

JANUARY 1, 2001

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

Who Can Heal the **WOUNDS OF WAR?**

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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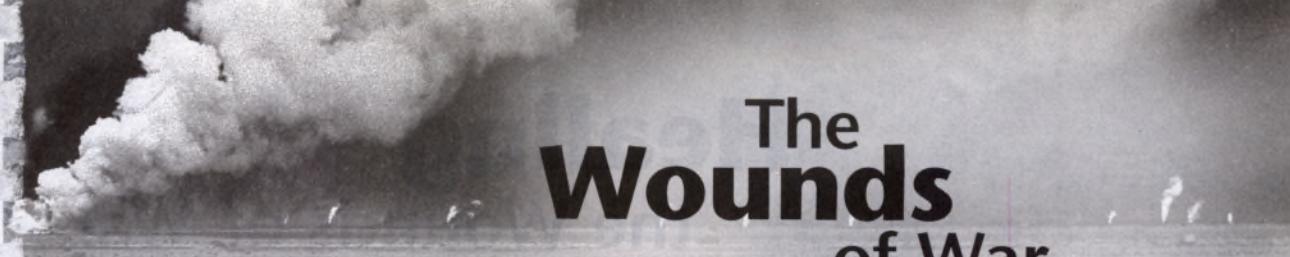
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The Wounds of War

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"IN WAR there are no winners," remarked a former soldier who fought in World War II. "There are only losers." Many would agree with him. The cost of war is horrendous; the victors as well as the vanquished pay a terrible price. Even after an armed conflict has ceased, millions go on suffering from the ghastly wounds of war.

What wounds? War can decimate a population, leaving large numbers of orphans and widows. Many survivors carry terrible physical wounds, along with psychological scars. Millions may be left destitute or may be forced to become refugees. Can we imagine the hatred and grief that must linger in the hearts of those who survive such conflicts?

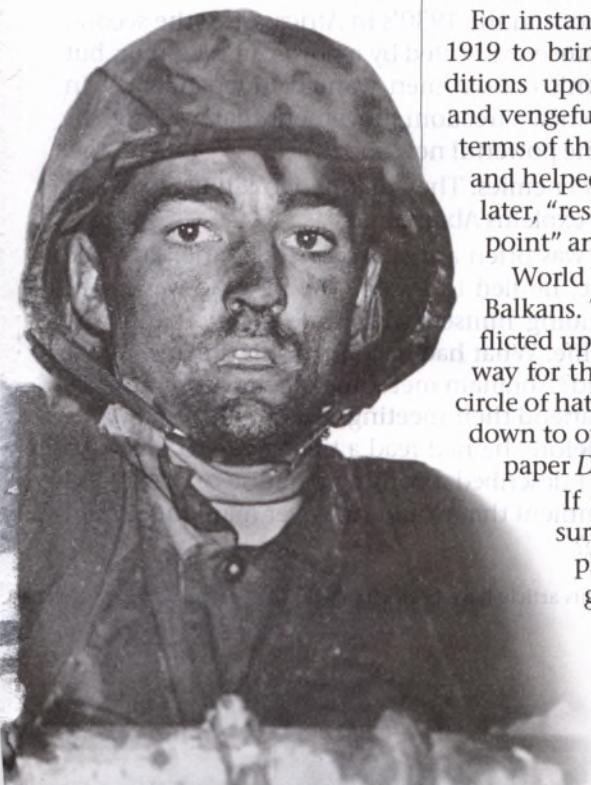
Festerling Wounds

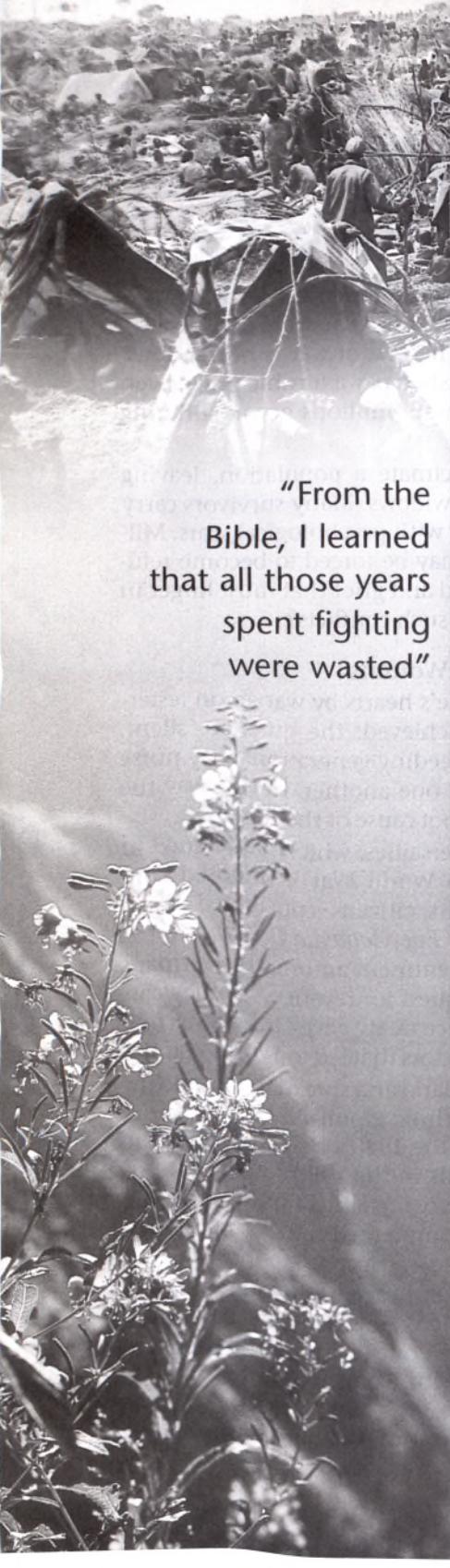
The wounds etched on people's hearts by war go on festering long after a cease-fire is achieved, the guns are silent, and the soldiers go home. Succeeding generations may nurse a deep-seated bitterness toward one another. In this way the wounds of one war can be the root cause of the next.

For instance, the Treaty of Versailles, which was signed in 1919 to bring a formal end to World War I, imposed conditions upon Germany that its citizens considered harsh and vengeful. According to *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, the terms of the treaty "caused resentment among the Germans and helped to stimulate the quest for revenge." Some years later, "resentment of the peace treaty gave Hitler a starting point" and was one of the factors that led to World War II.

World War II started in Poland and spread to include the Balkans. The wounds that ethnic groups in the region inflicted upon one another in the 1940's helped to pave the way for the war in the Balkans in the 1990's. "The vicious circle of hatred and revenge has turned into a spiral, reaching down to our present time," commented the German newspaper *Die Zeit*.

If mankind is to live at peace, the wounds of war surely have to be healed. How can that be accomplished? What can be done to erase the hatred and grief? Who can heal the wounds of war?





Healing the Wounds of War

"From the Bible, I learned that all those years spent fighting were wasted"



ABRAHAM was in a guerrilla army for 20 years.* But he has stopped fighting and will never go to war again. In fact, some of his former enemies are now his closest friends. What made him change? The Bible did. It gave Abraham hope and insight, helping him to view human affairs from God's standpoint. The Bible took away his desire to fight, and he started to heal his sorrow, grief, hatred, and bitterness. He found that the Bible contains potent medicine for the heart.

How does the Bible help a person to heal emotional wounds? It could not change what had happened to Abraham. Still, reading and meditating on God's Word brought his thinking into line with that of the Creator. He now has a hope for the future, and he has new priorities. Things important to God have become important to him. Once this started to happen, the wounds in his heart began to heal. That is how Abraham was helped to change.

Plunged Into Civil War

Abraham was born in the 1930's in Africa. After the second world war, his country was ruled by a powerful neighbor, but many of Abraham's countrymen wanted independence. In 1961, Abraham joined a freedom movement that waged guerrilla war against the powerful neighbor.

"They were our enemies. They planned to kill us, so we set out to kill them," explains Abraham.

Abraham's life was often at risk, so in 1982, after 20 years of armed struggle, he fled to Europe. By now he was in his late 40's, and finding himself with time on his hands, he took stock of his life. What had become of his dreams? What did the future hold? Abraham met some of Jehovah's Witnesses and started to attend their meetings. He recalled that in Africa some years before, he had read a tract given to him by a Witness. The tract described a coming paradise on earth and a heavenly government that would rule over mankind. Could that really be true?

* Some names in this article have been changed.

Abraham says: "From the Bible, I learned that all those years spent fighting were wasted. The only government that will treat everyone justly is God's Kingdom."

Shortly after Abraham was baptized as a Witness of Jehovah, a man by the name of Robert fled from Africa to the European city where Abraham was living. Robert and Abraham had fought in the same war but on opposite sides. Robert had often wondered about the real purpose in life. He was a religious man, and having read parts of the Bible, he knew that God's name is Jehovah. When the Witnesses from Abraham's congregation offered to help Robert understand the Bible better, he readily agreed.

Robert explains: "From the very beginning, I was impressed with the way the Witnesses use the names of Jehovah and Jesus, acknowledging that they are separate persons. That was in harmony with what I already knew from the Bible. The Witnesses also dress neatly and are kind to others, regardless of nationality. Such things had a deep impact upon me."

Enemies Become Friends

Robert and Abraham, former enemies, are now close friends. They serve as full-time evangelizers in the same congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. "During the war, I often wondered how it was possible for people from neighboring countries—many of whom belonged to the same religion—to hate one another," explains Abraham. "Robert and I belonged to the same church, yet we went to war against each other. Now we are both Jehovah's Witnesses, and our faith has united us."

"That is the difference," adds Robert. "We now belong to a faith that makes us part of a genuine brotherhood. We would never go to war again." The Bible has had a powerful influence on the hearts of these former enemies. Hatred and bitterness have gradually given way to trust and friendship.

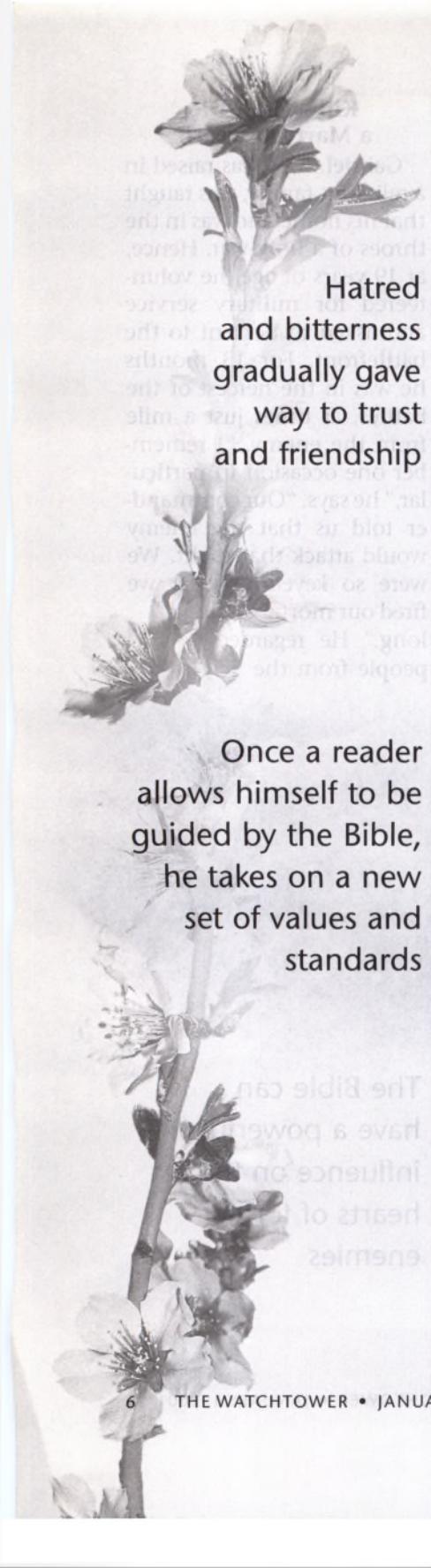
At the same time that Abraham and Robert were at war, two other young men stood on opposite sides of another conflict between two neighboring countries. Soon the Bible acted like a very potent medicine to heal their hearts too. How?

