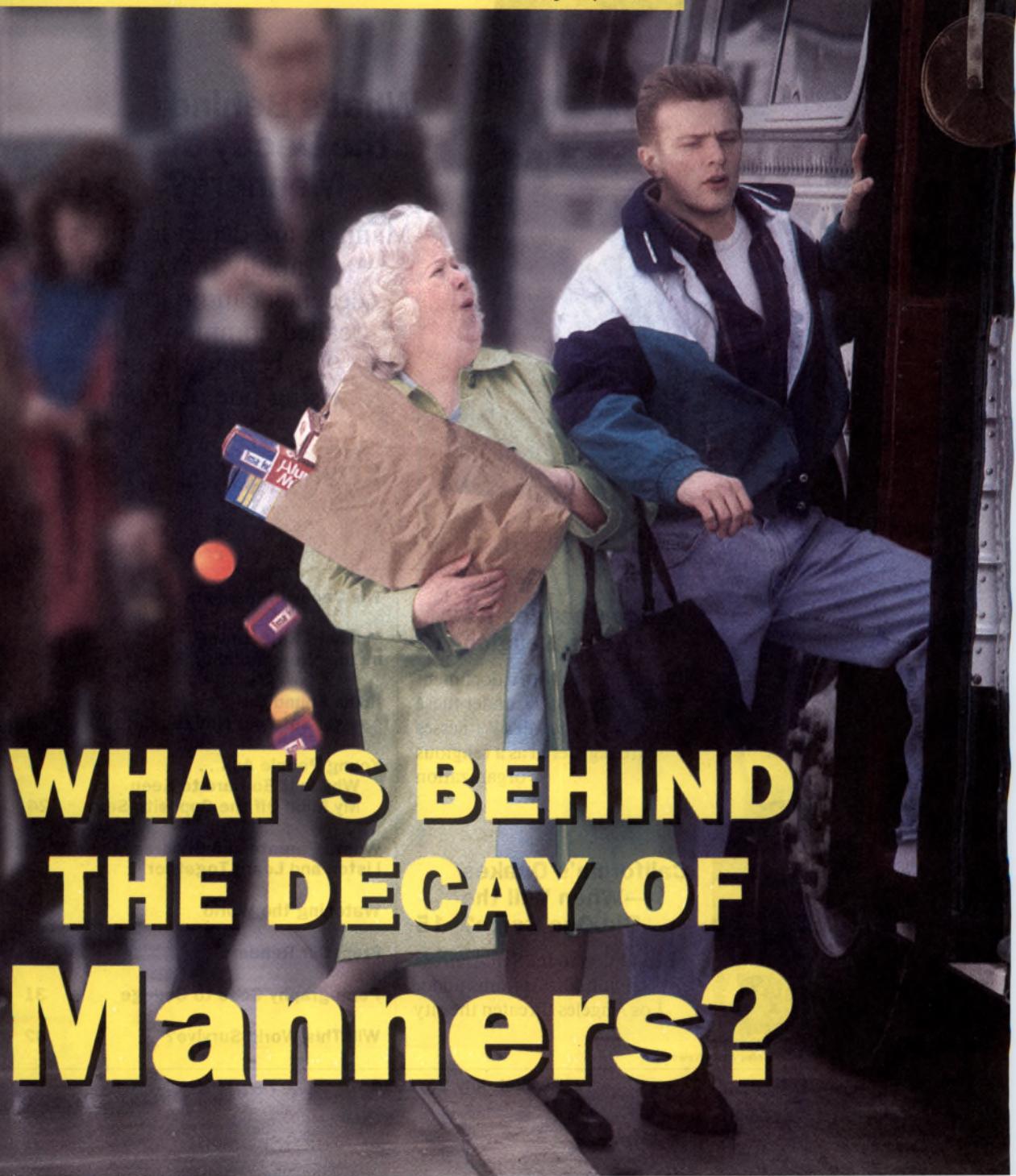


Awake!

July 22, 1994



**WHAT'S BEHIND
THE DECAY OF
Manners?**



What's Behind the Decay of Manners? 3-11

Manners are deteriorating so rapidly that common decency can no longer be called common. What is behind the current rising tide of rudeness?



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In accordance with a document dated May 7, 1993, under these new laws, Jehovah's Witnesses are registered as a religious organization



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In addition to the San Andreas Fault, thrust faults under Los Angeles threaten the city

Hans Gutknecht/Los Angeles Daily News

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THE DECAY OF *Manners*



*Millions still practice good manners.
Other millions trample them underfoot.*

AT THE turn of the century, etiquette got off on the wrong foot, according to *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*: "In the late 19th and early 20th centuries those in the upper strata of society regarded the observance of the most trivial demands of etiquette as at once a diversion and, for the women, an occupation. More and more elaborate rituals were designed to create a sense of exclusiveness for the initiates and to keep the unworthy, ignorant of them, at a distance."

That is a far cry from what good manners should be. Amy Vanderbilt is a respected authority on the subject of manners, and she writes in her *New Complete Book of Etiquette*: "The finest rules for behavior are to be found in Chapter 13 of First Corinthians, the beautiful dissertation on charity by St. Paul. These rules have nothing to do with the fine points of dress nor with those of superficial manners. They have to do with feelings and attitudes, kindness, and consideration of others."

What Amy Vanderbilt referred to is the Biblical passage at 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, which says: "Love is long-suffering and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, does not get puffed up, does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep account

of the injury. It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails."

What a rarity it would be to see love like this practiced today! Everywhere, all manners would be impeccable! The starting point in teaching and learning such manners is the Christian home. A family is a delicate machine whose parts are in close contact with one another. Only expert lubrication can keep it in smooth running order. Knowing how to be helpful, courteous, pleasant, and polite will go a long way toward making a home happy. Learning how to voice the accepted everyday expressions of courtesy and consideration—such as "Thank-you," "Please," "Forgive me," "I'm sorry"—will do much to eliminate destructive friction in our associations. These are little words with big meanings. Everyone can say them properly. They cost us nothing, but with them we buy friends. If we daily practice good manners in our homes, they will not leave us when we go outside the family circle and mingle with the public.

Good manners involve showing consideration for the feelings of others, according them respect, treating them as we would like for them to treat us. Many have noted, however, that manners themselves have undergone

Left: Life; Right: Grandville

a breakdown. One writer said: "We are wanting in courtesy because individualism has gained the upper hand." Philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer wrote: "Selfishness is such a horrible thing that we invented politeness to conceal it." Today many believe that "polite" means "weak" and that putting others first is wimpy. Was it not the Me decade of the '70's that launched us into the present me-first mode of living? One big-city newspaper said: "The problem has reached the point where common decency can no longer be described as common."

Common decency can no longer be called common

London's *Daily Mail* reports that children as young as five years of age are increasingly belligerent, disrespectful of other children's property, lacking in respect for adults, and using obscene language. Most teachers surveyed feel that parents are spoiling their children and that this is the root cause of the increase in unsocial behavior. Of the teachers interviewed in one survey, 86 percent blame "lack of clear standards and expectations at home." Eighty-two percent point to the absence of parental example as the culprit. Broken homes, divorce, live-in relationships, too much television, no discipline, no sanctions

—it all boils down to the destruction of the family.

One elementary school principal said: "I worry about the absence of respect among children today. They don't seem to care if they humiliate peers or offend adults. . . . They show their disrespect in many ways —offensive signals, obscenities, refusal to obey simple orders . . . , willingness to hog the ball . . . [On the other hand,] children from some homes tend to respect others. They don't have to be teacher's pet . . . , but they behave respectfully toward others. They wait their turn while others push ahead . . . Either it's instilled [in the children] or not."

Another elementary school principal, a veteran of many years, goes further: "We're seeing more just plain meanness. On the playground kids don't seem to play like they used to; they rove around in gangs. They're quick to identify the weak ones, kids on the fringe, kids who don't wear the right sneakers or jeans. They go after them, taunt them; there's a vicious edge to it. We've tried to stop it, but we haven't been very successful."

"Many people are driving incredibly rudely," says Professor Jonathan Freedman of Columbia University. "It's almost a battle-ground on the highways." The *Monthly Letter* of the Royal Bank of Canada speaks of "the relentless carnage on the roads" and concludes that "the core of the problem is uncivil behaviour. The courtesy, consideration, forbearance, tolerance and respect for human

Awake!

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rights which go to make up civilization are disgracefully lacking."

The New York Times characterizes the streets of New York City this way: "It's Motorists vs. Ambulances." More motorists in that city are refusing to yield to emergency vehicles, such as ambulances and fire trucks—increasing the danger that someone who is critically ill or injured will die because he can't be reached or transported to a hospital quickly enough. Captain Ellen Scibelli of the Emergency Medical Services told of a man driving on Pelham Parkway in the Bronx who refused to clear the way for an ambulance responding to a cardiac-arrest call. "He tried to be a tough guy and not move over, but when he arrived at his house, he realized just how stupid it was. His mother had a heart attack and the ambulance was trying to get to her."

The New York Times International told about an English organization called the Polite Society that was formed because "people have become positively beastly to one another, and something must be done." In a column in *The Evening Standard*, a broadcast journalist was moved to complain: "A nation once renowned for its civility is becoming a country of boors." A Scottish insurance company "concluded that 47 percent of all road accidents can be traced back to an act of discourtesy."

Television has contributed heavily to the erosion of manners, especially with children and teenagers. How people dress, how people

talk, how people cope with human relationships, how people repeatedly solve problems with violence—television is a teacher. If we and our children take in a diet of fictitious and shallow programs, eventually our manners will reflect the sassy, disrespectful, and sarcastic attitudes of the characters we view. Parents are often depicted as nannies and children as the smart ones.

The world finds satisfaction in speaking with loud, authoritative bluster—interrupting, proud of being domineering, boisterous, condescending, provocative, challenging. It used to be that rude behavior was frowned

The ambulance was trying to reach his mother

upon by the community at large, and the perpetrator was ostracized. In today's society a rude act can be committed without stigma being attached to the offender. And if anyone objects, he may come under verbal or physical assault! Some youths traveling in noisy groups fill the air with foul language, obscene gestures, offending observers with their crude conduct, all deliberately designed to attract attention to their defiant rebelliousness and to shock adults by their blatant display of rudeness. However, as it has been said, "rudeness is a weak man's imitation of strength."

The laws men have compiled to manage

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the conduct of humanity would fill a library, yet they have not resulted in the guidance humanity needs. Do we need still more? Or maybe fewer? It has been said that the better a society is, the less law it needs. How about just one law? This one, for example: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them; this, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean."—Matthew 7:12.

Obedience to that law would sweep away most of the current problems, but still, to complete the needs of society, a more important law must be added: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength."—Mark 12:30.

