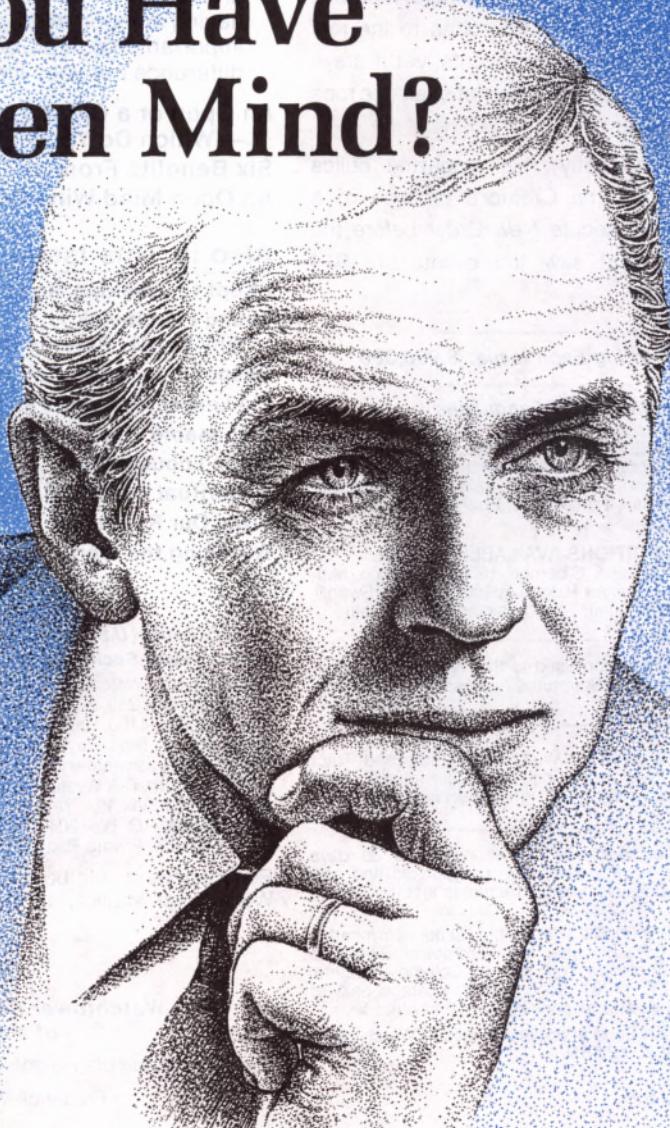


Awake!

NOVEMBER 22, 1984

**Do You Have
An Open Mind?**



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

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Feature Articles

Everyone likes to think he has an open mind. Actually, just about everyone has a mind closed to one or more subjects, at one time or another. Are you open-minded enough to consider the possibility that you may not be? This series of articles presents some of the advantages of having an open mind, among them the most important one of all, one that can mean the difference between life and death!

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Frederick W. Franz, President

An Open or a Closed Mind

—Which Do You Have?

PEOPLE do have difficulties getting along with one another, do they not? And although most of us like to think of ourselves as being open-minded, let us ask ourselves with complete honesty: Is the narrow-minded and bigoted person really always the "other fellow"?

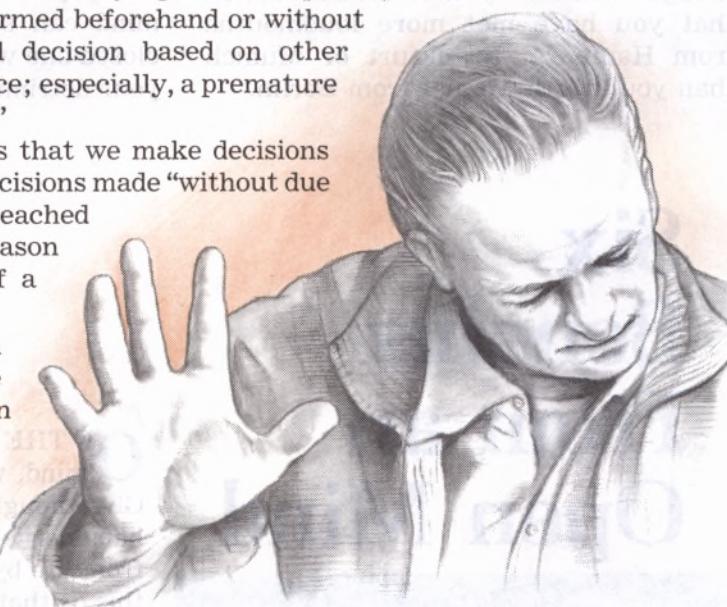
In reality your mind may be more closed than you imagine. Do you at times say: "Two things I never talk about are religion and politics"? Or do you turn up your nose at foods you have not eaten before? "Snails? Never!" Or how do you feel about unfamiliar types of medical treatment? "Acupuncture? Pure quackery!" Or do you "know"—as, for example, "everyone" in Germany does—that Gypsies are thieves, North Germans are stubborn, everyone from Berlin is a loudmouth, Swabians are stingy and foreigners are lazy? Of course, similar ideas are found everywhere—yes, in your country too.

What Is an Open Mind?

An open mind is free from the fetters of prejudice, which by one dictionary is defined as follows: "A judgment or opinion, favorable or unfavorable, formed beforehand or without due examination; a mental decision based on other grounds than reason or justice; especially, a premature or adversely biased opinion."

A necessary part of life is that we make decisions and reach judgments. But decisions made "without due examination" or judgments reached "on other grounds than reason or justice" are evidences of a closed mind.

Having an open mind, on the other hand, means to be receptive to new information



and ideas. It means being willing to examine and to evaluate information without a biased attitude. By retaining what is worthwhile and rejecting what is worthless, we can reach definite conclusions on a solid basis and still leave our minds open to further revision should additional information become available at a future time. He who feels he has learned it all can be sure that this attitude will prevent him from ever learning more.

Why People Have Closed Minds

A closed mind may indicate lack of knowledge. We may know so little about a subject, or have information so distorted or incomplete, that the facts necessary to reach proper conclusions are missing. For example, if you are living in Germany and are so sure that everyone from Berlin is a loudmouth, ask yourself just how many people from Berlin you know. Enough to judge several million people accurately? Perhaps more careful thought will lead you to the realization that you have met more loudmouths from Hamburg, Frankfurt or Munich than you ever have met from Berlin.

A closed mind may betray a lack of interest in the subject or a reluctance to look into the matter. In fact, it could even be a sign of uncertainty or doubt. For example, if we are unable to defend our religious views, we may find ourselves lashing out against those who challenge our beliefs, not with logical arguments, but with slurs and innuendos. This smacks of prejudice and of a closed mind.

A closed mind may also indicate a selfish desire to retain certain advantages that an open mind might cause us to lose. In some countries racial groups have been suppressed so that other groups can enjoy certain privileges. Unwilling to share these with others, the privileged groups retreat to the prejudicial position of "we are better than you," closing their minds to all evidence to the contrary.

Are you open-minded enough to consider the possibility that you may not be? It will pay to find out. Whereas an open mind can serve to your advantage, a closed one will almost certainly serve to your detriment.

Six Benefits From an Open Mind

OF THE many advantages of an open mind, we would like to discuss six. Give thought to whether you could perhaps derive greater benefit or pleasure from life by developing an open mind in this or that particular aspect.



1 Enriches Life

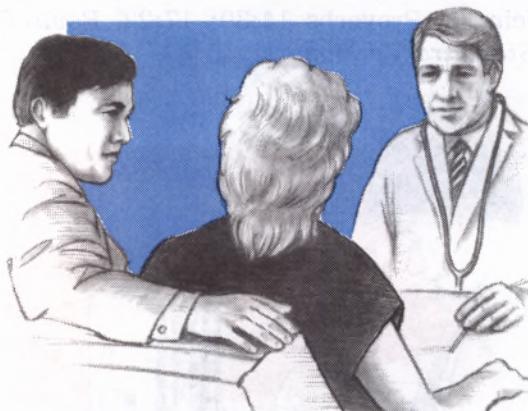
Remember when you were a child? How exciting life was! How thrilling to explore everything new that came along. You were—as most children normally are—open-minded, receptive to new impressions. You did not know what prejudice meant.

But have you retained this open-minded attitude toward new things? Or have you become like the foreign traveler who complains that he can't find the food he is accustomed to eating at home? Of course, taking certain health precautions as regards food and drink when traveling may be necessary. For example, it may be wise to drink only bottled water and, particularly in the tropics, to avoid raw vegetables and salads. But, outside of that, what prevents you from at least *trying* some of the local cuisine? The natives have been enjoying it for years. You may not know what you are missing!

