

The WATCHTOWER

**WILL IT
EVER BE SAFE
TO LIVE**

*Without
Locks?*

ALSO

FAITHFULNESS
—A Way of Life

SEPTEMBER 1, 1974

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

September 1, 1974
Vol. 95, Number 17

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. A minister of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's witnesses locally.

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SOME older people can recall the days when no one locked doors. Today, young folks in some parts of the world find that almost impossible to believe. They have grown up learning that locks are essential to protect property and life.

In New York city many homeowners have four locks on their front doors. In Rome a *Guardian* reporter relates: "Two or three new locks are installed on front doors. The poor, who never bothered shutting their doors during the day, now realize that the new thieves are not class-conscious." Yes, these days, more and more people need locks.

As a consequence, the security business is booming. Not just locks, but burglar-proof glass windows and electronic alarms are being installed in great numbers. Under the title "The Fortification of Suburbia," one U.S. magazine recently devoted eleven pages to describing the lengths to which homeowners are going to protect themselves and their possessions.

But even with many locks and other more sophisticated security equipment, few people really feel safe.

ARE YOU SAFE WITH LOCKS?

Locks have only a limited value; thinking people realize that. They know, for one thing, that crime is increasing rapidly in major cities. In 1972 there was 'one burglary for every forty-five homes' in the U.S. However, an authority in home security claims: "Eventually, I think, every home in America may be robbed. There's really no hope to cut the crime rate." So, the chances of you or your home being a

Will it ever be safe

TO LIVE WITHOUT LOCKS?



target for crime grow greater every day.

Then, too, people know, as a popular American monthly, *Changing Times*, says: "No lock will stop a thief determined to get into your home." Why? Because professional burglars are able to pick just about any lock that stands in their way, and others less skillful often force doors and windows to get into homes. Of course, good locks greatly reduce the possibility that your home will be burglarized.

Some ask, Why not just get away from crime, and go to where locks are not needed? That might sound like a good idea; but where would you suggest going?

True, there are some areas where one is still relatively safe from immediate bodily harm; but each day these places are becoming fewer in number. How about small isolated towns? In Roundup, Montana (population about 2,800), the local sheriff says that there is "no respect for the law whatsoever." What about those larger cities that were once considered mostly crime free? These, too, are now often known for their danger. In Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Police Chief P. A. Jong refers to the "alarming" increase of crime in his area.

In view of this, what can be done to assure one's safety? There is a diminishing number of places to which one can flee. Is the use of more locks the only answer?

Before a definite answer is given, stop and consider, What would be necessary to make the world or any part of it crime free?

WHEN LOCKS ARE NOT NEEDED

It would be essential to *change people*, that is, to alter their personalities. If people were good, locks would not be needed, is that not true? A former New York legislator notes: "Controlling [crime] means changing the minds and hearts of men." Perhaps that strikes you as a "utopian" solution. Is it?

Several years ago an international organization held a mammoth convention in Munich, Germany. A businessman in the city later remarked that his fellow workers had made an interesting observation about the convention. Ordinarily, when there is a large group of visitors to Munich, there is also a wave of shoplifting. But these businessmen were astonished because, with this meeting, there was no rise in thefts. Who sponsored this convention of honest people? Jehovah's witnesses.

Similarly, Norman Long tells about the work of Jehovah's witnesses in Zambia, on the African continent. His book *Social Change and the Individual* says: "Put bluntly, while non-Witnesses can trust only their kin (and not always them), Witnesses can trust both kin and fellow Witnesses." They are known for their honesty.

And Dan Grotta reported on a large U.S. Witness gathering for *Philadelphia* magazine (October 1973). He tells of passing a Lost and Found counter on which were displayed pens and pencils, and, yes, pocketbooks and wallets. Grotta observes: "No one watched very closely because the Witnesses wouldn't *think* of taking what wasn't theirs; there are no more honest people in the world than Jehovah's Witnesses."

These examples from Europe, Africa and America, involving people who had come from all kinds of backgrounds, should be sufficient to show that people can change and live honest lives. A world filled with people like them would hardly need locks, would it? But how have the Witnesses been able to make such changes?

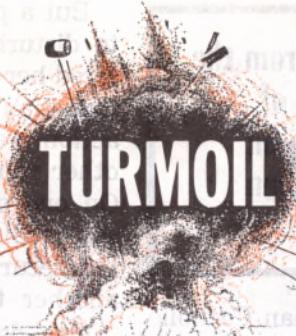
Primarily by their faith in an honest, loving God and in his Word, the Bible, the Witnesses have been able to make these changes. They know that God started mankind in paradise with the prospect of eternal life. But man, instigated by the Devil, sinned, and this has brought on the criminal conditions that have characterized human history. Jehovah's witnesses are sure that God will carry out his original purpose to make all the earth a paradise, because his word has "certain success," the Bible says at Isaiah 55:10, 11. When will this occur?

The very lawless conditions that prompt people all over the world now to ask, "Will it ever be safe to live without locks?" prove that the time is very near when wickedness will be ended by God. Then God's new order will follow.—See Matthew 24, 25; Mark 13 and Luke 21.

These truths are very real to Jehovah's witnesses. So, they are not overly influenced by wicked men around them. They take to heart the words of the psalm, freely rendered by one modern translator: "Never envy the wicked! . . . Only a little while and the wicked shall disappear . . . But all who humble themselves before the Lord shall be given every blessing, and shall have wonderful peace . . . and live there forever."—Ps. 37:1-3, 10, 11, 29, *The Living Bible*.

Would it not be a pleasure to associate with such honest, peace-loving people? Feel free to contact Jehovah's witnesses; find out more about the approaching world without locks.

LIVING AMID TURMOIL IN IRELAND



IN THE winter of 1968-1969 the troubles that have persistently afflicted Ireland once again erupted into open conflict. Since then there have been dreadful bloodshed and massive destruction of property. Over a thousand persons have died in bombings, shootings and assassinations. Thousands of others have been mutilated, disfigured and injured. Why?

Basically, it is due to religious/political differences—between Protestants and Roman Catholics. On one side are Protestants associated with British rule, and on the other side are Roman Catholics linked with the struggle for Irish independence. Sadly, even after all the lessons of history, many feel that violence is the way to settle differences.

PROTESTANT BACKGROUND

I was born in Belfast in northern Ireland in 1917. One of the major influences in my life was the Orange Order, a society devoted to the cause of Protestantism. It takes its name from the famous victory by King William of Orange over King James II of England at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690.

The highlight of each year for Orangemen is the massive parade on July 12 to commemorate that victory. Passions are stirred by the multitude of flute and drum bands that give color and excitement to the march. I remember well walking along with my father, who was a leading drummer in one of the bands. It is a real demonstration of Protestant strength and as-

cendancy in the north of Ireland and, of course, it serves to heighten bitterness between the communities.

CHANGE TO CHRISTIAN NEUTRALITY

The turning point of my attitude came in the mid-1950's. My mother, once a staunch Protestant, had for many years been loosely associated with Jehovah's witnesses. However, none of us youngsters, imbued as we were with a spirit of nationalism and Protestant superiority, would pay much attention to what she would tell us.

I became a regular member of the Church of Ireland, the largest Protestant Church in the country. However, Jehovah's witnesses were very persistent, though kindly. In time they started a Bible study with my wife. Soon afterward my interest was stirred to the point that I began attending their meetings. On account of the fine instruction received, I quickly came to a knowledge of the Bible, and both my wife and I were baptized by Jehovah's witnesses in 1956. Now, instead of my having the bigoted and hateful attitude that had marked my early years, the truth of the Bible has developed in me an appreciation of true Christian qualities.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

Jehovah's witnesses are strictly neutral as regards the factional strife that festers all around them; they refuse to participate in any way in the religious/political conflicts that rage. So gone are the days when, for instance, I threatened to bury my

'With proper instruction from the Bible the bigoted attitude of my early years gave way to an appreciation of true Christian qualities.'

hammer in the head of a Roman Catholic fellow worker if he opened his mouth again on the subject of religion.

But you may wonder, how can a person who remains neutral cope with the pressures that are inevitably brought to bear on him? How can he maintain Christian neutrality in the face of fanatical religious/political controversy? How does it affect his life and the life of his family?

A look at some of the experiences that have happened to my family and friends will answer these questions.

MAINTAINING A RIGHT OUTLOOK

I work in one of Belfast's main hospitals, where I witness firsthand many of the sad victims of dreadful bombings. Such tragedies occur almost daily, particularly in cities like Belfast and Londonderry.

Seeing legless and armless and otherwise mutilated persons regularly carried into the hospital can be a shocking experience. It often produces a terrible bitterness in people, and it is only by keeping firmly fixed in mind God's promise of a righteous new order that one can maintain a right outlook.—2 Pet. 3:13.

The threat to life and property is ever present. For example, one of my Christian associates was caretaker of a large block of offices that had become the target of terrorist bombers. He and his family just managed to get clear of the building before a two-hundred-pound bomb exploded, wrecking the building and destroying all their possessions.

But a person cannot permit such things to disturb him. After a bullet had shattered her bedroom window, a friend in our Christian congregation said that her reaction was: "I'm putting my bed in the other room. I'm losing no sleep tonight!" On one occasion my brother found himself in the middle of a gun battle between the security forces and the terrorists. At another time they stole his car.

One day a fifty-pound bomb went off in the building directly opposite our home, not more than twenty-five feet away. It caused great damage to many homes in the area.

At the time, we were preparing to leave for one of our Christian assemblies. But we refused to allow this incident to interfere. After making temporary repairs, we went off to the assembly, leaving our troubles behind. The strength and hope that our Creator, Jehovah God, gives help us to ride out these storms.

ATTENDING CONGREGATION MEETINGS

Part of our worship is to attend Christian meetings regularly. But simply traveling to them can be a nerve-racking experience. There is an ever-present danger of car bombs. Vehicles are packed with explosives and then parked, ready to explode, at some point designed to cause havoc. Once a car blew up without warning less than fifty feet from our car. It is terrifying to see the flash of the exploding bomb, with people being flung to the ground among the flying debris!

