

Awake!

NOVEMBER 2009



A man in a striped shirt and tie stands in the foreground, looking down at his mobile phone. A woman in a white blouse and brown skirt stands behind him, also looking at her phone. They are in a modern city with skyscrapers and greenery. The background features a large circular structure with red leaves.

TECHNOLOGY
BLESSING OR CURSE?

Awake!

AVERAGE PRINTING 36,725,000
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Is It Possible to Love One's Enemies?

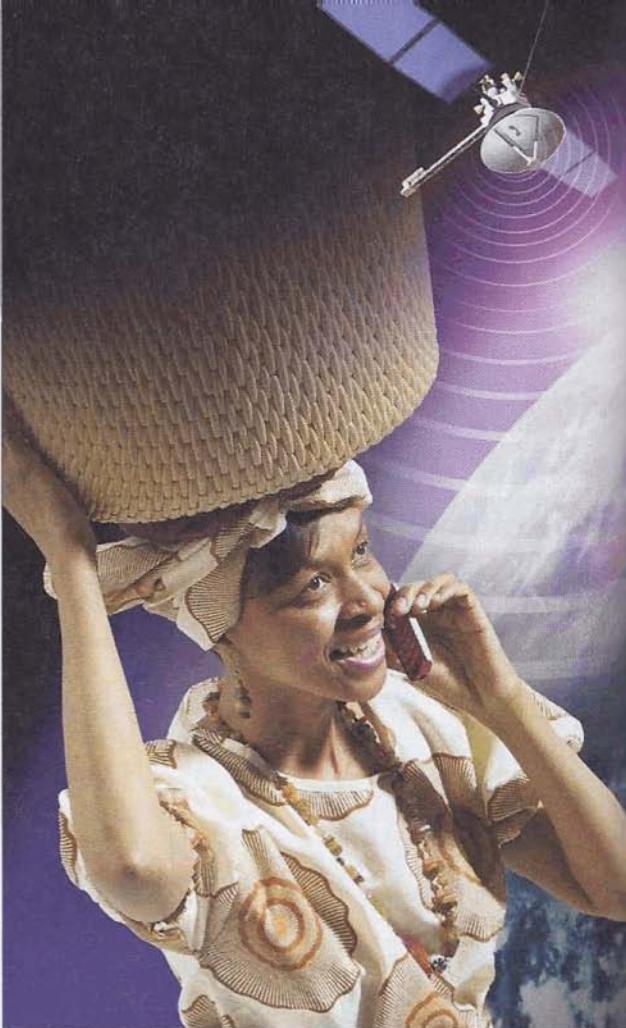
Hatred and violence breed hatred and violence. See how love can break that ugly cycle.



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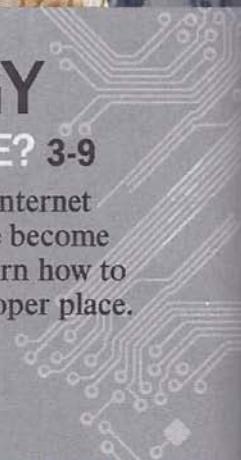
From Silent Service to Sacred Service

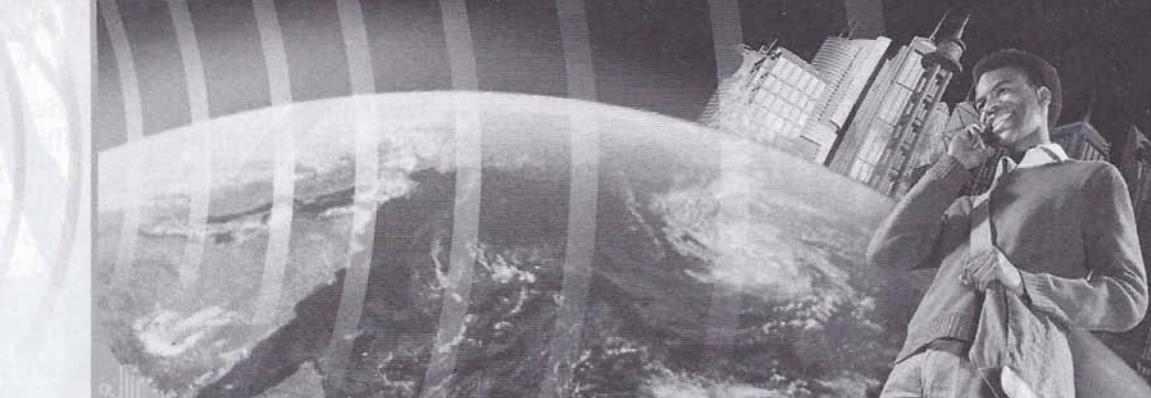
After being made Engineer Officer on the first of a new class of ballistic-missile nuclear submarines, a naval officer made a major career change. Read why.



TECHNOLOGY BLESSING OR CURSE? 3-9

Cell phones, computers, the Internet and, of course, television have become a part of modern-day life. Learn how to keep these devices in their proper place.





AN EXPLOSION OF TECHNOLOGY

In Albania it is not unusual to see an older person riding a donkey while talking on a cell phone. In India a beggar might pause in his solicitations to make or take a call on his phone. Yes, from cell phones to computers to television, technology has found its way into every corner of the world—even crossing the divide between rich and poor—and has become a part of life for many.

The pervasiveness of technology is perhaps most apparent in the proliferation of cell phones, many of which are no longer just phones. Advanced models enable users to access the Internet, send and receive e-mail and text messages, watch TV, listen to music, take photos, navigate by the Global Positioning System (GPS), and—oh, yes—phone someone!

According to a report in the *Washington Post* newspaper, a multimedia smartphone “now has more processing power than did the North American Air Defense Command in 1965.” The *Post* also states: “There is now one cellphone for every two humans on Earth,” and at least 30 nations have more cell phones than people. Indeed, we are witnessing “the fastest global diffusion of

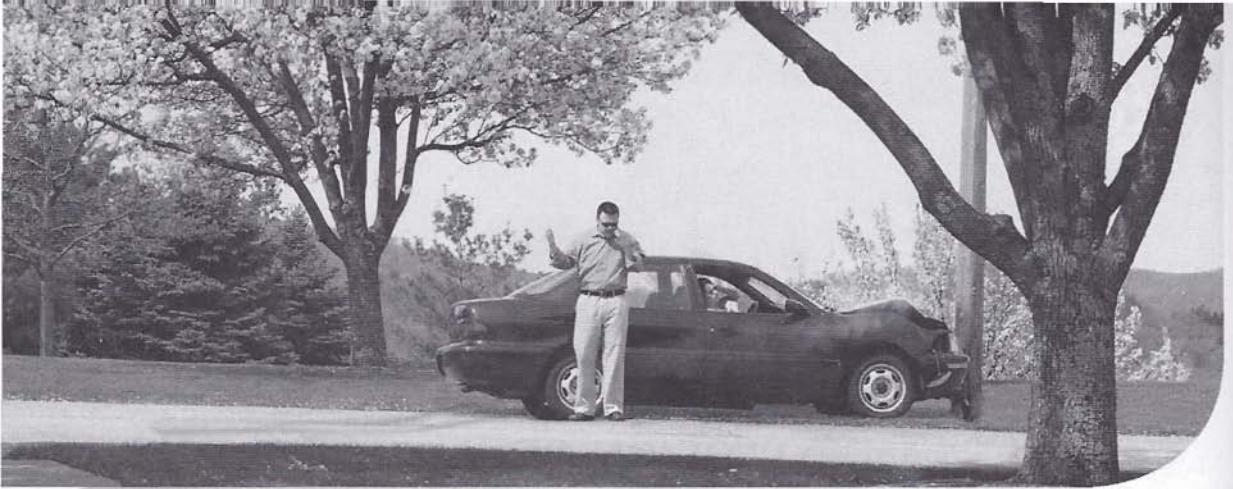
any technology in human history,” says the paper.

Worldwide, almost 60 percent of users live in developing lands, making the cell phone the first high-tech communications device to have the majority of its users in those lands. Afghanistan, for example, added about 140,000 subscribers a month in 2008, while in recent years Africa has seen cell-phone use grow nearly 50 percent annually.

But the communications revolution has its downside. Cell phones, pagers, and laptop computers make people accessible almost anytime, anywhere, causing some users to feel caught in an electronic web. At the other extreme are technology “addicts,” who have a compulsion to be connected, to know what is going on.

“Addiction,” distraction, interruption—these are perhaps the most recognized problems associated with popular communications and media technology.* But the same devices also have much power for good. How, then, can you use them in a balanced, wise, and considerate way? The following articles address this question.

* This series of articles focuses on such devices as cell phones, computers, and television, as well as the Internet. Unless otherwise stated, “technology” refers to these products.



BLESSING OR CURSE?

A driver loses control of his car and hits a utility pole, seriously injuring a passenger. Immediately, he uses his cell phone to call for help. But why did he lose control? He momentarily took his eyes off the road to answer his phone.

AS THIS example illustrates, the products of modern technology can be either a blessing or a curse—the choice depends on us. Few people, though, would prefer to go back to the comparatively crude products of yesteryear. Computers, for example, spare us tedious tasks, enable us to buy and bank conveniently online, and help us keep in touch with others by e-mail, voice mail, or video link.

Not too long ago, family members would go their various ways in the morning and not speak to one another again until evening. But

now, “70% of couples in which both partners have cellphones contact each other daily just to say hello, 64% contact each other to coordinate schedules, and 42% of parents contact their children daily using a cellphone,” says a report in *USA Today*.

Do Not Let an Asset Become a Liability

Can the excessive or improper use of technology be harmful mentally and physically? Consider the example of two newlyweds in one Western land. According to a news report, they “were on the phone constantly—in

Awake!®

THIS JOURNAL IS PUBLISHED 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 that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

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their cars, at the gym, even calling each other from different rooms inside their own house." At times, they accrued 4,000 minutes—more than 66 hours—a month, and they said that they could not cope without their phones. They have the "classic signs of addiction," noted Dr. Harris Stratynier, a mental-health specialist. "It's like they are having a relationship through an object."

