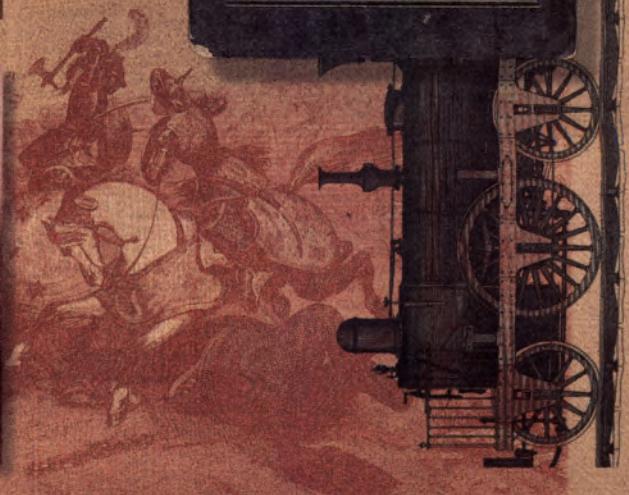
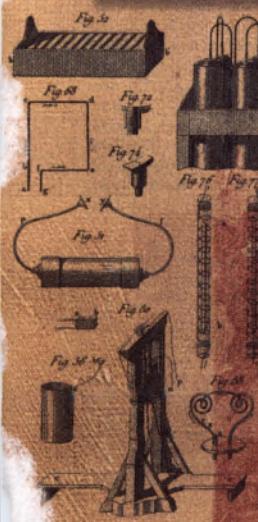


DECEMBER 1, 1994

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

## Uncovering the Roots of Atheism



# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these 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 God's 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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# THE ROOTS OF ATHEISM

**W**E LIVE on a crisis-filled planet; a momentary glance at newspaper headlines confirms that fact each day. The desperate state of our world has caused many to question the existence of God. Some, claiming to be atheist, even deny his existence. Is that true of you?

Belief or disbelief in God can profoundly affect your outlook on the future. Without God, the survival of the human race is entirely in man's hands—a bleak thought, considering man's destructive potential. If you do believe that God exists, then you likely accept that life on this planet does have a purpose—a purpose that may yet be realized.

Although denials of God's existence have been sporadic throughout history, it is only in recent centuries that the popularity of atheism has spread. Do you know why?

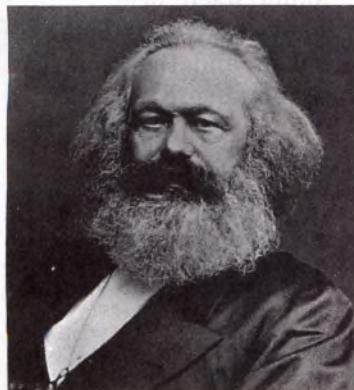
## Perceiving the Roots

A towering tree is an impressive sight. Yet, the eye merely perceives the leaves, branches, and trunk. The roots—the life source of the tree—lie hidden deep in the ground.

It is much the same with atheism. Like a lofty tree, the denial of God's existence grew to an impressive stature by the 19th century. Could life and the universe exist without a supernatural First Cause? Is the worship of such a Creator a waste of time? The answers from the leading philosophers of the day were loud and clear. "Just as we no longer need a moral code, neither do we need religion," declared Friedrich Nietzsche. "Religion is the dream of the human mind," asserted Ludwig Feuerbach. And Karl Marx, whose writings would have profound influence in coming decades, boldly stated: "I want to increase the mind's freedom from the chains of religion."

Multitudes were impressed. What they perceived, however, were simply the leaves, branches, and trunk of atheism. The roots were in place and sprouting long before the 19th century began. Surprisingly, the modern growth of atheism was fostered by the religions of Christendom! How so? Because of their corruption, these religious institutions provoked a great deal of disillusionment and protest.

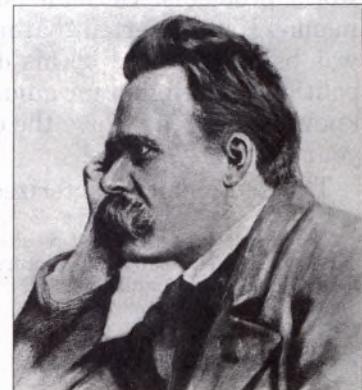
*Karl Marx*



*Ludwig Feuerbach*



*Friedrich Nietzsche*



## The Seeds Are Sown

During the Middle Ages, the Catholic Church had a stranglehold on its subjects. "The hierarchy seemed ill equipped to deal with the spiritual needs of the people," notes *The Encyclopedia Americana*. "The higher clergy, notably the bishops, were recruited from the nobility and saw their office mainly as a source of prestige and power."

Some, such as John Calvin and Martin Luther, tried to reform the church. Their methods, however, were not always Christ-like; intolerance and bloodshed marked the Reformation. (Compare Matthew 26:52.) So vicious were some attacks that three centuries later Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, wrote: "It would be more pardonable to believe in no god at all, than to blaspheme him by the atrocious attributes of Calvin."\*

Clearly, the Reformation did not restore pure worship. Yet, it reduced the power of the Catholic Church. No longer did the Vatican hold a monopoly on religious faith. Many joined newly formed Protestant sects. Others, disillusioned by religion, made the human mind their object of worship. A liberal attitude ensued, allowing for diverse opinions about God.

## Skepticism Sprouts

By the 18th century, rational thinking was commonly extolled as the panacea for world problems. German philosopher Immanuel Kant asserted that man's progress was being hindered by his dependence on politics and religion for guidance. "Dare to know!" he urged. "Have the courage to use your own intelligence!"

This attitude characterized the Enlight-

\* The Protestant sects that resulted from the Reformation retained many unscriptural doctrines. See *Awake!* issues of August 22, 1989, pages 16-20, and September 8, 1989, pages 23-7.

enment, also known as the Age of Reason. Lasting through the 18th century, this period was marked by an obsessive quest for knowledge. "Skepticism replaced blind faith," says the book *Milestones of History*. "All the old orthodoxies were questioned."

One 'old orthodoxy' to come under scrutiny was religion. "Men changed their outlook on religion," says the book *The Universal History of the World*. "They were no longer satisfied with the promise of rewards in heaven; they were demanding a better life on earth. They began to lose their faith in the supernatural." Indeed, most Enlightenment philosophers held religion in contempt. In particular, they blamed the power-hungry leaders of the Catholic Church for keeping people in ignorance.

Dissatisfied with religion, many of these philosophers became deists; they believed in God but maintained that he had no interest in man.\* A few became outspoken atheists, such as philosopher Paul Henri Thiry Holbach, who claimed that religion was a "source of divisions, madness, and crimes." As the years passed, many more grew weary of Christendom and shared Holbach's sentiments.

How ironic that Christendom spurred on the growth of atheism! "The Churches were the soil of atheism," writes theology professor Michael J. Buckley. "The Western conscience found itself deeply scandalized and disgusted by confessional religions. The Churches and the sects had devastated Europe, engineered massacres,

\* Deists claimed that, much like a watchmaker, God set his creation in motion and then turned his back on it all, remaining coldly uninvolved. According to the book *The Modern Heritage*, deists "believed that atheism was an error born of despair but that the authoritarian structure of the Catholic Church and the rigidity and intolerance of its doctrines were even more deplorable."

demanded religious resistance or revolution, attempted to excommunicate or to depose monarchs."

### Atheism Reaches Its Full Height

By the 19th century, the denial of God was out in the open and thriving. Philosophers and scientists had no qualms about boldly proclaiming their views. "Our ene-

my is God," declared one outspoken atheist. "Hatred of God is the beginning of wisdom. If mankind would make true progress, it must be on the basis of atheism."

However, a subtle shift occurred during the 20th century. Denial of God became less militant; a different sort of atheism began to spread, affecting even those who profess belief in God.

## THE 20TH-CENTURY DENIAL OF GOD

*"People are resigned to the absence of God and are organizing their lives independently, for good or for ill, and without any reference to God."*

—One Hundred Years of Debate Over God—The Sources of Modern Atheism.

**T**HOUGH it is at first impressive, a towering tree is eventually regarded as commonplace. Its presence is familiar; its height is no longer awe-inspiring.

It is similar with atheism. Though it provoked much debate during the 19th century, the denial of God's existence is neither shocking nor disturbing today. An era of tolerance has allowed atheism to settle into peaceful coexistence with belief in God.

Not that most people deny God outright; on the contrary, poll results from 11 countries throughout the Americas, Europe, and Asia reveal that, on the average, little more than 2 percent claim to be atheists. Nevertheless, an atheistic spirit is prevalent—even among many who believe that God exists. How can this be?

### Denying God's Authority

"Sometimes atheism refers simply to the practical rejection or ignoring of God," notes *The Encyclopedia Americana*. For this reason, *The New Shorter Oxford En-*

*glish Dictionary* gives the following second definition of "atheist": "A person who denies God morally; a godless person."—Italics ours.

Yes, atheism may entail a denial either of God's existence or of his authority or of both. The Bible alludes to this atheistic spirit at Titus 1:16: "They profess to acknowledge God, but deny him by their actions."—*The New English Bible*; compare Psalm 14:1.

Such rejection of God's authority can be traced back to the first human pair. Eve acknowledged God's existence; yet, she wanted "to be like God, knowing good and bad." The implication was that she could 'be her own boss' and create her own moral code. Adam later joined Eve in this denial of God's authority.—*Genesis 3:5, 6*.

Is this attitude prevalent today? Yes. A subtle atheism is manifested in a quest for independence. "People today are tired of living under the eye of God," observes the book *One Hundred Years of Debate Over God*

## STRENGTHENING THE ROOTS OF ATHEISM

In the middle of the 18th century, philosopher Denis Diderot was commissioned to translate a single-volume encyclopedia from English into French. However, he far exceeded his employer's expectations. Diderot spent about three decades compiling his *Encyclopédie*, a 28-volume work that captured the spirit of the age.

