

SEPTEMBER 15, 1993

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

**Why Love  
Your Neighbor?**

# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

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# Why Love Your Neighbor?

**E**VERLASTING life depends on our love of God and neighbor. That point was made during a conversation that took place nearly 2,000 years ago.

A Jewish man versed in the Mosaic Law asked Jesus Christ: "By doing what shall I inherit everlasting life?" Jesus replied: "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" Quoting the Law, the man said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind," and, 'your neighbor as yourself.'" "You answered correctly," said Jesus. "Keep on doing this and you will get life."—Luke 10:25-28.

At that, Jesus' inquirer asked: "Who really is my neighbor?" Instead of answering directly, Jesus told an illustrative story about a Jewish man who had been robbed, beaten, and left half dead. Along came two Jews—first a priest and then a Levite. Both of them observed their fellow Jew's condition but did nothing to help him. A Samaritan came by next. Moved with pity, he dressed the wounds of the injured Jew, took him to an inn, and provided for his further care.

Jesus asked his inquirer: "Who of these three seems to you to have made himself neighbor to the man that fell among the robbers?" Clearly, it was the merciful Samaritan. Jesus thus showed that true neighbor love transcends ethnic barriers.—Luke 10:29-37.

## A Lack of Neighbor Love

Today there is growing hostility between people of different ethnic groups. For instance, neo-Nazis in Germany recently threw



The Good Samaritan/The Doré Bible Illustrations/Dover Publications, Inc.

a man to the ground and trampled him with their heavy boots, breaking nearly all his ribs. They then doused him with a highly alcoholic beverage and set him ablaze. The man who was left to die was attacked because he was thought to be a Jew. In an unrelated incident, a house near Hamburg was firebombed, burning three people of Turkish origin to death—one of them a ten-year-old girl.

In the Balkans and farther east, ethnic wars were claiming thousands of lives. Others died in clashes between people of different backgrounds in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. And in Africa, intertribal and interracial conflicts claimed the lives of still others.

Most people are appalled by such violence and would never do a thing to harm their neighbor. In fact, large demonstrations in Germany have condemned ethnic violence there. Yet, *The New Encyclopædia Britannica* says: "Members of nearly all the world's cultures regard their own way of life as superior to that of even closely related neighbours." Such views get in the way of neighbor love. Can anything be done about this, especially since Jesus said that life depends on love of God and neighbor?

# *Love of Neighbor Is Possible*

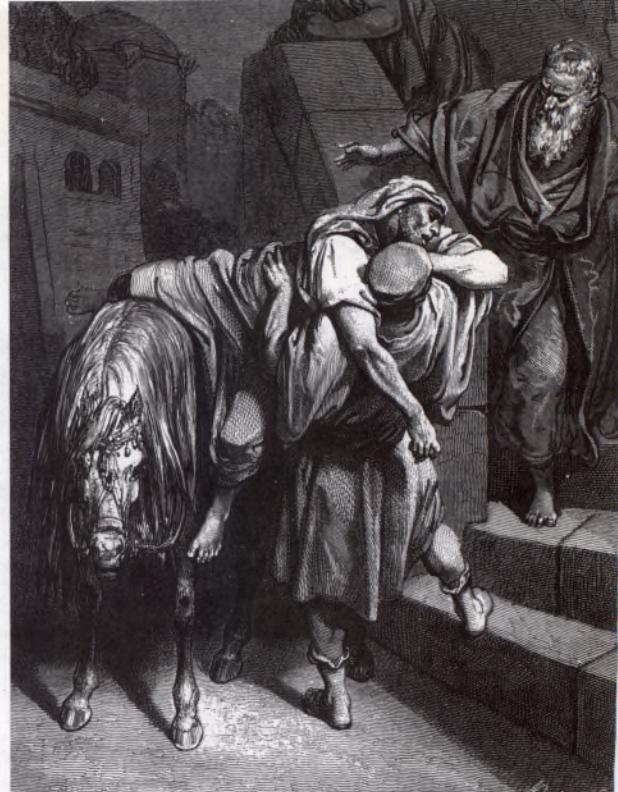
JESUS CHRIST'S illustration of the Samaritan showed what genuine neighbor love really means. (Luke 10:25-37) Jesus also taught: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.'"—Matthew 22:37-39.

Like many people, do you find it difficult to love your neighbor of an ethnic group other than your own? Perhaps this is so because you have learned about or have personally experienced discrimination and injustice. You or your loved ones may even have suffered abuse at the hands of people of another group.

Since Jesus indicated that one of God's commandments is that we love our neighbor, it must be possible to overcome such strong feelings. The key to doing so is to view people as God and Christ do. In this regard let us consider the example of Jesus and the early Christians.

## **Jesus' Fine Example**

First-century Jews had strong feelings against the Samaritans, a people living in an area between Judea and Galilee. On one occasion Jewish opposers contemptuously asked Jesus: "Do we not rightly say, You are a Samaritan and have a demon?" (John 8:48) So strong was anti-Samaritan sentiment that some Jews even cursed Samaritans publicly in the synagogues and prayed daily that the Samaritans would not be granted everlasting life.



Arrival of the Good Samaritan at the Inn/The Doré Bible Illustrations/Dover Publications, Inc.

Knowledge of this deep-seated hatred doubtless prompted Jesus to give the illustration about the Samaritan who proved himself to be a real neighbor by taking care of the Jewish man beaten by robbers. How might Jesus have answered when the Jewish man versed in the Mosaic Law asked: "Who really is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29) Well, Jesus could have replied directly by saying: 'Your neighbor includes not only your fellow Jew but also other people, even a Samaritan.' Jews would, however, have found it difficult to accept that. So he related the illustration about a Jew who received a *Samaritan's* mercy. Jesus thus helped Jewish listeners to draw the conclusion that true neighbor love would extend to non-Jews.

Jesus had no anti-Samaritan sentiments. Traveling through Samaria on one occasion, he rested by a well while his disciples went to the nearby city to obtain food. When a

Samaritan woman came to draw water, he said: "Give me a drink." Since Jews had no dealings with Samaritans, she asked: "How is it that you, despite being a Jew, ask me for a drink, when I am a Samaritan woman?" Jesus then bore witness to her, even declaring openly that he was the Messiah. She responded by going into the city and calling others to come and listen to him. The result? "Many of the Samaritans out of that city put faith in him." What a fine outcome because Jesus was not fettered by the prevailing attitude of his Jewish contemporaries!—John 4:4-42.

### God Is Not Partial

It was God's purpose that Jesus preach chiefly to the Jews, "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 15:24) Hence, his early followers were of Jewish background. But just three years after the outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost 33 C.E., Jehovah made it clear that he wanted Jewish believers to extend the disciple-making work to people of the nations, the Gentiles.

To the Jewish mind, loving a Samaritan as oneself would be hard enough. It would be even harder to show neighbor love to uncircumcised Gentiles, people having less in common with Jews than did the Samaritans. Commenting on the attitude of Jews toward Gentiles, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* states: "We find, in N[ew] T[estament] times, the most extreme aversion, scorn and hatred. They [Gentiles] were regarded as unclean, with whom it was unlawful to have any friendly intercourse. They were the enemies of God and His people, to whom the knowledge of God was denied unless they became proselytes, and even then they could not, as in ancient times, be admitted to full fellowship. Jews were forbidden to counsel them, and if they asked about Divine things they were to be cursed."

While many held these views, Jehovah caused the apostle Peter to experience a vision in which he was told to 'stop calling defiled the things God had cleansed.' God then directed him to the home of the Gentile Cornelius. Peter gave a witness about Christ to Cornelius, his family, and other Gentiles. "For a certainty," said Peter, "I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." While Peter was yet preaching, holy spirit came upon the new believers, who were then baptized and became the first Gentile followers of Christ.

—Acts, chapter 10.

Jewish followers accepted this development, realizing that Jesus' command to "make disciples of people of all the nations" was not limited to Jews in all lands but included Gentiles. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 11:18) Overcoming any anti-Gentile feelings they may have had, they zealously organized a preaching campaign to make disciples among the nations. Less than 30 years later, it could be said that the good news had been preached "in all creation that is under heaven."—Colossians 1:23.

Spearheading this preaching work was the apostle Paul, himself a Christian of Jewish background. Before becoming a follower of Christ, he had been a zealous member of the religious sect of the Pharisees. They looked down on not only Gentiles but even the common people of their own nationality. (Luke 18:11, 12) But Paul did not allow those views to hold him back from showing neighbor love to others. Instead, he became "an apostle to the nations [Gentiles]," devoting his life to the work of disciple-making throughout Mediterranean lands.—Romans 11:13.

During the course of his ministry, Paul was stoned, beaten, and imprisoned. (Acts 14:19; 16:22, 23) Did such harsh experiences

cause him to become embittered and to conclude that he was wasting his time among certain nations and ethnic groups? Not at all. He knew that there were honesthearted individuals scattered throughout the many ethnic groups of his day.

As Paul found Gentiles willing to be taught God's ways, he came to love them. For instance, to the Thessalonians he wrote: "We became gentle in the midst of you, as when a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us." (1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8) These heartfelt words show that Paul truly loved the Gentile Thessalonians and allowed nothing to spoil the joy of a good relationship with them.

### **Neighbor Love in Action**

Today, as in the first century, those who attach themselves to the Christian congre-

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***In the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses,  
you will find happy people of all races***

gation cultivate neighbor love for people of all ethnic groups. By developing a godly view of others and by sharing the good news of the Kingdom with them, true Christians have broadened their understanding of people they might never have come to know. They even have brotherly love for them. (John 13:34, 35) This can be your experience too.

Such love exists among Jehovah's Witnesses, though they are found in 229 lands and represent "all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues." (Revelation 7:9) As a global brotherhood, they are united in the worship of Jehovah, in their refusal to take part in ethnic conflicts and rivalries, and in their rejection of prejudices that rob people of warm relationships with fellow humans.

Associate with the Witnesses, and you will observe how people of all ethnic backgrounds are doing God's will. You will see neighbor love in action as they proclaim the good news of God's Kingdom. Yes, and in their congregations, you will meet kind, sincere people who show by their lives that they have truly learned to love their neighbor.





