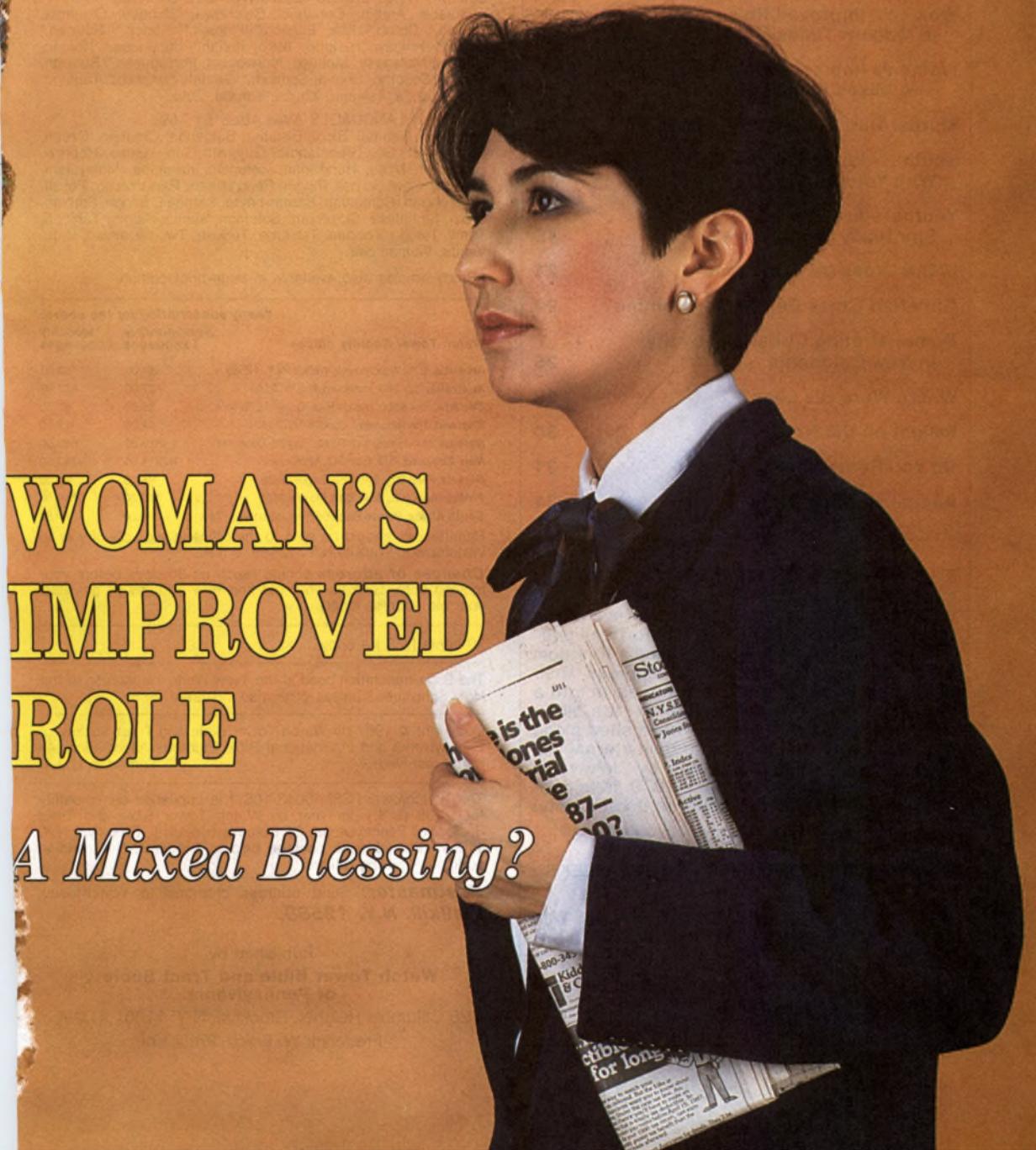


# The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

August 15, 1987



## WOMAN'S IMPROVED ROLE

*A Mixed Blessing?*

# The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

August 15, 1987  
Vol. 108, No. 16

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# Women's Improved Role in Modern Times

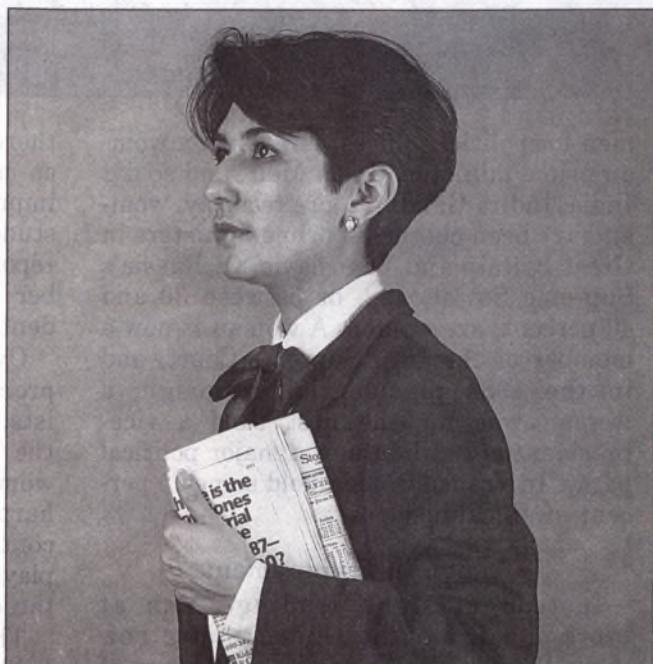
BACK in 1906 Czar Nicholas of Russia received from some Russian peasant women a petition that, among other things, stated:

"For generations the women of the peasant class have lived without having any rights whatever.

. . . We are not even considered human beings, but simply beasts of burden. We demand to be taught to read and write; we demand that our daughters be given the same facilities for learning as our sons. . . . We know that we are ignorant, but we are not to blame."

That sad situation is quite in contrast with the description that the Bible gives of a capable and respected woman, holding her out as an example worthy of imitation and praise. (Proverbs 31:10-31) Yet, the description from Russia reflects a truism stated long ago in the Bible by wise King Solomon: "Man has dominated man to his injury." (Ecclesiastes 8:9) That injury certainly has not been limited to males. The verse might be taken broadly to mean: 'Men have dominated other men *and women* to their injury.' But what a change in the lot of women, as the situation in Russia illustrates!

Today, "the majority of Soviet doctors and teachers are women. Women account for nearly two-thirds the total number of economists and three-quarters of cultural workers. Forty per cent of those



working in the sciences are women . . . Out of every thousand women engaged in the national economy, 862 have a higher or secondary (complete or incomplete) education."—*Women in the USSR*.

## Women in Politics

What has developed in Russia has to a greater or lesser extent occurred in many other lands. The first nation to grant women the right to vote was New Zealand, back in 1893. Between 1917 and 1920, they were given that right in Russia, Great Britain, the United States, and Canada. In Switzerland they had to wait until 1971, although Swiss women could hold political office.

Today, women not only vote but compete with



men for political offices. Israel had a woman prime minister, Golda Meir, and so did India, Indira Gandhi. More recently, women have been chosen as prime ministers in Great Britain and Yugoslavia. Of Russia's Supreme Soviet, 492, or between 30 and 40 percent, are women. A woman is now a member of the U.S. Supreme Court, and in the 1984 presidential campaign, a woman was for the first time a vice-presidential candidate of a major political party. In France women hold some 15 percent of all cabinet posts.

### Women in Employment

Instead of signs reading "Men at Work," many in the United States now read "People Working." Why? Because of a change in women's role in the economic sector. The number of women working outside the home has doubled in the past 25 years. Women held but 27 percent of office jobs back in 1970; 14 years later, women held 65 percent of them. For some, holding a job is an economic necessity; for others, it is by preference. In some places, wages for men and women doing identical jobs are gradually becoming more equal.

### In Education, Arts, and Religion

Almost worldwide, women have made remarkable progress regarding education. The number of women in schools has increased from 95 million in 1950 to 390 million in 1985. In Spain 25 years ago,

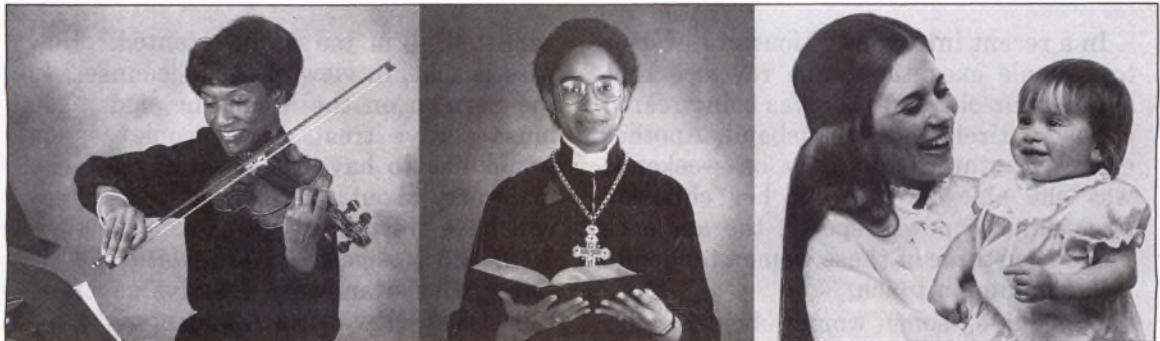
there were twice as many illiterate women as men. By 1983 the situation had so improved that 30 percent of the college students were women. *Women in Britain* reports "a dramatic increase in the number of full-time women university students."

Over the years, women have figured prominently in the field of music as soloists, both vocal and instrumental. But in the United States before 1935, the only women playing in orchestras were the harpists, a role men seemed to avoid. In contrast, presently 40 percent of those playing in major, regional, and metropolitan orchestras are women.

There has been a similar increase in the field of religion. Many women have enrolled in seminaries, so that in the United States from 29 to 52 percent of such students are women. Women are appearing in pulpits, and there are also women rabbis. Some 11 percent of Swedish pastors are women, and there are Anglican women priests in the Orient. *The New York Times* (February 16, 1987) said "there are 968 ordained women in the Episcopal Church."

