

The WATCHTOWER

**Joy from Having
Spiritual Needs Filled**

**Preaching Christ—Through Envy
or Goodwill?**

Life and Light Go Hand in Hand

MAY 15, 1976

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The **WATCHTOWER**

May 15, 1976
Vol. 97, Number 10

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's witnesses locally.

PUBLISHED BY
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary

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Average Printing Each Issue: 10,200,000

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Five cents a copy

Yearly subscription rates for semi-monthly editions in local currency	
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	\$1.50
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 2135	\$2.50
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6A 1Z5	\$1.50
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	\$1.50
Hawaii, 1228 Pensacola St., Honolulu 96814	\$1.50
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	\$1.50
Nigeria, West Africa, P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	\$1.10
Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	\$8
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, 1406	R1.30

(Monthly editions cost half the above rates.)

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to 117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach as thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, R.D. 1, Box 300, Wallkill, New York 12589, U.S.A. POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to same address.

The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the modern-language "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated. Printed in U.S.A.



JOY FROM HAVING SPIRITUAL NEEDS FILLED

HAVE you noticed how few people these days seem to have genuine joy? They keenly sense that something is missing in their life, but they do not know just what it might be. Has this been your personal experience? If so, could it be because your spiritual needs are not being satisfied?

We cannot escape the fact that we need more than food, clothing and shelter to make us happy. Otherwise unhappiness would be unknown among materially prosperous people. But we know that this is not the case. On the other hand, some persons with little in a material way experience great joy. Why? They have found that the Bible expresses a basic truth when it says: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." (Matt. 5:3) Such an awareness of spiritual need prompts the individual to take action to fill it. The spiritual satisfaction thus gained can be the source of joy of the highest caliber.

But where can a person look for spiritual nourishment? Could it be in one of the prominent religious organizations of Christendom? Or, might it be among a comparatively small group of devoted Christians?

For an answer to these questions, let us focus our attention on recent developments in Italy. Expressions such as the

following are to be heard there: "We just started a study of the Bible and have an eager desire to get deeply into the only truth in the world." "I want you to know that I got farther and farther away from religion but have a secret hope of finding the light of the true faith." "It is the third time I have talked with your fellow workers. Although I am a Catholic, I keenly appreciate what you do and receive much spiritual benefit from it. I accepted the Bible study you offered and want to thank you very kindly for the work you are accomplishing in spreading the Word of the Lord." These are but a few samples of the comments received daily at the branch office of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in Rome.

Some may think it strange that in Italy, considered by many to be the cradle of Christianity, there should be persons who could not satisfy their spiritual needs in their own church and want to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Interestingly, though, Cardinal Poletti, due to people's waning interest in the Church, recently called Rome a "missionary field." This may well apply to all of Italy.

Yes, an ever-increasing number of Italians are becoming conscious of their spiritual need. Particularly during the last thirty years there has been greater emphasis on getting advanced education. So

Italians are reading more, and one result has been that many have come to realize that they have not received Bible education from their religious leaders. In fact, until quite recently reading of the Holy Scriptures was not encouraged by the Church.

HANDICAPPED PERSONS RESPOND

The Bible's message appeals to people of all kinds. Severely handicapped persons,

for example, are no exception. They, too, can experience great joy when their spiritual hunger is satisfied.



Take the case of one young man in Italy whose arms and legs were paralyzed in the prime of youth on account of a road accident. Thereafter a friend spoke to him about the Bible and presented him a copy, along with the Bible study aid *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. Within two months the young man had read these from cover to cover and began studying the Holy Scriptures with Jehovah's Witnesses. Soon he recognized the importance of sharing with others what he had learned. His brother-in-law, who was not then one of Jehovah's Witnesses, would take him by car so that he could speak with others about the Scriptures. Since the paralyzed man had to remain in bed or in his wheelchair, he would take advantage of every occasion to speak to those who visited him. Also, he tried writing letters by tying a pen to his wrist. But this did not work too well, as his writing was just too bad. So he bought an electric typewriter and came up with a device that could be tied to his wrist, enabling him to strike the keys with it.

Six months after his baptism, this young man began devoting about one hundred hours each month to aiding others to learn about the Bible. He conducted as many as six Bible studies, and had the great joy of seeing three of the persons with whom he studied progress to the point of getting baptized at a circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses.

In spite of his physical condition, he is finding happiness in assisting others spiritually. In one of his letters, he writes: "I am grateful to Jehovah because he has given me the potential to cultivate heartfelt interest in the Holy Bible and the desire to serve him."

Through a study of the Bible, a deaf-mute couple were likewise helped to find real satisfaction and joy in life. Besides their physical handicap they had other serious problems. Their marriage was most unhappy.

Every night the husband would come home drunk and would at times beat his wife. Their financial situation was very bad, and they had to support four children ranging in age from six to thirteen years. Because of poor health,

the wife feared another pregnancy. When she again became pregnant, she tried to commit suicide. But she was rushed to the hospital and so escaped death. At this time a deaf-mute friend of hers, who studied with Jehovah's Witnesses, communicated with her about God's kingdom. This woman gladly accepted the offer of a Bible study. Soon her husband joined in the discussions.

As a result of having their spiritual needs filled, their life changed for the bet-



ter. No longer did the husband smoke, beat his wife or get drunk. Freed from expensive habits, the family's economic situation improved noticeably. Later, the wife got baptized at a circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1974, and the husband was immersed in the summer of 1975 during the "Divine Sovereignty" District Assembly. Presently both are busy in helping other deaf-mutes in Italy to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth.

A NEW AND HAPPIER WAY OF LIFE

Thieves, drug addicts, prostitutes, as well as persons whose lives were all wrapped up in such things as sports and the like, have come to appreciate the value of spiritual things. That is why they are now pursuing a much happier way of life.

Unknown to herself, a Witness mother played a role in helping a thief to make a start in caring for spiritual needs. She customarily read aloud to her baby from the Bible. One evening she concluded her reading with Ephesians 4:28: "Let the stealer steal no more, but rather let him do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work." Then she closed the Bible, put it on the bedside table, and turned off the lights to sleep. When she got up the next morning, the Bible was nowhere to be found. No one in the home knew anything about it. What had happened to this Bible?

Some months later, during a district assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Cagliari, Sardinia, a man approached her and asked: "Do you know where I got a knowledge of the truth?" "No, I don't," was her reply. He continued: "I got to know it under your bed." The



Witness could not believe what she was hearing. Shown the Bible he had with him, she immediately recognized it as the one that had disappeared from her bedside table. The man explained that he had gone into her house to steal. But, hearing a noise, he hid under the bed and stayed there until the Witness finished reading her Bible, turned off the light and fell asleep. "As soon as I was sure you were asleep," the man added, "I took the Bible from which you read 'Let the stealer steal no more,' left the house and went home. That Bible was my last theft." In the meantime he had looked for Jehovah's Witnesses and started a Bible study.

Then there was a young Italian woman who tried to study and to explain the Gospel to others, but did so under the influence of drugs. Later she came in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses and, with her husband, began studying the Bible with them. On the basis of what they learned, they stopped living an immoral life and using drugs. Both are now trying to help other young people to appreciate that God can be reached, not by using drugs, but by doing his will as explained in the Holy Bible.

There are times when those who take in the rich spiritual food of God's Word come to look at matters from a completely different standpoint. Spiritual things begin to take on the greatest importance in their life and they are willing to give up things that at one time were very dear to them.

This was the experience of a girl who had become a champion discus thrower. She relates: "Every day I would be at the stadium for training. Rain or wind would not stop me. My goal was to win the Italian record for my sport." But, then, as she studied the Bible, this girl realized that involvement with competitive sports could hinder her from cultivating the right Christian spirit. So she decided to quit

sports and eventually, as she herself wrote, "was baptized in Rome at the same stadium where I used to be honored for my sports performances."

Another who began to look at his life differently was the owner of a gymnasium where judo and karate were taught. After studying the Bible, his conscience moved him to view training for violence in a different light. He decided to sever his connections with these "martial arts." Having acted in harmony with his conscience, he takes delight in acquainting others with the Christian message of peace.

A MARVELOUS LIBERATION

Truly, spiritual food from God's Word has helped people to break free from ways that they came to appreciate as being out of harmony with Christian living. Some in Italy have also experienced a liberation from harassment by superhuman forces.

This is what happened to a nine-year-old girl. One day she went to visit her aunt and was brought before a clairvoyant in trance. As a result, the little girl was struck with paralysis, her eyes became wide open and glassy, and the color of her face turned extremely pale. From then on the girl had visions and heard voices; she was also able to perform apparent healings and to foretell deaths. Experiencing sleepless nights, she was greatly upset and often cried out of fear. She also perspired profusely as if engaged in a fight. On her breast the figure of a cross appeared. It looked as though her breast had been cut open.



The girl's parents were very distressed about what was happening to their child. Clergymen were unable to provide any help. One of them even suggested the possibility that the little girl was on the way to "holiness." But the child suffered greatly and was most unhappy. She wanted so much to be like all the other little girls and play, run and jump.

When the father was in the depths of hopelessness, he came in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses. He told them about his daughter's condition. From the Bible, he was shown that what had happened to her was not the will of God. A Bible study was started with the whole family. When they recognized that Jehovah's Word condemns idolatrous images, they got rid of everything in their home that had associations with false worship. As the little girl progressed in the study of the Bible, she began experiencing grand relief. Soon she no longer heard "voices," visions vanished and the cross on her breast disappeared. She regained the joy of living, and the entire family was happy for the undeserved kindness of Jehovah God. Soon they expressed their gratitude by getting baptized, symbolizing their dedication to the God of mercy, Jehovah.

PERSONS IN RELIGIOUS PROFESSIONS

It is also noteworthy that people in religious professions are giving evidence that their spiritual needs are not really being cared for. Italian magazines and newspapers continue to report that more and more seminaries are closed or almost empty because fewer young men are willing to take up the priesthood. Also, a growing number of priests, nuns and friars are leaving religious orders and taking up other vocations. And surprisingly, among Jehovah's Witnesses can be found a growing number of former nuns, friars and priests. How did these persons become aware of a spiritual need?

There was the friar who was sitting at the door of a monastery when a woman came to tell him that Jehovah's Witnesses had visited her home and left the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. He suggested that she leave the magazines with him, so that she would not be contaminated by reading the two journals. But this friar later read the magazines and was startled to learn that the Gospel accounts speak of Jesus as having half brothers. As soon as he could, he went to the library and eventually located a Bible. After looking up the Bible quotations appearing in the magazines, he was convinced that they contained the truth.

To the best of his ability, he began to tell the other friars what he had learned. For this, he was reproved, moved to other monasteries and finally taken to a hospital on the pretense of being insane. Upon being released from the hospital, he went home and explained to his family why he left the monastery. They were furious with him, but he did not lose his courage. He located Jehovah's Witnesses and began studying the Bible with them.

For several years now this former friar has been proclaiming Bible truth to others and is finding great joy in doing so.

Another case in point is a man who had been a parish priest for seventeen years. He was very conscientious about observing the precepts of the Church. But then certain doctrines began to trouble him. He was unable to understand how a God of love could torment His own intelligent human creatures in a fire throughout eternity. Later he had the opportunity to read the Bible study aid *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* and other Watch Tower publications.



