The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

SEPTEMBER 1, 1972
Semimonthly

YOU ARE NEVER ALONE

HELP FROM ON HIGH

MEETING THE CHALLENGE OF MORAL PRINCIPLES

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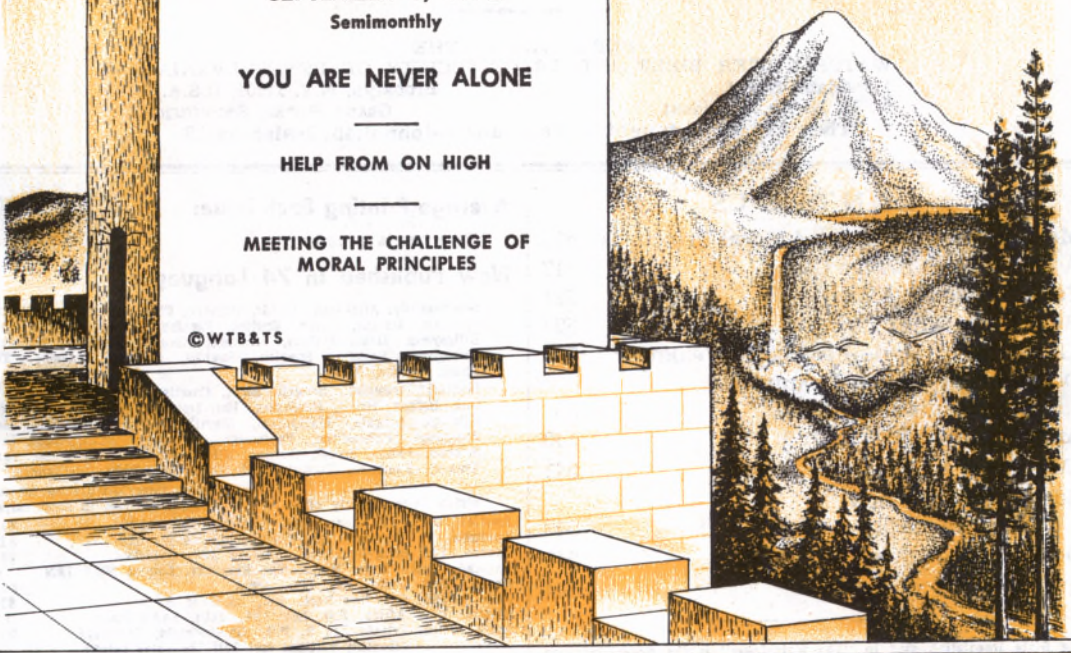

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

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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The WATCHTOWER
Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
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Meeting the Challenge OF MORAL PRINCIPLES

"THE Sorrow and the Pity." That was the name of a four-and-a-half-hour motion picture being shown in the spring of 1972 throughout the United States. In a blunt and artless way it documented how some people behaved during the German occupation of their country. One reviewer stated that it served a fine purpose in that "it forces us to examine ourselves and our smug assumptions about how we would behave in a moment of national crisis. . . . Would we risk pain and prison and death for our beliefs?" Many, faced with that crisis, did not.

By way of contrast, it has been noted, the Christian witnesses of Jehovah during those times were the exception to the rule. They refused to compromise. As Professor Ebenstein, of Princeton University, wrote in *The Nazi State,* "each member seems to be a fortress which can be destroyed but never taken." Why? One reason no doubt was that in their everyday lives they had been meeting the challenge of moral principles, and so, when a crisis came, they were well prepared to handle it and come off the victors.

Today most people are not facing a national crisis posing such vital issues. But all persons are involved in a conflict between the forces of right and those of wrong. Where, then, do we stand? Are we meeting the challenge of moral principles in our everyday lives?

One of the glories of our humanity is that we are free moral agents. That is, we are capable of understanding the difference between right and wrong and are free to choose to be governed by one or the other. This, as much as any other one factor, testifies to the vast gulf that exists between us and the brute creation. Those who accept the evolution theory choose to overlook this all-important difference. Yes, we alone of all earth's creatures have a moral sense; we alone can appreciate the difference between what *is,* a world filled with wickedness and violence, and what *ought to be,* a world of righteousness and peace. We alone find a need for an explanation of things, a need for religion.

God's Word, the Bible, eloquently testifies to this great difference. Only man was made in God's image and likeness. Only man was given a moral issue to face: "As for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die."—Gen. 1:26-28; 2:16, 17.

Fittingly, man, by reason of his higher endowments, has, not only greater privi-

leges and a greater capacity for enjoying life, but also greater responsibilities. It is even as Jesus said: "Everyone to whom much was given, much will be demanded of him; and the one whom people put in charge of much, they will demand more than usual of him."—Luke 12:48.

To be governed by moral principles means to put obedience to conscience ahead of selfish gain, ahead of material things. When we stop to think about it, actually all the animals are materialists, for to them physical comfort and satisfaction of their sexual impulses are all that matter. Interestingly, the Bible tells us that the wisdom marked by selfish strife and jealousy is animalistic. Further, the Bible tells us that the wicked are like unreasoning brutes, and, like them, such people will also perish.—Jas. 3:14-16; 2 Pet. 2:10-13.

Today the world has, by and large, become animalistic and as a result it is ever harder to govern oneself by moral principles. Never before have there been such temptations and pressures toward self-interest, expediency, greed, love of sensual pleasure or thirst for power. Every day we are faced with moral challenges, with temptations to compromise.

Of course, the challenges are not the same for all. Because of heredity and/or environment they differ. For one, a challenge might be posed because of the thrills and excitement associated with gambling, such as betting on the horses. For another, it may be the use of narcotics, because of the pleasure associated with the addiction. For many others, the challenge is posed because of their leaning toward sexual immorality. Nor are there only a few for whom hard work represents a challenge, because of their love of ease or just plain laziness. Likewise a real challenge of self-control faces many who imbibe alcoholic beverages.

To meet the challenge of moral principles, to come off victorious when temptations or pressures are applied, is not easy; it is not the line of least resistance. But it is the only wise, the only satisfying, the only rewarding course. The wisest human king that ever lived proved to himself that the pursuit of material things leads only to frustration.—Eccl. 2:1-11.

To meet these challenges successfully takes alertness. And it also requires looking to God for help. As Jesus said: "Keep on the watch and pray continually, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:41) And it also requires self-discipline, self-control, even as the apostle Paul appreciated: "I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow."—1 Cor. 9:27.

Additionally, it will help you to meet the challenge of moral principles to remind yourself continually of the fact that you are accountable to the Creator, and that you should ever beware of displeasing him. That is why His Word tells us that "the fear of Jehovah is the start of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10) It will also be a great help to read God's Word the Bible daily. Not only is it filled with fine counsel such as noted in the foregoing, but it also contains fine examples for you to strive to imitate.

Consider, too, the rewards that come from your meeting the challenge of moral principles. There are the clear conscience and the self-respect that come when you gain a victory over temptations and pressures to yield or compromise, when you let yourself be governed by love and righteousness rather than by selfish considerations. And God's Word also holds out the hope of everlasting life to those who win God's approval by meeting the challenge of His high moral principles.

A DEATH That Brings Gain

GAIN by dying? How can that be? A person losing life loses everything he has. However, some persons have felt that their death would mean gain when they were dying for a cause. Not that they gained anything for themselves, but with the view that promoting the cause by their own death would help others.

But is it possible to die a death that actually brings gain to the one dying as well as to others? Not a death in which he gains only a name for himself, but one from which he is raised up, actually living again to see what his death accomplished? If so, how?

The wise writer of the Bible book of Ecclesiastes said: "A name is better than good oil, and the day of death than the day of one's being born." (Eccl. 7:1) This is not the case, however, if one merely makes a good name with men. The apostle Paul wrote: "If I give all my belongings to feed others, and if I hand over my body, that I may boast, but do not have love, I am not profited at all."—1 Cor. 13:3.

The death that brings gain, then, must be a death that takes place in service to God, making a good name with him. In fact, the Bible shows that there are certain persons God has selected who *must* die, but who in so doing gain the greatest reward possible. Who are these?

CHRIST AN EXAMPLE

For the answer we turn first to the example of Jesus Christ. His death brought incalculable gain to mankind and the greatest reward to himself. For it not only provided a ransom sacrifice for mankind's salvation; it also resulted in his resurrection to immortality, and his being raised to a position of far greater power, with authority over all God's creation. —Eph. 1:20-22; Phil. 2:9-11.

Now, this mightiest of God's sons had to die in order to attain to these things. To provide the ransom price for mankind, God transferred his Son's life from heaven to the womb of the virgin Mary. He became human and was known as Jesus the Messiah or Jesus Christ. (Luke 1:34, 35; Gal. 4:4) Then, in order to return to the heavens he had to undergo a change of nature, which necessitated his death. Jesus likened his sacrificial death to the planting of a grain of wheat, which has to die in the ground in order to sprout and produce fruitage.—John 12:24.

When he was baptized with holy spirit at the Jordan River, Jesus started the course that ended in his sacrificial death. He spoke of this course as a "cup" or portion handed to him by his Father, saying to his disciples: "The cup I am drinking you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am being baptized you will be baptized."—Mark 10:39.

THE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION

When Jesus died, he certainly did not die as a sinner. What, then, about those of the Christian congregation, the spirit-begotten sons of God, anointed by his spirit? (1 John 2:27; 3:1) These, accord-

ing to the Scriptures, number 144,000 and are joint heirs with Jesus Christ, to be kings and priests in the heavens with him. (Rev. 14:1-4; 5:9, 10) At their death they likewise do not die as sinners. Why not?

To answer this question, it is helpful first to consider the death of the rest of mankind. They are all dying due to sin. The apostle says that "through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Rom. 5:12) Also he tells us, "The wages sin pays is death." (Rom. 6:23) Since death constitutes "wages" for sin, the Bible principle is, "He who has died has been acquitted [justified] from his sin." (Rom. 6:7, *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*) He dies because of the sin that is in him, but his death acquits him of the acts of sin he has committed. Nevertheless, there is no gain in this for him, for, "as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all, neither do they anymore have wages."—Eccl. 9:5.

It is different with the spirit-begotten brothers of Jesus Christ. Why? Because, as the apostle Paul explains:

> "Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him through our baptism into his death, in order that, just as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, we also should likewise walk in a newness of life. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall certainly also be united with him in the likeness of his resurrection; because we know that our old personality was impaled with him, that our sinful body might be made inactive, that we should no longer go on being slaves to sin. For he who has died has been acquitted from his sin."—Rom. 6:3-7.

