

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

March 15, 1990



What does
JESUS'
DEATH
mean to you?

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

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What Does Jesus' Death Mean to You?

ALL the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever were built, all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has this one solitary personality." So wrote author James A. Francis regarding Jesus Christ.

People view Jesus in various ways, but the Bible identifies him as God's Son and a man of self-sacrificing love. Jesus cited a principal way in which he showed that love when he said of himself: "The Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many."—Matthew 20:28.

What is the significance of this ransom? Why was it needed? Who is ransomed? Indeed, what does Jesus' death mean to you?

What Is It?

A ransom is something that releases. Ransoming someone means delivering him from captivity or punishment by paying a



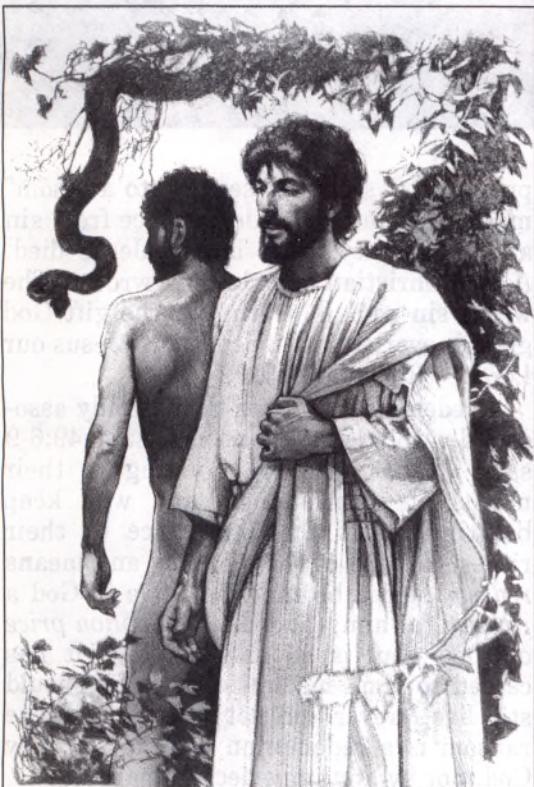
price. In a spiritual sense, "to ransom" means to bring about deliverance from sin and its penalty. That is why Jesus died. As the Christian apostle Paul wrote: "The wages sin pays is death, but the gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord."—Romans 6:23.

A redemption price is Scripturally associated with paying a ransom. Psalm 49:6-9 says: "Those who are trusting in their means of maintenance, and who keep boasting about the abundance of their riches, not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (and the *redemption price* of their soul is so precious that it has ceased to time indefinite) that he should still live forever and not see the pit." The ransom is a redemption accomplished by God, not by any imperfect human.

Why Needed?

The ransom is needed because our first human father, Adam, sinned. He thus lost endless perfect life, was justly sentenced to death, and eventually died. (Genesis 2: 15-17; 3:1-7, 17-19; 5:5) As his descendants, we have inherited sin and death. "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin," wrote Paul, "and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Romans 5:12) Yes, "in Adam all are dying." (1 Corinthians 15:22) So the psalmist David correctly said: "With error I was brought forth with birth pains, and in sin my mother conceived me."—Psalm 51:5.

Deliverance from condemnation to sin and death is essential if any sinful descendant of Adam is to receive eternal life.



Whereas imperfect humans cannot provide this ransom, Jehovah lovingly did so through Jesus Christ. Yet, what is bought with the ransom? Well, when Adam sinned, he lost everlasting perfect human life, with all its rights and prospects. Hence, the same thing was redeemed by means of Jesus' ransom sacrifice.

What It Makes Possible

Justice was satisfied in mankind's experiencing death, the penalty of sin. So the ransom is an act of God's mercy and loving-kindness. Jesus' perfect human life, with all its rights and prospects, was laid down in death and never taken back, for he was not resurrected as a man of flesh and blood but as an immortal spirit creature. (1 Corinthians 15:50; 1 Peter 3:18) The sacrificed human life of Jesus Christ therefore continued to have redemptive, or ransoming, power.

As a sinless human, Jesus stood in a position similar to that originally occupied by perfect Adam. For being obedient to God to death, Jesus was made the great High Priest, and he presented the value of his perfect human sacrifice in heaven. (Hebrews 9:24-26) Because God accepted this redemptive price, Jesus could redeem believing descendants of Adam from sin and death by applying the merit of his sacrifice in their behalf. (1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23; 1 John 2:1, 2) Jesus thus "became responsible for everlasting salvation to all those obeying him." (Hebrews 5:8, 9) This makes it possible for them to attain a righteous standing before God through his Son.

Who Is Ransomed?

Who, then, benefit from the ransom? Humans who exercise faith in this provi-

Sinless Jesus stood in a position similar to that originally occupied by perfect Adam

sion and thus come into harmony with God. By serving him faithfully, they can be freed from sin and its penalty death and receive eternal life.—John 17:3.

The first man could decide whether to obey God or not. He chose disobedience. “Adam was not deceived,” but he died a willful sinner. (1 Timothy 2:14) Yet, what about Adam’s descendants? They could choose either to serve God to the best of their imperfect ability or to disobey their Creator.—Joshua 24:15.

Jesus came “to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many.” (Mark 10:45) But who are the “many”? Adam is evidently excluded because he was a perfect man who deliberately chose to disobey God and died as an unrepentant, willful sinner. But what about his large family, numbering into the thousands of millions? With a corresponding price, Jesus Christ offsets the inherited condemnation resting on Adam’s family. (Compare 1 Timothy 2:5, 6.) In behalf of the “many” believers, Jesus applies the merit of his redemptive price.

Ransomed believers include both Jews and Gentiles, or people of the nations. Says Paul: “As through one trespass the result to men of all sorts was condemnation, likewise also through one act of justification the result to men of all sorts is a declaring of them righteous for life.” (Romans 5:18) By dying on a stake, “Christ by purchase released [Jews] from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse instead of [them], because it is written: ‘Accursed is every man hanged upon a stake.’” (Galatians 3:13; Deuteronomy 21:23) Romans 4:11 alludes to Gentiles when it says that while Abraham, forefather of the Jews, was yet uncircumcised, he became “the father of all those having faith while in uncircumcision.” So, then, Jesus’ ransom sacrifice benefits believing Jews and Gentiles.

The course taken by each individual determines whether he will benefit from Je-

sus’ sacrifice. Like Adam, the willfully wicked do not have ransom merit and eternal life forced upon them. As Christ said: “He that exercises faith in the Son has everlasting life; he that disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him.” (John 3:36) The ransom also makes a resurrection possible for those dead who are in God’s memory. (John 5:28, 29) If they prove obedient and appreciative, the application of ransom benefits to them means that they will live forever. But for those living in these “last days,” there is the possibility of life eternal without the need to die at all.—2 Timothy 3:1-5; Matthew 24:3-14, 21, 34; John 11:25, 26.

Reasons for Gratitude

Anyone desiring to benefit from the ransom must have deep appreciation for it. And how fitting such gratitude is! After all, the ransom called for abundant love on the part of God and Christ.

Jehovah God showed great love in providing the ransom through his Son’s death. Said Jesus: “God loved the world [of mankind] so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life. For God sent forth his Son into the world, not for him to judge the world, but for the world to be saved through him.” (John 3:16, 17) Should you not appreciate this manifestation of God’s love?

Think further about the depth of Jehovah’s love in making provision for the ransom. Before God’s Son was sent to the earth to live and die as a perfect man, he had a prehuman existence. He was “the firstborn of all creation,” by means of whom “all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible.”

*Do you appreciate
the real meaning of Jesus' death?*

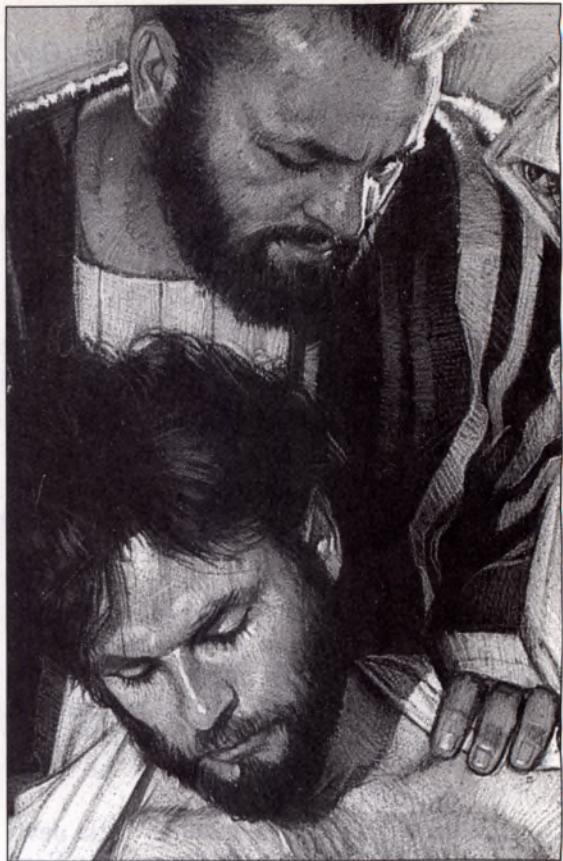
(Colossians 1:13-16) How Jehovah loved his Son! Nevertheless, God did not send just any one of the millions of righteous angels to the earth. His love for mankind was so great that he sent his firstborn Son.