After some months of meditation he decided to give up his position as parish priest and find secular work. He began to associate regularly with the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Finally he symbolized his dedication to Jehovah God by water baptism. He is now finding much joy in conducting Bible studies with some of his former parishioners.

SMALL BEGINNINGS

The work of Bible education carried on by Jehovah's Witnesses in modern times had a very small beginning. Italy is no exception. Back in 1946 only 120 persons were spreading the Bible's message to their neighbors. By 1950 that number had increased to 1,211. Twenty-five years later, in 1975, 56,264 were busy in encouraging others to study the Bible.

Many more persons are attending the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses in their Kingdom Halls. Often the attendance is double the number of Witnesses associated with that particular congregation. To commemorate the Lord's Evening Meal on April 7, 1975, for example, 120,031 were present in the various congregations throughout Italy.

As in Italy, people elsewhere from all walks of life have benefited greatly from studying the Bible with Jehovah's Christian witnesses and attending their meetings. Once having their own spiritual needs filled, they are eager to share with others what they have learned. This adds to their happiness, for the Scriptures tell us, "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

If you desire the joy that comes from having spiritual needs satisfied, why not invite Jehovah's Witnesses to conduct a free Bible study in your home or at any other location convenient for you? See for yourself how a regular program of spiritual feeding can enrich your life and add immeasurably to your joy.

Preaching Christ

GOD'S servants have always met stiff opposition in their efforts to help people. Jesus Christ's opponents used every form of ridicule and criticism, with false charges based on any trivial thing that they could find.

Because Jesus ate and drank they accused him of being a glutton and a wine-bibber. (Matt. 11:19) Because he went to the homes of sinners when invited and spoke the good news to them, they said he was mixing with sinners. (Mark 2:15, 16) When he actually cured people, releasing them from the grip of terrible diseases, they wanted to stop him on the ground that he broke their self-made rules concerning the Sabbath day.—Matt. 12:9-14.

These religious men preferred to let the people suffer if they could just do away with Jesus, because his preaching and course of action showed them up to be teachers of no value. (Matt. 15:14) They wanted plaudits of men rather than honor for or from God.—Matt. 23:5-7.

The apostles experienced the same opposition. When Paul was unjustly in a Roman prison, put there at the instance of religious opposers for spreading the light of the freedom-giving good news, his opponents did all they could to ruin the good effects of his preaching. Paul said about this: "True, some are preaching the Christ through envy and rivalry, but others also through goodwill. . . . The former do it out of contentiousness, not with a

-Through ENVY or GOODWILL?

pure motive, for they are supposing to stir up tribulation for me in my prison bonds." —Phil. 1:15-17.

These who were 'stirring up tribulation' for Paul were mainly Jews who had claimed to become Christians, but had broken away from Paul's pure apostolic teaching. They feared to suffer reproach and persecution as Christ had suffered. (Gal. 6:12, 13) They did not have pure motives, but sought to cause doubts, strifes, divisions—in short, to tear down the apostle's work and the spirituality of those he had worked so hard to build up. They wanted to break down the apostle's spirit by adding to him this burden on top of the prison bonds he was suffering.

When writing to the congregation at Corinth about such opponents, Paul described the hardships that he and his companions had undergone, "through glory and dishonor, through bad report and good report; as deceivers and yet truthful." (2 Cor. 6:8) Yes, these fighters against Paul even went so far as to say that he was a *deceiver*, misleading the disciples. This was to the end that the congregations might break up—that these men might cause the true Christians to break away from the congregations. It was not so much an effort to get new disciples of their own from the outside world. No, it was an attack against the Christian congregation, to "draw away the *disciples*" of Christ, and to keep others from listen-

ing to the message that these true disciples proclaimed.—Acts 20:30.

Therefore, it is obvious that these opponents of the early Christians were not trying to build up others, even though they themselves claimed to be Christians. They themselves were not occupied in making disciples of Christ, but they tried to *tear down* those who might be listening to the good news.

TRUE PREACHING BUILDS UP

What about the situation today as to the preaching of the good news of Christ's kingdom and its coming rule over earth? Jehovah's Witnesses as modern-day Christians are working hard to get this good news preached to every individual. They do not claim infallibility or perfection. Neither are they inspired prophets. But they are trying to live clean lives and to help people by teaching them the good news. Millions are responding.

Is such activity a *building* work? One only has to look at the results. When we examine this activity can we not see an outstanding example of worldwide unity of teaching, conduct and love? We find people in the hundreds of thousands each year changing their personalities so that they become law-abiding citizens, maintaining Scriptural morality, raising happy families, bringing to others the same high standards. Where else do we find people that take their own time and resources to show love for their fellowman by spending hours calling on people at their homes and teaching interested ones the truths of God's Word? Where else do we observe such an international program eliminating racism among those taught, and where they are 'beating their swords into plowshares, learning war no more'? (Isa. 2:4) Where else do we find a body of people concerned with supporting and defending the purity of Bible truth at all cost? —1 Tim. 3:15.

TEARING DOWN BUT NOT REBUILDING

Nevertheless, as with early Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses have opposers today. Some spring out from among their own ranks, just as it was with early Christianity. (Acts 20:30) But what is the objective of such men? It is to *tear down*. What they say and publish is almost wholly in the form of an *attack* upon Jehovah's Witnesses. Do we see them upbuilding anyone? Are they sharing in a great ingathering of clean-living, Kingdom-preaching Christians? If they *do* draw away someone who is associated with Jehovah's Witnesses, where is this person to go? Where will he be built up spiritually?

The same questions arose when Jesus was on earth. Some began to murmur and to walk away from Jesus because he said something that they could not accept. Jesus then asked his apostles: "You do not want to go also, do you?" Simon Peter answered: "Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life." (John 6:67, 68) Where could they get spiritual upbuilding? Could they go to these disgruntled ones and get help? They knew they could not. They would only have to abandon what they had believed and have nothing, or go back to the bondage of Judaism, from which Christ had liberated them.—Gal. 4:8-11.

Do modern-day opponents of Jehovah's Witnesses have a program for building people up in a knowledge of God? Do they offer the people a progressive spiritual education? No. They generally ally themselves with the religious systems of Christendom, often recommending that people join or rejoin the denomination of their choice. In cases the clergy let these disgruntled ones use their pulpits, not to preach the Gospel, but in an attempt to tear down Jehovah's Witnesses. Furthermore, these men go back to the things that they themselves once threw down and publicly declared as false—the doc-

trine of the Trinity ('God in three persons'), the immortality of the human soul, a hellfire of torment for the wicked, and other unscriptural teachings. They say that the Witnesses *deceived* them, sometimes for many years—the same charge that "false apostles" made against Paul. But now, they say, they have suddenly seen the light—that these doctrines that they had rejected were true all along. They repent at having doubted such doctrines and having talked against these while being associated with the Witnesses.

Does not this wavering from one position to another raise questions as to the sincerity of these opposers? Most of them were former church members who came to declare that such doctrines were false, originating in non-Christian religions. While they were associated with Jehovah's Witnesses they offered proofs of their conviction to others as they preached to them. Are these men, when turning against Jehovah's Witnesses, following the pattern of the apostle Paul? He once was a firm believer in Judaism, believing that he could gain righteousness by works of the Mosaic law. But he threw these things down when he became a Christian. His opposers said that Christians should return to subjection to the things of the Law, and trust in such works for salvation. Paul answered: "If the very things that I once threw down I build up again, I demonstrate myself to be a *transgressor*."—Gal. 2:18.

It is a serious matter to represent God and Christ in one way, then find that our understanding of the major teachings and fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures was in error, and then after that, to go back to the very doctrines that, by years of study, we had thoroughly determined to be in error. Christians cannot be vacillating—"wishy-washy"—about such fundamental teachings. What confidence can one put in the sincerity or judgment of such persons?

Moreover, Jesus said of his disciples: "They are no part of the world." (John 17:16) But who can deny that the churches of Christendom are an integral part of the world? Those going back to ally themselves with these churches ignore the fact that the clergy have blessed the wars of the nations, members of the same denomination praying on both sides for the victory of their own army and the destruction of the other. Persons returning to support these denominations bring back upon themselves the bloodguilt from which they were once freed.—Compare Numbers 35:33; Revelation 18:24.

If a person has cleaned up from doctrines that dishonor God—the Trinity, the fiendish torment of souls in an eternal hell of fire, the destruction of our planet Earth, the support of blood-spilling national warfare and like beliefs that would make the Christian defiled as a part of the world—and then turns back to take up these doctrines again, he is doing what the apostle Peter described of some persons in his day. Peter wrote: "Certainly if, after having escaped from the defilements of the world by an accurate knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they get involved again with these very things and are overcome, the final conditions have become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them not to have accurately known the path of righteousness than after knowing it accurately to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them. The saying of the true proverb has happened to them: 'The dog has returned to its own vomit, and the sow that was bathed to rolling in the mire.'"

—2 Pet. 2:20-22.

MAKING SURE OF ONE'S POSITION

How, then, can a person be sure that his position is right if he has developed faith in Jehovah God and His kingdom through studying with Jehovah's Witness-

es? On this point the apostle Paul admonished Timothy, who faced men who would try to shake his faith. Paul said: "You, however, continue in the things that you learned and were persuaded to believe, knowing from what persons you learned them and that from infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through the faith in connection with Christ Jesus."

—2 Tim. 3:14, 15.

How was this advice very helpful to Timothy? Well, Timothy had been raised by a devout Jewish mother and grandmother. He knew what the Hebrew Scriptures said. He was persuaded to believe them, and to acquire faith "without any hypocrisy." (2 Tim. 1:5) Then, when he heard the teaching of the apostle Paul, he was further persuaded (not through smooth talk, but by proving Paul's teachings from the Scriptures) to accept Christianity. Now Paul tells Timothy to recall from what persons he learned: Were they teaching him for some selfish gain—to get money or make a slave of him, or did they, instead, truly love him? Was he made a disciple of a man, Paul, or of the Lord Jesus Christ? Knowing these things, he would be able to discern the bad motive in one who would try to turn him away.

Likewise, Jehovah's Witnesses today, and those learning from them, can consider: What persuasive power has convinced me of the things I have come to believe? Was it smooth or clever talk by men? Was I in any way forced or put under coercion? And what about those who taught me? Were they profiting financially? Did they ask for money to pay for their time and expense of coming to my home regularly? Did they make me a disciple of themselves, and when teaching me, did they tell me what to do out of their own 'wisdom,' or did they appeal to the Scriptures as a guide? Did the ones calling on me show concern for me? Had other

religious organizations shown such concern? Paul said concerning himself and his associates when they were in Thessalonica, "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 Thess. 2:7, 8) Were you also beloved by those who came to you, and did they put themselves out repeatedly, as 'imparting their own souls to you'?

What a contrast, then, such Christians would find if they thought about the kind of persons the opposers showed themselves to be! As Paul wrote to the congregation at Rome: "Now I exhort you, brothers, to keep your eye on those who cause divisions and occasions for stumbling contrary to the teaching that you have learned, and avoid them. For men of that sort are slaves, not of our Lord Christ, but of their own bellies; and by smooth talk and complimentary speech they seduce the hearts of guileless ones." —Rom. 16:17, 18.

