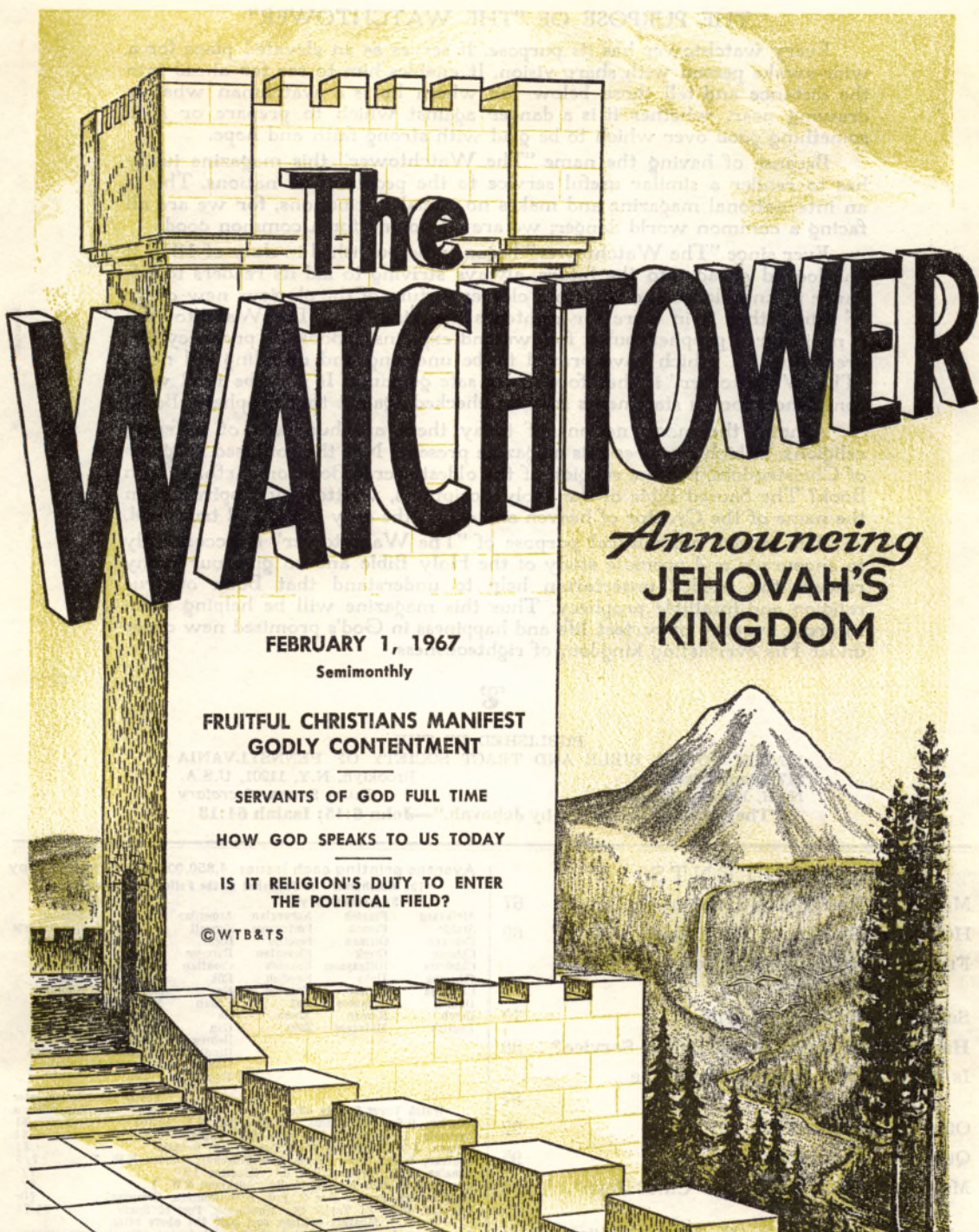




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

FEBRUARY 1, 1967

Semimonthly

**FRUITFUL CHRISTIANS MANIFEST
GODLY CONTENTMENT**

SERVANTS OF GOD FULL TIME

HOW GOD SPEAKS TO US TODAY

**IS IT RELIGION'S DUTY TO ENTER
THE POLITICAL FIELD?**

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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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AT - An American Translation
AV - Authorized Version (1611)
Dy - Catholic Douay version
JP - Jewish Publication Soc.
Le - Isaac Leeser's version
Mo - James Moffatt's version
Ro - J. B. Rotherham's version
RS - Revised Standard Version
Yg - Robert Young's version



Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

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"A HUSBAND is head of his wife," the Bible explains. (Eph. 5: 23) Yet, according to reports of social scientists and wives themselves, many modern-day husbands have abdicated their rightful position as head of the house. "Many of my clients complain of the weakness and irresolution of their husbands," one prominent marriage counselor in New York city reported.

The failure of many men to exercise proper headship is clearly responsible for a large portion of today's marital problems. What, therefore, is involved in being a proper head of the house? What role should the husband assume in the family? How should he treat his wife?

Some men interpret headship to mean that they should be dictators to their wives. In fact, it has long been the practice in some places for husbands to treat their wives as slaves or worse. But this is not in harmony with the above Scriptural principle, for notice that it says: "A husband is head of his wife *as the Christ also is head of the congregation.*" And Christ definitely did not treat his congregation of followers in an unloving manner!

So men who really are the head of the house are not dictatorial bosses. Yet, on

MEN who really are HEAD OF THE HOUSE

the other hand, neither are they weak and irresolute, allowing their wives to assume the role that is rightfully theirs. A proper head is, as Webster's New Third International Dictionary describes, "one who stands in relation to others somewhat as the head does to other members of the body . . . one in charge of a division or department." Thus, as the physical head directs the movements and operations of the body, or the head one of a department supervises the organization and work of his staff, so the head of the house should assume charge of the household, having jurisdiction over its activities.

What would happen if the head of a staff of workers knew little or nothing about the work of his department? If he took little interest in what his staff was doing, gave them no directions or instructions, put off making decisions, failed to shoulder responsibility, and forced his subordinates to take charge in order to get anything accomplished, what would they think of him? Why, they would consider him to be a mere figurehead, not a real head. Under such circumstances relations can deteriorate fast.

The situation is similar in a home. If a man turns over leadership and all

decision-making to his wife, she quickly loses respect for him as her head. A man that says, "Go ask your mother," whenever the children ask permission to do something; or, "You decide," whenever a family decision has to be made, reveals that he is not *really* the head of the house. And such a home is generally an unhappy one.

What, then, does proper headship involve? Does it mean making all decisions? Does it include directing every activity and movement of one's wife and children? Not at all! God created humans, including wives and children, to enjoy relative freedom. People are discontent and rebel when their every move and moment of time is directed and scheduled for them.

So proper headship is not a matter of making every decision, but of exercising oversight of all the activities and business of one's family. It is the man's responsibility to set the guidelines according to which the household is run. Yet, at the same time, there can be a great latitude of freedom within the bounds set.

For example, a husband may grant his wife almost total freedom to decide how the furniture is to be arranged, what to purchase in the way of food for the family, or to make decisions in other similar matters. Still the husband exercises jurisdiction and, as he sees fit, can issue directives to improve the way things are being handled. Usually, however, kind words of encouragement and well-placed compliments do the most to inspire cooperation and support. A good family head will not withhold praise.

Genuine concern for the welfare of his staff of workers distinguishes a really fine departmental head. Sometimes persons are heard to say about such a one: "I'd do *anything* for him," meaning they would cooperate to the fullest extent. Similar expressions are heard concerning men who

heed the Bible exhortations: "Husbands, continue loving your wives." (Eph. 5:25) And: "Fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) To such a considerate, helpful and loving head it is a joy to be subject.

Such a family head is humble. He realizes he does not "know it all." He acknowledges that his wife and, at times, even his children may know more about certain matters than he does. So he often discusses things with them before making decisions. In this way his wife and children are made to feel close to the family arrangement. Yet, at the same time, they feel secure in knowing that the head of the house is assuming his responsibility.

A man who is really head of the house has initiative; he is not a lazy person. It is understandable that after a hard day's work he appreciates a little peace and quiet when he comes home, perhaps in perusing the evening newspaper. Nevertheless, he shows initiative by planning and organizing family activities, even as he might plan his business schedule. He sees to it that there are occasional weekend outings with the children and evenings that include some form of family relaxation. He also considers the needs of his wife, perhaps planning an evening out alone with her at times. Such a father and husband is really appreciated and loved.

Still there is another area in which a man who is truly head of the house must take the lead, and that is in teaching his family love and respect for Almighty God. He prays with his family; they regularly attend Christian meetings together, and, as a family, they take an active part in sharing with others what they know about God and his purposes. A man who does this not only is loved by his family but is pleasing to Jehovah God as well.

How GOD Speaks to Us Today

THE confusion, strife and lawlessness that mark our day cause some to conclude that God no longer cares what happens to mankind. 'If he cares, why doesn't he speak out? Why doesn't he help us to solve the problems that face us?' they ask.

Really, the problem is not that God does not speak out but that people in general are confused as to how God speaks to us today. This is evident even in the effort of one of America's clergymen, Harry Emerson Fosdick, to explain the matter. He recently said: "God's word does not come to man through magical handwriting on the wall, or spelled out on stone tablets, but from the inner counsel of the heart." But is this really the answer?

If God's word comes from the inner counsel of the heart, it may well be asked, From the counsel of whose heart? The heart of the atheist, the agnostic, the Communist, the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Moslem, or from the hearts of those adhering to any one of the hundreds of conflicting sects of Christendom? Is it not for the very reason that men follow the inner counsel of their hearts that the world is in such a sorry state today? Besides, how

could a wise, just and loving God speak so many contradictory things?

The fact is that the Bible warns us against the fallen, imperfect human heart: "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9) That is why God's Word counsels us: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understand-

ing. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight." (Prov. 3:5, 6)

But how can humans "take

notice" of God? Does God speak to men today?

HOW DID GOD SPEAK IN TIMES PAST?

It will be enlightening for us first to examine how Jehovah God spoke to men of early times. One of the ways God spoke to mankind was by means of angels. This is clear from the Bible record, such as in the account of Abraham, for Genesis 22: 11 plainly says that "Jehovah's angel began calling to him out of the heavens." Also, the Mosaic Law given to Israel is referred to as "the word spoken through angels." (Heb. 2:2) The most prominent of angelic mouthpieces used by God was the one later identified in the Bible as "the Word," or representative spokesman of God, Jesus Christ in his prehuman existence.—John 1:1, 14.