## *Papias Valued the Lord's Sayings*

**I**DID not . . . enjoy those who have much to say, but those who taught what was true." So wrote Papias, a professed Christian of the second century of our Common Era.

Papias lived in the period immediately following the death of Jesus Christ's apostles. In fact, he was an associate of Polycarp, who reportedly learned from the apostle John. These credentials, coupled with Papias' method of acquiring knowledge, make it likely that he was well-informed.

### **Careful Method**

Papias' thirst for truth is clearly evident in the five books making up his work on the sayings of the Lord. In his earlier years, no doubt Papias stored up many of the sayings of truth that he had heard. Later, from his residence in the Phrygian city of Hierapolis, in Asia Minor, Papias inquired of elderly ones to ascertain if they had ever seen or heard any of Jesus' apostles. He eagerly

questioned them and recorded what they had to say.

Papias explains: "I will not hesitate to put down . . . whatever I carefully learned at any time from the elders, and carefully remembered, assuring you of their truth. For I did not, like most people, enjoy those who have much to say, but those who taught what was true; nor those who relate commands of others, but those who report the ones given by the Lord to the faith and proceeding from the truth itself. And if anyone should come my way who had been a follower of the elders, I would ask for the accounts given by the elders—what Andrew or what Peter said, or what Philip or what Thomas or James, or what John or Matthew said, or any other disciples of the Lord."

### **His Work**

Doubtless a wealth of spiritual knowledge was available to Papias. We can only imagine how intently he must have listened to

the details surrounding the personal life and ministry of each of the apostles. About 135 C.E., Papias put what he had to tell into a book of his own. Regrettably, this book has disappeared. It was quoted by Irenaeus, a professed Christian of the second century C.E., and by the fourth-century historian Eusebius. In fact, it was still read in the 9th century C.E. and may have existed until the 14th century.

Papias believed in the coming Millennial Reign of Christ. (Revelation 20:2-7) According to Irenaeus, he wrote of a time "when creation, renewed and liberated, shall yield an abundance of all kinds of food, from the dew of heaven and the fertility of the earth, just as the elders, who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, related that they had heard how the Lord would teach about those times." Papias further wrote: "To believers these things are credible. And when Judas, the betrayer, refused to believe and asked, 'How will such production be effected by the Lord?' the Lord said, 'Those who reach those times will see.'"

Papias wrote at a time when Gnosticism was rampant. The Gnostics intertwined philosophy, speculation, and pagan mysticism with apostate Christianity. Actually, Papias' exposition of the Lord's oracles, or sayings, was an attempt to stem the tide of Gnosticism. After him, Irenaeus continued to resist the Gnostics' false and exaggerated spirituality. Gnostic literature must have been voluminous, sparking Papias' sarcastic allusion to "those who have so very much to say." His objective was clear—to counteract falsehood with truth.—1 Timothy 6:4; Philippians 4:5.

### Comments on the Gospels

In the fragments of Papias' writings that still exist, we find mention of the narratives written by Matthew and Mark. For

instance, Papias says of Mark's document: "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he remembered." Further attesting to this Gospel's accuracy, Papias continues: "So then Mark made no mistake, while he thus wrote down some things as he remembered them; for he made it his one care not to omit anything that he heard, or to set down any false statement therein."

Papias provides external evidence that Matthew originally penned his Gospel in the Hebrew language. Says Papias: "He wrote the sayings in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as best he could." It is likely that Papias made reference to the Gospel accounts of Luke and John, as well as to other writings of the Christian Greek Scriptures. If so, he would be one of the earliest witnesses establishing their authenticity and divine inspiration. Unfortunately, though, only meager fragments of the writings of Papias survive.

### Conscious of His Spiritual Need

As an overseer in the congregation at Hierapolis, Papias was an indefatigable investigator. In addition to being a hardworking researcher, he displayed keen appreciation for the Scriptures. Papias judged correctly that any doctrinal statement of Jesus Christ or His apostles would be far more valuable to explain than the capricious statements found in the literature of his day.—Jude 17.

Papias reportedly suffered martyrdom at Pergamum in 161 or 165 C.E. How deeply the teachings of Jesus Christ actually affected the life and behavior of Papias cannot be said with certainty. Yet, he had a keen desire to learn and discuss the Scriptures. So do true Christians today, for they are conscious of their spiritual need. (Matthew 5:3) And like Papias they value the sayings of the Lord.

# ENDURANCE—VITAL FOR CHRISTIANS

*“Supply to your faith . . . endurance.”—2 PETER 1:5, 6.*

THE traveling overseer and his wife were visiting a fellow Christian in his 90's. He had spent decades in the full-time ministry. As they talked, the older brother reminisced about some of the privileges he had enjoyed over the years. “But,” he lamented as tears started streaming down his face, “now I am not able to do much of anything.” The traveling overseer opened his Bible and read Matthew 24:13, where Jesus Christ is quoted as saying: “He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved.” Then the overseer looked at the dear brother and said: “The final assignment all of us have, no matter how much or how little we can do, is to endure to the end.”

<sup>2</sup> Yes, as Christians all of us must endure to the end of this system of things or to the end of our lives. There is no other way to receive Jehovah's approval for salvation. We are in a race for life, and we must “run with endurance” until we cross the finish line. (Hebrews 12:1) The apostle Peter emphasized the importance of this quality when he urged fellow Christians: “Supply to your faith . . . endurance.” (2 Peter 1:5, 6) But what exactly is endurance?

## Endurance—What It Means

<sup>3</sup> What does it mean to endure? The Greek verb for “endure” (*hy-po-me'no*) literally means “remain or stay under.” It occurs 17

1, 2. Why must all of us endure to the end?  
3, 4. What does it mean to endure?

times in the Bible. According to lexicographers W. Bauer, F. W. Gingrich, and F. Danker, it means “remain instead of fleeing . . . , stand one's ground, hold out.” The Greek noun for “endurance” (*hy-po-mo-ne'*) occurs over 30 times. Regarding it, A New Testament Wordbook, by William Barclay, says: “It is the spirit which can bear things, not simply with resignation, but with blazing hope . . . It is the quality which keeps a man on his feet with his face to the wind. It is the virtue which can transmute the hardest trial into glory because beyond the pain it sees the goal.”

<sup>4</sup> Endurance, then, enables us to stand our ground and not lose hope in the face of obstacles or hardships. (Romans 5:3-5) It looks beyond the present pain to the goal—the prize, or gift, of eternal life, whether in heaven or on earth.—James 1:12.

## Endurance—Why?

<sup>5</sup> As Christians, all of us “have need of endurance.” (Hebrews 10:36) Why? Basically because we “meet with various trials.” The Greek text here at James 1:2 suggests an unexpected or unwelcome encounter, as when a person is confronted by a robber. (Compare Luke 10:30.) We meet with trials that may be divided into two categories: those that are common to men as a result of

5. (a) Why do all Christians “have need of endurance”? (b) Into what two categories may our trials be divided?



**Kingdom Schools were set up to teach Christian children expelled from school because of directing their worship only to Jehovah**

inherited sin, and those that develop because of our godly devotion. (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Timothy 3:12) What are some of these trials?

**6** *Serious illness.* Like Timothy, some Christians must endure "frequent cases of sickness." (1 Timothy 5:23) Especially when faced with a chronic, perhaps very painful, illness do we need to endure, to stand our ground, with God's help and not lose sight of our Christian hope. Consider the example of one Witness in his early 50's who waged a long, hard battle against a fast-growing malignant tumor. Through two operations he remained steadfast in his resolve not to accept blood transfusions. (Acts 15:28, 29) But the tumor reappeared in his abdomen and continued growing near his spine. As it did, he experienced unimaginable physical pain that no amount of medication could suppress. Yet, he looked beyond the present pain to the prize of life in the new world. He con-

tinued to share his blazing hope with doctors, nurses, and visitors. He endured right down to the end—the end of his life. Your health problem may not be life-threatening or as painful as the one experienced by that dear brother, but it may still pose a great test of endurance.

**7** *Emotional pain.* From time to time, some of Jehovah's people encounter "the pain of the heart" that results in "a stricken spirit." (Proverbs 15:13) Severe depression is not uncommon in these "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) *Science News* of December 5, 1992, reported: "Rates of severe, often incapacitating depression have increased in each succeeding generation born since 1915." The causes of such depression are varied, ranging from physiological factors to painfully unpleasant experiences. For some Christians, endurance involves a daily struggle to stand their ground in the face of emotional pain. Yet, they do not give up. They remain faithful to Jehovah despite the tears.—Compare Psalm 126:5, 6.

**8** The various trials we encounter may include *serious economic hardship*. When a

7. What kind of pain does endurance involve for some of our spiritual brothers and sisters?
8. What financial trial may we encounter?

brother in New Jersey, U.S.A., suddenly found himself without a job, he was understandably concerned about feeding his family and not losing his home. However, he did not lose sight of the Kingdom hope. While he was looking for another job, he took advantage of the opportunity to serve as an auxiliary pioneer. Eventually, he found a job.  
—Matthew 6:25-34.

<sup>9</sup> If you have experienced the *loss of a loved one in death*, you need endurance that lasts long after those around you have returned to their normal routine. You may even find that it is especially difficult for you each year about the time that your loved one died. Enduring such a loss does not mean that it is wrong to shed tears of grief. It is natural to mourn the death of someone we loved, and this in no way indicates a lack of faith in the resurrection hope. (Genesis 23:2; compare Hebrews 11:19.) Jesus “gave way to tears” after Lazarus died, though He had confidently told Martha: “Your brother will rise.” And Lazarus did rise!—John 11:23, 32-35, 41-44.

<sup>10</sup> In addition to enduring the trials that are common to all humans, Jehovah’s people have a unique need of endurance. “You will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name,” warned Jesus. (Matthew 24:9) He also said: “If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” (John 15:20) Why all the hatred and persecution? Because no matter where we live on this earth as God’s servants, Satan is trying to break our integrity to Jehovah. (1 Peter 5:8; compare Revelation 12:17.) To this end Satan has often fanned the flames of persecution, putting our endurance to a severe test.

9. (a) How may the loss of a loved one in death call for endurance? (b) What scriptures show that it is not wrong to shed tears of grief?  
10. Why do Jehovah’s people have a unique need of endurance?

