

The **WATCHTOWER**

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

JULY 1, 1970

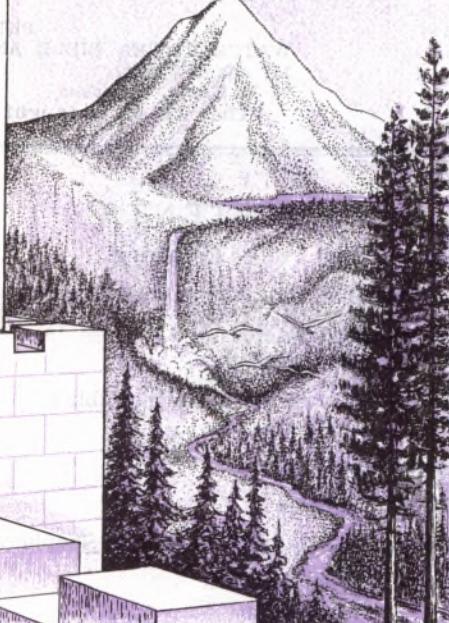
Semimonthly

PERSONALLY BENEFITING FROM
THE BIBLE'S LAWS AND
PRINCIPLES

—
WHY YOU OUGHT TO BE FORGIVING
—

PRIESTS TELL
WHAT'S WRONG WITH CELIBACY

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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 13

WHY

You Ought to Be Forgiving

CAN YOU BE FORGIVING?

TO BE forgiving is not always easy. Often because of the cruelty of other people, or their carelessness, or poor judgment, much pain, injury or embarrassment must be endured. One could quite easily harbor resentment and feel justified in doing so, but the Bible recommends that we be forgiving. Why?

There are many reasons. One very important reason is that we are in need of God's forgiveness. The Bible tells us that we "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," that we are constantly in need of his forgiveness. (Rom. 3:23; 6:23) "If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand?" asks the psalmist. But he adds: "There is the true forgiveness with you."—Ps. 130:3, 4; 19:12; 32:1.

GETTING GOD'S FORGIVENESS

To be in line to receive that forgiveness we must forgive others. Thus Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in the model prayer that he gave to his followers, made God's forgiveness of us dependent upon our having forgiven others. Yes, note that Jesus did not say we were to pray that God

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

forgive us our debts as we intended to forgive others but "as we also have forgiven our debtors."—Matt. 6:12.

Jesus well knew that as imperfect, forgetful humans we are only too ready to promise that we will forgive others so as to get forgiveness ourselves. But then we may forget or refuse to forgive others, because it is not always an easy thing to do. Jesus made the same point in his Sermon on the Mount when he said: "Happy are the merciful," those practicing mercy, "since they will be shown mercy"—by God, of course, and often also by man.—Matt. 5:7; Eph. 4:1, 2, 32; Col. 3:12, 13.

And what a wretched position we would be in if our heavenly Father refused to extend mercy to us! Yet God gave his own Son as a sacrifice so that He could, in keeping with his justice, forgive repentant sinners who exercise faith, even as we read: "By means of him we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one, yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness." (Eph. 1:7) But he extends that forgiveness to us only if we freely forgive

others for their trespasses against us.

Jesus underscored the discrepancy between our indebtedness to God and another person's indebtedness to us in an illustration. This he gave right after he told the apostle Peter that he must forgive, not only up to seven times, but, "Up to seventy-seven times."—Matt. 18:21, 22.

In this parable or illustration he told of a king who forgave or canceled the \$10 million debt of one of his slaves. But that slave was unwilling even to grant time for a fellow slave who owed him only \$17 to make repayment! In fact, he had him thrown into jail! Upon hearing of this, the king canceled the mercy extended to the unforgiving slave and ordered him to be thrown into prison until he had paid all that he owed. Pointing out the moral, Jesus then said: "In like manner my heavenly Father will also deal with you if you do not forgive each one his brother from your hearts."—Matt. 18:23-35.

Thus Jesus in his parable underscored not only the need of our forgiving others but also the great difference between what others owe us and what we owe God. Yes, what others may be said to owe us by reason of their trespassing against us, compared with what we owe God by reason of trespassing against his laws, might be likened to the difference between \$17 and \$10 million. If God can be that forgiving, should this, then, not prompt us to be even more forgiving than we have been?

A PRACTICAL REASON FOR FORGIVENESS

Another reason why the Bible recommends that we be forgiving is that we love ourselves. As the apostle Paul so well stated it: "No man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it," which care is an expression of man's love for himself.—Eph. 5:29; Matt. 22:39.

Since we do love ourselves, we would not want to burden ourselves needlessly,

would we? Yet that is what we are doing when we nurse grudges and refuse to be forgiving, for as one person wrote: "A grudge is too heavy a load for any man to carry."

Wisely God's Word counsels us: "Let the sun not set with you in a provoked state." (Eph. 4:26) A deliberate effort should be made to write off the wrong and restore the fractured relationship as soon as possible, the very day the rupture takes place, if possible.

FORGIVENESS VITAL IN MARRIAGE

Especially in marriage is it wise to be forgiving. Putting off forgiveness or refusing to forgive can lead to separation and divorce, often followed by feelings of guilt and loneliness. Pride may make a wife or a husband insist on a divorce or a separation, but one's pride makes very poor company.

A renowned writer recently said that he was prepared to report on what it is like to be divorced after fourteen years of marriage. "It's the bunk!" he says. "The disadvantages of being without marital ties, particularly in middle life, far outweigh the delights. You learn for the first time how loud silence can be in the stillly clamor of an empty home. The loneliness and silence close in when the rattle of one's key in the front door initiates no answering sound. It is in this moment that one learns that the bark of a dog, the meow of a cat or the chirrup of a bird is no substitute for a human voice. . . . Friends do not close the awful gap that was once filled by someone called wife or husband. It just isn't the same." Putting forgiveness ahead of pride might have saved this marriage.

An actress, divorced and living by herself in London, had achieved the pinnacle of financial success. She was "free." But she said: "It's when I come home after

the theater and close the door, and know that not a soul really cares what I am doing or what is happening to me, physically or spiritually, that I understand the snare of this so-called freedom." Is it possible that putting forgiveness ahead of pride would have saved that marriage?

IGNORANCE A FACTOR

Often offenses against us are due to ignorance, which may, in turn, be due to the environment of an individual and his rearing. If we take this into consideration it will help us to be forgiving.

A true-life experience well illustrates this point. A waitress was having problems with a cook who seemed to scream and curse at every little happening. The cook's crude behavior was extremely trying, although she was completely oblivious to this fact. Her upbringing had never taught her to behave differently. One day the waitress spilled a dish of peas and the cook embarrassed her before all the customers. What should she do? Quit? The waitress appealed to one of Jehovah's witnesses who was studying the Bible with her, for Scriptural guidance. She was told to speak to the cook, in the spirit of Matthew 18:15, and to be loving and forgiving.

The following week when the Witness went to conduct her Bible study she was also anxious to learn the results the waitress had with her cook. "Anne, the Bible way really works!" is the greeting she was given at the door. "Ever since I talked to you about how to handle my problem the cook has been just wonderful to me. She is the best friend I have over there. She invites me out to the kitchen for a piece of pie with her and goes out of her way to be nice to me, giving my orders special attention. I'm so glad I listened to you and didn't yell back at her." The cook appreciated the forgiving nature and the loving approach of the waitress.

At times ignorance leads people to commit very wicked deeds. The element of ignorance entered in to the murder of Jesus Christ. So the apostle Peter, seeing opportunity for a change in those people, said to his Jewish listeners: "I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers also did." (Acts 3:17) He called on them to repent and receive forgiveness for their sins. Many of these did. And as many as did so became brothers and sisters in the Christian congregation, in fact, the spiritual brothers of Christ!

EMPATHY AND LOVE THE KEYS

Empathy and love are qualities that will help us to be more forgiving toward those who transgress against us. Empathy is that quality by which we are able to enter into the thinking and feelings of others, placing ourselves in their shoes as it were.



Is an unforgiving attitude going to make for a happy home?

When we put ourselves in the other person's place, it helps us to be forgiving. It enables us to see more clearly how to apply the principle stated by Jesus: "Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them." (Luke 6:31) Would we want others to bear a grudge against us because of some misdeed on our part? Of course not. We want others to forgive us, and we appreciate their doing so.

Unselfish, principled love helps one to see clearly the wisdom of forgiveness. In the first place it prompts us to forgive another, and then the forgiving may result in love for us by the one forgiven. As a wise king long ago said: "The one covering over transgression is seeking love." (Prov. 17:9) Solomon was here referring to those lesser transgressions that persons, from day to day, tend to commit against one another.

The relationship between love and forgiveness is also called to our attention by the apostles Peter and Paul. In counseling his fellow Christians, Peter wrote: "Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins." Paul wrote: "Clothe yourselves with love." "Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also." (1 Pet. 4:8; Col. 3: 12-14) To the extent that there is love, a husband or wife will forgive the other those mistakes for which Jehovah freely forgives us; a friend will forgive his erring companion and the Christian minister will forgive those who treat him rudely.

Why is love forgiving? Why does love "not keep account of the injury"? Because, as Paul shows in his description of love, "love is long-suffering and kind. Love is not jealous, . . . does not look for its own interests, . . . hopes all things, endures all

things." Surely all these facets of love explain why love is forgiving!—1 Cor. 13:4-7.

However, let it be noted that forgiveness is a mercy. It cannot be demanded by the erring one as a right, even as humankind cannot demand mercy from God.

"FROM YOUR HEARTS" AND "FREELY"

Our forgiving of others is not to be a mere perfunctory, superficial forgiveness. Since forgiving is prompted by love, it must be sincere, genuine, heartfelt. Discerningly Jesus stressed that forgiving must be "from your hearts." (Matt. 18: 35) Similarly, the apostle Paul underscored that forgiving was to be done, not reluctantly, not begrudgingly, but "freely." He urges us to be "forgiving one another freely."—Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13.

In fact, our forgiving of others is to be done cheerfully, for we are told that "he that shows mercy," which means to be forgiving, "let him do it with cheerfulness." (Rom. 12:8) Even as "God loves a cheerful giver," so the one who is forgiven appreciates it when the forgiving is done with cheerfulness.—2 Cor. 9:7.

