The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

MAY 1, 1965
Semimonthly

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

MATURE MINISTERS CAN AID OTHERS

CHEER AMID WORLD FEAR

WHY NO COLLECTIONS?

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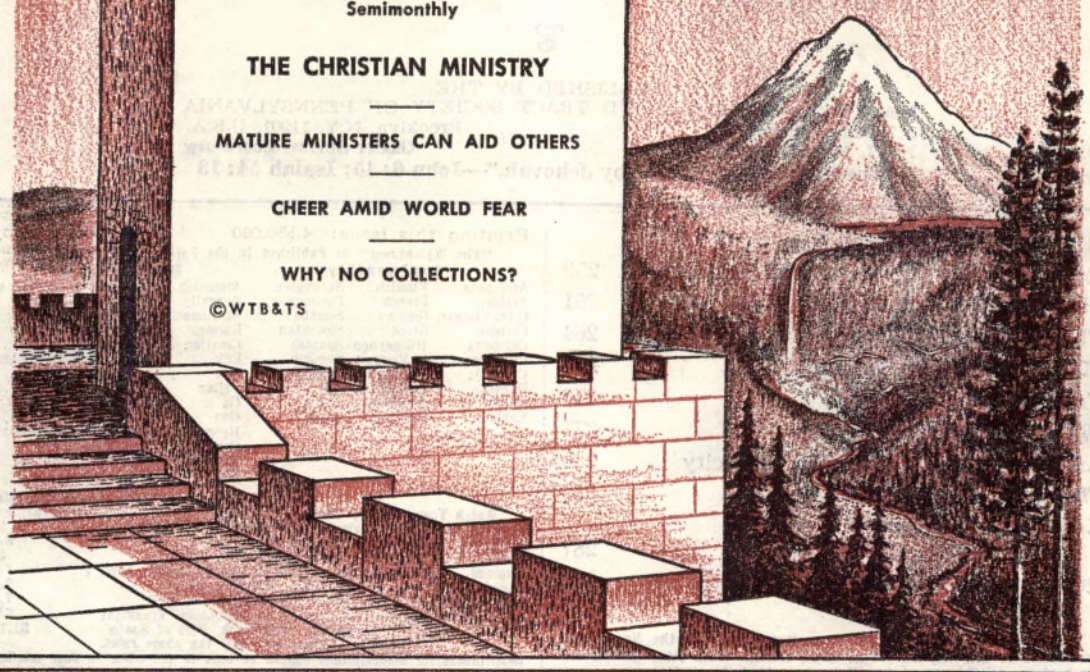

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

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

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DO YOU GET Angry OVER SMALL THINGS?

A MAGAZINE editor hurrying along a busy French street with a suitcase in his hand passed close to a shiny sports car. Suddenly, to his surprise, a man leaped out of the car accusing him of having scratched it with the suitcase. Seething with anger, the man struck the editor such a severe blow that he never regained consciousness. Is a scratch on a car worth a man's life? The answer is obvious; yet in a state of uncontrolled anger that might be the price you could cause someone to pay for something just as small as a scratch.

We live in a high-speed age that is filled with tensions and pressures that make people edgy. Small things can be so annoying that they cause tense persons to explode with anger, saying things they later regret or doing things for which they later have remorse. A thoughtless remark, an unintentional bump or an irritating discourtesy is a small thing, but over such small things a person can become violently angry if he fails to exercise self-control.

There are many small annoyances that have to be expected in a city, such as jostling on busy sidewalks and in crowded stores, someone talking a long time on a public phone when you want to use it, a car driver cutting in front of you in traffic, someone bumping your car from behind or impatiently honking his car horn, and so forth. If you permit such things to irritate you, your temper can soar quickly to the explosion point, and you will try to injure the other person by words or deeds. It is better to learn how to live with other people in a community than to let the things they may do cause your anger to boil up. In a state of anger you can lose control of yourself and do something that you would regret the rest of your life.

Whether on city streets or at home or among friends and business associates, you show wisdom if you learn to ignore small things that could be annoying if you would let them. Why lose friends, sour your relations with fellow workers or businessmen and ruin your marriage by getting angry over unimportant things they do? If your wife puts a wrinkle in the fender of the family car, burns the toast, squeezes the toothpaste tube in the center instead of at the bottom or does some other thing that irritates you, you would be wise to exercise self-control and not say the first thing that comes to your lips. A blistering remark can easily start a heated argument that might chill your marital relationship. A wife also would do well to exercise self-control and not permit anger to rise up over small things her husband does that annoy her. There have been people who

have filed for divorce because of angry disputes over such small things as burnt toast and choice of television programs. Are these things more important than a marriage?

Injury can be done to a child when a father or a mother fails to control anger over small things the child might do that are irritating. A stepfather in New York city who worked at night was kept awake by a mischievous boy of two and a half years. In a blinding rage he vented his anger on the child, beating him to death. In another American city, a 22-month-old boy had to be taken to a hospital on four separate occasions because of having been beaten by his short-tempered mother. A long list could be given of shocking cases of mistreatment of small children by parents. It is so common in this age of high tensions that doctors have become gravely concerned.

Small annoyances are not so important that a person should injure his children, ruin his marriage, lose his friends or even endanger the lives of other people. They are not worthy of a second thought. By one's thinking about them, they become magnified, causing anger to build up until it explodes into injurious action. There are more important things in life to think about.

There is wisdom in the proverb that says: "He that is slow to anger is better than a mighty man, and he that is controlling his spirit than the one capturing a city." (Prov. 16:32) This statement in God's Word lays out a very important fact of life. In order to live harmoniously with other people in a community you must overlook their thoughtless actions and habits. No one is perfect. People are certain to do things that can be annoying, especially when you are in an unpleasant mood. Nothing is gained by reacting angrily. You are the loser. On the other hand, if you exercise self-control, being slow to anger, you gain much. You will have learned what is an important factor in maintaining good relations with others, holding on to friends, gaining the respect of your employer and earning the love of your wife and children. When coupled with other wholesome virtues, self-control can make you an asset to a business and a community.

Being slow to anger over small things as well as over big things is expected of Christians. When they follow the pattern set by Jesus Christ, they make personality changes that cause them to be markedly different from people of the world. Addressing them, the Bible says: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all injuriousness. But become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you." (Eph. 4:31, 32) Anger, wrath, screaming and abusive speech have no place in the temperament of a Christian. However, such things are common with people not living by Christian principles. That is why such people have so much difficulty getting along with others and are often guilty of violent acts.

Instead of flaring up in heated anger over small things that other people do, follow the Bible's good instructions by being kind, "tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another." Is it not better to forgive a person who accidentally scratches a fender of your car or cuts in front of you in traffic than to punch him into unconsciousness and possibly take his life? Is it not better to forgive the person who thoughtlessly bumps you on a sidewalk or stands in your way than to spew out an ear-searing stream of invectives? Certainly it manifests wisdom on your part not to let small things irritate you.

Cheer AMID WORLD FEAR

Why is there increasing world fear? How can we face the future with cheer?

THE world is living on a diet of fear. The news media, with emphasis on sensationalized crime and catastrophe, daily build up the sense of foreboding. Threats, real and imagined, hang over the heads of the people, whether we view them individually, nationally or internationally. Add to this the dread of a hot atomic war, the breakdown of faith and good morals, the increase of suspicion and intolerance that now characterize human relationships, and you see a world of humans who live and work and play and sleep through a constant nightmare.

By reason of scientific "breakthroughs" mankind has come to learn a little more about the vast reaches of space that surround his global home. Instead of this resulting in greater comfort and satisfaction of mind, the additional information at times serves to render man more fearful, more disturbed about the future, more anxious about its horrendous possibilities. Instead of the sun being just a benign, life-giving agent for man's blessing, to many it has become a potential menace to all life on this planet as they learn of the mighty flares of energy it shoots out hundreds of thousands of miles into surrounding space, greatly intensifying the constant, mysterious rain of cosmic particles that disrupt earth's communications, and that are even said to have damaging effects on the human mind. Some scientists forecast a future intensification of solar flares to the point where they are likely to envelop the entire planetary system of our sun and burn everything to a cinder.

Now, too, man has succeeded in sending his space vehicles around and onto the moon, even obtaining remarkable close-up photographs of the lunar surface. The thrill of such scientific achievement, however, is not without widespread feeling of uneasiness, for it is well known that both of the great blocs of nations now confronting each other in cold-war array are planning to be the first to plant a military mission on the moon and use it to scrutinize the installations and movements of the enemy. So the moon is no longer just a gently beaming light for the night sky. It has become a cause for deepening anxiety. And what may yet be discovered, as man turns his attention to nearby planets, is likewise certain to promote the dread feeling of insecurity and uncertainty.

Even the mighty seas that God provided as an undepletable reservoir for the operation of the great cycle of life-giving refreshment described at Isaiah 55:10 have come to be viewed as unpredictable and violent enemies of man. Has he not felt their crushing blows as mighty waves have crashed in far beyond the normal coastlines, lashed into fury by earthquakes and hurricanes? Earth's population explosion plus the great speedup in communications have brought this threat of the sea into immediate focus. Scientists have pointed out that the level of the oceans needs only to be raised by a few feet and scores of

metropolitan areas around the world would be inundated, with tremendous damage to property and loss of life. This, men know, could result from higher tides due to some slight alteration in the relative positions of the moon and our earth. A literal shaking of these heavenly bodies could swiftly produce effects that man would be unable to cope with or control.

WORLD FEAR FORETOLD

Nineteen hundred years ago Christ Jesus foresaw this fear-gripped generation, and pointed to the immediate cause: "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and its agitation, while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." (Luke 21:25, 26) Already mental pain and the fainting sense of helplessness have taken hold of mankind as they face a bleak and purposeless future. What the next few years may produce in the way of fearsome developments is a subject the contemplation of which could well push humankind closer to panic. "The sea and its agitation" may yet take on more vital meaning as we move farther into this atomic age and men vainly strive to find the way out of an era of stark fear. The signs in the skies above and the developments on the surface of the earth are such as to terrify men who are without God and without hope.

