

Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



Hse. No. J348/4 - Tema Beach Road - Nungua, Accra
P. O. Box GP 760, Accra, Ghana Tel. No.: (0302) 712456-8; 7010110 Fax: (0302) 712454

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TO THE BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

How happy we are to see the fulfillment of Bible prophecies in this time of the end. As prophesied at 2 Timothy 3:12: "In fact, all those desiring to alive with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted." Although persecution in itself is not pleasant, we know what that means for God's people in this time of the end. As we see the fulfillment of Bible prophecy, including the persecution of God's people, Jesus Christ our Lord, comforts us: "But as these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) God's Kingdom is at hand, so be of good cheer, brothers.

In the days of the apostles, the civil authorities and the religious enemies of the good news charged that the apostles no longer proclaim God's Word in the name of Jesus Christ. So the apostles of Christ were cautious but they were determined to continue giving Jehovah exclusive devotion. Rather than shrink in fear, the apostles fervently petitioned Jehovah: "Sovereign Lord, you are the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them. The kings of the earth took their stand and the rulers massed together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one. . . . And now, Jehovah, give attention to their threats, and grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness." Jehovah heard their prayer of faith, determination and courage. The account continues: "And when they had made supplication, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness."—Acts 4:24-31.

We are determined to follow the footsteps of the apostles. You are the overseers of God's flock by the appointment of God's holy spirit. Therefore, set the right example of reliance on Jehovah, courage and theocratic tact.

We here outline what you should do immediately to reorganize the brothers for meetings and field service. Many of you have done so already, but we still provide the information for the benefit of all. Our first directive has to do with reorganizing meetings. Split the brothers up into smaller groups and designate elders who should care for the various groups with the assistance of ministerial servants. An elder should be designated to coordinate the activities of each group and other elders and ministerial servants should assist him. As you already know, meeting days will change from week to week. At the end of each meeting, the coordinator for the group will advise all assembled as to which day and time their next meeting will be.

For now, we recommend that only two meetings be held each week. The two meetings will be held on the same day. We recommend that you hold the *Watchtower* Study and the Service Meeting for the next few weeks. If in your locality you find that it is safe enough, then add another set of meetings so that the brothers can meet twice a

week. Do not wait to hear anything from us as to when you should introduce the second set of meetings. Study your local situation and arrange matters accordingly.

If you are introducing a second set of meetings, then we recommend the following arrangements in the first meeting day, hold the School and Service Meeting as well as the Book Study. On the second meeting day, hold the *Watchtower* Study and the Public Talk. On the other hand, if you have only one meeting day a week, then please note the arrangement of meetings as we have already said. In that case, hold only the *Watchtower* Study and the Service Meeting. However, we hope that before long all of you will be holding meetings twice a week.

We recommend the following for the Theocratic Ministry School: The Instruction Talk will last ten minutes. There will be no oral review. Give the Bible Highlights in five minutes. Then arrange for one student talk. In this way, the entire school will last 25 minutes, including prayer and counsel for the student talk.

The Service Meeting will be 30 minutes in length. Where there are not enough elders and ministerial servants to be assigned, then the sole elder or ministerial servant in that group can read the material and discuss it with the group.

The Service Meeting will be followed by the Book Study and this should last 30 minutes. Thus, all the three meetings, Theocratic Ministry School, Service Meeting and Book Study should last no more than one hour 30 minutes.

On the second day of meeting, the Public Talk will be delivered in 30 minutes and the *Watchtower* Study will be held for 40 minutes. Therefore, with prayer and announcements, the Public Talk and *Watchtower* Study should last no more than one hour 20 minutes. Please make sure that for the *Watchtower* Study you read all paragraphs as usual, but keep your comments brief. With regard to the Public Talk, the individual who gives a Public Talk in one group should give the same talk in all the other groups, so that everyone benefits.

With regard to assignments for the Theocratic Ministry School, we leave it up to you elders to decide whether the coordinator for each group should make the assignments for members of his group or the appointed Theocratic Ministry School overseer for the congregation. With regard to the Service Meeting, we recommend that the presiding overseer make the assignments. We realize, though, that this may not be practical in all cases and in that case, the coordinator for the group could be asked by the body of elders to make out the assignment for the Service Meeting for his group. Please decide definitely what you want to do and implement.

The circuit overseer will visit you as usual. The circuit overseers are presently preoccupied with visiting each congregation to encourage and give the necessary direction. We are hopeful that they will finish this part of the assignment sometime in July, in which case, if the circuit overseer has already notified your congregation that he will be serving, he will do everything possible to confirm it, starting sometime in July, so that you can prepare accordingly. We are sending a copy of this letter to each circuit overseer, so that they can confirm early the dates of service from July onwards. Their service with each congregation will run as usual from Tuesday through Sunday.

