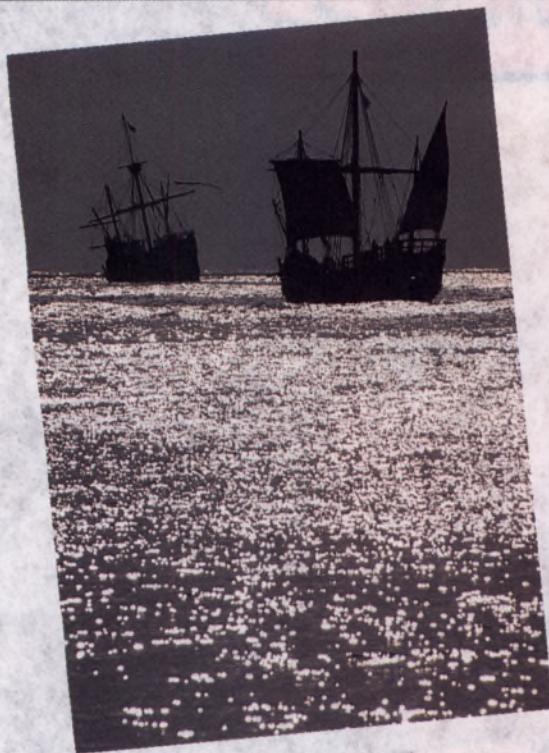


Awake!

March 8, 1992



**“The New World”
500 Years Old**



"The New World" 500 Years Old

3-13

Five hundred years ago, three small ships dropped anchor in the Bahamas. Columbus' epic voyage of discovery had reached its goal, and the world—for better or for worse—would never be the same. What inspired Columbus to sail into the unknown? What were the consequences of the dramatic clash between two cultures?



Big Business Tightens Its Grip 21

Since 1914, big business, driven by the profit motive, has been a party to war, pollution, and exploitation. It has also molded personalities, perhaps yours.



Is God a Mystery? 26

Christendom has taught the mystery of the Trinity for centuries. The impression is that only theologians can really understand God. Is that true?

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Cover: Christopher Columbus, courtesy of the Museo Naval, Madrid, Spain

The Quest for Spices, Gold, Converts, and Glory

TIERRA! Tierra!" (Land! Land!) This jubilant cry shattered the silence of the night watch on October 12, 1492. A sailor on the *Pinta* had sighted the faint silhouette of an island. The interminable voyage had finally been crowned with success for the ships *Santa María*, *Pinta*, and *Niña*.

At first light, Columbus, his two captains, and other officials waded ashore. They gave thanks to God and took possession of the island in the name of Spain's monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella.

Columbus' dream had been realized. He now looked forward to discovering gold (the gold nose-rings of the natives did not pass unnoticed) and returning to Spain in triumph. The western route to India was his, he thought, and the frustration of the past eight years could be forgotten.

The Dream Takes Shape

At the close of the 15th century, two commodities were in great demand in Europe: gold and spices. Gold was needed to buy luxury goods from the Orient, and spices from the East made monotonous meals palatable during the long winter months. European traders wanted direct access to lands where such merchandise could be obtained.

The Portuguese merchants and navigators were busy establishing a monopoly on trade with Africa, and they eventually found a

route to the East via Africa and the Cape of Good Hope. Meanwhile, the thoughts of the Italian navigator Columbus turned west. He believed that the shortest route to India and its coveted spices was across the Atlantic.

For eight weary years, Columbus shuttled from one royal court to another before finally obtaining the backing of Spain's king and queen. In the end his unwavering conviction won out over doubting sovereigns and reluctant sailors. The doubters had their reasons. Columbus' project was not without its flaws, and he audaciously insisted that he be appointed "Grand Admiral of the Ocean" and perpetual governor of all lands he might discover.

But the main objections centered on his calculations. By this time most scholars did not dispute that the earth was round. The question was, What stretch of ocean separated Europe and Asia? Columbus reckoned that Cipango, or Japan—which he had read about in the account of Marco Polo's journey to China—lay some 5,000 miles west of Lisbon, Portugal. He thus placed Japan in what is now the Caribbean.*

Largely because of Columbus' overly optimistic estimate of the distance separating Europe and the Far East, royal commissions in

* This error was the result of two serious miscalculations. He believed that the Asian landmass stretched much farther east than it does. And he also unwittingly reduced the circumference of the earth by 25 percent.

both Spain and Portugal dismissed his venture as ill-advised. The possibility that there might be a large continent between Europe and Asia apparently occurred to no one.

But Columbus, supported by friends in the Spanish court, persisted, and events worked out in his favor. Queen Isabella of Castile, a fervent Catholic, was enticed by the possibility of converting the East to the Catholic faith. When Granada fell to the Catholic sovereigns in the spring of 1492, Catholicism became the religion of all Spain. The time seemed ripe to risk some money on a venture that might pay large dividends, both religiously and economically. Columbus got the royal consent and the cash that he needed.

The Voyage Into the Unknown

A small fleet of three ships was quickly fitted out, and with a total complement of some 90 men, Columbus left Spain on August 3, 1492.* After restocking in the Canary Islands, on September 6 the ships headed westward en route to "India."

The voyage was a trialsome one for Columbus. Hopes were raised and then dashed by winds fair and foul. Despite promising sightings of seabirds, the western horizon remained stubbornly empty. Columbus constantly had to stiffen the resolve of his sailors with promises of land and riches. When they were, according to Columbus' "personal cal-

* It has been calculated that the *Santa María* had a crew of 40, the *Pinta* 26, and the *Niña* 24.

culation," some 2,000 miles out into the Atlantic, he gave the ship's pilot the figure of 1,752 miles. Then he wrote in the ship's log: "I did not reveal this figure [2,121 miles] to the men because they would become frightened, finding themselves so far from home." (*The Log of Christopher Columbus*, translated by Robert H. Fuson) On many occasions it was only his unflagging determination that kept the ships from turning back.

As the days dragged by, the sailors became more and more restless. "My decision has not pleased the men, for they continue to murmur and complain," wrote Columbus. "Despite their grumblings I held fast to the west." By October 10, after more than a month at sea, complaints were increasing on all three ships. The sailors were only appeased by Columbus' promise to return the way they had come if land was not reached within three days. The following day, however, when they hauled aboard a green branch with flowers still on it, faith in their admiral returned. And when dawn broke the next day (October 12), the sea-weary mariners feasted their eyes on a lush tropical island. Their epoch-making voyage had reached its goal!

Discovery and Disappointment

The Bahamas were idyllic. The naked natives, wrote Columbus, were "well-built people, with handsome bodies and very fine faces." But after two weeks of savoring the tropical fruits and exchanging goods with the



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friendly inhabitants, Columbus moved on. He was searching for gold, mainland Asia, converts, and spices.

A few days later, Columbus reached Cuba. "I have never seen anything so beautiful," he remarked when he disembarked on the island. Earlier he had written in his log: "I am now certain that Cuba is the Indian name for Cipango [Japan]." Thus, he dispatched two representatives to contact the khan (the ruler). The two Spaniards found neither gold nor Japanese, although they did bring back reports of a peculiar habit among the natives, that of smoking tobacco. Columbus was undeterred. "Beyond doubt there is a very great amount of gold in this country," he reassured himself.

The odyssey continued, this time toward the east. He discovered a large mountainous island near Cuba that he named *La Isla Española* (Hispaniola). And at last the Spaniards found a fair quantity of gold. But a few days later, disaster struck. His flagship *Santa María* went aground on a sandbank and could not be refloated. The natives willingly helped the crew to salvage everything possible. "They love their neighbors as themselves, and they have the softest and gentlest voices in the world and are always smiling," said Columbus.

Columbus decided to establish a small settlement on Hispaniola. Earlier, he had ominously observed in his log: "These people are very unskilled in arms. . . . With 50 men you

could subject everyone and make them do what you wished." He also envisioned a religious colonization: "I have great hope in Our Lord that Your Highnesses will convert all of them to Christianity and they will all belong to you." Once the settlement was organized in a place he called *La Villa de la Navidad* (The Town of the Nativity), Columbus decided that he and the rest of his men should make haste to Spain with news of their great discovery.

Paradise Lost

The Spanish court was euphoric when the news of Columbus' discovery finally reached them. He was showered with honors and urged to organize a second expedition as soon as possible. Meanwhile, Spanish diplomats moved quickly to secure from the Spanish pope, Alexander VI, the right to colonize all lands Columbus had discovered.

The second expedition, in 1493, was an ambitious one. An armada of 17 ships carried over 1,200 colonists, including priests, farmers, and soldiers—but no women. The intention was to colonize the new lands, convert the natives to Catholicism, and, of course, any gold or spices that might be discovered would be more than welcome. Columbus also intended to continue his search for the sea passage to India.

