

Awake!

AUGUST 22, 1983



**What Are the Chances
for
Peace?**

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AWAKE! is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

Most importantly, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure New Order before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly for \$3.50 per year by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.

Printed in U.S.A.

Feature Articles

PEACE? PEACE? Will we ever have universal peace? This is the question so many people are asking these days. And with millions of antiwar demonstrators protesting the buildup of the world's nuclear arsenals, could it be that shortly the nations will be proclaiming "Peace and security!" for all mankind? We invite you to read the following articles

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Fifteen cents (U.S.) a copy

Watch Tower Society offices

	Yearly subscription rates
	Semimonthly
America , U.S., Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589	\$3.50
Australia , Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565	\$3.50
Canada , Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4	\$4.00
England , The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	£4.00
New Zealand , 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	\$5.00
Nigeria , P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	N2.50
Philippines , P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	₱30.00
South Africa , Private Bag 2, Elandsfontein, 1406	R4.00

Remittances should be sent to the office in your country or to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589, U.S.A.

Published by

**Watchtower Bible and Tract Society
of New York, Inc.**

25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

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ARE THE CHANCES FOR *Peace* LOOKING UP?

MAN'S search for peace is as old as war itself. Our modern times are therefore no exception. Yet a journalist was recently moved to describe current peace efforts as "an idea whose moment may have arrived." Why? Are the chances for world peace actually better now than they were in the past? What is so unusual about today's peace movement?

What Led Up to Today's Peace Movement

Two atomic bombs dropped over Japan in August of 1945 ended World War II with unexpected suddenness. During the postwar years, the horrors of atomic war prevented the cold war between the superpowers from warming up into a fiery holocaust. As political and economic relations between them and their allies improved, tension decreased. Words like "détente" held out promise of a lasting peace. It appeared that the "balance of terror" was paying off.

Then, almost without warning, détente suffered a setback. The United States failed to ratify the SALT II treaty. The Soviet Union marched into Afghanistan. Difficulties in Poland complicated matters. Controversy arose about building a neutron bomb—the so-called

clean bomb—designed to destroy people but not property. The United States launched a massive program of military buildup. NATO announced plans to base 572 Pershing II and cruise missiles on European soil. Talk was heard about the possibility of a "limited" nuclear war. The unthinkable—that a nuclear conflict was winnable—began to gain acceptance among certain officials.

Some West Germans, living in a country already saturated with more nuclear weapons per square mile than any other nation in the world, were horrified that more were on the way. Terrified of being trapped on a nuclear battlefield between East and West, they and their European neighbors allowed fear to turn into an-



ger. And anger gave vent to action. A new peace movement was being born.

Something Different

Today's peace movement is different from previous ones in several ways. During the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, there had also been antiwar demonstrations, both in Europe and in America. Some American men even burned their draft cards in protest. But their anger

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nuclear war

was directed mainly against that war in particular, rather than war in general. Today's peace movement, on the other hand, is one born out of an almost hysterical fear of nuclear war, out of a feeling that by threatening to annihilate the human family *the very existence of nuclear weapons* is already wrong and immoral.

Another difference is that of size. Hundreds of organizations have sprung up in Europe and America, differing in makeup and views but united in their agreement that the nuclear-weapon arsenal must be reduced. As a preliminary step toward disarmament, the idea of a nuclear freeze has gained considerable support. This would mean a bilateral—some even favor a unilateral—moratorium on the testing, production and further deployment of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union. Many Americans, encouraged by leading politicians, are said to be in favor. Cities and towns across the country—yes, even

some states—have overwhelmingly endorsed nuclear-freeze resolutions.*

This general international outcry for peace finally reached the inner chambers of the United Nations General Assembly. As a result, the Associated Press reported that a few months ago a number of resolutions were overwhelmingly adopted by that august body. These proclamations called for a freeze on the further development and deployment of both nuclear and chemical weapons.

Today's movement is also different in that it has a broad base. No longer are all the protesters clad in blue jeans. People of all ages, of varied political and religious persuasions and social standings are involved. In Bonn more than 250,000 took to the streets, in Amsterdam upwards of 300,000 and, to coincide with the Second UN Conference for Disarmament, about 700,000 in New York City in June of 1982. And in addition to all the "people in the streets," says George Ball, former U.S. under secretary of state, "there are enormous numbers at home who feel exactly the same way."

Outstanding also is the movement's spontaneity and rapid expansion. Germany's *Der Spiegel* called its popularity in the United States "the surprise, perhaps even the sensation of the spring of 1982." It spoke of Americans "marching for peace, even on the verge of overtaking the fighters for peace in Europe."

Contributing to this support have been books and pamphlets, like Jonathan Schell's best-seller *The Fate of the Earth*, that have alerted people to the horrors of nuclear war. In Britain the BBC screened *A Guide to Armageddon*,

* Some resolutions have been defeated, chiefly because opponents contend that an immediate freeze would give the Soviets an undue military advantage.

showing the damage a single megaton bomb exploded over St. Paul's would do to London. Roger Molander, originator of Ground Zero Week in the United States, said of the nuclear threat: "I want people to know exactly what the dangers are, because they will be stunned that no one is doing anything about it, and they will be moved to take action."

And taking action they are—and with results. Their effectiveness was noted by a Canadian member of Parliament who said: "The experts have lost control of this issue to the public will." And the *London Times*, agreeing, says that it is "pretty obvious that the peace movements have had a major, though delayed effect on Western governments."

Religious Involvement

Any number of reasons—political, social and religious—are given by those involved in the peace movement. Pope John Paul II, while on his 1982 visit to Britain, said: "Today the scale and the horror of modern warfare, whether nuclear or not, make it totally unacceptable as a means of settling differences between nations." While not all churches have spoken out so strongly, "protests sponsored by churches have played a major role in arousing public opinion," says *Time* magazine.

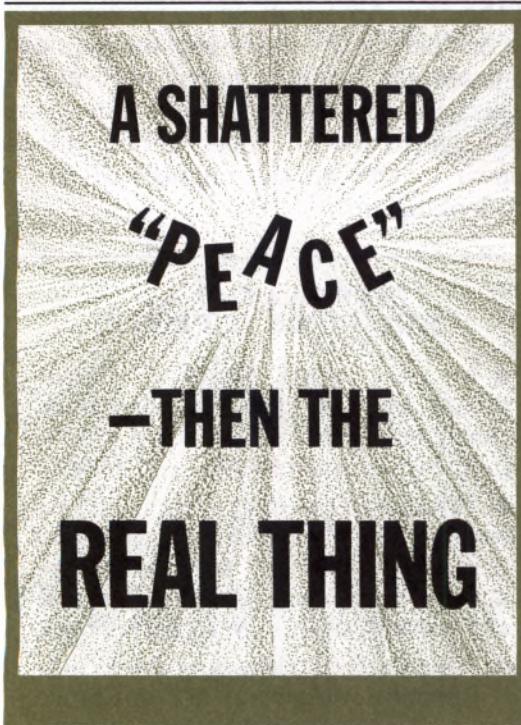
In May of 1982 the Soviet-sponsored "World Conference of Religious Workers for Saving the Sacred Gift of Life From Nuclear Catastrophe" was held in Moscow. Nearly 600 religious delegates from 90 countries were present, representing Buddhists, Parsis, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Shintoists and Christians. A prominent participant was U.S. evangelist Billy Graham, dubbed by one German newspaper as "a kind of emissary

of the new American peace movement."

Considering the peace movement's undisputed and growing popularity, and in realization of the pressure it can exert upon world leaders, does it not indeed appear as though the chances of peace are looking up?

INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS SUPPORT

- In the United States "religious groups in most denominations have contributed moral and political weight [to the freeze movement]."—*Maclean's*
- "The [U.S. bishops] letter called on Roman Catholics and 'all men and women of good will' to make peace-making their most important spiritual and worldly goal."—*New York Times*
- "The Catholic bishops in the Federal Republic of Germany and in France have issued a forceful call for the military blocs to enter into disarmament discussion."—*Süddeutsche Zeitung*
- In Germany "the Lutheran Church has thrown its considerable weight behind the antimissile protest . . . Protests sponsored by churches have played a major role in arousing public opinion."—*Time*
- In the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) "thousands and thousands of mostly young Christians are openly taking their stand for peace . . . wearing as an expression of their Christian confession for peace the slogan 'Swords into Plowshares.'"—*Bonner General-Anzeiger*
- "The Interchurch Peace Council . . . is an official organisation of the most important Dutch churches. Its slogan is: 'Rid the world of nuclear weapons, start with Holland.'"—*The Economist*



EIIGHT out of ten Germans say that one of politics' foremost duties is to safeguard peace. Seven years ago they put solving economic and social problems at the top of the list. "What you are witnessing is a fundamental change in people's consciousness," noted a prominent German politician.

