

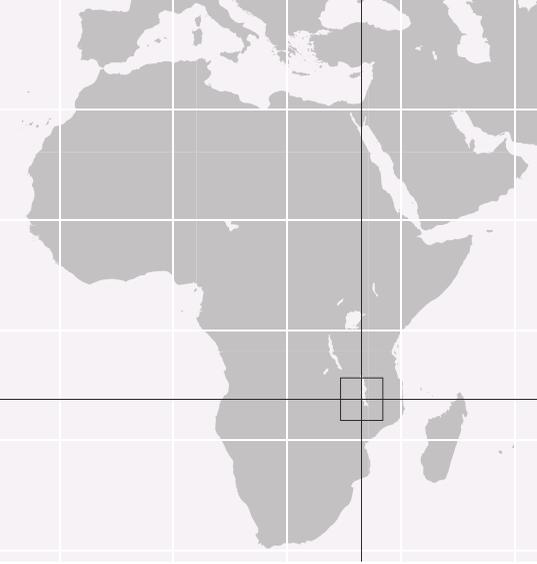
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THE  **WATCHTOWER**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
OCTOBER 1-28, 2018

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COVER IMAGE:

MALAWI

A circuit overseer and his wife are ready to travel to the next congregation that they will visit. Their bicycles carry Bible literature, a projector, a sound system, and most of their personal belongings

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Determined Not to Let My Hands Drop



SONGS:
126, 95

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

Why must we be selective about what we read and about what we share via e-mails or text messages?

How can we imitate Jesus if others spread false reports about us?

What three Bible principles will help us to evaluate information accurately?

Do You Have the Facts?

“When anyone replies to a matter before he hears the facts, it is foolish and humiliating.”—PROV. 18:13.

AS TRUE Christians, we need to develop the ability to evaluate information and reach accurate conclusions. (Prov. 3:21-23; 8:4, 5) If we do not cultivate this ability, we will be far more vulnerable to the efforts of Satan and his world

1, 2. (a) What important ability do we need to cultivate, and why? (b) What will we consider in this article?

to distort our thinking. (Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8) Of course, only if we have the facts can we reach right conclusions. As Proverbs 18:13 says, “when anyone replies to a matter before he hears the facts, it is foolish and humiliating.”

² In this article, we will consider several challenges associated with obtaining the facts and reaching proper conclusions. In addition, we will consider practical Bible principles and examples that can help us improve our ability to evaluate information accurately.

DO NOT BELIEVE “EVERY WORD”

³ Today, people are bombarded with information. Internet websites, television, and other mass media present a seemingly unending array of ideas. Many people are also flooded with e-mails, text messages, and reports from well-meaning friends and acquaintances. Since the deliberate spreading of wrong information and the distorting of facts are common, we have good reason to be cautious and to evaluate carefully what we hear. What Bible principle can help us? Proverbs 14:15 says: “The naive person believes every word, but the shrewd one ponders each step.”

3. Why do we need to apply the Bible principle found at Proverbs 14:15? (See opening picture.)

⁴ To make good decisions, we need solid facts. Therefore, we need to be highly selective and to choose carefully what information we will read. (Read Philippians 4:8, 9.) We should not waste our time viewing questionable Internet news sites or reading unsubstantiated reports circulated via e-mail. It is especially important to avoid websites promoted by apostates. Their whole purpose is to tear down God’s people and to distort the truth. Poor quality information will lead to poor decisions. Never underestimate the powerful effect that misleading information can have on your mind and heart.—1 Tim. 6:20, 21.

⁵ Believing a false report can be disastrous. For example, consider what happened in Moses’ time when 10 of the 12 spies who were sent to explore the Promised Land brought back a bad report. (Num. 13:25-33) Their exaggerated and outrageous account completely disheartened Jehovah’s people. (Num. 14:1-4) Why did the people react this way? Perhaps they thought that since the majority of the spies brought a bad report, their account must be true. They refused

4. How does Philippians 4:8, 9 help us in selecting what material we read, and why is it vital to have accurate information? (See also the box “A Few Provisions to Help Us Get the Facts.”)

5. What false report did the Israelites hear, and how were they affected?



A FEW PROVISIONS TO HELP US GET THE FACTS

What provisions have been made to keep God's people up-to-date with accurate information?

BREAKING NEWS: The feature *Breaking News* on the jw.org website provides quick, brief updates to Jehovah's people on major events happening worldwide.

NEWSROOM: This regular section on jw.org contains more extensive reports on matters affecting our freedom of worship and on our response to natural disasters.

JW BROADCASTING: This Internet television station provides video updates on the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide.

to listen to the good report brought by the trustworthy men Joshua and Caleb. (Num. 14:6-10) Instead of getting the facts and showing confidence in Jehovah, they chose to believe the bad report. How foolish!

⁶ We need to be especially cautious when we come across reports regarding Jehovah's people. Never forget that Satan is the accuser of God's faithful servants. (Rev. 12:10) Therefore, Jesus warned that opposers would "lyingly say every sort of wicked thing" against us. (Matt. 5:11) If we take that warning seriously, we will not be shocked when we hear outrageous statements about Jehovah's people.

⁷ Are you the kind of person who enjoys sending e-mails and text messages to your friends and acquaintances? If so, when you see a newly published story in the news media or hear an experience, you might feel like a news reporter who wants to be the first to break an exciting story. However, before you send that text message or e-mail, ask yourself: 'Am I certain that the information I am about to spread is true? Do I really have the facts?' If you are not certain, you could unwittingly circulate false informa-

6. Why should we not be shocked if we hear outrageous reports about Jehovah's people?

7. Before sending e-mails or text messages, what do we need to consider?

tion among our brotherhood. If in doubt, hit the delete key, not the send button.

⁸ There is another danger in quickly forwarding e-mails and text messages. In some lands, our work is under restriction or outright ban. Our opposers in such lands may purposely circulate reports designed to instill fear or to cause us to distrust one another. Consider what happened in the former Soviet Union. The secret police, known as the KGB, spread rumors that various prominent brothers had betrayed Jehovah's people.* Many put confidence in such false reports, and as a result, they separated themselves from Jehovah's organization. How sad! Thankfully, many later returned, but some never did. Their faith was shipwrecked. (1 Tim. 1:19) How can we avoid such a disastrous outcome? Refuse to circulate negative or unsubstantiated reports. Do not be naive, or gullible. Be sure you have the facts.

INCOMPLETE INFORMATION

⁹ Reports that contain half-truths or incomplete

* See the *2004 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, pp. 111-112, and the *2008 Yearbook*, pp. 133-135.

8. What have opposers in some lands done, and how could we inadvertently cooperate with them?

9. What is another challenge to obtaining accurate information?

information are another challenge to reaching accurate conclusions. A story that is only 10 percent true is 100 percent misleading. How can we avoid being misled by deceptive stories that may contain some elements of truth?—Eph. 4:14.