<sup>11</sup> For example, in the 1930’s and early 1940’s, Jehovah’s Witnesses and their children in the United States and Canada became objects of persecution because they did not salute the national emblem for reasons of conscience. The Witnesses respect the emblem of the nation in which they live, but they comply with the principle set forth in God’s Law at Exodus 20:4, 5: “You must not make for yourself a carved image or a form like anything that is in the heavens above or that is on the earth underneath or that is in the waters under the earth. You must not bow down to them nor be induced to serve them, because I Jehovah your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion.” When some Witness schoolchildren were expelled because they desired to direct their worship only to Jehovah God, the Witnesses set up Kingdom Schools for their instruction. These students returned to the public schools when the Supreme Court of the United States acknowledged their religious position, as enlightened nations do today. However, the courageous endurance of these youngsters serves as a sterling example especially for Christian youths who may now face ridicule because they endeavor to live by Bible standards.—1 John 5:21.

<sup>12</sup> The various trials we encounter—both those that are common to humans and those we face because of our Christian faith—indicate why we need endurance. But how can we endure?

#### **Endure to the End—How?**

<sup>13</sup> God’s people have a definite advantage over those who do not worship Jehovah. For help, we can appeal to “the God who supplies endurance.” (Romans 15:5) How, though,

11, 12. (a) Jehovah’s Witnesses and their children faced what test of endurance in the 1930’s and early 1940’s? (b) Why do Jehovah’s Witnesses not salute the national emblem?  
13. How does Jehovah supply endurance?

**Determined to honor his Father, Jesus prayed for strength to endure**

does Jehovah supply endurance? One way he does so is through the examples of endurance recorded in his Word, the Bible. (Romans 15:4) As we contemplate these, not only are we encouraged to endure but we also learn much about how to endure. Consider two outstanding examples—the courageous endurance of Job and the flawless endurance of Jesus Christ.—Hebrews 12:1-3; James 5:11.

<sup>14</sup> What situations put Job's endurance to the test? He suffered economic hardship when he lost most of his possessions. (Job 1:14-17; compare Job 1:3.) Job felt the pain of loss when all ten of his children were killed by a windstorm. (Job 1: 18-21) He experienced a serious, very painful illness. (Job 2:7, 8; 7:4, 5) His own wife pressured him to turn away from God. (Job 2:9) Close companions said things that were hurtful, unkind, and untruthful. (Compare Job 16:1-3 and Job 42:7.) Through all of this, however, Job stood his ground, maintaining integrity. (Job 27:5) The things he endured are similar to the trials that Jehovah's people meet with today.

<sup>15</sup> How was Job able to endure all those trials? One thing in particular that sustained Job was hope. "There exists hope for even a tree," he declared. "If it gets cut

14, 15. (a) What trials did Job endure? (b) How was Job able to endure the trials he faced?



down, it will even sprout again, and its own twig will not cease to be." (Job 14:7) What hope did Job have? As noted a few verses later, he stated: "If an able-bodied man dies can he live again? . . . You will call, and I myself shall answer you. For the work of your hands you will have a yearning [or, long for]." (Job 14:14, 15) Yes, Job saw beyond his present pain. He knew that his trials would not last forever. At most he would have to endure until death. His hopeful expectation was that Jehovah, who lovingly desires to resurrect the dead, would bring him back to life.—Acts 24:15.

<sup>16</sup> What do we learn from Job's endurance? To endure to the end, *we must never lose sight of our hope*. Remember, too, that the

16. (a) What do we learn about endurance from the example of Job? (b) The Kingdom hope must be how real to us, and why?

certainty of the Kingdom hope means that *any suffering we encounter is relatively "momentary."* (2 Corinthians 4:16-18) Our precious hope is solidly based on Jehovah's promise of a time in the near future when "he will wipe out every tear from [our] eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore." (Revelation 21:3, 4) That hope, which "does not lead to disappointment," must guard our thinking. (Romans 5:4, 5; 1 Thessalonians 5:8) It must be real to us—so real that through eyes of faith, we can picture ourselves in the new world—no longer battling illness and depression but waking up each day in good health and with a clear mind; no longer worrying about serious economic pressures but living in security; no longer mourning the death of loved ones but experiencing the thrill of seeing them resurrected. (Hebrews 11:1) Without such hope we can become so overwhelmed by our present trials that we give up. With our hope, what a tremendous incentive we have to keep fighting, to keep enduring right to the end!

<sup>17</sup> The Bible urges us to "look intently" at Jesus and 'consider him closely.' What trials did he endure? Some of them resulted from the sin and imperfection of others. Jesus en-

17. (a) What trials did Jesus endure? (b) The intense suffering that Jesus endured may possibly be seen from what fact? (See footnote.)

### How Would You Answer?

- What does it mean to endure?
- Why do Jehovah's people have a unique need of endurance?
- What enabled Job to endure?
- How does Jesus' example help us to have a realistic view of endurance?

dured not only "contrary talk by sinners" but also the problems that arose among his disciples, including their repeated disputes over who was the greatest. More than that, he encountered an unparalleled test of faith. He "endured a torture stake." (Hebrews 12: 1-3; Luke 9:46; 22:24) It is difficult even to imagine the mental and physical suffering involved in the pain of impalement and the disgrace of being executed as a blasphemer.\*

<sup>18</sup> What enabled Jesus to endure to the end? The apostle Paul mentions two things that sustained Jesus: 'supplications and petitions' and also "the joy that was set before him." Jesus, the perfect Son of God, was not ashamed to ask for help. He prayed "with strong outcries and tears." (Hebrews 5:7; 12:2) Especially when his supreme trial was approaching did he find it necessary to pray for strength repeatedly and earnestly. (Luke 22:39-44) In response to Jesus' supplications, Jehovah did not remove the trial, but he did strengthen Jesus to endure it. Jesus endured also because he looked beyond the torture stake to his reward—the joy he would have in contributing to the sanctification of Jehovah's name and the ransoming of the human family from death.—Matthew 6:9; 20:28.

<sup>19</sup> From the example of Jesus, we learn a number of things that help us to have a realistic view of what endurance involves. *The*

\* The intense suffering that Jesus endured may possibly be seen from the fact that his perfect organism expired after just a few hours on the stake, whereas the evildoers impaled alongside him had to have their legs broken to hasten death. (John 19:31-33) They had not experienced the mental and physical suffering inflicted on Jesus during the sleepless all-night ordeal preceding the impalement, perhaps to the point where he could not even carry his own torture stake.—Mark 15:15, 21.

18. According to the apostle Paul, what two things sustained Jesus?

19, 20. How does Jesus' example help us to have a realistic view of what endurance involves?

*course of endurance is not an easy one.* If we are finding it difficult to endure a particular trial, there is comfort in knowing that the same was true even of Jesus. *To endure to the end, we must repeatedly pray for strength.* When under trial we may at times feel unworthy to pray. But Jehovah invites us to pour out our hearts to him ‘because he cares for us.’ (1 Peter 5:7) And by reason of what Jehovah has promised in his Word, he has obligated himself to supply “power beyond what is normal” to those who call upon him in faith.—2 Corinthians 4:7-9.

<sup>20</sup> *Sometimes we must endure with tears.* For Jesus the pain of the torture stake was not in itself a reason for rejoicing. Rather, the joy was in the reward that was set before him. In our case it is not realistic to expect that we will always feel cheerful and elated when we are under trial. (Compare Hebrews

12:11.) By looking ahead to the reward, however, we may be able to “consider it all joy” even when we meet with the most trialsome situations. (James 1:2-4; Acts 5:41) The important thing is that we remain steadfast—even if it must be with tears. After all, Jesus did not say, ‘He that sheds the least amount of tears will be saved’ but, “He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved.”—Matthew 24:13.

<sup>21</sup> Endurance is thus vital for salvation. However, at 2 Peter 1:5, 6, we are urged to supply godly devotion to our endurance. What is godly devotion? How is it related to endurance, and how can you acquire it? These questions will be considered in the next article.

21. (a) At 2 Peter 1:5, 6, we are urged to supply what to our endurance? (b) What questions will be considered in the next article?

## SUPPLY TO YOUR ENDURANCE GODLY DEVOTION

*“Supply to your faith . . . endurance, to your endurance godly devotion.”*

—2 PETER 1:5, 6.

**I**T WAS a dark period in 20th-century history. Starting in the 1930's, thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses in lands under Nazi control were unjustly arrested and thrown into concentration camps. Why? Because they dared to remain neutral and re-

1, 2. (a) Starting in the 1930's, what happened to Jehovah's Witnesses in lands under Nazi control, and why? (b) How did Jehovah's people fare under this harsh treatment?

fused to hail Hitler. How were they treated? “No other group of prisoners . . . was exposed to the sadism of the SS-soldiery in such a fashion as the Bible Students [Jehovah's Witnesses] were. It was a sadism marked by an unending chain of physical and mental tortures, the likes of which no language in the world can express.”—Karl Wittig, a former German government officer.

<sup>2</sup> How did the Witnesses fare? In her book *The Nazi State and the New Religions: Five Case Studies in Non-Conformity*, Dr. Christine E. King noted: "Only against the Witnesses [in contrast with other religious groups] was the government unsuccessful." Yes, Jehovah's Witnesses as a whole stood their ground, even though for hundreds of them, this meant enduring to the point of death.

<sup>3</sup> What has enabled Jehovah's Witnesses to endure such trials not only in Nazi Germany but all over the world? Their heavenly Father has helped them to endure because of their godly devotion. "Jehovah knows how to deliver people of godly devotion out of trial," the apostle Peter explains. (2 Peter 2:9) Earlier in the same letter, Peter had advised Christians: "Supply to your faith . . . endurance, to your endurance godly devotion." (2 Peter 1:5, 6) So endurance is closely linked with godly devotion. In fact, to endure to the end, we must 'pursue godly devotion' and manifest it. (1 Timothy 6:11) But what exactly is godly devotion?