RESULTS TO THOSE WHO FIGHT GOD'S SERVANTS

What, then, shall we say about the efforts of the few disgruntled persons who try to tear down the work and effects of the preaching done by Jehovah's Witnesses? It turns out as the apostle wrote about those who preached in order to tear him down: "What then [shall we conclude]? Nothing, except that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, *Christ is being publicized*, and in *this* I rejoice." (Phil. 1:18) By making a contention these unwittingly awaken attention to what Jehovah's Witnesses are saying. Paul refers back to the Egyptian magicians in Moses' day as an example of the final outcome of such opposition efforts. He says: "Now

in the way that Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so these also go on resisting the truth, men completely corrupted in mind, disapproved as regards the faith. Nevertheless, they will make no further progress, for their madness will be very plain to all, even as the madness of those two men became."—2 Tim. 3:8, 9.

At Hebrews 6:4-8 the apostle describes the even more perilous situation of those who fall away from the truth. Then he speaks to those who have been faithfully and sincerely serving God, saying: "However, in your case, beloved ones, we are convinced of better things and things accompanied with salvation, although we are speaking in this way. For God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work

Dream of Life Eternal

● "The dream of everlasting life is probably as old as mankind," wrote Dr. Viktor Tobiasch in "Ausblick," a West German journal. He cited various efforts to lengthen the human life-span. These have included use of organ extracts and even the 'freezing' of the body in liquid nitrogen so that it might be thawed out "to a new life."

Prof. Tobiasch also said that around 1955, in highly developed lands, average life expectancy rose to about seventy years. However, he explained that this was due to improvement in life expectancy for the newborn and small children. The average life-span for adults has not increased.

These comments underscore two points made in the Bible. First, "in themselves the days of our years are seventy years; and . . . because of special mightiness they are eighty years." (Ps. 90:10) Second, it is not surprising that mankind should dream of everlasting life, for "even time indefinite he [Jehovah God] has put in their heart." (Eccl. 3:11) Of all earth's creatures, humans alone have a God-given concept of past and future time indefinite or eternity. Moreover, life eternal is Jehovah's purpose for those who love him.

and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering. But we desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end, in order that you may not become sluggish, but be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."—Heb. 6:9-12.

Following the fine counsel of the Scriptures, let everyone who has undertaken to bear the name of Christ and of Jehovah his Father continue through faith and patience to build up his Christian brothers and his neighbors so that he may inherit the marvelous promise of everlasting life for himself and help others also to attain it.—1 Tim. 4:15, 16.

Insight on the News

● "A Query into the Quarter Century" is the title of a message issued recently by twenty experts from various fields who met under the sponsorship of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation and the Wright-Ingraham Institute. They concluded: "Family, social unrest and possible political chaos may not be far away. . . . By the year 2000 the problems in food production, storage, transportation and distribution will make today's problems appear as child's play."

Humans themselves can never solve such problems, for "it does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jer. 10:23) God alone will end social unrest, assure adequate food and remove man's other difficulties. Jehovah soon will 'make a banquet for all the peoples' and bless godly persons abundantly. (Isa. 25:6-8; Rev. 21:4) With those pleasant prospects in view, appreciative ones wisely pursue a course of dependence upon the Creator, as did David, who prayed to God: "Let my steps take hold on your tracks, in which my footsteps will certainly not be made to totter."—Ps. 17:5.

LIFE AND LIGHT

Go Hand In Hand

"For with you is the source of life; by light from you we can see light." —Ps. 36:9.

LIIGHT and darkness constitute one of the greatest contrasts. If in broad daylight you were walking through open country new to you, you would feel quite confident. Not only would you see nearby objects, or take a few steps and reach out and touch them, but you would also enjoy a clear view of the distant landscape and pick out various details, even a moving object visible on the skyline. In total darkness, however, it would be foolhardy to take a single step without a torch or lamp. Your movements would be marked with extreme care and caution.

Not only is light a vital necessity for all forms of life and movement, but it also adds much to the beauty and pleasure of life. Perhaps after walking in the glare of the noonday sun, you step into a shady wood. What a delightful contrast! Why is it so attractive? The light is now soft and kind to the eyes, reflected in an endless variety of shades and colors as you stand and look at the different trees and their foliage, and maybe some flowers in the undergrowth. On raising your eyes, instead of being dazzled by the sun, you see that the sky is broken up by the branches and leaves into myriads of tiny points and splashes of light. You feel that you just want to stand there and enjoy the quiet beauty of it all, especially if you are with

1. 2. By contrasts, how can we increase our appreciation of light, both as a necessity and as a source of delight?

a companion who also knows how to enjoy things quietly.

³ Of course, you would not appreciate the tremendous value of light, either for its usefulness or as a source of endless delight, unless you were alive and able to see with your eyes. In fact, the better your health and the better your vision, likewise the better is your appreciation of light. Life and light indeed go hand in hand.

⁴ Sad to relate, many persons take these things for granted. They are glad to enjoy for themselves all the benefits of life and light, but do not stop to consider their real source. They think that life came about largely by accident, a process of evolution with no one responsible for starting it or controlling its operation. As for light, they say that we on earth need go no farther than the sun for its source. What a surprise, not to say a shock, these would have if they had the experience that a certain man once had. He related it to King Agrippa II as follows: "I saw at mid-day on the road, O king, a light beyond the brilliance of the sun flash from heaven about me and about those journeying with me." Who was this man? What was the occasion, and what was its significance? —Acts 26:13.

3. What natural association can be seen between light and life?

4. (a) Why and how do many take these things for granted? (b) In face of a complacent attitude, what experience can be cited?

⁵ Many, including those who claim to be Christians, believe that certain parts of the Bible, recorded as factual, can be relegated to the realms of myth and legend. But even those taking such a view do not deny that such a man as Paul, formerly known as Saul of Tarsus, actually lived and wrote many letters that form part of the Christian Greek Scriptures. There is likewise no reason to doubt the details concerning Saul's conversion as recorded by that reliable historian Luke, at Acts 9:1-30. The entire record bears the stamp of truth, including the words spoken to Saul by Jesus on that occasion. It was entirely contrary to anything that Saul could possibly have just imagined, in view of his set purpose in going to Damascus at that time. He described the intense hatred he then had of the Christians, saying to King Agrippa that "by punishing them many times in all the synagogues I tried to force them to make a recantation; and since I was extremely mad against them, I went so far as to persecuting them even in outside cities," that is, away from Jerusalem. It was when on his way to the city of Damascus that he had the shock and surprise of his life, as mentioned above. That was the occasion. What was its significance?—Acts 26:8-11.

WITNESSING TO THE LIGHT MEANS LIFE

⁶ It will be of great interest and benefit to pay careful attention to what Jesus said to Saul on that occasion. We will learn much regarding the close relationship between life and light, showing how we are all involved, whatever our reaction might be. Telling of the commission he was about to give to Saul, Jesus said: "For to this end I have made myself visible to

you, in order to choose you as an attendant and a witness both of things you have seen and things I shall make you see respecting me; while I deliver you from this people and from the nations, to whom I am sending you, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, in order for them to receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those sanctified by their faith in me."—Acts 26:16-18.

⁷ Saul's immediate acceptance of his commission to be a witness is shown by what he went on to say to King Agrippa: "I did not become disobedient to the heavenly sight. . . . I continue to this day bearing witness to both small and great . . . that the Christ was to suffer and, as the first to be resurrected from the dead, he was going to publish light both to this people [the Jews] and to the nations." (Acts 26:19-23) Saul rightly understood and got the point of what Jesus had said to him. The question is, Do you too get the point of Jesus' words and how they should affect you? Consider.

⁸ Jesus was obviously using figurative language when speaking to Saul about seeing certain things and opening the eyes of others to turn them from darkness to light. There was nothing new or unusual about this. Physical sight and the mind are closely linked, and we frequently use expressions that can have either a literal, physical meaning, or a figurative and sometimes a spiritual meaning, as related to the mind and heart. Do you not often say, "Oh! yes, I see," meaning that you understand and appreciate what has been said? We have a good example of this when, in a certain letter, Paul prayed that

5. For what reasons can Saul's experience, resulting in his conversion, be accepted as authentic?

6. What commission did Jesus give to Saul, and why should we be interested?

7. How did Saul, later known as Paul, give evidence of his acceptance of his commission?

8. (a) Explain how some expressions can have both a literal and a figurative meaning. (b) What shows whether the Bible uses figurative language?

God "may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the accurate knowledge of him; the *eyes of your heart* having been enlightened."—Eph. 1:17, 18.

⁹ From the foregoing it can be seen that light is used as an apt symbol of truth and of related things that welcome inspection, such as righteousness. In contrast, darkness is used as a symbol of error and ignorance, and also of related things that shy away from inspection, such as shameful conduct and evil deeds.

¹⁰ Paul evidently realized that, under the direction of the risen Lord Jesus, he was to bear witness to the light by "making the truth manifest" to others. (2 Cor. 4:2) That is, not truth in general, but the truth as contained in God's Word, the Bible. (John 17:17; 1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:15) Those who responded would get their mental eyes opened and would see the steps they must take, not only to come into the light, but to gain life. And this life, similar to light, is something more, much more than the present physical and temporary life belonging to our fleshly bodies. Such a deeper meaning regarding life is evident in Paul's next words to the Ephesians: "Furthermore, it is you God made alive though you were [formerly] dead in your trespasses and sins." This explanation is only the first step to a full understanding of life from God's viewpoint.—Eph. 2:1.

¹¹ Hence, we can say that life and light go hand in hand, figuratively and spiritually speaking, as well as literally. Witnessing and testifying to the light, the truth, meant life not only for Paul, but also for us—first as recipients of the

9. What do light and darkness, in contrast, each symbolize?

10. (a) Was it truth in general to which Paul bore witness? (b) Acceptance of Bible truth results in what progressive benefits?

11. (a) How can we witness to the light, and how is this related to life? (b) What attitude must we avoid in this connection?

light, then as light bearers to others. Do you see, do you appreciate, where and how you are involved? To help us in this, let us pay a little more attention to what Jesus said to that man on his way to Damascus. Oddly enough, though physically blinded for a time, he now began to see things mentally, everything, in fact, from a totally new viewpoint. His heart was also involved. He was not rebellious or disobedient. We trust the same can be said of us, keeping in mind Jehovah's warning given to Ezekiel: "Son of man, in the midst of a rebellious house is where you are dwelling, that have eyes to see but they actually do not see, that have ears to hear but they actually do not hear, for they are a rebellious house."—Ezek. 12:2.

UNDER WHOSE AUTHORITY ARE YOU?

¹² When speaking to Saul, Jesus said that the objective for opening the people's eyes was "to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God." (Acts 26:18) These words thus mention a root source and a governing authority as regards both darkness and light, or, we might say, as regards both death and life. We certainly want to know under whose authority we come, and how a transfer can be made, if desired, from one to the other.

¹³ God's Word makes it clear that Jehovah is the Source of both life and light. He is "the Creator of the heavens, . . . the Former of the earth and the Maker of it, . . . who formed it even to be inhabited" with living creatures. The account of creation in the book of Genesis confirms this, saying: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Then, as affecting the earth, "God pro-

12. What objective was set forth in Saul's commission, leading to what question?

13. How does God's Word show that Jehovah is the Source of (a) light and (b) life?

ceeded to say: 'Let light come to be.' It later mentions the "greater luminary for dominating the day," that is, the sun, earth's principal source of light, and also of energy, without which life on earth would be impossible. The crowning act of earthly creation came when "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul," "in God's image." Adam, and then Eve, were created perfect, with all the senses and faculties, physical and mental, for the full use and enjoyment of both life and light.—Isa. 45:18; Gen. 1:1, 3, 16, 27; 2:7.

