

July 1, 1986

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



LIBERATION —How Desirable!





The Watchtower®

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

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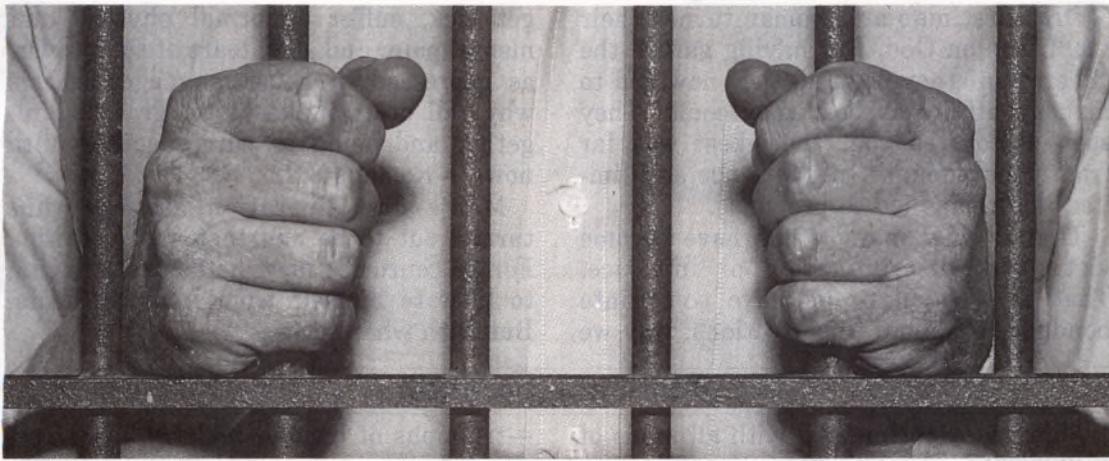
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LIBERATION —How Desirable!



GIVE me liberty or give me death!" cried the American patriot Patrick Henry over 200 years ago. For him, liberation was more precious than life itself. Down through the centuries, millions of people have had similar feelings.

Within the past half century, however, the desire for liberation has taken on new dimensions. Colonial powers have been divested of millions of subjects as these sought and achieved political independence. Social, economic, and even religious movements have been set up to seek liberation from oppression and discrimination, either real or imagined. Never before have so many men wanted liberation from the authority of employers and governments, so many women from the authority of husbands and fathers, and so many children from the authority of parents and teachers. Still, liberation movements are nothing new. In fact, they are almost as old as mankind itself. The world's oldest history book, the Holy Bi-

ble, tells us more. The gist of the story, as found at Genesis 3:1-7, is this:

Shortly after man and woman's creation, the woman was approached by an angelic creature. His actions betrayed a desire to break free from the authority of his Creator. So it is not surprising that he asserted that what she and her husband needed was liberation. Was it not true, he argued, that God had placed restrictions upon them? But why, he asked, should they not eat from "the fruit of the tree . . . in the middle of the garden"? After all, "the tree was desirable to look upon," was it not? Indeed!

Break away, he urged, and "your eyes are bound to be opened and you are bound to be like God, knowing good and bad." How desirable! Yes, liberation from God's "oppressive" rule was made to appear to be as precious as life itself.

"Give me liberty or give me death!" Adam and Eve got both—to their sorrow and ours! How so?

“All Creation Keeps On Groaning” —Why?

THE first man and woman turned their backs on God. But having gained the “liberation” they wanted, they now had to manage affairs as best they could. They soon discovered that their best was far from good enough. Inexperience and limited knowledge led to problems.

That is why many of us have become victims of discrimination or injustice. That is why all of us have come into bondage to human imperfections, why we

get sick, suffer abnormal physical and mental pain, and shed tears of sorrow. Or, as expressed in Bible language, that is why “all creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now.”—Romans 8:22.

Man’s first liberation attempt thus turned out to be one that enslaved him. For 60 centuries now, he has been trying to liberate himself from its bad effects. But with what success?

Political Liberation

Man has experimented with all kinds of government. Those oppressive or unjust, or that failed to meet the people’s immediate needs, have been discarded or even violently overthrown and replaced by others—but with dubious results.

Journalist Lance Morrow, speaking about political revolutions, observes: “History has paraded past too many utopian dramas of transformation that ended by being as totalitarian, as murderous, as the regimes that they swept away

—triumphs of hopeful zealotry over experience.”

Replacing one imperfect government with another is hardly the ideal way to bring about real liberation. Hence, wise King Solomon was divinely inspired to write: “Man has dominated man to his injury.” (Ecclesiastes 8:9) Obviously, “all creation [will keep] on groaning together and being in pain” until *perfect* government makes liberation from imperfect rule a reality.

Replacing one imperfect government with another imperfect one is no solution for bringing about real liberation

Liberation From National and Racial Discrimination

Racial or national prejudices directly contradict the Bible truths that God “made out of one man every nation of men” and that “God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him.” (Acts 17:26; 10:34, 35) But those seeking equal treatment have often failed to find it, even in nations professing to be Christian.

For example, consider the black race.

Some so-called Christians claim that black skin color is the result of a divine curse placed upon Canaan and his descendants, consigning them to a position of servitude. In this they err. The black race descended not from Canaan but from Cush and possibly Put. And no curse was placed upon either of them.—Genesis 9:24, 25; 10:6. Despite this fact, blacks have often found themselves socially and economical-

ly downtrodden even by fellow blacks. They have longed for liberation. But their liberation movements, despite sit-ins and protest marches, have brought only partial success. Unable to change hearts fully, they have failed to wipe out racial prejudice,

Civil disobedience, sit-ins, and protest marches do not change hearts

The Liberation of Women

Down through the centuries, women have been mistreated and often considered to be second-rate humans. This is no fault of their Creator. He did not create the woman in order for man to view her simply as a sex object. Neither was the man instructed to tyrannize over her. As man's wife, she was to be his "helper," to serve "as a complement of him," to become "one flesh" with him.—Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-24.

Eve's desire for independence from God's loving authority resulted not in freedom but in harsh subjugation. Foreseeing this, God foretold: "Your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you." (Genesis 3:16) For many women, imperfect male domination has been most unpleasant, and

a number of feminist movements have tried to shake it off.

But the Women's Liberation Movement, while effecting some changes for the better, has failed because it is contrary to the balanced liberation that God promises. "All creation [will keep] on groaning together and being in pain" until God's Kingdom teaches all men to love "their wives as their own bodies" and to treat "older women as mothers, younger women as sisters with all chasteness."—Ephesians 5:28; 1 Timothy 5:2.

Before explaining how that day will come, we must deal with another important question. Just how should Christians view today's liberation movements?

The Women's Liberation Movement has failed because it is contrary to the balanced liberation that God promises

How Christians Should Feel About LIBERATION

CHRISTIANS are opposed to "liberation" that rejects properly exercised authority. Why? Because in reality it does not liberate—it enslaves. A simple example may serve to illustrate this.

A youth chafes under the authority of his parents, who forbid him to smoke and to drink alcoholic beverages. Not appreciating that their authority is being exer-

cised for his own good, he longs for liberation. After becoming of age and leaving home, he finally achieves the liberation he has always wanted. But years later, after having become a chain smoker and a borderline alcoholic, his doctor tells him that for health reasons he must give up both smoking and drinking. He finds this difficult to do. His liberation has led to addiction, to enslavement.

Liberation From Absolute Authority

God's authority is absolute and is based upon his being the Creator. This gives him the right to determine for his creatures what is proper conduct, what is moral and what is immoral. These standards, established for mankind's welfare, are plainly set out in the Bible. "Do not be misled," it says. "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit

God's kingdom."—1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

It is particularly in this worldly-wise, sophisticated 20th century that man has tried to liberate himself from such moral guidelines. Yet, despite any so-called liberation, he cannot free himself from the consequences of practicing what God defines to be sin. Rather than being free, such persons have become slaves to their own desires, lusts, and passions, as Jesus clearly showed in saying: "Every doer of sin is a slave of sin."—John 8:34; see also Romans 6:16.

God's authority is absolute and is based upon his being the Creator

Liberation From Relative Authority

Government officials have the right to exercise authority within the state, parents within the family, teachers within the school system, and Christian elders within the congregation. Of course, the authority is only relative. For example, the absolute authority of Jehovah, who commands that his servants read his Word and associate with fellow Christians, would take precedence over the relative authority of the husband who might demand that his wife do neither of these things.—Acts 5:29.

In recognition of the state's relative authority, however, Christians could not participate in liberation movements to overthrow such authority. They could not condone civil disobedience simply because they disagree with governmental policy, neither could they encourage the withholding of taxes as a way of protesting against certain policies. "He who opposes the authority has taken a stand against the arrangement of God," said the apostle Paul, adding: "Those who have taken a stand against it will receive judgment to themselves."—Romans 13:1-4.

But what if a government official is unjust and misuses his authority? What if he discriminates against individuals or unpopular

minorities? The Bible's counsel is: "If you see any oppression of the one of little means and the violent taking away of judgment and of righteousness in a jurisdictional district, do not be amazed over the affair, for one that is higher than the high one is watching." (Ecclesiastes 5:8) It may be possible to appeal to a higher governmental authority or court. But even if justice is not obtained by that means, God's servants can be confident that, "as regards Jehovah, his eyes are roving about through all the earth to show his strength in behalf of those whose heart is complete toward him."—2 Chronicles 16:9.

