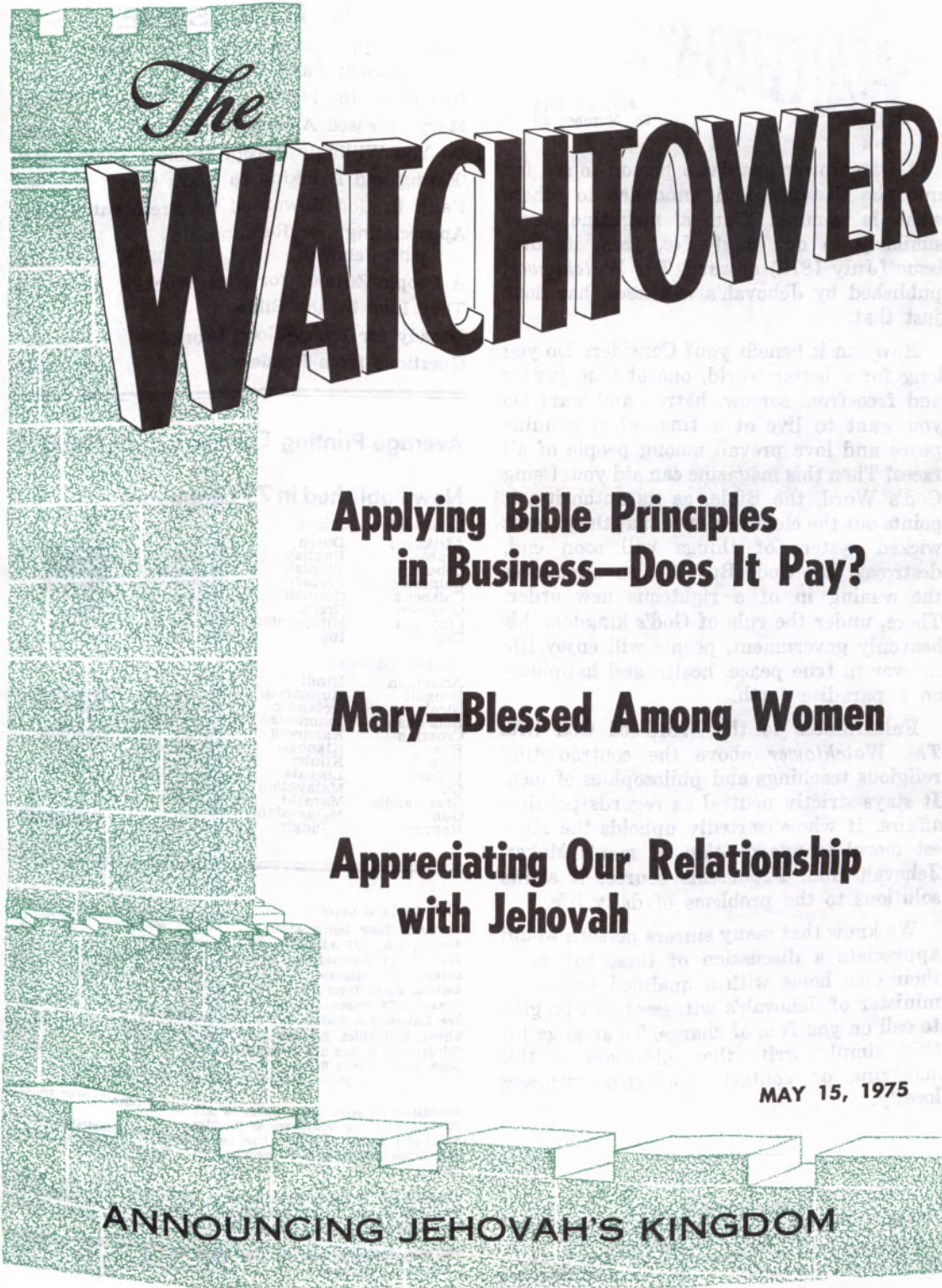




The **WATCHTOWER**

**Applying Bible Principles
in Business—Does It Pay?**

Mary—Blessed Among Women

**Appreciating Our Relationship
with Jehovah**

MAY 15, 1975

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

May 15, 1975
Vol. 96, 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.

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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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APPLYING BIBLE PRINCIPLES IN BUSINESS

RUNNING a business is a risky undertaking these days. A business starting now has, at best, a 50-50 chance of survival, according to a Chicago expert in the business-administration field.

A factor that makes a businessman's life hard is widespread business dishonesty. When competitors resort to bribery, kickbacks, cheating customers and "cutting corners" on taxes, it is harder for the honest businessman to give full, correct weight and measure, with good service, and still make a reasonable profit.

The extent to which dishonesty has permeated the retail-business field was revealed in a recent three-state survey. Various items of merchandise were checked—vitamin pills, nails, paper clips, electronic parts, facial tissues, foods—packaged

-Does it Pay?

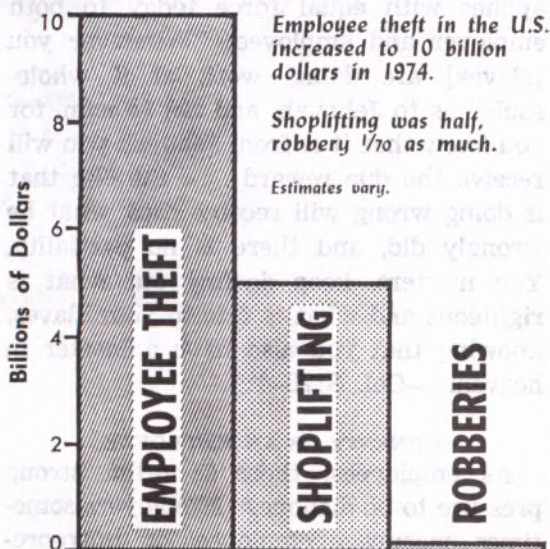
goods labeled to contain a certain number of items. It was found that the percentage of packages that shortchanged the customer was alarming—in foodstuffs, for example, 40 percent. In a box of "eight" frozen lobster-tails there were only six. A bottle of "100" vitamin pills contained 85. All products examined turned out to average from 10 to 30 percent short.

Furthermore, stealing by employees and executives has become so great as to outstrip all losses from shoplifting and robbery. This adds to the burden of all businessmen.