God also spoke in ancient times by

How does God help us to cope with problems of modern-day living? Is he speaking through humans today?

means of his prophets. In this regard one of the apostles of Jesus Christ said: "God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets of old time." (Acts 3:21) And the Bible, at Hebrews 1:1, says: "God . . . spoke on many occasions and in many ways to our forefathers by means of the prophets." Much of what God spoke through those prophets has been preserved for us in the Holy Bible.

The most important way that God has spoken to mankind is by means of his own Son, sending him to the earth as a man to speak the words God had given him. The inspired account at Hebrews 1:1, 2, after stating that God spoke in times past by the prophets, explains that God "has at the end of these days spoken to us by means of a Son." This Son when on earth acknowledged that the words he spoke were not of his own originality: "What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him that sent me. If anyone desires to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching whether it is from God or I speak of my own originality." Jesus' followers well knew that he spoke God's words, words of divine truth. In fact, on one occasion Jesus described himself as "a man that has told you the truth that I heard from God."—John 7:16, 17; 8:40.

So God spoke in times past, not only through angels and prophets, but, most importantly, through his own Son. (Heb. 2:1-3) Now, having done this, did God stop speaking to men? No, indeed.

God now spoke to mankind through his organization of followers of his resurrected Son. For example, when a certain Ethiopian official was reading the prophecy of Isaiah and could not understand it, God sent a representative of his organization, Philip, to help this truth seeker understand what he was reading. (Acts 8:26-40) There is also the case of Saul of Tarsus. God's word came to him in a miraculous

way, Jesus Christ appearing to him. Yet in spite of thus supernaturally receiving God's word, Saul needed help from God's visible organization. The Lord sent the disciple Ananias to Saul; he taught Saul the truth about Jesus. At the prompting of Ananias, Saul was at once baptized, and he became the apostle Paul. (Acts 9:1-19; 22:16) This very apostle later wrote these words, showing that God speaks to mankind through humans who belong to His organization: "When you received God's word, which you heard from us, you accepted it, not as the word of men, but, just as it truthfully is, as the word of God."—1 Thess. 2:13.

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD, THE BIBLE

What God spoke through the prophets and through his Son he has had recorded. As a result, all Scripture, from Genesis through Revelation, is inspired of God, just as the apostle Peter testified: "No prophecy of Scripture springs from any private interpretation. For prophecy was at no time brought by man's will, but men spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit." (2 Pet. 1:20, 21) So when we hear the Bible read, we are hearing the words of God.

What God had recorded was not merely for people of generations past. No, it was written for our admonition, as the apostle Paul wrote: "All the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that . . . we might have hope." (Rom. 15:4) What the Bible says reaches far beyond the days in which it was recorded. It speaks of future days; in fact, it describes in detail the times in which we live. (2 Tim. 3:1-5; Luke 21:10, 11, 25, 26) It shows the course that we should pursue now. Yes, through it God is speaking to us today.

God's Word is not out-of-date in this modern scientific world. The facts show that it is sound. Concerning this, Earl

Chester Rex, a mathematician and author of the textbook *Vector Analysis*, says: "As a scientist I find my conclusions concerning God and the universe confirmed by the sacred Scriptures. I happen to believe those Scriptures. I believe all they say about the origin and direction of this universe. . . . [Critics] have been caught in errors too often for us to accept their flippant assertions."* Even as the Bible is scientifically accurate and contains reliable history, as archaeologists have confirmed, it also contains God's perfect principles to guide us through these hard-to-deal-with times.

COPING WITH PROBLEMS OF MODERN-DAY LIFE

God has not left us in the lurch in these modern times; what he has spoken to us is even more helpful in these critical, wicked days than ever before. Why, the counsel given in the book of Proverbs for us not to associate with wicked ones, with hot-tempered people or with talebearers but, rather, to associate with persons who love divine wisdom could never be more up-to-date. "The book of Proverbs," once said American educator William Lyon Phelps, "is more up to date than this morning's newspaper."†—Prov. 1:10-19; 4:14-19; 13:20; 20:19; 22:24, 25.

Yes, God, by means of his Word, speaks to us today words of wisdom to help us cope with modern-day problems. In this materialistic age, are we tempted by the love of money? God speaks to warn us against it: "Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things." (1 Tim. 6: 9, 10) Yes, what unhappiness, what frus-

trations people bring upon themselves and what crimes have been committed all because of the love of money, of material possessions! How wise this warning that God speaks to us today!

Are we concerned with preserving a happy marriage? Human nature is no different today from what it was 1,900 years ago. God's counsel for husbands and wives that he caused to be recorded back there is as applicable to us today as when it was first written, and so God speaks to us today regarding these things also: "Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord . . . as the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, continue loving your wives . . . husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies." Surely this counsel gets at the chief causes of marital difficulties: wives failing to be in subjection; husbands failing to love their wives as themselves.—Eph. 5:22-28.

Furthermore, God gives wise counsel on the relations between the individual and the governing authorities, between employers and employees, and between Christians and their presiding ministers. All of it fits our circumstances today.—Rom. 13: 1-4; Col. 3:22-4:1; Heb. 13:7, 17.

And God speaks to us, not only with regard to modern-day individual problems, but also as to present world problems. His Word shows the only solution to the overwhelming problems facing mankind—the kingdom of God. It explains how that heavenly kingdom will solve them and bring in everlasting peace and make possible everlasting life in God's righteous New Order. And when does God say that this is to take place? In this generation. Indeed, God is speaking to us today by means of the Bible.—Dan. 2:44; Isa. 9:7; 1 Cor. 15:24, 26; Rev. 21:2-4; Matt. 24: 32-34.

* In *The Evidence of God in an Expanding Universe*—J. C. Monsma.

† *Treasury of the Christian Faith*, 1949, edited by Stuber and Clark, p. 48.

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS ORGANIZATION TODAY

Of course, not everyone listens to God by reading the Bible. But this does not muzzle God. No, because he sends his Christian witnesses to the homes of the people, to tell them about his kingdom, even as Jesus Christ foretold for our day: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matt. 24:14) This is being done in 199 lands and principal island groups. What they are telling people is what God in his Word says; he is the one talking.

So, too, God uses men to speak to those within the congregation of believers. For example, when overseers in the Christian congregation counsel their fellow believers, who really is speaking? Well, who designated them as overseers? It is God's Word that set out the qualifications. If they are serving because they meet those qualifications, they are designated by God. When they give counsel in harmony with the Scriptures, it is God who is speaking by means of them.—1 Tim. 3:1-7.

However, God is not speaking by means of everyone who takes up the Bible and uses the name of his Son. Just as there were prophets in ancient times of whom God said, "I have not sent them, nor have I commanded them or spoken to them," so it is in our time. Jesus Christ said concerning the time of reckoning that 'Not everyone saying to me, "Lord, Lord," will receive approval.' He explained:

"Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name . . . ?' And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness." (Jer. 14:14; Matt. 7:21-23) Then how can one identify the organization through which God is speaking to mankind today?

He must examine their claims in the light of God's written Word. Do they stick to God's Word the Bible and faithfully teach what it says? Do they live in harmony with it? Is it true of them, as

Jesus said, that "they are no part of the world," steering clear of involvement in its social and political strife? Do they produce the fruits of God's spirit in their lives? Are they known for their unity, believing and teaching alike wherever they are, so that God's message through them is the same to people everywhere? Are they readily identifiable as distinct from all others because they love one another as Jesus said would be true of those who really are in union with him and God his Father? —John 17:16, 20, 21; 13:35; Gal. 5:22, 23; 1 Cor. 1:10.

There are such persons today through whom God is speaking. By means of them you received this magazine. Prove to yourself whether they meet the Scriptural qualifications set out above; associate with them in the Kingdom Hall nearest you. Do not delay. Your life depends on finding out who today are truly God's servants that speak his Word and becoming one of them.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Jehovah Makes Full Might Abound.
- "From a Weak State . . . Made Powerful."
- Fulfilled Prophecy Testifies that God Lives.
- Meeting the Problems of Your Children.



TRUE Bible Christians are not persons who simply go to a place of worship once in a while, and then live like the rest of the world. Their entire outlook on life is deeply influenced by the fact that they are followers of Jesus Christ; so they take to heart the things that he and his apostles taught and did. As Jesus said, they are "no part of the world," and, for that reason, if they are mature Christians, they do not share the

outlook of the materialistic world around them. (John 17:16) They do not put material possessions above spiritual values. Is that true of you? If you are one who professes to be a Christian, have you taken to heart the counsel recorded in the Bible at Hebrews 13:5, which says: "Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things"?—NW; Yg; Ro; ED.

²Being "content with the present things" does not mean that one is indifferent about his situation in life. Certainly it does not mean that he is complacent about spiritual matters. He is not like

1. (a) How should one's being a Christian affect his attitude toward material possessions? (b) What pointed counsel on this matter is recorded at Hebrews 13:5?

2. (a) Before the Flood, how did people manifest their indifference toward the message Noah preached, and is the same attitude evident today? (b) Is such apathy what is meant by being "content with the present things"?

FRUITFUL CHRISTIANS MANIFEST

Godly Contentment

"Having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things."—1 Tim. 6:8.

fused with godly contentment.—Luke 17:26-30.

³Nor does the inspired counsel of the apostle Paul to be "content with the present things" mean that one should be satisfied with the present wicked system of things. This system of things is permeated with sin and is marred by sickness, suffering and death, which are the fruits of sin. It is characterized by men who are "lovers of money" and who indulge in the dishonesty that such love breeds. It is filled with those who are "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3:1-5) How could any true Chris-

3. Why could no true Christian be content with the present wicked system of things?

those people who apathetically "took no note" of the warning that God issued through Noah before the flood and who, as a result, went on 'eating and drinking and marrying and giving their daughters in marriage' in

a manner that indicated that they did not take seriously what Noah preached. (Matt. 24:38, 39) They showed by their actions that they did not really believe that global destruction was impending. Jesus said that the

same attitude would prevail in our day, and it does. Such ungodly apathy about spiritual matters is not to be con-

tian be content with such a state of affairs?—Gal. 1:4.

⁴ Then, just what is the contentment that the Bible encourages us to have? It is contentment with the material necessities of life. This does not mean that anyone is being told to be lazy, expecting others to provide for him while he takes it easy. (2 Thess. 3:10, 12; Acts 20:33, 34) But it does mean that we are being urged not to get trapped in the materialistic way of life of the world, constantly endeavoring to add to our material possessions, as if life itself depended on doing so or as if such possessions were the source of true happiness. For this reason Paul said with unmistakable clarity to his fellow Christian Timothy: "We have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." (1 Tim. 6: 7, 8; Eccl. 5:15) Can you, in all honesty, say that that is true of you?

