

# ***Awake!***

JANUARY 8, 1986



***Peace in the Family***  
**What's the Secret?**

## WHY AWAKE! IS PUBLISHED

AWAKE! is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

Most importantly, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure New Order before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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## Feature Articles

In the midst of the stress and turmoil in the world, one would hope to find peace in the family. Yet, often the very opposite is true. Some families exist in open warfare, while others are in a tense cease-fire. What prevents families from enjoying the warmth they so desperately need? How can conditions be improved? The following articles provide some realistic answers.

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# Husbands and Wives

## —Conquer Conflict With Communication

### THE FAMILY—Haven of Peace?

The weapons are words aimed with chilling precision to pierce weak spots in one another's emotional armor. Even ranting, screaming, hitting, and throwing things are the daily fare of families that have declared open warfare. Other families, though, have ceased battling openly and have withdrawn behind barriers of silence and tearful frustration. Yet for the most part these are family members who care about their relationships with one another. What prevents them from getting the warmth they desperately want from their homelife? How can conditions be improved? The following articles provide some realistic answers.

JOAN and Paul had what many felt was a "perfect marriage." Paul, however, became emotionally involved with his work. 'When I came home, all I wanted to talk about were the exciting challenges on my job. Though I would give Joan a perfunctory kiss and hug, my mind was on something else,' confessed Paul. Joan did not share this enthusiasm for his work. Struggling as a young mother, she felt neglected and left out. This bred resentment, since Paul was insensitive to her emotions.

After a while Joan no longer cared. When Paul poured out his problems, she responded with callous indifference. She had 'walked out' emotionally. Despite his being an able provider and she a capable mother, they had deprived each other of a basic need and a most significant gift—intimacy of heart. They became strangers emotionally, and this lack of personal com-

munication was slowly destroying their marriage.

#### A Need of the Heart

A "fundamental function of marriage," according to counselors Marcia Lasswell and Norman Lobsenz, may be "getting and giving . . . [emotional] support to each other." Because of the assaults from the world around us, such support from those we love is vital. Lack of it deeply hurts, and "because of the pain of the heart there is a stricken spirit." (Proverbs 15:13) One's self-confidence and spirit can be shattered.

When the heart is pained because of the insensitivity of one's spouse, anger often flares. "When he just sits there telling me I'm too emotional, I get so mad," stated one wife. "I wind up crying and feeling terrible." Or as Paul felt: 'I noticed that when we were alone together, Joan showed little

enthusiasm, but as soon as someone called or visited, she was so excited with them, ignoring me completely. I was crushed and at the same time angry because I felt as if I was being used. I provided for her, and yet she acted as if she preferred the company of others.'

Some couples choose to suffer in silence, becoming, in effect, "great pretenders," as if all is well in their marriage. But the body feels what the brain chooses to ignore. Chronic pain, headaches, a knotted stomach, depression, frigidity, and impotence are reported to doctors by people with unresolved marital conflicts. Often, the increasing hostility culminates in a split. Researchers estimate that *one half* of first marriages now taking place in the United States will end in divorce.

But what can be done to conquer conflict and develop intimacy? The secret: *Apply Bible principles*. God, who made the heart and the mind, knows our emotional needs. Therefore, the Bible, which contains his counsel, provides the finest guidance. A couple must not only know but sincerely try to apply this inspired advice. If applied, the Bible can help a couple to meet each other's emotional needs adequately.—Ephesians 5:22-33.

### **"I Don't Know What She Wants"**

It is not easy to recognize the emotional needs of one's spouse. A person may hesitate to spell out his or her needs to others because of fear of rejection, further hurt, or disillusionment—or may not know what such needs are. "I swear, I don't know what she wants," admitted one husband. "She keeps saying we have to talk, and then when we do, it always turns out I'm saying the wrong thing.... So I get worried about it, and I don't say anything."

The Bible, though, shows that, rather than clamping up like this husband, you need to show discernment. "By wisdom a

household will be built up, and by *discernment* it will prove firmly established," states Proverbs 24:3. Therefore, try to discern what is behind your mate's actions or remarks. Ask yourself: Why is he or she telling me this? What does he or she *really* want or need?

At times, a wife may perplex the husband with her volatile emotions. But "a man of *discernment* is cool of spirit" and seeks to 'draw up' from her the real problem. (Proverbs 17:27; 20:5) Is she struggling with some oppressive emotional load? (Compare Ecclesiastes 7:7.) Is her hostility concerning the time you get home from work really an outcry against your indifference and lack of affection? Or have you hurt her by some thoughtlessness? Is extra effort—and time—needed to smooth matters over? Discerning the need, however, is only the first step.—Proverbs 12:18; 18:19.

### ***Building Intimacy***

In the Bible, Job stated that the words of his mouth would strengthen the listener.

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### ***Emotional Support—How Important?***

"Most couples who have an enduring marriage have a deep appreciation of the emotional security of that marriage."

—Dr. April Westfall, Marriage Council of Philadelphia.

"This inability to apprehend the logic of emotions lies at the root of much of the discontent between the sexes, and helps to make marriage the most difficult of all relationships."—*Worlds of Pain—Life in the Working-Class Family*, by Lillian Rubin.

"Men's confusion and consequent lack of responsiveness to their wives' emotional needs is both a cause and an effect of unhappiness in many marriages."—*Psychology Today*, October 1982.

(Job 16:5) This applies also in marriage. Sincere expressions that enhance the self-worth of your spouse are reinforcing. "You husbands," commands the Bible, "continue dwelling in like manner with [your wives] according to knowledge, assigning them honor [viewing as precious; especially dear] as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one." (1 Peter 3:7) When you make your wife feel precious, her hostility often melts.

Of course, according to custom, couples are emotionally closer in some lands than in others. Yet, regardless of the local traditions, husbands who apply the Bible in their marriage see the value of getting emotionally closer to their wives. Knowing that she is cherished by her husband makes it easier for any wife to bare to him the depths of her heart, and this increases their happiness.

"A good listener," states the book *The Individual, Marriage, and the Family*, "has the capacity for making the other person feel that he is especially valued and what he is saying is of concern and significance." Therefore, couples who wish to cultivate intimacy should pay attention to how they listen. An active listener gives his mate full attention and attempts to understand what that one is saying without interrupting, arguing, or changing the subject. Empathetic listening, as well as the cultivating of an unselfish personal interest in the matters of your mate, is the lifeblood of intimacy.—Philippians 2:3, 4.

To improve intimacy, marriage counselors further suggest: (1) Learn to confide in your spouse rather than in someone else. (2) Create some quality time each day, or at least weekly, without distractions, when you can pour out feelings and thoughts. (3) Share small everyday happenings with each other. (4) Regularly show affection in little things—giving a small but unanticipated present, doing a chore the other dis-

## Resolving Arguments

- Set a mutually acceptable time and place to talk.
- Pinpoint the issue and stick to it.
- Have attitude of problem solving, not winning.
- Focus on the present, not on unrelated past events.
- Have only one person talk at a time.
- Try not to attack personally nor hold grudges.
- Be specific, yet sensitive to spouse's feelings.
- Avoid mind reading. Ask for clarification.
- Be open to giving and receiving feedback.
- Avoid sarcasm and name-calling.
- Be willing to compromise for the sake of your marriage.

likes (without being asked), leaving a loving note in the lunch box, or giving an unexpected touch or hug.

However, even devoted couples will still disagree at times. The suggestions in the box shown above can help to prevent such arguments from escalating into marriage wreckers.

Even if disagreements become serious, refuse to give up on your marriage. One couple, whose conflicts had led to a separation, *reconciled* by reading together the Bible's counsel on marriage at Colossians 3:18, 19 with the determination to *apply* this. When straightforwardly discussing the feelings that caused resentment, both asked: "Why didn't you tell me before that you felt that way?" They listened and tried to see the other's point of view. Now, after their being back together for nearly a decade, the husband acknowledges: "Things have only got better, thanks to the beautiful counsel in Jehovah God's Word. Our happiness was worth the effort."



# Teenagers —How Can You Promote Family Peace?

**"I** AM writing to ask for your help," began a letter from a young girl. "It seems I'm always fighting with my parents. I feel all alone and am often depressed. If something doesn't happen quick, I'm going to end my own life. . . . P.S. Don't suggest that I talk to my parents. *Nobody* listens to me."

While you may not be as desperate as this girl, many teenagers experience similar conflict in their homes. Daily chores, curfews, dress and grooming, performance in school, dating, and one's attitude toward other family members—all of these are common causes for bickering.

Nevertheless, many youngsters have found that the Bible's advice, when applied, really does promote peace. And obviously, there are real advantages to being at peace with your parents. (See box on opposite page.) What Bible counsel, though, helps you accomplish that?

### **'Honor and Obey'**

"Obey your parents. . . . Honor (esteem and value as precious) your father and your mother . . . that all may be well with you

and that you may live long on the earth," commands the Bible at Ephesians 6:1-3. (*The Amplified Bible*) Should you not honor your parents, who gave you life, nourished you as a helpless infant, and sacrificed to give you shelter, clothing, food, and health care? *Obedience* means that you do what God-fearing parents ask—even if it is difficult. This is easier said than done! Yet, heeding the advice of your parents, who have much more experience in living, can make you wiser and shield you from some painful heartaches.