Truly there are compelling reasons why you should be forgiving. While the one in the wrong cannot demand forgiveness as a right, he can humbly plead for forgiveness even as we plead with God to forgive us. And while it is not always easy to forgive, it is the wise thing to do. It makes for peace of mind and good health, both for the forgiver and the one forgiven. It is the loving thing to do, making for happiness and prompting a loving response. And, above all, remember that your good relations with your Maker, Jehovah God, depend upon your forgiving others!

"Two men were debtors to a certain lender; the one owed ten times as much as the other. When they did not have anything with which to pay back, he freely forgave them both. So, which of them will love him more?" Jesus asked. The reply: "The one to whom he freely forgave the more."—Luke 7:41-43.

POPE PAUL VI says that the church law forbidding priests to marry is right. He called it a "brilliant jewel." Earlier this year he said: "It is happy, it is lovely, it is Catholic. We must conserve and defend it."

But the majority of younger Catholic priests do not agree. In one survey, over 80 percent of them wanted the celibacy law changed. Many older priests also believe that the church celibacy law is wrong. What do they say is wrong with it?

NO SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Many Catholic priests are quick to point out that the law is not a Scriptural one. It is not taught in the Bible. The Bible describes celibacy as a "gift," and since this is so, priests argue, the church has no business making it obligatory.

Jesus Christ said: "Not all can accept this teaching [as to singleness], . . . Let him accept it who can." And the apostle Paul, who himself was single, said: "I would that you all were as I am myself; but each one has his own gift from God, one in this way, and another in that."—Matt. 19:11, 12; 1 Cor. 7:7, "Catholic Confraternity."

Catholic priest John A. O'Brien also emphasized that these Bible statements are not directed to a specific religious class. He said: "Neither the words of Christ nor those of St. Paul are directed specifically or exclusively to priests or candidates for holy orders but to Christians generally. They simply indicate that the state of being unmarried for the sake of the kingdom of heaven can be an authentic way of Christian life."

Priest O'Brien then explains that the Scriptures do not forbid marriage of ministers, saying: "Writing to the Corinthians, [Paul] says: 'Do we not have the right to be accompanied by a wife, as the other apostles of the Lord and Cephas?' (1 Cor. 9:5) While *guné*, the word used here, can mean both woman and wife, the context, especially with the reference to Cephas (Peter), indicates that wife is here the most likely meaning."

Thus, priests commonly point out that celibacy was optional, not obligatory, among early Christians. Catholic theologian Hans Küng notes: "Peter and the Apostles were, and

Priests tell WHAT'S WRONG with CELIBACY

stayed, married even in the full discipleship of Jesus, and this remained the pattern for the leaders of the community for many subsequent centuries."

It was not until 1139 C.E. that the Catholic church imposed the celibacy law. Before that, many popes themselves were married. In fact, the recent Pope John XXIII said: "Ecclesiastical celibacy is not a dogma. The Scriptures do not impose it. It is even easy to effect a change. I take up a pen, I sign a decree and, the next day, priests who wish to may get married."

A WRONG BASIS

Priests also point to the erroneous thinking that contributed to the church's adoption of the celibacy law. They note that the thinking of church leaders was dominated by the teachings of "St." Augustine, who lived from 354 to 430. This man is called, by "The Catholic Encyclopedia," "the greatest of the [Catholic] Fathers."

Augustine had written about marriage: "I feel that nothing more turns the masculine mind from the heights than female blandishment and that contact of bodies without which a wife may not be had."

Catholic theologian R. J. Bunnik pointed out that such views did, and still do, influence Catholic thinking. He says that Augustine bears "no small measure of responsibility for the insinuation into our culture of the idea, still widely current, that Christianity regards sexuality as something particularly tainted with evil."

But what influenced Augustine to downgrade marriage and sex? Priests such as John O'Brien say it was the fact that Augustine had lived with a girl outside of wedlock for some eleven years. Also, Catholic law teacher John T. Noo-

nan observes: "Having had this guilt-ridden experience of sexual intercourse in a quasi-permanent union, Augustine believed there was nothing rational, spiritual, sacramental in the act of intercourse itself."—"Why Priests Leave" (1969).

So priests say that the celibacy law is founded on a wrong basis. Unscriptural and erroneous thinking on sex and marriage contributed toward its adoption.

BAD FRUITAGE

It should not be surprising, then, that an unscriptural law founded on a wrong basis should bear bad fruitage. Many priests point to this fruitage when telling what is wrong with enforced celibacy. They note that the Catholic church permits, and even condones, gross misconduct on the part of priests, as long as the priests do not marry.

Edward Frank Henriques served as a Catholic priest for sixteen years before he married and left the priesthood. He observes:

"Is it not significant that Canon Law imposes no punishment whatever upon such extra-parochial diversions as clerical fornication, adultery, sodomy, flagrant promiscuity, or any other form of sexual aberration, nor even for continued and prolonged concubinage, but only for 'committing' matrimony? This is the unpardonable crime. How many times have I heard priests say—and for shame, I have said it myself—do what you will, but don't marry her!"

Joseph Blenkinsopp, who served prominently as a Catholic scholar, contributing to "The Jerusalem Bible" and the "Jerome Bible Commentary," pointed to common examples of misconduct. He said:

"I have personally known priests in parish work in a Latin American country who regularly took in girls for the weekend but would not have dreamed of giving up the practice of their ministry. One of them, I recall, rationalized splendidly but was surprised when I asked about the effect of this on the Indian girls in question. . . .

"It seems clear not only from recent experience but from the whole history of the Church that the 'gift' of celibacy is of much

rarer occurrence than official pronouncements seem to presuppose."

This is the admission of those closest to the situation. For example, Catholic priest Peter Riga has served as theology professor at Notre Dame and has taught at St. Mary's College in California. He admits that sexual transgressions of those committed to a life of celibacy are "massive," and not small as officially represented. Pointing to the dishonesty of church officials who glorify the virtues of enforced celibacy, he explains:

"Honesty would call for the counterbalancing evidence of countless members of the clergy who systematically resolved their difficulties in this area ranging from open concubinage to legal marriage, mistresses, paramours, and platonic dating. And shall we not include the diluted forms of homosexuality and other forms of unwholesome sexual expressions in seminaries and religious houses, for which too much depressing evidence is at hand? The non-publicity of these widespread phenomena and the loyalty of the understanding flock which glosses over individual instances and subtracts them from notoriety is no excuse for knowingly stacking the cards and ignoring contrary evidence."—"Married Priests and Married Nuns" (1968).

Faced with such circumstances in the church, what are many priests doing? Priest Riga pointed to "the thousands of cases of more coherent and upright priests" who are leaving the priesthood. In 1968 an estimated 2,700 of them left in the United States alone! Thus the Catholic Church, Riga said, "is not losing her worst but her very best sons."

A superior of a community of East Coast priests in the United States lamented the effects of this mass departure. He said: "I also feel that the perverted personalities in the priesthood will stand out more clearly in the dwindled ranks . . . I am one of the many who does not look forward to living out a life amidst twisted personalities."

Can you blame priests for quitting? When a religious organization clings to unscriptural practices, should not any God-fearing person want to leave that organization? Many are now doing so.

JUDGES and COUNSELORS

of a New Order Society

"I will bring back again judges for you as at the first, and counselors for you as at the start. After this you will be called

City of Righteousness, Faithful Town."—Isa. 1:26.

WHEN God spoke the above words through the prophet Isaiah to the nation of Israel in the eighth century B.C.E. they were a nation living under his law, but it was hard for anyone to get justice, and unrighteousness was allowed to run rampant in the land. (Isa. 1:23) This finally resulted in a breakdown so great that God let the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel go into captivity to the Assyrians. Later on, the southern kingdom of Judah and Benjamin was taken into exile by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. God restored his people in 537 B.C.E., after the decree of Cyrus the king of Persia and conqueror of Babylon, liberating the Jews. But again the nation deteriorated, its judges becoming corrupt.—Matt. 23:23; Luke 20:47.

* In a fuller and more important sense God fulfilled his promise to restore righteous judges and to bring about real adherence to his righteous laws with the establishment of the Christian congregation. In the first century C.E., during the lives of the twelve apostles, God's law was made to stand out in its full clarity and

purity. Those appointed as overseers of the Christian congregation were righteous men, directed by God's holy spirit. Jesus Christ himself appointed all the primary judges among them, namely, the faithful apostles. (Mark 3:14; Acts 9:15) These judges and counselors directed the congregation in a prosperous and successful way. For instance, in Acts 16:4, 5, we read: "Now as they traveled on through the cities they would deliver to those there for observance the decrees that had been decided upon by the apostles and older men who were in Jerusalem. Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day."

"GIFTS IN MEN"

* God also selected additional men as "gifts" to the congregation and gave them special abilities so that the young organization could be firmly established. To this effect it is written in Ephesians 4:8, 11, 12: "Wherefore he says: 'When he ascended on high he carried away captives; he gave gifts in men.' And he gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelizers, some as shepherds and teachers, with a view to the readjustment of

1. What was the situation in Israel during Isaiah's time, and to what did it lead? When were their judges restored?

2. How did God restore righteous judges in a fuller and more important sense?

3. What did the "gifts in men" do for the congregation?

the holy ones, for ministerial work, for the building up of the body of the Christ." Christ's apostles, under the direction of holy spirit, appointed other men, such as Timothy and Titus, men of zeal and loyalty, who would be judges and counselors to see that righteousness was maintained inside the congregation. (1 Tim. 1:3, 4; chap. 5; Titus 1:5-13) Furthermore, the apostles and other mature men gave much counsel in writing. With these writings added to the Hebrew Scriptures, it can be said that "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 Tim. 3:16, 17.

BULWARK AGAINST APOSTASY

⁴ As long as the apostles lived, and to some extent during the lives of the faithful appointed ones who may have outlived the apostles, the congregation followed in the way of serving God faithfully. Attempts were made by some to bring in unrighteousness and injustice, but the strong authority of the apostles held them back. (2 Thess. 2:7, 8) For examples, we can point to the apostles' action in quickly judging and correcting matters.

⁵ When Ananias and Sapphira conspired in their hearts to lie to God, bringing hypocrisy into the congregation, Peter, directed by God's spirit, saw through their hypocrisy and expressed judgment, which really was God's own judgment against them.—Acts 5:1-11; Matt. 18:18.

