

The **WATCHTOWER**

FEBRUARY 1, 1970

Semimonthly

LOYAL ADVOCATES OF
THE WORD OF GOD

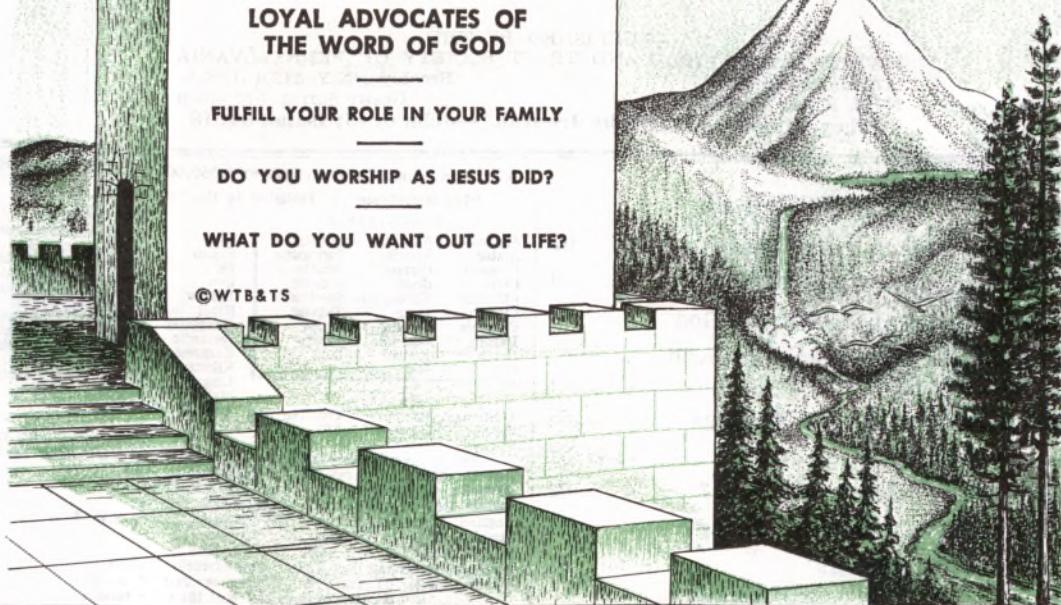
FULFILL YOUR ROLE IN YOUR FAMILY

DO YOU WORSHIP AS JESUS DID?

WHAT DO YOU WANT OUT OF LIFE?

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**



"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.



PUBLISHED BY THE
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary
"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6: 45; Isaiah 54: 13

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The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1961 edition. When other translations are used the following symbols will appear behind the citations:

AS—American Standard Version
AT—An American Translation
AV—Authorized Version (1611)
Dy—Catholic Douay version
JP—Jewish Publication Soc.

ear behind the citations:

Le - Isaac Leeser's version
Mo - James Moffatt's version
Ro - J. B. Rotherham's version
RS - Revised Standard Version
Ya - Robert Young's version

Average printing each issue: 6,050,000 Five cents a copy
"The Watchtower" Is Published in the Following 72 Languages.

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Semimonthly		Monthly	
Afrikaans	Finnish	Norwegian	Ewe
Arabic	French	Portuguese	Fijian
Cebuano	German	Sesotho	Ga
Chinese	Greek	Spanish	Gun
Chishona	Hilagaynon	Swedish	Hebrew
Cibemba	Iloko	Tagalog	Hindi
Chyanja	Italian	Xhosa	Hungarian
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English	Malagasy	Kiribati	Samoan	Twi
		Lingala	Sango	Ukrainian
		Malayalam	Sepedi	Urdu
		Marathi	Serbian	
Armenian	Bicol	Croatian		
Burmese	Business	Gal.		

Bengali	Burmese	ENR	Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions
Watch Tower Society offices			
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y.		11201	\$1
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W.		2135	\$1
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 390, Ontario			\$1
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7			9/-
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10			\$1
New Zealand, 821 New North Rd., Auckland 3			90c
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal			70c
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain			\$2

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, New York 11201. U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y.

Printed in U.S.A.

Fulfill YOUR ROLE

in Your Family

CAN a family enjoy peace and unity if the husband and wife are competing with each other for headship? Can the children learn discipline if the mother countermands the restrictions placed on them by the father? Or can a family maintain good morale if the father refuses to shoulder his responsibilities? The failure of either husband or wife to fulfill the role each has can lead to very undesirable results, even to a breakup of their family.

The respective roles of husband and wife are not recognized by many married couples, causing their marriages to be on a rocky road from the very beginning. This undoubtedly is one of the main factors behind the high divorce rate in many countries today. If they would only follow the good counsel on marriage given in the Bible they could avoid much trouble, heartache and emotional stress.

The Bible clearly sets out the respective roles of husband and wife. It assigns to the husband the role of being head of the family, saying: "A husband is head of his

wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation." (Eph. 5:23) As head of the family he is responsible to make important decisions for the family.

Regarding the role of the wife the Bible says: "As the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in everything." (Eph. 5:24) Thus the role of the wife is one of subjection to her husband. In view of this, would it be proper for her to compete with her husband for family headship? Would she be showing subjection if she were to countermand his restrictions on the children? Would it not be more in keeping with her role for her to support them? As for the children, the Scriptural role for them in the family is to be 'obedient to their parents in union with the Lord.'—Eph. 6:1.

The Bible admonishes husbands to use their authority in a loving way: "Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies." (Eph. 5:28) The husband, therefore, should lovingly care for his wife as he does for himself and be considerate of her. In all of his decisions he should have her happiness and best interests at heart.

This means that before making important decisions for the family the Christian husband does well to consider the wishes of his wife as well as those of the children.

Such communication needs to be maintained within the family for its well-being. All need to feel that the father is approachable and reasonable. However, when he makes a final decision, it is the responsibility of the wife and children to accept that decision and to work in harmony with it.

But what if the husband's decision is not a wise one? What then? Should the wife try to usurp his headship and institute a different decision? That would not be wise. In a kind and tactful manner she can discuss the matter with her husband, but if he is determined to stick to it, then it is her responsibility to support his decision, provided he is not demanding that she do something that is a violation of God's law. By such loyal wifely support she will help the children to maintain respect for his headship, as well as maintain peace and unity in the family.

Repeatedly nagging at him about his mistake would not be in keeping with her role as a submissive helpmate. It would only make life in the family intolerable for him. For this reason the Bible says: "A leaking roof that drives one away in the day of a steady rain and a contentious wife are comparable." (Prov. 27:15) Many homes have been broken up because of such wives.

Now suppose a mother does everything she can to give her children proper training, but some of them turn out to be bad because the father fails to fulfill his role by disciplining them and by exercising his authority. Should the mother feel that she is to blame? In such a case the blame rests chiefly upon the father's shoulders for failing to fulfill his role.

There are instances, though, when both parents properly fulfill their roles, but some of the children still turn out bad. If they have done all they could to train the children properly, the responsibility for

the badness does not rest on them. They should not blame themselves. There are several instances in the Bible where good parents had some children that turned out bad. Jotham is one who had this experience.—2 Chron. 27:6, 9; 28:1.

Usually marital problems can be solved when husband and wife follow the Scriptural counsel regarding their respective roles in the family. This can be illustrated by the experience of one couple whose marriage actually broke down in divorce. A year after the divorce the man contacted the woman and expressed a desire to remarry her. When relating the experience, she said:

"I advised him that remarrying would not be the answer. If we did not make it before we definitely could not make it the second time. He kept insisting that he knew how to make a good marriage now. From nothing but mere curiosity I asked him what this one and only way was that would make us happy. His reply was God's Word of truth. I told him, 'I'll tell you what, you show me that you are sincere about this and as time goes by, if you are, we will remarry.' His reply was, 'O.K., that's fair enough with me.' On his return to . . . , he contacted one of Jehovah's witnesses and arranged for a home Bible study. He attended all the meetings, called or wrote to me every night and was really excited about everything he had learned. We remarried on January 16, 1968, and have been very happy. When a problem arises now, we go to the Scriptures for guidance."

By following the Bible's guidance a family need not be faced with turbulent crises and threatened by a shattering divorce. Problems can be solved and differences settled peacefully. With each one in the family fulfilling his respective role it is possible for a family, even now, to enjoy peace, unity and happiness.

DO YOU Worship as Jesus Did?

What did his worship involve?
Who are worshiping in his way today?

IF YOU think of yourself as a Christian, you no doubt respect the teachings of Jesus Christ and look to him as the example for all Christians. His way of worship is of special interest to you, and you want to worship as he did.

You may have observed, however, that, even though the various churches of Christendom profess to be Christian, they worship in different ways. You may have wondered how these churches can be so different and still be following Jesus' example, or why the way of worship in your church differs from that of other religious organizations.

Since Jesus Christ set the example for Christians, let us look to his way of worship as a standard by which we can measure these various ways of worship and different teachings. As we examine Jesus' way of worship, we do well to keep in mind these questions: How does my way of worship compare with that of Jesus? If necessary, do I have the courage to make corrections so as to follow him as the model for all Christians?—1 Pet. 2:21.

"WORSHIP WITH SPIRIT AND TRUTH"

Perhaps you remember that the Bible account at John chapter 4 tells us about a conversation Jesus had with a woman of Samaria who believed that true worship of God involved worship at the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim. Speaking at Jacob's Well, at the foot of Mt. Gerizim, Jesus Christ uttered these momentous words:

"Believe me, woman, The hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you people worship the Father. . . . the hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshipers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for, indeed, the Father is looking for suchlike ones to worship him. God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth."—John 4:21-24.

In their form of worship the Samaritans and Jews were principally concerned with the outward things of time and place and manner of observance. But now Jesus was saying that true worship went deeper than the things that are seen—that it must be "with spirit and truth." The worship of God was not to be confined to one people or centered at one place, whether at Jerusalem or any other "holy city." Instead, the way was being opened for men of all kinds to worship Jehovah God "with spirit and truth," anywhere and everywhere.

DO YOU WORSHIP "WITH SPIRIT"?

Since Jesus said that his Father wants to be worshiped "with spirit," sincere Christians ought to examine their way of worship to make certain that they are living up to this requirement. For example, what are we to think of the idea of painting a picture or sculpturing an image of anything in heaven or on earth and then performing acts of worship toward it? God himself says that it would displease him, for he once told his ancient people:

"You must take good care of your souls . . . that you may not act ruinously and may not really make for yourselves a carved image." "You must not bow down to them or be led to serve them."—Deut. 4:15, 16; 5:8, 9.

