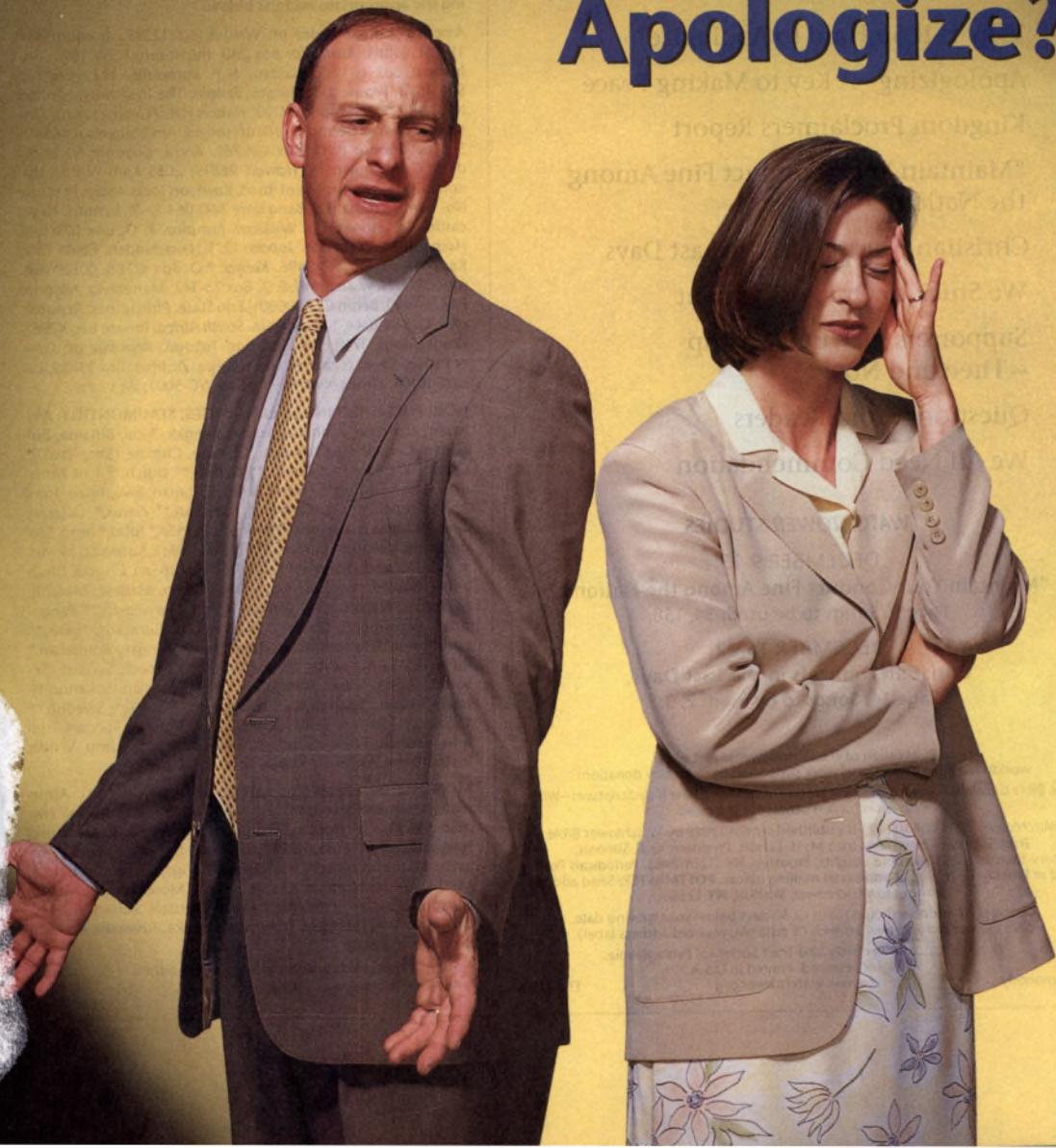


NOVEMBER 1, 2002

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

Why Should I **Apologize?**





THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

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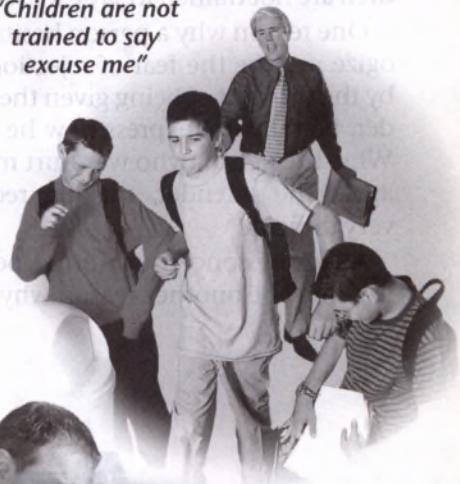
Why Is It So Hard to Apologize?

IN July 2000, the California State Legislature in the United States passed a bill designed to relieve people of liability if they express sympathy to an individual who was injured in an accident in which they themselves were involved. Why the legislation? It was noted that when an accident causes injury or damage, people often hesitate to extend an apology lest it be construed in court as an admission of guilt. On the other hand, those who feel that they should be given a prompt apology may get upset, and a minor accident may turn into a major dispute.

Of course, it is not necessary to apologize for an accident that is not your fault. And there may be times when the wise course is to be careful about what you say. An old proverb says: "In the abundance of words there does not fail to be transgression, but the one keeping his lips in check is acting discreetly." (Proverbs 10:19; 27:12) Still, you can be courteous and helpful.

Is it not true, though, that many people have stopped apologizing, even

"Children are not trained to say excuse me"



"My husband never apologizes"



"My men do not admit their mistakes"



when lawsuits are not involved? At home a wife may lament, 'My husband never apologizes for anything.' At work a foreman may complain, 'My men do not admit their mistakes, and they hardly ever say that they are sorry.' At school a teacher may report, 'Children are not trained to say excuse me.'

One reason why a person hesitates to apologize may be the fear of rejection. Troubled by the thought of being given the cold shoulder, he may not express how he really feels. Why, the person who was hurt might totally avoid the offender, making reconciliation very difficult.

A lack of concern for other people's feelings may be another reason why some hesi-

tate to apologize. They may reason, 'Apologizing will not undo the blunder I have already made.' Still others hesitate to say that they are sorry because of the possible consequences. They wonder, 'Will I be held responsible and be asked to make compensation?' However, the biggest hurdle to admitting a mistake is pride. A person who is too proud to say "I am sorry" may in essence conclude, 'I don't want to lose face by admitting my blunder. That would weaken my position.'

For whatever reason, many find words of apology hard to utter. But is it really necessary to apologize? What are the benefits of apologizing?

Apologizing A Key to Making Peace

"APOLOGIES are powerful. They resolve conflicts without violence, repair schisms between nations, allow governments to acknowledge the suffering of their citizens, and restore equilibrium to personal relationships." So wrote Deborah Tannen, a best-selling author and sociolinguist at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

The Bible confirms that a sincere apology is often an effective way to repair a damaged relationship. For example, in Jesus' parable of the prodigal son, when the son returned home and offered a heartfelt apology, the father was more than ready to receive him back into the household. (Luke 15:17-24) Yes, a person should never be too proud to swallow his pride, apologize, and seek forgiveness.

Of course, for sincerely humble individuals, apologies are not so difficult to make.

The Power of an Apology

Abigail, a wise woman in ancient Israel, provides an example of the power of an apology, although her apology was for a wrong that her husband had committed. While dwelling in the wilderness, David, who later became king of Israel, together with his men protected the flock that belonged to Abigail's husband, Nabal. Yet, when David's young men asked for bread and water, Nabal sent them away with very insulting remarks. Provoked, David led about 400 men to go up against Nabal and his household. Upon learning of the situation, Abigail set out to

meet David. When she saw him, she fell upon her face at his feet. Then she said: "Upon me myself, O my lord, be the error; and, please, let your slave girl speak in your ears, and listen to the words of your slave girl." Abigail then explained the situation and gave David a gift of food and drink. At that, he said: "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have listened to your voice that I may have consideration for your person."—1 Samuel 25:2-35.

Abigail's humble attitude along with her words of apology for her husband's rude behavior spared her household. David even thanked her for restraining him from entering into bloodguilt. Although it was not Abigail who had mistreated David and his men, she accepted the blame for her family and made peace with David.

Another example of someone who knew when to apologize is the apostle Paul. Once, he had to defend himself before the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court. Infuriated by Paul's honest words, the high priest Ananias ordered those standing by Paul to strike him on the mouth. At that, Paul said to him: "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall. Do you at one and the same time sit to judge me in accord with the Law and, transgressing the Law, command me to be struck?" When onlookers accused Paul of reviling the high priest, the apostle immediately admitted his error, saying: "Brothers, I did not know he was high priest. For it is written, 'You must not speak injuriously of a ruler of your people.'"—Acts 23:1-5.