That example may seem extreme, but it reflects a worrisome trend. For many people, the thought of being out of contact for even an hour is unbearable. "We always need to check out e-mail, we always need to be on the Internet, we always have to be on instant messaging with our friends," said one woman in her 20's.

If being connected "takes up more and more of your time and it becomes the preferred activity in your life to the exclusion of everything else, that's the surest warning signal that something is not quite right," says Dr. Brian Yeo in *The Business Times of Singapore*. Moreover, people who closet themselves away for hours on end with their gadgets often get little if any exercise and risk developing cardiovascular disease, diabetes, or some other serious condition.

Other dangers are more immediate. In regard to cell phones, for instance, a recent study concluded that motorists who talk on either handheld or hands-free devices are as impaired as drunk drivers! Texting while driving can also be lethal, and one survey found that approximately 40 percent of drivers be-

tween the ages of 16 and 27 text while behind the wheel. Moreover, if you are tempted to use a cell phone to talk or text while driving, keep in mind that should you have an accident, the police and your insurance company may check your cell-phone use in the moments leading up to the crash. A phone call or a simple text message can prove to be very costly!* An investigation into a 2008 train wreck that cost 25 lives in California, U.S.A., revealed that the engineer had sent a text message seconds before the crash. He never even applied the brakes.

Because a growing number of children use cell phones and computers, as well as entertainment media, they need to learn to use these devices wisely and responsibly. How can they be helped? Please read the following article.

* All who strive to live by Bible teachings should be particularly concerned about being distracted by anything in any potentially dangerous situation.
—Genesis 9:5, 6; Romans 13:1.

Is being connected taking up more and more of your time?



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PARENTS GUIDE YOUR CHILDREN

"In the past, we only had to be concerned about too much TV exposure. Now we have video games, computers and cell phones. It is overwhelming for young children and creates patterns of behaviors similar to addiction patterns . . . Their brains get used to too much auditory and visual stimulation—and in the absence of these stimulations, they do not know what to do with themselves."—Mali Mann, M.D.

WE LIVE in an increasingly "wired" world thanks to advances in communications technology and the Internet. Many young people cannot leave home without their portable media player or cell phone. And as these and other devices become more powerful, more versatile, and less expensive, the present flood of communications technology may only intensify, creating even more challenges for parents in regard to supervising, training, and disciplining their children.

Those challenges can be met when parents do two important things. First: Recognize the truth of the following statement found in the Bible at Proverbs 22:15: "All children are foolish, but firm correction will make them change." (*Contemporary English Version*) Second: Understand the power of technology to influence children in a positive or negative way, and strive to make it positive.

Start Early!

In many homes, TV is a child's introduction to technology. In fact, TV often becomes the babysitter. Yet, some mental-health professionals believe that premature and excessive exposure to TV can foster disinterest in physical exercise, confusion between reality and fantasy, emotional problems and, later in the classroom, inattentiveness. Some children, says Dr. Mali Mann, may even "get diagnosed incorrectly with Attention Deficit Disorder [ADD] or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder [ADHD], or even be erroneously labeled with bipolar disorder." According-

ly, some authorities recommend no television viewing for children under the age of two.

"The most important thing that happens in the first couple of years of a child's life is they form a deep connection with their parents," says American Academy of Pediatrics spokesperson Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg. That connection is forged when parents talk and play with their little ones and read to them. And as many parents know, children who are regularly read to develop a love for reading, which is another valuable asset.

To be sure, a knowledge of computers and related technologies may be important, even essential, for millions of children. But if you detect that your children are becoming abnormally focused on computers, computer games, the Internet, and the like, it may be wise to broaden their interests. How? Why not introduce them to an interesting craft or a musical instrument—anything wholesome that may be different, absorbing, and stimulating?

A well-chosen activity may do more than offer a refreshing diversion. It may also help your child to develop patience, tenacity, self-control, and creativity—qualities that are essential for success in life, where solutions to problems are not always just the click of a mouse away.

Children Need "Wisdom and Thinking Ability"

In the Bible, adults and children are encouraged to develop their "power of reason,"



Children need a broad range of activities that expand the mind and nurture patience and tenacity

or thinking ability. (Romans 12:1; Proverbs 1:8, 9; 3:21) This, in turn, enables us to distinguish not only right from wrong but also what is wise from what is unwise. To illustrate, it is not illegal to spend hours playing computer games or watching TV, but is it wise? It is not illegal to buy the latest gadgets or software, but once again, is it wise? How, then, can you help your children to develop a wise heart in regard to technology?

■ Explain the dangers. When it comes to technology and the Internet, children may be quick learners, but lacking wisdom and experience, they tend to be naive. So show them the dangers to avoid and how to avoid them. Consider online social networks, for example. Granted, such networks may allow young ones to express their identity and meet other young people, but the sites are also a “shopping mall” for sexual predators and others with bad motives.* (1 Corinthians 15:33) Prudent parents, therefore, urge their children not to divulge personal details online.[#]

* Parents will find it helpful to read the article “Children Online—What Parents Should Know,” in the October 2008 issue of *Awake!* In the issues of March and December 2007 and January 2008, you will find helpful articles on pornography, video games, and the Internet.

[#] Some teens also use cell phones to send lewd images of themselves to their friends. Termed “sexting,” the practice is not only debasing but also foolish, for regardless of the sender’s purpose, the photos are often shared with others.

Of course, children have a right to privacy commensurate with their level of maturity. But as a parent, you have both the God-given authority and the responsibility to train and supervise your children. (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4) Hopefully, they will recognize your concern, not as a needless intrusion, but as an expression of unselfish love.

“But,” you may say, “how can I help my children if I don’t understand the devices they use?” Well, why not learn at least the basics? Melba, in her 90’s, never touched a computer till she was over 80. “When I first tried to use the thing,” she says, “I wanted to chuck it out the window. After a couple of months, I got the hang of it, and now I can handle e-mail and other functions quite easily.”

■ Set appropriate limits on your child’s use of technology. If your child isolates himself for hours on end watching TV, surfing the Internet, or playing computer games, why not consider establishing technology-free times and zones in the home? This may help your son or daughter learn the value of the following Bible principle: “For everything there is an appointed time.” That means there is a time for family, a time for friends, a time for homework, a time to eat, a time to get some exercise, and so on. (Ecclesiastes 3:1) Reasonable rules, consistently enforced, give family life structure and help children develop good manners, consideration for others, and sociability.

In the final article of this series, we will look at some principles that may help all of us—adults and children—to use technology not just considerably but also economically.



USE TECHNOLOGY CONSIDERATELY AND ECONOMICALLY



Katherine, who is in her 20's, uses a computer at work. But at home she found herself constantly surfing the Web, shopping online, and keeping up with countless e-mails. Still, her use of technology was moderate compared with that of younger colleagues. "Why do they bother me all the time with silly text messages?" she asks. "I'm a human! Why can't they talk to me on the phone?"

THREE is irony in Katherine's question, for the phone too is an indirect link. Still, Katherine has a point: Many gadgets that were designed to connect people may, in fact, put emotional distance between them. To help you find a good balance in your use of technology, consider the following Bible principles.

■ **"All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them."** (Matthew 7:12) When we apply those words of Jesus Christ to our use of cell phones and computers, we treat others with respect and show good manners. "My husband and I were at a restaurant," says a woman named Anne. "Two men were having a meal together at an adjacent table. One of

them, though, spent the entire time on his cell phone, talking and eating. We felt sorry for his companion, who ate 'alone.'" How would you feel if you were that companion? Hurt? Offended? Yes, the fact that we may be able to use a cell phone almost anywhere and at any time does not mean we should. Jesus' words ought to be our guiding principle.

■ **"Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves."** (Ephesians 5:15, 16) Time is a precious gift from God and should not be squandered. Granted, technology can save time. The Internet, for example, can speed up research, banking, and shopping. But it can also steal time if we spend hours aimlessly surfing the Web.

Another potential time waster is multitasking—working on a computer while watching TV and talking on the phone, or toggling between, say, e-mail and other programs. Why can multitasking be counterproductive?

"It's almost impossible to gain a depth of knowledge of any of the tasks you do while you're multitasking," states neuroscientist Dr. Jordan Grafman. We simply cannot focus on a number of things at the same time; something has to suffer. Hence, multitasking can result in superficiality and poor retention. Also, the rapid-fire switching of attention causes people to make more mistakes and take "far longer—often double the time or more—to get the jobs done than if they were done sequentially," says a report in *Time* magazine. So think twice before multitasking; your day may not be long enough!

■ **"Guard against every sort of covetousness, because even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses."** (Luke 12:15) Material possessions, no matter how costly or fancy, cannot give us life or true happiness. Only God can. "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need," said Jesus. (Matthew 5:3) The commercial world, on the other hand, equates happiness with material things. 'Buy, buy, buy,' it says. 'You must have the latest.' Do not be deceived. Instead, be wise. Analyze your motives and needs before parting with your hard-earned money. Remember, too, that many high-tech products rapidly depreciate in value. So if you do need a certain gadget, ask yourself: 'Must I have the very latest? And do I need one with all the costly extras, which I may never use?'

A Blessing or a Curse—Your Choice

Katherine, mentioned earlier, was alarmed when her home computer failed. "At first I was in shock," she says, "but I decided to postpone replacing it. After a month, my nerves were more relaxed, and I read more. I use a computer at work, so I can still keep in

CELL PHONES, COMPUTERS, AND GOOD MANNERS

How can you use your cell phone and computer considerately? Consider the following suggestions.