Although the *Encyclopédie* contained much practical information, its focus was on human wisdom. According to the set *Great Ages of Man*, it "dared to preach the [philosophers'] radical credo that man could improve his lot if he replaced faith with reason as his guiding principle." Men-

tion of God was conspicuously absent. "By their choice of subjects," says the book *The Modern Heritage*, "the editors made it clear that religion was not one of the things men needed to know." Not surprisingly, the church tried to suppress the *Encyclopédie*. The attorney general denounced it as subversive to politics, morals, and religion.

Despite its enemies, Diderot's *Encyclopédie* was requested by some 4,000 persons—an astounding number, considering its exorbitant price. It was simply a matter of time before this atheistic undercurrent would blossom into full-fledged denial of God.

—*The Sources of Modern Atheism.* "They . . . prefer to live in freedom." The Bible's moral code is renounced as impractical, unrealistic. The thinking of many is much like that of the Egyptian Pharaoh who defiantly declared: "Who is Jehovah, so that I should obey his voice . . . ? I do not know Jehovah at all." He rejected Jehovah's authority.—Exodus 5:2.

### Christendom's Denial of God

The most shocking denial of God's authority comes from Christendom's clergy, who have substituted man-made traditions for pure Bible truths. (Compare Matthew 15:9.) Additionally, they have backed the bloodiest wars of the 20th century, thus rejecting the Biblical command to display genuine love.—John 13:35.

The clergy have also denied God by turning their backs on his moral standards—as evidenced, for example, by a steady stream of lawsuits against pedophile priests. The situation of Christendom resembles that of ancient Israel and Judah. "The land is filled with bloodshed and the city is full of crookedness," the prophet Ezekiel was told, "for they have said, 'Jehovah has left the

land, and Jehovah is not seeing.'" (Ezekiel 9:9; compare Isaiah 29:15.) Little wonder that many have abandoned Christendom's churches altogether! But must they abandon belief in God?

### Valid Reasons for Atheism?

Whether they have observed the hypocrisy of religion or not, many atheists simply cannot reconcile belief in God with the suffering in the world. Simone de Beauvoir once said: "It was easier for me to think of a world without a creator than of a creator loaded with all the contradictions of the world."

Do the world's injustices—including those instigated by hypocritical religionists—prove that there is no God? Consider: If a knife is used to threaten, injure, or even murder an innocent person, does this prove that the knife had no designer? Does it not rather show that the object was put to a wrong use? Likewise, much of human grief gives evidence that humans are misusing their God-given abilities as well as the earth itself.

Some, however, feel that it is illogical to believe in God, since we cannot see him. But

what about air, sound waves, and odors? We cannot see any of these things, yet we know they exist. Our lungs, ears, and noses tell us so. Surely, we believe in what cannot be seen if we have evidence.

After contemplating the physical evidence—including electrons, protons, atoms, amino acids, and the complex brain—natural scientist Irving William Knobloch was moved to say: “I believe in God because to me His Divine existence is the only logical explanation for things as they are.” (Compare Psalm 104:24.) Similarly, physiologist Marlin Books Kreider states: “Both as an ordinary human being, and also as a man devoting his life to scientific study and research, I have no doubt at all about the existence of God.”

These men are not alone. According to physics professor Henry Margenau, “if you take the top-notch scientists, you find very few atheists among them.” Neither the advances of science nor the failure of religion need force us to abandon belief in a Creator. Let us examine why.

### The Contrast of True Religion

In 1803, United States president Thomas Jefferson wrote: “To the corruptions of Christianity, I am, indeed, opposed; but not to the genuine precepts of Jesus himself.” Yes, there is a difference between Christendom and Christianity. Many of Christendom’s tenets are founded upon the traditions of men. In contrast, true Christianity bases its beliefs solely upon the Bible. Thus, Paul wrote to the first-century Colossians that they should acquire “accurate knowledge,” “wisdom,” and “spiritual comprehension.”—Colossians 1:9, 10.

This is what we should expect of genuine Christians, for Jesus commanded his followers: “Make disciples of people of all the

nations, baptizing them . . . , teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.”—Matthew 28:19, 20.

Today, Jehovah’s Witnesses are carrying out this command in 231 lands around the world. They have translated the Bible into 12 languages and have printed well over 74,000,000 copies. Moreover, through a home Bible study program, they are presently helping over 4,500,000 persons to ‘observe all the things Jesus commanded.’

This educational program is having far-reaching results. It brings true enlightenment, for it is based, not on man’s thoughts, but on God’s wisdom. (Proverbs 4:18) Furthermore, it is helping people from all nations and races to do something that man’s “Enlightenment” could never accomplish—to put on a “new personality” that enables them to develop genuine love for one another.—Colossians 3:9, 10.

True religion is triumphing in our 20th century. It does not deny God—neither his existence nor his authority. We invite you to see this for yourself by visiting Jehovah’s Witnesses at one of their Kingdom Halls.



# THE RIGHTFUL PLACE OF JEHOVAH'S WORSHIP IN OUR LIVES

*"All day long I will bless you, and I will praise your name to time indefinite, even forever." —PSALM 145:2.*

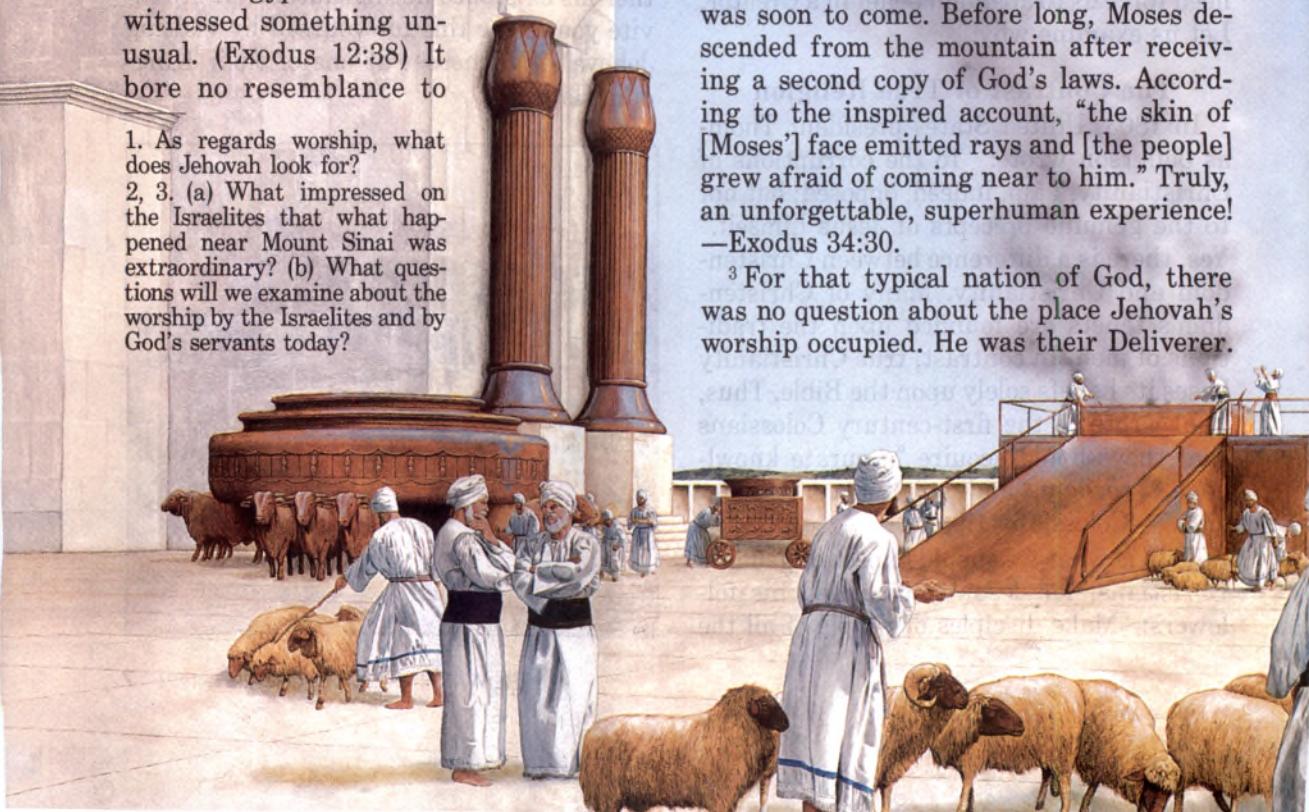
**I** JEHOVAH your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion." (Exodus 20:5) Moses heard that declaration from Jehovah, and he later repeated it when addressing the nation of Israel. (Deuteronomy 5:9) There was no doubt in Moses' mind that Jehovah God looked for His servants to worship Him exclusively.

<sup>2</sup> Encamped near Mount Sinai, the Israelites and the "vast mixed company" who had left Egypt with them witnessed something unusual. (Exodus 12:38) It bore no resemblance to

1. As regards worship, what does Jehovah look for?
- 2, 3. (a) What impressed on the Israelites that what happened near Mount Sinai was extraordinary? (b) What questions will we examine about the worship by the Israelites and by God's servants today?

the worship of the gods of Egypt, who were now humiliated by the ten blows, or plagues. As Jehovah manifested his presence to Moses, fear-inspiring phenomena occurred: thunder, lightning, and the deafening sound of a horn that made the whole camp tremble. Next came fire and smoke as the whole mountain quaked. (Exodus 19:16-20; Hebrews 12:18-21) If any Israelite needed further proof that what was happening was extraordinary, that was soon to come. Before long, Moses descended from the mountain after receiving a second copy of God's laws. According to the inspired account, "the skin of [Moses'] face emitted rays and [the people] grew afraid of coming near to him." Truly, an unforgettable, superhuman experience! —Exodus 34:30.

