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THE WATCHTOWER  
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



**SEXUAL MORALITY—  
Is It Really Possible?**

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A WATCHTOWER provides a vantage point from which the watchman can observe and warn of approaching danger. This magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1879, serves a similar purpose. It keeps watch on world events in these critical times and calls attention to God's warning of his vengeance soon to be executed on those ruining the earth. It comforts all peoples with the hope that God's kingdom by Jesus Christ is about to bring in a global paradise of peace. It encourages all to exercise faith in the ransoming power of Jesus' shed blood, and points to the joyous prospect of everlasting life on earth under the sovereignty of the true God, Jehovah. "The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom" is nonpolitical, and adheres to the Bible as authority.

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# Sexual Morality— Is It Really Possible?

**W**E LIVE in a world saturated with sex, and this has affected both young and old. You may feel as did one young man, who said: "Everything around us focuses on sex. It is as common as breathing and sleeping. Every time you pick up a magazine, or turn on the TV, there it is. When you're at the store, driving your car, at work, at school—there it is! The way persons act, speak and dress is constantly drawing attention to the human body and sex. It is the number one topic of conversation." Recent statistics show that, worldwide, unprecedented numbers of teenagers—even preteens—are engaging in premarital sex relations.

**GREAT BRITAIN:** "Only one in six girls leaving her teens is still a virgin and one in four first has sexual intercourse before 16," a 1980 survey reveals.

**CANADA:** "An 'epidemic' of unwed teen mothers," says a 1979 government report.

**UNITED STATES:** 'Four out of five young men and two out of three young women have had sex by 19,' a 1981 study indicates.

**JAPAN:** In some cities 'unmarried mothers in their late teens and early twenties have registered a sixtyfold increase between 1970 and 1979.'

**FRANCE:** "More than half of France's school-girls claim to take part in sexual relationships on a regular basis," a 1980 survey shows.

"Teen Pregnancy Growing World Problem," says a headline of a recent newspaper article in the *Brazil Herald*. The article documented such increases in England, Wales, East Germany and Russia.



As much as 85 percent of all reported cases of venereal disease occur in young persons. Such diseases have become epidemic worldwide.

Yet not all young persons have taken up the chant "Chaste makes waste." Many have decided that they will wait till marriage before enjoying sex relations. But it is not easy for them to preserve their chastity and "abstain from fornication," as the Bible commands. (1 Thess. 4:3) They may rightly ask: 'Is there any power available to help a person to cope with the awesome tidal wave of sexual promiscuity?'

*Yes, there is.* Startling evidence of this power was seen 2,000 years ago during one of the most morally degenerate periods in recorded history.

## "THE MONSTROUS MORALS OF ROME"

The Roman statesman Seneca was an eyewitness of conditions in the Roman world at the time when Christianity had its beginning. He admitted: 'Every day the desire for wrongdoing is greater. Wickedness has gained such power over

## Recent statistics show that unprecedented numbers of young people are engaging in sexual immorality

the hearts of all that innocence is not rare —it no longer exists.' Juvenal, who also lived during that period, writes of "the monstrous morals of Rome."

"Past all moral sense" is how a Bible writer described the people of his day. (Eph. 4:19) Promiscuous sex relations were viewed as the norm. Ancient historian Lampridius said of that era that an unmarried person had to have a girl with whom he could have sex relations habitually, "because it was *impossible* that he could exist without one." But what helped create such a sordid atmosphere?

### 'IF A GOD DOES IT, WHY NOT I?'

The gods of the Romans, for the most part borrowed from the Greeks, were looked to as patterns of behavior. But what immoral characters! Venus and Flora were brazen-faced prostitutes, Bacchus was a drunkard, Mercury was a highway robber and Apollo was a seducer of many women. Even Jupiter, the chief and wisest of the gods, is said to have committed either adultery or incest with 59 women!

How did these examples affect the people? One of the plays during that era portrays a young man contemplating whether he should or should not commit fornication with a beautiful young girl. He then notices a picture of Jupiter seducing a woman. "If a god does it, why should not I, a man?" he reasons, and "so I decided to do it." This play reflected real life, for Seneca wrote that sexual immorality no longer had any shame for a man "when he saw the gods were no better than himself." No doubt the invisible masterminds behind these concepts of gods were the 'sons of God' who rebelled in Noah's day, coming down to earth to have

immoral relations with the daughters of men. Though these sexual perverts returned to the spirit realm, they have continued to saturate the society of mankind with the spirit of immorality.—Gen. 6:1-4; Jude 6, 7.

### "A MARKET FOR FORNICATION"

Second-century writer Athenagoras charges that some at that time had set up "a market for fornication, and established infamous resorts for the young for every kind of vile pleasure." Included in this "market" that publicly "sold" illicit sex was the theater. The themes of the shows dwelt on the immoral love life of the gods. The performers often dressed in "close-fitting dress" that gave the appearance of nudity. Additionally, on the walls of homes and temples, often in full public view, were paintings of "indescribable lewdness," at times even portraying sexual intercourse. The statues of the immoral gods, often portrayed nude, were in public view for even the youngest of eyes. Also, literature containing some of the filthiest language and descriptions ever recorded circulated freely among the youth. Minds were contaminated from an early age by reading, or by having others read to them, the escapades of the gods and goddesses.

Add to this the very popular public baths, used by the masses, which were considered little better than "houses of prostitution under a respectable name"; the gymnasiums, where many young and old men exercised in the nude, and which became dens of homosexuality; and the festivals, which were often just public sexual orgies. The situation became exactly as that described in the apostle Paul's letter to the Roman Christians. Referring

## Despite the "monstrous morals" of ancient Rome, the early Christians were miracles of moral purity

to those who 'rendered sacred service to the creation rather than the Creator' and who followed the then-current morals, he wrote: "God gave them up to disgraceful sexual appetites, for both their females changed the natural use of themselves into one contrary to nature; and likewise even the males left the natural use of the female and became violently inflamed in their lust toward one another, males with males, working what is obscene." (Rom. 1:24-27) Paul's description was shockingly accurate, for the moral depravity of the Graeco-Roman world led to one of the most disgusting practices in history—the sexual abuse of young boys by older men. This filthy practice was glorified by poetry and plays, and the whole society was infected with it.

If you had lived then, and everywhere you turned you saw moral filth, how difficult it might have been to keep clean! Yes, for a young man or a young woman to have remained virtuous would indeed have required moral strength and adherence to principle. Yet, in the midst of all of this, and as by a miracle, some did display such virtue.

### A MORAL MIRACLE

After listing the type of immoral persons that filled the ancient city of Corinth—fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals and the like—the apostle Paul, in his letter to the Christian congregation located there, wrote: "That is what some of you *were*. But you have been washed clean." (1 Cor. 6:9-11) The teachings of genuine Christianity had imparted moral strength so that its adherents could change and stay free of sexual immorality.

"Perhaps the most marked originality

of the Christian doctrine was the stress it laid on chastity," concluded William Sanger in his book *The History of Prostitution*, which discusses ancient morals at length. He adds: "From the first, the Christian communities made a just boast of the purity of their morals." What brought about such a reputation? With help from God they were able to imitate a better "image" than that of the sex-maddened gods.

### THE BETTER "IMAGE"

"Clothe yourselves with the new personality," advised the apostle Paul, "which through *accurate knowledge* is being made new according to the *image of the One who created it.*" (Col. 3:10) Through information from the inspired Scriptures and from the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Christians were able to come to an "accurate knowledge" of the qualities of the true God, Jehovah. His "image" stood in stark contrast to that of the Roman gods.

True Christians saw their Creator as their heavenly *Father* who loved and cared for them. (1 Pet. 5:6, 7) They learned how he always acted with justice, righteousness and mercy. He was pure and holy. (Deut. 32:4; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16) They were moved by his qualities, and strove to follow the inspired counsel: "Become imitators of God, as beloved children." (Eph. 5:1) They saw God as revealed through Christ as an ever-present friend. They could *love* him. The spirit of genuine love filled their hearts and motivated them to Christian works.

God helped these early Christians by means of his holy spirit, which gave them "power beyond what is normal." Also, at

their religious meetings they were reminded of the need to keep chaste. By sticking close to their associates within the Christian brotherhood they managed to be faithful. (2 Cor. 4:7; Heb. 10:24-26) "We who formerly delighted in fornication, now strive for purity," stated second-century professed Christian Justin Martyr. Still, such striving for moral purity was not easy.

#### A DAILY STRUGGLE

We should not forget that the early Christians lived in a depraved world. Some who became Christians were of "the household of Caesar." (Phil. 4:22) At the time, Nero was the Caesar, and his shocking moral outrages are well known. He arranged the lewdest of entertainment. He even "married" a young man "with all the forms of regular wedlock."<sup>\*</sup> Yet those of his "household" who were Christians (perhaps government officials or servants) remained chaste despite the environment.

The Christians in Rome were objects of much peer pressure and ridicule. For instance, Seneca reflects the common view when he writes: "Whoever has no love affairs is despised." "Chastity is simply a proof of ugliness." Others reportedly would complain: 'What a woman she *was!* How sensual, how gay! What a youth he *was!* How loose, how lustful! *Now* they have become Christians—what a pity!'

But those early disciples were not to be pitied. They could hold their heads up with self-respect. They had clear consciences. As "children of light" they spread their pure message far and wide without any embarrassment. (Eph. 5:8) Would you not have counted it a privilege to have been identified as one of these moral "rocks" in that sea of mud? Their truly satisfying way of life contrasted sharply with that of the people of the nations 'who did not know God and indulged their

covetous sexual appetite' to their hurt.—1 Thess. 4:5.

For instance, during that first century, life for many had become meaningless. They had drunk the intoxicating cup of pleasure to the dregs—exhausting every avenue of enjoyment. No charm, no delicacy, was left—and also *no satisfaction*. According to the writings of Juvenal, one homosexual, who at an older age was rejected by his lover, pleaded: "What's my best move *now* after all these wasted years and disappointed hopes? The bloom of life will wither too soon, our miserable span on earth is running out: While we drink, while we're calling out for garlands and perfumes and girls, old age creeps up on us, unregarded." However, no disappointment and misery befell those faithful Christians.

