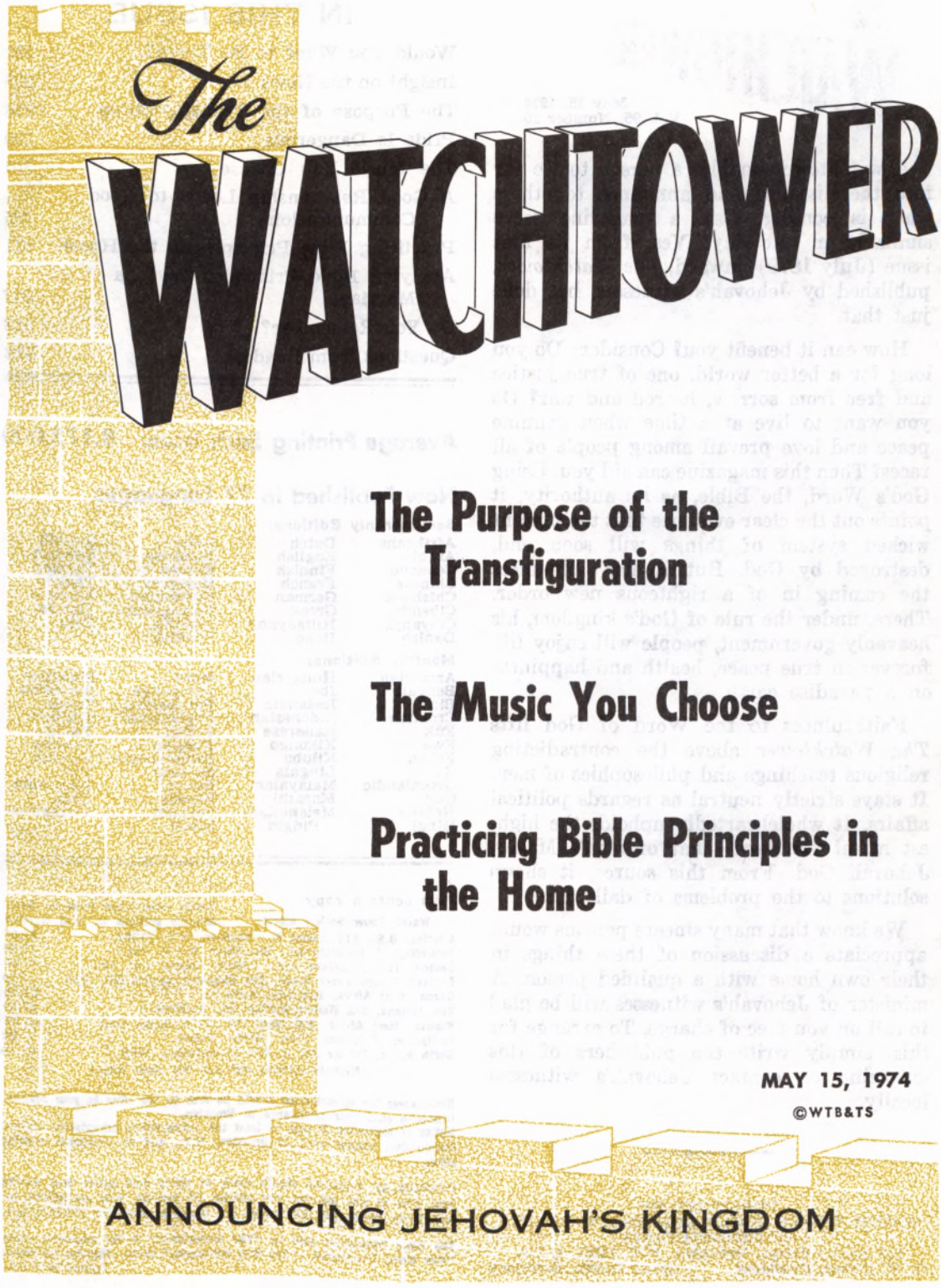
The
WATCHTOWER
The Purpose of the Transfiguration
The Music You Choose
Practicing Bible Principles in the Home
MAY 15, 1974
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ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

May 15, 1974
Vol. 95, Number 10

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. A minister of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's witnesses locally.

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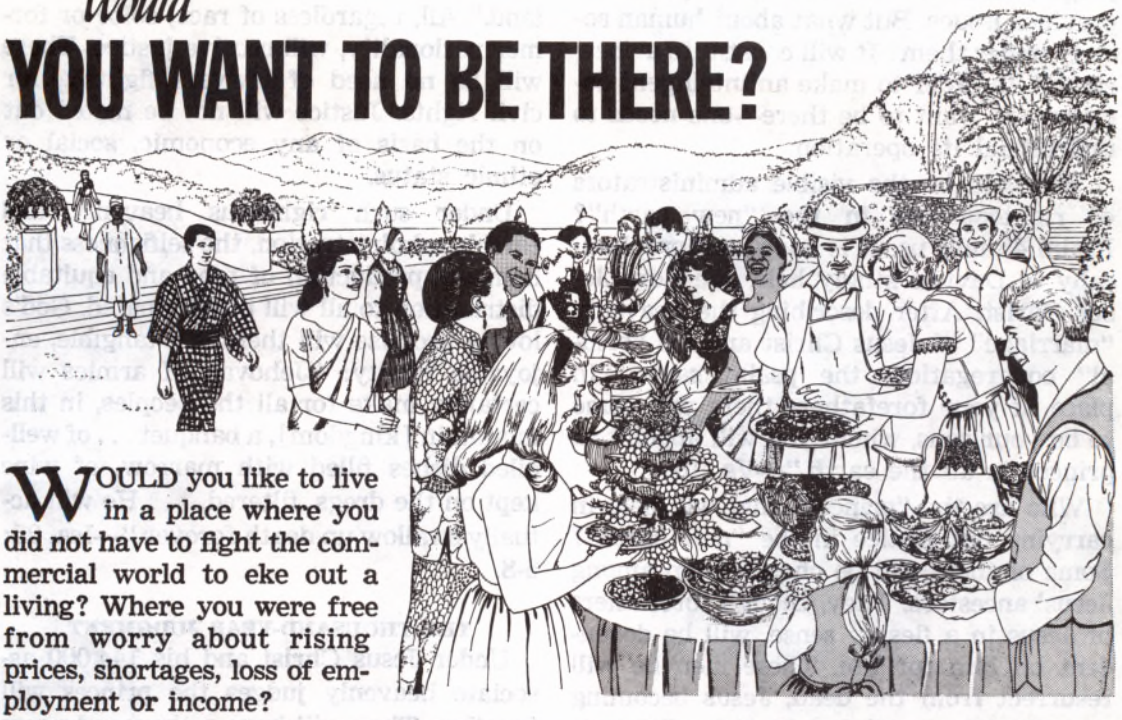
Would YOU WANT TO BE THERE?



WOULD you like to live in a place where you did not have to fight the commercial world to eke out a living? Where you were free from worry about rising prices, shortages, loss of employment or income?

Would you like to get away from governmental corruption, inequalities in rights and opportunities and slackness in the administration of justice?

Do you wish that you could live where there would be no need for lawyers, doctors, hospitals or cemeteries?

You may reply, 'You're talking about heaven.'

No. We are talking about the earth. You likely have wished for this very condition. Have you prayed: "Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth"? This prayer is not a request to go to heaven. It asks for the righteous, favorable conditions of God's heaven to be brought to *earth*. —Matt. 6:10.

Could such a condition be possible? It can and will be. When? How?

In the very near future, by God's own hand. Surely you see that this present system as run by men is decadent. There is evidence, however, that there are also unseen forces that exercise vast influence. The Bible identifies these forces as demons, wicked spirits controlled by a master demon, Satan the Devil. Invisibly, he is "misleading the entire inhabited earth."—Rev. 12:9; 2 Cor. 4:4.

Consequently, there is a wicked invisible rulership, which the Bible calls a "heaven," and a wicked visible human society called "earth." Of these, the Bible says, prophetically: "The earth and the heaven fled away, and no place was found for them." (Rev. 20:11) This is foretelling that God will do away with the corrupt system that holds mankind in the viselike grip of fear, corruption, war, disease and death.—2 Pet. 3:7, 13.

A RIGHTEOUS EARTH

The "new heaven" of Jesus Christ and his 144,000 associate kings and priests will then rule invisibly. (Rev. 21:1; 14:1; 20: 4-6) Of their qualifications as rulers and

judges, *The Watchtower* has spoken in previous issues. But what about human society under them? It will constitute a "new earth." In order to make an intelligent decision—to want to be there—one needs to understand its operation.

Who will be the visible administrators of righteousness in the "new earth"? Psalm 45 tells us. It is addressed prophetically to David's kingly heir, the Lord Jesus Christ. After describing the heavenly "marriage" of Jesus Christ and his "bridal" congregation, the psalm says: "In place of your forefathers there will come to be your sons, whom you will appoint as princes in all the earth."—Vs. 16.

Who are the "princes" that will help in carrying out justice in the "new earth"? Some of them will be chosen from among Jesus' ancestors. They, though forefathers of Jesus in a fleshly sense, will be dependent on him for life. These men he will resurrect from the dead, Jesus becoming their "Father," and they his "sons." Others will also serve as "princes" from among the survivors of this system's destruction and from among faithful men of old not in Jesus' ancestry.

The primary factor qualifying these princes is integrity. Jesus Christ will follow God's own principle in selecting these men, as stated at Exodus 18:21: You should select "capable men, fearing God, trustworthy men, hating unjust profit." These princes will not be corruptible, as rulers are today. They will be courageous and protective of what is right, like the princes described in Isaiah 32:1, 2:

"Look! A king will reign for righteousness itself; and as respects princes, they will rule as princes for justice itself. And each one must prove to be like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land." All, regardless of race, color or former nationality, will receive justice. There will be no need of lawyers fighting for civil rights. Justice will not be meted out on the basis of any economic, social or ethnic status.

Under such righteous heavenly and earthly administration, the selfishness that hampers production of food and equitable distribution to all will be eliminated. God's loving promise will then be a tangible, enjoyable reality: "Jehovah of armies will certainly make for all the peoples, in this mountain [kingdom], a banquet . . . of well-oiled dishes filled with marrow, of wine kept on the dregs, filtered. . . . He will actually swallow up death forever."—Isa. 25: 6-8.

THE THOUSAND-YEAR JUDGMENT

Under Jesus Christ and his 144,000 associate heavenly judges the princes will function. They will have a thousand years to assist the human race to learn obedience to God's laws and to achieve life. With sparkling, invigorating life, there will be no sickness requiring doctors and hospitals, as are now necessary to alleviate, to some extent, the terrible suffering it causes. God gave the apostle John a vision that provides a fine picture of this judgment day. John writes:

"And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. But another scroll was opened; it is the scroll of life. And the dead were judged out of those things written in the scrolls according to their deeds. And the sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades gave up those dead in them, and they were judged individually according to their deeds."—Rev. 20:12, 13.