This change in public priorities, apparently an international phenomenon, caused the London *Times* to ask: "What, after all, has changed in the real world since 1979 and 1980 that would account for the resurgence of public concern about nuclear weapons?" It admits to having no totally satisfying answer "why public opinion should have behaved as it did."

But fear of nuclear war comes as no surprise to serious students of the Bible. They recall Jesus' prophecy that "men

[would] become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." (Luke 21:26) They also learn there of God's purpose to make "wars to cease to the extremity of the earth." How? Through disarmament, for the text continues: "The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire." (Psalm 46:9; see also 72:7.) Could this indicate, as some religionists may claim, that today's peace movement is God's way of accomplishing this earth-wide peace?

"To Peace There Will Be No End"

Isaiah 9:6, 7 promises that "the princely rule" of Christ Jesus, the "Prince of Peace," will bring about a peace to which "there will be no end." This means nothing other than the establishment of God's Messianic Kingdom. In the Model Prayer that Jesus gave his disciples, Christians have long prayed for that Kingdom to accomplish God's peaceful "will" here on earth.—Matthew 6:9, 10.

Bible prophecy is most clear on these two points: First, *man will not destroy himself in a nuclear holocaust*, and secondly, *he will succeed in achieving a measure of "peace and security."* But this cannot be the peace of which Isaiah prophesied "there will be no end." Why not? Because, according to the Bible, "whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them." (1 Thessalonians 5:3) Thus man's "peace and security" will be shattered, cut short by "sudden destruction" in the "war of the great day of God the Almighty . . . called in Hebrew Har-Magedon." (Revelation 16:14, 16) Just how will this come about?

Religious Influence Backfires

It appears likely that religion will actively support political leaders in bringing about this "peace and security." To what extent it may even exert pressure upon them to achieve this goal, the Bible does not say. But, in any case, its alliance with politicians to bring about a substitute peace will be in rejection of God's arrangement for lasting peace through the "princely rule" of Christ Jesus. Like an immoral woman who commits fornication, false religion will be found serving the interests of earthly peacemakers rather than those of the heavenly "Prince of Peace."—See Revelation 17:1-6.

Politicians have not been above using religious leaders to procure support for their policies, even to preach men onto the battlefields in defense of their governments. Religious leaders, on the other hand, have used their influence with heads of state to manipulate matters to their own selfish advantage. They have often actively engaged in politics and even in revolts against governments. Of religious interference in politics, in 1981 German Chancellor Schmidt said: "I do not believe that this can be permitted indefinitely." And yet religious interference continues. In fact, a group of German Protestant ministers recently admitted: "We want to preach politics and to change politics."

Just how much longer this interference will continue, God himself will decide. His prophecy foretells that certain political elements "will hate the harlot [the world empire of false religion] . . . and will completely

burn her with fire." When? At God's predetermined time in the "one day" in which God's judgment against her will be carried out. (Revelation 17:16; 18:8, 20; compare Daniel 4:35.) So although religion may have worked hand in hand with political leaders so that the cry of "peace and security" could be made, the political elements will suddenly turn on and devastate world religion. Then they, in turn, will suffer destruction at God's hands in the soon-to-follow war of Har-Magedon.

Thus man's "peace and security" will have been exposed as a sham. It will have served as a touchstone for divine judgment, showing the falsity of placing trust in peace-making schemes of men rather than in God's Kingdom now rul-



**The real thing—not just war
helmets turned into flowerpots,
but children learning war no more**

ing in heaven.* To what extent today's peace movement, with religious backing, will be instrumental in bringing about the "peace and security" that will immediately precede false religion's destruction, we must leave the future to reveal.

Surviving to See "the Real Thing"

Today's peace movement may or may not prevent a third world war. By no means will it prevent the war of Har-Magedon. It may or may not pressure governments into disarming. By no

* For proof of the Kingdom's establishment in heaven in 1914, see the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, published in 1982 by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

means will it pressure Christ Jesus, the one who "judges and carries on war in righteousness," into disarming.—Revelation 19:11-16.

Since the righteous war of Har-Magedon is unavoidable, why not permit Jehovah's Witnesses to point out to you in God's Word the requirements for survival? Avoid pinning your hopes to a sham "peace and security" that is doomed to be shattered. Turn to the "Prince of Peace" and actively support his "principally rule." Then the peace you can look forward to enjoying will be "the real thing"—the peace of which "there will be no end."—Isaiah 9:6, 7.

Putting an End to 'Putting It Off'

YOU have just finished dinner. You tell yourself that this evening you are going to straighten out your closet, or the garage, or your desk, or finally get to one of those projects that you have been meaning to do for weeks or even months.

But before you get started, you reason, why not relax for a moment? After all, you just finished dinner. So you rest on the couch and turn on the TV—"just for a few minutes." Before you know it, you are watching the late news. The evening is gone. The task you have been meaning to get to will have to wait again.

If you see yourself in the above description, you can at least draw comfort

from the fact that you have plenty of company. Putting it off, postponing, procrastination or whatever else you want to call it is surely one of the most common of human weaknesses. There is hardly anyone who has not at one time or another said to himself or herself, "I know I should be doing it, but . . . "

"I'll Do Better Next Time"

Procrastination makes itself manifest in our lives in many guises, some tragic, some not quite so serious. In fact, behavioral scientists believe that, because many instances of 'putting it off' are not really so serious, it is easy for the habit to become ingrained in us.

For example, you may have all the intentions of sending off a thank-you note to the friends you stayed with on a recent trip. But time marches on. Before you realize it, weeks and months have gone by, and your note is still unsent. But there appears to be no real harm done. "I'll do better next time," you tell yourself. And there is the beginning of a losing battle.

There may not always be a "next time." A 25-year-old woman, who for years had been hesitant about showing her affection for her sister, wrote: "I wanted to hug and kiss her many times, but I never let her know how I felt. . . . On Feb. 25 my sister died. My world has collapsed. How sad that she never knew how much I loved her! . . . When there is love among family members, . . . show it! Don't put it off until later. It may be too late."

It must be noted, however, that not all delaying is necessarily harmful. Some may prefer to use the term "deliberation" instead. It takes time for ideas to gel and plans to crystallize. Putting off a decision until a more opportune time may, in fact, be a good decision in itself.

A more serious form of procrastination, though many fail to recognize it as such, is chronic lateness. This may involve being late for appointments, social engagements, business meetings, or simply being late to work. Or it may involve tardiness in getting things done on time or in meeting deadlines. It could cost one friends, a job and even, it has been said, one's marriage.

Why Things Get Put Off

Since procrastination appears to have something to do with time, the first explanation that comes to mind is that

Before you know it, the evening is gone. The task you have been meaning to get to will have to wait





Always being late is a bad habit

procrastinators are not time conscious or do not know how to manage their time. Thus, supervisors in large corporations often attempt to teach their employees certain time-management techniques. But often, to their disappointment, they find that when it comes to putting the newly learned techniques to use, most procrastinators procrastinate as usual. Something more appears to be involved.

In the book *Decision Making*, co-authors Irving Janis and Leon Mann wrote: "A decision maker under pressure to make a vital decision affecting his future welfare will typically find it painful to commit himself, because there are some expected costs and risks no matter which course of action he chooses. One way of coping with such a painful dilemma is to avoid making a decision."

The feeling of inadequacy or incompetence is another reason why many people procrastinate. "Putting things off acts as a buffer for their shaky sense of self-worth," says psychologist Jane Burka. Rather than risking the possibility of

doing poorly, they put off the task altogether. Their fear of criticism prevents them from even starting.

Experts who have studied the problem of procrastination point to other causes that are, perhaps, more subtle. A subordinate may be rebelling against the rules, deadlines and other demands of his superior by procrastinating. Putting things off until the last minute may be a person's way of excusing his shoddy work because he can then say: "If only I had more time!" Others are so intimidated by the overall size of their task, or by the amount of time it takes to complete it, that they feel there is no use even to get started.

Indeed, there are many reasons why people procrastinate, and each one of us is affected differently. So what can be done to overcome the insidious effects of procrastination and chronic lateness?

How to Put an End to 'Putting It Off'

If you have ever read any books on overcoming procrastination, you probably have noticed that most of them are full of exhortations such as, "Do it right now!" "Get up and get started!" and so forth. But few readers are ever motivated enough to do anything more than getting up and putting the book down. Why? Because most such "self-improvement" books approach the matter from an egoistic point of view. Why worry about what others think or say? Go ahead and do what you want.

