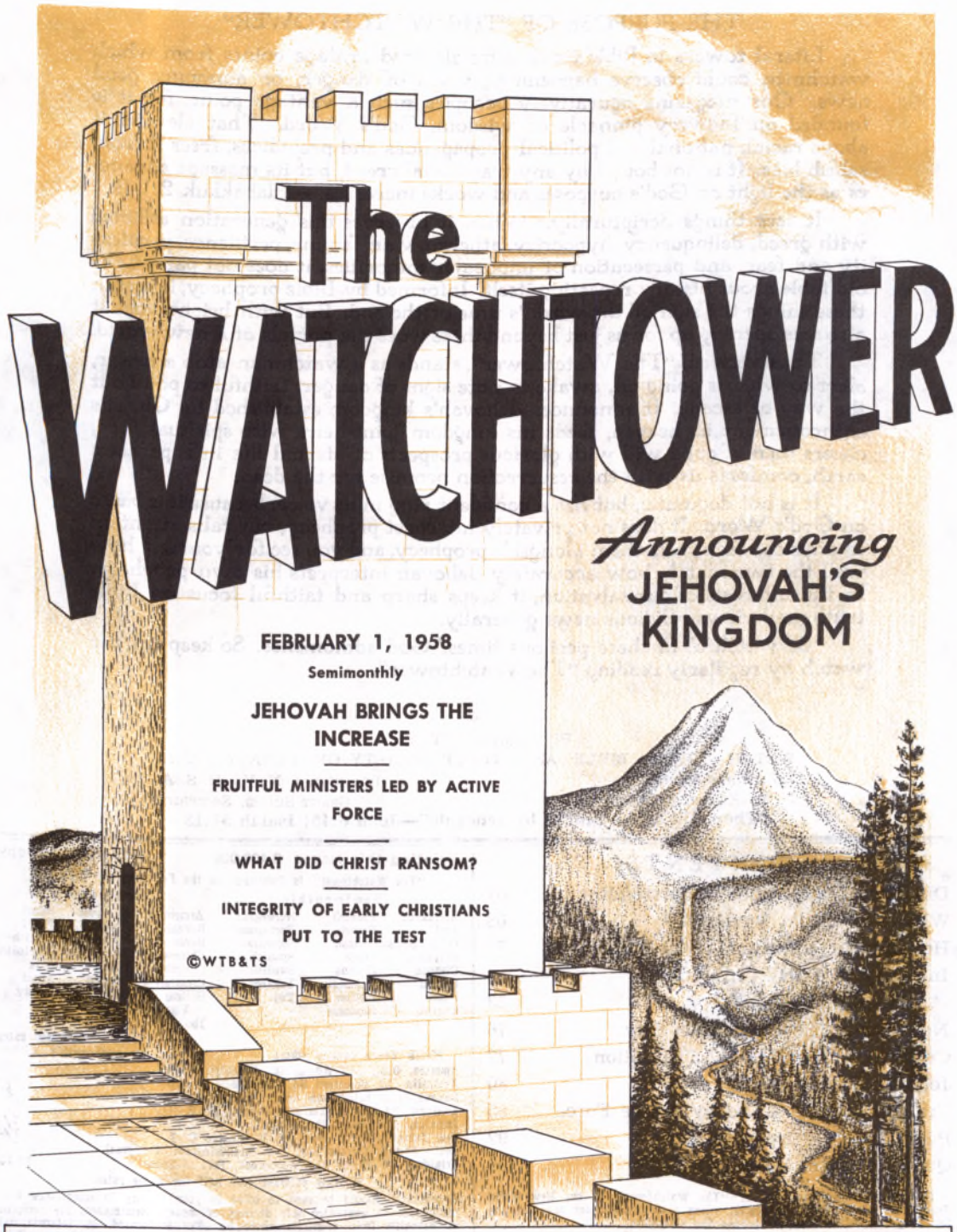

The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

FEBRUARY 1, 1958
Semimonthly

JEHOVAH BRINGS THE INCREASE

FRUITFUL MINISTERS LED BY ACTIVE FORCE

WHAT DID CHRIST RANSOM?

INTEGRITY OF EARLY CHRISTIANS PUT TO THE TEST

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"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; Isaiah 54:13

CONTENTS

Did They Decide with Understanding?	67
What Did Christ Ransom?	68
Holding Forth Healing to the Nations	72
Integrity of Early Christians Put to the Test	73
New York: The Convention City	76
Cultivate a Good Mental Disposition	77
Jehovah Brings the Increase	80
Fruitful Ministers Led by Active Force	85
Pursuing My Purpose in Life	92
Questions from Readers	95

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AT – An American Translation
AV – Authorized Version (1611)
Da – J. N. Darby's version
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JP – Jewish Publication Soc.
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The WATCHTOWER
Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
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DID THEY Decide WITH UNDERSTANDING?

TO THE crowds that gathered in Madison Square Garden in New York city last summer Billy Graham pleaded that they make a decision for Christ. Fifty-five thousand responded. But can it be said that they understood what a decision for Christ really is? Can it be said that the evangelist's plea at a carefully planned moment when the crowd's emotion was high is the proper way to evoke such decisions? And can it be said that a decision for Christ is nothing more than acknowledging belief in him as one's savior?

A great deal more is involved than those people realized. A decision for Christ is primarily a decision for his Father, Jehovah God. It is a decision to do God's will, putting his interests first, just as Christ did. Jesus said: "I seek not my own will but the will of him that sent me." (John 5:30) Those who follow him must do the same. He also magnified his Father's name, but how many of those fifty-five thousand at Madison Square Garden even knew what that name is, or what God's will is?

It is written that "Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely." (1 Pet. 2:21) Were those people told that a decision for Christ means to follow his example by making a dedication to do his Father's will? That it means to endure persecution for keeping integrity to God? That it means to preach by making public proclamation of God's purposes and kingdom?

Christ set the example of no friendship with the world. A decision for Christ means to follow that example. James said: "Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God." (Jas. 4:4) How many of those fifty-five thousand at Madison Square Garden have ignored this Scriptural requirement and continued to be friends of the world? How many are party to its unscriptural schemes, its blood-spilling differences and unloving actions?

Those who decided to follow Christ in the first century made their decision after careful instruction in the Scriptures. Their allegiance to God's anointed King was with understanding. It can be no different today. A person must decide to follow Christ, not because of emotional pleading from an evangelist, but because of understanding that comes from an accurate knowledge of the Scriptures.

WHAT DID Christ RANSOM?

Why is the ransom important? Who benefit from it?

DURING the 1930's kidnaping was a popular crime among racketeers. It was a source of easy money. A victim would be taken and held for a stipulated ransom that would vary according to his financial worth or that of his friends. When the amount requested was paid it was a ransom because it brought release to the victim. The word "ransom" is defined by Webster's *New International Dictionary,* Second Edition, Unabridged, as "a redeeming or releasing of a captive by payment of a consideration. . . . a payment that releases from captivity, a penalty, or a forfeit."

A ransom does not necessarily have to be money. It can be anything of value. It can even be men. In 1780 a treaty between the French and English specified that a French vice-admiral or an English admiral could be ransomed with sixty prisoners of war. The ransom varied according to the officer's rank.

Mankind as a whole is in need of a ransom. They are in a captive state as a result of what happened long ago when earth's only human inhabitants were two persons—Adam and Eve. This first human pair had been created perfect with eternal life ahead of them. They were free and had the prospect of a peaceful life devoted to subduing the earth and filling it with perfect humans like themselves. "Further, God blessed them and God said to them: 'Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it.' "—Gen. 1:28.

It was only right that God should require obedience from these two intelligent creatures of his. He gave them opportunity to demonstrate what course they *would* choose to follow and gave them fair warning of what would happen if they disobeyed. (Gen. 2:16, 17) But in spite of the warning they disobediently ate from the tree whose fruit they were told not to eat. Since sin means disobedience to God's law or transgression of his will, it can be said that Adam and Eve sinned.

Because they ignored the warning and transgressed God's expressed will they became captives to sin and its curse of death. There was no way for them to free themselves, and that meant their children would be born in the same captive state they were in. The situation might be compared with a man and wife who are in slavery. The children born to them would not be born free but would inherit the enslaved condition of their parents. So it has been with all the descendants of Adam and Eve. "That is why, just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned."—Rom. 5:12.

All mankind have inherited sin and the curse of death from Adam because their life force came from him by means of procreation. His sin was passed on to them

just as some diseases can be passed on from parents to children.

HOW TO REGAIN WHAT WAS LOST

By their act of disobedience Adam and Eve lost perfect human life. They were no longer perfect in God's eyes; and as time moved by, the imperfection they passed on would become more and more manifest in the bodily functions of their descendants. They also lost their right to live in the paradise of Eden and partake of its abundant fruits. Besides this they lost the prospect of living indefinitely, of populating the earth with perfect humans, and of subduing the earth by transforming it into one big, peaceful garden. As great as these losses were there was one still greater, and that was the loss of their righteous standing with God.

It was beyond the power of mankind to redeem or gain back what was lost. They could not free themselves from captivity to sin and death by their own efforts. What they needed was a ransom that would bring release, but it would have to come from an outside source. No descendant of Adam could provide it. "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."—Ps. 49:7.

The ransom necessary to free man must be of equal value with Adam. Since it was a perfect man who lost life for mankind a perfect human life was necessary to redeem it. None of Adam's descendants were equal to him in his perfection, and therefore none could be the necessary ransom. Animal life was also of insufficient value. The animals sacrificed by the Israelites could at the most only picture the perfect human sacrifice that could ransom mankind.

The shedding of animal blood in those sacrifices pointed out one further fact, and that is, that blood must be shed in order that man might be freed from the effects of Adam's sin. This is because a creature's life is in the blood. At Hebrews 9:22 it is written: "Yes, nearly all things are cleansed with blood according to the Law, and unless blood is poured out no forgiveness takes place." Thus the life of a perfect man, as represented by his blood, must be poured out in order to redeem what Adam lost.

HOW RANSOM FOR MAN WAS PROVIDED

Only Jehovah God could provide a suitable ransom for Adam's descendants. He alone could cause a human to exist whose life force did not come from Adam. This was accomplished by transferring the life force of one of his spirit sons to the womb of Mary. By the regular process of birth a human was then born whose life did not come from Adam through procreation. Because it did not, Christ was perfect and free from inherited sin. He was not in captivity to sin and death.