It is a similar situation with a family. If husbands or fathers should misuse their authority, we can be sure that God eventually will right such matters, not allowing any injustices to exist in his righteous new system soon to come. In the meantime, Christian women and children continue to respect the principle of Christian headship, even if it is sometimes abused. They appreciate that it is not meant to belittle but is designed to ensure peace and unity within both the family and the Christian congregation.—1 Corinthians 11:3.

Christians do not rebel against the state because of policies for which it will have to answer to God

"Liberation" From Authority Within the Congregation

With regard to headship in the Christian congregation, God's Word states: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account." (Hebrews 13:17) Although this authority of elders is relative, yet it has been delegated to them by God through his holy spirit. Thus it has been granted in a more direct way than the relative authority delegated, for example, to government officials.—Acts 20:28.

Some have felt that the regulations and instructions issued by God's visible organization are too restrictive, not allowing

for enough individual freedom. This has caused them to stop associating with Jehovah's Witnesses; no longer are they willing to be submissive to those keeping watch over their souls. Although these persons possibly consider themselves liberated, their "liberation" has, in fact, enslaved them once again to false religious beliefs and practices.

True Christians respect authority, both the absolute authority of God and the relative authority of humans. This proper view of authority prevents them from misusing the Christian freedom that a knowledge of the truth has given them.

True Christians respect authority, both the absolute authority of God and the relative authority of humans

Appreciating the Supreme Authority, Jehovah God

Paying back to the secular authority

Recognizing relative authority in the congregation



Make Proper Use of Christian Liberation

CHRISTIANS have been "called for freedom," but they are warned not to "use this freedom as an inducement for the flesh." (Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 2:16) How tragic it would be if a Christian were to misuse Christian liberation so as to be enslaved anew! Let us take an example.

Many a religious person has been taught that drinking alcoholic beverages is a sin. An accurate knowledge of the Bible will liberate him from this mistaken idea, since it is not drinking but drunkenness that the Bible condemns. (Compare Psalm 104:14, 15 with 1 Corinthians 6:10 and 1 Peter 4:3.) So now such a liberated Christian might feel free to enjoy an occasional drink. But if he begins to "use this freedom as an inducement for the flesh," he could overdo it, developing a certain dependence upon alcohol, even becoming enslaved to it.

Thus, after being liberated from false views on recreation, dress and grooming, or social behavior, a Christian dare not swing to the other extreme: spending excessive time or money on things previously forbidden but now permitted. This would be an abuse of Christian liberation. It could have serious consequences.

Preach the Liberation Hope

Particularly since the establishment of God's Messianic Kingdom in 1914 has his promise that "creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God" been moving rapidly toward fulfillment. (Romans 8:21) Already Christ has liberated the heavens from Satanic influence. (Revelation 12:7-12) Soon he will destroy Babylon the Great, which has en-

slaved man by means of religious error. Then at God's war of Har-Magedon, he will liberate mankind from imperfect human governments by crushing them out of existence. (Daniel 2:44; Revelation 18:21; 19:11-21) He will even liberate humans from the prime backer of enslavement when Satan is made inactive, unable to "mislead the nations anymore until the thousand years [have] ended."—Revelation 20:2, 3.

By the end of his Thousand Year Reign, Christ will completely have liberated man from all the bad effects that resulted from the original liberation movement back in Eden. Mistreated racial groups will have been liberated from unjust or discriminatory treatment. Women will have been liberated from oppressive male domination. Sick persons will have been liberated from disease. Elderly persons will have been liberated from the debilitating effects of old age. And, wonder of wonders, bereaved persons will have been liberated from sorrow, for their dead loved ones will have been liberated from the grave!—Revelation 20:13-21:5; see also Psalm 146:5-10.

By preaching this divine message of liberation, Jehovah's Witnesses today are using their own Christian liberation in a beneficial way. How shortsighted it would be for them to support human liberation movements, which, at best, can bring only partial relief and which, in reality, obscure the real liberation hope.

Think of it: You have the opportunity of living to experience a liberation far grander than the liberty of which Patrick Henry spoke. Moreover, you have the opportunity of enjoying its blessings after Armageddon, to all eternity!

Receiving the 'Requests of My Heart'

As told by P. J. Wentzel

WHEN our ship docked in New York harbour from South Africa, a black man met us at the dock. He was there to drive me, my wife Lina, and an elderly woman who was travelling with us to our accommodations. We stopped in a black neighbourhood, and the driver got out to check the address for our travelling companion. "But Piet," she said to me, "this is all black!"

"This is America," I reminded her. "There is no difference between black and white here; we are all the same." (But within me I hoped that my wife and I would be taken to a white home!) Then the driver returned for our companion, who was warmly welcomed by a black family.

Then came our turn—still in the black area. As our host and his wife approached the car, I prayed fervently to God to help me get rid of any racial prejudice that might still be remaining—a legacy of my parents.

Our black hosts in New York gave us a warm welcome. They ushered us to our room, where everything was spotlessly clean. When they left us alone, we were silent at first. Then Lina walked to the bed, lifted the corner of the cover and said: "Piet, to think that tonight, for the first time in my life, I must sleep in a black woman's bed!" But we came to know and love our hosts dearly.

Why was overcoming racial prejudice no small accomplishment for me and my travelling companions?

Early Influences

Bonnievale, where I was born in 1922, is a small town some 160 kilometres (100 mi) east of Cape Town, South Africa. My father was a member of the Dutch Reformed Church. It was a church for whites only. The blacks had their own churches in a separate township where they lived. So we were raised to accept the separation of races.

And how deep-seated racial prejudice can be! We were taught that our race is superior. We looked on blacks as people to be treated as humans but not as social equals. In my early days the custom was to receive them at the back door, and if we offered them some tea, to serve it in a special mug kept for blacks only. We were led to believe that things might be different in heaven, but on earth there is strict segregation.

Soon after I turned 17, I asked my father if I could be confirmed, but he felt I was too young. The following year, however, he told me that it was now time for confirmation. I took this very seriously. To me it meant giving oneself to God and doing his will. And since I lived for the

We came to know and love our black hosts dearly



P. J. Wentzel and his wife Lina

world and its pleasures, including heavy smoking, I realized I had to make drastic changes in my life.

So at every lunch break, I would spend most of my time reading the Bible. To me it was a revelation—I could see that my way of life and that of my family fell far short of what the Scriptures require. Although I was reading the Bible in my own language, Afrikaans, there was much that I did not understand. Hence, I not only read but also prayed to God to help me understand the Bible.

When the time for confirmation classes approached, I had already read much of the Bible. I asked my father where confirmation is explained in the Bible so that I could study it.

"It is not in the Bible," he replied. "It is a requirement of the church." I was shocked!

"But if confirmation is not in God's

Word, how can I accept it?" I asked. "And if we are being misled on this vital matter, how can I entrust my life to the church?"

Well, from then on I began to search for the truth.

Searching for the Truth

One day a friend invited me to a service at the Dutch Reformed Church—I had not attended for some time. The minister spoke about hope: "If we hope for what we do not see, we keep on waiting for it with endurance." (Romans 8:24, 25) Ah, this was what I wanted to know! What is our hope? What am I living for? Would I now get answers? But the preacher failed to describe a future hope. As I sat there, I begged God to help the preacher to help me!

Something else disturbed me. I noticed that a lot of people were dozing. I was yearning to hear the truth, and here people were asleep! I left the church feeling disappointed, and I never went back again.

Later I discussed the Bible with a friend who had some Pentecostal ideas. He said that a person who wants to serve God has to be baptized by total immersion in water. So I attended the next service of this little group and was baptized in the river. This made my father bitterly angry. He even threatened to kill me for daring to join a sect! I could no longer read the Bible at home but did so with the little group I had joined. I could not even eat with my father anymore, and whenever I came in contact with him, he would tell me to turn my face away. He did not want to see it!

The little Pentecostal group simply read the Bible, sang and prayed together, and spoke in tongues. By then I had cleaned up my life, including giving up smoking. I tried hard to receive the spirit like the others, even fasting for a few days, but

nothing happened. Then I thought things over. I knew that there were others in town who claimed to speak in tongues, but they lived immoral lives. So how could God grant his holy spirit to people whose lives were out of harmony with his will? And something else puzzled me. I decided to ask the leader of our group.

"Is the holy spirit that you and others receive the same holy spirit that inspired the Bible?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied.

"Well, is the earth to be man's eternal home, or is it to be destroyed?"

"The earth will be destroyed, and Christians will live in heaven."

"But something is wrong here," I replied, "since the Bible says that the earth remains forever—a statement inspired by God's spirit—the same spirit that you claim to have."—Ecclesiastes 1:4.

I knew then that our little group did not have the truth. My search for it continued.

One day the Pentecostal group leader brought me a book entitled *Riches*, published by the Watchtower Society. As soon as I started reading it, I could see that it lined up with what I had read in the Bible. At last I had found the truth! I wrote for more publications. These were eagerly accepted by our little group, and we used them to study the Bible and to witness to others. Soon after this, a few of Jehovah's Witnesses came to Bonnievale for a short visit, and we had a good discussion with them. Moreover, four of our group joined them in house-to-house preaching the following Sunday.

We Form a Small Congregation

To be able to continue spreading the message of hope, we ordered more books from the Watchtower Society's branch office in Cape Town. They replied that we must first apply for the formation of a congregation. At first we were scared

about this, but as the need for books became more pressing, we eventually applied and were formed into a new congregation—just the four of us, although not one of us was baptized as a Witness!