- Avoid taking or making a phone call when or where you may disturb others. Turn your phone off if necessary.
- Do not let your phone disrupt important face-to-face conversations unless absolutely necessary.
- When you are talking on the phone, give the person you are speaking to your full attention.
- Do not take someone's picture with your cell phone if this may be impolite or embarrassing to the individual.
- Resist the temptation to forward every "interesting" e-mail you receive. The recipients may not appreciate it.

touch with my friends outside of work hours. But I no longer feel driven to be constantly connected. Technology no longer rules my life."

To be sure, many products of science and technology are practical and can save us much time and energy. So by all means use them if you need to, but do so responsibly and considerately. How? Put people before technology. Avoid squandering precious time and money on gadgets or software that you do not need. Do not use the Internet and other media to watch moral filth and violence. And do not become a technology "addict." In short, be wise—apply the divinely inspired, time-tested principles found in God's written Word, the Holy Bible. Yes, "Jehovah himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment."—Proverbs 2:6.

Is It Possible to Love One's Enemies?



"I say to you," said Jesus Christ, "continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous."—Matthew 5:44, 45.

DO YOU see religion as a force for love and peace or for hatred and violence? Today many see it as the latter, especially when religion is fused with politics, ethnicity, or nationalism. Yet, as Jesus' words show, those who are true 'sons of God' imitate God's love—even toward their enemies.

Another servant of God stated: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink . . . Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good." (Romans 12: 20, 21) But is such love really possible in this divided world? Jehovah's Witnesses unequivocally answer yes! Consider the example of Jesus and his early followers.

They Loved Their Enemies

Jesus taught the truth about God, and many listened to him with pleasure. Others,

however, turned against him, some out of ignorance. (John 7:12, 13; Acts 2:36-38; 3:15, 17) Nevertheless, Jesus continued to share his lifesaving message with all, including opposers. (Mark 12:13-34) Why? He knew that some might change their ways, recognize him as the Messiah, and conform to the spiritual truths found in God's Word.—John 7:1, 37-46; 17:17.

Even on the night of his unjust arrest by armed opponents, Jesus showed love for his enemies. In fact, he healed one of his captors, whom the apostle Peter had struck with a sword. On that occasion Jesus stated an important principle that guides his true followers to this day. He said: "All those who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:48-52; John 18:10, 11) Some 30 years later, Peter wrote: "Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps

closely. . . . When he was suffering, he did not go threatening, but kept on committing himself to [God]." (1 Peter 2:21, 23) Clearly, Peter had learned that love, not retaliation, is the way of Christ's true followers.—Matthew 5:9.

All who 'follow Jesus' steps closely' reflect his loving, gracious disposition. "A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, . . . keeping himself restrained under evil," says 2 Timothy 2:24. Those qualities would be evident in the Christian's way of life, which is one of peace and reconciliation.

Peaceable 'Ambassadors for Christ'

To his fellow believers, the apostle Paul wrote: "We are therefore ambassadors substituting for Christ . . . As substitutes for Christ we beg: 'Become reconciled to God.'" (2 Corinthians 5:20) Ambassadors do not meddle in the internal political and military affairs of the countries where they serve. Rather, they remain neutral. Their job is to represent and advocate the government for which they speak.

The same is true of Christ's ambassadors and envoys. They view Jesus as King and advocate his heavenly Kingdom by peacefully proclaiming the good news. (Matthew 24:14; John 18:36) Thus, Paul wrote to Christians of his day: "We do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning . . . reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God."—2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:13-20.

When Paul penned those words, Christians were being persecuted in many lands. To be sure, they could have retaliated. Instead, they continued to love their enemies and to share the message of reconciliation with all who would listen. The *Encyclopedia of Religion and War* states: "The earliest followers of Jesus rejected war and military service," recognizing these practices as "incompatible with the love ethic of Jesus and the injunction to love one's enemies."*

Like the early Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses recognize Jesus as their King. They also recognize him as King of God's Kingdom—a heavenly government that will soon bring about lasting peace and security on earth. (Daniel 2:44; Matthew 6:9, 10) Hence, like ambassadors and envoys, they proclaim the excellencies of that Kingdom. At the same time, they strive to be good citizens of the lands in which they live, paying their taxes and obeying the law where it does not conflict with God's law.—Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1, 7.

Sadly, though, like the early Christians, the Witnesses are sometimes misunderstood, maligned, and persecuted. Still, they never retaliate. Rather, they try to be "peaceable with all men," hoping that some opposers may "become reconciled to God" and have the prospect of everlasting life.†—Romans 12:18; John 17:3.

* "Christian writers prior to Constantine [Roman emperor 306-337 C.E.] unanimously condemned killing in war," says the *Encyclopedia of Religion and War*. A shift in attitude occurred when the apostasy foretold in the Bible became rampant.—Acts 20:29, 30; 1 Timothy 4:1.

† Like the first-century Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses legally defend their religious freedoms when necessary.—Acts 25:11; Philippians 1:7.

HAVE YOU WONDERED?

- How should Christians treat their enemies?—Matthew 5:43-45; Romans 12:20, 21.
- When persecuted, how did Jesus respond?—1 Peter 2:21, 23.
- Why did the early Christians renounce physical warfare?—2 Corinthians 5:20; 10:3-5.

From Silent Service to Sacred Service

AS TOLD BY ANDREW HOGG



"If we ever have to launch our nuclear warheads," said the commanding officer of our submarine, "we have failed in our mission." This prompted lively discussions on the ethics of nuclear warfare. How, though, did I come to be in the submarine service, also called the silent service because of our efforts to remain undetected?

I WAS born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., in 1944. As I grew up, I was influenced by my father, grandfather, and uncle, who had all served in the armed forces, viewing this as the highest human endeavor. As a boy, I toured the nearby navy yard and saw my first submarine. From that moment on, the submarine service was my goal. During my senior year in high school, I was accepted into the U.S. Naval Academy. I graduated four years later, in June 1966.

I entered the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program for training in nuclear engineering and submarine operations. Then, in April 1967, I married Mary Lee Carter, my dear wife to this day. Finally, in March 1968, I realized my boyhood dreams when I was assigned to my first ship, the submarine USS *Jack*. About a year later, Mary Lee gave birth to the first of our two children—our daughter, Allison.

In 1971, I was made Engineer Officer of the USS *Andrew Jackson*, whose captain made the statement mentioned at the outset. While at sea in this Polaris missile submarine, we experienced an emergency that is the dread of all submariners—fire. A little after midnight,

while I was relaxing with some fellow officers, we felt a thump. Then came the gong, gong, gong of the general alarm and the words, "Fire in machinery room one!"

Because I was responsible for nearly all mechanical and electrical systems, I raced aft to survey the damage. A flash fire had occurred in one of the ship's oxygen generators, which help to produce breathable air. Four of us quickly donned air-breathing masks and purged any flammable gases from the area. Fortunately, no one was hurt. Despite the mishap, we were able to stay on our assigned patrol—a testimony to the good training of the crew.

I Chose to Read About a Peacemaker

To help us cope with the stresses of work, we were encouraged to spend a few hours each week looking into something cultural. I usually read the biographies of noteworthy military men. This time, however, I decided to read about someone well-known as a peacemaker—Jesus Christ. Using the Bible I had received at my graduation from the naval academy, I launched into the Gospels. But my reading raised more questions than it answered. I needed help.



The USS "Los Angeles"

U.S. Navy photo



With Mary Lee today

Near the end of our patrol, our commanding officer convened a meeting of the officers in the wardroom and announced: "Gentlemen, our engineer has just been assigned to the best job in the United States Navy. He will be the Engineer Officer on the first ship of the navy's newest class of attack submarine." I was stunned!

My new assignment took my family to Newport News, Virginia, where the USS *Los Angeles* was under construction. My work involved overseeing the testing of engineering systems and developing technical manuals and training programs. The work was extremely complex but satisfying. Meanwhile, Mary Lee gave birth to our son, Drew. Now I was the father of two, and my thoughts once again turned to God: 'What does he think about war? What happens when you die? Is there a hell?'

Answers at Last!

At about that time, my wife began having discussions with two of Jehovah's Witnesses. One day when I phoned home from the shipyard, Mary Lee said, "Two 'Bible ladies' are here."

"What church are they from?" I asked.

"Jehovah's Witnesses," she replied.

I had no idea who the Witnesses were, but I wanted to understand the Bible. "Invite them to come over one evening," I said. Shortly thereafter, one of them returned with her husband, and my wife and I began to study the Bible.

Finally, I began to get answers to the questions that had puzzled me for years. For example, I learned that the dead are "conscious of nothing at all," as if in a deep sleep—a comparison Jesus used. (Ecclesiastes 9:5; John 11:11-14) The dead, therefore, are experiencing neither bliss nor torment but are "sleeping" in death, awaiting a resurrection.

Mary Lee and I also began to attend Christian meetings at the local Kingdom Hall. There we saw Witnesses—from different cultural, educational, and ethnic backgrounds—all serving God in peace and unity. "The Bible really can improve people's lives," my wife and I concluded.—Psalm 19:7-10.

A Time of Decision

When the Arab-Israeli War of 1973 broke out, U.S. Atlantic Fleet submarines were deployed. Things could easily have escalated, and it really began to dawn on me that

only God's Kingdom, not human politics, will bring true and lasting peace. In fact, I had often prayed "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth," but I did not know what that meant. (Matthew 6:9, 10, *King James Version*) Now, though, I understood that God's Kingdom is a heavenly government that will soon rule over the entire earth, cleansing it of all evil and evildoers.—Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14.

A passage of Scripture that particularly concerned me was 2 Corinthians 10:3, 4. True Christians, it states, "do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God." Those "weapons," I learned, are of a spiritual nature, and they include "the sword of the spirit"—the Holy Bible.—Ephesians 6:17.

We resolved to serve the ultimate "Commander in Chief"

I was now at a fork in the road. Would I continue in my present career, which I had found to be both challenging and enjoyable, or would I harmonize my life with Bible truth? After giving the matter much prayerful thought, I concluded that if I was truly sincere about being a peacemaker, I should do it God's way.

