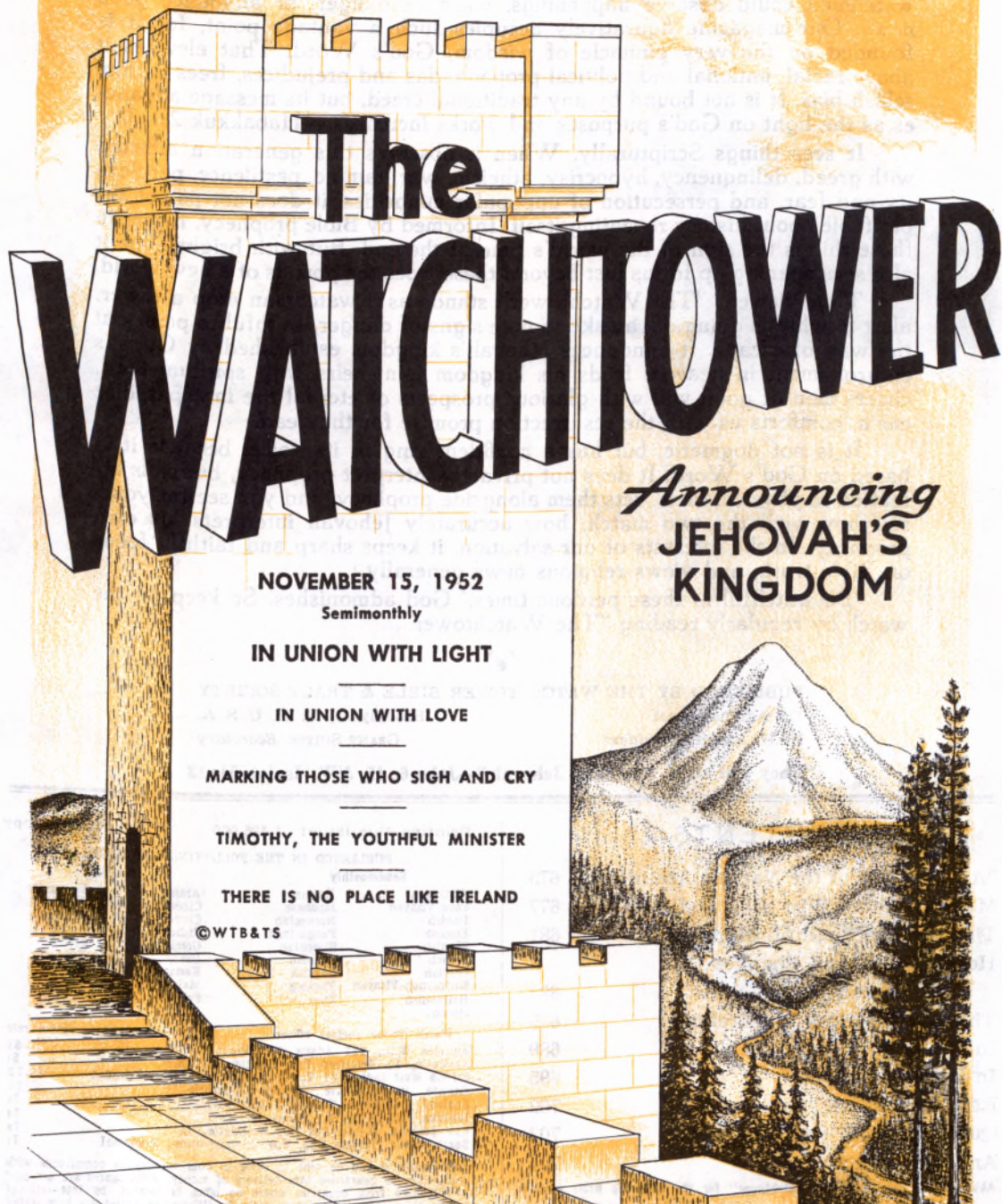




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

NOVEMBER 15, 1952

Semimonthly

IN UNION WITH LIGHT

IN UNION WITH LOVE

MARKING THOSE WHO SIGH AND CRY

TIMOTHY, THE YOUTHFUL MINISTER

THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE IRELAND

©WTB&TS

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".



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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6: 45, NW; Isaiah 54: 13

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Abbreviations used in "The Watchtower" for the following Bible versions

AS - American Standard Version	LXX - The Septuagint Version
AT - An American Translation	Mo - James Moffatt's version
Da - J. N. Darby's version	NW - New World Trans. (2nd Ed.)
Dy - Catholic Douay version	Ro - J. B. Rotherham's version
ED - The Emphatic Diaglott	RS - Revised Standard Version
Le - Isaac Leeser's version	Yg - Robert Young's version

Unless otherwise indicated, the Bible used is the King James Version

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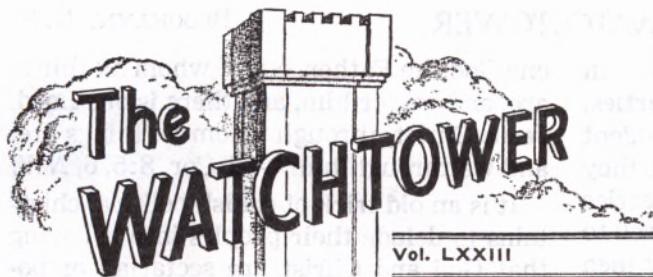
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"ALL THE GODS OF THE NATIONS ARE IDOLS"

JEHOVAH God takes the measure of worldly politics and national ambitions. "All the gods of the nations are idols"—that is how his inspired psalmist put it. —Ps. 96:5.

Note the exalting truths surrounding this verse: "Great is Jehovah, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are idols; but Jehovah made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Ascribe unto Jehovah, ye kindreds of the peoples, ascribe unto Jehovah glory and strength. Ascribe unto Jehovah the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. Oh worship Jehovah in holy array: tremble before him, all the earth." —Ps. 96:4-9, *AS*.

But is there a single political party or faction anywhere on earth today that seeks such ends? No, the totalitarian spirit has infested the governments and societies of this world so that dictator-led peoples are crushed under military machines into outright worship of the state and their *fuehrers*, *duces*, *caudillos*, etc. In professedly democratic lands, though the method is more subtle—through political machines—the resulting exaltation of men, their programs, parties, "deals," etc., is very similar. So flagrantly hypocritical do their boasts and promises become that the people generally and even the politicians smile cynically at their own antics.

A recent instance occurred early this past July when the president of the United States, Harry S. Truman, journeyed into Arkansas to view and dedicate two government power projects. Seizing the opportunity to exalt his political party, this prominent leader in world affairs told one crowd: "There is not a man or a woman in this audience who is not better off for twenty years of Democratic rule. Now if you want to throw that out the window and go off after false gods, that is your business and I can't stop you. But just do a little thinking and you will find that your interests are with the party that represents the people as a whole and not special interests."—*New York Times*, July 3, 1952.

In a similar vein, one that kept reminding his listeners how much they owed to the government administration, President Truman declared during a high point of his main speech of the trip: "My friends, I say to you that the progressive policies of the last twenty years have been the salvation of this country."

Whether he said it in so many words or not, whether he meant to infer it or not, the obvious implication of Mr. Truman's remarks is that the powers of the Democratic party represent the "true gods" of the American people. If he called his political enemies *gods*, "false gods," it would not be beyond him to consider himself and his political associates and allies likewise gods, supposedly the "true gods". If he meant the

programs rather than the individuals in the two main American political parties, the effect is the same. As the president said, the people are free to do what they like in selecting human leaders and parties and programs to follow. But they do well to remember that following the mighty men or their promises in any human political party is to follow a sin-spoiled and dying creature. No more than one blind man can lead another can they of themselves bring a world born in sin back into divine favor. "Do you not know that if you keep presenting yourselves to anyone as slaves to obey him, you are slaves of him because you obey him, either of sin with death in view or of obedience with righteousness in view?"—Matt. 15:14; Rom. 6:16, NW.

Instead of "strong leaders" Mr. Truman should know that his modern political "gods" are weak and helpless men, frozen by fear, weighed down by worthless mutual agreements and in complete darkness as to the future. This is naturally so, for the powers of this world, the unseen too, Satan and his demons, are all as nothing compared with Jehovah the one true and almighty God. That is what the psalm says. The *American Translation* renders it: "The gods of the peoples are nonentities." Msgr. Knox's Catholic translation says: "They are but devils whom the heathen call divine." (Ps. 95:5 in the *Knox* translation) In a footnote it states: "The word used in the Hebrew text rather signifies nothingness, worthlessness." Is it not utterly foolish then to deck a fallen human creature in the robes of state, exalt him above his fellow sinners, heap praise over his head, surround him with a mighty army and expect that then he is able to deliver his comrades? Call them what one will, the fact remains that "even though there are those who are called 'gods', whether in heaven or on earth, just as there are many 'gods' and many 'lords', there is actually to us

one God the Father, out of whom all things are, and we for him, and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are, and we through him".—1 Cor. 8:5, 6, NW.

It is an old trick of selfish political chieftains to delude their peoples into believing that God and Christ are sectarian or political divinities standing by ready to bless their various schemes. Their followers, through clergy influence, treat these leaders as the "higher powers" or "superior authorities". (Rom. 13:1, NW) But the Bible clearly brands this as a fraud and shows the people have thus been made "slaves to those who by nature are not gods" and thus restrained from obtaining God's true provision for everlasting life, "the salvation that is in union with Christ Jesus."—Gal. 4:8; 2 Tim. 2:10, NW.

How insipid and childish to think that any political party is "the salvation of this country" or of any country. How can the "gods" of this world, visible or invisible, save anyone or anything when they will not be able to save even themselves at Armageddon? Are you content to rely upon that which God's Word calls nothingness to deliver you in that time? Ezekiel foretold the end of idols and idol worshipers in forceful words: "Ye shall know that I am Jehovah, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, on all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the places where they offered sweet savor to all their idols. And I will stretch out my hand upon them, . . . and they shall know that I am Jehovah." Then the name of no political party will pass one for salvation, but only the provision made by Jehovah through Christ Jesus. "The name of Jehovah is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe."—Ezek. 6:13, 14; Prov. 18:10, AS.

Marking Those Who Sigh and Cry



AMONG the many prophetic pictures throwing light on the work Jehovah is now having done in the earth is the one found in the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. Briefly there we are told of a vision which Ezekiel saw of six men with battle-axes or slaughter weapons appearing from the north at the call of Jehovah's messenger, and in whose midst was a man clothed in linen with a writer's inkhorn at his side. This man was told to go through the city of Jerusalem and set a mark upon the foreheads of all those who sighed and cried because of the abominations that were being committed in the land. Then the six men were commanded to go after him and slay all who had not been marked by him, sparing neither men, women nor children. —Ezek. 9:1-8.

Since this prophecy is among the things that were written aforetime for our instruction, it must have a meaning for us. (1 Cor. 10:11; Rom. 15:4, NW) What is it? What is pictured by Jerusalem? By the six men with slaughter weapons? Why six? Why did they come from the north? Who is pictured by the man in linen? Why was he clothed in linen? and what is pictured by his marking work? Who are the ones

that today sigh and cry? and for what abominations? What is pictured by the destruction of all those not having the mark? and why were not only men and women but also children slain?

