



THE WATCHTOWER

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STUDY EDITION

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, is to honor Jehovah God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Just as watchtowers in ancient times enabled a person to observe developments from afar, so this magazine shows us the significance of world events in the light of Bible prophecies. It comforts people with the good news that God's Kingdom, which is a real government in heaven, will soon bring an end to all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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PURPOSE OF STUDY ARTICLES

Study Articles 1, 2 PAGES 3-11

In his renowned Sermon on the Mount, Jesus highlighted the importance of being mild-tempered, merciful, and peaceable. He urged his followers to 'let their light shine' and showed how we should treat our enemies and others.

Study Article 3 PAGES 12-16

Consider how you might explain why there is a greater need for deliverance today than ever before. See how you could identify Jehovah as the Great Deliverer and show others how God's Kingdom will soon deliver mankind.

Study Articles 4, 5 PAGES 17-25

Why should youths serve God? Can they succeed in leading a life of dedication to Jehovah regardless of how others might view them? What service opportunities lie before them? How can the example of the apostle Paul help all in the congregation to make spiritual progress? Questions of such importance are discussed in these two articles.

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How the Governing Body Is Organized

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Jehovah's Word Is Alive—Highlights From the Book of Acts

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HOW SHOULD WE TREAT OTHERS?

"Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them."—LUKE 6:31.

JESUS CHRIST truly was the Great Teacher. When his religious foes sent men to arrest him, the officers returned empty-handed and said: "Never has another man spoken like this." (John 7:32, 45, 46) One of Jesus' masterful discourses was the Sermon on the Mount. It is recorded in chapters 5 through 7 of Matthew's Gospel, and similar information is presented at Luke 6:20-49.*

² Perhaps the best-known statement in that sermon is the one that is often called the Golden Rule. It has to do with how we treat others. "Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them," said Jesus. (Luke 6:31) And what good things he did for people! Jesus cured the sick and even raised the dead. Individuals were especially blessed, however, when they accepted the good news he shared with them. (*Read Luke 7:20-22.*) As Jehovah's Witnesses, we are delighted to engage in similar Kingdom-preaching activity. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) In this article and the next, we will consider Jesus' words about this work as well as other points in the Sermon on the Mount that relate to how we should treat others.

Be Mild-Tempered

³ Jesus said: "Happy are the mild-tempered

* In your personal study, you are likely to find it very beneficial to read these passages before considering this article and the one following it.

1, 2. (a) What is the Sermon on the Mount?
(b) We will discuss what in this article and the one following?

3. How would you define mildness of temper?

ones, since they will inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5) In the Scriptures, mildness of temper has nothing to do with weakness. It is gentleness that we exercise in response to God's requirements. This attitude is reflected in our conduct with regard to fellow humans. For instance, we "return evil for evil to no one."—Rom. 12:17-19.

⁴ The mild-tempered ones are happy because "they will inherit the earth." Jesus, who was "mild-tempered and lowly in heart," is the "appointed heir of all things" and is therefore the principal Inheritor of the earth. (Matt. 11:29; Heb. 1:2; Ps. 2:8) It was foretold that the Messianic "son of man" would have associate rulers in the heavenly Kingdom. (Dan. 7:13, 14, 21, 22, 27) As "joint heirs with Christ," 144,000 mild-tempered anointed ones were to share in Jesus' inheritance of the earth. (Rom. 8:16, 17; Rev. 14:1) Other mild-tempered ones will be blessed with everlasting life in the earthly realm of the Kingdom.—Ps. 37:11.

⁵ If we were to be harsh, we would likely try the patience of others and alienate them from us. However, having Christlike mildness makes us pleasant and spiritually upbuilding members of the congregation. Mildness is part of the fruitage that God's active force produces within us if we 'live and walk by spirit.' (*Read Galatians 5:22-25.*) Surely we want to be counted among the mild-tempered individuals led by Jehovah's holy spirit!

4. Why are mild-tempered ones happy?
5. Having Christlike mildness does what for us?

How Happy the Merciful!

⁶ In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus also said: “Happy are the merciful, since they will be shown mercy.” (Matt. 5:7) “The merciful” have tender compassion and show kind consideration, even pity, for the disadvantaged. Jesus miraculously relieved suffering because he “felt pity,” or was “moved with pity.” (Matt. 14:14; 20:34) Pity and consideration should therefore prompt us to be merciful.—Jas. 2:13.

⁷ When a crowd met Jesus on his way to get some rest, “he was moved with pity for them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd.” Consequently, “he started to teach them many things.” (Mark 6:34) What joy we experience as we similarly share the Kingdom message with others and tell them about God’s great mercy!

⁸ The merciful are happy because of being “shown mercy.” When we treat people mercifully, they usually respond in a similar way. (Luke 6:38) Moreover, Jesus said: “If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” (Matt. 6:14) Only the merciful know the happiness that results from forgiveness of sins and divine approval.

Why “the Peaceable” Are Happy

⁹ Citing another reason for happiness, Jesus said: “Happy are the peaceable, since they will be called ‘sons of God.’” (Matt. 5:9) The Greek word here rendered “peaceable” literally means “peacemakers.” If we are peacemakers, we will not condone or participate in anything, such as slanderous talk, that could ‘separate those familiar with one

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6. “The merciful” have what notable qualities?
 7. Pity moved Jesus to do what?
 8. Why are the merciful happy?
 9. How will we act if we are peaceable?



Declaring the Kingdom message is a vital way to let our light shine

another.’ (Prov. 16:28) By word and deed, we will pursue peace with people inside and outside the Christian congregation. (Heb. 12:14) Especially will we do our utmost to be found at peace with Jehovah God.—Read 1 Peter 3: 10-12.

¹⁰ Jesus said that “the peaceable” are happy, “since they will be called ‘sons of God.’” Because of exercising faith in Jesus as the Messiah, anointed Christians receive “authority to become God’s children.” (John 1: 12; 1 Pet. 2:24) What about Jesus’ peaceable “other sheep”? They will have him as their “Eternal Father” during his Thousand Year Reign with his heavenly joint heirs. (John 10: 14, 16; Isa. 9:6; Rev. 20:6) At the end of his Millennial Rule, such peacemakers will in the fullest sense become earthly children of God.—1 Cor. 15:27, 28.

¹¹ To enjoy an intimate relationship with Jehovah, “the God of peace,” we must imitate his qualities, including peaceableness. (Phil. 4:9) If we allow ourselves to be guided by “the wisdom from above,” we will treat others in a peaceable way. (Jas. 3:17) Yes, we will be happy peacemakers.

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10. Why are “the peaceable” happy?
 11. How will we treat others if we are guided by “the wisdom from above”?

"Let Your Light Shine"

¹² We treat people in the best way possible when we help them to receive spiritual light from God. (Ps. 43:3) Jesus told his disciples that they were "the light of the world" and urged them to let their light shine so that people might see their "fine works," or good deeds to others. This would result in spiritual illumination "before men," or for the benefit of mankind. (*Read Matthew 5:14-16.*) Today, we let our light shine by doing good to our neighbors and by sharing in the work of preaching the good news "in all the world," that is, "in all the nations." (Matt. 26:13; Mark 13:10) What a privilege we enjoy!

¹³ "A city cannot be hid when situated upon a mountain," said Jesus. Any city located on a mountain would be easily seen. Similarly, we are noticed for our fine works as Kingdom proclaimers and for such qualities as moderation and chasteness.—Titus 2:1-14.

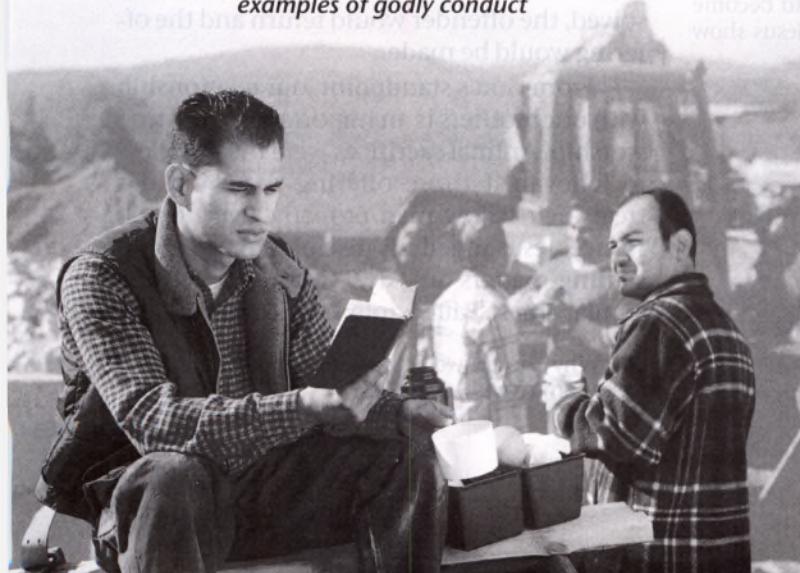
¹⁴ Jesus spoke of lighting a lamp and putting it, not under a basket, but on a lamp-

12. (a) What did Jesus say about spiritual light?
(b) How can we let our light shine?

13. For what are we noticed?

14. (a) How would you describe first-century lamps? (b) How is it that we do not hide spiritual light under a "measuring basket"?

*Christians must be
examples of godly conduct*



stand so that it would shine upon all those in the house. A common first-century lamp was an earthenware vessel with a wick that drew up liquid (usually olive oil) by capillary attraction to feed a flame. Often placed on a wooden or metal stand, a lamp would 'shine upon all those in a house.' People would not light a lamp and put it under a "measuring basket"—a large container having a capacity of about eight dry quarts. Jesus did not want his disciples to hide their spiritual light under a figurative measuring basket. So we must let our light shine, never permitting opposition or persecution to make us hide Scriptural truth or keep it to ourselves.

¹⁵ It was after he mentioned a shining lamp that Jesus told his disciples: "Likewise let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens." Because of our "fine works," some "give glory" to God by becoming his servants. What an incentive for us to keep on "shining as illuminators in the world"!—Phil. 2:15.

¹⁶ Being "the light of the world" requires that we be involved in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work. But something else is also required of us. "Go on walking as children of light," wrote the apostle Paul, "for the fruitage of the light consists of every sort of goodness and righteousness and truth." (Eph. 5: 8, 9) We need to be shining examples of godly conduct. Indeed, we must heed the apostle Peter's counsel: "Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against

15. How do our "fine works" affect some people?

16. Being "the light of the world" requires what of us?

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 Pet. 2:12) But what should be done if strained relations develop between fellow believers?

"Make Your Peace With Your Brother"

¹⁷ In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned his disciples against harboring wrath and contempt for a brother. Instead, they were to be quick about pursuing peace with an offended brother. (*Read Matthew 5:21-25.*) Take careful note of Jesus' counsel. If you were bringing your gift to the altar and there remembered that your brother had something against you, what were you to do? You were to leave your gift in front of the altar while you went to make peace with your brother. After doing that, you could return and offer up your gift.