¹⁰ Consider what happened to the Israelites dwelling on the western side of the Jordan River in the days of Joshua. (Josh. 22:9-34) They received a report that the Israelites living on the eastern side of the Jordan (the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh) had constructed a large, impressive altar near the Jordan. That portion of the report was true. Based on this incomplete information, those on the western side concluded that their brothers had rebelled against Jehovah, so the Israelites living on the western side assembled to wage war against those living on the eastern side. (Read Joshua 22:9-12.) Thankfully, before attacking, they sent a delegation of trustworthy men to get all the facts. What did the men learn? The Israelites from the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had built the altar, not for sacrifices, but as a memorial. It was built so that in the future all would know that they too were faithful servants of Jeho-

10. How did the Israelites nearly come to war against their brothers, and how was that avoided?

vah. How thankful those Israelites must have been that they did not massacre their brothers based on incomplete information but took the time to get the facts!

¹¹ As individuals, we may also become victims of injustice because half-truths or incomplete information is circulated about us. Consider the example of King David and Mephibosheth. David showed generosity and kindness to Mephibosheth, returning to him all the land of his grandfather Saul. (2 Sam. 9: 6, 7) Later, however, David received a negative report about Mephibosheth. Without verifying the information, David decided to strip Mephibosheth of all his property. (2 Sam. 16:1-4) When David finally spoke with him, David recognized his error and restored to Mephibosheth a share of the property. (2 Sam. 19:24-29) But this injustice could have been avoided had David taken the time to get the facts instead of rashly acting on incomplete information.

¹² What, though, if you are a victim of a slanderous accusation? Jesus and John the Baptizer experienced such a challenge. (Read Matthew 11:18, 19.) How did Jesus deal with false information? He

11. (a) How did Mephibosheth become a victim of injustice? (b) How could David have avoided this injustice?

12, 13. (a) How did Jesus deal with slanderous reports? (b) What can we do if someone spreads a false report about us?

did not spend all his time and energy defending himself. Instead he encouraged people to look at the facts—what he did and what he taught. As Jesus said, “wisdom is vindicated by its works.”—Matt. 11:19; ftn.

¹³ There is a valuable lesson here that we do well to learn. At times, people may say unfair or critical things about us. We may long for justice and wish that we could do something to undo the damage to our reputation. Yet, there is something we can do. If someone spreads a lie about us, we can live in such a way that no one will believe that lie. Indeed, as Jesus’ example shows, our personal record of upright Christian conduct can wipe out half-truths and false accusations.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF?

¹⁴ Obtaining reliable facts is only one challenge to reaching good conclusions. Our human imperfection poses another major challenge. What if we have been serving Jehovah faithfully for decades? We may have developed fine thinking ability and discernment. We may be highly respected for our sound judgment. Nonetheless, can this also be a snare?

14, 15. How can leaning on our own understanding become a snare?

15 Yes, leaning too heavily on our own understanding can become a snare. Our emotions and personal ideas could begin to govern our thinking. We may begin to feel that we can look at a situation and understand it even though we do not have all the facts. How dangerous! The Bible clearly warns us not to lean on our own understanding.—Prov. 3:5, 6; 28:26.

16 Consider this imaginary scenario. While in a restaurant one evening, an experienced elder named Tom was shocked to see a fellow elder, John, sitting at another table with a woman who was not his wife. Tom observed the couple laughing, thoroughly enjoying each other's association, and sharing an affectionate embrace. Tom became more and more disturbed. Would this lead to divorce? What would happen to John's wife? What about John's children? Tom had seen such heartbreaking situations before. How would you have felt if you had witnessed this scene?

17 But wait. Although Tom quickly concluded that John had been unfaithful to his wife, did he really have the facts? Later that evening, Tom telephoned John. Can you imagine how relieved Tom felt when

16. In this imaginary scenario, what happened in a restaurant, and what conclusions did Tom quickly draw?

17. In this imaginary scenario, what did Tom later learn, and what lesson does this teach us?

he learned that the woman was John's fleshly sister, who was visiting from out of town. The two had not seen each other for many years. Because she was just passing through for a few hours, John was only able to meet her for a meal in the restaurant. His wife was unable to join them. Thankfully, Tom had not spread his wrong conclusions to others. The lesson for us? No matter how much experience we may have in Christian living, experience alone is never a substitute for the facts.

¹⁸ Another challenge to evaluating matters accurately may be faced when we have a personality conflict with a brother in the congregation. If we constantly dwell on our differences, we may begin to look at our brother with a measure of suspicion. Thus, if we hear a negative report about this brother, we may be eager to believe it. What is the lesson? Harboring ill feelings toward our brothers can lead to distorted judgments that are not based on the facts. (1 Tim. 6:4, 5) We can prevent our judgment from becoming clouded by refusing to allow envy and jealousy to take root in our hearts. Instead of giving in to such bad feelings, may we recognize our obligation to love our brothers and freely forgive them from the heart.—Read Colossians 3:12-14.

18. How might our judgment be clouded by personality conflicts?

BIBLE PRINCIPLES WILL SAFEGUARD US

¹⁹ Obtaining the facts and evaluating them accurately present a challenge today because of the abundance of low-quality information, reports filled with half-truths, and our own imperfection. What will help us with this challenging task? We must know and apply Bible principles. One such principle is that it is foolish and humiliating to reply to a matter before hearing the facts. (Prov. 18:13) Another Bible principle reminds us not to accept every word without question. (Prov. 14:15) And finally, no matter how much experience we have in Christian living, we must be careful not to lean on our own understanding. (Prov. 3:5, 6) Bible principles will safeguard us if we are certain to use facts from reliable sources to draw good conclusions and to make wise decisions.

²⁰ But an additional challenge remains. It is the tendency to judge matters based on the outward appearance. In the next article, we will examine some common pitfalls in this area and see what can help us to avoid them.

19, 20. (a) What Bible principles will help us to evaluate information accurately? (b) What will we examine in the next article?



SONGS:
142, 123

Do Not Judge by the Outward Appearance

**WHAT DO
THE FOLLOWING
SCRIPTURES
TEACH US ABOUT
JUDGING OTHERS?**

“Stop judging by the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”—JOHN 7:24.

Acts 10:34, 35

Leviticus 19:15

1 Timothy 4:12

THROUGH his prophecy about our Lord Jesus Christ, Isaiah warms and reassures our hearts. Isaiah foretold that Jesus would “not judge by what appears to his eyes, nor reprove simply according to what his ears hear.” He would “judge the lowly with fair-

1. What did Isaiah prophesy concerning Jesus, and why is this encouraging?

ness.” (Isa. 11:3, 4) Why is this encouraging? Because we live in a world filled with bias and prejudice. We all long for the perfect Judge, who will never judge us by our outward appearance!

² Each day we make judgments about people. Yet, as imperfect humans, we are not able to judge matters perfectly as Jesus does. We tend to be influenced by what appears to our eyes. Nonetheless, when Jesus was on earth, he commanded: “Stop judging by the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.” (John 7:24) Clearly, Jesus wants us to be like him and not judge others by their outward appearance. In this article, we will discuss three areas in which people are frequently influenced by what appears to their eyes: race or ethnicity, wealth, and age. In each area, we will consider practical ways to obey Jesus’ command.

