The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

MARCH 15, 1961
Semimonthly

PARENTS, DO YOU TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN?

PARENTS, SAFEGUARD YOUR CHILD'S LIFE WITH ACCURATE KNOWLEDGE

ARE YOU MATURE?

IS ALL RELIGION GOOD?

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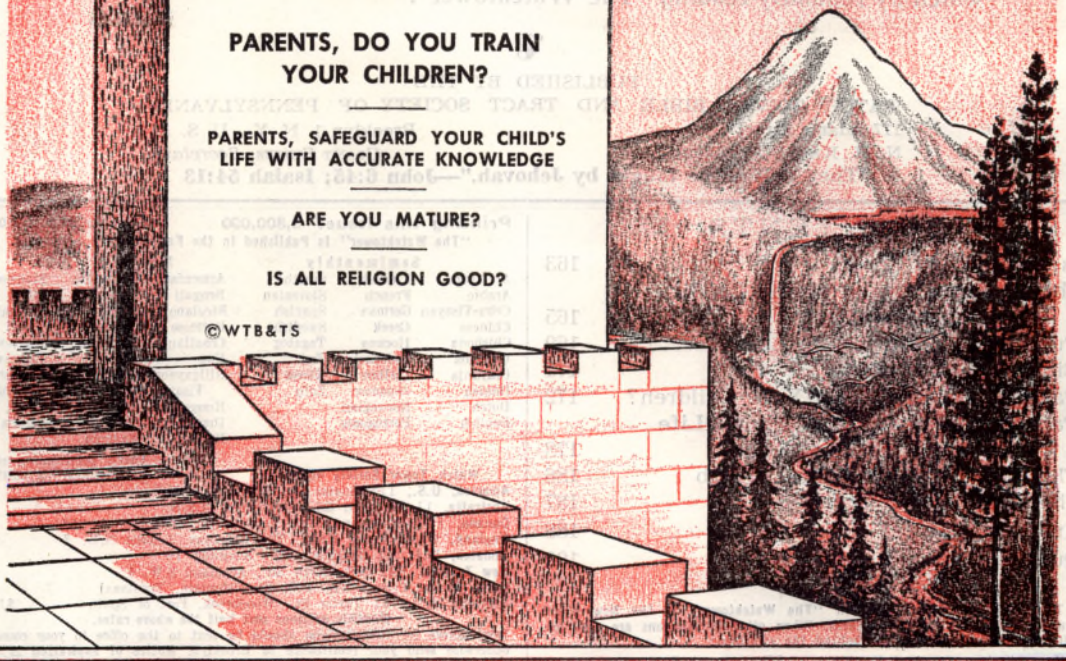

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

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".

PUBLISHED BY THE
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street — Brooklyn 1, N. Y., U. S. A.
N. H. KNORR, *President* — GRANT SUITER, *Secretary*

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

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AV – Authorized Version (1611)
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Dy – Catholic Douay version
ED – The Emphatic Diaglott
JP – Jewish Publication Soc.
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Mo – James Moffatt's version
Ro – J. B. Rotherham's version
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Printing this issue: 3,800,000 — **Five cents a copy**

"The Watchtower" Is Published in the Following 59 Languages

Semimonthly			Monthly		
Afrikaans	Finnish	Sesotho	Armenian	Icelandic	Siamese
Arabic	French	Slovenian	Bengali	Kanarese	Silozi
Cebu-Visayan	German	Spanish	Bicolano	Korean	Singhalese
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Dutch	Norwegian		Ibanag	Polish	Urdu
English	Portuguese		Ibo	Russian	Yoruba
				Samoan	

Watch Tower Society offices — **Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions**

America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn 1, N.Y.	$1
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W.	8/-
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 19, Ontario	$1
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7	7/-
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10	7/-
New Zealand, 621 New North Rd., Auckland S.W. 1	7/-
South Africa, Private Bag, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal	70c
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain	$1.75

Monthly editions cost half the above rates.

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. **Notice of expiration** is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, 117 Adams Street, Brooklyn 1, New York, U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. — Printed in U.S.A.

The WATCHTOWER
Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
Vol. LXXXII March 15, 1961 Number 6

IS all Religion GOOD?

IS ALL religion good? According to the Communists no religion is good. They like to quote Marx, who said that religion is opium for the people. After Darwin embraced the evolution theory he had no more use for religion. And Freud, father of psychoanalysis, termed religion "the Great Illusion."

Going to the opposite extreme are those who hold that one religion is as good as another, or as true as another, or that religion in itself is intrinsically a good thing. They say that there should be more religion in the home, in the schools, in business and in government, but without stating which religion they have in mind. This is also the position taken by certain modern psychotherapists, such as Carl Jung. They are strong believers in the power of religion to heal those who are emotionally ill. Jung, in his works, dismisses questions as to the merit or validity of certain religious beliefs; all he is concerned with is that religion does help his patients.

The history of man, and in particular as recorded in God's Word, the Bible, does not allow us to hold that all religion is good. In fact, religious ambition and religious envy caused the first two murders, by Satan the Devil and Cain, the first son of Adam. The nation of Israel suffered incalculable harm by adopting the religions of the people round about them with their idolatries, sex worship and human sacrifices. During the Dark Ages and even until modern times, intolerant fanatical zealots have committed shocking crimes in the name of religion. In many parts of the earth animal worship still abounds, and reports of suttee—where a widow is persuaded or coerced into immolating herself on the funeral pyre of her husband—are still heard. Why, the most infamous, heinous crime in all the history of humankind, the murder of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was instigated by religious leaders. Clearly, not all religion is good. Those who hold that it is are as mistaken as those who hold that all religion is bad.—John 8:44; 1 John 3:12; Matt. 27:20.

However, the Bible clearly shows there is good religion. Religion is simply a form of worship, the service rendered to a higher power, and that religion may be true or it may be false. Thus the disciple James wrote: "If any man seems to himself to be religious and yet does not bridle his tongue, but goes on deceiving his own heart, this man's religion is futile."—Jas. 1:26, *ftn.*

Religion that is good should be able to tell us convincingly whom to worship, why and how. It should enlighten us as to ultimate causes of things and reasons for present conditions. Further, it should give us hope regarding the future and bring forth the right kind of fruits, proving it to be the one true religion. By these standards true Christianity, as recorded in God's Word, the Bible, and as taught and practiced by Jesus and his apostles, qualifies, it alone, as the one good religion.

Whom should we worship? The textbook of the one good religion tells us: The one true invisible God, whose name is Jehovah. He is the one who created and keeps on sustaining all things animate and inanimate, material and spiritual. Why should we worship him? Because it is due him as Creator and the Most High Sovereign of the universe. And not only is it right to worship Jehovah God but it is the wise and loving, grateful thing to do. It results in everlasting life and happiness to us.—Ps. 83:18; Isa. 40:26; 42:8.

How do we worship this God? By obeying his commandments, which have been summed up by his Son in this way: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with you whole mind and with your whole strength," and, "You must love your neighbor as yourself." Otherwise expressed, we worship God by giving him exclusive devotion and doing to others as we would have them do to us.—Mark 12:30, 31; Ex. 20:5; Matt. 7:12.

The one good religion, by means of its textbook, the Bible, also gives us accurate information as to the ultimate origins of things and the reasons for present conditions. It shows that with God is the wellspring of life, that all things owe their existence to him and that every good gift and perfect present proceeds from him. It also tells us why God permits wickedness: because of the questions of God's sovereignty and man's integrity that were raised by Satan the Devil. This has given all the opportunity to show where they stand, either for God, truth and righteousness or against him. Those who prove God true and the Devil a liar by keeping integrity will be rewarded with everlasting life. —Gen. 1:27; Ex. 9:16; Job chapters 1 and 2; Ps. 36:9; Prov. 27:11.

The one good religion also gives us a solid hope for the future. It assures us that because Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead by his Father, a way has been opened for us to become reconciled to God and gain everlasting life in God's new world of righteousness. To strengthen our hope Jesus taught us to pray for God's kingdom and for His will to be done on earth as in heaven.—Matt. 6:10; John 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:18.

And lastly, the one good religion proves itself to be such by the changes it makes in the lives of those who embrace it. By reason of the examples God's Word gives, the high principles it sets out and the rewards it offers, it furnishes powerful motivation to live in harmony with God's will. Proof of this is seen in the transformation it has brought about in the lives of tens of thousands, causing native Africans to give up polygamy and tribal strife, overcoming national pride and selfish materialism, changing even criminals into upright and God-fearing men.

Would you take a wise course *in this* space age, safeguarding your future? Then avoid both extremes, that of communism and that of Christendom. Learn the religion that the Most High God himself approves as set forth in his Word the Bible. Let it mold your life, assuring you peace and happiness now and everlasting life in happiness in God's new world. Jehovah's witnesses of the New World society will be glad to assist you to that end.

Should You Partake of the LORD'S EVENING MEAL?

SPRING had come to the year later known as A.D. 33. The day was the fourteenth of Nisan, the first month of the Hebrew lunar year. The sun had disappeared below the horizon as in an upper room Jesus Christ and his twelve apostles, reclining on couches around a spread table, were eating a meal consisting of roast lamb, unleavened bread, bitter herbs and wine. As faithful Jews they were celebrating the annual passover feast, commemorating the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. As they reached the end of this meal one of their number, Judas Iscariot, rose and left, and, then, according to an eyewitness account:

"Jesus took a loaf and, after saying a blessing, he broke it and, giving it to the disciples, he said: 'Take, eat. This means my body.' Also he took a cup and, having given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: 'Drink out of it, all of you; for this means my "blood of the covenant" which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins.' " And from other accounts it is apparent that Jesus intended this event to be observed repeatedly, for he further said: "Keep doing this in remembrance of me."—Matt. 26:26-28; Luke 22:19.

Why did Jesus so command, and just what is the import of his words? This celebration, termed by Paul "the Lord's evening meal," was instituted as a lesson in appreciation—appreciation of what Jehovah had done in providing his Son, but particularly in appreciation of what Jesus Christ had done and appreciation of what is required of his followers. In obedience to Jesus' command the Christian witnesses of Jehovah throughout the world will come together after sundown on Nisan 14 to commemorate the death of their Lord, which day, according to our modern calendar, this year begins on March 30.

