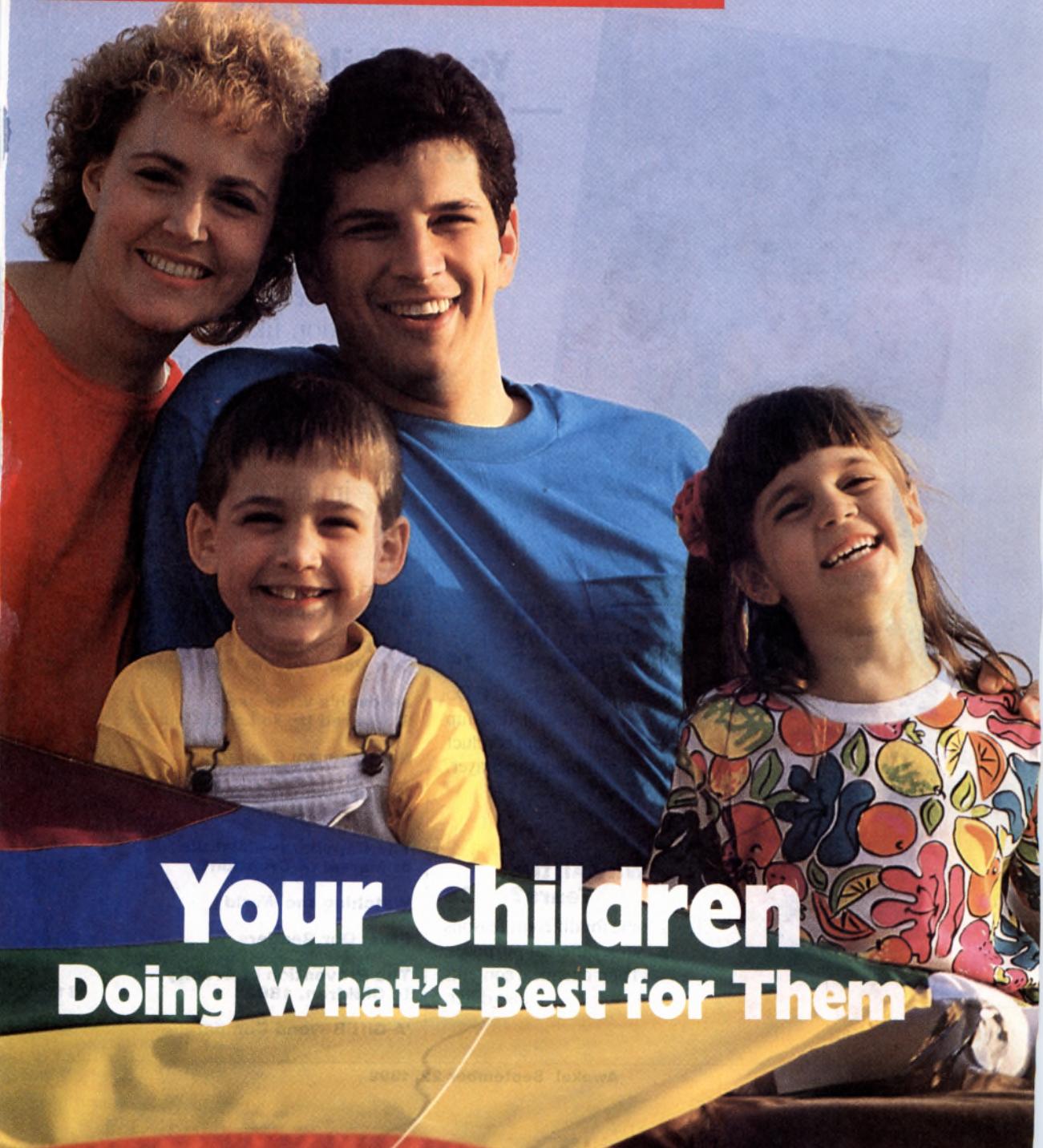


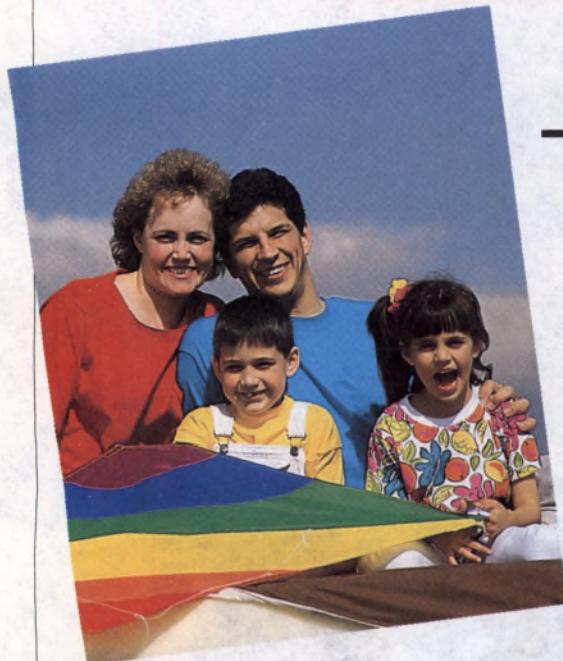
Awake!

September 22, 1992



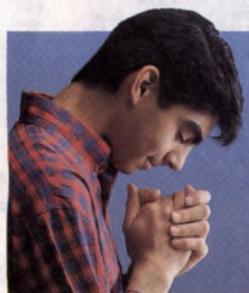
**Your Children
Doing What's Best for Them**

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Your Children —Doing What's Best for Them **3-10**

The crucial years for training your children are from one to five. That is when their minds soak up information like a sponge. It is when you can inculcate into them a moral code to enable them to resist contamination from an immoral environment.



Does God Answer My Prayers? **14**

How sincere are your prayers? Do you have a genuine relationship with God? Attitude and conduct can be roadblocks to prayer.



Why All the Tears? **25**

Tears come for different reasons and serve different purposes. Their chemical contents also differ.

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The Formative Years

When Your Best Is Needed the Most

CHILDREN are said to be "an inheritance from Jehovah." They are said to be "like slips of olive trees all around your table." (Psalm 127:3; 128:3) Parents are instructed to "go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah."—Ephesians 6:4.

If you are going to shape olive trees for fine fruit bearing, the time to do it is while they are 'like slips around your table.' As the young twig is shaped, so grows the tree. If you are going to train your children to be conformed to God's ways, the best time to do it is from their infancy. "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." (Proverbs 22:6; 2 Timothy 3:15) In infancy the brain is soaking up information at high speed, faster than it ever will again. It's your opportune time to do your best for your children.

Masaru Ibuka, founder of the Sony Corporation, wrote a book entitled *Kindergarten Is Too Late!* On its cover appeared these words: "Your child's potential for learning is greatest during the first two or three years of life. So, don't wait . . . *Kindergarten Is Too Late!*"

In a foreword Glenn Doman, director of The Institutes for the Achievement of Human Potential, says the following: "Mr. Ibuka's marvelous and gentle book makes no earth-shaking pronouncements of any sort. He simply proposes that tiny children have within them the capacity to learn virtually

anything while they are tiny. He proposes that what they learn without any conscious effort at two, three, or four years of age can be learned only with great effort, or may not be learned at all, in later life. He proposes that what adults learn painfully children learn joyfully. He proposes that what adults learn at a snail's pace, tiny children learn almost speedily. He proposes that adults sometimes avoid learning, while tiny children would rather learn than eat."

The reason Ibuka gives for saying that kindergarten is too late is that by then the child's best years for learning have passed. But there is another reason. In these days the moral breakdown has reached kindergarten, and before the child gets there, parents need to inculcate into the child a strong moral code to protect him from contamination.

This need is shown by the report by parents of a six-year-old boy who had just entered kindergarten. "During the first week in kindergarten, our son was sexually accosted by another boy in the 15 minutes he rides the school bus. This went on for several days. It was not merely child's play or playing doctor but was abnormal, explicit behavior.

"Many of the children in our son's class attend R-rated movies with their parents. Perhaps the parents consider it safer to take them than leave them in the questionable care of a baby-sitter. Some of the children watch R- and X-rated movies either through

the cable or on movies their parents keep at home.

"The value of inculcating moral principles into our son during his formative years, from infancy onward, was impressed on us by a shocking occurrence in our own home. Along with some adult guests, a four-year-old girl was present. She and our son, who had been carefully instructed that sex was only for married adults, were in his playroom. She wanted to play date and explained that he should lie down. When he innocently did so, she lay on top of him. He became frightened and exclaimed: 'That's only for married people!' As he broke loose and ran out of the playroom, she cried out: 'Don't tell anyone!'"—Compare Genesis 39:12.

Following are some of the things that are happening both in the inner cities and in the suburbs—things your young children should be insulated against from infancy onward.

Two seven-year-old boys were charged with the rape of a six-year-old girl in a public school restroom. Three boys, ages six, seven, and nine, sexually assaulted a six-year-old girl. An eight-year-old boy sodomized a kindergartner. An 11-year-old boy was charged with the rape of a 2-year-old girl. Some therapists contend that often such offenders were victims of sexual abuse when very young.

This was confirmed in the case of one young boy. When he was an infant, his 20-year-old aunt practiced oral sex on him.

From 18 months of age to 30 months, he underwent this sexual abuse. Two or three years later he was molesting young girls. When he started school, he continued this activity and was expelled in the first grade and again in the second grade.

The Need for Early Training

Parental failure to give proper training during the formative years paves the way for delinquency, which may open the way to far more serious crimes: vandalism, burglary, and murder. Following are a few samples of such things.