At the time of Ezekiel's prophecy Jerusalem had become unfaithful. Isaiah's words "How is the faithful city become an harlot!" applied with even more force than when they were first uttered by Isaiah more than a hundred years previous. (Isa. 1:21) Jerusalem professed to be dedicated to the one true God, Jehovah. It had Jehovah's temple, his priesthood and royal house; his Word consisting of the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. However, in spite of all this, as indicated in the previous chapter of Ezekiel (8), all kinds of wickedness were being practiced in the land, the worship of the sun, of human creatures and of the lower animals taking the place of the worship of Jehovah God, not to say anything about the oppression of the weak and poor and the sexual immorality.

How like modern Christendom! She likewise professes to be dedicated to God, has many houses or temples of worship, has God's Word in more than a thousand languages, and has taken upon herself the name of God's Son, Christ, namely Christendom. Yet in spite of all these professions we find the worship of intellectuality and of religious organizations, we find the evolution theory preferred to the Bible and the United Nations to God's kingdom; and we also find all manner of oppression and immorality. Truly unfaithful ancient Jerusalem finds her counterpart in modern faithless Christendom.

IDENTIFYING THE SEVEN MEN

In the vision, Ezekiel heard an angelic messenger call with a loud voice: "Come forward, you officers of the city, armed

each with his weapon of destruction!" In response to that command Ezekiel saw 'six men coming from the north, each having a slaughter weapon, a battle-axe, in his hand'. (Ezek. 9:1, 2, *AT*; *AS*, margin) The one issuing the call well pictures Christ Jesus, to whom all power and authority has been committed, while the "six men" would well represent the angelic hosts he will use in the execution of God's judgments upon Christendom. Yes, the same ones who began the work of executing Jehovah's judgments by the casting of Satan and his demons out of heaven will also complete it. —Rev. 12:1-12.

Why did these six men come from the north? Because in the Bible the north is pictured as the place of Jehovah's habitation. Zion, which is spoken of as Jehovah's dwelling place, is said to be situated on "the sides of the north". Promotions come, we are told, not from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, "but God is the judge," clearly implying that he resides in the north. Also we read that Satan the Devil was ambitious to exalt his throne to the sides of the north in his efforts to be like the Most High. (Ps. 48:1-3; 75:6, 7; Isa. 14:12-14) Coming from the north thus shows that these are God's executioners.

But why only six men? Is not the number six a symbol of incompleteness? True, and that would indicate that the six men do not picture all of God's servants; and such is the case. God's servants on earth will not share in the destructive work, even though belonging to Jehovah's organization, and so the six men with slaughter weapons would not also picture them. Are God's servants on earth also foreshadowed in this prophetic picture? Yes, they are.

In times past it was thought that the man in linen with the writer's inkhorn by his side pictured a certain individual in modern times. However, that does not appear to be reasonable in view of the fact

that not even Peter, Paul or John were foretold in the Bible in spite of the prominent roles they played in the early Christian congregation. Such would be attaching too much importance to a man and would savor of creature worship. Rather, all the facts indicate that this man in linen with a writer's inkhorn by his side pictures or represents the body of faithful anointed Christians working as a unit for the accomplishment of Jehovah's purposes in the earth, and who are working together under divine direction as the "faithful and discreet slave". Isaiah likewise referred to this class of people as God's "servant". (Isa. 43:10-12; 52:7; 61:1-3; Matt. 24:45-47, *NW*) So the six men with slaughter weapons, picturing God's invisible servants, and the man in linen, picturing God's anointed servants on earth, together total seven, well picturing *all* such of God's servants. And the division of these, six of one and only one of the other, would well show that the angelic hosts under Christ Jesus that will do the work of destruction are far more numerous than are God's servants on earth.

THE WORK OF THE MAN IN LINEN

Why are these earthly servants represented as being clothed in linen? Revelation 19:8 (*NW*) depicts God's servants as having on fine linen, which "fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the holy ones". This would show that their work is a righteous work and that they have God's approval. Such, of course, would not be possible were it not for their faith in the blood of Christ which gives them a clean standing before God.—Rom. 5:1, 9; Rev. 7:14, *NW*.

The man in linen is described as having 'the writing material by his side'. (*Leeser*) In ancient times (and even today in some parts of the Middle East) such men with pen and metal ink bottle hanging from the shoulder went about the city offering their

services to those unable to write and who had need of a letter or some business document to be drawn up; illiteracy being quite common then even as it still is in some parts of those lands. This writing equipment would well represent the various means used today to make known the good news of God's kingdom, chief of which is the printed page.

The man with the writer's equipment was commanded: "Pass through the city—through Jerusalem—and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done in the midst of it." (Ezek. 9:4, *AT*) Do we see persons in Christendom sighing and crying because of the abominations in the land, the corruption, the juvenile and adult delinquency, the widespread immorality and lack of integrity in Christendom? We certainly do. In fact, all men of good will, all lovers of righteousness cannot do otherwise than mourn because of such conditions until they find out why God is permitting them and what the outcome will be. These are the ones whom Jesus termed "happy" because of being "conscious of their spiritual need", and because of "hungering and thirsting for righteousness"; the ones "toiling and loaded down" to whom he offered refreshment.—Matt. 5:3, 6; 11:28-30, *NW*.

Particularly since 1918 has the man in linen been preaching a message of comfort for these who sigh and cry. In that year the good news "Millions Now Living Will Never Die" was first published in the form of public lectures, it later being printed in booklet form. At that time only a few thousand had a share in that publishing work; but the number of these has grown till at the present time about half a million ministers are assisting in this work of marking men of good will in their foreheads.

What is meant or pictured by such being marked in their foreheads? For one

thing, the forehead is the seat of intelligence, and this publishing work of Jehovah's witnesses is impressing the truth upon the minds of the people, is leaving its mark on men of good will. But more important still, by accepting this knowledge and making it their own and by dedicating themselves to the doing of God's will, such are identifying themselves as being the slaves of Jehovah God and Christ Jesus, even as in ancient times, in the nation of Israel, slaves bore a mark that all could see.—Ex. 21:6; Deut. 15:17.

These are the ones addressed at Zephaniah 2:1-3 (*AS*): "Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation that hath no shame; before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of Jehovah's anger come upon you. Seek ye Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, that have kept his ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah's anger." Those heeding this injunction receive the mark upon their foreheads, thus having the assurance of being spared.

Does that mean that all who receive the mark now are assured of living on and through the expression of Jehovah's anger against the present wicked system of things? Yes, with the exception of some who may die from natural causes before that time, and the possibility that some may die during that destruction because of not being able physically to stand the strain. Such are not considered as being destroyed by Jehovah's executioners, and therefore will be resurrected and doubtless awaken early from the tomb.

After the man in linen was sent forth the six men with slaughter weapons were commanded: "Pass through the city after him, and slay without mercy or pity. Old men, young men and maidens, little children and

women—strike them all dead! But touch no one on whom is the mark. And begin at my sanctuary!" (Ezek. 9:5, 6, AT) This destructive work will be accomplished by the "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at "the place that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon". (Rev. 16:14, 16, NW) That destruction will be world-wide, as Jeremiah foretold at Jeremiah 25:33.

But why are little children also to suffer the wrath of Jehovah's executioners? Because the Bible shows that children who have not reached the age of accountability share the destiny of their parents. God did not spare babes or little children at the time of the flood; they perished with their parents. The same was true regarding Sodom and Gomorrah and the desolation of the Jewish nation A.D. 70. However, the converse is also true. The Bible assures us that the faithful course of the parents assures the protection of children under the age of accountability.

Note also that in obedience to instructions the slaughter began at God's sanctuary: "So they began with the elders in front of the house. Then he said to them, 'Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain. Then go out, and slay in the city!'" (Ezek. 9:6, 7, AT) This is in keeping with Jehovah's rule to deal with those having the greatest accountability first, and therefore apostate Christianity will be the first to suffer Jehovah's wrath. Godless elements of Christendom may feel inclined to exult over the downfall of the religious elements, but God warns them that their turn will be next: "For, lo, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name [modern Jerusalem, Christendom]; and should ye be utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished; for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith Jehovah of hosts."—Jer. 25:29, AS.

The servants of Jehovah will be priv-

ileged to see this destructive work from a place of safety, even as Noah and his family were at the time of the deluge. Lot and his daughters saw the results at the time of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. However, it will be a terrifying sight, even as it was to Ezekiel. "As they went on slaying, and I was left alone, I fell upon my face, and cried out, saying, 'Ah Lord God! wilt thou destroy all that remains of Israel, in this outpouring of thy fury upon Jerusalem?'" —Ezek. 9:8, AT.

Ezekiel, however, was assured that the judgment was just: "So he said to me, 'The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is immeasurable. The land is full of bloodshed, and the city is full of oppression; for they think, "The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see us." Therefore I on my part will show no mercy or pity; I will requite their doings upon their heads.'" (Ezek. 9:9, 10, AT) How well those words describe the attitude taken by those of modern Christendom! Truly by their actions they betray that in their hearts they are saying "There is no God", or that Jehovah has forsaken the land, he does not see, he does not care, he does not take note of what they are doing. In this they are sadly mistaken, for nothing escapes Jehovah and, because he is the Most High, because he is just and omnipotent, he is bound to destroy all the wicked.—Ps. 14:1; Ezek. 25:17; Heb. 4:13.

The vision concludes with the report of the man clothed in linen, "I have done as thou didst command me." (Ezek. 9:11, AT) And so the class of Jehovah's servants on earth today, pictured by the man in linen and assisted by the great crowd of marked ones, will continue to do the marking work by preaching the good news of the Kingdom until their work is completed. No need will there be for the stones to cry out, for the facts show that they are accomplishing the work Jehovah has given

them to do. When Jehovah's executioners, under the direction of his Field Marshal Christ Jesus, go into action against Christendom the marking work will have been finished.

Not that they will stop preaching then. No, it seems that they will keep on bearing

witness after Armageddon begins as a testimony against the godless elements, even though no more marking work will be possible, until the "cities lie waste, without inhabitant, and houses without man", yes, until all of Satan's wicked organization on earth has been wiped out.—Isa. 6:11, AT.



"TRAIN up a child in the way he should go; and even when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6, AT) Among the many good examples of the validity of that Scriptural rule is Timothy, the very young minister who lived in apostolic times. Termed by the apostle Paul as his child in the faith, his fellow worker and God's minister, Timothy also served as a traveling representative and agent of the governing body of the early Christian congregation.—Rom. 16:21; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Tim. 1:2, NW.

Timothy received his sound Scriptural training, not from his father, who was an unbelieving Greek, but from his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois, both of whom had real faith in Jehovah God. As a result of such training Timothy from infancy knew the holy writings which are able to make one wise for salvation through faith in connection with Christ Jesus.—Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15, NW.

The apostle Paul met Timothy's mother and grandmother at Lystra in Asia Minor on his first missionary tour, and as a result of his preaching both of them became Christians. And doubtless, just as they had

taught young Timothy what they understood of the Hebrew Scriptures according to the law of Moses, they now instructed him regarding the promised Messiah who had come. Incidentally, these two women, instead of rebelling at their restricted sphere of activity in the Christian congregation, applied themselves diligently to the privileges that were theirs, and the Lord blessed their efforts.

