

## VISITING PROGRAM TRAINING CLASS

### Thirteenth Class

March 9, 1969

#### FORMAT:

1. Open with prayer.
2. World news discussion and drill (5 - 8 Minutes).
3. Difficult scripture drill (30 Minutes).
4. Sermonettes and evaluations (30 Minutes).
5. Recess (10 Minutes).
6. Lecture (one hour).
7. Assignments for next class.

#### DIFFICULT SCRIPTURES

##### 1. Why did God kill Uzza (I Chron. 13:9-10)?

A. David wanted to bring the ark back from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem. In doing so, he had the ark carried on a new cart. As they were going, the oxen stumbled and Uzza put his hand on the ark to steady it -- to keep it from falling. Because Uzza touched the ark, God killed him (I Chron. 13:1-10).

B. This is an example of disobedience which ended in disaster. The ark should have been carried on the shoulders of the Levites, not on a new cart (Num. 7:9; Deut. 10:8). Secondly, Numbers 4:15 warned the Levites when carrying the holy things they were not to touch any of it lest they die.

The parallel account in II Samuel 6:6-7 explains that God smote Uzza for "his error." The word error is rendered rashness in the margin. It was a rash act to touch the ark of God that even the Levites were forbidden to touch. The ark was so holy that at one time God killed over 50,000 Israelites for profaning it by opening and looking inside of it (I Samuel 6:19).

C. I Chronicles 15:2 shows us that David later realized what he had done wrong. He learned after the death of Uzza how the ark should be transported -- by being carried on the shoulders of the Levites.

D. David told the Levites to sanctify themselves so that they could carry the ark. Because they hadn't carried the ark at first, God

made a breach upon them. David said that they hadn't sought God after "the due order" (I Chron. 15:12-13).

When they did everything according to God's instructions, they were able to bring up the ark with joy (I Chron. 15:15, 25-26). The principle to learn is that we must do exactly as God commands not "reason" or water down His instructions. Also, we must deeply respect anything He has made holy -- i.e., the Sabbath, Holy Days, etc.

2. Disprove: The wicked burn forever in hell (Rev. 14:11).

A. This scripture does not say the wicked burn forever in hell. Notice the context. This is the time when God pours out His punishment upon those who worship the Beast (the coming United States of Europe -- the resurrected Roman Empire) and his image (the Papacy) (Verses 9-10). This occurs in the presence of the Lamb -- that is, at the second coming of Christ.

B. At that time the Beast and False Prophet will be cast into a lake of fire (Rev. 19:19-20). It does not say they burn for all eternity. Revelation 14:11 says the smoke of their torment ascends forever. Of course, as long as the fire is burning, the smoke will ascend.

C. The term forever does not necessarily mean for eternity as we understand it. In Exodus 21:5-6 God says a servant in ancient Israel who loved his master was to serve that master forever. Obviously this did not mean for all eternity. Eventually both would die. It meant as long as they both lived -- as long as the conditions of the contract remained constant.

The same is true for the fire used by God to punish the wicked. As long as the fire burns smoke will ascend. When the fire stops burning the smoke will stop ascending. The smoke that is already in the air will rise until it becomes diffused into the atmosphere.

Until the fire is extinguished or stops burning, the sulphurous fumes and smoke will continuously ascend.

D. We know the people can't be burning up forever and ever because the wicked are to be ashes under the feet of the righteous (Mal. 4:1-3). They will be burned up! They will be consumed into smoke (Psalm 37:20) which will ascend up to the atmosphere.

3. Disprove: Man can't kill the soul because it is immortal (Matt. 10:28).

- A. The soul is not immortal. This verse says God is able to destroy it. The Greek word for "soul" is psuche which corresponds to the Hebrew word nephesh meaning BREATHING CREATURE. It refers to our temporary, physical life. We see this proved in Genesis 2:7 where "God breathed into man the breath of life and he became a living soul." And, in Ezekiel 18:4, 20, God shows us that "the soul that sins, it shall die."
- B. Men can kill the body (Gr. soma meaning corpse or physical structure). Yet, Christ said that "men are not able to destroy the soul." Why not? Paul states in Colossians 3:3 that though men kill the body, a Christian's life is "hid with Christ in God." In other words, no man can stop God from resurrecting a Christian to life.
- C. God has the power to kill the body and to also destroy your life in the lake of fire. That's why Christ said we should fear God who is able to destroy both our life AND body in hell (Gehenna fire). "Fear him, which after he has killed has power to cast into gehenna (Greek word)" (Luke 12:5). When God resurrects the incorrigibly wicked and casts them into the lake of fire, "This is the second death" (Rev. 20:14). God will have destroyed their life because they will never live again (Mal. 4:1, 3).

## HOW TO CONDUCT A VISIT - - PART I

### I. WHY VISIT?

Let's answer this question first! Then we will have the right approach to conducting a visit. Effective visiting is vitally important and we need to understand why!

