

# The WATCHTOWER

**WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD  
FOR  
The United Nations?**

ALSO

**DO NOT HOLD BACK  
FROM  
"Practicing The Truth"**

SEPTEMBER 15, 1974

**ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM**

# The WATCHTOWER

September 15, 1974  
Vol. 95, Number 18

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. A minister of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's witnesses locally.

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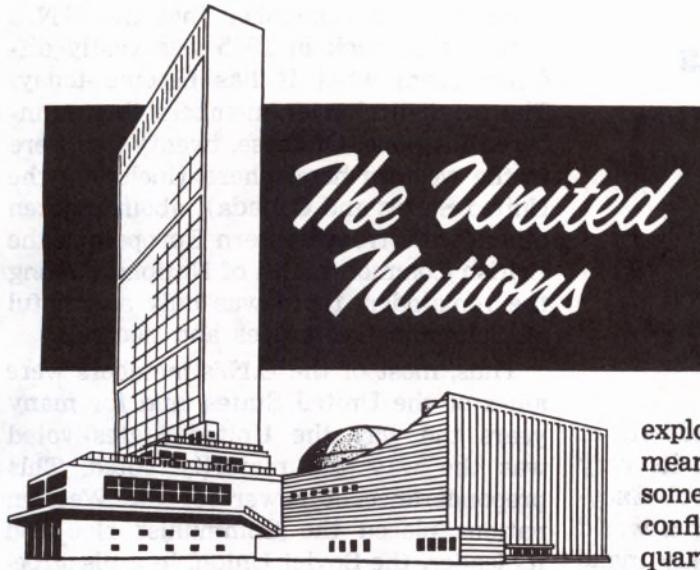
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## -HOW STRONG A WORLD FORCE?

BORN in 1945, the United Nations Organization is now almost twenty-nine years old. Where does it stand today as a world force? After years of apparent decline, is it now in a time of growing strength?

The evidence points that way. Recent developments indicate that this global organization is due to play a highly significant role in future world affairs. Bible prophecy points in the same direction.

High hopes were held when the U.N. was brought forth through the San Francisco Conference in 1945. "The most important human gathering since the Last Supper," exclaimed the *New York Post* in describing the conference.

The world had then just emerged from the greatest military holocaust in human history, its finale brilliantly lit by the devastating blasts of atomic bombs. The promise that this newborn organization would be the agency whereby all nations could unite in the interests of international peace and security sounded good to war-weary people. It inspired visions of a new era of progress and prosperity through an international cooperation unparalleled in the past.

During the early years, the U.N. captured world attention. The setting up of the Republic of Israel, the Kashmir border dispute between India and Pakistan, the outbreak of war in Korea, the Suez Canal incident and similar events kept the U.N. on the front page of newspapers around the world. It scored some successes—"keeping the lid on" in several potentially explosive situations, serving as the means for bringing about truces in some cases and an early settlement of conflict in others. Its gleaming headquarters on the East River in Manhattan became a major tourist attraction.

### DECLINE BEGINS

Then, during the 1960's, the U.N. began a slide into relative obscurity, fading from public attention. By 1970 it was with sarcasm being referred to by some as the "East River Debating Society," a "propaganda platform," and an "international psychiatrist's couch" where nations went to voice their complaints. Its visitors' galleries were largely empty. Press coverage dwindled. For a time the U.N. was even in danger of financial bankruptcy because of lack of support from member nations.

True, U.N. agencies, such as the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, were all achieving notable advances in far-flung areas of the earth. But the U.N. was designed to be primarily a political instrument. And it was in the field of world politics that its greatest weakness seemed evident.

## **IN COMING ISSUES**

- **The Gambling Boom—How Do You View It?**
- **Settling the Issue of Ownership.**
- **How Are Jehovah's Witnesses Different?**

The organization, of course, had built-in limitations and weaknesses from its very formation. As the 1970 *World Book Encyclopedia* states: "The UN is not a world government. Normally, it can only make studies and recommendations." This is particularly true of the General Assembly, the main body of the organization, which can draw up and pass resolutions—but resolutions which are not binding on the organization's membership.

The fifteen-member Security Council has greater initiative and can make decisions that are binding. However, each of its five permanent members (the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and China) holds the power of veto.

The present U.N. secretary-general, Kurt Waldheim, summed up the problem in saying:

"You must not expect the United Nations to accomplish miracles. We are made up of sovereign nations. We can only accomplish what our member nations allow us to accomplish."

Unity has been the critical factor for any decisive action by the giant organization. And within one year of its formation, the unity of the United Nations was largely in name only. The "cold war" pitted the Communist nations against the Western powers.

We need to remember that the U.N.'s composition back in 1945 was vastly different from what it has become today. The original charter members then numbered fifty-one. Of these, twenty-two were in the western hemisphere (including the United States and Canada), about a dozen others were from western Europe and the British Commonwealth of Nations. Among the remainder, there was only a handful of Communist countries and neutrals.

Thus, most of the U.N.'s members were allies of the United States, and for many years the way the United States voted was the way the majority voted. This preponderance of power for the Western nations placed the Communist bloc and its leader, the Soviet Union, in a disagreeable position. That was a major reason why the Soviet Union used its power to veto Security Council measures more than a hundred times in the first two decades of the U.N.'s existence. By the 1960's the picture had undergone a dramatic change. The bright hopes were flickering, weakening.

### **A KEY FACTOR IN THE DECLINE**

During the first five years of the organization's life, only nine new members were admitted, bringing the membership total up to 60. But by 1960 there were 99 members. Today there are 135. The vast majority of new members have come from Asia and Africa (where onetime imperial colonies have steadily been gaining independence, often with the U.N.'s help). This change in composition proved a key factor in the U.N.'s decline from world prominence. Why?

On the one hand, this expansion made the organization truly global. At the same time, however, Western influence underwent steady erosion. Zeal and enthusiasm for the organization waned, notably in the United States.

A major cause of disenchantment involved the voting in the General Assembly. There any of the now abundant small countries, some of which have a population of less than a million inhabitants, had a voting power equal to that of nations the size of England, Brazil, the United States or the Soviet Union. The "super-powers" often found this frustrating.

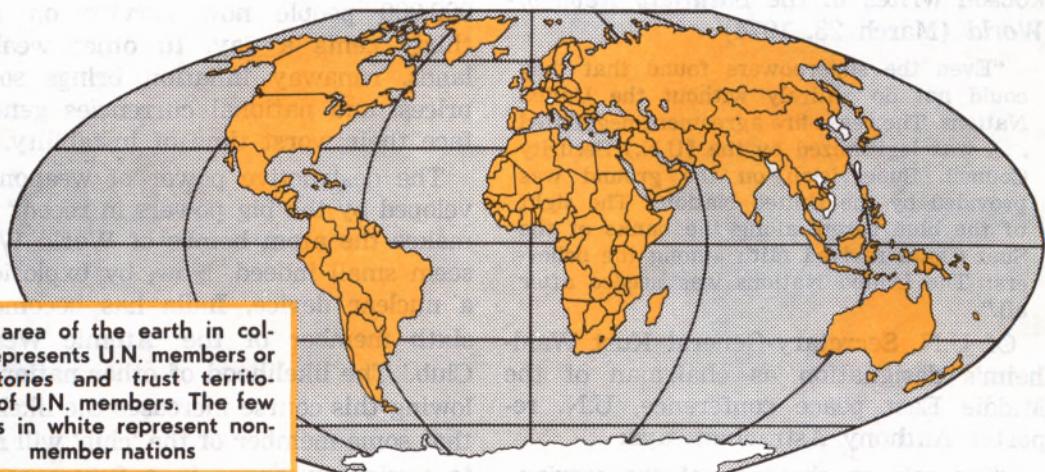
The past decade has brought the ascendancy of the Afro-Asian states to a majority status in the U.N. (more than 70 out of the 135 members). This undoubtedly was a strong factor in the success of the twenty-year-long movement to admit Communist China as a member, with its enormous population of some 800,000,000 persons. Its entrance in 1971 to a permanent position on the Security Council in the place of Nationalist China also contributed to the U.N.'s radically changed aspect. Clearly, things would never return to the way they were during the global organization's infancy.

Despite expansion, to the world's view there was no notable sign of renewed

strength of the U.N. The so-called "Third World," made up of the poorer, "developing" nations, had come into the extraordinary position of being able to put resolutions through the General Assembly in the face of opposition from the "super-powers." But the "Third World" nations did not have the means to give "muscle" to these resolutions. The general state of frustration continued and the giant organization twitched, groaned and shouted, but generally could not coordinate its strength for decisive action.

Thus, as a *Life* magazine editorial in 1970 expressed it: "National self-interest is still the common denominator of international politics, and real power resides where it always has—with the governments and military forces of great powers."

Why, then, is there reason to believe that the United Nations is now experiencing a resurgence of power? What factors contribute to this? What part will this global organization yet play in the future of all mankind?



The area of the earth in color represents U.N. members or territories and trust territories of U.N. members. The few areas in white represent non-member nations

WHEN THE U.N. EXPANDED TO 135 MEMBER NATIONS, IT MADE THE ORGANIZATION TRULY GLOBAL. THIS HAS GREATLY CHANGED THE U.N. FROM AN ORGANIZATION MADE UP MOSTLY OF WESTERN NATIONS TO ONE IN WHICH THE AFRO-ASIAN STATES ARE IN THE MAJORITY

# WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE United Nations?



THE United Nations is evidently entering an era of renewed vigor and prominence on the world scene. In the near future it will be involved in events of world-shaking impact. Why is this so?

The Middle East conflict in October of 1973 and its aftermath helped to restore much of the U.N.'s prestige. True, the big powers played dominant roles in the truce arrangements between Israel, Egypt and Syria. But as Finnish historian Max Jakobson writes in the *Saturday Review/World* (March 23, 1974):

"Even the superpowers found that they could not do entirely without the United Nations. The cease-fire agreement negotiated . . . was legitimized by the [U.N.] Security Council. Supervision on the ground was provided by the United Nations. The sight of the blue berets along the banks of the Suez Canal revived faith among the believers: The United Nations was needed after all."