The problem with such an approach is that much of putting things off, passing the buck, and especially lateness, is, to begin with, due to a lack of concern for others. Moreover, if a person is real-

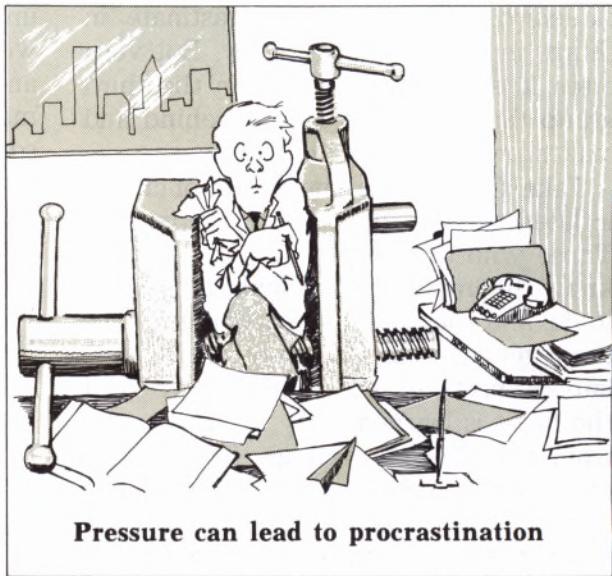
ly that conscientious about doing everything that is supposed to be good for him, most likely he would not be a procrastinator in the first place.

Setting Your Priorities

Since procrastination, as we have seen, is a form of avoidance, to overcome it one must be able to see the reason and the true worth of the task at hand, as well as its relative importance among the many things that one must do or wants to do. This is what management experts call setting one's priorities.

What are the truly important things in life to you? To what would you assign top priority? For many today, self-advancement and getting ahead take the first place in their life. Yet the files of professional counseling centers contain many case histories of ambitious men and women with promising careers suddenly hitting a snag, becoming serious procrastinators, even jeopardizing their future. The competition and the pressure to produce causes them to doubt their own ability. They begin to drag their feet, to put things off, to procrastinate. As one young lawyer put it: "It's a fear of judgment, of being laughed at. Better to show them nothing than to show them something stupid."

Ancient King Solomon was certainly one who had advanced to the top. But this is what he said about such endeavors: "I myself have seen all the hard work and all the proficiency in work, that it means the rivalry of one toward another; this also is vanity and a striving after the wind." (Ecclesiastes 4:4) Surely, it is easy to put off something that is



Pressure can lead to procrastination

"vanity and a striving after the wind" when one begins to feel the "rivalry of one toward another." Putting it in colloquial speech, people 'drop out of the rat race when the going gets tough.'

Clearly, self-advancement can be motivating only to a degree. For something to be counted as really important, hence, not to be put off, it must involve more than mere self-interest. It must have a broader and truly worthwhile purpose.

So the next time you wonder why certain things you have intended to do get put off so often, stop and ask yourself: Are these things really important? Do they serve a useful purpose? And if so, what is preventing me from doing them?

Examine Your Habits

We live in a fast-paced world, and for most of us life is filled with many things to do. Some of these we *have* to do. Others we would *like* to do. Still others we do more or less *out of habit*. Serious procrastinators put off things in the first

category. Most people procrastinate in things in the second category. But very often it is doing the things in the third group that causes us to fall behind and makes procrastinators out of us.

Take, for instance, the matter of chronic lateness as a form of procrastination. Those who are perpetually late usually know the importance of what they have to do, and they even enjoy doing it once they get started. But they are always late. Experts in the field believe that the habit is learned early in life, usually from parents and siblings. It is carried over first to school, then to work and into other areas of life. For such people it is not simply a matter of learning how to manage their time. They "should start changing their thinking from 'better late than never' to 'it's better to be early than late,'" says psychologist Pierre Haber.

Interestingly, Tony and Robbie Fanning, a husband-and-wife counseling team, note in their book *Get It All Done*: "Being late has nothing to do with actual time; it is a matter of putting off the deadline." Chronic latecomers will find themselves late even if they have or allow themselves extra time. To break the habit, the Fannings suggest moving up the deadline mentally. If you have to be at a meeting at 7:00 p.m., aim for 6:30 or 6:45. You still may be late as usual but yet on time for the meeting.

Help Is Available

Many are those who, for a lack of real motivation, procrastinate in trying to rid themselves of certain harmful habits. A man who smoked as many as three packs of cigarettes a day for 11 years related his experience: "I made at least a dozen serious attempts to quit, but all were

unsuccessful. Each time I tried to quit I would go through a period of agony . . . and always ended up smoking." Another man, who was a compulsive gambler for some ten years, said: "I tried a number of times to break the habit but could only stop it at the most for about two days." Their repeated failures caused them to put off trying again. Eventually, however, both of these men found the motivation they needed.

The former smoker related: "In studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses I found a lot of scriptures that dealt with both physical and spiritual cleanliness. Also, there is the basic principle of showing love to one another and treating other people as we want to be treated. How could someone sit and blow smoke in another person's face and say that he follows that principle?"

What did this newfound motivation do for him? "I made up my mind that I would quit once and for all," he said. "I asked for Jehovah's help each time I felt that I wanted a cigarette. To my surprise, it was easier than I anticipated."

What about the gambler? "My wife began studying the Bible," he said. "She invited me to the study and I accepted. The result was I quickly realized gambling was wrong." The Bible truth gave him the needed motivation. Within three months he accomplished what he had been putting off for ten years.

"He that is watching the wind will not sow seed; and he that is looking at the clouds will not reap," says the Bible at Ecclesiastes 11:4. So whether you are troubled by serious procrastination or habitual lateness, it is the course of wisdom to take a serious look at your priorities and your habits. Then put an end to putting things off.

Young People Ask...

How Can I Cope With Disappointment?

IGOT out of school in June," says Barbara, "but didn't get a job till October—and that job was temporary! Only recently have I been able to find work." And how did this make her feel? "It's hard to come home and tell everybody that you couldn't find a job. And when it's time to pay the rent and everybody else is scraping up pennies—and you don't have anything to give—it makes you feel like quitting."

English poet Philip James Bailey once said: "There is no disappointment we endure one half so great as that we are to ourselves." And even if you've never been turned down for a job, you probably know the humiliation of failing some important assignment or of having a friend or a parent let you down. What should you do when disappointment strikes?

When It's Your Fault

Professor Dan Russell at the University of Iowa, who has studied the reactions of competitive athletes, makes this observation: "People are self-protective. If they lose, they blame external reasons, like the weather or the referee. And when they win, they say it's because of their own abilities." Nevertheless, often *you* are to blame for failure. And accepting this responsibility is a big part of coping with disappointment.

King David, for example, was once severely reprimanded for committing adultery.

Yet David did not hide behind a wall of excuses. The 51st psalm poignantly reveals how squarely he faced his failure. Nevertheless, God decreed that the child of his adultery would die! David fasted and fervently prayed for the child's life, but the child finally died. Did David wallow in self-pity? To the contrary, the Bible says: "David got up from the earth and washed and rubbed himself with oil and changed his mantles . . . after which he came into his own house and . . . began to eat."—2 Samuel 12:20.

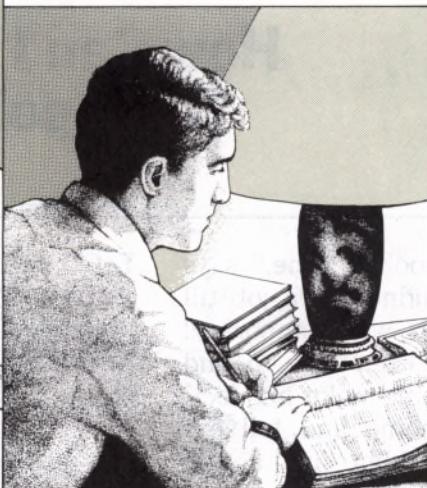
Was David cold and heartless? No, but David had accepted his failure and was



It's hard to come home and tell your folks you didn't find a job



Avert disappointment by preparation and hard work



determined never to let it happen again. Now that he had dealt with his mistake, all he could do was pick himself up and go right on living.

You too can learn from even the worst of blunders. Barbara, for example, now realizes: "I should have been more persistent about job hunting. At times I got so discouraged that I didn't even look for a job." And likewise with an exam you might fail. Are you honest with yourself about your failure? Admitted one youth: "I just never cared for math, so I never put forth the effort to pass. I could have done better."

Thorns in the Flesh

Not all disappointments are your fault, however. The apostle Paul, though eminently successful as an apostle, writer and missionary, had a bitter disappointment—an affliction he calls "a thorn in the flesh." Likely Paul referred to seriously defective eyesight. Paul says he "three times entreated the Lord that it might depart," but instead he was told God's "undeserved kindness is sufficient

for you."—2 Corinthians 12:7-9.