### With What Effect?

So there is no denying that the situation of women has changed dramatically in recent times. You may have seen or personally felt these changes. But the question should be raised: Have all these changes been an unmixed blessing?



# Women's Improved Role *A Mixed Blessing?*

**I**N SUM, women in the eighties are better educated, healthier, and live longer, fuller lives." With those words, a magazine concluded its article: "The Way We Were; the Way We Are Now." But could it be that women's improved role has actually been a mixed blessing because of its side effects?

## Effect on Marriage and the Family

For example, there is the common clash between wholesome family life and pursuing a career. One report stated: "Women executives are far less likely to give their home life high priority than are their male peers, and they're twice as likely to be divorced." You might wonder why. A management professor at California State University explains: "Males look at their home environment as a sup-

port system, while women see it more as a burden. A guy comes home and he relaxes; that's what he's been working for. But to women it represents an added workload."

This does not apply just to executives. Russian women have been in the work force a generation longer than have women in Western lands. They still find caring for a job and a family to be a burden. A Russian editor of *Working Woman* says: "Women are the heart of the family and must be warmer to create the atmosphere of warmth and love." So they face a double load, while many husbands fail to share domestic duties.

Another cause of conflict is illustrated by one of Wall Street's most successful women. She boasts: "Work to me is recreation," and adds, "I like what I'm doing, and I make very few concessions"—even for her family. Its well-being depends upon the husband who looks after their two children, even though he is a businessman. Her associates describe her consuming interest as "clearly not good for family relationships."

It is similar with one of the modern prime ministers. Her family did not get much attention because of her political ambitions. While growing up, her children often stayed at the home of their uncle because, we are told, "one of the things [they] liked best was simply sitting down to meals as a family, something that was never easy to arrange" at home.

In a recent interview of four of Europe's top female executives, one revealed that her 12-year-old daughter was being reared almost entirely by her husband. Another executive stated that only on weekends was she able to care for her children. According to news reports, the audience noted that three of these women tended to lack the human touch.

Of course, some women hold secular jobs out of sheer need, perhaps because a husband died or left the family. So for such women, being able to find employment may be a partial blessing, but like it or not, they have to contend with the negative aspects.

### Negative Effects

That women's changed role has been a mixed blessing is clear from the common effect when wives outdistance their husbands in earning power or professional status. According to therapists, this trend is "becoming a significant and recognized crisis point in more and more marriages." One husband's complaint is typical: "I know intellectually I applaud her success. But emotionally I feel badly. I feel I'm being abandoned. And I feel guilty because I am so upset." If both Christian mates presently have to work, loving discussion and consideration can help to minimize such negative feelings and effects.

—1 Peter 4:8.

Another factor indicating that the progress made by women is a mixed blessing is the emphasis that many feminists put on what is primarily to their advantage. *The Coming Matriarchy* points to the time when the world will be run by women who are self-centered and who ask, "What's in it for me?" Interestingly, the successful woman financier previously described put it just about that way; she was not interested in helping others up the corporate ladder unless she stood to profit by it. She

admitted: "I'm too profit-oriented." How wise is that, in view of Jesus' counsel? In the Sermon on the Mount he said: "You must always treat other people as you would like to have them treat you." "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries of its own." (Matthew 7:12; 6:34, *American Translation*) Certainly, Christian women strive to maintain Jesus' view on such matters.

### Biblical Morality Expendable?

No doubt the most negative aspect of the changed role of women is the erosion of moral values. References by feminists to God and religion are rare and usually critical. Women who postpone marriage because of their careers often hold that marriage is not essential before having sex relations.

A negative trend of the feminist movement is its support of lesbianism. In 1971 the annual meeting of NOW (National Organization of Women) resolved: "That NOW recognizes the double oppression of women who are lesbians, That a woman's right to her own person includes the right to define and express her own sexuality and to choose her own lifestyle, That NOW acknowledges the oppression of lesbians as a legitimate concern of feminism." Compare, though, God's judgment at Romans 1:26, 27. Often going hand in hand with the feminist view on lesbianism is espousal of having abortions on demand. Tulane University law professor Billups Percy well stated: "To regard the destruction of the fetus as just another surgical procedure is to disregard centuries of criminology, theology and moral philosophy."

One report tells that in the past decade serious crimes on the part of women have increased far more rapidly than among men. Between 1974 and 1979, the number of women in the United States arrested

for fraud increased almost 50 percent, but the increase was only 13 percent among men. Embezzlement by women increased similarly about 50 percent but only 1.5 percent for men. Forgery and counterfeiting arrests among women rose 27.7 percent but less than 10 percent among men. Evidently the changed role of women has not resulted in full contentment.

Use of tobacco has also increased among women. Lung cancer due to smoking is replacing breast cancer as the number one cause of cancer deaths among women. In one recent year it accounted for 25 percent of all cancer deaths among women and is increasing at the rate of 7 percent each year.

### A Satisfying Future—How?

Can a job or a career give most women complete satisfaction in life? Apparently not, as more and more are finding out. Hilary Cosell, author of *Woman on a Seesaw: The Ups and Downs of Making It*, addressed this problem in an article, asking: "If women had erred before on the side of marriage and motherhood and housewifery, might they be erring again on the side of professionalism, career and success?" She also asks: "Can we really do everything our mothers did, and everything our fathers did as well?"

Similarly, in *The Cost of Loving*, Megan Marshall revealed that "the facade of professional competence only thinly concealed the private wounds: disappointed loves, compulsive promiscuity, lesbian experimentation, abortions, divorce and just



plain loneliness." She tells how the women's movement gave birth to the "Myth of Independence," but for most, this is not working.

Marshall concludes that "we must believe in the long-term love that a good marriage protects," that "the human self does not exist in isolation," and that "we must find others to care for, and who will care for us." This calls to mind the words of the greatest Teacher ever on earth, Jesus Christ. "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

Truly, humans are prone to go from one extreme to another. That modern woman's improved role is not an unmixed blessing underscores the prophet Jeremiah's words: "It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) Christian women, by knowing what changes have occurred (with attendant blessings and problems), can better appreciate the value of following God's counsel. Experience has shown that it is "more to be desired than gold." 'In the keeping of it there is a large reward.'—Psalm 19:7-11.

## Murder During a Birthday Party

**A**FTER giving instructions to his apostles, Jesus sends them out into the territory in pairs. Probably the brothers Peter and Andrew went together, as did James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and Matthew, James and Thaddaeus, and Simon and Judas Iscariot. The six pairs of evangelizers declare the good news of the Kingdom and perform miraculous cures everywhere they go.

Meanwhile, John the Baptizer is still in prison. He has been there almost two years now. You may recall that John had declared publicly that it was wrong for Herod Antipas to take Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip, as his own. Since Herod Antipas claimed to follow the Mosaic Law, John had properly exposed this adulterous union. It is for this that Herod had John thrown into prison, perhaps at the urging of Herodias.

Herod Antipas realizes that John is a righteous man and even listens to him with pleasure. So he is at a loss as to what to do with him. Herodias, on the other hand, hates John and keeps seeking to have him put to death. Finally, the opportunity she has been waiting for comes.

Shortly before the Passover of 32 C.E., Herod arranges a large celebration of his birthday. Assembled for the party are all Herod's top-ranking officials and army officers, as well as the leading citizens of Galilee. As the evening progresses, Salome, the young daughter of Herodias by her former husband Philip, is sent in to dance for the guests. The male audience is enthralled by her performance, which is no doubt most alluring.

Herod is highly pleased with Salome. "Ask me for whatever you want, and I will give it to you," he declares. He even swears: "Whatever you ask me for, I will give it to you, up to half my kingdom."

Before answering, Salome goes out to consult with her mother. "What should I ask for?" she inquires.

The opportunity at last! "The head of John the baptizer," Herodias answers without hesitation.

Quickly Salome returns to Herod and requests: "I want you to give me right away on a platter the head of John the Baptist."

Herod is greatly distressed. Yet because his guests have heard his oath, he is embarrassed not to grant it, even though this means murdering an innocent man. An executioner is immediately dispatched to the prison with his grisly instructions. Shortly he returns with John's head on a platter, and he gives it to Salome. She, in turn, takes it to her mother. When John's disciples hear what has happened, they come and remove his body and bury it, and then they report the matter to Jesus.

Later, when Herod hears of Jesus' healing people and casting out demons, he is frightened, fearing that Jesus is actually John who has been raised from the dead. Thereafter, he greatly desires to see Jesus, not to hear his preaching, but to confirm whether his fears are well founded or not. **Matthew 10:1-5; 11:1; 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29; Luke 9:7-9.**

- ♦ Why is John in prison, and why does Herod not want to put him to death?
- ♦ How is Herodias finally able to have John killed?
- ♦ After John's death, why does Herod want to see Jesus?



# YOUTHS

## *What Will You Do With Your Life?*

"That those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them."

—2 CORINTHIANS 5:15.

**T**HANK you! I owe you my life!" People saved from a burning house or from drowning have said that to their rescuers. And appreciative Christian youths have made such an expression to their parents. They were referring not simply to the physical life received from their parents but especially to the loving care and instruction that put the youths on the way to receiving "the promised thing that he himself promised us, the life everlasting."—1 John 2:25.

<sup>2</sup> It was love that moved Jehovah God to make everlasting life, "the real life," available to each one of us. "He loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." (1 Timothy 6:19; 1 John 4:10) Think, too, of the love that his Son Jesus showed in dying a painful death so that we might obtain everlasting life! (John 15:13) In light of the foregoing, What will you do with your life?

1. What expression of gratitude have people made, and why?
2. In the light of what information should you consider the question, What will you do with your life?



<sup>3</sup> Youths are often asked this question, in one form or another, by student counselors at school or others interested in their future. What will determine your answer? Will it be determined simply by personal preference? Will the deciding factor be the advice of those wanting you to achieve a secure position in the secular world? Or will what you do with your life be determined by superior considerations? The inspired reminder says: "He died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised up." (2 Corinthians 5:15) Yes, how fine it is when the way we use our lives reflects gratitude for what Jesus Christ and his heavenly Father have done for us!

