliness in every aspect of life (1Pe 4:3)

Shun violent sports, immoral entertainment, and overindulgence in alcohol

Avoid such worldly traits as jealousy, contentiousness, bragging, and lying (Jas 3:13-15)

Keep pursuing peace (Heb 12:14)

By fearing Jehovah and acquiring wisdom, we will avoid destruction and ruin with the foolish and senseless world (Pr 3:13-18; 4:7)

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## YOU CAN FEEL SAFE IN THIS TROUBLED WORLD!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Be convincing without being dogmatic in your delivery. Be enthusiastic, while manifesting warmth and feeling

### **WHY PEOPLE DO NOT FEEL SAFE** (3 min.)

Many have legitimate reasons to fear for their personal and family safety (*g* 11/06 3) [Where possible, cite local and current examples for following]

Hurricane leaves a path of death and destruction

Earthquake reduces a city to rubble

Pestilence claims lives of victims

Predatory criminals lurk in neighborhoods

Terrorist attack changes a quiet day into a nightmare of violence

Nuclear weapons, developed by increasing number of nations, threaten security

Warfare and civil disorders terrify millions

Is there any way we can truly feel safe?

### **SENSE OF SAFETY VANISHED IN 1914** (15 min.)

Bible Students of the late 1800's knew that the year 1914 was significant (*ju* 60, 134-5)

Secular historians acknowledge that 1914 was a turning point in human history (*w*05 10/1 5; *w*04 2/1 20; *w*92 10/1 17; *rs* 239-40)

Jesus foretold events that would rob humans of a sense of security and safety in our day [Read Matthew 24:3, 6-8] (*w*05 10/1 4-6)

*"You are going to hear of wars and reports of wars . . . For nation will rise against nation"*

In his parallel account, Luke quotes Jesus as saying that we would "hear of wars and disorders" (Lu 21:9)

Wars, revolutions, civil disorders, and acts of terrorism have become increasingly common since 1914

As a result, millions of lives have been lost (*w*06 9/15 4; *w*00 10/15 16; *w*97 4/1 9)

Some nations where people once felt relatively secure now face daily threat of terrorism

People all over the earth no longer feel safe

In 1914 the first *world* war was fought

Not merely a conflict between two armies but war between entire nations, affecting civilian populations (*rs* 235)

'Peace was taken away from the earth' in 1914 (*Re* 6:4; *re* 93-4)

Wars and ethnic fighting continue to rage

In many regions, both the noise of battle nearby and the reports of battles far away are being heard (*w*70 43)

In giving the sign of his invisible presence, Jesus made a remarkable statement: "See that you are not terrified" (Mt 24:6)

Such calmness could be achieved only by those who understand the import of Jesus' words

[Read Matthew 24:7]

*"There will be food shortages"*

Today, many cannot feed their families properly for lack of money or land or because of the aftereffects of war (*w*06 9/15 4; *w*04 1/1 4; *g*00 5/8 4-5)

Hundreds of millions suffer from chronic hunger

*"Earthquakes in one place after another"*

Devastating earthquakes since 1914 have, on average, been 20 times more frequent per year than during the 2,000 years prior to 1914 (*rs* 236)

Since 1914, earthquakes strong enough to destroy buildings and split open the ground have averaged 18 per year (*w*05 10/1 6)

Earthquakes have claimed hundreds of thousands of lives in the last 100 years (*w*06 9/15 4-5)

Survivors suffer nightmares and long for place of safety (*w*95 10/15 4)

[Read Luke 21:11]

*"In one place after another pestilences"*

At the end of World War I, the Spanish influenza alone killed up to 50 million people (*w*05 10/1 5)

In spite of medical advances, all mankind still live in fear of the spread of deadly infectious diseases (*w*06 9/15 5)

Jesus said that this period of time would be marked by "fearful sights" and that in the future "men [would] become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth" (Lu 21:11, 26; *w*95 10/15 5-8)

How, then, is it possible to live in this troubled world and *not* be terrified?

**WHERE REAL SAFETY CAN BE FOUND** (22 min.)

Jehovah God assures us that he will protect those worshipping him in “spirit and truth” (Joh 4:24; Ps 46:1)

God’s name is a strong tower [Read Proverbs 18:10]

When one truly knows Jehovah and trusts him, he has a sound basis for feeling safe and secure (Pr 3:5, 6; *cl* 68, 70)

When facing anxiety over the instability of this system of things, apply Philippians 4:6, 7 [Read]

Peace of God is a deep inner calm that frees us from anxiety and alarm and helps us to feel safe (*w*94 11/15 22)

Having this peace we can “dwell in security,” knowing that Jehovah will not let anything happen that will cause us permanent harm (Ps 4:8)

When giving the aforementioned features of the sign of his presence, Jesus compared the pre-Flood world of Noah’s day to our day [Read Matthew 24:37-39]

The Flood set a pattern for our day [Read 2 Peter 2:5, 6, 9]

By means of the Flood, the violence-filled world of that time was destroyed (2Pe 3:5-7)

Why were Noah and his family spared the destruction of that time?

Because “Noah walked with the true God”; he and his family obeyed Jehovah and found real safety in the ark (Ge 6:9)

Similarly, we must take advantage of Jehovah’s provision for a safe haven at this time—the symbolic ark (*w*97 3/1 12)

It represents the spiritual paradise that Jehovah has been building up among his worshippers since 1919—the condition of a restored peaceful relationship with God (*w*86 1/1 14-15)

[Consider some features of the spiritual paradise (*w*01 3/1 8-11)]

Prospective human survivors are already entering this “ark” so that they may get safely through the “great tribulation” that will culminate in Armageddon (Mt 24:21)

Armageddon will destroy the Devil’s unsafe, wicked system

Survivors will be safely ushered into a cleansed earth—a physical, gardenlike place of true peace and security (Re 7:9, 10, 14-17; 21:4)

Soon Jesus will arrive “in his glory” to judge mankind [Read Matthew 25:31-33] (Joh 5:22, 27; *w*95 10/15 22-3)

The “sheep,” the “righteous ones,” will be granted “everlasting life” in God’s new world (Mt 25:46; 2Pe 3:13)

We will be considered sheeplike if, over a period of time, we have actively supported Christ’s brothers—his anointed followers—who have been given the commission “of bearing witness to Jesus” (Re 12:17; Mt 25:34-40; *w*95 10/15 25-8)

**SEEK REAL SAFETY NOW** (5 min.)

Do not be misled! Satan offers false promises of security [Read 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3]

Claims that human governments will finally make their citizens truly safe are lies (Ps 146:3)

The only source of true safety lies with Jehovah

By heeding his Word, the Bible, we can find genuine safety

While we must face the stresses of this imperfect world and may even face death, Jehovah will not forsake us (Ps 94:14)

Faithful ones will be kept safe in God’s memory, and he will resurrect them in his due time (Joh 5:28, 29; *cl* 74)

Today, the world situation terrifies mankind

But you can feel safe in this troubled world!

Respond now to the good news of God’s Kingdom before it is too late! (Mt 24:14)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read or commented on)



## WHY BE GUIDED BY THE BIBLE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Develop the material so as to appeal to the mind with sound logic; deliver it in a way that will appeal to the heart with strong conviction. Help the audience to appreciate that the Bible is Jehovah's book of lifesaving guidance and that applying its counsel brings blessings. When relating the cited experiences, make them live

### **AS AUTHOR OF THE BIBLE, JEHOVAH PROVIDES GUIDANCE FOR MANKIND** (5 min.)

God's ability to give guidance is seen in both his inanimate and his animate creation (*g82 7/22 12*)

He directs the stars by his laws of motion and gravitation (*Job 38:32, 33; w05 4/1 6*)

Birds and other creatures are guided by the instinctive wisdom given them by God (*Job 39:26; Pr 30:24-28; g 7/07 3*)

Humans, who can choose their course in life, are given direction by means of written principles that all of us need (*Ps 48:14; Jer 10:23*)

More so than stars and migrating birds, humans receive guidance; by following guidance from God, they can gain everlasting life (*w07 5/1 14, 18*)

Will you allow God to guide you by means of his Word, the Bible? (*g 7/07 5-6*)

By reading just four to five pages a day, you can cover the entire Bible in a year

Reading a portion of it daily and meditating on it can improve the quality of your life

We will now examine four aspects of guidance provided by the Bible

### **1. THE BIBLE IS A UNIQUE GUIDE FOR HUMAN CONDUCT** (8 min.)

The moral standards and rules of conduct provided in the Bible are unsurpassable

Bible counsel never causes harm to the person following it [*Read 2 Timothy 3:16*]

For example, let us consider the Bible's standards of cleanness and morality

Note how people benefit when God's standards are followed and suffer when those standards are ignored

[As examples, consider the tobacco habit and sexual immorality, and draw on references cited to show the undesirable consequences and complicated problems that result when Bible principles are ignored. Also point out how following such principles results in healthful living, a good conscience, and peace (*Pr 1:2-4; 3:1, 2*)]

Tobacco use (*w07 4/1 5; g 7/07 6-7; gm 165-6; rs 109-11*)

Sexual immorality (*g 4/07 3-4; g00 4/8 6; gm 168-70; rs 370*)

### **2. THE BIBLE IS A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR GAINING TRUE HAPPINESS** (4 min.)

The Bible fills an essential need by setting out guidelines that contribute to stable families and wholesome, happy relationships (*Pr 3:13, 18, 21, 22; Mt 5:3; Lu 11:28; Re 1:3*)

Following Bible principles will help all to improve their marriage (*g 7/06 6-9; rs 253-4*)

The Bible's guidance has been shown to produce the greatest happiness in the long run (*w04 9/1 6-7; w03 4/15 17*)

### **3. THE BIBLE IS AN UNFAILING GUIDE TO REAL SUCCESS** (4 min.)

Jehovah is always completely successful (*Isa 55:11*)

Through the Bible, he shows humans how to be successful in life (*Jos 1:7, 8; Ps 1:1-3*)

He warns against striving after worldly and financial success (*1Ti 6:9, 10; w90 4/1 12-13*)

### **4. THE BIBLE IS THE EXCLUSIVE GUIDE TO EVERLASTING LIFE** (5 min.)

A guide to life would be sadly lacking if it did not hold out a hope or goal for the future, since our outlook on the future strongly influences our present course

The Bible stands alone as the book that can lead us to the greatest prize a human could ever receive, everlasting life (*Ro 6:23; 1Ti 4:8; g 7/07 8-9*)

Emphasizes that God's Kingdom is the only hope for all mankind; shows how this heavenly government is the instrument for sanctifying God's name and vindicating his sovereignty (*Da 2:44*)

Explains the course we need to pursue to enjoy a close, personal relationship with our Maker and Life-Giver (*Joh 17:3; 1Ti 6:12; 1Jo 5:20*)

The very best, happiest, most productive life possible now falls far short of the real life in God's new world

Should not the knowledge of God's purpose for mankind motivate us to make adjustments in our lives now?

In harmony with what we have learned, should we not let the Bible guide our steps toward the goal of eternal life?

### **BE CONFIDENT IN GUIDANCE FROM THE BIBLE BECAUSE IT IS INSPIRED OF GOD** (4 min.)

This book of incomparable value deserves to be taken from our shelves, read, and studied

Open the Bible with full confidence; it is completely accurate, reliable, and authentic (*Ps 78:7; w05 7/15 4-6; w98 4/1 14-20*)

All parts of the Bible are “inspired of God,” or “God-breathed” (2Ti 3:16, ftn; 2Pe 1:20, 21; *w97* 6/15 6-8; *it-1* 1204)

Originating with one Author, Jehovah, the Bible conveys a unique message

All who accept the Bible and its message are unified in thought, speech, and action (Zep 3:9; Ro 15:5, 6)

Would you like to be guided into everlasting life on a paradise earth just as surely as the stars are directed in their orbits and the birds are guided by God-given instinct?

Then let the Bible be your guide (Ps 119:105)

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## WHO IS QUALIFIED TO RULE MANKIND?

### *Note to the speaker:*

While making it evident that Jehovah's Witnesses are strictly neutral as to the world's politics, explain in practical terms why God's Kingdom is far superior to any human government. Contrast the abilities of Jesus Christ with the limitations of human rulers

### **WEIGHING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HUMAN GOVERNMENTS** (3 min.)

Aspiring leaders strive to prove their qualifications to rule—some by campaigning, others by force

How effective are human governments in addressing the needs of their subjects?