Further, is it not reasonable to believe that if God wanted to be worshiped through images Jesus would have used them? But never in the Scriptures do we read of Jesus' using them. When he prayed to his Father he did not use any carved images or rosary-like aids to worship. No, but he prayed directly to his "Father in the heavens," as we see from the Lord's Prayer. (Matt. 6:9) Neither did he feel that he had to go to any particular sacred place to worship his Father. He prayed everywhere—on mountains, in homes or wherever he happened to be. (Luke 6:12; Matt. 26:18, 26) This was the example he set for his followers. Do you follow his example in prayer? Or do you pray only at a shrine or in some other spot regarded as being sacred?

It is highly important to understand as clearly as possible the full significance of worshiping by means of that which is unseen to the eye, that is, "with spirit." One of the important reasons for doing so is that God's Word says Christians "are walking by faith, not by sight." Another is that "the things seen are temporary, but the things unseen are everlasting." (2 Cor. 5:7; 4:18) In order to obtain that which is of everlasting value, the Christian must think about his own way of worship, asking such questions as: Does my worship in any respect involve the use of images, so-called "holy pictures," rosaries or crosses?

Many sincere people have used such objects in their worship, but when they learn about the way God really wants to be worshiped—"with spirit and truth"—they have made changes. Those who be-

came Christians in the days of the apostles got rid of things God does not view with approval. (Acts 19:18, 19) And when young King Josiah started to search for the true God, he cleaned the graven images out of Judah, breaking them to pieces. (2 Chron. 34:3, 4) What a fine example for you if you wish to please God!

DO YOU WORSHIP 'WITH TRUTH'?

Now, what did Jesus mean by 'worshiping with truth'? Certainly he meant that truth, not falsehood, must be the basis for our worship. Otherwise our worship would be all in vain. Because they were not worshiping 'with truth,' Jesus told the Jewish religious leaders of that time: "Isaiah aptly prophesied about you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far removed from me. It is in vain that they keep worshiping me, because they teach as doctrines commands of men.'"—Mark 7:6, 7.

So if one worships according to human theories, personal opinions or philosophies that contradict the Word of truth, the Bible, how can one be worshiping 'with truth'?

Jesus always worshiped with truth. On one occasion when praying to his heavenly Father he said: "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) Might it not be expected that the true followers of Christ would view the written Word of God as Jesus did—as truth?

Many clergymen today, however, do not view the Bible as Jesus did; they claim that it is filled with myth. A *Time* magazine article tells of a Methodist theologian who teaches college students that "the Bible is the greatest collection of mythology in the history of Western civilization." And the leading branch of the Presbyterian Church in the United States announced that it does not consider the Bible as "in-

errant" or free from error. Perhaps you have noted that the clergy are becoming more open in revealing their disbelief in the Bible as the inspired Word of God.

How unlike Jesus and his apostles such clergymen are! One of Jesus' apostles wrote: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching."—2 Tim. 3:16.

So whom will you imitate—Jesus and his apostles, or the many faithless clergymen? What if such ministers continue in good standing in the religious organization of which you are a member? Then is it not time to face the fact that the religion itself has deviated from the example Jesus set and so is disapproved by God? If you choose to stay with an organization whose ministers downgrade the Bible, then do you not turn your back on Jesus? It is that serious.

ARE THE CHURCHES REALLY IMITATING JESUS?

Perhaps you have read statements by various clergymen to the effect that the churches in general differ from Jesus' way of worship. For example, Episcopal bishop Daniel Corrigan stated: "Broadly speaking most people do not find much in the average church that reminds them of Christ." You may feel the same way. In fact, *The Protestant Dictionary* states: "Jesus would, of course, recognize few traces of his philosophy in the churches named after him anywhere in the world." And New York city clergymen Ralph W. Sockman has said that not even Jesus would "feel at home in many of the churches erected in His name, because they have allowed ecclesiasticism and worldliness to destroy the simplicity and sincerity of His original gospel."

Judge the matter for yourself. Did Jesus put on special religious garments when he met with his disciples? Did he require his followers to build ornate buildings for wor-

ship, to set up an altar, to engage in elaborate religious rites and to have a clergy class? If you have read the Bible you know that he did not do those things. Nor did he do as many clergymen of today who are more and more "turning to secular sources as an inspiration for sermons." (*Time*, March 10, 1967) Jesus concentrated on the Word of God and encouraged his listeners to obey God's commandments: "You are my friends if you do what I am commanding you. . . . all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."—John 15:14, 15.

Jesus taught the Word of God, never adulterating it with the speculations of men. But what do we find with regard to the churches? In his book *The Outline of History*, H. G. Wells states that the churches over the centuries adopted methods and teachings from pagan religions so that Jesus' "revolutionary teaching was buried under these customary acquisitions."

Did you know, for instance, that the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul, taught in virtually every church, is an acquisition from ancient false worshipers? You can verify this by consulting reference works. Even some clergymen admit its unchristian origin. Here is how a prominent clergymen states it in the book *The Evolution of Immortality*:

"Those who were Greeks [among the converts to "Christianity"] brought in the new religion the Platonic idea that the individual soul is indestructible . . . Then the masterful Augustine . . . TOOK PLATO'S DOCTRINE OF THE INHERENT IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL . . . and gained for it that general acceptance which it has held to this day . . . A pagan speculation has masqueraded so long as an elemental Christian truth that now . . . Plato stands across the path and is commonly mistaken for Christ."

It is not difficult to determine the Bible truth of the matter, so that you can 'worship with truth.' At Ezekiel 18:4, God's Word of truth says: "The soul that is

sinning—it itself will die." In view of this and numerous other Bible expressions, it is evident that the churches are not teaching the truth as Jesus did. Their hope is based on something that does not exist. The truth that Jesus taught was the hope of the resurrection, not immortality of the human soul. (John 5:28, 29) Can those who prefer a hope founded on pagan speculation rather than on what Jesus taught expect him to reward them with eternal life? That is surely something to think about. If you wish to worship 'with truth' and so please God, can you remain part of a religious organization that does not teach as Jesus did?

IMITATE JESUS IN YOUR WORSHIP

Even though the churches have failed to imitate Jesus, you do not need to go along with worship that is in vain. You can turn to the Bible and learn what Jesus did and imitate him. What did Jesus encourage his followers to do? In his Sermon on the Mount Jesus emphasized "doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens."—Matt. 7:21.

We can learn what the will of God is by studying Jesus' work. In prayer to his Father, Jesus spoke of "having finished the work" he had been given and said: "I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world." So making known God's name Jehovah was part of his work.—John 17:4-6; Ps. 83:18.

Further, as we study the Gospel accounts we see repeatedly emphasized the preaching work that Jesus did. He not only went to the homes of the people to preach God's kingdom himself but trained others to do it. (Luke 4:43; Matt. 10:7; Acts 20:20) And after his resurrection he commanded his followers: "Go . . . make disciples of people of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe *all* the things I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19, 20) In his

great prophecy that involves our day, Jesus indicated that his true followers would be engaged in a worldwide preaching work. He foretold: "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.

Has your church trained you and equipped you to share in this work that is part of true worship? Has your church helped you to make God's name "Jehovah" known to others? If your religious organization is not training you to do the public preaching work that Jesus gave his followers, can you say it is helping you to worship as Jesus did?

If you sincerely desire to imitate Jesus and worship as he did, you can receive help. Many persons throughout the earth recognize that there is a worldwide group that is worshiping as Jesus did. For example, Leo Pfeffer in his book *Church, State and Freedom* states that the preaching methods of Jehovah's witnesses "are reminiscent of those employed by the early Christians." These Christian witnesses are proclaiming God's kingdom as Jesus commanded, and they are making known the Father's name, Jehovah.

You are welcome to come to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in your locality. Here you will find meetings designed to strengthen your faith and to provide practical training to share in the work that Jesus gave his followers to do.

Further, to help you worship as Jesus did, one of Jehovah's witnesses will be happy to hold a free Bible study with you in your own home. It will help you to gain an accurate understanding of the Bible and thus to learn the truth that Jesus said would "set you free"—free from traditions, philosophies and non-Christian practices. (John 8:32) May you courageously choose to worship as Jesus did, worshiping "with spirit and truth."

Loyal Advocates

OF THE WORD OF GOD

"When you received God's word, ... you accepted it, not as the word of men, but, just as it truthfully is, as the word of God, which is also at work in you believers."—1 Thess. 2:13.

THREE are many writings that are held sacred by people living in various parts of the earth. But the Holy Bible has characteristics that put it in a class apart from all others.

² Concerning one of these traits, Orientalist George Rawlinson said: "Christianity . . . is in nothing more distinguished from the other religions of the world than in its objective or historical character. The religions of Greece and Rome, of Egypt, India, Persia, and the East generally . . . did not even seriously postulate an historical basis. . . . But it is otherwise with the religion of the Bible. There . . . we find a scheme of doctrine which is bound up with facts; which depends absolutely upon them; which is null and void without them; and which may be regarded as for all practical purposes established if they are shown to deserve acceptance."^{*}

³ An examination of the evidence shows that the Bible record is built around people who actually lived and places that truly exist. It specifies the time of notable events and names contemporary rulers in other

nations existing at the same time. (2 Ki. 25:8, 9; Luke 3:1, 2) The Bible is a book that stands up to careful scrutiny. As the Bible psalmist said to Jehovah God: "The substance of your word is truth."—Ps. 119:160.

⁴ Even more striking than its historical accuracy, however, is the fact that the Bible is a book of reliable prophecy. This, outstandingly, sets it apart from all other sacred books. Its prophecies are not simply a few incidental comments about the future. From its first book, Genesis, through its final book, The Revelation, it is filled with pronouncements of future events.—Gen. 3:15; Dan. 4:17; Rev. 21:1-5.

⁵ Many of those prophecies were fulfilled within the lifetime of those who first heard them. Thus persons living then saw for themselves that these were of no mere human origin. (Gen. 18:9-11; 21:1-3; Jer. 28:15-17) But Bible prophecy did not all focus on events now long in the past. It foretold what would happen in this twentieth century. Though the last portion of the Bible was written before the end of the first century of our Common Era, it

* *The Historical Evidences of the Truth of the Scripture Records*, pp. 25, 26.

1, 2. What characteristic is pointed to by one Orientalist as distinguishing the Bible from other sacred writings? 3. Give examples of the historical facts embodied in the Bible accounts.

4. Of what significance is the fact that the Bible is a book of prophecy?

5. (a) Did persons who lived at the time that Bible prophecies were first spoken know that they were from God? (b) How does Bible prophecy help us?

vividly described the turmoil that would shake human society in our day. It also made clear that these events would mark the "last days" of the present system of things and the time for the establishment of the kingdom of God. (Luke 21:24-31; Rev. 6:1-8) By showing where we are in relationship to the fulfillment of God's purposes, and the wise course for us to take, the Bible provides guidance that each one of us needs.