What Paul had said—that the one appointed as judge should not resort to violence—was valid. Still, he apologized for unknowingly speaking to the high priest in a manner that could be viewed as being disrespectful.* Paul's apology paved the

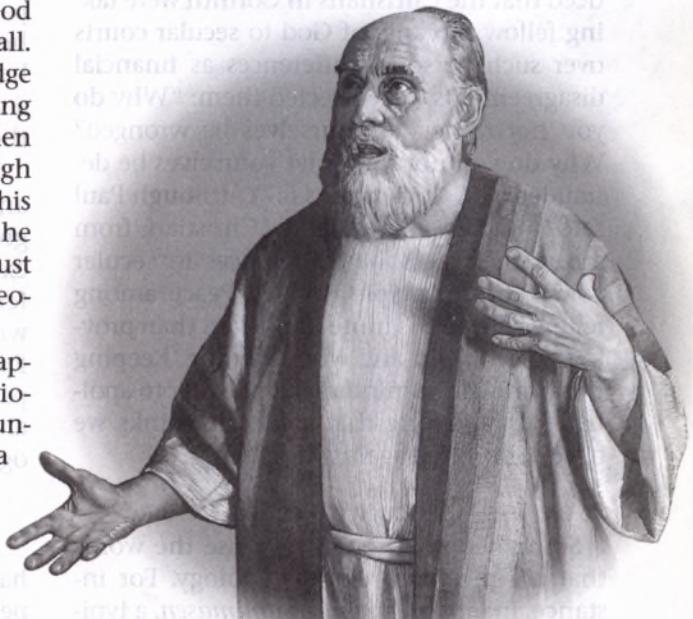
way for the Sanhedrin to listen to what he had to say. Since Paul was aware of the controversy among the members of the court, he told them that he was being tried for his belief in the resurrection. Consequently, much dissension arose, with the Pharisees siding with Paul.—Acts 23:6-10.

What can we learn from these two Biblical examples? In both instances, honest expressions of regret opened the way for further communication. So words of apology can help us to make peace. Yes, admitting our mistakes and apologizing for damage done can open up opportunities for constructive discussions.

'But I Have Not Done Anything Wrong'

When we find out that someone was offended by what we said or did, we may feel that the person is being unreasonable or too

What can we learn from Paul's example?



* It might well have been because of Paul's poor eyesight that he did not recognize the high priest.

sensitive. Yet, Jesus Christ advised his disciples: "If, then, you are bringing your gift to the altar and you there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go away; first make your peace with your brother, and then, when you have come back, offer up your gift."—Matthew 5:23, 24.

For example, a brother may feel that you have sinned against him. In such a situation, Jesus says that you are to go and "make your peace with your brother," whether you feel you have done him wrong or not. According to the Greek text, the word Jesus here used 'denotes mutual concession after mutual hostility.' (*Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*) Indeed, when two humans are at odds, there may be a measure of blame on both sides, since both are imperfect and prone to err. This usually calls for mutual concessions.

The issue is, not so much who is right and who is wrong, but who will take the initiative to make peace. When the apostle Paul noticed that the Christians in Corinth were taking fellow servants of God to secular courts over such personal differences as financial disagreements, he corrected them: "Why do you not rather let yourselves be wronged? Why do you not rather let yourselves be defrauded?" (1 Corinthians 6:7) Although Paul said this to discourage fellow Christians from airing their personal differences in secular courts, the principle is clear: Peace among fellow believers is more important than proving who is right and who is wrong. Keeping this principle in mind makes it easier to apologize for a wrong that someone thinks we have committed against him or her.

Sincerity Needed

Some people, though, overuse the words that are meant to express apology. For instance, in Japan, the word *sumimasen*, a typi-

cal expression used in apologizing, is heard thousands of times. It can even be used to express gratitude, implying an uneasy feeling of not being able to reciprocate the favor shown. Because of its versatility, some may feel that the word is used too often and may wonder if those saying it are really sincere. Forms of apology may seem to be overused in other cultures too.

In any language, it is important to be sincere when extending an apology. The wording and the tone of voice should convey the genuineness of sorrow. Jesus Christ taught his disciples in the Sermon on the Mount: "Just let your word Yes mean Yes, your No, No; for what is in excess of these is from the wicked one." (Matthew 5:37) If you apologize, mean it! To illustrate: A man in line at an airport check-in counter apologized when his luggage nudged the woman waiting next in line. A few minutes later, when the line moved, the suitcase again touched the woman. Once more, the man courteously apologized. When the same thing happened yet another time, the woman's traveling companion told him that if he really meant what he had said, he should make sure that the baggage did not touch the woman again. Yes, a sincere apology should be accompanied by the determination not to repeat the mistake.

If we are sincere, our apology will include an admission of any wrong, a seeking of forgiveness, and an effort to undo damage to the extent possible. In turn, the one who was offended should readily forgive the repentant wrongdoer. (Matthew 18:21, 22; Mark 11:25; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13) Since both parties are imperfect, peacemaking may not always proceed smoothly. Still, words of apology are a strong force toward making peace.

When an Apology Is Inappropriate

Although expressions of regret and sorrow have a soothing effect and contribute to peace, a wise person avoids using such ex-

No Obstacle to Peace

Today, we make mistakes because we inherited imperfection and sin from our ancestor Adam. (Romans 5:12; 1 John 1:10) Adam's sinful condition was a result of his rebellion against the Creator. Originally, though, Adam and Eve were perfect and sinless, and God has promised to restore humans to this state of perfection. He will wipe away sin and all its effects.—1 Corinthians 15:56, 57.

pressions when it is not appropriate to do so. Suppose, for example, that the issue involves integrity to God. When Jesus Christ was on earth, "he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake." (Philippians 2:8) He did not, however, apologize for his beliefs in order to alleviate his suffering. And Jesus did not offer an apology when the high priest demanded: "By the living God I put you under oath to tell us whether you are the Christ the Son of God!" Instead of sheepishly apologizing, Jesus courageously replied: "You yourself said it. Yet I say to you men, From henceforth you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26:63, 64) The thought of keeping peace with the high priest at the cost of his integrity to his Father, Jehovah God, never occurred to Jesus.

Christians show respect and honor to people in authority. Still, they have no need to apologize for their obedience to God and for their love for their brothers.—Matthew 28:19, 20; Romans 13:5-7.

When everyone is perfect, there will be no obstacles to peace



Kingdom Halls Open to Everyone

WHILE training his disciples for the public ministry, Jesus Christ encouraged them to "preach from the housetops." (Matthew 10:27) Yes, they were to perform their Christian ministry openly, in full public view. In the spirit of this counsel, the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses is also conducted openly. This openness has enabled the Witnesses to overcome opposition and to gain favorable notice.

Although congregation meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses are open to the public, prejudice makes some people feel reluctant to enter a Kingdom Hall. This is true in Finland. Others are simply timid about going to new places. When a new Kingdom Hall is constructed or an existing hall renovated, an open house is usually arranged. A special effort may be made to invite neighbors to visit the Kingdom Hall and get acquainted with the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses.

In one area, the Witnesses arranged to have a magazine campaign on the same day that they held an open house at their new Kingdom Hall. Two Witnesses met an elderly man who said that he enjoyed reading the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. The brothers told him about the open house and offered to take him to the Kingdom Hall. The man said that he would be happy to join them. His wife, having listened to the conversation, cried out, "Do not leave without me!"

Upon entering the Kingdom Hall, the man looked around and said: "This is not black at all. Why, this is beautiful and light. I was told that the Kingdom Hall would be black!" The couple stayed for some time and requested some of the literature that was on display.

One congregation wanted to announce in the local newspaper an open house on the occasion of the dedication of their Kingdom Hall. Upon receiving notice of the event, the editor in chief suggested that an article be written on the subject. The brothers agreed, and a short time later, a favorable half-page article appeared in the newspaper, covering the event and describing the activities of the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

After the article was published, an elderly Witness met a neighbor who said to her: "There was a wonderful article about Jehovah's Witnesses in the newspaper today!" The sister was able to give a witness and later to place with her the brochure *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Twentieth Century*.

In addition to clearing up some misconceptions about Jehovah's Witnesses, such arrangements in connection with open houses and dedication programs at new Kingdom Halls have

stimulated the publishers by encouraging them to invite more people to attend the meetings. Yes, in many lands, including Finland, people have learned that the Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses are open to everyone.



"MAINTAIN YOUR CONDUCT FINE AMONG THE NATIONS"

"Honor men of all sorts, have love for the whole association of brothers."

—1 PETER 2:17.

SEVERAL years ago, a newspaper correspondent in Amarillo, Texas, U.S.A., visited different churches in the area and reported on his findings. One group stood out in his mind. He said: "For three years, I attended the Jehovah's Witnesses' annual conventions at the Amarillo Civic Center. As I intermingled with them, never once did I see anyone light a cigarette, open a can of beer, or use profanity. They were the cleanest, most well-behaved, modestly dressed, good-natured crowd of people I have ever met." Similar comments about Jehovah's Witnesses have often been printed. Why are the Witnesses frequently praised by people who do not share their faith?

- 1, 2. (a) What comment did a newspaper correspondent make about Jehovah's Witnesses? (b) Why do Jehovah's Witnesses strive to maintain high standards of conduct?

² Usually, God's people are praised because of their good conduct. While standards in general are deteriorating, Jehovah's Witnesses view high standards of conduct as an obligation, a part of their worship. They know that their actions reflect upon Jehovah and their Christian brothers and that their good conduct recommends the truth that they preach. (John 15:8; Titus 2:7, 8) Let us see, then, how we can maintain our good conduct and thus continue to uphold the fine reputation of Jehovah and his Witnesses and how we benefit ourselves in so doing.

The Christian Family

³ Consider our conduct within the family. The book *Die Neuen Inquisitoren: Religionsfreiheit und Glaubensneid* (The New

3. From what do Christian families need to be protected?

How can the Christian family be a source of great joy?





Why do Jehovah's Witnesses love one another?