And how do you feel about foreign customs? They may be somewhat strange viewed from your standpoint. But "strange" does not mean "inferior." It is a closed mind that insists that "our way of doing things is better." So even though you may still prefer a knife and fork to

chopsticks, your life will be enriched once you learn to eat with them.

Why rob yourself of association with other ethnic groups because their way of life may be different? A German graduate of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead recalls that he had never enjoyed close contact with people from other nations until he attended this missionary school in 1962. "I was part of a student body composed of students from 50 different countries," he remembers, "from such far-away places as Japan, Papua New Guinea, the Congo, Argentina and India. At first my feelings toward them were mixed, but in the course of time, after becoming better acquainted with them, I learned to love them. It was an experience that greatly enriched my life and broadened my horizons." Your life, too, will become more meaningful if you widen out to enjoy the full variety to be found within the human family.



2 Contributes to Better Health

The total and lasting cure for illness is beyond man's power to find, either at present or in the future. But divine help is on the way. God's new system of things will soon displace today's society that is sick both physically and morally. Then,

"no resident will say: 'I am sick.'"—Isaiah 33:24.

In the meantime we seek temporary relief from physical ailments. There are any number of medical treatments to choose from. Having an open mind, we will not condemn any of them simply on the basis of their being unusual or unorthodox. We will also realize that what may be effective for one person may not work for another. Thus, although we exercise due caution, an open mind will open up a much wider scope of medical therapies to choose from than a closed mind would ever allow.

An open mind helps us maintain a cheerful attitude. A closed mind is poisoned by prejudice and hate. It is unloving and therefore detrimental to health. As one psychiatrist said: "It is easier to hate, but healthier to love." Yes, modern medicine has discovered the Bible truth that "a tranquil mind gives life to the flesh" and that "a cheerful heart is a good medicine."—Proverbs 14:30; 17:22, *Revised Standard Version*.



3 Promotes Mental Growth

It has been estimated that your brain has the capacity to remember 10,000 times as much material as is recorded in

the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*! Why stifle this tremendous capacity by allowing a closed mind to limit your intake of knowledge?

A closed mind brings mental growth to a standstill. This is dangerous because a closed mind is incapable of correcting improper or wrong ideas and views. An open mind, on the other hand, leads to maturity and greater mental balance. It helps us broaden the foundation upon which to base our views and make our decisions. Thus, the greater likelihood we have of making correct ones.



4 Helps in Solving Problems

To solve problems successfully we need to be willing to accept wise counsel. Proverbs 15:22 says: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk, but in the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment." An open mind helps us to accept the counsel of those around us, people with whom we work, live and associate. This leads to accomplishment and success.

An open mind will help us pick up counsel by way of example, even when the one

giving it may be unaware of that fact. This is illustrated by what a Christian missionary's wife used to tell her husband whenever he became upset at the way people were doing things. "Remember," she would remind him, "you can learn something from everyone—if it's no more than how *not* to do something."

Yes, we can benefit greatly by not closing our minds to the thoughts and conduct of others. By open-mindedly contemplating "how their conduct turns out," we can either imitate or avoid their course of action, as the case may be.—Compare Hebrews 13:7.



5 Promotes Good Relationships

Did you ever jump to conclusions that later proved to be incorrect? How embarrassing. But even worse, how painful if this caused a severe strain on your marriage or on a treasured friendship. An open mind would have prevented you from making up your mind about the matter until all the evidence was in. This, in turn, would have prevented you from speaking too soon. The Bible's sage observation

about this at Proverbs 18:13 is: "When anyone is replying to a matter before he hears it, that is foolishness on his part and a humiliation."

It is truly difficult to have a fine relationship with narrow-minded people who see everything only from *their perspective*, not allowing for differences of opinion, taste and preference. And what is more narrow-minded than a closed mind?

Of course, an open mind should not be so open or broad that it loses sight of moral principles and adopts the view that "anything goes." But by open-mindedly trying to *understand* a person, we are not condoning his wrong actions. We are simply trying to determine why he thinks or acts as he does. Are there extenuating circumstances? Could it be the way he was brought up, his background or his environment? Could it be lack of knowledge?

Being open-minded as regards the faults and weaknesses of others will make it easier for us to show them empathy. It will not be difficult to reach out to them in Christian love, helping them to change wrong actions and attitudes. It will make for meaningful relationships.

6 The Most Important Advantage

A sixth advantage of an open mind is so important that it deserves more detailed consideration. It, too, has to do with our relationship with others, this time with our Creator, Jehovah God, and with his Son and our Redeemer, Christ Jesus.

Our relationship with our fellowman, while important, can mean at most only the difference between happiness and unhappiness. Our relationship with Jehovah God and Christ Jesus means the difference between life and death! See the next article for details.

An Open Mind Wins God's Approval

THIE importance of having an open mind so as to win God's approval is shown in the words recorded at Ephesians 5:10, 17. There we read: "*Keep on making sure* of what is acceptable to the Lord. On this account cease becoming unreasonable, but *go on perceiving* what the will of Jehovah is."

But is it not a fact that many people have closed minds when it comes to religion? Some even reject the idea of a Supreme Being and are unwilling to listen to the evidence of his existence presented by believers. For them religion is a closed subject.

Even some religious people have closed minds. They are interested only in "their" religion, showing no willingness to as much as listen to the views of others. And even though they may not have chosen their religion but simply have inherited it from their parents, still they feel that their religion must be right. But not every inheritance is necessarily good. A quick temper, a selfish attitude or a deceitful spirit can also be parental hand-me-downs, but they are definitely undesirable.

What makes a religion right is its total adherence to God's Word. Whether our religion meets this criterion or not can only be determined by open-mindedly comparing it with the Bible. Certainly such an important matter as our worship of God should not be determined for us by the coincidence of where we were born. After all, the child born to Catholic parents has had no more control over this

fact than the child born to Muslim parents controls that.

Avoid Religious Prejudice

When people are approached with a religious message, they may react in one of several ways. Some will say: "Absolute truth is impossible to find"; "all religions are only out for your money"; "science has disproved religion"; "religion is just a crutch for weak people." These views, and others like them, tend to close the mind and cut off investigation before it has begun. It is prejudice at work.

Why, some people have even been known to doubt the truthfulness of a message simply on the basis of where the message bearer came from. Take, for example, an event from the first century C.E. John 1:45, 46 tells us: "Philip found Nathanael and said to him: 'We have found the one of whom Moses, in the Law, and the Prophets wrote, Jesus, the son of Joseph, from Nazareth.' But Nathanael said to him: 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him: 'Come and see.'" Philip was clearly admonishing Nathanael to keep an open mind.

Similar things happen today. When missionaries of Jehovah's Witnesses preach in foreign countries, they may experience rejection, even though their message is based on the Bible, simply because of their nationality. Following the example of Nathanael of old, some people may ask: "Can anything good come out of America?"

Others may tend to reject a message because it is presented in a simple way by a person of simple background. But is this wise? About members of the early Christian congregation, we read: "When the Council [Jewish Sanhedrin] saw the boldness of Peter and John, and could see that they were obviously uneducated non-professionals, they were amazed and realized what being with Jesus had done for them!"—Acts 4:13, *The Living Bible*.

Yes, "uneducated non-professionals" can do amazing things when trained in the sayings of God. So do not allow their lack of formal theological training or professionalism to close your mind; leave it open to investigate the message they bring.

How to Find Religious Truth

An open mind is willing to do what 1 John 4:1 recommends. It says: "Beloved ones, do not believe every inspired expres-

sion, but test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God, because many false prophets have gone forth into the world." But in view of the thousands of different religious groups and sects now in existence, is it possible to test what is true? Yes, not only possible but also not nearly as difficult as you might think. For example:

Some religions teach that in time our literal earth will be burned up. They may quote 2 Peter 3:7 in support: "But by the same word the heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men."

But does this text really say that the literal earth will be burned up? Actually, it only speaks of the "destruction of the *ungodly men*." In the preceding verses, 5 and 6, it likens this to the time of Noah's flood when "the world of that time suffered destruction when it was deluged with water."

Now what actually perished in the Flood? Genesis 7:23 answers: "Thus he wiped out every existing thing that was on the surface of the ground, from man to beast, . . . and they were wiped off the earth." Logically, when wicked people were "wiped off the earth," the literal earth must have remained standing.

This is in harmony with Ecclesiastes 1:4, which informs us that "a generation is going, and a generation is coming; but the earth is standing even to time indefinite." Psalm 104:5 is even more emphatic: "He has founded the earth upon its established places; it will not be made to totter to time indefinite, or forever."