Physical limitations are similarly "a thorn in the flesh" for many youths today. One teenaged youth has suffered an assortment of ailments. She says: "When I first found out that I had to have a serious operation, it really shook me."

But she gradually adjusted to the idea. And although medical treatment has offered her *some* relief, it still is not easy for her. Nevertheless she says: "I've learned to *accept* the situation." Again, acceptance is the key to coping. And as in Paul's case, physical limitations need not keep you from accomplishment—or from enjoying life.

When Parents Let You Down

"My greatest disappointment," said one youth, "was when my father was disfellowshipped [excommunicated] from the Christian congregation. He hasn't improved at all. And the way he treats my mother just makes me sick!"

At times, our own parents fail to live up to our expectations. They may engage in hurtful conduct. They may make promises they don't keep. Or they simply may not be there when we need them. Thirteen-year-old Peter's mother is forced to work full time. Says Peter: "I come home from school and stay all alone until around seven o'clock. I watch TV but it gets pretty boring. . . . At times

I like being alone. But it's a strange feeling. You're there all by yourself. You've got nobody to talk to. When my mother comes home it's just as bad because when she comes in she's tired and she goes to sleep. . . . When I try to tell her what I'm feeling, she'll get mad or something."

How might you cope? First, you might try—hard though it may be—to view your parents *objectively*. When you are little, your parents seem infallible. But as you get older, it slowly dawns on you that your parents are far from perfect, that they experience pressures you can only begin to understand. Remember, too, that a parent—even one with serious problems—is entitled to your respect and loving obedience.—Ephesians 6:1.

What if your parent's work schedule deprives you of his or her full attention? Realize that these are indeed "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) In just a short time, you may have to experience firsthand how hard it is to make a living these days. So try to make the most of a difficult situation. After all, an empty house is no reason to be idle. Pitch in and help with the housework! Try having a hot meal waiting when Dad or Mom gets home. And when opportunities arise to spend some time with your parents, try to make up for lost time.

When Friends Let You Down

"One time," says one teenaged girl, "I told my girl friend something that was not supposed to go any further. I found out later, however, that she had told someone and, when I confronted her, she started giving me excuses. I told her she wasn't a true friend and that I didn't want to see her anymore."

It should not surprise you, however, that some friendships prove to be disappointing. The patriarch Job, for example, was afflicted with illness, financial disaster and the loss of loved ones. Surely his three "friends" would comfort him!

If people fail they blame others. When they succeed they take the credit

But what did they do? They berated Job with accusations of secret wrongdoing! "My own brothers have dealt treacherously," bemoaned Job.—Job 6:15.

If one of your friends similarly lets you down, don't be too quick to dismiss the friendship. Why not try to talk out your differences and resolve them? Likely some misunderstanding has occurred. And the Bible says: "Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *freely forgiving one another* just as God also by Christ freely forgave you."—Ephesians 4:32.

Learn From Disappointments

The longer you live, the more disappointments you will experience. Learning to deal with them, however, is valuable experience. Jesus Christ himself suffered disappointment. His own people rejected him. One of his closest friends betrayed him. His disciples abandoned him on the night of his arrest. But he was not broken by disappointment. Rather, he "learned obedience from the things he suffered." His resolve to serve Jehovah God faithfully was strengthened by what he experienced. (Hebrews 5:7, 8) You, too, can become a stronger person for having suffered a letdown.

Mixing Catholicism With Voodoo —How Do You View It?

By "Awake!" correspondent in Brazil

SEVERAL years ago, in Brazil, a well-known television personality had her adopted son baptized. In the morning he was baptized according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, in the afternoon according to the ritual of *candomblé* (Brazilian voodoo). Later, he would be baptized according to the Messianic and the Rosicrucian rituals. The proud mother explained: "This is so that he will have the protection of all the religions when he grows up."

Does her broad-minded view of religion surprise you? Could it happen where you live? In Brazil it is not uncommon. Even the clergy are affected.

Some time ago a Roman Catholic priest moved to Bahia, Brazil, to study Afro-Brazilian religions. He ended up joining one! His story appeared in the *International Herald Tribune*, which said that he had served for four years as a voodoo church leader. As such he regularly called up spirits to intercede for his parishioners. "But that doesn't mean he's abandoned his Roman Catholicism," declared the *Tribune*. The priest explains:

"I always talk with God through Jesus and never through the spirits."

There is a technical word to describe this mixing together of beliefs from different religions. It is "syncretism." Perhaps to you it is startling, but millions of Brazilians find no difficulty in mixing Roman Catholic observances with the worship of ancient, pagan gods. How did it all get started?

"In Brazil, syncretism is an old phenomenon, for from the beginning of colonization we find it in the *quilombo dos Palmares* (hiding place of fugitive slaves) . . . we find it in Cuba, in Haiti, in the same form as in Brazil." Thus wrote historian Roger Bastide in his book *Contribuição ao Estudo do Sincretismo Católico-Fetichista*.

The Mixing Process

He goes on to explain that it followed the importing of slaves from Africa: "Arriving in Brazil, the blacks [slaves] were catechized [taught basic Catholic doctrines] in a vague way, [and] were, at least, baptized. However, they understood nothing of that religion which was forcibly taught to them." What did the black slaves do? They went through the motions of this new religion, but in their minds and hearts continued to worship the gods they remembered from back home in Africa.

The result? Gradually, "Catholicism changed into . . . a way of disguising his traditional beliefs: in reality, the [Catholic] saint was not worshiped, but rather the corresponding *orixá* [African deity] behind it. Catholicism became merely a front to hide a secret ritual. . . . In the syncretism, Christianity furnishes only the Portuguese words; all else is fetishism," according to Bastide.

A similar thing happened with the native Indians. Another historian wrote: "The natives of this country, although taught the Gospels for a long time, are no more Christians now than they were at the time of the conquest. . . . In present-day Bolivia and the south of Peru, the old pagan divinity Pacha-Mama (Mother Earth) still remains alive, although absorbed into the Virgin. . . . In Mexico, veneration of the virgin of Guadalupe has its roots in the cult of the goddess Tonantzin (Mother of the gods)." —*Mecanismos da Conquista Colonial*, by Ruggiero Romano.

William H. Prescott, historian of the conquest of Mexico, added regarding the Indians in that country: "It is only required of him to transfer his homage from the image of Quetzalcoatl, the benevolent deity who walked among men, to that of the Virgin or the Redeemer; from the Cross, which he has worshipped as the emblem of the god of rain, to the same Cross, the symbol of salvation." —*History of the Conquest of Mexico*, by William H. Prescott.

While Catholic ritual was thus being grafted on to African and native forms of worship, non-Christian beliefs were filtering back into Catholicism. Waldeimar Valente says: "Catholicism . . . became spotted with superstitious ideas, with absurd beliefs, with magical-fetishist concepts." —*Sincretismo Religioso Afro-Brasileiro*.

Is It Good or Bad?

How do you view such a religious mixture? Some may be offended, feeling it is a corruption of Christianity. Others, though, may view it as no bad thing. Throughout history, countless victims have died in religious wars, crusades,

persecutions and riots. What is happening in Brazil, they may say, is at least better than that!

Others, again, may wonder what all the fuss is about. They could point out that the Catholic religion itself is a product of at least three religious traditions: Biblical Christianity, Greek philosophy and the popular pagan religions of the Middle East and Europe. How was that?

The Catholic Church teaches that the Bible is the Word of God, and from this come many of the names and concepts it uses in worship. However, Catholic theologians were strongly influenced by the philosophies of the ancient pagan Greeks, and this colored their teachings. For example, the doctrine of the inherent immortality of the human soul does not appear in the Bible. (Ezekiel 18:4, 20) However, it was taught by the Greek philosophers and is now a fundamental doctrine of Catholicism.

The third tradition, popular pagan religions, is seen in many Church beliefs. Christmas and Easter, the use of the cross and images in ritual, and the worship of a "Trinity," "saints" and a "Mother of God" all come—not from the Bible—but from these religions. On this point you may recall that John Henry Cardinal Newman in *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* gives a long list of traditional practices, including "incense, lamps, and candles; votive offerings . . . holy water; asylums; holydays . . ." and then says that they "are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church."

Hence, it could be said that the religious mixing, or syncretism, that is going on in Brazil is merely a continuation of a historical process. Is that how you would view it? It is interesting that many in the

Roman Catholic Church do not. Statements by some of its leaders show deep uneasiness.

Time magazine reports that Pope John Paul II during his visit there warned that Christianity can accept the "cultural expressions of any people" but must not "mutilate" its own teachings. Cardinal Brandão Vilela feared that the Brazilian people are entering a period of "Africanization." When he saw the multitudes that turned out for a ceremony in honor of the goddess Iemanjá, he attacked the "abuse of religious syncretism."—*Veja*, January 7, 1981.