#### A. To Feed the Flock of God

Jesus Christ called God's people the "little flock" (Luke 12:32). He referred to them as His "sheep" (John 10:27). Three times Jesus Christ asked Peter, "Do you love Me?" Each time Peter replied, "Yes Lord. You know that I love you." And each time Jesus Christ replied, "Feed my sheep" (John 21:15, 16, 17).

This is the second great commission that Jesus Christ gave to His Church -- to feed His people spiritually! You men who qualify will have a direct part in this tremendously important job. Christ also said to Peter, "When you are converted, strengthen the brethren." (Luke 22:32.) As you men become deeply converted and receive and use the training this class is giving you, you also will be able to help strengthen the brethren spiritually.

Peter received so much instruction from Jesus Christ about feeding the

flock spiritually that when he was converted, he himself wrote, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (I Peter 5:2-3.)

The need for spiritually-mature men to visit God's people individually is absolutely necessary for their proper spiritual growth.

#### B. To Perfect the Saints

One of the purposes for the Visiting Program in God's Church is, "For the perfecting of the saints" (Eph. 4:12). This is somewhat different than feeding God's people spiritually. This involves not just instruction, encouragement and inspiration, but working with them and helping them to overcome their problems. A general social visit about God's Work and God's Kingdom can be inspirational and help a member grow spiritually, but it does not necessarily help them to overcome a problem.

So, another important reason for visiting is to "work with" God's people and help them overcome their personal problems through proper instruction, exhortation and personal correction. All of this must be done in love by men who are spiritually mature.

You men, in this Visiting Program Training Class, will have the opportunity to help perfect God's people if you yourself will qualify by overcoming the spiritual problems which hinder you from serving others. Remember that Christ said, "You must first cast out the beam out of your own eye, and then you shall see clearly to cast out the mote out of your brother's eye" (Matt. 7:5).

#### C. To Help Finish God's Work

A very major reason for visiting God's people is to help them keep their hearts in the Work of God! Their very salvation depends upon this! Those who do not have their hearts in God's Work will not make it!

"Where there is no vision the people perish" (Prov. 29:18). It is part of the job of the Visiting Program to help God's people obtain vision of what God's Work is all about. Many of them just do not understand! They need someone who does understand to help them.

You men have the opportunity to help finish this phase of God's Work by visiting God's people and teaching them the importance of God's Work and by showing them how to put their whole heart into God's Work! God's

people need to be stirred up to understand that this is the most important work on earth!

Men, realize that you also have a part in the first commission of God's Church by visiting. You can inspire God's people to back up His Work through fervent prayers, faithful tithes and generous offerings.

You have been given three vitally important reasons why visiting is necessary. Now let's go on to the physical preparation that is necessary for effective visiting.

## II. PHYSICAL PREPARATIONS

### A. Personal Cleanliness and Grooming

This part of visiting is important too! Your personal cleanliness and appearance will have a definite effect on your visiting. So, be sure to apply the following points.

1. Take a shower or bath every day. Use good soap and even underarm deodorant if necessary. Be sure to change your underclothing every day. Keep your clothes clean and pressed, looking sharp! Polish your shoes before going visiting. They are always noticeable! Wear long socks that cover the calf of your leg and be sure they are not too bright or flashy -- no white socks!
2. In other words, wear mature and conservative clothes. Flashy sports clothes are not in order for visiting. Be sure they are in good taste. You are representing Jesus Christ! On the other hand, don't wear black or dark suits all the time. Colorful ties are helpful and appropriate.
3. Watch your grooming. Keep your hair clean and combed properly. Use a good dandruff remover and hair dressing if necessary. Brush your teeth and be careful about bad breath. Masculine-smelling lotions and colognes are certainly in order.

Your purpose in all of this is to set the right example and give a good impression. So, look sharp, feel sharp, and be sharp!

### B. Organization

This is a key point to success in your visiting. You can save much time during the day if you are properly organized before leaving. Decide your visits ahead of time. Plot them on a map that you can carry with you. "Call ahead" if you haven't written, and plan your visits for the

day. Taking the time to do this can save time and frustration later. Leave in plenty of time to keep your appointments as scheduled. Allow adequate time for each visit and travel time between visits. Take the time at the beginning of each day to thoroughly plan your visiting day. Don't just grab your files and rush out at the last minute hoping to find someone home to visit. God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33) and neither should we be! Organizing and planning your day ahead of time is an important part of physical preparation for visiting.

### C. Safe Driving

This too is important! Don't be a hazard on the road! Take your driving responsibilities seriously and be careful. Stay alert and don't tailgate! These are two of the most important points to remember when driving. Accidents can happen in a split second, so don't let your mind wander. Watch the other person -- drive defensively.