With all these things working against him, can a man be honest and survive in a selfish business world? And are there any practical advantages in applying Bible counsel to business?

The Bible advises: 'All things that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them.' (Matt. 7:12) And as regards business dealings: "You must not commit injustice . . . in weighing or in measuring . . . You should prove to have accurate scales, accurate weights." (Lev. 19:35, 36) "Two sorts of weights [one for selling and one for buying] are something detestable to Jehovah, and a cheating pair of scales is not good."—Prov. 20:23.

A businessman who has regard for God



will follow these principles. It is true that doing so may cause him to be looked upon as strange, even foolish. He may encounter inconveniences and troubles. But if he maintains a good conscience, which is of great value in the eyes of God, this will be worth more than money. Moreover, many have followed the course of honesty and still have a flourishing business.

This is because honesty is a more powerful weapon than many suppose. On the other hand, dishonesty can be a "two-edged sword" that can turn against its user and bring him to ruin. If a businessman is found to be dishonest, his customers will often forsake him. But the honest businessman gains the confidence of his customers, his suppliers and creditors. Also, his employees will respect him and will tend to be honest with him.

No businessman can afford to underrate the value of prompt, efficient service and a quality product that gives the consumer his money's worth, along with friendliness and honesty in dealing with customers. Without these qualities, a business is in greater danger of complete collapse than is the honest one. This fact is highlighted in the experiences of some of Jehovah's witnesses.

For example, consider the experience of an owner of three grocery stores in the southern United States. When medical evidence brought to light the health-damaging effects of tobacco, he gave serious thought to the matter. Not wanting to be responsible for selling his customers something detrimental to their health (he felt that, conscientiously and in all honesty, he could not advertise, display and sell such a product) he consulted with his store managers, getting their agreement to remove all tobacco products from his stores. This was a risk, not only because tobacco sales were profitable, but also because people tended

to trade where they could get tobacco when they bought their groceries.

What was the result? For three months the sales in the three stores dropped sharply. Then they began to go up, finally returning to their normal level. Why? The customers appreciated the honest, friendly, considerate service in these stores and were willing to buy their groceries there and get their tobacco elsewhere.

DEALING WITH EMPLOYEES

An employer can benefit his business by applying Bible principles in his relationship with his employees. The Bible counsels: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness." (Eph. 4:31) Threats and shouting, "bossing" men around, make them unhappy and therefore damage a business. The Bible states why: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage, but a word causing pain makes anger to come up."—Prov. 15:1.

An employer must remember that those in his employ are not slaves. But the Bible's advice to slave owners and slaves applies with equal force today to both employer and employee: "Whatever you [slaves] are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men, for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward . . . the one that is doing wrong will receive back what he wrongly did, and there is no partiality. You masters, keep dealing out what is righteous and what is fair to your slaves, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."—Col. 3:23-4:1.

HONESTY AS AN EMPLOYEE

As employees, there is often strong pressure to be dishonest. Employers sometimes encourage employees to misrepresent

sent or lie about the quality of merchandise. Cheating on weights and measures is practiced. Subordinate supervisors may encourage "loafing" or a "slowdown" for various reasons.

However, it has often been found that employers appreciate an employee who sticks to upright principles. They feel that the employee will be loyal and will not steal from them or lie to them.

An instance of this occurred in a West African country. An official in the government invited an efficient young man under his employ to work as his private secretary. The job carried with it a big pay raise and other benefits. The young man explained that he would be happy to take the position, but there was one thing he could not do. When the country's president phoned at a time when the official should be working in his office but was absent, he explained, he could not conscientiously give the customary answer that the official was in the men's room. The official argued that others in the office, even religious persons, did not mind telling such "white lies." The young man replied that a good name with God was more important than position or money, saying: "I would not like to do anything that would displease God." The official was favorably impressed and said that the country needed trustworthy men like him.

In New York city, employees at a firm having several branch stations had been under surveillance because they were suspected of stealing. Finally a meeting was held. Each employee was interviewed. Each one, in turn, was fired because he had been observed stealing, until four men who lived by Bible principles were interviewed. The detectives who had been investigating commended the men, for they were the only ones who had not stolen anything. These men, all of them Jehovah's

witnesses, were then offered managerial jobs.

Similarly, a grain mill in a Latin-American country was losing money in its flour department, because sacks of flour were being stolen from the shipping room. Flour was scattered over the floor and the excuse was made that sacks had been broken. The owner then hired a man to take charge of the floor and noticed that for the first time in years he began making a profit in that department. On investigation, he found that the recently hired man, as one of Jehovah's witnesses, lived by Bible principles and had put a stop to the stealing. The owner made the man manager of his entire mill.

These experiences show that there are people that appreciate honesty, and that honesty is rewarded. Even though some may have to resign or lose their jobs because of pressure against them to be dishonest, applying Bible principles as an employee pays, and the person who sticks to what is right finds encouragement in the words of the psalmist, who said: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread." (Ps. 37:25) Also, Jesus comforted his disciples with the words: "Never be anxious and say, 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' . . . Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and [God's] righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you."—Matt. 6:31-33.

So, whether a businessman or an employee, one who truly applies Bible principles can take courage from the Bible's words: "The eyes of Jehovah are upon the righteous ones [for their good]," and can keep confidently in mind that "the righteous are the ones whom good rewards." (1 Pet. 3:12; Prov. 13:21) And the greatest reward of all will be a good conscience before God and men.

Insight on the News

- Each year a conference of Christians and Jews meets to discuss what is called the "Holocaust"—the mass destruction of Jews during the

Legacy of a Holocaust

Nazi regime in Europe. In the last session, held this past March, Dr. Franklin H. Littell, professor of religion at Temple University, stated that "the murder of approximately 6 million Jews by baptized Christians in the heart of [Christendom] called into question the Christian faith as has not been done in nineteen hundred and some odd years." He said the question produced a severe "spiritual wrestling" by the churches and added, "I'm not sure Christianity will survive."

The blame for the mass murder of Jews, however, does not rest with Christianity. It rests with Christendom and her churches. The reason for the holocaust is plain: Christendom's clergy and their flocks abandoned the teachings of the Bible and of Christ Jesus in favor of supporting the political state. Centuries of history show that this is by no means the first time they have done so. By contrast, thousands of European Jews can testify that one religious group in Germany underwent persecution equal to that heaped upon the Jews: Jehovah's witnesses. Hundreds of these died in concentration camps. They suffered because of insisting on holding to and practicing true Christianity rather than worship of the State.

