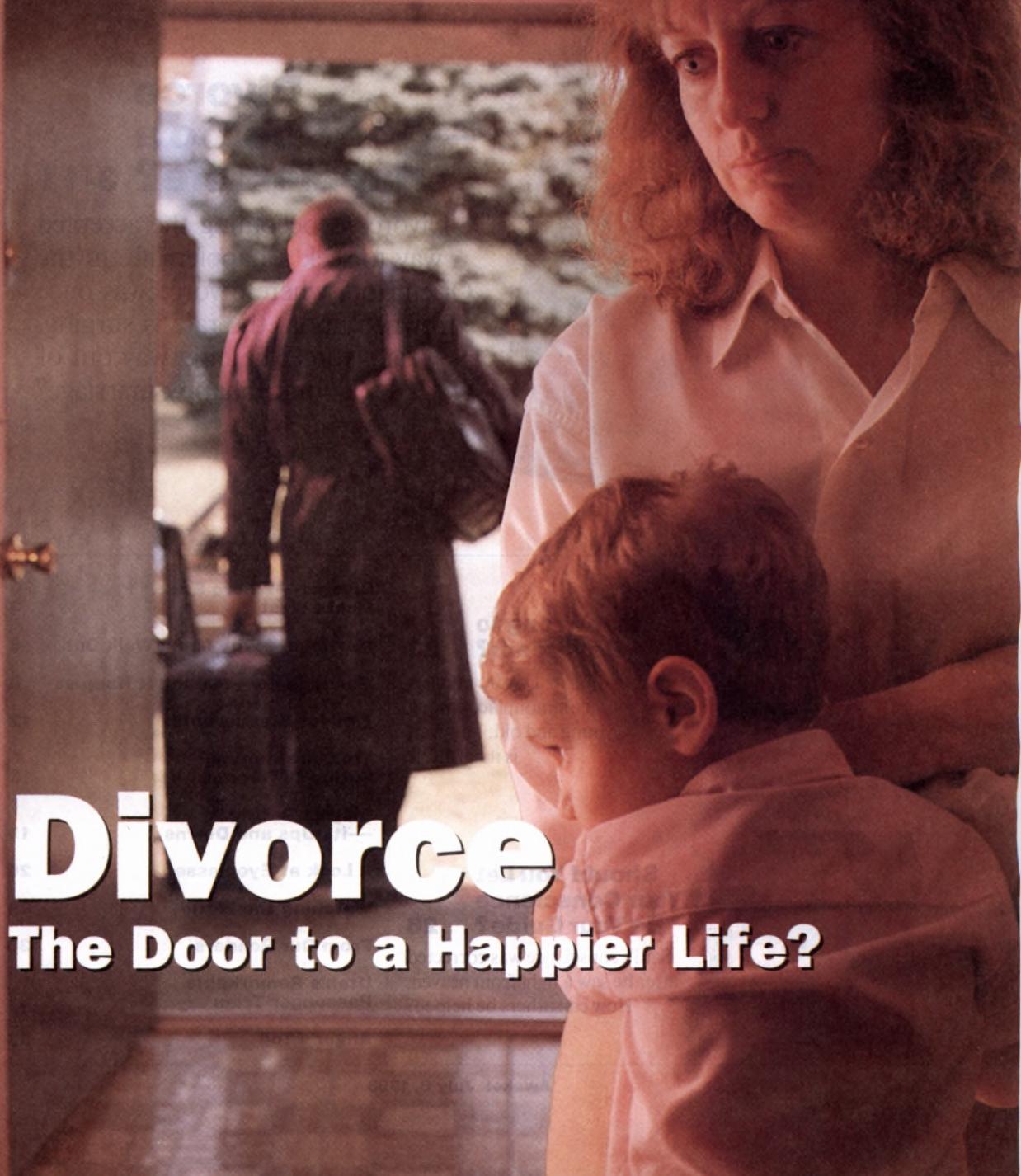


Awake!

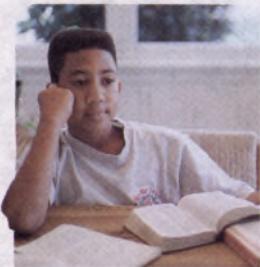
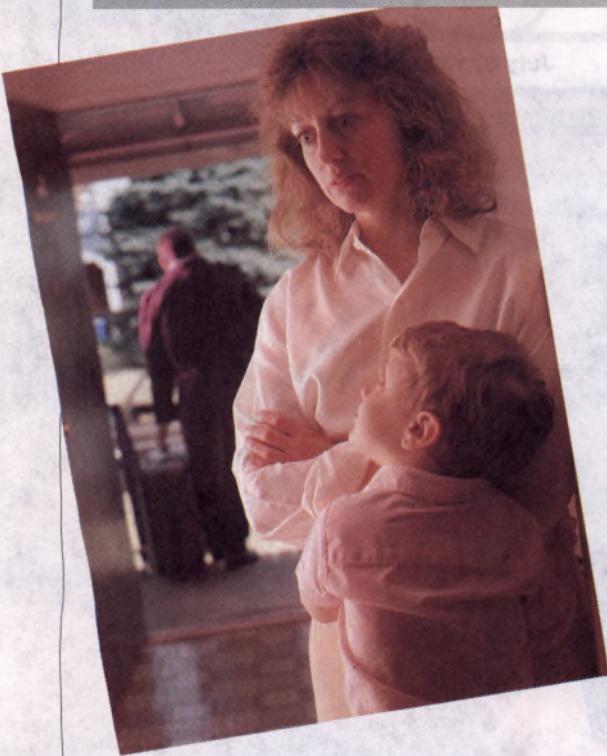
July 8, 1993



Divorce The Door to a Happier Life?

Divorce —The Door to a Happier Life? 3-11

Divorce is becoming the accepted way to seek a happier life. In the Orient too, where divorce was once frowned upon, the rate is surging. Is divorce the only way out of an unhappy marriage?



Is It Wrong to Daydream? 23

Daydreaming is commonplace among young and old; however, is it harmful?



Should You Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide? 26

Saul's conscience was corrected after he saw a light from heaven. How can others be helped?

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LET ME retire from my work too." These words came as a surprise to an executive retiring from a major Japanese trading company. His wife wanted to retire from being his mate and homemaker. Their country is experiencing an upsurge in its divorce rate, which, surprisingly, engulfs the middle-aged and older. Among those in their 50's and 60's, the number of divorces has tripled in 20 years. Giving up on their marriage seems to have become their last opportunity to find a happier life.

At the other end of the age scale, younger couples who become disillusioned with each other during their honeymoons decide to have a *Narita rikon* (Narita divorce). Narita is Tokyo's international airport, and the expression refers to newlywed couples who say goodbye to each other and their marriage when they arrive back at Narita. In fact, 1 out of 4 or 5

couples seek divorce in Japan. They view divorce as the door to a happier life.

Even in Hong Kong, where old Chinese values are still strong, the divorce rate more than doubled in the six years between 1981 and 1987. In Singapore, divorce among both Muslims and non-Muslims increased almost 70 percent between 1980 and 1988.

Admittedly, women's viewpoints in the East have long been repressed. For example, in the old days in Japan, a husband could divorce his wife with just "three and a half lines" of writing. All he had to do was write down in three-and-a-half lines a statement confirming the divorce and hand the piece of paper to his wife. His wife, on the other hand, had no easy way to obtain a divorce except by taking refuge in a temple that offered sanctuary to women running away from bullying husbands. With no means to support themselves, wives have had to bear loveless marriages and even their husbands' extramarital affairs.

Divorce

Where East Meets West

By **Awake!** correspondent in Japan

Today, many a husband who plunges into the corporate system virtually abandons his family. He sees nothing wrong in living for his company. With such devotion to work, he neglects his wife's need to be heard and looks upon her as an unpaid servant who cooks, cleans, and washes for him.

The influx of Western ideas, however, is transforming the way that Eastern women view marriage and married life. "The 'liberation' of women," observes *Asia Magazine*, "is implicitly the single-most important factor in leading to the rising divorce rate in Asia." Anthony Yeo, director of Singapore's Counselling and Care Centre, said: "Women have become more assertive of their rights and more conscious of their dignity. They are no longer willing to sit back and take things quietly. Today's women have more options and less tolerance of neglect and abuse. And divorce is a real option for those who cannot find marital happiness, especially when the stigma surrounding it has been largely lifted and is not what it used to be 25 years ago."

Western countries too have undergone a profound change during the past quarter century. Samuel H. Preston called the change "the earthquake that shuddered through the American family in the past 20 years." In 1985 almost a quarter of all homes with children under 18 were single-parent homes, mostly because of divorce. It is forecast that 60 percent of children born in 1984 may be living in a single-parent home before they reach 18.

A Fruitage of "Live-in Divorce"

UNDERNEATH the number of actual divorces lurk "dormant" divorces. In Japan, where many women are still economically dependent on their husbands and subjected to the persisting tradition of male domination, couples may reluctantly live under the same roof in a condition termed "live-in divorce." In such a situation, wives tend to pour all their energy into child rearing. These mothers are often overprotective, making it difficult for the children later to stand on their own feet.

As a result, when such mothers' sons grow up and marry, many of them suffer from a "no-touch syndrome." These never lovingly touch their wives at all, even after several years of married life. They suffer from what has been labeled the "I love Mummy" problem and often got married because their mothers told them to. According to the *Asahi Evening News*, Dr. Yasushi Narabayashi, who specializes in marriage counseling, says that the problem has been growing for a decade and that there are tens of thousands of men afraid to seek advice because of their shame.

With the institution of marriage weakening, is divorce really the door to a happier life? To answer let us first examine what caused people to view divorce as the panacea for their family problems.

Awake!

Why Awake! Is Published *Awake!* is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

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Marriage

Why Many Walk Out

FOCUSING on divorce in Hong Kong, where Eastern and Western cultures exist side by side, *Asia Magazine* observed: "Lack of communication, infidelity, sexual difficulties and incompatibility are factors which are usually at the heart of marital conflict with both Chinese and Western couples." The story is the same elsewhere in the world.

Both men and women with career-first mentalities are quick to sacrifice their families for their work. Thus, they slam closed the shutters on family communication. Tired after a day of work, the husband buries his head in the newspaper. Junichi and his wife operated three restaurants and worked from eight in the morning until ten at night in different places. "There was virtually no communication between us as husband and wife," admits Junichi. This lack of communication led to serious marital problems.

Another factor leading to breaking of marriage bonds is people's view of extramarital

sex. Sex outside of marriage is now so rampant that 20 percent of the males and 8 percent of the females who responded to a survey in Japan admitted that they had had sexual contacts outside their monogamous relationships within the past year. Not unusual is the career woman in Japan who went out with men other than her husband. She flitted from one man to another, thinking, "If my husband finds out, I'll just divorce him." Modern society winks at these affairs.