LIFE DOES NOT RESULT FROM MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

⁵ On one occasion when Jesus was preaching in the territory of Judea, a situation arose that gave him the opportunity to emphasize the proper attitude toward material possessions. One of the crowd said to him: "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." Jesus did not agree to mediate that family dispute over inheritance, but he did discern what the difficulty was and so replied: "Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of covetousness." Jesus' warning against covetousness seems to indicate that the man was really seeking to get

something that was not due him; apparently the dispute had arisen over failure to respect the Law requirement that two parts of everything go to the eldest son. (Deut. 21:17) But the man's difficulty was not only that he was covetous; it went deeper than that. What made him think that way in the first place was that he felt that material possessions are the big thing in life, and Jesus made it plain, both for his benefit and ours, that such thinking is not sound, when he said: "Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:13-15) Life is from God. As the apostle Paul explained to men of Athens, "the God that made the world and all the things in it . . . himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things." —Acts 17:24, 25.

⁶ Developing the matter, Jesus used an illustration: "The land of a certain rich man produced well. Consequently he began reasoning within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, now that I have nowhere to gather my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my storehouses and build bigger ones, and there I will gather all my grain and all my good things; and I will say to my soul: "Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, enjoy yourself."'" But even if he got all his riches stored away, was there any assurance that he would live long enough to enjoy it? Did he really have security? No, as Jesus went on to show. "God said to him, 'Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your soul from you. Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?'" (Luke 12:16-20) And is that not just what so often happens in life? A man works hard for many years so that when

4. (a) So, what is the contentment that the Bible encourages us to have? (b) In this regard, what question should each one ask himself?

5. What situation provided a fine opportunity for Jesus to point out the proper attitude toward material possessions, and what was basically wrong with his inquirer's outlook on life?

6. (a) With what illustration did Jesus develop the point he was making on that occasion? (b) Why is a course like that of the man in Jesus' illustration a vain one?

he retires he will be financially secure, only to die before he even enjoys what he has saved up. What vanity!—Eccl. 2:17-19.

⁷ Jesus did not charge the man of whom he spoke with dishonesty in business, nor did he say that he had no interest in God. But his big mistake was that he had the wrong viewpoint toward life. He was busy acquiring material possessions and was not "rich toward God." (Luke 12:21) How well that describes the situation of the majority of people today! They may "believe in God," as they put it, but they feel that, when all is said and done, money will do more for them than faith. So they devote most of their lives to acquiring and enjoying material possessions, but, for insurance, as it were, they may include a little religion in their lives. They are persons "having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power," and the Scriptures urge us: "From these turn away." (2 Tim. 3:5) Do not be like them.

DO SPIRITUAL INTERESTS COME FIRST IN YOUR LIFE?

⁸ What is your outlook on life? Have you set your heart on acquiring material things, or does the service of God come first? There are countless persons in this world who are like that man of whom Jesus spoke in his illustration. Concern over material wants and needs comes first in their lives. They are busy earning a living, buying a home or redecorating one, entertaining guests or making trips here and there. They may say that they like the message of God's kingdom, but it is always in second place. It happens to them as Jesus said—"the anxieties of this system of things," "the deceptive power of riches" and "pleasures of this life" domi-

nate their lives and choke the word about the Kingdom, so it cannot grow and become fruitful. (Mark 4:18, 19; Luke 8:14) Such a course brings no glory to God.

⁹ On the other hand, there are those who have taken to heart the words of the Lord Jesus, who said: "My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples." (John 15:8) They may be men who are secularly employed, providing for their families. They may be mothers caring for their children. They may be students attending school. But they are, first of all, servants of God. They manifest the fruits of God's spirit in their lives, and they also bear Kingdom fruit, sharing in the proclamation of God's kingdom. They do not shove spiritual interests into second place but "always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name." (Heb. 13:15) Is that true of you? Jesus showed that it is true of those with "a fine and good heart," because they are the ones who favorably receive the word of God, "retain it and bear fruit with endurance." (Luke 8:11, 15) Their course glorifies God and leads to everlasting life.—Rom. 6:22.

¹⁰ Some persons who have been bearing godly fruit, however, turn aside from that right course, and this is often because they are no longer "content with the present things." Young people, for example, are easily influenced by the materialistic outlook of the world around them, and especially is this true if their parents are inclined to value highly the ability to command a big salary in the business world. As a result, they may set their hearts on the education that is offered by the world's institutions of "higher learning." Their de-

7. How do people today frequently show themselves to be like that man of whom Jesus spoke?

8. (a) In what way do many persons show that spiritual interests do not come first in their lives? (b) What prevents them from being fruitful Christians?

9. Of whom is it true that they "keep bearing much fruit," and with what results?

10. Why do some young folks who have shared in Jehovah's service seek a college education, and what are the pitfalls in such a course?

sire is not simply to learn a trade so that they can work with their hands and not be a burden on others; no, they want to be in an upper-income bracket. (1 Thess. 4:10-12) But what is wrong with that? Jesus frankly said that it would be more difficult for a rich man to get into the Kingdom than for a camel to get through the eye of a sewing needle. (Luke 18:24, 25) Rather than being content with "sustenance and covering," those who devote themselves to getting a "higher education" usually want to be able to enjoy "the rest of the things" that money can buy. (Mark 4:19) If they are going to succeed in the education they have set out to get, they have to work hard at it. Study of the Bible, association with the Christian congregation and participation in the Christian ministry are curtailed. Worldly associations predominate; worldly philosophy fills their minds. What happens? Perhaps not what they expected, though they would have known if they took seriously what the Bible says. (1 Cor. 15:33; Col. 2:8) It may even come as a shock to their parents. Why, just recently a man who wanted his boy to have a "good education" so that life would be easier for him found that, in just one year at college, the boy had lost his faith—something that no amount of money can buy.

¹¹ Others, too, may at one time have prized the truth of God's Word and set aside time to teach it to others. They applied what the Bible said at Colossians 4:5: "Go on walking in wisdom toward those on the outside, buying out the opportune time for yourselves." But they did not guard their hearts. They knew the truth in their minds, but in time their hearts began to long for more in the way of material possessions. Time that they had bought out from the world they began

to devote again to materialistic pursuits. At first they missed a few meetings of the congregation, then many. Participation in the field ministry became irregular, and finally stopped. In so doing, "some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains." (1 Tim. 6:10) This is not what they planned, but it is what happened. They came to be materially prosperous but spiritually impoverished. (Rev. 3:15-17) It emphasizes the truthfulness of Jesus' words: "You cannot slave for God and for Riches."—Matt. 6:24.

¹² Many are the individuals who, even in their quest for what might be considered just the normal requirements of life, allow their production of fruitage to God's praise to be stifled. They associate with Jehovah's people, but they are not really "rich toward God." Overtime secular work frequently crowds out attendance at the congregation meetings, because fear of displeasing their employer is stronger than their fear of displeasing God. They may have a token share in the field ministry because they know it is a Christian requirement, but their principal efforts are channeled into other interests. What will be their position when Armageddon strikes? Will Jehovah, who examines the heart, really find that they are persons who have loved him with all their heart and mind and soul and strength? (Luke 10:25-28) Will he preserve them into his new system of things? This is a matter for serious consideration. Not just next month or next year, but today, while we are yet alive and able to do things, is the time to prove that we want to be wholehearted praisers of Jehovah "from now on and to time indefinite."—Ps. 115:17, 18.

11. How have some others who at one time were active in God's service lost their spirituality?

12. (a) In what way does the course of some persons demonstrate that they are not truly "rich toward God"? (b) Why is this a matter for serious consideration now?

CONFIDENCE IN GOD AS PROVIDER

¹³ Obviously, when one puts material interests first in life, spirituality suffers. A person cannot produce fruit that is really an honor to God if he does not view things in God's way. What is the proper view of this matter? Jesus Christ when on earth made it clear that he never spoke of his own originality, but that he expressed the will of his Father in heaven. (John 14:10) So it is with interest that we read his words on the matter. Immediately after Jesus' illustration emphasizing that one's life does not result from the things he possesses, Jesus turned to his disciples and showed them how this principle applied in their lives. He spoke, not of piling up great riches, but of obtaining the necessities of life, saying: "On this account I say to you, Quit being anxious about your souls as to what you will eat or about your bodies as to what you will wear." Does not God provide food for the birds? Does he not 'clothe the vegetation of the field'? Then how much rather will he care for you who are his servants! "So quit seeking what you might eat and what you might drink, and quit being in anxious suspense; for all these are the things the nations of the world are eagerly pursuing." Christians are not to be like the "nations of the world." Their whole life is not to be a mere struggle for material necessities. (Eccl. 6:7) It is not that they need these things less than unbelievers. As Jesus went on to say: "Your Father knows you need these things. Nevertheless, seek continually his kingdom, and these things will be added to you."—Luke 12:22-31.

¹⁴ Take note that Jesus did not say that no one on earth would go hungry. As a matter of fact, he foretold "food shortages" for our time. (Mark 13:8) Nor is

there any assurance that professed Christians who simply do not like to work or refuse to do work that they consider too lowly would be cared for. (2 Thess. 3:10) Those who may be skeptical about the whole situation are given no reason to believe that they, with their lack of faith, will be thus favored by God. (Jas. 1:6-8; Heb. 11:6) Rather, the provision is made by God for 'workers,' those who "seek continually his kingdom," those who are "seeking first the kingdom." (Matt. 10:9, 10; 6:33) He did not promise material luxury—just "sustenance and covering."—1 Tim. 6:8; Luke 12:22, 31.

¹⁵ There are many thousands world wide who are keenly aware of the heavenly Father's blessing on their efforts to obtain life's necessities while putting Kingdom interests first. For example, a Christian overseer in Brazil who has a wife and four children was invited to the Watch Tower Society's special training course for overseers. He regularly works to care for his family, but, being of limited means from a material standpoint, he had no way to support them while he would be away. Shortly before he was to leave for school, he prayed about the matter to God. That prayer was answered when several in the congregation volunteered to care for his family materially while he was away becoming better equipped to care for all of them spiritually. In scores of cases the faith of such overseers was put to the test. Request for a leave of absence to attend the school was refused by their employers—but later was granted, and frequently with pay, when it was realized that the employee would quit the job if necessary and look for another one later, because he was a man who was "seeking first the kingdom." Certainly such overseers have

13. What attitude toward obtaining the necessities of life did Jesus urge his disciples to have, and how is this different from that of worldly people?

14. For whom did Jesus show that this provision would be made by God, and what would it include?

15. How has the heavenly Father blessed many Christian overseers for 'seeking first the kingdom,' and who can benefit from their example of faith?

a faith that others who worship Jehovah can beneficially imitate.—Heb. 13:7.

