

OCTOBER 2018

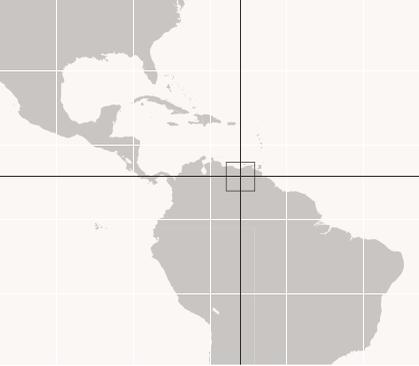
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

SIMPLIFIED EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
DECEMBER 3-30, 2018



COVER IMAGE:
VENEZUELA

A mother and her children take a brief break to enjoy cold drinks while out in the ministry in Telares de Palo Grande, Caracas

PUBLISHERS
149,355

BIBLE STUDIES
209,866

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE (2017)
478,266

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Lying has become very common today. Who told the first lie? What was the worst lie ever told? How can we protect ourselves from being deceived, and how can we speak the truth with one another? How can we use our Teaching Toolbox to teach the truth in our ministry? These articles will answer those questions.

16 WEEK OF **DECEMBER 17-23**
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—The Christ**

22 WEEK OF **DECEMBER 24-30**
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Changing Circumstances**

It can be difficult to adjust to changes. These two articles will help us to keep our peace of mind and to trust in our Leader, the Christ, even when unexpected things happen in our life.

28 LIFE STORY
Jehovah Richly Blessed My Decision

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Speaking the Truth

“Speak the truth with one another.”—ZECHARIAH 8:16.

SOME inventions, such as the telephone, the light bulb, the car, and the refrigerator, have made life better. Other inventions, such as gunpowder, land mines, cigarettes, and the atomic bomb, have made life more dangerous. But there is something that is older than all of these and has hurt mankind the most. What is it? The lie! Telling a lie is saying something that we know is not true in order to deceive, or trick, someone. Who told the first lie? The Devil! Jesus Christ called him “the father of the lie.” **(Read John 8:44.)** When did he tell the first lie?

² He did so thousands of years ago in the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were enjoying life in the beautiful Paradise that Jehovah had created for them. God had told them that if they ate from “the tree of the knowledge of good and bad,” they would die. Even though Satan knew this, he used a snake to tell Eve: “You certainly will not die.” That was the very first lie. Satan also said: “God

1, 2. What did the Devil use to hurt mankind the most?

SONGS: 56, 124

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How is Satan misleading people today?

Why do people lie?

How can we be truthful with one another?

knows that in the very day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and bad.”—Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-5.

³ Satan’s lie was malicious because he knew that if Eve believed him and ate the fruit, she would die. And that is exactly what happened. Eve and later Adam disobeyed Jehovah’s command and eventually died. (Genesis 3:6; 5:5) More than that, because of Adam’s sin, “death spread to all men.” In fact, “death ruled as king . . . , even over those who had not sinned in the same way that Adam transgressed.” (Romans 5:12, 14) That is why we are not perfect and do not live forever as God intended. Instead, we live only about “70 years, or 80 if one is especially strong,” and our lives are “filled with trouble and sorrow.” (Psalm 90:10) All of this has happened because of Satan’s lie!

⁴ Jesus said about Satan: “He did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him.” Satan has not changed. He is still “misleading the entire inhabited earth” with his lies. (Revelation 12:9) But we do not want Satan to mislead us. So we need to know the answers to three questions. How is Satan misleading people today? Why do people lie? And how can we speak the truth all the time so that we do not

3. Why was Satan’s lie malicious, and what happened because of that lie?

4. (a) What questions must we be able to answer? (b) According to Psalm 15:1, 2, who only can be Jehovah’s friend?

lose Jehovah’s friendship, as Adam and Eve did?—**Read Psalm 15:1, 2.**

HOW SATAN IS MISLEADING HUMANS

⁵ We can avoid being deceived by Satan. The apostle Paul said: “We are not ignorant of his intentions.” (2 Corinthians 2:11; footnote) We know that Satan controls the whole world, including false religion, corrupt governments, and greedy businesses. (1 John 5:19) So we are not surprised that Satan and his demons influence powerful people to “speak lies.” (1 Timothy 4:1, 2) For example, some business people tell lies in their advertisements to sell products that are harmful or to trick people and take their money.

⁶ It is especially bad when religious leaders tell lies. Why? Because if someone believes their false teachings and does things that God hates, that person may lose the opportunity to live forever. (Hosea 4:9) Jesus knew that the religious leaders in his day were deceiving the people. He boldly told them: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you travel over sea and dry land to make one convert, and when he becomes one, you make him a subject for Gehenna,” that is, everlasting destruction. (Matthew 23:15; footnote) Jesus said that those false religious leaders were just like

5. How is Satan misleading people today?

6, 7. (a) Why is it especially bad when religious leaders tell lies? (b) What lies have you heard religious leaders tell?

their father the Devil, who is “a murderer.”—John 8:44.

⁷ There are many religious leaders in our day too. They may be called pastors, priests, rabbis, swamis, or by other titles. Like the Pharisees, they do not teach the truth from God’s Word but have “exchanged the truth of God for the lie.” (Romans 1:18, 25) Some of their lies are “once saved, always saved,” humans have an immortal soul, the dead are reincarnated, and God accepts homosexual lifestyles and same-sex marriages.

⁸ Politicians too have used lies to deceive humans. One of the biggest lies they will soon tell is that they have brought “peace and security” to the world. But “then sudden destruction is to be instantly on them.” So we should not believe these political leaders who say that things are improving. The truth is that we “know very well that Jehovah’s day is coming exactly as a thief in the night.”—1 Thessalonians 5:1-4.

WHY PEOPLE LIE

⁹ Today, powerful people are not the only ones who lie. The article “Why We Lie,” by Y. Bhattacharjee, says that “lying has come to be recognized as a deeply ingrained human trait.” In other words, people think that it is natu-

8. What lie will political leaders soon tell, but how should we react to it?

9, 10. (a) Why do people lie, and what are the consequences? (b) What should we remember about Jehovah?

ral and normal to lie. People often lie to protect themselves, perhaps to hide mistakes they have made or crimes they have committed. They also lie to make money or to benefit themselves in some other way. The article also says that some people have no problem lying “to strangers, co-workers, friends, and loved ones.”

When people lie, they can deceive other humans, but they cannot deceive Jehovah

¹⁰ What is the result of all these lies? People no longer trust one another, and relationships are ruined. For example, imagine how devastated a faithful husband must be when he learns that his wife had an affair and then lied to him to hide what she did. Or imagine how terrible it is when a man mistreats his wife and children at home but pretends to be loving and caring to them when they are around others. Such people can deceive other humans, but we should remember that they cannot deceive Jehovah. The Bible says that “all things are naked and openly exposed” to him.—Hebrews 4:13.

¹¹ In the Bible, there is an example of a Christian couple whom Satan

11. What does the bad example of Ananias and Sapphira teach us? (See opening picture.)

influenced to lie to God. Ananias and Sapphira tried to deceive the apostles. They sold some of their property and then gave only part of the money to the apostles. Ananias and Sapphira wanted to impress others in the congregation, so they told the apostles that they had given all of the money. But Jehovah knew they were lying, and he punished them.—Acts 5:1-10.