Three six-year-olds ransacked a playmate's home, vandalizing practically every room in it. A nine-year-old vandal was charged with criminal damage, plus burglaries, threatening another child with a knife, and setting a girl's hair on fire. Two 11-year-old boys shoved a nine-millimeter pistol into a 10-year-old's mouth and stole his watch. A ten-year-old boy shot and killed a seven-year-old girl over a video game. Another ten-year-old shot his playmate and hid the body under the house. A five-year-old pushed a toddler to his death from a fifth-floor stairwell. A 13-year-old joined two youths in kidnapping a 7-year-old to extract money from his family, but even before calling the family to demand the ransom, they buried the boy alive.

Then, at the end of the line, there is the horror of teenage gangs, armed with guns, prowling the streets, waging gun battles, with

Awake!

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bullets flying, killing not only one another but innocent children and adults caught in the cross fire. They are terrorizing many neighborhoods in big cities—in Los Angeles county alone, “there are 100,000-plus members of over 800 identifiable gangs.” (*Seventeen*, August 1991) Many are from broken homes. The gang becomes their family. Many end up in jail. Many end up dead. These excerpts from three letters written from jail are typical.

First: ‘I’m in camp for attempted robbery. It was four of us. Then the cops came. Two of my homeboys [gang family] ran one way, me and my other homie ran another way, but not faster than the German shepherds that caught us. When I get out, I hope someday I’ll be somebody special. Going to school and getting good grades was always too hard for me. But, buddy, you ain’t never seen nothin harder than doin time in jail!’

Second: ‘When I first came from Mexico, I was only eight years old. When I turned 12, I was in a gang. When I turned 15, I was really into it. I used to do a lot of drive-by [shooting people from a car]. I had my gun by my side always. When I was 16 years old, I got shot and nearly passed away. And I thank the Lord that he didn’t want me yet because I wasn’t ready to go with him. Right now I have bullet holes in my legs. So my advice is not to go gang bang!!! or you will be all alone and crippled in jail like me!'

Third: ‘I’ve been a known gangbanger since I was 11. I’ve been stabbed four times, shot three times, and locked up and beaten up so many times that it’s hard to keep count. The only thing left for me is to die, but I’ve been ready for that every day since I turned 13, and I’m 16 now. I’m doing eight months now and in a couple of years I’ll be dead, but you can avoid the whole thing by not starting gangbangbang.’

Seize the Opportune Time

Now, all of this is not to say that failure to train children during the formative years will necessarily result in these terrible crimes. But the failure to do so *can* lead to disruptive conduct, which can escalate into delinquency, and if it runs on unchecked, delinquency could erupt into criminal conduct, jail, and death.

And the checking of any such trends in your children is far more easily done in the preteens rather than waiting until they are in their teens. In fact, prekindergarten is the time to start, when you have them more or less to yourself during the formative years, before outside influences compete for their attention. If you have not been close to them in their infancy, they may not let you get close to them in their teens. You may discover that their peers have replaced you. So the counsel to parents is, Do not neglect your children during these formative years when doing your best for them will yield its finest fruitage, to your blessing and theirs.—Compare Matthew 7:16-20.

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The Formative Years

What You Sow Now You Will Reap Later

BABY brains are sponges soaking up their surroundings. In two years their possessors learn a complex language just by hearing it. If the child hears two, he learns both. Not only language but also musical and artistic abilities, muscular coordination, moral values and conscience, faith and love and the urge to worship—all spring from capacities and potentials preprogrammed into baby brains. They only await input from the environment for their development. Also, there is a correct timetable for this input to come for the best results, and that advantageous time is during the formative years.

The process begins at birth. It is called bonding. Mother gazes lovingly into baby's eyes, talks soothingly to him, hugs and cuddles him. Maternal instincts are stirred as baby looks intently at her and feels secure. If at this beginning nursing occurs, so much the better for both. The baby's sucking stimulates milk production. The touch of his skin causes a release of hormones that reduces her postdelivery bleeding. Mother's milk contains antibodies that protect baby from infections. Bonding occurs. It's the beginning of a love affair. But only the beginning.

The twosome soon becomes a threesome when father is brought into the picture, as he surely must. "Every child needs . . . a father," Dr. T. Berry Brazelton says, "and every father can make a difference. . . . The mothers tended to be gentle and low-keyed with their

babies. Fathers, on the other hand, were more playful, tickling and poking their babies more than the mothers did." The babies respond to this manhandling with excited cries and screams of delight, having boisterous fun and clamoring for more. It's a continuation of the bonding initiated at birth, "a love connection between parents and child that most naturally is made or missed in the first eighteen months of a baby's life," says Dr. Magid, coauthor of the book *High Risk: Children Without a Conscience*. If missed, he says, such children may grow up to become unattached and have no capacity for love.

Mother and Father Share Bonding

Hence, how crucial for both mother and father to collaborate on strengthening this love connection, this bonding and attachment between parents and child during the formative years prior to kindergarten! Let there be hugs and kisses galore from both parents. Yes, dads too! *Men's Health*, June 1992, says: "Hugs and physical affection with parents strongly predict successful friendships, marriages and careers in a child's future, says a 36-year study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. Seventy percent of the kids with affectionate parents did well for themselves socially, compared with only 30 percent of the kids with cold-fish parents; and Dad's hugs were found to be as important as Mom's."

Also, hold him while rocking in a rocking chair. Read to him as he feels secure on your lap. Talk with him and listen to him, instruct him in what's right and wrong, and be sure to be good models, practicing these principles yourselves. And all the while remember the child's age. Keep it simple, keep it interesting, make it fun.

Your child has a natural curiosity, a desire to explore, to learn all about his surroundings. To satisfy this hunger to know, the child plies you with a running stream of questions. What makes the wind? Why is the sky blue? Why does it get red when the sun sets? Answer them. It's not always easy. These questions are an invitation for you to influence your child's mind, to have input, perhaps to instill an appreciation for God and his creation. Is it a ladybug crawling on a leaf that fascinates him? Or the design of a tiny flower? Or watching a spider spin a web? Or just digging in the dirt? And don't

overlook teaching with little stories, as Jesus did with his parables. It makes learning enjoyable.

In many cases both parents need to work to make ends meet. Can they make a special effort to spend evening and weekend hours with their children? Is it possible for the mother to work half days to have more time with her children? There are many single parents today, and they must work to support themselves and their children. Can they be diligent to give as many evening hours and weekends as possible to their children? In many cases it is necessary for mothers to be away from their children. Even when the reasons for being away are valid, the small child does not understand that and may feel abandoned. Then special effort must be made to buy out time for your child.

Now, just what is this "quality time" we hear about? Busy parents may spend 15 or 20 minutes every other day with their child, maybe an hour on the weekend, and call it quality time. Is this adequate for the child's need? Or is its purpose to salve a parental



**Father joins
mother in
the bonding
process**



conscience? Or to ease the mind of a mother who works for self-fulfillment while leaving her child unfulfilled? But you say, 'Honestly, I'm so busy I just don't have that kind of time.' That is too bad and very sad for both you and your child because there are no shortcuts. Find the time during the formative years, or be prepared to reap a generation gap in the teen years.

It is not only the possible damage done to the child left in day care, but also the parents' loss when they miss out on enjoying the child as he grows up. The child does not always understand the whys and wherefores for being left alone; he may feel neglected, rejected, abandoned, unloved. By his teen years, he may have formed attachments with peers to replace the parents too busy for him. The child may even start living a double life, one to placate his parents and another to please himself. Words, explanations, apologies—none of this closes the gap. Pa-

rental talk about love now does not come through as genuine to the child that was neglected during the years when he needed his parents the most. Talk of love now sounds false; the words ring hollow. Like faith, professed love without works is dead.—James 2:26.

Reaping Even Now What We Have Sown

In this me-first generation, selfishness is on the rise, and it is apparent particularly in the abandonment of our children. We have them, and then we put them in day-care centers. Some day-care centers may be good for children, but many are not, particularly not for young children. Some even come under investigation for sexual child abuse. One researcher said: "In the future, without any question, we'll have problems that make today look like a tea party." Today's "tea party" is already horrendous, as statistics presented by Dr. David Elkind in 1992 show:

As imagination flourishes, a boy running with arms flung wide is a soaring airplane, a large carton becomes a home for playing house, a broomstick becomes a fiery steed, a chair is the driver's seat of a race car



"There has been a 50-percent increase in obesity in children and youth over the past two decades. We lose some ten thousand teenagers a year in substance-related accidents, not including injured and maimed. One in four teenagers drinks to excess every two weeks, and we have two million alcoholic teenagers."

"Teenage girls in America get pregnant at the rate of one million per year, twice the rate of the next Western country, England. Suicide has tripled among teenagers in the last 20 years, and between five and six thousand teenagers take their own lives each year. It is estimated that one out of four teenage girls manifests at least one symptom of an eating disorder, most commonly severe dieting. The 14- to 19-year-old age group has the second-highest homicide rate of any age group."

Add to these frightening statistics the killing of over 50 million babies while they are still in the womb, and today's "tea party" defies description. With the collapse of families in view, Dr. Elkind said: "Rapid social change is a catastrophe for children and youth, who require stability and security for healthy growth and development." One writer on me-first selfishness cried out in protest: "But nobody's willing to say to couples, *Look, you've got to stay married. If you've got kids, stay married!*"

It takes time to love a child. Years ago Robert Keeshan, broadcaster to children as Captain Kangaroo, warned of the consequences of withholding your time from your children. He said:

"A small child waits, thumb in mouth, doll in hand, with some impatience, the arrival home of a parent. She wishes to relate some small sandbox experience. She is excited to share the thrill she has known that day. The time comes, the parent arrives. Beaten down by the stresses of the workplace the parent so often says to the child, 'Not now, honey. I'm busy, go watch television.' The most often spo-

ken words in many American households, 'I'm busy, go watch television.' If not now, when? 'Later.' But later rarely comes . . .

"Years go by and the child grows. We give her toys and clothes. We give her *designer clothes* and a stereo but we do not give her what she wants most, our time. She's fourteen, her eyes are glassy, she's into something. 'Honey, what's happening? Talk to me, talk to me.' Too late. Too late. Love has passed us by. . . .

