

Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education



Moses—at first hesitant, but he let God use him

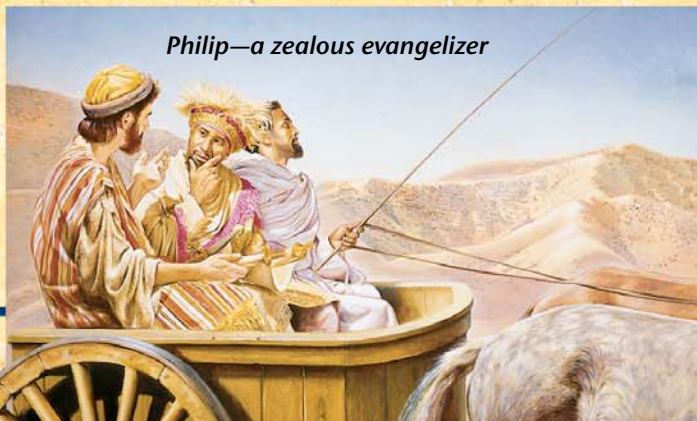
WHAT CAN YOU LEARN FROM EXAMPLES SET BY *Jehovah's Servants in the Past?*

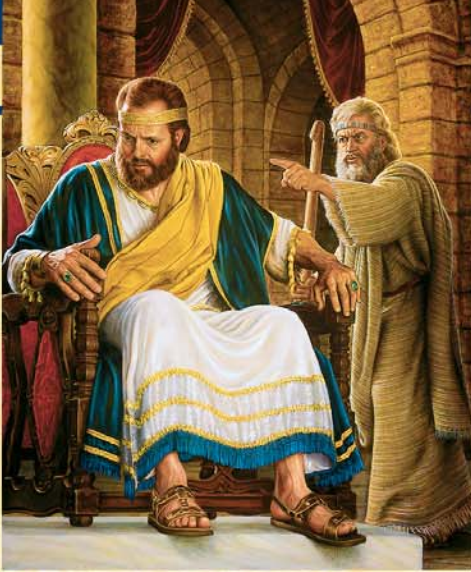
Paul—logical, persuasive



*Apollos—eloquent speaker
but willing to accept counsel*

Philip—a zealous evangelizer





Nathan reached King David's heart



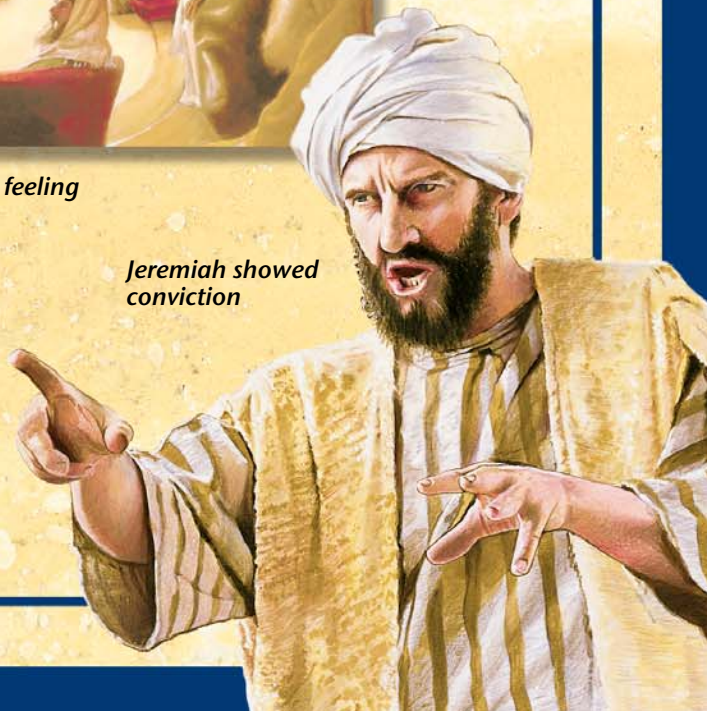
Israelite girl—fearless in expressing her faith



Peter preached with deep feeling



*Esther spoke
with great respect*



*Jeremiah showed
conviction*

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“I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk.”—Isa. 48:17.

(Student's name)

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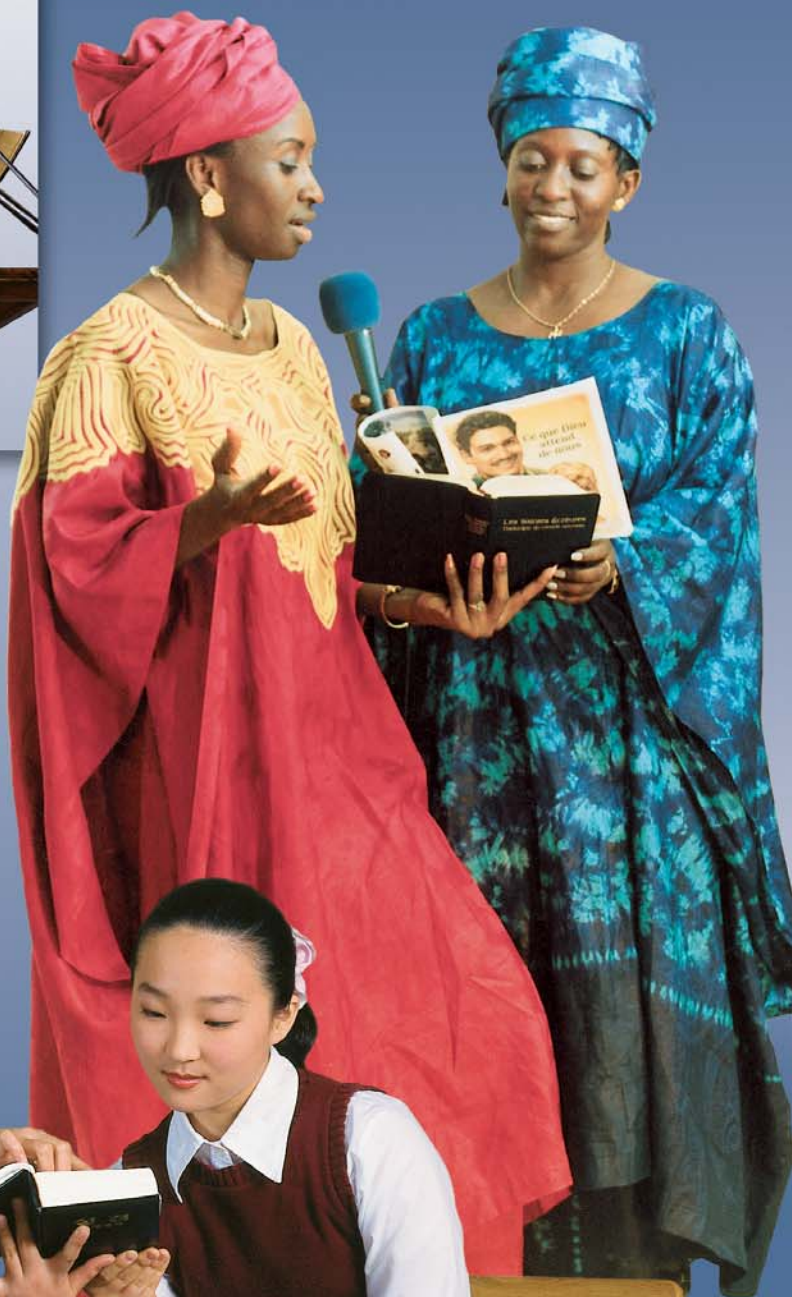
Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*.

Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education English (be-E)

Made in the United States of America

How to Improve

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Welcome to the Theocratic Ministry School

AROUND the earth, in upwards of 200 lands, millions of students are benefiting each week from Theocratic Ministry School education. Some are new. Others have attended the school for many years. The school is conducted in tens of thousands of locations. Wherever you live on earth, the same program of education is available to you. People of all ages, ethnic groups, and educational backgrounds are receiving this theocratic instruction, free of charge.

When the school was inaugurated in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1943, its purpose was stated in these words: "To prepare all 'faithful men,' those who have heard God's Word and proved their faith therein, to 'be able to teach others' . . . to the one end of making each one . . . better equipped to publicly present the hope that is within him." (*Course in Theocratic Ministry*, p. 4) The school's objective has remained the same to this day.

Really, what is the best thing that any of us can do with our God-given gift of speech? The Bible answers: "Every breathing thing—let it praise Jah." (Ps. 150:6) When we do that, we bring joy to the heart of our heavenly Father. We give evidence to him that our own hearts are responding with gratitude to his goodness and love. No wonder Christians are encouraged always to "offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name"! (Heb. 13:15) With a



view to helping you improve in your ability to use your God-given gifts to praise Jehovah, we welcome you as a student in the Theocratic Ministry School.

While public reading and the arts of speaking and teaching are given much attention in the school, the benefits of Theocratic Ministry School education are not limited to that. As you participate, you will be helped to cultivate such valuable skills as personal reading, listening and remembering, studying, doing research, analyzing and organizing, conversing, answering questions, and putting thoughts down in writing. The Bible itself and Bible-based publications will provide the basis for study and for comments and presentations given in the school. As you fill your mind with the precious truths found in God's Word, you will learn to think God's thoughts. How beneficial that can be in every aspect of life! Of the value of God's Word, 20th-century university educator William Lyon Phelps wrote: "Everyone who has a thorough knowledge of the Bible may truly be called educated. . . . I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without a Bible."

FEATURES OF THE SCHOOL

- A weekly program of reading, study, and research centered on the Bible
- Instruction in public reading and in the arts of speaking and teaching
- Participation in class discussions
- Opportunities to give presentations before the congregation
- Personal assistance to help you progress

How to Benefit to the Full

Of course, in order to benefit fully from the education provided in the Theocratic Ministry School, you, the student, must make a personal effort. The apostle Paul urged his Christian associate Timothy: "Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, that your advancement may be manifest to all persons." (1 Tim. 4: 15) In what practical ways can you apply yourself?

If at all possible, attend the Theocratic Ministry School each week. Make wise use of this textbook, *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education*. Print your name in the space provided for it on the title page. Always bring the book with you when you attend the school. This textbook is also a workbook. When you read in it important points that you feel will help you, underline them. Use the generous margins to write down practical points that you learn during discussions at the school.

A printed copy of the program to be followed in the Theocratic Ministry School is provided separately. The schedule will also include details as to how the school will be conducted. You may find it practical to keep the schedule in this book, where it will be handy.

In preparing for the weekly school sessions, keep in mind that the Bible is the principal textbook. Give priority to reading any portion of the Bible that may be scheduled for the week. If you are also able to read in advance the material for the various program parts, this too will be very beneficial.

During the school, there may be opportunities for audience participation. Take full advantage of these. Getting involved in such discussions is an important factor in remembering what you hear and being able to put it to use in your personal life.

Of course, all students will have opportunities to give talks or demonstrations before the congregation. Make good use of each one of those opportunities. Really apply yourself to improve in whatever speech quality has been assigned to you. You will be given counsel with a view to your continued progress. Welcome that personal help. In your book, make a note of specific suggestions as to what you might personally do to improve. Since it is difficult for a person to perceive himself the way others do, the loving, Bible-based suggestions and counsel provided can contribute significantly to your progress. That is true even if you have been enrolled in the school for many years.—Prov. 1:5.

Would you like to make more rapid progress? If you show personal initiative, that can be done. Study in advance the material that is to be covered in each student talk. If a substitute speaker is needed, you will be in a position to volunteer, and that will give you more experience. When others give talks, listen carefully to how they handle the material. We learn from one another.

Additionally, if your circumstances permit, you can accelerate your progress by personally studying ahead in this textbook. After you have learned well what is in the next 15 studies, proceed to work your way through the “Program for Developing Ability as a Speaker and a

SKILLS THAT ARE GIVEN ATTENTION

- Listening and remembering
- Personal reading
- Studying
- Doing research
- Analyzing and organizing
- Conversing
- Answering questions
- Putting thoughts down in writing

Teacher,” beginning on page 78. First, study each lesson, and do the exercises that are outlined in connection with it. Apply in your ministry what you are learning. This can greatly enhance your progress as a speaker and as a teacher of God’s Word.

Your Theocratic Ministry School education will help to prepare you for what matters most in life. Since we are alive because of God’s will, to praise him is to realize the very purpose of our existence. Jehovah God deserves praise of the highest quality. (Rev. 4:11) The education that we receive in the school is a means to accomplish this so that we may think clearly, act wisely, and communicate effectively the marvelous truths from God’s inspired Word.

A FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO BUILD

The ability to communicate effectively is an art. Not everyone does it well. Many textbooks have been designed to help people to improve in this area. However, the Creator, the One who endowed humans with the ability to speak, knows more about speaking and teaching than any human speech instructor. His only-begotten Son cooperated with him as the Master Worker in producing the human brain and the organs of speech as well as all the other marvels of creation.

As angels and then humans were brought into existence, that Son served as the Word of God, the primary One through whom God himself conveyed instruction to them. (Prov. 8:30; John 1:1-3) That Son was sent to earth as the Lord Jesus Christ. Concerning him, the inspired record says: “The crowds were astounded at his way of teaching.” And those who heard him testified: “Never has another man spoken like this.” (Matt. 7:28; John 7:46) Over 40 times Jesus is spoken of in the

Gospels as Teacher, and with good reason. There is much about speaking and teaching that we can learn from him.

The Bible also contains a record of how Jehovah God used men and women from many backgrounds to accomplish his will. Some of them delivered brief but powerful messages. Many did not speak before large audiences, but they faithfully shared in giving a witness concerning the true God and his purpose. Apparently, most were not eloquent speakers, but God blessed their efforts. We can learn from what the Bible tells us about how they carried on their ministry. —Ps. 68:11.

Of course, the Bible is not a textbook about public speaking. But for those who read with discernment, it contains valuable insights regarding effective speaking and teaching. *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education* endeavors to build on that foundation.

Take Delight in God's Word

HAPPY is the man whose “delight is in the law of Jehovah.” Such a man reads God’s Word “in an undertone day and night.” (Ps. 1:1, 2) Do you experience that delight? How can you increase the joy that God’s Word brings you?

Listen as Jehovah Speaks

Do not simply read words. Visualize the situations about which you read. Imagine the voices of those who are quoted. As you read the opening chapters of the Bible, hear Jehovah himself reveal, step by step, what is done in making the earth fit for man. Listen as he tells his Son, the Master Worker, that the time has come to bring the first humans into existence. Picture the scene: Adam and Eve rebel, God passes judgment on them and, subsequently, he ousts them from Paradise. (Genesis, chaps. 1-3) Feel a sense of awe when you read that a voice from heaven identifies Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the beloved, the one sent by God to lay down his life for mankind. (Matt. 3:16, 17) Try to imagine the apostle John’s reaction when he hears Jehovah declare: “Look! I am making all things new.” (Rev. 21:5) Truly, reading God’s Word in this way is a delightful experience!

Continue reading the inspired record, and you will come to know Jehovah as a majestic and awe-inspiring person. You will feel strongly drawn to this One who loves us, deals mercifully with us, helps us if we humbly keep trying to do his will, and shows us how to enjoy success in all that we do.—Josh. 1:8; Ps. 8:1; Isa. 41:10.

The more time you spend reading the Bible, the greater will be your satisfaction as you grow in knowledge of God’s will for you. But the delight will go far beyond that. When your reading provides you the help you need to deal wisely with problems, you will feel like the psalmist who said: “Your reminders are wonderful. That is why my soul has observed them.” (Ps. 119:129) You too will rejoice as you discern from the Scriptures principles that help to mold your thinking and your desires in a godly way.—Isa. 55:8, 9.

The Bible provides moral guidance that shields us from harm and

shows us the right way. As we read it, we sense that Jehovah is a Father who knows what problems will result when we give in to imperfect fleshly desires. He does not want us to suffer the terrible consequences that will inevitably come from flouting his high moral standards. He cares about us and wants us to enjoy the best way of life. Our reading of his Word helps us to appreciate more fully what a blessing it is to have him as our God and heavenly Father.

Read the Bible Daily

The psalmist said of the man who reads God's Word daily: "Everything he does will succeed." (Ps. 1:3) Yes, despite our imperfections, despite our living in Satan's wicked system of things, and despite the Devil's efforts to devour us, regular reading and application of what is in God's Word will enable us to succeed in everything that involves our relationship with Jehovah.

Since we are under pressure from this old system, absorbing the Creator's thoughts for even a few precious moments each day can impart strength to us. Some who were imprisoned for their faith had access only to scattered verses that they found quoted in newspaper articles. They clipped these, memorized them, and meditated upon them. Jehovah blessed their efforts because they did what their circumstances allowed in taking in knowledge from God's Word. (Matt. 5:3) Yet, most of us have far more freedom than that. We should not conclude that quickly reading a Bible verse once a day will, in itself, have some miraculous effect. Blessings will be ours, however, if we adjust our priorities so as to read a portion of the Bible each day, think about it, and put it to work in our lives.

Realistically, our best plans can be disrupted. When that happens, we give priority to the things that really matter. For example, we would not on purpose go without drinking water for a day or two. Regardless of what comes up in our daily lives, then, we should take some time to refresh ourselves with the waters of truth.—Acts 17:11.

Read All of God's Word

Have you personally read the entire Bible? Some have felt overwhelmed by the prospect of reading from Genesis to Revelation. Hence, many who wanted to read the entire Bible started by first reading the Christian Greek Scriptures. Why? Perhaps it was because they

could more readily see how those Bible books applied to them as individuals seeking to walk in the footsteps of Christ. Or perhaps it was because the Christian Greek Scriptures did not seem like so much to read—only a little over one fourth of the Bible. But after they completed reading those 27 books, they turned their attention to the 39 books of the Hebrew Scriptures and began reading and enjoying them. By the time they finished the Hebrew Scriptures, they had established a pattern of regular Bible reading, so they continued, reading the Christian Greek Scriptures for a second time, and they have never stopped. May you likewise make daily reading of God's Word your lifelong habit.

Is there someone in your family or congregation who cannot read? Why not offer to read the Bible regularly to that person? You will benefit, and he too will benefit as he meditates on what he hears and then applies it in his life.—Rev. 1:3.

MAKE A SUCCESS OF DAILY BIBLE READING

A major part of the education offered in the Theocratic Ministry School centers on the program of Bible reading. We urge you to share in it.

A modest portion of the Bible is scheduled for personal reading and for discussion in the school each week. This will progressively take you through the entire Bible.

In order to make daily Bible reading a part of your life, set aside a regular time for it—perhaps early in the morning, at noontime, at suppertime, or before you go to bed. Just reading snatches of it during the day when you happen to have time will not ensure regularity.

If you are a family head, show personal interest by helping family members to develop

a good routine. Doing some Bible reading as a family may encourage family members to pursue daily Bible reading on a personal basis.

Daily Bible reading requires self-discipline. You are not born with a desire for it. You need to “form a longing” for God's Word. (1 Pet. 2:2) As you cultivate the habit, your spiritual appetite will grow. Then you may find that you want to broaden out by undertaking special projects of Bible reading and study to deepen your understanding and appreciation for the spiritual riches that Jehovah has made available to us.

When you do your Bible reading, take time to ponder the meaning of what you read—what it tells you about Jehovah, how it can influence your life beneficially, and how you can use it to help others.

In time, you may want to undertake special projects in connection with your Bible reading. Some of these can enhance your appreciation for the relationship between the various parts of the Bible. If your Bible has marginal references, these may direct you to historical details and parallel accounts. They may help you to discern the circumstances that led to the writing of various psalms as well as letters penned by apostles of Jesus Christ. *Insight on the Scriptures* provides a wealth of background information on people, places, and qualities mentioned in the Bible. Charts draw attention to the fulfillment of Bible prophecies, show which kings and prophets were contemporaries, and give approximate dates for many Bible events.

As you meditate on what you learn, you will understand the reasons why certain conditions developed among God's people. You will also find out why Jehovah dealt with his people as he did. You will see how Jehovah evaluates the actions of governments, peoples, and individuals. This will give you greater insight into his thinking.

Bible history will become more interesting to you when you visualize the region in which events occurred. Maps of Bible lands reveal the terrain as well as the distances between places. For example, approximately where did the Israelites cross the Red Sea? What was the size of the Promised Land? How far did Jesus walk as he carried out his earthly ministry? What sights did Paul see on his missionary journeys? Maps and geographic descriptions convey details that will bring your reading to life. Where can you find maps of the Bible lands? Some appear in the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. The *Insight* volumes contain some 70 maps, and there is a map index at the end of the first volume. Use the *Watch Tower Publications Index* to locate other maps. If these resources are not available, use maps published in *The Watchtower* to assist you in your Bible reading.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, King David extolled Jehovah, saying: "How precious your thoughts are! O God, how much does the grand sum of them amount to!" (Ps. 139:17) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the apostle Paul praised Jehovah because He "has shone on our hearts to illuminate them with the glorious knowledge of God by the face of Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6) David and Paul lived centuries apart; yet, they both delighted in God's Word. So can you if you take the time to read all that Jehovah has given you in the pages of his inspired Word.

“Pay Attention to How You Listen”

LISTENING is an important factor in learning. It can also influence a person’s prospects for survival. When Jehovah was preparing to deliver his people from bondage in Egypt, he gave instructions to Moses, who told the older men of Israel what they must do in order to save their firstborn from the angel of death. (Ex. 12:21-23) The older men then conveyed this information to each household. This was done orally. The people had to listen carefully. How did they respond? The Bible reports: “All the sons of Israel did just as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron. They did just so.” (Ex. 12:28, 50, 51) As a result, Israel experienced an awe-inspiring deliverance.

Today, Jehovah is preparing us for an even greater deliverance. Surely, the instruction he provides merits our earnest attention. Such instruction is given at the congregation meetings. Are you benefiting fully from such gatherings? Much depends on how you listen.

Do you retain highlights of the instruction given at the meetings? Is it your habit, week by week, to seek ways to apply in your own life the instruction given or to share it with others?

Prepare Your Heart

To benefit fully from the instruction provided at Christian meetings, we need to prepare our hearts. The importance of doing so is highlighted by what occurred during the reign of King Jehoshaphat of Judah. Jehoshaphat took a bold stand for true worship. He “removed the high places and the sacred poles from Judah” and commissioned princes, Levites, and priests to teach Jehovah’s Law to the people in all the cities of Judah. Still, “the high places themselves did not disappear.” (2 Chron. 17:6-9; 20:33) The worship of false gods and the unauthorized form of worship of Jehovah practiced at the pagan high places were so strongly entrenched that they were not eradicated.

TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LISTENING

- Pray for help to focus your attention on the program
- Keep your eyes on the speaker
- When scriptures are cited, look them up in your Bible, and follow along
- Look for the objective of a talk
- Mentally respond to questions asked; listen carefully to comments given
- Take brief notes
- Isolate points that you personally plan to apply

Why did the instruction arranged by Jehoshaphat fail to have a lasting influence? The record continues: “The people themselves had not yet prepared their heart for the God of their forefathers.” They heard but failed to act accordingly. Perhaps they felt that traveling to the temple in Jerusalem to offer sacrifices was inconvenient. In any case, their hearts were not moved by faith.

To avoid drifting back to the ways of Satan’s world, we must prepare our hearts to receive the instruction that Jehovah is providing today. How? One important way is by prayer. We should pray that we will receive divine instruction with a thankful spirit. (Ps. 27:4; 95:2) This will help us to appreciate the efforts of our brothers who, though imperfect, make themselves available for use by Jehovah in teaching his people. It will move us to thank Jehovah not only for new things that we are learning but also for the opportunity to deepen our appreciation for matters that we have learned before. Having the desire to do God’s will fully, we pray: “Instruct me, O Jehovah, about your way. . . . Unify my heart to fear your name.”—Ps. 86:11.

Focus Your Attention

There are many obstacles to our listening attentively. Our minds may be crowded with anxieties. Noise and movement in the audience or outside the meeting place may distract us. Physical discomfort may make it difficult for us to concentrate. Those with young children often find that their attention is divided. What can help us to keep our attention focused on the program?

The eyes strongly influence where we focus our attention. Use your eyes to help you concentrate by keeping them on the speaker. When he cites a Bible text—even a familiar one—look it up, and follow along as he reads it. Resist the temptation to turn your head in the direction of every noise or movement. If the eyes are flooding your mind with distracting information, you will miss much of what is being presented from the platform.

If any “disquieting thoughts” make it difficult for you to focus on the program, pray to Jehovah for the calmness of mind and heart needed to pay attention. (Ps. 94:19; Phil. 4:6, 7) Do so repeatedly if necessary. (Matt. 7:7, 8) The congregation meetings are a provision from Jehovah. You can be confident that he wants you to benefit from them.—1 John 5:14, 15.

Listening to Talks

Likely, you can recall favorite points that you have heard in talks. Listening to a talk, however, involves more than just collecting outstanding points. A talk is like a journey. Although there may be interesting things to see along the way, the main thing is the destination, the objective. The speaker may be trying to lead the audience to a certain conclusion or move them to take some action.

Consider the speech Joshua made to the nation of Israel, recorded at Joshua 24:1-15. His objective was to move the people to take an uncompromising stand for true worship by completely separating themselves from the idolatry of the surrounding nations. Why was that so important? The prevalence of false worship posed a serious threat to the nation's good standing with Jehovah. The people responded to Joshua's plea by saying: "It is unthinkable, on our part, to leave Jehovah so as to serve other gods. . . . We shall serve Jehovah." And they did!—Josh. 24:16, 18, 31.

As you listen to a talk, try to discern its objective. Consider how the points the speaker brings out contribute toward reaching that objective. Ask yourself what the information calls for you to do.

Listening During Discussions

The *Watchtower* Study, the Congregation Book Study, and portions of the Service Meeting are conducted as question-and-answer discussions of printed Bible-based material.

Listening during a discussion is, in certain respects, like sharing in a conversation. To benefit fully, listen carefully. Observe the direction in which the discussion is moving. Note how the conductor emphasizes the theme and the main points. Mentally respond to his questions. Listen as others explain and apply the material. Looking at the information from the viewpoint of others may give you fresh insight into a familiar subject. Contribute to the interchange by offering your own expressions of faith.—Rom. 1:12.

Studying the assigned material in advance will help you to be absorbed in the discussion and to follow the comments made by others. If your circumstances make it difficult to study the material thoroughly, at least take a few minutes to get an overview of the information prior to the meeting. Doing this will enable you to get more out of the discussion.

Listening at Assemblies and Conventions

At assemblies and conventions, there are likely to be more distractions than at congregation meetings. This can make listening a greater challenge. What can help us?

An important factor is getting enough rest at night. Before the program begins each day, fix the theme firmly in mind. Look at the title of each talk, and try to anticipate what will be presented. Make good use of your Bible. Many people find that taking brief notes of main points helps them to keep their minds focused on the program. Make a note of instruction that you plan to apply in your own life and ministry. Discuss a few points as you travel to and from the assembly site each day. This will help you to retain the information.

Training Children to Listen

Christian parents can help their children—even infants—to become “wise for salvation” by bringing them to congregation meetings, assemblies, and conventions. (2 Tim. 3:15) Since children vary in disposition and attention span, discernment is needed to help them learn to listen attentively. You may find the following suggestions to be helpful.

At home, arrange times for your young children to sit quietly and read or look at the pictures in our Christian publications. At the meetings, avoid using toys to keep young ones occupied. As was true in ancient Israel, so today young ones are present “in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn.” (Deut. 31:12) Where practical, some parents provide even very young children with personal copies of the publications being considered. As children get a little older, help them prepare to have a share in programs that call for audience participation.

The Scriptures reveal a close link between listening to Jehovah and obeying him. This can be seen in Moses’ words to the nation of Israel: “I have put life and death before you, the blessing and the malediction; and you must choose life . . . by loving Jehovah your God, *by listening to his voice* and by sticking to him.” (Deut. 30:19, 20) Today, listening to the instruction Jehovah provides and obediently applying it in our lives are essential to gaining God’s approval and the blessing of everlasting life. How vital, then, that we heed Jesus’ admonition: “Pay attention to how you listen”!—Luke 8:18.

You Can Improve Your Memory

JEHOVAH GOD created the human brain with the marvelous ability to remember. He designed it to be a reservoir that could be tapped without losing the precious things that had been put into it. The brain's design is consistent with God's purpose that humans should live forever.—Ps. 139:14; John 17:3.

But you may feel that too much of what you take into your mind gets lost. It does not seem to be there when you want it. What can you do to improve your memory?

Take an Interest

Interest is an important factor in memory improvement. If we make it a habit to be observant, to be interested in people and what is going on around us, our mind is stimulated. It will then be easier for us to respond with similar interest when we read or hear something of lasting value.

It is not uncommon for a person to have difficulty in remembering the names of people. Yet, as Christians, we know that people are important—fellow Christians, those to whom we witness, and others with whom we have dealings as we care for necessary matters of life. What can help us to remember the names that we really should? The apostle Paul listed by name 26 of those in a congregation to which he wrote. His interest in them is indicated by the fact that he not only knew their names but mentioned specific details concerning many of them. (Rom. 16:3-16) Some modern-day traveling overseers of Jehovah's Witnesses do very well in remembering names, although they move from one congregation to another each week. What helps them? They may make it a practice to use a person's name several times when they first speak together. They put forth effort to associate the person's name with his face. Additionally, they spend time with various individuals in the field ministry and at meals together. When you meet someone, will you

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR READING RECALL

- After reading a portion of text, ask yourself, 'What is the main point of what I just read?' If you cannot recall the key point, then look back and find it in the material
- When you finish reading an entire chapter or article, test yourself again. List all the main points. If they do not readily come to mind, look back and review what you read

remember that person's name? Start by having a good reason for remembering the name; then try some of the foregoing suggestions.

Remembering what you read is also important. What can help you to improve in this regard? Both interest and comprehension play a part. You need to care enough about what you are reading to focus your full attention on it. You will not retain information if your mind is somewhere else while you are trying to read. Comprehension is improved when you relate the information to things that are familiar to you or to knowledge that you already have. Ask yourself: 'How and when can I apply this information in my own life? How can I use it to help someone else?' Comprehension is also improved if you read phrases instead of individual words. You will more readily grasp ideas and identify principal thoughts, so they are easier to remember.

Take Time to Review

Experts in the field of education emphasize the value of review. In one study, a college professor demonstrated that one minute spent in prompt review would double the amount of information retained. So immediately after you finish your reading—or some major portion of it—mentally review the principal ideas in order to fix these in your mind. Think about how you would explain in your own words any new points you learned. By refreshing your memory soon after you have read an idea, you will extend the length of time that you can retain the point.

Then in the next few days, seek an opportunity to review what you read by sharing the information with someone else. You might do so with a family member, someone in the congregation, a workmate, a schoolmate, a neighbor, or someone you meet in the field ministry. Try to repeat not only the key facts but also the Scriptural reasoning that goes with them. Doing this will benefit you, helping to fix important things in your memory; it will also benefit others.

Meditate on Important Things

In addition to reviewing what you have read and telling others about it, you will find that meditating on important things that have been learned is beneficial. The Bible writers Asaph and David

did that. Asaph said: “I shall remember the practices of Jah; for I will remember your marvelous doing of long ago. And I shall certainly meditate on all your activity, and with your dealings I will concern myself.” (Ps. 77:11, 12) David similarly wrote: “During the night watches I meditate on you,” and “I have remembered days of long ago; I have meditated on all your activity.” (Ps. 63:6; 143:5) Do you do that?

Such deep, concentrated thinking in which you ponder on Jehovah’s doings, his qualities, and expressions of his will does more than help you to retain facts. If you make a practice of such thinking, it will impress truly vital things on your heart. It will mold the sort of person you are inside. The memories that are made will represent your inmost thoughts.—Ps. 119:16.

The Role of God’s Spirit

When seeking to remember truths concerning the activities of Jehovah and the things spoken by Jesus Christ, we are not left on our own. On the night before his death, Jesus told his followers: “While remaining with you I have spoken these things to you. But the helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, that one will teach you all things and bring back to your minds all the things I told you.” (John 14:25, 26) Matthew and John were among those present. Did the holy spirit prove to be such a helper to them? Yes, indeed! About eight years later, Matthew completed writing the first detailed account of the life of Christ, including such priceless memories as the Sermon on the Mount and the detailed sign of Christ’s presence and of the conclusion of the system of things. Sixty-five years after Jesus’ death, the apostle John wrote his Gospel, including details of what Jesus said on the last night that the apostles spent with the Lord before he laid down his life. No doubt, both Matthew and John had vivid memories of the things that Jesus had said and done while they were with him, but the holy spirit played a major role in ensuring that they did not forget important details that Jehovah wanted in his written Word.

Does the holy spirit act as a helper to servants of God today? Definitely! Of course, the holy spirit does not put into our minds things that we have never learned, but it does act as a helper to bring back

to our minds important things that we have studied in the past. (Luke 11:13; 1 John 5:14) Then, as the need arises, our thinking faculties are stirred to “remember the sayings previously spoken by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior.” —2 Pet. 3:1, 2.

‘You Must Not Forget’

Jehovah repeatedly cautioned Israel: ‘You must not forget.’ It was not that he expected them to remember everything perfectly. But they were not to become so wrapped up in personal pursuits that they pushed their recollections of Jehovah’s dealings into the background. They were to keep alive their memories of Jehovah’s deliverance of them when his angel slew all the firstborn of Egypt as well as when Jehovah opened the Red Sea and then closed it, drowning Pharaoh and his army. The Israelites were to recall that God gave them his Law at Mount Sinai and that he led them through the wilderness and into the Promised Land. They were not to forget in the sense that memories of these things were to continue to have a profound effect on their daily lives.—Deut. 4:9, 10; 8:10-18; Ex. 12:24-27; Ps. 136:15.

We too should exercise care not to forget. As we cope with the pressures of life, we need to remember Jehovah, keeping in mind the kind of God he is and the love he manifested in the gift of his Son, who provided a ransom for our sins so that we might have perfect life forever. (Ps. 103:2, 8; 106:7, 13; John 3:16; Rom. 6:23) Regular Bible reading and active participation in congregation meetings and in the field ministry will keep these precious truths alive in us.

When faced with decisions, big or small, call to mind those vital truths, and let them influence your thinking. Do not forget. Look to Jehovah for guidance. Instead of viewing matters simply from a fleshly standpoint or trusting the impulse of an imperfect heart, ask yourself, ‘What counsel or principles from God’s Word should have a bearing on my decision?’ (Prov. 3:5-7; 28:26) You cannot recall things that you have never read or heard. But as you grow in accurate knowledge and love for Jehovah, the reservoir of knowledge that God’s spirit can help you to remember will expand, and your growing love for Jehovah will motivate you to act in harmony with it.

Apply Yourself to Reading

ANIMALS cannot do what you are doing right now. One out of every 6 humans has not learned to read—often because of the lack of opportunity to attend school—and of those who have, many do not do so regularly. Yet, your ability to read the printed page allows you by this means to travel to other lands, to meet people whose lives can enrich yours, and to gain practical knowledge that will help you cope with the concerns of life.

The ability to read influences how much a young person gets from his schooling. When he seeks employment, his reading ability may influence the kind of work that he is able to get and the number of hours that he has to work in order to make a living. Housewives who read well are better able to care for their families with regard to proper nutrition, hygiene, and prevention of sickness. Mothers who are good readers may also exercise a very positive influence on the intellectual development of their children.

The greatest benefit that comes from reading, of course, is that it can enable you to “find the very knowledge of God.” (Prov. 2:5) Many of the ways in which we serve God involve the ability to read. The Scriptures and Bible-based publications are read at congregation meetings. Your effectiveness in the field ministry is greatly affected by the way you read. And preparation for these activities involves reading. For that reason your spiritual growth depends to a large extent on your reading habits.

Make Good Use of the Opportunity

Some who are learning God’s ways have had a limited education. They may need to be taught to read in order to improve their spiritual advancement. Or they may need personal assistance in improving their reading skills. Where there is a local need, congregations endeavor to organize literacy classes based on the publication *Apply Yourself to Reading and Writing*. Many thousands have

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR READING PROGRAM?

- Is the Bible at the top of your list?
- Do you regularly read the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines?
- Do you read new Bible study literature soon after it is received?
- When given your copy of *Our Kingdom Ministry*, do you read what has been provided there to help you in your ministry?
- How many of the older publications of Jehovah’s Witnesses have you read?



*What you read to your children can help
shape their personalities*

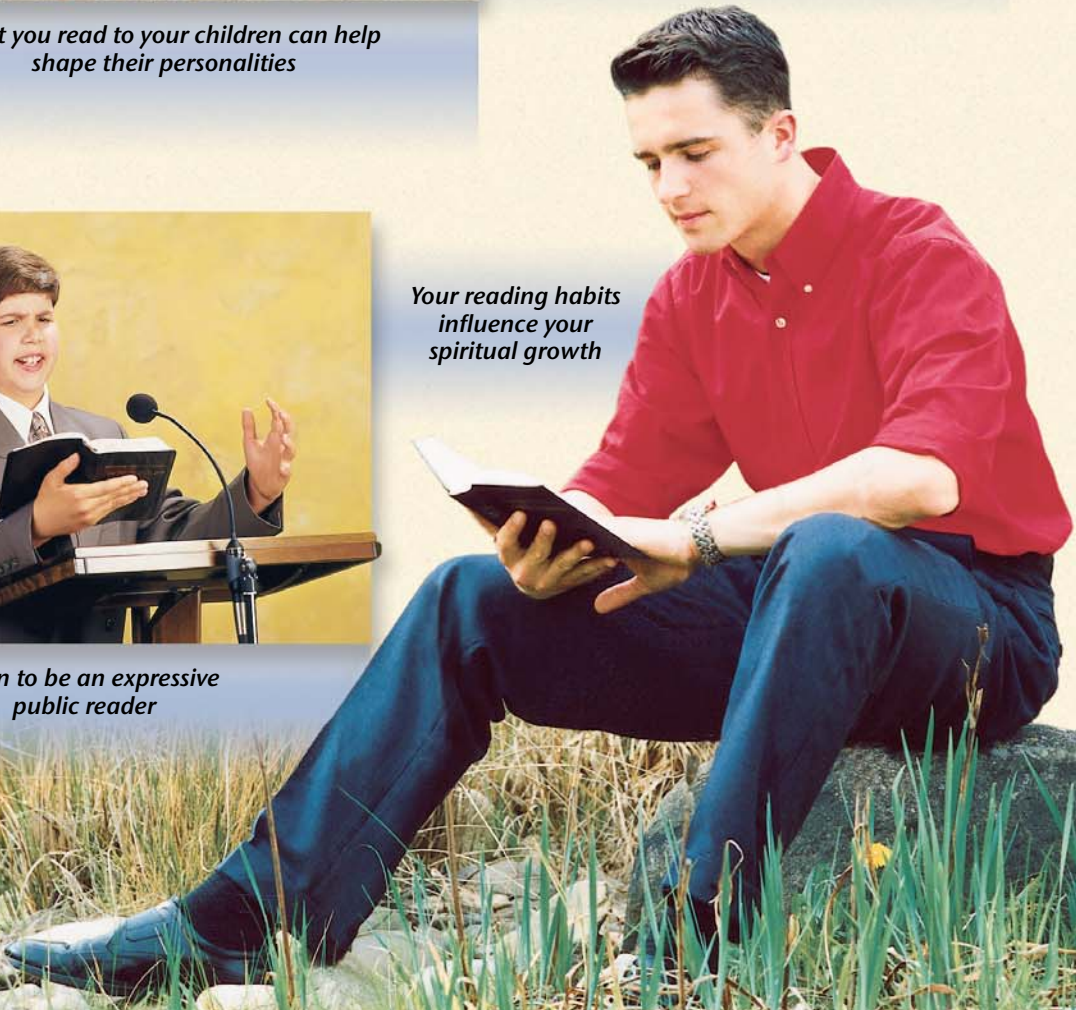


*Continue applying yourself
to public reading*



*Learn to be an expressive
public reader*

*Your reading habits
influence your
spiritual growth*



benefited greatly from this provision. Because of the importance of being able to read well, some congregations arrange for reading-improvement classes to be held in conjunction with the Theocratic Ministry School. Even where such classes are not available, a person can make good progress by taking some time each day to read aloud and by regularly attending and participating in the school.

Sadly, comics and television, among other things, have pushed reading into the background in the lives of many people. Television viewing and limited reading may hinder the development of a person's reading skills and his ability to think and to reason clearly and to express himself well.

Publications that help us to understand the Bible are provided by "the faithful and discreet slave." These make available a wealth of information concerning vital spiritual matters. (Matt. 24:45; 1 Cor. 2: 12, 13) They also keep us abreast of important world developments and their meaning, help us to become better acquainted with the natural world, and teach us ways to cope with issues that concern us. Above all, they focus on how to serve God acceptably and gain his approval. Such wholesome reading will help you to develop as a spiritual person.

Of course, the ability to read well is not a virtue in itself. The skill needs to be used in the proper way. Like eating, reading must be done selectively. Why eat food that offers no real nourishment or that may even poison you? In like manner, why read material, even casually, that can corrupt the mind and heart? Bible principles should provide the standard against which we measure whatever reading material we choose. Before deciding what you will read, have in mind such scriptures as Ecclesiastes 12:12, 13; Ephesians 4:22-24; 5:3, 4; Philipians 4:8; Colossians 2:8; 1 John 2:15-17; and 2 John 10.

Read With the Proper Motive

The importance of the proper motive in reading becomes clear upon examination of the Gospel accounts. In Matthew's Gospel, for example, we find Jesus asking well-versed religious leaders such questions as "Have you not read?" and "Did you never read this?" prior to his giving them the Scriptural answers to their crafty

questions. (Matt. 12:3, 5; 19:4; 21:16, 42; 22:31) One lesson we learn from this is that if our motive for reading is improper, we can draw incorrect conclusions or miss the point altogether. The Pharisees were reading the Scriptures because they thought that by means of them, they would get everlasting life. That reward, as Jesus pointed out, is not granted to those who do not love God and accept His means of salvation. (John 5:39-43) The intentions of the Pharisees were selfish; hence, many of their conclusions were wrong.

Love for Jehovah is the purest motive we can have for reading his Word. Such love stirs us to learn God's will, for love "rejoices with the truth." (1 Cor. 13:6) Even if we did not enjoy reading in the past, loving Jehovah with our "whole mind" will move us to apply our minds vigorously to take in the knowledge of God. (Matt. 22:37) Love awakens interest, and interest stimulates learning.

Consider the Pace

Reading goes hand in hand with recognition. Even as you are reading right now, you are recognizing words and remembering their meaning. You can increase the pace of your reading if you broaden out the area of recognition. Instead of stopping to look at each

word, try to see several words at a time. As you develop this ability, you will find that you more clearly understand what you are reading.

When reading deeper material, however, what you derive from your efforts may be increased by using a different method. Counseling Joshua on his reading of the Scriptures, Jehovah said: "This book of the law should not depart from your mouth, and you must in an undertone read in it." (Josh. 1:8) Speaking in an undertone is often

Reading together draws family members closer



done when a person is musing. Therefore, the Hebrew term that is rendered “in an undertone read” is also translated “meditate.” (Ps. 63:6; 77:12; 143:5) When meditating, a person thinks deeply; he does not rush. Reading in a contemplative manner allows God’s Word to have a greater impact on the mind and heart. The Bible contains prophecy, counsel, proverbs, poetry, pronouncements of divine judgment, details regarding Jehovah’s purpose, and an abundance of real-life examples—all valuable to those who want to walk in Jehovah’s ways. How beneficial to read the Bible in a manner that allows it to be deeply impressed on your mind and heart!

Learn to Concentrate

As you read, put yourself in each scene being described. Try to see the characters in your mind’s eye, and participate emotionally in the experiences taking place in their lives. This is relatively easy when reading an account such as the one about David and Goliath, recorded in 1 Samuel chapter 17. But even details in Exodus and Leviticus about the construction of the tabernacle or the installation of the priesthood will come to life when you visualize the dimensions and materials or imagine the scent of the incense, the roasted grain, and the animals presented as burnt offerings. Think how awe-inspiring it must have been to carry out priestly services! (Luke 1:8-10) Involving your senses and your emotions in this way will help you grasp the significance of what you are reading and will serve as a memory aid.

If you are not careful, though, when you try to read, your mind may wander. Your eyes may look at the page, but your thoughts may be elsewhere. Is music playing? Is the television on? Are family members talking? If possible, it is best to read in a quiet location. However, the distraction may come from within. Perhaps you had a busy day. Alas, how easy it is to replay the day’s activities in your mind! It is good, of course, to review the day’s events—but not when you are reading. Perhaps you start out with your mind focused, or you may even open your reading session with a prayer. But then as you read, your mind begins to drift. Try again. Discipline yourself to keep your mind focused on the material you are reading. Gradually, you will see improvement.

What do you do when you come to a word that you do not understand? Some unfamiliar words may be defined or discussed in the text. Or you may be able to discern the meaning from the context. If not, take the time to look the word up in a dictionary if one is available, or mark the word so that you can ask someone the meaning later. This will broaden your vocabulary and contribute toward your reading comprehension.

Public Reading

When the apostle Paul told Timothy to continue applying himself to reading, Paul was specifically referring to reading for the benefit of others. (1 Tim. 4:13) Effective public reading involves more than simply calling out words from a page. The reader needs to understand the meaning of the words and comprehend the thoughts they express. Only when he does that can he convey the ideas correctly and reproduce the emotions accurately. This, of course, requires thorough preparation and practice. Hence, Paul exhorted: “*Continue applying yourself* to public reading.” You will receive valuable training in this skill in the Theocratic Ministry School.

Make Time to Read

“The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage, but everyone that is hasty surely heads for want.” (Prov. 21:5) How true that is with respect to our desire to read! To get the “advantage,” we need to plan diligently so that other activities do not crowd out our reading.

When do you read? Do you benefit by reading early in the morning? Or are you more alert later in the day? If you can set aside even 15 or 20 minutes each day to do some reading, you will be amazed at how much you can accomplish. The key is regularity.

Why has Jehovah chosen to have his grand purposes written down in a book? So that people can consult his written Word. This enables them to consider Jehovah’s wonderful works, to tell these to their children, and to commit to memory God’s practices. (Ps. 78:5-7) Our appreciation for Jehovah’s generosity in this matter is best shown by the way that we apply ourselves to reading his life-giving Word.

Study Is Rewarding

HAVE you ever watched people select fruit? Most observe its color and size to determine its ripeness. Some people smell the fruit. Others touch it, even squeeze it. Still others weigh it, putting one piece in each hand to detect which is heavier with juice. What are these people thinking? They are analyzing details, evaluating differences, remembering previous selections, and comparing what they now see with what they already know. A tasty reward awaits them because they give careful attention to the matter.

Of course, the rewards for studying God's Word are far greater. When such study occupies an important place in our lives, our faith becomes stronger, our love deepens, our ministry becomes more productive, and decisions that we make give greater evidence of discernment and godly wisdom. Concerning such rewards, Proverbs 3:15 says: "All other delights of yours cannot be made equal to it." Are you experiencing such rewards? The way that you study may be a factor.—Col. 1:9, 10.

What is study? It is more than superficial reading. It involves using your mental faculties in careful or extended consideration of a subject. It includes analyzing what you read, comparing it with what you already know, and taking note of reasons given for statements made. When studying, think deeply on any ideas expressed that may be new to you. Consider, too, how you might personally apply Scriptural counsel more fully. As a Witness of Jehovah, you will also want to think about opportunities to use the material to help others. Obviously, study includes meditation.

Getting Into the Right Frame of Mind

When preparing to study, you lay out such things as your Bible, whatever publications you plan to use, a pencil or pen, and perhaps a notebook. But do you also prepare your heart? The Bible tells us that Ezra "prepared his heart to consult the law of Jehovah and to do it and to teach in

TO REAP THE GREATEST REWARDS

- Prepare your heart
- Preview the study material
- Isolate important facts
- Consider how the scriptures provide reasons for statements made
- Review the main points
- Meditate on how your own life should be influenced by what you study
- Seek opportunities to use the material to help others

Israel regulation and justice.” (Ezra 7:10) What does such heart preparation involve?

Prayer enables us to approach the study of God’s Word with the proper attitude. We want our heart, our inmost self, to be receptive to the instruction that Jehovah gives us. At the beginning of each study session, petition Jehovah for the help of his spirit. (Luke 11:13) Ask him to help you understand the meaning of what you will study, how it relates to his purpose, how it can help you to discern between good and bad, how you should apply his principles in your life, and how the material affects your relationship with him. (Prov. 9:10) As you study, “keep on asking God” for wisdom. (Jas. 1:5) Honestly evaluate yourself in the light of what you learn as you seek Jehovah’s help in getting rid of erroneous thoughts or hurtful desires. Always “respond to Jehovah with thanksgiving” for the things he reveals. (Ps. 147:7) This prayerful approach to study leads to intimacy with Jehovah, since it enables us to respond to him as he speaks to us through his Word. —Ps. 145:18.

Such receptiveness differentiates Jehovah’s people from other students. Among those who lack godly devotion, it is fashionable to doubt and challenge what is written. But that is not our attitude. We trust Jehovah. (Prov. 3:5-7) If we do not understand something, we do not presumptuously conclude that it must be in error. While searching and digging for the answers, we wait on Jehovah. (Mic. 7:7) Like Ezra, we have the goal of acting on and teaching what we learn. With this inclination of heart, we are in line to reap rich rewards from our study.

HOW TO PREVIEW STUDY MATERIAL

- Analyze the wording of the title
- Consider how each subheading relates to the title
- Examine any illustrations, charts, or teaching boxes

How to Study

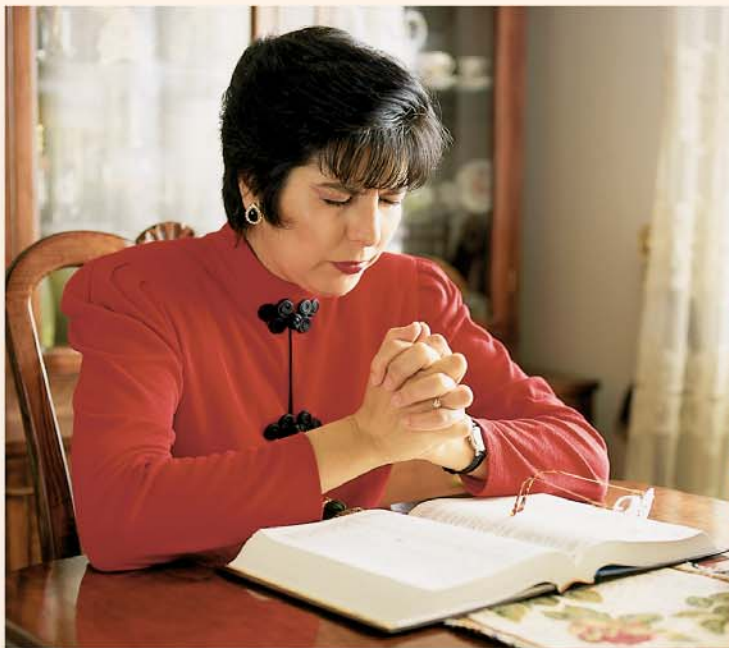
Instead of simply starting with paragraph 1 and working your way through to the end, first take time to preview the entire article or the chapter in the material. Begin by analyzing the wording of the title. This is the theme of what you will be studying. Then take careful note of how the subheadings relate to the theme. Examine any illustrations, charts, or teaching boxes that accompany the text. Ask yourself: ‘Based on this preview, what do I expect to learn? In what way will it be of value to me?’ This gives direction to your study.

Now get the facts. *Watchtower* study articles and some books include printed questions. As you read each paragraph, it is beneficial to mark the answers. Even if there are no study questions, you may still mark important points that you want to remember. If a thought is new to you, spend a little extra time on it to be sure that you understand it well. Be on the lookout for illustrations or lines of reasoning that will be useful to you in the field ministry or that might be incorporated in an upcoming talk assignment. Think of specific people whose faith might be strengthened if you share with them what you are studying. Mark the points that you want to use, and review them when you complete your study.

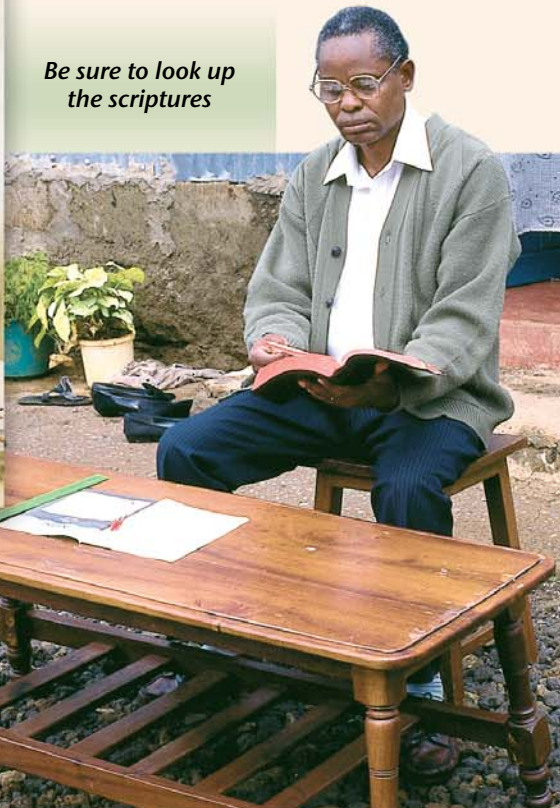
As you consider the material, look up the cited scriptures. Analyze how each scripture relates to the general thrust of the paragraph.

You may encounter points that you do not readily understand or that you would like to explore more thoroughly. Instead of letting them sidetrack you, make a note to give these further consideration later. Points are often clarified as you make your way through the material. If not, you can do additional research. What things might be noted for such attention? Perhaps there is a scripture quoted that you do not understand clearly. Or you may not readily see how it applies to the subject being discussed. Perhaps you feel that you understand a certain idea in the material but not well enough to explain it to someone else. Rather than simply passing these by, it may be wise to do research on them after you have finished what you started to study.

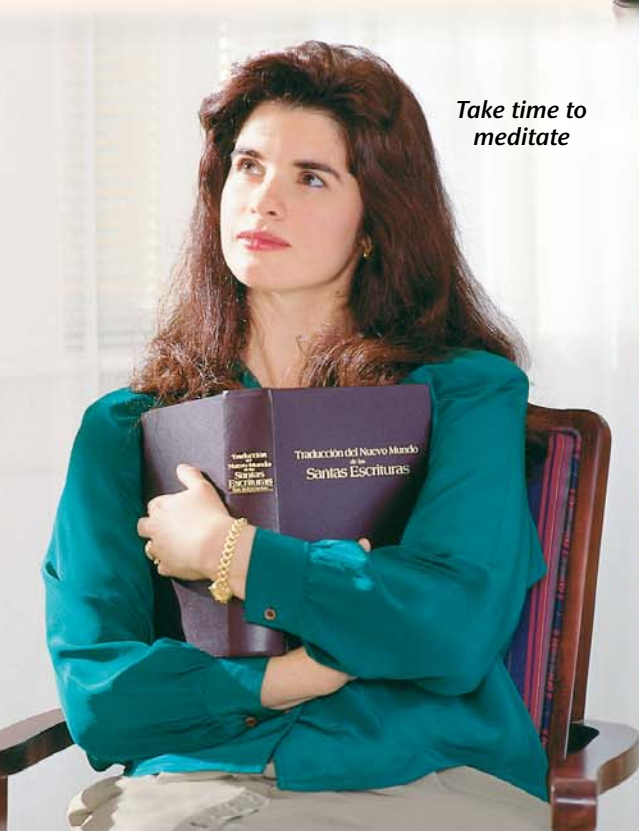
When the apostle Paul wrote his detailed letter to the Hebrew Christians, he paused midway through it to say: "This is the main point." (Heb. 8:1) Do you give yourself a reminder like that from time to time? Consider why Paul did so. In the preceding chapters of his inspired letter, he had already shown that Christ as God's great High Priest had entered heaven itself. (Heb. 4:14–5:10; 6:20) Yet, by isolating and emphasizing that main point at the beginning of chapter 8, Paul prepared the minds of his readers to think deeply on how it related to their lives. He pointed out that Christ had appeared before the person of God in their behalf and had opened the way for their own entry into that heavenly "holy place." (Heb. 9:24; 10:19–22) The surety of their hope would help move them to apply the further counsel that this letter contained regarding faith, endurance, and Christian



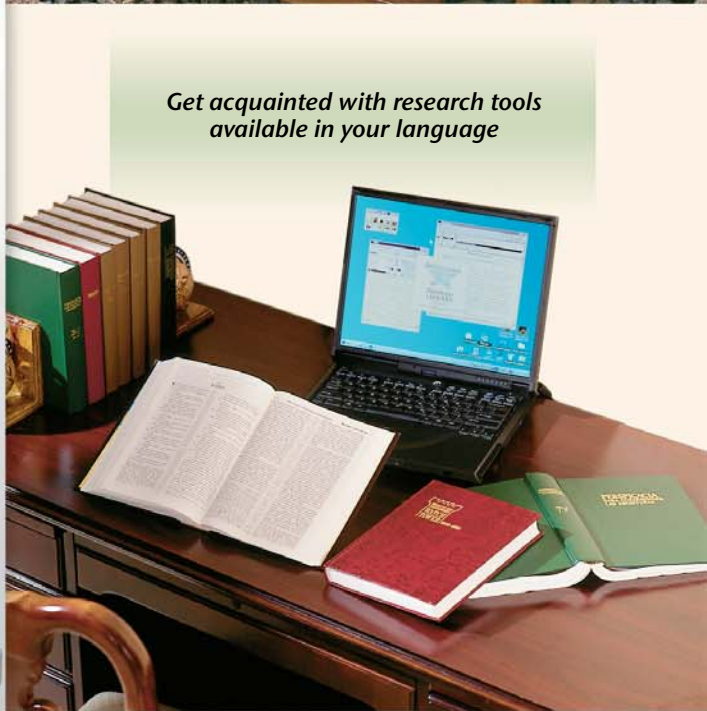
To benefit fully from your personal study, prepare your heart



Be sure to look up the scriptures



Take time to meditate



Get acquainted with research tools available in your language

conduct. Similarly, when we study, focusing on the main points will help us discern the development of the theme and will impress on our minds the sound reasons for acting in harmony with it.

Will your personal study move you to act? This is a vital question. When you learn something, ask yourself: ‘How should this affect my attitude and my goals in life? How can I apply this information in solving a problem, making a decision, or reaching a goal? How can I use it with my family, in the field ministry, in the congregation?’ Consider these questions prayerfully, contemplating real situations in which you can put your knowledge to work.

After completing a chapter or an article, take time for a brief review. See if you can recall the main points and the supporting arguments. This step will help you to retain the information for future use.

What to Study

As Jehovah’s people, we have plenty to study. But where should we start? Each day, we do well to study the text and comments from *Examining the Scriptures Daily*. Each week, we attend congregation meetings, and study done in preparation for these will help us to benefit to a greater extent. In addition to this, some have wisely invested time in studying some of our Christian publications that were printed prior to their learning the truth. Others select some portion of their weekly Bible reading and do deeper study of those verses.

What if your circumstances do not permit you to study carefully all the information that will be considered at the weekly congregation meetings? Avoid the pitfalls of rushing through the material just to get it done or, worse, of not studying any of it because you cannot do it all. Instead, determine how much you can study, and do that well. Do it each week. In time, endeavor to broaden out to include the other meetings.

“Build Up Your Household”

Jehovah recognizes that family heads must work hard to provide for their loved ones. “Prepare your work out of doors,” says Proverbs 24:27, “and make it ready for yourself in the field.” Yet, your family’s spiritual needs cannot be overlooked. Hence, the verse continues: “Afterward you must also build up your household.” How can family heads do this? Proverbs 24:3 says: “By discernment [a household] will prove firmly established.”

How can discernment benefit your household? Discernment is the mental ability to look beyond the obvious. It could well be said that an effective family study begins with a study of your family itself. How are your family members progressing spiritually? Listen carefully during your conversations with them. Is there a spirit of complaint or resentment? Are materialistic pursuits the big thing? When you are in the field ministry with your children, do they feel comfortable identifying themselves before their peers as Jehovah's Witnesses? Do they enjoy your program of family Bible reading and study? Are they really making Jehovah's way their way of life? Careful observation will reveal what you, as a family head, need to do in order to establish and build up spiritual qualities in each family member.

Check *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* for articles that deal with specific needs. Then tell the family in advance what will be studied so that they can give thought to the information. Maintain a loving atmosphere during the study. Without chastising or embarrassing any family member, highlight the value of the material under consideration, making specific application to your family's needs. Keep each member involved. Help each one to see how Jehovah's Word is "perfect" in providing just what is needed in life.—Ps. 19:7.

Reaping the Rewards

Observant people without spiritual comprehension can study the universe, world events, and even themselves but fail to comprehend the real meaning of what they are seeing. On the other hand, with the help of God's spirit, people who regularly study God's Word can discern in these things the handiwork of God, the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, and the unfolding of God's purpose for blessing obedient humans.—Mark 13:4-29; Rom. 1:20; Rev. 12:12.

Marvelous as that is, it should not cause us to become proud. Instead, daily examination of God's Word helps us to remain humble. (Deut. 17:18-20) It also shields us from "the deceptive power of sin" because when God's Word is alive in our hearts, the appeal of sin is less likely to overpower our determination to resist it. (Heb. 2:1; 3:13; Col. 3:5-10) Thus, we will "walk worthily of Jehovah to the end of fully pleasing him as [we] go on bearing fruit in every good work." (Col. 1:10) Doing so is our objective in studying God's Word, and accomplishing it is the greatest reward.

How to Do Research

KING SOLOMON “pondered and made a thorough search, that he might arrange many proverbs in order.” Why? Because he was interested in writing “correct words of truth.” (Eccl. 12:9, 10) Luke “traced all things from the start with accuracy” in order to narrate in logical order the events of Christ’s life. (Luke 1:3) Both of these servants of God were doing research.