Because Christ came into the world in this fashion he was human with all the human life rights possessed by Adam before sinning. He was Adam's equal and thus a suitable ransom for mankind. If he had been an incarnation, a spirit clothed with flesh, he would not have been Adam's equal. As such he could not have human life rights and could not ransom mankind. Only by giving up spirit life and becoming a human through the birth process could he be entitled to those rights. "He emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men." (Phil. 2:7) Since he was not an incarnation he was "like his 'brothers' in all respects."—Heb. 2:17.

Christ was not forced to give up his human life and its rights in order to ransom Adam's descendants. He did it voluntarily. It was an act of love on his part. "Just as the Son of man came, not to be

ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." —Matt. 20:28.

On the third day after Christ died on the stake he was resurrected as a spirit creature with heavenly life rights. Peter testified to this when he said: "Why, even Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous person for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you to God, he being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit." (1 Pet. 3:18) As a spirit he was able to present the value of his sacrificed human life before God as a ransom price to release Adam's descendants.

But this ransom does not bring a blanket release to all humans. Those people who persist in following Adam's course of disobedience to God will not benefit from the ransom. It was purposed for those who would not follow that wrong course but who would be obedient and would exercise faith. "He that exercises faith in the Son has everlasting life; he that disobeys the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him."—John 3:36; 1 Tim. 4:10.

Why should God be a Savior to those who do not rest their hope in him and who are not faithful? Why should the precious life of his beloved Son be used to bring them the valuable things Adam lost when they are unworthy of them? Jehovah did not give his Son as a ransom for every human but rather for those who would exercise faith and be obedient. These are the ones he desired to save.

A world consisting exclusively of such persons from all kinds of men is what God purposed. It is this righteous new world that he loved so much that he gave his Son as a sin-atoning sacrifice. It was for all obedient humans who exercise faith and who would be the inhabitants of that righteous new world that the ransom was paid. "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

Such ones who exercise faith will be cleansed of inherited sin from Adam by Christ's blood, as it alone can cleanse from sin. (1 John 1:7) Because it does they will be freed from captivity to sin and death. All that Adam lost will thus be redeemed for them. Christ's one sacrifice does this, and it does not have to be repeated. "But now he has manifested himself once for all time at the consummation of the systems of things to put sin away through the sacrifice of himself."—Heb. 9:26.

WHY FAITH IN RANSOM NECESSARY

If a captive is told how he can be ransomed but he refuses to have faith in the means that could free him and so rejects it, he will continue in his captivity. So it is with humankind. God does not force the benefits of Christ's ransom upon anyone. Its existence has been proclaimed to mankind, and it is up to each individual to accept it or reject it. It is only by accepting it and exercising faith in it that a person will experience release from sin and its curse of death. "But the Scripture delivered up all things together to the custody of sin, that the promise resulting from faith toward Jesus Christ might be given to those exercising faith."—Gal. 3:22.

There are many professed Christians that refuse to exercise faith in Christ's ransom sacrifice. They refuse to see any sin-atoning value in his shed blood. They are similar to the ones Peter referred to when he said: "However, there also came to be false prophets among the people, as there will also be false teachers among you. These very ones will quietly bring in destructive sects and will disown even the

owner that bought them, bringing speedy destruction upon themselves." (2 Pet. 2:1) Christ bought the Christians with his perfect human life, but these persons ceased to recognize his ownership. When men reject him, he rejects them. They will never receive the things that Adam lost and Christ redeemed.

Unless a person has knowledge about the ransom and why it is necessary it is not possible for him to exercise faith in it. He must first know something about it, and this requires instruction in the truths of God's Word. The Scriptures make it clear that God was not obliged to provide a ransom for mankind. The fact that he did was an expression of undeserved kindness toward man. This must be appreciated by those who want freedom from Adamic sin.—Titus 3:4, 5.

For a person to benefit from the ransom he must recognize his sinful condition. He cannot close his eyes to it and imagine himself free from sin, as some try to do. "If we make the statement, 'We have no sin,' we are misleading ourselves and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8) He must gain accurate knowledge, and when he does he then has a basis for exercising faith in the ransom and in the fact that God is "the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him."—Heb. 11:6.

WHEN RANSOM BENEFITS WILL GENERALLY BE APPLIED

God has anointed Christ Jesus to be King of the righteous world he purposed in the beginning. By means of him and the Kingdom he heads, the present wicked system of things will be swept from the earth. He will then proceed to fulfill his Father's purpose for the earth by extending to the survivors of that cleansing action the benefits of his ransom sacrifice. This will begin a reviving of mankind that will proceed until mankind regains all that Adam lost for them.

During this reviving period of one thousand years the dead who are judged worthy of a resurrection will be raised to life. This will be an emptying of mankind's common grave and will mean that the death due to Adam's sin will lose its sting. Adamic sin will no longer result in further death to man. The benefits of Christ's ransom sacrifice will nullify it. Then the prophecy will be fulfilled that says: "As the last enemy, death is to be destroyed." —1 Cor. 15:26.

After a short and final test obedient mankind will be justified by God and will once again have a righteous standing before him. The gift of eternal life will then be theirs. Christ's ransom sacrifice not only will have brought them release from captivity to sin and death, but will have redeemed for them all that Adam lost.

But for anyone today to be among those who shall live to see this, he must be obedient to the will of God. He must exercise faith in God's promises and in the value of Christ's ransom sacrifice. It is only by obedience and faith now that he will be living then.

Spiritual Condition in Question

¶ A Roman Catholic bishop recently questioned the reality of his church's membership claim in the United States. The Roman Catholic Church now claims 34,563,851 members. But Bishop Stephen S. Woznicki of Saginaw, Michigan, thought that no more than twenty-five million are practicing Catholics. "There has been great progress in the physical condition of dioceses," he said, "but the spiritual condition is an entirely different question."—*Time*, September 23, 1957.

Holding Forth Healing to the Nations

TRULY the peoples of the nations are greatly in need of healing, physically, politically and especially religiously, spiritually. While their leaders admit it and promise the people healing, the results show that they, like Job's feigned comforters, "are physicians of no value." (Job 13:4) Healing of the nations can come only from Jehovah and on his terms, even as he told his ancient people Israel at 2 Chronicles 7:14.

The one whom Jehovah has chosen through whom to bring this healing to the nations is his beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Nineteen centuries ago he went throughout the land healing not only the mental and physical infirmities of his people, but, far more vital, their religious and spiritual ills by means of the truth. Beginning with the Roman soldier Cornelius, this healing work extended to the Gentiles.—Acts 10: 1-48.

For some time now God has been doing a modern healing work, even as foretold: "And on this side of the river [of water of life] and on that side there were trees of life . . . And the leaves of the trees were for the curing of the nations." (Rev. 22:2)* As a result there is today a New World society of more than seven hundred thousand Christian witnesses of Jehovah who have come into friendly relations with God and obtained forgiveness through faith in Jesus' shed blood. By means of the truth of God's Word they have had their minds made over, making them free from false religion, from selfish pursuits and from the fear of man.—John 8:32.

While we cannot repay God for healing us, we can show gratitude and appreciation therefor. How? By holding forth healing to others. Doing so, we further show that we love our neighbor as ourselves.

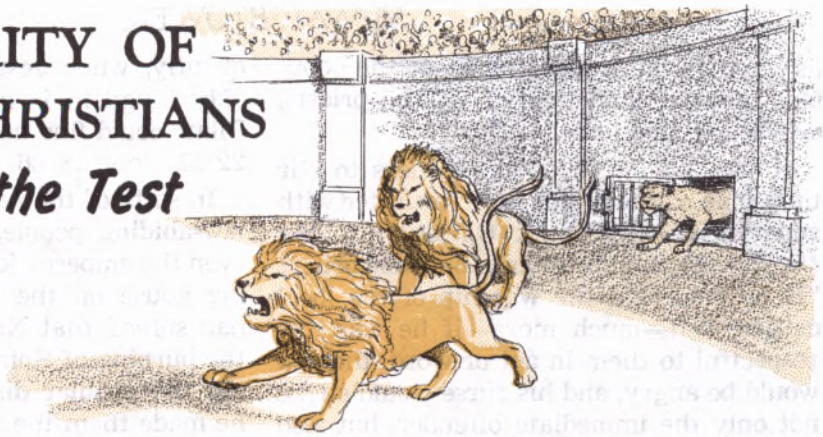
Regarding his own healing activity Jesus said: "We must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night is coming when no man can work." The same is true of us; the time is fast running out in which we can hold forth healing to the nations. Are we doing all we can, or are we contenting ourselves with part-time healing activity when we could be devoting full time to it? Are we limiting our healing activity to where the need is the least when we could share in the healing work where the need is great? Are we limiting our activity to nine or ten hours a month when by just devoting one evening hour, one hour Saturday afternoons and three on Sunday regularly each week we could double our activity? What that would mean in the way of increase if we devoted twice as much time to the healing work!

And what about opportunities for incidental healing activity, such as at our places of employment, as we travel, in business contacts or when we have guests at our homes? Surely if we are alert we can find many opportunities to hold forth healing to the nations. Nor should we let inclement weather serve as an excuse for staying home; rather, let it present us with a challenge that we will meet like men. Yes, why let bad weather deter us when it does not prevent our children from going to school or keep us from our places of secular employment?

The time is fast running out. There will not be another such opportunity to hold forth healing to the nations as is ours today. Let us show our gratitude to Jehovah and our love to our neighbor by holding forth healing to the nations to the extent we are able to do so.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, September 15, 1957.

INTEGRITY OF EARLY CHRISTIANS *Put to the Test*



JESUS stated a truth that has been demonstrated daily when he said: "If you were part of the world, the world would be fond of what is its own. Now because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you." (John 15:19) While many professing Christians do not appreciate the significance of those words, true Christians right down to our day do. (2 Tim. 3:12) They have never shared the materialistic philosophy that governs not only the social and political but also the religious life of the world. Instead of putting their confidence in men, they look to "the city having real foundations and the builder and creator of which is God." The worship they render to God does not depend on the possession of man-made aids to devotion, but they "worship the Father with spirit and truth."—Heb. 11:10; John 4:23.