¹² How does Jehovah feel about people who lie? All people who tell malicious lies and who do not repent will end up in “the lake of fire,” just like Satan. In other words, they will be destroyed forever. (Revelation 20:10; 21:8; Psalm 5:6) Why? Because Jehovah views these liars the same way he views all others “whose practices are

12. What will happen to malicious liars who do not repent, and why?

disgusting in God’s eyes.”—Revelation 22:15, footnote.

¹³ We know that Jehovah “is not a mere man who tells lies” and that “it is impossible for God to lie.” (Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 6:18) “Jehovah hates . . . a lying tongue.” (Proverbs 6:16, 17) If we want to please him, we must tell the truth. So we “do not lie to one another.”—Colossians 3:9.

WE “SPEAK THE TRUTH”

¹⁴ What is one way that true Christians are different from members of false religions? We “speak the truth.” (Read Zechariah 8:16, 17.) Paul said: “We recommend ourselves as God’s

13. What do we know about Jehovah, and what does that motivate us to do?

14. (a) What makes true Christians different from members of false religions? (b) Explain the principle found at Luke 6:45.

Do you see a problem in this young sister’s life?

(See paragraphs 15, 16)



SOME EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED

Malicious lie:

A lie that is told in order to hurt someone or to ruin his or her reputation

ministers, . . . by truthful speech.” (2 Corinthians 6:4, 7) And Jesus said that people speak “out of the heart’s abundance.” (Luke 6:45) This means that an honest person will tell the truth. He will tell the truth to strangers, coworkers, friends, and loved ones. Let us discuss some examples of how we can show that we are trying to be honest in all things.

¹⁵ If you are a young person, you may want your peers to accept you. Yet because of this desire, some young people are living a double life. They pretend to be morally clean when they are with their family and the congregation but are completely different when they are on social media or with people who do not serve Jehovah. They may use bad language, wear immodest clothes, listen to music with unclean lyrics, get drunk, use drugs, date secretly, or do other bad things. They are lying to their parents, to their brothers and sisters, and to Jehovah. (Psalm 26:4, 5) But Jehovah knows when we claim to honor him and then do things he hates. (Mark 7:6) It is so much better to do what the proverb says: “Let your

15. (a) Why is it bad to live a double life?
(b) What can help young people to resist peer pressure? (See footnote.)

heart not envy sinners, but be in the fear of Jehovah all day long.”—Proverbs 23:17.* (See footnote.)

¹⁶ If you want to become a regular pioneer or begin special full-time service, for example at Bethel, you have to fill out an application. It is very important that you give honest answers to questions about your health, the type of entertainment you choose, and your morals. (Hebrews 13:18) But what if you have done something that Jehovah hates or something that bothers your conscience and you have not talked to the elders about it? Ask them for help so that you can serve Jehovah with a clean conscience.—Romans 9:1; Galatians 6:1.

¹⁷ What should you do if our work is banned where you live and the authorities arrest you and ask you questions about your brothers? Should you tell them everything you know? What did Jesus do when a Roman governor

* See chapter 15, “How Can I Resist Peer Pressure?,” and chapter 16, “A Double Life—Who Has to Know?,” in the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, Volume 2.

16. How should we answer questions on an application for full-time service?

17. What should we do when persecutors ask us questions about our brothers?

questioned him? Jesus applied the Bible principle that there is “a time to be silent and a time to speak,” and at times he did not say anything! (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7; Matthew 27:11-14) If we are in a similar situation, we need to be discreet and cautious so that we do not put our brothers in danger.—Proverbs 10:19; 11:12.

¹⁸ What if a person in the congregation has committed a serious sin and you know about it? The elders have the responsibility to keep the congregation morally clean, so they may ask you about what you know. What will you do, especially if the person is a close friend or relative? The Bible says: “The one who testifies faithfully

18. What is our responsibility if the elders ask us questions about our brothers?

will tell the truth.” (Proverbs 12:17; 21:28) So you have the responsibility to tell the elders the whole truth without hiding any of the facts. The elders have a right to know the facts so that they can find the best way to help the person to repair his or her relationship with Jehovah.—James 5:14, 15.

¹⁹ David prayed to Jehovah: “You find pleasure in truth in the inner person.” (Psalm 51:6) David knew that what is important is what we are inside. At all times, true Christians “speak the truth with one another.” Another way to show that we are different from the members of false religions is to teach the truth from the Bible. In the next article, we will discuss how we can do that in our ministry.

19. What will we discuss in the next article?

How would you decide when to remain silent and when to tell the whole truth?

(See paragraphs 17, 18)





Teaching the Truth

“O Jehovah, . . . the very essence of your word is truth.”
 —PSALM 119:159, 160.

JESUS CHRIST was a carpenter and later a minister. (Mark 6:3; Romans 15:8) He did both kinds of work perfectly. As a carpenter, he learned how to use his tools to make useful products out of wood. And as a minister, he used his deep knowledge of the Scriptures to help the common people understand the truth from God’s Word. (Matthew 7:28; Luke 24:32, 45) When Jesus was 30 years old, he stopped being a carpenter and became a minister because he knew that this was the most important work he could do. He said that preaching the good news of the Kingdom of God was one reason why God sent him to the earth. (Matthew 20:28; Luke 3:23; 4:43) Jesus focused his life on preaching the good news, and he wanted others to do the same.—Matthew 9:35-38.

² Most of us are not carpenters, but all of us are ministers who teach others the good news. This work is so important that God is involved. In fact, we are called “God’s fellow workers.” (1 Corinthians 3:9;

-
- 1, 2. (a) What was the most important work in Jesus’ life, and why?
 (b) What must we do to be successful as “God’s fellow workers”?

SONGS: 29, 53

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What should we focus on in our ministry?

Why do we have a Teaching Toolbox?

Which tool do you want to use better?

2 Corinthians 6:4) We agree with the psalmist who said: “The very essence of your word is truth.” (Psalm 119:159, 160) Jehovah’s word is the truth. That is why we want to be sure that we are “handling the word of the truth aright” in our ministry. **(Read 2 Timothy 2:15.)** So we keep trying to become more skillful at using the Bible, our main tool for teaching others about Jehovah, Jesus, and the Kingdom. To help us to be successful in our ministry, Jehovah’s organization has given us other useful tools, and we need to know how to use them too. These tools are in our Teaching Toolbox.

³ You may wonder why we call it a Teaching Toolbox and not a Preaching Toolbox. That is because to “preach” means to declare a message, but to “teach” means to explain that message so that a person understands what he hears and then is moved to act on what he learns. During the short time left in this system, we must focus on starting Bible studies and teaching people the truth so that they may become disciples of Christ. This means that we should zealously look for all those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life” and help them to start serving Jehovah.—**Read Acts 13:44-48.**

⁴ How can we find those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life”?

