



The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

FEBRUARY 15, 1972

Semimonthly

LEARNING FROM THE GREAT
TEACHER

HOW EARLY TO START TEACHING
YOUR CHILDREN

LIVING A DEDICATED LIFE

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

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Number 4

HAVE you ever wondered how a person can be sure what kind of worship God approves? There are many persons who feel that no one can be sure. Yet these same persons often believe that if a person is sincere he will be saved. Is that what you believe? Do you think that even though there are many different 'roads,' or ways of belief, they all lead to salvation? Or is there a certain way of truth, and can we be sure of whether we are on it or not?

—Matt. 7:13, 14.

Jesus Christ knew that he had the truth. He had been with God in heaven, and was taught directly by the heavenly Father. So he was sure that what he believed was right. But what about Jesus' apostles?

After about three years of close association with his apostles, Jesus said in prayer to God: "The sayings that you gave me I have given to them, and they have received them and *have certainly come to know* that I came out as your representative." The apostles knew that Jesus Christ had come from God. So they were sure of the way of salvation, for Jesus taught them the truth directly.—John 17:8; 14:6.

Did those who later on accepted these teachings from Jesus' apostles know for sure whether they had the truth? The historian Luke, who became a follower of the resurrected Jesus, wrote to a friend: "I have traced all things from the start with accuracy . . . that you may know fully the *certainty* of the things that you

Are You

**REALLY
SURE?**

have been taught orally." Do you know with certainty whether you are worshiping God in the way that he approves? Is it possible to find out?—Luke 1:1-4.

Well, consider: How did Jesus' apostles know they had the truth? It was because they had received the teachings that Jesus directly heard from Almighty God. And we today have those teachings faithfully preserved for us in the Bible! Jesus' apostles and their companions wrote them down. But, of course, we cannot know the truth if we do not read what they wrote.

Have you carefully read the Bible yourself? How much of it have you read? Bible reading should not be viewed simply as a religious exercise, or a duty to be fulfilled, but as a means of proving to yourself "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

By such a study of the Bible you will come to have God's mind on matters. You will see what he approves, and what he

considers wrong. Surely you want to know the truth!

Therefore it is of interest to set the teachings of Christendom's churches alongside the Bible to see whether they agree. Such an examination will aid you to test your religion and to make sure of what is truth.—1 Thess. 5:21.

Christendom's churches say: Jesus is God; he is part of the Godhead, being a member of a trinity of three persons in one God. The Bible says: “*Jehovah our God is ONE Jehovah.*” Jesus said: “*The Father is greater than I am;*” and prayed to his Father, also calling him “*my God.*”—Deut. 6:4; John 14:28; Matt. 27:46; John 20:17.

Christendom's churches say: The human soul is immortal; it cannot die. The Bible says: “*The soul that is sinning—it itself will die.*” (Ezek. 18:4) And Jesus spoke of God as being able to destroy the soul.—Matt. 10:28.

Christendom's churches say: The wicked will be tormented forever in a hell of fire. The Bible says: “*The wages sin pays is death.*”—Rom. 6:23.

By studying the Bible you can get a clear knowledge of the true teachings of God. But what if you find that your religion holds to certain doctrines that are contrary to God's Word? Or what if you are a member of a church whose leaders endorse the “new morality,” and so approve of adultery, homosexuality, abortion and other practices that God condemns? Clergymen of the Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian and other churches have spoken in favor of this “new morality.”

How should one who desires God's approval view such churches? Regarding association in religious worship with those who go contrary to his teachings, God says: “What fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light have with darkness? . . . ‘Therefore get out from among them, and sepa-

rate yourselves,’ says Jehovah, ‘and quit touching the unclean thing; ‘and I will take you in.’” Yes, you are touching the unclean thing if you continue associating with a religious organization that does not adhere to God's ways.—2 Cor. 6:14-17.

However, you may feel that even though your church does not follow God's Word in every respect, it does teach many fine things. But, then, do not even the worst criminals often do many things that are good—donating to charities, supporting projects for community improvement, and so forth? Yet they are criminals. So, too, a religious organization may appear good—doing and saying certain things taught in the Bible—but if it does not believe and faithfully adhere to *all* the teachings of God's Word, does God approve of it?

For example, Jesus said concerning his true followers: “They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world.” (John 17:16) True worshipers today must be like Jesus, keeping separate from the world. Yet many clergymen, with the support of their church, share in political movements or in supporting political rebellions and demonstrations. As a result, what standing do they have with God? The Bible answers: “Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God.” (Jas. 4:4) Do you want to share in worship with such persons?

So, do you see how a person can be sure of what is true religion, and how he can know whether he has the truth? It is by learning and believing God's truth taught in the Bible, and then practicing it. If you are interested in worshiping in the way that God approves, you are welcome to attend meetings of Jehovah's witnesses at their local Kingdom Hall. There the basis of all discussion is the Bible, and by adhering to its teachings you can be sure you are walking in the way of the truth.

WHAT are the gods of the nations like? Look at some of the images of the various gods around the world. Even if you accept these images as only representing *qualities* or *dispositions* attributed to such gods by their worshipers, what are they portrayed to be? Usually they are pictured as cold, aloof, angry, vicious, whimsical, fearful to approach, hard to placate, unmerciful.

The true God is invisible to human eyes. "God is a Spirit," said his Son when on earth. He knew, for he had actually beheld Jehovah. (John 4:24) Jehovah kindly refrains from revealing his form to human eyes. His power, magnificence and brilliance are so great that human eyes could not endure the sight. "No man may see me and yet live," says Jehovah.—Ex. 33:20.

We can appreciate why God maintains his invisibility if we realize that it is more important to know the personality and qualities of a person than merely to view his appearance. For Jehovah wants his worshipers to worship him with spirit and truth. (John 4:23) Why should we demand that the great majestic God, the Spirit, bring himself into the range of our eyes to believe in him? It is not because of or by means of an image or the appear-

HOW IS JEHOVAH DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHER GODS?

ance of any form that Jehovah's worshipers serve him. It is because they love righteousness, and because of his qualities of righteousness, love, wisdom and justice.

PICTORIAL REVELATIONS

Accordingly, Jehovah reveals himself, his personality, through his word of truth and by pictorial representations. Some of these revelations, presented in vision to his prophets, seem at first to be strange

and unintelligible, although they are awe-inspiring. But by considering the circumstances under which they were given, also by consulting other statements in the Bible, the understanding becomes clear. These prophetic visions mean much to the faith of Jehovah's worshipers. They give a picture of the true God and his dealings far more effectively



than would any image of his form.

One of the most outstanding of such visions was the one beheld by the prophet Ezekiel. At the time Ezekiel was one of the Jewish exiles in Babylonia. It was the fifth year since King Nebuchadnezzar had taken King Jehoiachin of Judah captive, along with princes and mighty, valiant men and craftsmen. It was near the close of the spring of 613 B.C.E.—Ezek. 1:1-3.

At that time Jehovah's anger was against Jerusalem, situated about 500 miles to the west of Ezekiel's location. God had shown mercy in letting the city remain when Nebuchadnezzar dethroned Jehoiachin and placed Jehoiachin's uncle Zedekiah (Mattaniah) on the throne, in 617 B.C.E. Despite this, the city continued its idolatrous, rebellious course against God, and looked to Egypt rather than to Jehovah for help. (2 Ki. 24:11, 14-20; Ezek. 17:15) Therefore, God gave warning to the Jews in Babylon, through Ezekiel, of Jerusalem's coming destruction. He also comfortingly foretold the mercy he would express toward some of its citizens. At the same time he revealed a glimpse of his awe-inspiring majesty and his surpassingly fine qualities.

In view of the purpose Jehovah had in presenting the vision, namely, to show himself as directing destructive forces toward the city of Jerusalem, what better illustration could he have used than that of a great war chariot? Ezekiel, a priest, gave us a description of what he saw. He wrote:

"I began to see, and, look! there was a tempestuous wind coming from the north, a great cloud mass and quivering fire, and it had a brightness all around, and out of the midst of it there was something like the look of electrum [an alloy of gold and silver that glowed brilliantly when heated], out of the midst of the fire. And out of the midst of it there was the likeness of four living creatures, and this was how they looked: they had the likeness of earthling

man. And each one had four faces, and each one of them four wings. And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of the foot of a calf; and they were gleaming as with the glow of burnished copper. And there were the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides, and the four of them had their faces and their wings. Their wings were joining one to the other. They would not turn when they went; they would go each one straight forward."—Ezek. 1:4-9.

Later Ezekiel had a second vision of the chariot of God in which he called the four living creatures "cherubs." (Ezek. 10:1-22; 11:22) These mighty spirit persons, angels of great power, serve as attendants around God's throne as well as at his "chariot."—Ex. 25:18-22; 37:7-9; Rev. 4:6-9.

ATTRIBUTES OTHER GODS LACK

Each cherub had a man's face to the fore and the hands of a man under its wings. Cherubs have the God-given quality of love as does man, whose forefather Adam was created in the image and likeness of God. (Gen. 1:26-28) The face of a lion (symbol of courageous justice) was on the right side of each cherub's head. (Isa. 31:4; Rev. 5:5) Opposite, on the left side, was the face of a bull (power, strength [Job 39:9-11]). Thus justice was nicely represented as being supported or backed up by invincible power. The eagle's face at the rear of the cherub's head points to heavenly wisdom, which corresponds with the heavens in which the farsighted, high-flying eagle soars (the cherubs had four wings).—Job 39:27, 29.

Having a face looking in each direction, the cherubs could follow any one of the four faces. Whichever of the four qualities or attributes needed to be exercised in any given circumstance, the cherub would immediately follow the face representing that quality toward the objective. The cherubs' speed was like lightning. These

things Ezekiel saw in his vision. He reported: "And they would go each one straight forward. To wherever the spirit would incline to go, they would go. They would not turn as they went. And as for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire. Something like the appearance of torches was moving back and forth between the living creatures, and the fire was bright, and out of the fire there was lightning going forth. And on the part of the living creatures there was a going forth and a returning as with the appearance of the lightning."—Ezek. 1:12-14.