Even though Jesus' true followers had to struggle daily to keep themselves morally clean, their peace of mind was worth it. Sexual morality *was* possible.

Do we see similar moral strength today? Yes. Countless young people worldwide will say that sexual morality *is* possible. These are youths associated with the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. Despite the corrupting moral influences in entertainment and the social life of today's society—not one step behind that of ancient Rome—these young persons, as a group, stand out as shining examples of purity.

Yet some youngsters who are associated with these Christian congregations have difficulties in this regard. Even some raised in Christian homes occasionally lose appreciation for Bible morals. How can Christian youths maintain the same moral purity as that so evident among genuine Christians of the first century—despite *tremendous obstacles*? How can their parents help them? Two following articles are designed to provide some practical help.

—See page 8.

\* *Annals* (IX, 37) of Roman historian Tacitus.

# INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● "No more telling Mom that living together first will make for a better marriage later," declared "Psychology Today." It reported the results of a new study that showed that couples who lived together before they got married were just as likely to obtain a divorce

as those who lived apart. This study from the University of California at Los Angeles confirmed an earlier one at Florida A & M University that showed similar results. Also of interest was the finding that those who had cohabited before marriage had more problems with adultery, alcoholism and drugs. Regardless of such findings, however, persons who conscientiously want to do God's will abide by the Scriptural standard of not having sexual relations until marriage, for his Word states: "Let marriage be honorable among all, and the marriage bed be without defilement, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers."—Heb. 13:4.

● Each year in the United States alone, more than a million schoolgirls become pregnant, says the National Institute of Education, and 80 percent of them drop out of school. The Institute reports that about half of those who choose to have the baby keep it, but very few ever marry. As a result, a large proportion of these young unmarried mothers soon apply for public welfare, with little hope of ever becoming self-supporting. Often, their children grow up to be dropouts themselves, keeping them in the welfare cycle.

Add to these results the following: the flood of venereal diseases among promiscuous youth; the heartache of both the unmarried pregnant girl and her family; in many cases, the resorting to murder by abortion; the fact that "babies born to women under 15 years of age have three times the number of brain and nervous system disorders" as do those born to older women, according to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Moreover, consider that these babies are twice as likely to be premature, weighing five

## Not the Way to Happier Marriage

pounds or less, with the result that they are three times more likely to die in their first year of life than is a child born to a mother 20 to 24 years old; and that a woman having a baby as a young teenager is twice as likely to have a hysterectomy later in life as are women who have their children when older.

From such facts it is apparent that the fruits of illicit sexual relations are very bad. Hence, note the wisdom of the counsel in God's Word: "Flee from fornication." (1 Cor. 6:18) However, in addition to the bad fruitage of immoral sex relations, another consideration is even more important. It is that "no fornicator . . . has any inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God."—Eph. 5:5.

● "People are killing other people, claiming that they're Christians. Don't believe them," declared Vancouver "Sun" staff writer Steve Whysall. He noted that the violence perpetrated or supported by those who claim to be Christian was in direct contradiction to the teachings of Jesus, who said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves."—John 13:34, 35.

After commenting on the violence between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland, the Church support of dictators, the Inquisition and other acts of violence by those claiming to be Christian, Whysall said: "Just because people go to church every Sunday, quote scripture, and are surrounded by people who do the same thing, does not mean they are Christians. Jesus Christ said: 'Judge a tree by its fruits.' " Whysall also observed: "Who ever said they were Christians who did those awful things? Oh, you say, the established churches say so. Well, who ever said the established churches are Christian? So the pope blessed Mussolini, and there is evidence of other popes who have done dastardly deeds in the past. So who said they were Christians? . . . No Christian can war against another Christian—it would be like a man fighting himself. True Christians are brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. . . . and they would never, never intentionally hurt one another." He added that even in time of strife "real Christians" are "working for love and harmony and unity."

# Youth, Is Bible Morality the Best Way?

"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."—Isa. 48:17.

"THE days of our youth are the days of our glory," wrote the poet. Many young persons agree, for it is a time of excitement and freedom from the heavy responsibilities of adulthood. But many young persons are eager to grab all the pleasures open to both youths and adults. Their attitude can be summed up as: 'No waiting; yes, we want every pleasure right away.'

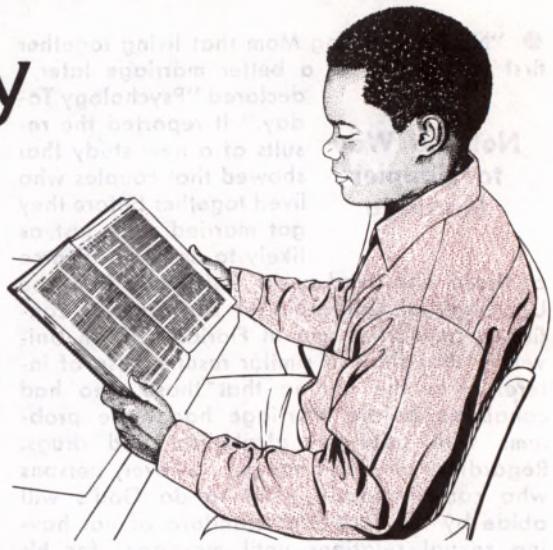
During this "prime of life" the surge for *every* pleasure has resulted in more young persons engaging in premarital sex relations, called fornication, than at any other period of modern history.\* This flood of sexual promiscuity has even affected some youths within the Christian congregation. As a Christian you may wonder, 'What makes it so difficult for a young person to remain chaste, especially during these "last days"?'—Eccl. 11:10; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

## THE PRESSURE IS ON!

During the teens, there is a 'blooming'

\* See the article on page 3 for the startling statistics.

1. Why is youth a good time in life, but what attitude do some have?
2. (a) What do recent statistics show about youth and morals? (b) Do you feel these trends are affecting youth within the Christian congregation?
3. 4. (a) Why is it not easy for a young person to remain chaste? (b) How do peer pressure and a need for understanding create problems?



of sexual desire. This period, called "the bloom of youth" in the Bible, usually brings a strong attraction for the opposite sex. So it is not unusual if you, as a young person, are troubled by sexual desires. However, this normal desire is whipped up by today's entertainment and advertising media, which glorify sex.—1 Cor. 7:36.

The pressure from other youngsters can also be intense, as one young Christian schoolgirl explains, saying: "It's really hard to be different nowadays. Some of the girls in school asked if I have had sex yet. When I told them no, they all began to laugh. I really felt like crying and saying that I had." Additionally, young people have a need for love and understanding, and this may not be satisfied at home. They cherish a boyfriend or a girl friend who treats them "special" and who has a sympathetic ear. Such emotional closeness can lead to sexual intimacies. Some youngsters are bewildered by the swarm of all these new emotions. They may wonder, 'Could something so pleasurable be

wrong? Is the Bible's morality *really* the best way?"

#### THE BEST WAY

<sup>5</sup> Our heavenly Father reminded his chosen people: "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." (Isa. 48:17) What is the 'way in which we should walk' morally? "This is what God wills [or, requires] . . . that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel [body] in sanctification and honor, not in covetous sexual appetite . . . For God called us, not with allowance for uncleanness."—1 Thess. 4:3-8.

<sup>6</sup> God's will regarding morals is clear—"get control of your bodies"; abstain from fornication and uncleanness. You young ones who have dedicated your lives to God have formed a close union with him and have become part of a clean organization. How delighted God is by such a course! But for you to engage in pre-marital sex relations would be the same as if one of the anointed "members of the Christ" who is "joined to the Lord" became "joined [sexually] to a harlot." "Never may that happen!" exclaimed the apostle Paul. It would be the highest insult to such a precious relationship. No other sin is quite the same, for "he that practices fornication is sinning against his own body." Certainly, such sin can destroy the spiritual relationship we have with God. No wonder Paul urged "flee from fornication." Yes, "flee"! Do not wait around to reason or debate on it. Get as far away as you can—and fast! But what if a person does not "flee" from such conduct?—1 Cor. 6:15-18.

5. (a) What does Isaiah 48:17 tell us about God? (b) According to 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8, what is God's will for us morally?

6. (a) What did the apostle Paul command anointed Christians with regard to fornication, and why? (b) Why should this cause young persons to consider their course?

#### "WRONGING THEMSELVES"

<sup>7</sup> The apostle Peter says that those within the congregation who spoke abusively of "glorious ones" and got involved in immorality ended up "wronging themselves as a reward for wrongdoing." (2 Pet. 2:9-13) These 'rewards' for sexual wrongdoing go much deeper than just venereal disease or an illegitimate pregnancy. They destroy love, respect and peace of mind. For instance, some young people who "went too far," committing fornication, sorrowfully admitted:

"It was a big letdown. There was no feeling of good or warmth of love as it was supposed to be. Rather, the full realization of how bad the act was hit me."

"I cried all night."

"I felt as low as a dog. It was an empty sickening feeling. I lost respect for myself and the girl. In fact, I found myself blaming the girl for allowing it to happen."

<sup>8</sup> Our heavenly Father tells us to avoid not just fornication but also "uncleanness." (1 Thess. 4:7) While this term covers a wide range, it refers to conduct that is morally repugnant. For instance, masturbation (sexual self-abuse) is an 'unclean' habit that many young persons have engaged in. It certainly whips up the "sexual appetite" and can cause extreme guilt. In some cases where the person did not seriously strive to overcome it, this pattern of thinking created problems after marriage. One young man was shocked to find that after marriage his long pattern of sexual self-gratification made him unable to provide the marriage "due." Months of misery followed!—1 Cor. 7:3.