Monarchies reflect the imperfections of a single ruler (*g90* 8/22 19-20)

Aristocracies—government by the nobility, by a privileged minority, or by an elite class—have rulers based on wealth or blood descent (*g90* 9/8 26-7)

Democracies reflect the limitations of the populace (Ec 7:20; Jer 10:23; *g90* 9/22 13-14)

Every form of authority devised by humans has failed miserably [Read Ecclesiastes 8:9]

### **WHAT RULE BY CHRIST JESUS WILL ACCOMPLISH** (16 min.)

Jesus has proved what he can accomplish as Ruler

In contrast with failures of human rule, the miracles Jesus performed demonstrated his ability to satisfy mankind's needs, foreshadowing blessings under his rule

#### *The Economy*

Under human rule, multitudes of children die of hunger each day

Jesus Christ will provide abundant food for all [Read Matthew 14:19-21]

Kingdom rule will furnish every family with excellent housing

There will be no unemployment; all will have rewarding work (Isa 65:21-23)

#### *Disaster Preparedness*

Human governments are often ill-equipped to respond, both before and after major storms

Jesus could control the wind and sea by means of God's spirit [Read Mark 4:37-39]

He will control forces of nature for the benefit of humans under his rule

#### *Health Care*

Governments face an enormous challenge attempting to provide adequate health care for their subjects

Jesus demonstrated his power over illness [Read Matthew 15:30]

He will heal all maladies and eliminate all diseases—not just chronic ailments but even aches and pains that detract from the enjoyment of life (Isa 33:24)

He will restore the aged to youthful vigor (Job 33:25)

No human ruler can match Jesus' ability to restore life [Read Mark 5:38-42]

#### *Protection*

Jesus exerts power over even superhuman spirit creatures [Read Matthew 8:16]

Demons had to accede to Jesus' orders and release people possessed by them (*it-2* 167)

Demons are not only more powerful than humans; they actually back human rulerships (Da 10:13; Lu 4:6; Joh 14:30; Eph 6:12; 1Jo 5:19)

Jesus protects his subjects from demonic control now and will eliminate Satan and all wicked spirits in the future (Re 20:10)

In vanquishing man's real enemies, Jesus will have been used by Jehovah to end all wars (Ps 46:8, 9)

#### *Ecology*

Deterioration of the environment has become a matter of serious concern (*g03* 11/22 4-8)

God will empower Jesus to "bring to ruin those ruining the earth" (Re 11:18)

A peaceful relationship between humans and animals will become a reality (Isa 11:6-9)

The earth will be transformed into a paradise

The foregoing are only a small sampling of the blessings the Messianic Kingdom will bring

### **JESUS CHRIST—EMINENTLY QUALIFIED TO RULE MANKIND** (5 min.)

God's Kingdom by Christ Jesus will succeed because it has none of the weaknesses inherent in human rule

All human rulers are limited in knowledge; Jesus Christ possesses "all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge" (Col 2:3)

Human rulers are hampered by imperfection and often have wrong motives; Jesus is "loyal, guileless, undefiled, separated from the sinners" (Heb 7:26)

Human rulers die and leave their kingdoms to successors; Jesus is immortal and needs no successors (Da 2:44) [Read 1 Timothy 6:15, 16]

Humans are often tempted to use their power for selfish purposes; Jesus never used his God-given power for personal gain, nor did he ever use his authority to mistreat others (Mt 4:1-4; Ro 15:3)

**TAKE YOUR STAND FOR THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM** (6 min.)

Many believe that Jesus Christ existed, but few demonstrate faith that he is actually ruling as King

Evidence that he has taken power and begun ruling in heaven is abundant (*bh* 84-95)

We urge you to grow in your understanding of these facts

What action should we take concerning the One qualified to rule mankind? [Read Psalm 2:12]

We should warmly welcome him (*w04* 7/15 19-20)

Even kings are commanded to be subject to him (Ps 2:10)

Learn more about God's government in the hands of Christ Jesus, and help others to do the same

Experience the blessings that God's ruling Kingdom will soon bring

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# YOU CAN ENJOY LIFE IN PEACE NOW—AND FOREVER!

## *Note to the speaker:*

Although you point to the disruptive problems we all face, emphasize that peace is possible even now. Help all to appreciate that there are requirements we must meet and maintain in order to enjoy life in peace at present and for eternity

### **LIFE IS JOYLESS FOR MILLIONS** (4 min.)

Instead of finding joy in life, increasing numbers of people face hardship, insecurity, and fear (Job 14:1; *w05* 2/1 4)

Many live in lands ravaged by wars and political unrest (*w04* 1/1 3-5)

Most developing countries are troubled by economic problems, food shortages (*w05* 5/15 3; *g05* 9/22 7-8)

Even in prosperous lands, people are afflicted by crime, drug problems, violence, unemployment; thousands are homeless (*w05* 10/15 8; *g03* 7/8 3-8)

Terrorism is now a destabilizing force, creating further tension and insecurity (*g01* 5/22 3-10)

More and more are affected by pollution and diseases, such as AIDS (*g05* 2/22 28)

### **PEACE AND SECURITY TAKEN AWAY FROM THE EARTH** (4 min.)

God's Word foretold problems we face, including the lack of peace

Prophecy in Revelation chapter 6 is undergoing fulfillment since 1914 [Read verse 4] (*w05* 9/1 19-20; *w98* 9/15 7; *w93* 3/1 4-5; *re* 93-4)

The horsemen that follow bring food shortage, disease, and death (Re 6:5-8; *w05* 2/15 32; *re* 95-8)

Woes increase as Satan, now confined to vicinity of earth, knows that his time is short (Re 12:7-9, 12)

Misrule by worldly rulers, influenced by Satan and his demons, contributes to lack of peace and security on earth (*g05* 7/22 12-13)

We can expect problems to worsen despite efforts of sincere people (Ps 146:2, 3)

Although world situation is grave, we can enjoy a relative measure of peace and happiness (Ps 146:5)

### **IT IS POSSIBLE TO ENJOY LIFE IN PEACE NOW** (5 min.)

Jehovah is a God of peace (1Co 14:33)

Right now, Jehovah is blessing his people with peace (Ps 29:11; *w05* 1/1 6)

Note some examples of how Jehovah's Witnesses live in peace

In Israel, Witnesses of Arab and Jewish origins live and worship in peace, displaying love despite tensions felt in world (Joh 13:35; *w97* 8/1 16; *w94* 1/15 6)

When violence erupted between Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda, Witnesses from both tribes continued to enjoy peaceful relations (*w98* 4/1 18-19; *w94* 12/15 26, 29)

In Eastern Europe millions have suffered from divisive warfare, but Jehovah's Witnesses maintain true unity (*w96* 3/1 28; *g00* 4/22 9-10; *g93* 12/22 6-13)

Upon becoming Witnesses, former Catholics and Protestants in Ireland have overcome their hatred and now work peacefully with one another (*w99* 12/15 9-13)

No police needed to maintain peace among Witnesses at their conventions (*w02* 7/15 25; *g97* 3/8 22-4)

Each year thousands of peace-loving people find out how to live in peace and happiness in a troubled world (*g02* 5/8 9)

### **REQUIREMENTS TO ENJOY LIFE IN PEACE NOW** (14 min.)

The opportunity to enjoy peace now is available to you

First, take in knowledge of Jehovah through his Word (Joh 17:3)

Then build a personal relationship with Jehovah as you learn his commands and keep them (Pr 3:1, 2)

Associate with those who observe God's laws and are blessed with peace (Ps 119:165; Ga 5:22; Heb 10:24, 25; *w98* 4/1 18-19)

Servants of God must actively pursue peace (1Pe 3:11)

Such pursuit will result in life that is far happier than anything the world can offer (Pr 3:13, 17, 18)

World's so-called happiness is based on greed, jealousy, selfishness, 'earthly wisdom' (Jas 3:14-16)

Christians must reject worldly wisdom and display godly wisdom, which brings peace (Jas 3:17, 18)

With spiritual security and godly peace, God's servants avoid much of the anxiety concerning the problems that plague mankind (Mt 6:31, 32)

They see need to put spiritual interests first to enjoy true peace (Ps 119:36; Mt 6:33)

Never give up in your pursuit and enjoyment of peace

As far as it depends on you, pursue peace with all men (Ro 12:18)

For continuous enjoyment of godly peace, maintain a good personal relationship with Jehovah through obedience and regular communication with him in prayer (Ps 119:93, 97; Php 4:6, 7)

**FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR LIFE IN PEACE—FOREVER** (3 min.)

Enjoying life in peace is not limited to the present

Bible promises future perfect life and total peace eternally for those serving Jehovah (Ps 37:10, 11; Isa 9:7; 1Ti 4:8; 6:19)

Grand blessings await those who love the God of peace and cherish the peace he gives (Re 21:3, 4)

Act with urgency so as to receive blessings of enjoying life in peace now and forever (Ps 37:37; Zep 2:3)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-4, 116-19)

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## WHAT IS YOUR STANDING WITH GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience to appreciate importance of obtaining Jehovah's approval and not succumbing to fear of man. In a warm and encouraging manner, show how we can acquire and maintain a good standing with God

### **WHY OUR STANDING WITH GOD IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE** (4 min.)

Each of us should be concerned about our standing with God

We all are accountable to him (Ro 14:10b, 12)

Parents are accountable for the way they raise their children

Youths will render an account for their actions (Ec 11:9)

We must answer for the way we use time, energy, resources

To acquire and maintain a good standing with God, each person must work to gain and retain God's approval

We must learn to trust in Jehovah, whose approval will bring lasting benefits (Pr 3:5, 6; 29:25)

Although we are not insensitive to standards and customs of society that govern such things as proper dress and good manners, we do not succumb to fear of man and compromise where human customs conflict with God's will or standards (*w05* 1/1 30)

### **IMITATE THOSE WHO ENJOYED AN APPROVED STANDING WITH GOD** (21 min.)

In Bible times, a 'great cloud of witnesses,' men and women, sought the approval of God rather than that of men (Heb 12:1)

They maintained a good standing with him by demonstrating faith (Heb 11:1, 2)

There are also many modern-day examples of Christian men and women who have done the same

Consider some examples past and present

*Abel* sought to worship God acceptably and gain Jehovah's approval even though his parents had rebelled against God (Ge 4:3, 4; Heb 11:4; *it-1* 15)

So today, many in unbelieving families gain Jehovah's approval by their steadfastness in true worship (*w03* 12/1 25; *w99* 2/1 8; *yb04* 50; *yb98* 99-100)

If you are facing family opposition because of pursuing true worship, rest assured that your faithful endurance does not go unnoticed by God (Mt 10:34-39)

*Enoch* 'walked with God' and, in the face of persecution, set example of courageously declaring Jehovah's judgments against ungodly men (Ge 5:22, 24; Heb 11:5; Jude 14, 15; *it-1* 729)

Modern-day servants of Jehovah have fearlessly proclaimed his judgments despite threats and violence (*w01* 9/1 26; *yb01* 115-117; *yb94* 194)

In many areas where persecution was once severe, there are now flourishing congregations (*ju* 666-668, 700-701)

Clearly, Jehovah approves of those who continue to preach the "good news of the kingdom" despite being "objects of hatred by all the nations" (Mt 24:9, 14)

*Abraham* and *Sarah* demonstrated their faith by leaving their home city of Ur, even though this evidently involved significant material sacrifices for them (Ge 12:1-3; Heb 11:8-10; *it-2* 1141-1142)

Many present-day Witnesses have displayed similar faith by making material sacrifices in order to be more useful in Jehovah's service (*w97* 9/15 7; *w92* 9/15 27; *yb03* 252; *ju* 284-286)

God is well-pleased with such sacrifices (Mr 10:29, 30)

*Moses* was well-educated, "powerful in his words and deeds"; yet, he rejected worldly prominence and treasures, seeking God's approval rather than that of men (Ac 7:20-22; Heb 11:23-26; *it-2* 434)

This would have been viewed as a poor career choice from a worldly standpoint, but Jehovah rewarded Moses by entrusting him with the leadership of the nation of Israel (Heb 11:6)

Among Jehovah's people today are many who have rejected worldly prestige and have chosen not to pursue a materialistic lifestyle (*w05* 10/1 28-31; *w92* 11/1 18-20)

Jehovah blesses those who put Kingdom interests first in their lives (Mt 6:33; *w94* 1/15 23)

*Rahab* risked her life in order to protect Jehovah's servants because she wanted Jehovah's approval for herself and her family (Jos 2:9-13; Heb 11:31; *it-2* 727-728)

Courageous Christian women in modern times have likewise risked their lives to promote Kingdom interests (*yb94* 232, 235)

We may not all be called upon to risk our lives for our brothers, but we must show self-sacrificing love in order to maintain a fine standing with God (Joh 13:34, 35; 1Jo 4:20, 21)

### **ACT NOW TO GAIN APPROVED STANDING WITH GOD** (5 min.)

Because of sin, humans are alienated from God from birth (Ps 51:5; Eph 4:18; Col 1:21)

On the basis of Christ's sacrifice, it is possible to be reconciled to Jehovah and enjoy an approved standing (Joh 3:36; 14:6)

A “great crowd” benefit from the ransom and are depicted as “dressed in white robes,” picturing an approved position before God (Re 7:9, 10)

Like faithful men of old, these will have demonstrated their faith by zealously proclaiming the Kingdom message

Will you be among them?

Examine your spiritual condition, and make necessary adjustments

If newly interested, learn what you must do in order to be saved—before it is too late (Zep 2:2, 3; Ro 10:13)

Now is the favorable time to show concern for your standing with God

To delay taking action may cost you dearly (2Co 6:1, 2)

Act now to gain an approved standing with God!

(Not all cited texts need to be read)

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## IS THERE A TRUE RELIGION FROM GOD'S STANDPOINT?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Indicate just how deeply people's attitudes are influenced by their religious beliefs. While speaking with respect for people who adhere to different religious beliefs, contrast attitudes that displease God with attitudes that Jehovah favors

### **THE REASON WHY NOT ALL RELIGION IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOD** (4 min.)

Most people are born into their religion and accept it as they accept their nationality; some equate religion with nationality

Others choose their form of worship based on personal opinion

Recent survey found that 86 percent of the world's population profess some form of religious affiliation (*w08* 6/1 9)

Believers belong to 19 major religions

Professed Christians are spread among 37,000 denominations

But can all conflicting beliefs be true?

Rather than teaching that all religion is acceptable to God, the Bible clearly speaks of worship that is not approved by him (Jg 10:6, 7; Mr 7:6, 7; 1Co 10:20; *rs* 322-323)

The Scriptures show that some worship is futile but that there is a form of worship that God approves [Read James 1:26, 27]

God places great importance on how people treat one another

What we believe has a large impact on how we act

### **THE PURPOSE OF TRUE RELIGION** (4 min.)

Main objective of true religion is to honor, praise, and obey God (Ec 12:13; Re 4:11)

Jehovah God deserves our praise and honor; creation and the Holy Scriptures reveal God's wonderful qualities (Joh 3:16; Ro 1:20)

Secondary objective of true religion is to guide man to the best way of living (Isa 48:17, 18) [Read Micah 6:8]

Some hold that all religions promote essentially the same objectives, namely to believe in God and to do good

Yet, what a religion produces in its adherents can serve as a basis for judging whether it is true from God's standpoint

### **INSPECTING THE FRUITAGE OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS** (11 min.)

There is a direct connection between what we believe and what we become or practice [Read Matthew 7:16-20] (*g95* 7/8 26-27)

For example, hatred, drunkenness, sexual depravity, and other vile traits were notable among the gods of ancient Greece and Rome (*it-1* 978-979)

History shows that many worshippers of such gods found pleasure in immoral revelries and in observing men and beasts fight to the death in the arena (*w02* 6/15 28; *w81* 11/1 4-5; *g97* 11/8 27)

Those who believe in racial superiority have perpetrated horrendous forms of human oppression (*g98* 3/8 24; *g93* 8/22 6-8)

People's view of death has a profound effect on their life

Many who have no hope in the resurrection focus attention on getting as much as possible out of life now (1Co 15:32)

Thinking that the timing of all affairs is predetermined, believers in fate assume little responsibility for their actions (*w96* 9/1 6)

Belief that spirits of dead humans affect the living leads people to perform superstitious acts that result in hardships and displease God (*w05* 1/1 29-30; *w98* 7/15 21)

Many believe that God's Kingdom will come through human rule

Such thinking ignores the fact that remaining without spot from this world is a key element of "the form of worship that is clean and undefiled" (Jas 1:27)

Additionally, varying political viewpoints result in divisions and foster hatred

People fail to appreciate that God's Kingdom is a real heavenly government that will rule over all the earth (Da 2:44; Mt 6:10)

We must examine religion by its fruitage; if a religion allows or promotes practices that the Bible condemns, is it measuring up to God's standards?

