

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

**Awake!**

**MOVEMENTS  
TOWARD**

**Religious Unity**

**—What they mean to *you!***

APRIL 22, 1965

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# Awake!

"It is already the hour for you to awake."

—Romans 13:11

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Number 8

## ***The Importance of Your Worship***

**I**T IS a well-established fact that all civilizations of mankind have practiced some form of worship. Although individuals may be atheists, never has a society of people been, in the strict sense of the word, atheistic. But why is it that most humans consider religion necessary?

George Washington, the first president of the United States of America, gave an interesting answer. "Religion is as necessary to reason as reason is to religion," he said. "The one cannot exist without the other. A reasoning being would lose his reason, in attempting to account for the great phenomena of nature, had he not a Supreme Being to refer to."

However, when humans become unreasonable and deny that there is a need to worship God, serious troubles result. In fact, one doctor associated with the University of Vienna said: "Modern suppression of our need for religion creates much of the frustration and tension in this atom-endangered world. It kills our chance of leading happy, purposeful lives."

Yes, worship of God is vital, for it brings man close to his Maker, giving him a sense of security and purpose. In appreciation of

this the eminent statesman Daniel Webster once said: "Religion, therefore, is a necessary, indispensable element in any great human character. There is no living without it. Religion is the tie that connects man with his Creator, and holds him to his throne. If that tie is sundered or broken, he floats away a worthless atom in the universe."

Since religion represents your relationship with God, it should not be taken lightly. You should know its basis. This means that you should also know something about the current proposals to merge various religious organizations. Do you know what is required in order to unite the major religious bodies? And have you considered how these movements toward religious unity affect your worship?

Will they mean, for instance, that the beliefs you cherish are going to be compromised? And if beliefs to which you adhere are going to be altered, does that mean they were never true anyway? Would early Christians have been willing to compromise their teachings for the sake of religious unity? Can the desired unity be obtained in any other way? These questions vitally affect your life and happiness, so it is important that you give them due consideration.

# Christendom

SEEKS  
TO



"**D**ISUNITY in the name of Christ is a scandal and a shame," lamented *Time* magazine.<sup>1</sup> That sentiment is not new, but has been expressed by many for a long time as they see the devastating effect disunity has had on the cause of professed Christians.

This negative effect was noted by an Australian clergyman who recently stated: "We cannot reprove the sin of the world and cannot logically appeal for reconciliation among nations and races in the world when we Christians ourselves are divided."<sup>2</sup> He added that "disunity becomes an even greater scandal in Overseas Missions," where competition between churches is fierce.

Catholic priest J. A. O'Brien confirmed this when he said: "The divided character of Christianity is so evident, even to the primitive peoples of New Guinea, that they have recently requested its competing emissaries to stay out. 'The ex-cannibals of the world,' says British Congregational

clergyman, the Rev. Cecil Northcott, 'are teaching us a Christian lesson: Can we not cease to be cannibals among ourselves? Instead of eating together at the common table, we tend to eat one another in a kind of blasphemous competition.'"<sup>3</sup>

So extensive has this disunity become that one authority estimates there are over 270 different religions in the United States alone!<sup>4</sup>

## How It Got That Way

The disintegration began soon after the death of the last apostle in the first century. Men arose in the Christian organization who were more interested in their own ideas and ways than in maintaining the truths and unity Jesus Christ initiated.

The first major split began in the fourth century, when, for all practical purposes, the Roman Empire was divided into two parts, one in the West with its center at Rome and the other in the East, governed from Constantinople (Byzantium). The churches in one part began to drift away from the churches in the other part, the Roman being influenced by Latin customs and law, the Eastern by Greek and Byzantine culture. The final, formal split came in the year 1054, when the pope of Rome, Leo IX, excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople. The patriarch retaliated by denouncing the dogma of the Roman church as heresy.

There were further divisions in the Eastern Church, but even more in the West, where schisms that began about the twelfth century culminated in the Protestant Reformation some 400 years later. This speeded up the process of disintegration, and it has continued down to our century, resulting in the shattering of Christendom into hundreds of different religions.

There were many reasons for this proliferation of religions. The desire for political power, especially on the part of the Roman church, alienated some. The claim of primacy by the popes of Rome offended others, as did church corruption. Doctrinal differences spurred the dividing. Splinter groups were even formed due to very minor disagreements over words and ritual.

Religious persecutions and wars widened the breach, particularly the Thirty Years' War fought between Catholics and Protestants from 1618 to 1648. This violence and persecution, perpetrated by Catholics and Reformers alike, further alienated one religion from another.

Not the least of all causes of religious disunity was the cleavage caused by nationalism. Churches took on the flavor of the nation they were in, and even those of the same denomination butchered one another in time of war, just because their nationality was different.

Thus, the differences of doctrine, procedure, organization, nationality, also social and money differences, in addition to the division permitted in the churches due to skin color, completed the shredding of Christendom until it was far removed from the unity of truth and practice taught by Jesus Christ.

### *Efforts to Achieve Religious Union*

Before the twentieth century, all efforts to bridge the gap between the major religions of Christendom failed. A notable attempt among Catholics was that of 1438 and 1439, when Pope Eugenius IV met with Patriarch Josephus II of the Eastern Church in an effort to terminate the centuries-old division; but the endeavor ended in dismal failure.

Few efforts toward unity among Protestants made progress until 1910. In that year the first major step toward some sort of union was taken at the Edinburgh, Scot-

land, Missionary Conference. One hundred and sixty religious bodies sent representatives to study and coordinate missionary activities. From that conference sprang three streams of activity. One was the formation of the International Missionary Council for cooperation in the missionary field. Another stream led to the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work in Stockholm, 1925, which was concerned with the application of Christianity to social, economic and political life. The third stream was the World Conference on Faith and Order, first held at Lausanne, Switzerland, in 1927, concerned with theological and ecclesiastical questions.

From the conferences on "Life and Work," and "Faith and Order," the idea of a World Council of Churches originated. This Council was formally constituted on August 23, 1948, when representatives of 148 religious groups met at Amsterdam. Not included were the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox churches under Russian influence, as well as many fundamentalist groups. This World Council, with headquarters in Geneva, was not a merger of church members, but was more a platform for conversation about church issues. In 1961, at New Delhi, India, twenty-two new religious groups, including Russian Orthodox, were admitted, increasing the membership to nearly 200, with parishioners totaling approximately 300,000,000. The most important result at New Delhi was the vote to unite the International Missionary Council with the World Council. Thus the three main streams of Protestant activity resulting from the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910 finally met and merged. It was hailed as being of almost equal importance to the Reformation of the sixteenth century. But it did not represent real unity in worship.

Similar bridges toward unity have been built on a national level. For example, in

the Philippine Islands, an important union of non-Roman Catholic churches took place in 1963, when seven denominations with a membership of about four million joined in the National Council of Churches in the Philippines.<sup>4</sup> And similarly, in the United States, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. was formed in 1950, coordinating many of the activities of over 30 Protestant and Orthodox denominations, representing some 40,000,000 church members,<sup>5</sup> though they do not all believe the same things.

Mergers of individual religions have also taken place. One occurred in 1925, when Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists combined to form the United Church of Canada. In 1929 various Presbyterian churches merged with the Established Church of Scotland. And in 1939 a number of evangelical churches united to make up the Reformed Church of France.<sup>6</sup>

After World War II a fusion took place in India, when, in 1947, the Anglican, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian churches combined to form the Church of South India.<sup>7</sup>

In Africa the winds of ecumenical effort have also gathered force. In Nigeria negotiations are in process for a uniting of Anglicans with local Methodists and Presbyterians.<sup>8</sup> In Ghana four major religions are doing the same.<sup>9</sup> In Zambia, after ten years of discussions, the Church of Barotseland, the United Church of Central Africa in Rhodesia, the Free Churches in the Copperbelt and the Methodist Church have agreed to combine in the United Church of Zambia, becoming the largest denomination in that country.<sup>9</sup>

In Australia, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches are talking unity.<sup>10</sup> In Canada the two biggest Protestant religions, the Anglican and the United Church of Canada, are progressing with merger discussions to create the Church of

Canada, with a membership of about 3,800,000.

In the United States there have also been unions of various churches. The most ambitious currently is that being discussed by the Methodist Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the United Church of Christ, representing nearly 20,000,000 members. Two other churches, the Disciples of Christ and the Evangelical United Brethren, have joined these talks that began in 1962.<sup>11</sup>

Moves toward unity have been initiated between the Vatican and the Eastern Orthodox churches. One such was the visit of Pope Paul VI to the "Holy Land" early in 1964, for the stated purpose of healing "the breach, itself nine centuries old, between the Eastern Orthodox and the Roman branches of the Catholic Church."<sup>12</sup> Pope Paul and the patriarch of Constantinople Athenagoras I, publicly embraced and prayed together for the unity of Christian churches.

Contacts between Catholic and Protestant churches have been increasing. Cardinal Cushing of Boston has preached in Protestant churches. In another instance, a Roman Catholic priest read the litany at the ordination rites of an Episcopal priest; and Southern Baptist, Assembly of God, Methodist, Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic clergymen all marched in procession.<sup>13</sup> At the Ecumenical Council of the Catholic Church in 1964, common worship by Roman Catholics and non-Catholics "in special circumstances" was authorized.<sup>14</sup> So the rush to build bridges in Christendom gathered momentum. But why this sudden compulsion in Christendom to unite?