Of U.N. Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim's designation as chairman of the Middle East peace conference, U.N. reporter Anthony Astrachan says:

"His role as chairman of the opening peace talks in Geneva may be symbolic, but symbols develop importance, if not power. Moscow and Washington . . . now cultivate him to protect their options with the world."

The more recent conflict in Cyprus also

brought into sharp focus the peace-keeping role of the U.N.

## PROBLEMS CLAMORING FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION

But the Middle East is just a small part of the global picture. There is, world wide, a growing realization of the need for swift united action, internationally, to cope with the severe problems that now rise on mankind's horizon.

Vast regions of the earth are now in dire need of food. But the grain bins of the world are virtually empty of reserve supplies. Meanwhile the world's population continues its steady upward climb—seventy-eight million more last year.

Poverty deepens. According to World Bank President Robert McNamara, 800,000,000 people now survive on about thirty cents a day. In other wealthier lands, runaway inflation brings soaring prices, and national currencies generally face their worst time of instability.

The destructive power of weapons developed by the big powers in recent years makes the atom bombs of World War II seem small indeed. Now, by explosion of a nuclear device, India has become the sixth member of the 'Atomic Weapons Club.' The likelihood of other nations following this course increases the likelihood that some member of the 'club' will resort to nuclear weapons in a future conflict. The destruction that could develop staggers the imagination.

Demands for energy resources are outpacing available supplies. The energy crisis

has shoved concern over pollution into the background. But the problem of contamination of earth's air, land and seas does not thereby go away. It continues and worsens.

Speaking about these problems before the United Nations, U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said: "Challenges of this magnitude cannot be solved by a world fragmented into self-contained nation-states or rigid blocs." The situation calls for collective action on a world scale. But there are yet other factors enhancing the position of the United Nations.

#### OTHER KEY FACTORS

As Dr. George W. Shepherd points out, the world is no longer like a chessboard on which the two superpowers confront each other, with the European nations like knights and bishops, and the "Third World" nations like pawns. "That," says this University of Denver professor, "is why we are seeing a revival of [the United Nations]."

Though previously the "Third World" nations were able only to make noise in the U.N. and pass resolutions that were never enforced, the big powers can no longer treat these smaller nations lightly. The recent Arab oil boycott showed the potential power that exists in the "Third World." This is true not only of the oil-rich lands. Many of the basic raw materials and minerals—tin, zinc, copper, manganese, uranium, iron ore, bauxite (for producing aluminum)—that the industrialized nations depend heavily upon, come from these so-called "undeveloped" nations. What may this lead to?

An article in the German newspaper *Schwabacher Tagblatt* says it would be astonishing if these poorer countries were to resist for long the temptation to "throw down the gauntlet to the so-called rich

nations and flex the muscles of their awakened self-assurance," imitating the Arab nations. The article adds: "When we feel the grip of the awakened self-assurance of these countries around our Adam's apple, then it is too late . . . social problems will arise in our industrial world with dimensions such as have never before confronted us."

All of this adds to the insecurity that moves the political nations, large and small, to seek global agreements and action that will bring relief. Concern for peace and security grips the nations today as seldom before in history and has produced a dominant attitude or "spirit" that is moving the nations more and more to think and act on a global basis. Pointing out why they may be expected to turn increasingly to the United Nations as their instrument, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N. Charles W. Yost says:

"The U.N., despite everything, has one enormous advantage over all the other devices for the conduct of international relations—it is a permanent institution. Whatever may be the merits of summit meetings, regional conferences, bilateral and multilateral agreements, they all rest on the shifting sands of capricious and changing leadership and public opinion. Only the U.N., like national governments, is firmly based on a constitution and a bureaucracy which have lives of their own and which endure from decade to decade."

#### WHAT BIBLE PROPHECY REVEALS

The conclusive answer as to what the future holds for the United Nations is not found, however, by analyzing world conditions or trends. It is found in the inspired Word of God, the Bible, and its prophecies. Present-day events and trends confirm the rightness of those prophecies.

In the Bible, political world powers are represented under the symbol of beasts. (See Daniel 7:17, 23; 8:20-22.) Chapter 17

of the book of Revelation foretells a composite political organization, combining in itself the remnants of the world powers of history. It is represented under the symbol of a seven-headed beast (each head representing a world power, as counted on the basis of its effect on the servants of the true God) with ten horns, the horns representing the totality of earthly political governments. This organization was to disappear from the scene for a time, falling as if into a pit of death-like inactivity. Then it would reappear and move to its final destiny.

The United Nations, with its predecessor, the League of Nations (which entered into a period of deathlike inactivity during World War II), fits this symbolic description. Even as the governments represented by the "ten horns" gained increased authority on a world scale through association with the composite political organization, so too we see that even small nations have gained a voice, importance and power through their membership in the United Nations.—Rev. 17:7-13.\*

As prophetically represented, these distinct symbolic kings "have one thought." (Rev. 17:13) That is, even though they disagree on numerous proposals, they are united in their determination to employ a human scheme for establishing lasting peace and security on a global scale. In so doing, they reject God's own provision for accomplishing this: his kingdom by means of Christ Jesus. Therefore the prophecy shows this international political organization as fighting against God's appointed King and those on his side of the issue. This makes inevitable the ultimate destruction of that composite political organization and all its members and supporters, thereby making way for God's

own government of earth.—Rev. 17:14; compare Daniel 2:44.

But before it passes off the earthly scene, that composite political organization will fulfill another feature of divine prophecy. The Bible shows that the organization's member nations have long been under the deceitful domination of worldly religious systems, these forming a world empire of false religion pictured in Revelation by a harlotrous woman named "Babylon the Great." But prophecy shows that the political powers will tire of the hypocrisy, the meddling, the demands of the harlotrous religious systems and will turn against them, utterly devastating them.—Rev. 17:1-6, 15-18.†

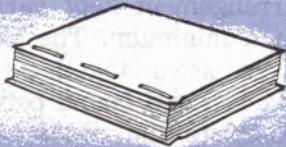
Strange as it may seem, just when this global organization appears to reach the zenith of its prominence, seemingly on the threshold of establishing a political foundation for peace and security, it will simultaneously near the point of its own downfall. As the apostle Paul was inspired to write: "Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them." (1 Thess. 5:2, 3) And, although after such proclamation this world organization will engage in its most dramatic and world-shaking act—the destruction of the world empire of false religion—that act will not protect it from being destroyed itself by God as a counterfeit, a futile and rebellious attempt to substitute a political setup for God's promised kingdom.

For this reason growing numbers of persons in more than 200 lands and isles of the sea, yes, people of many nations, now unite in placing their full confidence and hope, not in a political system of this troubled world, but in the heaven-based government of Christ Jesus, the true source of enduring peace and security for this earth.

\* For further information on this prophecy, see the book *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached*, pp. 308-311.

† See the book "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*" *God's Kingdom Rules!*, pp. 598-603, for further explanation.

# The Practical Codex



EVERY year millions upon millions of books are printed. In the Brooklyn, New York, printery of the Watchtower Society alone, over a million bound books are frequently produced each week. Books being so common today, it may be hard to imagine a time in human history when they were unknown. Yet that was the case for many centuries.

Not until after the passing of about four thousand years of human history did the codex or leaf-book, the forerunner of the modern book, come into common use. Before that, scrolls of papyrus or parchment served the purpose that books do today.

Scrolls had definite disadvantages not shared by the codex. To find a particular point in a concluding section of a scroll might require unrolling twenty, thirty or more feet of it. This may explain why quotations made by ancient secular writers from other sources are often very inaccurate. Instead of going to all the trouble of unrolling a scroll and trying to find the quotation, they likely recorded it from memory.

The codex was far more practical than the scroll. While a scroll of some 104 feet might be needed to contain the four Gospels, one compact codex could accommodate them all. Because the writing was on separate pages and not just on one long roll with numerous columns of writing, one could more readily find specific statements. A codex usually contained twice as much information as a scroll having the same amount of papyrus or parchment. This was so because scrolls ordinarily had writing on only one side, whereas the leaves of the codex had writing on

both sides. So the codex was more economical than the scroll.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE CODEX

As to the development of the codex, the Latin word from which the term "codex" is drawn provides clues. It comes from the Latin *caudex* and originally meant a tree trunk. Later the term was applied to wooden tablets that were used for writing after being smeared over with wax. In time, individual tablets were bound together by cords or rings, and the assembled tablets came to be known as a codex.

Eventually the Romans began using parchment instead of wax-coated wood as writing material. Such parchment was called *membranae*, that is, "skin (prepared for writing)." By the first century C.E. *membranae* was evidently in common use. The apostle Paul, for example, requested that Timothy bring him "the scrolls, especially the parchments [Greek, *mem·bra'nas*]." With the change in writing material, the development of the codex progressed rapidly.—2 Tim. 4:13.

The early codices took various forms. One form of codex consisted of a large quire (signature or collection of sheets) that was sewn down the center fold. When this codex was closed, the center pages extended beyond the outer pages and therefore had to be trimmed. As a result, this codex had the objectionable feature of middle pages that were noticeably narrower than the outer pages.

The type of codex that gained popularity, however, was the multiple-quire codex. A quire of eight to ten leaves (four or five sheets folded in half) was found to be most convenient for binding. This

arrangement kept variation of page size at a minimum. The sheets of each quire were sewn together before they were stacked and bound between the covers, to complete the codex. Modern books also consist of a group of signatures.

#### EARLY CHRISTIANS ADOPT THE CODEX

At least until about the end of the first century C.E. Christians used mainly scrolls. The apostle John referred to the book of Revelation, which he wrote about 96 C.E., as a "scroll."—Rev. 22:18, 19.

Not long thereafter, Christians adopted the codex to preserve the writings making up the Christian Greek Scriptures. Archaeological findings suggest that early Christians were making more extensive use of the codex than other people. For ex-

ample, scroll fragments of classical writings of the third century number 291. But there are only 20 codex fragments for the same period. As for Christian writings, codex fragments number 38 and scroll fragments perhaps 9.