JUDGING BY RACE OR ETHNICITY

³ Imagine the thoughts that were going through the apostle Peter’s mind when he was called to Caesarea to the home of the Gentile Cornelius. (Acts

2. What did Jesus command us to do, and what will we discuss in this article?

3, 4. (a) What events led the apostle Peter to reevaluate his view of the Gentiles? (See opening picture.) (b) What new truth did Jehovah help Peter to understand?

10:17-29) Like other Jews of his time, Peter grew up believing that Gentiles were unclean. Yet, Peter had experienced events that caused him to reevaluate that position. For example, Peter had just had a miraculous vision. (Acts 10:9-16) What had Peter seen? A sheetlike vessel filled with unclean animals was lowered before him while a heavenly voice ordered: “Get up, Peter, slaughter and eat!” Peter firmly refused. Then that heavenly voice told him to “stop calling defiled the things God has cleansed.” As he awoke from the vision, Peter was perplexed as to what the voice was trying to tell him. Just then, the messengers from Cornelius arrived. After receiving direction from the holy spirit, Peter pressed forward and accompanied the messengers to the home of Cornelius.

⁴ If Peter had judged matters solely on outward appearance, he would never have entered the home of Cornelius. Jews simply did not enter the homes of Gentiles. Why did Peter move forward despite deep-seated prejudices? Peter was profoundly affected by the vision he had seen and by the reassurance he received from the holy spirit. After he listened to what Cornelius related, Peter, no doubt moved by the account, declared under inspiration: “Now I truly understand that God is not partial, but in every nation the man who fears him and does what is right is ac-

ceptable to him.” (Acts 10:34, 35) What a thrilling new understanding for Peter—one with far-reaching implications! How would this truth about being impartial affect all Christians?

⁵ By means of Peter, Jehovah was helping all Christians to understand that He is not partial. He places no significance on racial, ethnic, national, tribal, or linguistic differences. Any man or woman who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him. (Gal. 3:26-28; Rev. 7:9, 10) No doubt, you acknowledge that this is true. But what if you have grown up in a land or in a home filled with prejudice? While you might see yourself as being impartial, deep inside, prejudice may linger. Even Peter, who had the privilege of revealing Jehovah’s impartiality, later manifested prejudice. (Gal. 2:11-14) How can we listen to Jesus and stop judging by the outward appearance?

⁶ We need to examine ourselves carefully in the light of God’s Word to see if we are holding on to any prejudiced thoughts or feelings. (Ps. 119:105) We might also need loving help from others who may see prejudiced attitudes in us, even if we cannot see

5. (a) What does Jehovah want all Christians to understand? (b) Despite our knowing the truth, what may linger within us?

6. (a) What can help us to root out prejudiced attitudes from our hearts? (b) What did one responsible brother’s report reveal?

them in ourselves. (Gal. 2:11, 14) It could be that these attitudes are so ingrained in us that we are not conscious of them. Consider, for example, one responsible brother who submitted a report on a fine couple in full-time service. The husband was from an ethnic minority frequently looked down on by others. Apparently, the responsible brother was not aware that he himself harbored prejudiced views about this minority. In his report, he said many fine things about the husband; yet, he concluded by saying: “Although he is of [this nationality], his manners and way of life help others to understand that being [from this ethnicity] does not necessarily mean having a dirty, inferior lifestyle, *typical* of many from [this] descent.” Do you see the point? No matter what our responsibilities are, we must examine ourselves carefully and be willing to receive help so that we can identify any remaining traces of prejudice in our hearts. What else can we do?

⁷ If we open our heart wide, we will allow love to replace prejudice. (2 Cor. 6:11-13) Are you in the habit of having close association only with those of your own race, ethnicity, nationality, tribe, or language group? If so, widen out. Why not invite those of a different background to work with you in the

7. How can we demonstrate that we are opening our heart wide?

field ministry or invite them to your home for a meal or a gathering? (Acts 16:14, 15) If you do so, you will fill your heart with so much love that there will be no room for prejudice. But there are additional areas in which we tend to judge others by their outward appearance. Let us next consider material wealth.

JUDGING BY RICHES OR POVERTY

⁸ Material wealth is another factor that can affect our view of others. Leviticus 19:15 says: “You must not show partiality to the poor or show preference to the rich. With justice you should judge your fellow man.” But how could a person’s wealth or his poverty affect the way we view him?

⁹ Holy spirit moved Solomon to record a sad truth about imperfect humans. At Proverbs 14:20, he states: “The poor man is hated even by his neighbors, but many are the friends of the rich person.” What does this proverb teach us? If we are not careful, we could desire the friendship of brothers who are wealthy while shunning brothers who are poor. Why is it so dangerous to measure the value of others solely on the basis of their material wealth?

8. According to Leviticus 19:15, how can riches or poverty affect our judgment?

9. What sad truth did Solomon record, and what does it teach us?

¹⁰ If we judge others on the basis of their material wealth, we could create class distinctions in the congregation. The disciple James warned that this problem was dividing some congregations in the first century. (Read James 2:1-4.) We must be on guard not to allow this thinking to affect our congregations today. How can we fight against such judgments based on the outward appearance?

¹¹ We need to see our brothers as Jehovah sees them. A person is not precious to Jehovah because he is wealthy or because he is poor. Our relationship with Jehovah will never be determined by how many material possessions we have or by what we lack. While it is true that Jesus said that “it will be difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of the heavens,” he did not say that it would be impossible. (Matt. 19:23) On the other hand, Jesus also said: “Happy are you who are poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.” (Luke 6:20) Yet, this did not mean that all poor people were specially blessed and responded to the teaching of Jesus. Many poor people did not respond. The point is, We simply cannot judge a person’s relationship with Jehovah by his material possessions.

10. What problem did James identify?

11. How does a person’s material possessions affect his relationship with Jehovah? Explain.

¹² We are blessed to have many brothers and sisters, rich and poor, who love and serve Jehovah with a complete heart. The Scriptures instruct those who are rich “to place their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God.” (Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19.) At the same time, God’s Word admonishes all of God’s people, rich and poor, to be careful not to love money. (1 Tim. 6:9, 10) Indeed, when we open our eyes and see our brothers as Jehovah sees them, we will not be tempted to judge them solely on what they have or do not have materially. But what about a person’s age? Is that a sound basis for judging others? Let us see.

JUDGING BY AGE

¹³ The Scriptures frequently instruct us to show proper respect for older ones. Leviticus 19:32 says: “Before gray hair you should rise up, and you must show honor to an older man, and you must be in fear of your God.” Proverbs 16:31 similarly instructs us that “gray hair is a crown of beauty when it is found in the way of righteousness.” Then, too, Paul admonished Timothy not to criticize an older man severely

12. What instruction do the Scriptures provide to the rich and to the poor?

13. What do the Scriptures teach us concerning respect for older ones?

but to view such an older brother as a father. (1 Tim. 5:1, 2) Although Timothy had a measure of authority over such older brothers, he was to treat them with compassion and respect.

