

No. 1 **What Does It Mean to Be a Spiritual Person?** (Circuit overseer)

Note to the speaker:

Introduce song number 127, then invite a pioneer elder to open with prayer. Be warm and encouraging. Build anticipation for the program

OPENING COMMENTS (3 min.)

Each year we look forward to meeting with you on this special occasion

Such meetings are a source of joy and encouragement to us all

The theme for this year's program is based on **1 Corinthians 16:13** [Read]

All of us, including our many sisters, are to "carry on in a manly way" as courageous Kingdom proclaimers (w02 4/1 15 ¶2-3)

To serve Jehovah in a courageous way, we must grow as spiritual persons

Ask yourself: 'Am I deepening my spirituality? Or, has my spiritual advancement become stagnant in some way?'

Our program is designed to help us to answer that question

WHAT IS A SPIRITUAL PERSON? (9 min.)

A spiritual person endeavors to learn how Jehovah thinks so that he can bring all his ways into harmony with those of his Creator (1Co 2:14-16)

By growing in understanding of Bible principles and applying them, we become more God-oriented and no longer display the traits of a child (1Co 13:11)

Just as each child grows at his own pace, we are all at different stages of spiritual growth

Paul referred to the Christians in Corinth as "infants in Christ" because they were not understanding and applying Bible principles (1Co 3:1)

One brother who has been an elder for more than three decades said: "My appreciation for the Bible has grown immensely. I constantly find new opportunities to apply Bible principles and laws in various ways. My appreciation for the ministry continues to grow too" (w13 3/15 14-15 ¶9-10)

Learning about the Christ and meditating on his example will keep our spiritual growth from becoming stunted [Read **2 Peter 3:18**]

Even though the crowds made unusual demands on him, Jesus kept his spirituality strong by setting aside time for meditative prayer (Mr 1:35; Lu 6:12)

It would be a mistake to spend so much time preaching to others that we neglect to make time for adequate personal study and heartfelt prayer (Ro 2:21)

[Briefly highlight how being balanced in the use of time can help a pioneer to keep spiritually strong. You may use a local example or one from the article "Are You a Balanced Pioneer?" in the May 15, 1996, issue of *The Watchtower*, page 30]

MAKE EARNEST EFFORT TO GROW IN SPIRITUALITY (3 min)

Our goal is not limited to remaining in full-time service, but includes measuring up to the Christ, which requires earnest effort on our part [Read **Ephesians 4:13**]

Brother Nathan H. Knorr once gave the following counsel: "We need to give all the spiritual admonition we can to build up the spirituality of the congregations. When people are strong spiritually they will be regular in field activity. The field work strengthens one's spirituality too. A person cannot be strong in the field, however, if he is not feeding on spiritual things"

As today's program develops, try to identify two or three specific areas where you can make improvement

No. 1 What Does It Mean to Be a Spiritual Person?—Page 2

[Highlight some key points of the program that should be especially beneficial to the pioneers in your circuit]

Be attentive to the guidance you will receive in this program, and be resolved to continue making progress as a spiritual person (Php 3:16)

Brother _____ will now begin a four-part symposium with the talk “Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . Displaying Faith”

**No. 2 Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . (Symposium)
 Displaying Faith (Pioneer elder)**

Note to the speaker:

This is the first part of a four-part symposium and includes an interview and audience participation. Emphasize how strong faith can help a pioneer progress spiritually

STRONG FAITH NEEDED (3 min.)

To cope with life's anxieties, overcome obstacles, and maintain zeal in the ministry, we need strong faith in Jehovah and his Word (1Pe 5:9)

Jesus' disciples faced challenges in their ministry [**Read Matthew 17:20**]

Jesus did not imply that his disciples were without faith, but, rather, their faith needed to be stronger

As we cultivate stronger faith in Jehovah's ability to help and support us, no mountain-like obstacle will be impossible to overcome (w88 12/15 25-27)

How can strong faith help us to "stand firm" when dealing with anxieties and to overcome obstacles? (1Co 16:13)

WEATHER THE STORM (10 min.)

Living in critical times, we are confronted with anxieties and worries triggered by poor health, economic difficulties, and worldly pressures (2Ti 3:1-5)

There is no need to become overanxious about our needs, since Jehovah has assured us that he will care for us [**Read Matthew 6:30-34**]

[Interview: (3 min.) Interview a pioneer who has experienced poor health or economic challenges that affected his pioneer service, even possibly necessitating his coming off the pioneer list for a time. What was the specific obstacle? How did he overcome it? What role did strong faith play in his success? What benefits has he reaped by preserving his spirituality?]

