

## WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

### *Note to the speaker:*

Encourage each one to reflect on his or her own personal relationship with God. Highlight what God requires if one is to have divine approval and how one must act in order to receive God's support

### **A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS IMPORTANT** (5 min.)

Historians and anthropologists find that humans have an urge to worship (*sh* 19; *g89* 3/22 6)

Jesus said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need" (Mt 5:3)

As we need wholesome food for physical health, so we need a good relationship with God for spiritual health (*sh* 28)

Things do not always go well, so we need divine help

Facing illness, hardships, may call for more than human strength

Mankind in general is estranged from God (Eph 2:1, 2)

Yet, Enoch and Noah walked with God; Abraham was his friend; David had good relationship (Ge 5:22; 6:9; Isa 41:8; Ps 23:1)

How is your relationship with God? Is there room for improvement?

What are the benefits of a good relationship with God?

### **HOW WE BENEFIT FROM A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (8 min.)

God answers prayers of those who earnestly seek him (Heb 11:6)

Witness missionary in Africa said: "My greatest happiness comes each evening when my mind is still awake, and while alone I can spend some time under the starry heavens walking and talking with Jehovah. This has drawn me closer to Jehovah." (*w73* 174)

Good relationship improves the quality of our life (Cite real-life experiences, like those in *w90* 5/15 21)

Good relationship with God protects us, for we fear to displease him (Ps 97:10)

One who is tempted to commit fornication will realize that giving in will bring reproach and sorrow on oneself and loved ones and will disgrace the Christian congregation (Pr 7:1-27)

Good relationship with Jehovah sustains us (Ps 121:1, 2)

Prevents one from becoming paralyzed by fear of man; gives confidence in God's support no matter what the outcome (*w89* 6/1 6)

How is such a good relationship with God attained?

### **ATTAINING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (7 min.)

Must develop proper fear of Jehovah (Pr 9:10; *it-1* 818)

Then follow these vital steps to a good relationship with God:

- (1) Take in accurate knowledge and comply with it (Joh 17:3)
- (2) Exercise faith in God, Christ, and ransom (Joh 3:16)
- (3) Repentance—heartfelt sorrow over past wrongdoing (Lu 5:32)
- (4) Conversion—turning around, pursuing godly course (Ac 3:19)
- (5) Dedication of your life to God, expressed in prayer (Mr 8:34)
- (6) Baptism in symbol of dedication to Jehovah (Mt 28:19)

If steps not taken, not yet in complete relationship with God, which leads to salvation (*w89* 1/15 15-16)

### **GOOD CONDUCT NEEDED TO MAINTAIN A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (12 min.)

Continue to study Bible, attend meetings (Joh 6:63; Ps 26:12)

Rely on God in earnest, explicit prayers (Php 4:6, 7)

Accept God's direction through his Word, providence, spirit, angels, visible organization (Pr 3:5, 6; 16:9; Re 14:6)

Trust God, responding to his love and other attributes (Ps 107:8)

Humbly accept God's discipline (Heb 12:4-11)

Jehovah may be refining us for later use, as in Moses' case

Be forgiving, or God will not forgive us (Mt 6:14, 15)

Fight tendency to harbor resentment (1Co 13:4, 5)

Love brothers (1Jo 4:20, 21)

Seek to please God even in small matters (Lu 16:10)

Keep integrity to Jehovah (Ps 26:1)

### **GOOD RELATIONS REQUIRE THAT WE BE GOD'S FELLOW WORKERS** (10 min.)

Be interested in God's chief concern—settling issue of sovereignty

Clean life and showing neighbor love in mundane things not enough

Must witness about Jehovah's name and purposes (Isa 43:10)

Cooperate with faithful and discreet slave that directs Kingdom-preaching work (Mt 24:14, 45-47)

Do this work zealously; do not be self-sparing (Lu 13:24)

If you are not yet baptized but want to share in this joyful work, speak with the congregation elders

The more zealous we are in sacred service, the better our relationship with God and the greater our joy (Tit 2:13, 14)

Great satisfaction comes from working with God (1Co 3:6-9)

What else is needed?

**KEEP WORKING TO IMPROVE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (3 min.)

Work hard to deepen your relationship with God

Get to know God better through diligent study, meetings

Never take for granted the benefits of good relationship with God

Maintain good communication, never being too busy to pray

Cooperate with 'faithful slave' to have good relationship with God

Keep busy in sacred service, zealously preaching Kingdom message

Sow bountifully and you will reap bountifully (2Co 9:6)

In such ways, taste and see how good God really is! (Ps 34:8)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)