



# The **WATCHTOWER**

*Announcing*  
**JEHOVAH'S  
KINGDOM**

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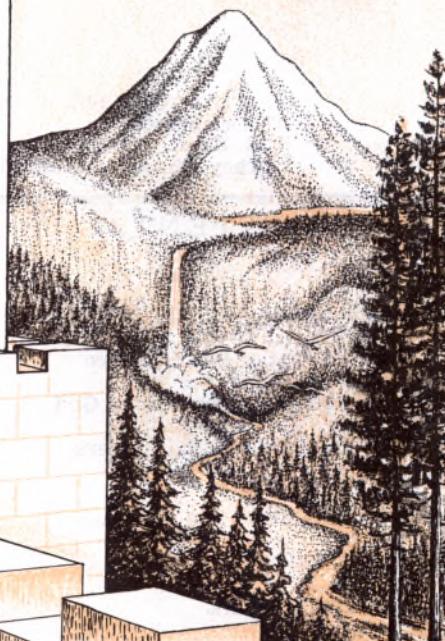
**REVIVING THE SPIRIT  
OF SELF-SACRIFICE**

**SACRIFICES THAT ARE ACCEPTABLE  
TO GOD**

**DEVELOPMENT OF TRINITY  
IN THE CREEDS**

**HAVE YOU STUMBED  
AT WHAT OTHERS HAVE DONE?**

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**"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12**

## THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.



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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6: 45; Isaiah 54: 13

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The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1961 edition. When other translations are used the following symbols will appear behind the citations:

*AS* — American Standard Version  
*AT* — An American Translation  
*AV* — Authorized Version (1611)  
*Dy* — Catholic Douay version  
*JP* — Jewish Publication Soc.

*Le* — Isaac Leeser's version  
*Mo* — James Moffatt's version  
*Ro* — J. B. Rotherham's version  
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## A Confused Concept of God



HERE is much confusion today about God. Most persons will say that they believe in his existence, but generally their concept of him is vague. The teaching of the churches is largely responsible.

Theologian G. H. Boobyer frankly admitted this, saying: "Do we not find the orthodox doctrine of the person of Christ a source of much perplexity to enquiring non-christians and to many a christian believer under instruction? 'True God from true God, begotten not made, of one substance with the Father' and 'the selfsame perfect in Godhead, the selfsame perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man'—thus runs the familiar language . . . Must it not be conceded that to many intelligent lay folk it seems sheer mystification?"—*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, Spring 1968, page 248.

Lutheran seminary professor N. Leroy Norquist, writing in *The Lutheran*, made a similar observation: "If a man who had never before heard what Christians believe found himself suddenly among a Lutheran congregation at the Sunday morning service he'd be thoroughly confused."

How do you feel? Are you, too, confused by the churches' teaching about God? What is your concept of God? Is it the same as what your religious organization teaches?

### THE CHURCHES' CONCEPT OF GOD

The fact is, a large number of persons today do not really know what their church teaches about God. It has been observed that in many churches little is said about Him. Thus the *Ladies' Home Journal* of March this year carried the feature on its cover: "1,000 WOMEN REPORT: 'YOU CAN'T FIND GOD IN CHURCH ANYMORE.'" One member of the Congregational Church in Claremont, California, even said: "GOD IS DEAD posters are displayed in our Senior Married Group's meeting lounge."

Obviously the churches have not been doing a very good job of instructing their people about God. A major reason for this is their admittedly confusing concept of Him. What is this concept?

It is that God is 'three persons in one.' All major churches of Christendom teach

this. The Roman Catholic Church does. And the basis for membership in the 237-member World Council of Churches declares: "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

Thus the religious organizations to which the vast majority of persons in Christendom belong hold that the "Father, Son and Holy Spirit," although being three, are but "one God." Is this your concept of God? Do you really understand it?

#### EXPLAINING YOUR BELIEF TO OTHERS

If someone asked you to explain this concept of God to him, could you do so? According to Professor Norquist, this is what a visitor to church might say to a church member:

"You proclaim that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Spirit is God and yet you're trying to tell me that you don't believe in three Gods but one. Do you mean that your God is two-, or perhaps three-faced, that he's the same God but acts differently with different kinds of people, shows different faces according to different situations?"

If you are a church member, how would you reply? Could you give a satisfactory answer?

People desire explanations. In order to have a basis for faith an individual requires answers that satisfy his mind. Christians are urged in God's Word always to be "ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you." (1 Pet. 3:15) But

is there an explanation for how God can be three persons and yet one? Can you explain it?

Note what theologian Norquist finally concludes: "Well, we'd have to concede, we can't explain it. The doctrine of the Trinity cannot be 'puzzled out.' . . . The men who framed it designed it as a tool to be used against heretics.

"In fighting heresy, they experimented with words, sharpened phrases, until they had defined the relation of the three 'persons' of the Trinity in such a way that they could finally say, 'Unless you believe this you're not a true believer.' "—*The Lutheran*, June 15, 1960, pages 11 and 12.

Does it not seem that there is something wrong with a concept of God that cannot be explained? Is it any wonder that religion is in such a decline when its teaching about God is so confusing?

#### FORMULATION OF CREEDS

What does it mean that "men who framed it . . . experimented with words, sharpened phrases, until they had defined the relation of the three 'persons' of the Trinity"? What men framed this concept of God?

Actually it was churchmen who lived after the death of Jesus. These men formalized statements of belief or confessions that began with the words "I believe." This expression "I believe" in Latin is "credo," and from it comes the English word "creed." It was in these "creeds," or statements of belief, that the concept of the Trinity developed.

Are you familiar with these creeds? What do they contain? Is what is expounded in them a firm basis for faith?



# DEVELOPMENT OF Trinity IN THE Creeds

PROBABLY most churchgoers today believe that Jesus Christ and his apostles developed the doctrine of the Trinity. However, Professor E. Washburn Hopkins explains in his book *Origin and Evolution of Religion*, page 336: "To Jesus and Paul the doctrine of the trinity was apparently unknown; at any rate, they say nothing about it." They formulated no creed defining a Trinity.

The fact is, the word "trinity" does not even once occur in the Holy Bible. Nor are such expressions as "one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit," or "one substance with the Father," found in the Bible. To the contrary, the Bible speaks of Christ as "the beginning of the creation by God," and says that "the head of the Christ is God." (Rev. 3:14; 1 Cor. 11:3) Thus, the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* says of the Trinity: "It is not, as already seen, directly and immediately the word of God."

—Volume 14, page 304.

## UNKNOWN TO EARLY CHURCHMEN

Nor was the 'three persons in one God' concept developed immediately after the death of Jesus and his apostles. This is noted by Episcopal professor of church history James Arthur Muller, who writes: "This lack of a formulated doctrine of the Trinity reflects the theological thought of the second century. In the works of Justin Martyr, who wrote in about 150 A.D., the preexistence of the Son is stressed, yet in relation to the Father He is spoken of as 'in the second place.'"—*Creeds and Loyalty*, page 9.

Even toward the end of the second century the prominent churchman Irenaeus spoke of Christ as being subordinate to God, not equal to him.—See *Irenaeus Against Heresies*, Book 2, chapter 28, section 8.

Thus the Trinity was unknown to early churchmen. Actually it was some 400 years or more after the death of Christ that the concept of 'three persons in one God' was finally formulated by men and introduced into the church.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

"But," someone may object, "did not the apostles themselves compose the Apostles' Creed? And does not this creed teach the Trinity?"

That the twelve apostles wrote this creed was taught for centuries, and it was piously believed. But this claim has been proved untrue. Actually, the evidence reveals that the "Apostles' Creed" was framed by men living hundreds of years later!

*The Faith of Christendom*, a source book of creeds and confessions, edited by B. A. Gerrish, observes: "So far, then, from being composed by the Apostles in person, we have no reason to assume that the Creed which bears their title appeared less than five hundred years after their time." Examine the Apostles' Creed set forth below:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus  
Christ his only Son our Lord, who was  
conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the  
Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended  
into hell; the third day he rose from the

dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen."\*

You can see that nothing is said here about God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost as being "one God." However, during the years in which the Apostles' Creed was being formulated great controversy developed over the nature of Christ. What exactly was his relationship to God? Was he lesser than and distinct from God, or was Jesus God himself?

#### THE NICENE CREED

By the fourth century some churchmen, including the young archdeacon Athanasius, were arguing that Jesus and God were one and the same person. On the other hand, men such as the presbyter Arius held to the position of the Bible, that Jesus was created by God and was subordinate to his Father. In 325 C.E. a church council, called by Roman Emperor Constantine, met in Nice, Asia Minor, to decide on such issues. At this council pagan Emperor Constantine favored the side of Athanasius. Therefore, the views expressed by Arius, although based solidly on the Bible, were declared heretical.

Hence there followed an 'experimenting with words and sharpening of phrases' to design a creedal tool to use against those who held that Christ had a beginning and was not the same substance as the Father. In its original form, the Nicene Creed was clearly designed to combat the position of Arius. It concluded with this pronouncement, which was later dropped from the creed:

"But those who say there was a time when he was not; or that he was not before

he was begotten; or that he was made from that which had no being; or who affirm the Son of God to be of any other substance or essence, or created, or variable, or mutable, such persons doth the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematize [curse]."

Noteworthy, too, is the fact that the original creed drawn up at Nice did not give personality to the Holy Ghost. However, later additions, believed to have been made at the Council of Constantinople in 381 C.E., did. The creed drawn up at Nice in 325 C.E., with its later alterations, passed into history as the Nicene Creed. It reads as follows:

"I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who



The pagan Roman Emperor Constantine called a church council in Nice in 325 C.E. He influenced the adoption there of the Nicene Creed with its Trinity teaching

\* The creeds, as they appear in this article, are quoted from M'Clintock & Strong's *Cyclopaedia*, Volume 2, pages 559-563.

spake by the prophets. And I believe one catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen."