After comparing these scriptures, an open mind will conclude that any religion teaching the literal destruction of the earth is teaching an untruth. Could it



Do you reject a message because of preconceived ideas? Or do you investigate?

then be the true religion, representing Jehovah God, the God of truth? Or what if it teaches other doctrines equally false?* By the process of elimination, we can weed out false religions quickly.

Be Sound in Mind

The apostle Peter's admonition "be sound in mind" includes, of necessity, having an open mind, for only an open mind can reach sound conclusions and make sound judgments. Some of the inhabitants of Beroea had such an open mind, because of them we read that "they received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so." —1 Peter 4:7; Acts 17:11.

An open mind, free of prejudice, will enable us to go on "carefully examining the Scriptures daily" and then to act upon what we learn. This is in harmony with the Bible counsel to "become doers of the

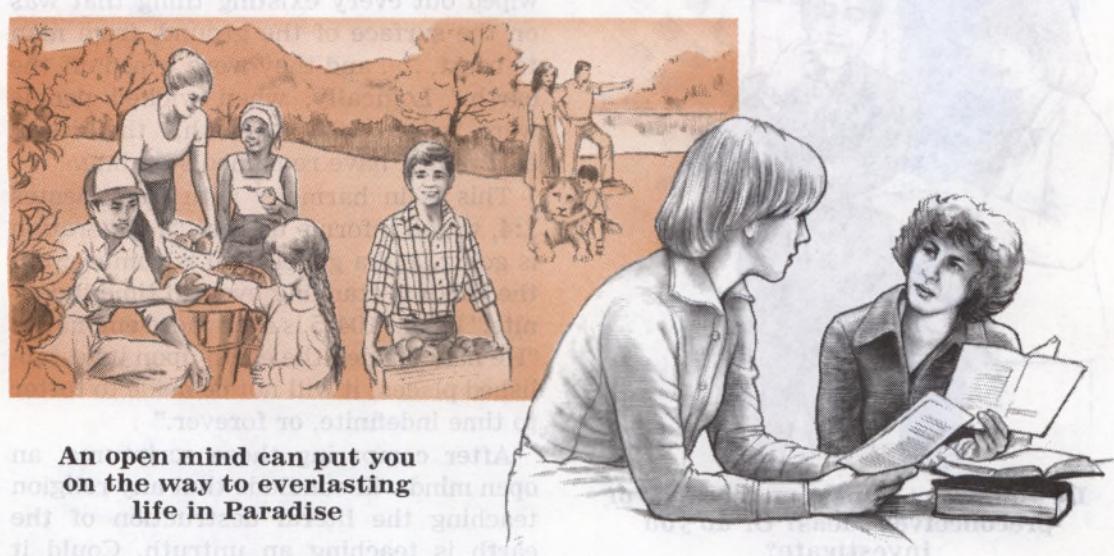
* For additional examples, see chapters 8 and 9 of the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, published in 1982 by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

word, and not hearers only." The Beroeans were more than just hearers, because Acts 17:12 informs us that "many of them became believers."—James 1:22; see also Matthew 7:21.

Yes, having an open mind will pay in many ways. Using it to help us find the true religion will enrich our present life, improve our spiritual health and assist us in solving life's problems. But, most importantly, it will also help us win God's approval, thus putting us in the way of receiving everlasting life in his new system.—See Mark 10:29, 30.

Literally hundreds of thousands of people living around the globe are happy that they were open-minded enough to investigate the Bible message. By having an open mind toward religion they have seen the marvelous prospect of everlasting life on a paradise earth opened up to them. Would you enjoy such a prospect for your future?

Are you open-minded enough to investigate? It will be to your everlasting benefit if you are.



**An open mind can put you
on the way to everlasting
life in Paradise**



He fought in Vietnam and took drugs to escape war's horrors. An accident left him a quadriplegic, and he took more drugs to escape the trauma of life in a wheelchair. He inherited some money, and along with it got friends who were not real friends. He sought truth from philosophers and intellectuals and found only empty words. Only when he sought from the right source did he find what he was searching for.

I Kept On Seeking, and I Found It

—As told by William Roddis

THE structure of my life came unstuck when I was 14. My folks got divorced. What I'd taken for granted as being stable and normal was no longer stable and normal. I was shuttled back and forth between a father in Wisconsin and a mother in Arizona. By my late teens I no longer wanted to be involved in this ruptured family life. So in 1967 I joined the army.

I went to Vietnam, served on a helicopter combat assault team as a door gunner and then came back and worked on experimental aircraft for the army. My ambition was to be a bush pilot in Alaska. But these plans were blasted in a moment's time. In 1969, during a weekend leave in Panama City, Florida, I ran down the beach, dived into the surf and hit a sandbar with my head. In that instant I became a quadri-

plegic. Eight months later I left the VA hospital in Long Beach, California, and took up my life in a wheelchair.

I got an apartment in Long Beach, fell in with some unsavory characters and ended up operating a shop with them on Sunset Boulevard. It's what was called a head shop—psychedelic posters, hash pipes, dope-smoking paraphernalia, black lights and all the other crazy things that go along with the drug culture. To help me cope with life in a wheelchair, I got into drugs—marijuana, cocaine, hashish, mescaline and others. I had used drugs in Vietnam to escape the horrors. Now I used them to endure life in a wheelchair.

Along with my so-called friends, I got involved in circulating petitions to legalize marijuana, and we, along with others, ac-

tually did get the marijuana initiative on the ballot in California. We published an underground newspaper, *The Long Beach Free Press*.

Well, that's the direction my life was taking in the early '70's. It was also during those years that three things started happening. One of them would completely change my life.

Number One: I inherited some three quarters of a million dollars. Along with it

As my bankroll dwindled so did the number of my friends

came many new friends, attracted by the money and the drugs I could buy. With other investors I got a restaurant and several wine stores. The businesses didn't prosper and finally went under. As my bankroll dwindled so did my friends. I became skeptical, leery of forming close attachments. I withdrew into a shell, began reading Nietzsche and other philosophers, and started associating with some of the intellectuals at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

I was searching for truth. I didn't know it then, but I was on my way to experiencing the fulfillment of Jesus' promise: "Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you." —Luke 11:9.

Number Two: I was beginning to realize that my drug use was ruining my body. Cocaine made me not want to eat. If I didn't eat, I'd get thin and, in my condition, if I got thin, I'd get bedsores. I knew I had to quit the drugs—ah, yes, easier said than done!

Number Three: Jehovah's Witnesses began to call. I was living in what is considered an exclusive neighborhood near Los Angeles, the Palos Verdes Estates. A law said that nobody was to solicit in our fine community. So when Jehovah's Witnesses called, I called the police.

"They have a constitutional right to preach from door to door," I was told. "In fact, they won the right in the Supreme Court of the United States."

I was impressed. I started taking their *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Then one of the men didn't just leave the magazines with me—he started a discussion. Well, I could handle this! He was a janitor, he was black, and I had recently read a book on Bible prophecy. So I knew plenty! More than enough to cope with this man!

Well, as it turned out, I didn't know enough. He supported everything he said from the Bible, and I always had deep respect for the Bible. But now what this man showed me from God's Word turned a light on in my head! The discussions led to

When Jehovah's Witnesses called, I called the police

a study in the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*.

"We can talk, but I'm not about to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses," I warned him at the outset. He didn't seem disturbed. He had heard that before.

The first three chapters didn't interest me. The fourth one, "Why We Grow Old and Die," did. But it was the next chapter, "Where Are the Dead," that grabbed me. Something clicked. I'd been getting involved in philosophy and man's concept of truth, seeking answers to the ultimate

questions: Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going? Who is God?

When philosophers discuss that last question, they quickly bog down in theorizings. Not accepting God's Word as a source of information, their talk becomes an exercise in futility. I'd always believed in God, but just who he was—that I didn't know. I had no close relationship with him. How could I? I knew nothing about him.

So when the Witness got to the chapter "Where Are the Dead?" I came to life. Who can say where the dead are? No man, no philosopher. Their speculations are empty. But now, finally, I was getting the answers from God's Word.

Then we got into the subject of truth: What is truth? Is it always in agreement with itself? I learned that Satan is the god of this present world, and the mess it's in became understandable. A whole new awareness dawned on me. Past history and present events fell into place as I learned of Satan's organization and of God's promised Kingdom under Christ, that it is soon to cause God's will to be done on earth. Just as I had prayed in the Lord's Prayer! Truth became real. Jesus came to bear witness to the truth. What is truth? Speaking to God in prayer, Jesus said: "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) From that time onward "scales" fell from my eyes!