JEHOVAH'S WAR CHARIOT

Not only the cherubs, but also the chariot they accompanied could move in a marvelous way unknown to earthly vehicles. Ezekiel described the chariot's wheels:

"As I kept seeing the living creatures, why, look! there was one wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, by the four faces of each. As for the appearance of the wheels and their structure, it was like the glow of chrysolite [a semiprecious stone]; and the four of them had one likeness. And their appearance and their structure were just as when a wheel proved to be in the midst of a wheel. When they went they would go on their four respective sides. They would not turn another way when they went. And as for their rims, they had such height that they caused fearfulness; and their rims were full of eyes all around the four of them. And when the living creatures went, the wheels would go beside them, and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels would be lifted up. Wherever the spirit inclined to go, they would go, the spirit inclining to go there; and the wheels themselves would be lifted up close alongside them, for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels."—Ezek. 1:15-20.

Just as the wheels of a four-wheeled vehicle are at its four corners, so was the case with this chariot. The wheels were alike in appearance and structure. Their height was so great that Ezekiel must have been dwarfed into insignificance by them, for he says: "they had such height that they caused fearfulness." With such a circumference the wheels could cover a great distance with each revolution.

Indicating that the chariot did not move aimlessly, blindly, but with purpose and sureness, the wheels had eyes all around their rims, as if they could see where they were going. Each wheel had a wheel inside it, not a smaller wheel within the big wheel and in the same plane with it. Rather, it was a wheel of the same diameter and fitted into the base wheel crosswise, rim touching rim at right angles. In this way the chariot wheels could go instantly in any one of four directions, and, according to Ezekiel's description, the chariot thus changed directions without any loss of momentum. It was indeed amazing.

This description of the chariot's motion fits in with the statement that the wheels "would go on their four respective sides." Accordingly, they could move just as did the cherubs, like lightning in any direction, according to the impelling force of the spirit of Almighty God. Another remarkable thing about this chariot was that it could rise into space as well as run along the ground, just as could the cherubs, by God's spirit.

High as the wheels were, yet above them, on invisible support, was the platform-like floor of the chariot. Ezekiel de-

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- Does a Great Heavenly Organization Exist?
- Can Your Family Life Be Improved?

scribes it: "Over the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of an expanse like the sparkle of awesome ice, stretched out over their heads up above." (Ezek. 1:22) This expanse, though solid, was translucent, like ice. It was awe-inspiring, in harmony with the dignity of the one who rode above the platform, directing the chariot's movements.

A SOUND BETOKENING WAR

Since the four living creatures were not as gigantic as were the four wheels, the platform was far above their heads. Ezekiel says:

"And under the expanse their wings were straight, one to the other. Each one had two wings covering on this side and each one had two covering on that side their bodies. And I got to hear the sound of their wings, a sound like that of vast waters, like the sound of the Almighty One, when they went, the sound of a tumult, like the sound of an encampment. When they stood still, they would let their wings down."—Ezek. 1:23, 24.

The wings of the cherubs in motion produced a fear-inspiring sound, like vast waters when they are agitated. This was because Jehovah's chariot was not on a mission of peace, but on one of war. The sound was that of an encampment of armed soldiers. In ancient times the sound of an army preparing for battle, the clamor of men talking and shouting excitedly and the clash of war equipment, would indeed convince the listener that a battle was imminent.

However, the appearance to Ezekiel, though instilling a respectful, wholesome fear in the prophet, was not one of hostility toward him. God caused each cherub to face Ezekiel with the face representing love (the man's face). To the faithful prophet Ezekiel, therefore, the vision was of peace and a revelation of the primary attributes of the incomparable God. It revealed Jehovah to be a God of justice who

has almighty power at his disposal, yet who exercises it in divine wisdom and who reveals himself in love to his true worshipers. Certainly the God of such beauty of personality is no angry god of an eternal torment of hellfire, nor a grotesque three-headed trinitarian god, as Christendom's religions would have their members believe.

Though Jehovah's glory is so far greater than all other gods, and though his wisdom, power and glory cannot be fully fathomed by the human mind, God overcomes the limitations of his servants by revealing himself and his qualities in terms that they can understand.—Rom. 11:33-36; 1 Cor. 2:9-13, 16.

Consequently, the things of Ezekiel's vision are not to be understood as literally existing in the form that Ezekiel saw them. They were symbolic. Scientists today use diagrams and illustrations easily grasped to explain the properties and motions of submicroscopic things such as atoms. Likewise, Jehovah the Superscientist reveals his principles and dealings through relatively simple pictures. Nevertheless, even these visionary moving pictures are thrilling and beautiful, on a level of grandeur far above that of the illustrations men use.

Yes, by studying Jehovah's Word of truth and observing his dealings with his people, his long-suffering even with his enemies, and his purpose to give obedient mankind everlasting life we can come to appreciate his sterling attributes.

But exactly what was the mission of this chariot, and what do we learn by the vision's description of the chariot's rider? We will await forthcoming discussions of Ezekiel's prophecy, which deals further with the aforementioned qualities of Jehovah, to see even greater revelations of his superiority over all other gods.

WHETHER we are young or old, learning can be—and should be—a delight. Why? Because learning opens up the windows of the mind; it is the enemy of monotony and dullness. There is so much to learn. The earth around us is filled with interesting people, interesting places, amazing varieties of creatures and plants. Yes, the earth, not to mention the starry skies above, is a treasure-house of knowledge. It holds subjects for study that could last a thousand lifetimes and more.—Prov. 9:9.

² But we can do more than just learn about things. By learning, we can gain the ability to do things, for ourselves and others—and life, after all, is made up of *doing*. Here again, the worthwhile things that humans can learn to do, are almost endless. There can be no doubt about it, learning can enrich us immensely, it can multiply life's interests and joys a thousandfold.—Eccl. 3:12.

FINDING "THE TREASURES OF WISDOM AND OF KNOWLEDGE"

³ But, most important for all of us, learning can mean the difference between life and death. At Proverbs 8:35, 36, the inspired writer personifies wisdom as saying: "For the one finding me [wisdom] will certainly find life, and gets goodwill

1. Why should learning be a delight for persons of all ages?

2. As a result of learning, what ability should we seek to acquire, and why?

3. How important is it that we learn?



from Jehovah. But the one missing me is doing violence to his soul; all those intensely hating me are the ones that do love death." Do you want to find life? Then you need to find wisdom. How? Where? God's Son showed us the way when he said: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

⁴ Jehovah God, who created the universe and all that is in it, is the true Source of all learning. He knows all there is to know, far more than we could possibly learn. But God has provided the way for us to learn the most important things. (Prov. 2:6) In his Word, the Bible,

he gives us the things to learn that will count most for our happiness now and in the future. He has also appointed for us a Great Teacher, his own Son, Christ Jesus. Of him, Colossians 2:3 significantly says: "Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge."

What does that mean?

⁵ Because Jesus is God's firstborn Son, he knows the Father better than anyone else does. Out of all God's sons, it is true of this Son alone that "by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth." (Col. 1:15, 16)

4. (a) From whom does all true knowledge come, and why? (b) What does Colossians 2:3 tell us about God's Son?

5, 6. (a) How extensive is Jesus' knowledge? (b) In what way did Jesus use that knowledge to benefit mankind, as explained in the writings of the apostle John?

For that reason Jesus has a knowledge of universal history surpassed only by that of his Father. He knows his Father's ways better than any other. One of his purposes in coming to earth was to aid men to know God better than they had ever known him before. As the apostle John says: "So the Word became flesh and resided among us, and we had a view of his glory, a glory such as belongs to an only-begotten son from a father; and he was full of undeserved kindness and truth. No man has seen God at any time; the only-begotten god [that is, Jesus Christ] who is in the bosom position with the Father is the one that has explained him." —John 1:14, 18.

⁶ Jesus' teachings opened up men's minds to learn wonderful truths never before understood. Those teachings were actually God's own, for Jesus said: "What things I have seen with my Father I speak . . . The things I say to you men I do not speak of my own originality; but the Father who remains in union with me is doing his works." (John 8:38; 14:10) We today can thank God that he caused men to record the life, works and words of his Son for our benefit so that we today can also learn from this Great Teacher provided by God.

⁷ Jesus' teaching work did not end with his death as a human. Resurrected and returned to heaven, he sits at God's right hand as Jehovah's anointed King. Matthew 12:42 quotes Jesus as saying that the queen of the south traveled from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of King Solomon, but Jesus added, "Look! something more than Solomon is here." King Solomon, when faithful, taught his people with wise proverbs, sayings and judgments. The Greater Solomon, Christ Jesus,

also teaches all those who turn to him in faith and accept his kingly rule.—John 14:25, 26.

⁸ Do we see, then, why it can be said, as we read at Colossians 2:3, that "carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge"? It is because Jesus is the key figure in the revelation and outworking of all God's purposes. That is why the apostle Paul could also speak of Jesus as "the power of God and the wisdom of God." Yes, because God's wise purpose is powerfully manifested through, and summed up in, this Son, Jesus has indeed "become to us wisdom from God, also righteousness and sanctification and release by ransom." (1 Cor. 1:24, 30) Does this in any way diminish his Father's position as the All-Wise God? Not at all. For in fulfilling God's purpose and in serving as the Great Teacher, Christ Jesus continually directs attention to the true God and honors his Name. He leads us to God.

⁹ Remember, now, that in the book of Proverbs, chapter 8, wisdom is represented as saying, "The one finding me will certainly find life." Since wisdom finds its personification in God's Son, Jesus could say essentially the same thing, namely: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) Do we want to find the wisdom that leads to life? Then we *must* learn from this Great Teacher that God has appointed for us. There is no other way. To miss learning from him is, as the proverb goes on to state, to 'do violence to our soul' and would amount to 'loving death.'—Prov. 8:35, 36.

8. (a) So, why can it be said of Jesus that "carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge"? (b) Why does this not detract from his Father's position?

9. Read and explain the meaning of Proverbs 8:35, 36 in relation to God's Son.

7. Compare the teaching now being done by Jesus with that of King Solomon.

ARE YOU REALLY ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES?

¹⁰ Have you learned from this Great Teacher? We have all had opportunity to do so. Those who have seized that opportunity have learned what God's will and ways are, what his standards are, how they are to conduct themselves toward him and toward others, how to live lives that are clean and moral. Because of what they have learned from Jesus they have a clear hope for the future, a brilliant hope, indeed, of life in a righteous new order.