What is research? It is a careful search for information about a particular matter. It includes reading, and it requires the application of the principles of study. It may also involve interviewing people.

What circumstances call for research? Here are a few examples. Your personal study or Bible reading may give rise to questions that are important to you. Someone to whom you witness may raise a question on which you would like to have specific information for a reply. You may have been assigned to give a talk.

Consider that assignment to give a talk. The material that you have been asked to cover may seem quite general. How can you apply it locally? Enrich it by doing research. When supported with a statistic or two or with an example that fits your material and that touches the lives of those in your audience, a point that may have seemed obvious becomes informative, even motivating. The published material with which you are working may have been prepared for readers worldwide, but you need to amplify, illustrate, and apply the points to one congregation or to one person. How should you proceed?

Before running in search of information, consider your audience. What will they already know? What do they need to know? Then identify your objective. Is it to *explain*? to *convince*? to *refute*? or to *motivate*? *Explaining* requires providing further information to make a matter clear. Although the basic facts may be understood, you may need to expand on *when* or *how* to do what is stated. *Convincing* calls for giving reasons outlining *why* a thing

WHICH OF THESE RESEARCH TOOLS DO YOU HAVE?

- *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*
- *Comprehensive Concordance*
- *The Watchtower and Awake!*
- *Reasoning From the Scriptures*
- *Jehovah’s Witnesses —Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*
- *Insight on the Scriptures*
- *Watch Tower Publications Index*
- *Watchtower Library on CD-ROM*

is so, including presentation of evidence. *Refuting* requires a thorough knowledge of both sides of an issue along with a careful analysis of evidence used. Of course, we seek not simply strong arguments but ways to present facts in a kindly manner. *Motivating* involves reaching the heart. It means giving your audience incentive and building up their desire to act on what is being discussed. Real-life examples of those who have taken such action, even in the face of difficulty, can help to reach the heart.

Are you now ready to begin? Not quite. Consider how much information you need. Time may be an important factor. If you are going to present the information to others, how much time will be available for you to do it? Five minutes? Forty-five minutes? Is the time fixed, such as at a congregation meeting, or is it flexible, such as on a Bible study or a shepherding call?

Finally, what research tools are available to you? In addition to what you have at home, are there more in the library at your Kingdom Hall? Would brothers who have been serving Jehovah for many years be willing to let you consult their research tools? Is there a public library in your area where reference books can be used if necessary?

Using Our Foremost Research Tool—The Bible

If your research project involves the meaning of a scripture, start with the Bible itself.

Examine the Context. Ask yourself: “To whom was this text directed? What do the surrounding verses indicate as to the circumstances leading up to the statement or the attitude of the people involved?” Such details can often help us understand a text, and they can also add life to a talk in which you might use them.

For example, Hebrews 4:12 is often quoted to show the power of God’s Word to touch hearts and influence lives. The context adds depth to our appreciation of how that can be so. It discusses the experiences of Israel during the 40 years in the wilderness before entering the land that Jehovah had promised to Abraham. (Heb. 3:7–4:13) “The word of God,” his promise to bring them into a place of rest in harmony with his covenant with Abraham, was not dead; it was alive and moving toward fulfillment. The Israelites had every reason to show faith in it. However, as Jehovah led them from Egypt to Mount Sinai and on toward the Promised Land, they repeatedly

showed a lack of faith. Thus, by their reaction to the way that God carried out his word, what was in their hearts was made manifest. In a similar way in our day, God's word of promise shows up what is in the hearts of men.

Check the Cross-References. Some Bibles have cross-references. Does yours? If so, these may help. Note an example from the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. First Peter 3:6 points to Sarah as an example worthy of imitation by Christian wives. A cross-reference to Genesis 18:12 reinforces that by disclosing that Sarah spoke of Abraham as lord "inside herself." Her submission, therefore, was heartfelt. In addition to such insights, cross-references may refer you to texts that show the fulfillment of a Bible prophecy or of a Law covenant pattern. Realize, however, that some cross-references are not meant to give such explanations. They may simply refer to parallel thoughts or to biographical or geographic information.

Search With a Bible Concordance. A Bible concordance is an alphabetic index of words used in the Bible. It can help you locate scriptures that relate to the subject on which you are doing research. As you explore them, you will learn other helpful details. You will see evidence of "the pattern" of truth set forth in God's Word. (2 Tim. 1:13) The *New World Translation* contains a basic listing of "Bible Words Indexed." The *Comprehensive Concordance* is much more extensive. If it is available in your language, it will direct you to all the texts containing each of the principal words in the Bible.

Learning to Use Other Research Tools

The box on page 33 lists a number of other research tools that have been provided by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45-47) Many of these have a table of contents, and many have an index in the back, which is designed to help you pinpoint specific information. At the end of each year, subject indexes are published in both *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* for that year's collection of articles.

Being familiar with the type of information offered in these Bible study publications can accelerate the research process. Say, for instance, that you want to know about prophecy, doctrine, Christian conduct, or the application of Bible principles. *The Watchtower* will likely contain what you seek. *Awake!* deals with current events, contemporary problems, religion, science, and peoples of various lands.

Commentary on each account in the Gospels in chronological order appears in *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*. A verse-by-verse discussion of entire Bible books is found in such publications as *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*, *Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!*, and the two volumes of *Isaiah's Prophecy—Light for All Mankind*. In *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, you will find satisfying answers to hundreds of Bible questions that are commonly raised in the field service. For a clearer understanding of other religions, their teachings, and their historical backgrounds, see *Mankind's Search for God*. A detailed account of the modern-day history of Jehovah's Witnesses is contained in *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*. For a report on current developments in the global preaching of the good news, check the latest *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. *Insight on the Scriptures* is a Bible encyclopedia and atlas. If you need details about people, places, things, languages, or historical events associated with the Bible, this is an excellent resource.

"Watch Tower Publications Index." This *Index*, published in more than 20 languages, will direct you to information in a wide variety of our publications. It is divided into a subject index and a scripture index. To use the subject index, locate a word representing the subject you want to investigate. To use the scripture index, locate in the list of scriptures the one you would like to understand better. If something has been published in your language on that subject or that scripture in the years covered by the *Index*, you will find a list of references to consult. Use the key in the front of the *Index* to decipher the abbreviations for the names of cited publications. (With that help, for example, you would learn that w99 3/1 15 refers to *The Watchtower* for 1999, March 1 issue, page 15.) Main headings such as "Field Ministry Experiences" and "Life Stories of Jehovah's Witnesses" can be helpful in preparing motivating presentations for the congregation.

Since doing research can be very absorbing, be careful not to get sidetracked. Stay focused on your objective to search out the material needed for the task at hand. If the *Index* refers you to a certain source, turn to the page(s) cited, then use subheadings and opening sentences of paragraphs to guide you to the material that fits your needs. If you are searching for the meaning of a particular Bible verse, first locate the citation on the page to which you are referred. Then examine the surrounding comments.

“Watchtower Library” on CD-ROM. If you have access to a computer, you may benefit from using the *Watchtower Library* on CD-ROM, which contains a vast collection of our publications. The easy-to-use search program enables you to look for a word, a combination of words, or a scripture citation in any of the publications in the *Watchtower Library*. Even if this research tool is not available in your language, you may be able to benefit from it in a widely used international language with which you are familiar.

Other Theocratic Libraries

In his second inspired letter to Timothy, Paul asked the young man to bring “the scrolls, especially the parchments,” to him at Rome. (2 Tim. 4:13) Paul valued certain writings and kept them. You can do the same. Do you save your personal copies of *The Watchtower*, *Awake!*, and *Our Kingdom Ministry* even after these have been considered at congregation meetings? If so, you will have them available to use as research tools, along with the other Christian publications you have acquired. Most congregations maintain a collection of theocratic publications in a library at the Kingdom Hall. These are for the benefit of the entire congregation, for their use while at the Kingdom Hall.

Maintain Personal Files

Keep alert to items of interest that you can use when you are speaking and teaching. If you find in a newspaper or a magazine a news item, statistic, or example that you can use in your ministry, clip it out or copy the information. Include the date, the title of the periodical, and perhaps the name of the author or publisher. At congregation meetings, jot down reasoning points and illustrations that may help you to explain the truth to others. Have you ever thought of a good illustration but did not have an opportunity to use it right away? Write it down, and keep it in a file. After you have been in the Theocratic Ministry School for some time, you will have prepared a number of presentations. Instead of throwing away your notes from these talks, save them. The research you have done may prove useful later.

Talk to People

People are a rich source of information. When Luke was compiling his Gospel account, he evidently gathered much information by interviewing eyewitnesses. (Luke 1:1-4) Perhaps a fellow Christian can

shed light on a matter on which you have been endeavoring to do research. According to Ephesians 4:8, 11-16, Christ uses “gifts in men” to help us grow in “the accurate knowledge of the Son of God.” Interviewing those with experience in serving God may yield useful ideas. Conversing with people may also reveal what they are thinking, and this can help you to prepare material that is truly practical.

Evaluate Your Results

After wheat is harvested, the grain needs to be removed from the chaff. So it is with the fruitage of your research. Before it is ready for use, you need to separate what is valuable from what is superfluous.

If you are going to use the information in a talk, ask yourself: ‘Does the point I plan to use really contribute something worthwhile to my presentation of the subject? Or, even though it is interesting material, does it tend to divert attention from the subject that I ought to be talking about?’ If you are considering using current events or material from the ever-changing fields of science or medicine, make sure that the information is up-to-date. Realize, too, that some points in older publications of ours may have been updated, so consider what has most recently been published on the topic.

There is a special need to be cautious if you choose to compile information from secular sources. Never forget that God’s Word is truth. (John 17:17) Jesus occupies the key role in the fulfillment of God’s purpose. Therefore, Colossians 2:3 says: “Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge.” Evaluate the fruits of your research from that perspective. With regard to secular research, ask yourself: ‘Is this material exaggerated, speculative, or shortsighted? Was it written with a selfish or commercial motive? Do other authoritative sources agree with it? Above all, does it harmonize with Bible truth?’

Proverbs 2:1-5 encourages us to keep searching for knowledge, understanding, and discernment “as for silver, and as for hid treasures.” That implies both exertion and rich rewards. Research takes effort, but doing it will help you to find God’s thoughts on matters, to correct mistaken ideas, and to make firm your grasp of the truth. It will also add substance and life to your presentations, making them a pleasure to deliver and a delight to hear.

Making an Outline

WHEN assigned to deliver a talk, many laboriously write it out, beginning with the introduction and working through to the conclusion. Before the talk is completed, numerous drafts may have been prepared. The process may take hours.

Is that the way you prepare your talks? Would you like to learn an easier way? If you learn how to prepare an outline, you will no longer need to write everything out. This will give you more time to practice delivering the talk. Your presentations will be not only easier to give but more interesting to listen to and more motivating to your audience.

Of course, for public talks given in the congregation, a basic outline is provided. However, that is not the case for most other talks. You may be assigned only a subject or a theme. Or you may be asked to cover specific printed material. Sometimes you may simply be provided with a few instructions. For all such assignments, you need to prepare your own outline.

The sample on page 41 will give you an idea of how a brief outline might be arranged. Notice that each of the main points begins at the left margin and is written in capital letters. Under each main point are listed the thoughts that support it. Additional points that will be used to develop those thoughts are listed under them and indented a few spaces from the left margin. Examine this outline carefully. Notice that the two main points relate directly to the theme. Observe, too, that the subpoints are not simply interesting items. Rather, each one supports the main point under which it appears.

When you prepare an outline, it may not look exactly like the sample. But if you grasp the principles involved, these will help you organize your material and prepare a good talk in a reasonable amount of time. How should you proceed?

Analyze, Select, and Organize

You need a theme. Your theme is not merely a broad subject such as might be represented by a single word. It is the central idea that you want to convey, and it indicates the angle from which you plan

to discuss your subject. If a theme is assigned, analyze each main word carefully. If you are to develop the assigned theme on the basis of published material, study that material with the theme in mind. If you are assigned only a subject, then it will be up to you to choose the theme. Before doing so, however, you may find it helpful to do some research. By keeping your mind open, you will often get fresh ideas.

As you take these steps, keep asking yourself: ‘Why is this material important to my audience? What is my objective?’ It should be not just to cover material or to give a colorful talk but to accomplish something beneficial for your audience. When your objective takes shape, write it down. Keep reminding yourself of it as you prepare.

After you have determined your objective and have selected a theme consistent with it (or analyzed how your assigned theme fits in with that objective), you can do research that is more focused. Look for material that will be of particular value to your audience. Do not settle for generalities, but search for specific points that are informative and truly helpful. Be realistic in the amount of research that you do. In most cases you will soon have more material than you can use, so you will need to be selective.

Identify the main points that you need to discuss in order to develop your theme and achieve your objective. These will become your framework, your basic outline. How many main points should there be? Perhaps two are enough for a short discussion, and usually five are sufficient for even an hour-long discourse. The fewer the main points, the more likely your audience will remember them.

Once you have your theme and the main points in mind, organize your research material. Decide what directly relates to your main points. Select details that will add freshness to your presentation. When you choose scriptures to support the main points, note ideas that will help you to reason on those texts in a

HOW TO PREPARE AN OUTLINE

- Determine why your subject is important to your audience and what your objective is
- Select a theme; if one is assigned, analyze it
- Gather informative, helpful material
- Identify your main points
- Organize your material; keep only the best
- Prepare an interest-arousing introduction
- Plan a motivating conclusion
- Review your talk; refine it

meaningful way. Put each item under the main point to which it belongs. If some of the information does not fit any of your main points, discard it—even if it is very interesting—or put it in a file for use on another occasion. Keep only the best material. If you try to cover too much, you will have to speak too fast and your coverage will be shallow. It is better to convey a few points that are of real value to the audience and to do that well. Do not go overtime.

At this point if not before, arrange your material in logical sequence. The Gospel writer Luke did this. Having collected an abundance of facts relating to his subject, he set them out “in logical order.” (Luke 1:3) You might line your material up chronologically or topically, possibly according to cause and effect or problem and solution, depending on what is most effective to attain your objective. There should be no abrupt switching from one idea to another. Your listeners should be led easily from one thought to another, with no gaps that cannot easily be bridged. Evidence presented should lead the audience to logical conclusions. As you arrange your points, think about how the presentation will sound to your audience. Will they readily follow your line of thought? Will they be moved to act on what they hear, in harmony with the objective that you have in mind?

Next, prepare an introduction that arouses interest in your subject and that shows your audience that what you are going to discuss is of real value to them. It might help to write out your first few sentences. Finally, plan a motivating conclusion that is consistent with your objective.

If you work out your outline early enough, you will have time to refine

WHAT IS GOD'S PURPOSE FOR THE EARTH?

GOD'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE WAS FOR THE EARTH TO BE A PARADISE

God started a paradise in Eden (Gen. 2:8, 15)

Adam and Eve and their offspring were to extend Paradise earth wide (Gen. 1:28)

GOD HAS NOT ABANDONED HIS PURPOSE TO MAKE THE EARTH A PARADISE

Lawless conduct of first humans under Satan's influence did not change God's purpose

At God's appointed time, wicked people will be destroyed by God (Prov. 2:22)

Satan will be cast into the abyss (Rev. 20:1-3)

Christ will fulfill God's purpose for the earth during Millennial Rule

Sickness and death will be no more (Rev. 21:3, 4)

Dead ones will be resurrected to life on earth

Under heavenly rulership, faithful humans will share in making all the earth a paradise (Isa. 65:17, 21-25)

it before you deliver the talk. You may see the need to support certain ideas with a few statistics, an illustration, or an experience. Using a current event or some item of local interest may help your audience to see more readily the relevance of the material. As you review your talk, you may become aware of more opportunities to adapt the information to your audience. The process of analyzing and refining is essential to shaping good material into an effective talk.

Some speakers may need more extensive notes than others do. But if you organize your material under just a few main points, eliminate what does not really support these, and put your ideas in logical order, you will find that with a little experience, you will no longer need to write everything out. What a time-saver that can be! And the quality of your talks will improve. It will be evident that you are truly benefiting from your Theocratic Ministry School education.

Preparing Student Assignments for the School

WITH each assignment in the school comes an opportunity to grow. Apply yourself conscientiously, and your advancement will gradually become manifest both to you and to others. (1 Tim. 4:15) The school will help you to develop your abilities more fully.

Are you nervous at the prospect of speaking before the congregation? This is normal, even if you have been enrolled in the school for some time. Certain things, however, can help to lessen your level of anxiety. At home, make it a habit to read aloud often. At congregation meetings, comment frequently, and if you are a publisher, participate regularly in the field service. This will give you experience in speaking before others. Additionally, prepare your student assignments well in advance, and practice delivering them aloud. Remember that you will be speaking before a friendly audience. Prior to giving any talk, pray to Jehovah. He gladly gives holy spirit to those of his servants who ask him.—Luke 11:13; Phil. 4:6, 7.

Be modest in your expectations. It takes time to gain experience as a speaker and to become an effective teacher. (Mic. 6:8) If you are newly enrolled in the school, do not expect to give a polished presentation right away. Rather, work on one point of speech counsel at a time. Study the section in this book that discusses it. If possible, do the exercise that is suggested there. This will give you experience in matters related to the point of counsel before you handle your assignment in the congregation. Progress will come.

How to Prepare a Reading Assignment

Preparation for public reading involves much more than simply being able to say the words in the assigned material. Endeavor to get a clear understanding of what the material means. As soon as you receive your assignment, read it over with that objective in mind. Try to understand the point of each sentence and the idea that is developed in each paragraph so that you will be able to convey the thoughts accurately and with proper feeling. Where possible, check

a dictionary for correct pronunciation of unfamiliar words. Get to know the material well. Parents may need to help their young children do this.

Have you been assigned to read a portion of the Bible or possibly the paragraphs of an article in *The Watchtower*? If audiocassettes of that material are available in your language, it can be very helpful to listen to the reading and take note of such factors as pronunciation, phrasing, emphasis, and modulation. Then try to incorporate these qualities into your own reading.

When you begin to work on your assignment, be sure to study carefully the lesson that discusses the speech quality that you have been assigned. If possible, review it after you have practiced reading the assigned material aloud several times. Endeavor to apply that written counsel as fully as possible.

This training will serve you well in your ministry. As you engage in the field service, you have many opportunities to read to others. Since God's Word has the power to change people's lives, it is important that you read it well. (Heb. 4:12) Do not expect to master all aspects of effective reading with one or two assignments. To a Christian elder who had years of experience, the apostle Paul wrote: "Continue applying yourself to public reading."—1 Tim. 4:13.

Working With a Subject and a Setting

When you receive an assignment on the school that involves working with a setting, how should you proceed?

Three main things need consideration: (1) your assigned subject, (2) your setting and the person with whom you will be speaking, and (3) the counsel point on which you have been assigned to work.

You need to gather material on your assigned subject. But before you go very far with that, think seriously about your setting as well as the person with whom you will speak, as these factors will have a bearing on the type of material that you will cover and the way that you will present it. What setting will you be using? Will you be demonstrating how to present the good news to someone you know? Or will you show what might happen when meeting an individual for the first time? Is the person older than you are or younger? What attitude might he have regarding the subject that you plan to discuss?

How much does he likely know about it already? What objective do you hope to achieve as a result of your discussion? The answers to those questions will provide important guidelines with which to work.

Where will you find material on the subject that has been assigned? On pages 33 to 38 of this book, there is a discussion of “How to Do Research.” Read it, and then use the research tools that are available to you. In most cases you will quickly find more material than you can use. Read enough to become aware of the potential that is available. As you do that, however, keep in mind the setting that you are going to use for your presentation as well as the person with whom you will be speaking. Mark points that are suitable to use.

Before you organize your presentation and make the final selection of details, take time to read the discussion of the counsel point that you have been assigned. Application of that counsel is one of the main reasons for your assignment.

By covering your material in the time allotted, you will have the satisfaction of giving your conclusion, since a signal will be given when the assigned time is up. In our field ministry, however, timing is not always a factor. So as you prepare, take into account the amount of time available, but keep the emphasis on effective teaching.

A Word About Settings. Examine the suggestions on page 82, and select one that will be practical in your ministry and that will allow you to make realistic use of the assigned material. If you have been in the school for some time, view this as an opportunity to reach out and develop additional skills for your ministry.

If the Theocratic Ministry School overseer assigns the setting, accept the challenge. Most settings involve witnessing. If you have never witnessed under the circumstances described, get ideas by talking to publishers who have. If possible, try to discuss your assigned subject in a setting comparable to the one that you will use in the school. This will help you to achieve an important objective of your training.

When Delivery Is to Be in the Form of a Talk

If you are a male, you may be assigned to present a brief talk to the congregation. In preparing these talks, the basic points that need to

be considered are similar to those already listed for student assignments in the form of demonstrations. The main differences are the audience and the format.

It is generally desirable to prepare your material so that everyone in the audience will benefit from it. Most of those present already know basic Bible truths. They may be well acquainted with the subject on which you have been assigned to speak. Take into account what they already know about your subject. Endeavor to benefit them in some way by your presentation. Ask yourself: 'How can I use my subject to deepen my appreciation and that of my audience for Jehovah as a person? What is there in the material that will help us to discern God's will? How can this material help us make sound decisions in the midst of a world that is dominated by fleshly desires?' (Eph. 2:3) Satisfying answers to those questions require research. When using the Bible, endeavor to do more than simply read texts. Reason on the scriptures that you use, and show how these provide the basis for drawing conclusions. (Acts 17:2, 3) Do not try to cover too much. Present your material in such a way that it will be easy to remember.

Preparation should also include giving attention to your delivery. Do not minimize this. Practice giving your talk out loud. The effort you put into studying and applying counsel on the various speech qualities will contribute much to your progress. Whether you are a new speaker or one who is experienced, prepare well so that you can speak with conviction and feeling that are appropriate to your material. As you carry out each assignment in the school, keep in mind the objective of using your God-given gift of speech to honor Jehovah.—Ps. 150:6.

Preparing Talks for the Congregation

THE program of the Theocratic Ministry School is prepared to benefit the entire congregation. Valuable information is also presented at other congregation meetings as well as at assemblies and conventions. If you have been assigned a part on one of these programs, you have been given a weighty responsibility. The apostle Paul urged the Christian overseer Timothy to pay constant attention to his teaching. (1 Tim. 4:16) Those who are present at Christian gatherings have set aside valuable time—and some have put forth much effort—to be in attendance for instruction in matters that pertain to their relationship with God. Giving such instruction is an awesome privilege indeed! How can you care for it well?

Highlights From Bible Reading

This feature of the school is based on the Bible reading that is assigned for the week. Emphasis should be put on how the material affects us today. As reported at Nehemiah 8:8, Ezra and his associates read publicly from God's Word, explaining it, 'putting meaning into it,' and imparting understanding. Your handling of the Bible highlights affords you the opportunity to do that too.

How should you prepare such an assignment? If possible, read the assigned portion of the Bible a week or more in advance. Then think about your congregation and its needs. Pray about it. What counsel, what examples, what principles in this portion of God's Word meet those needs?

Research is essential. Is the *Watchtower Library* on CD-ROM or the *Watch Tower Publications Index* available in your language? If so, make good use of them. By researching what has been published on the verses you have chosen to focus on, you may find enlightening background material, explanations of the fulfillment of prophecies, analyses of what certain texts reveal about Jehovah, or discussions of principles. Do not try to cover too many points. Focus on just a few selected verses. It is better to cover a few verses and do it well.

Your assignment may also call for inviting the audience to comment on how they have benefited from the week's Bible reading. What did they find that will benefit them in their personal and family study or in their ministry or way of life? What qualities of Jehovah were manifested in his dealings with people and nations? What did the audience learn that strengthened their faith and built appreciation for Jehovah? Do not dwell on technicalities. Emphasize the meaning and practical value of points selected.

Instruction Talk

This is based on published material, such as an article in *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* or possibly a portion of a book. In most cases there is more than enough material for the allotted time. How should you handle the assignment? As a teacher, not merely as someone covering material. An overseer must be "qualified to teach." —1 Tim. 3:2.

Begin your preparation by studying the assigned material. Look up the scriptures. Meditate. Endeavor to do that well in advance of the date of your talk. Keep in mind that the brothers are encouraged to read beforehand the published material on which the talk is based. Your assignment is not simply to review it or to condense it but to show how to apply it. Use appropriate portions of the material in a manner that will truly benefit the congregation.

Just as each child has his own personality, each congregation has distinctive traits. A parent who teaches effectively does not simply recite moral precepts to his child. He reasons with the child. He takes into account the child's personality and the problems with which the child struggles. In a similar way, teachers in the congregation endeavor to come to grips with the needs of the group to which they are speaking. However, a discerning teacher will avoid using examples that could embarrass someone in the audience. He will point out the benefits already being enjoyed as a result of walking in Jehovah's way and will highlight counsel from the Scriptures that will help the congregation to deal successfully with problems that they face.

Good teaching touches the hearts of those in the audience. This requires not merely stating facts but also building appreciation for

what these represent. It requires genuine concern for those being instructed. Spiritual shepherds should know the flock. If they lovingly keep in mind the problems that various ones are facing, they will be able to speak encouragingly, showing understanding, compassion, and empathy.

As effective teachers know, a talk must have a clearly defined objective. Material should be presented in such a manner that key points will stand out and be remembered. The audience should be able to take with them practical thoughts that will affect their lives.

Service Meeting

When you are giving a talk based on an article in *Our Kingdom Ministry*, the challenge may be somewhat different. Here you will find that you are often called on to convey fully to the audience what has been provided, not to select what is most appropriate. Help the audience to reason on the scriptures that constitute the basis for any counsel given. (Titus 1:9) Time is limited, in most cases not allowing for additional material.

On the other hand, you may be invited to present material on which no article appears in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Reference may be made to a *Watchtower* article, or the assignment may consist of a few brief notes. It is up to you as a teacher to consider the needs of the congregation in relation to the assigned material. You may need to use a brief, pointed illustration or relate a fitting experience. Remember that your assignment is not simply to speak on the subject but to handle it in such a way that the congregation is helped to accomplish the work that God's Word sets out and to find joy in doing so.—Acts 20:20, 21.

As you prepare your assignment, think about the circumstances of those who make up the congregation. Commend them for what they are already doing. How may their applying the suggestions given in the assigned material increase their effectiveness and their joy in the ministry?

Does your assignment call for a demonstration or an interview? If so, it should be planned well in advance. It may be tempting simply to ask someone else to make arrangements for it, but that does not always yield the best results. If at all possible, rehearse the

demonstration or interview before the day of the meeting. Be sure that this element of your part is handled in a manner that truly enhances the instruction being given.

Assemblies and Conventions

Brothers who develop fine spiritual qualities and who become effective public speakers and teachers may in time be asked to share in the program at an assembly or a convention. These are truly special occasions for theocratic education. Such an assignment may come in the form of a manuscript, an outline, instructions for a Bible drama with a modern-day application, or a paragraph of instructions. If you are privileged to serve on such a program, carefully study the material supplied to you. Work with it until you appreciate its value.

Those who are assigned a manuscript talk should read the material word for word. They do not reword or rearrange the material. They study it to discern clearly what the main points are and how these are developed. They practice reading aloud until they can deliver the talk with proper sense stress, enthusiasm, warmth, feeling, earnestness, and conviction, as well as volume and intensity appropriate for a large audience.

Brothers who are assigned an outline talk are responsible to develop their material in a manner that closely conforms to the outline. Instead of reading from the outline during the talk or preparing it in manuscript form, the speaker should present the material extemporaneously, from the heart. It is important to adhere to the time allotted on the outline in order to present clearly each main point shown. The speaker should make good use of the thoughts and scriptures listed under the main points. He should not bring in additional points of his own personal liking to the exclusion of what is in the outline. The foundation of the instruction, of course, is God's Word. The responsibility of Christian elders is to "preach the word." (2 Tim. 4:1, 2) So a speaker should give special attention to the scriptures in the outline—reasoning on them and making application of them.

Do Not Procrastinate

Do you serve in a congregation where there are many opportunities to speak? How can you do justice to all of them? Avoid preparing your parts at the last minute.

Talks that truly benefit the congregation require adequate forethought. Therefore, get into the habit of reading the material as soon as you receive each assignment. This will enable you to mull it over as you go about other activities. During the days or weeks before you give your talk, you may hear comments that help you see how best to apply the information. Situations may arise that reveal its timeliness. Reading and thinking about your assignment right after you receive it takes time, but this is time well spent. When you finally sit down to develop the outline, you will reap the benefits of having thought it out well in advance. Handling assignments in this way will greatly reduce stress and will help you to present material in a manner that is practical and that reaches the hearts of those in the congregation.

To the extent that you appreciate the gift that has been entrusted to you in connection with Jehovah's program of education for his people, you will honor him and will prove to be a blessing to those who love him.—Isa. 54:13; Rom. 12:6-8.

Preparing Discourses for the Public

EACH week, most congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses arrange for a public discourse on a Scriptural subject. If you are an elder or a ministerial servant, do you give evidence of being an effective public speaker, a teacher? If so, you may be invited to give a public talk. The Theocratic Ministry School has helped tens of thousands of brothers to qualify for this privilege of service. When assigned to give a public talk, where should you begin?

Study the Outline

Before you do any research, read the outline and meditate on it until you get the sense of it. Fix in mind the theme, which is the title of the discourse. What is it that you are to teach your audience? What is your objective?

Become familiar with the main headings. Analyze those main points. How does each one tie in with the theme? Under each main point, a number of subpoints are listed. Elements that support the subpoints are listed beneath these. Consider how each section of the outline builds on the preceding one, leads into the next, and helps to accomplish the objective of the talk. Once you understand the theme, the objective of the talk, and how the main points accomplish that purpose, then you are ready to begin developing the material.

At first you may find it helpful to think of your discourse as four or five short talks, each with a main point. Prepare these one at a time.

The outline provided is a preparation tool. It is not meant to serve as the notes from which you give your talk. It is like a skeleton. You will need to put some flesh on it, as it were, give it a heart and breathe life into it.

Use of Scriptures

Jesus Christ and his disciples built their teaching on the Scriptures. (Luke 4:16-21; 24:27; Acts 17:2, 3) You can do the same. The Scriptures should be the basis of your talk. Rather than simply explaining and applying statements made in the outline provided, discern how those statements are supported by the Scriptures, and then teach from the Scriptures.

As you prepare your talk, examine each verse cited in the outline. Take note of the context. Some texts may simply provide helpful background. Not all of them need to be read or commented on during your delivery. Select those that are best for your audience. If you concentrate on the scriptures cited in the printed outline, you will probably not need to use additional Scripture references.

The success of your talk depends, not on the number of scriptures used, but on the quality of the teaching. When introducing scriptures, show why they are being used. Allow time to apply them. After you read a scripture, keep your Bible open as you discuss the text. Your audience will likely do the same. How can you stir the interest of your audience and help them to benefit more fully from God's Word? (Neh. 8:8, 12) You can do so by explanation, illustration, and application.

Explanation. When preparing to explain a key text, ask yourself: 'What does it mean? Why am I using it in my talk? What might those in the audience be asking themselves about this verse?' You may need to analyze the context, the background, the setting, the force of the words, the intent of the inspired writer. This requires research. You will find an abundance of valuable information in the publications provided by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45-47) Do not try to explain everything about the verse, but explain why you had your audience read it in connection with the point being discussed.

Illustration. The purpose of illustrations is to take your audience to a deeper level of understanding or to help them remember a point or principle you have discussed. Illustrations help people take what you have told them and relate it to something they already know. This is what Jesus did when he gave his famous Sermon on the Mount. "Birds of heaven," "lilies of the field," a "narrow gate," a "house upon the rock-mass," and many such expressions made his teaching emphatic, clear, and unforgettable.—Matt., chaps. 5-7.

Application. Explaining and illustrating a scripture will impart knowledge, but applying that knowledge is what brings results. True, it is the responsibility of those in your audience to act on the Bible's message, but you can help them discern what needs to be done. Once you are confident that your audience understands the verse

under discussion and sees its relevance to the point being made, take time to show them its impact on belief and conduct. Highlight the benefits of relinquishing wrong ideas or conduct that is inconsistent with the truth under discussion.

As you think about how to apply scriptures, remember that the people making up your audience come from many backgrounds and face a wide range of circumstances. There may be newly interested ones, youths, older ones, and those struggling with a variety of personal problems. Make your talk practical and true to life. Avoid offering counsel that sounds as if you have only a few individuals in mind.

The Speaker's Decisions

Some decisions regarding your discourse have already been made for you. The main points are clearly indicated, and the amount of time you should devote to the discussion of each main heading is clearly shown. Other decisions are yours to make. You may choose to spend more time on certain subpoints and less on others. Do not assume that you must cover every subpoint to the same degree. That may cause you to rush through material and overwhelm your audience. How can you determine which to develop more fully and which to mention only briefly, or in passing? Ask yourself: 'Which points will help me to convey the talk's central idea? Which ones afford the greatest potential for benefiting my audience? Will omitting a certain cited scripture and related point weaken the lineup of evidence that is being presented?'

Studiously avoid injecting speculation or personal opinion. Even God's Son, Jesus Christ, avoided speaking of 'his own originality.' (John 14:10) Appreciate that the reason why people come to the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses is to hear the Bible discussed. If you have come to be regarded as a fine speaker, likely it is because you make it a practice to draw attention, not to yourself, but to God's Word. For this, your talks are appreciated.—Phil. 1:10, 11.

Having turned a simple outline into a meaty explanation of Scripture, you now need to rehearse your talk. It is beneficial to do so aloud. The important thing is to be sure that you have all the points well in mind. You must be able to put your heart into your deliv-

ery, breathe life into the material, and give an enthusiastic presentation of the truth. Before delivering your talk, ask yourself: ‘What am I hoping to accomplish? Do the main points stand out? Have I really made the Scriptures the basis of my talk? Does each main point lead naturally into the next? Does the talk build appreciation for Jehovah and his provisions? Does the conclusion relate directly to the theme, show the audience what to do, and motivate them to do it?’ If you can answer yes to these questions, then you are in a position to ‘do good with knowledge,’ for the benefit of the congregation and to the praise of Jehovah!—Prov. 15:2.

WHEN YOUR TALK IS TO BE GIVEN THROUGH AN INTERPRETER

Often there are many language groups within a country, so public speakers may be called on to give Bible talks through interpreters. If you are invited to speak in such a setting, the following guidelines will help both you and your interpreter.

- The effectiveness of your talk will depend to a considerable extent on the work of the interpreter. Even one experienced in the field of interpreting will do better work if you help him to prepare.
- Generally, you must reduce your talk by at least one third to allow for the interpretation. (Sign language is an exception, since it can be delivered almost simultaneously.)
- Before delivery, review with the interpreter the general outline of your talk and its objective. If your assignment is a manuscript talk at a convention, let the interpreter see a copy well in advance.
- Discuss with the interpreter the scriptures that you will use. Be sure that the vernacular Bible conveys the same thought that your Bi-

ble does. Show the interpreter which expressions from the scriptures will be stressed or explained.

- Decide whether the scriptures will be read in both languages or only in one. Reading in the target language may suffice.
- Rapidly stating dates, numbers, and scripture citations can present problems. Use helpful pausing, and favor round numbers for statistics.
- Discuss any illustrations, idioms, and unusual expressions that you plan to use. Be sure that your interpreter understands them and that it is possible to convey the concepts in the target language.
- When speaking, use short sentences. Express complete thoughts before pausing for the interpreter. (He renders thoughts, not necessarily all the words.) For consecutive interpretation, allow the interpreter to finish before you continue.
- The interpreter depends on your using good volume and enunciation.

Develop Ability as a Teacher

WHAT is your goal as a teacher? If you have recently become a Kingdom publisher, you no doubt have the desire to learn how to conduct a home Bible study, since Jesus gave his followers the assignment to make disciples. (Matt. 28:19, 20) If you already have experience in this activity, perhaps your goal is to be more effective in reaching the hearts of those whom you seek to help. If you are a parent, you surely want to be the sort of teacher who can motivate your children to dedicate their lives to God. (3 John 4) If you are an elder or are reaching out to become one, perhaps you want to be a public speaker who can build in his listeners a deeper appreciation for Jehovah and his ways. How can you reach these goals?

Take a lesson from the Master Teacher, Jesus Christ. (Luke 6:40) Whether Jesus was speaking to a crowd on a mountainside or to just a few people as they walked on the road, what he said and the way he said it made a lasting impression. Jesus stimulated the minds and hearts of his listeners, and he made practical application that they could understand. Can you accomplish similar things?

Rely on Jehovah

Jesus' teaching ability was enhanced both by the intimate relationship that he had with his heavenly Father and by the blessing of God's spirit. Do you earnestly pray to Jehovah to be able to conduct a home Bible study effectively? If you are a parent, do you regularly pray for divine guidance in teaching your children? Do you offer heartfelt prayer when preparing to give talks or to conduct meetings? Such prayerful reliance on Jehovah will help you become a more effective teacher.

Dependence on Jehovah is also manifested by reliance on his Word, the Bible. In prayer on the final evening of his life as a perfect human, Jesus said to his Father: "I have given your word to them." (John 17:14) Though Jesus had vast experience, he never spoke of his own originality. He always spoke what his Father taught him, thereby leaving an example for us to follow. (John 12:49, 50) God's word, as preserved in the Bible, has power to influence people—their actions, in-

most thoughts, and feelings. (Heb. 4:12) As you grow in knowledge of God's Word and learn to use it well in your ministry, you will be developing the sort of teaching ability that draws people to God. —2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

Honor Jehovah

Being a teacher in imitation of Christ is not simply a matter of being able to give an interesting discourse. True, people marveled at Jesus' "winsome words." (Luke 4:22) But what was Jesus' objective in speaking well? It was to honor Jehovah, not to draw attention to himself. (John 7:16-18) And he urged his followers: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and *give glory to your Father* who is in the heavens." (Matt. 5:16) That counsel should influence the way we teach. It ought to be our aim to avoid anything that would detract from that objective. So when planning what we will say or how we will say it, we do well to ask ourselves, 'Will this deepen appreciation for Jehovah, or will it attract attention to me?'

For example, illustrations and real-life examples can be used effectively in teaching. However, when a lengthy illustration is developed or an experience is related in excessive detail, the point of the instruction may be lost. Similarly, telling stories that merely entertain detracts from the purpose of our ministry. In effect, the teacher is drawing attention to himself instead of accomplishing the real goal of theocratic education.

"Make a Distinction"

For a person truly to become a disciple, he must clearly understand what is being taught. He must hear the truth and see how it differs from other beliefs. Drawing contrasts helps to achieve this.

Repeatedly, Jehovah urged his people to "make a distinction" between what is clean and what is unclean. (Lev. 10:9-11) He said that those who would serve in his great spiritual temple would instruct people "in the difference between a holy thing and a profane thing." (Ezek. 44:23) The book of Proverbs is full of contrasts between righteousness and wickedness, between wisdom and foolishness. Even things that are not opposites can be distinguished from one another. The apostle Paul drew a contrast between a righteous man and a good man, as recorded at Romans 5:7. In the book of Hebrews, he

showed the superiority of Christ's high-priestly service over that of Aaron. Indeed, as 17th-century educator John Amos Comenius wrote: "To teach means scarcely anything more than to show how things differ from one another in their different purposes, forms, and origins. . . . Therefore, he who differentiates well teaches well."

Take, as an example, teaching someone about God's Kingdom. If he does not understand what the Kingdom is, you might show how what the Bible says contrasts with the idea that the Kingdom is simply a condition in a person's heart. Or you could show how the Kingdom differs from human governments. Yet, for people who know these basic truths, you might go into greater detail. You might show them how the Messianic Kingdom differs from Jehovah's own universal kingship, described at Psalm 103:19, or from 'the kingdom of the Son of God's love,' mentioned at Colossians 1:13, or from the "administration," spoken of at Ephesians 1:10. The use of contrasts can help to bring this important Bible teaching clearly into focus for your audience.

Jesus repeatedly employed this teaching device. He contrasted the popular understanding of the Mosaic Law with the true intent of the Law. (Matt. 5:21-48) He differentiated true godly devotion from the hypocritical acts of the Pharisees. (Matt. 6:1-18) He contrasted the spirit of those who 'lorded it over' others with the self-sacrificing spirit that his followers would show. (Matt. 20:25-28) On another occasion, recorded at Matthew 21:28-32, Jesus invited his listeners to draw their own contrast between self-righteousness and true repentance. That leads us to another valuable facet of good teaching.

Encourage Listeners to Think

At Matthew 21:28, we read that Jesus introduced his comparison by asking: "What do you think?" A capable teacher does not simply relate facts or give answers. Instead, he encourages his listeners to cultivate thinking ability. (Prov. 3:21; Rom. 12:1) This is done, in part, by asking questions. As found at Matthew 17:25, Jesus asked: "*What do you think*, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth receive duties or head tax? From their sons or from the strangers?" Jesus' thought-provoking questions helped Peter draw his own correct conclusion about paying the temple tax. Similarly, when responding to the man who asked, "Who really is my neighbor?" Jesus contrasted

the actions of a priest and a Levite with those of a Samaritan. Then he posed this question: “Who of these three seems to you to have made himself neighbor to the man that fell among the robbers?” (Luke 10:29-36) Here again, rather than thinking for his listener, Jesus invited him to answer his own question.—Luke 7:41-43.

Reach for the Heart

Teachers who grasp the sense of God’s Word realize that true worship is not merely a matter of memorizing certain facts and conforming to certain rules. It is built on a good relationship with Jehovah and appreciation for his ways. Such worship involves the heart. (Deut. 10:12, 13; Luke 10:25-27) In the Scriptures, the term “heart” often refers to the whole inner person, including such things as desires, affections, feelings, and motivations.

Jesus knew that while humans look at the outward appearance, God sees what the heart is. (1 Sam. 16:7) Our service to God should be motivated by our love for him, not by efforts to impress fellow humans. (Matt. 6:5-8) On the other hand, the Pharisees did many things for outward show. They put great emphasis on conformity to details of the Law and compliance with rules of their own making. But they failed to manifest in their lives the qualities that would identify them with the God whom they professed to worship. (Matt. 9:13; Luke 11:42) Jesus taught that while obedience to God’s requirements is important, the value of such obedience is determined by what is in the heart. (Matt. 15:7-9; Mark 7:20-23; John 3:36) Our teaching will accomplish the greatest good if we imitate Jesus’ example. It is important that we help people to learn what God requires of them. But it is also important for them to know and love Jehovah as a person so that their conduct becomes a reflection of the value they place on an approved relationship with the true God.

Of course, to benefit from such teaching, people need to face up to what is in their own hearts. Jesus encouraged people to analyze their motives and to examine their feelings. When correcting a wrong view, he would ask his listeners why they thought, said, or did certain things. Yet, so as not to leave it at that, Jesus coupled his query with a statement, an illustration, or an action that encouraged them to view matters correctly. (Mark 2:8; 4:40; 8:17; Luke 6:41, 46) We can likewise help our listeners by suggesting that they ask themselves such

questions as: ‘Why does this course of action appeal to me? Why do I react to this situation as I do?’ Then supply motivation for them to view matters from Jehovah’s standpoint.

Provide Application

A good teacher knows that “wisdom is the prime thing.” (Prov. 4:7) Wisdom is the ability to apply knowledge successfully to solve problems, to avoid dangers, to attain goals, to help others. It is the responsibility of a teacher to help students learn to do that but not to make decisions for them. When discussing various Bible principles, help the student to reason. You might cite a situation from everyday life and then ask the student how the Bible principle you have just studied would help him if he were confronted with that situation. —Heb. 5:14.

In his discourse at Pentecost 33 C.E., the apostle Peter provided an example of practical application that touched people’s lives. (Acts 2:14-36) After he discussed three Scripture passages that the crowd professed to believe, Peter made application of these in the light of events that they had all witnessed. As a result, the crowd felt the need to act on what they had heard. Does your teaching have a similar effect on people? Do you go beyond a recitation of facts and help people to understand why things are so? Do you encourage them to consider how the things they are learning should affect their lives? They may not cry out, “What shall we do?” as did the crowd at Pentecost, but if you have applied the scriptures well, they will be moved to consider taking appropriate action.—Acts 2:37.

When reading the Bible with your children, you parents have a fine opportunity to train them to think in terms of practical application of Bible principles. (Eph. 6:4) You might, for example, select a few verses out of the Bible reading scheduled for the week, discuss their meaning, and then ask such questions as these: ‘How does this provide guidance for us? How might we use these verses in the ministry? What do they reveal about Jehovah and his way of doing things, and how does that build up our appreciation for him?’ Encourage your family to comment on these points during the discussion of Bible highlights at the Theocratic Ministry School. The verses they comment on will likely be those they remember.

Set a Good Example

You teach not only by what you say but also by what you do. Your actions provide a practical example of how to apply the things you say. This is the way that children learn. When they imitate their parents, they give evidence that they want to be like their parents. They want to know what it is like to do what their parents are doing. Likewise, when those whom you teach ‘become imitators of you as you are of Christ,’ they begin to experience the blessings of walking in Jehovah’s ways. (1 Cor. 11:1) God’s dealings with them become part of their own experiences.

This is a sobering reminder of the importance of setting a proper example. The “sort of persons [we are] in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion” will go a long way in giving those whom we teach a living demonstration of how to apply Bible principles. (2 Pet. 3:11) If you encourage a Bible student to read God’s Word regularly, be diligent about reading it yourself. If you want your children to learn to abide by Bible principles, be sure they see that your actions are in line with God’s will. If you instruct the congregation to be zealous in the ministry, see that you have a full share in that work. When you practice what you teach, you are in a better position to motivate others.—Rom. 2:21-23.

With a view to improving your teaching, ask yourself: ‘When I give instruction, is it done in such a way that it makes a difference in the attitudes, the speech, or the actions of those who hear it? To make matters clear, do I differentiate one idea or course of action from another? What do I do to help my students, my children, or my audience at a meeting to remember what I say? Do I clearly show my listeners how to apply what they are learning? Can they see it in my example? Do they appreciate how their response to the matter being discussed can influence their relationship with Jehovah?’ (Prov. 9:10) Continue giving attention to these things as you seek to develop ability as a teacher. “Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Stay by these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.”—1 Tim. 4:16.

TO BE EFFECTIVE IN YOUR TEACHING

- Rely on Jehovah, not on your own ability
- Appreciate the power of God’s Word, and use it well
- Make it your aim to honor Jehovah, not to draw attention to yourself
- Use contrasts to help others understand clearly
- Encourage listeners to think
- Urge others to examine their motives and feelings
- Encourage listeners to consider how Bible knowledge should affect their lives
- Be an example worthy of imitation

How to Improve Conversation Skills

DO YOU generally find it easy to converse with others? For many, the very thought of engaging in conversation, especially with someone they do not know, causes anxiety. Such people may be shy. They may wonder: ‘What should I talk about? How can I get the discussion started? How can I keep it going?’ Confident, outgoing people may tend to dominate a conversation. Their challenge may be to draw others out and to learn to listen to what is said. So all of us, whether shy or outgoing, need to keep cultivating the art of conversation.

Start at Home

To improve your conversation skills, why not start at home? Up-building conversation can contribute much to the happiness of a family.

The foremost key to such conversation is caring deeply about one another. (Deut. 6:6, 7; Prov. 4:1-4) When we care, we communicate, and we listen when the other person wants to say something. Another important factor is having something worthwhile to say. If we have a regular program of personal Bible reading and study, there will be much that we can share. Wise use of the booklet *Examining the Scriptures Daily* can stimulate discussion. During the day, perhaps we have an enjoyable experience in the field service. We may read something that is informative or humorous. We should make it a practice to share these things during wholesome family conversation. This will also help us to converse with people outside the family circle.

Conversing With a Stranger

Many people hesitate to start a conversation with someone they do not know. But because of love for God and for their neighbor, Jehovah’s Witnesses make an earnest effort to learn how to converse in order to share Bible truths with others. What can help you to improve in this area?

The principle stated at Philippians 2:4 is valuable. We are encouraged to keep an eye, “not in personal interest upon just [our] own

matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others.” Think of it this way: If you have never met the person before, he views you as a stranger. How can you put him at ease? A warm smile and a friendly greeting will help. But there is more to consider.

You may have interrupted his thoughts. If you try to get him to discuss what is on *your* mind without concern for what is on *his* mind, will he respond favorably? What did Jesus do when he met a woman at a well in Samaria? Her mind was on getting water. Jesus initiated his conversation with her on that basis, and he soon turned it into a lively spiritual discussion.—John 4:7-26.

If you are observant, you too can discern what people may be thinking about. Does the person look happy or sad? Is he elderly, possibly infirm? Do you see evidence that there are children in the home? Does it seem that the person is materially well-off or that he struggles to obtain the necessities of life? Do home decorations or personal jewelry indicate a religious influence? If your greeting takes such things into account, the person may view you as someone who shares an interest in common with him.

If you do not meet the householder face-to-face, perhaps only hearing his voice through a locked door, what might you conclude? The person may live in fear. Could you use that information to start a conversation through the door?

In some places it is possible for you to draw a person into conversation by telling him something about yourself—your background, why you have come to his door, why you believe in God, why you began to study the Bible, and how the Bible has helped you. (Acts 26:4-23) Of course, this needs to be done with discretion and with a clear objective in mind. This, in turn, may move the person to tell you something about himself and how he views matters.

In some cultures, hospitality to strangers is customary. People may readily invite you to come in and sit down. Once you are seated, if you make a polite inquiry about the well-being of the family and sincerely listen to the response, the householder may be equally attentive to what you have to say. Other peoples show even more intense interest in visitors, so the preliminary greetings may be

CONVERSATION OPENERS

- Follow local customs
- Offer a sincere compliment
- Mention a point of mutual interest
- Ask a viewpoint question

extensive. In the process, they may find that they have things in common with you. This can lead to a beneficial spiritual discussion.

What if there are many people in your area who speak languages other than yours? How can you reach these people? If you learn even simple greetings in some of those languages, the people will realize that you are interested in them. This may open the way for further communication.

How to Continue a Conversation

To keep a conversation going, be interested in the thoughts of the other person. Encourage him to express himself if he is willing to do so. Well-chosen questions can help. Viewpoint questions are best because they usually prompt more than a yes or no response. For example, after mentioning a problem of local concern, you could ask: "What do you think has caused this situation?" or "What do you think is the remedy?"

When you ask a question, listen attentively to the reply. Indicate your genuine interest by a word, a nod, a gesture. Do not interrupt. With an open mind, consider what is being said. "Be swift about hearing, slow about speaking." (Jas. 1:19) When you do respond, show that you were really listening to what was said.

Realize, however, that not everyone will answer your questions. From some people the only response may be raised eyebrows or a smile. Others may simply say yes or no. Do not get frustrated. Be patient. Do not try to force the conversation. If the person is willing to listen, use the opportunity to share upbuilding Scriptural thoughts. In time, the person may come to view you as a friend. Then perhaps he will be willing to share his thoughts more freely.

As you talk with people, have an eye to the future. If a person raises a number of questions, answer some of them but leave one or two for the next time you talk together. Offer to do research, and then share the results with him. If he does not raise questions, you might conclude your conversation with a question that you believe will interest him. Offer to discuss it on the next call. A wealth of ideas can be found in the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?*, and recent issues of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

When With Fellow Believers

When you meet another one of Jehovah's Witnesses for the first time, do you take the initiative to get acquainted? Or do you just stand quietly? Love for our brothers should move us to want to get to know them. (John 13:35) How can you begin? You might simply give your name and ask for the name of the other person. Asking him how he learned the truth will usually lead to an interesting conversation and will help you get to know each other. Even if what you say does not seem to come out fluently, your effort indicates to the other person that you care about him, and that is what is important.

What can contribute to a meaningful conversation with a member of your congregation? Show genuine interest in the person and his family. Has the meeting just concluded? Comment on thoughts that you found helpful. This can be beneficial to both of you. You might mention a point of interest from a recent issue of *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* This should not be done as a show or a test of knowledge. Do it to share something in which you found special delight. You might talk about an assignment one of you may have in the Theocratic Ministry School and exchange ideas on how it could be handled. You might also share experiences from the field ministry.

Of course, our interest in people often leads to conversation about people—the things they say and do. Humor too may be part of our speech. Will what we say be upbuilding? If we take to heart the counsel of God's Word and are motivated by godly love, our speech surely will be upbuilding.—Prov. 16:27, 28; Eph. 4:25, 29; 5:3, 4; Jas. 1:26.

Before we engage in the field ministry, we prepare. Why not prepare an interesting tidbit to share in conversation with friends? As you read and hear things of interest, make note of points that you want to share with others. In time, you will have an abundance from which to choose. Doing this will enable you to broaden out beyond making comments on the daily routine of life. Above all, may your speech give evidence of how precious God's Word is to you!—Ps. 139:17.

HELPFUL QUALITIES

- A cheerful attitude
- Warmth and sincerity
- Appropriate personal interest

Know How You Ought to Answer

SOME questions are like icebergs. The most substantial part lies hidden beneath the surface. An underlying issue is often more important than the question itself.

Even when the inquirer is eager for the answer, your knowing how you ought to answer may involve discerning how much to say and the angle from which to approach the subject. (John 16:12) In some cases, as Jesus indicated to his apostles, a person may ask for information to which he is not entitled or that would really not benefit him.—Acts 1:6, 7.

The Scriptures counsel us: “Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt, so as to know how you ought to give an answer to each one.” (Col. 4:6) Thus, before we answer, we need to consider not only what we are going to say but how we are going to say it.

Discern the Questioner’s Viewpoint

The Sadducees tried to entrap Jesus with a question about the resurrection of a woman who had been married several times. However, Jesus knew that they actually did not believe in the resurrection. So in his reply, he answered their question in a way that dealt with the mistaken viewpoint that was the underlying basis for that question. Using masterful reasoning and a familiar Scriptural account, Jesus pointed out something that they had never considered previously—clear evidence that God is indeed going to resurrect the dead. His answer so amazed his opposers that they were afraid to question him any further.—Luke 20:27-40.

To know how you ought to answer, you must likewise discern the views and concerns of your questioners. For example, a classmate or a workmate may ask you why you do not celebrate Christmas. Why does he ask? Does he really care about the reason, or is he simply wondering whether you are permitted to have a good time? To find out, you may need to ask what gave rise to the question. Then answer accordingly. You might also use the opportunity to show how following

the Bible's direction protects us from those aspects of the holiday that have become a frustration and a burden to people.

Suppose you are invited to speak about Jehovah's Witnesses to a group of students. After your presentation, they may ask questions. If the questions seem to be sincere and straightforward, answers that are simple and direct may be best. If the questions reflect community prejudices, you might do more good by preceding your answers with brief comments about what can shape popular views on such issues and why Jehovah's Witnesses choose to let the Bible set the standard for them. Frequently, it is beneficial to view such questions as subjects of concern, not as challenges—even though they may have been presented in that way. Your reply, then, affords you opportunity to broaden the viewpoint of your audience, provide them with accurate information, and explain the Scriptural basis for our beliefs.

How will you respond to an employer who does not want to give you time away from work to attend a convention? First, consider things from his viewpoint. Might your offering to do overtime at another time help? If you explain to him that the instruction given at our conventions helps us to be honest, trustworthy workers, might that make a difference? If you show that you are taking his interests into account, perhaps he will also give favorable consideration to what he realizes is important in your life. But what if he wants you to do something dishonest? A clearly stated rejection coupled with a thought from the Scriptures would state your position. But might more good be accomplished if you first reason with him that a person who is willing to lie or steal *for* him might also lie *to* him or steal *from* him?

On the other hand, perhaps you are a student who does not want to participate in certain unscriptural activities at school. Remember, the teacher probably does not share your views, and it is his responsibility to maintain discipline in the class. The challenges that face you are (1) to show regard for what concerns him, (2) to explain your position respectfully, and (3) to be firm for what you

BEFORE YOU RESPOND, CONSIDER

- Why the question was asked
- What foundation needs to be laid so that the answer will be properly understood
- How to explain your position in a way that shows regard for matters that deeply concern the other person
- How to express yourself kindly and with conviction
- Whether you should give a direct answer or provide Bible principles and examples that will help the other person decide for himself what to do

know will please Jehovah. For best results, more may be needed than a simple, direct statement of what you believe. (Prov. 15:28) If you are young, no doubt your father or mother will help you prepare something to say.

At times, you may be required to refute charges brought against you by someone in authority. A police officer, a government official, or a judge might demand that you answer questions about obedience to a certain law, your position of Christian neutrality, or your attitude toward participation in patriotic ceremonies. How should you reply? “With a mild temper and deep respect,” the Bible counsels. (1 Pet. 3: 15) Also, ask yourself why these issues are of concern, and respectfully acknowledge that concern. Then what? The apostle Paul referred to the guarantees of Roman law, so you might point out legal guarantees that apply in your case. (Acts 22:25-29) Perhaps facts about the position taken by early Christians and by Jehovah’s Witnesses worldwide would broaden the official’s viewpoint. Or you might point out how recognition of the authority of God actually motivates people to be more consistently obedient to proper laws of men. (Rom. 13:1-14) Against such a background, a statement of Scriptural reasons for your position might be favorably received.

Questioner’s View of the Scriptures

When deciding how to answer, you may also need to consider your questioner’s view of the Holy Scriptures. Jesus did this when answering the Sadducees’ question about the resurrection. Knowing that they accepted only Moses’ writings, Jesus reasoned on an account contained in the Pentateuch, prefacing his remarks by saying: “But that the dead are raised up even Moses disclosed.” (Luke 20:37) You may likewise find it advantageous to quote from portions of the Bible that your listener accepts and with which he is familiar.

What if your listener does not view the Bible as authoritative? Note what the apostle Paul did in his speech on the Areopagus, as recorded at Acts 17:22-31. He shared Scriptural truths without directly quoting from the Bible. Where necessary, you can do the same. In some places you may have to have several discussions with a person before making direct reference to the Bible. When you do introduce the Bible, you may be wise at first simply to offer some reasons why it is worthy of consideration rather than state firmly that it is God’s Word.

Your aim, however, should be to give a clear witness about God's purpose and, in time, to let your listener see for himself what the Bible says. The Bible is far more persuasive than anything that we personally might say.—Heb. 4:12.

“Always With Graciousness”

How appropriate that servants of Jehovah, who himself is gracious, are told to let their speech be “always with graciousness, seasoned with salt”! (Col. 4:6; Ex. 34:6) This means that we ought to speak with kindness, even when it may not seem deserved. Our speech should be in good taste, not rough or tactless.

Many people are under tremendous pressure, and daily they are subjected to verbal abuse. When we call on such people, they may speak harshly. How should we respond? The Bible says: “An answer, when mild, turns away rage.” Such an answer can also soften one who has an opposing viewpoint. (Prov. 15:1; 25:15) To people who experience roughness every day, a manner and a voice that express kindness can be so appealing that they may listen to the good news we bring.

We have no interest in arguing with those who show no respect for truth. Rather, our desire is to reason from the Scriptures with people who will allow us to do so. Regardless of the situation we encounter, we keep in mind that we ought to answer with kindness and with conviction that the precious promises of God are reliable.—1 Thess. 1:5.

Personal Decisions and Matters of Conscience

When a Bible student or a fellow believer asks what he should do in a given situation, how should you answer? You may know what you would personally do. But each person must bear responsibility for his own decisions in life. (Gal. 6:5) The apostle Paul explained that he encouraged “obedience by faith” among the people to whom he preached. (Rom. 16:26) That is a fine example for us to follow. A person who makes decisions mainly to please his Bible teacher or another human is serving men, not living by faith. (Gal. 1:10) So a simple, direct answer may not be in the best interests of the one who is making the inquiry.

How, then, could you reply in a manner that is consistent with the Bible's guidelines? You might draw attention to appropriate Bible principles and examples included in the Bible record. In some cases,

you might show him how to do research so as to find those principles and examples himself. You could even discuss the principles and the value of the examples but without applying them to the situation at hand. Ask the person if he sees in them something that might help him to make a wise decision. Encourage him to consider in the light of these principles and examples what course would be pleasing to Jehovah. You are thus helping him to ‘train his own perceptive powers to distinguish both right and wrong.’—Heb. 5:14.

Commenting at Congregation Meetings

Meetings of the Christian congregation often provide opportunities for us to make public declaration of our faith. One way in which we do that is by commenting in response to questions. How should we comment? With a desire to bless, or speak well of, Jehovah. That is what the psalmist David did when “among the congregated throngs.” (Ps. 26:12) We should also comment in a manner that encourages fellow believers, inciting them “to love and fine works,” as the apostle Paul urged. (Heb. 10:23-25) Studying the lessons in advance can help us to accomplish this.

When called on to comment, keep your remarks simple, clear, and brief. Do not cover the entire paragraph; address just one point. If you give only part of the answer, that will allow others the opportunity to give additional comments. It is especially beneficial to highlight the scriptures cited in the material. When doing so, endeavor to draw attention to the portion of the text that bears on the point under consideration. Learn to comment in your own words rather than reading directly from the paragraph. Do not become disturbed if a comment you make does not come out exactly right. That happens occasionally to everyone who comments.

It is obvious that knowing how we ought to answer involves more than knowing the answer itself. It requires discernment. But how satisfying it is when you give an answer that comes from your heart and that touches the hearts of others!—Prov. 15:23.

HOW TO COMMENT AT MEETINGS

- If called on first, give a simple, direct answer to the question
- To add to the discussion, (1) show how a cited scripture bears on the point under consideration, (2) mention how the matter affects our lives, (3) explain how the information can be used, or (4) relate a brief experience that highlights a key point
- Listen carefully to comments given so that you will know how to build on what has been said
- Try to comment in your own words

Communicating Through Letters

LETTERS have improved the lives and behavior of millions of people. Most of the books of the Christian Greek Scriptures were originally letters. We today can write letters in order to build up new believers, keep in touch with friends, encourage brothers and sisters who have taken on special responsibilities, fortify those who are facing hardships, and relay information needed to care for congregation activities.—1 Thess. 1:1-7; 5:27; 2 Pet. 3:1, 2.