Consider the import of Jesus' words. In likening his body to the unleavened bread Jesus was referring to his literal fleshly body, which was to be, in effect, life-giving food for mankind, even as he had previously stated: "The bread that I shall give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world." As for the wine, it represented Jesus' literal blood or his life, the soul or life being in the blood. It served two purposes: it took "away the sin of the world," and it made valid a new covenant, which God was instituting at the time to take the place of the old law covenant under Moses, which was passing away.—John 6:51; 1:29; Jer. 31:31-34; Acts 15:14.

On this very occasion Jesus took his eleven faithful apostles into a covenant for the Kingdom, even as we read: "You are the ones that have stuck with me in my trials; and I make a covenant with you, just as my Father has made a covenant with me, for a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones to judge the twelve tribes of Israel." Other scriptures show that shar-

ing this glory with Jesus and his eleven faithful apostles will be 143,989 others, for a total of 144,001. These all have part in the first resurrection and reign as kings and priests for a thousand years. It is only such as these that are entitled to partake of the Lord's evening meal.—Luke 22:28-30; Rev. 14:1, 3; 20:4-6.

NO PROBLEM IN TIMES PAST

There was a time when the question of whether one should partake of the Lord's evening meal or not did not even need to be asked. In the early Christian congregation all dedicated and baptized Christians became members of the body of Christ, were anointed by holy spirit and gave proof of it by their being able to use one or more of the miraculous gifts of the spirit, such as healing, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues, and so forth. So long as these gifts were being imparted it was clear to all who should partake of the bread and wine at the Lord's evening meal.

Even after the passing away of these gifts, when the apostles as well as those to whom they had imparted these gifts had fallen asleep in death, it was comparatively easy to determine whether one should partake or not, whether one was a spirit-begotten son of God, a member of the spiritual body of Christ, or not. At least until modern times it was true that "all who are led by God's spirit, these are God's sons. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery causing fear again, but you received a spirit of adoption as sons, by which spirit we cry out, '*Abba,* Father!'" Further, of them all it also could be said: "We know we have passed over from death to life, because we love the brothers." Scriptures such as these found application only to those who were in line for the heavenly reward and kingdom.—Rom. 8:14, 15; 1 John 3:14.

Without doubt, during all the centuries from the death of the apostle John down to the end of the nineteenth century, there were some of these spirit-begotten Christians upon earth, growing as wheat in a field that was now full of weeds, even as Jesus' parable showed. (Matt. 13:37-43) Then, beginning in the 1870's, God began to gather these together, and in 1919 began the fulfillment of Matthew 24:31, which says: "And he will send forth his angels with a great trumpet-sound and they will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from one extremity of the heavens to their other extremity." The facts show that at that time the call went out for more workers in God's vineyard. This call continued until 1931, when, at the end of the "day's" work in the vineyard, all the workers received their reward, the denarius, the name Jehovah's witnesses. —Matt. 20:1-16.

THE OTHER SHEEP

Particularly since 1931 Jehovah God has been gathering to himself a great crowd of "other sheep," persons who dedicate themselves to God to do his will and who manifest love for their brothers and spiritual-mindedness. In all other respects, except as regards their heavenly hope, they resemble the remaining ones or the remnant of those in line for the heavenly kingdom. These may be compared to the temporary residents in ancient Israel. These accepted all the responsibilities of the law covenant and shared its many blessings, even as their modern counterparts today accept the responsibilities resting upon spiritual Israel and share in the blessings. And just as no alien or temporary resident could ever have become king, so none of those who today comprise the great crowd of other sheep can ever be of the ruling class, that is, not as such.—Deut. 17:15.

Since 1931 the Kingdom message has

been directed primarily to this great crowd of other sheep whose hopes are earthly. However, it is likely from among such that individuals are called to fill any vacancy in the 144,000 caused by unfaithfulness and rejection. So the date of one's dedicating oneself would have some bearing on the likelihood of one's being of the remnant, although it would not be conclusive.

DIFFERENCES

Both those comprising the body of Christ, the little flock, and the great crowd of other sheep take the same initial steps. These consist of taking in knowledge, repenting, converting, exercising faith in God, in Christ's sacrifice and in God's Word, dedicating themselves to God to do his will and being baptized in water. But for those who become part of the spiritual body of Christ Jehovah God acts uniquely in their behalf: On the basis of their faith in Christ's sacrifice and their dedication he declares them righteous, begets them as spiritual sons by means of his holy spirit or active force and brings them under the anointing of the body of Christ. All such are at the same time made parties to the new covenant and the Kingdom covenant. Thus by reason of what the creature himself does and what God does in behalf of him, such a one now has a firm conviction of a heavenly reward if faithful until death.—Rev. 2:10.

To such and only to such the words of Paul apply: "The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are God's children. If, then, we are children, we are also heirs: heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ, provided we suffer together that we may also be glorified together. For we were saved in this hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for when a man sees a thing, does he hope for it? But if we hope for what we do not see, we keep on waiting for it with endurance." And concerning these John wrote: "Beloved ones, now we are children of God, but as yet it has not been made manifest what we shall be. We do know that whenever he is made manifest we shall be like him, because we shall see him just as he is."—Rom. 8:16, 17, 24, 25; 1 John 3:2.

To determine whether one should partake of the bread and wine of the Lord's evening meal or not he should ask himself the following questions:

Am I a spiritual Israelite, begotten by God's active force to become a spiritual child of his with a spiritual destiny? Have I become one that is in this new covenant made with spiritual Israel? Furthermore, am I in this Kingdom covenant? Do I, like Paul, have the firm conviction that I am going to have a heavenly resurrection, to be joined with the Lord Jesus in the heavenly kingdom? Since the spirit of God itself bears witness, there should be no doubt about it. Am I in that relationship with God and Jesus Christ even as were those eleven apostles back there with whom Jesus instituted the Lord's evening meal? Am I convinced that I have this heavenly calling, this hope? Do I make it a subject of my prayers, my thoughts, my longings?

If you are a married man and your wife is not in this covenant for the Kingdom, you must ask yourself: Am I prepared to die with the consciousness that I am leaving her never to join her again on earth, but to join Jesus Christ and leave her on this earth? Or if you are a wife and mother you must ask yourself: Am I prepared to leave my children behind and never mother them any more and never associate with them throughout all eternity? Does my being a member of the bride of Christ take precedence over my being the wife of a husband on earth? Do I want to be *with* Jesus more than with that dear *man, and* that for all eternity?

These are some of the things to think about, to know what we are doing, to know what our destiny will be. Then we can be certain of what course of action we should take at the Lord's evening meal, whether we should partake of the bread and wine or not.

If you really have these heavenly convictions, then you are preparing for them, you are working for them and they are the very fiber of your life. Then, like the apostle Paul, you know, you have the conviction, you have the witness of God's spirit, it witnessing with your spirit that you are a spiritual son of God, a joint heir with the Lord Jesus in the Kingdom.

If you have such a whole-souled conviction and God's dealings with you up till now confirm this fact, then you know where you stand and you know your relationship with God, and then you should partake of the bread and wine of the Lord's evening meal with appreciation of how these symbolize Christ's sacrifice, by which means you came into this wonderful relationship with God, with its wonderful heavenly opportunities.

THOSE NOT PARTAKING

But if you cannot answer a confident "Yes!" to all the foregoing questions, then you are one of the great crowd of other sheep. Then you are not in the covenant for the Kingdom and consequently there is not a heavenly, royal destiny awaiting you, but an earthly one.

Still you will want to cling to God's covenant people of spiritual Israel because you love God and you recognize his people and want to be associated with them. Having dedicated yourself to God to do his will, you come under the wonderful benefits of the new covenant though you are not in that covenant. You can look forward to the joys of a paradise earth, to sharing in the token fulfillment of the procreation mandate, living forever on earth in perfection and happiness with your blessed offspring.

The fact that a heavenly destiny is not for you should not make you feel discontented. After all, none of us are entitled to anything. Everything is undeserved kindness, everything is unmerited favor. If all were of the heavenly seed of Abraham, there would be no families of the earth for that seed to bless. —Gen. 12:3; Gal. 3:16, 29.

The other sheep are just as welcome at the Lord's evening meal as are those of the remnant, even though they do not partake of the bread and wine. They have the same opposition to meet that those of the remnant do and therefore are greatly aided by the lesson of appreciation of what Jehovah God did, and in particular what his Son did in providing a ransom for us as well as setting the perfect example for us.

Therefore let all the spirit-begotten remnant, all of the great crowd of other sheep, as well as all men of good will toward God, heed Christ's command by assembling at the local Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses on Thursday evening, March 30, after sundown—the remnant to partake of the bread and wine, the others to observe, yet all to be spiritually refreshed by having the truths regarding Christ's sacrifice rehearsed in their hearing.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Exercising Patience.
- Patience and Endurance.
- Do You Serve God or Expect God to Serve You?
- A World Without Strangers.
- "Shepherd My Little Sheep."
- Judah—He Who Proved Himself to Be Superior.

Pursuing my Purpose in Life

As told by Allen S. Coville

IT WAS in the East End of London, at the age of eighteen, that I heard of Jehovah's witnesses for the first time. My married sister was living on the outskirts of London, and I used to pass the weekends there. She was already studying the truth and attending meetings; and when I thought she was in the garden or otherwise occupied I would furtively look into the Society's books that lined both sides of the radio. Later, at home, the truth made a deep impression on me, as a result of reading three booklets published by the Watch Tower Society: *Angels; Home and Happiness* and *Prosperity Sure.*

I had been attending the Methodist Church with my parents, but eventually I began going instead to the Kingdom Hall. In June, 1938, I decided to engage in the preaching work. At that time there was no training program, no three- to eight-minute sermons, no ministry school. I remember we were offering the small *Cure* booklet for one penny a copy. After going six doors with a brother, he said: "You go there and I'll be on the other side of the road." Completely lacking in tact, I started my preaching work; but with the help of the brothers, and with persistence and patience on my part, I improved my presentations.

Then came September, 1938. I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water immersion during the Royal Albert Hall assembly in London, September 9-11. One of Brother Rutherford's talks at that assembly was "Face the Facts." I continued my studies at every available moment. I had a metro (subway) journey of about forty-five minutes back and forth to my work, and I read quite a number of the Society's publications in that way.

DECISION TO GO TO BETHEL

December, 1938, arrived; and Brother Schroeder, at that time branch servant in England, paid a visit to the congregation, and I was invited to enter Bethel. I made the right decision. Those nine years in the London Bethel were most enjoyable, though some very tense moments were passed at certain times during the years of World War II. Preaching and working under conditions of continual air raids has to be experienced to be really understood.