Not to be overlooked is the far deeper cause for the troubles and fears that afflict this generation, a cause that only God's Word, the Bible, reveals. Whether men admit it or not they are subject to a baleful, invisible power that has been exerting unprecedented influence over humans particularly since shortly after the year 1914. That year, according to Bible prophecy, marked the end of uninterrupted rule of mankind by godless national or imperial rulerships, as well as the time for Christ's kingdom in the heavens to go into operation. According to the inspired vision of the apostle John, that year saw a great battle in heaven between the righteous angelic forces under Christ and the wicked demonic forces under Satan the Devil. The result, as described by John, was: "So down the great dragon was hurled, the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth; he was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were hurled down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven say: '. . . Woe for the earth and the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time.' "—Rev. 12:9, 10, 12.

No wonder man is unable to allay the fears that dominate his life today! How can he hope to match his wits successfully against those of a cunning, invisible enemy who is bent on turning all mankind against God through pressure of threats and sufferings? (Job 1:9-11) Without God's help man is completely at the mercy of the "god of this system of things."

God has not forsaken man, however, even though men have ignored him. He has called attention to the significance of these times of fear in his Word, the Bible. Additionally, he sends forth witnesses throughout the whole earth with a message explaining these fearful conditions of today, and pointing to these very conditions as the evidences that soon now the rule of fear and wickedness will end, making way for a reign of peace and righteousness by Christ's kingdom. Rulers and peoples of this selfish system of things can see these evidences pointed to by Jehovah's witnesses, but they do not perceive or understand, for their hearts are loaded down with selfish thoughts and hopes. (Matt. 13:22) So

in this sense we must understand Jesus' forecast: "And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud [invisibly] with power and great glory." (Luke 21:27) They have been told about it, they have seen the evidences with their literal eyes, but they still do not believe. They walk on in anguish and fear.

HOW TO GAIN CHEER

However, you do not need to go on walking with them in the way of death-dealing fear. You can, in fact, enjoy cheer amid this world's fear. This you can achieve by walking with those to whom Jesus addresses this word of comfort: "But as these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) Do you not note that Jehovah's faithful worshipers, his witnesses, are not depressed by the fears that crush humankind in general? Rather, they are pleasantly and hopefully going about the work of preaching the good news of the Kingdom as the hope for all mankind. Having come to know Jehovah as their God and Christ Jesus as their Leader and Commander, and having dedicated their lives to the loving Creator, they have willingly accepted and applied the counsel from the Holy Scriptures: "The object of their fear you men must not fear, nor must you tremble at it. Jehovah of armies—he is the One whom you should treat as holy, and he should be the object of your fear, and he should be the One causing you to tremble."—Isa. 8:12, 13.

To God's servants, then, the swiftly mounting troubles and causes for fear are evidences that soon now their work of proclaiming the Kingdom amid a fear-riddled generation will have been completed, and the time for deliverance from the persecutions and galling restrictions of this world's rulers will have arrived. No longer do they hang their heads or bow down as though in servitude to the ruler of this system of things who can guarantee only toil, tears, trepidation and the tomb. They know that soon that wicked ruler will be abyssed in deathlike inaction for a thousand years. Their strong hope moves them to greater and greater activity as they boldly proclaim around the whole earth the good news of the victorious kingdom under Christ.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Settling Difficulties in Christian Love.
- Love Gives No Cause for Stumbling.
- A Notable Generation.
- Would You Avoid Dishonor? Avoid Presumptuousness.

If you will walk with this happy people, you also will be able to shed the suffocating burden of fear. Taking in knowledge of God and of Christ is the first step, for Jesus in prayer declared: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) You must then conquer this world by separating yourself from it and dedicating your life unconditionally to God for the accomplishment of his will. Thereafter you must strive to carry out that dedication as long as you have life and breath. For your encouragement the Lord Jesus has said: "In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world." (John 16:33) Having himself conquered the world, he stands ready and willing to come to the help of each one who faithfully strives to follow his steps closely. With confidence, therefore, step out and associate with Jehovah's people and, with them, find cheer amid world fear.

The Christian Ministry

WHEN the first-century people of Galilee heard a thirty-year-old man preaching in their territory, they were so impressed by what he said that "good talk concerning him spread out through all the surrounding country." (Luke 4:14) Never had there been a man among them that spoke with such wisdom and authority. His preaching had begun shortly after his baptism in the Jordan River, at which time God's spirit had come upon him. The preaching that Jesus Christ began at that time was the beginning of something distinctly new in the long history of the Hebrew people.

[2] During the days of the Hebrew prophets that ended with Malachi, there was no attempt to establish a growing body of preachers that would proclaim Jehovah's purposes and teach the people Scriptural truths. God sent prophets primarily as agents of reformation, not as teachers. Their task was to turn the people back to true worship and to warn of what God would do to them if they persisted in their course of disobedience. For this the prophets were individually inspired by God. No attempt was made by them to assemble a body of preachers. The association called the "sons of the prophets" was an association of prophets who already had Jehovah's spirit. They were not the product of preaching.

"Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations." —Matt. 28:19.

1. (a) What impressed the people of Galilee in the first century? (b) When did Jesus' ministry begin?
2. What was the task of the Hebrew prophets?

But those who followed Jesus Christ were.

[3] Unlike the prophets, Jesus preached with the purpose of gathering a people together who would be preachers. This was something decidedly new. It was his purpose that they would, in due time, form an organization of devoted worshipers of Jehovah who would "worship with spirit and truth" and would preach. (John 4:24) So with the preaching begun by Jesus in Judea and Galilee, the Christian ministry was established.

[4] Very early in his ministry Jesus began selecting those who would become his apostles. Eleven of them were Galileans, but the twelfth, the one that eventually proved unfaithful, was apparently a Judean. What he had in mind for them was revealed when he chose the first two who already were among those who had become his disciples. "Walking alongside the sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, letting down a fishing net into the sea, for they were fishers. And he said to them: 'Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.' " (Matt. 4:18, 19) He planned to train them as ministers so they could find persons who loved righteousness and bring them into association with him.

MINISTERS SENT OUT

[5] Since the purpose of the Christian ministry was very different from that of the preaching that was done by the Hebrew prophets, a great many preachers were needed. A teaching work had to be done in order to bring together interested persons. God's Word would draw them into the new system of things. Through Jesus Christ, God had purposed to replace the old Jewish system of things that had begun with Moses with a new system of things. This new system would be much superior to the old one as it would bring eternal life to those brought into it. Comparing the gathering of people into the new system of things with a farmer's harvest, Jesus said: "Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Matt. 9:37, 38) This he did by prospering the Christian ministry in that first century.

[6] After a period of training, Jesus sent out his twelve apostles to preach. "These twelve Jesus sent forth, giving them these orders: 'Do not go off into the road of the nations, and do not enter into a Samaritan city; but, instead, go continually to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, preach, saying, "The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." Cure sick people, raise up dead persons, make lepers clean, expel demons. You received free, give free.' " (Matt. 10:5-8) They were to confine their preaching to the natural Jewish descendants of Abraham. At a later time it would be expanded to the nations, or non-Jewish peoples. Being the covenant people of God, the Jews were to be the first to receive the opportunity to make up the Christian congregation whose members would ultimately be privileged to be priests to God and to "rule as kings over the earth."—Rev. 5:10.

[7] The message the apostles were instructed to preach was an upbuilding one regarding Jehovah's kingdom. For a long time a kingdom of God's making had been anticipated by the Israelites. The prophet Daniel had spoken of it more than five hundred years before Jesus began his ministry. When Jesus and his apostles announced

3. How was the purpose of Jesus' preaching a new thing for the Hebrews?
4. How did Jesus reveal what he had in mind for his followers to do, and what was that work?
5. Explain why the Christian ministry needed many preachers in the first century.
6. What ministerial instructions did Jesus give his apostles, and to whom were they to confine their preaching then?
7. (a) Why was the message the apostles were told to preach good news? (b) Explain why they could say that the kingdom had drawn near.

that it had drawn near, that was good news. Jesus was its King. An angel had identified him as the king before he was born. To Mary the angel said: "He will rule as king over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end of his kingdom." (Luke 1:33) Since he was the King of God's kingdom, his presence brought the kingdom closer to reality than it had ever been before. Because it was represented in him, its head, the apostles could joyfully announce the good news that the kingdom had drawn near.—Dan. 2:44.

[8] As evidence that God's spirit was upon the apostles and that they were indeed proclaiming things God wanted the Jews to know, they were given the power to perform miracles of healing and of raising dead persons. Although the common people for the most part heard Jesus and his apostles gladly, recognizing that they were servants of God, many of the religious leaders stubbornly refused to recognize their authority to preach despite their miracles. (Mark 12:37) On one occasion these leaders said to Jesus: "By what authority do you do these things? And who gave you this authority?" (Matt. 21:23) Jesus had shown who had given him this authority when he had read publicly from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth. Reading from Isaiah 61:1, 2, he said:

[9] "Jehovah's spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to the poor, he sent me forth to preach a release to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed ones away with a release, to preach Jehovah's acceptable year." When he had finished reading this, he said to the people: "Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled." (Luke 4:18-21) In this way Jesus revealed Jehovah God as the One who had authorized his preaching. That was much higher than any authorization that might be granted by human religious leaders. With his commission coming from God, Jesus did not have to be a graduate from one of the rabbinical schools of higher learning or have his ministry authorized by high priest Caiaphas or by another member of the Sanhedrin. As he could point to Jehovah God as the One who gave him the authority to preach, so could his apostles.

[10] After the apostles had begun to engage in the Christian ministry Jesus sent out seventy more followers as preachers. By doing this Jesus showed that he intended his commands to preach to apply to more than just the twelve apostles. "After these things the Lord designated seventy others and sent them forth by twos in advance of him into every city and place to which he himself was going to come." He told them: "Go on telling them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' " (Luke 10:1, 9) Like the apostles, they carried their message to the people, rather than waiting for the people to come to them. By training and sending out these eighty-two persons, Jesus had begun to expand the Christian ministry.