My New "Commander in Chief"

Mary Lee and I prayerfully discussed our future and resolved that we would serve the ultimate "Commander in Chief"—Jehovah God. We each decided to dedicate our life to Jehovah, and I submitted my resignation from the navy. I was then transferred to Norfolk, Virginia, to await my discharge. Most of my fellow officers were puzzled by my decision, and some were antagonistic. But others were genuinely interested in my Biblical stand and accorded me respect.

I received my discharge in 1974. That same year my wife and I symbolized our dedica-

tion to God by water baptism at the "Divine Purpose" District Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Hampton, Virginia. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Our new life had begun.

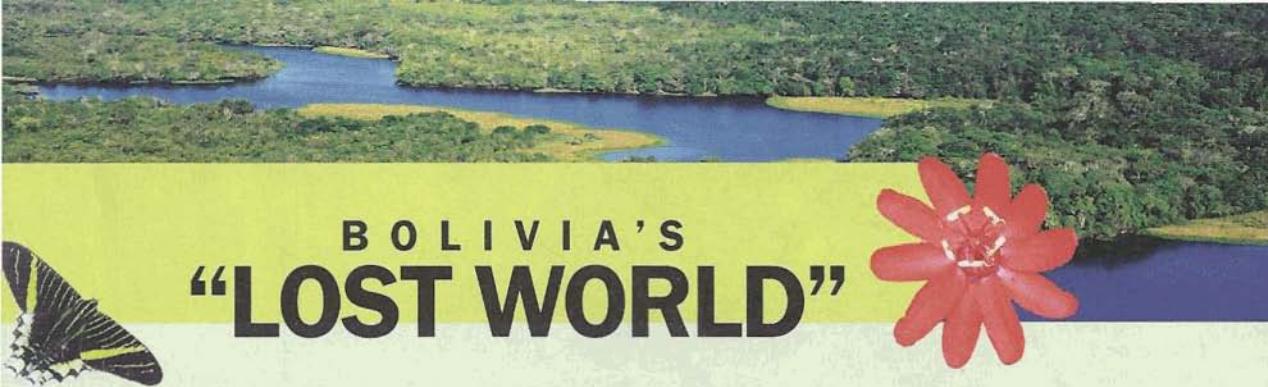
Facing New Challenges

Mary Lee and I had two small children, no income, and only enough money to last a couple of months. I sent my résumé to a number of employers and left matters in God's hands. Before long, a utility company offered me work. The pay was about half my navy pay, but the job allowed our family to stay in the area.

As my wife and I made spiritual progress, we wanted to do more in Jehovah's service. A Witness family we knew had moved to central Virginia to serve where the need for Bible teachers was greater, and they invited us to visit them. One visit was all it took, and we started making plans to move. I put in a request for a transfer, and to my delight, it was accepted. In fact, it came with a promotion! And the utility company agreed to cover our moving expenses. 'Yes,' we thought, 'God truly does care for those who strive to do his will.'—Matthew 6:33.

Because our family has maintained a relatively simple lifestyle, Mary Lee and I have been able to serve in the full-time ministry. This, in turn, allowed us to spend a lot of time with our two fine children while they were growing up. Indeed, the results have brought us immeasurable joy, for both Allison and Drew continue "walking in the truth."—3 John 4; Proverbs 23:24.

Yes, there have been times when finances, housing, health, and just growing older have made us anxious. But Jehovah has always stood by us. Do I regret having left the "silent service"? Not at all! As Mary Lee and I reflect on our lives, we can say without a hint of doubt that serving Jehovah is, without question, the most noble and rewarding human endeavor.—Ecclesiastes 12:13.



BOLIVIA'S "LOST WORLD"

In 1906 the president of Britain's Royal Geographical Society discussed with Colonel Percy Harrison Fawcett the great economic potential of South America. Pushing a chart in front of Fawcett, he said: "Look at this area! It's full of blank spaces because so little is known of it." He then offered the colonel the job of exploring the region. Fawcett accepted.

In his journals Fawcett described the heavily forested slopes of what is now known as the Huanchaca Plateau in Bolivia. He called the area "a lost world."^{*} Some believe that Fawcett's journals and photographs inspired famous British author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to write the novel *The Lost World*, which describes a mythical world of "ape men" and terrifying dinosaurs that had supposedly survived to modern times. Today, this relatively pristine part of Amazonia includes Bolivia's magnificent Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, which was designated a World Heritage site in the year 2000.[#]

Located in the far northeast of Bolivia along the Brazilian border, the park is an almost untouched wilderness that covers an area of nearly 5,900 square miles. It encompasses five ecosystems: upland evergreen forest, deciduous forest, upland dry savanna, savanna wetlands, and forest wet-

* In May 1925, Fawcett wrote to his wife about his expedition. It was his last communication, and his disappearance still remains a mystery.

[#] Created in 1979, the park was originally named Huanchaca National Park. The new name was given it in 1988 in honor of Bolivian biologist Noel Kempff Mercado, who was murdered on the plateau by drug traffickers after he stumbled across an illegal cocaine laboratory.

lands. The Huanchaca Plateau itself is a 2,000-square-mile sandstone escarpment that rises 1,800 feet above the surrounding plain and runs like a 93-mile-long backbone parallel to the eastern border of the park. The numerous rivers that drain the plateau and surrounding plain feed some 20 waterfalls, including the Salto Susana Falls, the Arco Iris Falls, the Federico Ahlfeld Falls, the Gemelas Falls, and El Encanto Falls.

Our Adventure Begins

Somewhat protected by its isolation, the park is a magnet for ecotourists, many of whom fly there from Santa Cruz, in central Bolivia. We decided to drive the 440 miles, which gave us a much closer look at the Bolivian countryside. At one spot we saw ahead of us what seemed to be a cloud of colorful leaves fluttering across the road. The "leaves," however, turned out to be butterflies, and we were not the only observers. A platoon of hungry lizards were scampering about, feasting on their hapless prey.

When we arrived at the national park, we met our guide, Guido, in the village of La Florida, on the banks of the Paragua River. Guido took us and our vehicle across the river on a pontoon boat, and from there we drove the short distance to Los Fierros camp. Along the way we spotted a fox and a scissor-tailed nightjar—a handsome bird that swooped across the road in front of us.

After a night's sleep, we awoke to the raucous sound of birds—four beautiful blue-and-yellow macaws perched high in a tree outside



Purple and red orchid

Ahlfeld Falls, inside the national park

our cabin. It was as if they were calling out, "Welcome to our home!" This fine start to our first day in the park told us that we were in for a treat.

Teeming With Life

Noel Kempff Mercado National Park boasts over 600 species of birds, 139 different mammals (more than in all of North America), 74 varieties of reptiles, and perhaps some 3,000 kinds of butterflies—not to mention countless other insects. The birds include more than 20 varieties of parrots, as well as the harpy eagle, the hoatzin, and the helmeted manakin. Nick Acheson, a local bird guide and conservationist, told us that "rare species like the rufous-sided pygmy-tyrant and the black-and-tawny seedeater draw bird-watchers from all over the world."

Among the many mammals are giant anteaters, maned wolves, jaguars, peccaries, tapirs, and pampas deer. The numerous rivers that surround and drain the park are also filled with life, including 62 kinds of amphibians and 254 species of fish, as well as caimans, giant river otters, capybaras, and beautiful pink dolphins. The park truly is a nature lover's paradise!

Because of the big cats in Amazonia, many visitors have concerns about safety—and so did we. The administrator of Los Fierros camp told us about his first night in the park. "I awoke at midnight with the strange

feeling that I was being watched," he related. "I looked out the window of my cabin to see a jaguar staring at me, a mere insect screen separating us! Terrified, I locked myself in the bathroom until dawn." That was not what we wanted to hear!

But then the administrator continued: "I soon learned that this curious feline often visits at night and is not considered dangerous. In fact, on hot days jaguars often enter the camp and lie on the cool, tiled patios of the cabins. As you might imagine, that can be an unnerving sight to newcomers! In the past, we always carried a rifle, especially when guiding night tours, but now we never take one. The animals haven't changed; our attitude toward them has." Nevertheless, he cautioned us to treat all wild animals with respect.

The Jungle Walk to El Encanto Falls

The park's many waterfalls are a big attraction. We started out early on our walk with Guido, our guide, to El Encanto Falls, which spill down 262 feet from the Huanchaca Plateau. As we walked the 3.5 miles through the rain forest, spider monkeys and howler monkeys greeted us from the branches above. Both species are appropriately named—spider monkeys because they are all arms and legs and howler monkeys because they make a loud crying sound that can be heard up to two miles away! Up ahead, a red-throated piping-guan, a turkeylike bird, dashed across



Macaws



El Encanto Falls

our path in search of breakfast. Guido drew our attention to tracks along the banks of the nearby stream. His trained eye identified the footprints of two different kinds of deer, as well as a tapir, a jaguar, and a cougar. We sensed that eyes of all kinds were observing us from numerous hiding places and that day and night this place throbs with life.

The watchful creatures have abundant foliage to hide behind, for the various landscapes and habitats in the park support a profusion of plants of every kind. In fact, an estimated 4,000 species thrive in the area, including over 100 varieties of orchids, as well as a wide range of trees, ferns, bromeliads, and vines. Our eyes feasted on the colors and our noses captured the fragrances as we savored the delicious fruits growing near the path. The latter included mangaba fruit, which grows on a tree, and passion fruit, which grows on a vine.

Finally, as we crossed a stream, we began to hear the distant sound of falling water, which got louder with every step we took. Then, suddenly, we entered a clearing, and there before us towered majestic El Encanto Falls, the lower portion shrouded in mist. Ferns and bromeliads decorated the rock walls around the crystal-clear pool. "On hot days," said Guido, "monkeys come down to the water to cool off." We took the hint and cooled off too, all the while absorbing the unspoiled tranquillity of this beautiful place and

the pleasant sound of the falling water.