- Yet another chapter of Nazi history is returning to haunt Christendom's churches, namely, that of the Nazi euthanasia (so-called "mercy killing") program. It was part of Hitler's plan to produce a Teutonic superrace by 'weeding out' those considered to be weakening elements. Operating during 1939 to 1941, it resulted in the deliberate killing of an estimated 60,000 to 100,000 Germans and Austrians who were mentally defective, epileptic or physically deformed.

Now evidence is surfacing to show that Church leaders in Germany and elsewhere knew of this but generally chose to remain silent until much of the killing had passed.

A Jesuit historian, writing in "Civiltà Cattolica," presents evidence that Nazi officials first wanted some indication as to whether Church leaders would strongly oppose their program or not. They commissioned a professor of the Catholic theological seminary in Paderborn, Germany, to supply them with information on the subject. One of the Nazi officials involved is cited as saying that the Catholic theologian 'anticipated no fundamental objection from the Church' and that thereafter Hitler initiated the euthanasia program.

Under the heading "The Terrible Silence," the "Sunday Times" of London shows that it was a year after the Nazi program had got under way that a Vatican broadcast first mentioned euthanasia unfavorably, but without reference to Germany. The euthanasia program was terminated in late 1941. Nearly two more years passed until the pope (Pius XII), on June 29, 1943, made an official statement condemning euthanasia. His statement was of no help to the thousands of adults and children who were already dead.

Significantly, in both cases the researchers (in "Civiltà Cattolica" and the London "Sunday Times") point to the euthanasia program as a prelude to the mass liquidation of Jews that followed.

- Through the prophet Isaiah, Jehovah God foretold: "And Babylon . . . must become as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited." (Isa. 13: 19, 20) About a century later, Babylon's overthrow as a kingdom came, in the year

Babylon Rebuilt?

539 B.C.E. Now a recent "Agence France-Presse" report tells of efforts to "rebuild ancient Babylon and the Tower of Babel." Is Babylon really to be reinhabited?

No, the report actually deals with efforts by the Iraqi government to uncover and restore more of the remaining ruins of the ancient city that has lain desolate for centuries. An Italian archaeologist assigned the task is quoted as saying that Babylon "is not only covered with earth, but with subsurface water that has to be drained." It still is the desolate waste and uninhabited place that Bible prophecy foretold it would be.

MARY - *Blessed Among Women*

FOR a woman to be in the line of descent leading to the Messiah would be an honor. How highly favored, then, would be the woman who actually became the mother of the Messiah! As the Bible shows, a virgin of the royal house of David, Mary, was the one so blessed among women.

It was the angel Gabriel who told Mary about the role that God had in mind for her. According to the rendering of the *Catholic Douay Version*, Gabriel greeted Mary with the words: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee." (Luke 1:28) Based on these words, many people have concluded that Gabriel was ascribing a special degree of sanctity or holiness to Mary.

But did Gabriel's words call attention to Mary's "holiness"? No. Note how the *Catholic New American Bible* translates Gabriel's greeting: "Rejoice, O highly favored daughter! The Lord is with you." The *Catholic Jerusalem Bible* reads similarly, and in a footnote we find this explanation: "'So highly favoured', i.e. [that is] as to become the mother of the Messiah." Of course, for the Most High to have favored Mary with the honor of becoming the mother of his Son on earth indicates that she was a faithful and humble servant of God.—Luke 1:38, 46-50.

But was Mary more than a humble servant of God who was given the unique privilege of bearing the Son of God? Did she, for example, continue in a special state of "holiness" by remaining ever virgin?

Many professed Christians believe that

Mary did remain a virgin throughout her life. They point to Mary's statement to the angel Gabriel as proof. Told that she would conceive and bear a son, Mary said: "But how can this come about, since I am a virgin?" (Luke 1:34, *Jerusalem Bible*) In the *Jerusalem Bible*, a footnote on this rendering says: "Lit[erally] 'since I do not know man'; this phrase means that Mary is in fact a virgin and perhaps expresses also her intention to remain so."

To determine whether Mary had perhaps decided to remain a virgin before the angel Gabriel visited her, we must look at matters from the standpoint of the time in which she was living. For a married woman to be childless in that time was viewed as a reproach. Hence, when Elizabeth became pregnant with her first and only child, John, she said: "In these days the Lord is acting on my behalf; he has seen fit to *remove my reproach among men.*" —Luke 1:25, *New American Bible*.

Accordingly, for Mary to have gotten engaged to Joseph with the intent of remaining a virgin would have meant making herself an object of reproach. How could Joseph have consented to an arrangement whereby his wife would come under the reproach of barrenness? Why would he deliberately want to forfeit the opportunity to have an heir to carry on his name? The Hebrew Scriptures with which he and Mary were acquainted in no way recommended such a thing. They pointed to parenthood as something desirable. For example, at Psalm 127:3 we read: "Sons are a gift from the Lord; the fruit of the

womb is a reward." (*New American Bible*) The only arrangement known to the Israelites whereby a man or a woman might remain a virgin was by continuing in the single state.—Compare Jeremiah 16:1-4.

Years later both Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul recommended voluntary singleness as the better course for those seeking to devote themselves more fully to spiritual interests. (Matt. 19:12; 1 Cor. 7: 28-38) However, nowhere does the Bible encourage celibate marriages or attribute a special sanctity to them. The contrary is the case. The inspired apostle Paul said to married people: "The husband should fulfill his conjugal obligations toward his wife, the wife hers toward her husband." —1 Cor. 7:3, *New American Bible*.

So, had Mary and Joseph intended to enter a celibate marriage, they would have been doing something for which there was no Biblical precedent. In fact, they would have been acting contrary to God's purpose respecting marriage. Is it not far more reasonable, therefore, to conclude that they had no thought of living with each other as celibates and that they did not do so for the full course of their marriage?