This vision clearly depicts the resurrection of the dead, whether from an earthly

grave or a watery one—all the redeemed ones, for whom God accepts the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ. This will constitute the majority of mankind who have ever lived.

In addition to the resurrected ones there will be the survivors of the "great tribulation" that destroys this wicked earthly system of things. (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 7:9-17) These will need the help of the heavenly judges and priests in order to be lifted up to perfection, even though some may serve as "princes." Likewise, the resurrected men appointed as "princes" will need such heavenly help.

All of these must stand before Jehovah's judgment throne. God has delegated judgment authority during the thousand years to Jesus Christ. (John 5:22) Is the judgment based on the past record of those being judged? No. The judgment is not based on whether their name is in the book of life when they come before the throne. The vision shows that other scrolls were opened and that "the dead were judged out of those things written in the scrolls according to their deeds." Thus, determination is made as to whether they get the opportunity to have their names in the book of life or not.

The scrolls set forth Jehovah's laws for living and working in the "new earth." The people are not judged *en masse,* but "individually according to their deeds" of obedience or disobedience to these laws administered by the heavenly judges. The earthly princes will assist the people to learn and obey them.

Under these conditions, can we expect the majority of earth's population then to turn out wicked, disobedient? This does not seem reasonable. At the present time many circumstances cause people to be disobedient to law. One of these is the slow, dragging process of justice in today's courts, as well as the bribery and favoritism that produce injustice. The situation in this world has encouraged criminality. It has occurred as the Bible says: "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in them to do bad."—Eccl. 8:11.

No such situation will exist during Christ's thousand-year reign. Throughout this time, as the result of the dripping and trickling down of righteousness from the "new heavens," the human soil of the "new earth" will respond and become fruitful in a corresponding way. The Bible expresses it beautifully: "Let the earth open up, and let it be fruitful with salvation, and let it cause righteousness itself to spring up at the same time. I myself, Jehovah, have created it."—Isa. 45:8.

Consequently, the path of the right-hearted person will not be such rough going as now, but will be smoothed out. God's prophet Isaiah wrote: "The path of the righteous one is uprightness. You being upright, you will smooth out the very course of a righteous one. Yes, for the path of your judgments, O Jehovah, we have hoped in you. . . . because, when there are judgments from you for the earth, righteousness is what the inhabitants of the productive land will certainly learn."—Isa. 26:7-9.

Conditions will be the reverse of what they have been under the satanic "god of

IN COMING ISSUES

- **The Real Power Behind Occultism.**
- **What Prevents You from Getting Baptized?**
- **Meeting the Challenge of Bible Translation.**

this system of things" with corrupt political domination and the influence of false religion to keep the people in subjection. The "scrolls" of God's instructions for handling earth's affairs will be taught without interference from false ideologies and the materialistic philosophies of selfish men. Greedy commercialism will no longer govern the lives of people by manipulation of earth's resources so as to cause spiraling prices, inflation, shortages and consequent suffering, along with dissatisfaction, unhappiness and unrest. That which is right and good will be exalted, and no more will it be true that "sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily."

WHAT ABOUT THOSE NOT OBEDIENT?

Of course, there will undoubtedly be some who are not obedient to the "things written in the scrolls" for the direction of mankind in God's way. The prophet Isaiah goes on to say: "Though the wicked one should be shown favor, he simply will not learn righteousness. In the land of straightforwardness he will act unjustly and will not see the eminence of Jehovah."—Isa. 26:10.

The millennial "land of straightforwardness," of straightforward dealing with the people and among the people, will be a place where great favor is shown to all mankind in their inborn human imperfection. But some members of the human family have gone down more deeply into sinful degradation than others and have been hardened in an unjust personality. Their accustomed bent is toward injustice, even though all around them there is straightforwardness. They will not want to recognize the eminence of Jehovah as the rightful Lawgiver nor the rightness of his standards for living.

Persons who, in the "land of straightforwardness," receive the "favor" of God in vain, missing its loving purpose, and who prove unreformable, need not necessarily be preserved to the end of the thousand years before being executed as unfit for eternal life in the Paradise restored to earth. Without any injustice to such who prove to be beyond correction, they may be executed by the one whom God has appointed to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness. (Rev. 20:14, 15; Acts 17:31) How wise and prudent it is, then, to be obedient now to the "good news of God" and to cultivate a love of righteousness in view of that coming Judgment Day! —1 Pet. 4:17, 18.

After the end of the thousand-year rule of Christ, there are greater things to come. These will be discussed in the next issue of *The Watchtower*.

Do you want to be in a world like this? Would you be happier than now if you possessed perfection of health and could welcome back in the resurrection your loved ones and friends? This happy condition will be *right here on earth*. If you truly want to live in such a world, your heart and conscience will motivate you to look further into God's Word the Bible. God's very reason for having this book written was to provide instructions for us during this time. It shows us how to conduct ourselves in order to get onto the way to life in that "new earth."—Rom. 15:4.

"O God, give your own judicial decisions to the king, and your righteousness to the son of the king. May he plead the cause of your people with righteousness and of your afflicted ones with judicial decision. Let the mountains carry peace to the people, also the hills, through righteousness. Let him judge the afflicted ones of the people, let him save the sons of the poor one, and let him crush the defrauder. In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more."—Ps. 72:1-4, 7.

Insight on the News

Holy Year Preparations

● Nineteen seventy-five was designated as a "Holy Year" by Pope Paul VI, and the city of Rome is already preparing for an expected six and a half million pilgrims.

Under the headline "A Rain of Billions on the Holy Year," the Italian newspaper "Corriere della Sera" predicts an influx of from 600 to 700 billion lira ($960,000,000 to $1,120,000,000) from the pilgrims and native Italians visiting Rome. A question now discussed is, Who will share in these profits? The newspaper reports that a small "war of the sanctuaries" began to flare—due to so many sanctuaries wanting to give the special indulgences to the Holy Year pilgrims. Finally, the Italian Episcopal Conference allowed only four places outside Rome (Loreto, Pompeii, Assisi and Padova) to share in granting these indulgences.

Hotel owners, shopkeepers and restaurants all stand to benefit, but even among these there are reports of discontent. Why? "Corriere della Sera" estimates that religious institutions acting as hotels will house half the visitors and will take in about one tenth of all the billions of lira spent. Small shopkeepers dealing in religious items—rosaries, medallions, Madonnas, Christs and saints—face similar church competition. Sighed one prominent merchant: "They take the food from our mouths . . . There isn't a vestry, ecclesiastical home or church that doesn't have its rooms for renting, its selling booths full of religious articles and souvenirs. They can sell everything cheaper . . . they don't have our expenses: rent, taxes, employees' wages and insurance."

So the papal announcement of a "Holy Year" in 1975 apparently involves more than spiritual upbuilding of the millions of pilgrims that Rome expects. We are reminded of circumstances in a different "holy city" nineteen centuries ago. Jesus observed that men were selling doves and changing money (for a profit) in Jerusalem's temple. Read what he said about their practice, at Matthew 21:12, 13. The merchandise may be different today. But the situation is the same.

Costly Curiosity

● Somewhat over a year ago the Apollo space project, with its six manned flights to the moon, ended. The cost: twenty-four billion dollars. What has mankind really learned?

Scientists have learned that many theories were wrong—for one thing the moon's chemical makeup is quite different from the earth's. But the major question it was hoped the project would solve still remains: By what process did the moon take shape? Because the findings fail to fit so many of the theories held, a "Wall Street Journal" report humorously summed up things by saying: "The moon isn't where it's supposed to be—or, if it is, it's made of the wrong stuff."—March 25, 1974.

The same week that that statement was made, World Bank president Robert McNamara drew attention to another matter that deserves consideration. He was quoted as saying that, of two billion people living in one hundred "developing" countries, "800,000,000 of them live on, in [U.S.] terms, 30 cents a day, and the people are barely on the margin of life." —New York "Post," March 27, 1974.

Scientific curiosity has led to some useful discoveries. But, weighing priorities against the background of world conditions, is it not questionable whether mankind should now be allowing itself the luxury of such costly curiosity? With good reason 1 Corinthians 3:19 says: "The wisdom of this world is folly in God's sight."—"New English Bible."

New Model for Women's Lib?

● The 'women's liberation' movement supposedly has a new model and supporter, according to "Marialis Cultus," a recent papal document. Who is the model? Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus. The "apostolic exhortation" depicts Mary as a forceful woman whose example supports the "liberating energies" now astir in modern society.

There is no doubt that Jesus' mother Mary was not a bashful, backward, withdrawn individual. (Compare Luke 1:46-55; 2:41-49; John 2:1-5.) On the other hand, she was undoubtedly in agreement with the apostle Peter's exhortation to wives to "be in subjection to your own husbands," and to be adorned with "the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God." (1 Pet. 3:1-4) Would you say that this is the view of most modern feminist leaders?

THE PURPOSE of The Transfiguration

DO YOU believe that Christ will actually rule the earth as King? If so, will he rule from an earthly throne or a heavenly one? Or do you think that he was merely an outstanding man, a teacher?

It was to provide a sure, reliable answer to these questions, and to have eyewitnesses with accurate and unshakable testimony to the reality of his heavenly rulership, that the transfiguration vision was given to three of the apostles, and the account thereof preserved in writing.

To understand the purpose of the transfiguration, we need to go back to a conversation that Jesus had with his disciples only a few days previously. They were present when the Pharisees and Sadducees unbelievingly demanded a sign—likely that Jesus come visibly on the clouds of heaven. But Jesus told those selfish, wicked men that they would receive only an earthly sign—the sign of the prophet Jonah. —Matt. 16:4.

A little later Jesus asked his disciples about the opinion of the people in general: "Who are men saying the Son of man is?" They replied: "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."—Matt. 16:13, 14.

Having ascertained the opinion of the people, Jesus asked: "You, though, who do *you* say I am?" Simon Peter answered: "You are the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God." God had revealed this to the apostles because of their faith; but they yet needed to know much more about the Messiah, what he had to do and the glory he would be given by God. Accordingly, Jesus began explaining that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things and be killed. Peter tried to dissuade him, saying: "Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this destiny at all." Peter's response showed that he did not fully grasp that Jesus had to die a sacrificial death, and that he would be resurrected to heavenly life. Neither did Peter see that the Kingdom would rule from *heaven,* beginning long after the apostles' death, at the time of Christ's *parousia,* or invisible presence in glory and power. Jesus immediately corrected Peter, saying: "You think, not God's thoughts, but those of men."—Matt. 16:15-23.