⁴ Christian couples recognize that they have emotional, spiritual, and physical obligations to each other. (1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Ephesians 5:21-23; 1 Peter 3:7) Christian parents have weighty responsibilities toward their offspring. (Proverbs 22:6; 2 Corinthians 12:14; Ephesians 6:4) And as children in Christian homes get older, they learn that they too have obligations. (Proverbs 1:8, 9; 23:22; Ephesians 6:1; 1 Timothy 5:3, 4, 8) Fulfilling family obligations takes effort, commitment, and a spirit of love and self-sacrifice. However, to the extent that all family members meet their God-given obligations, to that extent they are a blessing to one another and to the congregation. More important, they honor the Originator of the family, Jehovah God.—Genesis 1:27, 28; Ephesians 3:15.



Inquisitors: Freedom of Religion and Religious Envy), by Gerhard Besier and Erwin K. Scheuch, states: "For [Jehovah's Witnesses] the family is something to be especially protected." That statement is true, and today there is much from which the family needs protection. There are children who are "disobedient to parents" and adults who have "no natural affection" or are "without self-control." (2 Timothy 3:2, 3) Families are scenes of spousal violence, parents abuse or neglect their children, and children rebel, get involved in drug abuse and immorality, or run away from home. All of this is the result of the destructive influence of 'the spirit of the world.' (Ephesians 2:1, 2) We need to protect our families against that spirit. How? By heeding Jehovah's counsel and direction for family members.

Can we show love for our brothers even if we do not know them personally?



The Christian Brotherhood

- ⁵ As Christians, we also have responsibilities:
4. What responsibilities do Christian family members have toward one another?
 5. What blessings do we reap from associating with fellow Christians?

ties toward fellow believers in the congregation and, ultimately, toward those who make up "the entire association of . . . brothers in the world." (1 Peter 5:9) Our relationship with the congregation is vital for our spiritual health. When we associate with fellow Christians, we enjoy their strengthening fellowship as well as nourishing spiritual food from "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matthew 24:45-47) If we have problems, we can go to our brothers for sound advice based on Scriptural principles. (Proverbs 17:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9; James 5:13-18) When we are in need, our brothers do not desert us. What a blessing it is to be part of God's organization!

⁶ However, we are not in the congregation merely to receive; we are also there to give. Indeed, Jesus said: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." (Acts 20:35) The apostle Paul highlighted a giving spirit when he wrote: "Let us hold fast the public declaration of our hope without wavering, for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near."—Hebrews 10:23-25.

⁷ Within the congregation, we make a "declaration of our hope" when we offer comments during the meeting or share in other ways in the program. Those contributions certainly encourage our brothers. We also encourage them by our conversation before and after the meeting. That is a time when we can strengthen the weak, console the depressed, and comfort the sick. (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Sincere Christians are generous with that kind of giving, which is

6. How did Paul show that we have responsibilities toward other Christians?
7. How do we show a giving attitude both within our congregation and toward Christians in other lands?

why so many who attend our meetings for the first time are impressed by the love they sense among us.—Psalm 37:21; John 15:12; 1 Corinthians 14:25.

⁸ Still, our love is not limited to our own congregation. It embraces the whole association of our brothers worldwide. That is why, for example, there is a contribution box for the Kingdom Hall Fund in each Kingdom Hall. Our own Kingdom Hall may be in fine condition, but we know that thousands of fellow Christians in other countries lack a suitable place in which to meet. When we contribute to the Kingdom Hall Fund, we show our love for such individuals even though we may not know them personally.

⁹ Why do Jehovah's Witnesses love one another? Well, Jesus commanded them to do so. (John 15:17) And the love that they have for one another is evidence of God's spirit working upon them as individuals and as a group. Love is a part of "the fruitage of the spirit." (Galatians 5:22, 23) As Jehovah's Witnesses study the Bible, attend Christian meetings, and pray constantly to God, love becomes natural to them despite living in a world where 'the love of the greater number has cooled off.'—Matthew 24:12.

Dealing With the Secular World

¹⁰ Paul's mention of "the public declaration of our hope" reminds us of another responsibility. This public declaration embraces the work of preaching the good news to those who are not yet our Christian brothers. (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20; Romans 10:9, 10, 13-15) Such preaching is a further act of giving. To share in it takes time, energy, preparation, training, and the use of personal resources. Yet, Paul also wrote: "Both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to wise and to

9. For what basic reason do Jehovah's Witnesses love one another?
10. What responsibility do we have toward the secular world?

senseless ones I am a debtor: so there is eagerness on my part to declare the good news also to you there in Rome." (Romans 1:14, 15) Like Paul, may we not be stingy as we pay off this "debt."

¹¹ Do we have other responsibilities toward those who are not fellow believers? Definitely. We recognize, of course, that "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) We know that Jesus said of his disciples: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." Still, we live in the world, earn a living in it, and receive services from it. (John 17:11, 15, 16) So we have obligations in the secular world. What are they? The apostle Peter answered that question. Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, he wrote a letter to Christians in Asia Minor, and a passage in that letter helps us have a balanced relationship with the world.

¹² To begin with, Peter said: "Beloved, I exhort you as aliens and temporary residents to keep abstaining from fleshly desires, which are the very ones that carry on a conflict against the soul." (1 Peter 2:11) True Christians are, in a spiritual sense, "aliens and temporary residents" in that the real focus of their lives is the hope of everlasting life—spirit-anointed ones in heaven and the "other sheep" in a future earthly paradise. (John 10:16; Philippians 3:20, 21; Hebrews 11:13; Revelation 7:9, 14-17) What, though, are fleshly desires? These include such things as the desire to be rich, the desire for prominence, immoral sexual desires, and the desires described as "envy" and "covetousness." —Colossians 3:5; 1 Timothy 6:4, 9; 1 John 2:15, 16.

11. What two Scriptural principles govern our relationship with the world, but what do we nevertheless recognize?
12. In what way are Christians "aliens and temporary residents," and as such, from what should they abstain?

¹³ Such desires really do "carry on a conflict against [our] soul." They erode our relationship with God and thus put our Christian hope (our "soul," or life) in jeopardy. For example, if we cultivate an interest in immoral things, how can we present ourselves "a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God"? If we fall into the trap of materialism, how are we "seeking first the kingdom"? (Romans 12:1, 2; Matthew 6:33; 1 Timothy 6:17-19) The better course is to follow Moses' example, turn our back on the enticements of the world, and put Jehovah's service first in our lives. (Matthew 6:19, 20; Hebrews 11:24-26) That is an important key to achieving a balanced relationship with the world.

'Maintain Fine Conduct'

¹⁴ Another vital guideline is found in Peter's next words: "Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against you as evildoers, they may as a result of your fine works of which they are eyewitnesses glorify God in the day for his inspection." (1 Peter 2:12) As Christians, we strive to be exemplary. In school we work hard. At our place of employment, we are industrious and honest—even if our employer seems unreasonable. In a divided household, the believing husband or wife makes a special effort to follow Christian principles. It is not always easy, but we know that our exemplary conduct pleases Jehovah and often has a good effect on non-Witnesses.—1 Peter 2:18-20; 3:1.

¹⁵ The success of most of Jehovah's Witnesses in maintaining exemplary standards is seen in comments about them that have been published over the years. For ex-

13. How do fleshly desires "carry on a conflict against [our] soul"?
14. Why do we as Christians strive to maintain fine conduct?
15. How do we know that the high standard of conduct of Jehovah's Witnesses is widely recognized?

ample, *Il Tempo* of Italy reported: "People who have Jehovah's Witnesses as workmates describe them as honest workers, so convinced of their faith that they may appear obsessed by it; nevertheless, they command respect for their moral integrity." The *Herald* of Buenos Aires, Argentina, said: "Jehovah's Witnesses have proved through the years to be hardworking, sober, thrifty, and God-fearing citizens." The Russian scholar Sergei Ivanenko stated: "Jehovah's Witnesses are known throughout the world as impeccably law-abiding people and particularly for their scrupulous attitude toward paying taxes." The manager of a facility in Zimbabwe used by Jehovah's Witnesses for their convention said: "I see some Witnesses picking up paper and cleaning toilets. The showgrounds are left cleaner than before. Your teenagers are principled. I wish the whole world was full of Jehovah's Witnesses."

Christian Subjection

¹⁶ Peter also speaks about our relationship with secular authorities. He says: "For the Lord's sake subject yourselves to every human creation: whether to a king as being superior or to governors as being sent by him to inflict punishment on evildoers but to praise doers of good. For so the will of God is, that by doing good you may muzzle the ignorant talk of the unreasonable men." (1 Peter 2:13-15) We appreciate the benefits received from orderly government, and guided by Peter's words, we obey its laws and pay our taxes. While we recognize the God-given right of governments to punish lawbreakers, the main reason we submit to secular authority is "for the Lord's sake." It is God's will. Moreover, we do not wish to bring reproach on Jehovah's name by being punished for wrongdoing.—Romans 13:1, 4-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 3:17.

16. What is our relationship with secular authorities, and why?

¹⁷ Unfortunately, some "unreasonable men" in authority persecute us or oppose us in other ways—such as by promoting smear campaigns against us. Still, in Jehovah's due time, their lies are always exposed, and their "ignorant talk" is effectively muzzled. Our record of Christian conduct speaks for itself. That is why honest government officials often commend us as doers of good.—Romans 13:3; Titus 2:7, 8.

Slaves of God

¹⁸ Peter now warns: "Be as free people, and yet holding your freedom, not as a blind for badness, but as slaves of God." (1 Peter 2:16; Galatians 5:13) Today, our knowledge of Bible truth frees us from false religious teachings. (John 8:32) Moreover, we have free will, and we can make choices. Still, we do not abuse our freedom. When making choices about associations, clothing, grooming, entertainment—even food and drink—we remember that true Christians are slaves of God, not pleasing themselves. We choose to serve Jehovah rather than to be slaves of our own fleshly desires or the fads and trends of the world.—Galatians 5:24; 2 Timothy 2:22; Titus 2:11, 12.