It is vital that we answer that question, not from our standpoint, but from God's

### **PRACTICE RELIGION THAT IS TRUE FROM GOD'S STANDPOINT** (11 min.)

Leading a godly life is linked to having an accurate knowledge of God (Tit 1:1) [Read Colossians 3:10]

Hence, true religion from God's standpoint must be based on the truth as found in the Holy Scriptures (Joh 8:32; 17:17)

True religion will produce people who do God's will and reflect the wisdom from above [Read James 3:17, 18]

It must guide people in the way of love (Joh 13:34, 35; 1Jo 3:10)

People who practice religion that is true from God's standpoint exalt God's name and preach about his Kingdom (Ps 83:18; Mt 24:14)

They are readily identifiable by their works of faith

True religion encourages everyone to examine the Scriptures and prove to themselves the perfect will of God (Ro 12:2)

This can be done by learning what the Bible teaches (Joh 17:3)

Allow the Bible's teachings to produce good fruitage in you (1Th 2:13)

Examine the evidence for yourself, and practice "the form of worship that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father"

(Not all cited texts need to be read)

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## GOD'S NEW WORLD—WHO WILL QUALIFY TO ENTER?

### *Note to the speaker:*

In a positive but realistic way, help audience to see the need for God's new world and why it cannot be of human design. Make plain the reality of God's ruling Kingdom. Highlight its benefits and what is needed to qualify for life in God's new world. Please use the expression "new world," not "new order"

### **WE NEED A NEW WORLD!** (5 min.)

Throughout the world, people live in anguish and fear (*w06 9/15 4-6; w03 6/1 13; g05 8/8 4-7; g03 7/8 3-4*)

Despite talk and concern by many, overwhelming world problems continue

Can we expect imperfect humans to fashion a new world?

Human governments have ruled for thousands of years

Some changes take place, but the ability to resolve the world's major problems and satisfy mankind's pressing needs eludes world rulers

All forms of human government have failed to provide what is desired (*Ec 8:9; g90 12/8 23*)

### **MANKIND MUST LOOK TO JEHOVAH FOR A BETTER WORLD** (10 min.)

Jehovah God has promised a new world (*2Pe 3:13*)

The Kingdom will fulfill God's promise (*Mt 6:10; Re 11:15*)

Jehovah has provided what is necessary to inspire trust in his Kingdom (*g06 11 8; bh 77-79*)

He has demonstrated his grand qualities in dealing with mankind

The principles on which his government is founded have been made clear

We have unmistakable identification of the Messiah, the ruling King (*w06 2/15 5-7*)

Essential that we trust in Jehovah and follow his guidance (*Pr 3:5, 6*)

Jesus plays a major role in the making of a better world (*g06 12 5-9*)

His death eliminated a great obstacle to entering into the new world, making it possible to remove inherited sin and gain eternal life (*Joh 3:16*)

Since 1914, Christ has been ruling as heavenly King (*Ps 110:1, 2; Da 7:13, 14*)

Kingdom will soon destroy all human governments (*Da 2:44*)

All earth's inhabitants will thereafter be subject to Jesus' righteous rule (*Ps 72:7, 8, 11; g06 12 4*)

Spirit-appointed men are being trained for oversight (*Isa 32:1, 2*)

### **QUALIFYING FOR LIFE IN GOD'S NEW WORLD** (12 min.)

Jehovah sets the standards for entry into the new world (*Ps 15:1-5; 24:3, 4; Isa 35:8*)

Only peaceable people will live there (*Mic 4:3*)

Moral cleanness and respect for the marital arrangement are essential for life in the new world (*Eph 5:3-5; Heb 13:4*)

New world will have a human society permeated with love (*Joh 13:34, 35*)

There will be no place in God's new world for ungodly, selfish, or materialistic people (*Tit 2:11, 12*)

Jehovah's Witnesses have a reputation for upright conduct

Impressive evidence shows that Witnesses have made real progress in developing "the new personality" (*Col 3:8-10; w04 10/1 13; w02 11/1 17; w02 10/1 11; w02 1/15 19-20*)

They have already adopted standards of conduct that will prevail in the new world

Worldwide preaching work is now being done to help others have hope of life in God's new world (*Mt 24:14*)

People must be helped to realize that knowledge about coming new world is dispensed through only one channel (*Mt 24:45-47*)

Essential that we conform to Bible standards, cooperate with "faithful and discreet slave," and share in the Kingdom-preaching work

Decisive action needed, for "last days" nearing their end (*2Ti 3:1*)

Jehovah is exercising great patience

No time for indifference or indecision (*2Pe 3:9, 11, 14*)

Act now for preservation through "great tribulation" (*Re 7:9, 14*)

### **GOD'S NEW WORLD WILL BECOME A REALITY FOR THOSE WHO QUALIFY FOR IT** (3 min.)

New world will restore Paradise and extend it earth wide

Wars will be a thing of the past (*Ps 46:9*)

There will be no such thing as famine (*Isa 25:6*)

Only righteous and blameless people will reside in the earth (Pr 2:21, 22)

Perfect new world will last forever (Ps 37:11, 29)

Act now that you may be included among great crowd of survivors and live under Jehovah's protective care in his new world

(Not all cited texts need to be read)

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## WHAT MARKS THE BIBLE AS AUTHENTIC?

### *Note to the speaker:*

This talk should strengthen the faith of our brothers as well as encourage newly associated ones and build up their faith. It should increase conviction that the Bible is God's inspired Word of truth by which we must direct our steps in these critical last days

### **TRUE CHRISTIANS CHAMPION THE BIBLE'S AUTHENTICITY** (5 min.)

Today, powerful elements work to discredit the Bible (*gm* 31-35)

Critics, modernist clergy, evolutionists, and philosophers attack its authenticity and invent theories to supplant faith in the Bible, even dismissing need for belief in God

God-dishonoring conduct of professed Christians has brought reproach on Bible both inside and outside Christendom (Ro 2:21-24; *w05* 9/1 30-31)

Jehovah's Witnesses boldly proclaim that the Bible is the authentic, inspired, and infallible Word of God

Their teachings and organization are based solidly on the Bible

They recognize it as much more than a great literary masterpiece

To them, the Bible is unique, the most outstanding and beneficial book

Jesus Christ upheld God's Word as truth and used it to defeat temptation (Mt 4:4; Joh 17:17)

As his followers, we must use and view the Scriptures in similar ways

We know from experience that the Bible is the only reliable guide for knowing and pleasing God (Ps 119:105)

Provides a sound basis for belief and faith (1Pe 3:15)

We have firm evidence showing that the Bible is God's authentic and inspired Word

### **UNDENIABLE MARKS OF BIBLE AUTHENTICITY ARE ABUNDANT** (20 min.)

Marks of authenticity seen in content, attitude of writers, and other factors

Candor of the writers is strong proof of Bible's reliability (*w05* 5/15 18; *w05* 7/15 6; *si* 341; *it-1* 312)

Integrity of Bible attested to by its writers and early Christians who bore witness to facts, knowing that they could be condemned to death on the basis of their testimony (*si* 342; *it-1* 312)

Internal harmony adds to proof that Bible is authentic and inspired

Bible is harmonious even though some 40 people were involved in writing it over a period of 1,600 years (*si* 341)

It has one theme throughout—the vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty and the sanctification of Jehovah's name by his Kingdom under Christ (*si* 342; *it-1* 310-311)

Practicality of Bible's righteous principles and moral standards testifies to divine inspiration (*w05* 7/15 5; *si* 340; *it-1* 312)

Accuracy of Bible account, including geographic, geologic, and chronological records, supports its authenticity (*si* 339-341)

Though the Bible is not a treatise on science, it is accurate when it touches on scientific matters (*w05* 7/15 5; *si* 340; *it-1* 312)

Historical accuracy of canonical books of Hebrew and Greek Scriptures has been confirmed (*g01* 3/8 8-11; *si* 338-339; *it-1* 153-154, 311-312)

Fulfilled prophecy most powerful testimony to authenticity of Bible

Outstanding are the prophecies concerning Jesus and their fulfillment (*si* 343-344) [Select several, such as matters concerning his birth, ministry, death, and resurrection, and mention both the prophecy and the fulfillment]

Fulfilled prophecies regarding ancient nations and present conditions add to our confidence in Bible as God's Word (*si* 344-346) [Use following examples and others as time permits]

Fall and eventual desolation of Babylon (Isa 13:17-22; 45:1, 2; Da 5:22-31; *gm* 122-125)

Rebuilding of Jerusalem and temple by the returning Jewish exiles (2Ch 36:22, 23; Ezr 1:1-4; Isa 44:26-28)

Succession of world powers (Da 8:1-8, 20-22; *gm* 125-128)

Great time of trouble before complete end of this system of things (Mt 24:7-14; 2Ti 3:1-5; *gm* 136-148)

### **PAY ATTENTION TO THE AUTHENTIC WORD OF GOD** (5 min.)

Bible's counsel and teaching beneficial and rewarding (2Ti 3:16, 17)

Get to know the Author of the Bible by taking in life-giving knowledge of him and his Son (Joh 17:3)

Heed Bible's counsel, which will make you wise (Ps 19:7b; Pr 2:6; 2Ti 3:15)

Bible prophecies show that with end of this world nearing, time left to act is running out (1Co 7:29; *w04* 2/1 21-22; *bh* 86-95; *wt* 175-183)

We invite you to study the Bible with us to “prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Ro 12:2)

By demonstrating faith in the good news, you will benefit yourself now and in future (Isa 48:17; Heb 10:38, 39)

Heeding Bible counsel offers sure hope of blessings in God’s new world (2Pe 3:13)

(Not all cited texts need to be read)

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## REAL PEACE AND SECURITY—WHEN?

### *Note to the speaker:*

While acknowledging that many sincerely strive to achieve peace, explain why worldwide peace will come only through God's Kingdom and why true peace involves more than the absence of war. By use of Scriptural reasoning, help all to see that real peace and security is at hand. When discussing 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3, do not make any speculative remarks. Please follow carefully what is stated in the outline

### **WHY REAL PEACE AND SECURITY ARE SO ELUSIVE (3 min.)**

For centuries, men have sought peace and security

At best, they have achieved only a few short periods of temporary coexistence with neighbor nations

They do not understand the real reasons why peace and security are absent in this world

God's Word gives two basic reasons why attaining real peace is so elusive

(1) Mankind is not at peace with God, the Source of love and peace (2Co 13:11; *w97* 1/15 12)

(2) The world is ruled by Satan, the source of hatred and war (Joh 12:31; *w90* 4/1 6)

Let us consider these reasons

### **REAL PEACE AND SECURITY DEPENDENT ON BEING AT PEACE WITH GOD (5 min.)**

Man was created to depend on Jehovah and to obey his laws (Jer 10:23)

When Adam rebelled against God's rule, he lost the peaceful relationship he had enjoyed with God (Ro 5:12)

Since then, man's history has been filled with hatred, war, and disobedience to God's laws

Today, people may equate peace and security with absence of war, protection by police, safety of high-security buildings

Such conditions do not constitute true peace and security

To restore peace with God, we must recognize our spiritual need and submit to God's laws (Mt 5:3; Isa 48:18)

Love for God and deep respect for his righteous principles are essential to having peace and security (Isa 57:21; *w99* 10/1 11)

### **SATAN'S REMOVAL OPENS THE WAY FOR REAL PEACE AND SECURITY (13 min.)**

The world today, more than ever, is influenced by Satan (1Jo 5:19)

Shortly after God's Kingdom began ruling in heaven in 1914, Satan was hurled to the earth (Re 12:9; *w06* 3/15 13)

Since then, Satan has intensified his efforts to mislead man, and hatred, warfare, and other woes have increased (Re 12:12)

Satan's superhuman evil influence dooms all human efforts to bring about peace (*w85* 10/15 5)

Jehovah assures us that it is still his purpose to have lasting peace on earth (Ps 37:9, 11)

He will do so by means of Jesus, the "Prince of Peace" (Isa 9:6, 7)

We have reached the time when significant developments and earthshaking events prophesied in the Bible are to occur (Da 2:33-35, 41-45; *dp* 57-62)

One development that has yet to take place is foretold at 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3 [Read]

The cry of "peace and security" may be one event or a series of events involving political leaders

Possibly, religious leaders will join them in saying this (Jer 6:14)

As to the complete fulfillment of this prophecy, it is wise to wait and see what develops on the world scene

God's Word assures us that false religion will be attacked and destroyed by "the wild beast" and "the ten horns" (Re 17:15, 16; *re* 255-258)

Many people feel that religion blocks their efforts to achieve peace

After the destruction of false religion, God's Kingdom will crush all human governments at Armageddon (Da 2:44; Re 16:16; 19:19-21; *w90* 5/15 6-7)

Thereafter, Satan the Devil will be removed, opening the door to a millennium of real peace and security (Re 20:1-3)

### **THE MANY FACETS OF REAL PEACE AND SECURITY (5 min.)**

God promises real peace and security for those who will live on earth after Satan has been removed

Peace with fellow men and with wild animals (Isa 11:6-9)