⁶ The Bible record also wins our confidence because of the obvious humility and honesty of its writers. They do not seek to gloss over the facts, to make notable persons among them appear to be more righteous than they really were. In a very frank manner they openly admit their own weaknesses and failings. (Ex. 4:10-14; Matt. 26:31-56) The disciples of Jesus acknowledge that they were looked down upon by the religious leaders of their day as "unlettered and ordinary." (Acts 4:13) The Bible writers freely tell both of deliverances that God performed on behalf of his people and of times when he expressed his disapproval toward them. (2 Chron. 12:1-9; 20:14-26) This unmistakable evidence of honesty, high ideals, pure motive and intelligent conviction attracts lovers of truth to the Bible.

⁷ It is here in the Bible that one finds answers to questions that otherwise could not be answered. What is the origin of the universe, of our planet Earth and of humankind? Why is mankind plagued with difficulties, disease and death? In easily understandable language the Bible answers those questions. (Gen. 1:1, 2, 26-28; 2:16, 17; 3:1-24; Rom. 5:12) It also outlines what God has done to bring relief to the human family, and it shows what we individually must do in order to avail our-

6. What is there about the attitude of Bible writers that wins one's confidence? Illustrate.

7. For what other reasons does the Bible recommend itself to us as deserving our earnest attention?

selves of that provision. (John 3:16, 36; Dan. 2:44) For all these reasons the Bible recommends itself to us as a book that deserves our earnest attention.

⁸ But what about you as an individual? Have you read the Bible—not just portions of it, but the entire Bible, from cover to cover? Have you studied it carefully to determine how it affects your life? Certainly this is the course of practical wisdom. Why? Because our lives depend upon God, and the Bible plainly says that it is the Word of God.—Ex. 20:1; Eph. 6:17.

REALLY THE "WORD OF GOD"

⁹ To the world in general, even to church members in Christendom, the expression "Word of God" used with reference to the Bible means very little. They may believe that the Bible is a book that devout men wrote *about* God, but not that it actually originated with God. Yet the Bible itself says that "all Scripture is inspired of God." Also, that "prophecy was at no time brought by man's will, but men spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit." (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21) This means that, while various men were used to do most of the actual writing, the Bible has only one Author, Jehovah God. By means of his spirit he conveyed messages or visions to the minds of his prophets, and then they wrote them down. How was this done?

¹⁰ In some cases information was conveyed by dictation. Through an angelic representative Jehovah told Moses: "Write down for yourself these words, because it is in accordance with these words that I do conclude a covenant with you and Israel." (Ex. 34:27; Heb. 2:2) Moses recorded exactly what he was told.

¹¹ However, in other instances it seems

8. Why should we personally read and study the entire Bible?

9. In what sense is the Bible the "Word of God"?
10, 11. (a) Did God actually dictate the words contained in the Bible? (b) What common business practice is helpful in illustrating the matter?

evident that the Bible writers were allowed to use a certain amount of personal initiative as to the style of writing. Jehovah's spirit guided their thoughts, but the mode of expression reflected to some extent the characteristics of the penmen. (Eccl. 12:10; 2 Sam. 23:1, 2) In our own day it is common practice for a business manager to direct his secretary to write a letter, while not necessarily specifying the phraseology to be used. The secretary does the actual writing, following carefully the instructions given and using expressions that he knows, from experience, are in harmony with the manager's way of doing things. The completed letter, signed by the manager, is acknowledged to be from him.

¹² Should it be difficult for us to comprehend that God, though invisible to his servants, could convey messages or visions to their minds? (Acts 28:25; Ezek. 1:1-3) We do not consider it to be unusual to turn on a radio and listen to the voice of someone who may be unseen to us, many miles away. When astronauts orbited the moon, they broadcast both messages and pictures back to earth, and these were received with remarkable clarity. How do men do these things? Simply by using laws that Jehovah himself already put into operation.

¹³ So, the idea that God can communicate with man out of the invisible realm is not at all unreasonable. Nor does the fact that penmen here on earth did the actual writing prove that what they wrote was not really from God. Still it must be acknowledged that the mere fact that these things *could* be does not in itself prove that the Bible is from God. What evidence is there that God actually did communicate with those men who wrote the Bible?

12, 13. Why should it not be difficult for us to comprehend that God could convey to men messages or visions from the invisible realm?

EVIDENCE OF DIVINE COMMUNICATION

¹⁴ After the Israelites had been delivered from Egyptian bondage, they gathered in the wilderness of Sinai. Moses went up into the mountain to receive instruction from Jehovah and came back with a message for the people. Moses reported that Jehovah had said: "This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and to tell the sons of Israel, 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, that I might carry you on wings of eagles and bring you to myself. And now if you will strictly obey my voice and will indeed keep my covenant, then you will certainly become my special property out of all other peoples, because the whole earth belongs to me. And you yourselves will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'" (Ex. 19:3-6) That is what Moses told the older men of the people, but was it true? Had God really spoken to him? What reason did they have for believing that Jehovah was dealing with Israel through Moses?—1 John 4:1.

¹⁵ Not many months prior to this they had all been in Egypt. There Moses, speaking in the name of Jehovah God, had foretold ten devastating plagues on the land. Each one had come as announced. (Ex. 7:15-12:29) Surely Moses himself had not caused the locust plague or the pestilence that he forecast. He could not control the elements so as to bring about the hail-storm that he had announced in advance. He certainly did not personally make his way into every home and barn of the Egyptians to put to death their firstborn. Without question, this had been the work of God, and since Moses had been able to announce in advance what would happen, it must be God who had communicated

14. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, what message did he bring to his fellow Israelites, but what questions could be asked?

15. How did the Israelites know that Jehovah had communicated with Moses and was using him?

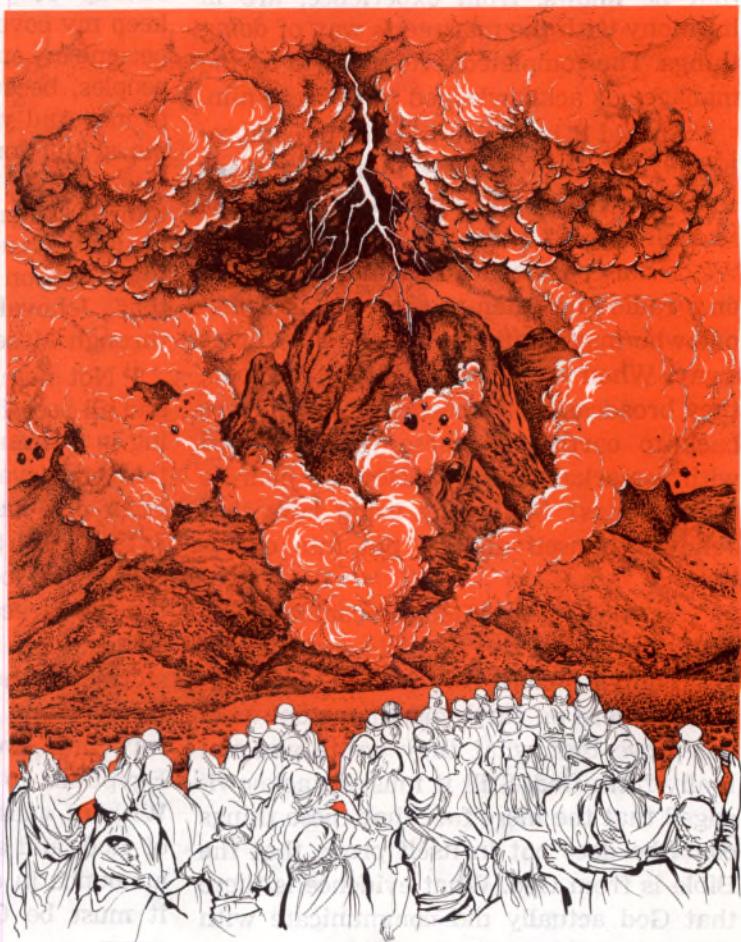
with him. Later, when Moses stretched out his hand over the Red Sea, the waters had opened up to make an escape route for them, while a supernatural cloud kept Israel separated from the pursuit forces of Egypt. The Israelites, who were now at Mount Sinai, had been there and seen it; they knew that Jehovah was using Moses to lead them.—Ex. 14:19-22.

¹⁶ Now at Mount Sinai Jehovah performed further signs, and the very reason he did it was, as he told Moses, "that the people may hear when I speak with you, and that in you also they may put faith to time indefinite." (Ex. 19:9) It was an awe-inspiring display of the power of God. "Thunders and lightnings began occurring, and a heavy cloud upon the mountain and a very loud sound of a horn, so that all the people who were in the camp began to tremble. . . . And Mount Sinai smoked all over, due to the fact that Jehovah came down upon it in fire; and its smoke kept ascending like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain was trembling very much. When the sound of the horn became continually louder and louder, Moses began to speak, and the true God began to answer him with a voice." (Ex. 19:16-19) The millions who witnessed this spectacle had convincing proof that the things that Moses spoke and wrote in the name of Jehovah were

really "the word of God."—Acts 7:35-38.

¹⁷ During the centuries that followed, Jehovah raised up other prophets: Samuel, Nathan, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and many more. They, too, spoke in the name of Jehovah, and the fact that they reliably announced in advance the acts of God made it evident that He was communicating with them.—Deut. 13:1-3; 18:21, 22.

17. How was it evident that Jehovah also communicated with the later Hebrew prophets whose writings are found in the Bible?



At Mt. Sinai Jehovah performed signs. The mountain trembled and smoked all over. Millions saw and heard proof that what Moses made known in God's name was the word of God

16. At Mount Sinai what further signs did Jehovah perform, and why?

¹⁸ In the first century of our Common Era, Jesus Christ appeared on the earthly scene. He plainly said that he was God's Son, and by miraculously calming the sea, healing the sick and raising the dead he proved that he had indeed come forth from God. (John 10:36; Luke 8:22-25; 5:17-26; John 11:39-44) How did he view the Bible books that had been written down to that time? What they said concerning the past he quoted as fact. Their statements about the future he spoke of as certain to be fulfilled. (Matt. 19:1-6; 24:30; Dan. 7:13, 14) When he spoke of "the Scriptures" he included the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms, the entire Hebrew Scriptures. (Luke 24:27, 44-48) He believed them, taught them and guided his life by them. He recognized that they were the inspired Word of his God and Father in heaven.

¹⁹ Shortly after Jesus' death and resurrection, at the time of the forming of the Christian congregation, God again demonstrated with supernatural signs whom he was using as spokesmen on earth. (Heb. 2:1-4) He poured out his spirit on the disciples of Jesus Christ who were gathered in Jerusalem, enabling them to speak miraculously in tongues that they had not studied. Representatives of many nations personally witnessed this manifestation of divine backing. (Acts 2:1-12) From among those upon whom God put his spirit, whether then or shortly afterward, he selected men to write the Christian Greek Scriptures. These things were not done in a corner. The powerful works that God performed through their hands were public knowledge. As a result, thousands became

believers.—Acts 2:41; 3:1-4:4; 9:40-42.