17. When "unreasonable men" oppose us, of what can we be confident?

18. As Christians, in what ways can we avoid abusing our freedom?

Do You Remember?

- What responsibilities do Christians have within the family?
- How can we show a giving attitude in the congregation?
- What responsibilities do we have toward the secular world?
- What are some benefits that come from our maintaining a high standard of conduct?

¹⁹ Peter goes on to say: "Honor men of all sorts, have love for the whole association of brothers, be in fear of God, have honor for the king." (1 Peter 2:17) Since Jehovah God allows humans to occupy various positions of authority, we show those humans appropriate honor. We even pray concerning them, to the end that we may be allowed to pursue our ministry in peace and with godly devotion. (1 Timothy 2:1-4) At the same time, however, we "have love for the whole association of brothers." We always work for the good, not the harm, of our Christian brothers.

²⁰ For example, when one African nation was torn apart by ethnic violence, the Christian conduct of Jehovah's Witnesses stood out. The newspaper *Reformierte Presse*

19-21. (a) How do we view those in positions of secular authority? (b) How have some shown "love for the whole association of brothers"? (c) What is our most important responsibility?

of Switzerland reported: "In 1995, African Rights . . . were able to prove the participation of all churches [in the conflict] with the exception of Jehovah's Witnesses." When news of the tragic events reached the outside world, Jehovah's Witnesses in Europe quickly sent food and medical aid to their brothers and others in that afflicted land. (Galatians 6: 10) They heeded the words of Proverbs 3:27: "Do not hold back good from those to whom it is owing, when it happens to be in the power of your hand to do it."

²¹ There is, though, a more important responsibility than the honor we owe to any secular authority and even than the love we owe our brothers. What is that? Peter said: "Be in fear of God." We owe Jehovah far more than we owe any human. How is that true? And how can we balance our obligations to God with what we owe secular authorities? These questions will be answered in the following article.

CHRISTIAN NEUTRALS IN THE LAST DAYS

"They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world."—JOHN 17:16.

ON THE last night of his life as a perfect human, Jesus uttered a long prayer in the hearing of his disciples. In the course of that prayer, he said something that describes the lives of all true Christians. Speaking of his followers, he said: "I have given your word to them, but the world has hated them, because they are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world. I request you, not

1, 2. What did Jesus say about his followers' relationship with the world, and what questions do his words raise?

to take them out of the world, but to watch over them because of the wicked one. They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world."—John 17:14-16.

² Twice, Jesus said that his followers would be no part of the world. Moreover, that separateness would lead to tensions—the world would hate them. Still, Christians need not be dismayed; Jehovah would watch over them. (Proverbs 18:10; Matthew 24:9, 13) In view of Jesus' words, we may well ask: 'Why are true Christians

no part of the world? What does it mean to be no part of the world? If Christians are hated by the world, how do they view the world? In particular, how do they view the world's governments? The Scriptural answers to these questions are important because they affect us all.

"We Originate With God"

³ Our close relationship with Jehovah is one reason why we are no part of the world. The apostle John wrote: "We know we originate with God, but the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) John's words about the world are manifestly true. The wars, crime, cruelty, oppression, dishonesty, and immorality that are so rampant today give evidence of Satan's, not God's, influence. (John 12:31; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 6:12) When an individual becomes one of Jehovah's Witnesses, he will not practice or consent to such wrong practices, and that makes him no part of the world.—Romans 12:2; 13:12-14; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 John 3:10-12.

⁴ John said that Christians, in contrast with the world, "originate with God." All who dedicate themselves to Jehovah belong to him. The apostle Paul said: "Both if we live, we live to Jehovah, and if we die, we die to Jehovah. Therefore both if we live and if we die, we belong to Jehovah." (Romans 14:8; Psalm 116:15) Because we belong

3. (a) What makes us separate from the world? (b) What evidence is there that the world is "in the power of the wicked one"?

4. In what ways do we show that we belong to Jehovah?



How does our subjection to God's Kingdom affect our relationship with the world?

to Jehovah, we give him exclusive devotion. (Exodus 20:4-6) Hence, a true Christian does not devote his life to some secular cause. And while he respects national emblems, he does not worship them, either by actions or in spirit. He certainly does not worship sports stars or other modern idols. Of course, he respects the right of others to do as they wish, but he worships only the Creator. (Matthew 4:10; Revelation 19:10) This too makes him separate from the world.

"My Kingdom Is No Part of This World"

⁵ Christians are followers of Christ Jesus and subjects of God's Kingdom, which also makes them no part of the world. When Jesus was on trial before Pontius Pilate, he said: "My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source." (John 18:36) The Kingdom is the means by which Jehovah's name will be sanctified, his sovereignty vindicated, and his will done on earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:9, 10) Throughout his ministry, Jesus preached the good news of the Kingdom, and he said that it would be proclaimed by his followers right up to the end of the system of things. (Matthew 4:23; 24:14) In 1914 the prophetic words of Revelation 11:15 were fulfilled:

5, 6. How does subjection to God's Kingdom make us separate from the world?

A Hutu and a Tutsi happily work together

"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." One day soon, that heavenly Kingdom will be the only ruling power over mankind. (Daniel 2: 44) At a certain point, even secular rulers will be forced to acknowledge its authority. —Psalm 2:6-12.

⁶ With all of that in mind, true Christians today are subjects of God's Kingdom, and they follow Jesus' counsel to 'keep on seeking first the kingdom and God's righteousness.' (Matthew 6:33) That does not make them disloyal to the country in which they live, but it does make them spiritually separate from the world. The prime task of Christians today, as in the first century, is 'to bear thorough witness concerning the kingdom of God.' (Acts 28:23) No human government has the right to impede that God-given work.

⁷ In harmony with their belonging to Jehovah and being followers of Jesus and subjects of God's Kingdom, Jehovah's Witnesses have remained neutral in the national and international conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries. They have chosen no sides, have taken up no arms against anyone, and have not spread propaganda for any secular cause. In a remarkable demonstration of faith in the face of seemingly overwhelming opposition, they have followed the principles expressed to the Nazi rulers of Germany in 1934: "We have no interest in political affairs, but are wholly devoted to God's kingdom under Christ his King. We will do no injury or harm to anyone. We would delight to dwell in peace and do good to all men as we have opportunity."

7. Why are true Christians neutral, and how have they shown this?



Ambassadors and Envoys for Christ

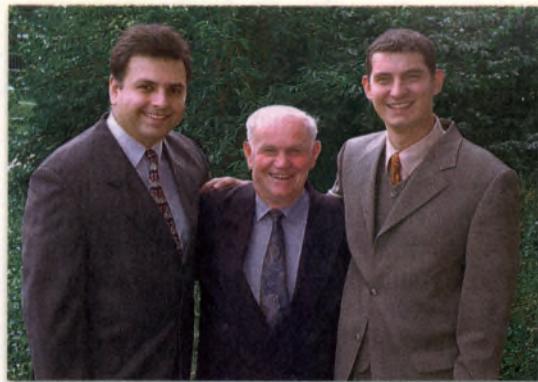
⁸ Paul described himself and fellow anointed Christians as "ambassadors substituting for Christ, as though God were making entreaty through us." (2 Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:20) Since 1914, spirit-anointed Christians can properly be spoken of as ambassadors for God's Kingdom, of which they are "sons." (Matthew 13:38; Philippians 3: 20; Revelation 5:9, 10) Further, Jehovah has brought out of the nations "a great crowd" of "other sheep," Christians with an earthly hope, to support the anointed sons in their ambassadorial work. (Revelation 7:9; John 10:16) These "other sheep" can be termed "envoys" of God's Kingdom.

⁹ An ambassador and his staff do not meddle in the affairs of the country where they serve. Similarly, Christians remain neutral in the political affairs of the nations of the world. They do not take sides for or against any national, racial, social, or economic group. (Acts 10:34, 35) Rather, they "work what is good toward all." (Galatians 6: 10) The neutrality of Jehovah's Witnesses means that no one can honestly reject their message by claiming that they are associated

8, 9. In what way are Jehovah's Witnesses today ambassadors and envoys, and how does this affect their relationship with the nations?



*Jewish and Arab
Christian brothers
enjoy one another's company*



with an opposing side of some racial, national, or tribal division.

Identified by Love

¹⁰ In addition to the foregoing, Christians are neutral in the world's affairs because of their relationship with other Christians. Jesus said to his followers: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) Brotherly love is a key to being a Christian. (1 John 3:14) Related as it is to his relationship with Jehovah and Jesus, the relationship a Christian has with other Christians is very close. His love is not restricted to those in the local congregation. It embraces "the entire association of [his] brothers in the world."—1 Peter 5:9.

¹¹ Today, Jehovah's Witnesses demonstrate their brotherly love by fulfilling the words of Isaiah 2:4: "They will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." Instructed by Jehovah, true Christians are at peace with God and with one another. (Isaiah 54:13) Because they love God and their brothers, it would be inconceivable

for them to take up arms against fellow Christians—or anyone else—in other lands. Their peace and unity is an essential part of their worship, a demonstration that they truly have God's spirit. (Psalm 133:1; Micah 2:12; Matthew 22:37-39; Colossians 3:14) They "seek to find peace . . . and pursue it," knowing that "the eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous ones."—Psalm 34:14, 15.