"When we say to a child, 'Not now, later.' When we say, 'Go watch TV.' When we say, 'Don't ask so many questions.' When we fail to give our young people the one thing they require of us, our time. When we fail to love a child. We are not uncaring. We are simply too busy to love a child."

Quantity Time Needed

The ideal is not simply to dole out "quality time" in measured installments; it must include also "quantity time." The Bible, which contains far more wisdom than all the books ever written on psychology, states at Deuteronomy 6:6, 7: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." You must inculcate into your children's hearts the true values from God's Word that are in your heart. If you live them, your child will copy you.

Remember the proverb quoted in the second paragraph of the previous article? Here it is again: "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." (Proverbs 22:6) It holds true only if the values training has been internalized, that is, put inside of him, made a part of his thinking, his innermost feelings, what he is deep inside. This happens

Which Parent Will I Be?

"I got two A's," the small boy cried, his voice filled with glee. His father bluntly asked, "Why didn't you get more?" "Mom, I've got the dishes done," the girl called from the door. Her mother calmly said, "Did you take out the garbage?" "I've mowed the grass," the tall boy said, "and put away the mower." With a shrug his father asked him, "Did you trim the hedge as well?"

The children in the house next door seem happy and contented. The same thing happened over there, and this is how it went:

"I got two A's," the small boy cried, his voice filled with glee. His father proudly said, "That's great; I'm glad you did so well." "Mom, I've got the dishes done," the girl called from the door. Her mother smiled and softly said, "I love you more each day." "I've mowed the grass," the tall boy said, "and put away the mower." His father happily answered, "You've made me proud of you."

Children deserve a little praise for the tasks they do each day. If they're to lead a happy life, much depends on you.

only if these values have not only been taught him by his parents but also been practiced by his parents.

He has absorbed them as a way of life. It has become his personal standard that is a part of himself. To go against them now would not be going against what his parents taught him but what he himself has become. He would be untrue to himself. He would be denying himself. (2 Timothy 2:13) There is a deep-down unwillingness to do this to himself. Hence, he is far less likely to 'turn aside from this way' that has been instilled into him. So let your children absorb fine conduct from you. Teach kindness by showing kindness, manners by practicing them, gentleness by being gentle, honesty and truthfulness by exemplifying them.

Jehovah's Arrangement

The family unit was Jehovah's arrangement for man from the beginning. (Genesis 1:26-28;

2:18-24) After six thousand years of human history, it is still recognized as the best for both adults and children, as confirmed by the book *Secrets of Strong Families* in these words:

"Perhaps something deep within us realizes the family is the foundation of civilization. Perhaps we instinctively know that when we come to the bottom line in life it's not money, career, fame, a fine house, land, or material possessions that are important—it is the people in our lives who love and care for us. People in our lives who are committed to us and on whom we can count for support and help are what really matter. Nowhere is the potential for the love, support, caring, and commitment for which we all yearn greater than in the family."

Hence, it is important to be diligent and sow fine training now during formative years so that what you reap in the future will be, for both you and your children, a happy family life.—Compare Proverbs 3:1-7.

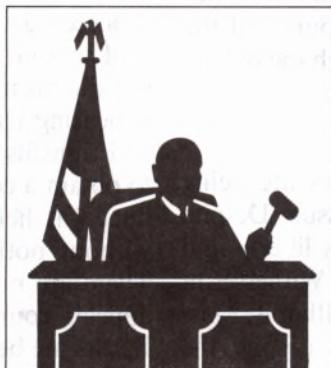
Jehovah's Witnesses 'Delivered Up to Local Courts'

CHRISTIANITY has met with opposition from its inception. In giving instructions to his disciples, Jesus warned: "Be on your guard against men; for they will deliver you up to local courts, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. Why, you will be haled before governors and kings for my sake, for a witness to them and the nations." (Matthew 10: 17, 18) In most countries today, opposition to the Kingdom takes a more subtle approach than the murderous wave of persecution that broke out shortly after the execution of Jesus. In the complex world in which we live, the issues raised by opponents extend beyond the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom.

Child-Custody Matters

One court to which some of Jehovah's Witnesses have increasingly been delivered is the family court. In Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Norway, the United States, and other countries, a small group of opposers have tried to make religion the key issue in determining child-custody issues when faithful Witnesses of Jehovah are divorced by unbelieving mates. Just because they were Jehovah's Witnesses, Witness parents have lost custody of their children.

One Witness lost custody of her three-year-old son and was restricted from even mentioning religion during periods of visitation.



The Legal Department of the Watchtower Society appealed this order and lost in the court of appeals. An appeal was then taken to the Ohio State Supreme Court. Happily, on April 15, 1992, the court ruled in favor of the liberty of the Witness. The 11-page opinion struck quite a blow to the so-called expert witness, who is actually a disfellowshipped individual claiming to be a psychologist. The court said that he "testified, on the basis of a dissertation he had written, that mental illness was more common among Jehovah's Witnesses than among the general population. This testimony was a blatant attempt to stereotype an entire religion. . . . [T]his one piece of statistical evidence is meaningless."

The court has ordered a new trial, saying: "[C]ustody may not be denied to a parent solely because she will not encourage her child to salute the flag, celebrate holidays, or participate in extracurricular activities. We reverse the trial court's custody and visitation orders because these decisions were improperly based on [the parent's] religious beliefs." As a result, this mother enjoyed attending the Memorial of Christ's death on April 17 with her son at her side in the Kingdom Hall.

The Legal Department of the Canada branch office of the Watch Tower Society has two cases now pending before the Supreme Court of Canada on this same issue. The Austria branch has been involved in a stunning

victory in a case before the European Commission of Human Rights. Additionally, Belgium, France, and Norway have reported recent trial-court victories for beleaguered Witnesses in other child-custody cases where religion was the focal point of the attack. In each instance, as Jesus said, it has turned out for a witness not only to the court and the lawyers but to the nations through the publicity generated by the news media.

Blood Issue

Another matter that Witnesses are being confronted with is the blood issue. Despite recent victories for the religious liberty and personal autonomy of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Supreme Courts of Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, and New York and despite the tireless efforts of Hospital Information Services and the many hospital liaison committees of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the country, this issue keeps raising its ugly head. However, health-care providers are getting a witness, and some hospitals are trying to

The young boy was tied up and transfused for eight hours

identify quickly and clearly patients who are Jehovah's Witnesses.

A Japanese Witness in California had her position on blood respected by the trial court sitting in San Diego. She suffered a brain aneurysm and was unconscious. Her properly signed Medical Directive and the testimony of a pediatrician who had questioned her extensively on the blood issue when she contacted the pediatrician in the door-to-door work were enough to convince the judge that the unconscious Witness would not have accepted blood under any circumstances.

A Long Island case in which a Witness was tied down and transfused while her husband was hauled away in handcuffs has been taken to the New York High Court by the Watchtower Society's Legal Department. A ruling in favor of the personal rights of Jehovah's Witnesses was obtained, and the case is now proceeding through the pretrial process in a civil lawsuit. A lawsuit on behalf of a 16-year-old and his mother in federal court in Atlanta is nearing trial. The young boy was tied up and transfused for eight hours. The hearing to obtain a court order authorizing this conduct was held in the hospital and obtained without notice to the boy or his mother. There are numerous other cases pending in appeals courts and new ones arising daily. Battles are being won, but the struggle for human rights is not over. Jehovah's Witnesses look to Jehovah God to vindicate his law on this issue, in his own due time.

Since 1943 few of Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States have been haled before local courts on the issue of preaching. However, each week the Watchtower Society receives dozens of calls and letters from bodies of elders asking for assistance when problems are encountered by Jehovah's Witnesses in their public ministry. One report from the state of Washington had a humorous turn. An irate householder locked the car group of Witnesses on his fenced property and called the police. His angry shouts and threats of violence caused them to wait prudently inside their car. When the police squad car pulled up, instead of arresting the Witnesses for trespassing, the police thanked them. You see, the police suspected that the householder was a fugitive, but they had not been able to get on the property to prove it. Now that he had invited them onto his property, they confirmed his identity and hauled him and the woman with whom he was living off to jail, while the Witnesses continued in their preaching and teaching work.

The stage is set for more legal battles in behalf of Kingdom interests. The Watchtower Society appreciates the interest, concern, and prayers of the many Witnesses around the world for Jehovah's guidance and direction in dealing with the complex legal issues encountered in accomplishing God's work today. Jehovah told the nation of Israel that they would not conquer the Promised Land all at once but that it would be accomplished "little by little." (Deuteronomy 7:22) The advancement of the rights of Jehovah's modern people is rather similar; little by little

they make progress. But win or lose, it is certain that whenever Jehovah's people are haled before governors, kings, courts, or anyone at all, it turns out as a witness for them and the nations.

In the near future Jehovah will completely vindicate himself not only on issues involving blood and custody but also on the legal issue involving his sovereignty. Then his people will experience peace from all opposers and enjoy exquisite delight under Kingdom rule—because Jehovah is a lover of justice. —Psalm 37:28.

Not Ordinary Garbage!

ON FRIDAY, March 24, 1989, the tanker *Exxon Valdez* struck a reef in Alaska's Prince William Sound. As a result, 11 million gallons of crude oil gushed into the water. The accident threatened the livelihoods of local fishermen, polluted hundreds of miles of shoreline, and destroyed thousands of birds and sea mammals.

The *Exxon Valdez* incident continues to stir the emotions of environmentally concerned people. However, a more insidious "oil spill" takes place daily. And likely this is happening in your own neighborhood!