¹¹ But Jesus has also taught that we should share this hope with others, our families, friends and people in general, anywhere and everywhere. In fact, in addition to his primary care for his congregation, which is like a bride to him, Jesus is personally directing the greatest educational campaign in all human history, causing the good news of his kingdom to be preached in all the inhabited earth, and supervising a disciple-making work that has already affected the lives of millions.—Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19, 20.

¹² If we have learned from this Great Teacher, then he holds us responsible to prove ourselves his true disciples. Are you a true disciple? How do you show that you are? To be his true disciple means living a life like his, a life that harmonizes fully with God's inspired Word, one that reflects the fruits of God's holy spirit and brings honor to our heavenly Father. It means loving our brothers with a love like Christ's, doing all we can to help them to gain life. It also means being preachers of the good news to those of the world of mankind who are not as yet our brothers, and sharing in making disciples of all who are willing to be taught. How do we know the right way to do all this? We

10. What are some of the things that we have learned from the Great Teacher, and how has our view of the future been affected?

11. With whom has Jesus taught us to share this hope?

12. What does it mean to be a true disciple of Jesus?

know because of the example Jesus personally set while on earth as the Great Teacher.—John 15:8, 12.

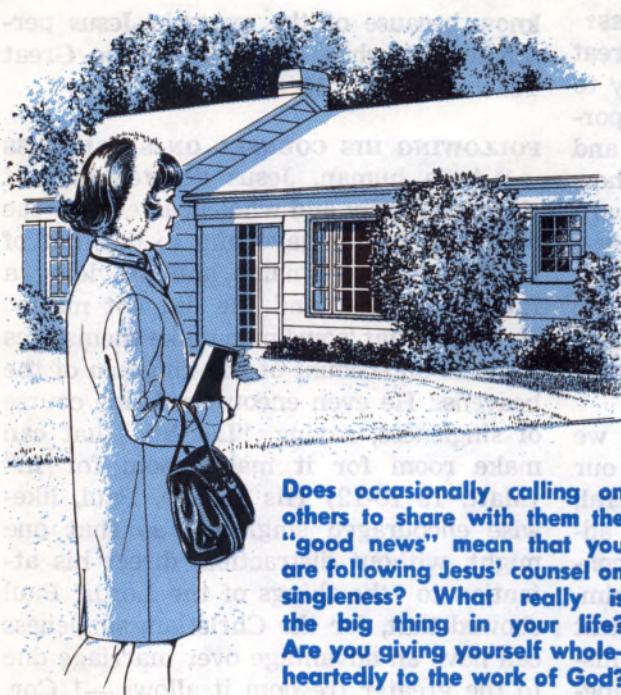
FOLLOWING HIS COUNSEL ON SINGLENESS

¹³ As a human, Jesus devoted himself single-mindedly and wholeheartedly to the work his Father gave him to do, that of vindicating God's name and providing a ransom for mankind. He did not marry. He stated that 'some men make themselves eunuchs on account of the kingdom of the heavens.' He even encouraged this course of singleness, saying, "Let him that can make room for it make room for it." (Matt. 19:10-12) His apostle, Paul, likewise encouraged singleness so that one might, without distraction, direct his attention to "the things of the Lord." Paul showed that, for the Christian, singleness can have an advantage over marriage due to the greater freedom it allows.—1 Cor. 7:32-35.

¹⁴ Perhaps you are single. Does that mean you are following Jesus' and Paul's counsel? Not necessarily. The question is: What are you doing within your single state? How are you using your freedom? Are you using it as Paul said, to give "constant attendance upon the Lord," being anxious for spiritual things rather than material things? (1 Cor. 7:35) Do you keep spiritually strong by serious Bible study and discussion with others? Do you contribute to the spiritual welfare of others, help them to produce the fruits of God's spirit, and set a good example in this yourself? What service do you render to the congregation of which Jesus Christ is the Head? What service do you render to those outside the congregation, to those of the world of mankind?

13. (a) With what goal in view did Jesus encourage singleness? (b) To what advantage of singleness did Paul direct attention?

14. (a) In determining whether a person, in singleness, is really following the counsel of Jesus and Paul, what should he consider? (b) How have some single persons used their singleness most beneficially?



Does occasionally calling on others to share with them the "good news" mean that you are following Jesus' counsel on singleness? What really is the big thing in your life? Are you giving yourself wholeheartedly to the work of God?

Some single persons today are rendering fine services within local congregations; others are serving at the Watch Tower Society's Bethel homes throughout the earth. Others are in the full-time preaching work as pioneers, some serving as missionaries in far-flung fields. By wholeheartedness for spiritual things, they give evidence of 'making room for the course of singleness' in the sense that Jesus presented it. They have gained rich blessings. They have nothing to regret.

WHAT JESUS TAUGHT ABOUT MARRIAGE AND PARENTHOOD

¹⁵ Many others among Jehovah's witnesses are married. Does this make these any less true disciples of the Great Teacher? No, for many of Jesus' apostles were married also. (1 Cor. 9:5) Again the question is: What are they doing in that married state? Some married couples are rendering fine services in local congrega-

15. How can married couples show themselves to be devoted disciples of the Great Teacher?

tions, at Bethel homes, or in evangelizing activity, including service in foreign lands. They show they are true disciples by the lives they lead in service to God and to his Son, by their love for their brothers, and by their compassion toward sheeplike persons in the world of mankind before whom they tightly grip the Word of life.—Phil. 2:12-16.

¹⁶ Some of these married persons have no children; others do. Does having children make those who are parents any less true disciples of the Great Teacher than single persons or married persons without children? Not at all. As we have seen, Jesus, personally and through his apostle Paul, showed that singleness had a certain advantage over marriage for the Christian. On the other hand, for married persons

Jesus left the matter of having children entirely up to them, with no urging in one direction or the other.

¹⁷ But, you may ask, did not Jesus, in his prophecy concerning the great tribulation, say: "Woe to the pregnant women and those suckling a baby in those days"? (Matt. 24:19) Yes; because in its first application that prophecy dealt with tribulation upon the city of Jerusalem and the province of Judea. For those who would escape the coming desolation there was need to flee from that area to the mountains outside. Delay was unwise, dangerous. What if some Christian women postponed departure and then found themselves pregnant or with suckling children at the time when opportunity for flight had all but run out? They would be in difficult circumstances. But in the mod-

16. How did Jesus view the matter of parenthood in relation to discipleship?

17. (a) Then, what is the meaning of Jesus' statement as recorded at Matthew 24:19? (b) But against what must such women be on guard?

ern fulfillment, the flight is not a physical flight from a literal city or province to literal mountains. It is a spiritual flight, a pulling completely away from antitypical Jerusalem, Christendom, as well as all of symbolic Babylon the Great, of which Christendom is a part, for these are all doomed to suffer desolation in the coming tribulation. In this larger fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy the message is still the same: not to postpone departure from the antitypical Jerusalem, Christendom. However, today this calls for no actual movement in a geographical way. Pregnant women or those with infant children are called on to do no literal traveling and are in this sense at no particular disadvantage when it comes to making the necessary spiritual departure out of Christendom and all the rest of Babylon the Great. But if they allow family interests to engross them to the extent that they fail to cultivate a good relationship with Jehovah, this is another matter. For such women and for all others, the point is: Do not delay your spiritual flight out of the danger zone, for if you wait, some unforeseen future circumstances may make doing so much harder.

¹⁸ God's Word says that "sons are an inheritance from Jehovah; the fruitage of the belly is a reward." (Ps. 127:3-5) That is still true. Parenthood is honored throughout the Scriptures; the Great Teacher sent by God said nothing to diminish that honor. On the other hand, it is evident that when it comes to certain work, such as what the apostle Paul did, which involved extensive traveling and long hours of preaching and teaching to disciples and others, it would be virtually impossible to perform such work if

18. (a) Throughout the Scriptures, how is parenthood viewed? (b) Why does this not mean that those with families can enjoy all the same types of service that others are able to perform? (c) Whatever our circumstances, how should we all perform our service to God and to his Son?

one had a large family to care for. So, to the extent that married Christians are able to control the situation, it is a matter of what feature of God's service they seek to make themselves available for, or what they feel their circumstances allow. But whatever we seek, or whatever our circumstances are or may become, we should be wholehearted in our service to God and to his Son. This will assure our being true and faithful disciples of the Great Teacher.—Luke 10:27.

MAKING CHRISTIAN DISCIPLES OF YOUR CHILDREN

¹⁹ It is true that being a parent is a God-given privilege. But it also carries with it a heavy responsibility, and this too is God-given. With the birth of a child begins what one father called "a twenty-year project," caring for the child until it reaches adulthood. This is not an easy task. It would be hard to calculate all the time, money and labor that go into caring for a child, keeping it clean, providing it with shelter, clothing, food, protecting it from harm, caring for it through sicknesses, and providing it with schooling. It is a heavy investment, one calling for much love and self-sacrifice. And the present circumstances on earth—the growth of crime, of juvenile delinquency, the uncertain economic conditions—all add to the sober concern with which married persons may view the prospect of rearing children.

²⁰ Many parents in the world today are content to care for their child's body and the development of its mental ability by education. But is that all there is to our responsibility? By no means. If we are disciples of the Great Teacher we know that for a child to grow up with a healthy

19. In addition to being a privilege, what else is parenthood? Explain.

20. Why are a parent's responsibilities not adequately fulfilled simply by seeing that his child is cared for physically and gets an education?

body and a well-educated mind will mean little if the mind becomes corrupted and the heart is not true, not righteous. Parents who sincerely want to give their child a fine start in life will not shortsightedly overlook this.

²¹ You parents, are you caring for your responsibility? Are you making disciples of your children? Are you leading them to the Great Teacher to be instructed by him in the wisdom that leads to life eternal? (Luke 18:15, 16) Do not think that your children will naturally become disciples just because you parents are. They will not be followers of Jesus Christ *unless you teach them that way*. Sooner or later your children are going to come into contact with others outside your home. They are going to come into contact with children in the neighborhood and at school. Will they learn about the Great Teacher from those children? We know better than to think that. They are going to hear persons who use filthy language, who lie; they are going to see persons who have bad morals, persons whose ways represent the works of the fallen flesh, not the fruits of God's spirit. Have you prepared your children for this, have you helped them to have the spiritual strength they need to resist being infected by such things? You may say, 'Yes, I have talked with my child about these dangers.' But, how often have you done this? Once? Twice? A few times? Remember, your child will be facing some of these things, not once, twice or a few times, but over and over

21. (a) If children are to become disciples of Jesus Christ, what must their parents do? (b) How often is it necessary to discuss with a child the Christian view of worldly practices?

again, day after day. If he or she is going to withstand this daily pressure and not cave in, your child needs to be renewed in his spiritual outlook and strength with regularity that matches that pressure. It is a loving parent that provides such help.