Consider, too, the deep love that Jesus showed in connection with the ransom. As a spirit creature in heaven, he was God's "master worker." True, "the things [God's Son] was fond of were with the sons of men." (Proverbs 8:22-31) Yet, it was not easy for him to leave heaven, with its very favorable circumstances in association with his Father and myriads of righteous angels. From his heavenly vantage point, the Son of God could see the evil conditions on the earth and the ravages of sin and death upon mankind. He also knew that providing the ransom would call for his death. Yet, he "took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, . . . he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death." For such faithfulness, Jesus was raised to glorious heavenly life. (Philippians 2:5-11) What love he showed with regard to the ransom! Do you appreciate what Jesus did?

What Will You Do?

The English prelate Richard of Chichester (c. 1198-1253) once prayed that men and women might come "to know Jesus Christ more clearly, to love him more dearly, and to follow him more nearly." Jesus' ransom sacrifice surely provides one sound reason to get to know, love, and follow him.

If it was not for the ransom, as sinners we would die without hope, for "the sting producing death is sin." (1 Corinthians 15:56) Hence, to be saved from death that would result because of your having been



stung by sin, what must you do? You need to learn about God's provision for salvation through Jesus Christ. Then you must demonstrate that you exercise faith in the ransom. How? By showing heartfelt appreciation for it, devoting yourself to God, and telling others about this wonderful provision for salvation.

This course can put you among the "great crowd" who "come out of the great tribulation, and . . . have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Jesus Christ. (Revelation 7:9, 14) Theirs is the hope of eternal life in an earthly paradise. (Luke 23:43) Yes, and you can be part of that happy throng, if Jesus' death really is something precious to you.

MOSES WITH HORNS

An Artistic Curio

IF YOU have ever visited Italy, you might well have seen Michelangelo's famous statue of the seated Moses, now located at the Church of St. Peter in Chains, in Rome. How curious the 16th-century sculpture appears, as it depicts Moses with horns protruding from his head! In fact, a number of artists have portrayed Moses with horns. Why so? Does the Bible provide any basis for the idea?

The Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible tells us that following his conversation with God on Mount Sinai, Moses' face was "horned." (Exodus 34:29, 30, 35; compare *Douay Version*.) The *Vulgate* enjoyed great popularity in much of Christendom and thus influenced the way scriptures were understood.

However, the Hebrew word translated "horned" also has the meaning 'send forth rays' or 'shine.' (See footnote of the *Douay*



Based on *Short History of Art*

Version at Exodus 34:29.) According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, the word "denotes the form of a horn(s) rather than the substance." And viewed pictorially, rays of light do actually resemble horns.

The fact that Moses' face emitted rays is explainable, as Jehovah's glory had just passed by. (Exodus 33:22; 34: 6, 7) Paul confirms

this to be the accurate understanding, writing about "the glory" of Moses' face, not of his "horns."—2 Corinthians 3:7.

Accurate understanding of Biblical terminology thus leads to a more penetrating knowledge of the Bible report. Accordingly, the horns on Michelangelo's famous statue of Moses are simply an artistic curio stemming from a long-corrected error of translation.

Sign of the Last Days

BY NOW it is Tuesday afternoon. As Jesus is seated on the Mount of Olives, looking at the temple below, Peter, Andrew, James, and John come to him privately. They are concerned about the temple, since Jesus has just foretold that 'not a stone will be left upon a stone in it.'

But apparently they have even more on their minds as they approach Jesus. A few weeks earlier, he had spoken about his "presence," a time "when the Son of man is to be revealed." And on an earlier occasion, he had told them about "the conclusion of the system of things." So the apostles are very curious.

"Tell us," they say, "when will these things be [resulting in destruction for Jerusalem and her temple], and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" In effect, theirs is a three-part question. First, they want to know about the end of Jerusalem and its temple, then regarding Jesus' presence in Kingdom power, and finally about the end of the entire system of things.

In his lengthy response, Jesus answers all three parts of the question. He provides a sign that identifies when the Jewish system of things will end; but he provides more. He also gives a sign that will alert his future disciples that they are living during his presence and near the end of the entire system of things.

As the years go by, the apostles begin to observe the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. Yes, the very things he foretold start to occur in their day. Thus, Christians who are alive 37 years later, in 70 C.E., are not caught unawares by

the destruction of the Jewish system with its temple.

However, Christ's presence and the conclusion of the system of things do not take place in 70 C.E. His presence in Kingdom power occurs much later. But when? A consideration of Jesus' prophecy reveals this.

Jesus foretells that there will be "wars and reports of wars." "Nation will rise against nation," and there will be food shortages, earthquakes, and pestilences. His disciples will be hated and killed. False prophets will arise and mislead many. Lawlessness will increase, and the love of the greater number will cool off. At the same time, the good news of God's Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth as a witness to all the nations.

Although Jesus' prophecy had a limited fulfillment prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., the major fulfillment of it takes place during his presence and the conclusion of the system of things. A careful review of world events since 1914 reveals that Jesus' momentous prophecy has been undergoing its major fulfillment since that year.

Another part of the sign that Jesus gives is the appearance of "the disgusting thing that causes desolation." In 66 C.E. this disgusting thing appeared in the form of the "encamped armies" of Rome that surrounded Jerusalem and undermined the temple wall. "The disgusting thing" stood where it ought not.

In the major fulfillment of the sign, the disgusting thing is the League of Nations and its successor, the United Na-

tions. This world peace organization is viewed by Christendom as a substitute for God's Kingdom. How disgusting! In time, therefore, the political powers associated with the UN will turn on Christendom (antitypical Jerusalem) and will desolate her.

Jesus thus foretold: "There will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." While Jerusalem's destruction in 70 C.E. was indeed a great tribulation, with over a million reportedly being killed, it was not a greater tribulation than the global Flood

in Noah's day. So the major fulfillment of this portion of Jesus' prophecy is yet to be realized. **Matthew 24:2-22; 13:40, 49; Mark 13:3-20; Luke 21:7-24; 19:43, 44; 17:20-30; 2 Timothy 3:1-5.**

- ♦ What prompts the apostles' question, but apparently what else do they have on their minds?
- ♦ What part of Jesus' prophecy was fulfilled in 70 C.E., but what did not occur then?
- ♦ When did Jesus' prophecy have a first fulfillment, but when does it have a major fulfillment?
- ♦ What is the disgusting thing in its first and final fulfillments?
- ♦ Why did the great tribulation not have its final fulfillment with the destruction of Jerusalem?



'THE FAITHFUL SLAVE' AND ITS GOVERNING BODY

"Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time?"—MATTHEW 24:45.

JEHOVAH is a God of order. He is also the Source of all legitimate authority. Confident in the loyalty of his faithful creatures, Jehovah is willing to delegate authority. The one to whom he has delegated the most authority is his Son, Jesus Christ. Indeed, God "subjected all things under his feet, and made him head over all things to the congregation."—Ephesians 1:22.

² The apostle Paul calls the Christian congregation "God's household" and says that Jehovah's faithful Son, Jesus Christ, was placed over this household.

(1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 3:6)

In turn, Christ delegates authority to the members of God's household. We can see this from Jesus' words recorded at Matthew 24:45-47. He said: "Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that

1. Why is Jehovah willing to delegate authority, and to whom primarily has he done so?

2. What does Paul call the Christian congregation, and to whom has Christ delegated authority?

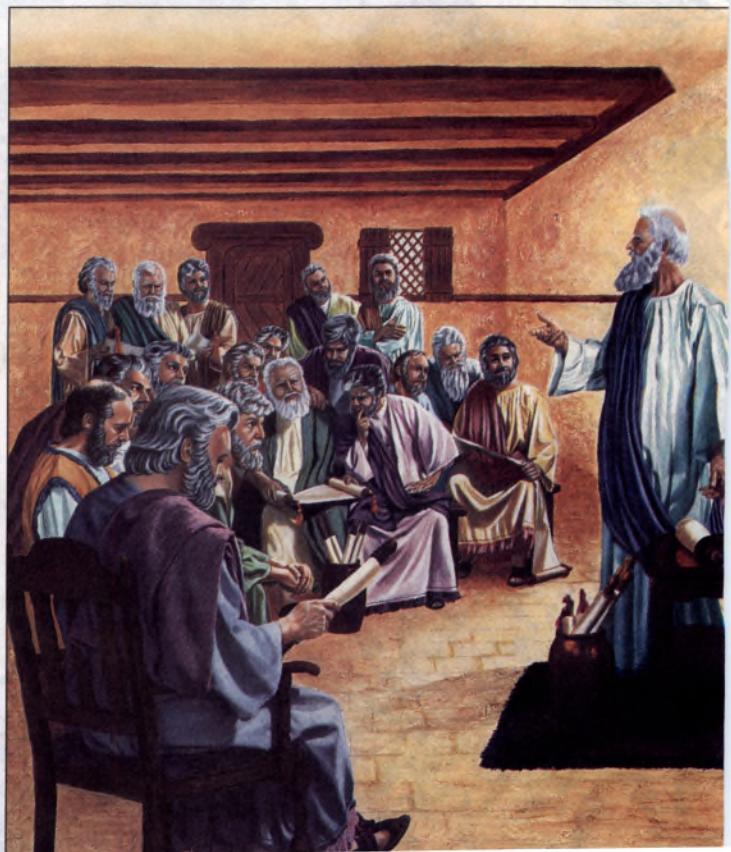
The first-century "slave" had a governing body made up of the apostles and the elders of the Jerusalem congregation

slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings."

The First-Century House Manager

³ From our careful study of the Scriptures, we know that the spirit-anointed members of God's household at any given time collectively make up "the faithful and discreet slave," "steward," or "house man-

3. Who make up "the faithful and discreet slave," and what term is applied to them as individuals?



ager." Individually, the members of Jehovah's household are termed "domestics" or "body of attendants."—Matthew 24:45; Luke 12:42; *Reference Bible*, footnote.