"Rudeness is a weak man's imitation of strength"

Today's society dismisses both of these Biblical requirements as unnecessary, along with any other guidelines contained in the Bible. The Bible speaks of such ones at Jeremiah 8:9: "The wise ones have become ashamed. . . . They have rejected the very word of Jehovah, and what wisdom do they have?" They also see no need for a public consensus on the true values that have traditionally been recognized as essential for our guidance. Their new morality is a broad way that gives room for any alternative life-styles that individuals may choose—the broad way that Jesus identified as the road leading off into destruction—and many are the ones going off into it.—Matthew 7:13, 14.

The Perfect Example

Jesus Christ, the one "who is in the bosom position with the Father," is an outstanding

example worthy of imitation. (John 1:18) In dealing with people, he was tender and compassionate on the one hand, forceful and firm on the other; yet he was never rude or unkind to anyone. Commenting on "his extraordinary gift of being at ease with all sorts of persons," the book *The Man From Nazareth* says of Jesus: "Alike in public and in private he associated with men and women on equal terms. He was at home with little children in their innocence and strangely enough at home too with conscience-stricken grafters like Zacchaeus. Respectable home-keeping women, such as Mary and Martha, could talk with him with natural frankness, but courtesans also sought him out as though assured that he would understand and befriend them . . . His strange unawareness of boundaries that hemmed ordinary people in is one of his most characteristic qualities."

Jehovah God is always mannerly when dealing with those below him, often adding "please" to his requests. When granting his friend Abraham a blessing, he said: "Raise your eyes, please, and look from the place where you are." And again: "Look up, please, to the heavens and count the stars." (Genesis 13:14; 15:5) When giving Moses a sign of His power, God said: "Stick your hand, please, into the upper fold of your garment." (Exodus 4:6) Many years later, Jehovah, through his prophet Micah, said even to his wayward people: "Hear, please, you heads of Jacob and you commanders of the house of Israel. . . . Hear, please, this, you head ones." (Micah 3:1, 9) In this respect, have we "become imitators of God" in saying "please" when dealing with others?—Ephesians 5:1.

So, what guidelines or moral precepts do the worldly-wise offer as replacements for the Biblical ones they reject as unacceptable? The following article considers this.



Manners

REJECTED BY THE "NEW MORALITY"?

*'Woe to those putting bad for good,
dark for light, bitter for sweet.'—Isaiah 5:20.*

THE 20th century saw sweeping changes in manners and morals. In the decades that followed the two world wars, the old value systems gradually came to be viewed as outmoded. Changing conditions and new theories in the fields of human behavior and science convinced many that the old values were no longer valid. Manners once held in high regard were shed as excess baggage. Bible guidelines once respected were rejected as outmoded. They were much too restrictive for the freewheeling, liberated society of ultramodern individuals of the 20th century.

The year that saw this turning point in human history was 1914. The writings of historians concerning that year and World War I are replete with their observations declaring 1914 to be a year of momentous change, a real marker dividing epochs in human history. The Roaring Twenties charged in on the heels of the war and people tried to catch up on the fun missed during those war years. Old values and inconvenient moral restraints were brushed aside to clear the way for the fun splurge. A new morality, indulging fleshly pursuits, was informally installed—basically an anything-goes approach. The

new moral code inevitably carried with it a change in manners.

Historian Frederick Lewis Allen comments on this: "Another result of the revolution was that manners became not merely different, but—for a few years—unmannerly. . . . During this decade hostesses . . . found that their guests couldn't be bothered to speak to them on arrival or departure; that 'gate-crashing' at dances became an accepted practice, people were 'fashionably late' for dinners, left burning cigarettes about, scattered ashes on rugs, without apology. The old bars were down, no new ones had been built, and meanwhile the pigs were in the pasture. Some day, perhaps, the ten years which followed the war may aptly be known as the decade of Bad Manners. . . . If the decade was ill-mannered, it was also unhappy. With the old order of things had gone a set of values which had given richness and meaning to life, and substitute values were not easily found."

Substitute values that restored richness and meaning to life were never found. They were not sought after. The exciting anything-goes life-style of the Roaring Twenties freed people of moral constraints,

Left: Life; Right: Grandville

which suited them just fine. They were not casting morality aside; they were just revising it, loosening it up a bit. In time they called it the New Morality. In it each one does what's right in his own eyes. He's number one. He does his own thing. He blazes his own trail.

Or so he thinks. Actually, three thousand years ago, wise King Solomon said: "There is nothing new under the sun." (*Ecclesiastes* 1:9) Even earlier, during the period of the Judges, Israelites had considerable latitude as to whether they would obey God's Law or not: "In those days there was no king in Israel. What was right in his own eyes was what each one was accustomed to do." (*Judges* 21:25) But the majority proved unwilling to heed the Law. By sowing this way, Israel reaped hundreds of years of national disasters. Similarly, nations today have reaped centuries of pain and suffering—and the worst is yet to come.

There is another term that identifies the New Morality more specifically, namely, "relativism." *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines it thus: "A view that ethical truths depend on the individuals and groups holding them." In a nutshell the disciples of relativism contend that whatever is good for them is ethical for them. One writer enlarged upon relativism when he said: "Relativism, long lurking below the surface, emerged as the prevailing philosophy of the 'me decade' of the seventies; it reigns still in

the yuppieism of the eighties. We may still give lip service to traditional values, but in practice, the right is whatever is good for me."

And that includes manners—"If it suits me, I'll do it; if it doesn't, I won't. It wouldn't be right for me, even if it were more mannerly for you. It would ruin my radical individualism, make me look weak, turn me into a wimp." Apparently, for such people this applies not just to acts of rudeness but also to such easy, everyday niceties as 'Please, I'm sorry, Excuse me, Thank you, Let me get the door for you, Take my seat, Let me carry that package for you.' These and other phrases are like gentle lubricants that smooth out and make pleasant our human relationships. 'But showing manners for others,' the me-firster would object, 'would negatively affect my living up to and projecting my image of being number one.'

Sociologist James Q. Wilson attributes the increased friction and criminal conduct to the collapse of what today "is sneeringly referred to as 'middle-class values,'" and the report continues: "The demise of these values—and the increase in moral relativism—appears to correlate with a higher crime rate." It certainly correlates with the modern trend to reject any restraint on self-expression, regardless of how ill-mannered or offensive it may be. This is as another sociologist, Jared Taylor, said: "Our society has moved steadily from self-control to self-



Some say: 'Trash the Bible and moral values'

expression, and many people dismiss old-fashioned values as repressive."

Practicing relativism makes you the judge of your personal conduct, brushing aside anyone else's judgment, including God's. You are deciding for yourself what is right and what is wrong for you, just as the first human pair did in Eden when they rejected God's edict and decided for themselves what was right and what was wrong. The Serpent deceived Eve into thinking that if she disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit, then it would turn out as he said to her: "Your eyes are bound to be opened and you are bound to be like God, knowing good and bad." So Eve took some of the fruit and ate it and then gave some of it to Adam, and he ate it. (Genesis 3:5, 6) Adam and Eve's decision to eat was a disastrous one for them and calamitous for their offspring.

After a lengthy summary of corruption found among politicians, businessmen, athletes, scientists, a Nobel prize winner, and a clergyman, one observer said in a speech before the Harvard Business School: "I believe we are experiencing in our country today what I choose to call a crisis of character, a loss of what traditionally through Western civilization had been considered those inner restraints and inner virtues that prevent us from pandering to our own darker instincts." He spoke of "words that will almost sound quaint when uttered in these surroundings,

words like valor, honor, duty, responsibility, compassion, civility—words which have almost fallen into disuse."

In the '60's on university campuses, certain issues exploded. Many claimed that 'there is no God, God is dead, there is nothing, there is no transcendent value, life is ut-

terly meaningless, you can overcome the nothingness of life only by heroic individualism.' The flower children took their cue from this and went out to overcome the nothingness of life by 'sniffing coke, smoking pot, making love, and seeking personal peace.' Which they never found.

Then there were the protest movements of the '60's. More than just fads, they were embraced by the mainstream of American culture and led into the Me decade of the '70's. Thus we entered a decade that Tom Wolfe, the social critic, called "the de-

cade of Me." That graduated into the '80's, cynically called by some, "the golden age of greed."

What does all of this have to do with manners? It is about putting yourself first, and if you put yourself first, you cannot easily give way before others, cannot put others first, cannot exercise good manners toward others. By putting yourself first, you may be, in fact, indulging in a form of self-worship, a worship of Me. How does the Bible describe someone who does that? As a "greedy person—which means being an idolater," as showing "covetousness, which is idolatry."



**"God is dead."
"No meaning to life!"
"Smoke pot, sniff coke"**

(Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 3:5) Whom do such people really serve? "Their god is their belly." (Philippians 3:19) The sordid alternative life-styles that many people have chosen as morally right for them and the calamitous, death-dealing consequences of those life-styles only prove the truthfulness of Jeremiah 10:23: "I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step."

The Bible foresaw all of this and predicted it as a warning feature of "the last days," as recorded at 2 Timothy 3:1-5, *New English Bible*: "You must face the fact: the final age of this world is to be a time of troubles. Men will love nothing but money and self; they will be arrogant, boastful, and abusive; with no respect for parents, no gratitude, no piety, no natural affection; they will be implacable in their hatreds, scandal-mongers, intemperate and fierce, strangers to all goodness, traitors, adventurers, swollen with self-importance. They will be men who

put pleasure in the place of God, men who preserve the outward form of religion, but are a standing denial of its reality. Keep clear of men like these."

We have drifted far from what we were created to be—in the image and likeness of God. The potential attributes of love, wisdom, justice, and power are still within us but have become unbalanced and distorted. The first step on the way of return is revealed in the last sentence of the Bible text quoted above: "Keep clear of men like these."

Seek out a new environment,

one that will change even your internal feelings.

Instructive toward this end are the wise words written years ago in *The Ladies' Home Journal* by Dorothy Thompson. Her quote opens with the declaration that to overcome juvenile delinquency, it is necessary to educate a youth's emotions rather than his intellect:

"His actions and attitudes as a child largely determine his actions and attitudes as an adult. But these are not inspired by his brain, but by his feelings. He



Impeccable Table Manners That People Might Well Copy

Cedar waxwings, beautiful, well-mannered, very sociable, banqueting together in a large bush loaded with ripe berries. Lined up in a row along a branch, they feed on the fruit, but not at all hoggishly. From beak to beak, they pass a berry back and forth to one another, until finally one graciously eats it. They never forget their "children," tirelessly bringing food, berry by berry, until all the empty mouths have had their fill.

H. Armstrong Roberts

becomes what he is encouraged and trained to love, admire, worship, cherish, and sacrifice for. . . . In all this manners play an important role, for good manners are nothing more or less than the expression of consideration for others. . . . Internal feelings are reflected in external behavior, but external behavior also contributes to the cultivation of internal feelings. It is hard to feel aggressive while acting considerately. Good manners may be only skin deep to start with, but they seldom remain so."