There was good reason for the early Christians to adopt the use of the codex. Jesus Christ had commissioned his followers: "Make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19, 20) In order to make and to teach disciples, Christians needed to use the Sacred Scriptures. The compact and convenient nature of the codex facilitated their teaching, making it easier to find appropriate passages of Scripture.

The pattern for using the Scriptures extensively in making and teaching disciples had been established in the first century C.E. Of the apostle Paul's use of the Scriptures, Acts 17:2, 3 reports: "According to Paul's custom he went inside to them, and for three sabbaths he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead." Also, the taught ones were commended for checking matters out in the Holy Scriptures. Thus we read: "Now the [Beroeans] were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11) The codex was much easier to use in imitating these fine examples.

Just as the early Christians made wise use of the codex, Jehovah's Christian witnesses in modern times have availed themselves of modern methods to spread the Kingdom message. Hence, the printed page is today playing a tremendous part in spreading God's truth to the most distant parts of the earth.

#### HE RAN FOR "THE PRIZE OF THE UPWARD CALL" AND WON!

On July 30, 1974, at the age of 86, Thomas James Sullivan finished his earthly course. He was born on May 14, 1888, in County Kerry, Ireland. In March 1916 he was baptized, and in 1924 he and his wife Evelyn entered full-time service in the Brooklyn Bethel. His intimate friends affectionately called him "Bud," and as the Superintendent of Evangelists he was in charge of the Watchtower Society's Service Department for many years. In this capacity he regularly visited his Christian brothers who were imprisoned in the United States because of their neutrality during World War II and thereafter. On October 31, 1932, he was made a member of the board of directors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania; he was also one of the eleven-member governing body of Jehovah's witnesses. When he died at Watchtower Farm, where he had lived for the past eleven months, he was able to say, as did the apostle Paul, "I have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith."

—2 Tim. 4:7; Phil. 3:14.

# **Insight on the News**

- The African country of Zambia holds its Trade Fair each year, lasting six days. For the past four years the gates at the Fair have been manned by Jehovah's witnesses. Why?

**Honesty Still Appreciated** An article in the "Times of Zambia" says that certain other organizations had been used by the Fair management in the past but these had "displayed a singular disregard for honesty." Shortages in gate receipts would run as high as 400 to 500 "kwacha" (or, in dollars, from \$615 to \$769). To illustrate the honesty of the Witnesses, the article states that this year the shortage in gate receipts for the six days amounted to "an astounding 40n [about 62c]."

- Modern computers handle mathematical problems with astounding speed. They store up tremendous amounts of information in their "memory banks." Some twenty years ago, scientists predicted that computer-controlled automation would revolutionize human society, with increased production displacing millions of laborers. Others foresaw future computers that would "think" better than people, even replace humans in government. What has happened?

**How "Smart" Are Computers?** In the August 1974 "Atlantic" magazine, science reporter Fred Hapgood shows that productivity rates were no different in the 1960's than in the 1950's, despite the addition of nearly 200,000 more computers.

As to computers 'thinking,' those advancing the idea evidently choose to ignore the time and effort humans must spend preparing the "data" (figures and facts) fed into computers and preparing the "programming" that tells the machine just how to handle the data. The slightest change in a problem can mean that all this complicated work must be done over again so the computer will function properly. Pointing out that there is no "intelligence" involved in the mechanical operations of a computer, author Hapgood says: "Whatever else intelligence may be, it surely implies an ability to link up with the real world, to pursue some objective or apply a competence over at least a small range of natural experience."

A classic example cited of the limited ability of computers is the automatic zip-code readers

used in some post offices. After years of development, the most sophisticated model (costing \$800,000) can successfully handle "only 9.5 percent of the mail."

The May 1974 issue of "Psychology Today," cites another illustration. One corporation uses these sentences to test a computer's ability to "understand" language: "Tommy had just been given a new set of blocks. He was opening the box when he saw Jimmy coming in." Three questions are then put to the computer: "Who was opening the box? What was in the box? Who came in?" The article says: "Although any first-grader could easily answer these questions, the computer finds them surprisingly hard." It needs the data spelled out in still simpler, more specific terms.

Another good question is: If modern science cannot produce intelligence in a machine, how could the blind chance that the evolution theory relies on have produced it in man?

- In Canada, Sunday-school attendances have dropped "catastrophically" in the past ten years. The "Toronto Star" re-

**Decline in Sunday Schools** ports that the overall decline is close to 50 percent, with some major churches having even greater decreases. United Church rolls listed 648,354 children in 1962. In 1972 the figure was down to 293,900. Presbyterian schools dropped from 109,864 in 1963 to 63,362 in 1973.

Anglican bishop L. S. Garnsworthy of Toronto said: "Unless Christian parents start teaching their children themselves, Christianity will not be transmitted to another generation. Sunday schools, as we have known them, are withering away."

Some religious groups report growth in Sunday-school attendances but most of them achieve it only through bussing of children and such things as contests for attendance records or pre-Sunday-school sports and similar methods.

The Bible nowhere sets forth any basis for isolating children in Sunday schools. It shows that the parents themselves are responsible to bring up their offspring "in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah," and to have them with them in congregational meetings.—Deut. 6:4-7; 31:12, 13; Eph. 6:4; Matt. 15:32, 38.

# *Is* CHRISTIANITY DYING?

**I**S Christianity dying, or is it perhaps completely dead, as some have concluded? If we view Christendom's churches as representing true Christianity, a look at them would seem to confirm the idea. Samuel Calian, author and professor of theology at the University of Dubuque, Iowa, recently said of the ministers of Christendom's churches:

"Who is it in our society that makes significant and prophetic statements about the epic events of our times? . . . for the most part certainly not ministers. . . . Harried, tired, and ill-prepared, they have become an inarticulate voice in a world seeking purpose and hope."

And William L. Edelen, Jr., minister at the First Congregational Church in Tacoma, Washington, admitted:

"The church today is . . . almost indistinguishable from an average business corporation or political machine."

But this gives rise to a very good question: Do Christendom's churches really represent Christianity, or is it a false label? If you look at Christendom's history, has it ever promoted real Christianity among its adherents?

So, then, if the churches do not represent real Christianity, perhaps we should look for it to be alive elsewhere. A judge who was not himself a Christian once counseled the rulers of a nation regarding the apostles of Christ and their preaching activity: "(If this scheme or this work is from men, it will be overthrown; but if it is from God, you will not be able to

overthrow them;) otherwise, you may perhaps be found fighters actually against God."—Acts 5:38, 39.

The Founder of Christianity gave a prophetic illustration in which he showed that real Christianity is indeed from God and that it would not die out, but, rather, would flourish, in the first century, as it actually did, and again in the time of our generation, which the Bible refers to as the "conclusion of the system of things."—Matt. 24:3, 34; 13:40.

## CHRISTIANITY FLOURISHES IN FIRST CENTURY

This illustration is the parable of the "talents," found in the Bible at Matthew 25:14-30. Jesus spoke figuratively of himself as a man who, before leaving on a long trip, committed his money to his slaves. Concerning their activity after his departure, the parable continues: "Immediately the one that received the five talents [a large amount of money] went his way and did business with them and gained five more. In the same way the one that received the two gained two more."—Vss. 16, 17.

This was true of the first-century disciples, the apostles and their associates, who immediately went to work on Pentecost day of 33 C.E., only ten days after Christ's ascension to heaven. Their work was not to make money, but to increase the number of disciples by diligent work in the cultivated field that their Master left them, thus promoting true Chris-

tianity. Thousands were added to the Christian congregation in a very short time and the Christian message 'bore fruit and increased in all the world,' and was "preached in all creation that is under heaven."—Acts 2:41; 4:4; Col. 1:6, 23.

#### **FORETOLD TO PROSPER IN OUR TIME**

How did the parable show that Christianity would also flourish in this present time, in our day? Well, the parable showed that after a long journey the man would return and make an inspection and would find that two of his three slaves increased by 100 percent the "belongings" entrusted to them. Other Bible texts support the view that this part of the parable applies to Christ's return after a long period, "to settle accounts" with those anointed to serve him.—1 Pet. 4:17, 18; Col. 3:24.

There are also other reasons to expect true Christianity to flourish and to increase today. One of these reasons is that this is the time of Christ's invisible presence in power as King. The "appointed times of the nations," or the "times of the Gentiles," have ended. These "times" began when God's representative kingdom on earth was overthrown in 607 B.C.E. by Babylon. How long were these "times" to run? They were to be "seven times" or seven prophetic years of 360 days each, in which a day was to count for a year. This would be  $7 \times 360$ , or 2,520 years. This brings us to the year 1914 C.E., when the Kingdom would be restored in the hands of the one "who has the legal right."—Luke 21:24; Dan. 4:17; Ezek. 4:6; 21:27.

Additionally, conditions on earth since 1914 match what Jesus foretold would be taking place at the time of his taking power at "the conclusion of the system of things."—Matthew chap. 24; Mark chap. 13; Luke chaps. 17, 21.

Now, this return of Christ in Kingdom power, in heavenly glory, is a time of

judgment; first, of those anointed to represent Christ, and next, of the world. The people need to know about this. Hence, it is essential that the message of the Kingdom, outlining God's purposes for mankind, be widely proclaimed again on a wide scale, "in all the inhabited earth." God has always used his servants to give warning before acting in execution of judgment upon people. Witness Noah's warning before the flood, the prophets' warning to Jerusalem before its destruction in 607 B.C.E. and the intense warning given by Jesus and his disciples before that city's destruction by the Roman armies in 70 C.E.

#### **CHRISTIANITY VIGOROUS NOW**

So, even though Christendom's churches are decaying, true Christianity is not dying. It is a perilous time for all, however, because it is the consummation of this world's system. It is therefore to be expected that Christ would raise up more "slaves" and entrust them with his "belongings." However, in 1914, when Christ took Kingdom power, a world war was ravaging the earth. This war was fought mainly by the armies of so-called Christian nations.