RAPID GROWTH

[11] With the outpouring of the holy spirit at Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus was resurrected from the dead, Christianity began to have an explosive growth. On that day alone 3,000 persons became disciples. During the days following Pentecost the number of believers increased daily. Unlike those who responded to the preaching done before Jesus died, these were formed into an organization that was distinctly sepa-

8, 9. (a) What evidence did Jesus and his apostles give to prove that they were true representatives of Jehovah? (b) How did Jesus show who authorized his ministry, and what does this reveal regarding religious leaders?

10. What is indicated by Jesus' sending out seventy more followers to preach?

11. (a) What began happening to Christianity at Pentecost? (b) Why was a Christian organization not possible before Pentecost?

rate from the Jewish religious system of things. This was not possible before Jesus died because the law covenant was still valid, and Jesus could not properly establish an organization that would compete with that which existed under the Law. After his death had fulfilled the purpose of the Law, bringing it to an end, the time had arrived for forming the Christian organization. It began with 120 persons, all Jews, at Pentecost, with the apostles being the governing body.

12 The rapid growth of this new organization was due to the fact that all who became Christians participated in the Christian ministry and God's blessing was upon their preaching efforts. "At the same time Jehovah continued to join to them daily those being saved." (Acts 2:47) When these new followers of Jesus Christ returned to their home countries after Pentecost, they did not remain silent about what they had learned. Like the eighty-two persons Jesus had sent out to preach, they too engaged in the Christian ministry. They let the light of truth shine out just as Jesus had instructed. "People light a lamp and set it, not under the measuring basket, but upon the lampstand, and it shines upon all those in the house. Likewise let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens."—Matt. 5:15, 16.

13 The stoning to death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, ignited a wave of persecution that lashed against the infant Christian organization and caused its members to be scattered. This served to spread the Christian faith and to increase their numbers. All of them kept preaching wherever they went. "However, those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word." (Acts 8:4) Some of these followers of Christ reached Syrian Antioch, where they preached to the Jews and formed a congregation. "Consequently those who had been scattered by the tribulation that arose over Stephen went through as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, but speaking the word to no one except to Jews only."—Acts 11:19.

14 Among those who were scattered after Stephen's death some preached to Greek-speaking Jews and proselytes. "However, out of them there were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene that came to Antioch and began talking to the Greek-speaking people, declaring the good news of the Lord Jesus. Furthermore, the hand of Jehovah was with them, and a great number that became believers turned to the Lord." (Acts 11:20, 21) Significantly, after Barnabas and Saul of Tarsus taught there, Antioch became the central point from which Christianity expanded among the non-Jewish nations. It was here also that Christ's followers were first called Christians.

15 The conversion of Saul of Tarsus was an important factor in the rapid expansion of Christianity. When he was converted, he realized that the Christian ministry was an obligation that accompanied acceptance of the Christian faith, and he did not hold back from engaging in it. There is no indication that he regarded the ministry as the exclusive right of a few religious leaders. After spending a little time with the disciples in Damascus, probably for instruction, he plunged into the ministry with exemplary zeal. The preaching he began there in Damascus, while he was still in what appears to have been his thirties, was the start of a long

12. What accounts for the rapid growth of the Christian organization?

13, 14. (a) Explain how persecution helped in the spreading of Christianity. (b) How did the city of Antioch in Syria figure into the events?

15. How did Saul of Tarsus regard the ministry when he became a Christian, and how did he *manifest his* devotion to it?

career of zealous activity in the Christian ministry, a career that lasted for about thirty years. During that time he let the light of truth shine wherever he traveled. The record of his career shows him to have been a very fruitful minister.

16 Whenever Paul entered new territory, he made it a practice to concentrate his preaching in towns that were commercial centers. Ephesus, Thessalonica and Corinth were such places. They were centers to which people in the vicinity came to do business and through which trade routes passed to distant places. Ephesus, for example, was on the imperial highway from Rome to the East, and Corinth was located on an isthmus where ships unloaded their cargo to be transported to other parts of Greece. This was a safer practice than risking a voyage around the storm-lashed capes at the southern tip of Achaia. Such places were ideal for Christianity to establish a foothold in new territory. The Jews and non-Jews in these places who became Christians carried the truth to neighboring cities, to the hinterland and to distant places on the trade routes.

MINISTRY NOT LIMITED

17 The rapid spreading of Christianity showed the wisdom of Jesus' arrangement for having all believers preach. In a short time Christians could be found all over the vast Roman Empire. The Christian writer Tertullian revealed this when arguing with the pagans of his day. He wrote: "Men proclaim aloud that the state is beset with us; in countryside, in villages, in islands, Christians; every sex, age, condition, yes! and rank going over to his name. . . . We are but of yesterday, and we have filled everything you have—cities, islands, forts, towns, exchanges." That all of them participated in the ministry is indicated by what was written by the pagan writer Celsus. He mocked Christianity because, according to the historian Augustus Neander, "labourers, shoemakers, farmers, the most uninformed and clownish of men, should be zealous preachers of the Gospel."

18 All who exercised faith took seriously what Jesus said about confessing union with him. "I say, then, to you, Everyone that confesses union with me before men, the Son of man will also confess union with him before the angels of God." (Luke 12:8) To be in union with him a person had to believe the truths Jesus taught and had to follow his example of preaching those truths to others. The person who was unwilling to show by activity in the ministry that he was united with Christ in beliefs and purposes showed a lack of love for him. Why should he acknowledge that person before God and the angels as being a member of his body, his congregation?

19 After Jesus' resurrection and before his ascension, he gave a command to his eleven faithful apostles that was not limited to them alone. It applies to all Christians. He said: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19, 20) This the apostles and all who became followers of Jesus during the lifetime of the apostles did. They rejoiced in every opportunity to make disciples whom they could train to teach others.

20 Some time after the death of the apostles and those who had been close to them, the professed Christians of that time began to become apostate. Ecclesiastical orders

16. Explain the procedure Paul followed when preaching in new territory and why it was effective.
17. What evidence do we find in the first century that Jesus' arrangement for making all believers preachers was a wise one?

18, 19. (a) How did the early Christians take what Jesus said about confessing union with him, and what did he mean by this expression? (b) What other command did Jesus give regarding the ministry, and to whom does it apply?
20. Explain how preaching became a rare thing among professed Christians.

were established, and preaching ceased to be the activity of all who professed the Christian faith; it became the exclusive prerogative of a clergy class. Note what the Bible encyclopedia by M'Clintock and Strong says about this: "When ritual ceremonies came to supersede not only the practice, but the very idea of evangelization, it is not surprising that preaching itself became a ceremony, and at length a rare and infrequent ceremony. Not merely laymen, but even presbyters of the Church were inhibited from preaching, except by special permission of bishops; while many of the bishops, who had arrogated to themselves the exclusive right of preaching, either through ignorance or indolence practically abandoned the custom." The custom today for a clergy class to do the preaching and for the common people to remain silent comes from these apostates rather than from Jesus Christ.—Acts 20: 29, 30.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY TODAY

[21] Although we are removed from Jesus' day by more than 1900 years, the Scriptural commands for Christians to preach have not been changed. They are still binding. Being a Christian still means letting the light of Scriptural truth shine out for the benefit of others. The need for the Christian ministry is just as great today as it was in the first century despite the fact that about 30 percent of the world's population professes to be Christian. The unchristian actions of the greater number of these professed followers of Christ reveal that true Christianity has not touched their hearts. As with ancient Israel, God can say of them: "This people have come near with their mouth, and they have glorified me merely with their lips, and they have removed their heart itself far away from me."—Isa. 29:13.

21, 22. Why is it still necessary for Christians to engage in the ministry?

[22] The professed Christians of Christendom need to be taught the basic truths of the Scriptures. They need to be told the good news of God's kingdom; they need a hope created in them for world peace and just rule by means of the kingdom of God. They are like the unfruitful Israelites who suffered from a spiritual famine. Although they profess to be Christians, they are in need of true Christians coming to them with nourishing spiritual truths. There are such Christians today who are doing that very thing.—Amos 8:11.

[23] Realization of the responsibility that rests upon every Christian to engage in the Christian ministry spurs Jehovah's witnesses to teach the truths of Christianity "publicly and from house to house" as the apostles did. (Acts 20:20) In 194 lands they are following the example of Jesus by going among the people and preaching to them wherever they can be found. Like the early Christians, they train those who respond to the good news of the Kingdom to teach still others. Thus all who come within the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses are encouraged to participate in the Christian ministry. It matters not if a person can spend only a few hours a month in the ministry. He can still obey Jesus' command to preach. These modern-day Christians take to heart what the apostle Paul said: "For with the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation."—Rom. 10:10; 2 Tim. 2:2.

[24] Many professed Christians react unfavorably to the contention made by Jehovah's witnesses that the Christian ministry is for all Christians. They are content with a clublike arrangement in which a clergyman preaches to them, and they remain

23. Who today realize what a Christian's responsibility is, and how are they like the early Christians?
24. How does the preaching by Jesus and his apostles compare with that done by the clergy today?

spiritually inactive. That is not what Christ purposed for his followers. That is not the Christian ministry. He did not confine his preaching to just his apostles, with their doing nothing but listening. Unlike the pagan teachers of Egypt and Greece who had their groves and porticoes where they spoke to sympathetic listeners, Jesus spoke in public places to people who were not all followers of him. Some were hostile. Later, when congregations were formed, the apostles did not attach themselves to various congregations and confine their ministry to those gatherings of believers. They continued to preach to people outside the Christian organization, setting an example for all who became dedicated Christians. They provided good leadership that helped to maintain the spiritual vitality and health of the various congregations. This pattern of upbuilding Christian activity is just as necessary today as it was in the first century.

[25] The Christian ministry that Jesus began has been revived by Jehovah's witnesses. People of all races and nationalities are being given the opportunity to learn of the marvelous things Jehovah has purposed for mankind. Because all in the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses are urged to engage in the ministry and because this arrangement has God's blessing, a great crowd of people is being brought into Jehovah's organization. These people of good heart recognize the Christian ministry as their responsibility and as a divinely provided means for keeping spiritually alive. They know that it is vital for their salvation as well as for those to whom they preach. By means of it they praise God through Christ. "Through him let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name."—Heb. 13:15; Matt. 24:14.

