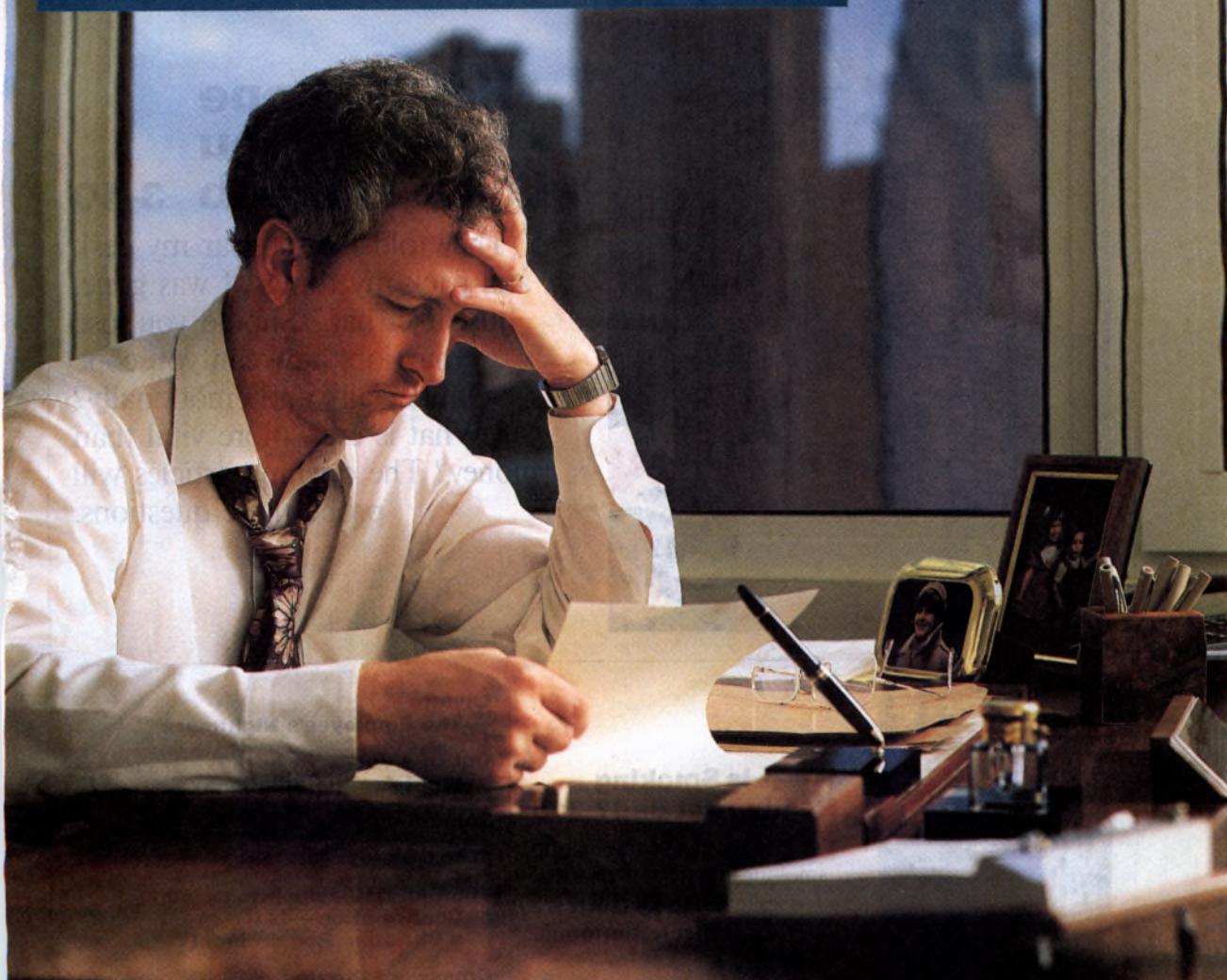
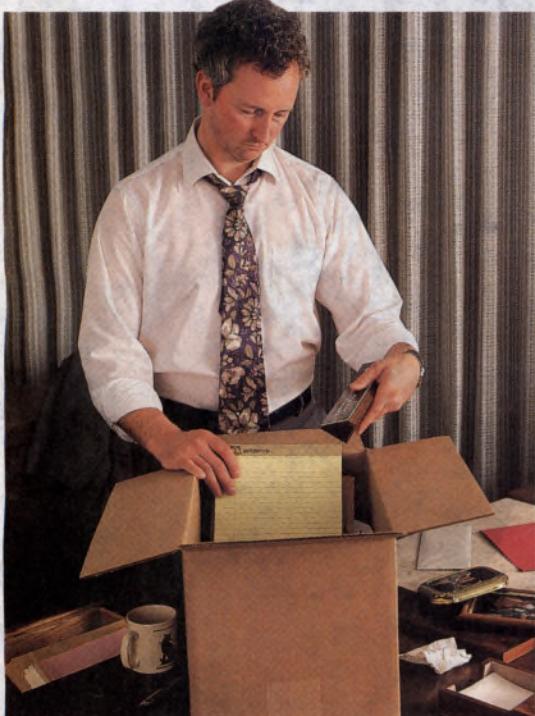


# Awake!

August 8, 1991



## How to Cope When You Lose Your Job



## **How to Cope When You Lose Your Job 3-10**

"They told me to clear my desk and pack my things. I was gone, just like that." Should you lose your job, how can you cope financially and emotionally? What is even more vital than money? The opening articles will probe these questions.



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Many young people take up smoking in spite of the harm it does to health. But there is a better reason to quit.



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Is your home cluttered with too many things? What can you do to control this problem?

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# Layoffs

## The Employee's Nightmare

"It hit me like a ton of bricks. I was in a state of shock."

*Communications manager,  
age 44.*

"It's a terrible blow to your self-confidence. You feel worthless."

*Chief financial officer,  
age 38.*

"What kind of economy have we created that sacrifices people in their prime?"

*Clothing executive,  
age 47.*

**W**HAT experience did these individuals share? Each went through the traumatic experience of being laid off from work.

Look again at the ages of those workers. They were not novices, so they likely felt that they had a measure of job security. And they were at what many would consider their peak earning years. But the end of their employment was quick and unexpected. "They told me to clear my desk and pack my things," said the communications manager mentioned above. "I was gone, just like that. Poof."

### What Happened?

Economic uncertainty is nothing new. In many countries, there have always been periods of relative prosperity followed by recessions or depressions. And the recent economic downturns experienced throughout the world, even before the war in the Persian

Gulf, showed how fragile economies could be even after years of relative prosperity. Many people, some for the first time, realized that they could not take their jobs and incomes for granted.

The effect of the economic slowdowns on the work force was staggering. Companies were compelled to cut costs to the bone, often resulting in sweeping layoffs. In the wealthier, industrialized member states of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, a total of some 25 million people were unemployed at one time.

"Almost every day I get calls from friends in large companies who have been let go," said a home-interior designer. "A lot of the companies I work with are down to half the business they had a year ago."

Layoffs have always been part of blue-collar life. In the recent downturn, an increasing

number of white-collar workers also lost their jobs. "These are the economic icon jobs," said Dan Lacey, editor of the newsletter *Workplace Trends*, "the jobs that gave us the ability to buy a house in a nice neighborhood and drive two cars."

Many of those jobs were lost in the last few years. And the workers who were laid off found themselves, as *Newsweek* put it, "weighted down by mortgages, young families, big bills and an increasingly uncertain future."

### What Are the Effects?

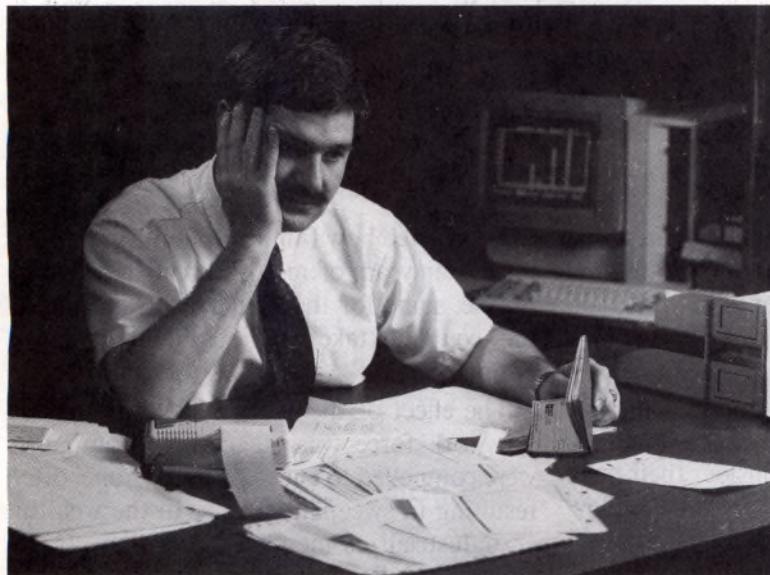
There is a twofold impact to all of this: Laid-off workers are hit both financially and

emotionally. The financial strain is obvious. With less income, one's standard of living must be adjusted. And unemployment has an emotional effect as well.

For example, the outlook of young people toward job security changes. Sporadic employment becomes a normal, accepted way of life. *The Wall Street Journal* noted that off-and-on unemployment has turned many of Britain's youths into "permanent adolescents."

There are more deep-seated emotional implications for those who are laid off after years of steady employment. "When there's a layoff," said management psychologist Neil P. Lewis, "it's not just losing a paycheck, but losing a bit of your self-concept."

In fact, psychologists have noted that the trauma of being laid off is similar to the trauma associated with the death of a loved one and with divorce. Initial shock gives way to anger, which in turn leads to grief and then acceptance. "Some people go through it all in two days," says Lewis. "Others take weeks and months."



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Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References* is used.

*Awake!* (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Awake!*, c/o Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589. Printed in U.S.A.