This same society promotes a me-first attitude, so that both husband and wife become self-centered, which leads in turn to

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incompatibility, another cause of divorce. "We as a couple could have separated anytime," says Kiyoko. "As soon as we were married, my husband told me to be a robot and just do as I was told. When things were going well for him, it was not too bad, but when things got rough, he wouldn't admit his faults and blamed everything on others. I was also to blame, since I used to rebel against authority. I found it very difficult to obey my husband when he was being unjust."

Other reasons for divorce are violence and drunkenness, financial problems, difficulties with in-laws, and mental abuse.

What Is Behind It All?

However varied the reasons for divorce are, there is something more behind its worldwide surge. Although the East blames the influence of Western society for its ills, the acceptance of divorce in the West is a recent phenomenon. In fact, divorces in the United States tripled and in Britain quadrupled over just the past few decades. Andrew J. Cherlin of The Urban Institute (a research organization investigating social and economic problems in the United States), though admitting that the causes for the rise in divorce are not well understood, lists "the increasing economic independence of women" and "societywide attitudinal shifts" as being among the factors behind the trend.

For women in the United States, as well as those in other industrialized countries, to be married and working outside their home is no longer unusual. However, the husband's portion of the household chores has been very slow to increase. It is no wonder that some women mutter: "What every employed woman needs most is a wife!"

While women work their fingers to the bone washing, cleaning, fixing meals, and caring for children, in the United States, "many men enjoy time spent in 'hanging around,'" says the book *The Changing American Family*

and Public Policy. This is observed the world over, say anthropologists. In Japan it is not unusual for menfolk to go out socializing after work. They claim that it is a must for smooth human relationships at their workplace, while they ignore smooth human relationships at home. Since men, according to their logic, are the breadwinners, women and children should not complain. With more women working, however, such thinking is shown to be mere rationalizing.

Another major factor contributing to marital failure is the "societywide attitudinal shifts" or, as the *Journal of Marriage and the Family* puts it, "a decline in the ideal of marital permanence." To brides and grooms of the 1990's, the traditional marriage vow of "till death do us part" no longer means just that. They remain on the lookout for a better mate. If that is how newlywed couples view their bond, how strong will it be?

These social changes are not at all surprising to students of the Bible. This inspired book reveals that since 1914 we have been living in the "the last days," which are "critical times hard to deal with." People are "lovers of themselves, . . . unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement." (2 Timothy 3:1-3) So to people who love themselves more than their mates, who become disloyal to their spouses, and who cannot come to any agreement in their marriage, divorce becomes the only way out of their marital problems.

A Door to a Happier Life?

Divorce, in most cases, has not proved itself to be a door to happiness.* "Divorce is deceptive," says mental-health researcher Judith Wallerstein after a 15-year survey of 60 divorced couples. "Legally it is a single event, but psychologically it is a chain—sometimes a never-ending chain—of events, relocations

* A legal divorce or a legal separation may provide a measure of protection from extreme abuse or willful nonsupport.



Couples today often cannot communicate with each other

For these, a reshaped personality arises, usually from the ashes of the old. For example, once the shock of a divorce and its accompanying grief and doubts about self-worth are over, an innocent mate may emerge from the ordeal a stronger, more vital, whole person.

One wife whose husband left her for another woman explains that after the hurt and anger start to subside, "you find that you are different inside. Your feelings have changed. You can never be the person you were before." She advises: "Take time to get to know yourself as an individual again. In marriage the mates generally subdue their likes and desires in deference to the other person, but after a divorce, time should be taken to find out what your likes and dislikes are now. If you bury your feelings, you bury them alive. One day they will come back, and you will have to face

them. So you might as well face your feelings and work through them."

Because of an increasing awareness of the problems divorce poses, it is becoming less attractive as an option. *Time* magazine reports that a growing minority of counselors are now encouraging troubled couples: "Stay together." David Elkind of Tufts University wrote: "Experiencing a divorce is a little like breaking your leg on a ski trip: No matter how many other people at the lodge break their leg, your broken leg doesn't hurt any less."

Divorce is not an easy way out of marital problems. What, then, is a better way to resolve marital differences?

and radically shifting relationships strung through time." Her studies show that a quarter of the women and a fifth of the men had not got their lives back on track a decade after divorce.

Especially vulnerable are the children of divorce. From the same research, Wallerstein found that for virtually all the children involved, divorce exerted "powerful and wholly unanticipated effects." Some children who deny any negative feelings over their parents' divorce may suddenly find such emotions surfacing later on in their lives when they seek a marriage mate.

This is not to imply that all victims of divorce will never find happiness, since some do.

Married Life

Making It Happier

What can make marriage a success?

Whose guidance can lead to marital happiness?

How can communication problems be solved?

InFLUENCED by books they read on women's liberation, Yasuhiro and his girl-friend, Kayoko, started to live together, thinking they could dissolve their relationship anytime. Only after Kayoko became pregnant did they legalize their marriage. Yasuhiro, however, continued to have doubts about the family arrangement. With the advent of financial problems and a sense of incompatibility, there was nothing to stop them from divorcing.

Some time after their divorce, and unknown to each other, both Yasuhiro and Kayoko started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. After a while, each learned of this and could observe the changes made in the other's life through applying Bible principles. They decided to remarry. Now, with their godly view of marriage, they are willing to make sacrifices to solve their problems.

What made their second marriage a success? It was their respect for the Originator of marriage. (Genesis 2:18-24) The guidance given by the most experienced marriage counselor, Jehovah God, is the key that opens the door to marital happiness.

The Key to Marital Happiness

Marital problems can be solved and marriages saved when both mates apply what Je-

sus Christ said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this, "You must love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-39) Here is the key to marital happiness. Both husband and wife must love Jehovah before loving themselves or each other. This relationship may be compared to a threefold cord. "If somebody could overpower one alone, two together could make a stand against him. And a threefold cord cannot quickly be torn in two."

—Ecclesiastes 4:12.

As the love of God means observing his commandments, the husband and the wife must put his laws and principles on human behavior first in their life. By doing so they are making a threefold cord of which the strongest thread is their love for Jehovah. And "his commandments are not burdensome," says 1 John 5:3.

This leads to viewing marriage as a permanent arrangement. (Malachi 2:16) With such a foundation in their marriage, a couple will be moved to resolve marital problems instead of walking out of the back door by getting a divorce.

Showing Love for Your Nearest Neighbor

To have a permanent bond with your mate, you must nurture your love for him or her, your nearest neighbor. This love must be unselfish. Notice how the Bible encourages this principle: "Have the same love, being joined together in soul, holding the one thought in mind, doing nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior to you, keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others." —Philippians 2:2-4.

Granted, it is difficult to do nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism in this selfish world. When your mate does not take the initiative in showing love, unselfishness is even harder; but by putting on lowliness of mind, considering that your mate is superior to you, you will find it easier to give thought to your mate's interests. The Bible admonishes us to have the mental attitude that was in Christ Jesus. He was a mighty spirit, but he "took a slave's form," becoming a man. Not only that, but when he was on the earth, he "humbled himself and became obedient as far as death," which benefited even men who did not welcome him. (Philippians 2:5-8) By displaying this attitude, Jesus won the hearts of many opposers, and by imitating Jesus, so did his followers. (Acts 6:7; 9:1, 2, 17, 18) The same can happen for you. By viewing your mate as superior to you and keeping an eye in personal interest on the matters of your mate, you may gradually win his or her heart.

However, viewing your mate as superior does not require passive resignation of a wife to a husband's tyranny, as has been the case in the East. Both the husband and the wife must view each other as superior in that each is willing to make sacrifices for the other. When a couple talk over their problems with this lowliness of mind, reflect an unselfish interest

in each other, and follow divine counsel, they are well on the road to solving their problems. Let us now consider some of God's counsel.

Let "the Marriage Bed Be Without Defilement"

Jehovah, who initiated the marriage arrangement, has a blueprint for the proper

When Divorce Is an Option

ALTHOUGH the Bible makes allowance for divorce and remarriage on the grounds of fornication, the adultery does not automatically end the relationship between husband and wife. The innocent spouse has the option of either obtaining a divorce or not.—Matthew 19:9.

Yasuko faced this decision. Her husband had made another home with his mistress. Her husband's mother blamed Yasuko and said: "It's all your fault that my son is behaving this way." Yasuko wept day in and day out. Many gave her advice, but none condemned her husband's affair. Then, her own mother, who had started to study the Bible, told her: "In the Bible, it is clearly stated that committing adultery is wrong." (1 Corinthians 6:9) Yasuko was very much relieved to know that there is still a standard for good and bad in this world today.

Now Yasuko had a choice. Although she thought of divorcing her husband, she could see after studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses that she was not doing her part either. So she decided to test the Bible principles in solving her problems. She started applying them. (Ephesians 5: 21-23) "It was not easy," she recalls. "I kept experiencing relapses again and again. Many were the times I prayed to Jehovah in tears." As she changed, her husband gradually changed too. Some five years later, her husband severed all ties with his mistress. Yasuko concludes: "I am convinced that obeying the Word of God is definitely beneficial."

relationship between a man and his wife. When asked whether it is lawful for a man to divorce his wife on every sort of ground, Jesus Christ said: "What God has yoked together let no man put apart." He indicated that there is only one legitimate basis for divorce and remarriage by further saying: "I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery."—Matthew 19:3-9.

Extramarital sex, even if practiced in the name of love, is not loving at all, for either party. A man in central Japan was carrying on affairs with several women outside his marriage. His wife became suspicious and frustrated. Their marriage faced a crisis. Then the day came when one of his lovers told him that she was going to make her existence known to his wife and demanded that he marry her. "Such relationships make nobody happy," he recalls with penitence. He came out of this mire only after hurting everybody involved.



The Bible's standard is clear-cut on this matter. "Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers." (Hebrews 13:4) By observing this command, one avoids sexually transmitted diseases, marital strain, and the stress of a hidden love affair.

Husbands, Love and Cherish Your Wives

The principle of headship within the family has also been outlined by God. "Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is head of his wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation," states Ephesians 5:22, 23. Applying this counsel is not easy. "It was a mountainous challenge for me," admits Shoko, who had been usurping her husband's right to make final decisions. Thinking that a man should buy a house when he reached his late 20's, she forced her husband to buy one she had gone ahead and found. When she learned the Bible principles involved, however, she began to view her husband in a different light. What seemed to be a passive and unmanly character was, when seen in proper perspective, discerning, humble, and meek.

This principle requires husbands to be aware that they are under the higher authority of Christ Jesus. (1 Corinthians 11:3) Being under Christ's authority, a husband is to love and cherish his wife the same way Jesus loves his

Respecting Bible principles will help a couple to communicate freely

Sexual Incompatibility and Divorce

MANY couples cite sexual incompatibility as their reason for divorce. Pointing out where the problem lies, a book dealing with today's changing family arrangement, entitled *Sekkushuaritii to Kazoku* (Sexuality and Family), says: "A monogamous marriage arrangement and erotomania sex information today do not go hand in hand. The flood of sex information distorts conjugal Eros and shreds ordinary affection to pieces. Not just the merchandising of sex but pornographic videotapes and comic books that depict female bodies as commodities pervert human senses and hearts. Thus, wives are afflicted with [their husbands'] rapelike sex, and husbands who are rejected become impotent."

