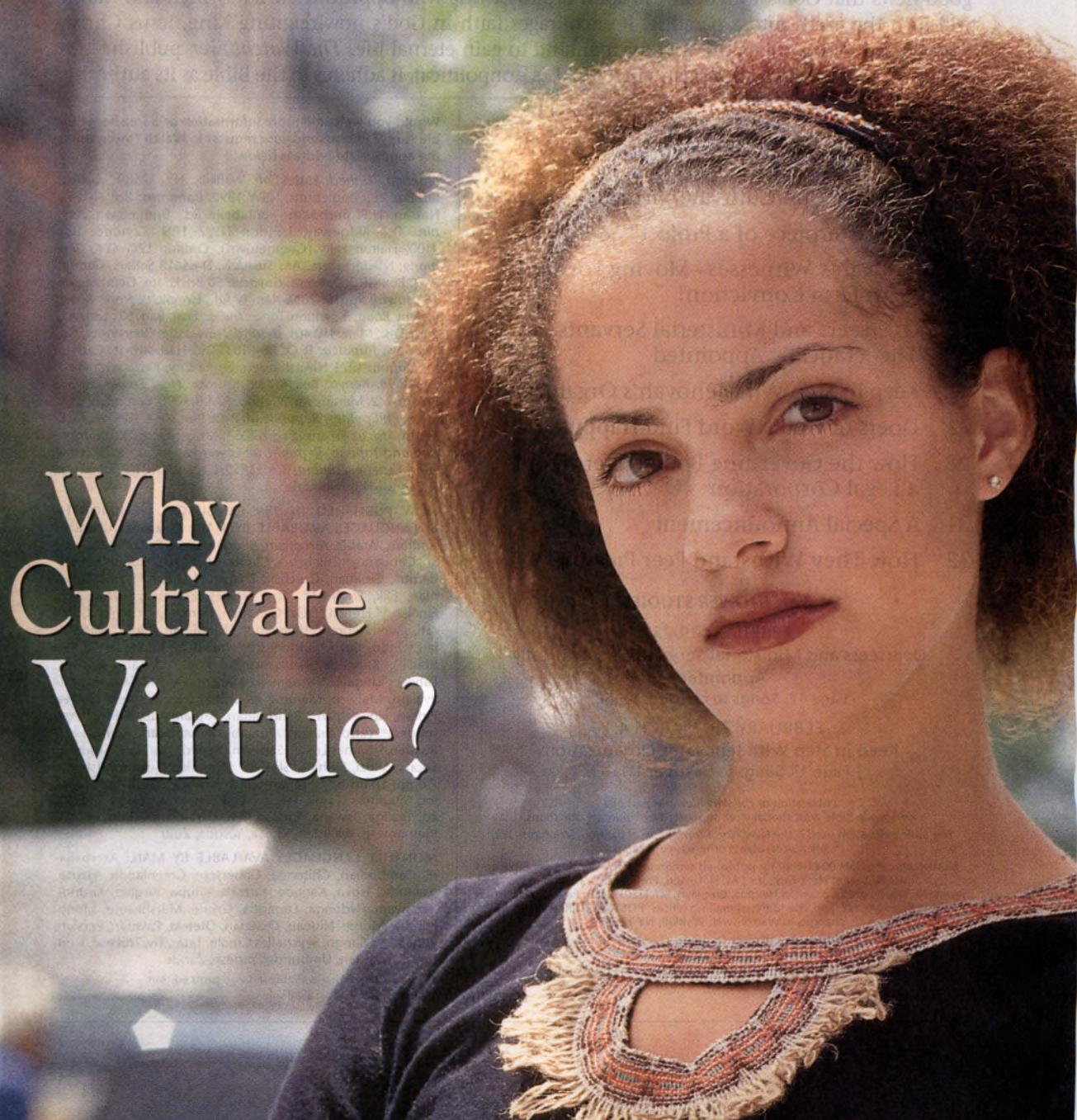


JANUARY 15, 2001

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Why Cultivate Virtue?

January 15, 2001

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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WHY CULTIVATE VIRTUE?



A MIDDLE-AGED Japanese man named Kunihito recently migrated to the United States.* Within weeks after his arrival, he came face-to-face with a situation that could have damaged his career. Kunihito relates: "When my superior asked me if I could take on a certain responsibility, I felt quite confident about accepting it. Yet, having been brought up to view modesty as a virtue, I replied: 'I am not sure if I can do it, but I will try my best.' To my American supervisor, this sounded as if I was incompetent and lacked confidence. When I learned that, I realized I needed to make some adjustments."

Maria, who lives in New York City, was an excellent student, always glad to help her classmates. Juan was a fellow student who occasionally enlisted Maria's help. But he also took a romantic interest in her and tried to impress her. Despite her desire to remain morally chaste, Maria succumbed to Juan's advances and became involved in sexual misconduct.

Displaying virtue in today's culturally divergent and morally corrupt world is indeed a challenge. So why cultivate virtue? Because virtuous conduct pleases God, and most of us surely desire to have his favor.

God's Word, the Bible, exhorts its readers to cultivate virtue. For example, the apostle Paul writes: "Whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things." (Philippians 4:8) And the apostle Peter urges us to put forth 'earnest effort in supplying to our faith virtue.' (2 Peter 1:5) But what is virtue? Can it be taught in a classroom? How may we cultivate it?

* Some names have been changed.

HOW WE CAN CULTIVATE VIRTUE



MODERN-DAY dictionaries define "virtue" as "moral excellence; goodness." It is "right action and thinking; goodness of character." Lexicographer Marvin R. Vincent says that the original classical sense of the Greek word rendered "virtue" denotes "excellence of any kind." Not surprisingly, then, such qualities as prudence, courage, self-discipline, fairness, compassion, perseverance, honesty, humility, and loyalty have been hailed as virtues at one time or another. Virtue has also been defined as "conformity to a standard of right."

To whose standard of excellence, goodness, and right should we conform? "According to the dominant school of moral philosophy," said *Newsweek* magazine, "the skepticism engendered by the Enlightenment has reduced all ideas of right and wrong to matters of personal taste, emotional preference or cultural choice." But is mere taste or preference a satisfactory way of determining right and wrong? No. For us to cultivate virtue, we need a reliable standard of good and bad—a standard by which a certain act, attitude, or quality may be judged right or wrong.

The Only True Source of Moral Standards

There is only one true Source for standards of morality—the Creator of mankind, Jehovah God. Soon after creating the first man, Adam, Jehovah God laid this command upon the man: "From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die." (Gen-

esis 2:16, 17) Jehovah God gave the tree that unique name to denote his exclusive right to decide what is good and what is bad for his creatures. God's standards of good and bad thus became the basis for judgment, or evaluation, of a person's deeds, outlook, and personality traits. Without such standards we could not correctly distinguish right from wrong.

The command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and bad set before Adam and Eve a choice—to obey or not to obey. For them, virtue meant obedience to that command. In time, Jehovah further revealed what pleases him and what displeases him, and he had this recorded for us in the Bible. Cultivating virtue, then, entails our conforming to Jehovah's righteous standards set out in the Scriptures.

Get Fully Acquainted With God's Standards

Since Jehovah God has determined the standards of good and bad and has revealed them in the Bible, should we not get fully acquainted with them? The apostle Paul wrote: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

For example, consider the misunderstanding that Kunihito, mentioned in the preceding article, faced when displaying modesty as his culture viewed it. A closer look at Scriptural standards later helped him to take a more balanced approach. The Bible certainly encourages modesty, and it counsels against overconfidence and presumptuousness. (Proverbs 11:2; Micah 6:8) Yet, when outlining the qualifications for "an office of overseer," the apostle Paul spoke of "reaching out" for that privilege. (1 Timothy 3:1) This

"reaching out" is to be done not only without being boastful or presumptuous but also without needlessly putting oneself down. 137

What does the Bible say about moral excellence in the business arena? Employing questionable methods or cutting corners on government regulations and tax laws is a common practice in today's business world. Regardless of what others do, however, the Bible standard is that we are "to conduct ourselves honestly in all things." (Hebrews 13:18) Hence, we cultivate virtue by being honest and fair with employers, employees, customers, and secular governments. (Deuteronomy 25:13-16; Romans 13:1; Titus 2:9, 10) Honesty certainly promotes trust and goodwill. And putting agreements in writing often prevents misunderstandings and complexities that may arise because of "unforeseen occurrence."—Ecclesiastes 9:11; James 4:13, 14.

The matter of dress and grooming is another area in which we need to cultivate virtue. Clothing choices vary according to culture, and pressure may be strong to keep up with the latest styles and trends. But why should we follow every fad or fashion that comes along? The Bible admonishes us to "quit being fashioned after this system of things." (Romans 12:2) Rather than make up rules, the apostle Paul wrote under inspiration: "I desire the women to adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind, not with styles of hair braiding and gold or pearls or very expensive garb, but in the way that befits women professing to reverence God." (1 Timothy 2:9, 10) This basic standard applies to men and women alike. Of course, there is room for delightful variety in style as a result of cultural preference or personal taste.

The Bible also identifies immoral practices that God explicitly condemns. At 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10, we read the warning: "What! Do you not know that unrighteous persons

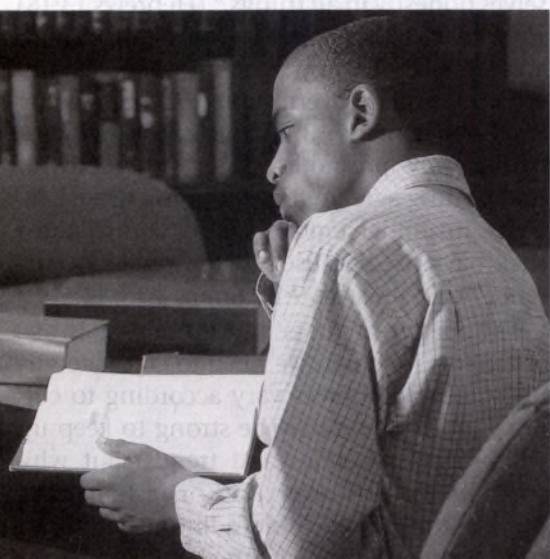
will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be misled. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom." This scripture helped Maria, mentioned earlier, to see that according to the standard of moral excellence set out by the Creator, her involvement with

gratitude for Jehovah and we are moved to apply Scriptural principles in our lives.