Paradise conditions (Isa 35:1)

Good health and plenty of food for everyone (Ps 72:16; Isa 33:24)

Satisfying work (Isa 65:21-23)

No more death and sorrow (Re 21:4)

**ACT NOW, AND LEARN HOW YOU CAN BENEFIT YOURSELF!** (4 min.)

Micah describes how Jehovah is bringing about peace and security [Read Micah 4:3, 4] (*w07* 11/1 15)

Today, Jehovah's servants already conform to his requirements by 'not learning war anymore' and dwelling in peace with one another (Isa 32:17)

You too can enjoy peace and security

Acquire knowledge of Jehovah, and develop a close relationship with him (Joh 17:3; Jas 4:7, 8)

Studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses will help you to do so

By obeying God's laws, you will enjoy peace with Jehovah God and fellow humans even while living in this turbulent world (Ps 119:165; 2Pe 3:14)

Soon real and lasting worldwide peace and security will arrive

Now is the time to put your full trust in Jehovah! (Pr 3:5, 6)

(Not all cited texts need to be read)



## WHERE CAN YOU GET HELP IN TIMES OF DISTRESS?

### *Note to the speaker:*

As you provide a solid basis for belief that Jehovah is readily to be found during all our distresses, demonstrate fellow feeling for those who are suffering

### **WE ARE LIVING IN TIMES OF DISTRESS** (4 min.)

The Bible foretold that the last days would be marked by distress (Mr 13:8)

Truly, we are living in “critical times hard to deal with” (2Ti 3:1-5)

Yet, around the earth, Jehovah’s Witnesses are recognized as a happy people

How are faithful Christians able to maintain joy when they face bitter opposition and persecution for their faith as well as the stresses of family problems, sickness, economic hardship, and the loss of loved ones in death? (2Ti 3:12)

This question is important, for discouragement over trials can weaken our resolve to endure to the end (Pr 24:10)

Let us consider how we can cope with distressing situations and maintain our trust in Jehovah, our “fortress in the time of distress” (Ps 37:39)

### **WHAT WILL HELP US IN TIMES OF DISTRESS?** (18 min.)

Our loving God, Jehovah, has provided the means by which we can cope with our problems (Ps 55:22; 1Jo 4:8)

It is important, then, to turn to Jehovah in prayer (1Sa 30:6; Ro 15:5; 2Co 1:3, 4)

The Scriptures contain many prayers offered in times of distress (1Sa 1:4-20; Ps 42:6, 8)

If pressure is so severe that even prayer is difficult, bear in mind the words of Psalm 34:18 [Read]

Holy spirit can help us to cope with distress

Jesus promised his disciples that the holy spirit would act as a helper, or comforter, forever (Joh 14:16, ftn.)

Like the early Christians, we can count on God’s spirit to infuse us with boldness (Ac 4:31; 1Th 2:2)

Jehovah may use fellow Christians to help us and allay our anxiety (Pr 17:17)

In the case of Paul’s concern over the Corinthians, relief came through his Christian associate Titus (2Co 7:5-7)

Loving, unselfish assistance is available in the Christian congregation (*w99* 5/15 25-28)

When troubled, make an effort to associate regularly at the meetings, and resist the urge to isolate yourself (Pr 18:1)

At times, some may feel too downhearted to enjoy association with fellow Christians

We should fight such feelings and not deprive ourselves of the comfort that fellow believers can offer

### **JEHOVAH CARES FOR HIS FAITHFUL SERVANTS** (8 min.)

As Christians, we should take care to keep pressures and problems from weakening our relationship with Jehovah (Ro 8:35, 38, 39; *w97* 7/1 8-13)

Avoid negative thinking

Do not conclude that you are sick spiritually if you experience emotional pain

We should not act with suspicion toward those who are depressed

Paul urged the brothers to “speak consolingly to the depressed souls” (1Th 5:14)

Jehovah recognizes that even faithful Christians experience distress (Ps 37:39)

Remember that the distresses we face are temporary (Pr 13:12; 2Co 4:18)

In time, there will be a way out of our trials, and we will “come in with a joyful cry” (Ps 126:6)

Jehovah has affection for you! (Jas 5:11)

Let all of us continue to do our part, loyally trusting in Jehovah as our fortress, our place of refuge and escape

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## WALK IN THE WAY OF INTEGRITY

### *Note to the speaker:*

Make practical application of Psalm 26. Indicate what will help us walk in the way of integrity and what dangers we must avoid

### **WHAT IT MEANS TO WALK IN THE WAY OF INTEGRITY** (4 min.)

“Integrity” means moral soundness, completeness of heart devotion to Jehovah (*w09* 4/15 3; *it-1* 1209-1212)

Integrity involves a way of life that reflects unswerving devotion to righteousness

Requires right heart motivation along with proper action

It is embraced in the command to love Jehovah with our whole heart, soul, and mind (Mt 22:37)

Walking in integrity calls for constantly searching to know Jehovah’s will and then acting in harmony with that knowledge [Read Psalm 119:1-3]

Applies to all aspects of human conduct

It is a challenge in this sinful world, but millions of Jehovah’s Witnesses are meeting that challenge successfully

### **HOW WE CAN MAINTAIN OUR INTEGRITY** (15 min.)

The 26th Psalm shows what will help us walk in integrity (*w04* 12/1 13-18)

King David of Israel was a man of integrity [Read Psalm 26:1]

He asked Jehovah to examine his motives and refine him [Read Psalm 26:2]

Regularly invite Jehovah to examine your heart

Welcome such an examination, and make any necessary changes

David walked in God’s truth [Read Psalm 26:3]

He kept God’s acts of loving-kindness in front of his eyes

In order to ‘walk in God’s truth,’ we must know Jehovah well

David hated bad associations [Read Psalm 26:4, 5]

We likewise shun men of untruth

Some men hide what they are by feigning friendship with us

To draw us away from Jehovah, apostates may hide their motive

How vital that we avoid bad associations! (1Co 15:33)

Includes those on TV or in other media

David proclaimed his devotion to Jehovah [Read Psalm 26:6]

We ‘march around God’s altar’ by exercising faith in Jesus’ sacrifice

Such faith makes our devotion to Jehovah acceptable to him

David pointed to a work that helps us [Read Psalm 26:7]

Do you likewise feel moved to share with others what you know about Jehovah?

Engaging in the preaching work helps safeguard us from conformity to the world (*w98* 6/1 6-7)

Christian meetings, assemblies, and conventions help to fortify our integrity [Read Psalm 26:8]

As you attend, make a diligent effort to take in knowledge

Grow to love Jehovah’s reminders (Ps 119:167)

Encourage others, and be encouraged by others on such occasions (Heb 10:24, 25)

### **WALK IN THE WAY OF INTEGRITY, AND AVOID DISASTER** (8 min.)

Like David, who did not want to live and die along with sinners, we plead for Jehovah’s mercy [Read Psalm 26:9, 10]

Shameless conduct is made to appear normal and acceptable in magazines, in movies, and on many Web sites

Internet could become a means of association with evildoers

Viewing pornography can lead to loose conduct or *por-nei’a* (*w10* 4/15 21-22; *w04* 12/1 17; *g03* 7/22 6-10)

Youths especially must work to resist immoral influences

Many feel pressured to date or to form romantic attachments while they are too young to marry

Youths who walk in the way of integrity are spared the pain and defilement wrought by immoral conduct

Adults must guard their integrity

Integrity-keepers maintain strong and peaceful marriages

Walking in integrity is evidenced in honest business practices and in decisions that take Jehovah’s will into account

Meditating on the value of our integrity-keeping course will help us to cultivate a hatred for all corrupting influences (Am 5:15)

**GIVE GOD GLORY BY CONTINUING TO WALK IN INTEGRITY (3 min.)**

Is it not encouraging to see millions of Christians today walking in the way of integrity?

May our manner of life always show that we respect and appreciate the sovereignty of God

Never allow Satan to entice you to do things that could jeopardize your precious relationship with Jehovah

Let your life reflect the sentiments expressed at Psalm 26:11, 12 [Read]

(Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on)

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## REJECT WORLDLY FANTASIES, PURSUE KINGDOM REALITIES

### WORLD PROMOTES FANTASIES, UNREALISTIC DREAMS (2 min.)

Millions indulge in flights of fancy

Fantasies often featured in advertising, movies, TV programs, magazines, and books

Dreams of gaining fabulous wealth, power, prominence, of fulfilling every desire for pleasure, of engaging in immoral sexual activity—with no responsibility or accountability

Are such worldly fantasies harmless?

### WHY WE SHOULD REJECT WORLDLY FANTASIES (15 min.)

Worldly fantasies stir wrong desires, which can lead to the harsh realities of sin (Jas 1:14, 15; *w92* 7/15 13-14)

It appears that the one who became Satan fantasized, allowed feelings of self-importance to develop in his heart, and began to crave worship that belonged to Jehovah

Final result of Satan's course is described at Revelation 20:1-3, 10 [Read]

Influenced by Satan, first woman, Eve, was deceived about forbidden fruit, believing that eating it would make her like God (Ge 3:1-6; 1Ti 2:14)

Led her to eat the fruit and then induce her husband to do the same

Result of their sinful course was pain, imperfection, and death (Ro 5:12)

Before the Flood, some angels fantasized about women

Left their proper dwelling place, married, and produced violent hybrid offspring (Ge 6:1-4)

Disobedient angels were punished by Jehovah and will eventually be destroyed (Jude 6)

Satan continues to promote deceptive fantasies

Many spend much time being entertained by movies, magazines, soap operas, game shows, and books that encourage pursuit of material riches and even greed

This has led some to be caught up in a quest to fulfill materialistic dreams by taking on extra secular work, leading to the shipwreck of their faith (*w07* 10/1 19)

Material security is a satanic illusion! (Pr 11:4; 18:11; *w07* 8/1 28-29)

Bible encourages contentment (1Ti 6:6-8)

Some indulge in immoral fantasies

They fan wrong desires by reading romance novels or watching immoral movies or videos

Others have become entangled in online social networks

This has led to having intimate conversations and in some cases passionately embracing and kissing someone other than marriage mate

Still others have gone further, committing adultery and divorcing innocent mate (Mal 2:15, 16; Heb 13:4; *w07* 7/15 29; *w06* 11/15 22-23)

Such treachery is a sin against Jehovah, one's mate, and the congregation

Bible's clear counsel is to 'rejoice with wife of youth' (Pr 5:18-20)

Those chasing selfish dreams will be bitterly disillusioned

World and its fleshly desires are passing away (1Jo 2:16, 17)

### MAKE KINGDOM REALITIES YOUR PURSUIT (9 min.)

Jesus urged us to pursue the Kingdom (Mt 6:33)

Kingdom is real government with power and authority; it will fulfill proper expectations (Ps 145:16)

Christ, the King, was not an illusion in first century; nor is he such today (*w01* 12/15 5-8)

Kingdom has already brought many things to reality

Loyal subjects throughout the earth are announcing its establishment (Mt 24:14) [See latest *Yearbook* for number of lands reporting and total hours spent in field]

Has resulted in tangible, lasting results—multitudes learning pure language, united in love and peace (Ps 29:11; Joh 13:35)

Our hope must be secure, and the new world must be real to us

Bible's promise that all things will be made new is no fantasy (Re 21:3-5)

Do you meditate on that promise?

Picturing yourself in new world is, not an unrealistic dream, but an evidence of faith (Heb 11:1)

We must continue to build faith through study of God's Word

Millions of sheeplike ones are responding to the Kingdom message

Do you bear witness concerning the Kingdom?

Can you have a more active share?

**KEEP PURSUING THE KINGDOM** (4 min.)

Anointed remnant have for decades ‘pressed forward’ to ‘seize’ Kingdom privileges (Mt 11:12; *it-2* 168; *w05* 2/11; *w92* 7/15 18)

Similar vigorous effort required of “other sheep” to qualify as subjects (Joh 10:16)

We are living in a special period of opportunity

Those who pursue worldly fantasies will soon face the stark reality that God’s Kingdom is actively ruling and this wicked system faces imminent, permanent destruction (Isa 29:8; *w92* 7/15 18)

May we keep minds and hearts focused on the realities of God’s Kingdom and enjoy its eternal blessings (Mt 25:34)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 116-119)

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# THE RESURRECTION—WHY THAT HOPE SHOULD BE REAL TO YOU

## *Note to the speaker:*

With conviction and persuasion, show that the resurrection hope is based solidly on the Scriptures. Read and explain scriptures with appropriate emphasis, highlighting why we can have complete trust in this teaching. Help audience to appreciate more fully how the resurrection highlights God's love for us

### **WHY THE RESURRECTION BECAME NECESSARY** (7 min.)

Resurrection is essential to the fulfillment of Jehovah's purpose

Death came upon man because of the schemes of Satan (Joh 8:44)

Resurrection harmonizes with God's purpose for the earth (Ge 1:28)

Resurrection vindicates Jehovah as the loving, powerful Preserver of his servants (1Sa 2:6)

Jehovah rewards faithful ones with everlasting life (Mt 24:9; Tit 1:2; Re 2:10)

No other god can preserve and restore life (Ps 36:9)

### **WHY THE RESURRECTION IS A CERTAINTY** (7 min.)

Jehovah provides a guarantee of resurrection (Ac 17:31)

Guarantee is the resurrection of Jesus (*w82* 10/1 20 pars. 2-3)

Christ appeared to hundreds after his resurrection (1Co 15:6)

Jesus, whom Jehovah uses to resurrect others, is rightly called "the resurrection and the life" (Joh 11:25)

His resurrection paved the way for the resurrection of billions

Jesus demonstrated reality of resurrection

He likened death to sleep

With God's power, Jesus resurrected the dead as readily as we might waken a loved one from sleep (Joh 11:11-14)

No wonder Jesus expressed confidence in the certainty of the resurrection! (Joh 5:28, 29; *it-2* 789 pars. 3-6)

First-century Christians had faith in this hope (Heb 6:1, 2)

### **A SOURCE OF SUSTAINING COMFORT** (10 min.)

We are 'a mist appearing and disappearing' (Jas 4:14)