Jesus realized that his apostles viewed his kingdom from a human viewpoint, thinking he would rule from an earthly throne. But it was essential for these men, who would be pillars in the Christian congregation, to be witnesses to the truth of his future heavenly presence in Kingdom power. (Gal. 2:9) Not at that time, but after his death and resurrection, they would have to establish this great truth,

this important doctrine, firmly in the congregation. So he made this remarkable statement to them:

"The Son of man is destined to come in the glory of his Father with his angels . . . Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here that will not taste death at all until first they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."—Matt. 16: 24-28.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

A few days later Christ's words were fulfilled. He took Peter, James and John into a lofty mountain. He did not need to take all his apostles. Three witnesses were sufficient, as the Law required. (Deut. 19: 15; 2 Cor. 13:1) Luke's account of the transfiguration scene reads:

"As [Jesus] was praying the appearance of his face became different and his apparel became glitteringly white. Also, look! two men were conversing with him, who were Moses and Elijah. These appeared with glory and began talking about his departure [Greek, *exodos*] that he was destined to fulfill at Jerusalem. Now Peter and those with him were weighed down with sleep; but when they got fully awake they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. And as these were being separated from him, Peter said to Jesus: 'Instructor, it is fine for us to be here, so let us erect three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah,' he not realizing what he was saying. But as he was saying these things a cloud formed and began to overshadow them. As they entered into the cloud, they became fearful. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying: 'This is my Son, the one that has been chosen. Listen to him.' And as the voice occurred Jesus was found alone."—Luke 9: 29-36.

The vision must have occurred at night, for they were sleepy, and they did not come down from the mountain until the next day. But they were awake when they saw the transfiguration. Imagine the apostles' amazement as they saw Jesus' face shining as the sun, and his clothing glitteringly white! Long previously Moses, after returning from the mountain where God spoke with him, could hide the brilliance of his face by a veil, but the far greater glory of Christ made even his entire apparel brilliant, glistening.—Ex. 34: 29-35; compare 2 Corinthians 3:7-11.

EVIDENCE OF CHRIST'S COMING GLORY

Here, before the apostles' eyes, was evidence that Jesus' presence in Kingdom power would be a glorious heavenly one. Also, the conversation of the visionary Moses and Elijah about Jesus' exodus was proof that his humiliating death was not something to avoid, as Peter had desired. In this tableau, Moses, who was used by God to give the Law to Israel, represented that Law covenant. Elijah represented the other prophets. Both the Law and the prophets had foretold Christ, his life, his suffering, his sacrifice, his glory. All pointed to Christ. As the apostle Paul said: "The Law has become our tutor leading to Christ." (Gal. 3:24; Rom. 10:4) And, as to the other prophets, an angel later told the apostle John: "The *bearing witness to Jesus* is what inspires prophesying."—Rev. 19:10.

Also, Christ is a Leader and Deliverer, as was Moses. He is Mediator of the new covenant, as Moses was of the Law covenant. (Gal. 3:19; Heb. 9:15) Jehovah had said to Moses: "A prophet I shall raise up for them from the midst of their brothers, like you; and I shall indeed put my words in his mouth, and he will certainly speak to them all that I shall command him. And it must occur that the man who will not listen to my words that he will speak in my name, I shall myself require an account from him."—Deut. 18:18, 19; Acts 3:22, 23, 26.

Christ would conduct a work like Elijah. The prophet Malachi had recorded Jehovah's promise: "Look! I am sending to you people Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and fear-inspiring day of

Jehovah." Elijah had done a great work toward restoring pure worship. (1 Ki. 18: 25-29, 40) John the Baptist did this toward Israel. (Luke 1:17; Matt. 17:12, 13) But, at the time of the transfiguration, this John was dead. Elijah appearing in the vision would therefore indicate that Christ would conduct a greater work, restoring pure worship permanently. This had to take place "before the coming of the great and fear-inspiring day of Jehovah," that will take place when God executes judgment on false worshipers and this present wicked system of things.—Mal. 4:5, 6.

The vision was so real that Peter began to participate in the scene, evidently overwhelmed with awe and appreciation. When he observed the two visionary men "being separated from [Jesus]," he apparently did not want them to leave. So he spoke about erecting tents, "not realizing what he was saying."

However, the occurrence was a *vision,* Moses and Elijah being only visionary. (Matt. 17:9) For Moses had died and was still in his grave. (Deut. 34:5, 6; compare Acts 2:29.) Elijah was carried up in a fiery chariot into the sky, but not into the heaven of God. Actually, he was transferred or transported to another assignment on earth. In fact, years afterward Elijah, still alive, wrote a prophetic letter to Jehoram, king of Judah. (2 Chron. 21:12) Later Elijah died, just as do all mankind. Neither he nor Moses was resurrected to everlasting life ahead of Christ, who is "the firstborn from the dead." Jesus himself, while on earth, said: "No man has ascended into heaven."—Rev. 1:5; John 3:13.

While Peter was speaking, a cloud formed and overshadowed them. This was a symbol of Jehovah's invisible presence. (Ex. 16:10; 1 Ki. 8:10) Then, in one of the three instances where Jehovah's own voice was heard, He gave his own testimony to Jesus' Messiahship, saying: "This is my Son, the one that has been chosen. Listen to him."—Luke 9:35.

"THE PROPHETIC WORD MADE MORE SURE"

What conclusive and awe-inspiring proof was given to these three apostles on that occasion! How powerful and convincing their witness to Christ's Messiahship would now be! They had, indeed, 'not tasted death' before seeing this dramatic demonstration of Christ's future presence in Kingdom glory. More than thirty years afterward the apostle Peter wrote:

> "No, it was not by following artfully contrived false stories that we acquainted you with the power and presence [*parousia,* the invisible presence in Kingdom power] of our Lord Jesus Christ, but it was by having become eyewitnesses of his magnificence. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when words such as these were borne to him by the magnificent glory: 'This is my son, my beloved, whom I myself have approved.' Yes, these words we heard borne from heaven while we were with him in the holy mountain. Consequently we have the prophetic word made more sure; and you are doing well in paying attention to it as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and a daystar rises, in your hearts." —2 Pet. 1:16-19.

The apostle John, about sixty-six years after the transfiguration vision, apparently had this scene still vividly in mind when he wrote: "The Word became flesh and resided among us, and we had a view of his glory, a glory such as belongs to an only-begotten son from a father; and he was full of undeserved kindness and truth." —John 1:14.

Today the "daystar" that Peter spoke of has risen. Jesus Christ has been enthroned in Kingdom glory at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 C.E.! If we have 'paid attention, in our hearts, to the prophecy,' we have the prophetic word yet more strongly confirmed than it was to the apostles. Christ has fulfilled what was written prophetically about him in the Law and in

the Prophets. He is now leading his people as did Moses, with a righteous paradise earth just ahead for those now accepting him and following his leading. Do you take seriously the prophetic word and the word of the truthful eyewitnesses of his majesty? Do you discern his invisible presence in Kingdom power? If so, you are highly favored now, and have a wonderful prospect yet before you.

Pride IS DANGEROUS

ARE you drawn to people who give the appearance of always being right? Rather, are you not repelled by those who continually boast about their abilities, achievements, wealth or position? Does it annoy you that some people are very quick to point out the mistakes of others but refuse to acknowledge their own, even taking offense when some failing is called to their attention?

Yes, such expressions of pride repel and irritate. There can be no question that pride has a bad effect on others, tearing down rather than building up. It can give rise to hard feelings and may eventually ruin good relationships with fellowmen.

Just what is pride? It is inordinate self-esteem; an unreasonable feeling of superiority as to one's talents, wisdom, beauty, wealth and rank. It usually displays itself outwardly by a haughty, conceited, self-important bearing.

As pride is a common fault among imperfect men, we do well to control it and thereby avoid its damaging effects. This requires that we develop or maintain a heartfelt recognition of the fact that pride has no sound basis. Regardless of race, nationality, education, abilities, achievements or economic circumstances, all humans are sinners and the offspring of sinners. That is no cause for boasting, is it?

Yet someone might say, 'I have worked hard for the position or prominence that I now enjoy.' But does that give him any basis for being proud? Well, did he give himself the capacity to develop some talent or ability? If he had been born with great mental or physical limitations, would his best efforts have enabled him even to come near to his present achievements? An argument recorded in the Holy Scriptures gives the right balance on this. We read: "Who makes you to differ from another? Indeed, what do you have that you did not receive? If, now, you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as though you did not receive it?"—1 Cor. 4:7.

Besides a proper evaluation of self, respect for the dignity of fellow humans is vital in controlling pride. The Bible's counsel is: "[Do] nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior to you."—Phil. 2:3.

It is good for the Christian to recognize that other fellow believers may have certain qualities superior to his own. They may be exemplary in showing love, kindness, sympathy or consideration. Years of

Scriptural study may have given some an excellent grasp of Bible principles and their application to daily living. While others may not be particularly outstanding in knowledge, they may have had much valuable experience in life. Something can be learned from them, too, even if it is just a matter of coming to recognize that there may be more than one way of looking at matters. This will prevent one from making the mistake of trying to fit everyone into the same mold and being overbearing in making decisions or in turning down suggestions.

For a man to make another feel low or inferior because of considering himself superior in knowledge, abilities or experience is dangerous. In the Christian congregation, for example, a ministerial servant might approach an elder with a suggestion. Now, what might be the result if the elder brushed him off without giving due consideration to his suggestion, implying that the ministerial servant was talking out of turn? Would not the ministerial servant feel hurt and be saddened about having been misunderstood? At the same time the display of pride, though minor, may lower the ministerial servant's view of the elder. In having had his motivations questioned for no valid reason, the ministerial servant might conclude consciously or subconsciously that the elder's judgment as a whole may not be the best. Being hurt over what has happened, he may pour out his heart to a close friend and that friend's view may likewise be adversely affected for a time.

The example of Jesus Christ is certainly one worthy of imitation. He did not let 'knowledge puff him up.' (1 Cor. 8:1) Though he had all the *correct* answers, he did not alienate others by calling attention to his superior ability, knowledge, experience and wisdom. He did not make his disciples think that after his leaving them they would never be able to do the work to the extent that he had done it. To the contrary, he expressed confidence in them and accorded them honor, saying to his disciples: "Most truly I say to you, He that exercises faith in me, that one also will do the works that I do; and he will do works greater than these, because I am going my way to the Father." (John 14:12) And as a body, the disciples of Jesus Christ did do works on a greater scale than he had done and for a longer period of time.—Compare Matthew 5:14.

Now, if Jesus as a perfect man could voice such confidence regarding believers, why should any imperfect man conclude that others simply cannot do what he can? The man who reflects such proud thinking makes things harder for himself and others. He discourages others from wanting to work with him because they are made to feel inferior and undeserving of confidence. As a result, they are robbed of a measure of personal interest.

Especially dangerous, however, is a dominantly proud "spirit." It causes those possessing it to resent valid criticism, correction or discipline, in fact, to reject the counsel of God's Word. This leads them into following a way of life that is bound to bring ruin to themselves. The Bible proverb aptly puts it: "A man repeatedly reproved but making his neck hard will suddenly be broken, and that without healing." (Prov. 29:1) This is so because the dominantly proud person places himself in opposition to God and what He looks for in those whom He accepts as His servants. As the Bible says: "All of you gird yourselves with lowliness of mind toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones."—1 Pet. 5:5.

It is vital, therefore, that Christians work hard in keeping pride under control. Not only can the proud person harm others, but he may also lose out on God's approval and life. Truly pride is dangerous.

MUSIC is a natural part of human life. Among the earliest sounds many of us heard was music, in a mother's lullaby.