These, then, have figuratively "died." After they have the benefits of Christ's sacrificial death for their sins applied to them, they are declared or 'counted' righteous. (Rom. 5:1, 18; 8:30) Their fleshly bodies, with their old personalities, are counted as impaled with Christ. They are then spiritually begotten by God, giving them hope of life in the spirit. (John 3:5-8) Their hope is no longer set on earthly things. Of course, they need the material necessities of life, but they are no longer going on "being slaves to sin," doing the "works of the flesh." They are cultivating the "fruitage of the spirit."—Gal. 5:19-23.

Since they realize that the old personality is counted as "dead" by God, they exert themselves vigorously in keeping it under subjection. They realize they must keep continually in mind this important fact: "By relationship with [Christ] you were also circumcised with a circumcision performed without hands by the stripping off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision that belongs to the Christ, for you were buried with him in his baptism, and by relationship with him you were also raised up together through your faith in the operation of God, who raised him up from the dead."—Col. 2:11, 12.

God views and judges these spirit-begotten Christians according to what they are spiritually, just as they view one another. The apostle expressed this truth to the Corinthian congregation when he wrote: "[Christ] died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised up. Consequently from now on we know no man according to the flesh. Even if we have known Christ according to the flesh, certainly we now know him so no more."—2 Cor. 5:15, 16.

The apostle Peter wrote in the same vein: "Therefore since Christ suffered in the flesh, you too arm yourselves with the same mental disposition; because the person that has suffered in the flesh [taking up the torture stake of Christ (Luke 9:23)] has desisted from sins, to the end

that he may live the remainder of his time in the flesh, no more for the desires of men, but for God's will. For the time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct . . . In fact, for this purpose the good news was declared also to the [spiritually] dead, that they might be judged as to the flesh from the standpoint of [worldly] men but might live as to the spirit from the standpoint of God." —1 Pet. 4:1-6.

These, as 'new creatures,' are allowed to live on for a while in the flesh to carry out a ministry on earth and to prove their integrity under test. (2 Cor. 5:17) Their bodies are not healed, because their hope of life is heavenward, so these fleshly bodies continue to deteriorate as they grow older, until death. At the end of their course they do not have to be acquitted of their sin by death. This acquitting has already been done by Jehovah when he declared them righteous, accepting them into the new covenant.—Heb. 8: 10-13.

Consequently, these anointed ones are not viewed or counted by God as sinners, and are not living and suffering as sinners. They win the conflict that they wage against the sin in their fleshly bodies by reason of the sacrifice and help of their great High Priest, Jesus Christ. Paul explains: "Those in union with Christ Jesus have no condemnation. For the law of that spirit which gives life in union with Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death."—Rom. 7:21–8:2.

Christ's spiritual brothers, therefore, die a death like Christ's. Not that it supplies a part of the propitiatory sacrifice for sins. Only Christ's perfect sacrifice could do that. But they give up all human things in order to serve as vindicators of Jehovah's name. The apostle Paul said: "Daily I face death." Whether fighting temptation, opposition, misrepresentation and persecution, and yet maintaining faithfulness to God, it is all a suffering for righteousness' sake as integrity keepers. —1 Cor. 15:31; 1 Pet. 5:9, 10.

THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Are You Merciful as Your Father Is Merciful?**
- **The Witness-Bearer Within Us.**
- **What Is the Christian View of Dancing?**

In view of these things, then, these spiritual brothers of Christ undergo a death that brings gain. Paul said: "In my case to live is Christ, and to die, gain." (Phil. 1:21) In his discussion of the resurrection, Paul illustrates the necessity of their death in order to gain the glorious reward of immortality in the heavens with Christ, saying:

> "What you sow is not made alive unless first it dies; and as for what you sow, you sow, not the body that will develop, but a bare grain, it may be, of wheat or any one of the rest; but God gives it a body just as it has pleased him, and to each of the seeds its own body. . . . So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised up in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised up in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised up in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised up a spiritual body."—1 Cor. 15:36-44.

The apostles and their fellow Christians in past centuries died and thereafter waited for Christ's second presence for their resurrection. (Phil. 3:10, 11, 20, 21) When that time arrived, however, the spirit-begotten ones then on earth who thereafter died would not have to wait 'asleep' in death. They would receive an instantaneous resurrection to the heavens

at the time of their death. This was indicated by the apostle when he told fellow Christians: "You died [while still alive, counted as impaled with Christ], and your life has been hidden with the Christ in union with God. When the Christ, our life, is made manifest, then you also will be made manifest with him in glory." —Col. 3:3, 4; Gal. 2:20; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; Rev. 14:13.

CHRIST'S "OTHER SHEEP"

What, though, about those who, in this time, are the companions of Christ's spiritual brothers, namely, the "great crowd" of "other sheep," who have hopes of everlasting life on earth under the heavenly government of Christ and his associate kings and priests? They are shown in the Scriptures to be dressed in robes that they have made white because of their faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. (John 10:16; Rev. 7:9, 10, 14, 17; Matt. 25:31-34, 46) They are not following a course of sin as they did when involved in this world's wicked system of things. Through prayer to Jehovah God in the name of Christ they can get forgiveness for the sins they commit day by day. —1 John 2:2.

However, these members of the "great crowd" are not called by God to be joint heirs with Christ. They are not counted as 'impaled with Christ.' Their being "declared righteous" as perfect human creatures must wait. But, should they die faithful now, they will receive a resurrection with the opportunity to be made perfect on earth during Christ's reign. (Heb. 11:6; Rev. 20:12, 13) So, if they make a good name now with God, 'the day of death is better than the day of birth' for them too. They have a reward to which to look forward.

Moreover, their death can be one of satisfaction to them and of gain to others, if it is met in faithful integrity to God. God can use it to his glory. This truth is emphasized by the incident involving one of the faithful "other sheep" in Nigeria, Africa:

> "A young man who had been raised a Presbyterian was persuaded by his parents to join the Biafran army during the Nigerian civil war. While at a camp awaiting deployment, a number of young men were brought in for conscription. Among them was one of Jehovah's witnesses who refused enrollment for military training. He was severely beaten, yet would not change his mind. The officers in charge tried to pressure him into renouncing his faith. He refused, and was taken before a firing squad for public execution. He was tied to a pole and informed that, after the count of four, he would be shot. As the officer called out each number, he would pause to allow the Witness to change his mind. He still refused. At the count of four he was executed.
>
> "In the audience watching the execution was the young soldier. Seeing this outstanding example of faith and integrity, his mind was moved to examine his own position. Whereas before he used to think that all were worshiping the same god, now he knew Jehovah's witnesses were different. He decided that if God would spare him through the war, then he would worship Him fully. He decided never to handle a gun and arranged to work in the kitchen. As soon as the war ended, he started attending the meetings of the local congregation of Jehovah's witnesses and studying the Bible. Before long he requested baptism. He has now completed his first period of 'temporary pioneering,' which is a devoting of full time in preaching the good news of God's kingdom."

The Scriptures say: "Precious in the eyes of Jehovah is the death of his loyal ones." (Ps. 116:15) This is especially true of those whom God calls to undergo a death like Christ's. It is also true of all those who give their lives in faithful service to Jehovah. Their death is not wasted. They provide a witness to the rightfulness of Jehovah's sovereignty, and God can use even their death in helping others to see the truth and be moved to serve Him.

You Are NEVER ALONE

IN 1965 a missionary was released from a Red Chinese prison where he had spent seven years in isolation. Arriving in Hong Kong, he was met by newspaper reporters. One of them told the missionary, "Why, I could *never* endure to be alone. If I had to be alone for seven years I would be climbing up the walls."

[2] Whom would you be like—the news reporter or the missionary? What was the source of that missionary's strength? He later explained how he could endure such long isolation. Speaking as one of Jehovah's Christian witnesses, he stated: "We have something to think about. We have some spiritual food inside us that feeds us, and we can stand firm in faith. Of course, we have to study first. We have no inner strength if we don't study. So the best thing is to keep studying your Bible and building yourself up. And then when trouble comes, if it does come on you, you will be able to 'stand firm.' "

"God is for us a refuge and strength, a help that is readily to be found during distresses. That is why we shall not fear."
—Ps. 46:1, 2.

[3] This experience illustrates that true Christians are never alone! Persons without faith simply cannot understand this, yet it is true: Dedicated Christians are never alone, because their knowledge of spiritual matters is like a strong, ever-present companion with whom they can confer. Moreover, they have Jehovah God the Almighty as their Helper wherever they are, no matter what their circumstances may be. Showing that those who have faith like the psalmist are never alone are the words at Psalm 121:1-3: "I shall raise my eyes to the mountains. From where will my help come? My help is from Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth. He cannot possibly allow your foot to totter. The One guarding you cannot possibly be drowsy."

1, 2. How did a reporter react to a missionary's seven-year isolation, and how did the missionary explain his successful endurance?
3. What does the missionary's experience illustrate, and why is this so?

WHEN DISCOURAGED OR DEPRESSED

[4] There are times, outside of prisons too, when one may feel lonely. This is especially true when one is despondent, discouraged or feeling despair. Whatever the cause for the discouragement, a person should remember that he can throw his burden of anxiety or frustration upon Jehovah, even as the psalmist said: "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you. Never will he allow the righteous one to totter." (Ps. 55:22) We can be certain that Jehovah God will not let his servants totter or fall to ruin. But here is a warning: Do not take an independent attitude. Rather, lean upon Jehovah God; completely depend on him. Then he will uphold and keep you from falling.—Prov. 3:5-7.

4. When a person feels alone due to despair or discouragement, what can he do, but what attitude must he avoid?

5 Prayer is one way by which we show our reliance on God and by which we can throw our burdens upon him. Never neglect the medium of prayer. (Eph. 6:18) It takes faith to persist in prayer. In fact, the Lord Jesus once raised this question with regard to prayer: "When the Son of man arrives, will he really find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) At the time Jesus was teaching his disciples the need to pray, the need to "cry out to him day and night" in prayer, as verses one and seven show. Thus his question about "the faith" is especially related to faith in the efficacy of prayer to God. Who have this kind of faith today? Do you? Happy are those who do! They are never alone.

6 Especially is prayer important when one feels discouraged, despondent, almost crushed. (1 Sam. 1:5-18) Cast your reasons for anxiety upon him. Certainly he can sustain you. (Phil. 4:6) Why, Jehovah God sustained a great crowd of Israelites in the wilderness for forty years. He swooped down as an eagle with outspread wings to sustain them! (Deut. 32:11, 12) God provided for them miraculously so that their sandals and clothing never wore out.—Deut. 29:5.