Regarding the first reported meeting of Paul and Timothy at Lystra about A.D. 49 we read: "And, look! a certain disciple was there by the name of Timothy, the son of a believing Jewish woman but of a Greek father, and he was well reported on by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium. Paul expressed the desire for this man to go out with him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in those places, for one and all knew that his father was a Greek."—Acts 16:1-3, NW.

It may seem a little strange to some for Paul to have Timothy circumcised, particularly in view of the fact that the two were about to go on a tour in which they would advise the Christian congregations about what the governing body at Jerusalem had concluded about circumcision's not being necessary and just what they should observe. (Acts 15:19-21; 16:4) However, there was no inconsistency here on the part of Paul. He merely had Timothy circumcised so as to avoid arousing

needless prejudice, since it was known that Timothy was of mixed parentage.

Timothy must have been quite a young man, doubtless still in his teens at this time, for more than ten years later Paul, in his first letter to him, makes more than one reference to Timothy's youth. "Let no man ever look down on your youth. On the contrary, become an example to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness." "Do not severely criticize an older man. To the contrary, entreat him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters with all chasteness."—1 Tim. 4:12; 5:1, 2, NW.

Seemingly Timothy was a rather diffident youth, otherwise Paul would not have found it necessary to counsel him not to let anyone look down on his youth. This is further borne out by Paul's instructions to the Corinthians: "However, if Timothy arrives, see that he becomes free of fear among you, for he is performing the work of Jehovah, even as I am. Let no one, therefore, look down upon him. Conduct him part way in peace, that he may get here to me, for I am waiting for him with the brothers."—1 Cor. 16:10, 11, NW.

Timothy's diffidence may have partly been due to his poor health. Paul's counsel to him showed that Paul was concerned in Timothy's being both physically and spiritually strong. "Do not drink water any longer, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent cases of sickness." "I remind you to stir up like a fire the gift of God which is in you . . . For God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind." "You, therefore, my child, keep on acquiring power in the undeserved kindness that is in connection with Christ Jesus."—1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 1:6, 7; 2:1, NW.

Timothy received much instruction

through Paul, as well as the gift of the spirit. That Timothy made good use of the instruction and the gift given him is quite apparent from the report Paul sent to the congregation especially dear to him, the Philippians, regarding Timothy: "For my part, I am hoping in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I may be a cheerful soul when I get to know about the things pertaining to you. For I have no one else of a disposition like his who will genuinely care for the things pertaining to you. For all the others are seeking their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. But you know the proof he gave of himself, that like a child with a father he slaved with me in furtherance of the good news."—Phil. 2:19-22; 2 Tim. 1:6, 13; 2:2, NW.

From the foregoing we can readily appreciate why Timothy was so beloved by Paul, he repeatedly referring to him in terms of endearment, "my child," "a beloved child," "a genuine child in the faith." That Paul's affection for Timothy was like that of Jonathan for David, unselfish and based upon principle and not mere sentimentality, is apparent from Paul's further words to Timothy: "I never leave off remembering you in my supplications, night and day longing to see you, as I remember your tears, that I may get filled with joy. For I recollect the faith which is in you without any hypocrisy, and which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, but which I am confident is also in you."—1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2-5, NW.

TIMOTHY SERVES WITH PAUL

Upon joining Paul at Lystra Timothy accompanied him on his second missionary tour through Phrygia, Galatia, and on to Troas, where one night Paul received the call to come to Macedonia. In that province a congregation was started at Philippi. After traveling through several other cities

they came to Thessalonica, where another congregation was established; persecution, however, cut their stay short. Success at their next stop, Boerea, again aroused the Jews to persecute them. But here it was thought best to have Paul go on alone to Athens, while Silas and Timothy remained behind.—Acts 16:1 to 17:15.

At Athens Paul sent word for Timothy to return to the Thessalonians to encourage them: "When we could bear it no longer, we saw good to be left alone in Athens, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's minister in the good news about the Christ, in order to make you firm and comfort you in behalf of your faith, that no one might be swayed by these tribulations." This Timothy did, and later met Paul at Corinth, from which place Paul wrote his two letters to the Thessalonians, in the first one of which he reported: "Timothy has just now come to us from you and given us the good news about your faithfulness and love."—1 Thess. 3:1-3, 6, NW.

Thereafter Timothy was sent with Erastus to Macedonia and was back with Paul as he again visited Philippi, where he wrote his second letter to the Corinthians. He also accompanied Paul as he journeyed through Asia on this, his third missionary tour. While at Ephesus Paul sent Timothy on an important mission to the Christian congregation at Corinth. Timothy was also a helpful companion during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome. In eleven of Paul's fourteen letters Timothy is either referred to or directly addressed. Indicative of Paul's appreciation of his assistance is his appeal to Timothy during his second imprisonment: "Do your utmost to come to me shortly."—2 Tim. 4:9, NW.

Because of Timothy's devotion to Jehovah God and Christ Jesus, the apostle Paul, under the guiding influence of the holy spirit, appointed Timothy to serve as an

agent of the governing body of the Christian congregation in his day; being authorized to appoint mature men as overseers and assistants in the various Christian congregations. (1 Tim. 1:3; 3:1-15, NW) In this capacity Timothy pictured or represented the instrument that Jehovah God is using today, the Society of footstep followers of Christ Jesus, which likewise appoints servants in the Christian congregation in keeping with Jesus' promise that he would set his faithful and discreet slave over all his belongings.—Matt. 24:45, NW.

Paul gave Timothy much good counsel, which all ministers today will do well to heed: "Continue applying yourself to public reading, to exhortation, to teaching. Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Stay by these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you." "Do your utmost to present yourself approved to God, a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of the truth aright." "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work." "Preach the word, be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season." "Keep your balance in all things, suffer evil, do missionary work, thoroughly accomplish your ministry."—1 Tim. 4:13, 16; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16, 17; 4:2, 5, NW.

Truly Timothy was a good example of the results of proper Christian training of children. Let all Christian parents be diligent to follow the example of Lois and Eunice in training their children. And let all young ministers manifest becoming humility as did Timothy, but at the same time remember Paul's counsel to Timothy: "Let no man ever look down on your youth."

HONEST 'SHEPHERD' CHANGES DIET FOR KOREAN FLOCK

SOME months prior to the outbreak of the Korean conflict a *moksa* (pastor) of a small church of the "Church of Christ" sect in Seoul permitted a friend to take refuge in his church building. His friend had recently fled across the 38th parallel to flee the Communist oppression to the north. The *moksa* had many different discussions with his friend on the Bible.

❧ One day his friend brought a young man to the church to talk to the *moksa*. The young man was a full-time minister of Jehovah's witnesses and had a 'strange version' of Christianity. The *moksa* and his friend listened and asked the young man many questions. They were sure the young man was mistaken, and the *moksa* encouraged his friend to accept the invitation offered by the witness to have another discussion a few days later. The *moksa* told his friend, Mr. Nam, that it was his duty to try to show this young witness of Jehovah his errors. Mr. Nam agreed and was confident he could.

❧ On his return from the discussion the *moksa* asked him how it went. Mr. Nam told him that the witness had called his attention to many things in the Bible he did not know and had asked him many questions about the church's beliefs that he could not answer. And he was very annoyed. Soon the discussions between Mr. Nam and the witness were being held with the idea in mind of Mr. Nam's honestly wanting to know the truth. Each time he would discuss the things he learned with the *moksa*. They would read and discuss the publications of the Watchtower Society.

❧ It was no surprise to the *moksa* when his friend, Mr. Nam, became one of Jehovah's witnesses too. Later he attended a meeting of Jehovah's witnesses at the Seoul missionary home and expressed his surprise that Watchtower missionaries were in Korea. He began to do some serious thinking. Then came the war. The *moksa* and Mr. Nam lost touch with each other. The *moksa* later made it down below the fighting in a little town called Yakmok, where he himself became a refugee. While there he had much time to think and study and he became convinced that Jehovah's

witnesses have the truth. While in the little rural community he organized another "church", but taught them the truth about God's new world of righteousness with its provision of the paradise earth. Later he returned to Seoul and began preaching this truth to what was left of his former congregation.

❧ Then in the spring of this year when the Seoul company began to meet again in the damaged missionary home he found the witnesses again. He talked to the company servant about some questions that still were bothering him and asked where Brother Nam was. When he found that his friend was now a pioneer in Taegu he took a train to talk with him. In Taegu his final questions were cleared away and he asked Brother Nam to baptize him. Then (May 1952) he and Brother Nam went to visit the little group in Yakmok. They found the little group continuing in the way of truth. Brother Nam and the former *moksa*, now known as plain Brother Lee, baptized six of them and encouraged them to continue their meetings and carry out their obligations of service. Later during the month of July the Society's missionary paid a visit to Yakmok and found seven publishers working there.

❧ Brother Lee returned to Seoul and his former congregation. There he asked all of his flock who were interested to come to the Kingdom Hall where he was going. He resigned from his church, making a long statement of his reasons. He stated that he had nothing to criticize the Church of Christ about except on doctrine, and then he proceeded to give, point by point, the major points of the church's beliefs that he felt were contrary to the Bible's teaching and meaning. He had his statement mimeographed and distributed among all the other *moksas* and members of his former church that he knew.

❧ At this writing ten members of his former congregation have been immersed and others are studying and looking into the matter carefully. As for the former *moksa* himself—during the month of June he reported 140 hours in field service. His wife and son are Kingdom publishers now, too.



There Is No Place Like Ireland

By a Watchtower Society Missionary in Ireland

“AND phwat do you suppose the loikes of youse want to come over here praechin’ to the loikes of us? Sure, isn’t this the land of saints and scholars? Glory be, if you had your way, sure you’d build a roof over the whole country and turn it into one big factory.” So said the Irishman with a roguish twinkle in his eye and in a delightful brogue as he approached the Kingdom publisher in the streets of Dublin.

That reminds me of the joke the American troops had for it when they were over here in the last world war. They said that Ireland would be perfect if only it had a roof over it. Well, of course, it does rain a lot, but if it didn’t we wouldn’t have everything so beautifully green, and then it wouldn’t be Ireland, the Emerald Isle, sure it wouldn’t. Truly this wee island is a green garden of delights. It is a land of stark contrasts too, not only in scenery but in the circumstances and types of its people. We are in the South, and that means Eire. The people are of pure Celtic strain, at times volatile and unpredictable, but with a native charm peculiarly their own.

How would you like to come with me for a day and visit some of the homes? I’ll promise you never a dull moment, till we get back late at night. First we have a few miles of good broad road, just newly resurfaced. We pass a few scattered farms and cottages and now a village. The church is on the left and the clergyman’s house

is easily recognizable as the largest in the village, nearly as big as his church, standing in its own grounds and with peacocks strutting on the lawn. We turn off the road here and push on a few miles before we make our first visits.

Here we are at last. A long, low white-washed house with thatched roof. As we approach the gate there is an excited chatter and children’s faces appear at the tiny window, a woman looks out over the half door (most of the cottages have the door divided) and immediately disappears again. I wonder what sort of reception we are going to get here? You would never know!