<sup>3</sup> For that typical nation of God, there was no question about the place Jehovah's worship occupied. He was their Deliverer.



They owed their very lives to him. He was also their Lawgiver. But did they keep the worship of Jehovah in first place? And what about God's modern-day servants? What place does Jehovah's worship hold in their lives?—Romans 15:4.

### Israel's Worship of Jehovah

<sup>4</sup> If you had had a bird's-eye view of Israel encamped in the wilderness, what would you have seen? A vast, but orderly, array of tents housing possibly three million or more people, grouped according to three-tribe divisions to the north, south, east, and west. Peering closer, you would also have noticed another grouping nearer the middle of the camp. These four smaller clusters of tents housed the families of the tribe of Levi. At the very center of the camp, in an area cordoned off by a cloth wall, was a unique structure. This was the "tent of meeting," or tabernacle, which "wise-hearted" Israelites had built according to Jehovah's plan.—Numbers 1:52, 53; 2:3, 10, 17, 18, 25; Exodus 35:10.

<sup>5</sup> At each of about 40 campsites during their wilderness trek, Israel erected the tabernacle, and it became the focus of their encampment. (Numbers, chapter 33) Fittingly, the Bible describes Jehovah as dwelling among his people at the very center of their camp. His glory filled the tabernacle. (Exodus 29:43-46; 40:34; Numbers 5:3; 11:20; 16:3) The book *Our Living Bible* comments: "This portable shrine was of the utmost importance, since it created a religious rallying-centre for the tribes. It thus kept them united during the long years of wandering in the desert and made concerted action possible." More than that, the

4. What was the layout of Israel's camp during their wilderness sojourn, and what was at the center of the camp?

5. What purpose did the tabernacle serve in Israel?

tabernacle served as a constant reminder that the Israelites' worship of their Creator was central to their lives.

<sup>6</sup> After the Israelites arrived in the Promised Land, the tabernacle continued to be the focus of Israel's worship. (Joshua 18:1; 1 Samuel 1:3) In time, King David proposed building a permanent structure. This proved to be the temple, constructed later by his son Solomon. (2 Samuel 7:1-10) At its inauguration a cloud descended to indicate Jehovah's acceptance of that building. "I have successfully built a house of lofty abode for you," Solomon prayed, "an established place for you to dwell in to time indefinite." (1 Kings 8:12, 13; 2 Chronicles 6:2) The newly constructed temple now became the hub for the nation's devotions.

<sup>7</sup> Three times a year, all Israelite males went up to Jerusalem to attend joyous celebrations at the temple in recognition of God's blessing. Appropriately, these reunions were designated "seasonal festivals of Jehovah," focusing attention on God's worship. (Leviticus 23:2, 4) Devout women attended along with other members of the family.—1 Samuel 1:3-7; Luke 2:41-44.

<sup>8</sup> The inspired psalmists eloquently acknowledged how prominently worship figured in their lives. "How lovely your grand tabernacle is, O Jehovah of armies!" sang the sons of Korah. They certainly were not lauding a mere edifice. Rather, they raised their voices in praise of Jehovah God, declaring: "My own heart and my very flesh cry out joyfully to the living God." The Levites' service brought them great happiness. "Happy are those dwelling in your house!" they proclaimed. "They still keep on

6, 7. What structure for worship replaced the tabernacle, and how did it serve the nation of Israel?

8. How does Psalm 84:1-12 testify to the importance of the worship of Jehovah?

praising you." In fact, all of Israel could sing: "Happy are the men whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways. . . .

They will walk on from vital energy to vital energy; each one appears to God in Zion." Though an Israelite's journey to Jerusalem may have been long and tiring, his strength was renewed as he reached the capital. His heart filled with joy as he extolled his privilege of worshiping Jehovah: "For a day in your courtyards is better than a thousand elsewhere. I have chosen to stand at the threshold in the house of my God rather than to move around in the tents of wickedness. . . . O Jehovah of armies, happy is the man that is trusting in you." Such expressions reveal the priority those Israelites gave to Jehovah's worship.—Psalm 84:1-12.

<sup>9</sup> Sadly, Israel failed to keep true worship to the fore. They allowed devotion to false gods to undermine their zeal for Jehovah. Consequently, Jehovah abandoned them to their enemies, allowing them to be taken into exile in Babylon. When they were restored to their homeland after 70 years, Jehovah provided Israel with the rousing exhortations of the faithful prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Priest Ezra and Governor Nehemiah stirred God's people to rebuild the temple and reinstitute true worship there. But as the centuries passed, true worship again became a low priority in the nation.

### First-Century Zeal for True Worship

<sup>10</sup> At Jehovah's appointed time, the Messiah appeared. Faithful individuals were looking to Jehovah for salvation. (Luke 2:25; 3:15) Luke's Gospel account pointedly de-

9. What happened to the nation of Israel when it failed to keep Jehovah's worship to the fore?
- 10, 11. What place did Jehovah's worship have in the lives of faithful ones when Jesus was on earth?

scribes 84-year-old Anna as a widow "who was never missing from the temple, rendering sacred service night and day with fastings and supplications."—Luke 2:37.

<sup>11</sup> "My food," said Jesus, "is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) Recall how Jesus reacted when he confronted the money changers in the temple. He overturned their tables as well as the benches of the merchants selling doves. Mark relates: "[Jesus] would not let anyone carry a utensil through the temple, but he kept teaching and saying: 'Is it not written, "My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations"? But you have made it a cave of robbers.'" (Mark 11:15-17) Yes, Jesus did not even allow anyone to take a shortcut through the temple courtyard when carrying items to another part of the city. Jesus' actions reinforced his advice previously given: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and [God's] righteousness." (Matthew 6:33) Jesus left us a marvelous example in rendering Jehovah his exclusive devotion. He truly practiced what he preached.—1 Peter 2:21.

<sup>12</sup> Jesus also set a pattern for his disciples to follow by the way he fulfilled his commission to release the downtrodden, but faithful, Jews from the burdens of false religious practices. (Luke 4:18) In obedience to Jesus' command to make disciples and baptize them, the early Christians boldly proclaimed Jehovah's will in connection with their resurrected Lord. Jehovah was well pleased with the priority they gave to His worship. Thus, God's own angel miraculously released the apostles Peter and John from custody and instructed them: "Be on your way, and, having taken a stand in the temple, keep on speaking to the peo-

12. How did Jesus' disciples demonstrate the priority they gave to Jehovah's worship?

ple all the sayings about this life." Reinvigorated, they obeyed. Every day, both in Jerusalem's temple and from house to house "they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus."—Acts 1:8; 4:29, 30; 5:20, 42; Matthew 28:19, 20.

<sup>13</sup> As the opposition to their preaching grew, God directed his faithful servants to pen timely advice. "Throw all your anxiety upon [Jehovah], because he cares for you," wrote Peter shortly after 60 C.E. "Keep your senses, be watchful. Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone. But take your stand against him, solid in the faith, knowing that the same things in the way of sufferings are being accomplished in the entire association of your brothers in the world." The early Christians doubtless found reassurance in those words. They knew that after they had suffered a little while, God would finish their training. (1 Peter 5:7-10) During those final days of the Jewish system of things, true Christians elevated the loving worship of Jehovah to new heights.—Colossians 1:23.

<sup>14</sup> As the apostle Paul had predicted, apostasy, a turning away from true worship, occurred. (Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Thessalonians 2:3) Testimony from the closing decades of the first century piled up evidence of this. (1 John 2:18, 19) Satan successfully sowed imitation Christians in among the genuine, making it difficult to distinguish these "weeds" from wheatlike Christians. Nevertheless, over the passing centuries, some individuals put the worship of God first, even at the risk of their lives. But not until the closing decades of "the appointed times of the nations" did God regather

13, 14. (a) Since early Christian times, what has Satan attempted to do to God's servants? (b) What have God's faithful servants continued to do?

his servants to elevate true worship.—Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43; Luke 21:24.

### Jehovah's Worship Elevated Today

<sup>15</sup> In 1919, Jehovah empowered the anointed remnant to undertake a bold worldwide witnessing campaign that has raised the worship of the true God on high. With the influx of the symbolic "other sheep" from 1935 on, the stream of people who spiritually ascend to "the mountain of the house of Jehovah" has grown and grown. During the 1993 service year, 4,709,889 Witnesses of Jehovah praised him by inviting others to join in his elevated worship. What a contrast this makes to the spiritually debased condition of the sectarian "hills" of the world empire of false religion, notably in Christendom!—John 10:16; Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-4.

<sup>16</sup> Adherents of false religion view their churches and cathedrals and even their clergy as "lofty," attributing to them grandiose titles and honors. But note what Isaiah predicted: "The haughty eyes of earthling man must become low, and the loftiness of men must bow down; and Jehovah alone must be put on high in that day." When will this be? During the fast-approaching great tribulation when "the valueless gods themselves will pass away completely." In view of the imminence of that fear-inspiring time, all of God's servants need to examine seriously what place the worship of Jehovah has in their lives.—Isaiah 2:10-22.

<sup>17</sup> As an international brotherhood, Jehovah's Witnesses are well-known for their

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15. Since 1919, how have the prophecies of Isaiah 2:2-4 and Micah 4:1-4 been fulfilled?
  16. What do all of God's servants need to do in view of what is predicted at Isaiah 2:10-22?
  17. How do Jehovah's servants today demonstrate the priority they give to Jehovah's worship?

zeal in preaching the Kingdom. Their worship is no mere token religion, reserved for an hour or so a week. No, it is their whole way of life. (Psalm 145:2) Indeed, last year more than 620,000 Witnesses arranged their affairs to share in the Christian ministry full-time. The rest certainly do not neglect the worship of Jehovah. It figures prominently in both their everyday conversations and their public preaching, even if their family commitments require that they work hard at secular jobs.