<sup>9</sup> Some couples have engaged in passionate, sexually stimulating touching of intimate body parts. This is also "uncleanness" and could easily—and often does—lead to immoral sexual intercourse. This practice can inflame a person with

7-9. (a) What does 2 Peter 2:9-13 say concerning those who engage in immorality? (b) How have some who engaged in uncleanness 'wronged themselves'?



### Immorality hurts because of a ruined conscience and loss of respect

"sexual appetite" to the point of virtual frenzy. One young man admitted: "You see yourself as an animal with beastly desires, which is emotionally devastating." Such conduct has resulted in broken engagements\* and often in problems for those who later married. "We did almost everything up to fornication and almost committed it before we were married," confessed one young couple. "Though we got help from the elders, things were never the same again. It has been hard gaining back the respect for each other we once had."

<sup>10</sup> When an unmarried person begins engaging in some of the 'intoxicating' sexual practices reserved for the marriage bed, he or she can be fooled into marrying someone who does not have the qualities

needed for a good husband or a good wife. Sex tends to cover over serious differences that reappear after marriage and cause problems. It is not surprising that a study revealed that out of 265 weddings where the bride was pregnant, after five years only 15 couples were still together! Other research studies show that if a person engages in premarital sex, he or she is *twice* as likely as others to commit adultery. So you young brothers and sisters, do not be fooled by the "empty words" of persons who say that having sexual relations before marriage results in a happier marriage. (Eph. 5:6) Some even claim that you will get sick if you do not have sex after reaching puberty. This is false. No sickness has ever been linked by doctors to chastity! Sadly, some persons who have settled for lust rather than love, have regretted this the rest of their life!

<sup>11</sup> Never forget that "Jehovah is one who

\* Habitual passionate touching of intimate body parts has been given, by some authorities, as one of the chief causes for the breaking of engagements. Surveys indicate that at least one out of every three engagements does not eventuate in marriage.

10. Why is "uncleanness" harmful to unmarried couples?

11, 12. (a) How does Jehovah exact punishment for sexual immorality? (b) What does Job say about those who show stubbornness against God? (c) What question will we now consider?

exacts punishment for *all* these things [fornication and uncleanness].” (1 Thess. 4:6) This punishment may be a painful conscience, discipline from congregational elders, or reaping the consequences of what you sow. Of course, if we are repentant, Jehovah freely forgives and completely covers our sins. But some are stubborn and refuse to heed God’s laws. “Who can show stubbornness to [God] and come off uninjured?” asked Job. (Job 9:4) *No one!* It pains Jehovah to see such “stubbornness.” It hurts concerned elders who have seen many of our young persons suffer the previously mentioned traumas. These overseers realize that no one can violate God’s laws and principles and walk away “uninjured.” As one Christian youth who repented of immorality told her congregational elders: “I wish I could tell every young person in the Truth, ‘Don’t do it!’ Jehovah may forgive your errors but you may never. The bad memories will eat you up. It’s not worth it.” The elders join with Jehovah in pleading: “O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments!”—Isa. 48:18.

<sup>12</sup> But how can a Christian youth follow Jehovah’s commandments and avoid the many traps and subtle pitfalls of sexual immorality?

#### GIVE HEART TO PARENTS

<sup>13</sup> “My son, do give your heart to me, and may those eyes of yours take pleasure in my own ways.” (Prov. 23:26) This appeal calls for more than just mechanical obedience. A young person must open up and confide. However, as a youth, you may feel your Christian Dad or Mom simply does not understand your feelings. One Christian girl who had a problem with masturbation and needed help felt this way. She worried about talking to her mother. How would she react? Would she

13. How can young persons with godly parents apply Proverbs 23:26, and with what results?

understand? “Well, when I talked to her about it, she listened and didn’t reproach me,” said the teenager. “She put her arm around me, told me she loved me and would help me overcome the problem. We talked about it frankly and when we were through she held me in her arms and we prayed together. Ever since then I can talk to her about anything.”

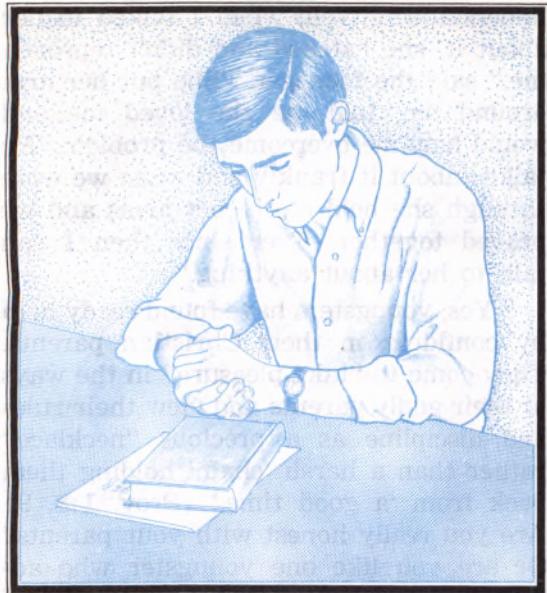
<sup>14</sup> Yes, youngsters have found ready help by confiding in their Christian parents. They come to “take pleasure” in the ways of their godly parents and view their rules and discipline as a precious “necklace” rather than a harsh ‘chain’ holding them back from ‘a good time.’ (Prov. 1:8, 9) Are you really honest with your parents? Or are you like one youngster who admitted: “When I’m around my parents I am what they want me to be, but when I’m not, then I’m what I want to be”? By drawing close to God-fearing parents, you can be helped to avoid much needless anguish. Those who may not have Christian parents can approach mature Christians—both men and women—as well as elders in the congregation. Seek out their willing help.—Titus 2:3, 4; Jas. 5:14, 15.

#### LEAD BODY AS SLAVE

<sup>15</sup> The apostle Paul said: “I pummel [‘beat black and blue’\*] my body and lead it as a slave [not, ‘it leads me as a slave’], that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow.” (1 Cor. 9:27) Paul ‘got tough’ with himself. So, too, rather than let your bodily desires dominate, anticipate situations that will excite sexual feelings and deliberately *avoid them*. For instance, you know what will happen to your bodily desires if you read books and watch TV pro-

\* *The Expositor’s Greek Testament.*

14. How should Christian youths view the laws of their godly parents?  
15. How does the apostle Paul describe his course at 1 Corinthians 9:27, and how can a youth act in a similar way?



**A personal relationship with God,  
developed through prayer,  
serves as a protection**

grams and movies that glorify sex. Hence, avoid these like the plague! Dating (where socially acceptable) when you are not ready for marriage, certain types of dancing, parties with no chaste direction and where couples can pair off, all work up the "sexual appetite." So avoid them and "deaden, therefore, your body members . . . as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite."—Col. 3:5.

<sup>16</sup> Especially when a couple is dating and preparing for marriage do they need to watch their circumstances. Being alone in an automobile, apartment (a person perhaps living away from home by himself), or in a secluded spot outdoors may induce couples to become overly intimate. One 17-year-old said frankly: "Anyone can say, 'we know when to stop.' True, a person may know *when*, but how many can do it? It is better to avoid the situation. Have others there." Yes, a chaperone

can give you the extra strength to dominate completely over the sexual desires in your bodies when you are together. Also, "set limits" as to how far your expressions of endearment will go. Stick to these.

<sup>17</sup> When the body craves being around those with loose morals, "lead" it away from such association. "Keep your way *far off* from alongside her [an immoral woman], and *do not get near* to the entrance of her house," recommends the Bible. (Prov. 5:8) Of course, while in school, young persons are plunged into association with many immoral persons. But do you socialize with them? One 18-year-old girl echoed the sentiments of many when she said: "Your association has a big influence on your morals. After listening to their conversations about sex, you become curious. You wonder what sex is really like. Is it as good as they say? I know that this is true because I am rearing a child by myself due to these very facts."—Prov. 13:20.

<sup>18</sup> The Scriptures indicate that some immoral persons would slip into the Christian congregation. Therefore, be on guard. If you believe any may be of this sort, refer them to the elders for spiritual assistance. Thus you will be showing them genuine love as well as perhaps protecting others in the congregation. True, some worldly immoral individuals may mock you for your chaste stand. But, just think! Should you let persons who are "slaves of corruption"—yes, slaves to their own passions—make you feel embarrassed? (2 Pet. 2:19) Who has the greater strength—the loose, immoral woman (or man) who 'chases after her passionate lovers,' or the chaste virgin who can say of her moral strength, "I am a wall"? (Song of Sol. 8:10; compare Hosea 2:7.) Which one of

16. What precautions should a Christian couple take while dating and preparing for marriage?

17. Is it important to watch our associations? Why?  
18. When mocked because of being chaste, what questions should a young Christian consider?

you is more likely to lose your self-respect and "give to others your dignity"?—Prov. 5:9; Jude 4, 8-13.

<sup>19</sup> By controlling your body, dominating it, you will be able to look back with no regrets. Think of the joy of the young Shulammite girl and her shepherd lover when they eventually were united in wedlock. With the help of others, and by their own efforts, they conquered their bodily desire and remained chaste. Although they had spoken words of endearment, they had not been immoral before entering wedlock, thereby diminishing the pleasure they would enjoy after adjusting to each other in marriage. How different from passionate Amnon who could not wait and whose 'body led him as a slave' into immorality!—Song of Sol. 2:16; 4:16; 5:1; 2 Sam. 13:1, 2, 10-16.

#### BUILD YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

<sup>20</sup> "I never built a personal relationship with Jehovah," confessed a 22-year-old female raised from infancy in a Christian home. "God was not a real person to me. I guess that's why it didn't really bother me when I committed immorality." Her situation was similar to the immoral persons described by Paul. These "knew God"; they 'knew full well his righteous decree,' but lacked "accurate knowledge."<sup>\*</sup> (Rom. 1:21, 28, 32) This "deeper and more intimate knowledge and acquaintance,"<sup>†</sup> a personal knowledge, that should have been developed, was lacking. Do you, as a young person, have this personal "accurate knowledge"? You need to study God's

\* In verse 21 Paul uses the Greek word *gno'sis*, whereas in verse 28 he uses *e-pi'gno-sis*, which is a stronger form of the word. It denotes a deeper and a more thorough knowledge.