On the other hand, those few who at that time were trying to increase their Master's "belongings" by the practice of real Christianity came under heavy persecution, due to the war propaganda and war fever. They were jailed, beaten and driven out of some towns because of the distorted, prejudiced viewpoint that even Christendom's clergy had caused the people to have regarding the work to be done by the "slaves" of Jesus Christ. It appeared that their work was crushed.

Nevertheless, after the war, by 1919, there was still a faithful group that saw the need to proclaim the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ for the purpose of in-

spection and judgment. These the Lord raised up and infused with zeal and energy, never to be stifled again by their enemies! By 1922 they had made preparations to announce that the King Jesus Christ had taken his power in the heavens and would soon free mankind of all oppressors. It was to be a worldwide work! Because of their zealous proclamation of the truth there were 90,434 persons who attended the annual Memorial of the death of Jesus Christ in 1925. This showed that the "slaves" had indeed done as the parable stated, namely, they had gained more "talents" or had increased the Master's "belongings."

Today, less than fifty years later, practically the whole creation has had the Kingdom message preached to them "for a witness." (Matt. 24:14) In 208 countries of the earth, now more than a million and a half have heard and believed the message of Christ's "slaves" and have taken up the same work, aiding others to hear. Since there are but 144,000 persons who will make up the entire body of faithful "slaves," eventually to reign with Christ in the heavens, most of those taking up the message now have hope of surviving the destruction of this system of things and of living on earth under the Kingdom government.—Rev. 14:1, 4.

We note that in the parable each class of the *faithful* slaves, the five-talent class and the two-talent class, worked equally hard, and both classes gained a 100-percent increase. So each one did up to the extent possible for him, and no one was better than anyone else. Of course, they could not boast over the increases gained, for it is Jehovah, through Christ, to whom the accomplishments belong, as the apostle Paul said: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow; so that neither is he that plants anything nor is he that waters, but God who makes

it grow." (1 Cor. 3:6, 7) Christ's "slaves" are merely the instruments that God is pleased to use in effecting the increase. How are these faithful "slaves" rewarded during the time of the Lord's inspection and judgment?

In the fulfillment, note that the slaves represent, not individuals, but *classes* of persons. Modernly, therefore, we cannot point to individuals as being of the five-talent class or the two-talent class. Both work equally hard with the responsibilities, greater or less, assigned to them.

#### THE MASTER'S REWARD TO FAITHFUL "SLAVES"

The apostle Paul speaks about their reward at 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17:

"If our faith is that Jesus died and rose again, so, too, those who have fallen asleep in death through Jesus God will bring with him. For this is what we tell you by Jehovah's word, that we the living who survive to the presence of the Lord shall in no way precede those who have fallen asleep in death; because the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel's voice and with God's trumpet, and those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first. Afterward we the living who are surviving will, together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall always be with the Lord."

That this reward is a real, living hope the apostle Paul demonstrated when, shortly before his death, he wrote to his co-worker Timothy: 'I have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith. From this time on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me as a reward in that day, yet not only to me, but also to all those who have loved his manifestation.'—2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

At the time of the Lord's presence, when he comes to inspect and judge, he gives first attention to those "slaves" of

his who have died from the time of Pentecost of 33 C.E. until the time of his arrival. These he resurrects to heavenly life. They join him as his collective "bride." (Rev. 19:7; 21:9) This, being a heavenly resurrection to spirit life, is, of course, not observed by those living on earth. The "slaves" remaining on earth during his presence, as they die, will, "together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air." That is, during Christ's invisible presence, represented by clouds, they will join those already resurrected. From then on they will always be with the Lord.

These faithful ones, at their death, are instantaneously resurrected. There they "rest from their labors, for the things they did go right with them." (Rev. 14:13) They have labored hard with the Lord's "belongings," the "talents" entrusted to them. After their resurrection they are relieved from their hard circumstances on earth, yet go right on with work in their place of heavenly reward. Their instantaneous change at the moment of death is described at 1 Corinthians 15:50-54.

But what about the faithful "slaves" while they remain on earth for a time during the King's presence? They enjoy a reward now by entering into the "joy" of their Master. (Matt. 25:19-23) Who is the source of this "joy"? Jehovah God, the Father of Jesus Christ. Jesus endured his sufferings because of "the joy that was set before him." (Heb. 12:2) When he took his long journey he went to his Father, the Source of that "joy," and he received from the Father greater responsibilities, including kingly power. The faithful "slaves" find great joy in announcing the established Kingdom. Also, as "a people for his name," they are having the name of Jehovah the great Universal Sovereign called upon them. They are known world wide by the name 'Jehovah's

witnesses.' (Isa. 43:10-12) And, since they are "slaves" of Christ, they are Jehovah's Christian witnesses.

#### YOU CAN PRACTICE REAL CHRISTIANITY

It is Jehovah's purpose, during this time of inspection, to gather to the remaining faithful "slaves" of Christ a "great crowd" of other people. Since the terminating of the conclusion of this system of things is very near, these persons will be survivors of this world's destruction and be the foundation for a 'new earth, wherein righteousness is to dwell.'—Rev. 7:9-17; 2 Pet. 3:13.

These members of the "great crowd" are coming in to associate with Jehovah's witnesses so rapidly that hundreds of new meeting places, called "Kingdom Halls," are being built every year. While Christendom's churches are groaning about shrinking memberships and lack of support, the halls of Jehovah's witnesses are figuratively "bulging." Tens of thousands are baptized each year. And these new ones are not passive members, but are active proclaimers of the same Kingdom message that the "slave" class bears.

So, Christianity, real Christianity, is not dying, but is alive, flourishing, increasing in numbers and extent of activity. If you want it you can now find and practice it. Approach the matter with an open mind, and see for yourself what God is doing to support and to cause Christianity to grow mightily today. The Kingdom Halls of this happy group are open to you and you may attend free of charge, without having to suffer embarrassment by a request for contributions or the passing of a collection plate. Examine what these people believe and what they are doing, then do what you see is right alongside those you see doing it. This is the only way to joy now and to life in the righteous system of things near at hand.

# DO NOT HOLD BACK

"**G**D is light and there is no darkness at all in union with him."

(1 John 1:5) This profound truth should be an inspiration to all persons seeking to practice the truth, to live by righteous principles. If one is in union with God one is walking in the light. And how precious light is! In fact, if there were no light from the sun in the heavens there would be no life on the earth. Each one of us can appreciate the value of light when we suddenly find ourselves in a totally dark place. One's first reaction is to ask for a light to be turned on. Therefore when one comes to appreciate that God is light, it should be one's desire to be in association or union with God, the Source of all true light.

<sup>2</sup> Our world today, however, is filled with humankind who do not know God and, in the majority of instances, do not wish to know him. It is as Isaiah wrote centuries ago under the inspiration of God: "For, look! darkness itself will cover the earth, and thick gloom the national groups." (Isa. 60:2) This is not a darkness as a result of lack of illumination from the sun shining through to the earth.

1. (a) How important is light? (b) What kind of light is of the greater importance, and how should we feel about it?

2. What serious lack of light, spoken about by Isaiah, exists today?

FROM

## *Practicing The Truth*



"If we make the statement: 'We are having a sharing with him,' and yet we go on walking in the darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth."  
—1 John 1:6.

This is a much more serious darkness, a darkness resulting from the lack of spiritual light from Jehovah God, the Father of the celestial lights.

<sup>3</sup> The author of this darkness is the archfoe of the God of light, Satan the Devil, and his demon associates. They are spoken of in Ephesians 6:12 as "the world rulers of this darkness, . . . the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." It is the intention of Satan and his demons to keep mankind in darkness, alienated from the light of Jehovah God. In large measure it appears that they have succeeded in this. The apostle Paul, under inspiration of holy spirit, called the Devil "the god of this system of things," who

3. (a) Who is the author of such darkness, and how does Ephesians 6:12 describe his associates? (b) What purpose does the author of mental darkness have in mind, and whom does the apostle Paul say he has succeeded in blinding?

"has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine through." This 'blinding of the mind' results in spiritual darkness.—2 Cor. 4:4.

<sup>4</sup> In spite of the fact that people live in such a world, this does not mean that the light from God and his Son, who is "the image of God," and therefore is also light, is not reaching some among mankind and thus freeing them from the darkness. (John 8:12) The God of light and his Son have provided the light of truth to such an extent that throughout the history of mankind there have been some individuals who have walked in the light and have had the Creator's favor and blessing. The eleventh chapter of Hebrews mentions a few of such individuals of pre-Christian times. The Christian Greek Scriptures relate the history of the beginnings of Christianity and carry us into the final days of the first century, telling about Christ Jesus and his followers, who walked in the light. And while we have little actual recorded history to identify the adherents of light in the centuries following the death of the apostles and early disciples of Christ down to our modern times, nevertheless, we are assured by the illustration of Jesus Christ concerning the wheat and the weeds that throughout that time there would be those walking in the light of God, following his Word, the Book of light. (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43) In modern times, as the fulfillment of the illustration of the wheat and the weeds reaches its culmination, the "sons of the kingdom" are glorified in the established Kingdom, a remnant yet on earth shining "as brightly as the sun," dispensing spiritual enlightenment so that others may

be gathered onto the side of the God of light for future preservation.

#### NOT EASY TO WALK IN THE LIGHT

<sup>5</sup> The fight to keep people from the light of God's Word and from walking in the light of God is an intense war waged by the powers of darkness, Satan, his demons and his visible earthly organization. (1 John 5:19) For those coming in contact with the light there is often every possible hindrance placed in their path to make them stumble and so to continue on in the darkness. It may be pressure from relatives who fight against the light of truth. It may be doubts about the truthfulness of the Word of God, because of one's being blinded for so long by the false teachings of the religious powers of darkness. It may be pressure from associates one has or one's own sinful inclinations that make it hard to live up to the divine requirements placed on the children of the light.