<sup>18</sup> The life stories of Witnesses published in *The Watchtower* provide insight into the ways different brothers and sisters have kept Jehovah's worship first in their lives. One young sister who dedicated her life to Jehovah at six years of age set missionary service as her goal. You young brothers and sisters, what goal can you choose that will help you keep Jehovah's worship foremost in your lives?—See the article "Pursuing a Goal Set at Six Years of Age," in *The Watchtower* of March 1, 1992, pages 26-30.

<sup>19</sup> A widowed older sister provides anoth-

18, 19. Cite examples of encouragement you may have received from reading Witnesses' life stories.

### In Review

- As regards worship, what does Jehovah look for?
- Of what did the tabernacle serve as a reminder?
- In the first century C.E., who were outstanding examples of zeal for true worship, and how?
- Since 1919, how has Jehovah's worship been elevated?

er fine example of putting Jehovah's worship in its rightful place. She drew great encouragement to endure from those she had helped to learn the truth. They were her "family." (Mark 3:31-35) If you find yourself in similar circumstances, will you accept the support and help of the younger ones in the congregation? (Please note how Sister Winifred Remmie expressed herself in "I Responded in Harvesttime," published in *The Watchtower* of July 1, 1992, pages 21-3.) You full-time servants, demonstrate that the worship of Jehovah really comes first in your lives by humbly serving where you are assigned, submitting willingly to theocratic direction. (Please note Brother Roy Ryan's example, as related in the article "Sticking Close to God's Organization," in *The Watchtower* of December 1, 1991, pages 24-7.) Remember that when we give priority to Jehovah's worship, we have the assurance that he will care for us. We need not be anxious about where life's necessities will come from. The experiences of Sisters Olive and Sonia Springate illustrate this.—See the article "We Have Sought First the Kingdom," in *The Watchtower* of February 1, 1994, pages 20-5.

<sup>20</sup> Individually, then, ought we not ask ourselves some penetrating questions? What place does the worship of Jehovah hold in my life? Am I living up to my dedication to do God's will to the best of my ability? In what areas of life can I improve? A thoughtful consideration of the succeeding article will offer opportunity to reflect on how we use our resources in keeping with our chosen priority in life—the worship of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, our loving Father.—Ecclesiastes 12:13; 2 Corinthians 13:5.

20. What pertinent questions should we now ask ourselves?

# 'MAKE FRIENDS BY MEANS OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS RICHES'

*"Make friends for yourselves by means of the unrighteous riches . . . The person faithful in what is least is faithful also in much."*—LUKE 16:9, 10.

**R**ESCUED by a miracle—what a faith-strengthening experience! Israel's exodus from Egypt could be attributed to no one other than Jehovah, the Almighty. Little wonder that Moses and the Israelites sang: "My strength and my might is Jah, since he serves for my salvation. This is my God, and I shall laud him; my father's God, and I shall raise him on high."—Exodus 15:1, 2; Deuteronomy 29:2.

<sup>2</sup> How Israel's newfound freedom contrasted with their situation in Egypt! Now they could worship Jehovah without hindrance. And they did not leave Egypt empty-handed. Moses relates: "The sons of Israel . . . went asking from the Egyptians articles of silver and articles of gold and mantles. And Jehovah gave the people favor in the eyes of the Egyptians, so that these granted them what was asked; and they stripped the Egyptians." (Exodus 12:35, 36) But how did they use these riches of Egypt? Did it result in 'raising Jehovah on high'? What do we learn from their example?—Compare 1 Corinthians 10:11.

## **"Jehovah's Contribution"**

<sup>3</sup> During Moses' 40-day-long sojourn on Mount Sinai to receive God's instructions

1. How did Moses and the sons of Israel praise Jehovah upon their escape from Egypt?
2. What did Jehovah's people take with them as they left Egypt?
3. Israel's use of gold in false worship prompted what reaction from Jehovah?

for Israel, the people waiting below grew restive. Tearing off their gold earrings, they directed Aaron to make an image for them to worship. Aaron also built them an altar, and early the next day, they offered sacrifices there. Did this use of their gold endear them to their Deliverer? Hardly! "Now let me be," Jehovah declared to Moses, "that my anger may blaze against them and I may exterminate them." Only at Moses' pleading did Jehovah spare the nation, although the rebellious ringleaders fell to a plague from God.—Exodus 32:1-6, 10-14, 30-35.

<sup>4</sup> Later, Israel had the opportunity to use the riches they possessed in a way that did please Jehovah. They took up "a contribution for Jehovah."\* Gold, silver, copper, blue thread, various dyed materials, ram skins, sealskins, and acacia wood were among the donations for the construction and furnishing of the tabernacle. The account focuses our attention on the contributors' attitude. "Let every *willing-hearted* one bring it as Jehovah's contribution." (Exodus 35:5-9) Israel responded overwhelmingly. Hence, the tabernacle was a structure of "beauty and sublime grandeur," to quote the words of one scholar.

\* The Hebrew word rendered "contribution" comes from a verb that literally means "be high; be exalted; lift up."

4. What was "Jehovah's contribution," and who offered it?

## Contributions for the Temple

<sup>5</sup> Although King Solomon of Israel directed the construction of a permanent house for Jehovah's worship, David, his father, had made extensive preparations for it. David collected a great quantity of gold, silver, copper, iron, timber, and precious stones. "Since I am taking pleasure in the house of my God," David told his people, "there is yet a special property of mine, gold and silver; I do give it to the house of my God over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house: three thousand talents of gold . . . and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for coating the walls of the houses." David encouraged others to be generous too. The response was profuse: more gold, silver, copper, iron, and precious stones. "With a complete heart," the people made "voluntary offerings to Jehovah."—1 Chronicles 22:5; 29:1-9.

<sup>6</sup> By these voluntary contributions, the Israelites expressed deep appreciation for Jehovah's worship. David humbly prayed: "Who am I and who are my people, that we should retain power to make voluntary offerings like this?" Why? "For everything is from you, and out of your own hand we have given to you. . . . I, for my part, in the uprightness of my heart have voluntarily offered all these things."—1 Chronicles 29:14, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Yet, the tribes of Israel failed to keep the worship of Jehovah uppermost in their minds and hearts. By the ninth century B.C.E., a divided Israel had become guilty of spiritual neglect. Concerning the northern ten-tribe kingdom of Israel, Jehovah declared through Amos: "Woe to those who are at ease in Zion and to those trust-

- 5, 6. In connection with the temple, how did David use his riches, and how did others respond?  
7. What warning lesson do we learn from Amos' day?

ing in the mountain of Samaria!" He described them as men "lying down on couches of ivory . . . sprawling on their divans, . . . eating the rams out of a flock and the young bulls from among fattened calves; . . . drinking out of bowls of wine." But their opulence was no protection. God warned: "They will go into exile at the head of those going into exile, and the revelry of sprawling ones must depart." In 740 B.C.E., Israel suffered at the hands of Assyria. (Amos 6:1, 4, 6, 7) And in due course the southern kingdom of Judah also fell victim to materialism.—Jeremiah 5:26-29.

## Proper Use of Resources in Christian Times

<sup>8</sup> In contrast, the relatively poor condition of God's servants in later times did not prevent them from demonstrating zeal for true worship. Consider Mary and Joseph. In obedience to Caesar Augustus' decree, they journeyed to their family's hometown, Bethlehem. (Luke 2:4, 5) There Jesus was born. Forty days later, Joseph and Mary visited the temple in nearby Jerusalem to present the prescribed purification offering. Indicative of their lowly material state, Mary offered two small birds. Neither she nor Joseph pleaded poverty. Rather, they obediently used their limited resources.—Leviticus 12:8; Luke 2:22-24.

<sup>9</sup> Later, the Pharisees and party followers of Herod tried to trick Jesus, saying: "Tell us, therefore, What do you think? Is it lawful to pay head tax to Caesar or not?" Jesus' reply revealed his discernment. Referring to the coin they gave him, Je-

8. What good example do Joseph and Mary furnish as to using resources?  
9-11. (a) Jesus' words at Matthew 22:21 provide what guidance as to how we use money? (b) Why was the widow's small contribution not offered in vain?

sus asked: "Whose image and inscription is this?" They replied: "Caesar's." Wisely he concluded: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Matthew 22:17-21) Jesus knew that the authority issuing the coin expected taxes to be paid. But he there helped his followers and enemies alike to realize that a true Christian seeks also to pay back "God's things to God." This includes the proper use of one's material assets.

<sup>10</sup> An incident that Jesus witnessed in the temple illustrates this. He had just condemned the greedy scribes who 'devoured the houses of widows.' "As he looked up he saw the rich dropping their gifts into the

**The widow's contribution, though small,  
was not in vain**



treasury chests," Luke reports. "Then [Jesus] saw a certain needy widow drop two small coins of very little value there, and he said: 'I tell you truthfully, This widow, although poor, dropped in more than they all did. For all these dropped in gifts out of their surplus, but this woman out of her want dropped in all the means of living she had.'" (Luke 20:46, 47; 21:1-4) Some of the people mentioned that the temple was decorated with precious stones. Jesus responded: "As for these things that you are beholding, the days will come in which not a stone upon a stone will be left here and not be thrown down." (Luke 21:5, 6) Had that widow's small contribution been in vain? Certainly not. She supported the arrangement Jehovah had in place at the time.

<sup>11</sup> Jesus told his true followers: "No house servant can be a slave to two masters; for, either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot be slaves to God and to riches." (Luke 16:13) Thus, how can we demonstrate the right balance in using our financial resources?