After carefully reading the Nicene Creed, it is interesting to note that in it the Trinity is not yet completely defined. The Father and Son are asserted to be of the same substance, and the Holy Ghost is called "Lord and Giver of Life," but these three are not said to be "one God." There was to be yet further 'experimenting with words and sharpening of phrases.'

#### THE ATHANASIAN CREED

It is in the Athanasian Creed that the Trinity was finally defined. As you recall, Athanasius was the young archdeacon who prominently supported the views set forth in the Nicene Creed. Did he also compose this creed bearing his name?

This is what was believed for centuries, but this has definitely been proved untrue. *The Faith of Christendom* observes on page 61: "The attribution of the Creed to Athanasius was exposed in the seventeenth century by the Dutch scholar G. J. Voss. It has been argued on internal evidence that the document may be dated to the period between A.D. 381 and 428."

However, there is no certain evidence for such an early date for the creed. In fact, there is no reference to it in completed form until hundreds of years later! Thus, John J. Moment, in his book on the creeds, states flatly: "Athanasius had been dead for five hundred years when it appeared." (*We Believe*, page 118) Observe how the Athanasian Creed defines the Trinity:

"... we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one: the glory

equal, the majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost. The Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, and the Holy Ghost uncreate. The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost incomprehensible. The Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal. And yet they are not three eternals, but one eternal. As also there are not three incomprehensibles, nor three uncreated, but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible.

"So likewise the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, and the Holy Ghost almighty. And yet there are not three almighty, but one almighty. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord. And yet not three Lords, but one Lord. For like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every person by himself to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the catholic religion to say there be three Gods and three Lords.

"The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son; neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Ghost, not three Holy Ghosts. And in this Trinity none is afore or after other; none is greater or less than another. But the whole three persons are coeternal together, and coequal. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved must thus think of the Trinity...."

So, many hundreds of years after the death of Jesus Christ, the Trinity doctrine was finally formulated. Men had, in the words of theologian N. Leroy Norquist, "experimented with words, sharpened phrases, until they had defined the relation of the three 'persons' of the Trinity in such a way that they could finally say, 'Unless you believe this you're not a true believer.' "

In this way, therefore, the concept of God now held in most churches was formalized.

#### WIDE ACCEPTANCE

Perhaps, though, you may not believe that your church really approves these creeds. It is true that the trend has been not even to attempt to teach parishioners the perplexing concept of God that they propound. But this does not mean that the creeds have been rejected by the churches. To the contrary, almost all churches still hold to their confusing concept of God.

That the Roman Catholic Church does is clearly stated in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* under its heading "Trinity." After citing a portion of the Athanasian Creed, it declares: "This, the Church teaches."

The Church of England also endorses the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian creeds. The Protestant Episcopal Church does too, explaining that from the Church of England it "is far from intending to depart . . . in any essential point of doctrine."

Lutheran bodies also embrace these creeds. The constitution of the Lutheran Church in America, Article II, section 4, says: "This church accepts the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church." Similarly, the constitution of the United Church of Christ states: "It claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds . . ."

Presbyterians endorse the Nicene Creed, and so do major Methodist bodies. These religions officially hold the Trinitarian concept. Although Baptist bodies generally do not subscribe to creeds, the Associate General Secretary of the American Baptist Convention observes regarding the Athanasian Creed: "I am confident that most

American Baptists would be in substantial agreement with its contents."

It is true that certain churches of Christendom may not officially endorse any creeds, yet almost all do uphold the Trinitarian dogma that they developed. Thus John J. Moment wrote regarding the Athanasian Creed in his book *We Believe*: "Its stereotyped definitions have continued to be accepted in Protestantism, more or less consciously, as the norm of orthodoxy."

#### AN UNSCRIPTURAL CONCEPT

God's Word, however, is in direct opposition to this 'three persons in one God' concept. The Bible says that God is the "King of eternity," and is without beginning or end. (1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 90:2) But the Bible says that, unlike his eternal Father, Jesus is "the beginning of the creation by God." (Rev. 3:14) Further proof that Jesus and God are not one and the same or equal is seen in the fact that upon Jesus' resurrection from the dead, "God exalted him to a superior position." (Phil. 2:9) If, before his exaltation, Jesus had been equal to God, he could not have been exalted any further, for that would have made him superior to God. How evident that the Trinity doctrine was not taught by the first-century Christians!

The Bible teaching is clear. Jehovah is the Almighty God who "created all things." (Rev. 4:11) Jesus Christ is "God's Son," not Almighty God himself. (Luke 1:35) And the holy spirit is not a person but is God's active force with which persons can be filled. (Acts 2:4) Since the churches obviously have not been teaching these Bible truths, it is vital, if you desire to please your Creator, to separate completely from such religious organizations.—Rev. 18:4.

*Jehovah is in truth God. He is the living God  
and the King to time indefinite.—Jer. 10:10.*

# Reviving The Spirit of **SELF-SACRIFICE**

"If anyone wishes to be a follower of mine,  
he must leave self behind."

—Luke 9:23.\*

THE Founder of Christianity at one time said: "If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake day after day and follow me continually. For whoever wants to save his soul will lose it; but whoever loses his soul for my sake is the one that will save it. Really, what does a man benefit himself if he gains the whole world but loses his own self or suffers damage? For whoever becomes ashamed of me and of my words, the Son of man will be ashamed of this one when he arrives in his glory and that of the Father and of the holy angels." Obviously, Jesus Christ was inviting others to a course of self-sacrifice when he said the above words, which are recorded in the Holy Bible at Luke 9:23-26.

But is not that invitation a little outdated? Why be interested in a course of self-sacrifice today when no one cares much about those who do and there is so much that this modern world has to offer and work for? Why should one "disown himself" when everywhere people are doing just the opposite, asserting themselves, and demanding more and more free-

dom? They want more of the good things this world has and feel they have the right to take these by force if not by other means. Why should not one seek to 'gain the whole world' or at least a good portion of it? Is it really true that following a course of self-sacrifice 'for his sake' could benefit such one to the extent of saving his life? The Bible and the recent history of true Christians provide some very encouraging answers. Even a person only mildly interested in spiritual things cannot help but be interested in the answers to these questions in view of the lack of honor, integrity and self-sacrifice in the world today.

But is this world that bad? Is its course so bad that steering clear of it is so necessary? Yes, and it should not come as a surprise to anyone that the world as a whole is becoming more and more self-indulgent and materialistic. This state of affairs was foretold by one of the most reliable of prophets, the apostle Paul, and his prophecy is recorded at 2 Timothy 3:1-5: "But know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will

\* New English Bible, 1961.

1. What did Jesus Christ say that indicated he was inviting others to enter into a life of self-sacrifice?  
2. What questions might one ask concerning that invitation?

3. What kind of world does one who takes up a course of self-sacrifice leave?

be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power; and from these turn away." All around us we see clearly now the fulfillment of this prophecy. In fact, to say simply that people are becoming more self-indulgent and materialistic is putting it mildly. It is actually the spirit of rebellion and anarchy that one sees everywhere.

<sup>4</sup> But are there some who are concerned with developing the spirit of self-sacrifice? Yes, Jehovah's true servants are. This, too, was foretold. Psalm 110:3 says: "Your people will offer themselves willingly on the day of your military force. In the splendors of holiness, from the womb of the dawn, you have your company of young men just like dewdrops."

<sup>5</sup> There must be something that these Christians have in mind that is worth while sacrificing for today. There is. True Christians know that God's kingdom has been established in the heavens and has been reigning for some time. In fact, we are a long way into the time of the end, and not too much time remains for this old system of things. When God, through his king, Jesus Christ, takes action to rid this earth of those who have no interest in doing things His way it will be too late for any more to come out into God's place of safety. World events in fulfillment of Bible prophecy give sure indication that only a few years remain for this wicked arrangement of things. How could one,

then, find something more worth while to make sacrifices for than God's kingdom by Christ, encouraging those who have a love of righteousness to take a firm stand for that kingdom now? No better cause could be found!

<sup>6</sup> There is, then, a real need for reviving the spirit of self-sacrifice. The good news concerning that kingdom must be preached, and it takes faithful, zealous servants of God to do this. Appreciating what is involved in self-sacrifice will help one to continue in a faithful course. Self-sacrifice is by no means a mere formalism. We want to enter into the true spirit of it.

#### SACRIFICING WHAT?

<sup>7</sup> The sacrificing that we are talking about does not have to do with sacrificing someone else or something that belongs to someone else. We are talking about self-sacrifice. A mad dictator is willing to sacrifice the lives of thousands in order to gain his own selfish ends, often convinced that his cause is just. Rioters in so-called "free" countries who destroy property and life are guilty of the same thing. So are anarchists and revolutionaries. But the true Christian sacrifice is one of self, not improperly implicating or obligating others.

<sup>8</sup> Sacrificing has to do with giving up things. To quite some extent it has to do with giving up things of a material nature that constitute an attraction to the flesh and that stand in the way of complete and unhindered service to Jehovah. Some of these material attractions or fleshly desires may lead to overindulging the sinful or fallen flesh, something either outrightly condemned in God's Word or strongly counseled against. Eating and drinking excessively would fall into this

4. Who are interested in self-sacrifice, and how was this foretold?

5. What do they have that is worth sacrificing for?

6. Why be interested in learning the Bible viewpoint?  
7. What is included and what is not included in self-sacrifice?

8. (a) What are some things that one ought to see clearly the need for giving up? (b) Why should they not be difficult to give up?

category. Gambling, or becoming closely associated with gambling arrangements, would be another. Closely associating with those of the opposite sex when one is not free to do so or doing so in an improper way is still another. Giving up things not within our right is something that we can quite easily see the need of. Besides, they are usually harmful to physical or mental health. Abstaining from such things usually is not too difficult and is really basic to becoming a Christian.