True, this may mean learning to do or accept some things that you feel are unpleasant. But this is essential training for coping with the pressures of the adult world. Dr. Paul Gabriel, a child psychiatrist, found that "coping children" are those that "can tolerate frustration." They learn to handle disappointments without going to pieces and learn to accept the inevitable. The Bible also indicates that coping with adversity can build personality. Lamentations 3:27 states: "Good it is for an able-bodied man that he should carry the yoke during his youth."

But what if you feel that your parents are overlooking your point of view? The Bible suggests: (1) Talk calmly rather than fight verbally. (Proverbs 29:11) (2) Use words that are "sweet." Ask for consideration and help, rather than demand such. (Proverbs 16:21) (3) Be reasonable. Give solid reasons for your viewpoint rather than irrelevant remarks, such as, "Everyone else is doing it."—See Philippians 4:5.

### **Talk 'Straight From Your Heart'**

When Gregory was a teenager, he felt that he got little emotional support from his mother. Her restrictions seemed unreasonable. Without any real basis she often accused him of wrongdoing. Gregory's inner pain led to daily conflict. A minister whom he approached for help at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses urged him to talk to his mother 'straight from his heart.'—Job 33:3, *The Holy Bible in the Language of Today*, by William Beck.

"I worked hard to let her know how I really felt. I needed her understanding and emotional support," said Gregory. "I helped her see that I wasn't doing anything wrong and how hurt I was that she didn't trust me. Well, she began to understand my feelings, and our relationship improved. Also, I obeyed her and avoided giving her any reason to distrust me." When a youngster's emotional needs go unanswered, often resentment builds. But heart communication with parents can improve the home atmosphere.

The improved situation in Gregory's home can better be evaluated when you consider he was part of a rapidly increasing type of household with unique problems, the one-parent family.

### **The One-Parent Family**

Presently, one out of every five children in the United States lives with only one parent, and there are similar situations in other lands. A single mother in Peru told of

## **Value of Good Parent-Teen Relationships**

"Consensus existed among the [approximately 200] studies reviewed that academic achievement, leadership, and creative thinking of children was positively related to warm, accepting, understanding . . . parent-child relationships."—James Walters and Nick Stinnett in *Journal of Marriage and the Family*.

"When an adolescent becomes addicted to drugs or alcohol, his particular role within the family may be critical to his addiction and to his treatment."—"Drug Abuse: A Family Affair," by M. Hager in *The Journal*.

"According to one study, the more satisfied adolescents were with the communication and help received from their parents, the higher their self-esteem."—E. Atwater in *Adolescence*.

the enormous load she had to carry, such as working long hours and then caring for the household chores. Yet she said: "What makes life *harder* is when the children do not respect my orders."

If you are a child in such a family, show compassion by cultivating what the Bible calls "fellow feeling." (1 Peter 3:8) Be obedient. Prove that you are a *real* son or daughter by not only helping with household chores but also supporting your parent emotionally. Be glad that you have someone who cares about you and is determined to rear you properly. Successfully coping with the added challenges in a one-parent family will make you a better person.\*

True, no home is perfect. Nevertheless, focus on the positive points of your home with an appreciative eye and then promote peace.

\* See "Just You and Me, Mom" in our February 22, 1981, issue.

# Peace in the Stepfamily

- 'Stepfather reportedly loses his patience and beats young stepson to death.'
- 'Teenager kills her stepfather with her pistol blazing,' according to police report.
- 'Fourteen-year-old boy shot by stepmother, who reportedly became fed up with his behavior.'

"**S**TEPFAMILY households can be most stressful places," explains Dr. John Visher, cofounder of the Stepfamily Association of America. "When people go into the relationship with unrealistic expectations, they are likely to complain they are under considerable strain." Because of snowballing divorce rates, stepfamilies have dramatically increased. But sadly, 44 percent of these fail *within the first five years!* Yet, many have coped with the unique problems of blending two families into one. Application of the following Bible principles was vital.

*"Better is the end afterward of a matter than its beginning. Better is one who is patient than one who is haughty in spirit. Do not hurry . . . to become offended."* (*Ecclesiastes 7:8, 9*) Patience is critical! Relationships must be established that are taken for granted in natural families. You are not an "instant family." Experts say that the process of developing a sense of "we" may take from four to seven years. In the beginning period, stepparents should *take it easy*. Try not to be easily offended if initial efforts to befriend stepchildren are rejected.

*"By presumptuousness one only causes a struggle, but with those consulting together there is wisdom."* (*Proverbs 13:10*) A headstrong, presumptuous attitude —on the part of either children or parents—leads to conflict. Have regular ses-

sions when you can consult together as a family and talk out problems. Learn to express your feelings in a way that shows a sensitivity for others. The more you get to know about the "new" family members through open communication, the closer you will become.

*"He that is showing insight in a matter will find good, and happy is he that is trusting in Jehovah."* (*Proverbs 16:20*) Insight involves looking beyond the obvious and being able to identify the reasons for certain attitudes and behavior. (See interview on opposite page.) This quality can help you see the good in others.

For instance, during an explosive discussion, one stepmother interrupted and suggested: "Let's all tell one thing about each other we dislike, and then follow it immediately with something we really like." Later, she wrote: "We were amazed at all the good traits we appreciated in each other." Tears and hugging followed. In another home, a teen rebelled when his mom remarried, but insight brought peace. "After a few months, I realized that this is the man that makes my mother happy," said Jeff. "And that's all that's important."

But whether you will apply these principles or not depends on your spirituality. "Trusting in Jehovah," desiring to please him, is the key to peace in a stepfamily.

# "Living in Step"

—An interview with the director of the Stepfamily Foundation

Mrs. Jeannette Lofas, director of the Stepfamily Foundation and coauthor of *Living in Step*, has studied the unique pressures within the stepfamily. The following interview with her by an Awake! staff writer tells how these can successfully be met.

**Q.** Mrs. Lofas, why is it so tough being a stepparent?

**A.** Often a stepparent starts with a mythical black eye and goes on to earn the real one. Most stepparents hope to get the recognition a biological parent gets. Generally, they will not. Consciously or unconsciously, they nearly always try to prove themselves. Often the stepchildren reject all this parenting because of feeling disloyal to their departed parent. The biological parent has a hallowed place. In the beginning the stepparent will take a battering. It doesn't always follow, 'If you love me, you'll love my children.'

**Q.** Why are stepchildren often hostile?

**A.** It is real tough on a child to go through a divorce. The child feels bad that Mommy has left or Daddy is not around paying enough attention. Often the children will transfer these bad feelings onto the stepparent. This is called displacement. So stepparents are easily made scapegoats for all these bad feelings. All of a sudden, the child is just being awful to you.

**Q.** How can you help a child cope with these "bad" feelings?

**A.** First, both the parent and the children need to *recognize* that such feelings are a normal part of the dynamics, or pattern of behavior, of a stepfamily. If you blame the child or blame the stepparent instead of the dynamics, you could be in deep trouble. The children need to understand that at the beginning it is normal to be upset and to feel anger and frustration. Often, just helping the child to recognize why he feels that way and empathizing with him is a big help. The biological parent should reassure the child that he will always have a special position and therefore has no reason to fear the stepparent as a usurper of 'position and turf.'

**Q.** Can a stepparent really discipline a stepchild?

**A.** Yes, by setting down 'house rules' from the start. Love means you will give the children

boundaries and not let them run wild. Discipline and love need to be balanced, in or out of step. But living in step, the love is often hard to feel. The blood and the history are missing, so a stepparent may overreact, or a stepchild may resent discipline from a "stranger." A stepfather should establish his authority by leading rather than by commanding.

**Q.** What causes serious problems with punishment?

**A.** When the father and the mother disagree in front of the children. For a child to have the two adult figures in his life disagreeing is the worst thing. A child then has nowhere to turn. If the stepfamily has no 'company policy,' it is devastating. It is very important that the parents discuss privately, and agree on, what the standards of the home are and the consequences if these are violated. They must then make this clear to the child. One stepfather put it this way: "It's a beautiful thing when the mother says, 'This is my husband, your stepfather. Together we are bringing you up.'"

**Q.** How important is the relationship of the couple?

**A.** This is the primary relationship, and it has to be strong; otherwise the rest won't work. You need to build what we call the couple strength. This creates a cohesive family. Without it, not only will you give the children mixed messages but they will drive a wedge between the two of you. Go out as a couple. Enjoy the children as a couple, not burdening just one parent.

**Q.** Do religious values help?

**A.** Yes, a great deal. They enable you to rise above the petty wrongs done against each other. For instance, a husband may on an occasion wrongly favor his biological child. The wife fumes. Now, is she going to rise above the pettiness of the argument, not staying in the mire of what has happened? True, he was wrong. So what? It happened. Where do we go from here? Her religious values help because she thinks: 'What would God's will be? That we make the family work. So what do we need to do now to make that occur? By sincerely trying to follow God's will, we can make the system work.'

# 'It's All His Fault!'

## —Peace Despite Differences

**W**ELL, if *you* straighten up and do what *you're* supposed to," snapped Sherry, "then *I'll* do what *I* should be doing." Her husband, Allen, absorbed the outburst. But in his mind he felt it was the other way around. Both knew what the Bible said, but each felt that the other was not applying it.

