

CIRCUIT OVERSEER MEETS WITH ELDERS AND MINISTERIAL SERVANTS PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER 2014 THROUGH FEBRUARY 2015

Note to the circuit overseer:

Please ask the elders and ministerial servants to bring their *Ministry School* book to the meeting. Additionally, please ask the elders to review the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 2, paragraphs 24-25, in advance of the meeting. As noted in the outline below, consideration is being given to the teaching ability of those who conduct the *Watchtower* Study and the Congregation Bible Study. At the start of the visit, you should meet with the coordinator of the body of elders and the auxiliary counselor to inquire if any elders who conduct these meetings are struggling in this area. (If the coordinator of the body of elders is the auxiliary counselor, another elder who displays good teaching ability should be included in the discussion.) If an elder has not responded to past counsel on his teaching ability and it seems that he may not qualify to conduct the *Watchtower* Study or the Congregation Bible Study, you and another elder should discreetly meet with him sometime before the consideration of the outline. You should kindly inform him that his qualifications to conduct those meetings will be considered by the body of elders. At your meeting with the elders and the ministerial servants, warmly express appreciation for all that they are doing in caring for the needs of the congregation. Mention specific ways that the brothers demonstrated good teaching during the Tuesday meeting (*tg* 21:11)

Theme: Cultivate the “Art of Teaching” (Tit 1:9)

INTRODUCTION (3 min.)

Why should elders and ministerial servants cultivate the “art of teaching”?

Jehovah deserves praise of the highest quality (Re 4:11; *be* 8 par. 1)

Talks should be prepared to encourage and strengthen the congregation (Ac 15:32)

During these critical last days, Jehovah’s people need to be built up (Heb 10:24, 25)

Being a good teacher is a Scriptural requirement for elders [**Read Titus 1:9**]

By cultivating this art, ministerial servants may qualify for additional responsibilities

This meeting will address a few essential elements of effective teaching in the congregation

All appointed men should regularly evaluate their own teaching ability

From time to time, ask for observations on how you may improve your teaching

PREPARE WELL (10 min.)

Like a fine meal, good teaching requires forethought and preparation [**Read Proverbs 15:28a**]

Do not procrastinate [**Read page 51, paragraph 1, of the *Ministry School* book**]

Question: How have you benefited from taking time to meditate on upcoming speaking assignments as you go about your daily routine?

Thoroughly research your subject (*be* 33-38)

Consider your audience

A good cook prepares food with his guests in mind

Gather more material than you can use, then cut nonessential ideas

Use the *Research Guide*, *Watchtower Library*, or the *Watch Tower Publications Index* to find information that moves *you*, then your presentation will move the *audience*

Similar to the seasoning on food, appropriate illustrations or examples can enhance your presentation, but should not overshadow the main points

Rather than simply summarizing the material, teach the audience how to apply it

Preparing discourses for the public requires additional effort and forethought

[Direct the brothers' attention to the *Ministry School* book, page 52, paragraphs 2-5]

Question: What are the first steps in preparing discourses for the public?

Before concluding the preparation of your talk, ask yourself the following questions [Review the questions on page 55 of the *Ministry School* book]

'HOLD FIRMLY TO THE FAITHFUL WORD' (10 min.)

A professional chef must adhere to the restaurant's menu. Similarly, teachers in the congregation do not have authority to change the spiritual food; they must 'hold firmly to the faithful word' (Tit 1:9)

The Bible should be the backbone 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 (Ac 17:2, 3; *be* 52 par. 6; *w13* 11/15 28-29 par. 12)

How do we accomplish this? [Direct the brothers' attention to pages 53-54 of the *Ministry School* book, and discuss the four main points listed below]

(1) Read

Build anticipation for Bible verses to be read. After you read a scripture, keep your Bible open as you discuss and apply the text

When reading familiar verses, avoid expressions such as, 'We already know what this says, but let's read it anyway.' Rather, help the audience to look at the verse with renewed appreciation or from a different perspective