According to *Consumer Reports*, people who personally change their automobile's engine oil discard between 200 million and 400 million gallons of waste oil every year. Reportedly, "only 10 to 14 percent of that oil is dis-



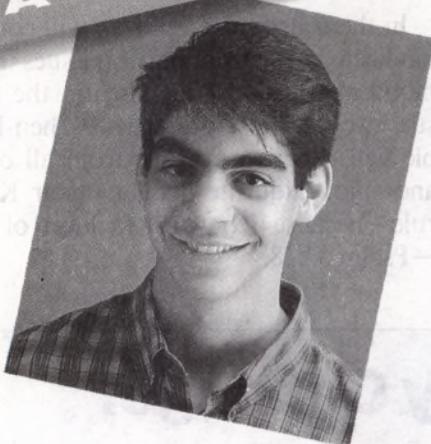
posed of properly." This small percentage of waste oil gets recycled, as other useful products can be made from it. But what happens to the rest? Likely, car owners are simply dumping it as ordinary garbage.

Every year millions of gallons of waste oil end up in the ground, in streams, or in sewers. It would take at least 25 *Exxon Valdez* spills to

generate such an amount of oil! But used oil, as well as other automobile waste, such as antifreeze, brake fluid, and transmission oil, is not ordinary garbage. It is worse.

Consumer Reports notes that if the oil gets "into drinking water, there can be serious consequences: One gallon of used oil can make a million gallons of fresh water undrinkable, and a mere pint of oil can produce a slick that covers an acre of water."

Young
People
Ask . . .



Does God Answer My Prayers?

I NEED to know if Jehovah is answering my prayers," says 11-year-old Sandra, "because I'm not sure if he is. I know many other youths who have the same problem." Fifteen-year-old Alyssa once had a similar problem with prayer. "I often felt that I was talking to myself," she admits.

According to a 1988 Gallup survey, 87 percent of teenagers in the United States have prayed at some time or other, but less than half do so regularly. Apparently some feel that their prayers just aren't being answered. At times, you may likewise get the feeling that no one is listening to your prayers. The Bible assures us, though, that when one offers up a

sincere prayer of faith, the "Hearer of prayer" is listening! (Psalm 65:2) But how do you know that he is not simply a passive listener—politely hearing but doing little or nothing in response?

After calling God the Hearer of prayer, the psalmist said: "With fear-inspiring things in righteousness you will answer us, O God of our salvation." (Psalm 65:5; compare Psalm 66:19, 20) Why, then, do some feel that their prayers go unanswered?

Roadblocks to Prayer

The reason may be the lack of a real relationship with God. Some youths doubt his very existence. Others believe but view him as a distant, abstract figure. Prayer becomes like pushing the stop button on an elevator—a last resort in dire emergencies. "I believe in God," claims one Catholic youth. "When I'm in a bind, when I need help, I always ask for His help." Another youth put it bluntly: "Sometimes I only pray when I really want something."

However, prayer should be an expression of faith, reverence, devotion, and trust—not merely of desperation or selfish desire. And it is not enough to pray because you think God might exist. "He that approaches God," says the Bible, "must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Hebrews 11:6) Doubters do not get their prayers answered. (James 1:6-8) Jehovah listens to those who have come to know and love him; they do not reserve prayer for emergencies. As 1 Thessalonians 5:17 exhorts, they "pray incessantly," or as *An American Translation* puts it, they "never give up praying."

Sad to say, some Christian youths have come to know of Jehovah but have not really developed a *friendship* with him. (Psalm 25:14) Their prayers tend to be few and far between, impersonal, and ultimately unanswered. Might this be true of your prayers? If so, "draw close to God" by getting to know

him. (James 4:8) Young Alyssa, mentioned earlier, had her doubts about Jehovah. But a personal study of the Bible gradually erased her doubts and helped her to develop a relationship with God.

One's attitude and conduct can also be major roadblocks to prayer. The psalmist said: "If I have regarded anything hurtful in my heart, Jehovah will not hear me." (Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 15:29) Would it be reasonable to expect God to answer your prayers if you were doing things that offended him—if you used drugs, smoked, listened to degrading music, or engaged in sexual immorality? Hardly. Jehovah therefore rejects the prayers of those who lead a double life, hypocritically 'hiding what they are.' (Psalm 26:4) He listens only to one who is "walking faultlessly and practicing righteousness and speaking the truth in his heart." (Psalm 15:1, 2) So if you get the feeling that you are talking to yourself when you pray, take stock of your life. Maybe you need to make some changes.

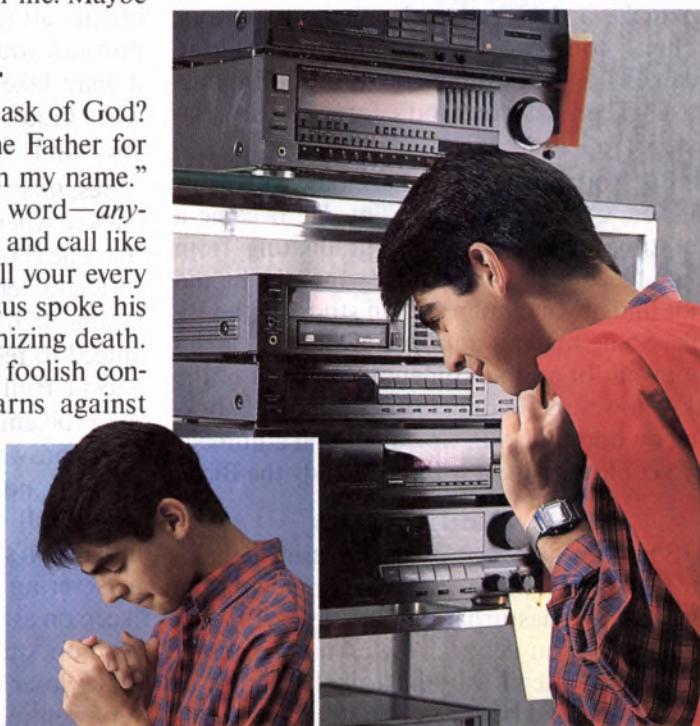
Abuses of Prayer

What sort of things may you ask of God? Jesus assured us: "If you ask the Father for anything he will give it to you in my name." (John 16:23) That tantalizing word—*anything!* Is God really at your beck and call like some sort of genie? Will he fulfill your every request, even frivolous ones? Jesus spoke his words just hours before his agonizing death. Surely he did not have in mind foolish concerns! James 4:3 therefore warns against abusing prayer. It says: "You do ask, and yet you do not receive, because you are asking for a wrong purpose, that you may expend it upon your cravings for sensual pleasure."

Prayer should not consist of frivolous requests for material wants

Many today abuse the privilege of prayer. One school basketball team would kneel at mid court and recite a prayer after each game. But do you really think that God is a basketball fan or that he would stoop to tamper with a competitive game? (Compare Galatians 5:26.) Or how about the woman who reportedly prays for shoes? "Sometimes a shoe store might be down to just one or two pair left in my size," she says, "and if I don't have the money right then, I'll ask God to make sure they're there when I get back to them." Now, it is one thing to pray out of need—and quite another to expect God to do your shopping.

Along similar lines, it would be inappropriate—and futile—to pray to God to spare you due punishment or discipline. (Hebrews 12:7, 8, 11) Nor are you going to have much success asking God to give you a good grade on a test for which you have done little or



nothing by way of preparation.—Compare Galatians 6:7.

Prayers "According to His Will"

The apostle John explains an important point about prayer: "This is the confidence that we have toward him, that, no matter what it is that we ask according to his will, he hears us." (1 John 5:14) Jesus' model prayer (Lord's Prayer) illustrates some of the things such a prayer might include. He prayed for (1) God's name to be sanctified, (2) God's Kingdom to come, (3) God's will to be accomplished, (4) the supplying of physical and spiritual needs, and (5) help in avoiding Satan's traps.—Matthew 6:9-13.

Within this framework there are many proper subjects for prayer. Indeed, 1 Peter 5:7 urges Christians to 'throw all their anxiety upon God, because he cares for them.' That means it is appropriate to pray about virtually every facet of our lives. Do you have to make a decision, such as choosing your school courses? Pray for divine wisdom. (James 1:5) Have you made some foolish mistake? Then ask for God's forgiveness.—Isaiah 55:7; 1 John 1:9.

But you must act in harmony with your prayer. Consider young Clint. He became a full-time evangelizer after graduating from high (secondary) school. For months he did not find anyone interested in studying the Bible. So he made it a matter of prayer. He did not wait for a Bible student to drop out of the sky, however. He diligently continued knocking on doors, and in time he found a number of people who were willing to study the Bible.

How God Answers

Sometimes the act of prayer itself is helpful. Young Sandy was struggling with the problem of masturbation. She says: "Praying and calling on Jehovah helps me because I know that after I ask him to help me not to masturbate, I'd better not do it."

At times, though, it seems that God maneuvers events to answer prayers. Young Ken once needed to get to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses in order to deliver a short Bible lecture he had been assigned. Unfortunately, no one was in a position to give him a ride. He prayed about the matter fervently. A few minutes later his sister, who seldom visited, arrived. Although not interested in his religion, she gave him a ride. A direct answer to his prayer? Perhaps. In any case, it is always appropriate to thank God when things work out to our advantage. Paul exhorts: "In connection with everything give thanks."—1 Thessalonians 5:18.

Don't expect God to answer your prayers in some dramatic way, though. Nor should you interpret every little thing that happens to you as a manifestation of the divine will. Our prayers are usually answered in subtle ways: You read something in the Bible or Bible literature; a parent or a fellow Christian provides you with sound advice. Admittedly, it may take discernment to determine just what God's will for you is. Things usually clear up in time.