<sup>6</sup> Even after a person has freed himself from the control of the powers of darkness and has come into the light he faces continued bombardment from this system of things. So it may be difficult at times for some to 'practice the truth,' but they need to be on guard so that they do not return to their former way of life. The apostle John wrote: "If we make the statement: 'We are having a sharing with him,' and yet we go on walking in the darkness, we are lying and are not *practicing* the truth." (1 John 1:6) True, we all fall short at times, but what are the things that we practice? Are some of us walking in darkness rather than light, even though we claim to have come out

4. What evidence is there that the light from God and his Son has reached many among mankind all through man's history?

5. What tactics have Satan and his demons used to keep people from the light of God's Word?

6. (a) What can happen to one even after being freed from enslavement to darkness? (b) What questions do we do well to consider?

of the darkness of this world into the light? Are we really *practicing* the truth, or does our pattern of life show that we are holding back, deceiving ourselves, lying to ourselves?—1 John 1:8-2:2.

<sup>7</sup> Self-examination is vital in this matter, using the Word of God as the guide to what a person should be doing if he is practicing the truth, walking in the light. This self-examination enters into a number of vital areas, areas in which each one of us should be interested. This self-examination we should do, having in mind the words of the apostle Paul in speaking to the Corinthian congregation: “For we do not dare to class ourselves among some or compare ourselves with some who recommend themselves. Certainly they in measuring themselves by themselves and comparing themselves with themselves have no understanding.” (2 Cor. 10:12) Our self-examination should be made on the basis of the Book of light, the Word of God. Paul further said: “For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is deceiving his own mind. But let him prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person.” (Gal. 6:3, 4) Let God’s Word show each one individually what God requires of those who say they are “practicing the truth.” Let us not be measuring ourselves by some other human, or by human standards.

#### PRACTICING THE TRUTH IN OUR DAILY CONDUCT

<sup>8</sup> To the congregation in Ephesus, the apostle Paul wrote these words: “This, therefore, I say and bear witness to in the Lord, that you no longer go on walking just

as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds, while they are in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the insensibility of their hearts. Having come to be past all moral sense, they gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness.” —Eph. 4:17-19.

<sup>9</sup> The standards of this world, their “situation ethics,” are the result of minds that are in darkness mentally, alienated from the life that belongs to God. The world says in effect, “Do your own thing,” meaning that one is a lawmaker to oneself, not bound by any outside code or rule that would limit one’s freedom. This standard allows for one to become insensible in one’s heart. “Anything goes,” becomes the motto.

<sup>10</sup> Those in darkness mentally include many religious leaders of Christendom who support such worldly standards. Rather than encouraging people to practice truth, they acquiesce in the pressures of the nations and the people in high station who condone wrong conduct. To support this statement, consider what a Protestant chaplain of a college in the United States said about adultery: ‘A full life can best be achieved when a man—and his wife, too—are free to engage in extramarital affairs [adultery], not secretly, but with each other’s knowledge and consent.’ Said a San Francisco clergyman in a weekly Episcopal Church magazine: “There is no sex act which in itself is sinful. . . . I also believe that two people of the same sex can express love and deepen that love by sexual intercourse [homosexuality].”

7. What self-examination is vital, and on what basis should it be done?

8. In his letter to the Ephesians, what did the apostle Paul advise one to avoid?

9. What standards of the world today show that many minds are in darkness?

10, 11. Who are included among those in mental darkness, and why?

<sup>11</sup> This mental darkness also extends into the field of entertainment. And, in fact, in many ways those in the "arts" are the policy makers, or "style setters" for this generation. It is not uncommon to read in magazines and newspapers about men and women living together, and bearing children out of wedlock, with no stigma whatsoever attached to such fornication. In fact, any who would protest are often branded as prudish, out of step with modern times. Talk shows on radio and television often feature these people of questionable quality as the main attraction. They like to make their lives an open book for all to read and see, as though they were trying by every possible means to shock common decency. Little do they know that the shock will come to them in the days ahead as they reap what they sow because of their loose conduct.

<sup>12</sup> The apostle Paul well described this type of individual in his letter to the Romans who lived under similar conditions nineteen hundred years ago. He said: "Therefore God, in keeping with the desires of their hearts, gave them up to uncleanness, that their bodies might be dishonored among them, even those who exchanged the truth of God for the lie and venerated and rendered sacred service to the creation rather than the One who created, who is blessed forever. . . . That is why God gave them up to disgraceful sexual appetites, for both their females changed the natural use of themselves into one contrary to nature; and likewise even the males left the natural use of the female and became violently inflamed in their lust toward one another, males with males, working what is obscene and receiving in themselves the full recompense,

which was due for their error."—Rom. 1:24-27.

<sup>13</sup> In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul said that such kinds of persons were "in darkness mentally, . . . because of the insensibility of their hearts." Again, in the letter to the Romans, Paul said that such ones are "empty-headed in their reasonings and their unintelligent heart became darkened." (Eph. 4:18; Rom. 1:21) Note in both instances that such ones are not associated with light, but with darkness, with lack of light and understanding.

<sup>14</sup> Paul continued on to show the further results of such empty-headedness, saying: "And just as they did not approve of holding God in accurate knowledge, God gave them up to a disapproved mental state, to do the things not fitting, filled as they were with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, badness, being full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malicious disposition, being whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, insolent, haughty, self-assuming, inventors of injurious things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, false to agreements, having no natural affection, merciless. Although these know full well the righteous decree of God, that those practicing such things are deserving of death, they not only keep on doing them but also consent with those practicing them."—Rom. 1:28-32.

<sup>15</sup> These types of people—and this earth is filled with such because of the influence of the 'authority of the darkness'—are not "practicing the truth," as spoken of by the apostle John, but are 'practicing things deserving of death.' The problem facing those who want to walk in the light,

13. How does Paul describe the mind and heart of empty-headed worldlings?

14. Show what results from those in darkness who are "empty-headed in their reasonings," according to Romans 1:28-32?

15. Describe the problem of those wanting to walk in the light.

12. What description of those in mental darkness is given at Romans 1:24-27?

to be in union with the Source of light and his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, in short, to practice the truth, is how to keep the proper mental balance in the midst of this darkness surrounding them and not be enticed away from the pathway of light. What, then, is required of one to keep the proper mental balance, so as not to be so enticed?

<sup>16</sup> If we are going to practice the truth we have to be "walking in the light." (1 John 1:7) To walk in the light we must consistently heed the counsel given us by the God of light and cultivate love for his ways. If we do so, then when we see this system of things approving of standards that are condemned by the God of light, Jehovah, we will not allow ourselves to contemplate the seeming satisfaction of such a course. We will not think to ourselves how nice it would be to enjoy such pleasures just for a moment, feeling that somehow those lower standards of the world do have some redeeming features. We will not dupe ourselves into thinking that, after all, the brief moment of enjoyment might be worth the violation of the principles of light. Rather, we will call upon God, in our practice of the truth, and seek to follow right principles. Looking in the Bible we find recorded, for example, the life of Moses, a servant of Jehovah. It is written of him that he refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, "choosing to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin." How was Moses able to do this? The record says, "because he esteemed the reproach of the Christ as riches greater than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked intently toward the payment of

16. (a) Explain what it means to be "walking in the light." (b) How do we avoid wrong thinking and actions, and whose life is an encouragement in this direction?

the reward." (Heb. 11:24-26) That is what practicing the truth is. That is what walking in the light means.

#### PRACTICING THE TRUTH BY WATCHING OUR ASSOCIATIONS

<sup>17</sup> No doubt many of you who are reading this information have heard the expressions, 'Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are,' and, 'Birds of a feather flock together.' Both of these expressions carry the meaning that you are much like those with whom you associate. If one seeks the company of those of this darkened world who are interested only in doing as they want, regardless of the requirements for upright living that are outlined in the Bible, then the chances are that such a one will find it difficult not to identify himself with such company and become like them. The Bible's warning along this line is, "Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) Thus every person wanting to practice the truth must in all honesty ask himself whether those with whom he is associating are helping him to walk in the light or are hindering his progress in serving the God of light.

<sup>18</sup> In the field of religious thinking, is it consistent for a person who says that he wants to 'walk in the light' also to associate with a religious organization that condones the so-called "situation ethics" of this system? If a church organization allowed one of its ministers to preach from its pulpit in support of adultery, homosexuality, and other forms of loose living, how could one seeking to learn of God's way so as to walk in the

17. What connection is there between practicing the truth and watching our associations?

18. (a) If a religious organization tolerates ministers who encourage immorality, why would the fact that not everyone in the organization practices loose living not argue that one practicing the truth could still identify himself with such an organization? (b) Where, then, must those be who practice the truth?

pathway of light continue to associate with such an organization? It makes no difference that some in the church organization may not practice such things, while others do. The organization is still condoning the individual who believes and preaches what is contrary to the express will of the God of light. Paul's counsel concerning an immoral man in the Corinthian congregation of the first century was: "Remove the wicked man from among yourselves." (1 Cor. 5:13) So it is that those who would gain the favor of Jehovah God and practice truth must follow the admonition of Revelation 18:4, which says concerning religious Babylon the Great: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues." Yes, that is where all who practice truth and walk in the light have to be, completely "out" of the false religious organizations of Babylon the Great!

<sup>19</sup> Of course, a person must also watch who his associates are in the field of entertainment. While the association here may not be so personal—the majority of persons do not have direct association with those in the entertainment world—still one has to watch one's habits in the reading of books and periodical publications that follow the corrupt standard of this world, or in watching movies and television that exalt and praise the things condemned by God's Word, such as those outlined in the book of Romans, referred to previously. One cannot walk in the light of God while running in association with those of this wicked and sick society that approves of everything that the God of light abhors. The choice of association

is up to each one to determine, but the decision as to whether that one is practicing the truth is up to Jehovah God. Remember that the words of 1 John 1:6 are: "If we make the statement: 'We are having a sharing with him,' [that is, with the God of light] and yet we go on walking in the darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth." The point is plain and forceful. It is the duty of all Christians, followers of the Master, Jesus Christ, to heed the counsel of God's Word and direct their lives in accordance with that counsel.