"How I do love your law!" exclaimed the psalmist. "All day long it is my concern." (Psalm 119:97) And King David wrote: "I have remembered days of long ago; I have meditated on all your [God's] activity; I willingly kept myself concerned with the work of your own hands." (Psalm 143:5) We too should make prayerful meditation an integral part of our study of the Bible and Bible-based publications.

True, making time for diligent study accompanied by meditation can be a challenge. But the pursuit of virtue requires that we buy out the time from other activities. (Ephesians 5:15, 16) Aaron, age 24, buys out such time every day by waking up 30 minutes earlier than he once did. He relates: "At first, I just read the Bible for the entire half hour. Only recently have I come to realize the importance of meditation. So now I use about half of that time to dwell upon what I have just read. This has been truly rewarding." Meditation can be done at other times. In a melody to Jehovah, David sang: "During the night watches I meditate on you." (Psalm 63:6) And the Bible relates: "Isaac was out walking in order to meditate in the field at about the falling of evening."—Genesis 24:63.

Meditation is invaluable in cultivating virtue, for it helps us to feel the way Jehovah feels and to make his views our views. Maria, for example, knew that God prohibits fornication. But to 'abhor what is wicked and cling to what is good,' she needed to meditate on key Bible texts. (Romans 12:9) She was helped to see the need to make changes after reading Colossians 3:5, which urges us to 'deaden our body members as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness.' Maria had to ask herself: 'What kind of sexual appetite must I deaden? What should I avoid that might arouse unclean de-



Make meditation a part of your Bible study

Juan was wrong and she must put an end to it if she would have God's approval. Clearly, to cultivate virtue, we need to get thoroughly familiar with Jehovah's standards.

Learn With the Heart

Virtue is not a passive avoidance of what is bad. It has moral power. A virtuous person has goodness. "Virtue," says one professor, "needs to be learned with the heart as well as the head." Cultivating virtue, then, entails more than a thorough acquaintance with God's Word. It calls for meditation on what is written there so that our hearts get filled with



Build a godly personality by imitating Christ Jesus

sires? Are there changes I need to make in the way I treat those of the opposite sex?"

Meditation includes considering the result of an action. Paul urges Christians to abstain from fornication and to exercise self-control so that "no one go to the point of harming and encroach upon the rights of his brother." (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7) Good questions to ponder are: 'What damage would I do to myself, my family, or others by committing this act? How would I be affected spiritually, emotionally, and physically? How have things turned out for others who have violated God's law in the past?' Such contemplation made Maria stronger at heart, and it can do the same for us.

Learn From Examples

Can virtue be taught in a classroom? This question is one that has perplexed thinkers for millenniums. The Greek philosopher Plato leaned toward thinking that it can. Aristotle, on the other hand, reasoned that virtue is gained through practice. A journalist summed up the debate on the issue this way: "In short, an ethics of virtue cannot be learned alone. Nor can it be taught from text-

books. Good character comes from living in communities . . . where virtue is encouraged and rewarded." But where would we find truly virtuous individuals? While most cultures offer some examples of virtue, at least in their mythological heroes and stories, the Bible contains abundant true examples.

The most outstanding example of virtue is Jehovah. He always acts in a virtuous way and does what is righteous and good. We can cultivate virtue by becoming "imitators of God." (Ephesians 5:1) And God's Son, Jesus Christ, 'left us a model for us to follow his steps closely.' (1 Peter 2:21) Moreover, the Bible contains accounts of many faithful individuals, such as Abraham, Sarah, Joseph, Ruth, Job, and Daniel and his three Hebrew companions. Not to be overlooked are the examples of virtue among modern-day servants of Jehovah.

We Can Succeed

Can we really succeed in doing what is virtuous in God's eyes? Having inherited imperfection, at times there may rage within us a fierce battle between the mind and the flesh—between wanting to do what is virtuous and following our sinful tendencies. (Romans 5:12; 7:13-23) But the battle can be won with God's help. (Romans 7:24, 25) Jehovah has provided his Word and Bible-based publications. By diligent study of the Scriptures and prayerful meditation on them, we can become pure in heart. From such a pure heart can come forth virtuous thoughts, words, and actions. (Luke 6:45) Based on the examples of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ, we can build a godly personality. And we can certainly learn much from individuals who are faithfully serving God today.

The apostle Paul exhorted his readers to "continue considering" virtue and other praiseworthy things. Doing this is sure to result in God's blessing. (Philippians 4:8, 9) With Jehovah's help, we can succeed in cultivating virtue.

STAND COMPLETE AND WITH FIRM CONVICTION

"A Masterpiece of a Project"

FROM the early days of their modern-day history, Jehovah's Witnesses have been intensely interested in one of Jesus Christ's prophecies: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) As 1914—the beginning of "the last days"—approached, sincere Bible Students undertook with firm conviction an unprecedented worldwide campaign of education based on the Holy Scriptures.—2 Timothy 3:1.

To achieve their objective of declaring the good news earth wide, these servants of Jehovah employed a method that was new, bold, and vivid. To learn more about it, let us go back in time.

A New Way to Declare the Good News

It is January of the year 1914. Imagine that you are seated among 5,000 others in a darkened auditorium in New York City. Before you is a large motion-picture screen. A

white-haired man in a frock coat appears on screen. You have seen silent movies, but this man speaks, and you can hear his words. You are at the premiere of something techni-

cally innovative, and the message is unique. The speaker is Charles Taze Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Society, and the production is the "Photo-Drama of Creation."

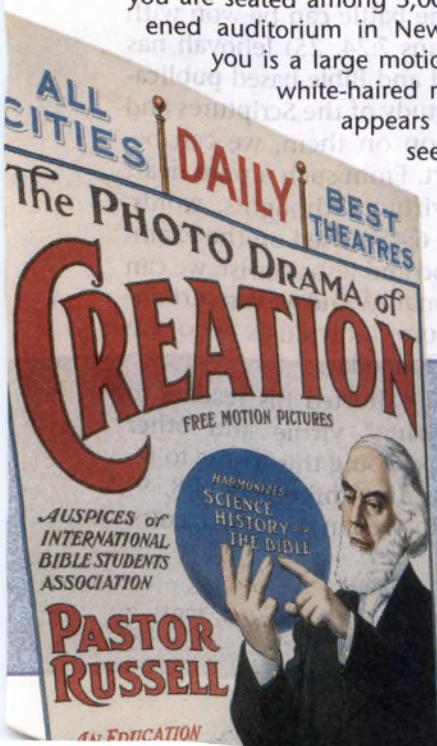
C. T. Russell realized the potential for motion pictures to reach masses of people. In 1912, therefore, he began preparing the "Photo-Drama of Creation." Eventually, it came to be an eight-hour-long photographic slide and motion picture production, complete with color and sound.

Designed to be shown in four segments, the "Photo-Drama" took viewers from creation down through human history to the climax of Jehovah God's purpose for the earth and humankind at the end of Christ's Millennial Reign. Years would pass before the same use of technology would be commercially successful. Yet, millions saw the "Photo-Drama of Creation" free of charge!

Choice musical recordings as well as 96 phonograph-record talks were prepared for the "Photo-Drama." Stereopticon slides were made of fine art pictures illustrating world history. It was also necessary to make hundreds of new paintings and sketches. Some of the color slides and films were painstakingly hand painted. And this was done repeatedly, for, in time, 20 four-part sets were prepared. This made it

The "Eureka Drama"

Eight months after the premiere of the "Photo-Drama," the Society saw the need to provide another version of it called the "Eureka Drama." While the complete "Photo-Drama" continued to be shown in large cities, the "Eureka" sets presented the same basic message in villages and rural areas. One version of the "Eureka Drama" was de-





possible to show a portion of the "Photo-Drama" in 80 different cities on any given day!

Behind the Scenes

What took place behind the scenes during exhibitions of the "Photo-Drama"? "The Drama started with a movie of Brother Russell," said Bible Student Alice Hoffman. "As he would appear on the screen and his lips began to move, a phonograph would be started . . . and we would enjoy listening to his voice."

Alluding to time-lapse photography, Zola Hoffman recalled: "I sat there in open-eyed amazement as we watched the portrayal of the days of creation. There were lilies there just gradually unfolding before our very eyes."

Music lover Karl F. Klein of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses adds: "At the same time that these pictures were being shown, there was an accompaniment of very fine music, such gems as *Narcissus* and *Humoreske*."

There were also other memorable incidents. "Sometimes humorous mishaps would take place," recalled Clayton J. Woodworth, Jr. "On one occasion the record was playing 'Flee as a Bird to Your Mountain,' and on the screen came the picture of a huge gigantosaurus, a pre-Flood animal of great size!"

Besides the regular "Photo-Drama of Creation," there soon were "Eureka Drama" sets.

scribed as giving "the sisters an exceptional opportunity" to preach. Why so? Because its case of phonograph records weighed *only* 30 pounds. For an exhibition, of course, it would also be necessary to carry a phonograph.

(See box.) One was made up of the recorded lectures, as well as musical recordings. The other consisted of both the records and the slides. Though the "Eureka Drama" lacked motion pictures, it was very successful when shown in less densely populated areas.

A Powerful Witnessing Tool

By the end of 1914, the "Photo-Drama" had been presented to audiences totaling over 9,000,000 in North America, Europe, and Australia. Though few in number, the Bible Students did not lack the firm conviction needed to declare the good news with this new medium. They gladly contributed the funds required to rent suitable places for these exhibitions. So it was that the "Photo-Drama of Creation" did a great work in acquainting viewers with God's Word and purposes.

In a letter to C. T. Russell, one person wrote: "That first visit to your Drama was the turning-point of my life; or, I should say, the turning-point in my knowledge of the Bible." Said another individual: "I had almost been drawn into the quick-sands of infidelity and feel that I was saved by the 'Photo-Drama of Creation' which was shown here last summer. . . . I now have that peace which the world cannot give and which I would not part with for all its riches."

