Awake!

Learning to Live with Yourself

PAGE 3

Modern "Healers"—Instruments of God?

PAGE 5

The Farmer and World Food Shortages

PAGE 9

Our Awesome Universe

PAGE 16

JUNE 22, 1975

Awake!

June 22, 1975
Vol. 56, Num. 12

Average Printing Each Issue:
9,200,000

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Five cents a copy

Watch Tower Society offices	Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions in local currency
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	$1.50
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 2135	$1.50
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6A 1Z5	$1.50
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	£1.30
Hawaii, 1228 Pensacola St., Honolulu 96814	$1.50
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	$1.50
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Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	P8
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, 1406	R1,10

(Monthly editions cost half the above rates.)

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, New York 11201, U.S.A.

The Bible translation used in "Awake!" is the modern-language "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

Printed in U.S.A.

IN THIS ISSUE

Learning to Live with Yourself	3
Modern "Healers"—Instruments of God?	5
The Farmer and World Food Shortages	9
Profit Incentive—Subtle Enemy of the Hungry World	11
Solomon Islands Lift Ban	14
Our Awesome Universe	16
'Your Child Is Mentally Retarded!'	20
Would You Like to Buy a Painting?	24
Inventor Appraises TV	26
What Is the Bible's View? How About a Game of Cards?	27
Resist Bad Thoughts	28
Watching the World	29

PUBLISHED BY
WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF NEW YORK, INC.
117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
N. H. KNORR, *President* GRANT SUITER, *Secretary*

LEARNING to Live with Yourself

WOULD you try lifting a ten-ton boulder with your bare hands? Or would you attempt to memorize a thirty-volume encyclopedia? Either endeavor would, of course, be impractical. We readily admit that we have physical and mental limitations—at least when it comes to such colossal tasks.

Acknowledging limitations in other matters in everyday life, however, is not always easy. In fact, one of the greatest problems that many people have is learning to recognize their own limitations. Yet, unless a person does so, he cannot experience true satisfaction and happiness.

For instance, we need to realize that our demand for rest and sleep may differ considerably from that of others. Some adults do well with six hours of sleep nightly, or less, while others need nine or more. But, whatever requirements we have personally, it certainly is wise to get sufficient rest and sleep. Otherwise, we may experience energy loss or become nervous and find even normal activity to be difficult and unpleasant.

Similarly, not everyone feels the best when eating all the things that others enjoy. The amount of food needed also differs with individuals. So, in this and other ways, we act prudently if we learn our own needs and take care of ourselves, instead of doing things simply because others do them. Only then are we more likely to enjoy life.

As for personal abilities, there is much opportunity for development, and all of us can learn from others. But the fact remains that not everyone excels in every endeavor. How does that fact of life affect you? For example, someone you know may be an accomplished musician and you may not be. It is a great pleasure to hear him play, is it not? But is there any reason to be discouraged if you are unable to match your friend's skill at music? Why, even under the influence of God's holy spirit, not all persons in the early Christian congregation could do the same things.—1 Cor. 12:27-31.

Actually, the fact that not all individuals excel in the same things provides a basis for appreciating, for highly esteeming, our fellowman. We can enjoy and show gratitude for the work of an expert carpenter or stonemason, a fine seamstress or cook, or an accomplished musician, even if we are unable to do the same things that that one can accomplish. How rich and satisfying life is when we properly esteem the fine qualities and abilities of other people!

On the contrary, if we constantly endeavor to push beyond our capacities, we may ruin our health and thus impose even greater limitations upon ourselves. This might be illustrated by what sometimes happens to very ambitious individuals. Determined to become rich, a man may virtually slave for years, only to discover that he has ruined his health in the process. Perhaps he can now afford to buy good food in abundance. Nevertheless, as the Bible says: "The true God does not enable him to eat from it . . . This is vanity and it is a bad sickness." (Eccl. 6:1, 2) What

real satisfaction and happiness can a person have if he has driven himself to the point of illness only for things that are materialistic?

An individual like the one just described has ignored something very important. It is that human life should have a spiritual side to it. To enjoy true happiness, contentment and satisfaction, humans need to have a proper relationship with God. It has been said: "The fact that man, everywhere at all times, from the beginning to the present day, has felt the impulse to call upon something he believed to be higher and more powerful than himself, shows that religion is innate and should be scientifically recognized. . . . we should stand in awe, amazement and reverence to see the universality of man's search for, and belief in, a supreme being." (*Man Does Not Stand Alone,* by A. Cressy Morrison) A vital part of learning to live with oneself, therefore, should consist of acquiring and applying knowledge of God in one's life. Jesus Christ truthfully said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." —Matt. 5:3.

The person who really has learned to live with himself recognizes that, just as he needs food and rest, so too he has spiritual needs. As a result, he does not allow materialistic pursuits to crowd out spiritual interests. Such an individual agrees with Jesus Christ's remark that "even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) And the spiritually inclined individual can testify to the truthfulness and wisdom of the apostle Paul's statement: "To be sure, it is a means of great gain, this godly devotion along with self-sufficiency. For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things."—1 Tim. 6:6-8.

Could you find contentment in pursuing such a course? It is true that individuals differ as to personal needs, and Jehovah God is not insensitive to this. He recognizes that there are differences among those worshiping him. God does not expect all of them to be alike or to accomplish the same amount in his service. The apostle Paul 'labored in excess of all the apostles.' (1 Cor. 15:9, 10) Apparently he had good mental ability, a fair measure of physical stamina and freedom from family responsibilities. Others could not do as much, perhaps because of various obligations, health limitations and the like. What does God require of each one? That they as individuals truly love him and faithfully do the will of God whole-souled. —Eph. 6:5, 6; Luke 10:26-28.

So, we can serve God acceptably despite our limitations. But that does not rule out the need to put forth unusual effort at times to achieve and maintain a satisfying relationship with Jehovah God. Thus one sixty-year-old man desiring to be baptized in symbol of his dedication to God underwent water immersion for that purpose while seated in a wheelchair. Another witness of Jehovah faced numerous trials during many years of illness prior to his death from cancer in 1974. Nonetheless, when partially disabled, he helped to construct a Kingdom Hall, a house of worship. Later, when confined at home because of his condition, he participated in the congregation's Theocratic Ministry School by recording his Bible talks, which were then played at the meetings. This ailing Christian also found ways to preach the good news of God's kingdom to others, and his spirit was such that visitors often remarked that he built them up more than they hoped to build him up.

Learning to live with ourselves, then, involves significant factors. It includes acknowledging our limitations, as well as taking care of ourselves. Especially vital is realizing our spiritual needs and even making unusual efforts that will enable us to enjoy a proper relationship with the Creator. Surely, such a course will result in the greatest contentment, satisfaction and happiness.

MODERN "HEALERS" —Instruments Of God?

A WEST AFRICAN man suffered lameness for many years. Finally he visited the isolated village of a prominent "prophet," hoping for a cure of his affliction. He paid the prescribed "offering," and days of fasting, meditation and prayer followed. An emotion-charged ritual climaxed the procedure, as the prophet and his prophetesses surrounded the man, singing and calling loudly to Jesus while dancing to the accompaniment of incessant drumming. But alas, no cure was forthcoming!

"You have no faith!" said the prophet.

"But I *did* have faith!" said the disillusioned man. "I had strong faith that God could cure me."

What went wrong? Was it really a lack of faith? Many others claim that they are healed. Why was he not healed?

Recent glowing reports have attracted many sincere, often desperate, people to a variety of modern "healers." The fact that they are gaining some scientific and medical attention is causing even skeptics to take a second look.

Growing "Respectability"

At one time, "faith healers" were associated only with the more radical fundamentalist groups in Christendom. Today, however, even some of the most conservative churches have healers and "healing services" associated with them.

When the well-known American faith healer Oral Roberts recently gave a talk at Atlanta's Memorial Methodist Church, it was "filled to capacity and overflow with mainline ministers, theologians and laymen," reports the Atlanta, Georgia, *Journal*. It notes that "he probably would not have been so warmly received by a similar group even as short a time as two years ago."

Twelve bishops and 700 priests attended last summer's Catholic Charismatic Renewal Conference at the University of Notre Dame. A massive healing service was held at one point in the meetings. Also, the famed Bolivian evangelist-healer Julio Ruibal is a Catholic.

"A few years ago, reports on the exploits of a faith healer would have drawn little more than snorts of derision from the medical community," says senior editor John Carlova of *Medical Economics* maga-

zine. However, some doctors are changing. In his article titled "Even M.D.s Have Faith in This Faith Healer," Carlova describes the activities of healer Olga Worrall, a Methodist, to whom "scores of M.D.s have gone . . . for treatment of their own ailments," and to whom "scores more have unofficially referred 'hopeless' cases."

And the deputy director general of the World Health Organization, Dr. T. Adeoye Lambo, calls for "some of these so-called witch-doctors, whom I would prefer to call *traditional healers,* . . . to be given an official position within the community . . . so that their services too could be incorporated into the overall health services of their nation."—*World Health,* April 1974.

With such a backdrop, it is not surprising that an administrator of the National Institute for Mental Health told the recent convention of the American Psychiatric Association that "there is now a psychic healer on every block, and there's no question that they are effective in some cases. The question is why."

A brief look at features characteristic of modern "healings" will give us some clues to the answer.

Consistently Inconsistent

One is immediately impressed by the diversity among healers. Methods differ, results are often unpredictable, and they attribute their powers to differing sources.