Although more islands were discovered, including Puerto Rico and Jamaica, frustration mounted. *La Navidad*, the original colony in

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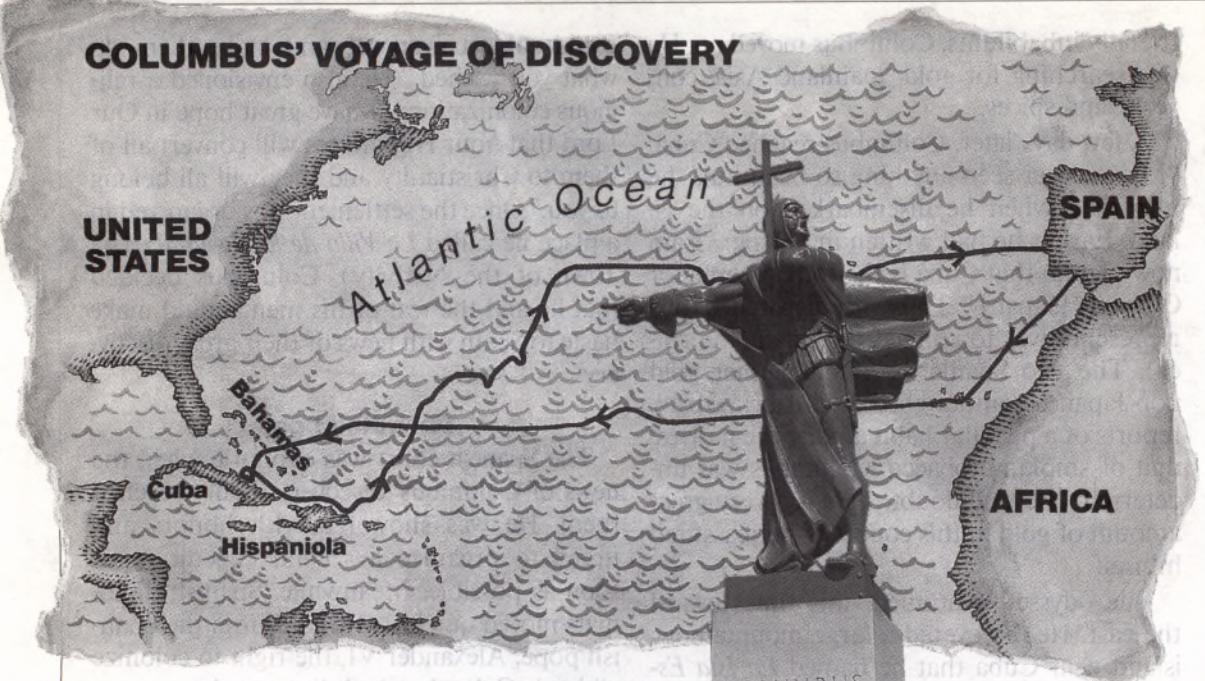
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COLUMBUS' VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY



Hispaniola, had been decimated by bitter feuding among the Spaniards themselves, and then it was almost wiped out by the islanders, incensed at the greed and immorality of the colonizers. Columbus chose a better site for a large, new colony and then continued his search for the route to India.

After failing to circumnavigate Cuba, he decided it must be mainland Asia—perhaps Malaya. As stated in *The Conquest of Paradise*, Columbus “decided that the entire crew should declare under oath that the coast they had been sailing along . . . was *not* that of an island at all but in fact ‘the mainland of the commencement of the Indies.’” Upon returning to Hispaniola, Columbus found that the new colonists had behaved little better than the previous ones, having raped the women and enslaved the boys. Columbus himself compounded the animosity of the natives by rounding up 1,500 of them, of which 500 were shipped to Spain as slaves; they all died within a few years.

COLUMBUS

Two more voyages to the West Indies did little to improve Columbus’ fortunes. Gold, spices, and the passage to India all eluded him. However, the Catholic Church did get its converts, one way or the other. Columbus’ administrative abilities were well below his gifts as a navigator, and failing health made him autocratic and even ruthless to those who displeased him. The Spanish sovereigns were obliged to replace him with a more capable governor. He had conquered the oceans but floundered when he went ashore.

Soon after completing his fourth voyage, he died at the age of 54, a wealthy but bitter man, still insisting that he had discovered the sea route to Asia. It would be left to posterity to confer upon him the lasting glory that he had so dearly yearned for all his life.

But the routes he charted had paved the way for the discovery and colonization of the entire North American continent. The world had changed dramatically. Would it be for the better?

A Clash of Cultures

OME five hundred years ago, in a small town in the heartland of Castile, Spanish diplomats wrangled with their Portuguese counterparts. By June 7, 1494, their differences were ironed out, and a formal treaty was signed—the Treaty of Tordesillas. Today, hundreds of millions in the Western Hemisphere speak Spanish or Portuguese as a result of that agreement.

The treaty reaffirmed papal bulls of the previous year dividing the unexplored world between the two Iberian nations. A north-south line was drawn “370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands.” Spain could colonize and evangelize the lands discovered to the west of that line (North and South America, with the exception of Brazil) and Portugal all land to the east (Brazil, Africa, and Asia).

Armed with the papal blessing, Spain and Portugal—with other European nations close on their heels—set out to rule the waves and thence the world. Fifty years after the treaty was signed, sea-lanes across the oceans had been established, the major continents bridged, and far-flung colonial empires had begun to emerge.—See box, page 8.

The repercussions of this explosion of discovery were vast. Commercial and agricultural systems were revolutionized, and the racial and religious divisions of the world were also transformed. It was gold, however, that set events in motion.



Copy of the Treaty of Tordesillas.
Courtesy of Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Spain

The Winds of Trade

Columbus was right. The gold was there, although he personally found very little. Before long, galleons began transporting to Spain enormous quantities of plundered American gold and silver. The wealth, however, was fleeting. The influx of vast amounts of precious metals brought in its wake disastrous inflation, and the surplus of easy money sabotaged Spanish industry.

On the other hand, the bullion from the Americas greased the wheels of a growing international economy. Money was available to buy exotic goods, which ships transported to and from the four corners of the world.

By the close of the 17th century, one could find Peruvian silver in Manila, Chinese silk in Mexico City, African gold in Lisbon, and North American furs in London. Once luxury items had paved the way, staples such as sugar, tea, coffee, and cotton began to flow across the Atlantic and Indian oceans in ever greater quantities. And eating habits began to change.

New Crops and New Cuisines

Swiss chocolate, Irish potatoes, and Italian pizza all owe a debt to Inca and Aztec farmers. Chocolate, potatoes, and tomatoes were just three of the new products to arrive in Europe. Often, the new flavors, fruits, and vegetables took time to catch on, although from the outset Columbus and his men were enthusiastic about pineapples and sweet potatoes.

—See box, page 9.

Some crops from the East, such as cotton and sugarcane, came into their own in the New World, while the South American potato eventually became a major source of nourishment for many European households. This interchange of crops didn't just give more variety to international cuisine; it brought a fundamental improvement in nutrition, which contributed to the enormous growth of the world population in the 19th and 20th centuries. But there was a darker side to the agricultural revolution.

Racism and Repression

The new cash crops, such as cotton, sugar, and tobacco, could make the colonists rich, provided they had sufficient cheap labor to work their estates. And the obvious source of manpower was the native population.

The European colonists generally viewed the natives as nothing more than animals with the gift of speech, a prejudice that was used to justify their virtual enslavement. Although a papal bull of 1537 concluded that the "Indians" were indeed "true men endowed with a soul," this did little to stem the exploitation. As a recent Vatican document points out, "racial discrimination began with the discovery of America."

Harsh treatment, along with the spread of "European diseases," decimated the population. In the space of a hundred years, it declined by as much as 90 percent according to some estimates. In the Caribbean the natives were all but wiped out. When local people could no longer be conscripted, the landowners looked elsewhere for strong, healthy farmhands. The Portuguese, who were well established in Africa, offered a sinister solution: the slave trade.

Once again racial prejudice and greed inflicted a terrible toll of suffering. By the close of the 19th century, convoys of slave ships



Columbus, Forerunner of the Age of Discovery

THE 50 years following Columbus' discovery of America saw the remaking of the map of the world. Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, Dutch, and English sailors, searching for new routes to the East, discovered new oceans and new continents. By 1542 only the continents of Australia and Antarctica remained undiscovered.

South America First Columbus and soon thereafter Ojeda, Vespucci, and Coelho charted the coastline of Central and South America (1498-1501).

North America Cabot discovered Newfoundland in 1497, and Verrazano traced the Eastern seaboard of North America in 1524.

Circumnavigation of the World It was first accomplished by Magellan and Elcano, who also discovered the Philippines after an epic voyage across the vast Pacific Ocean (1519-1522).

The Sea Route to India via the Cape of Good Hope After rounding the southern tip of Africa, Vasco da Gama arrived in India in 1498.

The Far East Portuguese sailors reached Indonesia by 1509, China by 1514, and Japan in 1542.



Arrival of Columbus in the Bahamas, 1492

Plants That Changed the World's Menus

THE discovery of America revolutionized the world's eating habits. There was a rapid interchange of crops between the Old World and the New World, and many plants cultivated by the Incas and the Aztecs are now among the most important food crops of the world.

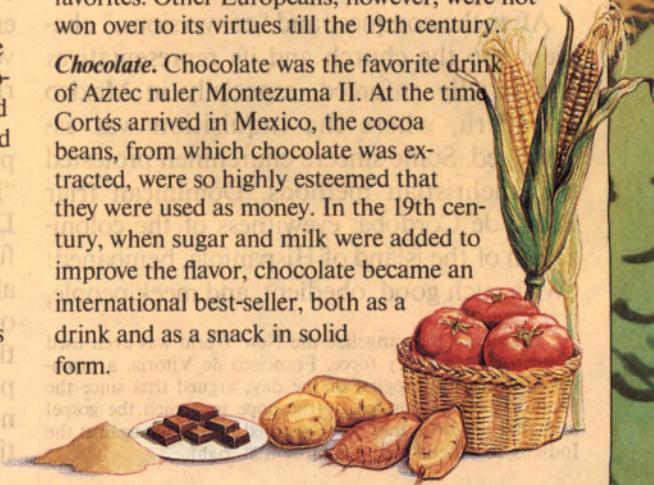
The Potato. When the Spanish arrived in Peru, the potato was the basis of the Inca economy. The potato also thrived in the Northern Hemisphere, and within two centuries it had become the staple food of many European countries. Some historians even attribute to this humble but nutritious tuber the rapid population increase that accompanied the European industrial revolution.

The Sweet Potato. Columbus encountered sweet potatoes on his first voyage. He described them as somewhat like "great carrots" with the "flavor proper to chestnuts." Now, the sweet potato is a staple food of millions of people throughout a large portion of the earth.

Corn, or Maize. So important was the cultivation of corn to the Aztecs that they viewed it as a symbol of life. Now corn is second only to wheat in world acreage planted.

The Tomato. Both Aztecs and Maya cultivated the *xitomatl* (later called *tomatl*). By the 16th century, the tomato was grown in Spain and Italy, where gazpacho, pasta, and pizza became cuisine favorites. Other Europeans, however, were not won over to its virtues till the 19th century.