¹⁶ Particularly have those who are in the full-time service as pioneers experienced fulfillment of the promise that the material necessities of life would be provided if they put the service of God first. In one instance, a pioneer arrived back in his territory assignment after a Christian convention, with very little money and no lodging. In deciding how to spend his first day back, he called to mind Jesus' words at Matthew 6:33. All day long he worked in the field ministry, and as he went along he mentioned to householders that he was looking for a room to rent, but nothing was offered. Late in the afternoon, after witnessing to a favorably disposed woman, he again mentioned his need of lodging. A boarder in the home who had been listening from the next room called to the lady of the house and told her: "See that this man has a place to sleep, and invite him to eat with us. If he cannot pay, I will. He is doing God's work." The experience is not an isolated one; it is common among those who have left behind homes and possessions, that they might devote their entire lives to the service of God.—Acts 16:14, 15; Mark 10:29, 30.

¹⁷ This does not mean that one who 'seeks continually the kingdom' will always have an abundance of provisions, but he will find contentment. Concerning his experiences the apostle Paul, then in prison in Rome, wrote to the congregation at Philippi in Macedonia: "I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be self-sufficient [content]. I know indeed how to be low on provisions, I know indeed how to have an abundance. . . . For

16. What has been the experience of pioneers when they put the ministry ahead of their efforts to satisfy their material needs?

17. (a) What attitude on the apostle Paul's part enabled him to be productive under difficult circumstances? (b) What confidence on our part will enable us to continue to produce godly fruitage even in times of economic hardship?

all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me." (Phil. 4:11-13) Paul was not one who quit when the going got hard. Even there in prison he kept on seeking the interests of God's kingdom. He preached to the guards, and to others that he could arrange to have visit him. (Acts 28:16, 30, 31; Phil. 1:13) During the time he was in prison he wrote six letters of marvelous spiritual counsel that have become part of the Bible. Yes, even under adverse conditions, whether due to persecution or economic difficulties, one can continue to produce godly fruitage. As Jeremiah 17:7, 8 says: "Blessed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in Jehovah, and whose confidence Jehovah has become. And he will certainly become like a tree planted by the waters, that sends out its roots right by the watercourse; and he will not see when heat comes, but his foliage will actually prove to be luxuriant. And in the year of drought he will not become anxious, nor will he leave off from producing fruit." Having full confidence in Jehovah, he continues to put spiritual interests first.—Heb. 13:5, 6.

REACHING OUT FOR SOMETHING BETTER

¹⁸ When they pursue such a course the modern-day Christian witnesses of Jehovah prove that they have faith like that of those men of old times who are named with approval in God's Word. Abraham moved out of the materially prosperous city of Ur in ancient Chaldea at God's command and became a temporary resident in the land of Canaan. "By faith he resided as an alien in the land of the promise as in a foreign land, and dwelt in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the very same promise. For he was awaiting the city having real foundations, the builder and creator of which city is

18. How can we today show that we have faith like that of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and why should we desire to do so?

God." Away back then, in the twentieth century B.C.E., they were willing to forgo many of the comforts the world offered, because their hearts were set on a permanent city that God would build, a heavenly government under which they could live. If they had kept thinking about the place they had left behind, they could have returned to it. But they did not. "Hence God is not ashamed of them, to be called upon as their God." (Heb. 11: 8-16) Is God just as pleased with the course in life that you have taken?

¹⁹ We today live in critical times. These are the "last days" of this wicked system of things. Already over fifty-two years have passed since the Kingdom's establishment in heaven in 1914. The end of six thousand years of human history is very close. The physical facts that mark our time as the "conclusion of the system of things" are unmistakable. (Matt. 24:3) It is a time of great urgency. Do we believe it? The fact is that some who profess to believe it may lose out on the blessings of God's new system of things because they are not keeping their minds

19. (a) Why is ours a time of great urgency? (b) What may cause some who know these things to lose out on the blessings of God's new system of things, and what timely warning does Jesus give?

and hearts fixed on the hope ahead. Instead of finding contentment with "sustenance and covering" along with godly devotion, they are being sucked down into the world's materialistic whirlpool. Their pursuit of the pleasures of the world is more ardent than their service to God. That is why Jesus warns: "Pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth. Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man."—Luke 21:34-36.

²⁰ If our love for God abounds, and we have accurate knowledge of his Word, we will not allow ourselves to be drawn aside to worldly pursuits, but will keep our lives oriented around "the more important things." In this way we will prove to be fruitful Christians, "filled with righteous fruit, which is through Jesus Christ, to God's glory and praise."—Phil. 1:9-11.

20. In what way will we be able to continue to prove ourselves to be fruitful Christians?

Servants of God Full Time

ALL of Jehovah's witnesses, who are baptized Christians, are full-time ministers. They have dedicated their lives to God to do his will, and, having studied

1. (a) How many of Jehovah's witnesses are full-time ministers? (b) What is God's will for true Christians as shown by Jesus, and how did the early Christians respond to it?

the Bible, they know what that will is. Jesus Christ, as Jehovah's Chief Witness, set the example for them. (Rev. 3:14) He was a preacher of the good news of the kingdom of God, and he took that message to the people wherever they were. (Mark 1:14, 15; Luke 8:1; 4:15, 16; 5:27)

He trained his disciples to share in that work. Before leaving them he commissioned them to be witnesses of him "to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) They did not conclude that only a select few were to do this work, while the others looked on. Even secular historians who ridiculed Christianity testify that early Christians who supported themselves as "labourers, shoemakers, farmers" were, nevertheless, zealous preachers of the gospel.* The book *A History of Civilization* (by C. Brinton, J. Christopher and R. Wolff) reports: "The Christian was by no means content with the prospects of his own salvation. His acceptance of the will of God was not passive. He was from the first an ardent missionary, anxious to convert and save others."

² That spirit has not died out; it is yet alive among the modern-day Christian witnesses of Jehovah. They take note of Jesus' prophetic declaration for our day, namely: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:14) In nearly two hundred lands Jehovah's witnesses devote upward of 14,000,000 hours each month to this very work that Jesus foretold. And, in addition to their preaching, they also regularly attend and participate in congregation meetings.

³ Yet the preaching of the "good news" and the attending of meetings, even along with all the personal study and reading that one may do at home, does not fill the day of each one of Jehovah's witnesses, does it? So how can it be said that they are all full-time ministers? Because every aspect of their lives is affected by their

ministry. They may be secularly employed as laborers, farmers, office workers or in some other business, but they are, first of all, ministers of God. It is what they believe and teach as ministers that influences their choice of secular work, and this is what makes them conscientious workers. (Col. 3:22, 23) Their secular work may change, but not the ministry. Whatever they do is with an awareness that they are ministers of God. It influences their training of their children, their conduct when shopping in the market, when attending school, when engaging in recreation or sitting down to a meal. "Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God's glory." (1 Cor. 10:31) Not only in speech, but also in conduct, they endeavor to 'let their light shine,' that others may, as a result of what they observe, glorify God. (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:12; 2 Cor. 6:3, 4) So their being full-time ministers means that they are ministers of God twenty-four hours a day, every day. Is that the way you think of yourself—as a full-time minister of God?

⁴ Of course, some may be in position to do more in certain ways to advance the interests of pure worship than others. Not all qualify to be overseers, nor do all excel as public speakers, but each one does make a valuable contribution to the spiritual welfare of the congregation if he does in real earnest what he is able to do. (Rom. 12:6-8) So, too, not all are able to devote the same amount of time to the field ministry, but if we publicly praise the name of God, not grudgingly or under compulsion nor because we are seeking to please men, but because our hearts overflow with gratitude to our loving Father in heaven, this is well pleasing to God.—2 Cor. 9:7; Heb. 13:20, 21.

* Celsus, whose writings are referred to in *The History of the Christian Religion and Church, During the Three First Centuries* (New York: 1848), by Dr. Augustus Neander, translated by H. Rose.

2. What evidence is there that that spirit is yet alive?
3. How is it true that each baptized witness of Jehovah is a full-time minister?

4. (a) Are all of us able to do the same things, and to the same extent, to advance the interests of pure worship? (b) What motive in service on our part is well pleasing to God?

IS PIONEER SERVICE FOR YOU?

⁵ Since the preaching of the Kingdom message is a prominent part of the life of a Christian minister, and one of which he keeps a record so as to make a report to the congregation, some may be inclined to judge whether they are pleasing to God simply in terms of the hours they devote to the field ministry. It is fine that they see the importance of that work; we all should. We need to 'buy out' time from other pursuits to devote to this vital work. The apostle Paul wrote to the congregation at Ephesus: "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked." But from what should we 'buy out' the time? Are we to sacrifice our own spirituality, cutting out personal Bible study and meeting attendance in order to preach? Are fathers to neglect their families? Are mothers to neglect their responsibilities to their husbands and their children in order to preach more? No; that is not the point. It may be that these necessary things can be better organized to make more room for the field ministry, but do not forget that all these other responsibilities are part of one's life as a Christian minister. Paul goes on to say: "On this account cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." (Eph. 5:15-17) And then in the following verses he shows that the "will of Jehovah" includes proper attention to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the members of one's family. (Eph. 5:21-6:4) So, in ascertaining what one can do in the field ministry, one needs to take into consideration his entire life as a Christian and ask what course will truly result in the

best spiritual condition for all in the household and so will bring the greatest glory to God.

⁶ Some, on examining their situation, realize that the course that is truly consistent with their dedication to God is for them to be sharing in the field ministry full time, as pioneer ministers, devoting a hundred hours to preaching the "good news" each month. They have completed their secular schooling, are young, in good health and without family obligations or other responsibilities that have a prior claim on them. (Eccl. 12:1, 13) They do not choose to get established in a career in the business world, because they cannot see throwing in their lot with a system that God's Word plainly says is 'going out of business' in the near future. So how do they react to "attractive offers" from the world? During his last year of high school one young brother, just a short time ago, was offered scholarships that would have completely paid for a college education. But he knew that success he might enjoy in the world would be, at most, short-lived. He called to mind the Bible's counsel: "Do not be loving either the world or the things in the world . . . the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever." (1 John 2:15-17) Love for Jehovah and faith in His word of promise moved him to enroll as a pioneer.

⁷ On the West Coast of the United States a married man was busy paying for his home. It required regular, full-time secular work, but he spent some time in the field ministry. Yet, being honest with himself, he realized that he was more con-

6. (a) Why is it the right decision for most young people who have completed their secular schooling to enter the pioneer service? (b) How did one young brother recently respond to offers of scholarships for a college education, and why?

7. (a) Why did a brother on the West Coast of the United States sell his home to enter the pioneer work? (b) What blessings have he and his wife enjoyed since then?