To illustrate, many prominent healers claim that their powers come from Jesus. But others who are said to be equally successful profess no links at all with Christianity. Some use voodoo or witchcraft. Others combine these with Catholicism, especially among Latin Americans. Another noted healer claims that he gained his powers through a Buddhist Lama.

On the other hand, a number of physicians and psychiatrists speculate that some form of "psychic energy" within the healer himself may be involved. Others assert that the patients' self-healing powers are mobilized telepathically by the healer.

Methods vary too. Many "heal" merely by using the name of Jesus in some formula, often after an emotion-charged sermon. Others go through long ritualistic ceremonies involving symbolisms that would repel some observers.

Then there is the controversial "psychic surgery," most notably practiced in the Philippines. These healers claim to remove diseased tissue in an "operation" that penetrates the body, using only the healer's hands as instruments.

Even the matter of faith raises an inconsistency. Most healers demand complete faith from the one seeking a cure. Failure is usually laid to "lack of faith." But one prominent healer declares that 'faith hasn't a thing to do with it.'

Some patients claim that they are completely healed, but others only get "better." Some healers require a number of visits to achieve a gradual "cure," while others are said to do it instantly. None of the healers even claim to be able to heal everyone who comes to them. "It can make you look like a hero one time and a failure the next," says Oral Roberts.

One consistency that does arise on this point is inability among healers to raise the dead. And an observer in Ghana raises the question: 'Why not make lepers clean in Ghana and elsewhere?'

Attitudes about money vary too. Collection baskets usually precede the "healings." Baptist healer David Epley frequently has Sunday collections so large that they have to be hauled away in an armored truck. Yet the Philippine "psychic surgeons" are said to receive only "donations," and it is claimed that Olga Worrall accepts nothing.

Thus it is clear that the main consistency among modern healers is their *in-*

consistency. Does it seem reasonable that instruments of *one* God would have such a diverse array of methods and degrees of success? The God of the Bible is said to be "not the author of confusion, but of peace."—1 Cor. 14:33, *Authorized Version* (*AV*).

If, then, they are not all instruments of one God, can it be said that any *one* healer or group of healers is backed by God? If so, then who or what is backing all the others? The healings reported in the Bible, which many modern healers cite as their precedent, prove whether any are instruments of God.

"Healings" Compared

Biblical healings were strikingly informal. Jesus and his disciples scheduled no "healing services." As they went about their preaching activity, people came to them at all times for healing. The healings were incidental to their preaching and were spontaneous: "[Jesus] saw a great crowd; and he felt pity for them, and he cured their sick ones." What could be more spontaneous than the occasion when a lame beggar asked for alms from Peter and John as they passed him on the temple steps? Instead of alms, he was given a sound body.—Matt. 14:13, 14; 15:29-31; Acts 3:1-7.

They required no emotional ritual. Usually a few words sufficed: "Get up, pick up your cot and walk." (John 5:8; Acts 3:6) At times even a touch without any words was enough. (Matt. 8:14, 15; 14:36) No "operation" was ever performed, either with the hands or any other instruments.

It was reported that those who came to an apostle of Jesus Christ for healing "would one and all be cured." And *"every sort* of disease" could be cured by Jesus; even the dead were raised. (Acts 5:15, 16; Matt. 4:23; 8:16; 10:1) There were no halfway cures, where the patient merely got "better." Nor did the healings require additional visits for "psychic surgery" or other ritual to finish the job. They were complete and instantaneous.—Acts 3:7, 16; John 5:5-9; Matt. 8:3, 13; 12:10, 13.

It is true that many of the cured displayed strong faith, but *not once* did their own lack of faith abort a cure. Many did not even know who was curing them. A blind man said of Jesus after being healed: "And who is he, sir, that I may put faith in him?" (John 9:36; 5:13) Could dead ones who were raised exercise faith beforehand? (Luke 7:12-15) Thus, when some disciples could not immediately cure a certain boy, Jesus rested the responsibility squarely on *their own lack of faith* and healed the boy himself.—Matt. 17:14-20.

In striking contrast to the frequent pre-healing money collections at modern services, Jesus' disciples took no collections. But, on occasion, *after* the cures they did distribute food *freely* to all.—Matt. 14:14-21; 15:30-38.

The foregoing are some major differences between Biblical healings and those of modern healers. Does it seem reasonable that the latter could be instruments of the same God who acted so differently back there? Has God changed his methods? Has his power become more limited? Does he now discriminate between those he heals and those he lets suffer? A confusing situation, is it not? Yet, as already noted, the God of the Bible is "not the author of confusion."—1 Cor. 14:33, *AV*.

However, there is another deficiency among modern healers that overshadows even the foregoing dilemmas.

Kingdom Missing

What was the main thrust of Jesus' ministry? Was it healing? No. The Bible says that "Jesus went about all Galilee, *teaching* in their synagogues, and *preaching the gospel of the kingdom,* and [secondarily]

healing all manner of sickness." (Matt. 4:23, *AV*) He told some who wanted him to stay and continue healing them: "I must *preach* the good news of *the kingdom of God* to the other cities also; *for I was sent for this purpose.*" He sent out his disciples for this same primary purpose.—Luke 4:43, *Revised Standard Version* (*RS*); Mark 1:38; Matt. 10:7, 8; Luke 9:2, 60.

Consistent with this, Jesus did not even mention healing when he predicted the activities of true Christians at the "close of the age." Rather than healing, he prophesied that they would be *'preaching this gospel of the kingdom* throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations.' —Matt. 24:3, 9-14, *RS;* Mark 13:9-13.

How many modern healers make God's kingdom the *heart* of their ministry? How many teach the people that the Kingdom is a real, everlasting government set up by God that "shall break in pieces all these [present] kingdoms and bring them to an end"?—Dan. 2:44, *RS;* 7:13, 14; Isa. 9:6, 7.

Rather than directing attention to God's kingdom as the remedy for man's ills in harmony with Jesus' prophecy, do not most modern "healers" focus on healing instead? And are they not often identified with conservative, patriotic attitudes, even though the Bible says that all the now-existing kingdoms of men will be 'broken in pieces' by God's kingdom?—John 17:14, 16; 18:36.

Healings reported in the Bible never overshadowed the real thrust of Christianity. They were only *supplementary* to preaching the "gospel of the kingdom." They served to prove that God himself was backing the preaching of the young Christian congregation. (Heb. 2:3, 4) They also demonstrated on a limited scale what God will do world wide when he brings permanent physical healing under his kingdom. (Luke 10:9; Rev. 21:1-4; compare 2 Peter 3:13.) Thus healing became obsolete, as did other miraculous spiritual gifts, once the Christian congregation became firmly established.—1 Cor. 13:8-12, *RS.*

Source of Modern "Healings"

It follows, then, that any who now divert attention from God's kingdom, though waving the banner of Christ's name, could not truly be instruments of God. Foreseeing this, Jesus predicted that 'miracle workers' in our day would cry: "Lord, Lord, did we not . . . cast out demons *in your name,* and do many mighty works *in your name?*" His answer shows whether he is the one backing them: "I never knew you; depart from me, you evildoers." He would have nothing to do with those subverting the Kingdom message in favor of "miracles."—Matt. 7:21-23, *RS.*

This fact identifies the backer of such activities as one who opposes God's heavenly kingdom in favor of existing invisible "principalities" and "powers, . . . the world rulers of this present darkness." (Eph. 6:11, 12, *RS*) The Bible identifies that one as "Satan," who shrewdly "disguises himself as an angel of light" to deceive people. "So it is not strange," it continues, "if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness."—2 Cor. 11:13-15, *RS;* compare 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10.

Do not allow yourself to be sidetracked from God's real purpose to bring permanent physical healing through his Kingdom government. Is it not wiser now to experience the far more important healing of our personalities by having them "renewed in knowledge" through the spiritual healing power of God's Word? Thereby we can ensure our place as fit subjects of that grand Kingdom.—Col. 3:9, 10, *RS;* Eph. 4:22, 23.

The Farmer and World Food Shortages

MOST of the working people in the world—yes, three out of every four—live on farms and are often desperately poor. The vast majority of these poor are in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In good years, they eke out enough food for themselves, their families and possibly a few others. In bad years, many starve.

In the more industrialized sectors of the world a smaller percentage of people produce food for the majority of the population. One of the most productive lands is the United States, where, although small farms exist, large ones predominate.

Bountiful Production

In the some forty years since the Great Depression, the increase of corn per acre in the U.S. has almost quadrupled, going from an average of 22 bushels to 84. Wheat has jumped from 13 bushels to 31; and rice, from 2,100 pounds per acre to 4,600, on the average.

In 1974, with more land than ever under cultivation, the U.S. farmer produced almost 1.8 billion bushels of wheat, second only to the Soviet Union. The 1974 U.S. corn crop was 4.6 billion bushels, the largest in the world. And 36 million head of cattle were slaughtered, a 7-percent increase over 1973.

This tremendous bounty of food is produced by only 2.8 million farmers in a nation of 208 million people. That means that each farmer feeds about 74 Americans.

Although this food is produced at a fairly modest price when compared to many other countries, persons on fixed incomes and those in lower economic brackets have been paying a rising percentage of their money for food. While farmers may sympathize with the hardships of others, they too face financial problems.

What Farmers Feel Forced to Do

The U.S. farmer would like to help feed the poor throughout the world, and he has provided considerable food for millions of starving people in other lands. Between the years 1965 and 1972, the United States says, it provided 84 percent of all so-called "food aid" in the world. However, only 20 percent of what is allocated for "food aid" by the U.S. goes to famished nations; the rest is sold to those who can pay the price.