To enable the presiding Overseer prepare an adequate schedule for the service week, we provide the following details: Field service will be arranged from Wednesday

through Sunday or on convenient days, depending on locality. Field service could be arranged for the morning or else for the afternoon or evening, as you see fit. For now, we are concentrating on return visits and Bible studies only, but we shall not be visiting new homes for now.

When the circuit overseer arrives to serve you, arrangements should be made for each group to listen to his talks. Since in many places there are many small groups that the circuit overseer has to speak to each group, it will not be practical to arrange for any other congregation meeting to coincide with the circuit overseer's service to that group at its meeting. In other words, if the group meets it will be for the sole purpose of listening to the circuit overseer. Then that group can arrange for the various congregation meetings on any other convenient days in the week.

When the circuit overseer speaks to the group, the first 30 minutes will be devoted to a service talk and another 30 minutes will be devoted to going over the Society's directives as to how to comport oneself before, during and after meetings as well as how to go about the field service. This will ensure that everyone understands the directives concerning these matters and if there are any questions, he will entertain them. The circuit overseer's visit to each group, therefore, will last one hour. If we add prayer and announcements, the entire meeting will last no more than one hour ten minutes. The circuit overseer will proceed to the next group on the set day and repeat the same arrangement as already explained.

Since field service time will be somewhat reduced because we are concentrating on return visits and home Bible studies only, he will have ample time to visit various homes of brothers to give various families and individuals the needed encouragement they need at this time. Please arrange for some of the elders and ministerial servants to be available to take him to the homes of brothers for this interchange of encouragement.

You should also arrange for him to hold the pioneer meetings and also meeting with elders and ministerial servants. At the elders' meeting, you will have ample opportunity to discuss your situation with him for the necessary direction and encouragement.

At the end of the month you will collect the field service reports as usual, but do not forward them yet, neither should you remit any money to the Society. You will receive specific instructions in due course.

For now, we are cutting down your supplies of magazines. In Jehovah's strength we hope we can send you a reduced supply of magazines for now so that you can conveniently handle it. We are confident that Jehovah will make it possible for you to receive the necessary material for *Watchtower* Studies. If in certain months there is a little delay, then please fall back on any previous issue of the magazine for study and the same applies if *Our Kingdom Ministry* is late. Fall on previous issues and arrange for the Service Meetings. As for the Book Study, we shall soon send you the schedule for the entire *Family Life* book. Thereafter, the material to cover at the Book Study will no longer appear in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Since the schedule will be available in each congregation, it will be up to the coordinator of the group to inform members of the that group the amount of coverage as far as the Book Study is concerned.

Please note this particular paragraph carefully: THE PRESIDING OVERSEER SHOULD IMMEDIATELY SEND US TWO OR THREE NAMES OF BROTHERS IN

GOOD STANDING, PREFERABLE ELDERS, IF AVAILABLE, AS WELL AS THEIR POSTAL ADDRESSES. WE SHALL SEND LETTERS TO YOU THROUGH SUCH BROTHERS WHOSE NAMES AND POSTAL ADDRESSES YOU PROVIDE. ADDRESS THE ENVELOPE THAT CONTAINS THIS INFORMATION TO JOHN K. MENSAH, P. O. BOX 4136, ACCRA.

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY THAT THE ABOVE ADDRESS IS NOT ACCRA NORTH, RATHER IT IS ACCRA. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU CROSS-CHECK THE ADDRESS CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU POST THE LETTER.

How will you frame the information? On a blank sheet of paper, write clearly the computer number for your congregation. Please cross-check the number carefully. If you have forgotten the computer number for your congregation, please check the latest literature and magazine Statement of account for your congregation. After writing the computer number, write the names of the individuals and the respective addresses. The entire service committee should sign. If there is only one elder, then he should invite one ministerial servant to sign. In the case of isolated groups, whoever is caring for the group can sign together with another capable brother. The above is all the information we require. Do not send us any more information. Do not make any reference to this letter. Just set out the information as we have specified above; that is enough.

Many of you have been able to store your magazines and literature in private homes and can use them gradually in field service. This is encouraging to see. In that case, make sure that all magazines and literature are stored in a safe place out of sight and well preserved so that termites and other vermins do not damage them. This way, you will have publications to use progressively in field service. If in your congregation you have arranged for one or two brothers to hold the literature and magazines servants, then this information should be made known to the brothers, so that if someone desires any publication he knows whom to see. The books should on no account be exposed anywhere along the line. Such assistants should be careful to note the quantities taken by the pioneers, so that the brother taking charge can maintain a good record so that the accounts remain in good condition.

Please do not make photocopies of letters we shall be sending you. The important thing is to arrange for a circulation of the letter among all the groups concerned. The presiding overseer should coordinate this so that every group receives whatever information is intended for it and make sure that the letter is returned to the secretary for the congregation's files. As you know, all files are confidential and are accessible to elders only.