**Faithful Stewards**

<sup>12</sup> When we dedicate our lives to Jehovah, we in effect say that everything we have, all our resources, belongs to him. How, then, should we use what we have? In discussing Christian service in the congregation, Brother C. T. Russell, first president of the Watch Tower Society, wrote: "Each one is to consider himself as appointed by the Lord the *steward* of his own time, influence, money, etc., and each is to seek to use these talents to the best of his ability,

<sup>12-14. (a)</sup> Christians are stewards of what resources? (b) In what outstanding ways do Jehovah's people today faithfully discharge their stewardship? (c) Where does the money to support God's work today come from?



**Our contributions support  
the worldwide Kingdom work**



to the Master's glory."—*The New Creation*, page 345.

<sup>13</sup> "What is looked for in stewards is for a man to be found faithful," states 1 Corinthians 4:2. As an international body, Jehovah's Witnesses strive to live up to that description, using as much of their time as they can in the Christian ministry, carefully cultivating their teaching abilities. Moreover, teams of volunteers under the direction of Regional Building Committees willingly give their time, strength, and know-how to make fine meeting halls ready for worship. With all of this, Jehovah is well pleased.

<sup>14</sup> Where does the money to support this vast teaching campaign and construction work come from? From willinghearted ones, even as it did in the days of tabernacle construction. Individually, are we having a share? Does the way we use our financial means demonstrate that Jehovah's service is of paramount importance to us? In money matters, let us be faithful stewards.

### A Pattern of Generosity

<sup>15</sup> The apostle Paul wrote about the generous spirit of Christians in Macedonia and Achaia. (Romans 15:26) Though afflicted themselves, they readily contributed to help their brothers. Paul encouraged the Corinthian Christians likewise to give generously, donating their surplus to offset others' deficiency. No one could rightly accuse Paul of extortion. He wrote: "He that sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he that sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."—2 Corinthians 8:1-3, 14; 9:5-7, 13.

<sup>16</sup> Generous contributions that our brothers and interested persons make for the worldwide Kingdom work today give evidence of how highly they esteem this privilege. But, as Paul reminded the Corinthi-

15, 16. (a) How did the Christians of Paul's day demonstrate generosity? (b) How should we view our present discussion?



ans, we do well to consider this discussion as a reminder.

<sup>17</sup> Paul urged the brothers to follow a pattern in their giving. "Every first day of the week," he said, "let each of you at his own house set something aside in store as he may be prospering." (1 Corinthians 16: 1, 2) That can serve as an example for us and for our children in our contributing, whether we do it through the congregation or directly to the nearest branch office of the Watch Tower Society. A missionary couple assigned to preach in an East African town invited interested ones to join them for a Bible study. At the end of this first meeting, the missionaries discreetly placed some coins in a box marked "Contributions for the Kingdom work." Other attenders did likewise. Later, after these new ones had been organized into a Christian congregation, the circuit overseer visited and re-

<sup>17</sup>. What pattern of giving did Paul encourage, and can this be applied today?

marked on the regularity of their contributions.—Psalm 50:10, 14, 23.

<sup>18</sup> We also have the privilege to use our resources to help victims of natural disasters and those who live in war-torn areas. How thrilled we were to read of the relief supplies sent to Eastern Europe as economic and political upheaval swept through that part of the world! Contributions of both goods and money demonstrated our brothers' generosity and solidarity with disadvantaged Christians.\*—2 Corinthians 8:13, 14.

<sup>19</sup> We highly value the work of our brothers who engage in full-time service as pioneers, traveling overseers, missionaries, and Bethel volunteers, do we not? As our circumstances allow, we may be able to

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\* See *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, pages 307-15, published in 1993 by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

18. How can we help our brothers in distress?
19. What practical things can we do to aid those in full-time service?

offer them some material help directly. For example, when the circuit overseer visits your congregation, you may be able to provide him with accommodations, meals, or help toward his travel expenses. Such generosity does not go unnoticed by our heavenly Father, who wants his servants to be cared for. (Psalm 37:25) Some years ago one brother who was able to offer only light refreshments invited a traveling overseer and his wife to his home. When the couple left for the evening field service, the brother handed his visitors an envelope. Inside was a bank note (the equivalent of one U.S. dollar) together with this handwritten note: "For a cup of tea or a gallon of petrol." What fine appreciation expressed in this humble manner!

<sup>20</sup> Spiritually, Jehovah's people are blessed! We enjoy spiritual banquets at our assemblies and conventions, where we receive new publications, fine teaching, and practical counsel. With hearts filled with appreciation for our spiritual blessings, we do not forget our privilege and responsibility.

20. What privilege and responsibility do we not want to neglect?

### Do You Remember?

- How did Israel respond to Jehovah's invitation to contribute to tabernacle construction?
- Why was the widow's contribution not in vain?
- What responsibility do Christians bear for the way they use their resources?
- How can we avoid regrets for our use of money?

ity to contribute funds to be used to further the interests of God's Kingdom worldwide.

### 'Make Friends by Means of Unrighteous Riches'

<sup>21</sup> Truly, there are an abundance of ways by which we can show that Jehovah's worship comes first in our lives, not the least of which involves our heeding Jesus' advice: "Make friends for yourselves by means of the unrighteous riches, so that, when such fail, they may receive you into the everlasting dwelling places."—Luke 16:9.

<sup>22</sup> Note that Jesus spoke of the failure of unrighteous riches. Yes, the day will come when the money of this system will become valueless. "Into the streets they will throw their very silver, and an abhorrent thing their own gold will become," prophesied Ezekiel. "Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury." (Ezekiel 7:19) Until this happens, we must exercise wisdom and discernment in the way we use our material assets. Thus we will not look back with regret for our failing to heed Jesus' warning: "If you have not proved yourselves faithful in connection with the unrighteous riches, who will entrust you with what is true? . . . You cannot be slaves to God and to riches."—Luke 16:11-13.

<sup>23</sup> Let all of us, then, faithfully heed these reminders to place Jehovah's worship first in our lives and to make wise use of all our assets. Thus we may maintain our friendship with Jehovah and Jesus, who promise that when money fails they will receive us into "the everlasting dwelling places," with the prospect of life eternal either in the heavenly Kingdom or on a paradise earth.—Luke 16:9.

21, 22. What will soon happen to "unrighteous riches," requiring us to do what right now?

23. What should we use wisely, and what will be our reward?

## HOW SOME MAKE DONATIONS TO THE KINGDOM-PREACHING WORK

- CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLDWIDE WORK:** Many set aside or budget an amount that they place in the contribution boxes labeled: "Contributions for the Society's Worldwide Work—Matthew 24:14." Each month congregations forward these amounts either to the world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, or to the nearest branch office.
- GIFTS:** Voluntary donations of money may be sent directly to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201-2483, or to the Society's office that serves your country. Jewelry or other valuables may also be donated. A brief letter stating that such is an outright gift should accompany these contributions.
- CONDITIONAL-DONATION ARRANGEMENT:** Money may be given to the Watch Tower Society to be held in trust until the donor's death, with the provision that in the case of personal need, it will be returned to the donor.
- INSURANCE:** The Watch Tower Society may be named as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or in a retirement/pension plan. The Society should be informed of any such arrangement.
- BANK ACCOUNTS:** Bank accounts, certificates of deposit, or individual retirement accounts may be placed in trust for or made payable on death to the Watch Tower Society, in accord with local bank requirements. The Society should be informed of any such arrangements.
- STOCKS AND BONDS:** Stocks and bonds may be donated to the Watch Tower Society

either as an outright gift or under an arrangement whereby the income continues to be paid to the donor.

**REAL ESTATE:** Salable real estate may be donated to the Watch Tower Society either by making an outright gift or by reserving a life estate to the donor, who can continue to live therein during his or her lifetime. One should contact the Society before deeding any real estate to the Society.

**WILLS AND TRUSTS:** Property or money may be bequeathed to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania by means of a legally executed will, or the Society may be named as a beneficiary of a trust agreement. A trust benefiting a religious organization may provide certain tax advantages. A copy of the will or trust agreement should be sent to the Society.

**PLANNED GIVING:** The Society has assembled information on "Planned Giving." Those who are planning to make a special gift to the Society now or to leave a bequest at death may find this information helpful. That is especially true if they wish to accomplish some family goal or estate-planning objective while using tax benefits to minimize the cost of the gift or bequest. This information can be obtained by writing to the Society at the address shown below.

For more information regarding such matters, write to the **Treasurer's Office, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201-2483**, or to the Society's office that serves your country.

# A PURPOSEFUL WAY OF LIFE

AS TOLD BY MELVA A. WIELAND

In March 1940, a few months after I was baptized,

my sister Phyllis came to me and asked:

"Why don't you go pioneering?" "Pioneering?" I asked.

"You mean preaching full-time, nearly every day?"

**H**OW can I be a pioneer,' I thought, 'with my limited knowledge of the Bible and even more limited savings in the bank?' Nevertheless, Phyllis' question started me thinking. I also prayed about it a lot.

Finally I reasoned, 'Why can't I trust God when he promises to look after us if we seek his Kingdom first?' (Matthew 6:33) So in June 1940, I gave notice to leave my job of dress-making. Then I wrote to the branch office of the Watch Tower Society in Australia, requesting a pioneer assignment.

## My Lifetime Assignment

A couple of weeks later, I received a reply, informing me that I would be given an assignment after I attended the convention that was to be held on the grounds of the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Strathfield, a suburb of Australia's largest



city, Sydney. The morning after the convention, I reported to the office to get my assignment.

The person at the desk explained: "We are very busy in the laundry right now. Would you be able to stay and help out for a couple of weeks?" That was in August 1940—and I am still working in the laundry! At that time there were only 35 in the headquarters family; now there are 276.

But you may wonder why I consider working in a laundry to be "a purposeful way of life," especially since this has been my work for over 50 years now. Before I explain, let me tell about my early pursuits.

## Sports Became a Way of Life

I came into the world in Melbourne on January 1, 1914, the firstborn of five children. We had loving parents who lived by high principles and administered discipline when needed. We also had what might be

called a casual religious upbringing, for our parents were not churchgoers. Nevertheless, they insisted that we children attend Sunday school classes of the Church of England.