### Popular Role Models

<sup>4</sup> Yet, who are the most popular figures today, the ones that young people generally adopt as role models? Is it not the rich

3. What often determines what people do with their lives?
4. Who are the most popular role models today?

and famous of the world, regardless of their moral standards? When you look in the rooms of many youths, whose pictures do you see hanging on the walls? Often it is those of musicians, movie stars, and athletes. Youths commonly dream of someday achieving similar worldly success or perhaps of marrying someone with the physical attributes of these persons. What about you? What do you want out of life?

<sup>5</sup> If you achieved the worldly success of admired celebrities, would you really be happy and satisfied? One of Hollywood's most successful actresses said: "I've had my taste of wealth and all the material things. They don't mean a thing. There's a psychiatrist that goes with every swimming pool out here, not to mention divorces and children who hate their parents."—Ecclesiastes 5:10; 1 Timothy 6:10.

<sup>6</sup> An outstanding student athlete, the 1981 winner of the women's division of a major 10-kilometer race in New York, became so disillusioned that she attempted suicide. "I have learned many truths about life in the past few months," she wrote afterward. "One is that true contentment is not attained in the ways that so many people strive for perfection and achievement. Contentment for me didn't come from having been a straight-A student, a state-championship runner or the possessor of an attractive figure." Yes, people need to learn that true contentment comes only with having a personal relationship with God, who alone can provide genuine peace and happiness.—Psalm 23:1, 6; 16:11.

<sup>7</sup> Clearly, then, you should not want to imitate those who struggle merely to achieve prominence and wealth. Even sec-

5, 6. (a) Why can it be said that worldly success fails to bring true contentment? (b) What is the source of true contentment?

7. As to realizing true satisfaction, how important are a college education and worldly success?

ular writers note the failure of worldly success to bring true satisfaction. Columnist Bill Reel wrote: "You graduate from college with dreams for the future. Sadly, most of your aspirations will turn to ashes. I don't want to demoralize you, but you might as well hear the truth: When you acquire the possessions you covet, if you acquire them, and when you achieve the successes you pursue, if you achieve them, they won't satisfy you. Instead, at those very moments when you would expect to be reveling in triumph, you will feel empty rather than fulfilled, depressed rather than elated, agitated rather than peaceful."—*New York Daily News*, May 26, 1983.

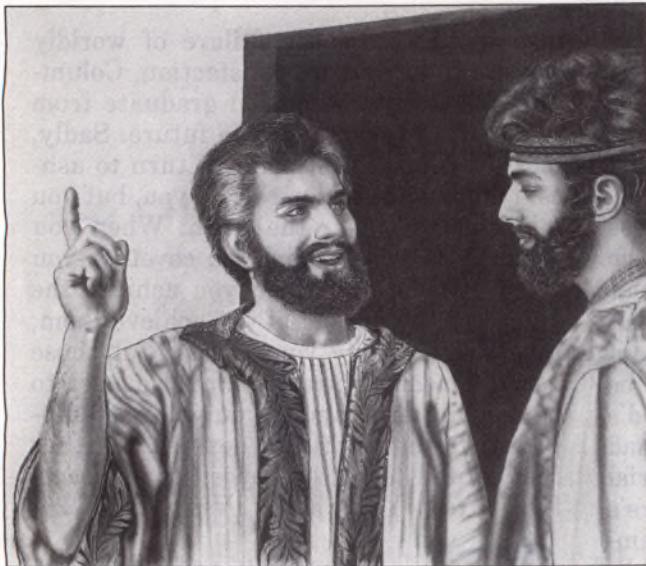
<sup>8</sup> But for us who are alert to the significance of world events in the light of Bible prophecy, there are much stronger reasons for not putting a worldly career foremost in life. (Matthew 24:3-14) We might compare ourselves to a person that sees a building with a sign: "This Company Going out of Business." Would we seek employment there? Of course not! And if we worked for such a company, we would wisely look for employment elsewhere. Well, the sign is evident everywhere on this world's institutions: "Going out of Business—End Near!" Yes, "The world is passing away," the Bible assures us. (1 John 2:17) So, wisely, we will not adopt as role models those who are deeply involved with it.

### What Advice to Follow

<sup>9</sup> Your life is shaped not only by those you hold in esteem but often also by relatives and friends who, as they put it, 'want the best for you.' 'You have to earn a living,' they may say. So they may

8. What strong reason is there for not pursuing a worldly career?

9. What worldly advice may those give who seemingly want the best for you?



*Luke, though a trained physician, put Christian pursuits first in life*

advise you to get a college or university education to prepare yourself for a well-paying profession. 'The Bible writer Luke was a physician,' they may note, 'and the apostle Paul was instructed by the Law teacher Gamaliel.' (Colossians 4:14; Acts 5:34; 22:3) Yet, analyze carefully such advice.

<sup>10</sup> The physician Luke never encouraged Christians to follow his former career example by becoming a doctor; rather, Luke held forth the lives of Jesus and his apostles for imitation. Evidently Luke became a physician *before* he learned about Christ but afterward put his Christian ministry first in life. The situation was similar with Paul. Rather than encouraging others to imitate him as he had imitated Gamaliel, Paul wrote: "Become imitators of me, *even as I am of Christ.*" So highly did Paul value the knowledge of Christ that he said that by comparison he considered his for-

10. What advice did Luke and Paul provide, and what can be said about their pre-Christian activity?

mer pursuits "as a lot of refuse." —1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:8.

<sup>11</sup> Remember, sentiment can cause even those who love you to give poor advice. For example, when Jesus spoke of what awaited him during his ministry in Jerusalem, the apostle Peter replied: "Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this destiny at all." Peter loved Jesus and did not want him to suffer. Yet Jesus rebuked Peter because He realized that to fulfill God's will would involve both suffering and being put to death by opposers.—Matthew 16:21-23.

<sup>12</sup> Similarly, some parents or friends may discourage you from a self-sacrificing course. Because of ill-advised sentiment, they may hesitate to encourage you to take an assignment in the full-time pioneer ministry, to serve as a missionary, or to do volunteer work at a branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses. They may say: 'Why not, rather, get married and settle down close to us?' Or, 'You know, the work is hard at Bethel. Maybe it's better you stay with us.' In other words, as Peter put it, "Be kind to yourself."

<sup>13</sup> Even Jehovah's servants at times need to readjust their thinking. Peter needed to, and with a readjusted viewpoint, he wrote: "In fact, to this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely." (1 Peter 2:21)

11. (a) What did Peter tell Jesus, and why?  
(b) How did Jesus respond?
12. What advice may well-meaning persons give youths, and why?
13. (a) What readjusted viewpoint did Peter express? (b) What is involved in being a true Christian?

Living a true Christian life involves self-sacrifice, yes, even suffering. It is not an easy course, but it is the one to which we were called as Christians. Accepting it involves 'no longer living for ourselves, but for him who died for us.' (2 Corinthians 5:15) Keeping in view good role models will help us to use our lives in this self-sacrificing way.

### Role Models to Keep in View

<sup>14</sup> The model you need particularly to keep in view is the one Jesus provided. As a perfect person, he could have become the greatest athlete, musician, physician, or lawyer that the world would ever know. But his attention was focused on pleasing his heavenly Father, even while Jesus was a youth. (Luke 2:42-49) He later said: "I must declare the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this I was sent forth." (Luke 4:43) Last summer a letter in the church magazine *Ministry* explained: "Our Saviour loved to get away from the multitude, and then He went from house to house—soul hunting. The one-soul audience was His delight. Then He could pour in the truth—the love of God."—Luke 10:1-16.

<sup>15</sup> Granted, house-to-house preaching is not easy. It requires diligent study to understand the good news of the Kingdom and a lot of work to prepare meaningful presentations. Also, this service takes courage, since most householders are not interested, and some are even hostile. Yet, the house-to-house ministry of you young ones is having a marvelous effect, as noted in the Italian parish magazine *La Voce*. The writer said: "Personally, I like Jehovah's Witnesses," who, he explained, "come and visit you at home." He com-

14. What example did Jesus provide?

15. (a) Why is house-to-house preaching a challenge? (b) What shows that the house-to-house ministry of youths is effective?

mented: "The ones I know are impeccably mannered, soft-spoken; beautiful people too and mostly young. Beauty and youth are, when on display, most persuasive."

<sup>16</sup> Surely, you young ones who are accepting Christ as your model are to be commended! More than 12,000 youths, age 25 and under, are in the pioneer work in the United States, and tens of thousands more are pioneering elsewhere. (Psalm 110:3) Be assured that no other work you can do is more important! Even the writer in the above-mentioned church magazine said: "God says the most essential work is house-to-house visitation—soul hunting," yet he continued, "What do you say about this? How much visitation are you and I doing? I have not seen much mention of this kind of work in MINISTRY." Can we not be grateful that we are associated with an organization that emphasizes the requirement of imitating Jesus' example of preaching?

<sup>17</sup> Since what you will do with your life will be largely influenced by those you admire, develop admiration also for the model provided by young Timothy. Born shortly before Jesus' death, Timothy as a young man left his family and joined the apostle Paul on his second missionary journey. A few months later a mob forced Paul and Silas to flee from Thessalonica, but not before they had made some disciples. (Acts 16:1-3; 17:1-10, 13-15) Soon afterward Paul sent Timothy into that dangerous territory to comfort these disciples in their trials. (1 Thessalonians 3: 1-3) Timothy was possibly in his late teens

16. (a) For what activity do youths deserve commendation? (b) How does the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses compare with the churches in performing the most important work on earth?

17. What had Timothy accomplished while possibly still a teenager, and what shows that he may have been that young at the time?

at the time, since some 12 to 14 years later Paul still spoke about his "youth." (1 Timothy 4:12) Do you not admire a courageous, self-sacrificing youth like that?

<sup>18</sup> Five years after Timothy's assignment to strengthen the brothers in Thessalonica, Paul wrote the Corinthians from Ephesus: "Become imitators of me. That is why I am sending Timothy to you, . . . and he will put you in mind of my methods in connection with Christ Jesus, just as I am teaching everywhere." (1 Corinthians 4:16, 17) Young Timothy, having already worked five years with Paul, was well acquainted with Paul's teaching methods. He knew how Paul had presented the message to the Ephesians, including how he had taught them "publicly and from house to house." (Acts 20:20, 21) Having been trained well in such preaching methods, what a fine help Timothy could be to the congregations!