She also observed that, with rare exceptions, goodness and badness "are not conditioned by the brain but by the emotions" and that "criminals become so not from hardening of the arteries but from hardening of the heart." She stressed that emotion governs our conduct more often than the mind and that the way we are trained, the way we act, even if forced at first, influences internal feelings and changes the heart.

However, it is the Bible that excels in giving the inspired formula for changing the inner person of the heart.

First, Ephesians 4:22-24: "You should put away the old personality which conforms to your former course of conduct and which is being corrupted according to his deceptive desires. . . . 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."

Second, Colossians 3:9, 10, 12-14: "Strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new according to the image of the One who created it. Accordingly, as God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kind-

ness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."

Historian Will Durant said: "The greatest question of our time is not communism versus individualism, not Europe versus America, not even the East versus the West; it is whether men can live without God."

The way we act, even if forced at first, influences internal feelings and changes the heart

To live a successful life, we must heed his counsel. "My son, my law do not forget, and my commandments may your heart observe, because length of days and years of life and peace will be added to you. May loving-kindness and trueness themselves not leave you. Tie them about your throat. Write them upon the tablet of your heart, and so find favor and good insight in the eyes of God and of earthling man. Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight."—Proverbs 3:1-6.

The kind and considerate good manners learned by centuries of living are not excess baggage after all, and the Bible's guidelines for living are not outmoded at all but will prove to be for mankind's eternal salvation. Without Jehovah, they cannot continue to live, for 'with Jehovah is the source of life.' —Psalm 36:9.

MEXICO

CHANGES ITS LAWS ON RELIGION

ON JULY 16, 1992, THE NEW LAW OF RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS AND PUBLIC WORSHIP WAS PUT INTO EFFECT IN MEXICO. WHY WAS THIS NECESSARY, AND WHAT DOES THIS NEW LAW CONVEY? LET US TAKE A LOOK INTO THIS MATTER THAT HAS AROUSED MUCH ANTICIPATION.

WITH Spain's conquest of what is now Mexico, the Catholic religion was imposed by force on the people. When the time came to legislate religious matters, a law of Spain, the *Constitución de Cádiz* (1812), was applied in part; Article 12 stated: "The religion of the Spanish Nation is and will forever be Catholic, Apostolic, Roman, the one and only true religion." Later on, in 1824, a Constitution was established for Mexico, and it stated: "The religion of the Mexican Nation is and will forever be Catholic, Apostolic, Roman. The Nation protects it by wise and just laws, and prohibits the exercise of any other." Although there were several revisions of the law of the country, the same idea was expressed even until 1843, granting the Catholic religion priority and, in fact, excluding any other religion.

It was in 1857 that Benito Juárez, a Mexican statesman, started a revision of the laws of the country introducing what was called Laws of the Reformation. This was to "nationalize the real estate of the church" and "to increase the political and economic power of the State and to decrease that of the [Catholic] Church." (*Historia de México*, Volume 10, page 2182) In this group of laws of 1859, the

Law of Nationalization of Ecclesiastical Properties was promulgated, as well as a law requiring that marriages be performed by the State in order for them to be legal. In 1860 the Law for Religious Freedom was promulgated.

The reformation laws granted a certain amount of religious freedom to the people, stipulating that the Catholic religion would no longer be the only one that could exist in the country. However, this new freedom was quite limited and conditional. The laws recognized that religions existed in Mexico but did not accord them any legal recognition or rights. Reformation laws were specially designed to limit the Catholic religion but incidentally also limited all religions in the country. Nevertheless, religions apart from Catholicism could then function more freely, and Protestant religions from the United States started an evangelization campaign in the country.

The reformation laws were reinforced in 1917, with the same anticlerical spirit, which caused persecution of the priests and Catholic people. This gave way to the *Cristeros* war in 1926, a Catholic war against the government that was an attempt to cancel the re-

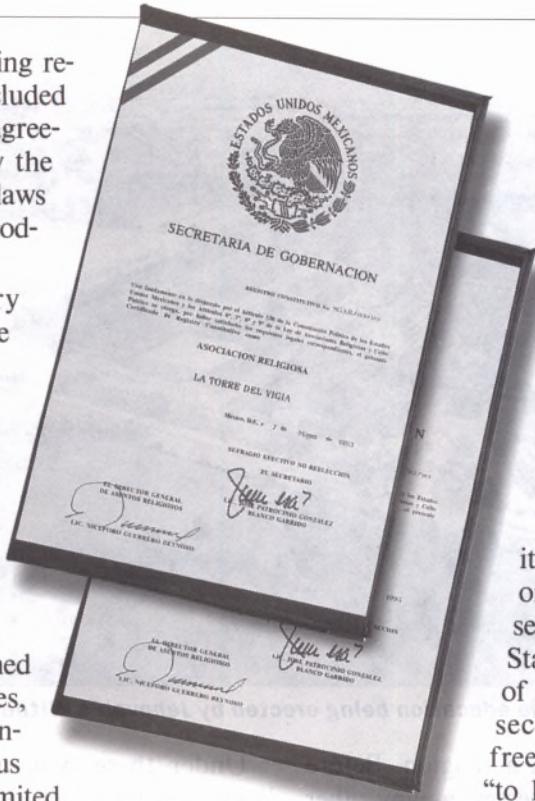
**Documents
of registration for
Jehovah's Witnesses
in Mexico**

strictive laws governing religion. This war concluded in 1929 with some agreement of tolerance by the government, but the laws continued without modification.

In a commentary about these laws, the book *Una Ley Para la Libertad Religiosa* (A Law for Religious Freedom) mentions: "We realize that originally our Constitutional Article 24 in its second paragraph, and the other reformed constitutional articles, were clearly an infringement of religious freedom, since they limited the external practice of every individual's religion and subjected the practice thereof to regulation dictated by the authority.

"Furthermore, these constitutional dispositions were clearly contradictory to what was established in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 19) and to the American Convention of Human Rights (Article 12), which international instruments the Mexican State has endorsed."

In 1988, when the new president of Mexico started his six-year term, the Catholic hierarchy was invited to the presidential inauguration. In his message, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari announced the need to modernize the relations between Church and State. This new approach led to the conclusion that a revision of the laws relative to religion was mandatory. Besides that, the country was developing into a more democratic society, and



negotiations were started for a free trade agreement with the United States and Canada. So it was essential to revise the law to make it consistent with freedom of religion.

The New Law

The new law, as stated in its first article, is "founded on the historic principle of separation of Church and State, as well as on freedom of religious beliefs . . ." The second article guarantees freedom for the individual "to have or to adopt the religious beliefs that he prefers and practice, collectively or individually, the acts of worship or rites of his preference . . . , to profess no religious beliefs . . . , not to be an object of discrimination, coercion, or hostility because of one's religious beliefs . . . , to associate and meet together peacefully for religious purposes." Through this law, "churches and religious groups will have legal status as religious institutions as soon as they obtain the corresponding required registry before the Ministry of Government." Also, "religious institutions formed according to the present law may have their own patrimony that allows them to fulfill their objective."

**Jehovah's Witnesses
Are Registered Legally**

In accord with this new law, Jehovah's Witnesses in Mexico presented an application to the Office of Religious Affairs on April 13,



New center for Bible education being erected by Jehovah's Witnesses in Mexico

1993, to be registered as a religion. Before that time Jehovah's Witnesses, as any other religion in the country, existed de facto but had no legal personality. Jehovah's Witnesses had been present in the country since early in the 20th century. Although there was no legal recognition, on June 2, 1930, the government of Mexico authorized the International Association of Bible Students. On December 20, 1932, this name was changed to La Torre del Vigía (The Watchtower). But in 1943, because of laws that limited religious activities in the country, a new entity was registered as a civil association. In this way Jehovah blessed the work that Jehovah's Witnesses had been carrying out throughout the years. At present, in accord with a document dated May 7, 1993, which was forwarded to them on May 31, 1993, Jehovah's Witnesses are registered as La Torre del Vigía, A. R., and Los Testigos de Jehová en México, A. R., both of them religious associations.

Under these new provisions, Jehovah's Witnesses in Mexico, as in 230 other lands in the world, continue working hard in preaching the Kingdom of God. There is a big program of expansion in Mexico, which includes the construction of new Kingdom Halls and new Assembly Halls. With more than 380,000 publishers and some 30,000 new ones getting baptized each year, there is a lot of work to do, as manifested in the 530,000 home Bible studies that are being conducted at present.

This does not mean that all the problems are solved for Jehovah's Witnesses in Mexico. Their children still have to face pressures in school because of the neutrality issue. The authorities, however, seek to apply the new law in an equitable way in dealing with the different religions in the country. Mexico has indeed taken a big step in the defense of human rights and religious freedom with the new law concerning religion.

CALIFORNIA'S QUAKES

WHEN WILL THE BIG ONE COME?