† Greek scholar Dr. Richard C. Trench in *Synonyms of the New Testament*.

19. (a) Who 'led the body as a slave'—the couple described in the Song of Solomon, or Amnon? (b) What were the results?

20. (a) What can happen when one does not have a personal relationship with God? (b) What was lacking in the immoral persons described by Paul in Romans chapter one?

#### In review, are you able to answer these questions?

- What is God's will for Christians as regards sexual morals?
- Why is sexual "uncleanness" harmful to unmarried couples?
- How should Christian youths view Bible-based help offered by their godly parents?
- A Christian couple should take what precautions while preparing for marriage?
- How can a strong personal relationship with Jehovah God be developed?

Word personally and regularly in order to appreciate the qualities of God. Recall how such "accurate knowledge" strengthened the early Christians. (See page 5.) But more than book learning is necessary.

<sup>21</sup> Heartfelt prayers build a closeness to God. One young Christian girl, who became ensnared by immorality but later recovered, said:

"The only way to keep that personal relationship is by prayer, not routine ones but those that flow right from the heart. When I just tell Jehovah what I feel inside and have this constant communication, I realize that he is a real Person and is interested in my life. My relationship with him is the most important thing in the world."

<sup>22</sup> Are your prayers that intense? Do you work in harmony with them? Also, by becoming a 'fellow worker with God,' engaging in the preaching work, your interests and objectives will become the same as God's. This will naturally build a closeness to Jehovah. Remember, only you can build this personal relationship with God.—1 Cor. 3:9.

21, 22. What will build a strong, personal relationship with God?

<sup>23</sup> True, the pressure is on young ones today. To be faithful is a daily battle. However, once beyond the "bloom of youth," the fight can become easier. Still, the battle will not continue forever. Soon Satan, the chief instigator behind this wave of immorality, will be destroyed. In God's new order so near at hand, there will be a righteous environment that will make

23. (a) Will the struggle against immorality continue forever? (b) Why should you be willing to put forth any effort to please Jehovah?

our course so much easier. Reflect on the blessings of that new order. Surely you agree with the sentiments of one young woman, who said: "I think of everything that Jehovah has done for me and promised me. He hasn't given up on me. He has blessed me in so many ways. I know he wants only the best for me, and I want to please him. *Eternal life is worth any effort in Jehovah's behalf.*"—Rom. 16:20; 2 Pet. 3:13.

## Parents, Reach Your Child's Heart

**"My son, if your heart has become wise,  
my heart will rejoice, even mine."—Prov.  
23:15.**

CHRISTIAN parents yearn to protect their children from devastating moral pitfalls. No doubt you, if you are a parent, share the same apprehension as that of a Christian father with four teenagers who wrote: "The morals that our young ones are faced with keep getting worse, and sometimes it is hard to keep up with each new approach the world takes. My constant prayer is to be able to help them. *I love them so much.*"

2 Yet, why is it that at times, even after being taken to religious meetings and being taught Bible morality, a child may still become involved in sexual immorality? Though head learning is important the heart plays a vital role, especially with regard to morals. What can a parent do to

1, 2. (a) What is the desire of Christian parents, but how did one father feel? (b) In child training, what needs to be reached, and why?

### DRAW UP COUNSEL OUT OF THE HEART

<sup>3</sup> Before you can reach the heart, you have to find out, to some extent, what is in it. "Counsel [one's real purpose or deeply rooted intentions\*] in the heart of a man is as deep waters, but the man of discernment is one that will draw it up." (Prov. 20:5) The real feelings in the heart of a child are like waters at the bottom of a deep well. In Bible times, some well openings were over 100 feet (30 m) down, and people had to walk down stairs to "draw up" the waters. It was a real task! To "draw up" your own child's intentions

\* "Counsel," at times, has the thought of purpose.—See Isaiah 29:15; 46:10.

3. What does Proverbs 20:5 mean, and what action does this require of parents?

**'My parents never had a heart-to-heart talk with me about sex. There were so many things I wanted to know. I became very curious, foolish and susceptible.'—A 15-year-old girl**

may be just as difficult. Doing this takes empathy and keen observation. It may require the skillful use of questions, patience—sometimes your being willing to talk with the child for hours before his real feelings surface. By reminding the child that you went through the same period, and that you too are imperfect, and by creating opportunities so that the child can be alone with you at times, you will make it easier for him to open up.—Job 33:5-7.

<sup>4</sup> Yet a 'thoughtless' word or statement can be devastating. Some speak thoughtlessly, "as with the stabs of a sword." Their words hurt and cause separation. So strive to be "cool of spirit" as you really *listen*. Perhaps you can recall when someone "talked down" to you or made fun of your feelings. Perhaps he said, 'You know better than that!' Did you yearn to confide in that person again?—Prov. 12:18; 17:27.

<sup>5</sup> When a child reaches his teens, his sexual desires become very strong. The youngster needs to talk with someone who can explain what is happening to his body and can answer an endless list of very delicate and personal questions. Yet in a survey taken of 1,400 parents with adolescent children, 92 percent never discussed sexual behavior with their children. The background of the parents, the customs of the land, or the belief that such discussion is not necessary, at times hinders even Christian parents from showing such discerning care. Just how important are such discussions?

4. According to Proverbs 12:18, what kind of speech can damage communication?

5. (a) What kind of instruction does a teenager need? (b) Are most parents providing such instructions?

<sup>6</sup> Well, after interviewing a number of families, one Christian elder concluded: "It's interesting how a pattern is followed. For parents who really dealt with sex early and worked hard at keeping in close communication with their children, the results were good. For those who, for whatever reason, did not deal early with the problem, the results usually were bad."

<sup>7</sup> The benefits from such discussion are many. First, it can shield the child's mind from the false, dirty information he will later hear. Second, it can build respect for parents and confidence in them and lay a common ground of communication that will carry over into puberty. And third, it can make it easier for your child to discuss the most intimate matters with you. Still, many parents wonder just how to go about discussing this somewhat embarrassing subject.

#### **INSTRUCT THE HEART**

<sup>8</sup> The value of starting to instruct the child at a young age cannot be overemphasized. A number of 10- and 11-year-olds have even become pregnant. Some researchers urge that communication about sex be firmly established before the child is six. Otherwise it may never be achieved. Often, just frankly and unashamedly answering a young child's questions in this regard is sufficient.\* However, a teenager needs instruction on how to control such desires. To reach the heart,

\* For specific suggestions regarding such discussions, see the book *Making Your Family Life Happy*, pp. 122-124, as well as the articles "A Father Talks to His Sons," and "A Mother Talks to Her Daughters," appearing in *Awake!* of June 8 and July 8, 1965.

6, 7. How important is it that parents discuss sexual behavior with their children?

8. How early should discussions about sex begin?

the instruction must come across as friendly help, not as an accusation.

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said: "A good man brings forth good out of the good *treasure* of his heart." (Luke 6:45) So, to reach your child's heart requires that you put into that young heart precious things—things that he or she will respond to emotionally and will cherish. Why? So that "good things" will come out of that heart.—Matt. 12:34, 35.

<sup>10</sup> The instruction given about this subject in the Proverbs furnishes a good example for parents. It treats sexual behavior frankly and yet with dignity. Notice the balanced approach of chapter five. The instructor or parent realistically discusses the pleasure of sex relations and especially the need to avoid sexual immorality. The prostitute's lips seem to 'drip with honey' as she seeks to entice a man. Ah, but the aftereffects—"as bitter as wormwood" and "as sharp as a two-edged sword"! (Vss. 3, 4) Then, the Biblical instructor touches a tender spot by showing the young man how he can lose his "dignity" by such conduct. (Vs. 9) Yet this is not an 'all-sex-is-sin' discussion. What a beautiful picture he paints of sexual relations within marriage.—Vss. 15-19.

<sup>11</sup> The parent does not accuse or berate

9. What should a parent try to put into a child's heart, and why?

10, 11. From the examples in the book of Proverbs, what can be learned about how to reach your child's heart during a discussion on sexual morality?

the young man. In Proverbs chapter seven, he relates others' experiences and uses straightforward terms. (Prov. 7:6, 7, 13, 17, 18) The instructor uses vivid illustrations—a passionate man that is enticed by a harlot is likened to a bull going to the slaughter, and an "arrow cleaves open his liver." (Prov. 7:22, 23) How could a youth ever forget such imagery! Such a warning example stored in the heart will

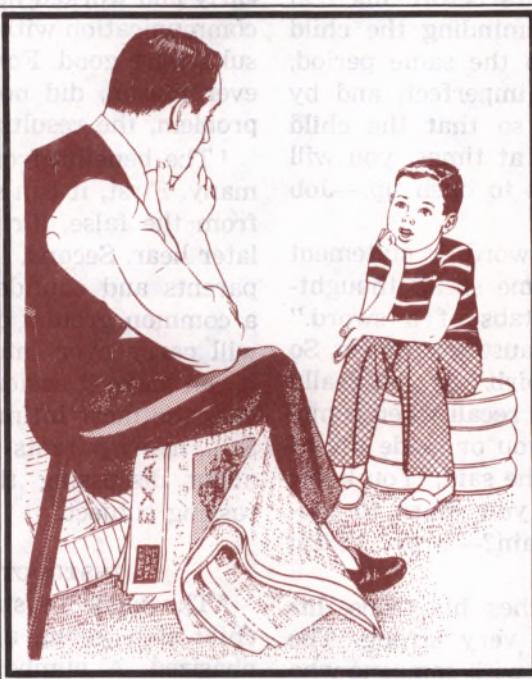
help the youth to cope with temptation. The parent did not just say that sexual immorality was wrong, but told why, explaining the effects and showing how easily the young person could get involved.