With firm faith in our heavenly Father and by relying on his strength, we will not easily relinquish the privilege of serving as a pioneer when confronted with obstacles (1Pe 4:11)

Questions: What are some obstacles that have threatened your privilege of pioneering, and how have you overcome them? What blessings have you received from displaying strong faith?

Be convinced that Jehovah will help us to flourish spiritually as we cope with life during these last days (Jer 17:7, 8)

At times, a change in circumstances may require that we stop pioneering

Jehovah will not abandon us, but will give us power and bless us in whatever we may be able to do in his service (Isa 40:29, 31)

DISPLAY FAITH AT ALL TIMES (2 min.)

Mature pioneers keep building their faith by taking in solid spiritual food (Heb 5:14)

Each time we talk about Jehovah's promises with others, we draw closer to him, and this strengthens our faith (Jas 1:17)

As we daily 'walk by faith' our spirituality will continue to blossom (2Co 5:7)

We will now consider another aid in preserving our spirituality. Brother _____ will deliver the second part of our symposium, entitled "Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . Displaying Hope"

**No. 3 Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . (Symposium)
 Displaying Hope (Pioneer elder)**

Note to the speaker:

This is the second part of a four-part symposium and includes a soliloquy and audience participation. Emphasize that spiritually mature pioneers have full confidence in Jehovah's ability to sustain and fulfill his promises for the future

HOPE—“AN ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL” (3 min.)

The Bible likens the Christian hope to “an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm” [**Read Hebrews 6:18, 19**]

When beset by a storm, sailors in ancient times would lower the ship's anchor. If the anchor took hold of the seabed, it would help the ship ride out the storm

The “sure and firm” hope set out in the Bible is an anchor that can help a pioneer to keep his emotional, mental, and spiritual balance when stormy trials arise (*w99* 7/15 18-19 ¶10-11)

God-given hope enables us to endure in our assignment with rejoicing, no matter what the conditions may be (Ro 12:12; 1Th 1:3)

Pioneers must be firmly convinced that Jehovah “becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him” (Heb 11:6)

JEHOVAH'S PROMISES SUSTAIN US (4 min.)

Jehovah God has obligated himself to reward his faithful servants by providing for their daily needs and giving them everlasting life (Mt 19:29)

This promise helps prevent a pioneer from dropping his hands in defeat

Jesus assured his disciples that if they would put the Kingdom first, God would see to it that their basic necessities would be supplied [**Read Matthew 6:31-33**]

Jehovah can easily anticipate our individual needs regarding food, clothing, and shelter, even before we become aware of them (Php 4:19)

He knows which piece of our clothing will wear out next. He knows what our dietary requirements are and what would be adequate shelter for us, given the size of our family

A Christian can make pioneering a way of life by trusting in Jehovah's ability to sustain him each day and fulfill his promises for the future (Isa 55:11)

Jehovah will see to it that we have what we *really* need

HOPE MUST BE DEVELOPED AND MAINTAINED (6 min.)

The need for Christians to display hope is emphasized in the Bible (Heb 6:11)

Hope is placed alongside other important qualities, such as faith and love (1Co 13:13)

How is this quality developed and maintained?

By regularly approaching the “Hearer of prayer” (Ps 65:2; Php 4:6, 7)

By sticking to a regular schedule of Bible reading (Ps 1:2, 3)

By regularly attending Christian meetings in association with people who hold fast to the Christian hope (Heb 10:24, 25)

[Soliloquy: (2 min.) A pioneer appears troubled and voices his concerns about a personal issue(s) that is weighing heavily on his mind. (For example, he may be experiencing financial struggles, he may have been out of work for an extended period of time, he may be facing a serious health issue, or he may be laboring over how to care for an elderly parent.) His first thought is to discontinue the full-time service. Then, after a sigh, he pauses and recalls Philipians 4:6, 7. He reads the verses aloud from the Bible. Afterward, he verbally recounts his reasons for not los-

**No. 3 Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . (Symposium)
Displaying Hope—Page 2**

ing hope and expresses his confidence in Jehovah’s ability and desire to care for his servants.
The soliloquy ends with the pioneer bowing his head in prayer to Jehovah]

Question: What did the pioneer do to remind himself of his hope in Jehovah?