Kill—Then Die a Martyr's Death

Gabriel, who was raised in a religious family, was taught that his homeland was in the throes of a holy war. Hence, at 19 years of age, he volunteered for military service and asked to be sent to the battlefield. For 13 months he was in the fiercest of the battles, at times just a mile from the enemy. "I remember one occasion in particular," he says. "Our commander told us that the enemy would attack that night. We were so keyed up that we fired our mortar all night long." He regarded people from the



The Bible can have a powerful influence on the hearts of former enemies



Hatred and bitterness gradually gave way to trust and friendship

Once a reader allows himself to be guided by the Bible, he takes on a new set of values and standards

neighboring country as his enemies, deserving of death. "My thought was to kill as many as possible. Then, like many of my friends, I wanted to die a martyr's death."

However, in time Gabriel became disillusioned. He fled to the mountains, crept across the frontier into a neutral country, and traveled to Europe. He kept asking God why life was so difficult, whether problems were a punishment from God. He came into contact with Jehovah's Witnesses, who showed him from the Bible why life is so full of problems today.—Matthew 24:3-14; 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

The more Gabriel learned from the Bible, the more he realized that it contains the truth. "I learned that we can live forever on a paradise earth. Strangely enough, that is something I longed for as a child." The Bible comforted Gabriel and soothed his hitherto troubled heart. His deepest emotional wounds began to heal. So by the time he met Daniel, a former enemy, Gabriel felt no hatred any more. But what made Daniel come to Europe?

"If You Really Exist, Please Help Me!"

Daniel was raised as a Catholic and at the age of 18 was called up for military service. He was sent to fight in the same war as Gabriel but on the opposing side. Close to the battlefield, Daniel was riding in a tank when it took a direct hit. His friends were killed, and he was seriously injured and taken prisoner. He spent months in the hospital and in a camp before being deported to a neutral country. Alone and destitute, he considered suicide. Daniel prayed to God: "If you really exist, please help me!" The very next day, Jehovah's Witnesses called on him and were able to answer many of his questions. Finally, he traveled to Europe as a refugee. Once again, Daniel associated with the Witnesses and studied the Bible. What he learned eased his anxiety and bitterness.

Gabriel and Daniel are now good friends, united in a spiritual brotherhood as baptized Witnesses of Jehovah. "My love for Jehovah and knowledge of the Bible have helped me to see things as he does. Daniel is no longer my enemy. Years ago I would gladly have killed him. The Bible has taught me the exact opposite—to be willing to die for him," says Gabriel.

"I saw people of different religions and nationalities murdering one another," says Daniel. "And there were people of the same religion on opposite sides of the war killing one another. When I saw this, I felt that God was to blame. Now I know that Satan is behind all wars. Gabriel and I are now fellow believers. We will never fight again!"

"The Word of God Is Alive and Exerts Power"

Why did Abraham, Robert, Gabriel, and Daniel change so dramatically? How were they able to erase deep-rooted hatred and grief from their hearts?

Each of these men read, meditated on, and learned the truth from the Bible, which is "alive and exerts power." (Hebrews 4:12) The Author of the Bible is the Creator of mankind, who knows how to influence for good the heart of someone who is willing to listen and learn. "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness." Once a reader allows himself to be guided by the Bible, he takes on a new set of values and standards. He begins to learn how Jehovah views things. This process brings many benefits, including a healing of the wounds of war.—2 Timothy 3:16.

God's Word explains that no national, racial, or ethnic group is better or worse than another. "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." The reader who accepts this is helped gradually to overcome feelings of racial or national hatred.—Acts 10:34, 35.

Bible prophecies indicate that God will soon replace the present system of human rule with his Messianic Kingdom. By means of this government, God "is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth." Institutions that promote wars and urge people to fight in them will be removed. Victims of war will be resurrected and given a chance to live on a paradise earth. No one will need to flee in the face of an aggressor or an oppressor.—Psalm 46:9; Daniel 2:44; Acts 24:15.

Of humans living at that time, the Bible says: "They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy . . . They will not toil for nothing, nor will they bring to birth for disturbance." There is no damage or injury that will not be healed. Putting faith in such a hope gradually removes grief and sorrow from a person's heart.—Isaiah 65:21-23.

The Bible is indeed potent medicine for the heart. Its teachings are already healing the wounds of war. Former enemies are being united in one international brotherhood. This healing process will continue in God's new system until there is no more hatred and bitterness, sorrow and grief in the hearts of mankind. The Creator promises that "the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart."—Isaiah 65:17.



Former enemies are now being united in an international brotherhood



BE BUILT UP BY LOVE

"You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind."

—MATTHEW 22:37.

A CHRISTIAN cultivates many things in order to be an effective minister. The book of Proverbs highlights the value of knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. (Proverbs 2:1-10) The apostle Paul discussed the need for solid faith and strong hope. (Romans 1:16, 17; Colossians 1:5; Hebrews 10:39) Endurance and self-control are also vital. (Acts 24:25; Hebrews 10:36) However, there is one element that if lacking detracts from all the other things and could even make them valueless. That element is love.—1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13.

² Jesus showed the importance of love when he said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) Since love is the identifying mark of a true Christian, we need to ask such questions as, What is love? Why is it so essential that Jesus said that it, above all else, characterizes his disciples? How can we cultivate love? Who should be the object of our love? Let us consider these questions.

What Is Love?

³ One description of love is 'a feeling of warm personal attachment or deep affection, a warm fondness or liking for another.' It is

1. (a) What are some things cultivated by a Christian? (b) Which is the most important Christian quality, and why?
2. How did Jesus show the importance of love, and what questions does this raise?
3. How can love be described, and why does it involve both the mind and the heart?



a quality that moves people to work for the good of others, sometimes at great personal sacrifice. Love, as it is described in the Bible, involves both the mind and the heart. The mind, or intellect, plays a role because a person who loves does this with his eyes open, recognizing that he and other humans that he loves all have weaknesses as well as attractive qualities. The intellect is further involved since there are those whom a Christian loves—sometimes, perhaps, against his natural inclinations—because he knows from his reading of the Bible that God wants him to do so. (Matthew 5:44; 1 Corinthians 16:14) Still, love basically comes from the heart. Genuine love as it is revealed in the Bible is never merely intellectual. It entails deep sincerity and full emotional commitment.—1 Peter 1:22.

4. People who are selfish at heart are rarely capable of a truly loving relationship because a person who loves is prepared to put the interests of another ahead of his own. (Philippians 2:2-4) Jesus' words "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving" are especially true when the giving is an act of love. (Acts 20:35) Love is a powerful bond.
4. In what way is love a powerful bond?

(Colossians 3:14) It often includes friendship, but the bonds of love are stronger than those of friendship. The romantic relationship between a husband and his wife is sometimes described as love; however, the love that the Bible encourages us to cultivate is more enduring than physical attraction. When a couple truly love each other, they remain together even if a physical relationship is no longer possible because of the infirmities of old age or because one of them is incapacitated.

Love—An Essential Quality

⁵ Why is love an essential quality for a Christian? First, because Jesus commanded his followers to love one another. He said: "You are my friends if you do what I am commanding you. These things I command you, that you love one another." (John 15:14, 17) Second, because Jehovah is the personification of love, and as his worshipers we should imitate him. (Ephesians 5:1; 1 John 4:16) The Bible says that taking in knowledge of Jehovah and Jesus means everlasting life. How can we say that we know God if we do not try to be like him? The apostle John reasoned: "He that does not love has not come to know God, because God is love."—1 John 4:8.

⁶ Love is important for a third reason: It helps us to balance different aspects of our lives and adds good motive to what we do. For example, it is vital continually to take in knowledge of God's Word. For a Christian, such knowledge is like food. It helps him to grow to maturity and to act in harmony with God's will. (Psalm 119:105; Matthew 4:4; 2 Timothy 3:15, 16) However, Paul warned: "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up." (1 Corinthians 8:1) No, there is nothing wrong with accurate knowledge. The problem is with us—we have sinful tendencies. (Genesis 8:21) If the balancing influence of

5. Why is love an essential quality for a Christian?
6. How can love balance different aspects of our lives?

love is missing, knowledge could make a person puffed up, thinking himself better than others. That will not happen if he is basically motivated by love. "Love . . . does not brag, does not get puffed up." (1 Corinthians 13:4) A Christian who is motivated by love does not become proud, even if he acquires a deep knowledge. Love keeps him humble and prevents him from wanting to make a name for himself.—Psalm 138:6; James 4:6.

⁷ Paul wrote to the Philippians: "This is what I continue praying, that your love may abound yet more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment; that you may make sure of the more important things." (Philippians 1:9, 10) Christian love will help us to follow this encouragement to make sure of the more important things. As an example, consider Paul's words to Timothy: "If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work." (1 Timothy 3:1) During the 2000 service year, the number of congregations worldwide increased by 1,502, making a new total of 91,487. Hence, there is a great need for more elders, and those who reach out for the privilege are to be commended.

⁸ However, those reaching out for privileges of oversight will maintain a good balance if they keep in mind the purpose of such a privilege. Simply having authority or a wider name recognition is *not* the important thing. Elders who please Jehovah are motivated by love for him and for their brothers. They are not seeking prominence or influence. The apostle Peter, after counseling congregation elders to maintain a good attitude, stressed the need of "lowliness of mind." He counseled all in the congregation: "Humble yourselves . . . under the mighty hand of God." (1 Peter 5:1-6) Anyone who is reaching out does well to consider the example of countless elders around the world who are

7, 8. How does love help us to focus on the more important things?

hardworking, humble, and therefore a blessing to their congregations.—Hebrews 13:7.

Good Motive Helps Us to Endure

⁹ The importance of being motivated by love is seen in another way. To those who pursue godly devotion out of love, the Bible promises rich blessings now and unimaginably wonderful blessings in the future. (1 Timothy 4:8) A Christian who strongly believes these promises and who is convinced that Jehovah “becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him” is helped to stand firm in the faith. (Hebrews 11:6) Most of us long for the fulfillment of God’s promises and echo the sentiment of the apostle John: “Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.” (Revelation 22:20) Yes, meditating on the blessings in store if we are faithful strengthens us to endure, just as keeping in mind “the joy that was set before him” helped Jesus to endure.—Hebrews 12:1, 2.

¹⁰ What, though, if our desire to live in the new world is our sole motive for serving Jehovah? Then we could easily become impatient or dissatisfied when things get difficult or events do not happen as or when we hope. We could be in serious danger of drifting away. (Hebrews 2:1; 3:12) Paul spoke of a former companion named Demas, who forsook him. Why? Because “he loved the present system of things.” (2 Timothy 4:10) Any who serve for purely selfish reasons are in danger of doing the same. They could be attracted by the immediate opportunities offered in the world and become unwilling to make sacrifices now in the hope of blessings to come.