Couples often reach such an impasse, believing that their problems are mainly the other's fault. Convinced that it was Allen's fault and that he was not going to change, Sherry moved out. "I felt that there was no point in my trying," she said. "The situation seemed hopeless." Have you ever felt this way? Fortunately, this couple found a solution that saved the marriage.

### ***Is It Only One Person's Fault?***

While at a meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses, Sherry heard something that touched her heart. A minister said that *humility* was vital in developing marital communication. Sherry humbly began to look at herself, to see if *she* had contributed to their problems.

Actually, we are all quick to absolve ourselves from blame. "The man who first puts his cause before the judge seems to be in the right; but then his neighbour comes and puts his cause in its true light." (Proverbs 18:17, *The Bible in Basic English*) Blaming a mate only provides a shallow excuse and avoids the painful search into yourself for possible causes of the predicament. According to the Bible, you can either 'build up' or 'tear down' your marriage with your "*own hands*." (Proverbs 14:1)

Looking at ourselves in the "true light" often reveals room for improvement.

This soul-searching was the beginning of the solution for Sherry. She realized that she was not likely to change her admittedly bossy husband by the way she had gone about things. But she could change her response and how she talked to him. This might influence him to improve. So she returned home, determined now to watch her speech. The results were positive.

### ***The Power of the Tongue***

The "tongue that speaks peaceably is a tree whose fruit gives life," says the Bible, but the "tongue undisciplined can break hearts." (Proverbs 15:4, *The Holy Bible*, by Ronald A. Knox) Thoughtless, "undisciplined" speech will often elicit anger and resentment. "I always used to throw it up to him that all he married me for was to have someone keep his house and kids," admitted Sherry. "He would get mad and start shouting. Well, I stopped saying this. I quit being so picky and critical. Instead of putting him down in front of the kids, I would wait till the right time to discuss things that I didn't like. I tried to listen more and to compliment him when I could."

Their marriage warmed as Allen responded. Do your words enrich your marriage or cause pain, 'breaking the heart' of your mate? Do you heed the Bible's command to show 'fellow feeling and tender compassion'?—1 Peter 3:8.

For instance, another couple, Larry and Michele, was considering which dessert to prepare for a dinner party. "Keep it simple.

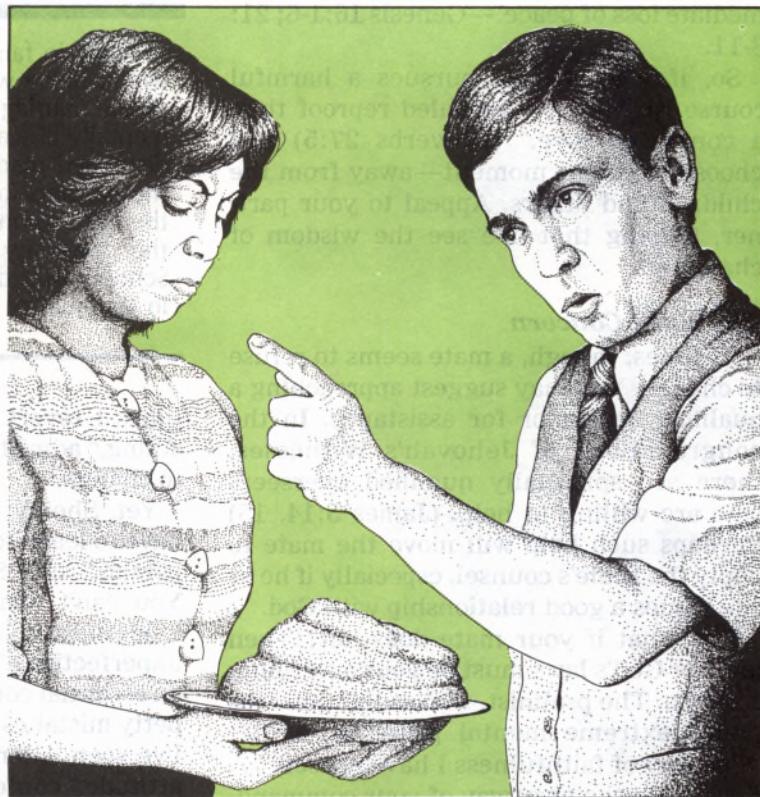
*Buy a cake," urged Larry.* Michele insisted on baking an elaborate cake. Sure enough, just before the guests were to arrive, Larry heard a wail from the kitchen. The unmolded layers had crumbled. "Didn't I tell you it was dumb to try to make that cake?" said Larry, totally insensitive to her distress. "Now what are you going to do for dessert?"

"I came within an inch of throwing the whole mess in his face," confessed Michele. Only the arrival of the guests averted violence. They scarcely spoke to each other for days afterward. But could Larry claim that it was all her fault? On the contrary, his thoughtless remark 'stabbed like a sword,' producing a fiery response. (Proverbs 12:18) How much more constructive if he had expressed sympathy and suggested another dessert!

What, though, if your mate is upset because of a bitter personal problem or failure? Oh, you realize that you are really not the target. But still, how do you manage when, out of frustration, that one lashes out at you?

### **Self-Sacrificing Love**

Instead of withdrawing, the Bible counsels: "Go on carrying the burdens of one another, and thus fulfill the law of the Christ." (Galatians 6:2) Since offering support when a mate is upset is tough, applying "the law of the Christ" is crucial.



**When tension mounts, will your words make the situation better or worse?**

Jesus commanded *self-sacrificing* love. (John 13:34, 35) This love "does not look for its own interests." (1 Corinthians 13:5) Even if you have a legitimate "cause for complaint," this love will move you to forgive and overlook it. (Colossians 3:13) Self-sacrifice calls for 'taking the lead' in showing honor and responding to evil with good. —Romans 12:10, 17-21.

Yet, being self-sacrificing does not mean doing absolutely *anything* to appease a mate. The Bible tells of Sarah, who was submissive and self-sacrificing. Nevertheless, she did not hesitate to speak her mind straightforwardly to her husband when the situation demanded it. She placed the long-term benefits to the family above any im-

mediate loss of peace.—Genesis 16:1-6; 21:8-11.

So, if your spouse pursues a harmful course, "better is a revealed reproof than a concealed love." (Proverbs 27:5) But choose the right moment—away from the children and others. Appeal to your partner, helping that one see the wisdom of changing.

### The Vital Concern

At times, though, a mate seems to refuse to change. You may suggest approaching a qualified counselor for assistance. In the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses, there are spiritually qualified overseers who are willing to help. (James 5:14, 15) Perhaps such help will move the mate to apply the Bible's counsel, especially if he or she values a good relationship with God.

But what if your mate does not? Then love for God's laws must be your overriding concern. The psalmist, who at the time was under extreme mental pressure, wrote: "The way of faithfulness I have chosen. . . . I shall run the very way of your commandments, because *you make my heart have the room.*" (Psalm 119:11, 30, 32) The psalmist, who treasured God's laws, not only increased knowledge of God within his heart but also developed greater confidence in God's ability to sustain. God therefore helped him to have "the room" in his heart to bear this emotional distress.

Jehovah is thus capable of helping you also to make room in your heart to accommodate even an uncooperative mate. Knowing that you are pleasing God by keeping his commands gives an inner peace.

### ***It Really Works!***

Happily, for nearly ten years, Sherry and Allen have been reunited from their separation. Both, though imperfect, have tried to apply the counsel from the Bible. "Some-

"Only in fairly rare instances, such as when, unknown to the partner at the time of the marriage, one partner is alcoholic or mentally ill, can most of the blame for a distressed marriage be ascribed to one of the partners instead of to both." This is the conclusion reached by Gary Birchler of the University of California Medical School, after doing considerable research in the field of marriage.

times I revert to some of my old ways of acting," admitted Allen. "But I keep trying to change."

Yet, Sherry tries not to overreact. "You have to learn to accept some things about a person," said Sherry. "It's the way he is. You can't change everything about him —no more than I can change all my own imperfections." Frankly, Sherry reached an essential conclusion: the need to forgive petty mistakes. (Matthew 18:21, 22) "Since I've seen Allen's response to my changed attitude," confessed Sherry as she reflected on the hostile seven years of marriage before the separation, "I've thought, 'Why didn't I do this before?' Those years would have been so much easier."

So do not expect near perfection from a mate. Marriage, even to the best of mates, still brings 'tribulation in the flesh.' (1 Corinthians 7:28) Face problems squarely, rather than running from such by a frivolous separation or divorce.\* Strengthen your personal resolve to keep God's laws, and you will experience the truth of Psalm 119:165: "Abundant peace belongs to those loving [God's] law, and for them there is no stumbling block."

\* The Bible does allow for divorce on the basis of sexual immorality that frees the innocent mate to remarry. (Matthew 19:9) For some serious reasons that could result in separation, see "When Marriage Ties Are at the Breaking Point" in the September 15, 1963, issue of our companion magazine, *The Watchtower*.

## Young People Ask...

# How Important Are Looks?

**'I've got this dislike about my body,' laments 16-year-old Maria. 'I think I don't look so good'**

**Y**OU say you don't like the way you look? Well, few of us—if any—are entirely satisfied with our physical appearance. Unlike Narcissus, who fell in love with his reflection in a pool of water, some of us nearly fall into depression when we see our reflection in the mirror.