Sometimes we make long detours around danger areas and known trouble spots. We have to be prepared for long delays as traffic is rerouted away from a suspect vehicle. Also, security forces sometimes check vehicles thoroughly in their search for explosives. We have to anticipate these things and leave for meetings early enough to make sure of getting there on time.

Travelers are often wise to lock themselves inside their cars to prevent the doors from being forced open by would-be hijackers. One family, on their way to a congregation meeting, were stopped in a line of cars at a traffic light. They were horrified to see terrorists moving speedily from one car to the next trying to commandeer vehicles. One of the locks on their vehicle was broken! Fortunately, as the terrorists approached, the traffic light changed and they moved on. Needless to say, the door lock was speedily repaired.

Such conditions have caused much inconvenience, but all our congregation meetings in the Belfast area have gone on as usual. No one has suffered injury while in attendance.

VIGILANTES

One development that has caused us considerable difficulty in sticking to a course of neutrality is the emergence of vigilante movements, particularly in Belfast and Londonderry. These groups are formed where Roman Catholic and Protestant communities are closely adjacent. These are flash points of potential trouble. The residents in such areas organize themselves for protection from incursions by extremists bent on murder and destruction of property.

Great pressure is often brought on Jehovah's witnesses by well-meaning neighbors to participate in protecting the area. For instance, one of my Christian brothers had recently moved to a street when the neighbors decided to organize themselves into a vigilante group. All the resi-

'Great pressure to support the vigilantes is often brought on Jehovah's witnesses by well-meaning neighbors.'

dents were called to a special meeting. Needless to say, the family of Witnesses, the only ones in the street not participating in the meeting, felt somewhat apprehensive. Already a number of Roman Catholic families on the street had been forced to leave when their homes were stoned.

After the special meeting broke up, there came a knock on the front door. Two women were collecting food and other supplies for the vigilantes. The family explained their position of neutrality as Jehovah's witnesses, and the women left without any trouble.—John 17:15, 16.

However, the vigilante fervor spread and requests for material assistance multiplied. Money was requested for warm clothing for those standing guard during cold winter nights. Also, there was a collection of money for a fund to get the wives and children out of the area if trouble escalated. Each time that requests were made, the Christian position of Jehovah's witnesses was explained.

As tensions grew, and destruction of homes and other property knew no bounds, pressure to conform and take sides also grew. One has to see the staggering amount of devastation that has wrecked large areas of Belfast to appreciate fully the criticalness of the situation, and the desperation of the population to protect themselves. The Witness on this street explains:

"The vigilantes became more and more impatient with our position of neutrality. Everyone, they explained, was playing a part in the protection of the area while I slept soundly in my warm bed, sheltered under their safekeeping."

"All I would have to do, I was told, was to walk around the block for a few hours each night and report anything suspicious. They tried to make out that I could not be Christian, because the local minister was taking his turn. Although feelings

against my position were running very high, I explained again why my conscience would not permit me to share in such activity.

"As I referred to the Bible principles involved, they began to leave one at a time. However, they warned that if my house was burning as a result of terrorist activity, they would not help me.

"I was able to explain to the one remaining vigilante that the early Christians took no part in the conflict at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in the first century. They fought for neither the imperial Roman armies nor the nationalistic Jewish forces, but stayed absolutely neutral, even though it brought upon them condemnation from their neighbors. I pointed out that it was not that first-century Christians did not care for their fellow countrymen—Jesus wept at the prospect of what would happen to Jerusalem—but their allegiance was to God's kingdom, and they refused to be drawn into the world's political struggles.

"After a discussion of these and other points, the one who remained said that he

'The allegiance of early Christians was to God's kingdom, and they refused to be drawn into the world's political struggles.'

now understood our position. We have not been disturbed since."—John 18:36.

This highlights the strong pressures that must be resisted if a true Christian is to avoid letting this system squeeze him into its mold.

BARRICADES

From time to time local people take the law into their own hands and seal off the

areas where they live. Barricades are erected for protection, and passage is denied to persons who are considered undesirables.

On one occasion there had been a lot of shootings and killings in the area where my son-in-law and his family live. Feelings of hatred prevailed, and virulent anger and rage mounted. Up went the barricades.

One of these barricades completely blocked the side entrance of my son-in-law's home. Moving it a few feet would have saved him a great deal of inconvenience. So he decided to try to get the barricade builders to move it. However, they were in no mood for reasonable discussion. One of them angrily pointed out that my son-in-law had no right to complain since he was not sharing in the defense of the area.

In the face of their hostility, he decided it was not worth arguing over the matter. He put up with the inconvenience.

FAMILY DISCUSSIONS

One thing that has helped our family to maintain proper Christian conduct and avoid unnecessary trouble is regular family discussions. We talk about what action we should properly take to meet the various circumstances that arise during the present turbulent conditions. Having clear in mind beforehand what would be a wise and Scripturally approved course of action has certainly been a help.

Repetition of these matters is vital, since doing the right thing can be life-saving. For example, some of the things we review from time to time include: Be sure to get away from any trouble spot *immediately* when violence flares, and do not wait around to see what happens. Also, during trouble stay indoors and away from windows. Ricocheting bullets and flying glass are no respecters of persons!

'People are beginning to realize that Jehovah's witnesses are different, that we are really separate from anything political, Roman Catholic or Protestant.'

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE PREACHING

Featured prominently, too, in our discussions has been how best to carry on our activity of calling from house to house to help persons to come to an accurate knowledge of God's purposes. Great tact and discretion are needed in doing this preaching work in the midst of the present turmoil.

People are naturally very suspicious and fearful of strangers. There have been many occasions when a knock at the door in Belfast has heralded a murder gang. Persons have been shot dead on their own doorsteps!

It is a fact to consider that in some areas of Belfast not even the security forces have free or safe access. In some instances undercover agents have posed as door-to-door callers; hence, there is suspicion of anyone who is not well known in a neighborhood.

In some instances Jehovah's witnesses have been forced by threats from extremists to leave certain areas, including both Roman Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods. We have not stopped to argue, but have quickly left rather than waiting for violence to erupt. At times we have avoided certain localities altogether, but later we begin to call on people in these areas once again. However, we must exercise great caution while doing so.

It is important that we use practical wisdom. Thus, while troubles were at their height, we drastically reduced much of our evening preaching activity. Also, we have

found it good to carry some means of positive identification. Not only is this useful when security forces check us, but it also helps to allay the fears of some householders.

There is difficulty here among many people in appreciating the fact that a person can be a Christian, a believer in the Bible, without being either Roman Catholic or Protestant. But many more people are beginning to realize that Jehovah's witnesses are different, that we are neutral, and are really separate from anything political, Roman Catholic or Protestant.

EFFECTS OF BIBLE TRUTH

I particularly enjoy working in the public preaching work among my Roman Catholic neighbors. At present I am sharing in a regular home Bible discussion with a young Roman Catholic couple who are appreciating the marvelous truths of the Bible and its promise of genuine peace and security. After a year of happy association it is exciting to see how Bible truth can break down the barriers that have held people apart for centuries and caused so much turmoil.

Now I am looking forward to our next Christian assembly when the first member of this formerly Catholic family plans to symbolize by water baptism his dedication to do Jehovah's will. One of my associates remarked on how grand it is to see the close friendship we have between us, one formerly a fervent Roman Catholic and the other formerly a bigoted Protestant.

While the worst of the troubles periodically subside, the turmoil is still here. There is a very tense situation, simmering like a volcano, and it can produce great mental and emotional pressures. I thank God that, although my family and I are living amid the turmoil here in Northern Ireland, we are no part of it.—*Contributed.*

TRUE CHRISTIANS CANNOT BE COWARDS

IT TAKES courage to be a true Christian, as one must be willing to face dangers, difficulty, opposition and, yes, even death itself. Genuine disciples of Jesus Christ cannot expect to receive better treatment than did their Lord. As Jesus himself said: "A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also."—John 15:20.

Though Jesus was persecuted, there was no just cause for it. He showed an active concern for the welfare of others. He was compassionate, kind and loving. (Matt. 8:2, 3; 11:28-30; Mark 8:2) Tirelessly he labored, often forgoing food and needed rest, to relieve imperfect humans of their ailments and to give them spiritual comfort and encouragement. (Matt. 14:13, 14; Mark 6:31-34) Though abused, he never reviled anyone. His life record was flawless, free from sin.—1 Pet. 2:22, 23.

Still Jesus Christ became an object of intense hostility. He was maliciously accused of being a drunkard and a glutton, a violator of God's law and even demon-possessed. (Luke 7:34; John 5:18; 8:48) He suffered great indignities, being spit on, slapped, hit with fists, scourged and finally nailed to a stake to die in public disgrace as if he were a blasphemer against God.—Matt. 26:65-67; John 18:22; 19:1, 17, 18.

It took tremendous courage for Jesus

to endure all of this. He could have avoided making himself an object of hostility by simply leading a good life as a carpenter in Nazareth. But he courageously declared the truth, exposing religious falsehoods and the wrongness of a life lived solely for self-interest. That brought upon him the world's hatred, for those who preferred living a life contrary to God's will did not want to be shown up as wicked. It hurt them to be exposed as not being the "righteous" persons many of them claimed to be.—John 3:19, 20.

Disciples of Jesus Christ are called upon to do what he did. Not only must they live a life that comports with God's will, but they must be actively involved in helping others to do likewise. (Matt. 28:19, 20) This activity, especially, brings them into direct conflict with those who prefer their own wicked ways. These react violently, wanting this work stopped. Faced with violent opposition, cowards would stop, but true Christians would not.

The spirit or dominant attitude of true Christians is not one of cowardice. They may be shy, fearful of injury or even in need of encouragement to reflect greater boldness. But they do not allow any fear or shyness to cause them to quit doing the divine will, as would cowards. The Christian apostle Paul reminded his faithful fellow worker Timothy of this, saying: "God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind."—2 Tim. 1:7.