When I left school in 1928 and started work as a seamstress, I decided to spend most of my leisure time playing sports, believing that this might help me overcome my shyness. I joined a tennis club and played all year round. During winter I also played basketball and baseball, and during summer I played on the women's cricket team. Cricket became my real love, and I tried hard to perfect my skill as a fast bowler in order to qualify for interstate matches.

### A Purpose Different From Sports

Early in life I became troubled by the teaching that a God of love had a place called hell where those who did bad things would be tormented endlessly. This just did not make sense to me. So imagine my delight when I unexpectedly learned from the Bible the true meaning of "hell." It happened this way:

My sister Phyllis, who is five years younger than I am, enjoyed playing sports too, and we were on the same women's cricket team. In 1936 a teammate introduced Phyllis to a young man named Jim who was known to be very religious. Soon Jim began talking to Phyllis about the teachings of the Bible. She was intrigued. "It is so logical and reasonable," she would tell me.

At the time Phyllis and I shared a room at home, and she tried to interest me in what Jim was telling her about God's Kingdom. "It is going to do what man's governments have failed to do," she told me excitedly. However, I argued with her, saying that this was just another religion to confuse us and that nobody really knew about



**When I was 25 years old**

the future. But Phyllis was tenacious and left literature around the room, hoping that I might read it.

I was curious as to why Phyllis was so enthusiastic about this new belief, so one day I picked up a booklet. It had the intriguing title *Hereafter*. I 'pricked up my ears' when I flicked through its pages and saw the word "hell." To my surprise, I learned that the Bible word "hell" actually refers to the common grave of mankind and that both good and bad people go there. I also learned that hell is not a place of torment; the dead are unconscious and can feel nothing.—Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; Psalm 146:3, 4.

This made sense to me, especially when the booklet explained that a loving and mighty God has promised to bring back the dead by a miracle called the resurrection. (John 5:28, 29) Now I also wanted to find out more of the things Jim had been telling Phyllis. I found the little *King James Version* that my father had given me when

I was a child and looked up the scriptures listed in the booklet. This confirmed what was said about hell and the condition of the dead.

Another fascinating surprise to me was to learn that God has a personal name, Jehovah. (Psalm 83:18) I could also see that God had a purpose, or reason, for everything that he did or allowed to happen. This caused me to ask myself, 'What really is my purpose in life?' From then on I began to wonder whether it was in my best interests to take sports so seriously—almost to the exclusion of everything else.

### Putting Resolves Into Action

Jim and Phyllis had no idea that my outlook on life had changed, but they found out when our family was invited to a friend's party. In those days, on such occasions all present would stand, and a toast would be proposed to the King of England, and all would raise their glasses to drink the toast. However, I decided to remain seated with Jim and Phyllis. They could not believe their eyes when they saw me still sitting! We, of course, did not mean any disrespect, but as Christians we felt that we should be neutral and not participate in such nationalistic ceremonies.—John 17:16.

Nevertheless, my parents and the rest of the family were horrified. They said we were disloyal, or crazy—or both! Then, when Phyllis and I attended the yearly presentation for the women's cricket team, a similar thing happened during a nationalistic ceremony. The upshot was that we both resigned from the team. This was not as difficult as I thought it would be, for I had come to realize that my allegiance and loyalty were to Christ Jesus, King of God's heavenly Kingdom.

Phyllis now pointed out that I needed to

attend the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses regularly to build up my faith with more Bible knowledge. At that time there was only one congregation in Melbourne, so I began attending meetings there each Sunday afternoon. Soon I was convinced that this was God's true earthly organization.

Before long I was invited to share in the congregation's house-to-house preaching activity. At first I was hesitant, but one Sunday morning I decided to go along just to see how it was done. I was pleased when I was assigned to accompany an experienced Witness who talked confidently at the first door and received a pleasant response from the householder. I thought to myself, 'Well, that was not too difficult, but I'll need a lot of practice before I can do as well as that.' So imagine my astonishment when, after that first door, the Witness said to me, "You'll be able now to go on your own."

"On my own?" I asked, stunned! "You can't be serious! What will I say if someone asks a question and I don't know the answer?" But my companion was insistent. So, literally trembling, I went on my own while she continued witnessing to people on the other side of the street. Somehow I survived that first morning.

From then on I began sharing in the preaching work each Sunday morning. When someone at the doors asked me a question that I couldn't answer, I would say, "I'll look it up and come back to see you." Happily, Jehovah kept giving me strength and courage to carry on my new purposeful way of life. I made a dedication of my life to him, and in October 1939, I was baptized at the Melbourne city baths. Soon thereafter Phyllis, who had by then married Jim, asked why I didn't start pioneering.



### Our wedding day in 1956

The steady growth of the Kingdom preaching required the addition of only 10 or 12 persons to our staff during my first 30 years at Bethel. But the scene changed rapidly in the 1970's when we began printing the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines here. Construction started in January 1972 on a new printery. Soon a 40-ton printing press arrived from Japan, and by 1973 we were printing nearly 700,000 magazines a month. Our Bethel family now really started to grow.

#### Service at the Branch

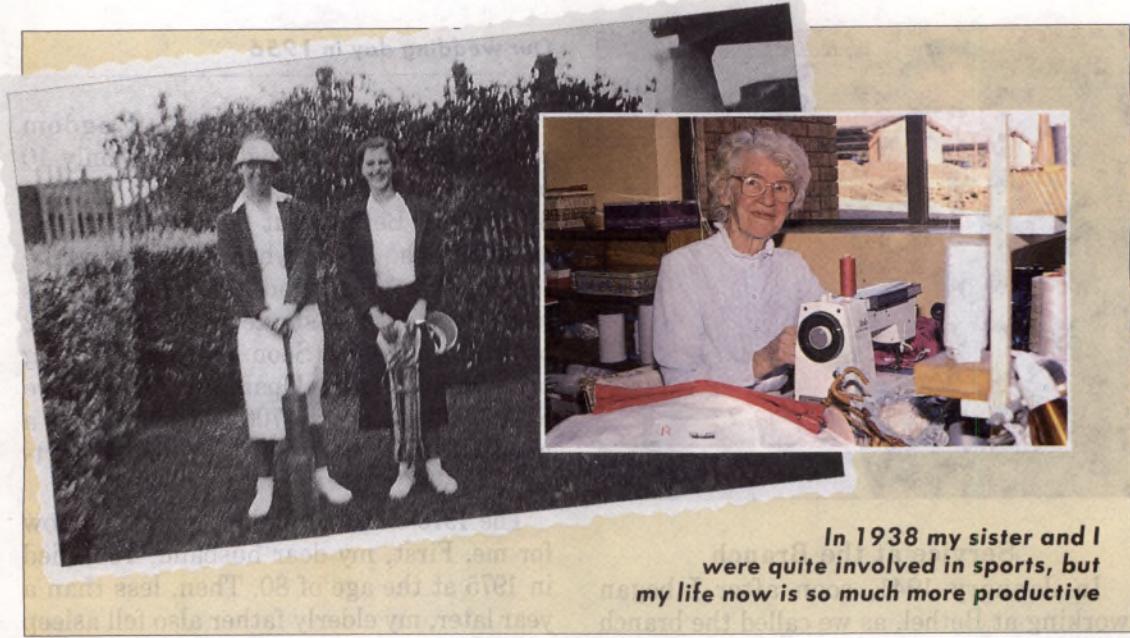
In January 1941, soon after I began working at Bethel, as we called the branch office, a ban was put on the work of Jehovah's Witnesses in Australia. Afterward the military took over our Bethel Home in Strathfield, and I was sent to the Society's farm at Ingleburn, about 30 miles outside the city. In June 1943 the courts exonerated the Watch Tower Society and lifted the ban. By the end of that year, 25 of us were invited back to Strathfield Bethel. There I continued working in the laundry, as well as sharing other duties around the home.

The next decade seemed to pass quickly. Then in 1956, I married a fellow Bethel worker, Ted Wieland. Ted was a very calm, patient man, and we were delighted when we received approval to continue to live in Bethel as husband and wife. We both treasured our purposeful way of life, happy for the privilege of serving at the Australia branch. Of course, in addition to our Bethel work, we had the joy of working together to help others to become disciples of Christ. As one example, you can read about the Weekes family in the October 22, 1993, issue of *Awake!*

The 1970's also brought personal sorrow for me. First, my dear husband, Ted, died in 1975 at the age of 80. Then, less than a year later, my elderly father also fell asleep in death. I drew much comfort from Jehovah and his Word, the Bible, and from my spiritual brothers and sisters. It also helped greatly that I kept busy at Bethel with my purposeful activity during this very sad time in my life.

Nevertheless, life goes on, and I again began to experience satisfaction and blessings, now as a widow. In 1978, I attended the convention in London, England, and afterward visited the Watch Tower Society's world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. Seeing hundreds of my brothers and sisters happily working there at Brooklyn Bethel has remained an inspiration to me down to this day.

As the 1970's came to an end, we learned that further expansion was being planned for the Australia Bethel complex. However, the expansion was not to take place in Strathfield, where we were running out of land space. Instead, a new, much larger complex was to be built on our property at Ingleburn, where I had worked during the ban in the early 1940's.



*In 1938 my sister and I were quite involved in sports, but my life now is so much more productive*

### Continued Purposeful Way of Life

What excitement there was in January 1982 when we moved to our new facilities! True, at first there was a little sadness at leaving familiar surroundings, but soon we were thrilled with our new home of 73 lovely bedrooms. Now instead of looking out at brick walls and suburban streets, we see green fields and trees, grazing cattle, and glorious sunrises and sunsets—a most enjoyable setting.