¹⁴ However, how far would we take that principle? For example, should we feel obligated to defer to someone older if he is willfully sinning or is advocating something displeasing to Jehovah? Jehovah will not judge by the outward appearance and will not excuse a willful sinner simply because he is older. Note the principle found at Isaiah 65:20: “The sinner will be cursed, even though he is a hundred years of age.” A similar principle is demonstrated in Ezekiel’s vision. (Ezek. 9:5-7) Thus, our main concern must always be to show respect for the Ancient of Days, Jehovah God. (Dan. 7:9, 10, 13, 14) If we do so, we will not be afraid to correct a person needing counsel, regardless of his age.—Gal. 6:1.

¹⁵ What about younger brothers in the congregation? How do you view them? To the young man Timothy, the apostle Paul wrote: “Never let anyone look down on your youth. Instead, become an example to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in

14. In what circumstance might it be proper for us to give needed counsel or discipline to a person who is older than we are?

15. What lesson do we learn from the apostle Paul about showing respect for younger brothers?



Do you show respect for younger brothers?
(See paragraph 15)

faith, in chasteness.” (1 Tim. 4:12) At the time that Paul wrote these words, Timothy may have been in his early 30’s. Yet, Paul had assigned him to care for weighty responsibilities. Regardless of the underlying reason for this counsel, the point is clear. We must not judge younger brothers simply based on their age. We do well to remember that even our

Lord Jesus carried out his entire earthly ministry while he was in his early 30's.

¹⁶ We may be part of a culture that tends to look down on younger men. If so, elders in the congregation may hesitate to recommend qualified young brothers to serve as ministerial servants or elders. All elders do well to remember that the Scriptures do not give a minimum age for a man to be recommended as a ministerial servant or an elder. (1 Tim. 3:1-10, 12, 13; Titus 1:5-9) If an elder establishes a rule based on culture, he is not acting according to the Scriptures. Younger men must be evaluated, not by personal or cultural viewpoints, but by the measuring stick of God's Word.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

¹⁷ Consider how such unscriptural cultural views can hold back qualified brothers. In one country, a well-qualified ministerial servant was entrusted with weighty responsibilities. Although the elders in his congregation agreed that the young brother met the Scriptural qualifications of an elder to a reasonable degree, he was not recommended for appointment. A few older elders insisted that the brother looked too young to be viewed as an elder. Sadly, the broth-

16, 17. (a) How do elders determine if a brother is qualified to be recommended as a ministerial servant or an elder? (b) How might personal or cultural viewpoints conflict with the Scriptures?

er was held back from appointment simply because of the way he looked. Although this is only one experience, reports indicate that this way of thinking affects many in various parts of the world. How important it is that we rely on the Scriptures rather than on our own cultural or personal viewpoints! That is the only way to obey Jesus and stop judging by the outward appearance.

JUDGE WITH RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

¹⁸ In spite of our human imperfection, we can learn to see others through the impartial eyes of Jehovah. (Acts 10:34, 35) But it takes continual effort on our part and constant reminders from God's Word. By applying these reminders, we will progress in obeying the command of Jesus to stop judging by the outward appearance.—John 7:24.

¹⁹ Soon our King, Jesus Christ, will judge all mankind, not by what appears to his eyes or by what his ears hear, but by righteous judgment. (Isa. 11:3, 4) How wonderful that will be!

18, 19. What does it take for us to see others as Jehovah sees them?



SONGS:
76, 110

**HOW WOULD YOU
ANSWER?**

Why can we say that humans were made to be generous?

What is the connection between generosity and happiness in the preaching work?

What Scriptural reasons do we have for being generous?

Generous Givers Are Happy People

“There is . . . happiness in giving.”
—ACTS 20:35.

EVEN though Jehovah was completely alone before he began to create, he was not thinking only of himself. On the contrary, he gave the gift of life to intelligent creatures, both spirit and human. “The happy God,” Jehovah, loves to give good things. (1 Tim. 1:11;

1. How does creation give evidence of Jehovah’s generosity?

Jas. 1:17) And since he also wants us to be happy, he teaches us to be generous.—Rom. 1:20.

² God made man in his image. (Gen. 1:27) That is, we were created to reflect his personality. In order to attain happiness and fulfillment, then, we need to follow Jehovah's example by being interested in others and by being generous givers. (Phil. 2:3, 4; Jas. 1:5) Why? Quite simply because Jehovah lovingly designed humans that way. Despite our imperfection, we can succeed in imitating Jehovah's generosity.

³ The Bible tells us how we can be generous givers. Let us review some of the lessons that the Scriptures teach on this topic. We will see how being generous leads to God's favor and how cultivating this quality helps us to fulfill the role God has given us. We will also examine how our generosity is connected with our happiness and why we need to keep on cultivating this quality.

HOW WE CAN ENJOY GOD'S FAVOR

⁴ Jehovah wants his human creation to imitate

2, 3. (a) Why does giving make us happy? (b) What will we consider?

4, 5. What examples of generosity have Jehovah and Jesus set for us?

him, so it makes him happy when we are generous. (Eph. 5:1) It is very clear from the way that we are made and from the beauty and riches of our natural environment that God wants humans to be happy. (Ps. 104:24; 139:13-16) Hence, we honor him when we strive to make others happy.

⁵ True Christians imitate the Christ, who provided us with the perfect example of how a human can be generous. Jesus himself stated: “The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his life as a ransom in exchange for many.” (Matt. 20:28) Hence, the apostle Paul urged Christians: “Keep this mental attitude in you that was also in Christ Jesus . . . He emptied himself and took a slave’s form.” (Phil. 2:5, 7) Each of us would do well to ask, ‘Can I follow Jesus’ example even more closely than I am already doing?’—Read **1 Peter 2:21**.

⁶ We can enjoy Jehovah’s favor by imitating his and Christ’s perfect examples, by being interested in the welfare of others, and by looking for ways to care for their needs. Indeed, in the parable of the neighborly Samaritan, Jesus made clear that he expected his followers to go out of their way to help others, even those of a different background. (Read

6. What lesson did Jesus teach us in the parable of the neighborly Samaritan? (See opening picture.)

Luke 10:29-37.) Do you recall the question that moved Jesus to recount the parable of the neighborly Samaritan? A Jew asked him: “Who really is my neighbor?” Jesus’ answer shows that like the Samaritan we must be willing to give generously if we are to enjoy God’s favor.

⁷ Christians have many good reasons to practice generosity. For example, this quality is related to the issue Satan raised in the garden of Eden. How so? Satan asserted that Adam and Eve—and by extension all humanity—would be better off focusing on themselves and putting the pursuit of their own interests ahead of obedience to God. Eve acted out of a selfish desire to be like God. Adam manifested a selfish desire to please Eve. (Gen. 3:4-6) The results of their decisions are plain to see. Selfishness does not lead to happiness; quite the opposite. By being generous, we demonstrate our conviction that God’s way of doing things is the best.

FULLFILLING THE ROLE GOD HAS GIVEN TO HIS PEOPLE

⁸ God gave the first human couple instructions

7. How is our being selfish or unselfish connected with the universal issue?

8. Why should the first human couple have been interested in giving?

that should have made them think about the welfare of others, even though they were alone in the garden of Eden. Jehovah blessed Adam and Eve and encouraged them to multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. (Gen. 1:28) Just as the Creator was keenly interested in the welfare of his creation, the first human parents should have been interested in the happiness of their unborn children. Paradise was to be extended earth wide for the benefit of Adam's offspring. That huge project would require the cooperation of his ever-growing family.