Early Christianity spread rapidly and, as it did, persecution arose, just as Jesus had foretold. "There were many reasons which led the populace to hate Christians, whom, first of all, they regarded as being unpatriotic. While among Romans it was considered the highest honor to possess the privileges of Roman citizenship, the Christians announced that they were citizens of heaven. They shrank from public office and military service,"[1] maintaining their integrity as soldiers of Christ. (2 Tim. 2:3) Further, their opposers labeled them 'haters of mankind' and anarchists because they would not participate in the social and political activities of the community.[2] They knew that for their worship to be acceptable to God they must 'keep themselves without spot from the world.'—Jas. 1:27.

At first the outbursts of opposition were instigated by the local religious shepherds who feared loss of influence and income. "Christians were hated by the idolaters, and suffered innumerable wrongs and outrages from the hands of the populace, even when there was no governmental persecution. . . . The mere fact that one was a Christian, no matter how pure his character, how exemplary his life, exposed him to every conceivable indignity from the idol-worshipping populace. The local magistrates, yielding to the clamors of the mob, would afford no protection to those who were accused of being the disciples of Jesus."[3] And as pointed out in Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History,* it was usually the religious leaders who kept the kettle of persecution at the boiling point. "It had become a common custom to persecute the Christians, and even to put them to death,

as often as the pagan priests, or the populace under the instigation of the priests, demanded their destruction."[4]

It was not hard for the leaders to stir up people whose minds were saturated with superstition. The book *Christianity and the Roman Empire* reports on their belief: "If he neglected the worship of the local deities, and—much more—if he was disrespectful to them in act or word, the god would be angry, and his curse would strike not only the immediate offender, but also those who tolerated him. Again each member of the State was bound to promote its welfare by religious observance. He had no more right to abstain from the performance of his religious duties than to decline paying taxes."[5] Such was the thinking of the Romans. They superstitiously believed that it was vital to force conformity in religious matters or to destroy the offenders. "If the empire had been afflicted by any recent calamity, by a plague, a famine, or an unsuccessful war; if the Tiber had, or the Nile had not, risen beyond its banks, if the earth had shaken, or if the temperate order of the seasons had been interrupted, the superstitious Pagans were convinced that the crimes and the impiety of the Christians, who were spared by the excessive lenity of the government, had at length provoked the divine justice."[6] So popular clamor caused many magistrates to yield to the demand: "Christians to the lions!"

OFFICIALS JOIN IN PERSECUTION

When Jesus said: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God," he clearly set out the principle that would govern Christians' relationship to the civil authorities. They are neutrals. They do not rise in rebellion against the governments, even when unjustly persecuted. Active support, however, they give to the heavenly kingdom of God. Consequently, when Jesus explained to Pilate: "My kingdom is no part of this world," Pilate could find no fault with him.—Matt. 22:21; John 18:36.

In spite of the fact that Christians were law-abiding people, the time came when even the emperor joined the others in heaping abuse on the Christians. The rumor had spread that Nero was responsible for the burning of Rome. Diabolically employing the popular dislike of the Christians, he made them the scapegoats to divert attention from himself. Tacitus is quoted as telling what followed: "Various forms of mockery were added to enhance their dying agonies. Covered with the skins of wild beasts, they were doomed to die by the mangling of dogs, or by being nailed to crosses, or to be set on fire and burned after twilight by way of nightly illumination. Nero offered his own garden for this show, . . . a feeling of compassion toward them began to rise, as men felt that they were being immolated not for any advantage to the Commonwealth, but to glut the savagery of a single man."[1]

During the reigns of Vespasian and Titus official opposition subsided, only to be renewed at the instigation of Domitian toward the end of the first century.[7] Reports are said to have reached him about the Christian belief in the return of Christ in Kingdom power. Much as Herod at the birth of Christ, he considered it a threat, fearing someone might claim to be heir to the throne, and so he conducted inquiries on the matter. While some were martyred, no general edict was issued.[3, 5]

However, within a few years the rapid growth of Christianity in Asia Minor attracted more official attention. Pliny the Younger, proconsul in that area, reported on the matter to Emperor Trajan. This brought forth official legislation in the form of Trajan's letter A.D. 112, which

said of the Christians: "They are not to be searched for. If, indeed, they are accused and convicted, they must be punished, with this restriction, however, that when the party denies himself to be a Christian, and shall make it evident that he is not, by invoking our gods, let him . . . be pardoned upon his repentance. Anonymous accusations ought not to be received in prosecutions of any sort."[7]

Judges often offered prisoners their freedom with the seemingly simple requirement that they "cast a few grains of incense upon the altar." Christians, following the example of Christ, who would not do an act of worship to the Devil for personal advantage, firmly maintained their integrity. When this effort of the court was ineffective they used bribery, and then the victim was put to torture in which "every art of cruelty was employed to subdue such inflexible, and, as it appeared to the Pagans, criminal obstinacy."[6] While this official procedure continued in operation for many years, it should not be supposed that all cases were now handled by the courts and that a complete restraint had been placed on the priests who wished to oppress the Christians. To the contrary, at the public games they still succeeded in exciting the crowds to demand the death of Christians. Further, "it was in the power of the presidents to persecute the Christians with impunity whenever they pleased."[4]

Faithful Christians firmly maintained their integrity, neutral as regards the affairs of the world, obeying all proper laws, but reserving their worship exclusively for Jehovah God. Rome pushed the issue to the fore by demanding that the state be placed above God. "Christians were liable to the penalties of sacrilege and high treason, of sacrilege for refusing to worship the gods of the state, of high treason for refusing to worship the genius of the Emperor in whom the majesty of the state was embodied, with the customary offerings of wine and incense."[5] But Christians, with full confidence in Jehovah God who holds the power of life, firmly declared: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) Because they are no part of the world, true Christians are hated by the world. But because they maintain integrity to the Living God, he will show his love for them by granting them an eternity of life in which to serve him.

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[7] *Library of Biblical and Theological Literature*, History of the Christian Church, by G. Crooks and J. Hurst, pages 165-168.

"Best Thing That Could Happen"

A news dispatch in the Houston *Chronicle* of August 16, 1955, reported on some statements made by a clergyman in Marthall, England: "Rev. Philip Francis, the local vicar, sincerely believes that what this world needs is an atomic war. 'Yes, it would be the best thing that could happen,' the 55-year-old parson told reporters who besieged him with questions last night about a provocative article he wrote in his parish magazine. In the article he said: 'We need not bother about the dire warnings of eminent people who hate changing from the gunpowder age to the atomic age.' 'An atomic war would do the world good. . . . It is the only thing which could clear away present evils and bring about world government.'" But the Bible shows that the only thing that will do this is God's war of Armageddon. It will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth."

New York: THE CONVENTION CITY

A SMALL dot on maps of the United States is being looked at with keen interest by people in Europe, Africa, Asia, the South Pacific, South America, Central America and North America. The dot represents a city they plan to visit this summer.

But these people are not ordinary tourists. They are coming to New York city for a special purpose—to attend the international assembly of Jehovah's witnesses.

This assembly will mean a great influx of people in a matter of a few days, but New York is well capable of handling them. It has plenty of accommodations.

Since these people will be coming to worship and serve Jehovah God, it brings to mind how assemblies for the same purpose made Jerusalem a great convention city. In ancient times people traveled great distances to assemble there three times a year, as required by God's law to Moses: "On three occasions in the year every male of yours will appear before the face of the Lord Jehovah." (Ex. 23:17) They were to appear at the sanctuary located in Jerusalem.

Of course, God has no sanctuary in New York city, and neither has he given a command for people to assemble there. The reason Jehovah's witnesses have made it their convention city for 1958 is the fine facilities it has for a large international assembly. It is easily reached by every means of modern transportation. Three immense airports can readily care for the conventioners arriving by air. Those coming on trains and buses will be handled with ease by the big railroad stations and numerous bus depots. Boats bringing other conventioners will dock in one of the world's finest harbors. Those coming by automobile will find excellent, high-speed highways leading into the city.

The Witnesses do not have a Scriptural command to assemble in any particular place as the Israelites did, but they do have a Scriptural command to have conventions. This is found at Hebrews 10:24, 25: "And let us consider one another to incite to love and right works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near."

Jehovah's witnesses obey this command by holding many conventions, and occasionally an international one. But it is a problem to find a place large enough and suitable for their needs. Fortunately, New York city has something that does meet their needs—two large stadiums within a few blocks of each other. Yankee Stadium and the Polo Grounds will be used for the 1958 international assembly.

Another feature that makes New York a fine convention city is its excellent transportation system. Large crowds can be brought quickly from all parts of the city to any one point. And then a few hours later they can be just as quickly whisked away.

As the festival of booths in ancient Israel lasted for seven days, followed by an eighth day of assembly, so the international assembly of the Witnesses will last eight days, July 27 to August 3. It will be a rich feast of spiritual food. This will make it very different from the many hundreds of conventions that are held in New York city every year. It might be mentioned that 767 conventions and expositions were held there in 1956, drawing a total of 3,717,000 delegates and visitors. But of all these gatherings this assembly of Jehovah's witnesses will be distinctly unique. It will be an immense international gathering of ministers who will do in New York what is commanded at Hebrews 13:15: "Offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name."

This great assembly will add to New York city's prestige as a convention city. But more than that, it will focus public attention on the fact that God's kingdom is mankind's only hope for peace, security and life.

Cultivate

A GOOD MENTAL DISPOSITION

WHAT would you do if you suddenly learned that the Sovereign Ruler of the universe was displeased with you? Would you abandon your place and bolt for cover, some imagined safer place? Would you resent his rebuke and corrective rod of discipline and rebel against it, or would you humbly acknowledge your *wrongful* action, turn from such course and accept the chastening discipline of Jehovah? You would be wise to do the latter, for God's Word counsels us on this matter: "If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for submissiveness causeth great offences to be avoided." —Eccl. 10:4, *Le.*

Only recently, during World War I, the remnant of the little flock had just such an experience. Because of the political and religious pressure of those troublesome days they were guilty of fear of man. They were taken into captivity by the enemy. Then they grieved as they recognized their position and begged Jehovah's forgiveness.