⁶ Again, an attempt was made to defile the congregation by bringing gross immorality into it. This took place in the

congregation at Corinth. Those in charge of the Corinthian congregation were apathetic toward this insidious infiltration, but the apostle Paul acted to clear out the vicious, cancerous thing from among them. In 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 13, Paul wrote: "Actually fornication is reported among you, and such fornication as is not even among the nations, that a wife a certain man has of his father. And are you puffed up, and did you not rather mourn, in order that the man that committed this deed should be taken away from your midst? I for one, although absent in body but present in spirit, have certainly judged already, as if I were present, the man who has worked in such a way as this, that in the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are gathered together, also my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus, you hand such a man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. . . . 'Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.' " Efforts were put forth by others to bring false doctrine and a wrong spirit into the same congregation, such men claiming to be apostles. They began to rule haughtily over their Christian brothers and to promote sects through the adulation and following of men.—1 Cor. 1:10-13; 4:8; 2 Cor. 11:19, 20.

⁷ There were other injustices and deviations from Christ's law in that congregation, but apparently Paul's letters corrected the greater portion of these. This is inferred in his second letter to them. He commended them for the godly sorrow that they expressed because of the immorality that had existed, and for their repentance and energetic action in cleaning it out. He spoke well of their improved spirit and then gave further counsel concerning the false apostles. (2 Cor. 7:9-11; 11:12-15) Powerful letters such as these

4. How long did the congregation enjoy righteous judges and counselors?

5-7. Give some examples of the action of the righteous judges and counselors in keeping the congregation clean before God.



Letters from the apostles helped early Christians to stay in line with the law of Christ

by the apostles had the effect of protecting the congregations and bringing them back in line with the law of the Christ. Pointing to this, Paul wrote, in 2 Corinthians 10:5, 6: "For we are overturning reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God; and we are bringing every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ; and we are holding ourselves in readiness to inflict punishment for every disobedience, as soon as your own obedience has been fully carried out."

⁸ Further violations of the law and the spirit of Christ that the apostles had to correct were: misunderstandings about the resurrection, some teaching that it was already past, a sort of "spiritual resurrection" of those who were alive instead of an actual resurrection of the dead. (2 Tim. 2:18) Others were flatly saying that there was no resurrection. Just as Paul wrote,

in 1 Corinthians 15:12, 35, 36: "Now if Christ is being preached that he has been raised up from the dead, how is it some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead? Nevertheless, someone will say: 'How are the dead to be raised up? Yes, with what sort of body are they coming?' You unreasonable person! What you sow is not made alive unless first it dies." Certain Judaizers, calling themselves Christians, were trying to bring the Christians back into bondage to sin by trusting in works of the Mosaic law. This was not because they loved God and his people, but because they feared persecution from the Jews. Paul's letter to the Galatians acted in correction of this false teaching.—Gal. 5:2-4; 6:12, 13.

⁹ The letter of Jude, who was not an apostle but a half brother of Jesus Christ, powerfully reproved immorality, with which some who were trying to slip into the congregation were seeking to corrupt it. In Jude 4 we read: "My reason is that certain men have slipped in who have long ago been appointed by the Scriptures to this judgment, ungodly men, turning the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct and proving false to our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ." James, another half brother of Jesus, wrote in condemnation of favoritism, saying: "You have class distinctions among yourselves and you have become judges rendering wicked decisions." (Jas. 2:1-4) Years later, shortly before the death of the apostle John, these bad things were raising their heads in the congregation; Jesus' message to the seven congregations was strong reproof, as recorded in Revelation 2:6, 14, 15, 20. The Devil fought hard to overthrow the early congregation at its start. As long as the apostles lived as judges and counselors, the congregation was kept clean and the apostasy could not assert itself. But after the death of

8, 9. What were some of the violations of God's law that Paul, Jude, James and Jesus corrected to prevent the Devil from overthrowing the Christian congregation?

the apostles it took place. (2 Thess. 2:6-8) As Paul said in Acts 20:29, 30: "I know that after my going away oppressive wolves will enter in among you and will not treat the flock with tenderness, and from among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves."

JUDGES AND COUNSELORS TODAY

¹⁰ And now the final and grand fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy has come! Jehovah's organization is again established on a fully theocratic basis, for more than 25,000 congregations of Jehovah's witnesses all over the world are at complete unity and follow the same law in every congregation. This law is with us in the instruction and counsel of Jesus and his apostles and disciples. The organization is apostolic, that is, operating as it did under the immediate supervision of the apostles. Mature, faithful men are appointed as overseers and ministerial servants to direct the congregation and to handle violations of God's law.

¹¹ Today the Christian congregation can be kept clean, maintaining God's favor and preserving unity in accomplishing the work. The earth-wide congregation of God's people today constitutes a stronghold for true worship. (1 Tim. 3:15) All who see the failure of this world and recognize its injustices may thus come to a place where justice is practiced and may look forward to the time near at hand when God's law will be enforced throughout the entire earth, dispensing justice and righteousness toward all, never again allowing rebellion to bring about a downfall. Foretelling this, Isaiah 60:17, 18 says:

10. How can it be said that the final fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy has come?

11. How does the congregation of God's people today constitute a stronghold for true worship, and what does it provide for those who see this world's failure?

"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. No more will violence be heard in your land, despoiling or breakdown within your boundaries. And you will certainly call your own walls Salvation and your gates Praise."

¹² In these "last days," when the Christian congregation has reached full maturity, the earthly Kingdom interests have been committed to the "faithful and discreet slave," God's "servant" class, made up of the remaining members of the spirit-begotten brothers of Christ on earth. (Matt. 24:45-47) Abiding by the law of Christ as set forth in the Bible, they direct the congregations of Jehovah's witnesses throughout the earth. Through them the holy spirit has appointed men in the congregations according to Bible requirements to take care of matters that may arise in which God's law is violated. Hence Paul said in Acts 20:28: "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."

¹³ There are three mature men that usually sit on such a case, namely, the congregation servant or overseer, the assistant congregation servant and the Bible study servant. These must be men who have proved to be faithful and who love justice and mercy. (1 Tim. 3:1-10) Cases of serious wrongdoing that affect the congregation and its standing with God as well as those things that bring reproach

12. How are the congregations of God's people governed today?

13. What is the arrangement for taking care of serious violations of God's law?

on the congregation are handled by these three appointed men known as the "congregation service committee." These men act in safeguarding the doctrinal and moral purity of the congregation.—1 Tim. 4: 11-16; 5:19-21; 6:3-5, 13, 14, 20; Titus 3: 9-11.

¹⁴ In the early Christian congregation there was no privileged class. (Matt. 23: 8; Rom. 12:10) Each one had the same opportunity and the same rights before the spiritually appointed overseers. (Prov. 28:21; 1 Tim. 5:21) If there was any difficulty between members of the congregation, they could take the dispute before these men and get a righteous judgment based on God's law. The apostle Paul counseled that there was no need for Christians to take one another to courts of the world; that they should bring their disputes before the congregation. This was reasonable, because in God's due time, those whom he had chosen to be joint heirs with Christ in the heavens were going to judge the world, yes, even angels. Therefore, it was actually ignoring the theocratic arrangement and bringing a defeat to themselves as a Christian congregation to institute lawsuits against one another in worldly courts. It was a reproach, a defeat for them. How could they claim to represent God the Judge of all, and his Son Jesus Christ, yes, how could they encourage others to forsake the world and join them if they themselves could not handle their own differences?—1 Cor. 6: 1-8.

A CASE FOR ILLUSTRATION

¹⁵ To illustrate how the congregation today expresses judgment against wrong-

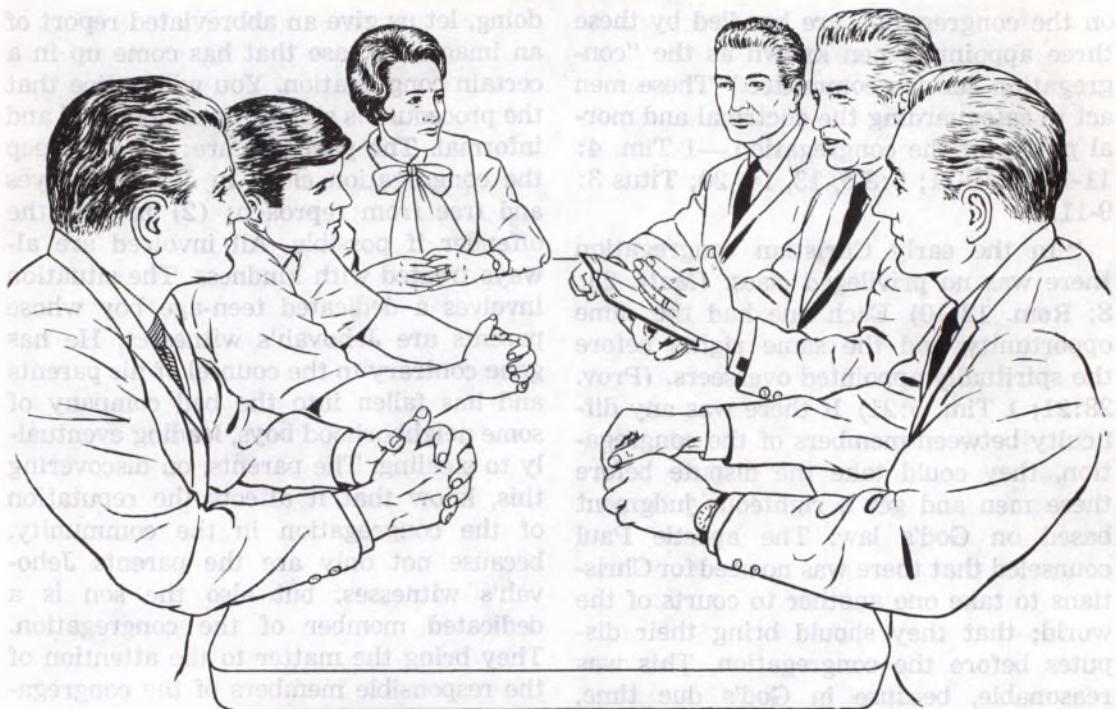
14. (a) What was the arrangement for handling disputes in the early Christian congregation? (b) Why should not Christians bring lawsuits against one another in worldly courts?