I was grateful to be able to serve as congregation servant, in addition to Bethel privileges. Thrown into those nine years was the experience of serving a prison sentence because of maintaining neutrality in the world conflict. Eight of the Bethel brothers went in on the same day, and we were liberated on July 4, 1944. The year 1946 saw my parents begin studying the truth, and it was a joy to my sister and me to see them both baptized at the Wembley assembly in 1951.

Then toward the end of 1947 a letter arrived from the office of the Society's president, inviting me to go to the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. "Please report for the term beginning February 25, 1948." Here was another decision to make; I could still decline the invitation. I realized that I had gone direct from secular work into Bethel. Many thoughts flitted through my mind as I said to myself: 'You know, you have never been a pioneer. Suppose you are sent into the missionary work

somewhere in a foreign land, to go from house to house, speaking each and every day in a foreign tongue, will you be able to do it?' But December, 1947, saw twenty-four Witnesses from England on the ocean liner Queen Elizabeth embarking for New York, and I was among them.

We disembarked at New York early in January, 1948; and after arriving at Bethel we were sent to different places in and around New York, awaiting the trip to Gilead. I enjoyed the few days passed at the Brooklyn Bethel, being able to work there after having heard so much about it.

School started at Gilead on February 25, and the five and a half months that followed were never to be forgotten. There was the hard but enjoyable work (the compact daily study schedule as well as chores on the farm), the Christian fellowship (with brothers of different nationalities, giving one a foretaste of future New World living), and appreciation (because of what the organization, in its love, does for those who are able to meet the requirements for Gilead training). Yes, everything was directed to that one goal—preparation for the real work to come later, being now better equipped to care for the "other sheep."

Graduation day came on August 1, 1948, the first graduation to take place on the campus in front of the then newly constructed library building, Shiloah. As we left Gilead, Brother Knorr's graduation speech was still ringing in my ears: 'The Society is a human organization, but it has the Lord's spirit and blessing and I can say for the Society that it will not let you down either. We are with every one of you.' And how true that has been! Since then many of us have seen each other at least twice, in 1953 at Yankee Stadium and again in 1958, at the special reunion in the New Rockland Palace, during the Divine Will International Assembly.

APPLYING GILEAD TRAINING

After Gilead I served as circuit servant in Pennsylvania circuit number four, thus starting my application of Gilead training. Then, just a year after debarking from the ship, six of the original party of twenty-four were again on the Queen Elizabeth, on our way back to Europe.

My assignment, with another English brother, was in France as a missionary, to go from house to house every day, speaking in a foreign tongue. The possibility that had passed through my mind before going to Gilead was now to become a fact. So one foggy morning in January, 1949, the night ferry from Southampton to Le Havre nosed its way into Le Havre harbor. Thus began our real application of Gilead training.

We were greeted by a few of the local publishers, speaking away in French, which we were unable to follow. We left the dock and made our way out through town, looking at our future territory. Finally we arrived at our lodgings, an attic with a low sloping roof, in the home of an elderly brother and sister. They did what they could for us, and we appreciated it, but it was so different! Here was where patience and perseverance and real faith in Jehovah and his organization began for us. Eventually we got settled down and started to work, including doing our own washing and cooking.

Though armed with a basic knowledge of French received at Gilead, we found it difficult to give a witness. While in England a card was prepared for me written in French, and this I used to introduce myself. At the first home called upon we found someone who had some of the Society's books; we did not understand that they had them, but we saw that they had, because they showed them to us. So we continued, saying slowly: *"Voulez-vous*

lire cette carte, s'il vous plaît?" Then we heard a flood of words in reply.

Week in, week out, our knowledge of French gradually improving, we attended the *Watchtower* study and faithfully followed through in French.

LEARNING AND TEACHING AT BIBLE STUDIES

Because of circumstances beyond our control, it was not possible to stay longer than five months, and so we returned to England. I received another assignment, this time to Belgium. I arrived in Belgium on September 1, 1949. Already armed with some knowledge of French, and there now being four missionaries together, I gradually increased my knowledge of French. I can truthfully say that I received the most help in understanding and speaking French by conducting home Bible studies, both in France and in Belgium. I managed to make the people understand that I would appreciate their correcting my glaring errors of pronunciation and grammar. At the same time I was able to show them, with Jehovah's Word, how they could learn the "new language" of the Bible. Looking back, I can say that I learned much of the language that way—getting out among the people and learning from them, putting the same time to profit for their spiritual well-being.

During my first month in Belgium, which was a booklet campaign month, I placed 514 booklets; and in the seventh month I was privileged to conduct nineteen Bible studies.

While here in Belgium I have had varied privileges of service: as missionary, as circuit servant, working in the Brussels Bethel and also serving as district servant. In July, 1955, after serving Jehovah in a single state for nigh on seventeen years, I married a sister who was in Gilead's seventeenth class and who has been in the pioneer work since May, 1945. We were married here in Brussels; and up to now we have served together here in Belgium for the past five years.

Missionary work is a happy life. I must say that those few months in France right after Gilead were the hardest up to the present; but I am glad *now* that I stuck it out *then,* because by such experiences one becomes steeled for further tests.

I am glad that I made the decision to go to London Bethel back in December, 1938; for it has resulted in bountiful blessings. Many privileges will come our way if we adopt the attitude of Isaiah: "Here am I! Send me." When decisions have to be made, it is proper to count the cost, but he who decides for the Kingdom and its interests will never be disappointed.

Bibles Replace Rifles

In two small adjacent villages in Guanajuato, Mexico, consisting of a total of but 153 souls, there are 150 witnesses of Jehovah and the remaining three are of good will toward Jehovah God. It came about in this way. Some time ago a special representative of the Watch Tower Society began to preach to these people and found them all armed with rifles and pistols because of feuds in which whole families killed one another. When government tried to prosecute the guilty, they found no one willing to testify. At first these people also suspected even the minister of Jehovah sent into their midst; then one of the villagers agreed to having a Bible study in his home, and soon he and all his family became Jehovah's witnesses. Eventually all the neighbors accepted the truth about Jehovah God and his kingdom. When asked what they did with their pistols and rifles, one of them quietly replied: "We sold them and with the money bought Bibles."—1961 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses.*

Parents, do you TRAIN YOUR

"Train up a boy according to the way for him, even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." —Prov. 22:6.

PARENTS, before ever your child is born, stop and reflect upon his future, the goals that you will set before him and on how he may reach those goals with your help. Begin at this point to formulate a series of instructions as thorough and complete as you possibly can devise. Be ready to teach your child how he must conduct himself in every step of life. When he begins to understand—yes, in early childhood—explain the future before him. Show him his duties and responsibilities. Give him instruction and direction on how to perform the duties, escape the dangers and secure the blessings, which all lie before him. Fix firmly the goal of everlasting life in the child's mind by daily inculcation; then by example slowly lead him step by step in the way of life that you have outlined before him, until each step has become a strongly set habit. Pray without ceasing for Jehovah's blessing on all this teaching and training. Then you have obeyed the injunction of Jehovah: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." (Prov. 22:6, *RS*) We have God's Word for it that such training of a child when he is young and impressionable will never be effaced and that such good habits will never be destroyed.

1. (a) When should parents consider the future of their child, and how thorough a training program should they prepare for? (b) What goal should parents firmly fix in the child's mind, and what assurance do parents have if they follow out Jehovah's injunction at Proverbs 22:6?

[2] The Hebrew word *hhanákh,* translated to "train up" or "initiate," also means to dedicate. It is often used in connection with the dedicating of a person, a house or anything to the service of God. Therefore, parents, dedicate your child to God; then teach, train and discipline him as God's child, whom he has entrusted to your care. "Look! sons are a possession from Jehovah; the fruitage of the belly is a reward." (Ps. 127:3) If parents observe these sayings and illustrate them by their own conduct, then their sons and daughters will have the way of life laid out plainly before them and will find no just cause to depart therefrom.

[3] Parents of the animal kingdom take great pains to train their young for survival. Take mother deer and her little fawn, for an example. What does the baby deer know about the vicious mountain lion and how to escape becoming a meal for this powerful beast? Virtually nothing. But Jehovah has instilled in the mother deer wisdom concerning survival techniques. Instinctively the mother deer trains her little ones how to escape danger and survive. Her first rule is implicit obedience to instruction. When danger threatens, the mother deer commands *her young* to lie absolutely motionless. Being magnificently camouflaged and perfectly still, the fawn remains hid from its enemies. The lion roars to frighten the young to move and betray its position. It might ap-

2. What does the Hebrew word *hhanákh* mean, and what attitude should parents adopt toward the training of their child?
3. What lesson can be learned from the animal kingdom that parents must drive home to their children?

pear wiser for the little deer to leap up and run for its life. But how far do you think it would get before the hungry lion would pounce on it? Not very far. The little one obeys its mother until danger is past. The mother then returns and indicates to its young that it is free to move. The little one hops about happy to be alive. The mother gives it an affectionate lick for having obeyed. Yes, obedience means life, disobedience means death. This vital lesson parents of humankind must drive home to their children.

[4] Before parents can inculcate survival techniques as set forth in God's Word, the Bible, they themselves must know and be guided by them. To Israelite parents Moses said: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart." After that Moses declared: "You must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." (Deut. 6:4-9) Children are commanded by Jehovah to listen to such theocratically trained parents: "Observe, O my son, the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother. Tie them upon your heart constantly; bind them upon your throat. When you walk about, it will lead you; when you lie down, it will stand guard over you, and when you have waked up, it itself will make you its concern. For the commandment is a lamp, and a light the law is, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life." Children must be made to know that it is Jehovah's will respecting them that they listen to parental instruction, for such is the way of life.—Prov. 6:20-23; 4:10-13, 20-24.

4. Before parents can teach Bible principles, what must they know, and what Scriptural advice is offered to children?

HOME, CENTER OF TRAINING

[5] The home is the center of theocratic training. What happens in the home will affect the child the rest of its life. The head of this training center is the father. He is to shoulder the responsibility by taking the lead in the instructing of his children. The Bible emphasizes the major role fathers are to play in the educating of their children, in these words: "You, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) Dr. Benjamin Spock says: "Some fathers have been brought up to think that the care of babies and children is the mother's job entirely. This is the wrong idea." As the Bible shows, a man needs to be with his children for their development. If he is not with them it affects their growth, whether he cares to have it so or not. The child is very fond of its father. "My father knows what he is talking about," the child says. But when father fails to instruct or take the lead, or if he becomes overly critical or too strict and harsh, the child is inwardly hurt. He expects more of his father and rightly so.