<sup>19</sup> Another five or six years pass, and Paul is in prison in Rome. Timothy, who himself was recently released from prison, is with him. (Hebrews 13:23) Imagine the scene: Possibly using Timothy as his sec-

18. Why was Paul going to send Timothy to the Corinthians?

19. What did Paul say about Timothy more than ten years after they started serving together?

### Questions for Review

- Why should true Christians not put worldly careers first in life?
- What faulty advice have some given, yet what can we learn from Jesus' answer to Peter?
- In what ways did Jesus and Timothy provide fine role models for youths?
- What is involved in being spiritually minded?

retary, Paul is dictating a letter to the Philippians. Speaking deliberately, Paul proceeds: "I am hoping in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly . . . For I have no one else of a disposition like his who will genuinely care for the things pertaining to you . . . You know the proof he gave of himself, that like a child with a father he slaved with me in furtherance of the good news."—Philippians 1:1; 2:19-22.

<sup>20</sup> Surely, young Timothy is an admirable example! He was such a reliable, faithful companion to Paul, sticking with him through thick and thin, supporting him in the preaching work, and being willing to serve wherever he was sent. He sacrificed a so-called normal life at home, yet what contentment and satisfaction his life in God's service brought him! Timothy was indeed 'living no longer for himself, but for Christ who had died for him.' (2 Corinthians 5:15) Are you moved to imitate his example?

### Live for God's New World

<sup>21</sup> Timothy, in effect, was living for God's new world. He was not thinking simply of the here and now but of using his life to produce lasting benefits. (Matthew 6:19-21) Since Timothy's father was a Greek and apparently an unbeliever, he may have urged Timothy to pursue higher education and a worldly career. But as a result of the godly instruction from his mother and grandmother, Timothy's life was wrapped up with the Christian congregation. He pursued spiritual interests, apparently remained single at least for a time, and qualified to serve with the apostle Paul.—2 Timothy 1:5.

20. What makes Timothy such an admirable role model for youths?

21. Why can we say that Timothy was spiritually minded?

<sup>22</sup> What about you? Will you use your youth in the way Timothy did? The brochure *School and Jehovah's Witnesses* was referring to such a life course when it explained regarding Witness youths: "Their main goal in life is to serve effectively as ministers of God, and they appreciate schooling as an aid to that end. So they generally choose courses that are useful for supporting themselves in the modern world. Thus, many may take vocational courses or attend a vocational school. When they leave school

22. How does the *School* brochure highlight for youths today a life course similar to Timothy's?

they desire to obtain work that will allow them to concentrate on their principal vocation, the Christian ministry."

<sup>23</sup> For you who really appreciate what Jehovah God and his Son have done for you, it should not be hard to answer the question, What will I do with my life? Rather than living for yourself and personal pleasure, you will use your life to do God's will. You will live, as did Timothy, as a spiritual person.

23. Why should it not be hard for Christian youths to answer the question, What will I do with my life?

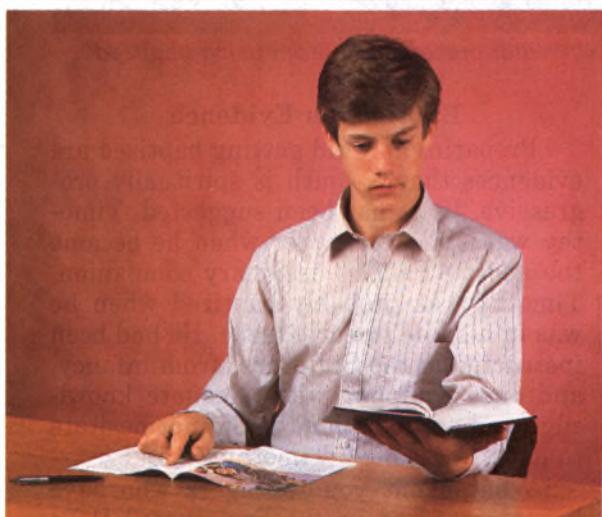
# YOUTHS

## *Are You Spiritually Progressive?*

"Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, that your advancement may be manifest to all persons."—1 TIMOTHY 4:15.

**W**HAT does it mean to be spiritually progressive? It means being like young Jesus and Timothy, who put spiritual interests first in their lives. If you are spiritually progressive, you will know what you want to do with your life. You will not say: 'I'll begin to think seriously about serving Jehovah when I get older.' No, you will serve him now!

1, 2. What does it mean, and not mean, to be spiritually progressive?



<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, being spiritually progressive does not mean being monk-like, putting on religious airs, or even becoming a bookworm; nor does it mean being sad, solemn, and never socializing. (John 2:1-10) Jehovah is a happy God, and he wants his earthly children to be happy. So moderate participation in sports and other recreational activities has God's approval.—1 Timothy 1:11; 4:8.



*What prevents you from being baptized?*

### Baptism an Evidence

<sup>3</sup> Preparing for and getting baptized are evidences that a youth is spiritually progressive. If, as has been suggested, Timothy was still a teenager when he became the apostle Paul's missionary companion, Timothy was probably baptized when he was in his mid or early teens. He had been instructed in the Scriptures from infancy, and once equipped with adequate knowledge and appreciation, he did not hesitate to get baptized.—2 Timothy 3:15.

<sup>4</sup> What about you teenagers who have been instructed in the Scriptures? Have you considered the question: "What prevents me from getting baptized?" In the first century, that question was asked by a man who was well versed in the Scriptures but who had just then learned the identity of Christ. True, the man did not know all there is to know about God's purposes, yet he was moved with deep

3. When was Timothy most likely baptized?
4. What question was Philip asked, and although the questioner had just learned about Christ, why did Philip grant his request?

appreciation for what he did know! Thus, the disciple Philip had no legitimate reason for not baptizing him.—Acts 8:26-39.

<sup>5</sup> What prevents *you* from getting baptized? To qualify, of course, you must comprehend what is involved. You must truly want to serve Jehovah because you love him. You also need to make a personal dedication to him in prayer. In addition, you must be adhering to God's moral requirements and have sufficient experience in sharing your faith with others. When you thus qualify, it is vital to follow through and get baptized.—Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 2:38.

<sup>6</sup> Though getting baptized is evidence that you are spiritually progressive, remember that baptism is just a beginning step. By making a dedication to Jehovah, you become an alien in this old world ruled by Satan. So dedication may be compared to applying for everlasting life in God's new system, and the formal ceremony of baptism is, in effect, a demonstration before witnesses confirming this fact. (John 12:31; Hebrews 11:13) Afterward you must faithfully live up to your dedication in order to receive God's gift of everlasting life.—Romans 6:23.

### Evidenced by Conduct

<sup>7</sup> Whether you are spiritually progressive or not will also be evidenced by your attitude toward things of the world. What things? They include a freewheeling lifestyle, drugs, sexual freedom, immoral movies, suggestive music, obscene talk, sensuous dancing, racial and national pride, and so forth. (1 John 2:16; Ephesians 5:3-5) Youths, in particular, need to be on guard. Remember, the way you be-

5. What is required for you to be baptized?
6. What may baptism be compared to, and what must follow it?
7. How does your attitude toward things of the world relate to your spiritual progressiveness?

have regarding such things will reveal the state of your spiritual health.—Proverbs 20:11.

<sup>8</sup> Satan sees to it that the world's immoral ways appear very attractive. In fact, a 15-year-old said: "The more we see sex and drugs on TV, the more it seems normal in society." Youths who do not participate in the ways of the world are made to feel that they are oddballs and that they are missing out on fun. Do you ever feel that way? Some associated with the congregation do, and they are indecisive. When asked about getting baptized, one youth said: 'I don't want to now because I may do something I would be disfellowshipped for.' Yet you cannot straddle the fence or be limping on two different opinions. God's prophet once said: "If Jehovah is the true God, go following him; but if Baal is, go following him."—1 Kings 18:21.

<sup>9</sup> Really, by avoiding the immoral ways of the world, all that you are missing out on is a lot of trouble. "An enormous feeling of revulsion and remorse for the life I had been leading overwhelmed me," confessed one woman. "I had cheapened and cheated myself and the child I had conceived." Yes, the apparent glamour and glitter of the Devil's world is only a mirage, a deception. It holds nothing of value. Following the world's ways leads to out-of-wedlock pregnancies, broken homes, sexually transmitted disease, and untold frustration and misery. So listen to counsel, be spiritually progressive. "Turn away from what is bad and do what is good."—1 Peter 3:11.

<sup>10</sup> A spiritually progressive youth will heed the admonition of the apostle Paul: "Be babes as to badness; yet become full-

8. Why do some youths hesitate to get baptized?
9. What protection is realized by being spiritually progressive?
10. What admonition and whose examples will a spiritually progressive youth heed?

grown in powers of understanding." (1 Corinthians 14:20) Young Timothy certainly applied this counsel. Can you imagine his seeking the companionship of licentious, worldly youths of his day? Not at all! His companions were fellow servants of God. (Proverbs 13:20) Imitate his example. When about to engage in any questionable activity, ask yourself: Would Timothy or Jesus do this?

#### Evidenced by Bible Study

<sup>11</sup> An article from Italy published in *World Press Review* said: "The youths' delusion and desperation mount daily, and no one can offer them an encouraging future." The blinded eyes of those in Satan's world have no vision of God's promised new world and of the glorious future that awaits those who qualify for life there. (2 Corinthians 4:4; Proverbs 29:18; 2 Peter 3:13) But spiritually progressive youths have such a vision that is kept bright and clear through regular Bible study.

<sup>12</sup> Is God's new world real to you? It can be, but attaining it requires real effort on your part. You need to develop a keen appetite for Bible understanding so that "you keep seeking for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you keep searching for it." (Proverbs 2:1-6) What keeps a treasure hunter searching and digging, sometimes for years? He passionately desires the riches that the treasure will bring him. Yet knowledge is so much more precious than material treasure. "This means everlasting life," Jesus said, "taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) If you really believe

11. What vision do youths of the world lack, and how is it gained and maintained?
12. (a) How must we go about obtaining knowledge of God? (b) Why is this knowledge worth the effort?



what Jesus there said, Bible study will become an eager pursuit that will reward you with what is more precious than priceless gems.—Proverbs 3:13-18.