7 Since Jehovah God can sustain not only a great crowd of people, but, in fact, the whole universe, can he not sustain one of his servants who may feel that he stands alone? Of course he can! But we must pray in faith to Jehovah for this sustaining power that even our Christian brothers cannot give.—Phil. 4:13.

5. (a) How can we show our reliance on Jehovah? (b) When Jesus spoke of finding "the faith" on the earth when the Son of man arrives, to what was he especially referring?

6, 7. When is prayer especially important, and why can we have confidence that God can sustain the faithful Christian who comes to him in prayer?

WHEN TEMPORARILY AWAY FROM OTHERS

8 Do you feel all alone when you are temporarily away from others? Some persons do, and their first inclination may be to turn on the radio or television. But, really, temporary periods of being alone are beneficial; in fact, a certain amount of solitude is a basic need of humans. Even Jesus sought solitude as a relief from the crowds. In the mountains and the gardens he prayed. (Luke 4:1, 42; 6:12; 22:39-41) There are other examples in the Bible of godly men who also sought solitude at times. Jehovah spoke to Moses in the lonely recesses of Mount Horeb and then he used him to lead Israel. The psalmist David produced some of his loveliest psalms in solitude. John the Baptist resorted to the desert wilderness near the Jordan River. These men knew the need for solitude and used it to good advantage and to the glory of God.

9 Today life is very crowded. It moves fast, and man needs time to evaluate the events that flash by. Being alone for a time allows a person to catch up, so to speak. It provides the mind moments for necessary reflection and meditation on the truths of the Bible, a sheer pleasure in itself. It also affords one the opportunity to thank Jehovah for one's blessings and to seek his guidance and holy spirit.

10 Do you remember why God let the Israelites wander through the wilderness for forty years? In order "to put you to the test so as to know what was in your heart," God said. (Deut. 8:2, 3; compare 2 Chronicles 32:31.) So, what we do with our time when we are alone can also be a test as to what is really in our hearts. We need to put physical interests secondary to spiritual needs, feeding on the

8, 9. (a) What Bible examples show the value of solitude? (b) So, how can temporary periods of being away from others be beneficial?

10. What did God say as to why he let the Israelites wander forty years in the wilderness, and what lesson is there in this for us?

words of God whenever there is an opportunity.

[11] So, when we have periods of being alone, we can seek to use the time most wisely. We can use the time to meditate. Now, by meditation is not meant lazy daydreaming, a mind rambling, but, rather, guided thinking. Meditation should be purposeful, enabling one to think things over and arrive at some definite conclusion. To that end we need guidance when we meditate, and the best guide of all is the Holy Bible. When reading it, pause and mentally expand on what you read. Thus you will avoid helter-skelter thoughts with no definite goal.

[12] Christians can imitate Jesus Christ, who, in the wilderness, meditated on God's Word. And he thought deeply, undisturbed, about it. This meditation equipped him well, so that he could later repel the Devil's attacks.—Matt. 4:1-11.

IN TIMES OF TRIBULATION

[13] Sometimes true Christians find themselves isolated due to persecution. Here again they need to keep in mind that in such times of tribulation Jehovah's spirit comforts those who rely entirely on Him. Knowing what to do in troublesome times is vital because the Lord Jesus, in giving the Revelation to his apostle John, said: "Look! The Devil will keep on throwing some of you into prison that you may be fully put to the test." And the apostle Paul stated: "All those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted." —Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 3:12; 2 Cor. 1:3, 8-10.

[14] How strong is *your* faith? Could you face up to constant interrogation and years of isolation in prison because of your desire to keep integrity to God and yet not falter? The time to fortify yourself is before such persecution comes. How? By wise use of your time now, by studying and meditating on God's Word so that it becomes deeply rooted in your heart, by regularly associating with Jehovah's people, and by putting to use in His kingdom ministry what you learn. If you rely on Jehovah now, availing yourself of the spiritual provisions at hand, you will be in position to draw strength from him in time of crisis, strength that will sustain you through it all.

[15] But when a person is thrust into isolation, just what can he do? Well, he can review the Holy Scriptures in his mind, think upon God's dealings and his work. He can think of Bible examples of endurance and faithfulness. There is Joseph, who spent years in prison, and yet he was not really alone, for God was with him. (Gen. 39:20-23) There is Samson, who, in the prison house, seemed all alone, but Jehovah did not forsake him. (Judg. 16:21-30) There are the apostles, who were often in prison, and yet they kept integrity. (Acts 5:17-21; 12:3-17; 16:19-34; 2 Cor. 6:3-5) A Christian in isolation due to persecution can do as the psalmist Asaph did when he was in great distress. This "visionary" who did 'prophesying with the harp' writes at Psalm 77:2, 12: "In the day of my distress I have searched for Jehovah himself. . . . I shall certainly meditate on all your activity, and with your dealings I will concern myself." (1 Chron. 25:1; 2 Chron. 29:30) That is what one of the Watch Tower Society's zone overseers did when under restraint and when undergoing both verbal and physical abuse due to keeping integrity.

11, 12. Explain purposeful meditation, and what example did Jesus set in this regard?

13. Why may true Christians at times find themselves isolated?

14. How can a Christian fortify himself so as to be able to endure isolation?

15, 16. (a) If a Christian is thrust into isolation, what can he do? (b) How did the psalmist Asaph cope with distress?

Telling of his experience afterward, he said: "We did a lot of praying; in such a situation a person does a lot of thinking."

[16] Similarly, the psalmist Asaph did a lot of thinking when he was in a difficult situation. He appeared to be forsaken by God, and the situation looked black. But what did he do to sustain himself and hold fast to Jehovah God? As already cited, he said: "I shall certainly *meditate* on all your activity, and with your dealings I will concern myself." He concerned himself with God's past activities and dealings, how Jehovah had delivered his people in the past. Asaph knew that God does not change, just as it is written: "For I am Jehovah; I have not changed. And you are sons of Jacob; you have not come to your finish." (Mal. 3:6) Certainly, then, Jehovah will not allow his people, if faithful, to be consumed or finished off.

[17] So, there is good reason to familiarize ourselves with God's activities, past and present, on behalf of his people as well as what he has done for his organization. Now is the time to store up all this information in our hearts and minds. To this end we have God's Word and various publications of the Watch Tower Society to help us. Then if we are ever in a difficult situation, such as Asaph was, we can do the right kind of thinking so that we can stand firm. We will have good things, noble things, praiseworthy things, lovable things in our mind upon which we can meditate. —Phil. 4:8.

[18] So, it is a good pattern that the psalmist sets for us here—to meditate on Jehovah God's activities and dealings. Then it will stand us in good stead in time of need.

17, 18. What can the Christian do to prepare himself to face a difficult situation?

By prayer and meditation on Bible texts those imprisoned for serving God have endured long isolation

MODERN-DAY EXAMPLES

[19] As Asaph the visionary was never alone because of his meditation and his trust in God, it is also true of God's modern-day servants. Consider, for example, a missionary who spent five years in isolation in a Red Chinese prison. This Christian witness of Jehovah related how he kept spiritually alive:

[20] "Right from the start I realized that I would have to take steps to stay strong in faith. No sooner had I been locked in my cell on the day of my arrest than I got down on my knees to pray. . . . To keep alive my appreciation of spiritual things I arranged for a program of 'preaching' activity. But to whom does one preach when in solitary confinement? I decided that I would build up some appropriate Bible sermons from the things I could remember and then preach to imaginary characters. Then I started out on the work, as it were, knocking on an imaginary door and witnessing to an imaginary householder, visiting several doors during the morning. . . . All this I did aloud, so that the sound of these things would further impress them on my mind. I am sure that the warders thought I was going out of my mind, but it was really keeping me strong in faith and of a sound mind."

19, 20. How did a modern-day servant of Jehovah cope with five years of isolation?

21 That missionary was not alone, though in isolation, and this is true no matter where any of Jehovah's servants may be. As that missionary further said: "I might be isolated from my fellowmen, but no one could isolate me from God. What spiritual strength and comfort prayer brought to me! . . . There are no guns, no walls, no prison bars that can keep the spirit of God from reaching his people! If we have applied ourselves to a study of his Word and allowed it to sink down deep into our hearts, there is nothing to fear. We do not stand in our own strength. But with God's almighty power he is able to make even the most frail of us come off victorious in the face of persecution!"

22 Another imprisoned missionary in similar circumstances explained: "I had so much time on my hands. . . . Many Scripture texts began to come to my mind and I would write them down. . . . When I had written out enough scriptures I would select one for a daily text, copy it and keep it somewhere prominent so that I could consider it throughout the day."

23 From all parts of the world come modern-day examples, proving that true Christians are never alone. In Germany, during World War II, thousands of Witnesses were put in Hitler's concentration camps, usually deprived of their Bibles. One of those Witnesses, after his release, wrote: "When I was arrested I was thankful that I had not neglected personal Bible study, as it helped me to have the faith to endure. Frequently I thought about the endurance mentioned by the Bible writer James, who said: 'Look! We pronounce happy those who have endured.'—Jas. 5:11.

24 "Although the prison officials took the Bible away from me, they permitted other prisoners [who were not Witnesses] to have it. They thought that my faith would become weak if I did not have the Bible, and I would renounce my faith by signing a declaration to that effect prepared by the Nazis. They failed to realize that I had impressed the truth of God's Word deeply upon my mind by personal and group Bible study long before I was imprisoned. They could not remove those faith-strengthening truths from my mind."

25 Witnesses in the United Arab Republic who were put in a concentration camp also experienced the faith-strengthening power of God's Word and they too never felt alone. Observed one Witness who had been a traveling representative of the Watch Tower Society before his imprisonment: "Regardless of the amount of insults and beatings that we received, a few seconds would pass and we would not feel anything more, even though the beatings continued. We were feeling that Jehovah God was always with us."

26 And how did those Witnesses arrange to take in strength-giving spiritual food? One of them answered: "Each morning we would discuss an appropriate Bible text, selecting one that would be encouraging to our Christian brothers. We would also select two chapters from the Bible to talk about. Then each of us would draw from our memory the information we could remember from these chapters. Each evening, too, we would gather for a Bible talk. These daily Bible discussions and talks indeed proved strengthening to us."

27 Many indeed are the modern-day examples that prove that true Christians are never alone; Jehovah is with them if they trust and rely entirely upon him.

21, 22. (a) How did this missionary explain that he was never alone? (b) And how did another imprisoned missionary beneficially use his time in isolation?

23, 24. How did a modern-day servant of God in Germany explain his basis for endurance in a Nazi concentration camp?