<sup>20</sup> But there is even more to practicing the truth than watching our daily conduct and keeping with the right company. Practicing the truth calls upon us to observe other necessary things. For example, how does a person who practices the truth view his association with those of like precious faith in congregation meetings? As a necessity, or as something to do when one has nothing better to do? And what about sharing in telling others about the God of light and of his Son, who is the light of the world? Can one practice the truth and not be willing and anxious to tell others of the blessings in store for mankind as foretold in God's Word? Then there is the matter of assisting those of the household of faith, those who are now sharing in practicing the truth in the Christian congregation. How does our practicing the truth affect this relationship and its responsibilities? For one to have a sharing with Jehovah the God of light and his Son, so that one can truly say one is practicing the truth and not walking in darkness, one is called upon to meet certain basic requirements. These are discussed in the article that follows.

19. How does a person go about watching his associations in the field of entertainment, and so what choice becomes necessary?

20. Name other necessary things one must consider when it comes to practicing the truth.

# "Continue Observing HIS COMMANDMENTS"

"And by this we have the knowledge that we have come to know him,  
namely, if we continue observing his commandments."

—1 John 2:3.

EARTH WIDE today there are hundreds of thousands of dedicated and baptized witnesses of Jehovah God who meet together and share in declaring the good news of the Kingdom from house to house and by many other means. These servants of God love him and want to do his will. That is why they have dedicated their lives to carrying out his commandments, observing his laws. However, at times there may be some who fail to appreciate fully what it means to "continue observing his [God's] commandments." If one does not keep on with self-examination of one's way of life and one's motives, one may find that the powers of darkness in this system blind one to the requirements of Jehovah. We need to continue to carry out the commandments of God. If a person continues to do the same thing, in time it becomes a habit with him, something he does regularly. He does not do it now, and forget it later. We could say that he practices that "something" habitually, whatever it may be. So it becomes a way of life to him, something that he does without thought of discontinuing in the future.

<sup>2</sup> So it is with those who observe the commandments of God. They continue in this course day in and day out, month in

and month out, year in and year out, knowing that this is a requirement of God. The point of all of this is that the only way truly to 'come to know him,' that is, Jehovah, is by always observing what he wants us to do. This does not allow for serving him only when we feel like it, when it does not interfere with anything else that we think is of greater importance. This constancy is what is embodied in the expressions "practicing the truth" and 'continuing to observe his commandments.'

#### IN "THE CONGREGATED THRONGS"

<sup>3</sup> The psalmist wrote: "Among the congregated throngs I shall bless Jehovah." (Ps. 26:12) Jehovah, the God of light, has commanded that his people meet together in his name. The Hebrew Scriptures contain the commands of Jehovah laid upon his ancient people Israel to meet together to observe special events during the year. It was obligatory in many cases for the people so to meet. Besides, it was to their blessing and benefit. The obligation to have meetings for worship was passed along to the Christian congregation of God's people. Basically, Hebrews 10:24, 25 calls upon Christians to meet together and not to forget doing so. It is for the purpose of

1. Why is self-examination in practicing the truth necessary?

2. How does one truly come to know Jehovah?

3. What does Jehovah call upon his people to do as regards meeting together?

encouraging one another and building up their faith, inciting to love and right works.

<sup>4</sup> The Christian congregation today, in our twentieth century, must be "observing his commandments" about meeting for worship. Individually each one in the group must observe this commandment if there is to be a 'congregated throng.' To practice the truth as a group, each one must listen to the commandments of Jehovah. It might be argued that there is no specific command in the Scriptures that we must meet together five hours a week, as is customary among Jehovah's people on earth. That is true. But should we not be grateful that our God is generous, abundantly supplying us with spiritual good things? We are benefited spiritually by every meeting that we attend. Our faith is strengthened. When we meet with fellow Christians we are aided to observe Jehovah's commandments, to practice the truth. Is that not what we want to do?

<sup>5</sup> It stands to reason, then, that a dedicated servant of Jehovah would make every effort to be with his Christian brothers and sisters at the meetings. Rather than finding excuses to stay away, he would seek reasons to be at every meeting possible of the congregation. Naturally, he would use good judgment if he were sick or if some unforeseen circumstance of serious importance arose. But, by and large, his Bible-trained conscience will impel him to practice the

truth by following the commandment of Jehovah through his Word not to forsake assembling together.

<sup>6</sup> If a servant of the Lord is not watchful, he could regularly let very minor matters keep him from this blessed association. At times a visit from relatives might keep one from a particular meeting, depending on the circumstances. But would one let every visit from relatives and every occasion of this nature interfere with one's being with those walking in the truth among the congregated throngs? Why not invite the relatives to go with you? Similarly, there might be an occasional meeting missed on account of bad weather, one's job, or minor illnesses. However, it is when these "reasons" become "excuses" to leave off from being in association with the Lord's people regularly that one begins to walk in darkness, rather than in light, to become as one lying rather than as one practicing the truth. Do we think for a moment that at the time of the exodus from Egypt the faithful Israelites let any-

6. How might "reasons" for missing a meeting become "excuses" for making it a habit to miss them?



**At weekly meetings  
of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, hundreds  
of thousands congregate for upbuilding  
Bible discussions**

4. (a) In order to practice the truth, what must a person do?  
(b) How might one argue about meetings of the congregation, but what is it good to bear in mind?

5. How, then, would a dedicated servant of Jehovah view the meetings of the congregation?

thing interfere with the sprinkling of some of the blood on their doorposts, with their eating the Passover lamb and being ready to leave at a moment's notice? They knew that to observe Jehovah's commandments in this instance meant their very lives. Is it any less serious now? Are times any different now? Are we not living in critical days, hard to deal with? So much more so, then, should we show our willing attitude by associating with the congregated throngs regularly as commanded by Jehovah.

#### PRACTICING THE TRUTH PUBLICLY

<sup>7</sup> One of the outstanding characteristics of the first-century Christians was their public declaration of the good news. We read of Jesus going throughout the whole of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and preaching the good news of the Kingdom. (Matt. 4:23) He preached and taught in the mountains, among the people along the seashore, in the homes of interested ones, anywhere and everywhere that there proved to be people with whom to speak. To the twelve that he was specially training he said: "Go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'" When the twelve had their instructions, he sent them out to the cities to teach and to preach.—Matt. 10:5-10.

<sup>8</sup> It is but reasonable, then, that the Christians of the twentieth century would be doing the same. Somewhere along the line it is evident that the vast majority of those in Christendom, instead of being "doers of the word," have become hearers only, doing nothing themselves to practice the truth by spreading the Word of the truth. But among Jehovah's Christian witnesses we find "doers of the word." They realize that to be like Jesus they must share in telling others the good news

7. What outstanding characteristic of early Christianity is next discussed in our lesson?

8. How are Jehovah's Christian witnesses different from the majority of those in Christendom?

of the Kingdom. It is their commission just as it was the commission of Jesus and those of the early Christian congregation. The Bible record tells us: "He that says he remains in union with him is under obligation himself also to go on walking just as that one walked."—Jas. 1:22; 1 John 2:6.

<sup>9</sup> To practice this truth by sharing in the Kingdom-preaching is not always the easiest thing for a Christian. He often has to put up with abuse from opposers. There are very few persons who are, as it were, born for the public preaching activity, that is, possessing the gift of being able to talk freely to people. The faithful Christian, therefore, has to work at it to become proficient and capable. He also has to humble himself to carry out the public preaching work, realizing that it is his love for God and for his neighbor that impels him to share the good news with others. Therefore, there are times when a Christian may find it difficult to share in such work, and he may make excuses for not doing so.

<sup>10</sup> Occasionally there may be a very good reason not to be able to share in the preaching work at a particular time. There are times when the home in which one lives is in desperate need of certain repairs. The car on which one depends for transportation may be in urgent need of attention. There may be something of a personal nature that one must do that would prevent one from sharing in the preaching and teaching work. But again the question, When does the reason become an excuse? Does one allow such interferences to cause one to stop practicing the truth? Each one knows what is in one's own heart, and, of course, Jehovah

9. Outline some of the problems in practicing the truth by sharing in public preaching.

10. (a) Name some of those things that might keep one from sharing in the preaching work at times, and when might "reasons" become "excuses"? (b) What is it good to keep in mind about Satan's tactics, and where can we turn for help?

knows. But in the life-and-death issue that is now facing all mankind surely we as faithful Christians want to be careful that we do not allow ourselves to begin walking in darkness. Satan, the god of darkness, works on our weaknesses, not on our strengths. If he can get us to feel sorry for ourselves, to think negatively, then he will do it all the more each time the issue arises. To meet and overcome his designs successfully, we must rely on Jehovah God. We need his help and we should ask for it in prayer. We should ask ourselves, Do we make a practice of putting Kingdom interests first, or do we make a practice of putting other interests first?

<sup>11</sup> We must be on guard against letting anything take us away from the love of God. Remember, in the time of the prophet Haggai he told the negligent people what their trouble was. His words were: 'You are on the run, each one in behalf of his own house, while my house is lying waste.' (Hag. 1:9) Are we going to take the same course and cut ourselves off from Jehovah's blessing? If Jehovah shakes the earth, and the mountains totter into the heart of the sea, what will happen to our homes and the new paneling and the improvements we have made? (Ps. 46:2) How vital, then, to continue practicing the truth, sharing fully in our public preaching work. The time nears when this never-to-be-repeated activity will be done. Ahead of us lies the great tribulation. In the strength of the God of light let us do with our might what our hands find to do. Remember Paul's words: "For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me." (Phil. 4:13) May those "all things" include our public preaching to the praise of Jehovah's name.

11. How can material pursuits prove to be a stumbling block to practicing the truth, and from where does strength to do right come?