### What Godly Devotion Is

<sup>4</sup> The Greek noun for "godly devotion" (*euse'bei-a*) may be translated literally as "well-reverencing."\* (2 Peter 1:6, *Kingdom Interlinear*) It denotes a warm heartfelt feeling toward God. According to W. E. Vine, the adjective *eusebes*', literally meaning "well-reverential," signifies "the energy which, directed by holy awe of God, finds expression in devoted activity."—2 Peter 2:9, *Int.*

\* Regarding *euse'bei-a*, William Barclay notes: "It is the *seb-* part [the root] of the word which means reverence or worship. *Eu* is the Greek word for well; therefore, *eusebeia* is worship, reverence well and rightly given."—*New Testament Words*.

3. What has enabled Jehovah's Witnesses to endure severe trials?

4, 5. What is godly devotion?

<sup>5</sup> The expression "godly devotion" therefore refers to the reverence or devotion for Jehovah that moves us to do what is pleasing to him. This is done even in the face of difficult trials because we love God from the heart. It is a loyal, personal attachment to Jehovah that finds expression in the way we live our lives. True Christians are urged to pray that they may lead "a calm and quiet life with full godly devotion." (1 Timothy 2:1, 2) According to lexicographers J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, "in a number of languages [*euse'bei-a*] in 1 Tm 2.2 may be appropriately translated as 'to live as God would have us live' or 'to live as God has told us we should live.'"

<sup>6</sup> We can now better appreciate the connection between endurance and godly devotion. Because we live as God would have us live—with godly devotion—we incur the world's hatred, which invariably brings trials of faith. (2 Timothy 3:12) But there is no way we would be motivated to endure such trials if it were not for our personal attachment to our heavenly Father. Moreover, Jehovah responds to such heartfelt devotion. Just imagine how it must make him feel to look down from the heavens and observe those who, because of their devotion to him, are striving to please him despite all manner of opposition. No wonder he is disposed to "deliver people of godly devotion out of trial"!

<sup>7</sup> We are, however, not born with godly devotion, nor do we automatically acquire it from godly parents. (Genesis 8:21) Instead, it must be cultivated. (1 Timothy 4:7, 10) We must work to supply godly devotion to our endurance and to our faith. This, Peter says, takes "earnest effort." (2 Peter 1:5) How, then, can we acquire godly devotion?

6. What is the connection between endurance and godly devotion?

7. Why must godly devotion be cultivated?

## How Do We Acquire Godly Devotion?

<sup>8</sup> The apostle Peter explained the key to acquiring godly devotion. He said: "May undeserved kindness and peace be increased to you by an accurate knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, forasmuch as his divine power has given us freely all the things that concern life and godly devotion, through the accurate knowledge of the one who called us through glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:2, 3) So to supply godly devotion to our faith and endurance, we must grow in accurate, that is, full, or complete, knowledge of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ.

<sup>9</sup> What does it mean to have accurate knowledge of God and Christ? Clearly, it involves more than just knowing who they are. To illustrate: You may know who your next-door neighbor is and may even greet him by name. But would you lend him a large sum of money? Not unless you really knew what kind of person he is. (Compare Proverbs 11:15.) Similarly, knowing Jehovah and Jesus accurately, or fully, means more than merely believing that they exist and being aware of their names. To be willing to endure trials for their sake even to the point of death, we must really know them intimately. (John 17:3) What does this involve?

<sup>10</sup> Possessing accurate, or complete, knowledge of Jehovah and Jesus involves two things: (1) getting to know them as persons—their qualities, feelings, and ways—and (2) imitating their example. Godly devotion involves a heartfelt, personal attachment to Jehovah and is made evident by the way we live our lives. Therefore, to acquire it we must

8. According to the apostle Peter, what is the key to acquiring godly devotion?
9. How may it be illustrated that having accurate knowledge of God and Christ involves more than just knowing who they are?
10. Having accurate knowledge of Jehovah and Jesus involves what two things, and why?

get to know Jehovah personally and become thoroughly acquainted with his will and ways as far as this is humanly possible. Truly to know Jehovah, in whose image we were created, we must use such knowledge and strive to be like him. (Genesis 1:26-28; Colossians 3:10) And since Jesus perfectly imitated Jehovah in what he said and did, accurately knowing Jesus is a valuable aid in developing godly devotion.—Hebrews 1:3.

<sup>11</sup> How, though, can we gain such accurate knowledge of God and Christ? By diligently studying the Bible and Bible-based publications.\* However, if our personal Bible study is to result in our acquiring godly devotion, it is vital that we take the time to meditate, that is, to reflect, or ponder, on what we read. (Compare Joshua 1:8.) Why is this important? Remember that godly devotion is a warm, heartfelt feeling toward God. In the Scriptures, meditation is repeatedly associated with the figurative heart—the inner person. (Psalm 19:14; 49:3; Proverbs 15:28) When we reflect appreciatively on what we read, it filters down to the inner person, thus stirring our feelings, touching our emotions, and influencing our thinking. Only then can study strengthen our personal attachment to Jehovah and move us to live in a way that pleases God even in the face of challenging circumstances or difficult trials.

### Practicing Godly Devotion at Home

<sup>12</sup> Godly devotion should be practiced first at home. Says the apostle Paul: "If any wid-

\* For a discussion of how to study to deepen our knowledge of God's Word, see *The Watchtower* of August 15, 1993, pages 12-17.

11. (a) How can we gain accurate knowledge of God and Christ? (b) Why is it important to meditate on what we read?
12. (a) According to Paul, how may a Christian practice godly devotion at home? (b) Why do true Christians care for aging parents?

ow has children or grandchildren, let these learn first to practice godly devotion in their own household and to keep paying a due compensation to their parents and grandparents, for this is acceptable in God's sight." (1 Timothy 5:4) Caring for aging parents is, as Paul notes, an expression of godly devotion. True Christians provide such care not merely out of a sense of duty but because of love for their parents. More than that, though, they recognize the importance that Jehovah places on caring for one's family. They are well aware that to turn their backs on their parents in a time of need would be equivalent to 'disowning the Christian faith.'—1 Timothy 5:8.

<sup>13</sup> Admittedly, it is not always easy to practice godly devotion at home. Family members may be separated by considerable distances. The grown children may be raising their own families and may be struggling economically. The nature or the degree of the care needed by a parent can tax the physical, mental, and emotional health of the ones providing the care. Nevertheless, there can be real satisfaction in knowing that caring for one's parents not only amounts to "a due compensation" but also pleases the One "to whom every family in heaven and on earth owes its name."—Ephesians 3:14, 15.

<sup>14</sup> Consider a truly touching example. Ellis and five of his brothers and sisters face a real challenge in caring for their father at home. "In 1986 my father suffered a stroke, which left him completely paralyzed," explains Ellis. The six children share in looking after their father's needs, ranging from bathing him to making sure that he is regularly turned so that he does not develop

13. Why may practicing godly devotion at home be a real challenge, but what satisfaction results from caring for one's parents?

14, 15. Relate an example of godly care on the part of children for a parent.

bedsores. "We read to him, talk to him, play music for him. We are not sure whether he is aware of what goes on around him, but we treat him as though he is fully aware of everything."

<sup>15</sup> Why do the children care for their father as they do? Ellis continues: "After the death of our mother in 1964, Dad raised us on his own. At the time, we ranged in age from 5 to 14. He was there for us then; we are here for him now." Clearly, it is not easy to provide such care, and the children do get discouraged at times. "But we realize that our father's condition is a temporary problem," says Ellis. "We look forward to the time when our father is restored to good health and we can be reunited with our mother." (Isaiah 33:24; John 5:28, 29) Surely, such devoted care for a parent must warm the heart of the One who commands children to honor their parents!\*—Ephesians 6:1, 2.

### Godly Devotion and the Ministry

<sup>16</sup> When we accept Jesus' invitation to 'follow him continually,' we come under a

\* For a full discussion of how to practice godly devotion toward elderly parents, see *The Watchtower* of June 1, 1987, pages 13-18.

16. What should be the primary reason for what we do in the ministry?

## In Our Next Issue

A Key to Successful Family Life

Does God Really Know You?

Principle or Popularity  
—Which Is Your Guide?

**Endurance and godly devotion were displayed by Witnesses of Jehovah imprisoned in the Nazi concentration camp at Ravensbrück**

divine commission to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to make disciples. (Matthew 16:24; 24:14; 28:19, 20) Clearly, having a share in the ministry is a Christian obligation in these “last days.” (2 Timothy 3:1) However, our motive for preaching and teaching must go beyond a mere sense of duty or obligation. A deep love for Jehovah must be the primary reason for what we do and how much we do in the ministry. “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks,” said Jesus. (Matthew 12:34) Yes, when our hearts overflow with love for Jehovah, we feel impelled to witness about him to others. When love for God is our motive, our ministry is a meaningful expression of our godly devotion.

<sup>17</sup> How may we cultivate the right motive for the ministry? Reflect appreciatively on three reasons that Jehovah has given us for loving him. (1) *We love Jehovah because of what he has already done for us.* No greater love could he have shown than in providing the ransom. (Matthew 20:28; John 15:13) (2) *We love Jehovah because of what he is now doing for us.* We have freeness of speech

17. How may we cultivate the right motive for the ministry?



with Jehovah, who answers our prayers. (Psalm 65:2; Hebrews 4:14-16) As we give priority to Kingdom interests, we enjoy the necessities of life. (Matthew 6:25-33) We receive a steady supply of spiritual food that helps us to cope with the problems we face. (Matthew 24:45) And we have the blessing of being a part of a worldwide Christian brotherhood that truly sets us apart from the rest of the world. (1 Peter 2:17) (3) *We also love Jehovah because of what he will yet do for us.* Because of his love, we have “a firm hold on the real life”—everlasting life in the future. (1 Timothy 6:12, 19) When we consider the love of Jehovah in our behalf, surely our hearts will move us to have a devoted

share in telling others about him and his precious purposes! Others will not have to tell us what to do or how much to do in the ministry. Our hearts will move us to do what we can.

<sup>18</sup> Even in the face of challenging circumstances, a heart stirred by godly devotion will be impelled to speak. (Compare Jeremiah 20:9.) This is shown by the case of Stella, an extremely shy Christian woman. When she first started studying the Bible, she thought, 'I could never go from house to house!' She explains: "I was always very quiet. I could never approach others to start a conversation." As she continued studying, her love for Jehovah grew, and she developed a burning desire to talk to others about him. "I remember telling my Bible teacher, 'I so much want to talk, but I just can't, and that really bothers me.' I will never forget what she told me: 'Stella, be grateful that you want to talk.'