25. (a) Why can it be said that the Christian ministry in the form that Jesus began it has not passed away? (b) What is the fruitage of the ministry today?

MATURE MINISTERS CAN AID OTHERS

"Feed my lambs. . . . Shepherd my little sheep."
—John 21:15,16.

IN THE suffering that Jesus Christ endured because of keeping integrity to God and in the keen interest he manifested with regard to making known his Father's purposes, he set a fine example for all who would become his followers. They could safely model their lives after his, because he did what was right in the eyes of God. In the third year of Jesus' ministry, Jehovah voiced his approval of him by saying

1. Why is Jesus an example we can safely follow?

within the hearing of Peter, James and John: "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved; listen to him." (Matt. 17:5) They did listen to him, and they followed his instructions to let the light of *truth* shine out for the benefit of others. About thirty years later Peter wrote a letter in which he encouraged all Christians to follow Jesus' leadership as they had. "In fact, to this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely."—1 Pet. 2:21.

[2] By engaging in the Christian ministry and by aiding his disciples to engage in it, Jesus demonstrated what he told them about letting their light shine. He made it evident that everyone who would become his follower must take up the Christian ministry. They must follow his example by preaching the good news of God's kingdom. To fail in this would mean to fall short of being a Christian. It would be doing what Jesus said not to do—covering over a light with a basket. Because the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses recognizes this obligation as resting upon Christians, it strives to help all who come within it to preach. This requires its mature ministers to follow Jesus' example of aiding others to become profitable servants of God.—Matt. 5:14-16.

[3] When Jesus stood on the shore of the sea of Tiberias after his resurrection, he gave a solemn command to Peter that applies to all spiritual shepherds in Jehovah's organization. He said: "Feed my lambs. . . . *Shepherd* my little sheep." (John 21:15, 16; 1 Pet. 5:1-4) His sheep are the people of good heart condition toward Jehovah that respond to the preaching of Christian truths. As newly born lambs are weak and are in need of being regularly fed in order to grow strong, so spiritual lambs are weak in the faith. They are just newly associated with Jehovah's organization and need to be fed spiritually by those who are mature ministers in it. So his instruction to mature ministers is to "feed my lambs." They must help the lambs to grow in knowledge of God's Word of truth and to build a firm faith.

[4] Jesus also instructed mature ministers to "shepherd my little sheep." Shepherding means much more than feeding the sheep. It means to have charge over them, caring for their various needs, guarding them from danger, gathering them together and leading them in the way that is best for them. The responsibility of a mature minister in Jehovah's organization, therefore, does not end with his providing spiritual instruction for persons of good heart. He must be willing to guard them against loss of faith because of attacks by persons who hate the truth and because of the atheistic influence of the world. This he can do by preparing them in advance to anticipate such opposition and by supplying them with Scriptural arguments so *they can* make a defense before those who demand a reason for their hope. He will also gather these sheep into Jehovah's organization and will lead them into the Christian ministry. To others in Jehovah's organization that might become spiritually sick and tend to fall behind the advancing organization, he will also give whatever spiritual aid he can. In this way mature ministers can shepherd the sheep.—1 Pet. 3:15.

DESIRE FOR MATURITY

[5] All who come within Jehovah's theocratic organization should earnestly desire to attain spiritual maturity. They cannot always remain as spiritual babes. That would be dangerous as it would make them

2. (a) What did Jesus demonstrate by engaging in the ministry? (b) Why does the New World society help people to preach?

3, 4. Explain how Jesus' command to Peter at John 21:15, 16 applies to mature ministers today.

5. Why cannot a person remain as a spiritual baby?

constantly vulnerable to hardships and attacks by the wolves of the world. To endure severe trials they have to grow up to spiritual maturity and strength. The apostle Paul advised: "Stay awake, stand firm in the faith, carry on as men, grow mighty." (1 Cor. 16:13) A baby wants to sleep, not stay awake. How can a Christian receive God's approval if he is like a sleepy baby and is not awake to service privileges? How can he follow closely in Jesus' steps if he keeps crawling like a baby and makes no effort to learn how to walk like a mature man? How can he stand firm in the faith if he refuses to learn how to stand? How can he carry on as a spiritually mature man who is mighty in the faith when he makes no effort to grow out of spiritual babyhood? Mature ministers will strive to aid him, but, if he has no desire to grow to spiritual manhood, it is very unlikely that he will survive to see God's promised new order of things.

[6] Persons who strive diligently to achieve spiritual maturity are valuable additions to Jehovah's organization. They can be of real service to him. Mature Christians appreciate their responsibility to preach and to teach as Jesus did. No one needs to call on them at their homes to encourage them to participate in the ministry or to attend congregational meetings. They have the initiative, the inner drive, to do this without being prodded. Positions of responsibility are gladly accepted by them, and they are capable of caring for them. By their faithful and zealous service, they manifest their Christian love and their faith.—Jas. 2:17, 18.

HOW TO ATTAIN MATURITY

[7] Spiritual maturity is not something that comes automatically with dedication or with the reading of a few Bible-study aids. It comes with time, with continued study of the Scriptures and with experience in the ministry. When a person is a spiritual lamb or baby, he learns the elementary things of God's Word, the milk of the Word. To grow to maturity he must advance beyond the elementary things to the "deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10) This requires personal study in addition to study of the Scriptures with a group. Before attending a group study, he should read the portion that is due to be considered, underlining important points, looking up the scriptures cited and reading the verses surrounding them to get the setting clearly in mind. By contributing comments during the group study he helps to impress the information upon his own mind. Regular Bible study with a group and by himself at home contributes to his spiritual growth.

[8] What the person learns from his study of God's Word he must use in the Christian ministry. If a young lamb were to lie in the sheepfold all the time, eating but not exercising, it would become weak and sickly. Exercise is an important factor in its growth and health; the same is true with spiritual lambs. For their spiritual health and growth they need regular activity in the ministry. This also can be said of Christians who have been in the organization for some time but who are spiritually weak. It was with good reason that Paul wrote: "Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Stay by these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you." (1 Tim. 4:16) The Christian who does not pay constant attention to his teaching by engaging regularly in the Christian ministry cannot expect to be a fruitful minister, much less to have a firm footing on the

6. How are mature ministers of great value to Jehovah's organization?
7. What relationship does study have with spiritual maturity?
8. Why is activity in the ministry an important factor in attaining maturity?

road to salvation. He becomes one who needs aid from a mature minister who does pay attention to the ministry.

[9] Splendid training is provided by the congregation, and it has a maturing influence on a person. The congregation's theocratic ministry school, for example, teaches him to study and to express himself coherently and convincingly. It trains him to be a flexible teacher, capable of teaching large groups of people as well as individuals. It tests his knowledge of Scriptural truths so he can see where he is weak and in need of further study. In this school mature ministers can be very helpful to weak ones who find student talks difficult by aiding them in preparing and delivering the talks.

[10] Whatever assignment a person may receive from the congregation, whether for the ministry school or for a service center or for a congregation meeting, he should accept it and do his best with it. Congregation assignments contribute to his spiritual growth and bring benefit to others. By means of them he is able to show love for his brothers and for Jehovah's organization. Willingness to accept them leads to greater privileges of service.

[11] The Christian who has attained spiritual maturity applies in his life the things that he learns from his study of God's Word. When confronted with a fleshly temptation that is regarded as unclean or immoral by Jehovah, the mature Christian will recall the instructions of the Scriptures: "Flee from fornication." (1 Cor. 6:18) "Flee from idolatry." (1 Cor. 10:14) "Flee from the desires incidental to youth." (2 Tim. 2:22) Do not "behave indecently." (1 Cor. 13:5) He will vigorously resist the temptation and fight to maintain moral cleanness. He can help others do the same by timely counsel. In his relationship with his brothers he will exercise the quality of love by being long-suffering and kind, not keeping account of injury. (1 Cor. 13:4, 5) He will not lie, steal or murder. (Prov. 14:5; Eph. 4:28; Ex. 20:13) The many things that mark the world as repulsive in the eyes of God he will cease to do. By applying in his life the things that he learns from God's Word he will be putting on a "new personality" that is "created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." (Eph. 4:22-24) He will be modeling his life after Christ's.

9, 10. How does the congregation have a maturing influence?

11. How does a Christian show spiritual maturity in his life?

HOW MATURE MINISTERS CAN AID OTHERS

[12] The success of any aid that a mature minister gives to others depends to a great extent upon how he gives that aid. Unless he shows patience and exercises love and kindness his assistance will not accomplish much. It might even stunt the other person's growth. Christian love is needed to help others. It is needed to do what Paul said: "Go on carrying the burdens of one another, and thus fulfill the law of the Christ." (Gal. 6:2) This does not mean to carry another person's load of responsibility to serve God or the burdens of his personal life. Those are things he must bear himself. But the mature Christian can lovingly help him with spiritual problems that are burdens for him.

[13] When giving aid to another person so that he might become stronger in the ministry, the mature minister must take into consideration his personal problems that could make it difficult for him to engage regularly in the ministry or to attend all meetings of the congregation. Perhaps he lives in a home where he is the only one who is striving to walk closely in Jesus' steps. If his mate opposes him, he has a

12. (a) What is needed for the aid a mature minister gives to others to be successful? (b) Explain how he bears the burdens of others.

13. What should be taken into consideration?

difficult burden to bear and needs understanding by the mature minister who is seeking to help him. Or he might have a job that requires him to work long hours or odd hours. It is not for the mature minister to tell him how to order his personal life so he can be more active in the ministry, although he can make tactful suggestions. The helpful minister can strive to build up his appreciation for the ministry and for the comforting truths we are privileged to bring to the people. He can give the weak one assistance whenever possible, and in time the person may become strong enough to resolve his personal problems so that fuller participation in theocratic activities will become possible.