⁴ Some months before his death, Jesus raised this question, recorded at Luke 12: 42: "Who really is the faithful steward, the discreet one, whom his master will appoint over his body of attendants to keep giving them their measure of food supplies at the proper time?" Then, a few days before he died, Jesus likened himself to a man about to travel abroad, who summoned his slaves and committed his belongings to them.—Matthew 25:14.

⁵ When did Jesus assign others to look after his belongings? This occurred after his resurrection. In his familiar words found at Matthew 28:19, 20, Christ first gave those who would become part of his composite house manager an extended assignment to teach and make disciples. By individually witnessing "to the most distant part of the earth," the attendants would expand the missionary field that Jesus had begun to cultivate during his earthly ministry. (Acts 1:8) This involved their acting as "ambassadors substituting for Christ." As "stewards of sacred secrets of God," they would make disciples and would dispense spiritual food to them.—2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Corinthians 4:1, 2.

The Household's Governing Body

⁶ Collectively, spirit-anointed Christians were to be the master's steward, or house manager, assigned to dispense timely spiritual food to the individual members of the household of God. Between the years

4. Shortly before his death, what question did Jesus raise, and to whom did he liken himself?
5. (a) When did Jesus assign others to look after his belongings? (b) What extended assignment did Christ give to those who would become part of his composite house manager?
6. What was the first-century steward class divinely inspired to provide?

41 C.E. and 98 C.E., members of the first-century steward class were divinely inspired to write 5 historical accounts, 21 letters, and the book of Revelation for the benefit of their brothers. These inspired writings contain fine spiritual food for the domestics, that is, individual anointed ones of God's household.

⁷ While all anointed Christians collectively form God's household, there is abundant evidence that Christ chose a small number of men out of the slave class to serve as a visible governing body. The early history of the congregation shows that the 12 apostles, including Matthias, were the foundation of the first-century governing body. Acts 1:20-26 provides us with an indication of this. In connection with a replacement for Judas Iscariot, reference is there made to "his office of oversight" and to "this ministry and apostleship."

⁸ Such office of oversight included the responsibility of the apostles to appoint suitable men to positions of service and to organize the ministry. But it meant more. It also involved teaching and clarifying points of doctrine. Fulfilling Jesus' promise recorded at John 16:13, "the spirit of the truth" was to guide the Christian congregation progressively into all the truth. Right from the start, those who embraced the word and became baptized, anointed Christians continued devoting themselves to "the teaching of the apostles." In fact, the reason why seven recommended men were appointed to the necessary business of distributing material food was so that "the twelve" could remain free to 'devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.'—Acts 2:42; 6:1-6.

7. For what purpose did Christ choose a small number of men out of the slave class?
8. What did the responsibilities of the first-century governing body include?

⁹ It seems that at first the governing body was composed exclusively of Jesus' apostles. But would it remain that way? About the year 44 C.E., the apostle James, the brother of John, was executed by Herod Agrippa I. (Acts 12:1, 2) Apparently no effort was made to replace him as an apostle, as was done in the case of Judas. Why not? No doubt this was because James died faithful, the first of the 12 apostles to die. On the other hand, Judas was a wicked defector and had to be replaced in order to bring back to 12 the number of the foundation stones of spiritual Israel.—Ephesians 2:20; Revelation 21:14.

¹⁰ The original members of the first-century governing body were apostles, men who had walked with Jesus and had been witnesses of his death and resurrection. (Acts 1:21, 22) But this situation was to change. As the years went by, other Christian men gained spiritual stature and were appointed as elders in the Jerusalem congregation. By the year 49 C.E. at the latest, the governing body had been expanded to include not only the remaining apostles but also a number of other older men in Jerusalem. (Acts 15:2) So the makeup of the governing body was not rigidly fixed, but God evidently guided things so that it changed to fit the circumstances of his people. Christ, the active Head of the congregation, used this enlarged governing body to settle the important doctrinal matter of non-Jewish Christians' being circumcised and submitting to the Law of Moses. The governing body wrote a letter explaining its decision and issued decrees for observance.—Acts 15:23-29.

9. How was the early governing body reduced to 11 members, but why apparently was the number not immediately brought back to 12?

10. When and how was the first-century governing body expanded, and how did Christ use it to guide God's household?

A Time of Accounting for the House Manager

¹¹ Individually and as congregations, the early Christians appreciated this strong lead given by the governing body. After the congregation in Syrian Antioch read the letter from the governing body, they rejoiced over the encouragement. As other congregations received the information and observed the decrees, they "continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day." (Acts 16:5) Manifestly, God blessed this arrangement.—Acts 15:30, 31.

¹² But let us look at another aspect of this significant matter. In his illustration of the minas, Jesus likened himself to a man of noble birth who traveled to a distant land to secure kingly power for himself and then returned. (Luke 19:11, 12) As a result of his resurrection in 33 C.E., Jesus Christ was exalted to the right hand of God, where he was to sit until his enemies would be placed as a stool for his feet.—Acts 2:33-35.

¹³ In a parallel illustration, the parable of the talents, Jesus stated that after a long time, the master came to settle accounts with his slaves. To the slaves who proved faithful, the master said: "You were faithful over a few things. I will appoint you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master." But regarding the unfaithful slave, he declared: "Even what he has will be taken away from him. And throw the good-for-nothing slave out into the darkness outside."—Matthew 25:21-23, 29, 30.

¹⁴ After a long time—nearly 19 centuries—Christ was vested with kingly power in 1914, at the end of "the appointed times

11. Was the firm lead set by the governing body appreciated by the brothers, and what shows that Jehovah blessed this arrangement?

12, 13. What events did Jesus foretell in his parables of the minas and the talents?

14. What did Jesus expect of his spirit-anointed slaves?

of the nations." (Luke 21:24) Shortly thereafter, he "came and settled accounts" with his slaves, spirit-anointed Christians. (Matthew 25:19) What did Jesus expect of them individually and collectively? The steward's assignment continued as it had been since the first century. Christ had entrusted talents to individuals—"to each one according to his own ability." Hence, Jesus expected proportionate results. (Matthew 25:15) Applicable here is the rule at 1 Corinthians 4:2, which states: "What is looked for in stewards is for a man to be found faithful." Putting the talents to work meant faithfully acting as ambassadors of God, making disciples and dispensing spiritual truths to them.—2 Corinthians 5:20.

The "Slave" and Its Governing Body as the Time of the End Drew Near

¹⁵ Jesus expected anointed Christians collectively to be acting as a faithful steward, giving his body of attendants "their measure of food supplies at the proper time." (Luke 12:42) According to Luke 12:43, Christ said: "Happy is that slave, if his master *on arriving* finds him *doing so!*" This indicates that for some time *before* Christ arrived to settle accounts with his spirit-anointed slaves, they would have been dispensing spiritual food to members of the Christian congregation, God's household. Whom did Christ find doing so when he returned with kingly power in 1914 and proceeded to inspect the house of God in 1918?—Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 19:12; 1 Peter 4:17.

¹⁶ As the long period of Jesus' waiting at Jehovah's right hand drew to a close, it

15. (a) What did Christ expect of his collective house manager? (b) What indicates that Christ expected the slave class to be doing this *before* he arrived to inspect his household?

16. When Christ arrived to inspect the house of God in 1918, why did he not find Christendom's churches supplying spiritual food at the proper time?

gradually became apparent who was giving spiritual food supplies to Christ's domestics even in the time prior to 1914. Do you think it was Christendom's churches? Certainly not, for they were deeply involved in politics. They had been willing tools of colonial expansion and had tried to outdo one another to prove their patriotism, thus encouraging nationalism. This soon brought heavy bloodguilt upon them, that is, when they gave their active support to political governments involved in the first world war. Spiritually, their faith had been weakened by Modernism. A spiritual crisis was brought about because many of their clergy became easy prey to higher criticism and evolution. No spiritual nourishment could be expected from Christendom's clergy!

¹⁷ Similarly, no nourishing spiritual food was forthcoming from those anointed Christians who were more concerned with their personal salvation than with putting the Master's talent to work. They turned out to be "sluggish," unfit to take care of the Master's belongings. Hence, they were thrown "into the darkness outside," where the churches of Christendom still are.
—Matthew 25:24-30.

¹⁸ On arriving to inspect his slaves in 1918, therefore, whom did the Master, Jesus Christ, find giving to his body of attendants their measure of food supplies at the proper time? Well, by then, who had given sincere truth-seekers the correct understanding of the ransom sacrifice, the divine name, the invisibility of Christ's presence, and the significance of 1914? Who had exposed the falsehood of the Trinity, immortality of the human soul, and hellfire? And who had warned of the dangers

17. Why did Christ reject some anointed Christians, and with what consequence for them?

18. Whom did the Master find supplying his body of attendants with spiritual food at the proper time, and what proves this?

of evolution and spiritism? The facts show that it was the group of anointed Christians associated with the publishers of the magazine *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, now called *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*.

¹⁹ In its issue of November 1, 1944, *The Watchtower* stated: "In 1878, forty years before the Lord's coming to the temple in 1918, there was a class of sincere consecrated Christians that had broken away from the hierarchic and clergy organizations and who sought to practice Christianity . . . The following year, namely, in July, 1879, that the truths which God through Christ provided as 'food in due season' might be regularly distributed to all his household of consecrated children, this magazine, *The Watchtower*, began to be published."

²⁰ Supplying information on the develop-

19. How had a faithful slave class manifested itself before 1918, by what means had it distributed spiritual food supplies, and since when?
20. (a) How did a modern-day Governing Body appear on the scene? (b) What were the members of the Governing Body doing, and under whose guidance?