(2) Explain

Why did you read the verse? Make the explanation clear and obvious. Use the verse to teach points from the outline. If the meaning of the verse is not clear in your mind, then it will likely be unclear in the mind of your audience (Ne 8:8)

(3) Illustrate

Use examples, illustrations, or experiences to help your listeners to remember and to appreciate the main points. Remember that your aim is to teach, not to entertain

(4) Apply

Use rhetorical questions to help the audience to understand how a particular point impacts their life and their relationship with Jehovah and why it should move them to action

A talk has motivating power when the audience understands and retains the application of the Bible texts. The force of a talk is not in the number of verses quoted or read, but in their application

[Read Luke 24:32]

Our goal is to touch the feelings of our brothers and help them deepen their love for Jehovah

BE EXTEMPORANEOUS AND ENTHUSIASTIC (12 min.)

Some speakers fear delivering a talk that is not written out. However, an extemporaneous delivery is the most effective way to hold the interest of and motivate an audience (*be* 174-178)

It involves spontaneous word choice and careful preparation of ideas

Keep your notes simple, review the main points mentally, and practice expressing the ideas out loud within the allotted time for each subheading

What can help you to be more extemporaneous? **[Read Isaiah 50:4]**

Convince yourself of the benefits of speaking extemporaneously. Such a delivery is more flexible and less formal, and thus more appealing to the audience

Approach each assignment prayerfully, humbly trusting that Jehovah will help you to fulfill your assignment

Enthusiasm in your delivery also helps to maintain the attention of your audience (*be* 115-117)

To develop enthusiasm, prepare not only the information but also your heart (Ezr 7:10)

Meditate on the precious truths you will be teaching until they touch *you* emotionally

Give careful thought to how the points you are going to cover will benefit your listeners

Analyze why your audience needs to hear the information, and pray for Jehovah to guide you to use it for their benefit (Ps 32:8)

Be thoroughly alive in your manner of speaking so that your face reflects how you feel

If you are aglow with God's spirit, your animated delivery will move those who listen to you to action

Not all points in your talk require special enthusiasm. Thus, there is a need for proper balance. Although some are naturally more inclined to show enthusiasm, it can be developed effectively regardless of a person's cultural background or personality

Question: Why is it important to rehearse out loud repeatedly? [Doing so helps you to become thoroughly familiar with your material and to speak about it with enthusiasm]

Your extemporaneous and enthusiastic delivery will captivate and motivate your listeners (Mt 7:28, 29)

PUBLIC READING THAT TEACHES OTHERS (10 min.)

Effective reading of Bible verses and material at the *Watchtower* Study and Congregation Bible Study contributes to good teaching and to the spiritual progress of others (Pr 2:5; w96 2/1 11 pars. 9-11)

It requires more than pronouncing words correctly (*be* 26)

You must understand the meaning of the words and comprehend how the thoughts they express relate to the main points and the theme of the material (*be* 105 par. 3)

Thorough preparation and practice are needed to master public reading

Applying the suggestions in study 11, "Warmth and Feeling," and study 14, "Naturalness," of the *Ministry School* book will enable you to put appropriate feeling, emotion, and conviction into your reading

As a spirited delivery persuades the mind, reading with warmth and feeling stimulates the heart

Strive to express the emotion that the Bible text conveys by tone of voice and facial expressions; visualize yourself in the scene (*be* 120 par. 1)

[Read Matthew 20:29-34 and Matthew 23:29-32] [Assign these verses in advance to capable brothers so they can prepare and practice]

Question: How do these two Bible passages illustrate the need to adjust the emotion you express in public reading?

Naturalness in public reading requires identifying the principal ideas and understanding how they are being developed in the material (*be* 130 pars. 2-4)

Read quotations in a way that makes the material live!

Consider altering the voice slightly for each character in a Bible passage

Putting life into the reading in a natural way does not mean being overly dramatic

[Read Matthew 4:1-10] [Assign these verses in advance to a capable brother so he can prepare and practice]

Question: Why is it essential to know the material well in order to read with naturalness?

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SERVICE MEETING PARTS (5 min.)