<sup>19</sup> Before long, Stella found herself witnessing to her next-door neighbor. Then she took what was for her a monumental step—she shared in the house-to-house ministry for the first time. (Acts 20:20, 21) She recalls: "I had my presentation written out. But I was so scared that even though I had it in front of me, I was too nervous to look down at my notes!" Now, over 35 years later, Stella is still very shy by nature. Yet, she loves the field ministry and continues to have a meaningful share in it.

<sup>20</sup> Not even persecution or imprisonment can shut the mouths of devoted Witnesses of Jehovah. Consider the example of Ernst and Hildegard Seliger of Germany. Because

18, 19. What obstacle did a sister overcome in order to share in the ministry?

20. What example shows that not even persecution or imprisonment can shut the mouths of devoted Witnesses of Jehovah?

of their faith, between them they spent more than 40 years in Nazi concentration camps and Communist prisons. Even in prison, they persisted in witnessing to other prisoners. Recalled Hildegard: "Prison officials classified me as being especially dangerous, because, as one woman guard said, I spoke about the Bible all day long. So I was put in a basement cell." After they were finally given their freedom, Brother and Sister Seliger devoted their full time to the Christian ministry. Both of them served faithfully until their deaths, Brother Seliger in 1985 and his wife in 1992.

<sup>21</sup> By diligently studying God's Word and taking the time to meditate appreciatively on what we learn, we will grow in accurate knowledge of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. This, in turn, will result in our acquiring a fuller measure of that precious quality—godly devotion. Without godly devotion there is no way to endure the various trials that come upon us as Christians. So let us follow the apostle Peter's advice, continuing to 'supply to our faith endurance and to our endurance godly devotion.'

—2 Peter 1:5, 6.

21. What must we do to supply godly devotion to our endurance?

### What Is Your Answer?

- What is godly devotion?
- What is the connection between endurance and godly devotion?
- What is the key to acquiring godly devotion?
- How may a Christian practice godly devotion at home?
- What must be the primary reason for what we do in the ministry?

# They Compassionately Shepherd the Little Sheep

**O**F ALL the animals that live close to man, none are quite like domestic sheep. Most animals have the strength and instincts needed to search out food and elude creatures that prey upon them, but a sheep is different. It is vulnerable to predators, offering little in the way of a defense. Without a shepherd, a sheep is fearful and helpless. Separated from the flock, it easily gets lost. Docile sheep therefore have overpowering reasons to feel an attachment to their shepherd. Without him they would have little chance of survival. Because of these characteristics, the Bible uses sheep figuratively to depict innocent, abused, or defenseless people.

To be sure, the rewards of a shepherd are well earned. His life is not an easy one. He is exposed to both heat and cold, and he experiences sleepless nights. He has to protect the flock from predators, often at his own peril. Since a shepherd must keep the flock together, much of his time is spent searching for sheep that stray or get lost. He has to treat the sick and the injured. Feeble or weary lambs have to be carried. There is constant concern about getting an adequate supply of food and water. It is not uncommon for a shepherd to sleep overnight out in the field so as to ensure the flock's safety. Hence, shepherding is a rigorous life requiring the services of a man who is brave, diligent, and resourceful. Most of all, he must have the capacity to show genuine concern for the flock entrusted to his care.

## Shepherding the Flock of God

The Bible depicts God's people as docile sheep and those in charge of them as shepherds. Jehovah himself is 'the shepherd and

overseer of our souls.'

(1 Peter 2:25)

Jesus Christ, "the fine shepherd," expressed his wish that the sheep receive compassionate care when he told the apostle

Peter: 'Feed my lambs, shepherd my little sheep, feed my little

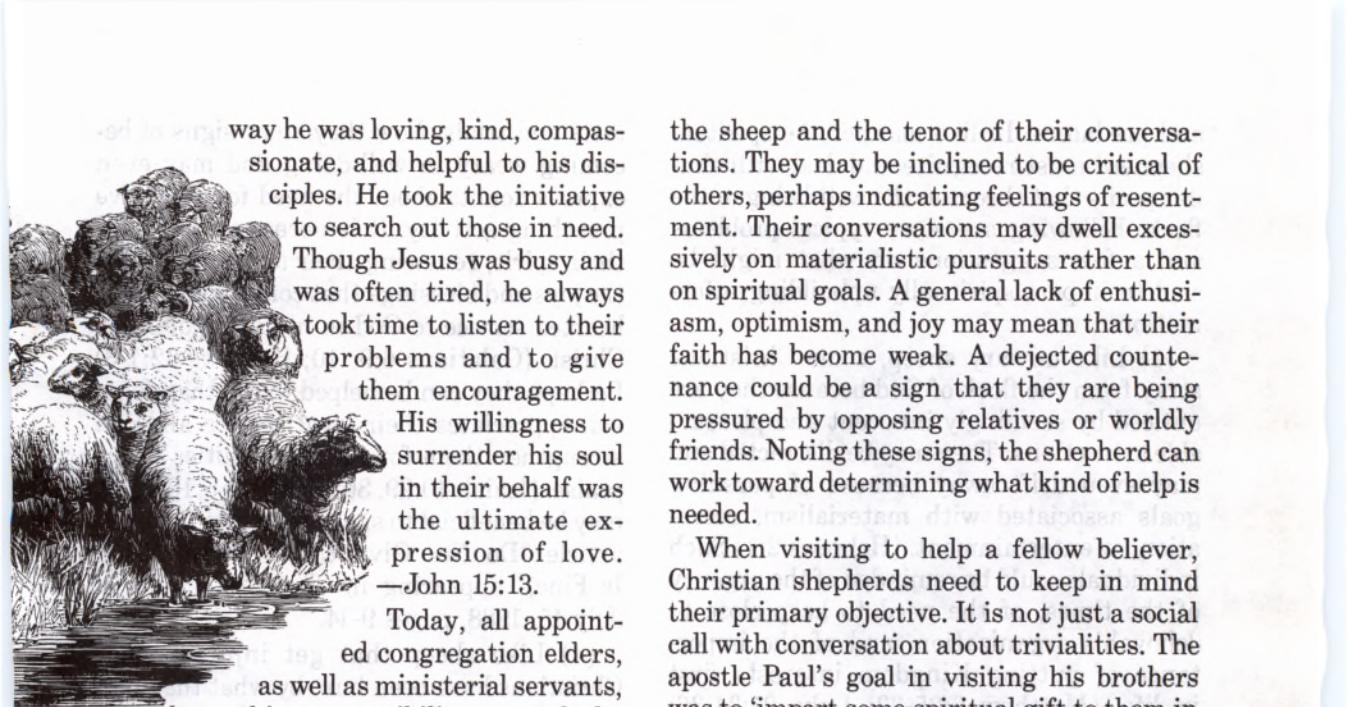
sheep.' (John 10:11; 21:15-17) Christian overseers have been solemnly charged with 'the shepherding of the congregation of God.' (Acts 20:28) And their work as spiritual shepherds calls for the qualities of a good literal shepherd—bravery, diligence, resourcefulness, and, mainly, heartfelt concern for the well-being of the flock.

In the days of God's prophet Ezekiel, the majority of the shepherds appointed to care for the needs of Jehovah's people in Israel failed to fulfill their duties. God's flock suffered terribly, with most abandoning true worship. (Ezekiel 34:1-10) Today, the clergy of Christendom portray themselves as shepherds of the so-called Christian congregation, but its spiritually sick state proves that the clergy are like the wicked impostors who neglected and abused the people when Jesus was on the earth. Christendom's religious leaders are like "the hired man" who "does not care for the sheep." (John 10:12, 13) In no way are they willing, able, or qualified to shepherd the flock of God.

## Shepherds That Truly Care

Jesus set the perfect example for all who would shepherd Jehovah's flock. In every





way he was loving, kind, compassionate, and helpful to his disciples. He took the initiative to search out those in need. Though Jesus was busy and was often tired, he always took time to listen to their problems and to give them encouragement.

His willingness to surrender his soul in their behalf was the ultimate expression of love.  
—John 15:13.

Today, all appointed congregation elders, as well as ministerial servants, share this responsibility toward the flock. Hence, even potential material advantages in another country do not induce the vast majority of these responsible men to move and thus leave congregations without adequate help and supervision. Living in "critical times hard to deal with," the flock is in need of encouragement and guidance. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) There is an ever-present danger that some will fall prey to Satan, who is "like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone." (1 Peter 5:8) Now more than ever before, it is vital that Christian shepherds "admonish the disorderly, speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak." (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Constant vigilance is essential if they are to prevent unsteady ones from falling away from the flock.—1 Timothy 4:1.

How can the shepherd determine when a sheep needs help? Some of the more obvious signs are a failure to attend Christian meetings, irregular participation in the field ministry, and a tendency to avoid close association with others. Weaknesses can also be detected by carefully noting the attitude of

the sheep and the tenor of their conversations. They may be inclined to be critical of others, perhaps indicating feelings of resentment. Their conversations may dwell excessively on materialistic pursuits rather than on spiritual goals. A general lack of enthusiasm, optimism, and joy may mean that their faith has become weak. A dejected countenance could be a sign that they are being pressured by opposing relatives or worldly friends. Noting these signs, the shepherd can work toward determining what kind of help is needed.

When visiting to help a fellow believer, Christian shepherds need to keep in mind their primary objective. It is not just a social call with conversation about trivialities. The apostle Paul's goal in visiting his brothers was to 'impart some spiritual gift to them in order for them to be made firm and that there might be an interchange of encouragement.' (Romans 1:11, 12) To accomplish this, advance preparation is needed.

First, analyze the individual, and try to determine what his spiritual condition is. With that established, give some thought to what kind of direction, encouragement, or counsel will be most beneficial. God's Word, the Bible, should be the primary source of information because it "exerts power." (Hebrews 4:12) The *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines can be checked for articles that deal with the specific needs of sheep confronted with special problems. Exhilarating and refreshing experiences can be found in the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. The goal is to impart something spiritual that will be 'good for the person's upbuilding.'

—Romans 15:2.