<sup>13</sup> You will find that the more you study, the greater your appetite will be for spiritual food. Learn good study methods. Do not simply underline answers, but look up cited Bible texts, and then pursue related texts through the Bible cross-references. You can also do additional research using indexes, such as the *Watch Tower Publications Index 1930-1985*. Analyze how the material applies and how it can be put to use. Talk to others about what you are studying. This will impress points on your mind and will serve to encourage others to do research as well. By really applying yourself, you will be heeding the counsel given to young Timothy: "Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, that your advancement may be manifest to all persons."—1 Timothy 4:15; 2 Timothy 2:15.

13. What suggestions for study will spiritually progressive youths follow?

#### Showed at Meetings and in Service

<sup>14</sup> When you enjoy Bible study and have prepared well, Christian meetings become a greater pleasure. (Psalm 122:1; Hebrews 2:12) You then look forward even more to sharing in audience-participation parts and to giving talks in the Theocratic Ministry School. But when attending meetings, there are other ways to fulfill the instruction 'to encourage one another' and "to incite to love and fine works." (Hebrews 10:24, 25) Do you, for instance, take the initiative to speak to others? A friendly, "Hello, I'm glad to see you!" or a sincere inquiry, "How are you feeling?" can be so encouraging, especially when coming from a young person.

<sup>15</sup> A lot of work is involved in the operations of a congregation. Can you share? Likely, young Timothy performed many

14. What helps to make Christian meetings a greater pleasure, and in what ways can you encourage others while attending?

15. How can you make yourself available to perform needful services, and why is it good to keep Christ's example in mind?

helpful services for Paul—running errands, obtaining supplies, delivering messages, and so forth. If you have not done so, why not mention to the elders your willingness to be of help. Perhaps you will be asked to hand out meeting assignments, keep the hall clean, or perform some other needful service. Remember, Christ washed his disciples' feet, so no work is beneath the dignity of one who is spiritually progressive.—John 13:4, 5.

<sup>16</sup> When we look at other religions, we can indeed be grateful for the training we receive at our meetings for the all-important preaching work. Writing in *U.S. Catholic* last September, Kenneth Guentert said: "I grew up in the days when Catholics weren't supposed to read the Bible because they'd get strange ideas—like thinking Christians should go around knocking on doors trying to convert people. Then came Vatican II, and I started to read the Bible. Sure enough; now I think Christians should go around knocking on doors to try to convert people." He added: "It's not that I'm terribly comfortable with the idea, you understand; but if you read the New Testament, it is almost impossible to avoid this conclusion."—Matthew 10:11-13; Luke 10:1-6; Acts 20:20, 21.

<sup>17</sup> Yes, early Christians were active in house-to-house preaching, and evidently youngsters like Timothy were right out there in the ministry with older ones. Yet, admittedly, for some today this is not the most enjoyable work. Why not? Adeptness is a factor. For example, when you do well in a game or a sport, do you not enjoy it more? It is much the same with the ministry. As you become more proficient in using the Bible and discussing Bible top-

16. What activity did a Catholic periodical recognize to be a Christian responsibility?

17. How can the ministry become more pleasurable for you?

ics, the ministry will become a source of pleasure, especially when you find someone with whom you can share life-giving knowledge. So be spiritually progressive! Practice your door-to-door presentations. Get suggestions from others. Petition Jehovah's help.—Luke 11:13.

### By Relationships With Older Ones

<sup>18</sup> When he was just a youth of 12, Jesus enjoyed spending time with older ones, discussing spiritual things. His parents once "found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers and listening to them and questioning them." (Luke 2:46) It was similar with Timothy. When the apostle Paul and his companions visited Lystra, Timothy evidently enjoyed their company and paid earnest attention to their teachings. He had a rapport with the local brothers who highly recommended him.—Acts 16:1-3.

<sup>19</sup> Although Timothy willingly performed physical services for others, Paul chose him as a traveling companion particularly for his ability to minister to people's spiritual needs. In view of that, when a mob forced Paul to leave Thessalonica, he sent young Timothy to comfort and strengthen the new disciples. So not only was Timothy eager to learn from older ones and to enjoy their company; he was of real spiritual help to them as well.—Acts 17:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-3.

<sup>20</sup> You will be wise to imitate Jesus and Timothy and be eager to benefit from the experience and knowledge of older ones. Seek their company and ask them questions. But also show your spiritual

18. What kind of relationships did Jesus and Timothy enjoy with older ones?

19. Why particularly did Paul choose Timothy as a traveling companion, and how was Timothy of help?

20. What will you be wise to do, and what services can you perform in behalf of older ones?

progressiveness by being of assistance to them. Are there aged or infirm ones that would appreciate having you do some shopping or other needful services? Perhaps you could simply visit them, read to them, and share experiences you have enjoyed in the ministry.

### Role of Parents and Others

<sup>21</sup> The spiritual health of youths is largely dependent upon the instruction and example provided by their parents. (Proverbs 22:6) Jesus surely benefited from the guidance given by his God-fearing earthly parents. (Luke 2:51, 52) And most certainly Timothy would not have been the spiritually progressive lad he was had it not been for the training of his mother and grandmother. (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15) The importance of regular Bible instruction cannot be overemphasized! As parents, are you providing this? Or is it neglected?

<sup>22</sup> A young man at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses explains that through the years of growing up, an inevitable feature of their family life was the weekly Bible study with the children. "Sometimes Dad would be so tired from work he could hardly keep awake, but the study was held regardless, and this helped us to appreciate the seriousness of it." Parents, it is unlikely that your children will highly value spiritual matters unless you do. So hold forth the goals of pioneering and of missionary and Bethel service. Help them to appreciate that the ministry is a career with a future and that there is no real future in worldly careers.—Compare 1 Samuel 1:26-28.

- <sup>23</sup> Others, too, can help youths to progress spiritually. You can make a point of conversing with them at meetings. Also, try to include them in some of your activities. With the parent's permission, an elder might arrange to take a youth on a speaking assignment or to include him on an outing. (Job 31:16-18) What may seem to be a little thing can mean a lot. A traveling overseer, noting that a boy who was listening to his talk did not have a Bible, afterward made a gift of one to him. The lad was impressed not only with the gift but also with the interest shown in him. Over 30 years later, the boy, now an elder himself, still remembers with fondness that brother's loving gesture.
21. How important is the role of parents, and what cannot be overemphasized?  
22. (a) When parents consider family Bible study vital, how are children affected? (b) What direction should parents give to their children?  
23. How can others in the congregation help youths to be spiritually progressive?

<sup>24</sup> Is it not thrilling to realize that there are hundreds of thousands of "young men just like dewdrops" publishing the refreshing Kingdom message and that there is at least an equal number of young women forming 'a large army telling the good news'? May all of them apply themselves to being spiritually progressive, and may all of us help them to that end.—Psalm 110:3; 68:11.

24. What is it thrilling to realize, and what should be our determination?

### Questions for Review

- What can help a youth to decide when to be baptized?
- How is a youth's conduct a measure of his spiritual progressiveness?
- What can help youths to enjoy meetings and field service?
- What relationship should youths develop with older ones?
- How can parents and older ones help youths?

# Is the Cross for Christians?

"**M**Y MOTHER gave it to me." "It's manly." "I wear it as an ornament." "I'd feel uncomfortable without it." "It protects me from evil." "It's just something to hang on the chain."

Thus replied several people who were asked why they wore a cross. Though obviously not all do so out of religious devotion, wearing a cross is quite in vogue in some parts of the world. Even Soviet youths have been seen wearing one. Many attach deep religious significance to the cross, for, as one youth simply said, "It's sacred."

But is it really proper for a Christian to wear a cross? Does it accurately portray the way Christ died? And are there valid objections even to wearing it as an ornament? To see, let us first take a look at the origin of the cross.

## A Christian Symbol?

You may assume that Christians were the first to use the cross. *The Encyclopedia Americana*, however, speaks of "its ancient usage by both Hindus and Buddhists in India and China, and by the Persians, Assyrians, and Babylonians." Similarly, *Chambers's Encyclopaedia*, (1969 edition) says that the cross "was an emblem to which religious and mystical meanings were attached long before the Christian era."

Indeed, there is no evidence that early Christians used the cross in their worship.



During the early days of Christianity, it was the pagan Romans who used the cross! Says *The Companion Bible*: "These crosses were used as symbols of the Babylonian sun-god . . . and are first seen on a coin of Julius Caesar, 100-44 B.C., and then on a coin struck by Caesar's heir (Augustus), 20 B.C." The Roman nature-god Bacchus was at times represented with a headband containing a number of crosses.

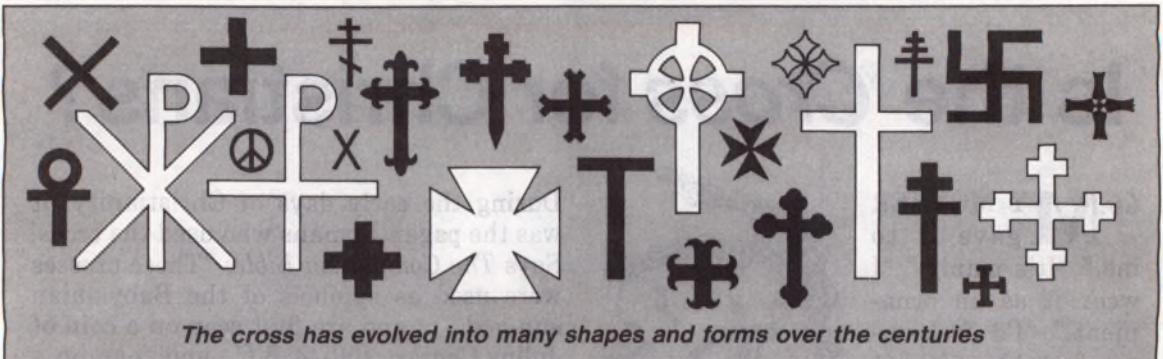
How, then, did the cross become the symbol of Christendom?