Of course, prior to the birth of Jesus, Joseph had no sexual relations with his wife. At Matthew 1:25, the *New American Bible* reads: "He had no relations with her at any time before she bore a son, whom he named Jesus." As pointed out in a footnote of the *Jerusalem Bible*, the literal reading is: "He did not know her until the day she gave birth." Would you say that this should be understood to mean that Joseph thereafter had no relations with his wife? Or, does it not, rather, allow for, not only the possibility, but actually the probability that he did have relations with Mary after the birth of Jesus?

If it could be established Scripturally that Jesus had brothers and sisters, all question as to whether Mary remained a virgin would be removed. Surely the in-

habitants of Jesus' hometown, Nazareth, must have known the facts. What did they say? At Mark 6:2, 3, we read of their being amazed about Jesus and saying: "Is this not the carpenter, the son of Mary, a brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not his sisters our neighbors here?"—*New American Bible*.

These words were originally recorded in Greek. Hence, the question arises, How would Greek-speaking people have understood the original terms here rendered "brother" and "sisters"? The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Vol. 9, p. 337) admits: "The Greek words . . . that are used to designate the relationship between Jesus and these relatives have the meaning of full blood brother and sister in the Greek-speaking world of the Evangelist's time and would naturally be taken by his Greek reader in this sense."

In view of what the Bible says about marriage, should we not accept the natural meaning of the terms "brother" and "sister" rather than to claim that Jesus' brothers and sisters were merely his kinspeople, perhaps his cousins? When we accept this natural meaning, we come to appreciate that Mary lived her life as a humble servant of God in harmony with his purpose respecting marriage.

The Scriptural view of matters counteracts any warped ideas about sex relations in marriage. Proper sex relations are not in themselves defiling. Not sex relations between marriage partners, but celibate marriages are contrary to the spirit of God's Word. So the teaching that Mary remained ever virgin misrepresents God's purpose respecting marriage, making it appear that unnatural celibate marriages are "holy." In no way did Mary's becoming the mother to other children diminish her being blessed among women in having been granted the unique favor of bearing the human Son of God.

Do You Willingly Accept HUMBLE TASKS?

HUMILITY helps to make life pleasant—not only for those around us but for ourselves. It helps to smooth out many of life's 'rough spots.'

But best of all, humility gains us God's favor. Psalm 138:6 says of him: "Jehovah is high, and yet the humble one he sees; but the lofty one he knows only from a distance."

Today, humility is sadly lacking among the majority of mankind. People are interested in prestige, prominence, power. Really, it was not much different back in the first century of our Common Era, especially in big cities, like the city of Rome. When writing to the Christian congregation in Rome, the apostle Paul gave them this counsel: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

In urging his brothers not to let themselves be molded by worldly attitudes, Paul evidently had in mind worldly pride as a major aspect. Because, in his following words, we find him counseling his brothers that each should be on guard "not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think," and to "not be minding lofty things, but be led along with the lowly things." Or, as *An American Translation* renders these last words, "Do not be too ambitious, but accept humble tasks."—Rom. 12:3, 16.

ability, but who resent being asked to do things viewed as of a lowly nature?

In his letter to the Christians at Rome, Paul went on to show that the Christian congregation as a whole is like a body with many members, each member having its own function. In the congregation back in the first century some had certain miraculous gifts granted to them by means of God's holy spirit or certain services given to them to perform. The apostle urged all to serve willingly and gladly in whatever way was opened up to them. (Rom. 12:4-8) This same spirit of serving cooperatively



for the good of all is vital for the happiness and good order, not only of a congregation, but also of a family or any other kind of arrangement where a number of persons work together.

CIRCUMSTANCES CALLING FOR THE EXERCISE OF HUMILITY

Some circumstances in life that call on us to accept a hum-

ble role are simply a part of the natural, proper order of things. Children who subject themselves to their parents' instructions, and who do whatever household chores are assigned to them, gain God's favor as well as their parents' love. The Bible says: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: 'Honor your father and your mother'; which is the first command with a promise: 'That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth.'"—Eph. 6:1-3.

Wives often set a fine example of pleasing humility. Their work is generally carried on in the privacy of the home, out of the public eye; much of it may not even be seen by their husbands, who may observe only the results on their return home from the day's work. So, much of a housewife's work is of a humble kind, and today modern concepts would downgrade it and rob it of its dignity and worth. Yet how much that work contributes to the overall happiness of a home! And it is pleasing to God, whose Word encourages wives to "love their husbands, to love their children," showing this by being "workers at home, good, subjecting themselves to their own husbands." (Titus 2:4, 5) Yes, God highly appreciates Christian women who are conscientious wives and mothers, homemakers and housekeepers. Their good work, though unobtrusive, does not go unnoticed by Him; in his eyes their work is honorable and has its own dignity.—Compare Proverbs 31:10-31.

While generally not done in such secluded circumstances or in inconspicuous ones, a man's work often entails labor that brings little "recognition" or prominence. The days of the individual craftsman with his own enterprise have pretty well faded away, and the trend goes more and more toward large businesses where a few individuals have prominence and authority and where those forming the large work

force lose much of their personal identity. Not only this, but the world has developed an artificial and generally upside-down concept of what is honorable, what brings prestige, and of what is lowly or 'beneath one's dignity.' This worldly attitude, as much as or more than the work itself, may require a humbling of oneself.

Christian men have the hope of a coming new order of God's making, which will bring relief from the present systems, including the commercial and industrial systems. But meanwhile they need to face up to the facts of life and make the best of things. A lack of humility might tempt them toward using high-pressure tactics or even underhanded methods in order to get into positions of authority or prominence. Or, not wanting a "humble" job that, while providing steady employment and income, offers little prospect of quick financial gain, they may be tempted to try high-risk, private projects that promise fast profits. This may lead them from one scheme to another, alternately into debt and out of debt, preoccupied with problems, yet all the while perhaps feeling superior to those whose work appears more ordinary, even somewhat humdrum.

Back in the first century, the disciple James found it necessary to write this counsel to certain Christians: "Come, now, you who say: 'Today or tomorrow we will journey to this city and will spend a year there, and we will engage in business and make profits,' whereas you do not know what your life will be tomorrow. For you are a mist appearing for a little while and then disappearing. Instead, you ought to say: 'If Jehovah wills, we shall live and also do this or that.' But now you take pride in your self-assuming brags. All such taking of pride is wicked. Therefore, if one knows how to do what is right and yet does not do it, it is a sin for him."—Jas. 4:13-17.