I began to use the newfound Bible truth as a touchstone to examine everything. I had been associating some with the Pentecostals. I was attracted by their warmth. It was an emotionally stirring religion. But now I recalled that they had told me, "Wine is the tool of the Devil!" Using the Bible as the touchstone, I realized this could not be true since Jesus' first miracle was turning water into wine.

I also went to the Episcopal priest with questions on Revelation. "I studied the

book of Revelation for two years in theology school," he said. "You can't understand it and shouldn't bother with it at all. Get into politics. Improve the world."

Again, the Bible as the touchstone came into my mind: "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world." "The whole world is lying in the power of the

We can talk, but I'm not about to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses

wicked one." "Friendship with the world is enmity with God."—1 John 2:15; 5:19; James 4:4.

There was, incidentally, a psychological problem that had to be overcome en route to this point. Egotistically, I found it hard to handle the fact that this black janitor was coming to my house and teaching me so much. The man himself sensed the problem and solved it. One evening he came with another Witness and said:

"You know, we're not any great geniuses on the Bible. There's lots we don't know. We have to study for our meetings. If you don't mind, we'll study here too."

So they sat in my living room and studied for their Tuesday evening Congregation Book Study while I prepared for my lesson in the *Truth* book. Now I felt comfortable. My ego was appeased. We were all students. They had to study too!

And this accomplished something else. It made me curious about their Tuesday night meeting. So I started attending that meeting. Then I went to their Sunday meeting, and after that their Thursday night meeting that trained the Witnesses for field service. Soon I was witnessing from door to door myself.

For me, what really distinguished this religion from any other was the door-to-door preaching. I felt it was important for me personally to do it, notwithstanding my handicap. After all, in our present, imperfect state everyone is disabled. Some are just more disabled than others. So I'd go out with the group, I in the wheelchair. At most doors I couldn't get close enough to

At most doors I couldn't get close enough to push the doorbell, so I carried a long stick to push it with

push the doorbell, so I carried a long stick to push it with.

I often worked with one Witness in the congregation who was old and disabled. He had had a stroke, his sight was very poor, his hearing wasn't good, but he'd been witnessing for almost 40 years. We often worked together in the preaching work. He'd push my wheelchair and I'd drive the car and be his eyes and ears. It seemed I was only a half and he was the other half, but together we made a whole Witness!

By now my third aim was accomplished—and more. What was easier said than done was now done: To become a Witness I gave up all drugs. To this another blessing was added: Because of quitting the drugs my health improved and my strength increased so much that I could walk with crutches!

It was about this time that I got engaged to marry. Patsy was one of the pioneers—full-time ministers—in the congregation. When the group went out witnessing, she and I often worked together. Eventually we got married and pioneered together.

Things had moved fast for me since the Witnesses first called on me. In January of 1974 I started talking to the Witnesses. In February I began the study with them. In May I went out in the field service for the first time. In June I finished my study in the *Truth* book. In July I went to my first district convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. In August I got baptized. In September I proposed. In December I got married. In January '75 I was pioneering. A busy 13 months!

In 1977 my wife and I and our daughter, Dolores, moved to northern California, to Calistoga in the heart of the wine country. I bought 35 acres of wooded hills—including a small valley with 3 acres of grapevines. I started making some wine, and eventually I got bonded and began selling wine commercially. Using a golf cart to get around while working in the vineyard and my crutches in the winery, I am able to do the work necessary in spite of my disability.

Now, in 1984, I am selling this property and the wine business and relocating in the same area. I am doing this to free my wife and me so that we can spend more time witnessing to others about God's Kingdom. It is our hope that by Jehovah's undeserved kindness we may live to see the fulfillment on the Paradise earth of Jehovah's promise to "prepare a banquet for all the nations of the world—a banquet of the richest food and the finest wine. Here he will suddenly remove the cloud of sorrow that has been hanging over all the nations. The Sovereign LORD will destroy death forever! He will wipe away the tears from everyone's eyes."—Isaiah 25:6-8, *Today's English Version*.

So I am glad I kept on seeking, for I found the truth and the satisfaction and contentment that it brings.

Young People Ask...

Why Are My Parents Overprotective?

You say you're old enough to stay out late on weekends. They say you have to be home early.

You want to see that new movie all the other kids are talking about. They tell you that you can't see it.

You say you've met some nice kids you'd like to go out with. They say they'd like to meet your friends first.

WHEN you're a teenager, it sometimes feels as if your parents have a choke hold on your life. Every "I want to" you make seems to be followed by an inevitable "No, you can't." Recalled one young girl: "When I became a teenager, my parents started putting all kinds of restraints on me, like coming in by midnight. I really resented it."

No part of your life seems safe from the 'prying eyes' of your parents. "My dad questions me about how I get my money and where I spend it," complains 18-year-old Billy. "If I make it, I feel I should decide how to spend it." Fifteen-year-old Debbie has a similar grievance: "My dad always wants to know where I am, what time I'm going to be home. Most parents do that. Do they have to know *everything*? They should give me more freedom."

In all fairness, though, most youths manage to get their way at least a fair share of the time, and likely you're no exception. Still, there may be times when

your folks seem to forget that you are growing up and treat you more like a toddler than a teenager. From where does this compelling urge to protect come?

"Mental Distress"

Doubtless you have long ago figured out that the protective urge pretty much goes along with the job of being a parent. When Mom and Dad aren't busy putting a roof over your head, clothing or feeding you, they are often grappling with how to teach, train and, yes, *protect* you. And if your parents are Christians, they take seriously the Bible's command to 'bring you up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.' (Ephesians 6:4) So their interest in you is far from casual. They are responsible *before God* for the way in which they bring you up. And when something seems to threaten your well-being, they worry.

Consider Jesus Christ's parents. Once, after a visit to Jerusalem, they unknowingly left for home without him. When

they became aware of his absence, they made a diligent—if not frantic—three-day search for him! And when they finally “found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers and listening to them and questioning them,” Jesus’ mother exclaimed, “Child, why did you treat us this way? Here your father and I in mental distress have been looking for you.” (Luke 2:41-48) Now if Jesus’ parents suffered anxiety, think of how often your parents must worry about you!

Power Versus Experience

Another reason parents are so inclined to protect is the fact that their perception of you, your friends and the world we live in is likely quite different from yours. As Solomon once noted, young people are full of “power” and energy. (Proverbs 20:29) They see the world as brimming with opportunities to explore and develop their potentials. But in doing so, they do not always use the best judgment because they are “inexperienced” and lack “shrewdness.” (Proverbs 1:4) Adults, though perhaps lacking in “power,” often see the world through the eyes of experience. They well know the pitfalls and dangers of life and want to help you “ward off calamity.”—Ecclesiastes 11:10.

Take, for example, that never-ending conflict over what time you should come home. You perhaps see no reason to be restricted in this way. But have you ever looked at matters from your parents’ point of view? The school-age authors of the book *The Kids’ Book About Parents* tried to do so. They admit: “We know that parents get worried and angry when kids are out past their curfew.”

Indeed, these youngsters compiled a list of what they call “the fantasies that must go on in parents’ heads about what

their kids are doing if they are not home at the proper time.” Included in this list were such things as ‘doing drugs, getting in a car accident, hanging out in parks, getting arrested, going to porno movies, selling dope, getting raped or mugged, winding up in jail, and disgracing the family name.’



Many teenagers feel that their parents fence them in

At face value, it seems almost amusing that some parents jump to such conclusions. 'I'd never do such things,' you proudly assert. But is it not true that many young people—perhaps some of your schoolmates—are doing just such things? Should you therefore resent the suggestion that keeping both late hours and the wrong kind of company could be harmful for you? Why even Jesus' parents wanted to know his whereabouts!

Understand Your Parents' Feelings

True, not all of your parents' restrictions may seem so reasonable. Some youths even say that their parents' fear of harm coming to them borders on paranoia! But there are reasons for this. The Bible tells of a young man named Benjamin and how circumstances required that he and his brothers make a trip to Egypt. His father's reaction? Says the Bible: "But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph's brother, with his other brothers, because he said: 'Otherwise a fatal accident may befall him.'"—Genesis 42:4.

Now Benjamin was a grown man, likely in his 30's. He could easily have chafed at being treated this way. After all, why would a "fatal accident" be any more a threat to him than to his ten older brothers? Nevertheless, he apparently understood his father's feelings. Benjamin was the second child of Jacob's beloved wife Rachel. She had died giving birth to him. (Genesis 35:17, 18) You can therefore imagine the intense attachment Jacob must have had for this son! Too, Jacob was under the misconception that his other son by Rachel, Joseph, had suffered "a fatal accident." Though perhaps not entirely rational, Jacob's reactions were at least understandable.