Immoral publications, videos, and TV programs distort sex. They do not teach what constitutes real enjoyment of matrimony. They also destroy the trust that a husband and wife must cultivate in order to have a suc-

cessful marriage. *Psychology Today* states: "Trust enables you to put your deepest feelings and fears in the palm of your partner's hand, knowing they will be handled with care. While feelings of love or sexual excitement may wax and wane over time, ideally, trust is a constant."

Sex is not the pivot on which a successful married life turns. A wife who has gone through difficult marital problems says: "What encouraged me most were the words in the book *Making Your Family Life Happy*: 'Generally speaking, if all the other relationships in the marriage are good, if there are love, respect, good communication and understanding, then sex will seldom be a problem.'**

The real bonding agent between spouses is not sex but love. Sex without love is futile, but love can stand alone. By putting sex in its place, not making it the center of their lives, a couple can enjoy their partnership and solve the problem of sexual incompatibility.

* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

followers. (Ephesians 5:28-30) Thus, a Christian husband will thoughtfully consider his wife's feelings, wishes, and limitations before making decisions.

"Seasoned With Salt"

Hisako had problems communicating with her husband. Whenever she tried to discuss something with him, he would shy away by saying: "Do as you please." Hisako recalls: "I think a lack of tenderness on my part was the cause of our problem. It might have been better if I had talked at a slower tempo." Today, she and her husband can discuss matters with smiles on their faces. The change has come about since Hisako applied the following counsel: "Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt, so as to know how you ought to give an answer to each one." (Colossians 4:6) As food seasoned

with salt is more palatable, well-thought-out words uttered in a gracious manner are easier to take. (Proverbs 15:1) In fact, just by being considerate in how you talk, marital discord can often be prevented.

Yes, loving Jehovah God and respecting his principles really does work. Love for Jehovah motivates you to view your marriage as a permanent bond and helps you to be determined to preserve it. God has provided sound guidelines that will help you to deal with all marital discord and solve your problems, however mountainous they may seem. No, in most cases divorce is not the door to a happier life, but the applying of Bible principles is. You can open that door by cultivating your love for Jehovah. Why not learn more about his counsel from the most authoritative marriage guidance book, the Bible?

THE U.S. Bureau of the Census predicts that stepfamilies will outnumber traditional families by 1995. By then, 59 out of every 100 children will live in "blended families" (families with a step-parent) before they reach 18 years of age. Following are just a few suggestions to help the growing number of stepparents.

Give It Time: Stepparents must remember that it takes time for stepchildren to accept a new parent. Mental-health professional Mavis Hetherington explains why the first few months—or years—can be so difficult: "In the early stages of remarriage, both sons and daughters are hostile, sulking, negativistic and angry not only at their stepfather but at their mother. They're mad... at their mother for remarrying." Stepparents must try to understand the feelings of the children, challenging though that may be.—See Proverbs 19:11.

Build a Good Relationship First: Joy Conolly, in her book *Stepfamilies*, wisely cautions that stepparents will be in a better position to correct their stepchildren's behavior *after* they have built a good relationship with them. In the meanwhile, it may be best for the natural parent to handle needed discipline. (Compare Proverbs 27:6.) On the other

Tips for Stepparents



hand, stepparents can give children a sense of continuity by supporting the routines they have long enjoyed—such as taking long walks or playing games together. Stepfathers, though, should not use mealtimes as occasions to lecture the family.

Avoid Favoritism: The stepfather or the stepmother should avoid, if possible, any evidence of favoritism toward his or her natural offspring, however difficult this may be at times.—Compare Romans 2:11.

Draw Close With Caution: A recent study of stepfamilies found that it is often particularly difficult for stepfathers and stepdaughters to get along. One author put it this way: "Stepfathers reach out, and the girls shrink back. Stepfathers try to exert some discipline, and the girls fight back." The author summarizes: "It seems there is nothing a stepfather can do, early on,

with girls that is successful." Great patience and empathy are thus needed. While girls appreciate verbal praise from their stepfather, they often feel uncomfortable with physical gestures such as hugging.

The stepfather should be aware that a girl might feel this way. If she does, he should put more emphasis on verbal praise and discussion than on physical displays of affection.—Compare Proverbs 25:11.

Beware of Jealousy: Experience shows that many a stepdaughter tends to perceive a stepmother as a competitor. A stepmother who anticipates and empathizes with the girl's feelings may thereby wisely prevent unnecessary power struggles. The father can do much to relieve tension by reassuring his daughter of his continuing love and esteem. (Proverbs 15:1) Researchers caution that stepmothers often try too hard and too soon to become parent figures for their new stepdaughters. Again, patience is the key.

Being a stepparent is far from easy. But it can be done, as thousands of successful examples show. And remember, the Bible gives the best advice for success in any family situation when it says: "Clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."—Colossians 3:14.



FROM days of long ago, people have appreciated the beauty of the unlocked treasures of creation once hidden in the earth. For example, Havilah, a site associated with ancient Arabia, was renowned for colorful onyx stones. (Genesis 2:11, 12) Or imagine seeing a high priest of ancient Israel bearing a breastplate of onyx, ruby, emerald, topaz, and other gemstones—12 in all—set in gold. What a dazzling sight that must have been! (Exodus 28: 15-20) Also, great quantities of precious stones were used in building the temple in Jerusalem, dedicated to the worship of Jehovah. (1 Chronicles 29:2) Many of those gems may have been polished to great brilliance. Recent

Treasure Hunting With a Difference

archaeological finds show that thousands of years ago, people used a simple treadle machine to operate a grindstone for polishing rocks. So our present-day hobby of rock collecting is not something new.

Equipment and Location

'What equipment will I need for rock collecting?' you may ask. A rock hammer, which is square and flat at one end and pointed at the other, is essential. Paper for wrapping

specimens and a bag in which to carry them will suffice. See? Not expensive at all.

"Where do I begin looking for rocks?" you wonder next. Valleys and riverbeds are good places to start your search. Why there? Because unusual pieces of rock, broken off from larger rocks at a higher level, may tumble down the hill or the stream, being smoothed and polished along the way. Where rivers join the sea, you can find rocks carried to the river's mouth and pebbles washed up on the seashore from undersea reefs. Other likely places offering exciting possibilities for rock collectors are roadway cuts and areas near abandoned quarries or mines. But be careful there. There is always a danger that loose rock may fall. In some places, you may need to get permission before setting out on your search.

If you live in South Africa or Brazil, you may have the good fortune to find diamond crystals. Rubies and sapphires can be found in the riverbeds of India, Myanmar, and Thailand, and emeralds in Colombia, India, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. In China and Japan, jade and jadeite are most popular for jewelry, ornaments, and incense burners. Jade is found in Myanmar, New Zealand, and Alaska, as well as in Japan.

One of the most beautiful gemstones is the opal, a form of noncrystalline silica. Found in Australia and Mexico, opals have a fascinating variety of color—fiery tints of red, yellow, green, and blue. Opals are relatively soft and

when polished are often covered with a thin layer of quartz to prevent scratching.

Material for Amateurs

Stones like these are material for experts and unlikely finds for amateurs. Quartz, though, is plentiful and easier to find. It is one of the most common of all rock-forming minerals and is found in three of the major rock types. You may find one quartz specimen to be transparent, while others may be translucent or even opaque. Some are colored with markings of red, yellow, purple, green, or brown. Of course, in addition to looking for quartz, you may collect any piece of rock with interesting color or markings. And when the stone is polished, you may be pleasantly surprised by its beauty and may desire to use it for baroque jewelry, as a showpiece on a cabinet shelf, or as part of a miniature rocky mountain in your garden.

After having collected enough pieces of rock, you need to know something of polishing methods. Some rock collectors' clubs suggest tumbling the stones with abrasive grit and water in a hollow revolving drum powered by a small electric motor. This will take patience and time, possibly weeks, first with coarse grit, then with finer abrasives, and finally with polishing powder. But the results are well worth the effort.

Other Kinds of Stones

Rock collecting is not limited to small pieces. In Japan larger rocks are used extensively in landscape gardening. These can be surprisingly expensive. For example, one piece of reddish-colored stone weighing 1,540 pounds was priced at over \$2,300. Why so expensive? The value lies in the natural beauty of its shape. You could arrange for a stream of water to flow from a cup-shaped formation near the top of this stone, cascading to the bottom in a series of miniature waterfalls.

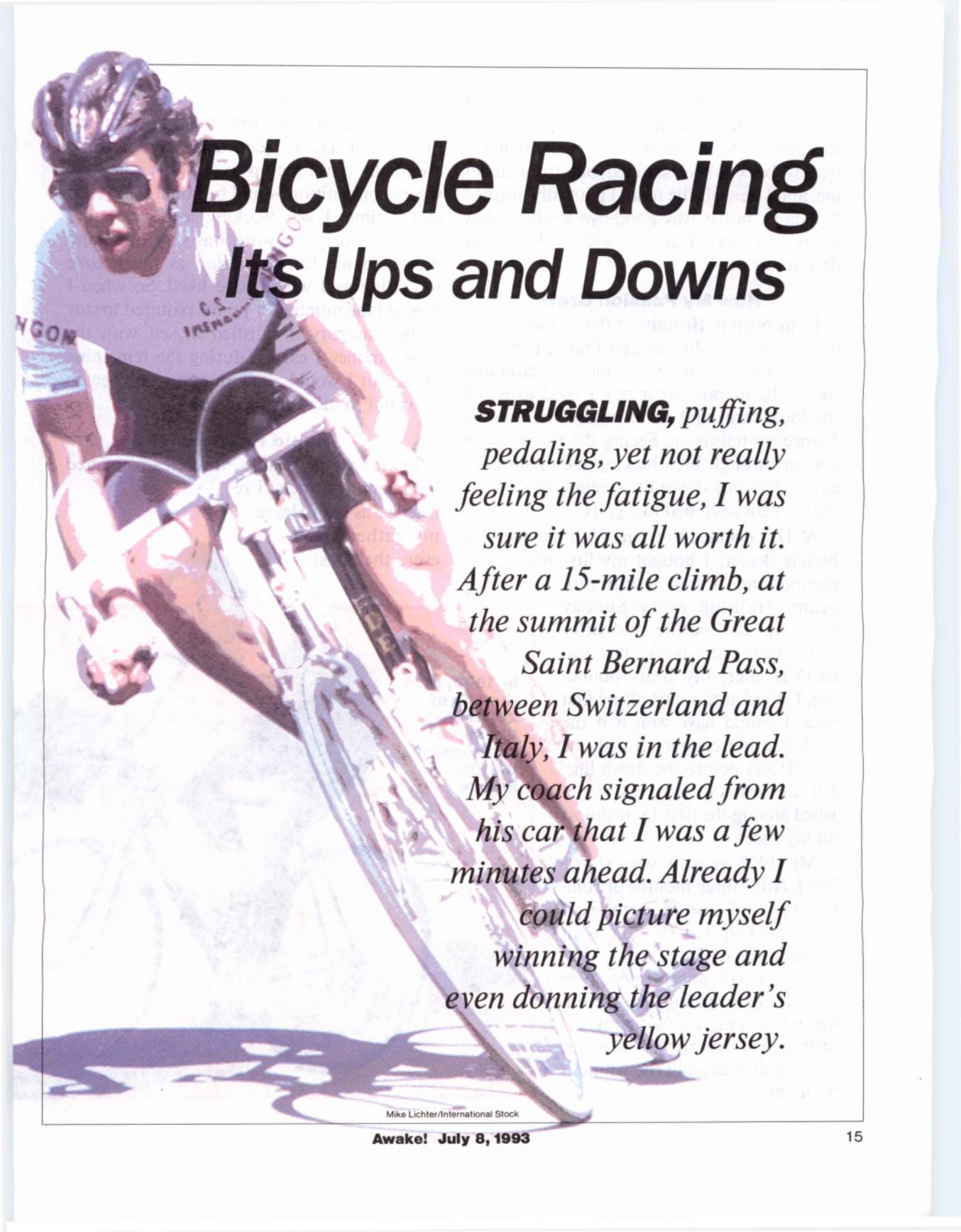
Are you now stirred up to go rock hunting? If so, hopefully you will find a treasure with a difference.—Contributed.