All the information detailed above is for the elders. The information which now follows is meant to be read and discussed with each group in the congregation. Ensure that this is done. The information is really for the entire congregation, but we find it expedient to put it in the letter addressed to the elders. The information has to do with meetings and field service.

If the brothers are attending the meetings, they should dress casually, but decently. They should not carry Bibles nor bags. They should just walk casually into the home where the meeting will be held. If a publisher in approaching the house where the meeting will be held sees another publisher entering, he should just pass on, roam about a bit and then return and enter. For this to work, it is important that as many brothers as possible leave home quite early, so that some start to arrive even 30 minutes to time. We

mention again that it not wise for any to bring bags nor Bibles to meetings. Paper and pen are enough to note the Scriptures. A Bible will be available in home where the meeting will be held for those who have talks to use.

All should be quiet in the home and the speaker should use volume just sufficient for the group to hear comfortably. There will neither be singing nor clapping after an assignment has been performed.

Publishers should not be quick to bring new ones to the meetings. Those who will be admitted to our meetings now will be only those who have been regularly attending in the recent past. The publication for study can be hidden on one's person and brought to the meeting. We mention again that it is important for all to prepare thoroughly for each meeting and participate meaningfully.

After the meeting, the brothers should observe silence and leave one by one until the last person goes out. Children can be held by the hand to enter and leave the meeting place.

The congregation is here admonished not to be over-enthusiastic in the way we talk nor by over-zealous in field service. We all need to be balanced, particularly at this time. Someone may ask you: "Who are your 'leaders' in this town? Where do they live?" "Who are your 'leader' in Accra? We implore the elders to help the congregation to know what to say in answer to this and similar questions. The elders are further admonished to keep reminding the brothers about the need for caution. The Bible exhorts us at James 1:19: "Know this, my beloved, Every man must be swift about hearing, slow about speaking."

We want the brothers to keep firmly in mind that for now, as far as field service is concerned, we are concentrating on return visits and home Bible studies. In other words, we are not visiting new ones yet, but people we already know. But even in this respect, there is need for caution. In some houses, particularly the compound houses, we are already well-known as Jehovah's Witnesses, and so if we visit interested persons in such places and are indoor with them over a period of time, the inmates may suspect that we are carrying out our preaching activity. In such a case, why not invite the interested person to a neutral place that is safe, for example, your own home? The pronouncement does not forbid us to converse with our friends over the Bible in the privacy of their own room. They should hide the publication for study. You may have other laudable ways of solving the problem satisfactorily. Go ahead.

If it will be safe for you to visit a Bible friend at home or ask him to come to your house for a study, you may invite another publisher to join you, so that he can at the same time participate in field service with you and thus count the time. Keep in mind the irregular publishers and invite them in this way, so that they do not eventually become inactive.

If two publishers arrange to be out in field service, a strategy would be for each one of them to put the publications to be studied in their pockets and this will especially be ideal with the pocket-size books and even the small-size Live Forever book. Use the strategy that is safe and workable for you.

There will be occasions, too, for informal witnessing. Study carefully the person you are speaking to and above all, Leave politics out from all your discussions. Jehovah's

Witnesses do not meddle in politics. Ours is to preach the good news of God's Kingdom and its blessings. We want to help honesthearted ones on the road to live. Stick firmly to this message and do not deviate.—Mark 13:10; Matt. 24:14.

We consider it a wonderful privilege to be able to communicate with you all during this hour of trial of our faith. Our prayer is that the tested quality of our faith “may be found a cause for praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”—1 Peter 4:7.

Your brothers rejoicing in the truth despite adversity,

*Christian Congregation
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

BLIND COMMENTS: If any special pioneers are associating with your congregation or group, please tell them that at the end of each month they should bring their Special Pioneer Report to Kumasi and inquire of the club depot. If they can make this inquiry from the brothers, so much the better. At the club depot, they will be given the necessary direction for their allowance to be paid to them. If any special pioneer sends his partner to collect his allowance, the pioneer should make sure that he gives him a signed authority note in addition to the Special Pioneer Report form. Otherwise the report will not be honored. They should not just send any messenger. If the messenger is not a special pioneer, we shall not honor the report.

Special pioneers closer to Accra should come to the Glamour store near the general bus stop at Opera Square. A representative will be at the Glamour store to give them further directions. There should be no enthusiastic greetings when they meet the branch representative in Kumasi or Accra.

All special pioneers are requested to present their reports at the Kumasi depot on any of the first three days of each month, regardless of whether any of the first three days of the month is a week-end. Whether in Accra or Kumasi, if the special pioneers call from the fourth day onwards, they should not expect to meet anyone. they will be served between the hours of 8:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m.

The elder are kindly requested to pass this information on to any special pioneers that may be associating with them. Thank you very much.