## The End of Economic Expansion?

In the past year, fear of turbulent waters in the sea of finance has been reported worldwide. Consider several examples:

**France:** "The world is reaching the end of the longest period of economic expansion that it has ever known. . . . If European countries do not have much to fear in the short term, thanks to the boost provided by German reunification, they cannot expect to escape completely. . . . The markets have seen the danger coming."—*Le Monde*, Paris.

**Brazil:** A recession in the United States would "inevitably be transmitted and felt in the other industrialized countries and, as a result, would create greater restrictions for the growth of exports from the less-developed nations."

—*Fórlha de S. Paulo*, São Paulo.

**Britain:** "The British economy, with its deeply rooted inflation, high interest rates, and slow growth, also appears uninviting."

—*Financial Times*, London.

**Canada:** "A lot fewer employers are looking for a lot fewer workers."—*The Toronto Star*.

**Germany:** "Parallels to the 1973 oil-price shock are already visible . . . as [are] signals of recession."—*Neues Deutschland*, Berlin.

**Japan:** "Land values are now like a hair-trigger bomb sitting at the heart of the world economy. If the bomb were allowed to go off and land prices fell, Japanese banks would implode as [loans] secured on Japanese land became next to worthless. This, in turn, would trigger a worldwide recession."

—*Australian Financial Review*, Sydney.

However, the end of the Gulf War early in 1991 brought renewed hopes of an upturn in economic activity throughout the world. Still, it is evident that national economies are indeed fragile things, especially considering the enormous debt load that already burdens many countries.

The emotional toll is also seen in that those laid off become more susceptible to alcohol and drug abuse. Despair can even lead to family violence or breakup. "Those feelings have to go somewhere," stated Stephen Pilster-Pearson, director of employee assistance at the University of Wisconsin, U.S.A., "and one of those places, of course, is home."

In an even more tragic reaction, a universi-

ty graduate in Hong Kong chose to end his life after five years of unemployment. He stepped into the path of an oncoming train.

So when jobs are lost, more than the wallet is affected. Thus, it is imperative to see beyond the financial aspect of the problem. Highly charged emotions are involved, and families must pull together and unitedly work at solutions.

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### Average Printing: 12,980,000 Published in 64 Languages

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# Out Of a Job

## What Are the Solutions?

**"It's going to be brutal. Many businesses are broke, but won't admit it yet."**

*U.S. financier.*

**M**ANY have already experienced the harsh reality of that dire prediction, made late in 1990. In some companies, "surviving" employees wondered if they would be next to be laid off.

What would you do if you lost your job today? It is the course of wisdom to be prepared. As the previous article pointed out, losing a job carries a financial as well as an emotional impact. Therefore, more is involved than simply paying the bills. Following are some guidelines that have helped others to keep financially and emotionally stable when faced with the loss of a job.

### **1. Do Not Panic**

When Dominick lost his job, he had to give his house back to the bank and move his family in with his mother. His advice is to remain calm, no matter how extreme the situation may appear. "Job or no job, you won't dry up and blow away," he says. "I honestly had to learn that we weren't all going to die." Rather than flooding the mind with worst-case scenarios, calmly work at productive solutions.

### **2. Think Positive**

Jim and Donna have four part-time jobs between them. However, they earn less than

Jim alone earned at his previous full-time job. In spite of this, they have accepted it as a teaching experience for their five children. Donna stated: "Without the problems they'd have been better off in a material way. But they'd have missed the pitfalls that teach you how to live."

### **3. Open Your Mind to New Types of Work**

Even white-collar workers can choose to change professions and start over in new work. "People don't look at alternatives until they are forced to," said Laura, who was fired from an administrative job. "In the '90s," she noted, "people have to learn to be more flexible." Trying to get the same type of work you are accustomed to—or the same pay—may only weaken your chances of finding work. This may at least partially explain why it often takes white-collar workers longer to find work than it takes blue-collar workers. So open your mind to the possibility of new types of work. Many have had success offering some kind of service to others, such as housecleaning.

### **4. Live Within Your Means —Not Someone Else's**

A powerful tool in advertising is to create a "need" that did not previously exist. Often

you are made to feel that everyone else (except you) is informed and acting upon that need. 'This is the style everyone is wearing [except you].' 'The movie everyone is talking about [so why haven't you seen it?].' 'The car everyone is driving [when will you buy it?].'

Similar persuasion may affect how we view and spend money. A friend takes an expensive trip. Suddenly you need a vacation. Another friend purchases a new car. Suddenly your car seems old, inadequate. Becoming envious of what everyone else is doing will only make you spend money you do not have, buying things you do not really need. Avoid such self-defeating comparisons.

Jim, the laid-off worker mentioned earlier, observed: "People crash when they can't maintain the lifestyle they *think* they want. You only need to worry about food and shelter. The rest is truly irrelevant." As the Bible recommends at 1 Timothy 6:8, 'be content with sustenance and covering.'

### 5. Be Careful With Credit

A credit card can be an asset, but it can also be your greatest liability. Some use the credit card as a crutch. They use it to bypass completely the 'can I afford it?' question. The card becomes a painkiller that lets you spend without thinking about or feeling the effects of losing money.

In recent years a virtual credit-card craze has enveloped many countries. What are the results? A

**Couples should communicate so that money matters do not turn into family fights**

computer salesman from Korea who bought a new car with a credit card summed up the matter: "When it is time to settle my credit, I always feel terrible. It's just as if I gave that money away." In Japan nearly half of all those seeking financial counseling are in their 20's. The 140 million credit cards in that land are largely held responsible for the huge debts of young people.

So be careful with a credit card. Use it, but do not let it use you. Do not let it blind you to your true financial status. This will only add to the stress of losing a job.

### 6. Keep the Family United

In a survey of 86,000 people, more than a third said that money was the number one problem in their marriage. Another study found that money caused the most fights.



"Differing attitudes toward money can strain relationships," said financial consultant Grace Weinstein.

Even a seemingly close-knit couple may have widely different views of money and how it should be spent. One may be a fanatical saver, the other a voracious spender.

If not talked out, money matters can snowball into family fights. "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk," says the Bible at Proverbs 15:22. And while discussing financial matters, try to understand and accommodate your mate's views.

### 7. Keep Your Self-Esteem

Grace Weinstein noted: "For the man or woman who is no longer earning an income, there is the emotional problem of diminished status and reduced independence, both resulting in loss of self-esteem."

Do not quickly conclude that you were laid off because you were not valued as a worker. Twenty-nine-year-old Rani was laid off just three weeks after receiving the highest possible raise in her level at her annual review. While being an honest, trustworthy worker may keep a person from being laid off, this is not always the case. So one need not take being laid off as a personal affront to his worth. Valued, reliable workers may be affected too.

### To Prepare a Budget:

1. Calculate how much cash is coming in.
2. Keep a record for an entire month to identify where your money is being spent.
3. Prepare a budget based on the first two steps. Decide how much should be allocated to each category.
4. Make adjustments to your budget as needed.

### 8. Set Up a Budget

Many cringe at the idea of a budget. They feel that it represents confinement, something that will restrict them from buying what they want. Not so. A budget is a tool to help you achieve your goals, not restrict you. It is simply a system of control, a laid-out plan to tell you where your money is going and how to make it go where you want it to.

Surprisingly, many have no idea just where their money is being spent. Instead, they fall victim to impulse buying and then lament: "Where did it all go?" The need for avoiding such spending is especially important when times are difficult financially. The Bible wisely states at Proverbs 21:5: "Plan carefully and you will have plenty; if you act too quickly, you will never have enough."—*Today's English Version*.

To follow this advice, keep a written record. Write down everything you spend for an entire month, categorizing your expenses. Also, keep a record of how much money is coming in. If you find that more is flowing out than is coming in, look at your expenses to find the source of the problem. Once you know what you spend and where you spend it, you can gain control of your finances.

Keep your budget flexible. In the first few months, mistakes will be discovered, and some expenses may be overlooked. Make adjustments and corrections until the budget fits your needs. A good budget will thus be your servant, not your master.\*

The above guidelines may help a person to ride out a period of unemployment. But to be effective, these points must be balanced with a proper estimation of the true importance of money. Really, how vital is it? Should anything else come before money, even when one's job is lost? We will examine these questions in the next article.

\* For further assistance in setting up a budget, see *Awake!*, April 22, 1985, pages 24-7.

# Something More Vital Than Money

**"Our incentive system to this day is built almost wholly around monetary rewards."**

*Psychology Today.*

NANCY and Howard had big plans after they married in 1989. They wanted a house, a baby, new cars, and an exotic vacation. They had the income to afford it. But suddenly both found themselves unemployed. The money saved for the down payment on a house had to be used for rent.

Nervous about the future, they had to postpone all their plans—including that of start-

ing a family. "Five years from now," said Nancy, "I don't think we'll be back up to where we were. All that's gone, and I don't know if it will ever come back."

How well this illustrates the devastating effect of losing a job! But it also exposes the illusory power of money. What is here today can be gone tomorrow. As the Bible realistically warns: "Your money can be gone in a



**Spiritual values are to be treasured**

flash, as if it had grown wings and flown away like an eagle.”—Proverbs 23:5, *Today's English Version*.

Accepting the transitory nature of money is easier said than done. “Money is the universal measure,” notes *Psychology Today* regarding common attitudes toward money. “We keep score by it, often even to ourselves.” The obsession with acquiring money has led even the well-off to chronic anxiety, depression, and other ills that have been humorously grouped under the catchy name affluenza.

### The Importance of Wisdom

But there is something more vital than money. The Bible identifies it at Ecclesiastes 7:12: “Wisdom is for a protection the same as money is for a protection.” Then the verse adds a fact about wisdom that shows it to be superior to money: “Wisdom itself preserves alive its owners.”