In Our Next Issue

Children Under Stress —How Can They Be Helped?

The Courage to Put God First

Our Versatile Sense of Smell



Bicycle Racing Its Ups and Downs

STRUGGLING, puffing, pedaling, yet not really feeling the fatigue, I was sure it was all worth it. After a 15-mile climb, at the summit of the Great Saint Bernard Pass, between Switzerland and Italy, I was in the lead. My coach signaled from his car that I was a few minutes ahead. Already I could picture myself winning the stage and even donning the leader's yellow jersey.

Mike Lichter/International Stock

In front of motorbikes and cars, I raced down the other side at a reckless speed. Halfway down, I took one of the curves too quickly. My back wheel skidded out from under me, and I flew off the road. I painfully finished the stage, but it was good-bye to the yellow jersey and glory. I did not win the 1966 Tour de l'Avenir.

How My Passion Grew

I was born in Brittany at the end of the second world war. In western France cycling is very popular, and the region has produced many champions. As a boy I used to watch the local races and never missed the Tour de France on television. Seeing the riders laboring up through breathtaking mountain passes and hurtling down the steepest of slopes, I thought they seemed like gods.

At 17, I decided to try it. With the help of a bicycle dealer, I bought my first racing bike secondhand. I had a full program: training every Sunday morning and before and after work during the week. Just two months later, my heart pounding, I stood at the start of my first race. I would have won it if the pack had not caught up with me just 30 feet before the finish line! For the rest of that year, I finished among the first 15 in almost all my races.

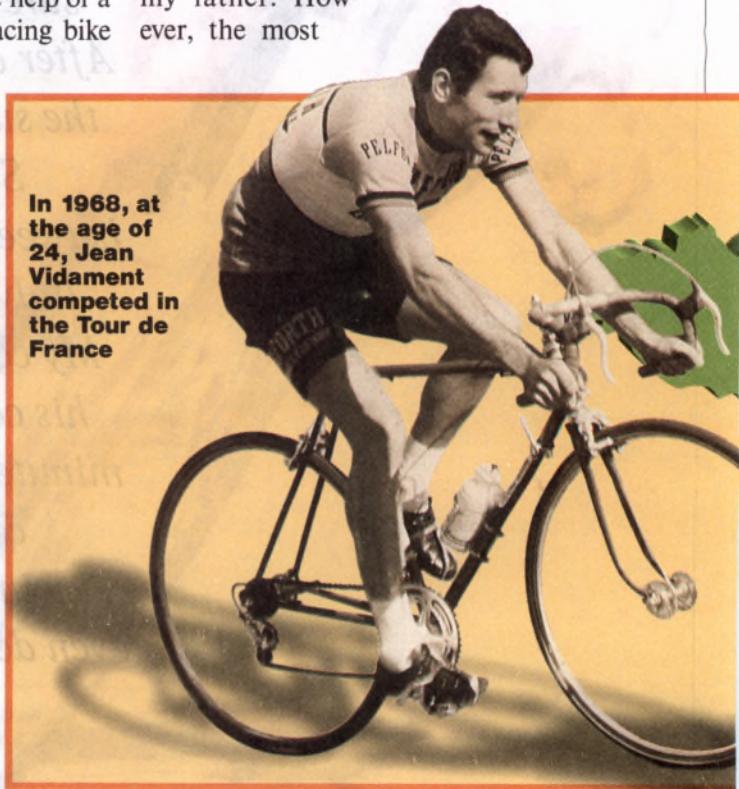
My 1962 season was short-lived. After three months of competition and several victories, I was called up for 18 months of military service in Algeria. After my return to France, I spent 1965 readapting to cycling. But the following season, I was firmly determined to experience the joy of once again receiving the winner's bouquet.

From March 1966 onward, it was one victory after another. Each time that I came in first or second in a race, I gained points that would eventually move me up to a higher category, where competition would be stiffer. However, at the time, I was working with my father sanding floors. The work was very tiring and prevented me from devoting as much time to cycling as I would have liked. So when I reached the number of points required to stay in my category, I satisfied myself with the bonus money I earned during the remaining races, but I would allow myself to be beaten so as not to move up a category.

Rapid Progress

In view of my results, three teams offered me racing contracts. I refused so as not to leave my father. However, the most

In 1968, at the age of 24, Jean Vidament competed in the Tour de France



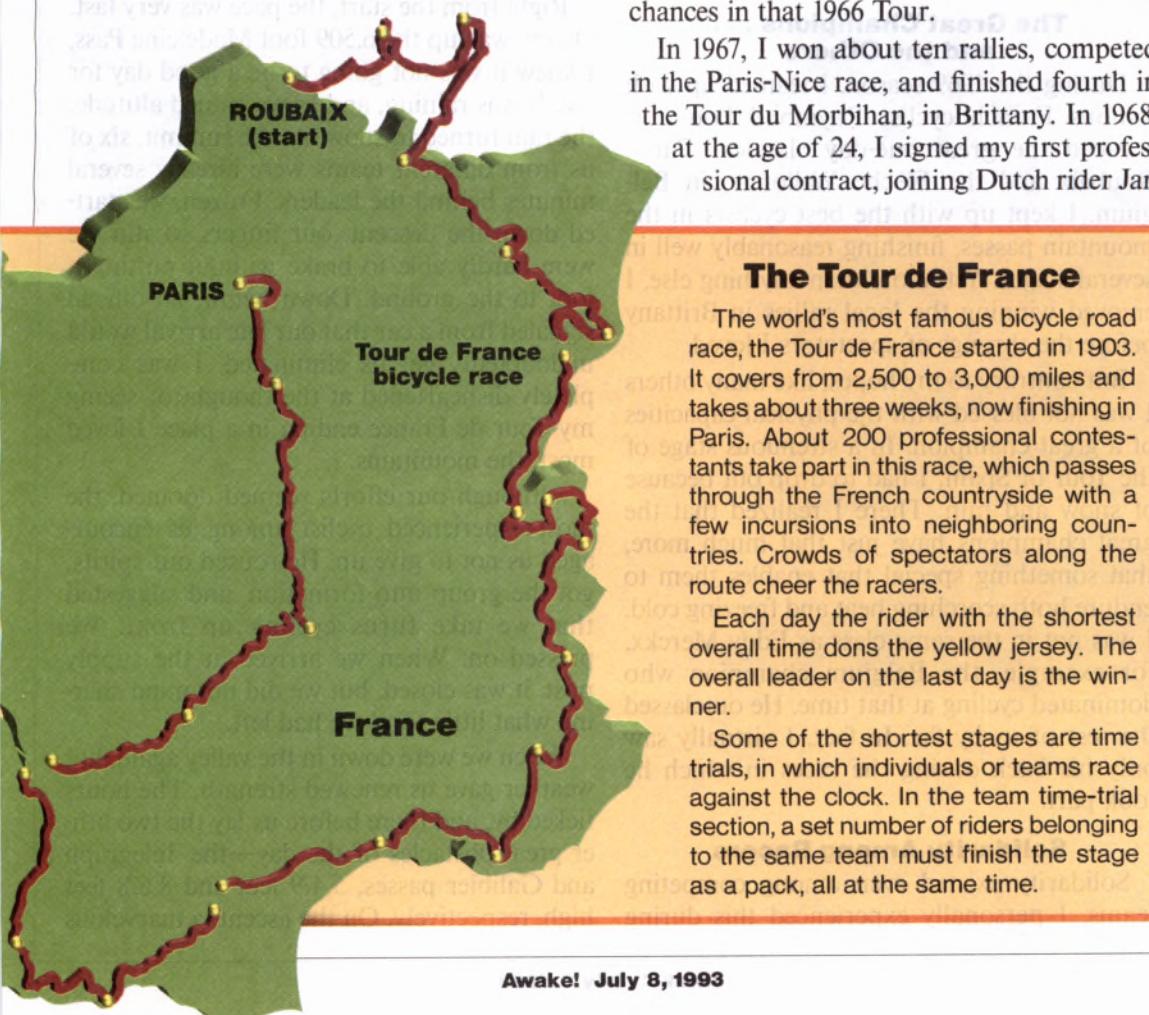
insistent coach persuaded my father to grant me a week's leave to compete in a difficult race in the Pyrenees mountain range along the French-Spanish border. I placed respectably, so we continued on into Spain, where I won the amateurs' Tour of Catalonia. A few days later, I competed in the Tour of the Balearic Islands, won the first stage, and donned the leader's jersey, only to lose it on the last day in a time trial because my team dropped out.

Then came the Route de France in the Nice region. I excelled in many of the stages and won the trophy for the best hill specialist. Because of such good results, I was selected as one of the top ten riders and was invited to

represent France in the Tour de l'Avenir, the amateur version of the Tour de France.

During those two months, the only news my family received had come from the sports pages of the newspapers. Thinking of my father and the fact that he had given me only a week's leave, I refused the offer and returned home. But my coach and a sports journalist convinced my father that I was one of France's bicycle-racing hopes, so he let me go. I thought I was dreaming! Just a few months earlier, I was a third- or fourth-category amateur, and now here I was chosen for the most important amateur bicycle race in the world! As I mentioned at the outset, a fall ruined my chances in that 1966 Tour.

In 1967, I won about ten rallies, competed in the Paris-Nice race, and finished fourth in the Tour du Morbihan, in Brittany. In 1968, at the age of 24, I signed my first professional contract, joining Dutch rider Jan



The Tour de France

The world's most famous bicycle road race, the Tour de France started in 1903. It covers from 2,500 to 3,000 miles and takes about three weeks, now finishing in Paris. About 200 professional contestants take part in this race, which passes through the French countryside with a few incursions into neighboring countries. Crowds of spectators along the route cheer the racers.