¹⁴ From this it is evident that, not only is Jehovah God the Source and Author of life and light, the Creator and Life-Giver, but by virtue of such he is rightly the Supreme Authority, the Supreme Ruler in government. (Ps. 103:19; Dan. 4:17, 35; Rev. 4:11) Accepting this, we naturally want to know how there could possibly be an authority in opposition to Jehovah. What is the "authority of Satan" that Jesus mentioned? How did it come about? And how can we come out from under its domination?

¹⁵ As the inspired account shows, Satan attempted to use his *influence* in a subtle way, and in this he was successful. How so? By insinuation and falsehood. He put forth error, under cover of a lie, as a substitute for truth. In other words, he put darkness for light.

14. On what basis is Jehovah seen to be the Supreme Authority, this giving rise to what question?

15. (a) How did Satan subtly seek to undermine God's authority? (b) How was God's word involved in this? (c) What prompted Adam and Eve in their course of action?

Interestingly, it was regarding life, saying that Eve would not die but would continue to live in the flesh on earth if she did as he suggested. He promised her increased enlightenment when he said, through the serpent: "In the very day of your eating from it [the forbidden fruit] your eyes are bound to be opened." Then, implying she would become free to exercise authority independent of God, he added: "You are bound to be like God, knowing [for yourselves] good and bad." (Gen. 3:1-5) Satan thus claimed that God's word and command given to Adam were not to be relied on as a true light to guide and keep him and his wife in the right roadway leading to life. First Eve and then Adam decided to disobey God's simple and direct command, and to strike out on the roadway of selfish independence, a roadway leading away from life and light in God's favor into darkness and death.—Ps. 119:105; see also 2 Corinthians 11:14.

¹⁶ We pause here to consider one of Satan's chief tactics and how it operates. By subtle means, by deception, he tempts us to view things from a selfish viewpoint, as he did with Eve. If at heart we are, or become, governed by selfishness, then we readily fall into Satan's snare and are easily blinded and deceived. We seek to justify ourselves, and put out of our mind the fear of God. See how clearly and forcefully this is expressed in Psalm 36:1-3: "The utterance of transgression to the wicked one is in the midst of his heart; there is no dread

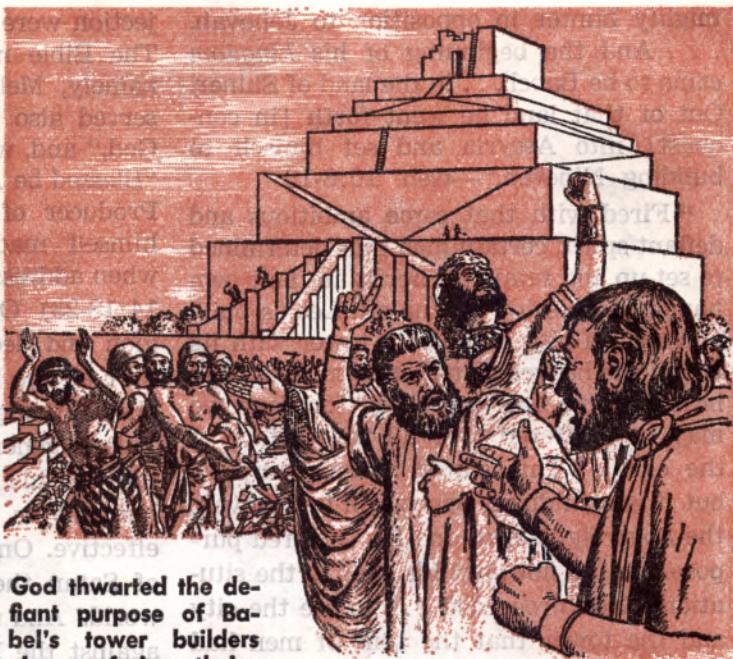


Adam and Eve's course of selfish independence led them away from light and life into darkness and death

16. (a) Why is it helpful to consider Satan's line of approach? (b) How do the Scriptures give enlightenment respecting this?

of God in front of his eyes. For he has acted too smoothly to himself in his own eyes to find out his error so as to hate it. The words of his mouth are hurtfulness and deception; he has ceased to have insight for doing good." God's judgment of such is well expressed by the prophet Isaiah: "Woe to those who are saying that good is bad and bad is good, those who are putting darkness for light and light for darkness . . . ! Woe to those wise in their own eyes and discreet even in front of their own faces!" We should certainly fear lest we "become hardened [and hence blinded] by the deceptive power of sin."—Isa. 5:20, 21; Heb. 3:13.

¹⁷ From the time of the rebellion in Eden, mankind in general came increasingly under Satan's influence and control. Though Satan was primarily responsible, yet man himself was also to blame to a large extent. Keep in mind that God did not leave himself without a witness to the world of mankind. Though he is invisible, yet "his invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship, so that they are inexcusable." Closely in line with Psalm 36:1-3, Paul went on to say that "although they [men] knew God, they did not glorify him as God nor did they thank him, but they became empty-headed in their reasonings and their unintelligent heart became darkened." (Rom. 1:19-23) True, Satan put darkness for



God thwarted the defiant purpose of Babylon's tower builders by confusing their language

light, but it must be admitted that men in general preferred darkness and ungodliness to light. Enoch's inspired prophecy confirms this, with fourfold emphasis on ungodliness. (Jude 14, 15) The three reported exceptions up to the time of the flood, namely, Abel, Enoch and Noah, only served to show up the inexcusableness of the majority. Those men 'walked with God.' Of Noah it was said that he 'showed godly fear and condemned the world.' —Gen. 5:22; 6:9; Heb. 11:4-7.

KINGDOM AUTHORITY

¹⁸ After the Flood, the time came when Satan began to exercise authority by way of specific visible rulership. For the first time we read of a kingdom. Satan found a willing tool for his ambitious purpose in Nimrod, and concerning him we read: "He made the start in becoming a mighty one in the earth. He displayed himself a

17. To what extent was man himself responsible for becoming increasingly subject to Satan's influence? NO

18. What development occurred after the Flood regarding Satan's authority?

mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah. . . . And the beginning of his *kingdom* came to be Babel . . . in the land of Shinar. Out of that land he went forth [in conquest] into Assyria and set himself to building Nineveh."—Gen. 10:8-12.

¹⁹ Fired with that same ambitious and defiant spirit, certain men thus determined to set up and retain authority in their own hands. They said: "Come on! Let us build ourselves a city and also a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a celebrated name for ourselves, for fear we may be scattered over all the surface of the earth." This suited Satan's purpose, but it was in direct opposition to Jehovah, the Sovereign Lord, and his declared purpose. He did not shut his eyes to the situation. God "proceeded . . . to see the city and the tower that the sons of men had built." He then made this observation: "Why, now there is nothing that they may have in mind to do that will be unattainable for them." So Jehovah broke up their united purpose by confusing their language, and causing them to be scattered over all the earth. (Gen. 9:1; 11:1-8; Acts 4:24) The majority of men, however, still preferred human rulership, and there were always those who had Satan's spirit of ambition for power and authority. This resulted in man-made kingdoms, sometimes just a city-kingdom, then expanding to embrace an entire region, such as the kingdoms of Moab and Ammon, and finally the great empires and world powers.

²⁰ Religion played a large part in all these kingdoms, but the rulers and their subjects did not recognize Jehovah as the Supreme Ruler to whom worship and sub-

jection were due. (Jer. 10:10; Dan. 6:26) The Bible mentions only one exception, namely, Melchizedek, king of Salem. He served also as "priest of the Most High God," and, when blessing Abram, he said: "Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, Producer of heaven and earth." Abram himself made similar reference to God when addressing the king of Sodom. (Gen. 14:18-23) Otherwise, through false religion and deception, Satan held rulership over all the kingdoms, along with the disobedient angels who joined in with him. This is generally not realized because Satan and his demon hosts are invisible to human eyes. Invisible, yes, but all the same effective. On three occasions Jesus spoke of Satan the Devil as 'the ruler of this world.' And telling of the Christian's fight against the Devil, Paul says it is a fight "against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places."—John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 6:11, 12; see also 2 Corinthians 4:4.

²¹ From this it is evident that when Jesus spoke to Saul about turning people "from the authority of Satan to God," this is a transfer from one rulership to another. As Paul wrote: "He [Jehovah] delivered us from the authority of the darkness and transferred us into the *kingdom* of the Son of his love." (Col. 1:13) Today, the situation has reached a great and tense climax on the two opposing sides, that of Jehovah God and that of Satan the Devil. The foretold "enmity" between the two sides has indeed come to a climax. (Gen. 3:15) Under Satan's rule, the darkness is of greater density than ever. The rulers and the ruled do not know which way to turn to solve their many vexing problems. It

19. (a) How did opposition to Jehovah manifest itself, and what was Jehovah's reaction? (b) Though halted, how did this opposition continue to develop?

20. (a) What part has religion played in man-made kingdoms? (b) What exception to this does the Bible record? (c) How and to what extent has Satan held rulership over most of mankind?

21. (a) What is involved in being delivered from Satan's authority? (b) How have things today reached a climax on both sides?

is a 'gloomy darkness that may be felt.' (Ex. 10:21, 22) But under Jehovah's rule by his Messianic King, Christ Jesus, the light of truth and righteousness is shining with a greater intensity than ever, giving clear direction and confidence to his subjects, besides many spiritual pleasures and delights. The issue before mankind thus centers around the theme of rulership and kingdom authority.

²² Notice how this theme is emphasized in the book of Revelation. In a vision given to John, he hears loud voices in heaven saying: "The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever." This was fulfilled in 1914 C.E., at the end of the uninterrupted rule of the world by Gentile powers, permitted by God for 2,520 years from 607 B.C.E. Then, after seeing the birth of the Messianic kingdom, the war in heaven and the hurling of the dragon, Satan the Devil, out of heaven, John hears the proclamation: "Now have come to pass the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ." In contrast, the next vision tells how the dragon gives the "wild beast" (a symbol of Satan's worldwide political organization) "its power and its throne and great authority," so that all peoples of the earth give it their worship. Similar authority and worship are further mentioned regarding the "image of the wild beast," a symbol of the present-day United Nations organization. In fact, Satan's organization "puts under compulsion all persons" to receive its mark of identification, without which life is made next to impossible.

—Rev. 11:15; 12:10; 13:2, 15-17.

22. Where and how are authority and rulership stressed regarding (a) the Messianic kingdom, and (b) Satan's bid for supremacy?