Every month, we reported the amount of preaching work we had done. But being untrained, we were not making return visits on people who showed interest. The branch office pointed this out to us month after month. Finally two of us mustered up courage and went to a home where the people seemed receptive. We gathered the family and sang a hymn together. I then opened with prayer and put on a Bible recording of one of J. F. Rutherford's lectures. All listened attentively. We then concluded with another hymn and prayer. As we went home I said: "Well, that was our first 'back call'!"

Meanwhile my father's opposition continued unabated. My knowledge of the Bible was so limited! Yet what I knew, I believed deep in my heart. One day Rachel, one of my sisters, came to visit us. During my lunch break, she started to argue about the Trinity.

"Why do you people reject the Trinity doctrine?" she asked. "Our church plainly teaches that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are coequal in existence and power."

"If the holy spirit is coequal with the Father and the Son," I replied, "then it can do for me exactly what the Father and the Son can do. So I might as well pray to the holy spirit."

Rachel made no comment. But my father, in the next room, called out: "Rachel, leave him alone. You will get nowhere with him." The whole family gathered round to support Rachel. My father then rushed in, terribly agitated. He clenched his fist, brought it to my forehead—but stopped and withdrew. I kept very quiet and still.

"You sit there like a hypocritical angel," my father shouted. "I wish now you had gone and got killed!"

"You sit there like a hypocritical angel," my father shouted. He reminded me of the time when I had volunteered to fight against Hitler and he had refused permission as I was under-age. "I wish now you had gone and got killed!" he roared. I quietly thanked him for preventing me from enlisting in the army.

When it was over, I went outside and reflected. Before I took an interest in the Bible, there had been peace. Now there was a family feud. What should I do? Go back to church and thus restore family peace? If I did that, I would be forsaking the precious truths I had learned. My parents had brought me into the world, but only God could give me everlasting life. With my hand against a beautiful palm tree, upright and firm, I decided right there: "They can kill me, but I will not turn back."

Entering the Full-Time Service

Being single, young, and strong, I began to feel too restricted at my job in a local cheese factory. I worked there six days a week for small pay but could only spend one day a week in sacred service to Jehovah, from whom I expected everlasting life. Why should I continue making cheese when I had precious truths that could save lives? I wanted to be a full-time minister.

I wrote to the Society and said that I wanted to be a "pioneer," or full-time worker. "But how?" I asked. I was only 18 and my father would never agree. I received an answer that quoted these beautiful words: "Take exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will give you the requests of your heart." (Psalm 37:4) How could my

heart's desire be fulfilled when my father was so opposed? Nevertheless, I pondered those words and kept praying.

Finally I made a plan. I told my father that there was no future for me in Bonnievale and that I wanted to move to Cape Town. He said: "I know why. You want to go and sell those books of Judge Rutherford!" But he consented.

In Cape Town I worked hard to earn enough to buy the few things I would need to start in the full-time ministry. When I met the branch overseer, George Phillips, I had a problem. Being from an Afrikaans community, my English was so poor that I had to speak to him through an interpreter. And at the meetings I understood so little that once when an assembly was organized for Cape Town I missed it because I had not understood the announcement!

In November Brother Phillips informed me that there was an opportunity for me to pioneer in Kimberley, and I could start the next month. I went home to say goodbye to the family. I had to control my emotions because I thought I might not see them again before Armageddon! But I did not tell them that I was going to be a pioneer.

It was December 1, 1941, at 19 years of age, that I started my pioneer career in Kimberley. From there I wrote to my parents. I bore no malice toward my father for the way he had treated me. Mother replied that she was happy that I could fulfil my heart's desire. Indeed, I had found "exquisite delight in Jehovah" for he had given me the 'request of my heart' —the full-time ministry.

How beautifully the organization has kept flourishing over the years—even during the heat of persecution!

Receiving Another 'Request of My Heart'

In 1942, at the first national assembly that I attended, in Johannesburg, I symbolized my dedication to God by baptism. Two years later I met a young pioneer sister, Lina Muller. We were attracted to each other, but we agreed to wait until after the great tribulation before thinking seriously about marriage.

The public meeting campaign began in 1945. I was then serving at Vereeniging with two other pioneers, one of whom was Frans Muller, Lina's brother. When we first heard of this new campaign, we agreed it was not for us—we had no experience as public speakers. With the Society's encouragement, though, we selected talks. To practise delivery we chose a quiet spot near the Vaal River, where we addressed our "audience"—the river! We felt well rewarded when, a month later, instead of the usual 4 or 5 at our group meeting, 37 came to the first talk!

In 1947 I was assigned to the circuit work. The following year Lina and I were married. Ever since, my dear wife has been labouring at my side—a most loyal companion. So another 'request of my heart' was given me.

Learning Important Lessons

In 1953 Lina and I had the great privilege of attending the "New World Society" Assembly in New York, U.S.A.—our first trip abroad. That is when one of our Christian brothers picked us up at the dock to take us to the home of the black Witness family with whom we stayed. How we came to love those dear brothers and sisters!

This experience helped us tremendously

when I later served as district overseer for the black Witnesses in South Africa, where we were often received into very humble homes, sometimes sitting on the floor and once even sleeping on the floor.

Since 1966 my wife and I have been serving at Bethel here in South Africa. Having spent nearly 20 years as a travelling overseer, at first I found it difficult to adjust to life in Bethel. I dearly loved to be out preaching, teaching, and training others. But as time went by, I learned to appreciate Bethel service deeply. In time I was privileged to work in the Service Department and for a number of years now as a member of the Branch Committee.

Looking back, I recall that in 1942, when still in Kimberley, we heard of the death of the president of the Society, J. F. Rutherford. A news report commented: 'Now that the leader of Jehovah's Witnesses is dead, the organization will wither and die, like a pumpkin plant in the hot sun.' Instead, how beautifully the organization has kept flourishing over the years—even during the scorching heat of persecution! And what marvellous growth has taken place in South Africa since those early years in Bonnievale! Then there were some 1,000 Witnesses in South Africa; now there are over 36,000.

When I reflect on what Jehovah and his organization have done and have meant for me over the years, I heartily encourage all my young fellow Witnesses to make room for full-time service if at all possible. It brings rich rewards. I know that if I keep on finding exquisite delight in doing Jehovah's will, he will grant me the request of my heart—an eternity of joyful service.

ESCAPE from reality." That is what a relative said when a young minister moved to the South Pacific so as to engage in missionary activity. And many would share this sentiment. A radio commentator in New Zealand, for example, recently suggested that when economic conditions deteriorate, great numbers of people turn to belief in God as a form of escapism.*

But are those who devote their lives to the pursuit of spiritual interests really escapists? Not according to Jesus Christ. He did not view belief in God as an illusion, invention, or mere figment of the imagination. At John 7:28 he said: "I have not come of my own initiative, but he that sent me is real."

In Jesus' case, however, belief in God did not affect him in some passive way. He was moved to present his life to God, saying: "Look! I am come . . . to do your will, O God." (Hebrews 10:7) True Christians today are affected no less compellingly. To illustrate, note the counsel Paul wrote to Timothy, a prominent elder in the first-century congregation. Paul knew that some in the congregation had considerable material assets. But because their faith was based on reality, they would be moved to put these assets to use. Said Paul: "Tell those who are rich in this present world not to be contemptuous of others, and not to rest the weight of their confidence on the transitory power of wealth but on the living God, who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment. Tell them to do good, to be rich in kindly actions, to be ready to give to others and to sympathise with those in distress. Their security should be invested in the life to come, so that they may be sure

* "Escapism" is defined as "continually diverting the mind to fantasy, as an escape from reality," or "the avoidance of reality by absorption of the mind in . . . an imaginative situation, activity, etc."

Who Really Are the Escapists?

of holding a share in the life which is real and permanent."—1 Timothy 6:17-19, Phillips.

Christianity is therefore no flight from reality. It involves a manly facing up to responsibility. The God we worship is no mirage; he is real. The life of service we lead is one of meaning and fulfillment. Our hope in a future reward, rather than being a baseless supposition, has as its sure foundation the promises of a God who cannot lie.—Hebrews 6:18.

What, though, of those who deny the need to serve God and who build their lives around material goods or some selfish career? Could it be that these are in fact the escapists?

The wise man Solomon used expressions such as "vanity" and "striving after wind" to describe a life in which material things and fleshly pleasures held a prime place. He described the outcome, saying: "And anything that my eyes asked for I did not keep away from them. I did not hold back my heart from any sort of rejoicing, for my heart was joyful because of all my hard work, and this came to be my portion from all my hard work. And I, even I, turned toward all the works of mine that my hands had done and toward the hard work that I had worked hard to accomplish,



and, look! everything was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing of advantage under the sun.”—Ecclesiastes 2:10, 11.

Yes, even a materialistic way of life brought rejoicing of a kind. But real fulfillment and permanent happiness were lacking. Such a life is pure “vanity.” Indeed, the Hebrew word for “vanity” carries the literal meaning of “breath” and therefore refers to that which is lacking in stability and permanence. *The New English Bible* thus uses the word “emptiness.”