Conservation —The Legacy of Noel Kempff Mercado

Conservationist Noel Kempff Mercado died in 1986. Nevertheless, the work he began of protecting this part of Bolivia continues. In 1996 the governments of Bolivia and the United States agreed to protect 2.2 million acres of rain forest and promote sustainable development in an effort to mitigate the emissions of greenhouse gases in other parts of the world. The following year the government of Bolivia and three energy companies started the Noel Kempff Climate Action Project, which, among other things, resulted in the termination of logging rights on 2.2 million acres of forest. This area was then added to the park, doubling its size.

Our visit to this magnificent place heightened our appreciation for the Creator and for the beauty and diversity of the life he placed on planet Earth. Says Psalm 104:24: "How many your works are, O Jehovah! All of them in wisdom you have made. The earth is full of your productions." Indeed, as we walked the trails in this unspoiled "lost world," we felt an almost instinctive desire to tread lightly, to absorb the beauty, and to take nothing home with us but the pictures in our cameras and the memories in our hearts.



What can I wear?



WARDROBE wars are nothing new. Your parents may have fought similar battles with their parents when they were your age. And back then, they probably felt the same way you feel today! But now they've switched sides, and the issue of what you can wear causes one skirmish after another.

You say: It's comfortable.

They say: It's sloppy.

You say: It's so adorable!

They say: It's too provocative.

You say: It's half-price.

They say: It should be... Half of it is missing!

Is there any way to declare a cease-fire? Yes! Megan, now 23, knows the secret. "There doesn't have to be an argument," she says. "There can be an agreement." *Agreement?*

Heather is ready to walk out the door, and her parents can't believe their eyes.

"You're wearing **that?**" her dad blurts out.

"Why not?" Heather replies, sounding astonished. "I'm just going to the mall with friends."

"Not in **that** outfit!" her mom says.

"But Mom," Heather whines, "this is what **all** the kids are wearing.... and besides, it makes a statement!"

"Well, we don't like what it's stating!" Dad shoots back. "Now go upstairs and change, young lady, or you're not going **anywhere!**"

Does that mean you have to dress like a 40-year-old? Relax! To agree just means that you and your parents discuss your differences and brainstorm other options that they—and you—can be happy with. The benefits?

1. You'll look your best, even to your peers.
2. Your parents will be less likely to criticize what you wear.
3. After seeing how responsible you are in this area, your parents may even grant you other freedoms.

So let's get started. Think of a "must-have" outfit that you've spotted online or at the store. The first thing to do is...

Consider Bible Principles

The Bible says surprisingly little about dress. In fact, you could read aloud all the Scriptural admonition that directly relates to

wardrobe work sheet

Instructions: Copy this page. Have your parents fill out the column on the right while you fill out the left-hand column. Later, swap work sheets with your parents, and discuss your answers. Are there any surprises? What did each of you learn about the others' perspective that you did not know before?

FOR YOU

Think about a particular outfit that you want to wear or purchase.

■ Why do you like this particular outfit? Number the factors below in order of your priority.

- Brand name
- Appeal to the opposite sex
- Acceptability to peers
- Comfort
- Price
- Other

■ My parents' initial reaction to this outfit will probably be

- "No way!"
- "Maybe."
- "No problem."

■ The most likely reason for their objection is

- "It's too provocative."
- "It's too sloppy."
- "It's too trendy."
- "It reflects badly on us as your parents."
- "It's too expensive."
- Other

FOR YOUR PARENTS

Think about a particular outfit that your adolescent wants to wear or purchase.

■ Why do you think, does your child like this outfit? Number the factors below according to what you **think** are his or her priorities.

- Brand name
- Appeal to the opposite sex
- Acceptability to peers
- Comfort
- Price
- Other

■ My initial reaction is

- "No way!"
- "Maybe."
- "No problem."

■ The reason for my objection is

- "It's too provocative."
- "It's too sloppy."
- "It's too trendy."
- "It reflects badly on us as your parents."
- "It's too expensive."
- Other

CAN WE WORK TOGETHER ON THIS?

■ What merit can I see in my parents' view?

■ What, if anything, can be done to make the garment acceptable?

■ Is our objection to this outfit merely a matter of our personal taste?

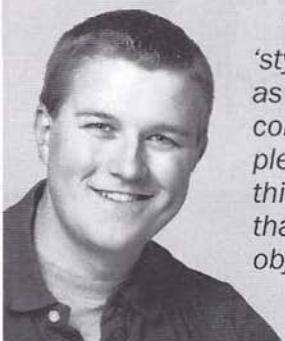
- Yes
- Possibly
- No

■ What, if anything, can be done to make the garment acceptable?

THE DECISION



WHAT YOUR PEERS SAY



"It's all right to have 'style' in what you wear, as long as it doesn't conflict with Bible principles. There are a lot of things that you can buy that look good and are not objectionable."—Derrick.

"When I was a teenager, I wanted to be independent. I didn't like being told what I could wear. In time, though, I realized that I wasn't getting the respect I wanted—not until I started considering the opinion of my parents and older ones."

—Megan.



the subject in just a couple of minutes! In that time, though, you would find solid, valuable guidelines. For example:

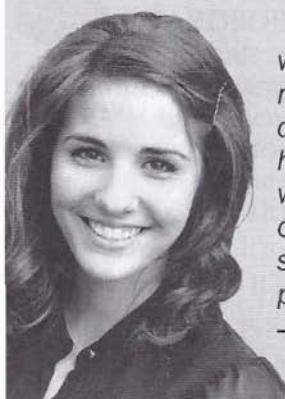
■ The Bible advises women to adorn themselves "with modesty and soundness of mind."*—1 Timothy 2:9, 10.

The word "modesty" might make you worry. 'Do I have to wear a sack?' you may wonder. Not at all! In this context, modesty means that your clothes show you have self-respect and consideration for others' feelings. (2 Corinthians 6:3) A wide variety of clothing fits those criteria. "It might be challenging," says Danielle, 23, "but you *can* be fashionable without wearing extreme styles."

■ The Bible says that when it comes to appearance, you should focus on "the secret person of the heart"—or, as *Today's English Version* renders it, "your true inner self."—1 Peter 3:4.

An immodest outfit may momentarily turn heads, but it's your inner beauty that will win the long-term respect of adults and your peers. Your peers? Yes—even *they* may see the folly of excessive styles. "It's sickening to see the way women practically throw themselves at men by what they wear!" says 16-year-old Brittany. Kay would agree. Describing a former friend, she says: "Everything she wore had 'look-at-me' written all over it. She wanted the attention of the guys, and to get it she would wear the most eye-catching outfits she could find."

Fashion Tip: Avoid styles that highlight sexuality. They make you appear desperate and



"When I see girls wearing sleazy clothes, my respect for them decreases. On the other hand, when I see people wearing modest yet cute clothing, I think to myself, 'That's how I want people to see me.'"

—Nataleine.

* While such Biblical admonition is directed to women, the principles apply to both genders. See the box "What About Boys?"

TO THINK ABOUT

Think of an outfit you'd like to purchase. Then ask yourself:

- What "message" does it convey?
- What possible reaction might it cause in others?
- Am I really seeking that reaction and its consequences?

self-absorbed. They could also make you a target for harassment—or worse. In contrast, modest clothing enhances your appearance and highlights your good qualities.

Get Your Parents' Input

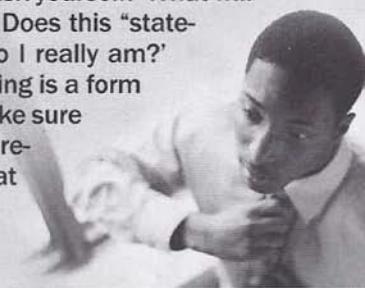
Stuffing a daring outfit into your backpack and changing into it at school is *not* the way to go. You'll gain more trust from your parents if you're open and honest with them, even in things that you think you *could* get away with. In fact, you'd probably do well to seek out their opinion when you're considering an outfit.—Proverbs 15:22.

But why would you want to do *that*? Isn't it your parents' job to *stifle* your fashion sense? Not really. True, your dad and mom may look at things from a different perspective. But sometimes that's what you need. "I appreciate my parents' advice," says 17-year-old Natalieine, "because I don't want to walk out of the house embarrassing myself or to be the one that people are talking about negatively because of my appearance."

Besides, let's face it: As long as you're under your parents' roof, you're under their authority. (Colossians 3:20) Still, once you understand their views—and they, yours—you

WHAT ABOUT BOYS?

The Bible principles discussed in this article apply to boys too. Be modest. Let the secret person of your heart—your true inner self—shine through. When considering an item of clothing, ask yourself: 'What will it say about me? Does this "statement" reflect who I really am?' Remember, clothing is a form of expression. Make sure that your clothes reflect the ideals that you believe in!



might be surprised at how often you can come to an agreement. As a result, the wardrobe wars may finally be over!

Fashion Tip: When trying on clothing, think of more than what you see in the mirror. A seemingly modest outfit may change when you sit down or bend over to pick up something. If possible, get the opinion of a parent or a mature friend.

More articles from the "Young People Ask" series can be found at the Web site
www.watchtower.org/ype

A NOTE TO PARENTS

Consider the opening scenario in this article, and imagine that Heather is your daughter. You cannot help but notice the skimpy outfit she's wearing—a little too much of nothing, in your view. Your reaction is immediate, "Go upstairs and change, young lady, or you're not going anywhere!" Such a response may well get results. After all, your daughter has little choice but to comply. But how do you teach her to

change her thinking and not just her clothes?

■ First, remember that the consequences of immodesty must matter as much or more to your adolescent than they do to you. Deep down, your adolescent does not want to look foolish or invite unwanted attention. Patiently point out that immodest styles are really not flattering.* Recommend alternatives.

* Your adolescent is likely very body-conscious, so be careful not to imply that his or her appearance is somehow flawed.

■ Second, "let your reasonableness become known." (Philippians 4:5) Ask yourself, 'Does the garment violate a Bible principle, or is this just a matter of personal taste?' (2 Corinthians 1:24) If it is a matter of taste, can you make a concession?