How Christians View the World

¹² Jehovah has pronounced an adverse judgment on this world, but he has not yet judged all individuals in the world. He will do that through Jesus in His own due time. (Psalm 67:3, 4; Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Peter 3:10) Meanwhile, he shows great love toward mankind. He even gave his only-begotten Son so that everyone might have the opportunity to receive everlasting life. (John 3:16) As Christians, we imitate God's love by telling others about God's provisions for salvation, even if our efforts are frequently rebuffed.

¹³ How should we view secular rulers in the world? Paul answered that question when he wrote: "Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority

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10. For a Christian, how important is love?
 11. How has the conduct of Jehovah's Witnesses been influenced by their love for one another?

12. What attitude of Jehovah toward people in the world do Jehovah's Witnesses imitate, and how?
13. How should we view secular rulers?

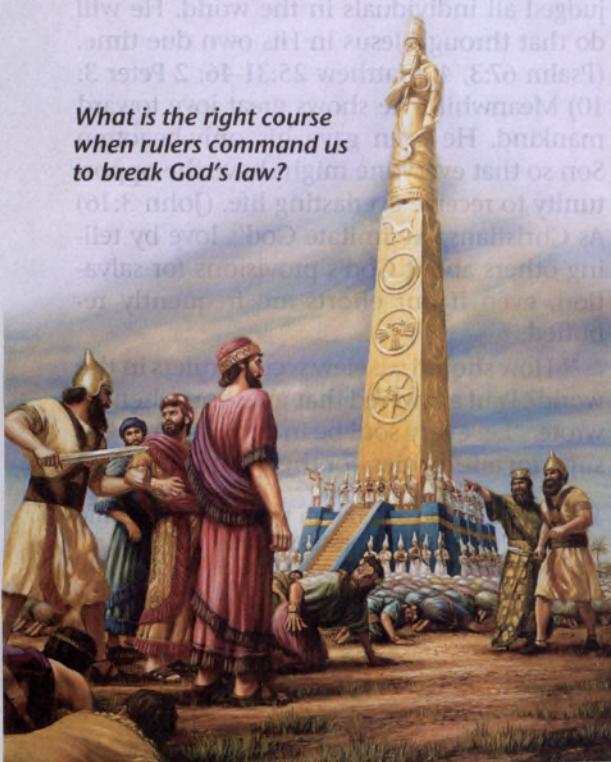
except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God.” (Romans 13:1, 2) Humans fill “relative” positions of authority (greater or lesser in relation to one another, but always inferior to Jehovah) because the Almighty allows them to. A Christian submits to secular authority because that is an aspect of his obedience to Jehovah. What, though, if a conflict arises between God’s requirements and those of a human government?

God’s Law and Caesar’s

¹⁴ Daniel and his three companions provide a fine example of how to balance submission to human governments with submission to divine authority. When the four young Hebrews found themselves in exile in Babylon, they obeyed the laws of that land and were quickly chosen for special training. Daniel, realizing that the training would likely lead to a conflict with Jehovah’s Law, dis-

14, 15. (a) In what way was Daniel able to avoid a conflict in the matter of obedience? (b) What stand did the three Hebrews take when a conflict in the matter of obedience could not be avoided?

What is the right course when rulers command us to break God’s law?



cussed the matter with the official in charge. As a result, special arrangements were made to respect the consciences of the four Hebrews. (Daniel 1:8-17) Jehovah’s Witnesses follow Daniel’s example when they tactfully explain their position to officials so as to avoid unnecessary problems.

¹⁵ On a later occasion, however, a conflict in the matter of subjection could not be avoided. The Babylonian king erected a large idol on the plain of Dura and commanded high officials, including administrators of jurisdictional districts, to assemble for its inauguration. By now, the three friends of Daniel had been appointed administrators of the jurisdictional district of Babylon, so the order applied to them. At a certain moment in the proceedings, all assembled were to bow before the image. But the Hebrews knew that this would be against God’s law. (Deuteronomy 5:8-10) So when everyone else bowed down, they remained standing. By disobeying the king’s order, they risked a horrible death, and their lives were saved only by a miracle; but they chose to risk death rather than to disobey Jehovah.—Daniel 2:49-3:29.

¹⁶ In the first century, the apostles of Jesus Christ were called before the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem and commanded to stop preaching in Jesus’ name. How did they react? Jesus had commissioned them to make disciples in all nations, which would include Judea. He had also told them to be his witnesses in Jerusalem as well as in the rest of the world. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8) The apostles knew that Jesus’ commands represented God’s will for them. (John 5:30; 8:28) Hence, they said: “We must obey God as ruler rather than men.”—Acts 4:19, 20; 5:29.

¹⁷ The apostles were not being rebellious. (Proverbs 24:21) Still, when human rulers

16, 17. How did the apostles respond when ordered to stop preaching, and why?

forbade them to do God's will, they could only say, 'We must obey God, not man.' Jesus said that we should "pay back Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Mark 12:17) If we disobey a divine command because a human tells us to, we are giving to man what belongs to God. Instead, we pay back everything we owe to Caesar, but we recognize Jehovah's supreme authority. He is the Universal Sovereign, the Creator, the very Source of authority.—Revelation 4:11.

We Will Stand Firm

¹⁸ At present, most secular governments recognize the neutral stand of Jehovah's Witnesses, and for that we are grateful. In some lands, though, the Witnesses have faced severe opposition. Throughout the 20th century and continuing to the present time, some of our brothers and sisters have struggled mightily, in a spiritual sense fighting "the fine fight of the faith."—1 Timothy 6:12.

¹⁹ How can we stand firm like them? First, we remember that we must expect opposition. We should not be shocked or even surprised if we meet up with it. Paul warned Timothy: "All those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted." (2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12) In a world where Satan's influence reigns, why would we *not* meet opposition? (Revelation 12:17) As long as we are faithful, there will always be some who are 'puzzled and go on speaking abusively of us.' —1 Peter 4:4.

²⁰ Second, we are convinced that Jehovah and his angels will support us. As Elisha of old said, "there are more who are with us than those who are with them." (2 Kings 6:16; Psalm 34:7) It may be that Jehovah, for

18, 19. What fine stand have many of our brothers taken, and how can we follow their example?

20. Of what strengthening truths are we reminded?

his own good purpose, allows pressure from opposers to continue for a while. Nevertheless, he will always give us the strength needed to endure. (Isaiah 41:9, 10) Some have given their lives, but that does not dismay us. Jesus said: "Do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." (Matthew 10:16-23, 28) We are only "temporary residents" in this system of things. We use our time here to "get a firm hold on the real life," everlasting life in God's new world. (1 Peter 2:11; 1 Timothy 6:19) No human can deprive us of that reward as long as we remain faithful to God.

²¹ Hence, let us remember the privileged relationship that we have with Jehovah God. May we always appreciate the blessing of being followers of Christ and subjects of the Kingdom. Let us wholeheartedly love our brothers, and may we always delight in the love that we receive from them. Above all, let us heed the psalmist's words: "Hope in Jehovah; be courageous and let your heart be strong. Yes, hope in Jehovah." (Psalm 27:14; Isaiah 54:17) Then we, like countless Christians before us, will stand firm with our hope sure—faithful Christian neutrals who are no part of the world.

21. What should we always keep in mind?

Can You Explain?

- How does our relationship with Jehovah make us separate from this world?
- As subjects of God's Kingdom, how do we keep a neutral position in this world?
- In what ways does love for our brothers keep us neutral, separate from the world?



WE STUCK TO OUR ASSIGNMENT

AS TOLD BY
HERMANN BRUDER

My choice was simple: serve five years in the French Foreign Legion or face internment in a Moroccan prison.

Let me explain how I came to be in this predicament.

I WAS born in Oppenau, Germany, in 1911, just three years before the outbreak of World War I. My parents, Joseph and Frida Bruder, had 17 sons and daughters. I was their 13th child.

My earliest memories are of watching a military band marching down the main street of our hometown. Drawn by the lively marching tune, I followed the musicians to the station in time to see Father and other men dressed in military uniform boarding the train. As the train departed, some women on the platform burst into tears. Shortly thereafter, our priest delivered a long ser-

mon in church and read out the names of four men who had died defending the fatherland. "Now they are in heaven," he explained. A woman standing near me fainted.

Father contracted typhoid fever while serving on the Russian front. He arrived home severely debilitated and almost immediately was admitted to the local hospital. "Go to the chapel beside the cemetery and say 50 Our Fathers and 50 Hail Marys," recommended the priest. "Then, your father will recover." I followed his advice, but Father died the next day. Even for a young boy, the war was a very painful business.

How I Found the Truth

Work was hard to come by in Germany between the wars. After I left school in 1928, however, I managed to find a job as a gardener in Basel, Switzerland.

Like Father, I was a staunch Catholic. My ambition was to serve as a Capuchin monk in India. When my brother Richard, by then one of Jehovah's Witnesses, heard of these plans, he made a special journey to Switzerland to try to dissuade me. He warned me about the danger of trusting in men, especially clergymen, and encouraged me to read the Bible and trust in it alone. Despite misgivings, I acquired a New Testament and began to read it. Little by little it dawned on me that many of my beliefs were not in harmony with Bible teachings.

One Sunday in 1933, while I was at Richard's home in Germany, he introduced me to a married couple who were Jehovah's Witnesses. On discovering that I was reading the Bible, they gave me a copy of a booklet entitled *The Crisis*.^{*} It was almost midnight when I finally laid that booklet down. I was convinced that I had found the truth!

Jehovah's Witnesses in Basel supplied me with two volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures** together with magazines and other publications. Impressed by what I was reading, I contacted the local priest and asked to have my name removed from the church register. The priest became very angry and warned me that I was in danger of losing my faith. In fact, nothing could have been further from the truth. For the first time in my life, I was beginning to cultivate true faith.