5. (a) On what basis may some be inclined to judge whether they are pleasing to God, and why? (b) What ought to be taken into consideration in determining how much time one can devote to the field ministry?

cerned about his secular work and his home than he was with Jehovah's service. He knew that, to please Jehovah, he had to improve his spirituality. (Matt. 19:21; 5:3) After careful consideration, he sold his home and he and his wife became pioneers. They began to enjoy the service as they never had before. Soon they were invited to share in special pioneer service where the need was greater, then to the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead for missionary training, and now they are serving in Colombia. Jehovah has richly blessed them for the faith they showed in enlarging their share in the preaching work.

⁸ Others who have enrolled as pioneers have children to consider. In some cases it would not be possible to take on the responsibilities of a full-time pioneer minister and at the same time properly care for children. There are a variety of factors involved, including personal organization, one's health, and the ages and traits of the children. But, in examining her own circumstances along with her husband, one mother felt that her becoming a pioneer, even for a time, would be a good thing for the spirituality of their entire family, and she reported that that is the way it turned out. Her preschool-age boy went with her in the service and thoroughly enjoyed it and her seven-year-old began asking when he could pioneer. Another mother who also has pioneered said: "Knowing that pioneering doesn't excuse one from other obligations has made me a more conscientious wife and mother as well as a better housekeeper. In order to be fruitful in the ministry, pioneering has taught me that one must lean heavily up-

on Jehovah at all times." Having a mother who was a pioneer minister proved to be a rich blessing to these families. Would that also be true in your case?

⁹ In the case of a Witness living in Ohio the situation was different. She had the desire to pioneer, all right. But she became a Witness two years after her husband had left her with four youngsters to raise. She did not sidestep that responsibility, but diligently raised all four of those children to love and serve Jehovah God. Though she could not pioneer, she instilled the desire to share in full-time preaching in each one of her children. Each one of them spent between five and seven summer vacations in that full-time service and, on graduation from school, each one became a pioneer minister. Having faithfully cared for those family responsibilities, the mother too rejoiced to have the opportunity to enroll as a pioneer.

¹⁰ The problem facing another Kingdom publisher was different from that. He felt that he could pioneer if he could only arrange for adequate part-time secular work. For two years he tried in vain to make such arrangements with his employer. Finally, he realized that he would never pioneer if he did not put his full trust in Jehovah. He turned in his resignation; but almost immediately his boss called him into the office and said that he thought he ought to get a sizable salary increase. Determined not to let materialistic pressures curtail his service to Jehovah, he stood firm. After four years he is still pioneering, still has the needed "sustenance and covering," and has had the joy of seeing a new congregation with fifty pub-

8. (a) Mention some of the factors that might influence a mother's decision as to whether she could pioneer and still properly care for her children. (b) What was the effect on their families in the case of two mothers who pioneered?

9. How did a mother with four children to raise by herself properly shoulder that responsibility and at the same time show how she felt about pioneer service?
10. After trying for two years to arrange for convenient secular work so he could pioneer, what did one brother do, and what has been his experience since then?

lishers grow up in the territory where he serves.—1 Tim. 6:8.

¹¹ There are many who, after honestly appraising their personal circumstances, do not find that they can be regular pioneer ministers, devoting one hundred hours each month to the field ministry. But this does not necessarily mean that they love God less. If their being ministers of God truly affects all their activities in life, they, too, are full-time ministers. When faced with pressures from the unbelieving world, they are just as firm for what is right as are their brothers and sisters who are able to devote more time to the field ministry. Their hearts are in Jehovah's service, and they have a zealous share in it every month. They, too, are grateful to God that he has counted them worthy by permitting them to have a share in the ministry, and they 'buy out the opportune time' from other pursuits to seek first God's kingdom.

¹² Periodically, large numbers of these zealous ministers of the good news enroll as vacation pioneers for a period of two weeks or a month or more. It takes careful planning on their part and extra effort. They cherish that month in which they are able to devote a hundred hours to the field ministry, or seventy-five hours for the month if they are two-week pioneers. They may not be able to keep that pace all the time, but their love for Jehovah moves them to do it when they can. Many share in this activity during the month of April each year, when there is much special activity in the congregation. Others may do it during their vacation time or at regular intervals all year long. What blessings they enjoy as a result!

11. How do many who are not able to pioneer nevertheless demonstrate their wholehearted devotion to Jehovah God?

12. (a) For what special service do many of Jehovah's witnesses periodically enroll, and why? (b) When may a person share in vacation pioneer service?

ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE OF MISSIONARY SERVICE

¹³ In the first century of our Common Era there were some in the Christian congregation who were able to arrange their affairs to share in foreign missionary work. Among such were the apostle Paul, and his companions Barnabas, Mark, Silas, Luke and Timothy. It was not easy work, but there were rich spiritual rewards. In Philippi two of them were thrown into jail, but they were able to help both the jailer and his family to become believers. (Acts 16:25-34) Frequently travel in their territory was perilous, and Paul was endangered by highwaymen, flooding rivers and shipwreck. But he was grateful for God's undeserved kindness to him, and he had deep love for those whom he was able to instruct in The Way. (1 Thess. 2:8, 19, 20; 4:1) His attitude was as recorded at Acts 20:24: "I do not make my soul of any account as dear to me, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received of the Lord Jesus, to bear thorough witness to the good news of the undeserved kindness of God."

¹⁴ Similarly, there are those in modern days who, putting the ministry ahead of everything else in life, have become missionaries. One such missionary couple moved from the Caribbean islands to West Africa at a time when there were none of Jehovah's witnesses there, and they stayed on for twenty-seven years, until there were over ten thousand actively praising Jehovah's name. Many others have faithfully served for ten, fifteen or twenty years in missionary assignments. Those who have taken up missionary service might have chosen easier fields in

13. (a) In the first-century Christian congregation, who were some that shared in foreign missionary work? (b) What experiences did they have, and how did they view their ministry?

14. (a) In modern times, what privilege did a missionary couple enjoy in West Africa? (b) Why did not those who are now missionaries choose easier fields in which to serve Jehovah?

which to serve Jehovah, but their heartfelt gratitude to God for his undeserved kindness to them moved them to say, as did the faithful prophet Isaiah: "Here I am! Send me." (Isa. 6:8) They knew that the Kingdom good news yet had to be preached in other lands, and that the people there could never put faith in Jehovah and his kingdom if no one preached to them. (Rom. 10:13-15) On examining their circumstances in life, they realized that they could make the necessary adjustments to take up that service. Lack of faith did not deter them; they knew that Jehovah would fulfill his good promise to provide the things they needed. Indifference did not make them reason that, after all, God could use someone else to do the job; they were grateful to God for the privilege to be used by him. Love for Jehovah dispelled any fear, and they responded. Said one brother, many years after graduating from the Watchtower Society's missionary school and taking up a foreign assignment: "When decisions have to be made, it is proper to count the cost, but he who decides for the Kingdom and its interests will never be disappointed."

SERVING AT BETHEL

¹⁵ Some who have made that decision to put first the interests of God's kingdom have been invited to serve at one of the Bethel homes, branch offices or printing plants of the Watch Tower Society. Here, too, they do work like that of their Christian brothers in the first century. Tertius was privileged to do scribal work, writing the inspired letter to the Romans at the apostle Paul's dictation. (Rom. 16:22) Silvanus also recorded part of the Bible, at the apostle Peter's direction. (1 Pet. 5:12) Today, instead of making just one copy at a time, brothers in Bethel service print

and bind millions of copies of the Bible in many languages; and some are privileged to run printing presses on which Scriptural counsel provided through the "faithful and discreet slave" is turned out by the tens of thousands of copies every hour.—Matt. 24:45-47.

¹⁶ Others serving in Bethel homes do work like that of Stephen, who, as a waiter, 'distributed food to the tables' of those early Christians who were serving close together. That was no unimportant assignment, to be given to someone who could not do anything else. No, the Bible tells us that Stephen was appointed to that necessary work because he was "full of faith and holy spirit." He was a trustworthy man who could be counted on to do the job well. But at the same time, Stephen was zealous in the field ministry and a powerful defender of the Word of God. When opponents tried to dispute with him, "they could not hold their own against the wisdom and the spirit with which he was speaking." (Acts 6:1-10) Members of Bethel families around the world appreciate that fine example set by Stephen. They, too, are glad to do whatever work is assigned, and they realize that it is a great privilege to serve Jehovah and their brothers in this way. At the same time, they endeavor to have a full share in the field ministry, preaching from house to house and conducting Bible studies. Many of them are appointed servants in the congregations and public speakers. In such a theocratic atmosphere as exists at Bethel homes there is marvelous opportunity for spiritual growth. Grand privileges of service open up for willing servants. What a fine privilege to be serving in such a place during the remaining years of this old system of things!

15. How is some work performed by those in Bethel service like that done by Tertius and Silvanus in the first century?

16. (a) In what respects is some Bethel service like that of faithful Stephen? (b) How does Bethel service prove to be a marvelous blessing for those who lay hold of it?

ENCOURAGE OTHERS

¹⁷ It should be the earnest desire of every dedicated Christian to see Jehovah's name praised to the fullest possible extent in all the earth. We individually can have a share, and we can do much to encourage others to be praisers of Jehovah. The world is never going to offer such encouragement, because it lacks love for God. (Jas. 4:4; 2 Tim. 3:4; Matt. 24:12) But, in faithfulness to God, we owe such encouragement to others. Therefore the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Thessalonica: "Keep comforting one another and building one another up, just as you are in fact doing." (1 Thess. 5:11) As we study the Bible with others, we encourage them to become active praisers of Jehovah. Within the congregation, too, there are those who might have a fuller share in the service if they were given loving encouragement, perhaps in the form of an invitation to go along with you.

¹⁸ In like manner, when there is opportunity to encourage anyone in our midst to enlarge his privileges of service, it is a matter of faithfulness to God on our part to offer such encouragement. Is someone thinking about pioneer service? By all means commend him. Is he talking about applying for Bethel service or missionary work? Build him up. Do not be like those brothers in Caesarea to whom Paul had to say: "What are you doing by weeping and making me weak at heart?" (Acts 21:13) Nor be like Peter on that occasion when Jesus turned to him and said: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men." (Matt. 16:23) Rather, rejoice that the hearts of your brothers are so filled with

love for Jehovah that they are willing to be used more fully by him. Encourage them to move ahead, with full faith in Jehovah.