Don't drive too fast. Always obey the speed limit. When roads are slippery, drive below the speed limit. Adjust your speed to suit the road conditions and any unfamiliar situation. Don't pass on hills or curves. We all know these rules but sometimes we are careless! Let's crack down on our driving and cut down on the number of accidents occurring.

Use your seat belts and be sure there is plenty of tread on your tires. Many serious injuries and accidents occur, which could be prevented, if people would do these two simple things! Take the time to fasten your seat belt. It could save your life! Balding tires are dangerous. You are taking your life in your own hands when you drive on them! And, don't tempt God! Do your part in driving and God will do His part in protecting your life. Drive carefully!

## III. SPIRITUAL PREPARATIONS

### A. Prayer and Bible Study

You can't help others unless you are close to God. Without effective prayer and Bible Study, you cannot be close to God. This is probably the most important point of all in visiting. If you are not filled with God's Holy Spirit you cannot do a good job visiting and serving others. Before you leave to go visiting, plan to spend about an hour in prayer and Bible study. Draw close to God and He will draw close to you and inspire you on your visits.

Jesus Christ will speak through you and use you to serve His people if you are close to Him. Unless Christ is in us, we are of no good use

or purpose (II Cor. 13:5, last sentence). Men, we have nothing to give of ourselves. We cannot feed God's people spiritually unless we are filled with the Spirit! So, drive yourself in prayer and Bible Study. There is no other way to be effective and useful instruments in the hands of God! Unless you are filled with His Spirit through prayer, and are sharp in the knowledge of His Word, you cannot conduct a visit the way Christ would.

## B. Love and Compassion

Love is an outgoing concern for others. Compassion is suffering with others. If you don't have these two spiritual qualities you are not prepared spiritually to serve others. We all need much more love and compassion for one another. If we are not motivated by love to serve others, then we will be by vanity and self exaltation. Love is the first fruit and a gift of the Holy Spirit. Ask God for more of this gift!

I Corinthians 13:4-7 explains how love and concern for fellowman is expressed -- through kindness, consideration, gentleness, patience, giving others the benefit of the doubt -- not by jealousy, envy, resentment, selfishness, harshness or vainglory.

God is love and we need to be like God if we are going to serve His people.

God also is compassion. "When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd (Matt. 9:36). We, too, must be moved with compassion on God's people! We must learn to suffer with them in their trials and tests and want to help them desperately. Hebrews 5:1-2 shows that every High Priest, or anyone serving God's people should have compassion on the ignorant and weak, remembering that he himself is compassed with weakness and infirmity.

Men, pray fervently for more love and compassion.

## C. Wisdom and Discernment

"Wisdom is a principal thing; therefore get wisdom. . ." (Prov. 4:7). Without the spiritual gift of wisdom you will not properly be able to use love to serve. Many of God's people have love but lack the real wisdom to be a servant of others. Wisdom is necessary to make right decisions and give good advice.

"Wisdom is more precious than rubies: and all the things you can desire are not to be compared unto her" (Prov. 3:15). Wisdom, then, is one of

the most important qualities that a leader needs in order to serve. And wisdom is a gift from God -- "the Lord gives wisdom" (Prov. 2:6). We are told "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God -- and it shall be given him"(James 1:5).

Here is why you need Godly wisdom -- "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17). So pray for more wisdom and also ask for the gift of discernment. To serve people, you need to be able to discern their true attitude of heart and mind. Human nature is carnal and very deceitful! You also need to be able to discern between carnal attitudes and demon influence.

Both wisdom and the discerning of spirits are spiritual gifts from God (I Cor. 12:7, 10), SO pray in faith and ask for these gifts in order to serve God's people!

#### D. Humility and Faith

If we will humble ourselves before Him and have more faith, God will give us more of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. We must be meek and yet not weak. We must know that of ourselves we can do nothing and yet we must drive ourselves to work hard. We must abase ourselves and let God exalt us. We need to fast more and get rid of vanity!

True humility is an attitude of mind -- a spirit of meekness. It is not walking around looking "pious or religious." We should humble ourselves before God in prayer and fasting and then be strong and courageous before others. This is the way to be a leader. This is the way to serve. Know that you are nothing of yourself -- that if you repent, submit and yield, God can work through you to help others.

If you are truly humble, you will be close to God and have much faith. Faith is a gift from God (Eph. 2:8). We must have strong faith if we are to strengthen God's people! We must know that God is real and that He hears our prayers and will answer! Many of God's people are very weak in faith. Faith grows by obeying God and seeing that He does back up His Word. Faith comes by stepping out and being a doer. Ask for the gift of faith and use it to serve God's people!

#### IV. NORMAL MEMBER VISITS

This means visits other than problems visits (which will be discussed later). Much member visiting is of a routine nature. But these routine visits can be made extremely profitable if you will use the following points.