They did not, as did the "evil servant" group, find fault with Jehovah's discipline and reject it. They wanted nothing more than to retain their place in Jehovah's mercy and their place of service. For them it became a matter of enduring his discipline in hope of appeasing his spirit. "My son, do not belittle the discipline from Jehovah, neither give out when you are corrected by him; for whom Jehovah loves he disciplines, in fact he scourges everyone whom he receives as a son. It is for discipline you are enduring." (Heb. 12:5-7) Jehovah's spirit did soften! They were restored to his favor with greater and grander privileges. Shortly they were singing, and still sing: "And in that day thou shalt say, I will give thanks unto thee, O Jehovah; for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me."—Isa. 12:1, *AS.*

"SPIRIT" DEFINED

From the way the word "spirit" is used in Ecclesiastes 10:4 and in many other places in the Bible, it is clear that this is one of the distinct uses or meanings of the Hebrew word *ru'ahh,* which is usually translated *spirit.* In keeping with the underlying general meaning of the Hebrew word, the meaning in this instance also refers to something invisible, but something that can produce visible results. This particular use to which the word is put relates to one's state of mind or mental disposition or mental attitude. That is something no human eye can fathom. It can and does, however, produce seeable physical actions.

Our mind is that faculty of our brain that enables us to search out information or evidence and to reason on it and to arrive at definite conclusions. By our mind we set our mental processes in action along any desired line of thought as a result of being endowed with the ability to decide for ourselves what we shall think about. We are not robots; we have free will. What we allow our minds to dwell upon makes lasting impressions in our brain, giving it a certain bent or inclination that, in turn, influences our conduct. When a man's thoughts along a certain line become fixed

enough to affect his conduct they are soon crystallized into physical action that anyone can observe. Since man does have free will, then two courses are before him as to his thinking, his mental attitude and resulting personality.

GOOD AND BAD DISPOSITION

The average person today is uninformed concerning the operation of Satan and his demons because of not knowing God's Word. Leaning to worldly wisdom and human reasoning tainted with demonic influence, he falls easy prey to Satan's devices. His thinking is warped along the lines of self-interest; and, having as associates those of the same frame of mind, he finds himself unable to control his spirit or mental disposition completely. "He whose spirit is without restraint is like a city that is broken down and without walls." He cannot resist the pressures of this world over which Satan rules. Because of this he is unreliable, just as foretold concerning the last days of this system.—Prov. 25:28, *AS;* 2 Tim. 3:2, 3.

What a man thinks about he talks about. Violent deeds accompany vile and lawless talk, both bearing strong evidence of the depraved mental disposition and bad heart condition of the majority of mankind today. Strife is a common thing, because of not following Jehovah's counsel (Prov. 17:14) and controlling one's spirit. No one knows this better than Jehovah's witnesses, who often have been the victims of brutal assault by those who have surrendered themselves to the passions of anger, either individually or in mobs.

In striking contrast with such persons stand those who have been gathered out of this corrupt system of things into the New World society. No dirty talking there! No vile or violent deeds are permitted. Why, how could there be such persons with the mental disposition that is evidenced by those who make up the society? That disposition is clearly explained by Paul when he says: "But we do have the mind of Christ." Christ Jesus had a mind that was perfect and holy and guileless. He always had it in complete control and centered on doing the Father's will. His attitude was not one of superiority or being puffed up with knowledge, although he had knowledge second only to One. He was mild-tempered and lowly of heart.—1 Cor. 2:16.

Among Jehovah's witnesses today these same qualities are observed, although not in perfection. They have stripped off the old personality and put on the new personality. Their minds are filled with godly thoughts from God's Word and their disposition is according to that decreed by Jehovah for those among whom he dwells. (Isa. 57:15, *AS*) They exercise self-control and direct the channel of their thoughts and desires so that they can be described as having a good mental disposition and righteous heart condition. The very lives they live from day to day give evidence of this to all who wish to observe it.

This does not mean that we can no longer get angry or lose our temper. We can, and for that reason we must continually be on guard. We can get angry against underhanded enemy action; we may feel anger against some within the organization at times; we may even feel angry with ourselves occasionally. Why, even Paul and Barnabas once gave way to a burst of anger between themselves. In these instances, however, our anger and its manifestation are far different from the frenzied outburst of some demonized half-mad person without control of his spirit. Ephesians 4:25-27 faces up to our problem and gives us the right advice: "Wherefore, now that you have put away falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, because we are members belonging to one

another. Be angry, and yet do not sin; let the sun not set with you in a provoked state, neither allow place for the Devil." We must control our anger.—Prov. 17:27.

CULTIVATING THE PROPER DISPOSITION

In these last days, with the execution of Jehovah's judgments staring us in the face, it is vital for us to cultivate and retain the right disposition, for no other kind will be allowed to survive Armageddon. It can be done. To encourage us and assure us that it is possible Jehovah counsels us in his Word to imitate his Son: "Keep this mental attitude in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:5) To know Christ's mental attitude means study of the Sacred Record, where his thoughts and teaching are set down. His was the uncomplaining mind with no grumbling at his assignment. His delight was to do his Father's slightest wish. That is the attitude to cultivate.

So we are to quit fashioning our mind after the self-seeking model of this world and make our mind over to resemble that of Christ Jesus, a mind that knows the good and acceptable and complete will of God. (Rom. 12:2, 11, 12) Through taking in accurate knowledge we change the bent of our mind and acquire a proper unselfish motive as our force in life. Prayer is necessary; it gives us strength. Jehovah's active force comes into play, giving us the will to serve him and the ability to do so. His active force together with his Word will transform us so that our new personality will have his approval and blessing.

It is a mistake to think that such a transformation can take place apart from the New World society. Association with it and participation in its activities are absolutely necessary. Through working with it and meeting with our brothers in the various congregational meetings and field service arrangements we advance to maturity. We must always remember that we learn the truth from Jehovah's channel of communication, the "faithful and discreet slave" class. (Matt. 24:45-47) We receive of his spirit by our continued association with his channel. Sometimes we receive reproofs or discipline through the same agency, for we all need discipline to keep a right mental attitude. Loving association with the brothers preserves that attitude. We can hardly harbor anger or a grudge and still have a good disposition. We know better than to do so. We keep "carefully watching that no one may be deprived of the undeserved kindness of God; that no poisonous root may spring up and cause trouble and many be defiled by it." (Heb. 12:15) Pride because of position in the organization or because of any other reason must not be found in us. To be guilty of that disposition would cause a rising of Jehovah's spirit that would mean, at least, a jolting fall in the way of discipline through the organization or, at most, destruction by Jehovah's Executioner.

Very shortly now Jehovah's anger against all the proud of this system of things and all who are identified with it will be manifested in the destructive fury of Armageddon. While his anger will never be expressed against the loyal New World society, it can be expressed against any of the society who corrupt their good mental disposition. Be on guard, then, constantly that such a thing may never happen. Then you can share in Jehovah's triumph and rejoice in the glorious salvation he will work in behalf of those who continue to have the attitude of his dear Son. "The undeserved kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ be with the spirit you show, brothers." "May the spirit and soul and body of you brothers be preserved blameless at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ." —Gal. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:23.

JEHOVAH BRINGS THE INCREASE

"To us belongs nothing, O Jehovah, to us belongs nothing, but to your name give glory according to your loving-kindness, according to your trueness."—Ps. 115:1.

FALSE, imitation Christianity is a curse to mankind. True, genuine Christianity is a blessing to men of good will. Is true Christianity on the increase at this time? Yes, it is. This is a well-considered answer, based on events that are actually taking place, and it is true in spite of the fact that now is the most materialistic time of man's history. Who is accomplishing the increase in true Christianity? The One accomplishing it, the One to whom all credit is given, is the true God himself, Jehovah. In some sectors of the earth orthodox church evangelism is prominent from time to time, but such "evangelism" has nothing to do with the God-given increase of true Christianity. It is true that in some sectors church membership and church attendance have increased; but that such increase is no part of the present expansion of true Christianity is demonstrated by the fact that in those same sectors devilish materialism also increases, and is accompanied by increasing crime, lawlessness and violation of every righteous commandment and principle of Christianity. So for the advance of the cause of clean worship, pure religion, true Christianity, no man and no organization of men can properly claim credit; but, on the contrary, "To us belongs nothing, O Jehovah, to us belongs nothing, but to your name give glory according to your loving-kindness, according to your trueness."—Ps. 115:1.

[2] Are you in accord with the expression of this psalm? Are you willing, yes, anxious that the glory go to Jehovah's name? Jehovah is accomplishing his purposes to the glory of his name and according to his own loving-kindness, and with such we must be in accord if we are to share in the blessings of Christianity's increase now. The increase is also 'according to his trueness.' The truth of God's Word, the Bible, is the precious gathering instrument, which he is using to bring about his increase earth-wide.—Ps. 115:1, *margin*.

1. (a) Why is it here stated that Christianity is on the increase? (b) Where should the credit for such increase be given, and why?

2. Why must we be in accord with Psalm 115:1?

[3] To observe this increase with glory to Jehovah's name according to his loving-kindness and truth, where can we look? To what quarter can we turn to see actually it in progress? That such increase is on and is to be permanently successful is unquestionably certain, because Jehovah himself is the great One who brings it about. How is it being accomplished on earth? Economically? No, because the world's economy is at once materialistic and sick. Politically? No, because no political organization or nation of the East or of the West is devoted to the glory of Jehovah's name, to his loving-kindness, or to his trueness. Religiously? Yes, religiously; but certainly not among orthodox religions of pagandom or of Christendom, because no one of such religions holds high the name of Jehovah God or requires that its adherents acknowledge his loving-kindness and conform to his truth. And yet on every hand, wherever we turn, in all quarters, in all the earth, is seen the increase in true Christianity, which Jehovah God himself is bringing about in our wonderful day. It is seen in the earth-wide, Christian New World society. This New World society is not a philosophy of economy or of politics, nor has it anything in common with orthodox religion, but it is strictly Christian.