■ Third, don't just tell your adolescent what is *not* acceptable. Help him or her to find clothes that are appropriate. It will be well worth your time and effort.

We Are All ONE FAMILY

HOW do you feel about people of a skin color or ethnic group different from your own? Do you view them as equals? Sadly, many view certain races as inferior. "Racism," according to one reference, is "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race."

This belief has resulted in much harm. Feelings of racial superiority have "provided justification for colonial treatment and slavery of other groups of people," wrote Professor Wen-Shing Tseng in his *Handbook of Cultural Psychiatry*. He added that race has been used "to justify social, economic, and political inequalities." Even today, racism exists in many parts of the world. But is this hurtful belief based on truth? What do science and the Bible say?

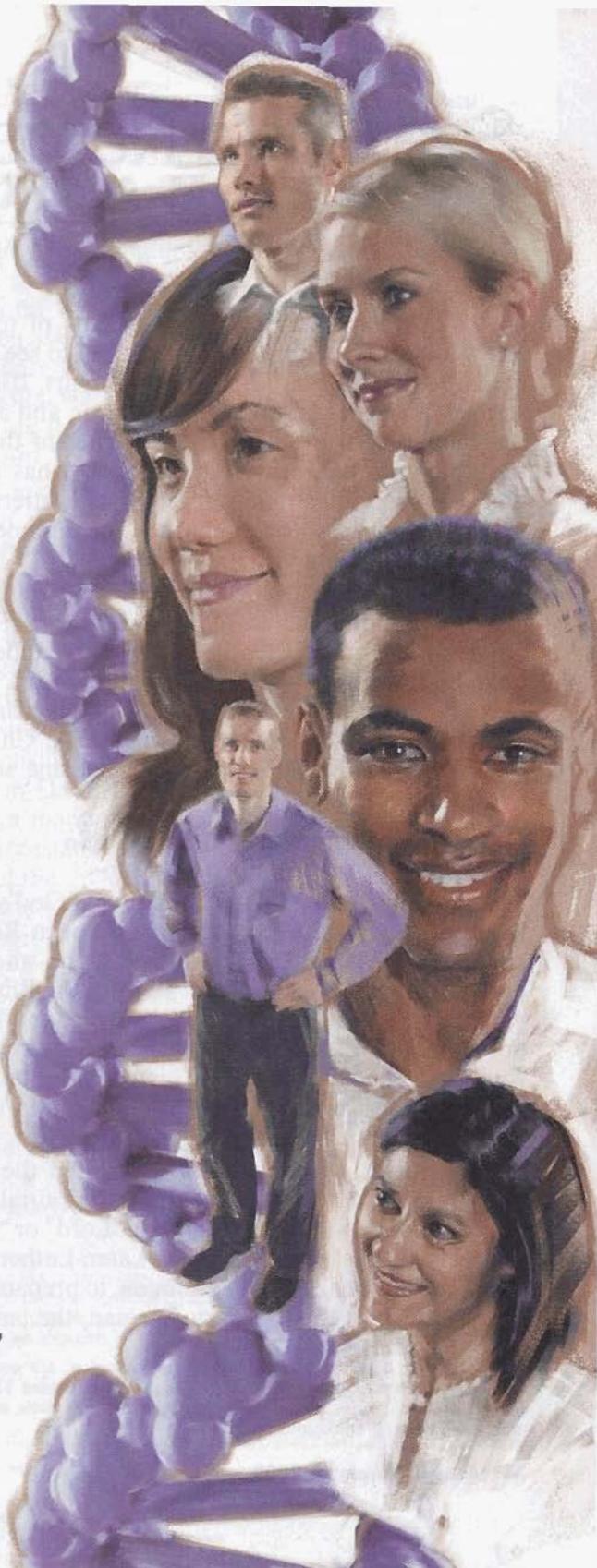
What Does Science Say?

Discoveries in genetics have confirmed the fallacy of racism. Researchers studying people from different continents have found that the differences in DNA between any two randomly chosen individuals from virtually anywhere in the world amounted to about 0.5 percent.* And 86 to 90 percent of those differences occurred *within* any one racial group. Therefore, just 14 percent or less of the 0.5 percent variation occurred *between* racial groups.

Because "humans are genetically homogeneous," says the journal *Nature*, "genetics can and should be an important tool in helping to both illuminate and defuse the race issue."

Such thinking is not new. Beginning in 1950 the United Nations Educational, Scien-

* The relatively few genetic differences between humans may, however, be significant medically, for some diseases appear to have a genetic link.



tific, and Cultural Organization published a series of statements intended to combat racism. The statements were authored by anthropologists, geneticists, and sociologists. Yet, racism persists. Clearly, an awareness of the facts is not enough. The heart, or the inner person, must also be reached. "Out of the heart come wicked reasonings," said Jesus Christ.—Matthew 15:19, 20.

The Bible's Viewpoint

The Bible was written to appeal to the heart. For example, in addition to stating the scientific truth that "[God] made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth," the Bible also says: "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35; 17:26) Does that not warm your heart toward God?—Deuteronomy 32:4.

Jehovah God wants us to show that we love him by becoming like him. "Become imitators of God, as beloved children, and go on walking in love," says Ephesians 5:1, 2. "Walking in love" includes loving people as God does, regardless of their skin color or ethnicity.—Mark 12:31.

God will not accept as his servants those whose hearts are filled with badness, including hatred and racial prejudice. (1 John 3:15) In fact, the time is fast approaching when God will wipe all wicked people off the face of the earth. Only those who imitate his qualities will remain. Then mankind will truly be just one family—physically and spiritually.
—Psalm 37:29, 34, 38.

"Humans are genetically homogeneous," or essentially the same

See God's Name IN DENMARK

EVERY year, many of the thousands of tourists who visit Copenhagen are surprised to see God's name, Jehovah, or its Hebrew counterpart, יְהוָה, inscribed on castles and other buildings in and around the capital.* For example, in the center of the city, the **Dockyard Church** (Holmens Kirke) has a gate that features God's name in large gold letters. The name also appears inside the gate on a commemorative plaque dated 1661.

Within walking distance of the Dockyard Church stands a building called the **Round Tower** (Rundetårn). On the outer wall, the divine name appears in large Hebrew letters as part of a sign in Latin. Translated, it reads: "Let Jehovah direct right doctrine and justice into the heart of the crowned King Christian the Fourth." How did God's name become so well-known in Denmark?

The Protestant Reformation and Bible Translation

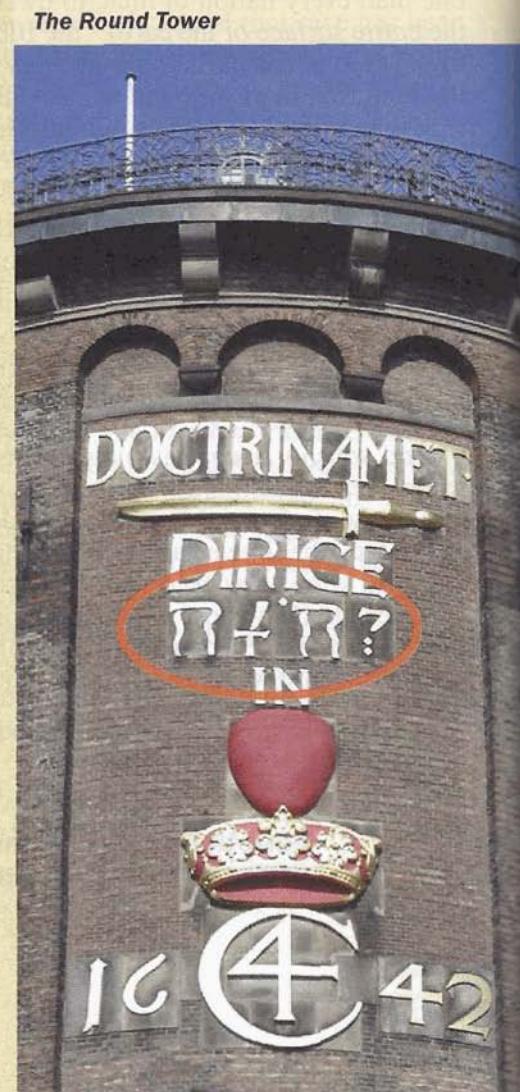
A major factor in the dissemination of God's name was the Protestant Reformation. European Reformers such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Huldrych Zwingli made an earnest study of the Bible and its original languages—Hebrew, Aramaic, and Koine, or common, Greek. As a result, they became familiar with God's personal name. "This name Jehovah . . . belongs exclusively to the true God," said Martin Luther in a sermon.

Nevertheless, when Luther translated the Bible into German, he adhered to the unscriptural tradition of rendering the divine name as "Lord" or "God," thus using titles, not God's name. Later, Luther asked an associate, **Johannes Bugenhagen**, to prepare a version of Luther's Bible in Low German, the language

* These four characters, called the Tetragrammaton, are consonants and are read from right to left. They are usually transliterated YHWH or JHVH. In ancient times, the reader supplied the missing vowels, as is common today when abbreviations are read.



The Dockyard Church gate



The Round Tower



TYCHO BRAHE AND GOD'S NAME

In 1597, famous Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe left his native country after disagreements with the Danish nobility and King Christian IV. In a farewell poem to Denmark, Brahe wrote in Latin: "Foreign people shall act kindly towards me—so is the will of Jehovah."



Hans Paulsen Resen

Auerst de name **Jehoua**/ verth nummer
in der Schrifft / einer **Cvane** / noch **Engelen** **Jehoua** y
noch **Wünschen** gegeuen / Sunder allene des **hille** ge
Gödl'ien maester / **Weldkes** ocf de **Jöden** sül's **Name Gs**,
uest bekennen / vnd **Leren** / **driven** wunder das **des**,
mede / vnde dörten en nicht vrhspreken. Dessen
Namen schal ocf hebbien / **Messias** de **Söne Das**
nids / alse **Jeremias** wyssaget im 23. Cap. **Dath**

Johannes Bugenhagen used God's name in the preface of the Low German version of Luther's Bible, 1541

spoken in northern Germany and southern Denmark. In his preface to the 1541 edition (the first edition was published in 1533), Bugenhagen made several references to the divine name, including the statement: "Jehovah is God's holy name."