#### "WALKING IN THE LIGHT" BY LOVING OUR BROTHER

<sup>12</sup> Turning now to another practice of the truth that is important, we read again from the book of First John: "He that says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness up to right now. He that loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in his case. But he that hates his brother is in the darkness and is walking in the darkness, and he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes." (1 John 2:9-11) Observing the commandments of God and practicing the truth are very closely connected with the love of one's brother. How very foolish it would be to conduct ourselves uprightly in all respects, regularly to share in congregating with God's people and in the preaching and teaching activity, and at the same time to have little or nothing to do with our Christian brothers at other times, to shun them, to be unconcerned for their welfare.

<sup>13</sup> One might ask, 'How could this be?' One might say: 'I love my brothers. I would be glad to do anything for them. But what can I do? What do they need?' Let us look at it this way: In recent years there have been occasions when the servants of Jehovah have suffered much in various parts of the earth. In the country of Malawi, for example, Jehovah's people were greatly persecuted, the majority finally having to flee their homes and the country and take up residence in another land because of opposition to their Christian conduct. In the land of Nicaragua a devastating earthquake struck the capital, Managua, and many faithful Christians lost all their belongings—their homes, jobs, meeting places, everything. What

12. What other form of darkness must we avoid, and why?

13. (a) What questions might one logically ask at this point? (b) How do the examples involving our brothers in Malawi and Nicaragua show that God's servants want to practice truth by showing love for one another?

was the response of the servants of Jehovah world wide? There was great concern for the welfare of these spiritual brothers of theirs. This was shown by the aid sent in behalf of these Christians. It was a wonderful display of Christian concern, of care for one's brothers.

<sup>14</sup> But let us bring it to a more local level. Are we as concerned with practicing the truth among those with whom we meet regularly and whom we know very well in our own congregations? Many, of course, are, but, remember, we are doing some self-examination now. These are times when people are feeling great pressure as a result of the soaring cost of living. That pressure is greatly increased if the family breadwinner is laid off from his job. Many family groups and individuals who live on fixed incomes have a hard time obtaining the necessities of life, and in the months to come that situation will no doubt worsen. (Hab. 3:17) What are we going to do as individuals when we realize that another person or a

14. Who in the congregation might we well have in mind as we practice truth by showing concern for our brothers, and in what ways might we assist?

**By doing things for our elderly and infirm Christian brothers and sisters, we show love and concern**



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family group in our midst, because of no fault on their own part, has come into need? As the disciple James wrote: "If a brother or a sister is in a naked state and lacking the food sufficient for the day, yet a certain one of you says to them: 'Go in peace, keep warm and well fed,' but you do not give them the necessities for their body, of what benefit is it?" (Jas. 2:15, 16) It is something to think about for those who are practicing the truth.

<sup>15</sup> How about some of our elderly brothers and sisters in the congregation? How are they faring? Are we showing that we are "walking in the light" by fellow feeling and concern for them? Are we continuing to observe Jehovah's commandments regarding them? Perhaps at times they need someone to pick them up and help them to get to meetings or in the field service. They also may need help with obtaining the physical necessities of life or to assist with the upkeep of their home. These are ways to practice the truth. Sometimes those who are aged appreciate it if someone drops by to pay them a visit, to talk about the truth of God's Word, to take an interest in them. We are told this in Scripture: "Gray-headedness is a crown of beauty when

it is found in the way of righteousness." (Prov. 16:31) How pleasing

it must be to Jehovah to see his servants who have been faithfully doing his will for many, many years given attention by others who are practicing the truth, and walking in the light!

<sup>16</sup> We need also to bear in mind that practicing the truth includes showing respect for elders

15. Who else need our consideration, and in what possible ways?

16. How is respect for elders in the congregation still another way to practice the truth?

who preside in a fine way. The advice of the apostle Paul is: "Now we request you, brothers, to have regard for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; and to give them more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work. Be peaceable with one another." (1 Thess. 5:12, 13; Heb. 13:17) Is this how we view the older men in our congregations?

<sup>17</sup> Of course, it is also evident that those who are presiding must be practicing the truth, having intense interest in the welfare of the "sheep." They must not lord it over their brothers, as then they would not be reflecting the ways of Jehovah, the God of light. They are under direct command of God to "shepherd the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock."

—1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

<sup>18</sup> Finally, it should be borne in mind that practicing the truth, walking in the light, observing Jehovah's commandments, keeping free of the darkness of this wicked system of things, calls upon all of us to follow the authoritative advice of the apostle Paul in his words of wisdom to the Colossian congregation: "Accordingly, as God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things,

17. How, in turn, can elders show that they are practicing the truth?

18. Outline the wisdom of the authoritative advice of Paul to God's people.

clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."—Col. 3:12-14.

<sup>19</sup> Herein, then, we find some of the ways we can practice the truth and observe God's commandments in these days of total darkness upon the people as a result of the blinding of the minds of the people by Satan, so that the glorious good news about the Christ might not shine through. While the darkness of the world grows more dense, the light of truth from the Word of God grows brighter. It reminds us of the days of Moses when the Israelites were down in Egypt in slavery. The ninth plague, or blow, against the hardhearted Pharaoh of Egypt was that of a thick darkness upon the land. We learn about it in these words: "Moses immediately stretched his hand out toward the heavens, and a gloomy darkness began to occur in all the land of Egypt for three days. They did not see one another, and none of them got up from his own place three days; but for all the sons of Israel there proved to be light in their dwellings."

—Ex. 10:22, 23.

<sup>20</sup> We are living in momentous times, and while the world gropes in darkness, not knowing the way out, the light of truth from the God of light and his light of the world, the Lord Jesus, shines brilliantly. How appropriate that we regularly consider what it means to all of us to practice the truth and to continue observing God's commandments, walking in the light. What that means for the days ahead is stated in these words of the apostle John: "However, if we are walking in the light as he himself is in the light, we do have a sharing with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7) Let us be thankful for our union with the God of light, in whom there is no darkness at all.

19, 20. What occurrence in the days of Moses reminds us of the world we live in today, and how can we personally be blessed as a result of practicing the truth by observing Jehovah's commandments?

# Finding Delight IN JEHOVAH'S WAYS

**L**IIGHT makes a person cheerful. We are delighted, after a dark night, to see the dawn. In a spiritual sense, those who follow Jehovah's ways are enjoying light and reflect it to others. (Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5) This kind of light, which reveals the unfruitful works of darkness, makes these bad things, hidden as stumbling blocks in the darkness of this world, appear as clearly as if they themselves lighted up, so that the person seeking to do what is right can avoid them.

—Eph. 5:13.

<sup>2</sup> The light exposes the wicked persons of the earth, so that they are shaken from the earth's surface. (Job 38:12, 13) On the other hand, it reveals delightful things to those who do not count on darkness for the doing of secret works! Jehovah says of the earth as the dawn progressively moves across its face from east to west: "It transforms itself like clay under a seal, and things take their station as in clothing." (Job 38:14) Just as a seal was anciently rolled across the clay, leaving its clear imprint, so the light of morning reveals the things on earth, these suddenly taking form in all their variegated colors and hues, just as a beautiful garment. In the same manner Jehovah's spiritual light reveals the outcome of his purposes in all their beauty. At first the things he promises are seen only in dim outline. Then, as time progresses, we can see things taking shape.

1. What benefit does Jehovah's spiritual light provide with respect to the bad practices of this world?
2. (a) What effect does light have upon wicked ones?  
(b) Explain the meaning of Job 38:14.

<sup>3</sup> Those who have served as Kingdom proclaimers for many years remember that a relatively few years ago fulfillment of the Bible's promises of increase in the number of true worshipers was experienced only in a limited way. It was a source of wonderment just how prophecies such as Isaiah 2:2-4; 56:6, 7; Haggai 2:7 and Zechariah 8:23 would be completely fulfilled. In most congregations it took many hours of work to find an interested person, and many more hours of study, sometimes over a period of years, before that person began, slowly, to take a stand for the truth.

<sup>4</sup> Then, by the year 1935, the way was thrown open for a "great multitude" of Paradise-minded persons to join the anointed spiritual "brothers" of Christ in proclaiming the good news as dedicated, baptized disciples of Christ. A search of the Scriptures revealed them to be the "great crowd" spoken of in Revelation, who have the hope of surviving the destruction of this system of things and of living everlasting on earth. (Rev. 7:9-17) But three years later, in 1938, there were, reportedly, on an average, only 47,143 persons preaching the good news world wide. Nevertheless, in the 1944 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, strong faith was expressed, in the following statement:

3. What was the situation in the congregations some years ago in relation to the fulfillment of prophecies promising outstanding increase in the number of true worshipers?

4, 5. Beginning with 1935, what developments in fulfillment of these prophecies have taken place?

"The Scriptures indicate that a great host is yet to come out from the peoples of all nations, kindreds and tongues, even as the prophet Isaiah, in the 60th chapter and 8th verse, stated: 'Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?' This prophecy denotes that there will be a great ingathering of active witnesses for the Kingdom who will, for a short time before Armageddon, but sufficiently long to prove their integrity, come into the Lord's organization and work there in the interests of the Kingdom; and a witness will be given far and wide, by the Lord's grace, such as never has been given heretofore."

<sup>5</sup> Today we can see this fulfilled in much more detail. In the 208 lands where the good news is being preached, the numbers getting baptized as real disciples of God's Son are amazing. Over two million persons have been baptized since 1948. Each year brings the fulfillment of God's promises into fuller reality and color, just as the morning light progressively shows the details and colors of the things that it illuminates.

#### THE POWER OF THE TRUTH

<sup>6</sup> How marvelously Jehovah has brought his promises to fulfillment, and we are not yet to the end. Who can fail to take delight in Jehovah, in that his patience has resulted in salvation to so many people?  
—2 Pet. 3:15.