### *Motives in Seeking Union*

Catholic clergyman J. A. O'Brien gives the most demanding reason when he says:

"With Communism striving to complete its conquest of the world by pulling the remaining free nations behind its Iron Curtain, the need for Christians to unite is imperative. Unable to present a united front, we are losing one battle after another in the underdeveloped countries." He adds that "Islam is winning more adherents in some of the developing countries than Christianity."<sup>3</sup>

Commenting on this motive of fear, *Time* magazine states: "The march of Marxism, the idolatry of science, the determinism of Freud, the stigma of being a 'white man's religion,' the resurgence, with the rise of the new nations, of the 'national' religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism and Islam—all are helping herd the scattered Christians into one corral."<sup>15</sup> Significantly, it adds: "This is not true Christian unity, but it is producing a sense of unity and a growing recognition of an urgent common need."

Yes, the principal motive for the current urge to seek unity in Christendom is fear, not a love for the pure truths of God.

### **Obstacles to Unity**

In spite of all the current unity discussions, the hard fact remains that the obstacles in the way of genuine union are overwhelming. Realizing this, the writer of an article in *The Atlantic Monthly* of August 1962 stated: "Protestantism and Roman Catholicism are not simply two versions of one movement; their differences are fundamental and apparently permanent."

There are multitudes of doctrinal and organizational differences standing in the way of unity. For example, Protestant and Orthodox churches cannot accept the pope as their head. But the archbishop of Baltimore told a group of Protestants: "There certainly has not been and will not be any change in (Catholic) doctrine on the Pope's

supremacy and infallibility." Corroborating this, an item in the *New York World-Telegram and Sun* of January 20, 1965, reported: "Pope Paul VI warned Catholics against the temptation, which he said insinuates itself 'even in those who are experts,' to weaken or deny controversial Catholic teaching for the sake of Christian unity." Yet, this is just one of a multitude of sensitive issues.

There is also the grave matter of national differences. The major religions of Christendom have not even suggested that there be an international unity of action that would take precedence over national divisions.

So while some bridges between the various religions of Christendom are being built and basic differences papered over, this is having little noticeable effect among church members. It has not united peoples of different races and nationalities in the bonds of Christian love. Mere organizational mergers that ignore unity of spirit, doctrine and practice may give an outward appearance of unity, but this is not true Christian unity.

Yet, the problem of religious disunity is much greater, for even if Christendom were successfully to obtain unity within her own realm, that would still leave the huge division that exists between Christendom and the nonchristian world. Have any results been achieved in efforts to bridge this religious gap?

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# CHRISTENDOM

*Seeks Unity*

**C**HRISTENDOM'S efforts to unite religiously are not limited to professedly Christian religions. The ultimate goal is the union of the many religions within Christendom and outside of it. In other words, not just Catholics and Protestants, but also Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, Confucianists, Taoists and others—all gathered together. What efforts are being made in this direction? Upon what basis could such a union with the nonchristian world be made?

## WITH THE NONCHRISTIAN WORLD



Christendom's clergy have made decided pronouncements on moving closer in association with nonchristian religions. Declared Anglican Archbishop George Appleton of Perth, Australia: "I believe God speaks through all religions, . . . In meeting men of other faiths we have the opportunity of discovering something of God's truth, love and grace so we may enlarge our own understanding."<sup>1</sup> And in the United States, Deane William Ferm, dean of Mount Holyoke College Chapel, called for action: "I believe that the time has come for creative explorations between the religions of East and West."<sup>2</sup>

Actually, some explorations between religions of the East and the West have been and are under way. Consider the Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches; it opened in 1961, not in Christendom, but in New Delhi, India, the land of Hinduism. That was the first such assembly of that group in Asia. Then last year the Roman Catholic Church held its Thirty-eighth Eucharistic Congress in Bombay, India—their first such congress held in a land predominately nonchristian.

From all quarters of Christendom come words pressing for closer fellowship with

and understanding of nonchristian religions. The Roman Catholic Church has made a number of statements regarding the matter. Said the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* of September 28-29, 1964, speaking generally about all non-catholics, and in particular about Moslems: "Let us try to understand also Moslems who worship an only God, personal and rewarding, and who, with their religious meaning, are quite near us."

Published about two months later was a summary of the Roman Catholic Church's Ecumenical Council draft "On the Relation of the Church to the Non-Christian Religions." Speaking of religions that included Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, it said: "Nothing that is true and holy in these religions the Catholic Church scorns. . . . The church, therefore, admonishes Catholics that they converse and collaborate with the followers of other religions."<sup>3</sup> Thus the Roman Catholic Church finds a great deal in common with nonchristian religions, especially Islam, and requests its adherents to collaborate with followers of these religions. Not only Catholics but also Protestants are putting forth such efforts.

### **Efforts to Unite with Nonchristians**

That movements toward unity with non-christian religions are under way is clear from various reports, such as this one from Jerusalem: On August 6, 1964, representatives of Jordan's Christian religions joined Moslem delegates from thirty-one Arab and Moslem countries at rites marking the reopening of Islam's famed shrine, the Dome of the Rock.<sup>4</sup>

The visit to Jerusalem last year by Pope Paul VI was considered significant, especially his remarks about building in Jerusalem a permanent study center of comparative theology to promote Christian unity and better relations with the non-christian world. Further, the pope established a special Vatican Secretariat for nonchristians.

Certainly Catholics are collaborating and meeting together more with nonchristians. For instance, here is a report from Plouaret, France: Catholics from France, Germany and Belgium prayed with Moslems from Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in a joint Christian-Mohammedan pilgrimage to the Hill of Seven Sleepers of Ephesus.<sup>5</sup>

From Brazil come reports on the Christian-Jewish Fraternity Council, made up of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish representatives. This council, already functioning in Argentina, Uruguay and some European countries, aims "to create an atmosphere of understanding, mutual respect and fellowship among the various groups."<sup>6</sup>

When this interfaith council met in Rio de Janeiro, representatives spoke in approval of the pope's advocating a center in Jerusalem for studies in comparative theology. Declared Presbyterian cleric Anselmo Chaves: "The initiative taken by Pope Paul VI is another excellent means . . . of tightening the bonds that unite human beings who are willing to cultivate religious sentiment without discrimination

of theological creeds." Expressing the Jewish viewpoint, Rabbi Meir MacLiah Melamed said: "All that depends on the Jews will be done to bring about a closer union between Jews and Christians."<sup>7</sup>

From Bombay, India, comes this report: After Pope Paul VI's arrival, a meeting was held with representatives of India's religions—noncatholic Christians, the Hindus, the Moslems, the Buddhists and the Zoroastrians. Said the pope to these religious leaders: "We must come closer together. We must come together with our hearts, in mutual understanding, esteem and love."<sup>8</sup>

A side conference held in Bombay on nonchristian religions was attended by various Roman Catholic notables, among them Hans Kung, dean of the Catholic University of Tübingen, Germany. A report on this conference was published in the French newspaper *Le Monde* of December 5, 1964. It said: "The conclusions arrived at by this conference can be summed up as follows: 1. It is necessary to categorically reject the classic formula that has caused so much misunderstanding and which states: 'Outside the [Catholic] Church there is no hope of salvation.' 2. Christ also reveals himself to men belonging to non-Christian religions."

In harmony with that conclusion, Pope Paul VI, after returning to Rome, stated: "United also in Our thoughts and Our prayers are all Our brethren members of the various ancient non-Christian religions."<sup>9</sup> This pronouncement was in keeping with the official statement drawn up at the Ecumenical Council: "The church esteems the Moslems; they adore the one God who is a living and all-powerful God, the Creator of heaven and earth. . . . They also honor Mary, His Virgin Mother. At times they even call on her with devotion."<sup>10</sup>

This look at recent ecumenical efforts finds Christendom definitely seeking unity

with the nonchristian world. Not only does the pope call nonchristians "brethren," but actual fraternities have been formed with Jews, as well as more and more fellowshiping with Hindus, Buddhists and Moslems. But how do nonchristians view these overtures? Is there any indication that they will respond to Christendom's efforts to come closer?

### *View of Nonchristian Religions*

Yes, there is. For, as Pope Paul said, Moslems are close to Catholics because of religious similarities, such as in the matter of giving devotion to Mary. There is a statue of Mary at one of India's best-known Catholic shrines, in Bandra, a suburb of Bombay; it is called "the universally venerated statue of our Lady of the Mount."<sup>10</sup> Under the heading "Universal Shrine," a report says: "The vast throngs of devotees of all castes and creeds, Catholics, Protestants, Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Jews . . . flock in an endless stream to offer their prayers and gifts to the Lady of the Mountain throughout the Novena and Octave of the Bandra Feast."<sup>10</sup>

The general willingness of nonchristians to absorb teaching and practices of other religions also provides a basis for unity. For example, Zoroastrianism has adopted some Hindu customs and beliefs. Taoism has absorbed a great deal of foreign elements. And Hinduism, which has virtually absorbed Buddhism in India, does not require Christians to renounce Christianity in order to unite with them. In a leaflet entitled "Appeal to His Holiness the Pope," a number of India's religious officials say about Hinduism:

"It does not advocate the doctrine that salvation can be attained only by putting faith in one particular prophet or one holy book. Arya (Hindu) religion does not insist on outward conversion for attainment of salvation. According to Hindu religion a Christian need not renounce his religion and

yet attain salvation, if he follows and practices the rules of conduct, principles and doctrines as expounded in the different philosophical works of Hindu religion and if he acquires mastery over his self by self-discipline, self-control, meditation and other Yogic practices."<sup>11</sup>

From the way many Hindus talk, then, they are not adverse to absorbing elements of the Christian religion as long as there is no resistance to such Hindu practices as Yoga. In fact, some who teach Yoga claim: "The true Christian way of life is Yoga."<sup>12</sup> And as Swami Maharaj puts it, "A true Christian is automatically a Hindu."<sup>13</sup> When Hindu leader Mahatma Gandhi expressed his beliefs some years ago, it sounded as if he were part of a giant interfaith movement: "I consider myself a . . . Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Jew, Buddhist and Confucian."<sup>14</sup>

Buddhism, too, is not unwilling to absorb other teachings; in fact, it has absorbed so much already that it is a far different religion today from when it was founded. "The diffuse spiritual legacy of Buddha," reported *Time* magazine of December 11, 1964, "commands perhaps 300 million faithful. . . . Precisely what they are faithful to is as diverse as the cultures of Asia, for everywhere Buddhism has benignly bent and become a part of all that it has met."