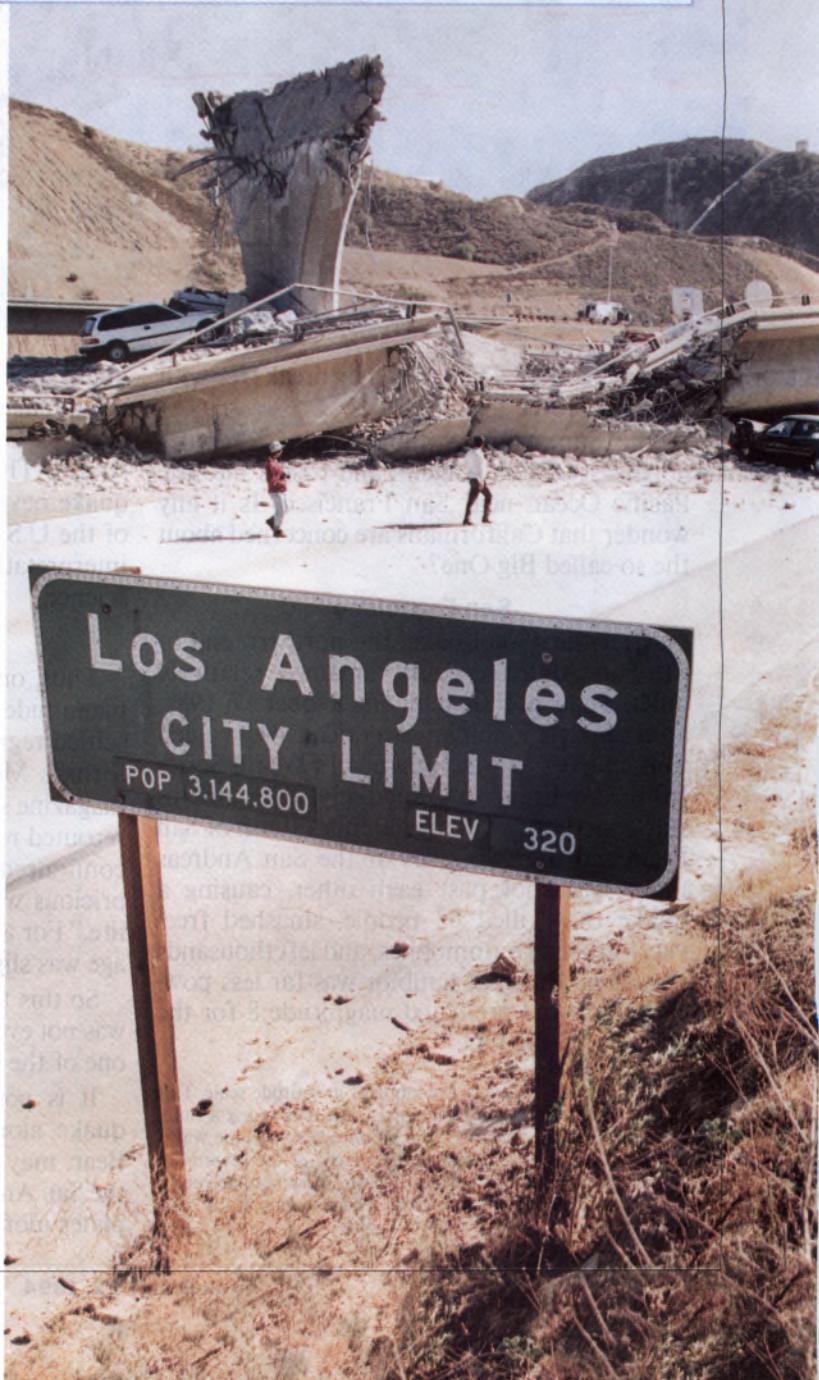
THE ground swayed. Gas lines snapped. Buildings collapsed. Fires raged. Was this the recent Los Angeles earthquake? No. It was the quake that struck San Francisco on April 18, 1906. That quake, and the three-day fire that followed it, destroyed 512 blocks in the center of town and took some 700 lives.

What causes such catastrophes?

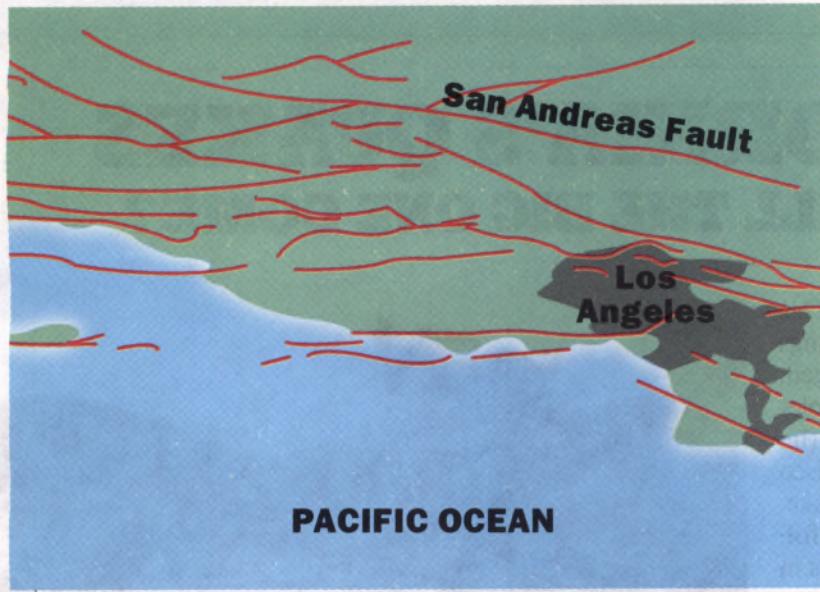
Scientists try to explain by using the theory of plate tectonics. They say that earth's crust lies on some 20 rigid plates, or slabs, of rock that move slowly, sliding past and at certain points under one another. The Pacific plate slides slowly northward, past the North American plate. The zone of slippage between these two plates is called the San Andreas Fault. It stretches northward some 650 miles, from the head of the Gulf of California, disappearing into the Pacific Ocean near San Francisco.

These plates move very slowly, at something like the rate at which your fingernails grow—an inch or so a year. Over many years stress builds when the plates stick as they try to slide

Freeway damage left by the 1994 Los Angeles quake



Hans Gutknecht/Los Angeles Daily News



Thrust fault lines in the Los Angeles basin

past each other. Then they may break free with explosive force.

The San Andreas Fault passes 33 miles northeast of Los Angeles and passes into the Pacific Ocean near San Francisco. Is it any wonder that Californians are concerned about the so-called Big One?

San Francisco

After the 1906 quake, the northern end of the San Andreas Fault remained relatively quiet. Then, at 5:04 p.m. on October 17, 1989, an estimated 50 million Americans were glued to their TVs to watch baseball's World Series from San Francisco. Suddenly, the cameras started to bounce. Some 60 miles south of San Francisco the two sides of the San Andreas Fault had shot past each other, causing a quake that killed 63 people, smashed freeways, crushed automobiles, and left thousands homeless. But that tremor was far less powerful than the predicted magnitude 8 for the anticipated Big One.*

* "Magnitude" refers to the moment magnitude scale. This scale is based directly on the slip of the rock along a fault. The Richter scale measures the amplitude of seismic waves and is therefore an indirect measurement of the severity of an earthquake. The two scales usually show similar results for most earthquakes, though the moment magnitude scale is more precise.

Back in the spring of 1985, the U.S. Geological Survey predicted that a quake of magnitude 6 would occur within five years of 1988 near the small town of Parkfield, about halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. By studying ground movement in advance of this anticipated

quake, they hoped to learn how to predict earthquakes and to be able to give a warning perhaps hours or even days before a quake strikes. This study cost \$15 million, but the quake never occurred. As William Ellsworth of the U.S. Geological Survey once said, "the interpretation of seismic patterns is an inexact science."

Landers Quake

Thus, on June 28, 1992, no one expected a magnitude 7.5 quake to strike in a sparsely settled region near Landers, in southern California's Mojave Desert. Of this quake *Time* magazine said: "In a few fearsome seconds, it rerouted roads, realigned parking lots and reconfigured the landscape in countless capricious ways, miraculously taking only one life." For a quake of this magnitude, the damage was slight.

So this too was not the Big One. In fact, it was not even on the San Andreas Fault but on one of the smaller faults that surround it.

It is possible, however, that the Landers quake, along with a smaller one at nearby Big Bear, may have awakened nearby sections of the San Andreas. Scientists have said the stuck plates along the southernmost section of the

San Andreas have a 40 percent chance of snapping loose sometime within the next 30 years. That might trigger the long-feared Big One, at magnitude 8 some five times as powerful as that at Landers.

Los Angeles

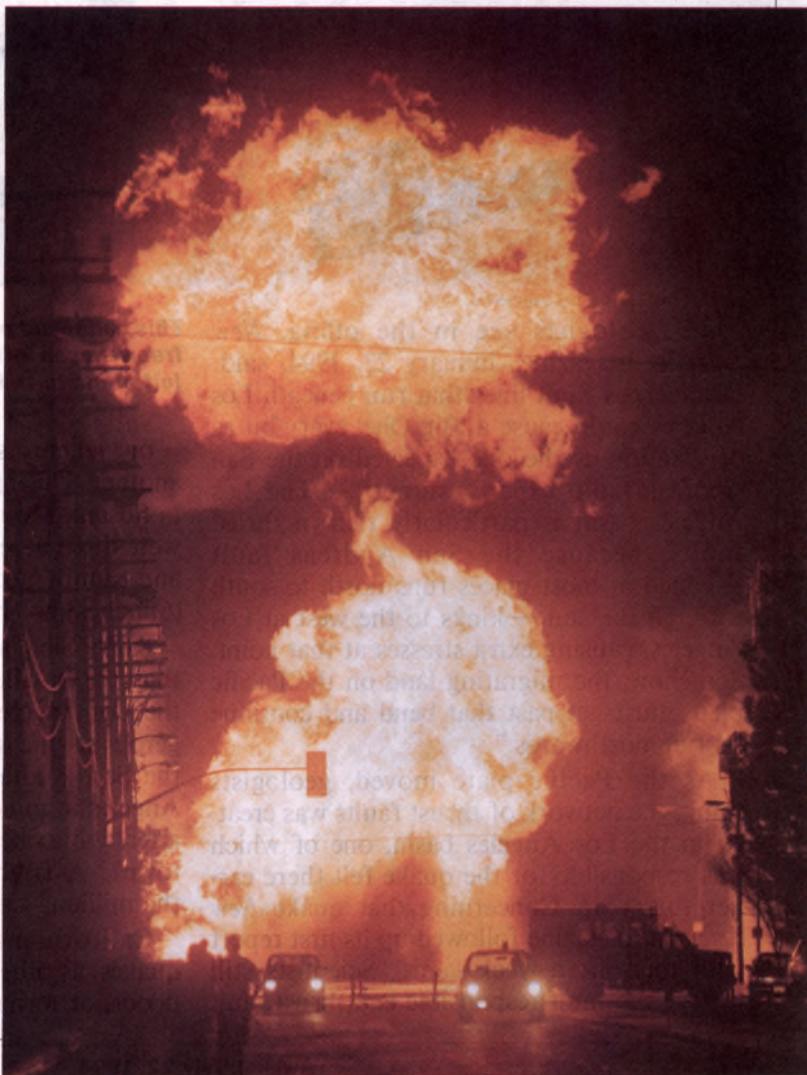
Then, on January 17 of this year, Los Angeles was jolted awake at 4:31 a.m. Some 11 miles beneath the surface of heavily populated San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles, a patch of rock is thought to have slipped some 18 feet along a deeply buried fault. This ten-second jolt of magnitude 6.6 took at least 57 lives. Tragically, 16 people died in one collapsing apartment building. A man who survived was trapped for eight hours under 20 tons of concrete in a fallen parking structure. A freeway collapse severed the city's main route to the north. Churches, schools, stores, and a major hospital closed. As is frequently the case, lower-income families suffered the most because of living in older buildings that had been constructed before modern earthquake codes were established.

This quake demonstrated the problems that may develop with even smaller local faults directly under a major city. As far as people are concerned, any earthquake is the Big One to them if they are sleeping on top of it!

The destruction would have been far greater had it not been for strict local building codes. Each earthquake teaches lessons that may make it easier next time. Some freeway overpasses that had been strengthened after previous quakes survived this one; others did not. But the real test will come if a greater earthquake—a really *big one*—strikes near a major city. Los Angeles again, maybe?