HOPE DOES NOT LEAD TO DISAPPOINTMENT (2 min.)

The Devil would like to see you abandon your hope and accept defeat. Be determined to “hold fast to what is fine” (1Th 5:21)

Be determined to fortify your hope as you endure one storm after another (Ro 15:4)

What will be the result of displaying hope in Jehovah? **[Read Romans 5:5a]**

We will now consider another way to preserve our spirituality. Brother _____
will deliver the third part of our symposium, entitled “Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . Display-
ing Reasonableness”

**No. 4 Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . (Symposium)
 Displaying Reasonableness (Pioneer elder)**

Note to the speaker:

This is the third part in a four-part symposium and includes a demonstration. Explain that a spiritual person is reasonable and balanced in what they expect of Bible students and themselves. This leads to joy in serving Jehovah

SPIRITUALLY MATURE PERSONS ARE REASONABLE (3 min.)

Spiritual growth should modify our thinking in a way that is evident to others (1Co 13:11) [**Read Philippians 4:5**]

A reasonable person strives to be gentle in their dealings with all, taking into consideration their circumstances

They are realistic about their own circumstances and balanced in their expectations of themselves (*w13 6/15 15 ¶12; it-2 756*)

This quality is a mark of one who manifests “wisdom from above” (Jas 3:17)

How can we remain balanced in our view of the ministry and ourselves?

BE REASONABLE WITH BIBLE STUDENTS (7 min.)

A reasonable teacher understands that spiritual progress, like the growth of a plant, takes time and cannot be forced or sped up (1Co 3:6, 7; Mr 4:26-29; *w14 12/15 12-13 ¶4-8*)

We display reasonableness by giving attention to each student according to his needs and circumstances

Be kind and patient as you help them to establish reasonable and progressive goals such as: (1) praying to Jehovah each day, (2) reading the Bible daily, (3) preparing the lesson each week, (4) regularly reading *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, (5) attending meetings and assemblies, as well as (6) sharing what they are learning informally

[Demonstration: (4 min.) A student is embarrassed to admit that she has not prepared for her study, even though her Bible teacher has encouraged her to do so several times before. The student’s many responsibilities take up much of her time, although she admits that at times, she is simply too tired to concentrate by the end of the day and just browses social media or watches television. The pioneer is understanding, but encourages her to plan out time to prepare in a way that is practical to her circumstances, perhaps even splitting up her study periods and sacrificing less important activities. (Pr 21:5) She helps the student to locate the article “How to Invest Your Time Wisely” on jw.org. (*g 2/14 6-9*)]

HAVE REASONABLE EXPECTATIONS OF YOURSELF (4 min.)

“Exert yourselves vigorously” in your ministry, but maintain balance by setting realistic goals that take into account your circumstances (Lu 13:24; Ec 6:9)

Unrealistic goals lead to needless frustration and can leave us feeling spiritually and emotionally exhausted (Pr 13:12; *w94 9/1 14 ¶5*)

If you realize some of your goals are unrealistic, be willing to make adjustments

Make reasonable efforts to care for your physical, emotional, and spiritual health (*w04 8/15 24-25 ¶14-18*)

Get enough rest, eat wholesome meals, and exercise regularly to prevent fatigue (Ec 4:6)

Learn what your limitations and needs are and adapt to them rather than pushing yourself to match what others can do (Ga 5:26)

Regularly buy out time for Bible reading, prayer, and private reflection (Mt 14:23; Eph 5:15, 16; *cf 134 ¶14*)

**No. 4 Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . (Symposium)
 Displaying Reasonableness—Page 2**

“ALWAYS REJOICE IN THE LORD” (1 min.)

Striving to cultivate reasonableness to a greater degree will help us find joy and satisfaction in our sacred service (Ga 6:4; Php 4:4)

We will maintain a balanced view of our ministry, ourselves, and our brothers, and become even more valuable to Jehovah’s people

We will now consider how pioneers preserve spirituality by manifesting the dominant quality of Jehovah’s own personality, love. Brother _____ will deliver the final part of this symposium, entitled “Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . Displaying Love”

**No. 5 Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . (Symposium)
 Displaying Love (Pioneer elder)**

Note to the speaker:

This is the final part of a four-part symposium and includes an interview and audience participation. Highlight the benefits of showing love and being a peacemaker. Enthusiastically encourage the audience to take an interest in foreigners by making use of various available tools such as the *JW Language* app

WHY DISPLAY LOVE? (2 min.)