¹⁸ The "gift" often was a sacrificial offering that a person might present at Jehovah's temple. Animal sacrifices were very important, for they had been commanded by God as part of Israel's worship under the Mosaic Law. But if you recalled that your brother had something against you, settling that matter was of even greater urgency than offering your gift. "Leave your gift there in

17-19. (a) What was the "gift" mentioned at Matthew 5:23, 24? (b) How important is it to become reconciled with a brother, and how did Jesus show this?

How Would You Answer?

- What does it mean to be mild-tempered?
- Why are "the merciful" happy?
- How can we let our light shine?
- Why should we be quick to 'make peace with our brother'?



Do your best to make peace with your brother

front of the altar, and go away," said Jesus. "First make your peace with your brother, and then, when you have come back, offer up your gift." Becoming reconciled with a brother was to take precedence over performing an obligation set out in the Law.

¹⁹ Jesus did not limit his statement to particular offerings and specific transgressions. Therefore, any offering was to be postponed if a person remembered that his brother had something against him. If the offering was a living animal, it was to be left "in front of the altar" of burnt offering in the priests' courtyard of the temple. After the problem was solved, the offender would return and the offering would be made.

²⁰ From God's standpoint, our relationship with our brothers is an important part of true worship. Animal sacrifices were meaningless to Jehovah if those offering them did not treat their fellow man properly. (Mic. 6:6-8) Hence, Jesus urged his disciples to "be about settling matters quickly." (Matt. 5:25) Along similar lines, Paul wrote: "Be wrathful, and

20. Why should we act to settle matters quickly if we are angry with a brother?

yet do not sin; let the sun not set with you in a provoked state, neither allow place for the Devil." (Eph. 4:26, 27) If we do become justifiably angry, we should act to settle matters quickly so that we do not remain in a provoked state and thus allow the Devil to take advantage of us.—Luke 17:3, 4.

Always Treat Others With Respect

²¹ Our review of certain statements made by Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount should help us to treat others with kindness and respect. Although all of us are imperfect, we can apply Jesus' counsel because he does

21, 22. (a) How can we apply Jesus' counsel that we have just discussed? (b) What will we consider in the next article?

not expect more of us than we can do, and neither does our heavenly Father. With prayer, sincere effort, and Jehovah God's blessing, we can be mild-tempered, merciful, and peaceable. We can reflect spiritual light that shines to Jehovah's glory. Moreover, we can make peace with our brother when that becomes necessary.

²² Acceptable worship of Jehovah includes proper treatment of our neighbor. (Mark 12: 31) In the next article, we will consider other statements in the Sermon on the Mount that should help us to keep on doing good to others. After meditating on the foregoing points drawn from Jesus' matchless discourse, however, we might ask ourselves, 'How well do I treat others?'

KEEP ON DOING GOOD

"Continue . . . to do good."—LUKE 6:35.

DOING good to others can be a challenge. Those to whom we show love may not reciprocate. Although we seek the spiritual welfare of people by endeavoring to share with them "the glorious good news of the happy God" and his Son, they may be apathetic or ungrateful. (1 Tim. 1:11) Others prove to be hateful "enemies of the torture stake of the Christ." (Phil. 3:18) As Christians, how should we treat them?

² Jesus Christ told his disciples: "Continue to love your enemies and to do good." (Luke 6:35) Let us now take a close look at this admonition. We will also benefit from other points Jesus made about doing good to others.

1, 2. Why is doing good to others often challenging?

"Love Your Enemies"

³ In his renowned Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his audience to love their enemies and to pray for those persecuting them. (*Read Matthew 5:43-45.*) Those present on that occasion were Jews, who were aware of God's command: "You must not take vengeance nor have a grudge against the sons of your people; and you must love your fellow as yourself." (Lev. 19:18) First-century Jewish religious leaders held that "the sons of your people" and "your fellow" referred only to Jews. The Mosaic Law required that the Israelites stay separate from other nations, but the viewpoint had developed that all

3. (a) In your own words, summarize Jesus' statement recorded at Matthew 5:43-45. (b) What view regarding Jews and non-Jews had developed among first-century Jewish religious leaders?

non-Jews were enemies, to be hated as individuals.

⁴ In contrast, Jesus declared: “Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you.” (Matt. 5:44) His disciples were to act lovingly toward all who showed hostility to them. According to the Gospel writer Luke, Jesus said: “I say to you who are listening, Continue to love your enemies, to do good to those hating you, to bless those cursing you, to pray for those who are insulting you.” (Luke 6:27, 28) Like first-century individuals who took Jesus’ sayings to heart, we “do good to those hating” us by responding to their hostility with gracious actions. We “bless those cursing” us by speaking to them in a kind way. And we “pray for those persecuting” us with physical violence or other forms of “insulting” treatment. Such petitions are loving requests that persecutors might have a change of heart and take action that brings them Jehovah’s favor.

⁵ Why show love for our enemies? “That you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens,” said Jesus. (Matt. 5:45) If we heed that counsel, we become “sons” of God in that we imitate Jehovah, who “makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous.” As Luke’s account puts matters, God “is kind toward the unthankful and wicked.”—Luke 6:35.

⁶ Stressing how important it was for his disciples to ‘continue loving their enemies,’ Jesus said: “If you love those loving you, what reward do you have? Are not also the tax collectors doing the

4. How were Jesus’ disciples to act toward their enemies?

5, 6. Why should we love our enemies?

Why should we pray for those persecuting us?

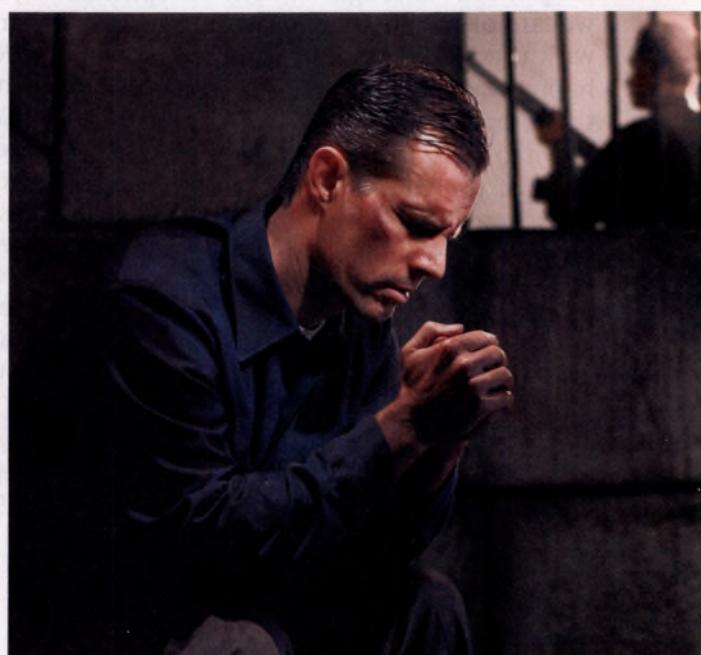
same thing? And if you greet your brothers only, what extraordinary thing are you doing? Are not also the people of the nations doing the same thing?” (Matt. 5:46, 47) If we were to limit our love to those who reciprocate, this would not merit any “reward,” or favor, from God. Even tax collectors, who were generally despised, showed love for people who loved them.—Luke 5:30; 7:34.

⁷ The common Jewish greeting included the word “peace.” (Judg. 19:20; John 20:19) This was an implied wish for the health, welfare, and prosperity of the person greeted. It would not be an “extraordinary thing” if we were to greet only those whom we consider to be our “brothers.” As Jesus pointed out, something similar was done by “people of the nations.”

⁸ Inherited sin made it impossible for Christ’s disciples to be flawless, perfect. (Rom. 5:12) Yet, Jesus concluded this part of his discourse by saying: “You must accordingly be perfect, as your heavenly Father is

7. Why would it not be extraordinary if we were to greet only our “brothers”?

8. What was Jesus encouraging his listeners to do when he said: ‘You must be perfect’?



perfect." (Matt. 5:48) He was thereby encouraging his listeners to imitate their "heavenly Father," Jehovah, by perfecting their love—making it complete by loving their enemies. The same thing is expected of us.

Why Be Forgiving?

⁹ We keep on doing good when we mercifully forgive someone who sins against us. In fact, part of Jesus' model prayer contains the words: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." (Matt. 6:12) Of course, this does not refer to forgiving financial debts. Luke's Gospel shows that the "debts" Jesus had in mind are sins, for it says: "Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone that is in debt to us."—Luke 11:4.

¹⁰ We need to imitate God, who freely forgives repentant sinners. The apostle Paul wrote: "Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you." (Eph. 4:32) The psalmist David sang: "Jehovah is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness. . . . He has not done to us even according to our sins; nor according to our errors has he brought upon us what we deserve. . . . As far off as the sunrise is from the sunset, so far off from us he has put our transgressions. As a father shows mercy to his sons, Jehovah has shown mercy to those fearing him. For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust."—Ps. 103:8-14.

¹¹ People can receive God's forgiveness only if they have already forgiven those who have sinned against them. (Mark 11:25)

9. What is meant by the words: "Forgive us our debts"?

10. With respect to forgiveness, how can we imitate God?

11. To whom does God grant forgiveness?

Stressing this point, Jesus added: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; whereas if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14, 15) Yes, God grants forgiveness only to those who freely forgive others. And one way to keep on doing good is to comply with Paul's counsel: "Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also."—Col. 3:13.

"Stop Judging"

¹² Another way to do good was set out in the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus told his listeners to stop judging others and then used a powerful illustration to emphasize this point. (*Read Matthew 7:1-5.*) Let us consider what Jesus meant when he said: "Stop judging."

¹³ Matthew's Gospel quotes Jesus as saying: "Stop judging that you may not be judged." (Matt. 7:1) According to Luke, Jesus said: "Stop judging, and you will by no means be judged; and stop condemning, and you will by no means be condemned. Keep on releasing, and you will be released." (Luke 6:37) The first-century Pharisees judged others harshly, in keeping with unscriptural traditions. Any of Jesus' listeners who did that were to "stop judging." Instead, they were to "keep on releasing," that is, forgiving the shortcomings of others. The apostle Paul gave similar counsel regarding forgiveness, as noted above.

¹⁴ By extending forgiveness, Jesus' disciples would move people to respond with a forgiving spirit. "With what judgment you are judging, you will be judged," said Jesus, "and with the measure that you are measuring

12. What counsel did Jesus give about judging others?

13. How could Jesus' listeners "keep on releasing"?

14. By extending forgiveness, Jesus' disciples would move people to do what?

out, they will measure out to you." (Matt. 7:2) With respect to our treatment of others, we reap what we sow.—Gal. 6:7.