²⁰ To a congregation of such individuals in Macedonia, the apostle Paul wrote, saying: "We also thank God incessantly, because when you received God's word, which you heard from us, you accepted it, not as the word of men, but, just as it truthfully is, as the word of God, which is also at work in you believers." (1 Thess. 2:13) Jehovah's Christian witnesses in this twentieth century believe the same as did those first-century Macedonian Christians. Having read the Bible for themselves and knowing what it contains, they have no doubt that it truly is the Word of God. Do you share that faith?

²¹ If so, you have the privilege and the responsibility to aid others. If they have never read the Bible, encourage them to do so. Discuss with them the evidence that it is God's Word. Acquaint them with what it teaches. Emphasize to them the seriousness of the matter. Then, of course, they must make their own decision as to what they will do. But halfway belief is not enough. If a person is to be well-pleasing to God, he must be wholehearted; he must be a loyal advocate of the Word of God.

'SACRED SERVICE WITH LOYALTY'

²² The Bible itself emphasizes the importance of loyalty. Why so? Because it is one of the noteworthy qualities of Jehovah, the Author of the Bible. To the wayward people of Israel, Jehovah said through his prophet Jeremiah: "I am loyal." (Jer. 3:12) And the apostle John, when beholding a vision of future events, heard the ones whom God exalts to heavenly glory sing to God: "Great and wonder-

20. So, how do Jehovah's witnesses view the Bible?

21. (a) If a person believes that the Bible truly is the Word of God, what privilege and responsibility does he have? (b) To be well-pleasing to God, how far must one's belief in the Bible go?

22. How and why does the Bible emphasize loyalty?

18. (a) When Jesus Christ appeared on earth, what evidence was there that he was from God? (b) How did he view the Bible books written down to that time?

19. What evidence of divine backing was there in the case of the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures?

ful are your works, Jehovah God, the Almighty. Righteous and true are your ways, King of eternity. Who will not really fear you, Jehovah, and glorify your name, because you alone are loyal?" (Rev. 15:3, 4) They appreciate that loyalty originates with Jehovah and that it outstandingly characterizes him.

²³ Understandably, then, if humans are to serve God acceptably they must reflect this godly quality. Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, realized this. Filled with holy spirit, he thanked God for "the privilege of fearlessly rendering sacred service to him with loyalty and righteousness before him all our days." (Luke 1:74, 75) But how can a person be loyal to Jehovah if he is filled with doubts about His Word? If anyone has questions, it is only reasonable to ask them, to examine the evidence presented in answer, and then to make a decision. But we cannot please God if we are halfhearted, continually limping on two opinions. (1 Ki. 18:21) "If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching; and it will be given him. But let him keep on asking in faith, not doubting at all, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and blown about. In fact, let not that man suppose that he will

receive anything from Jehovah; he is an indecisive man, unsteady in all his ways."

—Jas. 1:5-8.

²⁴ To please our Creator, we must have confidence in the rightness of his ways. But that is a quality that is notably lacking among many professed Christians. It was foretold in the Bible at Second Timothy chapter 3 that one of the outstanding attitudes prevalent in the "last days" would

be disloyalty. Not only disloyalty to marriage mates and employers, but disloyalty to God. Because of this, those whose worship is only a "form of godly devotion" prove "false to its power."

(2 Tim. 3:1, 2, 5) Lacking in personal conviction that the Bible is God's Word, they do not take it seriously. It is not the guiding force in their lives; it does not motivate them. But a change is required if they are going to be genuine followers of Jesus Christ. At Ephesians 4:23, 24, Christians are admonished: "You should be made new in the force actuating your mind, and should put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." Have you done that? Are you unshakably loyal to God, and do you manifest this in your attitude toward his Word the Bible? If you do, then you can be a blessing to others by aiding them to put faith in God's Word.

23. Why must our service to Jehovah be rendered "with loyalty," and what does this imply as to our attitude toward God's Word?

24. (a) How is disloyalty to God manifest in Christendom? (b) What change must such persons make in order to be true followers of Jesus Christ?





MANIFESTING LOYALTY toward JEHOVAH AND HIS WORD

IN THIS modern, materialistic world it is not at all uncommon to hear doubts expressed concerning the reliability of the Bible. When church members are asked if they recognize the Bible to be God's Word, they may readily say that they do. But oftentimes these same persons, in the very next breath, state that there are things in the Bible that they just do not believe. The problem may be that they lack knowledge, or they may have been influenced by the comments of skeptics. But, regardless of the cause, their attitude does not reflect loyalty toward God and his Word.

² The clergy themselves, in increasing numbers, make public statements expressing disbelief in the Bible. A target of frequent attack is the miracles reported on in the Scriptures. And one of these that is most often held up to ridicule is the virgin birth of Jesus. Concerning it, a Church of England clergyman said: "Could any intelligent twentieth-century man believe . . . that Jesus was born of a Virgin without the agency of a human father? If everyone who didn't believe in the Virgin Birth were asked to leave the Church of England there would be an acute shortage of clergy and hardly any professors left in our theological colleges."—*The Sunday Express*, August 6, 1967.

³ But why would anyone who professes to have faith in God find it difficult to believe the Bible account that by God's holy spirit the Jewish virgin Mary was made pregnant and gave birth to Jesus? (Luke 1:30-35; Matt. 1:18-25) It is true that virgin births are not taking place among womankind in our day. But is this a sound reason for not believing? Do these clergymen believe only in those events that they have personally witnessed? Do they refuse to believe that the earth itself had a beginning, simply because they were not on hand to see it happen? Do they also reject the idea that earthly life had a beginning?

⁴ Really, which would be more difficult: for God to cause a child to be conceived in the womb of a living virgin, or for him to create the first living human from lifeless matter? It is only reasonable that the Almighty Creator, who designed woman and gave her the ability to produce children, could also cause a woman to become pregnant by means of his invisible active force, his holy spirit. True, no man can explain in detail how Mary as a virgin conceived in her womb, but that should not surprise us. No man fully understands how a child is conceived and develops in its mother's womb even under normal cir-

1. How are the expressed views of church members concerning the Bible often inconsistent, and why does this situation exist?

2. What attitude toward Bible accounts do many clergymen express? Illustrate.

3. Why is the fact that virgin births are not taking place in our day not a sound argument against belief in the virgin birth of Jesus?

4. Why is it not unreasonable that the Creator could cause a virgin to give birth?

cumstances. The very idea that the "blue-prints" for the growth of an entire human, with all the needed organs, can be contained in a single fertilized cell staggers the imagination. (Ps. 139:14-16) Yet who would deny that conception does take place and that children are born?

⁵ Furthermore, anyone who rejects the virgin birth of Jesus also shoves aside the ransom sacrifice as the basis for salvation. Why is that? Because the life of a perfect human, corresponding to that of perfect Adam, was needed in order to redeem mankind. (1 Tim. 2:5, 6) Had Jesus been simply a materialized spirit, he would not have qualified. If a human father had been responsible for his life, he would have inherited the imperfection of Adam. (Job 14:4) But because God was his father, his perfection was assured; and since he was brought to birth by a human mother, he himself was human. Also, his virgin birth had been foretold centuries in advance by the prophet Isaiah (7:14). It is clear, then, that what the Bible says about Jesus' virgin birth is in harmony with the rest of God's Word. So, a little sound reasoning shows that there is every reason to believe what the Bible says about the birth of Jesus and to encourage others to do the same.

⁶ Why is it, then, that these clergymen say they do not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus? Could it be that they do not believe in God and so reject the idea of any divine intervention in human affairs? In answer to that question, note what a Canadian clergyman states in his book *A Church Without God*: "Werner Pelz, who entitled a book *God Is No More*, is a Church of England vicar; . . . Father Jackson, who says, 'If there is a God, we can't speak

5. By rejecting the virgin birth of Jesus, what other fundamental Bible teaching do the clergy shove aside, and why is this so?

6. What is the real reason why these clergymen do not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus, and how do the facts show this to be so?

of him as a supreme being,' is a university chaplain; Thomas Altizer, who wrote *The Gospel of Christian Atheism*, is an Associate Professor of Bible Studies at an American university; I am on the staff of an Anglican parish in Toronto. I claim to be a Christian and an Anglican; yet I can say, in all seriousness, that there is no God." (Page 39) This attitude is not rare among the clergy. A report in the *National Observer* states: "A 'God is dead' mood pervades the thought of 90 percent of the Protestant theologians under 40." Thus it becomes evident that outright disloyalty toward God and his Word prevails in the ranks of the clergy. But you do not have to share their views.

RECOGNIZING OUR LIMITATIONS

⁷ In order to show yourself truly loyal toward Jehovah and his Word, you need to know what the Bible contains. You need to be convinced that the Bible truly is inspired of God. You need to see in it evidence of God's superlative wisdom and love, and these are clearly set out in language that even a child can understand. (Matt. 5:44, 45; 1 John 4:8-10) But is it reasonable to expect to understand everything about Jehovah and how and why he did all the things that the Bible credits to him? No; there are matters that our minds, with human limitations, just do not fully comprehend. As recorded at Romans 11:33, an apostle of Jesus Christ wisely acknowledged: "O the depth of God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and past tracing out his ways are!" Yet, while the apostle Paul did not profess to fathom all God's judgments, he loyally acknowledged God's right as Creator to do ac-

7, 8. (a) How only can we prove ourselves to be truly loyal toward Jehovah and his Word? (b) Should we expect to understand everything about Jehovah and how and why he did all the things credited to him in the Bible?

cording to his own will, because, as Paul wrote in verse 36, "from him and by him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever."—See also Revelation 4:11.

⁸ So this inspired Bible writer urges us to offer ourselves to God for his sacred service, not doing so blindly, without understanding, but, as the first verse of chapter twelve of Romans says, "with your power of reason." However, that power of reason must be used in a right way.

⁹ There are persons who approach a study of the Bible with the idea that it ought to conform to their own personal viewpoint. This, of course, makes it difficult for them to appreciate what it says. Why? Because, as the Bible shows, 'God's ways are higher than our ways, and his thoughts are higher than our thoughts.' (Isa. 55:9) We are all imperfect, subject to error. King Solomon, one of the wisest men who ever lived, acknowledged that fact, saying: "There is no man that does not sin." (1 Ki. 8:46) Human experience demonstrates the truthfulness of this. So, if a person views matters from the standpoint of imperfect human reasoning, God's judgments may seem strange. But if the Bible conformed to our own limited human viewpoint, would that prove it to be from God? No!—Ezek. 18:29, 30.

¹⁰ As we learn Jehovah's ways we should expect to make adjustments in our thinking. Instead of arguing about how we think God should have decided certain matters, it should be our desire to learn from what he did. If we show a proper disposition, he will help us. "He will cause the meek ones to walk in his judicial decision, and he will teach the meek ones his way."—Ps. 25:9.