25-27. Explain how Jehovah's people in a concentration camp in the United Arab Republic felt, and how in that situation did they manage to feed on spiritual food?

KEEP A MENTAL VISION OF GOD

[28] What will help us to rely on Jehovah is to do as the psalmist did, that is, keep Jehovah at our right hand constantly. At Psalm 16:8 we find these encouraging words: "I have placed Jehovah in front of me constantly. Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be made to totter."

[29] Now, it is well to keep in mind that the apostle Peter applied Psalm 16 to Jesus Christ: "God resurrected him by loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to continue to be held fast by it. For David says respecting him, 'I had Jehovah constantly before my eyes; because he is at my right hand that I may never be shaken.' "—Acts 2: 24, 25.

[30] We can do the same as did David and the Lord Jesus Christ! We can mentally put Jehovah in front of us. As Jesus did, so we too can keep Jehovah in front of us constantly by trying always to please him. Be positive; know your God. By your keeping him at your right hand Jehovah can uphold you with his left hand as he fights for his people with his right hand. Yes, we know the prophetic promise given to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Melchizedekian king-priest, as foretold at Psalm 110:4-6: "Jehovah himself at your right hand will certainly break kings to pieces on the day of his anger. He will execute judgment among the nations; he will cause a fullness of dead bodies." So, by following the example of Jesus Christ our Exemplar, and by placing Jehovah God in front of us constantly, keeping him at our right hand, we will never be alone; we will never totter.

[31] Our hope helps to keep Jehovah close to us. In fact, the apostle Paul likens the Christian hope to an "anchor for the soul." "This hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm, and it enters in within the curtain, where a forerunner has entered in our behalf, Jesus." (Heb. 6:19, 20) Since this anchor-like hope originates with God, it in effect enters into heaven, where Jesus Christ and Jehovah are. By our holding to this hope, never relinquishing it, it will bind us fast to Jehovah God and we will never drift away. So never let anyone sever your intimate connections with Jehovah or his organization.

[32] As a faithful Christian keep ever in mind that you are never alone. Jehovah God, moreover, is nearer than any enemy. And as the psalmist put it at Psalm 46: 1, 2: "God is for us a refuge and strength, a help that is readily to be found during distresses. That is why we shall not fear, though the earth undergo change and though the mountains totter into the heart of the vast sea."

[33] The wording of this psalm seems to accord with the crucial time in the days of King Hezekiah, when Jerusalem was threatened by the king of Assyria. Hezekiah could have felt that he was all alone, but he realized that God is "a help that is readily to be found during distresses." So he prayed to Jehovah, and the city was delivered from its distress. (Isa. 37: 14-37) Therefore, when true Christians are in distress, they too can keep this psalm in mind. In order to make God our Refuge we must flee to him, and to do this we need ever to stick to his righteous principles. By trusting in him, sticking faithfully to his organization, we make Jehovah our secure Tower and Refuge. —Prov. 18:10.

28-30. (a) As indicated at Psalm 16:8, what will help us to rely on Jehovah? (b) How can we imitate David and Jesus in this respect?

31. What will our God-given hope do for us if we steadfastly hold to it?

32, 33. (a) In view of Psalm 46:1, 2, why can it be said that God is nearer than any enemy? (b) From the apparent background of this psalm, how is it evident that God's servants are never alone during distress? (c) How do we make God our Refuge?

[34] There is a time of great distress still ahead, when Gog of Magog, Satan the Devil, launches his foretold assault on us as Jehovah's people. (Ezek. 38:1, 2, 8-12) But we are never alone, and Jehovah will help us to endure, whether we be in solitary confinement or not. We are determined to stand firm no matter what the future brings. In due time Jehovah God will go into vigorous action against all his enemies, and we will stand triumphant with his kingdom. After it is all over and the "great tribulation" is past, we will find that Jehovah has been our ready Help, our secure Height, our sure Refuge and our Strength.

34. What should we determine about the future, and with what grand result?

HELP FROM ON HIGH

"Keep on the watch and pray continually, that you may not enter into temptation."—Matt. 26:41.

"BUT the end of all things has drawn close. Be sound in mind, therefore, and be vigilant with a view to prayers." When the apostle Peter wrote those words of counsel to Christians, he may well have had in mind the night that he, James and John had been advised by Jesus to pray. They were in the Garden of Gethsemane. The time for Jesus' betrayal was at hand. Jesus said to the three: "My soul is deeply grieved, even to death. Stay here and keep on the watch with me." —1 Pet. 4:7; Matt. 26:38.

[2] Jesus then went a little way forward, fell upon his face and prayed to his heavenly Father: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will." Returning to the three disciples, Jesus found them sleeping. He said to Peter: "Could you men not so much as watch one hour with me? Keep on the watch and pray continually, that you may not enter into temptation."—Matt. 26:39-41.

[3] Again, for the second time, Jesus went off and prayed, asking God that His will take place. Then he went back and again found the three disciples sleeping, "for their eyes were heavy." For the third time Jesus left them and prayed. Upon returning to the apostles, he said: "At such a time as this you are sleeping and taking your rest! Look! The hour has drawn near for the Son of man to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer has drawn near." While he was speaking those very words, Judas Iscariot drew near with an armed crowd that Jesus might be taken into custody.—Matt. 26:42-47.

1, 2. (a) When the apostle Peter wrote the words, "Be vigilant with a view to prayers," what event may he have had in mind? (b) What counsel did Jesus give the three apostles who had failed to "keep on the watch"?

3. Despite Jesus' counsel, how did the apostles respond, prompting what comment from Jesus?

PRAYER NEEDED TO AVOID TEMPTATION

4 Jesus' disciples entered into temptation —in the face of warnings from their Master! The three apostles were at their post and were supposed to stay awake, but they reclined and fell asleep, while Jesus engrossed himself three times in prayer. True, it was probably past midnight and the disciples were naturally sleepy, but Jesus, knowing full well that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, had told them to watch and pray! (Matt. 26:41) They had been warned before they got into circumstances of temptation, Jesus saying: "All of you will be stumbled in connection with me on this night, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered about.'" (Matt. 26:31) In this way they had been warned that the prophecy of Zechariah 13:7 was about to undergo fulfillment. However, Peter answered Jesus' warning, saying: "Although all the others are stumbled in connection with you, never will I be stumbled!" But Peter was told that he would do even worse—he would deny the Lord Jesus three times!—Matt. 26:31-35.

5 Jesus had set a fine example for his disciples in the matter of wakefulness and in being vigilant with a view to prayers. But the apostles failed to understand how Jesus' words were going to take place. So what did they do? They *slept* over the matter instead of *praying* over it! They should have prayed over it, seeking help from on high. But here they were sleeping over it. They were not on the watch; they were not praying continually, and so were bound to enter into temptation.

4. (a) What clear warning had the apostles received before they got into circumstances of temptation? (b) How did Peter react in the face of this warning?
5. As the apostles faced temptation, what did they do, but what should they have done?

6 This experience of the three disciples reminds us of Jesus' words given to "the angel" of the Philadelphia congregation, recorded at Revelation 3:10: "Because you kept the word about my endurance, I will also keep you from the hour of test, which is to come upon the whole inhabited earth, to put a test upon those dwelling on the earth." Since the coming of the foretold "time of the end," pressures from human sources and from invisible demon sources have indeed become terrific, in materialistic, faithless, nationalistic directions. The test has been to determine whether one is part of this wicked system of things or is in favor of God's kingdom. The great temptation today is for a person to yield to these worldly pressures and attractions and to become a part of this system of things. This worldwide test in a comparatively short time period, like an "hour," is not over as yet. Modern-day Christians are thus warned that they are in a day of temptation. They, too, like first-century Christians, need to watch and pray to avoid entering temptations.

7 Since Christians today are faced with so many temptations, they need to know how to get out of them. How can you get out of temptation? Keep in mind that Jehovah God does not tempt anyone with what is bad, but he lets temptations come upon his faithful servants to test their integrity to him and their loyalty to his kingdom. But remember, when under temptations we have the ever-open, ever-present channel of prayer. We can get help from on high at any time.

8 As the Bible shows, entering temptation is largely a matter of *desire*. (Jas. 1:

6. (a) What is the "test" to come upon "the whole inhabited earth," as Jesus foretold at Revelation 3:10? (b) Since the test is not over yet, what warning is there in this for Christians?
7, 8. (a) Why does God allow tests to come upon Christians, and what means does God provide for our getting help from on high? (b) Entering into temptation is largely a matter of what, and so how does prayer help?

13-15) So watch that you do not cultivate wrong desire, for if you do, then enticement pulls you right into sin! We must be vigilant with a view to prayer, for prayer helps us to avoid selfish desire. Such sincere prayer puts to flight any selfish desire; it frees us from the cords of enticement with all their selfish pulling power. We need to pray in order to be watchful, and prayer, too, will purify our hearts. Yes, God will help us if we but ask him to do so. We need that help from on high because temptations are bound to come our way. When they do, remember the divine warning: Stay awake and pray!

HELP DURING TEMPTATIONS

[9] It is vital for Christians to realize that their faithful God does not allow them to be tempted beyond what they can bear. As the apostle Paul writes at 1 Corinthians 10:13: "God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it." This means that Jehovah God is faithful throughout the entire operation of the temptation, till the one in it knows how to deal with it by help from Jehovah, and he escapes from the temptation.

[10] Now, we should keep in mind that the apostle Paul here at 1 Corinthians 10:13 is talking particularly about temptations, not about persecutions. He was thinking of temptations "common to men." He said at the beginning of this verse thirteen: "No temptation has taken you except what is common to men." Common to what men? Particularly common to the men of ancient Israel who were in a covenant with Jehovah. For in the preceding verses of this chapter the apostle talked about the temptations that came upon the natural Jews, and how thousands of them fell under the temptations. He brings up the matter of their experiences and their fall as a warning so that Christians may be cautious lest they fall under like circumstances. Those Israelites had contact with the pagans, and thousands of the Israelites fell to immorality, as the apostle Paul said: "Neither let us practice fornication, as some of them committed fornication, only to fall, twenty-three thousand of them in one day." (1 Cor. 10:8) They also turned to idol worship, to complaining and murmuring. Jehovah let these temptations come upon them to see what was in their hearts, whether they loved Jehovah their God or not.—Deut. 8:1-3.

[11] So all such temptations come upon Christians today who are also in covenant relationship with Jehovah, since they are the antitypes of those ancient peoples, the natural Israelites and the "vast mixed company." (Ex. 12:37, 38; Num. 11:4-6) By allowing us to experience temptations, Jehovah can know what kind of people we are at heart. God, then, does make a way out of the temptation but he lets us prove what we really are, what is in our hearts, that we hate what is bad and love what is good.

