



WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

25 COLUMBIA HEIGHTS, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11201, U.S.A.

PHONE (718) 625-3600

October 1, 1993

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

Another year of joyful service has passed. It has been an exciting year, and we have seen abundant evidence of Jehovah's blessing. You have been very busy, and we appreciate the support you give to the pioneers. In October 1992 we reached a record number of over 73,000 regular pioneers in the United States harvest work. (Isa. 6:8; Matt. 9:37, 38) Your labors as overseers, providing direction and encouragement in the harvest, could be compared to the administrative duties of a steward.

In Bible times stewards were entrusted with substantial responsibility over their master's goods. (Gen. 39:4; Isa. 22:15) The stewardship of elders includes oversight of the ministry of the Christian congregation. We know you take this assignment very seriously. (2 Cor. 11:28) Each year it becomes more urgent for us to preach the good news thoroughly in our assigned territory. (Rom. 15:19b) Who are carrying a major share of the load in the preaching work? The PIONEERS!

You can make the difference: Again we appeal to you elders to give attention to the needs and problems of the pioneers. In just three years, 1990-92, over 45,000 enrolled as regular pioneers. But during that same period, nearly 40,000 found it necessary to stop. Many of these stopped after a year or less. Why did they do so? How can you help the newer, less experienced pioneers to hold on to their privilege of service?

We believe some who discontinue pioneering could be helped to stay on the list if they were given prompt and loving help before minor problems become so serious that they cause the pioneer to stop. Many pioneers have expressed heartfelt appreciation for the Pioneer Service School and special meetings arranged just for pioneers in connection with circuit assemblies. These have helped some who were thinking of quitting to change their mind. But there is no substitute for the personal interest of concerned elders when pioneers face discouragement and problems that could cause them to stop pioneering.

Does the secretary take note of pioneers who are falling behind in hours, and does he alert the presiding overseer, who will arrange for someone to help? Are the ministry and the problems of the pioneers regularly placed on the agenda for elders meetings? When you hold your December meeting with the pioneers, do you carefully prepare and try to make the meeting a happy, upbuilding occasion? The meeting should not serve as a forum to criticize or to air problems. If counsel is needed, it can be given at another time.

Although health and family obligations are two of the leading causes of pioneers discontinuing, traveling overseers have advised the Society that discouragement and failure to maintain a self-sacrificing spirit are also major factors. The pioneer may be getting limited results in the field, or he may be distracted by the material prosperity of others. In some cases a lack of unity among fellow pioneers has caused some to quit. If the pioneer is helped to view his assignment as an honored privilege and to see that a self-sacrificing life is truly rewarding, he may decide

to hold on to his precious privilege of service. You brothers can make the difference. The congregation will benefit if pioneers are helped to remain on the list.

You can help us keep accurate records: At times we encounter problems in making adjustments to pioneer records because elders have apparently forgotten directions on certain procedures. A common problem is with Pioneer Service Identification Cards. The secretary is to issue ID cards ONLY to pioneers who move to his congregation from within the contiguous United States. When preparing a new ID card, he is to change only the congregation name on the top line. No other changes are to be made on the card. Pioneers who change their name, lose their card, or move from another country (including Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico) are provided with a new card by the Society after we receive your notice. Please review our letters of August 1, 1989, and January 1, 1991.

Also, some elders are telling their pioneers that they need not worry about their hours as long as they report at least 900 hours for the year. The requirement is still 1,000 hours, and all pioneers should understand this. If a pioneer is having difficulty meeting this requirement because of changed circumstances, the elders should offer to help the pioneer so that he can bring his hours up to the required 1,000 hours. If that is no longer possible after assistance has been given, it may be best that he be content with auxiliary pioneer service.

The Society appreciates very much the tender care you give to the pioneers. They are in the forefront of the work as soldiers fighting "the fine fight of the faith." (1 Tim. 6:12) As spiritual stewards with empathy for the flock, your support of the pioneers and their ministry will surely bring Jehovah's blessing. Be assured of our prayers in your behalf. We send warm love and greetings.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. S. Society
OF NEW YORK, INC.

December Meeting With Regular Pioneers

Theme: "Pay Constant Attention to Yourself and to Your Teaching."--1 Tim. 4:16.
(60 to 90 minutes. To be conducted by two elders selected by body. Prepare thoroughly. Other elders may attend. Invite pioneers to participate freely.)

1. Jehovah keeping "gates" open wide for sheep to enter, speeding up work. How can we do our part? (Isa. 60:2, 8, 11, 22) Though some hardships in pioneering, will eventually reap "with a joyful cry."--Ps. 126:5, 6; John 16:20.
2. Guard conduct and association. In one year nearly 1,500 pioneers removed for improper conduct.--Ps. 39:1; Eph. 5:3-5; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 13:18.
3. Since our ministry is "a sacrifice of praise" to Jehovah, it must be of highest quality. Strive to be skillful, discerning in your teaching.--Heb. 13:15; Prov. 22:29; Acts 17:2; 18:19; Rom. 11:13.
4. Are you quick to apply suggestions presented in *Our Kingdom Ministry* and in the *Reasoning* book so that what you say is fresh and appealing?--Review articles "Are You Doing Your Utmost?" in *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1993, pages 28-30, and "Do All Things for the Good News," in *The Watchtower*, of November 15, 1989, pages 10-14.
5. How can we be thorough in working our assigned territory? (Acts 8:25; 20:24; Rom. 15:19; km 7/89, p. 4) Invite comments from pioneers on how they can reach the most people. When best time to call? Why call back soon after initial contact?
6. Urgent that we pray for "dynamic energy" to finish work, not tire out.--Isa. 40:28-31; Ps. 29:11; Gal. 6:9; 1 John 5:14, 15.