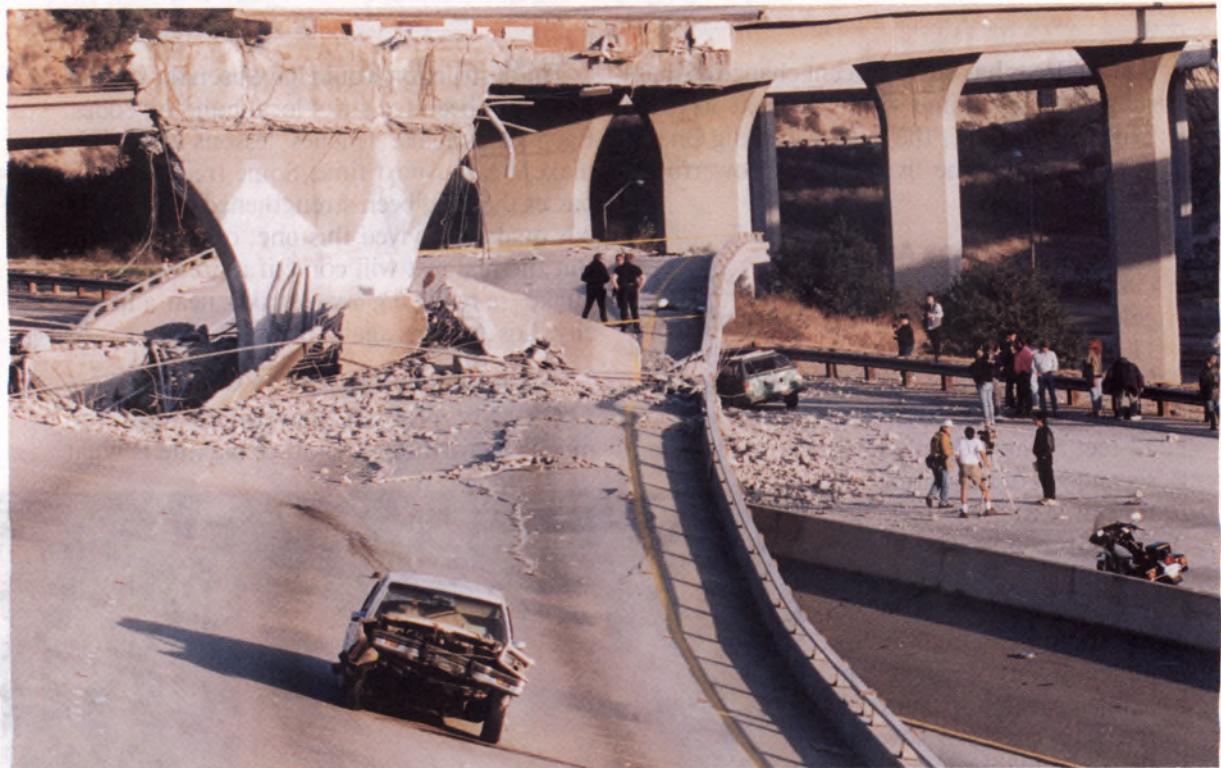
A Second Big One to Come?

'Oh, No! Not another one! One's too much!' Nevertheless, another big one is what



Flames erupting from a gas line snapped by the 1994 quake

Tina Gerson/Los Angeles Daily News



Gene Blevins/Los Angeles Daily News

some geologists see in the offing. *New Scientist* magazine, January 22, 1994, said: "Dangerous fault lines that run beneath Los Angeles could cause a 'Big One' every bit as devastating as the one expected on the San Andreas fault, experts warn. . . . The Los Angeles basin is particularly rich in thrust faults, because the San Andreas fault—which at most places runs north to south through the state—kinks to the west at Los Angeles, causing extra stresses at that point. Somehow, the migrating land on the Pacific plate must get past that bend and continue its ride northwards."

As the Pacific plate moved, geologists think, the network of thrust faults was created in the Los Angeles basin, one of which was responsible for the quake felt there earlier this year. Concerning that quake *New Scientist* magazine followed up its first report with this one a week later: "Scientists still believe the fault responsible is a thrust fault

This collapsed portion of a Los Angeles freeway was left in the wake of a ten-second jolt of magnitude 6.6

—one where a slab of rock slides up and over another. During last week's quake, the Santa Susana Mountains north of the epicentre were lifted at least 40 centimetres [16 inches] and simultaneously moved 15 centimetres [6 inches] northward."

Kerry Sieh, a geologist from Caltech, feels that the smaller thrust faults crisscrossing the Los Angeles basin could be just as dangerous as the still-expected magnitude 8 on the San Andreas. Sieh then asks with Los Angeles in mind: "Is it possible we could get a really big one, a magnitude 8, under downtown?" A frightening question, considering the millions sitting on top of it!

Californians seem to live with earthquakes, as other people live with hurricanes, floods, or tornadoes.

Addie Found the Answer Late *but Not Too Late*

The story of a black woman's 87-year search for social justice. She is sitting on a log fishing at the edge of a swamp. Her skin is smooth, her mind is clear, and she has an air of dignity about her. She is strong, experienced, knowledgeable, but in her eyes you can see wit and humor, plus a pleasing humility. She is a great storyteller. Her African heritage comes through, mingled with memories of the deep South. Listen as she relives her life.

MY GRANDMOTHER was born on a slave ship on its way from Africa to Georgia. She was so frail no one expected her to live. So when her mother was sold, they just gave the sickly child along with her. This was about 1844. The child was named Rachel.

"Dewitt Clinton was running a plantation for his uncle. By Dewitt, Rachel conceived my father, Isaiah Clinton, who was born in June 1866. They called him Ike. As a boy, he often rode on the same horse with Dewitt and was taught all there was to know about running a plantation. A few years later, Dewitt told Ike: 'The time has come for you to make your own way in the world.' He then removed a money belt from his waist and gave it to Ike.

"After this my father went to work for a Mr. Skinner, became the overseer of the Skinner plantation, and married Ellen Howard. I was born on June 28, 1892, in Burke County, near Waynesboro, Georgia. Life was wonderful to me. I couldn't wait to get out the front door. Mother would hold me back until she tied my dress in back, and I'd hear her say every day: 'Tie a bow and let her go.' I would

climb onto the fork of the plow to be near my father.

"One day during a summer storm, lightning struck Mr. Skinner and his horse in an open field. Both were killed. Mrs. Skinner was a woman from the North and was hated by all the people in Burke County because of what General Sherman did when he burned Atlanta. So they hated Mrs. Skinner more than they hated the blacks! Mrs. Skinner got even with them. For spite, when her husband died, she sold the plantation to my father, a black man. Imagine a black man owning a plantation before the turn of the century in Georgia!"

Mr. Neely and the General Store

"When Papa needed anything, he went to Mr. Neely, who owned the general store. They have everything. Need a doctor, go to the general store. Need a coffin, go to the general store. You don't pay for anything; just put it on your bill until the cotton comes in. Neely found out Papa had money in the bank, so he brought us everything, stuff we didn't need—icebox, sewing machine, guns, bicycles, two mules. 'We don't need it!' Papa would say. Neely's response: 'It's a present. I'll put it on your bill.'

"One day Neely arrived at our farm with a big black Studebaker. Papa said: 'Mr. Neely, we don't need it! Nobody knows how to drive it or take care of it, and everybody's afraid of it!' Neely brushed that aside. 'Keep it, Ike. I'll put it on your bill and have one of my boys teach yours how to drive it.' We didn't get any use out of it. I begged Papa to let me go with one of the hands to get gas one day. Papa said: 'Don't touch it; I know you!' As soon as we were out of sight, I said: 'Let me try it. Papa knows I'm gonna do it.' The car took off, me turning left then right through the brush and the trees. I landed it in the creek.

"I'd asked Papa why he didn't refuse this stuff, and he'd reply: 'That would be a big mistake, an insult. Besides, the KKK [Ku Klux Klan] don't mess with none of Mr. Neely's niggers.' So we paid for all this stuff we didn't need. And I thought of what Papa was always saying: 'Don't buy what you don't need, or soon you'll need what you can't buy.' I hated Mr. Neely!

"When everyone was celebrating the turn of the century, January 1, 1900, my mother died while giving birth to her fourth child. I was only eight at the time, but I told Papa at the graveside I would take care of him.

"My mother's mother helped out with us kids. Her name was Mary. She was very religious, had a memory like an elephant, but couldn't read or write. I'd be in the kitchen plying her with questions. 'Why is it that

white people don't want to be bothered with colored people, since they say everybody's equal in God's sight? When we go to heaven, are all the white people gonna be there too? Will that Mr. Neely be there?"

Mary would answer: 'I don't know. We'll all enjoy ourselves.' I wasn't so sure.

"Grandma, what are we gonna do in heaven?" 'Oh, we gonna walk on streets paved with gold! We gonna put on wings and fly from tree to tree!' I thought to myself: 'I'd rather be outdoors playing.' I never wanted to go to heaven anyway, but I didn't want to go to hell either. 'Grandma, what are we gonna eat in heaven?' She answered: 'Oh, we gonna eat milk and honey!' I cried out:

'But I don't like milk, and I don't like honey! Grandma, I'm gonna starve to death! I'm gonna starve to death in heaven!"

I Start My Education

"Papa wanted me to get an education. In 1909 he sent me to the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Booker T. Washington was the head and heart of the school. The students called him Papa. He traveled extensively raising money for the school, much of it from white people. When he was at the school, he preached this message to us: 'Get an education. Get a job, and save your money. Then own a piece of land. And don't let me ever visit you and find the grass uncut, the house unpainted, or the windows broken out with rags stuffed in them to keep the cold out. Have pride in yourself. Help your people.'



Help them to pull up. You can be an example.'

"They certainly needed a 'pull up.' They're good people—lots of good in them. There are things the white man should remember about the past when he considers the Negro. The Negro wasn't given the opportunity to learn. It was against the rules in slavery to teach a Negro. We are the only people who came into this country against our will. Others were eager to get here. We weren't. They put us in chains and brought us here. They worked us 300 years for free. We worked 300 years for the white man, and he didn't give us enough to eat or shoes to wear. Worked us from morning till night, whipped us at the slightest whim. And when he freed us, he still didn't give us a chance to learn. He wanted us to work on the farm and for our children to work too and to go to school three months a year.

"And do you know what kind of school it was? A little church because there was no school for the Negro. Plank seats. June, July, and August, the hottest months of the year. No screens on the windows. Kids sitting on the floor. A hundred and three students to one teacher, and all the bugs getting in. What can you teach a kid in three months? One summer break from Tuskegee, I taught 108, from every grade.

"I graduated in 1913 as a nurse. In 1914, I married Samuel Montgomery. Later he left for World War I, and I was pregnant with my only child. Shortly after Samuel returned, he died. With my young son, I traveled by train to visit my sister in Illinois, expecting to find a nursing job there. All the Colored were directed to the car just behind the coal car. It was hot, the windows were open, and we were covered with soot and cinders. The second day our sandwiches were gone and no milk for the baby. I tried to get into the dining car

but was stopped by a black porter. 'You can't come in here.' 'Would they just sell me some milk for my baby?' The answer was no. Neely was the first injustice that fired my soul. This was the second one.