<sup>12</sup> Many Christian parents have had similar discussions. They have had them on numerous occasions when the subject could be approached in a natural, informal way. Some of these opportunities were during long walks, when talking about some incident illus-

trating the value of proper morals, after such material was considered during congregational meetings, or when their own family's spiritual discussions treated the subject. Many made use of the book *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It\** to help them. Such discussion was not always easy,

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

12, 13. (a) What are some occasions when a parent can discuss sexual behavior with his or her child? (b) Have you found other times that are convenient? (c) For a child to be moral, is it enough just to put good instruction into his heart?



Communication between parent and child is so important

but genuine love for the child motivated the parents. As one mother of five admitted: "I forced myself to talk about it until finally I was no longer uncomfortable, nor was the child." Do not let your child suffer untold heartache because of a lack of "good instruction" in this most delicate area.—Prov. 4:2.

<sup>18</sup> Yet, despite all the good instruction that can be put into a child's heart, foolishness is also deeply ingrained there because of inherited sinfulness.—Ps. 51:5.

#### DISCIPLINE REFINES THE HEART

<sup>14</sup> What can drive foolishness out of the young heart? "The rod of discipline," according to Proverbs 22:15. Discipline is training that molds or corrects. It is firmness with understanding; so it does not smother or 'irritate' a child with unreasonable restrictions. (Eph. 6:4) Discipline is vital when your child forms an interest in the opposite sex. To allow a couple to keep company when either is too young to marry is to invite disaster.

<sup>15</sup> But many parents ask, 'What can you do when they want to be together?' Apparently under the direction or with the approval of their parents, when the brothers of the Shulammite maiden discovered that the shepherd boy wanted to take their sister alone on a walk in a secluded

14. What is discipline, and why is it so important?

15. (a) What situation is perplexing to many parents? (b) What did the brothers of the Shulammite maiden do when she and her boyfriend wanted to be together alone?

mountain spot, they *put a stop to it!* They gave her work to occupy her time and to keep the couple separated. Though they trusted her, they knew the power of temptation. Did this ruin the girl's life? To the contrary, it helped the couple remain chaste till they later married.—Song of Sol. 1:6; 2:8-15.

<sup>16</sup> Similar firmness, *along with* the providing of activities to keep the child's mind occupied, is needed today. In this regard, parents must use genuine discernment and godly wisdom. (Prov. 24:3) It is extremely difficult for parents to restrain a child's feelings once it becomes emotionally involved. Before allowing their child to date (where this is socially acceptable), Christian parents would have to consider the child's age, degree of emotional maturity and spiritual progress, who it is the child wishes to date and what their activities will be. One mother whose 19-year-old daughter was dis-

fellowshiped for what she felt she would have done differently in rearing her child. She replied: "I would *never* have let her become involved with the opposite sex in a romantic relationship while she was in her early teens. I would not have assumed she was so strong that she could deal with her problem."

<sup>17</sup> Some parents have sat down with the

16. What have some parents done to protect the hearts of their children?

17, 18. (a) Should a couple who are pursuing marriage be resentful when a parent or someone under that one's direction acts as a chaperone? (b) What did one young man learn the hard way?

young couple and explained why they cannot approve of their dating. By discussing the matter with the parents of the other child, additional support may be gained. One Christian parent with four children said: "A number of parents think that young boy-girl relationships are 'cute' and encourage them, as well as letting groups of teenagers go out with no adult supervision. What we see is 'pairing off,' immorality and early marriages. We encourage our children to develop hobbies and other physical activities such as skating and bicycling that they can do alone, with the family, or with others of the same sex."

<sup>18</sup> Even when the couple is old enough to court, help them by arranging a chaperone. An engaged Christian couple who were soon to be married let their guard down and engaged in "uncleanness." (Gal. 5:19) Looking back, the young man admitted: "Most of the time we had a chaperone. But those few times we didn't hurt us." Other youngsters later thanked their parents for being strict and carefully monitoring their entertainment, for they remained chaste and entered marriage with no regrets or bad memories. If your child's intentions are honorable, he should not resent your godly discipline, for it is "the way of life."—Prov. 6:23.

#### **HELP CHILD BUILD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

<sup>19</sup> The greatest protection against immorality is for your child to develop a personal intimate relationship with Jehovah. Even though this is what the child itself must do, a parent can help. First of all, *your own example* of devotion will give a living pattern to be imitated. Those who became Christians in first-century Thessalonica saw "what sort of men" Paul and his companions were and "became imi-

19. (a) What is your child's greatest protection against immorality, and what will help it to develop that? (b) What questions can parents ask about their own example?

tators," developing similar "strong conviction." (1 Thess. 1:4-6) What 'sort of person' do your children see in you? Do they see your "strong conviction," noting that you are building your entire life around your devotion to God and are making sacrifices for his worship? Do they see your strong dislike of immorality by your not being entertained by what is morally corrupt? Do they see an example of love in the way you treat your mate or deal with others? Do they hear you talk about Jehovah in a way that clearly shows he is real to you? Such an example will be an incentive for the child to make sacrifices to keep Jehovah's law. Your child will see that doing so is important.

<sup>20</sup> Also, by closely guarding your children's association and selecting for them associates showing spiritual "strong conviction," you will enhance your efforts. Nothing can destroy your work faster than bad associates for them—even if these are found within the Christian congregation. Such bad associates can ruin your child's spirituality and cause a generation gap.—Prov. 13:20; Jude 3, 4, 12, 16, 19.

<sup>21</sup> As a parent, you must be convinced of the power of God's Word, the Bible. The apostle John said that the spiritually strong "young men" in the congregation to which he wrote had "conquered the wicked one" because 'the word of God remained in them.' (1 John 2:14) Hence, in addition to promoting a close family spirit and setting a good example, godly parents should arrange for the Word of God to be studied regularly by the family so that its message sinks deeply into a youngster's heart. One couple painfully watched two of their three children turn bad during teenage years. The father, who had reared them in a Christian home from

20. What can destroy the effect of your good training? 21. (a) According to 1 John 2:14, what gives spiritual strength and what responsibility does this place on parents? (b) What suggestions do you have to keep such studies regular and interesting?

infancy, admitted: "If I had the chance to do it over again, there would be more regular family Bible study. Ours was always 'hit and miss.' I know a regular study would have pulled us together more as a family and strengthened them much more spiritually." By good preparation on the parents' part, avoiding a mechanical, stiff, overly formal procedure, and tailoring the study to fit the needs of the children, the discussion will be anticipated and will draw the family together spiritually. Granted, with all the demands on parents' time this is not easy, but more important than the length of such discussions is the quality of the time spent together. Additionally, children need to be taught good personal study habits of their own.—Deut. 6:4-9.

<sup>22</sup> As can be seen

from the experience on page 13, intimate, heartfelt prayer builds a close relationship with God. Help your child to learn of the need for prayer and how to 'pour out his heart' to Jehovah. (Ps. 62:8) Let your child hear your heartfelt prayers. Discuss what can be included in his prayers. By telling him how Jehovah has answered your prayers and by encouraging the child to look for answers to his own, the child will realize that prayer has power.

<sup>23</sup> "The intimacy with Jehovah belongs

22. How can you teach your child to offer meaningful prayers?

23, 24. (a) Why should a child be taught the fear of Jehovah? (b) With whom should parents regularly work in the field ministry, and why?

to those *fearful of him*," wrote King David. (Ps. 25:14) For your child really to develop an intimate relationship with God, he must have a wholesome fear of the awesome consequences of displeasing "the living God." (Heb. 10:31; Prov. 8:13) True, the child must love Jehovah and deeply appreciate His loving-kindness and goodness, but he must also have a solemn respect for Jehovah's ability to punish or to allow a person to 'reap what he has sown.' (Gal. 6:7) If this healthy "fear" is instilled from early age, the child will develop a good conscience. Rather than thinking, 'It's okay, as long as I don't get caught,' he will feel as did Joseph, who resisted enticement to immorality and said: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?"—Gen. 39:7-9.

<sup>24</sup> By working together in the Christian ministry, you will help your child to cultivate the same tender interest in people that Jehovah has. As the child grows in appreciation, its heart will see how it can 'make many rich' by teaching them the "good news" that can produce beneficial changes in their lives. This ministry is also a fine aid in developing a close relationship with God.—2 Cor. 6:10.

#### NEED HELP BEYOND WHAT IS NORMAL

<sup>25</sup> "It is not easy being the parent of

25, 26. (a) Why is help 'beyond what is normal' needed by parents? (b) From where does such help come? (c) What did one father do when he thought he was 'losing' his child, and what did he later realize?

teenagers," said one Christian father who mentioned his perplexity over his withdrawn 16-year-old daughter who is the object of much pressure from boys in school. "I pray by myself and with her often—but I'm still worried." Indeed, he saw the need for divine help that would give him and his daughter "power beyond what is normal."—2 Cor. 4:7.

<sup>26</sup> At times parents can feel helpless when it appears that all their efforts are not succeeding. But do not give up! Because of his boy's wayward tendencies, one Christian father admitted that at a certain point he felt he had "lost" his son, whom he had reared in Christian teaching from infancy. "I got down on my knees and prayed till the tears rolled down my face, and I begged Jehovah to help me," stated this father. "Jehovah answered those prayers and the boy gradually changed for the better. I surely became closer to Jehovah when I saw his hand at work in my family." Yes, look to Jehovah for help; rely on him. Pray with your children and for them. See Jehovah's hand at work in your family.—1 Thess. 5:17.

### Can you answer these questions by way of review?

- In training children, why is it vital to reach the heart?
- Why should parents discuss sexual matters with their children?
- What is a child's greatest protection against sexual immorality, and what will be helpful in developing this protection?
- How can a child be taught to offer meaningful prayers?
- Why should Christian parents regularly work with their children in the field ministry?