[4] It is well for us to realize thoroughly that while the increase is certain, due to the fact that Jehovah brings it, it is for his own good purpose that he does so. What is his purpose? Why does he grant prosperity upon his worshipers? Because they give glory to his name, because of his own name's sake: "But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown; and I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it; and the cities shall be inhabited, and the waste places shall be builded; and I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase and be fruitful; and I will cause you to be inhabited after your former estate, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah." (Ezek. 36:8-11, *AS*) That this beautiful, pictorial prophecy finds no fulfillment in any political nation of earth, the nation of modern Israel, or otherwise, is evident in the conditions, standards and practices of such nations. And yet the prophecy is true. We see it fulfilled upon those who are in fact today of "the Israel of God," spiritual Israel, the Christian congregation.—Gal. 6:16.

[5] If we are to share in the blessings of today's spiritual prosperity we must not merely be aware of the increase Jehovah is bringing, but be awake to its significance, be associated with it, be attentive to God's truth. Before the entire world the New World society stands as proof of this mounting increase. This it does, not as a new sect or a new denomination, because, organizationally, the New World society is one of primitive Christians, and it is neither a sect nor a denomination in the usual sectarian sense of these words. Rather, it is before the world now as a *new nation,* not under worldly direction, not praising lesser gods or serving earthly gods, but praising and serving the great heavenly One. Hence Jehovah's witnesses say: "Why should the nations say: 'Where, now, is their God?' But our God is in the heavens; everything in which he took a delight he has done." (Ps. 115:2, 3) Ac-

3. (a) Why is Christian prosperity certain? (b) How is it being accomplished? (c) Where do the facts locate it? Why there?
4. In what way does Ezekiel 36:8-11 show Jehovah's reason for bringing the increase?
5. (a) How may we share in today's spiritual prosperity? (b) What new nation is subject to the God in heaven? (c) What proves the new nation knows its God?

cordingly, those of the New World society know their God and they make him known to others through the proclamation of his truth, which, in turn, gathers others, to his praise. So advanced has this Christian organization and work become that it is actually represented throughout the earth by more than 700,000 zealous ministers who are carrying to other persons the essential knowledge of Jehovah's trueness.

NO COMPLACENT IDOL WORSHIP

[6] In his loving-kindness Jehovah sounds a warning through his Word so that idol worship of false "Christianity" will ever be avoided by those who would honor him and have his approval. He is aware of the deceptiveness of idol worship. Cannot we see its danger? Certainly idol worship is materialistic, because literal idols are material things. And yet one may be inclined to believe that because an object has a mouth, eyes, ears, a nose and hands and feet, and has a throat, it must be of some account, it must even be alive. It is possible to be deceived by appearances. It is possible for a Christian to be lulled into complacency, to be sidetracked, and so, in the same Psalm 115, there comes to us a warning contrast. You are a reader of *The Watchtower*. You may be, not one of Jehovah's witnesses, but a person interested in their activity or interested in the Bible to a measure, or perhaps even having your first contact with this publication. Can you not, whoever you are, recognize the warning in this scripture? To every one of us as an individual, and also to the entire New World society as an organization, comes the command to avoid as a deadly thing the idols of the nations who say to those of the New World society, 'Where, now, is your God?' and to trust only in Jehovah God: "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of the hands of earthling man. A mouth they have, but they cannot speak; eyes they have, but they cannot see; ears they have, but they cannot hear. A nose they have, but they cannot smell. Hands are theirs, but they cannot feel. Feet are theirs, but they cannot walk; they utter no sound with their throat. Those making them will become just like them, all those who are trusting in them. O Israel, trust in Jehovah; he is their help and their shield."—Ps. 115:4-9.

[7] These idols must not be for us. Their worship is not the religion that we shall practice. Our trust must be and must continue to be in Jehovah, our help and our shield. We cannot go the way of individuals and organizations that worship idols; we cannot go the way of individuals or of organizations that serve and worship anything, any god, other than the true God Jehovah. Therein lies the warning to us as individuals and as an organization.

[8] Jehovah has brought his wonderful increase, and yet it is in connection with this spiritual prosperity that the warning comes. We must see to it that, by Jehovah's undeserved kindness, the increase results only in good, in good to the New World society as a whole, in good to our associates therein, and good to ourselves individually. The increase must not result in our conforming to the old world. Large size must not result in our becoming just formalistic "churchgoers." The increase in numbers must not result in complacency on our part, because we are not like idols, nor are we as the idol worshipers. We have mouths, eyes, ears, noses, hands, feet and throats, but unlike idols, as Jehovah's servants we must be alive, using our literal and symbolic faculties and resources to the continued advancement of true Christiani-

6, 7. (a) What warning comes to individual Christians? (b) As an organization, the New World society receives what command? (c) Where must our exclusive devotion and trust be placed?

8. Show how appropriate it is that the warning of Psalm 115:4-9 accompanies spiritual prosperity.

ty, continuing to stand separate from the old world, bearing faithful witness to Jehovah's name and his kingdom, to the blessing of our fellow man and to the praise of our God, who "is in the heavens."

[9] There are persons who apparently hope for our conformity to the world and who try to see in our increase and prosperity signs of such conformity. Occasionally such ideas frequently spoken find published expression. Of interest is the following example, which, while reviewing modern events after a fashion, expresses a wish or hope for conformity on our part, as follows: "Jehovah's Witnesses is the fastest-growing religious movement in the world. In fifteen years it has tripled its membership. . . . One of my earliest impressions of the group came in the days of World War II when, on a city street, I saw a cleric jostle a Watchtower Witness and exclaim, 'Damn you, conscientious objector!' The witness smiled as if this treatment was but the fulfillment of what the Lord and Brooklyn headquarters had promised him. . . . we did attack a group of them in Arkansas in 1940 and beat up five with lead pipes. We tipped over their trailers at one of their Iowa conferences. We clamped them into prisons because of their views on military service and their stubborn refusal to submit to the draft. We asked police to jail a hundred of them in New Jersey because they were 'dangerous.' We lectured them publicly about their attitude toward the American flag and the American way. We took them to task for their opposition to blood transfusions. We slammed the doors in their faces. We preached against them and warned our people about them. And by these and other ways we proved again that those whom some will kill, others will canonize. . . . But the most startling of all features about the startling Witnesses is that they are in transition. . . . There is, first, a transition in the area of personality emphasis. . . . This brings us to the second point of transition, the matter of terminology. . . . Which leads us to a third transitional phenomenon in the open arena of social consciousness. . . . things have changed. Today the Witnesses are dipping into the accredited church rolls. Today's convert to the new and growing Brooklyn denomination is no longer a disorderly soul from the other side of the tracks. He is the same type of person who sits in the cushioned pew of the home-town church around the corner. And he is changing the pattern of this ambitious millennialistic group so that it is becoming socially acceptable and considerably more respected than in the notorious days of Russell and the 'millions now living shall never die' days of Mr. Rutherford. . . . since the startling Witnesses are here to stay I can only hope that it is in the stars that they will also modify their incredible stand. . . . The Witnesses show some evidence of becoming more social-minded and more community-conscious. . . . Jehovah's Witnesses are not a threat, but a challenge calling once more upon the traditional church to—witness!"—*The Christian Century,* February 13, 1957.

[10] Is this not an expressed wish for us to conform, be like other religions, quit preaching the gospel of God's kingdom and quit insisting on the exclusive worship of Jehovah God?

[11] The modern history of steadfastness to God's truth in spite of opposition and persecution during years just past certainly gives no indication that the future will see an abandonment of Jehovah's requirements by his people. As to the future course of action by Jehovah's witnesses, this is not "in the stars"; it is not to be seen by

9, 10. In what way has one religious writer commented on the treatment of Jehovah's witnesses, their prosperity, and hope for their conformity?

11. What do we have as a basis for judging the future?

scanning the starry creation of Jehovah. In fact, attempts to foretell events by the stars or anyone's trusting in claimed "influence" of the stars is contrary to Jehovah's Word. Not to the stars in the visible heavens, but to the God in the heaven of heavens do we look for our future.

12 So it is that the evidences of the past fifteen years, in fact, of all the years since 1919 particularly, have piled high a mighty heap of testimony to Jehovah's name and kingdom and to Christian faithfulness. This modern history of the New World society has given fulfillment to much Bible prophecy. And the future? Will it see a modification of the Christian point of view respecting Jehovah's supremacy and the conclusiveness of his Word? Will it see an end to the increase Jehovah brings? Do even God's enemies really believe so? Perhaps some do so believe; perhaps many so hope. However, such beliefs or hopes are of no consequence.

13 What is of consequence is the continued blessing of Jehovah; "that is what makes rich." He brings the increase. His spirit, or active force, accomplishes his purposes to his praise and to the eternal welfare of those who love him. Shall he not thereby lead the New World society in the days ahead? Emphatically, Yes! Through the New World society shall you be led by his active force in the wonderfully promising future? You can be!—Prov. 10:22.

12. History and prophecy have what meeting since 1919?

13. (a) What is of consequence in considering the future of Christianity? (b) Can you be led by Jehovah's active force?

The Happiness of Spiritually Healed Lepers

TO MOST persons the thought of being afflicted with leprosy presents one of the worst fates imaginable. It often means segregation in a leper colony for many years and may even result in the gradual wasting away of one's nose, fingers, etc., accompanied with horrible disfigurement. Yet the value, power and beauty of the truth of Jehovah God's Word is so manifest that lepers who become spiritually healed by gaining an understanding and appreciation of it are far happier than any lepers could possibly be who have received only physical healing. Proof of this is seen by the zeal with which they spread spiritual healing to others.

¶ A case in point are the witnesses of Jehovah residing in the Luapala Leper Settlement, situated on the Luapala River in Northern Rhodesia, in south-central Africa. Scattered among its many acres are the houses of its five hundred inmates, various administration offices and clinics, as well as houses of the large staff of workers. In this settlement, owing to the zeal of the witnesses and Jehovah's blessing upon their efforts, one out of twenty is enjoying the happiness of spiritual healing.

¶ Recently the local congregation received permission to give a public lecture and show the film "The Happiness of the New World Society" in this settlement. The witnesses in it at once got busy, their affliction not deterring their zeal one bit. They fenced off a large playing field, changed an ugly towering anthill in it to an imposing platform, erected accommodations to seat four hundred and then invited one and all to come.