So it is not surprising that a Buddhist may join one of Christendom's churches and still remain a Buddhist. A report relative to Buddhism in Japan says that a Buddhist "can 'belong' to one of the new religious movements, or even a Christian church, without disturbing his temple and shrine relationship."<sup>15</sup>

### *Additional Basis for Unity*

Our review of nonchristian religion, then, reveals that there is some basis for unity. But what of Christendom's religions? Is there a similar basis for unity?

Yes, and even more so, when we examine Christendom's past readiness to accept a wide variety of pagan beliefs and practices. Roman Catholic cardinal John Henry Newman, in his book *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, admits:

"The rulers of the Church from early times were prepared . . . to adopt, or imitate, or sanction the existing rites and customs of the populace. . . . The use of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, . . . incense, lamps and candles; . . . holy water; asylums, holydays and seasons; use of calendars, tonsure, . . . images at a later date . . . are all of pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church."

Today there is still this willingness on the part of religious leaders in Christendom to absorb pagan practices. An example is the acceptance of Yoga, which is a form of spiritism. A report on the 1961 meeting in New Delhi of the World Council of Churches said regarding this: "Christians should take up oriental meditation, the system of Yoga and the 'disciplined will' of Eastern teachers, said U Ba Hmyin, a Baptist leader from Burma, preaching at the opening service of the World Council of Churches."<sup>12</sup> Such suggestions to take up Hindu Yoga also come from Catholic authorities. A Catholic Benedictine monk recommends Yoga in his church-approved book *Christian Yoga*.

Christendom's willingness to allow persons to join her churches and still retain pagan practices makes union with non-Christians a real possibility. In Haiti, for example, many Catholics practice a form of spiritism called Voodooism. They can be Voodooists and still be Catholics, so that Marcus Bach in his book *Strange Altars* says: "Voodoo is related to the whole broad run of Catholic teaching." And concerning Guatemala, a news report about a Mayan Indian village says: "They'll burn incense and worship pagan gods and idols. At the same time they'll pray and worship in the Santo Tomas Catholic Church."<sup>17</sup>

Moreover, in Africa, Christendom's religions have often permitted tribespeople to carry on paganism and still be church members. It is quite a common thing in South-West Africa for Hereros who have become church members to venerate their sacred fires. In a certain region "Christian" Herero people pray to the spirits of dead ancestors at large pagan graveside ceremonies. Many church members also still consult witch doctors. Thus, for many Africans Christianity means joining a church while largely retaining pagan beliefs and customs.

This willingness to accept paganism is the basis for unity between professed Christian and non-Christian religions. Therefore, more and more clergymen are in effect asking that the door be opened to more paganism. English clergyman Geoffrey Parrinder says, in his book *The Christian Debate, Light from the East*: "The claim that Christianity is a universal faith can only be maintained . . . if it is shown that it can assimilate not only Greek thought, but also that of the other religions."

Opening the doors wider for paganism may, in time, make it possible to obtain to some extent the unity that Christendom seeks with the non-Christian world. But is compromise a sound basis for religious unity? How will such compromise affect your beliefs and way of worship?

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# Religion

*that is willing to*

# COMPROMISE

A report from Australia quotes the dean of Melbourne as saying the following in St. Paul's Cathedral: "God has given us glimpses of His truth through Buddha, Mohammed, and Confucius."<sup>2</sup> But are you willing to say that Jesus was not the Mes-

**T**HERE can be no doubt that strong efforts are being made toward achieving some sort of religious unity in the world.

This desire to unite appears, on the surface, to be a noble one. However, when we probe deeper we are confronted with what must be done to achieve that unity: *compromise*.

This was acknowledged when, in 1963, more than 500 theologians and churchmen from all over the world, including observers from the Roman Catholic Church, gathered in Canada for a conference sponsored by the World Council of Churches. Stated one participating cleric: "An emotional commitment to compromise is necessary."<sup>1</sup>

## ***Doctrinal Compromise***

In order for unity to come about, the individual churches involved must compromise basic doctrines. But for there to be compromise doctrinally, it means that beliefs formerly held as true must be watered down or even discarded altogether, because they may be objectionable to the religions with whom union is sought.

For example, do you believe that Jesus Christ was the Messiah, the Son of God, and that he was used by God to dispense truth to humankind? If so, would you be willing to give up that belief to please the Buddhist, the Confucianist, the Mohammedan or the Jew? Some clergymen already have compromised in this direction.

siah, that he was just a good man who taught moral principles and, therefore, was on the same level as Buddha, Mohammed and Confucius, as well as other pagan philosophers?

Are you ready, as a Protestant, to acknowledge the pope of Rome as your spiritual leader? You would have to do so if your church united with the Roman Catholic Church, for recently Pope Paul VI reasserted "the exercise of supreme religious authority by the Roman Catholic Pontiff against the 'Protestant and modernist mentality' that denies the need for any intermediary between man and God."<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, if you are Roman Catholic, do you believe that Jesus was born of the virgin Mary? Many Protestant clergymen do not believe this, and today even some Catholic theologians question it. Note the following: "A prominent American Jesuit has said approvingly that many Catholic intellectuals no longer accept literally the doctrine of the virgin birth but rather accept it symbolically."<sup>4</sup> Such an interpretation may make Catholicism more palatable to religions that deny the virgin birth, but does this mean that this Scriptural doctrine you have believed all your life is no longer true? Would you be willing to sacrifice this Bible-based doctrine for the sake of unity?

The dilemma posed for you by doctrinal compromise cannot be pushed aside easily,

for it means uniting what is supposed to be true with what was regarded as error. Are you prepared to believe that an insect could be one of your dear departed ancestors? You may be required to do so if your religion unites with Hinduism. Do you believe that an infant should be baptized? If not, how could you in clear conscience unite with a religion that did? Do you believe that the bread and wine used in the 'Lord's Supper' is symbolic of Jesus' flesh and blood? If so, are you prepared to say that this is no longer true and accept the belief that they are changed into the literal body and blood of Christ in order to satisfy religions that believe this? Do you believe that Mary, the mother of Jesus, had other children? Then are you willing to compromise that belief in order to unite with a religion that believes she had no other children, that she was ever virgin and the mother of God himself?

You must face up to the hard fact that unity by compromise will mean the collapse of doctrines you now hold as truth, for many of them are unacceptable to other religions and will have to be modified or abandoned if unity is to be achieved. But this would be admitting that they were no longer true! Will you do that also? In addition, how could you trust a religion that will permit you to compromise truth? Is not the foundation for belief in God integrity to truth? No, doctrinal compromise cannot but undermine real faith in God, for in combining truth with error, the truth becomes diluted and soon completely corrupted.

### ***Bible Compromised***

However, it should not surprise you that doctrinal compromises are being considered by various religions. What has paved the way for this is a compromise of far more serious proportions. It is the compromising of faith in the Bible as God's in-

spired Word. For many years now, clergymen of many religions have been critical of the Bible and have not upheld it as God's inspired revelation to the human family. One of many recent illustrations of this is seen in the new Sunday-school curriculum of the United Church of Canada. It brands the first eleven chapters of the Bible as "myth," declares that Moses did not cross the Red Sea, that the story of Noah is a "legend," and belittles the Bible in other ways. Thus, for all practical purposes the Bible as a basis for their faith is destroyed in the eyes of church members.<sup>5</sup>

Were Roman Catholic scholars horrified by this United Church curriculum? The *Toronto Daily Star* reported: "Roman Catholic scholars agree with the central claim of the United Church's controversial new Sunday school curriculum—that the Bible contains many 'myths.' . . . Roman Catholic scholars, with the overwhelming majority of Protestant scholars, accept the principle that there are abundant 'mythic' elements in the Bible."<sup>6</sup>

Do you want to unite with religions that have so little respect for the Bible? How can you ever be sure of truth if you do? Without God's Word as a foundation for faith the doors for error are thrown wide open, and that is exactly what has happened. Your joining in with Bible critics will not advance truth, but will only brand you as a compromiser of truth.

### ***Moral Compromise***

Many religious leaders have also compromised on moral issues of our times, particularly sexual morality.