Chocolate. Chocolate was the favorite drink of Aztec ruler Montezuma II. At the time Cortés arrived in Mexico, the cocoa beans, from which chocolate was extracted, were so highly esteemed that they were used as money. In the 19th century, when sugar and milk were added to improve the flavor, chocolate became an international best-seller, both as a drink and as a snack in solid form.



(mainly British, Dutch, French, and Portuguese) had probably shipped more than 15 million African slaves to the Americas!

With its racial overtones, it is not surprising that the discovery of America by Europeans is deeply resented by many native Americans. A North American Indian stated: "Columbus didn't discover the Indians. We discovered him." Likewise, Mapuche Indians from Chile protest that 'there wasn't a real discovery or an authentic evangelization but rather an invasion of their ancestral territory.' As this observation implies, religion was not blameless.

Religious Colonization

The religious colonization of the New World went hand in hand with the political one.* Once an area was conquered, the native population was obliged to become Catholic. As Catholic priest and historian Humberto Bronx explains: "At first they baptized without oral instruction, practically by force. . . . Pagan temples were converted into Christian churches or hermitages; idols were replaced by crosses." Not surprisingly, such arbitrary "conversion" resulted in a peculiar amalgam of Catholic and traditional worship that has continued down to this day.

After the conquest and "conversions," obedience to the church and its representatives was strictly enforced, especially in Mexico and Peru, where the Inquisition was established. Some sincere churchmen protested the unchristian methods. Dominican friar Pedro de Córdoba, eyewitness of the colonization of the island of Hispaniola, bemoaned: "With such good, obedient, and meek people,

* The desire to evangelize the New World was even used to legitimize military force. Francisco de Vitoria, a prominent Spanish theologian of the day, argued that since the Spanish were authorized by the pope to preach the gospel in the New World, they were justified in warring against the Indians to defend and establish that right.

Mural entitled "Mexico Through the Centuries," original work by Diego Rivera, National Palace, Mexico City, Federal District, Mexico



Mexican victims of the Catholic Inquisition

if only preachers entered among them without the force and violence of these wretched Christians, I think that a church as fine as the primitive one could be founded."

Different but Not So New

Some see the discovery, colonization, and conversion of America as an "encounter between two cultures." Others view it as "exploitation," while a few condemn it outright as "rape." However it may be judged, it was undoubtedly the beginning of a new era, an era of economic growth and technical development, albeit at the expense of human rights.

It was the Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci who in 1505 coined the phrase the "New World" to describe the new continent. Doubtless, many aspects were new, but the fundamental problems of the Old World were also endemic in the New. The futile attempts of so many Spanish conquistadores to find the legendary El Dorado, a place of gold and plenty, reveal that human aspirations were not satisfied with the discovery of a new continent. Will they ever be?

The Real New World Awaiting Discovery

A NAME is an uncertain thing, you can't count on it!" This sober observation has proved to be true in the case of Columbus.

In harmony with the meaning of his first name, Christopher, Columbus did make an attempt to be a "Christbearer" of a kind. After all, the Spanish sovereigns had sent him forth in "the service of God and the expansion of the Catholic faith." But after teaching some uncomprehending natives to make the sign of the cross and to sing the Ave Maria, he concentrated on more tangible rewards: finding gold and the elusive route to India.

Some Catholics have argued that Columbus should, nevertheless, be made a "saint" because of his pivotal role in extending the boundaries of Christendom. But the mass "conversions" that came in the wake of his discoveries did little to take the authentic Jesus Christ to the people of the New World. Genuine Christianity has always been extended by peaceful means, not by the sword. The use of force to spread the gospel is a gross contradiction of what Jesus taught.—Compare Matthew 10:14; 26:52.

Columbus (Spanish, *Colón*) had somewhat more success in emulating his surname, which means "colonizer." It was he who founded the first two European colonies in the New World. Although these came to naught, others were soon established. The colonization of the Americas pressed ahead, but it was by no means a happy one, especially for the colonized.

Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas,

who witnessed the initial colonization of the West Indies, protested to Philip II, king of Spain, about 'the travesty of justice to which these innocent peoples are subjected, destroying them and shattering them without just cause or reason other than the greed and ambition that move those who commit such evil works.'

Although the worst abuses were later corrected, selfish motives and ruthless methods continued to dictate policy. Not surprisingly, such rule became odious. By the 20th century, most countries of the Americas had discarded the colonial yoke.

Converting continents to Christendom and administering a just rule over myriad tribes and tongues is admittedly a formidable task. And it would be unjust to blame Columbus for all the failures of the immense enterprise he unwittingly launched when he crossed the ocean and initiated what some call the "Encounter of Two Worlds."

As Kirkpatrick Sale points out in his book *The Conquest of Paradise*, "an opportunity there certainly was once, a chance for the people of Europe to find a new anchorage in a new country, in what they dimly realized was the land of Paradise." But discovering a new world is one thing; creating a new world is another. It was not the first time attempts to build a new world had failed.

Another Epic Journey

Two thousand years before Columbus set sail, about two hundred thousand people embarked on another epic journey. Rather than crossing an ocean, they possibly traveled

across a desert. They were also heading west, toward their homeland, Israel, which the majority had never seen. Their aim was to establish a new world, for themselves and for their children.

Their trek from Babylonian captivity fulfilled prophecy. Two hundred years earlier, the prophet Isaiah had foretold their repatriation: "Here I [the Sovereign Lord Jehovah] am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart."—Isaiah 65:13, 17.

The 'new heavens and new earth' were graphic symbolic terms referring to a new administration and a new society of people. Such were needed because a real new world requires much more than new territory to colonize; it calls for a new, unselfish spirit among those who govern and those who are governed.

Few of the Jews who returned from Babylon had such a spirit. Despite some initial success, about a hundred years after their return, the Hebrew prophet Malachi sadly described how selfishness and greed had become the dominant forces in the land. (Malachi 2:14, 17; 3:5) A unique opportunity to build a new world for the Jews had been squandered.

A New World Still Awaits Us

Nevertheless, failures to build a new world in the past do not mean that the quest is hopeless. In the book of Revelation, the apostle John, echoing the words of Isaiah, describes the following dramatic scene: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away . . . And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."—Revelation 21:1, 4.

These words assure us that God himself is determined to have a new government over all the earth and a new society of people who will respond to his rule. The benefits will be incalculable. It will be an authentic new world.

A new world of God's making may seem farfetched. But Columbus' conviction that continents lay to the West likewise seemed incredible to many of his contemporaries. The description of God's promised new world may also sound most improbable, yet how many 15th-century scholars could have imagined that a third of the earth's landmass was unknown to science?

The scientific ignorance of Columbus' day made the discovery of the New World seem most unlikely. Ignorance of God's purposes and of his power can likewise demolish confidence in his promised new heaven and new earth. But Almighty God follows up his description thereof by saying: "Look! I am making all things new. . . . Write, because these words are faithful and true."—Revelation 21:5.

Doubtless, all mankind yearns for a new world of some sort. Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes once observed: "Utopia is something of the past and of the future. On the one hand, it is the memory of a better world that once was and is no longer. On the other hand, it is the hope that this better world, more righteous and more peaceful, will come one day." Bible students are confident that a better world—not a fanciful Utopia—will indeed come because God has promised it and because God can accomplish it.—Matthew 19:26.

A New World on the Horizon

When Columbus was trying to convince his crew that they were approaching land, more than faith was needed. He needed some tangible proof. Fresh vegetation floating in the

**Discovering a new world is one thing;
creating a new world is another**



sea, increasing numbers of land birds, and finally a flowering branch drifting on the water restored the sailors' confidence in their admiral.

Today there is also visible evidence that we are approaching a new world. The fact that for the first time in history mankind's survival is endangered reminds us that God's patience with human rule must be rapidly nearing its end. He promised long ago to "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Revelation 11: 18) Greed and selfishness have spawned a host of insoluble global problems, problems

that the Bible vividly described in advance as developments that point to God's imminent intervention.*

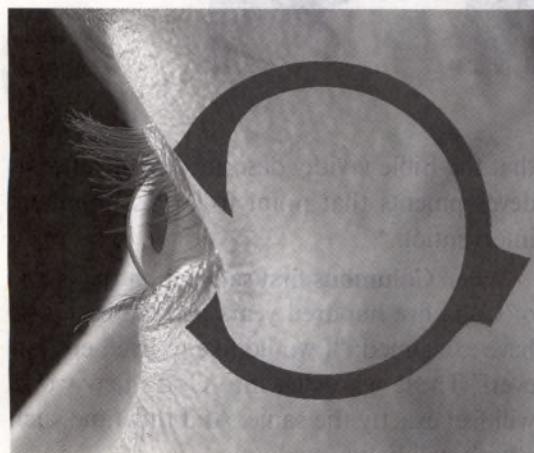
When Columbus first set foot on the island of Cuba five hundred years ago, he is said to have exclaimed: "I would like to live here forever!" Those who step into God's new world will feel exactly the same. And this time such a wish will be granted.

* For an analysis of the Scriptural evidence that God's new world is fast approaching, consult the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, chapter 18, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

In the Blink of

YOU just did it again. Yesterday you did it about 15,000 times. Most likely you were never aware of doing it, but you kept at it and thereby protected two of your most precious possessions. In the process, you may also have offered some unwitting indicators as to how your brain works. How did you do all of this? You blinked.

If your eyes are functional, they are the most delicate and sensitive sensory equipment you have. Widely regarded as a miracle of design, the human eye has been compared to a fully automatic, three-dimensional, self-focusing, continuously filming, full color, motion-picture camera. When not in use, a camera's delicate lens is covered with a lens cap. But the eye does better than that.



**Orb of the eye with only
10 percent exposed**

Want to know more about the eye? See "Eye Health" on page 10.