<sup>27</sup> Realize that the child ultimately has to write Jehovah's laws on its own heart. (Compare Proverbs 3:1-4.) But do all you can as a parent to reach your child's heart. What a reward to see that child remain loyal to the truth! How great a reason for 'your heart to rejoice' if your children show that their hearts have "become wise"! (Prov. 23:15) You will be like the apostle John who could say of his spiritual children: "No greater cause for thankfulness do I have than these things, that I should be hearing that my children go on walking in the truth."—3 John 4.

27. (a) Who has to write God's law on the child's heart? (b) How do you parents feel when your child shows that its heart has "become wise"?

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(See instructions on reverse)

## Nine-Year-Old Son Saves A Marriage

NEED a husband's one act of adultery absolutely require that the wife divorce him, even when he is truly repentant? One wife thought so, but her nine-year-old son thought otherwise.

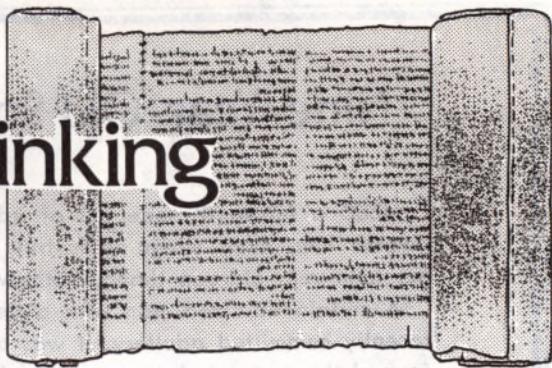
A certain baptized man with a dedicated wife and three young children recently committed adultery. It was a single offense and he immediately informed the appointed congregational elders. He was urged by the elders to seek his wife's forgiveness by confessing to her as well. The wife was very upset and was determined to bring their marriage to an end. She stated to the elders handling the case that her mind was made up and that she had already consulted with a lawyer. The elders talked with her, mentioning that the three children still were of tender years, the eldest being nine. But in spite of this, she was resolute. As a result, the husband was sorely distressed and would hardly eat. He wept much of the time.

In the meantime, the children got to know what was happening, and the eldest boy decided to do something about it. He sat down to work out a talk or what he would say to his mother. From attending meetings at the Kingdom Hall, he recalled some scriptures and also information from the book "Making Your Family Life Happy." Now he was well prepared to tackle his mummy. He called her into the bedroom and sat down with her. His first comment was to the effect that he was very upset and did not desire his family to break up. Then he said: "Look, Mummy, what the Bible says at Nehemiah 9:17." After the mother read this text, he said: "You see how Jehovah is a God that acts in a forgiving way. Mummy, do you not think that you also should forgive Daddy?" "Perhaps," his mother replied. He was really intent on helping his mother to see the importance of being forgiving.

The lad also quoted Ephesians 5:22, 33 and argued that as his daddy is the head of the house, the mother should listen to him. Next, the boy referred to Matthew 6:11, 12. After he read these two verses, he asked his mother what the word "debts" meant. She gave him the answer and he urged her to forgive "Daddy's debts." He used many more scriptures and, in conclusion, asked his mother: "Do you not think that you should forgive Daddy?" Happily, the answer was, "Yes, I will."

Now the family is happily united once again. The woman later said that she was glad about the way things worked out and remarked that she could see that her husband was really repentant and trying hard to make amends in the family relationship. So, what others' comments did not bring about, those of a nine-year-old boy did, with the use of God's Word. Truly, "out of the mouth of children . . . you [Jehovah] have founded strength."—Ps. 8:2.

# Bible Critics Revise Their Thinking



THE 20th century has seen great progress toward a more accurate Bible text. Discovery of many early manuscripts, especially the Chester Beatty and Bodmer Papyri and the Dead Sea Scrolls, has made possible a text much closer to the originals than many scholars hoped to achieve. Greater understanding of the original Hebrew and Greek languages has meant more precise translation of the Bible into many languages around the world. It would seem, therefore, that such progress must leave far behind the ideas of 200 years ago, even if it owes much to the work done during that time.

So it is perhaps surprising to find that the ideas of Johann Jakob Griesbach (1745-1812) are being discussed again in our day. In 1976 a conference was held in Münster, Federal Republic of Germany, devoted solely to the work of this scholar. Why is there a revival of his studies today?

After obtaining a master's degree when he was 23, Griesbach toured Europe, visiting libraries to examine manuscripts of the Christian Greek Scriptures. The fruits of this research were published in 1774 and 1775, and his Greek text (in later editions) was used by a number of Bible translators, including Archbishop Newcome, Abner Kneeland, Samuel Sharpe, Edgar Taylor and Benjamin Wilson (the latter in *The Emphatic Diaglott*).

For the first time, Griesbach included manuscript readings older than those that were used by Erasmus in his Greek text of 1516 C.E. The importance of this re-

search is evident from the following comment: "Griesbach spent long hours in the attempt to find the best readings among the many variants in the New Testament. His work laid the foundations of modern text criticism and he is, in no small measure, responsible for the secure New Testament text which we enjoy today."

—J. J. Griesbach: *Synoptic and Text-Critical Studies*, 1776-1976, p. xi.

In 1776 Griesbach issued his Synopsis of the Gospels Matthew, Mark and Luke, with the text set out in parallel columns for easy comparison. Ever since, they have been called the "synoptic" Gospels because they present a "like view." Griesbach firmly believed that these Gospels were written by the persons named, that Matthew was an eyewitness of the events he recorded, and that "the apostles were fitted through the Holy Spirit to both understand and transmit the doctrine without danger of error."

From his studies Griesbach concluded that the first Gospel was written by Matthew, the second by Luke and the third by Mark. But even during Griesbach's lifetime, the idea that Mark was the first Gospel to be written was suggested by G. S. Storr. Since then this theory has gained widespread support, together with the belief that behind the Gospels lies an unknown lost document labeled 'Q.' Later scholars added other strands and sources

to this theory, and its discussion and elaboration have occupied scores of books and thousands of articles. So important did it become to many theologians that it even took on the nature of "an article of faith." As a consequence, Griesbach was cast aside and often harshly criticized.

After dominating the field for such a long time, the 'source document' theory now is being criticized. As many scholars revise their thinking, they have 'rediscovered' the ideas of Griesbach. After being brought up to date with certain alterations, these ideas have been found to resolve more adequately existing questions regarding the Gospels.

The 'source document' idea has destroyed the faith of many persons in the divine inspiration of the Bible. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) This tendency is not new, for the apostle Paul told Timothy to "command certain ones not to teach different doctrine, nor to pay attention to false stories and to genealogies, which end up in nothing, but which furnish questions for research [“promote speculations,” RS] rather than a dispensing of anything by God in connection with faith."—1 Tim. 1:3, 4.

It is interesting that Bishop B. C. Butler, who defended the priority of Matthew almost alone some years ago, puts his finger on the key to the entire question, saying: "An unprejudiced enquirer, who wishes to discover the truth, will generally decide, if he reads and re-reads the Synoptic Gospels as whole books, that the authors were themselves honest men, setting down what they sincerely believed to be true. He will then realise that they could not have believed these things to be true unless the historical facts were, substantially, such as they represent them to have been."—*Searchings*, p. 85.

No uninspired lost document served as a basis for the Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They wrote under the influence of Jehovah God's holy spirit. Of course, the mistaken theories of men may hold sway for a very long time, in this case some 200 years. Meanwhile, the faith of many persons in God's Word is undermined. But if we are wise we will note all the evidence that has accumulated to show the reliability and divine inspiration of the Bible. And we will leave the critics to revise their thinking as often as they wish.

## Matthew Proclaims: ‘The Messiah Has Come!’

**W**HAT were the most important events ever to take place in the history of humankind? Without a shadow of doubt, they were the birth, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

In keeping with the divine principle that 'at the mouth of two or three witnesses

every matter must be established,' Jehovah God saw to it that four accounts of the life of Jesus Christ were recorded to establish the truthfulness of these events. (Deut. 17:6; 2 Cor. 13:1) The four persons He used were Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Well has it been observed of these four writers that each one has his

own particular theme, his own objective, reflects his own personality and keeps in mind his immediate readers.

Of Matthew, the first of these writers, we know little. However, we can conclude that he was a modest man, for only from his account do we learn that he had been a despised tax collector. (Matt. 9:9) And no wonder tax collectors were despised! For one thing, they represented the Roman yoke where it hurt very much, in the pocketbook! More than that, they were notorious in abusing their prerogatives, becoming extortioners. The words of the tax collector Zacchaeus indicate this. After Jesus had come to his home, Zacchaeus had a change of heart, saying: "Whatever I extorted from anyone by false accusation I am restoring fourfold." (Luke 19:8) But it seems that there can be little question about Matthew's having been an honest revenue agent; otherwise Jesus would not have invited him right from his job to be His follower.

As far back as the time of Adam's disobedience in Eden, Jehovah God had, in cryptic phrase, foretold the coming of the Messiah, referring to him as the woman's "seed." And as early as the time of King David this one was referred to as God's "anointed." The prophet Daniel in particular foretold the Messiah's coming. (Gen. 3:15; 22:17, 18; Ps. 2:2; Dan. 9: 24-27) That the long-looked-for Messiah had at last come was indeed such thrilling news that Matthew lost no time in proclaiming it by means of his Gospel. From the best evidence available, it appears that he may well have written his account as early as 41 C.E.

#### DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

It is quite clear that Matthew intended his Gospel account to be a bridge between the events recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures and those relating to the life of the Messiah. According to the testimony of

early church historians, Matthew first wrote it in Hebrew and later made a Greek copy of his Gospel. Supporting this position is the fact that all his quotations from the earlier Scriptures are not from the Greek *Septuagint Version*, as is often the case with the other Gospel writers, but from the Hebrew text. And in keeping with his theme that Jesus Christ was indeed the foretold Messiah, Matthew, more than others, shows how Jesus' life and actions fulfilled Bible prophecy. (Compare Matthew 8:16, 17 with Mark 1:34 and Luke 4:40.) Matthew also, more than the other Gospel writers, stressed the theme of the "kingdom of the heavens," for which reason his has been termed the "Kingdom Gospel."—Matt. 4:17; 5:3; 11:12; 22:2.