"In 1925, I married John Few, a porter on a train. He lived in St. Paul, Minnesota, so I relocated there. This brings me to the third thing that fired my soul on the issue of social justice. In St. Paul, I was far north, but the prejudice was worse than in the South. The county hospital wouldn't register me as a nurse. They said they had never heard of a black nurse. In Tuskegee we were well trained, and the patient always came first, but in St. Paul, skin color was the litmus test. So I sold the little house I still had in Waynesboro and used the money as a down payment on a lot and building. I started a garage, hired four mechanics, and soon had a good business going."

I Discover the NAACP

"It was about 1925 when I discovered the NAACP [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People] and plunged in. Had not Booker T. Washington said: 'Help your people. Help them to pull up'? The first thing I did was go to the governor of the state with a long list of black voters who owned homes and paid taxes. He listened, and he got a young black nurse a job at the same county hospital that had turned me down. The white nurses, however, treated her so badly—even pouring urine on all her uniforms—that she left for California and became a doctor.

"As for my garage business, it was great until one day in 1929. I had just made a \$2,000 deposit at my bank, and as I walked along, people began shouting that the banks had failed. I had two payments left on the garage. I lost it all. I divided with my mechanics what money I salvaged.

"No one had money. I bought my first house by cashing in my life-insurance policy for \$300. I got the house for \$300. I sold flowers, chickens, and eggs; took in boarders; and used extra money to buy empty lots for \$10 each. I was never hungry and was never on welfare. We ate eggs. We ate chickens. We ground up their bones to feed my pigs."

"Later I became friends with Eleanor Roosevelt and very close friends with Hubert Humphrey. Mr. Humphrey helped me buy a large apartment building in downtown white St. Paul. The real estate man was afraid for his life, so he made me promise not to do anything with the place for 12 months."

A Turning Point in My Life

"Something unusual happened in 1958 that I never forgot. Two white men and one colored man came to me looking for a place to stay for one night. I thought it was a trick to get me in trouble with the law, so I interviewed them for several hours. Their story was that they were Jehovah's Witnesses traveling cross-country to a convention in New York. They showed me what the Bible said about God's purpose for a paradise earth where there would be no prejudice. A brotherhood of man. I thought, 'Could they have what I've been searching for all these years?' They seemed like what they claimed to be—brothers. They didn't want to stay in separate places for the night."

"Then some years later I visited one of my tenants who I knew was dying. Her name was Minnie. When I asked what I could do for her, she said: 'Please read to me from that little blue book over there.' It was *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, a book distributed by Jehovah's Witnesses. So each visit I read more and more of the little blue book. One day Minnie died, and when I went to her apartment, a white lady named Daisy Gerken was there. She was almost totally blind. She told me that she studied with Minnie in the little blue book. Daisy asked me if there was anything here I would like to have. I said: 'Only her Bible and the little blue book.'

"I knew if I pursued the things in that blue book, I would have to quit all my work for my people. I couldn't describe all the things I was doing that I felt were worthwhile. I organized a union for the train porters. Through court battles won civil rights for some. I arranged for demonstrations, sometimes in several parts of town at the same time. I had to see that my people didn't break the law, and when they did, I had to get them out of jail. I belonged to over ten clubs but only to those that did civic work."

"So I thought I couldn't worry about the hereafter. My people were suffering now! I had a large staff in the NAACP, including a white secretary. From 1937 to 1959, I served as the vice president of the NAACP in St. Paul and from 1959 to 1962 as its president. I organized four states into a conference and served there to get the NAACP finally to hold its national convention in St. Paul. Many battles along the way, each a story in itself. Before I retired at 70 years of age in 1962, I visited President John F. Kennedy. Sad to say, at that time I was so involved in pursuing justice my way that I wouldn't make room for God's way."

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Parents—Be Your Child's Advocate

Is Gambling for Christians?

**How Can I Get My Mind
off the Opposite Sex?**

Finally I Discover the Only Way to Social Justice

"Daisy Gerken and I always kept in contact by phone, and she came to see me every year. Not long after I went to Tucson, Arizona, my gift subscription to *The Watchtower* ran out. A bad knee confined me, so when Adele Semonian, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, called, I was fortunately at home. We started studying the Bible together. Finally, the full impact of the truth hit me. I realized I couldn't solve all my people's problems and really 'pull them up.' The problem was bigger than Mr. Neely. Bigger than the South. Bigger than the United States. In fact, bigger than this world.

"It's a universal question. Who has the right to rule the world? Is it man? God's enemy Satan? Or is it the Creator's right? His, of course! Once this issue is settled, then the symptoms of social injustice that I had been battling all my life will disappear. And no matter what I had done, for black or white, we still grow old and die. God will make the earth a paradise with social justice for all. I was ecstatic with the prospect of living forever and caring for the plants and animals and loving my neighbor as myself —thereby fulfilling God's original purpose in creating man and woman here on the earth. (Psalm 37:9-11, 29; Isaiah 45:18) I was also thrilled to learn that I did not have to go to heaven and live on milk and honey or starve to death!

"I do have some regrets, principally that I spent most of my life seeking social justice

from the wrong source. I would have loved giving God the energy of my youth. In fact, I thought I was, by helping other people. I'm still helping, but now it is by pointing people to the hope of God's Kingdom under Christ Jesus, the only name given under heaven whereby we may be saved. (Matthew 12:21; 24:14; Revelation 21:3-5) My father used to say as he showed me a fist: 'If you hold your hand so tight, then nothing gets in and nothing gets out.' I want to open my hand to let out help for others.

"I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses at age 87. I can't slow down now because my time is short. I'm still kicking but not too high. I've missed maybe only two congregation meetings in the last two years. I've got to learn all I can so I can teach my family as much as I can when they are resurrected. I go in field service between 20 and 30 hours a month, with the help of Adele.

"Now, these things I've said are the highlights of my life. I couldn't tell you everything, or we would be sitting here on this log for weeks just talking."

Just then a big water moccasin slithered out over the log, and Addie cried out: "Where'd that snake come from?"

She grabbed her fishing pole and the string of fish she had caught and took off. The interview was over.

—As told by Addie Clinton Few to an "Awake!" reporter.

Shortly after this interview, Addie died at the age of 97.



**Young
People
Ask...**



Why Is It So Hard to Keep My Mind Off the Opposite Sex?

"Your curiosity about sex is a big thing when you are young," explained young Lorraine. "You become more and more preoccupied with sexual matters."

DO YOU spend much—if not most—of your waking hours thinking about, talking about, or looking at those of the opposite sex? Do you sit down to complete your homework, only to drift off into a reverie about some nice-looking boy or cute girl you saw

that afternoon? Are your conversations punctuated by furtive glances at attractive passers-by? Is it difficult for you to read, study, or even concentrate at Christian meetings and conventions—simply because you just can't get your mind off the opposite sex?

If so, you may fear that you are going crazy! One youth confessed: "I think I might be sex-crazy or something. I mean, I'm so often thinking about girls, fantasizing . . . Do you think I'm okay?" As writer Lynda Madaras notes, when you are young, "romantic or sexual feelings can be very strong. At times, it may even seem as if romance and sex are all you can think about!"*

Sexual feelings are not evil in themselves. God created man and woman with a strong attraction to each other. This accorded with his purpose that they marry and "fill the earth" with righteous offspring. (Genesis 1:28) The Bible is also quite frank in showing that sexual relations can be a source of great pleasure for married couples.—Proverbs 5:19.

The problem is, as imperfect humans we often have difficulty controlling our feelings. (Compare Genesis 6:5.) "The desire of the flesh" can seem overwhelmingly powerful! (1 John 2:16) And because you are young, it may be particularly difficult for you to get your mind off the opposite sex. Why is this?

The Pressures of Puberty

One reason is that you are approaching "the bloom of youth"—the time when sexual desires are at their peak. (1 Corinthians 7:36) Explains Dr. Bettie B. Youngs: "During puberty, hormone levels increase dramatically. These are responsible for setting in motion all the physical changes that transform a child's

* On the other hand, writer Alvin Rosenbaum reminds youths: "Sexual feelings and attitudes vary widely. Some people can't seem to stop thinking about sex while others don't feel sexual at all. . . . Both responses are normal." He adds: "Each person develops at a different rate."

body into an adult's. The increasing levels of hormones accompanying adolescence bring out many emotional and behavioral changes."

What kind of changes? Well, the biggest changes often involve one's feelings toward the opposite sex. Says writer Ruth Bell: "The body changes of puberty often bring stronger sexual feelings. You may find yourself thinking more about sex, getting sexually aroused more easily, even at times feeling preoccupied with sex. Several teenagers [we interviewed] described walking down the street or sitting on the bus feeling as if their whole body was on fire with sexual energy and excitement." Such preoccupation with the opposite sex is one of the many "desires incidental to youth" with which young people must cope.—2 Timothy 2:22.

The Influence of the Media and Friends

The flame of this desire, however, is often fanned by outside influences. We live in a society that seems bent on stimulating sexual activity by means of television programs, advertising, books, magazines, music, and films. Reports one Christian youth who fell into sexual misconduct: "Pornography is quite common at school, and this creates a real craving for sex. I knew what was right, but my sexual feelings were strong."

A book written for parents therefore says: "The media [have] profound influence. Our teenagers see young models their own age acting sexy and selling sexy clothes; they see adolescent sex promoted in the movies and on television." In fact, cable television and videocassette recorders have given many youths easy access to hard-core pornography. "The media arouse the curiosity and desires of a young person," admits one youth.

However, a book need not be pornographic on every page to be unwholesome. Consider

the experience of one Christian girl. She recalls: "I read a rather nice book that had only one or two paragraphs dealing with sex. I started to skip over those paragraphs, but something made me turn back and read them. What a mistake that was! I had terrible dreams as a result."

Your friends and associates can also have a big influence on your thinking. One book on adolescent development says: "Girl and boy watching are common pastimes that take place on street corners, in school halls, cafeterias, and shopping malls." And when young people are not gazing at the opposite sex, they are often talking about them. "When I was younger," admits 18-year-old Robert, "the pressures to have sex were very great . . . In the locker room, that's what all the talk was about." Admits another youth: "Sex was the number one topic of conversation among schoolmates, so it was often imposed on your thinking."

"Romantic or sexual feelings can be very strong"

It is hard to stand out as different. When your peers are constantly talking about the opposite sex—perhaps in a degrading, demoralizing way—it can be tempting to join in with them. But the Bible warns: "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly."—Proverbs 13:20.