One facet of the sign that Jesus gave regarding “the conclusion of the system of things” was that “the love of the greater number [would] grow cold” (Mt 24:3, 12)

Love is the quality that principally identifies true disciples of Christ (Joh 13:34, 35)

Each of us must individually do our part to display love

We will now consider practical ways that pioneers can display love

DISPLAY LOVE BY BEING A PEACEMAKER (8 min.)

In imitation of Jesus, spiritually strong pioneers take the initiative in showing love and pursuing peace with fellow believers and relatives

Although Jesus spent much time with his apostles, and at times they disappointed him, he was willing to forgive them (Lu 22:24-27; cf 167-169 ¶11-14)

Since pioneers are often in the company of one another, there may be more opportunities to offend someone

Being quick to settle differences with fellow pioneers rather than allowing the situation to deteriorate shows the depth of our spirituality (1Sa 25:23-28; Pr 25:15; Ro 14:19)

[Interview: (2 min.) Interview a pioneer who is known for pursuing peace in the congregation. When a conversation deteriorates into critical speech or harmful gossip, how does he redirect the conversation? If he becomes aware that he has offended someone or when someone offends him, what practical steps does he take to mend the relationship? What benefit is there when spiritually mature pioneers create an atmosphere of peace?]

In dealing with fellow Christians, putting into practice what Paul wrote concerning love will contribute to an atmosphere of peace (1Co 13:4-8; w14 6/15 20-21 ¶14-18)

We will then prove ourselves to be peacemakers, not peacebreakers (Ro 12:18)

DEMONSTRATE LOVE BY PREACHING TO FOREIGNERS (4 min.)

Pioneers should cultivate positive feelings toward foreigners, since they are also included in “the precious things of all the nations” (Hag 2:7)

Because of a poor economy or ethnic strife, many have relocated and now find themselves as foreigners in another land

The best way to show love to such ones is to share the good news of God’s Kingdom with them (Pr 3:27)

Many refugees who are “loaded down” find true refreshment from the good news (Mt 11:28-30; w17.05 7 ¶17)

Questions: What are some ways you have used jw.org and the *JW Language* app to show love to foreigners?

Advance preparation and familiarity with tools such as jw.org and the *JW Language* app will help us be adaptable in our ministry, resulting in a display of love for others

No. 5 Preserve Your Spirituality by . . . (Symposium)
Displaying Love—Page 2

LOVE HELPS TO PRESERVE OUR SPIRITUALITY (1 min.)

Working hard to display love helps preserve *our* spirituality and sets a good example for others

This symposium has helped us to see how we can preserve our spirituality by displaying
(1) faith, (2) hope, (3) reasonableness, and (4) love

Did you identify a few specific ways you can deepen your spirituality?

As you make earnest effort to do so by applying these points, you will increase the depth of
your spirituality and carry on as a courageous Kingdom proclaimer (1Co 16:13)

Brother _____ will now deliver the part “Giving Attention to the Needs of the
Pioneers”

No. 6 Giving Attention to the Needs of the Pioneers (Circuit overseer)

Share encouraging developments about the pioneer activity within the circuit. Offer sincere commendation for what is being accomplished, highlighting a number of positive points. You may mention one or two experiences of pioneers in the circuit to illustrate the good results being obtained locally from the pioneer ministry

Discuss one or two specific areas in which the pioneers could make further improvement. Explain how doing so will contribute to their joy and spiritual advancement

As time allows, encourage the pioneers to be Bible-study conscious. The following points may be considered where appropriate:

- (1) Even if it is not easy to find Bible studies in the territory, pioneers should *follow up on any spark of interest*, whether literature has been placed or not. This gives evidence of their faith that Jehovah is still drawing “precious things of all the nations” (Hag 2:7; Lu 10:5, 6)
- (2) Pioneers should *have the goal to discuss, at least briefly, an appealing Scriptural subject* with their return visits in order to awaken further interest in the truth (Heb 4:12; w14 8/15 12-13 ¶6-7)
- (3) In areas where Bible studies are plentiful, pioneers should *focus special attention on assisting progressive Bible students*. Pioneers should help them not only to baptism but to have a good foundation in Christian living (Col 2:6, 7; w98 6/1 10 ¶4-6)

At the end of the part, dismiss the audience for a 20-minute intermission. After the intermission, introduce the next speaker on the program

**No. 7 Spiritual Advancement Should Be Plainly Seen by . . . (Symposium)
Being a Good Student of the Bible (Pioneer elder)**

Note to the speaker:

This is the first part of a three-part symposium and includes an interview. Emphasize the importance of personal study, daily Bible reading, and meditation

MAKE PERSONAL STUDY A PRIORITY (2 min.)