THE FIRST CALL

Knocking at the door we peer into the slightly dim room faintly misted with turf smoke. No reply, so we call out, “May we come in?” “Surely,” calls out the housewife over her shoulder, for she is already setting out the chairs before the fire and wiping them with a hastily snatched-up cloth. She quite expected us to walk straight in as the custom is in these parts. “Rest yourself,” she says with a bright smile as she eyes us over. “That’s a wild hill-up so it is,” she says referring to our long climb up from the village. She is quite young, well under thirty years of age, black hair, strong and muscular but rather thin-cheeked and tired-looking. Grandma sits by the roaring turf fire in the great open hearth and watches over a huge black pot full of “praties”. With many a scold

and a "whist now", the children are hushed and kept quiet during the conversation. Five lovely "wee cutties" (girls) with big wondering eyes and little bare feet. "No boys?" we ask with an amused smile. "Divil a one," says she, "not a cuddy [boy] in the house at all, at all." We all have a right good laugh, including Grandma, who shows all her gums, for she has not a tooth in her head.

The atmosphere now being congenial and the weather having been solemnly and unanimously denounced as "powerful", "wild bad," and suchlike, we proceed to explain our visit. Now, however, the man of the house has walked over to see what all the dog-barking was about. The weather has to be gone over again, but briefly this time, and we get down to business. All this has taken time, and the city man might feel impatient, but these are simple-living countryfolk who seldom see strangers. A hurried city brusqueness would repel them.

But now we have their attention; so we begin by showing that our mission is a holy one. Then we show its universality. The mention of its being carried on in over 120 lands brings forth a favorite phrase, "Man, but that's a wild number of countries," and when told that about half a million missionaries are engaged in this world-wide work they exclaim, "Boys a boys, but that's a dreadful lot of people."

Taking out the Douay Bible we open it at Isaias 7:14, the prophecy of our Lord's virgin birth, and pass it around for all to read. The wife says she has often heard it but never before has seen it for herself. The man just grunts, but it turns out later that he cannot read, and, of course, we read it out to him. Now we show them Matthew 24 and Luke 21 and they can see what the events of our generation mean. Now comes the test. The books are introduced and passed around. Grandma chimes up distrustfully, "We're Catholics here, we

don't need to read any books; sure we get all the instruction we need." However, the young woman is interested. She yearns for kindness and freedom from want.

The man walks out. More points are explained about the kingdom we have all prayed and longed for. Yes, she would love to be there, to live on the earth forever under Christ the King. "Glory be to God," she exclaims, not irreverently but from sheer habit. "Wouldn't that be just great, just, och, I never heard the loike before." She has "no change", meaning she has no money at all, but she finds three or four pence to contribute a little toward their cost. It will be a joy to call back again and try to enlarge her vision of the Kingdom. As we leave with her parting, "God bless youse," the wee girls are permitted to shyly wave us good-by.

Well, did you enjoy that? The long climb was worth it to find someone who was meek like that and to sow seeds of comfort in their heart. Disarmed by our kindly reception we walk confidently up to the next house. It looks to be in a bad way. Grass grows profusely from the thatched roof, the barns are almost roofless, the house is dirty with garbage flung anywhere. The man who appears in the doorway is unkempt, with several days growth of beard and dirty clothes. He regards us with a sullen scowl as we wish him a cheery Good evening. At the very words of introduction, however, he shouts, "Get to hell out of here." Flinging open the half-door he grabs a nearby fork and, waving it wildly, roars, "Get up that road or I'll run youse through."

What a contrast! We move on to the next call. Ah now, here's a nice wee cottage. A pleasant woman answers our knock but does not invite us in. She has light-blue twinkling eyes and a good humored mouth. After a few words we show her the

literature and she exclaims, "Och sure, and didn't I know youse Jehovah's witnesses." "That's right," we reply. "Sure, youse don't believe in hell." A discussion is begun, and using the Douay Bible again the case of Jonah in the fish is cited. "Now," we ask, "what did he mean by saying he was in hell?" "The fish couldn't have been on fire surely?" Greatly puzzled, she reads the account over again and then her Irish wit comes to her rescue, "Och sure," says she, "and didn't he mean he was having a hell of a toime?" After a good laugh, the *Hope* booklet explaining hell is placed and we push on again.

At the next house we see the usual emblems and pictures hanging on the walls and the container of holy water hanging by the door. No progress here. The man is actually reading a newspaper but unblushingly tells us that he cannot read. He snaps out that he cannot understand a word we are saying. A little tactful handling and he says that he is filled with hatred of the political strife that has rent this country for many centuries and he concludes by unceremoniously telling us to "go to hell out of here". The woman of the house shoos us off and, grabbing the holy water, proceeds to sprinkle the porch, the door and even the path we walked up, while she calls on all the saints and specially the "Mother of God" to protect her from such "hathens" and "the loikes of their praechin' "

IRISH HOSPITALITY

It is time we made our way over the top of the hill now, as we have a family we have talked to several times and we must see how they are progressing. It is time to eat, too, but up here there is a slight misty drizzle and it is cold, so maybe we can eat our sandwiches when we get to O'Neill's farm. Here we are, my oh my, what a welcome! Such folks as these would

take some beating for warmth. Such a scurrying and a dusting of chairs and clearing the table and poking the fire and quieting the children, all in one operation. Before long we are pushing our chairs back, for that black turf can throw out a terrific heat. The farmer and his two boys come in from a nearby field. The girls, all smiles and dimples, sit in a row on a long wall seat and the discussion is on.

Mrs. O'Neill is very careful to observe all the requirements of her religion, prayers, masses, fasts and feasts, but yet she says that she feels something is missing, she is still spiritually hungry. A Bible study is held using the Douay Bible, on the "New Earth". She is delighted with all she hears. Mr. O'Neill smiles approval while the boys ask one or two very good questions. They had never seen a Bible before we called, and they handle it with great reverence. Mr. O'Neill and the boys remove their caps immediately.

And now what's this? We are invited to take a meal. But our sandwiches? "Not at all, man dear, glory be, whoever heard of a man bringing his own food to eat?" "Sure we couldn't let you go on a day like this without a hot meal, sure we couldn't." The potatoes are boiled in their skins and a huge bowlful is set in the middle of the table. Everyone helps himself to a "prat" and proceeds to deftly peel it, add a little butter, and with a bowl of buttermilk you sup away to your heart's content. There is no meat, but you would be surprised to find how satisfying and nourishing the meal is. After the meal we sing them Kingdom songs for about ten minutes and this is where our hosts' natural gifts come in, for though they could not read a note of music, they accompany us on the accordion. Now we must leave our friends and pass on to some further calls.

First, some little distance away, to a nice little woman in a cottage whose hus-

band burned the booklets she had taken from us before she could get to read them. Ah, himself has arrived home from work; so let's see what his trouble is. He doesn't look a very hopeful prospect, but here goes. O'Donovan is the name. He evidently knows who we are; so we dispense with preliminaries. We tell him of the suffering of our missionaries under the Russian domination, showing that we are not Communists as some mistakenly suppose. His eyes are narrowing, which is always a bad sign, and suddenly he interrupts us with a high-pitched scream of rage. Foaming at the mouth and shouting threats he grasps a turf spade and in lurid detail tells us what he will do to us until we safely have the garden gate between us.

Just one more visit and then we'd better call it a day. This is a mountain farm we are going up to. It is the last house in the hills, nothing but bog after this as far as the eye can see and reaching up to 2,000 feet. "Ould Tom" hears our voices and comes out with a light. "Och, its himsilf," says he, "come right in and warm yoursilf; bedad but it's a could noight so it is." Tom is a widower and around his fire you will always find a ring of neighbor men as the evenings begin to darken. It is about the only social contact they have.

After the usual greetings and all agreeing that "there's no hate" (meaning that there is no heat and the night is cold), a discussion opens up on hell and purgatory. During the discussion Tom lights an old short-stemmed pipe and after a few reflective puffs he passes it on to the next man. Each one solemnly has a few draws, and passes the pipe on again. As we do not use tobacco, we decline. It is a strange company that sits around that blazing hearth. There are more whiskery chins than you would see in a synagogue. They look like desperadoes, but they are quite harmless despite their rough appearance.

Just honest, hard-working shepherds. At the end of the discussion tea is served with soda bread and butter; and so home to bed, which ends another tiring day in Kingdom service.

Many an incident occurs during the preaching work that is highly amusing. The folk here love a "crack", as they choose to call it, meaning a good chat, especially with a laugh in it. For instance, the woman who said, "Be off wid yez, wesnes not of youses," meaning, of course, that she was of a different religion, or the waitress who was asked what kind of soup was on the menu, was it thick or thin soup? "Sure now, it's not too tik and it's not too tin." For some reason they are unable to pronounce the 'th' sound. Then there is the frequent reference to luck. One never fails to smile when departing, the householder warmly says, "Well good-by now, and all kind of luck to yez." Presumably the bad and the good are lumped together to give a bit of variety. Another woman who did not appreciate the message of the Kingdom told a witness, "Och, lorney dear man, will ya go away, or you'll have me do a murther on me own doorstep."

Back in our room after a long and tiring day over the rough Irish roads and waiting for the evening meal to be prepared which is already about an hour late, we hear the gramophone churning out these words, "If Ireland isn't heaven, then it's only right next door." That's Ireland, and strange as it may seem, we grow to like it more and more. This wee island, land of contrast, laughter and tears has yet many men of good will, the Paddys and Mikes, the Sammies and Johnnies, the blunt Irish colleens with their love of fun, and their quick tempers too, who will yet come out of these old world hatreds and superstitions to new world freedom.

*"God is light
and there is no darkness
at all in union with him.... God
is love, and he that remains in love
remains in union with God and God
remains in union with him."
—1 John 1:5; 4:16, NW*

IN UNION WITH LIGHT

JEHOVAH used a man well qualified through whom he revealed some of the deepest and some of the most precious and vital truths, truths bringing the richest blessings when appreciated and entered into, but also carrying with them the most serious and searching responsibilities. That man well qualified was John, a favored servant of Jehovah. He was one of the "twelve apostles of the Lamb", one of the privileged three chosen by Jesus from among the other disciples on special occasions, and the one who enjoyed a unique and close relationship with Jesus above any others who knew him when on earth. What made John particularly suited to be used as just mentioned? Let us look at the record and see.

² John was one of the first four called by Jesus to follow him. This meant he had the advantage of being in the closest possible touch with Jesus throughout his ministry, listening to all his teaching, receiving direct training for the ministry, besides seeing how he dealt with all the different types of persons met and all the varying situations he had to face. But it is evident that in many respects John gained a deeper insight into the mind and heart of Jesus than his companions did, and not only that,

but a fuller and freer access into the Lord's confidence and love. This close and intimate companionship was certainly not due to sentimental causes on either side; but, as clearly revealed by John's writings, it was solidly based on his keen appreciation and quick response to that which was uppermost in Jesus' own self—an intense love for righteousness, for God and toward all righteously disposed persons, and an equally intense hatred of evil in all its manifestations. The same basis formed that extraordinarily close friendship between those other two men, David and Jonathan. On his part, Jesus was quick to discern the true disposition of his disciple John and did not hesitate to show, not favoritism, but a justified preference and love and affection for this one who was worthy of it. Hence there came about a very close fellowship and partnership between these two. John was truly "in union" with his beloved Master.