15. (a) What are the two primary purposes of the committee in handling cases of wrongdoing? (b) In the case for illustration, what is the setting?

doing, let us give an abbreviated report of an imaginary case that has come up in a certain congregation. You will notice that the procedure is simple, uncomplicated and informal. The purposes are: (1) To keep the congregation clean in Jehovah's eyes and free from reproach; (2) to help the offender if possible. All involved are always treated with kindness. The situation involves a dedicated teen-age boy whose parents are Jehovah's witnesses. He has gone contrary to the counsel of his parents and has fallen into the bad company of some neighborhood boys, leading eventually to stealing. The parents, on discovering this, know that it affects the reputation of the congregation in the community, because not only are the parents Jehovah's witnesses, but also the son is a dedicated member of the congregation. They bring the matter to the attention of the responsible members of the congregation for correction, so that reproach can be erased from the congregation.

¹⁶ The boy, whose stealing was discovered by his parents, had tried to cover up the matter. But before the congregation committee he sees the seriousness of the wrong he has done and confesses it, giving evidence of the spirit of repentance and of his desire to do that which is right. All the evidence, the circumstances and factors in the case are clearly brought into the open. The expressions of the parents, the injured party, and particularly of the boy are heard. It is one of the members of the congregation from whose home he stole some money, in order to go with his worldly friends to a bar and dance hall. The one from whom he stole is willing to forgive the boy because of evident repentance. Then the committee withdraws and discusses the application of God's law

16. (a) What is the attitude of the boy before the committee? (b) How does the committee handle the hearing?



**Spiritually mature men serve as judges and counselors
in the modern-day organization of Jehovah's witnesses**

to the facts of the case and speaks again to the family. We hear the congregation overseer, Brother Christian, addressing the boy, whom we will call John Waywardson. (Scriptures are cited to show the principles involved.)

17 **Christian:** "John, the committee has considered the evidence in this case and all of the circumstances and factors in connection with it. Now, as you well know, the practice of the thing of which you are guilty could prevent you from entering into the kingdom of God. It's that serious. [1 Cor. 6:9, 10] It is mandatory for the Christian congregation to keep itself clean from such things, so as to maintain the spirit of Jehovah upon the congregation. [Deut. 23:14] You were in bad company,

John, in complete disregard of your parents' counsel [Eph. 6:1] and even contrary to our warning [Prov. 10:17; 12:1] and thereby you were led into this sin against Jehovah."

18 The mother and father then talk to the boy about the seriousness of his failure to listen to their counsel and the bad effects of the crowd with whom he has been running. The conversation then runs as follows:

John: "I'm sorry, Dad and Mother. I was altogether in the wrong. I looked for my associations in the wrong place and I admit it now and confess that I have sinned against Jehovah and the congregation. I want to continue serving God as

17. How does the congregation servant, Brother Christian, lay a foundation for expressing the committee's decision?

18. (a) How does John seem to express true repentance? (b) What principles does Brother Christian express with regard to John's action in keeping the matter covered, and as to John's repentance?

a member of the congregation. I am willing to do whatever the committee says and to take any discipline that is coming to me that will help me to get back into good standing with the congregation, and into the right spiritual state before Jehovah."

Christian: "All right, John; you have been rebellious; you have sought association among the wrong people. You are nineteen years old now—certainly old enough to take a right course on your own. But you did wrong and tried to keep it covered, and you had to be brought to us by your parents. [Job 31:33] However, it is good that, when you saw how bad your position was before Jehovah, you confessed [Jas. 5:16], and we believe that now you show sadness in a godly way—real repentance. [Prov. 28:13; 2 Cor. 7:9, 10] We believe, too, that you see how bad your actions were and you want to straighten out matters before Jehovah."

John: "I realize that I didn't use good sense; I don't know what got into me to get so far off the track. I realize now that I was really unhappy with what I was doing. And, brothers, I really do want to stay with Jehovah's organization if I may. As I said before, I am taking steps to pay back what I stole. I'm willing to cooperate with anything that you feel that God's law requires of me."

¹⁹ **Christian:** "Well, John, it's just as the Bible says: 'Bad associations spoil useful habits'—it's as simple as that. [1 Cor. 15:33] This should be a lesson to you. Even though you got into all this trouble you do show that you have a repentant attitude now, and you want to serve with Jehovah's organization. Therefore, mercy can be extended to you on the basis of Christ's sacrifice, to cover your sins.

19. (a) How does Brother Christian point out the disobedience to God's law that was at the root of John's trouble? (b) On what basis was the committee able to avoid disfellowshipping John?

[1 John 2:1, 2] So the committee's decision is not to disfellowship you from the congregation, John. [Jas. 2:13] But we are arranging for a probationary period for you."

John: "Brother Christian, I appreciate the opportunity to stay with God's organization, and I'll do anything you say to try to straighten things out to the extent possible. I know that I could have been disfellowshiped for what I did."

Christian: "Yes, but now you have come to your senses; you have confessed what you stole and the amount, and you have taken the first step toward doing what is right by agreeing to restore fully what you stole."

Father: "I'll see that he does, Brother Christian."

²⁰ **Christian:** "Very fine, Brother Waywardson. You should see that he works, either for you or for someone else, so that he himself earns enough to repay fully, with interest, what he stole. [Ex. 22:3, 7] . . . Now, John, according to God's law your parents are responsible for you; therefore we are allowing them to supervise this matter and assist you to come back to a healthy spiritual condition. Your parents will need to restrict you on the matter of running with the gang of boys. [Prov. 22:15] They will also help to restore you by seeing that you attend the meetings of the congregation [Heb. 10:24, 25], and will assist you in other ways to make recovery. You will be required to report to me or to one of the other members of the committee once a month. This reporting is not altogether for the purpose of checking up on you, John. It is also that the committee can help you as well

20. (a) On what basis could the congregation demand that John pay back what he stole, with interest? (b) How could the parents help John, and why does he need to report regularly to a member of the committee? (c) How had John actually become a slave?

as to find what progress you are making [1 Thess. 5:14], in order that the congregation may not come under Jehovah's disfavor for allowing wrongdoing to go on unchecked among its members. [1 Cor. 5:5, 6] You see, John, instead of being a slave of Jehovah, obeying his law, you actually became a slave to this bad crowd of boys that you were running with. [Rom. 6:16] You thought it was smart to do what they did, and didn't realize the slavery you were actually in."

21 Father: "Yes, and just think, the way those boys drive their cars! Why, you could have been with them when someone got killed. You could actually have become bloodguilty before Jehovah!"

—Num. 35:11, 25, 34.

Christian: "That's right, John. Well, Brother and Sister Waywardson, if John does what he says he has resolved to do, and if you give him very close attention and help, he should get along well, and how much happier all of us will be!"

—Luke 15:7; Jas. 5:19, 20.

22 This illustrates the simplicity with which such a case is handled. God's law, so plain and simple, is adhered to. Wrongdoing cannot be condoned; yet mercy is to be extended if there is found a basis for it when the person's attitude and the circumstances are taken into consideration. This is where the merit of Christ's sacrifice comes in.

21. (a) What grave danger had John placed himself in by running with the crowd of worldly boys? (b) What will now make John as well as the congregation happy?
22. (a) Is the application of God's law a complicated matter? (b) What should the committee always try to do if possible, and on what basis is it done?

THE NEXT ISSUE

- Meeting the Divine Requirement of Obedience.
- Appreciating Your Parents.
- God Has a Name.

23 If the boy recovers, he will be restored in time to full standing with the congregation. If he lapses back into his bad course of action and is a nonrepentant sinner, a thief or evildoer, or if he persists in consorting with others in wrongdoing, he will be disfellowshiped, that is, expelled from the Christian congregation.—1 Cor. 5:11-13.

24 Christians are happy that Jehovah has kindly given to the congregation "gifts in men" in the person of mature ones who understand God's law and adhere to it as judges and counselors. Jehovah's witnesses proceed according to the Scriptural outline. They take scrupulous care to see that the organization is kept clean. Jehovah has shown that he is with them by giving them a fine standing before him, and a fine report from people of the world as to their clean morals and law-abiding principles. (1 Tim. 3:7; 1 Pet. 4:15, 16) God is bringing greater and greater spiritual prosperity and increase, tens of thousands joining their ranks each year, dedicating their lives to Jehovah, with life in view in a new order without lawlessness. As it is written in Isaiah 60:22: "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."

23. By the extension of mercy to John, what prospects are before him, and why must he not lapse back?
24. What has been the result to Jehovah's witnesses from their care to follow God's law in keeping the congregation clean?

Personally Benefiting FROM THE BIBLE'S LAWS AND PRINCIPLES

TO DAY the followers of Jesus Christ are living under the law of the Christian system of things. The law is administered by Jesus Christ, not under Israel's old law covenant, but under the new covenant put into operation by Christ's shed blood. In the statutes under the Mosaic law covenant there are many similarities to those of the Christian system of things. This is to be expected because 'the Law was holy, and the commandment holy and righteous and good.' It was "spiritual." (Rom. 7:12, 14) And as having a shadow of the good things to come, the Mosaic Law shows us God's thinking and his manner of dealing with his people.—Heb. 10:1.

² But the Law condemned the nation of Israel because of their violation of God's covenant. They were said to be under a curse by it. (Gal. 3:10) For this very reason Jesus Christ died on a *torture stake*. By his death he could redeem the Jews from their sinfulness inherited from their forefather Adam. More than that, by the manner of his death he could remove the additional curse that the Law had brought on the Jews because of their violation of it. The apostle Paul, himself a Jew, explains this when he says: "Christ by purchase released us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse instead of us, because it is written: 'Accursed is every man

"Also, your own servant has been warned by them; in the keeping of them there is a large reward."—Ps. 19:11.

hanged upon a stake.'" (Gal. 3:13; Deut. 21:23) Their atonement day sacrifices each year, the apostle says, sanctified to the extent of cleanliness of the flesh, but were unable to impart to the Jews cleanliness of conscience.—Heb. 9:9, 13, 14.