In this uncertain system of things, life can end suddenly

Resurrection hope sustains us, tempers harsh reality of death

Those loving Jehovah are not dominated by morbid fear of death, a dread that enslaves many (Heb 2:14, 15)

For those faithful to God, death is not the end

Reality of resurrection provides comfort and sustains all of us

Sickness, accidents, and death can befall anyone (Ec 9:11)

Many in the truth for years had hoped to survive the end of this system but are now facing problems of advancing age (Ec 12:1-7)

Since life in this system is temporary, we need to focus on "the real life," that is, "everlasting life" (1Ti 6:12, 19)

Like Paul, we are sustained by resurrection hope when facing trials that arise because of our service to God (2Co 1:8, 9)

Our experiencing such difficulties puts our faith in the resurrection to the test

If our life is threatened, the resurrection hope helps us to remain faithful and refuse to compromise

This hope has helped many to obey God's law on blood and to maintain Christian neutrality

### **HOW WE SHOW OUR FAITH IN THE RESURRECTION** (3 min.)

Integrity of Jehovah's servants, even in the face of death, proves that their service is based on faith and love (Re 12:11)

We render exclusive devotion to Jehovah because of his wonderful qualities (Re 4:11)

It is a privilege to share in proving that the Devil's accusations against Jehovah and us are false (Job 2:4; Pr 27:11)

### **KEEP WAITING "WITH EVERLASTING LIFE IN VIEW"** (3 min.)

Great comfort comes from knowing that Jehovah yearns to bring faithful ones back to life [Read Job 14:14, 15]

We must keep ourselves "in God's love," patiently waiting for the certain fulfillment of Jehovah's purpose to give obedient humans everlasting life (Jude 21)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 116-119)





## IS IT LATER THAN YOU THINK?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Exhort the audience “on the basis of love,” particularly when considering the last section directed toward inactive ones (Phm 9; *be* 266 pars. 1-3)

### **“TELL US, WHEN WILL THESE THINGS BE?” (4 min.)**

Recently, we commemorated the death of Jesus, thereby honoring him and Jehovah God

We were reminded of their overwhelming love for us even in our present sinful state (Ro 5:8; 1Jo 4:9)

Each passing year that we proclaim the death of the Lord by means of observing the Memorial brings us closer to the end of this system of things (1Co 11:26)

Jesus' gripping prophecy found at Mark 13:1-4 has long been a subject of great interest and speculation [Read]

Jesus gave his disciples a composite sign identifying the last days of Satan's wicked system of things [Read Mark 13:8]

This prophecy has a two-fold fulfillment—in the first century and in our day

Is Mark 13:8 being fulfilled? What do the facts show? Are we really in the last days? Is it later than you think?

### **COMPOSITE SIGN OF THE LAST DAYS (11 min.)**

Let us examine five specific features identified by Jesus

(1) *“Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom”* (*w08* 5/15 13-14 par. 7)

Since 1914 more than 100 million lives have been lost in wars!

(2) *“There will be earthquakes in one place after another”* (*w11* 5/1 4)

(3) *“There will be food shortages”* (*w11* 5/1 5)

(4) *“There will be . . . in one place after another pestilences”* (Lu 21:11; *w11* 5/1 6)

(5) There is *“the increasing of lawlessness”* (Mt 24:12)

Lawlessness is a blatant disregard for God's laws and principles; increasingly, many consider such sins as adultery and homosexuality to be acceptable (Isa 5:20; *w02* 3/1 9 par. 8)

We have touched on just five features of the composite sign

What do you think? Are we really living in the last days?

Never before have these features been as prominent as they are now

The facts prove that it is much later than most people think!

### **RETURN NOW, AND ACTIVELY SERVE THE SHEPHERD OF OUR SOULS (15 min.)**

We do not know how long Jehovah will offer reconciliation (2Co 5:18-20; *w98* 12/15 17-18 pars. 9-11)

We do know that destruction of the wicked is soon to come [Read 2 Peter 3:11, 12]

We do well to ask ourselves, ‘Do I demonstrate that I really believe that “the time left is reduced”?’ (1Co 7:29-31)

Jehovah invites people from all walks of life to take in life-giving knowledge from the Bible (Re 22:17)

Taking in such knowledge and acting in harmony with it can lead to everlasting life in Paradise on earth

Does that prospect appeal to you?

It is urgent that you act without delay

Jehovah's Witnesses would be pleased to assist you in learning how you can bring your life into harmony with God's will

Jehovah also wants his inactive sheep to come back into his loving everlasting arms (De 33:27; La 3:40)

If you were once an active servant of Jehovah, please take to heart the words of 1 Peter 2:25 [Read] (*jr* 130 par. 5)

That you have made the effort to be here is evidence that you have not forgotten your Shepherd and his commandments [Read Psalm 119:176]

There are a number of reasons why individuals become inactive (*w08* 11/15 13-15 pars. 5-13)

Whatever your reason, we entreat you to accept the necessary assistance so that you can again actively serve our loving Shepherd (*jr* 72-76 pars. 13-16; 152-153 pars. 22-25)

Allow God's Word and our Christian publications to help you gain spiritual strength (Ps 119:105)

You will receive the support of Jehovah's loving congregation (1Pe 5:2; *w08* 11/15 16 pars. 19-22)

In the past, prophets provided needed reminders to God's people and warned them of God's coming judgments (Am 3:7)

Today, Jehovah uses his anointed servants to remind even the righteous that it is later than most think (Eze 3:21)

These servants have proved to be immovable, like iron pillars in a fortified city (Jer 1:17-19)

The anointed have their 'hips girded up'; they allow God's Word to strengthen them to fulfill their commission  
Make it your aim to show similar zeal and to support them  
It is vital that we "pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us" (Heb 2:1; Lu 21:34-36)  
Those who ignored warnings of impending destruction in the past soon realized that it was later than they  
thought  
Today, an even more urgent warning is being sounded, with overwhelming evidence that Armageddon is near  
Millions turn a deaf ear, but time is running out  
It is later than they think! Is it later than you realize?  
Think deeply about your heavenly Father; how late do you suppose he would say it is?  
We entreat you to find safety in the warm embrace of Jehovah, the Great Shepherd! (Isa 40:11)  
(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts  
need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 116-119)

# WHAT GOD'S KINGDOM IS DOING FOR US NOW

## *Note to the speaker:*

Present clearly the evidence that God's Kingdom is a real, ruling, active government. Show not only what the Kingdom is doing now but also what is expected of those who would be its citizens

### **ABUNDANT EVIDENCE THAT KINGDOM RULE BEGAN IN 1914** (6 min.)

Jesus taught us to pray: "Let your kingdom come" (Mt 6:10)

Although that heavenly Kingdom would eventually bring Paradise conditions earth wide, it would be established while human governments were still ruling the earth (Da 2:44; Re 21:4) [Read Psalm 110:1, 2]

Bible prophecy and chronology point to 1914 as the year of the Kingdom's establishment (Re 12:10, 12)

"Appointed times of the nations" expired (Lu 21:24; Eze 21:26, 27; *bh* 217)

Composite sign of Christ's presence in Kingdom authority is being fulfilled (Mt 24:3; *bh* 88-92)

"Critical times hard to deal with" that would characterize "last days" are here (2Ti 3:1-5)

Ride of the four horsemen of Revelation chapter 6 confirms that we live in time of Kingdom rule (Re 6:2, 4-6, 8; *w86* 1/1 1-7)

Foretold "woe for the earth" is evident in distress of men and nations (Re 12:12)

### **WHAT THE KINGDOM HAS BEEN DOING IN OUR DAY** (20 min.)

It has gathered millions of *loyal subjects* (Pr 14:28)

Though living in more than 235 different countries, they enthusiastically support God's Kingdom (Ps 110:3)

Last service year, they voluntarily spent over one and a half billion hours spreading the Kingdom message [use most recent figure]

As a heavenly government, it has administered *written laws*

Written laws governing those under Kingdom rule are found in God's Word (Ps 19:7)

The only government with a law of love (Joh 13:34, 35)

Biblical laws take into consideration that Christians live under laws of worldly governmental authorities, so they render relative subjection to Caesar (Ro 13:1, 7)

Subjects of God's Kingdom are among the most law-abiding of citizens (*w02* 11/1 12-13; *g00* 6/8 28; *g97* 8/22 26)

Officials and others often acknowledge the good conduct of those obedient to Kingdom rule (1Pe 2:12; *w02* 11/1 12-13; *g* 4/07 27; *g00* 6/8 28; *yb94* 166-167)

God's laws are enforced under Kingdom rule

Willful, unrepentant violators of God's laws are expelled from the congregation, which is thus kept clean (1Co 5:11-13; *w99* 6/1 17; *w98* 8/1 16)

God's Kingdom has provided an *educational system*

By means of the Bible and Bible-based publications, such as *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, the Great Educator 'teaches us how to benefit ourselves' (Isa 30:20; 48:17)

In a family, each one benefits from being taught how to fulfill his God-assigned role

Family Worship arrangement deals with needs on a personal level

Bible-based educational programs promote theocratic education

[Indicate how the various schools operated by the organization are equipping millions for what matters most (*be* 8; *km* 10/11 5-6)]

Free home Bible education extended to interested ones worldwide

Millions of Bible studies are being conducted each week

Our publications, available in over 600 languages, have been instrumental in this important work

God's Kingdom has *visible representatives* to care for and protect its subjects (Isa 32:1, 2; *w06* 7/15 5)

Elders serve as shepherds and teachers, providing refreshment for the flock (Mt 11:28-30)

### **KINGDOM RULE HELPS US TO ENDURE NOW** (4 min.)

It is faith-strengthening to reflect on what the Kingdom is doing for us now (Ps 77:12; 145:11)

Moves us to preach zealously (Ro 10:11, 13-15)

We are assured of angelic backing (Re 14:6, 7; *w09* 5/15 24-25)

Throughout history, men have made sacrifices for imperfect human governments, only to end up disillusioned

In contrast, God's Kingdom will never disappoint its subjects

We are benefiting even now from its rule

It has helped us to draw close to God and to experience the love and support of the worldwide brotherhood (Jas 4:8; 1Pe 2:17)

Under God's Kingdom, we will soon realize all our Bible-based hopes (Ps 145:16; Ro 8:24, 25; Re 21:5)

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## TURN YOUR EYES AWAY FROM WORTHLESS THINGS!

### *Note to the speaker:*

Strive to reach the heart of your listeners by reading key scriptures with appropriate enthusiasm and reasoning on them. Help all to appreciate the wonderful things that we can fix our eyes on and the vital role of self-control in our worship of Jehovah

### **WHAT WE SEE CAN AFFECT US** (7 min.)

Probably nothing affects our mind as much as our sight

This channel of communication to the mind strongly influences our emotions and actions (*it-1* 789)

What we see with our eyes can initiate or intensify ambitions and desires in our heart for good or for bad (*w10* 4/15 20-21; *w86* 5/1 10-14)

For good: Our sight enables us to perceive beauty, appreciate the wonders of creation, receive evidence of God's existence and glory, and desire to obey him (Ps 8:3, 4; 19:1, 2; 104:24; Ro 1:20)

For bad: Eve, the disobedient angels, and Achan did not pass on from seeing with their eyes and desiring in their heart what was forbidden to them (Ge 3:6; 6:1, 2; Jos 7:20, 21)

Modern commercial advertisers well know the age-old power of eye appeal (*w10* 4/15 21)

How important it is, then, to control what we look at!

We need to take to heart the psalmist's words [Read Psalm 119:37]

### **OBEY GOD, AND LOOK AWAY FROM WHAT IS WORTHLESS** (18 min.)

True Christians are not immune to the desire of the eyes and the flesh

We are encouraged to exercise self-discipline in connection with what we look at and long for (1Co 9:25a, 27; 1Jo 2:15-17)

Job recognized the link between seeing and desiring; he made a covenant with his eyes [Read Job 31:1]

He refused to touch a woman in an immoral way; he would not even allow his mind to entertain such a thought

What happened with the disobedient angels in Noah's day illustrates the danger of developing a passion for illicit sexual relations (Ge 6:4-7)

Jesus warned against doing so [Read Matthew 5:28]

To 'keep on looking' betrays an undisciplined heart that needs to deaden its illicit desires (Col 3:5, 6)

Today many secretly 'keep on looking' at pornography, in secular publications and on the Internet [Read Ephesians 5:3, 4, 12] (*w10* 4/15 21-22)

Even a temporary or an accidental brush with pornography can bring sad consequences

Results can be a guilty conscience, feelings of worthlessness, and great difficulty in erasing immoral scenes from the mind

Our mind is to be held captive by Christ; this can be achieved by nourishing our mind and heart through study of God's Word, prayer, and attending Christian meetings (2Co 10:5; Col 3:9, 10)

Some entertainment may be wholesome, but entertainment that promotes materialism or the occult or that features violence, blood, and death is "good-for-nothing," or worthless (Ps 101:3; *w10* 4/15 22)

Christian parents have the responsibility before Jehovah to be selective about what they allow to be viewed in their home

Beware of disguised occultism in films, TV series, video games, and children's books (*w02* 10/15 11)

Whether we are young or old, our eyes should find no pleasure in video games that specialize in violence and depict killing with gory realism [Read Psalm 11:5] (*g00* 7/8 28)

We must fix our eyes on what is wholesome and uplifting and refuse to focus our mind on any activity that Jehovah condemns

Satan is targeting our thoughts (2Co 11:3)

Even with entertainment that may be considered acceptable, spending *too much time* viewing it encroaches on our daily Bible reading and preparation for meetings (Php 1:9, 10)

### **BE DETERMINED TO TURN AWAY FROM WHAT IS WORTHLESS** (5 min.)

Regrettably, we cannot avoid seeing some worthless things; even Jesus had such thrust upon him (Mt 4:8)

When the Devil showed him the kingdoms of the world, Jesus did not let his heart be incited to have wrong desires, nor did he have to contemplate the Devil's offer in order to reject it

Jesus reacted immediately [Read Matthew 4:10]

His reply was in harmony with his declared purpose in life—that of doing God's will (Heb 10:7)

As followers of Jesus Christ, we make it our personal determination to turn away from what is worthless [Read Psalm 119:101]

It is risky to wait for a confrontation before deciding what we will do about matters that the Scriptures clearly condemn

We must have a predetermined reaction based on our knowledge of the Scriptures and on our desire to do God's will (*w10* 1/15 3)

Never will we regret maintaining a "simple" eye, an eye that is totally focused on doing God's will, not distracted by other things (Mt 6:22, 23; Heb 10:36)

Many of you have been striving to keep a simple eye, and you have long been turning your eyes away from worthless things

You are to be commended—certainly such a course pleases our righteous heavenly Father

Keep doing so, thus setting a fine example for newer ones and youths in the congregation

May our obedience to “pass on from seeing what is worthless” result in our being preserved alive in Jehovah’s own way (Ps 119:37)

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# DOES DEATH END IT ALL?