THE WAY OUT OF TEMPTATIONS

[12] Jehovah promises in his Word that "along with the temptation he will also make the way out." How? By simply removing the temptation? No, God does not remove the temptation, as when one is tempted with regard to immorality or murmuring. We do well to remember that when Aaron and Miriam complained about

9. What does the apostle Paul write about temptation at 1 Corinthians 10:13, and how does it relate to God's faithfulness?

10, 11. (a) As shown by the experiences of the Israelites, what kind of temptations is the apostle particularly speaking about? (b) Why will such temptations come upon Christians too, and what does God allow us to manifest?

12. Does God make a way out of temptations by simply removing the temptation, and how does an experience involving Moses illustrate your answer?

their brother Moses, that he had too prominent a position and that they did not have enough influence, God did not relieve these two complainers of the trial by putting Moses out of office, did he? No, he let Moses stay on, for he was Jehovah's choice and was the right man for the job. Aaron and Miriam were the ones who had to come into line. How? They had to get the theocratic viewpoint of things. They had to realize that Jehovah God is King and that they must be subject to his arrangements. (Num. 12:1-16) So we cannot expect that when temptations come we can wiggle out of the test and escape before the temptation is over. No, the temptation must run the limit; then God will know whether we have integrity and loyalty to him.

13 Where, then, is the escape, if we cannot avoid being in the presence of certain temptations? Well, God gives us a way out by giving us his theocratic principles, which, if we follow them, will aid us to avoid doing what is wrong. Further, God knows how much we can endure. Hence he does not let tests come upon us that we could not possibly endure. For example, when the Israelites came out of Egypt, the Bible account says: "God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines just because it was near, for God said: 'It might be the people will feel regret when they see war and will certainly return to Egypt.'" (Ex. 13:17) Thus God did not let them go the direct route to the Promised Land via "the Gaza Strip." Israel was not equipped for war or prepared to meet the well-trained troops of the Philistines. So Jehovah kindly chose the Red Sea route for his people. Thus Israel was not subjected to war with the Philistines at that time, for God knew they could not endure such a test.

14 We can be thankful that Jehovah does not subject us to tests we cannot endure; we can also be very grateful that he prepares us beforehand so we can endure the temptations and come through with integrity. To this end God builds us up spiritually beforehand. But woe to us if we do not take advantage of this God-provided advance preparation! Consider the test that came upon Joseph when he was tempted by Potiphar's wife to commit immorality. (Gen. 39:7-12) Can we be like Joseph? He had informed himself beforehand as to what God's laws were regarding such matters.

15 Yes, Jehovah God shows us the way out of temptation largely by describing beforehand what kind of conduct he expects of us. (Gal. 5:19-23) Then we can run the gamut of temptations from A to Z and come through victoriously, keeping integrity, proving faithful under test. But we need to heed the apostle Paul's counsel. Right after speaking about how God will help us in the matter of temptation he adds: "Therefore, my beloved ones, flee from idolatry." (1 Cor. 10:14) Idolatry is by no means limited to the worship of literal idols, images, statues and so forth. The apostle Paul warned that 'covetousness is idolatry.' This is because covetousness causes one to make an idol of *oneself*, and selfish cravings become the uppermost thing in one's life. But if we "flee" from all forms of idolatry, we are better prepared to face the future and the temptations that may yet arise.—Col. 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:18.

16 Whenever Jehovah permits a temp-

13, 14. (a) If we cannot avoid being subjected to a temptation, how, then, does God make a way out for us? (b) What experience of ancient Israel shows that Jehovah does not subject his people to tests that they cannot endure? (c) How does Joseph's experience illustrate the need for advance preparation?

15. (a) What success will we have if we prepare in advance for temptations? (b) How will 'fleeing from idolatry' help us in overcoming temptations?

16, 17. (a) When one is faced with a temptation, why is relying on one's own strength unwise? (b) What attitude must we avoid, as shown by the example of ancient Israel when at the very border of the Promised Land? (c) What course of action will enable us to join in expressing the apostle's words at 2 Timothy 4:17, 18?

tation to come upon us, let us do something to stand firm! For one thing we can persevere in prayer and seek help from on high! In this way we will not rely on our own strength. As the apostle Paul says: "Let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall." (1 Cor. 10:12) No matter how long a Christian has been serving God, he still has to contend with the human element, his fallen flesh. If humans in the past have been tempted by certain situations at critical times and have fallen, then we too as humans can also fall. We are still in this wicked system of things with all its many temptations to go the wrong way. The end is near, but we must be careful not to think we cannot fall. No, it is wise not to think we are so strong in ourselves that we cannot fall. Israel was so close to the Promised Land, and yet, despite their closeness, serious temptations were present, and 24,000 fell on the very border of the land. So today we must never minimize the danger of falling into temptation. Wait on Jehovah God, and the temptation will pass. Jehovah God will prove true to his Word and will bring us out of it.

17 Therefore trust in God when faced with temptations. Plead in prayer, saying: "Our Father in the heavens . . . do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one." Then we will be able to say with the apostle Paul: "The Lord stood near me and infused power into me . . . The Lord will deliver me from every wicked work and will save me."—Matt. 6:9-13; 2 Tim. 4:17, 18.

18 There are thousands of Witnesses who have in recent times faced temptations to take blood transfusions. A few have fallen into this temptation under pressure from doctors and others, but Jehovah's people as a whole have resisted this temptation, holding firm to his Word, which clearly says: 'Abstain from blood.' (Acts 15:20, 29) And they have done this by sticking close to Bible principles and by means of prayer. Consider the Witness from Surinam who suddenly became very ill while on a ship. He was taken off the ship at Haiti, there to receive medical treatment. A doctor explained that because of a bleeding stomach ulcer it was either "blood transfusion or death."

19 How did this Witness react to the tremendous temptation? He wrote: "There I was, more than a thousand miles from my family. They probably did not even know that I was in this dangerous condition. There were none of my Christian brothers with whom I could talk. The words 'blood transfusion or death' ran through my mind. Apparently those at the hospital thought I was surely to die. I prayed to Jehovah. Even though I felt lonesome at times, I could always talk to Him. What a wonderful thing to be able to throw all one's anxiety upon Jehovah, in full faith that he cares for his servants. If I would die, then I knew that I would receive a resurrection. The resurrection hope strengthened me in my decision not to accept blood." This Witness was eventually delivered from the temptation, and he recovered without a blood transfusion. By adhering to Bible principles and by being vigilant with a view to prayers he was triumphant over the temptation.

18, 19. (a) What kind of temptation has come upon thousands of Jehovah's people in recent times, and how have they resisted the temptation? (b) Faced with the temptation of "blood transfusion or death," how did a Witness from Surinam find a way out of the test?

PRAYER NOT HINDERED BY ISOLATION

20 When we need divine help quickly, prayer is the avenue most accessible for immediate and direct aid. Since Jehovah God does not sleep, there is no delay. "The one guarding you cannot possibly be

20-22. Explain why prayer is a marvelous help from on high.

drowsy." (Ps. 121:3) There is instant help from on high for those who go to God in prayer. It is not like having to write a letter and then waiting some days before an answer is received. And there is so much to pray for, not only for ourselves but for our Christian brothers too.

[21] Not only is communication by prayer instantaneous; it can be transmitted through every kind of isolation barrier. (Jonah 2:1-10) The missionary imprisoned in Red China for five years in isolation had the prophet Daniel in mind when he said: "I prayed three times a day in full sight of all who might pass my cell." The result? He said: "What spiritual strength and comfort prayer brought to me! And by this means all came to know me as a Christian minister." What marvelous help from on high in answer to prayer!—Dan. 6:10.

[22] A Christian, moreover, can pray for the comforting holy spirit, which penetrates every kind of barrier, prison walls and bars. Nothing can keep God's spirit away when we request it and are worthy of receiving it.

[23] Not long ago one of Jehovah's witnesses in Guadeloupe was threatened with isolation. This young man took his stand for Christian neutrality. (John 15:19) He was put into jail and kept alone in a cell. Then pressure was put on him. Threats were made: "If you do not change your mind, you will be put in prison for at least two years. Moreover, you will be alone in a cell all that time, so think well—*alone* for two years!" Now, what answer did they get back from this Christian youth?

[24] He answered: "Well, that is what you think. But I will not be alone as you say, not at all! Jehovah God will be with me and will strengthen me by his spirit."

[25] The authorities were surprised by that answer. Moreover, his good conduct impressed them. Months went by, and the time came for an assembly of the Witnesses. What a surprise to see that young man present for the opening session! He had been set free just the day before. And he gave his experience at the assembly. An officer was present, unknown to the youth. Later this officer told the youth's presiding minister: "Because of his good Christian conduct and unbreakable decision, do you know what my wife said to me? She said, 'Don't think that you men have done that by your own will. No, but it is his God, Jehovah, who has done that for him in order for him to attend his convention. His God, Jehovah, is stronger than our god!' "

[26] Faced with isolation, persecution, temptations and pressures, you faithful witnesses of Jehovah can come through successfully, gloriously to His praise. Your help is from on high. But remember the good counsel of the apostle Peter: "Be vigilant with a view to prayers." (1 Pet. 4:7) Peter learned the importance of this the hard way that night when the Lord Jesus told him to keep on the watch and "pray continually, that you may not enter into temptation." (Matt. 26:41) When a crisis is at hand, be careful that you do not merely sleep over it, but, rather, pray over it. Then you will get help from on high and come out of tests and temptations triumphantly, thanks to Jehovah. He will make a way out for you, for "God is faithful."

23-25. (a) What threat did not frighten a Christian youth in Guadeloupe, and why not? (b) Because of his keeping integrity, what was the outcome?

26. Why should we remember the good counsel at 1 Peter 4:7, and so what should we do when a crisis is at hand?

'GOD'S POWER Made Perfect in Weakness'

AS TOLD BY R. BENNETT BRICKELL

IN 1932 the Watch Tower Society selected me for foreign ministerial service—in Malaysia. So I left Australia and proceeded to my assignment, as the sole representative of Jehovah's Christian witnesses among a population of nine million. A vigorous program of preaching God's Word in Singapore and from there north to Kuala Lumpur was interrupted by severe illness. This resulted in cardiac disability and my being medically certified a life invalid. Despite this long-standing weakness, I am now able to look back on over forty years of full-time preaching. I can truly say that Jehovah's power through Christ has been 'made perfect in my weakness.'—2 Cor. 12:9.

