

CONDUCTING A MINISTRY

Recently, we received an email from a fellow Jehovah's Witness who asked:

“If I begin to teach these thoughts about being sons of God in the ministry, what happens when its time to study with them and get them to the meetings? They will surely see the things taught from the platform are different than what I share with them from the Bible. What happens then?”

Others have asked us these same questions, and we have consistently prayed for direction. For non-Witnesses who begin to share what they learn about sonship with God, they face no such dilemma. But for Jehovah's Witnesses, we have much to overcome.

Our ministry is practiced with the use of the Bible and Bible aids such as the Watchtower and Awake magazines, and various books and tracts. Many of our brothers have become so dependent on these 'aids' that they are unable to preach the good news of the kingdom without them. And when the information in these 'aids' conflict with the true good news as taught by Jesus and the first century disciples, most defer to the 'aids' rather than Jesus' own message.

But now that the true good news has been revived within our association, some of our brothers are almost paralyzed in the ministry. They know the true message, and can no longer preach 'another sort of good news.' But how will they do this without being subject to congregation discipline or a charge of apostasy? Not apostasy from Christ, but apostasy from the teachings of the organization.

This is a personal challenge that each Witness of Jehovah must face. It boils down to our loyalty to the Christ or our loyalty to an organization that is currently a little off point. (For a further discussion of this challenge, see **Proving Ourselves Worthy of Christ.**) But the information here can be used by all ambassadors of Christ, no matter their denomination.

Jesus told us:

“You are the light of the world. A city cannot be hid when situated upon a mountain. People light a lamp and set it, not under the measuring basket, but upon the lampstand, and it shines upon all those in the house. Likewise let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens.” – ***Matthew 5:14-16***

So in our ministry, we are obligated to share our enlightened knowledge with all we come in contact with, even if our leadership is lagging behind. We long for the day when the

Governing Body sees fit to correct the kingdom message, but we cannot wait on men to do the work that was commanded by Jesus Christ.

“Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, **teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.** And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things.” – *Matthew 28:19-20*

So to answer the question: [What happens when its time to study with them?](#) Here is our suggestion: If the literature provided by the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society does not accurately promote the true good news, we can simply use the Bible as the sole teaching aid. Everything we **need** to accomplish our ministry is contained within scripture:

“All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be **fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.**” – *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

Who can justly find fault with us if we decide to use the Bible as the sole source of information in our ministry? Who can justly find fault with us if we conduct Bible studies with – wait for it – THE BIBLE, instead of supplemental literature that does not promote the Kingdom of the Heavens?

So in answer to the brother’s question posed at the beginning of this article, when we preach to individuals who are interested in learning more about sonship with God and the heavenly hope, we use the Bible to teach the kingdom message. There are many articles on our site that discuss these matters, but instead of using the articles, use just the scriptures. You can go to the Scripture Index for any article on the site and you will find a list of scriptures in the order they appear in the article. You can print out that list of scriptures and conduct your Bible studies directly from the Bible! And of course, you are free to share the website if you wish.

The second question posed by our brother at the beginning of this article is what to do [when its time to get them to the meeting where they will surely see the things taught from the platform are different than what I share with them from the Bible?](#) In answer to that question, we wonder when is it **ever** time to take someone to a meeting where they will not learn the true good news as expressed in the Bible?

As for us, we believe the time to invite interested ones to a Kingdom Hall is when the Governing Body authorizes that the message of sonship and the heavenly hope can be taught from the platforms. Until that joyous day, we can upbuild and encourage the developing sons of the Kingdom by imitating the early Christians and even Christians brothers and sisters of today.

The Example of the Early Christians

In the Acts of the Apostles, we see striking similarities between what happened at Pentecost 33 C.E., and what is happening today.

After Jesus' resurrection, his apostles and disciples continued to meet together in an upper room. They were a little frightened at what the Jewish leaders would do to the free thinking Christians who claimed, like their Master, to be sons of God. But at that Pentecost, the Spirit of Truth was poured out 'on every sort of flesh' and they all began prophesying about the true and authentic message of Jesus – first in the upper room, then in the streets, and later in the synagogues – to all whom they met! (*Acts 2:1-36*) And after Peter's discourse in the synagogue, the response was overwhelming:

“Therefore **those who embraced his word heartily were baptized**, and on that day about three thousand souls were added. And they continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to **sharing [with one another], to taking of meals and to prayers.**” – *Acts 2:41-42*

We see a similarity today. The Spirit of Truth is active in our association and 'being poured out on every sort of flesh.' We get reports weekly of our brothers sharing the message of sonship and the heavenly hope with all whom they meet, including their fellow brothers and sisters. And like the early Christians, our brothers are gathering together in private homes to share meals, to discuss the heavenly hope, and to pray. Some of our brothers are finding it appropriate to invite their Bible students to join them in this informal fellowship. And as the Governing Body begins to publish talk outlines and magazines in line with the true Christian hope, we look forward to even more upbuilding experiences when these Bible students accompany them to congregation meetings.

