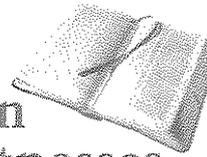


Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



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Dear Pioneer Publisher:

David was moved to exclaim: "Blessed be Jehovah, who daily carries the load for us, the true God of our salvation." (Psalm 68:19) He found delight in serving his heavenly Father. (Psalm 40:8) As a regular pioneer, no doubt you too have found delight in your ministry. You are giving of your time and energy, your love and knowledge of the truth. Your unselfish giving has likely brought you joy and contentment. True, the pioneer ministry is an additional responsibility, but Jehovah's helping hand has made it possible for you to succeed as a pioneer and maintain your joy in the ministry. Remember Jesus' promise recorded at Matthew 11:29, 30 (footnote), that he will help carry the "yoke," providing "refreshment for your souls."

Many pioneers have experienced the truthfulness of Ecclesiastes 9:11: "Time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all." If problems with health or family arise, can adjustments be made that will permit you to hold on to your precious privilege of full-time service? What may make the difference? Talk to Jehovah in heartfelt prayer, asking for wisdom and discernment to cope with the problem. (James 1:5; 1 John 5:14, 15) In addition, approach the elders or your circuit overseer, who will be glad to offer suggestions that may help you to continue pioneering. (Proverbs 20:18; 24:6; Isaiah 32:2) Rather than waiting until you get so far behind in your service that it will not be possible to catch up, be prompt in seeking solutions. Can some time be bought out from secular work or nonessential activity?—Philippians 1:10; Colossians 4:5.

Much is accomplished when you work hard to reach as many people as possible with the good news. In striving to 'accomplish your ministry fully,' doubtless you are working to improve your skill in all features of the service. (2 Timothy 2:15; 4:5) During the past 12 years, a special three-hour meeting for regular and special pioneers has been arranged each year in conjunction with the circuit assembly. One pioneer described such meetings as "very joyous and upbuilding occasions." Is that how you feel? Much encouragement and direction have been given to pioneers at these meetings. Here are some of the practical suggestions that were featured during the last four years.

Maintaining a Good Schedule: A pioneer needs a well-thought-out schedule to be successful. Is yours tailored to fit your present circumstances? Do you hold to it? Pioneers need to be balanced and set priorities. There should be sufficient time for personal study and preparation for and attendance at all meetings. There should be definite times for field service. Be sure to include time for rest, healthful meals, and some relaxation. Do not procrastinate in connection with your ministry. Get an early start each day, each month, and each service year.

Preach the Good News Everywhere: Be alert, and take the initiative to talk to people at every opportunity. Jesus did not need a door to talk to people. He *made* opportunities to preach. (Matthew 9:35; Luke 19:5; John 4:7) Look for specific opportunities to utilize his methods. Do not let apprehension hold you back.

Plan Ahead—Accomplish the Most Good: You will find it advantageous to keep a portfolio of *Our Kingdom Ministry* articles that you find especially helpful in accomplishing your ministry. Such articles might include the inserts from the March 1997, June and September 1996, September 1995, and August 1993 issues. More recently, the series of articles appearing on page 8 of *Our Kingdom Ministry* in the August through December 1999 issues addressed the topics: ‘What will I say to a Buddhist? a Hindu? a Jew? a Muslim? an atheist?’ Do these articles provide information that is applicable in your territory? Review your portfolio periodically.

Are You Fully Accomplishing Your Follow-Up Ministry? Follow up on all interest found. This will also stimulate others in the congregation to be return-visit and Bible-study conscious. Remember these seven points: (1) Call back on receptive ones, even if literature is not placed. (2) Have a positive attitude, and regard the person as interested. (3) Tell the householder you will return, and try to establish a day and time to call and a question to discuss. (4) Record the placement (if any), subject of conversation, name, and address. (5) Do not delay; try to return in a day or two. (6) Schedule time for return visits each week. (7) Return with the goal of starting a Bible study.

Reaching Hearts With the Art of Persuasion: The Greek root word translated “persuade” means “to convince, to bring about a change of mind by means of sound, logical reasoning.” (Acts 18:4) More is needed than cold logic or even a series of scriptures to prove a person’s viewpoint to be right or wrong. When strong emotional barriers exist, these must first be removed. To counteract such barriers, give attention to how you express your viewpoint. Do not take a dogmatic, self-righteous position, and do not be sarcastic or demeaning. Humility is the key. “Always treat others as you would like them to treat you.” (Matthew 7:12, *New English Bible*) Use persuasion by (1) listening carefully, (2) asking questions, and (3) using sound reasoning.

Importance of the House-to-House Ministry: The house-to-house ministry is still the mainstay of our preaching work. (Acts 20:20, 24) It is in this field that most find the majority of their return visits and Bible studies. We encourage you to support congregation arrangements for house-to-house witnessing, taking the opportunity to work with publishers from door to door. They can benefit very much from your experience in the field. Have a flexible schedule so that you can go from house to house when more people are at home.

The letter from the Governing Body in the 2001 *Yearbook* exclaims: “How favored we are! As Jehovah’s Witnesses, we are privileged not only to know Jehovah . . . but also to bear his name and serve him.” As a regular pioneer you have the special privilege of devoting 70 hours each month to the work of bearing witness to Jehovah. To continue strong in your ministry, it is vital that you maintain a good schedule of Bible reading, personal study, and meditation. . . . These will nourish you, helping you to keep going in your chosen vocation. . . . —1 Timothy 4:6.

Be assured of our prayers that Jehovah will continue to bless you and take you by the hand as you pursue the pioneer ministry, to your joy and to Jehovah’s praise.—Psalm 73:23.

Your brothers,

Christian Congregation of
Jehovah's Witnesses