Especially may this be so if you are a growing, perhaps self-conscious youth. 'I've got this dislike about my body,' laments 16-year-old Maria. 'I think I don't look so good.' Thirteen-year-old Bob has a similar grievance: 'I don't like my hair, the way it sticks up here in the back.'

Of course, it's only natural to want to look attractive. And making reasonable efforts to care for your personal appearance makes good sense. Nevertheless, has concern about your looks begun to dominate your thinking? Do you dislike yourself because of how you look? If so, ask yourself, How legitimate are my complaints? Could it be that I am simply trapped on the ceaseless treadmill of longing for greener grass?

### **Greener Grass**

Yes, for many, life is like an endless line of fences with greener grass just on the other side. You've seen such ones. The naturally slender girl who thinks she is skinny and eats herself sick. The pleasingly plump girl who thinks she is fat and nearly starves herself to death. Or ones like An-

nie, who grew faster than her schoolmates. Was she delighted with her adult stature? She recalls: "I was taller than *everybody*. It was embarrassing for me. I had a really tiny friend and I used to envy her."

Thus, beauty aids, gadgets, and contraptions abound. Plastic surgeons proliferate and prosper. And at risk to health and happiness, young people fret about the unchangeable. Is there a way off this merry-go-round of dissatisfaction? Yes! But the key is having the right *viewpoint* toward your looks. How do you get it? Let's begin by trying to understand *why* you may feel the way you do.

### **Powerful Influences**

There are many forces that influence our views and feelings about our looks. One such influence comes from within. The Bible calls such "the desires incidental to youth." (2 Timothy 2:22) These desires manifest themselves in many ways, and one such is an exaggerated concern with how we look.

Interestingly, though, professor of psychiatry Richard M. Sarles shows that those desires are often fed: "Adolescence is a period of transition in which a major reorganization of the body takes place.... To deal with the awkwardness of a new and changing body, most adolescents rely upon the security of their peer group." In other

words, if our friends do not notice how big our nose is, we can shrug it off. But when peers notice, so do we.

Another persuasive influence is the subtle system known as the media. From childhood on, TV, books, and movies teach us that "good" people are beautiful and that "bad" people are ugly, a theme relentlessly echoed throughout the corridors of the media. This worsens the tendency of imperfect humans to "look at things according to their face value," to stereotype people according to their looks.

—2 Corinthians 10:7.

The media would thus have you believe that if you're not a sleek, seductive, high-cheekboned, flawless-skinned beauty, or a muscle-bound "hunk," you might as well crawl into a hole somewhere—or at least give up on the idea of ever being popular, successful, or happy. Of course, *consciously* you probably see the media's ploy for what it is: utter nonsense. However, much of the media's effect is *subconscious*. Subtly or blatantly, beauty is idealized or worshiped at every turn! Striking looks sell everything from perfume to chain saws. As a result, many people buy not only products but also the twisted notion that looks are everything.

#### **Combating the 'Beautiful People' Fantasy**

Without a doubt, then, the 'beautiful people' fantasy infects many. Life becomes an endless round of fad diets, gaudy cosmetics, and expensive treatments. The Bible, however, says: "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould." (Romans 12:2, Phillips) Think: Who is it that



#### **What you dislike about yourself may be envied by others**

promotes the idea that you need a certain look if you are to be popular, successful, or happy? Is it not the manufacturers and advertisers who *profit* from such deception? Why let your thinking be molded by them? And if the put-downs about your looks emanate from friends, who needs "friends" like that, anyway?

The Bible further advises you to "think so as to have a sound mind." (Romans 12:3) That can mean casting a dubious eye on propaganda—whether from friends or from the media—that promotes self-dissatisfaction. Isn't it true that very few people really look like supermodels? "Beauty is a bubble," says the Bible. (Proverbs 31:30, *Byington*) So even people who are paid for their looks are at their peak for but a brief moment—before they are discarded for a fresh new face. Also, wonders can be done for the face and body with makeup, lighting, and photographic magic.

Some have been shocked when they saw their favorite celebrity in person without the benefit of his or her complex beauty-support system!

Another point to ponder: Aren't most of your friends rather average-looking? Some of them may by certain standards even be considered unattractive. And what about your parents? Would either of them be material for the cover of a fashion magazine? Probably not. But does that change your feelings toward them? In fact, once you come to appreciate them for what they *are* and not for how they *look*, you probably seldom even think about their looks.

Finally, is it not true that as a growing youth, your appearance is *changing* anyway? Teens mature at different rates. So if

you're too short or too tall, or your complexion isn't right, be patient. Time may take care of some of these so-called flaws.

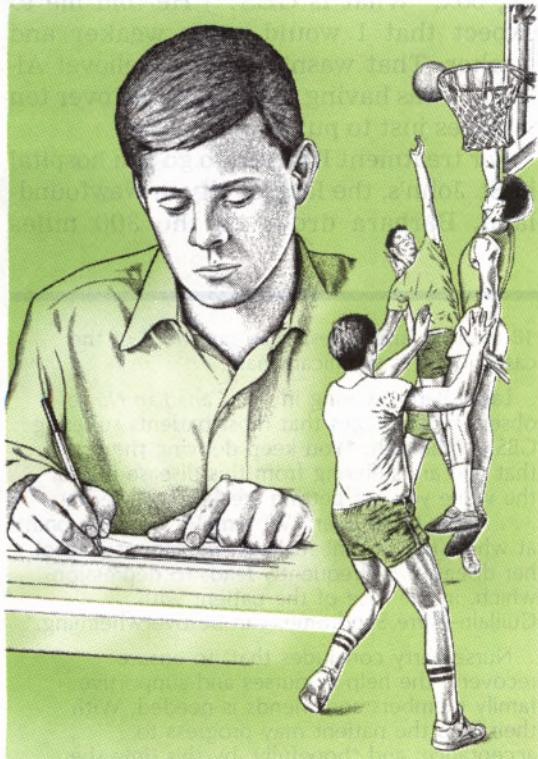
Looking at such matters with a sound mind can thus spare you the frustration of trying to match the unnatural images of screen and glossy magazines or of making unnecessary comparisons of yourself with other youths. You have assets that far outweigh any physical deficiencies—imagined or real. However, there is yet one more important factor for you to consider.

#### ***God's Thinking on the Matter***

Have you ever noticed how *little* the Bible talks about the way people looked? Why aren't we told what Abraham, Mary—or even Jesus—looked like? Obviously, God did not consider it important.

In fact, God once rejected for the position of king a young man named Eliab, who was apparently a fine physical specimen! Jehovah God explained to the prophet Samuel: "Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature.... For not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." (1 Samuel 16:6, 7) God instead chose a young boy named David.

Rightly, then, the Bible encourages us to focus our attention, not on outward adornment, but on "the secret person of the heart." (1 Peter 3:3, 4) Of course, this does not mean we should neglect our outward appearance. The Bible encourages us to maintain high standards of dress and grooming. (Compare 1 Timothy 2:9.) Still, at times our outward appearance may distress us a bit. But what a comfort it is to know that to God, the One who really counts, our looks are not the important thing! "He sees what the heart is." Would it not therefore be wise to stop worrying so much about your looks and work instead on beautifying your heart before him?



**You have assets that far outweigh any physical deficiencies**

# "Will I Ever Walk Again?"

THAT Monday morning in September of 1983 I went to pick up my attaché case as usual. I tried to take hold of the handle. 'That's rather odd,' I thought—it just slipped right through my fingers! There was no strength in my hand. At first I thought that maybe I had slept on my hand during the night and that shortly it would be normal again. But that wasn't the case. The rest of the day the problem just grew worse and worse.

By the next morning, I had lost the strength in both my legs. The only way I could get out of bed was with my wife Barbara's help. By this time, I knew I had to see a doctor.

We arrived at a small local hospital at Botwood, Newfoundland, where three

doctors examined me. After consultation, they told me they thought I had polyneuritis, a paralytic disease also known as Guillain-Barré Syndrome, or GBS. To make sure, they made arrangements for me to go to another hospital in the larger town of Grand Falls, Newfoundland. There a neurologist examined me. Using simple tests, he confirmed the earlier diagnosis—polyneuritis! (See the accompanying box, "What Is GBS?") He told me to expect that I would grow weaker and weaker. That wasn't hard to believe! Already I was having to struggle for over ten minutes just to put on my socks!

For treatment I agreed to go to a hospital in St. John's, the largest city in Newfoundland. Barbara drove us the 300 miles

## What Is GBS?

The Guillain-Barré Syndrome (named after the French neurologists who first discovered it) is a mystery to scientists. The exact cause is still unknown, though it seems to follow some minor viral infections. Usually victims recover somewhat spontaneously. Yet, death may result if the paralysis extends to the respiratory system. Thus, the *Journal of Neurosurgical Nursing* says that "the only hope these patients have is complete and exact nursing care."

In GBS, the body, after an infection, is thought to produce antibodies that attack the coating—the myelin sheath—of the nerves. These exposed nerves cannot now conduct the electrons that control muscle action. This, in turn, causes weakness and paralysis. Recovery begins as the nerves recoat themselves. This may take as long as

18 months, and in less than one third of the cases, there is significant pain.

Laura Barry, writing in *The Canadian Nurse*, observed the stages that most patients suffering GBS go through: "You keep denying the fact that you are suffering from this disease but all the while you are getting weaker and weaker. . . . Anger takes over: 'Why me!?' . . . The point at which the patient realizes she cannot control her disease . . . frequently leads to depression which, in the case of the patient with Guillain-Barré Syndrome, can be overwhelming."