<sup>9</sup> But what of those pleasures that simply constitute "normal" living? Is it not all right to live like other decent people in the neighborhood or country are living? After all, the Bible promises us an earthly paradise in which we can enjoy doing things that normal humans would naturally like to do. What is wrong with having a home that is large enough to be comfortable in, devoting some time to an educational hobby, watching the better television programs and keeping vigorous and healthy through things like swimming, boating, skiing and traveling? We will undoubtedly enjoy these things in God's new order after Armageddon, so why not enjoy these clean and wholesome things now?

<sup>10</sup> In themselves, these things are not wrong. It has to do with what is best, rather than what is permissible. Enjoyed properly, they can be very beneficial. It is simply a matter of having perspective. It is a matter of making the best possible use of the remaining time. One must be able to evaluate or appraise things so as to judge or decide what is truly worth while and most beneficial, and especially what is worthwhile activity in this day. What was it that was worth while in Noah's day? Matthew 24:38, 39 says: "For as they were in those days before

9. What are some things that might not be so easy to give up or give less time to?

10. If these things are not wrong in themselves, then what might be the danger in them?

the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away." Jesus did not say that all of their activity was wrong in itself. It was just that they should have been listening to what God had to say to them through Noah, His "preacher of righteousness." These "normal" things of life should not have filled their lives to the exclusion of God's will for that day. Likewise, Jehovah has something much more important for us today to do than get involved excessively in normal pursuits of the world. Giving up such things probably constitutes one of the greater tests in self-sacrifice.—1 Cor. 7:29-31.

<sup>11</sup> One must be able to see in its true light what is being given up now as compared with the reward that is to be won. It reminds us of Esau. He was not a good judge of values. He was willing to give up his priceless birthright for some stew. (Gen. 25:29-34) Jesus did not have a place to lay his head but he adhered to a course of integrity and self-sacrifice in order to get the reward that had been promised him. He had perspective and a good sense of values. The apostle Paul also had good perspective. At Philippians 3:8 he wrote: "Why, for that matter, I do indeed also consider all things to be loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. On account of him I have taken the loss of all things and I consider them as a lot of refuse, that I may gain Christ."

<sup>12</sup> There is another reason why the Christian life is one of self-sacrifice. It has to do with the view that those in the world will have of us when we become

11. What is needed in order to maintain a balance in these matters?

12. (a) What is another thing that one taking up Christianity will have to give up? (b) How does the apostle Paul prepare us so that we can have the right view?

identified with Jehovah's people. Everyone likes to be well thought of. Who likes to be looked down on, and especially when this is done in an unjust way? But one who makes himself prominent as a servant of God will not in this way enhance his prominence in this world. This is something he will have to sacrifice. It is not easy to bear, being looked down on; as described at 1 Corinthians 4:13, "we have become as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things, until now." Note Paul's description of the kind of person that will normally accept the truth and the view that the world as a whole has of those who are Jehovah's servants: "For you behold his calling of you, brothers, that not many wise in a fleshly way were called, not many powerful, not many of noble birth; but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put the wise men to shame; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put the strong things to shame; and God chose the ignoble things of the world and the things looked down upon, the things that are not, that he might bring to nothing the things that are, in order that no flesh might boast in the sight of God. But it is due to him that you are in union with Christ Jesus, who has become to us wisdom from God, also righteousness and sanctification and release by ransom; that it may be just as it is written: 'He that boasts, let him boast in Jehovah.'"—1 Cor. 1:26-31.

#### NOT EASY TO BE SELF-SACRIFICING

<sup>13</sup> Some find it difficult to make the change that will cause them to stand out as different from the world. They feel it is too much of a sacrifice. This should not be. Rather, seize the opportunity to show clearly just why you are different. These

are opportunities, not obstacles! Those who are young and still in school will have many fine opportunities to stand up for what they know to be right and to provide an effective witness while doing so. Maybe you will have to abstain from styles, fads, parties, popularity or college. In doing so you will provide a refreshing example to some who might have a leaning toward righteousness. Mothers and housewives might not be fully accepted in a neighborhood, but that is not the important thing. The important thing is to stand uncompromisingly for the truth no matter what others may think or say. The same is true of fathers and husbands at their places of secular employment.

<sup>14</sup> Some, in fact, find it not only difficult but impossible to make the change. They will study with one of Jehovah's witnesses for quite some time and then stop. They recognize that this is undoubtedly the truth, but they see what self-denial they will have to make and they feel that they cannot do this. Others have even taken the steps of dedication and baptism, served faithfully for some time and then have fallen away. It takes faithfulness in this course of self-sacrifice if one is to push on to maturity. The apostle Paul lost one of his traveling companions in this way. "For Demas has forsaken me because he loved the present system of things." (2 Tim. 4:10) What a shame for this to happen when such fine progress was being made!

<sup>15</sup> But whose fault really is it when one falls from the Christian course of self-sacrifice back into the worldly course of self-indulgence? Certainly not God's. He has not allowed the temptations to become too great so that a fall was inevitable. To the contrary, 1 Corinthians 10:13

14. What happens to some in connection with self-denial?

15. Is it excusable when one falls from the course of self-sacrifice?

13. (a) Do some find it difficult to change? (b) What is a better view?

points out: "No temptation has taken you except what is common to men. But God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it." Jehovah helps, he does not hinder. There is no doubt that there are many things to tempt one from a course of self-sacrifice back into the materialistic world. But it is not God's fault when it happens.

<sup>16</sup> At what age should one begin a course of self-denial? The sooner one starts, the better. Childhood is the best time. Parents who keep their children busy at worthwhile tasks in and around the home get the best results. It should be meaningful work that contributes to the family arrangement, and thus shouldering responsibility is learned. Some parents feel that because they had to work hard and had very little during their childhood they are going to see to it that it will be different for their children. They say that their children are not going to be deprived of things as they were. In their own childhood they wore shabby clothing, had poor or no equipment for recreation and play, and had very simple food along with long hours of hard work. But remember, it is not necessary to change all of this in order to benefit your child. Provide him with the needed clothing, be reasonable in recreation, give him wholesome food, but why eliminate the work? Too much leisure time is not at all good for a child. It pro-

vides poor training and background for a vigorous life of self-sacrifice and productive activity as a servant of Jehovah when he grows to manhood. It is not easy to overcome a habit that is deeply ingrained, and laziness certainly can become a habit. And the result? "The very craving of the lazy will put him to death, for his hands have refused to work."—Prov. 21:25.

<sup>17</sup> Actually many parents that had to work hard and had to do without some things when they were growing up are usually quite eager to tell about it now. That is because they now know that much of it was good for them and they are glad that they had that kind of training and conditioning. Proverbs 22:6 encourages: "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." Disciplining your sons and daughters in a course of self-denial could well be one of the most valuable things they will inherit from you. And remember, your example will drive home

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17. (a) Many parents that lived frugal lives in childhood feel how concerning it now? (b) What might well be the best thing a parent passes on to his child?



**Childhood is the best time to begin a course of self-denial. Children should be given worthwhile tasks around the home**

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16. (a) When should training in self-denial begin? (b) How do some parents feel about this, but what is the best view?

the point of the verbal instructions you give.

<sup>18</sup> It is not difficult to become self-indulgent again. God knew that the natural bent of imperfect man was downward. So, for the protection of his people, the Israelites, he forewarned them of what having material abundance in "the land flowing with milk and honey" might do for them. After the hardships of the forty-year trek in the wilderness they were told: "When you have eaten and satisfied yourself, you must also bless Jehovah your God for the good land that he has given you. Watch out for yourself that you may not forget Jehovah your God so as not to keep his commandments and his judicial decisions and his statutes that I am commanding you today; for fear that you may eat and indeed satisfy yourself, and you may build good houses and indeed dwell in them, and your herd and your flock may increase, and silver and gold may increase for you, and all that is yours may increase; and your heart may indeed be lifted up and you may indeed forget Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slaves." (Deut. 8:10-14) Yes, those who become materially rich can easily forget God. They can begin to rely on themselves instead of Jehovah and begin a downward slide that finds them out of the truth. That is one thing that Jesus had in mind when he said: "Truly I say to you that it will be a difficult thing for a rich man to get into the kingdom of the heavens. Again I say to you, It is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God." (Matt. 19:23, 24) It is necessary to be extremely careful with respect to acquiring material wealth if one is to continue faithfully serv-

ing Jehovah. Possessing much material wealth is not generally conducive to developing a good Christian spirit of self-sacrifice, just as God told the Israelites.

<sup>19</sup> One has only so much time and so much energy. Using these two valuable commodities in accumulating or managing material possessions just crowds out spiritual matters. Not only is time used up and energy spent on material things, but the mind, during that time, is being occupied unprofitably. Spirituality is being built up only when the mind is busy with spiritual matters. Having less of this world's goods, while at the same time having what is needed, can be a blessing in many ways. (Prov. 30:8) It usually allows more of our time, energy and thoughts to be occupied with Kingdom interests.

<sup>20</sup> But has not the Society in recent years recommended greater flexibility in our congregational service schedules and other service matters, saying that the congregations need not seek to make rigid rules and arrangements for publishers, but, rather, the brothers can engage in service when they personally decide it is best for them? Has it not been made clear that it is all right, for example, to make back-calls or conduct home Bible studies on Sunday mornings rather than adhere firmly to a schedule of house-to-house work the first thing Sunday morning? Does not all of this indicate that we do not have to push ourselves into the service when we do not feel like it and that the preaching and teaching work will get done somehow and we do not have to exert ourselves so strenuously?