[14] Friendly calls can be made at the home of the weak person with the purpose of encouraging him. The mature minister will defeat his purpose in calling if he proceeds to scold the weak one for missing meetings or for being irregular in the ministry. Instead, he should give him an upbuilding Scriptural discussion with the objective of strengthening his faith and appreciation for the truth. In the discussion he should stress the importance of personal study and regular Bible reading. These are big factors in building up appreciation. When it has been developed, the person will have the necessary inner drive that will move him to attend congregational meetings and to participate in the ministry regularly. He will not have to be reminded of these Christian necessities.

[15] The discussion could include a consideration of Galatians 6:9. The objective would be to impress upon the weak sheep the need to continue doing what he knows to be right in the eyes of God. The mature minister can help him to see that the promises Jehovah has made apply to those who do "not give up in doing what is fine." Those who "continue loving" Jehovah, as James 1:12 says, are the ones to whom he will ultimately give the promised gift of life. What is said at Hebrews 2:1; 3:14 and 10:25 would also be helpful.

[16] All mature ministers must realize that the initial vigor manifested by a person when he first begins to associate with Jehovah's organization will die unless personal assistance is given until he is well established in the truth. Aid must not stop when he makes a dedication to God and the minister ceases reporting any further time spent in teaching him. Until he has "a tight grip on the word of life," a home Bible study should continue to be held with him. (Phil. 2:16) This is the best way to help him grow to maturity. In the case where a mature minister is giving aid to a Christian who is weak because of spiritual sickness, he might find it advisable to consider reestablishing a home Bible study with him to help that person regain spiritual strength. But the circumstances would have to determine whether that would be the type of help needed.

TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY

[17] Unsteady lambs can easily fall if they are pushed, but if they are encouraged to follow, they can keep on their feet and gain strength. So too a spiritual lamb should not be pushed into the Christian ministry. It is a work that is to be done *voluntarily* as an expression of a right heart condition. The mature minister should aid him to appreciate what a grand privilege it is, helping him to realize the good he can do for others by engaging in it. He can aid him to see how it is an expression of neighbor love. He should point out how the Christian ministry is a means for bringing

14, 15. (a) What should be the purpose of friendly calls on spiritually weak persons, and what should they include? (b) Mention some things that could be used in a Scriptural discussion.

16. How long should aid be given to a new person in the New World society, and why that long?

17. (a) Why should a new person not be pushed into the ministry? (b) How can a mature minister aid a new one to appreciate the ministry?

praise to Jehovah God and for participating in the work Jehovah purposed to be done at this time. The need for such activity should be explained, pointing out how it benefits not only those who listen but also those who do the preaching. Some field experiences could be related from time to time—personal ones as well as some from the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*. The spiritual lamb will benefit from hearing how persons like himself in other parts of the world are successfully engaging in the ministry. So the ministry should not be viewed by the unsteady lamb as being impossible for him.

[18] After a time the mature minister can invite the new sheep to accompany him on a Bible study. He can encourage him to make comments by asking for his opinion on something about which the minister knows that he has previously expressed himself. After taking him on this study for a few times the mature minister can suggest, while on the way home, that they make a call on an interested person. By gradually increasing the number of such calls after a study, the new person becomes acquainted with the great importance of calling back on interested persons, and he sees firsthand how the ministry is benefiting others.

[19] After a time the person can be invited to go with the minister from door to door to observe how the ministry is carried on in that fashion. His being invited into the ministry should not be done until he has made progress in the truth and shows evidence that he is in full accord with the truths he has been learning. It would be improper to invite someone to engage in the Christian ministry who is not in harmony with what Jehovah's organization teaches. How could he be a representative of it? He must first learn and believe before he can preach. Jesus did not start in the ministry persons who were not in full harmony with his teachings.

[20] The mature minister should aid the new one to progress to the point of giving a sermon at the doors of other people. This can be done by helping him to prepare a short sermon and by rehearsing it with him until it is well in mind. As they preach from door to door, the mature minister can give kind counsel to the new one on the way he delivers the sermon. The most effective way to counsel is to mention only one weakness at a time and then demonstrate the counsel given. As the person makes progress, he can be encouraged to try giving the sermon at a door by himself. In this patient and loving manner persons can be taught to be more than silent worshipers of God. They can be aided to be public praisers of him and thus helped to walk closely in Jesus' steps.

ACCOMPLISHING THE PURPOSE OF THE MINISTRY

[21] The preaching being done worldwide by the thousands upon thousands of ministers in the New World society is accomplishing, in these last days, the purpose of the Christian ministry. Jehovah's name is being made known throughout the world; his judgments upon the present wicked system of things are being declared; the good news of the Kingdom is being proclaimed as a witness to the nations; people held captive to religious falsehoods are being released and their eyes opened wide to the revealing truths of God's Word; and multitudes are being gathered into Jehovah's theocratic organization. This grand work could not be done on such a scale if mature ministers did not unselfishly aid weak ones

18, 19. (a) Explain how a new person can be helped to get started in the ministry. (b) Why should a person not be invited into the ministry until he has made progress in his study of the truth?

20. Explain how help can be given to another person in delivering a sermon at the doors.

21. How is the preaching being done by Jehovah's witnesses accomplishing the purpose of the Christian ministry?

to grow to maturity. Aiding them is just as important in accomplishing the purpose of the ministry as is the bringing of new sheep into the fold.

[22] More and more mature ministers are needed to help the growing multitudes that are becoming part of the New World society. By all mature ministers aiding new and weak ones to maturity, the organization will have a steadily growing number of mature ministers capable of giving assistance to still others. In this manner it will be able to maintain a generally high level of maturity despite the continual influx of new people.

[23] To Jehovah's true worship these multitudes are now streaming from out of the nations, just as the prophet Isaiah foretold. (Isa. 2:2, 3) They are the good fruit of the Christian ministry. Associating with the anointed ones of Jesus' congregation, they are forming an immense flock of Christian sheep who are joyfully saying: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb." (Rev. 7:10) As they are trained in the ministry, they are turning to others and saying as Isaiah foretold: "Come, you people." With the help they receive from mature ministers they grow up to be strong and vigorous praisers of Jehovah God. By attaining maturity themselves, they are able to form the strong framework of new congregations and to fill responsible positions of oversight in Jehovah's organization. Here we see the good results that come from the aid that mature ministers give to others.

[24] All who are mature ministers in Jehovah's organization must carefully consider what they are doing to help others. Are some avoiding that responsibility and leaving it for a few to bear? By doing this are they not hindering rather than helping Jehovah's organization to fulfill the purpose of the ministry? Are they not failing to follow Jesus' steps closely? Each of these mature ministers has the responsibility not only of preaching but of aiding those who have responded to the Kingdom message. That is a vital part of the Christian ministry. Happy indeed are those mature ministers who recognize this and who humbly obey Jesus' command: "Feed my lambs. . . . Shepherd my little sheep."—John 21: 15, 16.

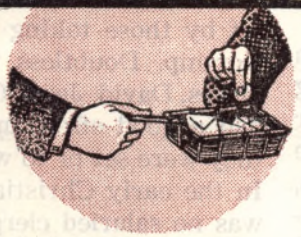
22, 23. (a) Why are more mature ministers needed in the New World society? (b) What are the results when mature ministers aid others?

24. What should every mature minister in the New World society consider?

Trained from Infancy

◆ A Brazilian witness of Jehovah who has ten children and whose husband is not a believer reports how her efforts to teach her children have been blessed: "Some of my children are zealous, being regular publishers, and others are very small; but even so I ask the blessing at mealtimes and consider the daily text with them. I also study with them every week. One of the greatest blessings that Jehovah has granted me is that my children already have the truth in their hearts. One day my husband took one of our daughters to the open market in the town of Cabo. At lunch time he decided to eat a delicacy, the well-known haggis, which is made of blood. The little girl who was with him is very bright and knows what haggis is, that it is made of blood. Do you know what happened? When her father gave her a plateful of haggis, the little girl said: 'Daddy, this food contains blood. I *can't* eat it, because Jehovah doesn't like people to eat blood.' The child is only four years old." Truly, such a mother trains her children 'according to the way for them.'—Prov. 22:6; Acts 15:20, 28, 29.

Why NO COLLECTIONS?



WHY no collections? That is a question that is frequently asked by persons visiting a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses for the first time. Typical is the incident that took place in a town in Nigeria, West Africa, within the past year. At the end of a meeting a young man, accustomed to the taking up of collections at church services, brought forward a sixpence on a plate and offered it to the presiding minister. Upon its being refused, he exclaimed: "Never before have I seen such a thing in any church—pastor refusing collection!"

This was indeed unusual. It certainly was in striking contrast to the stress placed on money matters by churches in general, even as noted in the article "The Money Raisers," appearing in *Time* magazine, September 4, 1964. It began by saying: "Where once they had only to pass a plate among Sunday attenders, churches nowadays raise money in ways that range from bingo to bonds. Fund raising brings up questions of taste, discretion, prudence and donor psychology that stir heated debates across the land." Of course, all these varying means of raising money are used in addition to the taking of collections. Collections no longer suffice to defray all the expenses.

But had you noticed that the question of Bible principles appears not to have been raised, according to the report in *Time?* That really should be the crux of the matter for all who profess to be Christians and it explains why the young Nigerian received such a surprise. Even as in other matters, Jehovah's witnesses are governed by Bible principles in their giving and receiving.

One reason why they do not pass a plate or basket to take up collections is that there is no Scriptural precedent for such a practice. In ancient Israel when funds were needed for special occasions, as for the building of the tabernacle and later the temple, a simple announcement was made and the people responded so generously that at times they even gave "more than enough." True, the Levites, who had charge of the organized worship of Jehovah God for the nation received the tithe, but this was merely because they did not receive any inheritance in the land.—Ex. 35:5; 36:4-7; 1 Chron. 29:9.

Coming down to the time of Christ and his apostles, at no time do we read that they took up a collection. On the contrary, Christ instructed the apostles he sent forth: "You received free, give free." This is seen to be all the more remarkable when we note that Jesus sent them forth with the power to "cure sick people, raise up dead persons, make lepers clean, expel demons." How easily they could have taken up collections after performing such miracles! But they did not. Nor do we read of any tithing being practiced among the early Christians. There were sufficient voluntary contributions.—Matt. 10:8; Luke 8:3.