Main Points to Remember

- Who is the Head of God's household, and to whom has this One delegated authority?
- What collective assignment did Christ give to the slave class?
- What other collective body existed within the slave class, and what were its particular duties?
- When Christ arrived to inspect God's household, who was providing spiritual food to its members?
- How did a modern-day Governing Body appear?

ment of the modern-day Governing Body, the December 15, 1971, issue of *The Watchtower* explained: "Five years later [in 1884] Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was incorporated and served as an 'agency' to minister spiritual food to thousands of sincere persons seeking to know God and to understand his Word . . . Dedicated, baptized, anointed Christians became associated with that Society at headquarters in Pennsylvania. Whether on the Board of Directors or not, they rendered themselves available for special work of the 'faithful and discreet slave' class. They aided in the feeding and directing of the slave class, and thus a governing body made its appearance. This was evidently under the guidance of Jehovah's invisible active force or holy spirit. Also, under the direction of the Head of the Christian congregation, Jesus Christ."

²¹ In 1918, when Jesus Christ inspected those claiming to be his slaves, he found an international group of Christians publishing Bible truths for use both inside the congregation and outside in the preaching work. In 1919 it truly turned out to be as Christ had foretold: "Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings." (Matthew 24: 46, 47) These true Christians entered into the joy of their Master. Having shown themselves "faithful over a few things," they were appointed by the Master to be "over many things." (Matthew 25:21) The faithful slave and its Governing Body were in place, ready for a widened assignment. How glad we should be that this was so, for loyal Christians are richly benefiting from the devoted work of the faithful slave and its Governing Body!

21. (a) Whom did Christ find distributing spiritual food, and how did he reward them? (b) What awaited the faithful slave and its Governing Body?

COOPERATING WITH THE GOVERNING BODY TODAY

"He will appoint him over all his belongings."—LUKE 12:44.

AT PENTECOST 33 C.E., Jesus Christ, the Head of the congregation, began actively ruling in the kingdom of his spirit-anointed slaves. How so? By means of the holy spirit, angels, and a visible governing body. As the apostle Paul indicated, God 'delivered anointed ones from the authority of the darkness and transferred them into the kingdom of the Son of his love.'—Colossians 1:13-18; Acts 2:33, 42; 15:2; Galatians 2:1, 2; Revelation 22:16.

² At the end of "the appointed times of the nations," Jehovah increased Christ's kingly authority, extending it beyond the Christian congregation. (Luke 21:24) Yes, in the year 1914, God gave his Son kingly authority over the "nations," "the kingdom of the world," all mankind.—Psalm 2:6-8; Revelation 11:15.

Appointed "Over All His Belongings"

³ Noteworthy here is Jesus' illustration of a man of noble birth. (Luke 19:11-27) Before traveling abroad to secure kingly power, the man gave his slaves money (minas) with which to work. Upon returning, this man, who represents Christ, called before him "these slaves to whom he

1. In what kingdom did Christ begin ruling in 33 C.E., and by what means?
2. In what larger Kingdom did Christ begin reigning in 1914?
- 3, 4. (a) In Jesus' illustration of the minas, who was represented by the man of noble birth? (b) What Kingdom developments occurred in 1918 and 1919?

had given the silver money, in order to ascertain what they had gained by business activity." (Luke 19:15) How did this work out after Jesus secured kingly power?

⁴ In 1918 the enthroned King Jesus Christ found a small group of Christians who had previously left Christendom's churches and were busy caring for their Master's earthly interests. After refining them as with fire, Jesus gave his slaves increased authority in 1919. (Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 19:16-19) He appointed them "over all his belongings."—Luke 12:42-44.

"Food Supplies at the Proper Time"

⁵ The reigning King Jesus Christ gave an enlarged assignment to his steward, or house manager, on earth. Anointed Christians were to be "ambassadors" of God substituting for a crowned king empowered to rule over all the peoples of the earth. (2 Corinthians 5:20; Daniel 7:14) Their collective responsibility was no longer to be only that of giving Christ's body of anointed attendants "their measure of food supplies at the proper time." (Luke 12:42) They were now to take an active part in the working out of the prophecies due to be fulfilled after the Kingdom's establishment in 1914.

- 5, 6. (a) What enlarged assignment did Christ's steward receive? (b) What prophecies were due to be fulfilled after 1914, and how was the steward class to participate actively in their fulfillment?

From its world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, the Governing Body supervises the publishing and preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses in 93 branches of the Watch Tower Society

⁶ What did this mean in actual practice? It meant expanding the preaching of ‘this good news of the kingdom to all the inhabited earth.’ (Matthew 24:14) Moreover, it meant publishing powerful messages of judgment against Satan’s wicked system and its supporters. This had the effect of ‘rocking the nations.’ Thus, “desirable things,” Christ’s “other sheep,” began to come in. (Haggai 2:7; John 10:16) From 1935 onward, the “great crowd” began to flock into Jehovah’s organization worldwide. (Revelation 7:9, 10) This called for progressive improvements in organization. Symbolically speaking, stones were to be replaced by iron, wood by copper, iron by silver, and copper by gold. (Isaiah 60:17) All of this has taken place since 1919 under the active and close direction of Jesus Christ, who has committed all his earthly Kingdom interests, or belongings, to his faithful slave class and its Governing Body.

⁷ We can easily understand that the increased load of responsibility devolving upon the Master’s slave, steward, or house manager involved intense writing and editorial activities. Spiritual food supplies had to be published regularly at the proper

^{7. What did the steward’s increased responsibilities involve?}



time in *The Watchtower*. In 1919 *The Golden Age* (a companion magazine later to become *Consolation*, and then *Awake!*) began to be published to arouse public interest, in addition to building up the “domestics.” (Matthew 24:45) Floods of books, booklets, and tracts have also been produced over the years.

Continual Refinements

⁸ Looking back in this “time of the end,” we are not surprised that the members of the Governing Body were at first closely identified with the editorial staff of the Watch Tower Society. (Daniel 12:4) The article “The Theocratic Alignment Today,” published in *The Watchtower* of November 1, 1944, said: “Reasonably, those who were entrusted with the publication of the revealed Bible truths were looked to as the Lord’s chosen governing body to

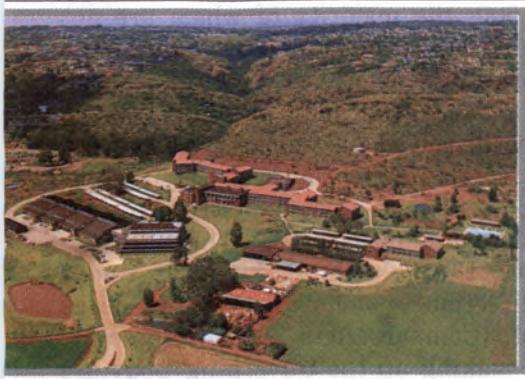
^{8. With what were the members of the Governing Body first identified, and what statement did *The Watchtower* make in 1944?}



Germany



Japan



South Africa



Brazil

guide all those who desired to worship God in spirit and in truth and to serve him unitedly in spreading these revealed truths to other hungering and thirsting ones.”

⁹ There were legal requirements involved in publishing magazines and other Bible study aids. Hence, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society was set up and registered in the state of Pennsylvania, U.S.A. For years, the visible Governing Body came to be identified with the seven-member board of directors of this corporation established to publish the Bible study aids needed and used by the Lord’s people earth wide.

9. With what did the Governing Body later come to be closely identified, and why?

¹⁰ The Society’s seven directors were faithful Christians. But their role in a legal corporation might have suggested that they owed their positions on the Governing Body to their being elected by legal members of the Watch Tower Society. Furthermore, by law such membership and its voting privileges were originally granted only to certain ones who made contributions to the Society. This arrangement needed to be changed. This was done at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania corporation of the Watch Tower Society held on October 2, 1944. The statutes of the Society were amended

10, 11. What refinement took place in 1944, and what comment was made about this in *The Watchtower*?

so that membership would no longer be on a financial basis. Members would be chosen from among faithful servants of Jehovah, and these have come to include many serving full-time at the Society's headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, and in its branches throughout the world.

¹¹ Reporting on this improvement, *The Watchtower* of November 1, 1944, stated: "Money, as represented in financial contributions, should have no determining voice, should in fact have nothing to do with the filling of the governing body of Jehovah's witnesses on earth. . . . The holy spirit, the active force which comes down from Jehovah God through Christ Jesus, is that which should determine and guide in the matter."

Different From a Board of Directors

¹² The progress of the preaching work during the following decades proves that Jehovah blessed the foregoing refinements in the understanding of the Governing Body. (Proverbs 10:22) Why, the number of Kingdom proclaimers throughout the earth jumped from less than 130,000 in 1944 to 1,483,430 in 1970! But further improvements were yet to come.

¹³ Until 1971 those of the Governing Body were still identified with the seven members of the board of directors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. The Society's president carried the main load of responsibility for making decisions affecting the operation of the Society's branches throughout the world. But epoch-making talks were delivered at the annual meeting held on October 1, 1971. The Society's president spoke

12. What shows that Jehovah blessed the refinements under the direction of the Governing Body?

13. (a) Until 1971, what was the situation as regards the Governing Body? (b) What occurred at the Society's annual meeting in 1971?

on the subject "Bringing the Holy Place Into Right Condition," and the vice president on the topic "A Governing Body As Different From a Legal Corporation." What difference is there between the Governing Body and the legal corporation?

¹⁴ As already mentioned, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania has a board of directors limited to seven members. These dedicated Christian men are elected for three-year terms by corporation members totaling no more than 500, the majority of whom are not anointed Christians. Moreover, since the corporation's existence is purely legal, with a fixed geographic headquarters, it can be dissolved by Caesar, that is, the State. (Mark 12:17) However, the Governing Body is not a legal instrument. Its members are not elected. They are appointed through the holy spirit under the direction of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. (Compare Acts 20:28.) Moreover, those making up the Governing Body are spirit-appointed men without any obligatory fixed geographic location or headquarters.