Letter writing is also an effective way to witness. In some areas, many people live in high-security apartment buildings or residence hotels that cannot be worked freely. Some are away from home most of the time, so we miss them when we witness from house to house. Others live in isolated places.

Sickness, bad weather, or a curfew may at times confine you to your home. Might you be able to write a letter to give a further witness to a relative or to someone you talked to informally? Has one of your Bible students moved? A letter from you might be just what he needs to keep his spiritual interest alive. Or perhaps you can share appropriate Scriptural information with those who have recently got married, become parents, or lost loved ones in death.

Witnessing by Letter

When writing to witness to someone you have never met, first introduce yourself. You might explain that you are participating in an international volunteer work. If it seems appropriate to do so, mention that you are one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Let the person know why you are writing instead of making a personal visit. Write as if you were talking to the person face-to-face. Still, in line with the direction to "prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves," give serious thought to how much information you should divulge about yourself.—Matt. 10:16.

Include in the letter what you would have said to the person if you could have visited him. You might adapt an introduction from the *Reasoning* book or use a Scriptural presentation from a recent issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry*. You could pose a question and encourage the

person to think about it. Some publishers simply explain that we have a free program for answering Bible questions and then cite some of the chapter titles from one of our study aids. A sample letter written to give a witness appears on page 73. It may give you some ideas, but it is good to vary the content. Otherwise, people may, in time, get the same letter repeatedly.

Some people are reluctant to read a long letter from a stranger. So it may be the course of wisdom to keep your letter brief. Bring your letter to a close before the recipient might tire of reading it. It would be appropriate to enclose a printed invitation to meetings at the Kingdom Hall. You could include a tract, a brochure, or an issue of *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* and explain that these can be provided on a regular basis if desired. Or you could ask if a visit may be made to the recipient's home to speak with him further on the subject discussed.

A Word About Form

Take a look now at the sample letter. Notice the following: (1) It looks tidy, not cluttered. (2) Even if the envelope gets misplaced, the recipient will still have the sender's name and postal address. (3) The purpose of the letter is stated simply and directly in the first paragraph. (4) Each main thought is dealt with in a separate paragraph. (5) In view of its purpose, the letter is neither too casual nor too formal.

In a more formal letter, such as one that the congregation secretary might send to the branch office, the name of the congregation would be included, along with the secretary's own name, his postal address, and the date. The name and address of the person or organization to whom the letter is being sent would also appear. This is followed by an appropriate salutation. To close the letter, in some languages an expression such as "Very truly yours" or "Sincerely" appears above the signature. The signature itself should be handwritten.

In any letter, give attention to proper spelling, grammar, punctuation and, of course, neatness. Doing so will lend dignity to your letter and the message that it contains.

On the outside of the envelope, always provide a return address—preferably your own postal address. If you feel that it would be unwise to give your own address when witnessing by letter to strangers,

ask the elders if they would approve of your using the return address of the local Kingdom Hall. The Watch Tower Society's address should never be used for this purpose, as this would improperly indicate that your correspondence was sent from the Society's offices and would cause confusion. If no return address is provided and literature is included, this too may give the wrong impression that the Society is the sender.

Make sure that you affix sufficient postage, especially if you have enclosed literature. If the postage is inadequate, the recipient may be charged for the amount due, and this would detract from your message. Remember that in many countries when a brochure or a magazine is enclosed, the postal rate is more than that required for just a letter.

The Right Tone

Once you have completed your letter, read it to evaluate the content. How does it sound? Is it friendly and tactful? Love and kindness are among the qualities that we endeavor to manifest in our dealings with others. (Gal. 5: 22, 23) If you detect a negative tone or a hint of pessimism, adjust the wording.

A letter can go places that you cannot. This fact alone makes it a significant tool for the ministry. Since your letter represents you and the things you stand for, give thought to what it says, how it looks, and how it sounds. It may provide just what is needed to start, strengthen, or encourage a precious soul on the road to life.

Phyllis Jonadab
124 Kingdom Way
Paradise, NY 12563
June 1, 20—

Dear Mrs. Friendly,

My husband and I live in your neighborhood. We have not been able to speak with you personally, but we have some important information that we want to share with you. A sample of it is contained in the enclosed tract.

It is our privilege to share in a work that is being done by volunteers in upward of 200 lands. In all these lands, people are being invited to benefit from a program that helps people learn the Bible's answers to such important questions as: Why do we grow old and die? What is the purpose of life? How can you find real happiness?

We engage in this activity because we are genuinely interested in our neighbors. Our work is not commercial. It is our hope that someday soon we will be able to talk to you personally. Please feel free to get in touch with us at the above address.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Be Progressive—Make Advancement

WHEN you first learned to apply Bible principles, deeply ingrained patterns of thinking, speech, and behavior began gradually to change. Much of this took place even before you enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School. Now you have likely progressed to the point where you have dedicated your life to Jehovah. Does that mean that you can stop making progress? Not at all. Your baptism is merely a beginning.

The disciple Timothy was already serving as a Christian elder when Paul told him to “ponder over” both the counsel given to him and the privileges of service entrusted to him—to “be absorbed in” these things—that his “advancement may be manifest to all persons.” (1 Tim. 4:12-15) Whether you are just beginning to follow the way of the truth or have much experience in Christian living, you should be interested in making advancement.

Knowledge and Transformation

At Ephesians 3:14-19, we read that the apostle Paul prayed that his fellow believers would be “thoroughly able to grasp mentally . . . the breadth and length and height and depth” of the truth. To that end, Jesus bestowed gifts in men to teach, readjust, and build up the congregation. Regular meditation on the inspired Word of God, along with guidance from experienced teachers, can help us to “grow up” spiritually.—Eph. 4:11-15.

That growth includes being “made new in the force actuating your mind.” This involves establishing a strong mental inclination in harmony with that of God and Christ. It requires constant exposure to their thinking, in order to “put on the new personality.” (Eph. 4:23, 24) When you study the Gospels, do you view these accounts of the life of Christ as a pattern for you to follow? Do you seek to identify specific traits shown by Jesus and then make a real effort to imitate these in your own life?—1 Pet. 2:21.

The topics you include in conversation can be an indication of the extent to which you have made such advancement. Those who have put on the new personality do not indulge in speech that is dishonest,

abusive, obscene, or negative. Instead, their speech is “good for building up . . . that it may impart what is favorable to the hearers.” (Eph. 4:25, 26, 29, 31; 5:3, 4; Jude 16) Their comments and expressions both in private and at congregation meetings reveal that the truth is transforming their lives.

If you are no longer “tossed about as by waves and carried hither and thither by every wind of teaching,” this too is evidence of advancement. (Eph. 4:14) How do you react, for example, when the world barrages you with new ideas, causes, or forms of entertainment? Are you tempted to divert time from spiritual obligations in order to pursue such things? Doing so can stifle spiritual advancement. How much wiser to buy out time for spiritual pursuits!—Eph. 5:15, 16.

How you deal with other people can also be an indicator of spiritual advancement. Have you learned to be “tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving” your brothers and sisters?—Eph. 4:32.

Your progress in doing things Jehovah’s way should be manifest both in the congregation and at home. It should also be evident at school, in public places, and at your place of secular work. (Eph. 5:21–6:9) If in all such circumstances you are displaying godly qualities in fuller measure, then your advancement is making itself manifest.

Use Your Gift

Jehovah has entrusted each of us with abilities and talents. He expects us to use these in behalf of others in such a way that through us, he can express his undeserved kindness. Regarding this the apostle Peter wrote: “In proportion as each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another as fine stewards of God’s undeserved kindness.” (1 Pet. 4:10) How are you handling your stewardship?

Peter continues: “If anyone speaks, let him speak as it were the sacred pronouncements of God.” (1 Pet. 4:11) This verse lays emphasis on the responsibility to speak in complete harmony with God’s Word, so that God is glorified. The *manner* in which such speaking is done should also glorify Jehovah. The training provided through the Theocratic Ministry School can help you to use your gift in such a way—glorifying God by the way that you help others. With that as your aim, how should you measure your progress in the school?

Rather than thinking in terms of how many points you have covered on your speech counsel form or the type of assignments that you

have been given, reflect on the extent to which the training has improved the quality of your sacrifice of praise. The school prepares us to be more effective in the field ministry. So ask yourself: ‘Do I really prepare what I am going to say in the field service? Have I learned to show personal interest in those to whom I witness? Do I lay the groundwork for return visits by leaving people with a question for discussion the next time? If I am studying the Bible with someone, am I working to improve as a teacher who reaches the heart?’

Do not view progress simply in terms of privileges of service that are granted to you. Your advancement is seen, not in the assignment, but in what you do with it. If given an assignment that involves teaching, ask yourself: ‘Did I really employ the art of teaching? Did I handle the material in such a way that it made a difference in the lives of those who heard it?’

The exhortation to use your gift implies using initiative. Do you take the initiative to work with others in the field ministry? Do you look for opportunities to help members of your congregation who are new, young, or infirm? Do you volunteer to clean the Kingdom Hall or to assist in various ways at conventions and assemblies? Can you enroll periodically as an auxiliary pioneer? Are you able to serve as a regular pioneer or help in a congregation where the need is greater? If you are a brother, are you reaching out to meet the Scriptural qualifications for ministerial servants and elders? Your willingness to offer assistance and accept responsibility is a sign of advancement. —Ps. 110:3.

The Role Experience Plays

If you feel limited because of a lack of experience in Christian living, take heart. God’s Word can make “the inexperienced one wise.” (Ps. 19:7; 119:130; Prov. 1:1-4) Applying Bible counsel allows us to benefit from Jehovah’s perfect wisdom, which is of greater value than any learning gained through experience alone. Yet, as we make advancement in our service to Jehovah, we do gain valuable experience. How can we use it to good advantage?

Having been exposed to a variety of circumstances in life, a person could be tempted to reason: ‘I have faced this situation before. I know what to do.’ Would this be the course of wisdom? Prov-

erbs 3:7 cautions: “Do not become wise in your own eyes.” Experience should certainly broaden our view of factors to consider when dealing with situations in life. But if we are making spiritual progress, our experience should also impress on our minds and hearts that we need Jehovah’s blessing in order to succeed. Our advancement is manifest, then, not by our facing situations with confident self-assurance, but by our readily turning to Jehovah for direction in our lives. It is shown by our being confident that nothing can happen without his permission and by our maintaining a trusting and affectionate relationship with our heavenly Father.

Keep Stretching Forward

The apostle Paul, despite being a spiritually mature, anointed Christian, recognized that he needed to keep “stretching forward” to attain the goal of life. (Phil. 3:13-16) Do you share that outlook?

To what extent have you made progress? Measure your growth in terms of how completely you have clothed yourself with the new personality, how fully you have submitted to Jehovah’s sovereignty, and how diligently you are using your gifts to honor Jehovah. As you benefit from Theocratic Ministry School education, the qualities highlighted in God’s Word should be progressively evident in your manner of speaking and teaching. Keep these aspects of your growth in focus. Yes, rejoice in them, and your advancement will readily be manifest.

WHAT ARE YOUR PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GOALS?

What realistic goals do you have that you should be able to attain within the next year?

1. _____
2. _____

What long-term goals are so precious to you that you are determined to work toward them until you achieve them?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Program for Developing Ability as a Speaker and a Teacher

WHETHER you are young or advanced in age, male or female, this course can aid you in expressing yourself more effectively and in becoming better qualified as a teacher of God's Word.

Assignments for those enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School will be made by the school overseer. On the next three pages, you will find your personal counsel form. The numbers preceding the various points correspond to the studies on the pages that follow. In those studies you will find an explanation of what is involved in mastering these aspects of speaking and teaching and why each one is important. You will also find helpful direction on how to accomplish what is being recommended.

The color coding on the counsel form indicates which points apply to assignments that involve (1) reading to an audience, (2) a demonstration with two or more people, or (3) a discourse to the congregation. The school overseer will assign the point on which you are to work. It is preferable to work on just one point at a time. You will benefit by doing the exercises recommended at the end of the assigned study. If you give evidence that you have successfully applied the counsel in the designated study, your counselor will assign you another point.

If your assignment is to be handled as a demonstration, you will need a setting. A list of settings appears on page 82, but you are not limited to this list. Your counselor may recommend that you try a certain setting in order to gain experience, or he may leave it up to you to make the selection.

Reading this book and doing the exercises even when you are not preparing school assignments can contribute greatly to your progress. Perhaps you can cover a different study each week or so.

Regardless of how long you have been sharing in the school or participating in the field ministry, there is room for improvement. May you benefit fully from the education provided through the Theocratic Ministry School.

YOUR COUNSEL FORM

(Study Number)			DATE ASSIGNED	EXERCISES ✓	DATE COMPLETED	
READING	DEMONSTRATION	DISCOURSE	1	Accurate reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		2	Words clearly spoken	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		3	Correct pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		4	Fluent delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		5	Appropriate pausing	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		6	Proper sense stress	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		7	Principal ideas emphasized	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		8	Suitable volume	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		9	Modulation	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		10	Enthusiasm	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		11	Warmth and feeling	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		12	Gestures and facial expressions	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		13	Visual contact	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		14	Naturalness	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		15	Good personal appearance	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		16	Poise	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		17	Use of microphone	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		18	Use of Bible in replying	<input type="checkbox"/>		

YOUR COUNSEL FORM

(Study Number)		DATE ASSIGNED	EXERCISES ✓	DATE COMPLETED
DEMONSTRATION	DISCOURSE	19 Use of Bible encouraged	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	
		20 Scriptures effectively introduced	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	
		21 Scriptures read with proper emphasis	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	
		22 Scriptures correctly applied	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	
		23 Practical value made clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	
			<input type="checkbox"/>	
	24 Choice of words	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	25 Use of an outline	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	26 Logical development of material	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	27 Extemporaneous delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	28 Conversational manner	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
29 Voice quality	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
30 Interest shown in the other person	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	31 Respect shown to others	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	32 Expressed with conviction	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	33 Tactful yet firm	<input type="checkbox"/>		
		<input type="checkbox"/>		
	34 Upbuilding and positive	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
35 Repetition for emphasis	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			
36 Theme developed	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	<input type="checkbox"/>			

YOUR COUNSEL FORM

(Study Number)		DATE ASSIGNED	EXERCISES ✓	DATE COMPLETED
DEMONSTRATION	DISCOURSE	37 Main points made to stand out	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		38 Interest-arousing introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		39 Effective conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		40 Accuracy of statement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		41 Understandable to others	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		42 Informative to your audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		43 Use of assigned material	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		44 Effective use of questions	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		45 Illustrations/examples that teach	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		46 Illustrations from familiar situations	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		47 Effective use of visual aids	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		48 Reasoning manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		49 Sound arguments given	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		50 Effort to reach the heart	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		51 Accurately timed, properly proportioned	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		52 Effective exhortation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		53 Audience encouraged and strengthened	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Use a Variety of Settings

You may use these settings in any order in the Theocratic Ministry School when presenting student assignments that take the form of demonstrations. To the extent possible, try not to use any setting more than twice before using all the others that are appropriate for your congregation's territory. On the line provided, note the date on which you used each setting.

Date Used

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 1. Giving a house-to-house presentation |
| _____ | _____ | 2. Overcoming a potential conversation stopper |
| _____ | _____ | 3. Making the first return visit on someone who showed interest |
| _____ | _____ | 4. Demonstrating a Bible study on the initial call |
| _____ | _____ | 5. Conducting a study with a person who does not read well |
| _____ | _____ | 6. Conducting a study with an advanced student |
| _____ | _____ | 7. Encouraging a Bible student to attend meetings |
| _____ | _____ | 8. Persuading a Bible student to apply some point of Scriptural counsel |
| _____ | _____ | 9. Having a practice session with an unbaptized publisher |
| _____ | _____ | 10. Encouraging Bible reading by showing how to do it or how reading a specific Bible book can benefit us |
| _____ | _____ | 11. Witnessing over the telephone or by intercom |
| _____ | _____ | 12. Engaging in street witnessing |
| _____ | _____ | 13. Witnessing at a market or other place of business |
| _____ | _____ | 14. Witnessing informally in a waiting room |
| _____ | _____ | 15. Witnessing informally on public transportation |
| _____ | _____ | 16. Witnessing in a local setting |
| _____ | _____ | 17. Witnessing to a neighbor |
| _____ | _____ | 18. Explaining your belief to a non-Witness relative |
| _____ | _____ | 19. Sharing your belief with a workmate or a schoolmate |
| _____ | _____ | 20. Witnessing to a schoolteacher, an employer, or a local official |
| _____ | _____ | 21. Witnessing to a doctor, a lawyer, or another professional |
| _____ | _____ | 22. Witnessing to a person who does not speak your language well |
| _____ | _____ | 23. Conversing with an atheist or an agnostic |
| _____ | _____ | 24. Witnessing to an animist, a Buddhist, a Catholic, a Hindu, a Jew, a Muslim, a Protestant, or someone of another local religion |
| _____ | _____ | 25. Working with someone in the Pioneers Assist Others program |
| _____ | _____ | 26. A parent reasoning with a child, or a youth reasoning with a sibling |
| _____ | _____ | 27. Sharing Scriptural encouragement with someone who is ill |
| _____ | _____ | 28. Using the Scriptures to comfort a grieving or depressed person met in the field |
| _____ | _____ | 29. An older person counseling a youth |
| _____ | _____ | 30. Another setting appropriate to your area |

What do you need to do?

Read aloud exactly what is on the printed page. Do not skip words, ignore parts of words, or exchange one word for another. Pronounce the words correctly. Take note of punctuation and diacritics.

THE Scriptures state that it is God’s will that people of all sorts “come to an accurate knowledge of truth.” (1 Tim. 2:4) In accord with that, when we read aloud from the Bible, our desire to convey accurate knowledge should influence how we read.

The ability to read aloud from the Bible and from publications that explain the Bible is important for youths and older ones alike. As Witnesses of Jehovah, we have a responsibility to share with others a knowledge of Jehovah and his ways. That often involves reading to one person or to a small group. We also do such reading within the family circle. In the Theocratic Ministry School, there are appropriate opportunities for brothers and sisters, young and old, to receive counsel with a view to improving their oral reading.

Reading the Bible publicly, whether to individuals or to a congregation, is something to take seriously. The Bible is inspired of God. Additionally, “the word of God is alive and exerts power . . . and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart.” (Heb. 4:12) God’s Word contains priceless knowledge that is available from no other source. It can help a person to know the only true God and to cultivate a fine relationship with him as well as to cope successfully with the problems of life. It explains the way to eternal life in God’s new world. Our goal should be to read the Bible to the best of our ability. —Ps. 119:140; Jer. 26:2.

How to Read Accurately. There are many facets to effective reading, but developing accuracy is the first step. That means endeavoring to read exactly what is on the printed page. Be careful not to skip words, drop word endings, or misread words because of their similarity to other words.

In order to read words correctly, you need to understand the

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Careful and correct reading is a fundamental part of conveying accurate knowledge of Bible truth.

context. That will require careful preparation. In time, as you develop the ability to look ahead and consider the flow of thought, your accuracy in reading will improve.

Punctuation and diacritics are important elements of written language. Punctuation may indicate where to pause, how long to pause, and possibly the need for inflection. In some languages, failure to change tone when required by the punctuation may change a question into a statement, or it may alter the meaning altogether. At times, of course, the function of punctuation is largely grammatical. In many languages it is impossible to read accurately without giving careful attention to diacritics—both those that are written and those that are understood from the context. These influence the sound of the characters with which they are associated. Be sure to get acquainted with the way that punctuation and diacritics are used in your language. This is a key to reading in a meaningful way. Remember that your objective should be to convey thoughts, not merely to say words.

Practice is required if you are going to cultivate the ability to read accurately. Read just one paragraph, and then do it again and again until you can read it without any mistakes. Then go on to the next paragraph. Finally, endeavor to read several pages of material without skipping, repeating, or misreading any words. After you have taken

PUNCTUATION

Period (.) indicates a full stop.

Comma (,) usually requires a slight pause, as more text will follow.

Semicolon (;) marks a pause milder than a period but stronger than a comma.

Colon (:) introduces a list or a quotation; it requires a pause but without a drop in inflection.

Exclamation point (!) signals strong feeling in tone.

Question mark (?) usually requires that the sentence be read in a somewhat higher tone or with rising inflection.

Quotation marks (" " or ' ') may indicate that the enclosed words should be set off with pauses (very slight if a part of text; stronger if a full statement).

Dashes (—), when used to set off words, usually call for a slight change of tone or pace.

Parentheses () and brackets [] may isolate words to be read with a slightly lower tone. Source references in parentheses do not need to be read, and bracketed words that are needed to complete the sense of what is read do not require a change in tone.

those steps, ask someone to monitor your reading and point out any mistakes that you may make.

In some parts of the world, poor eyesight and inadequate lighting contribute to difficulty in reading. If it is possible to give these the needed attention, improvement in reading will undoubtedly result.

In time, brothers who read well may be invited to share in the public reading of study material at the Congregation Book Study and the *Watchtower* Study. But to care well for such a privilege, more is required than just being able to say the words correctly. To become an effective *public* reader in the congregation, you will need to develop good habits in *personal* reading. This involves appreciating that each word in a sentence plays a role. You cannot ignore some of them and get a clear picture of what is being said. If you misread words, even when reading to yourself, the meaning of the sentence will be distorted. Misreading may result from failure to consider diacritics or the context in which words are used. Put forth an effort to understand what each word means in the setting in which it appears. Consider, too, how the punctuation affects the meaning of the sentence. Remember that thoughts are usually conveyed by groups of words. Take note of these so that when reading aloud you read word groupings—phrases and clauses—instead of simply words. Clearly understanding what you are reading is an important step toward being able to convey accurate knowledge to others by public reading.

It was to an experienced Christian elder that the apostle Paul wrote: “Continue applying yourself to public reading.” (1 Tim. 4:13) This is obviously an area in which all of us will find room for improvement.

HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

Practice! Practice! Practice!
And do so out loud.

Ask someone to monitor your reading and point out mistakes.

When doing personal study, discipline yourself to read carefully.

Instead of merely reading words, learn to read groups of words.

EXERCISE:

After preparing well, ask a friend or a family member to follow in the Bible as you read aloud a portion from Matthew chapters 5 to 7. Ask him to stop you every time you (1) skip a word, (2) read a word incorrectly or change the word order, or (3) ignore a diacritic or some punctuation that calls for a pause or an inflection. It would be good to do this for at least ten minutes on two or three occasions.

What do you need to do?

Express words so that they can easily be understood by your audience. This involves (1) proper use of the speech organs and (2) understanding of the structure of words.

IN ORDER to communicate effectively, you must speak clearly. What you want to say may be interesting, even important, but much of it will be lost if your words are not easily understood.

People are not motivated by speech that they do not really understand. Even though a person has a strong voice and can readily be heard, if his words are slurred, they will not move others to action. It is as if he were speaking in a foreign tongue, unintelligible to the hearer. (Jer. 5:15) The Bible reminds us: “If the trumpet sounds an indistinct call, who will get ready for battle? In the same way also, unless you through the tongue utter speech easily understood, how will it be known what is being spoken? You will, in fact, be speaking into the air.”—1 Cor. 14:8, 9.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When you enunciate carefully, others can understand what you say. Words that are clearly spoken are likely to be taken seriously.

What Makes Speech Indistinct? It may be failure to open the mouth sufficiently. Jaw muscles that are rigid and lips that scarcely move may contribute to muffled speech.

Speaking too rapidly may also result in speech that is difficult to grasp. That is like playing a recording of speech faster than it was designed to run. The words are there, but much of the benefit is lost.

In some cases, indistinct speech is related to a structural defect in the speech organs. But even those who must cope with such a problem can do much to improve by applying the suggestions in this study.

Frequently, however, indistinct speech results from a slurring of words—running them together so that they are difficult to understand. The problem may involve skipping syllables or significant letters or dropping word endings. When a person indiscriminately runs words together, his hearers may catch some ideas and phrases but they have to guess at others. Failure to enunciate clearly can impair the effectiveness of a person’s teaching.

How to Speak Clearly. One of the keys to saying words clearly is understanding the makeup of words in your language. In most languages, words are made up of syllables. Syllables are made up of one or more letters that are uttered as a single unit. In such languages, each syllable would normally be sounded when you speak, though not all with the same degree of emphasis. If you want to improve the clarity of your speech, slow down and do your best to express each syllable. At first this may sound overly precise, but as you practice, you will gradually resume a smooth flow of speech. For the sake of fluency, you will no doubt run certain words together, but this should be avoided if there is any danger of obscuring the sense of the words.

A note of caution: To cultivate your enunciation, you may practice speaking and reading in an overly precise manner. But do not allow that to become your regular manner of speaking. It would sound affected and unnatural.

If your speech sounds somewhat muffled, learn to hold your head up and move your chin away from your chest. When reading from the Bible, hold the book high enough so that shifting your gaze from the audience to your Bible requires only a slight downward look. This will allow your words to come out unimpeded.

Learning to release tension can also improve your speech. It is well-known that tension in the facial muscles or in those controlling your breathing can have an adverse effect on the speech mechanism. Such tension interferes with the harmonious coordination that should exist between your mind, vocal organs, and breath control—an operation that should be smooth and natural.

The jaw muscles need to be relaxed in order to respond readily to direction from the brain. The lips must also be relaxed. They have to be ready to expand and contract rapidly so as to put the finishing touches to many sounds that originate in the mouth and the throat. If the jaw and the lips are tense, the mouth will not open properly, and sound will be forced through the teeth. This will result in gruff, muffled, indistinct speech. Relaxing the jaw and the lips, however, does not mean becoming lazy in speech habits. This needs to

HOW TO DO IT

Speak and read individual words clearly—with proper enunciation, sufficient volume, and at a reasonable pace.

Do not slur expressions or run words together in such a way as to make the meaning uncertain to your hearers.

Hold your head up, and open your mouth sufficiently when you speak.

Practice relaxing your neck, jaw, lips, facial muscles, and throat muscles.

be balanced with the habit of forming sounds so that enunciation is clear.

In analyzing your situation, you may find it helpful to read aloud. Closely observe how you are employing the marvelous organs of speech. Do you open your mouth sufficiently so that speech sounds can come out without obstruction? The tongue, you must remember, is not the only organ of speech, though it is one of the busiest. The neck, the lower jaw, the lips, the facial muscles, and the throat muscles all play a part. As you speak, do you seem to be doing so without facial movement? If so, then there is a strong probability that your speech is indistinct.

If a tape recorder is available, record your own voice while you are speaking in a natural way, as you would to someone when you are in the field ministry. Record several minutes of conversational speech. Listening to that recording can help you pinpoint any trouble you may have in clearly sounding certain words. Watch for instances of slurring, muffling, or clipping of words, and try to determine the cause. Usually the weakness can be remedied by working on the points discussed above.

Do you have a speech impediment? Practice opening your mouth a little more than you have in the past, and try enunciating even more carefully. Fill your lungs when you take a breath, and speak slowly. Doing this has enabled many with speech impediments to speak with improved clarity. If you lisp, pull your tongue away from your front teeth when uttering the s and z sounds in words. Although your problem may not be completely solved, do not despair. Remember that Jehovah chose Moses, a man who may have had a speech impediment, to deliver vital messages to both the people of Israel and Pharaoh of Egypt. (Ex. 4:10-12) If you are willing, he will use you too, and he will bless your ministry with success.

EXERCISE:

Speak in your normal manner. How much do you open your mouth? Do you need to open it a little more and make fuller use of facial muscles? Practice doing that as you read Matthew 8:23-27 aloud. Be sure to hold your head up, and endeavor to relax the muscles of your jaw.

What do you need to do?

Say individual words correctly. This involves (1) using the right sounds to vocalize words, (2) stressing the right syllable(s) and, (3) in many languages, giving proper attention to diacritics.

NOT all Christians have had many years of secular education. Even the apostles Peter and John were described as “unlettered and ordinary.” (Acts 4:13) Nevertheless, it is important to avoid detracting from your presentation of Bible truth by pronouncing words poorly.

Factors to Consider. No one set of rules of pronunciation applies to all languages. Many languages are written in alphabetic letters. In addition to the Latin alphabet, there are such alphabets as Arabic, Cyrillic, Greek, and Hebrew. Instead of an alphabet, written Chinese uses characters that may be made up of a number of elements. These characters usually stand for a word or part of a word. Although Japanese and Korean borrow from Chinese, the characters may be used to represent very different sounds and may not carry the same meaning.

In alphabetic languages, proper pronunciation requires using the right sound for each letter or combination of letters. When such a language follows consistent rules, as is true of Greek, Spanish, and Zulu, the task is not so difficult. However, foreign influences on a language may result in pronunciations that reflect the origin of the words. As a result, a specific letter or group of letters may be pronounced in more than one way or, at times, may not be pronounced at all. You may need to memorize the exceptions and then use them often in your speech. In Chinese, proper pronunciation requires memorization of thousands of characters. In some languages the meaning of a word changes when the tone is altered. Failure to give adequate attention to this aspect of a language can result in conveying wrong ideas.

If the words of a language are made up of syllables, it is important to place the primary stress on the correct syllable. Many languages

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Proper pronunciation adds to the dignity of the message we preach. It allows a listener’s attention to be focused on the message we preach rather than on any mistakes in pronunciation.

that use such a structure have a fairly regular pattern of oral stress. Where there are exceptions to that pattern, an accent mark may be part of the written word. This helps to make proper pronunciation relatively easy. However, if the pattern is not consistent, the problem is more difficult. Dealing with it successfully requires much memorization.

In some languages, diacritics are a major factor to consider. These include marks shown above and below certain letters of the alphabet, such as: è, é, ô, ñ, õ, ŭ, č, ö, ç. The diacritical marks may be written, or the reader may be expected to supply them on the basis of the context in which a word appears. In the latter case, careful preparation will likely be needed when you are assigned to read publicly.

With regard to pronunciation, there are some pitfalls to avoid. Being overly precise can give the impression of affectation, even snob-bishness. The same can be said of pronunciation that is no longer in general use. The only effect will be to draw attention to the speaker. On the other hand, it is good to avoid the opposite extreme of using slovenly speech and pronunciation. Some of these matters have already been discussed under “Words Clearly Spoken.”

Acceptable pronunciation of the words of a language may differ from one country to another, even from one part of a country to another part of the same country. A person from another country may speak the local language with a distinctive accent. Dictionaries may list more than one acceptable pronunciation for a word. Especially if a person’s opportunity for secular education was very limited or if the language he now speaks is not his native tongue, he will benefit greatly by listening carefully to those who speak the local language well and then patterning his pronunciation after theirs. As Jehovah’s Witnesses, we want to speak in a manner that dignifies the message we preach and that will be readily understood by people in our area.

In everyday speech it is usually best to employ words with which you are well acquainted. Ordinarily, pronunciation will not be a problem in general conversation. However, when you read aloud, you may encounter some words that you do not use in daily speech. And Jehovah’s Witnesses do a great deal of oral reading. We read the Bible to people when we witness to them. Some brothers are called

on to read the paragraphs during the *Watchtower* Study or at the Congregation Book Study. It is important that we read accurately and that we do not detract from the message by mispronouncing words.

Do you find that some proper names in the Bible are difficult to pronounce? In English, a stress mark follows the syllable that should be given primary stress. If the accented syllable ends in a vowel, then the vowel is long in its pronunciation. If a syllable ends in a consonant, then the vowel in that syllable is short in its pronunciation. When the two vowels *a* and *i* are combined, as in Mor'de-cai and Si'nai, the *ai* is pronounced simply as a long *i*. With the exception of the name Rachel, the *ch* combination of letters is given a hard *k* sound, as in Mel-chiz'e-dek.

Ways to Improve. Many who have a problem with pronunciation are not aware of it. If your school overseer points out aspects of your pronunciation that need attention, appreciate his kindness. Once you know the problem, how can you make improvement?

First of all, when you have an assignment to read aloud, take time to consult a dictionary. Look up the words you do not know. If you are not experienced in using a dictionary, turn to the opening pages for an explanation of the symbols that are used or, if necessary, ask someone to explain these to you. The dictionary will show you where to place the primary stress in a word that is made up of more than one syllable and where to place the secondary stress in a longer word. It will show what sounds to use for the vowels and the consonants in a given word. In some instances, a word may be pronounced in more than one way, depending on the setting in which it is used. Whatever word you look up, say it aloud several times before you close the dictionary.

A second way that pronunciation can be improved is by reading to someone else—someone who pronounces words well—and asking him to correct your mistakes.

A third way to improve pronunciation is by listening carefully to good speakers. If audiocassettes of the *New World Translation* or the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines are available, make good use of these. As you listen, take note of the words that are being

HOW TO IMPROVE PRONUNCIATION

Learn to make good use of a dictionary.

Ask someone who reads well to listen to you and offer counsel.

Take note of pronunciation used by good speakers; compare your own with theirs.

pronounced differently from the way you would do it. Write these down, and practice them. In time, your speech will be free of the blemishes of mispronunciation, and this will greatly enhance your speaking.

EXERCISE:

Check pronunciation of any unfamiliar words in Psalm 83 or in a portion of the Bible that presents a particular challenge to you. Use a dictionary or consult with someone who knows the language well. Take note of which syllables should be stressed in proper names in these verses; say each of those names aloud. Then read the entire section aloud.

I need to practice the correct pronunciation of these words

What do you need to do?

Read and speak in such a manner that your words and thoughts flow smoothly. When delivery is fluent, speech is not jerky or painfully slow, and there is no stumbling over words or groping for thoughts.

WHEN reading aloud, do you stumble over certain expressions? Or when you get up in front of an audience to give a talk, do you find that you often grope for the right words? If so, you may have a problem with fluency. A fluent person reads and speaks in such a manner that words and thoughts flow smoothly, with apparent ease. This does not mean that he is constantly talking, that he speaks very rapidly, or that he speaks without thinking. His speech is pleasingly graceful. Fluency is given special attention in the Theocratic Ministry School.

A variety of factors may contribute to lack of fluency. Do you need to give special consideration to any of the following? (1) When reading to others, unfamiliarity with certain words may cause hesitancy. (2) Slight pauses in too many places may result in jerky delivery. (3) Lack of preparation may contribute to the problem. (4) In speaking before a group, a common factor in lack of fluency is failure to organize material in a logical manner. (5) A limited vocabulary may cause a person to hesitate as he gropes for the right words. (6) If too many words are emphasized, fluency may be impaired. (7) Lack of familiarity with rules of grammar may contribute to the problem.

If you lack fluency, the audience in a Kingdom Hall will not literally walk out, but their minds may wander. As a result, much of what you say may be lost.

On the other hand, care must be exercised so that speech that is meant to be forceful and fluent does not become overbearing, perhaps even embarrassing to the audience. If because of difference in cultural background, people view your manner of speech as brash or as lacking in sincerity, that will defeat your purpose. It is noteworthy

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When a speaker lacks fluency, the minds of the listeners may wander; wrong ideas may be conveyed. What is said may lack persuasiveness.

that the apostle Paul, though an experienced speaker, approached the Corinthians “in weakness and in fear and with much trembling” so that he would not attract needless attention to himself.—1 Cor. 2:3.

Practices to Avoid. Many people have the mannerism of inserting such expressions as “and-uh” when they speak. Others frequently

HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

When reading magazines and books, mark new words, find out exactly what they mean, and then use them.

Practice reading aloud at least five to ten minutes each day.

Prepare reading assignments thoroughly. Take special note of thought-conveying word groups. Become familiar with the flow of thought.

In daily conversation, learn to think first and then to say complete sentences without stopping.

ly start a thought with “now,” or they tack a phrase, such as “you know” or “you see,” on to whatever they are saying. Perhaps you are unaware of the frequency with which you use such expressions. You might try a practice session in which someone listens to you and repeats these expressions each time you say them. You may be surprised.

Some people read and speak with numerous regressions. That is, they begin a sentence and then interrupt themselves midway and repeat at least a portion of what they already said.

Still others speak rapidly enough, but they start with one line of thought and then, mid-sentence, shift to something else. Though words flow freely, abrupt changes in thought impair fluency.

How to Improve. If your problem is that you often grope for the right word, you need to make a concerted effort to build up your vocabulary. Take special note of words that are unfamiliar to you in *The Watchtower*, *Awake!*, and other publications that you may be reading. Look these up in a dictionary, check their pronunciation and their meaning, and add some of these words to your vocabulary. If no dictionary is available to you, ask for help from someone who speaks the language well.

Making it a practice to read aloud regularly will contribute to improvement. Take note of difficult words, and say these aloud several times.

In order to read fluently, it is necessary to understand how words work together in a sentence. Usually words need to be read in groups in order to convey the thought being expressed by the writer. Take special note of these word groupings. If it will help you, mark them. Your objective is not merely to read words correctly but also to con-

vey thoughts clearly. After you analyze one sentence, go on to the next until you have studied the entire paragraph. Become familiar with the flow of thought. Then practice reading aloud. Read the paragraph repeatedly until you can do it without stumbling and without pausing in the wrong places. Then go on to other paragraphs.

Next, increase your pace. If you have come to appreciate how words within a sentence work together, you will be able to see more than one word at a time and to anticipate what should come next. This will contribute much to the effectiveness of your reading.

Making a regular practice of sight-reading can be valuable training. For example, without doing advance preparation, read the day's text and comments aloud; do it on a regular basis. Become accustomed to allowing your eye to take in words as groups expressing complete thoughts rather than seeing just one word at a time.

COPING WITH STUTTERING

Many factors may contribute to stuttering. Therapies that bring relief to some people may not work as well for others. But to experience the joy of success, it is important to keep on trying.

Does the idea of giving a comment at a meeting give rise to fear, even panic? Pray to Jehovah for his help. (Phil. 4:6, 7) Focus your thoughts on honoring Jehovah and helping others. Do not expect the problem to disappear altogether, but observe how you are helped to cope with it. As you experience Jehovah's blessing and the encouragement of your brothers, you will want to do more.

The Theocratic Ministry School affords opportunity for you to gain experience in speaking before a group. You may be surprised at how well you do before a small group that is supportive and wants you to succeed. This can help you to gain confidence to speak under other conditions.

If you are going to give a talk, prepare well. Become engrossed in your delivery. Speak with appropriate feeling. If you begin to stutter while speaking, then, as much as possible, keep your voice and manner calm. Relax the muscles of your jaw. Use short sentences. Minimize the use of interjections, such as "um" and "ah."

Having identified words that caused a problem in the past, some who are coping with stuttering avoid these and instead use words that have similar meaning. Others favor identifying the speech sounds that give them the most difficulty and practicing these again and again.

If you stutter when engaging in conversation, do not give up in your effort to communicate. You may want to encourage the other person to talk until you are able to proceed. If necessary, simply write a note, or show the person something in printed form.

In conversation, fluency requires that you think before you speak. Make that a practice in your everyday activity. Decide what ideas you want to convey and the order in which you are going to state them; then start talking. Do not rush. Endeavor to express a complete thought without stopping or changing ideas in midstream. You may find it helpful to use short, simple sentences.

Words should come naturally if you know exactly what you want to say. Generally speaking, it is not necessary to select the words that you will use. In fact, for the sake of practice, it is better just to make certain that the idea is clear in your mind and then to think of the words as you go. If you do and if you keep your mind on the idea rather than on the words that you are speaking, the words will come more or less automatically, and your thoughts will be expressed as you really feel them. But as soon as you begin to think of *words* rather than *ideas*, your speech may become halting. With practice, you can succeed in developing fluency, an important quality in effective speaking and reading.

When assigned to represent Jehovah to the nation of Israel and before Pharaoh of Egypt, Moses felt that he was not capable. Why? He was not a fluent speaker; he may have had a speech impediment. (Ex. 4:10; 6:12) Moses offered excuses, but none of these were accepted by God. Jehovah sent Aaron along as a spokesman, but He also helped Moses to speak. Repeatedly and effectively, Moses spoke not only to individuals and to small groups but to the entire nation. (Deut. 1:1-3; 5:1; 29:2; 31:1, 2, 30; 33:1) If you conscientiously do your part while trusting in Jehovah, you too can use your speech to honor God.

EXERCISE:

Carefully preview Judges 7:1-25, studying one paragraph at a time. Be sure that you understand what it says. Using a dictionary, check unfamiliar words. Say each proper name aloud. Then read the paragraph aloud; be careful to do it accurately. When you feel comfortable with that paragraph, go on to the next one, and so on. Then read the entire chapter. Do it again, this time a little faster. Do it once more, going even faster on portions where appropriate—but not so fast that you stumble.

What do you need to do?

Make complete stops at appropriate stages of your delivery. At times, you may pause very briefly or simply allow the voice to fade momentarily. The pause is appropriate if it serves a worthwhile purpose.

IN SPEECH, properly placed pauses are important. This is true whether you are delivering a discourse or speaking with an individual. Without such pauses, what is said may sound like babble instead of clear expression of thought. Appropriate pausing helps to impart clarity to your speech. It can also be used in such a way that your main points will make a lasting impression.

How can you determine when you should pause? How long should pauses be?

Pause to Punctuate. Punctuation has become an important part of written language. It may indicate the end of a statement or a question. In some languages it is used to set off quotations. Some punctuation indicates the relationship of one part of a sentence to other parts. A person who reads to himself can see the punctuation marks. But when he reads aloud for the benefit of others, his voice must convey the meaning of whatever punctuation appears in the written material. (For further details, see Study 1, "Accurate Reading.") Failure to pause when required by punctuation may make it difficult for others to understand what you read or may even result in distorting the meaning of the text.

In addition to punctuation, the way thoughts are expressed within a sentence has a bearing on where pauses are appropriate. A famous musician once said: "The notes I handle no better than many pianists. But the pauses between the notes, ah, that is where the art resides." It is similar with speaking. Appropriate use of pausing will add beauty and meaning to your well-prepared material.

In preparing to read publicly, you may find it helpful to mark the printed material from which you will read. Draw a small vertical line

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Proper use of pausing is an important factor in speech that can readily be understood. Pausing also makes important points stand out.

where a brief pause, perhaps just a hesitation, is to be inserted. Use two closely spaced vertical lines for a longer pause. If you find that certain wording is awkward for you and you repeatedly pause in the wrong place, make pencil marks to tie together all the words that make up the difficult phrase. Then read the phrase from beginning to end. Many experienced speakers do this.

HOW TO DO IT

Give special attention to punctuation when you read aloud.

Listen carefully to well-qualified speakers, and observe where they pause and for how long.

After you say something that you really want others to remember, pause to let it sink in.

In conversation, invite others to express their thoughts, and then listen to their reply. Let them finish. Do not interrupt.

Pausing in everyday speech usually does not present a problem because you know the ideas that you want to convey. However, if you have the mannerism of pausing at regular intervals regardless of what the thought requires, your speech will lack force and clarity. Suggestions for improvement are given in Study 4, "Fluent Delivery."

Pause for Change of Thought. When you are making a transition from one main point to another, a pause can give your audience an opportunity to reflect, to adjust, to recognize the change in direction, and to grasp more clearly the next thought presented. It is just as important for you to pause when changing from one idea to another as it is for you to slow down when turning the corner from one street into another.

One reason why some speakers rush from one idea to the next without pausing is that they try to cover too much material. For some, the habit reflects their everyday speech pattern. Perhaps everyone around them speaks in the same manner. But that does not result in effective teaching. If you have something to say that is worth hearing and worth remembering, then take enough time to make the idea stand out clearly. Recognize that pauses are essential to speech that conveys ideas clearly.

If you are going to give a talk from an outline, your material should be organized in such a way that it is obvious where to pause between main points. If you will be reading a manuscript, mark the places where there is a change from one main point to the next.

Pauses for change of thought are usually longer than pauses for punctuation—however, not so long that they make the delivery drag. If they are too long, they give the impression that you are ill-prepared and are trying to determine what to say next.

Pause for Emphasis. A pause for emphasis is often a dramatic one, that is, one that precedes or follows a statement or a question delivered with a measure of intensity. Such a pause gives the audience opportunity to reflect on what has just been said, or it creates expectancy for what is to follow. These are not the same. Decide which is the appropriate method to use. But keep in mind that pauses for emphasis should be limited to truly significant statements. Otherwise, the value of those statements will be lost.

When Jesus read aloud from the Scriptures in the synagogue of Nazareth, he made effective use of the pause. First, he read his commission from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. However, before applying it, he rolled the scroll up, handed it back to the attendant, and sat down. Then, with the eyes of all in the synagogue intently fixed on him, he said: “Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled.” —Luke 4:16-21.

Pause When Circumstances Require It. Interruptions may also occasionally require that you pause in your speech. The noise of passing traffic or a crying child may require an interruption in conversation with a householder you have met in the field ministry. If a disturbance at a place of assembly is not too severe, you may be able to raise your volume and continue. But if the disturbance is loud and prolonged, you must pause. Your audience will not be listening anyway. So use pausing effectively, with a view to helping your audience get the full benefit of the good things that you want to tell them.

Pause to Allow for Response. Although you may be giving a talk with no provision for formal audience participation, it is important to allow the audience to respond, not audibly, but mentally. If you pose questions that should make your audience think but then you fail to pause sufficiently, much of the value of those questions will be lost.

Of course, it is important to pause not only when speaking from a platform but also when witnessing to others. Some people never seem to pause. If that is your problem, put forth earnest effort to cultivate this speech quality. You will improve in your communication with others as well as in the effectiveness of your ministry in the field. A pause is a moment of silence, and it has truthfully been said that silence punctuates, it emphasizes, it commands attention, and it refreshes the ear.

Everyday conversation involves a two-way flow of thoughts. Others are more inclined to listen to you when you listen to them and show interest in what they say. This requires that you pause long enough to give them opportunity to express themselves.

In the field ministry, our witnessing is often more effective when it is done in the form of conversation. After an exchange of greetings, many Witnesses find it good to identify their subject and then pose a question. They pause to give the other person opportunity to reply, and then they acknowledge what the householder said. During the discussion, they may give the householder a number of opportunities to comment. They know that they can usually do more to help a person if they know his views on the matter being discussed.—Prov. 20:5.

Of course, not everyone will respond to questions in a favorable way. But that did not deter Jesus from stopping long enough to allow opportunity even for opposers to speak. (Mark 3:1-5) Allowing the other person opportunity to speak encourages him to think, and he may, as a result, reveal what is in his heart. One of the purposes of our ministry is, in fact, to stir a heartfelt response by presenting people with vital issues from God's Word on which they must make decisions.—Heb. 4:12.

Use of appropriate pausing in our ministry is indeed an art. When pauses are used effectively, ideas are more clearly conveyed and are often lastingly remembered.

EXERCISE:

Read Mark 9:1-13 aloud; pause appropriately for the various marks of punctuation. Do not let the reading drag. After you have practiced, ask someone to listen to you and offer suggestions for improvement in your pausing.

What do you need to do?

Emphasize words and phrases in a way that makes it easy for listeners to grasp the ideas being expressed.

WHEN you speak or read aloud, it is important not only that you say individual words correctly but also that you emphasize key words and thought-containing expressions in a way that conveys ideas clearly.

Proper sense stress involves more than giving added emphasis to a few words or even to many. The *right* words must be emphasized. If the wrong words are stressed, the meaning of what you say may be unclear to your audience, who, in turn, may let their thoughts drift to other things. Even though the material may be good, a delivery having poor sense stress will be less effective in motivating the audience.

Added emphasis can be conveyed by various means, frequently used in combination: by greater volume, by more intensity of feeling, by slow and deliberate expression, by pausing before or after a statement (or both), and by gestures and facial expressions. In some languages, emphasis can also be conveyed by lowering the tone or raising the pitch. Take into account the material and the circumstances to determine what would be most appropriate.

When deciding what to emphasize, consider the following. (1) Within any sentence, the words that should be given added stress are determined not only by the rest of the sentence but also by the context. (2) Sense stress may be used to emphasize the beginning of a new thought, whether a main point or simply a change in the line of reasoning. It might also draw attention to the conclusion of a line of reasoning. (3) A speaker may employ sense stress to show how he feels about a matter. (4) Proper sense stress can also be used to highlight the main points of a talk.

In order to use sense stress in these ways, a speaker or a public reader must clearly understand his material and earnestly want

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Proper sense stress helps the speaker to hold the attention of his audience as well as to persuade or motivate them.

his audience to absorb it. Regarding instruction given in the days of Ezra, Nehemiah 8:8 states: "They continued reading aloud from the book, from the law of the true God, it being expounded, and there being a putting of meaning into it; and they continued giving understanding in the reading." It is obvious that those who read and explained God's Law on that occasion realized the importance of helping their audience to grasp the meaning of what was read, to retain it, and to apply it.

What May Cause a Problem. Most people are able to make their meaning clear in normal, everyday conversation. However, when they read material that was written by someone else, determining which words or expressions to stress may present a challenge. The key lies in clearly understanding the material. That requires careful study of what was written. So if you are asked to read some material at a congregation meeting, you should prepare diligently.

Some people use what might be termed "periodic stress" instead of sense stress. They emphasize words at fairly specific intervals, whether such emphasis is meaningful or not. Others emphasize function words, perhaps putting exaggerated stress on prepositions and conjunctions. When the emphasis does not contribute to clarity of thought, it easily becomes a distracting mannerism.

In an effort to use sense stress, some speakers employ increased volume in a way that may make the audience feel that they are being scolded. Of course, that seldom yields the best results. If sense stress is not natural, the impression may be given that the speaker is talking down to his audience. How much better simply to appeal to them on the basis of love and to help them see that what is being said is both Scriptural and reasonable!

How to Improve. Often a person who has a problem with sense stress is not aware of it. Someone else may need to draw it to his attention. If you need to make improvement in this area, your school overseer will help you. Also, feel free to ask for help from anyone else who is a good speaker. Ask him to listen carefully to your reading and speaking and then to offer suggestions for improvement.

As a start, your counselor may suggest that you use an article in *The Watchtower* as a basis for practice. He will undoubtedly tell you to analyze individual sentences to determine which words or phras-

es need to be emphasized in order to make the meaning easy to grasp. He may remind you to give special attention to certain words that are italicized. Remember that words within a sentence work together. Frequently, it is a group of words that should be emphasized, not merely an isolated word. In some languages, students may be encouraged to give more careful consideration to what diacritics indicate as to proper sense stress.

As the next step in learning what to emphasize, your counselor may urge you to consider a context that is broader than the sentence itself. What central thought is being developed in the entire paragraph? How should that influence what you emphasize in the individual sentences? Look at the title of the article and at the boldface subheading under which your material appears. What bearing do these have on your selection of expressions to emphasize? All of these are factors to consider. But take care not to put strong emphasis on too many words.

Whether you will be speaking extemporaneously or reading, your counselor may also encourage you to allow the line of reasoning to influence the use of sense stress. You need to be aware of places where the line of reasoning ends or where the presentation shifts from one important thought to another. The audience will appreciate it if your delivery alerts them to these places. This might be done by accenting such words as *first of all*, *next*, *finally*, *thus*, and *reasonably*.

Your counselor will also direct your attention to thoughts to which you want to attach special feeling. To do this you might emphasize such words as *very*, *absolutely*, *by no means*, *unthinkable*, *important*, and *always*. Your doing so can influence how your audience feels about what you are saying. More will be said about this in Study 11, "Warmth and Feeling."

To improve your use of sense stress, you will also be encouraged to have clearly in mind the main points that you want your audience to remember. This will be given further consideration from the standpoint of public reading in Study 7, "Principal Ideas Emphasized," and from the standpoint of speaking in Study 37, "Main Points Made to Stand Out."

HOW TO DEVELOP IT

Practice identifying key words and word groups in sentences. Give special attention to doing this on the basis of context.

Try using emphasis to indicate (1) change of thought and (2) how you feel about what you are saying.

When reading scriptures, make it a habit to emphasize the words that directly support your reason for referring to those texts.

If you are endeavoring to improve in your field ministry, give special attention to how you read scriptures. Make it a practice to ask yourself, 'Why am I reading this text?' For a teacher, simply saying the words properly is not always enough. Even reading the text with feeling may not suffice. If you are answering someone's question or teaching a basic truth, it is good to emphasize in the scripture the words or expressions that support what is being discussed. Otherwise, the person to whom you are reading may miss the point.

Since sense stress involves giving added emphasis to certain words and phrases, an inexperienced speaker may tend to hit those words and phrases too hard. The results will be somewhat like the notes played by a person who is just beginning to learn a musical instrument. With added practice, however, the individual "notes" will simply become part of "music" that is beautifully expressive.

After you have learned some of the basics, you will be in a position to benefit by observing experienced speakers. You will soon come to realize what can be accomplished by varying degrees of emphasis. And you will appreciate the value of using emphasis in various ways to make clear the meaning of what is said. Developing proper sense stress will greatly enhance the effectiveness of your own reading and speaking.

Do not learn just enough about sense stress to get by. In order to speak effectively, keep working at it until you have mastered sense stress and can use it in a way that sounds natural to the ears of others.

EXERCISES:

(1) Select two scriptures that you frequently use in the field ministry. Determine what you are endeavoring to prove with each text. Read the texts aloud in a manner that emphasizes the words or groups of words that support those points. (2) Study Hebrews 1:1-14. Why must the words "prophets" (vs. 1), "Son" (vs. 2), and "angels" (vss. 4, 5) be given special emphasis in order to express clearly the line of reasoning in this chapter? Practice reading the chapter aloud with sense stress that keeps the line of reasoning in focus.

What do you need to do?

When reading aloud, put special emphasis on the principal ideas in the entire body of material being read, not merely in individual sentences.

AN EFFECTIVE reader looks beyond the individual sentence, even beyond the paragraph in which it appears. When he reads, he has in mind the principal ideas in the entire body of material that he is presenting. This influences his placement of emphasis.

If this process is not followed, there will be no peaks in the delivery. Nothing will stand out clearly. When the presentation is concluded, it may be difficult to remember anything as being outstanding.

Proper attention to the emphasizing of principal ideas can often do much to enhance the reading of an account from the Bible. Such emphasis can impart added significance to the reading of paragraphs at a home Bible study or at a congregation meeting. And it is especially important when giving a discourse from a manuscript, as is sometimes done at our conventions.

How to Do It. In the school, you may be assigned to read a portion of the Bible. What should be emphasized? If there is some central idea or important event around which the material that you will be reading has been developed, it would be appropriate to make it stand out.

Whether the portion you are to read is poetry or prose, proverb or narrative, your audience will benefit if you read it well. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) To do this you must take into account both the passages that you are going to read and your audience.

If you are to read aloud from a publication at a Bible study or at a congregation meeting, what are the principal ideas that you need to emphasize? Treat the answers to the printed study questions as the principal ideas. Also emphasize thoughts that relate to the boldface subheading under which the material appears.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Your message will be easier to remember if the principal ideas are emphasized.

It is not recommended that you make a practice of using a manuscript for talks given in the congregation. On occasion, however, manuscripts are provided for certain convention discourses so that the same thoughts will be presented in the same way at all the conventions. In order to emphasize the principal ideas in such

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

Analyze the printed material in order to identify the principal ideas around which it is developed. Mark these.

When reading aloud, use heightened enthusiasm, a slower pace, or depth of feeling, as appropriate, to make those principal ideas stand out.

a manuscript, the speaker must first analyze the material carefully. What are the main points? He should be able to recognize these. The main points are not simply ideas that he feels are interesting. They are the key thoughts around which the material itself is developed. Sometimes a concise statement of a principal idea in the manuscript introduces a narrative or a line of argument. More often, a strong statement is made after the supporting evidence has been presented. When these key points have been identified, the speaker should mark them in his manuscript. There usually are only a few, probably not more than four or five. Next, he needs to practice reading in such a way that the audience can readily identify them.

These are the peaks of the talk. If the material is delivered with proper emphasis, these principal ideas are more likely to be remembered. That should be the speaker's goal.

There are various ways in which a speaker can convey the emphasis needed to help the audience identify the main points. He might use heightened enthusiasm, a change of pace, depth of feeling, or appropriate gestures, to mention a few.

EXERCISE:

Select five paragraphs from a *Watchtower* article scheduled for study. Under-score the answers to the study questions for those paragraphs. Read the paragraphs aloud in such a way that the answers will be easy for a listener to identify.

What do you need to do?

Speak with sufficient loudness or intensity of voice. In determining what is suitable, consider (1) the size and the makeup of your audience, (2) distracting noises, (3) the material being discussed, and (4) your objective.

IF A public speaker lacks needed volume, some in the audience may begin to doze. If a publisher speaks too softly in the field ministry, he may not hold the attention of the householder. And at meetings where comments from the audience are not given with adequate volume, those present will not receive needed encouragement. (Heb. 10: 24, 25) On the other hand, if a speaker increases his volume at the wrong time, the audience may become uncomfortable—even annoyed.—Prov. 27:14.

Consider Your Audience. To whom are you speaking? to an individual? to a family group? to a modest-sized group that is meeting for field service? to the entire congregation? or to a large convention? It is evident that volume suitable in one situation might not be appropriate in another.

On various occasions, servants of God have spoken to large audiences. At the inauguration of the temple in Jerusalem in the days of Solomon, there was no sound equipment. So Solomon stood on an elevated platform and blessed the people “with a loud voice.” (1 Ki. 8:55; 2 Chron. 6:13) Centuries later, after the outpouring of holy spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E., a multitude—some interested, others mocking—gathered around the small body of Christians in Jerusalem. Showing practical wisdom, Peter “stood up . . . and raised his voice.” (Acts 2:14) A powerful witness was given.

How can you tell whether the volume that you are using is suitable in a given situation? Audience reaction is one of the best barometers. If you notice that some in the audience are straining to hear, you should endeavor to adjust your volume.

Whether we are speaking to an individual or to a group, it is wise to consider who make up the audience. If someone is hard of hearing,

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Unless others can readily hear you, their minds may wander, and the information you present may not be clear to them. If you speak too loudly, people may find it irritating—and even disrespectful.

you may need to raise your voice. But shouting will not endear you to people who may simply react a little slower because of advanced age. It may even be considered a sign of rudeness. In some cultures, too much volume is viewed as evidence that a person is angry or impatient.

Consider Distracting Noises. When you engage in the field ministry, the circumstances you encounter definitely influence the volume

needed to give a witness. You may have to compete with traffic noise, rowdy children, barking dogs, loud music, or a blaring television. On the other hand, in areas where homes are close together, it may embarrass the household if you speak so loudly that you attract the attention of the neighbors.

Brothers who give talks in the congregation or at conventions also have to cope with a wide variety of circumstances. Speaking to an audience outdoors is quite different from delivering a talk in a hall that has fine acoustics. In Latin America two missionaries shared in giving a public talk on the patio of the home of an interested person while fireworks were going off in the nearby plaza and a rooster was crowing insistently nearby!

In the middle of a talk, something might happen that calls for either a pause until the disturbance subsides or an increase in volume. For example, if a meeting is being held in a structure with a tin roof, a sudden downpour may make it almost impossible for the audience to hear the speaker. A crying child or a disturbance caused by late arrivals will surely present a challenge. Learn to compensate for the distractions so that your audience can benefit fully from the information you are presenting.

Sound-amplifying equipment will be helpful if it is available, but it does not eliminate the need for increased volume on the part of the speaker when the situation calls for it. In some places where power outages are frequent, speakers are obliged to continue their talk without the aid of a microphone.

Consider the Material Being Discussed. The nature of the material in your talk also has a bearing on the volume needed. If the subject calls for strength, do not weaken the presentation by speaking too softly. For example, when you are reading denunciations from the

WHEN INCREASED VOLUME MAY BE NEEDED

To hold the attention of a larger group.

To counteract distractions.

To command attention when saying something very important.

To stimulate to action.

To get the attention of an individual or a group.

Scriptures, your volume should be stronger than when you are reading counsel on showing love. Adapt your volume to the material, but be careful to do it in a manner that does not draw attention to yourself.

Consider Your Objective. If you want to stimulate your audience to spirited activity, you may need to use somewhat stronger volume. If you want to change their thinking, do not drive them away by using too much volume. If you are endeavoring to console, a softer voice is usually better.

Effective Use of Increased Volume. When you are trying to get the attention of someone who is busy, increased volume often helps. Parents know this, so they raise their voices to call their children when it is time for them to come in from play. Increased volume may also be necessary when a chairman brings a congregation meeting or an assembly to order. As publishers share in the field ministry, they may call out a greeting as they approach people who are working outdoors.

Even after you get someone's attention, it is important to continue to use sufficient volume. A very subdued voice may give the impression that the speaker is ill-prepared or lacks conviction.

When coupled with a command, raising the voice can move people to action. (Acts 14:9, 10) Similarly, a shouted command may avert disaster. In Philippi a jailer was about to kill himself because he thought that his prisoners had escaped. "Paul called out with a loud voice, saying: 'Do not hurt yourself, for we are all here!'" In this way a suicide was averted. Paul and Silas then witnessed to the jailer and his household, who all embraced the truth.—Acts 16:27-33.

How to Improve Your Volume. For some, more than the usual effort is required to learn how to use suitable volume. A person may speak with insufficient volume because of having a weak voice. However, with effort, improvement may be possible, though he may still be soft-spoken. Give attention to breathing and posture. Practice sitting and standing erect. Push back your shoulders, and breathe deeply. Be sure that you are filling the lower part of your lungs. It is this air supply, properly regulated, that makes it possible for you to control your volume when speaking.

HOW TO IMPROVE

Be observant of the reactions of those to whom you speak; use the right amount of volume so that they can hear comfortably.

Learn to fill the lower part of the lungs as you breathe.