Man's Creator, in fact, built music into human surroundings. Not just the clear, flowing tones that spring from the throats of birds, but the gurgle of brooks, the whisper or wail of the wind in the trees, the chirp of crickets, the croak of frogs and the calls, cries and whistles of many others of earth's creatures—all of these have a musical sound to them. Not surprisingly, then, the development of musical instruments dates all the way back to the dawn of human history. —Gen. 4:21.

Helpful facts that young people want to know

Does that mean that all music is necessarily good? Or do you need to be selective as to the music you listen to? What can help us to determine? How much does it really matter?

One thing is sure—there is tremendous variety. Aside from so-called "serious" or classical music and operas, there is a wide range of semiclassical music, and every land has its own folk music, country songs and marches. Music for dancing goes from graceful waltzes to lively polkas; there are Latin-American congas, rumbas, and Brazilian sambas, also merengues, beguines and bossa novas, many of these having an African background. Particularly since World War I, highly syncopated instrumental and vocal music—jazz, blues, swing and rock have become popular. In some music, melody and harmony stand out; other kinds emphasize beat and rhythm.

So there is much to choose from. What do you prefer? Is there need for care?

THE NEED FOR CARE IN CHOOSING

Care and thought are necessary. Why? Because music has power. And like any other power it can serve for good or for harm.

Where does music's power come from? From its ability to induce a certain feeling, mood or spirit in people. Music can relax and soothe, or refresh and enliven. (Note the effect that David's music had on King Saul. [1 Sam. 16:23]) You can almost "feel" the difference between a vigorous march and a soft serenade. Music can stir every human emotion—love, tenderness,

reverence, sadness, anger, hatred and passion. Throughout history men have recognized music's power and have used it to move people in certain ways.

In the Bible the heart is closely associated with emotions and motivation. The Bible shows that the key to our conduct is found in the heart. (Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15: 18, 19) Since music's emotional power is a fact, our guarding our hearts requires being selective about the music we choose.

Music is a gift from God for our enjoyment, true, but it is the way a gift is used that determines its value to the user, as well as his appreciation to the giver. Speech, too, is a gift from God, and people can use their voices to speak in a pleasant, melodious way that makes life more enjoyable for those around them, saying things that are helpful and beneficial. But what if they use their voices for loud screaming and shrieking, for raucous shouting and bellowing? Or, even if they make their voices soft and sweet, what if they use them for lying or for encouraging others to commit wrongs? Do you enjoy voices that are used in that way? Would you like as your neighbors people who use their voices that way? Well, have you ever heard music that has similar effects?

Yes, a fact we should face is that music is a form of communication, between the composer or performer and the listener. Not just feelings are communicated; ideas are also. After all, songs are simply speech set to music, the music often helping the words (or lyrics) to penetrate more readily into the mind and heart. Some may say they pay no attention to the words of a song, that they just enjoy the music. But even without conscious attention the words are nonetheless heard, and their effect, though slow or subtle, still is there. People who set radio and television commercials to music know this, and you probably have found the words and music of some of these commercials running through your mind long after you heard them. So, the question is, What does the music you choose communicate to you?

Music is often the medium or vehicle for spreading philosophies, political ideologies, nationalism, religious beliefs and a host of other things. Part of the triumph of the French Revolution is frequently attributed to what one writer calls "the blood-curdling call to arms" of the song *La Marseillaise.* Colleges and schools usually have their "fight songs" used before athletic contests. The heavy, mystic tone in the music of certain religions fits their doctrines.

True, music's moving effect is only temporary. But it is often long enough to give a decided push in a certain direction, or to lower resistance to a certain attraction or temptation. If you studied chemistry in school you learned about "catalysts." You learned that the combining of two or more chemicals can often be achieved only by using some other ingredient that, in effect, brings the chemicals together. That ingredient is a "catalyst." Now, we all have certain weaknesses and wrong inclinations, and so we feel tempted at times to do certain things that are wrong. Suppose circumstances come up that encourage you to do a wrong act. Music can be the "catalyst" that will cause desire and circumstances to combine—resulting in something you may afterward seriously regret. On the basis of her studies, one researcher for a government commission studying pornography said:

"Music, by playing on girls' emotions to arouse love and affection, frequently serves as a catalyst for love and thereby a stimulus for sexual arousal in the adolescent female. . . . The music surfaces this feeling." —Denver *Post,* July 23, 1971.

Yes, the impulse that music supplies, though temporary, may be all that is needed to trigger you into a course or way of life that is itself long lasting or that pro-

duces results that are. So, is it not worth your while to use discernment where music is involved?

THE PROBLEM OF DECIDING

Actually, no one can provide you with a list that immediately identifies what music is good and what is bad. The reason is that among all the kinds of music mentioned there is none that can be stamped as "all good" or "all bad." You have to use your mind and heart for discerning their individual value, guided by principles such as those already considered. And your choice tells others something of the kind of person you are.

"Does not the ear itself test out words as the palate tastes food?" asked Job long ago. (Job 12:11) So, too, your ear can test out music. Even without the words, you can often tell what kind of mood or spirit a piece is designed to produce, what kind of conduct it encourages. That was the case with the music that Moses heard on coming down from Mount Sinai and approaching the Israelite camp. As he said to Joshua: "It is not the sound of the singing over mighty performance [a victory song], and it is not the sound of the singing of defeat [a mournful singing]; it is the sound of other singing that I am hearing." The singing actually reflected wild and idolatrous immoral activity.—Ex. 32:15-19, 25.

Consider more recent examples. Classical music, for instance, generally has a dignified, sometimes majestic sound. But while much of it may have a rather noble effect on one's thoughts, some of it deals with and even glorifies the sordid or selfish side of life. It is worth remembering that many famous classical composers lived immoral, even dissolute, lives. And though they generally wrote for an audience that supposedly appreciated the 'finer things of life,' it is almost unavoidable that some of their warped outlook and warped emotions would filter into their music, with or without words. So, if we want to guard the health of our minds and hearts, even so-called "serious" music cannot be taken too seriously or be accepted without question.

At the other end of the musical spectrum from classical compositions we find the syncopated jazz and rock music. Even here one finds some music that is melodic and moderate. But much of it is wild and strident. That is why musicians themselves distinguish between jazz and rock music that is "soft" and that which is "hot," "hard" or "acid." You should be able to tell what kind of conduct the music is promoting—your ear, your mind and heart should tell you. The words or the tone of certain music is sometimes so obvious that people easily associate it with certain types of conduct or kinds of persons. The Bible, for example, speaks of the "songs of drinkers" and the "song of a prostitute." (Ps. 69:12; Isa. 23:15, 16) What about today?

If, for example, you read in the newspaper about a music concert or festival and the report tells of people screaming, girls fainting, the use of drugs and of the police having to be brought in to keep the theater from being wrecked—what kind of music would you think was involved in the performance? If you hear of a popular young singer or musician dying of an overdose of drugs—what kind of music would you think he or she specialized in?

As the book *The Psychology of Music* points out, 'any monotonous, lengthy rhythmic sound produces various stages of trance.' Much rock music is distinctive by its dull, steady, heavy, throbbing or pulsating sound. It has a mind-deadening beat. Its relentless, steady pounding reminds one of a person who keeps repeating something insistently over and over again until he convinces others to do what he wants, driving other thoughts out of their minds. Some "ultramodern" classical music specializes in strange, often discordant sounds that have a similar effect. *High Fidelity*

Magazine quotes a divisional head of Columbia Records as saying: "The kind of receptivity needed for the new rock and the new classical are exactly the same. . . . You have to give yourself up to it and let them take your mind."

But can you safely let your mind be 'taken' in that way? The *World Book Encyclopedia* says that, for many, "rock music symbolizes a distinct way of life." You probably know that without being told by an encyclopedia. And you know that many young people are drawn to rock music because they believe that its lyrics "describe the realities and problems of the world around them." Perhaps more than any other form of popular music, rock music tries to put across a message: on the problems of growing up, the generation gap, drugs, sex, civil rights, dissent, poverty, war and similar topics. It tries to express many "young people's ideas for a better world and youthful discontent with social injustices." But what is its effect?

Stop and ask yourself: In the nearly twenty years since rock music came prominently on the scene (in the early 1950's), what has it done for young people? What real solutions have its philosophies brought them? Do its messages really present any clear, unified solution, or are they as confused and mixed up as are the world's religious sects, some songs advocating violence and others the opposite? Do the personal lives of its composers and performers show that—aside from making money—they themselves have found the solution to life's problems? Does it really present something new, or are not such things as sexual looseness, disrespect for authority, flight from responsibility, the use of drugs, things that have a very old history—a history that is never one of success but, sooner or later, of failure?

If such music is designed to bring realities into focus, why is so much of it drug oriented—some lyrics being understandable only to those who take drugs? Rather than help young people to understand life, is it not perhaps an appeal to childish tendencies to seek to escape responsibility?

So, your choice of music is no light matter. You can let others decide for you simply by going along with the crowd, choosing what is popular, what has mass appeal. Or you can think for yourself and use care in selecting, guided by the enduring and superior wisdom found in God's Word. (Prov. 14:15) Ecclesiastes 7:5 says: "Better is it to hear the rebuke of someone wise than to be the man hearing the song of the stupid ones." The "stupidity" the Bible talks about is not mere mental dumbness but means moral stupidity, following a course that can only bring future trouble. Your choice of music is a question, then, of whether you are simply interested in a "good time" or in a good *life,* an everlasting one in God's favor.

Consider, too, that your choice has an effect on others. You may feel that you can listen to music containing some words that go contrary to what is true and right or that has a sensual, wild sound to it, and still not be affected. But what kind of influence are you to others? Do you feel as the apostle Paul, who said that he was willing to forgo even such proper things as eating meat if thereby he could avoid becoming a stumbling block to others? (1 Cor. 8:9-13; Rom. 14:13, 21; 15:2) With what kind of persons does the music you choose identify you?

There are songs that form part of the true worship of the Source of the gift of music, Jehovah God. True, we are not required to sing or to listen only to such music. Yet we need to remember always that the day is coming when the only ones living on earth will be those who sing Jehovah God's praise. (Ps. 148:12, 13; 150:1-6) Wisely, then, choose music that will not lead your mind or heart away from that goal.

A GOOD RELATIONSHIP LEADS TO Good Communication

"Having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us."
—1 Thess. 2:8.

AS HUSBAND AND WIFE, are you as married persons able to communicate with each other fully and freely? You should do so. Or do you find there are certain limitations, if not barriers, giving rise to a measure of frustration, or perhaps even to hostility at times? The story of communication, how it originated and was established on a fine foundation, is intensely interesting. For our guidance and instruction on this subject, we do not turn to myth or legend, but to God's Word, the one and only source of reliable information.