<sup>21</sup> When it is examined carefully, we will see that what has been suggested is not a slackening of the hand, but, rather, that

18. (a) Of what did God warn the Israelites? (b) What can we learn from this?

19. What is a good balance with respect to material possessions?

20, 21. If greater flexibility in service arrangements has been suggested, what does this indicate and what does it not?

things can be arranged to suit the individual publisher so that he can actually accomplish more, if he personally wants to. It allows for greater initiative in service to Jehovah, and Paul says: "For you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward of the inheritance." (Col. 3:23, 24) Many servants of God, getting the spirit of the suggestions, have greatly increased both their time in the field service and also their effectiveness. Thus, we see that the need for exerting ourselves as dedicated Christians in a course of self-

sacrifice is still with us; in fact, the need is actually greater.

<sup>22</sup> The course of self-sacrifice is not an easy one. It requires hard work and vigilance. But appreciating who it is that invites us to this course and the rewards that lie ahead, we agree that it is truly worth while. Their having the right view of it and appreciating the need for it will add to the blessings of those who shun the path of self-indulgence today.

22. What do we conclude with respect to the matter of self-sacrifice?

# SACRIFICES That Are ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

WHEN God's servants of old sacrificed to him in the proper manner it was a pleasing thing to him. When the global flood had wiped out all wicked ones and Noah built an altar to Jehovah and offered burnt sacrifices thereon, the account says, "And Jehovah began to smell a restful odor." (Gen. 8:21) It apparently was a very satisfying thing to Him. The same was true with the sacrifices offered by his people in the land of Israel when they were offered according to his instructions.

<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the record is clear that not all sacrifices were received by Jehovah in that favorable way. When Saul, Israel's first king, disobeyed Jehovah in the matter involving the nation of Amalek,

saving their king, Agag, and the best of the Amalekites' herds and flocks, making the excuse that these would provide a fine sacrifice, Samuel said: "Does Jehovah have as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Look! To obey is better than a sacrifice, to pay attention than the fat of rams; for rebelliousness is the same as the sin of divination, and pushing ahead presumptuously the same as using uncanny power and teraphim. Since you have rejected the word of Jehovah, he accordingly rejects you from being king." —1 Sam. 15:21-23.

<sup>3</sup> After the return of the Israelite exiles from Babylonian captivity, in Malachi's day, God found both the people and the priests guilty with respect to the sacri-

1. How did Jehovah feel when his servants of old offered sacrifices to him?

2. Were all sacrifices received by God in a favorable way, and why?

3. How did Jehovah regard the sacrifices offered in Malachi's day?

fices presented on the altar at his temple. When the priests asked, "In what way have we polluted you?" God answered, "By your saying: 'The table of Jehovah is something to be despised.' And when you present a blind animal for sacrificing: 'It is nothing bad.' And when you present a lame animal or a sick one: 'It is nothing bad.' Bring it near, please, to your governor. Will he find pleasure in you, or will he receive you kindly?" (Mal. 1:7, 8) Jehovah was not hesitant in setting things straight in matters involving his temple and altar. Hypocrisy or dishonesty in the matter of sacrifices was not tolerated.

<sup>4</sup> Jehovah made it very clear what he desired from his people. The animals themselves were to be the very best they had. Also, these were to be offered with a good motive issuing from a pure heart. Note Micah 6:6-8: "With what shall I confront Jehovah? With what shall I bow myself to God on high? Shall I confront him with whole burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, with tens of thousands of torrents of oil? Shall I give my first-born son for my revolt, the fruitage of my belly for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O earthling man, what is good. And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?" It is obvious that Jehovah was interested in the spirit behind the offering.

<sup>5</sup> Although the need for animal sacrifices was done away with when the Law covenant was abolished, yet God is still interested in sacrifices today. He also has the same interest in the right kind of sacrifices. The apostle Paul makes that

clear in what is recorded at Hebrews 13: 15: "Through him [Christ] let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name." Offering to God a sacrifice of praise includes telling the good news of the Kingdom to others and doing so in the right way. But besides preaching and teaching the truth, which Paul here had in mind, the Christian offers sacrifices to God in a number of ways. Why, his entire dedicated life course was to be one of sacrifice as indicated by Peter, when he said: "To this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely." (1 Pet. 2:21) That the dedicated, baptized Christian's conduct in general has to be acceptable, note what Peter further says: "Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against you as evildoers, they may as a result of your fine works of which they are eyewitnesses glorify God in the day for his inspection." (1 Pet. 2:12) The apostle Paul also emphasizes these points when he says: "Consequently I entreat you by the compassions of God, brothers, to present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, *acceptable to God*, a sacred service with your power of reason." And to make it clear that this course has nothing to do with the course followed by those in this old wicked system of things he continues: "And quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:1, 2) Yes, while God is no longer interested in animal sacrifices, he is interested in the sacrifices his servants make on earth today in behalf of pure worship, and those sacrifices include their entire way of life. God has made clear

4. What does Micah 6:6-8 help us to appreciate concerning Jehovah and sacrifices?

5. (a) Is Jehovah still interested in sacrifices, and how do we know? (b) Is only preaching and teaching included in sacrifices today, or what?

to his people today what he requires, just as he did in behalf of the Israelites.

<sup>6</sup> Has God done other things for his people in these "last days" so that they can be sure they are in his favor? Yes he has. He delivered his anointed remnant of spiritual Israelites from captivity to Babylon the Great in 1919 and set them to work in his service. When it was apparent that the gathering in of all his anointed remnant was completed about 1935, he set them to gathering in those who would make up the "great crowd," those who themselves would aid in this great gathering work. Today, over one million one hundred thousand strong, these sheeplike people are being carefully and lovingly shepherded within over twenty-five thousand congregations all over the earth. He is feeding them rich spiritual food at the proper time and they are constantly growing in spiritual strength. This "one flock" he has given a tremendous task to perform. They are to preach the "good news of the kingdom" in all the inhabited earth for a witness before the end comes. (Matt. 24:14) The favored position that they enjoy and the protective arrangements that God has made for them are described at Isaiah 32:1, 2: "Look! A king will reign for righteousness itself; and as respects princes, they will rule as princes for justice itself. And each one must prove to be like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rain-storm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy *crag* in an exhausted land." Jehovah's people know where they stand and are happy and content.

<sup>7</sup> All of this being true, why should we be so concerned for the kind of sacrifices that are acceptable to God? We have said

that it has been made clear today what God requires! Also, he has shown *his approval* on his organization! Should we not have confidence that God has accepted our dedication and is pleased with our work? What more is necessary?

<sup>8</sup> While it may be true that Jehovah has shown his approval upon his people and has blessed them and prospered their activity, yet it is always necessary for Christians to examine themselves and what they are doing so as to be sure they continue in that favored position and thus offer sacrifices acceptable to God. Note Paul's warning to Christians already established in the truth in his day: "Beware, brothers, for fear there should ever develop in any one of you a wicked heart lacking faith by drawing away from the living God; but keep on exhorting one another each day, as long as it may be called 'Today,' for fear any one of you should become hardened by the deceptive power of sin."—Heb. 3:12.

<sup>9</sup> Apparently, then, it is possible for one to begin to develop within oneself a wicked heart before one knows it, and thus we must keep on the watch. So Jeremiah says: "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9) Thus Paul advises: "Keep testing whether you are in the faith, keep proving what you yourselves are." (2 Cor. 13:5) Also, he said: "Consequently let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall." (1 Cor. 10:12) Yes, we need to examine ourselves continually.

#### NEED TO KNOW THE TRUTH

<sup>10</sup> How can this be done? For one thing, we need to keep up-to-date with the truth.

6. What else has God done for his people that shows he has favored them?

7. If God has shown his favor on his people in so many ways, what questions might we well ask?

8. What is it always necessary for Christians to do, and why?

9. What do other Bible writers say about the need for self-examination?

10. What are some things that will help us to examine ourselves and help us to offer sacrifices God will accept?

If Jehovah has lovingly made the truth available to us today, and keeps adding to it, then we must show appreciation to him for this by studying it and learning it. In the world today it is said that technical and scientific knowledge is developing so fast in so many directions that it is difficult even to record it. It is the same with the truth. There is much to learn and limited time in which to learn it. Yet how can we be sure about what God specifically requires of us right now if we are not interested in keeping up-to-date?

<sup>11</sup> Accurate, up-to-date knowledge is important, not only for our own benefit, but also because we are required to be teachers of others. A teacher needs to know. Interested persons will be able to recognize the truth when it is presented if we really know it and understand it. This was true with respect to Jesus Christ and those who heard him. Matthew 7:28, 29 says: "Now when Jesus finished these sayings, the effect was that the crowds were astounded at his way of teaching; for he was teaching them as a person having authority, and not as their scribes." We should not think that it was simply Jesus' powerful delivery and impressive appearance that astounded the people. Undoubtedly this was involved. But we can be sure that it was what he said that was more convincing. Delivery is important, but material, or what you say, is even more important. This was true in the apostle Paul's case. Apparently he was not impressive personally, nor, apparently, was his delivery. But what he said was, and he persuaded many people to take up the way of Christianity.

<sup>12</sup> The importance of really knowing is illustrated in the care people take of their money. When they buy something, they do not like to get cheated but like to get

a quality product at the best possible price. But before making that final selection, they appreciate talking to one who is an authority on the subject. If, by reason of his training and experience, he is an expert in this field, then his knowledge is invaluable. Especially is this true if he is a close friend and thus you can really trust him. Generally speaking, there is no substitute for such a source of information.