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to understand the truly hopeless condition mankind would be facing were it not for Jehovah's provisions of the ransom and the Kingdom. Highlight the need to exercise implicit faith in the truths discussed at the Memorial

### **“THE END OF ALL MANKIND” (7 min.)**

Earth wide, millions of people die each year

Efforts to comfort mourning ones often reflect the belief that the dead continue living in some way

Such beliefs vary widely (*w99* 4/1 9-10 pars. 1-7)

Even those who claim that death is natural find it hard to accept that death is the final state

Bible speaks of one's dying as 'coming to one's end' (De 2:15; Jos 10:20)

Indeed, death is “the end of all mankind” [Read Ecclesiastes 7:2]

How are we to understand this? Does death really end everything?

### **DEATH DEFINED (7 min.)**

Death reverses the process described at Genesis 2:7 [Read]

Breathing stops; the life force is extinguished; thoughts perish (Ps 146:4)

There is no superiority of human death over animal death; they are the same (Ec 3:19, 20)

Death ends all communication, emotion, thinking, and existence (Ec 9:5, 6, 10)

This fact bothers us for good reason—we were made to live forever (Ec 3:11)

The truths considered at the annual commemoration of Christ's death give us a reason for hope

### **WHY JESUS' DEATH WAS NOT THE END (9 min.)**

Death is the penalty for sin (Ro 6:23)

Jesus committed no sin

Thus, he maintained the legal right to continue living endlessly as a human (Joh 10:18; Ac 2:24; *w09* 9/15 29 par. 15; *w80* 7/15 28 par. 25)

Having been raised to life as a spirit creature, Jesus presented to Jehovah the value of his perfect human life (1Pe 3:18)

Thus the debt that you and I owe to Jehovah for being sinners has been paid (2Co 5:14, 15)

Now there exists a basis for removing the consequences of inherited sin

Does Jehovah offer general amnesty based on the ransom?

No; obedience is required (Joh 3:36)

Continue taking in knowledge of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ, and act in harmony with it (Joh 17:3)

Jehovah's release of Jesus from the grave serves as “a guarantee to all men” of God's future Day of Judgment and provides assurance that there will be a resurrection (Ac 17:31; 24:15)

### **WHAT WILL “THE END” MEAN FOR YOU? (7 min.)**

Does death end it all?

Yes it would if not for God and Christ

Despite nanotechnology, humans can neither create life nor restore it (*w99* 10/15 5 pars. 3-4)

Only Jehovah can do those things

God's ancient servants exercised hope in the resurrection (Job 14:7-15; Da 12:13)

Jesus demonstrated God's desire and ability to resurrect the dead (Lu 7:11-17; 8:49-56; Joh 11:38-44)

Now that sufficient time has elapsed for all to see the results of disobedience to his laws, the appointed hour is fast approaching for God to correct matters on this earth

That includes raising the dead and guiding mankind to everlasting life on earth (*w07* 5/15 26-30)

So sure is Jehovah's purpose to resurrect his servants that they may be spoken of as living (Mt 22:31, 32; *cf* 106-107 pars. 20-21)

Living forever will give us endless opportunities to discover more about Jehovah God and to enjoy friendship with all those who love him (Job 26:14; Ec 3:10, 11; *w11* 5/1 27)

Serve Jehovah loyally, and receive rich blessings now “and the end everlasting life” (Ro 6:22)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 166-169)





## DOES THE TRUTH AFFECT YOUR LIFE?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Please ensure that your expressions will be understood by first-time meeting attenders. Show how even in the present system of things, our lives are improved in many ways when we apply Bible principles

### **IDENTIFYING THE TRUTH** (5 min.)

Shortly before Jesus died, he declared to Pontius Pilate that His purpose in coming into the world was to “bear witness to the truth” [Read John 18:37]

Pilate had no interest in hearing what Jesus had to say about Kingdom truth (Joh 18:38; *w07* 10/1 32)

Unlike Pilate, Jesus specifically spoke of “*the* truth,” referring, not to truth in general, but to divine truth, truth about Jehovah God and His purposes [Read John 17:17] (*w02* 3/1 13)

Divine truth is set forth in the inspired Word of God, the Holy Scriptures (2Ti 3:16, 17)

Accurate knowledge of the Scriptures leads not only to identifying the truth but also to being freed from slavery (Joh 17:3) [Read John 8:31, 32]

At John 8:32, Jesus was primarily referring to freedom from sin (Ro 8:1, 2)

The truth also frees us from specific consequences of sin

### **THE TRUTH LIBERATES BELIEVERS FROM SLAVERY** (20 min.)

Down through the centuries, millions have been sold into slavery with no opportunity for freedom (*g02* 6/22 4-6)

Today, mankind is subjected to many different forms of slavery, but individually we can *choose* to serve God [Read Deuteronomy 30:19] (*w10* 1/15 11)

Note some ways that the truth can affect someone’s life

[Speaker should select examples that meet the needs in the area where talk will be given]

Living by the truth results in freedom from fear and despair over present world conditions

Bible prophecy shows that the earth will soon be wiped clean of wickedness and then peace will be abundant (Ps 37:10, 11; 2Ti 3:1)

Knowledge of the truth brings freedom from enslavement to false religious teachings, such as those about the condition of the dead

Millions fear the dead and look to witch doctors, spirit mediums, or clergymen for help (*g96* 8/8 19)

The truth is that the dead cannot harm us; nor are they suffering harm in eternal torment (Ec 9:5, 6)

Alcohol dependence and the use of tobacco and illicit drugs enslave millions

The power of the truth coupled with the desire for a good relationship with God can free someone from such vices (2Co 7:1; *g02* 6/22 7-8)

The truth has brought about marvelous changes in people who were once given to fits of anger, abusive speech, and other ungodly conduct (Eph 4:31, 32; 5:25, 33)

Desiring to walk with God, they have learned to love kindness and to display godly qualities (Mic 6:8)

In the future, all true worshippers on earth “will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Ro 8:20, 21; *w99* 5/1 6)

This will be true freedom from everything that has caused so much pain and distress to the human family (Joh 8:36; Ro 6:22, 23)

### **CHOOSE THE TRUTH AND ENJOY REAL FREEDOM** (5 min.)

How good it is to serve Jehovah God and to have the hope of life in the new world of peace and righteousness! (2Pe 3:13)

To live in God’s new world, we must choose divine truth, fully embrace it, and put on the new personality (Eph 4:20-24; 1Th 2:13)

Jehovah never asks more of us than what we can do

Our efforts to live in harmony with the truth will bring us spiritual protection and his smile of approval (Ps 5:11, 12; 3Jo 3, 4)

When standing before Pilate, Jesus said that everyone on the side of the truth listens to His voice (Joh 18:37b)

May we fearlessly take our stand on the side of the truth—divine truth—and obey Jehovah by listening carefully to the voice of Jesus (Lu 9:35)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-54, 166-169.)



# UNITE WITH GOD'S HAPPY PEOPLE

## *Note to the speaker:*

With warmth and conviction, help the audience to appreciate that genuine and enduring happiness is based on spirituality and the doing of God's will in association with the visible part of his organization

### **THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO ARE TRULY HAPPY** (4 min.)

Genuine and enduring happiness is a possession of only those who loyally serve the happy God (1Ti 1:11)

Israelites experienced happiness when they served Jehovah (Ps 33:12)

Jesus' disciples were happy because their spiritual needs were satisfied (Mt 5:3)

Today, Jehovah's Witnesses are recognized as being unique, united, happy

Happiness is assured for those who faithfully serve Jehovah

God's happy people gladly help others to unite with them

Nations are invited to be glad with God's people (Ro 15:10)

On what is the happiness of Jehovah's people founded?

What benefits are enjoyed by those who become united with God's happy people?

Why should new ones become united with true worshippers?

### **DIVINE TEACHING UNITES US AS GOD'S PEOPLE, MAKING US HAPPY** (5 min.)

Jehovah is our Grand Instructor, and Jesus is our Teacher (Isa 30:20; Joh 13:13)

We are happy because we comply with God's Word (Lu 11:28)

By applying Bible truths, new ones are brought into unity with us

Unity and happiness exist among God's people everywhere because all of us receive spiritual food through Jehovah's organization

Joyous unity of thought and action is ours despite differing backgrounds (Isa 2:3)

With their lives transformed as a result of applying Bible truth, even former foes are now united as part of God's happy people [Cite current examples of this from our publications]

Jehovah's Witnesses publish Bible literature in nearly 1,000 languages, which helps us to think in agreement (2Co 13:11)

Global teaching program enables those "rightly disposed for everlasting life" to acquire wisdom that produces joy (Ac 13:48; Pr 3:13-18)

### **BENEFITS OF BECOMING UNITED WITH GOD'S HAPPY PEOPLE** (12 min.)

A relationship with God is enjoyed by all united as his people

Those doing Jehovah's will have his daily support (Ps 68:19)

They can freely approach the Hearer of prayer (Ps 65:2)

They have unparalleled peace (Php 4:6, 7; w80 11/1 18)

Applying Bible teachings gives us spiritual stability and helps us to maintain happiness

Brotherly love and its blessings are enjoyed by those united as God's happy people (Joh 13:35; Col 3:14; 1Pe 2:17)

They experience such love at meetings, assemblies, conventions

Love is also shown when fellow believers are in need locally and when disasters strike anywhere in the world

Hope of eternal life is set before those uniting with God's people

Jehovah made such life possible through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Mt 20:28; Ro 5:8; w92 6/15 4-7)

Anointed ones benefit from Jesus' sacrifice and become his Kingdom joint heirs (1Jo 2:1, 2)

"Other sheep" also benefit from Jesus' sacrifice and rejoice in the hope of life on a paradise earth (Joh 10:16; Lu 23:43)

As spiritual values replace material ones, life takes on real meaning (Mt 6:33; Php 1:9, 10)

Jehovah's people put his interests first, as Christ did (Joh 6:38)

Like Jesus, they have a purposeful life, honoring Jehovah and bearing witness to the truth (Joh 18:37)

[Cite recent accounts published in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* that prove that the lives of those united as God's people are truly meaningful and happy]

### **WHY LOVERS OF GOD SHOULD BECOME UNITED WITH HIS PEOPLE** (5 min.)

Consider why lovers of God should unite with his people (w93 5/15 9-10)

As Universal Sovereign, Jehovah deserves exclusive devotion (Ex 20:4, 5)

Deep concern over the vindication of Jehovah's sovereignty and the sanctification of his name supplies incentive to serve him

People can show love for God by becoming united with those doing his will and keeping his commandments (1Jo 5:3)

Gratitude for Jehovah's love in providing the ransom sacrifice of his Son is good reason to serve God with his people (Joh 3:16)

Appreciation for God's spiritual provisions through his organization should move us to worship him

A strong desire to speak about God's Kingdom is another reason to serve Jehovah with his people (Ps 145:10, 11)

**UNITE WITH GOD'S HAPPY PEOPLE WITHOUT DELAY** (4 min.)

Zechariah's prophecy foretold that people would join with anointed Christians, or spiritual 'Jews' [Read Zechariah 8:23]

Many are now doing this by embracing the Kingdom message

If you are a lover of God and of righteousness, now is the time to become united with Jehovah's servants

Evidence of God's blessing on his people increases day by day as people of all nations become united with those serving him

A multinational "great crowd" who will survive "the great tribulation" is becoming part of the global family of Jehovah's joyful worshippers (Re 7:9, 10, 14; 21:1, 4, 5)

Will you be among those fully united with God's happy people?

As one of the millions now unitedly serving Jehovah, many blessings await you

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-55, 166-169.)

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# WHY WOULD A LOVING GOD PERMIT WICKEDNESS?

*Note to the speaker:*

Present answers that first-time attenders can grasp. Strengthen the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses who may struggle with this question when tragedy strikes them personally

## **GOD HATES THE EVIL OF SATAN'S WORLD** (5 min.)

Victims of accidents, crime, war, terrorism, and disasters, often ask, "Why?" (*g* 11/06 3-9)

Have you wondered why a loving God would permit evil things to occur?

Even faithful servants of God pondered that question [**Read Habakkuk 1:3**]

Some people conclude that God does not care about humans

The Bible reveals that God hates suffering and injustice (Jg 2:18; Pr 6:16-19)

Jehovah felt hurt at heart because of all the badness in Noah's day, and his hatred of wickedness has not changed (Ge 6:5, 6)

Be assured that God is never the source of wickedness (Job 34:10; Jas 1:13)

## **WHY GOD HAS TOLERATED WICKEDNESS** (20 min.)

So why does a loving, just, and all powerful God permit the evil of Satan's world? (*w02* 10/1 5-6)

A common misconception is that God directly controls every situation

However, Jesus identified Satan the Devil as "the ruler of the world," the one responsible for wickedness (Joh 14:30; 1Jo 5:19)

Satan, "the father of the lie," has seduced wicked angels and humans to join him in rebelling against God (Joh 8:44; Jude 6)

Jehovah has permitted evil to exist for the past 6,000 years in order to settle the issues raised by Satan once and for all time (Ge 3:1-6)

Satan questioned Jehovah's right to rule (*bh* 109-110 pars. 10-11)

Has independence from God brought true freedom and lasting happiness? No!