A report from London states: "A Church of England canon challenged yesterday religious taboos against extra-marital sex and homosexual relationships. . . . Canon Rhymes said it had been argued that morality should be based on natural law." He

added: "But what is natural and what is unnatural? Much of the prejudice against homosexuality is on the ground that it is unnatural—but unnatural for whom? Certainly not for the homosexual himself."<sup>6</sup>

An Episcopal chaplain at all-girl Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland, told these students that premarital intercourse need not be "bad" but "it can be very beautiful." He also told the girls he could not tell them "whether you should or shouldn't, or even how far you should."<sup>7</sup> How demoralizing for impressionable young college girls!

In condoning immoral intercourse in certain circumstances, another chaplain wrote: "Only if we are certain the sexual relationship will help more than harm our partner (in the long run as well as in the immediate encounter) will we be justified in premarital sex."<sup>8</sup> This was written in the college paper!

Not all clergymen think as these do, but enough of them have such ideas so as to undermine sexual morality to a serious extent. Are you willing to go along with such religious leaders, or join with their organizations in interfaith movements? Is that the kind of instruction you want your daughter, son, wife or husband to receive? If your church is willing to compromise and merge with such religions, that is exactly what will happen.

### ***Compromise with Politics***

Not only has modern-day religion been willing to compromise doctrinally and morally, but it has also been willing to compromise with politics. What has this led to? Professed Christians have gone to war and have slaughtered their spiritual brothers from other countries, just because their nationality was different! Thus we have seen Catholic kill Catholic, Protestant kill Protestant, Jew kill Jew, as well as non-Christians killing non-Christians, on the

world's battlefields. Not only has compromising religion permitted its members to do this, but in time of war it has actually promoted this slaughter of brother by brother! The evidence of this is plain for all to see.

In Germany, for instance, a concordat was signed between the Roman Catholic Church and the Nazi rulers. Cardinal Faulhaber stated in June of 1936: "You are all witnesses to the fact that on all Sundays and holidays at the main service we pray in all churches for the Führer as we have promised in the Concordat." As a result of political compromise, "the attitude among Catholics in Germany in 1933, after the pronouncements of Bishops, changed from permissibility of supporting the Nazi government to a duty of supporting it."<sup>9</sup> All the other major religions compromised as well.

In Japan, the same thing happened. All the major religions compromised with the warlords. In the book *Religions in Japan* we are told: "Religious bodies were being utilized to enhance nationalism and militarism. . . . Money for war planes was raised by practically all religious bodies, and certain religious organizations even had their names attached to the planes. The members of religious bodies were organized into patriotic associations with their religious leaders as chairmen. . . . Victory celebrations were sometimes arranged by joint action of Buddhists, Shintoists, and Christians; sometimes they were held separately. When a celebration fell on Sunday, observance was made a part of Christian church services. Prayers for victory were composed by leaders of the three religions."<sup>10</sup>

In South Vietnam recently, Buddhists and Catholics have killed one another just because their political allegiance was different. As a matter of fact, throughout

Asia today, as *Time* magazine states, "sandal monks with shaved heads have abandoned Buddha's command to be still and motionless and have plunged deep into politics. . . . more and more of them are busy issuing political manifestoes, organizing riots, and working for the downfall of governments."<sup>11</sup>

These are not isolated exceptions, but are the rule. All the major religions of the world have become involved in national politics. This political compromise means that the current surge toward ecumenism is an empty contradiction, for such compromise has the effect of rendering null and void any outward uniting of churches. This is so because, regardless of what form church mergers take and how many there are, the religions of Christendom and non-Christian lands alike remain hopelessly divided by national boundaries, all because of political compromise! What a tragic departure from the unity that Jesus Christ taught!

That this is the case many religious leaders admit. Martin Niemöller, West German evangelical leader, noted that, because of loyalty to their nation, the churches have justified each war in history. But he added: "Yet, I cannot imagine Jesus marching with any army."<sup>12</sup> Also, during World War I, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise declared: "Failure of the churches and synagogues to maintain leadership over the people was the cause of the present war."<sup>13</sup>

### ***Compromise Evident to Others***

The course of compromise that religion has taken is evident to others besides religious leaders. Many laymen view with dismay the spirit of compromise and note its adverse effects. A Catholic writer said: "We are all but paralyzed by the spirit of compromise."<sup>14</sup>

How evident this spirit of compromise has become can be seen in a penetrating ar-

ticle published in *The Natal Mercury* of South Africa and written by a layman. In its issue of October 30, 1964, the writer stated the following:

"Is not the 'scandal' of the Church today its Laodicean coldness, its willingness to compromise, not on minor but on major and fundamental issues, its surrender to the dictates of 'the new morality'? . . . Can any organization succeed as it should if it compromises its foundations? . . . It has been said, and by a cleric, that 'we look in vain for an unequivocal affirmation that the Bible not only contains but actually constitutes the inspired and infallible Word of God.' In the light of such a pronouncement it is not difficult to understand why there is a bewildering and disturbing lack of unity on the very function of the Church. It is not the mission of the Church to provide a panacea for a pagan world that seeks solutions for its problems while it persists in rejecting Christ. Its mission is to redeem souls. It will not do this by involving itself in politics. It will not do this by organizing itself into some loose world federation, which for the sake of presenting a facade of unity temporises on the essentials of the Christian faith."

There is no question about it. It is evident to all who view the matter impartially and honestly: worldly religion has compromised doctrinally, morally and politically.

However, what of Jesus Christ? Was he willing to compromise? Were his disciples and apostles compromisers? Did the early Christians compromise their religion?

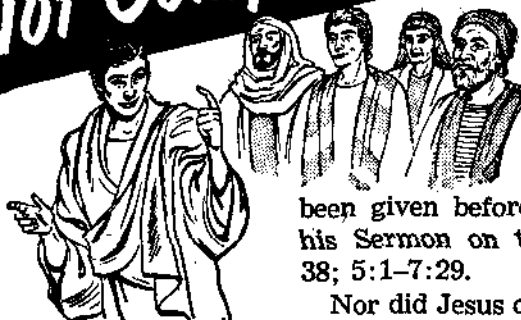
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# **WORSHIPERS WHO**

## **Would Not Compromise**

**I**N STRIKING contrast to worldly religions that are willing to compromise was the



course pursued by Jesus Christ, whom so many profess to follow. He refused to compromise. Rather than make a bid for popularity by incorporating the traditions of Judaism or the religion and philosophy of the Greeks, he took an exclusive position. Plainly he said: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) Jesus was not interested in uniting divided Judaism of his day, but, instead, brought forth the new religion of Christianity. Underscoring his refusal to make common cause with other religions are his words: "He that is not on my side is against me, and he that does not gather with me scatters."—Matt. 9:16, 17; 12:30.

Politically Jesus remained neutral. He did not compromise his teaching about a heavenly kingdom by making common cause with the political governments of his day. "My kingdom is no part of this world," he said. And concerning his followers he reported: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." Jesus kept separate from worldly politics and its conflicts. He would not permit the people to make him a king.—John 18:36; 17:16; 6:15.

The same must be said about Jesus' moral teaching. He did not wink at the hypocrisy and greed of the religious leaders of his day, but exposed them with righteous indignation. At the same time he set forth a higher standard of morality than had ever

been given before, especially as noted in his Sermon on the Mount.—Matt. 23:1-38; 5:1-7:29.

Nor did Jesus compromise in the face of danger as so many professed followers of his have done down to our day. Though threatened with death, he gave a fearless witness to the truth, and when one of his followers wanted to protect him by the sword, he rebuked him, saying: "All those who take the sword will perish by the sword."—Matt. 26:52; John 18:37.

### ***Apostles Refused to Compromise***

The Scriptures show that Jesus' apostles and early disciples were also unwilling to compromise. Plainly the apostles said to the authorities of their day: "Jesus Christ the Nazarene . . . is 'the stone that was treated by you builders as of no account that has become the head of the corner.' Furthermore, there is no salvation in anyone else, for there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved." They believed that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, and that he alone was sent by God as mankind's Savior.—Acts 4:10-12.

These early apostles of Christ were not at all impressed by the vaunted wisdom of the Greeks, and they refused to compromise with it. They held to the inspired Word of God as their guide. That Word was their authority and adequate for all

matters of teaching and conduct, even as one of them wrote: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness."—2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:21.

Far from compromising to make common cause with nonchristian religions, they stressed the incompatibility of these with Christianity. Wrote one apostle of Jesus Christ to a congregation of Christians: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what sharing do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever? And what agreement does God's temple have with idols?" How clear that true Christians were not to compromise their faith in order to unite with other religions! —2 Cor. 6:14-17.

In the matter of moral principles and chastity the Christians of apostolic times likewise showed themselves to be closely following Jesus' steps. They warned: "What! Do you not know that unrighteous persons will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be misled. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, . . . nor men who lie with men, . . . nor drunkards, . . . will inherit God's kingdom." When a willful practitioner of immorality was found to be a member of a Christian congregation, the apostle Paul gave explicit instructions: "Remove the wicked man from among yourselves"—1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 5:13.

Even as the Christian congregation of apostolic times did not compromise its moral standards for the sake of gaining members, so it refused to compromise Christian principles in the face of danger. When commanded not to preach anymore in the name of Jesus, the apostles fearlessly

said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." For this uncompromising stand Stephen was stoned to death, the apostle James was executed, the apostle Peter was imprisoned and, of those in Jerusalem, "all except the apostles were scattered."—Acts 5:29; 7:51-8:2; 12:1-3.