⁹ For perfect men and women, working to extend Paradise would have meant cooperating to the full with Jehovah to achieve his purposes, thereby entering into his rest. (Heb. 4:11) Imagine how fulfilling and rewarding that project would have been! Giving of themselves for the welfare of others would have brought them great blessings and immense satisfaction.

¹⁰ Today, Jehovah has given his people the work of preaching and making disciples. To fulfill that commission, we need to be sincerely interested in

9. Why would extending Paradise have led to happiness?

10, 11. How can we fulfill the commission to preach and make disciples?

the welfare of others. We can endure in this work only if we have the right motivation—love for God and love for our neighbor.

¹¹ In the first century C.E., Paul referred to himself and certain close associates as “God’s fellow workers” because of their role in planting and watering the seed of Kingdom truth. (1 Cor. 3:6, 9) Today, we too can be “God’s fellow workers” by generously giving of our time, resources, and energy to the divinely commissioned preaching work. What a tremendous privilege this is!

¹² Being generous with our time and energy in the preaching and disciple-making work brings great joy. Many who have had the privilege of conducting progressive Bible studies will tell you that few things are more rewarding. Great happiness comes from seeing appreciative individuals light up when they grasp spiritual truths, grow in faith, make changes, and start sharing the truth with others. Jesus also experienced great happiness when the 70 preachers whom he had sent out to the field “returned with joy” because of the favorable results they had experienced.—Luke 10:17-21.

12, 13. What would you say are the rewards of disciple-making?



Few things are more gratifying than helping appreciative individuals to grasp spiritual truths
(See paragraph 12)

13 Publishers worldwide rejoice to see the message of the good news affect people’s lives in positive ways. Consider the experience of Anna, a young single sister, who expanded her ministry by moving to serve in an area of Eastern Europe where the need for preachers is great.* “There are a lot of opportunities to conduct Bible studies here, and I like that very much,” she writes. “My service gives me great joy. When I get home, I don’t have time to focus on myself. I think about those with whom I am studying

* Name has been changed.

—their troubles and anxieties. I look for ways to encourage them and help them in practical ways. And I have become convinced that ‘there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.’”—Acts 20:35.

¹⁴ We can find happiness in giving people the opportunity to respond to the message of good news even if they choose not to listen. After all, our commission today is similar to that of the prophet Ezekiel, to whom Jehovah said: “You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or not.” (Ezek. 2:7; Isa. 43:10) Even if some do not appreciate our message, Jehovah appreciates our efforts. (Read Hebrews 6:10.) One publisher showed an excellent attitude in this regard. He wrote concerning his ministry, “We have planted, watered, and prayed in hopes that Jehovah will make the interest grow.” —1 Cor. 3:6.

HOW TO BE HAPPY

¹⁵ Jesus wants us to find happiness by being generous. Many people react favorably to generosity.

14. Even if few people respond favorably to the good news, how can you find pleasure in your ministry?

15. How do many people react to generosity, and should their reaction affect the way we act?

“Practice giving, and people will give to you,” he urged. “They will pour into your laps a fine measure, pressed down, shaken together, and overflowing. For with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you in return.” (Luke 6:38) Of course, not all respond positively to our generous giving, but when they do, their gratitude can

When we visit every house in our territory, we give people the opportunity to respond to the Kingdom message

[\(See paragraph 14\)](#)



start a chain reaction. So practice giving whether people seem to appreciate it or not. You never know how much good you can do with just one act of generosity.

¹⁶ Truly generous people do not give in order to get something in return. Jesus had this in mind when he taught: “When you spread a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; and you will be happy, because they have nothing with which to repay you.” (Luke 14:13, 14) “The generous person will be blessed,” said one inspired writer. Another said: “Happy is anyone who shows consideration to the lowly one.” (Prov. 22:9; Ps. 41:1) Indeed, we should give because we derive pleasure from helping others.

¹⁷ When Paul quoted Jesus’ words “there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving,” Paul was referring not only to sharing material things but also to giving encouragement, guidance, and assistance to those in need of these. (Acts 20:31-35) By word and example, the apostle taught us to give of ourselves—our time, our energy, our attention, our love.

16. What should motivate our acts of generosity?

17. What kinds of giving will make you happy?

¹⁸ Researchers in the field of social sciences have also observed that giving makes people happy. According to one article, “people report a significant happiness boost after doing kind deeds for others.” Helping others, researchers say, is important to developing “a greater sense of purpose and meaning” in life “because it fulfills basic human needs.” Hence, experts often recommend that people volunteer for public service to enhance their own health and happiness. This comes as no surprise to those who accept the Bible as the Word of mankind’s loving Designer, Jehovah.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

KEEP CULTIVATING GENEROSITY

¹⁹ It can be a challenge to maintain a generous spirit when we are surrounded by people who put their own interests ahead of those of others. However, Jesus stated that the two greatest commandments are to love Jehovah with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourselves. (Mark 12:28-31) As we have seen in this article, those who love Jehovah imitate him. Jehovah gives to others, and so does Jesus. And they rec-

18. What have many secular writers concluded with regard to generosity?

19, 20. What reasons do you have for wanting to be generous?

commend that we do the same, for it will make us truly happy. If we strive to manifest this generous spirit in our dealings with both God and neighbor, we will bring honor to Jehovah and benefit ourselves and others.

²⁰ No doubt you are already striving to give of yourself to help others, especially fellow believers. (Gal. 6:10) If you continue to do so, you will surely be loved and appreciated, and you will be happy as a result. “The generous person will prosper,” says Proverbs 11:25, “and whoever refreshes others will himself be refreshed.” Of course, selfless giving, kindness, and generosity can be shown in many ways and in many areas of your Christian life and ministry, with rewarding results. The following article will explore some of these ways and areas.



SONGS:
64, 111

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU HAVE TO WORK WITH JEHOVAH . . .

by assisting your family and fellow worshippers?

by being hospitable?

by volunteering and by expanding your service?

Work With Jehovah Each Day

“We are God’s fellow workers.”

—1 COR. 3:9.

THE Creator envisioned that perfect humans would cooperate with him to accomplish his purposes. Despite mankind’s current imperfect state, faithful people can still work with Jehovah each day. For example, we become “God’s fellow workers” by preaching the good news of his Kingdom and making disciples.

1. In what ways can we work with Jehovah?

(1 Cor. 3:5-9) Just think what a privilege we have to be counted worthy of cooperating with the almighty Creator of the universe in a work that he considers important! Yet, preaching and making disciples are not the only ways that we work with Jehovah. This article will examine other ways we can do so—by assisting our family and fellow worshippers, by being hospitable, by volunteering for theocratic projects, and by expanding our sacred service.—Col. 3:23.

² As we consider this material, do not compare what you can do for Jehovah with what others can do. Remember that age, health, circumstances, and abilities vary from one person to another. The inspired apostle Paul said: “Let each one examine his own actions, and then he will have cause for rejoicing in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person.”—Gal. 6:4.