Demetrius Papageorge, long a member of the Society's headquarters staff, commented: "The 'Photo-Drama' was a masterpiece of a project, when we consider the small number of Bible Students and the proportionately small amount of finances available. It really had Jehovah's spirit behind it!"



JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Moving Forward With Firm Conviction!

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

IN THESE days of skepticism and doubt, Jehovah's Witnesses stand out as Christians having firm conviction. This was made clear at the annual meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, held at the Jersey City, New Jersey, Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses on Saturday, October 7, 2000.*

In his opening remarks, the chairman, John E. Barr, a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, stated: "Out of all the earth's billions, we know and believe that Jehovah's beloved Son, Christ Jesus, is now enthroned in the heavens, ruling amid his enemies." Evidence of such firm conviction was presented in six thrilling reports from around the world.

Conquering Spiritism With Bible Truth in Haiti

Spiritism is quite prevalent in Haiti. "Usually," related Branch Committee coordinator John Norman, "people will take on voodoo to protect themselves." One witch doctor de-

veloped doubts when he lost a leg in an accident. 'How could this happen to me if I am being protected by spirits?' he wondered. Like many others, this man was taught the truth by Jehovah's Witnesses and was helped to break free from spiritism. The potential for growth in Haiti is shown by the fact that on April 19, 2000, four times the number of Kingdom publishers in that land attended the Memorial of Christ's death.

Zeal in Korea's Vast Territory

In Korea, 40 percent of Jehovah's Witnesses are in full-time service. "With this tremendous army," stated Branch Committee coordinator Milton Hamilton, "our territory of over 47 million people is covered about once a month." Growth in the sign-language congregations is particularly notable. In one sign-language circuit, 800 home Bible studies are being conducted. This is an average of one study per publisher. Sadly, young brothers are still being incarcerated because of their neutrality. These faithful Christians are dealt with favorably, though, and they are often given jobs requiring trustworthiness.

* The program was tied in electronically to a number of locations, bringing the total attendance to 13,082.



Meeting the Demands of Growth in Mexico

A peak of 533,665 Kingdom proclaimers reported field service in Mexico in August 2000. More than three times that number of individuals attended the Memorial. "Our goal for this year is to build 240 more Kingdom Halls," stated Branch Committee coordinator Robert Trahey. "Still," he added, "we need many more."

The youths among Jehovah's Witnesses in Mexico are exemplary. Regarding a certain young person, a Catholic priest stated: "I would like to have just one like him among my followers. I admire these people for their strong will and wise use of the Bible. They have defended God, even at the risk of their lives."

Integrity Amid Unrest in Sierra Leone

Since April 1991, when civil war broke out in Sierra Leone, thousands of people have been killed, injured, or maimed. "War and hardship have had a profound effect on people," reported Branch Committee coordinator Bill Cowan. "Many who were indifferent to our message now listen with interest. It is not uncommon for people to walk right off the street into our Kingdom Halls to attend their first meeting. The brothers are often stopped on the street and asked for a Bible study." Despite the country's continued instability, the Kingdom-preaching work is bearing fruitage in Sierra Leone.

Vast Building Program in South Africa

Currently, there is a need for several thousand Kingdom Halls in the territory cared for by the branch office in South Africa. Hundreds of halls have already been built. "Instead of meeting in a shack or under a tree, as was done previously, our brothers are able to meet in a proper place with suitable seating," noted Branch Committee member John Kikot. "Although most of these Kingdom Halls are of modest design, they usually stand out

as the most dignified buildings in their locale. In some areas, it has been found that after building a Kingdom Hall, the congregation will more than double during the following year."

A New Generation of Witnesses in Ukraine

During the 2000 service year, this land saw a peak of 112,720 publishers. More than 50,000 of these have learned Bible truth during the past five years. "Truly, Jehovah has raised up a new, youthful generation of Witnesses to declare his name!" said John Didur, coordinator of the Branch Committee. "Over the past two years," he added, "we have placed more than 50 million magazines, which is equal to the population of the country. Each month, on the average, we receive a thousand letters from interested people asking for more information."

Other Moving Features of the Program

Daniel Sydlik, a member of the Governing Body, gave an absorbing talk. The article "How the Governing Body Differs From a Legal Corporation," appearing in this magazine, is based on that informative presentation.

Theodore Jaracz of the Governing Body delivered a thought-provoking discourse entitled "Overseers and Ministerial Servants Theocratically Appointed." One of the articles appearing in this magazine is based on that subject.

The annual meeting also included a stirring talk given by Governing Body member David Splane on the yeartext for the year 2001. Based on the apostle Paul's words, it is: "Stand complete and with firm conviction in all the will of God." (Colossians 4:12) Jehovah's Witnesses around the world are determined to do that as they faithfully preach the good news of God's Kingdom in all the earth.
—Matthew 24:14.

OVERSEERS AND MINISTERIAL SERVANTS THEOCRATICALLY APPOINTED

"Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers."—ACTS 20:28.

JEHOVAH long ago foretold that something remarkable would occur in the time of the end. Through the prophet Isaiah, it was stated: "The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time."—Isaiah 60:22.

² Is there evidence that this prophecy is undergoing fulfillment today? Yes, indeed! During the 1870's, one congregation of Jehovah's people was formed in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. From such a small beginning, tens of thousands of congregations have sprung up and are flourishing worldwide. Millions of Kingdom proclaimers—a mighty nation—are now associating with more than 91,000 congregations in 235 lands around the earth. Unquestionably, this confirms that Jehovah is speeding up the ingathering of true worshipers before the outbreak of the "great tribulation," now so near at hand.—Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:9-14.

³ After making a personal dedication to Jehovah, and in harmony with Jesus' instructions, these millions were baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit." (Matthew 28:19) Being baptized "in the name of the Father" means that these dedicated individuals recognize Jehovah as their heavenly Father and Life-Giver and sub-

mit to his sovereignty. Baptism 'in the name of the Son' signifies that they confess Jesus Christ as their Ransomer, Leader, and King. They also acknowledge the role of God's holy spirit, or active force, in directing their life. This indicates that they have been baptized 'in the name of the holy spirit.'

⁴ At their baptism, new disciples are ordained as ministers of Jehovah God. Who ordains them? In principle, the words recorded at 2 Corinthians 3:5 apply to them: "Our being adequately qualified [as ministers] issues from God." They could wish for no greater honor than to be ordained by Jehovah God himself! After their baptism, they will continue to grow spiritually as ministers of the "good news" as long as they accept the leadings of God's spirit and continue to apply his Word.—Matthew 24:14; Acts 9:31.

Theocratic—Not Democratic—Appointment

⁵ Mature oversight by qualified overseers and the able assistance of ministerial servants are required to care for the spiritual needs of the growing number of active ministers. (Philippians 1:1) How are such spiritual men appointed? Not by methods like those employed in Christendom. For instance, Christian overseers are not elected democrat-

1. How is Isaiah 60:22 being fulfilled?
2. What does it mean to be baptized 'in the name of the Father, the Son, and the holy spirit'?

4. How are Christian ministers ordained?
5. Are Christian overseers and ministerial servants chosen democratically? Explain.

ically, that is, by receiving the votes of the majority of the people associated with a congregation. Instead, these appointments are made theocratically. What does that mean?

⁶ Simply stated, a true theocracy is rule by God. Witnesses of Jehovah voluntarily submit to his rulership and cooperate together in order to do the divine will. (Psalm 143:10; Matthew 6:9, 10) Appointments of Christian overseers, or elders, and ministerial servants are theocratic because the process of recommending and appointing such responsible men is carried out according to God's arrangement as set out in the Holy Scriptures. And as the "head over all," Jehovah of course has the right to determine how his visible organization will operate.—1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 97:9.

⁷ In contrast with many religious groups in Christendom, Jehovah's Witnesses do not decide for themselves the form of spiritual government under which they operate. These sincere Christians endeavor to stick to Jehovah's standards. Overseers among them are not put into office by some congregational, hierarchical, or presbyterian form of church government. If elements of the world seek to interfere with these appointments, Jehovah's people refuse to compromise. Steadfastly, they maintain the position so well expressed by the apostles in the first century when they said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) Thus, the Witnesses subject themselves to God in all things. (Hebrews 12:9; James 4:7) Following theocratic procedure brings divine approval.

⁸ As servants of the Great Theocrat, Jehovah, we do well to bear in mind the dif-

6. (a) What is a true theocracy? (b) Why are the appointments of overseers and ministerial servants theocratic?

7. How are Jehovah's Witnesses governed?

8. How do democratic and theocratic procedures differ?

ferences between democratic and theocratic procedures. Democratic processes call for equal representation and are often characterized by campaigning for office and election by majority vote. Such procedures are not involved in theocratic appointments. These do not come from men; nor do they proceed from some legal entity. Apparently alluding to his own appointment by Jesus and Jehovah as "an apostle to the nations," Paul told the Galatians that he had been appointed "neither from men nor through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him up from the dead."—Romans 11:13; Galatians 1:1.

Appointed by Holy Spirit

⁹ Paul reminded overseers living in Ephesus that they had been appointed by God through holy spirit. He said: "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the *holy spirit* has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son." (Acts 20:28) Those Christian overseers needed to continue to be led by holy spirit as they carried out their duties as shepherds of the flock of God. If a man who occupied an appointed office no longer met the divine standard, in time holy spirit would operate to remove him from his position.

¹⁰ How is it that the holy spirit plays a pivotal role? First of all, the record that sets out requirements for spiritual oversight was inspired by holy spirit. In his letters to Timothy and Titus, Paul outlined the standards to be met by overseers and ministerial servants. Altogether, he mentioned some 16 different requirements. For instance, overseers were to be irreprehensible, moderate in habits, 9. What does Acts 20:28 say about the appointment of Christian overseers? 10. How is it that the holy spirit plays a pivotal role in theocratic appointments?

sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, qualified to teach, and exemplary as family heads. They were to be balanced in the use of alcoholic beverages, were not to be lovers of money, and were to exercise self-control. Similarly, high standards were set for men reaching out for appointment as ministerial servants.