The brothers in Basel were planning a preaching trip over the border into France that weekend. One of the brothers kindly explained to me that I had not been invited be-

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses but no longer in print.



At Kingdom Farm,
Steffisburg,
Switzerland, late
1930's (I am
at the far left)

cause I had only recently begun to associate with the congregation. Undeterred, I expressed my firm desire to start preaching. After consulting with another elder, he assigned me a territory in Switzerland. Early Sunday morning, I set out on my bicycle for a small village close to Basel, with 4 books, 28 magazines, and 20 brochures in my service bag. Most of the villagers were in church when I arrived. Even so, by 11 o'clock, my service bag was empty.

When I told the brothers that I wanted to get baptized, they had a serious talk with me and asked me searching questions about the truth. I was struck by their zeal and loyalty to Jehovah and his organization. As it was wintertime, a brother baptized me in a bathtub in an elder's home. I remember feeling an indescribable joy and a great inner strength. That was in 1934.

Working at Kingdom Farm

In 1936, I heard that Jehovah's Witnesses had purchased a piece of property in Switzerland. I offered my services as a gardener. To my joy, I was invited to work on the Kingdom Farm at Steffisburg, about 19 miles from Bern. Whenever possible I helped others with their work on the farm as well. Bethel taught me the importance of having a co-operative spirit.

A highlight of my years at Bethel was Brother Rutherford's visit to the farm in 1936. When he saw the size of our tomatoes and how healthy the crops were, he smiled and expressed his satisfaction. What a dear brother he was!

When I had been serving at the farm for just over three years, a letter from the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States was read out at breakfast. The letter stressed the urgency of the preaching work and extended an invitation to any who wished to serve abroad as pioneers. Without hesitation, I volunteered. My assignment arrived in May 1939—Brazil!

At the time, I was attending meetings in the Thun Congregation, near Kingdom Farm. On Sundays, a group of us would go to preach in the Alps, a two-hour bicycle ride from Thun. Margarita Steiner was one of the group. A thought suddenly occurred to me: Had not Jesus sent out his disciples in twos? When I casually mentioned to Margarita that I had been assigned to Brazil, she expressed her own desire to serve where the need was greater. We were married July 31, 1939.

An Unexpected Stopover

We sailed from Le Havre, France, at the end of August 1939, bound for Santos, Brazil. All the double berths were taken, so we had to travel in separate cabins. While en route, news arrived that Great Britain and France had declared war on Germany. A group of 30 German passengers reacted by striking up the German national anthem. This so annoyed the captain that he changed course and docked at Safi, Morocco. Passengers with German travel documents had five minutes to disembark. That included us.

We were held for a day at the police station and then crowded into a rickety old bus and taken to a prison at Marrakech, about

85 miles away. Difficult days followed. Our cells were overcrowded and dark. The communal toilet—a hole in the floor—was constantly blocked. Each of us received a dirty sack to sleep on, and at night, rats gnawed the calves of our legs. Rations were served twice a day in a rusty can.

An army officer explained that I would be released if I agreed to serve a five-year term in the French Foreign Legion. My refusal earned me 24 hours in what can only be described as a black hole. Most of this time, I spent praying.

After eight days, the prison authorities allowed me to see Margarita again. She was terribly thin, and wept uncontrollably. I did my best to encourage her. We were interrogated and transferred by train to Casablanca, where Margarita was released. I was sent on to a prison camp at Port Lyautey (now Kenitra), about 110 miles away. The Swiss consul advised Margarita to return to Switzerland, but she loyally refused to leave without me. During the two months I remained at Port Lyautey, she traveled daily from Casablanca to visit me and bring me food.

A year earlier, Jehovah's Witnesses had released a book entitled *Kreuzzug gegen das Christentum* (Crusade Against Christianity) to draw public attention to the Witnesses' noninvolvement with the Nazi regime. While I was in the prison camp, the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Bern wrote to the French authorities, enclosing a copy of the book in an attempt to prove that we were not Nazis. Margarita also did a wonderful job visiting government officials and trying to convince them of our innocence. Finally, at the end of 1939, we received permission to leave Morocco.

It was only after embarking for Brazil once again that we learned that German U-boats were attacking shipping lanes in the Atlantic and that we were a prime target. Although a



*Shortly before
our wedding,
1939*

*Casablanca
in the 1940's*



Preaching as a family



merchant ship, our vessel, the *Jamaique*, had guns mounted at the prow and at the stern. During the day, the captain maintained a zigzag course and fired shells continuously. At night we observed a blackout to avoid detection by the Germans. How relieved we were finally to make port at Santos, Brazil, on February 6, 1940, more than five months after leaving Europe!

Back to Prison

Our first preaching assignment was Montenegro, a town in the southern Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. Church authorities evidently had been informed of our arrival. After we had been preaching for just two hours, the police arrested us and confiscated our collection of phonograph records containing Bible sermons, all our literature, and even the camel-skin service bags we had bought in Morocco. A priest and a German-speaking minister awaited us at the police station. They listened while the chief of police played one of Brother Rutherford's talks on our gramophone, which he had also confiscated. Brother Rutherford certainly did

not beat about the bush! When it came to a part that mentioned the Vatican, the priest turned very red and stormed out.

At the request of the bishop of Santa Maria, the police transferred us to Pôrto Alegre, the state capital. Margarita was soon freed and sought the help of the Swiss consulate. The consul suggested that she return to Switzerland. Once again she refused to abandon me. Margarita has always been a very loyal companion. Thirty days later I was interrogated and released. The police presented us with a choice: leave the state within ten days or "face the consequences." At the suggestion of headquarters, we departed for Rio de Janeiro.

"Please Read This Card"

Despite this inauspicious introduction to the Brazilian field, how joyful we were! After all, we were alive, our bags were once again full of literature, and we had the whole of Rio de Janeiro to preach to. But how would we preach with our limited knowledge of

Portuguese? By means of a testimony card. "*Por favor, leia este cartão*" ("Please read this card") was the first Portuguese expression we learned to use in the preaching work. And what a success the card was! In a single month, we distributed over 1,000 books. Many who accepted our Bible literature later embraced the truth. To be honest, our publications gave a much more effective witness than we could ever have done. This impressed upon me the importance of getting our publications into the hands of interested ones.

At that time Rio de Janeiro was the capital of Brazil, and our message was especially well-received in the government buildings. I had the privilege of personally witnessing to the minister of finance and the minister of the armed forces. On these occasions, I saw clear evidence of Jehovah's spirit in operation.

Once, while preaching in a square in the center of Rio, I entered the Palace of Justice. Somehow I found myself in a room surrounded by men dressed in black, in the middle of what seemed to be a funeral ceremony. I approached a distinguished-looking man and handed him my testimony card. It was no funeral. I had in fact interrupted a court case, and I was talking to the judge. Laughing, he signaled to the guards to be at ease. He graciously accepted a copy of the book *Children** and made a contribution. On the way out, one of the guards pointed to a conspicuous notice on the door: *Proibida a entrada de pessoas estranhas* (No Strangers Allowed).

Another productive field was the port. On one occasion, I met a sailor who accepted publications before returning to sea. Later, we met him at an assembly. His whole family had embraced the truth, and he himself

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses but no longer in print.



Participating regularly in the ministry today

was making good progress. That made us very happy.

However, not everything was smooth sailing. Our six-month visa expired, and we were faced with the prospect of deportation. After writing to headquarters about our situation, we received a loving letter from Brother Rutherford, encouraging us to persevere and suggesting how we should proceed. Our desire was to stay in Brazil, and with the help of a lawyer, we finally obtained a permanent visa in 1945.

A Long-Term Assignment

Before that, however, Jonathan, our son, was born in 1941, Ruth in 1943, and Esther in 1945. To care for the needs of our growing family, I had to take up secular work. Margarita continued in the full-time preaching activity right up to the birth of our third child.

From the beginning, we worked together as a family in the preaching work in city squares, in train stations, on the streets, and in business districts. On Saturday nights, we distributed *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* together, and these were especially happy occasions.

At home, each child had daily tasks to perform. Jonathan was responsible for cleaning the stove and the kitchen. The girls cleaned the refrigerator, swept the yard, and polished our shoes. This helped them learn to be organized and to develop initiative. Today, our children are hard workers who take good care of their homes and belongings, which makes Margarita and me very happy.

We also expected the children to behave well at the meetings. *Before* the program began, they drank a glass of water and used the bathroom. During the meeting, Jonathan sat on my left, Ruth on my right, followed by Margarita, and on her right, Esther. This helped them to concentrate and take in spiritual food from an early age.

Jehovah has blessed our efforts. All our children continue serving Jehovah faithfully and participating joyfully in the preaching work. Jonathan currently serves as an elder in the Novo Méier Congregation, Rio de Janeiro.

By 1970, our children had all married and left home, so Margarita and I decided to move to serve where the need was greater. Our first stop was Poços de Caldas, in Minas Gerais State, which at the time had a small group of 19 Kingdom publishers. I was dismayed when I first saw their meeting place—a basement room with no windows and in

desperate need of repair. Immediately, we started looking for a more suitable Kingdom Hall and soon found an attractive building in an excellent location. What a difference that made! Four and a half years later, the number of publishers had increased to 155. In 1989 we moved to Araruama, in Rio de Janeiro, where we served for nine years. During this time we witnessed the forming of two new congregations.