Certainly all this is a far cry from the method described in the *Scottish Daily Express,* November 30, 1960. It told of a

church with some 1,400 members having "sacked" 235 members for failing to make contributions and sending warnings to 239 others that they too would be taken off the church rolls unless they increased their contributions in the future.

WHY NOT NEEDED

To pressure members of a congregation in a gentle way to contribute by resorting to devices without Scriptural precedent or support, such as passing a collection plate in front of them or operating bingo games, holding church suppers, bazaars and rummage sales or soliciting pledges, is to admit a weakness. There is something wrong. There is a lack. A lack of what? A lack of appreciation. No such coaxing or pressuring devices are needed where there is genuine appreciation. Could this lack of appreciation be related to the kind of spiritual food offered to the people in these churches?

The fact is that when persons are fed the right kind of spiritual food, that based squarely on the Word of God, the Bible, they learn to appreciate what Jehovah God has done for them and so they respond by volunteering both their services and money contributions. As they learn of God's goodness they are moved to imitate him, even as Jesus taught: "Prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous. You must accordingly be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."—Matt. 5:45, 48.

More than that, as men of honest heart are helped to set their personal lives straight, as they experience the joys of associating with other sincere men and women desirous of serving God, and as they have their faith in God and in his Word increased and their hope strengthened in God's kingdom and its coming new order of righteousness, they feel compelled to express their appreciation in a material way, even as the early Christians did right after Pentecost.—Acts 4:32-35.

Not to be overlooked is also the example set by those taking the lead in Christian worship. Doubtless the fine examples of Moses, David, Jesus Christ and his apostles had a good effect upon those over whom they were set or to whom they ministered. In the early Christian congregation there was no salaried clergy, in fact, no clergy-laity distinction; all preached as they had opportunity and to the extent of their abilities. Far from being served and paid, those who took the lead bore the greatest burdens, even as Jesus showed it should be: "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister [*diákonos,* "servant"], and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave." When due to immaturity the Corinthian Christians did not appreciate their privilege of contributing voluntarily to defray Paul's expenses, he did not take up a collection but provided for himself by making tents!—Matt. 20:25-27; Acts 18:3; 1 Cor. 4:11, 12; 9:11, 12.

BIBLE PRINCIPLES GOVERNING GIVING

Also helping to make collections unnecessary is an understanding of Bible principles governing giving. One of these is that, to be pleasing to God, giving must be done unselfishly. Jesus condemned those who advertised their charities and counseled: "When making gifts of mercy, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, that your gifts of mercy may be in secret; then your Father who is looking on in secret will repay you." Paul made the same point, that unless giving is prompted by love one is "not prof-

ited at all." Only unselfish giving counts with God, for it is not primarily concerned with self but with others and asks not, How much *must* I give, but, How much *can* I give?—Matt. 6:2-4; 1 Cor. 13:3.

Another Bible principle that governs giving is that God judges the gift, not by its size, but by its relation to what one has. Yes, a gift is "acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what a person does not have." How just! How reasonable! How considerate! Jesus illustrated this principle when calling attention to the widow who put two coins of very little value into the temple treasury chest. He said that she had given more than any of the rest, for they gave out of their surplus but she "out of her want dropped in all the means of living she had." This principle is of great encouragement to all who can give but little, since in God's eyes it is much, and at the same time it encourages generous giving on the part of those who have much, so as to bear some resemblance to what they have!—2 Cor. 8:12; Luke 21:1-4.

Still another Bible principle pertinent here is that "God loves a cheerful giver"; a principle, it might be added, that is not at all limited to the giving of money but applies to all kinds of giving, including the giving of forgiveness to those who sin against us: "He that shows mercy, let him do it with cheerfulness." Cheerful giving makes for generous giving!—2 Cor. 9:7; Rom. 12:8.

Because the Christian witnesses of Jehovah let Scriptural principles govern their giving, their legal instrument, the Watch Tower Society, is able to finance a worldwide preaching and missionary work, the cost of which runs into the millions of dollars annually. Those who are interested in having the good news of God's kingdom preached worldwide in fulfillment of Matthew 24:14, not only contribute locally at their Kingdom Hall, where a contribution box is provided for the purpose, but also, as they have the means, they make contributions to the head offices of the Society in their country. That this Society may efficiently plan its work, it encourages all who intend to make regular contributions to write in once a year during May, advising how much they hope to be able to contribute during the coming year. This is in no sense of the word a pledge but merely a "contribution prospect," since no one is ever reminded of the amount he stated or checked on to see if he contributes. Just send a letter or card simply stating you hope to be able to contribute during the coming year. Those living in the mainland of the United States may send such contribution prospects to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.

This is not a request for contributions nor does it obligate those willing to give. In addition to enabling the Society to plan its work efficiently, it reminds those who wish to support it to give some thought to just how much they feel that they can give and then endeavor to follow through in keeping with the apostolic injunction: "Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion," but as one's love of God and neighbor prompts one and as one's circumstances permit. And this practical plan has good Scriptural backing, for early Christians were advised: "Every first day of the week let each of you at his own house set something aside in store as he may be prospering, so that when I arrive collections will not take place then." The apostle Paul, too, was not in favor of taking collections! —2 Cor. 9:7; 1 Cor. 16:2.

DESERVING WORLD PUBLICITY

A NEWS headline most welcome to peace- and freedom-loving peoples of the earth would be news of the downfall of a great, oppressive empire that had held other nations in captivity and subjugation. Especially would this be true if this world power was very cruel, and had even gone so far as to move an entire nation away from its homeland and try to force upon it a pagan, idol-worshiping form of religion. Victory over such an oppressor nation would indeed deserve the widest possible publicity. Just such an event actually happened 2,500 years ago, and was brought forcibly to the attention of the world of that time. So great an upset was it that it altered the course of history and it has exercised profound influence upon the nations and peoples of earth today.*

An unusual fact connected with this historic event is that, seventy-five years before the event occurred in 539 B.C.E., it received advance publicity in the nation that would be oppressed, and in the nation that was to be the oppressor. This is because the captive nation was at that time Jehovah's chosen people and the oppressor nation was the age-old enemy of God, Babylon. Jeremiah was the prophet God used to give the advance news of the fall of Babylon with vivid descriptiveness. The message was delivered both to Judah and at Babylon in 614 B.C.E., seven years before Jerusalem was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. (Jer. 51:59-64) We shall now discuss this prophecy, which adds enlightening details to that previously given by the prophet Isaiah about Babylon's fall. It is found in Jeremiah, chapters fifty and fifty-one.

Jehovah God, who is the "One who is dwelling above the circle of the earth, the dwellers in which are as grasshoppers," and who observes all the events of the earth in their relative importance, stressed the international significance and impact of Babylon's fall when he said to Babylon through Jeremiah: "Tell it among the nations and publish it. And lift up a signal; publish it. Hide nothing, O men. Say, 'Babylon has been captured. Bel has been put to shame. Merodach has become terrified. Her images have been put to shame. Her dungy idols have become terrified.' "—Jer. 50:2; Isa. 40:22.

Since Jehovah has it written in his Word and, as one of Jesus' apostles said, "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial," it is even today something to be given consideration and wide publicity, for it

* For a full discussion of the influence of this event and how it has prophetic significance, see the book *"Babylon the Great Has Fallen!" God's Kingdom Rules!*, published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York (1963).

serves as an advance notification and warning of the fall of an oppressive power today and of the way of escape from the consequences of its fall.—2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 10:11.

Merodach is the Hebrew word for Marduk, Babylon's chief god in the days of King Nebuchadnezzar and his dynasty. Babylon's theology claimed that he was the builder of their capital city and their famous temples. Merodach (Marduk, or Bel) appears therefore to be just another symbol for Nimrod, who was a rebel against Jehovah God and who actually built Babylon. (Gen. 10:9, 10) Because of Babylonian victories previously in subjugating the nations and becoming the Third World Power, Merodach had become terrifying to the nations. But now it was his turn to become terrified. He would be shown up to be a weakling, a worthless god, having dumb idols, worthless as dung, to represent him. He would be powerless, a mere false god. Merodach and his associate gods in Babylon would fail the Third World Power and his worshipers therein. Then the fate of these worshipers would be uncertain, for Merodach would lose his dignity and be unable to protect his worshipers from the persecution of their conquerors, who were worshipers of Zoroaster and other gods.

Jehovah reveals who the conquerors would be when he says: "For against her a nation has come up from the north. It is the one that makes her land an object of astonishment, so that there proves to be no one dwelling in her. Both man and domestic animal have taken flight. They have gone away." (Jer. 50:3) The Medes, who composed most of the troops of the Persian general, Cyrus, were from the north. Babylon's gods would be completely powerless to block their advance or their strategy. Thus Jehovah decreed the decline of this mighty city, so that it was to become an object of astonishment, a desolation deserted and avoided by man and domestic animal.

But what about Jehovah's people captive in Babylon when this fall took place? Jeremiah continues: " 'In those days and at that time,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'the sons of Israel, they and the sons of Judah together, will come. They will walk, weeping as they walk, and for Jehovah their God they will seek. To Zion they will keep asking the way, with their faces in that direction, saying, "Come and let us join ourselves to Jehovah in an indefinitely lasting covenant that will not be forgotten." ' "—Jer. 50:4, 5.

When Babylon fell in 539 B.C.E., it was only two years until the seventy years of desolation prophesied previously by Jeremiah would be up. (Jer. 25:11) Therefore Daniel and other faithful worshipers of Jehovah among the Jewish exiles began to pray for Jehovah to fulfill his promise by their early liberation, which did take place when Cyrus issued his decree in the first year of his reign, in 537 B.C.E. Tens of thousands of the captive Jews took advantage of this decree to return to Zion.