—1 Timothy 3:1-10, 12, 13; Titus 1:5-9.

¹¹ A review of these qualifications shows that those who take the lead in Jehovah's worship must be exemplary in Christian conduct. Men who reach out for congregational responsibility must give evidence that holy spirit is operating on them. (2 Timothy 1:14) It must be evident that God's spirit is producing in these men the fruitage of "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22, 23) Such fruitage would be manifested in their dealings with fellow believers and others. Of course, some may excel in displaying certain fruits of the spirit, while others may meet other qualifications for overseers to a superior degree. In their overall pattern of life, however, all who hope to be appointed as overseers or ministerial servants should demonstrate that they are spiritual men, measuring up to the requirements of God's Word.

¹² When Paul exhorted others to become imitators of him, he could do so with freedom of speech because he himself was imitating Jesus Christ, who 'left us a model for us to follow his steps closely.' (1 Peter 2:21; 1 Corinthians 11:1) Those meeting the Scriptural requirements at the time of their appointment as overseers or ministerial servants may thus be said to have been appointed by holy spirit.

11. What are some of the qualifications that must be met by men reaching out for congregational responsibility?

12. Who may be said to be appointed by holy spirit?

¹³ There is another factor that indicates how the holy spirit operates in the recommendation and appointment of overseers. Jesus said that 'the Father in heaven gives holy spirit to those asking him.' (Luke 11:13) So when the elders in the local congregation meet to recommend men for congregational responsibility, they pray for God's spirit to guide them. They base their recommendations on what is stated in God's inspired Word, and holy spirit enables them to discern whether an individual being considered for appointment meets the Scriptural requirements. Those making the recommendations are not to be unduly influenced by outward appearance, educational attainments, or natural abilities. Their primary focus must be on whether the person is a spiritual man, one whom members of the congregation would not hesitate to approach for spiritual counsel.

¹⁴ While bodies of elders share with traveling overseers in recommending brothers to serve as elders and ministerial servants, the actual appointments are made according to the pattern set in the first century. On one occasion, a need arose for spiritually qualified men to care for an important assignment. The governing body gave the following direction: "Search out for yourselves seven certified men from among you, full of spirit and wisdom, that we may appoint them over this necessary business." (Acts 6:1-3) While men on the scene made the recommendations, the appointments were made by responsible men there in Jerusalem. A similar pattern is followed today.

¹⁵ The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses directly appoints all members of Branch Committees. When deciding who

13. How does holy spirit help those making recommendations of men to serve in the congregation?

14. What do we learn from Acts 6:1-3?

15. How is the Governing Body involved in the matter of appointing men?



Elders and ministerial servants are privileged to serve by theocratic appointment

can assume such a weighty responsibility, the Governing Body has in mind Jesus' statement: "Everyone to whom much was given, much will be demanded of him; and the one whom people put in charge of much, they will demand more than usual of him." (Luke 12:48) In addition to appointing Branch Committee members, the Governing Body appoints Bethel elders and traveling overseers. However, they do commission responsible brothers to act for them in making certain other appointments. There is Scriptural precedent also for this.

Make Appointments, as I Gave You Orders'

¹⁶ Paul told his coworker Titus: "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective and might make appointments of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders." (Titus 1:5) Paul then outlined the qualifications that Ti-

16. Why did Paul leave Titus in Crete, and what does this indicate regarding theocratic appointments today?

tus was to look for in men who would qualify for such appointments. Today, therefore, the Governing Body appoints qualified brothers at the branches to represent it in making appointments of elders and ministerial servants. Care is taken that those acting representatively on behalf of the Governing Body clearly understand and follow the Scriptural guidelines for making such appointments. Hence, it is under the direction of the Governing Body that qualified men are appointed to serve in the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide.

¹⁷ When recommendations for appointment of overseers and ministerial servants are submitted to a branch office of the Watch Tower Society, experienced men rely on God's spirit for guidance in making the appointments. These men feel a sense of accountability, realizing that they must not lay their hands hastily upon any man, lest they share in his sins.—1 Timothy 5:22.

17. How are recommendations for appointment of overseers and ministerial servants handled by a branch office?

¹⁸ Certain appointments may be transmitted by a letter bearing an official stamp from a legal entity. Such a letter may be used to appoint more than one brother in the congregation.

¹⁹ Theocratic appointments come from Jehovah through his Son and God's visible earthly channel, "the faithful and discreet slave" and its Governing Body. (Matthew 24:45-47) The whole process of such recommendation and appointment is directed, or guided, by holy spirit. This is the case because the qualifications are set out in God's Word, which is inspired by holy spirit, and the individual appointed gives evidence of producing the fruitage of that spirit. Therefore, the appointments are to be viewed as being made by holy spirit. Just as overseers and ministerial servants were appointed theocratically in the first century, the same is true today.

Grateful for Jehovah's Guidance

²⁰ In this time of spiritual prosperity and theocratic increase in the Kingdom-preaching activity, we are thankful that Jehovah is primarily responsible for the appointment of overseers and ministerial servants. This Scriptural arrangement helps to maintain God's high standards of righteousness among us as Jehovah's Witnesses. Moreover, the Christian spirit and earnest efforts of these men contribute greatly to our wonderful peace and unity as Jehovah's servants. Like the psalmist David, we are therefore moved to exclaim: "Look! How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!"—Psalm 133:1.

²¹ How grateful we are for Jehovah's direc-

18, 19. (a) How are certain appointments transmitted? (b) How is the whole process of recommendation and appointment carried out?

20. Why do we share David's sentiments recorded at Psalm 133:1?

21. How is Isaiah 60:17 being fulfilled today?

tion by means of his Word and holy spirit! And meaningful, indeed, are the words recorded at Isaiah 60:17: "Instead of the copper I shall bring in gold, and instead of the iron I shall bring in silver, and instead of the wood, copper, and instead of the stones, iron; and I will appoint peace as your overseers and righteousness as your task assigners." As theocratic procedures have progressively been more fully implemented among Jehovah's Witnesses, we have experienced these blessed conditions throughout God's earthly organization.

²² We are deeply grateful for the theocratic arrangements in place among us. And we greatly appreciate the hard but satisfying work done by theocratically appointed overseers and ministerial servants. We wholeheartedly extol our loving heavenly Father, who has granted us spiritual prosperity and has blessed us so richly. (Proverbs 10:22) Let us, therefore, be determined to keep in step with Jehovah's organization. Above all, let us continue to serve together unitedly to the honor, praise, and glory of Jehovah's great and holy name.

22. For what are we rightly grateful, and what should we be determined to do?

How Would You Answer?

- Why can we say that the appointment of overseers and ministerial servants is theocratic, not democratic?
- How are responsible Christian men appointed by holy spirit?
- How is the Governing Body involved in the appointment of overseers and ministerial servants?
- As regards theocratic appointments, why should we be grateful to Jehovah?

KEEP IN STEP WITH JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

"May the God of peace . . . equip you with every good thing to do his will."—HEBREWS 13:20, 21.

IN THE year 1999, the earth's population reached six billion! *The World Almanac* indicates that of this number some 1,165,000,000 are Muslims; 1,030,000,000 are Roman Catholics; 762,000,000 are Hindus; 354,000,000 are Buddhists; 316,000,000 are Protestants; and 214,000,000 are Orthodox.

² In view of the religious division and confusion existing today, could all these millions be acting in harmony with God's will? No, "for God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace." (1 Corinthians 14:33) On the other

1. What is the world's population, and how many are counted as members of certain religions?
2. What can be said about the religious situation that exists today?

Like David, we cannot recount all of Jehovah's wonderful works

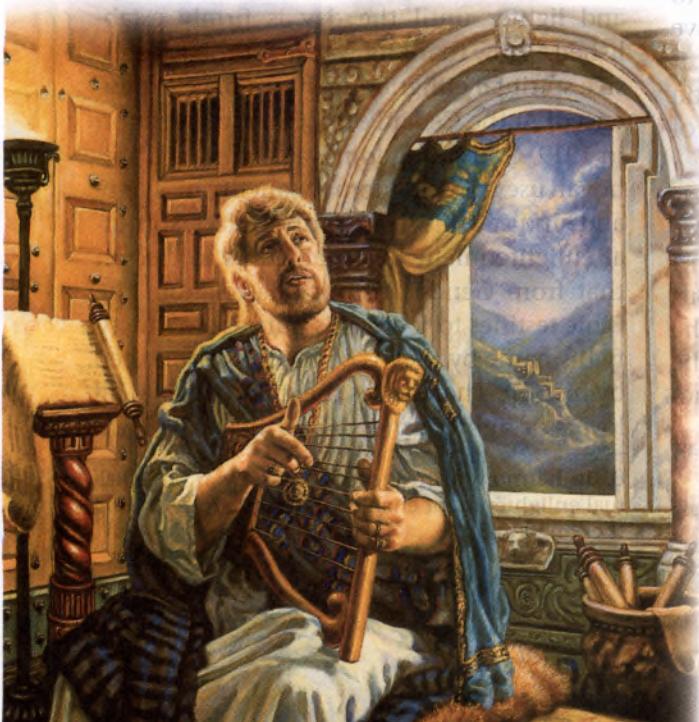
hand, what about the international brotherhood of Jehovah's servants? (1 Peter 2:17) Careful investigation proves that 'the God of peace equips them with every good thing to do his will.'—Hebrews 13:20, 21.

³ Of course, the number of those associated with Jehovah's Witnesses is not a criterion for determining if they enjoy divine favor; nor do statistics impress God. He did not choose the Israelites because they were "the most populous" of the peoples. They were, in fact, "the least" of them. (Deuteronomy 7:7) But because Israel proved unfaithful, at Pentecost 33 C.E., Jehovah transferred his favor to the new congregation that consisted of Jesus Christ's followers. They were anointed with Jehovah's holy spirit and zealously went forth declaring the truth about God and Christ to others.—Acts 2:41, 42.