Each day the rider with the shortest overall time dons the yellow jersey. The overall leader on the last day is the winner.

Some of the shortest stages are time trials, in which individuals or teams race against the clock. In the team time-trial section, a set number of riders belonging to the same team must finish the stage as a pack, all at the same time.

Janssen's team. We competed in the Tour de France, and Jan won it that year. In the meantime, after a time trial in Rennes, Brittany, I met Danielle, who had come there to see her first bicycle race. It was not to be her last, for we got married the following year.

How I loved those days—the team spirit, the nomad's life, seeing new towns and scenery every day! I did not earn much money, but it did not matter because the pleasure of racing was so satisfying. I did well in various trials and hoped to win one of the big races. However, I began to realize that an enormous gulf separates amateur and professional cyclists.

The Great Champions... and the Others

During the 1969 season, I teamed up with famous French cyclist Raymond Poulidor. I raced the great one-day classics—Paris-Roubaix and the Flèche Wallonne, in Belgium. I kept up with the best cyclists in the mountain passes, finishing reasonably well in several stages. Yet, more than anything else, I enjoyed winning the local rallies in Brittany before the throngs of spectators I loved.

But contrary to my hopes, like many others I was not blessed with the physical capacities of a great champion. In a strenuous stage of the Tour of Spain, I had to drop out because of snow and rain. There I realized that the great champions have just that much more, that something special that enables them to endure both scorching heat and freezing cold. I was not in the same class as Eddy Merckx, for example, the Belgium champion who dominated cycling at that time. He outclassed the rest of us by far. In fact, I virtually saw only his back during the races in which he took part.

Solidarity Among Racers

Solidarity existed even among competing teams. I personally experienced this during

one of the most difficult stages of the 1969 Tour de France. The previous night, we had arrived at our hotel exhausted after a series of strenuous mountain stages. The alarm clock rang at seven the following morning. As usual, a copious breakfast was awaiting us three hours before the race.

At the start, there were about 150 of us, everyone relating his ups and downs of the past few days, though taking care not to reveal team strategy for the race ahead. It was going to be a grueling day. This stage left from Chamonix, at the foot of Mont Blanc, for Briançon, with 140 miles of alpine roads and three major passes to cross.

Right from the start, the pace was very fast. On my way up the 6,509 foot Madeleine Pass, I knew it was not going to be a good day for me. It was raining, and as we gained altitude, the rain turned to snow. At the summit, six of us from different teams were already several minutes behind the leaders. Frozen, we started down the descent, our fingers so stiff we were hardly able to brake without putting a foot to the ground. Down below, an official signaled from a car that our late arrival would undoubtedly get us eliminated. I was completely disheartened at the thought of seeing my Tour de France ending in a place I loved most, the mountains.

Although our efforts seemed doomed, the most experienced cyclist among us encouraged us not to give up. He roused our spirits, got the group into formation, and suggested that we take turns cycling up front. We pressed on. When we arrived at the supply post, it was closed, but we did not mind sharing what little food we had left.

When we were down in the valley again, hot weather gave us renewed strength. The hours ticked by, and there before us lay the two other great obstacles of the day—the Telegraph and Galibier passes, 5,479 feet and 8,678 feet high, respectively. On the ascent, a marvelous

surprise awaited us. At a bend in the road, through the spectators, we could make out a multicolored mass. Yes, we had caught up with the others. We passed some who had given up and others who appeared to be pinned to the ground. I spotted one of Belgium's young hopes on foot, exhaustedly pushing his bicycle. I caught up with my team leader and finished the stage reasonably well.

All of this taught me an important lesson I have never forgotten: As long as the finish line has not been crossed, the race is neither lost nor won. Moreover, I will never forget the spirit of mutual support that existed, even among competing teams.

First Contacts With the Bible

In 1972, I had my first contact with the Bible's message. A cyclist named Guy, who had recently left professional racing, dropped in for a visit and spoke about his new faith. I told him that I was not interested and that everyone believes that his own particular religion is the best one. Guy showed me a few verses from the Bible and answered my objections by saying that since many religions say their beliefs come from the Bible, it should be easy to test their beliefs against the truth of God's Word.

I had heard of the Bible, but being a non-practicing Catholic, I did not think it had anything to do with my religion. Still, I felt our conversation had come at an opportune time because one of my wife's relatives, a Catholic missionary, was coming to visit, and we could discuss all of this with him.

My wife's relative confirmed that the Bible was truly the Word of God. Yet, he told us to be wary because, according to him, Jehovah's Witnesses were fine people, but they were misleading others. When I saw Guy again, I asked him about this. He explained that contrary to what I had been taught in the church, the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul is not in the Bible. (Ezekiel 18:4) He also asked

why the relative did not use God's name, Jehovah.—Psalm 83:18.

I was astounded to learn that God had a name. When we showed these verses to my wife's relative, he said the Bible should not be taken so literally. Our discussions with him went no further, and Guy returned to Paris, where he worked.

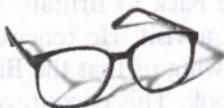
Guy came back to Brittany one year later and paid us a visit. He renewed our discussions by showing us that the Bible was also a prophetic book. This encouraged us to study it more closely. Our discussions began to become more regular. Yet, Guy had to be very patient with me, since my life still revolved around cycling and all that went with it—friends, supporters, and so forth. Also, being from Brittany, a region deeply attached to religious traditions, our families were opposed to our new interest in the Bible.

In 1974 my racing career ended abruptly with a road accident. This made us think about what was truly important in our lives. My wife and I decided to move away from our hometown and the influence of our families. At that point we started attending meetings regularly at the Kingdom Hall of the Dinan Congregation. Both of us progressed in the truth, and we were baptized in 1976.

Since then I have had the opportunity to speak about the Bible to several bicycle racers of my generation. Also, when I go from house to house, many people recognize me and enjoy talking about my career in bicycle racing. However, some are not as enthusiastic when I speak about the Kingdom message.

Today, when I feel the need for a good workout, I go riding with my family. During these moments, I appreciate the truthfulness of Paul's words when he said: "Bodily training is beneficial for a little; but godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." —1 Timothy 4:8.—*As told by Jean Vidament.*

A Look at Eyeglasses



By Awake! correspondent in Britain

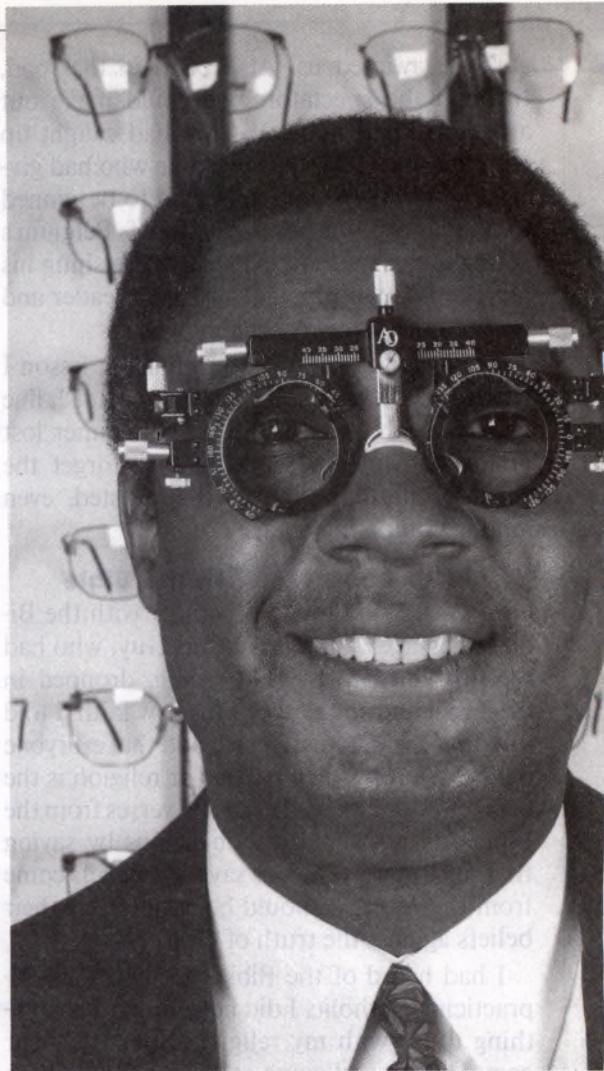
ARE you reading this with the aid of eyeglasses? Well, you are by no means alone. Some 60 percent of the British population, for example, now wear eyeglasses, or spectacles, as we call them.

Wearing glasses has thus become so commonplace that if your friends make any comment on them, it is probably because you have changed your style of frames or have decided not to wear them at all. Most of us get so accustomed to our spectacles that we put them on and take them off with hardly a thought—unless they start slipping down our noses or steaming up.

Most eyeglass wearers, though, would probably prefer 20/20 vision to stylish frames. Eyeglasses can be a nuisance. Nevertheless, people with poor eyesight have never had it so good.

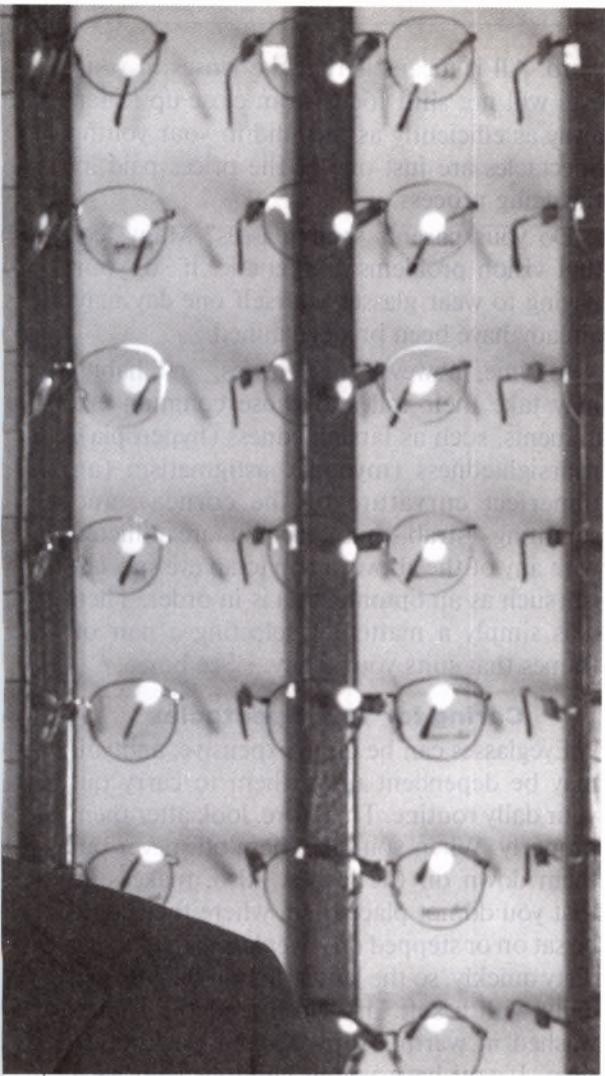
Early Vision Aids

Roman emperor Nero, in order to see the gladiatorial games better, is said to have had a lens made from emerald—a rather expensive and inefficient way of improving failing eyesight. In ancient times lenses were similarly made from crystal glass, quartz, amethyst, beryl, and topaz. However, about the year 1268, English monk Roger Bacon described



how a segment of a glass sphere could be used as a reading aid. About this same time, the first eyeglasses—frames with crude lenses fitted in them—started to appear.