We should keep in mind that we do not have to pluck our Bible students out of their environments and plant them into the organization. We can teach them to be evangelizers in their own churches and among their own associates. In this way, the true good news of the kingdom will spread exponentially rather than just one at a time. We can teach them to follow the counsel Paul gave to Timothy:

“You, therefore, my child, keep on acquiring power in the undeserved kindness that is in connection with Christ Jesus, and the things you heard from me with the support of many witnesses, **these things commit to faithful men, who, in turn, will be adequately qualified to teach others.**” – *2 Timothy 2:1-2*

Yes, our Bible students can be 'adequately qualified' to share the true good news to their family, friends and associations, persons whom we might not have an opportunity to reach. We will share with you a couple of examples of how this is being done in our ministry.

The Ministry of Isaac

Isaac is a business owner in our territory. Over the years, Isaac had been contacted by Jehovah's Witnesses many times. He was always gracious and took the literature, but never committed to a Bible study. However, while conducting business with him one day, we shared one of the articles from our website and explained the message of sonship and the heavenly hope. He immediately expressed interest. We left our telephone number with Isaac and asked him to give us a call if he had any further questions.

To our surprise, Isaac telephoned us later that same day and asked us to come back for more discussion. This went on practically every day for about a week. Isaac accepted the message and rejoiced greatly, sharing it with his wife and children. Then he shared it with his brothers, who, too, were impressed.

Without a word or any counsel from us to 'clean up his life,' Isaac instinctively and immediately ceased his illegal drug use and applied himself as a family man, becoming a better father and husband. The innate desire for freeness of speech with the Father is sufficient incentive for people to lead moral lives.

Shortly thereafter, he was called upon to travel to Mexico to assist his mother. When he arrived, he shared the kingdom message with his mother and a few of his family members, almost all of whom were Catholics and not favorably disposed to Jehovah's Witnesses. As a result of recognizing their sonship with God, his family began taking better care of their home and their yard. This attracted the attention of their neighbors, and the message of sonship and the heavenly hope was shared with them. They, in turn, started cleaning up their yards and sharing the message of sonship with others. Isaac's children also began sharing the message with the young children in the neighborhood.

Although we do not see Isaac anymore now that he practically lives in Mexico, he periodically calls us with reports. During our last telephone call, he told us that he conducts a 'Bible class' with a gathering of individuals in his renewed community numbering upward of 80 people, with many getting baptized! He tells us he now stands taller and has a real purpose in life. All this occurred within just a few months! The helper, the Spirit of Truth, is clearly at work with Isaac. We doubt that he could have been able to accomplish such amazing results if we had preached to him about 'another sort of good news' – a message that Jesus did not teach.

The Ministry of Carl and Melanie

Carl and Melanie are our neighbors and have been our neighbors for many, many years. They were approached by us, and other Jehovah's Witnesses many times, and like Isaac, they were always gracious, but never committed to a Bible study. However, Carl discovered our website and the message of sonship, and came to our apartment to tell us about it. He was surprised to learn that we are the authors of the articles on the site.

Carl told us that he and his wife discuss the articles on their lunch break at the college they attend. At first one or two people would overhear them and ask to join in the conversation. But at last report, the group has grown to nearly 80, with many getting baptized into the Christ and continuing to share the message with their family and friends.

Not only that, but Carl now conduct a group Bible study with everyone in his apartment building, with the exception of three households, teaching them about their sonship with God and the heavenly hope. And again, without any prompting or counsel, he and Melanie are applying Bible principles in their homes. They tell us that their family life is more peaceful than it has ever been.

The Ministry of Preachers and Pastors

We have had the privilege of sharing the message of sonship with certain individuals who are members of various churches of differing denominations. Instead of telling them to come to a Kingdom Hall, we encouraged them to share the true good news of the kingdom with their Pastors, Deacons and Preachers. Many of these Pastors were impressed with the message and called their fellow Pastors of other churches to enlighten them as well. Some even contacted us directly.