¹¹ While it is proper and natural to have a desire to receive future blessings and hoped-for relief from trials, love builds our appreciation for what should be paramount in our life. It is Jehovah’s will, not ours, that is the important thing. (Luke 22:41, 42) Yes, love builds us up. It makes us content to wait patiently upon our God, satisfied with whatever blessings he gives and confident that in his due time we will receive everything that he has promised—and more. (Psalm 145:16; 2 Corinthians 12:8, 9) In the meantime, love helps us to keep on serving unselfishly because “love . . . does not look for its own interests.”—1 Corinthians 13:4, 5.

9. Why do Christians keep Jehovah’s promised blessings in mind?

10, 11. How does being motivated by love help us to endure?

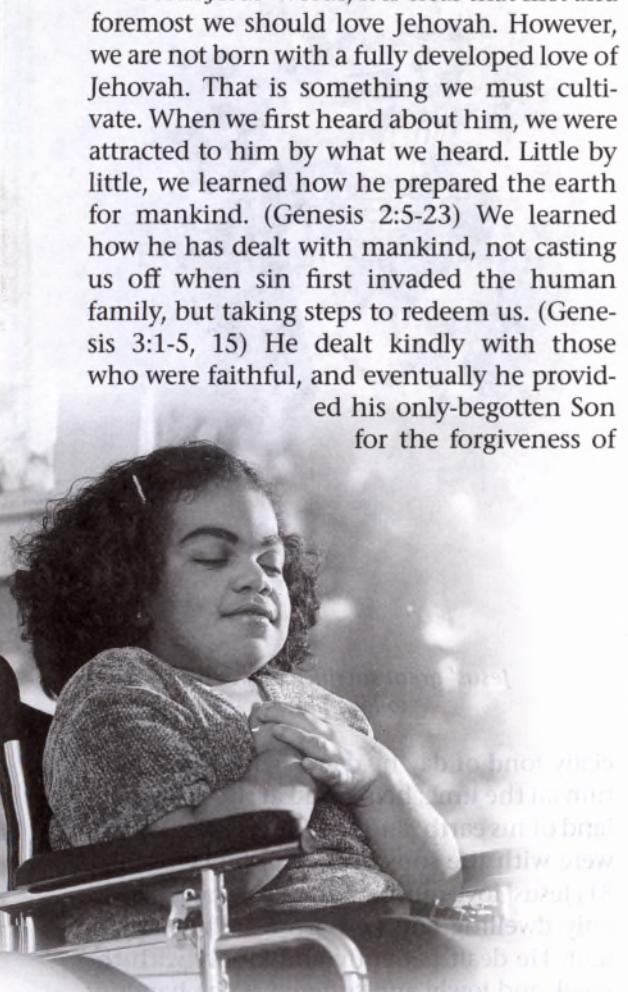
Love helps us to wait patiently for relief



—¹² Jesus gave a general rule as to whom we should love when he quoted two statements from the Mosaic Law. He said: “You must love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39) According to Jesus, whom should we love?

Whom Should Christians Love?

¹² Jesus gave a general rule as to whom we should love when he quoted two statements from the Mosaic Law. He said: “You must love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matthew 22:39) According to Jesus, whom should we love?



Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind" and, "You must love your neighbor as yourself."—Matthew 22:37-39.

¹³ From Jesus' words, it is clear that first and foremost we should love Jehovah. However, we are not born with a fully developed love of Jehovah. That is something we must cultivate. When we first heard about him, we were attracted to him by what we heard. Little by little, we learned how he prepared the earth for mankind. (Genesis 2:5-23) We learned how he has dealt with mankind, not casting us off when sin first invaded the human family, but taking steps to redeem us. (Genesis 3:1-5, 15) He dealt kindly with those who were faithful, and eventually he provided his only-begotten Son for the forgiveness of

The more we learn about him, the deeper our love becomes.—Psalm 31:23; Zephaniah 3:17; Romans 8:28.

How Can We Show Our Love?

¹⁴ Of course, many around the world say that they love God, but the way they act belies their claim. How can we know that we really do love Jehovah? We can talk to him in prayer and tell him how we feel. And we can act in a way that demonstrates our love. The apostle John said: "Whoever does observe [God's] word, truthfully in this person the love of God has been made perfect. By this we have the knowledge that we are in union with him." (1 John 2:5; 5:3) Among other things, God's Word tells us to associate together and live clean, moral lives. We avoid hypocrisy, speak the truth, and keep our thinking clean. (2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:15; 1 Timothy 1:5; Hebrews 10:23-25) We show love by giving material help to those in need. (1 John 3:17, 18) And we do not hold back from telling others about Jehovah. That includes sharing in the worldwide preaching of the good news of the Kingdom. (Matthew 24:14; Romans 10:10) Obedience to God's Word in such things is evidence that our love for Jehovah is genuine.

¹⁵ Love for Jehovah helps people to make good decisions. Last year, such love moved 288,907 individuals to dedicate their lives to him and symbolize that decision by water baptism. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Their dedication was meaningful. It marked a change in their lives. For example, Gazmend was one of the top basketball stars in Albania. For some years, he and his wife studied the Bible and despite obstacles eventually qualified as Kingdom publishers. Last year, Gazmend was baptized, one of 366 baptized in Albania in the

our sins. (John 3:16, 36) This increasing knowledge made our appreciation for Jehovah grow. (Isaiah 25:1) King David said that he loved Jehovah because of His loving care. (Psalm 116:1-9) Today, Jehovah cares for us, guides us, strengthens us, and encourages us.

13. How can we learn to love Jehovah, even though we cannot see him?

14. In what way can we show that our love for God is genuine?

15, 16. How did love for Jehovah affect many lives last year?

2000 service year. A newspaper published an article about him and said: "His life has a purpose, and because of this, he and his family are enjoying the happiest days of their life. For him, it is no longer important to see how much he can get out of life but, instead, how much he can give to help other people."

¹⁶ Similarly, a newly baptized sister working for an oil company in Guam received a tempting offer. After climbing the corporate ladder for years, she was finally offered the opportunity to be the first female vice president in the company's history. However, she had now dedicated her life to Jehovah. So after discussing matters with her husband, the new sister turned down the offer and instead arranged for part-time work so that she could progress toward being a full-time minister, a pioneer. Love for Jehovah moved her to want to serve him as a pioneer rather than to pursue the financial interests of this world. In fact, worldwide such love moved 805,205 to share in different features of the pioneer ministry during the 2000 service year. What an expression of love and faith those pioneers made!

Moved to Love Jesus

¹⁷ Jesus is a wonderful example of someone motivated by love. In his prehuman existence, he loved his Father and he loved mankind. As the embodiment of wisdom, he said: "I came to be beside [Jehovah] as a master worker, and I came to be the one he was spe-

17. What fine example of love do we see in Jesus?

Do You Remember?

- Why is love a vital quality?
- How can we learn to love Jehovah?
- How does our conduct prove that we love Jehovah?
- How do we demonstrate our love for Jesus?



Jesus' great sacrifice moves us to love him

cially fond of day by day, I being glad before him all the time, being glad at the productive land of his earth, and the things I was fond of were with the sons of men." (Proverbs 8:30, 31) Jesus' love moved him to give up his heavenly dwelling and be born as a helpless infant. He dealt patiently and kindly with the meek and lowly and suffered at the hands of Jehovah's enemies. Finally, he died for all mankind on a torture stake. (John 3:35; 14:30, 31; 15:12, 13; Philippians 2:5-11) What a fine example of right motivation!

¹⁸ When those with a right heart condition read the accounts of Jesus' life in the Gos-

18. (a) How do we cultivate love of Jesus? (b) In what way do we demonstrate that we love Jesus?

pels and meditate on how many blessings his faithful course has brought them, this causes a deep love for him to grow within them. We today are like the ones addressed by Peter when he said: "Though you never saw [Jesus], you love him." (1 Peter 1:8) Our love is shown when we exercise faith in him and imitate his life of self-sacrifice. (1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 1 Peter 2:21-25) On April 19, 2000, a total of 14,872,086 were reminded of our reasons for loving Jesus when they attended the annual Memorial of his death. What a large number that was! And how strengthening to know that so many are

interested in salvation through Jesus' sacrifice! Truly, we are built up by the love of Jehovah and Jesus for us and our love for them.

¹⁹ Jesus said that we should love Jehovah with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. But he also said that we should love our neighbor as ourselves. (Mark 12:29-31) Whom does that include? And how does love of neighbor help us to maintain a good balance and a proper motive? These questions will be discussed in the following article.

19. What questions about love will be discussed in the following article?

HOW FAR-REACHING IS YOUR LOVE?

"You must love your neighbor as yourself."—MATTHEW 22:39.

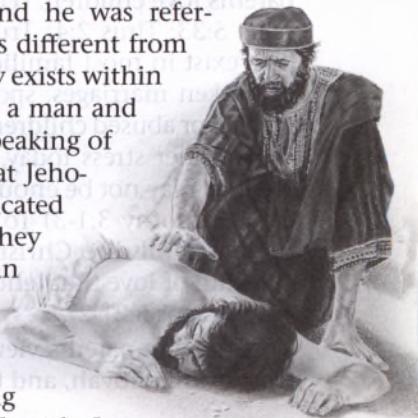
WHEN Jesus was asked which is the greatest commandment, he answered: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind." Then, he quoted a second commandment similar to the first: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39) Yes, love of neighbor is a mark of a Christian. Indeed, if we love Jehovah, we *must* love our neighbor. Why? Because we show our love of God by obeying his Word, and his Word commands us to love our neighbor. Hence, if we do not love our brothers and sisters, our love of God cannot be genuine.—Romans 13:8; 1 John 2:5; 4:20, 21.

² When Jesus said that we should love

1. If we love Jehovah, why must we also love our neighbor?
2. What kind of love should we have for our neighbor?

our neighbor, he was speaking of more than friendship. And he was referring to a love that is different from that which naturally exists within families or between a man and a woman. He was speaking of the kind of love that Jehovah has for his dedicated servants and that they have for him. (John 17:26; 1 John 4:11,

¹⁹ A Jewish scribe—who, as Jesus discerned, was speaking intelligently—agreed with Jesus that love of God should be "with one's whole heart and with one's whole understanding and with one's whole strength." (Mark 12:28-34) He was correct. The love a Christian cultivates both for God and for



neighbor involves our emotions and our intellect. It is felt in the heart and is guided by the mind.

³ As reported by Luke, when Jesus said that we should love our neighbor, "a certain man versed in the Law" asked: "Who really is my neighbor?" Jesus answered with a parable. A man was beaten, robbed, and left half dead by the wayside. First a priest and then a Levite walked by. Both ignored him. Finally, a Samaritan came along, saw the wounded man, and acted with great kindness toward him. Which of the three was a neighbor to the wounded man? The answer was obvious. (Luke 10:25-37) The man versed in the Law may have been shocked to hear Jesus say that a Samaritan could be a better neighbor than a priest and a Levite. Clearly, Jesus was helping that man to love his neighbor in a more far-reaching way. Christians too love in such a way. Consider all those whom their love embraces.

Love Within the Family

⁴ Christians love their family members—wives love husbands, husbands love wives, parents love children. (Ecclesiastes 9:9; Ephesians 5:33; Titus 2:4) True, bonds of natural love exist in most families. However, reports of broken marriages, spousal abuse, and neglected or abused children show that the family is under stress today, and natural family feelings may not be enough to hold it together. (2 Timothy 3:1-3) To make a real success of their family life, Christians need to exercise the kind of love that Jehovah and Jesus have. —Ephesians 5:21-27.