¶ For the afternoon public lecture the surprising number of 363 turned out. This obviously was in striking contrast with the total of six that attended a religious service across the way that was being conducted in a dead language. Excitement among the witnesses ran high. If that many came to hear the Bible lecture, how many would come to see the Society's film in the evening? Almost three times as many, packing out the enclosure! Yes, a count showed that almost a thousand, 997 to be exact, attended from the settlement and surrounding district. What rejoicing there was among the witnesses in the Luapala Settlement that night! And so happy in spite of their being lepers!

Fruitful MINISTERS led by ACTIVE FORCE

"And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them."—Ezek. 36:27, AS.

Do you feel that this is a time for true Christians to conform to the old world, or do you feel that now, more than ever, with the increase that Jehovah is bringing, this is the time to push forward and work hard for further increase by his blessing? Perhaps you are one of Jehovah's witnesses and have been engaging in the ministry of the Kingdom message from house to house and otherwise participating in the activities of the Christian congregation. What a fatal thing it would be for you, and what a dishonor to Jehovah God, were your profession of faith to become a mere empty formalism, you relinquishing your glorious treasure of service and degenerating into merely a sort of "churchgoer"! That is unthinkable! Yet there is the danger. This happens to people. Practically speaking, it has happened to an entire world of millions upon millions of formalistic practitioners of religion of all types and kinds who have been deceived and who have deceived themselves into thinking that they can violate the righteous requirements of Jehovah God, be out-and-out materialistic, follow selfish pursuits of the old world, conform to the old-world standards, beliefs and practices and yet, because they engage in some religious formalism, be Scripturally discharging their duty and responsibility to God and to man.

[2] The consciences of many such

1. (a) Here what course is designated as being dishonoring to Jehovah and fatal to the individual? (b) In what respect are millions deceived?

2. Uneasy consciences may work for what benefits?

persons are not at ease, and their uneasy consciences disturb them and move them in the right direction. To these people thus seeking a good conscience before God the truths of God's Word, the Bible, must be brought. Again, in the case of you who are one of Jehovah's witnesses, would your conscience be at rest should you follow this course of conformity and empty religious practice of the old world? No, "never may that happen!"

[3] Perhaps you know of a dedicated person who might be spiritually assisted by the Scriptural warning herein considered. Maybe such person no longer participates regularly in the field service of preaching, even though able to do so. Perhaps such person does not attend the meetings of the congregation regularly or even does not attend the meetings at all. Perhaps such person, while taking *The Watchtower,* does not study it, perhaps does not read it. Perhaps he no longer even receives it regularly. Do you know of any such? Are there some such in your congregation? Consider this matter. Congregation servants, with the help of the other servants in the congregation, and with the help of mature, active, spiritually strong publishers in the congregation, carry this issue of *The Watchtower* to such persons, talk to them about it, get them to read it, or read it together with them, and see what can be done for such persons, who have conformed and quit preaching, to arouse them to their spiritual obligations and responsibilities and wonderful New World privileges; because those of the New World society must keep the law of Jehovah God.

[4] Upon this point we read the words of Jehovah addressed to the expanding New World society of true Christianity: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep mine ordinances, and do them." (Ezek. 36:27, *AS*) This shows that fruitful ministers must be led by Jehovah's spirit or active force and must constantly respond and go forward under the leading of Jehovah's spirit. It shows too that, as an organization and as individuals therein, those of the New World society must walk in God's statutes, keep his ordinances, doing the things that he outlines for them to do. These requirements they cannot meet by conforming to the old world and by relinquishing their privileges of ministering. Now is not the time to take on old worldliness. Now is the time to progress in new worldliness.

[5] Let us observe some of the statutes of Jehovah, some of the Scriptural ordinances or requirements he has laid down in his Word, the keeping of which is necessary for increase. It is the keeping of these requirements that has brought Jehovah's blessing and increase until now. It is the keeping of these requirements in the days ahead that will continue his blessing and prosperity.

[6] Foremost is the theocratic principle of truth that it is Jehovah who gives the increase and we as his servants merely serve obediently in love. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow; so that neither is he that plants anything nor is he that waters, but God who makes it grow. Now he that plants and he that waters are one, but each person will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers. You people are God's field under cultivation, God's building."—1 Cor. 3:6-9.

[7] Furthermore, the immediate direction of the activities of Christians upon earth

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3. (a) Consideration of what, by whom and for whom is here suggested? (b) State the suggested procedure and its purpose.
4. On the point of keeping God's law, what does Jehovah say?
5. Increase, present and future, depends upon what?
6. What theocratic principle of increase is first?
7. Give Scriptural authority for the governing direction of the Christian ministry.

has come and must continue to come through the established governing body, as was the case in the apostolic church, which is the model for today's primitive Christian organization. Concerning the first-century church we read: "Now as [Paul and Barnabas] traveled on through the cities they would deliver to those there for observance the decrees that had been decided upon by the apostles and older men who were in Jerusalem. Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day." (Acts 16:4, 5) Concerning the primitive Christian organization today we read Jesus' prophecy: "Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings."—Matt. 24:45-47.

[8] Orthodox clergymen in charge of various religious congregations have a variety of sectarian standards, which they meet to varying degrees. In the true Christian congregation, however, the standards and requirements to be met by those who have the loving oversight of local congregations are outlined extensively in the Bible, and these include such obligations as those of appreciating the truth, working hard and loving the Lord's "other sheep." For instance, Paul said: "For to this end we are working hard and exerting ourselves, because we have rested our hope on a living God, who is a Savior of all kinds of men, especially of faithful ones." (1 Tim. 4:10) And: "An overseer must be . . . a lover of strangers, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, having loving-kindness, self-controlled, holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teaching that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict."—Titus 1:7-9.

8. For increase, what about the requirements met by congregational overseers?

NEED OF GOD'S SPIRIT

[9] The prophecy from Ezekiel before quoted shows the necessity of Christians' having Jehovah's spirit; and Acts 20:28 shows strikingly that those Christians having oversight of local congregations receive their appointment through the holy spirit. "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own [Son]." (Acts 20:28) Because the appointment comes to Christian men who have met and continue to meet the requirements laid down in God's Word, which Word was provided by holy spirit of Jehovah, in meeting these requirements that are God-ordained, not man-ordained, the servant or congregational overseer receives his appointment through the holy spirit of God. The free-working of Jehovah's spirit on all his servants, that is, on all who worship him and serve him, is further shown at Zechariah 4:6, speaking prophetically: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts."—*AS*.

[10] Another Jehovah-ordained provision for increase in true Christianity is that the ministerial activity of his servants must not be haphazard, but must be organized. Therefore, it is proper that Jehovah's witnesses give so much attention as they do to the details of their ministerial activity. Even as an individual Christian minister, the apostle Paul did not want to waste or dissipate his efforts and resources and so,

9. In what degree is Jehovah's active force necessary?
10, 11. (a) State another Jehovah-ordained provision for increase. (b) Is attention to individual and congregational detail of ministry Scripturally justified?
(c) How does Isaiah 2:2-4 confirm a peaceful, theocratic organization?

setting a proper example, he said: "The way I am running is not uncertainly; the way I am directing my blows is so as not to be striking the air." (1 Cor. 9:26) The thrilling prophecy of Isaiah 2:2-4 shows, among other things, that the expansion of Jehovah's worship among peoples of all nations would be organized, orderly and specific, stating: "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. And he will judge between the nations, and will decide concerning many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." —*AS.*

[11] Effective organization is shown by this prophecy, stating that people of all nations are going to flow to an organization for worship of Jehovah. What could that possibly be except the theocratic Christian organization? They say among themselves that they are going to be taught of Jehovah's ways, walk in his paths, which necessarily means keeping his Biblical ordinances and requirements. Furthermore, they are shown devoting their efforts, not to pursuits of war, but to pursuits of peace. This is exactly what those of the New World society all over the earth are doing at the present time.

[12] Showing that we must be, not fat, but lean in Christian activity; not lazy, but productive in Christian ministry, in contrast with the old world with which we do not conform, we have the apostle Paul's instructions at 1 Timothy 6:17-19, directed to his Christian associate: "Give orders to those who are rich in the present system of things not to be arrogant, and to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God, who furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment; to work at good, to be rich in right works, to be liberal, ready to share, safely treasuring up for themselves a right foundation for the future, in order that they may get a firm hold on the real life." Not only to non-Christians are the foregoing words helpful, but they are directly pertinent to the dedicated servants of Jehovah God. This is shown in the words of Paul to Titus, where Paul says, in effect, that even though we are one of Jehovah's witnesses we still have to keep our minds on maintaining right works and not quit the ministry: "Trustworthy is the saying, and concerning these things I desire you to make firm assertions constantly, in order that those who have believed God may keep their minds on maintaining right works. These things are right and beneficial to men."—Titus 3:8, 14.

12. What orders are given to the rich? To those who believe?

EFFECTIVENESS

[13] The application among sincere dedicated Christians of the foregoing and other requirements of God as set forth in his Bible to govern the Christian congregation can, of course, result in only an effective ministerial society. The real effectiveness of it is the blessing of Jehovah God upon our obedient response to his requirements. The two things, therefore, are necessary and they work together. That is, first, the obedient effort put forth by one who loves

13. (a) The result of meeting God's requirements must be what? (b) For effectiveness, what two things are required?

Jehovah supremely, and then, above all, the blessing of Jehovah God upon such effort. This is seen on the individual level and on the organizational level. It cannot be denied, because the earth-wide results are proof of it. Even as such has brought the theocratic New World society to its present spiritually prosperous state, so such must continue that the New World society and all in it may continue to progress spiritually to Jehovah's praise. Such effectiveness of obeying God's requirements is noticed and often noted. It is a good sign when this is the case. We have, for instance, the following published comment thereon, written, not by one of Jehovah's witnesses, but by a religious writer, published in a religious magazine, and which is of interest:

14 "They [Jehovah's witnesses] are also prepared to supply the time, energy and money needed to study with any homeless and friendless child of God and guide him into the inner fellowship without regard for race, color, social stratum or intellectual level. There is the heart of the matter. Their zeal is their secret. Every Witness is a minister. Every minister is a house-to-house visitor. Every visitor is a trained servant. I dare say that no other religious movement has each state, each county, each city, each block and each street in America as thoroughly graphed as has Jehovah's Witnesses. No other headquarters knows with such unerring accuracy what its minister members are doing, where and how they are serving . . . They operate as a unit, as an army. In fact, the local group used to be called a company, the person in charge was the captain, and the place of meeting was and still is the 'Kingdom Hall.' "—*The Christian Century*, February 13, 1957.