These two Church leaders criticized "mutilation" of doctrine. Of course, this will not trouble anyone who views religion as merely a matter of personal opinion. To him, one doctrine is as good as another. But many are aware that such "mutilation" has had disastrous results in past times.

What It Leads To

For example, in the days before Jesus Christ walked the earth, the Israelites attempted to mix the beliefs of their pagan neighbors with their worship of Jehovah

God. As a result, they got involved in sex worship, "sacred" prostitution, even child sacrifice. This led Jehovah God to withhold his protection, and they became easy prey for the empire-building Assyrians. (2 Kings 17:16-18) Why such an extreme reaction?

The reason is obvious. The worship Jehovah gave to the Israelites promoted high moral standards. When observed faithfully (without mixing in pagan teachings), it protected them physically, as well as spiritually, and prepared them for the coming of the Messiah. Adding pagan elements degraded it, just as adding polluted water to fresh water will pollute the fresh water.

The same holds true for Christian worship. The apostle Paul warns: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers [those who do not believe in Jesus Christ]. For what fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light have with darkness? . . . Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever? And what agreement does God's temple have with idols?" (2 Corinthians 6:14-16) Consider how history has proved the wisdom of Paul's words.

Christianity is a whole. It is a way of life involving our relationship with God, and it includes Bible-based beliefs—particularly with regard to the place of Jesus Christ in God's purposes—a code of conduct touching all aspects of life and a special responsibility to spread the faith to others. Compromise in any part weakens the whole.

Thus the willingness to compromise that allowed the entry of pagan doctrines also allowed unchristian immorality, cruelty, oppression, and so forth. As a result, some of the worst atrocities in

In Our Next Issue

- *Prolong Life Through Work!*
 - *The First World War—Was It the Prelude to Man's Final Era?*
 - *Are Violent Video Games Really Harmful?*
-

history have been committed by people claiming to be followers of Christ. Only those who have striven to hold to Bible Christianity in all its facets—doctrine as well as conduct—have been able to maintain the high standards of apostolic Christianity.

In view of this, a sincere person would share the concern of the Catholic theologian who said: "Speaking objectively, syncretism is not justified because it perverts the Word of God, . . . syncretism is very deplorable."—*O Estado de São Paulo*, by D. Estevão Bettencourt.

Jehovah's Witnesses feel that way, too. They believe that everyone today should be free to choose how he worships. But they also believe there is only one true religion, the one based on the teachings and life of Jesus Christ. How can we identify that religion?

The apostle Paul pointed to "the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation." He went on to explain: "All Scripture is inspired of God

and beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 Timothy 3:15-17.

Hence, Jehovah's Witnesses go to the Bible to learn of the true religion. In doing so, they avoid the kind of syncretism that is happening today in Brazil. They also avoid the syncretism that occurred hundreds of years ago, which brought hellfire, the immortal soul, the Trinity, images, the cross and other pagan beliefs into Christendom's system of worship. If syncretism that "mutilates" doctrine is wrong today, surely it was also wrong hundreds of years ago.

Why not read the Bible yourself and find out what true worship really is? You will thus avoid polluting *your* service to God with pagan rites, and—with God's help—you will gain the wisdom that leads to salvation.

Strange Partners?

"Did you see how he kissed the ground, following voodoo ritual? Ah, what power!" exclaimed a voodoo priest when he saw Pope John Paul II kiss the ground during his short visit to Haiti on March 9, 1983. Probably the pope did not have that in mind. Nevertheless, to the inhabitants of Haiti, a land described as 80 percent Catholic and 100 percent voodoo, the pope's action was a sign of the kinship they feel exists between the Roman Catholic religion and voodooism, according to a report in the Californian newspaper *Press-Telegram*.

In New York City, Roman Catholic Church officials recently admitted to

doubts as to whether they should take action against *santeria*, a cult originating in Cuba that—like voodoo—has a mixture of Catholic and African religious beliefs. *Santeria* practices include such things as altars in the home, special clothing, charms and potions, spiritism and animal sacrifices. Estimates of the number of adherents in New York City run as high as 300,000, according to the *Daily News* of January 6, 1983. Why the hesitation to act? Admits Catholic Church official Francisco Dominguez: "Some of these are practices that are abberations of the Catholic faith. But if you say it's junk, you're getting rid of a lot of people."

A Seafood Lover's Tour



Recipes From Portugal

BORED with beef? Poultry doesn't pique your interest? Then Portugal is the place for you! This country, you see, is a seafood gourmet's dream, a gastronome's paradise.

But fish isn't your favorite fare? You just might change your mind after you try some of our favorite seafood recipes. Your aspirations aren't exactly Epicurean? But the accolades you'll receive from family and friends after they taste these luscious dishes will make you wear your chef's hat with pride. So get your imagination and tastebuds in gear and join us on a seafood search through Portugal.

Clams, Eels and Bass in the North

The Atlantic Ocean—a thundering symphony of white froth on deep blue—beats against the northern shores. Along the coastline you enter the lagoon district, which is adorned by hundreds of canals and fish ponds. And beneath the

mirrorlike surface of the lagoons lurk clams, lampreys and eels.

But, of course, you have to skin eels to eat them. So cut the skin all around the eel's neck. Then, with a firm hold on the eel, with a cloth peel the skin off like a lady's stocking. Revolting? Maybe to some. But just think of how delicious eels are when fried or in a stew. And in vinegar they are simply irresistible!

But what's that sound? Why, we have come upon a fish auction—bidding and offering boxes and baskets, scales and scaly vertebrates. Look at those gorgeous crawling crustaceans just waiting to turn pink and tender in your cooking pot!

Did you get a good deal on bass or perch? Then you have the major ingredient for fried cherne. Want the recipe?

Take six slices of perch or bass (about as thick as your finger). Marinate them in a cup of white wine with a bay leaf, one teaspoon of salt, a dash of pepper and a drop of lemon for a couple of hours. Dry them and turn them in flour. Fry them in butter with a clove of garlic till they are golden brown. Enjoy!

The Central Regions—Fish, Fishing Boats and Fish Stew

Salmon and trout jump and spawn in the Central regions. Throw a few bits of bread in the river, and a shoal of trout just might crowd around for the meal. But come dinner and it's our turn to crowd around the table and feed on them!

Heading back to the coast, we visit the picturesque fishing hamlet of Nazaré. There men with long black caps

and checkered shirts, barefoot women in black and even children can still be seen on the beach mending nets—a centuries-old tradition. Perhaps even more impressive are their fishing boats—their stately high-curved prows colorfully decorated with paintings. Sometimes the moon and stars, a staring eyeball, or even a fish, adorn the prow of these graceful vessels.

But let's now taste the results of this people's labor by enjoying delectable *caldeirada*, or fish stew:

Clean and cut one kilo (2.2 lb) of ray, sole, prawn, cuttlefish and mussels. (A variety of almost any fish available can be used.) Heat one cup of olive oil in an earthenware pot and add a large chopped onion, two cloves of garlic and a sliced hot pepper and let simmer till onions are golden. Now add ½ bunch of chopped parsley, 400 grams (14 oz) of tomato pulp passed through a sieve, a cup of white wine, three cups of water and a little salt. Let simmer for half an hour. Add your assortment of fish and cook the mixture another 15 to 20 minutes. Rub six to eight slices of bread with garlic and place them in another pot for serving. Distribute pieces of fish on top of bread and cover it all with the sauce.

A Visit to Lisbon

Yellow streetcars still brighten this bustling port city. But we are heading for a *Sardinhas* in the old Alfama quarter. The unmistakable smell of sardines grilled on charcoal betrays the menu right away. To round out the meal we also feast on salad and farmer's bread. Neighborhood children watch from balconies and low doorsteps as we devour this culinary delight.

You'll also want to sample *bacalhau*,

or cod, which we affectionately call "the faithful friend." It is our favorite seafood treat. Here's the recipe for *Bacalhau à Gomes de Sá*:

Soak half a kilo (1.1 lb) of dried cod in cold water overnight. Remove the skin and bones. Flake the meat into small pieces. Shell and slice two hard-boiled eggs. Boil 12 whole potatoes till cooked. Peel and cut into cubes. Heat 8 teaspoons of olive oil in a pan and cook two sliced onions till golden brown. Add the cod and simmer it till it is cooked. Add the potatoes and let cook for a few minutes. Sprinkle two teaspoons of parsley on top. Arrange sliced eggs on top and decorate with ½ cup of black and green olives. Serves four.