"KEEP PROVING WHAT YOU
YOURSELVES ARE"

¹⁹ If you are a baptized Christian, never lose sight of the fact that your entire life has been dedicated to God. It is not merely a few hours a week that you have vowed to devote to the doing of God's will. Your entire life ought to reflect the fact that you are a minister of God. Changes in your way of thinking and doing things were required when you became a Christian, and it was love for Jehovah that moved you to make those changes. But that was only the start. As one continues to study God's Word and personally experiences his goodness, one's own love grows and is expressed more fully. Unless he becomes 'dull in his hearing' of God's Word, he is going to press on to maturity. (Heb. 5:11, 12) Bible principles will more deeply influence all his decisions, and his desire to share to the full in the preaching of this good news of the Kingdom will grow stronger. Is this happening to you? To stay in the faith one must keep on growing spiritually. "Keep testing whether you are in the faith, keep proving what you yourselves are."—2 Cor. 13:5.

²⁰ Remember, the progress that you are able to make spiritually, and what you are able to accomplish in the service of the heavenly Father, do not depend solely on your ability. (2 Cor. 4:7) They are far more directly tied in with your willingness to be used by Jehovah. Have you learned to look to him for guidance in all that

17. Why should we encourage others in Jehovah's service, and what opportunities are there for all of us to do so?

18. If any in our midst express a desire to pioneer, or to take up Bethel or missionary service, what should we do, and why?

19. (a) To what extent should our lives be influenced by our dedication to Jehovah? (b) What evidences of advancement to maturity should we look for in ourselves?

20. What attitude on our part will make possible the accomplishing of the greatest good in Jehovah's service?

you do? Do you have full faith in his ability to sustain you as his servant? Do you appreciate fully that, while it is your privilege to plant and water in the min-

istry, it is God who makes it grow? (1 Cor. 3:6-9) If so, you will continue to respond to his leading. You will prove yourself to be a servant of God full time.

Have You Thought About Bethel Service?

HOW does a young man feel after spending four years at Brooklyn Bethel, the headquarters of the Watch Tower Society? Does he feel that he has wasted his life, that he has forfeited a college education? What are his thoughts?

A brother, who was a bundler on a Cottrell press used in printing *Awake!* magazines, after four years of Bethel life, personally wrote to N. H. Knorr, president of the Watch Tower Society, the following:

"I am very grateful to Jehovah to have tasted of these few years of Bethel service. Of course, I have appreciated the clean, cheerful room, the abundant supply of good, wholesome food, the close proximity of well-equipped libraries, the laundry and shoeshop, the chance to learn something about printing, the Primary School Course for new members of the Bethel family, the text discussions each morning and the *Watchtower* study on Monday nights, the privilege of being on the Public Speaking List, having association with the Gilead students from many lands, the thrill of being busy every minute in Jehovah's service, of being able to work on Bibles, books and magazines that serve to bring vindication to his Name, and the unspeakable privilege of close association with mature anointed brothers who form the nucleus of the New World society.

"I have enjoyed very much also the privilege of being assigned to a New York City congregation and working with the local brothers as a study conductor and Ministry School servant, and helping cover the territory assigned to the congregation.

"Also, many little considerations shown to us at Bethel have been received with appreciation, such as a desk of my own for personal organization and study, and our treatment as mature adults, shown by each possessing his own key. Also the provision for us to be able to show hospitality when guests come to visit and the assurance that we'll be

taken care of when we are sick contributed to the feeling of security one gets at Bethel.

"With regard to learning something at Bethel, I must admit, Brother Knorr, that your statement: 'Bethel service will prove far better than any secular education you could get,' was met, not with disbelief, but with some skepticism when I received your invitation four years ago. That skepticism was unfounded. Not only have I learned much about the Bible from the Primary School Course and the three-year coverage we are about to complete in the Theocratic Ministry School, but I've attended a full-fledged meeting every day at the morning text discussions. I've learned the application of Bible principles to daily life—such as 1 Thessalonians 4:11, which has helped to keep life simple and enjoyable. I've learned a lot about getting along with my brothers and how to associate with sisters, in groups, in an upbuilding way. Yes, too, I finally learned to enjoy singleness with its freedom for the ministry, its measure of independence, the chance for travel and occasional solitude. I've learned something of the art of printing. I've learned to listen more and speak less; the need for punctuality and personal organization, and other lessons in life too numerous to mention. Appreciated too was the firsthand education concerning life in other countries by association with Gilead students.

"I'll never forget the daily prayers at Bethel for the brothers in the field and, in turn, I'll keep you in my prayers with the memory of the good friends at Bethel and in many countries around the world."

Not many people have the privilege of receiving so pleasant a letter. But any dedicated Christian young man who diligently applies himself after coming to Bethel will find reason to express himself in a similar manner.

The viewpoint of parents whose sons have served at Bethel is also of interest. For

example, a circuit servant, a father of two sons who served at Bethel, wrote to the Watch Tower Society, saying:

"We no longer have our sons at Bethel. Our older son left Bethel three years ago to get married. Our younger son left Bethel the first of October for the same reason, after six years of Bethel service. . . . Our older son was there for five years. . . . It might be said we have had a member of our family in Bethel for the past seven and a half years.

"We thought we would like to let you know, from a parent's standpoint, we have appre-

ciated the Bethel life that was offered our sons. The training and association they received while at Bethel will be of great value to them for all of their lives. We feel our sons went to Bethel as boys and came out as capable men."

Many parents feel the same way about having their sons at Bethel. There is no finer place on earth where they could be. Young ministers who avail themselves of this privilege will cherish the experience the rest of their lives. Have you thought about serving at Bethel?

IS IT

RELIGION'S DUTY

TO ENTER THE POLITICAL FIELD?



IN ANCIENT Babylon, where false religion got its start after the flood, prostitution was a part of religious practice. Every female had to give up her virginity at the temple of Ishtar, goddess of fertility, called "queen of heaven" and "mother of the gods." The price paid by the male worshiper enriched the temple coffers. Many other religions having this Babylonish background practiced temple prostitution. Even in the days of the apostles, in Corinth, the chief goddess, Venus, the goddess of sexual love and licentious passion, was worshiped by prostitution. A commentator writes: "Public prostitution formed a considerable part of their religion; and they were accustomed in their public prayers, to request the gods to multiply their prostitutes! and in order to express their gratitude to their deities for the favours they received, they bound themselves, by *vows*, to increase the num-

ber of such women; for commerce with them was neither esteemed sinful nor disgraceful."*

While prostitution formed a part of the worship of Babylonish religions, in God's law to the nation of Israel no girl was allowed to be a prostitute. An Israelite girl who in this way brought reproach upon her father's house was to be put to death. (Lev. 19:29; Deut. 22:21; 23:17) Money obtained by prostitution was an abhorrent thing. (Deut. 23:18) In the Christian congregation, prostitution is an abhorrent thing. Fornication and adultery are listed as things that would prevent one from entering into the kingdom of God.—Gal. 5:19-21.

SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

There is also a symbolic, or spiritual aspect to this matter. Christians, the spiri-

* Clarke's Commentary, Volume VI, page 187.

tual sons of Jehovah God, are spoken of as being espoused to Christ. (2 Cor. 11:2) As a *body* of followers they are considered his bride. (Rev. 19:7, 8; 21:9) Their allegiance has been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to God's kingdom. (Col. 1:13) Jesus himself said that his followers were no part of the world. (John 15:19) A Christian who would become a part of the world or who would violate his allegiance to Jehovah God and to Christ by entering into political connections with the world would be engaging in spiritual fornication. The Bible writer James says: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God." (Jas. 4:4) A religious organization, therefore, that dabbles in politics and interferes in the political affairs of the governments or tries to reform the social order and make over this world is engaging in prostitution, showing itself to be a part of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion.

Today we see the religious systems of Christendom practicing spiritual fornication just as it was in places like Babylon and Corinth, doing so as an integral part of their religion, their form of worship. Dr. James A. Pike, while still Episcopal bishop of California, went on record as claiming that "the church ought to be passionately involved in political struggles, bent on transforming the world."* Donald Soper, one of Egypt's leading ministers, expressed himself on the matter: "I believe that Socialism is the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth. I believe that though the Labour Party is not Socialist, it could be and it will be if Christians for Jesus Christ's sake enter it, transform it, and use it as a vehicle for the fulfillment of our 'Father's good

pleasure to give us the Kingdom.'"[†] The Houston, Texas, *Post* devoted almost an entire page to the subject "Organized Religion Fights for Political Power."[‡]

Interference in political affairs is true, not only of Christendom, but also of the so-called pagan religions; for example, German correspondent G. Bonn reported in *Atlas*, October 1965, with regard to Narada Thero, a monk active in the political affairs of Ceylon: "It is political and militant Buddhism which keeps South-east Asia in ferment today. . . . The letters that Narada Thero dictates here are more concerned with diplomatic strategy than with spiritual wisdom."

THE MOST INFAMOUS HARLOT

There is no question that much turmoil and suffering have been caused by these things, but does God look with a smile of approval upon religion's involvement in politics as her duty and commission? God went to the pains of providing a special vision to the apostle John, giving his official viewpoint and judgment. John describes the vision in these words: "And one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying: 'Come, I will show you the judgment upon the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, whereas those who inhabit the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.'"—Rev. 17:1, 2.

First of all, Jehovah speaks of judgment upon her. She sits upon many waters which represent the people of the earth, as shown at Revelation 17:15. This harlot is shown to be no ordinary harlot, for she has as her customers kings, including today's kings of the entire inhabited earth who are now being gathered by demon-inspired expressions to the bat-

* *Awake!*, August 8, 1966.

[†] *The Methodist Magazine*, August 1959.

[‡] *Awake!*, August 8, 1966.

tlefield of Har-Magedon. Hers is a long career of harlotry or fornication. By selling herself to kings and rulers, the wine of her fornication has affected all the earth's inhabitants, making them drunk, crazed, falling down and dying as a consequence.

John gives us further information about the harlot: "And he carried me away in the power of the spirit into a wilderness. And I caught sight of a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored wild beast that was full of blasphemous names and that had seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and was adorned with gold and precious stone and pearls and had in her hand a golden cup that was full of disgusting things and the unclean things of her fornication. And upon her forehead was written a name, a mystery: 'Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth.' And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the holy ones and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus."—Rev. 17:3-6.

John makes it clear that this harlot is not the ancient Babylon on the Euphrates River that fell from world power in 539 B.C.E. and finally after centuries of decline went down to everlasting destruction. No, it is *Babylon the Great, the worldwide empire of false religion*. She is pictured as being in a wilderness, where wild beasts belong. True to the picture, she sits on a wild beast.