5. What is the center of child training, who heads it, and why is this leadership essential?

[6] Recently, a test was taken that showed five factors that differentiated a large number of delinquent children from a large number of non-delinquent children. This test, which covered a ten-year period, revealed the differentiating factors to be: (1) discipline by father, (2) supervision by mother, (3) affection of father, (4) affection of mother, and (5) cohesiveness of family. The surprising discovery was the accent children placed on father's guidance, affection and discipline. The overly strict, harsh, unreasonable father scored low. The firm, kindly father scored high. The careless mother who allowed her child to roam the streets was rated poor. There is no escaping this one fact: whether children turn out to be good or bad depends largely on the training they receive in the home by father and mother.

[7] Parents must not deceive themselves into thinking that they are fulfilling God's injunction to train up a child simply by sending the youngster off to some Sunday school or other religious meeting. Basic religious instruction is to be received in the home. This responsibility parents cannot lightly pass off to another. Reports show God's blessing is not on the Sunday school system. Even though there are more than 36,000,000 children attending classes in close to 300,000 Sunday schools in the United States, "few lives are transformed into a true Christ-filled discipleship," said a prominent minister. We want our children to grow up, not on a diet of anemic faith, but on strong spiritual food that is capable of turning them into mature Christian men and women with renewed personalities. The place for such instruction is in the home with the parents in the lead position.

6. What five factors did a test reveal that highlighted home training?
7. Why do Sunday schools not take the place of the home as training centers?

A SPECIFIC DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAM

[8] Home training has a better chance of succeeding if the parents have a specific day-to-day program outlined for the children to follow. At a set time each day the Bible should be read, then a brief review should follow to see if the children understood what was read. The same procedure should be followed each day when discussing the text and comments from the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. There should also be a weekly home Bible study with the children and a weekly family *Watchtower* study in which the children should be made to participate. Note: the day and time for each of these studies should be definite so that on that specific day and hour the child will know exactly what to expect. Once study habits are formed they will be hard to break. Then, whenever the child is away from home, his mind will be drawn to what mother and father are doing at those specific hours. This draws the child closer into the family circle, and it will cause him to reflect on the good things learned at home.

[9] Children commit things to memory very easily. Train them to use their minds to remember important Bible passages. Teach them to pronounce the names of Bible books, other Bible names and words accurately. Instruct them in Bible doctrine. Instill in them the ability to make decisions, to distinguish right from wrong. Train them to have will power. It will help them to resist temptation when they grow older. Instruct them to share things with others. This will create in them a spirit of generosity. Be slow to criticize, quick to sympathize. Children must be taught respect for sacred things, and consideration for older brothers and sisters, compassion for the sick, kindness toward all. (Lev.

8. What specific program should the parents have for the children, and why is setting a specific time each day so important?
9. Name the various things parents should teach children, and tell why.

19:32) They must be taught humility, modesty and morality. When a child is ten it is intensely moral. Instill in this receptive mind the Bible principles of morality. Teach it the rights and wrongs of association with the opposite sex, how to conduct itself at social gatherings, and so forth. Big and little things count very much during these impressionable years; so, parents, train your children. Train them to be neat persons in dress, in habits of speech and in other things while in the privacy of their homes as well as in public. Train them to care for their own rooms, shoes, clothes, and so forth. In matters of money teach them the difference between extravagance and prudence, between stinginess and generosity. Let them give out of their own allowance for the upkeep of the Kingdom Hall. Let them pay for the literature they use; thereby teach them the value of money. Teach them to pray thoughtful, meaningful prayers. Inculcate in them the best of manners and they will be most grateful to you for having so trained them. In turn, you will reap great joy for your patience and hard work: "The father of a righteous one will without fail be joyful; the one becoming father to a wise one will also rejoice in him. Your father and your mother will rejoice, and she that gave birth to you will be joyful." However, "a stupid son is a vexation to his father and a bitterness to her that gave him birth." "Anyone becoming father to a stupid child—it is a grief to him; and the father of a senseless child does not rejoice." (Prov. 23:24, 25; 17:25, 21) Training in youth will make the difference.

DISCIPLINING AND TRAINING

[10] Parents, call upon Jehovah for direction on how to train and discipline your child. Manoah, the father of Samson, wanted his son to grow up in the right way. So he prayed to Jehovah for guidance in the training of his boy. "Excuse me, Jehovah," prayed Manoah. "The man of God that you just sent, let him, please, come again to us and instruct us as to what we ought to do to the child that will be born." "Accordingly God listened to the voice of Manoah and the angel of God came" and instructed them. Their son grew up to be a faithful servant of Jehovah. (Judg. 13:8-14) Follow this good example. Pray to Jehovah for guidance, and then follow his direction in his Word.

[11] However good a child's intentions, he is still a child and must be dealt with as a child. Constant oversight is necessary, because "foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy," says the Proverbs; "the rod of discipline is what will remove it far from him." Parents must be reasonably consistent in their instruction. They must feel, speak and act as if they expect the child to behave, and see to it that he does. There are times when the literal rod should be used to keep the peace and respect of the family. The Scriptures advise: "Do not hold back discipline from the mere boy. In case you beat him with the rod, he will not die. With the rod you yourself should beat him, that you may deliver his very soul from Sheol itself." (Prov. 22:15; 23:13, 14) Says Dr. Spock, "Firm guidance, which springs from devotion, is not only good for children—they love it!" The father and mother must care enough for their child to teach him right and wrong. J. Edgar Hoover, director of the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, said: "Discipline, fairly and consistently invoked, breeds pride and respect. And children want—desperately—to be disciplined. Superficially, they may rebel. But on a deep-

10. Why is Manoah's prayerful course a good example for parents today?

11. Why do good children need oversight and direction, and what do various authorities say about disciplining children?

er level, where character is formed, a child wants to be told what he can and cannot do. He needs guideposts to help him orient himself to the world. He looks to his parents for these guideposts. If parents are lazy or indifferent or over-indulgent, is it any wonder that a child loses love and respect for them? How can a child continue to look up to a parent who continually compromises and yields to him?" Along this same line Judge Philip B. Gilliam of the Juvenile Court of Denver, Colorado, gave some direct advice of interest and help to conscientious parents, saying: "Young people need a lot of parental love in their lives. That means supplying the sturdy discipline they require and unknowingly crave. And it means giving wisely of yourself, your experience and judgment." So do not hold back discipline from the mere boy. A good pat on the back, only lower down, will not kill him. It will assure him that you care. The following scriptures emphasize the wisdom of the use of discipline: Proverbs 3:11, 12; 4:1; 13:1, 24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13, 14.

[12] Spanking may not always be the answer when your child disobeys. Tact, poise, wisdom and a little good sense on your part as parents pay off. A warm smile is very disarming; even little children cannot resist it. However, before you scold your child make sure he, and not you yourself, is at fault. For example, you may say, "Johnny, don't scribble in the Society's books, or else you'll get a whipping!" That sounds clear enough to you, but is it to Johnny? You allow him to mark up other books. He sees you underlining your Bible, so in the little mind the thought is, "Why not this one?" So in your training of your child let him know in a way that he will understand. "This book belongs to daddy. You must not mark in it." Or, "This book is to be placed in service. There must be no marks in it—understand?" Give him a reason for your order. A spanking will not always help.

[13] Theocratic parents will want to instill in their child a desire to become one of Jehovah's ministers. Set this goal before the heart of the child early. You can best do this by setting a good example yourself. Take your child with you from house to house in the ministry, on back-calls and home Bible studies. Explain to him why you do things. You must make sure the child understands both how and why he is expected to do things. Tell him why you gave that particular sermon at the door, why you offered the book instead of the magazines. Invite his comments. Inculcate respect with reasons. It is best not to be dictating always.—Ex. 12:26, 27.

[14] Kindness, warmth and understanding go a long way toward creating in the child a desire to become one of Jehovah's witnesses. It is not enough just to say to your son or daughter, "I want you to be a minister for Jehovah." The child must see in you a good reason for becoming one. What you say, how you live and conduct yourself are weighed in the child's mind for or against the ministry. So if you mingle your training with tender love and affection, the child will see that the ministry is a desirable career to pursue. Do not be hesitant about telling your child how much you love having him with you at the Kingdom Hall, how pleased you are with his comments and note-taking. Encourage him whenever you can and do it sincerely. The effect for good is overwhelming. Express your appreciation for even the slightest work he may do. He

12. Show how a seemingly clear order might be confusing to a child. What must parents do to make instruction clear to children?

13, 14. (a) What goal will parents want to set before their child, and how? (b) In what way can parents train their child in the house-to-house ministry? (c) What qualities will help the child to see that the ministry is a desirable career to pursue? (d) *How can* parents train their children to do work and accept responsibility?

may be slow and inefficient, but remember, he is still a child. It takes him longer to see and do things. Do not make a big issue or, as children say, "a federal case" out of everything. Make things seem natural, easy and right when training them. "As long as a job is fun," says a disenchanted father, "the kids are dynamos; but when work becomes routine or requires some extra effort, off they go." Well, then, make washing dishes, mowing the lawn, polishing the car, cleaning the Kingdom Hall, the service center activity and the field ministry pleasurable—"fun." Be patient, however, with children. Good work habits and attitudes take time to develop. But with good adult example and good adult-child co-operation, the goal of the ministry can be attained. Dr. Charlotte D. Elmott, director of guidance and secondary education in the Santa Barbara schools, in California, declared: "Once young people get experience in a job, they really begin to grow up." Train them to accept little jobs at first, then to accept heavier work and responsibility. Soon they will be in position to take the lead in the service and assume servant duties. Do not withhold from them this privilege. Also, equip your child with a trade and perhaps a hobby. This will help to keep him balanced when he grows older.

LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT

[15] Children are very sensitive. Little things mean a lot to them. "If only mother and dad would be more appreciative," they say. Be appreciative. Commend your child whenever you can. Be sympathetic and understanding. Say, "I thought that review was rather difficult, but you have a fine grade." Always have something good to say to take the sharpness out of your criticism. "I thought you gave a good talk at the theocratic ministry school, son. But keep working on the points the school servant mentioned." Only when absolutely necessary rebuke. Even then, cushion such blows with love and affection and an understanding tone. Bear in mind: "A rebuke works deeper in one having understanding." Also, we are told "to be tactful toward all," which includes our children. —Prov. 17:10; 2 Tim. 2:24, 25; Gal. 6:1.

[16] The most vital element of all in training a child is that the parents love the child in the sense of being devoted to it, wanting it to turn out well, enjoying all of its good qualities. Dr. Spock says: A child "expresses his devotion to his parents by molding himself in their image; not just in the sense of copying their skills, occupations, manner of speech, but genuinely trying to be civilized and responsible like them. This is how the boy acquires much of his desire to be cooperative with men, brave in danger, courteous to women, faithful to a job, just as his father is. This is how a girl is inspired to be helpful in the home, devoted to babies (live and doll babies), tender to other members of the family, as her mother is." In the same manner your child will want to imitate you to become a minister of God. Therefore, set before him a good example. Show children love and sympathy. Listen to their problems and experiences. Listening to them gives them the feeling that their thoughts are important to you, that you know what is on their minds, that you care for them and can help them with their problems. If you do not listen to them, someone else will. They may get wrong advice.

[17] Train your children as you yourself

15. In what way can parents use tact when training their children?

16. What is the most vital element in training of children, and why is it important that parents take time to listen to their children?

17. (a) What does every child need, and how can *this* be arranged? (b) How can parents instill in their child the missionary spirit, and what is the greatest blessing that they can bestow upon a child?

would want to be trained. Be concerned about them. Parents, where are your children now? What are they doing? When was the last time you had a good heart-to-heart talk with them? Every child needs the chance to have a parent all to himself. Give him this chance by going for a walk with him. This allows him to get acquainted with you. Take him with you in service, on picnics, for rides; play with him. Take your child to baptismal services, to all congregation meetings, to national and international assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses. Whenever possible, work alongside him. Encourage him to preach and teach as a vacation pioneer. Have him join you to serve where the need for Kingdom witnessing is great. Instill in his young mind the missionary spirit by reading *Yearbook* experiences, by entertaining missionaries and pioneers in your home. Teach your child to love the brothers, the truth of God's Word, the New World society, for this is the way of life. What greater blessing can a parent bestow upon his child than a good introduction to the Kingdom ministry, which is the way leading to everlasting life?

[18] When children are trained to be industrious, when they are restrained and corrected with a due mixture of firmness and affection, when they are disciplined to endure hardship, to keep their place and obey, and when all this is enforced by good examples set before them and when constant prayers are made for and with them, children generally do not depart from the way. The good effects of their training can be seen wherever they go and as long as they live. Such well-trained children become a source of deep joy to their parents. Yes, parents, Jehovah's Word says: "The father of a righteous one will without fail be joyful." (Prov. 23:24) Therefore, parents, train up your child in the way he should go. If you do, your child will be a joy to you, a blessing to the theocratic organization, and a vindication of the arrangement that Jehovah instituted for the training of children, namely, the home, with the father and mother in the key positions.

18. (a) Children that receive what instruction usually stand fast to their early training? (b) Of what is proper child training a vindication?

Parents

SAFEGUARD YOUR CHILD'S LIFE *with accurate knowledge*

PARENTS of the New World society now stand with their children at the portals of God's new world of promise, but they have yet to enter. Satan and his demons and a terribly corrupt and wicked world would, if possible, prevent them from entering. What can parents do to safeguard themselves and their children

1. What questions should parents and children ask themselves at this time, and why?

from being sucked into this world's depravity and destruction? What can children do to avoid contamination with this old world, thus protecting themselves from being destroyed with it at Armageddon? What must be done by both parents and children should be of interest to all desiring life.

[2] Jehovah God through his inspired Word informs us what to do to survive this world's end. "Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding," is the wise counsel. "Do not forget and do not turn aside from the sayings of my mouth. Do not leave it and it will keep you. Love it and it will safeguard you." "For wisdom is for a protection the same as money is for a protection; but the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom itself preserves alive its owners." Therefore, if parents are to survive this time of trouble with their children and enter the promised new world, they must search out the wisdom of Jehovah, be taught of his ways and live according to them. The accurate knowledge of Jehovah's Word will become a protective shield about them in this hour of temptation and crisis.—Prov. 4:5, 6; Eccl. 7:12.

[3] Early in life children must be taught the wisdom of Jehovah, the principles of Christian living. As soon as the child is old enough to ask questions about life, it is old enough to receive forthright answers. It is not necessary to explain things in detail for a child, just answer the questions briefly, plainly and happily. There is no reason why we should hedge. Jehovah is *plain speaking* in the Bible and parents can be just as plain when speaking to their children. It is the responsibility of the parents to give a child a goal in life. Christian parents will want to make the new world with its blessings and life that goal for their child. To that end they will inculcate now in their child the principles of new-world living. This should include instruction on the facts of life, the child's biological make-up, its basic emotions and desires. At no time should parents feel it necessary to weave in fairy-tale stories about "storks carrying babies" when explaining the origin of life. The miracle of birth is nothing to be ashamed of. Satisfy the little curious minds with the "whys" and "wherefores" of life, because if you do not tell them, someone else will, but what children may learn from others may not always be the truth. Children should also be taught the need for self-control, that the driving force in them toward procreation has power to attract, to embarrass, divide and destroy a happy relationship if misused. Children must be taught that there are rights and wrongs and must learn to distinguish between them. (Heb. 5:14) They must grow to appreciate that many wrongs do not make a right, that widespread immorality among men does not justify one's becoming immoral, that Jehovah's laws must be regarded above all else if one is to gain life. Because "the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up," and because "foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy," it may be necessary to restrain, discipline and even punish the child to keep him from going astray. (Gen. 8:21; Prov. 22:15) A child learns best by loving parental example. A child properly trained will be able to say as the psalmist did: "From every bad path I have restrained my feet, in order that I may keep your word." Yes, the Word of Jehovah will be a safeguard in this wayward world.—Ps. 119:101-105.

[4] Perhaps the most dangerous of all cor-

2. To survive this world's end, what must parents and children do?
3. (a) When should children begin to be taught, and how? (b) What responsibility rests on parents regarding children and their aim in life? (c) To prevent children from going astray, what else must children be taught, and in what way is this best done?
4. (a) What Bible warning do we have about the dangers of sex? (b) What is the unhealthy moral state of the world, and with what consequence to youth?

ruptions to youth is the modern attitude toward sex. It was so with the children of Israel just before they entered the Promised Land. For forty years many of them persevered; then on the plains of Moab, just before receiving the realization of their dream, thousands of them fell victim to immoral practices with the daughters of Moab. Twenty-four thousand of them perished in one day! (Num. 25:1-9) We today stand in a similar position. Before us is the new world of promise, but around us is a "sex crazy" world. As a Harvard professor said: We live under the "continuous pressure of a gigantic army of omnipresent sex stimuli." Books and films that excite suggestiveness are most popular. Rape, homosexuality, illegitimacy and venereal disease abound. Stories of the debauched lives of celebrated Hollywood notables flood the newspapers, but seldom, if ever, does one read of the lives of decent, moral people who have reared healthy children for the good of the community. This moral breakdown was foretold to take place "in the last days." (2 Tim. 3:1-7) It is bringing forth its fruitage: "For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Gal. 6:7) Everywhere can be seen an open revolt against morals and conventions, with a devastating effect on youth especially. Polls taken in several colleges revealed that 79 percent of the students approved of sex relations before marriage. Some 36 percent of the boys questioned said that they were determined to go as far as they could when out with girls within three dated engagements. Lovely boys and girls are known to have lost complete control of themselves morally, finally ending up confused, frightened, depressed and on the verge of suicide. Parents of the New World society, know that these conditions also face your children who are forced by circumstance to rub elbows with the children of the world. So watch over your children, because their lives are involved.

[5] We want our children to grow up to be decent, God-fearing men and women who understand and appreciate their role in life. But simply desiring this will not make it so. We must be ready to inculcate righteous principles that will mold them into desirable companions. Great emphasis must be placed in youth on Jehovah's demand for right conduct between the sexes, the desirability of cleanliness and the rewards of maintaining integrity. The conscience of the child must be trained to know that singleness has its place, but that it must never encroach upon the prerogatives belonging solely to married persons; that to treat lightly or abuse one's trained conscience is to suffer shipwreck concerning one's faith. It means the loss of life in the new world. (1 Tim. 1:19) Such training must begin early in youth for best results. —2 Tim. 3:15-17.

[6] When the child asks mother or father, "Where do babies come from?" or, "Why are boys and girls made different?" it is time to begin instructing the child about its role in life. Explain to the child that girls were made by God to have babies, that is why they are different. Tell them how a child is born, how babies are fed and kept warm inside the mother until they are ready to eat and breathe on their own; and that these are Jehovah's ways and that they must be respected. The child will then come to love Jehovah and it will want to harmonize its life with his principles. During moments of temptation its trained conscience will prove a force for good and will restrain the child from wrongdoing. In later years the child will look upon sex relations, not as something "terrible" or "dirty," but proper and clean in its place—marriage. Parents can also do

5. To safeguard children from old-world debauchery, what training must children receive?
6. What instruction can parents give their children about the facts of life and about marriage and its responsibilities, and how will this aid children?

much to prepare children for obligations that go with marriage, such as housekeeping, child care and having a right attitude toward marriage and its responsibilities. Marital adjustment will then be much easier and happier.—Gen. 1:28.

THE DANGERS OF YOUTH

7 In some lands inside and outside of Christendom it is an accepted custom today for a boy and a girl to go out together alone. Wrongly this is looked upon as the first step toward adult man-woman relationship. However, such a period of getting acquainted is fraught with many dangers. The fact that a large number of parents allow their children to go out alone with the opposite sex even before their fourteenth birthday shows that such parents do not realize the psychological and moral implications of early courtship by those of the opposite sex. Children allowed to take this course are exposing themselves to obvious moral and social dangers that arise from early sex stimulation that cannot culminate in a rightful expression for years to come, namely, marriage. In a study of 517 college students it was found that those who started to go out alone with the opposite sex in the primary grade school or secondary junior high school were emotionally maladjusted. The overpowering sex impulse had driven many to the point of no return—into sin. As a result, in the past fifteen years illegitimate births among teen-age girls has more than doubled. The growth of early marriages has skyrocketed and so has the divorce rate among this group. Many high schools report that they have one marriage to every twenty single students. In the case of religious circles a large number of boys and girls have been put on probation, or even been disfellowshiped from the Christian congregation because of serious immoralities, thus procuring for themselves a blot on their record and disqualifying themselves from honorable religious service privileges for many years. The reason for much of this can be traced right back to permitting boys and girls to go out together alone at an early age before or right after reaching the age of puberty.