Therefore, is the person who leads the kind of life that Solomon labeled “vanity” in a position to accuse a Christian of escaping into a state of illusory content-

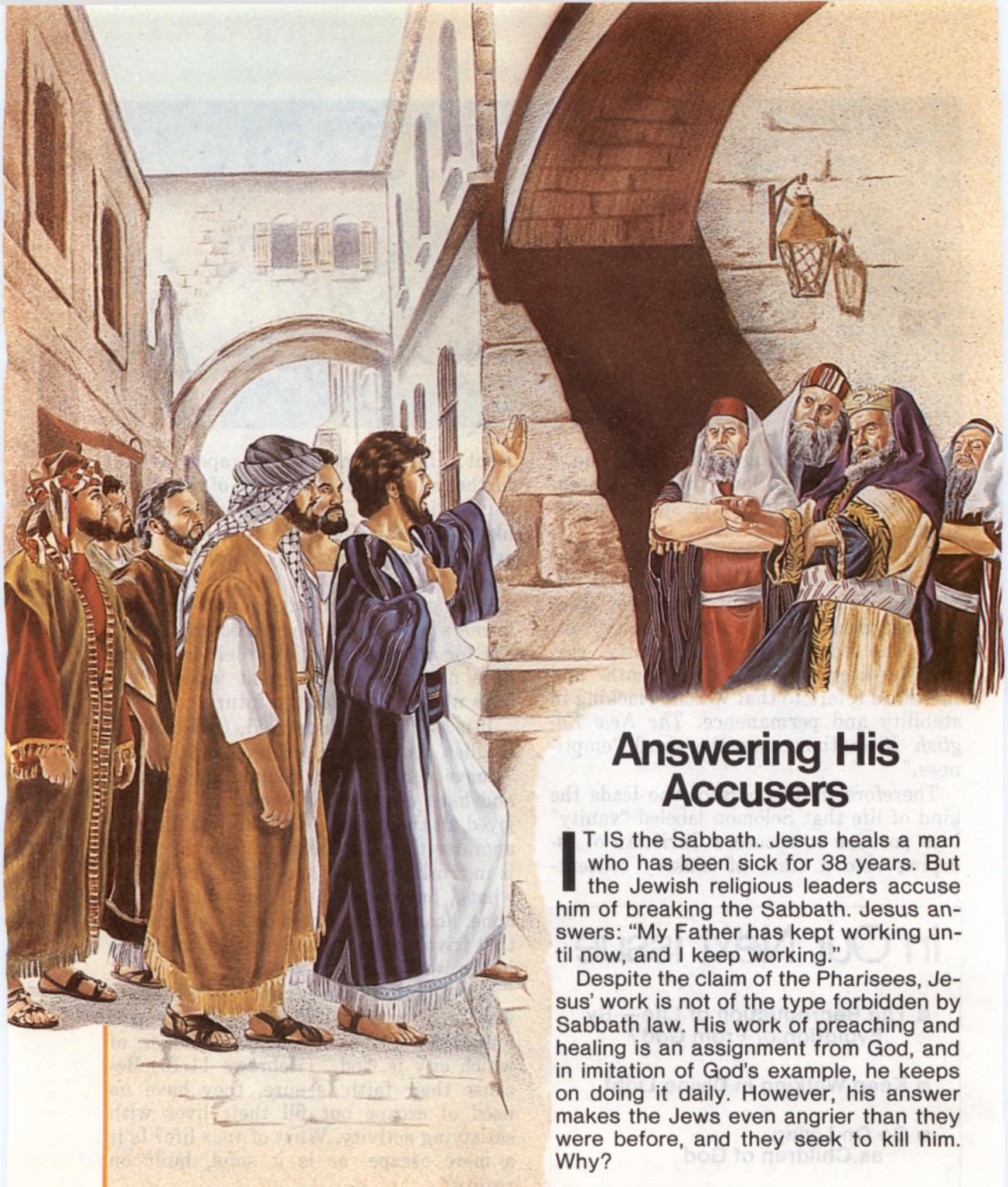
ment? Hardly. In fact, the apostle Paul further shows that “the scene of this world is changing.” (1 Corinthians 7:31) Here he likens the ungodly world to a stage with ever-changing scenes. That which today appears splendid, lovely, even spectacular, may be gone tomorrow. Present-day “performers” are in time replaced by others. Yet for all their exertion, their lives produce nothing of permanent value. They have no real hope for the future.

It is as Philip Chesterfield, 18th-century English courtier and orator, rightly said: “I have run the silly rounds of pleasure, and have done with them all. I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and I appraise them at their real worth, which is in truth very low . . . When I reflect on what I have seen, . . . and what I have done, I can hardly persuade myself that all that frivolous hurry and bustle of pleasure in the world had any reality.”

Christians, however, are like Abraham who “was awaiting the city having real foundations, the builder and maker of which city is God.” (Hebrews 11:10) Because their faith is sure, they have no need of escape but fill their lives with satisfying activity. What of *your* life? Is it a mere escape, or is it solid, built on reality?

In Our Next Issue

- **The Reproduction of Life—By Evolution or From God?**
- **Keep Walking in Divine Light**
- **Go On Living as Children of God**



Answering His Accusers

IT IS the Sabbath. Jesus heals a man who has been sick for 38 years. But the Jewish religious leaders accuse him of breaking the Sabbath. Jesus answers: "My Father has kept working until now, and I keep working."

Despite the claim of the Pharisees, Jesus' work is not of the type forbidden by Sabbath law. His work of preaching and healing is an assignment from God, and in imitation of God's example, he keeps on doing it daily. However, his answer makes the Jews even angrier than they were before, and they seek to kill him. Why?



It is because now they not only believe that Jesus is breaking the Sabbath but consider his claim of being God's personal Son to be blasphemy. However, Jesus is unafraid and answers them further regarding his favored relationship with God. "The Father has affection for the Son," he says, "and shows him all the things he himself does."

"Just as the Father raises the dead up," Jesus continues, "so the Son also makes those alive whom he wants to." Indeed, the Son is already raising the dead in a spiritual way! "He that hears my word and believes him that sent me," Jesus says, "has passed over from death to life." Yes, he continues: "The hour is coming, and it is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who have given heed will live."

Although up to this time, there is no record that Jesus has literally raised anyone from the dead, he tells his accusers that such a literal resurrection of the dead will occur. "Do not marvel at this," he says, "because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."

As yet, Jesus has evidently never publicly described his vital role in God's purpose in such a distinct and definite way. But Jesus' accusers have more than his own witness about these things. "You have dispatched men to John," Jesus reminds them, "and he has borne witness to the truth."

Just two years before, John the Baptizer told these Jewish religious leaders about the One coming after him. Reminding them of their once high regard for the now imprisoned John, Jesus says: "You for a short time were willing to rejoice greatly in his light." Jesus recalls this to their minds in hopes of helping, yes, saving, them. Yet he does not depend on the witness of John.

"The works themselves that I am doing [including the miracle he just performed] bear witness about me that the Father dispatched me." But besides that, Jesus continues: "The Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me." God bore witness about Jesus, for instance, at his baptism, saying: "This is my Son, the beloved."

Really, Jesus' accusers have no excuse for rejecting him. The very Scriptures they claim to be searching testify about him! "If you believed Moses you would believe me," Jesus concludes, "for that one wrote about me. But if you do not believe the writings of that one, how will you believe my sayings?" **John 5:17-47; 1:19-27; Matthew 3:17.**

- ♦ Why is Jesus' work not in violation of the Sabbath?
- ♦ How does Jesus describe his vital role in God's purpose?
- ♦ To prove that he is God's Son, to whose witness does Jesus point?

Living for God's Will —Today and Forever

"You too . . . live the remainder of [your] time in the flesh, no more for the desires of men, but for God's will."

—1 PETER 4:1, 2.

HOW do you react to the idea of letting your life be controlled by God? Many today find repugnant the very idea of submitting to someone

1, 2. (a) How do many react to the idea of submitting to someone else's will? (b) How may some react in the Christian congregation? (c) What questions are therefore raised?



else's will. Even in so-called stable societies there is a growing rebellion against authority. Riots, protests, disorder, and violence are the daily fare. Under stress the veneer of civilization turns out to be thin and brittle.—2 Timothy 3:1-3.

² In contrast, Jehovah's Witnesses show that they are living for God's will by their faithfulness, for example, in their house-to-house ministry. Yet, even within the Christian congregation, a spirit of independence has sometimes been manifested by a few. They may chafe at the discipline of the elders. A few show disrespect toward "the faithful and discreet slave" class and its Governing Body. (Matthew 24:45-47; Acts 15:2, 23) Therefore the questions arise: Why should I submit to God's will? Why should my life be controlled by God?

Christ's Selfless Example

³ Peter, who had shared many experiences with Jesus, believed that there was a very good reason to live for God's will rather than for one's own. He said: "Therefore since Christ suffered in the flesh, you too arm yourselves with the same mental disposition; because the person that has suffered in the flesh has desisted from sins, to the end that he may live the remainder of his time in the flesh, no more for the desires of men, but for God's will."—1 Peter 4:1, 2.

⁴ Why did Jesus suffer in the flesh? Because he supported his Father's side in the issue of universal sovereignty, or rulership. He proved God to be true and Satan a liar. And he did that by letting his earthly life be controlled by God, even though it resulted in a martyr's death.—2 Corinthians 5:14, 15.

3. What counsel did Peter give regarding our mental disposition?

4. How did Jesus show his submission to his Father?

⁵ Yet that death was an expression of God's love through Christ. (1 John 4:10) Why so? Because as a result of it, benefits were made available to all mankind. (Romans 5:8; 6:23) But how many are willing to accept those benefits? How many are willing to imitate Christ and sacrifice their own desires in submission to God's will?—Hebrews 13:15, 17.

Benefits Now and in the Future

⁶ Thus how appropriate even in our times is the invitation that Jehovah extended to Israel 2,700 years ago: "I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk. O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea."—Isaiah 48:17, 18; compare Genesis 22:18.