Paul very much appreciated that God had given him a spirit of power. In his letter to Christians at Philippi, he stated: "For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me." (Phil. 4:13) Paul had been given power to encounter foes and dangers of all kinds so that he did not shrink back in fear. He was given power to endure severe trials

and persecutions.—2 Cor. 11:23-27; 12:9, 10.

Besides a God-given ‘spirit of power,’ a ‘spirit of love’ impelled Paul to continue in faithful service. He had deep love for Jehovah God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Filled with appreciation for what they had done in his behalf, he wrote: “I am the least of the apostles, and I am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the congregation of God. But by God’s undeserved kindness I am what I am. And his undeserved kindness that was toward me did not prove to be in vain, but I labored in excess of them all, yet not I but the undeserved kindness of God that is with me.” (1 Cor. 15:9, 10) Then, too, Paul had an intense love for fellow humans, including his countrymen who often were responsible for the persecutions that befell him. With a clear conscience he could say: “I have great grief and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were separated as the cursed one from the Christ in behalf of my brothers, my relatives according to the flesh.” —Rom. 9:2, 3.

Additionally, a spirit of soundness of mind aided Paul to maintain faithfulness. He kept a balanced outlook, appreciating that the truly important thing was his relationship to Jehovah God as a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 3:8-11) This prevented him from yielding to pressure to make things easier on himself by compromise.

It was because Paul maintained the God-given spirit “of power and of love and of soundness of mind” that he remained an approved disciple of Jesus Christ. He was certain of his reward and, therefore, when about to face death, wrote to Timothy: “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, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me as a reward in that day, yet not only to me, but also to all those who have loved his manifestation.”—2 Tim. 4:7, 8.

Cowards, however, have no basis for such confidence. In fact, God’s Word clearly shows that they have no reward. They are among those to experience “second death,” a death from which there is no resurrection.—Rev. 21:8.

It is only right that this be the case, for the coward is disloyal to God. When seeing others undergo suffering for righteousness’ sake, he becomes frightened and quits serving God in order to escape possible injury at the hands of men. Faced with a test of integrity, he places himself on the side of Satan the Devil by showing that in his case the adversary’s claim is true: “Skin in behalf of skin, and everything that a man has he will give in behalf of his soul.”—Job 2:4.

The coward betrays complete lack of faith in God’s ability to offset all the harm that Satan and his agents might cause. If he yields to the threat of death, he manifests lack of faith in God’s promise of the resurrection. (Matt. 10:28; Heb. 11:35) If economic pressure causes him to disobey divine law, he reveals that he has no faith in God’s assurance to provide for his servants as a whole.—Heb. 13:5, 6.

If you desire to be among those who do not yield to such cowardly fear under pressure, take steps to strengthen your faith. Study God’s Word, appeal to him for direction and guidance, associate with courageous Christians and actively aid others to become Jesus’ disciples. Then, like Paul, you can look forward to the reward of life that is to be bestowed, not upon cowards, but upon courageous Christians.

Insight on the News

- Declining incomes trouble many churches. A general assembly of the United Presbyterian Church (seventh-largest U.S. Protestant denomination)

Churches in Financial Pinch

was told that the church is near bankruptcy. In England, the incoming Archbishop of Canterbury warned that "the church in the coming years will be stripped of much of its possessions" by means of inflation. A number of Anglican churches have had to sell treasured gold and silver plates to cover expenses.

Temple Beth Am, a Jewish synagogue in Amherst, New York, has chosen a different method: Bingo. Marshall Glickman, former president of the Reform congregation, says: "We are turning to bingo because we are nearly \$400,000 in debt. . . . If we push too hard for higher dues, we force people to drop out." He says that a Jewish temple in nearby Niagara Falls "began a bingo game and in three years cleared \$75,000." Compare this with the spontaneous giving on the part of God's servants as described at Exodus 36:3-7 and 1 Chronicles 29:9.

- "A calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism," says the Bible. (Prov. 14:30) Today people's calmness is under heavy attack from the stress of modern living. What happens to the "fleshly organism" under such pressure?

Coping with Stress

Heartbeat steps up, blood pressure rises, digestion slows and numerous other changes take place. According to a recent book titled "Stress," when relief does not arrive, these body reactions keep on and build a cumulative effect, "wearing out the motor of the body without taking us anywhere."

Prolonged tension can bring serious damage—from ulcers to crippling headaches to heart trouble. What is the solution?

Many turn to tranquilizers and "mood pills." But, as the authors of "Stress" point out, "these pills never really solve anything, they only obscure it."

The remedy, according to researchers, is to get at the cause of stress and either adjust your life to bring relief or adjust your attitude to reduce the effect on mind and body.

Some things in life are simply beyond human control to change. And adjusting one's attitude requires insight into the reasons for life's problems and something solid to rest one's hopes on for something better. "The waning power of religion," the book "Stress" observes, "is one reason why life has become so stressful in the Western world." But religion founded on truth will not wane in power. That truth is found in God's Word, pointing the way to the 'calmness of heart' that contributes to health of mind and body.—Prov. 3:4-8; Matt. 6:25-34; Phil. 4:6, 7.

- How severe an anemia resulting from blood loss can be survived without a blood transfusion? Oxygen is vital to life and hemoglobin is the blood component transporting oxygen.

Alternative to Blood Transfusions

Anemia is considered "severe" when the hemoglobin count drops to 6 grams (per 100 milliliters of blood) or lower. (Normal is 13-15 grams.) Even when the count drops to only 10 grams, and there is considerable bleeding, doctors generally want to transfuse blood.

Under the heading "Exceptional Blood Loss Anemia," the "Journal of the American Medical Association" (JAMA) of May 20, 1974, cites three cases involving Jehovah's witnesses where the hemoglobin levels dropped to 6.9, 3.8 and 2.6 grams respectively. On account of the patients' religious convictions, doctors at Long Beach Naval Hospital tried treatment other than blood transfusion. Along with intramuscular injections of dextran and intravenous injections of balanced saline solutions, they administered "hyperbaric oxygen" to compensate for the lack of oxygen-carrying hemoglobin. What resulted?

"Dramatic improvement, with reversal of the signs and symptoms of hypoxia [lack of oxygen] in all three patients," the article states.

Such treatment in itself may not solve the cause of the anemia, but it may allow the doctor needed time to work at the solution, or time for the patient's body to apply its own healing power, without resorting to blood transfusions. And it illustrates again that alternative methods are often available to doctors willing to respect convictions based on God's law regarding the use of blood.—Acts 15:28, 29.

"**I** AND the Father are one." (John 10:30) Those words, uttered by Jesus Christ, enraged his fellow countrymen. They considered his statement to be blasphemous and were ready to stone him. (John 10:31-33) Why was this so? Had Jesus Christ claimed that he was God himself, his Father's equal?

The context in which Jesus' words appear in the Biblical narrative reveal what he meant. A group of Jews had encircled him, demanding that he tell them outspokenly whether he was indeed the Christ. Answering them, Jesus stated: "I have told you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name are my witness; but you do not believe, because you are no sheep of mine. The sheep that belong to me listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life; they will never be lost and no one will ever steal them from me. The Father who gave them to me is greater than anyone, and no one can steal from the Father. The Father and I are one."

—John 10:25-30, *Jerusalem Bible.*

ONENESS NOT EQUALITY

Clearly Jesus Christ was not claiming to be his Father's equal. He himself stated that he acted, not in his own name, but in the 'name of his Father.' He recognized his Father's superior position and authority, acknowledging that the "sheep" had been given to him by his Father. He point-

How Are GOD AND CHRIST "ONE"?

edly said that 'the Father is greater than anyone.' At the same time the Father and the Son are "one" in purpose respecting the salvation of the "sheep." That is, both are equally concerned about the "sheep," not allowing anyone to snatch them out of their hand.

That Jesus referred—not to an equality of godship—but to a oneness of purpose and action is confirmed by his prayer recorded at John chapter 17. Jesus said:

"I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have observed your word. They have now come to know that all the things you gave me are from you . . . I make request, not concerning the world, but concerning those you have given me; because they are yours, and all my things are yours and yours are mine . . . Also, I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world and I am coming to you. Holy Father, watch over them on account of your own name which you have given me, in order that they may be one just as we are."

—John 17:6-11.

Note that the thoughts voiced by Jesus in this prayer are similar to his words recorded at John chapter 10. In chapter 17, Jesus again acknowledged that his disciples, his "sheep," were given to him by the Father. So the kind of oneness referred to in both of these chapters is the same. From Jesus' prayer we can see that Jesus

and his Father are "one" in the same sense that his true followers can be "one." (John 17:11) Obviously the faithful disciples of Jesus Christ could never become part of a triune God. However, they could be one in purpose and activity. Further proving that Jesus never claimed equality with his Father is the fact that, in his prayer, he addressed his Father as the "*only true God*" and spoke of himself as his Father's "representative."—John 17:3, 8.

But someone might object, arguing, 'When Jesus said "I and the Father are one," the Jews took it to mean that he was God, and Jesus did not deny this.' But is that really the case? Why not examine the account?

The Catholic *Jerusalem Bible* reads: "Jesus said to them, 'I have done many good works for you to see, works from my Father; for which of these are you stoning me?' The Jews answered him, 'We are not stoning you for doing a good work but for blasphemy: you are only a man and you claim to be God'. Jesus answered: 'Is it not written in your Law: *I said, you are gods!*' So the Law uses the word gods of those to whom the word of God was addressed, and scripture cannot be rejected. Yet you say to someone the Father has consecrated and sent into the world, "You are blaspheming", because he says, "I am the Son of God". If I am not doing my Father's work, there is no need to believe me; but if I am doing it, then even if you refuse to believe in me, at least believe in the work I do; then you will know for sure that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.'"—John 10:32-38.