²³ Under whose authority are you? Are you content to be identified as a supporter of Satan's world order? Or do you sincerely desire to escape from under his authority but are uncertain as to what steps to take and fearful of what might be involved? As a source of encouragement, turn again to Psalm 36. After describing the bad attitude of those who are always right in their own eyes and, hence, cannot see or learn to hate their errors, the psalmist then turns to Jehovah. He extols His loving-kindness, faithfulness and righteousness, and the blessings that come to those who take refuge under His wings. After saying that Jehovah is "the source of life," he adds: "By light from you we can see light." In other words, it is only by learning how to look at things, including ourselves, from *his* viewpoint, that we can be turned from darkness to light and can come to see and appreciate the steps we must take to gain eternal life under God's authority. Happy are we if we walk hand in hand with that light, with truth and righteousness, for "the path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established." Then we can join with David in his prayer: "Continue your loving-kindness to those knowing you, and your righteousness to those upright in heart."—Ps. 36:5-10; Prov. 4:18.

23. (a) In view of this, what questions should we ask ourselves? (b) How is the latter part of Psalm 36:9 to be understood, this leading to what fine conclusion?

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Jehovah Our God
—Righteous and Just.
- Generosity Is Rewarding.
- Glory—What Is It? How Does It Affect Humans?

JOHN, the apostle, was certainly one who believed that life and light go hand in hand. Notice how strongly this is emphasized in his Gospel and in his first letter. He opens his Gospel account by introducing "the Word" (that is, Jesus, in his prehuman existence) and tells of the Word's close relationship with God. John then says that "what has come into existence by means of him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light is shining in the darkness, but

1. How does John's Gospel closely relate life and light, also make the contrast with darkness?



THE NEXT ISSUE
God's Word in the
Scriptures and Its
Significance

were in the world
fearfully failing the

"Go On Walking As CHILDREN OF LIGHT"

"You were once darkness, but you are now light in connection with the Lord. Go on walking as children of light."—Eph. 5:8.

the darkness has not overpowered it." Thus John loses no time in telling of the conflict between light and darkness, making the point that the darkness could not gain the conquest over him who was God's "Chief Agent" for conveying both life and light to mankind.—John 1:1-5; Acts 3:15.

2. John then makes some illuminating remarks that will help those who perhaps are uncertain as to what steps to take to escape from the realm of darkness under Satan's authority. He shows that it is our own attitude and response that is the determining factor in benefiting from the light, rather than our background or past experience or natural temperament. In fact, we

2. (a) For whom was the true light to be made available? (b) Who did, and who did not, accept the light bearer, Jesus?

might have a most favorable background and yet not accept the light, as John pointed out. Showing first that the light was to be available to all, without discrimination, he said: "The true light that gives light to *every sort* of man was about to come into the world." After saying that the world of mankind in general "did not know him," or recognize Jesus for what he was, John then continued: "He [Jesus] came to his own home, but his own people did not take him in. However, as many as did receive him, to them he gave authority to become God's children, because they were exercising faith in his name."—John 1:9-13.

³ What a masterly summary of the situation! Why, of course, that generation of Jews had the best background, and their past experience gave them the best reasons for accepting Jesus as their heaven-sent Messiah, the One to whom the Law pointed. (Rom. 10:4) By his human birth Jesus was one of them, born in their own home so to speak, yet he was rejected by the majority of them. The bad attitude of the majority was further shown up in contrast with the good attitude of those who did receive him, appreciating that "he was full of undeserved kindness and truth." Note, too, that the responsive ones were given "authority to become God's children, because they were exercising faith in his name." That is, faith in what his name stood for, the One who provided "the release [from condemnation] by ransom through the blood of that one," and through our exercising "faith in his blood."—John 1:12, 14; Eph. 1:5-7; Rom. 3:25; Acts 4:12.

⁴ How does this aid us to take the right steps in fleeing from the darkness into the light and freedom of God's Messianic king-

dom? This can be answered best by looking a little further into John's Gospel. In quoting Jesus' words spoken to Nicodemus, at John 3:16-21, we find more information. First we read: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." Ah! yes, not only light, but "everlasting life" was to be available to the world of mankind, at great cost both to God and to his beloved Son. However, one all-important condition had to be met, that of one's "exercising faith," one thus manifesting the right attitude and response. Failure or refusal to exercise faith meant one's coming under, or remaining under, God's adverse judgment.—John 3:16, 18, 36.

⁵ Jesus next stated an important principle: "Now this is the basis for judgment, that the light has come into the world but men have loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were wicked." That "basis for judgment" is as true today as when it was first spoken, and it operates the same way. He that deliberately "practices vile things hates the light and does not come to the light, in order that his works may not be reproved," as Jesus explained. That is the reason why "his own people did not take him in." They, and especially their leaders, acting as "blind guides," did not want to be exposed or disturbed in their preference for tradition and hypocrisy. A similar situation obtains today, especially in Christendom.—John 1:11; 3:19-21; Matt. 15:7-9; 23:16-26.

⁶ Still, you may not see your way clear. Perhaps you say that your past life will not bear inspection. Yes, but what was your response when you learned for the first time of God's great love for man?

3. (a) What responsibility rested on that generation of Jews? (b) How were those blessed who received Jesus, and on what basis?

4. How did Jesus tell of God's provision for mankind, and on what condition was it to be had?

5. What important principle did Jesus state, and how does it operate?

6. Despite your past life, what steps can and should be taken?

kind, "his kindness and forbearance and long-suffering"? Instead of manifesting an "unrepentant heart," perhaps you, like Saul of Tarsus, showed at heart a good attitude. If so, you would honestly and humbly admit your unclean condition, perhaps extremely unclean in some respects. This would cause you to feel sincere regret over your former way of life. Thereby you would act in accord with the fact that the "kindly quality of God is trying to lead you to repentance." That is the first step—repentance. Paul mentioned the further steps when he said to King Agrippa: "I went bringing the message that they should repent and turn to God by doing works that befit repentance." In other words, true repentance must be followed by conversion, a turning around in one's course of action, followed by the step of dedication to do God's will, turning fully to him in whole-souled devotion. In this way you 'exercise faith,' you put it to work.—Rom. 2:4, 5; Acts 26:20.

7 Have you taken these steps? And have you given public evidence of your dedication to God by submitting to water baptism as this is observed by Jehovah's Christian witnesses? If so, then it can be said with authority that you are a true disciple, a follower of Jesus. Note what he said for your encouragement: "I am the light of the world. He that follows me will by no means walk in darkness, but will possess the light of life."—John 8:12.

8 From Pentecost of 33 C.E. onward, it is true that Jesus' immediate followers were given a "new birth to a living hope" of a heavenly inheritance, becoming "sharers in divine nature," of immortality. These make up the "little flock" who share with Christ Jesus in his heavenly throne. (1 Pet. 1:3, 4; 2 Pet. 1:4; Luke 12:32;

7. What public evidence is given of dedication, and how did Jesus give encouragement to those becoming his followers?

8. How do the Scriptures distinguish between those given a heavenly hope and those with an earthly hope during God's kingdom?

1 Cor. 15:54; Rev. 3:21) However, Jesus said on one occasion: "And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those also I must bring, . . . and they will become one flock, one shepherd." These "other sheep" are given hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth under the heavenly kingdom, and are identified with the sheep-like ones who do good to Christ's spiritual brothers, mentioned in the parable at Matthew 25:31-46, and being now in course of fulfillment. They are also identified with the "great crowd" mentioned at Revelation 7:9-17, and following the description of the heavenly class, numbering 144,000.—John 10:16.

9. Jehovah's Witnesses today, numbering well over two million, are a living testimony to the truthfulness of God's Word. Among them is a minority, a nucleus, who have the heavenly hope. Closely gathered around these is a large and growing number of those whose hope of life during God's kingdom is earthly, and they delight to give all possible support to Christ's "brothers." (Matt. 25:40) Both groups form "one flock [under] one shepherd," and concerning his sheep, all of them, Jesus said: "My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them [by name], and they follow me. And I give them everlasting life." All of them have been restored to a family relationship with God, so as to be called "children of God," and are rejoicing in the 'light of life.'—John 10:3, 27, 28; Rom. 8:19-21.

WALK IN THE LIGHT AND AVOID STUMBLING!

10 Considering now John's first letter, we find some fine and direct counsel for those who have turned to God in dedication and commenced following in Jesus' footsteps. As in his Gospel, John starts by writing

9. How do Jehovah's Witnesses today correspond to Jesus' "one flock of sheep"?

10. What counsel does John give those desiring to share with God and Christ?

about Jesus, this time as the "word of life," and he mentions a sharing, not only with himself, but also "with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." John then says in his customary emphatic style: "God is light and there is no darkness at all in union with him. If we make the statement: 'We are having a sharing with him,' and yet we go on walking in the darkness, we are lying and are not practicing the truth."—1 John 1:1-7.

¹¹ As these words indicate, a knowledge of the truth concerning Jehovah and his purpose, besides conveying a rich blessing and enlightenment, brings a responsibility that cannot be sidestepped. It is not simply a question as to whether we have a clear knowledge of the truth. Rather, the more searching question is as to how we are responding to the truth in our hearts, as evidenced by our entire course of action, both in public and in private. It is the heart attitude, the real person we are within, that determines how we view every situation and possibility and the course that we decide to take. As God's Word says: "More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life. . . . As for your eyes, straight ahead they should look. . . . Smooth out the course of your foot, and may all your own ways be firmly established. . . . Remove your foot from what is bad."—Prov. 4:23-27.

¹² If, however, we seek to use the knowledge of the truth or our standing among Jehovah's people for selfish ends, with a bad or impure motive, then we would be viewing things in an impure way, and our vision of matters would be a perverted, distorted one. Though we might not realize it, we would not be able to see straight in a spiritual way. As Jesus said: "The

lamp of the body is the eye. If, then, your eye is simple [all one way, in focus], your whole body will be bright; but if your eye is wicked, your whole body will be dark. If in reality the light that is in you is darkness, how great that darkness is!" (Matt. 6:22, 23) We could stumble over the very thing which, if taken aright, would result to our advantage, because what the 'eyes of our heart' receive would prove to be, not light, but darkness. This was well illustrated in the religious leaders of Jesus' day. Had they accepted him as the "chief cornerstone" in God's arrangement, how richly they would have been blessed! Instead, they rejected him. They stumbled and fell over him. In fact, their rejection of Jesus was so extreme, even to a murderous hatred of him, that it brought upon them God's extreme adverse judgment. As Jesus said: "The person falling upon this stone will be shattered. As for anyone upon whom it falls, it will pulverize him."—Matt. 21:42-44; see also Romans 9:32, 33.

¹³ It is also important to consider how we may influence others. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "All things are lawful; but not all things build up. Let each one keep seeking, not his own advantage, but that of the other person." He then explained that especially where there is a question of conscience, "not your own, but that of the other person," we must be careful to "keep from becoming causes for stumbling." He also counseled the Romans: "Make this your decision, not to put before a brother a stumbling block or a cause for tripping." Yes, if by your conduct "your brother is being grieved, you are no longer walking in accord with love."

—1 Cor. 10:23-33; Rom. 14:13-15.

¹⁴ Jesus, too, spoke very strongly about

11. (a) A knowledge of the truth brings what degree of responsibility? (b) How does Proverbs 4:23-27 help us in facing up to our responsibility?

12. (a) How and why is it possible for the "light" in one to become "darkness"? (b) What illustration of this was seen in Jesus' day?