### *Early Christians Opposed Interfaith*

Worshippers who would not compromise also include many Christians who lived immediately following the apostles. They too had high regard for the Scriptures. In fact, one historian said that their writings contained so many quotations from the Bible that, if the Christian Greek Scriptures had been lost, the greater part of them could be recovered from just their writings.<sup>1</sup> Far from compromising their Bible-founded beliefs with Greek philosophy that was so popular in their day, early Christians 'expressed their unfavorable criticism of it in a thousand different ways.'<sup>2</sup>

In particular did those early Christians refuse to compromise by making common cause with other religions. They believed that they had the truth, and, unlike the other religions in the Roman Empire that were agreeable to incorporating their deities into Rome's pantheon of gods, the early Christians would not consent to such an interfaith movement. They kept separate. As one church historian observed: "To the Christian, his God could never be placed in the same category as Isis or Mithras or Augustus."<sup>3</sup>

Because early Christians would not cooperate in interfaith worship but continued to preach Bible truth, they were singled out for persecution. One historian explains:

"Why was it that many of the emperors who saw without concern a thousand forms of religion subsisting in peace beneath their sway, singled out the sect of the Christians to make them the sole objects of persecution? The answer to this question is found

in several facts. And first, in the proselyting ardor of the Christians. The empire was tolerant of all faiths; but it was not tolerant of a faith which taught that the gods of Rome and of all other religions were alike false, and which strove to win over all mankind to that belief."<sup>4</sup>

### ***Refused to Compromise Politically***

Another reason why early Christians were objects of persecution is that they refused to compromise politically by giving worshipful honors to the emperor. It is not that they wanted to be obstinate or disobedient, but they had dedicated their lives to God. To them, worship was not merely a matter of policy or convenience, but of conviction to truth and whole-souled devotion to God. For this reason they would not sprinkle incense upon the altars of the emperor or serve in his imperial armies.

This uncompromising stand brought them into conflict with the Roman authorities, for as one historian observes: "It was difficult at any time for a Roman to understand and excuse their refusal to scatter the handful of incense on the altars, that would satisfy the law and set them free."<sup>5</sup> It may have appeared a small thing to offer just a pinch of incense, yet faithfulness to God was involved, and in this the early Christians would not compromise. That their Scriptural position was not understood is evidenced from the testimony of a modern history regarding them:

"Early Christianity was little understood and was regarded with little favor by those who ruled the pagan world. Pagan writers referred to it as a 'new and vicious superstition,' and to Christians as 'misguided creatures' . . . Christians refused to share certain duties of Roman citizens. The Christians were regarded as anarchists hoping to destroy the state; as pacifists who felt it a violation of their faith to enter military service. They would not hold political office. They would not worship the emperor."<sup>6</sup>

The uncompromising position of early Christians may surprise some, but the his-

torical record concerning their refusal to kill fellow humans on the battlefield is very clear. The second-century Christian Justin Martyr said: "We who formerly used to murder one another do not only now refrain from making war upon our enemies, but also, that we may not lie or deceive our examiners, willingly die confessing Christ."<sup>7</sup> Yes, rather than take up arms against a fellow human creature they were willing to suffer the death penalty!

One church historian summarized the uncompromising position of the early Christians very well when he wrote:

"The early Christians took Jesus at his word, and understood his inculcations of gentleness and non-resistance in their literal sense. They closely identified their religion with peace; they strongly condemned war for the bloodshed which it involved; they appropriated to themselves the Old Testament prophecy which foretold the transformation of the weapons of war into the implements of agriculture [Isa. 2:4] . . . With one or two possible exceptions no soldier joined the Church and remained a soldier until the time of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.). Even then, refusal to serve was known to be the normal policy of the Christians—as the reproaches of Celsus (177-180 A.D.) testify. . . . The application of Jesus' teaching to the question of military service was in a way unmistakable."<sup>8</sup>

### ***Morally Upright***

Early Christians also refused to compromise in the matter of morals and chastity. Amid the wicked, immoral society of Rome, their conduct stood out as exemplary. Origen, Christian apologist of the third century, explained that those who wanted to join the Christian community first had to "sufficiently evince their desire towards a virtuous life" before they were accepted. He said that all 'who led dissolute lives were excluded from their community.'<sup>9</sup> American historian John Lord observed: "We have testimony to their blameless lives, to their irreproachable morals, to

their good citizenship, and to their Christian graces."<sup>10</sup>

The very fact that so many of the early Christians were willing to endure bitter persecution rather than compromise on Bible principles indirectly testifies to their outstanding morals. Persons who are self-indulgent, licentious, thieves, hypocrites, and so forth, are not likely to be the ones willing to submit to all manner of persecution, some of it utterly fiendish, rather than change their beliefs.

### *Motivated by Love*

And nothing could be farther from the truth than the charge that those early Christians refused to compromise because they were "haters of the human race."<sup>11</sup> No people gave more abundant proof of their love of humankind. For example, it is said that when a terrible pestilence "visited Alexandria, in the reign of Gallienus, A.D. 260-268, the pagans drove their friends, when stricken by the contagion, from their presence, cast the half-dead into the streets, and refused to bury the dead; while the Christians took the diseased into their homes, nursed them with care, and, if the sufferers died, their bodies were buried with Christian rites."<sup>12</sup>

Their love was also shown by their refusal to harm their fellowman, during war-time, or at any other time. National boundaries did not divide them anymore than doctrinal, racial or social differences. Even though coming from all walks of life, they were united by a firm bond of love. "There were no strangers among the Christians," one historian noted; "they were all brothers; they called each other brother and sister . . . they knew of no distinctions."<sup>13</sup>

Further, how could these early Christians be "haters of the human race" and yet be so diligent in trying to proselyte all mankind, especially when this was one of the chief reasons for their being persecut-

ed? As one historian well observed: "The application of his energies to the salvation of others at the cost of fatigue and danger to himself speaks more eloquently than any quotations can do of the Christian missionary's love for his pagan fellow-men."<sup>14</sup>

From the foregoing it can be appreciated that "in those early times there was a 'clean cut' between the Church and the world." And while from the days of the last apostle, John, until the time of Constantine in the early fourth century, there was a gradual weakening of the faith, the fact remains "that throughout this period . . . there was no disagreement as to what being a Christian meant and no doubt as to the persons to whom the word 'Christian' applied."<sup>15</sup> How different it is today when it is so often impossible to distinguish a professed Christian from a nonchristian! And why is this? The compromising of Bible principles has largely been responsible!

But there is an exception. Today, as in the first century, there is a group of Christians that have refused to compromise. They, too, have been accused of being haters of all mankind, and yet they themselves are hated even as were the early Christians. In order to render acceptable worship to God it is vital that you know about them.

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# GODLY ATTITUDE

*toward*

# PEOPLE OF OTHER RELIGIONS

**T**HERE is no getting away from it, true Christians will be persecuted for their uncompromising stand for truth. However, instead of "paying back injury for injury or reviling for reviling," they copy the example of their Leader Jesus Christ, who taught: "Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you." —1 Pet. 3:9; Matt. 5:44.

Jesus was never intolerant toward those who persecuted and spoke abusively of him. Rather, he patiently "endured such contrary talk by sinners." His close associate and apostle, Simon Peter, said: "When he was being reviled, he did not go reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go threatening." Typical of his conduct is his reaction when some Samaritans, who were a people of a different religion, refused to give him lodging when he was passing through their village. His disciples wanted to retaliate for this insult. But Jesus "turned and reproved them." —Heb. 12:3; 1 Pet. 2:23; Luke 9:52-55.

Right down to his death Jesus maintained this kind and considerate attitude. This was true even when persecutors resorted to malicious slander and brutal torture. Although he refused to compromise or in any way approve of the religion of his opposers, he did not hold a grudge or harbor any hatred in his heart for them personally. In fact, while hanging on the torture stake one of his requests was in behalf of those who had abused and made fun of him. He prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." —Luke 23:34.

## *Imitating His Attitude*

It is this fine example that Jehovah's witnesses today endeavor to follow. They firmly believe, even as did Jesus himself, that their beliefs are true and that God is using them to preach His kingdom message. So although they seek to be at peace with all peoples, they are unwilling to compromise their beliefs in order to form an alliance with religious bodies that promulgate conflicting teachings. However, this refusal to compromise does not mean that Jehovah's witnesses are intolerant of the right of others to hold beliefs and opinions, any more than Jesus' refusal to compromise meant that he was intolerant of the right of those who did not agree with him to teach.

In the summer of 1963, to large audiences totaling more than 450,000 persons attending at twenty-four convention cities visited by the Around the World Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses, the following official statement was made, expressing the attitude of Jehovah's witnesses toward other religions and their adherents: "Everyone has the right to practice the religion of his choice. This holds true at present, unless a person's religion proves to be grossly immoral, licentious, shocking the public decency. *Everyone should respect the right of everyone else to choose and live his own religion. We must observe re-*

ligious toleration." Thus in lands where Protestantism and Catholicism are major religions, as well as in countries where Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Shinto are prominent religions, the population was notified concerning the tolerant attitude of Jehovah's witnesses toward people of other religious faiths.