### Shepherding That Is Upbuilding

A shepherd of a flock of literal sheep knows that they depend on him for protection and care. The most common perils come from straying, illness, weariness, injury,

and predators. In like manner the spiritual shepherd must recognize and deal with similar perils that threaten the well-being of the flock. Following are some typical problems and a few suggestions on what might be said to impart spiritually upbuilding information.

(1) Like unwary sheep, some Christians stray from the flock of God because they are enticed by seemingly innocent and pleasurable attractions. They may be distracted and may even drift away because of pursuing goals associated with materialism, recreation, or entertainment. (Hebrews 2:1) Such individuals could be reminded of the urgency of the times, of the need to keep close to Jehovah's organization, and of the importance of putting Kingdom interests first in life. (Matthew 6:25-33; Luke 21:34-36; 1 Timothy 6:8-10) Helpful counsel is found in the article "Keep Your Balance—How?" in *The Watchtower* of May 15, 1984, pages 8-11.

(2) A shepherd needs to provide treatment for sheep that succumb to illness. Similarly, spiritual shepherds must help Christians who become spiritually sick because of negative factors in their lives. (James 5:14, 15) They may be unemployed, may have a serious health problem, or may be experiencing difficulties in their family life. Such persons may have little appetite for spiritual food or association with God's people. This in turn results in isolation and discouragement. They need to be assured that Jehovah cares for them and will sustain them through hard times. (Psalm 55:22; Matthew 18:12-14; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; 1 Peter 1:6, 7; 5:6, 7) It may also be helpful to review the article "Look Straight Ahead as a Christian," found in *The Watchtower* of June 1, 1980, pages 12-15.

(3) The shepherd has to be on the lookout for sheep that get weary. Some have endured faithfully in Jehovah's service over a period of years. They have struggled through many

tests and trials. Now they show signs of becoming weary in well-doing and may even express doubts about the need for intensive preaching activity. It is necessary to revive their spirit, renewing their appreciation for the joys and blessings that come from wholehearted service to God in imitation of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 6:9, 10; Hebrews 12:1-3) Perhaps they can be helped to see that Jehovah appreciates their loyal service and can strengthen them for future activities to his praise. (Isaiah 40:29, 30; Hebrews 6:10-12) It may be beneficial to share thoughts from the article "Do Not Give Up in Doing What Is Fine," appearing in *The Watchtower* of July 15, 1988, pages 9-14.

(4) Like sheep that get injured, some Christians have been hurt by what they perceive to be offensive conduct. Yet, if we are forgiving toward others, our heavenly Father will grant us needed forgiveness. (Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Peter 4:8) Some brothers or sisters may have received counsel or discipline that they felt was unjust. However, all of us can benefit from spiritual counsel and discipline, and it is comforting to know that Jehovah disciplines those for whom he has love. (Hebrews 12:4-11) Because they have not been given privileges of service for which they feel qualified, others have allowed resentment to create a rift between them and the congregation. But if we were to draw away from Jehovah's organization, there would be no place else to go for salvation and true joy. (Compare John 6:66-69.) Helpful information along these lines can be found in the article "Maintaining Our Christian Oneness," found in *The Watchtower* of August 15, 1988, pages 28-30.

(5) Sheep must be protected from predators. In a comparable way, some may be opposed and intimidated by unbelieving relatives or workmates. Their integrity may come under attack when pressures are exert-

ed to make them curtail their service to God or stop having a share in the Christian ministry. They are strengthened, however, when they are helped to realize that opposition is to be expected and is actually one of the proofs that we are genuine disciples of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 5:11, 12; 10:32-39; 24:9; 2 Timothy 3:12) It may be beneficial to point out that if they are faithful, Jehovah will never leave them and will reward their endurance. (2 Corinthians 4:7-9; James 1:2-4, 12; 1 Peter 5:8-10) The article entitled "Enduring Joyfully Despite Persecution" in *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1982, pages 21-7, provides additional encouragement.

### Shepherds

#### —Fulfill Your Responsibilities

The needs of the flock of God are many, and proper watchcare is a demanding job. Christian shepherds must therefore be compassionate, genuinely concerned, and interested in being helpful. Patience and discernment are important. While some individuals need counsel and admonition, others benefit most from encouragement. A few personal visits may suffice in some instances, whereas in others a regular Bible study may be needed. In every case the primary goal is to impart spiritually upbuilding guidance or loving counsel that will motivate the individual to initiate good study habits, become or continue regular in attending congregation meetings, and enjoy active participation in the Christian ministry. These are principal ways to assist fellow believers and help them to open the way for a free flow of Jehovah's holy spirit.

Shepherds who provide that kind of support perform a most valuable service in behalf of the flock of God. (See *The Watchtower* of November 15, 1985, pages 23-7.) What spiritual shepherds do is very much appreciated by the flock. After receiving such help, one family head stated: 'After we had been

in the truth for 22 years, we were drawn into the world by materialism. We often wanted to attend meetings, but it just seemed that we couldn't make it. We didn't really fit into Satan's system, so we were completely disconnected, isolated. This left us frustrated and depressed. We needed words of encouragement. When an elder visited us, we gladly accepted the provision of a Bible study in our home. Now all of us are back in Jehovah's secure organization. I cannot express the happiness I feel!'

There is cause for much rejoicing when our straying or discouraged brothers and sisters are spiritually revived and reactivated. (Luke 15:4-7) Jehovah's purpose toward his people is realized when they are united "like a flock in the pen." (Micah 2:12) In this secure haven, they 'find refreshment for their souls' with the help of the Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ. (Matthew 11:28-30) The united worldwide flock receives guidance, comfort, and protection along with an abundance of spiritual food.

Today, through this shepherding activity, Jehovah is having a loving work done that harmonizes with his ancient promise: "I will search for my sheep and care for them. . . . I will deliver them out of all the places to which they have been scattered . . . In a good pasturage I shall feed them . . . The lost one I will search for, . . . and the broken one I shall bandage and the ailing one I shall strengthen." (Ezekiel 34:11-16) What comfort there is in knowing that Jehovah is our Shepherd!—Psalm 23:1-4.

Because of divine provisions for shepherding the flock of God, as Jehovah's servants we can share the sentiments of David, who said: "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you yourself alone, O Jehovah, make me dwell in security." (Psalm 4:8) Yes, Jehovah's people feel secure in his loving care and are grateful that Christian elders compassionately shepherd the little sheep.

# Preaching With Endurance in the Land of Ice and Fire

ICELAND is located in the North Atlantic about midway between North America and Europe. Though it lies just below the Arctic Circle, its climate is milder than might be expected, thanks to the warming effects of the Gulf Stream. Iceland has been called the land of ice and fire because it has Europe's biggest glacier and is also one of the most active volcanic areas in the world. Well-known are its many hot springs and solfataras, volcanic areas that give off hot vapors and sulfurous gases.

The 260,000 inhabitants of this second-largest island of Europe are descendants of the Vikings, who settled here more than 1,100 years ago. Icelandic is essentially the same as Old Norse, the Scandinavian language of the Viking age. It has remained nearly unchanged because Icelanders were fond of reading their old sagas, which were written mostly in the 13th century.

By the 16th century, the Bible began to be translated into Icelandic. A "New Testament" appeared in 1540 and a complete Bible by 1584. Over 90 percent of the people belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the official State religion. Though the Bible is found in almost every home, few believe that it is God's Word. Most Icelanders have



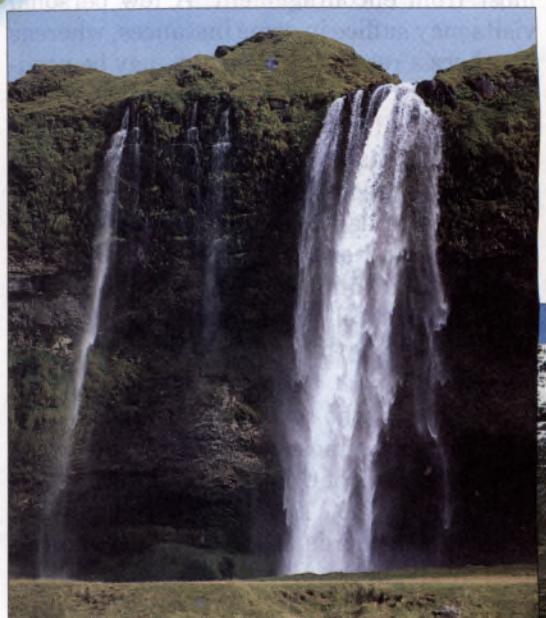
Based on map by Jean-Pierre Biard

liberal views about religion and, generally, are independent thinkers.

## The Good News Reaches Iceland

The first Icelanders to hear the good news of the Kingdom were then living in Canada. One of them was Georg Fjölnir Lindal. His parents were from Iceland, and he spoke Icelandic. Shortly after dedicating his life to Jehovah God, he became a full-time preacher of the good news. In 1929, when he was 40 years old, he took the good news to the people in that land of ice and fire.

What a tremendous task for one person! Iceland



is about 200 miles from north to south and some 300 miles from east to west. The coastline, including fjords and inlets, is about 4,000 miles long. At that time, there were no real roads and practically no automobiles or any other modern ways of getting around. Yet, Brother Lindal covered the whole island within ten years and distributed thousands of books. He traveled along the coast in boats, and when he visited the farms inland, he used two horses, one to carry him and the other to carry his literature and his belongings.

For almost 18 years, Brother Lindal was the only Witness in Iceland. Despite his

hard work, he did not see anyone take a stand for the Kingdom during that time. His long, lonely stay ended on March 25, 1947, when the first graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead arrived. You can imagine his joy when Jehovah finally answered his prayers for more workers for the harvest. (Matthew 9:37, 38) Brother Lindal continued his service in Iceland until he returned to Canada in 1953.

### More Workers for the Harvest

The missionaries who came in 1947 were two Danish brothers. More missionaries arrived two years later. As they continued the preaching work together with a few friends who had moved to Iceland, thousands of publications were distributed. Most Icelanders are avid readers, but not many responded to the good news. After 27 years of planting and watering, the patient brothers began to see the fruits of their labor. In 1956 seven new ones took their stand for the Kingdom and dedicated their lives to Jehovah.

During the last ten years, the number of Kingdom publishers has more than doubled. Now, there are seven congregations and one isolated group, a total of 280 proclaimers of the good news. Let us take a trip around the island to visit these congregations.