Most of the orb of the eye lies protected within the socket. But the remaining 10 percent of the eye's surface area is exposed naked to the atmosphere, with all its whirling dust and hazardous debris. To protect the eye against this constant threat of assault, the body is designed with a sophisticated, retractable "lens cap"—the eyelid. Made up of the body's thinnest skin, reinforced with tiny, fibrous strands, the eyelid slips smoothly down and up over the eye. The blink lasts only about a tenth of a second and occurs some 15 times every minute.

But that tiny, barely noticeable action accomplishes a lot. In snapping shut and then retracting, the eyelid draws a thin film of fluid across the surface of the eye, effectively rinsing it off. It also polishes the eye's outer surface. So the eyelid might be likened to a combination lens cap, lens cleaner, and lens polisher. Quite a design, isn't it?

But scientists have long puzzled over an odd point: At the rate that watery tears on the eye's surface dissolve, one or two blinks per minute should suffice to do the job of rinsing and polishing. Why, then, all the extra blinks? The answer, it seems, is in the mind.

Researchers have drawn connections between blinking and thinking. For instance, anxiety makes you blink more. If you are trying your hand at flying a helicopter, or you are being cross-examined by a hostile lawyer, or you are suffering from an anxiety disorder, you are likely blinking more than usual. If you are a television newscaster, you may have been told not to blink so that your audience

an Eye

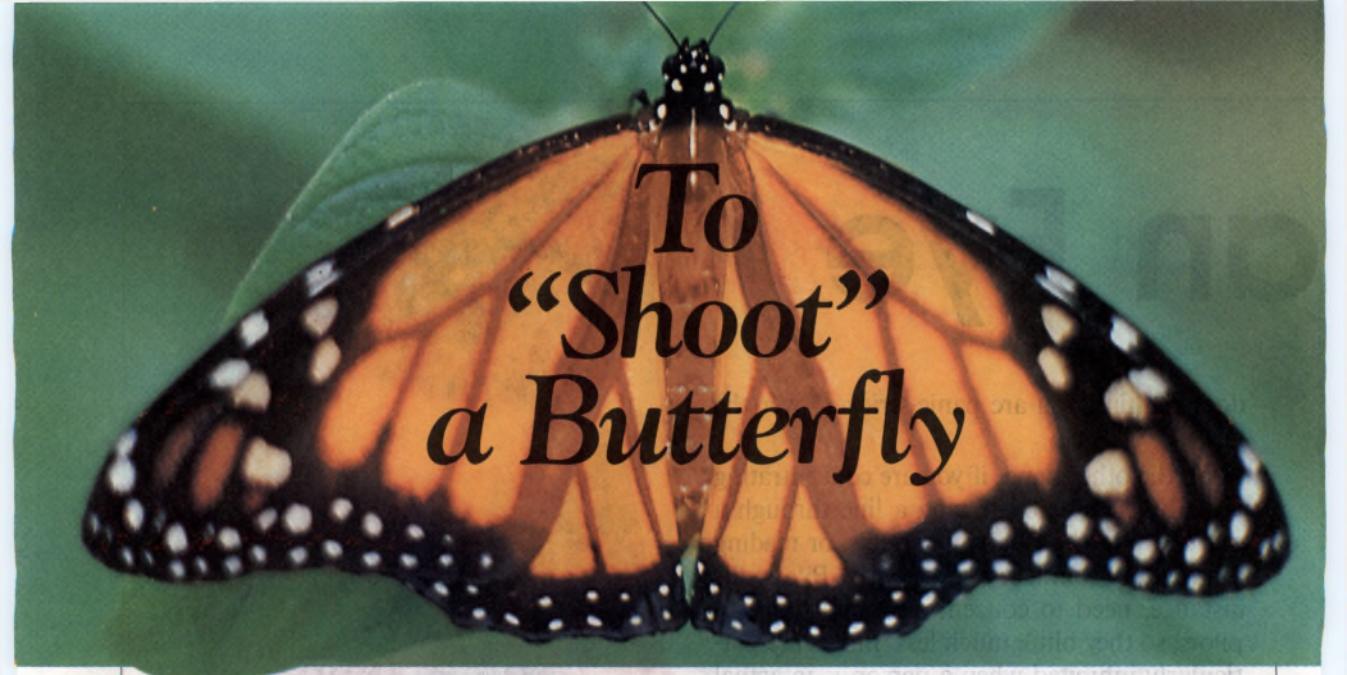
doesn't think you are panic-stricken over the news.

On the other hand, if you are concentrating visually, such as by tracing a line through a maze, driving through city streets, or reading a novel, you blink less frequently. Pilots, for instance, need to concentrate more than co-pilots, so they blink much less. Blinks are particularly inhibited when a person is in actual danger, and the eyes need to dart quickly from the main field of view to the periphery and back.

There is another connection between brain and blink. According to *The Medical Post* of Canada, research suggests that "each blink may occur at the crucial instant in which we stop seeing and start thinking." For example, a person memorizing something will probably blink right after scanning the information he wants to store. Or in decision making, tests suggest that "the brain orders a blink when it has enough information to make a good decision," notes the *Post*, adding: "Experiments indicate that blinking serves as a kind of mental punctuation."

It was nearly three thousand years ago that a wise man was inspired to write: "In a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14) The advances of medical science in our day have only bolstered that viewpoint. Just imagine: polishing and lubricating a sophisticated lens, registering the degree of the brain's concentration or anxiety, and punctuating the inflow of visual information—all of that in the blink of an eye!





To “Shoot” a Butterfly

HAVE you ever tried to “shoot” a butterfly—with a camera? It can be an irritating experience and a test of patience. They constantly flutter by on their apparently endless quest for food and drink, seldom giving you time to take a good photo. Then when they do land and spread their wings and you are just trying to get that critical focus, your precious beauty either closes its wings or takes off!

So imagine my reaction when a friend in Sydney, Australia, said: “Let’s go to the Butterfly House in Mittagong.” Here was my chance to see butterflies close up and perhaps take good photos under ideal conditions.

When we stepped into the live flight area of the butterfly house, we realized at once that we were in a controlled tropical atmosphere, insulated from the temperature changes outside. This is essential for the butterflies’ survival. All around us these delicate creatures flitted from plant to plant. As soon as we entered, we saw a beautiful orange-colored monarch laying her eggs on a citrus plant. In Australia the monarch is known as the wanderer. It reached this island-continent from

North America in 1870 and is now established in eastern and southern regions as well as near Perth in the far west.

Kerry, our guide, explained to us how these butterflies mate by connecting end to end. But here is the remarkable part—if the male is suddenly frightened, he takes off, carrying the female with him! Imagine virtually carrying someone your own weight, and on the wing! Then, to our amazement, we actually saw it happen—and there he was, winging his way over the bushes with the female passively hanging on.

Of course, the monarch is known worldwide for great feats of travel. As the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?** states: “Monarch butterflies leave Canada in the fall, many wintering in California or Mexico. Some flights exceed 2,000 miles; one butterfly covered 80 miles in a day.” But here is a remarkable fact: “The butterflies that come south in the fall are young individuals which have never before seen the hibernation sites. What enables them

* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.



Page 16: monarch; 1. Australian

lurcher; 2. pupa; 3. ulysses;

4. Australian birdwing; 5. birdwings

mating; 6. orange lacewing

to find these is still one of those elusive mysteries of Nature.”—*The Story of Pollination*.

But were we able to shoot any of these elusive creatures? Yes! They seemed to be used to people moving around in their humid world and settled easily on plants and even on human heads! So the photographers had a field day, especially video-camera enthusiasts. What a delight afterward to see those moving images on the TV by means of a videotape recorder.

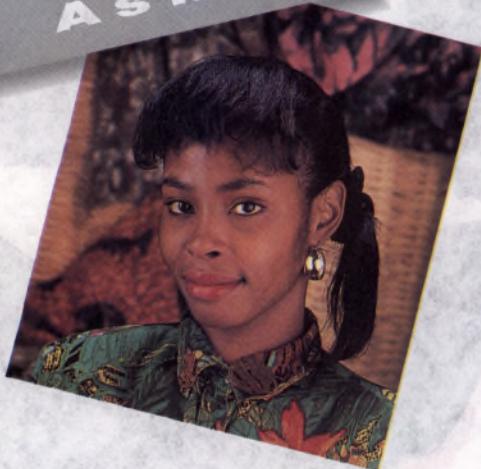
Other Australian butterflies that we saw were the blackwinged common eggfly, with purple-ringed white spots on its wings. Another beauty was the blue-banded eggfly, delicately designed with white spots and frills around the edges of its wings and blue bands inside. It has relatives in New Guinea, the Moluccas, and the Solomon Islands.

Butterflies have always intrigued me. The metamorphosis from a caterpillar (larva) via the pupa (chrysalis), or resting stage, to the flying wonder is to me a testimony, not to the so-called blind forces of nature and evolution, but to the scientific Creator, who has made all things wonderful in their different ways.

—Contributed.

All butterflies: Butterfly House,
Mittagong, Australia

**Young
People
Ask . . .**



How Can I Make Others Respect Me?

"Sometimes when you start talking to an adult, it's like talking to a wall."—Paul.

"I hate it when grown-ups don't trust you."—Matt.

"My parents either ignore me or pretend to listen, but they don't. You talk and talk and ask, 'Did you hear me?' and they answer, 'Uh-huh.' They really don't know what you said."—Paula.

RESPECT—why is it so hard to get others to treat you with just a little respect? You want to be heard, to be taken seriously. So when grown-ups—especially your par-

ents—and peers ignore you, make light of your feelings, talk down to you, or put you in your place, it can really hurt.

It's only natural to want to be esteemed by others. The Bible itself encourages us to "find favor and good insight in the eyes of God and of earthling man." (Proverbs 3:4) And godly youths in Bible times did so. For instance, the young man named Timothy had the privilege of accompanying the apostle Paul on his missionary journeys. Why? He was "well reported on by the brothers," having gained their respect. (Acts 16:1, 2) And there is Jesus himself, who as a youth "went on progressing in wisdom and in physical growth and in favor with God and men."—Luke 2:52.