<sup>13</sup> The same is true when our health is involved. Then we want to know our true condition. We want the simple truth presented to us in a way that we understand. Only then can we begin to arrange for the treatment that will bring about recovery or improvement. Here we want to talk to one who is an authority in this field. We want someone who knows and whom we can trust.

<sup>14</sup> Much more is this so with respect to the truth of God's Word. There are some still out in the world today who are concerned for their everlasting lives. Our really knowing the truth and being able to answer their questions and explain simply and clearly what God has done and will yet do will be convincing. There are still people today who are astounded at the informed Christian's way of teaching because they recognize it as the truth and are convinced. But we should appreciate the need to study and know in order to teach and convince. One who diligently applies himself to the taking in of knowledge for this unselfish reason can be confident he will have God's spirit to help him and can have assurance that his sacrifices of public declaration to God are acceptable.

<sup>15</sup> In taking in such knowledge it is important to be concerned about where it

11. Why is it so necessary really to know the truth?  
12, 13. What illustrates the value and importance of accurate and full knowledge?

14. Why is this even more important with regard to the truth?

15. (a) How far should knowledge reach within the individual? (b) When the truth touches one's heart, what is the result?

goes. It should go not only into the head but also down into the heart. Why is it that one person might have a good knowledge of the truth but not be zealous in the ministry, whereas another not as well endowed mentally does not have a fine knowledge of the deeper things of the truth but yet is zealous to engage in the service and anxious to tell others what he has learned? There are undoubtedly a number of things involved that we probably will never know, but without a doubt the matter has much to do with the truth's touching his heart. What the latter one has learned has affected him in the right way. Because of its having reached down into his heart he wants to do good with it, making the best possible use of it. This is vital if we are going to continue in Jehovah's favor and be able to offer up sacrifices to him that are acceptable.

<sup>16</sup> When the truth touches one's heart one becomes more interested in others. Your being interested in people will make it more certain that your sacrifices will be those God approves. Remember that God is more interested in *people* than in *things*. Apparently, that is why he created man last, after the material universe and the animal creation. Genesis 1:26 quotes

God as saying, "Let us make man in our image," meaning that man would have attributes like Jehovah. John 3:16 says: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." That means that God has a love for people who are in a redeemable condition even though not presently acquainted with the "good news" nor as yet dedicated to him. So does Jesus Christ. Matthew 9:36 says concerning him: "On seeing the crowds he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." Many of these for whom he felt pity never did take a stand for the truth and become followers of him. Yet, he had a natural concern for them and a desire to help.

<sup>17</sup> This warm, personal concern for others is something that we will never want to lose. It is a quality that God approves of very highly. Our having this Godlike quality means that we are interested in lives, not merely from a humanitarian standpoint, but from God's standpoint. We will have in mind his higher purposes as they relate to man. It is not good to allow

16. (a) How do Jehovah and Jesus feel about people?  
(b) How should this set an example for us?

17. What do other Bible writers say about personal interest in others, and how does this apply today?



**When Bible truth touches one's heart, one becomes more interested in others and seeks regularly to offer sacrifices of public declaration to God**

oneself to become indifferent to the problems of our brothers, and others, or distant in our relationship to them. Jesus said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) The psalmist appreciated this need and said: "A partner I am of all those who do fear you, and of those keeping your orders." (Ps. 119:63) The apostle Paul says: "Do not forget the doing of good and the sharing of things with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." (Heb. 13:16) The apostle Peter appreciated the need to be lovingly concerned for others, especially our brothers. But he also warned against letting a wrong motive creep into the matter when he said, "Be hospitable to one another without grumbling." (1 Pet. 4:9) Yes, cultivating a personal interest in others is something God approves.

<sup>18</sup> Keeping your sacrifices such that they will be acceptable to God obviously requires constant attention. It means endurance. Do you want to know what has helped many faithful servants of God to maintain this position over a long period of time? They committed themselves to a life course of service to God that kept them fully immersed or involved in Kingdom interests. Individual acts of self-sacrifice from day to day are fine. But obligating oneself to serve Jehovah full time, if that be his will, is much better. In fact, it is much easier. Ask any full-time preacher. There is no longer any question in the minds of most of these persons as to what they are going to do. Theirs is a life course of self-sacrifice. Not that continued application and determination are not still necessary. They are. But the schedule or routine that they have intelligently and willingly obligated them-

selves to follow means that the decision has been made and the work is now there ahead for them to do, outlined in advance for them to accomplish. When Isaiah said: "Here I am! Send me," we can be sure that he was volunteering to commit himself to a life course of service to do as God would direct. We can be sure, also, that thereafter it was easier for him to follow this course that God approved.

<sup>19</sup> Sacrifices that please God are, in a sense, like no sacrifices at all. Why? Because the sacrificer finds joy in it even though some deprivation or hardship is involved. Anything, after all, that is accomplished that is worth while, takes work. We are not to think that King David's life was all smooth sailing. In his earlier years he was on the battlefield with his soldiers and at all times he bore the heavy responsibilities of his office as king. Yet, when he had gotten old he looked back on his life in Jehovah's service with satisfaction and contentment. It was with reference not only to his own life of dedication but to that of others of God's servants that he said: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread." (Ps. 37:25) There was no evidence of regret on David's part for the sacrifices that he had made in his lifetime in God's service. Having done what was right, he was happy, just as the proverb says: "It is a rejoicing for the righteous one to do justice."—Prov. 21:15.

<sup>20</sup> The same is true today. It is the one that has spent his lifetime in God's service that has contentment. This is true of those who have spent twenty, thirty, forty

18. (a) What has helped some to serve God acceptably for many years? (b) Why has this been a help? (c) What of those who follow the course that God approves?

19. (a) Why do the right kind of sacrifices make one happy? (b) How is this shown in the case of David and others?

20. Among which people will happiness and contentment be found today?

or more years at Brooklyn Bethel. Has it all been easy? Not really. Here at the Watch Tower Society's headquarters you are tested as you become just one of about a thousand others, each one of them with an assignment that sometimes does not constitute the easiest nor the most pleasant work. But here is an opportunity to devote yourself unselfishly all of your waking hours for the highest good of others. You will be furnished with the necessities of life so that you can apply yourself wholly to the Kingdom interests. You will associate with mature Christians who know where they are going and have known it for many years. One who had spent many years in that service and still rejoices in it put it this way: "Even if there were no new order after Armageddon I wouldn't have wanted to miss serving God here because just being here now is a sufficient reward in itself." That does not sound like making a sacrifice, does it?

<sup>21</sup> Does that sound like the conclusion that some of Christendom's clergy have come to today after having been trained many years in their religious schools and then having served for a time in their churches? No, it does not. Many of these are now shedding all pretense of being believers of God and his Bible. They are changing course and becoming instigators in protest marches and even in riots. Their conclusion is that simply teaching the Bible is not enough. They feel that in order to accomplish something in behalf of deprived people they cannot wait for God to act but have to be out where the action is, even if that means violence that God condemns and the "Caesar" governments condemn. Surely we will not here find examples of those who are offering sacrifices that Jehovah delights in.

21. Where will one not find examples of sacrifices that God delights in, and why?

#### THINGS TO GUARD AGAINST

<sup>22</sup> Something to guard against in all of this is resentment. One could allow the feeling to develop that too much is required. It can happen to anyone. It happened to Moses, 'the meekest of men.' The Israelites had just gotten started on their trek through the wilderness toward the land of Canaan when the people began to complain because of lack of meat. Moses said to Jehovah: "I am not able, I by myself, to carry all this people, because they are too heavy for me. So if this is the way you are doing to me, please kill me off altogether, if I have found favor in your eyes, and let me not look upon my calamity." (Num. 11:14, 15) Jehovah has not required too much of us. There is, indeed, plenty of work to do, but the right view will straighten us out, just as Moses was aided to get the right view and was straightened out.

<sup>23</sup> We also have to guard against jealousy. This, too, can happen to anyone. It happened to Aaron and Miriam, Moses' brother and sister. They apparently felt that Moses had too much power and authority and so said to him: "Is it just by Moses alone that Jehovah has spoken? Is it not by us also that he has spoken?" (Num. 12:2) Miriam was stricken with leprosy by Jehovah, and it was only by Moses' intercession that she was healed. Do we feel that some others are more highly favored with responsibilities and privileges than we are? Do we sometimes allow the desire for a little more prominence in the congregation to build up in us unknowingly? It is something to watch, is it not? It is much better to rejoice when others of our brothers are rewarded for good work done, and, in fact, encourage

22. (a) What must one guard against in order to keep one's sacrifices acceptable? (b) Give an example.

23. (a) What else must one guard against to keep one's sacrifices acceptable? (b) Give an example.

them to greater works in behalf of pure worship.

<sup>24</sup> We will also want to guard against misplaced sacrifices. Have you been thinking of working overtime, or allowing your wife to work so that your son can go to college? This will be a 'sacrifice,' but is it really worth it? Too often these sons have come out of college with little or no faith in God nor love and respect for their parents who worked so hard to make the higher education possible. This experience has been a bitter disappointment to some. It is the wrong kind of sacrifice. By contrast, parents who concern themselves

24. What about misplaced sacrifices?

primarily with Christian training for their children and provide a Christian example for them to follow will find this a sacrifice that is pleasing to God.

<sup>25</sup> It is good to be living in the time when the kind of sacrifices that Jehovah enjoys most can be offered up to him. We are glad that these are to be offered in the form of praise by Christians who are intelligent and enlightened, not in a formalistic, sectarian way. It has been made clear just what God delights in. What a privilege to know of sacrifices that are acceptable to him and to offer them!