At times your parents may likewise seem to go to unnecessary lengths to

protect you. But remember, so much time, energy and emotion have been invested in you. The thought of your growing up—and even eventually leaving—may disturb and frighten your parents.* Wrote one parent: "My only child, a son, is nineteen now, and I can hardly bear the idea of his moving out."

Yes, your growing up may seem a cruel reminder to your parents that they are aging, and that their job as parents is seemingly coming to an end (although it really is not!). One parent said: "At first you think you have lived your life and are now ready for the scrap heap."

Hence, the tendency on the part of some parents is to smother or overprotect their children. It would be a real mistake, though, to overreact to this situation. One young woman recalls: "Until I reached the age of about 18, my mother and I were *very* close. . . . [But] as I got older we started to have problems. I wanted to exert some independence, which she must have seen as a threat to our relationship. She, in turn, started to try to hold on to me tighter, and I reacted by pulling away more. I realize now that I was partially at fault." Far better it is to cultivate "fellow feeling" and try to understand your parents. (1 Peter 3:8) A young girl named Kathy explains that doing so 'helped her to be more considerate of her parents.'

You, too, will do well to be more considerate of your parents, and try to cultivate some mutual understanding. Remember, not all youths have parents that care enough about them to look out for their welfare. And if yours are the caring sort, be happy. It means you are loved.

* See the series of articles on the subject "When They Grow Up and Leave Home—Why It's So Hard For Parents to 'Let Go'" in the February 8, 1983, *Awake!*

Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

77th Class—September 1984



In the list below, rows are numbered from front to back and names are listed from left to right in each row.

- (1) Joe, L.; Noumair, P.; Simms, M.; McCaslin, R.; Berkeley, T.; Sahuque, B. (2) Enns, K.; Medley, K.; Brandon, D.; Reed, M.; Sauvageau, S.; Näslund, M.; Krysuik, D. (3) Porter, J.; Deering, D.; Magnussen, K.; McCaslin, R.; Thomas, A.; Noumair, M.; Pole, H.; Krysuik, L. (4) Worcester, P.; Worcester, P.; Medley, T.; Thompson, S.; Woodson, A.; Pole, N.; Brandon, M.; Turner, M. (5) van Bussel, H.; Sauvageau, C.; Berkeley, M.; Reed, A.; Thompson, K.; Deering, J.; Rogers, S.; Berry, E.

RESPONDING TO THE CALL

—For More Missionaries

WE WERE looking for the postman every day," says Andrew Reed, "hoping and hoping." For Andrew and his wife, Miriam, the hoped-for letter came—an invitation to attend the 77th class of Gilead School, the Watchtower Society's missionary training school at Brooklyn, New York. They were ready to go.

Paul and Pamela Worcester were also ready to go. "We were in the process of moving to serve where the need was greater," says Paul, explaining that they were moving to a small congregation in Kansas. Pamela adds, "We were already set up, selling things and getting rid of things. So when we got the invitation to Gilead, we just finished it all up, and instead of going to Kansas we came here."

What do these young men and women recently attending Gilead School have in common? They, like their classmates—37 students in all—were ready, yes, anxious to come to Brooklyn for missionary training. "This is a dream come true," said one of the students. All of them, without exception, were willing to make adjustments in their life in order to respond to the call.

That is certainly how class members Mark and Patricia Noumair felt when they got their Gilead invitation. "But," says Patricia, "it wasn't hard because all along we had

been working toward it. We kept our life simple. We had a janitorial service just big enough for the two of us. If any other accounts were offered that we couldn't handle, we passed them on." In two weeks, they sold their mobile home and their business. Says Mark: "We were ready to go."

That kind of spirit has characterized some 6,100 ministers who have come to Gilead School since 1943, the year the school began operation. But why seek missionary work when they could pursue more comfortable careers, or even preach full time closer to home?

"That's a good question," says Karen Enns, one of six single women in the 77th class, who had said good-bye to her good friends in Alma, Quebec, Canada. "I liked the people in Alma, and I loved the territory. Everything was just fantastic. Yet I said to myself, 'You can do more.' I wasn't satisfied."

Terry and Karen Medley also enjoyed their ministry before coming to Gilead School. But they sought a new challenge. Says Terry, "I didn't want to be too comfortable." Michael and Tracy Berkeley felt the same way. "We couldn't, with a clear conscience, just sit," says Michael. Like many faithful Christians of the first century, they wanted to make them-

CLASS PROFILE

Total number of students ..	37
Number of countries represented	7
Number of countries assigned to	13
Number of single brothers ..	7
Number of single sisters	6
Number of married couples	12
Average age	30.9
Average years baptized ..	13.9
Average years in full-time service ..	8.7

selves available for further service to God.

Willing to Go Anywhere

All in the class came to Gilead not knowing where they would be assigned. Why didn't the possibility of being assigned to a distant country with perhaps poor sanitary conditions deter these students? "People need to hear the truth," was the overwhelming response from the class.

Admittedly, some in the class, like Mark and Patricia Noumair, had reservations before they applied for Gilead. But they came to appreciate, says Mark, that "there are pros and cons to every assignment." Mark and Denise Brandon, too, had wondered about the kind of conditions they might face. "But," says Mark, "we talked to a few missionaries." They were amazed how much these missionaries simply trusted in Jehovah. These four students are very pleased to serve now as missionaries in Africa.

Unquestionably, these young men and women have faith that Jehovah will take care of them. Certainly, by offering their services as missionaries, they seek, not their own interests, but primarily those of God's Kingdom. (Matthew 6:33) But how did they get this desire for missionary work in the first place?

"Upbringing," said a number of the students. Take Miriam Reed, assigned with her husband to serve in Peru. "When the series of *Watchtower* magazine articles came out encouraging people to go to Central America," she says, "my dad moved, and we went down as a family." The family—with six children—settled in Nicaragua. Miriam further explains: "When we first arrived there, I used to work with some of the missionary sisters in the service. And serving where the need

is greater and working with the missionaries, I think, is what made me want to be a missionary."

Not all in the 77th class of Gilead had the benefit of being raised by parents who encouraged them to become full-time preachers, let alone missionaries. Some, like Mark Noumair and Mark Brandon, came to appreciate the Christian ministry without early family support. Both said that the Watchtower Society's convention programs stimulated their interest in missionary work. Others, like Tracy Berkeley and Larisa Krysuik, were influenced by zealous companions in the congregation. Clearly, no single factor accounts for the zeal of the 77th class for missionary work. They simply love the ministry and have a willingness to go to the ends of the earth to help their fellowman.

Says Andrew Reed, "Many, many would love to do what we are doing. But because of age, family or for a number of legitimate reasons, they just cannot be missionaries." But students of the 77th class could. They responded to the call. As these 37 students take up their assignments in 13 different lands, we feel confident that Jehovah will bless their efforts.

In Our Next Issue

- **100 Years Old—And Stronger Than Ever!**
 - **My Guitar, My Music and My God**
 - **How Can I Improve My Grades?**
-



Women the world over have long sought to present a pleasing appearance through clothing. Some of the customs and ways this is accomplished are as different as the people themselves and come in such a delightful array of colors and styles to behold—the feminine kimonos of Japan, the beautiful saris of India, the splashes of color in African dress, the bright Indian blankets and the interesting bowler hats of Bolivia, to name just a few. However, in some parts of the world, just having sufficient clothing is a major concern for women—regardless of what it looks like. In other parts of the globe, clothing is more abundant, but then so are the styles to choose from, causing confusion for many and possibly a materialistic approach.



The following article offers some suggestions that will perhaps appeal more to the women in Western countries, whereas the principles given for modest dress touch women from the remotest villages of Africa and the towns of Chile all the way to the large cities of the developed nations. While dress codes differ according to climate and/or local custom, whatever clothing is chosen should always be appropriate and worn with the dignity due the honored position of being a woman.

Fig Leaves, Fashions and Figures —From a Woman's Wardrobe

DO NOT judge a book by its cover—a familiar statement warning against the perils of passing judgment based on mere outward appearance. The fact is, however, people *do* form opinions based on what they initially see. And whether or not

the book ever gets read may well depend on how inviting the cover is.

And so it goes with people. First impressions may not be correct, or even fair, but they often are the factor determining success or failure, credibility or lack of it. As

one researcher on the effect of clothing said: "What people see—not what they hear—has a far greater impact."