Nurse Barry concludes that, to ensure recovery, the help of nurses and supportive family members and friends is needed. With their help the patient may progress to acceptance, and "hopefully, by this time the disease will have reached its zenith and ceased to progress further."

(480 km) there. I remember that at one point on the trip she asked me to change the station on the car radio, but I didn't even have the strength to do that! By this time I wasn't able to walk. The questions that haunted me were, 'Will I ever walk again? Will my wife be burdened with the responsibility of looking after me for the rest of my life?'

When we arrived at the hospital, I was a deadweight. It was frustrating—and a little frightening at times. Here, too, the chief neurologist said: 'It's definite. You have polyneuritis, or GBS.'

That night I was determined to feed myself. But you should have seen me! Food on top of my head, even behind my ears! I simply couldn't coordinate my hands or my arms. I could still speak, but by the next morning I was completely *paralyzed*. I was in no real pain at that time, but I did feel a pins-and-needles sensation.

The paralysis now spread to my abdomen, and my breathing was affected. Every two hours my breathing was monitored. Then the pain started—excruciating pain. My knees and shoulders throbbed like a giant toothache. I found this the hardest period to endure. It lasted for several weeks. Since I couldn't ring a bell for any needed attention, I had to yell for the nurses to come and move me. The nurses would apply hot compresses, which would relieve the pain for about 20 minutes. The doctors encouraged me by explaining that while it wasn't easy to endure the pain, it was a good sign that the nerves were beginning to recover.

#### **"Is He Depressed Yet?"**

The best help of all was when Barbara came in every day and kept me built up



I was paralyzed, but now I can walk again  
—and hold my attaché case!

spiritually by reading to me from the Bible and Bible publications. She also fed me and gave me some of the physiotherapy treatment that I required.

At times the nurses called Barbara over and quietly asked, "Is he depressed yet?" They knew that with this disease there is a terrible emotional strain. And, true, there were moments when I did get discouraged, even frightened, wondering: 'Maybe my illness will affect my career, and I will have to give up the traveling ministry, which I enjoy so much.' But with the encouragement I received from Barbara and from the visits by members of the local congregations of Jehovah's Witness-

es, I continually fought to think positively.

Another thing that helped me to endure was a warm bath. They used to place me in a special chair, wheel me down to the bathing room, and then hoist me into a pool of lovely warm water! This was very helpful in relieving the pain in my joints. You see, I could feel the warm sensation on my skin even though I had no reflexes. As far as physical comfort was concerned, this was the highlight of my day!

It helped me, too, to keep in mind what the doctors had said to us, namely, that while it might take a number of months or even a year or so, there were good chances of complete recovery in my case. That's one thing that kept me going.

After a few weeks, as part of the therapy, I was placed in a chair and required to sit up. The pain was agonizing! A few minutes was all I could bear at first. Another victim of this disease hit the nail on the head when she said: "The pain is similar to what you feel when you bang your funny bone—only it doesn't let up."

As the days went by, I tried to sit up for longer periods of time. Also, my wife took me around the hospital in a wheelchair so I could visit the other two patients who were afflicted with GBS. Though I've heard that it usually affects only about one person in half a million, surprisingly, the two others stricken with GBS had been admitted after I was.

#### **"Now, How Far Can You Go On Your Own?"**

After about three weeks of total paralysis, what a joy it was to wake up one morning and find that I could move my thumb slightly! This added to the doctors' prior encouragement that there could be early recovery. Slowly, movement came to the rest of my fingers.

After I had been in the hospital for about a month, the nurses put me in a wheel-

chair, gave it a little shove, and said: "Now, how far can you go on your own?" I still wasn't that strong, but I tried to roll the wheels with the palms of my hands. I had to pause to rest frequently, yet with great effort—and with perspiration running down my face—I was able to move the full length of the hallway! I felt such a sense of accomplishment.

My first attempt to stand up was truly frightening! The pain was so intense that it is beyond description. For a moment I thought that my legs would go right through my body. But each day I tried to do a bit more than the day before. As I progressed, I was finally supplied with a walker, so that more and more I was on my own. I learned to be patient.

Shortly thereafter I was allowed a trial run of life at home again, spending the weekend with some friends. Barbara was able to look after me quite well there. Of course, I didn't like being totally dependent on other people, but there was nothing I could do about it. So I learned the lesson of humbly accepting the loving care of others when needed.

As I recuperated and saw how my body was mending itself, I often thought of the scripture that says, "In a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:

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## **In Our Next Issue**

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- Are You at Peace  
With Your Neighbor?
  - 'Everyone Else Smokes Pot  
—Why Shouldn't I?'
  - Carnival—A Flight From  
Life's Problems?
-

## **Remember the Patient!**

### Suggestions for Visiting Hospitalized Friends

- Stay for short periods, so as to avoid tiring the patient
- If visiting with a group, try to limit visitors in the room to two at a time; larger numbers can be tiring
- Speak in a low tone; loud talk can be disturbing to other patients
- Keep any talking positive and upbuilding
- Try to discern the needs of the patient. Offer to run errands for family members so they are freed to visit the patient as much as possible
- Make yourself available for supplying needed transportation
- If patient is asleep or receiving treatment when you arrive, leave a brief note or card to indicate that you called
- A mild handshake or a touch on the hand can be reassuring to the patient

14) I learned through adversity to appreciate the human body. How exciting it was now to wake up each morning and think: 'What will I be able to do today that I wasn't able to do yesterday?'

### **'You Have Connections With a Higher Power!'**

My doctors were very impressed with my relatively speedy recovery. Most peo-

ple take much longer to get back on their feet again. One nurse said to me: "I think that what contributes to your quick recovery is the fine, loving support of your congregation." That taught me a valuable lesson: the need to visit and give encouragement to those who are not well or are undergoing suffering of some kind. My wife kept a record of our visitors. Why, we had over 300 come to see us while I was recuperating!

The end of the fifth week of my hospitalization came, and I was anxiously awaiting my doctor's report. Finally, he came in to see me and said that I could go home. I was to return at certain times for physiotherapy and examination. Ten days after my discharge, I took the walker back to the hospital, explaining that I was determined to walk on my own again. I thanked the doctor for his care, but he said, "Don't thank me. You have connections with a power higher than ours!"

As I continued recuperating at home, I still had only a little strength in my hands. In fact, it wasn't until February that I was able to resume, in a limited way, my normal activities as a traveling minister of Jehovah's Witnesses in eastern Canada. It had been five months since that Monday in September when the attaché case slipped through my fingers. I had been paralyzed—but now I could walk again!—*As told by Winston Peacock.*

## **Should You Hold Back Tears?**

Little Johnny falls and scrapes his knee and starts crying. 'There, there now, dry those tears, Johnny,' we may tell him. 'Big boys don't cry.' And so if Johnny holds back those tears, perhaps we feel that we have taught him a valuable lesson about manhood. But have we really?

Don't hold back those tears! So urges biochemist Dr. William Frey II, a leading authority on crying. Why not? Because crying may be good for you.

Dr. Frey maintains that only humans shed emotional tears and that such tears differ chemically from those

induced by irritants, such as onions. Different in what way? In a report published in *Psychology Today*, Dr. Frey reported that "emotional tears contain a greater concentration of protein than do irritant-induced tears."

One thing appears certain: Crying does seem to help relieve emotional stresses, such as grief and sorrow. The Bible contains numerous examples of men and women—including Jesus Christ himself—who shed tears. (Luke 19:41; John 11:33-35) So in coping with such emotional stresses as grief, a helpful piece of advice may be: Don't hold back those tears!

# Is Smoking Really Wrong?

"WHY not use tobacco if I enjoy it? If I risk my health, that's my own business." To the millions who find pleasure in smoking, such "logic" is convincing.

Yet, news reports in 1985 blamed smoking for 100,000 deaths a year in Britain, 350,000 a year in the United States, and a third of all deaths in Greece. Common sense suggests that society would not shrug off the moral implications of these figures. But it does. Why?

For one thing, many religious leaders refuse to apply any moral pressure on their flock to stop smoking. The view they take is expressed by the author of a book called *The Christian Moral Vision*. He sees "no justification for moral pressure" on one who, "having considered the risks . . . [goes on] smoking

**'If 100,000 Britons had died from any other preventable cause, it would have provoked a national outrage'**

for the sake of the pleasure it provides." But is this the Bible's viewpoint? Does "pleasure" justify taking needless risks?

No, it does not. Would it not make more sense to try to stay physically and mentally in top shape? For our own good and out of respect for our loved ones and our Creator, the Bible stipulates that we should "cleanse ourselves of every defilement [pollution] of flesh and spirit." (2 Corinthians 7:1; *Kingdom*

*Interlinear*) Does the harm from tobacco stop at the physical body?

### What It Does to Your Life

The tobacco habit can grip you firmly not only physically but also mentally. Aside from polluting one's body, tobacco permeates the whole "spirit" with which tobacco users think, work, and play—the very mood of their daily affairs. A journalist admitted in *Reader's Digest*: "Without my daily ration of cigarettes, I could not write, eat, sleep, make love or even have fun with my children."