25. What makes us happy concerning sacrifices to Jehovah?

# Have you stumbled

**H**E HAD been a zealous Christian minister for many years. Also he had seen to it that his children were reared "in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." Then one day he quit associating with his fellow Christians and wrote to the Watch Tower Society giving his reasons. What had caused him to stumble? He felt he had been wronged by certain ones in his congregation.

—Eph. 6:4.

Then again, there was a ministerial assistant in a large congregation who suddenly lost all interest in Jehovah's work and severed his connections with Jeho-

vah's people. He stumbled at the course of his own father, who had been his overseer, the father being disfellowshiped because of adultery.

Among those stumbling and losing all interest in Jehovah's work was also an elderly couple. Why?

Because a business transaction with a fellow Christian seemed to them to be "sharp."

And too, there was a young Christian woman who had dedicated her life to Jehovah God but who

at  
what  
others have  
done?

now hesitated to get baptized. What caused her to be in danger of stumbling? The unwise conduct of a servant in her congregation.

What do these experiences and others

that might be given have in common? They all show persons making the mistake of letting the more or less unwise or wrong course of another stumble them to the point of losing out on the hope for everlasting life.

True, we all have feelings. When someone wrongs us or keenly disappoints us, it is but human to feel hurt, even as we feel pain when we stub our toe or hit a finger with a hammer. But is it wise to lose our temper and kick or smash something just because our feelings have been hurt? So we may well ask, Is it wise to let ourselves be stumbled out of the way of life just because of the unwise or wrong course of others, even though it brought us keen disappointment or suffering?

Rather than stumble out of God's truth due to a deep hurt, it would be better to remind ourselves that none of God's earthly servants today are perfect. Because of imperfection they will at times act ill-advisedly. (Gen. 8:21) Pressuring them to act in such ways are the world and its ruler, Satan the Devil. In view of these facts, should we not view our Christian brothers realistically and with mercy? —John 12:31; 1 John 2:15-17.

#### SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES

That the mistakes and sins of fellow servants of God are no valid grounds for being stumbled out of God's service the Scriptures make clear. The Israelites during their wilderness journey complained, rebelled and at times even engaged in false worship. But would their defections have been a valid reason for any Israelite to stumble and sever his association with Jehovah's people? Not if he wanted eventually to reach the "land flowing with milk and honey."—Ex. 3:8.

Even King David, whom Jehovah termed "a man agreeable to his heart," made serious mistakes. His grossest one

was in regard to the wife of Uriah, for which God severely punished him. But would any or all of these shortcomings on the part of King David have justified any Israelite's becoming stumbled and separating himself from Jehovah's nation? Would God hear his prayers if he did? Could he offer sacrifices for his sins apart from the Levitical priesthood?

And then there are the examples of Jesus' apostles and other disciples. The ten apostles were deeply hurt when they learned that James and John, together with their mother, had asked Jesus for the chief seats in his kingdom. But were they stumbled? Did they bear against James and John a grudge and quit associating with Jesus? Or did Jesus himself become stumbled and quit serving his heavenly Father because one of his apostles became a traitor, another denied him three times and all of them fled at the time of his arrest? Their course did not spoil his relationship with God.—Matt. 20:20-28; 26:20-75.

The inspired Record also tells us that Paul and Barnabas had a serious disagreement over taking John Mark along with them, and because of this they came to the parting of their ways. But did either of them quit serving God on account of it? By no means! Rather, we read that years later the apostle Paul asked that John Mark come to him because of his usefulness.—Acts 15:36-41; 2 Tim. 4:11.

O yes, there were some of Jesus' disciples that did stumble. When he told them about their needing to eat his flesh and drink his blood, they exclaimed: "This speech is shocking; who can listen to it?" and as a result they no longer walked with Jesus. But how unwise their course! As Peter said on that occasion, there was no one else to whom to go: "Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life."—John 6:53-69.

And so it is today. Jehovah God and Jesus Christ make allowances for the imperfections of their human servants and representatives. God is using 'Christ's brothers,' also termed collectively "the faithful and discreet slave," to do His work in the earth. The ones comprising this group are imperfect, make mistakes, and yet are being used and blessed by God. And Jesus said that whatever was done to them he counted as done to him, and that in spite of their imperfections.—Matt. 24:45-47; 25:31-46.

#### NO GROUNDS FOR STUMBLING

When we begin to reason on the subject we find that to let oneself be stumbled out of God's service by what others do is unwise, unjust and, above all, it is unloving. The Word of God tells us that joy is the lot of God's servants. (Isa. 65:14) Why let what someone else has done rob you of your joy? Well does God's Word counsel us: "Do not hurry yourself in your spirit to become offended, for the taking of offense is what rests in the bosom of the stupid ones." If it is unwise to let another rob you of your joy of serving Jehovah, and it is, then it is downright folly to let another rob you of your prospects of everlasting life in God's new order of things. Is not allowing oneself to be stumbled like that tantamount to committing suicide?—Eccl. 7:9.

To take such a course is also unjust. How so? In that one is taking a course of action contrary to Jesus' instruction. He commanded that we first go to the one who has offended us personally, all alone, in an effort to straighten out matters. If that fails, he commanded that we take one or two more along with us. And if that fails, he commanded that it become a congregation matter. And if that fails? Then the offender, not the one who was

wronged, was to be separated from the congregation.—Matt. 18:15-17.

When you have stumbled at the course of another you proclaim that you are not forgiving that one. But can you afford not to forgive? Jesus said that God would judge us with the same severity that we judge others, that he would not forgive us if we did not forgive those who transgressed against us. And we are to forgive, not only once or twice, but as Jesus told Peter, "Up to seventy-seven times."—Matt. 6:14, 15; 18:21-35.

Not only that, but for you to become stumbled and refuse to forgive another would be presumption on your part. How so? In that you presume to take the role of God in judging your brother. As Joseph, the son of the patriarch Jacob, noted when his brothers feared what his course would be upon the death of their father: "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God?" Yes, though they had sold him as a slave and he had suffered many years as such, he did not hold it against them. He did not harbor a spirit of revenge but freely forgave them.—Gen. 50:19-21.

Nor is that all. If you withdraw from association with Jehovah's people because of what one or several have done, are you not showing a lack of love for all the rest? What you are, in effect, saying to them is that all their loving association is not worth as much as your personal feelings. But is that really so? More than that, if you let what another does stumble you out of Jehovah's service, where is your love of neighbor? Where is your love for those hungering and thirsting for righteousness, those sighing and crying for all the disgusting things they see taking place, particularly in Christendom? The only way you can show love to them is by persevering in the Christian ministry regardless of what another may have done.

Moreover, when you stumble at what

others do you also betray a lack of love for Jehovah God. How so? In that he has permitted it. Jehovah God is long-suffering. He permits many things that he does not approve of as a test upon his servants. Look what he permitted Job and His own Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer. However, He has promised that we will not be asked to endure more than we can. (1 Cor. 10:13) If you let anything that He has permitted stumble you out of his service you are in effect finding fault with Jehovah God and betraying a lack of love for him. What it amounts to is that you dictate the terms under which you are willing to serve God. Does that make sense? Can you dictate to him? Can you set terms for him to meet? Does he need you, or do you need him? What does the psalmist say? "Abundant peace belongs to those loving your law, and for them there is no stumbling block."—Ps. 119:165.

#### WHY HAVE YOU STUMBLED?

If you have been stumbled it would be well for you to ask yourself, Why have I been stumbled? Superficially you may feel that it is because your sense of justice has been outraged, or you have been wronged or have been disappointed in another. But God's Word makes provision for serious transgressors to be dealt with and for personal wrongs to be righted. Could it be that you tend to be governed by emotion rather than by reason? Emotion often leans to self-interest. Or could it be that you tend to be introverted and so are more likely to take too seriously what others say and do?

Remember, the human heart is treacherous and desperate. (Jer. 17:9) Could it be that unconsciously you were seeking an excuse to quit? So when one has stumbled at what another has said or done one may well ask oneself: What was the real reason for my having stumbled? Is the

wrong or grievance so great, or is there some hidden motive or reason in back of my being stumbled? God knows the answer.

#### COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

The answer of the apostle Peter that there was no other place to go, that Jesus alone had the words of everlasting life, is one to keep in mind when you tend to stumble because of what another says or does. Where else is there to go? Is not the privilege of serving Jehovah God second to none? Is it not the most honorable activity in which anyone could engage, to be an ambassador or an envoy of the heavenly government, in Christ's place to be asking people to be reconciled to God? —2 Cor. 5:20.

And in what more rewarding work could one engage? It brings honor to Jehovah God and works to the vindication of his name. By means of this work you offer to people the prospect of everlasting life in God's new system of things after Armageddon. And because his is an unselfish work you reap great happiness from it, because "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

Since God's Word assures us that God is not unmindful of our faithful service and that our work for him is not in vain, you may be assured of a future reward. What? Either that of ruling with Christ for a thousand years or gaining entry into the post-Armageddon "new earth" in which God will wipe out every tear from human eyes and there will be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying nor pain. Why let what someone else did rob you of all this?—1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 6:10; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:4.

Let us face the facts. The dedicated Christian witnesses of Jehovah have a well-earned record or reputation of being outstanding for their honesty, their peace and

unity, their joy. They are people who love Jehovah with all their heart, mind, soul and strength and who love their neighbors as themselves. (Mark 12:29-31) Were you to separate from them, could you expect to find another group of people trying harder to live by Bible principles than they do? As already noted, they do not tolerate those practicing wickedness but remove these from their midst.—1 Cor. 5:13; 6:9-11.