¹⁵ Recall that in order to indicate how wrong it is to be overcritical, Jesus asked: "Why, then, do you look at the straw in your brother's eye, but do not consider the rafter in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Allow me to extract the straw from your eye'; when, look! a rafter is in your own eye?" (Matt. 7:3, 4) A person inclined to criticize another individual takes note of a minor defect in his brother's "eye." The critic is suggesting that his brother has impaired perception and poor judgment. Though the fault is minor—like a bit of straw—the critic offers to "extract the straw." He hypocritically volunteers to help the brother see things more clearly.

15. How did Jesus show that it is wrong to be overcritical?

¹⁶ Especially were the Jewish religious leaders highly critical of others. To illustrate: When a certain blind man who was healed by Christ declared that Jesus must have come from God, the Pharisees retorted: "You were altogether born in sins, and yet are you teaching us?" (John 9:30-34)

As regards clear spiritual vision and the ability to judge properly, the Pharisees had "a rafter" in their own eye and were totally blind. Jesus therefore exclaimed: "Hypocrite! First extract the rafter from your own eye, and then you will see clearly how to extract the straw from your brother's eye." (Matt. 7:5; Luke 6:42) If we are determined to do good and treat others well, we will not be harsh critics, always looking for a figurative straw in our brother's eye. Instead, we will acknowledge that we are imperfect and should therefore avoid being judgmental and critical of our fellow believers.

How We Should Treat Others

¹⁷ In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus pointed out that God displays a fatherly atti-

16. Why can it be said that the Pharisees had "a rafter" in their eye?

17. In view of Matthew 7:12, how should we treat others?

Do you always treat others as you would like to be treated?



tude toward His servants by answering their prayers. (*Read Matthew 7:7-12.*) It is noteworthy that Jesus set out this rule of conduct: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them." (Matt. 7:12) Only if we treat fellow humans in this way can we prove that we are true followers of Jesus Christ.

¹⁸ After saying that we should treat others as we want them to treat us, Jesus added: "This, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean." When we treat others in the way that Jesus specified, we are acting in harmony with the spirit behind "the Law"—the writings that make up the Bible books of Genesis through Deuteronomy. Besides revealing Jehovah's purpose to produce a seed that would do away with evil, these books set out the Law given by God to the nation of Israel through Moses in 1513 B.C.E. (Gen. 3:15) Among other things, the Law made it clear that the Israelites were to be just, were not to show partiality, and were to do good to the afflicted and to alien residents in the land.—Lev. 19:9, 10, 15, 34.

¹⁹ By referring to "the Prophets," Jesus had in mind the prophetic books of the Hebrew Scriptures. They contain Messianic prophecies fulfilled in Christ himself. Such writings also show that God blesses his people when they do what is right in his eyes and treat others in a proper way. For instance, Isaiah's prophecy gave the Israelites this counsel: "This is what Jehovah has said: 'Keep justice, you people, and do what is righteous. . . . Happy is the mortal man that does this, and the son of mankind that lays hold of it, . . . keeping his hand in order not to do any kind of badness.'" (Isa. 56:1, 2) Yes, God expects his people to keep on doing good.

18. How did "the Law" show that we should treat others as we want them to treat us?

19. How do "the Prophets" show that we should do good?

Always Do Good to Others

²⁰ We have considered only a few of the many vital points made by Jesus in his peerless Sermon on the Mount. Even so, we can readily understand the reaction of those who heard what he said on that occasion. Says the inspired record: "Now when Jesus finished these sayings, the effect was that the crowds were astounded at his way of teaching; for he was teaching them as a person having authority, and not as their scribes."—Matt. 7:28, 29.

²¹ Jesus Christ unquestionably proved to be the foretold "Wonderful Counselor." (Isa. 9:6) The Sermon on the Mount is a prime example of Jesus' knowledge of his heavenly Father's way of viewing things. In addition to the points we have discussed, that discourse has much to say about genuine happiness, how to avoid immorality, the way to practice righteousness, what we must do to enjoy a secure and joyous future, and many other matters. Why not read Matthew chapters 5 through 7 once again carefully and prayerfully? Meditate on Jesus' wonderful counsel recorded there. Apply in your life what Christ said in his Sermon on the Mount. Then you will be better able to please Jehovah, treat others properly, and keep on doing good.

20, 21. How did the crowds react to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, and why should you meditate on it?

How Would You Answer?

- How are we to treat our enemies?
- Why should we be forgiving?
- What did Jesus say about judging people?
- According to Matthew 7:12, how should we treat others?

DELIVERANCE BY GOD'S KINGDOM IS AT HAND!

"Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." —MATT. 6:10.

WHEN Jesus Christ gave his Sermon on the Mount, he included a model prayer that summarized his main teaching. He taught his followers to pray to God: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matt. 6:9-13) Jesus "went journeying from city to city and from village to village, preaching and declaring the good news of the kingdom of God." (Luke 8:1) Christ urged his followers: 'Keep on seeking first the kingdom and God's righteousness.' (Matt. 6:33) As you study this article, look for ways to use the material in your ministry. For instance, consider how you might answer these questions: How important is the Kingdom message? From what does mankind need to be delivered? And how will God's Kingdom provide deliverance?

² Jesus foretold: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:14) The

good news about God's Kingdom is of utmost importance. Why, it is the most important message in the world! In over 100,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses earth wide, about seven million servants of God are engaged in an unparalleled preaching work, telling others that the Kingdom has been established. Its establishment is good news because it means that God has set up a government in heaven to take full control of earth's affairs. Under Kingdom rule, Jehovah's will is going to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

³ What will happen to mankind when God's will is done on earth? Jehovah will "wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore." (Rev. 21:4) People will not get sick or die because of inherited sin and imperfection. The dead in God's memory will have the opportunity to live forever, for the Bible promises: "There is going to be a resurrection of both the righ-

1. What was Jesus' main teaching?
2. How important is the Kingdom message?

- 3, 4. What will be the result when God's will is done on earth?

God's Word foretold an unparalleled worldwide preaching work for our time



teous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) There will be no more war, illness, or hunger, and the earth will be transformed into a paradise. Even animals that are now dangerous will be at peace with humans and with one another.—Ps. 46:9; 72:16; Isa. 11:6-9; 33:24; Luke 23:43.

⁴ With such marvelous blessings resulting from Kingdom rule, it is no wonder that Bible prophecy speaks of life at that time in these comforting words: "The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." But what about those who cause trouble? The Scriptures foretell: "Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more." However, "those hoping in Jehovah are the ones that will possess the earth."—Ps. 37:9-11.

⁵ For all of this to happen, the present system of things with its conflicting governments, religions, and commercial systems will have to be removed. And that is exactly what the heavenly government will do. The prophet Daniel was inspired to foretell: "In the days of those kings [now existing] the God of heaven will set up a kingdom [in heaven] that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these [present] kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite." (Dan. 2:

5. What is going to happen to the present system of things?

44) God's Kingdom—a new heavenly government—will then rule over a new earthly society. There will be "new heavens and a new earth . . . , and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Pet. 3:13.

Greater Need for Deliverance Now

⁶ When Satan, Adam, and Eve rebelled against God, wanting to decide for themselves what was right and what was wrong, the human family was set on a disastrous course. Before the global Flood, over 1,600 years later, "the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time." (Gen. 6:5) About 1,300 years thereafter, Solomon found conditions to be so bad that he wrote: "I congratulated the dead who had already died rather than the living who were still alive. So better than both of them is the one who has not yet come to be, who has not seen the calamitous work that is being done under the sun." (Eccl. 4:2, 3) Some 3,000 years more brings us to our day, when badness continues to flourish.

⁷ While it is true that badness has been around for a long time, there is a greater need for deliverance by God's Kingdom now than at any other time. Conditions in the past 100 years have been worse than ever, and they continue to deteriorate. For example, the

6. How does the Bible describe the badness of this wicked world?

7. Why is there a greater need now for deliverance by God?



Worldwatch Institute reports: "Three times as many people fell victim to war in [the 20th] century as in all the wars from the first century AD to 1899." Since 1914 more than 100 million lives have been lost in wars! One encyclopedia estimates that up to 60 million people died in World War II. With some nations now even being armed with nuclear weapons, humans have the capacity to wipe out huge segments of the world's population. And even with advances in science and medicine, every year hunger still claims the lives of some five million children.—See chapter 9 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?*

⁸ Human efforts have failed to stem the tide of badness. This world's political, commercial, and religious institutions have never fulfilled the basic human need for peace, prosperity, and health. Far from solving the huge problems now facing mankind, these institutions have added to them. Surely, thousands of years of human rule have proved the truthfulness of the words: "To earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jer. 10:23) Yes, "man has dominated man to his injury." (Eccl. 8:9) Moreover, "all creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together."—Rom. 8:22.

⁹ Regarding our time, the Bible foretold: "In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here." After describing conditions of the last days under human rule, the prophecy states: "Wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse." (*Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13.*) That is what Christians expect, for "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," Satan. (1 John 5:

8. What have thousands of years of human rule proved beyond doubt?
9. What conditions do true Christians expect to see in these "last days"?

19) However, the good news is that God will soon deliver those who love him. They will be delivered from this world, which is rapidly going from bad to worse.

The Only Reliable Source of Deliverance

¹⁰ As you preach the good news, point out that Jehovah is the only reliable Source of deliverance. He alone has the power and the will to deliver his servants from any bad situation. (Acts 4:24, 31; Rev. 4:11) We can be certain that Jehovah will always deliver his people and fulfill his purposes, for he has sworn: "Surely just as I have figured, so it must occur." His word "will not return to [him] without results."—*Read Isaiah 14:24, 25; 55:10, 11.*

¹¹ Jehovah has guaranteed that he will deliver his servants when he executes judgment upon the wicked. When sending the prophet Jeremiah to speak boldly to gross sinners, God said: "Do not be afraid." Why not? "I am with you to deliver you." (Jer. 1:8) Similarly, when Jehovah was about to destroy wicked Sodom and Gomorrah, he sent two angels to escort Lot and his family safely out of the area. "Then Jehovah made it rain sulphur and fire . . . upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah."—Gen. 19:15, 24, 25.

¹² Even on a worldwide scale, Jehovah can deliver those who do his will. When he destroyed the ancient wicked world in the Flood, he "kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, safe with seven others." (2 Pet. 2:5) Jehovah will again deliver the upright when he destroys the present wicked world. His Word thus states: "Seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth . . . Seek righteousness, seek meekness. Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger."

10. Why is Jehovah the only reliable Source of deliverance?

11, 12. What guarantee does God give to his servants?

(Zeph. 2:3) As a result of that worldwide destruction, ‘the upright will reside in the earth, but the wicked will be cut off from it.’—Prov. 2:21, 22.