8 What can parents do to help their children see the dangers of early courting one of the opposite sex without having a chaperon along? By the time the child is old enough to have the sexual urge to go out alone with a young person his father and his mother should have had a long talk with him about the power of passion, about the danger of petting and about what constitutes proper conduct between boy and girl when alone. The apostle Paul advised youthful Timothy to "flee from the desires incidental to youth." (2 Tim. 2:22) Fleeing from such dangerous desires means fleeing from persons and places that might stir up these desires. Hence Christian girls should not allow themselves to be taken by boys down lonely roads or into secluded spots where passion might take free rein unobserved. Parents who let themselves be induced to allow their children to have companionship with those of the opposite sex unattended ought to safeguard their children by setting a time when these should be home at night. Hours after dark are when the body tires rapidly, when resistance is low and when the ability to make right decisions in moral directions is greatly reduced. The barriers go down. Passion is easily aroused and a young man doing the courting may not be so easily convinced that it is decent and advisable to go home. Girls, or daughters, should be made to realize that boys are very susceptible to sexual temptation. In turn boys should

7. What are some of the dangers of courting unchaperoned, and how do studies bear this out?

8. What can parents do to safeguard their children from the dangers of making engagements with the opposite sex alone?

know that girls are likewise susceptible. Accordingly it would be very indecent on the part of girls and boys to excite one another by improper dress or action or self-display. Parents can show that they are interested in the welfare of their child by telling their son or daughter the facts about life and the part that sex plays in one's life. Parents should tell the children of the dangers of petting. A good rule for parents is never to let their boy or girl go courting with anyone that they would not want their child to marry, because all too frequently such courting ends up in marriage that is vexatious. For his child's sake a Christian parent should forbid the child's making private engagements with one of the young opposite sex not of the immediate family in order to go out together unattended for amusement and pleasure-seeking. A father who is an overseer or ministerial servant of a Christian congregation is in fact under obligation to forbid such improperly or untimely early sex engagements by his children.—1 Tim. 3: 4, 12, 13; Titus 1:5-9.

[9] In many parts of the earth heavy petting by unmarried worldly persons is being indulged in commonly. Not affection, but sexual gratification is the motive for heavy petting. Marriage is not the end toward which such petting builds. Couples that allow themselves to neck and pet heavily show a running wild of their sexual emotions. They display a need for self-discipline as well as display their ignorance of accepted social practices and the consequences of these. When 159 women were asked about necking, about 25 percent of them admitted it made them nervous. Some heavy petters cried uncontrollably before going to bed and they did not know why. Doctors consulted advised that they be less intimate with their boy friends. When their intimacy with male petters was reduced their crying stopped too. The absence of necking was found to relate to good adjustment after marriage. Often couples feel safe to neck when they are out with a group. They say there is safety in numbers. But what happens when the petters sneak away to be alone? Or what if the whole group necks and works itself into going farther than mere necking and petting? Hardly anything else than immorality. So remember the apostle Paul's warning: "Bad associations spoil useful habits."—1 Cor. 15:33.

[10] One's behavior when one is out with the opposite sex alone for mere companionship is a joint responsibility. No boy or girl has the right to take full control of the situation and inject sexual awareness. Furthermore, drinking intoxicating liquors and courtship do not mix healthfully at all. Girls especially should know this inasmuch as some men designedly introduce liquor in order to relax a girl and to reduce her resistance and make her resign to sexual advances. Liquor excites passion. Liquor weakens will power. Thus it exposes its victims to disaster. God's Word warns: "Wine is a ridiculer, intoxicating liquor is boisterous, and everyone going astray by it is not wise."—Prov. 20:1.

[11] When courtship becomes permissible to Christian children, then their introducing the boy friend or the girl friend to the parents is a wise thing for them to do. It helps the interested youth to judge his companion of the opposite sex through the parents' viewpoint. Their eyes are not blurred with romance. For instance, when Abraham's servant found Rebekah at the well, what did Rebekah do? The Genesis account says: "The young woman went running and telling the household of her mother." So the servant was invited into

9, 10. (a) Why is heavy petting inadvisable? (b) Why do liquor and courting alone not mix?

11. Why is introducing a courted companion to one's parents good sense, and when should courtship be broken?

the house, where he told the household of his master Abraham's proposal of marriage for his son Isaac. Rebekah's parents and brother listened attentively and then they asked Rebekah if she would go to marry Isaac. Rebekah's reply was: "I am willing to go." Rebekah was chaperoned all the way to Isaac by women. At her meeting with him finally Isaac took Rebekah and she became his wife and he fell in love with her. Thus these two married with parental approval. So when Christian children have been given the needed instruction and training to make them mature regarding matters of sex so that courtship may be safely allowed to them, then it is good sense on the part of parents (and they should make it their business) to meet the person or persons with whom their child is going out. If after going out a number of times the young man or woman finds that mutual interest or religious agreement does not exist, then it is best not to allow such growing friendship to blossom into courtship. It would not be in the best interests of either party to allow such a relationship to continue. —Gen. 24:15-67.

COURTSHIP PROBLEMS

[12] In lands where courting is allowed it is generally viewed as a means of helping the youth to select the type of person that one would someday like to marry. Usually courtship leads to marriage. Courtship introduces one to many problems, and moral dangers are encountered that may be greatly enhanced by the deeper attraction between the two by the frequency of their meeting together alone. To determine upon enduring compatibility both parties to the courtship should size each other up. If they are thinking about marriage they should see each other in all sorts of conditions and situations. The girl should see her boy companion in his work clothes and in his various moods and reactions. The man should see his girl in her everyday wear in her own home and become acquainted with her likes and dislikes and temperament. If in course of time couples are able to enjoy the quiet presence of each other in nearness, if they like to do things together and for each other, if they long for each other and they are concerned about each other's health and pray for each other's success and the overcoming of each other's problems, if a word by one's companion brings one inner joy, if his voice thrills one, if what he says builds one up and promotes respect, then there is a good likelihood that one's love will last and that both will delight in each other through the years after marriage. —1 Cor. 13:4-8.

[13] Where courtship apart from a chaperon is permitted, both parties should at all times keep the danger of willful consent to sexual arousal remote, or at a distance. There is a surer outlook for happiness if courtship remains unsullied by immorality. Sullied courtships usu-

12. What problems arise in courtship, and how can one be reasonably sure of having the right companion?

13, 14. (a) Why should willful consent to sexual arousal be kept remote in courtship? (b) How long should courtship continue, and what are *the* dangers of extended courtships where there is not the spirit of God?

ally have one end, namely, strife and mutual contempt by the couple toward each other. Let those in the courtship keep their relationship clean before Jehovah.—Lev. 19:2.

[14] Where courtship is the custom, how long should it last? If one is serious about it and goes about it in the right way, it should continue until one solemnly says before witnesses, "This is my companion for life." Then even after that through married life courtship should continue. In a wide poll of many women 85 percent thought that a girl should not marry "unless she had gone with her prospective partner for six months to two years." However, these worldly women were generally agreed that any two persons could probably become sufficiently acquainted in a year. They observed that the longer the courtship continued the greater becomes the physical attraction between the sexes and the greater the danger of immorality, that is, for worldly men and women. In one study of 576 engaged couples it was noted that, "while not quite 40 percent of those engaged eight months or less had indulged in physical intimacy, close to half (48.4 percent) of those engaged 28 or more months had done so. In fact, the same study indicated the presence of strong physical attraction for almost two-thirds in less than six months' time." This information from worldly sources only proves that in the case of men and women who are not dedicated to God and who do not have God's spirit courtships that are extended unduly long for no legitimate reasons are not only meaningless but hazardous. If a person is miserable and discontented during courtship, it would be better not to enter into an engagement to marry. A person should never build a marriage on the shifting sands of uncertainty. It should be observed that in Bible times the parents usually espoused their children for a year in order to provide a minimum of time to train their children for marriage responsibilities. In many cases this year of espousal was entirely without any courtship between the espoused couple. The desirability of the marriage was determined upon by the parents or guardians of the intended married couple.

ENGAGEMENT AND MARRIAGE

[15] Inside Christendom engagement is a serious promise to marry. During this period couples talk about the important issues that come up after marriage, such as children, finances, religion, in-laws, and so forth. Couples reveal their health condition, whether one has a disease that would endanger the health of the other; and if one is in debt, this also is made known. This finding out takes time. Persons who have had fairly long engagements have been found happier in marriage. But how long should an engagement be? There are no hard and fast rules. Much depends on the couple, how long they have known each other and the courting period. A day is not long enough and ten years may be too long. However long the engagement, it still is not marriage and therefore they have no right to sex relations. When the two decide to marry, a wedding with friends present is commendable, whereas elopement has proved extremely hazardous. Jesus' presence at the wedding at Cana stamps his approval on such an arrangement.—John 2:1-11.

[16] Marriage is for mature, grown-up people. It is not for children. A recent survey of 15,000 teen-agers revealed that 96 percent expected to have more than two bathrooms in their future homes. Another sur-

15. What questions should be discussed during the engagement period, and how long should engagements be?
16. In what way do studies show the need for youth to face reality when considering marriage; and when looking for a marriage companion what should youth look for?

vey made among marriageable 20-year-old women in twelve cities disclosed that their ideal husband prototypes were movie stars. This shows an unrealistic, childish attitude toward marriage, which explains the high divorce rate in the United States. It shows a need to face reality as far as marriage is concerned. Consider your prospective partner not through the superficial, unrealistic eyes of Hollywood, but through the eyes of God's infallible Word. A woman should consider her companion in the terms of what she wants: a husband, provider, father; a man properly wants a wife, cook, housekeeper and a mother for his children. Before marrying, one should have sense enough to know that the marriage contract is for life. "A wife is bound during all the time her husband is alive." —1 Cor. 7:39.

SINGLENESS FOR WHOM?