On March 19, 1983, we had a delightful dedication of the new complex in beautiful autumn sunshine. Lloyd Barry of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses gave a moving dedication talk. I personally appreciated having him and his wife present for the dedication program, since I had worked with them at Strathfield Bethel when all of us were much younger.

Continued growth of the Kingdom preaching activity made necessary further expansion of our facilities here in Ingleburn. In 1987 the office was enlarged. Then, on No-

vember 25, 1989, a new five-story residence building and a three-story new factory addition were dedicated. How we have grown—from fewer than 4,000 ministers in Australia when I began my ministry to some 59,000!

More recently the Australia branch has been made one of the Society's three Regional Engineering Offices, along with Japan and Germany. This has made necessary even further expansion of the Bethel complex. Another three-story office building is now complete, and work is well along on a five-story residence, which will have 80 more rooms to house our constantly growing family.

In the laundry, we have a good-size crew to handle the workload, but I often recall that August day in 1940 when I was invited to help in this department for two weeks. I am so grateful that those two weeks have stretched to more than 50 years and that Jehovah God guided my steps to such a purposeful way of life.

# Gilead Graduates

## *Eager to Spread the Good News*

“THE most wonderful thing we could ever dream of.” That was the way Anders and Amalia Groth felt about their missionary training. They expressed the feelings of all 48 graduates of the 97th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in adding: “Gilead training has motivated and prepared us, so we are eager to go to our new assignments.”

We can sense this joy as the students comment on the graduation program; 6,420 assembled on September 4, 1994, for the event.

Theodore Jaracz of the Governing Body opened the program by speaking on the theme ‘Being Taught by Jehovah,’ said David Abel and his wife, Kelli. “The point we will never forget was when Brother Jaracz said: ‘We must acknowledge our own littleness in comparison to Jehovah,’ and illustrated it by the powerful lesson found in Job chapters 38 and 39. Brother Jaracz pointed out that while we have increased our Bible knowledge through Gilead School, we do not know the answer to every question. We must continue to study God’s Word.”

Christian and Angele Coffy now spoke: “We were impressed by the talk given by Max Larson on the theme ‘What Is the Value of a Good Foundation?’ We liked his comparing us to a building that needs a deep foundation in solid ground in order to stay stable even in an earthquake. By studying diligently, we can develop a closer relationship with Jehovah and can base our faith on deep knowledge so that we can stay stable in times of hardship.”

“The talk by Milton Henschel, president of the school, on the theme ‘The Fields Are White for Harvest’ will long be remembered,” noted Gary and Lynn Elfers. “The key scripture, John 4:35-38, stressed the privilege we have of entering a field that has already been sown by previous laborers. This will spur us on to work with a sense of urgency.” Agreeing with this, Jan and Sirpa Vaahtola observed: “Brother Henschel raised our anticipation concerning the harvest still ahead by giving the latest report from the Baltic States. The increase in Estonia was 51 percent, in Latvia 106 percent, and in Lithuania 51 percent. How thrilling! The brothers there are begging the Master to send out more workers. We were especially happy to hear this, as our assignment is to Estonia!”

“Joel Adams followed on the theme ‘Trust in Jehovah,’” recalled Kevin and Evelyn Cortina. “He advised us that we should never think that sometimes we can trust in Jehovah and sometimes we can rely on our own thinking. In our assignment we will face many challenges—health, food, language, customs, and so forth. All of them will require that we trust in Jehovah.”

Next came Gerrit Lösch, a member of the Governing Body, who developed the theme “Keep On Reflecting Jehovah’s Mercy.” Alen and Ann Marie Gokavi said: “He pointed out that it is a measure of Christian maturity to extend mercy to our fellow missionaries and those with whom we share the good news. Foreign assignments entail sacrifice, but if mercy is missing, then our



### 97th Graduating Class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

In the list below, rows are numbered from front to back, and names are listed from left to right in each row.  
(1) Hong, J.; Hong, D.; Groth, A.; Cortina, E.; Lakatos, S.; Hornback, D.; Acevedo, L.; Coffy, A. (2) Elfers, L.; Gokavi, A.; Ardkäll, L.; Abraczinskas, G.; Knott, K.; Lizer, T.; Abel, K.; Abel, D. (3) Duncan, M.; Gokavi, A.; Held, J.; Hupston, F.; Lakatos, B.; Long, R.; Minsky, S.; Acevedo, E. (4) Ardkäll, K.; Kauko, J.; Vaahola, S.; Cortina, K.; Carson, N.; Minsky, M.; Lizer, G.; Koula, K. (5) Duncan, J.; Abraczinskas, J.; Vaahola, J.; Madsen, F.; Madsen, V.; Long, D.; Carson, C.; Elfers, G. (6) Kauko, T.; Hupston, P.; Held, C.; Groth, A.; Hornback, K.; Koula, W.; Knott, D.; Coffy, C.

sacrifice will be of very little value." (Matthew 9:13) Peter and Fleur Hupston added: "Brother Lösch said we should be merciful to our brothers and sisters too, viewing them through the front end of field glasses, as it were, so their faults will be minimized instead of magnified."

"Jack Redford, one of our Gilead instructors, followed on the theme 'Can You Keep a Reproof?'" remembered Mickey and Sherry Minsky. "He pointed out that pride makes it hard to accept reproof and that if we are overly sensitive to counsel, we will lose out on its benefits. Then he gave some practical

suggestions on accepting reproof based on Lamentations 3:27-31." Charles and Joan Held chimed in: "Most of the time we are blind to our own shortcomings; therefore, we must view reproof as a way to open our eyes to things we were not aware of. Reproof or counsel from Jehovah is an evidence of his love for us."

"Another instructor, Ulysses Glass, spoke on the theme 'Acquire the Practical Wisdom That Leads to Life.' He asked: 'What will you do with what you have learned?'" said Kenneth and Lisbeth Ardkäll. "Then he gave an illustration based on Proverbs

30:24-26 about the little rock badger and how Jehovah has fully equipped it for life. We, on the other hand, are not instinctively wise, so we need to exert ourselves to acquire wisdom. Jehovah has equipped us with everything we need to do that. As long as we draw close to Jehovah and to one another in love, we will accomplish a lot."

### Principal Talk

"Brother Karl F. Klein, a member of the Governing Body, warmly considered the 19th Psalm with us in his talk 'A Jewel Among Jewels,'" said Jay and Gwen Abraczinskas. "He highlighted the psalmist David's deep appreciation for Jehovah and the fondness he had for God's Word." "Brother Klein divided the psalm into three parts," noted Keith and Donna Hornback. "Part 1 (verses 1-6) shows David's appreciation for God's creation, part 2 (verses 7-10) expresses his appreciation for God's laws, and part 3 (verses 11-14) reminds us that, like David, we should want to have a good relationship with Jehovah."

"We enjoyed the point that fear of Jehovah is vital if we are to avoid what is bad. This leads us to do what is pure in his eyes," said David and Raylene Long. Frank and Vibeke Madsen concurred. "Brother Klein's comments about how beneficial Jehovah's reminders, laws, and commandments are nicely summed up what we learned at Gil-ead," they said. "That made us even more determined to adhere to God's Word in the future and to treat it like a treasure chest of jewels."

Following the principal talk, the students received their diplomas, and their foreign assignments were announced. After an adjournment for refreshments, all reconvened for the afternoon session. The graduates participated in answering the questions propounded during an abbreviated *Watchtower Study*.

"Then came the student program 'Trained to Become Kingdom Proclaimers in All the Earth,'" recalled Bob and Shannon Lakatos. "The first portion of the program dealt with student experiences in field service during our five-month course. It focused on the skillful use of questions in our ministry. An interview portion showed positive ways to face the challenges and changing circumstances of missionary life. The three slide presentations, of Costa Rica, India, and Malawi, gave us a glimpse of Jehovah's worldwide organization."

"The drama that followed, *Be Theocratic, Not Worldly*, illustrated the bad effect some worldly, independent-minded relatives can have," noted Jesse and Michelle Duncan. "It showed that Christians must recognize the Theocracy's guidelines and directions as necessary and beneficial," added Wenzel and Kelly Koula.

A final song and prayer brought the delightful program to an end. As the graduates left in anticipation of their departure for foreign assignments in 18 lands, their thoughts were well expressed by this parting comment of Tommi and Jael Kauko: "We are very eager to go to our assignment and put into practice what we have learned. We have received so much—now it is our turn to give."

## In Our Next Issue

Christmas—Is It Truly Christian?

Should You Pray to Jesus?

A Health Test for You?

# Fulfilling a Basic Human Need Through Recognition

**A**SINCERE "Well done!" "Good for you!" or "You did your best; we're proud of you" does much to boost self-esteem, especially when it comes from someone you respect. Humans thrive on recognition. With it, they do better and are happier. Indeed, deserved recognition is as vital to the mind and heart as wholesome food is to the body.

One dictionary defines recognition as "acceptance of an individual as being entitled to consideration or attention" and "special notice or attention." It is closely related to respect, the feeling of esteem, which when given implies a reasoned estimation or evaluation of a person and the measure of recognition due him.

## Recognition—A Basic Need

Giving credit where credit is due is reasonable and fair. Jesus set the pattern in his illustration of the slaves to whom the master entrusted his belongings. In acknowledging the proper management of his assets, he said: "Well done, good and faithful slave!" (Matthew 25:19-23) Very often, however, this deserved courtesy is overlooked. Failure to give recognition stifles enthusiasm and initiative. Iona puts it this way: "Recognition makes you feel needed, wanted, and appreciated . . . It gives you initiative. If you are overlooked, you feel dejected and let down." Patrick adds: "Then it is difficult to maintain a high level of quality and output." How vital, therefore, that we learn how and when to give recognition. All of us crave the security of knowing that we belong. It is a basic human need.

