

## **ELDERS MEET WITH REGULAR PIONEERS, SPECIAL PIONEERS, AND FIELD MISSIONARIES**

PROGRAM FOR DECEMBER 2012 THROUGH JANUARY 2013

### *Note to the elders:*

This meeting is to be conducted in December or January by two elders selected by the body of elders. Other elders may attend. The meeting should be positive, practical, and encouraging. Allow those in attendance to comment freely on the questions posed. Supplemental questions may be used as needed and as time allows. If pioneers inquire, they may be informed that the arrangement for an annual letter to all regular pioneers has been discontinued

Theme: “Guard What Is Laid Up in Trust With You” (1Ti 6:20)

### **GUARD YOUR TRUST** (5 min.)

Like Timothy, all Christians have been given a trust—something valuable to care for and protect and for which we will render an account (*w00* 5/1 11 par. 16)

What is it? [Read 2 Timothy 1:13, 14]

It includes “the pattern of healthful words”—the truth imparted through the Scriptures and the spiritual food dispensed by “the faithful and discreet slave”—and the ministry associated with the truth (Mt 24:45-47; *w89* 9/15 10 par. 1)

As was required of Timothy, pioneers must also “guard” or protect their “trust”—how?

The apostle Paul was inspired to provide Timothy with specific counsel as to how he could do so. Pioneers must heed the same counsel

### **CHERISH THE PRIVILEGE OF YOUR MINISTRY** (15 min.)

[Read 1 Timothy 1:12-14]

**Question:** Though you likely have not opposed the truth as did the apostle Paul, why is your being given a ministry an undeserved kindness? [Read Romans 5:12, 20]

**Question:** How can you, like the apostle Paul, benefit by constantly reflecting on the mercy Jehovah has shown you? [This can stir within you feelings of gratitude that can spur you on in your ministry. It will help you to cope with feelings of unworthiness and to avoid undue anxiety over past mistakes, which could sap you of strength that could be used in the work. (*w12* 3/15 29 par. 17) It will compel you to try to help as many as you can to benefit from God’s undeserved kindness, even as you have]

**Questions:** How can the following show that you truly value your privilege to preach?

- (a) The quality of your teaching (1Ti 2:3, 4; 2Ti 2:15, 18) [Ensure that your teaching is solidly based on God’s Word—that you are helping others to acquire “an accurate knowledge of truth” by your explaining the Scriptures accurately (*w03* 11/15 9-10)]
- (b) Being well prepared to conduct each Bible study (*km* 6/09 2)
- (c) Endeavoring to become adept at using new teaching tools, such as the brochures *Good News From God!* and *Who Are Doing Jehovah’s Will Today?*
- (d) Your dress and grooming (1Ti 2:9, 10) [As servants of Jehovah, we rightly want to look our best, which means dressing in a way that is neat, clean, in good taste, and appropriate for the occasion. At all times, our appearance ought to reflect “modesty and soundness of mind” (*w09* 2/15 20-21)]

**Question:** What positive effect can your good example in dress and grooming have, especially on the young ones in the congregation?

### **PURSUE “GODLY DEVOTION”** (20 min.)

[Read 1 Timothy 4:6-8]

What is godly devotion? The September 15, 1993, issue of *The Watchtower*, page 15, paragraph 5, states: “The expression ‘godly devotion’ . . . refers to the reverence or devotion for Jehovah that moves us to do what is pleasing to him. This is done even in the face of difficult trials because we

love God from the heart. It is a loyal, personal attachment to Jehovah that finds expression in the way we live our lives”

We are admonished to ‘be training ourselves with godly devotion as our aim.’ The Greek word for “be training” (*gymna'zo*) described the strenuous and often painful exercises that athletes performed in the gymnasium. [Read 1 Timothy 4:10.] What does that training involve?

1. Good communication with God

**Question:** Why is daily Bible reading coupled with meaningful meditation and heartfelt and specific prayers vital to maintain good communication with Jehovah? (*w97 7/1 29*)

2. A good spiritual diet (1Ti 4:6)

**Question:** If you are going to be “nourished with the words of the faith,” why must your personal study of God’s Word include “the deep things of God”? (1Co 2:10; *w07 11/1 27-31*)

3. Maintaining a good conscience [Read 1 Timothy 1:19]

**Question:** Why must you be careful about your use of the Internet, the movies and TV programs you watch, and music you listen to if you are going to ‘hold a good conscience’? [Our conscience can gradually become seared]

4. Keeping recreation in its proper place (1Ti 4:8)

**Question:** How can applying the following Bible principles help you pursue recreation that is beneficial? [Read Proverbs 13:20; Matthew 6:33; and Philippians 4:8]

### **CULTIVATE AND MAINTAIN SELF-SUFFICIENCY (15 min.)**

[Read 1 Timothy 6:6-8]

Note that the apostle Paul links godly devotion with self-sufficiency. What is self-sufficiency? It means being content with the basic things. It is important to note that the Bible is not saying that a simple and unassuming manner of life in itself brings happiness. Instead, it is only when it is coupled with godly devotion that true happiness results (*w03 6/1 9-10*)

**Question:** What practical things can you do to ensure that you live within your means? [Draw on the list found in the article “Living Within One’s Means—How It Can Be Done,” in the June 1, 2011, issue of *The Watchtower*, pages 9-11. Highlight the points you feel are important for your pioneers]

**Question:** How has pursuing “godly devotion along with self-sufficiency” been “a means of great gain” for you?

**Question:** How can your congregation benefit from your example of pursuing “godly devotion along with self-sufficiency”?

**Question:** How can your Bible students benefit from your example of pursuing “godly devotion along with self-sufficiency”?

### **TREASURE UP FOR YOURSELF A FINE FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE (5 min.)**

A deep feeling of heartfelt joy and satisfaction comes from discharging a serious responsibility well (1) Cherish the privilege of your ministry, (2) pursue godly devotion, and (3) cultivate and maintain self-sufficiency

By so doing, you will be able to say as did the man with the secretary’s inkhorn: “I have done just as you have commanded me” (Eze 9:11)

The congregation benefits in so many fine ways from your faithful service year after year

Most of all, what joy you must bring to Jehovah’s heart as he sees that despite living in the most self-indulgent time in human history, you are pursuing the course of self-sacrifice!

By maintaining such a course of life, you will continue to be richly rewarded now and safely store up for yourself “a fine foundation for the future” (1Ti 6:19)