Receipt of the Watch Tower Society's book *The Way to Paradise* in 1925, when I was a lad of sixteen, started me on the pathway to life. Two years later I purchased *The Divine Plan of the Ages* while passing a secondhand shop in Auckland, New Zealand. I thoroughly perused the book, noting particularly the reference to the "colporteur" work, that is, the full-time preaching work under the direction of the Watch Tower Society. I began to think of dedicating my life to Jehovah and serving as a full-time minister. But I had no association with the Bible Students, as Jehovah's witnesses were then known. My efforts to find them were unavailing.

But in October 1929 I noticed an advertisement in a Wellington newspaper, stating where the Bible Students met for study. I eagerly made contact with them. Within a fortnight, I began preaching God's Word from house to house. Arrangements were made for my baptism, and eleven weeks later I made application for the full-time preaching work.

MAKING FULL-TIME PREACHING MY LIFE CAREER

In January 1930, I began my life career as a full-time preacher of God's Word. Two and a half years of preaching in New Zealand passed quickly. During this time the accent was on getting the message of God's kingdom in printed form into the hands of the people. To distribute the printed word in 1931 I made a two-hundred-mile walk, visiting farms situated on a coastal strip around picturesque Marlborough sounds. Jehovah blessed my efforts, and during that year I averaged 174 hours monthly in the preaching work and, coincidentally, placed 174 bound books each month.

In 1932 I was transferred to Australia, where I went to the northern part of the state of Queensland to visit remote territory. Some towns had never previously been visited by a Witness. And so a 1,200-mile bicycle ride took me from Rockhampton to Normanton across a mountain range and through waterless desert country. I was heavily laden with blankets, clothing, food and sixty bound books for the field ministry. Additional supplies of literature were sent to me en route.

In five months I completed the assignment. The final two hundred miles were traversed on foot, wheeling my cycle, due to its tires being worn out and their being irreplaceable in that area. As I walked, some stockmen I met begged me not to continue, citing instances where others had perished when attempting the same journey. But I had been entrusted with an assignment, and so with complete confidence in Jehovah's guidance, I proceeded to its completion.

It was from Queensland that I went to Malaysia. After my severe illness there I returned to Australia in 1934. Was my career as a full-time minister finished? It appeared so. A period of rest was arranged for me by the Watch Tower Society, and after some naturopathic treatment, I found myself much improved. So I resumed my full-time preaching.

In June 1936 my ministerial companions and I set up our sound-car equipment for broadcasting Bible lectures in the town of Meeniyan, in the state of Victoria. A policeman approached, saying: "The businessmen will tip your car over if you don't stop," and added: "I advise you to leave town."

"Is there any ordinance that would make our activity illegal?" I asked.

"No," was the reply, "but the businessmen are very serious about this and there may be trouble."

I suggested to the policeman that we were within our rights and entitled to his protection. We drove our vehicle to the middle of the business district, and soon the recorded talk "Warning" was being heralded forth by the Watch Tower Society's then president, J. F. Rutherford. Clearly came the opening words: "Freedom of speech and worship are dear to the hearts of true men. Today there is an organized movement to deprive the people of such rights, and to suppress the truth."

Then burly men began to emerge from their shops and offices with coats off and sleeves rolled up. At length a mob of about fifteen began marching down the street toward us. As they marched, one side of the record finished playing, and I switched to the other side. The muscular men marched fiercely forward, while we four ministers stood in front of our car, facing them serenely, fully confident in Jehovah's power to handle the situation.

About thirty yards from us the men suddenly stopped. There they remained until the recorded talk was completed. As I was making closing remarks over the microphone, the men turned around and marched back to their business establishments. We gave all thanks and praise to Jehovah, being reminded of the encouraging words voiced by his servant Moses: "Be courageous and strong. Do not be afraid or suffer a shock before them, because Jehovah your God is the one marching with you."—Deut. 31:6.

But our preaching work in this town was by no means completed. With friendly words and courtesy we called on all business places and homes, meeting the very men who had marched to "get us." All went well and we were able to give a thorough witness about God's kingdom.

At Ararat, Victoria, in 1940, while making a microphone announcement about the practices of false religionists, I was arrested on a charge of "insulting words." I was convicted, and this was upheld in the Supreme Court of Victoria. An effort to appeal the case to the Australian High Court was unsuccessful during the furor and prejudiced atmosphere of war.

Early in 1941, however, a review of this case by a well-known Australian law authority appeared in the *Australian Law Journal*. An able legal analysis of the case showed that there were absolutely no lawful grounds for my conviction. This analy-

sis, in which was incorporated the full statement that I made over the microphone, is on file in city libraries in Australia to this day, providing any reader a witness to the paramount issues of that momentous period. For the litigation involved, a lawyer of Ballarat, Victoria, gave his services entirely free of charge as a gesture of goodwill.

INTEGRITY UNDER BAN AND EXPANSION

The years when the work of Jehovah's witnesses was under ban in Australia (January 1941 to June 1943) afforded opportunity for us to display faith in Jehovah. We continued the house-to-house preaching work unabated, with the use of only our Bibles. During part of this time I served as presiding minister of the Central Congregation in Melbourne. I would also take mimeographed copies of *The Watchtower* to some country congregations, since it was unsafe to send these through the post or mail. The number of Witnesses increased from 2,532 at the outset of the ban to 3,817 when it was lifted in 1943.

In 1945 I was assigned to central west Queensland, my means of locomotion being a cycle. After some five months preaching in this area, visiting three towns with intervening stations (as ranches are called in Australia), I became very ill and was hospitalized. The collapse of a lung segment after pneumonic illnesses had aggravated the previous cardiac condition, and the doctor advised me to rest continually. On discharge from the hospital, the doctor stated he had found me to be "85 percent incapacitated for work." I had no alternative but to rest, being unable to walk down the street to do shopping without intermittent rest.

After two months I realized that I must either relinquish my full-time ministerial assignment or get going somehow. So on a hot day in November 1947 I loaded my cycle and set off visiting from station to station, or from ranch to ranch, riding along until I was exhausted. Then I would walk alongside my cycle or rest stretched out on the ground. Somehow, by Jehovah's undeserved kindness, I continued, Jehovah's power being manifested in my time of need.

After a sixty-mile cycle journey, I preached the good news in a small town. There I borrowed a horse for use in preaching to remote stations to avoid the strain of cycle riding. The young animal promptly threw me, resulting in a fractured hip. So it was back in the hospital for several weeks. Upon discharge, I was determined, with Jehovah's help, to continue in my ministerial assignment.

I was able to purchase a horse, and a local citizen kindly loaned me a small horse cart. With the horse-drawn cart I made station visitations for some three months. After preaching the good news throughout this assignment, I was assigned to a large area farther east.

FURTHER EXPANSION IN OUTBACK AUSTRALIA

In 1949, after two months of rest, I was assigned to cover the Northern Territory, an area of 523,620 square miles. Hitchhiking truck rides for myself and my cycle wherever possible, I proceeded seven hundred miles southwest to Alice Springs, thence a thousand miles north to Darwin, sharing the Kingdom message at towns and stations en route. I spent parts of each intervening year in Darwin, and response to preaching efforts there resulted in the formation of a congregation in 1952.

Thereafter I was assigned to the city of Mt. Isa, Queensland. Early in 1954 my efforts had, with all credit to Jehovah, resulted in the formation of a congregation there.

I was also privileged to visit station territory south from Mt. Isa to the famed Birdsville track, a desolate area of desert sand hills where many travelers have perished due to extreme heat and dehydration. Since the dehydrated bodies of a family of five were found in this area a few years ago, signs have been put up on the north and south approaches thereto, warning travelers of the hazards of *entering* this desert area.

To reach the few isolated station homes here I used a light motorcycle. At one of such stations the owner said that he would not traverse the territory unless "equipped with a truck loaded with a week's supply of food and water." However, I had been assigned to this hitherto unwitnessed-to territory and could rely on Jehovah's help in covering it. As it turned out, my covering the area on a light motorcycle attracted the attention of a representative of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, who requested an interview. This interview was broadcast by the A.B.C. over its national radio network, and it was a privilege to give a witness about God's kingdom to the Australian nation.

BRINGING THE GOOD NEWS TO ABORIGINES

After serving six years as presiding minister of the Mt. Isa congregation, I was assigned to bring the good news to aborigines who had never before heard the Kingdom message. Fellow Witnesses supplied me with projection equipment and Watch Tower Society films. Some 17,000 aborigines were grouped in thirteen government settlements, at religious mission establishments and at large cattle stations where they were employed.

I was finally given a permit to enter the Northern Territory aborigine settlements after years of negotiation. Though I could not get a permit for entering religious mission settlements, some aborigines from these places would be employed at cattle stations. I was able to talk to many of them about God's kingdom.

The population of the aborigines has now grown to 22,000, and I have been privileged to talk to many of them about God's kingdom. Since illiteracy is prevalent among a majority of these humble folks, I have helped many of them to understand the Bible's message by means of visual aids. I brought along twenty-eight oil paintings on Bible subjects, also slides depicting meetings and preaching of the Witnesses in New Guinea and Africa.

Many fine experiences have been enjoyed in ministering to the aborigines. After my giving an hour talk to one gathering, the whole body of persons present came forward to thank me warmly for the truths I had told them from the Bible. On another occasion, fifty aborigines were present to hear a talk within a few minutes of my arrival, although the camp was in complete darkness. From the literate aborigines, fine letters have been received in acknowledgment of my letters to them explaining Scriptural truths in simple language.

Truly Jehovah's mercy and lovingkindness have been abundant in permitting me to serve him during forty-two years of full-time service. It is now thirty-eight years since I was medically certified an invalid for life and twenty-five years since I was viewed as 85 percent incapacitated. But by use of self-applied treatment and exercises, I am still able to pursue a vigorous program of full-time preaching of God's Word, giving public talks of about an hour's duration, motoring thousands of miles ministering in my assignment and maintaining a robust appearance. So I can truly testify that Jehovah's power has indeed been made perfect in my weakness.

DO YOU GIVE UNDUE PROMINENCE TO CREATURES?

IN VARIOUS parts of the world we find people giving homage to all kinds of things, including animals and humans. Some of these are openly acknowledged as gods. Some are not called gods, yet the admiration and attention and, often, the obedience or devotion accorded these make them, in effect, gods. In fact, even in Christendom, their devotees often render far more service to such things than to the very God they claim to serve.