Who invented them first—the Italians or the Chinese? This is a matter of dispute, as the device appeared to emerge in both lands almost simultaneously. On the one hand, a tomb in Florence, Italy, bears this epitaph: "Here lies Salvino d'Armato of the Armati of Florence. The inventor of spectacles. God forgive him his sins." No one is sure when he died



—1285, 1317, or 1340. On the other hand, the great Italian explorer Marco Polo recalled seeing many people in China wearing eyeglasses when he first arrived there in the late 13th century. Indeed, legend has it that eyeglasses were worn in China from as early as 500 C.E.

At any rate, by the 16th century, the optical trade was flourishing in Venice, as well as Nuremberg and other European centers. Eyeglasses became sought-after ornaments, sold in many cities by street peddlers. But alas, the vendors offered no vision test with their

wares. So the buyer may have had his looks improved but not necessarily his sight!

Spectacles Today

Eyeglasses steadily improved. They were attached to the ears by ribbons or to the nose by means of a spring clip. By the early 18th century, someone came up with the idea of supporting eyeglasses by means of rigid earpieces. This is still the most popular method.

Lens manufacture also improved dramatically. High-grade optical glass eventually replaced transparent crystalline substances. Sir Isaac Newton's 17th-century experiments with prisms led to an understanding of light refraction. Precision lenses could thus be made with scientific accuracy.

In 1784, American statesman Benjamin Franklin invented an ingenious solution to a problem he had with his eyeglasses. His reading glasses interfered with his distant vision, and those he had for distant vision were not suitable for him to read with. So instead of continually switching two different pairs of eyeglasses, he reasoned, why not combine the two sorts of lenses in one pair of eyeglasses? Thus bifocals were born. However, it was another hundred years before an efficient means of manufacturing them was developed.

Different forms of optical glass are also available to meet specialized needs. Laminated or toughened lenses can be fitted to safety glasses so that workers' eyes are protected from flying particles. Some lenses are photosensitive: When exposed to bright sunlight, they darken, and when in the shade or indoors, they become clear again. Yet other lenses are plastic, reducing the weight of eyeglasses considerably and allowing people with thick lenses to wear them without discomfort.

'Me? Spectacles?'

Perhaps, though, you are one of the fortunate few who are endowed with perfect sight. Probably not for long.

Eyeglasses and Fashion

'Glasses will spoil my looks!' say many when told that they will have to wear eyeglasses. However, fashion designers have so effectively applied their talents to eyeglass design that a pair of spectacles can be a rather flattering article of adornment.

For one thing, frame manufacturers have taken advantage of new lightweight, durable plastics, making the choice of color and size almost endless. Too, by using high-refractive-index glass, it is possible to make strong-prescription lenses tolerably thin. And when coated with an antireflection film, they become almost invisible.

If you are fashion-conscious, you may choose eyeglass frames as wardrobe accessories. A brochure produced by the Optical Information Council (Britain) recommends that you select frames that will match the shape of your face, accentuating the good features while minimizing those not so good. For example, would you like to slim down your face? Then, says the brochure, choose frames that have color concentrated on the bridge, fading to clear temples. Do you have close-set eyes? Then choose frames with a clear bridge and color concentrated at the outer edges. Try on different styles, and study the different effects. You may find that it helps to take along a good friend who can be relied upon to give an honest opinion.

If you find eyeglasses too bothersome, consider contact lenses. They may be comfortably worn all day by many people.

'Are you saying that I might have to wear glasses someday?' you ask. Yes, the odds are that you probably will, even if right now the world is in sharp focus. Why? Well, for one thing, by the time you are 45 years old—or older—you will probably notice the effects of presbyopia. Now, don't be frightened by that

word. All it means is that the lenses in your eyes will not shift focus from close-up to far away as efficiently as they did in your youth. Spectacles are just one of the prices paid in the aging process.

Do your parents wear glasses? Many feel that vision problems are genetic. If so, your having to wear glasses yourself one day may already have been predetermined.

In time, however, age, genes, and habits may take their toll and cause common eye ailments, such as farsightedness (hyperopia), nearsightedness (myopia), astigmatism (an imperfect curvature of the cornea), and squinting (strabismus). If you are afflicted with any of the above, a trip to an eye specialist (such as an optometrist) is in order. Then it is simply a matter of selecting a pair of frames that suits your fancy.—See box.

Caring for Your Spectacles

Eyeglasses can be quite expensive, and you may be dependent upon them to carry out your daily routine. Therefore, look after them properly. When you take them off, never put them down on the lenses. Also, make sure that you do not place them where they could be sat on or stepped on. Eyeglasses tend to get dirty quickly, so the lenses should be polished daily with a soft, dry cloth, and the frames washed in warm, soapy water from time to time. If you have young children who wear eyeglasses, you will probably find that their glasses need to be cleaned more frequently.

What, though, if your glasses go out of adjustment and no longer fit properly? Take them to your optician for repair rather than risk doing the job yourself.

With proper care, you will get good service out of your spectacles. Oh, they may still be a minor nuisance from time to time, but they do improve your vision—and perhaps even your looks. Certainly that's worth a little nuisance, isn't it?

**Young
People
Ask...**



Is It Wrong to Daydream?

The last thing you remember was the sound of your teacher droning on about algebraic equations, but you are no longer in the classroom; your mind has drifted to the beach your family visited last summer. You can feel the hot sand and the warm sun. You can hear the sound of the waves crashing on the shore, the sound of children playing, the sound . . . of giggling classmates? Yes, your pleasant reverie has dissolved and in its place stands an irritated teacher, hand on hip, demanding the answer to a question that you did not hear.

DAYDREAMING—it is so commonplace among all sorts of people, young and old, that one prominent researcher called it "one of the central features of human life."

Some believe that up to a third of our waking hours are taken up by daydreaming in one form or another. Scientists are not exactly sure how and why these fleeting thoughts are formed, nor do they universally agree on just what a daydream is. One dictionary defines a daydream as "a pleasant visionary . . . creation of the imagination." However, many researchers broadly define it to include virtually any kind of waking fantasy or involuntary thought—whether it be pleasant or unpleasant. In this article, we will use the term in its very broadest sense, including not only involuntary flights of the imagination but also more deliberate ones.

Not all daydreams, then, are extraordinary, colorful flights of fantasy. Many are simply pleasant excursions into one's past. In an article in *Parents* magazine, Dr. James Comer cites his own experience with daydreams—such as when driving home after a difficult day at the office, he might drift back to the recollection of his winning shot in a playground basketball game as a teenager. "Unimportant stuff, maybe, but it still helps me feel good," he remarks. Yet others use daydreams to help plot their future. "I daydreamed a lot about becoming an internationally recognized musician," recalls one man who, indeed, became a popular jazz musician and composer.

Most daydreams, though, seem to focus on ordinary everyday events—school, social gatherings, homework. At times people may deliberately conjure up such thoughts to break the boredom of a dull school lecture or the tedium of a household chore. Other daydreams come spontaneously. A word, a sound, or a visual image suddenly reminds them of some current concern, some past delight, or some future exploit, and their mind starts wandering. The Bible says: "For a dream certainly comes in because of abundance of occupation." (Ecclesiastes 5:3) Indeed, one who is preoccupied with personal concerns and ambitions may

be virtually consumed by materialistic daydreams.

Nevertheless, as pleasant as daytime reveries can be, they can also interfere with your concentration at Christian meetings, at school, or on the job. Some fantasies may even be inappropriate—or harmful. Is daydreaming therefore a habit you need to break?

Hazardous to Your Mental Health?

In times past, daydreaming was viewed with disdain by mental-health workers, doctors, and educators. One young man was therefore told by a psychotherapist: "We have to help you stop daydreaming." According to researcher Dr. Eric Klinger, such advice was generally based on the theories of the so-called father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, who viewed daydreaming as infantile and neurotic. One psychology textbook thus claimed: "Daydreaming is often an outcome of failure or lack of interest in one's present environment, and is certainly a retreat from reality." A generation of educators and mental-health workers were taught that all daydreaming should be curbed. Claims were made that excessive daydreaming could even result in schizophrenia.

Freudian theories have yielded to the facts of hard research, however. In his book *Daydreaming*, Dr. Eric Klinger notes that among other things, investigators claim that:

Daydreaming is a common and normal activity.

On the average, people who daydream frequently are as well adjusted mentally as those who do not.

Daydreaming does not lead to hallucinating.

Daydreaming does not lead to schizophrenia. Schizophrenics are no more prone to daydreaming than anyone else.

Using Your Imagination Productively

Not surprisingly, then, the Bible nowhere condemns the healthy use of one's imagi-

nation. Indeed, the ability of our minds to envision and imagine is evidence that we are, in the words of the psalmist, "wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14) Used productively, this ability can be a valuable asset. Christians are told to "keep [their] eyes, not on the things seen, but on the things unseen." (2 Corinthians 4:18) This could involve trying to visualize God's righteous new world. The Bible's descriptions of this future global Paradise spur on our imagination in this regard!—Isaiah 35:5-7; 65:21-25; Revelation 21:3, 4.

Your imagination may also prove to be useful if you have a difficult task to perform. For example, youths among Jehovah's Witnesses are often as-

Mental rehearsals can improve one's actual performance



signed to give oral presentations on the Theocratic Ministry School. Besides practicing out loud, try rehearsing your presentation mentally. Picture the audience reacting to your information and delivery. This can help you make needed adjustments in your presentation and give you more confidence.

You can also mentally rehearse the handling of difficult situations. Perhaps you realize that a fellow Christian has something against you, and you want to talk matters out. (Matthew 5: 23, 24) Rather than approaching the person cold, you can go over the scenario mentally, trying out different approaches to the problem. This would harmonize with the Bible principle: "The heart of the righteous one meditates so as to answer."—Proverbs 15:28.

Has someone offended you or made you angry? Note the advice given at Psalm 4:4: "Be agitated, but do not sin. Have your say in your heart, upon your bed, and keep silent." This does not mean endlessly replaying hurtful scenes in your mind, nor does it mean dwelling on vivid mental images of thrashing someone with clever comeback lines. After all, Jesus warned that "everyone who continues wrathful with his brother will be accountable," as will "whoever addresses his brother with an unspeakable word of contempt." (Matthew 5:22) But mentally rehearsing your options—which may include simply forgiving the offender—may help you resolve matters with him in a calm, reasonable manner.