⁵ Christian parents view their children as a trust from Jehovah, and they look to him for

3. (a) How did Jesus teach a "man versed in the Law" that he should have an extensive view of who is his neighbor? (b) How does Jesus' illustration apply to Christians today?

4. Where, first, does a Christian exercise love?

5. To whom do parents look for help in raising their children, and what have been the results for many?

help in raising them. (Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 22:6) In this way they cultivate Christian love, which helps them to guard their children from the corrupting influences that young people may fall prey to. As a result, many Christian parents have experienced a joy similar to that of a mother in the Netherlands. After watching the baptism of her son—one of 575 individuals baptized in the Netherlands last year—she wrote the following: "At this moment, my investment of the past 20 years has paid off. All the time and energy—as well as the hurt, effort, and sorrow—are now forgotten." How happy she is that her son, of his own free will, chose to serve Jehovah. The peak of 31,089 publishers reporting in the Netherlands last year includes many who learned from their parents to love Jehovah.

⁶ Paul called love "a perfect bond of union," and it can preserve a marriage union even through stormy times. (Colossians 3:14, 18, 19; 1 Peter 3:1-7) When a man in Rurutu, a small island some 450 miles from Tahiti, started studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, his wife was strongly opposed. Eventually, she took the children, left him, and went to live in Tahiti. Still, he showed his love by sending her money regularly and calling by phone to ask if there was anything she or the children needed. Thus he did his best to fulfill his Christian obligations. (1 Timothy 5:8) He prayed constantly that his family would be reunited, and eventually his wife returned. When she did, he treated her with "love, endurance, mildness of temper." (1 Timothy 6: 11) In 1998, he was baptized and was later overjoyed when his wife agreed to study the Bible. That study was one of the 1,351 conducted in the territory under the Tahiti branch last year.

⁷ In Germany a man opposed his wife's in-

6. How can Christian love help to strengthen the marriage bond?

7. According to a man in Germany, what strengthened his marriage?

terest in Bible truth and was convinced that Jehovah's Witnesses wanted to deceive her. Later, however, he wrote to the Witness who first contacted his wife: "Thank you for introducing my wife to Jehovah's Witnesses. At first, I was worried because I had heard so many bad things about them. But now, having attended the meetings with my wife, I realize how wrong I was. I know that I am hearing the truth, and it has made our marriage much stronger." The 162,932 Witnesses of Jehovah in Germany—and the 1,773 in the islands under the Tahiti branch—include many families united in godly love.

Love for Our Christian Brothers

⁸ Paul said to the Thessalonian Christians: "You yourselves are taught by God to love one another." (1 Thessalonians 4:9) Yes, those who are "taught by Jehovah" love one another. (Isaiah 54:13) Their love is expressed in action, as Paul showed when he said: "Through love slave for one another."

(Galatians 5:13; 1 John 3:18) This they do, for example, when they visit sick brothers and sisters, encourage the depressed, and support the weak.

(1 Thessalonians 5:14) Our genuine Christian love contributes to the growth of our spiritual paradise.

⁹ In the Ancón Congregation—one of the 544 congregations in Ecuador—the brothers showed their love in a practical way. A financial crisis left them without work or income, so the publishers de-

8, 9. (a) Who teaches us to love our brothers, and what does love move us to do? (b) Give an example of how love can help brothers to be mutually supportive.



cided to raise money by selling food to the local fishermen when these came home after a night's fishing. Everyone cooperated, including the children. They had to start at 1:00 a.m. so as to have the food prepared by 4:00 a.m. when the fishermen returned. The money raised by the brothers was shared among them according to their need. Such mutual help demonstrated genuine Christian love.

¹⁰ However, our love is not limited to Christians whom we personally know. The apostle

10, 11. How can we show love for brothers whom we do not personally know?



Christian love can hold a family together

Peter said: "Have love for the *whole association* of brothers." (1 Peter 2:17) We love all our brothers and sisters because they are all fellow worshipers of Jehovah God. Times of crisis may present an opportunity to demonstrate this love. For example, during the 2000 service year, severe floods ravaged Mozambique, and an ongoing civil war in Angola left many impoverished. A large number of the 31,725 brothers in Mozambique and the 41,222 in Angola have been affected by these events. Hence, Witnesses in neighboring South Africa have sent large quantities of provisions to alleviate the distress of their brothers in those lands. Their willingness to contribute their "surplus" to their needy brothers demonstrated their love.—2 Corinthians 8:8, 13-15, 24.

¹¹ Love is seen, too, when brothers in many countries contribute toward the building of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls in less prosperous lands. An example is in the Solomon Islands. Despite much unrest, the Solomon Islands saw a 6-percent increase in publishers last year, with a peak of 1,697. They planned to build an Assembly Hall. Although many islanders were fleeing the country, volunteers came from Australia to help in the construction. Eventually, the volunteers had to leave, but not before they had trained local brothers to complete the foundation. The prefabricated steel structure of the hall was shipped from Australia, and the completion of this fine building for worship—at a time when many building sites lie abandoned—will be a fine witness to Jehovah's name and to the love of the brothers.

Like God, We Love the World

¹² Is our love limited to our family and our brotherhood? No, not if we are "imitators of God." Jesus said: "God loved *the world* so much that he gave his only-begotten Son,

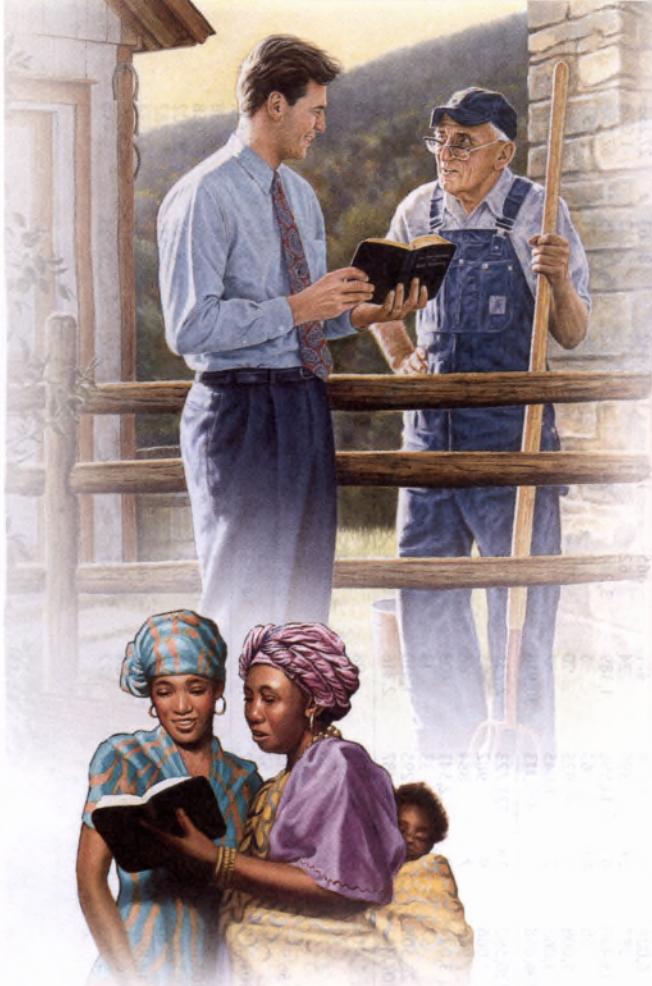
12. How do we imitate Jehovah in our attitude toward those not of our faith?

in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (Ephesians 5:1; John 3:16) Like Jehovah God, we act lovingly toward all—including those not of our faith. (Luke 6:35, 36; Galatians 6:10) In this regard especially, we preach the good news of the Kingdom and tell others of God's great act of love in their behalf. This can result in salvation to any who listen. —Mark 13:10; 1 Timothy 4:16.

¹³ Consider four special pioneer ministers in Nepal. These were assigned to a city in the southwest of the country, and for the last five years, they have shown their love by patiently witnessing in the city and outlying villages. To cover their territory, they often travel for many hours on bicycles in temperatures over 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Their love and "endurance in work that is good" produced fine results when a book study group was formed in one of the villages. (Romans 2:7) In March 2000, 32 people came to hear the public talk by the visiting circuit overseer. Nepal had a peak of 430 publishers last year—an increase of 9 percent. Jehovah is clearly blessing the zeal and love of the brothers in that land.

¹⁴ In Colombia temporary special pioneers went to preach among the Wayuu Indians. To do this, they had to learn a new language, but their loving interest was rewarded when despite a heavy downpour of rain, 27 attended a public talk. Loving zeal such as that shown by these pioneers contributed to a 5-percent increase in Colombia and a peak of 107,613 publishers. In Denmark an elderly sister wanted to share the good news with others, but she was disabled. Undaunted, she made contact with interested people by writing letters. At present, she corresponds with 42 people and conducts 11 Bible studies. She is one

13, 14. What are some experiences of brothers who showed love to non-Witnesses, even at great personal inconvenience?



Love moves us to share our hope with others

of the peak of 14,885 publishers who reported in Denmark last year.

Love Your Enemies

¹⁵ Jesus told the man versed in the Law that a Samaritan could be viewed as a neighbor. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus went even further when he said: "You heard that it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' However, I say to you: Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens."

15, 16. (a) How far-reaching did Jesus say our love should be? (b) How did responsible brothers deal in a loving way with an individual who made false accusations against Jehovah's Witnesses?

ens." (Matthew 5:43-45) Even when someone opposes us, we try to "keep conquering the evil with the good." (Romans 12:19-21) If possible, we share with him our most precious possession, the truth.

¹⁶ In Ukraine an article in the *Kremenchuk Herald* newspaper spoke of Jehovah's Witnesses as a dangerous sect. This was serious because in Europe some speak of Jehovah's Witnesses in this way in order to persuade people that the activities of the Witnesses should be restricted or banned. Hence, the editor was approached and asked to publish a press release correcting the article. He agreed, but with the release, he printed a statement that the original article was based on fact. So responsible brothers approached him again with more information. Finally, the editor realized that the original article was wrong, and he published a retraction. Dealing with him frankly and kindly was the loving way to handle this situation, and it led to a good result.

How Can We Cultivate Love?