THE HARLOT RIDES A BEAST

What is the scarlet-colored beast upon which Babylon the Great rides? It is different from the wild beast of Revelation 13:1, 2, which was spotted like a leopard, although in general shape it is like this wild beast that ascended out of the sea. Its color is different. This scarlet beast is not said to have ascended out of the sea

but it has seven heads and ten horns and is full of blasphemous names to resemble the original wild beast, which had upon its heads blasphemous names. The scarlet-colored beast also has ten horns though not with ten diadems, which the horns of the first wild beast had. It is an image of the wild beast that came out of the abyss of the sea. Revelation 13:14, 15 reveals that the two-horned wild beast that ascended out of the earth was the one that proposed the making of the image of the beast. Revelation 17:3 shows what the image looked like. It copies the outline of the wild beast of the sea. When did the scarlet-colored wild beast appear and when did the harlot get upon its back?

The two-horned wild beast was most prominent at the peace conference in France in 1919 when the leading representatives of Britain and America, composing this beast as the Seventh World Power, argued for an international peace-keeping organization, the League of Nations, and won. The peace conference signed the peace treaty into which the covenant for a League of Nations had been incorporated. This took place on June 28, 1919, and by October the required number of governments had ratified the treaty with its covenant, and the treaty went into effect in France.

In 1919 religious organizations of Christendom came out in favor of the League, advocating its adoption. On January 10, 1920, the signatory powers ratified the treaty in Paris and the League of Nations went into effect. King George V of Great Britain as supreme governor of the Church of England was in favor of the League, and Greece, of which the Eastern Orthodox Church is the state church, entered the League on March 30, 1920.

The Pontifex Maximus of the Roman Catholic Church had no official say at the peace conference. This was because of the

apparent connections of the Papal Vatican with the Teutonic Allies during World War I. So the pope of Rome was not permitted to intervene by diplomatic acts in regard to peace or to questions arising from the war.* But Roman Catholic expressions of support of the League came later on.

So it is seen that Babylon the Great lost no time in getting a seat on the beast. She had already made steps toward it in 1919. To her the beast was attractive. It was a scarlet color, which to her represented royalty, which she so much loves. It was a mark of luxury—she herself is arrayed in purple and scarlet.—Matt. 27: 28-31; 2 Sam. 1:24.

RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS WORSHIP THE BEAST

Babylon the Great thereby committed further fornication with the kings of the earth. She worshiped this "image" of the wild beast and induced others to do so. The blasphemous names it has are such as "the only light there is," "the hope of the world," and Babylon the Great herself gave it the name "the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth." The United Nations, which is the present name of the international peace organization, was visited by the pope on Monday, October 4, 1965. During his visit he labeled it with further blasphemous names, saying "this organization represents the obligatory path of modern civilization and of world peace," and "peoples of the earth turn to the United Nations as the last hope of concord and peace." He encouraged worship of the beast by saying, "We presume to present here, with their tribute of honor and of hope, our own tribute also" and "the edifice that you have constructed [the UN] must never fail; it must be perfected."[†]

* *The Encyclopedia Americana*, edition of 1929, Volume 17, pages 632, 633.

[†] *New York Herald-Tribune*, October 5, 1965, page B, special edition.

These names attached to it are blasphemous in that they attributed to the League and the United Nations that which only God's kingdom can do. These names reproach God, they turn the hopes and confidence of the people to a man-made thing and make an image to be worshiped in place of Jehovah God and to trust in instead of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom.

The woman is shown as being arrayed in purple and scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stone and pearls. By means of her fornication this international harlot has enriched herself. By her false, misleading doctrines she has deceived people and made them easy prey of the political rulers and in turn has received from the politicians riches and special favors. She can control the people by means of her religion and thus can turn over for gain all their support to the kings of the earth and the rulers. The cup in her hand, which means that it is something she holds out for her religious adherents to drink, is of gold. In other words, on the outside it appears beautiful and fit only for containing the best of drinks, but, as Jesus told the religious leaders of his day, the cup, inside, is full of disgusting things and the unclean things of her fornication.—Compare Matthew 23:25, 26.

As a result of drinking the wine of her cup and because of her fornication with the rulers, the people have been made to suffer untold hardships through religious wars, economic backwardness, illiteracy, low morals, and lack of faith in the Bible, with consequent opposition to God's Messianic kingdom.

ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN OF THE HARLOT

The harlot has her name written on her forehead for all to see. While it has been a mystery, a religious secret, just what she symbolized, Jehovah God has unveiled

her and exposed her so that all can see that she is the world empire of false religion. She is identified clearly now, just as Jehovah's Christian witnesses are identified as the slaves of God and Christ by the stand they take and by their activity, as shown at Revelation 14:1. She identifies herself by her activities as being like ancient Babylon, dominated by false religion that stems from Nimrod the mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah God. She is actually a slave of the Devil.

Although the woman is a harlot, she is a mother. She has many daughters. These are the various religious sects, both in Christendom and in pagandom, that compose her as an international organization, the world empire of false religion. All these daughters or harlot organizations are copying their mother in committing fornication with the kings of the earth. She has tried to induce the true Christian congregation under Jesus Christ to become a harlot, but she has failed in her efforts.

Babylon the Great is a mother also in another sense, that is, the mother of "the disgusting things of the earth." She has claimed to represent God but has brought forth illegitimate children, such as idolatry, both literal and figurative, contrary to God's law. (Rom. 2:22; Matt. 24:15; 1 Ki. 11:5, 7; 2 Ki. 23:13) Also, she has brought forth illegal persons, spirit mediums, fortune-tellers, astrologers, and she has even instituted and carried on the offering of human sacrifices. (2 Ki. 23:24; Isa. 66:3; Ezek. 20:7, 8, 30; Hos. 9:10) Instead of cultivating the fruitage of the spirit and encouraging her religious adherents to do so, she has practiced and promoted among her supporters the works of the flesh, such as obscene practices, loose conduct, even temple prostitution with its immorality; also drunkenness is indulged in to the honor of a false god.

DO NOT BECOME DRUNK WITH THE HARLOT

Babylon herself is an old drunkard, but her drink is a more disgusting one than alcoholic drinks, for she loves to get drunk on human blood, especially blood that has been shed in religious persecutions. Even before the apostle John's day she had become "drunk with the blood of the holy ones," and was responsible for shedding the blood of Jesus Christ, "the Holy One." (Acts 3:14, 15; 4:27, 30; Mark 1:24; Luke 4:34) But even to this day she has drunk her fill "with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus," as God's most bitter earthly enemy. Urged on by Satan she has made a fanatical effort to deaden the voices of these witnesses who are preaching Jehovah's Messianic kingdom and has therefore caused the death of many of them.—Rev. 17:6; 6:9-11.

So, then, the question, "Is it religion's duty to enter the political field?" is important to all, but especially to those who are members of religious organizations, because who wants to become a drunkard with Babylon the Great, particularly drunk on blood because of supporting and being allied with the bloodguilty, murderous organization? Who wants to be guilty of blasphemy against God and of worshiping an image that opposes God and his kingdom? (Rev. 18:3, 4; 6:10, 11) Remember that the vision given to John in Revelation was of the judgment of the harlot. Surely we do not want to come into judgment with the Almighty God by inciting him to anger. As the apostle Paul says, "We are not stronger than he is, are we?"—1 Cor. 10:22.

In succeeding issues of this magazine more details about the scarlet-colored wild beast according to the Revelation given to John will be discussed and also the execution of God's judgment upon the infamous harlot, Babylon the Great.

I AM eighty-three years old but very happy. My happiness arises largely from the fact that over fifty years ago I offered myself as a willing volunteer in the full-time service of Jehovah now called the pioneer ministry. From that time till now I have liked to think of the words of the psalmist: "Your people will offer themselves willingly"; and how grateful I am that I offered myself willingly as a pioneer!—Ps. 110:3.

I was born in Eden, Pennsylvania; my parents being of the old-order Amish faith of Lancaster County. These Amish folks are very plain in their way of living and dress, and some of them still travel about with horse and buggy.

Due to my father's death when I was four years old, our farm was sold; and in time I went to live with my sister on a Lancaster County farm, where one could enjoy the beauties of God's creation. Often I would stroll through the apple orchard, so beautiful in the spring, with the tree trunks whitewashed and the branches just filled with fragrant pink blossoms. "What a wonderful Creator and Provider!" I would say to myself; but in the Amish Church I was taught that someday all these things God created would be burned up. I was also bothered by the teaching that the wicked would suffer forever in torment. This all seemed so unreasonable, and was this really what the Bible taught?

I was always interested in the Bible and longed for a better understanding of God's Word, but it was not until the year 1906 that I came in contact with the Bi-

Offering Myself Willingly

As told by Malinda Z. Keefer

ble's truth. My brother-in-law, knowing my love for the Bible, gave me a copy of one of Charles T. Russell's printed sermons entitled "Where

Are the Dead?" Great was my joy in knowing that the Bible taught that the

dead are asleep and not conscious somewhere in torment. This was just the beginning of the light that would shine in my life brighter and brighter. How happy I was to learn that the earth and its beauty would never be destroyed! I was willing and eager to learn more of God's Word, and how grateful I was to Jehovah for letting me see his truth!

LEAVING THE AMISH CHURCH

Others in the same Amish church began to see God's truth. But some said we were going crazy on religion. When my brother-in-law handed me *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, the first volume of the *Studies in the Scriptures*, he said, "If you don't want to be called crazy, don't read it." Of course, he knew I would read it, as he was eagerly reading it himself. I was reminded of what Festus said to the apostle Paul: "You are going mad, Paul! Great learning is driving you into madness!" Paul said: "I am not going mad . . . but I am uttering sayings of truth and of soundness of mind." (Acts 26:24, 25) I, too, had to make my mind over to God's will and way for true Christians, and at that time I discarded the Amish garb I was then wearing.

The Amish minister called different times to get me to come back to church. When I knew the day of his coming, I

would get up at three o'clock in the morning to study my Bible so I could defend the truth, as the apostle Peter said Christians should be always ready to make a defense before everyone that demands a reason for their hope. (1 Pet. 3:15) For me the Bible was now a meaningful book.

There was quite a stir in the church when, not just I, but twenty-four other persons also left the Amish Church. The rules of the Amish Church are that if one leaves the church the members must not eat with him. I was shunned by them in many ways, but no intimidation or fear of man could turn me back from offering myself to Jehovah as a willing volunteer for God's work. Jehovah had now shown me a new way of life. How well I remember the last time I went to church, and Revelation 18:4 (AV) kept going through my mind: "Come out of her, my people," "Come out of her, my people." That I did.

I began meeting with a little group of Bible Students, as Jehovah's witnesses were then called, and there I learned more of Jehovah's wonderful purposes. The activity we engaged in then was the leaving of tracts, copies of *The Bible Students Monthly*, at the doors on Sunday morning in the hope that some would read them and seek further knowledge of God's Word.