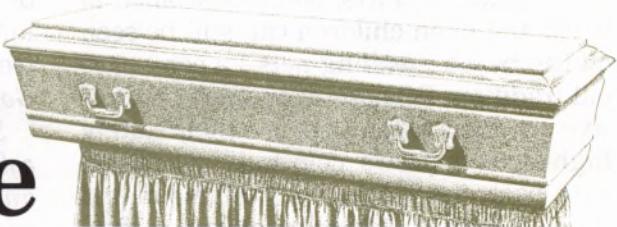
But you haven't seen Lisbon until you have been to a *Marisqueira*, a seafood restaurant. Take your pick of the lobster, shrimp and clams that arrive fresh from the coastal hatcheries. Wooden hammer in hand, explore the contents of crustacean claws and legs and down it all with cold, foamy beer!

A Tough Choice

The warm coast of Algarve is a study in white—dazzling beaches and cube-shaped, terraced houses, foaming surf and flowering almond trees. So many fish courses are available! Shall it be oysters with lemon? Fried tuna steak with salad and lots of olives? We can only pick one, so let it be stuffed squid!

Has our brief jaunt through Portugal perhaps made a seafood lover out of you? At the very least, we may have given you some fresh ideas to brighten up your dinner table. What will you try first? Fried eel or fried *cherne*? Salmon or fish stew? Grilled sardines or *bacalhau*? Any one of them is a delight!

Death Was My Way of Life



JUST put me in a wooden box. I don't care what happens to me after I die." "Have my body cremated." These are sayings that I have heard from time to time, mainly in a joking way because of my profession—that of caring for the dead bodies of friends, relatives and others. Yes, I am a mortician.

You might ask: What is it like to be around death all the time? How do you embalm a body? Why do people go to so much trouble and expense for a dead body?

My Personal Experience

In the United States the care of the dead has been entrusted to professionals known as funeral directors, morticians or undertakers. It was my goal to become a part of this profession. So during my second year of high school, I started laying the groundwork to attain this, choosing courses that would help me in the funeral profession. Upon graduation from high school, I attended a large university in the Midwestern United States and earned a degree in Mortuary Science. I became a licensed mortician. Now I was qualified to embalm dead bodies, direct funerals, inter the remains and assist in making sure that the necessary legal requirements were met.

You might think that being around death all the time would have caused me to become callous, hardened or insen-

sitive to death—this greatest enemy of man. This was not the case. It was especially hard for me to accept the death of little children and of persons my own age. The death of young people reminded me that life can be very short. Why, we are like "a mist appearing for a little while and then disappearing"—James 4:14.

The death of children whose whole life lay ahead of them used to cause tears to well up in my eyes. I gained some comfort by believing these little ones who died were angels in heaven with Jesus. I would, however, wonder, 'If God is so loving and kind, why would he cause so much unhappiness by allowing a little child to die?' This question was perplexing until I began a thorough study of the Bible. I learned that death was not a part of God's original purpose when he created man and so is really unnatural.

Embalming

Embalming has been in existence for thousands of years. In fact, it is mentioned four times in the Bible. (Genesis 50:2, 3, 26) Jacob and his son Joseph were embalmed so that their bodies would not decompose during the long hot trip to the place of their burial. As employed by the Egyptians, embalming consisted of using spices, oils, resins and other materials and then soaking the body in natron (sodium carbonate). This would

take several weeks and would preserve the body for years, even centuries.

Arterial embalming, as practiced today, is accomplished by locating an artery near the surface of the body, making an incision in it and injecting a preservative solution. The blood is pushed out of the vein by the arterial fluid. Then the restoration work can begin. This consists of rebuilding body parts that may have been destroyed, as in the case of an accident victim. Waxes, cosmetics and special stitches with needle and thread may be used to camouflage the wound. In school I was taught that this would help the survivors accept the reality of death. I would often spend many hours in restoring the body to a lifelike appearance. This was challenging and I prided myself in being able to restore an emaciated or mutilated body to appear as it did when the person was alive and healthy. For me a sense of satisfaction resulted from my efforts.

Expenses

People today are affected in a number of ways by death. For most, a funeral will be one of their greatest expenses. The amount you spend and the elegance of the funeral are personal family matters and should not be criticized, provided they do not violate Christian principles.

Why are most funerals far more elaborate and expensive than the deceased would have wished? The deceased may not have made his wishes known. Most people will say that they prefer a simple, inexpensive funeral. If there is nothing in writing, however, the burden of choice falls on the survivors. Even in Biblical times, funeral arrangements were made personally. When Jacob was dying, he told his son Joseph: "In my burial place

which I have excavated for myself in the land of Canaan is where you are to bury me."—Genesis 50:5.

Within certain limits, you and your family are free to choose which funeral services you desire. Some plans can be made before death occurs. Rationally preview the necessary decisions to be made at the time of death.

Is embalming necessary? In the United States federal law requires it if the body is to be transported by common carrier. Some states require it if final disposition does not occur for a specified number of hours or if death was from a communicable disease.

What expenses could be incurred? The caskets, or coffins, I would show a family ranged in price from inexpensive wood to very expensive metal caskets costing thousands of dollars. Other expenses might include transportation, burial plot, flowers, rent of funeral-home facilities, purchase of a tombstone, and so forth.

Should there be a funeral service? Many services I provided for the dead were set forth as customary. Usually no alternatives were offered, but often they were available. Some may want a very simple burial or cremation, perhaps followed by a memorial service, thus eliminating embalming, restoration and display of the body, a hearse and even the expense of a casket and burial vault. Others will want expensive funerals, just as many want expensive cars or expensive homes. Not everyone likes or wants exactly the same things. Morticians know this and therefore offer services and merchandise at various price levels.

What about relatives and others? Take into consideration the personal wishes of the family, but remember that others may have to be thought of. Christians

who live in small towns may have to bear in mind the traditions of the community. Personal needs, finances and other circumstances would dictate the type of services obtained. But if Scripturally acceptable customs and traditions are adhered to, a better witness could be given.

Make Wise Decisions

Death does not come very often to any one family. When it does, it can be a very upsetting experience. Eventually death itself will become a thing of the past! (Revelation 21:3, 4) Until that time comes, the laws, mortuaries, cemeteries, morticians and funeral services will continue to exist. But death will be less disconcerting if we familiarize ourselves beforehand with some of the details that have to be taken care of when it occurs.

Just as you would not buy a new house without investigating it first, apply the same common-sense principles when giving thought to how you want your remains to be cared for. Whatever procedures you choose, a reputable funeral home should be willing to assist you in working out the details. Memorial societies, too, can help arrange for a dignified and economical funeral. Giving thought to this subject now is not an exercise in morbidity. Rather, it shows mature foresight and loving concern for the survivors.

Since gaining an accurate knowledge of the Bible and the wonderful hope it holds out—that of life everlasting—I have come to have more concern for the living than for the dead. No longer is death my way of life.—Contributed.

Safeguard Your Gift of Hearing

LISTEN! What do you hear? Can you hear the ticking of a clock? the hum of the air conditioner? street noises? Can you hear voices well enough to understand what is being said?

Like most of us you probably take more or less for granted this ability to hear. Nevertheless, more than 15 million people in the United States and Canada alone suffer from significant hearing loss. Life can be difficult for such ones. Hearing-impaired children, for example, often are not able to learn to speak as

early as other children. And at times parents, not realizing their child has a hearing problem, yell at their child for 'not paying attention.' Hearing-impaired adults also have their problems. Some fear losing their job if their hearing difficulties become known. Or their marriage may suffer because of a breakdown in communication.

You can therefore appreciate that the ability to hear is really a precious gift. Says the Bible: "The hearing ear and the seeing eye—Jehovah himself has made

even both of them." (Proverbs 20:12) How, then, can you safeguard this gift from God? Let us first take a look at how the ear actually hears.

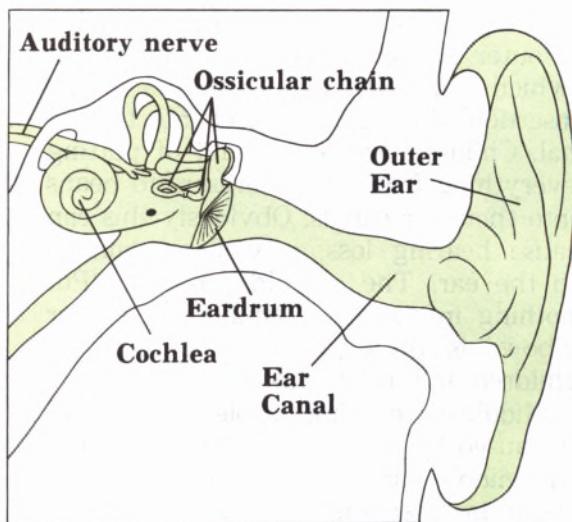
How Do We Hear?