For others, the problem is that they speak too loudly. Perhaps they developed the habit as a result of working outdoors or in a noisy environment. On the other hand, they may come from a background where everyone shouts and interruptions are common. As a result, they feel that the only way to get a word in is to talk louder than the rest. As they progressively heed the Bible's counsel to clothe themselves with "the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering," they will make adjustments in the volume they use when conversing with others.—Col. 3:12.

Good preparation, experience that comes from regular participation in the field service, and prayer to Jehovah will help you to speak with suitable volume. Whether speaking from the platform or to an individual in the field ministry, endeavor to focus your thoughts on how the other person can be helped by hearing what you are saying.—Prov. 18:21.

EXERCISE:

First read Acts 19:23-41 silently, getting in mind the setting as revealed in the narrative and the context. Take note of who is speaking and the attitude being displayed. Then read it aloud with volume that is suitable for each portion.

What do you need to do?

Vary the sound of your voice. In this study, we consider changes in volume, pace, and pitch.

YOUR use of simple sense stress helps an audience to understand what you say. But when you make good use of *variety* in volume, pace, and pitch, your talk can be much more enjoyable to listen to. More than that, it may tell your audience how you feel about what you are saying. *Your* attitude toward the material can influence how *they* feel about it. This is true whether you are speaking from the platform or to an individual in the field ministry.

The human voice is a marvelous instrument, capable of great variety. Properly used, it can give life to a talk, touch the heart, stir emotions, and motivate to action. However, this cannot be achieved by simply marking your notes to indicate where to adjust the volume, change the pace, or vary the pitch. Modulation in response to such cues will sound artificial. Instead of imparting life and color to your delivery, it may make your audience feel uncomfortable. Proper use of modulation springs from the heart.

When used wisely, modulation will not attract undue attention to the speaker. Instead, it will help the audience to enter into the spirit of the subject being discussed.

Adjust the Volume. One way to vary your vocal expression is to adjust your volume. But this should not be simply a routine increase or decrease in volume with monotonous regularity. That would distort the sense of what you are saying. If you raise the volume too often, the impression will be unpleasant.

Your volume should be appropriate to the material. Whether you are reading an urgent command, such as that found at Revelation 14:6, 7 or at Revelation 18:4, or an expression of strong conviction, as recorded at Exodus 14:13, 14, appropriate increase in volume is indicated. Likewise, if you are reading a strong denunciation from the

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Proper modulation gives life to a talk, stirs emotions, and motivates to action.

Lack of modulation may give the impression that you have no real interest in your subject.

Bible, such as that found at Jeremiah 25:27-38, varying your volume will make certain expressions stand out above the rest.

Consider, too, your objective. Do you want to motivate your audience to action? Do you want to make the main points of your presentation stand out? Greater volume, used with discretion, helps to accomplish these objectives. However, simply increasing your volume

may defeat your purpose. How so? What you are saying may call for warmth and feeling instead of increased volume. We will discuss this in Study 11.

When used with discernment, a drop in volume can stir up anticipation. But that usually requires greater intensity of tone immediately afterward. Lower volume coupled with increased intensity can be used to convey anxiety or fear. Reduced volume may also be used to indicate that what is being said is of secondary importance in comparison with what surrounds it. If your volume is always low, however, this may convey uncertainty or lack of conviction on your part or lack of real interest in your subject. Obviously, very soft tones need to be used with discretion.

Change Your Pace. In everyday speech, words flow spontaneously as we express our thoughts. When we are excited, we tend to speak rapidly. When we want others to remember exactly what we say, the pace of our speech becomes more deliberate.

However, few speakers who are new to the public platform vary their pace. Why? They prepare their wording too carefully. It may all be written down. Even if the talk is not delivered from a manuscript, the words may be virtually memorized. As a result, everything is delivered in a measured pace. Learning to speak from an outline will help to correct this weakness.

Avoid increasing your pace so abruptly that it reminds one of a strolling cat that suddenly leaps away when it spots a dog. And never speak so rapidly that your diction suffers.

To achieve variety in your pace, do not simply speed up and slow down at regular intervals. Rather than enhancing the material you

HOW TO DO IT

Adjust volume when expressing urgent commands, strong conviction, or denunciations. Give careful thought to portions of your talk that call for increased volume.

Change pace by speaking faster on points of less importance and slower on weighty arguments and main points. To convey excitement, speak rapidly.

Vary pitch, if appropriate, to convey emotions and touch hearts. In a tonal language, widen or narrow the range of your voice.

Modulation begins with your selection of material for your talk.

are presenting, that style of delivery will detract from it. Changes of pace should be geared to what you are saying, the emotions you want to convey, and your objective. Deliver your talk at a moderate pace. To convey excitement, speak more rapidly, just as you would in everyday life. This is also appropriate when stating points of lesser importance or when narrating events in which details are not vital. This will add variety and help to keep your talk from sounding too heavy. On the other hand, weightier arguments, main points, and climaxes in delivery usually call for a slower pace.

Vary Your Pitch. Imagine someone playing a musical instrument for an hour or so. During all that time, he sounds just one note—first loudly, then softly, at times quickly, then slowly. There is variation in volume and in pace, but with no variation of pitch, the “music” is not very appealing. Similarly, without variety in pitch, our voice will not be pleasant to the ears.

It must be noted that changes in pitch do not have the same effect in all languages. In a tonal language, such as Chinese, changing the pitch may change the meaning of a word. Nevertheless, even in such a language, there are things that a person can do to add greater variety to his vocal expressions. He can work at improving the range of his voice while retaining the same relative values for the various tones. Thus he can make the high tones higher and the low tones lower.

Even in languages that are not tonal, a change in pitch may convey a variety of ideas. For example, a slight raising of the pitch accompanied by a comparable increase in volume may be used for sense stress. Or a change in pitch may be a means of indicating size or distance. A rising inflection at the end of a sentence may indicate that a question is being asked. Some languages may require a falling inflection.

Excitement and enthusiasm may be expressed with a higher pitch. (In a tonal language, that may call for a wider range of the voice.) Sorrow and anxiety may call for a lower pitch. (Or in a tonal language, a narrower voice range.) The emotions mentioned here are ones that help the speaker touch the heart. When you want to express them, do not simply *say* the words. Use your voice in a way that shows that you also *feel* them.

Laying a Foundation. Where, then, does modulation begin? With selection of material for your talk. If you include nothing but argumentation or nothing but exhortation, you will have little opportunity for variety in your delivery. So analyze your outline, and make sure that you have the ingredients needed for a colorful, informative presentation.

Suppose that in the middle of your talk, you feel the need for greater variety because your presentation is dragging. What then? Change the nature of your material. How? One way is to open the Bible, invite the audience to open theirs, and read a scripture instead of simply talking. Or convert some statement into a question, adding a pause for emphasis. Insert a simple illustration. These are techniques used by experienced speakers. But regardless of the extent of your experience, you can use the same ideas when preparing your material.

It can be said that modulation is the spice in a talk. If the right kind is used and in the right amount, it will draw out the full flavor of your material and make it a delight to your audience.

EXERCISES:

(1) Read 1 Samuel 17:17-53 to yourself, taking note of opportunities to use appropriate variation in volume, pace, and pitch. Then read it aloud in an expressive but not extreme manner. Do this several times. (2) To develop flexibility in your voice, read verses 48-51 aloud as rapidly as you can without stumbling. Without sacrificing articulation, read it over and over, constantly increasing your pace. Then read the same material as slowly as possible, drawing out the sounds. Next, speed up and slow down alternately until your voice will do what you want it to do.

What do you need to do?

By animated delivery, give evidence of your strong feeling about the value of what you are saying.

ENTHUSIASM helps give life to a talk. While it is important to have informative material, it is a lively, enthusiastic delivery that will help capture the attention of an audience. Regardless of your cultural background or personality, you can cultivate enthusiasm.

Speak With Feeling. When speaking to a woman of Samaria, Jesus said that those who worship Jehovah must do so “with spirit and truth.” (John 4:24) Their worship must be motivated by appreciative hearts and be in harmony with the truth found in God’s Word. When a person has that depth of appreciation, it will be reflected in the way he speaks. He will be eager to talk to others about Jehovah’s loving provisions. His facial expressions, his gestures, and his voice will reflect the way he really feels.

Why is it, then, that a speaker who loves Jehovah and who believes what he is saying may lack enthusiasm when speaking? It is not enough for him to prepare what he is going to say. He must live his subject, be emotionally involved in it. Suppose that he is assigned to speak about the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ. When the speaker delivers his talk, his thoughts must be filled, not merely with details, but with appreciation for what Jesus’ sacrifice means both to the speaker himself and to his audience. He needs to recall his feelings of gratitude to Jehovah God and Christ Jesus for this marvelous provision. He needs to think of the grand prospect of life that it opens up for mankind—eternal happiness in perfect health in a restored earthly paradise! Thus he needs to get his heart involved.

Concerning the scribe Ezra, a teacher in Israel, the Bible says that he “prepared his heart to consult the law of Jehovah and to do it and to teach in Israel.” (Ezra 7:10) If we do likewise—preparing not only information but also our hearts—we will speak from the heart. Such

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Enthusiasm on your part will help to hold the interest of your listeners; it may also rouse them to action. If you are enthusiastic about what you say, your audience will be too.

heartfelt expression of the truth can do much to help those to whom we speak develop a real love for the truth.

Think About Your Audience. Another important factor in manifesting enthusiasm is having the conviction that your audience needs to hear what you have to say. This means that when preparing your presentation, you should not only gather worthwhile material but

also pray to Jehovah for his guidance in using it to benefit those to whom you are going to speak. (Ps. 32:8; Matt. 7: 7, 8) Analyze why your audience needs to hear the information, how it will benefit them, and how you can present it in such a way that they will appreciate its value.

Work on your material until you have something that you feel excited about. It need not be new, but your approach to the subject can be fresh. If you prepare something that will truly help your audience to strengthen their relationship with Jehovah, to appreciate his provisions, to cope successfully with the pressures of life in this old system, or to be effective in their ministry, then you have every reason to be enthusiastic about your talk.

What if your assignment is to read publicly? In order to do that enthusiastically, more is required than being able to say the words correctly and to group them together properly. Study the material. If you are going to read a portion of the Bible, do some research on it. Be sure that you understand its basic meaning. Consider how it is benefi-

cial to you and to your audience, and read with a desire to convey that to those listening to you.

Are you preparing for the field ministry? Review your subject for discussion and the scriptures that you plan to use. Consider, too, what is on the minds of the people. What has been in the news? What problems do they encounter? When you are equipped to show people that God's Word contains the solutions to the very problems that concern them, you feel an eagerness to do so, and enthusiasm comes naturally.

Show Enthusiasm by Animated Delivery. Enthusiasm is most clearly manifested by animation in your delivery. This should be evident in your facial expression. You must sound convinced, not dogmatic.

HOW TO DEVELOP IT

Prepare not only the information that you will present but also your heart; thus you get your emotions involved.

Give careful thought to how the points you are going to cover will benefit those to whom you speak.

Identify the portions that require special enthusiasm.

Be thoroughly alive in your manner of speaking. Make sure that your face reflects how you feel. Speak with strength and vigor.

Balance is needed. Some may be inclined to get excited about everything. They may need to be helped to realize that when a person becomes bombastic or overly emotional, his audience will be thinking about him rather than about the message. On the other hand, those who are shy need encouragement to be more expressive.

Enthusiasm is contagious. If you have good audience contact and are enthusiastic about your talk, your audience will pick up that enthusiasm. Apollos showed animation in his speaking, and he was described as an eloquent speaker. If you are aglow with God's spirit, your animated delivery will move those who listen to you to action. —Acts 18:24, 25; Rom. 12:11.

Enthusiasm Appropriate to Material. Take care not to carry your enthusiasm on such a high plane throughout your entire talk that your audience becomes exhausted. Any exhortation that you give to act on what is being discussed will fall on weary ears. This emphasizes the need to prepare material that allows for variety in your delivery. Try not to lapse into a style that reflects indifference. If you choose your material carefully, you will be keenly interested in it. But some points naturally call for more enthusiasm in delivery than others, and these should be skillfully interwoven throughout your talk.

Main points particularly should be presented enthusiastically. Your talk must have peaks, climaxes to which you build. Since these are the high points of your talk, they will usually be the points designed to motivate your audience. Having convinced your audience, you need to stimulate them, to show them the benefits of applying what has been discussed. Your enthusiasm will help you reach the hearts of your listeners. Animated delivery should never be forced. There should be a reason for it, and your material will provide you with that reason.

EXERCISE:

Examine Joshua chapters 1 and 2, determining where and how enthusiasm might appropriately be expressed when reading this account. Practice reading it aloud with appropriate enthusiasm.

What do you need to do?

Speak in a manner that reflects the emotions you feel and that is consistent with what you are saying.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

It is essential if you are to reach the hearts of those listening.

EMOTION is a fundamental part of human life. When a person expresses his emotions, he reveals what is in his heart, the sort of person he is inside, how he feels about situations and people. Because of harsh experiences in their lives—and in some instances because of cultural influences—many people hide their emotions. But Jehovah encourages us to cultivate positive qualities in the inner person and then to give appropriate expression to what is there.—Rom. 12:10; 1 Thess. 2:7, 8.

When we speak, the words we use may correctly identify emotions. But if our words are not expressed with corresponding feeling, those who hear us may doubt our sincerity. On the other hand, if the words are expressed with appropriate feeling, our speech can take on a beauty and a richness that may touch the hearts of those who are listening.

Expressing Warmth. Warm feelings are frequently associated with thoughts about people. Thus, when we speak about Jehovah’s endearing qualities and when we express our appreciation for Jehovah’s goodness, our voice should be warm. (Isa. 63:7-9) And when speaking to fellow humans, our manner of speaking should also convey an appealing warmth.

A leper comes to Jesus and begs to be healed. Imagine Jesus’ tone of voice when he says: “I want to. Be made clean.” (Mark 1:40, 41) Picture, too, the scene as a woman subject to a flow of blood for 12 years quietly approaches Jesus from behind and touches the fringe of his outer garment. Upon realizing that she has not escaped notice, the woman comes forward trembling, falls at Jesus’ feet, and discloses before all the people why she has touched his garment and how she has been healed. Think of the manner in which Jesus says to her: “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go your way in peace.” (Luke 8: 42b-48) The warmth that Jesus displayed on those occasions touches our hearts down to this day.

When, like Jesus, we feel compassion for people and when we truly want to help them, it shows in the way we speak to them. Such an expression of warmth is sincere, not excessive. Our warmth can make a big difference in how people respond. Most of the things we say in the field ministry lend themselves to this kind of expression, especially when we are reasoning, encouraging, exhorting, and sympathizing.

If you have a warm feeling toward others, show it on your face. When you manifest warmth, your audience is drawn to you as to a fire on a cold night. If warmth is not evident on your face, your audience may not be convinced that you sincerely care about them. Warmth cannot be put on like a mask—it must be genuine.

Warmth should also be evident in your voice. If you have a hard, coarse voice, it might be difficult to express warmth in your speech. But with time and conscious effort, you can. One thing that might help, from a purely mechanical standpoint, is to remember that short, clipped sounds make speech hard. Learn to draw out the softer sounds in words. This will help to put warmth into your speech.

Of even greater importance, however, is the focus of your interest. If your thoughts are centered sincerely on those to whom you are speaking and you have an earnest desire to convey something that can benefit them, that feeling will be reflected in the way you speak.

A spirited delivery is stimulating, but tender feeling is also needed. It is not always enough for us to persuade the mind; we must also move the heart.

Expressing Other Feelings. Emotions such as anxiety, fear, and depression might be expressed by a person who is in distress. Joy is an emotion that should be prominent in our lives and that we freely express when speaking to others. On the other hand, some emotions need to be curbed. They are not consistent with the Christian personality. (Eph. 4:31, 32; Phil. 4:4) Emotions of all sorts can be conveyed by the words we choose, our tone of voice, the intensity with which we speak, our facial expression, and gestures.

HOW TO EXPRESS IT

Instead of being overly concerned about the words you are using, focus on your desire to help your listeners.

Both your tone of voice and your facial expression should reflect whatever emotion is appropriate for your material.

Learn by carefully observing others who speak expressively.

The Bible reports on the whole range of human emotions. Sometimes it simply names emotions. At other times it relates events or quotes statements that reveal emotions. When you read such material aloud, it will have a greater impact, both on you and on those who are listening, if your voice reflects those emotions. To do that you need to put yourself in the place of those about whom you are reading. A talk is not a theatrical production, however, so be careful not to exaggerate. Make the passages live in the minds of those who are listening.

Appropriate to the Material. As with enthusiasm, the warmth you put into your expression and the other emotions you express depend in large measure on what you are saying.

Turn to Matthew 11:28-30, and take note of what it says. Then read Jesus' condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees, as recorded in Matthew chapter 23. We cannot imagine him expressing these scathing words of condemnation in a dull and lifeless way.

What sort of feeling do you believe is required by an account such as that in Genesis chapter 44 concerning Judah's plea for his brother Benjamin? Notice the emotion expressed in verse 13, the indication in verse 16 of how Judah felt about the reason for the calamity, and how Joseph himself reacted, as stated at Genesis 45:1.

Thus, whether we are reading or speaking, to do so effectively we must give thought not only to words and ideas but also to the feeling that ought to accompany these.

EXERCISE:

Read aloud the following portions of Scripture, doing so with feeling appropriate to the material: Matthew 20:29-34; Luke 15:11-32.

What do you need to do?

Use movements of the hands, the shoulders, or the entire body to express ideas, sentiments, or attitudes.

Use the eyes and the mouth as well as the positioning of the head to reinforce the spoken word and to convey feelings.

PEOPLE of some cultures gesture more freely than those from other backgrounds. Yet, practically everyone talks with changes of facial expression and some form of gesturing. This is true both in personal conversation and in public speaking.

Gestures were natural to Jesus and his early disciples. On one occasion, someone reported to Jesus that his mother and his brothers wanted to speak with him. Jesus replied: "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" Then the Bible adds: "*Extending his hand toward his disciples*, he said: 'Look! My mother and my brothers!'" (Matt. 12:48, 49) Among other references, the Bible shows at Acts 12:17 and 13:16 that the apostles Peter and Paul also made spontaneous use of gestures.

Ideas and feelings are communicated not only with the voice but also by means of gestures and facial expressions. Failure to use these well may convey an impression of indifference on the part of the one speaking. But when these means of communication are tastefully blended, the effectiveness of speech is greatly enhanced. Even when you speak over the telephone, if you make appropriate use of gestures and facial expressions, your voice will more readily convey the importance of your message as well as your personal feelings about what you are saying. Thus, whether you are speaking extemporaneously or are reading, whether your audience is looking at you or at their own copies of the Bible, gestures and facial expressions are of value.

Your gestures and your facial expressions should not be taken from a book. You never had to study how to laugh or how to be indignant. Gestures should also express feelings that are within you. The more spontaneous your gestures, the better.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Gestures and facial expressions add visual and emotional emphasis to your speech. They may stir up your feelings and therefore enliven your voice.

Gestures fall into two general categories: descriptive and emphatic. *Descriptive* gestures express action or show dimension and location. In the school, when you are working on the use of gestures, do not be content with just one or two. Try to gesture in a natural way throughout your talk. If you are having difficulty in doing this, you may find it helpful to look for words that show direction, distance, size, location, or relative positions. In many cases, however, all that you need to do is to get absorbed in your talk, not worrying about the impression you are making, but saying and doing things as you would in daily life. When a person is relaxed, gestures come naturally.

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

The most effective gestures and facial expressions spring from one's inner self. Observe what others do, but do not try to imitate them in detail.

Study the material for your talks until you know it well. Feel it, visualize it, and then use your voice, your hands, and your face to express it.

Emphatic gestures express feeling and conviction. They punctuate, vitalize, and reinforce ideas. Emphatic gestures are important. But beware! Emphatic gestures can easily become mannerisms. If you use the same gesture again and again, it may begin to draw attention to itself instead of enhancing your talk. If your school overseer indicates that you have this problem, try limiting yourself solely to descriptive gestures for a time. After a while, begin to use emphatic gestures once more.

In determining the extent to which you should use emphatic gestures and the sort of gestures that are appropriate, consider the feelings of those to whom you are speaking. Pointing at the audience may make them feel uncomfortable. If a male in some cultures were to make certain gestures, such as putting his hand over his mouth to express surprise, this would be viewed as effeminate. In some parts of the world, it is considered immodest for women to gesture freely with the hands. So in those places, sisters especially need to make good use of facial expressions. And before a small group, sweeping gestures may be viewed as comical in almost any part of the world.

As you gain experience and become more at ease in speaking, any emphatic gestures that you do use will express your inner feelings naturally, demonstrating your conviction and sincerity. They will add meaning to your speech.

The Expression on Your Face. More than any other bodily feature, your face often expresses how you really feel. Your eyes, the shape

of your mouth, the inclination of your head all play a part. Without a word being spoken, your face can convey indifference, disgust, perplexity, amazement, or delight. When such facial expressions accompany the spoken word, they add visual and emotional impact. The Creator has placed a large concentration of muscles in your face—over 30 in all. Nearly half of these come into play when you smile.

Whether you are on the platform or are participating in the field ministry, you are endeavoring to share with people a message that is pleasant, one that can make their hearts rejoice. A warm smile confirms that. On the other hand, if your face is devoid of expression, this may raise questions about your sincerity.

More than that, a smile tells others that you have a kindly feeling toward them. That is especially important in these days when people are often afraid of strangers. Your smile can help people to relax and to be more receptive to what you say.

EXERCISES:

(1) Read Genesis 6:13-22. In your own words, describe the building of the ark and the gathering of the animals. Do not worry about details; simply tell what you remember. *Use descriptive gestures while doing so.* Ask someone to observe you and provide comments. (2) Talk as if you were witnessing to someone about God's Kingdom and the blessings that it will bring. Be sure that your facial expressions reflect how you really feel about what you are describing.

13 VISUAL CONTACT

What do you need to do?

Look at those to whom you are speaking, allowing your eyes to meet for a few seconds if that is acceptable locally. See individuals, not merely a group.

OUR eyes communicate attitudes and emotions. They may indicate surprise or fear. They may convey compassion or love. At times, they may betray doubt or give evidence of grief. Concerning his countrymen, who had suffered much, an elderly man said: “We speak with our eyes.”

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In many cultures, eye contact is viewed as an indication of interest in the person being addressed. It is also viewed as evidence that you speak with conviction.

Others may draw conclusions about us and about what we say on the basis of where we focus our eyes. In many cultures, people tend to trust an individual who maintains friendly eye contact with them. Conversely, they may doubt the sincerity or competence of a person who looks at his feet or at some object rather than at the one to whom he is talking. Some other cultures view any intensive eye contact as rude, aggressive, or challenging. This is especially the case when speaking with members of the opposite sex or to a chief or other titled person. And in some areas, if a younger person were to make direct eye contact when speaking to an older person, this would be viewed as disrespectful.

However, where it is not offensive, looking an individual in the eye when making an important statement can add emphasis to what is said. It may be viewed as evidence of conviction on the part of the speaker. Notice how Jesus responded when his disciples expressed great surprise and said: “Who really can be saved?” The Bible reports: “*Looking them in the face*, Jesus said to them: ‘With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’” (Matt. 19:25, 26) The Scriptures also show that the apostle Paul keenly observed the reactions of those in his audience. On one occasion a man lame from birth was present when Paul spoke. Acts 14:9, 10 states: “This man was listening to Paul speak, who, *on looking at him intently and seeing he had faith to be made well*, said with a loud voice: ‘Stand up erect on your feet.’”

Suggestions for the Field Ministry. When you share in the field ministry, be friendly and warm as you approach people. Where appropriate, use thought-provoking questions to start a conversation on something that may be of mutual interest. As you do this, endeavor to establish eye contact—or at least to look the person in the face in a respectful and kindly way. A warm smile on the face of one whose eyes convey inner joy is very appealing. Such an expression may tell the individual much about what sort of person you are and help him to feel more relaxed as you converse.

Observing the expression in the person's eyes, where appropriate, may give you indications as to how to deal with a situation. If the person is angry or if he is really not interested, you may be able to see it. If he does not understand you, you may realize that. If he is getting impatient, you will usually be able to tell. If he is keenly interested, this too will be evident. The expression in his eyes may alert you to the need to adjust your pace, to make added effort to involve him in the conversation, to terminate the discussion or, possibly, to follow through with a demonstration of how to study the Bible.

Whether you are engaging in public witnessing or conducting a home Bible study, endeavor to maintain respectful eye contact with the one with whom you are speaking. Do not stare at him, however, as that can be embarrassing. (2 Ki. 8:11) But in a natural, friendly manner, frequently look the other person in the face. In many lands, this conveys a feeling of sincere interest. Of course, when you are reading from the Bible or some other publication, your eyes will be focused on the printed page. But to emphasize a point, you may want to look directly at the person, though doing so briefly. If you look up at intervals, this will also enable you to observe his reaction to what is being read.

If shyness makes visual contact difficult for you at first, do not give up. With practice, appropriate visual contact will become natural, and it may add to your effectiveness in communicating with others.

When Giving a Discourse. The Bible tells us that before Jesus began his Sermon on the Mount, “he lifted up his eyes upon his disciples.” (Luke 6:20) Learn from his example. If you are going to speak

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

Be natural and friendly, genuinely interested in those to whom you speak.

When reading, hold the reading material in your hand and keep your chin up so that you need to move only your eyes, not your head.

before a group, face them and then pause a few seconds before you start to talk. In many places this will include making eye contact with some in the audience. This brief delay may help you to overcome your initial nervousness. It will also help the audience to adjust themselves to whatever attitude or emotion your face reveals. Additionally, your doing this will permit the audience to settle down and be ready to give you their attention.

During your talk, look at the audience. Do not merely look at the group as a whole. Endeavor to look at individuals in it. In almost every culture, some degree of eye contact is expected on the part of a public speaker.

Looking at your audience means more than simply making a rhythmic eye movement from one side to the other. Make respectful visual contact with someone in the audience, and if appropriate, say a full sentence to that individual. Then look at another, and say a sentence or two to that person. Do not look at anyone so long that he becomes uncomfortable, and do not concentrate on only a few people in the entire audience. Continue to move your eyes through the audience in this way, but as you speak to a person, really talk to that one and notice his reaction before you pass on to another.

Your notes should be on the speaker's stand, in your hand, or in your Bible so that you can glance at these with only an eye movement. If it is necessary to move your entire head to see your notes, audience contact will suffer. Consideration should be given both to how often you look at your notes and to when you do so. If you are looking at your notes while you are reaching a climax in the talk, not only will you fail to see your audience's reaction but your delivery will lose some of its force. Likewise, if you are constantly consulting your notes, you will lose audience contact.

When you throw a ball to someone, you look to see if it is caught. Each thought in your talk is a separate "throw" to the audience. A "catch" may be indicated by their response—a nod, a smile, an attentive look. If you maintain good visual contact, this can help you to make sure that your ideas are being "caught."

If you are assigned to read to the congregation, should you try to look at the audience during the reading? If the audience is following your reading in the Bible, most of them will not be aware of wheth-

er you look up or not. But looking at your audience can help to invigorate your reading because it will keep you keenly aware of their reaction. And for any in the audience who are not using their Bibles and whose minds may be wandering, visual contact with the speaker may help bring their attention back to what is being read. Of course, you will only be able to look up briefly, and it should not be done in a manner that causes you to stumble in your reading. To that end, it is best to hold your Bible in your hand and to keep your head up, not with the chin dropped toward the chest.

At times, elders are called on to deliver a convention discourse from a manuscript. Doing this effectively requires experience, careful preparation, and much practice. Of course, use of a manuscript limits visual contact with the audience. But if the speaker has prepared well, he should be able to look at his audience from time to time without losing his place. His doing so will help hold the attention of the audience and enable them to benefit fully from the important spiritual instruction being presented.

EXERCISE:

In everyday conversation with family and friends, endeavor to increase your eye contact with others, doing so in ways that will not offend local custom.

What do you need to do?

Be yourself—conversational, sincere, and unaffected.

EXPRESSING yourself in a natural manner helps you win the confidence of others. Would you put your confidence in something said by someone who spoke to you from behind a mask? Would it make a difference if the face on the mask was more handsome than the speaker's own face? Not likely. So rather than using a disguise, be yourself.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

If you are nervous, stiff, or awkward in your speech because of being self-conscious, others may be distracted from what you say.

Naturalness should not be confused with carelessness. Poor grammar, wrong pronunciation, and muffled speech are not appropriate. Slang should also be avoided. We always want to manifest appropriate dignity, both in our speech and in our bearing. Someone who manifests such naturalness is neither overly formal nor overly concerned about impressing others.

In the Field Ministry. When you approach a house or step up to someone in a public place with a view to giving a witness, do you feel nervous? Most of us do, but for some the feeling is more persistent than for others. Tension may cause the voice to sound somewhat strained or shaky, or nervousness may manifest itself in awkward movements of the hands or the head.

A publisher may encounter this problem for a number of reasons. Perhaps he is thinking about the impression he will make or wondering whether his presentation will be successful. None of this is unusual, but problems arise when too much attention is given to such things. If you get nervous before engaging in the ministry, what can help? Careful preparation and fervent prayer to Jehovah. (Acts 4:29) Think about Jehovah's great mercy in inviting people to enjoy perfect health and eternal life in Paradise. Think about those whom you are endeavoring to help and their need to hear the good news.

Remember, too, that people have free will, so they can either accept or reject the message. The same was true when Jesus witnessed in ancient Israel. Your assignment is simply to preach. (Matt. 24:14) Even

when people do not let you talk, your very presence will give a witness. You will have succeeded because you let Jehovah use you to accomplish his will. On those occasions when you do have opportunity to talk, what will characterize your speech? If you learn to focus your thoughts on the needs of others, your speech will be appealing and natural.

When giving a witness, if you act and speak as you do every day, this will put your listeners at ease. They may even be more receptive to the Scriptural thoughts that you want to share with them. Rather than giving them a formal discourse, converse with them. Be friendly. Show an interest in them, and welcome their comments. Of course, where the language or local culture calls for certain protocols to show respect when speaking to strangers, you would want to observe these. But you can always be ready with a relaxed smile.

On the Platform. When you speak to a group, a natural, conversational style of delivery is usually best. Of course, when the audience is large, you need greater voice projection. If you try to memorize your talk or if your notes are too detailed, you are probably overly concerned about wording things precisely. Appropriate wording is important, but when it is given too much attention, delivery becomes stiff and formal. Naturalness is lost. Your ideas should be carefully thought out in advance, but give most of your attention to the ideas, not the exact wording.

The same is true when you are being interviewed at a meeting. Be well prepared, but do not read or memorize your answers. Deliver them with natural modulation so that your comments will have an appealing spontaneity.

Even desirable speech qualities taken to an extreme may strike an audience as being unnatural. For example, you should speak distinctly and use proper pronunciation but not to the extent that your speech sounds stiff or artificial. Emphatic or descriptive gestures, when done well, can enliven your talk, but gestures that are stiff or grandiose will detract from what you are saying. Use ample volume, but try not to be excessively loud. It is good occasionally to put fire into your delivery, but you should avoid being bombastic. Modulation, enthusiasm, and feeling should all be used in a manner

HOW TO DO IT

Speak in your everyday manner. Focus your thoughts, not on yourself, but on Jehovah and on the need for people to learn about him.

When preparing a talk, give principal attention to ideas, not precise wording.

When delivering a talk and when speaking in everyday conversation, avoid careless speech habits as well as the tendency to use speech qualities in a manner that draws attention to yourself.

Prepare well for public reading. Read with feeling and a keen awareness of meaning.

that does not draw attention to yourself or make your audience feel uncomfortable.

Some people naturally have a precise way of expressing themselves, even when they are not giving a talk. Others are more colloquial in their speech. The important thing is to speak well every day and to conduct yourself with Christian dignity. Then when on the platform, you will more readily speak and act with appealing naturalness.

When Reading Publicly. Naturalness in public reading requires effort. To achieve it, identify the principal ideas in the material that you are going to read, and observe how these are developed. Have these clearly in mind; otherwise, you will simply be reading words. Check the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. Practice reading aloud so as to get proper inflection and to group the words together in a way that conveys thoughts clearly. Do it again and again until your reading is fluent. Get to know the material well enough that when you read it aloud, your reading sounds like spirited conversation. That is naturalness.

Of course, most of our public reading is from our Bible-based publications. Apart from reading assignments in the Theocratic Ministry School, we read scriptures in the field ministry and when giving talks from the platform. Brothers are assigned to read material being considered at the *Watchtower* Study and at the Congregation Book Study. Some qualified brothers receive assignments to read manuscripts before convention audiences. Whether you read the Bible or other materials, read portions that embody quotations in a way that makes the material live. If a number of characters are quoted, alter your voice somewhat for each one. A word of caution: Do not be overly dramatic, but do put life into the reading in a natural way.

Reading that is natural is conversational. It does not sound artificial but has conviction.

EXERCISES:

(1) Read Malachi 1:2-14 silently, and take note of those who are speaking. Now read it aloud with appropriate expressiveness. (2) On three separate occasions before sharing in the field ministry, read the first two paragraphs of this lesson as well as the material under the subheading "In the Field Ministry," on page 128. Make an effort to apply the counsel.

What do you need to do?

Be neat, clean, and modest in your clothing. Hair should be neatly combed. Posture should convey an attentive attitude.

YOUR personal appearance says much about you. While Jehovah sees what the heart is, humans generally draw conclusions from “what appears to the eyes.” (1 Sam. 16:7) When you are clean and well-groomed, others will likely conclude that you have self-respect, and they will be more inclined to listen to you. Your being appropriately dressed will also reflect well on the organization that you represent and on your listeners’ view of the God you worship.

Guidelines to Apply. The Bible does not set out many rules about personal appearance. But it does provide balanced principles that can help us make sound decisions. Fundamental to all of these is the fact that we “do all things for God’s glory.” (1 Cor. 10:31) What principles come into play relative to our personal appearance?

First, the Bible encourages us to be clean, both in our body and in our clothing. In his Law to ancient Israel, Jehovah set out requirements regarding cleanliness. For example, when the priests were on duty, they were to bathe and wash their garments at designated times. (Lev. 16:4, 24, 26, 28) Christians are not under the Mosaic Law, but principles embodied in it are still valid. (John 13:10; Rev. 19:8) Especially when we are going to a place of worship or sharing in the field ministry, our body, our breath, and our clothing should be clean so that others do not find us offensive. Those who give talks or share in demonstrations in front of the congregation should set a fine example in this regard. Giving attention to our personal appearance shows respect for Jehovah and for his organization.

Second, the Bible exhorts us to cultivate modesty and soundness of mind. The apostle Paul urged Christian women to “adorn themselves . . . with modesty and soundness of mind, not with styles of hair braiding and gold or pearls or very expensive garb, but in the way that befits women professing to reverence God.” (1 Tim. 2:9, 10)

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Your personal appearance may influence how others view your Christian beliefs and the way of life that you represent.

Modesty and soundness of mind are also important in the dress and grooming of men.

A person who is modest is concerned about not needlessly offending others and not drawing undue attention to himself. Soundness of mind results in discretion, or good judgment. The person who displays these qualities has balance that results from respect for godly standards. Manifesting these qualities does not rule out dressing in an attractive manner but helps us to be sensible in our appearance and

to avoid extravagant styles of dress and grooming. (1 John 2:16) We want to apply these principles whether we are at a place of worship, sharing in the field ministry, or engaging in other activities. Even our casual dress should reflect modesty and soundness of mind. At school or on our secular job, there will be opportunities to do informal witnessing. While we may not be dressed in the same manner as when attending meetings, conventions, and assemblies, our dress should still be neat, clean, and modest.

Of course, we do not all dress alike. We are not expected to. People have different tastes, and this is quite proper. But Bible guidelines should always be applied.

The apostle Peter showed that even more important than hairstyles and outer garments is apparel associated with “the secret person of the heart.” (1 Pet. 3:3, 4) When our hearts are filled with love, joy, peace, kindness, and faith that is solidly based, these will become to us spiritual garments that truly honor God.

Third, the Bible urges us to consider whether our appearance is well arranged. At 1 Timothy 2:9, mention is made of “well-arranged dress.” While the apostle Paul was referring to the attire of women, the same principle applies to men. Something that is well arranged is neat and orderly. Whether we have much materially or not, we can have a neat appearance.

One of the first aspects of personal appearance that is noticed by others is our hair. It ought to be neat, or well arranged. Both local custom and hereditary factors have a bearing on how people wear their hair. At 1 Corinthians 11:14, 15, we find counsel from the apostle Paul on hairstyles, which evidently took into consideration both

CHECK YOUR APPEARANCE

Is everything clean?

Does your appearance reflect modesty and good judgment?

Is everything well arranged?

Is your hair neat?

Is there anything about your appearance that might reflect love of the world?

Is there any good reason to think that your appearance could stumble someone?

of these factors. However, when a person's hairstyle conveys the impression that he or she is trying to look like a person of the opposite sex, this is in conflict with Bible principles.—Deut. 22:5.

For men, a neat personal appearance may include being clean-shaven. In areas where mustaches are widely viewed as dignified, any who wear these should keep them neatly trimmed.

Fourth, our appearance should not reflect love of the world and its ways. The apostle John cautioned: "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world." (1 John 2:15-17) Many sinful desires characterize this world. Among these John mentions the desire of the sinful flesh and the showy display of one's possessions. The Scriptures also draw attention to the spirit of rebellion, or disobedience to authority. (Prov. 17:11; Eph. 2:2) These desires and attitudes are often manifest in the way that people dress and groom themselves. As a result, their appearance may be immodest, sensual, gaudy, unkempt, careless, or sloppy. As Jehovah's servants, we avoid styles that reflect such unchristian ways.

Rather than imitate the world, how much better to allow the fine example of spiritually mature men and women in the Christian congregation to influence your dress and grooming! Young men who hope to be public speakers someday can observe the attire of those who already qualify to give public talks. All can learn from the example set by individuals who have loyally shared for many years in the public ministry.—1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

Fifth, in deciding what is appropriate, we ought to keep in mind that "even the Christ did not please himself." (Rom. 15:3) Jesus' foremost concern was the doing of God's will. Jesus also put helping others ahead of personal convenience. When it comes to certain styles of dress and grooming, if anything would raise a barrier between us and the people where we are now serving, what should we do? Imitating the humble spirit shown by Christ can help us to decide wisely. The apostle Paul set out the principle: "In no way are we giving any cause for stumbling." (2 Cor. 6:3) For that reason we may forgo hairstyles or items of attire that would tend to close the minds of people to whom we want to witness.

Posture. Good personal appearance also involves proper posture. Of course, we do not all carry ourselves in the same way, and we do

not endeavor to conform to a certain pattern. However, it is noteworthy that according to Bible usage, standing erect conveys a sense of personal dignity and optimism. (Lev. 26:13; Luke 21:28) Nevertheless, because of working for years in a stooped position or because of advancing years or physical weakness, a brother or a sister may not be able to stand straight or may need to lean against something for support. But for those who are able to do so, standing reasonably erect when speaking to others is recommended so as not to convey an indifferent or apologetic attitude. Likewise, while it is not wrong for a speaker occasionally to rest his hands on the speaker's stand, a more positive impression is generally conveyed to the audience if he does not lean on the stand.

Neat Equipment. Not only should our personal appearance be clean and well arranged but our equipment for use in the ministry should also be clean and neat.

Consider your Bible. It is not possible for all of us to obtain a new Bible when ours has become worn. Nevertheless, no matter how long we have had our Bible, it should give evidence that it has been handled with care.

There are, of course, many ways to pack a witnessing case, but it should be neat. Have you ever seen papers fall out of a Bible when a publisher was preparing to read a scripture to the householder or perhaps when a brother was giving a talk to the congregation? You were distracted, were you not? If papers kept in a Bible are a source of distraction, it may be that your keeping them in another place would be consistent with having your equipment well arranged. Realize, too, that placing the Bible or other religious publications on the floor is viewed as very disrespectful in some cultures.

Good personal appearance should be important to us. It also influences how others view us. But above all, we give it careful attention because we desire to “adorn the teaching of our Savior, God, in all things.”—Titus 2:10.

EXERCISE:

Once a day for a full week, regardless of what activity you plan, check yourself against the list “Check Your Appearance,” on page 132.

What do you need to do?

Stand, move, and speak in a calm, dignified manner that gives evidence of composure.

IT IS not unusual for a speaker to feel nervous when he gets up to speak, especially if he does not give talks frequently. A publisher may feel somewhat nervous when he makes the first few calls of the day in the field ministry. When commissioned to be a prophet, Jeremiah responded: “Here I actually do not know how to speak, for I am but a boy.” (Jer. 1:5, 6) Jehovah helped Jeremiah, and he will help you too. In time, you can develop poise.

A poised speaker is one who is composed. This composure is evident in his physical bearing. His posture is natural and appropriate to the occasion. Movement of his hands is meaningful. His voice is expressive and controlled.

Even though you may feel that this description of a poised person does not fit you, you can improve. How? Let us consider why a speaker feels nervous and lacks poise. The cause may be physical.

When you are faced with a challenge and want to do well but are not sure that you will, you feel anxiety. As a result, the brain signals the body to produce more adrenaline. The resulting surge may cause a more rapid heartbeat, a change in breathing rate, increased perspiration, or even shakiness in the hands and knees as well as trembling of the voice. Your body is endeavoring to help you deal with your situation by increasing your energy level. The challenge is to channel the surge of energy into constructive thinking and enthusiastic delivery.

How to Reduce Anxiety. Remember that it is normal to feel some anxiety. To maintain poise, however, you need to be able to reduce the level of anxiety and deal with your situation in a calm and dignified manner. How can you accomplish this?

Prepare thoroughly. Invest time in the preparation of your talk. Make sure that you clearly understand your subject. If your talk is

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

If you are poised, your audience will be more likely to concentrate on what you are saying rather than on you.

one in which you select the points to cover, take into account what your audience already knows about the subject and what you hope to accomplish. This will help you to select material that is most worthwhile. If at first you find that difficult, discuss the problem with an experienced speaker. He can help you make a constructive analysis of your material and of the audience. When you are sure that you have material that will benefit your audience and you have it clearly in mind, your desire to share it will begin to overshadow the anxiety that you may feel about the delivery.

HOW TO ACQUIRE POISE

Prepare well.

Practice your delivery aloud.

“Throw your burden upon Jehovah” in prayer.
—Ps. 55:22.

Share regularly in field service, comment frequently at meetings, and volunteer for extra assignments in the school.

Identify symptoms of lack of composure, and learn how to prevent or control these.

Give special attention to your introduction. Know how you are going to start. Once your talk is under way, your nervousness will likely subside.

The same basic steps apply to preparing for the field ministry. Consider not only the subject that you plan to discuss but also the type of people to whom you will be witnessing. Plan your introduction carefully. Benefit from the experience of mature publishers.

You may feel that you will be more poised if you use a manuscript when giving a talk before a group. Actually, this may result in increased anxiety every time you give a talk. It is true that some speakers use extensive notes, while others use few. But what will change the focus of your thinking and reduce the level of your anxiety is, not the words on the paper, but the conviction in your heart

that what you have prepared for your audience is truly worthwhile.

Practice your delivery aloud. Such practice will give you confidence that you can put your thoughts into words. As you practice, you build up memory patterns that can readily be activated when you give your talk. Make your practice session realistic. Visualize your audience. Sit at a table or stand, just as you will when giving the talk.

Pray to Jehovah for help. Will he answer such a prayer? “This is the confidence that we have toward him, that, no matter what it is that we ask according to his will, he hears us.” (1 John 5:14) If you desire to honor God and to help people benefit from his Word, he will surely answer your prayer. That assurance can do much to strengthen you to fulfill your assignment. Furthermore, as you cultivate the fruitage of the spirit—love, joy, peace, mildness, and self-control—you will

develop the mental attitude needed to handle situations with poise.
—Gal. 5:22, 23.

Acquire experience. The more you share in the field service, the less nervous you will be. The more you comment at congregation meetings, the easier it will be to speak before others. As the number of talks that you give in the congregation increases, the degree of anxiety that you feel before each talk will probably decrease. Would you like to have more opportunities to speak? Then volunteer to substitute in the school when others are not able to fulfill their assignments.

After you have taken the steps outlined above, you will find it beneficial to examine the symptoms that point unmistakably to lack of composure. Identifying the symptoms and learning how to cope with these will help you speak with poise. The symptoms may be physical or vocal.

Physical Symptoms. Your poise, or lack of it, is shown by your physical bearing and the way that you use your hands. Consider first the hands. Hands clasped behind the back, held rigidly at the sides, or tightly clutching the speaker's stand; hands repeatedly in and out of pockets, buttoning and unbuttoning the jacket, aimlessly moving to the cheek, the nose, the eyeglasses; hands toying with a watch, a pencil, a ring, or notes; hand gestures that are jerky or incomplete—all of these demonstrate a lack of poise.

Lack of confidence may also be indicated by constantly shuffling the feet, swaying the body from side to side, standing with posture that is overly rigid, slouching, frequently moistening the lips, repeatedly swallowing, and breathing in a rapid and shallow manner.

With conscious effort these manifestations of nervousness can be controlled. Work on just one at a time. Identify the problem, and consider in advance what you need to do to prevent it. If you make that effort, you will give evidence of poise in your physical bearing.

Vocal Symptoms. Vocal evidences of nervousness may include an abnormally high-pitched or trembling voice. Perhaps you repeatedly clear the throat or speak too rapidly. These problems and mannerisms can be conquered by diligent effort to bring the voice under control.

If you feel nervous, pause to take a few deep breaths before you go to the platform. Endeavor to relax your entire body. Instead of thinking about your nervousness, concentrate on why you want to share with your audience the things you have prepared. Before beginning to speak, take a moment to look at your audience, pick out a friendly face, and smile. Speak slowly in the introduction, and then get immersed in your talk.

What to Expect. Do not expect all feelings of nervousness to disappear. Many speakers with years of experience on the platform feel nervous before they get up in front of an audience. However, they have learned to control their nervousness. One such speaker said: “I still have butterflies in my stomach, but now they fly in formation.”

If you make a sincere effort to eliminate the outward manifestations of nervousness, your audience will view you as a poised speaker. You may still feel nervous, but they may not be aware of that at all.

Remember, the surge of adrenaline that causes symptoms of nervousness also brings increased energy. Use it to speak with feeling.

There is no need to wait until you get on the platform to practice all these things. Learn to be poised and controlled and to speak with appropriate feeling in your daily life. Your doing so will go a long way toward giving you confidence on the platform and in the field ministry, where it is most important.

EXERCISE:

Every week for a month, endeavor to comment more than once at the *Watchtower* Study and at the Congregation Book Study. Notice that nervousness begins to subside when you give your second or third comment at the same meeting.

What do you need to do?

If a microphone is used for voice amplification at your meetings, use it correctly.

OUR Christian brothers and sisters spend much time and effort attending Christian meetings. If they are to benefit from what is said, they must be able to hear clearly.

In the days of ancient Israel, there was no electrical sound amplification. When Moses spoke to the nation of Israel on the Plains of Moab before they entered the Promised Land, how were all of those in his audience, numbering in the millions, able to hear? Moses possibly employed a system of human relays whereby his words were successively repeated by men stationed at appropriate intervals across the camp. (Deut. 1:1; 31:1) Not long after the Israelites began their conquest of the land west of the Jordan, Joshua gathered the nation in front of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, evidently with the Levites in the valley that separated them. There all the people heard and responded to the divine blessings and maledictions that were presented to them. (Josh. 8:33-35) It is possible that on this occasion too, human relays were used, but no doubt the excellent acoustics of the area were also helpful.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

What is said will benefit others only if it can be heard clearly.

About 1,500 years later when “a very great crowd gathered” at the Sea of Galilee to hear Jesus, he boarded a boat, pushed away from shore, and sat down to speak to the crowd. (Mark 4:1, 2) Why did Jesus speak from a boat? Evidently because the human voice carries with remarkable clarity over the smooth surface of a body of water.

Until early in the 20th century, the volume and clarity of a speaker’s voice often determined how many in an audience could hear what was said. However, starting in the 1920’s, Jehovah’s servants were able to take advantage of electrical sound amplification of the human voice at their conventions.

Sound Equipment. Such equipment can amplify the volume of a speaker’s voice many times and yet adequately maintain the quality

and tone of his voice. The speaker is not required to tax his vocal cords. Listeners do not have to strain to catch what is said. Instead, they can concentrate on the message.

Much has been done to make sure that good sound equipment is available at conventions and assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses. Additionally, many Kingdom Halls use sound equipment to amplify the

voices of those who give discourses, conduct meetings, or read from the platform. And some congregations also have microphones that are used by the audience when giving comments during meetings. If your congregation has such equipment, learn to use it well.

HOW TO DO IT

Keep the microphone four to six inches from your mouth.

Be sure to speak only when your mouth is toward the microphone.

Use a little more volume and intensity than you would in conversation.

If you need to clear your throat, turn your head away from the microphone.

Some Basic Guidelines. To use the equipment properly, keep the following points in mind: (1) The microphone should generally be about four to six inches from your mouth. If the microphone is too close, your words may become distorted. If it is too far away, your voice will be indistinct. (2) The microphone should be in front of you, not to one side. If you move your head to the right or to the left, speak only when your face is toward the microphone. (3) Use a little more volume and intensity than you would in conversation. But there is no need to shout.

The sound equipment will easily carry your voice to the farthest ones in your audience. (4) If you need to clear your throat or have the urge to cough or sneeze, be sure to turn your head away from the microphone.

When Giving a Discourse. When you step up to the speaker's stand, a brother will ordinarily adjust the position of the microphone. Stand in a natural manner with your face toward the audience while he does that. Place your notes on the speaker's stand, and be sure that the microphone does not block your view of them.

When you begin to speak, listen to how your voice sounds as it comes through the loudspeaker. Is the volume too loud, or do certain words result in popping sounds? You may need to move back an inch or two. When you are glancing at your notes, remember that you should speak and read only when your face is directed toward the microphone or slightly above it, not below it.

When Reading From the Platform. It is best to hold your Bible or other publication up so that your face is toward the audi-

ence. Since the microphone will probably be directly in front of you, you may need to hold your reading material slightly to one side. This means that your head should be slightly to the other side of the microphone. Then when you read, your voice will go directly into the microphone.

Most brothers who read at the *Watchtower* Study stand and speak into an upright microphone. This position allows them to breathe more freely and to read with greater expressiveness. Keep in mind that the reading of the paragraphs constitutes a major part of the meeting. The benefit derived by the audience depends, in large measure, on hearing the material being read.

When Commenting During the Meeting. If your congregation uses microphones for audience participation, remember that there is still a need to speak distinctly and with sufficient volume. When commenting, endeavor to hold your study publication or your Bible in your hand. This will enable you to see the material clearly while you are speaking into the microphone.

In some congregations brothers are assigned to take microphones to those called on to comment. If that is the case in your congregation, when you are called on, keep your hand up so that the brother handling the microphone can see where you are seated and get to you quickly. If the microphone is a hand-held type, be prepared to reach for it. Do not begin your comment until the microphone is in position. When you finish your comment, return the microphone promptly.

When Sharing in a Demonstration. Using a microphone during a demonstration requires special forethought. If the microphone is mounted on a stand, you will have both hands free to manage your Bible and your notes. Using a hand-held microphone may afford greater freedom of movement, but you may need to arrange for your partner to hold it. In that way your hands will be free to handle your Bible. You and your householder should practice this so that your partner knows how to hold it properly. Remember, too, that when on the platform, you should not turn your back to the audience, especially when you are speaking.

In Service Meeting demonstrations, there may be a number of participants, and they may move around on the platform. Thus, several

microphones may be required. These should be put in place in advance or made available to the participants when they go to the platform. Making sure that the microphones are in the right place at the right time takes advance planning. Rehearsing demonstrations before they are presented affords opportunity to instruct participants on the effective use of the microphones. When a rehearsal cannot take place on the platform, it may be wise for participants to hold a small object similar in size to a microphone in order to practice proper positioning. After the demonstration, the participants should replace hand-held microphones gently, being careful not to trip over cords from other microphones as they leave the platform.

Our giving attention to the use of microphones is directly connected with one of the principal objectives of our meetings, namely, benefiting one another by our discussion of God's Word. (Heb. 10: 24, 25) By learning to use microphones effectively, we can personally contribute to this important objective.

EXERCISE:

If microphones are used in your Kingdom Hall, take special note of how experienced speakers use both fixed and hand-held microphones. Identify procedures that you desire to use or avoid, along with reasons for your conclusions.

What do you need to do?

Make good use of the Bible itself when answering questions.

WHEN asked about our beliefs, our way of life, our viewpoint regarding current events, our hope for the future, we endeavor to use the Bible in replying. Why? Because it is the Word of God. It is from the Bible that we draw our beliefs. We base our way of life on the Bible. It shapes our view of world events. Our hope for the future is firmly rooted in the Bible's inspired promises.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

We are keenly aware of the responsibility that goes with our name. We are *Jehovah's* Witnesses. (Isa. 43:12) So we answer questions, not on the basis of human philosophy, but on the basis of what Jehovah says in his inspired Word. True, as individuals we have opinions on matters, but we allow God's Word to shape our views because we are firmly convinced that it is the truth. Of course, the Bible gives us latitude for personal preference in many matters. Rather than imposing our preferences on others, we desire to teach the principles set out in the Scriptures, thus allowing our listeners to exercise the same freedom of choice that we enjoy. Like the apostle Paul, we seek "to promote obedience by faith."—Rom. 16:26.

Jesus Christ is described at Revelation 3:14 as "the faithful and true witness." How did he answer questions and deal with situations that were thrust upon him? Sometimes by using illustrations that would make people think. At other times by asking the inquirer about his own understanding of a scripture. Frequently by quoting scriptures, paraphrasing them, or alluding to them. (Matt. 4:3-10; 12:1-8; Luke 10:25-28; 17:32) In the first century, Scripture scrolls were usually kept in the synagogues. There is no evidence that Jesus had a personal collection of those scrolls, but he knew the Scriptures well and referred to them liberally when teaching others. (Luke 24:27, 44-47) He could truthfully say that what he taught was not of his own originality. He spoke what he had heard from his Father.—John 8:26.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Our commission is to "preach the word." Jesus set the example, saying: "I do not speak of my own originality."—2 Tim. 4:2; John 14:10.

Our desire is to follow Jesus' example. We have not personally heard God speak, as Jesus did. But the Bible is God's Word. When we use it as the basis for our answers, we avoid drawing attention to ourselves. We show that instead of voicing the opinion of an imperfect human, we are firmly determined to let God have the say as to what is truth.

—John 7:18; Rom. 3:4.

HOW TO BECOME MORE PROFICIENT

Read the Bible daily. Have a good program of personal study.

Make it a practice to include scriptures in your comments at congregation meetings.

When faced with questions or situations, before replying or making a decision, always ask yourself, 'What does the Bible say?'

When you do not know what the Bible says on a matter, do not guess or give a private opinion. Offer to do research.

Of course, our desire is not merely to use the Bible but to do so in a way that will be most beneficial to our hearer. We want him to listen with an open mind. Depending on the attitude of the person, you could introduce Biblical thoughts by saying: "Don't you agree that what really counts is what God says?" Or you could say: "Did you know that the Bible discusses that very question?" If you are speaking to someone who does not have respect for the Bible, you may need to use a somewhat different introduction. You could say: "Let me share this ancient prophecy with you." Or you might say: "The book that is the most widely distributed in human history says this . . ."

In some instances, you may choose simply to paraphrase a text. Where possible, however, it is best to open the Bible itself and read what it says. Show the scripture to the person in his own copy of the Bible whenever this is practical. This direct use of the Bible often has a powerful effect on people.—Heb. 4:12.

Christian elders have a special responsibility to use the Bible when answering questions. One of the qualifications for serving as an elder is that the brother is "holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching." (Titus 1:9) A member of the congregation may make a serious decision in life after an elder has given him counsel. How important that this counsel be firmly based on the Scriptures! An elder's example in doing this can influence many others in their manner of teaching.

EXERCISE:

List one or two questions that you have been asked (1) in the field service, (2) about some matter recently reported in the news, and (3) about engaging in a certain popular activity. For each, select at least one scripture that would be appropriate to use in replying.

What do you need to do?

Encourage your audience to follow along in the Bible as texts are read.

OUR desire is to direct the attention of everyone to God's Word, the Bible. That sacred book is the basis for the message that we preach, and we want people to realize that what we say is, not of our own originality, but from God. People need to develop confidence in the Bible.

In the Field Ministry. When preparing for the field ministry, always select one or more scriptures to share with people who are willing to listen. Even if you are planning to make a relatively brief presentation of Bible literature, it is often beneficial to read an appropriate Bible text. The Bible has greater power to direct sheeplike people than anything that we might personally say. Where it is not possible actually to read from the Bible, you may choose to quote from it. In the first century, copies of Scripture scrolls were not widely available. Yet, Jesus and his apostles quoted extensively from the Scriptures. We too should make an effort to memorize scriptures and use these appropriately in our ministry, sometimes just quoting them.

When you are able to read from the Bible, hold it so that the householder can follow along as you read. If the householder follows along in his own copy of the Bible, his response to what he reads may be even more favorable.

You must realize, however, that some Bible translators have taken liberties with God's Word. Their renderings may not conform in all respects to what was in the original Bible languages. A number of modern translations have eliminated God's personal name, obscured what the original-language text says regarding the condition of the dead, and concealed what the Bible says about God's purpose for the earth. In order to show a person what has been done, you may need to compare key texts from a variety of Bibles or from earlier translations in the same language. On a number of subjects, *Reasoning From the Scriptures* provides a comparison of the ways that various translations

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

What a person sees with his own eyes, especially in his own Bible, makes a deeper impression.

render key expressions in verses that are often used. Anyone who loves truth will be grateful for knowledge of the facts.

At Congregation Meetings. All should be encouraged to use their Bibles at congregation meetings. This accomplishes good in a number of ways. It helps to keep the attention of the audience on what is being discussed. It adds visual impact to the oral instruction given by the speaker. And it impresses on the minds of newly interested ones that the Bible is, indeed, the source of our beliefs.

HOW TO DO IT

Show the householder the text as you read it from the Bible, or invite him to follow along in his own Bible.

When speaking in the congregation, directly invite the audience to look up key scriptures, and then allow them enough time to do this.

Whether those in your audience actually follow your reading of Scripture texts in their own Bibles will depend to a great extent on the encouragement that you give. Direct invitation is one of the best methods.

It is up to you, the speaker, to decide which texts you want to emphasize by having the audience look them up. It is best to read scriptures that will help you develop your main points. Then, as time permits, add a few others that support your argument.

Of course, merely citing the text or inviting the audience to look up a scripture is not usually sufficient. If you read one text and then go on to another before your audience has even had time to find the first one, they will soon become discouraged and will stop trying to follow along in the Bible. Be observant. When the majority have located the text, read it.

Think ahead. Cite your scripture sufficiently in advance of reading it. This will minimize the loss of time that results from waiting for the audience to find the text. While less material will be covered if you allow time for the audience to look up scriptures, the benefits will make it worthwhile.

EXERCISES:

On return visits, try the following: (1) Hand your Bible to the householder, and ask him if he would like to read a certain verse that you have already located. (2) Ask the householder if he would like to get his own Bible and read a key scripture.

What do you need to do?

Prepare the minds of your listeners before you read a scripture.

THE Scriptures provide the foundation for instruction given at our congregation meetings. Bible texts are also focal points in what we say in the field ministry. How much these contribute to our discussion, however, depends in part on how effectively they are introduced.

More is needed than simply referring to the scripture and inviting someone to read it with you. When introducing a scripture, endeavor to accomplish two objectives: (1) Arouse anticipation, and (2) focus attention on the reason for using the text. These objectives can be attained in a variety of ways.

Ask a Question. This is most effective if the answer is not already obvious to your audience. Endeavor to phrase the question in a manner that makes people think. Jesus did this. When the Pharisees approached him in the temple and publicly tested his understanding of the Scriptures, Jesus asked them: “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They replied: “David’s.” Jesus then asked: “How, then, is it that David by inspiration calls him ‘Lord’?” And with this he proceeded to quote Psalm 110:1. The Pharisees were silenced. The crowd, however, listened to Jesus with pleasure.—Matt. 22:41-46.

In the field ministry, you might use such introductory questions as the following: “You and I have personal names. Does God have a personal name? We can find the answer at Psalm 83:18.” “Will there ever be one government for all mankind? Notice how this is answered at Daniel 2:44.” “Does the Bible really deal with conditions that exist in our day? Compare what is stated at 2 Timothy 3:1-5 with conditions that are familiar to you.” “Will there ever be an end to suffering and death? The Bible answer can be found at Revelation 21:4, 5.”

In a discourse, careful use of questions to introduce scriptures can motivate your audience to take a fresh look at texts, even those familiar to them. But will they do so? That may depend on whether

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

An effective introduction to a scripture can help your audience understand the real significance of what the text says.

the questions that you raise are of genuine concern to them or not. Even when the subject is of interest to the audience, their minds may drift when you are reading texts that they have heard many times. To prevent that from happening, you need to give the matter enough thought to make your presentation appealing.

Present a Problem. You might present a problem and then direct attention to a scripture that has a bearing on the solution. Do not lead the audience to expect more than they will get. Often a scripture provides only part of the solution. However, you might ask the audience to consider, while you read the text, what guidance it does give for dealing with the situation.

HOW TO DO IT

When selecting a method that will arouse interest, take into account what your audience already knows and how they feel about the subject.

Be sure that you know what is to be accomplished by each text, and let your introductory comments reflect that.

In a similar manner, you might state a principle of godly conduct and then use a Bible account to illustrate the wisdom of following it. If a scripture contains two (or perhaps more) specific points related to what is being discussed, some speakers ask the audience to watch for these. If a problem appears to be too difficult for a particular audience, you can stimulate thought by presenting several possibilities and then allowing the text and its application to provide the answer.