Constantly Moving Forward

⁴ In the first century, the Christian congregation was constantly moving forward, opening up new territories, making disciples, and acquiring greater understanding of God's purposes. The early Christians kept in step with the spiritual enlightenment provided through divinely inspired letters. Spurred on by visits from the apostles and others, they accomplished their

3. What happened in Jerusalem at Pentecost 33 C.E., and why?
4. Why would you say that the early Christian congregation was constantly moving ahead?



ministry. This is well documented in the Christian Greek Scriptures.—Acts 10:21, 22; 13:46, 47; 2 Timothy 1:13; 4:5; Hebrews 6:1-3; 2 Peter 3:17, 18.

⁵ Like the early Christians, Jehovah's present-day Witnesses have developed from small beginnings. (Zechariah 4:8-10) Since the late 19th century, there has been clear evidence that God's spirit rests on his organization. Because we have relied, not on human power, but on guidance by holy spirit, we have continued to progress in our understanding of the Scriptures and in doing God's will. (Zechariah 4:6) Now that we are in "the last days," it is vital that we keep in step with Jehovah's progressive organization. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Doing so enables us to keep our hope alive and to share in giving a witness about God's established Kingdom before the final end overtakes this system of things.
—Matthew 24:3-14.

⁶ Within our ranks are those who began their association with Jehovah's organization in the 1920's, '30's, and '40's. During those early years, who among us could have imagined the remarkable growth and the progressive development of the organization up to this day? Think of the milestones that have been reached in our modern-day history! It is spiritually rewarding, indeed, to reflect on what Jehovah has accomplished by means of his theocratically organized people.

⁷ David of old was deeply impressed when he contemplated Jehovah's wonderful works. "Were I inclined to tell and speak of them," he said, "they have become more numerous than I can recount." (Psalm 40:5) We face the same limitation, being unable to relate the many great and praiseworthy deeds of Jehovah.

5. Why is God's organization progressing today, and why should we keep in step with it?

6, 7. We will consider what three areas wherein Jehovah's organization has moved ahead?



God's flock has benefited from timely adjustments in organizational procedures

vah in our day. Nevertheless, let us consider three areas wherein Jehovah's organization has moved ahead: (1) progressive spiritual enlightenment, (2) an improved and expanded ministry, and (3) timely adjustments in organizational procedures.

Grateful for Spiritual Enlightenment

⁸ Regarding progressive spiritual enlightenment, Proverbs 4:18 has proved true. It says: "The path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established." How thankful we are for the progressive spiritual enlightenment we have experienced! At the Cedar Point, Ohio, convention in 1919, God's Kingdom was highlighted. Jehovah uses the Kingdom to sanctify his name and vindicate his sovereignty. In fact, spiritual enlightenment has enabled us to discern that from Genesis through Revelation, the Bible testifies to Jehovah's purpose to sanctify his name by means of the Kingdom ruled by his Son. Therein lies the grand hope of all lovers of righteousness.—Matthew 12:18, 21.

8. In harmony with Proverbs 4:18, what has spiritual enlightenment enabled us to discern regarding the Kingdom?

⁹ At the Cedar Point convention in 1922, the principal speaker, J. F. Rutherford, urged God's people to "advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom." In the article "Birth of the Nation," published in *The Watch Tower* of March 1, 1925, attention was drawn to spiritual insight concerning prophecies that had pointed forward to the setting up of God's Kingdom in 1914. It was also discerned in the 1920's that there are two opposing organizations—Jehovah's and Satan's. The fight is on between them, and we will be on the winning side only if we keep in step with Jehovah's organization.

¹⁰ How has such spiritual enlightenment helped us? Since God's Kingdom and the King Jesus Christ are no part of the world, neither can we be part of it. By keeping separate from the world, we show that we are on the side of the truth. (John 17:16; 18:37) When we observe the complex problems plaguing this wicked system, how thankful we are to be no part of Satan's organization! And how favored we are to have spiritual security within Jehovah's organization!

¹¹ At the Columbus, Ohio, convention in 1931, fitting application was made of Isaiah 43:10-12. The Bible Students adopted the distinctive name Jehovah's Witnesses. What a grand privilege it is to make known God's name so that others may call upon it in order to be saved!—Psalm 83:18; Romans 10:13.

¹² Prior to the 1930's, many of God's people were somewhat uncertain about their hope for future life. Some had thoughts about heavenly life but were fascinated by Bible teachings about a paradise earth. At the Washington, D.C., convention in 1935, it was

9, 10. In the 1920's, what was learned about the Kingdom and about two opposing organizations, and how has this been helpful?

11. What Scriptural name was adopted by God's people in 1931?

12. What spiritual enlightenment concerning the great crowd was provided in 1935?

thrilling to learn that the great multitude, or great crowd, of Revelation chapter 7 is a class with an earthly hope. Since then, the gathering of the great crowd has moved ahead with ever greater momentum. Are we not thankful that the identity of the great crowd is no mystery to us? The reality of people being gathered in great numbers from all nations, tribes, and tongues motivates us to quicken our step as we keep pace with Jehovah's organization.

¹³ The big issue that should concern human society was highlighted at the St. Louis, Missouri, convention in 1941. It is universal domination, or sovereignty. This is the issue that must be settled soon, and the great and fear-inspiring day for that to be done comes on apace! Also brought to the fore in 1941 was the related issue of integrity, which allows us to show where we individually stand with regard to God's sovereignty.

¹⁴ At the 1950 international convention in New York City, the princes of Psalm 45:16 were precisely identified. It was an electrifying moment when Brother Frederick Franz spoke on this subject and explained that princes of the new earth were among us. At that convention and at subsequent ones, there have been numerous flashes of spiritual light. (Psalm 97:11) How grateful we are that our path "is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter"!

Moving Ahead in Our Ministry

¹⁵ A second way that Jehovah's organization has moved ahead has to do with our

13. What big issue was highlighted at the St. Louis convention in 1941?

14. At the international convention in 1950, what was learned about the princes mentioned at Psalm 45:16?

15, 16. (a) How did we move ahead in our ministry during the 1920's and 1930's? (b) What publications have given impetus to the Christian ministry in recent decades?

main work—Kingdom preaching and disciple making. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 13:10) To accomplish this work, the organization has kept before us the importance of expanding our ministry. In 1922 all Christians were urged to share in the preaching work. It was up to each one to let his light shine and thus have a personal share in bearing witness to the truth. (Matthew 5:14-16) In 1927 steps were taken to set Sunday aside as a day for the field ministry. Beginning in February 1940, it became common to see Witnesses on the streets in business districts offering *The Watchtower* and *Consolation* (now *Awake!*).

¹⁶ The year 1937 saw the introduction of the booklet *Model Study*, emphasizing the need to make return visits in order to teach others Bible truth. In the years thereafter, Bible study activity was greatly emphasized. Impetus was given to this feature of the ministry with the publication of the book “*Let God Be True*” in 1946 and *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* in 1968. Currently, we use the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. Coverage of such material lays a sound Scriptural foundation for making disciples.

Moving Ahead With Organizational Refinements

¹⁷ A third way in which Jehovah’s organization has moved ahead has to do with organizational refinements. According to Isaiah 60:17, Jehovah promised: “Instead of the copper I shall bring in gold, and instead of the iron I shall bring in silver, and instead of the wood, copper, and instead of the stones, iron; and I will appoint peace as your overseers and righteousness as your task assigners.” In keeping with this prophecy, steps have been taken to improve the oversight of the Kingdom-preaching work and the shepherding of the flock.

17. In keeping with Isaiah 60:17, how has Jehovah’s organization moved ahead?

¹⁸ In 1919 a service director was appointed in each congregation that asked to be organized for field service. This gave impetus to our ministry in the field. The election of elders and deacons was terminated in 1932, marking our departure from democratic methods. Another milestone was reached in 1938 when *all* servants in the congregation began to be appointed more closely in line with the arrangements for theocratic appointment in the early Christian congregation. (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 4:14) In 1972 overseers and ministerial servants were appointed to serve, as such men did among the early Christians. Instead of having just one man serve as the overseer of a congregation, Philippians 1:1 and other scriptures indicate that those meeting Scriptural requirements for overseers constitute a body of elders.—Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11, 12.

¹⁹ In 1975 an arrangement went into effect for committees of the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses to oversee the worldwide activities of God’s organization. Branch Committees were appointed to have oversight of the work in their respective territories. Since then, attention has been given to simplifying the work at headquarters and at the branches of the Watch Tower Society so as to “make sure of the more important things.” (Philippians 1:9, 10) The responsibilities resting on the shoulders of Christ’s undershepherds involve taking the lead in the evangelizing work, teaching in the congregation, and properly shepherding the flock of God.—1 Timothy 4:16; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:2, 3.

Jesus’ Active Leadership

²⁰ Keeping in step with Jehovah’s progressive organization requires that we recognize the God-assigned role of Jesus Christ as “head of the congregation.” (Ephesians 5:22, 23)

18, 19. What organizational refinements have there been through the years?

20. Keeping in step with Jehovah’s organization requires that we recognize what about Jesus’ position?

Noteworthy, too, is Isaiah 55:4, where we are told: "Look! As a witness to the national groups I [Jehovah] have given him, as a leader and commander to the national groups." Jesus certainly knows how to lead. He also knows his sheep and their deeds. In fact, when he inspected the seven congregations in Asia Minor, five times he said: "I know your deeds." (Revelation 2:2, 19; 3:1, 8, 15) Jesus also knows our *needs*, as does his Father, Jehovah. Before giving the Model Prayer, Jesus stated: "God your Father knows what things you are needing before ever you ask him." —Matthew 6:8-13.

²¹ How is Jesus' leadership manifested? One way is through Christian overseers, the "gifts in men." (Ephesians 4:8) Revelation 1:16 depicts anointed overseers as being in Christ's right hand, under his control. Today, Jesus directs the arrangement for elders, whether such men have a heavenly or an earthly hope. As explained in the preceding article, they are appointed by holy spirit in harmony with Scriptural requirements. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) In the first century, a group of older men in Jerusalem made up a governing body that had oversight of the congregations and of the Kingdom-preaching activity in general.