When you hear the gentle strains of a symphony orchestra or the sound of your child's voice, your hearing apparatus is reacting to vibrations, or sound waves, in the air. These vibrations are measured in terms of cycles per second. And by international agreement, they have been given the name Hertz (Hz). Now the normal human ear has a range from about 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz. This can be better understood if you realize that a piano's lowest note is about 27 Hz and its highest note is about 4,000 Hz.

But for your ear to hear these vibrations there must be sufficient intensity. Intensity is measured in terms of decibels (db). Zero decibels has been established as the threshold of hearing (the smallest sound the normal human ear can detect). The sound of the singing bird may reach your ear at 15 db, that of a typewriter at about 60 db, the noise from a riveter at about 100 db and that from a jet plane at about 125 db, with pain in the ear resulting at about 130 db.

Your hearing mechanism is divided basically into three physical units: the outer ear, the middle ear and the inner ear.

The outer ear collects sound and channels it through the ear canal to the eardrum in the middle ear. The vibrating drum is attached to the ossicular chain of three tiny bones called the malleus, incus and stapes. Thus the vibrations are passed on to the third part of the hearing mechanism, the inner ear. With-



No man-made listening device is as ingeniously designed as your ear

in this marvelously complex inner ear is a winding passage called the cochlea. It resembles a snail shell. Through this cochlea pass three fluid-filled ducts that further transmit the sound vibrations to thousands of tiny hair cells. Nerve connections to these tiny hair cells convert the mechanical energy of sound vibrations to nerve impulses. These impulses are then transmitted to the brain.

The "hearing ear" is a marvel. For example, to detect the weakest sound the eardrum will deflect less than the distance of the diameter of a single atom. Yet the same eardrum is able to tolerate a million times the weakest sound!

What Can Go Wrong?

To hear normally one must be able to hear all the sounds from very low pitch to very high pitch. Further, one should be able to hear each sound at a very faint level or intensity. But at times this delicate system is impaired.

The greatest cause of hearing loss due to outer ear problems is wax impaction (which a doctor should remove) or the insertion of a foreign object into the canal. Children are often fond of putting everything from pencil erasers to beans into their ear canals. Obviously this can cause hearing loss as well as damage to the ear. The age-old proverb, "Put nothing in your ear smaller than your elbow," is still a good guideline to teach children and adults alike.

Middle ear hearing problems are usually caused by an accumulation of fluid in the middle ear space. In time this may result in infection. Another problem is a progressive bony overgrowth of the ossicular chain, which can destroy its mobility. This, too, diminishes the hearing acuity.

When a hearing loss is associated with the outer ear or the middle ear, usually it is easy to identify because the one suffering can hear very well if others will merely talk louder. Problems with the inner ear, however, are much more complex. Disease or trauma to this part of the hearing mechanism tends to destroy the delicate nerve cells. The result is that no matter how efficiently the outer and the middle ear conduct sound vibrations to the inner ear, it is unable to transmit the sound vibrations to the brain. Hence, some sounds come through louder than others, resulting in distortion. Fortunately, most problems associated with the outer and the middle ear can be treated successfully. This is not true of the inner ear, though. While diseases of the inner ear may be treatable, destruction of the nerve system there cannot be undone.

Obviously, then, it is wise to obtain medical treatment as soon as possible when a hearing problem is discovered.

Parents, especially, want to be observant when it comes to their children's hearing. But how can you know if your child's hearing is impaired?

Testing Your Child's Hearing

Mothers and fathers have been instinctively testing the hearing of their newborn infants as long as there have been babies. Parents generally observe when their child becomes startled by loud noises or turns toward the source of a sound. They notice, too, if their child stops playing when strange or new sounds enter his environment. And when they cannot observe their infant showing some awareness of sound, it is time for a trip to the doctor.

Parents should likewise observe if their children respond to softer sounds, such as a ticking watch or whispered speech. If in doubt, a doctor can make a far more sophisticated test of your child's hearing by using an audiometer. This is an instrument designed to measure which sounds the ear can hear and how softly the sounds can be heard. If a problem is detected, treatment can immediately be given. This may prevent permanent ear damage.

There is a need for balance, though. Ear problems are quite common among preadolescent children and there is no need for you to be perturbed if your child develops one. These problems generally clear up as the child grows into adolescence. Judicious concern and intervention will usually see a child through these difficult years and promote normal hearing.

Interestingly, many industries, health agencies and schools have established what are called hearing-conservation programs. The participants in these pro-

grams have their hearing tested at regular intervals. The testing identifies those who may have ear disease and those who, though not having ear disease, are predisposed to hearing loss. Possibly such a program is available in your community. If not, you may want to arrange to have your child's hearing tested every year or two, or at any time it appears your child is not hearing well.

Preventing Hearing Loss

Of course, hearing checkups are not just for small children. If you work in a noisy environment, you should have your hearing tested regularly. True, you may have worked at your job for years without any noticeable decline in your hearing. Nevertheless, deterioration could occur at any time! Therefore, play it safe. Wear ear-protection devices, such as properly designed earplugs or even earmuffs.

If you are a teenager, your choice of music may have a profound effect on your hearing. Rock concerts, for example, often expose unwary listeners to dangerously high decibel levels. A survey of some 1,410 college freshmen revealed that more than 60 percent of them had "significant hearing loss in the high-frequency range." Might their choice of music have been at least partly to blame?

Beware, too, of those popular, but potentially dangerous, stereo headphones. Hearing specialists were quoted in *The Wall Street Journal* as saying that "there can be no doubt that these units have the potential for inducing a permanent . . . sensorineural hearing loss—especially if they are used at a volume setting of four or above for extended periods." Keeping the volume low might therefore save your hearing!

Of course, even with all these pre-

cautions, hearing loss is an unfortunate part of the aging process. At as early as 30 years of age you can begin losing your ability to hear high-pitched sounds. And each decade may bring deterioration to your ability to hear the middle and lower sounds. This can be particularly vexing to elderly people, for when the middle sounds are not clearly heard, communication becomes difficult; speech then sounds unclear, distorted. Nothing can be done medically or surgically to help the situation, although one may receive some relief by wearing a well-fitted hearing aid.

Nevertheless, one who truly appreciates the faculty of hearing will take reasonable steps to safeguard this gift: getting regular checkups, seeking medical treatment if a problem is suspected and avoiding prolonged exposure to high-decibel environments.

But what of those who have already lost some or all of their hearing? Such ones need not give up. They can take an appreciative look at all the other senses they still have and use them to their full potential. Hearing loss does not prevent a person from living a full and useful life. Far more importantly, however, they can take comfort in the Bible's promise of a time when "the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped." (Isaiah 35:5) This Bible text primarily points to a marvelous spiritual healing. Nevertheless, we can be confident the spiritual blessings pointed to in this prophecy will have a physical counterpart: miraculous healing for those afflicted with deafness.

The future can therefore look bright for the hearing impaired. But in the meantime, safeguard your gift of hearing. It will please the Creator of "the hearing ear."

From Our Readers

Parents to Understand

After reading, "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Get My Parents to Understand Me?" (May 22), I feel the need to share my personal experience with you. My family has problems. My mother was an abused child. My stepfather is an alcoholic. My mother in a sense abandoned my sister and me halfway through our childhood because she was either at work or "too tired" to offer us company. My stepfather showed an interest in our activities when he was sober, but that wasn't very often. So, while my sister and I always had a roof over our heads and food in the refrigerator, our need for love and maturing went unfulfilled. Whenever I would try to talk to my mother she would (and still does) give me short answers as much as to say, "Don't bug me."

I have spent my life searching for love and understanding from my parents. Since I've never received this I've suffered from feelings of failure and low self-esteem. I'm glad I didn't read this article when I was growing up (I am 22) because I would probably have tried harder to gain their approval, failed and blamed myself. I do not intend to sound disrespectful. I believe the advice given could be helpful for some children. However, I feel that it can be damaging to the egos of children whose parents aren't capable of understanding their children's needs.

D. H., Minnesota

We understand your feelings and thank you for sharing them with us. The article

was not designed to show that a problem of communication is one-sided, namely, a lack on the part of children. It was written to help both parents and children to see what they can do to promote better communication in the home. It is true that the information in the article will be most helpful in improving the atmosphere of those homes where both children and parents are willing to apply the counsel. However, we hope that even young people in unfavorable situations such as you describe will be able to bring about some improvement by applying, as far as possible, the principles discussed in the article.—ED.

I would like to express my grateful appreciation for "How Can I Get My Parents to Understand Me?" I am the mother of two teenage sons. The article seemed like events right out of my home. I have had communication problems with my boys. The article was so forthright, placing the responsibility not only on us as parents but also on our children.