Jehovah God, the God of the Bible, is "a God exacting exclusive devotion." (Ex. 20:5) Any deviation from full allegiance and wholehearted service to the true God tends to make the worshiper drift away from obedience to His laws. The person's spiritual and moral fiber breaks down and he gradually deteriorates into one disobeying God and an idolater. Finally, he no longer acknowledges Jehovah's supremacy and becomes an enemy of God.

WORSHIP OF "DUNGY IDOLS" IN ISRAEL

In ancient Israel the priests and religious teachers had drawn progressively farther from the Law to the point that exclusive devotion to God had deteriorated to an alarming degree. In fact, so bad had conditions become shortly before Jerusalem's destruction by the Babylonians that God had abandoned his temple located in Jerusalem. But he wanted all to know that he was, nevertheless, fully aware of what was going on. Also, God was concerned for the honest ones among the Jews, that they might know why he was bringing punishment on the nation. Therefore he permitted his prophet Ezekiel to see and to expose the shockingly detestable things that their leaders were doing at the temple.

Ezekiel, in a vision, was carried from Babylon to Jerusalem and was being conducted by Jehovah on a tour of the temple there. Ezekiel reports:

> "Accordingly he brought me to the entrance of the courtyard, and I began to see, and, look! a certain hole in the wall. He now said to me: 'Son of man, bore, please, through the wall.' And I gradually bored through the wall, and, look! there was a certain entrance."—Ezek. 8:7, 8.

Either through the enlarged hole or through a "certain entrance" near it, Ezekiel could go in and see what was taking place. He tells us:

> "And he further said to me: 'Go in and see the bad detestable things that they are doing here.' So I went in and began to see, and, look! there was every representation of creeping things and loathsome beasts, and all the dungy idols of the house of Israel, the carving being upon the wall all round about. And seventy men of the elderly ones of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing in among them, were standing before them, each one with his censer in his hand, and the perfume of the cloud of the incense was ascending. And he proceeded to say to me: 'Have you seen, O son of man, what the elderly ones of the house of Israel are doing in the darkness, each one in the inner rooms of his show-

piece? For they are saying, "Jehovah is not seeing us. Jehovah has left the land."'" —Ezek. 8:9-12.

Imagine! These supposed leaders of true worship paying homage to loathsome, unclean creeping things and beasts as gods, right in the temple of the living God, who had made them a great nation and had given them laws of cleanness and righteousness! And they had fallen into such a depraved mental state that they thought the Almighty God did not see the detestable things they were doing.

EVOLUTION A DANGER

Could such a thing possibly happen among professed Christians? Yes. In fact, it is one of the major dangers today. How?

Well, consider, for one thing, the theory of evolution, which millions, including many churchgoers, accept. What do they believe? That they originated from a one-celled creature in the primeval ocean. Then, from such single-cell beginning their ancestral lineage gradually evolved through changing stages of development, from simple forms of fish and amphibians to more complex land animals, from which man eventually emerged and stood upright —so their theory goes.

If you were to tell a man that he was from a family of snakes, he would likely want to fight you. Or if you said that his ancestor was a stupid ape, an opossum or a dog, he would feel greatly degraded. Yet, according to the evolution theory, man owes his existence to such animals as his forefathers. Evolution thereby degrades man to the level of beasts.

Worse than that, the evolution theory denies the existence of a God of supreme intelligence. Or it calls him a liar when his Word the Bible says that man was, from the start, made in the image of God, with far higher intelligence than the animals, with reasoning power and moral and spiritual qualities. Evolutionary belief leads church people to worship as creator, not Jehovah God, but a theoretical, blind, evolutionary force, personified as "Mother Nature." Degrading and blasphemous in the extreme, and gross idolatry!

NATIONALISM, SPORTS, PUBLIC FIGURES

Another even more subtle thing that can cause professed Christians to be found worshiping creatures and men or other things as idols exists in the matters of nationalism and the world of sports and entertainment. In what way?

Note, first, the wild animals and birds by which the nations of Christendom represent and symbolize their respective countries. Perhaps not much thought is given the symbol of the nation by the individual citizen. And it is not necessarily wrong that names, sometimes of birds or animals, are chosen to describe or stand for a nation. In the Bible Jehovah symbolically likens his care for his people to the eagle's care for its young, and Jesus Christ is called "the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah," the lion being a symbol of courageous justice. (Ex. 19:4; Rev. 5:5) The patriarch Jacob also prophesied concerning the twelve tribes of Israel, foretelling certain characteristics they would display by likening them to animals with these qualities.—Gen. 49:9, 14, 17, 27.

However, in the case of national symbols, the question is: Is there any worship attached to them? It is the *effect* of such things on the *attitude* of people that determines whether worship is involved or not. How are your thoughts and emotions affected when you see these symbols? Do you feel that people of your race or nationality are better than others? Or do you instead appreciate the fact that God "made out of one man every nation of men" and that he is not partial

to any race or nationality?—Acts 17:26.

In sports, how do you feel about the local team, or a team you may favor? Today outstanding athletes are celebrated as heroes, their "fans" or devotees being anxious to follow their pattern, eat the same food and wear the same styles of clothing. There is a great clamor for their autographs. Sometimes bitter disputes, even fierce fights are waged over players or teams, and large sums of money are bet on them.

How does this constitute the worship of "dungy idols"? Not that there is necessarily anything wrong about the team or the game. Nor can the "hero" himself be singled out as worse than other men. It is the *effect* on the "fan" and his *attitude* that constitutes worship. Merely because such athletes have strong bodies and good coordination, should they be idolized? Aside from these abilities, what kind of *persons* are they? Are they persons whose pattern of life should be imitated? Do they have the qualities of love, kindness, faith in God, joy, peace, self-control? Does following their way exalt God? Do they themselves exalt *God's* name or their *own?* Moreover, no matter what kind of person he is, no man should be idolized.

So, if a person spends much time and effort, carefully learning all the statistics and averages of the various teams and players, where is his real interest and devotion? How concerned is he about learning more concerning God's purpose?

The question is: Really what does a person meditate upon? What does he love to do, to watch, to read about? What does he value? Jesus said: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." —Matt. 6:21.

In the worship and service of Jehovah God there are no excesses. True, there is joy, there is zeal, there is enthusiasm. But it all results in that which is good, and it is helpful to others. The frenzy and excesses that so many sports devotees and performers indulge in is evidence that they are idolizing the game or its participants. Take, for example, instances of fans throwing bottles at players or umpires, and going wild, tearing up the turf and equipment after a baseball or football game.

Would anyone claiming to be Christian take delight in gladiatorial fights, Roman style? Is there not at least some similarity with many sports, particularly the contact sports today, such as football, boxing and hockey?

In professional football, for example, there is what is known as the "suicide squad," a group sent specially into a game, as *Life* magazine put it, "with specific violent jobs to do." The requirement for suicide squad members, *Life* explains, is "savage instincts and no fear at all." Said one player: "I just think about hurting the other person, because every time you get kicked senseless, you can count on knocking two or three other people senseless. That's a pretty good feeling."

When, in order to win a game, whether for money, fame, glory or anything else, a person not only risks his own health but also tries to hurt, possibly cripple or kill others, is this not a form of idolatry toward that sport? It certainly is thinking more of one's own glory than of one's fellowman, whom God created. It is in direct disobedience to the Creator and is a serving of something else as god, as more worthy of one's devotion and life's effort.

Of course, not all sports are so physically rough, but whatever sport he may favor, the Christian should guard himself against letting it capture his heart to the extent that it begins to take time and attention from the study of God's Word and service to Him.

And we cannot single out sports alone as something that can become an idol. If we view TV or movie stars, musicians, singers or other public figures with awe or devote time excessively to watching or hearing them, we are neglecting the worship of God in favor of them.

WATCH YOUR HEART'S ATTITUDE

Therefore, we can engage in idolatry if we overenthusiastically support these things in which men are glorified, if we give our hearts over to them. Even if we do not openly display such feelings, we need to watch our mental attitude and our heart. For the ancient prophet Job showed that a person can be guilty of idolatry inside the privacy of his own heart. He said:

> "If I used to see the light when it would flash forth, or the precious moon walking along, and *my heart began to be enticed in secrecy* and my hand proceeded to kiss my mouth, that too would be an error for attention by the justices, for I should have denied the true God above."—Job 31:26-28.

If we are induced to have an affection in our heart for any creature or thing that takes away from our exclusive devotion to God, it becomes an idol to us and a sin against God. It is good to keep in mind at all times Jesus' words that point up the great danger of letting our hearts be enticed by anything that may draw us into a course disobedient to God. He warned his disciples: "Out of the heart come wicked reasonings, murders, adulteries, fornications, thieveries, false testimonies, blasphemies." Also he showed that one's heart can entrap one into sin against God when he said: "I say to you that everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." —Matt. 15:19; 5:28.

Entertainment and exercise are fine in their proper place. The apostle Paul put things in their correct order when he said: "Be training yourself with godly devotion as your aim. For bodily training is beneficial for a little; but godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come."—1 Tim. 4:7, 8.

So we can see that Ezekiel's visions apply very strongly today. Just as some Israelites were ensnared, so are many professed Christians. Having been drawn into the worship of animals and other "dungy idols," those men of Israel thought that 'Jehovah did not see' them, that they would not be called to account. Today, although Christians know that Jehovah is "a God exacting exclusive devotion" and that 'he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images,' some let themselves be drawn into idolatrous practices.—Isa. 42:8.

Consequently, the true Christian needs to be on guard against that very subtle trap, "the proud display of life," which, the apostle John says, does not come "from the Father, but from the world." Seeking glory for oneself or glorifying men will take one into idolatry. And it is a passing glory. John goes on to say: "The world with its cravings is passing away, but whoever does God's will will endure forever."—1 John 2:16, 17, *An American Translation*.

Annual Meeting, October 1, 1972

● In accordance with the resolution adopted unanimously at the annual meeting last year, the forthcoming annual meeting of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held on Sunday, October 1, 1972, in the Civic Arena, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The program planned for the date of the annual meeting October 1, 1972, will

include, not only the annual meeting proceedings, but also the graduation exercises of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead.

It will be appreciated if the members of the Corporation will now see to it that the Secretary's Office has their present mailing addresses so that the regular letters of notice and the proxies can be sent to them to reach them shortly after September 1. The proxies are to be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 15. As each member knows, he should complete and return his proxy promptly whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not.