⁷ Jehovah teaches us to benefit ourselves by our living for his will—and those benefits are not just peace and righteousness here and now. They include the future blessings of everlasting life, even as Jesus promised: "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone that beholds the Son and exercises faith in him should have everlasting life, and I will resurrect him at the last day."—John 6:40.

⁸ Those words are a great comfort to faithful Christians today who are advanced in years. This system of things is into its 72nd year since the crucial date of 1914. Satan's world has lasted longer than many expected. In fact, some faithful Christians who expected to see

5. What challenge does Christ's example place before us?

6, 7. What are the benefits of submission to Jehovah's will?

8. In what way is Jesus' promise of a resurrection a comfort today?

Armageddon and the beginning of the new system of things in their lifetime have died. Yet their lives, dedicated to doing God's will, have not been in vain. True to his word, Jesus will resurrect them and grant them the benefit of everlasting life.—John 5:28, 29; 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Christ's Mental Disposition

⁹ What can make it easier for us to submit to God's will? According to Peter's counsel, quoted in paragraph 3, we must arm ourselves with "the same mental disposition" that Jesus had.—1 Peter 4:1.

¹⁰ Peter here uses a Greek word that is found only twice in the Greek Scriptures—*en'noi-a*. Although some translators render it "mind," it is not the usual Greek word for "mind," which is *nous*. Therefore Peter, under inspiration, had some specific point in mind when he chose this less common noun. Greek scholar W. E. Vine says that *en'noi-a* "denotes purpose, intention, design." J. H. Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon* defines it as "manner of thinking and feeling."

¹¹ Jesus' self-sacrificing course of action clearly showed his purpose, or design. He was not leading a superficial life, just seeking pleasure and fun. He knew that he had not given up his former life in heaven in order to waste away a few years on earth in selfish pursuits. (See the contrast in Genesis 6:1, 2, 4, and Jude 6.) Thus he stated: "I have come down from heaven to do, not my will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38) Jesus was single-minded in his devotion to his Father's cause, always putting it above his own will, even down to an ignominious death.

—Luke 22:42.

9, 10. (a) With what must we arm ourselves? (Philippians 2:5-8) (b) What is special about the Greek word rendered "mental disposition" at 1 Peter 4:1?

11. What can we learn from Jesus' example with regard to the way we use our lives?

¹² Even when tired and hungry, Jesus clearly showed his mental disposition toward his Father's will. On one occasion, while his disciples went off for food, he rested at Jacob's fountain. Instead of taking a well-earned nap until the disciples returned, he exerted himself to do God's will. He took an unusual step for a Jew. He entered into conversation with a Samaritan woman. He opened her eyes to an understanding of the true God. As a result, "many of the Samaritans out of that city put faith in him on account of the word of the woman."—John 4:6-26, 39-42.

¹³ When his disciples returned, they urged him to eat. How did he answer them? "I have food to eat of which you do not know." They were baffled by his response until he added: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." Clearly, Jesus took pleasure in submitting himself to his Father's will. To him it was like food, and just as with eating good food, he enjoyed real satisfaction as a result. If we want to feel truly fulfilled in our lives, we can do no better than follow the example of Jesus Christ.—John 4:31-38.

Effects of Christ's Mental Disposition

¹⁴ How should having Christ's mental disposition affect us? If we learn to think like Christ, then we will have an inner force that will guide us to do what Jesus would do under any circumstances. (Luke 22:42; Ephesians 4:23, 24) This force will not result just from fear of punishment, such as discipline from the elders in the congregation, but rather from an overwhelming appreciation for Jehovah's laws

12, 13. (a) How did Jesus manifest his mental disposition at Jacob's fountain? (b) What did Jesus mean when he said, "I have food to eat of which you do not know"?

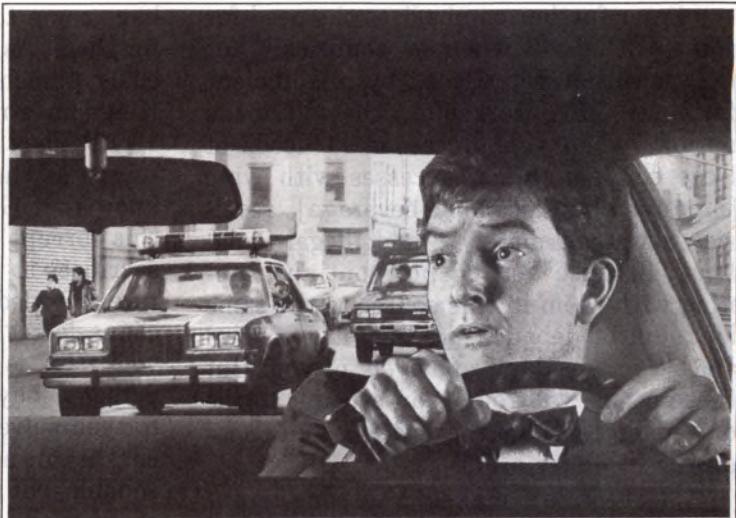
14. What do we need in order to have Christ's mental disposition? Illustrate.

Does appreciation for the law make you obey, or only the presence of the police?

and principles. We can compare the situation to the person who obeys traffic laws only when there is a policeman in view—he subjects himself only to an exterior influence. But the person who values life, loves his neighbor, and sees the wisdom of having traffic laws will obey because he respects the law. He has a strong inner motivation.—Psalm 51:10.

¹⁵ Jesus had that inner 'force actuating his mind.' Thus he was faithful to his Father's will, even unto death. He endured suffering without complaining or reviling his persecutors. (1 Peter 2:21-24) Sometimes we as Christians may come under similar pressures. Opposing authorities may try to stifle our preaching activity and meetings, as they did in Spain during the Franco era and in various European lands during the Nazi occupation. Many brothers and sisters were mistreated in an effort to have them betray responsible brothers in the local congregation. In spite of persecution the majority stood firm. (See 1978 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, pages

15. (a) What proves that Jesus had an inner force actuating his mind? (Ephesians 4:23) (b) What examples of integrity give evidence of Christ's mental disposition in modern-day Christians?



171-2, 182-3; 1986 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, pages 137-59.)

¹⁶ We may come under pressure in relation to Christian neutrality or the use of blood transfusions. (Acts 5:29; 15:28, 29) Then the issue arises, Do we live for God's will or for man's? Or temptation may arise from a combination of fleshly desires and unwholesome companions. Perhaps at school or at our place of work, the opportunity may present itself to smoke or to take drugs without anyone else in the congregation knowing about it. Or what about the temptation to gamble in the lottery? Or to commit fornication or adultery? So often a worldly work atmosphere can be conducive to wrong thinking and wrong action—unless we have the same resoluteness as Christ regarding the doing of God's will. What will you do? Will you have an upright force actuating your mind so that you will follow Christ's course of action under such circumstances?—Ephesians 4:17-20; 1 John 2:15, 16.

16. What are some of the ways in which we might be tested today? How can we resist?

¹⁷ Peter further emphasizes the need for doing God's will when he counsels: "For the time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine [or any other alcoholic beverage], revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries. Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you. But these people will render an account to the one ready to judge those living and those dead."—1 Peter 4:3-5.

¹⁸ Here Peter makes a strong point—those who ignore God's will must render an account. (Compare Romans 14:12 and Hebrews 13:17.) Paul arrives at a similar conclusion in his letter to the Colossians, where he writes: "Deaden, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of those things the wrath of God is coming." All those who practice such things are certainly not living for God's will but, rather, for the satisfying of their own greedy compulsions. Yet people can break away from such moral degradation, for, as Paul states, "In those very things you, too, once walked when you used to live in them."—Colossians 3:5-7; Ephesians 4:19; see also 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

Perceiving What God's Will Is

¹⁹ During these final years of the 20th century, more than three million people

17, 18. (a) What powerful point does Peter make regarding those who practice sin? (b) What is needed in order to resist the inroads of sin?

19. How are many now showing that they live for the will of Jehovah? (Romans 12:1, 2)

have come to perceive what God's will is for them. As a consequence, they are zealously preaching the good news of God's Kingdom government. (Acts 8:12; Mark 13:10) They are not living just for themselves, as the majority of others do. They know that God will soon bring an end to this corrupt system, and they are making sacrifices to help others to gain this accurate knowledge, even as the apostle Paul counseled: "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked. On this account cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is."—Ephesians 5:15-17.

²⁰ Life is like a glass of cool, fresh water. In the first decades of a person's life, he "drinks" deeply and hurriedly—until he begins to wonder how many years of life are left in the "glass." That is the puzzle that baffles everybody. How important, then, to live life with a sense of responsibility toward God and one's fellowman! How vital to take into account God's will and not just one's own selfish will!—Matthew 7:21, 24, 26.

20, 21. (a) How should we view the gift of life? (James 4:13-17) (b) How can we avoid being fashioned after the world?

How Would You Answer?

- How did Jesus show that he lived for God's will?
- What benefits are available to those who live for God's will?
- What was Christ's mental disposition toward God's will?
- How should the 'force actuating the mind' affect us?
- How should we view life?

²¹ However, living as we do in a world controlled by the spirit of Satan, it is not always easy to live for God's will. (Revelation 12:9) Pressures are exerted all the time to mold us to the world's will and attitude of mind. Fashion fads and manias can even influence some in the congregation, so that they begin to look like clones of some famous entertainment personality. How appropriate, then, is Paul's counsel: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God!"—Romans 12:2.