³ It is not our present intention to make a detailed study of the beloved apostle, but we remind our readers that this was the subject of an article in our issue of September 1, 1951. However, there is one other interesting feature we want to mention before taking up our main discussion, and that is John's unusual style of writing or composition. It raises a difficulty in our

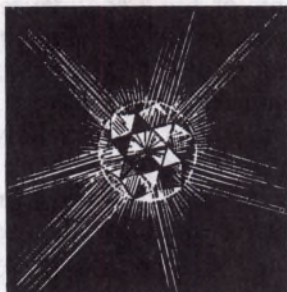
1. In what way was the apostle John especially blessed of Jehovah, and why?

2. (a) How was John well qualified to be thus used?
(b) What kind of relationship obtained between Jesus and John, and on what basis?

3. Is John's style of writing unusual in any way, and does this make for easy study?

readily gaining a concise and complete picture of any one of the various subjects he discusses. He does not appear to confine himself to a set outline, or progressive argument, and say all he has to say on one point at a time, with headings and sub-headings, as it were. No; he starts off on one line of thought, leading on to another, then another, then frequently goes back and adds to what he has already said on a certain subject, like a diamond merchant examining a precious stone, turning it round and round, letting the light reflect from its many facets. This is one reason why we are not taking up a verse-by-verse study of what John wrote.

⁴ Some might be tempted to say he repeats and contradicts himself; but, as is sometimes true of those thus accused, John does not really say the same thing twice, but looks at the subject from different angles; as, for instance, regarding sin. "If we make the statement, 'We have no sin,' we are misleading ourselves and the truth is not in us." But a few verses later John writes: "My little children, I am writing you these things that you may not commit a sin. And yet, if anyone does commit a sin, we have a helper with the Father, Jesus Christ, a righteous one." (1 John 1:8; 2:1, NW) First he shows we will sin, then writes as though we can avoid sin; but he goes on to show that we will sin because of imperfections, for which reason a helper is provided for us. So we must view such statements in their context. While these seeming contradictions, or paradoxes, occur once in a while in God's Word, careful examination of the context or background of events will dissolve the problems.



⁵ The reason for John's writing in the way he did may be partly that he knew, when writing his Gospel and letters toward the close of his long life and ministry, that his readers were already familiar with the themes on which he loved to dwell. In any case, we must remember that he wrote under the guidance of the holy spirit. His writings are part of God's Word. We wish now to take up a study of this part of God's Word, particularly the two main themes running through John's writings, (1) that "God is light" and (2) that "God is love", specially dealt with in his first letter. This must be done, however, in conjunction with John's Gospel, for the two are so closely interwoven.

⁶ Perhaps we hear someone say at this point: 'Ah yes, such a study may be very profitable, but no one can possibly enter into the same personal and intimate relationship with Jesus as enjoyed by the beloved John.' But let us not reach too hasty a conclusion. Granted, we cannot come into physical contact with the Lord, or recline on him, as John did. But that was a mere outward, passing expression of the real inward harmony subsisting between the two. In any event, any twinge of envy or regret we may feel on this score is done away with when noting that the first reason given for writing John's first letter concerning "this partnership of ours" is "that *our joy* [his and yours] may be in full measure". We can have partnership in the same joy as John did. And did not Jesus speak to the same effect when he said: "These things I have spoken to you, that my

4. Can the Bible in any part be accused of contradicting itself? How can the seeming contradictions be explained?

5. (a) What must be remembered respecting John's writings? (b) How are his two main themes summarized?

6. Why need we not hold back from aspiring to a close personal union with the Lord?

joy may be in you and your joy may be made full"? (1 John 1:3, 4; John 15:11, NW) Jesus undoubtedly "preferred" John, as we read several times (John 13:23; 21:7, 20, margin, NW); but this did not mean an exclusive friendship with John in the somewhat usual selfish meaning of that word. There is no need for us to hold back. Indeed, there is every encouragement from the foregoing to believe that we, too, can likewise be "in union" with our beloved Master, the closeness and depth of which union depends on each of us individually. How can this be? This, in turn, raises another important question. It is this:

WHOSE CHILD ARE YOU?

⁷ Yes, it is a question of sonship. In his letter John does not discuss sonship until the third chapter, but in his Gospel sonship crops up early in chapter one, in its logical sequence. He points out that "the Word", the sole creative agent of life, was also appointed by God to be "the light of men". He came into a dark world, "but the world did not take note of him." Why not? Because, as John explains at the end of his first letter, "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." He even "came to his own home", to those who should have welcomed him, but they were 'not at home' to him. His own people, the Jews, just did not want to be in union with him. There were individual exceptions, however, and it is regarding these that John writes: "As many as did receive him, to them he gave authority to become *God's children*." On what basis this? First and foremost, "because they were exercising faith in his name." This stresses the importance of faith in becoming God's children. Let us make sure we see its importance from the correct angle, the Scrip-

tural one.—John 1:4, 10-12; 1 John 5:19, NW.

⁸ All familiar with the Bible know how often John refers to the command that children of God should love one another, and records Jesus' own words on the subject; but not all realize that our having faith, particularly faith in Jesus' name, is mentioned as a prior command. Writes John: "Indeed, this is his commandment, that we have faith in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and be loving one another." (1 John 3:23, NW) If something is *commanded* by God it must be important: a righteous requirement, a charge laid upon us, which we cannot afford to treat lightly. It is much stronger than an appeal or exhortation. There is no option about a command from God. It must be obeyed.

⁹ The Jews recognized the importance of obedience to God's commands as contained in the Law; but they viewed obedience from the wrong angle. They pinned their faith on their own efforts to gain righteousness by keeping the works of the Law; but when they asked Jesus on one occasion: "What shall we do to work the works of God?" Jesus summed up the whole answer in one sentence: "This is the work of God, that you exercise faith in him whom that One sent forth." Paul argued the same matter out with the Galatians, asking: "Did you receive the spirit due to works of law or due to obedient hearing by faith?" Then he proceeds to show "that those who adhere to faith . . . are sons of Abraham" and are "blessed together with faithful [believing] Abraham". Finally, right on the question of sonship, Paul says: "You are all, in fact, sons of God through your faith in Christ Jesus. . . . for you are all one in union with Christ Jesus." Faith is necessary to gaining sonship. Admitted,

7. (a) What was Jesus' reception on coming into the world? (b) On what basis were some authorized to become God's children?

8. How is the importance of faith stressed in Scripture?
9. Where and how does the Bible explain the correct angle as to faith in relation to works and obedience?

these scriptures have their strict application to those called to the heavenly kingdom with Christ Jesus, the "little flock", but the same exercise of faith is required of the "other sheep", who can share in praying "Our Father", with the hope of gaining eternal life on earth.—John 6:28, 29; Gal. 3:2, 7-9, 26-28, NW.

¹⁰ Another point about faith as being commanded of us is this. God never issues a command that is impossible for the creature to obey. There are ample grounds for confidence in the possibility of exercising faith. There is no excuse. It depends on the heart attitude, the 'right kind of soil'. The individual is responsible to 'turn his faith' to God's Son. If necessary to that end, as is often the case, one can experience a change of heart, like Joseph's ten half-brothers, or like the younger son, the prodigal son, who "came to his senses".—Rom. 1:20; Mark 4:8; 1 John 5:10, NW; Gen. 44:18-34; Luke 15:17, NW.

¹¹ It can be appreciated, therefore, that the question of whose child you are is not at all determined by fleshly birth or by mere professions. Neither does this mean that before you turned your faith to the Son of God you were one of the Devil's children. One is not identified as either a child of God or a child of the Devil until shown to be in union with either the one or the other in a time of national or world judgment; proved by one's fruits to be either a "good tree" or a "rotten tree"; either practicing righteousness and loving one's brothers, or hating them and seeking their life, like Cain.—Matt. 7:15-23; 1 John 3:10-12, NW.

¹² So we see, then, that we can enjoy union with God only by becoming his children, through faith in his Son. But it must

be an *enlightened* faith based on the truth, especially the truth regarding Christ Jesus. He is the pivotal point, as John repeatedly stresses. Let us not stumble over Jesus, as the Jews did over his appearance as a sin-offering, though they reckoned they would have welcomed him as king; or like Christendom, stumbling over Christ as the present reigning king, though they reckon to accept him as their redeemer. Theirs is not an enlightened faith.

¹³ This question of an enlightened faith brings us to a consideration of the main word in the present theme for study—"LIGHT". What a cheering word it is!

¹⁴ "God is light," says the apostle; and in those three short words we feel there must be a wealth of meaning. (1 John 1:5, NW) It is one of the definitions, not of *who* God is, but of *what* he is. How is the word "light" used in the Scriptures? In this connection it is evidently used as a symbol, primarily meaning divine truth and the enlightenment therefrom, but also including closely related things, namely, God's favor and blessing, especially the crowning blessing of everlasting life. "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light." So we petition God: "Oh send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me: let them bring me unto thy holy hill." Yes, indeed, the light streaming forth from Jehovah's face means an endless flow of blessings, as Moses was instructed to say to Israel: "Jehovah bless thee, and . . . make his face to shine upon thee." These blessings can be enjoyed only by exercising an enlightened faith, rejoicing in the first shaft of light, the basic truth of God's existence, and then finding "that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him". He is truly "the Father of the celestial lights", from whom comes "every good gift and every

10. Is faith a gift with some, but denied to others, or is it within the reach of all?

11. How is one identified as a child either of God or of the Devil?

12, 13. How do the Jews, also Christendom, stumble over Christ, and show the need for what?

14. In what way is light used as a symbol in Scripture?

perfect present".—Ps. 36:9; 43:3; Num. 6:24, 25, AS; Heb. 11:6; Jas. 1:17, NW.

¹⁵ What immeasurable advantage the God of light, who is called "the Victory of Israel", enjoys! (1 Sam. 15:29, AS, margin) Think of it! There is not a thing or a person, neither a circumstance nor a conspiracy, conceived in the inner recesses of the mind or suddenly put into action, that can escape or hide from that all-powerful, all-penetrating beam. "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the evil and the good." "He that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep," and "there is not a creation that is not manifest to his sight, but all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting". He is never off guard; cannot be taken by surprise, knowing and "declaring the end from the beginning".

With him, final victory over all his enemies is absolutely assured, and at all times he is entirely fearless.—Prov. 15:3; Ps. 121:4; Isa. 46:10, AS; Heb. 4:13, NW.

¹⁶ Victory is one of the inspired and inspiring themes of the Bible. There was a time when there was no need for such a word, for victory means the overcoming of an enemy in battle, or conflict, over some issue that has arisen. At that time there was no enemy, no Satan, no ruler of darkness. At this time, though, it is the issue of light *versus* darkness. In contrast with light, darkness stands as a symbol primarily of error and falsehood and the darkening effects thereof, namely, craftiness and corruption, leading to death. John quotes Jesus' testimony as to why the issue arose. Jesus said of the Devil: "That one

was a manslayer when he began, and he did not stand fast in the truth, . . . he is a liar and the father of the lie."—John 8:44, NW; see also 2 Corinthians 11:3, NW.