¹⁷ When a baby is born, its parents quickly fall in love with it. Dealing lovingly with adults is not always so instinctive. That is likely why the Bible repeatedly tells us to love one another—it is something we have to work on. (1 Peter 1:22; 4:8; 1 John 3:11) Jesus knew that our love would be tested when he said that we should forgive our brother "up to seventy-seven times." (Matthew 18:21, 22)

17. What indicates that it might not always be easy to act lovingly toward others?

2000 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE

Country or Territory	Population	2000 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	2000 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1999	1999 Av. Pubs.	2000 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Alaska	653,000	2,133	306	1,983	-3*	2,037	55	211	29	314,427	781	4,626
Albania	3,262,000	2,160	1,510	1,969	20	1,641	366	620	48	826,885	3,840	10,864
American Samoa	62,900	185	340	170	-12*	193		20	2	33,472	170	570
Andorra	65,971	155	426	138	-2*	141	2	20	2	27,156	51	313
Angola	12,630,000	43,183	292	41,222	7	38,395	4,755	5,657	696	10,079,140	83,154	181,002
Anguilla	10,000	45	222	41	41	29		8	1	10,394	46	175
Antigua	65,952	372	177	340	-1*	342	13	45	6	70,169	344	1,123
Argentina	36,124,931	121,367	298	118,659	1	117,809	4,791	15,212	1,700	22,916,701	74,725	260,570
Armenia	3,344,336	6,387	524	5,834	20	4,874	690	1,061	39	1,680,987	6,556	18,817
Aruba	97,716	655	149	620	2	609	32	33	8	87,220	488	1,980
Australia	19,080,797	60,947	313	59,392	-1*	59,768	1,589	5,526	770	9,900,463	19,302	111,954
Austria	8,102,000	20,458	396	20,167	-1*	20,335	380	1,656	299	3,373,544	7,888	33,182
Azerbaijan	7,748,163	215	36,038	190	12	169		30	1	48,534	217	510
Azores	246,868	538	459	516	0	517		68	15	108,653	352	1,295
Bahamas	255,055	1,456	175	1,344	-1*	1,363	23	180	27	274,314	1,251	3,451
Bangladesh	126,947,000	97	1,308,732	87	2	85	5	12	2	18,235	89	234
Barbados	260,490	2,390	109	2,297	2	2,260	73	212	25	347,734	1,402	5,707
Belarus	10,267,000	2,852	3,600	2,651	10	2,412	252	412	27	645,307	2,302	6,950
Belau	18,836	86	219	77	12	69	5	23	1	24,131	143	349
Belgium	10,239,085	25,647	399	24,809	-2*	25,395	476	1,932	378	3,860,042	7,095	46,360
Belize	230,000	1,206	191	1,134	2	1,110	52	160	28	242,321	1,117	5,017
Benin	5,532,000	6,343	872	6,028	5	5,758	471	865	123	1,410,442	8,863	27,288
Bermuda	63,022	419	150	383	-3*	396	24	62	5	87,912	233	1,028
Bolivia	8,328,700	17,223	484	15,490	6	14,596	1,389	3,244	242	4,388,962	21,475	57,962
Bonaire	14,663	65	226	58	-8*	63	5	2	1	8,888	71	193
Bosnia & Herzegovina	4,204,300	1,052	3,996	1,008	9	925	90	271	13	367,758	704	2,333
Botswana	1,651,296	1,169	1,413	1,068	2	1,045	87	109	27	206,538	1,289	3,252
Brazil	165,917,964	536,270	309	506,888	5	483,113	30,918	57,823	8,099	91,992,951	526,102	1,329,194
Britain	59,093,450	126,297	468	120,592	-1*	121,723	2,731	11,136	1,461	18,484,412	37,373	215,620
Bulgaria	8,329,000	1,135	7,338	1,066	9	982	95	153	17	256,509	949	2,695
Burkina Faso	10,352,000	1,009	10,260	945	7	884	66	150	22	266,705	1,325	2,965
Burundi	6,700,000	3,420	1,959	3,034	19	2,541	408	465	51	877,351	6,916	12,211
Cambodia	11,700,000	70	167,143	57	73	33	13	30	1	30,840	142	327
Cameroon	15,292,000	27,544	555	26,508	1	26,295	1,410	2,353	635	4,747,875	30,010	84,428
Canada	30,576,316	111,173	275	107,742	-1*	108,437	2,316	11,594	1,362	18,979,385	33,129	185,389
Cape Verde	416,581	1,483	281	1,416	2	1,384	98	237	25	345,902	2,678	5,256
Cayman Islands	32,000	169	189	128	3	124	5	12	1	19,827	88	382
Central Afr. Rep.	3,500,000	2,398	1,460	2,274	0	2,270	152	409	56	609,430	3,773	13,501
Chad	7,000,000	583	12,007	561	2	550	46	112	17	178,227	903	3,515
Chile	15,211,308	62,171	245	56,952	3	55,415	3,136	9,378	678	12,614,326	48,253	154,997
Chuuk	71,789	58	1,238	54	4	52	2	25	3	28,835	193	746
Colombia	41,963,624	107,613	390	101,390	5	96,452	7,952	14,953	1,559	22,604,305	153,754	372,216
Comoros	630,000	11	57,273	9	50	6		1		2,290	12	38
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	50,000,000	118,513	422	103,877	9	95,319	8,938	13,677	2,748	23,073,685	188,003	584,058
Congo, Rep. of	2,900,000	4,050	716	3,477	10	3,155	351	672	108	1,067,398	12,786	20,102
Cook Islands	19,103	157	122	140	3	136	6	18	2	28,649	135	387
Costa Rica	3,622,171	19,880	182	18,880	2	18,587	742	1,642	239	2,861,741	14,051	47,534
Côte d'Ivoire	16,397,607	6,272	2,614	6,011	3	5,818	451	989	156	1,595,408	11,310	23,398
Croatia	4,784,265	5,330	898	5,283	0	5,257	172	751	69	1,211,659	2,238	9,859

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Cuba	11,180,099	86,874	129	85,872	2	83,940	5,994	12,797	1,269	16,728,720	133,813	188,623
Curaçao	143,373	1,434	100	1,398	-5*	1,474	39	118	20	225,134	1,290	4,003
Cyprus	666,800	1,812	368	1,797	1	1,778	66	245	22	349,600	846	3,344
Czech Republic	10,267,668	16,418	625	15,757	-2*	16,058	401	1,151	240	2,291,137	5,855	31,069
Denmark	5,337,344	14,885	359	14,522	-1*	14,700	197	1,327	217	2,216,039	3,744	22,967
Dominica	71,794	347	207	329	-1*	334	20	44	8	79,823	378	993
Dominican Rep.	8,568,545	23,284	368	22,369	3	21,684	1,442	4,393	352	5,765,962	37,437	79,602
Ecuador	12,646,095	43,420	291	40,328	6	37,960	3,414	7,256	544	9,898,336	60,742	161,185
El Salvador	6,276,037	28,462	221	26,982	3	26,183	1,603	2,686	485	5,028,234	25,377	75,217
Equatorial Guinea	474,509	768	618	662	18	563	79	126	12	187,205	1,777	3,514
Estonia	1,376,700	3,871	356	3,669	2	3,600	206	498	47	743,328	2,722	8,191
Ethiopia	62,000,000	6,166	10,055	5,936	3	5,790	411	1,018	95	1,563,483	3,638	16,201
Faeroe Islands	44,817	74	606	67	-6*	71	1	25	4	20,517	43	105
Falkland Islands	2,221	6	370	6	-14*	7	1	1	1	845	2	19
Fiji	775,077	2,009	386	1,886	-2*	1,928	91	241	31	370,244	1,663	7,408
Finland	5,171,302	20,120	257	19,366	1	19,269	393	1,881	304	2,824,268	6,745	27,911
France	59,225,683	115,050	515	112,149	-2*	114,918	2,114	7,731	1,590	16,425,160	28,449	204,237
French Guiana	157,274	1,500	105	1,462	-1*	1,477	65	196	23	335,245	2,288	5,293
Gabon	1,200,000	2,237	536	2,069	5	1,977	158	298	45	508,164	5,152	8,980
Gambia, The	1,300,000	144	9,028	137	25	110	18	34	3	48,754	222	405
Georgia	5,018,502	14,855	338	14,048	6	13,209	1,096	2,143	133	2,887,835	6,465	33,790
Germany	82,163,475	165,924	495	162,932	-1*	164,263	3,497	11,285	2,138	24,626,758	59,251	276,333
Ghana	18,412,247	65,828	280	62,821	7	58,860	4,828	6,380	1,042	12,614,947	141,890	230,469
Gibraltar	27,204	126	216	102	1	101	2	11	2	18,861	31	159
Greece	10,259,900	27,575	372	27,354	1	27,214	683	3,141	411	4,962,360	9,765	43,390
Greenland	56,087	144	389	140	-4*	146	2	23	7	30,549	87	289
Grenada	96,000	603	159	582	-4*	607	15	70	8	112,072	496	1,445
Guadeloupe	422,000	7,767	54	7,487	0	7,483	189	505	104	1,081,637	5,913	17,764
Guam	163,517	616	265	605	0	602	35	155	10	180,088	883	2,048
Guatemala	9,800,000	20,866	470	19,511	5	18,613	1,324	2,234	279	3,788,984	16,891	57,463
Guinea	7,466,200	707	10,560	657	6	619	43	146	19	226,485	1,478	3,261
Guinea-Bissau	1,200,000	76	15,789	64	-2*	65	4	26	1	39,311	272	475
Guyana	777,648	2,185	356	2,030	3	1,980	113	277	37	400,080	2,323	9,831
Haiti	7,300,000	11,860	616	11,290	2	11,053	774	1,372	214	2,271,713	14,826	51,419
Hawaii	1,185,497	7,564	157	7,325	-1*	7,409	191	1,188	95	1,589,998	4,917	18,371
Honduras	6,447,000	12,525	515	11,872	7	11,074	824	1,626	181	2,637,110	14,028	39,291
Hong Kong	6,600,000	4,584	1,440	4,464	3	4,335	290	903	44	1,176,823	3,872	7,625
Hungary	10,021,000	21,253	472	20,203	2	19,818	962	1,887	245	3,432,485	10,017	41,865
Iceland	278,702	324	860	310	-3*	321	2	33	7	52,042	152	518
India	1,009,907,766	22,217	45,457	20,572	5	19,614	1,479	1,943	513	3,419,559	14,237	49,120
Ireland	5,436,500	4,611	1,179	4,456	-1*	4,483	86	599	115	905,153	1,484	8,195
Israel	9,100,000	1,077	8,449	1,018	7	950	77	107	13	203,997	748	2,261
Italy	57,679,955	228,778	252	225,748	0	225,104	5,668	32,112	3,024	48,108,731	80,533	406,676
Jamaica	2,502,030	11,312	221	10,593	1	10,509	522	1,175	191	1,819,739	9,920	33,488
Japan	126,071,305	221,364	570	220,538	-1*	222,078	4,388	77,972	3,538	76,418,770	141,674	350,618
Kazakhstan	14,952,400	13,280	1,126	12,581	7	11,794	1,206	1,696	117	2,745,289	11,228	33,396
Kenya	30,000,000	15,018	1,998	14,289	7	13,403	1,463	2,915	280	4,213,090	21,000	41,861
Kiribati	78,300	91	860	82	3	80	4	22	1	31,460	222	393
Korea, Republic of	47,275,000	87,511	540	86,921	1	86,256	3,095	34,808	1,460	33,802,008	52,633	135,257
Kosrae	9,169	18	509	15	-6*	16	3	3	1	5,543	43	161
Kyrgyzstan	4,685,230	3,805	1,231	3,542	2	3,482	331	403	35	639,980	2,190	8,967
Latvia	2,416,100	2,129	1,135	2,007	9	1,836	175	390	28	552,739	1,819	4,276
Lebanon	3,562,699	3,589	993	3,486	0	3,474	96	261	70	568,355	1,585	6,733