Cite the Bible as the Authority. If you have already aroused interest in your subject and stated one or more views on some aspect of it, you might introduce a scripture by simply saying: “Note what *God’s Word* states on this point.” This shows why the material that you are going to read is authoritative.

Jehovah used such men as John, Luke, Paul, and Peter to write portions of the Bible. But they were only writers; Jehovah is the Author. Especially when speaking to people who are not students of the Holy Scriptures, introducing a text by saying “Peter wrote” or “Paul said” may not have the same force as an introduction that identifies the text as the word of God. It is noteworthy that in certain instances, Jehovah instructed Jeremiah to introduce proclamations by saying: “Hear the word of Jehovah.” (Jer. 7:2; 17:20; 19:3; 22:2) Whether we use Jehovah’s name in introducing scriptures or not, before we conclude our discussion, we should endeavor to point out that what is in the Bible is his word.

Take the Context Into Account. You should be aware of the context when deciding how to introduce a scripture. In some cases you

will directly mention the context; however, context may in other ways influence what you say. For instance, would you introduce the words of God-fearing Job in the same way that you would a statement made by one of his false comforters? The book of Acts was written by Luke, but he quotes, among others, James, Peter, Paul, Philip, Stephen, and angels, as well as Gamaliel and other Jews who were not Christians. To whom will you ascribe the text that you quote? Remember, for example, that not all of the psalms were composed by David and not all of the book of Proverbs was written by Solomon. It is also beneficial to know who was being addressed by the Bible writer and what general subject was being discussed.

Use Background Information. This is especially effective if you can show that circumstances existing at the time of the Bible account were similar to those that you are discussing. In other instances background information is necessary in order to understand a particular text. If you were to use Hebrews 9:12, 24 in a talk on the ransom, for example, you might find it necessary to preface your reading of the text with a brief explanation of the innermost room of the tabernacle, which, the scripture indicates, pictures the place Jesus entered when he ascended to heaven. But do not include so much background material that it overshadows the text that you are introducing.

To improve the way that you introduce scriptures, analyze what experienced speakers do. Note the different methods that they use. Analyze the effectiveness of these methods. In preparing your own talks, identify the key scriptures, and give special thought to what each text should accomplish. Carefully plan the introduction for each one so that it will be used with the most telling effect. Later, widen out to include all of the texts that you use. As this aspect of your presentation improves, you will be focusing greater attention on the Word of God.

EXERCISE:

Select a scripture that you believe you can use effectively in your territory. Plan (1) what question or problem you will present to arouse anticipation on the part of the householder and (2) how you will focus attention on your reason for reading the text.

What do you need to do?

Emphasize words and expressions that highlight your line of reasoning. Read with appropriate feeling.

WHEN you speak to others about God's purposes, whether privately or from the platform, your discussion should center on what is in God's Word. This usually involves reading scriptures from the Bible, which ought to be done well.

Proper Emphasis Involves Feeling. Scriptures should be read with feeling. Consider some examples. When you read Psalm 37:11 aloud, your voice should convey happy anticipation of the peace that is promised there. When you read Revelation 21:4 regarding the end of suffering and death, your voice should reflect warm appreciation for the marvelous relief that is being foretold. Revelation 18:2, 4, 5, with its appeal to get out of sin-laden "Babylon the Great," ought to be read with a tone of urgency. Of course, the feeling expressed should be heartfelt but not overdone. The proper amount of emotion is determined by the text itself and by the way it is being used.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The full force of scriptures that are read is made to stand out with proper emphasis.

Emphasize the Right Words. If your comments on a certain verse are built around just a portion of it, you should highlight that portion when reading the text. For example, when reading Matthew 6:33, you would not give primary stress to "his righteousness" or to "all these other things" if you intend to analyze what is meant by "seeking first the kingdom."

In a talk on the Service Meeting, you may plan to read Matthew 28:19. What words should you emphasize? If you want to encourage diligence in starting home Bible studies, stress "make disciples." On the other hand, if you plan to discuss the Christian's responsibility to share Bible truth with an immigrant population or you want to encourage certain publishers to serve where the need is greater, you might stress "people of all the nations."

Frequently, a scripture is presented in answer to a question or in support of an argument that others view as controversial. If every

thought expressed in the text is emphasized equally, your audience may fail to see the connection. The point may be obvious to you but not to them.

For example, when reading Psalm 83:18 from a Bible that contains the divine name, if you put all the emphasis on the expression “the Most High,” a householder may fail to grasp the seemingly obvious fact that God has a personal name. You should stress the name “Jehovah.” However, when you are using that same scripture in a discussion of Jehovah’s sovereignty, you should give primary emphasis to the expression “the Most High.” Likewise, when using James 2:24 to show the importance of coupling faith with action, giving primary emphasis to “declared righteous” instead of to “works” might cause some who hear you to miss the point.

Another helpful example can be found at Romans 15:7-13. This is part of a letter written by the apostle Paul to a congregation made up of both Gentiles and natural Jews. Here the apostle argues that the ministry of Christ benefits not only circumcised Jews but also people of the nations so that “the nations might glorify God for his mercy.” Then Paul quotes four scriptures, drawing attention to that opportunity for the nations. How should you read those quotations in order to emphasize the point that Paul had in mind? If you are marking expressions to stress, you might highlight “the nations” in verse 9, “you nations” in verse 10, “all you nations” and “all the peoples” in verse 11, and “nations” in verse 12. Try reading Romans 15:7-13 with that emphasis. As you do so, Paul’s entire line of argument will become clearer and easier to grasp.

Methods of Emphasis. The thought-carrying words that you want to stand out may be stressed in a number of ways. The means that you use should be in keeping with the scripture and the setting of the talk. A few suggestions are offered here.

Voice stress. This involves any change in voice that makes the thought-carrying words stand out from the rest of the sentence. The emphasis may be achieved by a change in volume—either by increasing it or by decreasing it. In many languages, a change in pitch adds

HOW TO CULTIVATE THE USE OF EMPHASIS

Regarding any scripture that you plan to read, ask yourself: ‘What feeling or emotion do these words express? How should I convey it?’

Analyze texts that you plan to use. Regarding each one, ask yourself: ‘What purpose will this text serve? Which words need to be emphasized in order to achieve that purpose?’

emphasis. In some languages, however, that may change the meaning altogether. When a slower pace is used for key expressions, this adds weight to them. In languages that do not permit voice stress as a means of emphasizing certain words, it will be necessary to do whatever is customary in that language in order to obtain the desired results.

Pausing. This may be done before or after reading the key portion of a scripture—or both. Pausing immediately before you read a main thought creates anticipation; pausing afterward deepens the impression made. However, if there are too many pauses, nothing will stand out.

Repetition. You can place emphasis on a particular point by interrupting yourself and rereading the word or phrase. A method that is often preferable is to complete the text and then repeat the key expression.

Gestures. Body movement as well as facial expression can often add emotion to a word or a phrase.

Tone of voice. In some languages, words may at times be read in a tone that influences their meaning and sets them apart. Here, too, discretion should be exercised, especially in using sarcasm.

When Others Read Texts. When a householder reads a scripture, he may stress the wrong words or none at all. What can you do then? Generally it is best to make the meaning clear by your application of the texts. After making the application, you might focus special attention directly on the thought-carrying words in the Bible.

EXERCISES:

(1) Analyze a scripture that you plan to use in the field service. Practice reading it with appropriate feeling. Having in mind the way that you plan to use the text, read it aloud with emphasis on the correct word(s). (2) In a current study publication, select one paragraph that contains quoted scriptures. Analyze how the scriptures are being used. Mark the thought-conveying words. Read the entire paragraph aloud in a manner that gives proper emphasis to the scriptures.

What do you need to do?

Make sure that any application of a scripture is in harmony with the context and with the Bible as a whole. The application should also be in harmony with what has been published by “the faithful and discreet slave.”

WHEN teaching others, more is required than merely reading verses from the Bible. The apostle Paul wrote to his associate Timothy: “Do your utmost to present yourself approved to God, a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, *handling the word of the truth aright.*” —2 Tim. 2:15.

To do this means that our explanation of scriptures must be consistent with what the Bible itself teaches. This requires that we take into account the context, instead of simply selecting expressions that appeal to us and adding our own ideas. Through the prophet Jeremiah, Jehovah warned against those prophets who professed to speak from the mouth of Jehovah but who actually presented “the vision of their own heart.” (Jer. 23:16) The apostle Paul warned Christians against contaminating God’s Word with human philosophies when he wrote: “We have renounced the underhanded things of which to be ashamed, not walking with cunning, neither adulterating the word of God.” In those days dishonest wine merchants would dilute their wine to make it go further and to bring in more money. We do not adulterate the Word of God by mixing it with human philosophies. “We are not peddlers of the word of God as many men are,” Paul declared, “but as out of sincerity, yes, as sent from God, under God’s view, in company with Christ, we are speaking.”—2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2.

At times, you may quote a scripture to highlight a principle. The Bible is filled with principles that provide sound guidance in dealing with a wide variety of situations. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) But you should make sure that your application is accurate and that you are not misusing a scripture, making it appear to say what *you* want it to say.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

It is a serious thing to teach others God’s Word. His will is that people come to “an accurate knowledge of truth.” (1 Tim. 2:3, 4) That imposes on us the responsibility to teach God’s Word correctly.

(Ps. 91:11, 12; Matt. 4:5, 6) The application must be in harmony with Jehovah's purpose, consistent with the entire Word of God.

“Handling the word of the truth aright” also includes getting the spirit of what the Bible says. It is not a “club” with which to browbeat others. Religious teachers who opposed Jesus Christ quoted from the Scriptures, but they were shutting their eyes to the weightier matters—those involving justice and mercy and faithfulness—which are required by God. (Matt. 22:23, 24; 23:23, 24) When teaching God's Word, Jesus reflected his Father's personality. Jesus' zeal for the truth was coupled with his deep love for the people he taught. We should endeavor to follow his example. —Matt. 11:28.

HOW TO DEVELOP THE ABILITY

Read the Bible regularly. Carefully study *The Watchtower*, and prepare well for congregation meetings.

Be sure that you know the meaning of the words in any scripture that you plan to use. Read the text carefully so that you correctly understand what it is saying.

Make it a practice to do research in our Christian publications.

How can we be sure that we are making proper application of a scripture? Regular Bible reading will help. We also need to appreciate Jehovah's provision of “the faithful and discreet slave,” the body of spirit-anointed Christians through whom he provides spiritual food for the household of faith. (Matt. 24:45) Personal study as well as regular attendance at and participation in congregation meetings will help us to benefit from the instruction provided through that faithful and discreet slave class.

If the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures* is available in your language and you learn to use it well, you will have at your fingertips the guidance that you need for correct application of hundreds of scriptures that are frequently used in our ministry. If you are planning to use an unfamiliar scripture, modesty will move you to do needed research so that when you speak, you will be handling the word of the truth aright.—Prov. 11:2.

Make the Application Clear. When teaching others, make sure that they clearly see the connection between the subject that you are discussing and the scriptures that you use. If you lead up to the scripture with a question, your listeners should see how the scripture answers that question. If you are using the scripture in support of some statement, be sure that the student clearly sees how the text proves the point.

Just reading the scripture—even with emphasis—is usually not enough. Remember, the average person is unfamiliar with the Bible

and will probably not grasp your point with just one reading. Draw attention to the portion of the text that directly applies to what you are discussing.

This usually requires that you isolate key words, those that have a direct bearing on the point being discussed. The simplest method is to restate those thought-carrying words. If you are talking to an individual, you might ask questions that will help him to identify the key words. When talking to a group, some speakers prefer to achieve their objective by using synonyms or by restating the idea. However, if you choose to do this, exercise care that the audience does not lose sight of the connection between the point of discussion and the wording in the scripture.

Having isolated the key words, you have laid a good foundation. Now follow through. Did you introduce the scripture with a clear indication as to your reason for using the text? If so, point out how the words that you have highlighted relate to what you led your audience to expect. State clearly what that connection is. Even if you did not use such an explicit introduction to the text, there ought to be some follow-through.

The Pharisees asked Jesus what they thought was a difficult question, namely: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on every sort of ground?" Jesus based his reply on Genesis 2:24. Notice that he focused attention on just one part of it, and then he made the needed application. Having pointed out that the man and his wife become "one flesh," Jesus concluded: "Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart."—Matt. 19:3-6.

How much explanation should you give in order to make the application of a scripture clear? The makeup of your audience and the importance of the point being discussed should determine that. Let simplicity and directness be your aim.

Reason From the Scriptures. Regarding the apostle Paul's ministry in Thessalonica, Acts 17:2, 3 tells us that he 'reasoned from the Scriptures.' This is an ability that every servant of Jehovah should try to cultivate. For example, Paul related facts regarding the life and ministry of Jesus, showed that these had been foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures, and then gave a forceful conclusion by saying: "This is the Christ, this Jesus whom I am publishing to you."

When writing to the Hebrews, Paul repeatedly quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures. To emphasize or clarify a point, he often isolated one word or a short phrase and then showed its significance. (Heb. 12:26, 27) In the account found in Hebrews chapter 3, Paul quoted from Psalm 95:7-11. Notice that he then enlarged on three portions of it: (1) the reference to the heart (Heb. 3:8-12), (2) the significance of the expression “Today” (Heb. 3:7, 13-15; 4:6-11), and (3) the meaning of the statement: “They shall not enter into my rest” (Heb. 3:11, 18, 19; 4:1-11). Endeavor to imitate that example as you make application of each scripture.

Observe the effectiveness with which Jesus reasoned from the Scriptures in the account found at Luke 10:25-37. A man versed in the Law asked: “Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit everlasting life?” In reply Jesus first invited the man to express his view of the matter, and then Jesus emphasized the importance of doing what God’s Word says. When it became clear that the man was missing the point, Jesus discussed at length just one word from the scripture — “neighbor.” Instead of simply defining it, he used an illustration to help the man come to the proper conclusion himself.

It is evident that when answering questions, Jesus did not simply quote texts that gave a direct, obvious answer. He analyzed what these said and then made application to the question at hand.

When the resurrection hope was being challenged by the Sadducees, Jesus focused attention on one specific portion of Exodus 3:6. But he did not stop after quoting the scripture. He reasoned on it to show clearly that the resurrection is part of God’s purpose.—Mark 12:24-27.

Mastering the ability to reason correctly and effectively from the Scriptures will be a significant factor in your becoming a skilled teacher.

EXERCISE:

Reason on the meaning of 2 Peter 3:7. Does it prove that the earth will be destroyed by fire? (When defining “earth,” also consider what is meant by “heavens.” What scriptures show that “earth” can be used in a figurative sense? Who or what is actually destroyed, as stated in verse 7? How does that agree with what occurred in Noah’s day, which is referred to in verses 5 and 6?)

What do you need to do?

Help your audience to see how your subject affects their lives or can be used by them in a beneficial way.

WHETHER you are speaking to an individual or to a larger audience, it is unwise to assume that your listener(s) will be interested in your subject just because you are interested in it. Your message is important, but if you fail to make clear its practical value, you will probably not hold the interest of your audience very long.

This is true of even a Kingdom Hall audience. They may mentally tune in when you use an illustration or experience that they have not heard before. But they may tune out when you talk about things they already know, especially if you fail to build on those things. You need to help them see why and how what you are saying is of real benefit to them.

The Bible encourages us to think in practical terms. (Prov. 3:21) Jehovah used John the Baptizer to direct people to “the practical wisdom of righteous ones.” (Luke 1:17) This is wisdom that is rooted in wholesome fear of Jehovah. (Ps. 111:10) Those who appreciate this wisdom are helped to cope successfully with life now and to lay hold on the real life, the eternal life to come.—1 Tim. 4:8; 6:19.

Making a Talk Practical. If your talk is going to be practical, you must give careful thought not only to the material but also to the audience. Do not think of them merely as a group. That group is made up of individuals and families. There may be very young ones, teenagers, adults, and some who are elderly. There may be newly interested ones as well as those who began serving Jehovah before you were born. Some may be spiritually mature; others may still be strongly influenced by certain attitudes and practices of the world. Ask yourself: ‘How might the material I am going to discuss benefit those in the audience? How can I help them to get the point?’ You may decide to give principal attention to just one or two of the groups mentioned here. However, do not completely forget the others.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

If people do not see the practical value of what you are saying, they may tell you that they are not interested, or they may tune out mentally, allowing their minds to wander.

What if you are assigned to discuss a basic Bible teaching? How can you make such a talk beneficial to an audience that already believes the teaching? Endeavor to strengthen their conviction in it. How? By reasoning on the Scriptural evidence supporting it. You can also deepen their appreciation for that Bible teaching. This might be done by showing how the teaching is consistent with other Bible truths and with Jehovah's own personality. Use examples—real-life experienc-

es if possible—that show how understanding this particular teaching has benefited people and has influenced their outlook on the future.

Do not confine practical application to a few brief remarks in the conclusion of your talk. Right from the start, each person in your audience should feel that “this involves me.” Having laid that foundation, continue to make practical application as you develop each of the main points in the body of the talk as well as in the conclusion.

When making application, be sure to do it in a manner that is consistent with Bible principles. What does that mean? It means doing it in a loving way and showing empathy. (1 Pet. 3:8; 1 John 4:8) Even when dealing with difficult problems in Thessalonica, the apostle Paul made it a point to highlight the positive aspects of the spiritual progress of his Christian brothers and sisters there. He also expressed confidence that in the matter then being discussed, they would *want* to do what is right. (1 Thess. 4:1-12) What a fine pattern to imitate!

Is your talk meant to stimulate participation in the work of preaching and teaching the good news to others? Build up enthusiasm and appreciation for the privilege. While doing so, however, keep in mind that the extent to which individuals are able to share in this varies, and the Bible takes this into account. (Matt. 13:23) Do not burden your brothers with feelings of guilt. Hebrews 10:24 urges us “to incite to love and fine works.” If we incite to love, works based on a good motive will follow. Rather than seeking to dictate conformity, recognize that what Jehovah wants is for us to promote “obedience by faith.” (Rom. 16:26) With this in mind, we seek to strengthen faith—both our own and that of our brothers.

HOW TO DO IT

When preparing a talk, consider not only the material but also your audience. Present it in a way that will really benefit them.

Practical application should not be reserved for your conclusion. It should be evident throughout your talk.

When preparing to give a witness, consider what is on the minds of the people in your territory.

When witnessing, really listen to the other person, and adapt your presentation accordingly.

Helping Others to Get the Point. As you witness to others, do not fail to highlight the practical value of the good news. Doing so requires that you consider what is on the minds of the people in your territory. How can you find out? Listen to the news on the radio or television. Look at the front page of the newspaper. Also, endeavor to draw people into conversation, and listen when they talk. You may find that they are grappling with pressing problems—loss of a job, paying the rent, illness, death of a family member, danger from crime, injustice at the hands of someone in authority, breakup of a marriage, keeping young children under control, and so forth. Can the Bible help them? Absolutely.

When starting a conversation, you will likely have a subject in mind. However, if the person indicates that some other issue is of pressing personal interest, do not hesitate to discuss that instead if you are able to do so, or offer to return with some helpful information. Of course, we avoid ‘meddling with what does not concern us,’ but we gladly share with others the practical counsel that the Bible offers. (2 Thess. 3:11) Obviously, what will impress people most is Bible counsel that touches their own lives.

If people cannot see how our message affects them personally, they may quickly end the conversation. Even if they let us talk, failure on our part to show the practical value of the subject may mean that our message will have very little effect on their lives. In contrast, if we make the practical value of the message clear, our discussion could mark the turning point in people’s lives.

When conducting Bible studies, continue to highlight practical application. (Prov. 4:7) Help students to understand Scriptural counsel, principles, and examples that show them how to walk in Jehovah’s ways. Emphasize the benefits that come from doing so. (Isa. 48:17, 18) This will move students to make needed changes in their lives. Build up in them love for Jehovah and a desire to please him, and let the motivation to apply counsel from God’s Word come from within.

EXERCISE:

Review issues of *Our Kingdom Ministry* that are available to you, and select one or two presentations that you feel are especially practical for use in your territory. Try them out in the field service.

What do you need to do?

Use words that show respect and give evidence of kindness, that are readily understood, that impart variety to your speech, and that convey appropriate vigor and feeling. Use words in a way that conforms to the rules of grammar.

WORDS are powerful tools of communication. But in order for our words to accomplish a specific purpose, we need to choose them carefully. A word that may be appropriate on one occasion may have the wrong effect when circumstances are different. Improperly used, a colorful expression may become “a word causing pain.” Use of such expressions may simply be thoughtless, reflecting a lack of consideration. Some terms have a double meaning, one of which is offensive or belittling. (Prov. 12:18; 15:1) On the other hand, “the good word”—a word that imparts encouragement—brings joy to the heart of the one to whom it is spoken. (Prov. 12:25) Finding the right words requires effort, even for a wise person. Solomon, the Bible tells us, was aware of the need to search out “delightful words” and “correct words of truth.”—Eccl. 12:10.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

It shows respect for the message you are delivering and reveals much about your attitude toward the people to whom you are speaking. It influences how others react to what you say.

In some languages, certain expressions are used when addressing those who are older or who occupy a position of authority, while different expressions are used when addressing one's peers or those who are younger. Ignoring such courtesies is considered rude. It is also in poor taste to apply to oneself expressions of respect that local custom has reserved for others. In the matter of showing honor, the Bible sets a higher standard than what may be required by law or local custom. It urges Christians to “honor men of all sorts.” (1 Pet. 2:17) Those who do this from the heart speak to people of all ages in a manner that shows respect.

Of course, many people who are not true Christians use language that is rude and vulgar. They may feel that rough language adds emphasis to what they say. Or their use of it may simply reflect a woefully deficient vocabulary. If someone habitually used such speech before learning Jehovah's ways, he may find that it is difficult to break

the habit. Yet, it is possible. God's spirit can help a person change speech patterns. However, the individual must also be willing to build a vocabulary filled with good words—words that impart what is favorable, words that build up—and then use these regularly.—Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:29; Col. 3:8.

Language Easily Understood. A fundamental requirement of good speech is that it be easily understood. (1 Cor. 14:9) If the words that you use are not readily understood by your audience, you become to them like someone speaking a foreign tongue.

Some words have a specialized meaning among people in a particular profession. Such terms may be used by them every day. But your use of them in the wrong setting may hinder your ability to communicate. Furthermore, even though everyday vocabulary is used, if you get unnecessarily bogged down in details, your listeners may simply turn their minds to other matters.

A considerate speaker chooses words that are understandable even to those whose education is quite limited. In imitation of Jehovah, he shows consideration for “the lowly one.” (Job 34:19) If the speaker does find it necessary to use an unfamiliar word, then he should use it in connection with simple phrases that make the meaning clear.

Simple words that are well chosen convey ideas with great power. Short sentences and simple phrases are easy to grasp. They can be interspersed with some longer sentences so that the delivery does not become choppy. But for thoughts that you especially want your audience to remember, favor words that are simple and sentences that are concise.

Variety and Accuracy in Expression. There is no lack of good words. Rather than use the same expressions for every situation, employ a variety of words. Then your speech will be both colorful and meaningful. How can you enlarge your vocabulary?

When reading, mark any words that you do not fully understand, and look these up in a dictionary if one is available in your language. Select a few of those words, and make a conscious effort to use them when appropriate. Be careful to pronounce them correctly and to use

HOW TO IMPROVE

From the suggestions in this lesson, select just one point on which you want to work. Make that your goal for a month or more.

Have your goal in mind when you are reading. Keep it in mind when you listen to capable speakers. Make note of expressions that you want to incorporate in your own speech. Within a day or two, use each one that you write down.

them in a context where they will be readily understood and not simply attract attention. Enlarging your vocabulary will add variety to your speech. But there is need for caution—when a person mispronounces or misuses words, others may conclude that he really does not know what he is talking about.

Our purpose in enlarging our vocabulary is to inform, not to make an impression on our listeners. Complex speech and long words tend to draw attention to the speaker. Our desire should be to share valuable information and to make it interesting for those who hear it. Remember the Bible proverb: “The tongue of wise ones does good with knowledge.” (Prov. 15:2) The use of good words, fitting words that are easily understood, helps make our speech refreshing and stimulating rather than dull and uninteresting.

As you enlarge your vocabulary, give careful attention to using the right word. Two words may have similar but slightly different meanings for use under different circumstances. If you recognize this, you will be able to improve the clarity of your speech and avoid offending your listeners. Listen carefully to people who speak well. Some dictionaries list under each word both its synonyms (words of similar, though not identical, meaning) and its antonyms (words of somewhat opposite meaning). Thus you find not only varied expressions for the same idea but also different shades of meaning. This is very helpful when you are seeking the right word for a particular circumstance. Before adding a word to your vocabulary, be sure that you know what it means, how to pronounce it, and when it should be used.

Expressions that are specific convey a clearer picture than do those that are general. A speaker might say: “At that time, many people got sick.” Or he could say: “After World War I, within a few months, some 21,000,000 people died from the Spanish influenza.” What a difference it makes when the speaker states clearly what he means by “at that time,” “many people,” and “got sick”! Expressing yourself in this way calls for knowledge of facts related to your subject as well as a careful choice of words.

Use of the right word can also help you get to the point without being wordy. Wordiness tends to bury thoughts. Simplicity makes it easier for others to grasp and retain important facts. It helps convey

accurate knowledge. The teaching of Jesus Christ was outstanding for its simplicity of language. Learn from him. (See the examples recorded at Matthew 5:3-12 and Mark 10:17-21.) Practice expressing yourself concisely in well-chosen words.

Words That Convey Vigor, Feeling, Color. As you enlarge your vocabulary, think not only of new words but also of words that have particular characteristics. Consider, for instance, verbs that express vigor; adjectives that convey color; and expressions that show warmth, have a note of kindness, or convey earnestness.

The Bible is filled with examples of such meaningful language. Through the prophet Amos, Jehovah urged: “*Search* for what is good, and not what is bad . . . *Hate* what is bad, and *love* what is good.” (Amos 5:14, 15) To King Saul, the prophet Samuel declared: “Jehovah has *ripped away* the royal rule of Israel from off you today.” (1 Sam. 15:28) When speaking to Ezekiel, Jehovah used language that is hard to forget, saying: “All those of the house of Israel are *hardheaded* and *hardhearted*.” (Ezek. 3:7) Emphasizing the gravity of Israel’s wrongdoing, Jehovah asked: “Will earthling man *rob* God? But you are *robbing* me.” (Mal. 3:8) In describing a test of faith in Babylon, Daniel vividly reported that “Nebuchadnezzar himself got *filled with fury*” because Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego would not worship his image, so he ordered that they be bound and thrown into “the *burning fiery* furnace.” Helping us to realize the intensity of the heat, Daniel reported that the king had his men “heat up the furnace *seven times more than it was customary to heat it up*”—so hot that when they neared the furnace, the king’s men were killed. (Dan. 3:19-22) Speaking to people in Jerusalem a few days before his death, Jesus said with deep feeling: “How often I wanted to gather your children together, *the way a hen gathers her chicks together under her wings!* But you people did not want it. Look! Your house is abandoned to you.” —Matt. 23:37, 38.

Well-chosen words can convey vivid mental impressions to your listeners. If you use words that appeal to the senses, your listeners will “see” and “touch” the things about which you speak, “taste” and “smell” the foods to which you refer, and “hear” the sounds that you describe and the people whom you quote. The audience will become engrossed in what you are saying because you help them to live it with you.

Words that vividly convey ideas can cause people to laugh or to cry. They can inspire hope, infusing a downhearted person with a desire to live and stirring within him love for his Creator. People around the earth have been profoundly affected by the hope engendered by the words in such Bible passages as Psalm 37:10, 11, 34; John 3:16; and Revelation 21:4, 5.

As you read the Bible and the publications of “the faithful and discreet slave,” you will observe a wide variety of words and phrases. (Matt. 24:45) Do not leave them all on the printed page. Select ones that delight you, and make them part of your working vocabulary.

Speech Conforming to the Rules of Grammar. Some people realize that their speech may not always be in line with the rules of grammar. But what can they do about it?

If you are still in school, take advantage of the opportunity now to learn good grammar and careful choice of words. If you are unsure of the reason for a particular grammatical rule, ask your teacher. Do not do only enough to get by. You have motivation that other students may not have. You want to be an effective minister of the good news.

What if you are older and grew up speaking a language other than the one you now use? Or perhaps you lacked opportunity for much formal education in your own language. Do not be discouraged. Rather, make a genuine effort to improve, doing so for the sake of the good news. Much that we know about grammar we learn by listening to others speak. So listen carefully when seasoned speakers give their talks. When you read the Bible and Bible-based publications, be conscious of the sentence structure, the words that are used together, and the context in which they are used. Model your own speech after these good examples.

Popular entertainers and singers may use expressions and modes of speech that clash with grammatical usage. People tend to imitate such individuals. Drug dealers and others whose whole pattern of life is criminal or immoral often have their own vocabulary, ascribing to words definitions quite different from the customary meaning. It is not wise for Christians to imitate any of these people. To do so would identify us with those elements of the world and their way of life.—John 17:16.

Make it a practice to use good speech every day. If you allow your speech to become sloppy in everyday conversation, do not expect to be able to speak well on special occasions. But if you use speech of good quality in the ordinary circumstances of life, it will come easily and naturally to you when on the platform or when witnessing to others about the truth.

EXERCISE:

As you prepare for either the *Watchtower* Study or the Congregation Book Study this week, select a few words that you cannot easily define. Look them up in a dictionary if one is available to you, or discuss their meaning with someone who has a good knowledge of words.

Words that I want to add to my active vocabulary

For variety and accuracy

To convey vigor, feeling, or color

[illegible]

What do you need to do?

Speak from an outline, either mental or written, instead of using a word-for-word manuscript for delivery.

THE prospect of speaking from an outline makes many people nervous. They feel more secure if everything they are going to say is down on paper or memorized.

Yet, in reality, every day we all speak without a manuscript. We do it in conversation with family and friends. We do it when sharing in the field ministry. And we do it when offering heartfelt prayers, whether in private or on behalf of a group.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Preparing an outline helps you to organize your thoughts. Using it for delivery makes it easier for you to be conversational and to speak from the heart.

When you deliver a talk, does it make a difference whether you use a manuscript or an outline? While reading from a prepared script can help to ensure accuracy and the use of choice wording, it has its limitations in reaching hearts. When you read more than a few sentences, you will usually adopt a pace and a pattern of inflection that differ from your spontaneous conversational

style. If your attention is focused more on your papers than on your audience, many may not listen as intently as they would if they felt that you were really thinking about them and adapting your material to their circumstances. For a truly motivating talk, extemporaneous delivery is the best.

The Theocratic Ministry School is designed to help us in everyday life. When we meet friends, we do not pull out a piece of paper and read our thoughts to them in order to ensure the best wording. In field service, we do not take along a manuscript to read, out of fear that we might forget some points that we want to share with people. When demonstrating in the school how to witness under such circumstances, practice speaking in a manner that is as natural as possible. With good preparation, you will find that an outline, either mental or written, is usually sufficient to remind you of the main thoughts that you want to discuss. But how can you develop the confidence needed to work from one?

Organize Your Thoughts. In order to use an outline when speaking, you need to organize your thoughts. This does not mean selecting the words that you plan to use. It simply means thinking before you speak.

In daily life, an impetuous person may find himself blurting out things that he later wishes he had not said. Another person may speak somewhat aimlessly, wandering from one idea to another. Both of these tendencies can be dealt with effectively by pausing to formulate a simple mental outline before beginning to speak. First fix your objective in mind, next select the steps that you need to take in order to achieve it, and then start to talk.

Are you preparing for field service? Take time not only to pack your witnessing case but also to organize your thoughts. If you decide to use one of the suggested presentations from *Our Kingdom Ministry*, read it over several times to get the main ideas clearly in mind. State the gist of it in one or two brief sentences. Adapt the wording to your own personality and to conditions in your territory. You will find it helpful to have a mental outline. What might that include? (1) As an introduction, you might mention something that is of concern to many people in your community. Invite the other person to comment. (2) Have in mind something specific that you could share on the subject, including one or two scriptures that show what God has promised to do to bring relief. If given the opportunity, emphasize that Jehovah will do this by means of his Kingdom, his heavenly government. (3) Encourage the person to take some action on what you have discussed. You might offer literature and/or a Bible study and make definite arrangements to continue the discussion.

The only outline you will probably need for such a presentation is a mental one. If you want to consult a written outline before your first call, the outline will probably contain no more than a few words to use for your introduction, a notation of one or two scriptures, and a brief note of what you want to include in your conclusion. Preparation and use of such an outline prevent us from rambling, helping us to leave a clear message that is easy to remember.

HOW TO DO IT

Impress on your mind the benefits of speaking from an outline.

In everyday conversation, organize your thoughts before you speak.

To gain the needed confidence to speak from an outline, pray to Jehovah, and make it a habit to participate freely in congregation meetings.

Make your outline simple, easy to read at a glance.

Prepare for delivery by reviewing ideas, not by memorizing words.

If some question or objection comes up often in your territory, you may find it helpful to do research on the matter. Usually, all you need are two or three basic points along with scriptures that provide the basis for them. “Bible Topics for Discussion” or boldface subheadings in *Reasoning From the Scriptures* may provide exactly the outline you need. You may find a good quotation from another source that you want to include. Make up a brief written outline, attach a photocopy of the quotation, and keep these with your equipment for field service. When a householder brings up the question or objection, let him know that you welcome the opportunity to give a reason for what you believe. (1 Pet. 3:15) Use the outline as a basis for your reply.

When you are going to represent your family, a book study group, or the congregation in prayer, it is also beneficial to organize your thoughts. According to Luke 11:2-4, Jesus gave his disciples a simple outline for meaningful prayer. At the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem, Solomon prayed at length. He obviously thought about the subject in advance. He focused attention first on Jehovah and His promise to David; then on the temple; and then, one at a time, on specific situations and groups of people. (1 Ki. 8:22-53) We can benefit from these examples.

Keep Your Talk Outline Simple. Is your outline meant for use when giving a discourse? How much should it include?

Remember that an outline is meant to help you recall *ideas*. You may feel that it would be beneficial to write out a few sentences for use as an introduction. But after that, focus on ideas, not words. If you put those ideas down in the form of sentences, favor short sentences. The few main points that you plan to develop should stand out clearly in your outline. This can be achieved by writing them in capital letters, underscoring the points, or marking them in color. Under each main point, list the ideas that you want to use when developing it. Cite the scriptures that you plan to read. It is usually best to do the actual reading from the Bible. Make note of illustrations that you want to use. You may also have some significant secular quotation that is appropriate. Make your notes extensive enough to have specific facts to present. The outline will be easier to use if it is neat.

Some use outlines that are very basic. An outline may consist of a few key words, notation of scriptures that the speaker will quote from

memory, and drawings or pictures that help him recall ideas. With these simple notes, a speaker is able to present his material in a logical order and a conversational manner. That is the objective of this lesson.

On pages 39 to 42 of this book, you will find the discussion “Making an Outline.” It will be very helpful to read that material while you are working on this study, “Use of an Outline.”

How to Use the Outline. Your goal at this point, however, is not simply to prepare your discourse in outline form. It is to *use* the outline effectively.

The first step in using your outline is preparation for delivery. Look at the theme, read each of the main points, and state to yourself the connection that each of those main points has to the theme. Make note of how much time can be devoted to each main point. Now go back and study the first main point. Review the arguments, scriptures, illustrations, and examples that you plan to use to develop that point. Go over the material several times until that section of your talk is clear in mind. Do the same with each of the other main points. Consider what you could omit, if necessary, in order to finish on time. Then review the entire talk. Focus on the ideas, not the words. Do not memorize the talk.

When you deliver the discourse, you should be able to maintain good visual contact with your audience. After reading a scripture, you should usually be able to reason on it with the use of your Bible but without going back to check your notes. Similarly, if you use an illustration, tell it as you would to friends instead of reading it from your notes. As you speak, do not look at your notes to pick up each sentence. Speak from the heart, and you will reach the hearts of those who listen to you.

When you master the art of speaking from an outline, you will have taken a very important forward step in becoming an effective public speaker.

EXERCISE:

Before you go into the field service this week, prepare a mental outline of something specific that you want to say. (See page 167, paragraph 3.) While in field service, take note of how many times you are able to have your planned discussion or at least to state the gist of the message.

What do you need to do?

Arrange your material in a manner that makes clear how the ideas relate to one another and to the conclusions that you draw or the objective that you are trying to attain.

BEFORE material can be organized in a logical manner, you need to have an objective in mind. Is your objective simply to inform others about a particular subject—a belief, an attitude, a quality, a type of conduct, or a way of life? Do you hope to prove or disprove a certain idea? Is your aim to build appreciation for something or to motivate to action? Whether you will be presenting your material to an individual or to a larger audience, to do so effectively, you need to consider what they already know about the subject and what their attitude toward it is. After you have done this, outline your material in a way that will help you achieve your objective.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When information is presented in a logical manner, it is easier for the audience to understand, accept, and remember.

Regarding the ministry of Saul (Paul) in Damascus, Acts 9:22 reports that he “was confounding the Jews that dwelt in Damascus as he proved logically that this is the Christ.” What did that logical proof include? As indicated by the record of Paul’s later ministry in Antioch and Thessalonica, he first built on the fact that the Jews accepted the Hebrew Scriptures and that they professed to believe what these say about the Messiah. Then, from those Scriptures, Paul selected portions that dealt with the life and ministry of the Messiah. He quoted these and compared them with what actually occurred in connection with Jesus. Finally, he drew the obvious conclusion, namely, that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah. (Acts 13:16-41; 17:2, 3) If you too present Bible truth in a logical manner, it can have a persuasive effect on others.

Organizing the Presentation. Material can be arranged in a variety of ways that are logical. If you find it advantageous, you might use a combination of methods. Consider a few of the possibilities.

Topical arrangement. This involves organizing your material into sections, each of which contributes to your objective. The sections may be main points that are important to an understanding

of your subject. They may be distinct arguments that prove or disprove something. Certain points, while related to the subject, might be added or deleted, depending on your audience or your objective.

Consider an example of topical arrangement. A short presentation regarding the name of God might include (1) why it is important to know God by name, (2) what God's name is, and (3) how we can honor that name.

Much can be learned about topical arrangement of material by examining publications that are designed by "the faithful and discreet slave" for use at home Bible studies. (Matt. 24:45) These publications usually include a number of subjects, or topics, that can help students get an overall view of basic Bible truths. Larger publications use subheadings to divide each chapter. Each topic prepares the student for material that follows and contributes to the overall picture.

Cause and effect. Reasoning from cause to effect is another method of presenting information in a logical way.

If you are talking to a group or to individuals who need to consider more carefully the outcome of something that they are doing or that they plan to do, this approach could be effective. Proverbs chapter 7 provides an excellent example of this. It vividly describes how an inexperienced young man who is "in want of heart" (the cause) gets involved with a prostitute and suffers bitter consequences (the effect). —Prov. 7:7.

To give added emphasis, you might contrast the bad results experienced by those who fail to walk in Jehovah's ways with the good results experienced by those who do listen to Jehovah. Moved by Jehovah's spirit, Moses made such a contrast when he spoke to the nation of Israel before they entered the Promised Land.—Deut., chap. 28.

In some instances, it is better to *begin* your discussion by identifying a situation (the effect) and then present evidence that points to the contributing factors (the cause). This frequently involves a problem-and-solution format.

Problem and solution. In the field ministry, when you discuss a problem that is of concern to people and show that there is a

ASK YOURSELF . . .

What is my objective?

Is each main point clearly related to that objective?

When selecting material, have I taken into account the needs of my audience?

Have I arranged the material so as to lead the minds of my listeners from one thought to the next with no gaps that they cannot easily bridge?

satisfying solution, this may encourage a person to listen. The problem may be one that you raise or something that the other person brings up.

Such a problem may be the fact that people grow old and die, the prevalence of crime, or the existence of widespread injustice. No extensive discussion is needed to show that there is such a problem, for it is obvious. Simply begin with a reference to the problem, and then present the solution set out in the Bible.

On the other hand, the problem may be quite personal, involving the challenges faced by a single parent, discouragement because of serious illness, or the hardship that a person is experiencing because of unloving treatment at the hands of another person. To accomplish the greatest good, you must first be a good listener. The Bible provides valuable information on all these problems. But it needs to be used with discernment. If your discussion is truly going to benefit the other person, you need to be realistic. Make clear whether you are discussing a permanent solution, short-term relief, or simply how to cope with a situation that is not going to change in this system of things. In other words, be sure that the Scriptural reasoning that you offer is sufficient to support the conclusion that you draw from it. Otherwise, the solution to which you point may not seem logical at all to the other person.

Chronological order. Some material lends itself to a presentation according to time sequence. For example, in the book of Exodus, the Ten Plagues are presented in the order in which they occurred. In Hebrews chapter 11, the apostle Paul's listing of men and women of exemplary faith follows a chronological pattern.

If you relate events from the past in chronological order, this may help your audience to understand how certain circumstances developed. This applies to modern-day history as well as events from Bible times. Thus you may be combining chronological sequence with cause-and-effect reasoning. If you plan to outline the events that the Bible shows are to occur in the future, a chronological presentation will probably be the easiest for your audience to follow and remember.

Using a chronological approach does not mean that you must always start at the beginning. In some cases, it may be more effective

to introduce a narrative at a dramatic point in the story. When relating an experience, for example, you may choose to tell about an occasion when someone's integrity to God was put to the test. Having aroused interest with that part of the narrative, you could state in chronological order the details that led up to it.

Using Only Relevant Material. No matter how you organize your material, be careful to use only what is relevant. The theme of your talk should have a bearing on your selection. The makeup of your audience should also be considered. For one audience a particular point may be vital, whereas for another group it may be superfluous. You must also be sure that all your material will contribute to accomplishing your objective. Otherwise, your presentation, while perhaps interesting, may lose its effectiveness.

When doing research, you may find a lot of interesting material that is related to your subject. How much of it should you use? If you overwhelm the audience with too much, you may defeat your purpose. A few main ideas that are well developed will be remembered more readily than a multitude of ideas presented in a rapid-fire manner. This does not mean that interesting sidelights should never be included. But do not let them becloud your objective. Note how such details were discreetly included in the Bible at Mark 7:3, 4 and John 4:1-3, 7-9.

As you progress from one point to the next, be careful not to do it so abruptly that your audience loses the train of thought. In order for the ideas to work together effectively, you may need to provide a bridge from one idea to another. The bridge may be a clause or it may be a complete sentence that shows the relationship between the ideas. In many languages, simple connective words or phrases can be used to show the relation of a new idea to what precedes it.

Using only relevant material and arranging it in logical order will help you accomplish your objective.

EXERCISE:

Having read this lesson, review the material at a moderate pace, stating to yourself the gist of each paragraph. Notice how each paragraph contributes to achieving the objective of the entire lesson.

What do you need to do?

Speak in a manner that is characterized by spontaneous word choice as well as careful preparation of ideas.

YOU may have worked hard on your talk. You may have informative material. The logic may be sound. You may be able to deliver it fluently. But if the attention of your audience is divided—they listen only to snatches of what you say because their minds frequently wander to other things—how effective is your presentation? If they have difficulty in keeping their minds focused on the talk, is it likely that you will reach their hearts?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Extemporaneous delivery is the most effective way to hold the interest of and motivate an audience.

What could be at the root of such a problem? A variety of factors might contribute to it. Most frequently, it is failure to deliver the talk in an extemporaneous manner. In other words, the speaker is consulting his notes too often, or his style of delivery is too formal. These problems, however, are directly related to the way the talk is prepared.

If you first write out your talk and then try to convert it into an outline, you will likely find that it is hard to deliver the talk in an extemporaneous manner. Why? Because you have selected the exact words that you plan to use. Even if you use the outline for delivery, you will be trying to remember the words that you used in the original version. When something is written, the language is more formal and the sentence structure is more complex than in everyday speech. Your delivery will reflect that.

Instead of writing out the talk in detail, try the following: (1) Select a theme and the main aspects of the subject that you are going to use in developing that theme. For a short talk, two main points may suffice. A longer talk may have four or five. (2) Under each main point, note the principal scriptures that you plan to use in developing it; also make note of your illustrations and key arguments. (3) Think about how you will introduce the talk. You might even write out a sentence or two. Also, plan your conclusion.

Preparation for delivery is very important. But do not go over the talk word-for-word with the intent of memorizing it. In extempora-

neous speaking, preparation for delivery should put the emphasis, not on words, but on ideas to be expressed. The latter should be reviewed until one easily follows the other in your mind. If the structure of your talk has been logically developed and well planned, this should not be difficult, and in your delivery, the ideas should come freely and easily.

Consider the Benefits. An important advantage of extemporaneous delivery is that you will be speaking in the down-to-earth manner to which people most readily respond. Your delivery will be more lively and thus more interesting to your audience.

This method of speaking allows you to have maximum visual contact with your listeners, which improves your communication with them. Since you do not rely on notes for the wording of every sentence, your listeners will be more inclined to feel that you know your subject well and that you sincerely believe what you are saying. Thus, this type of delivery lends itself to a warm, conversational presentation, a real heart-to-heart talk.

Extemporaneous delivery also allows for flexibility. The material is not so rigidly set that you cannot make adjustments in it. Suppose that early on the day that you are to give your talk, there is an outstanding news report that directly relates to your subject. Would it not be appropriate to refer to it? Or perhaps when you are speaking, you realize that there are many school-age children in the audience. How fine it would be to adjust your illustrations and application with a view to aiding them to appreciate how the material affects their lives!

Another advantage of extemporaneous delivery is the stimulation to your own mind. When you have an appreciative, responsive audience, you yourself warm up and then enlarge upon ideas or take the time to repeat certain points for emphasis. If you notice that the interest of the audience is waning, you can take steps to overcome the problem instead of simply talking to people whose minds are elsewhere.

Avoid the Pitfalls. You should be aware that extemporaneous speaking also has potential pitfalls. One is the tendency to run

HOW TO ACHIEVE IT

Impress on your mind the benefits of extemporaneous delivery.

Instead of writing out your talk, make a simple outline.

Prepare for delivery by mentally reviewing each main point separately. Instead of being overly concerned about wording, emphasize logical development of ideas.

overtime. If you insert too many additional ideas during the talk, timing may be a problem. You can deal with this if you make notations on your outline as to the time allowed for each section of the talk. Then stick closely to this schedule.

Another danger, especially for experienced speakers, is overconfidence. Having become accustomed to speaking publicly, some may find that it is not difficult to throw together some ideas and fill the allotted time. But humility and appreciation of the fact that we are sharing in a program of education in which Jehovah himself is the Grand Instructor should motivate us to approach each assignment prayerfully and to prepare well.—Isa. 30:20; Rom. 12:6-8.

Perhaps of greater concern to many speakers who are not experienced in extemporaneous delivery is that they might forget what they wanted to say. Do not allow this prospect to cause you to hold back from taking this forward step in effective speaking. Prepare well, and look to Jehovah for the help of his spirit.—John 14:26.

Other speakers allow excessive concern about wording to hold them back. True, an extemporaneous talk may not have the choice wording and grammatical precision of a manuscript talk, but an appealing conversational style more than compensates for that. People respond most readily to ideas that are presented in words that they easily understand and in sentences that are not complicated. If you prepare well, appropriate phrasing will come naturally, not because you have memorized it, but because you have reviewed the ideas sufficiently. And if you use good speech in everyday conversation, it will come naturally when you are on the platform.

What Sort of Notes to Use. In time and with practice, you may be able to reduce your outline to just a few words for each point of your talk. These, together with a notation of the scriptures you plan to use, may all be listed on a card or sheet of paper for easy reference. For the field ministry, you will in most instances memorize a simple outline. If you have done research on a subject for a return visit, you may have a few brief notes on a piece of paper inserted between the pages of your Bible. Or you may simply use an outline from “Bible Topics for Discussion” or material found in *Reasoning From the Scriptures* as a basis for your discussion.

However, if you have been assigned to handle several meeting parts within a few weeks and possibly to give public talks as well,

you may find that you need more extensive notes. Why? To refresh your mind on the material *before* handling each of those assignments. Even so, if you rely too heavily on the notes for wording during your delivery—looking at them at some point during nearly every sentence—you will lose the benefits that characterize extemporaneous delivery. If you use extensive notes, mark them so that you can conveniently refer only to the few highlighted words and scripture citations that constitute your outline.

While the delivery of a talk by an experienced speaker should usually be predominantly extemporaneous, there can also be advantages in incorporating other forms of delivery. In the introduction and conclusion, where good audience contact needs to be coupled with strong, carefully worded statements, a few memorized sentences may be effective. Where facts, figures, quotations, or scriptures are used, reading is appropriate and can be used with telling effect.

When Others Demand an Explanation. At times we are called on to explain our beliefs without opportunity for advance preparation. This may occur when someone we meet in the field service raises an objection. Similar situations may arise when with relatives, at the workplace, or at school. Government officials may also demand explanations of our beliefs and our way of life. The Scriptures urge: “Always [be] ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you, but doing so together with a mild temper and deep respect.”—1 Pet. 3:15.

Notice how Peter and John replied to the Jewish Sanhedrin, as recorded at Acts 4:19, 20. In just two sentences, they clearly stated their position. They did so in a way that was appropriate for their audience—pointing out that the issue facing the apostles also faced the court. Later, false charges were laid against Stephen, and he was taken before the same court. Read his powerful impromptu reply at Acts 7:2-53. How did he organize his material? He presented events in historical sequence. At an appropriate point, he began to emphasize the rebellious spirit shown by the nation of Israel. In conclusion, he showed that the Sanhedrin had manifested that same spirit by having the Son of God put to death.

When you are called on for impromptu explanations of your beliefs, what can help you make your comments effective? Imitate Nehemiah, who silently prayed before he answered a question posed

by King Artaxerxes. (Neh. 2:4) Next, quickly formulate a mental outline. The basic steps might be listed in this way: (1) Select one or two points that the explanation should include (you may choose to use points found in *Reasoning From the Scriptures*). (2) Decide which scriptures you will use to support those points. (3) Plan how to begin your explanation tactfully so that the inquirer will be willing to listen. Then start to talk.

Under pressure, will you remember what to do? Jesus told his followers: “Do not become anxious about how or what you are to speak; for what you are to speak will be given you in that hour; for the ones speaking are not just you, but it is the spirit of your Father that speaks by you.” (Matt. 10:19, 20) This does not mean that you will have the miraculous “speech of wisdom” that was given to first-century Christians. (1 Cor. 12:8) But if you regularly avail yourself of the education that Jehovah provides for his servants in the Christian congregation, holy spirit will bring needed information back to your mind when it is required.—Isa. 50:4.

Without a doubt, extemporaneous delivery can be very effective. If you practice it regularly when handling assignments in the congregation, then giving impromptu replies when needed will not be difficult, since similar outlining procedures apply. Do not hold back. Learning to speak extemporaneously will help you make your field ministry more effective. And if you have the privilege of giving talks to the congregation, you will more likely hold the attention of the audience and touch their hearts.

EXERCISES:

(1) When preparing for the *Watchtower* Study, make it a practice to underscore only key expressions instead of full sentences. Answer in your own words. (2) When preparing the delivery of your next assignment in the school, begin by repeating from memory the theme and your two or three main points.

What do you need to do?

Speak in a manner characteristic of everyday conversation but modified to fit your audience.

PEOPLE generally feel relaxed when they are conversing with friends. Their expressions are spontaneous. Some individuals are animated; others are more reserved. Nevertheless, the naturalness of such speech is appealing.

When approaching a stranger, however, it is not appropriate to speak in a manner that is overly familiar or too casual. In fact, in some cultures all conversations with strangers begin in a very formal manner. After due respect has been shown, then, with discernment it may be desirable to use less formal language and a more conversational manner.

When you speak from the platform, you must also exercise care. A manner that is too casual detracts from the dignity of a Christian meeting and from the seriousness of what is stated. In some languages, certain expressions are required when addressing an older person, a teacher, an official, or a parent. (Notice the terms used at Acts 7:2 and 13:16.) Different expressions are used when addressing a marriage mate or a close friend. While our manner of speech on the platform should not be needlessly formal, it should be respectful.

There are, however, factors that may cause a person's delivery to sound unnecessarily stiff or formal. One of these is sentence structure, or phrasing. A problem arises when a speaker tries to repeat expressions exactly as they appear in print. The written word is usually quite different from the spoken word. True, research in preparation for a talk is usually done using published material. Possibly a printed outline provides the basis for the talk. But if you express thoughts just the way they appear in print or read them directly from a published outline during your talk, it is not likely that your speech will sound like conversation. To maintain a conversational style, express thoughts in your own words and avoid complicated sentence structure.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

An appropriate conversational style of speech puts your audience at ease and helps them to be receptive to what you say.

Another factor is variation in tempo. Speech that is rather stiff and formal often involves a flow of words that are too evenly spaced and a pace that is too constant. In normal conversation, there are changes of pace and frequent pauses of varying lengths.

When you speak to a large audience, of course, you should couple the conversational style of speech with increased volume, intensity, and enthusiasm so as to hold their attention.

HOW TO DEVELOP THIS QUALITY

Start with your viewpoint toward those in your audience. View them as friends, but do not be overly casual. Treat them with respect.

Speak extemporaneously. Do not try to use exact wording from printed material. Put the ideas in your own words. Use short sentences, and vary your pace.

Concentrate on the desire to communicate. Speak from the heart. What is important is the message, not the impression you are making on others.

Improve your everyday conversation. One at a time, work on the suggestions offered on this page.

In order to employ a conversational manner that is appropriate for the ministry, you need to make it a habit to speak well every day. This does not mean that you must be highly educated. But it is good to cultivate speech habits that will cause others to listen with respect to what you say. With that in mind, consider whether you need to work on the following points in your daily conversation.

(1) Avoid expressions that clash with good grammar or that tend to identify you with people whose way of life defies godly standards. In harmony with the counsel at Colossians 3:8, shun language that is crude or vulgar. On the other hand, colloquial speech is not objectionable. Colloquialisms, or everyday expressions, are informal, but they conform to accepted standards of speech.

(2) Avoid constant repetition of the same expressions and phrases to convey every different thought that you might have. Learn to use words that clearly express what you mean.

(3) Avoid needless regressions by getting clearly in mind what you want to say; then start to speak.

(4) Avoid burying good thoughts in too many words.

Make it a practice to state clearly in a simple sentence the point that needs to be remembered.

(5) Speak in a manner that shows respect for others.

EXERCISE:

Check your own conversation habits. Work on the five numbered points listed above, concentrating on just one at a time for a full day. Whenever you make a mistake, express your thought again, at least in your own mind, doing so correctly.

What do you need to do?

Improve your voice, not by imitating someone else, but by breathing properly and relaxing tense muscles.

PEOPLE are greatly influenced not only by what is said but also by how it is said. If a person speaking to you has a voice that is pleasant, warm, friendly, and kind, is it not true that you are more inclined to listen favorably than if his voice is cold or harsh?

Developing a desirable voice quality is not altogether a matter of voice mechanics. It may also involve one's personality. As a person progresses in his knowledge and application of Bible truth, changes become evident in the way he speaks. Such godly qualities as love, joy, and kindness are reflected in his voice. (Gal. 5:22, 23) When he feels genuine concern for others, his voice shows it. When gratitude replaces a spirit of chronic complaint, both the words spoken and the tone of voice give evidence of it. (Lam. 3: 39-42; 1 Tim. 1:12; Jude 16) Even when you do not understand the language being spoken, if one person sounds arrogant, intolerant, critical, and harsh and another person sounds humble, patient, kind, and loving, it is not difficult for you to tell the difference.

In some cases an undesirable voice quality may be the result of an illness that damaged the person's larynx or an inherited structural defect. Such conditions may be so severe that they will not be completely corrected in this system of things. Usually, however, learning to use the speech organs properly can result in improvement.

At the outset it is important to appreciate that voice characteristics vary from one person to another. Your objective should not be to develop a voice that imitates that of someone else. Rather, cultivate the potential of your own voice, with its distinctive qualities. What can help you to do this? There are two main essentials.

Properly Control Your Air Supply. For best results in the use of your voice, you need an adequate supply of air along with proper

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Good voice quality helps others to relax and listen to you with pleasure. Poor voice quality interferes with communication, and it may frustrate both the speaker and the audience.

breath control. Without these, your voice may sound weak, and your delivery may be choppy.

The largest part of the lungs is not at the top of the chest; this area merely appears larger because of the shoulder bones. Rather, the lungs are widest just above the diaphragm. Attached to the lower ribs, the diaphragm separates the chest from the abdominal cavity.

If you fill only the top portion of your lungs when you inhale, you will soon be out of breath. Your voice will lack power, and you will tire easily. To breathe properly, you need to sit or stand straight and hold your shoulders back. Make a conscious effort to avoid expanding only the upper part of your chest when you inhale to speak. Fill the lower part of your lungs first. When this part fills, the lower part of your rib cage will expand sideways. At the same time, the diaphragm will move down, gently displacing the stomach and the intestines, so that you feel the pressure of your belt or other clothing

HOW SPEECH IS PRODUCED

The basis of all vocal sounds is the column of air that you send up from your lungs. The lungs act as bellows that push air through the windpipe into the larynx, or voice box, which is in the middle of your throat. Inside your voice box, on opposite sides, are two tiny folds of muscle called vocal cords. These are the main sound producers. These folds of muscle open and close the air passage through the larynx to let air in and out as well as to keep unwanted objects out of the lungs. In normal breathing no sound is produced as air passes over the vocal cords. But when a person wishes to speak, muscles tighten the vocal cords, and these vibrate as air from the lungs is forced past them. This results in sound.

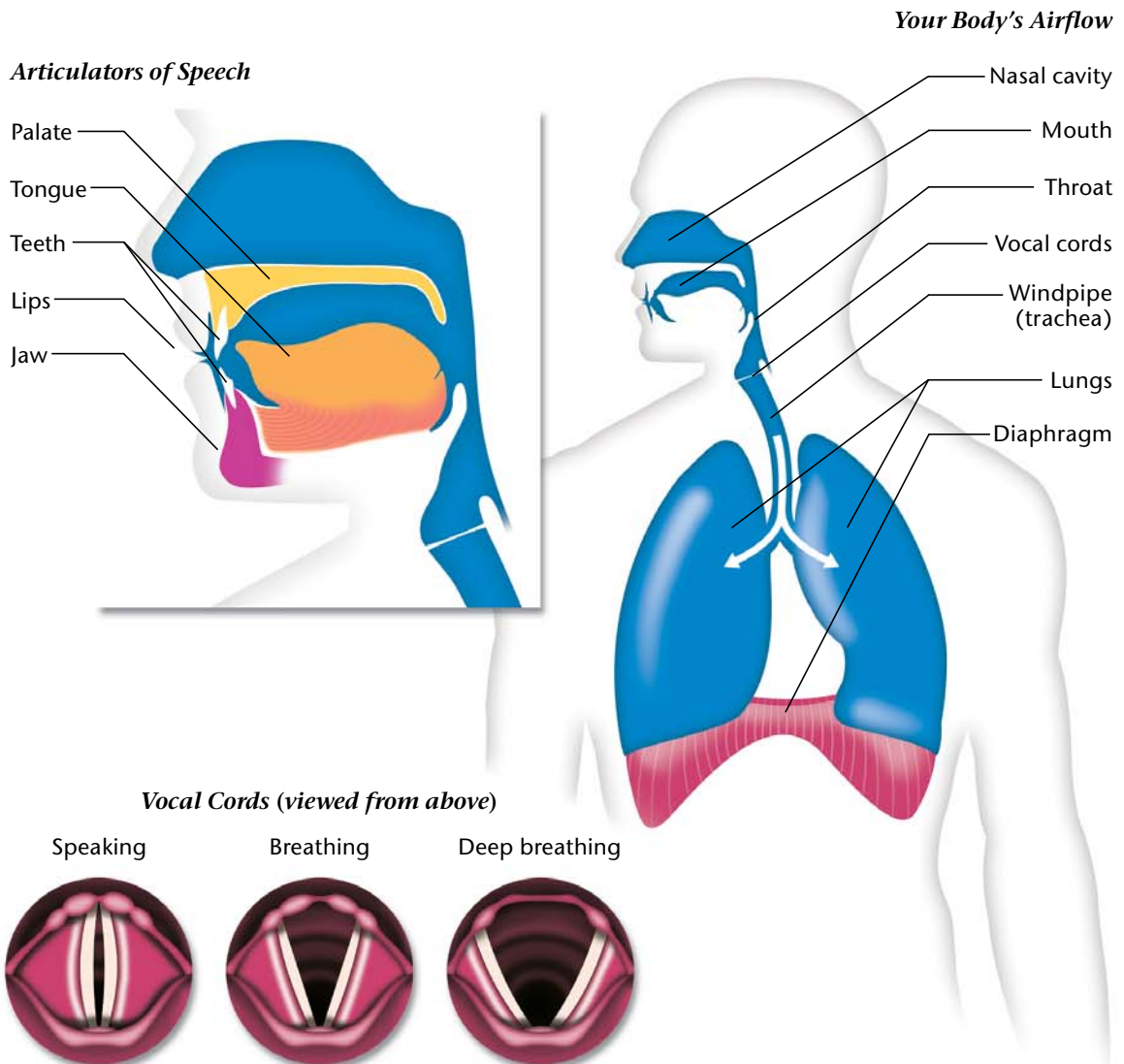
The tighter the vocal cords are stretched, the faster they vibrate and the higher the tones of the sounds produced. On the other hand, the

more relaxed the cords, the lower the tones. After leaving the larynx, the sound wave enters the upper part of the throat, called the pharynx. Then it passes into the mouth and nasal cavity. There overtones are added that modify, amplify, and reinforce the fundamental tone. The roof of the mouth as well as the tongue, teeth, lips, and jaw combine to break up the vibrating waves of sound, which come out in the form of understandable speech.