Profit is considered vital, since the way the U.S. agriculture system operates requires the farmer to make money on what he produces if he is to stay in business. And to try to make known their need to make a profit, some farmers have taken drastic measures. In several states they killed hundreds of calves and threw them into ditches to rot.

Of course, farmers may admit that such killing is a shameful waste of food, but a cattle farmer from Motley, Minnesota, adds: "It's also a shame for a farmer to work a year and find out he's $20,000 or

$30,000 in the hole. . . . I think that's a lot bigger shame than dumping some of this meat in the pit."

Varied Circumstances

Recent economic developments have hit many farmers hard. For example, to bring a calf to the point where it can be sold for veal has, at times, cost farmers more in grain than they received for the animal at the market. Likewise, the feed used to produce one hundred pounds of milk can cost more than the milk itself. As a result, in Wisconsin nearly ten dairies a day were recently reported to be closing.

On the other hand, some farmers are doing well financially. One, who farms about a hundred acres in Iowa, admits: "I can truthfully agree with the Secretary of Agriculture that I never had it so good. So my conclusion is, it depends on where one lives. Here it is good, at other places it is very bad."

But even those who had an excellent year know that their condition can change almost overnight. Thus, in 1974 grain farmers generally made good money, since grain sold for high prices. But many cattlemen who needed the expensive grain to feed their cattle went bankrupt.

Why this uncertainty and lopsidedness?

Basic Farm Problems

Many farmers consider the weather a number one problem, and expert meteorologists confirm that recent peculiar weather patterns are hurting farmers. To take one instance: In Iowa last year, heavy, devastating rains washed out much land, preventing early planting. Then a sizzling July with temperatures of 100 degrees Fahrenheit ruined vast sections of crops, only to be followed by a record-breaking early frost on September 2.

A major new problem is the tremendous increase in the price of petroleum, upon which modern agriculture is dependent. It has been estimated that the equivalent of eighty gallons of gasoline is used to produce just one acre of corn. The operation of farm equipment, as well as the production of commercial fertilizers, requires petroleum. In 1972 petroleum-base fertilizer was $65.50 per ton; by 1974 farmers were paying $175.00.

Also, the cost of farm machinery has skyrocketed. In some cases a tractor that cost $7,800 about two years ago now costs twice that much. Even at that, at times manufacturers did not keep up with demand and farmers had to wait three to six months for delivery of new equipment. Getting replacement parts was sometimes a bigger job than buying a new tractor, so some farmers buy two tractors or combines, even at inflated prices, just in case one breaks down at a critical time. In the long run, they figure, it costs them less than would the loss of the crops.

Seed prices too have risen astronomically. The average cost of seed corn rose over 30 percent between 1974 and 1975. Also, baling wire, used to bale hay, has gone up over 400 percent in three years.

Then there is the somewhat related problem of farm labor. When the farmer is forced to use unskilled labor to run his equipment, many repairs are often needed. One Midwest farmer, listing the reasons why he quit the farming business, put as the first point: "The difficulty in hiring honest and dependable labor."

There are dozens—possibly hundreds—of "little things" that seem to have hit the farmer at one time, resulting in a tremendous collective blow. Yet, at the same time, there has been pressure to produce more because of food shortages. But rising costs often make expansion difficult.

Farmland, for another example, is steadily increasing in price. In the state of New Jersey, it now costs, on the average, over

$2,000 per acre! And, says the Denison (Iowa) *Review:* "This year's [1974] statewide 31 per cent jump in the value of all grades of farm land comes on the heels of a 32 per cent rise in 1973."

For these and other reasons farmers say that they must now have higher prices for their products.

Setting the Prices of Farm Products

Yet, farmers say, they are locked into an economic system that does not allow them to set the price of their own product. Farmers charge that they must take the price they are offered for their products, which may be less than what it costs to produce them. But, then, just suppose that farmers could set their own prices. Would the whole world somehow be better off?

Frankly, consider: How many grain farmers, who did quite well last year, shared their wealth with not-so-prosperous cattle farmers? The Seattle (Washington) *Times,* reporting on the state's recent Association of Wheat Growers' meeting in Spokane, says: "The farmers . . . obviously enjoy their prosperity . . . If wheat farmers finally seem to be in the driver's seat, they are not about to apologize for it."

The farmer, actually, is just part of an economic system that, in effect, demands that each person look out for himself. It is based on the so-called profit incentive. Consider the effects that this incentive has had in a time when the world is calling for more food.

Profit Incentive
—SUBTLE ENEMY OF THE HUNGRY WORLD

UNITED STATES exports accounted for one in every five acres harvested in the country during 1973. If that huge export market is closed or is too tightly restricted, farm products pile up in the U.S. and this results in sagging prices. Then what happens?

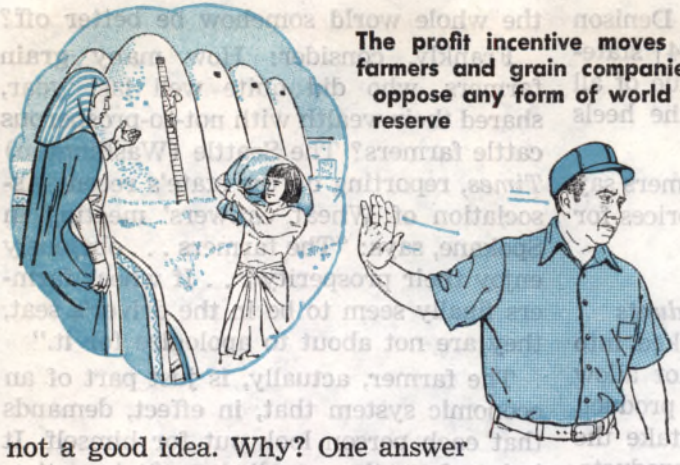
The farmer may purposely grow less food. To continue flooding the market with food would bring yet lower prices.

Not surprisingly, therefore, when *Farm Chemicals* journal asked U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz what would happen if farm prices declined, he responded: "Agricultural production also will decline." Yes, farmers have concluded, says an observer in Iowa, that 'the name of the game is profits.'

On the other hand, the same profit incentive has produced a euphoria among many farmers. Until events of the last couple of years shattered many farmers' serene picture, they believed that there was no end to the money that they could make. But some who invested more and more money in their desire for big profits are now overwhelmingly in debt.

The profit incentive has also moved many farmers to oppose world food reserves. If you are not a farmer, the idea of setting aside an ample storage of grain during abundant years to provide for lean ones probably seems reasonable. The Bible records how this was done in ancient Egypt in the days of Joseph, a fact noted by any number of world food reserve advocates. —See Genesis chapters 41-47.

But, to many American farmers, this is



The profit incentive moves most farmers and grain companies to oppose any form of world food reserve

not a good idea. Why? One answer comes from a former assistant U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, who told farmers that they would have to fill and fund any world food reserve. The need for exports would then dwindle, and a major base of the farmer's income would slip from under him. *Farm Journal* asked experts if the reserve could be set up without adversely affecting prices for the farmer. The answer was a plain "No!"

The profit incentive could therefore produce disastrous worldwide results.

Is the Middleman Reaping Profits?

If the farmer is not getting rich from rising prices, who is? Many farmers and consumers point to "The Middleman." Who is that?

The term is used to describe everybody involved in the food picture from the time the food leaves the farmer until you purchase it at the grocery store. Farmers blame packers, shippers, managers of supermarkets and others for higher food prices. Yet each of these groups claims that they, like the farmer, are victims of inflation and that they must raise prices as their own costs go up. All they want, they say, is an honest profit to support themselves and to stay in business. In other words, they are just part of the system.

Farmers also blame market speculators and large food commodity companies for higher prices. How valid are such charges?

When a farmer has some major food commodity to sell, such as grain, he does not ordinarily sell it directly to a bakery or someone else that will actually put it to use. Rather, it is taken to a local grain elevator where it is bought and at least temporarily stored. The price that the farmer is paid at the elevator is determined by the 'commodity market.'

The Board of Trade keeps track of the amount of grain (and other commodities) coming into elevators all over the country, letting prospective buyers know what is for sale. Then it accepts orders from buyers. The supply available in bins around the U.S. weighed against the demand for that supply from buyers determines the price that the farmer is paid for his grain.

Speculators buy commodities for a certain price, much as someone might purchase stocks on the stock exchange. The speculator does not actually buy the grain; he has no intention of ever taking delivery of it, but merely waits for its price on the market to go up. Then he sells and realizes a profit. These men, argue the farmers, even though they have no direct connection with growing food, are major contributors to higher food costs.

But the speculators remind farmers that they, too, are just part of the system, merely interested in an honest profit. They take a big chance every time that they invest. Prices do not always go up, they point out, and when they go down, speculators can suffer devastating losses.

In any event, the speculator says, somebody must own the grain after it leaves the farmer's hands and before it reaches

the actual user. If the speculator did not risk his money to pay for what amounts to "storing" that grain, then, he notes, somebody else would have to do so; thus, *somebody* would have to be paid what the speculator is getting.

And what about the big grain companies? Do they manipulate the market, that is, conspire together so as to make tremendous profits? Of course, the possibility always exists that someone *could* control the market in some way for their benefit. But possibility is by no means proof. Like the farmer and all the rest of the "middlemen," the grain companies too claim that they only want to make a decent profit. And it is for this reason that they sell most of the grain that is exported from the U.S. to "rich," not "poor," nations! The poor cannot afford it.