As a result, the spirit in those churches have been uplifted with many getting baptized and re-baptized. The attendance in many of those churches as doubled, even tripled. And many who would otherwise not have accepted a Bible study from Jehovah's Witnesses are getting the message of sonship and the heavenly hope right within their own association, among their own family and friends. We get reports that 100's are getting baptized in these churches across the country each week. Again, the Spirit of Truth at work with all who love the Christ. Truly, as the Apostle Peter said:

“For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him.” – *Acts 10:34*

The Ministry of Long Time Witnesses

Not only us, but others within our organization are using just the Bible in sharing the true good news of the kingdom. We regularly get reports from our brothers and sisters who share the message of sonship with their Bible students and with other members in the congregation. The results have been extraordinary.

Just this week, we received this email from a group of elders, pioneers and servants who conduct many Bible studies, but have begun to direct their students to the heavenly hope and sonship with God. Instead of extracting them from their churches into the Kingdom Hall, they are taking a personal interest in each one, considering all who accept the message of sonship as brothers of Christ. Here is an excerpt from the email:

“Hey dear friends! There is clear thinking among the body of our Lord. We are drawing closer to those in the ministry, going to dinner, movies, art shows and the like, and it is working. We are building up the brotherhood and having increase. At first, we only met together at a sister’s house to take meals together. As we were talking and praying, the spirit moved us to call our Bible studies and invite them to a movie. Oh friends, here's where the plot thickens. 12 turned into 41 and now the 41 are all friends with each other. All because we drew closer to them. How our hearts are constantly being renewed.”

Planting Kingdom Seed

The current method in our organization of formal door to door preaching and teaching could never produce as many sons of the kingdom in such a short period of time. This is reminiscent of the Ethiopian Eunuch who, upon hearing the good news, responded without delay:

“Now as they were going over the road, they came to a certain body of water, and the eunuch said: **“Look! A body of water; what prevents me from getting baptized?”** – With that he commanded the chariot to halt, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. **When they had come up out of the water, Jehovah’s spirit quickly led Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him anymore, for he kept going on his way rejoicing.”** – *Acts 8:36-39*

After learning the good news about Jesus, the eunuch was immediately baptized and went his way rejoicing, likely sharing what he had learned with his countrymen. He was not constrained to learn organization arrangements and ‘prove himself worthy’ before being allowed to share what was in his heart. And this is happening in the same way with this modern day ministry!

The above examples illustrate that the true good news of the kingdom can be preached without a formal preaching arrangement and without requiring our students to join our slow moving organization.

We do not have to stop our ministry because our leadership is running a bit behind the Father’s ‘chariot.’ No, we can continue, without letup, preaching and teaching, and then showing our students how to become capable teachers to their family, friends and associates. This way, the spiritual brotherhood of Jesus Christ can grow exponentially, instead of just one by one. Imagine whole churches turning to the true good news instead of one or two members of the church! Jesus explained that the Kingdom of God operates this way:

“Another illustration he set before them, saying: “The kingdom of the heavens is like a mustard grain, which a man took and planted in his field; which is, in fact, the tiniest of all the seeds, but when it has grown **it is the largest of the vegetables and becomes a tree**, so that the birds of heaven come and find lodging among its branches.” – *Matthew 13:31-32*

Another illustration he spoke to them: “The kingdom of the heavens is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three large measures of flour, **until the whole mass was fermented.**” – *Matthew 13:33*

The seeds of the kingdom, and the leaven of the good news, can be implanted everywhere and produce a tremendous harvest.

No, our ministry need not be formal. It can be conducted ‘as we pass by’ (*Matthew 9:26; Matthew 20:30; Luke 18:37*), as we go about our daily activity. Many of our Christian brothers in the faith are not privileged to have an organized ministry, yet they, too, can share in the kingdom preaching work. Jehovah’s Witnesses do not have a patent on preaching and teaching the good news of the kingdom as Jesus and his apostles and disciples taught. We should welcome all such workers!

“And Jesus set out on a tour of all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity. On seeing the crowds he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples: “Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few. **Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.**” – *Matthew 9:35-38*

We look forward to the possibility of the whole earth being fermented with the true kingdom message. Imagine that everyone you meet, no matter his or her race, religion, nationality or gender, recognizes that we are all sons of the same God and Father, and brothers to one another. We can be at the forefront of this work, conducting a ministry in honor of and as a sharer with Christ, as we await our heavenly adoption as permanent citizens of the Kingdom of the Heavens. (*Philippians 3:20*)

We welcome your comments.

“Elaia Luchnia”