Why, then, did faithless Jews come to the conclusion that Jesus was making himself "God"? Evidently because Jesus attributed to himself powers that the Jews believed belonged exclusively to the Father. For example, Jesus said that he

would give "eternal life" to the "sheep." That was something no human could do. However, what the unbelieving Jews overlooked was that Jesus acknowledged having received everything from his Father, and the fine works he was doing proved that he was his Father's representative. They were wrong in concluding that he was blasphemously making himself God.

That the unbelieving Jews reasoned wrongly is also evident from other incidents. When questioned before the Sanhedrin, Jesus was falsely accused of blasphemy, not because of claiming to be 'God the Son,' but because of claiming to be the 'Messiah, *the Son of the living God.*' (Matt. 26:63-68; Luke 22:66-71) Also, on an earlier occasion, certain Jews got the idea that Jesus was making himself equal to God and wanted to kill him as a blasphemer. Of this, John 5:18 tells us: "The Jews began seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath but he was also calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God." Note that Jesus did not say that he was God himself but that he called 'God his Father.' Jesus' unbelieving fellow countrymen, however, objected to his claiming this relationship to his Father, this special Sonship. And just as they were wrong in labeling Jesus as a Sabbath breaker, they were also wrong in their assertion about Jesus' making himself equal to God because of 'calling God his own Father.'

NOT ETERNAL LIKE HIS FATHER

The oneness or unity that Jesus enjoyed with his Father is, of course, far greater and grander than that enjoyed in any human father-and-son relationship. Even before the creation of the physical universe the Father and the Son were "one."

With reference to his prehuman existence, Jesus said to unbelieving Jews:

"Before Abraham ever was, I Am." (John 8:58, *Jerusalem Bible*) Did Jesus thereby identify himself as being Jehovah? Did not God tell Moses, "I Am who I Am. This he added 'is what you must say to the sons of Israel: 'I Am has sent me to you'"?" (Ex. 3:14, Je) Many translations use the expression "I Am" both at John 8:58 and Exodus 3:14. But do both texts express the same thought?

No. We know that they do not because at Exodus 3:14 the Greek *Septuagint Version* (the translation that was often quoted by the apostles in the first century C.E.) reads, *e-go' ei-mi' ho Ohn'*, "I am the Being." This is quite different from the simple use of the words *e-go' ei-mi'* (I am) at John 8:58. The verb *ei-mi'*, at John 8:58, is evidently in the historical present, as Jesus was speaking about himself in relation to Abraham's past. Numerous translators indicate this in their renderings. For example, *An American Translation* reads: "I existed before Abraham was born!"

Jesus' pointing to his prehuman existence should have come as no surprise to the Jews. Centuries earlier, Micah's prophecy said of the Messiah: "You, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, the one too little to get to be among the thousands of Judah, from you there will come out to me the one who is to become ruler in Israel, whose origin* is from early times, from the days of time indefinite." (Mic. 5:2) Thus while Jesus existed long before Abraham, he is not without beginning. Unlike his Father, who is "from time indefinite to time indefinite," the Son is spoken of as having "origin."—Ps. 90:2.

The very fact that Jesus is called the "Son of God" reveals that he was produced by the Father and is, therefore, his firstborn and only-begotten Son. Jesus himself said: "I live because of the Fa-

ther." (John 6:57) After having come into existence, the Son was used in creating everything. (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2) As firstborn Son, this one enjoyed a special intimacy with the Father. He is spoken of in Scripture as being "in the bosom position with the Father." —John 1:18.

So perfectly did Jesus reflect the image—the personality and ways—of his Father that he could say to Philip: "He that has seen me has seen the Father." (John 14:9) That is why one can come to know God only through the Son. As Jesus put it: "All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and who the Son is no one knows but the Father; and who the Father is, no one knows but the Son, and he to whom the Son is willing to reveal him." —Luke 10:22.

What a grand oneness exists between Jehovah God and his firstborn Son! They are always "one" in purpose and activity. But, as the Scriptures clearly show, they are not equal. The Son always acknowledges his Father's superior position, subjecting himself to his Father as his God and delighting in doing his Father's will. "He that sent me," said Jesus, "is with me; he did not abandon me to myself, because I always do the things pleasing to him." (John 8:29; 1 Cor. 11:3) Thus Jesus truly is, not 'God the Son' or the "second person" of a triune God, but the "Son of God."—John 20:31.

IN COMING ISSUES

- What Does the Future Hold for the United Nations?
- Do Not Hold Back from "Practicing the Truth."
- I Was a Compulsive Gambler.

* This rendering is in harmony with the lexicons of Brown-Driver-Briggs, Koehler-Baumgartner and Gesenius.

FAITHFULNESS—a way of life

"What is looked for in stewards is for a man to be found faithful."—1 Cor. 4:2.

OLD FAITHFUL" is the name of one of the many geysers in Yellowstone National Park in the United States. It got its name from the fact that during the 1920's and 1930's it erupted more or less regularly every sixty-five minutes. And due to this fact, it became famous as a tourist attraction.

² People admire faithfulness not only in a geyser that regularly sends up 10,000 gallons of steam and hot water to a height of 100 to 150 feet, but especially in persons who have a way of life that makes them dependable and trustworthy. Even in the business world what is looked for in a person entrusted with responsibility is faithfulness. It is probably for such a reason that the U.S. Marine Corps chose as its motto *Semper fidelis*, "ever faithful." —Compare 1 Corinthians 4:2.

³ But when it comes to demonstrating a superlative degree of faithfulness, who particularly comes to your mind? It should be none other than Jehovah God, the "faithful Creator" of the heavens and the earth. (1 Pet. 4:19) Whereas a geyser

1, 2. (a) What is "Old Faithful," and how did it get its name? (b) But what is admired even more than the regularity of a geyser?

3, 4. Who is the greatest example of faithfulness, and what are appropriate symbols of the dependability of his purpose?

might be a fitting symbol of faithfulness for humans, it certainly would be a poor representation of the unchanging faithfulness of Jehovah. Geysers all become erratic or inactive with the passing of time. Not so with Jehovah. Hence, the enduring sun and moon are more appropriate tokens of the unchangeableness of his purpose, his trustworthiness and flawless dependability.—Ps. 89:36, 37; 104:19.

⁴ Man can plan and work with confidence, trusting in the stability of the Creator's works, whether man is planting a vegetable garden or designing a computer that will guide him to the moon and back. It stands to reason that man can also learn infinitely much from a faithful God who has proved so reliable, not only in what he has said, but also in what he has done. Concerning this faithful God, we read: "Do you attribute greatness to our God! The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he."—Deut. 32:3, 4.

⁵ It should be expected that this "God of faithfulness" would look for this same characteristic among those who truly worship him. He is, in fact, the God and Savior

5. Among worshipers of God, what characteristic is expected, and what does He observe?

"especially of faithful ones." (1 Tim. 4:10) With his complete powers of observation, the living God Jehovah discerns with accuracy the earnest efforts of those who endeavor to serve him. His eyes are open to see all the ways of the sons of men, and it is to him that an accounting must be made. (Jer. 32:19; Heb. 4:13) As the Proverb says: "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the bad ones and the good ones."—Prov. 15:3.

⁶ Jehovah's loving care and watchfulness for the welfare of his people are most evident. Realizing this fact, that the loving Creator is fully aware of the good ones as well as the bad, and what each is doing, a person does well to ask himself: 'If Jehovah is looking for faithfulness among his people, does he view me as such a worshiper? Is my way of life one of faithfulness? How am I to know if he approves of me?'

A FAITHFUL STANDARD

⁷ Is it not reasonable to suppose that the God of faithfulness would have a code or

6. This being so, what questions should we ask ourselves?

7. What code or standard has Jehovah made available for mankind in general?



Since Jehovah demonstrates the superlative degree of faithfulness, the sun and moon are fitting symbols of the unchangeableness of his purpose.

standard that would define for his worshipers what is right and what is wrong, good and bad, true and false? Yes, it is. And more than that, the God of order and peace has provided just such a divine standard, the Holy Bible, for the instruction and guidance of all mankind. No other book of instruction has been given such a worldwide distribution or is accessible to the great majority of mankind.—1 Cor. 14:33.

⁸ How, then, does your way of life compare with that approved in the Scriptures? In your imperfection you need not be discouraged when facing up to the perfect standards set forth in God's Word. The assuring words of Psalm 103:14 say: "For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust." Jehovah recognizes our inherited imperfections. His demands never exceed our limits to perform.

⁹ Nevertheless, holding to a faithful course is not always easy to do; especially is this true today when it is popular to do what is right in one's own eyes and to go the way of the world. Simple, wholehearted faithfulness, however, is encouraged regardless of the magnitude of the test.

¹⁰ On the other hand, doing something great is not always a requirement to prove our faithfulness or for us to have Jehovah's blessing and approval. It was not a great test that Jehovah put upon Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. The simplicity of that test involving the first human couple serves as an excellent illustration of the principle stated over four thousand years later by God's own Son, namely, "The person faithful in what is least is faithful also in much, and the per-

8, 9. Why is a faithful adherence to God's Word not always easy?

10, 11. (a) Do we necessarily have to undergo great trials and difficulties in order to prove our faithfulness? Illustrate. (b) How may we apply in our daily lives the principle stated by Jesus on the matter of faithfulness, and with what beneficial results?

son unrighteous in what is least is unrighteous also in much."—Luke 16:10.

¹¹ Today, some nineteen hundred years after those words were uttered, they still ring as true as ever, and the same principle applies in every facet of life among genuine worshipers of Jehovah God. You often observe it in the little things one does day by day and which reflect the goodness of a heart that is loyal and true to Jehovah. It may be that you will never be called on to take some stand demonstrating what observers might call outstanding faithfulness. But your constancy in doing what is right, your regularity and dependability in small things, will give a fine testimony and evidence of your deep appreciation of the divine standards of what is true and faithful. It is the ones faithful even in small matters that "Jehovah is safeguarding."—Ps. 31:23.