Yes, *time!* Do not expect God to provide an answer when *you* feel he should. "Good it is that one should wait, even silently, for the salvation of Jehovah," wrote Jeremiah. (Lamentations 3:26) Furthermore, you are not guaranteed to receive the answer you prefer. The apostle Paul asked God three times to remove the problem he called "a thorn in the flesh." God's answer was no. (2 Corinthians 12:7-9) Paul did not, however, lose his appreciation for the gift of prayer but kept right on going in Jehovah's service. It was he who wrote: "Be persevering in prayer." (Colossians 4:2) So "keep on asking, . . . keep on seeking, and . . . keep on knocking." (Matthew 7:7) You will draw closer to God by doing so, and you may very well receive answers to your prayers.

My Burning Desire to Serve God

I would spend the next 13 years of my life at this school in Watertown, Massachusetts, U.S.A. I knew all the other kids in the school were blind, but I thought I could see. My parents never treated me any differently from my five sisters. Whatever they did, I did—chores around the house, roller-skating, swimming, climbing trees, whatever. I was never treated as though I was blind, so I never thought of myself as being blind.

I had a zest for life, loved adventure, and was eager to have fun. I got the other kids on the slides, swings, and a rocking boat. I rocked it so hard the kids screamed, but I sang as loud as I could and yelled for them to have fun. I guess I overdid it, for the bell would ring and the housemother would call me in, and I'd get the hairbrush, plus have to sit in the naughty chair. It was located by the staircase that all the teachers used. They would see me there and chuckle and ask, "You there again?"

I was five years old and known as the terror of the playground.

The school I attended was the Perkins School for the Blind.



Collette with her guide dog

Let me go back a little and explain how I got to be in this school for the blind. I was born in 1941, and when I was two years old, my parents were told that I had a tumor on the optic nerve of one of my eyes. The eye had to be removed. During the operation, they discovered that the tumor had spread to the optic nerve of the other eye and was heading back to my brain. This meant removing both eyes or letting me die. At that time, in 1943, blindness was considered worse than death. One eye specialist said: "If it were my child, I'd let her die." The other specialist disagreed. "No, let her live." Happily for me, my parents let me live. Three years later I was the terror of the playground.

Each child received religious instruction in the religion of his choice. Since my mother was Catholic, I was instructed by the nuns who came each week from the nearby convent. They would relate stories of "saints" who gave their lives for God, and at an early

age, I was fired with a burning desire to be just like them. I wanted to give my whole life to God, but the nuns told me that there was no hope for me. "You're just too bad," they said. "God wouldn't want you!" They said this because I played with Protestant and Jewish children, whereas they had told us to play only with Catholics.

I further irritated the nuns by asking them about Jehovah's name. By now my mother was studying off and on with Jehovah's Witnesses, and when I went home once a month for a weekend, I would hear that God's name was Jehovah. When I asked the nuns why they were not teaching us about Jehovah, they would become infuriated, and I ended up standing out in the hall. I think I must have spent half my early years either standing in the hall or sitting in the naughty chair.

Since my mother was a good Catholic, how did she happen to study with Jehovah's Witnesses? After my operation the priest came to visit her and told her that she must have done something terribly wicked to make God angry enough to cause my blindness. Instead of comforting her in this hard time of grief that she was enduring, he made her feel guilty. And besides, he blamed God for my blindness. That priest left the door wide open for Jehovah's Witnesses when they came knocking on her door—which they soon did.

They told her the wonderful good news of the Kingdom and that God was not a God of hurtfulness but one of love. So my mother began to study with the

Witnesses. It took her a long time, however, to make a dedication to serve Jehovah. The erroneous teachings of Catholicism had been deeply entrenched in her. But the Bible truths she was learning were "powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things," and in 1954 my mother got baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.—2 Corinthians 10:4.

Now when I went home for my monthly visit on weekends, my father wanted us to go to the Baptist church, some of my sisters went to the Methodist church, my mother took me to the Kingdom Hall, and at school my instruction in Catholicism was being intensified. Four different religions going on at the same time in one family! So by now I was



Collette at 17 and at 2 (when she was still able to see)

thoroughly confused as to which was the right way to worship God.

By the time I was 16, that nagging, gnawing, burning desire to serve God in the right way began welling up inside of me stronger than ever. I prayed to Jehovah that when I married, it would be to a man who had the right religion, whichever one that was. Well, the day came when this seemingly wonderful man came along and wanted to marry me. And since he was a Catholic and God apparently had sent him to me in answer to my prayer, I concluded that Catholicism must be the right religion. I made up my mind that from then on I would be a really good Catholic and wife and mother.

Sad to say, my marriage turned out to be a disaster. In 10 months we were blessed with a daughter and 22 months later with a son, but all the while the marriage was deteriorating. I was sure that things couldn't have been worse.

I was wrong; they got worse. It was our custom to go dancing every Saturday night, and afterward the group would come back to our house for coffee and refreshments. But

"If it were my child, I'd let her die"

on this particular Saturday, we went to another friend's house. While there, I overheard my husband making plans for wife swapping. A stranger was there, and he asked whom he would get, and I heard my husband say: "You can have my wife." Horrified, panic-stricken, I fled from that house. In the early morning hours, I paid the price for leaving. When my husband got home, he beat me severely. The reason, he said, was for 'making him look like a fool.'

All day Sunday, I prayed fervently to Jeho-

vah that if there was a right religion, a right way to serve him, he would show me what it was. Otherwise, I wanted to die. The only thing that kept me from committing suicide was my two small children. Who would take care of them if I died?

"You're just too bad," they said. "God wouldn't want you!"

The next morning I was outside mowing the lawn in my bare feet—to be barefoot helped me to know where the grass was longer and needed cutting. Two of Jehovah's Witnesses came by, a man and a woman. I'll never forget how mild-mannered and soft-spoken the man was, and he had a special article in Braille that the Watch Tower Society had produced. He gave it to me and asked if they could come back the following week. I wasn't really ready for this, but they were both so warm and friendly, I couldn't refuse. I remember walking back into the house and thinking: "Oh, no, God, not them, not Jehovah's Witnesses! Can't it be some other religion?"

They did come back, and we had weekly studies in the Bible. Eventually, two women, Judy and Penny, started coming. They were full-time ministers (called special pioneers) and were a great blessing from Jehovah. Judy was the bubbly, outgoing type but also studious and very adept at finding scriptures in the Bible. Penny was quieter but the firm disciplinarian that I needed. They were devoting their whole life to serving Jehovah, and in time I wanted to be just like them instead of like those "saints" the nuns had told me about.

When they later broached the matter of my going from door-to-door preaching as

they did, I thought, 'Oh, no, they can't expect me to do that! I'm blind!' I'd never used my blindness before to get out of anything, but this time I thought, 'Not me. I'm not going out in the door-to-door service.' So I said: 'How can I read scriptures at the doors?' Penny quietly said: 'You can memorize scriptures, can't you?' She knew I could, for they had been having me memorize two new scriptures every week. I couldn't get away with anything with those two!

The priest blamed God for my blindness

After I had been studying for two years, I was determined to go to the 1968 Memorial of Christ's death. I prayed before telling my husband. I knew he would react violently, and he did. He screamed that he'd rather see me dead than for me to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. He grabbed a knife and held it to my throat. "Tell me you're not going, and I won't kill you!" I prayed silently to Jehovah: 'Help me stay faithful even if I have to die.' I was amazed to feel the inner calm that came over me and found myself thinking, 'What good would life be anyway without serving Jehovah?' It seemed forever, but he finally threw the knife on the floor. "I can't kill you," he wailed. "I want to, but I just can't. I don't know why."

During the Memorial service, the feelings of peace and closeness to Jehovah again welled up within me. When I got home, I was locked out, and my things were on the doorstep. I spent the night with my parents. Thereafter the threats with a knife at my throat continued, and the beatings continued. I often found myself locked out of the house when I got home from meetings.

My husband said: "If you're going to serve Jehovah, let him take care of you." He stopped paying the bills. We ran out of food, the gas and electricity were cut off, we lost the house. But Jehovah was always there for me and the children.

In July 1969 a big convention of Jehovah's Witnesses was held in New York City. An hour before I was to get on the train to go, my husband cornered me, made his usual threats, and held the knife to my throat again. But I was used to that by now and never wavered. At that convention, on July 11, 1969, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah. Along with 3,000 other conventioners, I was baptized in the ocean.

At least twice a year, I put in 75 hours a month, even though my husband forbade me to go out in the service. I knew it was the command of Christ Jesus to preach, and I had to obey him. (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) I always worked hard at home, however. I

I overheard my husband making plans for wife swapping

kept the house clean. I had his meals ready on time. On meeting nights, I made his favorite meals. When I got home, I prepared special desserts for him. Even so, he was pretty grouchy. But it's hard for someone to keep yelling at you if you're feeding him his favorite dessert!

In 1975 my husband moved the family to California. In November 1976 our marriage ended, after 17 years. It was never my desire to be divorced. I never believed in divorce. At Malachi 2:16, Jehovah said that 'he hated a divorcing.' It was a devastating experience to go through. To add to my grief, my children stayed with their father in California. I

returned back East to where I had lived before.

My parents, who had given me such a warm and loving childhood, were there. (My father has since died, but my mother is still living, over 80 and a faithful Witness for nearly 40 years.) I lived on my own, however, and Jehovah has provided for all my needs: apartments, food, clothes, money, jobs when I needed them, and many loving friends who were and still are very supportive. One longtime friend,

He grabbed a knife and held it to my throat. “Tell me you’re not going, and I won’t kill you!”

Judy Cole, though now living far from me, telephones often, reads articles from *The Watchtower* to me, encourages me. She is my very best friend—second only to Jehovah, of course, whose friendship I treasure more than any other relationship I could ever have!

On October 1, 1986, at 11 o'clock at night, my daughter Linda called me from San Diego, California. She told me that my son, Stephen, 23 years old at that time, was in the hospital in intensive care and that he was not expected to live. On his motorcycle on a curving mountain road, he had hit a tree, plunged over a 150-foot cliff, and landed in the canyon below. Only one house was nearby. It was two in the morning, but the man living there just happened to be up late studying. He heard the commotion, came out, saw what had happened, and immediately got the paramedics there.