However, whether self-employed or working for others, Christian men who show freedom from pride as to matters of employment and who do good work, gain God's approval. Back in the first century, slaves often formed a large portion of the population. In his letter to Titus, stationed on the island of Crete, the apostle Paul showed that such slaves, by their Christian subjection and their faithful work, could adorn or "add lustre to the doctrine of God, our Saviour," yes, even in their humble situation. (Titus 2:9, 10, *New English Bible*) Christian men today who provide well for their families and who give sincere support to the Christian congregation, financially and otherwise, may also have the comforting assurance that God appreciates the kind of workers they are, even though their secular work is of a kind viewed as "humble."

WITHIN THE CONGREGATIONAL STRUCTURE

As within the Christian family, so too within the 'association of brothers' that the Christian congregation constitutes, there is a proper need for humility. The apostle Peter writes: "You younger men, be in subjection to the older men [or, elders]. But 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. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; while you throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you."—1 Pet. 5:5-7, 9.

Younger men in the congregation heeding this counsel will 'not be too ambitious, but will accept humble tasks,' having a right estimate of matters and recognizing their need to gain more experience and knowledge, such as should be found in elders. (Rom. 12:3, 16, *AT*) Younger men, such as Timothy and John Mark, were glad to 'minister' to the apostle Paul, that

is, to render helpful services on his behalf that would aid him in carrying out his shepherding work. (Acts 19:22; 2 Tim. 4:11) Their faithful service brought them valuable experience and rich blessings.

In a congregation there are many things that need to be done that are not of a prominent or prestigious nature. There may be cleaning work to be done or similar labor. But the lack of prestige should not cause those with a right attitude to hold back from sharing in such tasks. In reality, they gain dignity and worth in God's eyes and in the eyes of right-minded persons by willingly aiding in such work. Really, all that should matter to us is: Does something need to be done and can I benefit others by doing it? That should be reason enough for us to be not only willing but glad to share in such work.

True, some circumstances that call for the exercise of humility do not result from what is naturally right. At times individuals may use authority in a way that has a humiliating effect on others. They may even advocate humility among their associates while themselves taking advantage of such humility of others to continue a prideful course of their own. But, as the inspired apostle counseled, we can 'throw all our anxiety on Jehovah God, knowing he cares for us.' In his due time, Jehovah and his Son will grant favor to humble ones if these hold firmly to the right principles of God's Word.—1 Pet. 5:6, 7.

How pleasant it is when all 'gird themselves with lowliness of mind toward one another'! How comfortable and relaxed an atmosphere prevails—one of true unity! If we all gladly and willingly minister to one another, free from pride, the result is an exaltation for all, all being treated with dignity and appreciated for their true worth, properly estimated in the light of God's Word and not according to worldly standards.—1 Pet. 5:5; Ps. 133:1; Rom. 12:10.

'Eating and Drinking to God's Glory'



EVEN in the daily routine of life our Creator, Jehovah God, can and should be taken into consideration. The inspired admonition to Christians is: "Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God's glory." (1 Cor. 10:31) But how can one glorify God in such ordinary matters of life as eating and drinking?

For one thing, a Christian's eating and drinking should not injure the conscience of others and provide an occasion for stumbling. In some areas, for example, people look down upon those who eat certain meats or who partake of any alcoholic beverage. The Christian should not completely ignore the conscientious scruples of the community in which he lives. He should also be very considerate of the conscientious scruples of fellow believers. He would not want to make it more difficult for others to accept true worship or to maintain faithfulness to God. That is why the apostle Paul recommended: "It is well not to eat flesh or to drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles."—Rom. 14:21.

By restraining himself from doing what he has a right to do in this matter, a Christian glorifies God. How? He displays love and deep concern for fellowmen, seeking, not his own advantage, but theirs. (1 Cor. 10:24) He demonstrates that, in harmony

with God's purpose, his whole life centers around helping others to gain divine approval.

A desire to glorify Jehovah God also prevents

a Christian from becoming immoderate in his eating and drinking. Were he to overindulge, he would dull his senses and lose mental alertness, as well as a desire to accomplish things. Through excessive drinking he could easily make a fool of himself. As the Bible proverb puts it: "Wine is a ridiculer, intoxicating liquor is boisterous, and everyone going astray by it is not wise." (Prov. 20:1) Instead of glorifying God, one who comes under the controlling influence of alcohol is prone to unrestrained noisiness and senseless words and actions that result in his being viewed with disdain. He reproaches God, the very One whom he claims to represent as His servant.

Moderation in food and drink, however, is but one aspect of God's law governing eating and drinking. Perhaps one is not given to heavy eating or drinking. Yet he may not be glorifying God. This is clear from the words of the apostle Paul to Timothy: "The inspired utterance says definitely that in later periods of time some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to misleading inspired utterances and teachings of demons, by the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, marked in their conscience as with a branding iron; . . . commanding to abstain from foods which

God created to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who have faith and accurately know the truth. The reason for this is that every creation of God is fine, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified through God's word and prayer over it." —1 Tim. 4:1-5.

Note that religious regulations prohibiting certain foods are actually an evidence of a falling away from true Christianity. This means that persons claiming to be Christian but commanding certain dietary restrictions as a required means for gaining divine favor are in reality dishonoring God. How can this be? Did not God's law to Israel rule out certain foods as unacceptable?

True, the Israelites were given dietary laws that prohibited them from eating certain mammals, birds, insects and fish. (Leviticus, chap. 11) But those restrictions ceased to exist when the Law covenant was replaced by the new covenant in 33 C.E. Later, when the apostle Peter, while in a trance, objected to eating animals that were unclean according to the Mosaic law, he was told: "You stop calling defiled the things God has cleansed." (Acts 10:15) Yes, God's "word," his authorization or permission, put an end to the distinction between "clean" and "unclean" animals. Observing the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic law, therefore, was not a requirement for gaining salvation. That is why the inspired apostle Paul wrote: "Let no man judge you in eating and drinking or in respect of a festival or of an observance of the new moon or of a sabbath; for those things are a shadow of the things to come, but the reality belongs to the Christ." —Col. 2:16, 17.

Hence, for religious organizations of Christendom to impose the dietary restrictions of the Mosaic law, the whole or in part, would mean their denying that the reality belongs to the Christ. They would

be acting contrary to God's "word" that has sanctified or set apart *all* things usable for food as acceptable. Religious dietary restrictions other than those contained in the Mosaic law would likewise be in opposition to divine revelation that "every creation of God is fine" and therefore suitable for food.