13. Regarding our influence over others, what is it important to keep in mind?

14. (a) What two expressions of Jesus stress the importance and danger respecting stumbling? (b) How did John express himself about this?

this. He urged that if there was anything about our own selves that we were allowing to stumble us, we should get rid of it. As for other disciples, he said: "Whoever stumbles one of these little ones who put faith in me, it is more beneficial for him to have hung around his neck a mill-stone . . . and to be sunk in the wide, open sea." And again: "It is not a desirable thing with my Father who is in heaven for one of these little ones to perish." (Matt. 18:6-10, 14) If the "eyes of your heart" are indeed enlightened to see how precious each "one of these little ones" is in Jehovah's eyes, you will appreciate the forceful way that John expressed himself when he said: "He that loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in his case. But he that hates his brother [if only one] is in the darkness and is walking in the darkness, and he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes." It was John's undivided love and loyalty that caused him to write thus. These are good qualities of the heart that govern our attitude and course of action, forming part of "the new personality . . . created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—1 John 2:10, 11; Eph. 1:18; 4:24.

¹⁵ Further, note Paul's earnest appeal: "That you no longer go on walking just as the nations also walk . . . while they are in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the insensibility of their hearts." Later, he builds up on the positive side, saying: "Become imitators of God, as beloved children, and go on walking in love. . . . Go on walking as children of light, for the fruitage of the light consists of every sort of goodness and righteousness and truth."

What fine and attractive fruitage! He con-

15. What warning and appeal did Paul give as to how we should walk?

cludes: "So keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons."—Eph. 4:17, 18; 5:1, 2, 8-15.

ABSORBING AND REFLECTING THE LIGHT

¹⁶ The scriptures that we have discussed thus far have dealt mainly with our personal conduct as children of light, also our responsibility toward others. There is, however, one other aspect that is prominent in God's Word. Jesus said: "I am the light of the world," and Paul said that Christ Jesus "was going to publish light." (John 8:12; Acts 26:23) How were these scriptures fulfilled? Was it just by the good life that Jesus led and his exemplary conduct? That is as far as many who claim to be Christians get in letting their light shine. But was that the reason why Jesus was finally arrested and brought before Pilate—because of his kind and good deeds? Of course not. The issue involved was that of rulership and kingdom authority, centering around Jesus as the pivotal point, as shown by Pilate's question: "Are you the king of the Jews?" In reply, Jesus readily acknowledged that he had a kingdom and was therefore a king, but Pilate had no reason to be disturbed. As Jesus said: "My kingdom is no part of this world. . . . My kingdom is not from this source."—John 18:33-36.

¹⁷ That kingdom had indeed been the theme and basis, the central truth, of all of Jesus' preaching and teaching. Matthew says that, after John the Baptist was arrested: "Jesus commenced preaching and saying: 'Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'" Interestingly, Matthew points out that at that particular time and place the prophecy was fulfilled: "The people sitting in

16. (a) In letting our light shine, is it only a question of conduct? (b) When Jesus faced Pilate, what important issue was discussed?

17. (a) What was the main theme of all that Jesus taught and proclaimed? (b) In what way did Jesus make this light shine right to the end? (c) What scriptures guided and encouraged Jesus in this respect?

darkness saw a great light, and as for those sitting in a region of deathly shadow, light rose upon them." (Matt. 4:12-17; Isa. 9:1, 2) Jesus keenly realized his responsibility to bear witness to that all-important truth, as he said to Pilate: "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) Jesus had thoroughly absorbed his Father's Word, and he appreciated that Jehovah's purpose was centered in the kingdom of which he was the promised king. As God's only-begotten Son, he knew that such prophecies as Psalm 2:4-8 and Isaiah 9:6, 7, speaking of a "son," referred to him and would be fulfilled in him. He also knew that he was the one referred to in the prophecies of Isaiah where Jehovah addresses him as "my servant," saying that he will give him "as a light of the nations, . . . to open the blind eyes, to bring forth out of the dungeon the prisoner, out of the house of detention those sitting in darkness." And again: "I [Jehovah] also have given you for a light of the nations, that my salvation may come to be to the extremity of the earth." (Isa. 42:1, 6, 7; 49:6) In fact, Jesus knew that some of these scriptures had already been quoted as referring to him, as when the angel Gabriel announced his conception to his mother Mary, and by Simeon when Jesus' parents brought him into the temple as an infant.

—Luke 1:31-33; 2:25-32.

¹⁸ Jesus faithfully reflected all that he had absorbed. This is seen in the first part of his Model Prayer, tying in the Kingdom with the sanctification of God's name: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matt. 6:9, 10) Though that Kingdom message shone as a shaft of light

18. (a) What vital truths does Jesus' Model Prayer highlight? (b) How did events turn out when Jesus as light bearer appeared to be completely eliminated?

during all of Jesus' ministry, the stormy clouds of religious opposition appeared to have blotted it out completely when Jesus was publicly hanging dead on the terrible torture stake. Then what happened? Why, on the fifty-first day thereafter, at Pentecost, there was Peter publicly addressing a big crowd in Jerusalem, explaining that the outpouring of the holy spirit was proof that God had indeed raised his Son from the dead and had exalted him to his right hand, in fulfillment of the Scriptures. —Acts 2:22-36.

¹⁹ From then on, that shaft of light shone with a greater intensity and a broader beam, especially when the Kingdom message was taken to the nations, commencing with Cornelius. (Acts, chapter 10) All who accepted and absorbed that message into their minds and hearts responded by reflecting that light, remembering Jesus' commission: "You are the light of the world. . . . Let your light shine before men." (Matt. 5:14-16) The entire record in the book of Acts confirms this, concluding with the incident when Paul was "bearing thorough witness concerning the kingdom of God," and pointing to a further fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies. (Acts 28:23-28) Peter, too, stressed the primary obligation resting on the Christian congregation when he wrote: "You are '... a people for special possession, that you should declare abroad the excellencies' of the one that called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." —1 Pet. 2:9.

²⁰ After centuries of the so-called Dark Ages, what is the situation today? Granted that Satan's ministers have been very successful in obscuring the light, "transforming themselves into ministers of righteousness," but that was no problem to Jehovah.

19. What record did the early Christian congregation make as to reflecting the true light?

20. (a) Is there any possibility that Satan or his servants might outshine Jehovah? (b) What does the modern history of Jehovah's people reveal, as he foretold through Isaiah?

He is always Master of the situation. Indeed, to him, "the darkness might just as well be the light." (2 Cor. 11:14, 15; Ps. 139:11, 12) The night might seem endless to us, but nothing can delay the dawn. The rising sun first catches the highest hills and mountains and any city or temple built thereon. That is exactly what has happened. The restoration of fundamental truths and related activities from the 1870's on was like the early morning light. Then, after a brief, stormy testing period from 1914 to 1918, the sunlight of God's restored favor on his faithful ones burst forth in 1919. Since then their path has truly been "getting lighter and lighter." (Prov. 4:18) They are experiencing what Jehovah foretold when addressing Zion, his organization, saying: "Arise, O woman, shed forth light, for your light has come and upon you the very glory of Jehovah has shone forth. For, look! darkness itself will cover the earth, and thick gloom the national groups; but upon you Jehovah will shine forth, and upon you his own glory will be seen. And nations will certainly go to your light, and kings to the brightness of your shining forth."—Isa. 59:20; 60:1-3; 62:1-3; see also Isaiah 2:2, 3.

²¹ Jehovah's "servant" is now seen to embrace those serving with Christ Jesus

21. Who comprise Jehovah's "servant" today, and how do they reflect his glory?

as their head, and making up a servant body of "witnesses," spiritual Israel. To these, Jehovah says: "You are my witnesses . . . even my servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and have faith in me." (Isa. 43:10-12) These, along with their many sheeplike companions, are sharing in the worldwide kingdom proclamation. They gratefully absorb the ever-increasing light of understanding that shines from the pages of God's Word. Thus, like Moses, the spiritual Israelites "reflect like mirrors the glory of Jehovah." They do so by their personal conduct, also by declaring "this good news of the kingdom . . . in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations."—2 Cor. 3:4-6, 16-18; Matt. 24:14.

²² The remnant of spiritual Israel and their companions gladly press forward in their God-given work of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making. In line with the foregoing, their prayer to Jehovah, in which they invite others actively to share, is beautifully expressed at Psalm 43:3, 4: "Send out your light and your truth. May these themselves lead me. May they bring me to your holy mountain and to your grand tabernacle. And I will come to the altar of God, to God, my exultant rejoicing. And I will laud you on the harp, O God, my God."

22. What is the prayer of Jehovah's dedicated servants, and how do they live up to it?

Bible Truth Spreads in an Unusual Way

● In a village of western Africa, one of Jehovah's Christian witnesses left a copy of *The Watchtower* at a non-Christian religious edifice. The caretaker of that building later announced to the villagers, 'An angel of God has brought a message to the village,' and held up the magazine. He then took it upon himself to say that anyone wanting a blessing from God should contribute ten cents or more for a piece or page of the magazine.

One elderly man bought a page. What he read on that one page was enough to arouse his interest in the Bible's message. Soon he began studying the Scriptures with Jehovah's Witnesses and made excellent progress.

Christians at

CORINTH

Get 'Matters Set Straight'

THE apostle Paul, in writing to his friend Timothy, stated that the inspired Scriptures are profitable "for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3: 16) His first inspired letter to the congregation at Corinth, written from Ephesus about 55 C.E., certainly did serve to 'set matters straight' as well as to reprove and discipline those Christians in Corinth.

Some five years before, around 50 C.E., Paul himself established this congregation during his second missionary tour. As it often happened, his preaching immediately aroused opposition. But then the Lord Jesus appeared to him in a night vision and assured him of protection and success, for, as he said, "I have many people in this city." (Acts 18:5-11) And so it proved to be, Paul staying in Corinth eighteen months. Fittingly he could say to those Corinthians: "I have become your father through the good news."—1 Cor. 4:15.

Paul's first letter to them is filled with vital information that has served Christians extremely well for the past nineteen centuries. In it he answers a number of questions that the Corinthian Christians had raised. He also comes to grips with their problems concerning which he received reports.

For one thing, they had asked Paul about singleness, marriage and separation.

In answer Paul showed that, while the ideal was singleness, yet in view of the prevalence of sexual immorality, marriage was a wise choice; it is better to be married than to be inflamed with passion. Married Christians should give each other the marriage due and should not separate from unbelieving mates who are content to live with Christian mates. Those marrying should only marry fellow believers.—1 Cor. 7:1-40.

The Corinthian Christians had also asked about meat that had been offered to idols. Paul assured them that idols were nothing and so could have no effect on food. But if eating such food would cause a weaker brother to stumble, it would be better not to eat, for we are to seek, not just our own advantage, but that of others. Yes, 'whether eating or drinking, we are to do all things for God's glory.' (1 Cor. 8:1-13; 10:18-33) Paul's counsel on headship, on woman's role in the congregation, on speaking in tongues and on congregational meeting procedures likewise appear to have been in reply to questions from Corinth. There were other matters, however, that Paul said could wait until he visited them again.—1 Cor. 11:34.

THE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS

It is indeed ironical—yet so true to human nature—that the foregoing matters about which Paul was asked were not nearly as weighty as those about which he received reports, for these were really disturbing to him. True to human nature? Yes, for it is prone to be more concerned with the form and externals than with the substance and that which lies underneath.—Matt. 23:23.