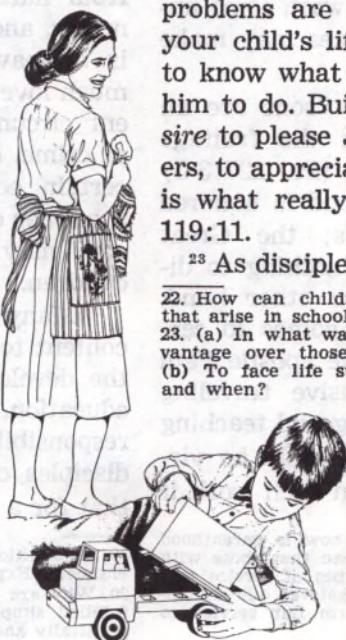
²² Likely at school your children are going to hear the theory of evolution; they will probably be put under pressure to display the spirit of nationalism; they may be tempted to join in with false religious ceremonies and other celebrations of pagan origin. Are your children ready to face these tests and stay true to the teachings of the Great Teacher and to his Father, Jehovah God? Have you equipped them to do this? Or will you wait until the day when your child comes home crying because one of these matters came up at school and he was not prepared for it, felt confused, frightened, and perhaps did something that he suspects was wrong? Realize what an upsetting effect this can have on a small child. Be merciful toward your children. You have been through enough of life yourselves to know what problems are almost certain to arise in your child's life. Lovingly aid your child to know what his heavenly Father wants him to do. Build up in your child the *desire* to please Jehovah God above all others, to appreciate that God's opinion of us is what really counts.—Prov. 29:25; Ps. 119:11.

²³ As disciples of the Great Teacher, you

22. How can children be fortified to meet the tests that arise in school?

23. (a) In what way do Christian parents have an advantage over those guided only by worldly wisdom?

(b) To face life successfully, what do children need, and when?



Parents must never forget that caring for their child's physical development and sending him to school is not enough. What are you doing to guide his mind and his heart in the ways of righteousness?

Christian parents have tremendous advantage over those guided only by worldly wisdom. They lack the wisdom, comfort and encouragement that God's Word gives. You Christian parents know that you can count on God's backing as you carry out your assignment as providers, protectors, educators and trainers of your little ones. You know better than to think that you have done your duty simply by supplying food, clothing and shelter for your children and sending them off to school. You know that if your children are to face life successfully they need moral guidance, principles by which to live. And they need to begin learning these even in their tender years, if they are to have the direction and protection they need.

²⁴ God's Word tells us: "Train up a boy

24. How do the Proverbs emphasize the importance of giving proper training to a child?

according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." (Prov. 22:6) On the other hand, it says that "a boy let on the loose will be causing his mother shame" and that "a stupid son is a vexation to his father and a bitterness to her that gave him birth." (Prov. 29:15; 17:25) Stupidity, of course, is the opposite of wisdom. And if parents fail to put forth the effort to lead their children to the Great Teacher, the one in whom are 'carefully concealed all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge,' do they not bear a heavy responsibility if their children follow a senseless, stupid course like that of this world? Yes, heartbreak ing things can and do happen when a child does not receive help or when he does not receive it early enough in life.

HOW EARLY TO START

Teaching Your Children

HOW early is "early enough" to start teaching your children? Many feel that the first few years of life are just sort of routine and that the child will more or less automatically pass through certain "stages," and that what happens during those first years will not affect his later life very much. They could hardly be more wrong. It is now recognized that much of this idea gained popularity through the theory of evolution as advanced by Darwin. Arguing against this idea, the book *Pre-School Education To-*

day shows to what it leads. On page 30 we read: "Thus, whenever little Johnny does something 'bad,' the behavior [is] explained by noting that it is just a stage he is going through. Moreover, following [one evolutionist's] parable of the tadpole's tail—in which the hind legs fail to develop if the tail is amputated—Johnny's unwanted behavior must not be hampered, else some desirable future characteristic will fail to appear." Now, will you go along with such evolutionary idea in training your child or will you be guided by God's Word?

1. What attitude toward early education has the theory of evolution encouraged?

² To the exact contrary of such idea, the Bible shows that those early years are precious, vital, critical, and should not be wasted by parents. Remember that Jesus Christ said: "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it." (Mark 10:15) The Greek word for "young child" is *pai-di'on*. It can be used of a twelve-year-old, as at Mark 5:40-42, which refers to a girl resurrected by Jesus; but it can also apply to a newborn baby, as when used of the child Jesus at the time he was visited by the shepherds.—Luke 2:17.

³ In view of Jesus' statement, how foolish to wait until a child gets past his childhood years to begin thinking seriously about giving him vital Scriptural instruction! Why, then the parent would have to say: 'Now that you're no longer a little child, well, just "turn around" and become like a young child again so you can be taught about and accept the truths about God's kingdom.' Why not teach the child while he still has those precious qualities of a young child? Why pass up the golden period of opportunity when your son or daughter is a young child, humble, pliable, willing, even eager to learn? So, when should you begin training your child for life in God's favor? From birth onward—there is no time to lose!

⁴ Is this practical? Is it realistic? It most certainly is. Granted, a newborn baby can breathe, digest food, feel, cry, yawn and sleep—but not much else. Yet already in a few days or weeks impressions are being made on its mind. Its intelligence is already beginning to function. Perhaps one of the biggest mistakes parents may make is to underestimate the intelligence of children during these early years. At birth a child's brain is only one fourth the

2, 3. (a) How does the Bible teach us to view the early years of a child's life? (b) As indicated at Mark 10:15, when should a child's religious training begin?

4. To what extent does a child's brain develop in the first two years of life?

weight it will be in adulthood. But did you know that in *just two years* the brain grows so rapidly that it reaches three fourths of its adult weight?

⁵ The child's intelligence is growing too. Researchers believe that a child's intelligence grows as much during its first four years as during the next thirteen. Some say that "the concepts the child learns before his fifth birthday are among the most difficult he'll ever encounter." One of these concepts learned is language, which another source rates as "probably the most difficult intellectual accomplishment a human being is ever called upon to perform." If you doubt that, just try learning a new language. In a short time you will realize what a marvelous intellectual feat your baby accomplishes when it learns to speak. And remember—when you take up the study of a new tongue, you already know one language and you know how language works. Your baby does not. Think, too, of children whose parents are of different nationalities, or who live in bilingual areas. Often at the age of only four or five years, these children converse in, not one, but two languages with ease, and frequently without an accent! Obviously the intelligence is there. Little children have an amazing capacity for learning—but that ability needs use, development and guidance. It needs your help; so much depends on you.

⁶ As true disciples, though, you should not be concerned just with your child's mind and its intellectual development. You ought to be far more concerned with your child's heart and the heart's development in providing right motivation. (Prov. 4:23) At birth a child's heart is relatively large, but did you realize that the heart

5. (a) What interesting comments have researchers made about the growth of a child's intelligence? (b) Illustrate the intellectual capacity that children have.

6. (a) What deserves even more attention than a child's mental development? (b) Along these lines, what takes place during the first year?

doubles in size during the first year? Thereafter it grows more slowly. Already in that first year habits begin to form. During that year a child begins to show its willingness—or lack of willingness—to respond to adult demands. Obedience, we know, is perhaps the most basic of all requirements for God's favor. It can mean the difference between life and death. How important, then, to begin molding your child from birth onward.—Eccl. 12:13; Jer. 7:23.

⁷ Corroborating this is an article in *Science Digest* of March 1969. According to Dr. Marvin Ack, studies indicate that the "major portion of the individual's personality is established before the onset of school. It is, of course, common knowledge that preschool children are extremely impressionable and malleable." "However," he says, "we have discovered that what they have encountered in their childhood in terms of attitudes and experiences often establishes lasting, and sometimes immutable, behavioral patterns." Does this mean that after five years of age such patterns cannot be changed? "No," says another researcher. "The child remains quite malleable during his first seven years, but the longer you wait, the more radically you need to change his environment—and the probability of change

becomes a little less with each successive year." Not all parents appreciate this fact. In the United States alone some four million preschool-age children have mothers that work outside the home. Perhaps some mothers are forced to do this. But many evidently assume that there is little they could teach their children during those early years anyway. What a tragic error!

⁸ The environment you provide your child during those early years plays a very large part in the molding process. It is not just the house you live in, but the

kind of home you make of that house. Is it clean, neat, orderly? Is it a peaceful home, free from quarreling, shouting, anger? Are you parents respectful to each other? If not, can you reasonably expect your little child to be different and show respect to you? Do you parents admit mistakes? If a child never hears his father or mother express humility, how can humility become his standard? There is this danger too: If the parents give the idea that they are never wrong, the child may feel that he can safely do whatever they do and it will always be right. If the parents tell what they might view as "little" lies, perhaps to a neighbor or a bill collector, the child



A child's heart doubles in size the first year; the brain reaches three fourths of its adult weight in two years. Proper training then has a big effect on later life. Are you using those years well in training your child?

will feel that he can tell "little" lies of his own. And if parents do not agree on matters of child discipline, or if they are always uttering warnings but seldom ful-

7. (a) As to personality development, what do researchers say? (b) What indicates that many mothers do not appreciate this?

8. Explain how home environment affects a child for good or for bad.

filling them, the child will quickly observe this and his respect for the rules they set will rapidly weaken. Never doubt it—these things make strong, almost indelible impressions on a youngster's tender mind. The child's natural innocence and inborn sense of honesty and fairness will inevitably receive blows as life goes along. But, please—see that those blows do not come from you.

USING THE BIBLE ITSELF—"FROM INFANCY"

⁹ Vital as it is, however, example is not enough. The child needs to know *why* his parents hold to the standards they do and *why* they require him to hold to the same discipline. This means using the Bible, and again this should be from infancy. To Timothy, the apostle Paul wrote: "You, however, continue in the things that you learned and were persuaded to believe, knowing from what persons you learned them and that *from infancy* you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."

—2 Tim. 3:14, 15.