Why does tobacco become so deep-rooted in people's lives, even to the point of causing them to look the other way when facing its ultimate harm—death? Concerning Britain, psychiatrist Judy Greenwood wrote

in the *Glasgow Herald* of January 3, 1985: "If 100,000 people had died from any other preventable cause, . . . it would have provoked a national

outrage. . . . But smoking is different . . . This particular social addiction is so ingrained in our culture and commerce . . . that we seem to have developed a blind spot in our national commonsense."

### The Spiritual Harm of Addiction

Yes, addiction, not pleasure alone, produces this moral blind spot in the public "spirit" today. And Dr. Richard Pollin, director

of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (U.S.A.), asserts that cigarette smoking is now the most serious and widespread addiction in the world—even worse than heroin.

The Bible's viewpoint has no such blind spots regarding addictive substances that would make us slaves both of a habit and of the men who traffic in the habit: "You were bought with a price; stop becoming slaves of men," states 1 Corinthians 7:23.

Were addictive drugs and herbs common in Bible times? Yes, says *Tobacco and Kentucky*, citing "the evidence of prehistoric pipes excavated at . . . the Mediterranean Sea and inland in Asia Minor [used in smoking] . . . cannabis (marijuana) and other herbs." In fact, adds the book, "fumigation with, or the inhalation of, the smoke of various substances has been a sacred, healing, or pleasurable practice . . . since time immemorial. . . . As with cannabis and opium, so with tobacco."

According to McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia*, the term "pharmacy" was used "in the early ages of the Christian Church" for the "art of inventing and preparing medicaments to do mischief." What view did the Bible take of such substances and those who trafficked in them?

### **The Dark Side of Pharmacy**

The Bible condemns drug abuse, not the proper healing use of drugs; and while

practitioners "will not inherit God's kingdom." (Galatians 5:19-21) Says *The International Standard Bible Encyclopædia*: "Paul in Gal 5 20 classes with uncleanness, idolatry, etc, what he calls *pharmakeia* . . . drugs used in exercising the magical art." Note, then, the great spiritual harm of addictive substances used for pleasure: They cut one off from God's favor—and from God's people.

Due to the magical use of drugs in Bible times, Galatians 5:20, 21 translates *pharmaki'a* as "practice of spiritism." But the *Kingdom Interlinear* translation shows "druggery" as the literal meaning, and Ferrar Fenton's translation uses "poisoning." Bible scholar Adam Clarke specified that "drugs" and "fumigations" (smoke) were employed "to produce supernatural effects."

Emphasizing this unsavory side of pharmacy, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* says: "If one is puzzled over the connection between medicine and sorcery . . . by this word (our pharmacy), he has only to recall quackery today in medicine . . . witch-doctors, professional faith-healers, medicine-men in Africa." Yes, and we might also recall "the very cornerstone of Amerindian religion"—the shaman, or priest, smoking tobacco in his "peace pipe."

Therefore, it is no wonder that Revelation 22:15 says that "outside" God's Paradise Kingdom are "the druggers [*phar·ma·koi'*] and the fornicators and the murderers."—*Int.*

Truly, the secular use of tobacco for pleasure today has its roots in the God-dishonoring superstitions of bygone days. And just as Jesus foretold concerning the fruits of false religion, so the fruitage of tobacco's roots—physically and spiritually—has been nothing short of rotten.—Matthew 7:15-20.

***In the Bible the use of addictive substances for pleasure is put in very bad company—"the works of the flesh"***

"pharmacy" in modern use means drugs put to proper use, the older meaning was drug abuse—for harm, not healing. In the Bible such pharmacy is put in very bad company—"the works of the flesh," whose

# Blood Case Makes Headlines in Japan

**K**EEP abstaining from . . . blood." This clear command is given in the Bible at Acts 15:29. It is part of a decision handed down by the governing body of the Christian congregation in the first century and is recorded in God's inspired Word for instruction of Christians down to this time.

However, this divine requirement was nothing new to the first century. Abstinence from blood was commanded 3,500 years ago in the Law of Moses, as stated at Leviticus 17:10-16. Indeed, a similar command was given more than 4,300 years ago to Noah, the progenitor of all mankind on earth today. We read it at Genesis 9:4: "Only flesh with its soul—its blood—you must not eat."

From these scriptures it is plain to those who live by the Bible that blood is precious in God's sight. As the Creator of man and the Provider of this stream of life, he is the One who may properly direct how blood is to be used. If it is not to be eaten to sustain life, then logically it may not be used to sustain life through intravenous feeding or blood transfusion. Those who worship the God of the Bible are careful to observe his requirements. And from his point of view, it is just as important to abstain from blood as to abstain from idolatry and fornication, as the scripture at Acts 15:28 and 29 clearly shows.

## A Case That Jolted Japan

On June 6, 1985, at 4:35 p.m., ten-year-old Dai Suzuki was riding his bicycle. He was on his way to practice his first talk to be presented in the Theocratic Ministry School in the local Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. He stopped at a traffic light between a large dump truck and the guardrail. When the light turned green, Dai started up. He was caught by the big rear tires of the truck and thrown down, crushing his legs. The wounds bled profusely. Five hours after being taken to a nearby hospital, Dai died as a result of his injury.

This event became nationwide news. What made it newsworthy was the fact that the parents refused to allow blood transfusions. The father of Dai is studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, and his mother is already a baptized Witness. On religious grounds, they firmly rejected appeals for permission to administer blood. They even sealed their written refusal with fingerprints, which are legally binding if a person does not have his official seal with him at the time. They considered it proper to follow the Scriptures in which God has so consistently commanded his servants to 'abstain from blood.'

At the time, the parents were threatened with a charge of murder if the child should die because of their not giving permission for blood transfusions. *However, a careful autopsy later revealed that death was not caused by any negligence on the part of either the parents or the hospital.* Therefore, no police charges were brought.

Japan's three leading national newspapers, together with influential local papers, ran lengthy articles on the case. It was also publicized on TV news and radio

news. In this way the media made strong appeals to popular sentiment, and as is so common in such emotion-packed cases, they twisted the facts considerably. Many of the articles were plainly provocative.

However, one commentator conceded that the Japanese are not accustomed to being governed by such strong religious conviction as that shown by the Suzuki family. He stated that 'if a transfusion had been forced on the patient and he had survived, both parents and patient would be in greater torment than if it had ended in death.' On this basis, he felt that one cannot really judge another's faith.

Japanese television networks made a big fuss about the case, stirring up emotional prejudices. But from the viewpoint of the Suzuki family, it had been important to obey the clear directives of the God of the Bible. So the loving, God-fearing parents obeyed the Bible command, "Abstain from . . . blood." (Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25) The fact that abstinence from blood is stressed in three separate verses in the book of Acts, and that it is parceled in with avoiding idolatry and fornication, shows how seriously the Creator views the matter.

In the rare event that a faithful Christian should die because of refusing blood, that one will surely be resurrected in God's due time, according to His promise. The parents of Dai can confidently say, as



Dai when he started first grade in 1981

did Martha concerning her brother Lazarus, "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day."—John 11:24; 5:28, 29.

The issue with Jehovah's Witnesses is entirely a religious one. True, it may also be argued that in many cases there is less risk in refusing a blood transfusion than there is in accepting one, for thus a person is protected against the serious illnesses that are conveyed through blood transfusion, such as AIDS and hepatitis.

However, to the Christian, who follows God's Word, this is a secondary matter. The main concern is to obey and remain in the favor of the Life-Giver, Jehovah God, who is able also to bestow everlasting life.—Psalm 36:9; Romans 2:6, 7.

It may require some sacrifice on occasion for a loyal Christian to stand by the Bible injunction 'to keep abstaining from blood.' Yet, self-sacrifice is a virtue that is recognized in many societies, and self-sacrifice in obeying one's Creator will certainly bring his smile of approval.—Luke 9:23, 24.

The Suzuki family chose resolutely to follow the Bible's directive in obedience to Almighty God, despite emotion-charged pressures from those who did not understand the principles involved. (Acts 5:29) May "the God of all comfort" continue to nurture this family in their integrity and grant them a grand blessing in the resurrection!—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.

# Spider Silk:

## Stronger Than Steel?



"Two to three times the strength of high-quality steel." "Flexible enough to stretch 30 per cent before breaking." Only "a thousandth of a millimetre in diameter" ("a hundredth the size of a human hair"). What is it? A wonder of modern technology? No, it is the silk spun by the tiny brown spider named *aranei diademati*, commonly known as the orb web spider. Scientists at the University of British Columbia studying the design of this natural product find that "generally, the stronger a substance gets, the more rigid it gets." Yet, "the unique arrangement of the molecules in a strand of [spider] silk . . . allows it to be both stretchable and strong at

the same time." So effort is being made by scientists at the University of British Columbia to see if they can learn something from the chemistry of the lowly spider that will enable man to develop synthetic patterns that are similar. Among the intriguing properties of this silk is the mystifying "ability of the protein chains to link rubbery and crystalline features." British chemist Paul Calvert found all this "very impressive." Obviously, spider's silk testifies to a Grand Designer who possesses superhuman intelligence.

Yes, it is one of "the wonderful works of the One perfect in knowledge," Jehovah God.—Job 37:16.