[2] First, you might ask, what does it mean to communicate? It means to convey or impart information from one to the other. This results in a sharing, having something in common with each other. This may be just on a mental level, imparting knowledge and understanding, but between husband and wife it can and should involve your heart, your feelings and desires, your loving interest in each other. The simple and direct way of doing this is by word of mouth. You converse or commune with each other. In other words, there is a communion established between you, a mutual understanding or meeting of the minds. Besides what is said, there is the way in which it is said. Even a look can communicate a world of meaning and feeling, as you doubtless recall from your early courting days. Is that not so? Do you not realize from this that the primary essential to good communication is a good relationship between you?

[3] However, another means of communication is by the written word, as evidenced by what you are now reading. The printed page is conveying something to you. The best example, of course, is the Holy Bible. True, the majority today, even in Christendom, do not accept the Bible as being of divine authorship, though it is still used in their church services. Do not let that surprise you or put you off. The situation is similar to what it was in Jesus' day. The Pharisees and scribes stoutly claimed to stand for the Law, but, as Jesus pointed out, they were first and foremost sticklers for the traditions of their fathers, thereby

1. What question confronts a husband and wife, and where do we look for a reliable answer?
2. What does it mean to communicate, leading to what conclusion?
3. (a) How is the Bible a means of communication? (b) In this regard, what do we learn from Matthew 15:1-9?

causing them to "overstep the commandment of God." Did the fault lie with God's written Word, the Hebrew Scriptures? No. Rather, they failed in the first essential, a good relationship of devotion to Jehovah. As Jesus said of them, quoting from Isaiah's prophecy: "This people honors me with their lips, yet their heart is far removed from me. It is in vain that they keep worshiping me, because they teach commands of men as doctrines."—Matt. 15:1-9.

4 Like the clergy of Christendom today who have the complete Bible, those men knew well enough what the written Word said, but they were blind and deaf to both the message and the spirit that it was intended to convey. However, there were exceptions then, and you can be among the exceptions today. As Jesus said on an earlier occasion to his disciples: "To you it is granted to understand the sacred secrets of the kingdom of the heavens, but to those people it is not granted. . . . 'For the heart of this people has grown unreceptive, and with their ears they have heard without response, and they have shut their eyes; that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back, and I heal them.' However, happy are your eyes because they behold, and your ears because they hear."—Matt. 13:11-16.

5 Counting you among the happy exceptions, let us look back at the story of communication and see how it got started, and what we can learn from it. In the Genesis account of creation, chapter one, we note that on each day, up to the sixth day, the action is introduced by the form of the Hebrew verb that means that something should take place. Yes, God was communicating his instructions, but no person is mentioned as responding thereto. However, when it comes to the crowning act of earthly creation, we note a marked change when we read: "And God went on to say: '*Let us* make man in our image, according to our likeness.' " Though in a position to issue a directive as to a subordinate, the Creator was now inviting cooperation. A friendly, kindly tone is implied; a good relationship, a happy partnership. This is how it should be between married partners. If you are a husband, is that how you talk to your wife, saying: "Come on, let us . . . "?—Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24, 26.

6 While at this time we are discussing particularly the marital relationship, the same principle applies to other relationships, including those between you who are elders or overseers and others in the congregations of Jehovah's witnesses. Though you as elders have a special responsibility, carrying with it a certain degree of authority, the general attitude and manner of communication should be by way of inviting cooperation, rather than giving orders. In helping someone with a problem, such as may be encountered when witnessing in certain territories, rather than just saying what must be done, it is far better to say: "Let us go and tackle this problem together." The warm spirit of unselfish and loving devotion should be conveyed, not only in what we say, but by our tone of voice and course of action. Notice how this is clearly and beautifully expressed by the apostle Paul when writing to the Thessalonian congregation: "Having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us." What a fine example of a good relationship leading to good communication both in word and deed!—1 Thess. 2:8.

4. How can we prove to be receptive and responsive, and with what result?
5. What was outstanding about man's creation as compared with other acts of earthly creation?
6. In this respect, what guidance is given to elders in the congregation?

EXEMPLARY PATTERN OF GOOD COMMUNICATION

[7] Returning to our story, do we know the one with whom Jehovah was communicating at the time of the creation of man? The answer will help us to appreciate the depth of meaning as to man's being made in God's image and likeness. John, introducing his Gospel account of Jesus, identifies him as "the Word," who was "in the beginning with God. All things came into existence through him," including man. Further, John says: "The Word became flesh . . . and we had a view of his glory . . . full of undeserved kindness and truth," and that he, being "in the bosom position with the Father is the one that has explained him." Surely this delightful description of Jesus breathes the very spirit of a fine relationship and a ready communication.—John 1:1-3, 14, 18; see also Proverbs 8:22, 30, 31.

[8] This is further seen in the significance of the title "the Word." It has the meaning of message bearer or spokesman, like the officer in former times who stood in front of a curtained window and conveyed aloud to others the message of the king, who was unseen inside. That officer was entitled *Kal Hatze,* meaning "the voice or word of the king." As for God's Son, he was the Mouth or Spokesman for his Father, Jehovah. He was the trustworthy means of communicating to others whatever the Creator wished to convey. He faithfully served in the same way during his earthly ministry. He said on one occasion: "I have not spoken out of my own impulse, but the Father himself who sent me has given me a commandment as to what to tell and what to speak. . . . Therefore the things I speak, just as the Father has told me them, so I speak them." He again speaks and acts in the same capacity when he leads the heavenly armies in the execution of God's righteous judgments at the battle of Har–Magedon, being called "the Word of God." —John 12:49, 50; 14:10; Rev. 19:13.

[9] With these things in mind, how deeply impressed we should be to think that man was created in the image and likeness of the great Creator and his beloved Son! The fact that we can appreciate and talk to one another about this in itself shows that this is true. Furthermore, Jehovah has kindly conveyed to us in his written Word the pattern of good relationship and communication, and even after six thousand years of sin and imperfection, it is still possible to conform to that pattern. Hundreds of thousands of Jehovah's Christian witnesses are endeavoring to do just that, with divine help. Are you couples, as husband and wife?

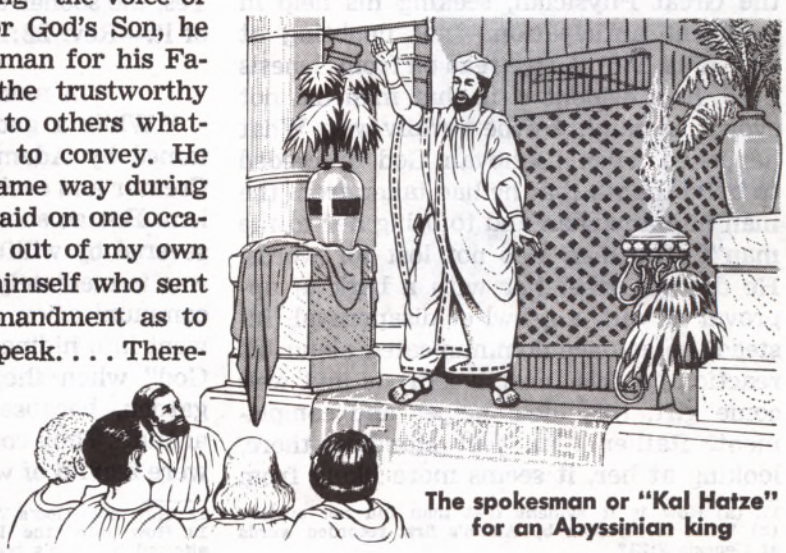
[10] Let us look more closely into this pattern and see the essential features that have to be copied, also features to be

7. How does John identify the one to whom God spoke as recorded at Genesis 1:26?

8. What is the significance of the title "the Word," and how does this apply to Christ Jesus?

9. What fine pattern is set for us at Genesis 1:26, and is it still possible to conform to this?

10. How and why do those who rely on human wisdom fail to deal adequately with marital problems?



The spokesman or "Kal Hatze" for an Abyssinian king

avoided and, if it is necessary, eradicated. This is, in fact, the only effective way of tackling and overcoming the difficulties and problems encountered, especially in the field of marital relationships. True, there are many and varied schools of thought promulgated by social organizations that interest themselves in such problems and are ready to give advice and treatment. Without our stopping to question their motives, it must be said that at best their efforts represent the sum of human wisdom in the field of psychology. In effect, they say that marriage is a human relationship and must be treated on that level. They fail and refuse to give the Creator his rightful place as the Originator of this relationship, or as being the personal Author of the Holy Bible, with its counsel and instruction on every human relationship. Whoever heard of a psychiatrist referring his patient or client to the Holy Scriptures as the final authority for guidance? For that matter, how many priests or clergymen would advise such a course to any of their flock in dealing with such problems?

[11] We, however, will shun worldly wisdom and will consult the Book provided by the Great Physician, seeking his help in confident anticipation, "not doubting at all." (Jas. 1:6) As we read on from Genesis 1:26, how evident it is that man did not evolve, as taught by the worldly-wise. What happened when "Jehovah God proceeded to build the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman and to bring her to the man"? The man was not lost for words. He did not greet her with a bark of approval or with a growl of disapproval. Instead, he at once communicated aloud his reaction to this most wondrous and welcome gift, this ideal helper and complement. Rather than just standing there, looking at her, it seems more likely from what he said that he held her close to him as he spoke those words so rich in meaning and feeling:

"This is at last bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh.
This one will be called Woman,
Because from man this one was taken."

Ah! that was real poetry, true in form and economy of words, each phrase nicely matching the next, with progression of thought and perfect balance. This would doubtless be more noticeable in its original tongue. Man was indeed made in God's image, with the fine ability to communicate.—Gen. 2:22, 23.

[12] Thus in its opening pages God's Word gives an interesting and encouraging account of communication between individuals, both in heaven and on earth. Invitingly, God's Word also ends, not with a grand resounding climax, but on a friendly note of a personal conversation between two who obviously enjoyed a happy relationship. "He [Christ Jesus] that bears witness of these things says, 'Yes; I am coming quickly.'" Then we hear the aged beloved John, with shining eyes, earnestly responding: "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus." Yes, the sooner the better. That is the tone of it.—Rev. 22:20.

A BARRIER OVERCOME

[13] While a good relationship was maintained by Adam and his wife with their Creator and each other, there was no problem. But as soon as that relationship was severed by willful transgression, a barrier was immediately raised across the line of communication. "The man and his wife went into hiding from the face of Jehovah God" when they heard his voice in the garden, because, as Adam said, "I was afraid." They could not face their God and were fearful of what he would say to them.

11. (a) How is it evident that man did not evolve? (b) What is revealed by Adam's first recorded words at Genesis 2:23?

12. How does God's Word conclude in an inviting vein?
13. How were the line and level of communication affected by man's transgression?

As for the level of communication between the man and his wife, it could not have been very cordial. Though no detail is given, this is indicated by Adam's self-excusing explanation offered to Jehovah: "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me . . . from the tree and so I ate." Additionally, Eve was told: "Your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you." As we will discuss later, that word "dominate" surely points to one of the chief causes of difficulty as regards communication, especially if it is on the part of the wife.—Gen. 3:8-16.