The human voice is a marvel, unequalled in versatility by any man-made instrument. It has the ability to express feelings and emotions ranging from tender, gentle love to harsh, violent hatred. When properly developed and trained, the voice can cover a range of as much as three octaves and can deliver not only beautiful musical sounds but also heart-stirring patterns of speech.

on your abdomen. But the lungs are not down there; they are within the rib cage. To test yourself, place one hand on each side of the lower part of your rib cage. Now breathe deeply. If you are breathing properly, you will not be sucking in your belly and raising your shoulders. Instead, you will feel the ribs move slightly up and out.

Next, work on the outflow of air. Do not waste the supply by letting it escape with a rush. Expel it gradually. Do not try to control it by tightening your throat. That would soon result in a voice that sounded strained or abnormally high-pitched. Pressure from the



abdominal muscles and from the intercostal muscles (between the ribs) expels the air, while the diaphragm influences how quickly it is expelled.

Just as a runner trains for a race, so a speaker can develop proper breath control by exercise. Stand erect with shoulders back, breathe so as to fill the lower part of the lungs, and gradually exhale while slowly and smoothly counting as high as you can on a single breath. Then practice reading aloud while breathing in the same manner.

Relax Tense Muscles. Another essential for good voice quality is this—relax! It is really amazing what improvement you can make by learning to relax when speaking. The mind as well as the body must be relaxed, for mental tension causes muscular tension.

OVERCOMING SPECIFIC PROBLEMS

A weak voice. A soft voice is not necessarily a weak one. If it is rich with pleasing overtones, others may listen to it with pleasure. But to be effective, the voice must have sufficient volume.

To improve the carrying quality of your voice, you need to improve its resonance. That requires learning to relax your entire body, in the manner described in this lesson. Conscious relaxing of your body as well as humming exercises can help. The lips should only be touching lightly, not pressed together hard. As you hum, feel the vibrations in your head and your chest.

Sometimes a voice sounds weak or strained because the person is not well or has not had enough sleep. Obviously, if that situation improves, the voice will improve.

A voice that is too high-pitched. Increasing tension on the vocal cords raises the pitch. A voice that sounds tense makes the hearers feel tense. By relaxing the throat muscles in order

to reduce the tension in the vocal cords, you can lower the pitch. Do it consciously, practicing it in daily conversation. Deep breathing also helps.

A voice that sounds nasal. At times this problem is due to nasal obstruction, but that usually is not the case. Sometimes by tensing muscles of the throat and mouth, a person closes off the nasal passages so that air cannot pass through freely. This results in a nasal twang. To avoid this, there is need to relax.

A voice that is gruff. Such a voice does not invite a friendly interchange of ideas. It may put others on the defensive.

In some cases, a basic factor is the need for ongoing effort to change one's personality. (Col. 3:8, 12) If that has been done, applying principles of voice mechanics can help. Relax both the throat and the jaw. This will make the voice more pleasant and will prevent distortion of it by forcing it through the teeth.

Relax mental tension by getting the right view of your listeners. If these are people that you meet in the field ministry, remember that even if you have studied the Bible for only a few months, you know valuable things about Jehovah's purpose that you can share with them. And you are calling on them because they need help, whether they realize it or not. On the other hand, if you are speaking in a Kingdom Hall, most of those in your audience are Jehovah's people. They are your friends, and they want you to succeed. No people on earth face such a friendly and loving audience as we regularly do.

Relax the throat muscles by focusing your mind on those muscles and consciously making them less tense. Remember that your vocal cords vibrate when air passes them. Voice tone changes as the throat muscles tighten or relax, just as the tone of a guitar string or a violin string changes when it is tightened or loosened. When you relax the vocal cords, the tone lowers. Relaxing the throat muscles also helps to keep the nasal passages open, and this will have a definite effect on the quality of your voice.

Relax your entire body—your knees, your hands, your shoulders, your neck. This will contribute to the resonance needed to give your voice carrying ability. Resonance is produced when the entire body acts as a sounding board, but this is hindered by tension. Voice tone, which is produced in the larynx, reverberates not only in the nasal cavities but also against the bony structure of the chest, the teeth, the roof of the mouth, and the sinuses. All of these can contribute to the quality of resonance. If you place a weight on the soundboard of a guitar, the sound will be deadened; the soundboard must be free to vibrate if it is to resonate properly. So, too, with the bony structures of our body, which are held firm by the muscles. With resonance you will be able to modulate your voice properly and express shades of feeling. You will be able to reach a large audience without straining your voice.

HOW TO IMPROVE

Cultivate the qualities of a Christian personality.

Practice breathing properly, filling the lower part of your lungs.

When speaking, relax your muscles—your throat, your neck, your shoulders, your entire body.

EXERCISES:

(1) For a few minutes each day for a week, practice breathing in such a way that you fill the lower part of your lungs. (2) At least once a day for a week, consciously relax your throat muscles as you speak.

What do you need to do?

Give evidence that you care about the thoughts of other people and are concerned about their welfare.

WHEN sharing Bible truths with others, we need to do more than inform the mind. We must appeal to the heart. One way to do this is by showing a sincere personal interest in our listeners. Such interest can be demonstrated in a variety of ways.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

This is one way we imitate the love shown by Jehovah, and it may enable us to reach a person's heart.

Consider Your Listeners' Viewpoint. The apostle Paul took into consideration the background and thinking of his listeners. He explained: "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to those under law I became as under law, though I myself am not under law, that I might gain those under law. To those without law I became as without law, although I am not without law toward God but under law toward Christ, that I might gain those without law. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I have be-

come all things to people of all sorts, that I might by all means save some. But I do all things for the sake of the good news, that I may become a sharer of it with others." (1 Cor. 9:20-23) How can we "become all things to people of all sorts" today?

If you have the opportunity to observe others, even briefly, before speaking with them, you may notice indications of their interests and circumstances. Can you tell what their occupation is? Do you see evidence of their religious beliefs? Is there an indication of their family situation? Based on what you observe, can you adjust your presentation to make it more appealing to your listeners?

Making your presentation more appealing requires that you give advance thought to how you will approach the people in your territory. In some areas, this includes those who have moved in from foreign lands. If such people live in your territory, have you found an effective way to witness to them? Since it is God's will that "all sorts of men should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth," make it your aim to present the Kingdom message in an appealing way to all whom you meet.—1 Tim. 2:4.

Listen Attentively. Although Jehovah is all-knowing, he listens to others. The prophet Micaiah received a vision in which Jehovah was seen encouraging the angels to express their ideas on the handling of a certain matter. God then allowed one of the angels to carry out the suggestion the angel had made. (1 Ki. 22:19-22) When Abraham expressed concern over the judgment that would be executed upon Sodom, Jehovah graciously heard him out. (Gen. 18:23-33) In our ministry, how can we imitate Jehovah's example of listening?

Encourage others to express themselves. Ask an appropriate question, and pause long enough for them to reply. Really listen. Your thoughtful attention will encourage them to speak freely. If their response reveals something about their interests, tactfully inquire further. Without turning the conversation into a cross-examination, seek to get to know them better. Commend them for their thoughts if you can do so sincerely. Even if you do not agree with their point of view, be gracious in acknowledging their expressions.—Col. 4:6.

We need to exercise caution, however, that our interest in people does not cross the line of propriety. Being concerned about others does not give us license to pry into their private affairs. (1 Pet. 4:15) We need to exercise care that a person of the opposite sex does not misunderstand the kindly interest that we show. Since what is considered an appropriate degree of interest in others varies from land to land, even from person to person, good judgment is needed.—Luke 6:31.

Preparation is an aid to being a good listener. When our message is clear in our mind, it helps us to relax and to pay attention to others in a natural way. This puts them at ease and may make them more inclined to converse with us.

We show honor to others by listening to them. (Rom. 12:10) It gives evidence that we value their thoughts and feelings. It may even cause them to pay closer attention to what we have to say. With good reason, then, God's Word counsels us to "be swift about hearing, slow about speaking."—Jas. 1:19.

Help Others to Progress. Concern for others will cause us to keep thinking about those who show interest and to call again on them to

HOW TO SHOW GENUINE INTEREST

Listen when the other person speaks. Thank him for expressing his thoughts and feelings. Ask questions in order to understand his thinking more clearly.

Think about the person after you have talked together. Get in touch with him again soon.

Share Bible truths that most directly fill his needs.

Do things to help him. Consider both immediate and long-term needs.

share the Bible truths that most directly fill their needs. When contemplating the next call, consider what you learned about them during previous visits. Prepare information on a subject they care about. Highlight the practical value of the material, helping them to see how they can benefit from what they are learning.—Isa. 48:17.

If your listener reveals a situation or problem that has been weighing on his mind, view this as a special opportunity to share the good news with him. Follow the example of Jesus, who was always ready to console those in distress. (Mark 6:31-34) Resist the temptation to offer a quick solution or to give superficial advice. This might cause the person to feel that you lack a sincere interest. Instead, show fellow feeling. (1 Pet. 3:8) Then do research in Bible-based publications, and share upbuilding information to help the person deal with his situation. Of course, loving concern for your listener will prevent you from revealing confidential matters he shares with you unless there is good reason to do so.—Prov. 25:9.

Especially should we show a personal interest in those with whom we conduct Bible studies. Give prayerful thought to the needs of each student, and prepare for the study with those needs in mind. Ask yourself, ‘What does he or she need to do next to keep making spiritual progress?’ Lovingly help the student to appreciate what the Bible and the publications of “the faithful and discreet slave” say on the matter. (Matt. 24:45) In some instances, just providing an explanation may not be enough. You may need to show the student how to apply a certain Bible principle, actually doing something together that demonstrates its application.—John 13:1-15.

Balance and good judgment are needed when assisting others to bring their lives into harmony with Jehovah’s standards. People have different backgrounds and abilities, and they progress at different rates. Be reasonable in what you expect of others. (Phil. 4:5) Do not pressure them to make changes in their lives. Allow God’s Word and his spirit to motivate them. Jehovah wants people to serve him out of a willing heart, not under compulsion. (Ps. 110:3) Avoid expressing your own opinions about personal decisions they face, and even if others ask you to do so, be careful not to make decisions for them.—Gal. 6:5.

Give Practical Assistance. Though Jesus was primarily concerned with the spiritual welfare of his listeners, he was sensitive to their oth-

er needs as well. (Matt. 15:32) Even if we are of limited means, there are many practical ways in which we can be helpful.

Interest in others will prompt us to be considerate. For example, if weather conditions are causing discomfort to your listener, move to a more suitable location, or arrange to continue the discussion at another time. If you have called at an inconvenient time, offer to return later. If a neighbor or someone who has shown interest is sick or in the hospital, show your concern by sending him a card or a short letter or by paying him a visit. If appropriate, you might also provide a simple meal or do some other kindness.

As Bible students progress, they may feel an emotional void because of not spending as much time with former associates. Befriend them. Spend time talking with them after their Bible study and at other times. Encourage them to cultivate good associations. (Prov. 13:20) Help them to attend Christian meetings. Sit with them at such gatherings, and assist them with their children so that all can benefit more fully from the program.

Show Interest From the Heart. Showing interest in people is, not a technique to be mastered, but a quality of the heart. The degree of our interest in others is evident in many ways. It shows in how we listen and in what we say. It is manifested by the kindness and consideration we extend to others. Even when we do not say or do anything, it is revealed by our attitude and our facial expressions. If we truly care about others, they will without fail be able to tell.

The most important reason for showing sincere interest in others is that by doing so, we imitate the love and mercy of our heavenly Father. This helps to draw our listeners to Jehovah and to the message he has given us to spread. Hence, as you share the good news, strive to keep an eye “not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others.”—Phil. 2:4.

EXERCISES:

(1) Before a congregation meeting, show personal interest in someone who is present. Do more than saying hello. Endeavor to get to know the person better. Show that you care. Make this a regular practice. (2) In the field service, show personal interest in someone you meet. Do more than give a witness. Get to know the person. Adapt what you say and do to what you learn about the individual. Keep on seeking opportunities to do this.

What do you need to do?

Show consideration for others, according them honor.

THE Scriptures tell us to “honor men of all sorts” and “to speak injuriously of no one.” (1 Pet. 2:17; Titus 3:2) Indeed, every human we meet has “come into existence ‘in the likeness of God.’” (Jas. 3:9) Each person is someone for whom Christ died. (John 3:16) And all deserve to hear the good news in order to act on it and be saved. (2 Pet. 3:9) Some people have qualities or authority that merit special deference.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Showing respect is a Christian requirement that promotes an atmosphere in which others are more likely to accept what you present to them from the Bible.

Why might some people try to excuse themselves from showing the sort of respect that the Bible encourages? Local culture may dictate who is eligible for honor according to caste, color, gender, health, age, wealth, or social status. Widespread corruption among public officials has eroded respect for authority. In some lands people are greatly dissatisfied with their lot in life, perhaps working long hours just to have the bare necessities, and they are surrounded by people who do not manifest respect. Youths experience peer pressure to join in rebellion against unpopular teachers and other authority figures. Many are influenced by television’s portrayal of children outsmarting and dominating their parents. It takes effort to keep such fleshly concepts from altering our regard for others. Yet, when we accord people dignity, this engenders an atmosphere in which an interchange of ideas is more readily possible.

Respectful Approach. A person who is engaging in religious work is expected to show respect by dressing and acting appropriately. What is viewed as appropriate decorum varies from place to place. Some consider it disrespectful to approach another person while wearing a hat or having one hand in a pocket. In other places, people might accept such decorum. Take local feelings into account so as not to offend. Doing so can help you to avoid impediments to your making known the good news effectively.

The same applies to our manner of addressing others, especial-

ly those who are elderly. It is generally viewed as impertinent for youths to call adults by their first name unless the youths receive permission to do so. In some places adults too are expected to refrain from addressing strangers by their first name. Also, many languages employ a plural form of the word “you” or some other device to show respect for someone older or in authority.

Respectful Acknowledgment. In smaller communities it is expected that you will acknowledge the presence of someone you encounter, either while walking along the road or when entering a room. This is accomplished by means of a simple greeting, a smile, a nod of the head, or even the raising of the eyebrows. Ignoring another person is viewed as disrespectful.

Some, though, may feel ignored even if you acknowledge their presence. How so? Because of their perception that you fail to see them as individuals. It is not uncommon for people to be categorized by some physical trait. People with disabilities and health problems are often shunned. Yet, God’s Word shows us how to treat such individuals with love and respect. (Matt. 8:2, 3) All of us are affected in some way by our inheritance of Adamic sin. Would you feel respected if others always identified you by your flaws? Would you not rather want to be recognized for your many positive qualities?

Respect also involves acknowledging headship. In some places it is necessary to speak to the head of the house before witnessing to others in the household. Although our commission to preach and teach comes from Jehovah, we recognize that parents are the ones authorized by God to train, discipline, and direct their children. (Eph. 6: 1-4) Hence, when calling at a home, it is usually appropriate to speak first to the parents before engaging children in any extended discussion.

With age comes life experience that must be respected. (Job 32: 6, 7) Acknowledging this helped a young pioneer sister in Sri Lanka who called on an elderly man. He at first objected to her visit, saying: “How can a youngster like you teach me the Bible?” But she replied: “Really, I didn’t come to teach but to share with you something I learned that made me so happy I just have to tell others.” The pioneer’s respectful response aroused the man’s interest. “Then tell me,

HOW TO DO IT

Recognize how Jehovah views people.

Acknowledge headship, age, and authority.

Allow people their opinions.

Understand your audience.

what did you learn?" he asked. "I have learned how to live forever," she said. The elderly man began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Not all older people will voice a desire to be treated with such respect, but most will appreciate it.

It is possible, however, to carry displays of deference too far. In the islands of the Pacific and elsewhere, the respectful use of the customary form of address when approaching village or tribal chiefs can help the Witnesses to gain a hearing ear and an opportunity to speak to both the chiefs and the people under their jurisdiction. Yet, flattery is neither necessary nor proper. (Prov. 29:5) Similarly, a language may include honorifics as part of its grammar, but Christian respect does not require that these be multiplied excessively.

Respectful Delivery. The Bible urges us to explain the reason for our hope "with a mild temper and deep respect." (1 Pet. 3:15) So, although we might be able quickly to expose the flaws of another person's viewpoint, is it wise to do so in a manner that may deprive him of his dignity? Might it not be better to listen patiently, perhaps ask why he feels the way he does, and then take his feelings into account as we reason with him from the Scriptures?

Respect like that shown in one-on-one situations should also be evident when addressing an audience from the platform. A speaker who respects his audience will not harshly criticize them or exude an attitude that implies: "You could do this if you really wanted to." Speaking in such a manner only discourages others. How much better to view the audience as an assembly of people who love Jehovah and want to serve him! In imitation of Jesus, we should show understanding when dealing with those who may be spiritually weak, less experienced, or slower to apply Bible counsel.

The audience will sense the speaker's respect for them if he includes himself as one needing to apply God's Word more fully. Thus, it is wise to avoid constant use of the personal pronoun "you" when applying scriptures. Note, for example, the difference between the question "Are you doing everything that you can?" and the statement "Each of us does well to ask himself: 'Am I doing everything that I can?'" The point of each question is the same, but the first implies that the speaker does not put himself on the same level as his audience. The second encourages each person, including the speaker, to analyze his own situation and his own motives.

Resist the temptation to make witty remarks just for the sake of making the audience laugh. This detracts from the dignity of the Bible's message. True, we should take delight in our service to God. There may even be facets of our assigned material that are somewhat humorous. Yet, to reduce serious matters to laughing matters betrays a lack of respect for the audience and for God.

May our approach, our demeanor, and our speech always demonstrate that we have come to view others the way that Jehovah has taught us to see them.

EXERCISE:

Think of someone who is either much older or much younger than you. Give thought to how you would approach the person, what you might say to initiate a conversation, and what you would do to show genuine respect for the person and for his or her expressions. Follow through on what you have planned.

Ways that I can show greater respect

What do you need to do?

Speak in a manner that shows that you are fully convinced of the truthfulness and importance of what you are saying.

WHEN a person speaks with conviction, others see that he firmly believes what he is saying. Such conviction was evident in the apostle Paul's ministry. To those who became believers in Thessalonica, he wrote: "The good news we preach did not turn up among you with speech alone but also with . . . strong conviction." (1 Thess. 1:5) That conviction was evident both in the manner that he spoke and in the way that he lived. Strong conviction should also be evident in the way that we present Bible truths.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Your conviction will encourage others to consider seriously what you say and to act upon it.

Expressing conviction is not the same as being opinionated, dogmatic, or arrogant. Rather, when a person who manifests conviction speaks about the things in God's Word, he does so in a manner that shows strong faith. —Heb. 11:1.

Occasions for Expressing Conviction. It is important to speak with conviction when you are in the field ministry. Often people notice your manner as much as your message. They sense how you really feel about what you say. Your conviction can convey, more powerfully than words alone, that you have something of great value to share.

There is also a need to express conviction when addressing an audience of fellow believers. The apostle Peter wrote his first inspired letter "to give encouragement and an earnest witness that this is the true undeserved kindness of God." In this, he urged the brothers: "Stand firm." (1 Pet. 5:12) When writing to the congregation in Rome, the apostle Paul expressed conviction that benefited them. He wrote: "I am convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor governments nor things now here nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor any other creation will be able to separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38, 39) Paul also wrote persuasively regarding the necessity of preaching to

others, and his own zeal in that activity gave clear evidence that he was personally convinced of its importance. (Acts 20:18-21; Rom. 10:9, 13-15) Similar conviction should be evident on the part of Christian elders today as they teach from God's Word.

During study periods and at other times, parents need to express themselves with conviction when discussing spiritual matters with their children. This requires that parents cultivate love for God and his ways in their own hearts. Then they can speak with heartfelt conviction to their children, 'for out of the heart's abundance the mouth speaks.' (Luke 6:45; Deut. 6:5-7) Having such conviction will also motivate parents to set an example of 'faith without hypocrisy.'—2 Tim. 1:5.

It is especially important to express yourself with conviction when your faith is challenged. A schoolmate, a teacher, or a workmate may express surprise that you do not join in a certain celebration. A resolute, well-reasoned answer may help him to respect your Bible-based position. What if someone tries to entice you into wrong conduct—dishonesty, misuse of drugs, or sexual immorality? It is important to make clear that you will definitely not engage in such conduct and that no efforts at persuasion will cause you to change your mind. This requires that you speak with conviction when rejecting the proposition. When resisting the immoral advances of Potiphar's wife, Joseph firmly stated: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?" When she persisted, he fled from the house.—Gen. 39:9, 12.

How Conviction Is Manifested. The words that you use can do much to convey your conviction. On numerous occasions Jesus prefaced important statements by saying: "Most truly I say to you." (John 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24, 25) Paul's conviction was reflected in such expressions as "I am convinced," "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus," and "I am telling the truth, I am not lying." (Rom. 8:38; 14:14; 1 Tim. 2:7) Regarding the fulfillment of his word, Jehovah at times inspired his prophets to make emphatic statements, such as, "It will without fail come true." (Hab. 2:3) When you refer to these prophecies, you might use similar language. If you put confidence not in yourself but in Jehovah and if you speak to others in

HOW TO DO IT

Speak with feeling that is appropriate to your subject.

Use language that reflects your conviction.

Study your material until you understand it clearly and can express it in your own words. You must be fully convinced of its truthfulness and of its value to your audience.

a respectful manner, expressions that reflect similar conviction will give evidence that you have strong faith.

Conviction may also be shown by the earnestness and the intensity of your expression. Your facial expressions, your gestures, and your body language all contribute to this, though these may vary somewhat from person to person. Even if you are shy or soft-spoken by nature, when you are fully persuaded that what you are saying is the truth and that others need to hear it, your conviction will be evident.

Of course, any expressions of conviction that we make must be genuine. If people sense that we are pretending rather than speaking from the heart, they will likely conclude that our message lacks substance. Therefore, above all, be yourself. Depending on the size of your audience, you may need to speak with greater volume than usual and with more intensity. But your aim should be to express yourself sincerely and naturally.

Aids to Expressing Conviction. Since your conviction involves your feelings about your material, good preparation is the key. Simply copying material from a publication and then reciting it are not sufficient. You need to understand the material clearly and to be able to express it in your own words. You must be fully convinced that it is true and that what you are saying is of value to your audience. This means that when preparing your presentation, you take into account their circumstances as well as what they may already know about the subject or how they may feel about it.

It is easier for others to sense our conviction when our delivery is fluent. Therefore, in addition to preparing good material, work hard on your delivery. Give special attention to the portions of your material that call for greater earnestness so that you can deliver them without being tied to your notes. Remember, too, to pray for Jehovah's blessing on your efforts. In this way you will 'muster up boldness by means of our God' to speak in a manner that reflects your conviction as to the truthfulness and importance of your message.—1 Thess. 2:2.

EXERCISE:

Study the following Bible accounts: Exodus 14:10-14; 2 Kings 5:1-3; Daniel 3:13-18; Acts 2:22-36. On the occasions described, how did servants of God express their conviction? What was the basis for their conviction? How can you manifest similar conviction today?

What do you need to do?

Show discretion in what you say as well as how and when you say it, in order to avoid offending others needlessly.

TACT is the ability to deal with other people without giving needless offense. It involves knowing how and when to say things. This does not imply a compromising of what is right or a distortion of facts. Tact should not be confused with fear of man.—Prov. 29:25.

The fruitage of the spirit provides the finest foundation for being tactful. Thus, a person who is motivated by love does not want to irritate others; he wants to help them. One who is kind and mild-tempered is gentle in his way of doing things. The person who is peaceable seeks ways to promote good relations with others. Even when people are abrasive in their manner, an individual who is long-suffering remains calm.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

Regardless of how the Bible's message is presented, however, some people will take offense at it. Because of the wicked heart condition of the majority of first-century Jews, Jesus Christ became to them "a stone of stumbling and a rock-mass of offense." (1 Pet. 2:7, 8) In connection with his work of Kingdom proclamation, Jesus said: "I came to start a fire on the earth." (Luke 12:49) And the message of Jehovah's Kingdom, which includes the need for humans to recognize the sovereignty of their Creator, continues to be the burning issue that confronts mankind. Many people take offense at the message that God's Kingdom will soon remove the present wicked system of things. Yet, in obedience to God, we keep on preaching. While doing so, however, we keep in mind the Bible's counsel: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men."—Rom. 12:18.

Tactful When Witnessing. There are many circumstances under which we speak to others about our faith. Of course, we do so when in the field ministry, but we also seek appropriate opportunities when with relatives, workmates, and schoolmates. In all these settings, tact is needed.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

If you are tactful, people may be inclined to listen with an open mind to the good news. Tactfulness will also help you to maintain good relations with fellow Christians.

If we present the Kingdom message in such a manner that others feel we are giving them a lecture, they may resent it. When they have not asked for help and perhaps do not feel the need for it, they may take offense at any implication that they need to be set straight. How can we avoid giving the wrong impression? Learning the art of friendly conversation can help.

Endeavor to begin the conversation by bringing up a subject that is of interest to the other person. If that person is a relative, a cowork-

er, or a schoolmate, you may already know what interests him. Even if you have never met the person before, you might bring up an item that you heard on the news or read in the newspaper. Such subjects usually reflect what is on the minds of many people. When you are working from house to house, be observant. Home decorations, toys in the yard, religious items, and bumper stickers on a car parked in the driveway may provide further indications as to the interests of the householder. When the householder comes to the door, listen as he expresses himself. What he says will either confirm or correct your conclusions about his interests and viewpoint and will provide further indications of what you need to consider in order to give a witness.

As the conversation unfolds, share points from the Bible and Bible-based literature that have a bearing on the subject. But do not dominate the conversation. (Eccl. 3:7)

Involve your householder in the discussion if he is willing to share. Be interested in his views and opinions. These may provide the clues you need in order to be tactful.

Before you say things, consider how they will sound to the other person. Proverbs 12:8 commends a “mouth of discretion.” The Hebrew expression used here is associated with such concepts as insight and prudence. Thus, discretion involves cautious reserve in speech as a result of thinking a matter through so as to act wisely. Verse 18 of that same chapter of Proverbs warns against “speaking thoughtlessly as with the stabs of a sword.” It is possible to uphold Bible truth without being offensive.

Simply showing discernment in your choice of terms may help you to avoid raising a barrier needlessly. If use of the term “the Bible”

HOW TO DO IT

Converse with people instead of lecturing them.

Give careful thought to how your intended comment will sound to the other person.

Before speaking, consider whether this is the right time to discuss a matter.

When possible, sincerely commend.

Do not overreact when objections are raised.

Avoid a self-righteous spirit; do not judge others.

raises a mental barrier, you might use an expression such as “holy writings” or “a book that is now published in more than 2,000 languages.” If you do refer to the Bible, you might ask the person his opinion of it and then take his comments into account during the rest of your conversation.

Being tactful often involves determining the right time to say things. (Prov. 25:11) You may not agree with all that the other person says, but there is no need to take issue with every unscriptural view he expresses. Do not try to tell the householder everything at once. Jesus told his disciples: “I have many things yet to say to you, but you are not able to bear them at present.”—John 16:12.

When possible, sincerely commend those to whom you speak. Even when the householder is argumentative, you may still be able to commend him for holding a certain viewpoint. The apostle Paul did this when speaking to the philosophers at the Areopagus in Athens. Philosophers were “conversing with him controversially.” How could he make his point without giving offense? Earlier he observed the many altars they had made to their gods. Instead of condemning the Athenians for their idolatrous worship, he tactfully commended them for their strong religious feelings. He said: “I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are.” This approach opened the way for him to present his message concerning the true God. As a result, some became believers.—Acts 17:18, 22, 34.

Do not overreact when objections are raised. Keep calm. View these as opportunities to gain some insight into the person’s thinking. You might thank him for expressing his views. What if he abruptly says: “I have my own religion”? You might in a tactful way ask: “Have you been a religious person all your life?” Then, after he responds, add: “Do you think mankind will ever be united in one religion?” This may open the way for further conversation.

Having a proper view of ourselves can help us to be tactful. We are firmly convinced of the rightness of Jehovah’s ways and the truthfulness of his Word. We speak with conviction regarding these things. But there is no reason for us to be self-righteous. (Eccl. 7:15, 16) We are grateful to know the truth and to enjoy Jehovah’s blessing, but we well know that our having his approval is a result of his

undeserved kindness and our faith in Christ, not a result of our own righteousness. (Eph. 2:8, 9) We recognize the need to ‘keep testing whether we are in the faith, to keep proving what we ourselves are.’ (2 Cor. 13:5) So when we speak to people about the need to conform to God’s requirements, we humbly apply the Bible’s counsel to ourselves too. It is not our place to sit in judgment of our fellowman. Jehovah “has committed all the judging to the Son,” and it is before his judgment seat that we must answer for what we do.—John 5:22; 2 Cor. 5:10.

With Family and Fellow Christians. Our use of tact should not be limited to the field ministry. Since tact is an expression of the fruitage of God’s spirit, we should also show tact at home when dealing with family members. Love will move us to show concern for the feelings of others. Queen Esther’s husband was not a worshiper of Jehovah, but she showed respect for him and great discernment when presenting to him matters that involved Jehovah’s servants. (Esther, chaps. 3-8) In some instances, tactfulness in dealing with non-Witness family members may require that we let our conduct, rather than an explanation of our beliefs, recommend the way of the truth to them.—1 Pet. 3:1, 2.

Similarly, the fact that we know members of the congregation well does not mean that we can be blunt or unkind to them. We should not reason that because they are mature, they should be able to take it. Nor should we excuse ourselves by saying: “Well, that is just the way I am.” If we find that the way we express ourselves offends others, we should be determined to change. Our “intense love for one another” should move us to “work what is good . . . toward those related to us in the faith.”—1 Pet. 4:8, 15; Gal. 6:10.

When Speaking to an Audience. Those who speak from the platform also need to be tactful. An audience consists of people from various backgrounds and circumstances. They are at various stages of spiritual development. Some may be at the Kingdom Hall for the first time. Others may be going through a particularly stressful time of which the speaker is unaware. What can help a speaker to avoid offending his audience?

In harmony with the apostle Paul’s counsel to Titus, make it your aim “to speak injuriously of no one, . . . to be reasonable, exhibiting

all mildness toward all men.” (Titus 3:2) Avoid imitating the world in its use of terms that downgrade people of another race, language group, or nationality. (Rev. 7:9, 10) Frankly discuss Jehovah’s requirements, and show the wisdom of applying these; but avoid making derogatory remarks about those who are not yet fully walking in Jehovah’s way. Instead, encourage all to discern God’s will and to do what is pleasing to him. Cushion words of counsel with warm and sincere commendation. By the way in which you speak and the tone of your voice, convey the brotherly affection that all of us should have for one another.—1 Thess. 4:1-12; 1 Pet. 3:8.

EXERCISE:

Read carefully the following Bible accounts: 2 Samuel 12:1-9; Acts 4:18-20. In each, notice (1) evidences of tactfulness and (2) statements that show firmness for Jehovah’s righteous ways.

What do you need to do?

Rather than dwelling at length on negative matters, speak about things that improve a situation or that impart confidence.

THE message that we have been commissioned to preach is good news. Jesus said: “In all the nations the good news has to be preached first.” (Mark 13:10) Jesus himself set the example by featuring “the good news of the kingdom of God.” (Luke 4:43) What the apostles preached is also described as “the good news of God” and “the good news about the Christ.” (1 Thess. 2:2; 2 Cor. 2:12) Such a message is upbuilding and positive.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

People are worn down by a loveless world. Many have serious personal problems. The Bible’s message, when properly presented, leaves honesthearted ones with a brighter outlook.

In harmony with the declaration of “everlasting good news” by the “angel flying in midheaven,” we urge people: “Fear God and give him glory.” (Rev. 14:6, 7) We tell people everywhere about the true God, his name, his marvelous qualities, his wonderful works, his loving purpose, our accountability to him, and what he requires of us. The good news includes the fact that Jehovah God will destroy the wicked, who dishonor him and spoil life for

other humans. But it is not up to us to judge individuals to whom we preach. Our earnest desire is that as many as possible will respond favorably to the Bible’s message so that it truly proves to be good news for them.—Prov. 2:20-22; John 5:22.

Limit Negative Material. Of course, there are negative aspects to life. We do not shut our eyes to these. To start a conversation, you may raise a problem that is on the minds of those in your territory and discuss it briefly. But there usually is limited value in pursuing it at length. People constantly hear distressing news, so talking about unpleasant things may cause them to close either their door or their ears. At an early point in your conversation, endeavor to direct attention to the refreshing truths in God’s Word. (Rev. 22:17) Then, even if the person does not want to continue the conversation, you will have left him something upbuilding to think about. This may make him more willing to listen on another occasion.

In like manner, if you are invited to give a talk, do not flood the audience with negative information just because an abundance of it is available. If a speaker dwells at length on the failure of human rulers, reports of crime and violence, and the shocking prevalence of immorality, the effect can be depressing. Introduce negative aspects of a subject only if they serve a useful purpose. A limited amount of such material may emphasize the timeliness of your talk. It may also identify major factors contributing to a situation and thus be used to show why the solution set out in the Bible is practical. Where possible, be specific without dwelling at length on the problems.

It is usually neither possible nor desirable to eliminate *all* negative material from a talk. The challenge is to present the mixture of good and bad in such a way that the overall effect is positive. To achieve this, you must determine what to include, what to leave out, and where to place the emphasis. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus admonished his listeners to avoid the self-serving ways of the scribes and Pharisees, and he cited a few examples to illustrate the point. (Matt. 6:1, 2, 5, 16) However, instead of dwelling on the negative examples of those religious leaders, Jesus emphasized understanding the true ways of God and living by these. (Matt. 6:3, 4, 6-15, 17-34) The effect was overwhelmingly positive.

HOW TO DO IT

Keep in mind that our assignment is to preach the good news.

Be constructive rather than critical.

Cultivate a positive view of those to whom you speak.

In conversation, consider how your comments may affect the other person.

Keep the Tone Positive. If you are assigned to give a talk in your congregation about some aspect of Christian activity, endeavor to be constructive rather than critical. Make sure that you are doing what you encourage others to do. (Rom. 2:21, 22; Heb. 13:7) Let love, not irritation, motivate what you say. (2 Cor. 2:4) If you are confident that your fellow believers want to please Jehovah, what you say will reflect that confidence, and this will have a beneficial effect. Notice how the apostle Paul expressed such confidence, as recorded at 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:4, 5; and Philemon 4, 8-14, 21.

At times it is necessary for elders to caution against unwise conduct. But humility will help them deal with their brothers in a spirit of mildness. (Gal. 6:1) The way that things are said should show that those in the congregation are viewed with respect. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) The

Bible counsels younger men to be especially aware of this. (1 Tim. 4: 12; 5:1, 2; 1 Pet. 5:5) When it is necessary to reprove, to discipline, to set things straight, this should be done on the basis of what the Bible itself says. (2 Tim. 3:16) Application of Scripture should never be forced or bent to support some idea about which the speaker may have strong feelings. Even when corrective counsel is needed, the tone of the talk can be kept positive if emphasis is placed primarily on how to avoid getting involved in wrongdoing, how to solve problems, how to overcome difficulties, how to correct a wrong course, and how Jehovah's requirements safeguard us.—Ps. 119:1, 9-16.

When preparing your talk, give special thought to how you will conclude each main point and the talk as a whole. What you say last is often remembered longest. Will it be positive?

When Conversing With Fellow Believers. Servants of Jehovah appreciate opportunities for fellowship at Christian meetings. These are times of spiritual refreshment. The Bible urges us to have in mind “encouraging one another” when we gather at our places of worship. (Heb. 10:25) That is done not only by talks and comments during the meetings but also by conversation before and after the meetings.

While it is normal for conversation to concern our everyday lives, the greatest encouragement comes from discussing spiritual matters. These include experiences that we enjoy in sacred service. Showing wholesome interest in one another is also upbuilding.

Because of the influence of the world around us, care is needed. When writing to Christians in Ephesus, Paul said: “Now that you have put away falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor.” (Eph. 4:25) Speaking truth instead of falsehood includes not glorifying the things and people that the world idolizes. Likewise, Jesus cautioned against “the deceptive power of riches.” (Matt. 13:22) So when speaking with one another, we need to be careful not to promote that deception by glamorizing the possession of material things.—1 Tim. 6:9, 10.

When counseling on the need to be upbuilding, the apostle Paul urges us not to judge or belittle a brother who might refrain from certain things because of “weaknesses in his faith,” that is, because he does not grasp the full scope of Christian freedom. Indeed, for our conversation to upbuild others, we must take into account their

background and the extent of their spiritual growth. How sad it would be “to put before a brother [or a sister] a stumbling block or a cause for tripping”—Rom. 14:1-4, 13, 19.

Those who cope with serious personal problems—for example, chronic illness—appreciate upbuilding conversation. Such a person may put forth much effort to attend meetings. Those aware of his situation may ask: “How do you feel?” He will no doubt appreciate their concern. However, the state of his health may not be the subject he finds most encouraging to talk about. Words of appreciation and commendation may do more to warm his heart. Do you see evidence of his continued love for Jehovah and his endurance under a difficult situation? Do you feel encouraged when he offers comments? Might it be more upbuilding to draw attention to his strengths and to what he contributes to the congregation instead of to his limitations?—1 Thess. 5:11.

For our conversation to upbuild, it is especially important to take into account Jehovah’s view of what is being discussed. In ancient Israel, those who spoke against Jehovah’s representatives and complained about the manna experienced God’s severe displeasure. (Num. 12:1-16; 21:5, 6) We give evidence that we have benefited from those examples when we show respect for the elders and appreciation for the spiritual food provided through the faithful and discreet slave class.—1 Tim. 5:17.

Finding beneficial things to talk about when with our Christian brothers is rarely a problem. However, if someone’s remarks are overly critical, take the initiative to steer the conversation in an upbuilding direction.

Whether we are witnessing to others, speaking from the platform, or talking with fellow believers, may we exercise discernment so as to bring forth out of the treasure of our hearts “whatever saying is good for building up as the need may be, that it may impart what is favorable to the hearers.”—Eph. 4:29.

EXERCISE:

Call on someone who is disabled or confined to his home. Initiate an upbuilding conversation. Be empathetic, but keep your comments positive. Plan ahead in order to achieve this.

35 REPETITION FOR EMPHASIS

What do you need to do?

State more than once the points that you especially want your audience to remember.

EFFECTIVE teaching includes the use of repetition. When an important point is stated more than once, those in attendance are more likely to remember it. If the idea is restated in a slightly different way, they may even be able to understand it more clearly.

If your listeners do not remember what you say, your words will not influence what they believe or how they live. They will probably continue thinking about points to which you give special emphasis.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In addition to being a memory aid, repetition can be used effectively to highlight principal ideas and help your audience to understand them clearly.

Jehovah, our Grand Instructor, sets the pattern for us in his use of repetition. He gave the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel. Through an angelic spokesman, he caused the nation to hear those commandments at Mount Sinai. Later he gave them to Moses in written form. (Ex. 20:1-17; 31:18; Deut. 5:22) At Jehovah's direction, Moses restated those commandments to the nation

before they entered the Promised Land, and by means of holy spirit, Moses made a record of that, as found at Deuteronomy 5:6-21. Among the commandments given to Israel was the requirement that they love and serve Jehovah with their whole heart, soul, and vital force. This too was stated again and again. (Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 30:6) Why? Because, as Jesus said, it was "the greatest and first commandment." (Matt. 22:34-38) Through the prophet Jeremiah, Jehovah reminded the people of Judah more than 20 times about the seriousness of obeying him in all the things that he commanded them. (Jer. 7:23; 11:4; 12:17; 19:15) And through Ezekiel, God stated more than 60 times that the nations "will have to know that I am Jehovah."—Ezek. 6:10; 38:23.

In the record of the ministry of Jesus, we also observe effective use of repetition. There are, for example, the four Gospels—each one covering important events that are reported in one or more of the other Gospels but viewing these events from slightly different angles.

In his own teaching, Jesus covered the same basic point of instruction on more than one occasion but in different ways. (Mark 9:34-37; 10:35-45; John 13:2-17) And while on the Mount of Olives a few days before his death, Jesus used repetition to emphasize this vital counsel: “Keep on the watch, . . . because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”—Matt. 24:42; 25:13.

In the Field Ministry. When you witness to people, you hope that they will remember what you say. Effective use of repetition can help to achieve that goal.

Frequently, repetition at the time a matter is being discussed will help impress it on a person’s mind. Thus, after reading a scripture, you could emphasize it by pointing to a key portion of it and asking, “Did you notice how that text is worded?”

The final sentences in a conversation can also be used effectively. For example, you might say: “The main point that I hope you will remember from our conversation is . . .” Then restate it simply. It might be something like this: “God’s purpose is that the earth be transformed into a paradise. That purpose is sure to be realized.” Or possibly: “The Bible clearly shows that we are living in the last days of this system of things. If we are going to survive its end, we need to learn what God requires of us.” Or it could be: “As we have seen, the Bible offers practical counsel on how to cope with problems of family life.” In some cases you may simply repeat a quotation from the Bible as the point to be remembered. Of course, doing this effectively requires forethought.

On return visits, including Bible studies, your use of repetition may involve review questions.

When a person finds it difficult to understand or to apply Bible counsel, you may need to bring the subject up on more than one occasion. Endeavor to approach it from various angles. The discussions do not have to be lengthy but should encourage the student to keep thinking about the matter. Remember, Jesus used this sort of repetition in helping his disciples overcome the desire to be in first place.—Matt. 18:1-6; 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-27.

WHEN TO DO IT

Immediately after stating an important point or after fully developing a main idea.

At the conclusion of your conversation or your discourse.

When you discern that your listeners are finding it difficult to grasp some key point.

More than once, possibly days or weeks apart in the case of return visits and Bible studies.

When Giving Discourses. If you give talks from the platform, your objective is not merely to present information. You want the audience to understand it, to remember it, and to apply it. To achieve that, make good use of repetition.

If you repeat the main points too often, however, you may lose the attention of your audience. Carefully select points that deserve special emphasis. These usually are the main points around which your talk is developed, but they may also include other thoughts that will be of special value to your audience.

To make use of repetition, you might first outline your main points in the *introduction*. Do that with short statements that provide a broad overview of what you will cover, with questions, or with brief examples that pose problems to be resolved. You might state how many main points there are and list them by number. Then develop each of those points in the body of your talk. Emphasis can be reinforced in the *body* of your talk by restating each main point before going on to the next one. Or it can be accomplished by using an example that involves application of the main point. Further emphasis can be given to your main points by using a *conclusion* that restates them, highlights them by using contrasts, answers the questions that were raised, or briefly sets out solutions to the problems that were posed.

In addition to the above, an experienced speaker observes carefully the individuals who make up his audience. If some of them find a certain idea difficult to grasp, the speaker is aware of it. If the point is important, he covers it again. However, repeating the same words may not accomplish his purpose. There is more to teaching than that. He must be adaptable. He may need to make impromptu additions to his talk. Your learning to cope with the needs of the audience in this way will determine to a great extent your effectiveness as a teacher.

EXERCISES:

(1) As you end a conversation with someone you met for the first time in the field ministry, repeat just one important point that you discussed and that you want the person to remember. (2) As you conclude a return visit, state again one or two key points for the interested person to remember from your discussion.

What do you need to do?

Refer to your theme, and enlarge on it in various ways throughout your talk.

EXPERIENCED speakers know the value of having a theme. When they are preparing a talk, the theme helps them to focus attention on a narrower field of information and to think more deeply about it. The result is that instead of superficially touching on many points, they develop their material in a way that is more beneficial to their audience. When each of the main points is directly connected to the theme and helps to develop it, the audience is also helped to remember those points and to appreciate their significance.

Although it can be said that your theme is the *subject* on which you speak, you will find that the quality of your talks will improve if you take the position that your theme is the particular *viewpoint* from which you develop your subject. The Kingdom, the Bible, and the resurrection are broad subjects. A variety of themes can be developed on these subjects. Here are some examples: “The Kingdom, a Real Government,” “God’s Kingdom Will Make Earth a Paradise,” “The Bible Is Inspired of God,” “The Bible Is a Practical Guide for Our Day,” “Resurrection Offers Hope to Grieving Ones,” and “The Resurrection Hope Helps Us to Remain Firm When Faced With Persecution.” All of these themes require development along completely different lines.

Consistent with the dominant theme of the Bible, the preaching done by Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry highlighted the theme: “The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.” (Matt. 4:17) How was that theme developed? More than 110 times in the four Gospels, reference is made to that Kingdom. But Jesus did more than use the term “kingdom” repeatedly. Both by what he taught and by the miracles he performed, Jesus made clear that he, the one who was present, was the Son of God, the Messiah, the one to whom Jehovah would give the Kingdom. Jesus also showed that through him the way was being opened for others to share in that Kingdom. He identified

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

It unifies your presentation and helps the audience to understand what you say and to remember it.

the qualities that must be demonstrated by those who would be given that privilege. By his teachings and the powerful works he performed, he made clear what God's Kingdom would mean in the lives of people and pointed out that his expelling of demons by means of God's spirit was evidence that 'the kingdom of God had really overtaken' his hearers. (Luke 11:20) It was concerning that Kingdom that Jesus commissioned his followers to bear witness.—Matt. 10:7; 24:14.

Using an Appropriate Theme. You are not called on to develop a theme to the same extent that the Bible does, but having an appropriate theme is no less important.

HOW TO DO IT

When preparing your talk, select main points and supporting details that will truly contribute to developing your theme.

When you practice your delivery, give thought to where and how you will emphasize the theme. You may even want to mark your outline at points where you plan to do this.

From time to time during delivery, repeat key words or ideas from your theme.

If selection of the theme is left to you, consider first the objective of your presentation. Then as you select the main points that will make up your outline, be sure that these really support the theme you have chosen.

If the theme is assigned, analyze carefully what it indicates as to the way that your material is to be developed. Some effort may be required to appreciate the value and potential of such a theme. If you will be choosing material with which to develop the assigned theme, make careful selection so that the theme will be kept in focus. On the other hand, if the material is provided, you still need to analyze how to use it in harmony with the theme. You also need to consider why the material is important to your audience and what your objective should be in delivering it. This will help you determine what to emphasize in your delivery.

How to Emphasize the Theme. In order to give proper emphasis to the theme, you must lay the foundation when selecting and organizing your material. If you use only what supports your theme and if you follow principles involved in preparing a good outline, you will almost automatically emphasize the theme.

Repetition can help to reinforce the theme. In classical music, a theme is a melody repeated often enough to characterize the entire composition. The melody does not always reappear in the same form. Sometimes only a phrase or two occur, occasionally a variation on the theme is used, but in one way or another, the composer skillfully weaves his melody in and out of the composition until it permeates the whole. That is the way it should be with the theme of a

talk. Repetition of key words from the theme is like the recurring melody of a musical composition. Synonyms of these words or the theme rephrased serves as a variation on the theme. Use of such means will cause the theme to be the main thought your audience carries away.

These principles apply not only to talks from the platform but also to discussions in the field ministry. A relatively brief conversation becomes more memorable if a theme stands out. Instruction given at a Bible study will more readily come back to mind if a theme has been emphasized. The effort that you put into selecting and developing suitable themes will do much to enhance your effectiveness as a speaker and as a teacher of God's Word.

EXERCISE:

For the field service, select a theme in harmony with a specific article in a recent *Watchtower* or *Awake!* Endeavor to stimulate interest in it in your introduction, develop it with one or two points during your discussion, and highlight its value in your conclusion.

A DOMINANT THEME IN A MAJOR COMPOSITION

In understanding the use of a theme, it is helpful to study how Jehovah God, though using human writers, wove a dominant theme through the 66 books that make up the Bible. That theme is the vindication of Jehovah's right to rule mankind and the realization of his loving purpose by means of his Kingdom.

This theme begins to unfold in the opening chapters of Genesis, and facets of it are thereafter developed throughout the Bible. Attention is drawn to the divine name itself again and again, more than 7,000 times. The rightfulness of Jehovah's rulership becomes manifest in the account of creation. The challenge to his rulership is reported, along with the disastrous effects of disobedience. Jehovah's su-

perlative love, his wisdom, his justice, and his almighty power are demonstrated by his dealings with his creatures. The benefits of obedience to God and the calamity that results from disobedience are shown by countless examples. Jehovah's provision through Jesus Christ to wipe out sin and death is explained and demonstrated. Details are set out for a heavenly government that will destroy both wicked spirits and humans who refuse to recognize Jehovah's rightful rulership over his creation. It is made clear that the Kingdom will bring to completion Jehovah's purpose that the earth be a paradise filled with people who love and worship the only true God and who love one another.

37 MAIN POINTS MADE TO STAND OUT

What do you need to do?

Organize and deliver your material so that special attention is given to the main points.

WHAT are the main points of a talk? These are not simply interesting aspects that are briefly stated in passing. They are important ideas that are developed at length. They are the ideas that are crucial to achieving your objective.

A key to making the main points stand out is your selecting and organizing of material wisely. Research for a talk frequently yields more information than can be used. How can you determine what to use?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

It is a memory aid, thus contributing to meditation and application.

First, consider your audience. Are they largely unacquainted with your subject, or are they quite familiar with it? Do most of them agree with what the Bible says about it, or are some inclined to be skeptical? What sort of challenges

do they face in daily life when they endeavor to apply what the Bible says about the subject? *Second*, be sure that you have clearly in mind your objective in speaking to that audience on the subject you plan to use. Using these two guidelines, evaluate the material and retain only what really fits.

If you have been given a basic outline with a theme and main points, you should adhere to it. However, the value of what you present will be greatly enhanced if you keep in mind the above factors when developing each main point. When no outline has been supplied, it is up to you to select the main points.

When you have your main points clearly in mind and have organized the details under these, it will be easier for you to give the talk. Likely, your audience will also get more out of it.

Various Ways of Organizing Your Material. A variety of patterns can be followed in organizing the body of your talk. As you get acquainted with them, you will find that several can be effective, depending on your objective.

A versatile pattern involves topical subdivision. (Each main point is

needed because it adds to your listeners' understanding of the subject or helps achieve the objective of your talk.) Another pattern is chronological. (Events before the Flood, for example, may be followed by events before Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 C.E., which, in turn, may be followed by events in our own day.) A third pattern is cause and effect. (This may be developed in either direction. For example, you could start with a current situation, the effect, and then show the cause.) A fourth method involves opposites. (You might contrast good with bad or positive with negative.) Sometimes a talk will include more than one method.

When Stephen was falsely charged before the Jewish Sanhedrin, he gave a powerful speech that followed a chronological pattern. As you read it at Acts 7:2-53, notice that the selection of points is purposeful. Stephen first made clear that he was relating history that his audience could not deny. Then he pointed out that although Joseph was rejected by his brothers, God used him to provide deliverance. Next, he showed that the Jews were disobedient to Moses, whom God was using. He concluded by emphasizing that a spirit like that manifested by Jews of former generations was shown by those who brought about the death of Jesus Christ.

Not Too Many Main Points. There are only a few essentials in developing any theme. In the majority of cases, these can be numbered on one hand. This is true whether you will be speaking for 5 minutes, 10 minutes, 30 minutes, or longer. Do not try to make too many points stand out. Your audience can reasonably grasp only a few different ideas from one talk. And the longer the talk, the stronger and more sharply defined the key points must be.

Regardless of how many main points you use, be sure to develop each one sufficiently. Allow the audience enough time to examine each main point so that it becomes firmly impressed on their minds.

Your talk should give an impression of simplicity. This does not always depend on the amount of material presented. If your thoughts are clearly grouped under just a few main headings and you develop these one at a time, the talk will be easy to follow and hard to forget.

HOW TO DO IT

Before you select the main points, consider what your audience knows about the subject and decide what your objective will be. Organize your material with those factors in mind.

Clearly show the connection between points of proof, scriptures, and other material and the main idea that these support.

Draw attention to each main point. This can be done by numbering them, by stating each main point before presenting supporting material, or by restating the point after it has been developed.

Make Your Main Points Stand Out. If your material is properly organized, it will not be difficult to reinforce the significance of your main points by means of your delivery.

The principal way to make a main point stand out is to present points of proof, scriptures, and other material in such a manner that these focus attention on the main idea and amplify it. All secondary points should clarify, prove, or amplify the main point. Do not add irrelevant ideas just because they are interesting. As you develop secondary points, show clearly their connection with the main point that they support. Do not leave it to the audience to figure out. The connection can be shown by repeating key words that express the main thought or by repeating the gist of the main point itself from time to time.

Some speakers highlight the main points by numbering them. While that is one way to highlight main points, it should not replace careful selection and logical development of the material itself.

You may choose simply to state your main point up front before you present the supporting argument. This will help the audience to appreciate the value of what follows, and it will also emphasize that main point. You might reinforce the point by summarizing it after it has been fully developed.

In the Field Ministry. The principles discussed above apply not only to formal discourses but also to conversations that you have in the field ministry. When preparing, take into account any major situation that people in the area have on their minds. Choose a theme that affords opportunity to show how the hope the Bible offers will resolve that situation. Select perhaps two main points to develop that theme. Decide which scriptures you will use to support those points. Then plan how you will begin your discussion. Such preparation allows for the sort of flexibility that conversation requires. It also helps you to state something that householders will remember.

EXERCISE:

Review the article for this week's *Watchtower* Study. Using the boldface subheadings and the questions in the teaching box, endeavor to identify the main points. It can be beneficial to do this every week.

What do you need to do?

In your opening sentences, say something pertinent that will get the attention of your audience and that will directly contribute to achieving your objective.

THE introduction is a crucial part of any talk. If you really arouse the interest of your audience, they will be more inclined to listen intently to what follows. In the field ministry, if your introduction fails to arouse interest, you may not be able to continue your presentation. When you give a talk at the Kingdom Hall, the audience will not walk out on you, but individuals may start thinking about other things if you have not captured their interest.

When preparing your introduction, have in mind the following objectives: (1) getting the attention of your audience, (2) clearly identifying your subject, and (3) showing why the subject is important to your audience. In some instances, these three objectives may be attained almost simultaneously. At times, however, they may be given attention separately, and the order may vary.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Your introduction may determine whether some people will listen and how attentive they will be.

How to Get the Attention of Your Audience. The fact that people have gathered to hear a discourse does not mean that they are ready to give the subject their undivided attention. Why not? Their lives are filled with many things that clamor for their attention. They may be concerned about a problem at home or another anxiety of life. The challenge facing you as the speaker is to capture and hold the attention of the audience. There is more than one way that you can do it.

One of the most famous discourses ever given was the Sermon on the Mount. How did it begin? According to Luke's account, Jesus said: "Happy are you poor, . . . happy are you who hunger now, . . . happy are you who weep now, . . . happy are you whenever men hate you." (Luke 6:20-22) Why did that arouse interest? In a few words, Jesus acknowledged some of the serious problems that his hearers had to face. Then, instead of discussing the problems at length, he showed that people who had such problems could still be

happy, and he did it in a way that made his listeners want to hear more.

Questions can be used effectively to arouse interest, but they must be of the right sort. If your questions indicate that you are simply going to talk about things that the audience has heard before, interest may quickly wane. Do not ask questions that embarrass your audience or that put them in a bad light. Rather, endeavor to phrase your questions in a manner that will stimulate thinking. Pause briefly after each question so that your listeners have time to formulate a mental answer. When they feel that they are engaging in a mental dialogue with you, you have their attention.

HOW TO DO IT

Consider those in your audience—their circumstances, their concerns, their attitudes, what they already know about your subject.

Determine what there is about your subject that will be of particular interest and of value to them.

Use of a real-life experience is another good way to capture attention. But simply telling a story may defeat your purpose if the experience is embarrassing to someone in your audience. If your story is remembered but the instruction that goes with it is forgotten, you have missed the mark. When an experience is used in the introduction, it should lay the groundwork for some significant aspect of the body of your talk. While some details may be needed in order to make the narrative live, be careful not to make experiences needlessly long.

Some speakers lead with a recent news item, a quotation from a local newspaper, or a statement by a recognized authority. These too can be effective if they really fit the subject and are appropriate for the audience.

If your talk is part of a symposium or a portion of a Service Meeting, then it is usually best to make your introduction brief and to the point. If you are giving a public talk, hold carefully to the time allotted for the introductory section. It is the body of the talk that will convey the information that is of greatest value to your audience.

On occasion you may find yourself speaking before an audience that is skeptical or even hostile. How might you get them to give you their attention? Stephen, an early Christian described as being “full of spirit and wisdom,” was taken by force before the Jewish Sanhedrin. There he gave an eloquent defense of Christianity. How did he begin? In a respectful manner and with a reference to something mutually accepted. “Men, brothers and fathers, hear. The God

of glory appeared to our forefather Abraham.” (Acts 6:3; 7:2) On the Areopagus in Athens, the apostle Paul adapted his introduction to a very different audience, saying: “Men of Athens, I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are.” (Acts 17:22) As a result of effective introductions, both audiences were willing to hear more.

When you are in the field service, you also need to get people’s attention. If your visit is not prearranged, the householder may be busy with other matters. In some parts of the world, uninvited visitors are expected to get to the point quickly. Elsewhere, custom requires that certain formalities be observed before you state the reason for your call.—Luke 10:5.

In either case, genuine friendliness can help to create an atmosphere that is conducive to having a conversation. It is often beneficial to begin with something that directly relates to what is on the person’s mind. How can you determine what to use? Well, when you approached the person, was he engaging in some activity? Perhaps he is farming, caring for the grounds around his house, repairing an automobile, cooking, doing laundry, or caring for children. Was he looking at something—a newspaper or an activity in the street? Do his surroundings reflect special interest in fishing, sports, music, travel, computers, or something else? People are often concerned about what they have recently heard on the radio or seen on television. A question or a brief comment about any of such matters may lead to a friendly conversation.

The occasion when Jesus spoke with a Samaritan woman at a well near Sychar is an outstanding example of how to start a conversation with a view to giving a witness.—John 4:5-26.

You need to prepare your introduction carefully, especially if your congregation works its territory frequently. Otherwise, you may not be able to give a witness.

Identify Your Subject. In the Christian congregation, a chairman or someone preceding you on the program will usually announce the title of your talk and introduce you. However, it can be beneficial for you to remind your audience of your subject during your introductory remarks. This can be, but does not have to be, a formal statement of the theme. In any event, the theme should gradually unfold

as the talk progresses. In some way in the introduction, you should focus attention on your subject.

When sending out his disciples to preach, Jesus clearly identified the message that they were to deliver. “As you go, preach, saying, ‘The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.’” (Matt. 10:7) Regarding our day, Jesus said: “This good news of the kingdom will be preached.” (Matt. 24:14) We are urged to “preach the word,” that is, to stick to the Bible when witnessing. (2 Tim. 4:2) Before opening the Bible or directing attention to the Kingdom, though, it is often necessary to identify some matter that is of current concern. You might comment on crime, unemployment, injustice, war, how to help young people, sickness, or death. But do not dwell at length on negative matters; your message is a positive one. Endeavor to direct the conversation to God’s Word and the Kingdom hope.

Show Why the Subject Is Important to Your Audience. If you will be speaking in the congregation, you can be reasonably sure that those in your audience will in a general way be interested in what you discuss. But will they listen as a person does when he is learning something that definitely involves him? Will they pay attention because they realize that what they are hearing fits their situation in life and because you are stirring in them a desire to do something about it? That will be true only if you considered your audience carefully—their circumstances, their concerns, their attitudes—when preparing your talk. If you did, then include in your introduction something that indicates that.

Whether you are speaking from the platform or witnessing to an individual, one of the best ways to arouse interest in a subject is to get your audience involved. Show how their problems, their needs, or the questions that are on their minds are related to the subject that you are discussing. If you make clear that you are going to go beyond generalities and come to grips with specific aspects of the matter, they will listen even more intently. To do that, you must prepare well.

The Way You Present It. What you say in your introduction is of primary importance, but *how* you say it can also arouse interest. For this reason your preparation ought to involve not only what you are going to say but also how you are going to say it.

Word choice is important in accomplishing your objective, so you might find it advantageous to prepare the first two or three sentences quite carefully. Short, simple sentences are usually best. For a talk in the congregation, you may want to write them out in your notes, or you may choose to memorize them so that your opening words will carry all the impact they deserve. Delivering an effective introduction in an unhurried manner can help you to gain the composure needed to give the rest of your talk.

When to Prepare It. Opinions vary on this subject. Some experienced speakers believe that preparation of a talk should begin with the introduction. Others who have studied public speaking are of the opinion that the introduction should be prepared after the body has been completed.

You certainly need to know what your subject is and what main points you plan to develop before you can work out the details of a suitable introduction. But what if you are preparing your talk from a published outline? After reading the outline, if you have an idea for the introduction, there is certainly no harm in writing it down. Remember, too, that for your introduction to be effective, you must take into consideration your audience as well as the material in the outline.

EXERCISES:

(1) Before sharing in the house-to-house ministry, prepare an introduction that fits both the message and some recent event in your territory. (2) Review the opening paragraph of five or six articles in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Ask yourself what makes each introduction effective.

39 EFFECTIVE CONCLUSION

What do you need to do?

In your concluding sentences, say something that is designed to move the audience to take action on what they have heard.

YOU may have carefully researched and organized the material for the body of your talk. You may also have prepared an interesting introduction. Still, one more thing is needed—an effective conclusion. Do not minimize its importance. What you say last is often remembered longest. If the conclusion is weak, even what went before it may lose much of its effectiveness.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

What is said in the conclusion is often remembered the longest. It influences the effectiveness of the entire talk.

Consider the following: Toward the end of his life, Joshua gave a memorable discourse to the older men of the nation of Israel. After recounting Jehovah's dealings with Israel ever since the days of Abraham, did Joshua simply restate the highlights in the form of a summary? No. Rather, with deep feeling he exhorted the people: "Fear Jehovah and serve him in faultlessness and in truth." Read for yourself Joshua's conclusion, recorded at Joshua 24:14, 15.