¹⁰ Does the Greek word *bre'phos*, which Paul uses here, actually mean a mere *infant*? Yes, it does. In fact, it is generally used of an *unborn* child, as at Luke 1:41, 44, where, in relating Mary's visit to Elizabeth, the record says that the 'infant in Elizabeth's womb leaped' when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting. But *bre'phos* can also mean a newborn child, an infant or babe, as when used at Acts 7:19, 20 of the three-month-old baby Moses. Paul, then, does not say that Timothy had known the holy writings simply from his 'youth' or 'childhood' but actually *from infancy*. How could this be?

9. Why is use of the Bible itself important in child training, and how early should this begin?

10. Does the Greek word that Paul used here really mean "infancy" or is it simply referring to 'childhood'?

¹¹ Well, Paul evidently was saying that, no matter how far back Timothy's memory could reach, he could not remember a time when he had not been receiving instruction from his mother and grandmother in the inspired Word of God. (2 Tim. 1:5) Timothy's earliest recollections of his infant consciousness included memories of the holy writings and their teachings. Timothy could say to Jehovah as did David at Psalm 22:10: "From the belly of my mother you have been my God." Will your child be able to say that? What Timothy's mother and grandmother did, you parents today can do and you can properly hope for fine results, as in Timothy's case.

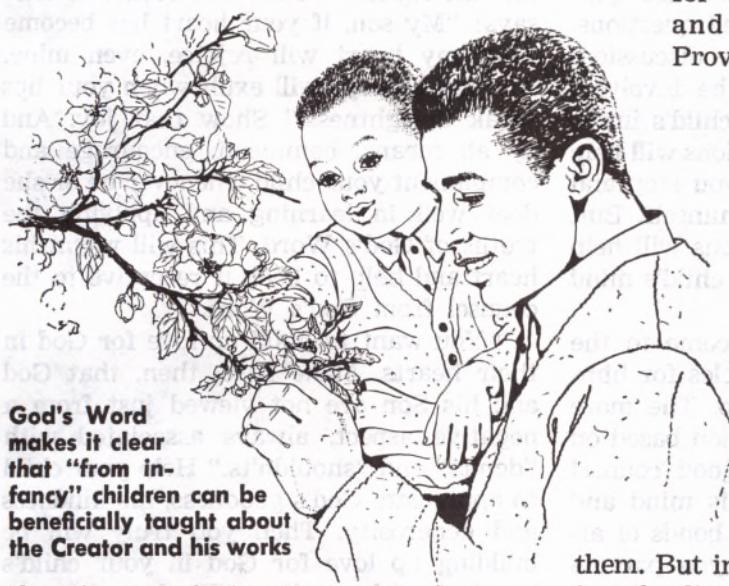
¹² Timothy's father was not a Christian. But Christian fathers will not leave the instruction of their children solely to their wives. If they do they will pay for it in decreased respect on the part of their children. The apostle's counsel at Ephesians 6:4 says: "And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." One way to irritate a child is to deny it the attention children naturally crave, on which they thrive from babyhood on. Is it not true that, if you show some interest in a baby, soon that little mouth opens up in a wide grin (perhaps with a solitary tooth showing), while some simple act of attention from its father or mother can produce chuckles or chortles of glee? Older children, too, hunger for their parents' interest in them. They may even misbehave as a means of getting it. Yes, one of the finest gifts you parents can give your children of any age is some of your time, your personal attention and interest. Just telling them or reproofing them is not enough; such discipline by itself can bring

11. How could Timothy have known the Scriptures from "infancy"?

12. (a) Who is to do the instructing of children in the home? (b) Why is it important to spend time with one's children, giving them personal attention?

irritation. The child wants and needs you to sit down with him, take the time to explain the 'whys' and 'wherefores,' not just the 'dos' and 'don'ts.' See that they get that help, because it is the loving thing to do.

¹³ Think of what you gain by taking



the time to instruct your children in God's Word. Without this, little children may feel that this matter of obedience is just a case of their parents saying, in so many words, 'Look, we were here first and we're bigger and stronger than you are, so what we say goes!' But when parents take time to explain what is right and what is wrong from the standpoint of the Bible, the children come to appreciate that their parents are not just giving their own idea. It is what their Creator says; it is his will. This gives a strength to parental counsel that cannot be equaled in any other way, causing the words to sink deep into the child's mind and heart. More than that, it is also a wonderful source of added

13. What is gained when parents take time to explain what is right and what is wrong from the standpoint of the Bible?

strength to the children. It enables them to hold firmly to right principles when rough spots begin to appear in their young lives. Your children may love and respect you very much as their parents. Nevertheless, you surely must realize that respect and love for God will do far more for them in times of temptation and crisis.—Ps. 119:109-111; Prov. 6:20-22.

TEACHING THAT REACHES THE HEART

¹⁴ Of course, once little children learn to talk they seem to become question factories with mass production. But, remember, questions are one of the most powerful tools for learning that little children have. If a child's questions are shunted to one side, or fall on deaf ears, he may eventually stop asking them. But in doing this, parents risk having the lines of communication begin to break down. Again, what your children want and need is some of your time. Your Creator says you should give it to them, lots of it. Jehovah told the Israelites: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." Are you giving that kind of attention to your child?—Deut. 6:6, 7.

¹⁵ As you study God's Word with your children you want them to get God's Word, not only in their heads, but also 'on their

14. (a) Why do children ask so many questions, and what may result if children are made to feel that their questions are simply an annoyance? (b) To what extent did Jehovah tell the Israelites to give attention to their children?

15. Why is it beneficial to encourage the children to ask questions during study sessions?

hearts.' With that in view, encourage their questions. Encourage them to express themselves. Draw them out, find out how they think, how they feel about things, what is in their hearts.

¹⁶ In study material that the Watch Tower Society has provided for parents to use with their children, there are generally a number of well-placed questions. These are meant to stimulate discussion. Remember, children like to be involved. Without that involvement a child's interest quickly fades. These questions will help to maintain that interest if you stop and allow your child to express himself. But, more importantly, the questions will help you to learn what is on your child's mind and in his heart.

¹⁷ In time your child will come to the point where he can read articles for himself. Encourage him to do so. The more he reads wholesome information based on God's Word, the more the good counsel in it will be impressed on his mind and heart. But, to strengthen the bonds of affection and respect between you parents and your child, by all means read such material together regularly too.

¹⁸ To reach the heart, make study time pleasurable, not an ordeal. Small children are not able to concentrate for long periods of time. Even in games, they quickly tire of one game and seek another, though they may soon be back at the one they just left. By nature, infants shift interest frequently; after a while their little minds sort of shut off and turn elsewhere. When they reach that point, there is little accomplished by trying to force interest. Do not worry if your child does not get all the points the first time. Those points

16. What is the twofold purpose of questions found in the study material provided by the Watch Tower Society for parents to use with their children?

17. How is personal reading beneficial for a child, but why should it not completely replace reading done with the parents?

18. As to length of study sessions, what must be considered?

can be emphasized on other occasions.

¹⁹ A vital ingredient for successful study sessions with children is parental enthusiasm. Perhaps you are not the demonstrative or vivacious type. But at least you can show that you really find joy and pleasure in studying with your child. Be like the father at Proverbs 23:15, 16 who says: "My son, if your heart has become wise, my heart will rejoice, even mine. And my kidneys will exult when your lips speak uprightness." Show that joy. And by all means, commend, encourage and compliment your child whenever he or she does well in learning and applying the truths of God's Word. This will warm his heart and help to keep it receptive to the counsel from God's Word.

²⁰ You want to build up love for God in their hearts. Make sure, then, that God and his Son are not viewed just from a negative aspect, always associated with "don'ts" and "shouldn'ts." Help your child to appreciate God's goodness, his kindness and generosity. Then you truly will be building up love for God in your child's heart. As John writes: "We love, because [God] first loved us." (1 John 4:19) It is so important that your child should come to *want* to serve God out of love, not merely know that he *has* to serve him. (Ps. 110:3; 112:1) If love is not the basis, the child's service will never become an enduring or a rewarding one. By putting the emphasis where it belongs—on God's goodness and mercy—your child can learn to trust in God, to pray to Him, confidently, with that perfect love that "throws fear outside."—1 John 4:17, 18.

²¹ Along with love of God goes love of neighbor. Little children have an inno-

19. (a) Of what value is parental enthusiasm during family study sessions? (b) How does commendation influence a child's progress?

20. (a) What can help you to build up your child's love for Jehovah? (b) Why is this very important?

21. Additionally, if children are to become true disciples of Jesus, what must they learn as to their dealings with other people?

cence that is charming, endearing, delightful. But that does not last forever, does it? It fades and the child's life goes on. What will replace that childish innocence? You can aid your child, not only to be clean and neat, but also to be respectful toward all, considerate, kind, helpful to others. These are qualities that are far more endearing than mere childishness. The Bible, including the words of the Great Teacher, will help you to teach your children how vital these qualities are. (Luke 6:31; 1 John 4:20, 21) With such wisdom, and with true love for your children, you can aid them to become true disciples of God's Son.

YOU CAN LEARN—EVEN NOW

²² Although much has been said here about helping children to learn from the Great Teacher, that learning is not confined to our childhood days, is it? Some of you young men and women who are single and some of you married persons may feel that your parents did not give you all the help you needed in your childhood days. You may see the value of some things now that they could have taught you but did not, perhaps because they were not disciples of the Great Teacher then, or simply because they did not fully appreciate the need to study with you and give you regular aid. Will you use that now as an excuse for conduct that falls short of Bible standards? When certain wrong ways are called to your attention, will you say, 'Don't blame me. Blame my

22. How do some who did not receive the best of childhood training try to excuse their conduct?

parents. That's the way I was brought up. I can't help it'? Is that sound reasoning?

²³ When we read accounts in *The Watchtower* and the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, we learn about persons, men and women, who at times had the worst of backgrounds—yet they changed. God's Word shows that persons of all sorts, persons who have practiced vile things, can change and have changed and become true disciples of God's Son. You are not going to benefit by going through life blaming your parents for what they did not do. You have full opportunity now to learn from the Great Teacher, and he can help you to make over your personality to conform to him, to make your mind over, changing from wrong ways, developing a pure heart and a new spirit. (Ps. 51:10) The only question is, Do you really want this?