However, to make clear that toleration of the right of others to their religious views does not mean approval of such views and, therefore, a willingness to join in interfaith movements with religious organizations holding to them, it was further stated:

"Our granting everyone his religious right, our refusing to interfere with each one's religious practice, does not signify, however, that we approve of his religion or that we approve of all other religions besides our own. Our practicing religious toleration does not mean we believe that all religions are right and beneficial and that all of them lead to an eternal happy future in endless enjoyment of the god that a person worships. Neither does it mean that we recognize that, after all is said and done, still we worship the one and the same god only under different names or by different ways of approach to him or by means of different religious ceremonies."

Jesus Christ did not believe that all religions were teaching the truth, and neither do Jehovah's witnesses believe this today. So rather than join in interfaith movements with religious bodies that they believe are teaching falsehoods, Jehovah's witnesses uncompromisingly remain separate and preach Bible truth, even though this offends the religious sensibilities of those who believe differently. But is it intolerant to expose the teachings of other religions as false? Would you say it is a form of religious persecution, an ungodly attitude toward people of other faiths? In

order to give an unbiased answer please ask yourself the following.

### *Is It Intolerant to Expose Error?*

If an untrue news report was published, would it be intolerant to expose that report to be in error? Why, of course not! Rather, it would be a public service to do so, especially if the untrue information would jeopardize the health and safety of people. The situation is similar relative to information published about Almighty God and his purposes regarding the earth and mankind. If the information is untrue and misrepresents God, it certainly is not a form of persecution to supply truthful information. Jehovah's witnesses drew this to the attention of people worldwide in the summer of 1963. At their conventions that year it was stated:

"It is not a form of religious persecution for anyone to *say* and to *show* that another religion is false. It is not religious persecution for an informed person to expose publicly a certain religion as being false, thus allowing persons to see the difference between false religion and true religion. But in order to make the exposure and show the wrong religions to be false, the true worshiper will have to use an authoritative means of judgment, a rule of measurement that cannot be proved faulty. . . . Still it leaves the public free to choose."

Jehovah's witnesses imitate the example of Jesus Christ and appeal to the inspired Word of God as the authoritative means of judging what is true and what is false. They simply endeavor to show people what the Bible says on matters. It is then left up to individuals to decide how they will act on the information. Never is an effort made to force or coerce anyone to accept what is said. Jehovah's witnesses do not spread their religion by the "sword," as false religions have often done. Rather, as was stated publicly, they "*respect the right of*

*everyone else to choose and live his own religion."*

Thus, Jehovah's witnesses do not persecute the adherents of religions that join interfaith movements, and they do not in any way interfere with the efforts of those religions to obtain religious unity through compromise. Unfortunately, however, worldly religionists have not been so tolerant of the uncompromising position of Jehovah's witnesses. In fact, they have instigated vicious persecution in an effort to suppress their preaching work. Observing this, a prominent constitutional lawyer, Leo Pfeffer, said of Jehovah's witnesses: "Their aggressive missionary tactics are reminiscent of those employed by the early Christians, and the reception accorded them by the nonbelievers is likewise reminiscent of that visited on the early Christians." But rather than retaliate against their persecutors, whether religious or political, Jehovah's witnesses have endeavored to demonstrate the same attitude toward opposers as did Jesus Christ and his early followers. This has had fine results.

### ***Fruitage of Godly Attitude***

For example, with the gaining of independence by the new African country of Malawi (formerly Nyasaland) there was a terrible wave of persecution against Jehovah's witnesses because of their refusal to compromise Christian principles. More than a thousand of their homes and nearly one hundred of their congregation meeting places were destroyed. However, when persons of other religions saw the uncomplaining spirit and godly attitude displayed in the face of this opposition, many of them came to Jehovah's witnesses and said: "Now we know that your church is the true church, because no one else would be able to take all these bad things that have

happened to you as you do. You are true Christians and therefore we want to become members of your church."

Treating opposers kindly has won many persons over to appreciate the grand principles of Christianity. For example, a man in the West Indies once turned his dog loose on one of Jehovah's witnesses who was calling at his home with the peaceful message from the Bible. Nevertheless, the Witness did not become angry with the man, and later greeted him on the street as though nothing had happened. This godly attitude so impressed the opposer that he accepted Bible literature and began to study it. He said: "These people have what it takes. I treated her bad at my house, but she still speaks to me on the street."

In another instance, when a young Indonesian man started to study the Bible, his father, a senior elder in a local Protestant church, angrily ordered him to stop the study or leave his home and never again be considered his son. The father did not immediately carry out his threat, and in the weeks of tension that followed, the young man maintained a quiet composure and treated his father with kindness and respect. Then disturbing conditions began developing at his father's church, and, in time, he became more amiable to Bible truth. Eventually the father, mother and other children all started to study the Bible, and now all of them are united in the worship of God.

What fine benefits have been realized from imitating the kind, considerate attitude of Jesus Christ! In addition to individual families' being brought together by the unifying force of God's Word, an entire society of people from all nations, tribes and former religious connections have been united in loving Christian unity. This international unification is now under way. But is there any practical evidence of it?



# INTERNATIONAL UNIFICATION

*Now Under Way*

**WHAT?** True unification, internationally, is actually under way? Now, today, in this year 1965? Where? In ecumenical councils? In the United Nations?

No, the true unity now under way is not being accomplished by merger talks between religions and it is not being realized in the United Nations. Such religious and political organizations of this world have not overcome the national, racial, social and economic barriers that divide humanity.

The unification now under way is accomplishing what they have failed to do—the actual unifying of people from different nations, races, economic levels and former religions and social standings, into one peaceful, harmonious, loving family of people worldwide! The unity that has been achieved is the kind that was demonstrated by the early Christians. Like them, there are Christians today who are obeying the command of God to be “fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought.” They follow very closely the pattern for international unification set down by Jesus and his followers.—1 Cor. 1:10.

Reporting on this international unification, the New York *Amsterdam News* of

August 2, 1958, told about an assembly of nearly 200,000 such worshipers held that year in New York City. It identified them when it said: “Never before have New Yorkers been host to people more wholly devoted to their faith than Jehovah’s Witnesses. . . . The worshipping Witnesses from 120 lands have lived and worshiped together peacefully, showing Americans how easily it can be done. . . . The As-

sembly is a shining example of how people can work and live together.”

The international unity found among Jehovah’s witnesses impresses others throughout the world, such as the editor in chief of the Manila, Philippines, *Evening News*, who said in the issue of August 14, 1963: “If Catholics could show the same unity of spirit, if they could participate in a community effort with the same zeal and dedication that the Witnesses are demonstrating, think of the world of good that they can do!” But how has this marvelous unity been brought about? Why is it possible for this society of people to succeed in getting unity where others have failed?

## ***Adherence to Bible Principles***

This international unification has been achieved, not through compromise, but, rather, by sticking to Bible principles, as did the early Christians. This has not gone unnoticed. For instance, the Akron, Ohio, *Beacon Journal* said: “Jehovah’s Witnesses have a religion they take far more seriously than the great majority of people. Their principles remind us of the early Christians.” By adhering to Bible principles the first-century servants of God were united.

"The multitude of those who had believed had one heart and soul." (Acts 4:32) In the same way, Jehovah's witnesses have adhered to the only Book that can truly unify men—the Holy Bible.

It is upon this Book that they base all their actions and beliefs. They do not belittle the Bible, by calling it "myth" and "legend." They believe, as Jesus did, that the Bible is God's Word and that it contains the revelation of Himself and His purposes to mankind. Jesus used the Bible available in his day and honored it, quoting it repeatedly, as for instance, when he quoted the second chapter of Genesis. He thus showed that he believed its account of creation as a fact and not as a "myth." And Jesus was in the best position to know, for he had previously been with his Father in the work of creation! Hence, these Christians today, unlike religious critics, take the Bible for what it is, God's Word, knowing that "all Scripture is inspired of God."—Matt. 19:4-6; Gen. 2:21-24; 2 Tim. 3:16.

This adherence to the Bible and its principles is noted by others. *Newsweek* magazine of August 4, 1958, made the following comment on one of the international assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses: "Education in the Bible, the single source of all Witness doctrine, is the principal function of the convention." And that is why David Manwaring, an assistant professor of political science, wrote in his book *Render unto Caesar* (page 17): "Jehovah's Witnesses, probably more so than any other denomination, base all their actions on their religious beliefs."

Thus the Bible is a powerful force for uniting these Christians. By using it as their guide they achieve genuine unity. Though they have in their ranks former Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems, pagans and some who

belonged to no religious organization, they now are united. They did not compromise with one another to achieve unity, but they forsook former wrong beliefs and practices and brought their thinking and conduct into line with God's Word. This has resulted in unity that is meaningful. Testimony to this fact appeared in the Milwaukee *Sentinel* of August 24, 1961, when it said of the United Worshipers Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in that city: "Their agreement is not on just the trivialities of life, but the vital things—rules of conduct, adherence to principles, worship of God."

Because the Bible plays a vital part in the lives of Jehovah's witnesses, they engage in a continual program of Bible education. They want to be certain of God's will, as did the people of Berea whom Paul called noble when "they received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11) Among families of Jehovah's witnesses a portion of the Bible is discussed daily at a convenient time. In addition, they endeavor to read ten or fifteen chapters from the Bible each week, and these are discussed and their practical value demonstrated at one of their weekly congregation meetings. As families they regularly attend meetings to receive Bible instruction. Even training in explaining God's Word to others is given them.