Daydreaming may also play a legitimate role in solving problems. Says Dr. Klinger: "Daydreams are themselves a way of discovering creative solutions to problems. People who daydream imaginatively can sometimes find solutions that would not occur to them were they to work on the problems deliberately."

There is even evidence that daydreaming can help you improve the way you perform physical tasks. One ski instructor, for example,

tells learners to form a mental picture of an upcoming ski run, imagining themselves navigating every curve and dip of the course. Researchers believe that doing so actually activates the part of the brain that controls the muscles, priming it for action. Of course, there's no substitute for real practice, but mental rehearsal may help you improve your ability to play a musical instrument or to type. "In short," says Dr. James Comer, "daydreaming is not a waste of time but rather a needed escape to help us function better."

The Dangers

Nevertheless, "for everything there is an appointed time." (Ecclesiastes 3:1) While daydreaming may be fine when you are relaxing in your room, there are occasions when doing so would be inappropriate or even dangerous. Are you driving a car? Then you need to be extra alert and vigilant to danger. What if you are taking a test or listening to a Bible lecture? Then you need to have "clear thinking faculties."—2 Peter 3:1.

The Bible also cautions us against needlessly dwelling on negative thoughts. It's only natural to have a little anxiety when facing an important test or a job interview, but you accomplish little by creating frightening mental images of defeat and rejection. (Compare Ecclesiastes 11:4.) "Anxious care in the heart of a man is what will cause it to bow down," warns Proverbs 12:25. Jesus Christ advised his listeners: "Never be anxious about the next day, for the next day will have its own anxieties. Sufficient for each day is its own badness."—Matthew 6:34.

Interestingly, excessive or inappropriate daydreaming can pose yet other dangers. Some youths, for example, nurture sexual fantasies. Others find that daydreaming is interfering with their concentration. Our next article in this series will give some suggestions to help you deal with such problems.

Should You Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide?

AS YOU walk down a busy street, you pass an elegantly dressed woman who unknowingly drops a roll of money. As you stoop to pick it up, you see her swiftly stepping into a limousine. What will you do? Call out to her or quickly stuff the bills in your pocket?

The answer depends on your conscience. What would it tell you to do? More important, can you trust what it tells you? Can you safely let your conscience be your guide?

What It Is

The conscience has been described as a natural sense of what is right and wrong, just and unjust, moral and immoral. The Bible explains the operation of the conscience at Romans 2:14, 15: "For whenever people of the nations that do not have law do by nature the things of the law, these people, although not having law, are a law to themselves. They are the very ones who demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them and, between their own thoughts,

they are being accused or even excused." Thus, your conscience is designed to enable you to evaluate situations, make right choices, and judge yourself on the choices you have made. But can you trust it?

That depends. After all, there is ample evidence to prove that an errant conscience can lead one into wrong conduct. The fact that one's conscience allows certain conduct is no guarantee that God condones it. For example, before he became a Christian, Saul of Tarsus led in the persecution of Christians. He even approved of and shared complicity in the murder of the Christian martyr Stephen. In all of this, his conscience did not condemn him.—Acts 7:58, 59; Galatians 1:13, 14;

1 Timothy 1:12-16.

In Nazi Germany during World War II, many SS troops said they were just following orders when they inflicted torture and death on millions in Hitler's concentration camps. Their consciences allowed them to do it. But world judgment—not to mention God's judgment—did not condone their acts. Rightly, they were condemned.



Painting by Caravaggio: Scala/Art Resource, N.Y.

"Conversion of St. Paul"

Why Doesn't It Work Properly?

Why would something created by God not work properly? The Bible explains. Because of man's fall into sin through the disobedience of Adam, sin is said to "rule as king," compelling men to obey its desires. (Romans 5:12; 6:12) Man's conscience, which was originally perfect, became warped; the driving force of sin now competes with it. (Romans 7:18-20) This set up the conflict so familiar to us: "I find, then, this law in my case: that when I wish to do what is right, what is bad is present with me. . . . I behold in my members another law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin's law that is in my members."—Romans 7:21-23.

In addition to this inherited weakness, our consciences are also affected by external stimuli. For example, peer pressure evidently distorted or suppressed the consciences of the Nazi SS troops mentioned earlier. (Compare Proverbs 29:25.) Further, feeding the mind on unwholesome things, such as immorality and violence on TV and in movies and books, likewise has an effect. If we are regularly exposed to such things, they will eventually not seem so bad, and our conscience will be weakened. Put differently, "bad associations spoil useful habits."—1 Corinthians 15:33.

If a person is trained to know and respect the laws of God, his conscience will obviously be a more reliable guide than if he was not so trained. Nevertheless, even a person with understanding and keen appreciation of God's ways may on occasion still find that because of inherited sin and imperfection, and perhaps external influences, his conscience is not a reliable guide.

What Can We Do?

Can a conscience be changed, made more sensitive to right principles? Yes. Paul counseled Christians that they could "through use have their perceptive powers trained to distin-

guish both right and wrong." (Hebrews 5:11-14) Such use and training includes studying the Bible, giving special attention to the perfect model left for us by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:21, 22) Thereafter, as we use our perceptive powers in making decisions, our consciences will steer us away more and more from wrong thoughts and actions and will prod us to do what is honorable and right.

Even so, we must never become self-righteous or say that if something "does not bother my conscience," it is all right. The proper and safe use of the conscience in imperfect humans can be illustrated by the cautious practices of a safe driver. When a driver wants to change lanes, he instinctively glances first in his rearview mirror. If he sees a car, he knows that it is unsafe to move to the other lane. However, even if he sees nothing, the prudent driver realizes that there are certain blind spots—not everything can be seen at all times by depending just on the mirror. Therefore, he does not simply look in the mirror. He turns his head to look, making sure the lane is clear before making his move. The same is true of the conscience. If it warns you, heed it! But even when it does not at first sound an alarm, be like the wise motorist—check further to make sure there is no danger.

Examine your thinking to see if it harmonizes with God's thinking. Use his Word as a sounding board to evaluate your conscience. Proverbs 3:5, 6 wisely says: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight."

So it is wise to listen to your conscience. But it is wiser still to compare all that we do with God's will as revealed in his Word. Only then can we say with assurance, "We trust we have an honest conscience."—Hebrews 13:18; 2 Corinthians 1:12.

Watching the World

Teens Reject Organized Religion

Canadian teenagers are sending a sobering message to religious leaders: The clergy have failed as teachers of God's Word. A recent national survey reveals that fewer teenagers support organized religion than ever before. Only 10 percent believe that involvement with a religious group is important in their life. Yet, "more than 80 percent turn to organized religion for ceremonies related to birth, marriage and death," reports *The Toronto Star*. Interestingly, 80 percent also believe in the existence of God, while 60 percent believe in life after death. "Teens are more likely to be influenced by peers, the media, movies and popular music than by the clergy," adds the *Star*. Only a small group of teenagers would look to church leaders for direction on important issues of life.

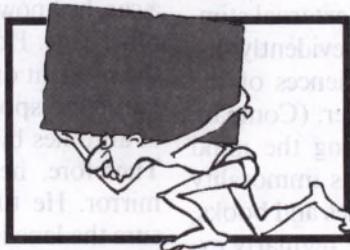
Deadly Rooms

"Environmental tobacco smoke causes more deaths than any other man-made pollutant," states Dr. Michael Popkiss, medical officer of health in Cape Town, South Africa. He was reacting to a pamphlet distributed by the Tobacco Institute of Southern Africa that claimed that inadequate ventilation was the problem. Dr. Popkiss explained that "tobacco smoke concentrations in buildings generally exceed the average air quality standards for clean air" and can result in lung cancer and heart attacks, as well as stunted lung growth in children. He said there was no way of ventilating or filtering the air in a building so that it is completely clear of tobacco smoke. He added: "The most effective technique to keep the air clear

is to limit air pollutants at their source."

Hard Life for Pharaoh's Workers

Recent studies of skeletons of those who worked on Pharaoh's pyramids, tombs, and temples show that they were malnourished, disease-ridden, and overworked. Many of the workers were afflicted with arthritis, says Azza Sarry el-Din, an Egyptian anthropologist. Her study also revealed that the workers endured hard labor. "Their spines were bent from carrying heavy loads," and "there's



bone inflammation, causing discomfort," she concludes. Evidence of these diseases was found by examining the skulls, backbones, and bits of finger and toe bones excavated from nearby cemeteries. However, these diseases were not apparent in the remains found at upper-class burial sites. The anthropologist estimates that the workers' life expectancy was in the 18- to 40-year range, while the privileged classes lived for some 50 to 70 years.

Replaced Monsters

Kidnappers and robbers have replaced monsters in the nightmares of Brazilian children. According to *Véja*, researcher Lenise Maria Duarte Lacerda identified a new and frightening list of pho-

bias. The most cited worries by those interviewed, from 7 to 11 years of age, were assault, violence, kidnapping, and young thieves." Since neither police nor parents can guarantee protection, "the child has lost the image of a hero that he cultivated in his imagination," she adds. Pediatrician Dr. José Henrique Goulart da Graça says of the result: "The main infantile disease today is fear. Many children manifest [this] by means of psychosomatic diseases, such as headaches, asthma, diarrhea, and gastritis."

Chagas' Disease and Blood Transfusion

Annually, 20,000 Brazilians are infected with Chagas' disease. However, João Carlos Dias, president of the National Health Foundation, says in *Globo Ciência*: "The situation can get worse because with the intense migration of rural populations to large cities, the disease can also be spread to urban areas." Since the parasite causing the disease 'may lodge in any organ, including the heart, the patient may eventually die of cardiac insufficiency.' While explaining that only 8,000 are infected by means of the bug's bite, the magazine adds: "Another very frequent kind of infection is through blood transfusion. It is estimated that 12,000 new cases occur annually by means of vertical transmission (from mother to child) or by transfusion."

Fax Messages to God?

Can God be reached by fax? Bezeq, the Israeli telephone company, evidently thinks so. In January, Bezeq set up a service that allows people to send messages to God via a fax number in Jerusa-

lem, reports the *International Herald Tribune*. Upon receiving the fax, a staff worker folds the message and takes it to be inserted into one of the crevices in the Western Wall, believed to be the remains of Jehovah's temple that was destroyed by Roman armies in 70 C.E. According to the *Tribune*, the practice of putting written prayers in cracks in the wall is "a good-luck measure" practiced by worshipers who seek divine help in their search for a marriage partner, better health, or other goals. On the first day of the fax service, 60 messages arrived.

Light Pollution

Astronomers are gravely concerned because artificial light from cities brightens the night sky, hampering efforts to study the stars. As reported in the *International Herald Tribune*, Alan MacRobert, associate editor of *Sky and Telescope* magazine, observed: "The absolute majesty, the incredible power of a truly dark, star-packed sky was part of the experience of all of humanity throughout all of human history. Now in developed countries, it's practically unknown." Responding to pressure from nearby observatories, the city of Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A., converted its 14,000 street lights from mercury vapor to sodium lighting having fixtures that direct the light toward the ground.