The huge American agriculture system based on profits, while partly successful, cannot continue to work indefinitely. It is like a pup chasing its own tail. Because everyone along the way wants, and necessarily *needs,* to make money according to the present economic system, food does not reach the ones who cannot afford to buy it or have someone buy it for them.

The St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* therefore concludes: "The food picture includes farmers on one hand, grocery shoppers on the other and a bewildering maze in between known as the middlemen. Pinpointing a villain, if there is one, is next to impossible."

"Put this all together and what have you got?" asks *Harper's* magazine. Its answer: "A prescription for a system on the verge of collapse."

Obviously, some better system is needed. What?

Hope for the Hungry

Would not a system based on unselfishness, on true love and concern for others be better than the present profit-incentive system? But who can establish and put in operation such a new system?

The Creator of the earth and humankind can. And the Bible reveals that it is his purpose to do so. The Kingdom government for which Jesus Christ taught his followers to pray will see to it that a righteous new earthly system will soon be established. (Matt. 6:9, 10; 2 Pet. 3:13) The Bible promises that at that time "the earth itself will certainly give its produce; God, our God, will bless us." (Ps. 67:6) Earth will be a paradise.

Why not let Jehovah's witnesses explain to you from the Bible what the rule by God's kingdom will eventually mean for the whole earth? You can reach them by writing to the publishers of this magazine.

But under the present system of things, what about farming? Many farmers do not want to quit farming. They appreciate that their chosen life has many fine benefits. A Wisconsin farmer notes: "There is the satisfaction of having your own business. It is enjoyable to work with animals and watch them grow up, going through their various playful stages of life. It is enjoyable, too, to see crops of grain and hay grow and to harvest it each year. A farmer can set his own work schedule and be with his family many times each day. So there is an enjoyable part to farming also. Many farmers feel that their occupation brings them close to God."

They love farming. But they detest the oppressive worldwide system that will work honest men—farmers, packers, sellers, shippers, distributors—day and night, give them minimum returns for their labors and then somehow never get the food to the people that really need it. With real fervency, such people pray to God for the realization of his promise: "Let *your* kingdom come. Let *your* will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth."—Matt. 6:9, 10.

SOLOMON ISLANDS Lift Ban

DECEMBER 30, 1974, brought special rejoicing to Jehovah's witnesses in the Solomon Islands. That date marked the lifting of a ban that had prohibited the importing and distributing of the periodicals *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* in those Pacific islands. The ban had continued in force for eighteen years.

What brought about the ban on these magazines? Did this cripple the work of Jehovah's witnesses in the Solomon Islands? What led to the lifting of the ban?

Jehovah's witnesses have been active in the Solomon Islands since the early 1950's. During that time a native Solomon Islander, desirous of gaining Bible knowledge, was corresponding with the Watch Tower Society's office in Australia. In those days there was also a European, a British subject, serving as one of Jehovah's witnesses in the Solomon Islands.

Then came March 23, 1956. On that day a proclamation by John Gutch, a British official and high commissioner for the Western Pacific, prohibited the importation into the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (B.S.I.P.) of certain publications printed by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, including the two magazines mentioned above.

Shortly thereafter, the European Witness was expelled from the Protectorate. Some may have thought that that would mark the end of the Witnesses in these islands. But things did not work out that way.

The native Solomon Islander mentioned above, who had written to the Watch Tower Society, continued to absorb Bible truth. He and two other natives began sharing the Bible's message with their neighbors in 1957. This man became the first native of these islands to be baptized as one of Jehovah's witnesses.

Though not allowed to use *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* in their public preaching activities, these zealous Christians worked hard. By August of 1958, there were 11 of Jehovah's witnesses active in the Solomon Islands. A year later the number jumped to 86, with 49 of them having been baptized during the previous twelve months. By August of 1962, there were 239 Witnesses in the Solomon Islands, and now their number has grown to more than 600.

Solomon Islanders have a hearty spiritual appetite. This is evident from the fact that 2,000 regularly attend local assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses. And 2,477 showed up for the observance of the Memorial of Christ's death on April 7, 1974.

It seemed fitting, therefore, to intensify efforts to get the ban on the two main publications of Jehovah's witnesses removed. How was this accomplished?

Increased Efforts to Get Ban Lifted

The ban had been imposed under British rule. By the latter part of 1973, however, the British Solomon Islands Protector-

ate was near to attaining self-government. The largely indigenous Governing Council continued to receive more responsibilities. This seemed to be a good time to increase efforts to get the ban lifted.

A Witness who was a native Solomon Islander approached the Secretariat in Honiara and was advised to write to the Chief Secretary. This was done, but time passed with little result. Some members of the Governing Council, who were mostly natives, were approached personally to see if they would raise the matter in the next Council sitting. A few indicated that they would do so, but nothing came of this.

Next, the International Bible Students Association, a legal corporation for Jehovah's witnesses, wrote to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London. The reply stated in part: "What ultimately transpires must be a decision of the B.S.I.P. Government and it would not be appropriate for H.M.G. [Her Majesty's Government] to overrule decisions made locally on matters that are primarily of concern to the local population." Thus it was necessary once again to approach local leaders.

Then came a new development. There was an election of a Chief Minister and other Ministers who formed a Legislative Assembly. Arrangements were made for an interview with the Chief Minister. He suggested that a petition be made up and addressed to the Governor and signed by as many of Jehovah's witnesses as possible. This was done, and on November 16, 1974, a petition containing 650 signatures was presented to the Governor. Copies were also provided for the Chief Minister and for all other Ministers of the Legislative Assembly. The petition contained relevant passages with regard to the protection of "Fundamental Rights and Freedoms" guaranteed under Chapter 1 of the British Solomon Islands Order 1974. In part, the petition said:

"We respectfully draw your attention to the First Point under Clause 10 of Chapter 1 of the 1974 Order. 'Except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of expression, and for the purposes of this section the said freedom includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference, *freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference,* and freedom from interference with his correspondence.' It is our belief that the Christian body of Jehovah's Witnesses has been deprived of their 'freedom to receive ideas and information without interference,' due to the[ir] not being able to receive *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines and other publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Furthermore, it is believed that they have not enjoyed full 'freedom to communicate ideas and information without interference' due to the[ir] not being able to distribute the aforementioned publications."

Did this petition bring good results? A letter from Government House dated February 11, 1975, and signed by the Governor of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate included the following:

"Please refer to the Petition dated 6 November 1974 signed by yourself and others. As you will probably have noticed, on 30 December 1974 the Schedule to Proclamation No. 1 of 1956 was amended by deletion of the following terms:–

"'Any past or future issues of periodical "Awake!"'

"'Any past or future issues of periodical "Watchtower".'

"This means that you are at liberty to import and distribute these magazines. I should be grateful if you would inform the other petitioners."

Recent governmental changes in the Solomon Islands have indeed resulted in greater freedom to communicate ideas. This generates hope in Jehovah's witnesses that other things requested, such as permission to bring missionaries into the Protectorate, will be granted in due time.

OUR AWESOME UNIVERSE

FOR thousands of years people have marveled at the starry heavens. On a clear night a person cannot help being impressed by the beauty and majesty of the stars that can be seen.

Those who think about what they see often wonder: Just what is "out there"? How is it organized? Is there any end to it? Where did it come from?

Probing the Universe

Today more is known about the universe than ever before. In the last few decades all sorts of instruments have been invented to aid scientists in probing for answers to their questions.

Now there are more powerful optical telescopes to look at the stars and to photograph them. Newer, larger radio telescopes capture the radio signals coming from space. And advanced instruments that can analyze the light and heat from stars are now widely used.

In addition, scientists have radar and man-made satellites. These are useful for probing our nearby solar system, that is, our sun and its planets and moons.

From all these sources a flood of information, as well as resulting theories, has been flowing. And a number of things have become evident. One is that the universe has proved to be far, far more awesome than anyone had ever imagined, *making* the mind stagger when one considers the immensity and complexity of it all. *National Geographic* magazine observed that what man is now learning has "left him stunned."

It has also made a shambles of many previous theories about the universe. As the *Geographic* said: "Exciting new information now pouring forth in ceaseless torrents is shattering our ideas about the universe."

However, at times fresh bits of information are used as the basis of a new theory that may not really be any closer to the truth than the one it replaced. Dr. James Van Allen of the University of Iowa called to mind what someone once said: "There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact."

Another thing that is being revealed is how little scientists really know about the universe. No matter how extensive their observations, photographs and recordings, they still admit that humans have only scratched the surface of knowledge about space. That should humble us all, and should increase our respect for the Creator of such an awesome arrangement.

Awesome Size

Only about fifty years ago, astronomers who were taking pictures of the heavens noticed some fuzzy, cloudlike formations on their photographic plates. It was assumed that these were nearby clouds of gases. But as larger, more accurate telescopes were constructed, the "gases"

turned out to be something far more immense and significant—galaxies.

A galaxy is a vast, rotating group of stars, gas and dust. Galaxies have been called "island universes," for each one of them is indeed like a universe. The earth, sun and other planets of the solar system are a tiny part of our galaxy, which is called the "Milky Way." This name is derived from the Greek word *galaxias,* which means "milky way."

Our Milky Way galaxy is only an average-size one. Yet it is immense, containing about *one hundred billion stars,* as well as the planets of our solar system and other material such as gases and dust. Its diameter is so vast that if you could travel as fast as the speed of light, 186,282 miles *a second,* it would take you 100,000 *years* to cross it! How many miles is that? Well, since light travels about six trillion miles in a year, multiply that by 100,000 and you have the answer: our galaxy is about 600 quadrillion miles in diameter! That is the number six followed by seventeen zeros.