It was a long way to Zion, and these released ones would ask the way. They would weep for joy because of Jehovah's liberation of them, his guidance and his provision for them through the wilderness journey to Jerusalem, and would express their appreciation for his forgiveness of them. Before their captivity they forgot Jehovah and broke his covenant. After their release through divine mercy, they would acknowledge that covenant anew. Their purpose in returning would have no political flavor. Their motive could not be to restore a kingdom, for they would acknowledge subjection to Persia, the nation Jehovah would use as their liberator. Why, then, would they endure the long journey and the hardships? In order to restore true

worship by rebuilding the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem, which Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed seventy years before, in 607 B.C.E. It was on the issue of true worship that their blame for their captivity lay, as Jehovah reminded them:

"A flock of perishing creatures my people has become. Their own shepherds have caused them to wander about. On the mountains they have led them away. From mountain to hill they have gone. They have forgotten their resting place. All those finding them have eaten them up, and their own adversaries have said, 'We shall not become guilty, due to the fact that they have sinned against Jehovah the abiding place of righteousness and the hope of their forefathers, Jehovah.' "—Jer. 50:6, 7.

So they had been at fault in that they had followed their kings and priests as leaders in a bad way, away from their resting-place in Jehovah and his pure worship. When the Babylonian conquerors attacked they found the Jews straying and disunited and had acted like wolves, bears and lions in devouring them like sheep. The Babylonians felt no personal guilt at destroying them or acting against them, for they said that, since the Israelites had sinned against Jehovah, they were justified in wreaking vengeance, and took the opportunity to vent their malice to the full. But Jehovah did count the Babylonians guilty when they acted with this unrighteous, malevolent motive against his people. Jehovah speaks encouragingly to his people, promising they will not continue under the hateful yoke forever:

" 'Take your flight out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth even out of the land of the Chaldeans, and become like the leading animals before the flock. For here I am arousing and bringing up against Babylon a congregation of great nations from the land of the north, and they will certainly array themselves against her. From there she will be captured. One's arrows are like those of a mighty man causing bereavement of children, who does not come back without results. And Chaldea must become a spoil. All those making spoil of her will satisfy themselves,' is the utterance of Jehovah." —Jer. 50:8-10.

It would only be after Babylon's fall that Jehovah's people could take their flight out of her. This return would have to be after Jehovah's decree of seventy years of desolation on Judah had been fulfilled. But when Babylon should fall, two years before the seventy years were up, faithful Jews who were in Babylon could begin to prepare to leave and would be so prompt in leaving when the time came that it would be like fleeing, although it would be, not a panicky, but an orderly departure. They would be like the leaders of the goats, trying to be the first ones to get out when the pen is opened. The ones to liberate them would be composed of troops from a number of great nations, all with the one aim of capturing Babylon. The arrows of their famed bowmen would bereave the mother organization, Babylon, of her children. The bows of the Persians would not come back without results. Babylon, the spoiler of nations, had so much spoil that the Persians would be completely satisfied with the booty taken. Jehovah expresses his judgment to these Babylonian spoilers of the kingdom of Judah:

"For you men kept rejoicing, for you men kept exulting when pillaging my own inheritance. For you kept pawing like a heifer in the tender grass, and you kept neighing like stallions. The mother of you men has become very much ashamed. She that gave you birth has been disappointed. Look! She is the least important of the nations, a waterless wilderness and a desert plain. Because of the indignation of Jehovah she will not be inhabited, and she must become a desolate waste in her entirety. As for anyone passing along by Babylon, he will stare in astonishment and whistle on account of all her plagues."—Jer. 50:11-13.

What a bitter, vicious attitude the Babylonians had when bringing execution upon Judah for its sin against God! It was actually an expression of their hatred for Je-

hovah and his people. They felt frisky, like a well-fed heifer, when they destroyed the city of Jerusalem and its temple and then took the precious temple vessels and put them in the temple of Babylon's false god, Marduk. They acted like neighing stallions, brimming with energy. This was not the proper spirit, and was a sin before God. Because of this, the mother city Babylon would come to be ashamed for her children, her citizens or inhabitants. For she would be toppled from her place as mistress of the world and captured. Her proud hopes for her children would be disappointed. And God's indignation was to be expressed even farther against her until she should become the least important of the nations by becoming a wild, waterless, deserted wasteland. Such would be her desolation that men who knew her past glory would be astonished. They would whistle, as they passed by, for self-assurance, as at a haunted place. The Medes and Persians could not be given the primary credit for Babylon's crash; it was really because of Jehovah God, who had decreed her fall, using Medo-Persia as his instrument. So he says, as if he were the commander-in-chief of the Medo-Persian army:

> "Array yourselves against Babylon on every side, all you who are treading the bow. Shoot at her. Spare no arrow, for it is against Jehovah that she has sinned. Shout a war cry against her on every side. She has given her hand. Her pillars have fallen. Her walls have been torn down. For it is the vengeance of Jehovah. Take your vengeance on her. Just as she has done, do to her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and the one handling the sickle in the time of harvest. Because of the maltreating sword they will turn each one to his own people, and they will flee each one to his own land." —Jer. 50:14-16.

Babylon's sin was great before Jehovah. She destroyed the kingdom of Judah and was the first one to destroy the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem. Then she went farther in her sin by defiling the holy vessels of the temple in the house of a pagan god and in King Belshazzar's last feast. (Dan. 1:1, 2; 5:1-4, 22, 23) God was justified in executing vengeance upon her. The prophecy indicates that the executional armies would be men expert in archery, like the Medes and Persians. Resistance by Babylon would be in vain. She would have to give her hand, her power, in surrender. Though the invading bowmen entered by the Euphrates riverbed, it was just the same as if the pillars supporting her and the walls protecting her had fallen.

Even though Babylon was very fruitful, due to her rivers and man-made canals, the productive land was to become a waste. The farmers would be cut off. The sword would be mercilessly applied to her, while those allied with her and supporting her as the Third World Power would leave her to her deserved judgment, turning each one to his own land and people. Those who did profitable business with her would be scattered. But to his own people Jehovah turns with comforting words:

> "Israel is a scattered sheep. Lions themselves have done the dispersing. In the first instance the king of Assyria has devoured him, and in this latter instance Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon has gnawed on his bones. Therefore this is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said, 'Here I am turning my attention upon the king of Babylon and upon his land in the same way that I turned my attention upon the king of Assyria. And I will bring Israel back to his pasture ground, and he will certainly graze on Carmel and on Bashan; and in the mountainous region of Ephraim and of Gilead his soul will be satisfied.'"
>
> "'And in those days and at that time,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'the error of Israel will be searched for, but it will not be; and the sins of Judah, and they will not be found, for I shall forgive those whom I let remain.'"—Jer. 50:17-20.

Here was an expression of Jehovah's unbreakable love for his people. When the As-

syrians conquered and deported the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel it saddened his heart. But Israel had sinned against God. However, Assyria went much too far when it threatened the holy city Zion. On one night Jehovah destroyed 185,000 of the Assyrian army and later avenged himself upon Assyria by enforcing his decree of destruction on its capital city, Nineveh, in 633 B.C.E. (2 Ki. 18:9 to 19:36; Nah. 1:1 to 3:19) However, at that time he left the Israelite exiles in foreign territory.

Babylon then became the leading assailant against the kingdom of Judah. This small kingdom was like the skeleton bones left out of the larger, more numerous people of Israel. King Nebuchadnezzar desired to get the most succulent part of the body of Israel, where the king sat upon "Jehovah's throne," and where the temple of Jehovah was located. Nebuchadnezzar worshiped the false god Marduk, whose symbol was the lion. And, like a lion, he destroyed Jerusalem and its temple, crushing them between his teeth as bones of a sheep, to get the sweet marrow out of them. His destruction of Jerusalem and the temple was far more notorious and profane than when Assyria destroyed Israel's paganized capital Samaria and its temple to the false god Baal. So if Assyria and her capital tasted God's indignation, Babylon deserved even greater vengeance to be wreaked upon her.

When Babylon fell, this cleared the way for Jehovah to bring his sheep back to their pasture ground in the Promised Land. The places mentioned in this prophecy, namely, Carmel, Bashan, the mountainous region of Ephraim and of Gilead, were in Israel's one-time territory outside the land of Judah. The mention of these places, therefore, would indicate the restoration of the Israelites of all tribes to their homeland, which actually was true during the Maccabean period, as the Israelites did hold those territories again.

So it was that, at Jehovah's appointed time of seventy years, he forgave the sins and error of the remaining ones of his chosen people, those who desired to see true worship restored. He blotted out the record of such sins. Therefore, nothing against the Israelites and the Judeans could be found, even though it was diligently searched for. He restored them to Zion and the land of Judah as one united people.

This amazing expression of Jehovah's love and mercy to his repentant people and his power to deliver and restore them was eminently deserving of the most extensive publicity. It has been made known and has been emphasized by the fact that Babylon today is exactly what Jehovah said it would be, a complete desolation without inhabitant. Jehovah's witnesses publicize this to millions of people in 194 lands in the earth today, not only as an example of Jehovah's love for his worshipers and his ability to preserve them, but even more because of what this milestone-like event in man's history pictures for our day. A continuation of God's Word through Jeremiah will be considered in the *Watchtower's* next issue to lay further groundwork for an understanding of this picture in its fullest clarity for our readers.

The Resplendent City of CORINTH

OUTSHINING all the other cities of Greece by its artwork, ancient Corinth, a city in which the Christian apostle Paul had great success in his missionary work, has been called the ornament of Greece. Its paintings, its sculpture work and especially its castings in bronze were done with the greatest of skill. Describing it, the historian John Lord states in *Beacon Lights of History:* "Corinth was richer and more luxurious than Athens, and possessed the most valuable pictures of Greece, as well as the finest statues; a single street for three miles was adorned with costly edifices." Its fine artwork reflected its great prosperity. As might be expected, where there is great prosperity, a spirit of materialism gripped the Corinthians. The Christians of the first century, when the apostle Paul was there, had to fight it constantly.

Due to Corinth's location on the isthmus or neck of land that joins the southern part of the Greek peninsula with the mainland, it became an outstandingly prosperous city. It had two harbors. One was Lechaeum on the western side of the isthmus. The eastern one, Cenchreae, was eight and a half miles from Corinth and was the departure point for the apostle Paul when he returned to Syria by ship at the end of his second missionary tour. —Acts 18:18.