## Constantine and the Cross

In 312 C.E., Constantine, ruling the area now known as France and Britain, headed out to war against his brother-in-law, Maxentius, of Italy. En route he reportedly saw a vision—a cross on which were the words "*Hoc vince*," meaning, "By this conquer." After his victory, Constantine made the cross the standard of his armies. When Christianity later became the state religion of the Roman Empire, the cross became the symbol of the church.

But did such a vision actually take place? Accounts of this legend are, at best, second-hand and full of discrepancies. Frankly, it would be difficult to find a more unlikely candidate for a divine revelation than Constantine. At the time of this supposed event, he was an avid sun-god worshiper. Constantine even dedicated Sunday as the day for sun worship. His conduct after his so-called conversion also gave little evidence of real dedication to right principles. Murder, intrigue, and political ambition ruled his life. It seems that for Constantine, Christianity was little more than a political device to unite a fragmented empire.

There is also little evidence that the type



*The cross has evolved into many shapes and forms over the centuries*

of cross Constantine "saw" really represented the instrument used to put Christ to death. Stamped on many coins Constantine subsequently had minted are X-shaped crosses with a "P" superimposed. (See illustration.) *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, by W. E. Vine, says: "As for the Chi, or X, which Constantine declared he had seen in a vision leading him to champion the Christian faith, that letter was the initial of the word 'Christ' [in the Greek language] and had nothing to do with 'the Cross,'" that is, as an instrument of execution. In fact, this style of cross is nearly identical to the pagan symbol for the sun.

Why, then, was the cross so easily accepted by "Christians"? Vine's *Dictionary* continues: "By the middle of the 3rd cent. A.D. the churches had either departed from, or had travestied, certain doctrines of the Christian faith. In order to increase the prestige of the apostate ecclesiastical system pagans were received into the churches apart from regeneration by faith, and were permitted largely to retain their pagan signs and symbols. Hence the Tau or T, in its most frequent form, with the cross-piece lowered, was adopted to stand for the cross of Christ."

### **The Evolution of the Cross**

Was it love for Christ that caused the cross, at this late time, to become such an

object of veneration? The *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* says: "With the 4th cent[ury] magical belief began to take a firmer hold within the Church." As with a magic charm, simply making the sign of the cross was thought to be "the surest defence against demons, and the remedy for all diseases." Superstitious use of the cross continues to this day.

Over the years, some 400 different styles of crosses developed. At first, Christ himself was not portrayed. Rather, a youth holding a jeweled cross would be depicted. Later, a lamb was included. In 691 C.E., the council in Trullo made "official" a cross showing the bust of a young man, instead of a lamb, over the cross. In time this developed into the crucifix—a cross with a representation of the body of Christ.

### **Did Christ Die on a Cross?**

"But does not the Bible teach that Christ actually died on a cross?" one may ask. To answer this, we must look into the meanings of the two Greek words that the Bible writers used to describe the instrument of Christ's death: *stau·ros'* and *xy'lōn*.

*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (1979) states under the heading "Cross": "Originally Gk. *staurós* designated a pointed, vertical wooden stake firmly fixed in the ground. . . . They were positioned side by side in rows to form fencing or defensive palisades around settlements,

or singly they were set up as instruments of torture on which serious offenders of law were publicly suspended to die (or, if already killed, to have their corpses thoroughly dishonored)."

True, the Romans did use an instrument of execution known in Latin as the *crux*. And in translating the Bible into Latin, this word *crux* was used as a rendering of *stau·ros'*. Because the Latin word *crux* and the English word *cross* are similar, many mistakenly assume that a *crux* was necessarily a stake with a crossbeam. However, *The Imperial Bible-Dictionary* says: "Even amongst the Romans the *crux* (from which our *cross* is derived) appears to have been originally an upright pole, and this always remained the more prominent part."

The book *The Non-Christian Cross* adds: "There is not a single sentence in any of the numerous writings forming the New Testament, which, in the original Greek, bears even indirect evidence to the effect that the *stauros* used in the case of Jesus was other than an ordinary *stauros* [pole or stake]; much less to the effect that it consisted, not of one piece of timber, but of two pieces nailed together in the form of a cross." Christ could well have been impaled on a form of *crux* (*stau·ros'*) known as the *crux simplex*. That was how such a stake was illustrated by the Roman Catholic scholar Justus Lipsius of the 16th century.

What of the other Greek word, *xy'lon*? It was used in the Greek *Septuagint* translation of the Bible at Ezra 6:11. In the *New World Translation* this reads: "And by me an order has been put through that, as for anybody that violates this decree, a timber will be pulled out of his house and he will be impaled upon it, and his house will be turned into a public privy on this account." Clearly, a single beam, or "timber," was involved here.

Numerous translators of the Christian



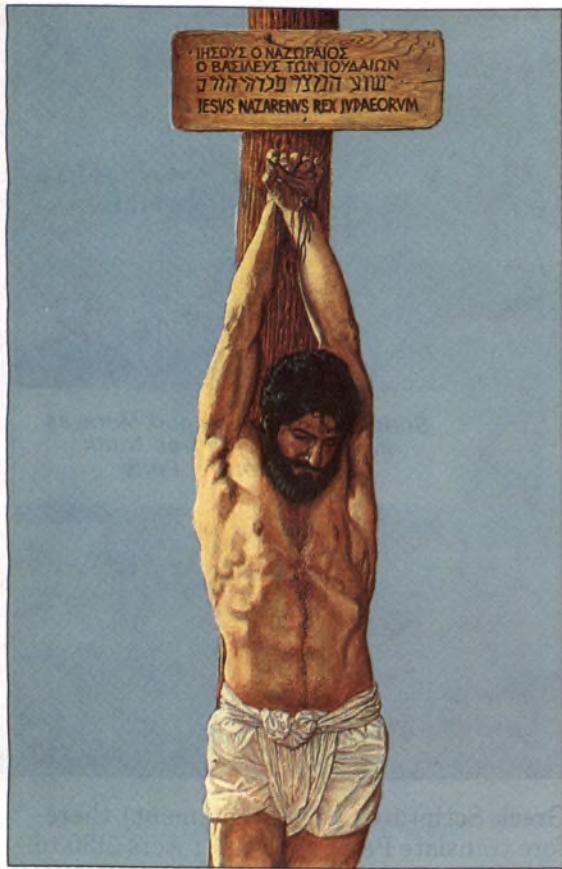
Statue of the Greek god Marsyas  
flayed alive on a tree trunk  
—The Louvre, Paris

Greek Scriptures (New Testament) therefore translate Peter's words at Acts 5:30 to read: "The God of our forefathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew, hanging him upon a *stake* [or, "tree," according to the King James Version, New International Version, The Jerusalem Bible, and Revised Standard Version]."] You might also wish to check how your Bible translates *xy'lon* at: Acts 10:39; 13:29; Galatians 3:13; and 1 Peter 2:24.

#### Walking by Faith, Not by Sight

Even after considering such evidence that Christ really died on a stake, some may still see nothing wrong with wearing a cross. 'It's just an ornament,' they may say.

Bear in mind, though, how the cross has been used down through history—as an object of pagan worship and of



superstitious awe. Could wearing a cross, even as just an ornament, be harmonized with the admonition of the apostle Paul at 1 Corinthians 10:14: "Therefore, my beloved ones, flee from idolatry"?

What about true Christians today? They, too, should be conscious of the need to 'guard themselves from idols,' as the Bible counsels. (1 John 5:21) So they do not find the cross to be an appropriate ornament. They recall Paul's statement: "Accursed is every man hanged upon a stake," and therefore prefer to think of Christ as a glorious enthroned King! —Galatians 3:13; Revelation 6:2.

Though such Christians do not wear crosses, they deeply appreciate the fact that Christ died for them. They know that Christ's sacrifice is a marvelous demonstration of "God's power" and eternal love. (1 Corinthians 1:18; John 3:16) But they need no material object like a cross to help them worship this God of love. For, as Paul exhorted, they "are walking by faith, not by sight." —2 Corinthians 5:7.

## Christian Cross Before Constantine?

**T**HE sign of the cross has been a symbol of great antiquity, present in nearly every known culture. Its meaning has eluded anthropologists, though its use in funerary art could well point to a defense against evil. On the other hand, the famous *crux ansata* of Egypt, depicted coming from the mouth, must refer to life or breath. The universal use of the sign of the cross makes more poignant the

striking lack of crosses in early Christian remains, especially any specific reference to the event on Golgotha. Most scholars now agree that the cross, as an artistic reference to the passion event, cannot be found prior to the time of Constantine."—*Ante Pacem—Archaeological Evidence of Church Life Before Constantine* (1985), by Professor Graydon F. Snyder, page 27.



# Demonstrating Christian Loyalty in New Caledonia

ALL was not well in paradise. By early 1985, political unrest had claimed some 20 lives on the South Pacific island of New Caledonia. This led *Maclean's* magazine to comment: "The island is already beginning to resemble Northern Ireland, divided into two heavily armed and hostile camps."

The situation had become so serious in January 1985 that President François Mitterrand of France scurried half way around the world on an unscheduled Saturday visit to Nouméa, the island's capital. The islanders, divided in their loyalties, were anxious to express their feelings during his visit. The original inhabitants, pushed by religious leaders and feeling a strong sense of loyalty to their Melanesian roots, pressed hard for an end to over 130 years of French rule. On the other hand, many descendants of European Polynesians and Asian settlers, and even Melanesians, expressed their loyalty to the French government and advocated that its rule continue.

Meanwhile, on this same Saturday, 1,567 of Jehovah's Witnesses and their friends had also gathered in Nouméa to make a public display of loyalty. Their loyalty, however, was not to any particular ethnic group or to an earthly government; it was loyalty to God's established Kingdom. But how did it come about that they were in Nouméa on this particular

day? For that matter, how did it come about that they were in New Caledonia at all?

## The Beginnings of Christian Loyalty

New Caledonia has what you might expect of a South Pacific paradise—a pleasant climate the year round, luscious fruits to incite the palate, abundant vegetation to delight the eye, and a colorful mixture of over 150,000 Melanesians, Polynesians, Asians, and Europeans.