It is almost impossible for the human mind to comprehend such size and distance. And yet, that is just the beginning of what is "out there." Even more staggering is this fact: so many galaxies have now been detected that it is said they 'are as common as blades of grass in a meadow.' A current estimate of their number is *one hundred billion.* No, not one hundred billion *stars,* but one hundred billion *galaxies!* And each one of them contains billions of heavenly bodies.

An idea of how numerous galaxies are can be gained from a report issued by scientists using the huge 200-inch Hale telescope on Mount Palomar, California. They examined the space as far as the telescope could see beyond the small area enclosed by just the bowl of the star pattern called the Big Dipper. How many galaxies do you think they found there? The next time you are out on a clear night, look at the bowl of the Big Dipper. As you do, call to mind that about *one million galaxies* have been found in the space beyond that small area!

In all their research, have scientists been able to detect the "end," or "outer limit" of the universe yet? No, they have not. Although with ever more powerful instruments they have penetrated farther and farther into space, they can see no end to the fantastic expanse of the heavens. But they have learned something very unique about galaxies.

Our solar system looks immense, yet it is dwarfed when placed in its position in our "Milky Way" galaxy. There are billions of galaxies

Clusters of Galaxies

The billions of galaxies are not scattered at random, as though thrown about haphazardly in space. Instead, they are arranged in definite groups, called "clusters." Thousands of these groups already have been observed and photographed.

Some clusters contain only a few galaxies. Our Milky Way galaxy, for example, is in a cluster of about twenty galaxies. Within this local group, the closest to us are two galaxies less than 200,000 light-years away, both named after the explorer Ferdinand Magellan. Another "near" neighbor can be seen on a clear night without a telescope, in the constellation of Andromeda. It is a spiral-shaped galaxy like ours, and it is about three million light-years distant.

Other clusters are made up of thousands of galaxies. One such cluster, about 100,000,000 light-years distant from the earth, is located in the direction of the constellation Coma Berenices. That one cluster is made up of about 10,000 galaxies!

The distance between galaxies within a cluster can be from a few hundred thousand light-years to a few million light-years. But the distance from one cluster to another may be a hundred times that.

Problem for Many Scientists

The size of the universe is truly awesome. But so is its very unique arrangement of galaxies, and clusters of galaxies. Such superb organization suggests an Organizer. Also, all those heavenly bodies are governed by definite physical laws. That suggests a Lawgiver. And on earth, ever so many special conditions exist for life, suggesting a purposeful Life-Giver. Commenting on this, *Science News* says:

> "The universe we see around us looks to us unique, and when we study it a little we begin to see that it has certain very special properties without which we could not exist. . . . they seem to require very special initial conditions.
>
> "The laws of physics that operate in our universe seem very special too."

These things bother scientists who are evolutionists and atheists. These feel that the universe "evolved" by itself, without a Supreme Organizer, Lawmaker, and Life-Giver.

But that is contrary to reason and to our experience. Everything organized has an organizer. Every law has a lawmaker. Every living thing on earth has a parent. Should not the far more complex organization and laws in the universe, as well as life on earth, have an Organizer, Lawmaker and Life-Giver too? An article in *Scientific American* notes:

> "As we look out into the universe and identify the many accidents of physics and astronomy that have worked together to our benefit, it almost seems as if the universe must in some sense have known that we were coming."

The more that is learned about the universe, the more evident it becomes that there is design behind it, which requires a Designer. Regarding this, *Science News* states:

> "Contemplation of these things disturbs cosmologists because it seems as if such particular and precise conditions could hardly have arisen at random. One way to deal with the question is to say the whole thing was contrived and lay it on Divine Providence."

Are most scientists willing to do that? No, but humble persons are willing. They acknowledge that such immensity, precision, law, and unique conditions for life could never happen by accident, but are the products of a superior mind.

The Bible book of Isaiah says: "Raise your eyes high up and see. Who has created these things? It is the One who is

bringing forth the army of them even by number, all of whom he calls even by name." Yes, it is the Almighty God Jehovah.—Isa. 40:26.

Expanding Universe?

Since many astronomers do not believe in a God that controls the universe, this has led to conflicting theories about the nature and future of it.

In 1929 astronomer Edwin Hubble concluded that the universe was steadily expanding. Later observations of other astronomers seemed to confirm that the clusters of galaxies were moving apart from one another. This theory apparently supported the idea that the universe began with a "big bang," from a central mass, and then spread out from there.

Some astronomers now suggest that the rate of expansion is slowing down slightly. They think that eventually this expansion will come to a halt, and that then gravity will pull the galaxies inward, back to where they began, merging in a mass of matter. Then, they theorize, that will "blow up" again in another "big bang." This process, some believe, will be repeated over and over again, so that the universe would be "oscillating." How much time is given for such a process? About eighty billion years for each cycle—forty billion to expand, and forty billion to contract.

How sound are such calculations? Admittedly it is all speculation. Scientists do not know what will happen in the future. True, today their instruments seem to indicate an expanding universe—but one that is slightly slowing down. Yet, in view of the repeated abandoning of past theories, it would be foolhardy to think that such present theories are ultimate truths.

For instance, scientists admit that the amount of matter in the universe does not appear to be nearly enough to supply the powerful gravity needed to slow down, stop, and then reverse the expansion believed to be taking place. If that is so, then the clusters of galaxies would continue to fly apart forever, as many astronomers contend.

Yet, Dr. James Gunn of the California Institute of Technology notes that it has long been known that there is also not enough material to provide the gravity needed even to hold the galaxies together in clusters. So every cluster of galaxies should long ago have broken up. Each galaxy should long ago have drifted away from the others in its group. But, admittedly, that has not been the case, for they are bound together in clusters.

It is obvious that, while much has been learned about the awesome universe we live in, far more is unknown. Theories come and go. What was "certain" yesterday is uncertain today. Thus, after a recent astronomers' conference, the New York *Times* stated: "As has become evident in the talks here, there is still no consensus as to the nature of the cosmos." And *Science News* concluded: "To sum it all up, cosmology is far from settled (if we can hope that it ever will be). Observation, theory and argument bubble on."

What is wrong with nearly all the present theories is that they ignore the Creator and his purpose. Are we to think that the loving God would create such an awesome universe, meticulously prepare the earth for human habitation, then allow the universe to come together in a mass and thus destroy it all? That is not in any way consistent with His stated purpose. God's Word declares that the "One who firmly established" the earth "did not create it simply for nothing," but "formed it even to be inhabited."—Isa. 45:18.

"Your Child is MENTALLY RETARDED!"

"YOUR baby is mongoloid. She is mentally retarded and will never be normal. Think in terms of an institution for her."

Those were the chilling words of the obstetrician who had delivered our baby just fifteen minutes earlier.

It was about midnight and my wife was under sedation. That was surely the longest and loneliest night of my life. Any hope that the doctor had made a mistake was shattered before daybreak when a pediatrician confirmed the diagnosis. My wife had to be told and a decision made.

By 9 a.m. I had broken the news to my wife. By 9:30 we had prayerfully decided that whatever the future might hold, the baby should enjoy the warm atmosphere of our home.

But less than an hour later the doctor rushed in to advise us that the baby was vomiting blood, and must be transferred immediately to the local children's hospital. It was a wild ride through the city, and our arrival immediately led to a confrontation over our Bible-based refusal, as Jehovah's witnesses, to allow blood transfusion.

By that evening I was told that the bleeding appeared to have subsided and might only have been blood swallowed during birth. However, the heart had begun to waver. Apparently the child had serious congenital heart defects, and I was informed that she could not possibly live through the night.

By the next morning, however, she had proved the doctors wrong, as she would many times in the future. The bleeding had stopped. Her weak little heart was still pumping away. For the next eight days we watched her through the glass walls of her incubator as she maintained her struggle to live. How marvelously the Creator has planted in all humans, even the very young and weak, an overwhelming tenacity to live! Although the medical staff expected her to live only a short time, they said we could now take her home.

As I sit here writing, a delightful, happy little blonde girl, now ten years old, plays on the floor beside me. She has just finished dialing the telephone for a long consultation with her grandmother about the health of her favorite doll. It is difficult to believe that she is the same child that we watched over, night after night, more than ten years ago, as her life hung in the balance.

The next crisis came only a few days after we brought her home from the hospital. She would eagerly take her bottle but could keep nothing down. The doctors thought she might have an intestinal ob-

struction. But she was so weak that it seemed impossible to contemplate surgery.

Returned to the Hospital

A few days later, however, she had to be returned to the hospital, since an intestinal obstruction was now definite. She would certainly die without surgery. The pediatrician in charge informed us that the surgeon would like to see us in his office.

My wife and I sat before his desk, bracing ourselves for another stand on blood transfusion. But we were wrong. His concern was not for permission to use blood. "Your child," he said, "is mentally retarded. She will always be a burden to you and to the community. If she were my child she would not have surgery. Give me permission to pull out the intravenous tubes and she will be dead in just a few hours."

Stunned, we drove home, promising that he would have an answer within an hour.

For a serious thirty minutes we prayerfully and Scripturally considered the doctor's recommendations, but there was really only one decision to make. We both had respect for the sanctity of life. Apart from the religious and moral aspects of the matter, there was also the simple fact that we loved the baby. Retarded or normal, we wanted her to enjoy life. Who could really know the extent of her retardation? As promised, within the hour the doctor had his instructions, and within two hours she was on his operating table.