Human rule has resulted in war, oppression, suffering, and death (Ec 8:9; Ro 8:22; *w13* 9/1 3-5)

Jehovah well knows the pains we suffer and promises to bring relief (Ex 3:7; 2Co 1:3, 4)

Jehovah assured Habakkuk that He had set an "appointed time" to eliminate injustice and oppression (Hab 2:3-5)

Jesus has already begun to "break up the works of the Devil" (1Jo 3:8)

How comforting to know that all suffering will soon end! (Ps 37:9-11; 72:12-14; *w13* 9/1 6-7)

The patience of our loving God means salvation for "the meek" (Ps 149:4; Jer 29:11, 12; 2Pe 3:9)

## **EXPERIENCE "THE REAL LIFE" FREE FROM SUFFERING** (5 min.)

If you have sincerely cried out to God asking *why*, then listen to him by taking to heart his message of comfort and hope [**Read Revelation 21:4; 22:1, 2**]

Any damage experienced in this system of things will be reversed [**Read Isaiah 65:17**]

In the meantime, hope in Jehovah and imitate the patient attitude of faithful ones, past and present (Hab 3:16-18; Heb 6:9-12)

As you continue to support God's sovereignty, you will soon experience "the real life" free of all wickedness (1Ti 6:19)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-55, 166-169]

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## IS YOUR CONFIDENCE IN JEHOVAH?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to appreciate the wisdom of relying on Jehovah completely, and show them what it means to display full confidence in him

### **THE NATIONS HAVE MISPLACED THEIR CONFIDENCE** (4 min.)

Nations rely on their own wisdom and strength to govern their actions

Political leaders gather together against Jehovah and his anointed King (Ps 2:1-3)

Religious leaders put their faith in politics rather than in God's Kingdom [**Read Isaiah 28:14, 15**]

Political alliances provide a hollow refuge (*ip-1* 292-294)

Result is worldwide lawlessness and lack of peace (Isa 57:20, 21)

### **WHERE IS YOUR CONFIDENCE?** (8 min.)

In strong contrast to this divisive world, God's servants demonstrate the following traits:

Are united as true worshippers in this politically, socially, and religiously divided world (Ps 133:1)

Are zealous in preaching the good news of God's Kingdom—a message of peace and salvation (Mt 24:14)

Are joyful, reflecting God's personality (1Ti 1:11)

Are careful to base their conduct and their decisions on Bible principles (Pr 3:5, 6)

Are impartial in doing "what is good toward all" (Ga 6:10)

The distinction "between one serving God and one not serving him" is obvious (Mal 3:18)

What has caused this distinction? [**Read Psalm 46:1-3**]

God's people confidently rely on Jehovah

They know that Jehovah is near to them and more powerful than any enemy

For them, God is "a help that is readily found in times of distress"

Even if the mountains disappear into the sea in a natural upheaval, God's people have unshakable confidence in Jehovah as their Refuge

Is this how you feel?

Have you really placed your confidence in Jehovah?

### **SOURCE OF YOUR CONFIDENCE** (13 min.)

How can we increase our confidence in Jehovah? [**Read Proverbs 22:19**]

Good effect of knowledge that God gives is shown at Proverbs 1:33 [**Read**]

Those who take their stand for Jehovah need not be disturbed by dread of calamity

They know that nothing can destroy the security that comes from listening to Jehovah

Nehemiah set a fine example of reliance on Jehovah in connection with the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls

[**Read Nehemiah 4:14 and enlarge on it**] (*w98* 10/15 17)

Do you "remember Jehovah"?

It is necessary that we do so day by day

We must also serve Jehovah "whole-souled" (Col 3:23; *w97* 10/15 13-17)

This means giving of ourselves, using all our energies to the fullest extent possible in service to Jehovah

We learn Jehovah's view from two contrasting examples

Lazarus' sister Mary "did what she could" by washing Jesus' feet with "very expensive" perfumed oil (Mr 14:3-9; Joh 12:3)

A poor widow gave "everything she had" by dropping "two small coins of very little value" into the temple treasury chest (Mr 12:41-44)

Jesus did not compare Mary with the widow

He valued the widow's two coins no less than he did Mary's "very expensive" oil

Since each woman gave her best, in God's eyes the gifts were both of value

Jehovah deserves our best

We must always observe his commandments (Ps 119:93)

### **MAINTAINING CONFIDENCE TO THE END** (5 min.)

Jehovah is still patient toward the nations

Evident because zealous Kingdom proclaimers continue to urge rulers and subjects to submit to Christ's rulership (Ps 2:10-12a)

Millions of Witnesses of Jehovah are zealously declaring the message of God's Kingdom in 239 lands

We do this joyfully before God's Son smashes the nations "like a piece of pottery" [**Read Psalm 2:9**]

As you prove to be zealous for fine works, maintain your confidence in Jehovah and experience the fulfillment of Psalm 46:7-11 [**Read**]

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School*, pp. 52-55, 166-169]





# WALKING WITH GOD BRINGS BLESSINGS NOW AND FOREVER

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help the audience to understand that walking with God is a way of life. Build appreciation for the privilege we have to do so

### **WE NEED GUIDANCE IN LIFE'S JOURNEY** (4 min.)

What parent would let a toddler take his first steps alone?

A loving parent walks alongside his little child, providing guidance in appropriate measure as the child matures

The Bible often uses the metaphor of walking to describe our journey through life (1Ki 22:43; Ec 12:5)

Our heavenly Father knows that we are not toddlers; he grants us considerable freedom (2Co 3:17)

Yet, he knows that regardless of our age, we are in desperate need of guidance [**Read Jeremiah 10:23**]

Walking in these "critical times hard to deal with" can be a struggle (2Ti 3:1)

We do not have to walk alone; we can walk with God

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WALK WITH GOD?** (6 min.)

Bible examples teach us what it means to walk with God

Enoch and Noah walked with the true God (Ge 5:24; 6:9)

Faithful men and women walked with God in that they trusted in him, relied on him for guidance, and obeyed him

Walking with God put them at odds with the majority in their day, but it was worth it (*w01* 9/15 29-31)

God has not changed; he invites us to walk with him today (Mal 3:6)

The Bible foretold that many would seek to walk in God's way [**Read Micah 4:1, 2**]

However, such ones are not in the majority; theirs is not "the popular course" (Jer 8:6)

**Micah 4:5** explains why [**Read**]

To walk in God's name is to carry out his will and to live our lives in harmony with all that God's name stands for

### **HOW CAN YOU WALK WITH GOD?** (9 min.)

We walk with God by listening to his voice and letting it direct our steps

Principles in God's Word should guide us in all things (Ps 119:105)

"Walking in the truth" should become a way of life for us (3Jo 3)

[Relate experience of a person changed by Bible truths. For examples, see the series "The Bible Changes Lives," beginning with the August 1, 2008, issue of *The Watchtower*]

Follow in Christ's footsteps (1Pe 2:21; *w86* 12/1 17-18)

Jesus set the perfect example of walking with God (*w02* 8/15 10-14)

Walk with others who walk with God (Mic 4:2)

It is worth all our efforts to attend Christian meetings (*yb99* 253-254; *yb90* 244-245; *yb89* 210-211)

In making decisions, we do well to think about what Jesus would do (1Co 2:16; *w00* 2/15 10-11 pars. 2-4)

### **WHAT BLESSINGS COME TO THOSE WHO WALK WITH GOD?** (8 min.)

"Walking as children of light" is a great blessing (Eph 5:8)

The guidance we receive protects us from the pitfalls of immorality (*w00* 7/15 28-31)

Those who walk in this world's darkness stumble (Isa 59:8-12)

World's moral darkness destroys families; immorality often leads to feelings of guilt, worthlessness, and anxiety

We are enlightened as to the meaning of world events

Most are in darkness as to why these times are so terrible and why so many people suffer

Having the light of truth on such subjects enables us to walk in hope and joy

Holy spirit can fortify us to keep walking with God in the face of all obstacles (Php 4:13)

Walking with God strengthens our friendship, or our intimacy, with him

With such a Friend, why fear what man might do to us? (Ps 118:6)

If we should stumble, God will raise us up if we look to him (Ps 145:14)

Jehovah is not quick to give up on those who sin; he forgives repentant ones "in a large way" (Isa 55:7; Pr 24:16)

Having a clean conscience makes us happier in life's walk

### **A WALK THAT CAN LAST FOREVER** (3 min.)

Life is a gift; even a short walk in this life is a blessing

Yet, God's Word contains inspired laments over the shortness of man's walk through life (Job 14:1; Ps 90:10)

Jehovah wants us to walk with him forever (Joh 3:36)

Those who refuse to walk in Christ's footsteps will have a short walk

Those who walk with God will walk forever!

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pp. 52-55, 166-169]

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## A PROMISE OF PERFECT FAMILY HAPPINESS

### *Note to the speaker:*

Jehovah's purpose to have one large happy human family without factions will soon be fulfilled by means of the Kingdom. Even now, application of Bible principles by individual families leads to peace and happiness. Give answers that first-time attenders can readily grasp. Also, strengthen the faith of those who are Jehovah's Witnesses

### **THE FAMILY—A DIVINE GIFT** (3 min.)

Jehovah expressed his purpose to fill the earth with a perfect human family [**Read Genesis 1:26-28**]

What a wonderful prospect! (*w14* 1/15 8 pars. 3-6)

The happiness found in family life is a gift from God (Ru 1:9; Ps 127:3)

### **HOW FAMILY HAPPINESS WAS DISRUPTED** (5 min.)

The disruption of family happiness began when Satan rebelled against God

Satan persuaded the first human couple and wicked angels to abandon their heavenly Father

Instead of experiencing the unity and happiness that Jehovah had originally purposed, the human family as a whole is divided socially, religiously, and politically

Within the family unit, we see dysfunction, stress, and unhappiness (2Ti 3:2, 3)

Adam and Eve's departure from Jehovah's universal family has not only hurt our Creator deeply but has also brought pain, suffering, and death to all their descendants (Ge 3:16-19; Ec 8:9; Ro 5:12)

### **HOW FAMILY HAPPINESS WILL BE RESTORED** (5 min.)

Our heavenly Father would never allow his purpose for an eternally happy human family to be thwarted by disloyal rebels

Jehovah showed his fatherly love by including a prophecy of restoration while pronouncing judgment on the serpent, Satan [**Read Genesis 3:15**]

God will use Jesus, the primary part of the "offspring," to bring an end to Satan and undo the effects of Adam's sin (Joh 3:16; 1Jo 3:8)

By means of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus, "the last Adam," all loyal descendants of 'the first Adam' will enjoy perfect family happiness forever (1Co 15:22, 45; Mt 20:28)

Jehovah's purpose for families will have been accomplished when Jesus hands everything back to his Father [**Read 1 Corinthians 15:24-28**]

### **HOW CAN YOU HAVE A HAPPY FAMILY NOW?** (14 min.)

God provides guidelines for families that result in happiness when applied (Pr 3:5, 6; 4:1-4; *fg* 18-19)

[**Read Ephesians 5:28-32**] Jehovah wants husbands and wives to be loyal to each other and to display unselfish love and to respect each other (Heb 13:4)

[**Read Ephesians 5:22-25, 33**] Jesus' headship over the congregation serves as a model for Christian husbands (1Pe 3:7)

Husbands must show self-sacrificing love by providing for their family materially and taking the lead spiritually (De 6:5-7; 1Ti 5:8)

[**Read Ephesians 6:1-3**] Children find happiness when they obey their parents and learn how to apply Bible principles (Ec 11:9, 10; 12:1)

[**Read Ephesians 6:4**] A parent's example in showing love for God will have a profound effect on his child  
For children to find lasting happiness, they must learn how to please their heavenly Father (2Ti 3:14, 15)

### **A HAPPY GLOBAL FAMILY AT LAST!** (3 min.)

God's promise of one united, happy global family will be realized (Ps 37:10, 11)

Would you like to be included among the happy ones described at **Psalm 89:15, 16**? [**Read**]

If so, we encourage you and your family to continue acquiring accurate knowledge of God's will for families (Mt 5:3; Joh 17:3)

By means of God's Kingdom, "all the families of the earth will be blessed" as they experience God's promise of eternal peace and happiness (Ac 3:25)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pp. 52-55, 166-169]



# HOW LOVE AND FAITH CONQUER THE WORLD

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help audience appreciate that the more we learn about Jehovah and the more we love him, the stronger our faith in his promises will become. That abounding love and unwavering faith will equip us to conquer the world, as Jesus did

## **CHRIST JESUS CONQUERED THE WORLD** (4 min.)

Near the end of his earthly ministry, Jesus declared: “I have conquered the world” (Joh 16:33)

He resisted the efforts of Satan the Devil, the god of this world, to ‘get a hold on him’ (Joh 14:30; 1Jo 5:19)

Jesus resisted the Devil’s temptations to seek material things, gain personal fame, and deny Jehovah’s Godship (Mt 4:4, 7, 10)

Hostile religious and political groups failed to entrap Jesus and interfere with his service to God (Mt 22:15, 16, 34, 46)

His unshakable faith and love for Jehovah enabled Jesus to hold fast his integrity and finish the work he was given to do (Joh 17:4)

Christ left a model for his disciples to follow (1Pe 2:21)

## **JESUS PREPARED HIS DISCIPLES FOR WORLD CONQUEST** (7 min.)

Jesus warned his disciples that they too would face persecution for being “no part of the world” (Joh 15:18-20; Mt 10:16-18)

He identified Satan as the chief opposer of Kingdom truth (Joh 8:44)

Christ taught his disciples to pray for protection from “the wicked one,” and he asked his Father to watch over them (Mt 6:9, 13; Joh 17:15, 16)

Jesus emphasized the importance of loving God and neighbor (Mt 22:37-39)

He demonstrated loving compassion in dealing with others (Mr 1:40, 41; Lu 8:43-48)

Christ strengthened the faith and love of his disciples by helping them come to know Jehovah better (Joh 17:3, 26)

By adhering closely to Jesus’ example, faithful disciples can be “completely victorious” (Ro 8:35-39; *w99* 5/1 7)