All of this family and congregation Bible study produces a spirit among these united worshipers that is in sharp contrast to the spirit of our strife-ridden world. The *African Weekly*, in its issue of August 30, 1950, noted this in connection with tribesmen when it stated: "Once they join the Watch Tower . . . these Christians do not fight among themselves, . . . Although one is not a member of their church yet one must say that they have love in their hearts."

## ***The Uniting Force of God's Spirit***

This display of love and peace, rather than hate and contention, is in harmony with the inspired words: "We received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God." This spirit that comes from God is another powerful force that unites, for it produces "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." Fruitage like this, especially love, unites; for love "is a perfect bond of union."—1 Cor. 2:12; Gal. 5:22, 23; Col. 3:14.

God's powerful spirit reaches right into the private lives of those receptive to it, uniting them and changing their conduct for good. Said the author of the book *Christians of the Copperbelt*, after visiting different churches: "This attitude of man and woman working together in their family units was very obvious in the homes of Watchtower members we visited. . . . While it was rather difficult in most other congregations to find out who was married to whom, because husbands and wives neither came to the church together nor sat together during the service, the Watchtower families were easily recognized in their meetings as little clusters of father, mother and children." How different from many families where individual members rarely, if ever, unite in common worship!

Further testimony to the power for good that God's spirit produces was incorporated in the United States Congressional Record, 1958, appendix, page A6907. Describing New York City's estimate of an international assembly of Jehovah's witnesses, it said:

"WITNESSES STYLED CITY'S BEST GUESTS—180,000 AT WORLD ASSEMBLY WIN PRAISE FOR COURTESY, QUIETUDE, AND NEATNESS. . . . New Yorkers are unanimous in agreeing that the Witnesses' conduct has been exemplary. . . . Execu-

tive vice president of the New York Convention and Visitor's Bureau, called the Witnesses 'an asset to the community.' He described their behavior as 'out of this world.'"

What a fine effect is produced when the Bible is treated with the respect due it! How marvelous it is when an entire society of people brings forth the fruitage of God's spirit! Great are the peace and unity when persons heed the entreaty to keep "putting up with one another in love, earnestly endeavoring to observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace"—Eph. 4:2, 3.

Here, then, are two powerful forces holding together these united worshipers from all nations—the Bible and the fruitage of God's spirit, especially love.

## ***High Moral Standards***

Nor is this unification taking place at the expense of high moral standards. Whereas the tendency among Christendom's churches is to compromise by condoning or permitting loose morals on the part of their members, Jehovah's witnesses imitate the early Christians and insist on the high moral standards of the Bible.

Before becoming Christians some persons may not have had such standards, but by studying the Bible and learning God's requirements they do as the apostle Paul counseled: "Strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe yourselves with the new personality, which through accurate knowledge is being made new." (Col. 3:9, 10) Paul noted this fine change that took place among these people who were once immoral when he said: "Yet that is what some of you were. But you have been washed clean, but you have been sanctified, but you have been declared righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the spirit of our God."—1 Cor. 6:9-11.

It is uplifting to know that even formerly immoral persons are turned to high moral standards when becoming Jehovah's witnesses, due to the transforming power of God's Word and holy spirit. When newly interested persons associate with congregations of Jehovah's witnesses, they can have confidence that their wives, husbands, sons and daughters are not associating with those who have low morals, but that they are coming into contact with Christians who make high moral standards part of their regular religious practice.

Again testimony verifies this change for good that Bible instruction makes in the lives of many. From Africa, *The Northern News* (April 24, 1959) reported:

"The immense gathering of Jehovah's witnesses now taking place near Ndola is evidence of the remarkable appeal this Christian organization has for Africans. . . . From all accounts those areas in which Jehovah's witnesses are strongest among Africans are now areas more trouble-free than average. Certainly they have been active against agitators, witchcraft, drunkenness and violence of any kind. A close study of the Bible is encouraged."

Due to this close study and practice of Bible principles, paganism, polygamy, witchcraft and all forms of immorality have been abandoned. Nor do Jehovah's witnesses permit any who become immoral, criminal persons to remain in their organization. These people must either repent of their bad practices and conform to Scriptural principles or be disfellowshipped from the Christian community. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) So fornication, adultery, drunkenness, lying, thievery, homosexuality, violence and the like are abandoned by those who become Jehovah's witnesses, regardless of the standards of the community in which they live. This insistence on the Bible's high moral standards furnishes another strong basis for unity, as it did among early Christians.

### **No Political, Nationalistic Barriers**

But what about nationalism and political compromise, which have been permanent barriers to all of Christendom's efforts to unite? These great barriers too have been breached by Jehovah's witnesses.

Instead of putting nationalism first, they have copied the early Christians and have put allegiance to God first. They refuse to compromise their Bible-based convictions. They will not kill their fellowman in time of war, or any other time for that matter. They well know the commandment to love one's neighbor, and how could they do that if they killed their neighbor? Could you imagine Jesus instructing or permitting his disciples to kill one another just because they happened to be living in different nations? Hardly!

Not wanting to be classed as children of Satan is one reason why Jehovah's witnesses avoid the world's divisive ways. "For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should have love for one another; not like Cain, who originated with the wicked one [Satan] and slaughtered his brother." (1 John 3:10-12) So, like the early Christians, Jehovah's witnesses have beaten "their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears." They willingly die rather than compromise with political rulers who ask them to violate God's commandments.—Isa. 2:4.

For this uncompromising stand, thousands of Jehovah's witnesses perished during the second world war, particularly in Hitler's concentration camps. Reported the magazine *Adult Teacher* (November 1956): "Scores of them have endured prison for their refusal to participate in war." But this report noted, "here again their willingness to suffer for a principle wins adherents as it did to early Christianity."

While being law-abiding and submissive to all civil governments, as the Bible com-

mands, these Christians do not carry this to the extent of violating God's laws. They "pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar," but do not forget to pay back "God's things to God." (Matt. 22:21) Hence, when war comes, they feel obligated to "obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) For this reason they are not divided from their brothers in other lands and cannot be induced to kill them. Nor are they torn apart during political elections by supporting different political parties, but they maintain their Bible-based neutrality.

### No Racial, Social Barriers

Racial barriers have been shattered by Jehovah's witnesses through their adherence to God's Word and by the divine fruitage of love. This too has been noticed by the various news media. For example, W. J. Whalen wrote in the July 1964 issue of the *U. S. Catholic*: "I believe that one of the most attractive characteristics of this cult has been its traditional policy of racial equality. Negroes who become Jehovah's Witnesses know they will be welcomed as full human beings."

Social distinctions also disappear, as they did in the time of early Christianity. In this regard Marcus Bach, writing in *Adult Student*, November 1956, said: "Here is actually a group of people, from many walks of life. In the ranks of Jehovah's witnesses are people of every class and culture; but they all hold one element in common: allegiance to Jehovah." Such allegiance results in their regarding one another in a relationship as close as brother and sister. Thus when they call each other 'brother' and 'sister,' it is not just a formalism. As *Die Welt* (*The World*) of Ham-

burg, Germany, (July 22, 1961) said: "This form of address, 'Brother' and 'Sister,' which the 'Witnesses' use in such a matter-of-fact way, really has meaning."

This close, loving Christian family of worshipers is now spread throughout 194 lands and islands of the sea. Realized among them is the unity Jesus prayed for: "That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you." Since nationalistic, political, racial, economic and social barriers have been overcome by them, the atmosphere when they are together is one of peace, joy and loving consideration for one another. Truly it is like being out of this world!—John 17:21.

When Jesus foretold this close, warm, loving family relationship among his followers, he said they would receive "a hundredfold now in this period of time . . . brothers and sisters and mothers and children." (Mark 10:29, 30) This promise is now being fulfilled, as it was among first-century Christians, for to whatever land a member of the Christian family of Jehovah's witnesses travels he has spiritual brothers and sisters that are delighted to see him. He is warmly welcomed into their midst even though of a different race or nationality. If you are Catholic or Protestant, could you expect such hospitality and love from a stranger in another country solely because you belonged to the same religion? It is something to think about.—John 13:34, 35.

The true unity described here is not merely a fanciful idea, a daydream, or wishful thinking. It is not an exaggerated description. It is a fact! True international unification is indeed a reality in the modern-day society of Jehovah's witnesses!

#### ARTICLES IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Do All Good People Go to Heaven?
- Your Time with the Family.
- What Has Happened to the United Nations?
- Pain-killing Drugs.

**T**HE question is, Which religion will you support? One that has been willing to compromise, or one that has attained international unity without compromise? You must decide. Your decision involves two roads.

In his famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus identified these roads when he said: "Go in through the narrow gate; because broad and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are the ones going in through it; whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it."—Matt. 7:13, 14.

Jesus here emphasized that only a minority would follow the narrow uncompromising way leading to life, while the majority would take the spacious road to destruction. But whom was he speaking about? Did he mean that only atheists, agnostics and nonchristians travel the broad, spacious road to destruction? Not at all! Jesus warned that many professed Christians, too, travel that road, for he went on to say:

"Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will. Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?' And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness."—Matt. 7:21-23.



From what Jesus said, it is evident that more than just sincere efforts are required to please God. God's will must be done. His laws must be obeyed. Bible principles must be adhered to. Therefore, if attempts are made to achieve religious unity by violating principles laid down in the Bible, it is detestable in God's sight. For this reason Jesus' words, "I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness," apply to those who are seeking religious unity through compromise.