21. How is Jesus' leadership manifested in the Christian congregation?

How Would You Answer?

- Why can we say that Jehovah's organization keeps moving ahead?
- What evidence is there that God's people enjoy progressive spiritual enlightenment?
- How have there been improvements in the Christian ministry?
- What timely adjustments have been made in organizational procedures among Jehovah's servants?

The same pattern is followed within Jehovah's organization today.

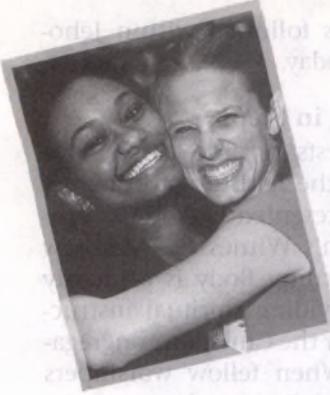
Keep in Step!

²² Kingdom interests on the earth have been entrusted to "the faithful and discreet slave," which is represented by the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. (Matthew 24:45-47) The Governing Body is primarily concerned with providing spiritual instruction and direction for the Christian congregation. (Acts 6:1-6) When fellow worshipers are affected by natural disasters, however, the Governing Body asks one or more legal entities to provide relief and to repair or restore damaged homes and Kingdom Halls. If certain Christians are dealt with harshly or are persecuted, steps are taken to build them up spiritually. And "in troublesome season," every effort is made to keep the preaching work moving forward.—2 Timothy 4:1, 2.

²³ No matter what comes upon his people, Jehovah constantly provides spiritual food and needed direction. God also gives discernment and insight to responsible brothers to prepare for further advancement and refinements in theocratic organization. (Deuteronomy 34:9; Ephesians 1:16, 17) Without fail, Jehovah provides what we need in order to fulfill our disciple-making commission and to accomplish our ministry worldwide. —2 Timothy 4:5.

²⁴ We have absolute confidence that Jehovah will never abandon his faithful people; he will deliver them through the coming "great tribulation." (Revelation 7:9-14; Psalm 94:14; 2 Peter 2:9) We have every reason to maintain the confidence we had at first firm right down to the end. (Hebrews 3:14) Let us, therefore, be determined to keep in step with Jehovah's organization.

22. What help does the Governing Body provide?
23, 24. Regardless of what comes upon his people, what does Jehovah constantly provide, and what should be our determination?



Doers of GOD'S WORD Find Happiness

"We recognize this convention as another of Jehovah's provisions to prepare us for further Kingdom activity," said one of the speakers early in the "Doers of God's Word" District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. He continued: "We have prepared ourselves to be instructed about happy family life, to be encouraged to stay close to Jehovah's organization, to be motivated to maintain our zeal in Kingdom service, and to be reminded of the need to keep on the watch."

SINCE late May 2000, millions of doers of God's word and their friends flocked to thousands of locations around the world to receive vital Bible education. What did they learn during the three-day convention?

Day One—Not Forgetting Jehovah's Doings

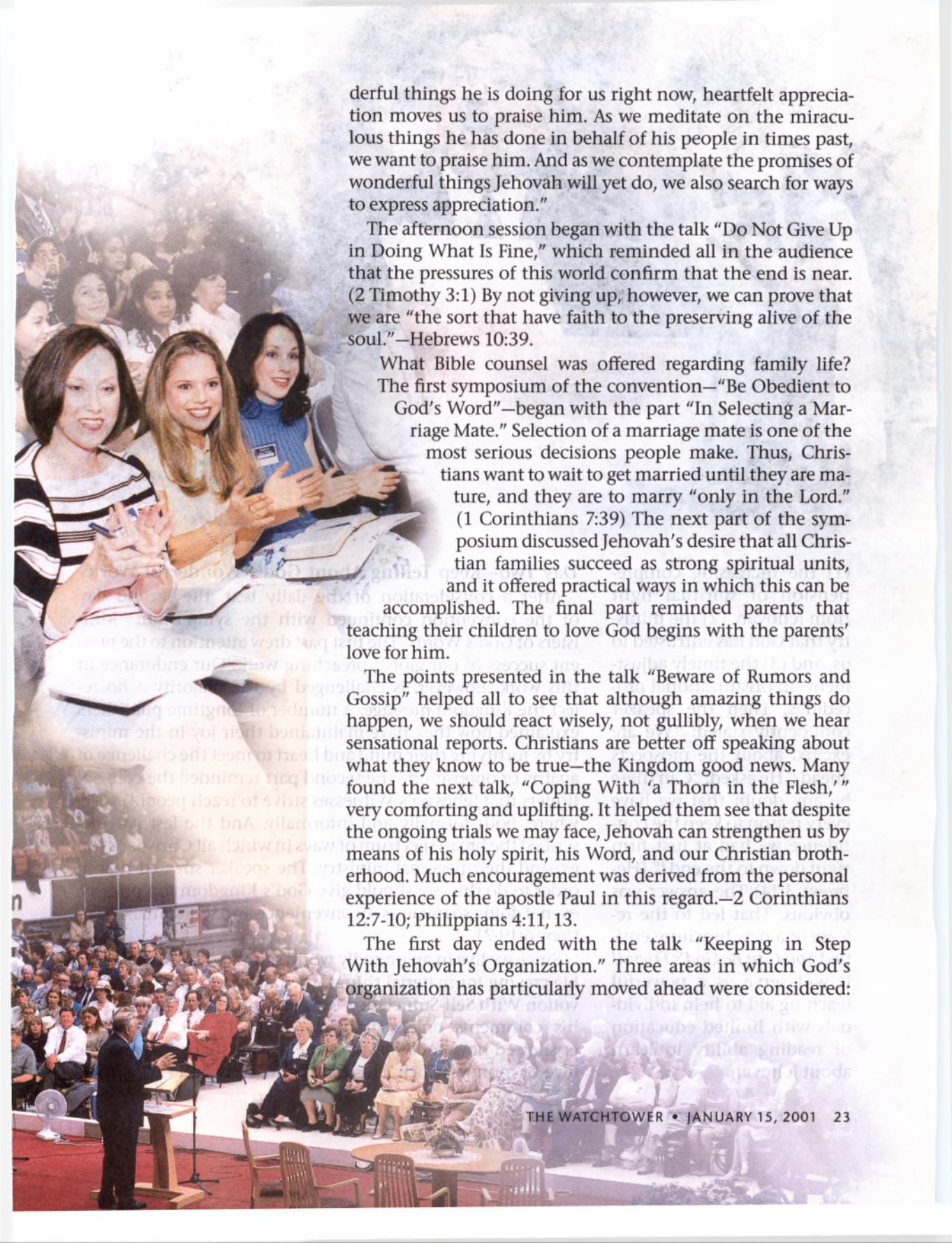
In the opening talk, the chairman invited the audience to experience the blessings that come from unified worship of Jehovah at conventions. All in attendance were assured that their faith would be increased and that their personal relationship with Jehovah would be strengthened.

"The happy God" knows what we need for our individ-

ual happiness. (1 Timothy 1:11) Thus, the talk "Doing God's Will Brings Happiness" stressed that Jehovah's Word, the Bible, outlines the best way of living. (John 13:17) A number of interviews with longtime Witnesses of Jehovah showed how doing God's will under varied circumstances adds meaning to our lives. The next talk, "Become Radiant Over the Goodness of Jehovah," emphasized that, as "imitators of God," Christians want to produce "every sort of goodness" in their lives. (Ephesians 5:1, 9) One outstanding way to do this is by preaching the good news and making disciples.—Psalm 145:7.

The discussion "Continue Steadfast as Seeing the One Who Is Invisible" showed how strong faith helps us to "see" the invisible God. The speaker described how spiritual people are aware of God's qualities, including his ability to know even what we think. (Proverbs 5:21) Those interviewed related the steps they have taken in order to develop stronger faith and put spiritual interests first in their lives.

The morning session ended with the keynote address, "Praise Jehovah—The Doer of Wonderful Things." It helped the audience appreciate that the more we learn about Jehovah, the more reasons we find to praise him as the Doer of wonderful things. The speaker said: "As we contemplate God's marvelous works of creation along with all the won-



derful things he is doing for us right now, heartfelt appreciation moves us to praise him. As we meditate on the miraculous things he has done in behalf of his people in times past, we want to praise him. And as we contemplate the promises of wonderful things Jehovah will yet do, we also search for ways to express appreciation."

The afternoon session began with the talk "Do Not Give Up in Doing What Is Fine," which reminded all in the audience that the pressures of this world confirm that the end is near. (2 Timothy 3:1) By not giving up, however, we can prove that we are "the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul."—Hebrews 10:39.

What Bible counsel was offered regarding family life? The first symposium of the convention—"Be Obedient to God's Word"—began with the part "In Selecting a Marriage Mate." Selection of a marriage mate is one of the most serious decisions people make. Thus, Christians want to wait to get married until they are mature, and they are to marry "only in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 7:39) The next part of the symposium discussed Jehovah's desire that all Christian families succeed as strong spiritual units, and it offered practical ways in which this can be accomplished. The final part reminded parents that teaching their children to love God begins with the parents' love for him.

The points presented in the talk "Beware of Rumors and Gossip" helped all to see that although amazing things do happen, we should react wisely, not gullibly, when we hear sensational reports. Christians are better off speaking about what they know to be true—the Kingdom good news. Many found the next talk, "Coping With 'a Thorn in the Flesh,'" very comforting and uplifting. It helped them see that despite the ongoing trials we may face, Jehovah can strengthen us by means of his holy spirit, his Word, and our Christian brotherhood. Much encouragement was derived from the personal experience of the apostle Paul in this regard.—2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Philippians 4:11, 13.

The first day ended with the talk "Keeping in Step With Jehovah's Organization." Three areas in which God's organization has particularly moved ahead were considered:



(1) the increasing comprehension of spiritual light from Jehovah, (2) the ministry that God has entrusted to us, and (3) the timely adjustments in organizational procedures. Then the speaker confidently stated: "We are excited about the prospects ahead." He asked: "Can there be any doubt that we have every reason to keep the confidence we had at first firm right down to the end?" (Hebrews 3:14) The answer was obvious. That led to the release of a new brochure entitled *You Can Be God's Friend!* It will serve as a powerful teaching aid to help individuals with limited education or reading ability to learn about Jehovah.