#### WARNING NOT TO STUMBLE OTHERS

However, the fact that the Scriptures do not justify anyone's being stumbled at what another does is not to be taken to mean that a Christian can be indifferent or view lightly the causing of another to stumble. Not at all! Stumbling another is a most serious offense. Jesus Christ left no doubt about that matter, for on one occasion he said: "Whoever stumbles one of these little ones who put faith in me, it is more beneficial for him to have hung around his neck a millstone . . . and to be sunk in the wide, open sea."—Matt. 18:6.

The apostle Paul also appreciated the seriousness of stumbling a fellow Christian and so repeatedly warned against it. He showed that even if a thing is perfectly right in itself, if it would cause another to stumble we should not do it: "It is well not to eat flesh or to drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles." And Paul not only preached this but he also practiced it: "If food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat flesh at all, that I may not make my brother stumble."—Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 8:13.

If we are not even to do things perfectly right in themselves if they would stumble others, how much more careful we should be lest some wrongdoing on our part stumble others! With this in mind Paul prayed for his brothers in Philippi: "That your love may abound yet more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment;

that you may make sure of the more important things, so that you may be flawless and not be stumbling others up to the day of Christ." In admonishing them in this manner he was but asking them to imitate him, for as he wrote to his brothers at Corinth: "*In no way are we giving any cause for stumbling*, that our ministry might not be found fault with."—Phil. 1:9, 10; 2 Cor. 6:3.

The work that Jehovah God is having done at the present time is a cooperative affair. Like the members of the human body, each contributes to the welfare of the rest and each has need of the rest. Can a hand or toe keep on living apart from the body? Can it serve any useful function if severed? Even as each member of the body is concerned for the welfare of the rest, so should Christians be. (1 Cor. 12:12-26) Each Christian should be careful therefore not to stumble a fellow Christian. When having to do with fellow Christians of a different race or nationality, take into consideration their sensitive areas and avoid giving offense. Are you a mature minister? Exercise care that you do not stumble the young and new ones who are likely to expect much from you.

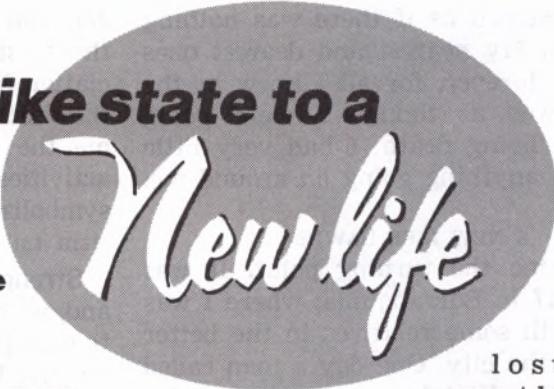
At the same time each one must recognize that no one is perfect, and that when others transgress, whether against Bible principles or against oneself, such is no valid reason for being stumbled. To allow oneself to be stumbled by others is neither wise, nor just, nor loving, even as we have seen. Is the transgression a serious one? Then it is for the congregation to take action. Is it against you personally? Then proceed according to Jesus' instructions found at Matthew 18:15-17. Is it some other matter? Then dismiss it from your mind, exercising the love that covers a multitude of transgressions.—1 Pet. 4:8.

When you let others stumble you out of God's service you displease Jehovah God. You make others unhappy as well as yourself. The only one you make happy is Satan the Devil, because he delights in seeing discord and unhappiness among God's people. Surely that is not what you want!

—Prov. 6:16-19.

Yes, let no one rob you of your joy. Hold firmly to your hope of eternal life. Count the many blessings that come to you as an active sharer in preaching this good news of God's kingdom to all who will hear. See the good in your fellow servants and realize with them the greater happiness that comes from giving!

## From deathlike state to a



*New life*

**As told by Inez Wiese**

DIFFICULT years those were, from 1939 to 1945! We had been living in Hamburg, Germany, for over twenty years, my husband and I, and during those war years there got to be a scarcity of food. The situation could not get much worse—so we thought. But then late one night we were all awakened by a strange penetrating odor. We went out to the garden to investigate, and what a sight met our eyes! Everything in the garden—vegetables, flowers, fruit and the trees themselves—were destroyed by the powerful gases of a bomb. Night after night the bombers were at work. Hamburg was a shambles.

What a contrast from my youth in Colombia, South America! My British parents moved to Bogotá when I was very young. When I grew up I married a German citizen, and we moved to Hamburg to live. We had no children of our own, but there were three children who had

lost their mother and whom we took to raise, and they became like our very own.

But now our girl was married and away from home. Our two boys died while serving in the war. Soon my husband took sick from a nervous ailment and died of a heart attack. I was all alone, without means, and unable to communicate with my relatives in Colombia. The German government took possession of the house, filled it with displaced persons, allowing me but one room.

Winter was the worst time of all. There was nothing to heat the house with—no electricity, no gas, no coal or wood. I would often go down to the Elbe River, not far from my home, to search along the banks for boards from the wreckage of ships and barges. With this material we could make a fire and thaw out ice for water, since all the piping in the house was frozen hard.

Over and over again I used to ask myself, What is the purpose of all this? The war was now over, but Germany was on the losing side, so I was interned in a displaced-persons' camp for a year. The future looked very dark. However, I determined to make my escape. I fled with five other persons, penniless and hungry. We made it to Belgium, and there the Colombian consul helped me to get back to the land of my youth.

But it seemed as if there was nothing to live for. My nearest and dearest ones were gone forever, for all I knew at the time. It was as though I were going through a living death. I had very little interest in anything going on around me.

#### A NEW LIFE DAWNS

Then came the turning point. It was during 1947 in Barranquilla, where I was staying with some relatives in the better section of the city. One day a man called bringing the *Watchtower* magazine. He explained that he was a missionary, one of Jehovah's witnesses. The magazine, he said, was about the Bible. I, for my part, had heard nothing about Jehovah's witnesses and knew very little about the Bible. However, I decided to subscribe on account of his kind, considerate attitude.

The Witness came back the following week. When I admitted that I understood very little of the contents, he began to explain some things to me. In fact, the upshot was that I consented to have a regular weekly Bible study. I began to awaken from my deathlike state. Questions began arising. Oh, how I wanted to know all about the paradise earth that was to come under the Kingdom rule, according to the Bible promises! My earlier travels had convinced me that the earth was indeed a place of beauty in spite of its pollution by selfish humans.

The more I advanced in the knowledge of the Bible's message the more I was filled with hope and the desire to live. Once again my eyes shone, this time because of genuine interest in God's kingdom. True, I had lost my family, but now I found another family, a larger and growing family, all of them children of faith. How exciting!

Soon after this spiritual awakening, I determined to dedicate my life entirely to Jehovah God through Christ Jesus. It was the least I could do to show my appreciation for God's love in rescuing me from the deathlike state of despair and offering me the opportunity to fill my life with activities in support of his kingdom. I symbolized my dedication by water baptism on July 4, 1948.

Strength and health came back to me, and, with these, much joy in aiding others to gain Bible knowledge. I kept on increasing the hours I devoted to spreading the message from house to house. Still it never occurred to me that I could serve as a full-time minister representing the Watch Tower Society, until one day my companion in the ministry, herself a full-time minister, suggested the thought. Right away I filled out and submitted an application to be a full-time or "pioneer" minister.

#### A HAPPIFYING CAREER

My assignment as a "pioneer" minister was dated March 10, 1949. Happily, I managed to get out early that morning with my handbag filled with literature. But then a strange thing happened when I arrived at the section of the town where I was to work. My vision clouded up, I felt suddenly weak and fell to the ground! Just then my relatives passed in a car, recognized me—imagine their surprise! —and took me home. I had to stay quietly at home for a few days.

When reviewing matters later, it almost seemed to me that I was supposed to be thoroughly discouraged from keeping on with pioneer activities. But to the contrary, I soon recuperated and resolved to make up for lost time. My relatives, who were Catholic, could not understand my zeal for Jehovah. Still, they did not try to hinder me. And it has been my joy to continue in the full-time preaching work to this day. To Jehovah goes the credit, for from him has come the measure of physical and spiritual strength that I have needed during these wonderful twenty years.

It was in Barranquilla that I spent the first seven of those years. What a joy it was to see the theocratic growth from just ten publishers of the Kingdom to four congregations of Jehovah's witnesses!

And today the city has twenty congregations. From this city, too, forty of us Colombian delegates were thrilled to attend the big international convention at Yankee Stadium, New York city, in 1953. Words fail to express our reaction to the sight of those thousands upon thousands of Witnesses, and the large banners announcing the greetings from our Christian brothers in Brazil, Ecuador, China, Colombia, and so forth. How apropos the words of the apostle John at Revelation 7:9: "I saw, and, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations."

At the close of the assembly I could not get back to Colombia quickly enough so I could tell those with whom I was conducting Bible studies all about it. They needed to learn that Jehovah's witnesses are not just a few people calling from house to house in their own town or village. Indeed, Colombians have since then

learned this from experience. Circuit, district and national assemblies have grown ever larger. And our international assembly (1966-1967) in Barranquilla had almost 6,000 in attendance. That truly was a treat to us, for we had the very pleasurable association with Witnesses from a number of countries.

#### PREACHING FROM CITY TO CITY

Cali was the next Colombian city to which I was assigned. It is wonderful to think that there are now five congregations there. And it was here that I had the joyous privilege of living with missionaries in the missionary home. How secure

and content I could feel, under the spiritual oversight of mature brothers in the faith! It was grand, too, that I could aid new missionaries to learn Spanish. But I

could see that the major factor that enabled them to make good progress and soon start giving sermons in Spanish was Jehovah's spirit.