But if such judgment is not always fair, does it matter how a woman dresses? How can she determine if certain clothing is modest or appropriate for a particular occasion? How can she tell the difference between fads and styles that are truly attractive on her? Let us examine these questions—and then our closets!

Fickle Fads

The fact that a particular look or style is *the* thing to wear does not mean that we need to accept it readily without further scrutiny. Why, then, do many of us find ourselves so gullibly donning whatever the fashionmongers and designers dictate?

Acceptability. It is natural to want to be liked and accepted by others. And the fashion industry, particularly in developed countries, has promoted this desire by creating a false and fickle standard of what is beautiful. Each season new fads are pushed on the public in an attempt to establish what will make you "acceptable," in vogue—whether you look good in it or not. But a woman should ask herself, 'Does this style really suit me?' And even when a certain garment does look attractive on you, there is something else to consider.

Accountability. While the fashion world may promote the anything-goes philosophy, much of the business world does have a dress code. For instance, regarding Western countries, notice the hefty list of don'ts from magazines and books on proper dress for a job interview: Don't wear slacks or too much



makeup. Don't be flamboyant (wild hairdo, long red nails). Don't wear a low-cut dress or blouse. Never reveal bare shoulders or bare back. Don't wear too short a skirt, below the knee is best. Don't wear hose with runs. Don't wear noisy, jangly jewelry. Don't wear party clothes. Don't wear anything faddish, extreme. And if such suggestions are useful to the businesswoman, they could also benefit a Christian woman in her preaching activities. Every time she engages in her career as a minister, she is being interviewed. If actions speak louder than words, then clothing has a powerful pair of lungs.

Adaptability. Just as excessively faddish clothing will detract from us and any message we present to others, so, too, will a very old-fashioned, outdated appearance.

But adaptability—taking attractive, modest styles and fitting them to our figure and life-style—will create a radiant, confident woman who is happy with herself. But how do you do that?

Fig Leaves and Figure Flaws

Fig leaves? They were first on the fashion scene and inappropriate from the start. (Genesis 3: 7, 21) Fig leaves were immodest. But many women want to enhance their appearance, and yet to do that so many have to deal with those nasty little things called figure flaws!

Balance is the key word. By using proportion, color and style, you can balance out the discrepancies, thus creating an illusion.

Proportion: You are trying to average out your overall figure through clothing. Do not concentrate on one particular flaw at the expense of putting everything else out of proportion. Decide what you need to make you appear

larger or smaller, then fit your clothing so as to compensate.

• **Color:** Proper use of color can also fool the eye. Some colors pick up your complexion, while others make it look washed out. The eye will be attracted to a complimentary skin/color combination rather than to figure flaws.

Style: Here we must first see which styles fall within the principles of modest dress and thereby rule out the 'fig leaves.' Of course, keep in mind that styles and customs vary from country to country, so review these principles in the light of your local community. One of these is: 'Recommend yourself to every human conscience.' (2 Corinthians 4:2) Would a particular style "recommend" us in our community as tasteful, modest, Christian ministers? Or what about the Bible's reference to "the garment of a prostitute"? (Proverbs 7:10) Labeling some styles "fashion" does not change the image they project. "Well-arranged dress, with . . . soundness of mind" is advised. (1 Timothy 2:9, 10) Does the style suggest "soundness of mind" for our age and/or the occasion?

To test a style for modesty, stand in front of a full-length mirror, if possible, viewing yourself from all angles. Bend forward. Sit down. Cross your legs. In each position, did the garment remain modest? Would you wear it to a job interview or before prominent officials? Next stand before the mirror (or a friend) with a bright light behind you. If the material

is thin or slightly sheer, do your undergarments keep it modest when the light hits you (as would sunlight or other strong light)? Or are they just as thin or sheer, thereby rendering the garment immodest? Do you feel comfortable in it? When in doubt, do without.

For overall balance some general guidelines are:

- Dark colors slim and elongate
- Bright colors tend to enlarge, attract the eye
- All one color gives unbroken line that is long and lean
- Tight clothes accentuate both underweight and overweight bodies. Fabric should skim the body to flow gracefully. Skirts and the like should fit smoothly to middle of buttocks, then flow down, not hugging, touching or cupping. For best looks and comfort, no matter what size you are, clothing should be worn slightly loose.
- Skirt length appropriate to leg if just skims back of leg where calf begins to curve in. (About one to two inches below the knee.) However, many women are more comfortable with a lower hemline. Hemlines too high cut legs short and may be 'fig leaves' if immodestly high. And consider, too, that in countries such as Burma or India a hemline revealing the ankles may qualify as a 'fig leaf.'



Necessary Accessories

Now add the finishing touches with accessories. These should be uncluttered—better understated than overdone.

One magazine showed a basic, classic suit from which five completely different, but stunning, outfits were made by sim-

ply changing the accessories. And that is the key to dressing on a shoestring budget. Start with basic, classic styles, even if you own only one dress, streamlined to your shape and coloring, and then dress it up or down with jewelry, scarves, shawls, belts, handbags, jackets, stockings, shoes, and so forth. One does not need to own all these accessories; just one simple ribbon can create a new outfit and a happy mood!

Like clothing, accessories should receive proper attention and fit the occasion. Scuffed, unpolished shoes would be fine for gardening but not for business appointments or dressy events. Check that there are no runs in your stockings. What about handbags? Are they tattered, torn and overstuffed, with straps taped together, or are they clean and comfortably filled? Broken, chipped fingernails with peeling nail polish will ruin the nicest outfit. And the

loveliest of appearances can be lost if hair, hats or wigs are not clean, neat and appropriate. Otherwise, you may find that people remember the sore spot rather than you or anything you said.

One accessory not to be overlooked is good posture. Your clothes will look better if your posture does.

Head for the Closet Before the Store

With all this information you should run straight out to the store, right? Wrong. March straight to your closet. We are going to empty it, sort through what you have and learn how to combine new outfits from existing clothes. Did you know that from 12 articles of clothing you can create 48 different outfits?

But all of that in the next issue of this magazine, so do not empty your closet yet! See you in two weeks.

Disposable Toys, Disposable Values

In the world of children's toys, "the traditional has been overtaken by the trendy, the quality toy has been cast aside for the junk toy," says London's *Daily Mail*. A child psychiatrist, Dr. Kieran Walshe-Brennan, feels it says something about "the stability and morality of the young generation." In the past, he says, toys were well made, and children were taught to value them and look after them. The "enduring quality" of such toys "reflected a far more stable and moral attitude in the people," says the doctor. In contrast, "the disposable toys of today, with their built-in obsolescence, are like many young people's attitude to marriage—good as long as it lasts, then it can just be chucked away. It underlines the insecurity of many young people."

When Locusts Fly

Locusts cannot fly when their bodies are cold. Hence, when the temperature drops in the evening, they commonly take shelter in hedges or in the crevices of walls. The muscles of these insects remain stiff until they are warmed by the sun. Not until locusts have a body temperature of about 70 degrees Fahrenheit (21° C.) are they able to fly.

These facts about locusts aid in understanding Nahum 3:17, which reads: "Your guardsmen are like the locust, and your recruiting officers like the locust swarm. They are camping in the stone pens in a cold day. The sun itself has but to shine forth, and away they certainly flee; and their place is really unknown where they are." Like locusts, the guardsmen and recruiting officers of Nineveh would disappear on account of the heat of the siege. Their disappearance would be just as sudden as the departure of a locust swarm warmed by the sun's rays.

A Spiritual Famine in Nigeria?

IS RELIGION on the Decline?" asked a newspaper article. Some may find it hard to take such a question seriously, especially if the churches are booming in their locality. Just a brief perusal through magazines and newspapers, however, is eye-opening. *Time* magazine, for example, said: "The sophisticated, once powerful and lately rather liberal Protestant churches of America seem to be in the doldrums." This is rather typical of what the media are saying about religion these days.

"But what about the rest of the world?" you might ask. "Is religion really suffering the same problems in other countries?" Yes, indeed. And to illustrate, let us look into the troubles the churches are experiencing in the resource-rich nation of Nigeria. The situation there will help you appreciate that church difficulties have developed on a *global* scale.

Converts, Not Christians

About a third of Nigeria's vast population claims to be Christian. And Christendom's missionaries have labored long and hard to gain this strong support. Said *Time* magazine: "Africans are still surprised and touched by the willingness of missionaries to struggle in the hinterlands, helping to dig wells, teaching reading and writing, commanding life-giving



sacks of grain during periods of famine, risking their lives trying to cure the sick."

While such deeds may be laudable, it also must be admitted that from the outset, the churches have won friends by catering to material needs—not to spiritual appetites. (Matthew 5:3) Hence, they have made many converts but not necessarily Christians.