Day Two—Keep Telling About God's Wonderful Works

After a consideration of the daily text, the second day of the convention continued with the symposium "Ministers of God's Word." The first part drew attention to the present success of our global preaching work. Our endurance in this work, however, is challenged by the majority, who reject the Kingdom message. A number of longtime publishers explained how they have maintained their joy in the ministry by fortifying their mind and heart to meet the challenge of apathy or opposition. The second part reminded the conventioners that Jehovah's Witnesses strive to reach people everywhere, both formally and informally. And the last part described the broad spectrum of ways in which all Christians can expand their personal ministry. The speaker stressed that in order to do this, we should give God's Kingdom top priority, even if doing so involves inconvenience and self-denial.—Matthew 6:19-21.

Since we live in an ungodly world saturated with an insatiable craving for material things, the talk "Cultivate Godly Devotion With Self-Sufficiency" was very timely. Basing some of his comments on 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 18, 19, the speaker showed how godly devotion helps Christians to avoid the love of money, which can lead them astray and cause many

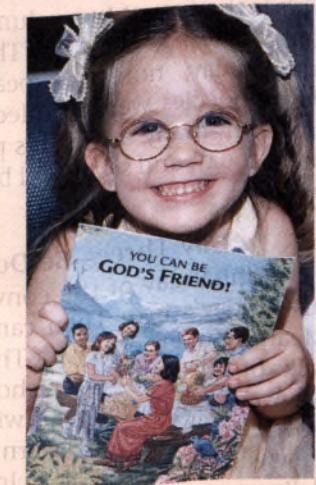


newly dedicated ones follow in Jesus' footsteps by submitting to water baptism! (Matthew 3:13-17) All who take this step have already accomplished much as doers of God's word. Moreover, when baptized they become ordained ministers of the good news, deriving much joy from knowing that they are sharing in sanctifying Jehovah's name.—Proverbs 27:11.

Pointed counsel was given in the talk "Maturity Needed 'to Distinguish Both Right and Wrong.'" Worldly standards of right and wrong are woefully inadequate. We therefore need to rely on Jehovah's standards. (Romans 12:2) All were encouraged to work hard to gain an accurate understanding of God's ways and to grow to

pains. He stressed that whatever our economic situation, happiness depends on our relationship with Jehovah and on our spiritual well-being. Many were deeply moved by the points presented in the talk "Giving God No Cause for Shame." The fact that Jehovah never forgets his faithful Witnesses was emphasized. The peerless example of Jesus Christ—who "is the same yesterday and today, and forever"—will help many to continue running the race for life with endurance.—Hebrews 13:8.

Closing the morning session was the baptism talk—always a highlight at large gatherings of Jehovah's Witnesses. What a joy to see



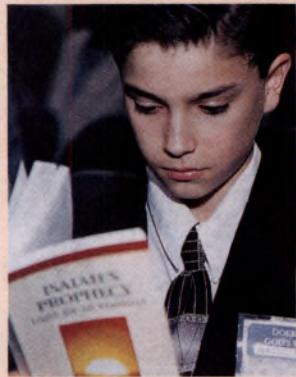
You Can Be God's Friend!

On Friday afternoon a new brochure entitled *You Can Be God's Friend!* was released. There is a great need for simplified Bible education in many parts of the world, and this brochure will be used to fill that need. It will be a great blessing to people with limited education or reading ability.



Isaiah's Prophecy —Light for All Mankind

Conventioners were thrilled to receive Volume I of the two-volume set *Isaiah's Prophecy—Light for All Mankind*. In this publication, emphasis has been placed on the practical value of Isaiah's prophecy for our day.



maturity. Then, with practice our perceptive powers will be trained "to distinguish both right and wrong."—Hebrews 5:11-14.

Next came the symposium "Work Hard at Cultivating Spirituality." True Christians recognize the importance of developing and maintaining spirituality. This involves hard work—reading, studying, and meditating. (Matthew 7:13, 14; Luke 13:24) Spiritual people also carry on "every form of prayer and supplication." (Ephesians 6:18) We realize that our prayers reveal the depth of our faith and devotion, the level of our spirituality, as well as what we view as "the more important things." (Philippians 1:10) The importance of developing a warm, loving relationship with Jehovah like that enjoyed by an obedient child

with a kind father was also stressed. We do not simply have a religion—although it is the true one—but we want to build strong faith, 'as seeing God.'—Hebrews 11:6, 27.

The subject of spiritual progress was further discussed in the talk "Make Your Advancement Manifest." Three areas of such advancement were considered: (1) increasing in knowledge, understanding, and wisdom, (2) producing the fruitage of God's spirit, and (3) discharging our responsibilities as family members.

At the close of the day's final talk, "Walking in the Progressive Light of God's Word," conventioners were delighted to receive a new book, *Isaiah's Prophecy—Light for All Mankind I*. This is the first of two volumes treating the Bible book of Isaiah chapter by chapter. "The book of Isaiah has a message for us today," noted the speaker. He continued: "Yes, many of its prophecies were fulfilled back in the days of Isaiah. . . . However, many of Isaiah's prophecies are undergoing fulfillment today, and some will be fulfilled in God's promised new world."

Day Three—Be Doers of Jehovah's Word

The final day of the convention started with a discussion of the day's text. Then came the symposium "Zephaniah's Meaningful Prophecy for Those Doing God's Will." The three talks of this symposium showed that, as he did in the days of wayward Judah, Jehovah will bring distress upon those who now refuse to heed his warning. Because they sin against God, they will walk about as helpless as blind men, unable to find deliverance. True Christians, however, faithfully keep seek-

ing Jehovah, and they will be concealed in the day of God's anger. Moreover, they enjoy many blessings even now. They have the blessed opportunity to speak the "pure language" of Bible truth. (Zephaniah 3:9) The speaker noted: "Speaking the pure language involves not only believing the truth and teaching it to others but also harmonizing our conduct with God's laws and principles."

Conventioners eagerly awaited the drama "Warning

Examples for Our Day." This full-costume drama showed how thousands of Israelites lost their lives at the border of the Promised Land because they forgot Jehovah and were seduced by pagan women into fornication and false worship. One of the main characters—Jamin—was initially torn between the allure of the Moabite women and his devotion to Jehovah. The false reasoning and deceptive thinking of ungodly Zimri came prominently to the fore, as did the faith and devotion of Phinehas. The danger of becoming involved with those who do not love Jehovah was vividly portrayed.

The drama set the tone for the follow-up talk, "Do Not Become Forgetful Hearers." An analysis of 1 Corinthians 10:1-10 showed that Jehovah tests our obedience to determine our worthiness to receive an inheritance in the new world. For some, fleshly desires crowd out spiritual goals even now, close to our entry into the new system. All were encouraged not to forfeit the opportunity to 'enter into Jehovah's rest.'—Hebrews 4:1.

The public discourse was on the subject "Why Be Attentive to God's Wonderful Works." Jehovah's "wonderful works" demonstrate his wisdom and his authority over the physical creation all around us. (Job 37:14) A number of searching questions from Jehovah were enough to impress Job with the power of the almighty Creator. Jehovah will also do future "wonderful works" in behalf of his faithful servants. The speaker concluded: "We have abundant reason to give attention to Jehovah's wonderful works—what he has done in the past, what he is doing around us in creation

today, and what he promises to do in the near future."

Following a summary of the *Watchtower* study article for the week, the final talk of the convention was presented. Entitled "Highly Esteem Your Privilege as a Doer of God's Word," this stirring discourse stressed that it is an honor to be doers of God's word. (James 1:22) The audience was reminded that our privilege as doers of God's word is unique, and the longer we exercise it, the more highly we will esteem it. All in attendance were encouraged to reflect the beneficial stimulation of this district convention in their desire to be doers of God's word to the fullest extent. That is the only way to experience the greatest happiness possible.



How the Governing Body Differs From a Legal Corporation

ANNUAL meetings of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania have been held since January of 1885. When the ingathering of anointed Christians was underway in the late 19th century, the directors and officers of this corporation had the heavenly hope. In fact, this has almost always been the case.

There was one exception. In 1940, Hayden C. Covington—then the Society's legal counsel and one of the "other sheep," with the earthly hope—was elected a director of the Society. (John 10:16) He served as the Society's vice president from 1942 to 1945. At that time, Brother Covington stepped aside as a director to comply with what then seemed to be Jehovah's will—that all directors and officers of the Pennsylvania corporation be anointed Christians. Lyman A. Swingle replaced Hayden C. Covington on the board of directors, and Frederick W. Franz was elected vice president.

Why did Jehovah's servants believe that all the directors and officers of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania should be anointed Christians? Because at the time, the board of directors and officers of the Pennsylvania corporation were closely identified with the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, which has always been made up entirely of spirit-anointed men.

A Historic Annual Meeting

At the annual meeting held on October 2, 1944, in Pittsburgh, the members of the Pennsylvania corporation adopted six resolutions amending its charter. The charter had provided that voting shares be issued to contributors of funds to the Society's work, but

the third amendment eliminated that provision. A report on that annual meeting noted: "Membership in the Society will be limited to not more than 500 . . . Each one chosen must be a full-time servant of the Society or a part-time servant of a company [congregation] of Jehovah's witnesses and must show the spirit of the Lord."

Thereafter, directors of the Society were to be voted into office by individuals who were fully devoted to Jehovah, irrespective of the amount of money that they contributed to advance the Kingdom work. This turned out to be in accord with the progressive refinements foretold at Isaiah 60:17, where we read: "Instead of the copper I shall bring in gold, and instead of the iron I shall bring in silver, and instead of the wood, copper, and instead of the stones, iron; and I will appoint peace as your overseers and righteousness as your task assigners." In referring to "overseers" and "task assigners," this prophecy pointed to improvements in organizational procedures among Jehovah's people.

This important step in bringing the organization into theocratic alignment came at the end of the "two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings," mentioned at Daniel 8:14. At that time, "the holy place" was "brought into its right condition."