9. Why will we encounter difficulty if we expect the Bible to conform to our personal viewpoint?

10. How should we approach a study of Jehovah's ways?

LEARNING FROM GOD'S JUDICIAL DECISIONS

¹¹ As an example, consider what there is to be learned from Jehovah's judicial decision concerning the destruction of the Canaanites. The instruction contained there can broaden a person's outlook, strengthen his faith and give him an appreciation of his responsibilities that he may not have had before. Together, let us review that Bible account.

¹² Jehovah had brought the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt and now they were encamped on the border of the new land to which he had led them. His prophet Moses spoke to the people, saying: "When Jehovah your God at last brings you into the land to which you are going so as to take possession of it, he must also clear away populous nations from before you, . . . seven nations more populous and mighty than you are. And Jehovah your God will certainly abandon them to you, and you must defeat them. You should without fail devote them to destruction. You must conclude no covenant with them nor show them any favor." (Deut. 7:1, 2) But why?

¹³ Moses explained: "Jehovah your God is driving them away from before you . . . in order to carry out the word that Jehovah swore to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." (Deut. 9:5) Over four hundred years earlier Jehovah had made a formal covenant with his faithful servant Abraham, promising this very land to him and to his offspring, and he had renewed that promise to Isaac and Jacob. Now the time had come for the fulfillment of the promise. Jehovah had not forgotten. He did not change his mind because the Canaanites were in the land. God does not lie. (Gen. 15:5-21; Titus 1:2) He does

11. When the matter is properly viewed, how may one benefit from a study of Jehovah's judgment against the Canaanites?

12. Before the Israelites entered the land of Canaan, what instructions did Moses give them?

13. What does Jehovah's giving the land to Israel show as to His truthfulness?

not promise a certain reward and then give something else. His word is trustworthy, and for that we can be grateful.—Hab. 2:3.

¹⁴ But did this action bring undeserved suffering to innocent people, the ones then inhabiting the land? Not at all! As Moses said to Israel: "It is for the wickedness of these nations that Jehovah your God is driving them away from before you." (Deut. 9:5) The Bible, and archaeology as well, shows that they were exceedingly depraved. They practiced adultery, sodomy and bestiality, and they carried on the worship of the idol-god Molech with its rites of child sacrifice. (Lev. 18:3, 20-25) About these people, Professor Merrill Unger observes: "The brutality, lust and abandon of Canaanite mythology is far worse than elsewhere in the Near East at the time. And the astounding characteristic of Canaanite deities, that they had no moral character whatever, must have brought out the worst traits in their devotees and entailed many of the most demoralizing practices of the time, such as sacred prostitution, child sacrifice and snake worship. . . . The character of Canaanite religion as portrayed in the Ugaritic literature furnishes ample background to illustrate the accuracy of . . . Biblical statements in their characterization of the utter moral and religious degeneracy of the inhabitants of Canaan."

¹⁵ What do we learn from this? One thing is plain: that while Jehovah is a lover of righteousness, he also hates wickedness. (Ps. 45:7) Also, what took place makes clear that Jehovah does not hastily destroy imperfect people at the first sign of transgression on their part. As shown at Genesis 15:16, God had taken note of the iniquity

14. Did the driving away of the Canaanites result in suffering for innocent people?

15. In reviewing Jehovah's judgment against the depraved Canaanites, how do we find both his attitude toward wickedness and his long-suffering with humans reassuring?

of the Amorite inhabitants of Canaan over four hundred years earlier, but he did not then destroy them. He manifested extraordinary long-suffering. And even when the time for the execution of judgment against the Canaanites was impending, Jehovah allowed Rahab of Jericho and the inhabitants of Gibeon and its neighboring cities to be spared because they showed faith in Jehovah, and threw in their lot with Israel. This reassures us. It gives us sound reason for believing that Jehovah will not forever tolerate wickedness, but, nevertheless, that he is long-suffering and compassionate toward his creatures.—Ezek. 33:11; 2 Pet. 3:15.

¹⁶ There is also something to be learned from what happened to the children of the Canaanites. They were not spared when their wicked parents were executed. This is significant, and, if we do not allow sentimentality to cloud our vision, we can benefit greatly from the principle there demonstrated.

¹⁷ It is a privilege to bring forth children, but with that privilege goes responsibility. The Bible shows that God places full responsibility for minor children on their parents. To his own people, God stated through the prophet Moses: "I have put life and death before you, the blessing and the malediction; and you must choose life in order that you may keep alive, you *and your offspring*, by loving Jehovah your God, by listening to his voice and by sticking to him." (Deut. 30:19, 20) By the course that they pursued, the Israelites would choose either life or death for both themselves and their children.

¹⁸ We cannot evade the fact that children either benefit or suffer as a result of what

16. What became of the Canaanite children, and, to benefit from the principle there demonstrated, what pitfall must we avoid?

17, 18. (a) As shown in the Bible, upon whom has God conferred full responsibility for minor children? (b) Why would it be inconsistent, then, for God to intervene to shield children from the effects of what their parents do?

their parents do. If a parent is hardworking, loving and devoted to God, the children will benefit greatly. But if he is lazy or a drunkard, can he rightly expect God to shield his children from the effects of his wrong course? Is God obligated to take over the responsibility of the parent or assign it to someone else so that no suffering comes to his offspring? Would it be consistent for God to cooperate with such a man in an evasion of his responsibility? Obviously not.

¹⁹ The Canaanite parents could have chosen life for themselves and their children. Rahab did; so did the inhabitants of Gibeon and three other Canaanite cities. They recognized that the true God was guiding Israel, and so they took their stand with them. For this, they and their children were spared. (Josh. 2:1-21; 6:25; 9:3-21) Others could have done the same, but they refused. In so doing they chose death for themselves and their offspring.

²⁰ Does this have meaning for us today? Yes, indeed. Parents who choose a dissolute course of life have no reason to believe that, when the fast-approaching day of Jehovah's vengeance strikes, God will spare their minor children simply because of their youth. The responsibility rests on the parents to set the example in right worship and to lead their children in that way. (Eph. 6:4) How much do your children mean to you? Are you living up to your responsibility? Have you dedicated your life to Jehovah God, and are you proving your loyalty to him by doing his will? If so, you show that you understand and loyally uphold the principle so vividly illustrated in what happened to the inhabitants of Canaan.—Prov. 2:7, 8.

LOYALTY UNDER PRESSURE

²¹ Loyalty or the lack of it becomes particularly manifest when a person is faced with hardship or put under pressure. And that is something that is experienced by everyone who walks in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. (2 Tim. 3:12) It is not difficult to speak in agreement with God's Word when in the company of those who agree with you. But what do you do when confronted with those who belittle the Scriptures? If you are attending school, for example, what happens when teachers or students make disparaging remarks about the Bible record? Do you demonstrate your loyalty to God's Word? In all parts of the earth there are Christian youths who do so, seizing these opportunities to speak out in behalf of the truth. Sometimes this brings ridicule from classmates. (1 Pet. 2:19, 20) In other cases it has opened the way to explain at length the reasons for one's beliefs, resulting in a fine witness concerning Jehovah and his purposes.

²² Loyal servants of Jehovah at all times have stood firm in their devotion to him. Hebrew youths in ancient Babylon were put under pressure to violate Jehovah's law against idolatry. Nebuchadnezzar, ruler of the empire, became enraged at the report that they had not obeyed his imperial edict to bow before the towering image that he had set up. It was not that the king refused to recognize the religion of the Jews at all. (Dan. 2:46-49) But pride now impaired his reason. He demanded that these young men conform to his decree. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were not disrespectful to the king, but they knew Jehovah's law forbidding the worship of images. They recognized Jehovah as the Supreme Sovereign, so it was

19. Who really was it that chose death for the Canaanite children? Could they have done otherwise?

20. How do parents today show whether they really care what will happen to their minor children in the day of Jehovah's vengeance?

21. In what way do many Christian youths show loyalty to God's Word in school even when under pressure?

22. How did three Hebrew youths in ancient Babylon demonstrate their loyalty to Jehovah and his law?

to him that they owed loyalty. They showed their loyalty by faithfulness to God's law even when the king of Babylon threatened them with death.—Dan. 3: 13-24.

²³ The apostles of Jesus Christ were faced with a similar test of loyalty. Haled before the high court in Jerusalem, they were ordered to quit preaching *in the name of Jesus*. They were not told that they could not read the Scriptures at all, or that they could not talk about these to others. But there was this one matter that the officials found to be offensive. (Acts 4:15-18) Similarly, in some lands today government officials tell Jehovah's witnesses that they have no objection to their reading the Bible or discussing it among themselves, but they do not like to have them preaching that "it is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service." (Matt. 4:10) They do not want them to be telling people, as Jesus did, that true Christians are "no part of the world." (John 17:14) They want their people to be involved in the affairs of the world and to be willing to demonstrate their devotion to the State by prescribed acts of devotion.

²⁴ What should Jehovah's witnesses do when governments make such demands upon them? Would it be right for them to hide portions of the Bible from public view, in order to please worldly rulers? What would you do? Peter and John, apostles of Jesus Christ, showed the loyal thing to do, when they said to the Jewish court: "Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." And when brought before the court a second time, the apostles again made their position clear: "We must obey

God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 4: 19, 20; 5:29.

LOYAL SUPPORT FOR THE BIBLE'S MORAL STANDARD

²⁵ In contrast to the apostles, there were those in Jerusalem who claimed to be priests of God but who were quite willing to substitute the precepts of men for the commandments of God. (Matt. 15:1-9) The modern-day clergy of Christendom show themselves to be of a like disposition. They are frequently heard publicly rejecting what the Bible says on various matters. One topic on which they have been particularly outspoken is sexual morality.

²⁶ Anyone who has studied the Bible knows what it says on this matter: "You must not commit adultery." (Rom. 13:9) "Flee from fornication." (1 Cor. 6:18) "Neither . . . men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men . . . will inherit God's kingdom." (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) There is nothing ambiguous about what those scriptures say: adultery, fornication and homosexuality are condemned by God. But do the clergy uphold what God's Word says? According to Joseph Fletcher of an Episcopal theological school, when commenting on the so-called "new morality," "there is nothing against extra-marital sex as such, in this ethic, and in some cases it is good." (*Commonweal*, January 14, 1966) Presbyterian minister Gordon Clanton, not content with that, said in the *Christian Century* magazine (January 8, 1969): "Now we must go further and proclaim that, properly understood and lovingly practiced, sex outside of marriage is indeed a positive good." And he makes it known that he believes it is the duty of the church to weaken any hold that a more strict morality may still have on society. But the trend does not stop even there.

23, 24. How do Jehovah's witnesses today prove their loyalty to Jehovah in the face of demands of human governments?

25-27. What evidence is there that the clergy do not loyally support the Bible's moral standard?