¹² So one does not have to hold a position of prominence in the Christian congregation in order to enjoy Jehovah's blessing that he pours out on those who are faithful. In your daily activity, whether it involves business or pleasure, either among others or just by yourself, faithfulness and integrity on your part will mirror the God who is righteous and faithful. As with proving endurance, so too it takes time to prove one's faithfulness. It means practicing the truth day after day, making obedience to Scriptural laws and principles your way of life. In turn, Jehovah blesses you, as it is written: "A man of faithful acts will get many blessings."—Prov. 28:20.

¹³ Looking back for a moment, you may not think that anything of really great consequence has happened in your life. Judging by the world's standards of achievement and success, probably you have not

12. Describe how time and circumstances are related to this matter of faithfulness.

13, 14. (a) By what should we measure the degree of our faithfulness? (b) What are some of the areas in which we can appraise our faithfulness to Jehovah?

accomplished anything really great. But whose ways are you trying to copy? To whose standards have you been trying to attain? If you have been building a life record to please Jehovah, it will not be quickly forgotten by that God of faithfulness.

¹⁴ Stop and think. How do others view you? What is your reputation among your contemporaries and associates? Do they observe that you are one who strictly keeps his word? Do you have the reputation of one who pays his debts and who follows the policy of being prompt about everything? Perhaps it is a matter of being regular in Kingdom service and at meetings for worship. These may seem to be little things, but they could lead others to view you as someone faithful. Now, if others have noticed the way you have been conducting your life, has not your Father in the heavens seen and noted it too?

DOES NATURAL ABILITY PLAY A PART?

¹⁵ Ability is said to be the power to perform. There is no question but that natural aptitude can be a great blessing. But is natural ability the important thing that God is looking for among his people?

¹⁶ It is true, in selecting elders in the congregation, ability is given consideration. Some may be gifted in certain ways. For example, to be an elder one must be "qualified to teach." (1 Tim. 3:2) But this involves more than natural ability. A qualified teacher in the congregation needs to have accurate knowledge. He must know the whys and wherefores and have a deep insight into the Holy Scriptures. And more than having knowledge, he must be tactful, patient and interested in other people in order to be an effective teacher. The apostle Paul instructed Titus to make appointments of older men, stating that an

15, 16. (a) How may ability be defined, and does it have any bearing on the selection of elders in the congregation? (b) Besides natural abilities, what more important qualifications must appointed elders have?

overseer must be "holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict." (Titus 1:9) Such accredited ones do not rely on their natural abilities but look to their Grand Instructor for guidance in assisting others in the congregation.

¹⁷ A measure of ability is often required to do certain other types of work in the congregation. But the results that are obtained should not be attributed just to personal ability or talent. In fact, those blessed with natural abilities need to be careful not to rely on their own understanding, but, rather, to lean on Jehovah, asking him to direct their steps. (Prov. 3:5, 6) Observation will usually show that those serving among us as elders, and others who are working hard, qualify through diligent study and application of what they learn. Over a period of time they have paid close attention to themselves and to their teaching, inclining their ears to God's instruction. They have wanted to do his work as he wishes it to be done, and it is commendable to see how they allow Jehovah to use their time and talents in various ways to promote his worship.

¹⁸ How, then, does God view those who are serving as appointed overseers? Does he look upon them as more precious than others? As more faithful than others? No, it is good to keep things in proper perspective. Those selected to oversee are actually there to serve as slaves or servants, and as such they must wholeheartedly use their abilities and talents to the full in proving their faithfulness. They enjoy their privileges, not primarily because of what or who they are. Rather, they are in their respective positions because of a need cre-

ated by the Kingdom proclaimers. Following the advice of Jesus, they minister to those in the congregation toward whom they are slaves. (Luke 22:26; Gal. 5:13) Faithful overseers recognize that their work is in connection with their fellow publishers of the good news, all of whom are precious in God's sight when they demonstrate faithfulness.

¹⁹ The responsibility and administrative duties of a steward suitably illustrate the ministry of a Christian overseer. Faithfulness is strictly required of them, as emphasized by what the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, when he said: "What is looked for in stewards is for a man to be found faithful." (1 Cor. 4:2) This same apostle wrote to Titus, saying: "For an overseer must be free from accusation as God's steward . . . hospitable, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, loyal, self-controlled." (Titus 1:7, 8) It follows, then, that any ability a steward may have, natural or acquired, if it is to be of real value to God, must be coupled with the sterling quality of faithfulness. Even David, who pictured Christ Jesus, said: "My eyes are upon the faithful ones of the earth, that they may dwell with me. The one walking in a faultless way, he it is who will minister to me."—Ps. 101:6.

²⁰ Ability is something that one can receive from Jehovah as a gift. In Exodus, for example, we read how Jehovah gave wisdom, understanding and knowledge to certain ones who worked in building the beautiful tabernacle there in the wilderness. (See Exodus 35:30–36:1.) But when it comes to faithfulness, this is not something that God gives a person. Nor is it something that is inherited or that is automatically received at baptism. It must be worked at, developed. It takes time, effort, endurance to build up a record tes-

17. Those with natural abilities and special talents need to guard against what?

18. Does God look upon elders and ministerial servants as men of greater faithfulness in the congregation? Explain.

19. What, then, is looked for in appointed overseers in the Christian congregation?

20. Why is faithfulness, and not ability, the thing Jehovah is looking for among those he approves?

tifying to one's way of life. It is up to the worshiper himself to display it as he does his work, carrying out his stewardship in faithfulness.—1 Pet. 4:10.

THE PART MODESTY PLAYS

²¹ When it comes to a proper estimate of oneself, Jehovah gives this fine counsel: "Wisdom is with the modest ones." (Prov. 11:2) One walking modestly with God realizes that he has nothing to brag about in himself, regardless of his ability or accomplishments. If he wants to boast, let him boast about the wonderful God he serves. This is what the Bible urges when it says that one should not brag about himself because of his mightiness or his riches. But, rather, let him brag about the fact that he knows Jehovah as a God of loving-kindness, justice and mercy.—Jer. 9:23, 24.

²² Some may have a little more of this world's goods than others. Some may seemingly have a better station in life. But the instruction is most straightforward that the Christian must not be overconfident, relying on the things he possesses, but, rather, must work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. (Luke 12:15; Phil. 2:12) This recommended way of life means staying totally involved in pure worship, being rich in fine works.—1 Tim. 6:17-19.

²³ Any resources or talents that a person has should be viewed as a treasure held in trust, to be used to God's honor and glory. In this way it will protect a person from getting puffed up because of his accomplishments in serving Jehovah. A fine attitude that everyone should cultivate after having done what was assigned is: "We are good-for-nothing slaves. What we have done is what we ought to have done."

21. When it comes to boasting, what do the Scriptures counsel?

22, 23. (a) How should we look upon any material possessions we might have? (b) Having done all we can, still how should we view ourselves? (c) What will help a person to keep from becoming bored and discouraged?

(Luke 17:10) Serving as God directs, doing so gladly and willingly and dependably, whether prominently or not, is something that is agreeable to him. No one, however, should have a feeling of frustration or uselessness, even though there may be a certain sameness or monotony about the routine of work performed. Remember, what Jehovah continues to look for among his servants is that they be found always faithful in whatever he gives them to do.

²⁴ Accurate knowledge of God's ways helps to keep one humble and to prevent one from minding lofty things. (Rom. 12:16) It safeguards a person from boasting in what he has done and aids him faithfully to direct attention to the Source of goodness and greatness. If one is prominent, let it be because of loyal service to the true God and because of unselfishly giving of oneself on behalf of others. A favorable name with Jehovah should be the thing desired, having a reputation for faithfulness—that is the way of life God approves.—Eccl. 7:1.

HAVING A GOOD NAME WITH JEHOVAH

²⁵ Even though the Bible makes no mention after Pentecost of 33 C.E. of most of the twelve apostles, and though there is no Biblical record of how they died, aside from James and a prophetic statement concerning Peter, the evidence indicates that they all maintained their faithfulness until death. We can be sure that they used their "all" in sacred service to the living God. And we can be sure that Jehovah did not forget any of them either. As enduring testimony to their faithfulness their names are inscribed on the foundations of the New Jerusalem.—Rev. 21:14.

24. Of what benefit to those faithful to Jehovah is the counsel at Romans 12:16?

25. Following Pentecost 33 C.E., what assurance do we have that the twelve apostles were all faithful down to their death?

²⁶ Today we have many "old-timers" associated with the Christian congregations who for many years have remained steadfastly faithful to Jehovah in the face of many obstacles. Now they are getting old and infirm and many of them are not able to accept heavy responsibilities in the congregation. But what a blessing to have them around! Their love and zeal are an incentive for fellow publishers to press on in the Lord's work. Though some are quite limited in physical strength, it is an encouragement to see them save some energy for Christian meetings and the field service.

²⁷ Additionally, there are many women in the congregations and these do not qualify as elders or ministerial servants. They too are very much needed and are a great assistance in getting the "good news" of the Kingdom preached in all the world before the end comes. One is reminded of Psalm 68:11, 12: "Jehovah himself gives the saying; the women telling the good news are a large army. . . . As for her who abides at home, she shares in the spoil."

²⁸ There are many functions to be performed by various organs in the human body. So also in the Christian congregation there are various duties that different ones may perform. No one should feel unwanted or say to another, "I have no need of you." The entire congregational arrangement serves to produce mature Christians for God's glory.—1 Cor. 12:4-7, 21, 22.

²⁹ Monumental results are obtained when old and young diligently work together in fulfilling their commission to preach the Word. You may create a spark of interest

by encouraging someone to read a Bible study aid. Time passes and someone else may water the seed of interest. Another may cultivate from time to time, and God keeps making it grow. (1 Cor. 3:6) Later, perhaps years later, at an assembly you may be introduced to this same individual —now your spiritual brother or sister! So, if it takes time to see the results of our preaching, let this not discourage us from speaking to everyone we meet, doing so from a heart full of love for Jehovah. (Rom. 10:10) You can also attract friends and neighbors to the message about our God Jehovah by letting them observe your pure Christian conduct.—2 Pet. 3:11, 12.