### Around the Capital

The brothers and sisters who endured all those years have been richly blessed. There are now two prospering congregations in Reykjavik, the capital city. They meet in a fine Kingdom Hall located in the same building as the branch office, dedicated in 1975.

Friðrik and Ada were among the seven who got baptized back in 1956. "I recall that we used to have meetings in a small room in the attic where the missionaries lived," says Friðrik. "There was room for 12 chairs, but sometimes, when more than the usual number showed up, we opened the door to the



next little room. What a difference today when two congregations fill the Kingdom Hall!"

Friðrik was in charge of the Food Service Department when the first assemblies were held. "I did most of the work myself, and at the same time, it was not unusual for me to have three or four parts on the program each day. While working in the kitchen, I wore an apron. When it was time to give a talk, I put my jacket on and hurried into the hall. Several times the brothers had to remind me to take off the apron. Now we have from 400 to 500 attending the assemblies, including fine elders who share in handling parts on the program. There are also many willing hands helping in the Food Service Department."

The congregation closest to Reykjavík is Keflavík, about 30 miles to the west. The drive takes us through lava fields. Ten percent of Iceland is covered with lava. The first vegetation to appear in these fields consists of lichens and mosses, but in the older lava fields, you will find wild berries and low-growing shrubs.

The congregation in Keflavík has 19 publishers and was formed in 1965. Nearby is the international airport, and a U.S. military base is also situated here. Though the Witnesses have never been able to work from house to house on the base itself, many Bible studies have been conducted there, and quite a few individuals have learned the truth.

Another congregation is in Selfoss, 35 miles east of Reykjavík. Here we see green farming country with cattle and sheep, including Iceland's largest dairy. On the way, we pass by Hveragerði, a small town in a picturesque valley. From a distance we notice columns of steam from hot springs all over the valley. This is one of the most extensive thermal areas in the country, and many greenhouses have been built to utilize these resources and provide hothouse tomatoes, cucumbers, and a variety of flowers.

In this area there is a small but active congregation of 19 Kingdom publishers. Sigurður and Guðrún Svava moved from Reykjavík to support this little group about the time the congregation was formed in 1988. Sigurður is the only elder here. Before he became one of Jehovah's Witnesses almost ten years ago, he was a well-known musician, playing the drums in various bands. Today, he makes a living as a window cleaner, and he also teaches music. His life-style as an entertainer brought him many problems, such as drug abuse, heavy drinking, and a broken marriage. How satisfied he is now, having a purpose in life and serving Jehovah!

### To the East End

Leaving Selfoss, we embark on a 420-mile drive, mostly on narrow and rough gravel roads. We head for the next congregation, in the town of Reyðarfjörður, on the east coast. Within half an hour, we come into view of Hekla, the most famous Icelandic volcano. It has erupted four times in this century.

In 1973 a dramatic volcanic eruption took place on Vestmannaeyjar (Westmann Islands). The entire population of some 5,300 was moved safely to the mainland in a matter of hours. After restoration of the town, most of the inhabitants gradually returned. Two Witnesses now live there and preach the good news to people in this small community. Driving for another two hours, we are treated to a beautiful view of the majestic Vatnajökull, by far the largest of Iceland's glaciers, with an area of 3,200 square miles. Along the way, we also pass many beautiful waterfalls and rivers.

Having spent about ten hours on the road, we reach our destination. In Reyðarfjörður we meet the 12 publishers of the youngest congregation in Iceland. No Witnesses lived in this area until a missionary home was established in the latter part of 1988. Kjell

and Iiris, a Swedish missionary couple who have served in Iceland since 1963, are assigned to work among the 15,000 people in this rural area. Many live in small fishing villages along the coastline, stretching about 300 miles.

Kjell relates: "There is no doubt that Jehovah has richly blessed the Kingdom work in this part of Iceland. On January 1, 1993, a congregation was formed, and we are conducting many good Bible studies with individuals who are making fine progress. Though the means of transportation has changed since Brother Lindal traveled on horseback, it is not always easy to drive over the mountain passes on icy roads during the dark winter months, even with a four-wheel-drive jeep. Once, it was blown off an icy road and rolled over two or three times down a slope. How happy we were to escape without injury!"

After 30 years in Iceland, Iiris says: "Over the years many have come from other countries to help. Though most have had to leave for various reasons, they have certainly had a great share in the planting and watering work. We are glad that we are able to stay, since we now have the privilege of seeing the harvest coming in. Jehovah is speeding up his work here also."

Much of the increase has come because new ones witness to their workmates. Atli learned the truth from the missionaries and started talking to others in the construction company where he worked. Two of his workmates are now sharing in the preaching work, one being baptized together with his wife in November 1992. A third workmate has been studying the Bible with the Witnesses.

### Taking the Northern Route

Leaving Reyðarfjörður, we head west. The next congregation is 190 miles away, in the town of Akureyri. Special full-time preach-

ers were assigned to work there in the early 1950's. From the very beginning, the work met with hard opposition from some clergymen. Articles were published in the local newspaper to warn people against Jehovah's Witnesses. Many of the townspeople were also involved in spiritism. But thanks to the endurance and patience of various pioneers and missionaries, today there is an active and loving congregation of 35 Kingdom preachers.

Friðrik, one of the elders here, was a fisherman. After attending the district convention in 1982, he was convinced that what he was learning was the truth. He returned to Akureyri determined to witness to his family, friends, and workmates. Friðrik made plans to quit his job as a fisherman so that he could have more time with the congregation. He told his girlfriend, Helga, that they could no longer live together until they were married, since he was going to become one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Friðrik also wanted her to study the Bible because he would not 'marry an unbeliever.' (1 Corinthians 7:39) To his surprise Helga started studying. They were married in February 1983 and were baptized shortly thereafter. In time Friðrik's mother and sister also accepted the truth.

Our last stop is Akranes, 220 miles from Akureyri, over three mountain ranges and through many beautiful valleys. Here the road is paved, making this a pleasant drive compared to the rough and narrow gravel roads we have traveled on most of the way. In Akranes we have the smallest congregation in Iceland—five publishers, two of them serving as elders. They consist of two families that responded to the Macedonian call, left one of the larger congregations in Reykjavík, and settled down in this little town to serve where the need is greater. (Acts 16: 9, 10) For more than two years now, they have patiently preached the good news in

this territory, confident that Jehovah will make things grow.—1 Corinthians 3:6.

### Bright Prospects for Increase

With greenhouses heated by geothermal energy and artificial lighting, Icelandic farmers have been able to grow a great variety of fruits, vegetables, and other plants. Likewise, the Witnesses, equipped with spiritual truth, the warmth of gentle persuasion, and the blessing of Jehovah's holy spirit, have been experiencing wonderful results in the Icelandic field.

This year 542 persons attended the Memorial of Christ's death, and close to 200 home Bible studies are now being conducted. In addition, the positive response to the encouragement to serve in unassigned territories gives us confidence that all sheeplike people in this vast island will hear the voice of the Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ. (John 10:14-16) What a joyful outcome for those faithful Kingdom proclaimers who have shown so much patience and endurance in preaching the good news in the land of ice and fire during the past 64 years!

## Persevere in the Pioneer Service

**S**OME 4,500,000 Witnesses of Jehovah are declaring the good news worldwide. Among them are over 600,000 pioneers, or full-time Kingdom proclaimers. Those in this army of pioneers range in age from preteens to retirees in their 90's. They come from all backgrounds and walks of life.

Doubtless, all these full-time preachers want to succeed in the pioneer ministry. Many wish to make it their lifetime career. Some are unable to do so for certain reasons. Yet, others have been able to continue pioneering despite financial difficulties, poor health, discouragement, and other problems. So how can full-time preachers cope with such problems and still persevere in the pioneer service?

### Meeting Financial Needs

In general, pioneers work secularly to cover their expenses, as did the apostle Paul. (1 Thessalonians 2:9) In most parts of the world, they face skyrocketing prices for food, clothing, shelter, and transportation.

Often it is difficult to obtain the part-time secular work they need. If available, such jobs frequently offer only minimum wages, without health insurance benefits.

If we 'keep on seeking first God's Kingdom and his righteousness,' we can have faith that Jehovah will provide for our material needs. When under financial pressure, therefore, pioneers need 'not be anxious about the next day.' (Matthew 6:25-34) While they make earnest efforts to resolve such problems, strong faith in Jehovah will spare them undue anxiety.

When a person is faced with financial difficulties, perhaps expenses can be reduced. With some budget changes, it may be possible to meet needs, though not mere wants of a material sort. To reduce expenses, some pioneers share an apartment with other Christians. In assisting their children to pioneer, parents sometimes provide lodging free or at a minimal cost. Others help pioneers with food and transportation costs. But pioneers would not want to be a burden

to others, for they have a Scriptural duty to support themselves.—2 Thessalonians 3: 10-12.

Transportation costs can be reduced by sharing expenses with other pioneers. If two pioneers own cars, they might engage in the preaching work together in the same area, using one car and eliminating the expense of operating two vehicles. Pioneers who do not own automobiles may be able to team up with those who do and share in covering the transportation costs. Travel expenses can be reduced further by covering nearby territories mainly by walking. In many countries pioneers use economical public transportation.

Among those who overcame financial problems and persevered in full-time service were Newton Cantwell and his wife. They sold their farm and began pioneering with six of their seven children in 1932, during the Great Depression. "It was not long before we had spent all that we received from the sale of our farm—mainly on doctor bills," wrote Brother Cantwell. "We recall that when we moved to our second assignment, we had just enough to pay two weeks' rent in advance, with five dollars to spare. Nevertheless, we knew that Jehovah would provide as long as we diligently carried out our service. . . . We learned to economize in various ways. On moving into a new territory, I would, for example, speak to some of the gas station owners and explain that we had three cars on the road each day in connection with our Christian work. This usually resulted in our obtaining gasoline at a discount. Our sons soon learned to take care of our auto repairs, saving us much in garage bills." The Cantwells thus coped successfully with financial challenges and persevered in full-time service. Brother Cantwell was still on the pioneer list when he died at the age of 103.