¹³ However, many of God’s servants have already died because of illness, persecution, and other factors. (Matt. 24:9) How, then, will all of these be delivered? As noted earlier, “there is going to be a resurrection of . . . the righteous.” (Acts 24:15) What comfort there is in knowing that nothing can prevent Jehovah from delivering his servants!

A Righteous Government

¹⁴ In your ministry, you can explain that Jehovah’s heavenly Kingdom is a righteous government. This is so because it reflects God’s marvelous qualities, such as justice, righteousness, and love. (Deut. 32:4; 1 John 4:8) God has put the Kingdom in the hands of Jesus Christ, the one best qualified to rule the earth. Jehovah has also purposed that 144,000 anointed Christians be taken from the earth and raised to heavenly life as Christ’s joint heirs associated with him in administering earth’s affairs.—Rev. 14:1-5.

¹⁵ What a great contrast there will be be-

-
13. How will Jehovah’s servants who have died be delivered?
 14. Why are we confident that God’s Kingdom is a righteous government?
 15. Contrast the rule of God’s Kingdom with human rule.

tween the rule of Jesus and the 144,000 and that of imperfect humans! The rulers of this system of things have often been cruel and have led their subjects into wars, resulting in the slaughter of millions. No wonder the Scriptures counsel us not to put our trust in man, “to whom no salvation belongs”! (Ps. 146:3) But what a fine spirit will mark Christ’s rule! “Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down,” said Jesus, “and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light.”—Matt. 11:28-30.

The Last Days Soon to End!

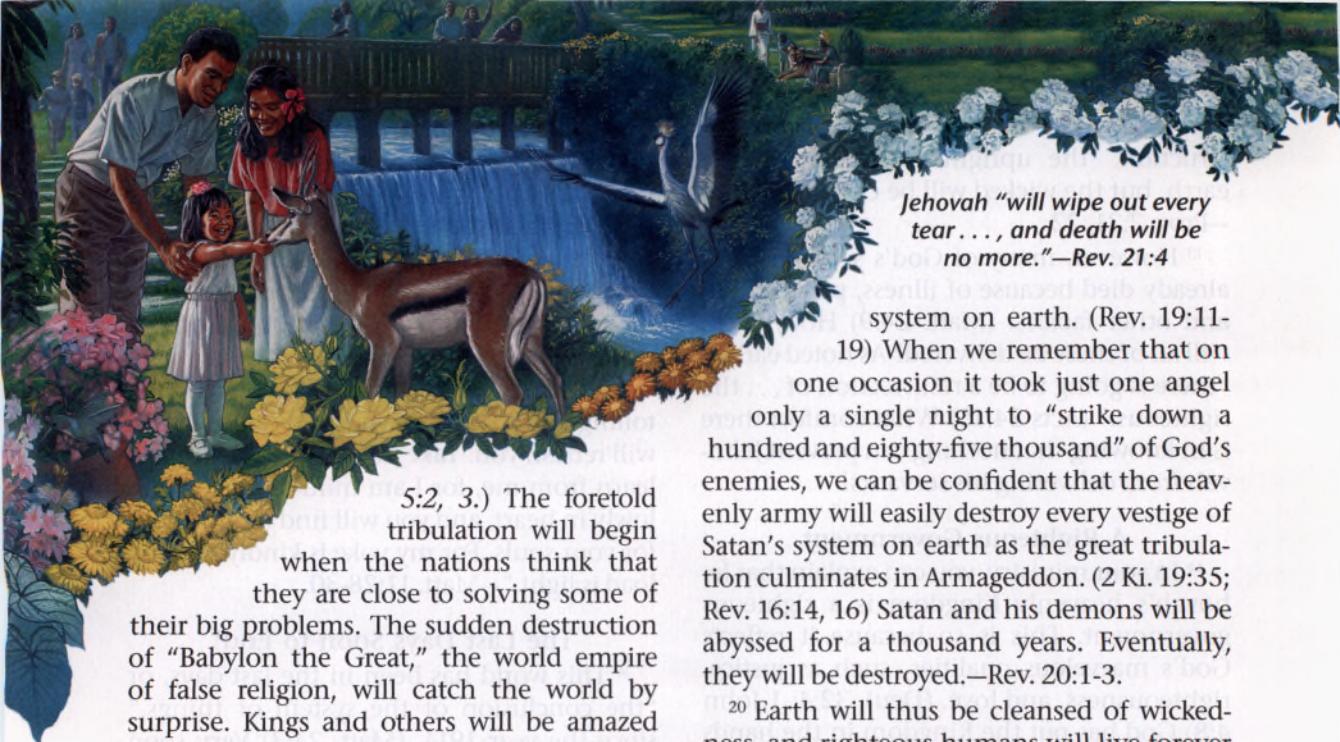
¹⁶ This world has been in the last days, or “the conclusion of the system of things,” since the year 1914. (Matt. 24:3) Very soon now, what Jesus called the “great tribulation” will occur. (*Read Matthew 24:21.*) That unparalleled tribulation will bring Satan’s entire world to its end. But how does the great tribulation begin? And how does it end?

¹⁷ The great tribulation will begin suddenly. Yes, “Jehovah’s day” will come unexpectedly “whenever it is that they are saying: ‘Peace and security!’” (*Read 1 Thessalonians*

-
16. How will these last days conclude?
 17. What does the Bible indicate as to the beginning of the great tribulation?

As Jehovah delivered Noah and his family, He can deliver us





Jehovah "will wipe out every tear . . . , and death will be no more."—Rev. 21:4

5:2, 3.) The foretold tribulation will begin when the nations think that they are close to solving some of their big problems. The sudden destruction of "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion, will catch the world by surprise. Kings and others will be amazed when judgment is executed upon Babylon the Great.—Rev. 17:1-6, 18; 18:9, 10, 15, 16, 19.

¹⁸ At a critical point, there will be "signs in sun and moon and stars," and "the sign of the Son of man will appear in heaven." We can then 'raise ourselves erect because our deliverance is getting near.' (Luke 21:25-28; Matt. 24:29, 30) Satan, or Gog, will turn his forces against God's people. But regarding those attacking his faithful servants, Jehovah says: "He that is touching you is touching my eyeball." (Zech. 2:8) Therefore, Satan's attempt to destroy them will not succeed. Why? Because the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will react promptly in order to deliver his servants.—Ezek. 38:9, 18.

¹⁹ When God takes action against the nations, 'they will know that he is Jehovah.' (Ezek. 36:23) He will send his executional forces—myriads of spirit creatures led by Christ Jesus—to destroy the rest of Satan's

18. How does Jehovah react to Satan's attack on His people?
19. Why can we be confident that God's executional forces will destroy Satan's system?

system on earth. (Rev. 19:11-12)

19) When we remember that on one occasion it took just one angel only a single night to "strike down a hundred and eighty-five thousand" of God's enemies, we can be confident that the heavenly army will easily destroy every vestige of Satan's system on earth as the great tribulation culminates in Armageddon. (2 Ki. 19:35; Rev. 16:14, 16) Satan and his demons will be abyssed for a thousand years. Eventually, they will be destroyed.—Rev. 20:1-3.

²⁰ Earth will thus be cleansed of wickedness, and righteous humans will live forever on this globe. Jehovah will have proved to be the Great Deliverer. (Ps. 145:20) By means of the Kingdom, he will vindicate his sovereignty, sanctify his holy name, and fulfill his grand purpose for the earth. May you experience great joy in your ministry as you declare this good news and help those "rightly disposed for everlasting life" to realize that deliverance by God's Kingdom is at hand!—Acts 13:48.

20. What will Jehovah accomplish by means of the Kingdom?

Do You Recall?

- How did Jesus highlight the importance of the Kingdom?
- Why is there a greater need for deliverance now than ever before?
- What events can we expect during the great tribulation?
- How does Jehovah prove to be the Great Deliverer?

WHILE YOU ARE YOUNG, CHOOSE TO SERVE JEHOVAH

"Continue in the things that you learned and were persuaded to believe."—2 TIM. 3:14.

THE sacred service of young people is so important to Jehovah that he inspired a prophecy regarding them. "Your people will offer themselves willingly on the day of your military force," sang the psalmist. "In the splendors of holiness, from the womb of the dawn, you have your company of young men just like dewdrops." (Ps. 110:3) Yes, Jehovah holds in high esteem youths who are willing to serve him.

² You young ones in the Christian congregation, have you made a dedication to Jehovah? Many may find the choice to serve the true God difficult to make. Business leaders, educators, and sometimes family members and friends point youths toward materialistic goals. When young people pursue spiritual goals, the world often scorns them. But the fact is that serving the true God is the best way of life you can pursue. (Ps. 27:4) In this regard, consider three questions: Why should you serve God? How can you succeed in leading a life of dedication to God despite what others may say or do? What wonderful opportunities of sacred service can open up for you?

Serving Jehovah Is the Right Thing to Do

³ Why should you serve the true and living God? Revelation 4:11 gives the main reason: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to

1. How does Jehovah view the service of his young Witnesses?
2. Young people today face what secular influences concerning their future?
3. How should Jehovah's creation affect us?

receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created." Jehovah is the wonderful Creator of everything in existence. How beautiful the earth is! The trees, the flowers, the animals, the oceans, the mountains, and the waterfalls—Jehovah has made them all. "The earth is full of [God's] productions," states Psalm 104:24. How grateful we can be that Jehovah has lovingly given us a body and a mind that allow us to enjoy the earth and the good things on it! Should not heartfelt appreciation for the wondrous creation make us want to serve him?

⁴ Another reason to serve Jehovah is found in the words of the Israelite leader Joshua. Near the end of his life, Joshua told God's people: "You well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you." Why could Joshua say this?—Josh. 23:14.

⁵ As a child growing up in Egypt, Joshua must have come to know of Jehovah's promise to give the Israelites a land of their own. (Gen. 12:7; 50:24, 25; Ex. 3:8) Then Joshua watched as Jehovah began to fulfill that promise by bringing the Ten Plagues upon Egypt and forcing obstinate Pharaoh to let the sons of Israel go. Joshua was among those who were delivered through the Red Sea, and then he watched as that sea

- 4, 5. What divine acts drew Joshua close to Jehovah?

swallowed up Pharaoh and his army. During a long journey through “the great and fear-inspiring wilderness” of the Sinai Desert, Joshua saw how Jehovah provided everything the Israelites needed. Not a single one died of thirst or hunger. (Deut. 8:3-5, 14-16; Josh. 24:5-7) When the time came for the Israelites to conquer mighty Canaanite nations and take possession of the Promised Land, Joshua saw how the God whom he and the other Israelites worshipped backed them in this work.—Josh. 10:14, 42.

⁶ Joshua knew that Jehovah had kept His promises. Hence, Joshua declared: “As for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah.” (Josh. 24:15) What about you? When you think of the promises that the true God has already fulfilled and those that he will yet fulfill, do you desire to serve him as did Joshua?