# Cooking Spaghetti Giulia's Way

By "Awake!" correspondent in Italy

**A**LMOST everyone enjoys eating a steaming bowlful of spaghetti. But did you know that this cylindrically shaped pasta gets its name from its stringlike appearance? In the Italian language, the word for string is *spago*. From this we get the derivative "spaghetti," or "little pieces of string."

"How do you cook it?" we ask. We are happy to have an expert cook named Giulia to answer our question. She is always pleased to talk about her favorite subject—cooking.

"Apart from the sauce you decide to use," Giulia quickly responds, "it is important that the spaghetti itself be cooked underdone. That means it should be cooked in boiling water with a little salt and taken out before it becomes too soft. Ideally, it should be slightly chewy. We Italians call it *al dente* (to the tooth). This is why the best quality spaghetti cannot be made with common wheat flour but only with flour from durum wheat. Cooking the pasta to the right point is one of the secrets of preparing a plate of tasty spaghetti."

"Is it very difficult to cook the pasta?" we next ask. Giulia, already expecting that question, quickly adds, "It isn't all that difficult. But for it to be truly tasty, remember you must not overcook the pasta." Here are some of Giulia's suggestions.

## *Giulia's Cooking Suggestions*

For every 100 grams (1/4 lb)\* of pasta, put about 1 liter (1 qt) of water in a pot to boil with 5 grams (1 tsp) of coarse-grained salt. Let the water boil for two minutes. Then add the spaghetti, and stir immediately with a spoon or a fork to prevent it from sticking together. The water will momentarily stop boiling. Please do not put a lid on the pot.

When the water starts boiling again, lower the temperature so that the water boils only slightly. Stir the pasta from time to time. The cooking time depends on the type of pasta you are using, whether thick or thin. The time also depends on the altitude, since water boils at lower temperatures at higher altitudes. Sometimes the cooking time is written on the

\* All measurement conversions in article are approximations. You may wish to vary measurements to personal taste.



spaghetti package. In any case, keep an eye on the spaghetti while it is cooking, and above all, *keep testing it!*

As you stir the pasta, you will feel when it starts to soften. That's when you should take a piece out to try it. Put it on a plate to cool so you don't burn your tongue. Then taste it. If it is still hard, let the spaghetti cook a bit longer. When it's soft but chewy, that is *al dente*. It's time to take the pot off the stove. Drain the spaghetti in a colander immediately. If the spaghetti keeps standing in the hot water, it will continue to cook and become too soft.

"Is that all there is to cooking spaghetti?" we wonder.

"Cooking the pasta is only part of the job of preparing an appetizing dish," continues Giulia. "Spaghetti needs a sauce. The sauce is another secret of success. Spaghetti goes very well with a tomato sauce made from peeled tomatoes cooked together in some olive oil with chopped garlic and onions. Or it can even be served with butter and sprinkled with Parmesan cheese. However, let me give you two recipes for some appetizing dishes."

### ***Giulia's Special Recipes***

#### ***Spaghetti alla Carbonara***

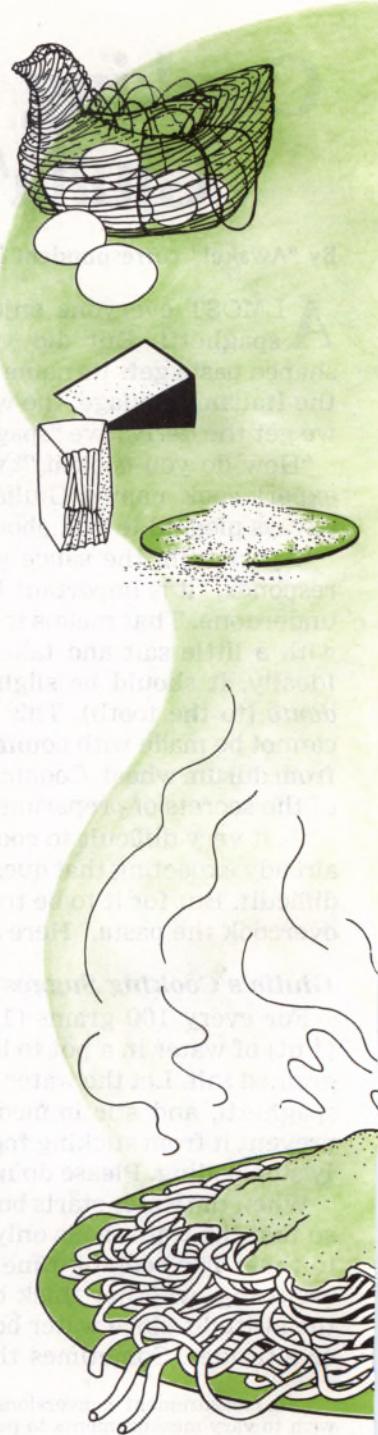
**Yield: 4 servings**

- 300 to 400 grams spaghetti (3/4 to 1 lb)
- 120 grams lean smoked bacon (1/4 lb)
- 50 grams butter (1 3/4 oz)
- 4 egg yolks
- 40 grams grated Parmesan and/or Romano cheese (1 1/2 oz)
- Pepper and salt to taste

**Just before putting the spaghetti into the boiling water:**

1. Cut bacon into 3- to 4-millimeter cubes (1/8 in.).
2. Melt the butter in a pan over low heat.
3. Cook the bacon in the butter.
4. Add pepper and salt. Stir mixture frequently to avoid drying up the bacon; remove from stove when bacon is sufficiently browned.
5. Beat the four egg yolks together with the grated cheese in a bowl.
6. Pour the egg-cheese mixture into the pan with the bacon. Cook it lightly for a minute or so. Be very careful that eggs do not set.
7. As soon as the spaghetti is cooked *al dente*, it should be drained. Put spaghetti into serving bowl and mix it with the prepared sauce. Now it is ready to be served piping hot.

"I don't know if the *carbonari* ate their spaghetti in this





way, but I can assure you that it is quite delicious," says Giulia. "Have you heard about the *carbonari*? They were 19th-century revolutionaries who were members of a secret society. It's possible that this recipe is named after them, or it could have been named in honor of the more prosaic sellers of charcoal who have the very same name. I think we really don't know its origin. Maybe the name was invented because it sounded good."

### *Pesto alla Genovese*

**Yield: 4 servings**

- 50 grams of small, fresh basil leaves (1 3/4 oz)
- 1 cup olive oil (8 oz)
- 2 cloves garlic
- 30 grams pine nuts (1 oz)
- 50 grams grated Parmesan and/or Romano cheese (1 3/4 oz)
- Pinch of salt

1. Wash the basil leaves in cold water until clean, and then dry them well with a clean cloth. (It is important that the basil leaves not be taken from a large plant because they will not have the desired flavor.)
2. Peel and slice the garlic, and put it into a mortar. Add the basil leaves. Crush both garlic and basil leaves together against the bottom and sides of the mortar with the pestle until a smooth paste results. (If you do not have a mortar, you can obtain similar results by mixing the same ingredients in an electric blender.)
3. Gradually add the grated cheese, oil, and pine nuts. As you do this, continue mixing and pounding to obtain a creamy sauce of an attractive green color. If you think it is too thick, add a little more olive oil.
4. Add a pinch of salt. Taste the *pesto* to regulate the amount of salt needed, since this will vary according to the kind of cheese you have used. It will not require any cooking. *Pesto* is a cold sauce!
5. As soon as the spaghetti is cooked *al dente*, drain it and put it into a serving bowl. Pour the sauce over it and mix well while it is hot. Now the dish is ready to serve and eat.

"*Pesto* is a typical dish from Genoa, the chief city of the Liguria region," Giulia explains. "As you know, its ingredients are crushed or pounded together in a mortar. Since the Italian word meaning 'to crush' or 'to pound' is *pestare*, the resulting sauce is known as *pesto*."

Are you thinking of trying these recipes? If so, Giulia's happy response is, "*Buon appetito!*"

# From Our Readers

## Allergies

I would like to thank you for the outstanding way in which you dealt with the problem of allergies. (June 22, 1985) I am a doctor specializing in the ear, nose, and throat. The article was so clear and accurate that I put it in my waiting room at my clinic. I wasn't at all surprised when various patients asked me for a copy. Later on they told me how much they appreciated the information.

E. P. D., Guatemala

## Improving Grades

I want to thank you ever so much for your "Young People Ask . . . ?" articles, especially that one "How Can I Improve My Grades?" (December 8, 1984) I wish I would have had this one sooner, because I am spending my second year in the fifth grade. Thank you for the articles and please don't quit publishing them.

C. T., South Carolina

## Reading the Bible

Thank you very much for the article "Young People Ask . . . Why Read the Bible?" (August 8, 1985) I am 14 years old. I had tried to read the Bible but found myself reading a lot one day, hardly any the next, then I would not read anything for weeks, even months. So I tried out the suggestion you brought out in the article, to read for just 15 minutes a day. This enabled me to read three or four chapters, and I have really enjoyed it. If my mind does stray during my reading, I make myself go back and read the passage again. I find it is easier to understand

and much more interesting than I ever thought reading the Bible could be.

S. T., England

## Dogs Man's Friend?

Your article "They Call Me Man's Best Friend" (September 8, 1985) says only half of the truth. Last year 15 million children starved to death because readers of Christian magazines had to feed 15 million dogs. Is that in accordance with Bible principles? I think that you should tell your readers that a dog is OK, but only if at least every child in this world has enough to eat.