## **MODERN-DAY DISCIPLES ARE WORLD CONQUERORS** (7 min.)

Jehovah’s servants today have gained victory over the world and its ways

By maintaining Christian neutrality (*w03* 3/1 3-7)

By overcoming opposition from family, neighbors, workmates, schoolmates, or apostates (*w01* 12/1 23 pars. 18-19)

By successfully fighting against the disobedient and prideful spirit of the world (Eph 2:2, 8; *lv* 53-54 pars. 7-8)

By avoiding selfish and valueless pursuits (1Ti 6:6-12)

Focusing our attention on the triumph of our Exemplar and on other faithful witnesses helps us to endure (Heb 12:1-3)

## **LOVE AND FAITH ENABLE US TO BE WORLD CONQUERORS** (8 min.)

This godly world is still “lying in the power of the wicked one,” Satan (1Jo 5:19)

Hatred, violence, genocide, lying, jealousy, and immorality, as well as styles of dress and remarks that are sexually provocative reflect the Devil’s spirit (*lv* 50-53 pars. 1-6; 56-57 pars. 11-13)

People who lack faith and have no knowledge of God’s love yield to the wicked influence of the Devil (*lv* 54-55 pars. 9-10)

Love for Jehovah and faith in his promises enable Christians to escape Satan’s “hold” (1Jo 5:3-5, 18)

Such love makes obeying God’s commands delightful, not burdensome (*lv* 11-13 pars. 13-16)

Faith conquers fear of man, which could cause us to compromise Bible principles (*w14* 4/15 10 par. 8)

As world conquerors, obedient to God, we enjoy a better life even now

Obeying the command to “cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit” frees us from such things as enslavement to tobacco, drugs, and pornography (2Co 7:1)

Heeding the admonition to attend meetings, we encourage one another to stand firm in the faith (Heb 10:24, 25)

Following Jesus’ instructions to preach, teach, and make disciples brings us true happiness, liberating us from Satan’s self-centered world (Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20; Ac 20:35)

## **CHRISTIAN CONQUERORS INHERIT ETERNAL BLESSINGS** (4 min.)

Jesus Christ conquered the world and was awarded great authority “at God’s right hand” (1Pe 3:22)

He will soon complete his conquest and gain the victory at Armageddon (Re 6:2; 16:16)

Faithful anointed footstep followers inherit the heavenly Kingdom (Lu 12:32; 22:28-30)

The “other sheep” inherit a place in the earthly realm of the Kingdom (Joh 10:16; Mt 25:34)

By standing firm as world conquerors and by fearlessly preaching God's Kingdom, we can help others to conquer the world and receive Jehovah's eternal blessing (Re 12:11)

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pp. 52-55, 166-169]

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# ARE YOU ON THE ROAD TO EVERLASTING LIFE?

## *Note to the speaker:*

Help Bible students and interested ones to understand why and how to make further spiritual progress. Emphasize the many sources of help available, and warmly encourage them to act without delay

### **WHAT IS ‘THE ROAD TO LIFE’?** (5 min.)

Jehovah God offers to all the prospect of receiving everlasting life (Ro 6:23)

Millions look forward to enjoying everlasting life in Paradise on earth, as God originally purposed

Gaining life requires following a course different from the majority [**Read Matthew 7:13, 14**] (*w09* 8/1 3-4)

The Bible reveals God’s requirements for gaining life (Joh 17:3; 1Jo 2:3; 5:3)

God’s requirements are reasonable; they reflect his love and greatly benefit us

### **HOW TO BEGIN WALKING ON ‘THE ROAD TO LIFE’** (13 min.)

Begin by building faith based on accurate Bible knowledge

We need strong confidence in the Bible to choose a path contrary to the one followed by others around us

If you are not fully convinced that the Bible is God’s Word, then examine the evidence (*g* 11/07 5-9)

Use the Bible to examine your current beliefs carefully

Jesus emphasized the need for our beliefs to be based on truth [**Read John 4:23, 24**]

Like the apostle Paul, be willing to change your beliefs when presented with evidence (Ac 26:9-20)

We may discern that in order to please God, we need to make changes in our personality or lifestyle

As we draw close to Jehovah and grow in faith, we gain the power to make such changes [**Read James 4:8**]

We put away habits and practices that God views as unclean (Ga 5:19-21; Eph 4:17-19)

We put on “the new personality” by imitating Jehovah and Jesus (Eph 4:20-29; 5:1, 2)

Many have successfully made dramatic changes (*w15* 5/1 10-11; *w14* 7/1 8-9)

As we grow in knowledge and faith, we need to share in making disciples, as Jesus commanded (Mt 28:19, 20)

To begin walking on ‘the road to life,’ we must dedicate ourselves to Jehovah and get baptized (Mt 16:24; 1Pe 3:21)

### **‘THE ROAD TO LIFE’ IS NOT TOO DIFFICULT** (7 min.)

Our situation is similar to that of the nation of Israel when about to enter the Promised Land [**Read Deuteronomy 30:11**] (*w09* 11/1 31)

‘The road to life’ may appear to be restrictive but actually brings freedom and happiness (*w06* 10/1 8-10)

Jehovah God provides the help we need to get on ‘the road to life’ and continue on it

God invites us to pray to him and promises to help us in times of need (Ps 145:18; Isa 41:13)

God gives us his holy spirit, which guides and strengthens us (Lu 11:10-13; *w10* 4/15 9 par. 11; 11 par. 15)

At Christian meetings, we can find support and wholesome association (Heb 10:24, 25)

### **CONTINUE TO MAKE SPIRITUAL PROGRESS** (5 min.)

Adjusting our lives to meet God’s requirements takes time and patience but is an urgent matter

The blessings and joys of serving Jehovah make doing so worth our effort

Do not be discouraged by obstacles or setbacks (Mr 4:26-29; *w14* 12/15 12-13 pars. 4-8)

Do not be deceived by the false claims of happiness promoted by this world and its ruler (1Jo 2:17; 5:19)

“The last days” of this system will not continue indefinitely (2Ti 3:1; 2Pe 3:4, 9, 10)

Now is the time to accept God’s invitation to walk on ‘the road to life’

[Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. See *Ministry School* book, pp. 52-55, 166-169]





# RESCUE FROM WORLD DISTRESS

## *Note to the speaker:*

With warmth and conviction, explain the Bible's promise of the coming deliverance. Express your confidence in this promise, and show what we must do in order to be delivered when Jehovah destroys the present wicked system of things

### **THE BIBLE'S PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE** (3 min.)

Jehovah cleansed the earth of ungodly people in Noah's day, and his Word assures us that soon he will destroy all those who are ruining the earth today (2Pe 2:5; 3:5-7; Re 11:18)

He fulfilled his covenant, or promise, to preserve Noah and his family through the Flood (Ge 6:18; 7:1; *it-1* 521 ¶3; 522 ¶2)

We can have confidence in the Bible's promise that Jehovah will rescue all who take refuge in him (Ps 37:39, 40)

### **A PATTERN OF THINGS TO COME** (5 min.)

Jehovah's judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah 'set a pattern of things to come' [**Read 2 Peter 2:6-8**]

Because of his compassion, Jehovah sent angelic messengers to urge Lot and his family to leave that place right away; He "rescued righteous Lot" while reducing the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes (Ge 19:12-17, 24, 25)

The apostle Peter viewed Lot's deliverance as an undeniable confirmation of Jehovah's ability and desire to rescue people of godly devotion [**Read 2 Peter 2:9**]

Modern-day messengers compassionately and zealously take the good news of deliverance to people everywhere, urging them to seek Jehovah before the end comes (Zep 2:2, 3; Mt 24:14)

### **SURVIVING THE COMING "TIME OF DISTRESS"** (12 min.)

Jehovah inspired the prophet Daniel to write about "a time of distress" that would lead to the destruction of the present wicked system of things [**Read Daniel 12:1**]

The approaching time of distress is also referred to as the "great tribulation" (Mt 24:21)

Its outbreak will be shocking to many, yet the Scriptures foretell that "the wild beast," which symbolizes the United Nations, will attack "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion (Re 17:5, 16-18; *w13* 7/15 4-5 ¶6-7)

This marks the beginning of the "great tribulation" and the time of world distress

It is "during that time" of world distress that "escape" will be provided for those serving Jehovah

Deliverance will depend on obedience to instructions from God's Word and organization (*w12* 4/15 26 ¶16)

The foretold "time of distress" will culminate in the war of Armageddon (Re 16:14, 16)

At that time, Michael, who is Jesus Christ in heavenly power, will "stand up" to take action in Jehovah's name as an invincible Warrior-King (2Th 1:6-8; *w10* 4/1 19; *dp* 288-289 ¶4-6)

He will rid the earth of wickedness and open the way for "a great crowd" to be brought safely through Armageddon into the new world (Re 7:9, 10, 14)

### **PREPARE NOW FOR RESCUE** (10 min.)

In Daniel's prophecy, the names of the escaped ones are described as being "written down in the book" (Da 12:1; *dp* 289 ¶7)

"The book" represents Jehovah's remembrance of those who do his will

Jehovah will never forget or abandon his loyal ones (Ps 37:28)

Because Jehovah's day is coming "as a thief," we need to stay awake spiritually [**Read 2 Peter 3:10-13**]  
(*w10* 7/15 3-7)

We can do this by performing deeds of godly devotion (*w10* 7/15 11 ¶17-19)

Studying the Bible and sharing what we have learned with others (Mt 28:19, 20)

Showing by our conduct that we love God and are determined to remain attached to him (1Ch 29:17)

Praying to him from the heart (Php 4:6, 7)

Not forsaking Christian meetings (Heb 10:24, 25)

Soon all the problems that now plague the human family will be gone forever (Isa 65:17; Re 21:4, 5)

May all of us continue to study God's Word and obey it, keeping in expectation of Jehovah and his promised deliverance into a new world free from distress (Isa 30:18)

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## HOW GODLY WISDOM BENEFITS US

### *Note to the speaker:*

Explain with warmth and conviction why the Bible is a book of true wisdom and how it provides practical direction for people of all ages. Highlight the benefits that come from applying God's wisdom when coping with life's challenges

### **“WISDOM IS PROVED RIGHTEOUS BY ITS WORKS” (3 min.)**

Humans have made remarkable progress in science, medicine, and technology but have failed to eliminate war, crime, and poverty; human wisdom has not made people more loving, peaceful, or reasonable (Jas 3:13-16)

Human wisdom fails because it rejects the Source of true wisdom, Jehovah God (Pr 9:10; Jer 8:9; 1Co 1:19-21)  
Godly wisdom is found in Jehovah's written Word, the Bible

Such wisdom is “proved righteous by its works” because it produces good results in the lives of those who choose to live by it (Mt 11:19b; Jas 3:17, 18)

### **GODLY WISDOM BENEFITS YOUNG PEOPLE (5 min.)**

Young ones who love God's Word and live by it find happiness and true success (Ps 1:1, 2)

They know that Jehovah God loves them and that it is for their own good that he wants them to be clean morally and to use their youthful energy to serve him (Ec 12:1; Isa 48:17)

When youths are guided by Jehovah's counsel, they are spared the painful results that come from bad associations and degrading entertainment (Ps 119:9; Pr 13:20; Ga 6:7, 8)

Youths who know Jehovah enjoy meaningful lives and have a secure future (Ps 73:28; 1Jo 2:17)

### **GODLY WISDOM BENEFITS MARRIED COUPLES (5 min.)**

In his Word, God dignifies both husbands and wives; he directs them to show genuine love and respect for each other (Eph 5:28, 33; *w13* 5/15 17-18 ¶11-17)

Put the needs and interests of your mate ahead of your own (Mt 19:4-6; *lv* 126-128 ¶13-15)

Couples can overcome problems by communicating freely (Eph 4:29, 31, 32; Col 4:6; *w15* 1/15 26-27 ¶13-15)

Those who apply godly wisdom in their marriage find genuine contentment, maintain a good conscience and, above all, show their love and respect for Jehovah, the Originator of marriage

### **GODLY WISDOM BENEFITS US IN TIMES OF PERSONAL DIFFICULTY (15 min.)**

Godly wisdom can strengthen us so that we do not despair or panic when problems arise (Ps 23:1-4)

#### **When facing economic pressures**

Keep the Kingdom and Jehovah's righteousness first in your life, fully confident that God will “make the way out” for you (1Co 10:13; Mt 6:33; *w14* 4/15 21 ¶17)

If you are tempted to pursue employment that requires separation from your family, pray for godly wisdom and follow Jehovah's commands and principles (Pr 28:6)

Some have ignored the risks of living apart from their spouse and children and have suffered painful consequences (*w14* 4/15 19-20 ¶8-11)

Your family's spiritual needs are your priority (De 6:6, 7; *w14* 4/15 18-19 ¶7)

#### **When distressed by serious health problems**

Keep on asking Jehovah to help you to endure and to be guided by Bible principles as you choose health treatments (Pr 14:15; *w15* 12/15 26 ¶14-16; *w06* 3/1 25 ¶12-13)

Avoid isolating yourself; we need the love of our brothers, as well as the encouragement provided by our Christian meetings (Pr 18:1; Mt 18:20; Heb 10:24, 25)

Know that Jehovah understands your present circumstances (Na 1:7; Mr 12:41-44)

#### **When coping with stress or loneliness**

Although serving God, you may at times feel lonely because of singleness, divorce, or bereavement

Keep your mind fixed on your hope for the future, and continue to have an active share in the ministry (Ac 20:35; 2Co 4:18)

Godly wisdom can keep you from making bad decisions out of desperation (Ps 55:22; 1Ti 5:5)

When feeling discouraged, supplicate Jehovah for his peace

Do not hesitate to draw help from your spiritual brothers and sisters (Php 4:6, 7; *w14* 6/15 9 ¶4)

### **JEHOVAH WILL HELP YOU TO GAIN AND APPLY WISDOM (2 min.)**

Jehovah's wisdom is always proved righteous, and it benefits us no matter what our circumstances may be  
**[Read James 1:5]**

Pray for God's wisdom, apply it, and trust God to help you deal with life's problems (Jas 3:13)

Take delight in your relationship with Jehovah now and for all eternity (Jer 9:23, 24)

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