Country or Territory	Population	2000 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to: 2000 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1999	1999 Av. Pubs.	2000 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Lesotho	2,144,146	2,612	821	2,408 2	2,369	190	333	63	576,890	3,109	6,422
Liberia	2,957,760	3,425	864	3,118 13	2,754	320	682	52	1,082,340	9,301	16,875
Libya	4,992,838	12	416,070	582 6	200 -4*	2	1	1	986	7	17
Liechtenstein	32,015	55	582	50	52	2	1	1	6,021	12	102
Lithuania	3,700,000	2,458	1,505	2,330 7	2,175	181	375	28	558,735	1,589	5,404
Luxembourg	504,700	1,850	273	1,816 -3*	1,869	30	140	32	294,406	702	3,428
Macao	500,000	116	4,310	108	-15*	127	4	2	35,105	97	226
Macedonia	2,000,000	1,024	1,953	977	7	916	62	15	228,928	626	2,740
Madagascar	15,163,250	11,186	1,356	10,717 6	10,117	858	1,964	243	2,687,686	23,000	53,158
Madeira	266,600	1,062	251	1,044	0	1,048	35	87	167,452	544	2,050
Malawi	10,207,593	46,507	219	44,172 5	42,020	2,532	5,528	689	8,614,390	33,356	150,754
Malaysia	23,260,000	2,148	10,829	2,069 3	2,010	109	357	48	515,842	2,656	5,638
Mali	11,500,000	202	56,931	171	-2*	174	10	6	78,487	359	740
Malta	376,340	557	676	533	2	523	17	7	90,092	183	947
Marshall Islands	64,583	217	298	204	3	198	26	4	68,225	540	1,251
Martinique	380,460	4,019	95	3,899 0	3,912	85	337	46	666,139	2,666	9,026
Mauritius	1,145,196	1,324	865	1,295 1	1,284	55	114	20	232,322	1,063	3,346
Mayotte	137,320	64	2,146	57	8	53	11	2	15,420	64	140
Mexico	98,713,792	533,665	185	526,913 2	515,785	27,683	66,766	11,287	104,220,646	550,667	1,655,597
Moldova	4,281,500	17,578	244	16,856 5	16,013	1,560	1,667	171	2,552,407	9,122	41,601
Mongolia	2,621,000	27	97,074	23	53	15	5	1	14,975	67	196
Montserrat	3,000	7	429	5	-29*	7	1	1	446	1	36
Mozambique	17,242,240	35,050	492	31,725 10	28,923	3,579	5,641	777	7,880,638	43,239	133,855
Myanmar	50,000,000	2,884	17,337	2,664 6	2,516	131	348	105	574,030	1,751	6,629
Namibia	1,805,227	1,053	1,714	904 5	858	72	85	19	179,613	963	2,943
Nauru	10,600	7	1,514	5 -29*	7	1	1	1	243	3	85
Nepal	23,385,000	430	54,384	393 9	362	45	69	6	91,682	499	1,177
Netherlands	15,863,950	31,089	510	29,287 -1*	29,596	575	1,929	415	4,010,931	7,850	52,324
Nevis	10,080	59	171	54 6	51	7	1	1	12,207	49	190
New Caledonia	212,000	1,657	128	1,501 1	1,489	64	131	23	249,516	1,271	4,952
New Zealand	3,831,000	13,168	291	12,461 -1*	12,548	382	1,265	166	2,125,814	5,505	26,144
Nicaragua	4,950,000	14,862	333	14,062 3	13,632	1,155	1,877	238	3,074,458	19,520	58,398
Niger	7,490,000	235	31,872	220 4	212	21	43	7	69,608	340	1,336
Nigeria	113,828,587	236,785	481	224,978 4	216,173	17,435	33,292	4,354	45,674,601	364,498	575,530
Niue	2,088	28	75	26 -7*	28	2	1	1	3,810	15	75
Norfolk Island	1,887	17	111	16 0	16	1	1	1	1,813	4	22
Norway	4,493,000	9,940	452	9,396 -1*	9,458	186	615	173	1,208,703	2,923	16,303
Pakistan	136,000,000	554	245,487	509 11	460	61	77	10	119,243	510	2,016
Panama	2,885,703	9,804	294	9,296 2	9,085	247	1,436	195	2,056,874	10,157	30,729
Papua New Guinea	4,722,477	3,509	1,346	3,050 0	3,065	167	329	51	599,895	3,134	16,347
Paraguay	5,496,450	7,280	755	6,502 6	6,145	541	1,054	93	1,503,191	7,074	14,777
Peru	25,661,700	74,623	344	67,498 8	62,690	6,097	16,816	774	19,968,336	100,452	233,358
Philippines	75,000,000	136,396	550	134,257 5	128,106	8,924	26,073	3,476	26,907,149	95,233	413,023
Pohnpei	40,880	72	568	68 8	63	1	15	1	19,772	169	517
Poland	38,654,000	125,287	309	122,575 0	123,052	3,741	7,488	1,759	14,595,905	40,439	235,219
Portugal	9,509,707	47,555	200	46,586 0	46,591	1,390	3,763	649	7,377,901	18,508	92,072
Puerto Rico	3,800,000	25,884	147	25,021 0	25,142	696	2,823	330	4,454,187	13,413	60,572
Réunion	715,900	2,608	275	2,557 -2*	2,604	78	240	35	445,671	1,375	5,744
Rodrigues	35,546	41	867	36 9	33	6	1	1	9,652	58	106
Romania	22,455,500	38,659	581	38,179 2	37,332	1,770	3,569	549	5,919,799	17,427	82,761
Rota	2,678	11	243	9 0	9	4	1	1	2,753	9	54
Russia	147,307,000	114,284	1,289	109,223 7	102,513	10,256	15,279	1,028	24,782,467	89,421	267,617
Rwanda	8,342,000	7,889	1,057	7,027 18	5,969	803	1,473	137	2,538,684	12,154	30,716
Saba	1,000	5	200	3 200	1	2	1,393	7	22		

Country or Territory	Population	2000 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	2000 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1999	1999 Av. Pubs.	2000 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
St. Eustatius	1,500	16	94	14	-7*	15	1	1	1	2,008	8	32
St. Helena	4,913	146	34	139	-4*	145	1	1	3	11,837	42	362
St. Kitts	31,800	144	221	136	-4*	141	5	21	3	28,774	183	455
St. Lucia	138,150	708	195	675	2	665	20	111	9	152,354	806	1,967
St. Maarten	24,000	283	85	262	-5*	276	11	44	3	60,085	277	902
St. Pierre & Miquelon	6,600	19	347	17	6	16	2	1	1	2,757	7	30
St. Vincent	111,380	318	350	295	3	286	5	50	7	73,548	334	993
Saipan	70,818	185	383	178	9	163	16	28	2	44,846	252	559
Samoa	170,727	381	448	372	-1*	377	44	84	7	102,126	383	1,309
San Marino	25,061	187	134	182	1	180	4	16	2	35,896	61	289
São Tomé & Príncipe	154,777	296	523	280	12	250	46	69	6	87,256	740	1,149
Senegal	9,500,000	911	10,428	861	4	827	43	169	21	265,893	1,278	2,293
Seychelles	80,410	225	357	213	10	194	27	21	4	45,505	277	569
Sierra Leone	5,232,624	880	5,946	811	10	734	96	142	15	232,169	1,621	3,299
Slovakia	5,400,637	12,596	429	12,261	0	12,263	346	599	178	1,555,685	3,749	24,383
Slovenia	1,988,230	1,866	1,066	1,836	0	1,836	59	243	30	410,089	650	3,103
Solomon Islands	409,042	1,697	241	1,577	6	1,487	178	257	39	346,130	1,790	6,133
South Africa	43,054,306	70,198	613	65,658	2	64,388	4,164	8,199	1,343	13,502,835	70,275	168,085
Spain	39,887,240	101,158	394	95,773	-1*	96,259	2,278	11,378	1,318	18,712,753	24,775	159,257
Sri Lanka	18,800,000	3,402	5,526	3,070	5	2,931	269	404	72	642,481	2,572	9,113
Suriname	438,026	2,022	217	1,944	1	1,932	118	286	38	410,484	2,037	6,051
Swaziland	980,722	2,096	468	1,918	0	1,924	121	267	57	456,955	2,224	6,524
Sweden	8,869,255	23,296	381	22,533	-1*	22,869	425	2,124	336	3,290,612	6,969	36,752
Switzerland	7,123,537	17,971	396	17,307	-2*	17,638	357	1,077	296	2,498,039	6,279	29,748
Tahiti	219,521	1,814	121	1,773	-3*	1,837	40	143	27	258,002	1,351	5,430
Taiwan	22,000,000	4,127	5,331	4,018	6	3,775	247	1,041	58	1,318,941	4,704	10,077
Tajikistan	6,440,732	290	22,209	267	11	241	31	30	3	58,947	399	998
Tanzania	31,861,643	9,318	3,419	8,380	12	7,457	894	1,590	211	2,344,921	11,918	29,010
Thailand	61,661,701	1,860	33,151	1,814	2	1,775	77	311	55	435,626	1,736	4,305
Tinian	5,100	20	255	14	0	14	6	1	6,798	33	40	
Togo	4,629,000	11,617	398	10,981	5	10,502	752	1,320	171	2,422,277	24,618	45,524
Tokelau	1,700	5	340	4	-20*	5	1	1	359	2	28	
Tonga	100,283	128	783	118	6	111	10	23	3	31,908	174	385
Trinidad & Tobago	1,293,794	8,142	159	8,007	2	7,860	313	1,311	92	1,591,394	8,402	22,430
Turkey	68,000,000	1,594	42,660	1,562	2	1,536	126	216	24	354,214	908	2,864
Turks & Caicos Isls.	17,502	142	123	124	6	117	9	11	3	26,293	175	439
Tuvalu	9,403	58	162	44	26	35	2	4	3	7,601	45	136
Uganda	21,894,000	2,582	8,479	2,445	11	2,210	223	332	40	577,518	4,014	8,015
Ukraine	49,456,100	112,720	439	108,184	8	99,998	10,306	13,355	1,043	21,531,602	67,877	251,953
U.S. of America	273,757,676	988,469	277	945,000	0	940,650	30,290	127,040	11,426	181,475,589	424,696	2,153,268
Uruguay	3,030,000	10,564	287	10,335	0	10,385	386	892	139	1,472,751	7,049	21,331
Vanuatu	189,000	277	682	262	-1*	264	32	27	5	51,333	438	1,566
Venezuela	24,169,744	87,211	277	82,076	3	79,390	4,682	14,283	1,238	19,769,100	102,601	285,835
Virgin Isls. (Brit.)	17,000	166	102	160	4	154	7	26	2	32,504	126	530
Virgin Isls. (U.S.)	104,000	651	160	623	1	614	33	89	9	127,379	566	1,798
Wallis & Futuna Isls.	15,000	54	278	47	18	40	5	8	1	13,032	62	259
Yap	11,397	29	393	25	-7*	27	1	10	1	11,651	61	160
Yugoslavia, F. R.	10,731,000	4,031	2,662	3,919	1	3,888	254	607	54	931,463	1,815	8,878
Zambia	10,657,529	117,654	91	103,569	7	96,544	10,455	12,417	2,098	19,576,095	143,116	474,933
Zimbabwe	12,652,972	30,270	418	27,164	4	26,126	1,919	3,475	874	5,427,590	37,582	70,982
29 Other Lands		25,456		23,550	3	22,943	1,172	2,470	505	4,863,153	23,746	59,850
GRAND TOTAL (235 Lands)		6,035,564		5,783,003	2.3	5,653,987	288,907	805,205	91,487	1,171,270,425	4,766,631	14,872,086

During the 2000 service year, the Watch Tower Society spent over \$66.3 million in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments.

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLDWIDE: 8,661

* Percentage of decrease

Paul too urged us to "continue putting up with one another." (Colossians 3:12, 13) No wonder that we are told: "Pursue love"! (1 Corinthians 14:1) How can we do this?