Another noteworthy talk, found at Acts 2:14-36, was given by the apostle Peter to a crowd in Jerusalem at the Festival of Pentecost 33 C.E. First he explained that they were witnessing fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel regarding the pouring out of the spirit of God. Next he showed how this was connected with Messianic prophecies in the Psalms that foretold the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his exaltation to the right hand of God. Then, in his conclusion, Peter clearly stated the issue that everyone in his audience needed to face. He said: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for a certainty that God made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you impaled." Those present asked: "Men, brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied: "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." (Acts 2:37, 38) That day some 3,000 people in his audience, deeply moved by what they had heard, embraced the truth about Jesus Christ.

Points to Keep in Mind. What you state in your conclusion should

be directly related to the theme of your talk. It should follow as a logical conclusion to the main points you have developed. Although you may want to include some key words from your theme, direct restating of it is optional.

Ordinarily, your purpose in speaking is to encourage others to take some action on the basis of the information you present. *One of the main purposes of the conclusion is to show them what to do.* When you selected your theme and main points, did you consider carefully why the material would be important to your audience and what your objective would be in delivering it? If so, you know the action that you would like them to take. Now you need to explain what that action is and perhaps how to go about it.

In addition to showing your audience what to do, *your conclusion should provide motivation.* It ought to include sound reasons for acting and possibly benefits that can result from doing so. If the final sentence is carefully thought out and well phrased, it will reinforce the impact of your entire talk.

Keep in mind that the talk is concluding. What you say should indicate that. Your pace should also be appropriate. Do not speak rapidly right up to the finish and then stop abruptly. On the other hand, do not let your voice simply fade. Your volume should be sufficient but not excessive. *Your last few sentences should have a note of finality. Your delivery of them should convey earnestness and conviction.* When preparing your delivery, do not fail to practice your conclusion.

How long should the conclusion be? That is not something to be determined solely by the clock. The conclusion should not drag. *The appropriateness of its length can be determined by its effect on the audience.* A simple, direct, positive conclusion is always appreciated. A somewhat longer one that embodies a brief illustration can also be effective if it is carefully planned. Compare the brief conclusion to the entire book of Ecclesiastes, found at Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14, with that of the much shorter Sermon on the Mount, recorded at Matthew 7: 24-27.

In the Field Ministry. Nowhere will you be confronted with the need for conclusions more often than in the field ministry. With preparation and loving interest in people, you can accomplish much

HOW TO DO IT

Be sure that your conclusion is directly related to the thoughts you have already presented.

Show the audience what to do about what they have heard.

Motivate your hearers by what you say and how you say it.

good. The counsel set out on the preceding pages can be applied beneficially even when adapted to one-on-one conversation.

A conversation may be very brief. The person may be busy. Your entire visit may last only a minute. If appropriate, you might say something like this: “I understand. But let me leave you with one encouraging thought. The Bible shows that our Creator has a wonderful purpose—to make this earth a place where people can enjoy life forever. We can be in that Paradise, but we need to learn God’s requirements.” Or you might simply offer to call back at a more convenient time.

If the call is cut short because the householder is abrupt—even rude—much good can still be accomplished. Keep in mind the counsel found at Matthew 10:12, 13 and Romans 12:17, 18. Your mild response could possibly change his view of Jehovah’s Witnesses. That would be a fine accomplishment.

On the other hand, you may have had a satisfying conversation with the householder. Why not restate the main point that you want him to remember? Include motivation for him to do something about it.

If you see the opportunity for further discussion at another time, give the person some reason to look forward to it. Ask a question—perhaps one discussed in *Reasoning From the Scriptures* or a publication designed for conducting home Bible studies. Keep in mind your goal, as set out by Jesus and recorded at Matthew 28:19, 20.

Are you concluding a home Bible study? Restating the theme will help the student to remember what was discussed. Use of review questions will help to impress key points on the student’s mind, especially if that review is not rushed. A question regarding how the material studied might benefit the student or how he might share it with others could help him to think in terms of making practical use of what he has learned.—Prov. 4:7.

Remember—your conclusion influences the effectiveness of your entire discussion.

EXERCISE:

Prepare two conclusions for the field ministry: (1) what to say when the householder is abrupt and there is little time to talk and (2) a definite question for discussion on your next visit.

What do you need to do?

Impart information that is in complete harmony with the facts.

WHY might a Christian make a statement that is not true? He might simply be repeating something that he has heard, without taking time to check the facts. Or he might overstate a matter because, without realizing it, he misread his source material. When we give careful attention to accuracy even in minor matters, our listeners will see that they can have confidence in the veracity of the more important aspects of our message.

In the Field Ministry. Realizing that they still have much to learn, many feel apprehensive about starting in the field ministry. Yet, these quickly find that they are able to give an effective witness, even with only a basic knowledge of the truth. How? The key is preparation.

Before going out in the field service, become familiar with the subject that you want to discuss. Try to anticipate questions that your listeners might raise. Search for satisfying Bible-based answers. This will prepare you to give accurate answers in a relaxed frame of mind. Are you going to conduct a Bible study? Review the study material carefully. Make sure that you understand the Scriptural basis for the answers to the printed questions.

What if a householder or a workmate asks a question that you are not prepared to answer? If you are not sure of the facts, resist the temptation to guess. "The heart of the righteous one meditates so as to answer." (Prov. 15:28) You may find the help you need in the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures* or in "Bible Topics for Discussion" if they are available in your language. If you have neither of these with you, offer to do some research and return. If the one who posed the question is sincere, he will not mind waiting for the correct answer. He may, in fact, be favorably impressed by your humility.

Working in the field ministry with experienced publishers can help you to develop skill in handling God's Word aright. Observe which scriptures they use and how they reason on them. Humbly accept any

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Accuracy in what you say reflects well on you, the organization with which you are serving, and the God you worship.

suggestions or correction they offer. The zealous disciple Apollos benefited from help received from others. Luke described Apollos as “eloquent,” “well versed,” and “aglow with the spirit,” a man “speaking and teaching with correctness the things about Jesus.” Yet, there was a gap in his understanding. When Priscilla and Aquila noted this, they “took him into their company and expounded the way of God more correctly to him.”—Acts 18:24-28.

“Holding Firmly to the Faithful Word.” Our presentations at meetings should reflect high regard for the congregation’s role as “a pillar and support of the truth.” (1 Tim. 3: 15) In order to uphold the truth, it is important that we get the sense of scriptures that we plan to use in talks. Take into account their context and intent.

HOW TO DO IT

Resist pressure to give an answer when you are unsure.

Base your comments on “the pattern of healthful words” in the Bible.

Do research on your subject.

Check the accuracy of statistics, quotes, and experiences, and use them without exaggerating.

Avoid guessing at details that you do not clearly remember.

What you say at a congregation meeting may be repeated. Of course, “we all stumble many times.” (Jas. 3:2) But you will benefit by developing habits that contribute to accurate speech. Many brothers enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School will, in time, become elders. “More than usual” is expected of those entrusted with such responsibility. (Luke 12:48) If an elder carelessly gives wrong advice that results in serious problems for members of the congregation, the elder could incur God’s displeasure. (Matt. 12:36, 37) Thus, a brother who qualifies as an elder must be known for “holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching.”—Titus 1:9.

Be careful that your conclusions agree with “the pattern of healthful words” that is manifest in the entire body of Scriptural truth. (2 Tim. 1:13) This should not intimidate you. Perhaps you have yet to complete reading the entire Bible. Continue working at it. But in the meantime, note how the following suggestions can assist you to analyze material that you are thinking about using in your teaching.

First, ask yourself: ‘Is this material in harmony with what I have already learned from the Bible? Will it draw my listeners to Jehovah, or does it put the wisdom of the world on a pedestal, encouraging people to be guided by it?’ Jesus said: “Your word is truth.” (John 17:17; Deut. 13:1-5; 1 Cor. 1:19-21) Next, make good use of study tools provided by the faithful and discreet slave class. These will help you not only to understand scriptures correctly but also to apply them with

balance and reasonableness. If you base your talks on “the pattern of healthful words” and rely on Jehovah’s channel when explaining and applying scriptures, your statements will be accurate.

Checking the Accuracy of Information. Current events, quotations, and experiences can be helpful when you are illustrating and applying certain points. How can you be sure that they are accurate? One way is by extracting such items from reliable sources. Remember to check that the information is up-to-date. Statistics become obsolete; scientific discoveries are quickly surpassed; and as man grows in understanding of history and ancient languages, conclusions based on previous knowledge need to be revised. Exercise great caution if you are thinking of using information from newspapers, television, radio, electronic mail, or the Internet. Proverbs 14:15 counsels: “Anyone inexperienced puts faith in every word, but the shrewd one considers his steps.” Ask yourself: ‘Does the source have a reputation for accuracy? Can the information be verified by some other means?’ If you doubt the truthfulness of an item, discard it.

In addition to checking the reliability of the sources, consider carefully how you plan to use the information. Make sure that your use of quotations and statistics harmonizes with the context from which they are taken. In an effort to express yourself forcefully, be careful that “some people” does not become “the majority of people,” that “many people” does not become “everyone,” and that “in some cases” does not become “always.” Overstating matters or exaggerating reports involving number, extent, or seriousness raises questions of credibility.

When you are consistently accurate in what you say, you will come to be known as a person who respects truth. This reflects well on Jehovah’s Witnesses as a group. More important, it honors “Jehovah the God of truth.”—Ps. 31:5.

EXERCISE:

Ask a mature Witness to listen and check the accuracy of what you say as you explain the following in your own words: (1) What sort of person is Jehovah, and how do you know? (2) Why did Jesus lay down his life in sacrifice, and how can we benefit from this? (3) Since his enthronement as King, what has Jesus Christ been doing?

What do you need to do?

Express yourself so that others can readily grasp the meaning of what you are saying.

WHEN you speak, do more than present information. Endeavor to make what you say understandable to those who are listening. This can help you to communicate effectively, whether you are speaking to the congregation or to non-Witnesses.

There are many facets to understandable speech. Some of them are covered in Study 26, “Logical Development of Material.” Others are considered in Study 30, “Interest Shown in the Other Person.” In this study, we are going to discuss a few additional points.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The easier your material is to understand, the more fully the audience will benefit from it.

Simple Words, Simplicity of Style. Simple words and short sentences are powerful tools of communication. Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount is a superb example of a talk that can be understood by people no matter who they are or where they live. The concepts may be new to them. Yet, they can understand what Jesus said because he dealt with matters of concern to all of us: how to be happy, how to improve relationships with others, how to cope with anxiety, and how to find meaning in life. And he expressed his thoughts in down-to-earth language. (Matt., chaps. 5-7) Of course, the Bible provides many examples of variety in the length and structure of sentences. Your main objective should be to express thoughts in a clear, understandable way.

Even when you deal with deep material, simplicity of style can help make it easier to understand. How can simplicity be achieved? Do not overwhelm your audience with unnecessary details. Organize your material so that it complements your main points. Select your key scriptures carefully. Rather than rushing from one text to another, read and discuss these. Do not bury a good thought in a multitude of words.

When you conduct a home Bible study, apply those same principles. Do not try to explain all the details. Help the student to under-

stand clearly the principal ideas. Later on, in personal study and at congregation meetings, he can fill in the details.

In order to present material in a simple manner, good preparation is needed. You must clearly understand your subject yourself if you are going to make it understandable to others. When you really understand something, you are able to give reasons why it is so. You are also able to express it in your own words.

Explain Unfamiliar Terms. Sometimes making things understandable requires that you explain the meaning of terms that are unfamiliar to your audience. Do not overestimate the knowledge of your audience, but do not underestimate their intelligence. As a result of your study of the Bible, you may use some terms that sound strange to other people. Without some explanation, those who are not associated with Jehovah's Witnesses will not understand that "remnant," "faithful and discreet slave," "other sheep," and "great crowd" identify specific groups of people. (Rom. 11:5; Matt. 24:45; John 10:16; Rev. 7:9) Similarly, unless a person is familiar with the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, he will probably not understand what is meant by such terms as "publisher," "pioneer," "circuit overseer," and "Memorial."

Some Biblical expressions that are freely used even by non-Witnesses may need some explanation. To many people, "Armageddon" means a nuclear holocaust. They may associate "God's Kingdom" with a condition within a person or with heaven but not with government. Reference to the "soul" may stir up thoughts of a so-called spiritual part of humans that survives the death of the body. According to what millions of people have been taught, "holy spirit" is a person, part of a Trinity. Because so many people have abandoned the Bible's moral code, they may even need help to understand what the Bible means when it says: "Flee from fornication." —1 Cor. 6:18.

Unless people are regular Bible readers, they may miss the point if you simply say, "Paul wrote . . ." or "Luke said . . ." They may have friends or neighbors who have those names. You may need to add some explanatory expression to identify the person as a Christian apostle or a Bible writer.

HOW TO DO IT

Use plain language; favor short sentences for principal ideas.

Emphasize just a few main points.

Explain terms unfamiliar to your audience.

Take time to explain and apply scriptures.

Consider how your example may affect those to whom you speak.

Modern-day audiences frequently need help to understand scriptures that include measurements or customs from ancient times. For example, the statement that Noah's ark was 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high may mean little to them. (Gen. 6:15) But if you were to describe those same dimensions in terms of familiar local landmarks, your audience would immediately picture the size of the ark.

Provide Needed Explanation. To make a matter clear to your audience, more may be needed than the correct definition of a certain term. In Jerusalem in the days of Ezra, the reading of the Law was accompanied by explanation. In order to help the people grasp its meaning, the Levites provided interpretation as well as application of the Law to the circumstances the people were facing at that time. (Neh. 8:8, 12) In a similar way, take time to explain and apply scriptures that you read.

After his death and resurrection, Jesus explained to his disciples that what had just occurred was in fulfillment of the Scriptures. He also emphasized their responsibility as witnesses of those things. (Luke 24:44-48) When you help people to see how what they have been taught should influence their own lives, they will more readily understand what it really means.

How the Heart Is Involved. Of course, even if your explanations are clear, other factors may influence whether the other person understands or not. When a person's heart is unreceptive, that is a barrier to his getting the sense of what is said. (Matt. 13:13-15) To those who are determined to view matters strictly from a physical standpoint, spiritual matters are foolish. (1 Cor. 2:14) When a person demonstrates such a spirit, it may be wise simply to end the discussion—at least for the present.

Yet, in some cases the heart is unresponsive because of hard circumstances in life. Given opportunity to hear Bible truth over a period of time, the heart of such a person may become receptive. When Jesus told his apostles that he was going to be scourged and put to death, they did not understand. Why not? It was not what they expected and certainly not what they wanted! (Luke 18:31-34) However, in time, 11 of those apostles did understand, and they demonstrated that by acting in harmony with what Jesus had taught them.

Effect of a Fine Example. People are helped to understand not only by our words but also by our actions. Regarding their first visit to a Kingdom Hall, many people say that they remember the love that was evident, not what was said. Similarly, the happiness that we manifest has helped many householders to open their minds to Bible truth. Seeing the loving-kindness shown by Jehovah's people toward one another and the kind consideration for others when faced with adversities has caused some to conclude that the Witnesses have the true religion. So as you endeavor to help people understand Bible truth, give thought to the way you explain it and to your example.

EXERCISE:

Endeavor to tell a non-Witness relative, neighbor, workmate, or schoolmate about something you enjoyed this week at a congregation meeting. Be sure to explain terms that the person may not understand.

What do you need to do?

Impart knowledge in a way that stimulates thinking and that leaves your audience with the feeling that they learned something worthwhile.

TO MAKE your presentation informative to your audience, you need to do more than speak on a worthwhile subject. Ask yourself: ‘Why does *this* audience need to hear *this* subject? What am I going to say that will make the audience feel that they really benefited from the discussion?’

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

If you simply tell people things they already know, you will not likely hold their attention very long.

In the school, if you are assigned to demonstrate how to witness to someone, your householder will be your audience. In other cases, you may be speaking to the congregation as a whole.

What Your Audience Knows. Ask yourself, ‘What does the audience know about the subject?’ That should determine your starting point. If you are speaking to a congregation that includes many mature Christians, do not simply repeat basics, which most of them know. Build on these fundamental truths. Of course, if many newly interested ones are also in attendance, you should consider the needs of both groups.

Adjust the pace of your delivery according to what your audience knows. If you include some details that are likely familiar to most, cover these fairly quickly. But slow down when presenting ideas that may be new to the majority of your listeners so that they can grasp these clearly.

What Will Inform. Being informative does not always mean having something new to say. Some speakers have a way of stating certain familiar truths with such simplicity that many in the audience will fully understand them for the first time.

In the field ministry, it is not enough to mention a news item to illustrate that we are living in the last days. Use the Bible to show the *meaning* of the event. This will truly be informative to the householder. Similarly, when mentioning some detail about natural law or about plant or animal life, your goal should not be to present some

fascinating scientific fact that the householder has never heard before. Rather, your objective should be to combine evidence from nature with statements in the Bible to show that there is a Creator who loves us. This will help the householder to see matters from a fresh perspective.

Presenting a subject to an audience that has heard it many times before can be a challenge. But to be an effective teacher, you need to learn how to do this successfully. How can it be done?

Research will help. Instead of simply including in your talk facts that readily come to mind, use the research tools discussed on pages 33 to 38. Have in mind the suggestions given there on the objectives you should be striving to achieve. In your research, you may find that a little-known historical event is directly related to your subject. Or you might come across a recent statement in the news that will illustrate the point that you plan to discuss.

As you examine the material, stimulate your own thinking by asking such questions as *what? why? when? where? who?* and *how?* For example: Why is this true? How can I prove it? What popular beliefs make it hard for some to grasp this Bible truth? Why is it important? How should this affect a person's life? What example demonstrates the benefit of applying it? What does this Bible truth reveal about Jehovah's personality? Depending on the material you are discussing, you might ask: When did this occur? How can we make practical application of this material today? You might even enliven your delivery by asking and answering some of such questions when you are giving the talk.

Your talk may call for you to use scriptures that are familiar to your audience. What can you do to make your handling of these informative? Do not simply read them; explain them.

Discussion of a familiar text may become more informative if you break the text down, isolating portions that relate to the theme of your talk and then explaining these. Consider the possibilities with a text such as Micah 6:8 in the *New World Translation*. What is "justice"? Whose standard of justice is being discussed? How would you

HOW TO DO IT

Consider what your audience already knows about your subject.

Pace the flow of information—faster for well-known points, slower for newer points.

Do not merely state facts; discuss their meaning or their value.

Stimulate your own thinking by asking: What? Why? When? Where? Who? How?

Take time to reason on the Scriptures; enlarge on specific portions of them.

Make use of comparisons and contrasts.

Include a concise overview of your material.

Show how to use the information to solve problems and make decisions.

illustrate what is meant by “to exercise justice”? Or “to love kindness”? What is modesty? How would you apply the material in the case of an elderly person? The material you will actually use, of course, should be determined by such factors as your theme, your objective, your audience, and the time available.

Simple definitions of terms are often helpful. For some people, it is eye-opening to learn the meaning of the “kingdom” referred to at Matthew 6:10. Being reminded of a definition may even help a long-time Christian to discern more accurately what a text is actually saying. This is clear when we read 2 Peter 1:5-8 and then define the various elements mentioned in those verses: faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godly devotion, brotherly affection, and love. When words that overlap in meaning are used in the same context, your defining them can help differentiate one from the other. That is true of such terms as wisdom, knowledge, discernment, and understanding, used at Proverbs 2:1-6.

Your audience may find it informative if you simply reason on a text. Many people are surprised when they first realize that at Genesis 2:7 in some Bible translations, Adam is said to be a living soul and that according to Ezekiel 18:4, souls die. On one occasion, Jesus surprised the Sadducees by referring to Exodus 3:6, which they professed to believe, and then applying it to the resurrection of the dead.—Luke 20:37, 38.

Sometimes it is enlightening to point out the context of a scripture, the circumstances that surrounded the writing, and the identity of the speaker or the listener. The Pharisees were well acquainted with Psalm 110. Still, Jesus drew their attention to an important detail that is found in the first verse. He asked: “‘What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?’ They said to him: ‘David’s.’ He said to them: ‘How, then, is it that David by inspiration calls him “Lord,” saying, “Jehovah said to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies beneath your feet’ ”? If, therefore, David calls him “Lord,” how is he his son?’ ” (Matt. 22:41-45) When you reason on the Scriptures as Jesus did, you will help people to read God’s Word more carefully.

When a speaker states the time of writing of a Bible book or the time when a certain event took place, he should also describe the conditions that prevailed at that time. In that way, the audience will more clearly grasp the importance of the book or the event.

Comparisons can help make what you say more informative. You might contrast a popular view with what the Bible says on the same point. Or you might compare two parallel Bible accounts. Are there differences? Why? What do we learn from them? Your doing this can give your listeners a fresh perspective on the subject.

If you are assigned to discuss some aspect of the Christian ministry, you might enrich your presentation by starting with an overview. Discuss what is to be done, why it needs to be done, and how it relates to our overall goals as Jehovah's Witnesses. Then explain where, when, and how to do the work.

What if your talk requires that you discuss some of "the deep things of God"? (1 Cor. 2:10) If you begin by identifying and explaining certain key elements of the subject, the details will be more readily understood. And if you conclude with a concise overview of your material, your audience will likely be left with the satisfying feeling that they really learned something.

Counsel on Christian Living. Your audience will especially benefit if you help them to see how the information in your talk applies to their lives. As you examine the scriptures in your assigned material, ask yourself, 'Why was this information preserved in the Scriptures until our day?' (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11) Think about situations in life that those in your audience are facing. Consider the situations themselves in the light of the counsel and principles in the Scriptures. In your talk, reason on the Scriptures to show how they can help a person to deal wisely with such situations. Avoid generalizations. Discuss specific attitudes and actions.

For a start, apply one or two of the above suggestions to a talk you are preparing. As you gain experience, apply more of them. In time you will find that the audience will look forward to your talks, being confident that they will hear something that will really benefit them.

EXERCISES:

(1) Do research to find an informative aspect of a familiar scripture, such as Matthew 24:14 or John 17:3. (2) Read Proverbs 8:30, 31 and John 5:20. How might meditating on the relationship between Jehovah God and Christ Jesus, as described in those verses, enable you to use those texts to benefit a family?

43 USE OF ASSIGNED MATERIAL

What do you need to do?

Build your talk around the assigned subject, and if source material is specified, draw scriptures and main points from it.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

When we use the assigned material to develop our talk, we show respect for the feeding program arranged by the faithful and discreet slave class.

THE Bible compares the Christian congregation to a human body. Each part is necessary, but “not all have the same function.” In harmony with that, we should work at whatever privilege has been entrusted to us. This requires that we understand and care well for any speaking assignment instead of minimizing the importance of some subjects because we think that other subjects would be more interesting. (Rom. 12:4-8) The faithful and discreet slave class has the responsibility to provide spiritual food “at the proper time.” (Matt. 24:45) When we use our personal abilities to develop talks according to the instructions we have received, we show appreciation for that arrangement. This contributes to the smooth operation of the congregation as a whole.

What to Include. When you are assigned a subject in the school, take care to develop that subject and not something else. In most cases, specific reference material will be supplied. If you are not told what printed material to use as the basis for your talk, you may gather material from sources of your choice. However, as you prepare your talk, be sure that *the entire presentation is built around the assigned subject*. When deciding what to include, you will also need to take your audience into account.

Carefully study the reference material, analyzing the scriptures included in it. Then consider how to use it most effectively for the benefit of the audience. Select two or possibly three points from the printed material to use as main points in your talk. Likewise, select from the assigned material the scriptures that you plan to read and discuss.

How much of the material should you cover? Only what you can handle effectively. Do not sacrifice good teaching in order to pack in a lot of information. If some of the material does not fit the objective of your talk, concentrate on portions that will help you reach that

goal. From the assigned material, use what will be most informative and beneficial for your audience. Your objective with this speech counsel point is, not to see *how much* you can cover, but to *use what has been assigned* as the basis for your talk.

Your talk is not meant to be simply a summary of assigned material. You should plan to explain certain points, enlarge on them, illustrate them, and possibly give an example of their application. Additional ideas should be used to *develop* important points from your assigned material rather than to *replace* that material.

Brothers who have the needed qualifications as teachers may in time be invited to give instruction on the Service Meeting. They understand the need to make good use of assigned material instead of replacing it with something else. Similarly, brothers who deliver public talks are given outlines to follow. These allow for some flexibility, but they clearly indicate the main points to develop, the supporting arguments to use, and the scriptures that provide the foundation for the talk. Learning how to teach using the assigned material as a basis is an important part of preparation for other speaking privileges.

This training can also help you to conduct progressive home Bible studies. You will learn to focus attention on the study material instead of digressing from the subject by highlighting other things that may be interesting but not necessary to an understanding of the subject. Yet, if you get the spirit of this lesson, you will not become so rigid that you fail to provide added explanation that a student may require.

HOW TO DO IT

Use only material directly related to your assigned subject.

If your assignment includes using certain printed material as the basis for your talk, select your main points and your key scriptures from that material rather than from other sources.

EXERCISE:

On three different days when you read the day's text, circle the word or phrase that identifies the *subject* being discussed. Underscore one or two brief comments that directly bear on that subject. Then, in your own words, comment on the subject by using the scripture and the points you marked.

44 EFFECTIVE USE OF QUESTIONS

What do you need to do?

Use questions in a way that will achieve a desired result. Your aim may be to get an oral response; it may be to stimulate a mental response. What you ask and how you ask it have a direct bearing on your success in the use of questions.

BECAUSE questions call for a response—either oral or mental—they help to get your listeners involved. Questions can help you to start conversations and to enjoy a stimulating exchange of thoughts. As a speaker and a teacher, you may use questions to arouse interest, to help someone reason on a subject, or to add emphasis to what you say. When you make good use of questions, you encourage others to think actively instead of listening passively. Have an objective in mind, and ask your questions in a manner that will help to achieve it.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Questions that are effective help listeners to get involved. Answers to well-chosen questions may also provide valuable feedback for a teacher.

To Encourage Conversation. When you engage in the field ministry, be alert to opportunities to invite people to express themselves if they are willing to do so.

Many Witnesses begin interesting discussions by simply asking, “Have you ever wondered . . . ?” When they choose a question that truly is on the minds of many people, they will almost assuredly have a fine time in the field ministry. Even if the question is new to the thinking of the other person, it may stimulate curiosity. A wide variety of matters can be introduced with such expressions as “What do you think . . . ?,” “How do you feel . . . ?,” and “Do you believe . . . ?”

When the evangelizer Philip approached an Ethiopian court official who was reading aloud the prophecy of Isaiah, Philip simply asked: “Do you actually know [or, do you understand] what you are reading?” (Acts 8:30) This question opened the way for Philip to explain truths about Jesus Christ. Using a similar question, some modern-day Witnesses have found people who were truly hungering for a clear understanding of Bible truth.

Once they are given opportunity to express their own views, many people will be more inclined to listen to you. After asking a ques-

tion, listen attentively. Be kind rather than critical in acknowledging the person's response. Offer commendation when you can do so sincerely. On one occasion, after a scribe had "answered intelligently," Jesus commended him, saying: "You are not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12:34) Even if you do not share the same view as the other person, you can thank him for expressing himself. What he said may make you aware of an attitude that you need to take into account in sharing Bible truth with him.

To Introduce Important Thoughts. When you talk to a group or converse with an individual, try to use questions to lead up to important thoughts. Be sure that your questions involve matters of genuine interest to your audience. You may also use questions that are intriguing because the answer is not readily apparent. If you pause briefly after posing a question, your audience will likely listen with heightened interest to what follows.

On one occasion, the prophet Micah used a number of questions. After asking what God expects of those who worship him, the prophet set out four more questions, each including a possible answer. All those questions help to prepare readers for the insightful answer with which he concluded that part of his discussion. (Mic. 6:6-8) Could you do something like that when teaching? Try it.

To Reason on a Subject. Questions can be used to help others follow the logic of an argument. When delivering a serious pronouncement to Israel, Jehovah did this, as shown at Malachi 1:2-10. First he told them: "I have loved you people." They failed to appreciate that love, so he asked: "Was not Esau the brother of Jacob?" Then Jehovah pointed to the desolate condition of Edom as evidence that because of their wickedness, God did not love that nation. He followed this with illustrations interspersed with questions to emphasize Israel's failure to respond properly to his love. Some of the questions are phrased as if the unfaithful priests were asking them. Others are questions that Jehovah asked the priests. The dialogue stirs emotions and holds our attention; the logic is irrefutable; the message, unforgettable.

Some speakers effectively use questions in a similar way. Although

HOW TO DO IT

To encourage conversation, use questions involving matters that are truly important to the other person.

Before you state an important idea, try to use a question that will make others want to hear it.

Use questions to help people see the basis for statements made, the logic of truths presented, and the good effects these can have on their lives.

Use questions to invite the student not only to recite facts but also to express how he feels about what he is learning.

no oral reply may be expected, the audience becomes involved mentally, as if sharing in a dialogue.

When we conduct Bible studies, we use a method that calls for participation by the student. Of course, the greater good is done if the student does not simply recite the printed answers. In a kindly tone, use auxiliary questions to reason with the student. On key thoughts, encourage him to use the Bible as the basis for his reply. You might also ask: “How does what we are discussing fit in with this other point that we have studied? Why is it important? How should it affect our lives?” Such a method is more effective than expressing your own convictions or giving an extended explanation yourself. In this way, you help the student to use his “power of reason” to worship God.—Rom. 12:1.

If a student does not grasp a certain idea, be patient. He may be trying to compare what you are saying with what he has believed for many years. Approaching the subject from a different angle might help. Sometimes, however, very basic reasoning is needed. Make liberal use of the Scriptures. Use illustrations. Along with these, use simple questions that invite the person to reason on the evidence.

To Draw Out Inner Feelings. When people answer questions, they do not always reveal how they really feel. They may simply give the answers that they think you want. Discernment is needed. (Prov. 20:5) As Jesus did, you might ask: “Do you believe this?”—John 11:26.

When many of Jesus’ disciples took offense at what he said and abandoned him, Jesus invited his apostles to express how they felt. He asked: “You do not want to go also, do you?” Peter put their feelings into words, saying: “Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life; and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:67-69) On another occasion, Jesus asked his disciples: “Who are *men* saying the Son of man is?” He followed this with a question that invited them to express what was in their own hearts. “You, though, who do *you* say I am?” In response, Peter said: “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”—Matt. 16:13-16.

When conducting a Bible study, you may find it beneficial to take a similar approach to certain issues. You might ask: “How do your classmates (or workmates) view this matter?” Then you might ask: “How

do *you* feel about it?" When you know a person's true feelings, this makes it possible for you as a teacher to be of the greatest help.

To Add Emphasis. Questions can also be used to add emphasis to thoughts. The apostle Paul did this, as recorded at Romans 8:31, 32: "If God is for us, who will be against us? He who did not even spare his own Son but delivered him up for us all, why will he not also with him kindly give us all other things?" Observe that, in each case, the question builds on the clause that immediately precedes it.

After recording Jehovah's judgment against the king of Babylon, the prophet Isaiah expressed strong conviction by adding: "Jehovah of armies himself has counseled, and who can break it up? And his hand is the one stretched out, and who can turn it back?" (Isa. 14:27) By their very content, such questions indicate that the idea expressed cannot be denied. No reply is expected.

To Expose Wrong Thinking. Questions that are carefully thought out are also powerful tools to expose wrong thinking. Before healing a man, Jesus asked the Pharisees and some experts in the Law: "Is it lawful on the sabbath to cure or not?" After performing the cure, he followed up with another question: "Who of you, if his son or bull falls into a well, will not immediately pull him out on the sabbath day?" (Luke 14:1-6) No reply was expected, nor was one offered. The questions exposed their wrong thinking.

At times, even true Christians can fall into wrong thinking. Some in first-century Corinth were taking their brothers to court to resolve problems that they should have been able to solve between themselves. How did the apostle Paul handle the matter? He asked a series of pointed questions to adjust their thinking.—1 Cor. 6:1-8.

With practice, you can learn to make effective use of questions. However, remember to be respectful, especially when speaking to older ones, people you do not know personally, and those in positions of authority. Use questions to present Bible truth in an appealing way.

EXERCISES:

(1) Having in mind the area in which you witness, prepare several questions that you could use to open the way for meaningful conversations with people. (2) Read Romans chapter 3, taking special note of Paul's use of questions to reason on the standing before God of both Jews and Gentiles.

What do you need to do?

Use figures of speech, stories, or real-life experiences in ways that contribute to your objectives as a teacher.

ILLUSTRATIONS and examples are powerful teaching devices. They often command and hold attention with remarkable effectiveness. They stimulate the thinking faculties. They stir up emotions and thus may reach the conscience and the heart. At times, illustrations may be used to overcome prejudice. They are also an effective memory aid.

Do you use them in your teaching?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Proper use of these teaching aids can enrich your talk, touch the lives of people, and make instruction memorable. Improperly used, they may divert attention from valuable instruction.

Figures of speech are illustrations that usually require only a few words; yet they can paint vivid mental images. When they are chosen carefully, much of their meaning is self-evident. But a teacher may reinforce their value by adding a brief explanation. The Bible is filled with examples from which you can learn.

Start With Similes and Metaphors. Similes are the simplest figure of speech. If you are just learning to use illustrations, you may find it helpful to start with these. They are usually introduced with the word “like” or “as.” While comparing two things that are quite different, similes highlight something these have in common. The Bible is rich with figurative speech that draws on created things—plants, animals, and heavenly bodies—as well as human experience. At Psalm 1:3, we are told that a person who regularly reads God’s Word is “like a tree planted by streams of water,” a tree that is fruitful and does not wither. The wicked one is said to be “like a lion” that lies in wait to seize prey. (Ps. 10:9) Jehovah promised Abraham that his seed would become “like the stars of the heavens” for number and “like the grains of sand that are on the seashore.” (Gen. 22:17) Regarding the close relationship that Jehovah made possible between himself and the nation of Israel, God said: “Just as a belt clings to the hips of a man,” so He caused Israel and Judah to cling to Him.—Jer. 13:11.

Metaphors too highlight a similarity between two very different things. But the metaphor is more forceful. It speaks as though the

one thing *were* the other, and thus it imparts some quality from one thing to the other. Jesus said to his disciples: “You are the light of the world.” (Matt. 5:14) Describing the damage that can be done by uncontrolled speech, the disciple James wrote: “The tongue is a fire.” (Jas. 3:6) To Jehovah, David sang: “You are my crag and my stronghold.” (Ps. 31:3) A metaphor that is well chosen usually needs little or no explanation. Its forcefulness is enhanced by its brevity. A metaphor can help your audience to remember a point in a way that a simple statement of fact does not.

Hyperbole is exaggeration, which must be used discreetly or it could be misunderstood. Jesus used this figure of speech to paint an unforgettable picture when he asked: “Why . . . do you look at the straw in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the rafter in your own eye?” (Matt. 7:3) Before you try to use this or other figures of speech, learn to make effective use of the simile and the metaphor.

Use Examples. Instead of using a figure of speech, you may choose to employ examples, whether fictional narratives or real-life experiences, as teaching aids. These tend to get out of hand, so they need to be handled well. Such examples should be used only to support points that are truly important, and they ought to be presented in such a way that the point of instruction is remembered, not merely the story.

Although not all examples have to be actual occurrences, they should reflect true-life attitudes or situations. Thus, when teaching how repentant sinners ought to be viewed, Jesus illustrated his point by telling about the rejoicing of a man who found his lost sheep. (Luke 15:1-7) In reply to a man who was failing to get the full import of what the Law meant by the command to love one’s neighbor, Jesus related a story about a Samaritan who helped an injured man after a priest and a Levite failed to do so. (Luke 10:30-37) If you learn to be a keen observer of people’s attitudes and actions, you can make effective use of this teaching device.

The prophet Nathan related an imaginary situation as a means of reproving King David. The story was effective because it avoided a situation that might have led David to react with self-justification.

HOW TO GET APPROPRIATE ONES

Read the Bible regularly; take note of the illustrations; meditate on the value of the examples.

As you observe the world around you, mentally associate the attitudes and actions of people with subjects about which you speak.

Build up a file of effective illustrations and examples. These may come from material you read, talks you hear, or personal observation. Save them for future use.

The story involved a rich man who had many sheep and a man of little means who had just one female lamb that he was raising with tender care. David himself had been a shepherd, so he could understand the feelings of the owner of that lamb. David reacted with righteous indignation against the rich man who had seized the poor man's cherished lamb. Then Nathan straightforwardly said to David: "You yourself are the man!" David's heart was reached, and he sincerely repented. (2 Sam. 12:1-14) With practice, you can learn to deal with emotional issues in an appealing manner.

Many examples that are valuable for teaching can be drawn from events recorded in the Scriptures. Jesus did this in a few words when he said: "Remember the wife of Lot." (Luke 17:32) When detailing the sign of his presence, Jesus referred to "the days of Noah." (Matt. 24:37-39) In Hebrews chapter 11, the apostle Paul referred to 16 men and women by name as examples of faith. As you become well acquainted with the Bible, you will be able to draw powerful examples from what the Scriptures say about the events and people named in its pages.—Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11.

At times you may find it beneficial to reinforce a point of instruction with a real-life, modern-day experience. When doing this, however, be careful to use only experiences that have been verified and to avoid those that would unnecessarily embarrass anyone in your audience or that would draw attention to a controversial subject that is not at issue. Remember, too, that the experience should serve a purpose. Do not relate needless details that tend to divert attention from the objective of your presentation.

Will It Be Understood? Whatever illustration or example you use, it ought to accomplish some definite objective. Will it do that if you do not make application of it to the subject under discussion?

After referring to his disciples as "the light of the world," Jesus added a few remarks about how a lamp is used and what responsibility this implied for them. (Matt. 5:15, 16) He followed up his illustration of the lost sheep with a comment about the joy in heaven over a sinner who repents. (Luke 15:7) And after his story about the neighborly Samaritan, Jesus asked his listener a pointed question and followed it up with some direct counsel. (Luke 10:36, 37) In contrast, Jesus explained his illustration about the various kinds of soil and the one about the weeds in the field only to those humble enough to

ask, not to the crowds. (Matt. 13:1-30, 36-43) Three days before his death, Jesus spoke an illustration about murderous vineyard cultivators. He made no application; none was needed. "The chief priests and the Pharisees . . . took note that he was speaking about them." (Matt. 21:33-45) So the nature of the illustration, the attitude of the audience, and your objective all have a bearing on whether application is required and, if so, how much.

Developing the ability to use illustrations and examples effectively takes time, but the effort is well worth it. Well-chosen illustrations couple intellectual appeal with emotional impact. The result is that the message is conveyed with a force that is not often possible with simple statements of fact.

EXERCISE:

Analyze the illustrations found in the following scriptures: Isaiah 44:9-20; Matthew 13:44; Matthew 18:21-35. What does each one teach? Why is it effective?

*Figures of speech that
I want to use in teaching*

*Real-life examples that
I want to remember and use*

What do you need to do?

Use illustrations that involve activities in which those in your audience engage or matters with which they are well acquainted.

IT IS important, of course, that whatever illustrations you use fit the material you are discussing. For them to be most effective, however, it is equally important that they fit your audience.

How might the type of audience influence your selection of illustrations for speaking to a group? What did Jesus Christ do? Whether

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Illustrations from familiar situations will touch the heart of the listeners.

he was speaking to the crowds or to his disciples, Jesus did not take his examples from ways of life unique to lands outside of Israel. Such examples would have been unfamiliar to his audience. For instance, Jesus made no mention of the court life of Egypt or the religious practices of India. Still, his illustrations did draw on activities common to people in all lands. He spoke of mending clothes,

carrying on business, losing something precious, and attending marriage feasts. He understood how people react under various circumstances, and he made use of this. (Mark 2:21; Luke 14:7-11; 15:8, 9; 19:15-23) Since his public preaching was directed particularly to the people of Israel, Jesus' illustrations most frequently alluded to objects and activities that were part of their daily lives. Thus, he referred to such things as farming, the way sheep respond to their shepherd, and the use of animal skins to store wine. (Mark 2:22; 4:2-9; John 10:1-5) He also pointed to familiar historical examples—the creation of the first human couple, the Flood of Noah's day, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the death of Lot's wife, to mention a few. (Matt. 10:15; 19:4-6; 24:37-39; Luke 17:32) Do you similarly consider carefully the activities common to your audience and their cultural background when selecting illustrations?

What if you are speaking, not to a large group, but to one person or perhaps to just a few? Endeavor to select an illustration that is especially appropriate for that small audience. When Jesus witnessed to a Samaritan woman at a well near Sychar, he spoke of "living wa-

ter,” ‘never getting thirsty again,’ and “a fountain of water bubbling up to impart everlasting life”—all of which were figures of speech directly connected to that woman’s work. (John 4:7-15) And when he spoke to men who had been washing their fishing nets, the figure of speech that he chose involved the fishing business. (Luke 5:2-11) In either instance, he might have made reference to farming, since they lived in an agricultural area, but how much more effective it was to allude to their personal activity as he painted a mental picture! Do you endeavor to do that?

Whereas Jesus directed attention to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” the apostle Paul was sent not only to Israel but also to the Gentile nations. (Matt. 15:24; Acts 9:15) Did this make a difference in the way Paul spoke? Yes. When writing to Christians in Corinth, he referred to foot races, mentioned the practice of eating meals in idol temples, and alluded to the triumphal processions, things with which those Gentiles would be acquainted.—1 Cor. 8:1-10; 9:24, 25; 2 Cor. 2:14-16.

Are you as careful as Jesus and Paul were in selecting illustrations and examples to use in your teaching? Do you consider the background and the daily activity of your listeners? Of course, there have been changes in the world since the first century. Many people have access to world news by means of television. Situations in foreign lands are often familiar to them. Where that is the case, it certainly is not amiss to draw on such news items for illustrations. Nevertheless, the things that touch people most deeply usually involve their personal lives—their home, their family, their work, the food they eat, the weather in their area.

If your illustration requires a lot of explanation, you may be talking about something that is not familiar to your audience. Such an illustration can easily overshadow the point of the instruction. As a result, the audience may remember your illustration but not the Scriptural truth that you were endeavoring to convey.

Instead of making complicated comparisons, Jesus used simple, everyday matters. He made use of little things to explain big things and easy things to make hard things plain. By making connections between everyday events and spiritual truths, Jesus helped people to

HOW TO DEVELOP THE ABILITY

Learn to think not only about what you want to say but also about your listeners.

Be observant of details of life around you.

Make it your goal each week to use at least one good illustration that you have not used before.

grasp more readily the spiritual truths he was teaching and to remember these. What a fine example to follow!

EXERCISE:

Analyze the illustration used at Matthew 12:10-12. Why was it effective?

*Illustrations that I might use
to reason with a teenager on
moral standards*

*Illustrations that I might use
to reason with an adult on
a basic Bible truth*

[illegible][illegible]

What do you need to do?

Use pictures, maps, charts, or other objects to make important points of instruction more vivid.

WHY employ visual aids in your teaching? Because doing so can make your teaching more effective. Jehovah God and Jesus Christ used visual aids, and we can learn from them. When visual aids are coupled with the spoken word, information is received through two senses. This may help to hold the attention of your audience and to strengthen the impression made. How can you incorporate visual aids into your presentations of the good news? How can you make sure that you are using them effectively?

How the Greatest Teachers Used Visual Aids. Jehovah employed memorable visual aids to teach vital lessons. One night he brought Abraham outdoors and said: “Look up, please, to the heavens and count the stars, if you are possibly able to count them. . . . So your seed will become.” (Gen. 15:5) Even though what was promised seemed impossible from a human standpoint, Abraham was deeply moved and put faith in Jehovah. On another occasion, Jehovah sent Jeremiah to the house of a potter and had him enter the potter’s workshop to watch the man shape clay. What a memorable lesson in the Creator’s authority over humans! (Jer. 18:1-6) And how could Jonah ever forget the lesson in mercy that Jehovah taught him by means of the bottle-gourd plant? (Jonah 4:6-11) Jehovah even told his prophets to act out prophetic messages while making use of certain appropriate objects. (1 Ki. 11:29-32; Jer. 27:1-8; Ezek. 4:1-17) The tabernacle and temple features are, in themselves, representations that help us to understand heavenly realities. (Heb. 9:9, 23, 24) God also made abundant use of visions to convey important information.—Ezek. 1:4-28; 8:2-18; Acts 10:9-16; 16:9, 10; Rev. 1:1.

How did Jesus employ visual aids? When the Pharisees and the party followers of Herod tried to trap him in his speech, Jesus asked for a denarius and drew attention to the image of Caesar on the coin.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A visual aid often makes a clearer or a more lasting impression on the mind than does the spoken word.

Then he explained that Caesar's things should be paid back to Caesar but that God's things should be paid back to God. (Matt. 22:19-21) To teach a lesson in honoring God with all that we have, Jesus pointed out a poor widow at the temple whose contribution—two small coins—was her whole means of living. (Luke 21:1-4) On another occasion he used a young child as an example of being humble, free from ambition. (Matt. 18:2-6) He also personally demonstrated the meaning of humility by washing his disciples' feet.—John 13:14.

EFFECTIVE VISUAL AIDS . . .

Should highlight or clarify things that deserve special emphasis.

Should have instruction as their primary objective.

Should be clearly visible to the entire audience if used on the platform.

Ways to Employ Visual Aids. Unlike Jehovah, we cannot communicate by means of visions. Yet, many thought-provoking pictures appear in the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses. Use them to help interested people visualize the earthly Paradise, promised in God's Word. On a home Bible study, you might draw a student's attention to a picture that is related to what you are studying and ask him to tell you what he sees. It is noteworthy that when certain visions were given to the prophet Amos, Jehovah asked: "What are you seeing, Amos?" (Amos 7:7, 8; 8:1, 2) You can ask similar questions as you direct the attention of people to pictures that are designed as visual teaching aids.

If you write out mathematical calculations or use a time line that shows a sequence of significant events, this can help people to understand more readily such prophecies as the "seven times" of Daniel 4:16 and the "seventy weeks" of Daniel 9:24. Such visual aids appear in several of our study publications.

In your family Bible study, discussion of such things as the tabernacle, the temple in Jerusalem, and Ezekiel's visionary temple can be made easier to understand if you use a picture or a diagram. These can be found in *Insight on the Scriptures*, the appendix of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, and various issues of *The Watchtower*.

When reading the Bible with your family, make good use of maps. Trace Abraham's journey from Ur to Haran and down to Bethel. Examine the route taken by Israel as the nation left Egypt and traveled to the Promised Land. Locate the area given to each tribe of Israel as an inheritance. Observe the extent of the domain of Solomon. Follow Elijah's route as he fled from Jezebel all the way to the wilderness

beyond Beer-sheba after being threatened by Jezebel. (1 Ki. 18:46–19:4) Locate the cities and towns where Jesus preached. Follow the travels of Paul, as described in the book of Acts.

Visual aids are useful when acquainting Bible students with the functions of the congregation. You might show your student a printed program and explain the kind of information that we discuss at assemblies and conventions. Many have been impressed with a personal tour of the Kingdom Hall or by a tour of a branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses. This can be an effective way of clearing away misconceptions about our work and its purpose. When giving a tour of the Kingdom Hall, indicate how it differs from other places of worship. Highlight the modest learning environment. Point out the features especially designed for our public ministry—literature distribution areas, territory maps, and contribution boxes (as opposed to collection plates).

Where videos prepared under the direction of the Governing Body are available, use these to build confidence in the Bible, to acquaint students with the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses, and to encourage viewers to live in harmony with Bible principles.

Using Visual Aids for Larger Groups. When well prepared and capably presented, visual aids can be effective teaching aids for larger groups. Such visual aids are provided in various forms by the faithful and discreet slave class.

Study material in *The Watchtower* usually includes visual aids in the form of artwork that can be used by the conductor to emphasize important points. This is also true of publications used at the Congregation Book Study.

Some outlines for public talks may seem to lend themselves to the use of visual aids to illustrate points. However, the greater good is usually accomplished by focusing attention on what is in the Bible, which most in the audience will have in their hands. If on occasion a picture or a brief outline of main points is necessary to convey one or several main points of a talk, check in advance to be sure that the visual aid can be clearly seen (or read) from the back of the meeting place. Such devices should be used sparingly.

Our objective in using visual aids when speaking and teaching is not to entertain. When a dignified visual aid is used, it should give

visual reinforcement to ideas that deserve special emphasis. Such aids serve a useful purpose when they help to clarify the spoken word, making it easier to understand, or when they provide strong evidence of the validity of what is said. Properly used, an apt visual aid may make such a deep impression that both the visual aid and the point of instruction are remembered for many years.

The ability to hear and the sense of sight both play important roles in learning. Remember how these senses have been used by the greatest Teachers, and strive to imitate them in your efforts to reach others.

EXERCISE:

List below visual aids that you might use . . .

*To build appreciation for
Jehovah’s organization*

*To teach certain Bible
truths to a child*

What do you need to do?

Use scriptures, illustrations, and questions in a logical way and in a manner that encourages people to listen and to think.

WE ARE grateful for the changes that God's Word has brought about in our lives, and we want others to benefit as well. Furthermore, we realize that how people respond to the good news will affect their future prospects. (Matt. 7:13, 14; John 12:48) We earnestly want them to accept the truth. However, our strong convictions and zeal need to be coupled with discernment in order to accomplish the most good.

A blunt statement of truth that exposes as false a cherished belief of another person, even when buttressed with the recitation of a long list of Scripture texts, is generally not well received. For example, if popular celebrations are simply denounced as being of pagan origin, this may not change how other people feel about them. A reasoning approach is usually more successful. What is involved in being reasonable?

The Scriptures tell us that "the wisdom from above is . . . peaceable, reasonable." (Jas. 3:17) The Greek word here rendered "reasonable" literally means "yielding." Some translations render it "considerate," "gentle," or "forbearing." Notice that reasonableness is associated with peaceableness. At Titus 3:2, it is mentioned along with mildness and is contrasted with belligerence. Philippians 4:5 urges us to be known for our "reasonableness." A person who is reasonable takes into account the background, circumstances, and feelings of the one to whom he is talking. He is willing to yield when it is appropriate to do so. Dealing with others in such a way helps to open their minds and hearts so that they are more receptive when we reason with them from the Scriptures.

Where to Begin. The historian Luke reports that when the apostle Paul was in Thessalonica, he used the Scriptures, "explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A blunt, dogmatic approach tends to close minds and hearts. A reasoning manner encourages discussion, gives people something to think about later, and leaves the way open for future conversations. It can be powerfully persuasive.

and to rise from the dead.” (Acts 17:2, 3) It is noteworthy that Paul did this in a Jewish synagogue. Those to whom he was speaking recognized the Hebrew Scriptures as an authority. It was appropriate to start with something that they accepted.

When Paul was speaking to Greeks at the Areopagus in Athens, he did not begin with references to the Scriptures. Instead, he started with things that they knew and accepted, and he used these to lead them to a consideration of the Creator and His purposes.—Acts 17:22-31.

HOW TO DO IT

When deciding how to begin your discussion, take into account the background and attitude of your listeners.

Do not challenge every wrong statement.

Speak with conviction, but recognize that others have the freedom to choose what they will believe, just as you do.

Instead of answering questions quickly, use other questions or illustrations to help the inquirer to reason on the matter.

Make it a habit to reason on a scripture by explaining key expressions, showing how the context or other scriptures shed light on the meaning, or using an example to show how the scripture applies.

In modern times, there are billions who do not recognize the Bible as an authority in their lives. But the life of nearly everyone is affected by harsh situations in the present system of things. People long for something better. If you first show concern for what disturbs them and then show how the Bible explains it, such a reasonable approach might move them to listen to what the Bible says about God’s purpose for humankind.

It may be that the heritage passed on to a Bible student by his parents included certain religious beliefs and customs. Now, the student learns that those beliefs and customs are not pleasing to God, and he rejects them in favor of what is taught in the Bible. How can the student explain that decision to his parents? They may feel that by rejecting the religious heritage they gave him, he is rejecting them. The Bible student may conclude that before trying to explain from the Bible the basis for his decision, he will need to reassure his parents of his love and respect for them.

When to Yield. Jehovah himself, though having full authority to command, shows outstanding reasonableness. When rescuing Lot and his family from Sodom, Jehovah’s angels urged: “Escape to the mountainous region for fear you may be swept away!” Yet, Lot pleaded: “Not that, please, Jehovah!” He begged to be permitted to flee to Zoar. Jehovah showed consideration for Lot by allowing him to do that; so when other cities were destroyed, Zoar was spared. Later, however, Lot followed Jehovah’s original direction and moved to the mountainous region.

(Gen. 19:17-30) Jehovah knew that his way was right, but he patiently showed consideration while Lot came to appreciate it.

In order to deal successfully with others, we too need to be reasonable. We may be convinced that the other person is wrong, and we may have in mind powerful arguments that would prove it. But at times it is better not to press the matter. Reasonableness does not mean compromising Jehovah's standards. It may simply be better to thank the other person for expressing himself or to let some wrong statements pass unchallenged so that you can focus the discussion on something that will accomplish more good. Even if he condemns what you believe, do not overreact. You might ask him why he feels as he does. Listen carefully to his reply. This will give you insight into his thinking. It may also lay the groundwork for constructive conversation at a future time.—Prov. 16:23; 19:11.

Jehovah has endowed humans with the ability to choose. He allows them to use that ability, even though they may not use it wisely. As Jehovah's spokesman, Joshua recounted God's dealings with Israel. But then he said: "Now if it is bad in your eyes to serve Jehovah, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve, whether the gods that your forefathers who were on the other side of the River served or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are dwelling. But as for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah." (Josh. 24:15) Our assignment today is to give "a witness," and we speak with conviction, but we do not try to pressure others to believe. (Matt. 24:14) They must choose, and we do not deny them that right.

Ask Questions. Jesus set an outstanding example in reasoning with people. He took into account their background and used illustrations that they would readily accept. He also made effective use of questions. This gave others opportunity to express themselves and revealed what was in their hearts. It also encouraged them to reason on the matter being considered.

A man versed in the Law asked Jesus: "Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit everlasting life?" Jesus could easily have given him the answer. But he invited the man to express himself. "What is written in the Law? How do *you* read?" The man answered correctly. Did his giving a correct answer end that discussion? Not at all. Jesus let the man continue, and a question that the man himself asked indicated that he was trying to prove himself righteous. He asked: "Who really is my

neighbor?" Rather than give a definition, which the man might have disputed because of the prevailing Jewish attitude toward Gentiles and Samaritans, Jesus invited him to reason on an illustration. It was about a neighborly Samaritan who came to the aid of a traveler that had been robbed and beaten, whereas a priest and a Levite did not. With a simple question, Jesus made sure that the man got the point. Jesus' manner of reasoning made the expression "neighbor" take on a meaning that this man had never before discerned. (Luke 10:25-37) What a fine example to imitate! Instead of doing all the talking yourself, in effect, thinking for your householder, learn how to use tactful questions and illustrations to encourage your listener to think.

Give Reasons. When the apostle Paul spoke in the synagogue in Thessalonica, he did more than read from an authority that his audience accepted. Luke reports that Paul explained, proved, and made application of what he read. As a result, "some of them became believers and associated themselves with Paul and Silas."—Acts 17:1-4.

Regardless of who may be in your audience, such a reasoning approach can be beneficial. That is true when you witness to relatives, speak to workmates or schoolmates, talk to strangers in your public witnessing, conduct a Bible study, or give a talk in the congregation. When you read a scripture, the meaning may be plain to you but perhaps not so to someone else. Your explanation or your application may sound like dogmatic assertion. Would isolating and explaining certain key expressions in the scripture help? Could you present supporting evidence, possibly from the context or from another scripture that deals with the subject? Might an illustration demonstrate the reasonableness of what you have said? Would questions help your audience to reason on the matter? Such a reasoning approach leaves a favorable impression and gives others much to think about.

EXERCISES:

(1) After you witness to someone who has strong views, analyze the way that you handled the discussion. What evidence did you present? What illustration did you include? What questions did you use? How did you show consideration for his background or feelings? If unable to do this in the field service, try it in a practice session with another publisher. (2) Rehearse how you would reason with someone (a peer or a child) who has in mind doing something that is wrong.

What do you need to do?

Provide satisfying evidence to support statements that you make.

WHEN you make a statement, your listeners are fully justified in asking: “Why is that true? What is the proof that what the speaker is saying should be accepted?” As a teacher, you have the obligation either to answer such questions or to help your listeners find the answers. If the point is crucial to your argument, make sure that you give your listeners strong reasons to accept it. This will contribute to making your presentation persuasive.

The apostle Paul used persuasion. By sound argument, logical reasoning, and earnest entreaty, he sought to bring about a change of mind in those to whom he spoke. He set a fine example for us. (Acts 18:4; 19:8) Of course, some orators use persuasion to mislead people. (Matt. 27: 20; Acts 14:19; Col. 2:4) They may start with a wrong premise, rely on biased sources, use superficial arguments, ignore facts that disagree with their view, or appeal more to emotion than to reason. We should be careful to avoid all such methods.

Based Firmly on God’s Word. What we teach must not be of our own originality. We endeavor to share with others what we have learned from the Bible. In this, we have been greatly helped by the publications of the faithful and discreet slave class. These publications encourage us to examine the Scriptures carefully. In turn, we direct others to the Bible, not with the goal of proving that we are right, but with the humble desire of letting them see for themselves what it says. We agree with Jesus Christ, who said in prayer to his Father: “Your word is truth.” (John 17:17) There is no greater authority than Jehovah God, the Creator of heaven and earth. The soundness of our arguments depends on their being based on his Word.

At times you may speak to people who are not familiar with the Bible or who do not recognize it as the Word of God. You should exercise good judgment as to when and how you bring in Bible texts.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Your listeners will not believe or act on what you say unless they are convinced that it is true.

But you should endeavor to direct their attention to that authoritative source of information as soon as possible.

Should you conclude that simply quoting a relevant scripture provides an irrefutable argument? Not necessarily. You may need to direct attention to the context to show that the scripture truly does support what you are saying. If you are merely drawing a principle

from a scripture and the context is not discussing that subject, more evidence may be needed. You may need to use other scriptures that bear on the matter in order to satisfy your audience that what you are saying is really solidly based on the Scriptures.

Avoid overstating what a scripture proves. Read it carefully. The text may deal with the general subject that you are discussing. Yet, for your argument to be persuasive, your listener must be able to see in it what you are saying that it proves.

Supported by Corroborative Evidence. In some cases, it may be helpful to use evidence from a reliable source outside of the Bible to help people appreciate the reasonableness of the Scriptures.

ness of the Scriptures.

For example, you may point to the visible universe as proof that there is a Creator. You may draw attention to natural laws, such as gravity, and reason that the existence of such laws presupposes that there is a Lawgiver. Your logic will be sound if it is in harmony with what is stated in God's Word. (Job 38:31-33; Ps. 19:1; 104:24; Rom. 1:20) Such evidence is helpful because it demonstrates that what the Bible says is consistent with observable facts.

Are you endeavoring to help someone realize that the Bible really is the Word of God? You might quote scholars who say that it is, but does that prove it? Such quotations merely help people who respect those scholars. Could you use science to prove that the Bible is true? If you were to use the opinions of imperfect scientists as your authority, you would be building on a shaky foundation. On the other hand, if you *start* with the Word of God and then point to findings of science that highlight the Bible's accuracy, your arguments will be established on a sound foundation.

Whatever you are endeavoring to prove, present sufficient evi-

HOW TO DO IT

Instead of merely making assertions, supply satisfying evidence to support important points.

Base arguments firmly on the Scriptures.

Use corroborative evidence to fit your objectives and the needs of your audience.

dence. The amount of evidence required will depend on your audience. For example, if you are discussing the last days as described at 2 Timothy 3:1-5, you may draw the attention of your audience to a well-known news report indicating that men have “no natural affection.” That one example may be adequate to prove that this aspect of the sign of the last days is now being fulfilled.

An analogy—a comparison of two things that have important elements in common—can often be helpful. The analogy does not in itself prove a matter; its validity must be tested against what the Bible itself says. But the analogy may help a person to see the reasonableness of an idea. Such an analogy might be used, for instance, when explaining that God’s Kingdom is a government. You might point out that like human governments, God’s Kingdom has rulers, subjects, laws, a judicial system, and an educational system.

Real-life experiences can often be used to demonstrate the wisdom of applying the Bible’s counsel. Personal experiences can also be used to support statements made. For instance, when you point out to a person the importance of reading and studying the Bible, you might explain how doing that has improved your life. To encourage his brothers, the apostle Peter referred to the transfiguration, of which he was an eyewitness. (2 Pet. 1:16-18) Paul too cited his own experiences. (2 Cor. 1:8-10; 12:7-9) Of course, you should use your personal experiences sparingly so that you do not draw undue attention to yourself.

Since people differ in background and thinking, evidence that convinces one person may not satisfy another. Therefore, consider the views of your listeners when deciding which arguments you will use and how you will present them. Proverbs 16:23 states: “The heart of the wise one causes his mouth to show insight, and to his lips it adds persuasiveness.”

EXERCISES:

(1) Turn to the main heading “Jesus Christ” in *Reasoning From the Scriptures*. Notice how questions are answered with primary emphasis on the Bible. (2) Examine the opening series of articles in an issue of *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* Select several of the main points that are developed. Underscore the key scriptures, and mark the corroborative evidence.

What do you need to do?

Take into account how people feel about matters being discussed. Help them to develop feelings and motivations that will result in their drawing close to God and becoming his friends.