Rewarded for Sticking to Our Assignment

In 1998, health problems and the desire to be near our children led us to move to São Gonçalo, Rio de Janeiro. I still serve there as a congregation elder. We do our best to participate regularly in the preaching work. Margarita enjoys witnessing to people at a nearby supermarket, and the congregation has kindly set aside some territory for us near our home, which makes it easier for us to preach as our health permits.

Margarita and I have been dedicated servants of Jehovah now for more than 60 years. We have personally experienced that 'neither governments nor things now here nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor any other creation can separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 8:38, 39) And what a pleasure it has been to witness the ingathering of the "other sheep," who have the marvelous hope of everlasting life on a perfect earth, surrounded by God's beautiful creations! (John 10:16) When we arrived in 1940, Rio de Janeiro had just one congregation, with 28 publishers. Today there are some 250 congregations and well over 20,000 Kingdom publishers.

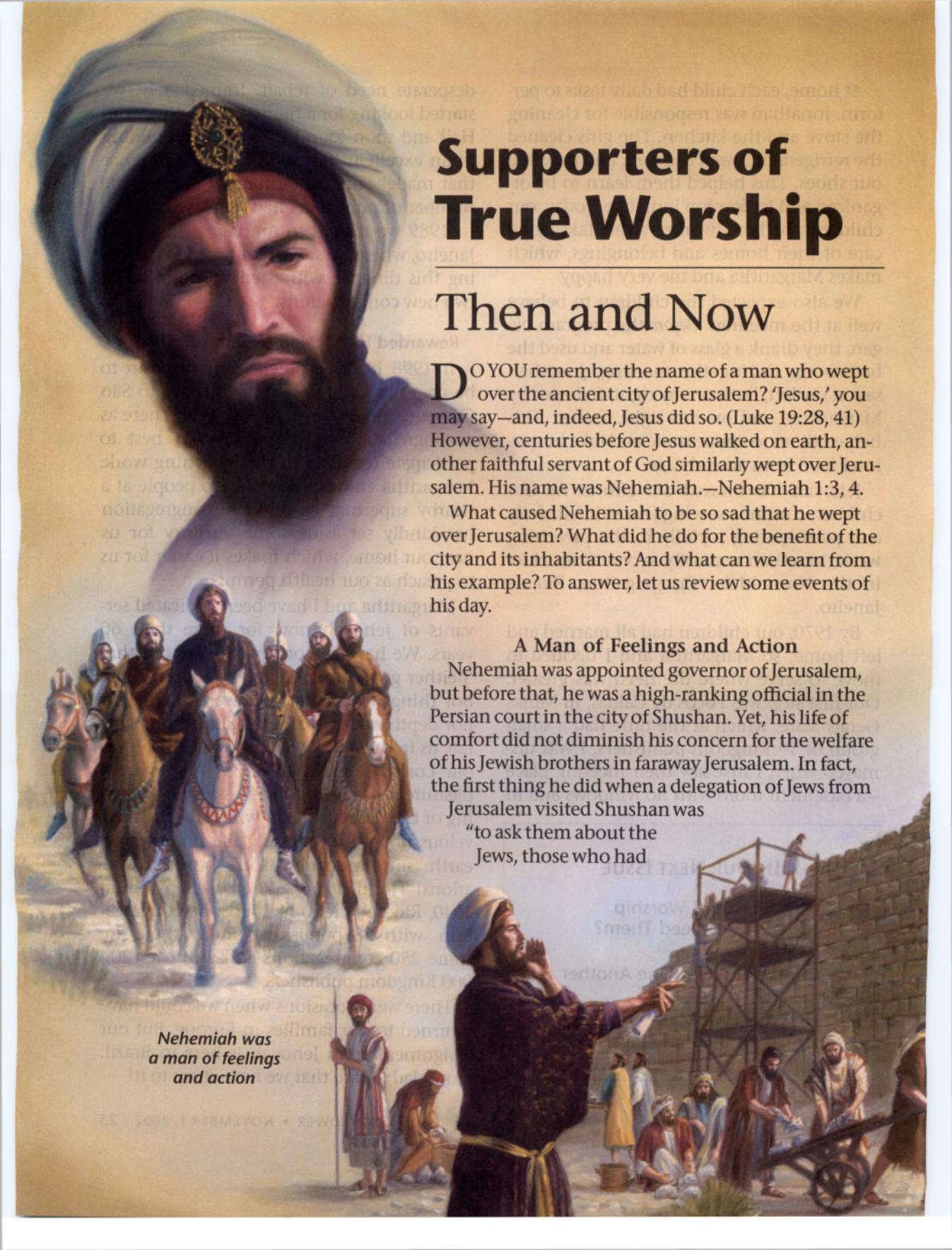
There were occasions when we could have returned to our families in Europe. But our assignment from Jehovah is here in Brazil. How glad we are that we have stuck to it!

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Places of Worship
—Do We Need Them?

Christians Need One Another

How Can We Make Our Days
Count Before Jehovah?



Supporters of True Worship

Then and Now

DO YOU remember the name of a man who wept over the ancient city of Jerusalem? ‘Jesus,’ you may say—and, indeed, Jesus did so. (Luke 19:28, 41) However, centuries before Jesus walked on earth, another faithful servant of God similarly wept over Jerusalem. His name was Nehemiah.—Nehemiah 1:3, 4.

What caused Nehemiah to be so sad that he wept over Jerusalem? What did he do for the benefit of the city and its inhabitants? And what can we learn from his example? To answer, let us review some events of his day.

A Man of Feelings and Action

Nehemiah was appointed governor of Jerusalem, but before that, he was a high-ranking official in the Persian court in the city of Shushan. Yet, his life of comfort did not diminish his concern for the welfare of his Jewish brothers in faraway Jerusalem. In fact, the first thing he did when a delegation of Jews from Jerusalem visited Shushan was

“to ask them about the Jews, those who had

**Nehemiah was
a man of feelings
and action**

escaped, who had been left over of the captivity, and also about Jerusalem." (Nehemiah 1:2) When the visitors responded that the people of Jerusalem were "in a very bad plight" and that the city wall was "broken down," Nehemiah "sat down and began to weep and mourn for days." After that he expressed his feelings of sadness in a heartfelt prayer to Jehovah. (Nehemiah 1:3-11) Why was Nehemiah so sad? Because Jerusalem was the center of Jehovah's worship on earth, and it had been neglected. (1 Kings 11:36) Moreover, the city's broken-down condition was a reflection of the poor spiritual state of its inhabitants.—Nehemiah 1:6, 7.

Nehemiah's concern for Jerusalem and his compassion for the Jews living there moved him to give of himself. As soon as the Persian king allowed him to take a leave of absence from his duties, Nehemiah began to plan the long trip to Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 2:5, 6) He wanted to give his strength, time, and skills in support of the needed repair work. Within a few days of his arrival, he already had a plan in place for the repair of Jerusalem's entire wall.—Nehemiah 2:11-18.

Nehemiah divided the huge task of repairing the wall among many families, all of whom worked side by side.* More than 40 different groups were assigned to repair one "measured section" each. The result? With so many workers—including parents accompanied by their children—giving their time and energy, a seemingly overwhelming task became manageable. (Nehemiah 3:11, 12, 19, 20) Within two action-packed months, the entire wall was repaired! Nehemiah wrote that even those who had opposed the repair work were forced to acknowledge that "it was

* Nehemiah 3:5 notes that some prominent Jews, "majestic ones," refused to share in the work, but they were the exception. People of varied backgrounds—priests, goldsmiths, ointment mixers, princes, traders—all supported the project.—Verses 1, 8, 9, 32.

from our God that this work had been done."

—Nehemiah 6:15, 16.

An Example to Be Remembered

Nehemiah contributed more than his time and organizational skills. He also used his material means to support true worship. He used his own money to buy back his Jewish brothers from slavery. He lent money without interest. He never "made it heavy" upon the Jews by demanding an allowance as governor, something to which he was entitled. Instead, he kept an open house to feed "a hundred and fifty men, and those coming in to us from the nations that were around us." Each day he provided "one bull, six select sheep and birds" for his guests. In addition, once every ten days he offered them "every sort of wine in abundance"—all at his own expense.—Nehemiah 5:8, 10, 14-18.

What an outstanding example of generosity Nehemiah set for all of God's servants then and now! This courageous servant of God freely and willingly used his material means to support the workers so as to advance true worship. Appropriately, he could ask Jehovah: "Do remember . . . O my God, for good, all that I have done in behalf of this people." (Nehemiah 5:19) Surely Jehovah will do just that.—Hebrews 6:10.

Nehemiah's Example Is Followed Today

It is heartwarming to see that Jehovah's people today similarly display warm feelings, a willingness to act, and a self-sacrificing attitude in behalf of true worship. When we hear that fellow believers suffer hardships, we are deeply concerned about their welfare. (Romans 12:15) Like Nehemiah, we turn to Jehovah in prayer in support of our afflicted brothers in the faith, asking him: "Please, let your ear become attentive to the prayer of your servant and to the prayer of your servants who take delight in fearing your name."—Nehemiah 1:11; Colossians 4:2.

However, our concern for the spiritual and physical welfare of our Christian brothers and for the advancement of true worship does not affect merely our feelings. It also moves us to action. Those whose circumstances allow are impelled by love to leave the relative comfort of their homes and, much like Nehemiah, move to other locations to give assistance to those in need. Undeterred by the less comfortable living conditions that such volunteers may face in some parts of the world, they support the advancement of true worship there, serving side by side with their Christian brothers. The spirit of self-sacrifice they display is truly commendable.

Ways in Which Some Choose to Give

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLDWIDE WORK

Many set aside, or budget, an amount that they place in the contribution boxes labeled "Contributions for the Worldwide Work—Matthew 24:14."