¹⁸ First, we can always keep in mind the love we have for Jehovah God. This love is a strong incentive to love our neighbor. Why? Because when we do so, this reflects well on our heavenly Father and brings glory and praise to him. (John 15:8-10; Philippians 1:9-11) Second, we can try to see things as Jehovah sees them. Every time we sin, we sin against Jehovah; yet, time and again he forgives us and keeps on loving us. (Psalm 86:5; 103:2, 3; 1 John 1:9; 4:18) If we cultivate Jehovah's view, we will be disposed to love others and forgive their offenses against us. (Matthew 6:12) Third, we can deal with others as we want them to deal with us. (Matthew 7:12) Imperfect as we are, we often need forgiveness. For example, when we say things that hurt others, we hope that they will remember that everyone sins with the tongue from time to time. (James 3:2) If we want others to deal lovingly with us, we should deal lovingly with them.

¹⁹ Fourth, we can seek the help of holy spirit because love is part of the fruitage of the spirit. (Galatians 5:22, 23) Friendships, family feelings, and romantic love are often instinctive. But we need the help of Jehovah's spirit to cultivate the love that Jehovah has, the love that is a perfect bond of union. We can seek the help of holy spirit by reading the inspired Bible. For example, if we study the life of Jesus, we will see how he dealt with people, and we can learn to imitate him. (John 13:34, 35; 15:12) Further, we can ask Jehovah for holy spirit, especially in situations that make it difficult for us to act in a loving way. (Luke 11:13) Finally, we can pur-

18. What will help us to cultivate love of others?
19. How can we seek the help of holy spirit in cultivating love?

sue love by staying close to the Christian congregation. Being with loving brothers and sisters helps us to cultivate love.—Proverbs 13:20.

²⁰ Last year, there was a peak of 6,035,564 publishers of the good news around the world. Jehovah's Witnesses spent a total of 1,171,270,425 hours seeking out individuals to tell them about that good news. It was love that made them endure the heat, the rain, and the cold as they went about this work. It was love that moved them to talk to schoolmates and workmates and to approach total strangers on the streets and at other locations. Many whom the Witnesses visited were apathetic, a few were opposed. However, some showed interest, so that 433,454,049 return visits were made and 4,766,631 Bible studies were conducted.*

²¹ What a demonstration all of this was of the love Jehovah's Witnesses have for their God and for their neighbor! That love will never grow cold. We are confident that the 2001 service year will see an even greater witness given to mankind. May Jehovah's blessing continue with his loyal and zealous worshipers as they 'let all their affairs take place with love'!—1 Corinthians 16:14.

* For complete details of the 2000 Service Year Report, see the chart on pages 18-21.

20, 21. What outstanding demonstration of love did Jehovah's Witnesses make during the 2000 service year?

Can You Explain?

- Whom do we imitate when we love our neighbor?
- How far-reaching should our love be?
- What are some experiences demonstrating Christian love?
- How can we cultivate Christian love?



SERVING WHOLE-SOULED IN SPITE OF TRIALS

AS TOLD BY
RODOLFO LOZANO

I was born in Mexico, in the city of Gómez Palacio, Durango State, on September 17, 1917. The Mexican Revolution was in full swing.

Although the revolution ended in 1920, disturbances in the area where we lived continued for years afterward, making life very difficult.

ONCE, when Mother learned that there was going to be a confrontation between the rebel forces and the army, she kept me and my three brothers and two sisters in the house for several days. We had little to eat, and I remember hiding with my younger sister under the bed. After that, Mother decided to take us children to the United States, where my father was to join us later.

We arrived in California in 1926, shortly before the Great Depression hit the United States. We moved about wherever we could find work, to places like the San Joaquin Valley, Santa Clara, Salinas, and King City. We

learned to work in the fields and to harvest all kinds of fruits and vegetables. Although my youth was one of strenuous work, it was a very pleasant time in my life.

Reached by Bible Truth

In March 1928, a Bible Student, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called, visited us. He was an elderly, Spanish-speaking man named Esteban Rivera. The title of the booklet he left, "Where Are the Dead?," impressed me, as did the contents. Even though I was young, I pursued Bible study and association with the Bible Students. In time, my mother



In 1942 when I was a pioneer

My wife began her missionary assignment in Mexico in 1947



and my sister Aurora also became zealous praisers of Jehovah.

In the mid-1930's, a Kingdom Hall was built in San Jose for the English-speaking congregation. Since many Hispanics worked on farms in the area, we began to preach to them and hold the *Watchtower Study*. We did this with the help of Hispanic Witnesses from San Francisco, some 50 miles away. In time, we had about 60 attending Spanish-language meetings in the San Jose Kingdom Hall.

Eventually, on February 28, 1940, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water baptism at an assembly in San Jose. The following year, I was appointed as a pioneer, a full-time minister of Jehovah's Witnesses. Then in April 1943, I was invited to move to Stockton, a city about 80 miles away, to form a Spanish-language congregation. At the time, I was serving as the presiding overseer of the English congregation in San Jose, and I was also caring for the Spanish-speaking Witnesses there. After arranging for others to care for these responsibilities, I moved to Stockton.



With Esther today

Integrity Put to the Test

Beginning in 1940, I was repeatedly called before the draft board, but each time my position as a conscientious objector was respected. Soon after the United States entered the second world war in December 1941, pressure from the draft board intensified. Finally, in 1944, I was put in jail. While waiting to be sentenced, I was kept in a basement with criminals. Learning that I was one of Jehovah's Witnesses, many of them asked questions about how the crimes that they had committed would affect their standing before God.

Witnesses in San Jose paid my bail so that I could be released, pending trial. A lawyer in Los Angeles who represented defendants in civil rights cases accepted my case without charge. The judge decided to free me on the condition that I quit pioneering, take a secular job, and report to the federal authorities each month. I did not accept that decision, so I was sentenced to two years in the McNeil Island prison in Washington State. There I used my time for intensive Bible study. I also learned to type. In less than two years, I was released for good conduct. I immediately made arrangements to continue in the pioneer ministry.

Expanded Activity

In the winter of 1947, I was assigned to work among the Spanish-speaking people of Colorado City, Texas, along with a pioneer companion. But it was so cold that we went to San Antonio to warm up. There, however, it rained so much that our door-to-door ministry was disrupted. Our money soon ran out. For weeks we subsisted on raw cabbage sandwiches and alfalfa tea. My companion returned home, but I stayed. When the English-speaking Witnesses became aware of my physical needs, they began to help me.

The following spring, I returned to my assignment in Colorado City, and eventually a small Spanish-language congregation was formed. Then I moved to Sweetwater, Texas, where I helped form another Spanish-language congregation. While in Sweetwater, I received a letter inviting me to the 15th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead for missionary training that commenced on February 22, 1950. After graduation that summer at the international convention in New York City's Yankee Stadium, I remained for three months at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn. There I received training for my assignment at the Mexico branch office.

Work in Mexico

I arrived in Mexico City on October 20, 1950. About two weeks later, I was appointed branch overseer, an assignment I handled for four and a half years. The experience I had gained in pioneer service, in prison, at Gilead, and in Brooklyn proved very beneficial. On arriving in Mexico, I quickly saw the need for building up the spirituality of our Mexican brothers and sisters. There was especially a need to help them hold to the high moral standards of God's Word.

In Latin-American countries, including Mexico, it was the custom for couples to

live together without being legally married. The religions of Christendom, particularly the Roman Catholic Church, had allowed this unscriptural custom to prevail. (Hebrews 13:4) Thus, some had become members of the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses, even though they were not legally married. Now an arrangement was made for such ones to be given six months to straighten things out. Otherwise they would no longer be recognized as Jehovah's Witnesses.

For many, straightening out their lives was simple. They needed only to legalize the relationship they were in by getting married. Others had more complicated situations. For example, some had been married twice, and even three times, without ever having obtained a legal divorce. When the marital situations of Jehovah's people were finally in harmony with the teachings of God's Word, fine spiritual blessings were enjoyed within the congregations.—1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

In those days the level of secular education in Mexico was generally low. Even before I arrived in 1950, the branch office had begun to organize reading and writing classes in the congregations. Now these classes were reorganized, and arrangements were made to register them with the government. Since 1946, when records began to be kept, over 143,000 persons in Mexico have been taught to read and write in classes conducted by the Witnesses!

The laws in Mexico were very restrictive with regard to religion. In recent years, however, there have been important changes in this respect. In 1992 a new law was passed on religious affairs, so in 1993, Jehovah's Witnesses in Mexico were registered as a religious organization.

For me these changes have been a source of great joy, something I would have thought impossible in earlier times. Over many years,



Top left: Our Mexico Bethel family in 1952 with me in front

Above: Over 109,000 met in this Mexico City stadium for a district convention in 1999

Bottom left: Our new branch facilities now nearing completion

work in Mexico City, and we lived at the branch, where I continued to serve.

In 1947, Esther had arrived in her first missionary assignment in Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico. There was only one congregation of 40 Witnesses in Monterrey, but by the time she was transferred to Mexico City in 1950, there were four congregations. At our branch near Mexico City, there are presently two young descendants of families with whom Esther studied the Bible when she was serving in Monterrey.

Back in 1950 the preaching territory of the missionaries in Mexico City included most of the city. They traversed their assignment on foot or in very old buses jammed with people. When I arrived on the scene late in 1950, there were seven congregations. Now these have increased to about 1,600, with well over 90,000 Kingdom publishers in Mexico City, and last year, more than 250,000 persons attended the Memorial of Christ's death there! Over the years, Esther and I have had the privilege of serving in many of these congregations.

I repeatedly visited government offices and faced a rather distrustful attitude. However, it is fine to see how these matters have been handled through the Legal Department at our branch office, so that we now meet with relatively little interference in the preaching work.

Serving With a Missionary Mate

When I arrived in Mexico, there were already many graduates of earlier classes of Gil-ead in the country. One of these was Esther Vartanian, an Armenian Witness who had begun pioneering in Vallejo, California, in 1942. We were married on July 30, 1955, and thereafter continued in our assignment in Mexico. Esther remained in the missionary

When Esther and I start a Bible study, we always try to get the father of the family interested so that the entire family becomes involved. Thus, we have seen many large families come to serve Jehovah. I believe that one of the reasons for the rapid growth of true worship in Mexico is that whole families often unitedly join in true worship.

Jehovah Has Blessed the Work

Since 1950 the progress of the work in Mexico has been noteworthy, both as regards increase in numbers and changes in organization. It is a real pleasure to have contributed in a small way to the increase, working with such a hospitable and happy people.

Karl Klein, who serves as a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, and his wife, Margaret, visited us while they were on vacation some years ago. Brother Klein wanted to feel the pulse of the work in our Mexican territory, so he and Margaret came to the San Juan Tezontla Congregation, near Mexico City, where we attended at the time. Our hall was small, about 15 feet wide and 18 feet long. When we arrived, about 70 were already present, and there was hardly standing room left. Older ones were sitting on chairs, younger ones on benches, and small children on bricks or on the floor.

Brother Klein was very impressed because all the children had their Bibles ready, looking up the Bible texts along with the speaker. After the public talk, Brother Klein spoke on Matthew 13:19-23 and said that in Mexico there was much of the "fine soil" that Jesus mentioned. At present, seven of the children who were in attendance that day are working on the huge project of enlarging our branch facilities near Mexico City. Another one serves at Bethel, and several others are pioneers!