Stephen was unconscious, had two broken legs, a shattered kneecap, and much swelling of his brain. When I got there, the doctors told me that they did not think he would live.

He was in a coma for a week. I was there when he came out of it. “Hi, Mama,” he said. The happiest words I'd ever heard! He was going to live! To add to my joy, Stephen got baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses one year later, in July 1988.

Another joy now brightens my life: the Watch Tower Society has now made so much literature available in Braille! It's such a wonderful, wonderful gift to me! When I came into the truth, there was practically nothing in Braille. But now there's the *Great Teacher* book, the *Bible Stories* book, the *Young People Ask* book, and now the recent book *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*.

In concluding I would like to say that all my trials only drew me closer to Jehovah. It has all been very faith strengthening. I've never really missed having eyesight, never knowing what it's like. I could, of course, see until I was two, but I have no memory of it at all. Yet, one of my favorite scriptures is Psalm 145:16, which says: ‘Jehovah is opening his hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing.’ Any desires not satisfied now will be satisfied in his promised Paradise earth, wherein he will make all things new. (Revelation 21:3-5) Even sight will be mine, as one Witness reminded me.

The joy that fills my heart now is the prospect of fulfilling forever my burning desire to serve Jehovah!—*As told by Collette Nunes.*

In Our Next Issue

You Can Overcome Negative Emotions

Shantytowns—Hard Times in the Urban Jungle

Niagara Falls—An Ageless Jewel of the Americas

The Capybara Mistake or Marvel of Creation?

HOW would you feel if someone called you odd or stupid? Insulted perhaps? Well, that's what evolutionist Charles Darwin and others have called me. Imagine, one even said that I'm "a mistake of creation"! Although I am peaceful by nature, this really upsets me. Therefore, I want to clear my name. I'll tell you about my looks, my likes, and my fears—my good sides and my bad sides. Then you can decide if I am a mistake or a marvel of creation.

Largest in the World

Pardon me. I'm so agitated that I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Mr. Capybara, from tropical South America.* Spanish-speaking folk call me *carpincho* or *chigüiro*. These are only 2 of the 190 names I've been given. I'm better known, though, as the "largest rodent in the world."

This sounds like bragging, but it really isn't. You see, I'm roughly the size of a sheep. Put me on the scales, and the needle swings to a hundred pounds. My twin sister registers 130 pounds or more. Yet, she is sleek compared with a female capybara in Brazil that sets the record—a hefty 200 pounds.

* The animal described here is known as *Hydrochoerus hydrochaeris*. A smaller species lives in Panama.

"Master of the Grasses"

All that weight is not the result of gorging ourselves on junk food, since we are wholly vegetarian, eating mainly grass. Sometimes we even graze alongside domestic cattle. Respectfully, Amerindians of old called us "master of the grasses." That's certainly a more reasonable description than "odd."

We also eat water plants, and while you are sleeping, we cannot resist sinking our chisel-shaped incisors into a juicy watermelon, a sweet stalk of sugarcane, or a young rice plant.

In fact, whenever you see us, we are nibbling—not because we are gluttons but because we are rodents. Our cheek teeth never stop growing, so the only way to wear them down is by chewing and gnawing until we die.

Nevertheless, as biologists have recorded, we know *what* to chew on. We pick only "plants of highest protein content," and, they say, we "are more efficient at converting grass to protein than sheep or rabbits." Who said we are stupid?

A Pig With Swim Fins?

I admit my looks are, let's say, characteristic. Protruding eyes; small, round ears; contractile nostrils—all placed high up on my



large head, giving my face an expression of perpetual amazement. Some say I look like a "jumbo guinea pig with just a suggestion of the hippopotamus in it." I can live with that. However, I disagree with the writer who said that my square snout seems to be "carved by a novice out of a sloping tree-trunk." Personally, I prefer: "A comic face [with] shrewd piggy eyes."

Of course, I'm no relative of the porkers, but with my short legs and massive, barrellike body, I look the part. Moreover, 200 years ago, Swedish botanist Carolus Linnaeus mistakenly classified me as a pig. Why, have you ever seen a pig with swim fins? Hardly! Yet, that is exactly what the Creator gave me, and believe me, these webbed feet are handy because I love water. In fact, it is my pig-shaped body and love for water that has earned me the nickname water pig.

A Fat Secret

Areas near ponds, lakes, rivers, and swamps—preferably surrounded by woods with thick undergrowth—suit me as home. Not only do I love water but I need it for survival.

However, some three hundred years ago in Venezuela, our love for water brought us trouble. Roman Catholics there were forbid-

**Odd? Stupid? Really?
Are we not a fine-looking pair?**

den to eat meat during Lent. Fish, however, was legitimate fare. So the Catholic Church conveniently declared my ancestors to be fish! To this day believers in Venezuela eat us without qualms during Lent.

Fortunately, some of my ancestors escaped. How? Not by making burrows to hide in like other rodents. Rather, when alarmed we head for water, dive in, and swim away with ease. Though my body lacks the streamlined features of other aquatic creatures, I am a superb swimmer. The reason? Here's my secret.

Because of my layers of fat, volume for volume, I'm only slightly heavier than water. Just imagine, one researcher wrote that while in water I have the grace of a ballet dancer and my movements, he said, remind him of poetry! That's a far cry from being "a mistake of creation."

When I am hard-pressed, my webbed feet propel me quickly forward—away from enemies. I swim a good distance underwater and remain submerged for several minutes. Then, with caution, I come up, staying low in the water, exposing only my nostrils, eyes, and ears—just as the hippopotamus does. Enemies, such as feral dogs, jaguars, caimans, anacondas, and humans, have a hard time spotting my nostrils among the water plants. But with my well-developed sense of smell, my nose easily discovers predators.

Since constant exposure to the hot sun quickly cracks and ulcerates my skin, being in the water also prevents sunburn. As my reddish-brown to grayish hair is sparsely distributed, my skin shows through. So to control my body temperature, I simply remain

submerged in water or wallow in mud, covering my body with a layer of clay.

"A Nursing Coalition"

Are we ever on land? At least mother has to be there to give birth. After a pregnancy of about four months, from two to eight babies are born, each weighing over two pounds. Their "lighter brown, sleeker coats," notes one observer, make them look "more smartly dressed" than the parents. A female capybara begins breeding when 15 months old. She may live for ten years and may produce a minimum of 36 babies in her lifetime.

Within hours the babies are walking closely behind mother. Swimming, however, is harder because baby at first is reluctant to go into the water. After a forced launching, the frantically paddling infant will try to catch up with mother, or another female, and climb on her back. Mother, then, willingly serves as a life buoy. The larger the infant becomes, though, the harder it is for it to keep its bal-

ance. Soon it rolls off mother's back, swimming on its own.

Adult females also cooperate in nursing. Mothers feed not only their own young but also the thirsty offspring of other females. Why? "A nursing coalition," explains wildlife film producer Adrian Warren, "may increase [the youngsters'] chances for survival."

The Last Word

Meek by nature, we are easy-to-tame pets. One blind farmer in Suriname even used a capybara as a "guide dog." But we are mostly kept for our meat, which some say is tasty. Venezuela, for example, has ranches where thousands of us are raised for food—a dubious honor. Anyway, I hope by now you like me not merely for the way I taste but for what I am.

Well, what do you think? Am I a mistake or a marvel of creation? Do you agree with Darwin or with me? Of course, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but remember: Darwin has been wrong before!

**Thousands of us
are raised for food
—a dubious honor**





Why All the Tears?

WHEN was the last time you had a good cry? Was it from happiness or from grief? Over a personal triumph or a crushing failure? Out of relief or out of frustration? The birth of a child or the death of a spouse, a fond memory or a painful recollection, welcoming a cherished friend or bidding one good-bye? Opposite situations, different feelings, yet often expressed in the very same way—with tears.

Just why do we cry in response to intense emotion? Does it accomplish anything? Or could we do without tears?

Why Do We Cry?

No one is quite sure. Humans and animals produce two kinds of tears: Basal, or continuous, tears moisten the eye, and reflex tears spring into action when the eye is irritated by some foreign object. But it is the shedding of emotional tears, weeping, that seems to be uniquely human—and little understood.

Researcher William Frey suggests that emotional crying actually relieves the body of harmful and excess substances, much as do kidneys, colon, lungs, and pores. His book *Crying—The Mystery of Tears* describes his study that

compared tears caused by an irritant (an onion) with tears caused by emotions (from watching sad movies). The emotional tears contained higher concentrations of protein—about 24 percent greater. The reason is not yet clear, but evidently the body produces a kind of tear in response to emotion that is different from the kind in response to irritation.

"I am weeping as a woman. My eye, my eye is running down with waters," wrote the prophet Jeremiah. (Lamentations 1:16) Do women truly weep more than men? Statistically they do—about four times as often (5.3 times a month versus 1.4 for men). According to Frey, in infancy boys and girls cry about the same amount, though it may be days or weeks from birth before a baby will shed tears of emotion. In the teenage years, however, the difference begins to develop. This might be due to social influences. But the hormone prolactin (the milk-producing stimulant) is equally present in youngsters of both genders until the teen years. Somewhere between ages 13 and 16, the level rises in females.

Prolactin is found in tears. It also builds up in the body under stress. Hence, women would be subject to even greater levels of the hormone

than men when stressed. Could this be why women cry more easily and frequently than men? Dr. Frey believes that emotional crying is the body's effort to regain chemical balance. The hormones may actually stimulate crying, and he theorizes that this is why we often feel better after we cry.