²² God's will is that "this good news of

22. (a) What is God's will for our time? (b) How can we show that we are living for God's will? (c) What blessing awaits those who do live for God's will?

the kingdom" be preached worldwide before he brings an end to the present world system. (Matthew 24:14; Revelation 14:6, 7) This gives all the more reason to respond to the call for more full-time ministers if your circumstances allow for it. It is reason, too, for elders and ministerial servants to make themselves available to move into congregations where there may be a need for their help. And it is an overwhelming reason for every Witness to be an authentic Christian witness—not just bearing a label but actually living for the will of God now and forever. Know that by so doing 'you will be safely treasuring up for yourselves a fine foundation for the future, in order that you may get a firm hold on the real life.'—1 Timothy 6:19.

Lining Up With Jehovah's Integrity Keepers

"As for me, in my integrity I shall walk. . . . Among the congregated throngs I shall bless Jehovah."

—PSALM 26:11, 12.

IN 1985 there were 189,800 persons baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah as his Christian witnesses. That is an average of 520 per day. How did all these people make their decision to be baptized? Did they attend mass rallies, listen to an emotional preacher, and then make some emotional decision for Christ? That is the way some Protestant and Evangelical religions function. But is that the way that Christ acquires a following?

² When we carefully examine Jesus' public preaching, we do not find him manipulating emotions. For example, did he appeal to his audience with choirs and singing? Or did he use clever psychology to establish a guilt complex in his audience and then cause them to dig into

- 1, 2. (a) How have some religions in Christendom acquired a following? (b) What teaching method did Jesus use? (Matthew 11:28-30)

their pockets? On the contrary, his method of teaching caused people to think and reason. Since most of his listeners were Jews, they already had a background in the Hebrew Scriptures. He could get them to reason on the basis of their previous knowledge so that they would recognize him as the Messiah.—Matthew, chapters 5-7; Luke 13:10-21.

³ Similarly, Paul, though regarded by some as lacking in speaking ability, appealed to the reasoning faculty. (Acts 20:7-9; 2 Corinthians 10:10; 11:6) He wrote: "I entreat you by the compassions of God, brothers, to present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God, a sacred service with your power of reason. . . . Be transformed by making your mind over [“so that your whole attitude of mind is changed,” *Phillips*], that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”—Romans 12:1, 2.

⁴ Likewise today, those who get baptized are persons who have studied the Scriptures and reasoned carefully on them before taking the serious step of baptism, or total immersion in water.

3. How do we know that Paul was not merely stirring up emotions by his teaching?

4. Before a person can be baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, what steps must he take?



Baptism opens the way . . .

(Acts 17:11, 12) Theirs has not been a hasty, emotional decision. On the contrary, before being accepted for baptism, they have regularly attended Christian meetings with a view to acquiring accurate knowledge of Jehovah God and his purposes through Christ Jesus. (Hebrews 10:25) They have also participated regularly in the Christian ministry, sharing the Kingdom good news with others. (Acts 5:42; 1 Corinthians 9:16) Then, in the final weeks before their baptism, they have carefully reviewed with various congregation elders more than 120 questions about Christian teaching and conduct, as well as considered hundreds of supporting Bible texts—all of this to be-



... to an integrity-keeping ministry

come approved integrity keepers prior to their baptism.—Acts 8:34-36.*

The Difference That Baptism Makes

5 What does a person accomplish by being baptized? First of all, he identifies himself with the greatest integrity keeper who ever walked the earth—Christ Jesus. He himself set the example by being baptized when he was about 30 years of age.

* The Watchtower of June 1, 1985, pages 29-31, outlines the proper procedure with regard to baptism and sets out the two questions that are presented to candidates toward the end of the baptism talk.

5. With what course of conduct is a person identified by baptism?

(Luke 3:21-23) Later he commanded his followers to teach and baptize throughout the world. (Matthew 28:19, 20) But did he mean that his disciples should baptize people indiscriminately, without reference to their present conduct?

6 The apostle Peter presents the right viewpoint when he writes: "Become holy yourselves in all your conduct, because it is written: 'You must be holy, because I am holy.'" (1 Peter 1:15, 16) Now, for a dedicated Christian, what does it mean to be "holy"?

7 According to W. E. Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, the Greek word *ha'gi-os* (translated "holy") "fundamentally signifies separated . . . and hence, in Scripture in its moral and spiritual significance, separated from sin and therefore consecrated to God." Another Greek scholar says that "it is characteristically godlikeness." This understanding imposes a high standard on those who would get baptized as true Christians. It is the standard of integrity, and integrity is 'firm adherence to a code of moral values' —in the Christian's case, Christ's values.—John 17:17-19; 18:36, 37.

8 The true Christian congregation has always insisted on integrity, maintaining a clean organization. Thus Paul ordered early Christians to "quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man. . . . Remove the wicked man from among yourselves." (1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 John 10, 11) Have the clergy of Christendom applied that high standard of integrity to

6, 7. (a) What is required of a true follower of Christ? (b) What does holiness imply?

8. (a) What standards prevailed in the early Christian congregation regarding conduct? (b) Has Christendom followed those standards? Give examples from local events.

their flocks? Christendom accepts—as either passive or active members—people who regularly commit every kind of gross sin and crime. Bible principles allow no room for such permissiveness.—Compare Jeremiah 8:5, 6, 10.

⁹ Precisely because of this high standard among Jehovah's Witnesses, those who love truth and integrity are drawn to dedicate themselves to the Sovereign Lord of the universe, Jehovah God. (Habakkuk 3:18, 19) They see a clear contrast between the conduct of worldly religions and that of Jehovah's Witnesses. True, the majority of people disdain pure worship. (1 Peter 4:3, 4) Yet lovers of integrity are turning to the truth by the thousands. They are showing their love of God and his standards when they submit to water baptism.—Compare Mark 1:10; John 3:23; Acts 8:36.

Integrity Based on Love and Endurance

- ¹⁰ Integrity has a price. Jesus made that
9. What draws many people to dedication and baptism?
 10. What is required for a Christian to keep his integrity?

clear when he invited people to become his followers. "If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself [“leave self behind,” *The New English Bible*] and pick up his torture stake and follow me continually." (Mark 8:34) The course of Christian integrity involves tests and sacrifices and for the same reason that it did for Christ—we have a common enemy, Satan. (Ephesians 6:11, 12) Thus endurance is required in order to follow Jesus “continually.” For that reason, dedication involves no light decision; it should be no passing fancy. Yet a few have abandoned the truth within a few months or years of their baptism. How can we explain that?

¹¹ Perhaps some approached baptism in an emotional rather than a rational state of mind. Others may have looked for quick results and made a self-centered, short-term dedication. Whatever the reason may be, they lost their strong relationship with Jehovah. They did not “look intently” at their Exemplar, Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 12:1, 2) As a consequence, their love of

11. Why, perhaps, have some not continued in the course of integrity?

Privileges in the Full-Time Ministry

Auxiliary Pioneer: A baptized minister who spends a minimum of 60 hours in preaching activity during a month.

Regular Pioneer: A baptized minister who spends an average of 90 hours per month in preaching activity.

Special Pioneer: A baptized minister who spends at least 140 hours per month in the ministry and receives a small monthly allowance for basic expenses. These pioneers are usually assigned to isolated groups and small congregations.

Gilead Missionary: A baptized minister who has been trained at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead for foreign service and also spends a minimum of 140 hours per month in the ministry.

Circuit and District Overseers: Traveling elders who visit congregations and circuits with a view to building up the brothers in their ministry and meetings. They spend many hours in field service.

Bethel Service: Performed by full-time ministers in any of the Watch Tower Society's branch offices and printing plants around the world.

God waned and their integrity was short-lived. And why is love such a vital factor? Because it is the only solid basis for a lasting dedication to Jehovah.—Mark 12:30, 31; 1 John 4:7, 8, 16; 5:3.

Counting the Cost of Integrity

¹² Jesus did not encourage his disciples to follow him blindly without counting the cost. He counseled: “Who of you that wants to build a tower does not first sit down and calculate the expense, to see if he has enough to complete it?” Yes, a prudent person carefully weighs his future course of action. He has to be sure of his motivation before accepting the full responsibility of Christian dedication and baptism. And Jesus showed what that could mean when he concluded: “Thus, you may be sure, none of you that does not say good-bye to all his belongings can be my disciple.”—Luke 14:28-33.

¹³ Dedication to Jehovah calls for whole-souled integrity in doing the divine will. No person or possession can be allowed to supersede one’s love of God. That is why Jesus stated: “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own soul, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26) Now what did Jesus mean when he spoke of hating one’s own family members and even oneself? Since he taught his followers to love even their enemies, in what sense did he use the word hate here? (Luke 6:27, 35) Hatred here has the thought of loving less.—Compare Matthew 12:46-50.

¹⁴ Certainly when a person becomes a

12. What is the wise course to take before baptism?

13. If the essence of Jesus’ teaching is love, what did he mean when he spoke of ‘hating’ one’s family members? (Matthew 22:37-40)

14. How do some friends and relatives react when one becomes a witness of Jehovah? (John 15:18, 19)

Christian witness of Jehovah, he suddenly finds out who are his true friends. Some will perhaps shun or boycott him because he has abandoned his former religion, even though they themselves do not practice any religion properly. But Jesus promised that there would be a compensation for any such loss, saying: “No one has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good news who will not get a hundredfold now in this period of time . . . and in the coming system of things everlasting life.”—Mark 10:29, 30.