¹⁷ At this point it is interesting to note how John, introducing his record of the good news with the masterly use of short and profound statements, closely ties in the three foregoing themes: life, light and victory. John tells us that Jesus said: "I am the way and the truth [the light] and the life." First, John reminds us that all life owes its existence to "the Word". Then he tells us that Jesus, "the life," is "the light of men". That means that the only way for man to gain life is to come to the light and forever stay in union therewith. Finally, John sounds the note of victory, saying: "And the light is shining in the darkness, but the darkness has not overpowered it." A victory for the light!—John 1:1-5; 14:6, NW.

¹⁸ Before discussing further how the darkness did its utmost to overpower the light in the case of Jesus, but utterly failed, let us see how we, too, come into the picture, examining it under the heading:

COMMISSION AND RESPONSIBILITY

¹⁹ As already noted (§7), we become God's children by exercising faith in Jesus' name. In other words, as Jesus said, "Exercise faith in the light [meaning truth], in order to become sons of light." (John 12:36, NW) Faith is the first step that brings us into the picture. Then what? Our becoming "sons of light" brings us the richest blessings and privileges, but carrying with them searching responsibilities.



15. What Scriptural support is found for linking victory with the God of light?

16. Over what issue did conflict first arise, as expressed by Jesus?

17. How does John closely tie in life with light and victory?

18, 19. What first step brings us into the picture, leading to what further things?

To appreciate and enter into these, we must first get the measure of Christ's commission and responsibility as God's foremost light-bearer.

²⁰ The wording of God's commission to Jesus as His Servant, recorded long before, reads thus: "I, Jehovah, have called thee . . . and give thee . . . for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." (Isa. 42:1, 6, 7; see also 49:6, 9, AS) Did Jesus appreciate the charge laid upon him? Hear his answer: "I am the light of the world." And did he faithfully discharge his responsibility? He did. Because Jesus went up to Galilee to preach, his apostle Matthew quotes and applies to Jesus Isaiah's prophecy, that "the people [of Zebulun and Naphtali] sitting in darkness saw a great light". Then he says: "From that time on Jesus commenced preaching and saying: 'Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'" (Matt. 4:15-17, NW) But with far greater emphasis comes Jesus' own testimony at the close of his earthly life. In fact, no expression ever fell from his lips with greater force respecting his mission than the declaration he made to Pilate: "For this purpose I have been born and for this purpose I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth."—John 8:12; 18:37, NW.

²¹ Do Christ's followers, the "sons of light", share in that same commission with its attendant responsibility? Most decidedly. Isaiah's prophecies concerning the "servant" often include these body members of the Christ in their major fulfillment. (See Isaiah 43:10, AS, for example.) We have, too, the Lord's pointed word to his disciples: "You are the light of the

world. . . let your light shine before mankind, that they may see your right works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens." (Matt. 5:14-16, NW) And now please observe Paul's word, showing both the blessing and the responsibility of our being in union with light and how we are brought right into the picture. First, he mentions "this ministry", which is "the good news we declare". Then he explains why "it is veiled among those who are perishing", namely, because "the god of this system of things has *blinded* the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination [enlightenment] of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God [the source of all light], might not shine through". Then Paul forges a most unexpected link with that first great command which rang out, "Let there be light." (Gen. 1:3) That command seemed to refer only to literal light, but Paul now gives added symbolic significance to it. He says: "For God is he who said: 'Let the light shine out of darkness,' and he has shone on *our* hearts to illuminate them with the glorious knowledge of God by the face of Christ."—2 Cor. 4:1-6, NW.

²² Yes, it is the truth, the glorious knowledge of God, that is the light, perfectly and fully reflected "by the face of Christ", and it is our commission for "all of us, with unveiled faces, to reflect like mirrors the glory of Jehovah"; or, as Peter expressed it, to "declare abroad the excellencies of the one that called you out of darkness into his wonderful light".—2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Pet. 2:9, NW.

²³ It is the realization of our commission from God that drives home the *practical* responsibility of being in union with light. It certainly does not mean our mere mental agreement as to what is truth, just a placid acceptance of light, like a dull, dark

20. How did God foretell Jesus' commission, and how was it fulfilled?

21, 22. As "sons of light", is our commission likewise clearly set forth?

23, 24. (a) What aspect of our responsibility is brought to the fore? (b) How does John highlight this aspect?

surface, absorbing all the light rays without reflecting anything in return. No. It means being like a precious stone reflecting the light to such a degree that it appears to be radiating light from within itself.

²⁴ Thinking of the practical aspect of our responsibility brings us back to John's first letter. Some might say that, of all the Bible writers, James stressed most the practical side; and that, in contrast, John was the apostle of love. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Every time John enunciates a truth he immediately follows it up by showing both its practical application and the dire results of a failure to act consistently therewith. Observe, for example, John's remarks following his statement "God is light", showing we must not only believe and love the truth, but must keep on "*practicing the truth*". (1 John 1:5, 6, NW) Nobody could be either more hard-hitting or helpful than John in showing how we can identify those of the "anti-christ", "who are trying to mislead you." (1 John 2:18-26, NW) And in his third letter he does not hesitate to mention by name a certain mischievous chatterbox, Diotrephes, followed by some terse counsel.

It would not be of much use trying to hide anything from John's penetrating gaze.—3 John 9-11, NW.

²⁵ Much more could be said, of course, about our responsibility as "sons of light" both regarding mind and heart and course of conduct, and also our ministry. But, above all, we must act consistently in "practicing the truth" so as to be ever in union with the God of light, with whom there is never a "variation or shadow caused by a turning".—Jas. 1:17, NW, margin. See also Luke 11:33-36; Ephesians 5:6-14.

²⁶ In poetic mood, we think of the smile of our heavenly Father's approval as likened to the warm sunshine. (Num. 6:25, *Mo; AS; Know*) And that is true. Light and love go hand in hand, leading us on to bright victory and making us fearless in God's service. If we have been helped to a closer union with God and his Son by our meditation on the theme "God is light", there is every reason to believe we shall find still further profit in considering that other definition of what God is, namely, "God is love."—1 John 4:16, NW.

25. Why is a consistent course of action so essential?
26. Is a close relationship seen between enlightenment and love?

IN UNION WITH LOVE

OUR understanding of Jehovah is entirely dependent on the revelation he is pleased to give of himself. By far the greatest enlightenment is given in his Word, as the psalmist wrote: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path." (Ps. 119:105, AS) Accordingly, in

our study of that inspired statement, "God is love," we will not determine its meaning by our own conjectures and feelings. Still less will we pay heed to what worldly wisdom has said on the subject of love. Least of all will we be guided by the teachings of a false religion which preaches a God of love and, in the same breath, a God of eternal torment. Instead, the question we ask

1. (a) To gain enlightenment of Bible truth, what must be avoided? (b) What question will aid us in understanding "God is love"?

ourselves is this: In the Scriptures is there anything that is set forth pre-eminently as the fullest expression of God's love? If there is, then by carefully learning all we can about that expression, we can be assured of being guided into a proper appreciation of the sublime truth that "God is love". Not only so, but as we continually observe that expression, bringing ourselves into line with it more and more, we can confidently look forward to being brought ever closer in union with love. Let us see, then, what answer God's Word gives to our question.

² It seems to us beyond a doubt that John himself points us to the answer in that record he was inspired to give of the conversation Jesus had with Nicodemus, when he told him about that thing which God loved "so much that he gave his only-begotten Son", the dearest treasure of his heart. What was that thing? Jesus said: "God loved the world so much." (John 3:16, NW) Yes, the most popular scripture text in all Christendom, yet none more misunderstood. How so? "The world" that Christendom likes to think Jesus referred to is the world of which itself is a part, this "present wicked system of things", 'the heavens and the earth that are now, stored up for fire.' (Gal. 1:4; 2 Pet. 3:7, NW) It is on the basis of this interpretation that Christendom loves to prattle about the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man", as applying to this present generation and state of things. What a mockery and travesty of truth! The right understanding of any statement in the Bible must always harmonize with the context, also with all other scriptures relative thereto, without exception. Let us apply that rule in this instance.

³ Note that John's comments at John

1:1-13 run parallel to those of Jesus at John 3:16-21 (NW), to show this: The true light came into the world that people of all kinds might exercise faith in his name. It was open to the people to accept the light and for the world to be saved. It was not God who prevented them, or influenced them, adversely. But what happened? The world took no note of him. Men loved darkness rather than the light. However, there were some exceptions who did exercise faith in him. And what happened to them? Why, by believing in him who became their sin-bearer, as Jesus had just previously explained to Nicodemus, they would escape the destruction ultimately to come on the world in its judgment day, and, instead, they were given authority to become God's children with the promise of everlasting life in that new world order, that new heavens and new earth where righteousness dwells.

⁴ But, you ask, if the world God loves so much was something far future from the day when Jesus spoke, why did he speak of God's loving it in the past tense? The answer is, because God not only determined and set his mind on that new world order as soon as the need arose, away back at the time of the rebellion in Eden, but also set his heart upon it with unbreakable attachment and devotion. From the very commencement he loved it so much that he arranged and foretold long in advance the chief means by which it would become effective, the promised seed of his woman. (Gen. 3:15) His love was so great and unselfish that he gladly arranged and foretold concerning the bruising of the heel of that seed by the serpent. Not that God rejoices in the suffering of the seed for suffering's sake; but, as beautifully explained: "It pleased Jehovah to bruise him

2. What word of Jesus points us to the answer, and how is this misapplied by Christendom?

3. To get the right viewpoint of John 3:16, how are we helped by a comparison with John 1:1-13, NW?

4. (a) If referring to the new world, why did Jesus speak of God's love for it as in the past? (b) How does Scripture reveal the extent of God's love for "the world"?

... [to] make his soul an offering for sin, ... He [Jesus] shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." As an outcome of this "travail", Jehovah says, "By the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities."—Isa. 53:10, 11, AS.

⁵ From the foregoing we can appreciate it is not an impersonal kind of love that God has for a certain arrangement. That new world order under God's kingdom is made up of individuals, each of whom God dearly loves; first and foremost, the promised Seed himself, his own dear Son. Here is how Paul expressed it: "He [God] delivered us from the authority of the darkness [of this present world] and transplanted us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, by means of whom we have our release by ransom, the forgiveness of our sins." (Col. 1:13, 14, NW) How ungrateful and unloving if we did not respond to such marvelous evidence of God's love and undeserved kindness, and to such a glorious and appealing prospect as set before us in that most lovely of all things, God's kingdom! Is your heart not moved and stirred? As we remind ourselves of these precious truths, do you not earnestly desire to become more and more in union with the God of love and with his kingdom under Christ, the full expression of his matchless love? As an aid toward satisfying that good desire, let us consider more closely the expression so frequently used by both Jesus and John, "in union with."