¹⁵ As to such refinements in understanding, *The Watchtower* of December 15, 1971, said: "Thankfully Jehovah's Christian witnesses know and assert that this is no one-man religious organization, but that it has a governing body of spirit-anointed Christians." The Governing Body of the anointed slave class and of their millions of companions among the other sheep has been progressively equipped to take care of its office of oversight.

14. What differences exist between a legal corporation and the Governing Body?

15. What statement about organization was made in *The Watchtower* of December 15, 1971, and what can be said of the modern-day Governing Body?

¹⁶ The earthly belongings of the King Jesus Christ have continually grown. Since 1971 the number of Witnesses has leaped from under 1,600,000 to a peak of over 3,700,000 in 1989. What proof of God's blessing! (Isaiah 60:22) This growth has called for the expansion of facilities at the Society's headquarters and in its branches, as well as for the modernizing of methods of production and distribution. It has resulted in the building of many Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls throughout the earth. All the while, the Governing Body has also continued to carry the responsibility of overseeing the preaching work, producing Bible study material, and appointing overseers in the branches, districts, circuits, and congregations. These are the Kingdom interests that Christ has committed to the care of the faithful and discreet slave, represented by its Governing Body.

¹⁷ The first-century governing body was enlarged to include more than Jesus' apostles. When the circumcision issue was decided, that body evidently included "the apostles and older men in Jerusalem." (Acts 15:1, 2) Comparably, the Governing Body was enlarged in 1971 and again in 1974. To facilitate their work of oversight, the Governing Body arranged for five committees to begin functioning on January 1, 1976. Each committee is composed of from three to six members, all of whom have equal voice in matters under consideration. The chairman of each committee serves for one year, and individual members of the Governing Body serve on one or more of these committees. Each of these five committees gives particular attention to a spe-

16. How have Christ's earthly belongings increased since 1971, and what are some of these that he has committed to the care of the faithful and discreet slave, represented by its Governing Body?

17. What further improvements in oversight were made in 1971, 1974, and 1976?

cific aspect of Christ's earthly belongings. A sixth committee—the Chairman's Committee, whose membership rotates each year, handles urgent problems.

Active Cooperation With the Governing Body

¹⁸ The committees of the Governing Body hold weekly meetings to review important matters, make decisions after prayerful considerations, and plan for future theocratic activity. As noted earlier, Acts chapter 15 shows that a weighty question needing resolution was referred to the first-century governing body for attention. Similarly today, important questions are referred to the entire Governing Body, which meets weekly or more often when necessary. The members of the Governing Body, at present 12 in number, seek Jehovah God's direction through the Scriptures and by means of prayer. One way we reflect our cooperation with the Governing Body is by remembering these specially appointed ones in our daily prayers.—Romans 12:12.

¹⁹ How do the instructions and decisions of the Governing Body reach the congregations? After the members of the first-century governing body reached their decision with the help of God's spirit, they sent a letter to the congregations. (Acts 15:22-29) However, the principal way today is through Christian publications.

²⁰ Since February 1, 1976, each of the branches of the Watch Tower Society has had a Branch Committee made up of capable men appointed by the Governing Body.

18. How does the Governing Body operate, and what is one way that we can reflect our cooperation with it?

19. How do instructions of the Governing Body reach the congregations?

20. (a) What further organizational refinement was made in 1976? (b) How do Branch Committees cooperate with the Governing Body?

As representatives of the Governing Body for the country or countries under the supervision of their branch, these brothers must be faithful, loyal men. This reminds us of the capable, God-fearing, trustworthy men who helped Moses judge the people in ancient Israel. (Exodus 18:17-26) Members of a Branch Committee implement instructions received by means of the Society's books and magazines and *Our Kingdom Ministry*, as well as in general letters and special letters dealing with local problems. Branch Committees keep the Governing Body up-to-date on the progress of the work in each land and on problems that may arise. Such reports from all over the world help the Governing Body to decide what subjects should be considered in the Society's publications.

²¹ Under the direction of the holy spirit, Branch Committees recommend mature, spiritual men to serve as circuit and district overseers. After being appointed directly by the Governing Body, they serve as traveling overseers. These brothers visit circuits and congregations in order to build them up spiritually and help them apply instructions received from the Governing Body. (Compare Acts 16:4; Romans 1:11, 12.) Traveling overseers submit reports to the branch office. With the help of the holy spirit and the inspired Scriptures, they share with local elders in recommending qualified brothers for appointment as ministerial servants and elders by the Governing Body or by its representatives.—Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5; compare 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 4:14.

²² In turn, those making up bodies of elders 'pay attention to themselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit

21. How are traveling overseers appointed, and what do their duties include?

22. (a) How do congregation elders cooperate with the Governing Body? (b) What proves that Jehovah is blessing this theocratic arrangement?

has appointed them overseers.' (Acts 20:28) These overseers faithfully seek to apply instructions received from Jehovah God and Jesus Christ by means of the faithful and discreet slave and its Governing Body. Jehovah is blessing this theocratic arrangement, for 'the congregations continue to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day.'—Acts 16:5.

²³ How fine it is that through the Governing Body, Jehovah God and the Master, Jesus Christ, are manifesting support of God's people! (Psalm 94:14) As part of Jehovah's organization, we individually benefit from such support. (Psalm 145:14) This should strengthen our resolve to cooperate with God's arrangements. Indeed, may we always be found cooperating with the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses as we move forward to the time when "the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."—Isaiah 11:9.

23. Regarding the Governing Body, we should be resolved to do what?

Main Points to Remember

- What increased responsibilities did the steward class receive in 1919?
- For many years, with what was the visible Governing Body identified?
- What progressive refinements were made in the appointment of the members of the Governing Body?
- What are some of Christ's earthly belongings that he has committed to the slave class and its Governing Body?
- How can we cooperate with the Governing Body?

SIERRA LEONE

Unearthing Its Most Precious "Diamonds"

IN THE year 1462, a group of intrepid Portuguese sailors pushed their way down the West African coast to a point 550 miles north of the equator. They were not frightened off by legends of a dark sea full of monsters that supposedly lay south of Morocco. Moreover, they did not accept the prevailing belief that the sun blazed so hot near the equator that the ocean boiled.

Just as those mariners hoped, their wooden ships did not burst into flame, nor did they see the headless monsters of legend. Instead, they found beautiful white-sand beaches beyond which soared dark-green mountains, lush with forests. And when the tropical rains deluged the earth and lightning ripped the sky, the thunder boomed and rumbled in those mountains like the roar of some immense beast. Interestingly, those seamen named the place Sierra Leone—"Lion Mountains"!

As the years passed, men learned that the richness of Sierra Leone was not limited to beauty. There were also minerals: iron, bauxite, rutile, chromite, platinum, and gold. But not until 1930 was there a discovery that made the commercial world take note of this tiny land. Diamonds were found! The supply of these valuable gems proved to be abundant, luring prospectors by the thousands.

Some have literally picked up diamonds from the surface of the ground. One woman found a massive diamond while washing her clothes in a stream. A man unearthed a 153-carat gem while planting sweet potatoes in a field. For the most part, however, finding these precious stones has required great effort. For ex-

ample, some diamonds are buried deep in the earth, embedded in kimberlite, a type of stone. Claiming them involves digging, blasting, crushing, and sorting. It also requires skill, knowledge, and patience.

While extensive diamond-mining operations continue to this day, a search for gems of a different sort—spiritual diamonds of far greater value—has been going on in Sierra Leone since 1915. In that year, a man named Alfred Joseph left Barbados and traveled to this land by steamer. Here he began a work of "prospecting," not for diamonds, but for people who desired to serve the true God "with spirit and truth." (John 4:24) This search was conducted in the same way as that carried on by first-century Christians—"publicly and from house to house." (Acts 20:20) Seven years later, Alfred Joseph was joined in this work by William R. Brown, also from the West Indies.

By the end of 1923, a small congregation had been established in the capital, Freetown. That congregation included 14 newly baptized ones. Today, 632 individuals in 30 congregations actively share in the public preaching work as Jehovah's Witnesses. Their efforts in finding and unearthing what might be called Sierra Leone's precious spiritual diamonds continue to meet with great success.

Active Seekers of Truth

Some new disciples of Jesus Christ have proved to be like diamonds easily picked up from the surface of the ground. They have actively sought out Jehovah's Witnesses. One of these was a hairdresser

named Joan. She phoned the local headquarters of the Witnesses in Freetown and requested a Bible study.

What prompted Joan to make that telephone call? "I cannot remember a time during my life when I wasn't looking for God," she says. "Since childhood, I have joined many churches and religious groups but could never get spiritual satisfaction."

"About ten years ago, I became aware of the Witnesses, but for no reason at all, I formed the opinion that these people were to be avoided at all costs. When a friend of the family became a Witness, I subscribed to the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. I did it just to please her; I never bothered to read them. In fact, I used them to clean my windows! Then an *Awake!* came that caught my attention. The cover article was about our need for love. [September 22, 1986] I read it and was deeply impressed. It was that magazine that moved me to ask for a Bible study." Joan made rapid progress and soon was a baptized Witness of Jehovah.