The Service Meeting helps us to be more effective in the ministry (*od* 64-67)

Jesus gave his disciples detailed instructions to accomplish the preaching work. They followed his example by having meetings to discuss experiences and to be strengthened for zealous activity (Mt 11:1; Ac 4:18-23)

The effectiveness of the Service Meeting depends much on elders and ministerial servants following the instructions provided [**Read 1 Corinthians 14:40**]

An explanation of these instructions is found in the article “Instructions for Those Handling Service Meeting Parts” (*km 9/10 2*) [Clearly identify the differences between a “questions and answers” part and a “discussion” part]

- **Talk:** The speaker should give a discourse with *no audience participation*. He should focus on what will be most helpful to the congregation
- **Questions and answers:** This part should have a *very brief* introduction and conclusion and the conductor should ask questions on all of the paragraphs. He should avoid commenting excessively. Key scriptures may be read as time allows. Paragraphs should not be read unless instructions are given to do so
- **Discussion:** This is a talk that should include some audience participation. It is not simply a talk, and it is not all questions and answers
- **Demonstrations and interviews:** These should be rehearsed well in advance, if possible. It is best not to use new and inexperienced publishers to take the lead in a demonstration although some can be used as householders. Ministerial servants should check with the coordinator of the body of elders or another elder before selecting participants

LOCAL NEEDS (8 min.)

CONCLUSION (2 min.)

The purpose of cultivating our art of teaching is not simply to refine technical skills. By our teaching we praise Jehovah and we encourage and strengthen our brothers

When delivering meeting parts, (1) call to mind what Jehovah has done, (2) show delight in what God is doing now, and (3) speak with feeling about the hope ahead (*be 268-271*)

Be assured that Jehovah will bless your efforts to praise him and to ‘strengthen your brothers with the words of your mouth’ (Job 16:5)

[**At this point, the ministerial servants should be dismissed.** Thereafter, consider with the elders the following information and any other necessary matters needing attention]

WHO QUALIFY TO CONDUCT THE CONGREGATION BIBLE STUDY AND THE WATCHTOWER STUDY? (15 min.)

“The faithful and discreet slave” provides rich spiritual food for the nourishment of all those willing to be taught (Mt 24:45; Isa 25:6)

The primary way such spiritual food is dispensed is through the pages of *The Watchtower* (*w10 4/15 10 par. 13; w89 3/15 22 par. 19*)

The extent to which the congregation understands and receives the full benefit of the lesson has much to do with how the study is conducted

What are the qualifications to serve as the conductor of the *Watchtower* Study?

[Review the main points of the *Shepherding* textbook, chapter 2, paragraphs 24-25]

By extension, similar qualifications are needed by those who conduct the Congregation Bible Study

In many congregations, all of the elders are automatically assigned to conduct the Congregation Bible Study. However, not all elders automatically qualify for this responsibility

[Review pertinent points from the letter dated August 2, 2008, to all bodies of elders, page 3, paragraph 2]

Perhaps a brother is a good teacher one-on-one in the congregation or on shepherding visits, but he may not be as effective from the platform

Is he able to grasp the full comprehension of the material, even if it is deeply prophetic in nature?

Does he actively participate in the Congregation Bible Study and *Watchtower* Study when he is not conducting?

Is he able to draw out the main points of the lesson from the audience, without commenting excessively himself?

Role of the auxiliary counselor

[Review the guidelines for the auxiliary counselor found in the current *Theocratic Ministry School Schedule*]

We lovingly encourage all to continue progressing in their teaching ability. While being “qualified to teach” is a requirement for all elders, we do not expect all to exhibit this quality to the same degree (1Ti 3:2; Eph 4:11-13) We encourage those who receive counsel regarding their teaching ability to graciously accept it and to work to improve for the benefit of the congregation (Pr 9:9; 22:17)

[Kindly but frankly consider with the elders whether those who are struggling to apply past counsel with regard to their teaching ability continue to qualify to conduct the *Watchtower* Study or the Congregation Bible Study. Offer balanced guidance to help them reach a decision regarding the brother(s) discussed]