⁶ The word "union" is closely tied in with another word, "organization." You cannot have the one without the other. An organization is made up of parts, or members, all interdependent, in union with one an-

other and at unity with the whole; a consolidated body. This raises an interesting question and also supplies the answer thereto. Some of our critics, who pose as our friends but are not "of our kind", are not slow to point out that the word "organization", which we use so much, is not found in any translation of the Scriptures. (1 John 2:19, NW) We do not argue the point, but, all the same, we do most strongly insist that it is a Scriptural teaching. Take three of the prominent illustrations used of God's people which have particular application right now, "at the full limit of the appointed times," when it is God's "good pleasure" to "*gather all things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth*". These illustrations are (1) the human body "harmoniously joined together and being made to cooperate through every joint", and (2) the temple built up of "living stones", and (3) Jerusalem, or Zion, "a city that is compact together," where all " *dwell together in unity*". Who can deny that organization is the common theme throughout? Only those who, for reasons best known to themselves, no longer want to be organized and be in union with Jehovah's witnesses.—Eph. 1:9, 10; 4:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, NW; Ps. 122:3; 133:1, AS.

⁷ With these scriptures in mind, all telling of an organized unity, we shall be helped individually in gaining a correct estimation of the depth and closeness of the union with the God of light and love which is possible for each one of us. We must be careful to see that the estimation or picture of union which we form in our minds is not determined or limited by our own conception of things. May we recommend, therefore, that you read John's glowing description of the glory of "the

5. What response should God's great love call forth from us?

6. (a) How are the words "union" and "organization" closely linked? (b) Are we justified in a free use of the latter?

7. (a) How is the depth of the union between Jesus and his Father revealed? (b) What provision brings us into the picture?

Word" who became flesh, "a glory such as belongs to an only-begotten son from a father, . . . full of undeserved kindness and truth." Yes, this one who "is in the bosom position with the Father is the one that has explained him". (John 1:14-18, NW) Then remember the saddening effect of the request Philip made at the close of Jesus' ministry: "Master, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Can you not hear the grieved tone in Jesus' voice as he replied: "Have I been with you men so long a time, and yet, Philip, you have not come to know me? He that has seen me has seen the Father also." (John 14:8, 9, NW) Philip did not properly appreciate the union between God the Father and Jesus. So Jesus went on to give emphasis to the union which existed between the Father and himself and to the provision he made, through the promise of "the spirit of the truth", whereby his followers could be brought into the same union, provided they prove true to the requirement: "He that has my commandments and observes them, that one is he who loves me."—John 14:17, 21, NW.

⁸ We remind you, too, how Jesus took up the same theme of union, in John, chapter 15, under the figure of himself as "the true vine" under his Father's cultivation, and his followers pictured as "the branches". How forcefully is shown the purpose of being brought into such union, namely, that we may "keep bearing much fruit", the fruit of bearing witness! (John 15:8, 27, NW) How true to nature, where much light and warmth are needed for the growth of a vine to maturity to give the maximum yield! Again, when Jesus turned his eyes and thoughts heavenward, note how earnestly and repeatedly he prayed that "they may *all be one*, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in

union with you, that they also may be in union with us".—John 17:21, NW.

⁹ On that last evening spent with his devoted followers, after Judas, the one who was *not* in union, had gone out into the night, Jesus unloaded his mind of these precious and vital truths. We can imagine John reclining there, so close to the one he loved, intently listening and taking it all in, even though he would not fully appreciate the significance of what he had heard until receiving the spirit at Pentecost. It is no surprise, therefore, that this one, so well qualified, should make this same theme of union the main burden of his first letter, stressing particularly the *practical* side of our responsibility. So John writes: "He that says he remains in union with him is *under obligation himself* also to go on walking just as that one walked."—1 John 2:6, NW.

¹⁰ Again, see how John uses the argument of God's love for the new world, as expressed at John 3:16, to show our obligation in another respect: "By this the love of God was made manifest in our case, because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him. The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins. Beloved ones, if this is how God loved us, then we are ourselves *under obligation to love one another*."—1 John 4:9-11, NW.

¹¹ Does not all this bring home to us that if we are to be in union with God we must be in union with that on which he has set his heart, the Kingdom under his dear Son? To be in union with it means more than just believing the Kingdom message and looking forward to its blessings. It

8. By what illustration and prayer are we further helped to appreciate our part in the union?

9. How did John pursue that theme in his first letter?
10. The manner and evidence of God's love places us under what obligation?

11. To be in union with God and his kingdom means what?

means *identifying* ourselves with it and subjecting ourselves to it by our dedication to its Author and Creator, and then faithfully and zealously serving its interests and proclaiming its message, as commanded. (Matt. 24:14, NW) We each should have such a steady, burning love for that Kingdom, ever talking about it and living according to its righteous requirements and reflecting its spirit so much, that we can say to anyone in touch with us, as Jesus said to Philip, 'Have you known me so long and yet you have not come to know and understand about God's kingdom as our only hope?'

¹² Now let us turn to another part of John's first letter. Unless the passage is fresh in your mind, we suggest you first read 1 John 4:16-19 (NW) so as to grasp more easily the following paraphrase and comments on the same. Our starting point is: "God is love." As we remain in union with God and he with us, so we learn in time to have perfect love, like God, in exercising unbreakable attachment and unselfish love and devotion for his kingdom, with complete confidence in it. Yes, "this is how love has been made perfect with us." As a result, our love gives us "freeness of speech", "boldness" (*margin*), now when most needed, "in the day of judgment." The reason is that just as God is love, seen in the fact that his mind and heart are fully set on that new world and he is supremely confident concerning it, so we, too, learn to have that same love and confidence while in this present world. This world is passing away, and on no account must we love either it or the things of which it consists. (1 John 2:15-17) Realizing, then, that love and confidence go hand in hand (you cannot increase in the one without the other), so we appreciate

that the outcome of perfect love and confidence in God and his new world, with all its blessings of enlightenment and protection, means that every vestige of fear is thrown to the winds concerning the evil forces and pressure arising from this doomed and wicked world. Indeed, if you are at all suffering any restraint *through fear* and are tongue-tied, when you should be exercising "freeness of speech" regarding the Kingdom message, then you can be quite sure your love has not yet been brought to maturity. Finally, never forget that whatever progress we make in respect to love comes about only "because he first loved us".

¹³ Here is another important point: This "freeness of speech" is essential not only in proclaiming the Kingdom message in this judgment day, but also in regard to making our petitions to God for those vital spiritual necessities in meeting the divine requirements and in gaining the victory over all the persecution and pressure brought to bear on us. Writes John: "This is the freeness of speech which we have toward him, that, no matter what it is that we ask according to his will, he hears us. Further, if [speaking out of perfect love and confidence] we know he hears us respecting whatever we are asking, *we know we are to have the things asked* since we have asked them of him." What more could you want?—1 John 5:14, 15, NW.

¹⁴ With these thoughts in mind, we can more readily appreciate the full import of that grand word: "This is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith." (1 John 5:4, NW) The issue is between the forces and personnel of light against those of darkness. It is the purpose of the latter, by causing us suffering and persecution and temptation, to break down our

12. (a) How is love made perfect with us, and with what result? (b) On what basis can fear be completely vanquished?

13. Why is "freeness of speech" toward God so essential?
14. On what issue and in what way can faith conquer the world?

integrity. Why did Jesus suffer? Because he persisted in letting his light shine amid the darkness and, testified John, "the darkness has not overpowered it." He conquered the world and gained the victory because, out of love for his Father and the honor of his name, he refused to submit to the temptations and pressure of darkness. At the end of his course he said for our encouragement: "In the world you will have tribulation, but cheer up! I have conquered the world." Are we, therefore, going to let 'tribulation or distress or persecution separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus'? "To the contrary, in all these things we are coming off *completely victorious* through him that loved us." —John 1:5; 16:33; Rom. 8:35-39, NW.

¹⁵ In the preceding article (§ 15) we spoke of the immeasurable advantage enjoyed by Jehovah, "the Victory of Israel." But do we not also enjoy a very measurable advantage over this world by being in full union with the God of light and love? Are we not enlightened as to the exact significance of the present world situation and its outcome? Are we not warned and kept on guard respecting the enemy's movements and foul purpose, so that we do not get caught by surprise? Can we not be absolutely fearless? We can, if we exercise perfect faith in the source of light and love: "God is our refuge and strength, . . . Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed." Provided, too, that we ever 'walk in the light', always grateful that "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin". We must do as expressed particularly for our day: "They conquered him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their witnessing, and they did not love their souls even despite the danger of death."—Ps. 46:1, 2; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 12:11, NW.

15. To what extent do we enjoy an advantage over this world, and by observing what conditions?

¹⁶ On the authority of God's Word, therefore, we can well afford to bring our study of union to a close on the note of triumph, namely:

IN UNION WITH ZION'S KING

¹⁷ "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of Jehovah is risen upon thee. And nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." (Isa. 60:1, 3, AS) Ah! Zion, glorious city of light, the only city of its kind, built on the pattern of love! What an unspeakable privilege to be in union with Zion's "superior authorities", who themselves are the source of its light! What a joy to be in union with its King Christ Jesus, who has the victor's title, "King of kings and Lord of lords"! (Rom. 13:1; Rev. 21:23; 19:16, NW) And how appropriate that it should be our same writer, John, who experienced the ecstasy of seeing and recording that vision of Zion in its full splendor, the capital city of Jehovah's beloved new world! Jehovah says of Zion: "This is my resting-place for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it." And think of it! We have been graciously invited to dwell there at that royal theocratic organization in union with him, under his love and protection, with the delightful prospect of obedient humankind's enjoying like blessings when God will "reside with them, and they will be his peoples". That will be the real "Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man".—Ps. 132:14, AS; Rev. 21:3, NW.

¹⁸ Did we not say that our study of this subject would bring the richest blessings, coupled with searching responsibilities? Just a final warning in line with responsibilities, as John similarly ends his letter. His word seems a disjointed note, a subject

16, 17. How do the Scriptures highlight the union possible in our day for all who enter Zion?

18. On what note of warning did John end his first letter, and does this have a particular lesson for our time?

not previously mentioned by him, namely: "Little children, guard yourselves from idols." When an individual puts his own ideas and ways before those which the Lord God provides for his people through his organization, that is a very subtle form of idolatry. That is what is happening with some now and again right down to this late day. Oh yes, these still acknowledge the one Word, the Bible, but they do not acknowledge the one table, "the table of Jehovah." They invite any whom they can get to listen to them to turn away from feeding in unity at the one table and to their own individual side tables, where they provide dishes of their own concoction. To them, feeding at the one table spells bondage and loss of individual freedom. But we are glad to be Jehovah's "slaves", mentally and entirely. Our heads were not left out of the water at our water immersion, were they? (Rev. 22:3, NW) Those independent ones, as "ministers of righteousness", seek to entice you with the promise of getting your eyes opened to real light and liberty. But it would be in exactly the same way as Eve got her eyes opened, and with the same result. "*Little children* [yes, this warning is specially needed by those young in the truth and not yet mature], guard yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21; 2 Cor. 11:15, NW; Gen. 3:5-7; Isa. 1:3, AS) Note also the contrast between idolatry and Jehovah's table at 1 Corinthians 10:18-22, NW.