In 1604, a young theologian named Hans Paulsen Resen spoke to King Christian IV about certain errors in the Danish translation of Luther's Bible. Resen then asked for permission to prepare a new translation based on the original Hebrew and Greek texts. Permission was granted. In a note on Genesis 2:4, Resen wrote that "Jehovah" is "the Supreme Being, the only Lord."*

As the divine name became known, it began to appear in public places. For example, in 1624, after **Hans Paulsen Resen** had been appointed bishop, he ordered that a plaque be installed in the Bronshøj Church. At the top of the plaque, inscribed in gold, is God's name in Danish, Jehovah. Also, on many of his writings as bishop, Resen included with his signature the words "Jehovah beholds."

Toward the end of the 18th century, Johann David Michaelis' German translation of the Bible was published in Danish. This Bible too contains the divine name in many places. Likewise, in the 19th century, Bible translators Christian Kalkar and others incorporated the divine name in most of the places where it appears in the original text. Then, in 1985, Jehovah's Witnesses released the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in Danish. Bible lovers were thrilled to see the name Jehovah faithfully rendered more than 7,000 times.

Jesus Christ said in a prayer to God: "I have made your name manifest." (John 17:6) And in his model prayer, sometimes called the Our Father prayer, Jesus said: "Let your name be sanctified [made holy]." (Matthew 6:9) As the religious history of Denmark shows, many have taken those words seriously.

* Genesis 2:4 contains the first occurrence of God's distinctive personal name in the original text of the Holy Bible. That name, which appears some 7,000 times in the original text, means "He Causes to Become," thus identifying Jehovah as the One whose purpose is always accomplished. What he says happens.

Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies

CONTENTED and healthy, a newborn baby lies cradled in its mother's arms. The father is aglow with pride. Because this happy scene occurs millions of times every year, it is easy to take normal childbirth for granted. After all, it is a natural process—so, what is there to worry about?

Granted, births usually go well, but not always. Hence, prudent prospective parents take reasonable measures to avoid unnecessary complications. For example, they learn about the causes of childbirth problems, they seek quality prenatal care, and they take some simple steps to reduce risks during labor and

delivery. Let us consider these points in more detail.

Causes of Childbirth Problems

One cause of childbirth problems for both mother and baby is lack of good care during pregnancy. Dr. Cheung Kam-lau, consultant pediatrician for the neonatal care unit of Prince of Wales Hospital in Hong Kong, says that "having no prenatal care can put pregnancies in high risk." He also states that "most of these mothers expect healthy, chubby babies, but things just don't always happen ideally."



Regarding the problems that can affect mothers, the *Journal of the American Medical Women's Association* states that "the major direct causes of maternal mortality" are excessive bleeding, obstructed labor, infection, and abnormally high blood pressure. Effective treatments are well-known, however, and in most cases "modern medical care . . . does not require highly technical interventions," the journal adds.

Readily available care could also help many babies. The *UN Chronicle* reports that

According to figures released in October 2007, one woman dies nearly every minute—536,000 a year—because of problems associated with pregnancy.

—United Nations Population Fund

"two thirds of newborn deaths could be prevented if all mothers and newborns" obtained medical treatment that is "well-known, feasible and deliverable without complex technology." Sadly, though, the lack of knowledge and the laxity in prenatal care on the part of mothers is all too common, reports the Philippines News Agency.

Optimal Prenatal Care for Mother and Baby

"Healthier mothers have healthier babies," says the *UN Chronicle*. It also observes that when a woman gets inadequate medical care or none at all during pregnancy, childbirth, and the period thereafter, her baby also receives little or no medical care.

In some lands it may be difficult for a pregnant woman to get adequate care. Perhaps she has far to travel, or she may be unable to cover medical costs. Still, if at all possible, an expectant mother should try to get at least some professional prenatal care. This is particularly important for a woman who lives by

the teachings found in the Holy Bible, which states that human life is sacred, including that of the unborn.—Exodus 21:22, 23;* Deuteronomy 22:8.

Does adequate care mean seeing a doctor every week? No, not necessarily. In regard to certain common complications that arise during pregnancy and childbirth, the World Health Organization (WHO) "found that women who visited their doctors only four times during their pregnancy" enjoyed results that "were comparable to those who had 12 or more visits."

What Doctors May Do

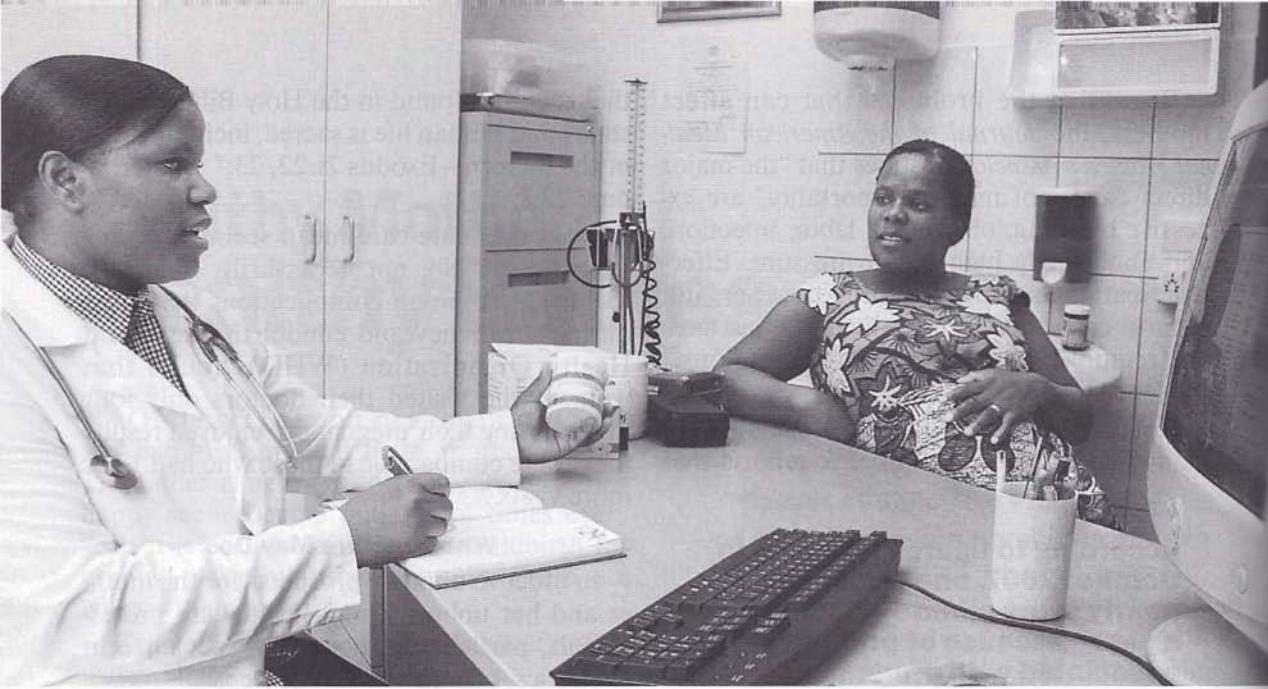
In order to improve prospects for the mother and her unborn child, health-care professionals, particularly those who specialize in obstetrics, take the following steps:

- They review the patient's medical history and perform an examination to determine risk and forestall complications that may involve the mother or her developing baby.
- They may take blood and urine samples to check for such problems as anemia, infection, Rh incompatibility, and disease. The latter may include diabetes, rubella, sexually transmitted diseases, and kidney disease, which can elevate blood pressure.
- When advisable and acceptable to the patient, they may recommend vaccinations for such things as influenza, tetanus, and Rh incompatibility.
- They may also recommend vitamin supplements, especially folic acid.

* The original Hebrew text refers to a fatal accident to either mother or unborn child.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

- Does the Universe Have a Purpose?
- You Can Satisfy Your Spiritual Need
- How I Lost My Love for War



When doctors identify the risks associated with individual pregnancies and take the needed precautions—or help the mother to do so—they enhance the prospects of a positive outcome for her and her unborn baby.

Minimizing Risks During Labor and Delivery

"The most dangerous time for a pregnant woman is the critical period around labour and delivery," says Joy Phumaphi, former assistant director general for Family and Community Health at WHO. What can be done to prevent serious problems, even life-threatening ones, at this critical time? Actually, the steps are simple, but they do need to be taken in advance.* This is especially important for those who refuse blood transfusions

* See the box "Preparation During Pregnancy."

for Bible-based reasons or for those who want to avoid blood because of the significant medical risks.—Acts 15:20, 28, 29.

Such patients should do what they reasonably can to ensure that the health-care provider, whether a doctor or a midwife, is both

"Each year 3.3 million babies are stillborn and more than 4 million newborns die within 28 days of coming into the world."—UN Chronicle

competent and experienced in administering medical alternatives to blood transfusion. Also, expectant parents would be wise to check that the hospital or delivery facility is willing to cooperate.* Here are two good

- 1. Phillip was like his master. 2. The eunuch was riding in a chariot not on a horse. 3. The event took place in the desert not in a crowded town.
- 4. Manasseh—Numbers 26:29; Judges 11:1.
- 5. Ammon—Judges 11:4. 6. True.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 31

* Couples who are Jehovah's Witnesses may consult with the local Hospital Liaison Committee (HLC) for Jehovah's Witnesses before the birth of their child. Committee members visit hospitals and doctors to provide them with medical information on the nonblood management of Witness patients. Additionally, HLCs likely can assist in finding a physician who respects the patient's beliefs and who has experience in non-blood medical management.

questions to ask the doctor: 1. What will you do if the mother or the baby loses a significant amount of blood or if there are other complications? 2. If you are not here when the baby comes, what alternative arrangements will be made?