If we are good students of the Bible, our spiritual advancement will be “plainly seen” by others
[Read 1 Timothy 4:15]

Ensure that you are “making the best use of your time” by scheduling adequate time each day to read, study, and meditate on the Word of God (Eph 5:15-17)

We will examine the importance of taking the time to meditate thoroughly on God’s Word and allowing what we learn to mold us

MEDITATING ON GOD’S WORD DRAWS US CLOSER TO JEHOVAH (7 min.)

A key objective of personal study is to build a close friendship with Jehovah (Ps 25:14)

Personal study that nourishes the heart involves more than simply identifying key points and looking up cited scriptures

It includes meditating on God’s Word with the same attitude of appreciation as expressed by the psalmist **[Read Psalm 77:11, 12]**

Take time to contemplate what the information reveals about Jehovah’s ways, standards, and personality (Ex 33:13)

Setting aside sufficient time *each day* to ponder on what we learn about Jehovah from the Scriptures will strengthen our attachment to him (Ps 119:147, 148; 143:5)

[Interview: (3 min.) Interview a pioneer who overcame poor study habits and now has a regular program of personal study, Bible reading, and meditation. What is his schedule for personal study? What obstacles did he overcome in establishing his good routine? What sacrifices does he make to stick to his personal study schedule? How has this benefited him spiritually and in his pioneer service?]

As with all relationships, closeness with Jehovah must be nurtured continually in order for it to keep growing (Jas 4:8)

ALLOW GOD’S WORD TO CONTINUE MOLDING YOU (4 min.)

Jehovah has been progressively molding us since we began taking in spiritual food (Ro 12:2)

Although you have the privilege of serving as a pioneer, allow him to continue molding you
[Read Isaiah 64:8]

Sufficient time for study and meditation must be invested in order to gain the strength and wisdom needed to deal wisely with obstacles and challenges you encounter in your pioneer service (Jos 1:8)

You will maintain joy in your pioneer service as your thinking comes more in line with Jehovah’s view of matters (Isa 55:8, 9; *be 9 ¶4*)

BIBLE STUDY AND MEDITATION RESULT IN LASTING BLESSINGS (2 min.)

Regular Bible study and meditation make “the inexperienced one wise” (Ps 19:7)

When we spend sufficient time studying God’s Word, allowing it to mold us, our spiritual advancement will be plainly seen by others

More important, Jehovah takes note of our spiritual progress

No. 7 Spiritual Advancement Should Be Plainly Seen by . . . (Symposium)
Being a Good Student of the Bible—Page 2

Through regular Bible study and meditation, we are continually reminded that our work as pioneers is pleasing to Jehovah and a blessing to others (Col 1:9, 10)

The next talk in this symposium highlights another way that our spiritual advancement should be plainly seen. Brother _____ will consider the subject “Spiritual Advancement Should Be Plainly Seen by . . . Our Conduct and Personal Choices”

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TO BE COVERED IN 15 MINUTES

**No. 8 Spiritual Advancement Should Be Plainly Seen by . . . (Symposium)
Our Conduct and Personal Choices (Pioneer elder)**

Note to the speaker:

This is the second part of a three-part symposium and includes audience participation. Help the pioneers see the relationship between spiritual advancement and their speech, dress and grooming, and choices of recreation

OUR PERSONAL DECISIONS REVEAL OUR SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT (2 min)

Spiritual persons wish not only to know Jehovah's thinking but to bring all aspects of their life, even personal matters, into harmony with it (1Pe 4:1, 2)

In this way, our advancement will be plainly seen in areas of life that may not be directly linked to our spiritual activity (1Ti 4:12, 15)

Our example is important because our brothers pay attention to our conduct and decisions

In this talk, we will discuss how our speech, dress and grooming, and choices of recreation reveal our spiritual progress

CONTROL THE TONGUE (3 min.)