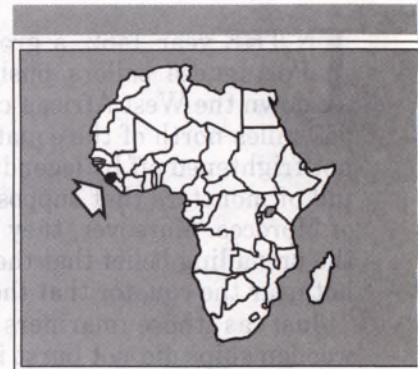
Another person who sought out the truth was a young man named Manso. He wanted to be a priest and went to a seminary. But when he observed the hypocrisy of his teachers, he became discouraged and quit. Next, Manso began to attend other religious meetings. One day while on his way to visit an uncle, he saw a book published by the Watch Tower Society—*Is the Bible Really the Word of God?* It was on the ground in a muddy puddle of water. Since the title interested Manso, he fished out the book, dried it, and read it. Here was the truth he had been seeking! The book encouraged readers to attend meetings at the local Kingdom Hall. So Manso went, began to study the Bible with the Witnesses, and was soon baptized. Now he serves as a full-time pioneer evangelizer!

Responding to Patient Assistance

Other new disciples, however, have proved to be more like diamonds locked deeply in stone. Real effort has been needed to "unearth" them. Donald, a Christian elder, recalls the patience needed to help a woman named Martha. He states: "Although she agreed to study, she always made us wait a long time before getting down to it. Sometimes she would deliberately save jobs that could have been done earlier. Then she asked us to wait until she did them. Sometimes we waited for more than an hour. She hoped we would become discouraged and go away, but every week we tried to cover at least a little

meaningful material. The result? In time her appreciation grew.

"Another difficulty was getting Martha to the meet-

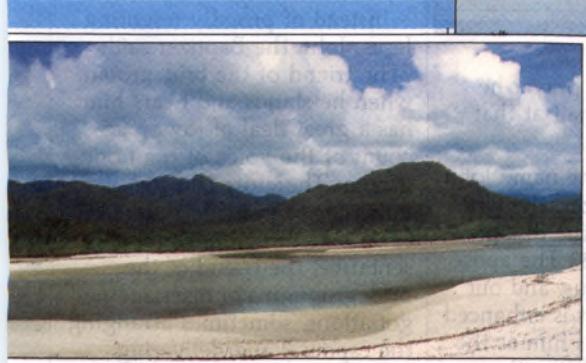


ings. I would bring other Witnesses to her Bible study so that she would feel at ease when she came to the Kingdom Hall. But she delayed and delayed so much that when she finally did come, she knew practically the entire congregation!" Patience paid off. Martha is now baptized and has a fine standing in the congregation.

Pius initially resisted the truth. By the time a missionary couple started a Bible study with him, Pius was in his 70's, was a staunch member of a political party, and was the treasurer of his church. "He argued bitterly about every point we discussed," said the missionaries. "Every week he started off calm, but gradually he got heated up. It was a real battle

...and in a few weeks
...and the people...
...and the people...

**Amid scenes like these,
Kingdom proclaimers find
spiritual diamonds
in Sierra Leone**



every week, and often we felt like throwing up our hands in dismay and giving up on him. The main thing that kept us going back to him was that he always prepared the lesson so thoroughly.

"After about a year of this, Pius announced that he had decided to do some independent investigating. Since he was a retired teacher, he knew how to do research. Every day for two weeks, he climbed the mountain to the university library, where he immersed himself in Bible commentaries and reference books. Afterward he announced: 'I am now convinced that everything you have been telling me is true. God is not a Trinity, there is no hellfire, and the soul is not immortal. Even

some people in my church admit this to be so.' After that, Pius made rapid progress, resigning from both politics and the church. After being baptized, he served as an auxiliary pioneer, spending 60 hours a month in the preaching work, as often as he could until his death in 1987.

"One thing we did not know for a long time," recall the missionaries who taught Pius, "was that his mother had been associated with Jehovah's Witnesses. He recalled attending meetings with her when he was young. But after she died, he went his own way. After his baptism, Pius said: 'My only regret is that my mother can't see me now.' Then his face lit up, and he added: 'But she will see me in the new world!'"

To this day, the search for diamonds and the search for disciples continue. Glossy advertisements boast that "diamonds are forever." Nevertheless, the owner of such an exquisite gem does not get to enjoy it forever because apart from God's provision for salvation, death is the lot of all sinful humans. (John 3:16, 17) The work of Jehovah's Witnesses in Sierra Leone is thus yielding a treasure far more valuable than mere diamonds: servants of God and disciples of Jesus Christ! And Jehovah's Word promises: "He that does the will of God remains forever." —1 John 2:17.

GEMS

From John's Gospel

JEOHOVAH'S spirit inspired the aged apostle John to pen a moving account of Jesus Christ's life and ministry. This Gospel was written in or near Ephesus about 98 C.E. But what is the nature of the account? And what are some of the gems it contains?

Largely Supplementary

John was selective, repeating little that Matthew, Mark, and Luke wrote. Indeed, his eyewitness account is largely supplementary in that over 90 percent of it covers matters not mentioned in the other Gospels. For instance, he alone tells us of Jesus' prehuman existence and that "the Word became flesh." (1:1-14) While the other Gospel writers say that Jesus cleansed the temple at the end of his ministry, John says that Christ also did so at its start. (2:13-17) The aged apostle alone tells us about certain miracles performed by Jesus, such as the changing of water into wine, the raising of dead Lazarus, and the miraculous catch of fish after His resurrection. —2:1-11; 11:38-44; 21:4-14.

All the Gospel writers tell how Jesus instituted the Memorial of his death, but only John shows that Christ gave the apostles a lesson in humility by washing their feet on that night. Moreover, John alone records the heart-to-heart talks

Jesus gave and the prayer he offered in their behalf at that time.—13:1-17:26.

In this Gospel, the name John refers to the Baptizer, the writer calling himself 'the disciple Jesus loved.' (13:23) The apostle surely loved Jesus, and our own love for Christ is enhanced when John portrays him as the Word, the bread of life, the light of the world, the Fine Shepherd, the way, the truth, and the life. (1:1-3, 14; 6:35; 8:12; 10:11; 14:6) This serves John's stated purpose: "These [things] have been written down that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that, because of believing, you may have life by means of his name."—20:31.

Humility and Joy

John's Gospel introduces Jesus as the Word and sin-atoning Lamb and cites miracles proving Him to be "the Holy One of God." (1:1-9:41) Among other things, the account highlights the humility and joy of John the Baptizer. He was Christ's forerunner but said: "The lace of [his] sandal I am not worthy to untie." (1:27) Sandals were tied by means of leather thongs, or laces. A slave might untie the laces of another person's sandals and carry them for him, as this was a menial duty. John the Baptizer thus expressed humility and

awareness of his insignificance in comparison with his Master. A fine lesson, for only the humble are suited for service to Jehovah and his Messianic King!—Psalm 138:6; Proverbs 21:4.

Instead of proudly resenting Jesus, John the Baptizer said: "The friend of the bridegroom, when he stands and hears him, has a great deal of joy on account of the voice of the bridegroom. Therefore this joy of mine has been made full." (3:29) As the groom's representative, the friend of the bridegroom made marriage negotiations, sometimes arranging the espousal and delivering gifts to the bride and the bride-price to her father. This deputy had reason to be glad when his duty was fulfilled. Similarly, John rejoiced in bringing Jesus together with the first members of His bride. (Revelation 21:2, 9) As the services of the friend of the bridegroom lasted only a short time, so John's work soon ended. He kept decreasing, while Jesus went on increasing.—John 3:30.

Jesus' Regard for People

At a well near the city of Sychar, Jesus told a Samaritan woman about symbolic water that imparts eternal life. When his disciples arrived, "they began to wonder because he was speaking with a woman." (4:27) Why such a reaction? Well, the Jews despised the Samaritans and had no dealings with them. (4:9; 8:48) It was also uncommon for a Jewish teacher to talk with a woman in public. But Jesus' compassionate regard for people moved him to give this witness, and because of it, resi-



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dents of the city "began coming to him."—4:28-30.

Regard for people moved Jesus to say: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink." (7:37) Evidently, he thus alluded to a custom added to the eight-day Festival of Booths. Each morning for seven days, a priest drew water from the pool of Siloam and poured it out at the temple's altar. Among other things, this was said to represent the outpouring of the spirit. Beginning at Pentecost 33 C.E., God's spirit impelled Jesus' followers to take life-giving waters to people earth wide. Only from Jehovah, "the source of living water," through Christ can anyone receive eternal life.—Jeremiah 2:13; Isaiah 12:3; John 17:3.

The Fine Shepherd Cares!

Jesus' regard for people is evident in his role as the Fine Shepherd who cares for his sheeplike followers. Even as his death approached, Jesus gave his disciples loving counsel and prayed in their behalf. (10:1-17; 26) Unlike a thief or a plunderer, he enters a sheepfold through the door. (10:1-5) A sheepfold was an enclosure in which sheep were kept for overnight protection from thieves and predatory animals. It had stone walls, perhaps with

thorny branches on top, and an entryway tended by a door-keeper.

The flocks of several shepherds might be kept in the same sheepfold, but the sheep responded only to the voice of their respective shepherd. In his book *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, Fred H. Wight says: "When it becomes necessary to separate several flocks of sheep, one shepherd after another will stand up and call out: 'Tahhoo! Tahhoo!' or a similar call of his own choosing. The sheep lift up their heads, and after a general scramble, begin following each one his own shepherd. They are thoroughly familiar with their own shepherd's tone of voice. Strangers have often used the same call, but their attempts to get the sheep to follow them always fail." Interestingly, Jesus said: "My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them everlasting life." (10:27, 28) Both the "little flock" and the "other sheep" respond to Jesus' voice, follow his lead, and enjoy his tender care.—Luke 12:32; John 10:16.

God's Ever-Faithful Son

Christ was ever faithful to God and exemplary as a loving shepherd throughout his earthly life. His compassion was also

manifested in post-resurrection appearances. It was compassionate regard for others that then moved Jesus to urge Peter to feed His sheep.—18:1-21:25.