Rome Without a Pope?

According to John Paul II, the popes are successors of Peter, and their seat is in Rome because, as confirmed by "the earliest tradition" of the church, the apostle was supposedly martyred there. However, the pope caused quite a stir when he stated that "for the conditions of the times or for their own particular reasons, it could be that the Bishops of Rome tempo-

rarily establish their residence in places other than the Eternal City." Is the papacy going to move at least temporarily to a different location? There are some who hail it as an event "destined to bring about radical changes in the whole of our culture," but the majority believe that the tradition is too strong and that the seat of the pope will not move. "Another Saint Peter would have to come to move the papal seat," says a teacher of ecclesiastical law, Carlo Cardia, who recognizes, however, that "the choice of Rome has no theological foundation."

Astrologers Wrong Again

Early in 1992 the Association for Scientific Research into the Parasciences in Germany collected approximately 50 predictions by astrologers from all over the world, evaluating the results at year's end. The association had done a similar exercise in 1991. (See *Awake!* of June 8, 1992, page 29.) Were the prognoses for 1992 more accurate than those for 1991? Far from it.



"Whereas in 1991 vague prognoses were able to record at least partial successes," reports the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, "this time the predictions do not contain even one bulls-eye." Predictions for 1992 included the reelection of George Bush and the destruction of the White House by fire. Looking ahead to 1993, the association even allowed itself a prediction: "The astrologers will be wide of the mark again next year."

Breathing Dangerously

From Buenos Aires to Beijing, from Seoul to Calcutta and Cairo, the air in the world's largest cities is becoming more and more dangerous to breathe. Citing a report by the UN Environment Program and the World Health Organization, the French newspaper *Le Figaro* says that the ever-increasing toxic levels of airborne pollutants (such as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, ozone, and lead) are clearly damaging the health of people living in large urban areas and can even be linked to the premature death of some city dwellers. Based on a 15-year study of 20 cities, the joint report warns that urgent measures must now be taken to decrease the pollution and to protect the health of the world's urban populations. The United Nations estimates that by the year 2000, almost half of mankind will be living in urban areas.

How Europeans Spend Their Time

In order to gain information about daily life in Europe, over 9,700 persons in 20 lands were queried at the end of 1991 by the multimedia group *Information et Publicité*. How do daily routines differ from one country to another? *Süddeutsche Zeitung* reports that Greeks go to bed latest (12:40 a.m.), but the Hungarians are among the earliest to rise (5:45 a.m.). The Irish and the Luxembourgers sleep longer than most. The Czechs, Slovaks, and Swiss give TV a low profile, switching it on just two hours a day, whereas in Britain "the goggle-box runs for almost four hours a day." In Sweden more than five hours a day is spent reading or listening to the radio, whereas the Danes enjoy one and a half hours of leisure per day at the movies, the theater, or something similar.

From Our Readers

Lead Poisoning Many thanks for the articles on lead poisoning. (November 22, 1992) Your mention of high blood pressure, kidney disease, stomach pains, and vomiting—problems I have suffered for years—caused me to have myself checked for possible lead poisoning. The results confirmed an inordinate lead accumulation. I hope the treatment I am now receiving will be successful.

T. W., Germany

It is evident that you do thorough research for your articles. I work in a research institute in the Department of Organic Coatings. In our country, lead-based paints were used for many years because of their resistance to weathering. Now their use is severely limited, but as you wrote, the danger of lead poisoning remains. This article helped me to show my colleagues that *Awake!* not only answers religious questions but also helps people to solve their problems even if they are not believers. Thank you.

A. A., Czech Republic

Iron Lung I just had to express my deep appreciation for the experience of Laurel Nisbet entitled "Not Even an Iron Lung Could Stop Her Preaching." (January 22, 1993) What a sterling example of courage, faith, endurance, and zeal! I have lupus, but my problems pale into insignificance when I think of what suffering Sister Nisbet endured and how long.

R. L. H., United States

Since I am paralyzed and cannot walk, I have complained that I cannot go out preaching much. Now I realize that if this woman, who lived in an iron lung for 37 years, was able to preach and make disciples, then I too can be satisfied with what I am able to do.

M. L., Italy

We appreciate such comments. Of course, Sister Nisbet's faithful example in no way

minimizes the struggle many have with other serious health problems that are somewhat less debilitating in nature but are still the cause of considerable suffering.—ED.

Bread Thank you for the article "Our Daily Bread." (December 8, 1992) I tried your bread recipe, and I was delighted at how easy it was to make bread and how delicious it tasted.

M. M., United States

I have quite a number of cookbooks on the shelf, but none of the recipes in those books brought results as good as your recipe. Many thanks!

S. H., Germany

Nazi Persecution I was very encouraged by the article "The Nazis Couldn't Stop Us!" written by Erwin Klose. (November 22, 1992) Unlike other experiences about the Nazis that have appeared up till now, Erwin Klose's story was told with a sense of humor. At times I couldn't stop laughing! I was encouraged by his cheerful and positive way of looking at things.

T. K., Japan

Russian Conventions I really want to thank you for the article "Russia's First International Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses." (December 22, 1992) Although I am a long-time servant of Jehovah God, I must admit that my appreciation for God's provisions cannot compare with that of those Christians in Russia! The expression on that sister's face when she received her first personal copy of the Bible made me realize how much I have—and take for granted. The article helped me to see areas in which I need to make adjustments.

B. T. A., United States

Utah's Remarkable Passenger Tram

THE "Steepest Passenger Tram in the World." That is how Skytram is advertised at Bridal Veil Falls in Provo Canyon, Utah, U.S.A. I wondered, 'Can that really be true?' I remember taking an aerial tram ride in Catalonia, Spain, about 15 years ago to visit the mountains of Montserrat, and that tram seemed to be steeper to me. So why do they say the steepest is here in Bridal Veil Falls? Because it rises 1,228 feet in a cable length of 1,753 feet—an average angle of over 45 degrees. When the car gets near the mountain lodge, at an altitude of 6,300 feet, the angle gets to be 62 degrees!

All of that is technical. The ride itself, in a six-person car, is beautiful as we rise from the highway and pass Bridal Veil Falls over to the left. We climb at an average speed of five miles per hour. Rugged mountains surround us—Mount Timpanogos rising to some 12,000 feet behind us and the one we are climbing, Cascade Mountain, in front. The falls is a double cataract that plunges over 600 feet before feeding into the Provo River. Some of the

water is piped to a hydroelectric station four miles away.

The Swiss-made tramway was opened in 1962 and has carried over 1.5 million people without a single serious accident. In case you feel nervous about taking a ride in an aerial tramway, a brochure states: "Tramways like this Skytram, historically and statistically, are the *safest* means of travel between two points." The next time you use an aerial tramway, check it out—is it steeper than this one in Utah?

Courtesy Mountainland Travel Region



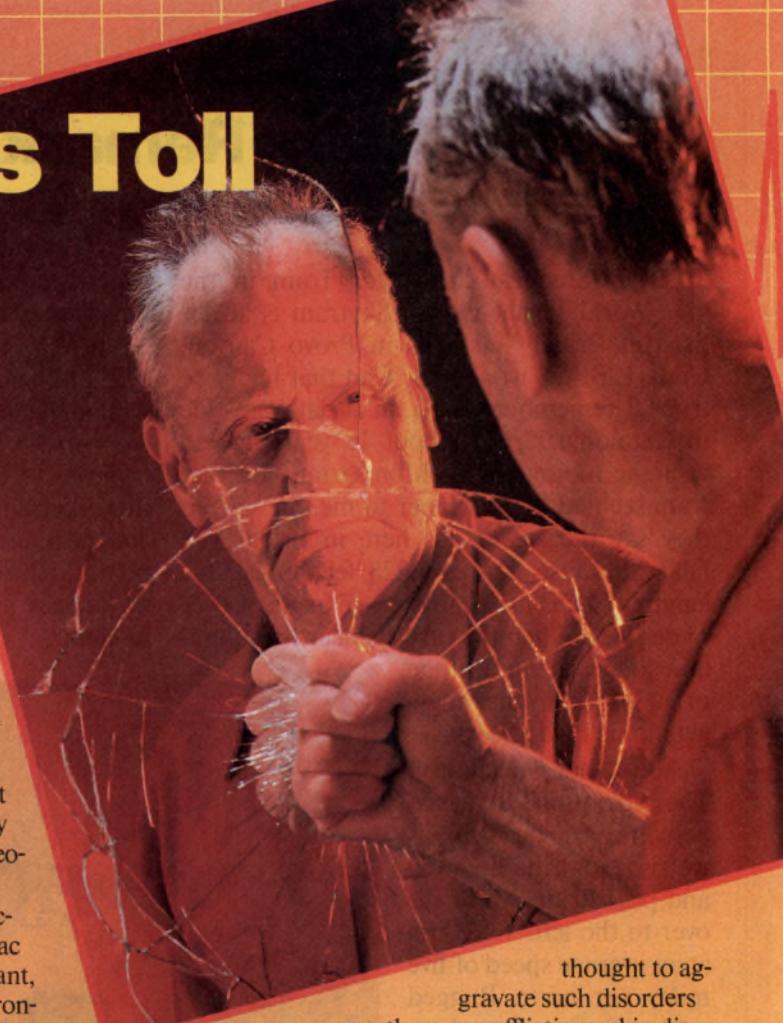
Anger's Toll

WHEN you get angry, your heart suffers. A recent study conducted at Stanford University in the United States found that when heart patients were asked to recall incidents that still made them angry, the efficiency of their hearts in pumping blood dropped by 5 percent. While the drop in efficiency was not permanent, doctors consider it meaningful in view of growing evidence that hostile people are much more likely to develop heart disease than are people who are peaceable.

"The five-percentage-point reduction we found in the patients' cardiac efficiency during anger is a significant, though mild drop," said Dr. Gail Ironson, who led the research. "The patients said they were only about half as mad when recounting the episode as they were while it happened. Presumably the pumping efficiency would be even more greatly reduced during an actual angry encounter."

The study is the first one to show that anger can cause a direct change in the heart's ability to function. And while anger is not solely responsible for heart disease—diet, exercise, and genetics also play a role—researchers believe that anger may be a major contributor.

Doctors have long known that anger works havoc on the human body. It can cause a rise in blood pressure, arterial changes, respiratory trouble, liver upsets, changes in the secretion of gall, and damage to the pancreas. Anger is also



thought to aggravate such disorders as asthma, eye afflictions, skin diseases, hives, and ulcers, as well as dental and digestive troubles.

Thus, apart from the spiritual and social benefits, there are physical benefits from heeding the Bible's counsel to "let anger alone and leave rage" and not to "hurry yourself in your spirit to become offended [or, "angry," *King James Version*]." How sensible it is to cultivate the "discernment" that makes one "slow to anger." Indeed, "a calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism."—Psalm 37:8; Ecclesiastes 7:9; Proverbs 14:29, 30.