IN ADDITION to giving people a witness, you need to make an effort to reach their heart. In the Bible, the heart is often set in contrast to what a person appears to be on the outside. The figurative heart represents what a person is inside—how he feels, all that he thinks about, why he thinks about it, and how those thoughts influence his actions. It is in this figurative heart that the seed of truth is sown. (Matt. 13:19) And it is from the heart that obedience to God must stem.—Prov. 3:1; Rom. 6:17.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

To please Jehovah, people must have God's Word firmly implanted in their hearts.

So that your teaching can penetrate to such depths, focus on these objectives: (1) Discern what has already influenced your listener's heart. (2) Strengthen positive qualities, such as love and godly fear. (3) Encourage your listener to analyze his inner motives so that he can be fully pleasing to Jehovah.

Using Discernment. The reasons why people have not yet accepted the truth vary. When conducting a home Bible study, you may need to break down prejudice and provide facts to offset wrong ideas the student has, or you may just need to supply proof. Ask yourself: 'Is this person aware that as a human he has spiritual needs? How much does he already believe? What does he not believe? Why has he arrived at those conclusions? Does he need help to overcome desires that could prevent him from accepting the responsibilities that come with knowing the truth?'

It is not always easy to find out why people believe as they do. "Counsel in the heart of a man is as deep waters," says Proverbs 20:5, "but the man of discernment is one that will draw it up." Discernment is the ability to grasp what is not readily evident. This requires keen observation and a caring attitude.

Not all communication is verbal. A certain topic may produce a

change in a student's facial expression or tone of voice. If you are a parent, you no doubt realize that a change in your child's behavior may indicate that he is reacting to a new influence in life. Do not ignore these signs. They are glimpses of the inner person.

Well-chosen questions can help you to draw out what is in someone's heart. You might ask: "How do you feel about . . . ?" "What convinced you that . . . ?" "How would you react if . . . ?" Yet, be careful not to barrage people with questions. You might tactfully preface your questions with, "Do you mind if I ask . . . ?" Discovering what is in the heart is a painstaking task that cannot be rushed. In most cases trust must be built up over a period of time before a person is willing to reveal his inmost feelings. Even then, care must be exercised so that the person does not feel that you are asking about things that are not your business.—1 Pet. 4:15.

The way you react to what you hear also requires discernment. Remember that your objective is to understand people so that you can determine what Bible-based information is likely to motivate them. Quickly suppress any urge to expose the wrongness of their viewpoints. Instead, be alert to discern the feelings behind the words. Then you will know how to respond; and your student, feeling understood, will more likely think seriously about what you say.—Prov. 16:23.

To some extent, you can motivate individuals even when you are addressing a large group. If you have good audience contact, are alert to facial expressions, and ask thought-provoking rhetorical questions, you will likely get an idea of how your listeners feel about what you are saying. If you know your audience well, show consideration for their circumstances. Take into account the general attitude of the congregation as you reason with them from God's Word.—Gal. 6:18.

Stirring Up Beneficial Feelings. After you gain some understanding of what a person believes, what he does not believe, and why, you will be able to build on that. Following his resurrection, Jesus reached the hearts of his disciples by "fully opening up the Scriptures" to them in the light of events that had recently occurred. (Luke

HOW TO IMPROVE

Display genuine love.

Discern what has influenced your listener's heart.

Emphasize Jehovah's wonderful qualities.

Help listeners to understand how to analyze and refine their motives.

24:32) You too should strive to make the connection between what a person has experienced, what he longs for, and what he is seeing in God's Word. A student's heart will be touched in a beneficial way when he clearly realizes: "This is THE TRUTH!"

When you emphasize Jehovah's goodness, his love, his undeserved kindness, and the rightness of his ways, you help those whom you teach to build their love for God. When you take time to show your listeners the fine qualities that God sees in them as individuals, you give them reason to believe that a personal relationship with him is possible. This can be accomplished by reflecting on such texts as Psalm 139:1-3, Luke 21:1-4, and John 6:44 and by helping your listeners to appreciate the depth of Jehovah's loving attachment to his faithful servants. (Rom. 8:38, 39) Explain that Jehovah looks beyond our mistakes and sees our entire life course, our zeal for pure worship, our love for his name. (2 Chron. 19:2, 3; Heb. 6:10) He remembers even the smallest details about our makeup, and he will, in a remarkable way, restore to life "all those in the memorial tombs." (John 5:28, 29; Luke 12:6, 7) Since humans are made in the image and likeness of God, a discussion of his qualities will often strike a responsive chord in the inner person.—Gen. 1:27.

The heart can also be touched when a person learns to view other people as Jehovah does. It stands to reason that if our God shows tender regard for us as individuals, then he also shows the same consideration for others, irrespective of their background, nationality, or race. (Acts 10:34, 35) Once a person has reached such an understanding, there will be a solid Scriptural basis for him to eradicate hatred and prejudice from his heart. This will enable him to reach out peacefully to others as he learns to carry out the divine will.

Godly fear is another feeling that you should help others to cultivate. (Ps. 111:10; Rev. 14:6, 7) Such profound reverence, or fear of God, can motivate a person to achieve what may not be possible in his own strength. By discussing Jehovah's awesome activities and his extraordinary loving-kindness, you can help others to develop a wholesome dread of displeasing him.—Ps. 66:5; Jer. 32:40.

Make sure that your listeners understand that their conduct matters to Jehovah. He has feelings, and by our response to his direction, we cause him either sorrow or rejoicing. (Ps. 78:40-42) Show people

why their personal conduct can make a difference in answering Satan's challenge to God.—Prov. 27:11.

Help your audience to see that meeting God's requirements is beneficial for them. (Isa. 48:17) One way this can be done is by pointing to the physical and emotional consequences of rejecting God's wisdom, even momentarily. Explain how sin distances us from God, deprives others of the opportunity to learn the truth from us, and otherwise encroaches on their rights. (1 Thess. 4:6) Help your audience to treasure the blessings that they already enjoy as a result of having kept God's laws. Strengthen their appreciation for the fact that walking in Jehovah's righteous ways spares us much adversity. Once a person has faith in the wisdom of God's ways, he will be repulsed by every course in opposition to them. (Ps. 119:104) He will see obedience, not as a burden, but as a way to express loving devotion to Jehovah as a person.

Helping Others to Make an Examination. In order to continue to grow spiritually, people need to become sensitive to what is in their hearts. Explain how the Bible can help them to do this.

Help your listeners to realize that the Bible is more than a record of commandments, counsel, historical events, and prophecies. It also reveals the thinking of God. At James 1:22-25, God's Word is compared to a mirror. By our reaction to what it says and to the way that Jehovah carries out his purpose, the Bible's message shows up what is in our heart. Thus it reveals how God, who is "the examiner of hearts," sees us. (Prov. 17:3) Encourage your listeners to keep this in mind. Urge them to ponder what God has preserved for us in the Bible record and what adjustments they may need to make in their life in order to be more pleasing to him. Help them to view Bible reading as a means of getting Jehovah's estimation of the "thoughts and intentions of the heart" so that they can cooperate with God in making any necessary adjustments.—Heb. 4:12; Rom. 15:4.

Some Bible students may want to act on what they are learning; yet they worry about what other people will think. They may be battling certain strong fleshly desires. Or they may be rationalizing to find some way to serve God while clinging to practices of the world. Point out the dangers of such indecision. (1 Ki. 18:21) Urge them to pray to God to examine and refine their hearts.—Ps. 26:2; 139:23, 24.

Show them that Jehovah understands their struggle and that the Bible explains what is taking place. (Rom. 7:22, 23) Help them to exercise care so that the inclinations of an imperfect heart are not allowed to dominate.—Prov. 3:5, 6; 28:26; Jer. 17:9, 10.

Encourage each one to analyze his motives for doing things. Teach him to ask himself: ‘Why do I want to do this? Will it show Jehovah that I truly appreciate all that he has done for me?’ Work to strengthen the conviction that an approved relationship with Jehovah is the most valuable asset that anyone can possess.

Help your audience to grasp the significance of serving Jehovah with their “whole heart.” (Luke 10:27) This means that all their feelings, desires, and motives must be brought into line with Jehovah’s ways. So teach your listeners to analyze not only what they *do* but also how they *feel* about God’s requirements and what their *motives* are in serving him. (Ps. 37:4) As your students discern areas in which improvement is needed, encourage them to pray to Jehovah: “Unify my heart to fear your name.”—Ps. 86:11.

When a student develops a personal relationship with Jehovah, he will obey God as a result of faith and not simply because of your urgings. He will then, on his own, “keep on making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord.” (Eph. 5:10; Phil. 2:12) Such heartfelt obedience delights Jehovah.—Prov. 23:15.

Bear in mind that Jehovah is the one who estimates hearts and draws people into a relationship with him. (Prov. 21:2; John 6:44) Our role is one of cooperation. (1 Cor. 3:9) It is “as though God were making entreaty *through* us.” (2 Cor. 5:20; Acts 16:14) Jehovah does not coerce anyone to accept the truth, but as we use the Scriptures, he may cause our listeners to realize that what they are hearing is the answer to their questions—or their prayers. Approach every teaching opportunity with this awareness, and earnestly ask Jehovah for his guidance and help.—1 Chron. 29:18, 19; Eph. 1:16-18.

EXERCISES:

(1) Read Matthew 6:21, and analyze how this text applies in your life. Read also verses 19 and 20, and consider what adjustments your heart moves you to make. (2) Analyze what motivated you to start serving Jehovah. What motivates you at present? What motivations that will please Jehovah do you want to strengthen?

What do you need to do?

Deliver your talk within the allotted time, and use appropriate portions of your time for each part of the talk.

WHILE principal emphasis should be placed on the quality of your teaching, the timing of your talks also deserves attention. Our meetings are scheduled to begin and end at specified times. Achieving this requires the cooperation of everyone who has a part on the program.

In Bible times, people's view of life was different from what it is in many places today. Time was expressed in such approximate terms as "about the third hour" or "about the tenth hour." (Matt. 20:3-6; John 1:39) There was rarely a cause for concern about precise timing of daily activities. In some parts of the world today, there is a similar view of time.

However, even though local custom or personal preference may cause people to be somewhat relaxed regarding time, we can benefit by learning to give it appropriate attention. When several are assigned parts on a program, consideration needs to be given to the time allotted for each part. The principle "let all things take place decently and by arrangement" can well be applied to the timing of our meeting assignments.—1 Cor. 14:40.

Achieving Good Timing. Preparation is the key. Usually, speakers who have difficulty with timing have failed to prepare sufficiently. They may be overconfident. Or they may simply put off preparation until the last minute. Good timing starts with appreciation for your assignment and a willingness to prepare well.

Is yours a reading assignment? First, review Studies 4 to 7, which involve fluency, pausing, sense stress, and emphasizing main ideas. Then, apply that counsel as you read aloud the material assigned to you. Time yourself. Do you need to read faster in order to finish in the allotted time? Increase your pace on portions of less importance, but continue to use pausing and a slower pace to emphasize

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Sufficient time needs to be allotted to each of the main points of instruction. It is important to end the meeting on time.

important ideas. Practice again and again. As your fluency improves, it will be easier to regulate your timing.

Will you be speaking from notes? It is not necessary to make your notes very extensive—virtually a manuscript—to ensure proper timing. When working on Study 25, you learned a better way. Keep in mind these five points: (1) Prepare good material, but not too much. (2) Have the main ideas clearly in mind, but do not memorize whole sentences. (3) Mark on your outline how much time you plan to use for each part of your talk or how much time should have elapsed when you reach certain points. (4) When preparing, consider which details might be dropped if you find yourself running behind schedule. (5) Practice your delivery.

HOW TO DO IT

Prepare well—and far enough in advance.

Assign an appropriate amount of time to each part of your talk, and then hold to that.

Rehearse your delivery.

Rehearsing is important. As you rehearse, watch the timing of each section of your talk. Go over your talk again and again until your entire talk fits within the assigned time. Do not try to squeeze in too much material. Allow yourself some leeway because delivering your talk

before an audience may take a little longer than when practicing in private.

Proportioning the Parts. Good timing is closely related to the proper proportioning of the parts of a talk. Most of the time should be spent in delivering the body. That is where the main points of instruction are. The introduction should be just long enough to accomplish the three objectives discussed in Study 38. The body should not be so long that there is insufficient time for an effective conclusion, in harmony with Study 39.

Your efforts to achieve good timing will result in a better talk and will show your respect for others who have parts on the program as well as for the entire congregation.

EXERCISE:

Plan to arrive at congregation meetings 15 to 20 minutes before they begin by allotting time needed for both you and your family to get ready. Allow time for travel. Consider how to deal with common problems that could cause you to be late. Try your plan several times, making needed adjustments. Similar principles apply when you give talks.

What do you need to do?

Incite others to action by convincing reasoning or by advice from a respected source. This requires speaking in an earnest manner.

CHRISTIAN elders must be able to “exhort by the teaching that is healthful.” (Titus 1:9) At times this must be done in the face of very difficult situations. It is important to give counsel in harmony with Scriptural guidelines. Hence, elders must heed the counsel: “Continue applying yourself . . . to exhortation.” (1 Tim. 4:13) Although our discussion here is directed primarily to elders or those who are reaching out for this privilege, there are times when parents must exhort their children or those conducting Bible studies need to exhort their Bible students. In such cases, similar guidelines will apply.

Situations That Call for It. To determine when exhortation is needed, it is helpful to examine situations recorded in the Bible where exhortation was given. The apostle Peter exhorted elders to pay attention to their responsibility as shepherds of the flock of God. (1 Pet. 5:1, 2) Paul counseled Titus to exhort younger men to “be sound in mind.” (Titus 2:6) Paul urged fellow Christians to “speak in agreement” and to avoid those who sought to cause divisions among the brothers. (1 Cor. 1:10; Rom. 16:17; Phil. 4:2) Though Paul commended members of the congregation in Thessalonica for the good things that they were doing, he exhorted them to apply even more fully the instruction that they had received. (1 Thess. 4:1, 10) Peter entreated fellow Christians to “keep abstaining from fleshly desires.” (1 Pet. 2:11) Jude exhorted his brothers to “put up a hard fight for the faith” in view of the influence of ungodly ones who indulged in loose conduct. (Jude 3, 4) Christians in general were urged to exhort one another so that none would become hardened by the deceptive power of sin. (Heb. 3:13) Peter exhorted Jews who had not yet put faith in Christ: “Get saved from this crooked generation.”—Acts 2:40.

What qualities are needed in order to make strong appeals in such

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Effective exhortation impresses others with the urgency of following the course of action that has Jehovah’s blessing.

situations? How can the one doing the exhorting make his appeal urgent without being oppressive or harsh?

“On the Basis of Love.” If our exhortation is not given “on the basis of love,” it may sound severe. (Philem. 9) True, when immediate action is required, the speaker’s delivery should convey the urgency of the situation. A soft-spoken manner could sound apologetic. At

the same time, the appeal should be made with earnestness and depth of feeling. A loving appeal will be more likely to motivate the audience. When speaking on behalf of himself and his companions, Paul told the Thessalonians: “You well know how, as a father does his children, we kept exhorting each one of you.” (1 Thess. 2:11) Those Christian overseers entreated the brothers with love. Let your expressions spring from genuine concern for your listeners.

Be tactful. Do not alienate those you are endeavoring to incite to action. At the same time, do not hold back from telling your audience “all the counsel of God.” (Acts 20:27) Appreciative ones will not take offense or love you less because you have kindly urged them to do what is right.—Ps. 141:5.

Often, it is beneficial to preface exhortation with specific, sincere commendation. Think of the good things that your brothers are doing—things with which Jehovah must be well pleased: the faith manifest in their work, the love that moves them to exert themselves, and their endurance in the face of trialsome situations. (1 Thess. 1:2-8; 2 Thess. 1:3-5) This will help your brothers to feel appreciated and understood, and it will put them in a receptive frame of mind for the appeal that follows.

“With All Long-Suffering.” Exhortation should be given “with all long-suffering.” (2 Tim. 4:2) What does this entail? Long-suffering includes the patient endurance of wrong or provocation. One who is long-suffering maintains the hope that his listeners will apply what he says. Giving exhortation in this spirit will prevent your listeners from thinking that you assume the worst about them. Your confidence that your brothers and sisters want to serve Jehovah to the best of their ability will appeal to their desire to do what is right.—Heb. 6:9.

HOW TO DO IT

Show love and long-suffering, and speak with earnestness.

Base your exhortation firmly on God’s Word.

Back up your exhortation by being a fine example.

“By the Teaching That Is Healthful.” How can an elder “exhort by the teaching that is healthful”? By “holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching.” (Titus 1:9) Rather than expressing your personal opinion, make God’s Word the power of your appeal. Let the Bible shape your view of what needs to be said. List the benefits of applying what the Bible says on the matter at hand. Have well in mind the consequences—both present and future—of not conforming to God’s Word, and use these to convince your audience of the need to take appropriate action.

Be sure that you clearly explain to your audience what they should do and how they should do it. Make it clear that your reasoning is firmly rooted in the Scriptures. If the Scriptures allow for some latitude in any decision to be made, outline the extent of that latitude. Then, in your conclusion, make a final appeal that will strengthen your listeners’ determination to act.

With “Freeness of Speech.” To exhort others effectively, one must have “freeness of speech in the faith.” (1 Tim. 3:13) What enables a person to speak freely? The fact that his “example of fine works” harmonizes with what he is urging his brothers to do. (Titus 2:6, 7; 1 Pet. 5:3) Where this is the case, those being urged to action will realize that the one exhorting them does not expect them to do what he himself does not do. They will see that they can imitate his faith even as he endeavors to imitate Christ.—1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:17.

Exhortation based on God’s Word and given in a spirit of love can accomplish much good. Those who are charged with giving such exhortation should apply themselves to do it well.—Rom. 12:8.

EXERCISE:

Read the apostle Paul’s letter to Philemon. Look for these elements: (1) warm commendation, (2) the basis on which Paul appeals in behalf of Onesimus, (3) the argument used to convince Philemon of how he ought to receive his returning slave, and (4) Paul’s confidence that Philemon will do the right thing. Consider how you can imitate this pattern when giving exhortation.

What do you need to do?

Impart hope or courage to your audience. Invigorate and strengthen them.

REGARDLESS of the problems they face, servants of God should be able to find encouragement in the Christian congregation. To that end, elders especially must ensure that their talks and counsel are encouraging. The elders should prove to be “like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land.”—Isa. 32:2.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

People are under great pressure from the world. Many get discouraged. What a speaker says and how he says it can deeply affect his audience.

If you are an elder, do your talks provide refreshment and comfort? Do they invigorate those who are endeavoring to serve Jehovah faithfully? Do they impart strength to persevere in doing God’s will in spite of public apathy or opposition? What if some in your audience are depressed, suffering under the weight of severe economic pressures, or battling a serious illness for which there is

no known cure? You can ‘strengthen your brothers with the words of your mouth.’—Job 16:5.

Use the opportunity that you have as a speaker to help your brothers draw hope and strength from Jehovah and the provisions that he has made.—Rom. 15:13; Eph. 6:10.

Call to Mind What Jehovah Has Done. An important way to inspire courage is by showing how Jehovah helped his people through difficulties in the past.—Rom. 15:4.

Jehovah told Moses to “encourage” and “strengthen” Joshua before Israel entered the Promised Land, which at the time was occupied by enemy nations. How did Moses do that? In Joshua’s presence, Moses reminded the entire nation of the things Jehovah had done for them as they left Egypt. (Deut. 3:28; 7:18) Moses also recounted victories that Jehovah had given them over the Amorites. Then Moses urged Joshua: “Be courageous and strong.” (Deut. 31:1-8) When seeking to encourage your brothers, do you help them to

draw strength by remembering what Jehovah has already done for them?

Sometimes individuals are so overwhelmed by their problems that they wonder whether they will ever experience the blessings of the Kingdom. Remind them of the dependability of Jehovah's promises. —Josh. 23:14.

In some lands our brothers are faced with government decrees forbidding the preaching of the good news. In such cases, loving elders can help fellow believers to draw strength from the experiences of the apostles of Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:1–5:42) And highlighting the way God maneuvered events as recorded in the book of Esther will most certainly inspire the brothers to have courage.

At times individuals attend congregation meetings but do not progress any further. They may feel that God could never forgive them because their former way of life was so bad. Perhaps you could relate how Jehovah dealt with King Manasseh. (2 Chron. 33:1-16) Or you might tell about people in ancient Corinth who changed their way of life, became Christians, and were declared righteous by God. —1 Cor. 6:9-11.

Do certain ones feel that the problems they are experiencing indicate that they have lost God's favor? You might remind them of what Job experienced and how he was richly blessed because he held fast his integrity to Jehovah. (Job 1:1-22; 10:1; 42:12, 13; Ps. 34:19) Job's false comforters had wrongly contended that Job must have committed some sin. (Job 4:7, 8; 8:5, 6) In contrast, when strengthening the disciples and "encouraging them to remain in the faith," Paul and Barnabas said: "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations." (Acts 14:21, 22) Likewise today, you can strengthen those undergoing trials by pointing out that endurance under tribulation is required of all Christians and is of great value in the eyes of God.—Prov. 27:11; Matt. 24:13; Rom. 5:3, 4; 2 Tim. 3:12.

Encourage your listeners to think about ways in which Jehovah has fulfilled his promises in their own lives. With a little prompting, they may see how Jehovah has already acted toward them personally, just as he promised. At Psalm 32:8, we read: "I shall make you have insight and instruct you in the way you should go. I will give advice with my eye upon you." By helping your listeners recall how

Jehovah has guided or strengthened them, you will enable them to see in a deeply personal way that Jehovah cares for them and that he will really help them through whatever trials they face at present. —Isa. 41:10, 13; 1 Pet. 5:7.

Show Delight in What God Is Doing Now. When seeking to encourage your brothers, draw attention to what Jehovah is doing right now. Speaking about these things in a way that shows that they delight you will stir up similar feelings in the hearts of your listeners.

HOW TO DO IT

When preparing a talk, remind yourself of the problems faced by those in your audience. Consider carefully how to encourage and strengthen them.

Make good use of God's Word. Show how what it says relates to situations we face.

Speak with sincere feeling.

Consider how Jehovah helps us to cope with the pressures of life. He shows us the best way to live. (Isa. 30:21) He explains the reasons for crime, injustice, poverty, sickness, and death and tells us how he will put an end to all of these. He surrounds us with a loving brotherhood. He grants us the precious privilege of prayer. He entrusts us with the privilege of being his Witnesses. He opens our eyes to see that Christ has already been enthroned in the heavens and that the last days of the old system are rapidly coming to an end.—Rev. 12:1-12.

Add to those blessings our congregation meetings, assemblies, and conventions. When you speak of these provisions in a way that shows genuine appreciation for them, you will strengthen the determination of others not to neglect assembling with their brothers.—Heb. 10:23-25.

Reports that give evidence of Jehovah's blessing on our efforts in the field ministry are likewise a source of strength. In the first century when Paul and Barnabas were en route to Jerusalem, they caused "great joy to all the brothers" by relating in detail the conversion of people of the nations. (Acts 15:3) You too can bring joy to the brothers by sharing upbuilding experiences with them.

Added encouragement will result when individuals are helped to see the value of what they are doing. Commend them for the share they are having in the Christian ministry. Commend those whose activity is severely limited by old age and illness but who are showing faithful endurance. Remind them that Jehovah does not forget the love they have shown for his name. (Heb. 6:10) Faith proved under test is a priceless possession. (1 Pet. 1:6, 7) Our brothers need to be reminded of this.

Speak With Feeling About the Hope Ahead. The inspired promises of things to come are a major source of encouragement to all who love God. Perhaps most in your audience have often heard these expressions. But by the appreciation you show when you speak about these promises, you can bring them to life, instill confidence in their fulfillment, and cause hearts to overflow with gratitude. Applying what you have learned in the Theocratic Ministry School can help you to do that.

Jehovah himself is the Great Encourager and Giver of strength to his people. Yet, you can cooperate with him in conveying such blessings. When you speak to the congregation, make good use of the opportunity to do that.

EXERCISE:

When doing your Bible reading or your personal study this week, select a portion that you feel you can use to encourage others. Share it with someone in the congregation.

Keep On Making Progress

HAVE you personally worked on each of the points of counsel in this school program? Have you also completed the recommended exercises? Are you applying each point when giving talks, whether in the school or at other meetings, and when sharing in the field ministry?

Continue to benefit from Theocratic Ministry School education. No matter how long you have been giving talks, there are areas in which you can make further progress.

THE MESSAGE WE MUST PROCLAIM

Jehovah has given us a responsibility and a great privilege, saying: "You are my witnesses, . . . and I am God." (Isa. 43:12)

We are not simply believers. We are witnesses who publicly testify to vital truths contained in God's inspired Word.

What is the message that Jehovah has commissioned us to deliver in our day? It focuses attention on Jehovah God, Jesus Christ, and the Messianic Kingdom.

"FEAR THE TRUE GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS"

LONG before the Christian era, Jehovah told faithful Abraham about a provision for "all nations of the earth" to bless themselves. (Gen. 22:18) He also inspired Solomon to write regarding a fundamental requirement that rests on all humans: "Fear the true God and keep his commandments. For this is the whole obligation of man." (Eccl. 12:13) But how would the people living in all nations learn about these things?

Although there have always been some people who believed God's word, the Bible indicates that the intensive global witness that would actually reach all nations with the good news was reserved for "the Lord's day." This began in 1914. (Rev. 1:10) Concerning this time, Revelation 14:6, 7 foretold that a vital proclamation under angelic direction would be made "to every nation and tribe and tongue and people." They would be urged: "Fear God and give him glory, be-

cause the hour of the judgment by him has arrived, and so worship the One who made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters." It is God's will that this message be delivered. We have the privilege of sharing in that work.

"The True God." When Jehovah declared, "You are my witnesses," it was in a setting where the issue of Godship was being debated. (Isa. 43:10) The message that must be delivered is not merely that people should have a religion or believe in a god. Rather, they need to be given the opportunity to learn that the Creator of heaven and earth is the only true God. (Isa. 45:5, 18, 21, 22; John 17:3) Only the true God can reliably foretell the future. It is our privilege to point out that the fulfillment of Jehovah's word in the past gives sound basis for confidence that everything he has promised for the future will come true.—Josh. 23:14; Isa. 55:10, 11.

Of course, many to whom we witness worship other gods or claim to worship no god at all. In order to gain a hearing ear, we may need to begin with something of mutual interest. We can benefit from the example recorded at Acts 17:22-31. Notice that although the apostle Paul was tactful, he clearly stated the accountability of all people to the God who is Creator of heaven and earth.

Making Known God's Name. Do not fail to identify the true God by name. Jehovah loves his name. (Ex. 3:15; Isa. 42:8) He wants people to know that name. He caused his illustrious name to be included in the Bible more than 7,000 times. It is our responsibility to acquaint people with it.—Deut. 4:35.

The future life prospects of all humankind depend on their knowing Jehovah and calling on him in faith. (Joel 2:32; Mal. 3:16; 2 Thess. 1:8) Yet, most people do not know Jehovah. That includes large numbers who profess to worship the God of the Bible. Even if they have a Bible and read it, they still may not know God's personal name because it has been removed from many modern translations. The only acquaintance that some people have with the name Jehovah is that their religious leaders have told them not to use it.

How might we acquaint people with God's name? Nothing is quite as effective as

showing it to them in the Bible—their own copy if possible. In some translations, that name appears thousands of times. In others, it may appear only at Psalm 83:18 or Exodus 6:3-6, or it may be found in a footnote on Exodus 3:14, 15 or 6:3. In a number of translations, substitute expressions, such as “Lord” and “God,” are set in distinctive type when the original-language text contains the personal name of God. Where modern translators have omitted God's personal name entirely, you may need to use an older Bible translation to show people what has been done. In some lands you might point out the divine name in religious hymns or in an inscription on a public building.

Even for those who worship other gods, Jeremiah 10:10-13 in the *New World Translation* can be used effectively. It not only states the name of God but also clearly explains who he is.

Do not hide the name Jehovah behind such labels as “God” and “Lord,” as Christendom does. This does not mean that the name has to be used at the beginning of every conversation. Because of prejudice, some people would cut off the discussion. But after establishing a basis for conversation, do not shy away from using the divine name.

ALL PEOPLE NEED TO HEAR . . .

That Jehovah is the Creator of heaven and earth.

That Jehovah is the only true God.

That Jehovah is a God of outstanding love, superlative wisdom, complete justice, and almighty power.

That we are accountable to Jehovah for what we do.

It is noteworthy that the Bible uses the personal name of God more often than the combined number of times that it uses such designations as “Lord” and “God.” Even so, Bible writers did not try to include the divine name in every sentence. They simply did it naturally, freely, and respectfully. That is a good pattern to follow.

The Person Identified by the Name. Although the fact that God has a personal name is in itself a profound truth, that is only the beginning.

In order to love Jehovah and call on him in faith, people need to know the kind of God he is. When Jehovah made his name known to Moses on Mount Sinai, He did much more than just repeat the word “Jehovah.” He drew attention to some of His outstanding qualities. (Ex. 34:6, 7) That is an example for us to imitate.

Whether you are witnessing to newly interested people or giving talks in the congregation, when you speak about the blessings of the Kingdom, point out what these indicate about the God who makes such promises. When referring to his commandments, emphasize the wisdom and the love that they reflect. Make clear that God’s requirements do not impose a hardship on us but, rather, are designed to benefit us. (Isa. 48:17, 18; Mic. 6:8) Show how each of Je-

hovah’s expressions of power reveals something about his personality, his standards, his purpose. Draw attention to the balance shown in the way that Jehovah manifests his qualities. Let people hear you express your own feelings about Jehovah. Your love for Jehovah can help to stir up such love in others.

The urgent message for our day calls on all

people to fear God. By what we say, we should seek to build up such godly fear. This fear is a wholesome fear, an awe of Jehovah, a profound reverence for him. (Ps. 89:7) It includes an awareness that Jehovah is the supreme Judge and that our future life prospects depend on our having his approval. (Luke 12:5; Rom. 14:12) Such fear, therefore, is in-

tertwined with deep love for him and, consequently, an intense desire to please him. (Deut. 10:12, 13) Godly fear also moves us to hate what is bad, to obey God’s commandments, and to worship him with a complete heart. (Deut. 5:29; 1 Chron. 28:9; Prov. 8:13) It safeguards us against trying to serve God while loving things of the world.—1 John 2:15-17.

God’s Name—“A Strong Tower.” People who truly come to know Jehovah enjoy great protection. This is not simply because they use his personal name or can list some of his qualities. It is because they put their trust

OUR WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH . . .

Should be motivated by love for him.

Should come from a complete heart, not a heart that also loves the things in the world.

Should give evidence of how precious to us is an approved relationship with him.

in Jehovah himself. Regarding them, Proverbs 18:10 states: "The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection."

Make good use of opportunities to urge others to trust in Jehovah. (Ps. 37:3; Prov. 3:5, 6) Such trust shows faith in Jehovah and his promises. (Heb. 11:6) When people 'call on the name of Jehovah' because they know that he is the Universal Sovereign, love his ways, and fully believe that true salvation can come only from him, then—God's Word assures us—they will be saved. (Rom. 10:13, 14) As you teach others, help them to build up that sort of faith in connection with every aspect of life.

Many people face overwhelming personal

problems. They may not see a way out. Urge them to learn Jehovah's ways, to trust in him, and to apply what they learn. (Ps. 25:5) Encourage them to pray earnestly for God's help and to thank him for his blessings. (Phil. 4:6, 7) When they come to know Jehovah, not simply by reading certain statements in the Bible but also by experiencing the fulfillment of his promises in their own lives, they will begin to enjoy the security that comes with truly appreciating what the name of Jehovah represents.—Ps. 34:8; Jer. 17:7, 8.

Use well every opportunity to help people to appreciate the wisdom of fearing the true God, Jehovah, and keeping his commandments.

"BEARING WITNESS TO JESUS"

AFTER his resurrection and before his return to heaven, Jesus Christ gave instructions to his disciples, saying: "You will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Loyal servants of God in our day are described as those who "have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (Rev. 12:17) How diligent are you about giving that witness?

Many people who sincerely say that they believe in Jesus know nothing of his pre-human existence. They do not realize that he truly was human when on earth. They do not comprehend what is meant by his being the Son of God. They know very little about

his role in the fulfillment of God's purpose. They do not know what he is doing now, and they do not realize how their lives will be affected by what he does in the future. They may even mistakenly think that Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in Jesus. It is our privilege to endeavor to make known the truth about these matters.

Still other people do not believe that anyone like the Jesus described in the Bible really lived. Some view Jesus merely as a great man. Many reject the idea that he is God's Son. "Bearing witness to Jesus" among such people requires much effort, patience, and tactfulness.

Regardless of the viewpoint of your listeners, they need to take in knowledge of Jesus Christ if they are to avail themselves of God's provision for eternal life. (John 17:3) God's clearly expressed will is that all who live must "openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord" and must submit to his authority. (Phil. 2:9-11) Thus, we cannot simply avoid the issue when we encounter people who have strong but wrong opinions or outright prejudice. Whereas in some cases we can speak freely about Jesus Christ—even on our initial visit—in others, we may need to make discreet comments that help our listeners to begin thinking correctly about him. We may also need to think of ways to introduce additional aspects of the subject on future visits. However, it may not be possible to discuss all that is involved until we conduct a home Bible study with a person.—1 Tim. 2:3-7.

Jesus' Vital Place in God's Purpose. We need to help people appreciate that since Jesus is "the way" and 'no one comes to the Father except through him,' it is impossible to have an approved relationship with God without faith in Jesus Christ. (John 14:6) Unless a person realizes the vital role that Jehovah has assigned to his firstborn

Son, it is impossible to understand the Bible. Why? Because Jehovah made this Son the key figure in the outworking of all His purposes. (Col. 1:17-20) Bible prophecy revolves around this fact. (Rev. 19:10) Jesus Christ is the one through whom the solu-

tion is provided for all the problems raised by Satan's rebellion and the sin of Adam.—Heb. 2:5-9, 14, 15.

To appreciate Christ's role, a person must recognize that humans are in a lamentable condition from which they cannot free themselves. All of us are born in sin. This may affect us in various ways during our lifetime. Sooner or later, however, it results in death. (Rom. 3:23; 5:12) Reason on that fact with those to whom you witness. Then point out that through the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Jehovah has lovingly made deliver-

ance from sin and death possible for those who exercise faith in that provision. (Mark 10:45; Heb. 2:9) This opens the way for them to enjoy everlasting life in perfection. (John 3:16, 36) It is not possible in any other way. (Acts 4:12) As a teacher, whether in private or in the congregation, do more than simply state these facts. Kindly and patiently build in your listeners a feeling of gratitude for Christ's role as our Redeemer.

HELP PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND . . .

That an approved relationship with God is possible only through Jesus Christ.

That deliverance from sin and death is possible only through faith in Jesus Christ.

That God's will is for all to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, not merely by calling him Lord but by keeping his commandments.

That what the Bible says about Jesus Christ is true but that much of what Christendom teaches about him distorts the facts.

Appreciation for this provision can have a profound effect on a person's attitude, conduct, and goals in life.—2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

Of course, Jesus laid down his life in sacrifice just once. (Heb. 9:28) However, he is actively serving as High Priest now. Help others to understand what that means. Are they experiencing stress, disappointment, suffering, or problems because of unkindness on the part of people around them? When Jesus was a human, he experienced all of these. He knows how we feel. Because of imperfection, do we feel the need for God's mercy? If we pray to God for forgiveness on the basis of Jesus' sacrifice, Jesus acts as "a helper with the Father." Compassionately, he "pleads for us." (1 John 2:1, 2; Rom. 8:34) On the basis of Jesus' sacrifice and through his services as High Priest, we are able to approach Jehovah's "throne of undeserved kindness" to receive help at the right time. (Heb. 4:15, 16) Though we are imperfect, the help that Jesus provides as High Priest enables us to serve God with a clean conscience.—Heb. 9:13, 14.

Additionally, Jesus exercises great authority as the one designated by God to be Head of the Christian congregation. (Matt. 28:18; Eph. 1:22, 23) As such, he provides needed direction in harmony with God's will. When you teach others, help them to appreciate that Jesus Christ, and no human, is the Head of the congregation. (Matt. 23:10) From your initial contact with interested ones, invite them to meetings of the local congregation, where we study the Bible with the help of material provided through

"the faithful and discreet slave." Explain to them not only who the "slave" is but also who the Master is so that they become aware of Jesus' headship. (Matt. 24:45-47) Introduce them to the elders, and explain the Scriptural qualifications that these must meet. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) Point out that the congregation does not belong to the elders but that they help us to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. (Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:16; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3) Help these interested ones see that there is an organized, worldwide society operating under Christ's headship.

From the Gospels, we learn that when Jesus entered Jerusalem shortly before his death, his disciples hailed him as "the One coming as the King in Jehovah's name!" (Luke 19:38) As people study the Bible more deeply, they learn that Jehovah has now invested Jesus with ruling authority that affects people of all nations. (Dan. 7:13, 14) When you give talks in the congregation or conduct studies, build appreciation for what Jesus' rulership should mean to all of us.

Emphasize that our way of life shows whether we really believe that Jesus Christ is King and whether we willingly submit to his rulership. Highlight the work that Jesus, after being anointed as King, assigned his followers to do. (Matt. 24:14; 28:18-20) Discuss what Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor, said regarding priorities in life. (Isa. 9:6, 7; Matt. 6:19-34) Direct attention to the spirit that the Prince of Peace said his followers

would manifest. (Matt. 20:25-27; John 13:35) Be careful not to take it upon yourself to judge whether others are doing as much as they should, but encourage them to consider what their actions indicate about their submission to Christ's kingship. As you do so, acknowledge your need to do the same.

Laying Christ as the Foundation. The Bible likens the work of making a Christian disciple to building a structure upon Jesus Christ as the foundation. (1 Cor. 3:10-15) To accomplish this, help people to know Jesus as he is described in the Bible. Exercise care that they do not look to you as the one they are following. (1 Cor. 3:4-7) Direct their attention to Jesus Christ.

If the foundation has been laid well, students will appreciate that Christ left a model for us "to follow his steps closely." (1 Pet. 2:21) To build on that, encourage students to read the Gospels not merely as truthful history but as a pattern to be followed. Help them to take to heart the attitudes and qualities that characterized Jesus. Encourage them to observe how Jesus felt about his Father, how he dealt with temptations and trials, how he showed submission to God, and how he dealt with humans under various circumstances. Emphasize the activity with which Jesus filled his life. Then, when faced with

decisions and trials in life, a student will ask himself: 'What would Jesus do in this situation? Will my course show proper appreciation for what he has done for me?'

When you speak before the congregation, do not conclude that since your brothers already have faith in Jesus, there is no need to draw special attention

to him. What you say will mean more if you build on that faith. When you speak about meetings, connect this with Jesus' role as Head of the congregation. When you discuss the field ministry, draw attention to the spirit Jesus showed as he carried on his ministry, and present the ministry in the light of what Christ as King is doing to gather people for preservation into the new world.

It is evident that more is needed than simply learn-

ing basic facts about Jesus. To become real Christians, people must exercise faith in him and truly love him. Such love motivates loyal obedience. (John 14:15, 21) It enables people to stand firm in the faith under adversity, to continue to walk in Christ's footsteps all the days of their life, to prove themselves mature Christians who are firmly "rooted and established on the foundation." (Eph. 3:17) Such a course brings glory to Jehovah, the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

ASK YOURSELF:

Do I give evidence that I clearly discern the role of Jesus Christ as the appointed Head of the congregation?

Is appreciation for the sacrifice of Christ as powerful a motivating factor in my life as it should be?

How can I bring my actions and attitudes more fully into harmony with the example set by the Son of God?

“THIS GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM”

WHEN providing details regarding the sign of his presence and the conclusion of the system of things, Jesus foretold: “This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.”—Matt. 24:14.

Exactly what is this message that is to be given such wide publicity? It is about the Kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray to God, saying: “Let your kingdom come.” (Matt. 6:10) Revelation 11: 15 describes it as “the kingdom of our Lord [Jehovah] and of his Christ” because the ruling authority originates with Jehovah and is conferred upon Christ as King. Note, however, that the message that Jesus said would be proclaimed in our day goes beyond what his followers preached in the first century. They told people: “The kingdom of God has come near to you.” (Luke 10:9) Jesus, the one anointed to be King, was then in their midst. But as recorded at Matthew 24:14, Jesus foretold the worldwide announcement of another development in the fulfillment of God’s purpose.

LET PEOPLE HEAR . . .

That God’s Kingdom now rules from the heavens and will soon replace all human rulership.

That the Kingdom will transform the earth into a paradise filled with people who love God and their fellowman.

That only by means of the Kingdom will the wholesome desires of all humans be fully satisfied.

That by what we do now we show whether we want to be subjects of God’s Kingdom.

The prophet Daniel was given a vision of this development. He saw “someone like a son of man,” Jesus Christ, receiving from “the Ancient of Days,” Jehovah God, “rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him.” (Dan. 7: 13, 14) That event of universal significance took place in heaven in the year 1914. Thereafter, the Devil and his demons were hurled down to the earth. (Rev. 12:7-10) The old system of things had entered its last days. But before it is completely removed, a global proclamation is being made that Jehovah’s Messianic King now rules from his heavenly throne. People everywhere are being put on notice. Their re-

sponse gives evidence of their attitude toward the Most High as Ruler in “the kingdom of mankind.”—Dan. 4:32.

True, more is yet to come—much more! We still pray, “Let your kingdom come,” but it is not with the idea that the establishment of God’s Kingdom is yet future. Rather, it is with the intent that the heavenly Kingdom will act in a decisive way to fulfill

such prophecies as Daniel 2:44 and Revelation 21:2-4. It will transform the earth into a paradise filled with people who love God and their fellowman. As we preach “this good news of the kingdom,” we point to those future prospects. But we also confidently make known that Jehovah has already conferred full ruling authority on his Son. Are you emphasizing *this* good news when you witness about the Kingdom?

Explaining the Kingdom. How can we fulfill our commission to announce God’s Kingdom? We may arouse interest by starting conversations on a variety of subjects, but it should soon become clear that our message is about God’s Kingdom.

An important aspect of this work involves reading or quoting scriptures that refer to the Kingdom. When you refer to the Kingdom, be sure that those to whom you speak understand what it is. More may be required than simply saying that God’s Kingdom is a government. Some people may find it difficult to think of something invisible as a government. You might reason with them in various ways. For example, gravity is invisible, but it has a powerful effect on our lives. We cannot see the One who made the law of gravity, but it is obvious that he has great power. The Bible refers to him as “the King of eternity.” (1 Tim. 1:17) Or you might reason that in a large country, many people have never been to the capital or seen their ruler in person. They learn about these through news reports. Likewise, the Bible, published in over

2,200 languages, tells us about God’s Kingdom; it lets us know who has been entrusted with authority and what the Kingdom is doing. *The Watchtower*, published in more languages than any other periodical, is devoted to “Announcing Jehovah’s Kingdom,” as stated on the front cover.

To help people understand what the Kingdom is, you might mention some of the things that they want governments to provide: economic security, peace, freedom from crime, impartial treatment of all ethnic groups, education, and health care. Show that only by means of God’s Kingdom will these and all other wholesome desires of mankind be fully satisfied.—Ps. 145:16.

Endeavor to stimulate a desire on the part of people to be subjects of the Kingdom, in which Jesus Christ rules as King. Point to the miracles he performed as previews of what he will do as heavenly King. Speak often of the appealing qualities he manifested. (Matt. 8:2, 3; 11:28-30) Explain that he laid down his life for us and that God thereafter raised him to immortal life in the heavens. It is from there that he rules as King.—Acts 2:29-35.

Emphasize that God’s Kingdom is now ruling from the heavens. Realize, however, that most people do not see the conditions that they think would be evidence of such rule. Acknowledge that, and ask if they know what *Jesus Christ* said would be evidence of it. Highlight some of the features of the composite sign found in Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, or Luke chap-

ter 21. Then ask why Christ's enthronement in heaven would lead to such conditions on earth. Direct attention to Revelation 12:7-10, 12.

As tangible evidence of what God's Kingdom is doing, read Matthew 24:14, and describe the global program of Bible education that is taking place now. (Isa. 54:13) Tell people about the various schools from which Jehovah's Witnesses benefit—all based on the Bible, all held free of charge. Explain that in addition to our house-to-house ministry, we offer free home instruction in the Bible to individuals and families in over 230 lands. What human

government is in a position to provide such an extensive educational program not only for its subjects but for people earth wide? Invite people to come to the Kingdom Hall, to attend assemblies and conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses, to see evidence of how such education is affecting the lives of people.—Isa. 2:2-4; 32:1, 17; John 13:35.

But will the householder realize how his own life is affected? You might tactfully point out that the purpose of your visit is to discuss the opportunity that is open to all to choose life as subjects of God's Kingdom. How? By learning what God requires and living in harmony with it now.—Deut. 30:19, 20; Rev. 22:17.

Helping Others Put the Kingdom First.

Even after a person accepts the Kingdom message, there are decisions that he must make. What priority will he give God's Kingdom in his own life? Jesus urged his disciples to "keep on . . . seeking first the kingdom." (Matt. 6:33) How can we

help fellow Christians to do that? By setting a good example ourselves and by discussing opportunities that are available. At times, by asking whether a person has considered certain possibilities and by sharing experiences to show what others are doing. By discussing Bible accounts in such a way that these deepen one's love for Jeho-

vah. By stressing the reality of the Kingdom. By emphasizing how important the work of Kingdom proclamation really is. The greatest good is often done, not by telling people what needs to be done, but by stimulating in them a desire to do it.

Without a doubt, the vital message that all of us must proclaim focuses primary attention on Jehovah God, Jesus Christ, and the Kingdom. The vital truths regarding these should be emphasized in our public witnessing, in our congregations, and in our personal lives. When we do that, we demonstrate that we are truly benefiting from our Theocratic Ministry School education.

ASK YOURSELF:

Does my way of life show that I seek first the Kingdom?

Are there adjustments that I can make in order to do this more fully?

What can I do to stimulate in others a desire to seek first the Kingdom?

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL OVERSEERS

IN EACH congregation, an elder is appointed to be the Theocratic Ministry School overseer. If you have been entrusted with this responsibility, your enthusiasm for the school and your personal interest in the progress of each student can be significant factors in what the school accomplishes locally.

An important part of your assignment is to preside at your congregation's weekly Theocratic Ministry School. Keep in mind that in addition to the students who have assignments on any given occasion, others are in attendance. Handle the school in such a way that the entire congregation receives motivating, practical reminders related to at least one of the objectives of the school that are mentioned on pages 5 to 8 of this textbook.

Take an interest in all students, whether they are scheduled to handle reading assignments, to give demonstration-style presentations, or to deliver talks. Help them to view what they are doing not merely as an assignment but as an opportunity to make progress in their service to Jehovah. The effort that they personally put forth is, of course, a key factor in their progress. But it is also important that you show kind interest, help them to understand the value of the points of counsel, and explain how to apply such counsel. To that end, listen carefully to each talk so that you can provide valuable observations.

Be sure to start and end the school on time. Set a good example by keeping your own comments within the time allotted for

them. If a student talk runs overtime, you or an assistant should give a signal. The student should complete his sentence and leave the platform. If some other part of the program runs overtime, shorten your own comments, and then discuss the matter with the brother after the meeting.

When you are present, you should conduct the school. If on occasion you are not able to be present, another elder previously designated by the body of elders should care for the school. If you need help with preparing schedules, writing out and distributing assignment slips, or arranging for substitutions on the program, a ministerial servant assigned by the body of elders may assist with these things.

Enrolling Students. Encourage all publishers to enroll in the school. Others who are actively associating with the congregation may enroll if they agree with the teachings of the Bible and their life is in harmony with Christian principles. When someone expresses a desire to enroll, warmly commend him. If the person is not yet a publisher, you as the school overseer should discuss with him the requirements for enrollment in the school, preferably doing so in the presence of the one who is conducting a Bible study with him (or in the presence of a believing parent). These requirements are the same as for a person to become an unbaptized publisher. They are found on pages 97 to 99 of *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry*. Keep an up-to-date list of all who are enrolled in the school.

Using the Counsel Form. The counsel form for each student is in his personal copy of the textbook, on pages 79 to 81. As indicated by the color coding, any counsel point from 1 to 17 may be used when a student is given a reading assignment. For demonstration-style presentations, any counsel point except 7, 52, and 53 may be used. Counsel for talks includes all the points except 7, 18, and 30.

When a point of counsel is assigned, the school overseer should see that a penciled entry is made under “Date Assigned” in the space provided next to that point on the counsel form in the student’s book. After the student cares for his assignment, privately ask whether he did the exercise(s) shown at the end of the discussion of the counsel point. If so, a check mark should be put in the box on the form. If you are recommending that he continue to work on the same point of counsel, no additional note is needed on the counsel form; simply do not fill in the blank for “Date Completed.” That should be marked only when he is ready to move on to another point. Additionally, on page 82 of the student’s book, to the left of the setting that was used, the date should be noted following each student talk. There is space on the counsel form and on the list of settings to allow for each one to be used twice. Students should have their books with them during the program.

Assign just one point of speech counsel at a time. Normally, it is best to cover the counsel points in the order that they are listed. However, if some students show outstanding ability, you may encourage them

to study and apply certain lessons on their own. Then you can work with them on those points that you believe will contribute most to their development as effective speakers and teachers.

Even if a student has been enrolled in the school for many years, he can benefit greatly from studying and applying each lesson. To help students with specific needs, you may select certain speech qualities for them to work on instead of going through the counsel form in a routine manner.

Giving Counsel. When giving counsel, make good use of Bible examples and principles. Students should sense that the counsel given and the spirit in which it is offered are governed by the lofty principles of God’s Word.

Keep in mind that you are a ‘fellow worker’ with your brothers and sisters. (2 Cor. 1: 24) Like them, you need to keep applying yourself to improve as a speaker and teacher. Personally study the book *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education*, apply its counsel, and set a good example for others to do the same.

As you do so, make it your aim to assist students to become good readers, capable speakers, and effective teachers. To that end, endeavor to provide whatever help is needed so that the students understand what the various speech qualities are, why these are important, and how to cultivate them. This textbook is laid out in a form that will help you to do that. However, more is often needed on your part than simply reading the words in the book. Discuss the idea that they express and how to apply it.

If a student did well on a certain point, commend him. Briefly state what made it effective or why what he did is important. If he could beneficially give further attention to a certain matter, be sure that he understands why. Discuss how to go about it. Be specific, and at the same time, be kind.

Realize that for many, getting up to give a presentation before a group is very difficult. If a person feels that he did not do well, he may wonder whether he should keep on trying. Imitate Jesus, who did not crush a “bruised reed” or extinguish a “smoldering flaxen wick.” (Matt. 12:20) Take into account the emotional state of the student. When offering counsel, be guided by whether the student is relatively new or is a seasoned publisher. Warm and genuine commendation can strengthen people to keep on doing their best.

Treat each student in a dignified manner. Romans 12:10 tells us: “In showing honor to one another take the lead.” What appropriate advice for a counselor in the Theocratic Ministry School! If the student is older than you, carefully apply the direction given at 1 Timothy 5:1, 2. Regardless of a person’s age, however, when counsel that involves making adjustments in his way of doing things is offered in a kind manner, it is often more readily accepted.—Prov. 25:11.

When counseling, keep before the student the objective of the training. That objective is not simply to do well enough to be commended and to be told to go on to the next point of counsel. The goal is not to be a speaker and a teacher who will be ad-

mired by others. (Prov. 25:27) Our desire is to use our gift of speech to praise Jehovah and to help others to get to know and love him. Our training is to equip us to care effectively for the work outlined at Matthew 24:14 and 28:19, 20. Baptized brothers who qualify may in time be invited to share in caring for “the flock of God” as public speakers and teachers.—1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

Suggest that students read the textbook discussion of their next point of counsel within a few days after it is assigned. Encourage them to apply what they learn in preparing their parts for the school, in daily conversation, in commenting at meetings, and in the field service.

Making Assignments. This should ordinarily be done at least three weeks in advance. All such assignments should be made in written form if possible.

Parts that involve instructing the congregation should be assigned to elders, preferably to those who will handle such parts effectively, and to ministerial servants who are good teachers.

In determining which student talks to assign to brothers and which ones to sisters, follow the instructions provided with the school schedule. If there are few brothers but many sisters who give student talks, be careful to allow the brothers sufficient opportunity to give talks that involve more than reading.

Consider the circumstances of individuals when making assignments. Is it necessary to assign a certain elder or ministerial servant to speak on the school on the same night

that he is on the Service Meeting or the same week that he has a public talk in the congregation? Is it necessary to assign a certain sister to give a presentation on the same night as one of her young children, whom she may need to help? Especially in the case of a young one or a student who is not yet baptized, is the subject suitable? Check to be sure that the assignment is suitable for the counsel point on which the student is working.

For assignments given to sisters, the student will usually select her own setting in harmony with the instructions on pages 78 and 82. One assistant should be assigned, but an additional assistant may be used. If a student requests an assistant who will be particularly well suited to portray a certain setting, consideration should be shown for that request.

Auxiliary Classes. If there are more than 50 students enrolled, you may want to consider use of auxiliary locations for parts handled by students. According to local need, this arrangement might be used for all student presentations or just for the last two.

Each auxiliary class should have a qualified counselor, preferably an elder. Where necessary, a well-qualified ministerial servant may fill in. Approval for these counselors should be given by the body of elders. Work in close cooperation with them so that there is effective follow-up with students regardless of the location of their next presentation.

Special Reading Class. If the body of elders determines that a number of individuals in the congregation need basic reading

instruction in the language spoken in the congregation, you may make arrangements for this in conjunction with the Theocratic Ministry School. This instruction may involve basic literacy skills, or its objective may be reading improvement.

Such classes do not have to be held at the same time that student talks in the Theocratic Ministry School are being given. In order to provide sufficient help, more time may be necessary than would be possible during the school. The local elders may determine what is needed and when to have such instruction given. According to the need, arrangements may be made for group instruction or for one-on-one tutoring.

A qualified teacher is needed. Preferably, the assignment should be given to a brother who is a good reader and who is well acquainted with the language. If a brother is not available, the elders may ask a capable, exemplary sister to help. She should wear a head covering when instructing the class. —1 Cor. 11:3-10; 1 Tim. 2:11, 12.

The booklet *Apply Yourself to Reading and Writing* has been made available in many languages. It is designed to teach basic literacy skills. Other instruction material may also be used, depending on the level of reading ability of those enrolled. When the students have progressed sufficiently, they should be encouraged to share in the regular Theocratic Ministry School program.

As Theocratic Ministry School overseer, you can do much to benefit the congregation. Prepare well, and in harmony with the counsel at Romans 12:6-8, care for your assignment as a precious trust from God.

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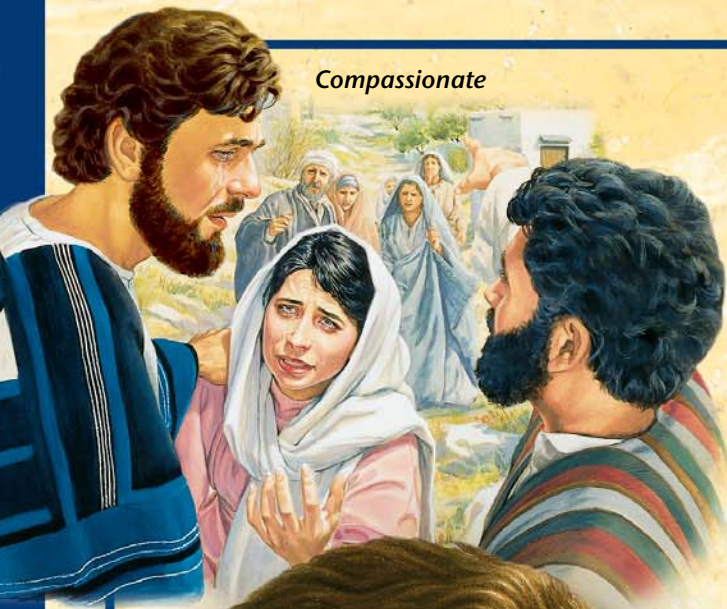
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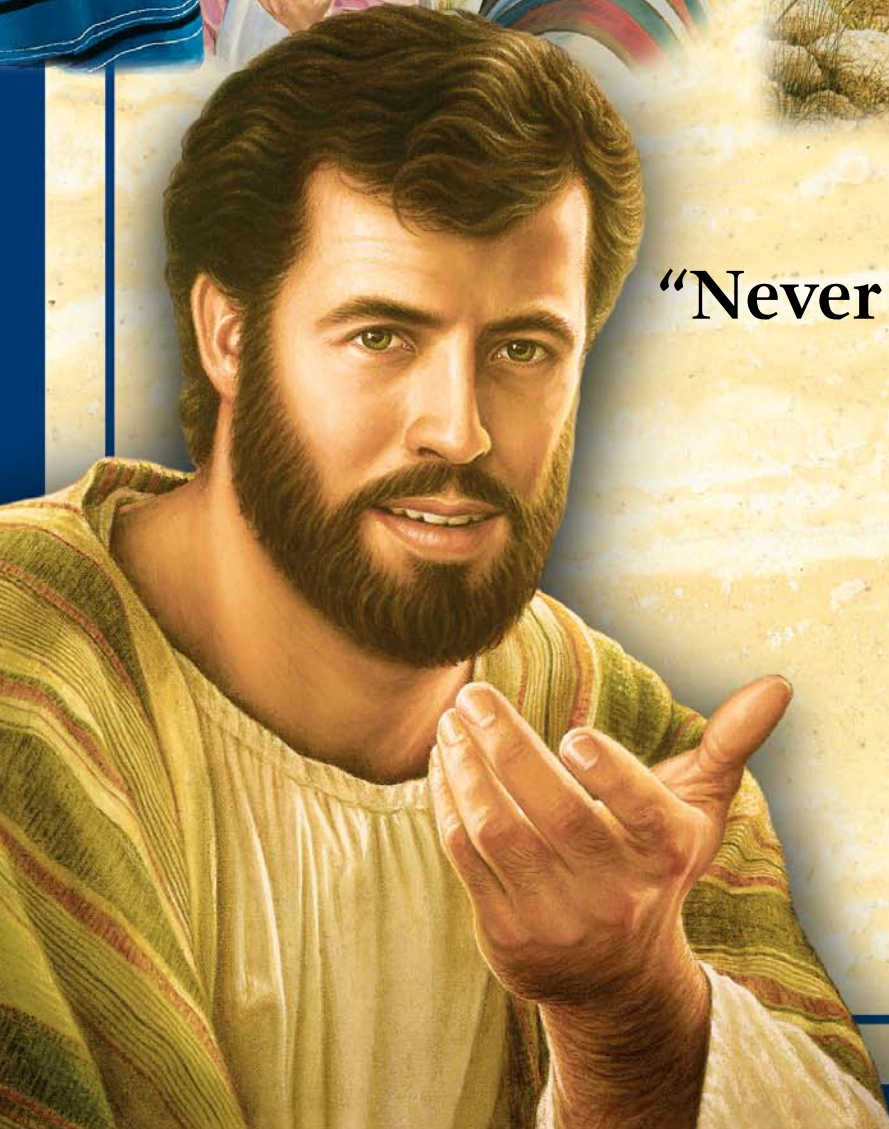
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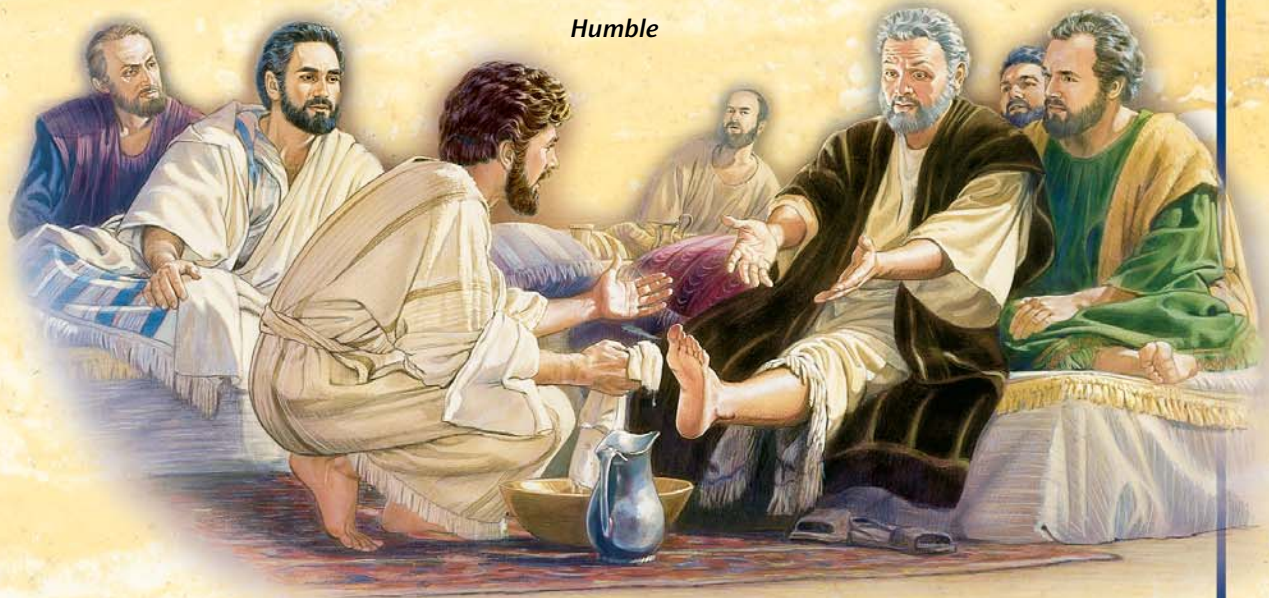


Impartial



“Never has another





man spoken like this”