GIVE ASSISTANCE TO YOUR FAMILY AND FELLOW WORSHIPPERS

³ Jehovah expects his servants to care for their

2. Why would it be unwise to compare what you do to promote Jehovah’s purposes with what others do?

3. Why can it be said that everyone who cares for his family is cooperating with God?

families. For example, you may have to work to provide financially for your loved ones. Many mothers stay at home to look after their infants. And some adult children may have to care for infirm parents. These are necessary activities. God's Word states: "If anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has *disowned the faith* and is worse than a person without faith." (1 Tim. 5:8) If you have such responsibilities, you likely cannot set aside as much time for theocratic activities as you would like to. But take heart! Jehovah is pleased when you provide for your family.—1 Cor. 10:31.

⁴ Christian parents cooperate with Jehovah when they set theocratic goals before their children. Many who have done so have later seen their sons and daughters take up full-time service assignments far from home. Some are missionaries; others pioneer where the need for publishers is greater; still others serve at Bethel. Distance might mean that families cannot get together as often as they would like to. Nevertheless, the self-sacrificing

4. How can parents put theocratic interests ahead of their own, and with what results?

parents encourage their children to persevere in their assignments. Why? They find great joy and satisfaction in knowing that their children are putting Kingdom interests first. (3 John 4) Perhaps many of these parents feel like Hannah, who said that she “lent” her son Samuel to Jehovah. These parents rightly view such cooperation as a precious privilege. They would not want things any other way.—1 Sam. 1:28.

⁵ If you do not have pressing family responsibilities, could you assist fellow worshippers who are caregivers and those who are infirm, elderly, or otherwise in need? Why not look around in your congregation and take note of who needs help? Perhaps you could spend time with the elderly parent of a Christian sister who is a caregiver while the sister attends to other matters. Or maybe you could help those who need assistance by offering to take them to meetings, to go shopping, to run errands, or to visit someone who is in the hospital. In doing so, you might be working with Jehovah to answer a prayer.—Read **1 Corinthians 10:24**.

5. How might you be able to offer practical assistance to members of your congregation? (See opening picture.)

BE HOSPITABLE

⁶ God's fellow workers are noted for practicing hospitality. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term translated "hospitality" means "kindness to strangers." (Heb. 13:2; ftn.) God's Word recounts events that teach us to show such love. (Gen. 18:1-5) We can and should seize opportunities to help others regularly, whether they are "related to us in the faith" or not.—Gal. 6:10.

⁷ Can you work with God by showing hospitality to visiting full-time servants? (Read **3 John 5, 8**.) Such occasions often provide an opportunity for "an interchange of encouragement." (Rom. 1:11, 12) Consider the experience of Olaf. He recalls that decades ago, no one in his congregation could accommodate the circuit overseer, who was single. Young Olaf asked his non-Witness parents if the circuit overseer could stay at the family home. They agreed but pointed out that Olaf would have to sleep on the couch. That adjustment was well worth it. "What a wonderful week!" Olaf recalls. "The circuit overseer and I got up early each morning and discussed many interesting topics over breakfast.

6. What is involved in showing hospitality?

7. Why might you consider showing hospitality to visiting full-time servants?

The encouragement I received kindled my desire to take up the full-time service.” Over the last 40 years, Olaf has served in various missionary assignments.

⁸ You can show love to strangers in many ways even if at first your efforts are not appreciated. Consider this example. While conducting a Bible study, a publisher in Spain noticed that her student Yesica, from Ecuador, could not stop crying. The publisher asked why. Yesica related that before emigrating she was so poor that one day she had no food. All she had to give her daughter was water. Yesica tried to rock her child to sleep as she prayed for help. Soon after, two Witnesses visited her, but Yesica was unkind to them and tore up the magazine the sisters offered. “Is this the food you want me to give to my daughter?” she asked. The sisters tried to comfort her, but their attempts were in vain. Later, they left a basket of food at her door. Yesica was touched by their kindness and felt bad as she recalled that she paid no heed when God answered her prayer. Now, though, she was determined to serve Jehovah. What a fine effect their generosity produced!—Eccl. 11:1, 6.

8. What reasons do we have for showing kindness even if at first it does not seem to be appreciated? Illustrate.

VOLUNTEER FOR THEOCRATIC PROJECTS

⁹ On various occasions in the history of ancient Israel, volunteers were needed. (Ex. 36:2; 1 Chron. 29:5; Neh. 11:2) Today, you also have many opportunities to volunteer your time, resources, and skills to help your brothers and sisters. And you will feel great joy and receive many blessings from making yourself available.

¹⁰ God's Word encourages men in the congregation to work with Jehovah by reaching out for privileges of service and oversight. (1 Tim. 3:1, 8, 9; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3) Those who do so want to assist others in both practical and spiritual matters. (Acts 6:1-4) Have the elders asked if you would be willing to serve as an attendant or to help with literature, territories, maintenance, or the like? Those who care for such duties will tell you that it is most enjoyable to assist others.

¹¹ Those who volunteer for theocratic projects of-

9, 10. (a) What were some of the occasions in Bible times when a need arose for volunteers among God's people? (b) What are some of the needs that are generally cared for by willing men in the congregation today?

11. How has one sister benefited from the friendships she made on theocratic projects?



Volunteering for theocratic projects offers many opportunities to make new friends
(See paragraph 11)

ten make new friends. Consider the example of Margie, a sister who has worked on Kingdom Hall construction projects for 18 years. Over the years, she has taken several younger sisters under her wing to give them training. She has found the experience to be an excellent way of encouraging one another spiritually. (Rom. 1:12) During trying periods of her life, Margie has received encouragement from those whose friendships she forged on construction projects. Have you ever volunteered for such a construction project? Whether you are skilled or not, can you make yourself available?

¹² When disasters strike, God’s people have opportunities to work with God by helping their brothers in practical ways. For example, they give financial support to those affected. (John 13:34, 35; Acts 11:27-30) Another practical way is by assisting with cleaning or reconstruction. Gabriela, a sister from Poland whose home was virtually destroyed by a flood, cheered up when brothers from nearby congregations came to her aid. “I don’t want to talk about what I lost—those are just material things,” she relates. “Rather, I want to tell you how much I gained. This experience reassured me that being a part of the Christian congregation is a unique privilege as well as a source of joy and happiness.” Many who receive help after a disaster say that they feel richer from the experience. And those who work with Jehovah to provide such help enjoy great satisfaction themselves.—Read Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7.

¹³ Stephanie and other publishers had the joy of working with God by assisting Witnesses who had arrived in the United States as refugees. They helped to find and furnish homes for families re-

12. How might you be able to contribute to disaster relief?

13. How can volunteering strengthen our relationship with Jehovah? Give an example.

locating from war-torn areas. “We were moved by their joy and appreciation as they experienced the love of their worldwide brotherhood,” says Stephanie. “The families think that we have helped them, but in reality, they have helped us much more.” She adds, “The love, unity, faith, and reliance on Jehovah that we have witnessed have truly strengthened our love for Jehovah, and this has given us a deeper appreciation for all that we receive through his organization.”