Spiritual advancement should be evident in *what* we say and *how* we say it (*w15 12/15 20-22 ¶10-17*)

Jesus taught that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" (Mt 12:34)

If our heart is full of love and compassion, our speech will be positive and upbuilding

A spiritually mature person will discern the *right time* to speak (Pr 15:23; *w15 12/15 19-20 ¶4-9*)

Question: In what circumstances might we have a tendency to be careless in the proper use of the tongue?

We will please Jehovah and others when we choose the right time to speak, select the proper words, and strive to be gracious

CHOOSE DRESS AND GROOMING THAT PLEASES JEHOVAH (5 min.)

The Bible encourages us to be modest and display "soundness of mind" regarding our dress and grooming [**Read 1 Timothy 2:9, 10**]

This principle applies equally to brothers and sisters

We need to regularly examine our heart to see if it is being enticed or influenced by inappropriate styles or trends of dress and grooming (1Jo 2:16)

Question: What are some popular trends that may not be appropriate for a Christian minister, especially for one in the full-time service?

We guide our decisions, not solely by our preference, but primarily by Jehovah's thinking and concerns because we love and support his way of ruling (*w17.06 31 ¶16*)

Our spiritual advancement is plainly seen when our dress and grooming brings glory to Jehovah, dignifies our message, and does not stumble others or draw undue attention to ourselves (1Co 10:23, 24, 31-33; Php 2:4; 1Pe 2:16)

WHOLESOME RECREATION IS A "GIFT OF GOD" (4 min.)

Wholesome recreation is a "gift of God" and fills an important need (Ec 3:12, 13)

It can help us to rest, relax, and find refreshment from our busy schedules (*w17.05 24-25 ¶11-14*)

Do not allow the world's spirit to influence your heart to love entertainment that is inappropriate

Much of what is available glorifies things that God hates, such as violence, spiritism, and illicit sex, which could stimulate wrong desires (Jas 1:14, 15)

**No. 8 Spiritual Advancement Should Be Plainly Seen by . . . (Symposium)
Our Conduct and Personal Choices—Page 2**

A spiritually mature person will give prayerful consideration to the amount of time spent in recreation and keep it in its proper place (Eph 5:15, 16)

Love for Jehovah and for Jesus will move us to focus primarily on Kingdom activities [**Read Philippians 1:9, 10**]

Question: How does this scripture help us to be balanced with regard to the time we spend in recreation?

Our spiritual advancement is plainly seen by the wholesome entertainment we choose and by our keeping it in balance with theocratic activities

PRAISE JEHOVAH IN ALL THINGS (1 min.)

By keeping our mind and heart in harmony with Jehovah's thinking, our speech, dress and grooming, and choice of recreation will ultimately bring praise to Jehovah (Ps 145:2; Pr 27:11)

The final talk in this symposium highlights a third way our spiritual advancement is clearly visible to all. Brother _____ will consider the subject "Spiritual Advancement Should Be Plainly Seen by . . . Our Ministry in the Congregation"

**No. 9 Spiritual Advancement Should Be Plainly Seen by . . . (Symposium)
Our Ministry in the Congregation (Pioneer elder)**

Note to the speaker:

This is the final part of a three-part symposium and includes audience participation. Highlight how setting a good example in the congregation will strengthen others

TIMOTHY’S ADVANCEMENT WAS PLAINLY SEEN BY ALL (3 min.)

Despite enjoying various privileges in Jehovah’s service, Timothy was encouraged to continue making spiritual advancement (1Ti 4:15)

His advancement was related to developing Christian qualities rather than merely obtaining privileges (*w09 12/15 12 ¶5-7*) [**Read 1 Timothy 4:12**]

Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to set “an example to the faithful ones”

By his words and actions he encouraged others to make spiritual advancement

You too should strive to make your advancement plainly seen to all in the congregation (Mt 5:16; Ac 16:2)

Let us discuss ways in which this can be done

CONTINUE TO MAKE PROGRESS IN THE CONGREGATION (5 min.)

One way our advancement is plainly seen is by developing the “art of teaching” in our comments and parts on the midweek meeting [**Read 2 Timothy 4:2**]

Well-prepared comments are upbuilding to the congregation (Ps 22:22; 40:9; Ro 1:11)

Encouragement can be given with just a “few words” (1Pe 5:12)

Our comments should be simple, clear, and brief

We should view each part that we receive on the midweek meeting as an opportunity to make spiritual progress (1Ti 4:13; *be 46 ¶1*)

Question: How is our spiritual advancement manifest when caring for congregation assignments?