17 Standing now at the threshold of Jehovah's new world, many youths may want to postpone marriage until after Armageddon, when selection of a wife will be made under righteous conditions and when marriage responsibilities will be carried out with none of the distractions that now plague mankind. Wise King Solomon advised youths: "Remember, now, your grand Creator in the days of your young manhood, before the calamitous days proceed to come." (Eccl. 12:1) With the rapid approach of Armageddon, youths of the New World society should want to seize hold of the grand privilege that is theirs, that is, to give their all for the sake of the Kingdom, thus safeguarding their position at this time of the end. The single state offers greater freedom and fewer distractions, as the apostle said: "The single man is anxious for the things of the Lord, how he may gain the Lord's approval. But the married man is anxious for the things of the world, how he may gain the approval of his wife, and he is divided. Further, the single woman, and the virgin, is anxious for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in her body and in her spirit. However, the married woman is anxious for the things of the world, how she may gain the approval of her husband. But this I am saying for your personal advantage, not that I may cast a noose upon you, but to move you to that which is becoming and that which means constant attendance upon the Lord without distraction." (1 Cor. 7:32-35) So for a more undistracted life, Paul encouraged singleness, not marriage.

18 Singleness is a gift bestowed on some as a reward for the victory of the spirit over the flesh. Often it is a solitary life, but a joyous one. A single person may be lonely but free. His life, which is not so weighted down with common material considerations, can soar the higher. However, whether one lives a married or a single life, the life he leads must be clean. If a single person should find himself distracted, that is, hard pressed because of passion, rather than for him to be constantly tempted with fornication or other abuses, it would be wiser for him to seek a mate and marry. Marriage is honorable in God's sight; fornication is not. Those, however, who are able to make room for singleness should. Paul says such ones "do better" than those who marry.—1 Cor. 7:38; Matt. 19:12.

19 There are many dedicated Christian girls who would like to marry this side of Armageddon, but there appears to be a scarcity of good, clean eligible mates. What should these do? Should they reach out

17. Why is singleness especially appropriate to consider at this time, and what reason does Paul advance for choosing singleness?

18. When should a single person seriously consider marriage?

19, 20. (a) What problem faces many single Christian women today, and how should they view this matter? (b) With Armageddon so near at hand, what should all Christians want to be, and why?

beyond the congregation of God to get themselves a companion not dedicated to the doing of Jehovah's will? Some have done so to their sorrow. The Scriptural injunction is: Marry "only in the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:39) True, the single state may impose a great test of faith on many, but enduring trials for righteousness' sake brings God's blessing. One who seeks the company of outsiders may end up marrying out of the truth. Trials arising out of such mixed marriages come as a result of ignoring God's counsel. Such trials often cause some to become spiritually sick and leave the truth; thus they lose out on life. Peter stated: "It is better to suffer because you are doing good, if the will of God wishes it, than because you are doing evil." (1 Pet. 3:17) Endure under trial; a blessing from Jehovah awaits you.

[20] With Armageddon so close at hand, with the new world of promise within reach, "keep yourselves clean, you who are carrying the utensils of Jehovah," so that he may preserve you alive on into his new world of promise, for you to serve him there forevermore in righteousness. May that be your happy lot.—Isa. 52:11.

THE THOUGHT BEHIND THE PROVERB

A PROVERB is said to be "a large amount of wisdom wrapped in the fewest possible words." The Hebrew word for proverbs, *Meshalím,* means a comparison. It includes more than is embraced by the English word, which we understand to mean a pithy sentence expressing in a few words a well-known or obvious truth.

A proverb may be likened to a kernel of corn, which, though a small thing in itself, has the potential to expand and increase until it can furnish food for millions. A proverb is also like a precious diamond, which, though tiny in size, may constitute a fortune. Even a child of little strength can conceal and carry a diamond around. But if the diamond's value were in iron or some other baser metal, it would take the strength of many to transport it from place to place. So it is with proverbs that are precious with mental and moral wisdom; they are small enough to be carried about and retained by the weakest memory, yet priceless in their instructive value.

In ancient times when books were few it was natural that observations on life and manners should be compressed into the fewest words possible and committed to memory. People carried these sayings about and quoted them from time to time as safeguards. The very purpose of the Bible book of Proverbs is stated in these words: "For one to know wisdom and discipline, to discern the sayings of understanding, to receive the discipline that gives insight, righteousness and judgment and uprightness, to give to the inexperienced ones shrewdness, to a young man knowledge and thinking ability."—Prov. 1:1-3.

Many proverbs were born of stored-up experiences and observations, not of just one wise man, but of many. Therefore, Lord Russell's epigram describes a proverb as "the wisdom of many and the wit of one." Some proverbs owe their origin to common situations in the everyday life of the times, knowledge of which is necessary to make clear how the proverb came into existence and how it is to be understood and applied. To make clear the fundamental, practical value of the wisdom embodied in the Proverbs, note a few of them and the lessons they teach.

PROVERBS 17: 19

"Anyone loving transgression is loving a struggle. Anyone making his entryway high is seeking a crash."

In various parts of Palestine the Jews were obliged to have the doors of their courts and houses very low, not more than three feet high, to prevent men on horseback from riding into the courts and houses and spoiling their goods. One who made a high gate or entryway was inviting disaster. The proverb could also be speaking of the mouth as an entryway that is lifted high by boasting and arrogant speaking. Such talk has a tendency to kindle and maintain strife, which leads to a crash.

PROVERBS 20: 14

" 'It is bad, bad!' says the buyer, and he is going his way. Then it is that he boasts about himself."

This is a common proverb in Oriental countries. The buyer says the article for sale is "bad." The price is lowered. He buys it and leaves, bragging about the clever deal he made. It takes no skill or experience to pronounce an article bad, but it does take some knowledge and judgment to put a fair price on an article. If the buyer robs the seller by saying the item is "bad," he has little to boast of. He has wronged another and himself. He has cheated his neighbor out of some money and he has injured his own conscience and has probably lost the confidence of his fellow man. Therefore, he has little reason for boasting.

PROVERBS 21: 1

"A king's heart is as streams of water in the hand of Jehovah. Everywhere that he delights to, he turns it."

The proverb alludes to the Eastern method of watering the land. Many canals are dug from one stream, and by opening a particular sluice the cultivator can direct a stream to whatever part he pleases. So Jehovah can direct the thoughts of a king in harmony with his will and order. Here, too, is shown that Jehovah rules the spirit of man in that he has access to his innermost thoughts and feelings—a power that human monarchs cannot claim.

PROVERBS 25: 13

"Just like the coolness of snow in the day of harvest is the faithful envoy to those sending him, for he restores the very soul of his masters."

Some select few in the East have snow-houses, that is, places dug under the ground where they lay up snow for summer use. The snow of Lebanon or Hermon was put into wine or other drink to make it more refreshing in the harvesttime. But the common people cooled their liquors by the simple mode of evaporation. They would dip a cloth in water, wrap it round the bottle, and then hang the bottle in the heat of the sun. The evaporation carried off the heat from the wine, and the process made the wine almost as cold as ice. Good news is as refreshing to the soul as a cool drink at harvesttime.

The Testimony of Creation

Impressed by the wonders of the solar system, Sir Isaac Newton said: "It is not to be conceived that mere mechanical causes could give birth to so many regular motions. . . . This most beautiful system of the sun, planets and comets could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being."

ARE YOU MATURE?

ARE you mature? If so, you are full-grown, able to do a man's or woman's work in your community. You have learned to gather information, to reason on it and to draw proper conclusions from it. If you are mature, you are able to meet difficult problems without becoming unbalanced. You can endure irritation without losing your temper. You do not become easily depressed or offended. Your knowledge of God's Word is comprehensive, your ability to aid others is effective, and your application of Scriptural principles to your own life is exemplary. Yes, all this is involved in being mature.

The term "mature" has the meaning of being full-grown, completely developed. It is the condition that at times is described in the Bible as complete or perfect. Only by reaching maturity can we realize the purpose of our existence, properly discharging all our obligations and responsibilities.—Matt. 5:48; 1 Cor. 13:10.

There are four aspects of maturity that Christians are concerned with: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Physical maturity cannot be hurried. At best we can only co-operate with the force of life that brings it about. But mental, emotional and spiritual maturity can be hastened, depending upon the mental disposition of the individual and his environment. Then again physical maturity is something quite tangible, whereas mental, emotional and spiritual maturity are relative, depending upon conditions. In their day Mohammed and Charlemagne were considered mentally mature, yet the one was illiterate and the other could hardly write his name.

PHYSICAL MATURITY

Physical maturity is not imperative to spiritual maturity, although it is a great aid and without it one's activities are to a certain extent circumscribed. For example, there are minimum age requirements for becoming a member of a Bethel family and for giving a public Bible lecture. It is thus seen that time is a very basic element in physical maturity and it cannot be ignored. Usually, physical maturity is associated with adulthood, although certain physiologists hold that the human body keeps on growing until it reaches the age of thirty years.

The process of maturing physically may be said to begin at conception. Maternal affection is a most vital factor, especially early in life; in fact, as early as conception, for an unwanted baby is born with a handicap. Pediatricians claim that mother does not need to be so much concerned as to just what kind of baby food she uses or just when she feeds the baby as that her child receives an abundance of maternal affection.

Co-operation with the inherent life force for physical maturity also requires parents to see to it that their children get, not only sufficient food, but also the right kind. Palate-pampering delicacies, such as pastries, candy, and so forth, while causing a child to add weight, may cause it to be deficient in other respects.

For physical maturity children also need exercise, something that is being greatly neglected in some lands because of all the conveniences in this modern age. While

children derive exercise from healthful play, there are also other ways in which to strengthen the muscles, such as useful toil, engaging in the Christian ministry and simply walking, to school or to the corner grocery store. Practical parents will therefore let their children walk any distance that is within reason, rather than always transporting them in the family auto. Why deprive your children of healthful exercise, at the same time giving them the vain notion that you exist solely for their benefit?

Rest and sleep also may not be slighted if progress toward physical maturity is not to be interfered with. Modern living habits deprive children of necessary sleep. In particular does watching television often rob children of hours that should be spent in rest and sleep.

In all this there is a lesson for adults whose physical health is not all that may be desired. Give sufficient—but not too much—attention to right food, adequate exercise, rest and sleep and you will be better able to discharge your responsibilities.