OFFERING MYSELF AS A PIONEER

However, this limited activity did not satisfy me, as I wanted to share full time in the service. I was willing, but how could I get started in the colporteur work, as the pioneer work was then called? A way was opened up. On June 1, 1907, a few others and I went to Pittsburgh to hear Brother Russell, the Watch Tower Society's president. I talked to him of my desire to enter the full-time service but said that I felt in need of more knowledge. His reply was, "If you want to wait until

you know it all you will never get started, but you will learn as you go along." Then he told me of a sister in Ohio who wanted a companion. While waiting to hear from her, arrangements were made for me to stay in Pittsburgh. Here I was—just a little country girl in a big city! Yet I was mindful of the blessings Jesus foretold for those who offered themselves willingly: "Everyone that has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive many times more and will inherit everlasting life." (Matt. 19:29) I will never forget the encouragement I received and the kindness shown me by the Watch Tower Society's headquarters family.

All arrangements were now made, and I was on my way to Zanesville, Ohio, my first assignment in the pioneer ministry. My prayers were answered, and I could say with the apostle Paul that a large door that led to activity had been opened to me, and through this door I willingly entered.—1 Cor. 16:9.

I had never met the sister I was to work with; but when I did, she showed me much kindness and help. Now, through the strength of Jehovah, I was knocking on my first door to explain Bible truth to others. Little did I realize that this would be my privilege for fifty-nine years! What a privilege from Jehovah!

I was now looking forward to my first convention, to be held in Niagara Falls, New York, August 29–September 5, 1907. What a thrill it was to be there with so many others of like faith! It was my first opportunity to symbolize my dedication by water baptism. *The Watch Tower* of October 1, 1907, described that baptism: "It was decided to use a lagoon or byewater off the Niagara River for the water immersion, and hold the service on the bank where the hillside formed a natural amphitheatre. An audience of about 1,500

gathered at the appointed hour, and after an address explanatory of the true baptism and its water symbol, 241 were immersed." What a joyful time that was!

I will always remember that Niagara Falls assembly also for the talk given by Brother J. F. Rutherford, later to become the Watch Tower Society's president. He gave a convention talk on the importance of prayer, and it was especially helpful to me to know that Jehovah always provides the help we need, if we look to him. It certainly was true, as *The Watch Tower* described that convention: "As for spiritual profit and manifestation of the Master's love we cannot imagine how it could have been improved upon—but this was true also of the Indianapolis convention and others. It seems true of our conventions . . . that 'The last always seems the best.'" And that has been true with the many other assemblies I have attended.

My next pioneer assignment was in the State of Delaware and along the eastern shore of Maryland, where we found the people very friendly and much literature was placed. Later, in 1914, we went back to work the same territory, during World War I. In a small town in Delaware my companion and I were taken to the office of the Justice of the Peace by a secret service man. The office door was locked and the secret service man asked many questions. We showed them the purpose of our work. Eventually the Justice of the Peace pulled out the fourth volume of the *Studies in the Scriptures*, entitled "The Battle of Armageddon," and said he had read it and found nothing wrong with it. They decided to let us go. We were thankful to Jehovah to continue in the service during those trying times.

The pioneer work has taken me into fifteen states. While working around Williamsport, Pennsylvania, I met Nathan J. Keefer, who was reared in a Christian

home. When I met him he was congregation servant of the Williamsport congregation. He was also a member of the Brooklyn Bethel or headquarters family of the Watch Tower Society for several years. In 1928 Nathan and I were married, and then we enjoyed our willing service together.

In 1929 came the financial collapse and depression; banks were closed. During a depression could we make ends meet? We never doubted, knowing that Jehovah was our Provider. It was a joy to bring the good news of the Kingdom to the depressed people in the southern state where we were working. There was very little money to be had. We could often trade a five-cent booklet for a spool of thread. We also traded our Bible literature for soap coupons, vegetables, eggs, chickens, and so forth. One day a chicken got away from us and it struck out for home across a plowed field, but it had to be captured, and it was, as it was needed for a trade-in on gasoline for our car. We pioneered in isolated territory most of the time.

SPECIAL PIONEER PRIVILEGES

In 1939 the door of activity opened still wider. The Watch Tower Society asked Brother Keefer to serve as a zone servant in Virginia and West Virginia. This involved visiting about twenty small congregations in the area. It was a real privilege to work with these friends and we were like a big family. When the zone work ended, we became special pioneers.

Our first assignment as special pioneers was in Harrisonburg, Virginia. A *Watchtower* study was started with the interested ones, and we celebrated the Memorial of the Lord's death with this little group in the spring of 1942.

Our next assignment was Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania, a mining town of many lan-

guages. This was the last assignment for Nathan and me together, as he passed away before we finished this assignment. Many times, as we would be leaving friends, he would say, "Keep up the good work!" I felt he would say the same to me, and this I was willing to do with the help of Jehovah.

In 1943 the Society assigned me to Trenton, New Jersey, with ten other special pioneers. There were about twenty publishers in Trenton at that time; now there are four congregations. I was glad to have a little share in this expansion.

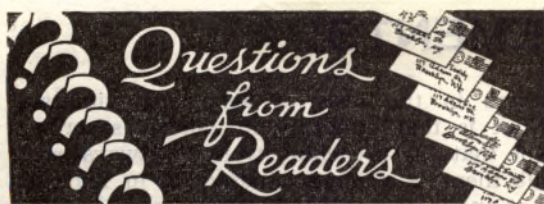
After serving there as a special pioneer for twenty years, with blessings too numerous to recount, my eyesight began to fail due to the development of cataracts; so in 1963 the Society gave me an assignment in my home territory, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

There have been a few problems over the years, but by my sticking close to Jehovah's organization they soon melted away. My one cataract has been removed

and the operation was successful. I am still offering myself willingly as long as this door of activity remains open to me. And, while putting Kingdom interests first, I have never lacked any of the necessities of life.

Jehovah's provisions have been so wonderful all down through the years, and the encouraging letters I have received from the Society from time to time have been a great blessing too. My years of pioneering have been full of joy and blessings. In recent months I have had to conserve strength and so now devote most of my ministerial time to making back-calls and conducting home Bible studies. I am presently blessed with some good studies and find great joy in teaching these sheeplike ones God's truth.

Now, at eighty-three years of age, I have enjoyed fifty-nine years of pioneering. How thankful I am that I offered myself willingly as a pioneer when a young woman and always put Kingdom interests first!



● Why, after pardoning Adonijah, did King Solomon have him put to death when he requested Abishag as his wife?—R. F., U.S.A.

In order to understand Solomon's actions, first consider the background. When David was in his old age and apparently greatly weakened by his long, vigorous life, his servants chose the beautiful virgin Abishag to serve as his nurse and companion. (1 Ki. 1:1-4) Even though David "had no intercourse with her," she was evidently viewed as being his wife or concubine. As such, according to

ancient Oriental custom, she would become the property of his heir when David died.

The account concerning Abishag directly precedes the details of the abortive attempt to gain the crown by David's oldest surviving son, Adonijah. It would seem to be so placed to shed light on Adonijah's actions during the early part of Solomon's reign. After ascending the throne, Solomon extended to would-be King Adonijah a conditional pardon. Later Adonijah cunningly persuaded Solomon's mother, Bathsheba, to ask her son to give him Abishag as a wife. Solomon concluded that Adonijah's request indicated a subtle effort by this usurper to strengthen his false claim to the throne of Israel, not simply a desire for a beautiful wife. The king reacted by revoking Adonijah's pardon and ordering his death.—1 Ki. 2:13-25.

Hence, Solomon did not act out of wild or irresponsible jealousy, but in such a way as to protect his rightful position as the anointed king on "Jehovah's throne."—1 Chron. 29:23.

Making God's Service Our Chief Joy

THERE are many activities that result in a measure of joy to those who engage in them, especially if done from humanitarian motives. But none of these, nor all of them put together, can compare with God's service or worship when it comes to giving one rich and enduring joy. Yes, as foretold, "my own servants will cry out joyfully."—Isa. 65:14.*

A Christian's joy is a pleasurable feeling of satisfaction in knowing that he is doing the right thing, pleasing God. It comes from knowing that we are doing good work that benefits others, furthers God's interests and magnifies his name. The realization of such things brings us a joyful sense of contentment and inner tranquillity that can always be ours.—Phil. 4:4.

To be able to make God's worship or service our chief joy we must dwell on the things that will give us joy. We cannot expect to have this joy if we dwell on unpleasant things or experiences. Rather, we must look at our ministry positively, at what it all accomplishes in fulfilling God's purposes, in separating people, in witnessing to his name and kingdom and in proving our integrity.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, June 1, 1966.

How do we show that we are making God's service our chief joy? By thinking about it, by talking about it whenever opportunity affords, by seeking first God's kingdom. (Matt. 6:33) We also show it by buying out time from worldly pursuits and pleasures for it—for meetings, for personal study and for the field ministry. (Eph. 5:15, 16) We show it by taking good care of our physical powers, avoiding over-indulgence in food and drink, the keeping of late hours, undue excitement, all of which are so likely to rob us of our vital powers that we could otherwise use in God's service and to the upbuilding of our brothers and ourselves.—1 Cor. 9:25.

And, of course, we show we make God's worship our chief joy by freely contributing of our means according to what we have, cheerfully, remembering that the more we give proportionately, the greater our joy.—Luke 21:1-4; Acts 20:35; 2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7.

Finally, let us never forget how important a good condition of heart is toward making God's worship our chief joy.—Isa. 65:14; Prov. 4:23.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1966 WATCH TOWER PUBLICATIONS INDEX

Now available is the new *Watch Tower Publications Index 1966* containing subject and scripture indexes to all issues of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* for 1966, the book *Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God*, 1967 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, *What Has God's Kingdom Been Doing Since 1914?*, and *Kingdom Ministry* for 1966. Available for 10c. Also available, *Watch Tower Publications Index 1961-1965* (50c), and *Watch Tower Publications Index 1930-1960* (\$1). Send today.

FIELD MINISTRY

There are many things in life that may bring a person a measure of joy, but there is one source of joy that stands out above all

others in the lives of Jehovah's witnesses. What is that? Sharing in Jehovah's service. Not that the preaching work is always easy, but there is abiding satisfaction in knowing that one is doing the will of God and is aiding his fellowmen to lay hold of eternal life. It is this joy that Jehovah's witnesses will have during February as they call at the homes of people to discuss the Bible and to offer, as an aid to interested persons, a year's subscription for *The Watchtower* for just \$1.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 5: Fruitful Christians Manifest Godly Contentment. Page 73. Songs to Be Used: 30, 35.

March 12: Servants of God Full Time. Page 79. Songs to Be Used: 52, 63.