EXPAND YOUR SERVICE

¹⁴ Would you like to work with Jehovah more fully? Would you be willing to relocate to serve him where there is a greater need for workers in his organization? Of course, God’s servants do not have to travel far from home to express generosity. But the circumstances of some brothers and sisters allow them to make themselves available farther afield. Their attitude is similar to that of the prophet Isaiah. In response to Jehovah’s question, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” he replied: “Here I am! Send me!” (Isa. 6:8) Do you have the desire and circumstances to respond

14, 15. (a) What spirit did the prophet Isaiah manifest? (b) How can Kingdom preachers today imitate Isaiah’s attitude?

in a similar way to theocratic needs? What needs exist?

¹⁵ Concerning the preaching and disciple-making work, Jesus said: “The harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.” (Matt. 9:37, 38) Can you serve in a field where the need is greater, perhaps as a pioneer? Or can you help someone else to do so? Many brothers and sisters have felt that the best way to show love for God and neighbor is to pioneer in areas or in territories in which there is a greater need for harvest workers. Can you think of other ways to expand or increase your service? Great joy comes from doing so.

¹⁶ Would you be willing to serve at Bethel or assist in the construction of a theocratic facility, either as a temporary worker or as a commuter? There is a constant need for individuals who can serve Jehovah wherever they are assigned and at whatever task they are given to do. This might require that they work in a field where there is a specific need, even though they have skills and experience in another field. Yet, Jehovah appreciates

16, 17. What further opportunities exist if you desire to expand the work you do for Jehovah?

the self-sacrificing spirit shown by individuals who offer themselves to serve wherever there is a need.—Ps. 110:3.

¹⁷ Do you desire to receive further training so as to be better equipped to carry out your sacred service? If so, you may qualify to attend the School for Kingdom Evangelizers. This school gives training to spiritually-minded men and women who are in full-time service, so that they can expand theocratic interests in the field. Those who apply to attend this school need to be willing to accept any assignment when they graduate. Would you be willing to take advantage of this opportunity to reach out for greater privileges of service?—1 Cor. 9:23.

¹⁸ As Jehovah's people, we are moved to be generous—which is a manifestation of goodness, kindness, and love—and to care about others each day. When we do that, we gain joy, peace, and happiness. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Whatever your circumstances in life, you can find joy by imitating Jehovah's generous personality and by being one of his precious fellow workers!—Prov. 3:9, 10.

18. What do you stand to gain by working with Jehovah each day?



Determined Not to Let My Hands Drop

AS TOLD BY MAXIM DANYLEYKO

“DADDY,” “PAPA,” “UNCLE.” That is how many young ones at Bethel have often addressed me. And as an 89-year-old, I like it. I view these expressions of affection as part of the reward from Jehovah for my having served him for 72 years in full-time service. And based on my experiences in God’s service, I am able to assure these young ones from my heart, ‘Your activity will be rewarded—if you do not let your hands drop.’—2 Chron. 15:7, ftn.

MY PARENTS AND SIBLINGS

My parents immigrated to Canada from Ukraine. They settled in the town of Rosscburn in the prov-

ince of Manitoba. My loving mother bore 8 boys and 8 girls, no twins—I was number 14. Father loved the Bible and read it to us on Sunday mornings, but he viewed religion as a money-making scheme and often jokingly asked, “I wonder who paid Jesus for his preaching and teaching?”

Eight of my siblings—four brothers and four sisters—eventually accepted the truth. My sister Rose pioneered until her death. She spent her final days encouraging everyone to pay attention to God’s Word, saying, “I want to see you in the new world.” My older brother Ted was at first a hellfire preacher. Every Sunday morning he preached on the radio, hammering away at his listeners, telling them that sinners would burn forever in the unquenchable fire of hell. Later, however, he became a faithful and zealous servant of Jehovah.

HOW MY FULL-TIME SERVICE STARTED

One day in June 1944 when I came home from school, I found a booklet entitled *The Coming World Regeneration** on our dining-room table. I read the first page, then the second, and then I could not stop reading. After I had finished reading the

* Published by Jehovah’s Witnesses in 1944. Now out of print.

whole booklet, my mind was made up—I wanted to serve Jehovah just as Jesus did.

How did the booklet end up on our table? My older brother Steve said that two men “selling” books and booklets had been at our home. “I bought that one,” he said, “because it only cost five cents.” The men returned the following Sunday. They told us that they were Jehovah’s Witnesses and that they used the Bible to answer questions that people might have. We appreciated that because our parents had brought us up to respect God’s Word. The two men also told us that the Witnesses would soon have a convention in Winnipeg, the city where my sister Elsie lived. I decided to attend the convention.

I pedaled my bicycle for the roughly 200 miles (320 km) to Winnipeg but stopped along the way in the town of Kelwood, where the two Witnesses who had visited our home were living. While I stayed there, I attended a meeting and learned what a congregation was. I also came to realize that every man, woman, and youth should be a house-to-house teacher, as Jesus was.

In Winnipeg, I met my older brother Jack, who had traveled to the convention from northern Ontario. On the first day of the convention, a broth-

er announced that there would be a baptism. Jack and I decided to get baptized at that convention. We were both determined to begin to serve as pioneers as soon as possible after our baptism. Jack entered the full-time service right after the convention. I was 16 years old and had to return to school, but the following year I too became a regular pioneer.

LEARNING LESSONS

Together with Stan Nicolson, I began pioneer service in Souris, a town in the province of Manitoba. I soon learned that pioneering was not always smooth sailing. We saw our funds diminishing, but we plodded on. One time after preaching all day, we headed home with not a single penny left and very hungry. What a surprise it was to find a big sack of food at our door! To this day, we do not know who put it there. That evening, we ate like kings. What a reward for not having let our hands drop! In fact, at the end of that month, I weighed more than I had ever weighed in my life.

A few months later, we were assigned to the town of Gilbert Plains, located about 150 miles (240 km) north of Souris. In those days, each congregation had a large chart on the platform that showed the

field service activity of the congregation month by month. When the activity dropped one month, I gave a talk to the congregation to stress that the brothers and sisters needed to do better. After the meeting, an elderly pioneer sister, whose husband was not in the truth, said to me with tears in her eyes, “I tried, but I just couldn’t do more than what I did.” Then it was my turn to cry, and I apologized to her.

As was the case with me, energetic young brothers can easily make slips like that and then feel disappointed with themselves. But I have experienced that instead of letting the hands drop, it is best to learn a lesson from a mistake and remember that lesson as you move on. Further faithful activity will be rewarded.

THE BATTLE OF QUEBEC

What a privilege it was for me as a 21-year-old to attend the 14th class of Gilead School, which graduated in February 1950! About a quarter of my classmates were sent to the French-speaking province of Quebec, Canada, where religious persecution against the Witnesses ran rampant. I was assigned to Val-d’Or, a town in the gold-mining country. One day, a group of us went preaching

in the nearby village of Val-Senneville. The local priest threatened us with violence if we did not leave the village at once. His threat led to a court case in which I was a plaintiff. The priest was fined.*

That incident and many similar ones became part of the “Battle of Quebec.” The province of Quebec had been controlled by the Roman Catholic Church for more than 300 years. The clergy and their political allies persecuted Jehovah’s Witnesses. It was not an easy time, and we were few in number; but we did not let our hands drop. Honesthearted Quebecers responded. I had the privilege of studying

* See the article “Quebec Priest Convicted for Attack on Jehovah’s Witnesses” in *Awake!* of November 8, 1953, pp. 3-5.