Paul was distressed because there were divisions among them due to their glorying in personalities. As a result, 'Christ existed divided' among them! But Christ, not one of their teachers, died for them! God makes things grow; all that Paul and

Apollos could do was to plant and water! Continuing, Paul stressed that the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God and that no one has any grounds for boasting. Why not? Because whatever a person has he has received in the first place! Their fleshly thinking even had them ruling as kings!—Chapters 1 through 4.

Paul was also greatly disturbed by a case of gross immorality in their midst. He was very plain. ‘A little of such leaven ferments the whole lump,’ and so they should ‘remove the wicked man from among themselves’! (1 Cor. 5:1-13) Paul likewise heard of their taking one another to worldly courts. Surely among them there were men capable of judging such matters, especially since the holy ones will even judge angels. Besides, would it not be better to suffer wrongs at the hands of a brother than to take him to court? (1 Cor. 6:1-8) With such conditions prevailing in their congregation it is not surprising that Paul also had to reprove them on the way some were observing the Lord’s Evening Meal. Certain ones even used the meeting place to eat and drink ahead of the celebration to such an extent that they did not discern the meaning of the Lord’s Evening Meal.—1 Cor. 11:17-34.

The fact that some of them were saying “there is no resurrection of the dead” served as a basis for Paul’s giving them an extensive treatment of this teaching, for which Christians since then have been most grateful. He established that Jesus was raised from the dead, absolutely proving that there is a resurrection. Then Paul went on to show the importance of the resurrection hope and gave further details regarding when and how the resurrection will take place. Most fittingly, he closed that fine exposition with an appeal to action: “Consequently, my beloved brothers, become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord,

knowing that your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord.”—1 Cor. 15:1-58.

SELF-CONTROL AND LOVE

In addition to the foregoing, Paul’s first letter to the Corinthian Christians contains many other gems to help them and all Christians since then to be better imitators of Paul, even as he was of Christ. (1 Cor. 11:1) Thus he writes: “I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow.” (1 Cor. 9:27) Plainly he tells them: “What! Do you not know that unrighteous persons will not inherit God’s kingdom? Do not be misled. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers . . . will inherit [it]. . . . And yet that is what some of you were.” (1 Cor. 6:9-11) And after listing some of the bad things the Israelites did in the wilderness, Paul tells them that “these things went on befalling them as examples, and they were written for a warning to us. . . . Consequently let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall.”—1 Cor. 10:1-12.

And what fine things Paul writes them regarding love: “Love builds up”! (1 Cor. 8:1) More than that, “love is long-suffering and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, does not get puffed up, does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury. It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.” What a standard to aim for!—1 Cor. 13:4-8.

Truly, God’s holy spirit inspired Paul to give the Corinthian Christians in his day, and Christians since then, fine counsel so that they may all keep “standing” and “not fall.”—1 Cor. 10:12.

SECOND CORINTHIANS

— Paul Speaks Out with "Great Freeness of Speech"

PAUL wrote his first letter to the Christians in Corinth apparently early in 55 C.E. But after writing it he was much concerned as to the effect that his admonition and strong reproof would have on his spiritual children. Would they take it to heart or ignore it? While waiting to hear from them Paul journeyed on to Troas and then to Macedonia before Titus arrived with a favorable report.

However, a certain condition still existed among those Christians that greatly distressed Paul. A number of individuals of considerable prominence among them were downgrading Paul's ministry. As a result, his second letter to them became an intensely personal one. In almost every chapter he refers to his ministry, telling of his irreproachable course and of the persecutions he endured. He has great love for them—"you are in our hearts to die and to live with us"—and so he feels he can use "great freeness of speech" toward them; all of which might be said to be in line with the proverb: "The wounds inflicted by a lover are faithful."

—2 Cor. 7:3, 4; Prov. 27:6.

He begins his second letter by blessing God for the comfort He gives his servants. Then Paul tells of the persecution he (and his companions) endured and how he conducted himself with holiness and godly sincerity among them. In chapter two he writes of his great joy at hearing a good report regarding them and then notes that he (and his companions) are adequately qualified, for they are not peddlers of God's Word but speak in sincerity. Continuing, he tells that he does not need letters of recommendation to them, for they themselves are his letters, written on hearts.

In chapter four Paul says that he did not act with cunning nor did he adulterate God's Word, but acted in a way to recommend himself to every human conscience in the sight of God. Again he reminds them of the persecution he endured. Continuing, he tells them: "We are

pressed in every way, but not cramped beyond movement." However, he is able to endure all these things because he has his sight trained on the unseen things that are eternal. Yes, "we are walking by faith, not by sight." He appeals to them, "I hope that we have been made manifest also to your consciences."

Paul begins chapter six by entreating them "not to accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose," and then goes into detail as to how careful he was that his "ministry might not be found fault with." After again assuring them of his love and telling them to widen out in their affection for him, he warns them not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. Continuing, he counsels: "Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in God's fear." Then Paul again defends his course: "We have wronged no one, . . . we have taken advantage of no one."

In chapters eight and nine Paul touches on the matter of their making contributions for their needy brothers in Jerusalem and then gives wise and comforting assurance: "Whatever a person gives is especially acceptable according to what a person has and not according to what he does not have," and "he that sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he that sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart . . . for God loves a cheerful giver."

—2 Cor. 8:12; 9:6, 7.

Next Paul tells that in his Christian warfare he did not make use of fleshly methods and "weapons" but his "weapons" were, nevertheless, powerful for overturning reasonings and for bringing every thought into subjection to the Christ. He thus reproves them for complaining that his letters are powerful but his speech and bodily presence are weak. All his counsel, however, is out of concern for their spiritual well-being, for he has promised them in marriage as a virgin bride to Christ. He therefore rebukes their "superfine apostles," lists his own qualifications and then recounts an impressive list of things that he endured as a servant of Christ. Yes, if anyone was a devoted servant of Christ, Paul was one even more so! —2 Cor. 11:1-33.

Truly Second Corinthians is an expression of Paul's great loving concern for his spiritual children at Corinth. No question about it, his "great freeness of speech" toward them is in keeping with the proverb that "the wounds of a friend are faithful."

Come to the "Sacred Service" Assembly!

ALL dedicated Christian worshipers of Jehovah God, take note! Also all you persons interested in knowing more about God and the Bible! All of you are invited to attend one of the "Sacred Service" District Assemblies that are to be held throughout the world beginning in the summer of 1976. Last year, according to partial reports received from 36 countries, at least 2,375,681 persons attended. How many will attend this year? Will you be one of them? You will be greatly blessed if you are!

This assembly will provide just what you need in the way of spiritual food. Each day will feature one aspect of a Christian's sacred service. The theme of the first day is "Sacred Service as a Family." Among other things the program will deal with family problems and will spell out what is required of Christian husbands and wives. Especially will all young folks benefit from the talk "What Does Youth Want out of Life?"

"Your Sacred Service in the Congregation" is the theme of the second day. Our need of Jehovah's organization will be highlighted. Also, how elders can cooperate with one another and how all can derive more benefit from the circuit overseer's visit. As a rule, the baptism will take place on this day, the subject of the talk being "Baptism Opens the Door to Sacred Service."

The theme of the third day will be "Sacred Service in the Field." Encouragement will be given to make our field presentations more Biblical. How we can make the most of all our opportunities will also be discussed, as well as how to be more fruitful in making disciples and our privilege to devote more time to witnessing.

"Enduring in Sacred Service" is the theme of the fourth and final day of the assembly. The need to keep the right mental attitude regardless of the time will be stressed. Also, how we can stand firm in faith and how prayer can help us. The public talk "Will Serving Jehovah Solve Your Problems?" should prove to be most helpful to the public and especially to those newly interested. The assembly will close with two talks that should deepen our appreciation of all the good things heard and stimulate us to act on what we have learned.

A new feature of this assembly will be that from the second day on, the program will begin with a review of the previous day's highlights. And each day a drama will be presented, two based on Biblical events and two in modern

settings. Before the Assembly, it is suggested that you read Second Kings chapters 22 and 23, and Daniel chapters 1 and 3.

Are you conscious of your spiritual need? (Matt. 5:3) Then put forth all possible effort, yes, leave no stone unturned, to attend one of the "Sacred Service" District Assemblies.

ASSEMBLY LOCATIONS

These are listed below for several countries. Those requiring assembly rooming accommodations may obtain a Room Request form and rooming address from the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, or from the branch office of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in the country where they plan on attending.

BRITISH ISLES

July 1-4: **Sheffield**, South Yorkshire, Sheffield Wednesday Football Ground, Hillsborough.
July 8-11: **Dublin**, Irish Republic, Industries Hall, R.D.S., Ballsbridge, **Sheriff**, South Yorkshire, Sheffield Wednesday Football Ground, Hillsborough.
July 15-18: **Cardiff**, Wales, Cardiff Arms Park.
July 22-25: **Edinburgh**, Scotland, Murrayfield Rugby Ground, Murrayfield, **London**, England, Rugby Union Ground, Twickenham.
July 29-August 1: **London**, England, Rugby Union Ground, Twickenham.

CANADA

July 1-4: **Charlottetown**, P.E.I., Sportsplex, 56 Maple Ave.
July 8-11: **Montreal**, P.Q. (French only), Blue Bonnets Raceway, 7440, boul. Décarie, **Ottawa**, Ont., Civic Centre Stadium, Lansdowne Park, Bank St., **Prince George**, B.C., The Coliseum, 1100 Patricia Blvd. **Saint John**, N.B., Lord Beaverbrook Rink, Main St., **Vancouver**, B.C., Pacific Coliseum, Exhibition Park, **Winnipeg**, Man., Winnipeg Convention Centre, 375 York Ave.
July 15-18: **Halifax**, N.S., Halifax Forum, 2901 Windsor St.
July 22-25: **Nanaimo**, B.C., Beban Park Recreation Centre, 2300 Bowen Rd., St. John's, Nfld., Feildian Gardens, Penywell Rd., **Toronto**, Ont. (English, Spanish and Portuguese), Woodbine Race Track, Hwy. #27 & Rexdale Blvd., Rexdale, Ont.
July 29-August 1: **Brampton**, Ont. (Italian only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Hwy. #7, 1 mile west of Mississauga Rd., Norval, Ont. **St. Catharines**, Ont., Garden City Raceway, Glendale Ave., **Saskatoon**, Sask., Exhibition Grandstand, Exhibition Grounds, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., The Sault Memorial Gardens, 269 Queen St. E.
August 5-8: **Brampton**, Ont. (Italian only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Hwy. #7, 1 mile west of Mississauga Rd., Norval, Ont. **Edmonton**, Alta., Edmonton Coliseum, 75th St. & 118th Ave., **Windsor**, Ont., Windsor Raceway, Hwy. #18.
August 12-15: **Brampton**, Ont. (Greek only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, Hwy. #7, 1 mile west of Mississauga Rd., Norval, Ont.
August 26-29: **Corner Brook**, Nfld., Humber Gardens.