3. What should we focus on in our ministry, and how does Acts 13:48 help us to do that?

4. How can we find those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life”?

For the first Christians, the only way to find those people was to preach. Jesus told his disciples: “Into whatever city or village you enter, search out who in it is deserving.” (Matthew 10:11) We need to do the same today. Of course, if people are not sincere, are proud, or do not really care about God, we do not expect them to listen to the good news. We are looking for people who are sincere, who are humble, and who really want to know the truth. We can compare our search for people to what Jesus had to do when he was a carpenter. Before he could make a piece of furniture, a door, a yoke, or something else, he first had to find the right wood. Then he could get his toolbox, use his skills, and make the item. In a similar way today, we first have to find sincere people, and then we can use our tools and skills to help them become disciples.—Matthew 28:19, 20.

⁵ In a toolbox, each tool has a specific purpose. For example, think about the tools Jesus used as a carpenter.* (See footnote.) He needed tools to measure, mark, cut, drill, and shape the wood, as well as tools to level the pieces and join them together. Similarly, each tool in our Teaching Toolbox has a specific purpose. So let us find out how to use these important tools.

* See the article “The Carpenter” and the box “The Carpenter’s Toolbox” in the August 1, 2010, issue of *The Watchtower*.

5. What do we need to know about the tools in our Teaching Toolbox? Illustrate. (See opening pictures.)

TOOLS THAT TELL PEOPLE WHO WE ARE

⁶ **Contact Cards.** These are small but very effective tools that tell people who we are and direct them to our website jw.org. On our website, they can learn more about us and even request a Bible study. More than 400,000 people have asked for a Bible study so far on jw.org, and hundreds more do so every day! You can keep a few contact cards with you and use them as you talk to people you meet throughout the day.

⁷ **Invitations.** The printed invitation to our meetings says: “You are invited to study the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Then it says that you can do this “at our public meetings” “or with a personal instructor.” So the invitation tells people who we are and also invites those who are “conscious of their spiritual need” to study the Bible with us. (Matthew 5:3) Of course, people are welcome to attend our meetings whether they accept a Bible study or not. When they come to our meetings, they will see how much they can learn about the Bible.

⁸ It is important that we keep inviting people to attend our meetings at least once. Why? Because when they come, they will see that Jehovah’s Witnesses teach the truth from the Bi-

6, 7. (a) How have you used the contact cards? (b) Why do we use the congregation meeting invitations?

8. Why is it important for people to come to at least one of our meetings? Give an example.

ble and help people get to know God, while false religions do not. (Isaiah 65:13) For example, a married couple in the United States named Ray and Linda noticed this difference some years ago. They believed in God and wanted to get to know him better. So they decided to visit all the churches in their city and to look for two things before joining one. First, they would have to learn something at the church, and second, the church members must dress like people who claim to serve God. It took them several years because there were so many churches. But they were very disappointed. They had not learned anything, and the church members dressed very disrespectfully. After they visited the last church on their list, Linda went to work and Ray went home. On his way home, he drove by a Kingdom Hall. He thought, ‘Let me go in and see what happens there.’ Of course, this was the best experience of all! Everyone at the Kingdom Hall was kind and friendly and dressed very nicely. Ray sat in the front row and loved what he learned! This reminds us of the apostle Paul’s description of a person who comes into a meeting for the first time and says: “God is really among you.” (1 Corinthians 14:23-25) Ray came to the meeting every Sunday after that. Then he started coming to every mid-week meeting. Linda also started coming to the meetings, and although they were in their 70’s, they studied the Bible and got baptized.

TOOLS FOR STARTING CONVERSATIONS

⁹ **Tracts.** We have eight tracts in our toolbox. They are easy to use, and they work very well to start conversations. Since the first of these tracts were released in 2013, some five billion of them have been printed! These tracts all have the same format. So once you learn how to use one of them, you can use all of them! How can you use a tract to start a conversation with someone?

¹⁰ Perhaps you want to use the tract *What Is the Kingdom of God?* Show the person the question on the front and ask: “Have you ever wondered what the Kingdom of God is? Would you say it is . . . ?” Then ask which one of the three answers he would choose. Rather than saying whether his answer is right or wrong, simply open the tract to the section “What the Bible Says” on the inside and read the scriptures shown there, Daniel 2:44 and Isaiah 9:6. At the end of your conversation, ask the question on the back under the heading “To Think About”: “What will life be like under the rule of God’s Kingdom?” You can answer that question during your next conversation. When you meet again, you can use lesson 7 of the brochure *Good News From God!*, which is one of our tools to start Bible studies.

9, 10. (a) Why are the tracts easy to use? (b) Explain how to use the tract *What Is the Kingdom of God?*

TOOLS THAT BUILD INTEREST IN THE BIBLE

¹¹ **Magazines.** *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* are the most widely published and translated magazines in the world! Because people from many different countries read these magazines, the subjects on the cover are designed to be interesting to people everywhere. We should use these magazines to help people to focus on what is most important in life today. But first, we need to know what type of person each magazine is designed for.

¹² *Awake!* is designed for people who know very little or nothing about the Bible. They may know nothing about Christian teachings, they may not really trust religion, or they may not realize that the Bible can help them in their personal life. One main goal of *Awake!* is to convince the reader that God exists. (Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:6) It also tries to help the reader have faith that the Bible “truthfully is . . . the word of God.” (1 Thessalonians 2:13) The three issues for 2018 have these titles: “The Way of Happiness,” “12 Secrets of Successful Families,” and “Help for Those Who Grieve.”

¹³ The main goal of the public edition of *The Watchtower* is to explain Bible

11. What are our magazines designed to do, and what should we know about them?

12. (a) For whom is *Awake!* designed, and what is its goal? (b) What good experiences have you recently had with this tool?

13. (a) For whom is the public edition of *The Watchtower* designed? (b) What good experiences have you recently had with this tool?

teachings to people who already have some respect for God and the Bible. They may know some things about the Bible, but they do not accurately understand what it teaches. (Romans 10:2; 1 Timothy 2:3, 4) The three issues for 2018 answer these questions: “Is the Bible Still Relevant Today?,” “What Does the Future Hold?,” and “Does God Care About You?”

TOOLS THAT MOTIVATE

¹⁴ **Videos.** In Jesus’ day, the only tools a carpenter had were hand tools. But now, carpenters also have tools that use electric power, such as saws, drills, and sanders. When we preach today, in addition to printed literature, we have beautiful videos to show people. Four of them are in our toolbox: *Why Study the Bible?, What Happens at a Bible Study?, What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?*, and *Jehovah’s Witnesses—Who Are We?* The shorter videos can be played in less than two minutes and work well on the initial call. The longer videos can be used on return visits and with those who have more time. These videos are wonderful tools because they can motivate people to study the Bible and come to our meetings.

¹⁵ As an example, one sister met a

14. (a) What are the four videos in our Teaching Toolbox designed to do? (b) What good experiences have you had in showing these videos?