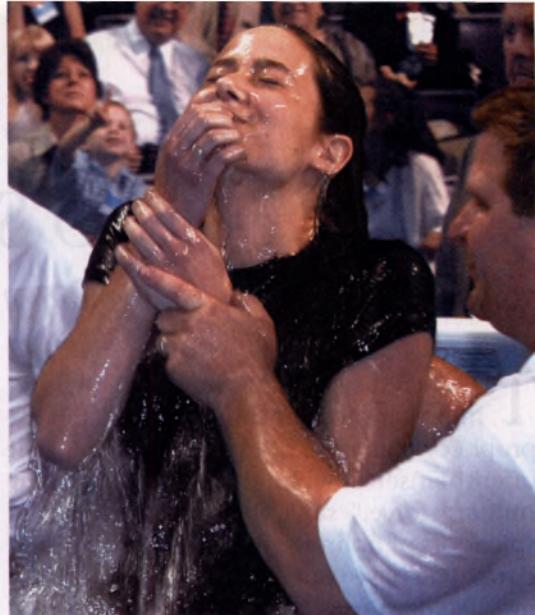
⁷ Contemplating Jehovah’s creative works and reflecting on his wonderful and completely reliable promises should move you not only to make a dedication to Jehovah but also to symbolize that dedication by water immersion. Baptism is a vital step to be taken by those wanting to serve God. This is made clear by our Exemplar, Jesus. Just before starting his work as the Messiah, he presented himself to John the Baptizer for baptism. Why did Jesus take that step? “I have come down from heaven to do, not my will,” he later said, “but the will of him that sent me.” (John 6:38) To symbolize his presentation of himself to carry out his Father’s will, Jesus was baptized.—Matt. 3:13-17.

⁸ Consider also the case of Timothy, a young Christian to whom Jehovah eventually gave much work and many privileges.

6. What will help you to cultivate the desire to serve God?

7. Why is water baptism a vital step to take?

8. Why did Timothy choose to worship God, and what may you need to do?



Serving Jehovah is the best way of life

Why did Timothy decide to worship the true God? The Bible tells us that ‘he had learned things and was persuaded to believe.’ (2 Tim. 3:14) If you have studied God’s Word and have been persuaded to believe that its teachings are true, you are in a position similar to that of Timothy. Now you need to make a decision. Why not speak to your parents about what you wish to do? Along with congregation elders, they can help you understand the Scriptural requirements for baptism.—*Read Acts 8:12.*

⁹ If you get baptized, this will be an excellent start in serving the true God. By taking this step, you enter a long-distance footrace in which the rewards are everlasting life and the joy that comes now from doing God’s will. (Heb. 12:2, 3) You will also bring joy to your family members who are already in the race and to your friends in the Christian congregation. Most important of all, you will make Jehovah’s heart rejoice. (*Read Proverbs 23:15.*) True, others may not understand why you have chosen to worship Jehovah, and

9. How may others be affected when you take the step of baptism?

they may question your decision. They may even oppose you. But you can successfully meet these challenges.

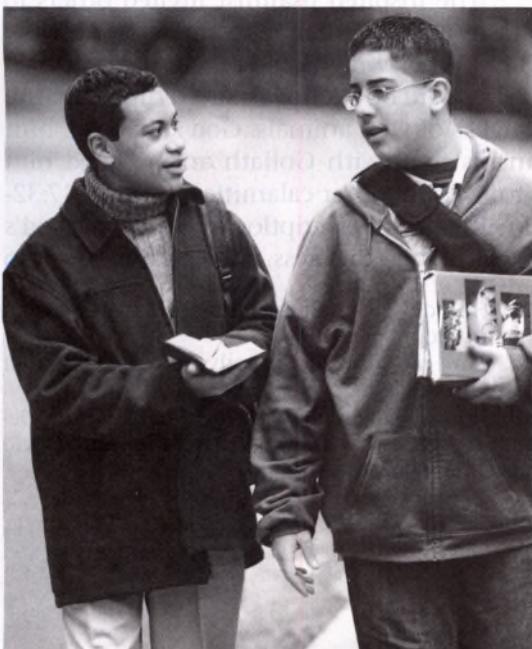
When Others Question or Oppose You

¹⁰ Your decision to serve Jehovah may leave schoolmates, neighbors, and relatives perplexed. They may ask you why you have chosen to follow this course and question you about what you believe. How should you respond? Of course, you need to analyze your thinking and feelings so as to be able to explain the reasons for your choice. And in answering questions about your beliefs, what better example can you follow than that of Jesus?

¹¹ When Jewish religious leaders interrogated Jesus about the resurrection, he directed their attention to a scripture that they had not taken into account. (Ex. 3:6; Matt. 22:23, 31-33) When a scribe asked him which was the greatest commandment, Jesus quoted ap-

10, 11. (a) What questions may people ask you about your decision to serve God? (b) What can you learn from the way Jesus answered questions about true worship?

Can you answer questions about your faith?



propriate Bible verses to him. That man was grateful to Jesus for the answer. (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5; Mark 12:28-34) Jesus' use of the Scriptures and his way of speaking caused "a division over him . . . among the crowd," and his opposers could not bring harm to him. (John 7:32-46) When you answer questions about your faith, use the Bible and respond "with a mild temper and deep respect." (1 Pet. 3:15) If you do not know the answer to a question, admit that fact and offer to do research. Later, look into the subject, using the *Watch Tower Publications Index* or *Watchtower Library* on CD-ROM if it is available in your language. With good preparation, you will "know how you ought to give an answer."—Col. 4:6.

¹² You may encounter more than questions about your position and beliefs. After all, God's enemy, Satan the Devil, controls the world. (*Read 1 John 5:19*) It would be unrealistic to expect commendation or approval from everyone, and you may meet up with opposition. Some people may 'speak abusively of you,' and they may keep on doing so. (1 Pet. 4:4) But remember, you are not alone. Jesus Christ too suffered persecution. The apostle Peter also did, and he wrote: "Beloved ones, do not be puzzled at the burning [suffering] among you, which is happening to you for a trial, as though a strange thing were befalling you. On the contrary, go on rejoicing forasmuch as you are sharers in the sufferings of the Christ." —1 Pet. 4:12, 13.

¹³ Enduring persecution or opposition as a Christian is a reason to rejoice. Why? Because having the world's approval would indicate that you are living according to Satan's standards—not God's. Jesus warned: "Woe,

12. Why should you not allow persecution to discourage you?
13. Why can Christians rejoice when they are persecuted?

whenever all men speak well of you, for things like these are what their forefathers did to the false prophets." (Luke 6:26) Persecution indicates that Satan and his world are angry with you because you serve Jehovah. (*Read Matthew 5:11, 12.*) And "being reproached for the name of Christ" is something to rejoice over.—1 Pet. 4:14.

¹⁴ When you remain faithful to Jehovah despite opposition, there are at least four positive results. You give a witness about God and his Son. Your faithful endurance encourages your Christian brothers and sisters. Some observers who do not know Jehovah may be moved to search for him. (*Read Philippians 1:12-14.*) And as you sense how Jehovah provides strength to endure trials, your love for him grows.

"A Large Door" Is Open to You

¹⁵ Concerning his ministry in Ephesus, the apostle Paul wrote: "A large door that leads to activity has been opened to me." (1 Cor. 16:8, 9) It was the door leading to great activity in preaching the good news and making disciples in that city. By going through that door, Paul helped many to learn about Jehovah and worship Him.

14. What good can result when a person remains faithful to Jehovah despite persecution?
15. What "large door" was opened to the apostle Paul?

How Would You Answer?

- Give two reasons why we should serve God.
- What helped Timothy to make a decision to serve God?
- Why should you remain firm in the face of persecution?
- What opportunities for service may open up to you?

¹⁶ In 1919 the glorified Jesus Christ placed "an opened door" before the anointed remnant. (Rev. 3:8) They went through that door and began preaching the good news, teaching Bible truth with more fervor than ever before. What has been the fruitage of their ministry? The good news has now reached to the ends of the earth, and about seven million people have the hope of gaining eternal life in God's new world.

¹⁷ "A large door that leads to activity" is still wide open to all of Jehovah's servants. Those passing through it find joy and satisfaction as they have a greater share in the preaching of the good news. You young servants of Jehovah, how highly do you value the incomparable privilege of helping others to "have faith in the good news"? (Mark 1:14, 15) Have you considered serving as a regular pioneer or as an auxiliary pioneer? Kingdom Hall construction, Bethel service, and the missionary field are other opportunities that may open up to many of you. Since time is running out for Satan's wicked world, entering these avenues of Kingdom service becomes more urgent every day. Will you go through the "large door" while there is still time?

"Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good"

¹⁸ The inspired psalmist invited others to "taste and see that Jehovah is good." (Ps. 34:8) When King David of ancient Israel was a shepherd boy, Jehovah saved him from the attacks of wild animals. God supported him in his fight with Goliath and rescued him from many other calamities. (1 Sam. 17:32-51; Ps. 18, superscription) Because of God's great loving-kindness, David was moved to

16. How did the anointed remnant go through "an opened door" in 1919?
17. How can you go through "a large door that leads to activity"?
- 18, 19. (a) What helped David to have a strong desire to serve Jehovah? (b) What shows that David never regretted serving God?

write: "Many things you yourself have done, O Jehovah my God, even your wonderful works and your thoughts toward us; there is none to be compared to you."—Ps. 40:5.

¹⁹ David came to love Jehovah deeply and wanted to praise Him with his whole heart and mind. (*Read Psalm 40:8-10.*) As the years passed, David never regretted spending his life worshipping the true God. Living with godly devotion was his greatest treasure—a source of happiness without equal. In old age, David said: "You are my hope, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah, my confidence from my youth. And even until old age and gray-headedness, O God, do not leave me." (Ps. 71:5, 18) David's trust in Jehovah and friendship with Him became stronger, even though his physical strength had waned.

²⁰ The lives of Joshua, David, and Timothy add proof that serving Jehovah is the best way to spend your life. The short-term material advantages of a career in this world cannot approach the long-range benefits you receive from 'serving Jehovah with your whole heart and soul.' (Josh. 22:5) If you have not made a dedication to Jehovah in prayer, ask yourself, 'What is stopping me from becoming one of Jehovah's Witnesses?' If you are already a baptized worshipper of Jehovah, would you like to increase your joy in living? Then expand your ministry, and make steady spiritual progress. The following article will show you how you can grow spiritually by following the example of the apostle Paul.

20. Why is serving God the best way to spend your life?

MAKE SPIRITUAL PROGRESS BY FOLLOWING PAUL'S EXAMPLE

*"I have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish,
I have observed the faith."—2 TIM. 4:7.*

THE man was intelligent and decisive. However, he 'conducted himself in harmony with the desires of his flesh.' (Eph. 2:3) He later described himself as "a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent man." (1 Tim. 1:13) That man was Saul of Tarsus.