True, you are not Jesus. And gaining the respect of others is not easy when you're young. For one thing, the Bible associates youth with 'inexperience' and unbridled energy; knowledge and wisdom come with age. (Proverbs 1:4; 20:29; Job 32:6, 7) Generally, then, people do not give youths the same respect they give adults. Unfair? Perhaps. But it is a fact of life you must deal with. Furthermore, many youths have made a bad name for themselves. As a result, some adults mistakenly think that *all* youths are "rebellious," "irresponsible," or "crazy."

In some lands, culture, tradition, and rapid social changes have widened the gap between youths and adults. In Africa, for example, many youths have educational advantages their parents did not have. Furthermore, they may find themselves in constant conflict with their elders who are guided by the traditional norms. Older ones are often greatly irritated by what they perceive as disrespect or even rebellion on the part of youths.

Whatever your situation, it will take real initiative and hard work for you to win the respect of others. But it can be done.

Something to Be Earned

First, realize that respect is not something bestowed upon you simply because you want it, nor can you *make* someone respect you. Respect is something that you earn. In Bible times the man Job was highly respected in his community. "Young men stepped aside as soon as they saw me," Job recalled, "and old men stood up to show me respect." However, Job clearly earned such respect. "Everyone who saw me or heard of me had good things to say about what I had done," Job explained. Yes, Job had a consistent record of upright conduct.—Job 29:7-17, *Today's English Version*.

What kind of record have you established for yourself? Have you applied the counsel given Timothy? "Let no man ever look down on your youth," Paul said. "On the contrary, become an example to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness." (1 Timothy 4:12) You too can become an example worthy of respect. Studying God's Word can help you do so. The psalmist said: "How I do love your law!... More insight than all my teachers I have come to have, because your reminders are a concern to me. With more understanding than older men I behave, because I have observed your own orders."—Psalm 119:97, 99, 100.

Fellow Christians are sure to respect you if you develop such spiritual insight. Note, however, that you must also 'observe,' or apply, the Bible's counsel. An African youth named Charles took seriously the Bible's command to "make disciples" and became a full-time evangelizer at the age of 16 and now serves at a branch office of the Watch Tower Society. (Matthew 28:19, 20) His faithful example in speaking has caused others to respect him and resulted in much personal joy. He says: "Life in this service is just fascinating. Working closely with godly men with vast experience has really built me up. It's a joy beyond compare."

Ways to Earn Respect

Another important way to earn respect is to become an example in conduct. Salome, a young African Witness, recalls of her youth: "I did not go along with the crowd. Rather, I fought hard to uphold Christian principles at all times. I tried to be serious-minded, polite, and respectful to others—even kids." True, you may get mocked and teased for being different. (1 Peter 4:4) But as in Salome's case, others will often begrudgingly respect you for it.

Note, too, that Salome made a point of being respectful to others. Respect begets respect. Romans 12:10 thus says: "In showing honor to one another take the lead." Lying and bending the truth, cruel teasing, making other people the butt of jokes, bossing or bullying—these are not ways of treating others with honor. In the long run, they undermine what respect others have for you.

It is particularly important that we show honor and respect to those in positions of authority. (1 Peter 2:17) For example, a law enforcement officer once said: "Kids today seldom say, 'Sir.'" How do you treat those in authority—teachers, police officers, school administrators? If you have a reputation for being respectful to authority figures, it is far more likely that such ones will treat you with a measure of respect.—Compare Matthew 7:2.

Respecting Older Ones

In certain cultures there are long-standing rules of etiquette that a youth is expected to follow. In Ghana, for instance, many older ones do not take kindly to a youth who talks to them with his hands in his pockets or who gestures to them with his left hand. Such social norms may seem strange to Westerners and old-fashioned even to some African youths, but they are not objectionable to Christians. Indeed, the Bible encourages us to

avoid offending others needlessly.—2 Corinthians 6:3.

A common saying in Ghana is: "A child is supposed to unshell snails but not tortoises." In other words, certain roles are expected to be filled by adults, not youths. This may very well seem unfair and demeaning to you. But one who bucks local culture by usurping adult authority will usually be thought of as impertinent. You will do far more to win others' respect if you recognize your subordinate role and learn to cope with it.

The Bible says at Leviticus 19:32: "Before gray hair you should rise up, and you must show consideration for the person of an old man, and you must be in fear of your God. I am Jehovah." When riding public transportation, do you willingly give up your seat for elderly ones? When conversing, are you careful to mind your language? Do you listen in a respectful way?



Carrying the load of an older one is one sure way to gain respect

Gaining Respect for Your Beliefs

What, though, if others disrespect you because of your religious beliefs? For example, youths among Jehovah's Witnesses are often pressured by teachers and peers to participate in patriotic ceremonies and religious activities that violate Bible principles. Unable to fathom why Witness youths take such courageous stands, others may view their beliefs with disdain. Witness youths may even be subjected to hostility.

Consider, though, how an African youth we'll call Kwasi conducted himself. "I never dodged classes," he explains, "and I supported activities that did not violate my conscience. More important, I made my stand as one of Jehovah's Witnesses clear right from the outset." Kwasi's honesty, seriousness, and firm principles endeared him to teachers and students alike. He adds: "I had to explain my stand sometimes—once to the principal and his whole staff—but my views were always respected."

Yes, conduct yourself in a manner that commands respect. Without forcing your beliefs on others, be "always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you, but doing so together with a mild temper and deep respect." (1 Peter 3:15) Avoid behaving in any way that could cause 'the word of God to be spoken of abusively.' (Titus 2:5) That would include avoiding outlandish dress and grooming styles and adopting independent or rebellious attitudes.

Of course, the Bible encourages you to 'rejoice in your youth,' and no one expects you to act like a 50-year-old. (Ecclesiastes 11:9) But by being an example in your speech and conduct, you can win the respect and confidence of others.

Big Business Tightens Its Grip

 **W**ORLD War I was scarcely over when the perilous state of the European economy presaged further trouble. In late October 1929, disaster struck. The New York stock market plunged sharply. People panicked. In the aftermath hundreds of banks collapsed. Millions of dollars were lost by thousands of people, some of whom leaped to their death from tall buildings.

The Great Depression pitched the whole world into economic ruin and, by fueling the forces that brought on World War II, into subsequent political chaos. Professor of history René Albrecht-Carrié described the 1930's as "punctuated by crises, played out against a background of economic disaster."

Thus, less than 20 years after 1914, it was quite obvious that the world's economic systems were not up to the tasks of the new century. This is significant, since according to Bible chronology and divine prophecy, God's permission of unrestrained human rule ran out in 1914. In that pivotal year, God established the heavenly Kingdom that was to make its invisible presence known by visible developments. Some of this evidence is mentioned in Matthew chapter 24, Luke chapter 21, and Revelation chapter 6, which chapters we encourage you to read.

Another outstanding evidence of the Kingdom's having been established is that the

earth is being progressively ruined by its inhabitants. (Revelation 11:18) Faced as we are with global pollution, damage to the protective ozone layer around the earth, and the potential for ecological disaster caused by the so-called greenhouse effect, we have ample reason to conclude that this prophecy is now being fulfilled.

Big Business—Master Polluter?

The industrial revolution laid the foundation for a strange kind of progress—progress that makes it easier, faster, and cheaper to provide humans with their wants and needs but which at the same time causes acid rain, creates chemical spills, and destroys the earth's rain forests; progress that jets tourists to the other side of the earth so that they can clutter once clean beaches and destroy the natural habitat; progress that by polluting our air, food, and water threatens us with a premature grave.

Besides developing the technology that has resulted in a ruining of the earth, big business has also provided the motivation. As *Time* magazine noted, "the pell-mell pursuit of profits by businesses has long been a major source of pollution." A UN forestry economist is quoted as saying that the commercial "illegal logging [of rain forests] is anchored in greed."

Noncapitalistic systems are equally guilty. Journalist Richard Hornik wrote in 1987 that

"for nearly three decades of Communist rule, Peking maintained that it was impossible for socialist construction to result in environmental degradation." But now the time of reckoning had come, and even China was learning "the environmental costs of economic advancement."

Another journalist called the ravages of pollution during 40 years of devastation in Eastern Europe "communism's dirtiest secret." Only now is the extent of the damage becoming apparent, giving Bitterfeld, 30 miles north of Leipzig, the dubious distinction of possibly being the most seriously polluted city in probably the most polluted region in the world.

Fruits of Ruthless Competition

Even as many of our actions and reactions are largely shaped by religion and politics, so also to a great degree are we influenced by big business. In fact, the tight grip it has on humankind may perhaps be recognized best of all in the way it molds personalities.

The very foundation upon which the world of capitalistic commerce is built, the spirit of ruthless competition, is found everywhere—at school, at work, in the entertainment and sports worlds, and sometimes even in the family. Youngsters are taught from infancy to be competitive, to be the best, to be number one. Getting ahead economically is viewed as

all-important, and few restrictions are placed on how to do so. For the sake of success, men and women are encouraged to be ambitious, even aggressive if need be.

Business people are trained to be friendly and polite. But do these characteristics always portray their true personality, or do they sometimes reflect a mask they are wearing as they play a role? In 1911, Edgar Watson Howe, American journalist, gave this advice: "When a man is trying to sell you something, don't imagine he is that polite all the time."

Competition fosters feelings of envy, jealousy, and greed. People who excel may begin to think themselves superior, making them arrogant and overbearing. Consistent losers, on the other hand, may suffer from a lack of self-esteem, causing despondency. Faced with competitive pressures with which they cannot cope, they may choose to drop out, an attitude that helps explain the surge in suicides among young people in some countries.

By failing to provide everyone with the necessities of life equally, ineffective economic systems can warp personalities into becoming ungrateful, selfish, and callous on the one hand or bitter, self-pitying, and conniving on the other. And by elevating money and possessions to the status of virtual godship, commerce can easily rob persons of their spirituality.