It was discovered in 1774 by Captain James Cook, the famous British navigator and explorer, but became a French colony in 1853. Half a step behind the first explorers and traders came Christendom's missionaries. The people they found obviously needed to be freed from certain wrong practices. The missionaries succeeded, for example, in wiping out cannibalism. They also introduced the people to the Bible and even translated it into four local languages. Commendably, they included God's name, rendered Iehova or Jehova in the vernacular. Yet, more was needed.

In the 1930's a group of Jehovah's Witnesses sailed through the Loyalty Islands distributing Bible literature. In the mid-1950's several Australian Witnesses moved to New Caledonia. Although they were later deported, the work prospered, and by 1967 the number of local



Witnesses had grown to over a hundred. In 1976 the Watch Tower Society established a branch office in Nouméa and oversaw the construction of the island's first Kingdom Hall.\*

Especially since then, great strides have been made in gathering loyal subjects for Jehovah's established Kingdom from all the country's different ethnic groups. For example, some 17,000 people from Wallis and Futuna—tiny islands located north of Fiji—live in New Caledonia. Many of these Wallisians are Catholics and very devoted to their church. But their attitude has been changing as more and more of them have begun listening to the Kingdom message. A priest, upset about this, sent the lady in charge of church finances out to "save the sheep from going astray." However, she also listened. Then her daughter, who was studying in Rome to become a missionary, returned home and accepted the Bible truth taught by Jehovah's Witnesses. Now both she and her mother are dedicated, loyal Witnesses.

Today the Witnesses are well known everywhere in these islands; in certain areas, there is one Witness for every 80

\* For a more complete report on the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in New Caledonia, see the 1984 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, pages 243-9.

persons. On the island of Lifou, a young carpenter became a Pentecostal. He went from village to village, announcing that Christ would return visibly to the island. To point up his conviction that material possessions are of no value, he publicly burned his clothes and money. But he became interested in what he read in a tract published by Jehovah's Witnesses. A regular Bible study helped him to an accurate knowledge of God's Word. Today, he is a balanced Christian, a full-time minister.

#### Loyalty to God's Kingdom Under Test

The political unrest and chaotic conditions that broke out in 1984 created problems for many New Caledonians, including the Witnesses. Some of these were mobbed and beaten while out preaching. Three men entered one Witness home, demanded the man's car keys at gunpoint, and then stole his car. A missionary discovered that his car had been set afire and destroyed while he was conducting a Bible study.

Whereas the islanders are divided in their loyalties, the Witnesses—regardless of which ethnic group—are united in their neutral stand. The clergy, themselves politically involved, have used the present state of unrest to stir up hatred of the

Witnesses. For example, Witnesses driving to pick up interested persons for a meeting were stopped. Their traveling overseer, who was visiting them that week, was dragged from one of the two cars and beaten, and his glasses were smashed. An interested person was shoved against a wall and beaten until his head was bloody, his pregnant wife being forced to watch.

Yet the Witnesses know that their loyalty has not been misplaced. They remember Paul's words: "All those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted." —2 Timothy 3:12; see also Matthew 10:16.

### Loyally Expanding Despite Unrest

In mid-1984 the Witnesses saw the need for building an Assembly Hall. An appropriate piece of property was found on a hill overlooking Nouméa harbor, and work was started in September. But in November, because of the political unrest, the authorities imposed a curfew, and a state of emergency was declared. Despite these difficulties, Witnesses from the entire island responded to the need for help at the construction site. Up to 400 volunteers came at a time, much to the amazement of onlookers. Since the construction work took place during school holidays, many

youngsters assisted. One young girl said: "This was the best vacation I ever had." And seeing a 60-year-old female Witness shoveling cement and gravel into a concrete mixer was enough to surprise any professional builder!

After just four months the project was finished. Dedication plans were made, but it turned out to be the very weekend of Mitterrand's unexpected visit! Because of the possibly explosive political situation, the authorities asked the Witnesses to cancel their program. However, the man in charge of security, who had previously seen a Witness convention in France, told them: "I know you people. It will not be with you that we will be having our problems. Just take necessary security measures; we will not interfere with your meetings."

Over 1,500 persons showed up for the fine dedication program, climaxed by a dedication talk delivered by Lyman Swingle, a visiting member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. The attendance at this meeting, despite civil unrest, demonstrated loyalty to Jehovah's Kingdom, a loyalty that is bearing fruit in New Caledonia. A new peak of 889 Kingdom proclaimers has been reached, and prospects for further increase are excellent. Proof of this can be seen in the 2,145 who attended the Memorial of Christ's death in 1986.

The recent period of political unrest clearly shows that most New Caledonians are looking to human governments to solve their problems. Not so those loyal to God's Kingdom, who put their complete confidence in God-rule. During these difficulties, a sign was spotted on the east coast's main road reading: "Jehovah Out!" But Jehovah, as represented by his established Kingdom, is here to stay. So are "his loyal ones."—Psalm 37:28; see also verses 9-11, 22, 29, and 34.

## In Our Next Issue

- Spiritism—How Viewed by God?
- "A Time to Speak"—When?
- On Guard Against "Peace and Security" as Devised by Nations

# Where Were His Legs?

**V**ICTIM Twisted on Cross, Unearthed Remains Show." Did you see such a headline in January 1971? Quite possibly, for there were many newspaper articles on some new "evidence" about death on a cross.

After the above title, the article began: "Jerusalem, Jan. 3 (Reuter)—Israeli archaeologists, having unearthed the first material evidence of a crucifixion, said today it could indicate that Jesus Christ might have been crucified in a position different from that shown on the traditional cross."

Did this new evidence actually reveal how Jews in Jesus' time were executed on a cross or a stake? What did archaeologists determine as to the body position of the victim? Did this have a bearing on Jesus' death? And how solid, you may ask, was the evidence?

## A Nail in the Heels

Back in 1968 some burial caves were accidentally discovered near Jerusalem. Inside, among the reburied bones, was what seemed to be an outstanding find—heel bones pierced by a rusty spike. Dr. Nico Haas, anatomist and anthropologist of Hebrew University-Hadassah Medical School, led an investigation of these particular bones. The respected *Israel Exploration Journal* (1970, Volume 20, pages 38-59) published his conclusions, which led to some sensational newspaper articles. What were those conclusions?

He reported that what was discovered was nothing less than the remains of a man executed on a cross in the first century. It seemed, basically, that the victim's two heels were nailed together to an upright stake, but the nail bent at the tip when it hit a knot in the wood. After the Jewish victim was dead, relatives had trouble pulling the nail free, so it was left in his heels at burial. Since one nail pierced both heel bones and

since it seemed that the leg bones had cut at an angle, Dr. Haas reported that the victim likely was executed in the position shown below. (Dr. Haas also felt that a scratch on an arm bone indicated that the man's arms were nailed to a crossbeam.) You may have seen such a drawing in a newspaper or magazine article. Many were excited about the implications as to how Jesus had died.

Again, though, you do well to ask: Was the evidence reliable, and did it really bear on the manner of Jesus' death?

## Reappraising the Heels

In the next few years, some noted scholars, such as Professor Yigal Yadin, began to question conclusions that Haas had reached. Finally, *Israel Exploration Journal* (1985, Volume 35, pages 22-7) published "A Reappraisal," by anthropologist Joseph



Zias (Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums) and Eliezer Sekeles (Hebrew University-Hadassah Medical School). They had studied the original evidence, photographs, casts, and radiographs of the bones. You may be surprised at some of their findings:

The nail was shorter than Haas had reported and thus would not have been long enough to pierce two heel bones and the wood. Pieces of bone had been misidentified. There was no bone from a second heel; the nail pierced only one heel. Some bone fragments were from another individual altogether. The scratched arm bone "was not convincing" evidence of nailing to a crossbeam; 'in fact, two similar marks were observed on a leg bone; neither are connected with the crucifixion.'

What conclusions did this new analysis lead to? "Both the initial and final reconstruction of the crucifixion [by Haas] are technically and anatomically impossible when one considers the new evidence . . . We found no evidence of the left heel bone and calculated that the nail was sufficient

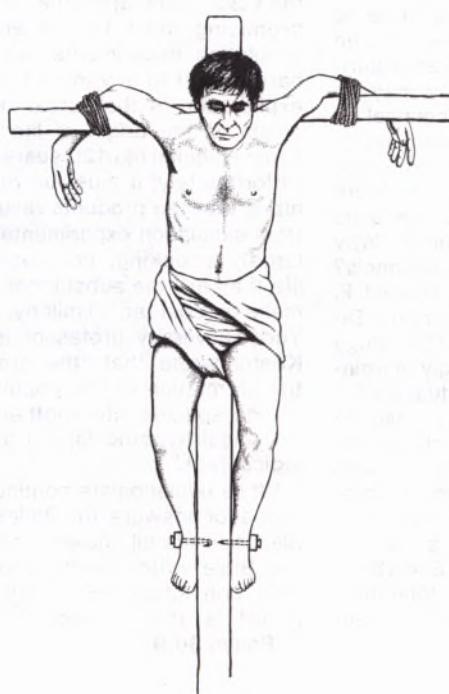
for affixing only one heel bone . . . The lack of traumatic injury to the forearm and metacarpals of the hand seems to suggest that the arms of the condemned were tied rather than nailed." You see on this page how Zias and Sekeles imagine the man was positioned for execution.

### What About Jesus?

So, what does this indicate about how Jesus was executed? Really, not much at all! For instance, as we discussed on page 23, Jesus most likely was executed on an upright stake without any cross-beam. No man today can know with certainty even how many nails were used in Jesus' case. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (1979, Volume 1, page 826) comments: "The exact number of nails used . . . has been the subject of considerable speculation. In the earliest depictions of the crucifixion Jesus' feet are shown separately nailed, but in later ones they are crossed and affixed to the upright with one nail."

We do know that his hands or arms were not simply bound, for Thomas later said: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails." (John 20:25) That could have meant a nail through each hand, or the plural "nails" might have reference to nail prints in 'his hands and his feet.' (See Luke 24:39.) We cannot know precisely where the nails pierced him, though it obviously was in the area of his hands. The Scriptural account simply does not provide exact details, nor does it need to. And if scholars who have directly examined the bones found near Jerusalem in 1968 cannot even be sure how that corpse was positioned, it certainly does not prove how Jesus was positioned.