15. What effect can watching one of our videos in their own language have on people? Give examples.

woman who had moved from Micronesia and whose first language is Yapese. The sister showed her *Why Study the Bible?* in Yapese. When the video started, the woman said: “This is my language. I can’t believe it! I can tell from his accent that he is from my island. He speaks my language!” After that, she said that she was going to read and watch everything in her language on jw.org. (Compare Acts 2:8, 11.) Another example is that of a sister in the United States whose nephew lives on a different continent. She sent him a link to the same video in his language. He watched the video and e-mailed her: “The part about an evil power controlling the world particularly caught my attention. I signed up for a Bible study.” This is especially exciting because he lives in a country where our work is restricted!

TOOLS THAT TEACH THE TRUTH

¹⁶ **Brochures.** How can we teach the truth to someone who cannot read well or who does not have any Bible literature in his language? We can use the brochure *Listen to God and Live Forever*.* (See footnote.) An excellent tool to start Bible studies is the brochure *Good News From God!* You can show a person the 14 topics on the

* If the person cannot read, you can have him follow along in the brochure *Listen to God*, which contains mostly pictures.

16. Explain the specific purpose of each brochure: (a) *Listen to God and Live Forever*. (b) *Good News From God!* (c) *Who Are Doing Jehovah’s Will Today?*

Our Teaching Toolbox has the tools that we need to teach people the good news

back cover and ask him which one he is most interested in. Then start the study in that lesson. Have you tried this on your return visits? The third brochure in our toolbox is ***Who Are Doing Jehovah’s Will Today?*** It is designed to teach Bible students about our organization. To learn how to use this brochure on each Bible study, see the March 2017 issue of *Our Christian Life and Ministry—Meeting Workbook*.

¹⁷ **Books.** After you start a study with a person using a brochure, you can at any time switch to the book ***What Can the Bible Teach Us?*** This tool can help people learn more about basic Bible teachings. If the student is making progress and he finishes that book, you can continue the study in the book ***How to Remain in God’s Love.*** This tool will teach the student

17. (a) What is the specific purpose of each study book? (b) What do all those who get baptized need to do, and why?

how to apply Bible principles in his daily life. Remember, even after he gets baptized, a new one still needs to continue his study until he has finished both books. This will help him to have strong faith in Jehovah and remain loyal to him.—**Read Colossians 2:6, 7.**

¹⁸ As Jehovah’s Witnesses, we have the responsibility to teach people “the message of truth of the good news” that can lead them to everlasting life. (Colossians 1:5; **read 1 Timothy 4:16.**) To help us do this, we have a Teaching Toolbox with the tools that we need. (See the box “Teaching Toolbox.”) Let us use these tools as best we can. Each one of us can decide which tool in the toolbox to use and when. But remember, our goal is not just to distribute literature, and we do not give literature to people who are not interested in our message. Our goal is to make disciples of people who are sincere, who are humble, and who really want to know God, people who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life.”—Acts 13:48; Matthew 28:19, 20.

18. (a) What does 1 Timothy 4:16 encourage us to do as teachers of the truth, and with what result? (b) What is our goal as we use our Teaching Toolbox?

SOME EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED

When we preach, we are searching for those who are “**rightly disposed for everlasting life.**” These people are sincere, are humble, and want to know God, so they will listen to the message of the good news

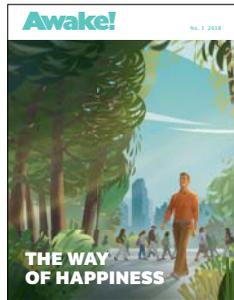


TEACHING TOOLBOX

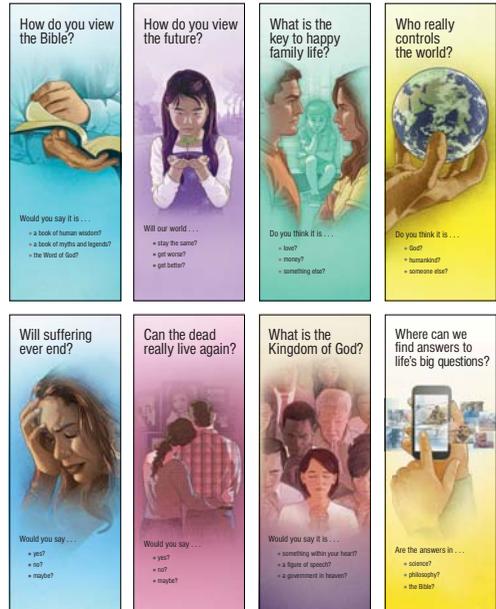
CONTACT CARDS AND INVITATIONS



MAGAZINES



TRACTS



VIDEOS



BROCHURES AND BOOKS





Put Trust in Our Active Leader The Christ

“Your Leader is one, the Christ.”—MATTHEW 23:10.

SONGS: 16, 14

DO YOU RECALL?

How did Jehovah lead his people in Joshua’s day?

What do we learn from the way Christ led the early Christians?

Why can we trust in Christ as our Leader today?

JEHOVAH told Joshua: “Moses my servant is dead. Now get up, cross the Jordan, you and all this people, and go into the land that I am giving to them.” (Joshua 1:1, 2) What a change for Joshua, who had been Moses’ attendant for almost 40 years!

² Moses had led the Israelites for a very long time, but now Joshua would lead them. So he may have wondered if the people would accept him as their leader. (Deuteronomy 34:8, 10-12) Referring to Joshua 1:1, 2, one Bible reference book says that one of the most difficult and dangerous times for a nation, whether in the past or today, is when one leader replaces another.

1, 2. What huge task did Joshua have after Moses died?

³ Joshua had good reason to be worried. But he trusted in Jehovah and was quick to follow his instructions. (Joshua 1:9-11) God blessed Joshua for trusting in him and used an angel to guide Joshua and the Israelites. This angel was very likely the Word, God’s firstborn Son.—Exodus 23:20-23; John 1:1.

⁴ Jehovah helped the nation of Israel to adjust well to the changes that came from having Joshua as their new leader. In our day, there are also many big changes happening. We may wonder, ‘As God’s organization keeps progressing, do we have good reason to trust in our appointed Leader, Jesus?’ (**Read Matthew 23:10.**) To answer this question, we will examine how Jehovah led his people in the past during times of change.

LEADING GOD’S PEOPLE INTO THE PROMISED LAND

⁵ Soon after the Israelites crossed the Jordan, Joshua had an unusual experience. Near the city of Jericho, he met a man with a sword. Joshua asked the man: “Are you on our side or on the side of our adversaries?” Joshua was surprised when the man said that he was the “chief of Jehovah’s army,” an angel who was ready to defend God’s people. (**Read Joshua 5:13-15 and footnote.**) Although the account in other places says that Jehovah was

speaking directly to Joshua, it seems that God was using an angel to speak for him, as he often did in the past.—Exodus 3:2-4; Joshua 4:1, 15; 5:2, 9; Acts 7:38; Galatians 3:19.

⁶ The angel told Joshua exactly what he needed to do to conquer Jericho. At first, some of the instructions might have seemed strange. For example, the angel told Joshua to circumcise all the soldiers. This meant that they would not be able to fight for a few days. Was it really the best time to circumcise these men?—Genesis 34:24, 25; Joshua 5:2, 8.