The Need for Balance

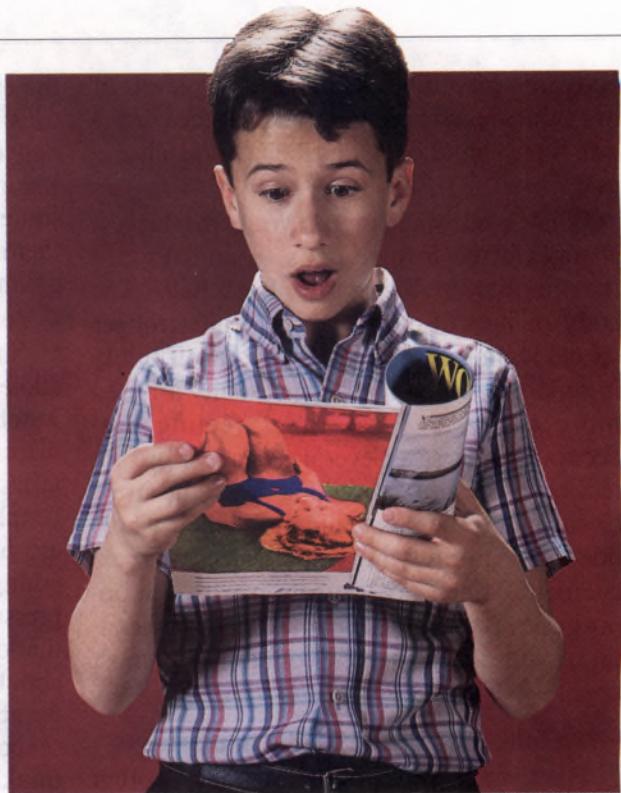
Does all of this mean it is wrong to notice or want to talk about the opposite sex? No, even Bible writers took note of the fact that certain men and women were physically attractive. (Compare 1 Samuel 9:2; Esther 2:7.)

Jesus, therefore, did not condemn someone simply for noticing that a woman is attractive. But he did exhort Christians not to '*keep on looking* at a woman so as to have a passion for her.' (Matthew 5:28) In a similar way, you cannot allow yourself to be driven by blind passion. At 1 Thessalonians 4:4, 5 we are told: "Each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God."—*New International Version*.

While erotic thoughts may come into the mind from time to time, dwelling on them may turn into a near-obsession, and then serious problems develop. Ecclesiastes 5:3 says: "For a dream certainly comes in because of abundance of occupation." Yes, one preoccupied with personal desires often begins nurturing unhealthy fantasies and daydreams.*

While it is normal to have erotic thoughts from time to time, dwelling on them is another matter. Writer Ruth Bell notes that "occasionally a person will find herself or himself spending nearly all day and night in fantasies. They may come to seem more real than reality." Consider one young girl who has got caught up in infatuation. She says: "I'm 12 1/2 years old, and I feel very strongly about a boy who attends my Kingdom Hall. I know I'm not old enough to date, but I'm having a very hard time controlling my emotions toward him." Along similar lines, some youths find it difficult to read, study, pay attention in class, or prepare for Christian meetings when their minds are full of romantic or sexually arousing thoughts.

* See the articles on daydreaming appearing in the July 8 and July 22, 1993, issues of this journal.



TV shows and magazine advertisements often promote an unhealthy interest in the opposite sex

Serious problems can also result when a youth attempts to alleviate such arousal by masturbation. The Bible urges Christians: "Deaden, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness." (Colossians 3:5) Masturbation is an unclean habit to be avoided by Christians and is the very opposite of 'deadening sexual appetite.' On the contrary, it stimulates and nurtures it. All too often, such desire becomes reality. The Bible writer James explains: "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin."—James 1:14, 15.

What, then, can you do to get your mind off the opposite sex? Please read the next article in this series.

Where Parents and Children Listen and Learn Together

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN JAPAN

"AS A janitorial company, we should be ashamed of ourselves, but it seems it is cleaner when you people do [the cleaning]." The man in charge of the janitorial company for the Fukuoka Dome Stadium, Japan, said this last summer concerning the preparation done by Jehovah's Witnesses for their "Divine Teaching" District Convention. He was also involved with the Tokyo Dome Stadium the preceding year when the "Light Bearers" District Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses was held there, and he was deeply impressed. At the end of the conventions, the stadium was cleaner than when it had been rented out. He further said: "The conduct of the children was outstanding. I can only say: 'Terrific!'"

Last year, the "Divine Teaching" District Convention was also held in Takamatsu City. A middle-aged man who had been observing convention delegates asked them, "Are you Christians?" and then continued: "You had a convention last year too, didn't you? Where are your children during the convention?"

When the delegates answered: "They are listening to talks and opening their own Bibles with their parents," the man said: "That's good! I see your people every summer and am always impressed that your children are well behaved." He then went on to observe that although he hears a lot about the generation gap between parents and children, he can tell from the conduct of the children of Jehovah's Witnesses

that the parent-child relationship among them is very good.

An elementary-school teacher, who attended a district convention of Jehovah's Witnesses held at Makuhari Messe last year, was astounded to see the attitude of the children at the convention site. At school, where learning should progress by the students' listening to others talk, she had felt that the children were not willing to listen. However, she saw something different at the convention. "Those children were sitting up straight for long periods of time. And what is more, they were holding their pencils tight in their hands and taking notes, writing characters correctly despite having to write on their laps. The Witness children are different from other children, even at school, in their way of speaking and listening and in their dress and grooming." She then added: "I think it is because of their daily training, their praising Jehovah, and their families working together toward one end."

Just as the Israelites followed the divine law that said: "Congregate the people, the men and the women and the little ones . . . , in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn," Jehovah's Witnesses today, both old and young, men and women, gather together and receive the same teaching. The above scripture continues, giving the reason: "As they must fear Jehovah your God and take care to carry out all the words of this law." —Deuteronomy 31:12.



WATCHING THE WORLD

One-Million-Percent Inflation

The inflation rate in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia rose to a million percent in December 1993, according to the country's Federal Statistics Bureau. The cost of living was 2,839 times higher than it was the previous month, and 6 trillion times higher than it was toward the beginning of the year. As a result printed currency is rendered worthless within days of issue. To cope, the central bank has been dropping zeros from the dinar. In just three months, 5 trillion dinars shrank to just 5 dinars.

Religious Involvement

In a survey, over 90 percent of Americans said they believed in God, and more than 40 percent claimed to attend church services each week. A 1992 Gallup poll showed that 45 percent of Protestants in the United States and 51 percent of Catholics attended church in any given week. However, new studies show that many more people claim to be religious and to be regular church attenders than actually are. According to one team of researchers, only 20 percent of Protestants and 28 percent of Catholics actually attend church weekly. Another team has found that only 36 million adult Americans—19 percent—regularly practice their religion and that nearly a third of Americans over 18 have a totally secular outlook. "While religion pervades the American landscape, only a minority take it seriously," says *Newsweek*. "Half of the American population claims a religion that does not inform their attitudes or behavior."

Water Shortages Looming

"Since snow and rainfall are relatively constant, renewable water is essentially finite," notes *Science* magazine. "By 2025, the number of people living in water-short countries will nudge the 3 billion mark," and already "by 2000, countries in Africa and the Middle East will be especially hard hit." According to a



report from Population Action International, many countries are already depleting groundwater supplies, and a number are failing to distinguish between nonrenewable and renewable water in their long-term planning. Although efforts have been made to improve water supplies, so far they have been nullified by population growth.

Closing the Door to Refugees

Refugees have increased more than eightfold in the last two decades, says Sadako Ogata, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and this has resulted in "an alarming upsurge of hostile and xenophobic attitudes." By the end of last year, 19.7 million refugees lived outside their home countries, and 24 million more were displaced within their own borders. Worldwide, 1 out of every 125 people has been forced away from normal home life by violence, civil war, or persecution. This has overwhelmed "the world's ability to respond" and the "human tradition

of giving asylum," reports *The Washington Post*, commenting on this first global study of refugees. A number of countries, already burdened by recession and weary of the seemingly unsolvable conflicts, have taken steps to close their doors to refugees. "Virtually all the refugee-producing conflicts taking place in the world during . . . 1993 were within states rather than between them," the study said, calling for an international policy to end civil wars. Meanwhile, a "less hospitable climate" faces refugees.

Pope Backs Door-to-Door Work

Accepting the urgings of John Paul II, a number of adherents of the Catholic Neo-Catechumenal movement have agreed to preach from door to door and in the streets of Rome and its suburbs. As reported in the newspaper *La Repubblica*, these "loquacious rivals of Jehovah's Witnesses" will "tell the life story of Jesus." The first group is composed of only 15 families, but the pope hopes that the project "may yield abundant fruit everywhere." Why this new initiative? The Catholic hierarchy realizes that it "has lost its ability to captivate, its religious attraction," says sociologist Maria Macioti, and the pope encourages such movements "to win converts by means of a powerful emotional appeal." Catholic writer Sergio Quinzio adds: "It is as though he does not want to overlook any opportunity, in the hope, or the illusion, that anything may be useful."

Ecological Disaster in Russia

"Viktor Danilow-Daniljan, Russia's Minister for the Environment, has declared 15 percent of

the surface area of Russia to be an ecological disaster area," reports German newspaper *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. According to the report, half the agricultural land in Russia is unfit to be used as farmland, and more than 100,000 persons are living in places where radioactivity is too high. Furthermore, tens of thousands of persons are reported to have died from poisoning in factories where chemical weapons used to be manufactured. Lew Fjodorow, president of the Union for Chemical Safety, remarked: "Viewed from a medical standpoint, our preparations for a chemical war had disastrous consequences."

Violent Children

Children who murder, rob, rape, and torture are found in many lands, and the incidence of violence and brutality is increasing. The number of murders committed in the United States by youths under 18 years of age rose by 85 percent in the last five years. Equally disturbing is the cavalier attitude demonstrated by many of the perpetrators. What accounts for these changes? "Our aggressive society, with its eroded standards, has made violence acceptable," says the German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel*. "Clear measures of right and wrong, good and evil . . . are hardly recognizable anymore." It adds: "Young culprits are also victims. They are the mirror images of the adult world in which they grow up. . . . Every child who behaves violently has observed and internalized unbelievable quantities of violence." By means of TV, children see the "violence of the entire planet." They are influenced by violent videos, computer games, and songs that glorify killing and other violent acts. TV programs promote violence as a reasonable way to solve problems and settle disputes. "We have become

an inhuman society," says Hamburg psychology professor Stefan Schmidtchen, "and our children are developing that way, too."