The institution of dietary restrictions as a religious duty is not a minor matter. It constitutes rejection of Christian faith and accurate knowledge. It implies that there is something defective in God's "word," that it does not reveal the full scope of what people need to do to gain divine approval and that man-made precepts are therefore needed. The importance of God's "word" is minimized and human regulations are elevated. By thus misunderstanding the only standard for judging truth, the Scriptural standard, the door is opened for other apostate teachings. Accordingly, to command obedience to man-made dietary restrictions as a religious duty dishonors God. However, if an informed Christian abstains for the time being in order not to stumble or offend the conscience of a person who feels bound by such dietary rules, he is doing a considerate thing and is looking for the liberating and salvation of a rule-bound person. —1 Cor. 9:19.

Jehovah God is also dishonored when food is eaten and no expression of thanks is made. This is so because food is sanctified, not only by God's "word," but also by prayer over it. The one praying acknowledges that God is the Provider and accepts food as a gift from him. He recognizes the truth expressed at Psalm 145: 15, 16: "To you the eyes of all look hopefully, and you are giving them their food in its season. You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing."

This appreciative attitude has a wholesome effect on true Christians. It serves

as a strong incentive not to misuse God's provision, either by overeating or by being wasteful, taking more food than one could reasonably eat. Then, too, a person is less likely to be needlessly 'picky' about food. His grateful attitude will cause even those of lesser means to welcome him into their home. Simple as the meal may be, they can be comfortable and need not fear that things really will not be up to his standards.

Surely there are good reasons to eat and drink to God's glory. The person who does this refrains from heavy eating and drinking and preserves his dignity. By appealing to the consciences of others, he avoids stumbling them. Above all, by acting in harmony with God's "word" and partaking of food with thanks, he can find real satisfaction in knowing that this course leads to lasting blessings.

FAITH IN GOD REWARDED

by PRESERVATION

TODAY we stand on the threshold of a great era for the earth. Though the astronauts viewed the earth from space as a jewel unique in the solar system, its history since shortly after man appeared on the scene about 6,000 years ago has been one of pollution, corruption and gradual ruination. But all evidences point to an end to the system of things now running earth's affairs. The Bible prophecies point out that there is indeed an end, and that it is not an end by man's hand, but by God's.

Then the earth will be freed, cleansed from the defilement it has undergone, and will enter into a glorious thousand-year period of rehabilitation and beautification. Just ahead, however, are momentous, yet strenuous, times. But the human race will not be blotted out. Many will fail to exercise faith in God's promise to provide survival, yet anyone who really desires to do so can now seize the opportunity.

To survive these dangerous times takes faith in God—faith actually to accept what he says and then to conform to it. The apostle Peter wrote: "If the righteous man is being saved with difficulty, where will the ungodly man and the sinner make a showing?" Then he advised Christians to "keep on commending their souls to a faithful Creator while they are doing good."—1 Pet. 4:18, 19.

What is just ahead? The Bible shows that soon the political governments will turn against false religion, including the religious organizations of Christendom and their leaders, and will devastate it. In the previous issue of this magazine this development of matters was discussed in connection with chapters seventeen and eighteen of the Bible book of Revelation. Therein we are shown how false religion will fall. Those truly serving God will not be caught in this destruction, but will stand out as God's representatives, as no

part of this world's system.—John 17:14; compare Ezekiel 33:33.

ENDANGERED BY INTERNATIONAL ATTACK

There will naturally be hardships during the turmoil that accompanies the destruction of false religion. But the really great pressure on those serving God will come after false religion's destruction when the political rulers will move against the peaceable ones, who are enjoying spiritual prosperity. These will not possess military might, but will rely only on God's invisible protection. This attack will be under the leadership of "the ruler of this world," "the god of this system of things," Satan the Devil.—John 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:4.

How does the Bible inform us that this attack will come against those serving God with spirit and truth? The same vision in Revelation that tells of false religion's destruction says also that the kings of earth "will battle with the Lamb, but, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them." (Rev. 17:12-14) The Lamb Jesus Christ being in the heavens, the earthly kings and their armies can fight him only by attacking his followers on earth, who recognize and submit to his kingly authority. Revelation chapter 19 describes that fight.

In addition to Revelation's prophetic vision, the prophet Ezekiel was inspired to write about the attack in symbolic words. Satan the Devil is shown under the name "Gog" as leading his hordes against Jehovah's people. Gog will think that they have no "wall" or protection. This Gog is quoted as saying: "I shall go up against the land of open rural country. I shall come in upon those having no disturbance, dwelling in security, all of them dwelling without wall, and they do not have even bar and doors." (Ezek. 38:2, 11) The kings, under Gog's leadership, will not see the invisible protection of Jehovah like "a wall of fire."

(Compare Zechariah 2:5; 2 Kings 6:11-17.) Then Jehovah, through his "King of kings," the "Lamb," will destroy them.—Ezek. 38:21-23; 39:1-4; Rev. 19:19-21.

How can anyone have the faith to stand firm under such an attack from all earth's armies, trusting in something one cannot see? To help those looking to him, Jehovah caused the psalmist to write his own experience as a strengthening encouragement. God's preservation of those trusting in him is plainly brought to our attention. The writer could have been speaking representatively for his whole nation, because not just he himself, but also his people, Jehovah God's chosen people, were at that time threatened with death, with an extermination. He said:

"I do love, because Jehovah hears my voice, my entreaties. For he has inclined his ear to me, and throughout my days I shall call. The ropes of death encircled me and the distressing circumstances of Sheol themselves found me. Distress and grief I kept finding. But upon the name of Jehovah I proceeded to call: 'Ah, Jehovah, do provide my soul with escape!' Jehovah is gracious and righteous; and our God is One showing mercy. Jehovah is guarding the inexperienced ones. I was impoverished, and he proceeded to save even me."—Ps. 116:1-6.