Each month, congregations forward these amounts either to the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses or to the local branch office. Voluntary donations of money may be sent directly to the

Treasurer's Office, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201-2483, or to the branch office that serves your country. Jewelry or other valuables may be donated as well. A brief letter stating that such is an outright gift should accompany these contributions.

CONDITIONAL-DONATION ARRANGEMENT

Money may be donated under a special arrangement in which, should the donor have a personal need, the donation may be returned to him. For more information, please contact the Treasurer's Office at the address noted above.

Doing Our Share Close to Home

Understandably, most of us are not able to move to another location. We support true worship close to home. That is also illustrated in the book of Nehemiah. Note the detail that Nehemiah adds about some of the faithful families who shared in the repair work. He wrote: "Jedaiah the son of Harumaph did repair work *in front of his own house* . . . Benjamin and Hasshub did repair work *in front of their own house*. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah the son of Ananiah did repair work *close by his own house*." (Nehemiah 3: 10, 23, 28-30) Those men and their families contributed greatly to the advancement of

CHARITABLE PLANNING

In addition to outright gifts and conditional donations of money, there are other methods of giving to benefit Kingdom service worldwide. These include:

Insurance: The Watch Tower Society may be named as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or in a retirement/pension plan.

Bank Accounts: Bank accounts, certificates of deposit, or individual retirement accounts may be placed in trust for or made payable on death to the Watch Tower Society, in accord with local bank requirements.

Stocks and Bonds: Stocks and bonds may be donated to the Watch Tower Society as an outright gift.

Real Estate: Salable real estate may be donated to the Watch Tower Society either by making an outright gift or by reserving a life estate to the donor, who can continue to live therein during his or her lifetime. Contact the branch office in your country before deeding any real estate.

Gift Annuity: A gift annuity is an arrangement whereby one transfers money or securities to the

true worship by doing their share in the repair work close to home.

Today, many of us support true worship in our own communities in various ways. We share in Kingdom Hall construction projects, disaster relief efforts and, most important, the Kingdom-preaching work. In addition, whether we are able to participate personally in construction or relief work or not, all of us have a heartfelt desire to support true worship with our material means, just as Nehemiah so generously did in his day.—See box “Characteristics of Voluntary Giving.”

Finding the necessary funds to finance our growing printing activities, relief efforts, and

Watch Tower Society. In exchange, the donor, or someone designated by the donor, receives a specified annuity payment every year for life. The donor receives an income-tax deduction the year the gift annuity is established.

Wills and Trusts: Property or money may be bequeathed to the Watch Tower Society by means of a legally executed will, or the Watch Tower Society may be named as a beneficiary of a trust agreement. A trust benefiting a religious organization may provide certain tax advantages.

As the term “charitable planning” implies, these types of donations typically require some

planning on the part of the donor. To assist individuals desiring to benefit the worldwide work of Jehovah’s Witnesses through some form of charitable planning, a brochure has been prepared in English and Spanish entitled *Charitable Planning to Benefit Kingdom Service Worldwide*.

The brochure was written in response to the many inquiries received regarding gifts, wills, and trusts. It also contains additional useful information on estate, financial, and tax plan-

numerous other services performed around the globe may at times seem overwhelming. Recall, however, that the task of repairing the huge wall of Jerusalem also seemed overwhelming. (Nehemiah 4:10) Yet, because the task was divided among many willing families, the work was accomplished. Likewise today, finding the considerable means to carry out our worldwide activities will remain within reach if each one of us continues to care for a portion of the work.

The box “Ways in Which Some Choose to Give” shows several ways in which the Kingdom work can be supported financially. During the past year, many among God’s people

ning. It informs individuals of a variety of ways that gifts may be made either now or through a bequest at death. This brochure may be obtained by requesting a copy directly from the Charitable Planning Office.

After reading the brochure and conferring with the Charitable Planning Office, many have been able to assist Jehovah’s Witnesses worldwide and, at the same time, maximize the tax benefits of doing so. The Charitable Planning Office should be informed of and receive a copy of any relevant document pertaining to any of these arrangements. If you are interested in any of these charitable planning arrangements, you should contact the Charitable Planning Office, either in writing or by telephone, at the address listed below or at the office of Jehovah’s Witnesses that serves your country.

Charitable Planning Office

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania

100 Watchtower Drive

Patterson, New York 12563-9204

Telephone: (845) 306-0707

have given such support, and the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses would like to use this opportunity to express their deep gratitude to all whose heart impelled them to share in this voluntary giving. Most of all, we thank Jehovah for his rich blessing on the wholehearted efforts of his people in promoting true worship throughout the world. Yes, when we reflect on how Jehovah's hand has guided us over the years, we are moved to echo the words of Nehemiah, who thankfully said: "The hand of my God, how it was good upon me."—Nehemiah 2:18.



Characteristics of Voluntary Giving

In his letters to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul mentioned three significant characteristics of voluntary giving. (1) When writing about a monetary collection, Paul instructed: "Every first day of the week let each of you at his own house set something aside." (1 Corinthians 16:2a) Thus, giving needs to be planned in advance, and it needs to be done *systematically*. (2) Paul also wrote that each person should give "in keeping with his income." (1 Corinthians 16: 2b, *New International Version*) In other words, an individual who wants to share in voluntary giving can do so *proportionately*. Even if a Christian earns but little, the resulting small amount that he may contribute is valued by Jehovah. (Luke 21:1-4) (3) Paul further wrote: "Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7) Sincere Christians give from the heart—*cheerfully*.



Voluntary contributions support printing activities, relief efforts, Kingdom Hall construction, and other beneficial services around the globe



Questions From Readers

Is it wrong to bet if only small amounts of money are involved?

God's Word does not discuss gambling in detail, but it does say enough to show that all gambling is incompatible with Bible principles.* For instance, it is widely acknowledged that gambling incites greed. That fact alone is an important consideration for Christians, since the Bible states that "greedy persons" will not inherit God's Kingdom and classes covetousness with idolatry.—1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Colossians 3:5.

Gambling also incites egotism and an unhealthy competitive spirit, a strong desire to win. The apostle Paul warned against such things when he wrote: "Let us not become egotistical, stirring up competition with one another, envying one another." (Galatians 5:26) Further, gambling encourages in some a superstitious reliance on good luck. Gamblers develop all kinds of superstitions, hoping to influence luck in their favor. They remind us of the unfaithful Israelites who were "setting in order a table for the god of Good Luck and those filling up mixed wine for the god of Destiny."—Isaiah 65:11.

Some might reason that betting small amounts of money while playing a friendly card or board game with relatives or close friends is no more than innocent entertainment. True, someone who bets a small amount of money may not view himself as greedy, egotistical, competitive, or superstitious. Still, what effect could his gambling have on the ones he is gambling with? Many compulsive gamblers began by making petty bets 'just for fun.' (Luke 16:10) A seemingly innocent diversion turned out to be something far more sinister in their case.

That is especially true where children are concerned. Many children have felt the excitement

* The *World Book Encyclopedia* defines gambling as "betting on the outcome of a game, event, or chance happening." It further states that "gamblers or players usually bet money on . . . such games of chance as lotteries, card games, and dice."



of winning a small bet and have been tempted to go for larger sums. (1 Timothy 6:10) A long-term study published in the United States by the Arizona Council on Compulsive Gambling confirms that many gambling addicts began at an early age "by placing small bets on sporting events or playing cards with friends or relatives." Another report says that "children start gambling at home, usually at card games with family and friends." The report adds that "thirty percent of children who gambled started doing so before their eleventh birthday." Many teenage gamblers finance their addiction with crime or immorality, according to the study *Why Do People Gamble Too Much—Pathological and Problem Gambling*. What a tragic consequence of something that may have seemed at first to be harmless!

Since we are living in a world that already has too many snares and temptations, why unnecessarily expose ourselves to yet another? (Proverbs 27:12) Gambling—with or without children present, for small or for large sums—endangers spirituality and should be avoided. Christians who enjoy board or card games as recreation would be better advised to keep a penciled score or to play the game simply for fun without keeping score. Wise Christians who care about their own spirituality as well as that of their friends and family avoid the practice of gambling—even for small sums of money.

We All Need Commendation

IT WAS a good day for the little girl. Although she had needed correction at other times, on this particular day, she was especially well behaved. That night, however, after the little girl had been put to bed, her mother heard her crying. When asked why she was upset, she tearfully sobbed: "Haven't I been a good girl today?"

That question cut through the mother like a knife. She had always been quick to correct her daughter. But now, despite having noticed how hard her little girl had tried to behave, the mother neglected to speak even one word of appreciation.

Little girls are not the only ones who need commendation and reassurance. We all do—as much as we need counsel and correction.

How do we feel when we receive heartfelt commendation? Does it not warm our heart and brighten our day? Likely we feel that someone noticed, someone cares. It reassures us

that what we did was worth the effort, and it motivates us to apply ourselves again in the future. It is not surprising that sincere commendation often draws us to the person who takes the time to say something encouraging.—Proverbs 15:23.

Jesus Christ appreciated the need to give commendation. In the parable of the talents, the master (picturing Jesus himself) warmly commends each of the two faithful slaves, saying: "Well done, good and faithful slave!" How heartwarming! Even though they have very different abilities and achievements, they get equal commendation.—Matthew 25:19-23.

So let us remember the mother of that little girl. We need not wait for others to be in tears before we give them commendation. Instead, we can make a point of looking for opportunities to commend. Indeed, we have good reason to give sincere commendation at every opportunity.