A word of praise, added responsibility, or even a material gift stimulates you to continue to do your best. This is true whether you are a parent, husband, wife, child, congregation member, or overseer. "When granted recognition," says Margaret, "I feel happy, needed, and I have a desire to do better." Andrew concurs, saying: "My spirit soars, providing stimulus to work even harder." However, to bestow recognition and respect upon someone requires careful thought and good judgment.

## Imitate Jehovah's Pattern in Bestowing Recognition

The foremost example of recognizing the worth of others is Jehovah God. He acknowledges those who are deserving of recognition. He noticed such men as Abel, Enoch, and Noah. (Genesis 4:4; 6:8; Jude 14) Jehovah acknowledged David for his outstanding faithfulness. (2 Samuel 7:16) Samuel, who as a prophet honored Jehovah for years, was in turn honored by God, who quickly responded to Samuel's prayer for help to defeat the Philistines. (1 Samuel 7:7-13) Would you not feel honored to have such divine recognition?

Gratitude and appreciation are closely linked with recognition. The Bible urges us to 'show ourselves thankful' and to be grateful for what is done in our behalf. (Colossians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:18) While this specifically applies to thankfulness to Jehovah, the same is true in day-to-day matters of life. The apostle Paul appreciated this. He gave recognition to Phoebe as "a defender of many" and to Prisca and Aquila for 'risking

their necks' in his behalf and in behalf of others. (Romans 16:1-4) Imagine how they must have felt upon receiving such openly expressed gratitude. It was also good for Paul to have the happiness of giving recognition, honor, and encouragement. We too can imitate Jehovah and his appreciative worshipers by showing proper recognition to those to whom it is due.—Acts 20:35.

### Recognition Within the Family Circle

"A little recognition goes a long way in making life enjoyable," says Mitchell, a husband and Christian elder. "It endears you, probably forever, to the one who gives you recognition." For example, a Christian husband carries a heavy load of responsibility and makes important decisions that involve the family's welfare. He must provide for the family's spiritual, material, and emotional needs. (1 Timothy 5:8) How grateful he is when proper recognition is shown for his God-given assignment as family head and when his wife shows him "deep respect!"—Ephesians 5:33.

Not to be overlooked is the work of a housewife, which is performed out of the public eye. Modern concepts may downgrade such work and rob it of its dignity and worth. Yet, it is pleasing to God. (Titus 2:4, 5) How refreshing it is when a discerning husband praises his wife, particularly in all aspects of life wherein she excels, granting her such recognition under his headship! (Proverbs 31:28) Rowena says of her husband: "When he acknowledges what I do, I find it easier to be submissive to him and to honor and respect him."

American educator Christian Bovee once said: "Judicious praise is to children what the sun is to flowers." Yes, even a very young child needs constant reassurance that he is a valued family member. During

the formative teen years, filled with new emotional and physical changes, there is increased self-consciousness about personal appearance, coupled with a hunger for independence and recognition. At this time especially, a teenager needs to feel loved by his parents and to be treated with understanding and human kindness. Aging parents and grandparents likewise need the reassurance that they are still useful and loved, that they have not been 'thrown away in old age.' (Psalm 71:9; Leviticus 19:32; Proverbs 23:22) Properly satisfying the need for recognition brings increased happiness and success to the family circle.

### Recognition Within the Christian Congregation

There is immeasurable value in cultivating a sincere interest in others in the Christian congregation and freely expressing appreciation for their deeds and efforts. Christian elders should take the lead by acknowledging the accomplishments and efforts of others in the congregation. "It was not until after I received a number of shepherding visits that I realized how much they meant in terms of encouragement, satisfaction, and happiness," said Margaret. "I realized what is missed out on when general recognition is not given." What a good reason for showing genuine, loving personal interest in all in the congregation! Recognize their good work. Freely commend and encourage. In many congregations there are single parents who work hard to inculcate spiritual values in their children. Such ones deserve special praise. Highlight the positive rather than the negative. Let others see your brotherly affection for them. Let them see that you care. In this way, loving overseers work to build up the congregation. (2 Corinthians 10:8) Individual members reciprocate by giving

deserved recognition and respect to such faithful ones who work hard in their behalf.—1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17.

But there is another side, or angle, to this matter. The desire for recognition is, admittedly, very strong. In Jesus' day it became a preoccupation among the religious leaders. Jesus had to correct his disciples' wrong view in this regard. (Mark 9:33-37; Luke 20:46) Christians need reasonableness and balance. If left unchecked, the desire for recognition could be spiritually hazardous. (James 3:14-16) How tragic it would be, for example, if an elder became haughty and began to demand that others accept his own exalted estimate of himself!—Romans 12:3.

The apostle Paul wisely admonished fellow Christians in Rome: "In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another take the lead." (Romans 12:10) These words apply preeminently to Christian elders, who must at all times recognize Christ as the Head of the congregation. Submission to his right hand of authority is manifested by seeking Christ's direction by means of the holy spirit, Bible principles, and the lead given by the Governing Body of "the faithful and discreet slave."—Matthew 24:45-47; see Revelation 1:16, 20; 2:1.

Thus, when elders meet, and they pray for Jehovah's guidance to shepherd the flock of God, they will strive to make decisions that are Scripturally sound. Christian modesty, meekness, and humility will prevent any elder from trying to exalt himself, dominate over his brothers, and impose his opinion at these meetings. (Matthew 20: 25-27; Colossians 3:12) Whenever possible, the chairman of the elder body would do well to invite input beforehand from fellow elders and then provide an agenda far enough in advance to allow time for careful

and prayerful thought to each point itemized. During the elders' meeting, he would try, not to shape the opinion of the elders, but, rather, to encourage them to exercise "freeness of speech" on matters under discussion. (1 Timothy 3:13) In turn, fellow elders should carefully listen to the expressions of one another and gladly benefit from the insight of elders who have many years of Christian experience.—Exodus 18:21, 22.

Overseers understand, however, that Christ can use any elder on the body to provide the Bible principles needed to cope with a situation or to make an important decision. A good spirit will prevail among the body when proper recognition is given to each elder for his contribution in caring for the spiritual interests of the congregation.—Acts 15:6-15; Philippians 2:19, 20.

### Work at Giving and Earning Deserved Recognition

Recognition builds up. It encourages and is endearing. "Even if we feel we're just ordinary," says Mary, "we need encouragement for our own self-worth." Sincerely acknowledge the everyday efforts of others. Doing so makes life all the more worthwhile and pleasant for them. Parents, children, overseers, and members of the Christian congregation, you can earn recognition by how you speak and how you act. The Bible speaks favorably of industrious, modest, and humble persons. (Proverbs 11:2; 29:23; Hebrews 6:1-12) Learn to acknowledge graciously the value of others. Take the feelings of others into consideration as you work with them. The apostle Peter gave this admonition: "All of you be like-minded, showing fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate, humble in mind." (1 Peter 3:8) This calls for granting recognition to others, thus fulfilling a basic human need.

# 'HIS DEEDS FOLLOW HIM'

AT 8:50 a.m. on Thursday, July 28, 1994, George D. Gangas finished his earthly course. He was 98 years old. One of the anointed, George Gangas had been a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses since October 15, 1971.

All who were personally acquainted with Brother Gangas knew of his love of righteousness and hatred of wickedness. They well remember the way he repeatedly described Satan as a gross, monstrous, wicked, base, and despicable liar. In contrast, he spoke of Jehovah as a loving, kind, compassionate, tender, and caring Father. Many also remember his love of asking Bible questions. In any conversation, he would unfailingly pose questions—some of them simple, some of them more mind stretching. Indeed, he loved Bible truth.

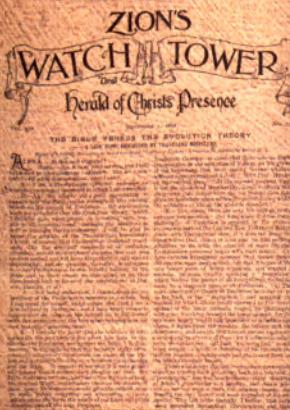
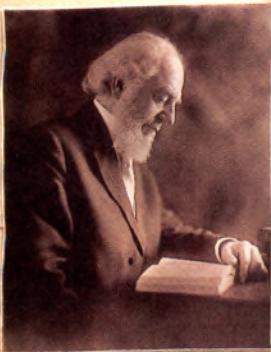
Brother Gangas was baptized on July 15, 1921. He began his career in the full-time preaching ministry (pioneering) in March 1928. Hence, he was in the full-time service a total of 66 years. He became a member of the Brooklyn headquarters staff of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society on October 31, 1928.

His life story appeared in the October 15, 1966, issue of *The Watchtower*. It describes a truly spiritual man of God. In that article, he made the following heartwarming expression: "I love life and I want my brothers to gain life. I consider, along with the apostle Paul, that all other things are 'loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus.'"—Philippians 3:8.

Brother Gangas showed by his actions that he indeed loved life, and he eagerly shared his "knowledge of Christ Jesus" with others. He will be missed, but how we rejoice that he has now received his heavenly reward! Now, 'he will rest from his labor, for his deeds follow him.'—Revelation 14:13, *New International Version*.



# **Voices for Belief**



**A**S THE last century ended, voices espousing science, philosophy, and secularism were taking a toll on belief in God and the Bible's inspiration.

But they were not the only voices to be heard. Many researchers saw that much could be said in support of belief in God rather than atheism. Their studies also turned up abundant evidence that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

One prominent voice was C. T. Russell. Millions read his 1886 volume *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. A powerful chapter in it was "The Existence of a Supreme Intelligent Creator Established."

In following decades, Russell authored articles, tracts, and books that provided potent reasons for belief in God and the Bible. These were published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Its second president, J. F. Rutherford, wrote *Creation* (1927) and other works that amplified the voice for belief.

That society has recently prepared additional up-to-date information on these matters. Jehovah's Witnesses can provide such for your thoughtful consideration.