Sleeping With Baby

"Not only would we reduce SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), but we'd raise healthier, happier babies if moms did just one thing: Take their babies with them to bed for the first year, rather than isolate them in their own cribs," says James McKenna, a professor at Pomona College in California. Sleeping in contact with a parent "helps regulate the baby's physiology throughout the night," reports *The Dallas Morning News*. Tests have confirmed that when a baby sleeps next to its mother, the infant's "breathing



patterns, heart rates and sleep stages follow those of its mother." And as mother and child usually face each other, the baby can easily feed whenever it wants to. "Babies alone in cribs suffer sensory deprivation," says Mr. McKenna. "We think this can lead to lack of crucial intellectual development and possibly to conditions more conducive to the risk of SIDS." Statistics show that in countries where babies customarily share beds with their mothers, SIDS rates are much lower.

Israel and Vatican Sign Pact

After years of refusal and 17 months of negotiations, the Vati-

can has signed a diplomatic pact with Israel. Delegates on both sides wore skullcaps as Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin signed for Israel and Undersecretary of State Monsignor Claudio Celli signed for the Vatican. "The Holy See," said Celli, "is convinced that a dialogue and respectful cooperation between Catholics and Jews will now be given new impetus and energy both in Israel and throughout the world." The agreement commits the Vatican to fighting anti-Semitism, and Israel agrees to allow the church freedom of expression and the right to carry out social programs in Israel. Some matters still need to be ironed out, such as taxes on church properties in Israel and access to holy places. While the question of Jerusalem was not mentioned in the accord, the Vatican hopes that it will now have a say in the final status of the city.

Biological Treaty Becomes Law

A treaty signed by 167 nations in Brazil in June 1992 became international law at the beginning of this year. Called the Convention on Biological Diversity, the agreement commits the signatory countries to devise ways to conserve the animals, plants, and microorganisms within their boundaries as well as the needed habitats. The signing nations are required to pass laws to protect endangered species and to promote public awareness on the proper use of biological resources and the need for conservation. The treaty was prompted by the knowledge that extinctions were rising at an alarming rate and the fear that half of all remaining species may vanish by the year 2050. The signers are to meet later this year to decide how the treaty will actually function.

FROM OUR READERS

Credit Cards I especially enjoyed the article "Plastic Money—Is It for You?" (December 8, 1993) Some years ago my wife and I found ourselves with a depressing credit-card debt that took a long time to pay off, even after we destroyed our cards. However, for the sake of convenience, we have just recently obtained a new card. Your timely reminders about plastic money and its dangers have helped us to be determined not to misuse it this time.

M. B. and D. B., United States

Animal Tales Thank you for the article on polar bears entitled "Impressive Giants of Canada's North." (December 8, 1993) It was such a beautifully written article. The facts that were brought out really made me appreciate how loving it was of Jehovah to create the animals for our enjoyment.

D. C., United States

Your article "A Kudu Makes Lions Lose Face" (November 22, 1993) was hilarious. I could just picture in my mind the enraged and humiliated kudu bull trying to ram this unmovable bronze kudu. And the way it put a pride of lions to flight—it was too funny! It shows that Jehovah loves laughter.

A. L., United States

I was thrilled at the way you scrutinized the subject "Probing the Secrets of the Eel." (October 22, 1993) These creatures demonstrate the truthfulness of the Bible's creation account and refute all efforts to prove the theory of evolution.

C. S. S., Brazil

I'm 11 years old, and I really liked the item in "Watching the World" called "Rat Worship." (November 8, 1993) The article explained that priests at a temple in India believe that when they die, they obtain salvation by being reborn as rats! They say they're not

really rats but they're messengers from God. Weird!

K. J., United States

Holidays I want to thank you so much for the series "Holidays—Why Some Children Do Not Celebrate Them." (November 22, 1993) The section "We Are Not Deprived!" moved me to tears. Many times I feel that I am alone in expressing my beliefs to schoolmates, and this article helped me to realize that I never have been alone and I never will be.

B. P., United States

For as long as I can remember, I have not celebrated Christmas. There have been times when I felt envious of other children. And just before this article came out, I was invited to a Christmas party. I turned it down and tried, from what I already knew, to explain why. But seeing how Christmas, which has become an annual celebration even in Japan, is a pagan celebration with demonic associations, I feel confident that I did the right thing.

K. I., Japan

Double Life Thank you for publishing the article "Young People Ask . . . Live a Double Life—Why Not?" (December 22, 1993) I am 15 years old and have been raised as a Christian. But I haven't been doing very well, and I constantly feel that I am slowly drifting away. One of the reasons is that my parents are extremely strict, and I often feel the need to do something they have prohibited, even though I know it is wrong. As I read the article, I realized that Jehovah God was sending me help. I knew that I wasn't the only one who did things behind my parents' backs. But as I read on, I was surprised at how others felt exactly as I felt. I know it won't be easy, but I am hoping to change my life-style with Jehovah's help.

K. J., United States

To obtain a college education
etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc., etc.

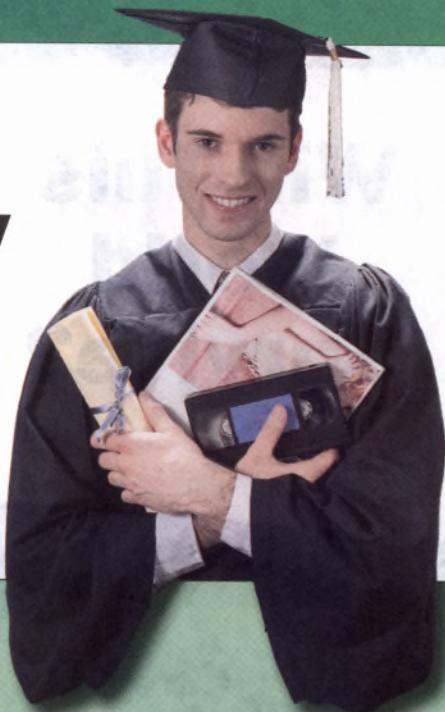
Pornography Goes to College

THE "Matier & Ross Report" in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 1, 1993, highlighted a controversial class offered at San Francisco State University. It is conducted by Professor John DeCecco on the subject of human sexuality. Matier and Ross comment on it as follows:

"What a class it is. If you're looking for a hot three credits toward a SFSU degree, just check out the steamy (and sometimes politically correct) subjects listed in the class syllabus."

The report then lists masturbation, transvestism, male homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, sadomasochism, along with others. The lectures on some of these activities include videotapes.

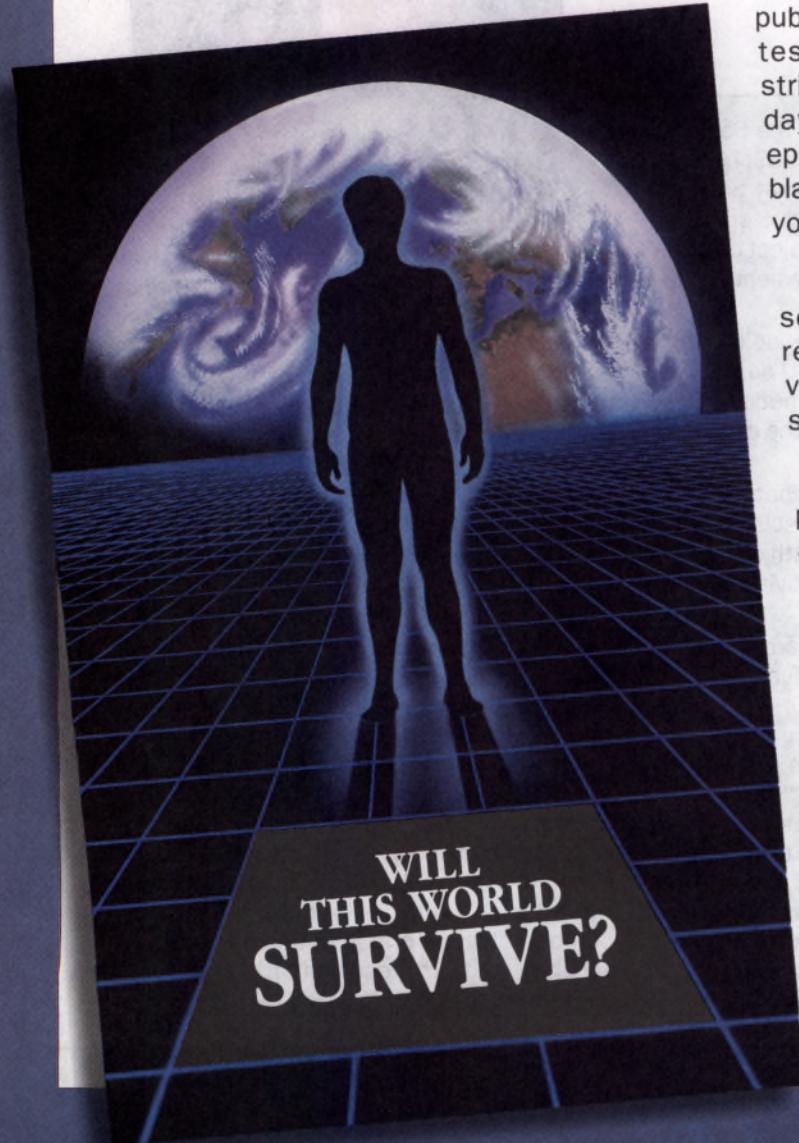
Such activities may be compared with "the detestable customs" that Jehovah hates, as enumerated in the Mosaic code at Leviticus chapter 18. After condemning incestuous acts, adultery, and other sexual perversions, verses 22 and 23 state: "You must not lie down with a male the same as you lie down with a woman. It is a detestable thing. And you must not give your emission to any beast to become unclean by it, and a woman should not stand before a beast to have connection with it. It is a violation of what is natural."



The practice of these things that Jehovah detests results in his condemnation: "Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, because by all these things the nations whom I am sending out from before you have made themselves unclean. Consequently the land is unclean, and I shall bring punishment for its error upon it, and the land will vomit its inhabitants out. In case anyone does any of all these detestable things, then the souls doing them must be cut off from among their people."—Leviticus 18: 24, 25, 29.

One student taking the SFSU course praised DeCecco for "breaking down stereotypes and showing that these people are like everyone else." Like everyone else? Certainly people in general are not involved in the sexual perversions of homosexuality, lesbianism, and sadomasochism, nor are they practicing sexual intercourse with animals. Admittedly, there is a moral breakdown of alarming dimensions in society today, but these activities portrayed in this university class are blatant pornography performed under the guise of scholarly study and research.

Will This World Survive?



That arresting question is the title of a tract that is distributed by Jehovah's Witnesses. Last year a resident of Washington, D.C., received this tract and said that he was intrigued. He wrote:

"It is obvious to one who lives in our nation's capital that the world is indeed coming to an end. Northern Ireland, former Yugoslavia, the former republics of the Soviet Union, all testify to the darkness and strife that plague this world today. Overflowing prisons, new epidemics of tuberculosis and black plague, all prove the point you make in your tract."

The man requested: "Please send me further information regarding your unique point of view, and the free home Bible study that you offer."

Jehovah's Witnesses direct people to what the Bible says about mankind's future.