Wisdom includes the ability to exercise sound judgment when we are confronted with challenging circumstances. When we are faced with job loss, sound judgment should tell us that life’s true value is not measured in dollars and cents. Sound judgment will also help us to keep our priorities straight, in focus.

### What Are Your Priorities?

What do you put first in life? Is your job worth more than your marriage? Is your home worth more than your children? Is money worth more than your health? Each day we make decisions based on our incentive system, our priorities. When faced with financial problems, such priorities will dictate our course of action. What are your priorities centered on?

Jesus Christ said: “Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need.” (Matthew 5:3) Note that Jesus showed that spirituality is a need, a priority, not just a background qual-

ity to pursue when everything else in one’s life is stable.

It is a challenge to give that spiritual need priority while under pressure to provide for one’s family materially. Yet, those who do so are, as Jesus said, happy. While concerned about making ends meet, they are relatively free of the “untold agonies of mind” one experiences when putting money first. (1 Timothy 6:10, *Phillips*) Such ones also find comfort in the words of David as recorded at Psalm 37:25: “A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread.”

### Satisfy Your Spiritual Need

Man’s spiritual need is inborn. He needs more than food, clothing, and shelter. Spirituality goes further, addressing such questions as, ‘Why am I here?’ and, ‘Where is this world—and my life—heading?’

Fear of an “economic apocalypse” has prompted many to sense their spiritual need. *Newsweek* reports: “Sales of prophetic books—ones that interpret current events as Biblical signs of the end of the world—are up 50 to 70 percent over last year.” However, to satisfy that spiritual need, one must search for accurate knowledge, not mere human speculation.

We invite you to investigate God’s Word, the Holy Bible. It contains practical wisdom to help you cope with life’s anxieties. More than that, the Bible can give you accurate knowledge of the meaning behind today’s “critical times hard to deal with.” (2 Timothy 3:1) By writing the publishers of this magazine, a free home Bible study can be arranged. Now more than ever is the time to seek the practical wisdom for the present—and accurate knowledge of the future—from God’s Word, the Bible.

# "The Greatest Gift"



PARENTS who do their best to raise their children to be decent, law-abiding, and God-fearing are very pleased when their young ones express appreciation for their efforts. This is especially the case in these "last days" when one sign of the times is widespread 'disobedience to parents.'—2 Timothy 3:1, 2.

Nancy, a 15-year-old high school student, was raised by parents who are Jehovah's Witnesses. One day her English teacher gave the class an assignment to write about the greatest gift they had ever received. The following is what Nancy turned in, under the title "The Greatest Gift":

"There are many kinds of gifts and givers. There are gifts of love, friends, and talents.

Also, there are gifts that you don't want, like hatred and poverty. There are many kinds of givers. Those who give selfishly and those who give because they want to. The best gift I ever received is the gift my father gave me, the gift of knowledge about God.

"This gift is one that will last a lifetime, not like other gifts that will be thrown out after they've been worn out. The things I have learned will inspire me throughout my life and influence everything I do. By studying about the God of the Bible, I have come to know him on a personal basis, as a friend I look up to and respect.

"Until my father's death this year, I looked to him when I needed guidance. Others did

too. Often I did not see my father after he came home from work because he was busy visiting and giving support to those in the hospital. Now I realize how giving of his time he was. Although he is not with me now to give me the support and guidance I need, I can rely on my heavenly Father for the things I need throughout my life.

"I appreciate this gift very much, and I thank God for giving me such a strong and faithful father. His example will have an everlasting effect on me. Hopefully, I will be able to show my appreciation as I grow older and follow the example that my father set for me.

"Knowledge of God is and always will be my most valuable gift, and I thank both of my parents for giving me this gift. Their great example of faithfulness will always remain with me."

This essay was appreciated by the teacher, who said that it touched her very much, and she read it to the class. She marked the paper with two A-pluses, one for contents, and the other for grammar and punctuation.

Nancy's mother also appreciated the essay. She said: "It pleased me very much. Not knowing exactly how your children feel all the time, it helped me to understand that Nancy is progressing and is accepting things as well as she can."

# Confirmation Is It a Christian Requirement?

"Confirmation is the sacrament which confers on the baptized Christian the full perfection of Christian life, making him spiritually an adult, a soldier, and a witness of Christ."

—*The Catholic Encyclopedia for School and Home.*

**M**OST Protestants reject the idea that confirmation is a sacrament. However, the 13th-century Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas wrote that "confirmation is a final perfecting of the sacrament of baptism." Either way, the questions arise: Did the earliest Christians practice confirmation? Is that ceremonial act a Christian requirement today?

"Absolutely nothing in the Gospel indicates that Jesus Himself instituted the Sacrament of Confirmation," admits the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. So why did church teachers later promote the idea that following baptism, a second rite, which may include anointing with oil and laying on of hands, was needed to make the person a fuller member of the church?

## How Did Confirmation Begin?

Infant baptism was one of the key factors that led to the need for another sacrament. "Aware of the problems caused by baptising ba-

bies," says the book *Christianity*, "churches . . . remind those who have been baptised of what this means by 'confirming' them later on in life." Does confirmation truly remind them of what baptism means, or does it obscure the truth about baptism?

The fact is that infant baptism finds no support in the Scriptures. Sprinkling water on a baby, for example, does not free the baby from original sin; only faith in the ransom sacrifice of Christ Jesus can do that. (John 3:16, 36; 1 John 1:7) Water baptism is an outward symbol that the one being baptized has made a complete dedication through Jesus to do the will of Jehovah God. Water baptism is for disciples—"believers"—not infants.—Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 8:12.

"Where did Baptism end and where did Confirmation begin?" asks the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*. It answers: "Perhaps we should not try to distinguish too precisely, for we are dealing with a single rite in the early Church." Yes, in the first century,



the “single rite” that brought full membership in the Christian congregation was baptism.—Acts 2:41, 42.

Is the ceremony of confirmation, with its imposition of hands, needed before one can receive the holy spirit? No. In the early Christian congregation, the laying on of hands following baptism normally was to make special appointments or to impart miraculous gifts of the spirit. These gifts passed away with the death of the apostles. (1 Corinthians 13:1, 8-10) And the laying on of hands is often linked, not with water baptism, but with specific tasks to be done in connection with the Christian missionary activity. (Acts 6:1-6; 13: 1-3) Thus, the idea that confirmation continues such apostolic laying on of hands and is, as *Basics of the Faith: A Catholic Catechism* says, a “sacrament that changes a person in so profound a way that it can be received only once,” does not stand up to scrutiny.

The apostle Paul warned about deviation from basic Bible truth: “The time is sure to come when, far from being content with sound teaching, people will be avid for the latest novelty . . . and then, instead of listening to the truth, they will turn to myths.” (2 Timothy 4:3, 4, *The Jerusalem Bible*) Yet, those who believe in the rite of confirmation cite two Scriptural examples as proof.

### A Scriptural Basis?

The account found at Acts 8:14-17 is often used as a basis for confirmation. However, this laying on of the hands to receive holy spirit was a unique occasion. How so? The Samaritans were not Jewish proselytes. Hence, they became the first non-Israelites to be added to the Christian congregation. When the disciple Philip preached in Samaria, many Samaritans “proceeded to be baptized, both men and women,” but they did not immediately receive the holy spirit. (Acts 8:12) Why?

Remember, it was to Peter that Christ Jesus

entrusted “the keys of the kingdom”—the privilege of first presenting the opportunity for entry into “the kingdom of the heavens” for different groups of converts. (Matthew 16: 19) So it was not until Peter and John went to Samaria and laid their hands on these first non-Jewish disciples that holy spirit was poured out on them as a token of their prospective membership in “the kingdom of the heavens.”

Some see in Acts 19:1-6 evidence that early Christians had a separate rite following baptism. In this case, however, it is obvious that the reason for withholding holy spirit from some disciples in the city of Ephesus was that these new believers were baptized “in John’s baptism,” which was no longer valid. (See also Acts 18:24-26.) When this was explained to them, they quickly “got baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” And in this instance, the apostle Paul “laid his hands upon them” so that they would receive some of the miraculous gifts of God’s holy spirit besides being adopted as God’s spiritual sons.—Romans 8: 15, 16.

Of these accounts, the *New Dictionary of Theology* says: “No direct continuity of usage can be traced to these occurrences, and, even if they do provide some precedent, it is doubtful whether they should be viewed as normative for Christian initiation in the way that water-baptism is. . . . The Acts of the Apostles has many instances of the use of water-baptism without a subsequent laying on of hands (so that these instances in fact appear as exceptions).” Yes, these were exceptional actions to cope with exceptional circumstances.

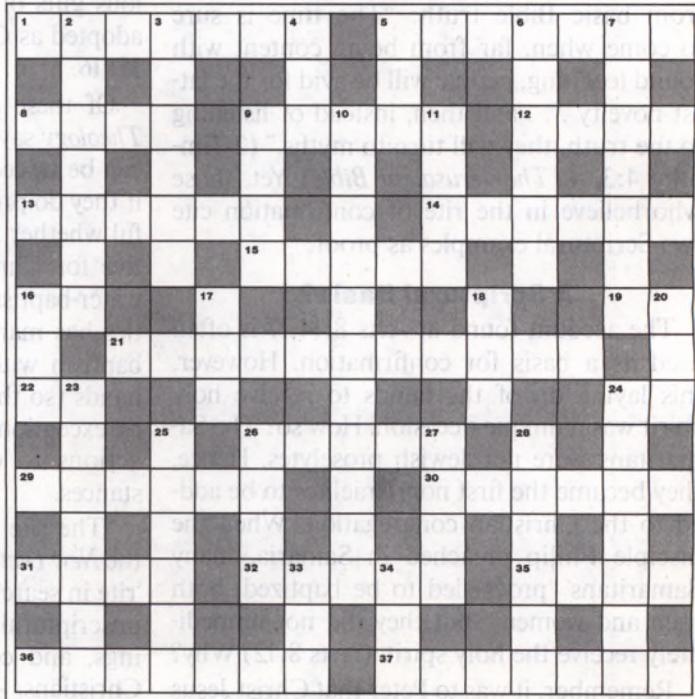
“The rite called ‘confirmation,’” concludes the *New Dictionary of Theology*, “has become a ‘rite in search of a theology.’” It is, in fact, an unscriptural ritual, a product of faulty teachings, and certainly not a requirement for Christians.