⁷ Maybe the soldiers wondered, ‘How will we protect our families if the enemy attacks our camp?’ But then something unexpected happened! Instead of attacking the Israelites, the men of Jericho became afraid of them. We read: “Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites; no one was leaving and no one was entering.” (Joshua 6:1) This news must have made the Israelites trust in God’s direction even more!

⁸ The angel told Joshua that the Israelites should not attack Jericho. Instead, they had to march around the city once a day for six days and then seven times on the seventh day. The soldiers might have thought, ‘What a waste of time and energy!’ But Israel’s invisible Leader knew exactly what he was doing! Following his instructions

3, 4. How did God bless Joshua for trusting in him, and what question can we ask?

5. What unusual experience did Joshua have near Jericho? (See opening picture.)

6-8. (a) Why might some of the angel’s instructions have seemed strange? (b) How do we know that the instructions were wise and came at the right time? (See also footnote.)

only made the Israelites' faith stronger, and they did not have to fight against the soldiers of Jericho.—Joshua 6:2-5; Hebrews 11:30.* (See footnote.)

⁹ What can we learn from this account? Jehovah's organization sometimes does things in a new way, and we may not always understand why. For example, we may not always have thought it was a good idea to use electronic devices for personal study, in the ministry, or at meetings. But now

* In the ruins of Jericho, archaeologists found large amounts of grain that the people harvested but did not eat. This supports the Bible account, which tells us that the siege was short and that the Israelites were not allowed to eat Jericho's grain. Since it was harvesttime, it was a good time for Israel to conquer the land because there was abundant food in the fields.—Joshua 5:10-12.

9. Why should we follow any instructions we receive from God's organization? Give an example.

we probably see the benefits of using them if possible. When we see the positive results of such changes, our faith grows stronger and we become more united with our brothers and sisters.

HOW DID CHRIST LEAD THE EARLY CHRISTIANS?

¹⁰ About 13 years after an uncircumcised Gentile named Cornelius became a Christian, some Jewish Christians were still saying that circumcision was necessary. (Acts 15:1, 2) In the city of Antioch, brothers were arguing about this. So the elders arranged for Paul to go and ask the governing body in Jerusalem about it. But who was really ar-

10. Who really arranged for the important meeting of the governing body in Jerusalem about circumcision?

Christ was the Leader of the early Christian congregation
(See paragraphs 10, 11)



ranging for him to go? Paul explained: “I went up as a result of a revelation.” Clearly, it was Christ who directed matters so that the question would be answered by the governing body.—Galatians 2:1-3.

¹¹ Christ directed the governing body to make it clear that non-Jewish Christians did not need to be circumcised. (Acts 15:19, 20) Still, years later, many Jewish Christians continued to circumcise their sons. Then the elders in Jerusalem heard the rumor that Paul did not respect the Law of Moses. So the elders asked Paul to do something that would show his respect for the Law.* (See footnote.) (Acts 21:20-26) They told him to take four men to the temple so that people would see that Paul did respect the Law. Paul could have said: ‘This makes no sense! Why would you ask me to do this? The Jewish Christians who do not understand the question of circumcision are the ones with the problem.’ But Paul understood that the elders wanted all Christians to be united, so he humbly followed their instructions. Yet, we may wonder why Jesus allowed circumcision to continue to be a problem for such a long time, even though the Law of Moses had ended when Jesus died.—Colossians 2:13, 14.

* See the box “Paul Humbly Meets a Test” in *The Watchtower*, March 15, 2003, page 24.

11. (a) What did some Jewish Christians still believe about circumcision? (b) How did Paul show that he humbly supported the elders in Jerusalem? (See also footnote.)

¹² It can take time to adjust to a new understanding. Some Jewish Christians needed time to accept the fact that they were no longer under the Law. (John 16:12) They were used to thinking that circumcision was a sign of a special relationship with God. (Genesis 17:9-12) Others were

The direction that the faithful slave gives us today proves that Jesus cares for us

afraid that they would be persecuted in their Jewish communities for being different. (Galatians 6:12) But in time, Christ gave them more direction in letters from Paul.—Romans 2:28, 29; Galatians 3:23-25.

CHRIST STILL LEADS HIS CONGREGATION

¹³ Christ is still the Leader of the Christian congregation today. So if the organization makes a change that you do not understand, think about the way Christ led God’s people in the past. Whether in Joshua’s day or in the

12. Why, possibly, did Christ allow time to pass before he completely settled the question of circumcision?

13. What can help us to support the way Christ leads us today?

time of the apostles, Christ has always given wise direction to protect God’s people, make their faith stronger, and help them stay united.—Hebrews 13:8.

¹⁴ Today, “the faithful and discreet slave” gives us the direction we need just when we need it. (Matthew 24:45) This direction proves that Jesus cares for us. Marc, who has four children, says: “Satan is trying to weaken congregations by attacking families. Now with the encouragement to conduct family worship each week, the message is clear for family heads—safeguard your family!”

¹⁵ When we see how Christ is leading us, we will understand that he wants to help us keep our faith strong.

14-16. How does direction from “the faithful and discreet slave” prove that Christ wants to help us keep our faith strong?

For example, an elder named Patrick says: “At first, some found it discouraging to meet in small groups for field service on weekends.” But he says that this change shows how Jesus cares for everyone in the congregation. For example, some brothers and sisters who are shy or who did not go out in the field ministry very much feel more needed and useful. This has strengthened their faith.

¹⁶ Christ also helps us to stay focused on our preaching work, which is the most important work being done on earth today. **(Read Mark 13:10.)** André, a new elder, has always tried to follow any new direction from Jehovah’s organization. He says: “The reductions in branch office personnel remind us of the urgency of the times and the need to focus our energy on the preaching activity.”

Are you helping your family and others to adjust to changes in Jehovah’s organization?
(See paragraphs 17, 18)



SOME EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED

To trust in Christ as Leader means to be convinced that Jesus is leading Jehovah's organization. All of Jesus' instructions come from Jehovah. So when there are changes in the way the organization does certain things, Jehovah's servants do not worry. They happily accept the new direction, even if they do not completely understand the reasons for it

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT CHRIST'S DIRECTION?

¹⁷ The direction we receive from Jesus Christ, our reigning King, will help us now and in the future. Try to focus on the ways you have benefited because you adjusted to recent changes. During your family worship, you could discuss how the changes in the meetings or in the ministry have helped your family.

¹⁸ If we remember that following instructions from Jehovah's organization leads to many good results, it will be easier to follow that direction and be happy. For example, because we do not print as much literature as before, we are saving money. And because we use new technologies, we are able to reach more people with the good news. Can we personally use electronic publications and media more? This is one way that we can support Christ, who wants us to use the organization's resources wisely.

¹⁹ When we support Christ's direction, we help our brothers and sisters to have stronger faith and be more united.

17, 18. Why should we focus on the ways we benefit from adjusting to changes?

19. Why should we support Christ's direction?

André says about recent changes in the size of the worldwide Bethel family: "The fine spirit shown by former Bethelites who adapted to such changes inspires me with trust and respect. They keep pace with Jehovah's chariot by finding joy in any assignment they are given."