¹⁹ Let us keep "*practicing the truth*", for "faith without works is dead". Love unexpressed "will cool off". Light hid under the "basket" of self and fear will get squelched, and "how great that darkness is!" To keep practicing the truth is the best antidote to

any tendency to indulge in the world's spirit of apathy and indifference, with a consequent withholding of Jehovah's blessing and a lack of increase. Keeping in union now with the God of light and of love is essential to our life in the new world society, whether we live now as members of a local company of Jehovah's witnesses or of a missionary home or of a Bethel home.—Jas. 2:26; Matt. 24:12; 5:15; 6:23, NW.

²⁰ John was greatly privileged to live in the days of the first advent and enjoy being personally present with his beloved Master. Are we less privileged? Are we not, rather, far more highly favored to be living in the days of the establishment of God's kingdom, serving him under the direction of his organization, Zion, in union with its worthy King, Christ Jesus? We, too, can live today in union with light and with love, no less than John did. There is no need to hold back from desiring and entering into a close friendship now, as far as you personally are concerned. For your encouragement and guidance and that your joy may be full, consider the following gracious expressions: "The LORD [Jehovah] loves the pure in heart; and he who is gracious in speech—the king is his friend." "A capable servant will enjoy the king's favor." Finally, in line with our hope of victory, listen to that fearless 149th psalm entitled "Praise to the Conquering God": "Let the sons of Zion triumph in their king. . . . For the LORD [Jehovah] is pleased with his people; he adorns the humble with victory." (Prov. 22:11; 14:35; Ps. 149:2-4, AT) So keep your union with Jehovah God, who is light and love, unbreakable!

19. Why is there special need to keep "practicing the truth"?

20. (a) Are we in any way in a more favored position as compared with John? (b) To those in Zion, what words of encouragement and guidance are given?

Report from Nigeria

Ekritam Circuit Assembly

WHEN the circuit servant approached the village chiefs about holding an assembly in Ekritam they flatly refused to cooperate. So arrangements were made to build a booth on property belonging to one of Jehovah's witnesses bordering the Scottish Mission church. On seeing the earnestness of the witnesses in building the booth, the villagers protested against the action of the chiefs. Saturday, the witnesses were invited to the church to meet the chiefs. They had changed their mind. It would not be right to refuse to welcome strangers. They begged them to move the booth onto Scottish Mission ground. Building activity was transferred.

☞ Came Sunday and work was in full swing. But the chief elder of the church began to plot trouble. Tuesday the district servant arrived and it only remained for seating to be installed. Returning from a public talk that evening the witnesses were met with a native court summons, charging them with trespassing on Scottish Mission property, claiming damages of £25 (\$70) and seeking an injunction restraining the witnesses from using the booth. In court the elder denied that permission had ever been given, then adjournment.

☞ What could be done? Build another booth! Back to the old site. With zeal and energy a new booth shot up in one day. The elder was stunned. From all sides came the villagers exhorting and encouraging the witnesses as they built. Arriving conventioners quickly volunteered. Friday morning, back to court. The court must inspect the Mission property, so another adjournment. That week eight persons in the village died and the chiefs became panicky. Maddened, the opposing elder came out with another summons for disturbing the peace on Sunday.

☞ By five o'clock every seat was occupied. Present were 1,054 in a circuit with a peak of 733 publishers. The village was shaken to its foundations. Opposite stood the empty booth as a silent testimony to religious intolerance. Saturday evening over a thousand were at the circuit activity meeting. Sunday, 103 were immersed and by evening the attendance had swelled to 1,350.

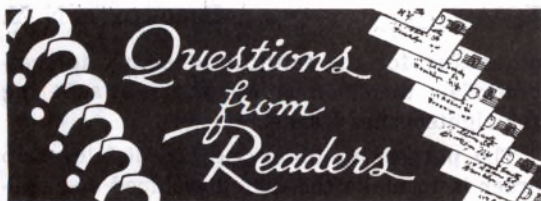
☞ Finally the case was settled and the witnesses were fined £5 for disturbing the peace. More people in the village died and the chiefs became terror-struck. The £5 was brought but the court clerk would not touch it. Off to the chiefs to pay. But no! they would not touch it either. They were quaking with fear lest a terrible calamity befall the village should they take the money. Now, three months later the £5 still remains with the circuit servant.

Catholic "Father" Boomed Out of Town

☞ When we arrived at Adagbrasa for the assembly I learned that the Catholic "father" had been pounding holes in the road between here and Warri, planning some strategy to hold Catholicism together before the onslaught of hundreds of witnesses wielding the "sword of the spirit". Catholics were warned to stay away from my lodgings, not to go near the assembly place, or dare to speak to any witness. In the evening the headmaster of the Catholic school and the catechist stayed around on police duty to see whether any Catholic boy was disobeying.

☞ Next morning "father" was back in the village. In the evening, just as a fine service meeting was under way, "father's" strategy revealed itself. Crowds of Catholic hoodlums rushed out of the bush around the assembly booth, beating drums, shouting and making so much noise that no speaker could be heard. But this only backfired. The village elders and people present at the meeting rose up in indignation and drove the hoodlums off with many angry blows and threatened to break down the entire Catholic compound and drive Catholicism out of town. Saturday morning the chiefs made an announcement throughout the village: "Jehovah's witnesses are not to be disturbed. Anyone molesting them will be severely punished and fined five shillings and a bottle of gin."

☞ Late afternoon "father" came bumping into the village again fearfully and desperately trying to hold his religion together. By this time the whole village was wholeheartedly for the witnesses. By the following afternoon things had got so hot for "father" he could stick it out no longer. As he stalked out of the village the people lined up and booed him.



● In the case of where a father or mother or son or daughter is disfellowshipped, how should such person be treated by members of the family in their family relationship?—P. C., Ontario, Canada.

We are not living today among theocratic nations where such members of our fleshly family relationship could be exterminated for apostasy from God and his theocratic organization, as was possible and was ordered in the nation of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai and in the land of Palestine. "Thou shalt surely kill him; thy hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people. And thou shalt stone him to death with stones, because he hath sought to draw thee away from Jehovah thy God, . . . And all Israel shall hear, and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is in the midst of thee." —Deut. 13:6-11, AS.

Being limited by the laws of the worldly nation in which we live and also by the laws of God through Jesus Christ, we can take action against apostates only to a certain extent, that is, consistent with both sets of laws. The law of the land and God's law through Christ forbid us to kill apostates, even though they be members of our own flesh-and-blood family relationship. However, God's law requires us to recognize their being disfellowshipped from his congregation, and this despite the fact that the law of the land in which we live requires us under some natural obligation to live with and have dealings with such apostates under the same roof.

God's law does not allow a marriage partner to dismiss his mate because his mate becomes disfellowshipped or apostatizes. Neither will the law of the land in most cases allow a divorce to be granted on such grounds. The faithful believer and the apostate or disfellowshipped mate must legally continue to live together and render proper marriage dues one to the other. A

father may not legally dismiss his minor child from his household because of apostasy or disfellowshipping, and a minor child or children may not abandon their father or their mother just because he becomes unfaithful to God and his theocratic organization. The parent must by laws of God and of man fulfill his parental obligations to the child or children as long as they are dependent minors, and the child or children must render filial submission to the parent as long as legally underage or as long as being without parental consent to depart from the home. Of course, if the children are of age, then there can be a departing and breaking of family ties in a physical way, because the spiritual ties have already snapped.

If children are of age and continue to associate with a disfellowshipped parent because of receiving material support from him or her, then they must consider how far their spiritual interests are being endangered by continuing under this unequal arrangement, and whether they can arrange to support themselves, living apart from the fallen-away parent. Their continuing to receive material support should not make them compromise so as to ignore the disfellowshipped state of the parent. If, because of acting according to the disfellowship order of the company of God's people, they become threatened with a withdrawal of the parental support, then they must be willing to take such consequences.

Satan's influence through the disfellowshipped member of the family will be to cause the other member or members of the family who are in the truth to join the disfellowshipped member in his course or in his position toward God's organization. To do this would be disastrous, and so the faithful family member must recognize and conform to the disfellowship order. How would or could this be done while living under the same roof or in personal, physical contact daily with the disfellowshipped? In this way: By refusing to have religious relationship with the disfellowshipped.

The marriage partner would render the marriage dues according to the law of the land and in due payment for all material benefits bestowed and accepted. But to have religious communion with the disfellowshipped person—no, there would be none of that! The faithful marriage partner would not discuss religion

with the apostate or disfellowshipped and would not accompany that one to his (or her) place of religious association and participate in the meetings with that one. As Jesus said: "If he does not listen even to the congregation [which was obliged to disfellowship him], let him be to you just as a man of the nations and as a tax collector [to Jehovah's sanctified nation]." (Matt. 18:17, NW) Hurt to such one would not be authorized, but there would be no spiritual or religious fellowshiping.

The same rule would apply to those who are in the relation of parent and child or of child and parent. What natural obligation falls upon them according to man's law and God's law the faithful parent or the faithful child will comply with. But as for rendering more than that and having religious fellowship with such one in violation of the congregation's disfellowship order—no, none of that for the faithful one! If the faithful suffers in some material or

other way for the faithful adherence to theocratic law, then he must accept this as suffering for righteousness' sake.

The purpose of observing the disfellowship order is to make the disfellowshipped one realize the error of his way and to shame him, if possible, so that he may be recovered, and also to safeguard your own salvation to life in the new world in vindication of God. (2 Thess. 3:14, 15; Titus 2:8) Because of being in close, indissoluble natural family ties and being of the same household under the one roof you may have to eat material food and live physically with that one at home, in which case 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 and 2 John 10 could not apply; but do not defeat the purpose of the congregation's disfellowship order by eating spiritual or religious food with such one or receiving such one favorably in a religious way and bidding him farewell with a wish for his prosperity in his apostate course.

"TRIUMPHANT CLEAN WORSHIP" WITNESSING PERIOD

—Jas. 1:27, NW.

"Clean worship" must be directed toward the one true God. Any other worship is idolatrous and unclean, Scripturally condemned. It is vile unfaithfulness on the part of the creature to ignore the Creator and render worship to idols, demons or men. "Clean worship" triumphs over false worship because it is strong, enduring and unshakable. "The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring for ever." (Ps. 19:9, AS) That right attitude of deep respect toward God will produce fruit in right works. It will seek to serve others, bringing them the knowledge that has so abundantly blessed the receiver. So, "clean worship" means to care for bereaved and desolate ones, giving them the comfort the truth contains.

Being limited by the laws of the worldly nation in which we live and also by the laws of God through Jesus Christ, we can take action against apostates only to a certain extent, that is, consistent with both sets of laws. The law of the land and God's law through Christ forbid us to kill apostates even though they be members of our own household blood family relation ship. However, God's law requires us to recognize their being disfellowshipped from the congregation and this despite the fact that the law of the land in which we live requires us under some natural obligation to live with and have dealings with such apostates under the same roof.

God's law does not allow a marriage partner to divorce his mate because his mate becomes disfellowshipped or apostate. Neither will the law of the land in most cases allow a divorce to be granted on such grounds. The faithful member must continue to live with and care for his mate as best he can.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES

Week of December 28: In Union with Light.

Week of January 4: In Union with Love.