²⁴ The wisdom you can receive through God's Son is ample for solving whatever your problems are, and God's spirit is powerful enough to aid you to win out over an unfavorable background, ingrained habits and wrong ways of thinking and wrong practices. Remember, the 'one finding wisdom will certainly find life, but the one missing wisdom is doing violence to his soul.' Show that you love life, not death, by seeking that wisdom with all your heart. Every day, continue to learn from the Great Teacher.

23. What modern-day examples show that anyone can bring his life into line with the teachings of Jesus if he really wants to do so?

24. What help has God provided for those who really do want to make the changes needed in order to gain eternal life?

"Listen, O sons, to the discipline of a father and pay attention, so as to know understanding. For good instruction is what I certainly shall give to you. My law do not leave. For I proved to be a real son to my father, tender and the only one before my mother. And he would instruct me and say to me: 'May your heart keep fast hold of my words. Keep my commandments and continue living. Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding.'" —Prov. 4:1-5.

WHAT KIND OF REPENTANCE

Brings "Seasons of Refreshing"?

TO A crowd gathered in Solomon's colonnade in the Jerusalem temple, the apostle Peter gave the call: "Repent, therefore, and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the person of Jehovah."—Acts 3:11-19.

What did it mean for them to 'repent and turn around'? How would it lead to "seasons of refreshing"? And does that apply to us today?

WHAT REPENTANCE MEANS

In Peter's day, Jewish people spoke both Hebrew and Greek. In both languages the words conveying the idea of "repentance" refer to a *change*, a change in one's mind, attitude or purpose.

For example, the Greek term *meta-no-e'o* is formed of two words: *meta'*, meaning "after," and *no-e'o*, related to *nous*, which means the mind, disposition or moral consciousness. So *meta-no-e'o* literally means *afterthought* (in contrast to *forethought*). It is somewhat like our expression 'to have second thoughts' about a matter, those later thoughts bringing a change in our attitude. Often that change is accompanied by, or impelled by, a feeling of regret, remorse, dissatisfaction or even disgust over the matter about which we have 'second thoughts.'

But this was no ordinary change of attitude that Peter was talking about. He previously had showed his audience that they shared guilt for the death of Jesus Christ, whom God had made "the Chief

Agent of life." Though they had acted in ignorance, as did their rulers, they still bore guilt because they supported and went along with those who resisted the truth, including the prophecies of the Hebrew Scriptures that foretold the coming of the Messiah.

So what kind of "change" was Peter calling on them to make? Simply to feel remorse over the death of an innocent man and resolve never to share again in responsibility for such crime? Was that all? By no means! The change was to be so penetrating that it would make them "turn around," not just from one particular wrong act, but from a whole life course that was running contrary to God's declared purpose. Repentance should make them turn from that course and take a different life course. Their course was leading them away from God. But now they were to turn to God through his "Chief Agent of life." Peter further made clear that to fail to listen to that Sent One of God would mean destruction, whereas obedience to his message would bring blessings. Yes, by faith in him as God's Chief Agent of life they could begin to enjoy "seasons of refreshment" because God would now forgive their wrong course, "blot out" their sins, and they would be freed from the burden of a guilty conscience. They would come into God's favor, his face would turn toward them in approval and he would bless them and lead them to life everlasting.—Acts 3:19-26.

What does this show, then, is the real

purpose of repentance? It is to enter into right relationship with God—not just temporarily but on a permanent basis.

This is made clear by what another apostle, Paul, stated to an audience in Athens, not a Jewish audience but one composed of Greeks, worshipers of many gods and goddesses.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE LIFE-GIVER

In the powerful speech he delivered on the Areopagus (or Mars Hill), Paul pointed his polytheistic audience to the one true God, the Maker of heaven and earth. The Greeks prided themselves on their logic and Paul demonstrated how illogical it was to "imagine that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and contrivance of man." Then he declared that, while God had allowed such misconduct to go on for a time, "yet now he is telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent."—Acts 17:29, 30.

So, then, would it be enough for those Greeks to repent of their idolatrous use of statues and their worship of a great array of deities? Could they then go on living their lives in other respects the same as before? No, that was not what Paul was saying.

He had first solidly established the truth that all mankind owes its life, and the continuance of life, to God, the Source of all life. So all mankind is indebted to God—they are *accountable*, responsible to him. As the Creator and Life-giver, God has the right to require of all his creatures that they serve his purpose, live in harmony with his supreme will. Paul emphasized the need for these Greeks to consider seriously that responsibility by going on to say: "Because he [God] has set a day in which he purposes to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man [Christ Jesus] whom he has appointed, and he has

furnished a guarantee to all men in that he has resurrected him from the dead."

—Acts 17:22-31.

This cardinal truth concerning the responsibility of all men to the one true God for the lives they live—this was a new teaching to the Greeks. It cast repentance in a new light. The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. IV, p. 979) points this out, stating that "repentance" (*me-ta'noi-a*) among the ancient Greeks "never suggests an alteration in the total moral attitude, a profound change in life's direction, a conversion which affects the whole of conduct."

Oh, those Greeks might "repent" (*meta-noe'o*) of a certain deed, speech, plan or project, rejecting such as unsatisfactory or regrettable. They might even go before the statue of one of their gods and express remorse about the matter. But the apostle Paul was showing them now that their *whole life* was owed to God. They were responsible to him for their entire life course. What a profound change "repentance" could mean in view of that teaching! If they now began to "seek God" as Paul showed them they could do, they would gain knowledge and, in the light of that knowledge, how many, many things they might find they had been doing contrary to the will and purpose of the true God, the Life-giver!

WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

Not just those Greeks hearing Paul, but "all" mankind, "everywhere" were, and are, in need of just such repentance. Most persons today, particularly in Christendom, have the idea that simply by being born they enter into a relationship with God as part of his family. The Scriptures show that this view is completely invalid.

True, all enter life in the relationship of debtors to God, having received life from

him, but not as approved members of his universal family. As the apostle Paul clearly shows, by Adam's sin all his descendants were sold into slavery and came under subjection to 'King' Sin and 'King' Death. (Rom. 5:12-14, 21; 7:14) Mankind as a whole has been alienated from God, in need of reconciliation with Him. That is why the apostle could say of the Gentile nations, who were outside God's covenant with Israel, that they then "had no hope and were without God in the world." (Eph. 2:11, 12) By the propitiatory sacrifice of his Son, Christ Jesus, God provided the means for reconciliation with himself on the part of all showing faith in that sacrifice. (Col. 1:19-23) The entreaty of the apostles, as ambassadors for Christ, therefore was: "Become reconciled to God."—2 Cor. 5:20.

So, one basic reason for repentance on the part of *all* persons is that we are all inherently sinful. A second is that, if we have been going along with the world of mankind in its course, then we have been pursuing a course of opposition to God—for the simple reason that mankind as a whole has ignored and even fought against God's will and purposes. That is why human history basically is but a depressing account of repeated acts of bloodshed, oppression, injustice and immorality. To refuse to see, recognize and admit one's own responsibility in all this as a willing member of the world community would be to attempt a weak whitewash of oneself. As the apostle John puts it: "If we make the statement: 'We have not sinned,' we are making [God] a liar, and his word is not in us."—1 John 1:10.

Rather than try to evade responsibility or justify himself, on seeing his true situation the sincere person will feel genuine sorrow and seek reconciliation with God.

He will definitely reject his past course of willing conformity to a world at enmity with God, will have a heartfelt hatred of that wrong course and of all that contradicts God's righteous standards. (Jas. 4:4; Ps. 119:104; Rom. 12:9) Truly repentant, he will "turn around" and will demonstrate that conversion by "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20; Matt. 3:8) He will clothe himself with a "new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—Eph. 4:17-24.

Today, as in apostolic times, repentance and conversion lead to another step: baptism. Baptism, according to the inspired writing of the apostle Peter, symbolizes one's "request made to God for a good conscience." (1 Pet. 3:21) Yes, thereby one formally petitions God to be allowed to come into good relations with Him and enjoy the benefits of a good conscience toward Him. Having experienced the bad effects of slavery to 'King' Sin with death in view, such person now begs God to purchase him as His own slave by means of the ransom price lovingly paid by God's Son.—Rom. 6:16-18; 1 Cor. 7:22, 23.

Have you made this vital change? Do you recognize your responsibility to the Life-giver to live your life in accord with his will? Do you feel impelled to do so out of love for him and for righteousness?

This calls for study of his Word. You must 'open your eyes and ears' receptively to Bible truth so that you can 'get the sense of it with your heart.' Of those who do, Jehovah says: 'I will heal them.' (Isa. 6:9, 10; Matt. 13:13-15) Doing this, you will experience "seasons of refreshing" and will be brought into "ways of pleasantness" and 'roadways of peace' as you enjoy a good conscience before God.—Prov. 3:17; 1 Pet. 3:21.



Living A **DEDICATED LIFE**

MANY persons have said that they have made a dedication to God. But is it merely a matter of having made a dedication to God that counts, or should we be even more concerned about living up to that dedication? If you are a Christian, can others who have a knowledge of the Bible wholeheartedly acknowledge that you are truly a dedicated person?

What do we mean when, for example, we speak of a person, say a doctor, as a "dedicated man"? Are we merely referring to his graduation from medical school and his taking up official practice? Do we mean that he has qualified to put up a sign and call himself a doctor? No. We mean that he is *wrapped up* in his work, *consumed* by his desire and efforts to relieve mankind's physical suffering. He does not turn to some other pursuit, nor does he let anything seriously interfere with his calling and work as a doctor.

The apostle Peter speaks of the Christian's baptism as representing, "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the request made to God for a good conscience." (1 Pet. 3:21) So at the time of a person's baptism he is not approaching God as if able to say, 'I am going to be your servant.' No, he comes before God as a *suppliant*. He has a bad conscience and *requests* or *asks* God to accept him and to give a good conscience so that he can be clean, with the hope that God will *let him serve*. With a sincere heart he has

repented of his sins and has turned around. He is then baptized and God accepts him on the basis of Christ's sacrifice, according to His promise.

Now, having done this, the question is, will he prove that he truly is dedicated to God? Having turned around, will he stay firmly in the course God's Word outlines without deviating? If so, he will prove himself dedicated to God. He will really be a "dedicated man."