HAVE FAITH AND TRUST IN OUR LEADER

²⁰ Soon our Leader, Jesus Christ, will "complete his conquest" and "accomplish awe-inspiring things." (Revelation 6:2; Psalm 45:4) But even now he is preparing us for life in the new world and for the work we will do there, when we teach resurrected ones and help to make the earth a paradise.

²¹ As long as we trust in our Leader and King no matter what happens, he will lead us into the new world. **(Read Psalm 46:1-3.)** Today, changes can be difficult, especially when they affect us in unexpected ways. When that happens, how can we keep our peace of mind and strong faith in Jehovah? We will discuss that question in the next article.

20, 21. (a) Why can we trust in Christ, our Leader? (b) What question will we discuss in the next article?



Maintain Inner Peace Despite Changing Circumstances

“I have calmed and quieted my soul.”—PSALM 131:2.

SONGS: 128, 129

DO YOU REMEMBER?

How can “the peace of God” help us if our life changes in ways we do not expect?

How can we imitate Joseph when our circumstances change suddenly?

What can we learn from Philip the evangelizer?

AFTER Lloyd and Alexandra had served at Bethel for more than 25 years, they were reassigned to the field. At first, they were sad. Lloyd says: “I felt as if Bethel and my work assignment had become my identity. I mentally appreciated the reasons for the change, but in the weeks and months that followed, I often experienced feelings of rejection.” One moment Lloyd felt positive about the change, and the next moment he felt depressed.

² From time to time, there will be changes in life that we did not expect, and they may make us feel a lot of anxiety and stress. (Proverbs 12:25) When changes are difficult to accept or adjust to, what can we do to stay calm? (**Read Psalm 131:1-3.**) Let us see how some servants of Jeho-

1, 2. (a) How can sudden changes in life affect us? (See opening picture.) (b) According to Psalm 131, what can help us to have peace of mind?

vah, both in the past and in our day, were able to have peace of mind even when their life changed suddenly.

HOW “THE PEACE OF GOD” HELPS US

³ Think, for example, about Joseph. Of all of Jacob’s sons, Joseph was his favorite. This made his brothers very jealous. When Joseph was 17, they sold him as a slave. (Genesis 37:2-4, 23-28) For about 13 years, he suffered in Egypt, first as a slave and later as a prisoner. Joseph was far away from his father, whom he loved very much. His situation could have made him feel hopeless and angry, but it did not. What helped him?

⁴ While Joseph was suffering in prison, he must have focused on how Jehovah was helping him. (Genesis 39:21; Psalm 105:17-19) Maybe he also thought about the prophetic dreams he had when he was younger and felt reassured that Jehovah was with him. (Genesis 37:5-11) He probably prayed often and told Jehovah everything that was in his heart. (Psalm 145:18) And Jehovah answered Joseph’s prayers by giving him confidence that He would be “with him” no matter what happened.—Acts 7:9, 10.* (See footnote.)

* Years later, Joseph named his firstborn son Manasseh because, as he said: “God has made me forget all my trouble.” He understood that his son was a gift from Jehovah to comfort him.—Genesis 41:51, footnote.

3. How did Joseph’s life change suddenly?
4. (a) What did Joseph do when he was in prison? (b) How did Jehovah answer Joseph’s prayers?

⁵ No matter how difficult our situation is, we can have “the peace of God” that protects our “mental powers” and makes us feel calm. (**Read Philippians 4:6, 7.**) When we feel anxiety and stress, “the peace of God” can strengthen us to keep serving Jehovah and not give up. Let us learn about some modern-day examples of brothers and sisters who have experienced this.

ASK JEHOVAH TO HELP YOU HAVE PEACE AGAIN

⁶ When Ryan and Juliette heard that their assignment as temporary special pioneers had ended, they felt discouraged. Ryan says: “We took this straight to Jehovah in prayer. We knew that we had a special opportunity here to display trust in him. Many in our congregation were new in the truth, so we prayed that Jehovah would help us to set an excellent example of faith.”

⁷ How did Jehovah answer their prayer? Ryan says: “Immediately after the prayer, the negative feelings and worries that we initially experienced disappeared. The peace of God was guarding our hearts and mental powers. We realized that we could continue to be useful to Jehovah if we maintained the right attitude.”

⁸ God’s spirit can make us feel calm,

5. How can “the peace of God” make us more determined to serve Jehovah?
- 6, 7. How can our prayers help us to have peace of mind again? Give an example.
- 8-10. (a) How can God’s spirit help us when we are anxious? (b) How may Jehovah help us when we focus on serving him?

and it can also direct us to verses in the Bible that will help us to understand what is really important in life. **(Read John 14:26, 27.)** Consider what happened to Philip and Mary, a married couple who had been at Bethel for nearly 25 years. Within four months, both of their mothers and another relative died, and they had to care for Mary’s father, who has dementia.

⁹ Philip says: “I thought I was coping well to a certain point, but something was missing. I came across Colossians 1:11 in a *Watchtower* study article. I was enduring, true, but not in the fullest sense. I needed to ‘endure fully **with patience and joy.**’ This verse reminded me that my joy in life is depen-

dent, not on my circumstances, but on the effect that God’s spirit has in my life.”

¹⁰ Because Philip and Mary stayed focused on serving Jehovah, he blessed them in many ways. Soon after they left Bethel, they both found Bible students who made good progress and who wanted to study more than once a week. Mary says: “They were our joy and Jehovah’s way of telling us that everything was going to be fine.”

DO SOMETHING THAT JEHOVAH CAN BLESS

¹¹ When life changes suddenly, we may become so anxious that all we can think about are our problems. That could have happened to Joseph. Instead, he chose to do the best that he could in his situation. Just as Joseph had worked hard for Potiphar, he worked hard in prison at anything that the chief officer assigned him to do.—Genesis 39:21-23.

¹² One day, Joseph was assigned to care for two prisoners who had served in Pharaoh’s court. Joseph was kind to them, and the men felt comfortable enough to tell him about their worries and the disturbing dreams they had the night before. (Genesis 40:5-8) Joseph did not know it then, but that conversation would eventually lead to his freedom. Two years later, he was released from jail and became a powerful

How can we imitate Joseph no matter what happens in our life?
(See paragraphs 11-13)



11, 12. (a) How did Joseph do something that Jehovah could bless? (b) How did Jehovah reward Joseph?

SOME EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED

The peace of God:

The feeling of calmness and security that Jehovah gives us. It is a product of his holy spirit, and it does not depend on our circumstances. This peace can protect our mind and heart in any situation and can help us continue to serve Jehovah with joy

ruler in Egypt. Only Pharaoh had more power than Joseph!—Genesis 41:1, 14-16, 39-41.

¹³ Like Joseph, we may find ourselves in a situation that we cannot really control. But if we are patient and do the best we can, Jehovah will bless us. (Psalm 37:5) Even when we feel confused and anxious, we will not be “left in despair,” or feel hopeless. (2 Corinthians 4:8; footnote) Jehovah will be with us, especially if we stay focused on our ministry.