A fine surgeon, an excellent hospital and staff, no blood transfusion, and she lived! But the next crisis quickly followed. A frantic call from the surgeon. She was so dehydrated that the stitching would not hold. Everything had come apart. The surgery would have to be completely redone. This time there was little chance that she could survive. But what a reversal in the outlook of the doctor! Her power to live had sparked his admiration. "I take a medical swipe at her, and she just swings right back," he confessed. Now he was so anxious to keep her alive, at all cost, that he spared no effort.

Again she lived. Eight weeks later—eight weeks of incubators, white gowns, masks and intensive care—and once again we took her home.

Joys Outweigh Problems

This was the dramatic beginning of a small life that has brought so much happiness to our family, and has resulted in many opportunities to witness to doctors, educators and others, and to honor the name of the Creator.

For the first few years of her life, we wondered if she would ever learn to talk. Our reflections on those times now produce smiles, as occasionally we wonder how to get her to stop talking. For several years it seemed that she would not walk, and it was a delightful day indeed when we entered the playroom to find her standing—wobbly and shaky on her feet—but standing. So much that is commonplace in normal children is a pinnacle of joy when dealing with the mentally retarded.

It was just a few days ago that, hand in hand, she and her mother worked together in distribution of Bible tracts from house to house. Only today she skipped up the driveway from her school bus, laughing and anxious to show me her latest accomplishments in schoolwork. Many times callers have complimented us on the good manners and clear articulation of the little girl that answered the telephone, and we no longer need to explain that she is mentally retarded.

Mongoloid children have few antibodies in their system, and even a common cold is a serious matter. For most mongoloids,

each winter is a series of chest infections, bronchitis and, in her case, even pneumonia. We have been so grateful for doctors who take a special interest in children of this kind, and there are many. At four years of age, she made several trips to Dr. Denton Cooley at the Texas Medical Center for surgical repairs to her fragile heart. She still lives with a limited life expectancy due to heart defects that are beyond repair. For the past several years, she has made regular trips to Dr. Henry Turkell, a Detroit physician who has concentrated on treatment of mongoloid children, both in America and Europe.

As I write, I am reminded also of the terrible night when, she having lost half her blood, a courageous Florida pilot risked the dangers of an Atlantic fog to race her by air ambulance to cooperative medical help after a local doctor and hospital refused even to look at her unless we first gave permission to transfuse blood into her system.

What If Your Child Is Retarded?

We are, of course, not alone. Every year hundreds of thousands of children are born mentally defective. Mongolism is just one of the many types of retardation. All parents involved face the same basic problems.

"Why has this happened to us? What do we do now? Should we keep the child or look for an institution? What effect will this have on the rest of the family? What will friends and neighbors think? What did we do wrong? Should we have more children? How do we cope with the situation?" These are just a few of the questions parents facing this problem have to answer.

To all of these we would offer a simple word of advice: Relax. Take the child home and let time work things out. My wife and I, our other child and a perky little girl with long blonde hair are all here to support that advice.

We have reflected often about the doctor who wanted permission to let her die. Unwittingly, he *made* us decide if we wanted her or not, whether normal or retarded. From that moment, we have never looked back with regrets, and what a blessing she has been to us!

For parents of the mentally retarded there are so many rewards. The retarded ones feel love and they express it with total lack of inhibition. The benefit of this influence for good in any household is impossible to measure. For instance, if displeasure shows on my face, how long can I remain annoyed when little footsteps doggedly pursue me through the house and a small voice demands to know why I do not smile? How trivial become problems, disagreements or even economic difficulties when one experiences the warmth and the affection expressed by a retarded child!

For most parents, their introduction to the subject of retardation is sudden, and most are badly informed. It is obviously an experience that nobody plans to have. Here are some very simple early steps you can take.

First, inquire what facilities are available in your community—nursery schools, home nursing care, specially trained doctors, and so forth. There are usually dentists, opticians and others who have specially prepared themselves to help the retarded. And many services are available without charge.

Later on, check to see what schools are available. Most communities have educational facilities, and children are usually transported by bus.

Do not underestimate the ability of your

child to learn. Our youngster wanted to learn to tie her shoes. Frankly, I did not think she was able to learn, and I failed to take the time to teach her. She kept watching. One day she proudly pushed me into a chair, and I watched while she tied both of her shoelaces in neat bows. She simply became tired of waiting for help and mastered it all by herself.

It was just last week that we were thrilled to watch her bounce happily to the end of the diving board, plunge headfirst into deep water, bob up and stroke strongly to the side of the pool to claim first prize in a diving competition sponsored for retarded children.

She rides her own two-wheeled bike, dials the telephone, regularly writes a Bible text for the day on the kitchen blackboard, and demands to know about every caller at the house, whether or not he or she is "in the truth," that is, one of Jehovah's witnesses, walking in accord with Bible truth.

Most Important of All—Love!

If I were to emphasize any one particular point in the treatment and help for retarded children, I would concentrate on the simplest, most important thing of all —love the child. Love will do more than all the special training, schools, doctors, psychologists, social workers or institutions can do. If you love the child, the child will love you; not just with the normal affection that exists between parents and children, but with a love so intense and overwhelming that it simply defies one's ability to produce superlative adjectives. While limited in so many ways, the retarded child seems endowed with a superabundance of love.

One of the greatest rewards with our own little girl occurred recently while spending several days at a resort hotel. Toward the end of our stay a physician, who had watched our two children playing each day at the pool, requested permission to ask me a personal question. Can you imagine my surprise when he asked: "Is your little girl retarded?" Even with his medical training and several days of observation, he just was not quite sure.

Regrettably, perhaps the greatest problem faced by parents of retarded children is the lack of understanding on the part of uninformed persons, both adults and children. How we wish that more persons, even those in our own circle of association, would inform themselves and their children about giving consideration to those of limited ability. When parents do not bother to explain the problems of the retarded to their own children, difficulties often result. Like the time that another child hootingly accused our little blonde: "You're retarded!" There is just no answer when a mentally retarded child climbs on your knee and wants to know "What does it mean to be 'retarded?' "

If all your children are normal, be grateful. But if someday you hear the words, "Your child is retarded," there is still so much for which to be happy. Invest a lot of love and the returns will be more than you and your family can absorb.—*Contributed.*

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- ***When Jobs Are Scarce —What Can You Do?***
- ***Is Pollution God's Fault?***
- ***My Life as a Famous Artist.***

WOULD YOU LIKE TO Buy a Painting?

By "Awake!" correspondent in Italy

THE demand for paintings in Italy has really grown in recent years, and with this growth, the press from time to time carries stories of spectacular thefts —well-known paintings being carried away from Roman Catholic churches and art galleries. It is supposed that more often than not the stolen paintings are sold abroad to adorn walls of some art patron. One might say that buying paintings of all sorts is in vogue today, not only in Italy, but also in many other countries.

What about you? Have you rented a new apartment and does some wall seem too bare? Do you desire to dress up your living room and make it more attractive? Or are you thinking about investing part of your capital in art? In any case, some persons view a good painting as just the thing to satisfy their needs.

But not everyone knows how to go about making a choice. If you would welcome some good advice, we know an artist that for thirty years has devoted his time to painting. Some of his works are in the art museums of the world. If you would like to join us, we will pay him a visit.

We are fortunate to find him in his studio and not busy at the moment. After the usual introductions, we explain that our intentions are to buy some paintings and that we would like his advice on the matter.

"How much do you want to spend?" he asks. "Paintings on the market carry all sorts of prices."

Picking up an attractive scene along the Seine, he places it at a proper angle for the lighting in the studio. Then, with a smile, he continues: "This is an easy way that many have followed. Obtain a printed catalog, usually accompanied by a pleasing presentation with testimonials of merit and various other information, and there you find photographs of the paintings with relative data as to size, price and the author. In this case it is just a pure and simple commercial deal."

Is it possible that the price is higher than the real value of the painting one intends to buy?

"Oh, yes. The price can be exorbitant. One pays for the publicity." Then, gesturing with his arms and head, he continues: "Unfortunately, it is very easy to be deceived."

Is there some rule for establishing the proper price based on the size of the painting or according to some other standard?

"Well," he says with a calm and measured tone, "it is not at all possible to establish the true value of exchange simply

according to size. A small painting might in fact be worth a billion lire, whereas a large painting only 100,000 lire."*

We look at him dismayed while he moves toward a large painting of a young woman that attracts our attention. We look at it from a side angle. The play of light and shadow creates a very pleasant harmony. Stupendous! But how do we know whether it is an original or just a copy?

"You probably think that there must be some persons who are competent to judge whether it is a genuine original," he says, as if knowing the question we are about to ask. "Yes, there are the academy professors, the great teachers, writers and art experts. But consider the facts. Recently a famous painting attributed to an Italian artist was put on display, 'La Gioconda' or 'Mona Lisa.' Some say it was done by Leonardo da Vinci. But not all experts are sure. If it's not possible to recognize the technique of such a great and famous artist, how can one distinguish the work of a less-known painter?"

"And you must remember," our artist friend continues, "the painter's name on the picture sets the price to a large extent. To illustrate: A great artist may go unrecognized and hence have no success. As a result, his paintings are valued less on the market. On the other hand, the artists who have been given much publicity have their work priced much higher."

This was all very interesting. Our next question was more specific. How can we *decide* whether to buy a certain painting or not?