Almighty God has never approved of uniting truth with error. He made this clear when he gave his law to the Israelites. He warned against their joining interfaith movements with worshipers of false gods. Notice how forcefully he

emphasized that they were not to compromise:

"Watch yourself that you do not conclude a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you are going, for fear it may prove itself a snare in your midst. But their altars you people are to pull down, and their sacred pillars you are to shatter, and their sacred poles you are to cut down. For you must not prostrate yourself to another god, because Jehovah, whose name is Jealous, he is a jealous God; for fear that you may conclude a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, as they will certainly have immoral intercourse with their gods."—Ex. 34:12-16.

Jehovah God requires exclusive worship. He will not allow the widening of the narrow gate by those who violate divine principles. Those who hold fast to these prin-

ciples will be blessed with life in a new system of things where "death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be any more." To attain these blessings you must take in knowledge of God and his purposes now and live in harmony with them. This is what is required to keep on the 'cramped road leading off into life.' O how happy you will be if you get on that road and stay on it!—Rev. 21:3, 4; John 17:3.

On the other hand, if you support efforts to obtain religious unity by compromising Scriptural truth you will be walking the broad way. In fact, that broad road is wide enough to accommodate all the world's religions in one great interfaith movement. But do you want to travel with those who are willing to compromise Bible principles for the sake of unity? Do you desire to unite with religionists who do not live by the Bible's high moral standards and who feel that its doctrines are unimportant? Remember what Jesus said was at the end of that broad road—*destruction*. Is that not good reason to avoid this popular superhighway?

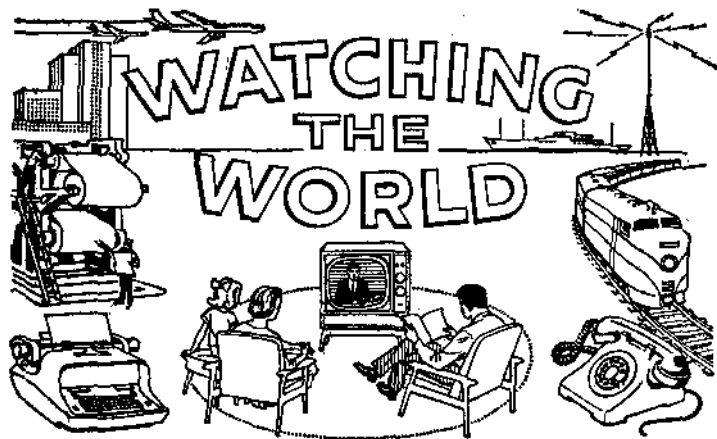
Keep in mind the Bible counsel: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what sharing do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever?" No, the Bible does not recommend unity or brotherhood with those who do not act in harmony with God's will. So heed the inspired admonition: "'Get out from among them, and separate yourselves,' says Jehovah." —2 Cor. 6:14-18.

This is a time of judgment. It is the period the Bible calls "the last days," or "the conclusion of the system of things." In course of fulfillment is the prophecy Jesus

uttered while he was yet on earth: "When the Son of man arrives in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit down on his glorious throne. And all the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another, just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And he will put the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who have my Father's blessing, inherit the kingdom' . . . Then he will say, in turn, to those on his left, 'Be on your way from me, you who have been cursed,' . . . and these will depart into everlasting cutting-off."—Matt. 25:31-34, 41, 46; 24: 3; 2 Tim. 3:1.

Appreciate that you are being separated either for life in God's new system of things, or for destruction with opposers of God. You are traveling either the narrow road of adherence to divine principle, or the broad, spacious road traveled by all those who have rejected the high standards of God's Word. Do not be misled by persons simply because their efforts seem sincere and noble, but let God's Word the Bible be your guide. Learn its divine principles, and examine religious practices, teachings and present interfaith movements in the Bible's divine light. Only in this way will you be able to make a decision that will enable you to walk with those who are on the narrow road to life.

Jehovah's witnesses desire to help you to acquire the knowledge necessary to make this right decision. They will be pleased to conduct a Bible study with you in your own home on a regular basis and free of charge. You are also welcome to attend meetings at their Kingdom Hall in your locality. Avail yourself of this invitation, and experience the rich blessings that come to those who seek religious unity on the basis of God's own Word, the Bible.



### Step Toward Unity

◆ On February 18 what churchmen described as an important step toward religious unity was taken. Roman Catholic Cardinal Bea visited the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, and announced that the "Holy See greets with joy and fully accepts" an invitation from the World Council of Churches "to explore together the possibilities of dialogue and collaboration."

### The Price of Unity

◆ Some Baptist ministers made interesting comments relative to obstacles to religious unity, as reported in the Vancouver *Sun* of December 9, 1964. "What about these doctrinal differences that divide Christendom?" they asked. "Will 'dialogue' dissolve disagreement on such basic doctrines as baptism, Lord's Supper, religious liberty, church government, and the role of the Virgin Mary? . . . Will Protestants accept Immaculate Conception and Bodily Assumption in order to get back into the church?" It is apparent that compromise must be the price of the unity sought by Christendom's leaders!

### Willingness to Compromise

◆ In New York recently a Lutheran missionary, Wesley Sadler, encouraged the admit-

tance of men and women of polygamous households to church membership. Although the Bible makes clear that a Christian can have only one living wife, Sadler said that allowing polygamous persons to be baptized would be "the greatest single act of love" the church could perform.

### A Last-Ditch Struggle?

◆ J. Robert Nelson, an editor for *The Christian Century* and a leader in the ecumenical movement, favors the efforts of churches to unite. But he asks: "Is this drive for unity a last ditch struggle of the church—like a group of drowning people clinging together before going under for the last time?" His answer, "Perhaps so, but perhaps not," reflects the uncertainty of many church leaders.

### Where Ecumenism Is Unpopular

◆ In Roman Catholic countries ecumenism is not popular, as the Toronto *Daily Star* of November 28, 1964, observed: "If you were a Protestant in Spain, where Roman Catholicism is the state religion, you could not be married legally by your minister . . . Spanish Protestants have no legal status. Most Protestant services are held in private homes. The few church buildings which do exist are intermittently locked up by the

police. The plight of Spanish Protestants probably was uppermost in the minds of Catholic progressives when they tried to ram through a Vatican Council declaration in favor of religious liberty. The attempt failed. The machinations of the conservative minority—mainly Spanish and Italian bishops—succeeded in having the declaration shelved."

### Hindus Honor Pope Paul

◆ When Pope Paul VI made his recent visit to Bombay, India, to attend the Roman Catholic Eucharistic Congress, it is reported, a million Indians turned out and pushed and shoved to get a glimpse of him. Showing the Hindu willingness to elevate personages from other religions as gods, *Time* magazine said: "Many of the Hindus believed that to see the Pope and perhaps touch him would heal them or bring them luck."

### Basis for Unity Ignored

◆ At the annual Luther celebration for the entire Evangelical parish the superintendent general of Berlin, Hans Martin Helbich, expressed concern over the church's inadequacies. He said: "Once the Christian community was the vanguard and now it is the rear-guard. The light of the world has become a tail-light." Pointing to the reason for the failure, he continued: "The family Bible appears to have only historical value in most homes or to be in the class of a relic. . . . Taking everything into consideration, at any rate the fact does not dare be suppressed that the Word of God suffers greatly in our midst." True Christian unity is impossible when the Bible, the basis for that unity, is ignored.

### Failure to Use Bible

◆ Methodist minister and professor at a California theological school, K. Morgan Edwards, recently drew attention to the failure of the Methodist

Church to use the Bible. "We have to bring spiritual and Biblical undergirding to our church," he said, as reported in the *Houston Post*. "I am convinced that as a denomination we are going to hell with the wheels spinning and the squeaks oiled out, congratulating ourselves on what a wonderful ecclesiastical organization we have."

#### Barrier to Unity

◆ Involvement in political affairs has resulted in terrible disunity among professed Christians; yet religious leaders still encourage such involvement. "There is no such thing as neutrality in a world such as this one," John E. Hines, the presiding bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, recently asserted, according to the *Houston Chronicle*. "The church must be for-

ever attached to political and social life." How different such counsel is from that given by Jesus Christ, who said that his disciples would be "no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world"!—John 17:16.

#### An Appeal to Renounce War

◆ In a letter printed in the *Presbyterian Life* some time ago one reader expressed his opinion that it was time for the World Council of Churches "to direct all Christians on both sides of the Iron Curtain to withdraw from, or if necessary, desert, all military forces." He said that "it is a sad commentary on the timidity of the orthodox churches that probably the only body of Christians with members on both sides of the Iron Curtain" which already avoids involvement in worldly wars "is the Jehovah's Witnesses."

#### Exceptional Zeal

◆ Writing in the Protestant journal, *Christianity Today*, theologian Harold Lindsell noted the exceptional witnessing zeal of Jehovah's witnesses. Pointing to the difference between them and other religionists, he wrote: "In my own experience, I have observed that the representatives of the Jehovah's Witnesses showed more zeal in my area than any or all of the Protestant denominations in the past 13 years. No Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Episcopalian, or other Protestant ever rang my doorbell; but advocates from Jehovah's Witnesses came at least a dozen times to sell printed material, press their claims, or in other ways represent the cult."



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