The Deceptive Power of Money

Once money was introduced into society, it began permeating all of human society and thus affecting human relationships. A price system imposed monetary values on goods and services. Soon everything came to be expressed in terms of money, it being the standard against which everything could be evaluated as to importance. This obscured the truth that the song so nicely expresses, however, that "the best things in life are free."

In Our Next Issue

**Unlocking the Secrets
of the Universe**

**What Is This Thing Called
Intuition?**

Is It Normal to Be a Virgin?

Even humans came to be evaluated in monetary terms, judged primarily on the basis of salary or possessions. Journalist Max Lerner recognized this in 1949, when he wrote: "In our culture we make heroes of the men who sit on top of a heap of money, and we pay attention not only to what they say in their field of competence, but to their wisdom on every other question in the world." More recently a reporter expressed misgivings at a U.S. president's strongly held view that wealth is the measure of the man. The reporter found it to be "symptomatic of the materialistic excess that has turned the 1980s into the 'My decade,' a time when by one's possessions thou shall be known and judged."

Overemphasizing money and the things it can buy tends to downgrade the value of human relationships. A young man from Bangladesh, after moving to capitalistic Europe, indeed had a point when he noted: "People here are interested in *things*; at home we are more interested in *people*."

The money-centered attitude also degrades work, making it only a means to an end, a burden and no longer a pleasure. One works, not for the joy of accomplishment or for the joy of giving others the things they need, but just in order to get money. This attitude actually robs the individual of joy because "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

Big business has helped make Europe probably the most polluted continent in the world

Do You Want Big Business to Mold You?

The scientific and technological progress made possible by the discovery and application of natural laws of divine origin has often been of great benefit to mankind. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses are most grateful for the development of modern printing methods and for the improved transportation and communications possibilities that permit them to fulfill their preaching commission in a way that otherwise would be impossible.

—Matthew 24:14.

Still, it cannot be denied that the potential for doing good that this progress offers has been badly tarnished by people who have let their personalities be molded in an ungodly way by false religion, corrupt politics, and imperfect economic systems.

Do you want your potential for good to be nullified by a misshapen personality—your own? Are you going to permit greedy commerce to determine your set of values purely



on a monetary basis? to allow it to cause love of money and possessions to triumph in your life over human relationships? to let it rob you of spirituality?

With commerce tightening its grip on mankind since 1914, is there any way to prevent it

Big Business Helps to Identify “the Last Days”

By molding personalities, big business is helping to provide the evidence of “the last days” as found at 2 Timothy 3:1-4: **But know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with** [including the difficulty of coping with economic anxieties] **will be here. For men will be . . .**

Lovers of themselves: Materialists are self-centered, an attitude encouraged by commercial advertising, which argues: ‘You deserve the best. Be good to yourself. Look out for number one’

Lovers of money: American humorist Mark Twain once said: “Some men worship rank, some worship heroes, some worship power, some worship God, . . . but they all worship money”

Self-assuming, haughty: A German politician said of foot-dragging chemical firms asked to stop polluting: “I find the predominating attitude quite bad. It is the arrogance of power”

Unthankful, disloyal: English writer Thomas Fuller said, “Riches rather enlarge than satisfy appetites” and, “The usual trade and commerce is cheating all round by consent”

Having no natural affection: Firms that for reasons of profit sell developing nations products outlawed elsewhere or that locate hazardous factories in lands with less stringent safety regulations show little concern for the lives of others

from shaping our personalities? Yes, there is! Along with showing us what this is, the final article in this series will explain how we may live to see the day when mankind will be able to sigh in relief: “Money Worries—Over at Last!”

Not open to any agreement, slanders:

Economist Adam Smith said that “commerce, which ought naturally to be, among nations, as among individuals, a bond of union and friendship, has become the most fertile source of discord and animosity”

Without self-control, fierce: Excessive installment buying, credit-card spending sprees, and the “buy now, pay later” mentality, fostered by commerce for personal gain, betray a lack of self-control; some commercial pursuits pander to human weaknesses and make fortunes from drugs, vice, and gambling

Without love of goodness, betrayers:

The newspaper *The German Tribune* says: “Where the colossal cost of coping with environmental pollution is concerned, moral standards can leave much to be desired.” People with no moral standards find it easy to betray others for the sake of personal gain

Headstrong: Powerful groups, such as gun and tobacco lobbies, stubbornly spend fortunes trying to dictate political policies to ensure high sales, even though their wares endanger health and public safety

Puffed up with pride: Possessions are no reason for pride, despite the claims of materialists. Greek fabulist Aesop said: “Outside show is a poor substitute for inner worth”

Lovers of pleasures rather than

lovers of God: Commercial entertainment stresses pleasures to the exclusion of spirituality and has created a generation of hedonistic pleasure addicts



Zulu Proverbs A Window on Africa

THE Zulu nation, living along the subtropical east coast of South Africa, has inherited a legacy of delightful proverbs that capture the lessons of life in a typically African way. Since the beloved cattle of the Zulus play an important part in their lives, it is not surprising that this is reflected in many of their sayings.

Consider, for instance, how a Zulu would describe the effect when two masters try to run one household. That would be as disastrous as putting 'two bulls in the same kraal [enclosure]' (*Akukho zinkunzi zahlala ndawonye*.)

And speaking of cattle, the acrid smell of a horn burning in the communal fire is extremely unpleasant to all in the immediate vicinity. Therefore, of a cantankerous and quarrelsome person, someone may mutter: "Oh, there he goes burning the horn again." (*Ushis' uphondo*.)

Carrying one's own load in life is deemed a virtue by most people. The Zulus are no exception. Therefore, an old sage may remark: "You should face

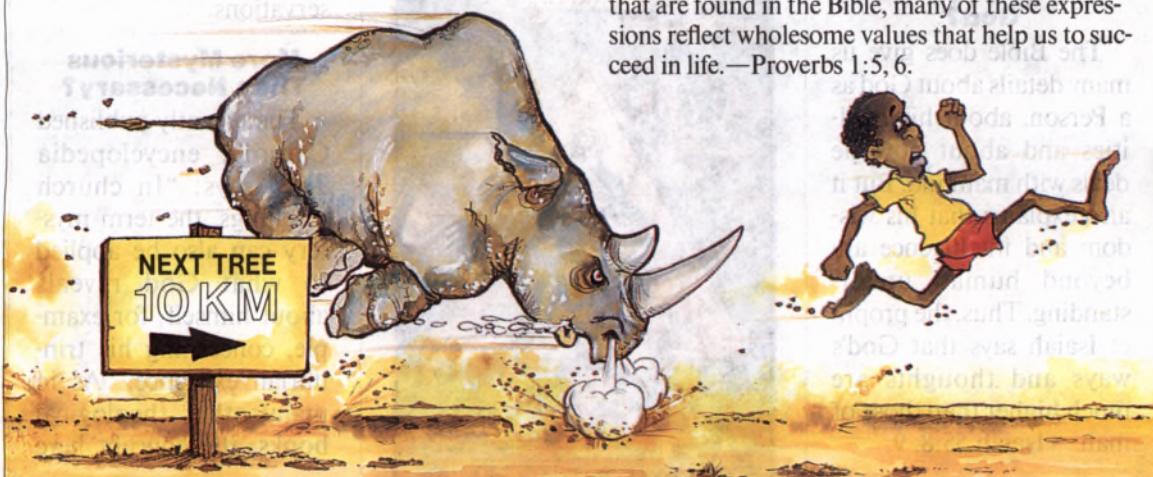
your responsibilities squarely, since 'no elephant ever found its trunk too heavy,'" (*Akundlovu yasindwa umboko wayo*.)—Compare Galatians 6:5.

If one encountered a rhino on a rampage in a wilderness area, a tree to climb would be most useful. Thus, the expression: "Do not speak of the rhino if there is no tree nearby!" (*Ungakhulumi ngobhejane kungekho sihlahla eduze*.) The proverbial warning is obvious.

In a similar vein, trying to handle too many things at once can be counterproductive. "You cannot chase two antelope at once," say the Zulus. (*Ungexoshe mpalambili*.) Anyone who has tried to do this will know that as you concentrate your energies on one buck, the other is busy making a getaway. The lesson? Tackle one thing at a time.

Unreasonable obstinacy is generally frowned upon by most people. The Zulus have a quaint way of summing up such a hardheaded person when they say: "While he was being cooked, a stone was also being cooked, and the stone was ready first." (*Kwaphekwa yena kwaphekw' itshe, kwavuthw' itshe kugala*.)

Although not divinely inspired like the proverbs that are found in the Bible, many of these expressions reflect wholesome values that help us to succeed in life.—Proverbs 1:5, 6.



Is God a Mystery?

"What is a mystery? Generally speaking, a mystery is a truth that is naturally impossible to understand or prove. . . . What is a religious mystery? It is one of God's truths that we are obliged to believe, although we can neither understand it nor prove it. What are the main religious mysteries? These are the mysteries of the most Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Redemption."—*Abrégé de l'exposition de la doctrine chrétienne, 1901*
(Abridged Explanation of Christian Doctrine)

THE above is how a book written at the beginning of the 20th century summarized the view of the Roman Catholic Church regarding mysteries. Furthermore, the recently published *Guide des difficultés de la foi catholique* (Guide to Difficulties of the Catholic Faith, 1989) shows that such doctrinal points still are of interest by stating: "It is not just through a personal attraction for obscure realities that a Christian admits the existence of a certain number of mysteries in his religious Creed. If he believes in them, it is purely on the basis of God's Word." But what does "God's Word" say? Is God a mystery?

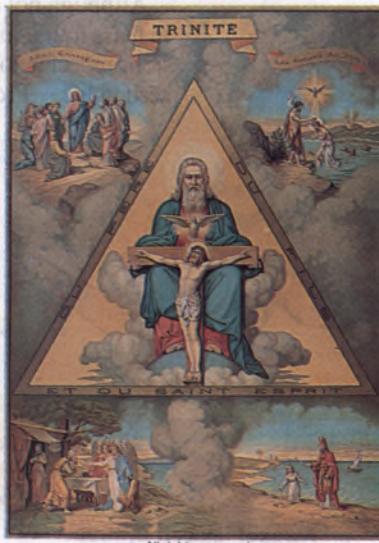
Can We Know Everything About God?