We should read and think about each assignment as soon as we receive it, not waiting until the last minute to prepare

Instead of relying on our natural abilities or previous experience, we should prepare well and apply any counsel we receive (*be 7 ¶4*)

HELP OTHERS MAKE ADVANCEMENT (5 min.)

We have all benefited from seeing Timothy’s advancement through the pages of the Bible (Php 2:19-22)

His example may have contributed to some of you becoming pioneers

Like Timothy, we can help others as they see our example [**Read Philippians 3:17**]

Prepare well for the field ministry, and be punctual for meetings for service

Let the publishers see you as an effective teacher of the Bible

We can also assist others to make progress by working with them in the ministry

Observing your joy and spiritual advancement may be all they need to further increase their service and begin pioneering

Question: In what ways have you endeavored to assist others to make spiritual advancement?

CONTINUE MAKING ADVANCEMENT AS SPIRITUAL PERSONS (2 min.)

This symposium has shown us that we should continue making spiritual advancement by

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Our Ministry in the Congregation—Page 2**

- (1) Being good students of God's Word
- (2) Our speech, dress and grooming, and choices of recreation
- (3) Becoming examples in our congregation

This can be a challenge due to the pressures of this system of things, family and secular responsibilities, or our own limitations

We are encouraged at 1 Corinthians 16:13 to "carry on in a manly way"

Continue courageously making spiritual advancement despite the challenges (De 31:6)

Let your love and devotion to God be plainly seen by all

In doing so, it will result in our salvation and those who listen to us (1Ti 4:16)

No. 10 “Carry On in a Manly Way”—When Facing Opposition (Pioneer elder)

Note to the speaker:

Explain why spiritually mature people do not become ashamed of the good news or dismayed when faced with negative propaganda. Speak with conviction, helping the audience to understand how they can prove themselves God’s ministers in spite of Satanic attacks

DO NOT BE SHAKEN BY NEGATIVE REPORTS (5 min.)

Because of Satan’s deep hatred of Jehovah’s people, he uses his system to circulate negative propaganda about us (Re 12:17)

We are not surprised by these attacks, since Jesus warned that we would be hated (Joh 15:19, 20; Lu 6:26)

These attacks fit the Devil’s personality. He is a liar and a deceiver, and so are his agents (Joh 8:44)

Spiritually mature people do not become ashamed of the good news when faced with bad reports published in the media [**Read Mark 8:38**]

Rather, we “carry on in a manly way” by imitating Jesus’ faith and courage (1Co 16:13)

How did Jesus handle false accusations?

FACE BAD REPORTS AS JESUS DID (9 min.)

Satan’s agents labeled Jesus a blasphemer, a glutton, and a drunkard and accused him of being subversive and demon-possessed (Mr 15:3-5; Lu 5:21; 7:34; 23:2; Joh 10:20)

Jesus kept focused on doing his Father’s will without becoming troubled by what his opponents said (Heb 12:2, 3)

He knew that he would contribute in a unique way to the vindication of Jehovah’s sovereignty and that his faith and fine conduct would provide Jehovah with the best answer to Satan’s accusations (*w16.04 15 ¶10*)

Jesus did not get distracted by trying to defend himself from every false accusation

For the benefit of sincere ones, he at times vigorously defended the truth before his accusers, but he did not waste time arguing endlessly with incorrigible opponents (Mt 15:1-12, 14; *w95 4/1 27*)

Like Jesus, continue to prove yourselves to be God’s ministers “through bad report and good report” [**Read 2 Corinthians 6:4, 8-10**] (*w98 12/15 19-20 ¶17-18*)

Keep focused on doing Jehovah’s will without becoming troubled by false reports

Remember that your faith and fine conduct proves that you support the underlying issue of Jehovah’s sovereignty (*lv 203-204 ¶19*)

Jehovah himself backs up the preaching work and nothing will stop it, so remain busy at using your spiritual weapons to preach and teach the truth to sincere ones (Isa 54:17)

Avoid becoming distracted by attempting to disprove or debate every false report

Brother Charles T. Russell once explained why he did not defend himself against the many personal attacks the clergy made upon him, saying: “If you stop to kick at every dog that barks at you, you’ll never get very far”

By continuing to imitate Christ’s example, whether we are honored or disrespected, we can attract sincere ones to the truth (1Pe 3:16)

Assist others who become discouraged by negative reports, helping them to keep the right perspective

Consider carefully the effect your speech may have on others before sharing unconfirmed or sensational reports via social media or other means (Job 34:3; Pr 12:18)

No. 10 “Carry On in a Manly Way” When Facing Opposition—Page 2

REMAIN STEADFAST AND JOYFUL (1 min.)