The World Book Encyclopedia

observed that many nominal Christians merely "combine Christian or Muslim religious practices with traditional [non-Christian] beliefs." Tragically, Christendom's missionaries have overlooked the fact that the African is often receptive to the message of the Bible itself—without the adornment of social work programs. Nevertheless, it is believed by some that Christendom's record of missionary activity has prevented the Muhammadan religion from sweeping the African continent, as some had predicted it would.

The churches, however, have not been content merely to make Nigerian converts. Many clergymen now feel it is their sacred duty to push actively for political change. The newspaper *Daily Times* of Lagos, for example, stated on October 18, 1982: "The patriarch of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, Dr. Bolaji Idowu, said in Ibadan yesterday that the Church had

a right to participate in politics if only to steer it towards righteousness . . . Dr. Idowu stressed that the Church could not abandon politics because it had the duty to proclaim the gospel as well as the duty of making men and women participate in politics."

The Methodist Church is not alone in jumping on the political bandwagon. Said

Christendom's missionaries have won the support of many Africans by means of social projects—not by teaching God's Word

the *New Nigerian* of January 12, 1981: "The Catholic Bishop of Ogoja, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Edra Ukpo has called for the creation of a department of religious affairs." The reason? The article went on to show that some clergymen felt "it was now time for government to bring all the religious organisations nearer to itself."

But what has been the effect of all of this on the church and its members?

The Backlash

Warnings are now being sounded against church involvement in politics. One writer observed that while the churches "give the impression that they have a constitutionally recognised role to play in the affairs of the state," in reality, "they do not have any such role." He further warned that it is not "in their best interest" for religionists to "get too close to the state as they do now. They might very well one day find that the state has taken up the job of choosing Bishops . . . for them."

Speaking at an Anglican Church Synod, State Governor Bola Ige similarly complained that the churches view their constitutional freedom of religion as a "licence for them to wish to impose their own particular religious and partisan susceptibility on the State by pretending to seek the peculiar interest of their flock." He thus encouraged church leaders to stick with their "task of evangelism" rather than politics.

Church Corruption

Is a return to evangelism likely, however? Not according to the picture church leaders and others paint of the spiritual condition of the church.

"The clergy have failed and laity have collapsed spiritually," said a clergyman, James Jide Adesoh, in an article in the *Daily Times* of September 7, 1982. "Partiality, tribalism and sectionalism are a great disease in our churches at this present age," he further stated. Similarly, the president of an Anglican Diocesan Council reportedly indicated that "the fall in the standard of Christian religion is the fault of top church leaders who allowed the love of money to over-shadow the spirit of God in them."

In such a spiritual vacuum, corruption inevitably develops. Said one outspoken clergyman: "It is inside the Nigerian church we find elders who after committing adultery would make reference to King Solomon as a royal flirt who was loved and blessed by God! . . . It is in Nigeria we find reverend gentlemen who protect themselves with juju charms and amulets right inside the church of God!" One Nigerian governor even claimed that "the growth of crimes in Nigeria is due to the failure of religious organisations to do what they preach."

Church corruption has become so nota-

rious that one writer lamented that "evangelism appears to have taken the back seat and Satan appears to be the only one on duty in our churches and nation." No wonder that a Nigerian newspaper posed the question raised at the outset: "Is Religion on the Decline?"

Famine Relief Work

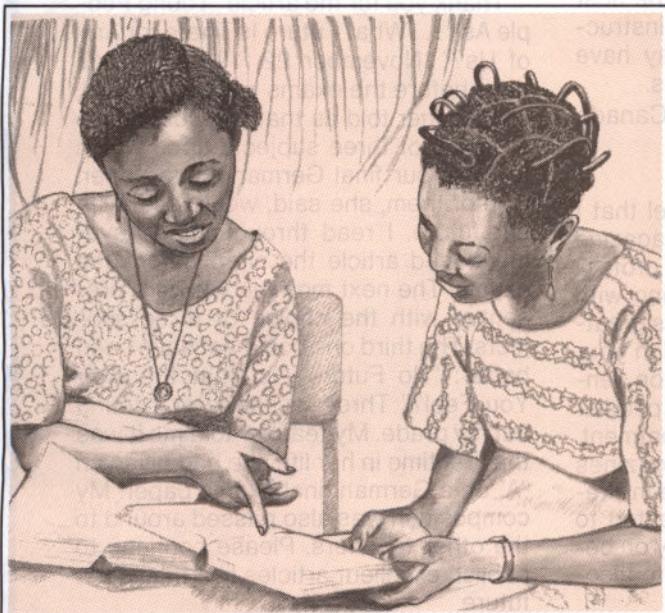
The problems of the church in Nigeria are typical of those of the world's religions. They have failed to satisfy the spiritual hunger of people. They have pursued materialism and played politics instead of teaching the Word of God. This, however, is no surprise to students of the Bible, for it long ago predicted: "Look! There are days coming," is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'and I will send a famine into the land, a famine, not for bread, and a thirst, not for water, but for

hearing the words of Jehovah.'" (Amos 8:11) Yet not all suffer such spiritual hunger pangs.

Thousands of Nigerians who are truly "hungering and thirsting for righteousness" have been helped by Jehovah's Witnesses to become spiritually "filled." (Matthew 5:6) 'But what makes Jehovah's Witnesses different from the other religions?' you might ask. Well, for one thing, they take seriously Jesus' command to be "no part of the world." (John 17:14) This means they stay out of politics and concentrate, instead, on preaching the "good news of the kingdom." (Matthew 24:14) Rather than sponsoring social programs, they point people to the sure hope of a coming government by God. The latest report indicates that an average of 102,356 Nigerians were sharing this satisfying hope with others.

True, church leaders have criticized the Witnesses. But, ironically, the criticism stems from the Witnesses' refusing to do the very thing that has caused the church crisis—namely, dabbling in politics. Because of their neutral position, the Witnesses have been spared the upheavals that Nigeria's churches now suffer.

We therefore invite you to satisfy your own deep longings for spiritual things by joining in serious Bible study and association with these Christians who are genuine disciples of Christ. This will open up a most satisfying life to you, because "godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come."—1 Timothy 4:8.



Jehovah's Witnesses have relieved the spiritual famine for thousands by teaching the Bible's hope of a government by God

From Our Readers

Help With Herpes

My family and I wish to thank you very much for the article "Is the End of Disease in Sight?" in the French edition. (English, September 22, 1983) The very day we took our year-old baby to the hospital with a serious eye infection, your magazine came in the mail and we took it along with us. How happy we were to have just read the information on herpes type I when his condition was diagnosed to be just that! We immediately started to treat his eye with a solution of warm water and Epsom salts, as the article suggested. (Page 9) Within two days the swelling had gone down and a lot of poison had come out. During his checkup the chief of staff for the department said that this was the best thing to do. Without your fine instructions, we are sure that he may have developed serious complications.

R. B., Canada

Drugs and Alcohol

I am a retired judge and I feel that I should tell how useful your magazine was to me while I exercised my profession. In one criminal case dealing with the traffic and use of drugs, I was greatly aided by the facts presented in your magazine to make my decision, enabling me to sentence the drug peddler and to have him interned for treatment. On another occasion the magazines were of much assistance to me in preparing a discourse to be presented to Alcoholics Anonymous in my city on behalf of a campaign to recuperate alcoholics. Thank you very much.

J. A., Brazil

School Projects

In my last year of studies in accounting, I received notice saying that because of my low marks, I would have to receive a mark of at least 90 in research on the subject of the worldwide economic crisis if I were to graduate. I decided to use as a basis for my research the series of articles on "The World Economy—Where Is It Heading?" (April 22, 1983) Imagine my joy and surprise when the professor praised my research highly. She said it was contrary to policy to give a perfect mark, so she would give me 9.8 out of 10—more than enough to graduate!

P. R., Brazil

Thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . What Future Is There for Any of Us?" (November 22, 1982) Several days before the exams were to be held, our teacher told us that we would have a choice of three subjects upon which to write our final German exam paper. One of them, she said, would deal with our future. I read through the above-mentioned article the night before the exams. The next morning we were presented with the choice of three subjects. The third one could not have been better: "No Future—Is That the Way You Feel?" Three weeks later I found out my grade. My teacher told me it was the first time in her life she had given an "A" on a German final exams paper. My composition was also passed around to the other teachers. Please continue to publish excellent articles like this in the future.