In 1960 the need arose for more full-time workers in Bogotá. It happened that I was in position to go, and soon I was at work there with five other "pioneers." In the years that followed, our service there was truly blessed, for now there are ten congregations in Bogotá.

It was in Bogotá that I realized the need to persevere in laying a strong groundwork for the faith of those whom we teach. I was studying with a young woman, her three children and her parents. The husband was opposed, threatening to take the children away from her. One night after a drinking spree with his cronies, he came home brandishing a revolver and, in the presence of the children, threatened to shoot her if she refused

#### COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- The Value and Need of Self-Control.
- "Supply to Your . . . Knowledge Self-Control."
- How the Bible Can Improve Your Family Life.
- Do Not Turn to Divination!

to give up Bible studies. The children, thoroughly alarmed, tearfully pleaded in their mother's behalf. But she quietly and courageously stood up to him, saying: "You can kill me, but I will not quit studying the Word of God. First, you should know that our children are going to be witnesses of your act, and above all you will have to answer to Almighty God for the blood you are about to spill." With that he strode out of the house. In time she was baptized, and is now busy preaching and attending meetings at the Kingdom Hall with her children. Her husband never again forbade her to study.

Three years ago I came to Medellin. This second city in the country is located high in the Andes. Here, too, I am privileged to live with missionaries who graduated from the Watchtower Bible School of Gil-ead. That is a great comfort, for I am now over seventy-nine years of age and no longer have the physical strength that I long enjoyed. We have no car and must walk a great deal to accomplish our ministry. However, several of the people with

whom I study the Bible are so appreciative that they come to "my home" for each weekly session. That way I can conserve energy and fulfill my 100-hour goal each month. And Jehovah's blessing is surely on our labors, for the congregation here grew so much that it became necessary to divide it into three separate congregations. At every meeting we see new faces.

In retrospect these twenty years as a "pioneer" minister have been happy ones, filled with hard work, but bringing also deep satisfactions. How marvelous to me that Jehovah drew me out of a deathlike state and granted me a new lease on life! Even now as my physical strength is reduced, he keeps the way open for me to serve in some small way the grand interests of his kingdom. He 'does not throw me away in the time of old age,' neither does he 'leave me because my power is failing me.' (Ps. 71:9) Always underneath are the everlasting arms! For my part, I am determined to be "steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord."—1 Cor. 15:58.

### "I QUIT SMOKING!"

**I**N THE first century James the half brother of Jesus wrote an inspired letter to those scattered about who wanted to serve Jehovah. Among other points, he counseled: "Become doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves with false reasoning."—Jas. 1:22.

Just as in that century, persons today who learn about God's will are becoming "doers of the word, and not hearers only." Two experiences related at assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses last summer illustrate this.

A Witness in Mississippi received a letter from a friend requesting that a call be made on a woman living in the area. The Witness made the visit and she was able to arrange to hold a Bible study with the family. The minister reports: "After the first study on the true God and idols, she discarded a large

religious picture which had held a place of prominence in the room. Over a period of time I helped them to appreciate the importance of coming to the Kingdom Hall. But, alas, within a week they moved twenty miles into the country, and they refused to let me come so far to pick them up. Finally they obtained an automobile. The same week they attended the Sunday meeting at the Kingdom Hall.

"What was the result? A changed family. They were firmly convinced that this was the truth from the Bible and were amazed by everyone's friendliness. It so impressed the forty-year-old daughter that she began to feel guilty about her bad habits. After her first meeting she said: 'I quit smoking!' She later commented: 'After Jehovah gave me so much, how could I come home and do some-

thing he disapproves of? I was afraid to wait. We never know what will happen tomorrow, and if I waited I might never have the chance to quit and prove my love for Jehovah."

The Witness added: "The remarkable thing —this woman is crippled. Cigarettes have been like a crutch to her all these years, but from what she learned at the Kingdom Hall in one meeting she received the incentive to give up the bad habit. At the second meeting she held out her hand and said: 'Isn't it pretty? It's not brown and stained anymore from tobacco.' She is now a regular attender."

At a convention at Rochester, New York, a couple explained about a Bible study they had held, saying: "The couple smoked heavily, and when coming home from the study we smelled like smoked herring. Gradually they started to attend meetings at the Kingdom Hall. Later they began to share in the field ministry and expressed the desire to be baptized. But their problem was that they were both heavy smokers.

"They thought that they could be baptized and then quit smoking. We told them that the fact that they had not broken the habit would not exclude them from baptism, but they might be sneaking smokes for a long time.

"They made up their minds to quit smoking in December, but then they procrastinated. Each time they tried to quit they got nervous and irritable. Finally one of the Witnesses showed them some articles in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* dealing with smoking. When they realized the Scriptural aspects of the matter, they decided to quit smoking at the time of the coming circuit assembly. They stuck to their decision, but reported that it was trying for both of them as they were very irritable and nervous for the first two weeks. But as time passed the craving for tobacco subsided. At the last district assembly they were baptized in symbol of their dedication to God. And they did so with a clean conscience, having put away this filthy habit. Since then the wife has enjoyed the privilege of vacation pioneering twice, making her very happy."



● As one who is studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses, I am interested in pleasing God. Seventeen years ago my husband left me, and I have not heard from him since. He may be deceased by now. Am I free to remarry?  
—A. S., U.S.A.

We are happy when those studying God's Word express genuine interest in pleasing Jehovah. In order for one to do this it is important to acknowledge and live by his inspired Word.

The Bible says that death dissolves a marriage. Speaking about a Christian wife, the apostle Paul commented: "If her husband should fall asleep in death, she is free to be married to whom she wants, only in the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:39; Rom. 7:2) The same would apply if the wife died; the husband would be free to remarry.

In the case in question, apparently there is no concrete evidence that the husband is dead. Thus the legal marriage still stands. It would be both illegal and immoral for the wife to go ahead and remarry just because she *felt* her husband was dead.

However, in many lands there are laws to the effect that if an adult has been absent and not heard from for a period of years he may be legally declared dead. Volume 17 of the legal work *Corpus Juris* states: "At common law the rule was that a presumption of death arose from an unexplained absence of seven years, . . . although in a few jurisdictions a shorter period has been prescribed by statute." (Pages 1167, 1168) But one cannot simply assume that, since the specified time has passed, he or she is free to remarry. Legal steps must be taken. This lawbook continues: "No presumption of death of a person arises from the mere fact of his unexplained absence unless diligent efforts have been made to find him."—Page 1171.

Just what legal action is required would have to be determined locally. The "diligent efforts" might include contacting all relatives and friends who could be expected to have heard from or about the absentee, checking at his

former residences and places of employment and posting a public notice in a newspaper. If an exhaustive search produces nothing to indicate that the absentee is alive, the court might pronounce him dead. Before that takes place the wife would not legally be free to remarry.

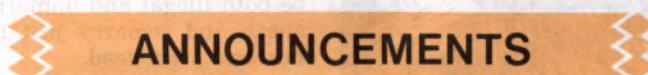
If all reasonably possible efforts to find the husband have failed and legally he has been declared dead, the wife must decide what to do. If she honestly believes him dead and wants to remarry, she must be willing to bear the responsibility before God, who knows all the facts and motives involved.—Gal. 6:5; Heb. 4:13.

This is a serious decision because the missing mate, who has been ruled as dead, might make an appearance again. What then? *Corpus Juris* indicates what is true in many places: "Where the presumption [of death] is rebutted by facts showing that the absentee is alive, the intended marriage is rendered void ab initio [from the beginning]." (Volume 38, page 1296) The woman would have to separate from the second man and get the matter straightened out.

While such a reappearance might seem unlikely, these things do occur. One woman in the state of New Jersey was deserted by her husband in 1924. In 1943 a court declared him dead.

Two years later she remarried. In time she became a Christian. Then thirty-six years after her husband deserted her she learned that he recently had been living in a town some thirty-five miles from her home. Thus her second marriage was null and she had to separate from the second man, to whom she thought she was married, and get the entire matter straightened out legally.

So in regard to the case under consideration, we can say: The lack of information about the husband would not hinder the wife's becoming a Witness. If in time she could show to the satisfaction of the representatives of the Christian congregation that all efforts to prove that he is alive had been unsuccessful and that there was good reason to believe him dead, and he is legally declared dead, they would allow her to assume the responsibility for the decision to remarry, "only in the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:39) She should remember that this is a very serious matter, not one to be rushed or taken lightly. A Christian marrying under these circumstances must shoulder the responsibility before Jehovah, who "judges impartially according to each one's work."—1 Pet. 1:17; Heb. 13:4.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FIELD MINISTRY

True happiness comes, not from the mere possession of material things, but rather from the worship of the true God Jehovah. Jehovah is "the happy God," and happy are those who worship him! Said the inspired psalmist: "Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people whom he has chosen as his inheritance." (1 Tim. 1:11; Ps. 33:12) Happy people like to share their happiness with others. And this is especially true with Jehovah's people! Since the basis for happiness is spirituality, Jehovah's witnesses will be sharing spiritual good things with their neighbors during July by offering them the fine Bible-study aid *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, for only 25c.

...that the world will gradually be overthrown. It  
gradually at present and it is progressing  
and the handbooks you see are very important.  
you all come and mark them out over the  
territory of which I am now in charge and  
I. 20, 21

...that Jehovah's spirit now reigns in the world.  
It gradually at present and it is progressing  
and the handbooks you see are very important.  
you all come and mark them out over the  
territory of which I am now in charge and  
I. 20, 21

### "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 3: Reviving the Spirit of Self-Sacrifice.

Page 425. Songs to Be Used: 45, 80.

August 10: Sacrifices That Are Acceptable to  
God. Page 431. Songs to Be Used: 5, 92.