When I came to Mexico City, there were only 11 members in our branch. Now we

have some 1,350 working on site, about 250 of whom are doing construction of new branch buildings. When all this work is completed, possibly in 2002, we will be able to accommodate some 1,300 people in our expanded facilities. To think that in 1950 we had fewer than 7,000 Kingdom publishers in the whole country, but now we have well over 500,000! My heart overflows with joy at seeing the way Jehovah has blessed the efforts of our humble Mexican brothers, who work so hard to praise him.

Facing a Big Challenge

One of my biggest challenges lately has been illness. In general, I have been a healthy person. But in November 1988, I had a stroke that greatly affected my physical faculties. Thanks to Jehovah, through exercise and other therapies, I have recuperated to a certain point, but parts of my body do not respond as I would like. I continue to receive treatment and medical attention to avoid intense headaches and other consequences that still remain.

Although I can no longer do as much as I would like, I find contentment knowing that I have been able to help many to learn about Jehovah's purposes and to become his dedicated servants. I also enjoy talking with as many Christian brothers and sisters as possible when they visit our branch; I feel that we are mutually encouraged.

Knowing that Jehovah appreciates our service to him and that what we have done is not in vain has greatly strengthened me. (1 Corinthians 15:58) In spite of my limitations and illness, I have taken to heart the words of Colossians 3:23, 24: "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men, for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward of the inheritance." In keeping with this admonition, I have learned to serve Jehovah whole-souled in spite of trials.

"Run in Such a Way"

IMAGINE yourself in a sports stadium jammed with excited people. The athletes march onto the field. The crowd roars as their heroes come into view. Judges are on hand to enforce the rules. As the events get under way, shouts of triumph mix with cries of disappointment. Deafening applause greets the victors!

You are attending, not a modern sporting event, but one held some 2,000 years ago on the Isthmus of Corinth. Here, every two years from the sixth century B.C.E. to the fourth century C.E., the famous Isthmian Games were held. For many days the event captured the interest of all of Greece. The games were more than simple athletic contests. Athletes were symbols of military preparedness. The winners—idolized as heroes—received crowns made of tree leaves. Gifts were lavished upon them, and the city gave them a large pension for life.

The apostle Paul was familiar with the Isthmian Games near Corinth and compared a Christian's life course to an athletic contest. By referring to runners, wrestlers, and boxers, he aptly illustrated the rewards of good training, well-directed efforts, and endur-



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ance. Of course, the Christians to whom he wrote also knew about the games. Some had undoubtedly been among the shouting crowds at the stadium. So they would readily appreciate Paul's illustrations. What about us today? We too are in a race—for everlasting life. How can we benefit from Paul's references to those contests?

'Contending According to the Rules'

The entry requirements for the ancient games were very strict. A herald would present each athlete to the spectators and shout: 'Is there anyone who can accuse this man of any crime? Is he a robber or wicked and depraved in his life and manners?' According to *Archaeologia Graeca*, "no person that was himself a notorious criminal, or [closely] related to any such, was permitted to contend." And breaches of the games' rules were heavily penalized by barring the violators from the contests.

This fact helps us to understand Paul's statement: "If anyone contends even in the games, he is not crowned unless he has contended according to the rules." (2 Timothy 2:5) Similarly, to run in the race for life, we

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must meet Jehovah's requirements, complying with his lofty moral standards as they are set out in the Bible. However, the Bible warns us: "The inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up." (Genesis 8:21) Thus, even after entering the race, we have to be careful to keep on contending according to the rules in order to continue having Jehovah's approval and gain everlasting life.

The greatest aid to act in this way is love for God. (Mark 12:29-31) Such love will make us want to please Jehovah and act according to his will.—1 John 5:3.

"Put Off Every Weight"

In the ancient games, runners were not weighed down by clothes or equipment. "At foot-races, . . . the combatants used to appear quite naked," says the book *The Life of the Greeks and Romans*. Wearing no clothes gave the athletes agility, ease of movement, and deftness. There was no wasted energy resulting from unnecessary weight. Paul likely had this in mind when he wrote to the Hebrew Christians: "Let us also put off every weight . . . , and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."—Hebrews 12:1.

What type of weight can hinder us in the race for life? One would be the desire to accumulate unnecessary material things or to maintain a costly life-style. Some may look to wealth for security or see it as a source of happiness. Such excess "weight" may slow a runner down to the extent that, eventually, God may not really matter very much to him. (Luke 12:16-21) Everlasting life may come to seem like a distant hope. 'The new world will come someday,' a person may reason, 'but in the meantime we might as well take advantage of what this world offers.' (1 Timothy 6:17-19) Such a materialistic outlook can very easily sidetrack one from

The Christian race is a long-distance run—it requires endurance

the race for life or prevent one from even starting it.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus stated: "No one can slave for 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 slave for God and for Riches." Then, after telling of Jehovah's caring for the needs of animals and plants and saying that humans are worth more than those, he admonished: "So never be anxious and say, 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?' For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you."—Matthew 6:24-33.

"Run With Endurance"

Not all ancient footraces were short sprints. One race, called *do'li-khos*, went for about two and a half miles. It was a demanding test of strength and endurance. According to tradition, in 328 B.C.E., an athlete named Ageas, after winning this race, set off and ran all the way to his home city, Argos, to announce his victory. That day, he ran approximately 70 miles!

The Christian race is also a long-distance run that tests our endurance. Enduring in



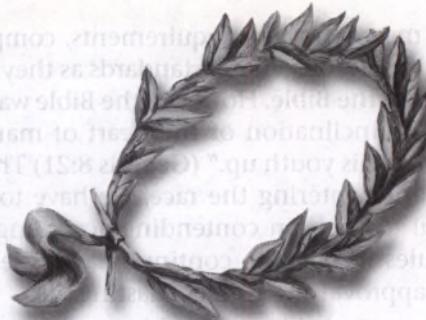
this race to the end is needed to gain Jehovah's approval and the prize of everlasting life. Paul ran the race in such a way. Near the end of his life, he was able to say: "I have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith. From this time on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness." (2 Timothy 4:7, 8) Like Paul, we have to run "to the finish." If our endurance wanes just because the race is somewhat longer than we expected at first, we shall fail to gain our reward. (Hebrews 11:6) What a tragedy that would be, seeing that we are so close to the finish line!

The Prize

Winners in ancient Greek athletic contests were given wreaths that were usually made of the leaves of trees and were adorned with flowers. In the Pythian Games, winners received a crown made of laurel. In the Olympian Games they got crowns of wild olive leaves, while in the Isthmian Games they were given crowns made of pine. "To excite the ardor of the combatants," notes one Bible scholar, "*the crowns*, the rewards of victory, and palm branches, lay, during the contest, full in their view, on a tripod, or table, placed in the stadium." For the winner, wearing the crown was a mark of great honor. On his return home, he rode triumphantly in a chariot into the city.

Having this in mind, Paul asked his Corinthian readers: "Do you not know that the runners in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may attain it. . . . Now they, of course, do it that they may get a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible one." (1 Corinthians 9:24, 25; 1 Peter 1:3, 4) What a contrast! Unlike the fading crowns of the ancient games, the prize awaiting those who run the race for life to the finish will never perish.

Regarding this finer crown, the apostle Peter wrote: "When the chief shepherd has



Unlike crowned athletes, Christians can look forward to an imperishable prize

been made manifest, you will receive the unfading crown of glory." (1 Peter 5:4) Could any prize this world offers compare with immortality, the prize of incorruptible life in heavenly glory with Christ?

Today, the great majority of Christian runners are not anointed by God to be his spiritual sons and do not have a heavenly hope. They are not running for the prize of immortality. However, God also places a matchless prize before them. It is everlasting life in perfection on a paradise earth under the Kingdom of heaven. Whichever prize a Christian runner has his eye on, he should run with greater determination and vigor than any runner in an athletic contest. Why? Because the prize will never fade: "This is the promised thing that he himself promised us, the life everlasting."—1 John 2:25.

With such an incomparable prize before the Christian runner, what should be his view of the enticements of this world? It should be that of Paul, who said: "I do indeed also consider all things to be loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. On account of him I have taken the loss of all things and I consider them as a lot of refuse." In line with this, how hard Paul ran! "Brothers, I do not yet consider myself as having laid hold on it; but there is one thing about it: Forgetting

the things behind and stretching forward to the things ahead, I am pursuing down toward the goal for the prize." (Philippians 3:8, 13, 14) Paul ran with his eyes fixed firmly on the prize. So should we.

Our Finest Example

In the ancient games, champions enjoyed widespread admiration. Poets wrote about them, and sculptors made statues of them. Historian Věra Olivová says that they "bathed in glory and enjoyed immense popularity." They also served as role models for a younger generation of champions.

Who is the "champion" setting the finest example for Christians? Paul answers: "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:1, 2) Yes, if we are to be victorious in our race for eternal life, we need to look intently

to our Exemplar, Jesus Christ. This we can do by regularly reading the Gospel accounts and meditating on ways in which we can imitate him. Such study will help us appreciate that Jesus Christ was obedient to God and proved the quality of his faith by his endurance. As a reward for his endurance, he received the approval of Jehovah God along with many wonderful privileges.—Philippians 2:9-11.

Of course, Jesus' most outstanding quality was his love. "No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends." (John 15:13) He gave deeper meaning to the word "love" by telling us to love even our enemies. (Matthew 5:43-48) Because he loved his heavenly Father, Jesus found joy in doing the will of his Father. (Psalm 40:9, 10; Proverbs 27:11) Our looking to Jesus as our Exemplar and as the one who sets the pace for us in the strenuous race for life will also move us to love God and our neighbor and to find real joy in our sacred service. (Matthew 22:37-39; John 13:34; 1 Peter 2:21) Keep in mind that Jesus does not ask the impossible. He assures us: "I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."—Matthew 11:28-30.

Like Jesus, we need to keep our eyes on the prize that is reserved for all who endure down to the end. (Matthew 24:13) If we contend according to the rules, if we put off every weight, and if we run with endurance, we can be confident of victory. The goal in sight beckons us onward! It renews our strength because of the joy that it infuses in us, a joy that makes the road ahead of us easier to tread.

*The prize is for all
who endure to the end*



Peace for the New Millennium?



THE International Year for the Culture of Peace was launched in Paris and New York City on September 14, 1999. This was proclaimed for the year 2000 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Federico Mayor, former director general of UNESCO, made a solemn appeal "to create a global movement for a culture of peace and non-violence."

UNESCO has a maxim that "since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed." In harmony with this, the organization intends to promote a culture of peace through "education, dialogue and co-operation." Mr. Mayor commented that it is not enough "to be peaceful, not even to be pacifists, but to be peacemakers."

Sadly, the year 2000 was far from peaceful. Modern history—including events in the year 2000—has highlighted man's inability to prevent war and violence despite sincere efforts to the contrary.

It is, however, worthy of note that peace is indeed linked with education. Some 2,700

years ago, the prophet Isaiah foretold: "All your sons will be persons *taught* by Jehovah, and the peace of your sons will be abundant." (Isaiah 54:13) The same prophet foresaw a time when people of all nations would stream to the pure worship of Jehovah God to learn of His ways. With what result? "They will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they *learn* war anymore." (Isaiah 2:2-4) In harmony with that prophecy, Jehovah's Witnesses are engaged in a worldwide educational work that has already helped millions to overcome the nationalistic and racial hatreds that are at the root of most wars.

Wars will finally be no more under God's Kingdom, which will bring lasting peace and security to the earth. (Psalm 72:7; Daniel 2:44) Then, the psalmist's words will be fulfilled: "Behold the activities of Jehovah, how he has set astonishing events on the earth. He is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth."—Psalm 46:8, 9.