## Crossword Puzzle

### Clues Across

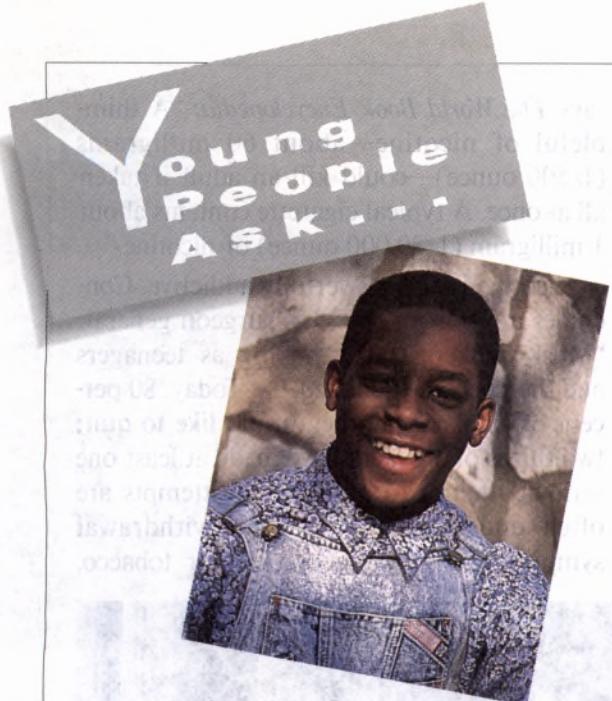
1. Jewish year of festival and liberty (Leviticus 25:10)
  5. A feature of "the new personality" (Ephesians 4:24)
  8. One of Levite Jaaziah's four sons who served in King David's time (1 Chronicles 24:27)
  9. An overseer must not be prone to this (Titus 1:7)
  12. A sacred object placed in the hands of the high priest and used by him to ascertain the divine will (Numbers 27:21)
  13. To enter for plunder (Matthew 12:29)
  14. Animation (Revelation 13:15)
  15. Discerns (Luke 16:15)
  16. To the same degree (Psalm 103:12)
  19. Behave (Luke 6:31)
  21. Disgusting and loathsome thing (Matthew 24:15, *King James Version*)
  22. Midsummer month on Jewish calendar
  24. "-- glad, you nations, with his people" (Romans 15:10)
  26. The descendants of this son of Lot displayed violent enmity toward Israel (Judges 11:4)
  29. What Jesus metaphorically said the Pharisees did regarding a gnat (Matthew 23:24)
  30. Vocally (Luke 1:4)
  31. A son of Helem of the tribe of Asher (1 Chronicles 7:35)
  32. A counterpart (Luke 5:36)
  35. What the hair on "the Ancient of Days" resembled (Daniel 7:9)
  36. A postexilic Benjaminite city (Nehemiah 11:32)
  37. As a sign from God, Gideon requested ---- for a fleece when there was dew on the ground (Judges 6:39)
3. The officer who arrested Jeremiah on the false charge of deserting to the Babylonians (Jeremiah 37:13, 14)
  4. A man who wished to continue as a slave indefinitely had this pierced through with an awl (Exodus 21:5, 6)
  5. Ancient method of settling a matter at issue (Proverbs 16:33)
  6. Object thought to protect the wearer
  7. Perverted (Acts 20:30)
  9. Length of time God's covenant was to be "in force" after the appearance of the Messiah (Daniel 9:27)
  10. Arrangement for a meeting (Amos 3:3)
  11. Wheel centers (1 Kings 7:33)
  16. A faithful king of Judah (1 Kings 15:11)
  17. Judean father of Anub and Zobebah (1 Chronicles 4:8)
  18. The pass by which the armies of Moab and Ammon came to fight Judah during King Jehoshaphat's reign (2 Chronicles 20:16)
  20. To be indebted (Matthew 18:28)
  23. It was used for mortar by the early builders of Babylon (Genesis 11:3)
  24. It expels air (Jeremiah 6:29)
  25. Ruth's first husband (Ruth 4:10)
  26. A city in the mountainous region of southern Judah (Joshua 15:50)
  27. Name in Hebrew Scriptures for the Egyptian city of Memphis (Ezekiel 30:13)
  28. A star-god (Amos 5:26)
  33. Symbol of humiliation and grief (Lamentations 4:5)
  34. Food rechewed by animals (Leviticus 11:3)

### Crossword Solutions Page 20



### Clues Down

2. A Roman Christian to whom Paul sent greetings (Romans 16:9)



## Is Smoking Really That Bad?

**S**MOKING had fascinated Oren since he was small. When his aunt used to light up her cigarettes, she would let him blow out the match. At age 16, he decided to try smoking. He went to a party and asked a girl for a cigarette—but he got sick before he could finish it.

His male ego bruised, Oren decided to “practice” smoking in private. One evening, after a heavy meal, he nervously lighted a cigarette and inhaled. What a surprise! No dizziness or nausea this time. Pleased with himself, he inhaled again and again. When he finished that cigarette, he wanted another.

And afterward, still another. For the next six years, Oren would be a chain-smoker.

### **Smoking—Has the Tide Turned?**

Many youths today might scorn Oren’s actions. According to one United States survey, 66 percent of teenagers polled believed that smoking one or more packs of cigarettes a day put a person at “great risk.” Ironically, some of the strongest condemnations come from smokers themselves! “It’s a disgusting habit,” says one 16-year-old smoker. In one study, nearly 85 percent of teenagers who smoked admitted that they thought it was harmful. Almost half said that they intended to quit—within five years, that is.

To all outward appearances, then, a tidal wave of disapproval now threatens to sweep away tobacco’s long-held popularity. Says the U.S. surgeon general’s 1989 report entitled *Reducing the Health Consequences of Smoking—25 Years of Progress*: “In the 1940s and 1950s, smoking was chic; now, increasingly, it is shunned. Movie stars, sports heroes, and other celebrities used to appear in cigarette advertisements. Today, actors, athletes, public figures, and political candidates are rarely seen smoking. . . . The population has been giving up smoking in increasing numbers.”

In 1965, of all adults in the United States, 40 percent smoked. Over 20 years later, only about 29 percent did. The surgeon general’s report further claims that “nearly half of all living adults who ever smoked have quit.” In 1976, about 29 percent of high school seniors smoked daily. Over a decade later, only 19 percent did.

It might therefore seem that little more needs to be said on the subject of smoking. But in spite of vigorous antismoking campaigns and dire warnings from physicians, overall worldwide tobacco consumption has increased significantly! Some 50 million adults in the United States continue to smoke. And

what happened to Oren is happening to many other youths. Every day some 3,000 teenagers in the United States alone light up for the first time. That adds up to an astounding one million new smokers a year! Surprisingly, the majority of the new nicotine addicts are teenage girls.

### **Antismoking Campaigns—Nothing New!**

It is not that people are unaware of the dangers. Why, long before researchers discovered scientific reasons to avoid smoking, common sense told people that it was a filthy, undesirable habit. Less than 90 years ago, cigarettes were illegal in many parts of the United States. Mere possession of them was a ground for arrest in some areas. And in ages past, even more stringent measures have been taken against smoking.

*Smithsonian* magazine describes some antismoking measures taken in the 17th century: "In China, an imperial edict issued in 1638 made the use . . . of tobacco a crime punishable by decapitation. . . . In Russia, smokers were flogged; the nostrils of repeat offenders were slit; persistent violators were exiled to Siberia. In Persia, they were tortured, impaled and/or decapitated."

Granted, such sanctions were excessive and cruel. But in their own way, smokers are being cruel to their own bodies.

### **Smoking —What It Does to Your Body**

Nicotine is the ingredient that gives tobacco its sinister appeal. However,

**Before letting yourself  
get hooked, think  
of the consequences**

says *The World Book Encyclopedia*: "A thimbleful of nicotine—about 60 milligrams (1/500 ounce)—could kill an adult if taken all at once. A typical cigarette contains about 1 milligram (1/30,000 ounce) of nicotine."

Nicotine is also powerfully addictive. Concludes a report of the U.S. surgeon general: "Most smokers start smoking as teenagers and then become addicted. . . . Today, 80 percent of smokers say they would like to quit; two-thirds of smokers have made at least one serious attempt to quit." Such attempts are often undermined by painful withdrawal symptoms: a gnawing craving for tobacco,



restlessness, irritability, anxiety, headaches, drowsiness, stomach upsets, and an inability to concentrate.

Cigarettes, however, do more than pollute one with nicotine; a lighted cigarette is a veritable poison factory, spewing out some 4,000 different chemical compounds. Forty-three of these chemicals have been identified as cancer causing. Some of them are in the form of a gooey tar that sticks to the lungs and to the airways leading to the lungs. This can later result in lung cancer. Smoking is also thought to be "a contributing factor for cancer of the bladder, pancreas, and kidney; and to be associated with cancer of the stomach."—*Reducing the Health Consequences of Smoking*.

It may take many years for a smoker to develop cancer. But just *one* cigarette is potentially harmful. Nicotine makes your heart beat faster, increasing your body's demand for oxygen. Unfortunately, cigarette smoke also contains carbon monoxide—the poisonous gas emitted by automobile exhausts. This toxic substance heads for the bloodstream and actually impedes the flow of oxygen to the heart and other vital organs. Worse yet, nicotine constricts the blood vessels, further slowing the flow of oxygen. Smokers thus have an alarmingly high rate of heart disease.