M. H., Federal Republic of Germany



Watching the World

Persecution in Turkey

● On June 16 two of Jehovah's Witnesses were arrested in Ankara, Turkey, while talking about their Christian beliefs. More arrests followed with the end result that 23 were imprisoned in Ankara and awaiting trial at last report. They were charged with "making propaganda... with the aim to change the political, social and economical order of the state according to religious rules." This is unwarranted since on March 24, 1980, the Supreme Court of Appeals in Turkey ruled that Jehovah's Witnesses cannot be punished, as their religion does not violate the law.—See *Awake!* of June 8, 1981, pages 25-7.

In view of the fact that the decision by the Supreme Court of Appeals was final and binding for all courts, these new arrests raise questions about constitutional rights in Turkey. The arrests occurred after some newspapers started a malicious campaign against the Witnesses. The "High Council of Religion in the Department of Religious Affairs" in speaking of Jehovah's Witnesses said, "This movement, which in no country is be-

ing accepted as a religion . . . is a Christian order under Jewish influence." However, the facts show that Jehovah's Witnesses are an accepted Christian religion actively engaged in their worship, now in more than 200 countries and islands of the sea worldwide. In spite of this, 23 of Jehovah's Witnesses continue to endure suffering, being unjustly treated as common criminals.

Vatican Chides Liberationists

● In a strongly worded essay released in September, the Roman Catholic Church denounced the more radical versions of the doctrine known as "liberation theology." For the last 15 years Roman Catholic priests and nuns, especially those in Latin America, have been using the doctrine as a justification for their active involvement in the political arena. "Liberation theology" champions justice for the poor, but it is based on concepts borrowed from an atheistic political theory—Marxism. While the Vatican statement condemned social injustices in Latin America, it decried the use of Marxist analysis by churchmen as the reme-

dy for the oppressed and cited it as a betrayal of Catholicism.

On the other hand, there is Concilium, a group of prominent Roman Catholic theologians from Europe, Latin America and the United States. At their June meeting in the Netherlands, they called for a more active church role in politics and protested against high church officials who censor "liberation theology." Thus, the battle line appears drawn between the Vatican and a growing number of prominent Catholic liberals.

UN Future Gloomy

● "The United Nations has fallen upon hard days," writes former Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim in the journal *Foreign Affairs*. As the UN prepares to celebrate its 40th anniversary next year, he sees a gloomy future for the organization. "It goes through its paces in a workaday routine that is increasingly ignored or condemned and that threatens to become increasingly irrelevant in the real world," the former UN leader said. "It is moving into fields of operation in which clashing interests threaten to tear it apart."

Bank Crisis

● Banks in the United States are failing at the fastest rate since the 1930's, reports the *Los Angeles Times*. "Although the U.S. banking system is generally sound and chances of a major disaster are remote," states the article, "developments in recent years have made the system increasingly risky." Eight of the largest banks in the United States have lent more than their entire net worth to Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela. A series of defaults by these nations could push the banks over the brink into insolvency. If the debt crisis becomes much worse,

experts fear that financial, political or social upheavals will follow in the debtor nations.

● Although in March Brazil reached its highest positive trade surplus in history—one billion dollars—still this was not enough to pay even the interest on its foreign debt of a staggering \$100 billion. The president of the Bank of Brazil, Oswaldo Colin, says in *Jornal da Tarde* that the recent increase of 1 percent in international interest rates "has already eaten up the trade surplus of one month." The trend toward increased interest rates adds to the already overwhelming burden of developing countries trying to repay. Some financial specialists conclude that the "foreign debt problem is out of control."

European Unity Call

● A call for European unity is being sounded by distinguished people from the world of letters and art, including the 1979 Nobel Prize winner for Literature, Odysseas Elytis, reports *Athens News Agency*. They hope that a united Europe "will cease to be a passive observer of international developments and will gain the necessary confidence and strength to play an important role in the struggle for world peace."

Japan's Crime Rise

● "Crime, Delinquency Highest Since 1940s," blares the headline in Japan's newspaper *The Daily Yomiuri*. The annual report of the NPA (National Police Agency) of Japan announced that crime in this affluent country continued unabated in 1983. A Justice Ministry's Research Institute for General Legal Affairs group found that more than half of the delinquents in Japan are

from broken homes. Juvenile offenders for the most part are between 14 and 15 years old. According to the NPA, in areas where traditional neighborhood ties remain strong, the crime figures are lower.

Abused Children

● Violence against children has become "an unforeseen blast of wickedness" that is sweeping through Italy, says the weekly *L'Espresso*. There are 15,000 acts of brutality against children each year, including 600 sexual abuses. These chilling figures do not reveal the extent of the problem, according to Judge Dosi of the Juvenile Court in Rome. He says: "The statistics on this phenomenon tell us so little that we call them 'the obscure number,' obscure because it hides a more complex and diffused reality." What drives parents to abuse their children? "First of all the bad relationship of the couple; then the difficulty to live up to the role of parent," are two basic reasons the report lists.

Lesbian "Marriage"

Annulled

● The 41-year-old pastor of the Altonaer Peace Church in Hamburg, Germany, performed a marriage ceremony last April for two lesbian women. As a result, the telephones of Lutheran churches all over Northern Germany were constantly ringing. "Upset Church members phoned their pastors, threatening to resign membership," reports the German newspaper *Schwäbische Zeitung*. An official statement issued by the Lutheran Church of Northern Germany said that the church did not approve of the "marriage," since "the Church is unable to wed a lesbian couple." The marriage was declared null and void.

42 Million Blind

● WHO (World Health Organization) reports that there are more than 42 million blind people in the world, including 28 million with greatly restricted vision who cannot see far enough to count the fingers on a hand at three meters (9 ft). It estimates that by the year 2000 this number will double. According to WHO, 75 percent of cases of blindness could be avoided "with appropriate public health measures." *O Estado de S. Paulo*, a Brazilian newspaper, says that "of every thousand blind persons, 36 are Brazilians."

Wife-Beating Arrests

● At first, Minneapolis police thought that arresting men for beating their wives was "a waste of everybody's time," says Police Chief Anthony Bouza. But since policemen have stepped up the number of arrests of wife-abusers, the number of repeat offenses has been cut down. What inspired the new policy, says *The Express* of Easton, Pennsylvania, was a study conducted by researchers Lawrence W. Sherman and Richard Beck. The study concluded that the rate of repeat abuse against wives was only 10 percent when police made arrests, 19 percent when police counseled the couple and 24 percent when the assailant was sent away for several hours.

Pandas in Peril

● Giant pandas—one of the world's rarest animal species—are in grave danger. At least 12 of these shy creatures starved to death in China's southwestern Sichuan province, states China's monthly magazine *China Reconstructs*. The death figure is alarming when compared to the estimated world

number of a thousand live pandas. The home of the giant pandas in Sichuan province's Wolong Nature Reserve lost 30,000 hectares (over 74,000 a.) of arrow bamboo trees. The trees withered and died, leaving the giant pandas without their main food source. Rescue operations launched by the Chinese government are scheduled to last for ten years.

Unwed Mothers

● England and Wales registered 99,000 illegitimate births in 1983—a 10-percent increase over the previous year. This figure, nearly double of that for 1977, represents one in six of total births. The report of the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys reveals that almost one third of the births were to girls in their teens and a further

third to mothers aged 20 to 24 years. "The younger ones realise rushing into marriage would be a mistake," says a spokesperson for the National Council for One Parent Families in the *Daily Mail* of London, "and the older ones are independent career-minded and confident they could bring up a child alone—or at least without being married." The World Health Organization estimates that 13 million babies are born each year to teenagers between 15 and 19 years of age.

'Test-Tube' Skin

● In 1983 two brothers, aged six and seven, were severely burned. Their condition was grim, with third-degree burns over 97 percent of their bodies. Now, a year later, *The New En-*

gland Journal of Medicine reports that the doctors at Shriners Burn Institute in Boston, Massachusetts, have succeeded in covering more than half of each boy's body with grafts of healthy skin tissue grown in laboratory dishes. The surgical team took fragments of the boys' remaining healthy skin, ground them into millions of cells, adding substances that helped the cells grow into sheets of skin. The skin was transferred to pads of gauze that were grafted over the burns. It took two to four weeks to cultivate a square yard of skin for each boy.

Remarkable as it is, Dr. Mansour of St. Barnabas Hospital Center, Livingston, New Jersey, cautions: "It is a very experimental procedure, and we really don't know the longstanding effects."

likely found in Mexico to the north of the border. The border town of Ciudad Madero has a population of about 20,000 people. It is located in the state of Tamaulipas, which borders on the Gulf of Mexico. The city is known for its beautiful beaches and its many parks. The city is also known for its excellent schools and its high standard of living.

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