³⁰ It is marvelous to watch so many turning to righteousness and the service of our God, dedicating their lives to the doing of the divine will in these "last days." Soon we see them, in turn, helping others to cultivate a love for Jehovah. There is great joy to have any part, even a very small part, in this ingathering work that is taking place in all parts of the earth. As we stand at the threshold of Har-Magedon and behold the incomparable blessings soon to follow, now is no time to be looking back with regrets. It is a time to build a fine reputation of faithfulness, for that is what God is looking for in those who have made up their minds to worship him wholeheartedly.

³¹ All the riches one might accumulate cannot compare with the name and reputation one makes with one's Creator the Life-Giver. "A good name is more to be desired than great riches." (Prov. 22:1, *New English Bible*) With the Bible's standard to help us to distinguish right from wrong, may we be diligent in following a way of life that God approves, namely, one of faithfulness.

26. What encouragement are "old-timers" able to give to their younger brothers and sisters?

27, 28. (a) What valuable service do the sisters in the congregations perform? (b) Describe how the human body is a good example of the Christian congregation.

29. When all in the congregation work together in peace and unity, what is accomplished? Illustrate.

30. What should be our determination as we stand on the threshold of Har-Magedon?

31. What is more to be desired than material riches, and how may it be obtained?

BY FAITHFULNESS

Keep Living

THE faithful God whose name is Jehovah has a place for all lovers of righteousness in his organization. Of course, those who accept his gracious invitation find that along with it there is much work to be done. A variety of assignments must be cared for. But in accepting such an assignment no one should underestimate God's power to assist the person to carry out the responsibility and work involved. And, as is necessary, God can provide the needed instruction, discipline and training.—Phil. 4:13; 1 Cor. 12:18.

² What does this demonstrate? Faithfulness on the part of Jehovah and his insistence that all those he approves also prove faithful. Faithfulness is closely related to God's righteousness, which is one of the attractive features of the kingdom of God. (Matt. 6:33) So it is necessary for those who are seeking that kingdom and who are putting it first in their lives to live in accord with Jehovah's righteous standards. They must put away their old unrighteous personalities and put on new personalities that are "created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." Then, by their conduct, they will reflect the righteousness of their holy God Jehovah.—Eph. 4:23, 24; Col. 3:5-14.

³ Necessary changes take place over a period of time in the lives of those who

"But as for the righteous one, by his faithfulness he will keep living."—Hab. 2:4.

will keep living under God's arrangement. They must keep on growing in accurate knowledge until they are no longer "tossed about as by waves and carried hither and thither by every wind of teaching by means of the trickery of men." Or, as the line of the old song has it, they are no longer "faithless as the winds or seas." Instead, they "become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord," faithful and dependable in any assignment given.—Eph. 4:14; 1 Cor. 15:58.

⁴ Such steadfast worshipers of Jehovah appreciate the importance of living within the safe bounds established by their God. It is a matter of not just knowing the right way to live, but actual performance of the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, the faithful living up to his laws, his standard of righteousness.—Jas. 4:17.

GOD'S FAITHFUL WATCHCARE OVER HIS PEOPLE

⁵ The faithful God Jehovah can be counted on to look after and care for those who are devoted to him. He observes all "the sons of men," both "the bad ones and the good ones," but, especially, "the eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their cry for help." (Ps. 11:4; Prov. 15:3; Ps. 34:15) Con-

1. What is expected of those in God's organization, and what does He provide for them?
2. Faithfulness is closely related to what, making what necessary on the part of those serving Jehovah?
3. How may those faithful and dependable be contrasted with those not faithful?

4. How is one's faithfulness demonstrated?
5. What assurance from the Scriptures do we have that Jehovah watches over his people?

firming this, King David also wrote: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread."—Ps. 37:25.

⁶ As evidence that Jehovah took notice of those faithful to him in times past he gives us some of their names. For example, there is a list of a few of these in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. This condensed account vividly describes some of the things these righteous ones went through in order to prove their faithfulness. They knew Jehovah to be their helper. What others said or did failed to strike them with paralyzing fear or turn them aside from serving Jehovah faithfully. They endured all kinds of trials and persecutions, and "the world was not worthy of them." But they were most precious in God's sight and memory and they will be fully rewarded by the resurrection in which they hoped.—Heb. 11:38.

⁷ They worked at building up a good record and a righteous standing before God. One of the outstanding qualities displayed by those witnesses of old was their dynamic energy, their zeal for what was right. One is also impressed with the faith, loyalty and love that these men of old showed in their service to God. They held steadfast to what they knew to be God's way of life. It is for our encouragement that the record of these men and women of faith from the past has been preserved until now.—Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11.

⁸ Other examples of those in the past that kept living in a way that pleased Jehovah are Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth. The apostle Paul's companion Luke reports this about them: "They both were righteous before God because of walking blamelessly in accord with all the com-

6, 7. (a) Where do we find evidence that Jehovah observed the faithfulness of men and women in the past? (b) What were some outstanding qualities of these faithful ones of old?

8. What other examples may be cited of those in the past who lived by faith?

mandments and legal requirements of Jehovah." And so in the course of time their prayers were answered, and Zechariah and his wife became the parents of John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah.—Luke 1:5-13.

⁹ Some widows of notable faith are mentioned by name in the Bible, such as Naomi, Ruth, Abigail and Anna the prophetess. Besides, after watching worshipers deposit money in the temple treasury chests, Jesus called the attention of his disciples to a particular widow whose name is not disclosed, saying: "Truly I say to you that this poor widow dropped in more than all those dropping money into the treasury chests; for they all dropped in out of their surplus, but she, out of her want, dropped in all of what she had, her whole living." (Mark 12:41-44) We do not know her by name, but she is mentioned with favor and her small contribution can teach us a lesson of faithfulness in support of true worship. The size of the contribution does not necessarily give a true picture of a giver's generosity. This widow wanted to show her love for Jehovah and she did so in her modest way.

¹⁰ Not everyone by any means who has proved faithful to Jehovah has had his name or his deeds preserved in the Bible's record. Does this mean that Jehovah failed to observe their course of life or that their deeds of faithfulness are forgotten by him? No, not at all. Jehovah has been fully cognizant of all that they have said and done. Not one of those faithful ones who displayed integrity in their worship of the Most High God has been forgotten by the God of eternity. They too are part of the "so great a cloud of witnesses" that will be rewarded for their faithfulness with life in a new order. (Heb.

9. (a) Who were some of the faithful widows named in the Bible? (b) What lesson of faithfulness can we learn from the account in Mark 12:41-44?

10. (a) Does the Bible's record give the names, and list the deeds, of all of God's faithful servants of the past? (b) So what can we learn from this?

12:1) They too are fine examples for us to imitate. How so? In that what we do should not be "eyeservice as men pleasers" or for the plaudits or trophies of men.—Eph. 6:6; Col. 3:22; compare Matthew 6:1-4.

¹¹ Some of these anonymous witnesses lived in the tenth century B.C.E. It was a time when Jehovah's eyes proved to be very discerning of the ones pursuing his worship in the nation of Israel. At the time wicked Ahab and his wife Jezebel sponsored Baal worship in the land, and the prophet Elijah found it necessary to flee from them for his life. Hiding in a cave, he explained to Jehovah that he felt he was the sole worshiper of Jehovah in all Israel, the only one left who was jealous for Jehovah's service. However, Jehovah corrected his thoughts on this, thus showing that He was aware of what was going on in the nation. There were many others besides this faithful prophet who

11, 12. What evidence is there that Jehovah was fully aware of all those faithful to him in the days of Elijah?



A captive Israelite girl showed faithfulness to Jehovah by informing the wife of Naaman about Elisha, a prophet of the true God

did not approve of false worship.—1 Ki. 19:1-10, 18.

¹² Discerning the good ones from the bad, Jehovah told Elijah that there were many, yes, seven thousand besides the prophet, who had not bent their knees to Baal nor kissed that detestable god. Kneeling before idols and kissing them as an act of adoration was strictly forbidden by Jehovah. (1 Ki. 19:14; Ex. 20:4, 5) Here again, although we are not provided with a lengthy list of their names, it is apparent that God knew them all, these thousands who proved righteous in holding on to true worship and avoiding being contaminated with false Baal worship, even though this put them in danger of being killed by wicked Jezebel.

¹³ Not many years after these events there lived "a little girl" who was taken captive by marauder bands of Syrians. We are not told what her name was, but Jehovah knows and he certainly will reward her for her deeds of faithfulness to him. Though a captive slave in a foreign land, yet she did not hesitate to bear witness to the wife of Naaman, the chief of the Syrian army, concerning the great power that her God Jehovah had demonstrated through his faithful prophet.—2 Ki. 5:1-4.

¹⁴ The son of the apostle Paul's sister is not named either, but this young man reported to Paul, and then to the military commander, how a plot

13. How did a little unnamed Israelite girl prove her faithfulness to Jehovah?

14. How was the apostle Paul's nephew tested as to his faithfulness?

had been formed by more than forty men to kill his uncle Paul. The ambush was foiled by this quick action on the part of a faithful young man. Certainly Jehovah loves young ones like these who put the interests of God's people ahead of their own interests. What a fine example for youth today faithfully to care for the Kingdom interests entrusted to them! —Acts 23:12-22.

¹⁵ It is a source of encouragement to read in the Bible the accounts of ancient examples of faithful living. For by examining those records we see how Jehovah bestowed upon his servants his love and watchcare. This, in turn, engenders in modern-day Witnesses a desire to serve the same ever-living God faithfully.