¹⁵ In some cases the course of dedication and integrity may mean a loss of esteem in other people’s eyes. (1 Corinthians 4:12, 13) Why should that be? Because you now practice a religion that is not deemed “respectable.” (Compare Mark 2:15, 16.) After all, it is not respectable to ‘go pestering other people with your religion from house to house.’ It is not respectable to go to prison rather than violate one’s neutrality on matters of nationalism and patriotism. (John 18:36) It is not respectable to refuse blood transfusions because of a Bible-trained conscience—although the present AIDS plague is giving some people second thoughts on that score.—Compare Acts 15:28, 29; 17:6, 7; 24:5.

¹⁶ Even though the way of Christian integrity is narrow and testing, we do have constant help available. (Matthew 7:13, 14) Therefore Paul could say: “For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me.” (Philippians 4:13) And we can acquire that power through constant prayer, through a study of God’s Word, and through association with the Christian congregation. As baptized integrity keepers, we can remain faithful and loyal, thanks to the power

15. Why may some look down on Jehovah’s Witnesses?

16. How are we helped to keep our integrity?

that God supplies.—Ephesians 4:11-13; 6:18; Psalm 119:105.

Benefits of an Integrity-Keeping Course

¹⁷ The step of dedication and baptism leads to many blessings. For one thing, it can mean a wider and more satisfying ministry. There is the prospect of future service as an auxiliary pioneer, which in some cases can lead to regular and special pioneer activity, missionary service, circuit and district work, and Bethel service. (See box on page 26.) For baptized brothers the way opens up to serve others in the congregation as a ministerial servant and, in time, as an elder. But for all these blessings, there is the same basic requirement—integrity.—1 Timothy 3:1-10.

¹⁸ The benefits of a life of dedication and integrity spread out to affect others. As a result of closely following Christ's example, one becomes a better husband or wife, father or mother. (1 Peter 2:21; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:4) Youths develop an upbuilding relationship with their parents, teachers, and congregation elders. (Titus 2:6, 7) Every baptized Christian becomes a better neighbor, employer, or employee. (Matthew 22:39; Ephesians 6:5-9; Titus 2:9, 10) And like Christ, every Christian should become refreshing association for others, even as Jesus said: "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."—Matthew 11:29.

¹⁹ A great benefit from taking the step of dedication and baptism is gaining a peaceful relationship with the Creator. This leads to peace of mind. As Paul counseled:

17. To what blessings may baptism lead?
18. How should our life of dedication affect others with whom we come in contact?
19. What other great benefit results from taking the step of dedication?

"Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."—Philippians 4:6, 7.

²⁰ "The peace of God" is based on a deep understanding of Jesus' example and sacrifice. This knowledge of Christ is leading many to genuine repentance and an authentic change of conduct, or a 'turning around' from sin. (Acts 3:19, 20) As a consequence, dedicated ones are saying, as did the psalmist: "As for me, in my integrity I shall walk. . . . Among the congregated throngs I shall bless Jehovah." (Psalm 26: 11, 12) The person who gets baptized in water in symbol of his dedication to God is lining himself up with Jehovah's integrity keepers around the world. (1 Peter 2:17) He is also getting a "hold on the real life," everlasting life, which Jehovah has promised through Christ Jesus.—1 Timothy 6:19; Titus 1:2.

20. (a) On what is "the peace of God" based?
(b) What opportunity opens up to the person getting baptized?

How Would You Answer?

- How were early Christians first attracted to the truth taught by Christ and the apostles?
- How does holiness relate to the individual Christian and the congregation?
- On what must integrity be based?
- What is involved in counting the cost of integrity?
- What are the benefits of keeping integrity?

An Archaeologist Who Appreciated Bible Truth

"THE last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed." These words of Sir Frederic Kenyon, taken from page 289 of his book *The Bible and Archaeology* (1940), are quoted on page 53 of the Watch Tower Society's book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. Why had Kenyon come to this conclusion? It was because newly discovered papyrus manuscripts were dated so close to the time of the composition of the Scriptures that he could describe the interval as "negligible." Yet these papyruses showed no significant variation from more recent manuscripts. This confirmed "the authenticity and the general integrity" of the later texts from which the Bible has been translated.

Interestingly, one of Jehovah's Witnesses writes concerning this famous archaeologist: "Sir Frederic Kenyon had several of the Society's publications, for over the years it was my privilege to leave various books with him and to correspond with him. I became acquainted with him in early 1936. . . . It was a book by Dr. Kenyon that enlightened me as to the origins of the Bible. I wrote and told him so. His book *The Story of the Bible* in time came to me inscribed, 'With the best wishes of the author, F. G. Kenyon, May 1st, 1937.'

"On receiving the book '*The Truth Shall Make You Free*', published by our Society, he wrote me: 'Your object is the same as my own, to persuade people to read and believe the Bible; but you appeal to a much wider public. My books are addressed primarily to those who are disturbed by what they are told about the results of modern criticism and discovery, while your book speaks to readers of all classes and kinds. I wish you all success to your work.'

"Writing regarding two more of our Society's publications, he again referred to our common objective, 'to encourage people to read the Bible,

and to read it intelligently,' and he added: 'I am glad to hear that your books are circulating widely and in many lands.' . . .

"In 1948 Sir Frederic published the book *The Bible and Modern Scholarship*, to counter a book by Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, who had described parts of the Bible, including those dealing with redemption by Christ Jesus, as 'folklore.' In his introduction Dr. Kenyon says: 'A detailed examination of the Bishop's book had convinced me that it was no up-to-date representation of the results of modern scholarship, but, on the contrary, was a revival of a school of criticism which had some vogue about seventy years ago, and ignored almost wholly the results of the last fifty years.' Concerning his own book, Kenyon said: 'I believe that the time has come . . . to restore confidence in the Bible as a guide to truth and a basis for the conduct of life. . . . I can only hope that [this book] may be of some assistance to those who look to Christianity as the one hope of our distracted world, and to the Bible as an assured foundation for the Christian belief.'

"This world-renowned Bible scholar, who had written so kindly regarding the work and publications of Jehovah's Witnesses, was a humble man, with a genuine kindness. . . . In 1889, after excelling as a student at Oxford, he entered the British Museum as an assistant in the Department of Manuscripts. Later he was promoted to be assistant keeper of manuscripts and in 1909 to be Director and Principal Librarian of the British Museum. During the first part of his long tenure, Biblical manuscripts and the discovery of papyruses were his principal concern; later, he was responsible as Director for the archaeological expeditions to Carchemish and Ur. After his retirement he had a hand in the acquisition of the Codex Sinaiticus and the publication of the Chester Beatty papyruses that helped toward authenticating the Greek Scriptures.

"In conclusion, it is fitting to quote from his book *The Story of the Bible* as follows: 'The Bible has a human history as well as a divine inspiration. It is a history full of interest, and it is one which all those who value their Bible should know. . . . It is reassuring at the end to find that the general result of all these discoveries and all this study is to strengthen the proof of the authenticity of the Scriptures, and our conviction that we have in our hands, in substantial integrity, the veritable Word of God.'

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

Races United in South Africa!

IMBALI is a black township just outside Pietermaritzburg, Natal, in South Africa. When the two Imbali congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses were granted a piece of land, the elders in the white and the Coloured congregations in Pietermaritzburg immediately met together to plan how they could help their black brothers build a Kingdom Hall in the shortest possible time. Although the building work stretched out over nine months, it actually took only 48 working days to complete the work, which was mostly done on Saturdays.

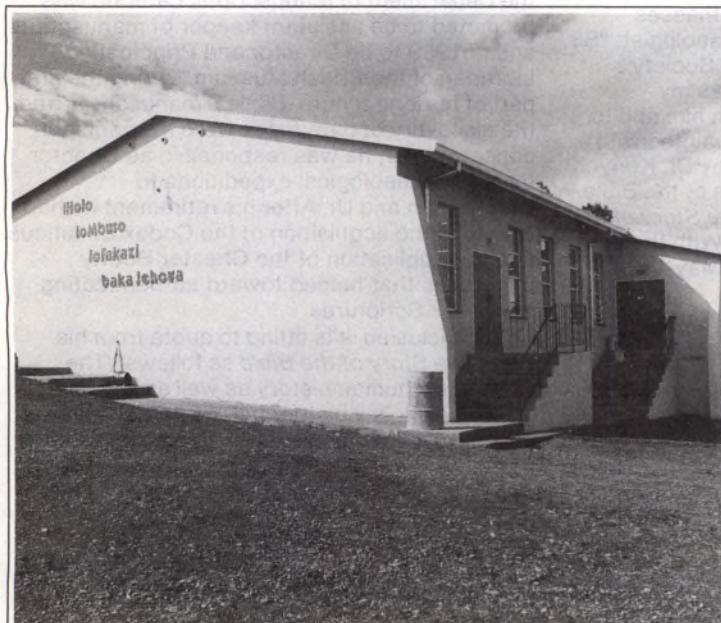
To the local residents of Imbali, the construction of this Kingdom Hall demonstrated something that they must have

thought impossible. Imagine scores of white, Coloured, and Indian Witnesses pouring into the township from Pietermaritzburg and Durban and working shoulder to shoulder with the black African congregations! (Compare Zephaniah 3:9.) Men, women, and children were all passing material and equipment from one to another, and eating meals at a common table. Such racial unity is unheard of in an African township, especially in this time of unrest! Surely, this is an indisputable evidence that Jehovah's Witnesses are a united people who really care for one another.