The Bible does give us many details about God as a Person, about his qualities and about how he deals with mankind. But it also explains that his wisdom and intelligence are beyond human understanding. Thus, the prophet Isaiah says that God's ways and thoughts are much higher than those of man.—Isaiah 55:8, 9.

The impossibility of knowing every single thing about God should not surprise us. For example, even though our knowledge of the universe is constantly increasing, scientists admit that they will probably never truly get to the bottom of the mysteries of the infinitely small or the infinitely large. So how could any creature know completely the depth of God's wisdom, he who is the Creator? Job confessed to Jehovah: "I was not understanding things too wonderful for me, which I do not know." (Job 42:3; compare Romans 11:33.) Thus, full knowledge of God is, in some respects, beyond our limited understanding. However, the doctrines of many churches go beyond the limits of these simple observations.

More Mysterious Than Necessary?

The recently published Catholic encyclopedia *Théo* says: "In church teachings, the term mystery can also be applied to what God reveals about himself, for example, concerning his trinitarian existence." As in many other theological books, the concept here



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implicitly developed is that 'since knowledge of God is inevitably mysterious, it should not surprise us that God is a Trinity and that this Trinity is a mystery.' Is such reasoning well-founded?

First, many books acknowledge, as does *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, that "neither the word Trinity, nor the explicit doctrine as such, appears in the New Testament." Moreover, the history of this doctrine shows that it has combined many ideas taken from pagan philosophies that were incorporated into the creeds of the church several decades after the death of the apostles. Therefore, there is no solid proof that the mystery of the Trinity is founded on the Bible.*

Think of this: Since it is impossible to know everything about God, would it make sense for Jehovah to obscure his own identity? No, he desires all humans to know him. (John 17:3; compare Hebrews 8:11.) And would it make sense for those who truly want to please him to obscure his identity? To illustrate: If the only opportunity one has to view some beautiful country scenery is through a window, would it be wise to steam up the window, saying: 'It might as well be steamed up because we can't see the details anyway?' Of course not! The Bible and good sense show that our knowledge of God is necessarily limited. But these limits do not at all justify converting our knowledge of God into a mysterious doctrine, such as the Trinity, that only serves to confuse our understanding of him.

Mysteries—Pagan and Christian

Moreover, when the term "mystery" appears in the Scriptures, it does not have the meaning of "hidden knowledge," as it is usually understood. As *Théo* rightly reminds us: "The term mystery does not have the same sense here. For

Christians it denotes something that is normally hidden or inaccessible, but that God wants to say to them . . . and have them experience."

The Greek word *myste'riōn* ("mystery," or "sacred secret") was employed 20 times by the apostle Paul in a particular sense. He used it in reference to a sacred secret that had long been hidden but that God revealed when He sent Jesus to earth. Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind, was the principal element of the promised "seed" that God would use to ransom mankind, the One 'through whom all the nations of the earth would be blessed' and who would have joint heirs in the heavens. (Genesis 3:15; 22:18; Romans 8:17) These concealed, or mysterious, elements were hidden to God's pre-Christian servants but were revealed by Jehovah at the proper time. (Ephesians 1:9; Colossians 1:26) Happily, this knowledge is not reserved for just a chosen few—as is the case with religious mysteries in certain religions—but is to be proclaimed to as many people as possible without distinction.—Ephesians 6:19, 20.

Worshiping God in Truth

The Bible contains enough information for us to worship God in the way acceptable to him. Far from teaching a Trinity, it very clearly reveals the supremacy of Jehovah and the subordinate position of Jesus. For example, Jesus said: "The Father is greater than I am." (John 14:28; 1 Corinthians 15:28) The Bible also indicates that the holy spirit is God's active force, which directs his faithful servants. —Acts 2:1-4.

When speaking with a Samaritan woman, Jesus showed that in order for someone to please God, he must worship Him "with spirit and truth." He added that "the Father is looking for suchlike ones to worship him." (John 4:21-24) It is up to each one of us to search for this accurate knowledge that will bring us blessings if we rely on God's Word rather than accept man-made, mysterious traditions that betray it.

* See the brochure *Should You Believe in the Trinity?*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1989.

Watching the World

The Most Influential Book

What book has made the greatest difference in the lives of many? The Bible. It ranks as number one in that it has influenced people more than any other book, according to a survey of reading habits conducted for the U.S. Library of Congress and the Book-of-the-Month Club. The survey of 2,032 members of the book club, which was released last November, showed that the respondents spent an average of 9 hours a week reading books, compared with 12 hours a week watching television. Yet, one can only wonder, How much of that time is really spent reading the Bible?

Alcoholism —Twofold Burden

Alcoholism is just as disastrous for the economy of developing countries as inflation, debt, and mismanagement are, concludes a study by Worldwatch Institute, as reported in the Dutch magazine *Onze Wereld*. For example, in Papua New Guinea, 30 percent of the income of the average family is spent on alcoholic drinks, while the men in the African country of Burkina Faso use 44 percent of their income on beer. Too impaired to cultivate the soil, alcoholics become "an important contributing factor to the cause of food shortages." Their children are the saddest victims. In one Guatemalan city, one third of all children suffer from undernourishment because of the parents' alcohol abuse. To make matters worse, notes *Onze Wereld*, the burden of alcoholism is twofold: It lowers national income and

raises health-care costs. For instance, 47 percent of all men admitted to the largest hospital in Trinidad suffer from alcohol-related medical problems.

Racial Bias in Europe

Europe's largest-ever study on racial feelings came up with some unpleasant results. "Many of the 13,000 respondents in 12 European countries express hostility towards racial minorities in their countries," reports *The European*. Prejudice is based on color, anti-Semitism, economic factors, and old territorial disputes. The survey found that Germans are disliked in Poland, just as Poles are



in Germany. Hungarians do not like Romanians; neither do Bulgarians like the Turks, who used to be rulers in Bulgaria. Another cause of tension is religion. "North Africans want to impose Islam on France," complained a French taxi driver. Clearly, efforts to consolidate Europe into one peaceful entity have a long way to go.

New Twist on Shoplifting

In South Africa the constant drift of rural dwellers to the cities is resulting in an ever-increasing number of unemployed. With rising inflation adding to the problem, more people are resorting to

an unusual kind of supermarket shoplifting in order to keep themselves alive. There are "more opened packages on the shelves than before," reports the journal *Security Focus*. "More people are hungry enough now to come in and simply eat what they can find in the store. The risk of being caught is lessened and they get something inside their stomachs."

Practicing Believer —A Thing of the Past?

According to a conference on religion among Europeans, held in Turin last October, 2 out of every 3 Europeans claim to believe in God. The Italians and the Spanish take the lead in claiming to be religious. However, why are the majority of Europeans believers? *La Stampa* quotes researchers as saying that "today's religiousness is weak, not too prescriptive [orthodox], very individualistic, and in [this religiousness] everyone can carve his own niche." This religious devotion, however, appears contradictory. For example, although in Germany less than 60 percent of the population consider themselves religious, 92 percent had their children baptized; but in Italy, where 83 percent consider themselves religious, 53 percent do not attend religious ceremonies. The experts say that religiousness has undergone profound changes. "The last decade has been characterized by a progressive disassociation between faith and practice or, as the sociologists would say, 'between religious belief and religious belonging,'" reports *La Stampa*. "The practicing believer

has almost become a thing of the past."

Welders at Risk

Studies that have been conducted on the long-term effects of welding fumes on humans reveal some disturbing facts. For one, welders are reported to suffer a higher-than-average incidence of lung cancer. An article entitled *The Dark Side of Welding* in the South African magazine *Safety Management* lists at least ten different metals and fumes common to welding that are potentially harmful to humans. The journal reports that cadmium fumes in high concentration can cause "irritation of the breathing passageways and fluid in the lungs" and that "long-term exposure to low levels can lead to emphysema and can damage the kidneys." *Safety Management* says that the best safeguard against the harmful effects associated with welding is proper respiratory protection and adequate ventilation, which may include the use of proper exhaust systems.

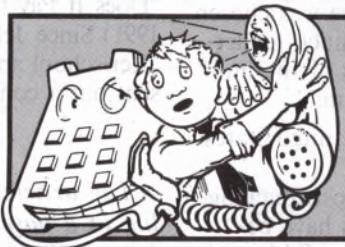
Not at Home

Mainstream churches of Australia recently conducted a census called Attender Survey. The religion correspondent for *The Weekend Australian* newspaper saw some major shortcomings in this survey and wrote: "In the past 20 years I have only been visited by the local churches on three occasions. Each was to discover what brand of Christian I was in a survey being conducted to separate the sheep from the goats. . . . Of course pastoral visiting at home is a thing of the past for most churches, its abandonment defended by arguments that no one is ever at home, or that a

pastor is too busy. . . . Today the knock at the door is much more likely to be from the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, or some other 'sect,' usually considered unorthodox by other Christians, or worse than unorthodox. . . . Unfortunately in the matter of evangelism the sects do much better, since they actually talk about what they believe."

Captive Audience

Telephone callers who are put on hold are a captive audience. Often companies take advantage of this and bombard them with a sequence of advertisements—even, it is suspected, if the caller could have been put straight



through. Now an American company has replaced the recorded messages with live ones in an effort to appease customers. Since it gets more than 13,000 calls a day, customers are often left waiting for ten minutes or more. As reported in *The Economist*, the "hold jockeys," like radio disc jockeys, chat with their audience, play soothing music, and give time and traffic reports in addition to reading their advertisements. They also give periodic updates as to how long it will be before the caller will get through to an extension to have his question answered. The company claims that not only does it now have fewer irate customers but it has a competitive edge in customer service

and can even target its advertisements to specific customers.