STAY FOCUSED ON YOUR MINISTRY

¹⁴ Philip the evangelizer was an excellent example of someone who stayed focused on his ministry no matter how his life changed. At one time, he was enjoying a new assignment in Jerusalem. (Acts 6:1-6) Then everything

13. How can we act in a way that Jehovah will bless, no matter what our situation is?

14-16. How did Philip the evangelizer stay focused on his ministry even though his life changed?

changed. After Stephen was murdered, there was fierce persecution against the Christians and they fled from Jerusalem. Because Philip wanted to stay busy serving Jehovah, he went to the city of Samaria, where people needed to hear the good news.—Matthew 10:5; Acts 8:1, 5.

¹⁵ Philip was willing to go wherever God’s spirit directed him. So Jehovah used him to preach in places where people had not heard the good news yet. Many Jews looked down on Samaritans and treated them badly. But Philip was not prejudiced, and he eagerly shared the good news with them. And the Samaritans listened to him “with one accord”—Acts 8:6-8.

¹⁶ Next, God’s spirit directed Philip to preach in the cities of Ashdod and Caesarea, where there were many Gentiles. (Acts 8:39, 40) Then Philip’s life changed again. He settled down and had a family. But no matter how Philip’s life changed, he stayed busy with his ministry, and Jehovah continued

to bless him and his family.—Acts 21: 8, 9.

¹⁷ Many in full-time service say that focusing on their ministry helps them to stay happy and positive even when their circumstances change. For example, when a South African couple named Osborne and Polite left Bethel, they thought that it would be easy to find part-time work and a place to live. But Osborne says: “Unfortunately, secular work did not come as soon as we had hoped.” Polite says: “We did not find work for three months, and we had no savings. It was a real challenge.”

¹⁸ What helped Osborne and Polite in this stressful situation? Osborne says: “Preaching along with the congregation helped us a lot to keep our minds focused and positive.” Instead of just

17, 18. When our life changes in some way, how will being focused on the ministry help us?

sitting at home worrying, they decided to stay busy in the ministry. Doing this brought them great joy! And Osborne adds: “We searched all over for jobs, and eventually we found work.”

TRUST IN JEHOVAH COMPLETELY

¹⁹ As we have seen, if we make the best of our circumstances and trust in Jehovah completely, we will be able to keep our peace of mind no matter what happens. **(Read Micah 7:7.)** In time, we may realize that the way we adjusted to a change actually strengthened our friendship with Jehovah. Polite explains that being re-assigned from Bethel has taught her what it really means to depend on Jehovah even when life seems very difficult. She says: “My relationship with him has deepened.”

19-21. (a) What will help us to keep our peace of mind? (b) How can we benefit when we adjust to an unexpected change?



The way we adjust to a change may actually strengthen our friendship with Jehovah

²⁰ Mary, who was quoted earlier, is still taking care of her elderly father and pioneering. She says: “I have learned that when I feel anxious, I need to stop, pray, and then relax. To leave things in Jehovah’s hands has probably been the biggest lesson that I have learned, and it will be ever so needed in the future.”

²¹ Lloyd and Alexandra admit that the changes in their life tested their faith in ways they did not expect. But they can see how these tests have actually

helped them. Now they know that their faith is strong enough to bring them comfort when they have problems, and they feel that they have become better people.

²² In this system, our lives can change suddenly. We may receive a different assignment in Jehovah’s service, develop health problems, or need to care for our family in a new way. But no matter what may happen, be confident that Jehovah cares about you and will help you at the right time. (Hebrews 4:16; 1 Peter 5:6, 7) And for now, do the best you can in your situation. Pray to your Father, Jehovah, and learn to rely on him completely. In this way, no matter how your circumstances change, you will always have the peace of mind that comes from Jehovah.

22. If we do the best we can with our circumstances, what can we be sure of?



Unexpected changes
can lead to unexpected
blessings!
(See paragraphs 19-21)



Jehovah Richly Blessed My Decision

AS TOLD BY CHARLES MOLOHAN

It was 1939. We woke up in the middle of the night and drove more than an hour to the small city of Joplin in southwestern Missouri, U.S.A. There, we started quietly putting tracts under the door of each house in the territory. As soon as we finished, we got into the car and drove to meet with the other groups. By now it was early morning. But why did we go in the ministry that day before sunrise and leave the territory so quickly? I will tell you later.

I WAS born in 1934. My parents, Fred and Edna Molohan, had already been Bible Students (Jehovah's Witnesses) for 20 years. I am grateful that they taught me to love Jehovah. We lived in Parsons, a small town in southeastern Kansas. Almost everyone in our congregation was anointed. Our family was regular at the meetings and in the preaching work. On Saturday afternoon we usually did street work, which is what we call public witnessing today. Sometimes we got tired, but Dad always treated us to some ice cream after we finished.

Our little congregation had a large territory with several small towns and many farms. Instead of giving us money for our literature, some farmers would give us homegrown vegetables, fresh eggs (right out of the nest), or even live chickens. Dad had already contributed money for the literature, so this food helped to feed the family.

WITNESSING CAMPAIGNS

My parents got a phonograph to use in the preaching work. I was too small to use it, but I enjoyed helping Dad and Mom to play recordings of Brother Rutherford's talks on return visits and Bible studies.

Dad attached a large speaker to the top of our car, a 1936 Ford, and he made it a sound car. It was great for service. Usually, we first played some music to get people's attention, and then we played a Bible talk. After that, we offered literature to interested people.

In the little town of Cherryvale, Kansas, Dad drove the sound car into the town park, where many people were relaxing on Sundays. Then, the police came and told him that he could use the sound car only outside the park. Dad moved the car to a street next to the park so that people there could still clearly hear the program. It

was always exciting to be with Dad and my older brother, Jerry, at times like these.

During those years, we did special campaigns in territories where people were very opposed. As I mentioned in the beginning, we would get up in the middle of the night and quietly put tracts or booklets under the doors of people's homes. Afterward, we would all meet outside the city to see if the police had arrested anyone.

Another exciting part of our ministry was what we called an information march. We would wear large signs and march through a city. I remember that one time the brothers came to our town and marched wearing signs that said "Religion Is a Snare and a Racket." They started at our home, walked for about one and a half kilometers (1 mile) through the town, and then came back to us. Happily, no one stopped them, but many people were curious about what was happening.

CONVENTIONS WHEN I WAS YOUNG

Our family often traveled to Texas for conventions. Dad worked for the railroad company, so we could ride the train for free to go to the conventions and visit our relatives. Mom's older brother, Fred Wismar, and his wife, Eulalie, lived in Temple, Texas. Uncle Fred learned the truth in the early 1900's when he was young, got baptized, and told his siblings, including my mother, about what he had learned. The brothers in central Texas knew Uncle Fred very well because he used to be a zone servant (now called a circuit overseer). He was kind, happy, and zealous and was a very good example for me.

In 1941, we traveled by train to St. Louis, Missouri, for a large convention. All the young ones were invited to sit together near the platform to hear Brother Rutherford's talk "Children of the King." At the end of his talk, all 15,000 young ones got a big surprise. Brother Rutherford and his assistants gave each one of us the new book *Children*.