Peptic ulcers, miscarriages, damaged offspring, strokes—these are just some of the many other risks smokers face. Each year there are some 2.5 million tobacco-related deaths worldwide. Over 400,000 of these deaths occur in the United States alone. The U.S. surgeon general claims: "Smoking is responsible for more than one out of every six deaths in the United States. Smoking remains the single most important preventable cause of death in our society." Some health authorities fear that smoking will eventually kill as many as 200 million persons presently under the age of 20.

But smokers do not injure only themselves. By forcing others to breathe in their toxic fumes, they also expose nonsmokers to the risks of lung cancer and other respiratory ailments.

### **Making Your Own Decision**

Little wonder, then, that nation after nation has taken steps to warn people of the dangers of tobacco or to curb its use. However, highlighting the risks seems to have little effect on many youths. "When I light up a cigarette, I feel relaxed," says 15-year-old Holly. "I never think of getting cancer."

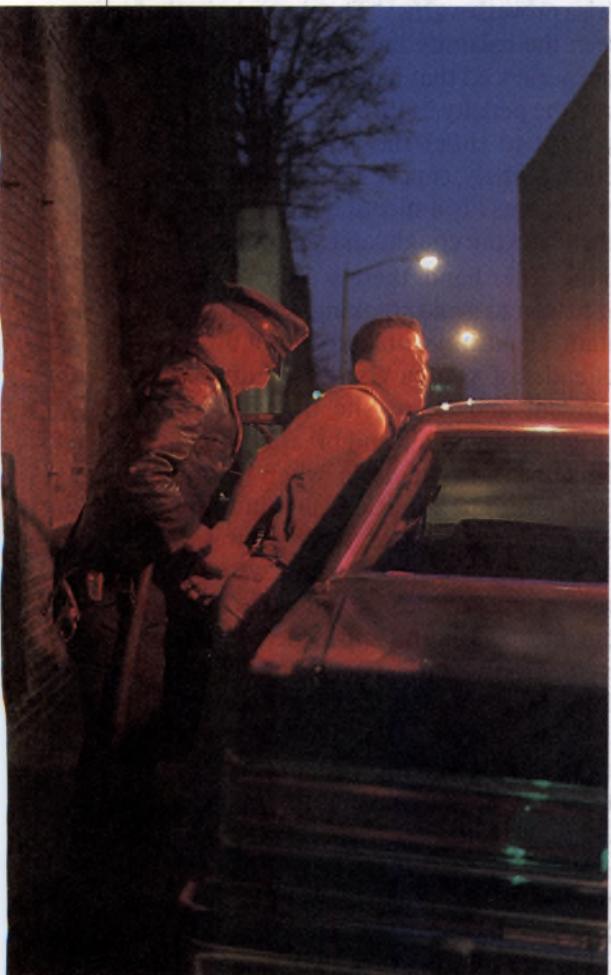
A wise proverb warns: "The shrewd one that has seen the calamity has concealed himself; the inexperienced that have passed along have suffered the penalty." (Proverbs 27:12) Do you really want to suffer the penalty of tobacco addiction, namely, cancer, heart disease, respiratory ailments? Is a nicotine high worth foul breath, a hacking cough, and yellow teeth?

On the other hand, there is a far more profound reason to avoid smoking: your desire to maintain friendship with God. Would you not feel offended if you gave someone an expensive present and he or she threw it away? Well, God gives us "life and breath." (Acts 17:25) Imagine how he feels when you misuse that gift! The apostle Paul thus wrote: "Therefore, since we have these promises [of having an approved relationship with God], beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in God's fear." (2 Corinthians 7:1) Smoking does more than simply defile the flesh, polluting one's body with noxious chemicals; it also defiles one's spirit, or dominant mental force. Smoking is corrupt, selfish, ungodly.

In spite of all of this, many youths are still tempted to smoke. Why this is so and how a youth can withstand such pressures will be the subject of a future article.

Waking You Out of Your Dreams  
to Good Cures and Better Sleeps

# Overcoming a Life of VIOLENCE



MY FRIEND and I ran as fast as we could, and when we reached the river near my hometown, we dove into it. As we surfaced, we began swimming furiously toward the opposite shore.

Was this some type of boyhood play? Not at all! It was more a matter of life and death. When I looked behind, I saw police with their weapons aimed at us. I dove underwater to escape the bullets and continued swimming to the opposite shore. Even underwater, I could hear the gunfire.

Once we reached the opposite shore, we had made good our escape from jail, where we had been locked up for burglary and car theft.

This was one of many times I had been wanted or actually pursued by the police for some criminal action. Although I was only 17 years old at the time, I had already built up a long arrest record with the authorities. Eventually, my friend and I were caught, and once again I was sentenced to a prison term, this time for a period of two and a half years.

Even in prison I showed a violent disposition. Because of fighting with other inmates so often, I was given a white uniform. This made other troublemakers and me stand out for special attention by the guards.

### **More Violent After Release**

I was released from prison, but I hadn't changed for the better. In fact, I was more violent than ever. I quickly established myself as a ruler of various streets. Anyone who would challenge me quickly found a willing combatant.

Once a group of young men irritated me. I attacked them, hurting several before police stopped the brawl, even though my right hand had been broken in a fight the week before.

Another time two friends and I challenged a group of men from a neighboring town. Their leader stepped out to meet me with an iron bar. I disarmed him, but he slipped out of my grasp and ran. The only way to get him to keep on fighting

was to give him back his iron bar, which I did. He returned, and I disarmed him again, this time making sure that he didn't get away until I had given him a beating.

One night, just to have "fun," I stood on a street corner in Harlem, New York City, and challenged anyone to fight. Various ones took me up on the offer, and the battles were numerous. As a result, my reputation as a dangerous, violent person grew. In these various battles, I was hit with bottles, tire tools, and clubs and set upon with knives and other weapons. But all of this did nothing to turn me from my violent ways.

### **Violence Escalates**

I soon discovered that there was much money to be made in the drug trade. Being a drug user, I was familiar with the drug society. Before long I had people selling drugs for me, making me even more violent.

Once we raided another drug dealer, hoping to steal his drugs. Armed with a pistol and a knife, we broke into his home and held three men and a woman hostage while we ransacked the house, looking for drugs.

Another time a friend and I, armed with shotguns and wearing ski masks, decided to rob a rich man so we could get money for drugs. We staked out his home, but he never appeared, so we left. Without a doubt, had he shown up, we would have carried out our intentions.

Thus, at just 20 years of age, I found myself deeply involved in violence, drugs, and serious crime. My future, at best, would be one of life in prison—and I was very unhappy.

I often wondered who should decide what is right and what is wrong. I concluded that it was whoever had the greater power in society. I also reasoned that since humans were deciding right and wrong, and I had absolutely no respect for any human authority, I had

as much right as anyone to decide such a question for myself. But I was soon to find a far better answer.

### **A Far Better Way**

My sister, who had married one of my friends I had been in prison with, had consented to a study of the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. She shared the things she was learning from the Bible with everyone in our family—except me. My family would tell me to avoid my sister. Why? They said that it was because all she talked about was that "crazy religion."

I was curious. What could she possibly say to upset people so much? I wanted to know, but my sister did not speak to me about it. Why not? She thought that I was too bad ever to listen to anything about the Bible.

But one evening I invited myself over to her home for dinner. I was sitting there eating with my sister and her husband, and I said: "Tell me about this new religion." They did—for six hours! It made so much sense to me that I returned the very next evening to hear more.

After this second visit, I was convinced that I had found something to live for, a real purpose in life. Immediately, I began attending meetings at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses and also speaking to my friends about what I was learning.

My life-style remained unchanged for a while. But I continued studying and learning about what Jehovah God expected, and I made sure that I didn't miss meetings at the Kingdom Hall, where the Bible was discussed. In this way I got the spiritual strength to change my life, one thing at a time.

First, I quit selling drugs. This angered some of those I had previously associated with, but I still had my violent reputation, which kept me out of harm's way. Next, I quit using hard drugs and also gave up my

immoral life-style. The last thing I brought under control was my tobacco habit. In eight months I had progressed to the point of being qualified for baptism, and I was baptized in 1970.

At last I had come to the full realization of the answer to my question about who is to decide what is right and what is wrong. The answer is: Jehovah, our Life-Giver, has that right, and he also has the right to expect his creatures to live accordingly.

I have often thought how the illustration at Isaiah 65:25 applied to me in a figurative way. That prophecy talks about the time to come when the lion's violent disposition would be changed to a peaceful one to the point that he would eat straw like the bull. I felt that in a similar way, I had changed from being a very violent person to one having a peaceful disposition and a peaceful outlook on life.

Still, I had a bad reputation to live down. As an example, I regularly called on people from door to door to discuss the Bible with them. At one door, the young man who answered recognized me and became terrified,

thinking I was there to do him harm. I quickly explained my message of peace from the Bible, leaving him dumbfounded but very relieved.

Not long after my baptism, I married one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Sad to say, in 1974 my wife decided that she no longer wanted to do God's will. She gave me an ultimatum: give up my way of worship or she would leave me, taking our two small children. That was the most difficult time of my life. But I could not abandon my worship of God, and I continued to do his will.

### A New Way of Life

Yet, Jehovah rewarded me for continuing to be faithful to him. In 1977, I met a wonderful Witness, and we got married. She had a five-year-old son. Soon my wife and I entered the full-time ministry, devoting ourselves to teaching others about God and his purposes. When our son grew up, he entered the full-time ministry also. He now assists with various duties in the local congregation.

My wife and I have since had the privilege of traveling to many parts of the world, doing volunteer construction work. This involves helping to build new branch facilities in various countries to support the worldwide educational work of Jehovah's Witnesses.