Matthew's previous occupation as a tax collector shows through in his writing. For one thing, he keenly appreciated the great undeserved kindness accorded him as a tax collector to become an apostle of the Messiah. So we find him uniquely recording Jesus' stressing of the fact that mercy and not just sacrifice are required. Interestingly, only Matthew gives us those comforting words of Jesus that begin with the invitation, "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you."—Matt. 9:9-13; 11:28-30; 12: 7; 18:21-35.

Matthew's having been a tax collector also shines through in his attention to figures. He alone tells us that Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. (Matt. 26:15) Moreover, where others mentioned but one or put things in the singular, Matthew becomes more specific and mentions two or puts things in the plural. (Compare Matthew 4:3; 8:28; 20:29, 30 with Mark 5:2; 10:46, 47; Luke 4:3; 8:27; 18:35-38.) In fact, it seems that Matthew had a fondness for numbers. Thus in chapter six we find him listing seven petitions in the Model Prayer (compared to Luke's five), seven parables in chapter 13, and seven

woes spoken by Jesus against the Jewish clergy of his day in chapter 23. And Matthew breaks Jesus' genealogy down into three sets of 14.—Matt. 1:1-17.

The distinctive features of Matthew's Gospel also become apparent when we note how his account complements that of Luke. This is but to be expected when we consider how different the thinking of a tax collector is from that of a physician. Nor may we leave out the holy spirit's role in this matter. Then, too, Matthew was writing to persuade faithful Jews that Jesus was the long-promised Messiah, whereas Luke presents Jesus as the Savior of all mankind. Thus Matthew traces Jesus' genealogy back only to Abraham through David, whereas Luke traces it back to 'Adam the son of God.' (Matt. 1:1-16; Luke 3:23-38) Evidently Matthew traces Jesus' legal lineage through His foster father Joseph, whereas Luke traces it back through the natural lineage of His mother Mary. Matthew records that an angel appeared to Joseph, Jesus' foster father. Luke tells of the angel Gabriel appearing to Mary, Jesus' mother. Similarly, Matthew tells of the astrologers coming to visit the child Jesus, 'the king of the Jews,' bringing costly gifts, whereas Luke tells of humble shepherds being invited to see the newborn Savior.

#### MATTHEW'S PRESENTATION OF THE MESSIAH

In recording Jesus' life, Matthew missed no opportunity to prove that Jesus was indeed the foretold Messiah. How did he do this? By referring to the Hebrew Scrip-

tures some 100 times in support of his theme. For example, in giving the details of Jesus' birth he underscores that Jesus' being born of the virgin Jewess Mary was in fulfillment of prophecy. (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:21-23) In recording the flight of Joseph and his family to escape the murderous edict of King Herod, Matthew notes that this was so that the scripture could be fulfilled: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

(Hos. 11:1; Matt. 2:14,

15) The grief caused by Herod's ordering the killing of all baby boys two years of age and under in Bethlehem and its districts, as Matthew shows, was likewise foretold.

—Jer. 31:15; Matt. 2:16-18.

In chapters three and four Matthew introduces the forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptizer, tells of his baptizing Jesus and of God himself acknowledging that Jesus is His Son. Then follows the threefold temptation

of Jesus in the wilderness and Jesus' starting out on his ministry to preach "the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near," while also performing many miracles of healing. Jesus' preaching is shown to be another fulfillment of prophecy. —Isa. 9:1, 2; Matt. 4:13-17.

Matthew, aside from his last 10 chapters, makes little effort to present matters chronologically. Since Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is such outstanding teaching, Matthew presents it right after telling of the start of Jesus' ministry, although Jesus actually delivered it about a year later. There is no question about its being the greatest sermon ever preached, and Matthew gives us the most complete report of it. It starts out with nine 'happinesses'



truly comforting to all lovers of truth and righteousness. In passing, let it be noted that these are "felicities," not "beatitudes," for which reason such modern translations as *The Jerusalem Bible* and *Today's English Version* use "happy" instead of "blessed," even as does the *New World Translation*.

Concerning the Sermon on the Mount, it is reported that Mahatma Gandhi said to a onetime viceroy of India, Lord Irwin: "When your country and mine shall get together on the teachings laid down by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount, we shall have solved the problems not only of our countries but those of the whole world." That Sermon also contains the Golden Rule. In keeping with Matthew's theme, he tells that Jesus had come not to destroy the law of Moses but to fulfill it and that the Golden Rule actually was what the Law and the prophets were all about.—Matt. 5:17; 7:12.

It seems that Matthew was especially impressed by Jesus' teaching. As compared with the other Gospels, not only is his account of the Sermon on the Mount more extensive, but so are his report of Jesus' sending forth His 12 apostles (chapter 10), his account of the seven Kingdom parables (chapter 13) and his record of Jesus' counsel on the need to show mercy, to be willing to forgive "seventy-seven times."—Chap. 18.

In chapters 8, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17, Matthew reports chiefly on Jesus' many miracles such as his feeding 5,000 on one occasion and another time "four thousand men, besides women and young children." These chapters also contain Jesus' denunciations of the willfully wicked, hypocritical Jewish religious leaders, who had committed the unforgivable sin. Moreover, in these chapters we find Peter's confession "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" and a description of the transfiguration, in which Jehovah God again testified to Jesus Christ as being indeed His Son.—Matt. 16:16; 17:1-9.

#### THE CLOSING DAYS OF JESUS' MINISTRY

Coming now to the closing events of Jesus' ministry, we find that Matthew has written things down in the order in which they happened. Most of what Matthew previously recorded took place in Galilee, but now he touches on Jesus' later Perean ministry. Religious opposers challenge Jesus on the subject of divorce, hoping to embarrass him. But, instead, they are foiled because of Jesus' wisdom and superior knowledge of the Scriptures: The only ground for divorce is "fornication." A self-satisfied rich young ruler comes to Jesus asking what he must do to get everlasting life, but he goes away with a greatly decreased estimation of his own goodness, for his wealth was more important to him than everlasting life. The spirit of rivalry divides the apostles, causing Jesus to remind them that he came, 'not to be served, but to minister and to give his life a ransom in exchange for many.'—Matt. 19:1-20:34.

With Jesus' last week on earth as a man, the location changes to Bethany and Jerusalem, and we read of his triumphal entry into that city. Jesus follows this event by going to the temple and cleansing it by driving out all the religious racketeers. Next, he tells a parable about the culti-

## In Coming Issues

- Feed Regularly on Bible Truths!
- "Kingdom Loyalty"—What Does It Mean to You?
- Hold Fast the "Good News"!

vators who murdered the heir of the vineyard, and lets his foes know that he realizes what is in their minds.—Matt. 21:1-46.

Although repeatedly defeated in their previous discussions with Jesus, his religious opposers again try to embarrass him by asking him tricky questions about paying the unpopular Roman tax, about the resurrection and about which is the greatest commandment. His wise and Scriptural answers silence them. Then, Jesus counseled his disciples on the need to be humble. He also handed his hypocritical religious opposers stinging rebukes, pronouncing seven woes. Because of their opposition their house was to be abandoned.—Matt. 22:1-23:39.

Comments by certain of his apostles on the grandeur of Herod's temple furnish Jesus the opportunity to utter his great prophecy about the end of the Jewish system of things, and about his return, his parousia, which words have had striking fulfillment especially since 1914. Next he utters three parables that have found fulfillment in our day, the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, of the talents and of the sheep and the goats.—Matt. 24:1-25:46.

Matthew then gives us the only eyewitness account we have of Jesus' instituting the Lord's Evening Meal in commemoration of his death. Continuing, Matthew relates Jesus' Gethsemane experience, his arrest, Peter's denial, Christ's trial, Pilate's vacillation and the washing of his hands, and then Jesus' impalement between two criminals as King of the Jews on the hill known as Calvary.—Matt. 26:1-75.

At Jesus' arrest his apostles all fled, and their spirits were certainly dejected at this turn of events. But not for long. On the third day they learn of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Later, they meet Jesus in Galilee, where, doubtless shortly before his ascension into heaven, he gives them the parting commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them . . . And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things."—Matt. 28:19, 20.

Without question, Matthew proves his theme that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God. This Matthew does by pointing to the many prophecies Jesus fulfilled, to the miracles Jesus performed and to the truths Jesus taught. Matthew undoubtedly had a keen and appreciative mind, quickened by God's holy spirit. Because God's spirit directed him and brought to his mind the things Jehovah God wanted to be recorded, he was able to pen a comprehensive and powerful record of Jesus' life.

How thankful we can be to Jehovah God that He inspired such a humble, honest and unselfish servant of his and follower of his Son to record such a faith-strengthening account of Jesus' earthly ministry! May we become truly familiar with this account so that we can both live by the principles Jesus set out and tell others at every opportunity the "good news" that the long-promised Messiah has come at God's appointed time in fulfillment of many prophecies recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures.—Matt. 24:14.

## The Master's Kindly Invitation

"Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."—Matt. 11:28-30.

# Bustling Hong Kong Sees Expansion of Kingdom Preaching



HONG KONG, "the beautiful harbor," is truly a beautiful sight, but also a busy and bustling one. From high, windswept Victoria Peak, which dominates Hong Kong, you can see the exclusive residential area on the slopes. Then you see multistory apartment buildings, the crowded business area and, across the harbor, the high-risers and other buildings of Kowloon. The harbor is a beehive of activity with more than 50 ships from world ports being handled each day. Any day of the year, junks and sampans can be seen side by side with modern ocean-going vessels and rapid harbor ferries.

This hubbub of activity in the harbor is repeated on dry land. It is characteristic of Hong Kong. Not only has its population exploded from 23,000 to more than 5 million during the last 140 years, but the industrial and building expansion during the past 20 years has been nothing short of phenomenal.