We know we shall enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations, but we are honored to be falsely accused on account of Jesus’ name (Mt 5:11, 12; Ac 14:22)

Though Satan and his agents hate us deeply, our faith will not waver

We rejoice in our hope of seeing the time when “every breathing thing” will give heartfelt recognition to Jehovah’s righteous sovereignty (Ps 150:6)

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TO BE COVERED IN 15 MINUTES

No. 11 **Spiritual Persons Support “the Faithful and Discreet Slave”** (Circuit overseer)

Note to the speaker:

This talk includes audience participation. Emphasize that Satan and his world love the spirit of independence, whereas a spiritual person finds joy in following divine direction supplied through the channel that Jehovah and Jesus are using. At the conclusion of the talk, invite all to sing song number 126, and then conclude with prayer

WHY WE SUPPORT “THE FAITHFUL AND DISCREET SLAVE” (2 min.)

Jehovah has appointed his Son as the head of the congregation

Jesus, in turn, has appointed “the faithful and discreet slave,” the Governing Body, to provide direction and spiritual nourishment for the “domestics” (*w13 7/15 22 ¶10*) [**Read Matthew 24:45**]

Jehovah blesses and directs the slave with his holy spirit (Ac 1:8)

We can have full confidence in the Scriptural insight, understanding, and guidance that we receive from the Governing Body (Ps 32:8)

As a result of following the guidance of the faithful slave, we enjoy a spiritual paradise!

GIVE WHOLEHEARTED SUPPORT TO THE CHANNEL JESUS USES (6 min.)

Simply obeying theocratic direction is not the same as supporting it wholeheartedly (Col 3:23, 24) [**Read 2 Chronicles 16:9a**]

It is vital that what we learn reaches our heart, not just our ears. A Chinese proverb says: “Teaching that enters the ears but not the heart is like dinner eaten in a dream”

Questions: If Jehovah and Jesus guide “the faithful and discreet slave,” why are changes necessary in our Bible understanding and organization? How can we give our wholehearted support to these changes? [After entertaining a few comments, **read and explain Proverbs 4:18**] (*w17.02 26 ¶12*)

Questions: What doctrinal or procedural changes have you witnessed or read about? Why have these changes been beneficial? [As time allows, mention examples from *God’s Kingdom Rules!*, sections 1-3, and the “Beliefs Clarified” heading in the *Watch Tower Publications Index*]

MAINTAIN AND PROMOTE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD CHANGES (4 min.)

Jesus appointed “the faithful and discreet slave” to ensure that his genuine followers would have a steady supply of timely spiritual food throughout the last days

The Governing Body appreciates our prayers asking that God grant them “a spirit of wisdom” (Eph 1:16, 17; *w17.02 28 ¶16*)

Be determined to continue giving loyal support to the anointed brothers who make up that “faithful and discreet slave” [**Read Hebrews 13:7, 17**]

The congregation looks to you as exemplary spiritual men and women

Never let them down by displaying a negative spirit or by making negative comments about new direction or adjustments in Scriptural understanding

REMAIN ON THE PATH OF EVER INCREASING LIGHT (3 min.)

[**Read 2 Samuel 23:3, 4**] The light on the pathway of Jehovah’s servants from earliest times to the present has kept on increasing (*w06 2/15 26 ¶2*)

Light from God’s Word has flashed forth, like the sunshine on “a morning without clouds,” to illuminate ever more clearly the pathway that Jehovah’s servants must walk

Regarding adjustments of understanding he had witnessed throughout the years, Brother A. H. Macmillan said: “The fundamental truths we learned from the Scriptures remained the same. So I learned that we should admit our mistakes and continue searching God’s Word for more

No. 11 Spiritual Persons Support “the Faithful and Discreet Slave”—Page 2

enlightenment. No matter what adjustments we would have to make from time to time in our views, that would not change the gracious provision of the ransom and God’s promise of eternal life”

As full-time servants, let us prove our spirituality by wholeheartedly supporting the channel that Jehovah and Jesus are using to direct and nourish us and by encouraging others to display the same spirit

S-312-tk18-E No. 11 6/17

TO BE COVERED IN 15 MINUTES