14. How does one writer view the secret of effectiveness of Jehovah's witnesses?

JEHOVAH THE DEPENDABLE INCREASER

15 Above all, these and other facts of the modern-day history of Jehovah's witnesses prove that our trust in Jehovah has been properly placed. Jehovah is dependable. He is the Dependable Increaser, and unassailable confidence is properly placed in him. Concerning this Psalm 115 continues: "O house of Aaron, put your trust in Jehovah; he is their help and their shield. You that fear Jehovah, trust in Jehovah; he is their help and their shield. Jehovah himself has remembered us; he will bless, he will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless those fearing Jehovah, the small ones as well as the great ones."—Ps. 115:10-13.

16 As should be expected under the blessing of the God Jehovah, the increase that he brings is not merely in numbers. There is indeed an increase in numbers that is most gratifying, as has been previously referred to, but there is also an increase in activity on the part of the Christian congregation of the New World society, with improved effectiveness. But that is not all. Of equal importance is the third element of increase, which is that of maturity. All these increases are essential for each one of us, that is, the increase of numbers, in activity and in maturity. Especially concerning the latter, 1 Peter 1:13-16 states: "Hence brace up your minds for activity, keep completely balanced and set your hope upon the undeserved kindness that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As obedient children, quit being fashioned according to the desires you formerly had in your ignorance, but, in accord with the holy one who called you, do you also become holy yourselves in all your conduct, because it is written: 'You must be holy, because I am holy.' " This enjoins upon true Christians individual

15. Above all, what do the facts demonstrate?
16. (a) Give three elements of increase. (b) Apply 1 Peter 1:13-16 to progress in spiritual maturity.

progress in spiritual maturity through the study of God's Word, obedience to it, and application in the individual's life of the principles contained in the Bible. That makes for a real Christian.

17 This should be expected in view of the fact that it is Jehovah who brings the increase, because he would not bring persons of good will and of honest heart to a corrupt and unclean worldly religion, belief, practice or organization. That he does bring an increase right here upon the earth is shown by the further verses of the psalm of praise: "Jehovah will give increase to you, to you and to your sons. You are the ones blessed by Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth. As regards the heavens, to Jehovah the heavens belong, but the earth he has given to the sons of men. The dead themselves do not praise Jah, nor do any going down into silence. But we ourselves will bless Jah from now on and to time indefinite. Praise Jah, you people!" (Ps. 115:14-18) It is to his New World society on earth now that Jehovah through Christ Jesus gathers persons of honest heart who love righteousness from every origin of men all over the earth; and he does so by means of their proclamation of the message of his Word, the Bible.

INCREASE IS ON JEHOVAH'S TERMS

18 From the foregoing scriptures it is seen that the response to the truth of the Bible by individuals results in their becoming worshipers of Jehovah God, and thus it is that the truth is the instrumentality of gathering and of increase. This really means that the increase is on the terms that Jehovah has set out in his Word. That is to say, in order for a person to become a Christian, to become an associate with the New World society and to come in line for Jehovah's blessings of everlasting life in his new world of righteousness, it is necessary that the individual meet Jehovah's terms, obey his commandments. Jehovah does not change his requirements or modify, weaken or lessen them to induce people to love and serve him. Orthodox religion does all manner of ungodly things to appeal to the masses, but not so Jehovah God, and not so his Word, the Bible. In view of the fact that it is our response to the truth or our conformity to the Bible that enables us to be Jehovah's witnesses, or to be in the New World society in the first instance, it follows unquestionably that to continue and progress in this joyful, happy, blessed relationship to Jehovah God we must continue to obey his Word. This we must do respecting all the issues of life. We continue to serve Jehovah on his terms, not on ours.

19 There are any number of illustrations of this fact that are really obvious and that show how practical the Bible is in the lives of modern-day Christians. We might list issues that arise constantly in the lives of people who are not Christians and also in the lives of people who are Christians and who, being dedicated to serve and obey Jehovah God, are obligated to conform to his Word. When such issues arise, how do you decide them? Do you have the assistance in making your decision that a knowledge of God's Word on the subject gives?

20 The ordinary issues of life arise daily, some of them every day with some people, and they must be met. For instance, there is the issue of honesty. What do you do when you have to determine whether you will be honest or dishonest? Issues of conduct and of morality arise all the time.

17. In what way does Psalm 115:14-18 show the nature of the organization to which persons of good will are gathered and the location of the gathering work?
18. (a) On what terms does one become a Christian? (b) To continue as such, what is necessary?
19. What test demonstrates our conformance to Jehovah's terms for his worship?
20. Comment on the various issues of life here listed.

Morality includes sexual morality, and it includes more. There are all manner of standards of morality; but there is only one proper standard, and that is the Bible's requirement. How do you decide issues of morality? And of conduct? Then there are such issues as those involving stealing, lying, killing. Everybody is confronted with them at one time or another. True worship itself is a paramount issue. There is an issue involving blood and its ingestion. Issues of divorce, the raising of children, politics. Christians have issues of their ministry of preaching; dedication presents an issue to everyone as to whether or not the individual is going to devote himself or herself to Jehovah God in dedication. Without exception every individual on earth has to answer this question or face this issue.

[21] Then there are issues of integrity, of neutrality toward worldly conflicts, payment of debts, sound and honest business practices, attending Christian meetings, the exercise of love or of selfishness, issues of the study of God's Word, the seeking of entertainment, the gaining of education, and others. The list can be greatly lengthened. We must appreciate that the Bible gives helpful counsel and also injunction and commandment respecting the issues of life. Are you interested in what the Bible has to say about these things? The Bible is the Word of the God of life; and if you are going to receive life you must be interested in what he states to be the requirements for life, which is granted on his terms through Christ Jesus our Redeemer.

[22] Those in the New World society, endeavoring in all sincerity to confront the issues of life squarely, honestly and with an assurance based upon their knowledge of the decisions that will please Jehovah God and bring his approval, are endeavoring to live according to New World requirements. By really practicing true Christianity you too can now start to conform to New World living requirements. Ahead are boundless blessings, privileges and joys in our further great advance toward maturity in this respect, an advance that thousands are beginning to comprehend and appreciate.

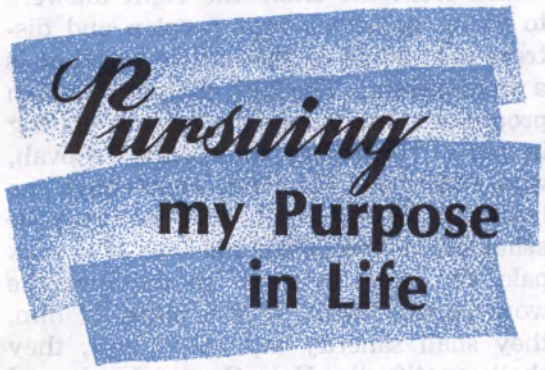
[23] In being able to confront the issues referred to and to meet them on Bible grounds, Jehovah's witnesses have obtained from the Bible the right answers to many questions that perplex and distress the people of the old world. That is a great blessing. The 29th chapter of Isaiah prophesies concerning the matter, stating in part: "Therefore thus saith Jehovah, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob: Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of my hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name; yea, they shall sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall stand in awe of the God of Israel. They also that err in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmur shall receive instruction." (Isa. 29:22-24, *AS*) The correct answers to problems are a very great blessing, but they are more than that. Those in the New World society have not merely obtained right answers to perplexing questions, but, at the same time, receive blessings that are exclusively those of the New World society. They have received joy, New World joy, privileges, opportunities of serving God and advancing his interests upon earth, and responsibilities, because of the assuming of them through their dedication to do his will. Also, exclusively, there have been laid upon them by Jehovah his requirements, which

21. (a) What are some other issues? (b) In what must we take an interest?
22. What are present opportunities and future prospects?
23. (a) In the light of Isaiah 29:22-24, what may be said about unashamed understanding now? (b) What about instruction to correct erring and murmuring?

they must meet and which they are meeting to the very best of their ability by his undeserved kindness toward them through Christ Jesus, their Redeemer and Leader.

[24] Today's increase in true Christian faith and practice is as great in scope as is the New World society which embraces it; that is, it is world-wide. The wonderful sign of the New World society standing for Jehovah's supremacy is an everlasting sign and it will never be cut off, but shall remain to Jehovah's praise. "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing; and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree; and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to Jehovah for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."—Isa. 55: 12, 13, *AS*.

24. What is the scope of the operation of Jehovah's active force, and how lasting is the sign it raises up?



As told by Donald E. Baxter

HERE in Venezuela, every evening on the radio we have an English program with music and world news. The other night I heard a song called "Count Your Blessings Instead of Sheep." Later I began to think about that. You know, in the missionary work you can count both —your blessings and the sheep. As you go into new fields to find the Lord's "other sheep" you have many blessings and experiences in this great educational campaign.

As I look back on how I have pursued my purpose in life I can see that I have received many blessings and have enjoyed many privileges of service. My father and mother began studying the truth when I was about ten. When sixteen, at a zone assembly, I was immersed in symbol of my dedication to Jehovah. At the time I knew what I was doing, but I must admit I did not then fully realize all that was required of a good minister. That I found out later when I joined the pioneer ranks in May, 1942. When I graduated from high school the world situation did not look so good. The United States was preparing for World War II. What should I do? Should I go to college, or should I look for employment, or what? My older brother and sister were pioneering in Chicago and they kept writing letters encouraging me to become a pioneer and join them in Chicago.

So in the spring of 1942 when I started to pioneer I was a rather weak publisher. Chicago and suburbs were much different from the farmhouses of South Dakota and its rurals that we had worked. I shall never forget the first week at Chicago. Every morning on the way to the territory I would get a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach. But after a few weeks and a little more experience that feeling left.