"For one thing," we are told, "you can look at the amount of detail in the painting, which gives an idea of the amount of work that went into completing it. You should also consider whether it is the kind of art that honors the great Creator. And, finally, there is the subject matter itself, that is, do you like what you see and does it stir your feelings? Will it fit in the surroundings in which you intend to hang it? If you decide to buy, the price might vary from 50,000 to 500,000 lire. Can you afford it?"

There were great artists in the Renaissance. This we know. And today certain artists follow in some way that form of painting, which raises in our minds other questions. What consideration should we give to the various modern tendencies so often found on the market? Why are these so often spoken of with contempt?

"I am glad that you asked me this question," the artist answers with a rise of emotion in his voice. "At times exaggerated prices are placed on what are truly just daubs of paint that offend the eyes. How is this done? Well, there are speculators that create a host of art patrons. These dealers are ready to stoop to anything for money. They thus popularize pseudo-artists that invade the painting market with monstrous presentations that deform reality and insult the observers."

But we cannot help but observe that if their paintings are sold in such large quantities, someone must like them. So we ask our friend about the modern schools of painting. Are they recognized to have any real merit? Have they contributed anything to the art of painting?

"To make a rapid examination," responds our artist, "let me mention the French Impressionists and also the Tuscan Impressionists (1800-1900). These were groups desirous of breaking with the schematic and manneristic traditions of the classical period of the 1700's and which extended into the succeeding century. Then there are more modern forms of impres-

* The Italian lira today is worth about 1.6 U.S. cents.

sionism as well as the futurists, the abstractionists, the cubists, the surrealists and the essentialists. Each has its disciples and salesmen who, to say the least, have very strong views as to what is good art and what is bad."

Our friend now very nicely summed up the discussion, saying: "When you go shopping for a painting, have well in mind your goal. Are you out to buy a painting simply as an investment? Then buy one, no matter how ugly it may be, that has the credentials of a famous artist. But if your goal is to decorate your home, then take into consideration the rest of the decor of the room. Purchase one you like, one you can live with day in and day out. It is not the publicity or the signature that makes such a painting important to you. The work should have significance. It should cause you to think about some aspect of Jehovah's creation, filling your mind and heart with appreciation for his love and goodness. You should be moved in an emotional and spiritual way to feel it. You, of course, must remember that God's law forbids the use of idols or images as aids to worship, as it is written in the Bible book of First John, chapter 5, verse 21. Rather, the desire should be to have something that is a pleasing ornament."

It is now time for us to leave our artist friend. As we thank him for his kindness in giving us this information, we cannot help but think of artistic ability as a gift of our Maker. We are therefore determined that the picture we buy will be a beautiful work of art and one that will honor and praise our grand Creator. Under inspiration, the psalmist must have had some similar thought in mind when he wrote: "Bless Jehovah, all you his works, in all places of his domination. Bless Jehovah, O my soul."—Ps. 103:22.

Inventor Appraises TV

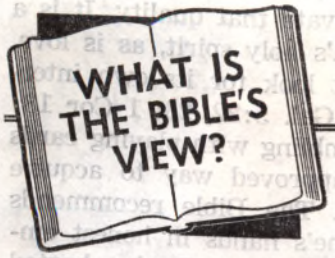
One of the inventors of television, Dr. Vladimir Zworykin, recently voiced disappointment with his handiwork. "People are hypnotized by it," he says. "They look at it all the time. It's contaminating our society." The extent of such 'contamination' may be indicated by the following:

● A nationwide Kung-fu fad is turning some of Britain's 'tiny tots into tiny toughs,' reports the Associated Press. Why? "They are too young to understand what they see on television," says a London school headmistress. "These little children were beating each other up in the playground."

● A noted U.S. psychologist and marriage counselor recently declared that he favored stamping every television set with the warning: "Danger: Television-viewing may be hazardous to your marriage." He says excessive TV watching makes couples passive and their marriages lose freshness, while the violence and callousness they see make them "insensitive to each other" when problems arise between them.

● Another marital therapist, says the Detroit *News*, relates the increase in adulterous affairs to "accepting the concept of marital relations implied on TV through jokes, comedy sketches and series —that it's OK to play around behind your spouse's back."

● How useful is TV coverage in learning the merits of political candidates? It merely gives the most attention to "those who exaggerate," declared Oregon's Reed College president at a recent regional education conference.



How About a Game of Cards?

THERE are hundreds of card games. These range from solitaire, involving just one person, to poker, with up to ten players. Millions of people often spend hours playing card games of skill or chance. They are eager to participate when someone asks, "How about a game of cards?"

Yet, others wonder, Is it proper to play cards? Are there Bible principles to consider in deciding whether to do so?

An individual may be particularly concerned about the origin of playing cards. Likely, their use began in Hindustan about the year 800 of our Common Era. Playing cards of today are thin, rectangular pieces of cardboard bearing certain numbers and figures. Fifty-two cards make up the most commonly used pack or deck, which is divided into four suits of thirteen cards. Three in each suit depict either a king, queen or jack (knave), representations probably dating from the Middle Ages.

Is it objectionable to play cards because they bear pictures of a king or queen? No, because kings and queens are mentioned in the Bible, and humans holding such positions are shown respect by godly individuals. But, of course, it would be out of harmony with the Scriptures to make any picture an object of worship. The apostle John wrote to fellow Christians: "Little children, guard yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21) However, it is not customary for people to give reverence to the drawings found on common playing cards. But, of course, any individual with a Biblically trained conscience would not use cards that bore immoral pictures. (Matt. 5:27, 28) Ordinarily, though, cards of that type are not used by card players.

Other persons may conclude that all card playing is wrong because it can produce rivalries. The apostle Paul wrote: "If we are living by spirit, let us go on walking orderly also by spirit. Let us not become egotistical, stirring up competition with one another, envying one another." (Gal. 5:25, 26) Individuals who yield to the influence of God's holy spirit or active force work to avoid a competitive spirit, one prompted by egotism and that causes a person to challenge others so as to prove he is better than they are. But not all persons who play cards have such an attitude of competition.

Naturally, if a highly competitive spirit develops in your heart when playing any game, you ought to strive to combat that feeling. Perhaps you will even decide that your emotional nature is such that it would be better not to play ball, cards, or some other game. But, of course, that does not mean that all others have a very competitive attitude when they play such games. They may play for pleasure and with a clear conscience before God and man.

Some card players trust in luck, making appeals to "Lady Luck." Is this proper? Not according to the Scriptures. God warned his people of old: "You men are those leaving Jehovah, those forgetting my holy mountain, those setting in order a table for the god of Good Luck and those filling up mixed wine for the god of Destiny. And I will destine you men to the sword." (Isa. 65:11, 12)

Those circumstances involved false worship, but the impropriety of trusting in luck cannot be ignored by anyone desiring divine approval. Nevertheless, not all card players trust in luck.

Certain individuals may be concerned about the matter of time. If card playing is more than an occasional activity, it can become so time-consuming that more important matters are neglected. However, this can also happen if too much time is spent playing ball or attending concerts. Hence, persons devoted to God wisely refrain from pushing aside Bible study and spiritual things for any of these activities. Rather, they 'buy out the opportune time because the days are wicked.' (Eph. 5:15, 16) Obviously, though, if a family plays card games occasionally and this activity does not dominate their life, they are not necessarily doing something spiritually improper.

That does not mean, however, that all card playing harmonizes with Scriptural principles. Participants in certain card games engage in gambling. They may risk money, hoping that they will win larger sums. Whether an individual wins or loses, gradually his self-control can be undermined. He may yearn to play often, not as a diversion, but to win. A lack of consideration for others easily develops in his heart. The winner does not care that fellow players may have worked hard for the money he gladly takes from them without working for it. Soon outright greed gets a grip on the gambler, and he may even resort to dishonesty in an effort to win.

Are these attitudes approved of in the Bible? Well, whereas the gambling card player may lose self-control, a servant of God should cultivate that quality. It is a fruit of Jehovah's holy spirit, as is love, which "does not look for its own interests" selfishly. (Gal. 5:22, 23; 1 Cor 13: 4, 5) Nor is gambling with playing cards a Scripturally approved way to acquire things of value. The Bible recommends working with one's hands in honest employment and the apostle Paul exhorted disorderly ones to work and thus "eat food they themselves *earn.*"—2 Thess. 3:8-12; Eph. 4:28.

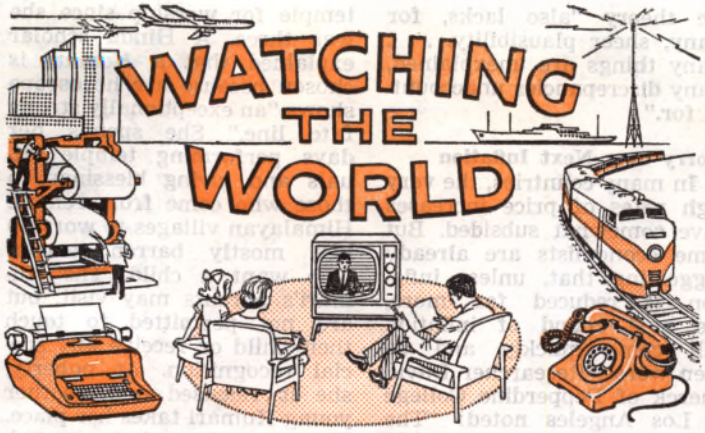
What if greed develops as a result of playing cards? Or suppose the gambler becomes dishonest. Neither trait befits an individual who reveres Jehovah. "Greedy persons" are among the unrighteous who will not "inherit God's kingdom." (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) Moreover, godly persons endeavor to conduct themselves "honestly in all things."—Heb. 13:18.