Commenting on this unity, one neighbour said: "Seeing whites, blacks, Coloureds, and

Indians working so harmoniously together has amazed us. We do not experience such co-operation in our churches." The mayor of Imbali, Mr. Pakkies, attended the dedication of the hall on November 10, 1985, and expressed astonishment at the unity and the determination of the Witnesses to complete such a large project by themselves. He summed up how they did it by declaring, "It can only be done with love." How true! And did not Jesus himself say: "By this love you have for one another, everyone will know that you are my disciples"?—John 13:35, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

With the end of the present system of things fast approaching, Jehovah's Witnesses throughout South Africa are aware of the need to build Kingdom Halls in the black townships and rurals as soon as possible. The first Kingdom Hall in Soweto was dedicated in February 1985. Several others are in the process of being built. Of the 700 congregations in the black field, about 70 have their own Kingdom Halls, so there is a tremendous need to be filled. The Imbali hall is helping to fill that need. It provides seating for 400 persons, who, in comfort, can take in the vital spiritual food being served there. Yes, in such centers for Bible education, lovers of righteousness are learning how they can survive the end of this system of things to gain life in God's new system where all races of mankind will live forever as one united family!



Questions From Readers

■ How could Jesus be "a god" who was created by Jehovah when in Isaiah 43:10 Jehovah says: "Before me there was no God formed, and after me there continued to be none"?

It is well known that Jehovah's Witnesses teach from the Bible that Jesus is the created Son of God and is subordinate to his Father. (John 14:28; 1 Corinthians 11:3) Still, as a powerful One who serves as God's Spokesman, or Logos, he may well be designated "a god." A number of Bible versions render John 1:1 as saying that the Logos was "a god." For example, *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (1979) by Jürgen Becker reads: "... und der Logos war bei dem Gott, und ein Gott war der Logos." (English translation: "... and the Logos was with the God, and a god the Logos was.")*

As the questioner indicates, though, this might seem to conflict with Isaiah 43:10, 11, which says: "You are my witnesses," is the utterance of Jehovah, 'even my servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and have faith in me, and that you may understand that I am the same One. Before me there was no God formed, and after me there continued to be none. I—I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no savior.'

A sincere Bible student is helped by noting carefully the context of those words. The Almighty God Jehovah was con-

trasting himself with the man-made idols in nations surrounding Israel. Jehovah asks: "To whom can you people liken God, and what likeness can you put alongside him?" Certainly not an image made by a metalworker or carved from a tree. (Isaiah 40:18-20; 41:7) Such "gods" could not 'stretch out the heavens like a gauze,' as Jehovah did. (Isaiah 40:21-26) Further, Jehovah is able to predict the future; surely the idols of the nations cannot 'tell the things that are to come afterward, that we may know that they are gods.' (Isaiah 41:23) This thought is repeated at Isaiah 43:9, where Jehovah states: "Let national groups be gathered together. Who is there among them that can tell this? Or can they cause us to hear even the first things? Let them furnish their witnesses." Rightly, the Almighty says: "I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images."—Isaiah 42:8.

So the context establishes that the Almighty is hurling a challenge at the so-called gods of the nations. Being mere idols with no divine power, they certainly are not gods to be worshiped; they are really nothings. Jehovah continues: "Does there exist a God besides me? No, there is no Rock. I have recognized none. The formers of the carved image are all of them an unreality, and their darlings [cast from metal or carved from wood] will be of no benefit." (Isaiah 44:8-17) Consequently, the context of Isaiah 43:10 makes it clear that Jesus is not being

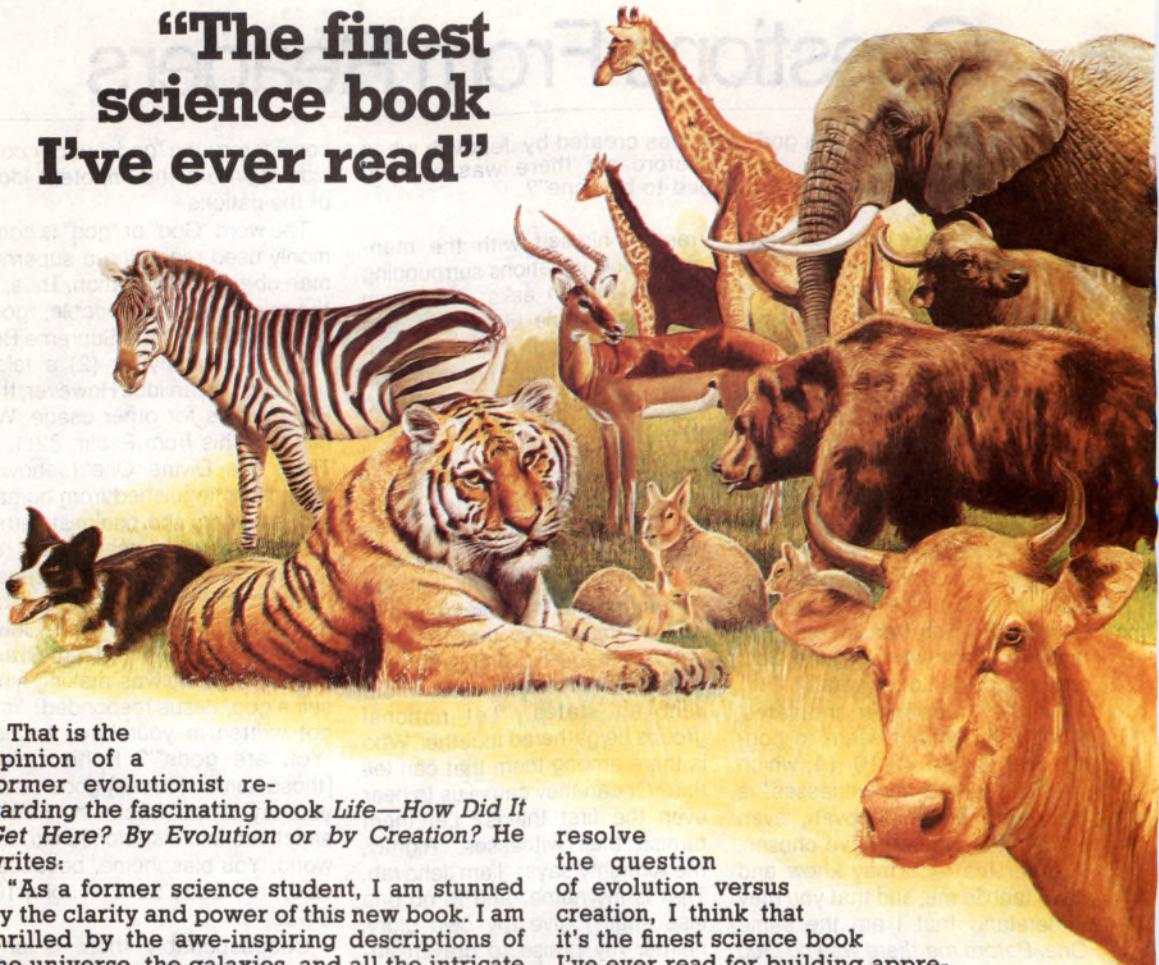
considered; the "gods" under consideration are the impotent idols of the nations.

The word "God" or "god" is commonly used regarding a superhuman object of veneration. Thus, in the minds of many people, "god" means either (1) the Supreme Being, the Almighty, or (2) a false god, such as an idol. However, the Bible allows for other usage. We can see this from Psalm 82:1, 2. There the Divine One (Jehovah God) is distinguished from human judges whom the psalmist terms "gods." Jesus himself later referred to this passage. Because he had spoken of Jehovah God as being his Father, some Jews wanted to stone him. To their accusation that he was 'making himself a god,' Jesus responded: "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said: You are gods'?" If he called [those human judges] 'gods'... do you say to me whom the Father sanctified and dispatched into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because I said, I am God's Son?"—John 10:31-36.

Unquestionably there is only one Almighty God, even as the apostle Paul wrote: "For even though there are those who are called 'gods,' whether in heaven or on earth, just as there are many 'gods' and many 'lords,' there is actually to us one God the Father, out of whom all things are,... and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and we through him." (1 Corinthians 8:5, 6) The Lord Jesus Christ is no false god, no demon god, no mere idol. He 'is the reflection of Jehovah God's glory.' (Hebrews 1:3) Thus it is fitting for John 1:1 to acknowledge Jesus as "a god," or "godlike" (Johannes Schneider).

* The title *ho theos* [the God, or God], which now designates the Father as a personal reality, is not applied in the [New] T[estament] to Jesus Himself; Jesus is the Son of God (of *ho theos*). ... In 1:1 should rigorously be translated 'the word was with the God [=the Father], and the word was a divine being.'—*Dictionary of the Bible* (1965), by John L. McKenzie, S.J.

"The finest science book I've ever read"



That is the opinion of a former evolutionist regarding the fascinating book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* He writes:

"As a former science student, I am stunned by the clarity and power of this new book. I am thrilled by the awe-inspiring descriptions of the universe, the galaxies, and all the intricate details that make life possible on planet Earth. I am amazed and delighted by the wealth of heart-stirring information on animal life and the instinctive wisdom that is all around us. And I am humbled by the descriptions of the human brain and its prodigious feats."

"Even if this book did not help a person to

resolve the question of evolution versus creation, I think that it's the finest science book I've ever read for building appreciation for life and the complexities of living things. It's very sophisticated scientifically, yet on a level that anyone can appreciate."