USING ONE'S RESOURCES FAITHFULLY

¹⁶ Today out of all nations a "great crowd" of people is joining the "remnant" of the Lord's brothers in preaching the Kingdom "good news" as foretold by Jesus Christ. (Rev. 7:9; Matt. 24:14) They have learned that there is much happiness in sharing the good things they now know with others. (Acts 20:35) This "crowd," now numbering many hundreds of thousands, do not claim to have any miraculous abilities—only a sincere desire to serve Jehovah with their whole heart, mind and soul. Hence, with the little resources they possess, they are determined to advance the Kingdom interests.

¹⁷ Living near the outbreak of Har-Magedon with incomparable blessings of life to follow, these modern-day witnesses of Jehovah realize that it is no time to follow a course in life of least resistance. Rather, it is for them the time of all times, a period in which to use to the full their time, their limited resources and their nat-

15. Of what special benefit to us today are these Bible accounts?

16, 17. (a) Corresponding to the "so great a cloud of witnesses" in ancient times, what do we find on earth today? (b) How do they demonstrate that they "keep living" by faithfulness?

ural abilities in God's service. They know that bestowal of the miraculous gifts of the spirit passed away with the apostles in the first century. Hence, it is only by diligent study and application, and by taking advantage of all the educational arrangements provided by Jehovah, that these new ones can progress rapidly toward becoming fully equipped for the work at hand. This too they are eagerly doing. —2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

¹⁸ One only has to visit any of the more than 32,000 congregations of Jehovah's witnesses to find living examples of those who today have the spirit of ancient King Hezekiah, as described in 2 Chronicles 31: 21: "It was with all his heart that he acted, and he proved successful." One congregation, for example, had the joy of observing the faithful endurance of a pioneer brother in his ninetieth year. He was serving as the field overseer besides, and was in constant attendance at the meetings. After devoting fifty-eight years in telling others the good news of the Kingdom, how happy he was to see the results of his work—some of his own "letters of recommendation" serving along with him in the same congregation!—2 Cor. 3:1-3.

¹⁹ If you will regularly go to the Kingdom Hall, in time you too will become personally acquainted with some of those who are tenaciously hanging on to the thread of life, persons who are using the twilight of their lifetime in praising their grand Creator and in helping others to know his name and purpose. They are persons who continue on giving of their little strength as day by day they live their life out in faithfulness, even until death. (Rev. 2:10) One Witness, expressing how she felt about growing old and becoming sick, regretted that she was getting to be a little forgetful and had a hard time keeping up with younger witnesses of Jehovah. But

18, 19. (a) Where will you find today those that have the spirit of ancient King Hezekiah? (b) Cite examples.

such ones can be comforted with the knowledge that they are continuing to be an example of faith and endurance for younger ones to follow. Like the apostle Paul, they can say, "Become imitators of me, even as I am of Christ."—1 Cor. 11:1.

²⁰ Many Witnesses have to overcome other obstacles besides the infirmities of old age as they pursue a course of faithfulness to Jehovah. Some have lost their physical eyesight. Others are plagued with hearing problems; still others are badly crippled in their limbs. Yet we find that they too are using their resources faithfully in Jehovah's service as they "offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name."—Heb. 13:15.

²¹ Not to be forgotten are the many Witnesses who for years have been going from door to door in the witness work, and have been doing so without benefit of transportation. Some old and faithful publishers are able to estimate how far they have walked in such field service, and they say that, in some cases, it amounts to as much as once around the earth or more. In their case the scripture seems quite appropriate that says: "How comely are the feet of those who declare good news of good things!"—Rom. 10:15.

KEEP LIVING IN APPRECIATION OF GOD'S RULERSHIP

²² In reviewing the life accounts of Jehovah's faithful servants, a person is impressed by the fact that these men and women, both past and present, so much appreciated God's sovereignty that they staked their lives in its defense. This shows us that the kind of people Jehovah desires to keep living are those who serve him

20. What are some of the other problems that Witnesses must contend with in proving their faithfulness to Jehovah?

21. What ancient mode of travel is still very much employed by Jehovah's faithful witnesses?

22. After considering these accounts, a person is left with what impression?

because of their love for him and his righteous qualities. They love him first and foremost. (Matt. 22:37, 38) Those individuals who have endured much can honestly testify that they actually prefer God's rulership over any other. One Witness expressed it this way: "I am thankful I had the years I did to serve Jehovah. I never regret one single minute of it, even though there were many trying times."

²³ The champions for what is right and true and good always look to the supreme Lawgiver, keeping clearly in focus his laws and principles as applicable in their daily living. There is no other place they would rather be than inside Jehovah's arrangement for his worshipers. (Ps. 84:10) They always find refreshment in going from house to house, looking for those who are praying for God's kingdom to come, and for his righteous will to be done on earth, and who want to live forever under that perfect government. (Matt. 6:9, 10; John 17:3) Never would they be satisfied with the promises of an earthly politician, nor would they ever choose to have a human king over them. (Compare 1 Samuel 8:1-9.) At the point of dedication, these individuals decided to uphold Jehovah's sovereignty, and henceforth they have endeavored to make all their decisions revolve around that prior choice.

²⁴ Such dedicated witnesses of Jehovah, knowing that they are responsible to the highest personage in the universe, the great Lawgiver and Judge, must walk very carefully among the wicked of this generation. (Jas. 4:12) Although some persons may be puzzled at their firm stand for Bible principles, why should they ever deviate from the path of righteousness or even try to break, or perhaps bend, God's laws for convenience' sake? (1 Pet. 4:3-5)

23. In appreciation of Jehovah's sovereignty, what is the attitude of Jehovah's witnesses toward the political rulers of this world?

24. (a) How do people of the world often view the Witnesses? (b) But how only are the Witnesses able to maintain a perfectly clear conscience before God?

Surely the one who created all things has the right to be first in the lives of his people. He also is entitled to their worship and their implicit obedience. Their taking notice of the Sovereign Lord in all their thoughts and ways, will be very helpful to them in behaving before him with a perfectly clear conscience.—Prov. 3:5; Acts 23:1.

²⁶ Appreciation for God's rulership should motivate right-hearted persons today to be responsive to His call for service. There is a need for more willing workers in God's ever-expanding preaching and teaching organization. Standing as we are so close to the greatest happening in history, all lovers of righteousness should now act courageously, knowing that whatever course they follow will affect their prospects for everlasting life.—2 Pet. 3:11-14.

²⁷ People by the tens of thousands from all walks of life, experience and background are coming each year to an accurate knowledge of the truth and are bringing their lives into harmony with God's laws and regulations. It means many changes, of course—the discarding of old habits, the making of new ones. It means accepting instruction, training and education. It means learning to love and obey Jehovah. But is that so hard? The apostle John said: "For this is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments; and yet his commandments are not burdensome."—1 John 5:3.

STAY FAITHFUL AND KEEP LIVING

²⁷ "My righteous one will live by reason of faith," is the positive statement found at Hebrews 10:38. Then to that faith, the Scriptures show, one must add other things such as virtue, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godly devotion, brotherly affec-

25, 26. (a) Where are we on the stream of time, this creating what need? (b) In response, what do we see taking place in harmony with 1 John 5:3?

27. Is faith all that is required to have Jehovah's approval?

tion and love. (2 Pet. 1:5-7) It is also important to put what natural abilities one has to use in the sacred service of God if one really wants to enjoy living.

²⁸ Some of the faithful men who have thus applied themselves are appointed to be teachers in the congregation, and as 'shepherds of the flock of God' they bear a heavy responsibility. These qualified teachers are needed to assist others to attain to the oneness in the faith along with accurate knowledge. (1 Pet. 5:2; 2 Tim. 2:2; Eph. 4:11-13) It is Scripturally right for mature men in the congregation to reach out for this added privilege as overseers; it is "a fine work." It is good for you to make a self-examination to see if you are moving ahead. Ask yourself, 'Can I improve my abilities or develop any latent talents so I can be more useful in the congregation and thus live in fuller measure for God's glory?'—1 Tim. 3:1-13.

²⁹ It will be a satisfying feeling to know that we have been found faithful. So let us fully value and wisely use the measure of life we have, bearing righteous fruit day by day to God's honor and praise. Whether we are new or old in the way of life, let us make it our determination to let nothing come between us and Jehovah God. God's unbreakable love, in turn, will sustain us in our faithful course even under severe test. (Rom. 8:38, 39) Our doing all things for God's glory will prevent us from stepping out of bounds or forsaking the well marked out way of righteousness that leads to everlasting life.

³⁰ May our key desire ever be to maintain integrity to our faithful God and to prove that no one, not even God's adversary the Devil, can swerve us from this course. In this way we can make Jehovah's heart rejoice.—Prov. 27:11.

28. In view of the appointments that have been made in the congregations, what should each one ask himself?
29. How are we able to show that we value the measure of life that we individually have, and with what results?
30. How can we too share in making Jehovah's heart rejoice?

Is there A UNITED BODY OF TRUE CHRISTIANS?

EVERYONE, when looking for a true Christian, expects to find a person of high moral qualities and good personality. And he is right. But there is more to a Christian than this.

You will find persons, even among those not professing to be Christians, who have fine moral qualities, also displaying likable personalities. What, then, is the difference?

The Christian must have, in addition to these things, a keen desire to promote true worship of the God of the Bible, as Jesus Christ did. He must have zeal and be active in that direction.

Even if you appreciate this fact, you may find it confusing to try to identify who really are true Christians in these days. In fact, you may wonder whether there are any at all. For you find little unity of thought and action among the religious people of Christendom. This is so as regards moral and social problems, and especially so when it comes to the worship of God. There is little effort to explain God and his purposes and the opportunity of gaining everlasting life, either in the heavens or on the earth, by pleasing Him in true worship.

UNITED THOUGHT AND EFFORT ESSENTIAL

Should there be, and is there, a BODY of people who devote themselves to the worship of God as set forth in the Bible and who do so with unanimity and active effort to get others to do so?