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Strictly speaking, mental maturity is primarily concerned with the mind as an instrument for thinking, for taking in facts, making comparisons, drawing conclusions and then showing determination to do something about them. Time is a major though not inflexible factor in attaining mental maturity. First parents and *then school*teachers have the responsibility of guiding and aiding their charges in attaining to mental maturity. However, there must be a willingness to co-operate on the part of the child if mental maturity is to be gained.

As with physical maturity, affection on the part of the child's monitors plays a vital role in the progress made toward mental maturity. On the one hand, it makes parents and teachers more discerning and more efficient instructors, and, on the other hand, affection gives a child encouragement as well as incentive to learn.

Of course, for mental maturity the child must also have the right kind of mental food. In addition to what the child learns from school textbooks he is influenced and helped or hindered by the mental level of his environment. Parents should therefore be careful of their grammar and pronunciation. Aside from its value toward gaining emotional and spiritual maturity, the Bible by reason of the way it is written, in the choicest of language and with the clearest of thinking and logic, is an excellent aid toward attaining mental maturity. It helps cultivate thinking ability. This is something especially for adults to remember, who may not be in position to attend school but who would like to cultivate clear thinking ability, taking in knowledge from reading, observation and experience and reaching sound conclusions.—Prov. 2:10, 11; 2 Pet. 3:1.

Emotional maturity requires a certain amount of physical and mental maturity. Bible principles furnish the best help toward attaining to emotional maturity. It has been defined as the ability to get along harmoniously with one's fellows with the minimum of friction. Its sum and substance are the two Scriptural requirements of loving your neighbor and exercising self-control.—Mark 12:31; Gal. 5:22, 23; 2 Pet. 1:6.

Important as affection is to physical and mental maturity, it is even more important for emotional maturity. In fact, it might be said that children do not become emotionally mature unless they are reared in a climate of love. Further, children must be taught to practice love themselves, to think of others. They must be trained in principles of justice and righteousness,

must learn to submit to authority and to appreciate that all freedoms are relative. Where parents have failed along these lines the individual can bring himself to emotional maturity by application of Bible principles and the help of God's spirit and other divinely provided aids. In addition to the plain and explicit commands in God's Word regarding what is required of us in loving ourselves and our neighbor, the Bible also contains many fine examples to follow and many warning examples of things to avoid, all of which is conducive to our achieving emotional maturity.

Emotional maturity also includes satisfactory sexual adjustment. The emotionally mature person is not frustrated, be the one married or single. If the individual is single, that one remains chaste, fleeing fornication. If the person is married, that one limits sex interest to one's own mate, one's own flesh.—1 Cor. 6:18; Prov. 5:15.

The emotionally mature person is able to exercise self-control regardless of the circumstances. He does not lose his temper or succumb to passion under temptation. Here again we have no better aid than God's Word with its express commands, reasons and examples, all uniting to strengthen us to exercise self-control.

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Spiritual maturity is the most important of all, for it involves not only our present life but also our future destiny. (1 Tim. 4:8) Christendom gives little or no thought to spiritual or religious maturity. That is why the increase in church membership has had no impact upon the moral tone of society. The average church member is unable to give a reason for his beliefs, and his conduct is not different from that of nonchurchgoers.

But true Christianity is concerned with spiritual maturity, for it is imperative to keeping one's integrity. That is why the Scriptures keep stressing its importance and need:

"Stay awake, stand firm in the faith, carry on as men, grow mighty." "Become full-grown in powers of understanding." "Let us press on to maturity." The very purpose of God in providing apostles, prophets, shepherds and teachers is so that Christians may "all attain to the oneness in the faith and in the accurate knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of growth that belongs to the fullness of the Christ; in order that we should no longer be babes."—1 Cor. 16:13; 14:20; Heb. 6:1; Eph. 4:11-14.

In what ways is the mature Christian different from the immature one? The immature Christian reads the Bible and Bible-study aids only as he finds time, which he seldom does. The mature Christian is not content with merely reading these but studies them so as to make the information his own and to be able to explain it clearly to others. He schedules time for his study.—2 Tim. 2:15.

The immature Christian permits bad weather to interfere with his attending meetings of the Christian congregation, comes late and unprepared to take part, and leaves right afterward. The mature Christian prepares in advance, comes regularly regardless of the weather, takes an active part in the meeting and lingers afterward to associate and encourage others.—Heb. 10:23-25.

The immature Christian preaches spasmodically and contents himself with talking and placing literature. The mature Christian serves regularly in all features of the ministry, is skilled in teaching, makes return visits and gets results. More than that, he helps train others in the ministry.—Rom. 15:1-3.

The immature Christian is easily offended, and is prone to compromise, to yield

to temptation, to show fear of man and to go to extremes. The mature Christian is forgiving, manifests the fruitage of the spirit, is strong and keeps balance by avoiding extremes. Far from letting outside influences govern him, he is guided by principle. He keeps on seeking first God's kingdom and lets its interests dominate his life, his family affairs, his secular occupation and his recreation. He keeps everything in its place; he does not let his secular work run away with him, nor does he let his recreation become a dominating hobby. He is not so busy preaching to others that he neglects either himself or his family. The mature person has godly devotion with self-sufficiency and thinks of others and not just of himself. By this criterion, are you mature? No doubt you are mature in some respects though not in others. Seek diligently to acquire the maturity you lack.—1 Tim. 6:6; 1 Pet. 1:13.

AIDS TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

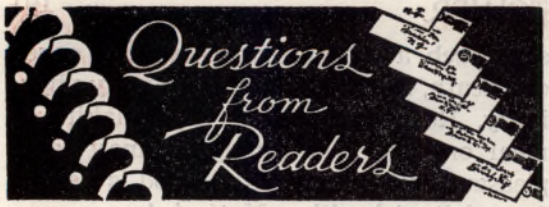
The most important single factor in attaining as well as maintaining spiritual maturity is depth of devotion. To the degree that our devotion is truly deep we will avail ourselves of the various aids that God has provided to help us to come to maturity: his Word, his visible organization, his holy spirit or active force and prayer. In other words, we will ever be keenly conscious of our spiritual need. —Matt. 5:3.

Among the very first essentials to gaining spiritual maturity is spiritual food, and that means studying the Bible and such aids as God has provided to enable us to understand it properly. There is so much to read and so much to study, there are so many meetings for which to prepare and to attend, that we have no time or energy for valueless things. Reading higher criticism is like nibbling at poison. Such a morbid curiosity may cause our death, spiritually and eventually physically. Reading novels is like making a meal on pastry or candy. It may taste pleasant, but good spiritual food is needed for spiritual health.—Matt. 4:4.

Association with God's organized people is also imperative for spiritual maturity and that for several reasons. God's organization furnishes us with spiritual food without which we could not mature spiritually. It also supplies us with loving care and affection as a mother, which we as Christians need to thrive, and this it does by means of various congregational meetings and large assemblies. It furnishes us opportunities for spiritual exercise, the preaching of the good news of God's kingdom as well as training us for this activity. Here in particular we show that we are mature Christians. The mature Christian is able to "stand firm," fully clothed in the armor of God and skilled in wielding the sword of the spirit, God's Word. He heeds the apostle's command: "Preach the word, be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season." —Eph. 6:14-17; 2 Tim. 4:2.

And finally, for spiritual maturity we need both God's spirit and to keep in touch with God through prayer, the two being related. We obtain God's spirit by study of his Word, association with his organization, activity in his service and by asking him for it in prayer. As for prayer, it keeps us in touch with God, cleanses us from a sense of guilt, and gives us comfort and hope.

It should not be overlooked that spiritual maturity can be lost if we do not continue in spiritual growth. To maintain our spiritual maturity we must continue faithfully to use all the aids that God has provided and that enabled us to attain to spiritual maturity in the first place.



● How can we explain the scripture at Isaiah 29:4?—P. M., U.S.A.

Isaiah 29:4 reads: "And you must become low so that you will speak from the very earth, and as from the dust your saying will sound low. And like a spirit medium your voice must become even from the earth, and from the dust your own saying will chirp."

The opening verse of Isaiah 29 shows that these words are addressed to Ariel, concerning which the footnote of the *New World Translation* states: "'Ariel.' Meaning, perhaps, 'the altar hearth of God'; or, 'the lion of God.' Designating Jerusalem here." This prophecy would therefore apply to spiritual Jerusalem as represented upon earth by the remnant.

These words show that God's earthly organization would come under attack and would be reduced to a very low state by the enemies of God's kingdom. God's people would be, as it were, crushed to the earth, at the time of Gog's attack upon them, so that what utterance they made, what vocal sounds they made, would come up from low down in their abasement. It would be sound coming up from the very dust of the earth. It would be as if a spirit medium were talking with the vocal sound coming from the dust of the earth. However, the next verses show that God would turn his attention to his faithful people who had been brought so low and he would work miracles on their behalf to deliver them from the power of the enemy so that their enemies and oppressors would become like dust and chaff that are quickly blown away by a violent windstorm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

Servants of God copy his Son and their Master in the way they perform their ministry. They employ the Master's manner of teaching. During March Jehovah's witnesses will continue to do that as they present a year's subscription for this journal, *The Watchtower*, and three booklets on a contribution of $1.

LORD'S EVENING MEAL

"This do in remembrance of me," said Jesus as he introduced the Memorial of his death, replacing the annual observance of the Passover. This year the date for the observance is Thursday, March 30, after 6 p.m., standard time. All of Jehovah's witnesses, both those of the anointed remnant and the other sheep, will assemble at their meeting places to hear a discourse on the subject, after which the emblems, the bread and the wine, will be passed separately after Jehovah's blessing has been asked upon each. In conclusion all will be invited to share in the field service. All persons of good will are invited and encouraged to attend. If you do not know where the nearest Kingdom Hall is located, write this office for information.

MAN'S PERMANENT HOME—WHERE?

Life savings are often spent to provide a comfortable and attractive home for retirement and old age, even though in time it must be passed on to others. Would it mean something to you to know that God himself is now making available a *permanent* home for man? —not in another world but here on earth, a home that need never be forfeited through death! It is a provision that God promised almost six thousand years ago when *man's* only home was a paradise. To learn why it has waited until our generation to be realized, read the fascinating 256-page book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained*. Send only 75c.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

April 23: Parents, Do You Train Your Children? Page 172.

April 30: Parents, Safeguard Your Child's Life with Accurate Knowledge. Page 178.