14 Does that mean the position was hopeless for us, with no prospect of overcoming the difficulty? There is an expression used in Genesis concerning certain ones that indicates otherwise. It is said of Enoch and Noah that they kept walking with the true God, not just on occasion, but for their whole lifetime. The same must have been true of Abel. (Gen. 5:22-24; 6:9) Where two keep walking together, there must of necessity be a well-established relationship and freeness of communication. This is also shown by another expression that is used of these three, also of many others. Starting with Abel, Paul says of those mentioned at Hebrews, chapter 11, that *"by faith"* they proved their loyalty and devotion to God, believing that "he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." These qualities are an essential part of the pattern to be copied. —Heb. 11:4-6.

15 It was Jehovah in his mercy and loving-kindness who made it possible for the barrier to be overcome, "for he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust." On our part, however, there must be the right heart attitude, or at least the willingness to be taught the right attitude, for "the loving-kindness of Jehovah is . . . toward those fearing him . . . and toward those remembering his orders so as to carry them out." (Ps. 103:10-14, 17, 18) There must be no self-willed or domineering attitude. On the positive side, looking further at those mentioned by Paul, we see two, Abraham and Moses, from whom we can learn much in studying the pattern we want to follow.

16 A relationship rarely, if ever, stands still. It either develops or recedes. Again, its growth is either healthy or unhealthy. This is something to be watched and safeguarded, especially when persons are living closely together as husband and wife. There may be mutual faith and confidence to begin with, but it cannot be taken for granted. Be prompt, even in small things, to demonstrate those fine qualities. This Abraham did throughout his life, as the record shows, commencing at Genesis, chapter 12. Paul mentions three big events when Abraham, by prompt obedience, proved his strong faith and devotion to Jehovah: (1) His leaving his hometown and country when called, and (2) his living for years "as an alien . . . in a foreign land," and especially (3) his 'offering up of Isaac.' (Heb. 11:8-10, 17-19) Notice how the foregoing is well supported by James, when, referring to this last incident, he says: "You behold that his faith worked along with his works and by his works his faith was perfected, and the scripture was fulfilled which says: 'Abraham put faith in Jehovah, and it was counted to him as righteousness,' and he came to be called *'Jehovah's friend.'*" What a healthy growth to a fine relationship! What a thrilling conclusion! Abraham had great faith in Jehovah, and Jehovah had strong confidence in his friend.

14. (a) What does it mean to walk with God? (b) The repeated expression "by faith," at Hebrews, chapter 11, implies what?

15. Why did Jehovah remove the barrier resulting from sin, and how should we respond to this?

16. (a) What is noteworthy about a relationship? (b) How did Abraham prove his faith and devotion, resulting in what?

—Jas. 2:21-23; Gen. 18:19; Rom. 4:16-22; Gal. 3:7-9.

17 Jesus spoke of the pattern of true friendship in connection with good communication. Humility, even lowliness, coupled with a readiness to serve, is an important part of the pattern. After washing his disciples' feet on that last night with them, he said: "If I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another. For I set the *pattern* for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also." Later that same night, he said to them: "You are my friends if you do what I am commanding you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (John 13:14, 15; 15:14, 15; Phil. 2:3) He took them into his confidence and kept nothing back. Similarly, as with a friend, Jehovah talked with Abraham a number of times, and once at great length in a most intimate way, when allowing Abraham to intercede with him over Sodom and Gomorrah, as recorded at Genesis, chapter 18. Sarah, Abraham's wife, comes into the picture here. She was quick to serve. She exercised faith. She showed great respect. And, says Peter, you wives can "become her children, provided you keep on doing good and not fearing any cause for terror." —1 Pet. 3:5, 6; Gen. 18:6; Heb. 11:11.

18 With Abraham, it was the close relationship as "Jehovah's friend," but with Moses it was the exceptional means of communication that was outstanding. When taking Miriam and Aaron to task for criticizing Moses, Jehovah said: "If there came to be a prophet of yours for Jehovah, it would be in a vision I would make myself known to him. In a dream I would speak to him. Not so my servant Moses! He is being entrusted with all my house. Mouth to mouth I speak to him, thus showing him, and not by riddles; and the appearance of Jehovah is what he beholds." (Jas. 2:23; Num. 12:6-8) Many years earlier, when describing how Jehovah used Moses' tent, "pitched . . . far away from the camp," as a "tent of meeting," the record says that "all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent . . . And Jehovah spoke to Moses face to face, just as a man would speak to his fellow." This led on to that grand communication when, in response to a request by Moses, "Jehovah went passing by before his face and declaring: 'Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth.' "—Ex. 33:7-11, 17-20; 34:6, 7.

19 Moses was surely unique in enjoying such a close means of communication with Jehovah. The reason? Partly his great need as a leader of a very difficult people, "stiff-necked" and "evil-inclined," and also because, for his own part, he maintained unswerving loyalty to Jehovah. (Ex. 32: 9, 22, 25-29) Another quality is mentioned. "The man Moses was by far the meekest of all the men who were upon the surface of the ground." In this too he was unique, as is also this final word regarding him: "But there has never yet risen up a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom Jehovah knew face to face."—Num. 12:3; Deut. 34:10.

SUMMARY

20 So how can we summarize? What constitutes a good relationship, leading to good communication? Looking into the in-

17. (a) What pattern did Jesus set for his followers? (b) What goes along with friendship, and how was this seen in Abraham's case?

18. What was outstanding in the case of Moses, leading to what special communication?

19. What reasons can be given for Moses' unique position?

20, 21. (a) What do we learn from the heavenly pattern of relationship and communication? (b) What do we also learn from the earthly pattern?

spired Scriptures, there is first the example of Jehovah and his Son. From the beginning, there was a genuine, loving interest in each other. "Jehovah himself produced me as the beginning of his way . . . and I came to be the one he was specially fond of day by day, I being glad before him all the time." Though superior, Jehovah invited his Son's cooperation. The Son, for his part, was always deeply respectful and obedient. There was the closest contact and confidence between them. They were in full union with each other. —Prov. 8:22, 30; Gen. 1:26; John 11:42; 14:10, 11.

[21] Looking at the earthly pattern in God's Word, what do we find? Although your partner, like yourself, is imperfect, learn how to express appreciation of each other in a tactful way, not only in the early days, but down to the twilight years. Avoid a domineering attitude due to pride and selfishness, not only wanting your own way but expecting your partner to fall in with your ways even down to small things of no real consequence. Rather, learn how to walk and talk with each other, ready to accommodate your pace and mood accordingly. Build up and maintain mutual faith and confidence. Suspicion is the worst enemy to free communication. Be alert to develop and strengthen the bond of true friendship. Practice and demonstrate "tender affection" with mercy and meekness.—Phil. 1:8; 1 Thess. 2:8; Jas. 5:11.

[22] Even though couples are striving to do these things in all sincerity, problems can easily arise, whether both partners are true Christians or not. How can a faithful course be maintained, especially in a divided household? In the following article we will find the answer to this question.

22. What further important question merits our consideration?

Practicing Bible Principles in THE HOME

WE ARE all different personalities. In some ways that is good. It makes life more interesting and varied. It can help to solve problems. Some situations are better handled where there is teamwork on the part of those with different abilities. That is true in the home. Due to imperfection, however, the opposite results are sometimes obtained. Differences in personalities create problems, making teamwork difficult. Of course, problems can arise from causes other than a difference or clash in personalities, but the question here is, Should a Christian ever conclude that a problem involving individuals is absolutely insoluble, or that certain personalities are hopelessly incompatible?

[2] It is not our purpose to lay down a lot of rules. Rather, we wish to encourage you to see possibilities for a solution to the problems where, perhaps, you thought

1. Differences in personality can work in what two ways, leading to what question?

2. In the face of difficulties, what encouragement is offered in preference to rules?

none existed. Or maybe you see the possibilities, but do not know how to put them into effect. Where people are concerned, never forget that situations can change. So can the persons involved. And so can you. In fact, a true Christian has a better opportunity and reason to alter or adjust his personality than anyone else. He is under obligation to do so. How is that?

[3] The Bible speaks very definitely about changes that must be made in personality. It gives both encouragement and incentive by explaining why and how it can be done. In writing to the Christians at Ephesus, Paul said: "You should put away the old personality which conforms to your former course of conduct and which is being corrupted according to his deceptive desires; but . . . you should be made new in the force actuating your mind, and should put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." This makes plain the reason for a new personality. Surely we each have to admit that our old personality was largely influenced by "deceptive desires," due to being "in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God." However, on accepting the truth, "just as truth is in Jesus," we began to learn how to "get a firm hold on the real life." We developed a heartfelt new desire, expressed by our dedication to God to do his will in steadfast devotion.—Eph. 4:17-24; 1 Tim. 6:19.

[4] While agreeing with this, you may wonder how it is possible to carry it out in handling the problems that press in on you so closely in homelife. You may feel that the "force actuating your mind" (literally, 'the spirit of your mind') is not strong enough. True, you may not be strong enough in yourself. But by your dedication you have placed yourself in Jehovah's hand, and he is strong enough. He is both able and willing to guide and strengthen you to do your part. "For God is the one that, for the sake of his good pleasure, is acting within you in order for you both to will and to act." (Phil. 2:13) You do not need to rely on the force or spirit of your own mind. Rather, you learn how to cooperate with God's spirit. No problem is too great for him, not even that of a dead Christ. Says Paul: "If, now, the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead will also make your mortal bodies alive through his spirit that resides in you."—Rom. 8:11; see also Ephesians 1:19, 20.

[5] This does not mean that you can solve all your problems by simply dismissing them. It means that you can have the comfort of knowing that your attitude and course of action is the right and Scriptural one. From Jehovah's viewpoint, your record and conscience are clear. It is his purpose that the "righteous requirement of the Law [in its basic principles] might be fulfilled in us who walk, not in accord with the flesh, but in accord with the spirit." Granted, you are still imperfect, but provision has been kindly made whereby your sins on that account can be forgiven. —Rom. 8:4.