As a victim of impalement, Jesus set us the prime example of faithfulness unto death. One ignominy he underwent in fulfillment of prophecy was that soldiers 'apportioned his garments among themselves.' (Psalm 22:18) They cast lots to determine who would get his fine inner garment (Greek, *khiton*'), woven without a seam. (19:23, 24) Such a tunic might be woven of wool or linen in a single piece and could be white or of varied colors. Often sleeveless, it was worn next to the skin and reached to the knees or even the ankles. Of course, Jesus was not materialistic, but he did wear such a garment of good quality, his seamless tunic.

During one of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances, he greeted his disciples with the words: "May you have peace." (20:19) Among the Jews, this was a common salutation. (Matthew 10:12, 13) For many, the use of such words may have meant little. But not so with Jesus, for earlier he had told his followers: "I leave you peace, I give you my peace." (John 14:27) The peace that Jesus gave his disciples was based on their faith in him as God's Son and served to calm their hearts and minds.

Similarly, we can enjoy "the peace of God." May we cherish this incomparable tranquillity resulting from a close relationship with Jehovah through his beloved Son.—Philippians 4:6, 7.

How to Help Depressed Ones Regain Joy

EPAPHRODITUS, a first-century Christian disciple, was depressed. He had been sent to attend to the needs of the imprisoned apostle Paul but had fallen seriously ill. Though Epaphroditus had recovered, he was depressed because his home congregation, which had sent him to Rome, had "heard he had fallen sick." (Philippians 2:25, 26) Being so far away but wanting to ease their mind about this brought on depression. Likely, he also felt that they considered him a failure. How could he be helped to regain his joy?

Epaphroditus was sent back to his home in Philippi carrying a letter from the apostle Paul. Therein, Paul instructed the congregation: "Give him the customary welcome in the Lord with all joy; and keep holding men of that sort dear." (Philippians 2:27-30) Philippian Christians were urged to draw Epaphroditus close to them in a way that would befit the distinctive quality of fellowship typical of the Christian congregation. Their consoling words would show him that he was highly valued, yes, 'held dear.' This joyful attention would go a long way in helping him to find relief from his mental depression.

This example shows that although Christians as a whole "rejoice in the Lord," some among them suffer various forms of depression. (Philippians 4:4) Severe mental depression is a serious emotional disorder

that has even led to suicide. At times, brain chemistry and other physical factors are involved. Nevertheless, depression can often be reduced through discerning help provided by others. Thus, Paul gave the exhortation: "Speak consolingly to the depressed souls." (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses should, therefore, joyfully provide emotional support to depressed souls. This responsibility was recognized by the modern Christian organization way back in 1903, for *The Watch Tower* then said of depressed souls, or faint-hearted ones: "Faint-hearted and weak, would need aid, support, encouragement." But how can you help depressed souls?

First, by showing "fellow feeling," you may be able to help the depressed one to reveal the "anxious care" in his heart. Thereafter, "the good word" from you may help him to rejoice. (1 Peter 3:8; Proverbs 12:25) Just letting him speak freely and sense your concern may bring much relief. "I had a couple of friends I could really pour my heart out to," explained Mary, a single Christian who struggled with depression. "I needed someone to listen." Having someone with whom to share innermost thoughts about the tribulations of life can mean very much.

More is needed, however, than just listening and giving such superficial advice as, "Look on the bright side of life" or, "Think in a positive way." Such statements could betray a lack of empathy and be entirely out of place when another person is depressed, even as Proverbs 25:20 indicates in saying: "He that is removing a garment on a cold day is as . . . a singer with songs upon a gloomy heart." Unrealistically optimistic remarks may also leave the depressed individual feeling even more perturbed. Why? Because such efforts do not address the reasons for his depression.

Strengthen With Words

A severely depressed person feels not simply sad but probably worthless and without hope. The Greek word translated "depressed souls" literally means "ones of little soul." One Greek scholar defines the word in this way: "One who is labouring under such trouble, that his heart sinks within him." Thus, his emotional resources have dried up, and his self-esteem has sagged.—Compare Proverbs 17:22.

The patriarch Job said: "I would strengthen you with the words of my mouth." (Job 16:5) The Hebrew word for "strengthen" is sometimes rendered "fortify" or "reinforce." It is used to describe how the temple was 'made strong' by means of structural repairs. (Isaiah 41:10; Nahum 2:1; 2 Chronicles 24:13) Your words must skillfully rebuild the depressed person's self-esteem, brick by brick, as it were. Doing this requires that you appeal to his "power of reason." (Romans 12:1) The 1903 issue of *The Watch Tower* cited earlier said regarding depressed ones: "Lacking . . . self-esteem, they need to be pushed to the front a little, in order to bring out what talents they really possess, for their own encouragement and for the blessing also of the entire household of faith."

The Bible example of Elkanah and his depressed wife Hannah illustrates how you can strengthen with words, as Job did. Elkanah had two wives. One of them, Peninnah, had several children, but Hannah was barren. Likely, Hannah considered herself worthless. (Compare Genesis 30:1.) As if this load were not heavy enough, Peninnah vexed her to the point that she broke down in tears and lost her appetite. Though Elkanah was unaware of the depth of her distress, on seeing her situation, he inquired: "Hannah, why do you weep, and why do you not eat, and why does your heart feel bad?"—1 Samuel 1:1-8.

Elkanah's kindly, unaccusing questions gave Hannah opportunity to put her feelings into words. Whether she replied or not, she was helped to analyze *why* she likely felt worthless. So, too, a depressed soul may say, 'I am just a bad person.' You could ask, 'Why do you feel that way?' Then listen carefully as he unburdens to you what he feels in his heart.—Compare Proverbs 20:5.

Elkanah then asked Hannah this very strengthening question: "Am I not better to you than ten sons?" Hannah was reminded of his affection for her, despite her barrenness. He considered her precious, and she could therefore conclude: 'Well, I am not so worthless after all. I really do have the deep love of my husband!' His words fortified Hannah, for she began to eat and went on to the temple.—1 Samuel 1:8, 9.

Just as Elkanah was specific and drew his wife's attention to a legitimate reason for her to feel better about herself, those who wish to help depressed persons must do likewise. For example, a Christian named Naomi said this about what helped her to regain her joy: "Some of the friends praised the way I had raised my son, the way I kept my home, and even the way I kept up my appearance despite my depression. This encouragement meant so much!" Yes, deserved commendation helps a depressed soul to see his or her good qualities and make a proper estimate of self-worth.

If your wife is depressed, why not seek to build her up in harmony with the words of Proverbs 31:28, 29? There we read: "Her owner rises up, and he praises her. There are many daughters that have shown capableness, but you—you have ascended above them all." Still, a depressed wife may not accept such an assessment, since she may feel like a failure because of being unable to care for household tasks

as well as she thinks she should. By reminding her of the woman she is inside, and what she was like before experiencing depression, however, you may be able to convince her that your praise is not empty flattery. You might also acknowledge that what she now does represents a supreme effort. You could say: 'I know what it took for you to do this. How commendable that you are putting forth that much effort!' Receiving the approval and praise of one's mate and children, those who know one the best, is vital for rebuilding self-esteem.—Compare 1 Corinthians 7:33, 34.

Use of Bible examples may help a depressed person to see what changes in thinking may be necessary. For instance, perhaps an individual is overly sensitive about the opinions of others. You might discuss the example of Epaphroditus and ask: 'Why do you think he became depressed when he learned that his home congregation had heard of his sickness? Was he really a failure? Why did Paul say to hold him dear? Did the real value of Epaphroditus as a person depend on the privilege of service he held?' Such questions may help the depressed Christian to make personal application and realize that he is not a failure.

"Support the Weak"

The Bible urges: "Support the weak." (1 Thessalonians 5:14) The existence of a network of Christian friends who can provide practical care is another advantage of true religion. Real friends are those "born for when there is distress," and they truly stick with a depressed person. (Proverbs 17:17) When the apostle Paul felt "laid low" and had "fears within," he was comforted "by the presence of Titus." (2 Corinthians 7:5, 6) Similarly, warmhearted visits and telephone calls at appropriate times are likely to be deeply appreciated

by depressed souls. You might ask if there is any way you can give practical help, such as running errands, doing housework, or the like.* A Christian named Maria says: "When I was depressed, a friend wrote to me several times and always included encouraging scriptures. I would read the letter over and over, crying as I read it. Such letters were like gold to me."

After encouraging the congregation to help "the depressed souls," Paul says: "Be long-suffering toward all. See that no one renders injury for injury to anyone else." (1 Thessalonians 5:14, 15) Patience is vital, for because of mental pain, negative thinking, and exhaustion from a lack of sleep, a depressed person may respond with "wild talk," as did Job. (Job 6:2, 3) Rachelle, a Christian whose mother became seriously depressed, revealed: "Many times Mom would say something very hateful. Most of these times, I tried to remind myself of the kind of person Mom *really* is—loving, kind, and generous. I learned that depressed persons say many things that they do not mean. The worst thing that one can do is to return evil words or actions."

Some mature Christian women may especially be in a position to bring relief to other women suffering emotional anguish. (Compare 1 Timothy 5:9, 10.) These capable Christian women can make it a point to speak with such ones consolingly on fitting occasions. At times it is more appropriate that mature Christian sisters rather than brothers continue to help a woman. By organizing matters and supervising them properly, Christian elders can see to it that the depressed souls receive the needed care.

* See the article "Defeating Depression—How Others Can Help" in *Awake!* of November 8, 1987, pages 12-16.

HOW TO SPEAK CONSOLINGLY

□ LISTEN CAREFULLY—With discerning questions 'draw up' the feelings of the person's heart. Be quick to listen and slow to reach any conclusions before having the full picture.