UNITED STATES

June 10-13: **Irving**, Tex., Texas Stadium, 2401 Airport Fwy., **Jacksonville**, Fla., Memorial Coliseum, Gator Bowl Sports Complex, **Kansas City**, Mo., Kemper Memorial Arena, 1700 Wyoming St., **Laurel**, Md., Laurel Race Course, Rte. 1, **Oklahoma City**, Okla., Myriad Convention Center, One Myriad Gardens, **St. Petersburg**, Fla., Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S., **San Antonio**, Tex. (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, S. Alamo & Market Sts., **Tucson**, Ariz., Tucson Community Center, 260 S. Church.
June 17-20: **Charlotte**, N.C., Charlotte Coliseum, 2700 E. Independence Blvd., Dededo, Guam, Harmon Loop School Cafetorium, **Greenville**, S.C., Greenville Memorial Auditorium, 300 E. North St., **Kalamazoo**, Mich., Wings Stadium, 3600 Van Rick Dr., **Laurel**, Md., Laurel Race Course, Rte. 1, St. Paul, Minn., Civic Center, 143 W. 4th St., **St. Petersburg**, Fla., Bayfront Center, 400 1st St. S.

Springfield, Ill., Fairgrounds Grandstand, Illinois State Fairgrounds, Tuscaloosa, Ala., Memorial Coliseum, 10th St. & Hackberry Ln., West Palm Beach, Fla. (Spanish only), West Palm Beach Auditorium, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

June 23-26 (Note: Wednesday through Saturday): **Detroit, Mich.**, Tiger Stadium, Cor. Michigan & Trumbull.

June 24-27: Asheville, N.C., Asheville Civic Center, 87 Haywood St., Augusta, Ga., Augusta Civic Center, Community Dr., Cicero, Ill., Hawthorne Race Course, 35th & Cicero Ave., Des Moines, Iowa, Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 833 5th Ave., Greensboro, N.C., Greensboro Coliseum, 1921 W. Lee St., Kalamazoo, Mich., Wings Stadium, 3600 Van Ricker Dr., Laurel, Md., Laurel Race Course, Rte. 1, Macon, Ga., Macon Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr., Mobile, Ala., Municipal Auditorium, 401 Auditorium Dr., Pasco, Wash. (Spanish only), Pasco High School, W. Henry & N. 14th St., Phoenix, Ariz., Arizona Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1826 W. McDowell Rd., Richfield, Ohio, The Coliseum, 2923 Streetsboro Rd., Tulsa, Okla., Tulsa Assembly Center, 100 Civic Center, Waikiki, Maui, Hawaii, Baldwin High School Auditorium. June 27-30 (Note: Sunday through Wednesday): Inglewood, Calif. (Spanish only), The Forum, Manchester & Prairie. July 1-4: Anchorage, Alaska, Anchorage West High School, 1700 Hillcrest Dr., Cicero, Ill., Hawthorne Race Course, 35th & Cicero Ave., Denver, Colo., Denver Coliseum, E. 46th & Humboldt St., El Paso, Tex. (Spanish only), El Paso County Coliseum, 4000 E. Paisano Dr., Inglewood, Calif. (Spanish only), The Forum, Manchester & Prairie, Macon, Ga., Macon Coliseum, 200 Coliseum Dr., Madison, Wis., Dane County Memorial Coliseum, John Nolen Dr., New Orleans, La., Municipal Auditorium, 1201 St. Peter St., Reno, Nev., Centennial Coliseum, 4590 S. Virginia St., Richfield, Ohio, The Coliseum, 2923 Streetsboro Rd., Savannah, Ga., Savannah Civic Center, Orleans Square, South Bend, Ind., N.D.U. Athletic Center, Juniper Rd., Tulsa, Okla., Tulsa Assembly Center, 100 Civic Center.

July 8-11: Allentown, Pa., Fairgrounds Grandstand, 17th & Chew Sts., Baton Rouge, La., L.S.U. Assembly Center, Louisiana State University, Billings, Mont., Yellowstone Metra, Yellowstone County Fairgrounds, Hwy. #10 E. Bismarck, N.D., Civic Center, 6th St. & Sweet Ave., Cicero, Ill., Hawthorne Race Course, 35th & Cicero Ave., Denver, Colo., Denver Coliseum, E. 46th & Humboldt St., Fresno, Calif. (Spanish only), Fresno Convention Center, 700 "M" St., Green Bay, Wis., Memorial Arena, 1901 S. Oneida St., Hilo, Hawaii, Hilo High School Auditorium, 556 Waianuenue Ave., Lakeland, Fla., Lakeland Civic Center, 700 Lemon St., Louisville, Ky., Coliseum, Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center, Madison, Wis., Dane County Memorial Coliseum, John Nolen Dr., Memphis, Tenn., Mid-South Coliseum, Mid-South Fairgrounds, Nashville, Tenn., Municipal Auditorium, 417 4th Ave., N. Reno, Nev., Centennial Coliseum, 4590 S. Virginia St., Richfield, Ohio, The Coliseum, 2923 Streetsboro Rd., Seattle, Wash., The Kingdome, 201 S. King St., Spring-

field, Mass., Springfield Civic Center, 1277 Main St., Syracuse, N.Y., Onondaga Memorial Auditorium, 515 Montgomery St., Utica, N.Y., Utica Memorial Auditorium, Oriskany St. W.

July 15-18: Allentown, Pa., Fairgrounds Grandstand, 17th & Chew Sts., Buffalo, N.Y., Memorial Auditorium, 140 Main St., Cicero, Ill. (Spanish only), Hawthorne Race Course, 35th & Cicero Ave., Denver, Colo., Denver Coliseum, E. 46th & Humboldt St., Fresno, Calif. (Spanish only), Fresno Convention Center, 700 "M" St., Hampton, Va., Hampton Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr., Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii, McKinley High School Auditorium, 1039 S. King St., Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, Kealakeha School, Lakeland, Fla. (Spanish also), Lakeland Civic Center, 700 Lemon St., Louisville, Ky., Coliseum, Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center, Memphis, Tenn., Mid-South Coliseum, Mid-South Fairgrounds, Oakland, Calif., Oakland-Alameda County Stadium, Nimitz Fwy. & Hegenberger Rd., Philadelphia, Pa., Veterans Stadium, S. Broad & Pattison Ave., Reno, Nev., Centennial Coliseum, 4590 S. Virginia St., Roanoke, Va., Roanoke Civic Center, 710 Williamson Rd., NE, Springfield, Mass., Springfield Civic Center, 1277 Main St., Utica, N.Y., Utica Memorial Auditorium, Oriskany St. W.

July 22-25: El Paso, Tex. (Spanish only), El Paso County Coliseum, 4000 E. Paisano Dr., Hampton, Va., Hampton Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr., Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii, McKinley High School Auditorium, 1039 S. King St., Providence, R.I., Providence Civic Center, 1 LaSalle Sq., San Antonio, Tex. (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, S. Alamo & Market Sts., West Palm Beach, Fla., West Palm Beach Auditorium, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

July 29-August 1: Inglewood, Calif., Hollywood Park Race Track, 1050 S. Prairie Ave. at Century Blvd., Long Island City, N.Y. (French only), Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave., Providence, R.I., Providence Civic Center, 1 LaSalle Sq., West Palm Beach, Fla., West Palm Beach Auditorium, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

August 4-7 (Note: Wednesday through Saturday): Elmont, N.Y., Belmont Park Race Track, Hempstead Tpk. at Cross Island Pkwy.

August 5-8: Inglewood, Calif., Hollywood Park Race Track, 1050 S. Prairie Ave. at Century Blvd., Lihue, Kauai, Hawaii, Kauai High School Auditorium.

August 8-11 (Note: Sunday through Wednesday): Elmont, N.Y., Belmont Park Race Track, Hempstead Tpk. at Cross Island Pkwy.

August 12-15: Elmont, N.Y., Belmont Park Race Track, Hempstead Tpk. at Cross Island Pkwy., Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii, Roosevelt High School Auditorium, 1120 Nehoa St., Inglewood, Calif., Hollywood Park Race Track, 1050 S. Prairie Ave. at Century Blvd.

August 19-22: Elmont, N.Y. (Spanish only), Belmont Park Race Track, Hempstead Tpk. at Cross Island Pkwy., Honolulu, Oahu, Hawaii, Roosevelt High School Auditorium, 1120 Nehoa St.

Do You Remember?

Have you read the recent issues of *The Watchtower* carefully? If so, you will doubtless recall these points:

● What did King Solomon mean when he said: "Foolishness has been put in many high positions . . . I have seen servants on horses but princes walking on the earth just like servants"?—Eccl. 10:6, 7.

In this world, unqualified persons may be put over capable men of noble or princely disposition. These princely men may be granted no dignity but may be treated as servants by those who have the authority but who really lack the qualifications to discharge it properly.—P. 6.*

* All references are to *The Watchtower* for 1976.

● Why could the apostle Paul say that his "tribulation meant glory" for Christians? —Eph. 3:13.

Paul's faithful endurance exalted Christianity as something worth suffering for and even dying for. It demonstrated the conviction that being a disciple of Jesus Christ was of the highest value, deserving any sacrifice.—Pp. 57, 58.

● What is the point of Proverbs 15:15: "All the days of the afflicted one are bad; but the one that is good at heart has a feast constantly"?

The person who allows his affliction or sorrow to dominate his life finds that every day is gloomy. He is blind to the blessings

that may surround him. But the person who does not permit unpleasantness to dominate in his heart experiences an inward joy from day to day. His positive outlook enables him to be cheerful, as if enjoying a "feast constantly."—P. 69.

● Does God's promise to remove "pain" mean that all sensations of pain will be a thing of the past?—Rev. 21:4.

No, sensations of pain serve a beneficial purpose in alerting a person to danger, enabling him to act quickly in avoiding further contact with the source of the pain. Pain will be no more in that the causes of human suffering—oppression, crime, sickness, death and the like—will be removed from the earth.—P. 131.

● At Hosea 2:16, what is meant by the fact that, as foretold, the Israelites would call Jehovah no longer "My owner," but "My husband"?

This pointed to the changed situation of the repentant Jewish remnant. No longer would they as a composite wife want to feel as being

just owned as if by a slave master. The designation "My husband" reflected a greater intimacy and a feeling of being like a helper to God. Also, because of previous defilement with the worship of the false god Baal, which means "owner," they would rightly avoid using the title "Baal" with reference to Jehovah God. Thus they would not be reminded of their sin and that of their forefathers in worshiping Baal.—Pp. 182, 184.

● In what sense is Jehovah humble as stated at Psalm 18:35?

Though in submission to no one, Jehovah is humble in the sense that he condescends to deal with sinful humans, showing favor even to those whom men despise.—Pp. 197, 198.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

June 20: Life and Light Go Hand in Hand. Page 301. Songs to Be Used: 40, 110.

June 27: "Go On Walking as Children of Light." Page 308. Songs to Be Used: 28, 2.

Do You Remember?

● Why could the apostle Paul say that his "impatience went away" for Christians?—Eph. 3:18.

Paul's initial impatience arose from the fact that as soon as he had dedicated his life to God he was to face difficulties that would be a great trial to Jesus Christ as of the highest level, especially the sacrifice.—Eph. 3:28.

● What is the point of Proverbs 17:12? "All the glory of splendor and all the pride of a person pass away as though they had not been." Instinctively?

The person who shows an affiliation to some sort of组织的 group that is far above others is likely to be a follower of Jehovah. He is likely to be possessed

of the same kind of pride that caused the apostle Paul to say that his sense of the "glory of splendor" had passed away.

● What did King Solomon mean when he said: "The foolishness has been built up through foolishness . . . I have seen many people

forget foolishness on the earth that have been built up through foolishness . . . I have seen many people

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