² In time, Saul made radical changes in his life. He put off his former ways and worked hard 'not to be seeking his own advantage but that of the many.' (1 Cor. 10:33) He be-

1, 2. What changes did Saul of Tarsus make in his life, and what important work did he take up?

came gentle and showed tender affection for those who would have been victims of his animosity. (*Read 1 Thessalonians 2:7, 8.*) "I became a minister," he wrote, adding: "To me, a man less than the least of all holy ones, this undeserved kindness was given, that I should declare to the nations the good news about the unfathomable riches of the Christ."—Eph. 3:7, 8.

³ Saul, who was also known as Paul, made

3. In what way can studying Paul's letters and the record of his ministry help us?

outstanding spiritual progress. (Acts 13:9) One sure way to accelerate our personal advancement in the truth is by studying Paul's letters and the record of his ministry and then imitating his example of faith. (*Read 1 Corinthians 11:1; Hebrews 13:7*) Let us see how doing so will motivate us to develop a good routine of personal study, to cultivate genuine love for people, and to have a proper view of ourselves.

Paul's Routine of Study

⁴ As a Pharisee who had been educated "at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strictness of the ancestral Law," Paul already had some knowledge of the Scriptures. (Acts 22:1-3; Phil. 3:4-6) Right after his baptism, he "went off into Arabia"—either the Syrian Desert or possibly some quiet place on the Arabian Peninsula that was conducive to meditation. (Gal. 1:17) Paul apparently wanted to reflect upon the scriptures that proved that Jesus was the Messiah. Moreover, Paul wanted to prepare for the work that lay ahead of him. (*Read Acts 9:15, 16, 20, 22*) Paul took time to meditate on spiritual things.

⁵ The Scriptural knowledge and insight that Paul acquired from personal study enabled him to teach the truth effectively. For example, at the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, Paul used at least five direct quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. Paul also referred to the holy writings several times. His Biblical arguments were so persuasive that "many of the Jews and of the proselytes who worshiped God followed Paul and Barnabas" in order to learn more. (Acts 13:14-44) When a group of Roman Jews came to him in his lodging place years later, Paul explained matters to them "by bearing thorough witness concerning the kingdom of God and by using persuasion with them concerning Jesus from

^{4, 5}. How did personal study benefit Paul?

both the law of Moses and the Prophets."
—Acts 28:17, 22, 23.

⁶ When facing trials, Paul continued to examine the Scriptures and derive strength from their inspired message. (Heb. 4:12) While imprisoned in Rome before his execution, Paul asked Timothy to bring him "the scrolls" and "the parchments." (2 Tim. 4:13) Those documents were likely portions of the Hebrew Scriptures that Paul used in his in-depth study. Acquiring knowledge of the Scriptures by having a routine of Bible study was essential to Paul so that he could remain steadfast.

⁷ Regular study of the Bible, accompanied by purposeful meditation, will help us to progress spiritually. (Heb. 5:12-14) Regarding the value of God's Word, the psalmist sang: "The law of your mouth is good for me, more so than thousands of pieces of gold and silver. Wiser than my enemies your commandment makes me, because to time indefinite it is mine. From every bad path I have restrained my feet, for the purpose that I may keep your word." (Ps. 119:72, 98, 101) Do you have a routine of personal Bible study? Are you preparing for future assignments in God's service by reading the Bible daily and reflecting upon what you read?

Saul Learned to Love People

⁸ Before becoming a Christian, Saul had been zealous for his religion, but he had little concern for people outside of Judaism. (Acts 26:4, 5) He watched with approval as some Jews stoned Stephen. Saul must have been emboldened by what he saw, perhaps viewing Stephen's execution as deserved punishment. (Acts 6:8-14; 7:54-8:1) The inspired account relates: "Saul . . . began to deal out-

6. What helped Paul to remain spiritually strong when facing trials?
7. Cite the benefits you can gain from regular Bible study.
8. How did Saul treat those outside of Judaism?

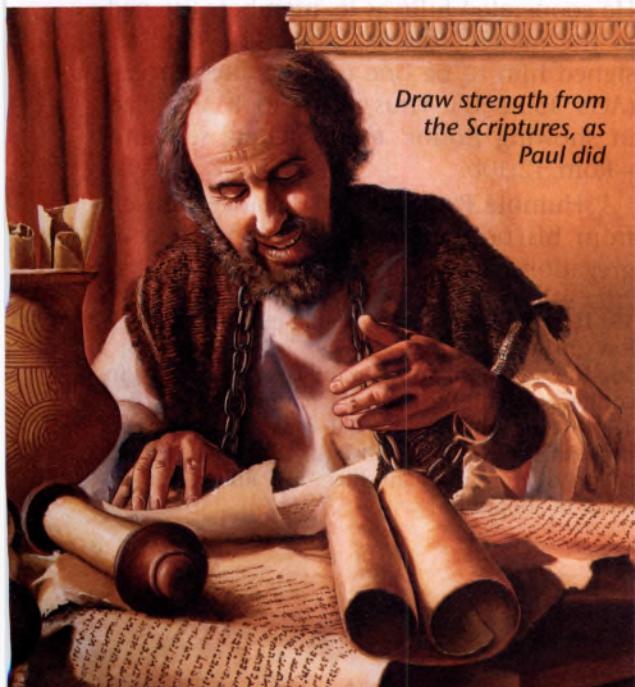
rageously with the congregation. Invading one house after another and, dragging out both men and women, he would turn them over to prison." (Acts 8:3) He "went so far as to persecuting them even in outside cities."—Acts 26:11.

⁹ When the Lord Jesus appeared to him, Saul was on his way to Damascus to harass Christ's disciples there. The supernatural brilliance of the Son of God left Saul blind and dependent on others. By the time that Jehovah used Ananias to restore Saul's sight, Saul's attitude toward people had changed forever. (Acts 9:1-30) Upon becoming a follower of Christ, he worked hard to deal with all people as Jesus did. This meant putting off violence and being "peaceable with all men."—*Read Romans 12:17-21.*

¹⁰ Paul was not content with just being at peace with others. He wanted to show them genuine love, and the Christian ministry gave him that opportunity. On his first missionary tour, he preached the good news in

9. What experience caused Saul to reexamine the way he treated people?

10, 11. How did Paul display genuine love for people?



Asia Minor. Despite fierce opposition, Paul and his associates concentrated on helping meek ones to embrace Christianity. They revisited Lystra and Iconium, even though opposers in those cities had tried to kill Paul.—Acts 13:1-3; 14:1-7, 19-23.

¹¹ Later, Paul and his group searched for rightly inclined people in the Macedonian city of Philippi. A Jewish proselyte named Lydia listened to the good news and became a Christian. The civil authorities beat Paul and Silas with rods and threw them into prison. However, Paul preached to the jailer, with the result that he and his family were baptized as worshippers of Jehovah.—Acts 16:11-34.

¹² Why did the onetime persecutor Saul embrace the faith of his victims? What motivated that insolent man to become the kind and loving apostle who was willing to risk his life so that others could learn the truth about God and Christ? Paul himself explains: "God, who . . . called me through his undeserved kindness, thought good to reveal his Son in connection with me." (Gal. 1:15, 16) To Timothy, Paul wrote: "I was shown mercy [so] that by means of me as the foremost case Christ Jesus might demonstrate all his long-suffering for a sample of those who are going to rest their faith on him for everlasting life." (1 Tim. 1:16) Jehovah forgave Paul, and receiving such undeserved kindness and mercy moved him to show love to others by preaching the good news to them.

¹³ Jehovah likewise forgives our sins and mistakes. (Ps. 103:8-14) "If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand?" asked the psalmist. (Ps. 130:3) Without God's mercy, none of us would have the joy of sacred service, nor could we look

12. What motivated insolent Saul to become a loving apostle of Jesus Christ?

13. What should move us to show love to others, and how can we do so?

forward to receiving everlasting life. God's undeserved kindness has been great toward all of us. Like Paul, therefore, we should desire to extend love to others by preaching to them and teaching them the truth and by strengthening our fellow believers.—*Read Acts 14:21-23.*

¹⁴ Paul wanted to progress as a minister of the good news, and Jesus' example touched his heart. Among the ways the Son of God showed incomparable love for people was by means of his public ministry. Jesus said: "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Matt. 9:35-38) Paul acted in harmony with any



Show love by sharing the good news with others

request he might have made for more workers by becoming a zealous worker. What about you? Can you improve the quality of your ministry? Or can you increase the share you are having in the Kingdom-preaching work, perhaps even making room in your life for pioneer service? Let us show genuine love toward others by helping them to gain "a tight grip on the word of life."—Phil. 2:16.

14. How may we be able to expand our ministry?

Paul's View of Himself

¹⁵ As a Christian minister, Paul set an outstanding example for us in yet another way. Although he received many privileges in the Christian congregation, Paul was well-aware that he did not earn those blessings and that they were not due him because of his abilities. He realized that the blessings he experienced were expressions of God's undeserved kindness. Paul recognized that other Christians were also effective ministers of the good news. Despite his standing among God's people, he remained humble.—*Read 1 Corinthians 15:9-11.*

¹⁶ Consider how Paul handled a problem that arose in the Syrian city of Antioch. The Christian congregation there was split over the issue of circumcision. (Acts 14:26-15:2) Since Paul had been appointed to take the lead in preaching to the uncircumcised Gentiles, he might have thought of himself as an expert in dealing with non-Jews and therefore well-qualified to resolve the problem. (*Read Galatians 2:8, 9.*) When his efforts did not seem to clear up the issue, however, with humility and modesty, he went along with arrangements to approach the governing body in Jerusalem to discuss the matter. He cooperated fully as its members listened to the matter, reached a decision, and assigned him to be one of their messengers. (Acts 15:22-31) Thus Paul 'took the lead in showing honor' to his fellow servants. —Rom. 12:10b.

¹⁷ Humble Paul did not distance himself from his brothers and sisters in the congregations. Rather, he became attached to

15. How did Paul view himself in relation to his fellow Christians?
16. How did Paul show humility and modesty in connection with the issue of circumcision?
- 17, 18. (a) What feeling did Paul develop toward those in the congregations? (b) What does the reaction of the Ephesian elders to Paul's departure teach us about him?



Do you know what endeared Paul to his brothers?

them. At the end of his letter to the Romans, he greeted over 20 people by name. Most of them are not mentioned anywhere else in the Scriptures, and few had special privileges. But they were loyal servants of Jehovah, and Paul loved them dearly.—Rom. 16:1-16.

¹⁸ Paul's humble and friendly manner built up the congregations. After he had met with the elders from Ephesus for the last time, "they fell upon Paul's neck and tenderly kissed him, because they were especially pained at the word he had spoken that they were going to behold his face no more." The departure of a proud, aloof man would not have caused that reaction.—Acts 20:37, 38.