DELIVERANCE BY COMPLETE DEPENDENCE ON JEHOVAH

The psalmist did not want to die. And yet death seemed a sure thing for him. It was already as if death had its ropes tied fast and unbreakable around him, preventing all moves for escape. It was as if he were already in Sheol (the common grave of mankind), feeling the distressing circumstances of being squeezed in by the narrow walls of a burial pit. But he cried to Jehovah and was delivered. For this graciousness, righteousness and mercy of

God, the psalmist was moved to express his deep love for his Creator and Preserver.

Similarly, when God's people survive the destruction of this system of things at Har-Magedon, they will look back and appreciate just what a salvation God the Almighty has wrought in their behalf. (Rev. 16:14, 16; Luke 21:36) It was a near-death situation from which they were rescued. They were inexperienced in the devious maneuverings and wicked ways of this world and could not appeal for human aid. No one would or could deliver them but Jehovah—they could call on no other name. In their endangered state, impoverished of all earthly help, their full reliance had to be on Him. And it was not misplaced. How grateful those whom Jehovah delivers will be! With what heartfelt terms and actions they will express their love to him, their God, forever!

WALKING BEFORE JEHOVAH IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING

Being preserved from such a fearful situation, the survivors can then say, as did the psalmist:

“Return to your resting-place, O my soul, for Jehovah himself has acted appropriately toward you. For you have rescued my soul from death, my eye from tears, my foot from stumbling. I will walk before Jehovah in the lands of those living. I had faith, for I proceeded to speak. I myself was very much afflicted. I, for my part, said, when I became panicky: ‘Every man is a liar.’”—Ps. 116:7-11.

After deliverance from the enemy attack, which certainly will bring tenseness to the endangered ones, the survivors of Har-Magedon can let their souls, their own selves, relax. They may get temporarily panicky when under attack, knowing that no human could help them even if he promised or tried to do so. *Faith in God* is what

will bring their deliverance. Then, having been preserved from stumbling in a death-dealing fall, they will be determined to continue to “walk before Jehovah in the lands of those living.”

Today all who have faith in God can get strength from the words of the psalmist in conjunction with the apostle Paul's comforting counsel at 2 Corinthians 4:8, 9: “We are pressed in every way, but not cramped beyond movement; we are perplexed, but not absolutely with no way out; we are persecuted, but not left in the lurch; we are thrown down, but not destroyed.”

The apostle went on to say, with Psalm 116 in mind: “I exercised faith, therefore I spoke.” (2 Cor. 4:13) Likewise God's people can speak with full, unquestioning faith in God's protection. Why? Because God will ‘act appropriately toward them.’ (Ps. 116:7) His action is altogether appropriate and in harmony with the promises recorded in his Word. He “becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.” (Heb. 11:6) This is also in harmony with his loving-kindness and his purpose to vindicate his name in the foiling of his enemies and their vicious purpose.

Having survived the enemy attack and entered into a cleansed earth, the survivors will witness another deliverance performed before their eyes. That is the deliverance of billions of persons from the grave by a resurrection. With the help of the survivors these will learn of the God of salvation and deliverance. *Uncounted* numbers of these will express faith and will be able also to “walk before Jehovah in the lands of those living,” attaining finally to everlasting life in perfection on earth as “children of God.” (Rom. 8:21; Rev. 20:11-15) Faith in God is rewarded by preservation, and such preservation leads to everlasting life.

APPRECIATING

Our Relationship WITH Jehovah

A TRUSTWORTHY friend is to be counted among our most valuable possessions. Such a person is a reassuring comfort in time of need and a delightful joy when we have blessings to share. If we have a number of loyal friends we are rich indeed. But whom would you regard as your *best* friend? Probably the one with whom you have the most in common and whose relationship with you contributes most toward your needs. We can all think of friends we hold dear, but nowhere among all of them can we find one who matches Jehovah as a friend who can so completely fill our needs. "To the one without dynamic energy he makes full might abound," imparting all that is required to sustain us. (Isa. 40:29-31) Those who appreciate their relationship with Him inseparably attach themselves to Him as a close companion.

² Viewing it from a human standpoint, some may regard a relationship with him as unrealistic. How can I be a close friend of one so far removed? What opportunity is there to estimate personally his qualities? Few of us have the prospect of association with him in his literal presence, but this does not mean that we can never know what he is like as a person. He provided an exact knowledge of his personality through his Son. Jesus declared: "He that has seen me has seen the Father also." (John 14:9) His disciples could observe in

"Prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens."—Matt. 5:45.

Jesus the same qualities that exist in his Father. His presence and works among men gave us an unparalleled opportunity to get personally acquainted with his Father. "Happy are the eyes that behold the things you are beholding," Jesus said. "Many prophets and kings desired to see the things you are beholding but did not see them." (Luke 10:23, 24) Even Moses, who experienced the intimacy of personal communication with Jehovah, was not as blessed as those able to see and hear Jesus.

³ Jesus made it possible for us to know what Jehovah is like. He showed us how to approach his Father to gain His goodwill. His personal knowledge of the Father became a wellspring of information for us to draw on. The apostle Paul observed: "Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge." (Col. 2:3) A study of his teachings and personal qualities helps us to understand and appreciate his Father as a trusted friend. The closer we become, the greater our joy. Likewise, our responsibility becomes greater. Accountability before him increases. One who willfully turns his back on Jehovah after acknowledging him as a friend is regarded as one who has "tram-

1. Why do we treasure a good friend, and why must we regard Jehovah as our best friend?

2, 3. (a) How can we get personally acquainted with Jehovah? (b) What responsibility comes with His friendship?

pled upon the Son of God and . . . outraged the spirit of undeserved kindness with contempt." (Heb. 10:28, 29) Rather than repel us, such knowledge gives us even more reason to seek his friendship.

JESUS FULLY APPRECIATES HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

⁴In every way, Jesus showed that he treasured his relationship with his Father. All that he said and did showed that he knew his Father very well and wanted to be like him in every way. In a prehuman existence extending over aeons of time, he was continuously in his Father's presence, able to see him literally and experience the close relationship between a loving father and a devoted son. His assignment of work was to carry out his Father's creative purposes. As a result, "all things came into existence through him." (John 1:3) His perfect accomplishment of that work involved an infinite variety of duties, the magnitude of which we can but barely perceive. He was entrusted with employment of the most powerful force that exists: the holy spirit. He used it in faithful

4. What opportunity did Jesus have to get to know his Father, and what assignment was he given?



Jesus helped others to come into a relationship with Jehovah, receiving all persons on the same basis, with no preference for the wealthy or disdain for the poor

obedience to his Father's will, accomplishing all that He had purposed.