Returning from service one cold winter day, I found a large envelope from the Society. Surprised and very happy I was to find in it an application for Gilead. As I read the letter and application a thousand questions went through my mind. Can I do it? Will it be too hard? Others had done it; so I reasoned that I too could do it.

I filled out the application and sent it back to the Society.

In February, 1945, I went to Gilead, the fifth class. Time passed swiftly there—never enough of it to get everything properly studied or prepared. It was an enjoyable event and every day was packed full with something new to be learned and remembered.

After Gilead I was appointed as a circuit servant. At that time the servant stayed with some congregations two or three days and with others a week, depending on the number of publishers. Also, he had to be prepared to give all of the eight public talks. While on the road I was always thinking about where I would be assigned. By this time I had forgotten most of the Spanish that I had tried to learn at Gilead. In February of 1946 I received a letter from the Society saying that I would be assigned to Venezuela and that at the end of February I should come to Bethel and stay until I received a visa to enter Venezuela. On June 2, 1946, I was landing at Maiquetía, the airport for Caracas, the capital city, no one being there to greet us or to help us with the Spanish language. But soon we found four publishers meeting together in a home, studying *The Watchtower* and also having a book study. A family of good will nearby was also attending these meetings, so twelve persons were at this first meeting I attended in Caracas.

In April, 1946, Brother Knorr and Brother Franz had visited Venezuela and they had started the meetings and the field service now being done. The four publishers were eager for literature and help in the field. From these brothers we learned that there were others in the interior of the country who were doing some work in the service. The first thing was to get them organized and to get them to send in their reports so they could be sent to Brooklyn. This was difficult, because we did not know Spanish. But two young boys who had just started pioneering knew some English, so we told them what we wanted done and they, in turn, told the congregation. Little by little the congregation in Caracas began to grow. A branch office was started in September, 1946, and the first report we sent in was nineteen publishers.

Caracas was certainly a strange place to us. Prices were shocking, houses practically impossible to find. We walked for miles, not knowing what bus to use, being unable to understand what people told us when we asked. Finally we found a little house on the edge of the city, on a dirt street, with no running water. There we started the first missionary home in Venezuela. Later the Society sent more missionaries to help us, and things began to become easier. For three years we looked for a better missionary home, with no success, due to high rents. Several of our group returned to the United States, some were sick and others chose to get married; so for several months I was alone until the Society sent more. In July, 1949, we found a better home in Caracas and the family was increased to ten, a joy indeed to me for having kept on pursuing my purpose in life. Also, another group of missionaries were assigned to Maracaibo and they started a home there in December, 1948.

One experience stands out: Three Venezuelan pioneers and I were working in a suburb of Caracas. I had been here only a few months, so my Spanish was very meager. The next business place was an English-speaking tailor. The boys said for me to take it and I could talk in English. That tailor I found to be a very meek individual. He told me he had a Bible and was very much interested in it; that he was Catholic but another tailor who was an Adventist was trying to convert him.

He took the book *"The Kingdom Is at Hand"* in English and I told him I would call back later. Then I started a study with him and he accepted the truth. Later he asked to have the study in Spanish because he realized he was to have a part in the preaching work and would have to improve his Spanish and learn how to read Spanish. Soon he was with us in field service and was baptized. On Sunday he and I would work together, he taking me to some of his back-calls, and we started three studies. One day on our way to one of these he said: "I pray to God that I will find a sheep out here in this territory."

One Italian with whom we had just started a study took hold of the truth very rapidly and soon was in the service with us. This Italian then started to pioneer in spite of the fact that he has a wife and three children to support. He continues doing very well.

After a series of lectures we started a service center in one of the homes and later that study was turned over to a mature brother living nearby. Now we have a congregation of seventy publishers in this suburb. Last month when the circuit servant gave a public talk in that congregation eighty-one attended.

Last June I had been in Venezuela for eleven years. It seems as if I have been here most of my life, at least the most important part of it. During those years things have changed much in this country. Its capital, Caracas, now with a million people, has been changed into a modern city with new buildings and new streets.

In Venezuela the number of Kingdom publishers also has increased year by year. With an average of thirteen in 1946, it now exceeds 1,233. For last year the peak number of publishers was 1,364. We have eight missionary homes and twenty-two congregations in the country. The message and the work have spread to the far corners of this land. Here in Caracas we started with four publishers and now we have five units with over 550. Throughout the country the publishers work hard and we always have an average of twelve hours or more per publisher. Still we need more pioneers and missionaries, having much territory to cover.

So while pursuing my purpose in life I have learned that it is a great privilege and blessing to be a missionary in a foreign field. Looking back, I am very thankful to Jehovah that I started to pioneer when I did and that I accepted the invitation to Gilead. Pioneer work, followed by Gilead training and missionary service, is not to be compared with anything in this old world. The joy and the privileges of serving entirely outweigh hardships and inconveniences you encounter along the way. I have fifteen years in full-time service, with most of that time in the foreign field. I would not trade my experience with anybody. Were I again a youth of seventeen I would have my heart and mind set on Gilead and missionary service.

The Treatment of Heretics

¶ Thomas Aquinas, who lived during the thirteenth century, is the celebrated philosopher of the Roman Catholic Church. Interestingly, even to this day his *Summa Theologiae* remains substantially the standard Roman Catholic authority. In discussing the treatment of heretics, he says in Question XI, Art. 3, 2 a, 2ae: "It is much more serious to corrupt faith, which gives life to the soul, than to falsify money, which sustains temporal life. If, therefore, the falsifiers of money or other malefactors are at once by secular princes justly given up to death, how much more may heretics, as soon as they are convicted of their heresy, be not only excommunicated, but justly killed."

● In the 1956 *Watchtower* series of articles on marriage, paragraph 36 on page 596 says: "If a person forgivingly takes an erring mate back again it should be without collecting such [woman] damages." When the Philistine king Abimelech returned Sarah to Abraham, may not the money that Abimelech then gave to Abraham be considered "woman damages"? —Gen. 20:14-16.

The scripture cited reads: "Following that Abimelech took sheep and cattle and men slaves and women slaves and gave them to Abraham and returned to him Sarah his wife. Further Abimelech said: 'Here my land is available to you. Dwell where it is good in your eyes.' And to Sarah he said: 'Here I do give a thousand silver pieces of money to your brother. Here it is for you a covering of the eyes to all who are with you, and before everybody, and you are cleared of reproach.'"

According to the Bible account, Sarah was not an erring mate. Abraham did not deliberately lend her out to King Abimelech to commit adultery with his beautiful wife Sarah that he might thereafter collect what is called "woman damages" from Abimelech as her violator. Abraham was not setting an example for polygamists today who keep a number of concubines for the express purpose of prostituting them, just to collect "woman damages" over and over again on the same concubine.

By letting King Abimelech take Sarah away from him Abraham was trying to protect his own life. Had it been known that Sarah was his wife, Abraham might have been killed by the Philistines in order that they might take Sarah forcibly away from him for the sexual pleasures of King Abimelech. Sarah was the half sister of her husband Abraham and he and she had agreed that in this enemy territory in Canaan she should always say that he was her brother so that there would be no reason or excuse to kill Abraham in order to get his wife. So King Abimelech took Sarah away on the understanding that she was merely the sister and not the wife of Abraham.

In a dream God informed King Abimelech that he had taken Abraham's wife but that God had not allowed Abimelech to touch her. God now commanded Abimelech to return Sarah to Abraham because Abraham was God's prophet and Abraham would then make supplication to God for Abimelech that he might keep living and that the women of his household might bear children again.

The sheep and cattle and men slaves and women slaves that King Abimelech gave to Abraham after returning Sarah were not as a payment to him for having used his wife in a sexual way. Abimelech gave this gift as a compensation to Abraham for having temporarily deprived him of his wife. Neither were the thousand silver pieces of money that Abimelech gave to Abraham a sort of "woman damages." King Abimelech told Sarah that this money was a gift made to her "brother" to cover her in the eyes of everybody who became informed of this affair, to show that she was innocent in the matter and that she was cleared by the king himself of all reproach against her as a moral woman. Abraham did not accept this money as "woman damages" for Abimelech's having used his wife immorally. Had Abraham prostituted his wife Sarah in order to gain "woman damages," God would not have said to Abimelech that Abraham could come to him in prayer and supplicate him to heal Abimelech so that Abimelech's wife and slave girls might become pregnant again.—Gen. 20:6, 7.

Thus the Bible is cleared of any precedent for prostituting one's wife in order to make money by her immorality.

Hence if a Christian husband forgives his wife for her adultery and takes her back to himself again, it should be solely because he has mercy upon her and not because he is reaping any financial gain through her immorality. Thus he clears himself before God and man, showing that he was not consenting to or conniving at the immorality of his wife in the hope of material gain thereby. He cannot, therefore, be disfellowshiped from the congregation because of the immorality of his wife. With a clean conscience he can go to God in prayer and pray that God will heal his wife spiritually and help her be a faithful wife thereafter.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 16: Jehovah Brings the Increase, and Fruitful Ministers Led by Active Force, ¶1-4. Page 80.

March 23: Fruitful Ministers Led by Active Force, ¶5-24. Page 86.

✓✓ CHECK YOUR MEMORY ✓✓

After reading this issue of "The Watchtower", do you remember—

✓ How there is more in making a decision for Christ than people generally realize? P. 67, ¶2.

✓ Why children born today are like children born in slavery? P. 68, ¶5.

✓ How Christ could be born from an imperfect descendant of Adam and not inherit Adam's sin? P. 69, ¶5.

✓ Who alone can bring healing to the nations? P. 72, ¶1.

✓ Why Christians of the first century were called "haters of mankind"? P. 73, ¶2.

✓ Why the overflowing of the Tiber River caused Christians to be thrown to the lions? P. 74, ¶1.

✓ What is attracting people from all over the earth to New York city this summer? P. 76, ¶2.

✓ What gives evidence of a bad heart condition? P. 78, ¶2.

✓ Where Christianity's increase can be seen today? P. 81, ¶3.

✓ How certain lepers in south-central Africa found joy in living? P. 84, ¶3.

✓ What makes for a real Christian? P. 89, ¶16.

✓ Where a person can count both blessings and sheep? P. 92, ¶2.

✓ Why Abraham wanted his wife to tell the Philistines that she was his sister? P. 95, ¶4.