Early reports indicate that not only are many members of the Corporation planning to attend in person, but also other brothers from distant places are considering attending the annual meeting. For the information of the latter, we call attention to the fact that the capacity of the Civic Arena in Pittsburgh is approximately 14,000. We would not want to have persons come a long distance and not be able to get into the Arena. In view of these circumstances and since the auditorium will of necessity be filled on a first come first served basis, and we just cannot guarantee seats to everyone, you should know that within a 200-mile radius of Pittsburgh there are approximately 40,000 of Jehovah's witnesses. Within a radius of 150 miles, the number is approximately 34,000, and if all of those within just a 100-mile radius of Pittsburgh attended the annual meeting, the Arena would be overfilled with the approximately 16,000 publishers within this area. So we feel that all should be practical in the matter, and our suggestion is that the general attendance, that is, those aside from the members and their families, be limited to those who are located within a 150-mile radius of Pittsburgh. Of course, we do not know how many of these will attend, and our sole purpose is to avoid anyone coming a long distance and being disappointed at not getting a seat. So we want you to know the facts regarding the capacity of the facilities that will be used. We expect the doors to the Arena to be opened at about 7:30 a.m., and the program to begin at 8:30 or 9 o'clock.

"My Sheep Listen to My Voice"

MANY religions today claim to be Christian. This would seemingly make it difficult to identify the religion that truly represents the teachings of Jesus Christ. But can it be done? Yes, for Jesus Christ said: "My sheep listen to my voice." (John 10:27) His voice *can* be identified despite modern religious confusion. This is well illustrated by the experiences of Jehovah's Christian witnesses.

● In Germany, a young man and his family studied the Bible entirely on their own. What they learned from this private study moved them to maintain a neutral position in political matters and to refrain from violating God's law about the sanctity of blood. Later, the young man saw one of Jehovah's witnesses as she was offering *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* to people on the street. Approaching her, he requested that a call be made at his home. She promised to do so but did not arrange for a definite time to call. By the following Saturday no one had visited him. So the young man approached another Witness on the street and told him about his request. The following Monday, the two Witnesses called at the young man's home. But he was away at work. So they left an invitation with his wife for the public Bible discourse at the Kingdom Hall.

The young man came to the discourse and remained for the meeting that followed, a study of the Bible with the aid of *The Watchtower*. During the course of the study he even volunteered comments. On Monday, when the Witnesses called, they found him equipped with two pages filled with questions that he wanted answered. For the meeting the following Sunday, this man thoroughly studied the *Watchtower* article to be considered then, looking up every Bible passage referred to and making notes in the margins of the magazine.

About two months later he attended a circuit assembly of Jehovah's witnesses with his entire family and, happy about having found the truth, shared in the preaching activity for the first time.

● A schoolteacher in an Iron Curtain country, though taking no personal interest in the Bible, permitted her twelve-year-old daughter to study the Scriptures with one of Jehovah's witnesses. Later, the mother broke her arm and was given sick leave. With extra time on her hands, she got bored and therefore began reading the book

The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life, one of the publications that had been left by the Witness. She was so fascinated by its contents that she finished the entire book. The next time the Witness came to study with the daughter the schoolteacher told her that the book had convincingly cleared up many things for her. She responded to the invitation of the Witness to attend a meeting. The next Sunday she also attended meetings and afterward remarked: "I am thankful that I broke my arm, because that gave me time to read the book and find the way to life."

● A married couple in Tchad were assigned to make known the Bible's message in an area where none of Jehovah's witnesses had ever preached from door to door. Though warned by the local clergy not to listen to this couple, the people had their interest aroused and manifested a longing for the truth. The Witness husband reports: "When we rise in the morning, we find people already waiting for us at the door, hoping to hear something from the Bible. When we do go out and return, we always find people waiting for us. We are often talking to them at eleven o'clock at night. Rarely do we have our noon meal. Often the evening meal is also forgotten because we just do not have the time to eat. People come from fifteen and twenty kilometers away and we just cannot disappoint them."

● In the same country a man obtained the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* from one of Jehovah's witnesses. Later he was sent on official business to a village about eighteen kilometers away. He told the people that he had talked to Jehovah's witnesses in the city. Immediately he was surrounded by a group of interested persons who wanted to hear what Jehovah's witnesses preached from the Bible. Knowing practically nothing himself, the man read the entire book, chapter by chapter, to the people. Though he was to remain only one day, he was detained a whole week and the villagers insisted on keeping the book. They then sent word through him that Jehovah's witnesses should come to teach them, as they also had the right to learn about God's new order.

Truly, Jesus' "sheep" are recognizing his voice and are responding by sharing with others the good things they are learning.

Boston City Council Expresses Appreciation

MANY people appreciate the work of Jehovah's Christian witnesses and admire their zeal and devotion. Some are even moved to voice their feelings publicly. This recently happened in the city of Boston.

On May 28, 1972, the president of the Boston City Council, Mr. Gabriel Francis Piemonte, was walking his dog outside his home. Two ladies and a man approached him, introducing themselves as Jehovah's witnesses. They left him the current issues of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Later Mr. Piemonte saw four other Witnesses sharing in the same activity.

Impressed by their dedication, interest and goal, he took the liberty to introduce an order in the Boston City Council on June 5. The order was unanimously adopted and read:

"CITY OF BOSTON
"IN CITY COUNCIL

"WHEREAS, volunteer representatives of the Jehovah's Witnesses are currently engaged in a program of promoting the reading of the Bible; and

"WHEREAS, the Bible affords a source of comfort, understanding, and an enlightenment of civilization; and

"WHEREAS, in their door-to-door program the Jehovah's Witnesses are distributing copies of two of their magazines—the 'Watch Tower' and 'Awake' to encourage the living of a more moral life; and

"WHEREAS, the copy of Watch Tower being distributed contains a timely and well-written article entitled 'How Do You View Authority?', now, therefore, be it

"RESOLVED: That the Boston City Council in meeting assembled on this 5th day of June, 1972, commends the Jehovah's Witnesses on their current program urging all persons of all faiths to lead a more moral life, and congratulates the volunteers of Jehovah's Witnesses engaged in the current door-to-door program for their dedication, generosity and concern.

"In City Council June 5, 1972. Adopted.
Attest:
(signed)
(Seal) City Clerk."

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Have you read the recent issues of *The Watchtower* carefully? If so, you will doubtless remember these points:

● Why can the Bible aid us to have a successful way of life?

What the Bible says is practical and reasonable, showing us what the Creator of man says about how we ought to live and behave now as humans so as to have a satisfying and meaningful life.—P. 260.*

● At Ecclesiastes 5:7, what are the "dreams" that are mentioned as coming about "because of abundance of occupation"?

These are not dreams one has while sleeping but are selfish dreams or personal ambitions resulting from becoming unduly involved in materialistic activities and thus getting sidetracked from God's service. —P. 286.

● Did the prophet Ezekiel, in obedience to the visionary command given him, actually lie on his left side for 390 days and on his right side for 40 days?

The Bible does not provide enough details to determine whether Ezekiel did so in a visionary way or actually lay on his side in the streets during the daylight hours. But this in no way affects the understanding of the prophecy and its application.—P. 310.

● Why does Philippians 4:6 speak of prayer *and* supplication?

Supplication is a form of prayer, but not all prayer is supplication. Supplication is a more intense form of humbly entreating Jehovah God.—P. 336.

● What determines whether a minor child will have favor before God on the basis of parental merit?

The child must be obedient to his parents and try to do God's will to the extent his age and circumstances allow.—Pp. 362, 363.

● When is 'willingness to believe' wisdom?

Only when it is based on solid evidence and reason. Belief in the existence of God and in the reliability of his Word fits this requirement.—P. 388.

● What determines whether a person is expelled or disfellowshiped from the Christian congregation?

It is not the seriousness of the wrong nor the bad publicity resulting therefrom. The determining factor is the individual's repentance or lack of it.—P. 438.

● What motivates true repentance?

The repentant person has a heartfelt longing to come back into divine favor because of his love for God. He feels sorrow about having brought reproach on God's name, rejects the bad course and rights the wrong to the extent possible.—P. 439.

● In what sense is man uniquely in God's image?

This is in the matter of *headship* where the man can reflect God's position toward his creatures. In the family arrangement the man has no earthly head over him; his wife and children are subject to him as family head.—P. 445.

● At Matthew 18:15, what is meant by 'gaining your brother'?

It means to gain him in the sense of aiding him to remain in the congregation, turning him back from a course that could lead to his being expelled or disfellowshiped therefrom.—P. 466.

● In keeping with Matthew 18:15, what kind of sins would one be obligated to lay bare between oneself and one's Christian brother?

These would be actual sins and not imagined ones. They could include such sins as fraud and slander.—P. 466.

● When is conformity a good thing, but when must it be avoided?

Conformity is good when it is in harmony with the guidelines set forth in the Bible and when it contributes to purposeful cooperative effort. But conformity to ways that are opposed to God's righteous standards must be avoided if one is to enjoy divine favor.—P. 474.

● What should you do if doubts come up in your mind about the spiritual food being dispensed by the "faithful and discreet slave" today?

Seek help from elders in the congregation. Be patient, remembering that following Jehovah's leading brings happiness and life. Keep in mind that you became a disciple because you were firmly persuaded of the truth and convinced that those who taught you had your interests at heart. Also consider how well matters have turned out for those who have maintained faithfulness.—P. 504.

* All references are to *The Watchtower* for 1972.

● When meat is cut in the course of preparation for cooking, or when it is sliced after it has been cooked, a reddish fluid may run out of it. Is such meat suitable for eating by a Christian?—U.S.A.

A Christian may eat meat only from animals that were drained of their blood at the time they were slaughtered. The Bible commands: "Keep abstaining . . . from blood and from things strangled."—Acts 15:29.

Of course, even the meat from properly bled animals may appear to be very red or may have red fluid on the surface. This is because bleeding does not remove every trace of blood from the animal. But God's law does not require that every single drop of blood be removed. It simply states that the animal should be bled.

Then, too, there is extravascular fluid in the meat. This fluid may mix with traces of blood and take on a red color. The extravascular fluid filling the spaces between the cells is known as interstitial fluid and resembles blood plasma. But it is *not blood* and therefore does not come under the prohibition respecting blood. Hence the presence of a reddish fluid does not in itself make meat unsuitable for food. As long as an animal has been properly bled, its meat may Scripturally be used for food.

There may be times, however, when a Christian has reason to believe that an animal may not have been bled properly. If there is no way for him to get the facts, he may choose not to eat the meat and thus avoid disturbing his conscience. This is in harmony with the principle stated at Romans 14:23: "If he has doubts, he is already condemned if he eats."

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

October 1: You Are Never Alone. Page 521.
Songs to Be Used: 7, 88.

October 8: Help from On High. Page 527.
Songs to Be Used: 41, 72.