



# WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF BRITAIN

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TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS

Dear Brothers:

During the 1999 service year, circuit and district overseers are meeting with bodies of elders at the time of the circuit assembly and are reviewing the outline entitled “Reach the Heart as Judges and Teachers.” Elders who have attended this meeting know that part of the programme highlights seven points that experienced speakers have found to be helpful in delivering the Society’s public talk outlines. This portion of the programme is entitled “Reach the Heart When Giving Public Talks.” Many have expressed appreciation for these points and requested that they be made available to all brothers assigned to deliver public talks.

We are pleased to attach a copy of that section of the outline. The presiding overseer may arrange to give a copy of that page to each speaker in the congregation who is assigned public talks, whether he is an elder or a ministerial servant.

The list of points is not comprehensive, but it covers those that are necessary for being effective in speaking and teaching. For more information on public speaking, please see the *School Guidebook*, Studies 8 to 10, pages 39-54.

We hope this material is helpful to those who give public talks. May Jehovah continue to bless your efforts as you put the Kingdom first.

Your brothers,

*Watch Tower B. & T. Society*  
OF BRITAIN

## REACH THE HEART WHEN GIVING PUBLIC TALKS

1. **Consider the purpose of the Society-approved outline:** Meditate on the material before doing extensive research. (*qm* 16, par. 3) The Society outlines are filled with information. Get in mind what the outline is saying, why the subject is being considered, and what we want to teach. Once that is clearly understood, begin to develop the material, determining how best to present it to the audience. A caution: Avoid injecting speculation and personal opinion
2. **Pay attention to main points, and build upon the Scriptural theme:** The main points of the outline need to stand out, with other ideas supporting them. Often, too many points are covered. The *School Guidebook*, page 53, paragraph 16, says: “A few points well explained [are better] than many briefly touched on.” Repeat the theme throughout the talk. Can your audience remember the Scriptural points of the talk the next day or the next week? If so, we have been successful
3. **Analyse and apply Bible texts, not simply reading them quickly:** The Bible is the backbone of your public talk. A talk has motivating power when the audience understands and retains the application of the Bible texts. Thus, analyse the context, the background, or the setting for each text. At times, some speakers read too many scriptures. Remember, the force of a talk is not in the number of verses quoted or read, but in their application. The Society’s public talk outlines say that not all cited texts need to be read or commented on. When reading key scriptures, do so directly from the Bible instead of from a computer printout. This will encourage the audience to follow along in their Bibles. Ask: Am I reading scriptures with proper sense stress so as to make clear why a certain text is being considered?
4. **Make the material practical and true to life:** Be perceptive to the needs of the audience by presenting helpful, practical information. This means knowing your audience and expressing matters with discernment. Are there interested ones, youths, older ones, or those struggling with health problems in attendance? Be flexible, adaptable, and sensitive to the situations of individuals in the audience
5. **Be enthusiastic, and speak with conviction:** Touch the hearts of the audience. The way that we say things should reveal that we truly believe what we say. Avoid flat, monotone presentations. Listen to a recording of your talk, and try to analyse it objectively. Ask: Do I have modulation? Do I have a variety of sentence structure? Do I use questions? Do I sound warm, or cold and academic? Avoid eccentricities and excessive emotion. These may direct too much attention to the speaker, amuse, or otherwise distract, which may make the audience uncomfortable
6. **Make the talk upbuilding and positive:** Be careful not to set standards so high that those in the audience feel they could never attain them. Never do we want to talk down to the audience or leave them feeling discouraged. Grant them equal dignity. People are beaten down in this world. We want to build up their self-respect and help them see the joy of being one of Jehovah’s servants. Anyone with faith can meet the high standards that Jehovah sets. And the ransom sacrifice is there to help us remain in the faith in spite of our shortcomings. We should reach the hearts of all those in the audience and motivate them, not push them or seek results through pressuring them
7. **Audience contact is important:** Look at individuals in the audience, and talk to them. This will help the audience to pay closer attention. It makes the information more personal. We must know the material in order to speak freely and not be tied to notes, unless it is a manuscript talk