R. W., Alabama

Acrostic Puzzles

I am ten years old. I was off from school with a cold and my mum showed me the latest *Awake!*, the one with the acrostic puzzle. It was a lot of fun to do. I have also enjoyed the crosswords and word searches you have put in *Awake!* I have learnt a lot about places, people and things in the Bible. I would love it if there was another acrostic puzzle in a future magazine.

R. C., England

Sharpen your pencil because we plan an acrostic puzzle for a future issue.—ED.



Watching the World

Christians and Hitler

● A new book entitled *Katholische Kirche und NS-Staat—Aus der Vergangenheit lernen?* (The Catholic Church and the Nazi State—Learning From the Past?) recently was published in the Federal Republic of Germany. In its review of the book the newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* comments: "Of particular merit is the fact that Lemhöfer [the author] makes reference to the few Catholics who refused military service under Hitler. Franz Jägerstetter from Tirol, the best known of them all, was later rehabilitated during the Second Vatican Council. For years his testimony had been suppressed, however, because this would have meant confessing—as Bishop Fliesser of Linz admitted—that the Ernest Bible Students [Jehovah's Witnesses] and the Adventists, who rejected military service as a group, were the greater heroes and the better Christians."

Modesty Changing in Japan

● The sexual revolution has seeped into Japanese society and is undermining traditional Japanese modesty. A report in

the Japanese magazine *Gendai* estimates that 7 to 10 percent of married women are unfaithful and that adultery among women 30 to 40 years of age is rising sharply. Although this figure of infidelity now is lower than the rates of many industrialized countries, the report predicts that the Japanese rate will soar. No doubt the sexual revolution has contributed to Japan's divorce rate of one out of every 4.5 marriages and to the sprouting of a business new to Japan—divorce consultants.

Malnutrition's Effects

● Every day malnutrition kills 40,000 children in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and this is apart from any death caused by famine, according to a recently published UNICEF document. The report lists the main causes of death as dehydration and diarrhea infection. It says that when mothers are faced with these ailments, they very often reduce the food, solid or liquid, given to their children, thus unknowingly contributing to malnutrition. According to UNICEF, lack of clean water, infrequent washing of hands, poor hygiene and lack of education result in the average

Third World child having between 6 and 16 attacks of diarrhea a year.

Wild Weather

● Worldwide, weather has been wet, wild and woolly this past year. In South America a series of downpours created havoc in some cities, even resulting in pools of raw sewage in streets. Unusual weather devastated Peru's fisheries, destroyed millions of oceanic birds and took the lives of hundreds when mud slides buried villages. Guayaquil, Ecuador, known for its desert-like surroundings, was inundated with over a hundred inches (254 cm) of rain in just a few months. West Germany's rain-swollen Rhine River rose to a record 23 feet (7.1 m), swamping homes and turning streets into canals in downtown Cologne—Germany's worst flooding in 36 years. Many parts of the United States were the wettest on record.

Why such global climatic havoc? Weather experts are baffled. Some blame *El Niño*, the phenomenon of usually warm ocean currents off Peru. Others point to the high number of volcanic eruptions last year, 22 that spewed sulfuric acid into the atmosphere, possibly changing earth's solar energy input. Or they fault last winter as being the warmest in 25 years for a large portion of the north temperate latitudes.

Miracle Water Polluted

● "The 'miraculous water' of Ransbach [Germany]—the water that superstitious ones said returned sight to the blind and [body] movement to paralytics—not only is not miraculous or mineral . . . but it turns out that it isn't even drinkable," reported Barcelona's dai-

ly *La Vanguardia*. The article explained that the water's contamination was due to infiltration from septic tanks and refuse left by visitors.

Cocaine Hotline

● In less than two weeks' time, the National Cocaine Hotline (number: 800-COCAINE) in the United States received more than 7,000 urgent telephone calls. "The volume of calls has caught us by surprise," says Dr. Mark Gold, director of the Hotline. "We had thought there were between 100,000 and 200,000 seriously dependent people in the U.S. The amount of calls indicates that the number may be much higher." The 17-hour-a-day Hotline, staffed by eight trained counselors and two psychiatrists, planned to add more counselors and increase its time to around-the-clock service.

Africa's Focus on Communication

● Nairobi, Kenya, hosted a six-week conference of the UN agency, International Telecommunication Union. Since the UN has designated 1983 as World Communications Year and issued a resolution stating that communication is "an essential element in the economic and social development of all countries," over a thousand experts from around the world met in Nairobi to determine future plans for international cooperation on telecommunication. Africa was its main focus. Only major towns and cities in that continent have telephone and telegraph services. "Rural people in Africa have virtually no telephone service," states *Africa Now* magazine. "Tanzania, for example, has almost 10 telephones for every 100 people in Dar es Salaam, but less than one telephone per 1,000 for the

whole population. This is typical of many African countries."

Pets and Health

● Caring for a pet can have a positive effect upon one's health—especially among older persons—claims biologist Professor Erika Friedman. Her study showed that the chances for recovery from a heart attack were quadrupled by the patient's getting a dog! Increased physical activity alone does not completely explain the effect, she notes, because patients with other kinds of pets (jerboas or iguanas) also had a higher survival rate than those without. Thus her study indicates that the interrelationship between animal and human is what matters. It keeps the patient busy feeding, grooming, petting and walking his new "friend," as well as talking to him, and helps the patient to communicate with other people they meet in elevators, hallways or parks. Pets also serve as a clock for persons out of work, giving their lives order and discipline. Of course, if a loving relationship with animals can have such positive effects upon health, how much more so a loving relationship with other humans!

Spaniards Gambled \$7 Billion

● Some thought that the authorization of slot machines, bingo parlors and casinos in Spain would diminish the amount of money spent on the more traditional forms of gambling—the state lottery and the football pool. These latter increased by 5 percent and 12 percent respectively with a take of \$1,800 million and \$400 million during 1982. But both took a backseat to slot machines and bingo parlors, which registered an income of well over

\$2,000 million (U.S.) each during the same period. The total amount spent on all forms of gambling during 1982 passed well beyond the \$7,000-million mark, a figure about equal to the combined annual budgets of Spain's Education and Science, Defense and Interior Ministries.

"Terminal Case"

● VDTs (video display terminals) along with computers make tasks easier for millions of office workers, "but they do not necessarily make a job easier, more pleasant, or healthier," reports *The Harvard Medical School Health Letter*. Why? Because "the VDT is not just another piece of office equipment" but, rather, the *Letter* continues, "it changes the nature of the work people do." Visual difficulties, musculoskeletal problems and job stress are associated with VDTs. The conclusion: Careful and thoughtful design of work areas, lighting and placement of furniture are crucial to work productivity and comfort. Padded and adjustable chairs with firm support for lower back are essential for VDT operators. Set reasonable workload requirements to human capabilities, not to that of the machine.

Diagnosis Errors

● One in four diagnoses by doctors at a leading Boston hospital was wrong, concludes a research report on autopsies in *The New England Journal of Medicine*. The study is based on comparing the diagnoses for 300 patients randomly selected from the years 1960, 1970 and 1980 with the findings in their later hospital autopsies. The autopsies found that in about 10 percent of the cases, if the condition had been properly diagnosed before death and

treated, it could have resulted in prolonged life. The study "also found that doctors might be missing some important diseases because they are overrelying on new diagnostic tests," notes *The New York Times*.

Brazil Uproots Drug

● Over one million marijuana plants, the equivalent of 500 tons of the drug, recently were destroyed in a combined operation of the federal police of two Brazilian states, reports *O Estado de S. Paulo*. Worth about \$200 million (U.S.), it was the largest quantity ever seized in Brazil. The police calculate that more than 500 families were in some way involved in the illegal business of growing the plants in their outly-

ing farms. The federal agents and their workers, with the aid of the military police, uprooted the plants one by one.

How Old Is Young?

● People thought 61-year-old Clifford Young, a potato farmer from Colac, Victoria, Australia, was out of his mind when he entered a marathon run of 875 kilometers (543 mi), between Sydney and Melbourne, against nine other competitors. Clifford, the oldest in the race, was the first across the finish line, 5 days, 15 hours and 36 minutes from the start and 43 kilometers (26 mi) ahead of his nearest rival. He wore out ten pairs of running shoes during the race and ran the last two and a half days with a dislo-

cated shoulder after falling the second night running. He slept a total of only 12 hours during the race. Clifford did not take up running until 57 years of age. For the marathon he trained about 50 kilometers (31 mi) a day, consisting largely of chasing cows around the paddocks of his farm, wearing the heaviest gum boots he could find. By the way, his 89-year-old mother greeted him at the finish line "with hugs and kisses."

Horns of a Dilemma

● The *Daily Telegraph* of London noted this unusual "No Trespassing" sign outside a farm field near Nottingham, England: "Don't cross this field unless you can do it in 9.8 seconds. The bull can do it in ten."