When we are home, we stay busy locally, helping others to learn about the Bible and in helping build new Kingdom Halls. I also serve on a Regional Building Committee in the southern part of the United States. And my former jail mate—my sister's husband—and I serve as elders in the same congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

I am grateful to Jehovah for helping me to take control of my life and for giving it an entirely new direction. As I allow him to show me what is right and what is wrong, my life just gets better and better.—Contributed.

### CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

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# When Clutter Gets Out Of Control

LOOK around your home. Are you being crowded out by clutter? Would you be embarrassed if a friend got a peek inside your closet? Do you have trouble locating a specific object because it is buried under a pile of accumulated possessions? If so, you are not alone.

"I am too confirmed a 'saver,'" confesses Ralph. Leon adds: "I was drowning in clothes, newspapers, books I had collected over 15 years." "Just thinking about cleaning it up makes me tired before I begin," laments another clutter victim.

Some children grow up in an environment of clutter. Says one such person: "As long as I can remember, I've always warned people what to expect the first time they come to our house. I told them it was OK to move something so they would have a place to sit down." Even adults may hesitate to invite anyone outside the family to visit because the house is unpresentable.

Often people do not realize how much they have stockpiled until faced with moving. If one has not kept a regular program of clutter control, moving is much more time-consuming—and expensive.

But for many, cleaning up clutter is more than the simple matter of throwing things out. A number of obstacles must first be overcome.

## Why Can't They Just Throw It Out?

For some time, psychologist Lynda W. Warren and clinical social worker Jonnae C. Ostrom had assumed that all clutterers were older people, who had survived the Depression

of the 1930's. Hoarding was, they thought, "a rare and harmless eccentricity." However, after studying the matter, they reported: "We were surprised to discover a younger generation of pack rats, born long after the 1930s. . . . We now believe that such behavior is common and that, particularly when it is extreme, it may create problems for the pack rats or those close to them."<sup>\*</sup>

How extreme can it get? "Ostrom has seen marriages break up over mess," reports *Health* magazine. Some people turn to professional counselors for help. In fact, *Health* magazine calls personal organization counseling "a burgeoning field whose practitioners may charge as much as \$1,000 [U.S.] a day to do what our mothers nagged us to do: clean up our rooms."

It is unlikely that you have a clutter problem as extreme as that. Still, you may find it difficult to get past the following four barriers that stand between the items in question and the trash can:

- Possible future need. ("Better to save it than to be sorry later.")
- Sentimental attachment. ("Aunt Mary gave this to me.")
- Potential value. ("It might be worth something someday.")
- Lack of wear or damage. ("This is too good to throw away.")

\* A "pack rat" is a person who accumulates needless items. He is named after a bushy-tailed rodent (also known as a wood rat) with well-developed cheek pouches that hoards food and miscellaneous objects. While a collector specializes in one or a few organized categories of objects, a pack rat will hoard possessions of all categories and seldom use them.

## Sorting and Disposing

Following are some helpful suggestions regarding specific items that can easily clutter your home if you are not careful.

**Reading material:** Do you find it hard to dispose of old magazines or newspapers? Does a title easily catch your eye, causing you to tell yourself: "I'll get around to reading this one of these days"? Instead of saving the whole magazine or newspaper, clip the article that looks interesting and put it in a "To Be Read" folder. If it is not read within a reasonable time—perhaps a few weeks—throw it out.

**Clothing:** Does your wardrobe get bigger and bigger each year, yet you don't wear half of the outfits you own? Some tell themselves: "This will look nice on me—after I lose ten

pounds." This becomes the license to hold on to anything and everything in the closet. To prevent such clothing clutter, if something isn't worn in a whole year, put it in an "Indecision" box. Then, if it is still not worn after a short period of time, give it away or throw it out.

**Mail:** Clear out mail on a daily basis. Personal letters and other correspondence that you want to keep should be filed in a specific place. You could have a folder for each month's filing and discard its contents after one year to make room for the new month's mail. The principle is *file, don't pile*. If you receive a lot of advertisement mail, decide right away if you will need it. If not, throw it out. If undecided, put it in an "Indecision" box for a week. If not acted upon by then, throw it out.

The result? *Psychology Today* says: "The stuff keeps mounting, and so do the problems it produces."

So how can you bring clutter under control?

### Where to Begin

Asked to imagine how she would feel if a hurricane were to strike and destroy all but a few possessions, one woman said: "What I felt most at the idea of losing everything was relief—being freed of my mess without the anxiety of sorting out and letting go." This

well illustrates that sorting and discarding can be a challenge.

"Clutterers have two problems," says consultant Daralee Schulman. "The stuff that's already in the house and the stuff that's coming in." Instead of engaging in cleanups, she suggests spending as little as 15 minutes a day organizing one area at a time. This is a much more effective way to deal with the clutter inside your home. But what about "the stuff that's coming in"?

Before purchasing any item for your home, ask yourself: "Do I really need it? Where am I going to put it? Will I use it?" Daralee Schulman claims that by asking such questions, "75 percent of the stuff you were going to bring into the house, you won't."

At the Watch Tower Society's headquarters and branch offices, occupants are expected to keep their rooms clutter free and to limit the number of decorative items on each piece of furniture or each shelf to two or three. This simplifies cleaning and is much more pleasing

### In Our Next Issue

#### Sports—What Place Do They Have?

#### How Can I Resist the Pressure to Smoke?

#### Something New in International Construction



to the eye. Papers, magazines, books, book bags, musical instruments, sports equipment, clothing, dishes, and other items are not to be left lying around. In fact, *nothing* is to be on the floor of the room unless it is furniture. This is certainly a model for any who would like to cultivate a clutter-free environment.

#### **Out Of Sight—And in the Closet**

"On a day's notice, I could whip my apartment into shape," says Joan, "but the closets were always a disaster." Some use the closet as a disposal unit, simply moving the clutter to a place where it cannot be seen. The problem only gets worse as more and more is put into a space that stays the same size.

Can your closet stand some relief from accumulated clutter? *Good Housekeeping* magazine suggests: "Closet-organizer systems come in a variety of materials and accessories that can be adapted to fit any space. Use one to conquer the storage crisis in your house." So don't make the closet your refuge for refuse. Keep it uncluttered and organized.

#### **A Balanced View of Possessions**

"My belongings are a reflection of me, they're a part of who I am," said one woman. "My jewelry is such a comfort to me," adds another. "I just love my rings and chains." Yet another woman defiantly says: "This is me—this is my individuality and you are not going to throw it out!"

In contrast, Jesus Christ stated: "A man's life is not made secure by what he owns, even when he has more than he needs."—Luke 12:15, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

Thus the Bible encourages a balanced view of one's possessions. It also promotes orderliness, making this a requirement for those who serve as elders in the congregation.  
—1 Timothy 3:2.

Why not start applying some of the above suggestions to an area in your home that is crowding you out? With daily effort and a balanced view of your possessions, clutter can be brought under control.

**T**HE sun is a giant in our solar system. It is so huge that 1,300,000 earths could fit inside it. But compare the sun to some of the supergiant stars in our galaxy, and it suddenly looks tiny indeed.

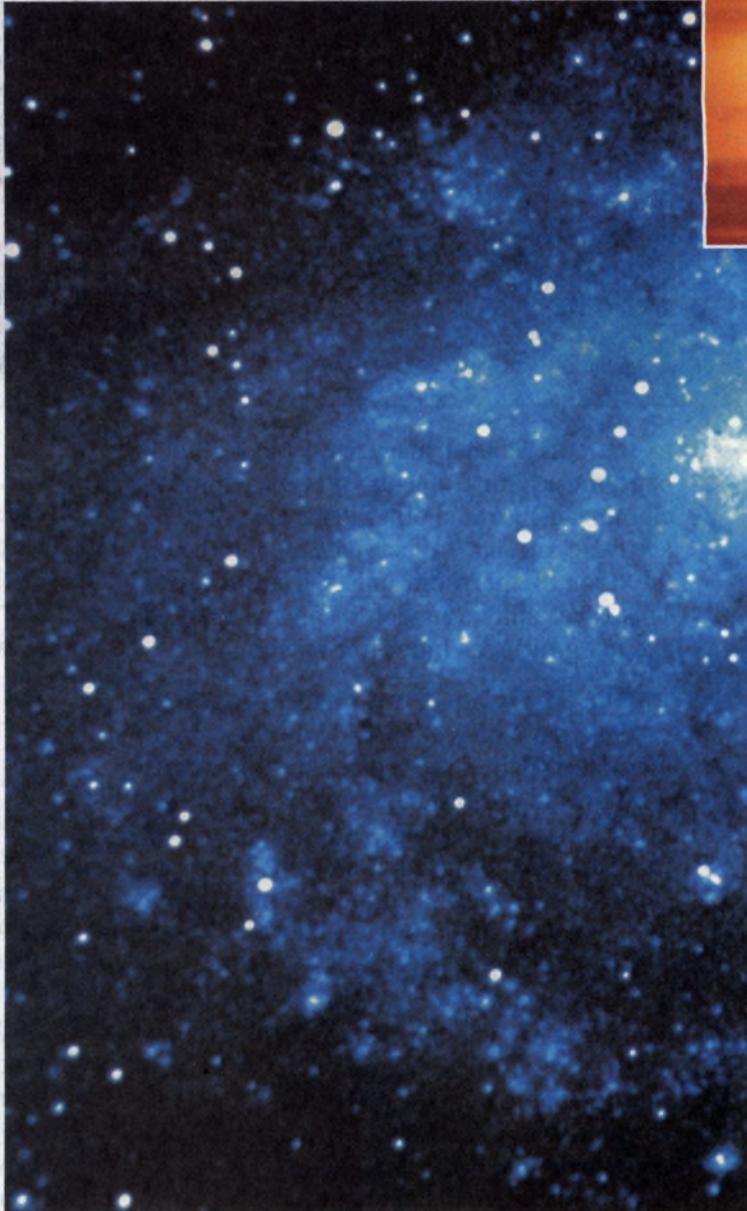
For instance, imagine putting various supergiant stars right where our sun is. There are some so mammoth that they would engulf the entire orbit of the earth. We would be inside the star! The star called Betelgeuse would extend nearly to Jupiter. And if the star Mu Cephei sat where the sun is, it would swallow Saturn—although Saturn is so far away that it took the *Voyager 2* space-craft four years to get there from Earth, traveling about 20 times as fast as a speeding bullet.