—Proverbs 20:5; 18:13.

□ SHOW EMPATHY—"Fellow feeling" should join with 'tender compassion' as you try to identify emotionally with the depressed one. 'Weep with one who weeps.'—1 Peter 3:8; Romans 12:15.

□ BE LONG-SUFFERING—It may take repeated discussions, so be patient. Overlook "wild talk" that the depressed one may speak because of frustration.—Job 6:3.

□ STRENGTHEN WITH WORDS—Help the depressed one to see his or her good qualities. Give specific commendation. Show that problems, past bad experiences, or shortcomings do not determine one's personal worth. Explain why God loves and cares about him or her.—Job 16:5.

Elders With Educated Tongues

Especially must spiritual shepherds have "knowledge and insight" so that they will "know how to talk to encourage the weary." (Jeremiah 3:15; Isaiah 50:4, Beck) If an elder is not careful, however, he might unintentionally make a depressed person feel worse. For instance, Job's three companions supposedly went to "sympathize with him and comfort him." But their words, motivated by a wrong view of Job's predicament, served to 'crush' him rather than comfort him.—Job 2:11; 8:1, 5, 6; 11:1, 13-19; 19:2.

Various articles in Watch Tower publications have outlined principles that can be applied in counseling individuals.* Most elders have applied such material. Yet, in some cases thoughtless statements by elders—either on a personal level or in talks—have been very harmful. So let elders not 'speak thoughtlessly as with the stabs of a sword' but with the 'healing tongue of the wise ones.' (Proverbs 12:18) If an elder thinks of the possible impact of his remarks before he speaks, his words can be soothing. Therefore, elders, be quick to listen and slow to draw conclusions without having the whole picture.—Proverbs 18:13.

* See the articles "An Educated Tongue—'To Encourage the Weary'" in *The Watchtower* of June 1, 1982, and "Spiritual Words" for the Mentally Distressed" in the issue of November 15, 1988.

When elders take a genuine interest in depressed persons, such individuals feel loved and appreciated. Such unselfish care may move these individuals to overlook any discouraging remarks. (James 3:2) Depressed persons are often overwhelmed with guilt, and elders can help them to get a balanced view of matters. Even when a serious sin has been committed, the spiritual care provided by the elders can help 'what is lame to be healed.'—Hebrews 12:13.

When depressed persons feel that their prayers are ineffective, elders can pray with them and for them. By reading with them Bible-based articles dealing with depression, elders can 'grease' these individuals with soothing spiritual words. (James 5:14, 15) Elders can also help a depressed one to take Scriptural steps to resolve any personal differences he or she may have with someone, if this is a problem. (Compare Matthew 5:23, 24; 18:15-17.) Often, such conflicts, especially in the family, are at the root of depression.

Realize that recovery takes time. Even Elkanah's loving efforts did not immediately relieve Hannah of her depression. Her own prayers as well as reassurances by the high priest finally led to relief. (1 Samuel 1:12-18) Hence, be patient if there is slow response. Of course, elders in

general are not doctors and may therefore find their efforts limited in some cases. They, along with members of the depressed person's family, may need to encourage that one to seek professional help. If necessary, elders or family members can clearly explain to any professional the importance of respecting the depressed one's religious convictions.

Until God's new world, no one will have perfect physical, mental, or emotional health. In the meantime, any Christian who loses his joy because of depression can draw strength not only from the Christian congregation but also from our heavenly Father, "who comforts the depressed." —2 Corinthians 7:6, *New American Standard Bible*.

Insight on the News

Selfish Motive

Soon after coming into power in 1933, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler negotiated a concordat with the Catholic Church. This concordat gave Hitler the right to veto the nomination of German bishops in exchange for certain privileges granted to the church. But which of the two parties was to benefit most? A new French Catholic encyclopedia gives a straight answer to this question.

"Pope Pius XI himself . . . considered it absolutely essential to ensure the safeguarding of the German church by means of a concordat. This was negotiated between April and July 1933. Although formally favoring the Catholic Church, this concordat was actually a success for Hitler, as it granted recognition to his regime. Moreover, since Hitler constantly violated it, the pope was accused of lulling Catholic consciences and disarming the bishops by making a fool's deal."

Today, especially in France and Germany, the Catholic Church is openly criticized for the compromises of its hierarchy during the Nazi regime. These problems develop when church leaders fail to heed the words and example of Jesus Christ, who said of his true followers: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world."

(John 17:16) True, such compromises by church leaders have curried the favor of the political element, but what has this done for their relationship with God? When writing to fellow Christians, Jesus' disciple James warned: "Friendship with the world is enmity with God." —James 4:4.

Lottery Losers

The odds are about 14 million to 1 against your winning the lottery. Yet, millions of people regularly play government-sponsored lotteries, reports *The Globe and Mail*, a Canadian newspaper. Research shows that lotteries have no appeal other than the hope of winning the jackpot, which is often fueled by advertising that focuses "on the prize and on the perils of failing to buy a ticket." Since the lottery's objective is to make profits and produce few winners, sponsors make daily pitches in "hopes of establishing habitual purchases."

Is this working? Yes! Reporting in *American Health* magazine on the increase of gambling among teenagers, Dr. Durand Jacobs points to lotteries as their introduction to gambling "because they're cheap, accessible and promoted as okay." He adds: "The lottery is the Pied Piper that leads adolescents into oth-

er forms of serious gambling behavior." One Canadian authority on compulsive gambling states: "Anyone who would try to tell you that lotteries are not gambling is either acting stupid or they are stupid. . . . We are spending hundreds of millions of dollars on lotteries in the hopes of winning something. It is gambling."

Lotteries promote a love of money. Dr. Marvin Steinberg, president of the Connecticut Council on Compulsive Gambling, observed that problem teenage gamblers used their lunch monies, stole money, and even shoplifted to support their gambling habit. True, indeed, are the words of the apostle Paul: "The love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have . . . stabbed themselves all over with many pains." —1 Timothy 6:9, 10.

In Our Next Issue

■ A "Peace Epidemic"?

■ "The Word of God Is Alive and Exerts Power"

■ "I Mounted Up With Wings Like Eagles"

Questions From Readers

- Should we conclude from Matthew 7:13, 14 and Luke 13:24 that even in the resurrection, most humans will reject true worship?

No, these verses do not support that conclusion. Rather, they relate particularly to gaining life in the heavenly Kingdom.

Jesus' words at Matthew 7:13, 14 are part of the Sermon on the Mount. He said: "Go in through the narrow gate; because broad and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are the ones going in through it; whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it."

Much of what Jesus said on this occasion related especially to the heavenly Kingdom. For example, he began with the words: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need, since *the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them*." He said that the pure in heart would "see God" and that "the kingdom of the heavens" belongs to those "persecuted for righteousness' sake." (Matthew 5:3, 8, 10) Later in that same discourse, Jesus spoke of the broad road leading off into destruction and the cramped road leading to life. In part, he added: "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into *the kingdom of the heavens*, but the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will."

—Matthew 7:13, 14, 21.

The meaning of Luke 13:24 is similar, as shown by the context. Jesus gave two illustrations about "the kingdom of God." Later, he was asked: "Lord, are those who are being saved few?" Jesus replied: "Exert yourselves vigorously to get in through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will seek to get in but will not be able." "Many" refers to people who

begged to be let in after a door was shut and locked. These were "workers of unrighteousness" who did not qualify to be with "Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God." The "many" had thought they would be first "in the kingdom of God," but they actually would be last, evidently meaning that they would not be in it at all. —Luke 13:18-30.

The context shows that Jesus was dealing with entry into God's heavenly Kingdom. Jewish leaders back then had long enjoyed a privileged position, with access to God's Word. They felt that they were spiritually rich and were righteous in God's sight, in contrast with the common people, whom they held in low esteem. (John 9:24-34) Yet, Jesus said that tax collectors and harlots who accepted his message and repented could have God's approval. —Compare Matthew 21:23-32; Luke 16:14-31.

Common people who became Jesus' disciples were in line to be accepted as spiritual sons when the heavenly calling did open up at Pentecost 33 C.E. (Hebrews 10:19, 20) Though vast multitudes heard Jesus, those who accepted him and later gained the heavenly hope were few. But the little flock of spirit-begotten humans receiving that reward could be compared to Jacob reclining at a table in heaven with Jehovah (the Greater Abraham) and his Son (pictured by Isaac). That certainly was worth exerting oneself for vigorously, but most who heard Jesus did not do so.

Consequently, we can see from the context in both instances that

Jesus' comments (about few being on the cramped road leading to life and being saved) related primarily to having God's approval at that time when He was holding out the hope of heavenly life. Relatively few who heard the message of truth and learned what was required responded and proved faithful.—Matthew 22:14; 24:13; John 6:60-66.

It is interesting that even today, when the whole Bible is available and there is abundant fulfillment of divine prophecies about the last days, comparatively few respond to the Christian message and endure in serving Jehovah. This is in line with Jesus' illustration about different soils. He said that some would hear "the word of the kingdom," but Satan would snatch away what was sown. Others would accept the word with joy but in time would fail because of tribulation or persecution. Yet others would prove unfruitful because of "the anxiety of this system of things and the deceptive power of riches."—Matthew 13:18-23.

We can be sure that it will be much different when millions upon millions are resurrected during the Judgment Day. Then Satan will not be free to snatch away seeds of truth sown in their hearts. They will not have to cope with persecution or the anxieties of the present wicked system. They will be taught in a righteous environment, surrounded by the miraculous work of God, including the resurrection of the dead and the healing of the nations. Granted, some will not respond even then. (Compare John 11:45-53.) But there is good reason to think that the majority will get the sense of the word, respond to it, and be saved.



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