THE LAW OF THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM

³ Are Christians similarly condemned by the law of the Christian system of things? Or, is the Christian law easier, so that they can live up to it? Neither! The law of the Christian system of things is of an even higher standard, for in Romans 3:31 the apostle Paul writes concerning Christian faith and says: "Do we, then, abolish law by means of our faith? Never may that happen! On the contrary, we establish law." Through Christ Jesus, Jehovah restores all things as he purposed them at the beginning, when He performed the marriage of Adam and Eve. For example, under the Jewish law polygamy was practiced, and divorce was allowed on grounds besides that of adultery. It was not God's time to restore marriage to its original status. Jesus Christ explained that the Law merely made a concession to the Jews because of their hardness of heart.—Matt. 19:7, 8.

⁴ God had promised that he would in time enable his people to keep his laws

1. Under what law are Christians living today, and why are there many similarities in the Law given to Israel?
2. Why did the Jews under the Law need help, and what help was provided by Jehovah?

3. Are Christians condemned by the law of the Christian system, or is it easier to keep? Explain.

4. What promise did Jehovah long ago make concerning his laws?

completely: "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I shall put inside you, and I will take away the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And my spirit I shall put inside you, and I will act so that in my regulations you will walk, and my judicial decisions you will keep and actually carry out."—Ezek. 36:26, 27; Heb. 9:10.

NOT CONDEMNATION, BUT LIFE

⁵ What, then, is the difference in the situation of Christians from that of the Israelites who were under the Mosaic Law and were condemned by it? This: we would be hopelessly unable to keep the law of Christ (which is God's law for Christians) were it not for the fact that he provided for us a better sacrifice than that arranged for under the Mosaic Law. (Heb. 9:23; 10:8-10) Whereas, up until the time of Pentecost, 33 C.E., all mankind was under the rule of 'kings' sin and death, now God's undeserved kindness rules as king. (Rom. 5:14, 21) The sacrifice of Christ provides forgiveness of sin for all those putting faith in him, for we read in 1 John 2:2: "He is a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, yet not for ours only but also for the whole world's."

⁶ Now, no imperfect man under the perfect law set forth through Moses could keep it. For illustration, he might not be one committing murder or adultery; he might not be a thief; but the tenth commandment would convict him, because it prohibited wrong desire. An individual could never overcome the sinful flesh by his own efforts. Under the Law covenant, God's spirit operated to help faithful men to be pleasing to him and to do the work he gave them. But under the law of Christ, God's undeserved kindness through the

sacrifice of Christ enters in. Through Christ the Christian can really come to know God and draw close to him. (1 John 2:3, 4, 14; 4:8) Forgiveness of sins gives him a clean conscience. (Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 3:21) He is actually on the road to life. (John 17:3; 2 Tim. 1:10) God's spirit operates in a way to help him progressively to change his personality to come nearer to the image of God.—Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:10.

⁷ Though there is no rule for his every action, the Christian has God's law written in his heart and God's spirit dwells in him at all times, aiding him to discern the right course to take. The holy spirit empowers the individual to overcome the desires of the flesh. When, through his inherited sinfulness, he violates the law of God, undeserved kindness and mercy come in to forgive him on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. In this way he maintains a clean standing at all times before God. A Christian would be condemned only if he were to become a deliberate, rebellious breaker of God's law. (Rom. 8:1-4) So in Hebrews 10:26-29 we read: "If we practice sin willfully after having received the accurate knowledge of the truth, there is no longer any sacrifice for sins left, but there is a certain fearful expectation of judgment and there is a fiery jealousy that is going to consume those in opposition. Any man that has disregarded the law of Moses dies without compassion, upon the testimony of two or three. Of how much more severe a punishment, do you think, will the man be counted worthy who has trampled upon the Son of God and who has esteemed as of ordinary value the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and who has outraged the spirit of undeserved kindness with contempt?"

5. What is the difference in the situation of Christians and ancient Israel as to God's law?

6. Why could no one keep the Law, but how can Christians keep the law of Christ?

7. What help does Jehovah provide today so that we can keep his laws?

LAWS AND PRINCIPLES

⁸ A principle is defined as a general or fundamental truth; a comprehensive or fundamental law, doctrine or assumption on which others are based or from which others are derived; a governing law of conduct. When it comes to obedience to instructions from God, we cannot make a distinction between principles and laws. Every statement of God governing his people and every judicial decision of God is a law to them.

⁹ Jesus said the greatest commandment in the Mosaic Law was to love God with one's whole heart, soul, mind and strength, and the second was to love one's neighbor as one's own self. (Mark 12:29-33) Now, neither the Law to Israel nor the law of Christ states any specific punishment that human agents should apply to an Israelite failing to show love, unless that failure manifests itself in some overt wrong action, such as stealing, murder, and so forth. Nevertheless, although no punishment was decreed for one's failure to love God and neighbor, the Christian writer James calls the command to love one's neighbor a LAW, the "kingly law."—Jas. 2:8.

VARIOUS AUTHORITIES

¹⁰ In discussing this matter, it is good to have in mind that there are different degrees of authority under the supreme authority of Jehovah God. For example, if we violate the law governing natural things, we find that it is enforced simply by means of processes that Jehovah has placed in these things themselves and in

the way that they are related to one another. There is also the law of the husband over the wife, which confers relative authority, having its limiting boundaries. (Eph. 5:22-24) There is the law of the "superior authorities," to whom God did not give authority, but whom he permits to exercise authority in the governmental field. This authority he commands the Christian to obey, but it too is a relative authority, inferior to that of God. Accordingly we read, in Romans 13:1-4: "Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God. Therefore he who opposes the authority has taken a stand against the arrangement of God; those who have taken a stand against it will receive judgment to themselves. For those ruling are an object of fear, not to the good deed, but to the bad. Do you, then, want to have no fear of the authority? Keep doing good, and you will have praise from it; for it is God's minister to you for your good. But if you are doing what is bad, be in fear: for it is not without purpose that it bears the sword; for it is God's minister, an avenger to express wrath upon the one practicing what is bad."

¹¹ Another authority exercised is that of the congregation over its members. It is relative, in that the congregation is answerable to God and Christ. Laws exist in the Christian arrangement that only God can enforce, such as to love one's Christian brothers, to honor and respect others and their rights and to avoid wrong desire and covetousness. And he will enforce them. We cannot avoid the consequences of wrongdoing. God tells us plainly: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap."—Gal. 6:7.

8. When it comes to obedience to God's instructions, why can we not make a distinction between "principle" and "law"?

9. Although the two greatest commandments in the Law could not be enforced by human agency, can they nevertheless be called "laws"?

10, 11. (a) Name various authorities that can enforce laws toward Christians. (b) Is it possible to avoid the consequences of violating a law of God that human agencies cannot enforce?

ANGELIC ENFORCEMENT

¹² It is good to keep in mind that the angels are active to "collect out from [God's] kingdom all . . . persons who are doing lawlessness." (Matt. 13:41) Such individuals may not commit any wrong that the congregation can act upon to expel them. Nevertheless, they do not obey God's law through Christ, for which cause the angels enforce the law by putting them out.

¹³ Christians must appreciate these facts. Their dedication is not to an organization nor to a work. Neither is it to a human or a government; it is only to the Creator himself, to Jehovah God, through Jesus Christ. Therefore, *every command from his mouth is law to them and*

they know that they must live by it, just as Jesus said to the Devil: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." (Matt. 4:4) If they do not live by it, it will be enforced against them. The spirit of God motivates them to love him and not to think that they can choose which of his laws they will obey and which they will disobey or ignore. It is the spirit of the world to try to "get by" with wrongdoing. The world's spirit is that, if a person does not get caught, he has actually evaded the penalties of the law. As one commentator remarked, many people live by an eleventh commandment: "Thou shalt not get caught."

12. Who may enforce God's law in matters in which the congregation does not have the power?

13. (a) How does the Christian's dedication oblige him to obey every word of Jehovah? (b) In this respect, what is the contrast between the spirit of the world and the Christian's attitude?

ALL GOD'S LAWS ENFORCED

¹⁴ It is true that oftentimes an individual violates some law of the land and the crime is never uncovered. Therefore, that person does not suffer the penalty laid down by the law of the land. Some may commit adultery and may never be discovered. Consequently they think that they have evaded the penalties in the law of the family and the law of the land. Perhaps in some cases they even escape detection in the Christian congregation, at least for a time. As a result they feel they can continue sinning with impunity. As we read, in Ecclesiastes 8:11: "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why

the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in

them to do bad." But do these people actually escape the consequences of their acts? No! Because all laws and principles of God are sure to be enforced, either through natural processes, by an agency of God, or by God himself. The apostle Paul states the governing rule in these matters: "The sins of some men are publicly manifest, leading directly to judgment, but as for other men their sins also become manifest later."—1 Tim. 5:24.

PURPOSE OF CONGREGATIONAL ACTION

¹⁵ In the Christian congregation there are definite laws against adultery, incest, homosexuality, bestiality, murder, stealing and other things, any of which, when committed by a Christian, would bring reproach from the world against the con-

14. (a) Do those sinning and escaping detection go unpunished? (b) What rule did the apostle Paul state about this?

15. (a) What is the primary purpose of congregational action against a violator of God's law? (b) When and toward whom is disciplinary action involved?



gregation. These things the Bible has put under the authority of the congregation, that is, it is required to take some action. (1 Cor. 5:1-5, 13) This action is not the punishment that the law calls for, at least not by any means the full punishment for the deed. The congregation acts, not primarily to punish the person, but to clear itself of reproach, uncleanness and contamination by cutting off (expelling) such a one from membership in the congregation. It may, if he is repentant, take disciplinary measures and place certain restrictions on him. If he is disfellowshiped (expelled), it is not to discipline him, but to get him out of God's clean organization. The action also serves as an example working for the disciplining of the congregation. This is how we are to understand 1 Timothy 1:20; 5:20, where we read: "Hymenaeus and Alexander belong to these, and I have handed them over to Satan that they may be taught by discipline not to blaspheme." "Reprove before all onlookers persons who practice sin, that the rest also may have fear."

¹⁶ The congregation acts according to the authority given it by God to maintain the congregation's good standing before God and to vindicate God's righteousness before the world. God himself has stated in 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10 that the practice of such things will keep one out of the Kingdom. In this case Jesus' words apply: "Whatever things you [God's earthly representatives] may bind on earth will be things bound in heaven." (Matt. 18:18) God has already made his will clear in the matter. The Christian congregation carries it out by expelling the offender.