Our galaxy, the Milky Way, has been called a giant spiral galaxy. Appropriately so. The sheer immensity of this great glowing pinwheel of over 100,000,000,000 stars, spinning majestically in the blackness of space, is staggering to the human mind. If we could stand on one edge of our galaxy and send a beam of light toward the opposite edge, it would take over 100,000 years for that light to cross the galaxy even though that beam would hurtle toward its goal at awesome speed: 186,000 miles every second. In other words, the Milky Way has a diameter of 100,000 light-years.

Yet, our neighboring spiral galaxy, Andromeda, is over twice

U.S. Naval Observatory photo

# A Tiny Giant





## Ceiling Drop and nebula

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the size of ours and may contain some 600,000,000,000 stars. What is more, astronomers have discovered a mammoth galaxy they named Markarian 348. It is some 13 times as large in diameter as our Milky Way galaxy, measuring about 1,300,000 light-years across!

Even the behemoth Markarian 348 would look small next to the galaxy recently discovered at the center of a cluster of galaxies called Abell 2029. Scientists believe that this is the largest galaxy they have ever seen. It is over 60 times as large as our own galaxy. It is some 6,000,000 light-years across and is home to a mind-numbing swarm of some 100,000,000,000 stars. According to a report in *The New York Times*, this is also one of the most luminous galaxies ever observed. And it is not the chaotic product of random forces. "This is an organized mass of light and energy," one of its discoverers said of it. "It's a very large, organized galaxy."

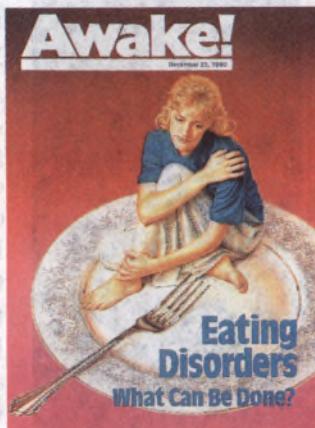
Our brains cannot even begin to grasp the immensity of these collections of stars or the vast distances involved. So, what about the creative, organizing force behind it all? "Raise your eyes high up and see. Who has created these things? It is the One who is bringing forth the army of them even by number, all of whom he calls even by name." (Isaiah 40:26) If the creation is awesome, how much more awesome is the Creator!

# "Eating Disorders" Our Readers Respond

THE *Awake!* articles on the theme "Eating Disorders—What Can Be Done?" (December 22, 1990) generated an unusual volume of mail. Readers from around the world wrote in to thank us for covering this sensitive and often painful subject. The articles touched many who have long struggled with eating disorders.

For instance, one woman wrote: "Dear Sir or Madam: The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society deserves the highest commendation for its article on eating disorders. Diagnosed with anorexia at 9 years of age, I have struggled with it for 34 years. Having read nearly all the available literature on eating disorders and having been exposed to a variety of therapies, I can truthfully say that the presentation in *Awake!* is the best I have ever encountered. No literature or any counselor has presented a spiritual perspective as comprehensive as the *Awake!* article. For the first time, I see anorexia as God sees it."

Many are already putting the articles' counsel to work. A woman writes: "When I read the article, 'Who Develop Eating Disorders?' I was amazed to read a description of my character. Every single point mentioned in the article 'Winning the Battle!' has helped me very much. I have corrected my views. It was a relief to know that others, even Christians, have this same problem. I thought perhaps I was the only one."



A 25-year-old woman wrote: "I have been suffering with bulimia since I was 13. I spent the entire year of 1989 and some parts of '88 in a deep, debilitating depression. I even tried to commit suicide twice. I can readily identify with these most touching articles and have already been practicing some of the suggestions and sound counsel. The articles have given me more focus and direction. This is definitely one issue that I will truly TREASURE and refer to often!"

"I keep reading and rereading the magazine," writes a young woman who has struggled with eating disorders for ten years. "I've just started to admit I have a problem. To know that Jehovah wants to help and doesn't give up on us if we have a setback is a tremendous comfort."

"I felt I was reading about my own feelings!" wrote a young girl. "This article helped me to open up and talk with my mom, and now I'm better able to handle my feelings about myself." A 16-year-old girl writes: "I'm recovering from anorexia nervosa. I had been praying to Jehovah for someone who would understand my illness. The *Awake!* showed me that I already have those people around me. I have my family, the many Witnesses of Jehovah who are my friends, and especially I have Jehovah. I hope the December 22 issue of *Awake!* helps others as much as it has helped me and my family."

A 20-year-old woman in the full-time ministry writes: "For the longest time, I tried to handle my eating disorder on my own. I even felt at one time that it was stupid to pray about it. It brought tears of joy to my eyes to know that Jehovah must really consider such a thing so important."

"It was excellent! I mean it!" wrote another woman. She continues: "I am a survivor of multiple childhood traumas, the two worst being sexual abuse and ritual abuse. The first two paragraphs under the subheading 'Feelings of Inadequacy' hit the core. It truly is a matter of retraining the mind to learn to like oneself, and one cannot do it alone, as was so well stated."

Many seemed to feel that the articles came as an answer to their prayers. "These articles were not written by chance because Jehovah does answer prayers!" exclaimed one reader. She adds: "Even though I have been fighting the 'Battle of the Bulge' for most of my life, it was only after I read the article that I realized that I have a serious eating disorder (bulimia)." Said a 19-year-old who has struggled with bulimia for six years: "I was just getting ready to write to you early this month to see if you could come up with a well-written article on this subject. I am so happy that you went into detail with it and didn't just sweep the issue under the rug as most people do."

One letter simply read: "I've prayed and waited patiently for the articles on eating disorders. I would have requested information if I had not been so embarrassed about it. The compassion you showed me as an individual in the articles strengthened my faith to overcome this problem once and for all." A high-school girl writes: "I developed anorexia nervosa and bulimia and consequently suffered both mentally and physically. I prayed to Jehovah for help, and these articles came out. I couldn't help crying for joy."

For many, reading the articles was an emotional experience. "As soon as I opened it up," writes a young woman, "the cover almost jumped out at me. I was almost scared to touch it. I put it on the bed beside me and just looked at it for a few minutes. All I could do was thank Jehovah for the articles. I can really see that Jehovah does love me. The articles helped me to reappreciate that my body is a precious gift and I should treat it that way."

"When I read the articles," writes one woman, "and even as I type this letter, I cannot keep the tears from rolling down my cheeks. I am a recovered bulimic and have been longing for an article from the Society on this subject. Learning to accept myself—believing that I have worth and value in Jehovah's eyes and not allowing other people's way of thinking to affect how I view myself—has been one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. Some days it's easier than others, but I am still working on it."

"It was with tear-filled eyes that I grabbed this magazine to my heart," writes a 21-year-old woman. "For nearly nine years, I have been fighting with all three disorders mentioned. I was always too afraid to tell anyone. Now, as a result of the practical advice given, I feel I can tackle this problem with God's help. This is just what I've been praying for."

Finally, a Christian elder writes: "I have found these articles to be of tremendous help. How vital it is that we elders carefully study and absorb this information so as to assist others, both inside and outside the congregation!"

These excerpts come from just some of the letters of appreciation we have received. It is our earnest hope and prayer that the articles continue to help people around the world to cope with these distressing disorders.

## Watching the World

### 1991 Off to a Bad Start

A succession of disasters worldwide in the first few months of the year have strained the capabilities of relief organizations. "Not since the end of World War II have so many people in so many different continents faced such devastation," said *U.S. News & World Report*. Soviet Georgia was hit by three earthquakes. One also struck Costa Rica and Panama. Tornadoes in the United States flattened parts of Kansas and Oklahoma. A cyclone with winds of 145 miles per hour battered Bangladesh for eight hours, killing at least 125,000 people and leaving millions homeless. "Coupled with demands in the Persian Gulf region and in Africa, where starvation already threatens 14 million Ethiopians and Sudanese alone, these new tragedies have left organizations scrambling," reports the magazine. Said one Red Cross official: "I don't know what I'll wake up to next."

### Earthquake Fatalities

Earthquakes caused nearly as many deaths last year as during the entire previous decade. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, more than 52,000 fatalities from earthquakes were reported in 1990, as compared with some 57,500 who died from earthquakes between 1980 and 1989. This was the highest annual toll since 1976. Most of the deaths occurred in a single quake of magnitude 7.7 that hit Iran in June, killing an estimated 50,000 and injuring 60,000 oth-

ers. The report listed 68 large earthquakes for last year, 8 more than the previous year.

### Pharmacy Students and Drug Abuse

First-year pharmacy students attending the University of Texas at Austin in the United States were told that nationwide, pharmacy students have the highest rate of drug abuse of all professional schools. Why? "I really don't know," says Assistant Pharmacy Dean Arlyn Kloesel. "But caring professions have a tendency to attract that type of person. And it's not the poor



student. It's generally the good student, the student leader . . . that ultimately ends up with the problem." Students were advised that before addicts or alcoholics can be helped properly, they must admit that they have a problem and then be willing to get help.