²⁷ Reporting on British legislation to repeal criminal penalties against homosexual acts by consenting adults, the *New York Times* (February 12, 1966) stated: "Churches have been in the forefront of the demand for reform. The Church of England and Roman Catholic and Methodist groups have all called for adoption of the [repeal] recommendation." In 1967 ninety Episcopalian priests meeting in New York declared that the church should recognize that homosexuality "may even be a good thing." And in the Netherlands two male homosexuals were "married" by a Roman Catholic priest. The disgusting thing is that the men who do these things claim to be Christian ministers!—*Titus 1:16*.

²⁸ People who read the Bible know that what these clergymen are doing is wrong, that they are not acting in harmony with God's Word and that they stand condemned by it. (*Rom. 1:32*) But if a person believes that they are wrong, it requires more than words to prove it. Regardless of what a person may say with his mouth, if he himself, out of public view, indulges in fornication, adultery or homosexuality, or in the loose conduct that leads to such things, he too is unclean in God's sight. No matter what he professes to be, no matter what other people think him to be, a person who indulges in such conduct is not loyal to God.—*1 Thess. 4:7, 8; Hos. 4:12*.

²⁹ Loyalty involves the heart, and the heart represents what a person is deep inside. (*Luke 5:22*) Jehovah observes, not only what we appear to be on the outside, but also what our hearts are. "Every way of a man is upright in his own eyes, but Jehovah is making an estimate of hearts." —*Prov. 21:2*.

28. How do we personally prove whether we are loyal supporters of the Bible's moral standard?

29, 30. What does one's heart attitude on morals have to do with one's loyalty toward Jehovah?

³⁰ When God makes an estimate of your heart, what does he find? Is it a good condition? (*Isa. 65:14*) Does he find a heart that has treasured up his sayings and that takes delight in his law? (*Ps. 119:11, 97*) Does he find that genuinely, deep down inside, you view immoral conduct in the same way that he does? Do you truly hate what is bad? That is what the Bible psalmist urges us to do, saying: "O you lovers of Jehovah, hate what is bad. He is guarding the souls of his loyal ones." (*Ps. 97:10*) If we heed that counsel, it gives evidence of loyalty on our part, and we can be assured that our souls will be precious in the eyes of Jehovah.

TAKING YOUR STAND WITH JEHOVAH'S LOYAL ONES

³¹ Now is the time to make one's position in relation to Jehovah God and his Word unmistakably clear. Do you really believe what God says in his Word the Bible? If so, your speech will reflect it. Your conduct will show it. It will also be evident in your choice of associates. You will make it a point to act in harmony with *Psalm 149:1*, which says: "Praise Jah, you people! Sing to Jehovah a new song, his praise in the congregation of loyal ones."

³² As we have seen, not all congregations that gather for worship are made up of ones loyal to Jehovah and his Word. Some may carry the Bible to church. Perhaps a Scripture passage is quoted in the sermon. But many church doctrines and practices are not in harmony with God's Word. In fact, so far has Christendom strayed from the teachings of God's Word, that the *Christian Century* magazine (September 5, 1962) said: "If we are really honest, would not a closed Bible, covered with dust and

31. If a person truly believes what the Bible says, how will this be manifest?

32, 33. When seeking out the congregation of those loyal to Jehovah and his Word, of what facts concerning the churches of Christendom should a person be aware?

crammed with yellowing obituaries, be a better symbol of the actual state of Protestantism?" And a Catholic newspaper, the *Luxemburger Wort* (January 16, 1965), commenting on the situation in Luxembourg, stated: "Is it not a sad situation that . . . the overwhelming majority of our Catholics, yes, of our priests, never have completed the reading of the Bible, not even the New Testament?"

³³ This situation is not new. Back in 1929, a survey was made of 500 theological students of the Baptist, Congregationalist, Episcopalian, Evangelical, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches. The question was asked: "Do you believe that the Bible is wholly free from legend or myth?" Ninety-five percent of those answering said, "No." Obviously, they do not accept the Bible as the Word of God.

³⁴ If you do not agree with their position it is vital to show it. And there are hundreds of thousands of persons in all parts of the earth who have done just that. They want no part with any religious organization that is disloyal to Jehovah God and his Word the Bible. (2 Cor. 6:14-17;

34. How have hundreds of thousands of persons earth wide demonstrated their desire to prove loyal to Jehovah and his Word?

Rev. 18:4) For that reason they have quit the churches, but they have not stopped worshiping God. They regularly gather for worship in the more than 25,000 congregations of Jehovah's witnesses earth wide. They believe what the Bible says. They uphold its moral standards. In almost any community they can be seen each week calling at the homes of their neighbors to encourage them to look into the Bible. They are glad to present to any sincere person the overwhelming evidence that the Bible truly is the Word of God. And, more than that, they gladly offer a free home Bible-study service to help such persons to get an accurate knowledge of God's Word so that they can live in harmony with it.

³⁵ What a marvelous future such loyal servants of Jehovah have! For God's own inspired Word declares: "Jehovah . . . will not leave his loyal ones. To time indefinite they will certainly be guarded; but as for the offspring of the wicked ones, they will indeed be cut off. The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Ps. 37:28, 29.

35. What future awaits those proving themselves loyal to Jehovah?

Helping Others to Attend Meetings

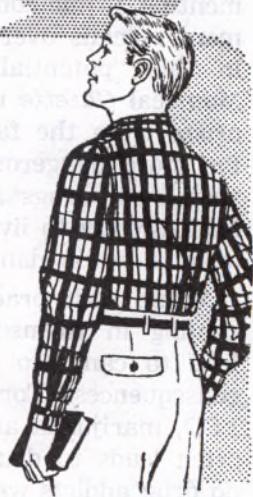
JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES love their neighbors and go out of their way to help those interested in the Bible to attend their meetings. They know that at these meetings these interested individuals can learn much more about Jehovah God's requirements for life. An example of this demonstration of love comes from Truk, in the Pacific. A Witness missionary there wrote the following:

"Our meeting attendance has doubled this past month. Many interested persons with whom we study the Bible felt that they could not attend our meetings because of not having transportation. We overcame the problem in this way. We began walking to the meetings ourselves instead of riding. Our

meeting place is about two miles from the missionary home. Between these two places we conduct several home Bible studies with interested persons.

"It takes about forty minutes to walk from our home to the meeting, so as we walk we invite these interested persons to walk along with us to the meeting. This has proved to be very effective. The very first week we walked, two persons joined us, the next week four, the third week eight and this past week our group has grown to ten persons. Nearly all of these persons are new ones who have never attended the meetings before. When they see faces they know going with us it encourages them to come along."

WHAT DO YOU WANT OUT OF LIFE?



AS A teen-ager, how are you responding to that question? Knowingly or unknowingly, you are answering the question, What do you want out of life? You are answering it by what you are doing, by your actions. You cannot escape it, your actions today are going to affect your life tomorrow. Whatever you sow today you will unquestionably reap in the future. 'You will eat from the fruitage of your way.'—Prov. 1:31; Gal. 6:7.

Although your teen-age years constitute a relatively short space of time in comparison with the normal life-span, what you are doing during these formative years will have a profound effect on what you will receive out of life. In this sense you are comparable to a young tree, which, if it does not grow erect in its youthful years, will be crooked the rest of its life. So, in what direction are you headed? What kind of a foundation are you laying for future life? Just what do your actions indicate you want out of life?

IN SEARCH OF THE "HAPPY LIFE"

In view of the things many youths are doing these days it would appear they are

not sure there is going to be a future for which to live. The attitude they have apparently adopted is, 'Let's live it up today, for there may not be a tomorrow.' And, for many young folks there proves to be no tomorrow. They unwittingly decide that for themselves, often-times just by one regrettable act. It may be by taking just one "trip out of this world" with LSD. For some it has been the "trip of no return."

Others, in search of the "happy life," try smoking "pot" or marijuana. But to what can this form of "entertainment" lead? One twenty-year-old Vancouver college student discovered that the Canadian government takes a different view of the "weed" than its users. Before he knew it, he was 'lying in the dirt in jail, near hysteria, considering what he would tell his parents.' Although this young man was given a two-year suspended sentence, he was reminded by the magistrate that marijuana offenses are punishable in Canada by a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. Is that what you want out of life?

News reports tell of another new "kick" for that "high feeling," inhaling spray

deodorant vapors. Does it sound inoffensive to you? Or could such a practice adversely affect your future? Recently it seriously affected the future of a fifteen-year-old boy, for he died of suffocation. Glue sniffing can be just as harmful. Commenting on the concern of federal government officials over the increased interest in this "potentially deadly game," the Montreal *Gazette* reported: "The concern arises from the fact that glue-sniffing is far more dangerous to the human body than such drugs as marijuana, and can lead directly to liver and kidney damage, anemia, brain damage, and even death."

While such practices are often death-dealing in themselves, what they often lead to can also result in other severe consequences. For instance, the use of LSD, marijuana and solvents for "kicks" often leads to drug addiction. And what do drug addicts want in life? More drugs. And what is their life like as a result? Said one female addict: "We are all animals in a world no one knows. We'll step on one another for a shot if there's no dope. I'm no different from any of the others. I'll beat somebody for their money just as fast as look at them. That's why I say we're animals." If you do not want to become one of those "animals," then you will not want to seek your excitement via the drug or glue-sniffing route. You, too, could become "hooked."

The glue sniffers, the "pot" smokers, the drug addicts, the drunkards, those seeking first the gratifying of the flesh, are not the truly happy, satisfied ones. By their unprincipled actions they are merely compounding their difficulties. And many of you teen-agers know that. Thus one teen-age girl, bent on the pursuit of pleasure, calmly viewed suicide as the way out if things got too complicated.

That many young people are looking to suicide as the way out is evident from the

report that it is now the second cause of death among the fifteen- to twenty-four-year-olds in America. But since when do people commit suicide because of having such a good time? Obviously their pursuit of the "happy life" has been misdirected. They have been disillusioned. This raises the question: In what way can you satisfy your desire for fun without jeopardizing your prospects for a happy future?

SENSIBLY SATISFYING DESIRE FOR "GOOD TIMES"

Many young folks are of the opinion that they must isolate themselves from older folks, such as parents, if they are going to have a good time. But others, instead of disdainfully considering parents and older friends as "old fogies" or "killjoys," have come to appreciate that older folks can contribute much to their enjoyment. And in this day, when many children and parents are practically strangers to one another, there is the advantage of drawing family members closer together. No doubt your parents would be very happy to have you suggest doing something together for diversion. But, what to do?

It is always exciting to go places, is it not? Are you acquainted with the tourist attractions in your area? Other persons travel many miles to see them. Have you ever been to a publishing house, an auction, or passed a few hours as a spectator in court? Or, more appealing to you may be hiking in the woods or fields, climbing a mountain trail or camping under the stars. Hobbies such as photography or studying the habits of wildlife can add to your joy on such excursions.