¹⁹ All who wish to progress spiritually must manifest a humble spirit as Paul did. He exhorted fellow Christians to do "nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior to you." (Phil. 2:3) How can we follow that counsel? One way is by cooperating with the elders in our congregation, following their direction and upholding judicial decisions made by them. (*Read Hebrews 13:17.*) Another way is by highly es-

19. How can we show "lowliness of mind" in our dealings with fellow Christians?

teeming all our brothers and sisters in the faith. The congregations of Jehovah's people are often composed of individuals of diverse national, cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. Should we, though, not learn to treat all with impartiality and affection, as Paul did? (Acts 17:26; Rom. 12:10a) We are encouraged to "welcome one another, just as the Christ also welcomed us, with glory to God in view."—Rom. 15:7.

"Run With Endurance" the Race for Life

²⁰ The life of a Christian can be likened to a long-distance footrace. Paul wrote: "I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith. From this time on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me as a reward in that day, yet not only to me, but also to all those who have loved his manifestation."—2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

²¹ Following Paul's example will help us to run the race for eternal life successfully. (Heb. 12:1) By all means, then, let us continue to make spiritual progress by developing a good routine of personal study, by cultivating deep love for people, and by maintaining a humble attitude.

20, 21. What will help us to run the race for life successfully?

How Would You Answer?

- How did Paul benefit from regular personal study of the Scriptures?
- Why is deep love for people important for true Christians?
- Having what qualities will help you to treat others impartially?
- How can Paul's example help you to cooperate with the elders in your congregation?

PURSUE “Holiness in God’s Fear”

ATTRIBUTING holiness in the superlative degree to Jehovah God, the Bible states: “Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah.” (Isa. 6:3; Rev. 4:8) The Hebrew and Greek words for “holiness” convey the idea of purity or religious cleanliness, of being set apart from defilement. The holiness of God refers to his absolute moral perfection.

Would not the holy God, Jehovah, expect those who worship him to be holy, that is to be physically as well as morally and spiritually clean? In no uncertain terms, the Bible shows that Jehovah wants his people to be holy. We read at 1 Peter 1:16: “You must be holy, because I am holy.” Can imperfect humans really imitate Jehovah’s holiness? Yes, albeit not in the perfect sense. We can be considered holy before God if we worship him in a clean spiritual state and have a close relationship with him.

How, then, can we keep clean in a world that is morally unclean? What practices should we shun? What changes in speech and conduct may we need to make? Let us see what we can learn in this regard from what God required of the Jews returning from Babylon to their homeland in 537 B.C.E.

‘There Will Come to Be the Way of Holiness’

Jehovah foretold that his people who were in Babylonian exile would be restored to their homeland. The prophecy of restoration contained this guarantee: “There will certainly come to be a highway there, even a way; and the Way of Holiness it will be called.” (Isa. 35:8a) These words show that Jehovah not only opened the way for the Jews to get home but assured them of his protection along the way.

For his modern-day servants on earth, Jehovah opened “the Way of Holiness” leading away from Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. In 1919 he freed anointed Christians from spiritual bondage to false religion, and they progressively cleansed their worship of all false teachings. As Jehovah’s worshippers today, we enjoy a clean, tranquil spiritual environment in which we can worship Jehovah and have a peaceful relationship with him and with our fellow man.

The members of the “little flock” of anointed Christians and a growing “great crowd” of “other sheep” have chosen to walk in a way that is holy and are inviting others to

What was required in order for the Jews to walk on “the Way of Holiness”?



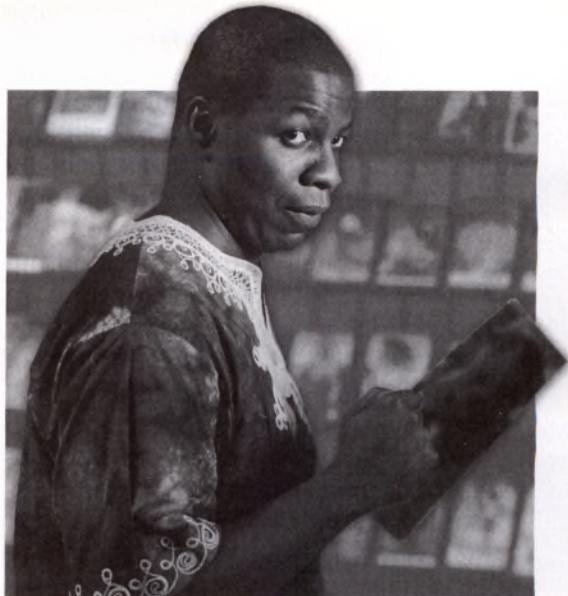
join them. (Luke 12:32; Rev. 7:9; John 10:16) “The Way of Holiness” is open to all who are willing “to present [their] bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God.”—Rom. 12:1.

“The Unclean One Will Not Pass Over It”

In 537 B.C.E., the returning Jews had to meet an important requirement. Regarding those qualified to walk on “the Way of Holiness,” Isaiah 35:8b states: “The unclean one will not pass over it. And it will be for the one walking on the way, and no foolish ones will wander about on it.” Since the purpose of the Jews’ return to Jerusalem was to reestablish pure worship, there would be no place for those who had selfish motives, lacked respect for sacred things, or were spiritually unclean. The returnees needed to maintain Jehovah’s high moral standards. Those desiring God’s favor today need to meet the same requirement. They must pursue “holiness in God’s fear.” (2 Cor. 7:1) What unclean practices, then, ought we to shun?

“The works of the flesh are manifest,” wrote the apostle Paul, “and they are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct.” (Gal. 5:19) Fornication has to do with all sexual activity involving the use of the genital organs that is carried on outside the bonds of marriage. Loose conduct involves “licentiousness; wantonness; shameless conduct; lewdness of conduct.” Both fornication and loose conduct are clearly contrary to Jehovah’s holiness. Hence, those who continue to practice such things are not allowed to become part of the Christian congregation or are disfellowshipped from it. The same is true of those who practice gross uncleanness, that is, “uncleanness of every sort with greediness.”—Eph. 4:19.

“Uncleanness” is a term that covers a wide range of sins. The Greek word for it refers to impurity or filth of any kind—in con-



Pornography damages one's relationship with Jehovah

duct, in speech, and in spiritual relationships. It includes practices involving a degree of uncleanness that may not warrant judicial action.* But are those who practice such uncleanness pursuing a course of holiness?

Suppose a Christian secretly begins to view pornography. Little by little, as unclean desires are aroused, his resolve to remain clean before Jehovah is undermined. His conduct may not yet have escalated to the point of becoming gross uncleanness, but he is not continuing to consider only ‘whatever things are chaste, well spoken of, virtuous, and praiseworthy.’ (Phil. 4:8) Pornography is unclean and certainly damages one’s relationship with God. Uncleanness of any sort should not even be mentioned among us.—Eph. 5:3.

Consider another example. Say a Christian makes a practice of masturbation—deliberately stimulating himself to cause sexual excitement—whether this is accompani-

* For a discussion of what distinguishes “uncleanness . . . with greediness” from “uncleanness,” see *The Watchtower*, July 15, 2006, pages 29-31.

by pornography or not. Although the term "masturbation" does not occur in the Bible, can there be any doubt that it is a mentally and emotionally defiling practice? Would not continued defilement of this sort seriously damage one's personal relationship with Jehovah and make one unclean in God's sight? Let us take to heart the apostle Paul's admonition to "cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit" and "deaden [our] body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness."—2 Cor. 7:1; Col. 3:5.

This world ruled by Satan tolerates unclean conduct, even encourages it. Resisting the temptation to engage in unclean behavior may present a real challenge. But true Christians must not be "walking just as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds." (Eph. 4:17) Only if we avoid unclean conduct, secret or otherwise, will Jehovah allow us to continue walking on "the Way of Holiness."

"No Lion Will Prove to Be There"

To enjoy the favor of the holy God, Jehovah, may require that some make radical changes in conduct and in speech. Isaiah 35:9 states: "No lion will prove to be there, and the rapacious sort of wild beasts will not come up on it," that is, "the Way of Holiness."



ness." Figuratively speaking, people who are violent and aggressive in action and speech are compared to wild beasts. They will certainly have no place in God's new world of righteousness. (Isa. 11:6; 65:25) It is therefore essential that those desiring God's approval leave such beastly personality traits behind and pursue a course of holiness.

"Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness," the Scriptures admonish us. (Eph. 4:31) At Colossians 3:8, we read: "Put them all away from you, wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk out of your mouth." The expression "abusive speech" used in these two verses basically refers to injurious, degrading, or blasphemous talk.

Today, hurtful, vulgar speech has become very common, even in the home. Married couples hurl biting, cruel, or demeaning remarks at each other and at their children. This type of verbal aggression should not exist in Christian homes.—1 Cor. 5:11.

Pursuing "Holiness in God's Fear"—A Blessing!

What a privilege it is to serve the holy God, Jehovah! (Josh. 24:19) The spiritual paradise into which Jehovah has brought us is very precious. Maintaining our conduct holy in Jehovah's sight is certainly the best way of life.

Very soon God's promised earthly Paradise will become a reality. (Isa. 35:1, 2, 5-7) Those who yearn for it and who keep on pursuing a godly course will be blessed with a place there. (Isa. 65:17, 21) By all means, then, let us continue to worship God in a clean spiritual state and maintain a close relationship with him.

"Let all . . . screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you"

How the Governing Body Is Organized

THE Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses consists of dedicated men who are anointed servants of God. They act as representatives of the faithful and discreet slave class, which has the responsibility of providing spiritual food and giving direction and impetus to the Kingdom-preaching work throughout the earth.—Matt. 24:14, 45-47.

Governing Body meetings are held each week, usually on Wednesday. This enables these brothers to work together in unity. (Ps. 133:1) The members of the Governing Body also serve on various committees. In caring for Kingdom interests, each committee has its area of oversight, as briefly outlined below.

■ **COORDINATORS' COMMITTEE:** This committee is made up of the coordinator of each of the other Governing Body committees and a secretary who is also a member of the Governing Body. It makes sure that all the committees operate smoothly and efficiently. It also concerns itself with major emergencies, persecutions, disasters, and other urgent matters affecting Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide.

■ **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:** The brothers on this committee have been entrusted with oversight of the arrangements for the personal and spiritual welfare and assistance of Bethel family members earth wide. This committee oversees the selecting and inviting of new members of Bethel families and handles questions regarding their Bethel service.

■ **PUBLISHING COMMITTEE:** This committee supervises the printing, publishing, and shipping of Bible literature worldwide. It has oversight of printeries and properties owned and operated by the various corporations used by Jehovah's Witnesses. This committee arranges

for the best use of funds donated for the worldwide Kingdom work.