Another study, by psychotherapist Margaret Crepeau, found a link between holding back crying and a "significantly higher rate of stress-related internal disorders like ulcers and colitis." (*Seventeen*, May 1990) Other researchers found evidence to the contrary. *Health* magazine reports that Drs. Susan Labott and Randall Martin examined frequent criers and infrequent criers. Their findings showed that stress was not lessened by weeping and that more frequent criers "were more prone to anxiety and depression." Their conclusion is that crying is not useful when it "merely distracts us

from the problem." However, weeping can be an important part of accepting a traumatic experience, for example, the death of a loved one.

Suffice it to say, the cause and purpose of emotional tears remains elusive.

The Other Tears

We know much more about the function of continuous tears, the ones you have in your eyes right now. They do much more than water your eyes. Let's chart the course of this marvelous fluid as it is produced, spread, and expelled through the lacrimal system.

The main tear gland is found in the depression just above the outer corner of your eye. This spongy gland, along with 60 others, creates a precision film made up of three layers —mucous, aqueous, and oil.

The inner layer, the mucous, makes a smooth surface so the lid glides across the exposed eye-

Help for Red Eyes

You have had that burning, gritty feeling in your eyes only too often. What causes it? Red eyes occur when the blood vessels in the membrane over the white of the eye become dilated.

A shortage of tears may be the culprit. People who work long hours at a video display terminal or with the printed page just don't blink enough. Normal blink rate is about 15 times a minute. When reading, driving, or otherwise concentrating, the rate may slow to from three to six times a minute, causing dryness and irritation. Doctors recommend taking so-called blink breaks and using eyedrops to soothe the eyes.

Upon awaking you will notice some redness because tearing action is greatly reduced in the dark and during sleep.

Certain medications may cause slowing of the tear glands, as does the aging process. Infection or swelling of the lids due to allergies,

climate extremes, or pollutants may cause redness.

Deformity or blockage of the lid or glands due to injury or birth defects might deprive the eye of full coverage with tear film, or the film itself might be unbalanced in composition.

Finally, millions suffer from diseases such as Sjögren's syndrome, an autoimmune disorder that attacks the tear, salivary, oil, and other glands, causing dryness of eyes, mouth, and skin.

What can be done about chronic dryness of the eyes? Artificial tears in the form of drops or pellets are now widely available, as are special glasses that form an airtight seal around the eye to slow evaporation. While unpleasant, these conditions rarely lead to blindness. However, if left untreated, chronic dryness can cause damage to the cornea, so it is important to seek medical advice.

"Do Put My Tears in Your Skin Bottle"

So wrote the psalmist David, entreating his God to look upon his deep distress. (Psalm 56:8) Yes, heartrending situations even in the lives of faithful servants of God have prompted weeping.

Imagine King David's tearful anguish over the deaths of his sons Amnon and Absalom and his loyal friend Jonathan, as well as King Saul. (2 Samuel 1:11, 12; 13:29, 36; 18:33) When the Amalekites plundered the city of Ziklag and kidnapped the wives and children of David and his mighty men, they "began to raise their voice and weep, until there was in them no power to weep anymore."—1 Samuel 30:4.

Great must have been the mourning when Jacob and Moses died, over whom entire na-

tions wept for days. (Genesis 50:3; Deuteronomy 34:8) Captivity and affliction have also brought cries of distress to the ears of Jehovah. (Job 3:24; Psalm 137:1; Ecclesiastes 4:1) The entire Bible book of Lamentations is a mournful dirge penned by the tearful Jeremiah.

—Lamentations 1:16; 2:11, 18; see 1:1, footnote.

Far from being a sign of weakness, weeping is a natural expression of strong emotion. Thus, even the perfect man Jesus was moved to tears. Once he wept over the city of Jerusalem and again at seeing the bereaved family and friends of the dead Lazarus. (Luke 19:41; John 11:33-35) Those tears of sorrow by family and friends, however, were soon changed to tears of joy when Jesus called forth his beloved friend from the tomb.—John 11:41-44.

ball. The aqueous layer is the thickest of the three, containing many important ingredients including oxygen, vital to the cornea. Also add a dose of lysozyme and 11 other enzymes found in tears. Lysozyme is a bacteria fighter par excellence. It keeps the eye white and clear.

The finishing touches on this tear will be supplied by 30 Meibomian glands, those little yellow dots lining both lids in single file behind the lashes. The glands secrete the oil layer, so thin that it doesn't distort your vision, yet keeps the tear film from evaporating and causing uncomfortable dry spots on the eye between blinks. In fact, some people have an inadequate supply of oil, and their tears evaporate much faster than normal.

In the Blink of an Eye

So here comes the lid, sweeping down in a flash, drawing out just the right blend of ingredients, and spreading them evenly across the eye in three layers. The lids meet perfectly so that the entire surface of the exposed eye is bathed in this soothing wash.

What happens to the used tears? A close look at your eye will show a tiny hole in the inner corner, the punctum, that drains the excess tears into a channel leading to the tear sac. From there the tears pass down the back of the nose and throat, where the tears are absorbed by the mucous membranes. Blinking causes the tear sac to act like a pump, which propels the tears into the canal and downward.

When you start to cry, you may instinctively blink faster, operating that pump faster to carry away those excess tears. However, when a real flood of tears begins, the pump overloads, the tear sac in the nasal cavity overflows, and your nose runs with tears. And you might as well reach for your handkerchief because by now the rest of the tears just spill over the lids and down the cheeks.

So whatever prompts them—a heartfelt compliment or a stinging insult, fits of laughter or bouts of depression, a crowning success or a keen disappointment—a ready supply of tears waits to speak your feelings.

Watching the World

Destructive Diseases

"Of the 50 million deaths [worldwide] each year, 46.5 million are due to disease," notes *Newsweek* magazine. "Infectious and parasitic diseases are the main killers (17.5 million), followed by heart disease, stroke and other circulatory ailments (11 million) and cancer (5.1 million)." In fact, says a report from the World Health Organization, over a billion people worldwide—or 1 in 5—suffer from disease at any given time. Many more, though not actively sick, are infected with potential ailments. These include 2 billion persons who have the hepatitis B virus, 30 million to 40 million with HIV, and 1.7 million with tuberculosis bacilli.

Pope Declares "Yahweh" to Be the Only God

"God Reveals His Name to Mankind." So read a boldfaced headline across the top of the page in the Vatican journal *L'Osservatore Romano*. Under it was the text of a homily given by Pope John Paul II while visiting St. Leonard Murialdo Parish in Rome. "In the passage from Exodus, God lets us know his name," began the pope. Then, after quoting Exodus chapter 3, verses 13 and 14, in which God told Moses to tell the Israelites, "I AM sent me to you," the pope added: "This word, 'I am', which is also expressed in the word *Yahweh*, says that God is the existent and transcendent One . . . From this we are given to understand that *Yahweh* is none other than one, the only God."

U.S. Rape Figures

The recently released National Women's Study has found that in the United States, 683,000 women were raped in 1990. The estimate,

based on interviews of 4,000 women, is five times larger than the figure of 130,000 attempted or completed rapes given for that year by the National Crime Survey. It was also found that only 16 percent of rape victims report the crime to the police, which accounts for the fact that only 102,560 rapes were reported in 1990. Most rapes were committed by persons known to the victims—relatives, neighbors, or friends. The survey also found that 12.1 million American women have been rape victims at least once in their lives. The majority, 62 percent, said that it occurred when they were minors, with 29 percent being under 11 years of age.

No Reason for Racism

With the aid of the latest advances in genetics, scientists have begun to unravel the information long hidden within man's genetic code. What they have discovered has swept aside the traditional concepts about race, notes the French newspaper *Le Figaro*. Despite the



seemingly infinite variety among mankind with all their visible external differences such as height, skin color, and other features, geneticists now agree that all people of the earth have undoubtedly descended from common parents and a common location in the not-so-distant past. "All the contrived

explanations for advocating racism have been brought to nothing," observes *Le Figaro*.

Quiet Revolution Empties Quebec's Churches

The words "French Canadian" and "Catholic" have long been synonymous in Quebec. At one time the church was the only structured body in French-Canadian society, represented by the parish priest. Nearly everybody went to church. But "with the Quiet Revolution, the Quebecers have developed critical thinking toward the church," says *Le Journal de Montréal*. "In less than 15 years, the Quebec church has lost what it had taken nearly 400 years to build." While the church still marries 80 percent of the population and baptizes 89 percent of babies, at most only 30 percent of the population go to church. "People don't feel obliged to practice [their religion] regularly," admits priest André Lamoureux of the Montreal archdiocese. The new role of the church, reports *Le Journal de Montréal*, is a social one.

"Eye for an Eye"

Because jail sentences usually mean little to hardened offenders, Judge Joe B. Brown of Memphis, Tennessee, has taken a different tack when burglars come before him for sentencing. As reported in *The Wall Street Journal*, "he invites victims to visit the thief's house and 'steal' something back. In a number of recent cases, the . . . Criminal Court judge has translated the Biblical eye for an eye into such things as two winter coats for a gold Rolex, and stereo speakers for a pair of bicycles. If a thief uses his own getaway car, that's up for grabs, too, along with clothing,

jewelry and other valuables." His rules allow the victim to go to the thief's home as often as it takes to offset the debt and at any time, day or night. However, there are specific guidelines. And a sheriff's deputy goes along to make sure the goods taken have not themselves been stolen from others.

Beauty and Nutrition

"Nutrition and moisturizing of the skin depend on the quality of what people eat. The main cosmetic is still that of eating properly," claims Ida Caramico, professor of pharmaceutical sciences of the University of São Paulo, Brazil. According to the Brazilian magazine *Globo Ciéncia*, pollution, toxic foods, emotional problems, excessive sunlight, and ironically, undue use of cosmetics cause the skin to age. In order to soften and regenerate the skin, the magazine suggests drinking at least eight glasses of water daily, along with a diet that includes sufficient quantities of fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain cereals. It adds: "Every external care may be used to improve the appearance, but no product—natural or artificial—surpasses the results of good nourishment."