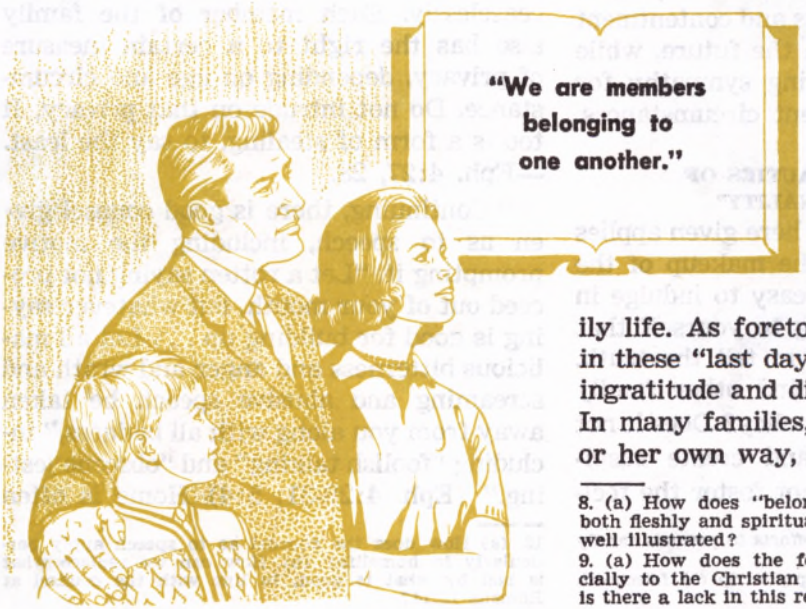
[6] While it is true that the scriptures previously mentioned apply primarily to those in the Christian congregation having a heavenly hope, yet in principle they also apply to the "great crowd" of Christian witnesses mentioned at Revelation 7: 9 who enjoy an earthly hope. Support for this is seen in the undeniable evidence of Jehovah's favor and blessing on all those

3. How does Paul give encouragement and incentive to a change in personality?
4. To what source should we look for help, and how does this operate?
5. Though life's problems persist, what relief and comfort can we gain?
6. In this regard, what can we learn from the record at Hebrews, chapter 11?

pre-Christian witnesses described in Hebrews, chapter 11. By his spirit they were enabled to surmount their many problems, including domestic ones, and we wish to encourage you to do the same. In fact, that is why the record of that great "cloud of witnesses" was given us. (Heb. 12:1) With this in mind, let us pay further attention to Paul's inspired counsel given to the Christians at Ephesus.

[7] Based directly on the appeal to put on the new personality, Paul goes on to give fine practical counsel. Though given mainly from the viewpoint of conduct within the congregation, it also applies to home-life, and some of it directly to family relationships. Rather than laying down rules, he discusses principles, showing how and why they should be observed. He writes: "Wherefore, now that you have put away falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, because we are members belonging to one another."—Eph. 4:25.

7. Following his appeal at Ephesians 4:22-24, what line of counsel does Paul give?



[8] By your dedication you have become a member of God's family, and can in truth address him as "our Father." (Matt. 6:9) This is a spiritual relationship, and takes priority in your life. However, it does not cancel out fleshly relationships and their obligations. God started the creation of the human family in perfection, telling them to multiply, with the prospect of countless family units comprising parents and children. (Gen. 1:28) When Paul said "we are members belonging to one another," he was expressing a fundamental principle, applying to both of the foregoing relationships. Supporting this, he elsewhere makes extensive use of the human body and its members as an apt illustration of interdependence.—See 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 4:4, 15, 16.

[9] Appreciation of this principle will be a great help to you. Do you get the point? Even in the Christian congregation the members belong, not only to God and their Head, Christ Jesus, but also to one another. They do not belong to themselves. That promotes the real conscious unity that you find among Jehovah's witnesses earth wide. However, due to the adverse pressures of these "critical times hard to deal with," such unity is often sadly lacking in family life. As foretold, the prevailing spirit in these "last days" is that of selfishness, ingratitude and disloyalty. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) In many families, each member goes his or her own way, including even the chil-

8. (a) How does "belonging to one another" apply to both fleshly and spiritual relationships? (b) How is this well illustrated?

9. (a) How does the foregoing principle apply beneficially to the Christian congregation? (b) Where today is there a lack in this respect, leading to what problem?

dren at quite an early age. You may feel inclined to do the same, reckoning that you are under obligation to do so, if perhaps you are the only one in the home interested in true worship. Your tastes and activities are quite different, and you "quit sharing with them in the unfruitful works that belong to the darkness." (Eph. 5:11) All the same, while living in the home you are part of a family, and to that extent have certain obligations toward the other members.

[10] What attitude and course should you take? Though your efforts may not be appreciated, look for opportunities, even in small things, to promote family peace and unity. If the others are opposed, do not echo their indifference and hostility. Do not make an issue over things unless a real Bible principle is involved. Even then, you cannot insist that others observe right principles, unless as a parent toward your children. When in daily contact with others, remember that actions speak louder than words, unless you are directly challenged or some inquiry is made. Try to be an example of good Christian living. Try to show what the truth means to you, in giving you true happiness and contentment and a bright outlook on the future, while at the same time showing sympathy for those hard hit by present circumstances.

DISPLAYING BEAUTIES OF "NEW PERSONALITY"

[11] Much of the counsel here given applies to homelife, whatever the makeup of the family may be. It is so easy to indulge in a little falsehood, saying to yourself that it does not always pay to tell the truth. Do you like it if you find other family members pursuing that policy? Does it not undermine confidence and create suspicion? It certainly does not foster the feeling of "belonging to one another." Says Paul: "Put away falsehood [and] speak truth each one of you." Again, it is easy to cherish a smoldering resentment due to continual irritation. Not being willing to admit this, you might live a falsehood by denying it. Even when the anger on your part is right and proper, be careful; "let the sun not set with you in a provoked state." The cause of anger may still be there, but endeavor to get Jehovah's viewpoint on the problem, and ask for his help. "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you." (Eph. 4:25, 26; Ps. 55:22) So doing, you will not "allow place for the Devil." Next, the point is made: "Let the stealer steal no more, but rather let him do hard work . . . that he may have something to distribute to someone in need." What a temptation it can be to do a little stealing—just a mouthful of your favorite dish before it comes on the table. It will not be missed, and no one sees, unless you omit to wipe away the evidence from around your mouth! This is not limited to small children, though it is then that right principles should be inculcated, kindly yet ceaselessly. Each member of the family also has the right to a certain measure of privacy, depending on age and circumstance. Do not intrude on that privacy. It too is a form of stealing, to say the least. —Eph. 4:27, 28.

[12] Continuing, there is good counsel given as to speech, including the motive prompting it. "Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth, but whatever saying is good for building up . . . Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness," including "foolish talking" and "obscene jesting." (Eph. 4:29-31; 5:4) Home is often

10. In what ways can we make efforts to promote family peace and unity?
11. How does Paul's counsel apply as to (a) falsehood, (b) anger, and (c) stealing?
12. (a) How does the counsel as to speech apply particularly to homelife? (b) How can we replace what is bad by what is good, in line with the counsel at Romans 12:14?

the place where you feel you can just be your natural self, even more so than in the congregation, where righteous principles are more to the fore. How necessary, then, to be aware of the need for self-control, especially if the general atmosphere is easygoing, drawing no lines on funny stories and jokes, or choice of words when one is irritated. A "rotten saying" does not have to be obviously foul or obscene. It may be a clever play on words, something with a double meaning, like an apple that looks smart and polished outside, but is actually rotten to the core. Yes, it depends on what you are at heart. (Matt. 12:34) Such things belong to the old personality. They must be replaced by what belongs to the new, by what is "good for building up," and the "giving of thanks." The malicious and bitter attitude, along with abusive speech, must be replaced by our becoming "kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another." These are Bible principles to be practiced in the home. —Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:8-10.

[13] We are not suggesting for a moment that these things are easy to put into practice. They are easier read than done. You are not dealing with inanimate facts and figures, nor with things to be dismissed as imagination. You are dealing with personalities, your own and those of others. With regard to such, including your own, there can be hidden recesses in the mind and heart, favorable or otherwise. There is also Jehovah's superlative personality to take into account. Never underestimate his loving interest in your maintaining a dedicated relationship with him. Never underestimate the many unfailing provisions he has made through his Word and organization, by his spirit and through prayer, to enable you to put on a Christlike personality. (Eph. 3:20) Advancement in spirituality is often a slow process as compared with your expectations. Higher standards may be envisioned, but, like new heights seen upon rounding the corner, they may be difficult to attain. It is largely a question of your own mental attitude—whether you are lowly in mind and willing to admit your mistakes and failures, and whether you are always ready to make a further effort, a fresh start. Jehovah certainly blesses such an attitude, and your brothers and sisters in God's family will love you for it, and do all they can to help you.

[14] However sincere and humble-minded you may be, this may not be appreciated by other members of your fleshly family who are prejudiced, even hostile. They may say you are trying to put on airs of superiority. This is not difficult to understand. Your standards as a true Christian may well be superior to theirs, but that does not make you superior in yourself, does it? You are what you are by Jehovah's undeserved kindness. You understand that, but they do not. Without compromising your position or violating any Bible principle, you should go out of your way in following what would be considered a normal pattern of behavior. To that extent, show that you belong. Be prepared to overlook many things. Try to avoid hurt feelings, either in others or in yourself. Jesus often endured much in this respect when in the company of those who were prejudiced and hostile. Never did he shut the door of communication and retire into his shell, as the saying goes. As Peter said of him: "Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely. . . . When he was being reviled, he did not go reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go threatening, but kept on committing him-

13. (a) What is true of all personalities? (b) What must we never underestimate, and how does humility play an important part?

14. (a) How should we seek to overcome prejudice shown against us? (b) What example did Jesus set for us in this regard?

self to the one who judges righteously." —1 Pet. 2:21-23.

TRUE LOVE AND SUBJECTION

15 Paul leads into his detailed counsel first to wives, then to husbands and children, by making this appeal to all: "Be in subjection to one another in fear of Christ." (Eph. 5:21) In counseling husbands and wives this is Paul's initial theme. By her precipitate action the first woman, Eve, showed a lack of subjection, not only to God, but also to her husband. True, Adam showed a certain subjection to Eve in following her example, but this was entirely out of order. He was showing a lack of subjection to God. Thus the matter of subjection got twisted and perverted as soon as sin involved the human family.

16 Proper subjection is a manifestation of true love. When, as a true Christian, you took the step of dedication, it was an evidence of your love for Jehovah, and of your complete and willing subjection to him, to do his will. In the Christian congregation, there should also be the spirit of mutual consideration and subjection "to one another in fear of Christ." In this, the elders should give the lead, not "lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock." The same spirit should be shown in the home. This is well illustrated in the human body, where all the members have to be 'harmoniously joined together and made to cooperate' to get things done. Why, even the head, at the top, cannot say to the feet: "I have no need of you."—1 Pet. 5:3; Eph. 4:16; 1 Cor. 12:21.

17 Where this fine attitude of cooperation is shown, there are few marital and family problems that cannot be solved, quickly and easily. In other words, the absence of this attitude is often the root cause of the problem. Even when only one mate is a dedicated Christian displaying this proper attitude, it can go a long way toward preventing problems from getting to the point of friction and dissension. Paul made the entreaty to "walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with complete lowliness of mind and mildness, with long-suffering, putting up with one another in love."—Eph. 4:1, 2.

18 He expressed this even more forcefully to the Philippians, saying: "Make my joy full in that you are of the same mind and have the same love, . . . doing nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior to you, keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others." (Phil. 2:2-4) Are you such a lowly-minded person, or are you self-centered and egotistical, insisting that you are *always right* in your opinion of things and of people? As a husband or an elder, does your wife or do others in the congregation observe that you are humble-minded? Is it apparent to all that you view others as superior to yourself? Doubtless they are in certain qualities and abilities. You might provide all the furnishings for the home, but could you arrange them in as inviting and restful a way as does your wife? Are not even your little ones more uninhibited and spontaneous in expressing joy and affection?