A game of baseball can be very enjoyable too, can it not? If Dad has had all he can physically take after an inning or two, at least he can serve as umpire. In some parts of the world families and friends get together for an outing and

make a soccer game the big attraction, while others like to swim. Where the winters are cold, there are such exciting sports as skiing, ice skating and tobogganing to be enjoyed.

Where the entertainment is wholesome and upbuilding, a pleasant time is also in the offing when friends come together for a social evening. On such occasions young and old may enjoy a good old-fashioned square dance. Others perhaps are able to entertain with song or music, or all can join in singing familiar tunes. Some may engage in a game of darts or table tennis. On occasion, slides or movies may be shown. At such gatherings cultivate the habit of being a good conversationalist. Take an interest in meeting new people. You will find that people are interesting.

Of course, to satisfy your desire for entertainment you do not always have to be with others. Some youths enjoy having a skill or hobby. It may be rock collecting, leather tooling, woodworking, sculpturing, painting, sewing, cooking, or another of any number of practical hobbies. Or, you can be an armchair traveler through the medium of good books.

It is necessary to view "good times" in the right perspective. While your Creator is "the happy God" and wants you to be happy too, he did not purpose that recreation occupy first place in your life. Those youngsters who love God and who are not making the pursuit of pleasure the thing of first importance in life do not lead a life of boredom because of being unoccupied. They have plenty to do in works that are worth while, finding satisfaction therein, but for a change of pace they enjoy entertainment and recreation.

—1 Tim. 1:11; Matt. 6:33.

FOLLY OF PURSUING MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

Is there not a tendency among many youths to have an unrestrained desire for

material things such as fine clothes, a stereo set or even a car? But you might ask: "What is wrong with having nice clothes, a stereo set or even a car?" As in the case of pleasure, there is nothing wrong with such things in themselves. They may be very useful and practical. But what is wrong is the attitude many have toward them. They magnify their importance all out of proportion, making their possession the objective in living. But just consider what this unrestrained love of material things can lead to, how it may well affect your future.

For one thing, it leads to lawlessness. Think of the vast number of vices that exist because of the lust for money. That the determination to be rich often leads to lawless practices is borne out by the statement by Sergeant D. Bellamy, head of the Vancouver city police youth squad, who said: "Commercialism is one of the squad's greatest enemies because unless a boy has spending power, he sometimes cannot mix with his group and this often leads him to supplement his income by illegal means." The Bible proverb makes the same point, saying: "He that is hastening to gain riches will not remain innocent."—Prov. 28:20.

Besides breeding lawlessness, the desire to be rich also breeds discontent. Why is it that the more people have, the more ambitious they are to have more? Could it be that material possessions do not really satisfy? Obviously, that is the answer, for the inspired record says: "A mere lover of silver will not be satisfied with silver, neither any lover of wealth with income." (Eccl. 5:10) Since the list of material things available to those with money is virtually without end, those making material possessions a goal in themselves do not have an objective that is attainable. As a result they are left frustrated, as if on a merry-go-round that never stops.

Those having their mind set on the accumulation of riches are building on a foundation that is crumbling because they are supposing that money will always have value. Yet, devaluation is the order of the day, and in the near future at the war of Armageddon what Ezekiel 7:19 says will come true: "Into the streets they will throw their very silver, and an abhorrent thing their own gold will become." So, if you do not want to lead a life of disillusionment and frustration, beware of sacrificing it on the altar of materialism.

EFFECT OF ASSOCIATIONS ON YOUR FUTURE

In considering what you want out of life you must give serious consideration to the company you keep. That is because your associates affect not only what you are doing now but also your prospects for the future. Whether you will "become wise" or will "fare badly" depends on your choice of companions. The inspired proverb makes this point when it says: "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly." (Prov. 13:20) The need to be very selective in choosing companions, then, is obvious, is it not? Yet, many young persons are unsuccessful in making a wise choice. Why?

Is it not because of their desire to be "in" with the crowd, to be accepted? However, if you do not choose your companions wisely, your desire to be accepted can have serious implications. Why? Because of the pressure to conform and the tendency to imitate. It is unnatural to want to be different. Oh, it is true that many young persons make the claim of being individualists. Yet, by conforming to the group in hairstyle, dress, speech and actions, do they not show themselves to be conformists to the group that they have chosen?

To illustrate how your desire to be accepted by the group can seriously affect your future, let us suppose that a teen-age girl is anxious to be accepted by other girls who are popular among the boys. She finds herself at a party where, because of not wanting to be "chicken," she smokes "pot." Since, after smoking marijuana, she 'feels she loves everybody,' she also commits fornication. What could be the result? Pregnancy, venereal disease, remorse, loss of self-respect, and more—in short, her prospects for a happy future jeopardized because she wanted to be accepted by the crowd.

So, on this matter of associations, "do not be misled." Just as good fruit becomes spoiled when in contact with bad, so "bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) You are revealing what you want out of life by your choice of companions. The best way to avoid bad associations is to cultivate good ones, not those who are living for the pleasure of the moment or merely for the acquisition of material possessions, but those who are living with their future in mind and who will help you do the same.

PRACTICAL PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE

You are growing up in a world where much emphasis is being placed on education. While millions of youths are not privileged to receive even a basic education due to poverty or inadequate educational facilities, others show contempt for school by playing hooky or attend only because they have to. Do you manifest such indifference toward your schooling? Or do you manifest the recognition that the education and skills you acquire now will have a great bearing on what you will get out of life?

Schooling involves more than book learning. It also involves the developing of abilities, habits and attitudes. Through

this development a foundation is being laid on which you will build throughout the rest of your life. Therefore, in connection with your schooling, look beyond the present.

Habits you acquire now during your formative years will in later years be automatic, to your benefit or to your detriment, depending on whether the habit is good or bad. For example, if you learn to exercise your brain now by applying yourself to your studies, thinking and reasoning powers will be developed that you will use every day of your life.

Your preparation for the future involves more than just your schooling. At home, too, you should be developing qualities or traits that will later identify you as a mature adult. Cultivate such qualities as orderliness, cooperativeness, submissiveness, humility, dependability, initiative and thoroughness. The possession of such will have a profound effect on your relations with others and on privileges received.

ACTING WISELY ON THE BASIS OF THE 'HIGHEST EDUCATION'

As important as your secular education may be, there is another education that is indispensable if you are going to be truly successful in life. You need to be educated in the Bible, the Word of God. Concerning this 'highest education' American educator William Lyon Phelps wrote:

"Everyone who has a thorough knowledge of the Bible may truly be called educated; and no other learning or culture, no matter how extensive or elegant, can . . . form a proper substitute. . . . I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible."

Did you know that part of the Bible was written specifically for the benefit of young people? The book of Proverbs, for example, was written "to give to the in-

experienced ones shrewdness, to a young man knowledge and thinking ability." (Prov. 1:4) Among other things, the Bible will show you the advantage that true godly wisdom has over money. (Prov. 3:13-18; Eccl. 7:12) And its counsel will safeguard you against the way of regret and heartache.—Proverbs, chapters 1, 5, 7.

With your future in view, God's Word wisely admonishes: "Remember, now, your grand Creator in the days of your young manhood." (Eccl. 12:1) Hundreds of thousands of youths, the world over, appreciating their indebtedness to their Creator, are remembering him by serving as witnesses to God and his kingdom. Hundreds of them are involved in the printing of this magazine and the many other publications of the Watch Tower Society. You may see them at work in the Society's printing plants in such cities as London, New York, Helsinki, Toronto and Wiesbaden.

Such Christian youths know what they want out of life. Enlightened by Bible prophecies, they know that current world events mean that this present system of things with its hypocritical false religion, greedy commercialism and corrupt politics shortly now will be destroyed. So they wisely are building with a view to life in God's righteous new order. They know that an eternity of tomorrows comes from remembering their Creator today, and, with a hope based on the promises of God, who cannot lie, they want to live a purposeful, happy life without end right here on this beautiful earth. Do you, too, want to embrace such a solid hope? Then respond to these words found in the Bible: "Choose life in order that you may keep alive . . . by loving Jehovah your God, by listening to his voice and by sticking to him; for he is your life and the length of your days."—Deut. 30:19, 20.

Do you MAKE YOURSELF AVAILABLE?

"EVERY one willing of heart" began bringing his sacrifice and gift to the place of Jehovah's worship. That was in the days of good King Hezekiah of Judah. So spontaneous was the movement of the people to render themselves and their possessions, there was reason for them all to rejoice in a God who could evoke such dedication and generosity! (2 Chron. 29:31-36) They had much for which to be thankful.

The very same God presides over his congregation of worshipers on earth today. He has separated them to himself and protected them. He has granted them honorable service as his representatives on earth. He has provided a continuing supply of spiritual sustenance. No good thing has he withheld. Surely, they too have reason to be thankful and rejoice, offering themselves and their possessions, making themselves available for his service!

How do you view these matters? Do you have a clear vision of God's worldwide congregation? Can you see the grand work of public proclamation that he is having done on earth? Have you seen the evidences of his blessing upon those who diligently offer themselves in that public ministry? If Yes is your answer to those questions, then what has been your reaction? Are you content to think of God's congregation as the best religion you have seen, or are you moved to offer yourself, heart and soul, for its activities and its way of life?

YOUTH AND AMBITION

Youth, young manhood or womanhood, is the time of life to get started in making yourself available for God's service. That is when many young people begin to make plans for the future, when ambitions are formed. Are you in that stage of physical vigor? Then what are you doing? Are you sharing with worldly persons dreams of a future that will not be? Or do you keep ever in mind that this present wicked system of things is doomed to pass away in a time of great trouble? All its rich promises, its attractive well-paying jobs, its popular activities—all are due to vanish from the earthly scene very soon now.

"Remember, now, your grand Creator in the days of your young manhood," is the inspired advice to which you do well to pay attention. (Eccl. 12:1) That does not mean thinking about him as a last resort, or when there is no other thing to do. No, it means having the Creator and his will in mind with regard to all one's thoughts and plans. If you are going to have a future, it is inseparably linked to God's purposes and his congregation.

The "god of this system of things," Satan the Devil, will do all in his power to divert you from a course of devotion to God. (2 Cor. 4:4) He will entice you through "the desires incidental to youth," through worldly ambitions, preoccupation

with sex, inducements to spend entirely too much time on music or the theater or to fill the mind with concern about sports. He is master of the art of occupying people's minds and commandeering the lion's share of their time. Will you be one of those caught in his snare?—2 Tim. 2:22, 26; 1 Pet. 5:8.

Basically, there are only two choices open to you: To serve God or to serve this wicked system of things run by God's enemy. To entertain ambitions tied in with Satan's doomed system is in reality a waste of time and it can even place your own future in jeopardy. Far wiser it is to choose life by making yourself available for God's service.