H. W., Italy

*We agree that there is a lot of inequity in the world today. A lot of resources that might better be diverted to easing human suffering are used for feeding pets, and even for other human luxuries. But we don't think that killing off all pet cats and dogs would be a solution. There is so much involved in the problem that we believe only God's Kingdom by Christ Jesus can solve the problem of hunger and all the other problems plaguing mankind.—ED.*

## Stepfamilies

Thanks for the article "Young People Ask . . . Will Being in a Stepfamily Ruin My Life?" (May 8, 1985) My wife does not share my faith. This brought many strains, even violence, in our relationship, as I tried to compel her to my thinking. Your article has helped me to adjust my way of thinking and to regain true happiness. Actually, the article helps to improve our human relations at all levels.

M. A. C., Nigeria

# Watching the World

## Silent Treatment

After citing numerous examples in which Jehovah's Witnesses have been the target of "government-sponsored religious intolerance" in many nations, a report in *The Wall Street Journal* continues: "One way to assess the attitudes of governments world-wide on the issue of freedom of religion would be to see what activities the U.N. has undertaken in the area. The answer is that—in contrast with its work in the area of racial discrimination—the U.N. has done little to attempt to curb government-sponsored religious intolerance." But the UN has not been alone in remaining silent on the matter. "Although one might expect inaction in the politically charged arena of the U.N.," the article states, "the dearth of comment about religious freedom by intellectuals is more disturbing. One could read countless books and articles about Africa and never read about the Jehovah's Witnesses; one could read volumes about the Soviet Union and learn little about its treatment of religious believers."

## Sex Law Repealed

A Canadian judge has ruled that a section of the criminal code was unconstitutional because it discriminates against males who wish to engage in sex-

ual relations with females under the age of 14. *The Toronto Star* states that the district court judge dismissed charges against a 21-year-old London, Ontario, man accused of having sexual relations with a 13-year-old girl. Commenting on the basis for his decision, Judge Killeen said that the law is no longer "reasonable or rational in 1985."

## 'Water Time-Bomb'

The water level under Britain's major cities is steadily rising to the point of "threatening tunnels,



foundations and even deep basements," says London's *Daily Telegraph*. For two hundred years, factories pumped up millions of gallons of water to satisfy the needs of industry. Now the relocation of factories outside large cities and the general industrial decline give rise to the fear of what civil engineering experts call a "time bomb." Water-level monitoring in London reveals a rise of about three feet (1 m) a year since the early 1970's. Serious

problems are reported from Liverpool and Birmingham, where pumping equipment is already at work to keep railroad tunnels and cable pipelines usable.

## "Rights of the Unborn"

A three-year-long legal tangle over what to do with 16,433 aborted fetuses was recently solved. They were discovered in 1982 in the Los Angeles area, preserved in a steel bin. Antiabortionists wanted to give them a religious burial, but this was opposed by feminist and civil liberties groups. The United States Supreme Court ruled that a burial of the fetuses by any one religion would violate the separation of Church and State. The compromise solution was to give the fetuses a nonreligious burial. They were placed in six coffinlike boxes and buried in three unmarked graves. President Reagan sent this message to those gathered for the burial: "From these innocent dead, let us take increased devotion to the cause of restoring the rights of the unborn."

## Painful Shift

A notable population shift has taken place in the Soviet Union. While two thirds of the population was rural 30 years ago, that same proportion now lives in cities. "In a country where a rural,

traditional way of life, with its firm sets of values, had endured much longer than in most Western nations," reports *The New York Times*, "the shift from the extended patriarchal family to the nuclear urban family is yielding painful results." There has been a "shift in social values and ways of life." New freedom in life, away from the village and family, is said to be contributing to the disintegration of families, to alcoholism, and to crime. "Today's young family is full of conflict, unstable and with few children," says Viktor I. Perevedentsev, senior researcher with the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

## Ouija Board Dangers

*The Toronto Star* reports that a 12-year-old girl spent a very frightening year after having been told incorrectly by a Ouija board that she would die by the time she reached the age of 13. In his new book *Ouija: The Most Dangerous Game*, Stoker Hunt points out that apart from giving blatantly incorrect messages, the board has been known to induce psychosis in some users, while others lose all sense of reality due to their obsession with the game. *The Toronto Star* notes that use of the board could expose one to demonic influences, and that it isn't something to be toyed with.

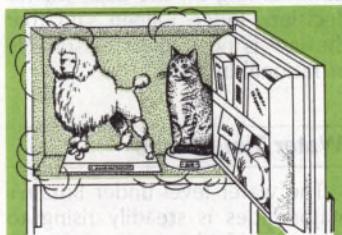
## Subdued Light for Baby

*The New England Journal of Medicine* reports that doctors recommend subdued lighting in rooms for newborn babies. Studies on infants kept in brightly lighted nursery rooms revealed evidence of damage to the blood vessels of the eyes, leading to vision defects. Though not discrediting the value of well-

lighted intensive-care nurseries, the medical team expressed concern for children that have to spend weeks or months under such conditions. They suggest that bright light heightens the eyes' sensitivity to oxygen, resulting in the damage to immature blood vessels.

## Freeze-Dried Pets?

Recent advances in freeze-drying techniques have been introduced to the world of commercial taxidermy. This new process appeals to pet owners who, grieved over the loss of



their pets, see it as an opportunity to preserve the dead animal. Describing the process, the *Los Angeles Times* reports that the animal is shampooed, disemboweled, dipped in insect repellent, and injected with preservatives. It is given artificial eyes and is posed by means of internal wires. After several days in a commercial freezer, it is transferred to a freeze-drying chamber to be completely dehydrated. This process may take from a few weeks to six months. The cost can vary from \$400 to \$1,000, depending upon the size of the dog or the cat.

## Teaching to Read

A new method of teaching children to read, one skill at a time, has produced mixed results

in the area of reading. For example, the pupil is taught consonants, tested, retaught and retested until he is proficient, before going on to vowels and plurals. According to *The New York Times*, results have been poor when no actual reading is done during the process. One U.S. university professor who advocated the new method admitted: "The children got good in learning these [skills], but they weren't reading." In one district where this method was used exclusively, only a third of high school graduates could read at a 12th-grade level. So school districts are now combining the new method with a normal reading program.

## Price of Inflation

Bolivia is reported to be the poorest nation in South America. Inflation within the country has left the peso practically worthless. Prices are skyrocketing at an annual rate of 10,000 percent! One visitor claims the cost of a hamburger is one million pesos, while a night spent at a good hotel may cost 35 million pesos. *Parade Magazine* reports that Bolivia imported \$23 million worth of peso bills in 1984, making them the country's third-largest import, outranked only by mining equipment and food. It is not uncommon for Bolivians to carry pesos in sacks or serapes slung on their backs when they go shopping. Inflation has forced the government to begin distributing currency in denominations of five million pesos.

## Who Robs Banks?

A police investigator in Munich, Germany, conducted an inquiry into the motive and background of bank robbers. He came

to the conclusion that robbing banks is in no way a crime committed only by persons with a previous criminal history. Rather, it has become practically "anybody's crime." "The investigation revealed that today's bank robbers come from all social, occupational, and intelligence levels," reports the *Bremer Nachrichten*. "You find the factory owner as well as the military officer, the stockbroker and the craftsman; but also the bank employee himself, yes, even the police officer." The most common motives are indebtedness, a passion for gambling, and the desire for "a care-free life-style."

### New Light on Youth Suicide

During the past 20 years, youth suicides have more than tripled in

the United States. A three-year study at the University of Louisville (Kentucky) has found that the generally accepted idea that those who speak of suicide do not commit it is not true. In studying 24 suicides of youths aged 12 to 19, it was noted that 17 had spoken beforehand of their desire to die, 11 had threatened to commit suicide, and 8 had tried to do so. "Because of this data, we are much more sensitive if a teacher or parent calls and says a kid wishes he were dead," said Dr. Mohammad Shafii, who headed the research team. Explaining the rise in suicides, he cites "the increase in one-parent homes, the declining influence of the church as a support system," and "more than anything else . . . a lack of human contact," reports *The Courier-Journal* of Louisville.

### Breakthrough for Astronomy

If you slowly rotate a liquid in a bowl, you will see a hollow forming on the top. Now researchers at the University of Arizona are using that principle to melt glass and form it into the parabolic mirrors used in astronomy. By means of a spinning oven that rotates from 8 to 15 times per minute, they have already produced a 2.61-foot (0.8-m) glass blank. "When cooled, the blank requires only a fraction of the grinding and polishing that is normally necessary," reports *Sky & Telescope* magazine. Economy is another important factor. Only a small amount of raw material is lost during the operation. The spinning oven is "a major step toward building truly giant telescopes on Earth or in space," says the report.

### Philadelphia for Assembly

If you travel west from New York City, a city you may not have heard of before, you will find a small town called Philadelphia. It is the capital of the state of Pennsylvania. It is also the site of the 1985 Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses. This year, the Convention will be held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, located in the heart of the city. The Convention will begin on July 15th and end on July 21st. There will be many speakers, including the General Overseer, Dr. J. F. Rutherford, and his successor, Dr. C. E. Russell. There will also be many other speakers, including the General Overseer, Dr. C. E. Russell, and his successor, Dr. C. E. Russell.

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**Philadelphia for Assembly**