LOVE FOR NEIGHBOR

¹⁷ On the other hand, in the Christian system of things there are also laws such

16. Why can we say that proper congregational action against a wrongdoer is an expression of God's will?

17. How is the law to love one's neighbor more extensive than it was in the Law given to Israel?

as loving God and one's fellowman; in fact, the Christian law in this matter is more extensive than the law of Moses. How? The latter law said: "You must love your fellow as yourself." (Lev. 19:18) But Jesus told his apostles: "This is my commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you." He went on to define that love, saying: "No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends." (John 15:12, 13) This is a LAW. In places such as Russia, Jehovah's witnesses are doing just this. They love those who love God and his law, and at great danger to their freedom and even their lives they go to take to these people the good news of the Kingdom. A corollary law is that we should not love the world or be its friends. In 1 John 2:15 it is written: "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Also, in James 4:4: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God."

ATTENDING MEETINGS

¹⁸ Then, there is a law that we should attend the Bible study meetings of God's people, as set out in Hebrews 10:24, 25, which reads: "Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near." We are commanded not even to have the desires and cravings of this world for material things and its yearnings for sensual satis-

18, 19. How is the law to attend Christian meetings one that the Christian should take as seriously as other laws of the Christian arrangement?

faction. (1 John 2:15, 16) On these things there is certainly a sanction or exacting of a penalty even though the application of the sanction is not within the authority of the congregation; it is to be applied by God himself. Therefore, one who obeys or disobeys one of these laws is certain to experience corresponding repayment. For that matter, does the person who violates the law on adultery and who is disfellowshiped have full punishment applied by the congregation? No, for if he does not repent, he will eventually receive the full punishment, death, not from the congregation, but at the hand of God.—Heb. 10:26-31.

²⁰ Say, for purposes of illustration, that an individual persistently neglects to attend meetings. He comes to the point where he is completely disassociated from the congregation, not having any concern at all for Jehovah's arrangements for His people to meet together. The congregation does not take any action against him; they have recognized his wrong course and have tried to help him; but he has on his own drifted away and disassociated himself. Now, if he remains in this state, is he, nonetheless, not in danger? He is in great peril, for in the coming "great tribulation" he will be destroyed just as surely as the

individual who has taken an obviously wrong course.—Matt. 24:21, 22.

ASSOCIATIONS

²¹ Another example is the law against bad associations. Jehovah commanded the Israelites that they should not practice interfaith or make marriage alliances with the pagan nations, because it would result in turning their children from following their God. (Deut. 7:2-4) He tells his people today to be no part of the world and, furthermore, not even to associate in close relationship with those of the world. The apostle Paul points out the reason: "Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) The congregation will take no adverse action against a person for merely ignoring this law. But he is in an unfavorable position before God. Moreover, bad associations will in time surely lead him into overt acts, such as drunkenness, stealing or perhaps even worse, some form of bloodguilt through reckless driving, maybe accidental or intentional manslaughter.

PROPER HABITS

²² Then at times we are admonished or warned, perhaps by the Bible, through *The Watchtower*, or by a responsible person in the congregation, regarding certain bad traits, or improper dress; or it might be we are following customs that are not compatible with Christian behavior. Our actions may be causing others to be offended or stumbled. They may give the wrong impression of our ministry to outsiders. We should not ignore such warning simply because there is



God's law directs us to gather together for worship. If we persistently ignore it, will he preserve us through the "great tribulation"?

20. How will the law on bad associations be enforced on the violator?

21. How should we view counsel concerning traits, appearance and like matters, and what might we gain or lose by following or rejecting it?

no penalty that the congregation can apply. Rather, we should take heed and make over our personalities, not be governed by the deceptive desires of the old personality, but be made new in the force actuating our mind. (Eph. 4:22-24) We should not resist with the attitude that we do not want to let anyone else tell us what is best for us. Jehovah is really the one telling us, so that we can gain life. In God's new order we will have to make spiritual progress first in order to achieve physical healing and perfection. If we do not make this effort now, will we be the kind of persons whom Jehovah will want to have in his new earth?

PREACHING AND TEACHING

²² Then there is the law stated by Jesus: "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." (Matt. 24:14; 2 Tim. 4:2) Since we are dedicated to Jehovah God and since Christ Jesus is God's Chief Agent, by whose blood God purchased us, his words are a command, a law to us. (Acts 3:23; 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:20) Again, at Matthew 28:19, 20, Jesus says: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." Is an immediate penalty enforced if you do not preach? No. Nonetheless, refusal to preach the good news of the Kingdom can keep one out of God's kingdom, just as



Do we favorably respond to counsel from God's Word on the need for modest dress?

can adultery, homosexuality and murder. In Romans 10:10 we read: "With the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation." Jesus expressed God's mind on such things when, speaking about the Mosaic Law, he said: "Whoever, therefore, breaks one of these least commandments and teaches mankind to that effect, he will be called 'least' in relation to the kingdom of the heavens," which means that he will not be there at all.—Matt. 5:19.

GUARD YOUR HEART

²³ Consequently, a person may obey some of the laws of God because they are matters in which the congregation can take disciplinary or disfellowshipping action. But he may ignore others of God's laws that will not be enforced by human authority. This person does not have the right mental attitude. He is thinking like the wicked man who says: "Jah does not see." (Ps. 94:7) His spirit is bad and his at-

titude fleshly, not spiritual. He needs to make his mind over and get the "mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:14-16) Such a one does not have love in his heart for God or for his neighbor. He is thinking only of himself and he does not recognize that Jehovah God requires faithfulness in the least of things and that he demands an accounting in all things from his servants.—Luke 16:10; Rom.

22. How is obedience to the law to preach a matter of life or death to us?

23. What is wrong with the person who is careful to obey only those laws that he knows humans will be able to enforce?

14:12; Heb. 4: 13.

²⁴ A Christian must be sure that his heart is right, that it is motivating him in the right direction. Otherwise, he should give attention to his heart and begin to serve God because he loves him and his law. If a person does not love Jehovah



Is it truly love for Jehovah and his law that motivates you to preach about his kingdom? That is what pleases God

with all his heart he will turn out to be like those mentioned by the apostle John who went out from the Christian congregation in the apostasy. John said: "Young children, it is the last hour [before the great apostasy fully manifests itself (after the apostles passed off the scene)], and, just as you have heard that antichrist is coming, even now there have come to be many antichrists; from which fact we gain the knowledge that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of our sort; for if they had been of our sort, they would have remained with us. But they went out that it might be shown up that not all are of our sort." (1 John 2:18, 19) These persons were not the *right-thinking, loyal* sort. They had failed to use their *hearts and minds* by calling upon God, studying the law of the Christ and then applying these principles in their lives.

THE CHRISTIAN CAN SUCCEED

²⁵ Happily, Christians can obey the law of Christ and have God's approval.

24. What example do we have of the importance of guarding the heart?

25. Can Christians be successful in obeying the law of Christ, and what enables them to do so?

This is possible through the undeserved kindness of God exercised toward us on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. It is not the letter of the law, but it is the spirit of God that directs us to success. (2 Cor. 3:6) If we are directed by the spirit, then we will not practice any

wrongdoing. If we walk according to the spirit, we will do the works of the spirit and not those of the flesh. In fact, though we are not under the Mosaic Law, we can even keep the righteous requirement of that law by walking in accord with the spirit! (Rom. 8:4, 5) If, because of our fleshly weaknesses, we inadvertently break God's law given through Christ, we will acknowledge it. We will be sorry for it, repent, turn around and change our course and call upon God through Christ Jesus to forgive us. Furthermore, we will turn to his organization for help, and we will succeed. This is possible for us because Christ is our great High Priest, who offered his life as a ransom. Jehovah will administer undeserved kindness and help in time of need. Accordingly, we read in Hebrews 4:16: "Let us, therefore, approach with freeness of speech to the throne of undeserved kindness, that we may obtain mercy and find undeserved kindness for help at the right time."

26. When we look back at the examples

26. How can we profit in our Christian course by considering the faithful men of ancient times?

God has set forth for us in the past, we find that all those of faith 'walked with God.' They did it from the heart. They followed the *way of truth*. They did not have to have a written rule to guide every move they made, but their love for God was rewarded with his favor and he guided them in the way that they went so that they did not stumble to a complete fall. If we draw close to Jehovah, he will draw close to us. (Jas. 4:8) We must study his Word in order to do this. It is a storehouse of wisdom. In fact, wisdom is personified by the writer of Proverbs and is represented as saying: "Those loving me I myself love, and those looking for me are the ones that find me. Riches and glory are with me, hereditary values and

righteousness. My fruitage is better than gold, even than refined gold, and my produce than choice silver. In the path of righteousness I walk, in the middle of the roadways of judgment, to cause those loving me to take possession of substance; and their storehouses I keep filled."—Prov. 8:17-21.

²⁷ Yes, the laws of Jehovah can guide us to life and are correct from every viewpoint, spiritual, moral and physical. He says: "The fear of Jehovah is pure, standing forever. The judicial decisions of Jehovah are true; they have proved altogether righteous."—Ps. 19:9.

27. How does Psalm 19:9 show us that the laws of Jehovah are correct from the spiritual, moral and physical viewpoints?

DETERMINED TO ATTEND

A mother in Los Altos, California, who is one of Jehovah's witnesses, explains how Jehovah God blessed her efforts to attend the 1969 "Peace on Earth" Assembly. She writes:

"My husband has always strongly opposed my efforts to continue in God's truth even to the point of physical and mental abuse and burning my Bible literature. I wanted so badly to be at the assembly but I just didn't see how I possibly could. First, the assembly site was 400 miles away from my home. Second, I have two small children whom I have never been permitted to take to the Kingdom Hall or to assemblies. And third, my husband adamantly refuses to let me have a penny for anything connected with God's truth.

"I mentioned this to one of the Witnesses. She informed me that she had reserved a motel room near the stadium, and that I could stay there and travel to the assembly in her car. She suggested that I make this a matter of daily prayer and work at saving my money, as the date of the assembly was still several months in the future.

"I worked at clipping coupons for grocery refunds, which refunds I would carefully set aside each week toward my expenses. In addition, I received some gift money from

relatives to spend as I pleased. I arranged for someone to care for our children, since my husband would not permit them to accompany me. About a week before it was time to leave for the assembly, I carefully calculated all my anticipated expenses, and I was disappointed to discover that I was about thirty dollars short.