Well, there should be, according to the apostle Paul's admonition to Christians in the first century. He wrote much about high morals and Christian personalities, but he also said: "Only behave in a manner worthy of the good news about the Christ, in order that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear about the things which concern you, that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one soul [as if they were all together one person] striving side by side for the faith of the good news."

—Phil. 1:27.

AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE CHRISTIAN'S OBLIGATION

Few persons will deny that Jesus and his apostles were very zealous in expanding true worship to the ends of the earth. They were bound together in this purpose, united in doctrine and action. To illustrate how his disciples should be, Jesus gave the parable of the talents. (A silver "talent" represents a monetary value of hundreds of dollars.) This parable shows clearly and forcefully their obligation to increase true Christianity to the greatest possible extent.

Jesus' disciples had asked him the question: "What will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" The parable of the talents was included in his answer. Accordingly, the parable was given to prove to Christians living at the "conclusion of the system of

things" that the Lord Jesus Christ was invisibly present in Kingdom power. But it had the beginning of its fulfillment back there when Jesus was on earth. We can get much enlightenment on the meaning of the parable from the similar parable of the minas or "pounds," which showed Christ's first-century listeners that the kingdom of God was not "going to display itself instantly," as they had thought.

—Matt. 24:3; Luke 19:11-27.

Both parables dealt with the kingdom of the heavens. The parable of the talents began in this manner:

"For it [that is, the circumstances connected with the kingdom of the heavens] is just as when a man, about to travel abroad, summoned slaves of his and committed to them his belongings. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, to still another one, to each one according to his own ability, and he went abroad."

—Matt. 25:14, 15.

The "man" is Jesus Christ. He was soon going to take a long trip "abroad," back to his Father in heaven. Jesus was going to do this after his death and resurrection. There he was to sit down "at the right hand of God, from then on awaiting until his enemies should be placed as a stool for his feet." (Heb. 10:12, 13) It would be a long time until he received from his Father the command to take full kingdom power, but at that time he would first inspect and reward his "slaves." He would expect them to be at harmony, attending to his 'business,' and not at odds with one another. After the inspection was completed he would oust his enemies from the earth, as shown at Luke 19:15-27.—Ps. 110:1-3.

THE "BELONGINGS" ENTRUSTED TO THE "SLAVES"

Now, this "man" had "belongings" to leave in charge of his "slaves" until he

would return with kingly power. What belongings of great value did Jesus Christ have? He did not have money, great possessions of land or buildings. Neither did he have recognition of authority from the political governments. He was put to death by the Roman Empire at the insistence of the Jews. What, then, did he have to entrust to his "slaves"?

It was a set of values different from the kind of belongings just mentioned. During his ministry in the flesh Christ had been seeking first the kingdom of his heavenly Father. By his preaching and teaching he had cultivated a field, he had built a potential into this field—a latent power to bring forth disciples. This was the estate that he left to his disciples. He had already said to his apostles more than two years previous to his death and resurrection:

"Look! I say to you: Lift up your eyes and view the fields, that they are white for harvesting. Already the reaper is receiving wages and gathering fruit for everlasting life, so that the sower and the reaper may rejoice together. In this respect, indeed, the saying is true, One is the sower and another the reaper. I dispatched you to reap what you have spent no labor on. Others have labored, and you have entered into the benefit of their labor."—John 4:35-38.

Jesus confined his sowing to the Jews and Jewish proselytes and the related Samaritans. John the Baptist had also done some sowing. After Jesus' resurrection and the pouring out of holy spirit on his disciples on Pentecost day of 33 C.E., these disciples would first do much reaping in this "sown" field. This they were "dispatched," obligated, to do. The ones first "reaped" had been cultivated by the pure teaching of Jesus. Hence when they joined the spirit-begotten disciples they were as one man in maintaining pure teaching.

It is obvious that Jesus had more than three "slaves." So the three different "slaves" who were depicted in the parable would represent all the prospective joint heirs of Christ for whom he has covenant-ed for the heavenly kingdom. There would be persons from all walks of life, old and young, men and women. (Compare Acts 1:14; 8:12.) But these differences of circumstance and age were to be no barrier to unity—all would do the same work.

In the fulfillment of the parable the Master saw to it that no one got more than he could handle, "according to his own ability." The "five-talents" class of that first century evidently included the apostles, to whom the greatest responsibility was given. (Rev. 21:14; Eph. 2:20-22) They were of great assistance to the "two-talents" class in taking care of their responsibilities.

All the "slaves," like the ones in the parable of the minas, were 'to do business until he came.' (Luke 19:11-13) It would be Jesus' business, the King's business, and the obedient slaves would therefore have to be at unity of thought and action. Christ is not divided against himself. (1 Cor. 1:10) His "slaves" would certainly not promote his business by working against one another, as in Christendom, where one sect teaches one thing and another sect teaches another.

In the parable itself the "ability" of the slaves, the basis on which the talents were proportioned, would be physical or mental ability. In the fulfillment, however, was it physical or mental ability that was represented? No doubt such would be valuable if channeled in the right direction and used properly. But the "ability" here represents the spiritual possibilities that are to be found in the Christian "slave" who is in line for the heavenly kingdom. The zeal, the willingness, the eagerness

that he has, all contribute to these possi-bilities. This is in harmony with the principle that "God has set the members in the body, each one of them, just as he pleased."—1 Cor. 12:18.

The Master, Jesus Christ, has committed something to these "slaves," no matter whether they prove to be in the "five-talents" class or the other classes mentioned in the parable. On their part, they must also have or contribute something. What they can contribute complements the valuable thing entrusted to them, and enables them to cultivate the spiritual estate, the "field" left by the Lord Jesus Christ. It would help them, as a class or united group, to reap new disciples.

BEGINNING

OF THE PARABLE'S FULFILLMENT

When did Jesus begin to commit these "belongings" to his disciples? Did he commit these to them independently or as a united group? The account at Acts 1:1-5 takes up where the Gospel of Luke left off, that is, "until the day that he [the resurrected Jesus] was taken up, after he had given commandment through holy spirit to the apostles whom he chose. To these also by many positive proofs he showed himself alive after he had suffered, being seen by them throughout forty days and telling the things about the kingdom of God. And while he was meeting with [a body of faithful disciples] he gave them the orders: 'Do not withdraw from Jerusalem, but keep waiting for what the Father has promised, about which you heard from me; because John, indeed, baptized with water, but you will be baptized in holy spirit not many days after this.' "

So not only had Jesus prepared the "field," making it ripe with a potential for many more disciples, but he had also

prepared the first ones of his body of "slaves" to receive his "belongings."

The fulfillment of the parable must have begun between the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and his ascension to his heavenly Father's presence. For when did Jesus first call his "slaves" together to commit to them his "belongings"? The apostle Matthew gives an account of Jesus' words at a meeting in Galilee after his resurrection: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you."—Matt. 28:16, 19, 20.

But on the day of his ascending to heaven Jesus was more specific about the course that the work of increasing his "belongings" would take. We read: "When, now, they had assembled, they went asking him: 'Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?' He said to them: 'It does not belong to you to get knowledge of the times or seasons which the Father has placed in his own jurisdiction; but you will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth.'"—Acts 1:6-8.

LOOK FOR A UNITED BODY TEACHING BIBLE TRUTH

After his resurrection Jesus made appearances to various ones of his disciples, more than five hundred in one instance. And at Pentecost there were about 120 who experienced the baptism with holy spirit. (1 Cor. 15:6; Acts 1:15; 2:1-4) So there were many more than three "slaves" who began immediately to 'do business' with the talents, 3,000 hearing the witness

about Jehovah God's purposes through Christ on that day. But they did not follow an independent course or split up into various denominations. They all joined in the same vigorous, united promotion of true worship.—Acts 2:41-47.

Consequently, if you are confused in looking for true Christians in our day, it is important to keep in mind to look for a united BODY of them, all teaching the same things about God's purposes. They must be living clean, moral, upright lives. Additionally, they must be zealously talking to others about the Bible, promoting true worship, helping new ones to become Christ's disciples. Thereby they are increasing the King's "belongings." Do you find a people like that in your community?

How does the parable's fulfillment come to a conclusion in our times? There was to be an inspection and rewarding of the slaves by the wealthy man. The fulfillment of this will be discussed in the following issue of *The Watchtower*.

ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 1, 1974

The annual meeting of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, October 1, 1974, at the Society's Office located at 4100 Bigelow Boulevard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213. Will those brothers who are members of the Corporation please now see to it that the Secretary's Office has their present mailing addresses so that the regular letters of notice and the proxies can be sent to them to reach them shortly after September 1. The proxies should be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 15. As each member knows, he should complete and return his proxy promptly whether he is going to be at the annual meeting personally or not.

Do You Remember?

Have you read the recent issues of *The Watchtower* carefully? If so, you will doubtless recall these points:

- What was the purpose of Jesus' transfiguration?

It served to show that Jesus' presence in Kingdom power would be a glorious heavenly one. The visionary appearance of Moses and Elijah (with Moses representing the Law, and Elijah the prophets) in connection with the transfiguration revealed that both the Law and the prophets foretold Christ.—P. 297.*

● What is absolutely essential for one to be an approachable person?

- The main thing is sincere, genuine interest.

The main thing is sincere, genuine interest in other people, coupled with due humility.—Pp. 367, 368.

- Why, as Proverbs 18:11 says, are valuables "a protective wall" in the "imagination" of the rich?

Valuables can give protection. But to view

* All references are to *The Watchtower* for 1974.

their ability to protect as unlimited is only imagination. They cannot secure good health, happy family life and other vital needs.

-P. 419-

- What is involved in treating an unrepentant sinner as a "man of the nations and as a tax collector"?—Matt. 18:17.

True Christians would not fraternize with one who has been expelled from the congregation. But they would still show such ones common courtesy and consideration. And especially the elders in the congregation would be concerned about helping those who abandon any practice of gross sin and show a desire again to become a part of the congregation.

—Pp. 464, 472.

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