Merchant ships would dock at one of these harbors and unload their cargo. It was then transported across the several miles of the isthmus to the other harbor, where it was loaded on another vessel and its journey continued. Small ships were not even unloaded but were pulled across the isthmus on the Diolcus or tramroad.

The trade route through Corinth was one of the three great routes that linked the West with the East. Persons traveling from Ephesus in Asia Minor, for example, could sail to Cenchreae, cross the isthmus and then board a ship for Brundisium on the east coast of what is now Italy. There was a good reason why travelers and merchants preferred the route through Corinth. It avoided the dangerous storm-swept capes of the Greek peninsula, which they would have to sail around if they did not go by way of Corinth.

A ship canal cutting across the isthmus was greatly desired by the Romans who saw its advantages. In 67 C.E., an attempt was made to dig one, but the project failed. At last in 1893 a canal was successfully dug, and it is still in use today.

The city of Corinth was located at the base of a mountainous rock that rose to a height of 1,857 feet. On the flat top of this rock Corinth had its acropolis or fortified portion of the city. Here too was the temple of Aphrodite or Venus, the goddess of sensual love. Although the Corinthians worshiped many other divinities, they gave their greatest devotion to her. In her service were a thousand female temple slaves

who served her as prostitutes. They contributed measurably to Corinth's reputation for immorality. Wealthy men considered it an honor to dedicate their most beautiful slaves to the service of this goddess.

Surrounded by gross idolatry and degenerating immorality, Corinthian Christians needed strong admonitions to help them maintain cleanness in the eyes of God. That is why the apostle Paul spoke so strongly about idolaters and moral uncleanness in his letters to them.—1 Cor. chaps. 5, 6; 2 Cor. 6:14-18.

Being a very ancient city, possibly one of the oldest in Greece, Corinth was a place where many divinities were worshiped. There was a sanctuary of the Ephesian Artemis, a shrine to Athena, a sanctuary of the Capitoline Zeus or Jupiter, sanctuaries of Isis and Serapis, altars to Helios, several sanctuaries to Apollo, a shrine to Poseidon or Neptune, a shrine to Hera or Juno, a temple of All the Gods, a temple of Herakles, a temple of Hermes, a temple to Octavia and a temple of Asklepios. Statues of gods and heroes lined the streets and public squares of the city.

At the temple of Asklepios archaeologists have found terra-cotta likenesses of body parts that ailing people brought to the temple as a thank offering to their god. Asklepios was regarded as the god of healing. These likenesses of parts of the body that were troubling the worshipers were painted in natural colors. A similar practice of offering replicas of ailing parts of the body to a divinity is carried on today by Roman Catholics in Honduras. There people present to an image of the "Virgin of Suyapa" likenesses of ailing parts of their body. These likenesses are fashioned in gold or silver. Hundreds of them hang on the walls of the church. Unlike these Roman Catholics, the Christians of Corinth refused to adopt the religious practices of the pagans.—1 Sam. 5:12; 6:4-11.

The marketplace or Agora of Corinth was paved with marble and lined with public buildings and shops. It was here that the apostle Paul was brought by persecuting Jews to appear before Proconsul Gallio. At Acts 18:12 we find the record of this: "Now while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up with one accord against Paul and led him to the judgment seat." The judgment seat was a raised speaker's stand in the marketplace. It was called the Bema and was a richly made structure, covered with marble and delicate carvings. On each side of the Bema and on the level of the Agora were two waiting rooms with mosaic floors and marble benches. Here the people waited their turns to present petitions or have cases presented to the proconsul.

The city had a good water supply. The subterranean flow of water was tapped by tunnels that conducted the water to four reservoirs with a total capacity of more than 100,000 gallons. From its principal spring, underground water channels passed beneath the shops on the Agora. A well in each shop connected with one of these channels. By lowering wine and foods into these wells, the merchants were able to keep them cool.

In a materialistic way Corinth was a resplendent city, but this did not preserve it. Those who lived for its materialism and licentiousness cannot be helped by it now that they are part of its dust. Neither can their many false gods do anything for them. But those persons in Corinth who held fast to the Christian truths proclaimed by Paul had the sure hope of being resurrected from the dead as heirs of the kingdom of heaven with their Lord Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. 15:12-57.

KEEP THE ORGANIZATION CLEAN FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

WHAT is the grandest assignment any organization could have? Is it not that of preaching this good news of God's kingdom? Surely! Such an organization would be an organization of public servants, which is what the Christian witnesses of Jehovah are.

This organization of public servants belongs to Jehovah God. He is holy, pure and righteous. It follows, then, that as members of his organization we must keep clean. This means not only keeping separate from this world's crooked politics, corrupt business practices and false religion but also keeping sexually pure, chaste. We must "quit touching the unclean thing."—2 Cor. 6:17.*

Jehovah God is not one to be deceived. He sees all. When the private lives of his servants run counter to that of their message, he feels hurt. Yes, God has feelings. Do we not read of his rejoicing, of his being long-suffering, of his being angry? So he feels keenly any reproach that is being heaped upon his own name, upon his beloved organization, upon his truth and upon the good news of His kingdom.

The chasteness of our lives should recommend our message to others; not be a stumbling block or hindrance to them. Each one of us should be able to say with Paul: "In no way are we giving any cause for stumbling, that our ministry might not be found fault with; but in every way we recommend ourselves as God's ministers, by the endurance of much, . . . by purity [chasteness]."—2 Cor. 6:3-6.

Not that there is anything wrong in sex itself. Jehovah God placed sex distinctions in plants, in the lower animals and in man, and so of itself it must be good. It serves his purpose of reproduction. But among humans He intended it only for those honorably bound in wedlock and so equipped to accept the consequences of sexual union, namely, the rearing of offspring.—Heb. 13:4.

But the world has gone sex mad; it acts as if sexual enjoyment were the supreme, the only good. That is why Christian ministers must be so on guard. Remember, none of those practicing sexual impurity will inherit God's heavenly kingdom. Those who once practiced these things must clean up and stay clean!

Today there are some who profess to be dedicated Christians who think that they can indulge in all manner of loose, unclean conduct just so long as they do not go to the limit of having sex relations. But not so! Such loose conduct incurs Jehovah's wrath. Our conduct with the opposite sex—not related to us by marriage—should be above reproach at all times.

In particular does an obligation fall upon overseers to set the right example in chasteness, treating younger women as their fleshly sisters, and older women as mothers. By setting the right example they encourage the rest of the brothers to do the same.—1 Tim. 5:2.

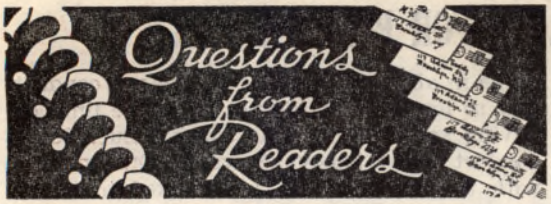
The women in the congregation must also watch themselves in this regard. They should be 'reverent in behavior, and love their children' and should "be sound in mind, chaste, . . . so that the word of God may not be spoken of abusively." In other words, so that the organization of public servants may be kept clean for preaching the good news of the Kingdom.—Titus 2:3-5.

If we individually would do our part toward keeping the organization clean for public service we must practice mental hygiene, which is even more vital than physical hygiene. That means we must be careful about the things on which we set our hearts, since out of the heart are the sources of life. The way we do this is by thinking on "whatever things are true, whatever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, . . . praiseworthy."—Phil. 4:8.

So let all of us make God's standards of purity our own. Only those (of the remnant of spirit-begotten ones) who are pure in heart will see God. If they craved uncleanness, how could they be happy in His presence? Likewise only those of the "other sheep" who keep themselves clean can hope to survive Armageddon and enter in and enjoy the clean post-Armageddon new order!—Matt. 5:8; 1 John 3:2, 3.

Jehovah the great Judge does not want any unclean person in his organization of public servants. If we want to remain a part of that organization, then we must do our part toward keeping it pure, chaste, to His praise and for our own well-being, both now and throughout eternity!

* For details see *The Watchtower*, November 15, 1964.



● Matthew 27:19 mentions a dream Pilate's wife had concerning Jesus in which she "suffered a lot." Was this dream from God?

The scripture here reads: "While he [Pilate] was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent out to him, saying: 'Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I suffered a lot today in a dream because of him.' " We must remember that the account is dealing with the trial of the Son of God. This trial and Jesus' impalement led to phenomena from God—unnatural darkness, an earthquake, the rending in two of the temple's curtain. (Matt. 27:45, 51-54) So the dream, in this context, suggests divine origin, especially since it is recorded in the Word of God by Matthew, who wrote under inspiration of God's holy spirit. It was not a normal dream induced by any foreknowledge that Jesus would be brought before her husband for trial on the following morning.

Inspired Bible writers show that Jehovah used dreams in times past to give warnings, not only to his faithful people, but also to others who had dealings with them. Such was the case when Abimelech the king of Gerar took Abraham's wife for himself. Matthew himself records other dreams that contained divine warnings—not only those to Joseph the foster father of Jesus, but also a dream warning pagan astrologers not to report to Herod the whereabouts of the child Jesus. (Gen. 20: 3-7; Matt. 1:20-24; 2:12, 13, 19) So Matthew's writing of the dream of Pilate's wife is to be viewed as significant.

In Pilate's case his wife's dream would serve as a forceful warning that he was dealing with a special situation, that he needed to be careful to avoid guilt. The dream gave emphasis to Jesus' innocence in a way that Pilate could hardly ignore. He had already examined Jesus and knew him to be innocent; then he received a message from his wife concerning her dream. It no doubt influenced his thinking as he made several efforts to get the crowd to withdraw their demand for his death. When Pilate at last washed his hands before the crowd and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this man," it did not clear him of responsibility for what he was doing, but the guilt of those who shouted, "His blood come upon us and upon our children," had certainly been well established.—Matt. 27: 24, 25.

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June 13: Mature Ministers Can Aid Others. Page 270.