Now, suppose you had no objection to certain card games, but knew that another person's conscience would be troubled if you played cards when he was present. You might well decide to refrain from playing in that one's presence. The apostle Paul, who showed regard for the consciences of others, prayed that fellow believers would act with discernment, so as to 'make sure of the more important things and not be stumbling others.'—Phil. 1:9, 10; compare 1 Corinthians 8:13.

Surely, then, there are important factors to consider when someone asks, "How about a game of cards?" Youths, of course, should first discuss the matter with their parents, who may or may not want to have them participate. If you are an adult, however, it is good to realize that whether to take part personally is something for individual decision.

Resist Bad Thoughts

● It has been said that temptations will certainly come to your door, but you are to blame if you invite them to stay for dinner. How necessary it is to reject bad thoughts before these lead to bad deeds!



Destructive "New Morality"

◈ The widespread "new morality" of recent years really signifies a surge of immorality, particularly in sexual matters. However, what have been the results? Ten years as attending physician at Syracuse University's health center has led Dr. Robert J. Collins to one conclusion: The "new morality" is destructive. He said: "It ignores history, it denies the physical and mental composition of human beings, it is intolerant, exploitative and is oriented toward intercourse, not love." He spoke of the emptiness and disappointment experienced by promiscuous young people. As one said: "I have learned that this did not bring me happiness." The fact is that any practice that violates God's laws cannot result in happiness for humans.

"Cleanest Waterway"

◈ The head of the Egyptian Suez Canal Authority says that the intensive operations needed to reopen the Suez Canal for traffic make it the world's cleanest waterway. The year-long cleaning operation removed the rubble resulting from the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli wars. So thorough was the operation that, in addition to thousands of explosives and hulks of ships and vehicles, even such small items as links of anchor chains and metal pipes were located and taken out. Work is continuing to widen the canal to accommodate supertankers up to 250,000 tons.

Recycling Bonus

◈ A Swedish study shows that the cost of the energy (from oil and other sources) needed to recycle basic materials is usually far less than the cost of the energy required to process them from raw materials in the first place. For example, the study said that with the same amount of energy one could recycle 50 percent more paper, twice as much steel, three times as much aluminum, and up to five times as much of some plastics. An American study confirmed the conclusions.

Soccer Madness

◈ In England, the worst outbreaks of violence by spectators at soccer matches have taken place in London and Nottingham. In London, a policeman and veteran of the Korean War who was crushed by rival supporters of soccer teams called the experience "the most terrifying day of my life." Fighting broke out before the kickoff, and when police were dispatched to quell the rioting, they were set upon by supporters of both teams who chanted, "Get the coppers." The *Daily Mail* of London says: "The frenzied fans ripped and clawed at the officers' clothes, kicked them in the face, back and legs and repeatedly punched them" before they could be rescued by other club-wielding police. One veteran police officer declared: "It was sheer madness." And his wife said: "Every time he goes to work at these football [soccer] games I am terrified."

First Mile in Place

◈ After a year of preliminary work, the actual laying of the first mile of the Alaska pipeline was completed during the spring of 1975. In another two years, the petroleum-carrying pipeline is scheduled to be 798 miles in length, from Prudhoe Bay on the north slope of Alaska to the terminus at Valdez on the south coast. The first of 34 major river crossings was also completed. The eventual cost of the pipeline is an estimated six to seven billion dollars.

Feeding Earth's Billions

◈ Some authorities say that world famine is inevitable because of earth's exploding population. Others insist that the planet Earth has the potential to feed many times the present world population. "I don't think there is as much contradiction in all this as would appear," stated C. W. Cook, an official of General Foods Corporation, to a panel on the World Food Conference in Texas. The problem is a lack of cooperation among nations and the lack of massive investments in food production instead of such huge spending on armaments and other nonessential goods. That is why even in lands with food surpluses, such as the United States, there is widespread malnutrition.

How Lasting Are Democracies?

◈ As the United States approaches its 200th anniversary as a nation in 1976, a state-

ment made more than 200 years ago by British historian Alexander Tyler has been brought to mind. He stated: "A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largess [gifts] from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy, always followed by a dictatorship. The average age of the world's greatest civilizations has been 200 years."

Selling Test-Tube Baby

◈ A Mormon Sunday-school teacher advertised in the San Francisco *Chronicle* offering up to $10,000 to any woman who would bear his child by artificial insemination and then turn the child over to him. He and his wife are childless. The newspaper said that it had received a number of calls from interested women.

Frustrated Evolutionists

◈ For well over a century now, scientists who reject the Bible's explanation that God directly created the basic kinds of life forms on earth have been frustrated in their attempts to back up their belief in evolution by facts. They still are. In the May issue of *Harper's* magazine, a contributing editor concedes that, after all this time, "crucial first appearances of major invertebrate groups are missing from the fossil record." It is also observed that what the current idea of evolution "seriously lacks, however, is a precise description of the actual mechanism" that would account for it. It is constantly *found* that living things multiply only 'after their kind,' as the Bible said they would. The article admitted that the theory "also lacks, for many, sheer plausibility. . . . Many things are unexplained, many discrepancies unaccounted for."

Worry over Next Inflation

◈ In many countries, the very high rates of price increases have somewhat subsided. But some economists are already suggesting that, unless inflation is reduced far more, the next round of inflation will come quickly and be even worse. Researcher David Tuerck of Pepperdine College in Los Angeles noted: "The greatest danger that the world economy faces now is that we will not be patient enough to let the inflation which is decreasing . . . get down to 'acceptable' levels before we yield to the temptation to shift to strong, expansionist policies. . . . there is a genuine danger of collapse if the industrial world does not kill this inflation before it goes on to create the next one." But even now some governments are planning huge deficits to pump more money into lagging economies. The United States plans a gigantic deficit of about $70 billion in the fiscal year starting July 1.

Elderly Shoplifters

◈ Because of inflation and recession, many elderly people, especially those on fixed incomes, are having increasing difficulty in buying life's necessities. This has resulted in a marked rise in shoplifting. Miami Beach store owners report that shoplifting arrests have more than doubled over the past year. Police there note that the great majority of people arrested were over the age of fifty-five.

Tragic Life for Child

◈ A palace in Katmandu, Nepal, houses a living child "goddess." Called Kumari, she is only seven years old and has been kept inside this Hindu temple for worship since she was three. A Hindu scholar explained that a Kumari is chosen because her horoscope shows "an exceptionally strong fate line." She spends her days performing temple rituals and giving blessings to those who come from remote Himalayan villages to worship her, mostly barren women who want a child. The Kumari's parents may visit, but are not permitted to touch their child or receive any special recognition. At puberty, she is released and another young Kumari takes her place. However, the scholar noted, "when she is released, it is unlikely she will ever find a husband—men here are superstitious about women with strong fate lines." He added: "Several of the most recent Kumaris are now walking the streets of Katmandu as prostitutes."

Not All Were Atheists

◈ For centuries members of Christendom's churches have joined armies of opposing nations and killed their fellow church members in war. Was it different in the recent Vietnam war? Daniel De Luce of the Associated Press notes that in South Vietnam there are about two million Catholics, many of whom fought in the South Vietnamese army. But from Hanoi, North Vietnam, he reports that there are about one million Catholics living there. He noted that about one third of the Catholic churches established by the French in colonial times are still in use. Thus, the North Vietnamese armed forces were not all atheistic, but included practicing Catholics who fought against Catholics on the South Vietnamese side.

Stripper in Church

◈ Many churches resort to raffles, bazaars, bingo and other forms of entertainment to bolster waning attendance. The

First Unitarian Church of Richardson, Texas, went a step farther, using a striptease dancer. A newspaper account states: "When she was through there was nothing left but her G-string." The clergyman in charge noted that she had performed the same dance that she does in a Dallas nightclub, adding: "I haven't had one complaint. . . . It fit very well into our service." The practically nude dancer was watched by about 200 adults and their children.

Western Theology Sick

◈ A group of religious thinkers say that the theology of the churches of Christendom requires radical transformation if it is to survive. One of the group noted that the Western world's religion has been linked directly to its culture, which is in a state of moral decline. Gordon Kaufman of Harvard Divinity School noted: "Theology apparently had no integrity or standards of its own. Its symbols could be used as a kind of decoration for and legitimation of almost any partisan position found in the culture." If theology is to revive, he stated, 'it must again take up the symbols of God and Christ, and theologians must cease leaping onto every cultural bandwagon that comes along.' But God's prophetic Word shows that it is far too late for any such revival.

Priests Quitting

◈ The Netherlands is facing a critical shortage of Roman Catholic priests. The Catholic Social Ecclesiastical Institute there forecasts that half of Holland's 1,839 parishes could be without a resident cleric before long. The institute also points out that 55 to 60 percent of the present parish priests are over fifty years old. On January 1, 1974, the country had 11,200 priests, which was 20 percent fewer than in 1965. In 1973, only 35 priests were ordained, to compare with the 156 who quit.

Tanker-Fleet Woes

◈ A few years ago demand for oil was rising swiftly everywhere. Owning oil tankers was very profitable. Thus, more and larger tankers poured out of shipyards. But the fourfold oil price rise in the last year and a half has caused a lessening of demand for oil. Now there is a huge glut of oil tankers, and many of them are idle. Many owners are unable to pay back the money that they borrowed to finance the ships. One tanker owner said: "It's a world crisis." They hope for an upsurge in the world economy so more oil will be used and more tankers needed.