We thus recognize that depictions of Jesus' death in our publications, such as you see on page 24, are merely reasonable artistic renderings of the scene, not statements of anatomic absolutes. Such depictions need not reflect the changing and conflicting opinions of scholars, and the drawings definitely avoid religious symbols that stem from ancient paganism.



# Insight on the News

## Clergymen and AIDS

"AIDS Cases Rising Among Catholic Clergy" read the title of an article appearing in the *International Herald Tribune*. The report stated: "While it is impossible to document the scope of the problem, physicians, churchmen and social workers in several cities around the country said the number of Catholic clergymen affected by AIDS was on the rise, . . . The increasing awareness that [AIDS] victims include Catholic clergymen has posed a problem for the church because of the implication that some priests and brothers have not only broken their vows of celibacy but have also engaged in homosexual acts in violation of church laws."

Breaking vows of celibacy cannot, however, alone be blamed, for even churches whose ministers are allowed to marry have registered cases of AIDS among their clergy. The same report revealed that "AIDS has affected a broad range of Americans, including rabbis, Episcopal priests, Baptist ministers and other clergymen."

Of course, not all clergymen with AIDS are necessarily homosexuals. AIDS can also be contracted through normal sexual intercourse and by means of blood transfusions. Nevertheless, such cases among the clergy do illustrate what can happen when individuals fail to follow the clear ruling set down by the first-century council in Jerusalem, namely, "to abstain . . . from blood, from the meat of strangled animals, and from illicit sexual union."—Acts 15:29, *The New American Bible* (Catholic).

## Wrong Channel

"Love yourself; you are God." A strange message, you say? Indeed, but among a growing number of persons searching for an alternative to traditional religion, the message is becoming a popular one. Those words, uttered by 27-year-old California housewife Penny Torres, are said to be spoken actually by Mafu, "a highly evolved 'entity from the seventh dimension' last incarnated as a leper in 1st Century Pompeii," for whom Torres serves as a "channel," reports the *Los Angeles Times*. Torres is one of a number of persons in the United States who "channel" for "dead spirits" that teach that everyone is his or her own God.

"Channels," according to the *Times*, are "mediums who purposefully enter a semi-conscious or unconscious trance state to communicate with the unseen 'spirit realm' or 'extraterrestrials.' In this state, they may be called upon to offer counsel or provide answers to questions on personal matters. It is estimated that in Los Angeles alone there are as many as 1,000 persons who claim to be channels. Why the sudden interest in channels? In *The Miami Herald*, Ronald F. Thiemann, dean of Harvard Divinity School, says that "theology has become increasingly marginal in American intellectual life."

Centuries earlier, Moses warned Israel: "There should not be found in you anyone . . . who consults a spirit medium or a professional foreteller of events or anyone who inquires of the dead." The reason? "Everybody doing these things is something detestable to Jehovah."—Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

## Groping in the Dark

Members of ISSOL (International Society for the Study of the Origin of Life) met last year in Berkeley, California, for their eighth conference. After acknowledging the need for a "self-critical stocktaking of achievements to date," ISSOL cofounder Professor Klaus Dose stated in *Naturwissenschaftliche Rundschau*, a German scientific magazine, that years of research have brought evolutionists no closer to understanding the origin of life.

Professor Dose writes: "Probably no discipline of natural science distinguishes itself by such a variety of contradictory ideas, hypotheses, and theories as does the whole field of the evolution of life. In 1986, more than 30 years after the initially promising start to the era of simulation experiments, we can hardly point to any more facts in explanation of the actual mechanism of the origin of life than Ernst Haeckel did 120 years ago. Unfortunately, it must be recognized that the products resulting from simulation experiments are, largely speaking, no closer to life than are the substances that make up coal tar." Similarly, New York University professor Irving Kristol wrote that "the gradual transformation of the population of one species into another is a biological hypothesis, not a biological fact."

While evolutionists continue to grope for answers, the Bible's explanation fits all known facts. As the Bible writer David recorded with conviction: "For with you [God] is the source of life." —Psalm 36:9.

# Do You Remember?

Have you found the recent issues of *The Watchtower* to be of practical value? Then see if you can recall the following:

What does it mean to be marked for survival by the prophetic man with the secretary's inkhorn in Ezekiel's vision? (Ezekiel 9:2-6)

It means that one has dedicated oneself to God to do his will, has been baptized as a disciple of Jesus Christ, and has put on the Christlike personality.—4/15, pages 11, 12.

What purposes are served by Bible prophecy?

Prophecies make known the truth about God, his will, and his moral standards. They clarify man's relationship to Jehovah so as to bring mankind back into harmony with His purpose, leading up to its full accomplishment. (Isaiah 1:18-20; 2:1-5; 55:8-11)—5/1, page 5.

What death-dealing famine pervades the whole earth today?

A spiritual famine, "for hearing the words of Jehovah." (Amos 8:11)—5/1, pages 10, 11.

What is "the fear of Jehovah"? (Proverbs 1:7)

It is a wholesome dread of displeasing Jehovah because we appreciate his loving-kindness and goodness. It also means acknowledging Jehovah as the Supreme Judge and the Almighty, trusting in him completely, and hating what is bad in his sight. (Psalm 2:11; 115:11; Proverbs 8:13)—5/15, page 28.

What guidelines are outlined

in 1 Timothy 5 regarding caring for the elderly?

Though family members bear first responsibility, the problems of the elderly are the concern of the entire congregation; their care should be properly organized; such care should be limited to those truly in need.—6/1, pages 9, 10.

In what four general ways has Jehovah refined his people during the past 69 years?

(1) Organizationally; (2) sharing in the field ministry; (3) increasing light of truth; (4) discarding unclean practices.—6/15, pages 17-20.

In what two ways is the word

"stand" used in relation to Michael in Daniel 12:1?

Michael is described as "standing in behalf of the sons of your people." Christ Jesus has been exercising authority in this regard on behalf of his people on earth since 1914 when he was enthroned as the reigning King of God's Kingdom. Daniel also says: "And during that time Michael will stand up." This refers to his rulership's entering a new phase in which he will yet act in an outstanding way to save Daniel's people. Thus, they will not be annihilated by the human governments at "the time of the end" for the king of the north and the king of the south. (Daniel 11:40-45)—7/1, pages 18, 19.

## ANNUAL MEETING October 3, 1987

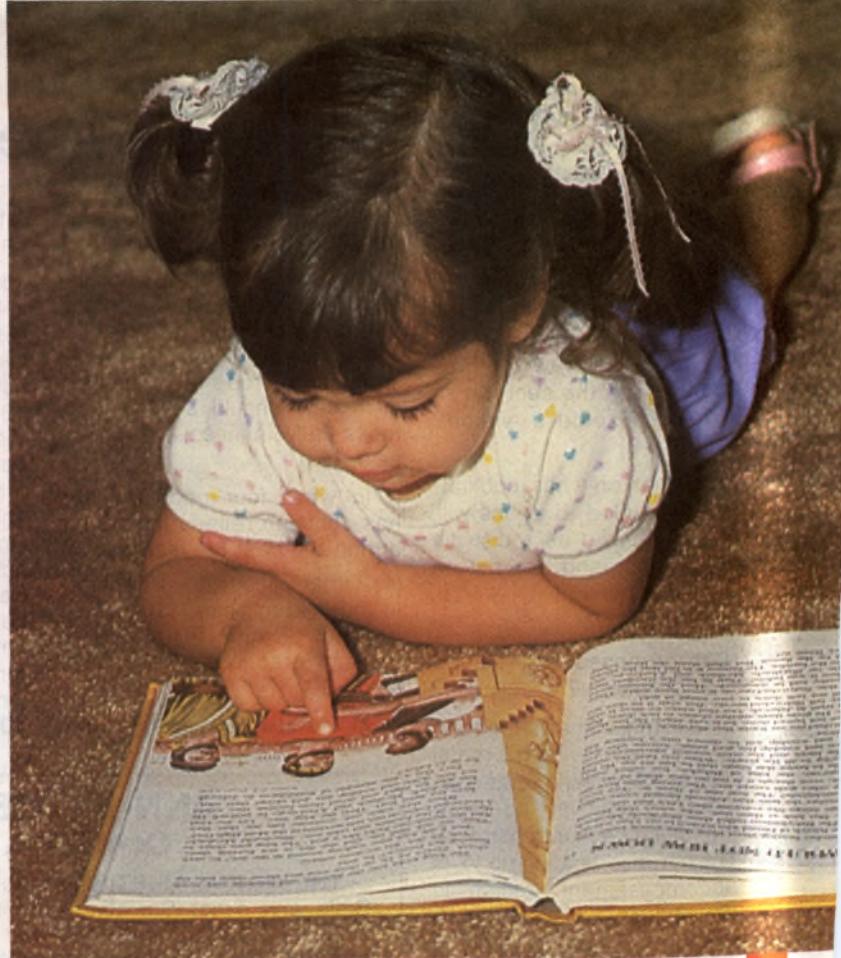
THE ANNUAL MEETING of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held on October 3, 1987, at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey. A preliminary meeting of the members only will convene at 9:30 a.m., to be followed by the general annual meeting at 10:00 a.m.

The members of the Corporation should inform the Secretary's Office now of any change in their mailing addresses during the past year so that the regular letters of notice and proxies can reach them shortly after August 15.

The proxies, which will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting, are to be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 1. Each member should complete and return his proxy promptly, stating whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not. The information given on each proxy should be definite on this point, since it will be relied upon in determining who will be personally present.

It is expected that the entire session, including the formal business meeting and reports, will be concluded by 1:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter. There will be no afternoon session. Because of limited space, admission will be by ticket only. No arrangements will be made for tying in the annual meeting by telephone lines to other locations.

# 'Children Just Love It'



Millions of families have enjoyed *My Book of Bible Stories*. Its 116 Bible accounts give the reader an idea of what the Bible is all about. Earlier this year a person in Western Australia illustrated how effective the book is, explaining:

"I am a teacher by profession and seek to inspire the children under my care to devote all their schoolwork to God and Jesus, as I do likewise in my work for the children. I have made it a point of duty to read to the class your 'Book of Bible Stories' that I purchased from one of your calling Witnesses. The children love the book, the stories in it, and beg for more when I put the book down."