Accordingly, a person cannot merely point to the time that he turned around from his worldly course and presented himself for baptism and say, 'I am a dedicated servant of God.' Rather, he must be taking a *wholly devoted course*. His entire way of life must manifest that he is serving God *every day*. His associates must be able to say concerning him, just as Jesus' disciples were able to say of Jesus, that 'zeal for Jehovah's house had eaten him up.'—John 2:17.

Regardless of how you are actually living your life, God, who accepted your sincere request at the time you were baptized, views you as responsible to stand by the declaration of faith you have made. Jesus said: "Just let your word Yes mean Yes, your No, No."—Matt. 5:37.

CHRISTIAN SLAVES OF GOD AND CHRIST

The apostle Peter told the Jews who were baptized on Pentecost day, 33 C.E.: "Get saved from this crooked generation."

Have you been baptized? Then you showed you were forsaking "this crooked generation" and its bad moral practices as well as its nationalism, which will take this generation into destruction in the great tribulation. (Acts 2:40) You became a *slave* of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. What, really, does this mean?—1 Thess. 1:9.

Jesus Christ gave an illustration of the Christian's position when he said: "Who of you is there that has a slave plowing or minding the flock who will say to him when he gets in from the field, 'Come here at once and recline at the table'? Rather, will he not say to him, 'Get something ready for me to have my evening meal, and put on an apron and minister to me until I am through eating and drinking, and afterward you can eat and drink'?"—Luke 17:7, 8.

While a slave has his own will, in going under the master he must subordinate his will to do what the master wants. Circumstances may arise that make it personally inconvenient for him to obey a certain command. He may even have the desire to find a way out, some "loophole" or some easier way than his master directs. But he cannot do so without denying his master.

Therefore, it is not a matter of what the Christian, the slave of God, wants to do. When you are confronted with a choice, or you plan a course of action, do you think of what decision *you* want to make? Or do you think first of which course has the approval of your Master, whose slave you are?

Are you building your life around your relationship to Jehovah? Or are you building according to a pattern that you are setting for yourself? Are you waiting for issues to arise before facing a decision about them? Or are you making firm decisions now and living in harmony with

those decisions, so that you will have strength when the issues strike?

Unfortunately, some persons claiming to be dedicated to God think and act as though their lives belonged to them and as if they were free to proceed according to their own judgment. But the apostle Paul says: "You do not belong to yourselves, for you were bought with a price. By all means, glorify God."—1 Cor. 6:19, 20.

To those who go ahead with their own plans rather than first consulting what God their Master says, the words of Jesus' half brother James apply: "You ought to say: '*If Jehovah wills*, we shall live and also do this or that'."—Jas. 4:13-15.

THE DANGER OF COMPROMISE DUE TO HUMAN REASONING

Many times a person does not make plans altogether voluntarily. Often he decides on a course because of being put under pressure. But in making the decision he may follow human reasoning rather than God's, and by such reasoning seek to justify the course he chooses.

Peter followed such reasoning unwittingly, becoming a "satan," an adversary of Christ, by trying to get Jesus to take an easier course than his Father had set before him. Jesus rebuked Peter with strong words: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men."—Matt. 16:22, 23.

A person may be offered drugs by his associates, even pressured by them: "Just try them." Does he have the right, if he wishes, to see what they are like, or to please his associates? No, for his Master does not approve, in fact, commands him to 'cleanse himself of every defilement of flesh and spirit,' also to 'keep his senses,' which drugs seriously pervert.—2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Pet. 5:8.

Or a person may be pressured by nationalism to compromise his allegiance and service to God. In some lands, he may even be offered a way to escape certain penalties by taking a course that walks the border line, one that, with specious argument, he can justify in his own mind. It appears less uncomfortable to take than the outright, straightforward way that God directs.

Such a situation confronted three young Hebrew men in Babylon. When they were commanded by the king to bow to the golden image, they answered: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are under no necessity in this regard to say back a word to you. If it is to be, our God whom we are serving is able to rescue us. Out of the burning fiery furnace and out of your hand, O king, he will rescue us. But if not, let it become known to you, O king, that your gods are not the ones we are serving, and the image of gold that you have set up we will not worship."—Dan. 3:16-18.

Notice that these men did not try to rationalize that there was some way they could obey the king's command and still continue to carry on service to God. They did not argue or maneuver, or hope that the king would give them some other duty in connection with the project that would seem to be less directly connected with the ceremony. These faithful men wanted it clear that they did not support the king's project *in any way*.

Neither did these three Hebrews have to hold a consultation or ask someone else so as, possibly, to talk themselves into some kind of compromise. They unhesitatingly showed the completeness and firmness of their dedication when they began their answer to Nebuchadnezzar with the statement "we are under no necessity in this regard to say back a word to you."

The servant of God knows that love is the basic quality that binds God's congregation together. (Col. 3:14) Christians who have 'beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears' do not lift up sword against one another nor learn war anymore. Therefore they refuse to participate in anything that would be contrary to that love, and they maintain their neutrality as to strife and warring factions of the world.
—Isa. 2:4.

Note, too, the immediate and direct answers given by the apostles when ordered by the Jewish rulers to stop preaching. They straightforwardly answered: "We cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard," and, "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29) They were not going to give up their freedom of service to God voluntarily, or agree to let these rulers tell them when and where to speak, or restrict them in doing *fully* what their Master commanded.

GOD WANTS WILLINGNESS FROM THE HEART

One should not think that God will prevent one from taking the course one decides on. God is not going to force anyone to obey him. However, he will provide a way to endure any test for those who trust in him. "God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it." (1 Cor. 10:13) This way out will not be any "easier" way, nor through any compromise. But Jehovah will give strength to those who take a bold and firm stand.

Jehovah's allowing the individual to take whatever course he chooses is actually part of the test of integrity. The person has his freedom of will. If he takes

a course violating his Christian neutrality, he is denying God as his Master, and he is walking out on God and his congregation. He is certainly not leading a dedicated life. The congregation is not the one that publicly disfellowshiped him. He takes himself out, dissociates himself. He was once saved from this "crooked generation," but now he prefers to go back with it, doing as it does.

Such a person may feel that he can walk out and walk back in as he pleases. Not so, for the congregation cannot welcome with open arms a person who has denied God's sovereignty over him as His slave. What place would God have for him in the "body" of the congregation? (1 Cor. 12:24, 25) Therefore the congregation, if giving him an approved place among them, would be condoning his disobedience and would be a sharer in his sins.—Compare 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Timothy 5:22.

It is not the congregation that must alter its principles. Rather, it is the erring individual who must repent and change completely from his wrong viewpoint and bad actions and associations. Before God's congregation can accept him in full association he has to give evidence of his repentance and change of heart and action, proving it over a period of time, and return to leading a dedicated life.

BE SINGLE-MINDED IN RELIANCE ON GOD

When pressures arise some become fearful, not so much of the enemy or of men themselves, but because of the economic situation in the world, such ones fearing that they may lose jobs or property, or perhaps may even have to go to prison, and thus be unable to provide support for

their families. But the truly dedicated person will follow the course of dedication to his heavenly Master. He will count on God to care for the interests of his faithful servant.

The apostle Paul followed this course of faith. Before becoming a Christian, he had many worldly advantages. But he left these. He said: "Yet what things were gains to me, these I have considered loss on account of the Christ. Why, for that matter, I do indeed also consider all things to be loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. On account of him I have taken the loss of all things and I consider them as a lot of refuse, that I may gain Christ and be found in union with him, having, not my own righteousness, which results from law, but that which is through faith in Christ."—Phil. 3:7-9.

So the Christian is not living a truly dedicated life if he engages in roundabout reasoning, or takes a course that is "half-way" or one that he feels is just inside the border line of obedience to God. If he wants to gain the prize of life, he should do as Paul, who wrote: "Therefore, the way I am running is not uncertainly; the way I am directing my blows is so as not to be striking the air; but I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow."

—1 Cor. 9:26, 27.

If a person follows this straightforward, single-minded course, he will be happy. Then his 'advancement will be manifest to all persons' and those knowing him will be able to say: "This is a truly dedicated person."—1 Tim. 4:15.



God's Powerful Word Transforms Lives

CAN God's Word move a criminal to abandon lawlessness? Does it exert sufficient power to liberate a habitual drunkard from his degrading habit? Yes, the Bible's message can exert tremendous power for good when persons come to appreciate it as the "word of God." This is demonstrated in the lives of many who are now Jehovah's Christian witnesses.

A young Catholic man living in Quezon City, Philippine Republic, at first tried to fight against the "word of God." His desire was to become a millionaire by the time he reached the age of forty-five. Accordingly, he purchased expensive equipment to reproduce pornographic films for distribution. But when he came to appreciate the rightness and righteousness of God's commandments as brought to his attention by Jehovah's witnesses, he changed his whole attitude. He destroyed all his immoral films as well as the many religious images in his home. Despite bitter persecution from relatives, he and his wife took a firm stand for pure worship.

In Cebu, another city of the Philippine Republic, a man was making much money by smuggling goods into the country from Borneo and Indonesia by motor launch. To protect his illegal operations he had six bodyguards. Eventually two of his bodyguards were killed in gun battles with government authorities and rival gangs. This made him think seriously.

Therefore, when one of his men heard the message of the Bible as presented by Jehovah's witnesses and talked to him about it, he readily accepted a Bible study for himself and his family. This led to his abandoning his illegal occupation. Today he, his wife and three of his former bodyguards are active witnesses of Jehovah, encouraging others to bring their lives into harmony with the teachings of the Bible.

Back in 1949 another man in the Philippine Islands came in touch with Jehovah's witnesses. But he did not respond favorably. Later he moved to the island of Guam, leaving his family behind. There he frequented the bars so much that he became quite popular with some of the bar owners. One of them even permitted him to sleep on the bar table in case he got drunk. He never knew where he would wake

up—in a gutter, a prison cell, the hospital or at home. Once he was horrified to awake and find that his car was parked between two excavations about thirty feet in depth. Repeatedly he failed in attempts to stay sober.

In time his wife and family joined him in Guam. One day his wife asked him to take the family to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses. Although not interested personally, he was impressed with the way the Witnesses used the Bible and their not believing in ancestor worship. He concluded that going to the Kingdom Hall would be good for his children, but not for him.

At first, he would wait around for the family outside the Kingdom Hall, sometimes half drunk and asleep in the car. Later he would wait for them at the door, ready to "take off" in case he did not like what was being discussed. But he began to like what he heard. Finally he began studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses. Within three months he made his decision to be a Witness. At the present time this former town drunk is an excellent example in Christian conduct.