## A. Guide the Visit -- Have a Definite Purpose in Mind

Don't waste time in a visit. Don't spend all the time just "shooting the breeze." You should be friendly and sociable, yes, but social visits are not always profitable visits.

Begin the visit with a friendly and warm greeting, a sincere handshake and a smile. Break the ice with friendliness and warmth. Put the member at ease. Help him to relax. Sometimes it is hard to "get the ball rolling" in a visit. Asking personal questions about their health and well being, children and the family in general is usually a good way to begin.

If you are warm, friendly and sincere, the member will soon loosen up and begin to talk. Some members don't need a warming up period. They are "hot" from the time you walk in. They will dominate the conversation from the beginning to the end of the visit if you let them. This is why you must consciously guide the visit and have a definite purpose in mind. Some members will talk about everything except spiritual subjects and others don't talk much at all. So, unless you guide the visit and make it profitable it can be a waste of time.

Your main concern should be the spiritual condition of each member. So you will definitely want to talk about some area of their spiritual life like prayer, Bible study, fasting, and meditation. Any one of these subjects can make an excellent visit. Let Christ guide the visit with His Spirit. Try to discern what the member really needs to talk about. If the member will bring up a worthwhile subject to discuss, then so much the better. But just make sure that they are not guiding the visit away from personal spiritual subjects that they really need. Remember that you must guide and direct the visit for their own good!

## B. Don't Assume Anything!

Always remember this in your visiting. Don't assume that people are converted just because they are in God's Church. Therefore, don't assume that they are keeping the Sabbath properly, or tithing, or praying and studying, or not smoking, etc. Don't assume any of these things! Don't be naive. And yet, don't be overly critical or suspicious either. Just remember that human nature is deceitful and that God's people are weak and that they have problems. Don't go into the visit with the attitude of prying and digging into their lives just to find out all their personal problems. But go there knowing there are problems.

God's way is to love people -- to earnestly desire to help them -- to

want to see them happy and close to God. So be tactful in the visit -- use Godly psychology. Make them know that you love them. Make them want to open up to you because they see your Godly love and concern for them. If they know you are God's servant and see real love, compassion and wisdom and an earnest desire to help them with their personal problems, most of God's people will eventually open up to you so that you can help them. But if you lack patience and love and try to force them to "tell you all their problems" then they won't confide in you. God's people must know that you really do care. Don't try to fool them. Either you care or you don't. So love God's people -- but don't assume anything!

Make sure they understand the basic overall purpose of life. Make God alive to them in personal experiences and other means. Help them plan a schedule for work, study, prayer, recreation, and family activities. Teach them how to study the Bible and how to pray. Discuss any subject or question thoroughly -- don't assume they know everything. Use your question, or their questions, as a springboard to get at their problems. Ask them to explain back what you have told them. See if they understand. Make sure they understand. Their salvation is at stake!

On technical questions, get back to the trunk of the tree, to daily living. Answer their questions from the Bible and be specific. Don't talk over their heads -- some of God's people have little education. Keep the Work of God in their minds! Let them do most of the talking and you listen attentively so that you can show them the basis of their problems and also how to overcome them.

Enter every visit knowing this person has problems and needs help. Knowing also that Christ can bring them out if you do your part and guide the visit tactfully with love and wisdom. This approach will work with most of God's people. God's people do want to grow and overcome and do want to be in God's Kingdom. Most of them want to be helped once they realize their needs. There are problem visits though and we will get to those later.

### C. Leave Them Encouraged and Inspired

The way a visit ends is important. You can leave people feeling warm, inspired and close to God. Or else you can leave them feeling cold and empty. Your visits can be profitable, enjoyable and helpful to God's people, or they can be dreaded. It all depends upon you men and just how determined you are to have a right uplifting impact upon the people of God. You have a fabulous opportunity to help many into the Kingdom of God! Remember this inspiring verse in the book of Daniel -- "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever"

(Daniel 12:3)!

Some of you men in this Visiting Program Training Class are going to have the opportunity to change the lives of other human beings and help them to become the very sons of God! If you go into each visit determined to motivate and inspire God's people to draw closer to their Creator, you will have a high position in the Kingdom of God. Take each visit seriously. Toward the end of the visit, review the important points that were covered during the visit -- the points you want to impress upon the member's mind. Instruct, exhort, and inspire them to apply these points. Pour out your heart to them! Don't act like this is just a routine visit -- just another person -- just part of your job. Inspire God's people by being inspired yourself! Be stirred up for God! Leave each visit with a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment -- knowing that you have given your all to try to help that person -- that human being -- that potential son of God to be one step closer to the Kingdom of God!

**NOTE TO MINISTERS:**

The next lesson will cover details of prospective visits -- introductions, when to invite, etc. Also, problem visits and special visits. So DON'T feel you need to cover these points until next time.