### Violent Crime Soars in the United States

"Violent crime, much of it drug-related, is on the rise in virtually every city in America," says *Newsweek* magazine. "Guns, including paramilitary assault weapons, seem to be everywhere—even in the hands of children." Murders hit a new

record last year. An estimated 23,200 people were killed, 60 percent of them by use of firearms. "During every 100 hours on our streets we lose three times more young men than were killed in 100 hours of ground war in the Persian Gulf," laments Health and Human Services Secretary Louis Sullivan. This is so despite the fact that the United States has the world's highest incarceration rate at 426 inmates per 100,000 population. Murder is now the leading cause of death for black males between the ages of 15 and 24. Why has crime escalated so? According to experts, "crime rates rise when social controls—the family, the church, the neighborhood, and all the invisible bonds of a coherent community—break down," states *Newsweek*.

### Animal Health Care

The world of pet medicine includes everything from "sophisticated surgery to supervised weight control programs, dental care and behavior counselling," reports *The Toronto Star*. "Having an animal today is very, very expensive," said a nurse. Treating a large dog's broken leg could cost more than \$700 (Canadian). Be prepared to pay \$800 and up for the treatment of an inflamed liver. A kidney transplant can easily exceed \$5,000. Behavioral counseling runs \$100 an hour. Animal health services also include maternity wards, intensive care facilities, use of acupuncture, electrocardiograms, cataract removal, root-canal work, and even pet insurance.

## Forests Vanishing Faster

"The earth's tropical forests are vanishing 50% faster than previously estimated," reports *Perspectives*, the bulletin of the International Institute for Environment and Development. Instead of the estimated 27 million acres a year, data gathered by the World Resources Institute now shows that "16 to 20 million hectares [40 to 50 million acres] of tropical forests may be stripped each year."

## End of Number 666

"Britain has dropped the Satanic number 666 from auto license plates," reports the publication *Leaders*. According to Annette Welsh, spokeswoman for the British Department of Transportation, drivers complained that the number was responsible for their accidents. One Welshman said that a week after he was issued the number, his water supply was poisoned, his house was burglarized, and his car was demolished by a truck. Actually, Revelation 13:18 applies the number 666 to a symbolic wild beast representing the world's political system and does not associate it with accidents or similar personal incidents.

## AIDS on the Increase

The grimdest AIDS prediction yet has recently been released by WHO (World Health Organization). By the year 2000, the projection shows, 10 million children and 30 million adults will be infected by the AIDS virus worldwide. It is estimated that by then ten million people will be full-blown AIDS cases and that deaths from the disease will orphan some ten million children. Only a year ago,

WHO placed the number of AIDS cases at 5 million children and 25 million adults. The predictions were revised when studies showed that the virus was spreading at an alarming rate in parts of sub-Saharan Africa and in Asia.

## Weight Gain in Smoke Quitters

What many smokers fear most about quitting is that they will gain weight. Researchers at the Centers for Disease Control in the United States found that the



average smoker who quits cigarettes gains from six to eight pounds over a five year period. "From a health point of view, the weight gain is pretty moderate," said the director of the study. However, the health benefits from quitting far exceed any risk from the extra weight.

## Less Salt Beneficial

Reducing salt intake by one tenth of an ounce per day can lower the incidence of heart disease by 16 percent and that of strokes by 22 percent in Western countries, London researchers say. The reduction would have more effect than drug treatment. Publishing their results in the *British Medical Journal*, the researchers from St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School, London, advise manufacturers to cut down on the amount of salt in their products. If salt was

left out of processed foods, they say, heart attacks could be reduced by 30 percent and death by strokes by 39 percent, preventing 65,000 deaths a year in Britain alone. People are advised to reduce their salt intake by not adding salt at the table and by avoiding salty foods.

## Airline Terrorism —No Solution Yet

"Technology aimed at thwarting terrorist attacks on commercial airliners still cannot deliver what scientists had hoped," notes *New Scientist* magazine. "After several years of experimentation, no detector system meets the minimum requirements set by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)." The agency wanted a system that would scan ten bags a minute, detect "several pounds" of explosives 95 percent of the time, yet have a false-alarm rate "approaching" 1 to 2 percent. However, X-ray machines and metal detectors cannot detect the "terrorist's current weapon of choice"—plastic explosives. A plastic explosive was used to blow up a Pan American jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988.

## Another Reason Not to Smoke

It is already known that cigarette smoking increases the risk of heart attacks. Studies now show it may "also block the discomfort that signals heart disease," says *Health* magazine, and diminish perception of pain. "If cigarettes retard pain perception, you could have massive injury to your heart before getting medical help," says Dr. Michael Crawford, chairman of the American Heart Association's Council on Clinical Cardiology.

## From Our Readers

**Hair Loss** I waited a long time for the article "Alopecia—Living in Silence With Hair Loss." (April 22, 1991) I have been suffering from *alopecia universalis* for several years, and I have contacted many doctors with no apparent result. I tried to learn more about alopecia but with little success. The article has helped me to accept my situation with serenity, waiting for the time when no one will say: "I am sick." —Isaiah 33:24.

R. C., Italy

**Nightclubs** The article "Young People Ask . . . What About Nightclubs?" (February 8, 1991) really hit home with me. My life started to go downhill after I began to go to a nightclub at the age of 15. It was harmless fun at first. I danced with friends from school. Non-alcoholic drinks were served at a soda bar. My Christian parents didn't know I went—I would secretly climb out of my window to go "clubbing." Well, "harmless" dancing led to drinking, then to drugs, and then to homosexuality. I finally pulled myself out of the nightclub world, but now I am paying the price for having lived a double life. I just wanted to share my experience in hopes that perhaps someone out there will now think twice about nightclubs.

L. E., United States

**Rap or Rock?** I'm glad you took notice of the obscenity problem in popular music in your article "Obscenity Set to Music." (March 8, 1991) However, you were in error when you classified the group "2 Live Crew" as a rock group. Actually, they are a rap group, which recites, rather than sings, the lyrics.

D. L., United States

*Thanks for the clarification. Of course, some would consider rap to be merely another form of rock music. Be that as it may, Christians must be selective about their choice of music, regardless of what name is attached to it.—ED.*

**Hospital Stays** Thank you for the concise, sound information in the series "Hospitals—How Can You Cope?" (March 8, 1991) I would like to add that in a nonemergency situation, after an accurate diagnosis has been made, you should learn as much as you can about your illness and treatments thereof. Only by being well-informed can you make sound decisions. The local library or the hospital library often contains much helpful information.

E. D., United States

**Narcolepsy** I am writing to express my appreciation for the article "Narcolepsy—The Sleeping Illness." (April 8, 1991) You have no idea what it meant to me to see this illness acknowledged in an international magazine! Narcolepsy struck me at age 15, and I still have it at age 77!

M. S., England

I was favourably impressed by the accuracy of the writer's exposition and the sympathy with which he treated the subject. I wish that we could rely upon all journals to adopt such an approach. You have done a kindness to sufferers, particularly those who meet a lack of understanding of their disorder.

P. J. H. S., Honorary Secretary,  
Narcolepsy Association [U.K.]

**Color Blindness** For a long time, I have waited for an article such as the one entitled "Color Blindness—A Curious Defect." (February 22, 1991) As one suffering from color blindness, I have always caused laughter and curiosity when I said that my blood is green or that a rainbow has but two colors. But thanks to your article, I will be better understood. I trust in Jehovah that one day I will be able to see the rainbow in full color.

I. F. O., Brazil

# Preventing Fires in the Home

AS THE story goes, Mrs. Patrick O'Leary's cow kicked over the kerosene lamp in the barn and started the great Chicago fire of 1871. The cost in property damage and life was staggering. According to one source, the fire left 100,000 homeless, destroyed over 17,400 buildings, and killed 250 people.

Today, 120 years later, modern fire-fighting technology has helped prevent many large-scale fires. However, house fires continue to pose a dangerous threat. The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) claims that in the United States, almost five thousand people were killed in house fires in one year. As recorded in *The Vancouver Sun*, NFPA gave a few simple hints to help keep the house fires out. They are, in essence:

- Do not allow tobacco smoking in the house. Accidents involving careless smokers continue to be the leading cause of death from fires in the home.
- Do not leave portable heaters operating unattended or while you sleep.
- Do not overload electrical circuitry or use frayed cords. Use only the proper size fuses.
- Keep furnaces and chimneys clean. Inspect them annually.
- Check smoke detectors regularly, and replace batteries every year. Be sure all in the family recognize the sound of the smoke detector.
- Check that all in the family know the fire escape route, and keep exits clear.



WILHELM  
HILDEBRAND  
GEMALDE

WILHELM HILDEBRAND  
wurde am 1. Februar 1856  
in Berlin geboren. Er ist der Sohn  
des Malers und Bildhauers Carl  
Hildebrand und der Sophie, geborene  
Krause. Seine Kindheit verbrachte  
er in Berlin, wo er von seinem Vater  
die ersten Anfänge in der Malerei erhielt.

Seine ersten Schritte auf dem künstlerischen  
Feld machte er in der Akademie von Berlin,  
wo er unter den Meistern der Malerei und  
Skulptur unterrichtet wurde. Er schuf  
seine ersten Gemälde während dieser Zeit.

Seine ersten Ausstellungen fanden in Berlin  
und anderen Städten statt. Seine Werke wurden  
mit Preisgeldern und Anerkennung belohnt.

Seine Gemälde sind hauptsächlich  
landschaftliche Darstellungen, die  
die Schönheit der Natur und  
die Freude am Leben zum Thema haben.

Seine Malerei ist geprägt durch eine  
einfache, direkte Ausdrucksweise,  
die die Wirkung der Farbe und  
die Schönheit der Natur hervorhebt.

Seine Werke sind in verschiedenen  
Ausstellungen und Museen ausgestellt.  
Seine Gemälde sind sehr geschätzt und  
werten die Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts  
auf.

Seine Malerei ist geprägt durch eine  
einfache, direkte Ausdrucksweise,  
die die Wirkung der Farbe und  
die Schönheit der Natur hervorhebt.