Improved Child Care

Following UNICEF's (United Nations Children's Fund) recommendations, the Brazilian state of Ceará has "lowered its infant-mortality rate, from 95 deaths for every 1,000 babies to 65," reports *Newsweek*. A UNICEF representative says: "No country or state has obtained the same dramatic results in the same short period of time as Ceará state." *Newsweek* says that after 80 hours of training, 4,000 health workers have gone into the countryside, traveling by foot, bicycle, horse, donkey, and canoe, to teach mothers basic baby care, such as breastfeeding. When taught how to prepare a lifesaving oral rehydration formula of sugar, salt, and water, a mother of three said in surprise: "I thought it had to be more complicated."

Indian Rights

For centuries, the Yanomami Indians have occupied a vast territory along the Brazil-Venezuela border. Blanketed by the Amazon forest, the region is six times the size of Belgium. It is also rich in gold and tin ore—tantalizing to miners and developers. Brazil's *Véja* magazine reports that President Carlos Andrés Pérez of Venezuela recently signed two decrees that transformed the area on the Venezuelan side of the border into a biosphere reserve and national park, thereby protecting the rights of the Yanomamis to the land. He also banned "from their land those whites who for decades have tried to conquer their souls—the missionaries—and their mineral riches—the miners." Some ecologists hailed it as "a fantastic decision."

From Our Readers

Kidnapping Thank you very much for the article "Don't Do Anything Stupid, or I'll Kill You." (November 22, 1991) I was moved to tears. I have never experienced anything like what Lisa Davenport went through, but having been depressed for some time, I have at times felt that I wanted to die. The article, though, made me think deeply about the strong support Jehovah God gives and how he always gives help when necessary.

N. O., Japan

Families Draw Close I am so happy about the series of articles "Families—Draw Close Before It's Too Late." (September 22, 1991) My eyes filled with tears when I saw the beautiful cover. Also, every word and phrase was chosen so carefully and written with so much tenderness! Thank you for reminding us of the importance of having a close-knit family.

K. E., United States

The articles were among the most touching that I have ever read. Many of us have believed that if we simply studied the Bible with our children, took them to Christian meetings, and participated together in the preaching work, we would have success as parents. I have found, though, that successful parents also have a close personal relationship with their child—a bond that assures the child of the parents' love. This point has been made in previous articles, but its impact on me now has never been greater.

T. H., United States

Before getting married, I was a bookkeeper. I enjoyed my work a great deal. After having children, I decided to stop working and stay home with the children. At times, though, I have felt very useless and longed to go back to work. After reading your article, I feel a renewed sense of responsibility toward my children.

S. M., United States

Gambling Thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . Is Gambling Really So Bad?" (November 8, 1991) In our school, gambling is very popular. One gambling game pays 20 yen to the winner; some classmates bring 2,000 yen to school! Once I was invited to join in. I began to wonder if gambling was really so bad, and I was tempted to try it just once. But after reading the article, I now know that gambling is not a good thing and that if you try it just once, you may want to do it again and again.

N. N., Japan

Honesty I am writing regarding the article "Does It Pay to Be Honest?" (October 22, 1991) Since Jehovah's Witnesses discourage after-school sports activities, I felt this article sent out a confusing message.

C. P., United States

The article told how a young boy playing in a baseball game was rewarded for being honest. However, the experience was credited to the magazine "Sports Illustrated." The youth involved was therefore not one of Jehovah's Witnesses. In any event, the article was published, not to promote sports participation, but to illustrate the value of honesty.—ED.

From Our Readers I always look forward to reading the feature "From Our Readers." I'm just amazed at the tactfulness you show in your responses. If there is a misprint or error, you humbly admit it. Yet, no matter how upset a reader may become, you never back down from the truth of God's Word. And you even have a sense of humor! I got a nice chuckle from your response under the item "Mistaken Identity" in the February 22, 1991, issue.

C. W., United States

Church Apology Exposes Deep Division

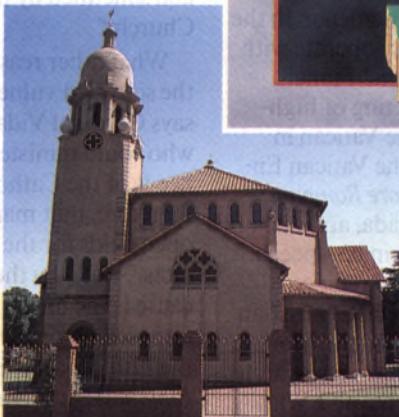
"I CONFESS before you and before the Lord not only my own sin and guilt . . . but—vicariously—I also venture to do this on behalf of the Dutch Reformed Church." Professor Willie Jonker, a leading Dutch Reformed minister, offered this startling public apology before a national conference of churches on November 6, 1990, at Rustenburg, South Africa. And to what sins did Jonker refer? To "the political, social, economic, and structural injustices that have been committed" because of the South African policy of apartheid.

"I feel at liberty to do this," continued the professor, "because the Dutch Reformed Church declared at its recent synod that apartheid is a sin, and it has confessed its own guilt." However, the widespread reaction to Jonker's apology indicates that many church adherents are thoroughly at odds with their church's statements on apartheid.

The reason for the controversy is that the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, whose members are mostly white Afrikaners, has long been associated with apartheid.

However, in October 1986 the church synod made a dramatic shift in policy by declaring that church membership was open to all races and that the church had been wrong in trying to use the Bible to justify the policy of apartheid. Furthermore, in 1990 the synod declared that the church "should have distanced itself clearly from this viewpoint much earlier" and that it "recognizes and confesses its failure to do so."

Jonker's apology unleashed controversy, exposing a deep division of church opinion over apart-

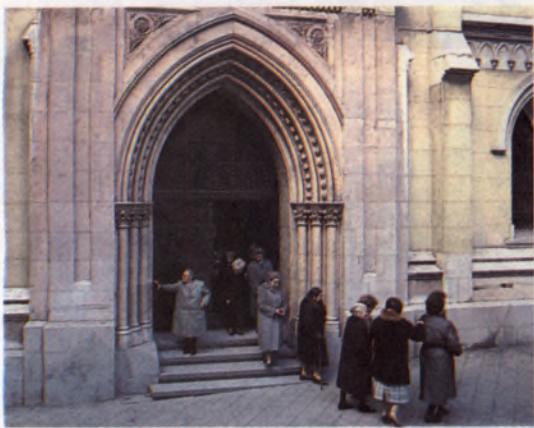


heid. Indeed, the rift seemingly cuts through all levels of the church, from the laity right up to former chairmen of the general synod. In response to Jonker's apology, Willie Potgieter, a Dutch Reformed minister, felt that it was "insensitive to do such a thing so suddenly." He

claimed that almost half his congregation still views apartheid as a Christian model that can work.

Understandably, many members of the Dutch Reformed Church are distressed by this disunity. In the words of one disgruntled member who wrote to a Johannesburg newspaper, *Beeld*: "It is time that we . . . got on our knees and begged for forgiveness for our sinful division and all the terrible things we say about one another."

Such an accord is not likely, however; nor is the Dutch Reformed Church the only church in South Africa to be plagued with such divisions. The wrangling of these so-called Christians is certainly a far cry from the love and unity that Jesus said would characterize his true followers.—John 17:20, 21, 26; compare 1 Corinthians 1:10.



"THE rise and spread of the sects or new religious movements is a marked phenomenon in the religious history of our times. They operate with considerable vitality," stated cardinal Francis Arinze of Nigeria to a special meeting of high-ranking Catholic clergy held in the Vatican in April 1991. This was reported in the Vatican English weekly edition of *L'Osservatore Romano*. Cardinal Ernesto Corripio Ahumada, archbishop of Mexico City, was more specific in his speech. He said about the spread of the new religious groups: "The most widespread pseudo-Christian sects are the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons." Cardinal Angel Suquía Goicoechea, archbishop of Madrid, Spain, listed Jehovah's Witnesses among those who "have taken root in the greatest number of countries."^{*}

Why are these groups effective in predominantly Catholic countries and areas? Several cardinals advanced a variety of reasons. Cardinal Ricardo J. Vidal, archbishop of Cebu, Philippines, stated: "The most effective means to do this seems to be a direct attack on Catholic teachings and practices, especially against Marian devotion, the use of statues, the cult of the saints, the sacrament of confession, the rule of priestly celibacy, etc."

That is an interesting remark in view of the fact that the first-century Christians initiated none of these practices.^{**} The cardinal's admission echoes

* In 1991 there were over 320,000 active Witnesses in Mexico, over 88,000 in Spain and 180,000 in Italy.

** For the Biblical viewpoint on all these Catholic practices, see *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, pages 254, 183, 352, 80, 42, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

Cardinals Explain Why Catholics Leave the Church

a statement by another Catholic prelate, Cardinal Newman, who wrote back in 1878: "The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints . . . , votive offerings . . . , holy water . . . , images at a later date . . . , are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church."

What other reasons did the cardinals offer for the so-called vulnerability of their flocks? One, says Cardinal Vidal, "is the scarcity of priests who could minister, in a personal manner, to the needs of the Catholic faithful. Little wonder, therefore, that many of our dioceses are wide-open fields for the proselytizing activities of the sects." But why the shortage of priests? A chief cause is the unscriptural requirement of celibacy imposed on priests in all the Latin church since the 12th century. Even the Catholic *Jerusalem Bible* states at 1 Timothy 4, verses 1 and 3: "The Spirit has explicitly said that during the last times there will be some who will desert the faith . . . They will say marriage is forbidden."

—Compare 1 Corinthians 9:5; 1 Timothy 3:1, 2.

What answer to the problem of Catholics leaving the church did Cardinal Vidal offer to his fellow prelates? "There is the challenge to read and study, pray over and live the written Word of God." And that is precisely what Jehovah's Witnesses encourage all sincere people to do, regardless of their social or religious background. That is why they are so intent on preaching "this Good News of the kingdom . . . to the whole world as a witness to all the nations" before God brings an end to this Satan-dominated world.

—Matthew 24:14, JB; 1 John 5:19.