Expansion in housing is seen in the huge housing estates and apartment buildings springing up. Modern air-conditioned trains, supplemented by taxis, trams and double-decker buses and cross-harbor ferries, provide some of the finest and cheapest means of public transportation in the world. An air of confidence, prosperity and industriousness permeates the city and its inhabitants.

## PREACHING OF THE "GOOD NEWS" MOVES AHEAD

Where there are people, the good news of Jehovah's kingdom must be preached. (Mark 13:10) A little preaching was done by visiting witnesses of Jehovah prior to 1949. Then two missionaries from the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead's 11th class, William Carnie and Roy Spencer, arrived. But what could two people do in the midst of this large, bustling city with its tremendous number of four- or five-

story tenement houses? They simply started from house to house, climbing one dark, narrow stairway after another, looking for those interested in God's kingdom. At first, the missionaries could witness only to those who could speak English. But gradually they learned the Cantonese language, and then were able to speak to all whom they met.

Here and there some persons showed interest and began to study. Some of these became Jehovah's Witnesses and joined the two missionaries in the preaching work. As the number taking up the preaching work increased, it was necessary for time and attention to be devoted to building up their faith in Jehovah and appreciation for him and the workings of his organization. They benefited from the appointment of elders to build up the congregations.

By August of 1973 the number sharing in the preaching work had grown to 278. These had looked forward with great anticipation to the "Divine Victory" International Assembly scheduled in Hong Kong that year. Their appreciation for the worldwide organization of Jehovah's Witnesses was enhanced by the presence at this assembly of five members of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. When this assembly opened there were 462 in attendance. Here was evidence that the work would now move ahead at a quicker pace.

#### **PRINTED PAGE HELPS THE WORK**

Though being few in number compared with the population of Hong Kong, Jehovah's Witnesses have not been discouraged. They have greatly appreciated the help of printed publications, especially the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* and the magazines *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

An example of the effect of the printed publications can be seen in the experience of a Witness who met a young man at the

door as he was preparing to go out. He had no time to listen to her and was quite abrupt, but the Witness presented the two magazines in a friendly manner. Turning to his elderly mother, the young man said: "Give her the contribution." On being handed the two magazines, he said abruptly: "Just put them on the table." He did not read them, but his two friends who came a little later looked at the magazines and asked where he had obtained them. "Take them and read them if you want to," he said. "I don't have the time." Both these young men did just that and later subscribed for both magazines.

In another instance, a missionary encouraged a young student, who was too busy to discuss the Bible, to subscribe for *Awake!* He did and read various articles at intervals throughout the year. He became more receptive to the Kingdom message and renewed his subscription. In time he began to attend Christian meetings at the Kingdom Hall. Today this young man and two of his sisters are actively sharing in the preaching work.

#### **MANY YOUTHS TAKE PART**

It is noticeable that the majority of those sharing in the Kingdom-preaching work in Hong Kong are in their late teens or early twenties. Some are children of dedicated Chinese Witnesses, whereas many others have taken to the truth in their youth.

In general, the youth of today are less tradition-bound than their parents. Through the influence of television and the newspapers young people are more aware of the world's troubles and the pressures of life. These are confirmed by their own experiences. Though they can enjoy a better standard of living than their parents did in their youth, young persons can often see that human efforts are doomed to failure.

When they learn that God's kingdom is

mankind's only hope they devote themselves wholeheartedly to the truth. They are very serious about personal study, attendance at congregation meetings, sharing in the preaching work and also their prayers. This helps them to make rapid spiritual progress. They are thus strengthened to resist the materialistic pressures of the present world and to maintain a commendable degree of zeal in Jehovah's service.—1 John 2:15-17.

#### INDUSTRIOUSNESS GETS RESULTS

The industriousness that characterizes the people of Hong Kong also characterizes Jehovah's Witnesses here. They are getting fine results and are moving ahead. Literature placements are high. For example, during June 1981, a record high of 895 Kingdom publishers placed more than 34,000 magazines and conducted 1,391 Bible studies.

These results are not achieved because the residents of Hong Kong are more receptive to the message than people are in other places. In part, the results must be said to reflect the zeal of the publishers. Though many Witnesses work long hours in factories, yet the more than 800 of them devote an average of over 15 hours a month in helping others to learn the truths of the Bible. About 10 percent of these spend their full time throughout the year in the preaching work, and more than half of the remainder share in the auxiliary pioneer service one or more times a year. It is this zeal, plus their alertness to make use of every opportunity to preach to others, that gets results.

For example, in the very exclusive area called "The Peak" it is difficult to meet people when going from house to house. Two of Jehovah's Witnesses noticed that people went for early morning walks along the tree-lined roads and paths; so they also decided to take a walk in this area at seven o'clock Sunday mornings. They

would walk along and talk with people. Many of these would listen and accept magazines. During one month two publishers placed 300 magazines in this way. Thus people in this exclusive area are now being reached.

Another example is a congregation of 60 Kingdom publishers who planned to take a ferry to an outlying settlement in order to preach to the people there. On previous occasions the Witnesses had all sat together in one section of the ferry and had enjoyed Christian fellowship. On this occasion, however, they decided that they would speak to every ferry passenger about the good news of the Kingdom and would offer magazines. So, on boarding the ferry at the pier, more than 50 publishers spread out among the passengers, each reading his magazine. It was not long before conversations were started and magazines were being placed. As one Witness explained: "The kingdom of Jehovah was the most talked about thing on the ferry that morning and many people took Bible literature home with them."

More than one home Bible study is conducted in Hong Kong for every person preaching the Kingdom message. This fine number of Bible studies has not been reached because studies are so easy to start. Actually, it is quite difficult to get one started and it is more difficult to keep it going on a regular basis. But the Witnesses in Hong Kong accept this as a challenge. One of the reasons why many show interest in the auxiliary pioneer service is so that they can get a Bible study.

One housewife and mother of four children had only learned to read and write since getting a knowledge of the truth. She was disappointed that she was not conducting a Bible study. But she was encouraged to share in the auxiliary pioneer service and spend 60 hours a month in the ministry, because in this way she would distribute more literature to people,

would get more opportunities for return visits and would have greater prospects of starting a study. She enthusiastically shared in this service and since that time has been conducting two home Bible studies.

During the 1980 service year alone, there was an average of 90 sharing in the auxiliary pioneer work each month. For the first six months of the 1981 service year, each month 92, on an average, have been sharing in this feature of service. So it can be appreciated that the high figure for Bible studies in Hong Kong is the direct result of the zeal and industriousness displayed by the Witnesses.

The Witnesses in Hong Kong are very spiritually minded and appreciate fully that though they may show zeal in their work of planting and watering, it is Jehovah

“who makes it grow.” (1 Cor. 3:6, 7) This growth is also seen in the fact that the greater part of the work being done here is now being carried on by local Chinese Witnesses. They have a fine spirit and appreciate deeply the privilege of serving Jehovah in the field. Moreover, they are very serious and genuinely want to do what is right. It is worthy of note that in the 30-year history of the Kingdom-preaching work in Hong Kong only 15 have been disfellowshiped.

As in all parts of the world, Jehovah’s Witnesses in Hong Kong are also facing increasing anxieties and pressures. But they are positive and optimistic in their work of proclaiming the “good news,” confident that, with Jehovah’s blessing, the work will continue to move ahead.—1 Cor. 15:58; 16:13, 14.

## QUESTIONS from READERS

- In the parable of the “talents,” who are represented by the three slaves?—Matt. 25: 14-30.

Since all three slaves are in the ‘master’s’ household, they would stand for all the prospective heirs of the heavenly kingdom, with differing abilities and opportunities for increasing Kingdom interests. From Pentecost 33 C.E. onward to the modern day, some anointed slaves would have greater abilities, energy and opportunities for increasing the master’s “belongings” committed to their care. The apostles and others with enlarged privileges would be in the five-“talent” category. The circumstances of others would limit them, comparatively speaking, in what they would be able to do. Nevertheless, all were required to be

whole-souled in their devotion and work, and all would receive the same reward.

Even the slave given one “talent” was not predestined to fail. If he had turned the one “talent” into at least two, likely he would have received the same reward of ‘entering into the joy of the master.’ Because he proved to be “sluggish” and “wicked,” he would represent those prospective Kingdom heirs who turned unfaithful. They lose not only their privileges but also any reward.

Members of Christendom *profess* to be the true slaves of the Master, Jesus Christ, but their words and deeds serve to disqualify them from any claim that they might make of being in the Master’s household. Thus they do not enter into the picture as prospective heirs of the heavenly kingdom.

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### “WATCHTOWER” STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

December 6: Youth, Is Bible Morality the Best Way? Page 8. Songs to Be Used: 73, 70.

December 13: Parents, Reach Your Child’s Heart. Page 14. Songs to Be Used: 115, 56.

G. 6, p. 71). "wore the coat now" describes just one of many old things that were left to his widow when he died. The coat was made of a dark brown material, and it was worn over a suit jacket.

It was found hanging from a hook in the coat closet. It was a dark brown color, and it had a small pocket on the left side. The coat was made of a heavy fabric, and it was in good condition.

—T. C. —

This shows how carefully items of personal property were handled. When a person dies, their possessions are often sold or given away. However, if the person has a will, their possessions may be left to specific individuals or organizations. In this case, the coat was left to the widow of the deceased.

It is important to keep track of personal belongings and to make sure they are properly stored. This will help prevent them from being lost or damaged. It is also important to keep track of valuable items, such as jewelry and贵重物品。这样可以确保它们的安全。

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"WATCHTOWER STUDIES FOR THE MEEKERS" (1985) is a book by Robert G. Morris. It contains studies on the New Testament. The book is divided into four main sections: "The Life of Christ," "The Ministry of Christ," "The Teachings of Christ," and "The Parables of Christ." The book is intended for use in Bible study groups and for individual study.