19 Paul proceeds to show the fine relation between the Bible principles of love, subjection and headship. Because a "husband is head of his wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation," she is in sub-

15. When giving counsel to family members, what is Paul's initial theme, but how was this principle perverted at an early time?
16. How is subjection a manifestation of true love, and in what way should it be evident?
17. Incompatibility is often due to what, yet what can often be the remedy?
18. (a) What can we learn from Paul's counsel at Philippians 2:2-4? (b) How is it possible that "others are superior to you"?
19. To what extent is a wife to be in subjection to her husband, and why?

jection to him. To what extent? Well, "as the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in *everything*." Her husband may not be a dedicated Christian, and may even be opposed on this account, but that does not abrogate or minimize the principle of headship. She should not submit to his headship begrudgingly, and should only make an exception where submission would cause a violation of some other Bible principle.—Eph. 5:22-24.

[20] To put the principle of true *agape* love into operation is the prime responsibility of the Christian husband. To what extent? "Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it, that he might sanctify it . . . [and ultimately] present the congregation to himself in its splendor, . . . holy and without blemish," as a glorious bride. This surely implies a high regard on the part of the husband for his wife, while the "wife should have deep respect for her husband."—Eph. 5:25-27, 33.

[21] For children, proper obedience and subjection are stressed. Under the wholesome and loving Scriptural discipline of their "parents in union with the Lord," they should be obedient "in everything," with the promise "that it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth."—Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20.

[22] Finally, it is encouraging and strengthening to note how Peter, in his own way, confirms the same Bible principles that Paul stressed. Peter likewise emphasizes the need on the part of each and every one to be humble-minded. He writes: "Finally, *all* of you be like-minded, showing fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate, humble in mind." And again: "*All* of you gird yourselves with lowliness of mind toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones." (1 Pet. 3:8; 5:5) This was well exemplified by the way Jesus washed the feet of his disciples as a pattern to be followed. When did you last wash someone's feet figuratively, by gladly rendering some lowly service to some member of the family or to someone in the congregation? This too is a loving Bible principle we do well to practice more often.—John 13:4-9.

20. To what extent should a husband love his wife, and why?
21. How and why do love and subjection apply to children?
22. How does Peter confirm the need for *all* to be humble-minded?

APPLYING BIBLE PRINCIPLES SAVED A MARRIAGE

THE WIFE of a police officer in Massachusetts began to study the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses, but her husband began to oppose. After a period of separation, however, he consented to studying the Bible in the hope of saving his marriage. But the officers with whom he worked began to make fun of him. Due to this and other pressures he stopped studying. Soon he fell back into his former ways—drinking heavily and having many problems at home. This led to another separation.

As to what happened next, he relates: "After a time my wife informed me that she was filing for a divorce, for which she had Scriptural and legal grounds. Having six children and still caring very much for them and my wife, I did not want a divorce. I called the Witness who originally studied the Bible with me and asked if he would study with me again."

Because of this man's applying what he was learning, his wife began to see that he was really changing his ways. Therefore, when asked by her husband whether they might try again, she accepted him back. Both are now united in building a happy family according to the guidelines found in God's Word.

Do You Remember?

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

● Why is the present strength of Christendom's churches and other religious bodies no indication that Jehovah's fiery day of judgment is far off?

The end of the religious systems making up "Babylon the Great" will come about suddenly while they are still functioning and outwardly powerful organizations. Revelation 17:16, 17 shows that God will put it into the heart of the political systems to destroy them.—Pp. 53, 54.*

● What shows that Jesus' words, "there will be great earthquakes," have been fulfilled since 1914 C.E.?—Luke 21:11.

The earthquakes since 1914 C.E. have been "great" in terms of power, lives lost and property damage. In fact, their destructiveness has been more widespread and greater than in the years prior to 1914 C.E., claiming approximately 30 percent of all persons killed in earthquakes during the last thousand-year period.—Pp. 73, 74.

● What will a Christian overseer who is "lowly in heart" avoid when being given suggestions?

He will not incline to take the suggestions as a criticism of his motives or manner of handling matters but will give them consideration, realizing that he, too, can benefit from counsel.—P. 104.

* All references are to *The Watchtower* for 1974.

● How are we to understand the words of the disciple James that, in answer to prayers made in faith, 'God gives generously to all and without reproaching'?—Jas. 1:5.

God will not reproach us for our weakness or as being "stupid"; he gives generously, wholeheartedly, in a way that makes us happy that we asked.—P. 138.

● To what extent can God's servants expect his protection during the "great tribulation"?

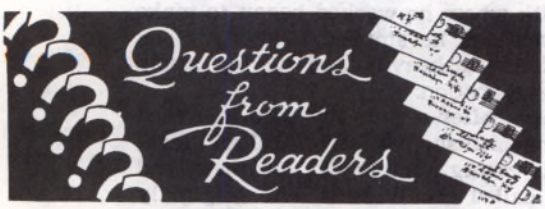
They can be sure that not a single one of them will be swept away *by mistake* when Jesus Christ and his angelic forces take action against the wicked. Some may die as a result of the attack of the symbolic "Gog," Satan the Devil, but *as a class* they will be delivered. (Ezek. 38:2) The strain of the conditions brought on by the "great tribulation" may lead to the death of some, but we will have to wait and see to what extent Jehovah God may shield and strengthen those having physical weaknesses. We are assured that a "great crowd" will survive.—Pp. 171, 172.

● In what sense were the apostles a "theatrical spectacle"?—1 Cor. 4:9.

Because of being reproached and persecuted they were as if exposed in a Roman theater before a universal audience.—P. 215.

● What is the "place that is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon"?—Rev. 16:16.

It is not a literal place but denotes a world situation that involves a decisive war. It denotes the stage in world hostility toward God that, when reached, requires the settling of the issue that has given rise to such hostility.—P. 232.



● Is it proper for a Christian woman to have her earlobes pierced to accommodate earrings?—B.C., Canada.

The Scriptures do not provide the information making possible a strict yes or no answer to this question. Whether one will have her earlobes pierced for this purpose is really a matter for personal decision.

We have the principle at Leviticus 19:28, which prohibited the making of cuts in one's flesh for a deceased soul. This was a practice found among those holding false religious beliefs. Some may feel that this prohibition would apply in principle to other unnecessary cuttings.

One may also consider that when God designed human bodies initially he found his work "very good." It follows that one would not want

to deform or seriously disfigure one's body. —Gen. 1:27, 31.

On the other hand, the Bible does mention earrings (as well as nose rings) and there is no way today to know whether this use involved piercing the ears or not.—Gen. 24:22, 47; Ex. 32:2; 35:22; Ezek. 16:12.

We may note, too, that the Law covenant provided for the piercing of the ear of a Hebrew slave who had fulfilled his required period of slavery and who wanted to remain a slave of a good master. (Ex. 21:2-6) The master was to pierce one of the slave's earlobes with an awl as a sign of this. This, of course, was not simply for adornment as in the case of piercing ears for earrings, yet the effect on the person's flesh was the same.

In viewing these various factors together it is apparent that no dogmatic answer can be given. Each Christian woman must exercise her personal conscience in the matter. Some, in applying the above principles, may not want to have their ears pierced; others may feel they can conscientiously do so. A married woman who favors having her ears pierced should rightly consult her husbandly head first. Similarly, a minor would take the matter up with her parents and abide by their decision, in harmony with Jehovah's arrangement for the family.—Col. 3:18, 20; Eph. 5:22–6:4.

As Christians we should also consider the feelings of others. We may remember the apostles' counsel showing that the wearing of ornaments is not as important as adorning oneself "with modesty and soundness of mind" and "good works."—1 Pet. 3:3; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10.

● In the Bible, Exodus 4:11 reads: "Who appoints the speechless or the deaf or the clear-sighted or the blind? Is it not I, Jehovah?" Does this mean that God is responsible in every case for such defects as deafness and blindness? —U.S.A.

No, as this would be out of harmony with God's whole personality. The Bible tells us: "With evil things God cannot be tried nor does he himself try anyone." (Jas. 1:13) His acts are always purposeful. Never does he bring calamity upon a person without good reason. He is the source of "every good gift and every perfect present." (Jas. 1:17) "Perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he."—Deut. 32:4.

In harmony with this, we see that it was by their own choice that the first human pair, Adam and Eve, lost their perfection and hence their ability to produce perfect children. (Job 14:4) As their descendants married, more and more imperfections began to be manifest among humans, including physical defects such as blindness and deafness. Because he has allowed this to develop, Jehovah God could speak of himself as 'appointing' the speechless, the deaf and the blind. (Compare Romans 8:20, 21.) Moreover, he fully understands such handicaps and their causes.

Also, Jehovah God has not shielded persons from the sad consequences that disobedience can bring on the physical organism. God's unchangeable law is: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Gal. 6:7) Thus children born of incestuous relationships may be born defective; they may be blind, deaf and otherwise handicapped from birth. Persons indulging in sexual immorality may contract a venereal disease leading to their becoming blind, deaf or even insane. The same might be true of children born to a woman infected with venereal disease.

When it is in agreement with his purpose and ways, Jehovah God can literally cause people to become blind, deaf or speechless. Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, is an example of this. When Zechariah expressed doubt upon learning that he would become father to a son by his aged wife Elizabeth, the angel Gabriel said to him: "You will be silent and not able to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their appointed time." (Luke 1:20) Zechariah was then for a time made mute, not able to speak until the circumcising of his eight-day-old son.—See also Acts 13:8-11.

Still another way in which God "appoints" the speechless, the deaf and the blind is in a spiritual sense. If people choose to be deaf and blind to his message, he permits them to persist in unbelief. This was the case with unfaithful Israel in the time of Isaiah the prophet. Isaiah was told: "Go, and you must say to this people, 'Hear again and again, O men, but do not understand; and see again and again, but do not get any knowledge.' Make the heart of this people

unreceptive, and make their very ears unresponsive, and paste their very eyes together, that they may not see with their eyes and with their ears they may not hear, and that their own heart may not understand and that they may not actually turn back and get healing for themselves."—Isa. 6:9, 10.

Since Jehovah God knew the heart condition of the unfaithful Israelites, he foreknew that they would fight against his message. The more Isaiah would call Jehovah's word to their attention, the more they would harden themselves against it. In this way Isaiah's prophesying revealed or made evident the full extent of their spiritual blindness and deafness. The effect of this was as if they had been made spiritually deaf and blind.

Hence, in view of what Jehovah God has done and can do, the Scriptures speak of him as 'appointing' the speechless, the deaf and the blind. But he is not directly responsible for all cases of such physical handicaps. These physical defects have come about mainly through God's permitting a sinful human race to come into existence. In a few cases and for specific purposes Jehovah God caused physical blindness and speechlessness; he has made spiritual blindness and deafness to become manifest in those who fail to exercise faith in his word or message. On the other hand, he has also granted spiritual sight and hearing to those seeking to do his will and, through the rulership of his kingdom by Christ, will free humankind from all physical handicaps.—Isa. 61:1, 2; Rev. 21:3, 4.

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June 23: Practicing Bible Principles in the Home. Page 311. Songs to Be Used: 42, 15.