The prudent woman will, of course, check with her doctor to ensure that her blood count is as high as possible within the normal range prior to labor. To build up the patient's blood, the doctor, in turn, might recommend that she take folic acid and other B-group vitamins, as well as iron supplements.

The doctor will also consider a number of other factors. For example, did his patient's prenatal visits reveal any health problems that may need attention? Does the prospective mother need to be off her feet? Should she get more rest? Would it be wise for her to gain or lose weight or get more exercise? And does she need to give more attention to bodily hygiene, including oral hygiene?

Studies show that gum disease in pregnant women is associated with an increased risk of preeclampsia, a serious complication that

is characterized by, among other things, a sudden rise in blood pressure, severe headache, and edema (excess buildup of fluid in the tissues).^{*} Preeclampsia can lead to premature delivery and is a leading cause of fetal and maternal death, especially in developing lands.

Indeed, a careful physician will give attention to any sign of infection in the prospective mother. And if she has premature labor pains, he will recommend prompt hospitalization, which can be lifesaving.

"Women risk death to give life," says Dr. Quazi Monirul Islam, director at WHO's Department of Making Pregnancy Safer. But good medical care during pregnancy, at birth, and immediately afterward can help to avert many complications, even death. Most important, of course, try to maintain good health. After all, if you want a healthy baby, you need to do your best to be a healthy mother.

* Although more studies are required to determine if gum disease causes an increased risk of preeclampsia, it is always wise to take good care of your gums and teeth.

PREPARATION DURING PREGNANCY

1. Choose your hospital, doctor, or midwife wisely by doing advance research.

2. Make regular visits to your doctor or midwife, establishing a trusting, friendly relationship.

3. Give careful attention to your health. If possible, take the appropriate vitamins, but avoid medication (even over-the-counter products) unless your doctor approves. It is wise to avoid alcohol. "Although the highest risk is to babies whose mothers drink heavily, it is not clear yet

whether there is any completely safe level of alcohol during pregnancy," states the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

4. If you experience premature labor pains (prior to the 37th week), contact your doctor or maternity ward immediately. Prompt attention may help to prevent a premature delivery and the complications that can result.*

* Blood transfusions are commonly given to anemic premature babies, whose organs have difficulty producing sufficient red blood cells.

5. Document personal decisions relating to medical care. For example, many have found it helpful to have a durable power of attorney (DPA) card filled out ahead of time. Find out what is used and legally acceptable in your country.

6. After the birth be mindful of your health and that of your baby, especially if the baby came prematurely. Consult the pediatrician right away if you observe any problems.

Buses Promote Atheism

"There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." This slogan has been displayed on 200 buses in London, England; on another 600 countrywide; and on two giant screens in London's Oxford Street, reports *The Guardian* newspaper. The originators say that their campaign is in response to religious advertising that condemns non-believers to hellfire. The word "probably" is used in order to meet the rules of Britain's Advertising Standards Authority, since it is impossible to prove that God does not exist. One objective of the campaign is to encourage more atheists to "come out," to reveal their views.

Risks of Programming Early Childbirth

In the United States, more and more infants are delivered early—by induced labor or by Cesarean section—out of convenience. However, the "last weeks of pregnancy are more important than once thought," says *The Wall Street Journal*. A study of some 15,000 newborns showed that for every week a baby remained in the womb between the 32nd and 39th weeks, there was a 23 percent drop in seizures, jaundice, respiratory distress, and brain hemorrhages. Infants born at 32 to

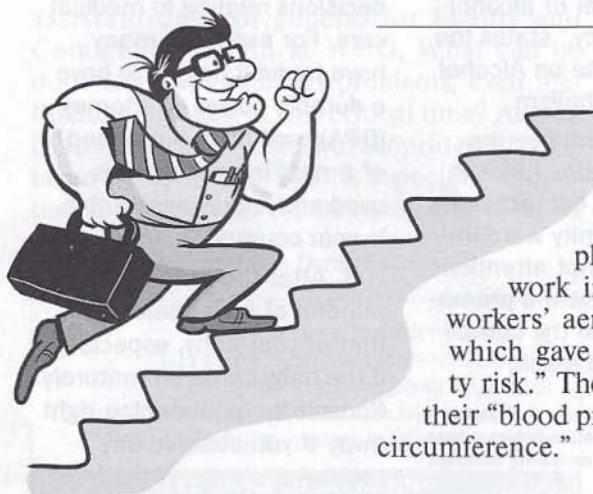
■ In a survey of some 2,000 people in Germany, almost 40 percent of teens 14 to 19 years of age thought it was all right to end a relationship by text message or e-mail. Over 80 percent of those 50 and older considered this totally unacceptable.—*FRANKFURTER NEUE PRESSE*, GERMANY.

■ It is estimated that 2.3 trillion text messages were sent worldwide during 2008.—*HITU NEWS*, TAHITI.

■ "How much does smoking shorten a person's life? By five to ten years, on average."—*UC BERKELEY WELLNESS LETTER*, U.S.A.

■ It is estimated that up to 60 percent of personal computers used in offices in the United States are left on overnight. As a result, some 14.4 million tons of carbon dioxide are needlessly emitted by electric power plants every year.—*WORLD WATCH*, U.S.A.

36 weeks had increased risk of mild behavioral and cognitive problems. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists thus recommends that babies not be delivered "before 39 weeks unless there is a medical reason to do so," says the *Journal*.



Climbing Stairs Improves Health

"Taking the stairs regularly is a simple and practical means to improving health," reports the British medical journal *The Lancet*. Researchers asked 69 sedentary employees to use only the stairs at their place of work instead of the elevators. After 12 weeks, the workers' aerobic capacity had increased by 8.6 percent, which gave them "a 15% reduction in all-cause mortality risk." The workers also saw significant improvement in their "blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, fat mass, and waist circumference."

What Is Wrong With This Picture?

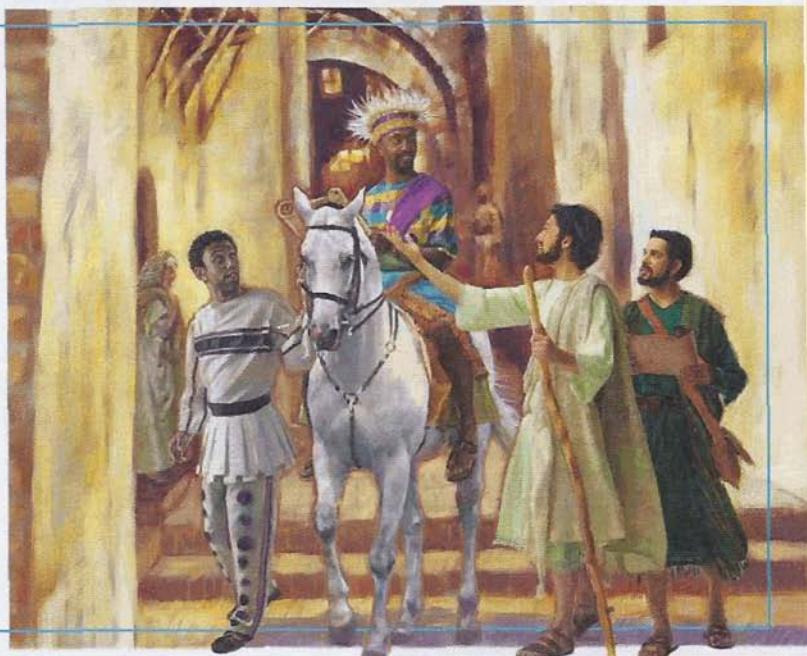
Read Acts 8:26-40. Now look at the picture. What features are incorrect? Write your answers on the lines below.

1.

2.

3.

FOR DISCUSSION: Why was the eunuch unable to understand what he was reading? How was he helped to understand? In what ways can you imitate the eunuch?



Children's Picture Search

Can you find these pictures in this issue? In your own words, describe what is happening in each picture.

From This Issue

Answer these questions, and provide the missing Bible verse(s).

PAGE 8 **What should you “buy out”?** Ephesians 5:_____

PAGE 9 **What should we guard against?** Luke 12:_____

PAGE 10 **If your enemy is hungry, what should you do?**
Romans 12:_____

PAGE 20 **When it comes to appearance, what should we focus on?** 1 Peter 3:_____

What Do You Know About Judge Jephthah?

Read Judges 11:1–12:7. Now answer the following questions.

4.

He was from which one of the 12 tribes of Israel?

CLUE: See Numbers 26:29.

6.

True or false? He lived after Joseph, son of Jacob (Israel).

5.

He delivered Israel from which nation?

FOR DISCUSSION: Why, do you think, did Jephthah's daughter cooperate with her father's vow? How might you imitate Jephthah's daughter?





What You Need Is in the Bible!

■ A French-speaking couple who are Jehovah's Witnesses entered an apartment building in the city of Ajaccio, on the Mediterranean island of Corsica. On the floor they found a blank envelope containing 400 euros. The wife explains what they did next: "We attached a note to the public notice board in the lobby, saying that the person who lost the envelope could call us at our number."

The next evening a woman called. After she gave proof that she was the one who had lost the money, she arranged to meet the couple. Astonished that someone would return her money, she arrived with a bouquet of flowers. The envelope she had lost contained her wages, and the next day she was going on vacation for a month.

While she was away, she sent the couple a card, thanking them once again for their kind gesture. When the woman returned from vacation, the two Witnesses called on her and spoke about the practical value of the Bible in family life and in everyday conduct, subjects that were of interest to her.

Using the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* the couple took the opportunity to discuss a few points from the chapter "How to

Make Your Family Life Happy." The woman was impressed and exclaimed: "Why, everything I need is in the Bible!" She then accepted a free Bible study.