In April 1943, we attended the "Call to Action" Assembly in Coffeyville, Kansas. There, we heard the announcement that all congregations would have a new school, the Theocratic Ministry School. We also received a booklet with 52 lessons that we would use in the school. Later that year, I gave my first student talk. That assembly was also special for me because, together with a few others, I got baptized in the cold water of a pond at a nearby farm.

I WANTED TO SERVE AT BETHEL

I finished high school in 1951 and had to decide what I was going to do with my life. My brother Jerry had served in Bethel. I really wanted to go to Bethel too, so I sent in my application. Soon afterward, I was invited to Bethel and started serving there on March 10, 1952. This was a very good decision that has helped me to serve God more fully.

I hoped to work in the printery to help produce our magazines and other publications. But I never got to do that. Instead, I was assigned to work as a waiter and later in the kitchen. I enjoyed this work and learned a lot. We worked in shifts, and I had some time off during the day. I often went to the Bethel library and used the many books there to do my personal study. This helped me to strengthen my faith and my friendship with Jehovah. I became even more determined to serve Jehovah at Bethel for as long as I could. Jerry had left Bethel in 1949 and married Patricia, but they lived nearby in Brooklyn and helped and encouraged me while I was still new in Bethel.

Shortly after I came to Bethel, the brothers started looking for Bethelites they could add to the list of Bethel speakers. Brothers on this list were assigned to visit congregations up to 320 kilometers (200 miles) away from Brooklyn. There, they would give a public talk and work with the congregation in field service. I was one of the brothers chosen. Nervously, I started



With my father and mother in front of our sound car



Preparing to broadcast from the WBBR studio



We used these handbills to advertise WBBR

making these visits and giving public talks. Back then public talks lasted one hour. I usually traveled to the congregations by train. I remember very well one Sunday afternoon in the winter of 1954. I got on a train going back to New York and was supposed to arrive at Bethel early in the evening. But on the way back, there was a storm with very strong winds and snow. The electric engines on the train stopped working, and I did not arrive in New York City until five o'clock Monday morning. I took the subway from the train station to Brooklyn and went immediately to work in the kitchen. I was a little late and very tired because I had not slept all night. But the joy I had serving the congregations and meeting so many new brothers and sisters was worth more than any sacrifices I made.

During my first years at Bethel, I also started to participate in a Bible study program that was broadcast every week on our radio station, WBBR. The studios were on the second floor of the 124 Columbia Heights building. Brother Alexander H. Macmillan, who had served at Bethel for many years, regularly participated in these radio programs. We used to call him Brother Mac. He was an excellent example for us younger brothers in Bethel because he had remained faithful despite many difficulties.

In 1958, my assignment changed and I started to work closely with the graduates of Gilead School. I would help these zealous men and

women get their visas, and I would make travel arrangements for them. Travel by plane was very expensive back then, so most graduates who went to Africa and Asia would travel by cargo ship. Years later, when the prices for flights became cheaper, most of the missionaries traveled to their assignments by plane.

CONVENTION TRAVEL

In 1960, I arranged for charter flights from the United States to Europe for the international conventions in 1961. I flew to one of those conventions in Hamburg, Germany. After the convention, three other Bethel brothers and I rented a car and drove through Germany to Italy and visited the branch office in Rome. From there, we went to France, crossed the Pyrenees Mountains, and entered Spain, where our work was under ban. We were able to give the brothers in Barcelona some publications, which we had wrapped so that they appeared to be gifts. It was exciting to meet them! From there, we drove to Amsterdam and flew back to New York.

In 1962, I was assigned to make travel arrangements for the 583 brothers and sisters who would attend a special series of international conventions around the world. This was the "Everlasting Good News" Assembly of 1963. The delegates would attend conventions in Europe, Asia, and the South Pacific and would then go on



With Patricia and Jerry Molohan on our way to the 1969 “Peace on Earth” Convention



Putting together Gilead diplomas before the graduation program

to Honolulu, Hawaii, and finally Pasadena, California. They would also visit Lebanon and Jordan for special tours of the lands of the Bible. Our department arranged for the flights and hotel reservations and got all the necessary visas.

NEW TRAVEL PARTNER

The year 1963 was also very important to me for another reason. On June 29, I married Lila Rogers from Missouri, who had come to Bethel in 1960. A week after our wedding, Lila and I joined the around-the-world tour and visited Greece, Egypt, and Lebanon. From there, we took a short flight to Jordan. However, our work there was restricted, and the authorities did not give Jehovah’s Witnesses visas. So we were not sure what would happen when we arrived. Imagine how happy and surprised we were when we saw a group of brothers and sisters standing on top of the tiny airport terminal with a big banner that said “Welcome Jehovah’s Witnesses”! It was wonderful to visit the lands of the Bible and see the places where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob lived, where Jesus and the apostles preached, and where Christianity began to spread “to the ends of the earth.”—Acts 13:47.

For 55 years, Lila has been my loyal companion in all of our assignments. We visited Spain and Portugal several times when our work there

was under ban. We could encourage the brothers and sisters and bring them literature and other things they needed. We were even able to visit some of our brothers who were in prison in Cádiz, Spain. I was very happy that I could give them an encouraging talk.

In the years since 1963, I have made travel arrangements for international conventions in Africa, Australia, Central and South America, Europe, the Far East, Hawaii, New Zealand, and Puerto Rico. Lila and I have been to many unforgettable conventions, like the one in Warsaw, Poland, in 1989. Many brothers from Russia were able to come to that large convention. This was their first convention ever! We met brothers and sisters who had been in prison in the Soviet Union for many years because of their faith.

Another assignment I really enjoyed has been visiting and encouraging Bethel families and missionaries around the world. On our last such visit, we went to South Korea and were able to meet with 50 of our brothers who were in prison in Suwon. They were all very positive and were looking forward to serving Jehovah again without restrictions. Meeting them encouraged us very much!—Romans 1:11, 12.

INCREASE BRINGS JOY

I have seen how Jehovah has blessed his people over the years. When I was baptized in 1943,

there were about 100,000 publishers. Now there are more than 8,000,000 serving Jehovah in 240 lands. The hard work of the Gilead graduates has greatly contributed to this increase. It has given me great joy to work closely with many of these missionaries and to help them get to their assignments.

I am grateful that while I was still young, I decided to use my life in Jehovah's service and that I applied for Bethel. Jehovah has richly blessed me all these years. Besides all the things we enjoy in our Bethel service, Lila and I enjoyed preaching with several congregations in Brooklyn for over 50 years and have made many true friends.

I continue to serve in Bethel with the support of Lila each day. Even though I am now over 84 years old, I am happy that I can still do meaning-

ful work and help with the branch correspondence.

It is such a joy to belong to Jehovah's marvelous organization and to see how true the words of Malachi 3:18 are: "You will again see the distinction between a righteous person and a wicked person, between one serving God and one not serving him." Every day we see that Satan's world is getting worse and that people have no hope and very little joy in life. But those who love and serve Jehovah have a happy life, even in these critical times, and a sure hope for the future. It is truly a privilege to tell others about the good news! (Matthew 24:14) God's Kingdom will soon replace this old world with a paradise. How much we want that day to come! Then, everyone on earth will be healthy and happy and will live forever.

With Lila today



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