SO MANY OPPORTUNITIES!

The congregation of God's people on earth is interested in the training of ministers—the kind of ministers who can go from house to house effectively preaching the good news of the Kingdom. Are you making yourself available for such training? All true Christians, young and old, male and female, will want to qualify as able 'ministers of the good news.'—Col. 1:23.

Certainly you would not be making yourself available by taking a negative view and saying: "Oh, I could never do that kind of work!" God can and does fully qualify those who want to be his ministers. (2 Cor. 3:5) So the vital question is, Do you want to be one of his ministers, and will you make yourself available by undertaking the training provided in every congregation of true Christians?

There are so many other opportunities to serve God and his congregation, in addition to being trained for and actually doing ministerial service! At times there

is a call for someone to volunteer his service in connection with a student talk from the platform or to share in demonstrating how certain features of the ministry might be done. Do you offer your services? Do you make yourself available?

Other privileges are available too. For example, you have often noted how clean and tidy the meeting place is, have you not? Had you thought of offering your services? Almost anyone could dust, sweep the floor, tidy up washrooms, and so on. Why not make yourself available in this regard?

Also, maintenance work has to be done from time to time so that the structure of the meeting place may not get run down. Do you know anything about such work? Can you offer suggestions and help so as to get these jobs done? Perhaps the men of responsibility in the congregation are unaware that you are available. Have you told them? It would be appropriate to let them know you are willing to share to the extent that you are able.

There are also many services that need to be performed at larger assemblies of Jehovah's people. There is need for attendants, for those who will volunteer to man the cafeteria, for a cleaning crew, and many other activities. Have you made yourself available in any of these respects? Your personal participation will have a wonderful effect in drawing you closer to your spiritual brothers and sisters. At the same time you will have served to make things more comfortable and convenient for all.

Also, have you noticed certain responsible men in the congregation who are very busy because of their duties in behalf of the congregation? They may handle magazines and other Bible literature, assisting the members of the congregation in

a variety of ways. Has it occurred to you that they might accomplish much more if they had assistance? If you are a male, you could tell the overseer that you would be willing to help whenever you are needed.

WILLING ONES BLESSED

There are many joys and satisfactions to be gained by making yourself available for every good work in connection with the Lord. When your mind and your hands are busied about services that promote the interests of God's kingdom, they are not available for foolish or even evil activities. Everything you do in behalf of the association of your spiritual brothers and sisters is a demonstration of the genuine love that Jesus declared would be the outstanding mark of his disciples. (John 13:35) You experience the superior happiness that derives from seeing others around you happy and contentedly busy in Jehovah's service because of your ready cooperation. (Acts 20:35) There is great joy, too, in seeing those whom you have helped to grow strong in faith, now being able to extend their help to still younger ones in the congregation.

Then, too, there is the realization that your willingness in service is patterned according to that perfect example, Christ Jesus himself. Did not he make himself available for the service of his heavenly Father, denying himself comforts and, at times, even rest in order to do so? (John 4:5-34; Mark 6:31-34) It was sufficient for him that he was doing the Father's will. You too can have that satisfaction.

How wonderful, also, to feel that closer fellowship with the apostles of Christ Jesus, Peter, Paul and others, all of whom forsook the ambitions and interests of this old system of things and found their joy in identifying themselves with God's Son! How zealously they labored under all kinds of trying circumstances, making themselves available as supports for the weak and as comforters of those in tribulation! You can experience a oneness with them as you make yourself available in God's congregation.

And the grandest reward of all—"God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering."—Heb. 6:10.

Good Listeners, Joyfully Enduring

How can one improve one's listening habits?

To improve one's listening habits one must heed the apostolic injunction to "pay more than the usual attention to the things heard." (Heb. 2:1) Jehovah, by his prophet Isaiah, gives similar counsel: "Listen *intently* to me, and eat what is good, and let your soul find its exquisite delight in fatness itself." (Isa. 55:2)* To improve one's listening habits one must take an interest in what a speaker has to say.

At times the mind may tend to wander because the delivery leaves something to be desired, as some felt about the apostle Paul's

talks. (2 Cor. 10:10) Especially here one can improve one's listening habits by concentrating on the arguments, the reasoning, the principles and the facts being presented. We can also improve our listening ability by taking notes on the principles and facts mentioned in the talk.

What benefits come to those who are good listeners?

By being good listeners when the Bible is being discussed, whether in private or at public gatherings, we will greatly expand our personal knowledge of God's Word. We will take in

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

fresh, stimulating viewpoints and arguments that will strengthen our faith and deepen our appreciation of Scriptural truth. Listening attentively to good counsel helps one to maintain good conduct and a healthy mental attitude, becoming wise, even as we read: "Listen to counsel and accept discipline, in order that you may become wise in your future." (Prov. 19:20) A good listener benefits even from talks on subjects difficult to understand, because he will make a greater effort to catch the principles and to reason on the supporting arguments. All this helps him to advance to maturity, and so be able to digest the spiritually deep things of God's Word.

Being a good listener gives one the knowledge that enables one to give a witness with earnestness and conviction to the people to whom one preaches. Moreover, by being good listeners, by applying what we learn and teaching it to others we will save ourselves and those who listen to us.—1 Tim. 4:16.

Who set for us fine examples of joyfully enduring although meeting up with much opposition and indifference?

Moses endured in spite of the indifference of his own people to what he told them. (Ex. 6:12) Elijah faithfully endured much indifference and opposition on the part of the nation of Israel. (1 Ki. 19:4, 15-19) Jeremiah endured much indifference and opposition, and that over a long period of time. (Jer. 20:7-9; 25:3-7) Jesus Christ likewise endured much when on earth. Neither his own people in Galilee nor the religious leaders in Jerusalem, with but few exceptions, listened to him. Yet, for the joy set before him, he endured. (Luke 10:13-15; 13:34;

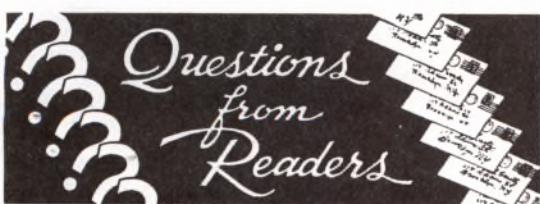
Heb. 12:1-3) A follower of Jesus who gave an outstanding example of enduring opposition and indifference was the apostle Paul. (2 Cor. 6:4; 2 Tim. 4:6-8) It was not the hardship or indifference that brought them joy, but the knowledge that they were doing the will of God and had his approval.

How can we endure joyfully in spite of indifference?

One of the ways is by strengthening ourselves by considering the fine examples of joyful endurance of indifference as mentioned above. Important also to our enduring is our being conscious of our spiritual need. (Matt. 5:3) We must keep strong our appreciation of Jehovah God and his life-giving truths. This requires not only that we regularly feed on the spiritual food that Jehovah provides in his Word and by his "faithful and discreet slave," but also that we keep meditating on what Jehovah has done for us, is now doing for us and will yet do for us in the near future. This includes calling to mind the great undeserved kindness He showed us by providing His Son as our ransom sacrifice; the blessings of prayer and of association with God's people, also the joys of the Christian ministry that we enjoy at the present time; and also the blessings awaiting us in God's new system of things.

—Matt. 24:45-47.

When the complete end of this wicked system of things comes, we will be able to feel satisfaction and happiness for having completed the work God gave us to do. Until then may we recommend ourselves as God's ministers by joyfully enduring indifference.



- How, by doing kindness to a person who hates one, does one 'take coals together on such a person's head,' as stated at Proverbs 25:21, 22?—U.S.A.

Proverbs 25:21, 22 reads: "If the one hating you is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink. For

coals ['red-hot coals,' *The Jerusalem Bible*] are what you are raking together upon his head, and Jehovah himself will reward you."

This counsel to do good to our enemies finds many parallels in the Scriptures. Thus the law of Moses required the following: "Should you come upon your enemy's bull or his ass going astray, you are to return it without fail to him. Should you see the ass of someone who hates you lying down under its load, then you must refrain from leaving him. With him you are without fail to get it loose."—Ex. 23:4, 5.

Jesus Christ admonishes us to the same effect: "Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may

prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens." In a similar vein the apostle Paul wrote: "Keep on blessing those who persecute; be blessing and do not be cursing."—Matt. 5:44, 45; Rom. 12:14.

But do not the words of Proverbs 25:22, "coals are what you are raking together upon his head," seem to contradict the spirit of kindness evinced in verse 21? No, we may not so conclude, for not only were these words written by a wise man but he wrote them under the power of divine inspiration, with the help and direction of Jehovah's holy spirit. So they must make sense.

It is quite likely that the metaphor or figurative expression here used is drawn from the method of smelting metals in ancient times. In the furnace not only was there a bed of hot coals upon which the ore was placed, but also on top of the ore was placed a bank of red-hot coals. The heaping of coals on top of the ore helped to soften it and thus to separate the metal from the dross. So, by doing kind deeds to an enemy in need, when he would be most likely to appreciate it, one can hope to soften

the enemy, make him feel remorse and shame, and may even bring out the good that is in him.

That this heaping of coals of fire upon the head of an enemy is not intended to produce an evil effect but a beneficial one is apparent from what the apostle Paul says right after quoting this very proverb. His next words are: "Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good."—Rom. 12:20, 21.

But suppose these figurative coals of fire do not soften the heart of the enemy, then what? Then there is the comfort and satisfaction of the concluding words of Proverbs 25:22: "And Jehovah himself will reward you." This promise in itself shows that the "red-hot coals" are not intended to harm the enemy nor do they indicate that one would gloat over the enemy's discomfort. If we do what is noble and right, then whether others appreciate it or not, and whether we personally benefit from it or not, directly or immediately, we can be certain that Jehovah God takes note of it and will reward us in his due time. And is not He the One we are serving and trying to please?



ANNOUNCEMENTS



FIELD MINISTRY

Being a good listener is essential to our being well informed. If we do not listen intently we often do not get the sense of what has been said. Have you not found this to be true from your own experience? In matters pertaining to pure worship we certainly want to be listening intently, as when God's Word is discussed. (Isa. 55:2) Being well informed can save your life, so there is every reason to listen to God's Word and learn of the life-preserving provisions that he has made for obedient mankind. During the month of February, Jehovah's witnesses will encourage those whom they meet in their house-to-house ministry to listen carefully to what God has to say. To that end they will offer a year's subscription for this Bible magazine, *The Watchtower*, along with three booklets, for \$1.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

February 22: Loyal Advocates of the Word of God, and Manifesting Loyalty Toward Jehovah and His Word, ¶1-6. Page 73. Songs to Be Used: 10, 69.

March 1: Manifesting Loyalty Toward Jehovah and His Word, ¶7-35. Page 80. Songs to Be Used: 108, 69.