"The next morning a Witness who knew nothing about my predicament appeared at my door and handed me an envelope that contained a gift from her and her husband for me to use for the assembly. Imagine my joy to find that the amount enclosed was thirty dollars! This to me was such an evidence of Jehovah's blessings on my efforts to be at the assembly that it gave me renewed courage to continue with my plans in spite of the severe opposition of my husband.

"The morning I was to leave I got up at 5 a.m. It was a moment of great joy to be finally in the car and on my way! This was the start of a week that contained one joy on top of another, and for all of these blessings I am overflowing with thankfulness to Jehovah."

What about you? Will you be at one of the "Men of Goodwill" District Assemblies being held this summer?

JEHOVAH PROVIDES

As told by Newton Cantwell

CHERISHING the memories now of more than thirty-nine years of full-time service in the Christian ministry as Jehovah's witnesses, my wife Esther and I marvel at how good Jehovah has been to us. 'In favorable season and in troublesome season' we have experienced his kindly care and provision for our daily needs. (2 Tim. 4:2) And it is always a delight to reminisce about those former days.

It was after our marriage in 1907 that we began to study the Bible in earnest with the help of Bible literature published by the Watch Tower Society. Strangely, an ex-Baptist minister had much to do with directing our attention to the Society's literature and encouraging us to study it.

Both of us from an early age had entertained a strong desire to be serviceable to God and an aid to our fellowmen. We both had early misgivings about the teachings of Christendom's churches, especially the repugnant teaching of eternal torment of helpless creatures. Though we did not become acquainted with each other until we had grown up, when we did we found that we had much in common.

As a young married couple we would regularly study the available Bible-study aids of the Watch Tower Society, looking

up all the cited texts of Scripture. The result was that we gained a firm foundation of knowledge that later aided us to make the decision to serve Jehovah. By 1916 we had progressed to the point of sharing, in a small way, in the distribution of the Society's Bible-study helps. From this start it was an easy step to get into the regular house-to-house distribution during periods between schoolteaching terms.

After 1924, when we moved back to Tennessee from southern Missouri, our family members were growing up and preparing to be publishers of the Kingdom message. It was our privilege to be "sharpshooters," a term applied for a time after 1907 to those who could not leave home or engage full time in the spread of the message but who were willing to serve actively as time would permit in their own neighborhood. We continued to be richly provided for spiritually. We always conducted a brief discussion of a Bible text each day; we had our family *Watch Tower* study each week and enjoyed periodic visits of the Society's traveling representatives called "pilgrims."

DOOR OPENS TO GREATER PRIVILEGES

As we advanced in knowledge our desire for a greater share in Jehovah's ser-

vice grew. During a six-month stay in Missouri in 1929 we had the privilege of providing rooms for two of our Christian sisters who worked full time in proclaiming the good news of God's kingdom. This whetted our spiritual appetites and moved us to think more constructively of our circumstances and our future.

When we returned to the farm in Tennessee a young couple, Ed Finkbeiner and his wife, came to preach full time in our area. Their fine example and many words of encouragement led us on toward a decision. In 1931, returning from the Columbus, Ohio, convention of Jehovah's people, where the name "Jehovah's witnesses" was officially adopted, Louis Larsen, a special traveling representative of the Society, stopped for a visit with us. We had late sessions with the entire family present. There were six of the children at home, two still in school. It was during this visit that we symbolized our dedication to Jehovah by baptism in water. And pioneering or preaching God's Word full time was seen as a distinct possibility for us.

Now came the time for a decision. What would it be? Would we apply for pioneer service or would we stick to previous plans to give the children a "better" education? There were reasons for not pulling up stakes. The health of the mother of the family was not the best. Besides, the opportunity turned up for us to enjoy better living conditions. It came in the form of an invitation to become manager of a fine modern experimental farm, financially backed by the local banker.

After prayerful consideration, we made up our minds. Our farm was put up for sale, but not so that we might move onto the experimental farm. Rather, it was so we could enter the ranks of pioneer ministers. Within a few months the farm was

sold for cash, yes, even in the midst of a financial depression. We were confident now that the door of opportunity was of Jehovah's provision.

In February 1932 we moved to our first pioneer assignment, which was Anderson County, Tennessee. It was not long before we had spent all that we received from the sale of our farm—mainly on doctor bills. We recall that when we moved to our second assignment we had just enough to pay two weeks' rent in advance, with \$5 to spare. Nevertheless, we knew that Jehovah would provide as long as we diligently carried out our service.

TRUST IN JEHOVAH PLUS DILIGENCE

The service of the pioneer minister in those days was somewhat different from that of the modern pioneer. Back-call and Bible-study work had not yet been inaugurated. Rather, we spent our time distributing Bible literature. By diligence in our ministerial work and assistance that Jehovah provided in other ways we could get by financially. We were fortunate enough to have a small fluctuating income besides, though far from adequate for our family of nine.

Those were times of depression, too, so that people in general did not have much money. This meant exchanging literature for all kinds of things—fruits, vegetables, canned goods, grain, and so forth. Thus we never did have a food problem. At times we also accepted live chickens and raised them for subsequent sale, this providing the emergency funds that aided us to attend a convention or move to a new assignment.

We learned to economize in various ways. On moving into a new territory, I would, for example, speak to some of the gas station owners and explain that we had three cars on the road each day

in connection with our Christian work. This usually resulted in our obtaining gasoline at a discount. Our sons soon learned to take care of our auto repairs, so saving us much in garage bills.

At that time most of the roads were in bad shape. They were not well marked or maintained. Often we had to walk long distances to reach some homes. On one occasion one of our cars rolled over and was demolished. But there was no thought of turning back. We managed to buy a replacement and carry on.

What a privilege it was to operate as a family group and cover twenty-seven counties in Tennessee, around fifteen in Kentucky, as well as some in Virginia! And as we served, Jehovah provided progressive training. We learned to use the printed "Testimony Card" after having used a memorized presentation from house to house. Later came the phonograph work—offering to play for interested persons brief Bible sermons on records. That involved carrying around a machine that weighed some twenty pounds.

Now, of course, we have the fine Bible sermons that we can give extemporaneously at the homes, and we have the delightful work of calling back on people manifesting interest with a view to organizing family Bible studies. This feature of the work we learned with the help of a question booklet used in conjunction with the set of phonograph records on the subject "Uncovered." And when outdoor sound lectures were developed, we were able to obtain sound equipment and convert our car into a "sound car." It has been a joy to taste all these fine privileges.

OTHER BLESSED PROVISIONS

It has always been a pleasure to attend conventions and experience the strength derived from association with thousands

of our fellow ministers. And especially is this so when one's regular scene of activity is in isolated rural areas. Our first small convention was at Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1930, when A. H. Macmillan and A. Koerber were the featured speakers. In 1934 we attended the convention at Atlanta, Georgia—our first large one. From then on we never missed any of the annual conventions until in more recent years poor health prevented it on one or two occasions.

It was at the 1937 convention in Columbus, Ohio, that we had the joy of being selected as one of the first groups of "special pioneer" ministers, assisted financially by the Watch Tower Society to maintain a well-organized campaign of education. Special application forms were filled out by the entire family, our youngest member at the time being fifteen. The applications accepted, we were given our first special assignment in New Haven, Connecticut, where there was considerable religious opposition to our preaching activities.

Both physical and spiritual endurance were now necessary. Imagine our situation after spending many years in the warm South, and now exposed to the bitter winters of the New England coast! And, too, more hours in the ministry were required on the part of special pioneers. Certainly warmer clothing was needed. Happily, Jehovah saw to our needs.

Up till then we had been accustomed to much work in rural areas and in small towns. Now we were to experience witnessing in large cities. And each time we went out in our ministerial work in this new assignment, it was with the realization that we might be subjected to unjust arrest. In fact, we were arrested on many occasions. Finally, as a result of the arrest of four of our family on a charge of

disturbing the Catholic peace by playing phonograph records in the homes of persons willing to hear them, a case was fought through the Connecticut courts and as far as the Supreme Court of the United States. The decision, holding that prosecution of Jehovah's witnesses was a violation of religious freedom guaranteed under the Fourteenth Amendment, was one of many legal victories that Jehovah gave to his people.

Meantime we were assigned to territory on Staten Island, New York, and in this and other assignments in the New York area we had the joy of close association with our Christian brothers at the Bethel headquarters of the Watch Tower Society. This was surely Jehovah's provision for our spiritual advancement! And many blessings followed.

What a blessing, for instance, in 1939 to have three of our sons called to work at the Society's headquarters! And then in 1944 one of our daughters was privileged to go through the third class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and thereafter take up foreign missionary service.

One of our special pioneer co-workers during this period was Florence Woodworth. Her association, together with that of her husband Eldon, a longtime member of the Brooklyn Bethel family, had a most beneficial effect on our whole family in a spiritual way.

As 1950 came along, and our children now all on their own, so to speak, we found it advisable in order to meet our pioneer goals of service to apply for territory where the climate would offer fewer problems. Our request was granted and soon we were serving at Chase City, Virginia, where I was appointed as overseer of the congregation of Jehovah's witness-

es. With Jehovah's help I was able to keep up this responsibility until 1964. At the age of eighty-six it then seemed only right that younger men whom I had helped to develop to maturity should take over the load.

Both of us are still able to carry on as pioneers, though, of course, we do not always meet our goal of hours. At ninety-two years of age I cannot complain about my health, and only pray that I may continue to love and serve Jehovah while I have breath. At seventy-six, I may add, Esther is in better health than when we entered the pioneer service back in 1932.

After thirty-nine years in full-time service and many, many years as part-time publishers of the good news of the Kingdom, both of us can say that we have never been in want, either materially or spiritually. Jehovah has indeed provided. And we have the pleasure of knowing that our children are devoted servants of God—two of our sons being traveling representatives of the Society and the other managing one of the Society's Caribbean branches, while two of our daughters are in full-time service, one here in the United States and the other in Uruguay. In fact, our cup of joy really overflows to see our children to the third and fourth generation sharing in the proclamation of God's kingdom.

In what other work or organization could one hope to serve joyfully for thirty-nine years and then in old age be able to say that it is actually only the beginning? We look forward to the next stage, beyond the "great tribulation," when Jehovah will provide his servants new assignments of work under conditions of peace and happiness guaranteed by Christ's thousand-year rule.—Matt. 24:21.