Manic Magnet

The old city of Jerusalem attracts not only thousands of tourists but also scores of mentally deranged persons who believe that they are Biblical characters or who are convinced that only they have the key to world peace and must reveal it at Jerusalem's walls. "Christians tend to identify themselves as Jesus or the Virgin or, most commonly, John the Baptist, often breaking down at places associated with Jesus like Via Dolorosa and the Garden Tomb," says *The New York Times*. "Jews lean toward Moses, King David and other Old Testament figures, and come apart on the Mount of

Olives or at the Western Wall." One tourist recently ran amok in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, yanking down a cross, breaking lamps, and trying to shatter a statue while yelling not to worship idols. Each year from 50 to 200 individuals suffering from what psychiatrists call the Jerusalem syndrome are taken to Kfar Shaul, a psychiatric hospital. Those who had a history of mental illness outnumbered those who did not by 4 to 1, and males outnumbered females by 2 to 1.

Gold in the Trash

Thanks to modern technology, an Italian firm now extracts precious metals from industrial refuse. According to *Il Messaggero*, a plant in the city of Arezzo, Italy, receives waste from different parts of the world and extracts from it gold, silver, and other precious elements. The items yielding the precious metals include photographic paper, wrapping foils, microchips,



discarded cameras, computers, and other electronic devices. *Il Messaggero* reports that this one plant in Arezzo alone recovers a yearly average of some 120 tons of gold, 200 tons of silver, 4 tons of palladium, one ton of platinum, 220 pounds of rhodium, and small quantities of iridium and ruthenium.

In Proper Perspective

People in countries where income is low are not necessarily faring badly. *The New York Times*

reports that in China the per capita income is only \$350 a year. A middle-aged couple in Guiyang, for example, have a combined salary of less than \$42 a month—she as a teacher and he as a factory technician. However, their actual income is more than double that, about \$85 a month, due to bonuses and subsidies and a stipend for having only one child. Though their income is still low, so are their expenses. They pay no taxes or medical bills. The rent for their apartment is less than a dollar a month, and heat and electricity are provided free. Food prices are also relatively low, taking up \$37 a month from their budget. Clothing needs require another \$19. This enables them to save \$10 or so each month—a seemingly modest amount toward future years. But they have no fear of layoffs and know that their medical expenses will be paid and a pension given to them in their old age.

Sexually Active Students

Concerned over the rise of sexually transmitted diseases and the risk of AIDS for young people, the CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control) made its first survey of the health habits of high school students in grades 9 through 12 (ages 14 to 18) in all 50 states, as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The results, published this year, show that 54 percent say they are no longer virgins. "We're particularly concerned about the increase at each grade level," said Dr. Lloyd Kolbe, director of the Division of Adolescent and School Health at the CDC. According to the survey, 40 percent of the students in the 9th grade have had sex, 48 percent in the 10th grade, 57 percent in the 11th grade, and 72 percent by their senior year. One out of every 25 students admitted to having a sexually transmitted disease.

From Our Readers

Hormones I appreciated the article "Hormones—The Body's Marvelous Messengers." (April 22, 1992) You succeeded in describing one of the most important and complex of all life-sustaining functions in simple terms. Knowing these things makes me appreciate the Creator of our marvelous body even more!

L. F., Italy

I found the article very helpful, as I just started studying this subject in school. The article was well developed and presented in a way that made the functioning of hormones easily understood. *Awake!* is truly an educational magazine.

D. A. J., Côte d'Ivoire

My friend, who is one of Jehovah's Witnesses, supplies me regularly with your literature. Your article on hormones was of special interest to me. I am in my second year of training to become a nurse, and as we are currently studying the hormones, I was particularly pleased to have your article at hand. I am very grateful to have found Jehovah's Witnesses.

Y. L., Germany

Curfews Your article "Young People Ask . . . Why Do I Have to Be Home So Early?" struck home. (May 8, 1992) I used to stay out until late into the night and try to creep into the house—only to find my mother waiting for me on the porch. At times she scolded me with tears in her eyes. When I think back, I regret being disobedient. I know now that anyone who does not pay attention to Jehovah's counsel is bound to suffer calamity.

T. A., Japan

Virginity Thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . Is It Normal to Be a Virgin?" (March 22, 1992) I remember being pestered by my classmates, asking if I had had sex.

Even today, workmates ridicule me when they find out the Bible condemns sex before marriage. However, promiscuous conduct results in unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Following Bible principles to avoid sex before marriage is a protection.

G. I. I. L., Brazil

I am 17 years old and am an expectant mother. I failed to listen to the Bible's counsel. My mind really opened when I read your article. I had never looked at virginity as being 'a badge of honor.' Now I wish I had listened to the Bible's counsel.

M. R., United States

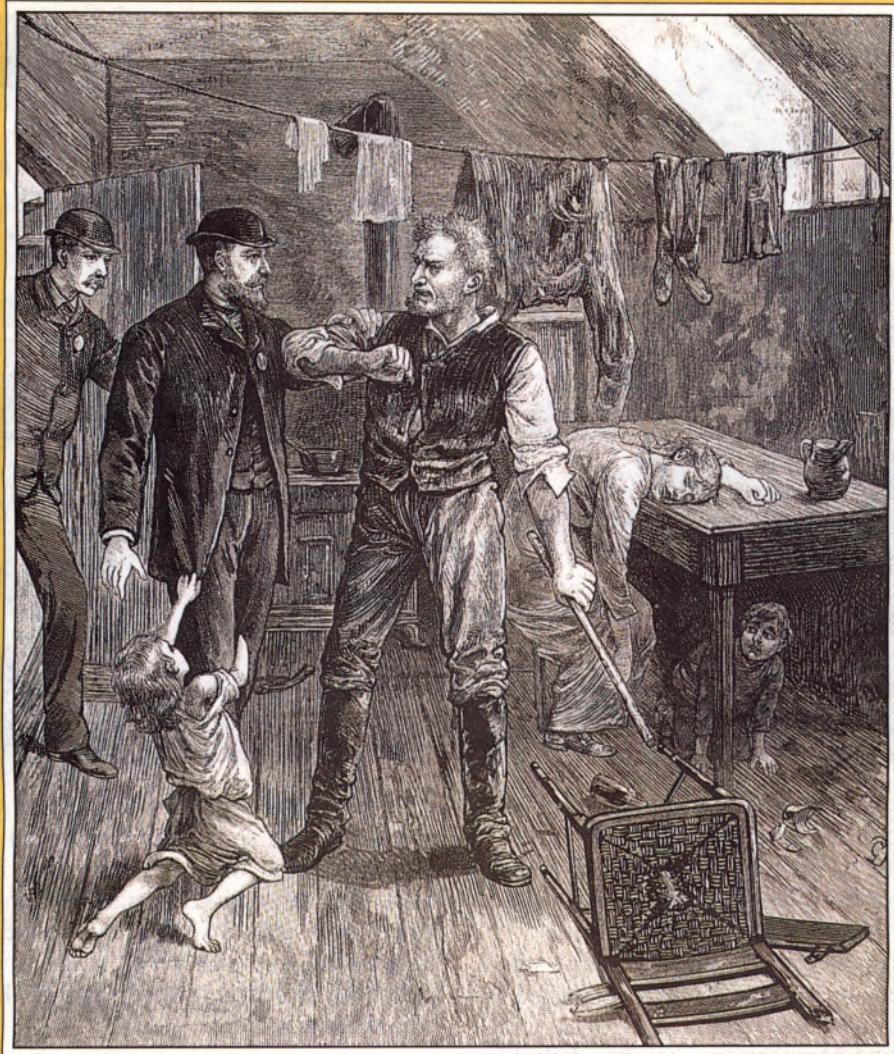
Thank you so much for the article "Young People Ask . . . Why Stay a Virgin?" (April 22, 1992) At a very tender age, I wandered from one meaningless relationship to the next, searching for love. I was bitterly disappointed for many years. You cannot imagine the heavy load of guilt, shame, and despair I carried all those years. As I read your footnote on page 27 about God's forgiveness, I was scarcely able to contain the great flood of emotion and gratitude that flowed from my heart toward God.

A. M., United States

Incredible Insects Just a short note to express my appreciation for the article "Incredible Insects Put Man's Flying Machines to Shame." (May 22, 1992) I work in the research division of a high-tech company, and the pride man takes in his achievements is all too clear. The complexities of nature, however, are seldom acknowledged as the handiwork of the Creator. I once overheard two scientists discussing the geometric beauty of a eucalyptus tree seed. Their conclusion? "Isn't Mother Nature wonderful?" Their minds are truly blinded.

P. G., United States

The Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 1882



New York in the Nineteenth Century, by John Grafton, Dover Publications, Inc.

"THE SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN, 1882. The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was founded in New York in 1875 by Henry Bergh. Seven years after its founding, the Society, the first organization to provide any protection for abused children in the city, was handling thousands of complaints annually, removing children from unfit homes and prosecuting offenders through the courts. This melodramatic engraving represents the timely intervention of officers in a tenement."—*New York in the Nineteenth Century*, by John Grafton.

'A Gift Beyond Compare'



THAT, in effect, is what a woman from São Paulo, Brazil, said about the gift of the publication *My Book of Bible Stories*. Her aunt had sent the book for the niece's five-year-old daughter. The niece wrote in appreciation:

"Every night I read a bit to her, and she likes it very much. She really is interested in it, asking questions, commenting on it, and even making comparisons with her daily life, using the teachings of the book as examples. Without my reminding her, she goes to get the book, curious about the next story.

"However, I want to say that the present was not just for Natalia; sharing God's teachings with my daughter has been very good for me. It has very much increased my joy and gratitude for being a mother.

"There are many kinds of presents we can give or receive, some being measured by their monetary value, others by their size. But this book that we received cannot be compared to any of such gifts. Its value can be measured only by the love with which it was given and by the joy it brings to the hearts of those who receive it."