▼ On our wedding day



▼ On our way to an assembly using “public transportation”



with several individuals who accepted the truth. One of my Bible studies was with a family of ten. The entire family began to serve Jehovah. Their courageous example incited others to leave the Catholic Church. We kept preaching, and eventually the battle was won!

TRAINING BROTHERS IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE

In 1956, I was reassigned to serve in Haiti. Most new missionaries there struggled to learn French, but people listened. Missionary Stanley Boggus stated, “We were amazed that people did all they could to help us express ourselves.” At first, I had an advantage because of having learned French in Quebec. But soon we realized that most local brothers spoke only Haitian Creole. So if we missionaries were to be effective, we had to learn the local language. We did, and we were rewarded for our efforts.

To help the brothers further, we received approval from the Governing Body to translate *The Watchtower* and other publications into Haitian Creole. Meeting attendance throughout the country soared. There were 99 publishers in Haiti in 1950, but that number rose to over 800 publishers

by 1960! At that time, I was assigned to serve at Bethel. In 1961, I had the joy of sharing in conducting the Kingdom Ministry School. We were able to give training to 40 congregation overseers and special pioneers. At the convention in January 1962, we encouraged qualified local brothers to expand their ministry, and some were appointed as special pioneers. This proved to be timely because opposition loomed.

On January 23, 1962, just after the convention, missionary Andrew D'Amico and I were arrested at the branch office, and the stock of *Awake!* of January 8, 1962 (in French), was confiscated. *Awake!* had quoted French newspapers that reported that voodoo was practiced in Haiti. Some did not like that statement and claimed that we had written the article at the branch. A few weeks later, the missionaries were deported.* But the trained local brothers carried on magnificently. Today, I rejoice with them over the endurance they showed and the spiritual progress they made. They now even have the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in Haitian Creole—something we could only have dreamed of back then.

* Details are described in the *1994 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, pp. 148-150.

BUILDING IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

After serving in Haiti, I was assigned to serve as a missionary in the Central African Republic. Later, I had the privilege of serving there as a traveling overseer and then as branch overseer.

In those days, many Kingdom Halls were extremely simple. I learned how to collect straw in the bush and how to thatch a roof. Seeing me struggle with this new trade was quite a spectacle for passersby. It also encouraged the brothers to become more involved in constructing and maintaining their own Kingdom Halls. Religious leaders mocked us because their churches had tin roofs and ours did not. Undeterred, we continued with our simple straw-roofed Kingdom Halls. The mockery stopped when a severe storm hit Bangui, the capital. It lifted the tin roof off a church and crashed it down onto the main street. The thatched roofs on our Kingdom Halls stayed put. To provide better supervision for the Kingdom work, we constructed a new branch office and missionary home in only five months to the day.*

* See "Building on a Solid Foundation" in *Awake!*, May 8, 1966, p. 27.

MARRIED LIFE—WITH A ZEALOUS COMPANION

In 1976 the Kingdom work was banned in the Central African Republic, and I was assigned to N'Djamena, the capital of neighboring Chad. On the positive side, I met Happy, a zealous special pioneer, originally from Cameroon. We married on April 1, 1978. That same month, civil war broke out, and like many, we fled to the south of the country. When the fighting was over, we returned to find that our home had become the headquarters of an armed group. Gone was not only the literature but also Happy's wedding dress and our wedding gifts. But we did not let our hands drop. We still had each other and looked forward to further activity.

About two years later, the ban in the Central African Republic was lifted. We returned there and served in the traveling work. Our home was a van with a folding bed, a barrel that could hold 53 gallons (200 L) of water, a propane-gas refrigerator, and a gas burner. Travel was difficult. On one trip, we were stopped at no less than 117 police checkpoints.

Temperatures often rose to 122 degrees Fahrenheit (50°C). At assemblies, it was sometimes difficult to find enough water for the baptism. So the brothers dug into dry river beds and little by little collected sufficient water for the baptism, which was often performed in a barrel.

FURTHER ACTIVITY IN OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES

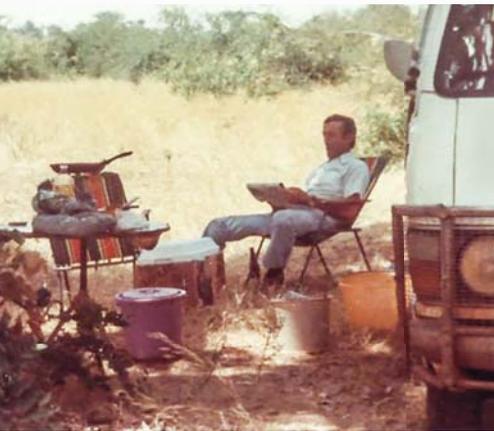
In 1980 we were transferred to Nigeria. There, for two-and-a-half years, we helped with the preparations for the construction of the new branch. The brothers had purchased a two-story warehouse that was to be dismantled and then set up on our site. One morning, I climbed up pretty high on the building to help with dismantling. Toward noon, I started climbing back down the same way I had come up. But the dismantling had changed things, and I stepped into air—and down I went. My condition looked quite serious, but after X-rays and an examination, the doctor told Happy: “Don’t worry. He has just torn some ligaments and will be OK in a week or so.”

In 1986 we were off to Côte d’Ivoire, where we served in the traveling work. That work took us up to neighboring Burkina Faso. Never could I have

imagined that years later, Burkina would become our home for a time.

I left Canada in 1956, but in 2003, after an absence of 47 years, I was back at Bethel in Canada and this time with Happy. On paper we were Canadians, but we felt that we belonged in Africa.

Then in 2007, when I was 79 years old, it was off to Africa again! We were assigned to Burkina Faso, where I helped as a member of the Country Committee. The office was later converted into a remote translation office under the Benin branch, and in August 2013, we were assigned to Bethel in Benin.



- ◀ While we were in the traveling work, our home was a van
- ▶ Conducting a Bible study in Burkina Faso
- ▼ With Happy, while serving at the Benin branch



In spite of my physical limitations, the ministry is still dear to my heart. During the past three years, with the kind help of the elders and the loving support of my wife, I have had the joy of seeing two of my Bible students, Gédéon and Frégis, get baptized. They now zealously serve Jehovah.

In the meantime, my wife and I were transferred to the branch in South Africa, where the Bethel family kindly provides for my health needs. South Africa is the seventh country in Africa where I have been privileged to serve. Then in October 2017, we received an outstanding blessing. We were able to attend the dedication of the world headquarters in Warwick, New York. What an unforgettable event that was!

The *1994 Yearbook* states on page 255: “To all who have endured in the work for many years, we exhort: ‘Be courageous and do not let your hands drop down, because there exists a reward for your activity.’—2 Chron. 15:7.” Happy and I are determined to follow this exhortation and to encourage others to do the same.



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