After the historic annual meeting in 1944, however, a vital question remained. Since the Governing Body was then closely identified with the Pennsylvania corporation's seven-member board of directors, did this mean that the Governing Body could never be made up of more than seven anointed Christians? Moreover, since the directors are elect-

ed by the members of the corporation, were the corporation members electing members of the Governing Body at the annual meeting each year? Are the directors and officers of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania and the members of the Governing Body one and the same, or are they different?

Another Unforgettable Annual Meeting

These questions were answered at the annual meeting held on October 1, 1971. On that occasion, one of the speakers pointed out that the governing body of "the faithful and discreet slave" preceded the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania by hundreds of years. (Matthew 24:45-47) A governing body was formed at Pentecost of 33 C.E., more than 18 centuries before the Pennsylvania corporation came into existence. At first, the governing body consisted of, not 7 men, but 12 apostles. Evidently, its number was enlarged later, for "the apostles and older men in Jerusalem" were taking the lead.—Acts 15:2.

In 1971 the same speaker explained that the members of the Watch Tower Society could not vote in the members of the anointed Governing Body. Why? "Because," he said, "the governing body of the 'slave' class is not appointed by any man. It is appointed by . . . Jesus Christ, the Head of the true Christian congregation and the Lord and Master of the 'faithful and discreet slave' class." Clearly, then, the members of the Governing Body cannot be voted into office by the membership of any legal corporation.

Continuing, the speaker made this very significant statement: "The governing body does not have officers such as the Society's Board of Directors has, namely, president, vice president, secretary-treasurer and assistant secretary-treasurer. It has merely a chairman." For many years, the president of the Pennsylvania corporation was also the foremost member of the Governing Body. This would no longer be the case. While not equal

in experience or ability, Governing Body members would be equal in responsibility. The speaker added: "Any member of the governing body can be chairman thereof without being at the same time the president of the . . . Society . . . It all depends upon the rotation system for the chairmanship in the governing body."

At that unforgettable annual meeting in 1971, a distinction was clearly drawn between the spirit-anointed members of the Governing Body and the directors of the Pennsylvania corporation. Still, members of the Governing Body continued to serve as directors and officers of the Society. Today, however, the question arises: Is there any Scriptural reason why the directors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania must be members of the Governing Body?

The answer is no. The Pennsylvania corporation is not the only legal entity used by Jehovah's Witnesses. There are others. One is the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Incorporated. It facilitates our work in the United States. Jehovah's blessing has clearly been upon that corporation, though its directors and officers have been mainly of the "other sheep." The International Bible Students Association is used in Britain. Other legal entities are used to promote Kingdom interests in other lands. All of them harmoniously assist and have a role to play in getting the good news preached earth wide. No matter where they are located or who serve as directors or officers, these entities are theocratically guided and used by the Governing Body. Hence, such entities have assigned tasks to perform in furthering Kingdom interests.

It is beneficial for us to have legal entities. We thereby conform to local and national laws, as required by God's Word. (Jeremiah 32:11; Romans 13:1) Legal entities facilitate our work of spreading the Kingdom message by printing Bibles, books,

magazines, brochures, and other material. Such entities also serve as legal instruments to handle matters related to property ownership, relief efforts, contracts for the use of convention facilities, and so forth. We are thankful for the services of such legal entities.

Jehovah's Name to the Fore

In 1944, Article II of the charter of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania was amended to underscore the objectives of this corporation. According to the charter, the purposes of the Society include this principal purpose: "To preach the gospel of God's kingdom under Christ Jesus unto all nations as a witness to the name, word and supremacy of Almighty God JEHOVAH."

Since 1926 'the faithful slave' has brought Jehovah's name to the fore. Especially noteworthy was 1931 when the Bible Students adopted the name Jehovah's Witnesses. (Isaiah 43:10-12) Publications of the Society that have laid emphasis on God's name include the books *Jehovah* (1934), "*Let Your Name Be Sanctified*" (1961), and "*The Nations Shall Know That I Am Jehovah*"—How? (1971).

Special mention must be made of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, published in its entirety in English in 1960. It contains Jehovah's name in every place where the Tetragrammaton appears in the Hebrew Scriptures. This translation also includes the divine name in 237 places in the Christian

Greek Scriptures where careful analysis indicated that this was warranted. How thankful we are that, in various ways, Jehovah has permitted the "slave" and its Governing Body to utilize their publishing resources and legal entities in making his name known earth wide!

Distribution of God's Word Promoted

Jehovah's people have consistently borne witness to his name and have upheld his Word by publishing and distributing millions of Bible-based publications as well as the Bible itself. In the early 1900's, the Watch Tower Society became the copyright owner of *The Emphatic Diaglott*, Benjamin Wilson's Greek-English interlinear edition of the Christian Greek Scriptures. The Society published the Bible Students' edition of the *King James Version*, which included a 500-page appendix. In 1942 it published the *King James Version* with marginal references. Then in 1944 the Society began to print the *American Standard Version* of 1901, which uses the divine name. The name of Jehovah also was a feature of *The Bible in Living English*, by Stephen T. Byington, published by the Society in 1972.

The legal entities used by Jehovah's Witnesses have assisted in printing and distributing all of these Bible translations. Most notable, however, has been the very close co-operation between the Watch Tower Society and the group of anointed Witnesses of Jehovah comprising the New World Bible Translation Committee. We rejoice that, in whole or in part, to date over 106,400,000 copies of this translation have been printed in 38 languages. The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania truly is a *Bible* society!

'The faithful slave' has been 'appointed over all his master's belongings.' These include facilities at headquarters in New York State, U.S.A., and the 110 branches now operating worldwide. The members of the slave class know that they will be called upon to

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Finding Security in a Risk-Filled World

Are You Living Up to Your Dedication?

You Can Cope With Discouragement!

render an account for the way in which they have used what has been entrusted to them. (Matthew 25:14-30) Yet, this does not prevent the 'slave' from allowing qualified overseers from among the "other sheep" to care for legal and administrative responsibilities. In fact, this allows members of the Governing Body to devote more time "to prayer and to the ministry of the word."—Acts 6:4.

As long as conditions in this world permit, the Governing Body, representing "the faithful and discreet slave," will make use of legal entities. These are convenient, but they are not indispensable. If a legal entity is dissolved by government decree, the preaching work will still go on. Even now, in lands where restrictions are in effect and no legal entities are used, the Kingdom message is being pro-

claimed, disciples are being made, and theocracy's increase continues. That is happening because Jehovah's Witnesses plant and water, and 'God keeps making it grow.'—1 Corinthians 3:6, 7.

As we look to the future, we are confident that Jehovah will care for the spiritual and material needs of his people. He and his Son, Jesus Christ, will continue to provide the heavenly direction and support needed to complete the Kingdom-preaching work. Of course, whatever we accomplish as God's servants is done 'not by a military force, nor by power, but by Jehovah's spirit.' (Zechariah 4:6) We therefore pray for divine help, knowing that in the strength that Jehovah supplies, we will be able to finish the work he has given us to do in this time of the end!

A SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

AT THE conclusion of the annual meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania on October 7, 2000, a special announcement was made by the chairman, John E. Barr of the Governing Body. This announcement built further on discourses given earlier that day by Theodore Jaracz and Daniel Sydlik.—See pages 12-16 and 28-31 of this magazine.

Making a very significant point, Brother Barr stated: "'The faithful and discreet slave' and its Governing Body have had entrusted to them interests that are higher and far more encompassing than those granted to legal corporations. Set out in the chartered purposes of each of such entities are matters that are limited in their scope. Our Master, Jesus Christ, however, has appointed the faithful slave class over all his 'belongings,' or Kingdom interests here on earth." —Matthew 24:45-47.

Concerning the Pennsylvania

corporation, Brother Barr added: "Ever since its incorporation in 1884, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania has played an important role in our modern-day history. Still, it is merely a legal instrument available for use by 'the faithful and discreet slave' when it is necessary."

In their discourses, Brothers Sydlik and Jaracz had explained that the fact that "the faithful and discreet slave" has been entrusted with all of the Lord's earthly belongings does not prevent the slave class from allowing qualified men from among the "other sheep" to care for certain routine administrative responsibilities. (John 10:16) Nor is there any Scriptural reason to insist that all or any of the directors of the legal entities used by Jehovah's Witnesses be anointed Christians.

Brother Barr told the audience that recently certain members of the Governing Body of Jehovah's

Witnesses who had been serving as directors and officers voluntarily stepped aside from the boards of directors of all the corporations used by "the faithful and discreet slave" in the United States. Responsible brothers of the other sheep class were elected as replacements.

This decision is beneficial indeed. It allows members of the Governing Body to spend more time in preparing spiritual food and in otherwise caring for the spiritual needs of the worldwide brotherhood.

In conclusion, the chairman told his delighted audience: "While various legal and administrative duties have been assigned to experienced overseers, . . . all of them serve under the spiritual direction of the Governing Body. . . All of us prayerfully look to Jehovah for his blessing upon our united efforts in doing his will, to the honor and glory of his great name."

How They Withstand Peer Pressure



THE desire to be accepted influences many to conform to the thinking and actions of their peers. Especially do young people need strength to say no to harmful practices, such as drug abuse and sexual immorality. How can they withstand peer pressure?

Two teenage girls in Poland recently wrote: "The world's spirit is clearly visible among many of our peers. They cheat on their lessons, use filthy language, and are fond of faddish dress and wild, immoral music. How happy we are to have articles that address us young ones and protect us from the influence of discontented and rebellious teenagers!"

"Words cannot express our gratitude for Watchtower articles that have impressed on us that as young people we are needed and appreciated. The Bible counsel we have received has helped us to direct our steps properly so as to continue pleasing Jehovah God. We are convinced that faithful service to Jehovah is the best way of life."

Yes, young people can stand up to peer pressure. By training their "perceptive powers," Christian youths learn to make wise decisions that do not reflect "the spirit of the world" but, rather, "the spirit which is from God."—Hebrews 5:14; 1 Corinthians 2:12.