<sup>7</sup> Have you been able to spend only a little time in the work of sharing the good news from God's Word with others? Or has the work you have done met with indifference, seeming to have meager results? Even so, you have reason to rejoice. Why? Jehovah's prophet said: "In the morning sow your seed and until the evening do not let your hand rest; for you are not knowing where this will have success, either here or there, or whether

6. Who has brought these promises to fulfillment, and how do we feel about him?  
7. Even though our personal efforts in publicizing the good news may seem to have had meager results, what encouragement does Ecclesiastes 11:6 give us?

both of them will alike be good." (Eccl. 11:6) Your own work may have had greater success than you thought.

<sup>8</sup> The foundation has often been laid in the house-to-house 'sowing' of the word of the Kingdom, both among those who responded and among those who did not. By this activity and also by informal witnessing, by Jehovah's witnesses *talking* wherever they were, whether they met interest, indifference or even opposition—others have been prompted to talk. (Phil. 1:15-18) God causes the "seed" to germinate. Many who have heard, even many who have read some of the Watch Tower publications, at first paid little attention or, having listened for a while, drifted away. But circumstances later caused them to view world conditions more seriously. As they listened to religious and political propaganda they had enough of the seed of truth in their minds and hearts to discern the fallacy of such propaganda. When they were again approached by Jehovah's witnesses their attitude was changed. Some, on their own initiative, got in touch with the Witnesses, seeking spiritual help. The seed sprouted! All of this is evidence of *the power of the truth*. It never really left their hearts, and at the right time and under the right circumstances it grew and produced fruitage. If you are one of Jehovah's witnesses *you sowed* some of that seed.

<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the truth has a "chain-reaction" effect. Most persons now have relatives, friends, workmates or schoolmates who are Jehovah's witnesses. Now, when the Witnesses approach these persons they already know something, at least, about God's people and their message, and can decide more intelligently. And it is not only the truth that the

8. (a) How has Ecclesiastes 11:6 worked out in the spiritual sowing work of Jehovah's witnesses? (b) What evidence does this give about the truth that God has placed in our hands?  
9. How have many people become acquainted with the good news and its power in one's life?

Witnesses speak, but also its cleansing power in their lives, that has exerted force to attract people to Jehovah's service.

#### JEHOVAH'S QUALITIES A SOURCE OF DELIGHT

<sup>10</sup> How does Jehovah feel about what his people do? Does Jehovah take delight in them? He says of his servant: "By Jehovah the very steps of an able-bodied man have been made ready, and in his way He takes delight." (Ps. 37:23) And his Son Jesus Christ expressed the special delight that he and his Father have in those loving him when he said: "If anyone loves me, he will observe my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our abode with him."—John 14:23.

<sup>11</sup> How delighted we can be in Jehovah, that he is a God who loves his people as a father, a God who is happy, loving cleanliness, beauty and peacefulness. This is in sharp contrast to the gods of the nations, including those of Christendom, which are depicted as grotesque, terrifying, angry, hard to appease. Conversely, Jehovah's appearance is shown in the apostle John's vision to have the effect of cheerfulness, calmness, serenity, majesty, tranquillity and peace.—Rev. 4:3.

<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Jehovah is a God close at hand, not far off. (Acts 17:27; Ps. 119:151) As a Father, he provides protection for us, through his angels. (Ps. 34:7) He expresses feelings toward us as does a father for his children. He is glad when we are loyal to him. (Prov. 27:11) He is hurt at heart, his spirit is grieved or hurt when we are disobedient.—Gen. 6:6; Isa. 63:10; Eph. 4:30.

<sup>13</sup> But what appreciation Jehovah has

for faith and for service rendered to him with a sincere heart! He gives rewards beyond expectation to those loving him. Because of Abraham's faith God selected him, out of all the world of that time, as the man through whom blessings would come to *all families of the earth*. (Gen. 12:1-3; Rom. 4:3) Rahab of Jericho, though a prostitute, developed and demonstrated faith in the true God after hearing the accounts of his mighty acts. She endangered her own life by safeguarding spies from God's people Israel. For this she was spared from death. She later married a chieftain of the tribe of Judah and became an ancestress of Jesus Christ. (Josh. chap. 2; 6:25; Matt. 1:5) Jehovah made a covenant for a priesthood with Phinehas for his loyal act in keeping the camp of Israel clean from immorality and idolatry.—Num. 25:10-13.

<sup>14</sup> God's loving consideration and appreciation for the faith and acts of devotion of his servants are so deep that they do not necessarily have to do great things to please him. Of the widow who dropped only two coins, worth about one fourth of a cent, into the temple contribution box, Jesus remarked: "This widow, although poor, dropped in more than they all [the rich ones] did." (Luke 21:3) And when Mary the sister of Lazarus and Martha anointed Jesus with perfumed oil, Jesus said: "Wherever this good news is preached in all the world, what this woman did shall also be told as a remembrance of her." (Matt. 26:6-13) God saw to it that Jesus' words came true, for this act of devotion is reported in three of the Gospel accounts.—Mark 14:3-9.

<sup>15</sup> Consequently, what if your circumstances have made it possible for you to spend only a small amount of time in

10. What is the attitude of Jehovah and his Son toward God's people?

11. How are Jehovah's qualities in sharp contrast with the qualities of the gods of the nations, including Christendom's gods?

12. How does God act as a true Father to us?

13. Does Jehovah appreciate the faith and service of his people? Give examples.

14. Show that God does not necessarily require his people to do great things in order to please him.

15. How, then, should you feel if you have been earnest in your service to God, but unable to do much, or have not seen great results from your work?

proclaiming the good news? Or what if you have been unsuccessful in helping others to learn the truth directly by means of Bible studies? If your effort has been made in sincere faith, has it gone unnoticed or unappreciated by Jehovah God? By no means. Not only does his love go out to you for it, but also he can make the seed you have planted grow and cause your works to bear fruit. The apostle Paul said: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow."—1 Cor. 3:6.

#### DELIGHT IN YOUR SERVICE TO JEHOVAH

<sup>16</sup> So, when you see new persons come to the Kingdom Hall, and when you see new ones baptized, can you say that you had no share? Not if you have a part in doing God's will. The congregation is a *body*, and it represents God and exerts its influence collectively, so that everyone shares. Additionally, by your upright conduct, by your friendliness, particularly toward those attending meetings—in fact, by your very presence at the meetings, you have strong influence toward helping them on the way to life. As to God's view of the importance of each one of his people, great and small, the apostle Paul wrote:

"For the body, indeed, is not one member, but many. If the foot should say: 'Because I am not a hand, I am no part of the body,' it is not for this reason no part of the body. And if the ear should say: 'Because I am not an eye, I am no part of the body,' it is not for this reason no part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If it were all hearing, where would the smelling be? But now God has set the members in the body, each one of them, just as he pleased." "And if one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it; or if a member is glorified, all the other members rejoice with it."

—1 Cor. 12:14-18, 26.

16. Why can none of Jehovah's witnesses, when they see many new persons coming in, say that they have had no share in this increase?

<sup>17</sup> To all who have 'tasted and seen that Jehovah is good,' the service of Jehovah is delightful in all its aspects. (Ps. 34:8) It is a *volunteer service*. (Ps. 110:3) It would hurt Jehovah if any of his servants felt forced, or were not happy, rejoicing in doing his will. Jesus found great joy in all his service to Jehovah. (Ps. 40:8; Heb. 12:2) Since Jehovah wants us to be happy, serving such a delightful God is not a matter of being an ascetic, over-serious, always denying ourselves anything that is not work. The Bible counsels: "Do not become righteous overmuch, nor show yourself excessively wise. Why should you cause desolation to yourself?"—Eccl. 7:16.

<sup>18</sup> Neither should we compare our record with that of another person or impose our conscience on him. The apostle Paul told the Christians at Galatia, who were making comparisons and restricting themselves by unnecessary rules: "Where, then, is that happiness you had?" Further, he said: "If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he is deceiving his own mind. But let him prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person."—Gal. 4:9-15; 6:3, 4; 2 Cor. 10:12.

<sup>19</sup> Of course, each one of Jehovah's witnesses must accept Jehovah's fatherly discipline. (Heb. 12:7-11) He should be open to Scriptural counsel from fellow Christians, and should work in harmony with the congregation. (Gal. 6:1; Heb. 13:17; Phil. 1:27) He must also exercise self-control, so as not to let imperfect human inclinations take over. (1 Cor. 9:26, 27; Prov. 6:9-11) Yet God's servants are not

17. How does Jehovah want us to feel about the service that we render him?

18. How should we feel about others who are serving Jehovah and any comparing of our activity with theirs?

19. (a) What protective things that Jehovah provides should the Christian appreciate and respect? (b) What effect does a reasonable view of service to God have?

required to drive themselves unreasonably. For example, perhaps you plan to spend a certain amount of time in field service. However, if you become weary, is it not better to stop and rest for a few minutes and then start in again than to feel driven to go without a pause? In fact, might this enable you actually to serve Jehovah better because you are relaxed, happy and able to think more clearly? Or, if you are cold and weary, is it not better to stop for a hot drink to warm and refresh yourself and then to continue instead of forcing yourself relentlessly, with risk to your enjoyment and effectiveness? Jesus worked whole-souled, yet he recognized the need to rest occasionally, and did not feel guilty while doing it. (Mark 6:31, 32) Moreover, "a joyful heart has a good effect on the countenance," and the people to whom you witness cannot help but be favorably affected if you are happy.—Prov. 15:13.

<sup>20</sup> So, enjoy your service to Jehovah. Rejoice and delight in it. (Phil. 4:4) He does not want your worship toward him to be a burden. If you enjoy your service your heart will prompt you to do even more. Happiness is contagious, and such a spirit will manifest itself throughout the entire congregation. New ones will observe it and will likewise see that the ways of Jehovah are truly a delight and will join you in happy service to him.—Zech. 8:23.

20. What will be the results if you truly enjoy your service to Jehovah?

## **"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS**

October 13: Do Not Hold Back from "Practicing the Truth." Page 560. Songs to Be Used: 19, 64.

October 20: "Continue Observing His Commands." Page 566. Songs to Be Used: 4, 65.

October 27: Finding Delight in Jehovah's Ways. Page 572. Songs to Be Used: 48, 101.