The changed course of life evident in Jehovah's Christian witnesses does not escape notice. For example, the branch office of the Watch Tower Society in the Philippines received the following letter: "We are in the process of reorganizing our Manufacturing Department and in this connection we would like to know if you could kindly assist us in our search for skilled workers. The strongest reason which prompted us to approach your Society is mainly because our observation, close study and experience have proved that men belonging to your organization could be highly relied upon to perform with unselfish diligence and honesty in any given task, and we are also amazed at their capability to understand and adjust themselves to existing economic and labor problems."

The fact that Bible study has aided many individuals to begin and continue living exemplary lives proves that God's Word is powerful indeed. This should be a source of encouragement to persons who would like to change their way of life but simply feel that they could never do so. A transformation is possible in the case of all who allow God's Word to exert its full force in their lives.—Heb. 4:12.

Questions from Readers

At the present time congregations of Jehovah's witnesses are giving consideration to men who might qualify to serve as elders and ministerial servants. In connection therewith, the following questions have been asked:

- Must the minor children of a man who is recommended be believers?

Yes, Titus 1:6 says that the man should have "believing children." This does not mean that such children must be baptized, but the indications should be that they submit to their father's direction in religious matters. Of course, there are places where the law of the land makes it impossible for minor children to change their religion as long as the wife adheres to it. But even in such a case the father should strive to do whatever he can to impart spiritual instruction to them, and others should be able to see that his children are responding to the extent of the limits imposed upon them by the law.

- What does it mean for a man to have his "children in subjection with all seriousness"?—1 Tim. 3:4.

This signifies that, in their subjection, the children should reflect a seriousness appropriate to their age and circumstances. Their subjection would include religious matters, the most vital aspects of a Christian's life. So the response that a man gets from his children to the instruction he gives them from God's Word should recommend him as one who can aid others in the congregation to conform their lives to God's righteous requirements.

- What is meant by the statement at Titus 1:6, "children that were not under a charge of debauchery nor unruly"?

This phrase has been variously translated from the Greek, "under no imputation of loose living, and are not out of control" (*New English Bible*) and "not have the reputation of being wild or disobedient." (*Today's English Version*) So the children in the recommended man's home should manifest that they are sub-

missive to their father and comport themselves in harmony with Jehovah's righteous laws. They should not have a bad reputation in the community nor in the congregation. The conduct and habits of the children should not give a basis for serious doubt that the man is really exercising his headship in a firm, though loving, manner.

- Does the conduct of a man's wife affect whether he qualifies for recommendation as an elder or a ministerial servant?

The wife is part of a man's household and her conduct does reflect favorably or unfavorably upon him. But in many lands she enjoys a certain legal status that often limits what the husband can do in controlling her conduct, especially if she is an unbeliever. According to the law, he usually has far less authority toward his wife than he does toward his children. Therefore, as long as the man is controlling his wife's conduct to the extent that the law permits, he would not be disqualified, provided that he met all the other Scriptural requirements. Of course, he himself should not be guilty of contributing toward any wayward conduct of his wife. The important thing is that the man be indeed "presiding over his own household in a fine manner."—1 Tim. 3:4.

- May a person who has completed a period of unannounced probation be recommended for appointment as a ministerial servant?

Regarding ministerial servants 1 Timothy 3:10 says: "Let these be tested as to fitness first, then let them serve as ministers, as they are free from accusation." An individual's having concluded a stipulated probation period for wrongdoing does not of itself imply that he is "free from accusation." It is not wise to entrust responsibility to such a person too soon. (1 Tim. 5:22) Enough time should have passed for him to establish that he has completely recovered himself from the weakness that was manifested in his wrong act or course. Over a sufficient period of time after the completion of the probation period he should have proved himself to be devoted to righteousness and as having genuine love for Jehovah and for his people. Others should be able to view him as a fine example in Christian conduct. So if he has really built up a fine reputation since completing his probation period, consideration could be given to recommending him to become, not an elder, but first a ministerial servant.

- What does Galatians 3:24 mean when it says that the "Law has become our tutor leading to Christ"?—U.S.A.

The Greek word rendered tutor (*pai-dago-gos*) literally means 'child leading.' It designated a man who accompanied a child to and from school. The tutor or pedagogue would turn the child over to the instructor. It was his duty to protect the child from physical and moral harm. The pedagogue also had authority to discipline the child and instruct it in matters of conduct. At times his discipline could be quite severe.

The Law given to Israel was much like such a tutor. It served to control the conduct of the Israelites and, if heeded, kept them from physical and moral harm. As Moses told the people: "If you will listen to the commandments of Jehovah your God, which I am commanding you today, so as to love Jehovah your God, to walk in his ways and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judicial decisions, then you will be bound to keep alive and to multiply, and Jehovah your God must bless you in the land to which you are going to take possession of it." (Deut. 30:16) Additionally, the Law held the Israelites together as a people despite conquest and foreign domination. It preserved the conditions that were necessary for the appearance of the Messiah, safeguarded God's Word of truth and prevented true worship from being totally eclipsed and lost from view.

But because of the imperfection of the Israelites, the Law exposed their transgressions and showed them up to be under condemnation. The sacrifices that they had to offer under the Law were a constant reminder of their sinfulness. (Gal. 3:10, 11, 19; Heb. 10:1-4) By thus pointing out the wrongs of the Israelites, the Law was really disciplining them and showing them the need for being liberated from the bondage of sin. Those who profited from this discipline were able to identify Jesus as the promised Messiah or Christ. In this way the Law, in effect, 'handed over' the properly disciplined Israelites to Jesus Christ, the real Instructor.

The Law, as Hebrews 10:1 states, "has a shadow of the good things to come." It therefore had to give way to the reality that "belongs to the Christ." (Col. 2:16, 17) Having a shadow, the Law gave an idea of the general shape or design of the reality, for Jesus put the things foreshadowed by the Law into the

realm of actual truth. That is why John 1:17 declares: "The Law was given through Moses, the undeserved kindness and the truth came to be through Jesus Christ."

These facts, therefore, show that it would be most inappropriate for anyone to insist that Christians are under the Mosaic law. As a tutor, it served its purpose well. "But now that the faith [that is, faith toward Jesus Christ] has arrived, we are no longer under a tutor." (Gal. 3:25) The God-appointed Instructor, Jesus Christ, has taken over.

- Is there not a contradiction in the Proverbs at chapter 26:4, 5? Verse four reads: "Do not answer anyone stupid according to his foolishness, that you yourself also may not become equal to him." But verse five says: "Answer someone stupid according to his foolishness, that he may not become someone wise in his own eyes."—F. D., Ecuador.

There is no contradiction here. Rather, the verses simply contrast the right and the wrong ways to answer a stupid person. Verse four gives instruction not to answer a stupid person in harmony with his foolishness in the sense of resorting to his degrading methods of argument—ridicule, attacks on personalities, loud boisterous talk, fits of rage, and so forth. One would thereby show oneself to be on the same level as the stupid one, and that is what the latter part of verse four warns against. So, it is the second part of the verse that indicates how the first part is to be understood.—Compare Proverbs 20:3; 29:11.

On the other hand, it would be proper to answer the stupid one "according to his foolishness" in the sense of analyzing his contentions, exposing them as being ridiculous. Showing that his arguments lead to entirely different conclusions from those he has drawn would be deterrent to his continuance in his stupid way. It should serve as a reproof and a rebuke. He should not feel so wise. Enforcing the consequences of a foolish argument, that is, demonstrating the absurdity and undesirability to which that viewpoint leads, is one of the best ways of dealing with such an argument.

For example, someone who wishes to ridicule the Bible may hold that the evolution theory makes the Bible out of date, or that the Bible consists merely of fables for the ignorant. In this case, rather than to appeal directly to the Scriptures, the believer in creation could present arguments such as are found in the

book *Did Man Get Here by Evolution or by Creation?* which take the beliefs, theories and statements of persons who will not accept the Bible's testimony and point out the insurmountable difficulties that evolution presents to its believers in explaining the existence of matter, life, and so forth.

There is also another sense in which the Christian should not answer according to the foolishness of the stupid one. He should avoid empty, high-sounding phrases. He should speak, "not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, as we combine spiritual matters with spiritual words." Therefore, when a Christian is before those who are versed in the wisdom of this world he should not be fearful or hesitant, because men relying on such wisdom are stupid, foolish in God's eyes. He should not try to adopt their manner of speaking, nor their language, even though it may sound very polished and erudite. He should use the spiritual words of the Bible, the simple, plain truths, relying on God to open the hearts of those who may possibly listen and be moved by these words of real wisdom.

Paul followed this course when in the presence of such worldly-wise men in the city of Corinth.—1 Cor. 2:1-5, 13.

On the other side of the broad river Jordan, near Bethany, Jesus said to his twelve apostles, "Come over here." They did so, and Jesus said to them, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of狼 (sheep) wolves. Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and innocent as doves." Then he said to them, "Behold, I send you forth as witnesses unto the Gentiles; go not into the way of the Gentiles, neither enter into a Samaritan town; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And when you have made converts, make them to come and see me, that I may rebuke them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, and may tell them how they have been deceived."

Jesus again said to them, "Behold, I give unto you power over all flesh; and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, go your way, bearing up your cross daily, as the symbol of the kingdom of God. For whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Then he said unto them, "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall hurt you. Nevertheless, in this world ye shall have tribulation: for the Son of man is not come to give you rest, but to bring you tribulation, and persecution, and many false prophets. But be ye of good courage; for I have told you all this, that ye might not be overcome by the evil one."

of such worldly-wise men in the city of Corinth.—1 Cor. 2:1-5, 13.

The Hebrew word *k'sil'*, used for "stupid" one at Proverbs 26:4, 5, carries with it the notion of impiety, ungodliness or insolence (in a religious way). The term does not necessarily refer to an ignorant person, but rather to moral stupidity, lack of understanding and wisdom. It is failure to use one's mental faculties in a proper way, especially in matters pertaining to spiritual things.—Compare Psalm 14:1.

Men who rely on the wisdom of this world are not spiritual, but are fleshly in their viewpoint. The Bible plainly says that they are stupid. Not that they are ignorant; they are sophisticated. But what they are doing puts them on a collision course with God.—1 Cor. 2:14.

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