Look for Oversight of Jehovah as Shepherd

Why is it wise to look for oversight of Jehovah as Shepherd?

Because Jehovah God has a vital interest in mankind's welfare. He has this interest in spite of mankind's being born in sin and conceived in iniquity, and even though Jehovah's lofty throne is apparently countless millions of light-years away from this earth. That Jehovah truly does care for mankind, in fact, has an intense interest in them is clear from what is said of him at Isaiah 40:11: "Like a shepherd he will shepherd his own drove. With his arm he will collect together the lambs; and in his bosom he will carry them. Those giving suck he will conduct with care." With good reason therefore could the apostle Peter speak of Jehovah as "the shepherd and overseer of your souls." —1 Pet. 2:25.*

Who in ancient times looked to Jehovah to be their Shepherd?

While Adam and Eve were desirous of acting independently, their son Abel looked to Jehovah and desired to serve him and to be directed by him. Before the flood of Noah's day there were apparently few others that did so, among these few being Enoch, Noah and his family. After the Flood mankind by and large rejected Jehovah's oversight, but notable exceptions were Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In time Jacob had twelve sons and from these came the twelve tribes of Israel. Moses, who led these tribes out of Egypt, also was noteworthy for his looking to Jehovah as Shepherd, even as were, among others, faithful judges, priests, kings and prophets. All these felt as did King David, who wrote: "Jehovah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing."—Ps. 23:1.

What principle of oversight that has continued to this day did Moses adopt at the suggestion of Jethro his father-in-law?

Moses took very seriously his responsibility of acting as Jehovah's spokesman to his people. They came to him to solve their problems in line with Jehovah's will for them. This required him to serve as judge from morning till evening. Noting this, his father-in-law Jethro counseled him: "Select out of all the people capable men, fearing God, trustworthy men, hating unjust profit; and you must set these over them as chiefs over thousands, chiefs over

hundreds, chiefs over fifties and chiefs over tens." Moses heeded this good advice.—Ex. 18: 21-26.

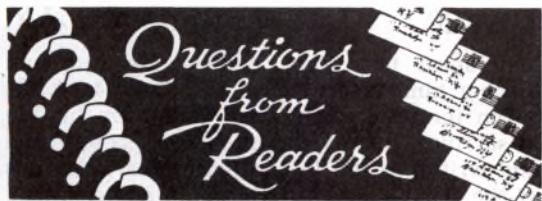
After Moses' day Israel continued to have such chiefs as judges, heads and officers, and later kings also served as such. Many of these, however, were not capable men, fearing God. This resulted in the nation's going into Babylonian exile for seventy years. Upon their return such men as Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah served as faithful shepherds. With the coming of Jesus Christ, Jehovah's people had the finest of all earthly shepherds. He, in turn, selected twelve apostles as undershepherds. These, together with some others, constituted a governing body that authorized the appointing of still others as shepherds. The qualifications of shepherds were also spelled out by some of these, such as Paul and Peter. These qualifications are given due recognition among the Christian witnesses of Jehovah.—1 Tim. 3:1-12; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-3.

How can those who want to serve God today look for oversight of Jehovah as Shepherd?

To do this they must first of all be diligent in the study of God's Word. They must find the organization that recognizes Jehovah God as the Chief Shepherd, the organization that has faithful shepherds that are truly interested in caring for the spiritual needs of the "sheep" of Jehovah. (1 Pet. 2:25) Such an organization of Christians is the one that is associated with the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. This organization functions theocratically, with Jehovah as the Great Shepherd working through Jesus Christ, his "fine shepherd," by holy spirit to make appointments of qualified men, fearing God, to serve as shepherds of God's flock.—John 10:11.

Then for one to look for oversight of Jehovah as Shepherd means to cooperate wholeheartedly with these undershepherds of his. That means regularly and faithfully attending the congregation meetings and supporting them by taking part in them. It also means giving these undershepherds support by being submissive to them, even as the apostle commands: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive." And it includes giving all such faithful shepherds extraordinary consideration by reason of their hard work.—Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, July 1, 1969.



Questions from Readers

- What is the "fear" that perfect love throws outside, as stated at 1 John 4:18?—C. A., U.S.A.

The apostle John writes: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love throws fear outside, because fear exercises a restraint. Indeed, he that is under fear has not been made perfect in love."—1 John 4:18.

The fear in this case is fear that inhibits one's expressions to God in prayer. The context shows that John is continuing his discussion of having "freeness of speech." (1 John 4:17) He is not dealing with freeness of speech in preaching the good news but with "freeness of speech toward God."—1 John 3:19-21; compare Hebrews 10:19-22.

The one in whom God's love reaches full expression can approach his heavenly Father in confidence, not feeling 'condemned in his heart' as if hypocritical or disapproved. He knows he is sincerely trying to observe God's commandments and hence is doing what pleases his Father. (1 John 3:21, 22) So he is free in expressing himself and making petitions to Jehovah. He does not feel as if he were 'on probation' by God, under some restriction as to what he is privileged to say or ask for. (Compare Numbers 12:10-15; Job 40:1-5; Lamentations 3:40-44; 1 Peter 3:7.) No morbid fear inhibits him; he is not conscious of some 'black mark' against him.—Compare Hebrews 10:26, 27, 31.

Just as a child does not feel the least bit embarrassed or afraid to ask his loving parents for anything, convinced that they are always interested in his needs and happiness, so the Christians in whom love is fully developed are sure that "no matter what it is that we ask according to his will, he hears us. Further, if we know he hears us respecting whatever we are asking, we know we are to have the things asked since we have asked them of him."—1 John 5:14, 15.

This perfect love, therefore, does not cast out fear of every kind. It does not eliminate the reverential and filial fear of God, born of deep respect for his position, power and justice. (Ps. 111:9, 10; Heb. 11:7) Nor does it do away

with the normal fear that causes one to avoid danger where possible and thus to protect oneself and one's life, or the fear caused by sudden alarm.—Compare 2 Corinthians 11:32, 33; Job 37:1-5; Habakkuk 3:16, 18.

The proper understanding of 1 John 4:18 is very enriching spiritually. It reveals how grand the relationship is that the Christian can enjoy with his magnificent Creator. It encourages us to speak from the heart in our prayers to God, not being formalistic or mechanical, but openly expressing our feelings, our needs, our concern for others, our hopes and our love for Him.

Nor should one view this being "made perfect in love" as a nearly impossible goal. 'Perfection' rarely is meant in the absolute sense; usually it is relative. When Paul wrote the Corinthian Christians, "do not become young children in powers of understanding, . . . yet become full-grown in powers of understanding," he was not setting a goal beyond the reach of any in the entire congregation. (1 Cor. 14:20) The Greek word (*te'lei-oi*) for "full-grown" that he used in this text is the same word (masculine gender) as the word (feminine gender) for "perfect" (*te-lei'a*) that John used at 1 John 4:18. So, our being "made perfect in love" means that God's love in us is not in an underdeveloped, halfway state, but is filling our hearts and moving us to do his will wholeheartedly.

- Hebrews 9:14 says that Christ "through an everlasting spirit offered himself." What is the "everlasting spirit"?—R. W., U.S.A.

Noting the earlier part of this statement will help us to see this expression in its setting. We read: "For if the blood of goats and of bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who have been defiled sanctifies to the extent of cleanliness of the flesh, how much more will the blood of the Christ, who through an everlasting spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works that we may render sacred service to the living God?"—Heb. 9:13, 14.

These comments come in the midst of a discussion that contrasts the arrangements that God approved under the old Law covenant, or Mosaic Law, and those that pertained to the new covenant. In the opening part of the chapter the apostle Paul discussed the tabernacle and the animal sacrifices offered there. These things were legal requirements "pertaining to the flesh" and were imposed until the

appointed time. (Heb. 9:10) Paul also pointed out that the "holy spirit" made it plain that as long as the tabernacle was standing and its sacrifices were being accepted by God, the way into the holy place of heaven itself was not yet available.—Heb. 9:8, 12.

The way into heaven, then, was through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus, not through animal sacrifices according to legal requirements "pertaining to the flesh." But how did Jesus' sacrifice come about? It was by means of the operation of the holy spirit already mentioned.

Earlier in this letter Paul had explained that Jesus did not become a priest "according to the law of a commandment depending upon the flesh," which would have been the case if he had been of the family of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi. Jesus was of the non-priestly tribe of Judah. Consequently, it was by direct appointment of God that he was selected to be a "priest forever according to the manner of Melchizedek." (Heb. 7:16, 17) Instead of being anointed with oil, as was Aaron, Jesus was anointed with holy spirit.—Ex. 29:7; Luke 3:21, 22.

Throughout his ministry Jesus proclaimed by his words and his works that he had God's

holy spirit upon him, empowering him and leading him. (Matt. 12:18, 28; Luke 4:14, 18) When the time came, Jesus laid down his life in sacrifice, just as was prophesied beforehand and written down in the Scriptures by means of the spirit—such as dying on a stake, among sinners and without a bone's being broken. (Deut. 21:22, 23; Gal. 3:13; Isa. 53:12; Ps. 34:20) His sacrifice was thus not in accord with fleshly requirements, but through the operation of and in accord with the spirit. And the Bible says that Christ's body was offered "once for all time."—Heb. 10:10, 12.

All the fleshly regulations of the Law were part of a temporary arrangement that would pass away—control by the Law was temporary. In contrast, that with which Jesus was anointed, directed and offered up was permanent—God's everlasting spirit. It would be used forever to direct those taken into the new covenant. And the offering that was made was not to be only of passing value, for a limited time; it was an everlasting sacrifice. With good reason Paul could contrast the fleshly provisions of the Law, its tabernacle, sacrifices and priesthood, with the everlasting spirit through which Christ offered himself.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

July 26: Judges and Counselors of a New Order Society, ¶1-16. Page 393. Songs to Be Used: 88, 27.

August 2: Judges and Counselors of a New Order Society, ¶17-24, and Personally Benefiting from the Bible's Laws and Principles, ¶1-9. Page 398. Songs to Be Used: 11, 17.

August 9: Personally Benefiting from the Bible's Laws and Principles, ¶10-27. Page 403. Songs to Be Used: 97, 49.