■ **SERVICE COMMITTEE:** Those on this committee have oversight of the preaching work and matters affecting congregations, pioneers, elders, and traveling overseers. It supervises the preparation of *Our Kingdom Ministry* and calls in Gilead School and Ministerial Training School students, later giving them postgraduate assignments.

■ **TEACHING COMMITTEE:** This committee oversees the instruction provided at assemblies, conventions, and congregation meetings. It arranges spiritual programs for Bethel family members and has oversight of various schools, such as Gilead School and the Pioneer Service School, as well as of the development of audio and video programs.

■ **WRITING COMMITTEE:** It is the responsibility of this committee to supervise the putting of spiritual food into written form for publication and distribution to fellow believers and the general public. This committee answers Bible questions and approves such material as drama scripts and talk outlines. It also oversees the translation work done worldwide.

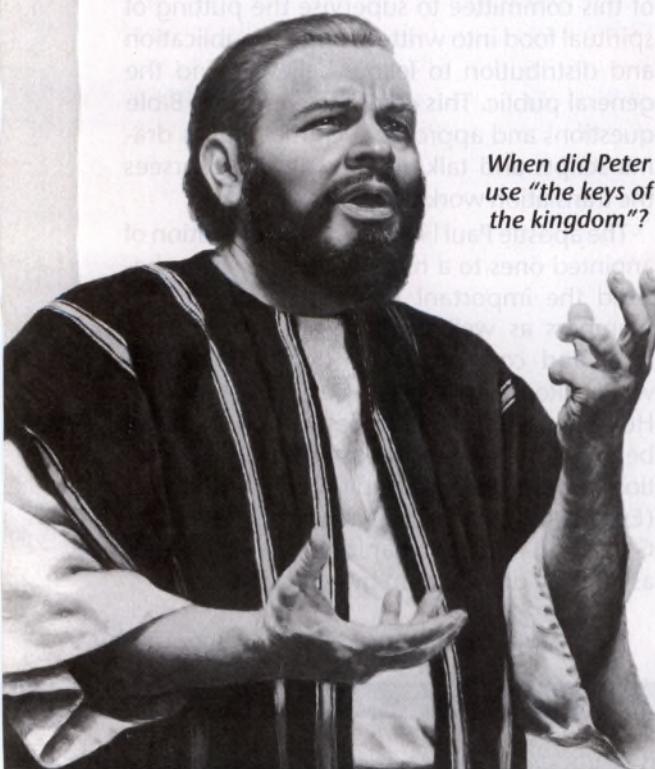
The apostle Paul likened the congregation of anointed ones to a human body and emphasized the important places occupied by all members as well as their interdependency, love, and cooperation in doing God-given work. (Rom. 12:4, 5; 1 Cor. 12:12-31) The Head, Jesus Christ, supplies the body members with what is needed for good cooperation, coordination, and spiritual nourishment. (Eph. 4:15, 16; Col. 2:19) In such respects, the Governing Body is organized to take the lead as Jehovah directs them by holy spirit.

Jehovah's Word Is Alive

Highlights From the Book of Acts

THE Bible book of Acts provides a comprehensive history of the establishment of the Christian congregation and its subsequent expansion. Written by the physician Luke, it presents a dynamic account of Christian activity over a period of some 28 years—from 33 C.E. to 61 C.E.

The first part of Acts is primarily about the activity of the apostle Peter, and the latter part is about that of the apostle Paul. By using such pronouns as "we" and "us," Luke indicates that he was present when certain events occurred. Paying attention to the message of the book of Acts will heighten our appreciation for the power of God's written Word and his holy spirit. (Heb. 4:12) It will also move us to be self-sacrificing and will build up our faith in the Kingdom hope.



When did Peter use "the keys of the kingdom"?

PETER USES

"THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM"

(Acts 1:1–11:18)

After receiving the holy spirit, the apostles give a bold witness. Peter uses the first of "the keys of the kingdom of the heavens" to open the door of knowledge and opportunity for Jews and proselytes who "embraced his word" to enter the Kingdom. (Matt. 16:19; Acts 2:5, 41) A wave of persecution scatters disciples, but this results in expansion of the preaching work.

Upon hearing that Samaria has accepted the word of God, the apostles in Jerusalem dispatch Peter and John to them. By opening up the Kingdom opportunity to the Samaritans, Peter uses the second key. (Acts 8:14–17) Perhaps within a year of Jesus' resurrection, an amazing transformation takes place in Saul of Tarsus. In 36 C.E., Peter uses the third key, and the free gift of the holy spirit is poured out upon uncircumcised people of the nations.—Acts 10:45.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

2:44–47; 4:34, 35—Why did believers sell their possessions and distribute the proceeds? Many who became believers had come from faraway places and were without enough provisions to extend their stay in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, they desired to remain there longer in order to learn more about their new faith and to bear witness to others. To help such ones, some Christians sold their property, and the funds were distributed to the needy.

4:13—Were Peter and John illiterate or uneducated? No, they were not. They were

called "unlettered and ordinary" because they did not attend rabbinic schools for religious training.

5:34-39—How could Luke know what Gamaliel had said in a closed session of the Sanhedrin? There are at least three possibilities: (1) Paul, formerly a student of Gamaliel, informed Luke; (2) Luke consulted a sympathetic member of the Sanhedrin, such as Nicodemus; (3) Luke received this information through divine inspiration.

7:59—Was Stephen praying to Jesus? No, he was not. One's worship—and therefore one's prayers—should go only to Jehovah God. (Luke 4:8; 6:12) Under normal circumstances, Stephen would have appealed to Jehovah in the name of Jesus. (John 15:16) In this instance, though, Stephen had a vision of "the Son of man standing at God's right hand." (Acts 7:56) Fully aware that Jesus had been given the power to resurrect the dead, Stephen spoke, but did not pray, directly to Jesus, asking Him to safeguard his spirit. —John 5:27-29.

Lessons for Us:

1:8. The worldwide work of witnessing done by Jehovah's worshippers cannot be accomplished without the help of the holy spirit.

4:36-5:11. Joseph of Cyprus was surnamed Barnabas, which means "Son of Comfort." The apostles may have given him the name Barnabas because he was warm-hearted, kind, and helpful to others. We should be like him and not like Ananias and Sapphira, who resorted to pretense, hypocrisy, and deviousness.

9:23-25. To elude our enemies in order to continue preaching is not cowardly.

9:28-30. If witnessing in certain neighborhoods or to some individuals becomes physically, morally, or spiritually hazardous,



The worldwide work of witnessing could not be done without the help of the holy spirit

we need to be prudent and selective about where and when we preach.

9:31. During relatively peaceful times, we should strive to fortify our faith through study and meditation. This will help us to walk in the fear of Jehovah by applying what we learn and to be zealous in the ministry.

PAUL'S ZEALOUS MINISTRY (Acts 11:19-28:31)

In 44 C.E., Agabus comes to Antioch, where Barnabas and Saul have been teaching "for a whole year." Agabus foretells "a great famine," which takes place two years later. (Acts 11:26-28) "After having fully carried out the relief ministration in Jerusalem," Barnabas and Saul return to Antioch. (Acts 12:25) In 47 C.E.—about 12 years after Saul's conversion—Barnabas and Saul are sent out by the holy spirit on a missionary tour. (Acts 13:1-4) In 48 C.E., they return to Antioch, "where they had been entrusted to the undeserved kindness of God."—Acts 14:26.

Some nine months later, Paul (also known as Saul) selects Silas as his companion and sets out on his second tour. (Acts 15:40) Timothy and Luke join Paul along the way. Luke stays in Philippi as Paul continues on to Athens and then to Corinth, where he meets Aquila and Priscilla and spends a year and six

months. (Acts 18:11) Leaving Timothy and Silas in Corinth, Paul takes Aquila and Priscilla with him and sails away for Syria early in 52 C.E. (Acts 18:18) Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him as far as Ephesus, where they remained.

After spending some time in Syrian Antioch, Paul embarks upon his third tour, in 52 C.E. (Acts 18:23) In Ephesus, "the word of Jehovah [keeps] growing and prevailing." (Acts 19:20) Paul spends about three years there. (Acts 20:31) By Pentecost of 56 C.E., Paul is in Jerusalem. After being arrested, he gives a fearless witness before the authorities. In Rome, the apostle is placed under house arrest for two years (c. 59-61 C.E.), and from there he finds ways to preach about the Kingdom and teach "the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts 28:30, 31.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

14:8-13—Why did people in Lystra call "Barnabas Zeus, but Paul Hermes"? Zeus was the ruler of the gods in Greek mythology, and his son Hermes was known for his eloquence. Since Paul took the lead in speaking, the people of Lystra called him Hermes and Barnabas they called Zeus.

16:6, 7—Why did the holy spirit forbid Paul and his associates to preach in the district of Asia and Bithynia? There were just a few workers. Hence, the holy spirit directed them to more fruitful fields.

18:12-17—Why did Proconsul Gallio not interfere when onlookers began beating Sosthenes? Gallio perhaps thought that the man who seemed to be the leader of the mob action against Paul was getting what he deserved. However, this incident apparently had a good outcome in that it led to Sosthenes' conversion to Christianity. Later, Paul speaks of Sosthenes as "our brother."—1 Cor. 1:1.

18:18—What vow did Paul make? Some scholars suggest that Paul had taken a Nazi-

rite vow. (Num. 6:1-21) However, the Bible does not state what Paul's vow was. Moreover, the Scriptures are silent as to whether the vow was made before or after Paul's conversion or if he was starting or ending the vow. Whatever was the case, the taking of such a vow was not sinful.

Lessons for Us:

12:5-11. We can and should pray for our brothers.

12:21-23; 14:14-18. Herod readily accepted glory that should be given only to God. How that differed from the immediate and emphatic rejection of undue praise and honor by Paul and Barnabas! We should not desire glory for whatever accomplishments we may have in Jehovah's service.

14:5-7. Exercising prudence can help us remain active in service.—Matt. 10:23.

14:22. Christians expect tribulations. They do not try to escape them by compromising their faith.—2 Tim. 3:12.

16:1, 2. Christian youths should apply themselves spiritually and seek Jehovah's help to build up a good reputation.

16:3. We should do all we can within Scriptural bounds to make the good news acceptable to others.—1 Cor. 9:19-23.

20:20, 21. House-to-house witnessing is an essential aspect of our ministry.

20:24; 21:13. Maintaining integrity to God is more important than preserving our life.

21:21-26. We should be willing and eager to accept good advice.

25:8-12. Christians today can and should make use of available legal provisions "in the defending and legally establishing of the good news."—Phil. 1:7.

26:24, 25. We should declare "sayings of truth and of soundness of mind" even though they are foolishness to "a physical man."—1 Cor. 2:14.