### Obtaining Part-Time Work

Many pioneers support themselves financially by means of part-time jobs. To sustain himself in the ministry at Corinth, Paul worked as a tentmaker along with his fellow believers Aquila and Priscilla. (Acts 18:1-11) Today, spiritual brothers are often happy to offer pioneers part-time secular work. Other pioneers obtain such work through employment agencies that offer temporary jobs. Faith in God is essential, and so is earnest prayer for his guidance in making employment decisions.—Proverbs 15:29.

"After drawing much strength from prayerful consideration," said one pioneer, "I notified my supervisor that my ministerial work is a serious personal responsibility and that I would not be able to accept the full-time position. The following Wednesday, I was asked if I would reconsider the job but on a part-time basis. I gladly accepted." Do not underestimate the power of prayer, and follow up your prayers with actions.

Pioneers may find it advisable to tell prospective employers that their purpose in seeking part-time work is to sustain themselves in the ministry. They might mention the days they are available and the number of hours a week they can devote to a job. Two fleshly sisters were able to split a full-time job in a legal firm, allowing each of them to work two and a half days a week. This sustained them as pioneers until they attended the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and received missionary assignments.

Various types of Scripturally acceptable work can be found by talking with fellow believers and others or by consulting newspaper advertisements. Humility is helpful, for it can keep pioneers from being too selective about the type of work they would do. (Compare James 4:10.) To continue pioneering they may need to do secular work that some people consider lowly or menial. If

such work is accepted but something different is desired, a change in employment may eventually be possible.

### Poor Health and Discouragement

Some must discontinue their pioneer service because of serious health problems. If pioneers are not hasty in this regard, however, they may find that a sickness can be cured or health can improve sufficiently for them to continue pioneering. Many can pioneer despite health problems because they get medical treatment, stick to a diet suitable for them, and get needed rest and exercise. A traveling overseer observed one pioneer sister so afflicted with arthritis that she needed help to walk from house to house in the ministry. (Acts 20:20) Yet, she and her husband conducted 33 home Bible studies and had helped 83 people to accept God's truth. Her health improved in time, and she attended the Pioneer Service School 11 years later.

Discouragement may cause some to leave the pioneer ministry. (Proverbs 24:10) One pioneer told a traveling overseer: "I'm going to stop pioneering. . . . I have bills to pay." He needed eyeglasses that cost 20 dollars. "Are you going to quit pioneering because of a 20-dollar need?" asked the overseer. It was suggested that the pioneer work in the local coffee plantation for a day, earn the 20 dollars, buy the glasses, and keep on pioneering. Further conversation revealed that the basic problem was discouragement over expensive car repairs. It was recommended that the pioneer reduce expenses by driving each day within a radius of a few miles instead of over a large area. He was also advised to maintain his spirituality. The pioneer applied the advice and six months later received his call to attend Gilead School. After graduation he was assigned to a foreign

country and served there faithfully for many years until his death. Yes, great blessings often result if we do not succumb to discouragement but bear in mind that Jehovah is with us.

### Treasure Your Privilege of Service

Despite trials, such as cases of need and times without food, Paul viewed his ministry as a treasure. (2 Corinthians 4:7; 6:3-6) In the face of hardship and persecution today, many of Jehovah's servants in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and elsewhere have held on to their privilege of pioneering. When trials are encountered, therefore, make every effort to persevere in this privileged service, to Jehovah's praise.

Most pioneers were able to enter the full-time preaching work only because they simplified their life-style. Like Paul, they resisted materialistic enticements and cultivated contentment with "sustenance and covering." To persevere in the pioneer service, they need to remain contented with the necessary things. (1 Timothy 6:8) Joy results from treasuring our God-given privileges, placing them above material possessions.

To illustrate: Anton Koerber was privileged to represent Kingdom interests to government officials in Washington, D.C. He served as a pioneer for some time and was a circuit overseer in the 1950's. Some of his former business associates once approached him with a proposition that would enable him to clear a million dollars for himself. To do so, however, it would have been necessary for him to devote all his time to business affairs for about a year. After praying for guidance and the spirit of a sound mind, he said: "It is not possible for me to give up my wonderful privileges of serving Jehovah here for even just one year, no, not for all the money in the world. Serving my

brothers here in Washington is more precious to me, and here I know I have Jehovah's blessing. I no doubt would make a million dollars, but at the end of the year of that kind of life, what would I be like spiritually, or even physically?" He therefore declined the offer. Treasuring their privileges in a similar way helps many to persevere in the pioneer service.

What grand blessings pioneers enjoy! It is a blessing to spend many hours speaking about Jehovah's glorious kingship. (Psalm

145:11-13) Because of devoting so much time to the ministry, pioneers have the blessing of bringing spiritual comfort to the poor and oppressed, sick or bereaved, and others sorely distressed and in need of a sure hope. Hence, if circumstances permit us to engage in the full-time preaching work, we will indeed enjoy many blessings. It is 'the blessing of Jehovah that makes rich.' (Proverbs 10:22) And it is with his help and blessing that the many Kingdom proclaimers joyfully persevere in the pioneer service.

## QUESTIONS FROM READERS

**At Romans 9:3, the apostle Paul wrote: "I could wish that I myself were separated as the cursed one from the Christ in behalf of my brothers, my relatives according to the flesh." Did he mean that he would sacrifice his life to save fellow Jews?**

Jesus set the superlative example of love. He was willing to surrender his soul, or life, for sinful mankind. During his public ministry, he expended himself for his countrymen—Jews—so that as many as possible would be among those who would benefit from his ransom sacrifice. (Mark 6:30-34) Their unresponsiveness and opposition to the message of salvation never dampened Jesus' loving concern for the Jewish people. (Matthew 23:37) And he left 'a model for us to follow his steps.'—1 Peter 2:21.

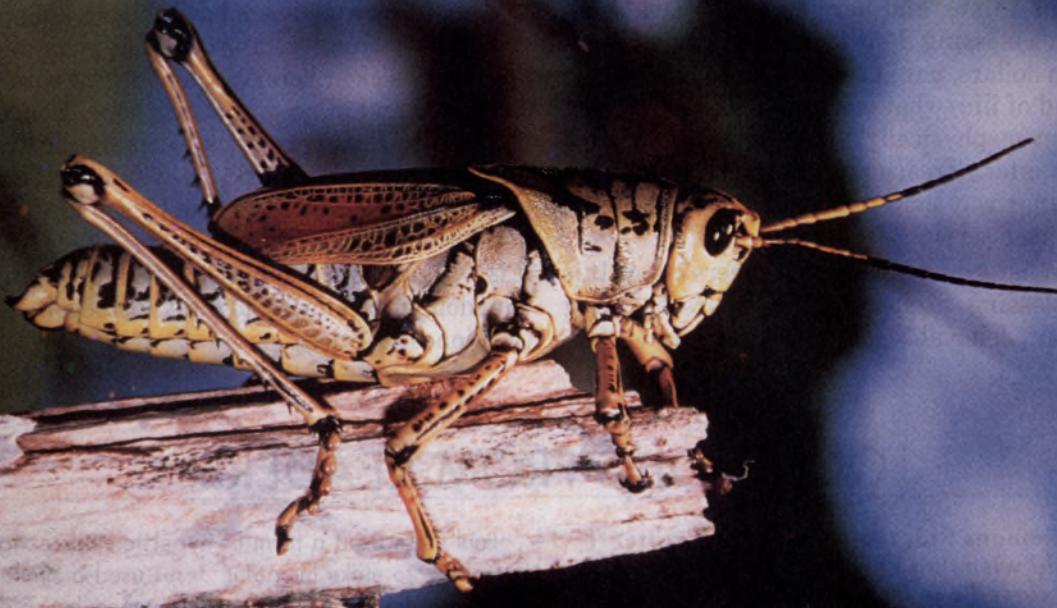
Is it possible for imperfect humans to follow Jesus' example of love? Yes, and we can see an illustration of this in the apostle Paul. He was so concerned about fellow Jews that, out of love for them, he said he could wish that he himself were "separated as the cursed one from the Christ" in their behalf.



Paul there used a form of hyperbole, or exaggeration, to make his point. Jesus used a similar exaggeration at Matthew 5:18, when he said: "Sooner would heaven and earth pass away than for one smallest letter or one particle of a letter to pass away from the Law by any means and not all things take place." Jesus knew that heaven and earth would not pass away. Neither would Paul become accursed, nor would all Jews accept Christianity. But Paul's point was that he would do virtually anything to help the Jews to avail themselves of God's means of salvation through Jesus Christ. No wonder the apostle could encourage fellow Christians: "Become imitators of me, even as I am of Christ!"—1 Corinthians 11:1.

Today, Christians should have the same concern as Jesus and Paul had for unbelievers. Never should we allow lack of interest or outright opposition from people in our witnessing territory to dampen our love for our neighbors and our zeal for helping them to learn the way of salvation.—Matthew 22:39.

# JUST LIKE GRASSHOPPERS



HAVE you ever strolled across a meadow in summer and seen countless grasshoppers leap out of your path? They seemed to be everywhere, though you may have paid them scant attention. After all, they appear harmless and insignificant.

Yet, the virtual insignificance of grasshoppers makes them a suitable symbol of mankind. Although some prominent men may consider themselves highly important, our Creator thinks otherwise. His prophet Isaiah said: "There is One who is dwelling above the circle of the earth, the dwellers in which are as grasshoppers."—Isaiah 40:22.

Jehovah God's grandeur, might, and wisdom elevate him far above the realm of mere humans, just as man is far superior to the grasshopper in intellect and power. However, God's supreme quality is love. And his matchless love impels him to take

notice of us, help us, and save us—if we love and obey him. Jehovah deals with us lovingly, even though we are like insignificant grasshoppers. The psalmist said: "Who is like Jehovah our God, him who is making his dwelling on high? He is condescending to look on heaven and earth, raising up the lowly one from the very dust."—Psalm 113:5-7.

As this psalm explains, Jehovah lovingly extends help to the lowly one. Yes, He helps those who humbly 'seek God that they may really find him.' (Acts 17:27) Those who do find God—and serve him—even become precious in his eyes. (Compare Isaiah 43:4, 10.) The humble grasshopper thus serves to remind us of our own insignificance and of the love of our almighty Creator, who grants obedient humans his friendship and undeserved kindness. Are you showing appreciation for God's love?