⁵The Son knows what it is to have great power. He is "over all others," and the Father has "given all things into his hand." (John 3:31, 35; Matt. 28:18) While on earth he continued to exercise a measure of that authority. When the apostle Peter reacted violently to Jesus' arrest, he rebuked Peter and asked: "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53) In dealings with his apostles, he spoke with authority. When they addressed him as "Lord," he acknowledged it, saying: "You speak rightly, for I am such." (John 13:13) His words and manner left no question about who was in charge. His exercise of authority, however, was always in a kindly way, to accomplish a twofold purpose: first, to exalt his Father and reveal His purposes, and, second, to benefit those who would obey. His handling of matters was purposely designed to direct favorable attention to his Father, exalting His name before others. He earnestly sought to make known his Father's marvelous qualities and loving provisions. Without hesitation

he repeatedly declared his own subservience to Jehovah God, avowing his determination always to "do the things pleasing to him."—John 8:29.

⁶He was concerned about the

5. (a) How did Jesus continue to exercise authority even while on earth? (b) What twofold purpose governed his use of authority?

6. How did Jesus show a sincere concern for others?

well-being of others, being anxious to help them to merit his Father's approval. In no way did he take advantage of his authority to exploit them for his own gain. His meager material possessions were evidence that he had no craving to enrich himself at their expense. He did not arbitrarily order others around; considerateness and mildness were characteristic of his manner. Those coming to him were all received on the same basis, with no preference for the wealthy or disdain for the poor.

⁷ He saw in his Father all that was good, righteous and just. Obedience was not simply a duty; he *wanted* his Father as Master over him. Jesus' perfect reflection of those qualities in his own personality generated the same desire in his disciples. Also, what they saw in him caused them to want Jesus as their Master. Peter spoke for all believers when he identified Jesus as "the Holy One of God" and as the one who has the "sayings of everlasting life." (John 6: 67-69) Because his appeal was always on the basis of love, they were instinctively drawn to him. (John 15:12) The attachment created by that love was maintained even at the cost of their lives. An inseparable unity resulted, binding them together in loyal obedience to the Father.—John 17:20, 21.

⁸ Jesus' confidence and trust in his Father were total. He had the whole-souled conviction that his Father would never disappoint him. There were no doubts in his mind about the goodness, justice, value or ultimate success of his Father's works. He unhesitatingly placed himself at his Father's disposal, eagerly volunteering to do, "not as I will, but as you will." (Matt. 26: 39) These were the conclusions reached by the one who knows the Father better than anyone else. It is obvious that he was awed

by the indescribable beauty of the qualities he saw in his Father.

CHRIST REVEALED JEHOVAH AS FRIEND

⁹ What a blessing it would be for us to know the Father as Jesus did! It was his innermost desire to help us to do that, we eventually coming to experience the sublime joy of his Father's friendship. Through his conduct, his Father's marvelous qualities were revealed for all to see. Foremost among these qualities is his infinite love. John 3:16 says: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son" as a ransom. We begin to grasp the depth of that love when we observe Jesus, moved by the same love, stepping forth voluntarily to "surrender his soul in behalf of his friends." (John 15: 13) We feel an eternal debt of gratitude to Jesus for what he did. When we appreciate that the whole arrangement was made possible by his Father at the cost of his dearly beloved Son, we are drawn to Jehovah with hearts overflowing with thankfulness.

¹⁰ Those coming to Jesus found him approachable, ready to listen and always sincerely interested in them. (John 4:6, 30-34) Many were amazed to find in him a genuine humility not ordinarily found in men of authority. How heartwarming it is to know that we can approach the Father, Jehovah God, with the same assurance that he will receive us kindly, displaying a sincere regard for our needs! An amazing humility can be seen even in the Father, it irresistibly drawing us close to him.—Ps. 18:35.

¹¹ Although being a perfect man possessing manly physical attributes, Jesus' appeal was not on that basis. Those without

9. How did Jesus help us to appreciate the depth of his Father's love for us?

10. How did Jesus imitate his Father in showing humility?

11. What attracted people to become Jesus' disciples, this having what effect upon their relationship with his Father?

7. How did Jesus feel about his Father's authority, and how did that affect his disciples?

8. How did Jesus show complete confidence in his Father?

love of righteousness or virtuous qualities were not impressed by what they saw respecting him, even as prophecy had foretold. (Isa. 53:1, 2) Those who became his disciples were those who had a high regard for goodness and righteousness, appreciating the unmistakable evidences of such in him. Our own observation of these admirable qualities in Jesus intensifies our esteem for his Father because we too come to admire Him personally. And we have come to love the righteousness manifested in all his ways.

CHRIST REVEALED OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

¹² Our first reaction to the suggestion that we can be close friends of Jehovah is that of feeling unworthy. Even so, he warmly beckons us to come to him, just as a father would his children. He is indeed our Father, and we have a place in his family of human sons. Our approach to him through Jesus requires no basic change in our bodily nature, since we were originally created in his 'image and likeness,' possessing a measure of his attributes. (Gen. 1:26) With these ties already existing, we are able to become related to him in a meaningful way. Inside his family is really the only truly natural place for us to be; any place outside leaves us alienated, cut off from the essentials necessary for our existence. Adam was responsible for the breach in our family relationship to God; his deliberate sin resulted in our condemnation as alienated sinners. Jehovah mercifully provided a way for us to regain what was lost. Jesus revealed to us what we are lacking and showed us exactly what changes are needed in our personalities to be acceptable again as part of God's family.

¹³ Of course, no matter how hard we try,

12. (a) How may we be inclined to react to the idea that we can become Jehovah's friend? (b) What knowledge encourages us to draw close?

13. What barrier has interfered with our relationship with Him, and how will it be overcome?

we could never on our own overcome the obstacle of inherited sin. As long as it remained, our personalities would reflect the sinful tendencies unacceptable to God. Paul confessed: "The bad that I do not wish is what I practice." He rejoiced to contemplate the applied benefits of the ransom, which would eventually remove all obstacles interfering with our development of the new personality. (Rom. 7:19, 24, 25) Those qualifying for the full benefits of the ransom learn to express this new personality in a way that pleases God.

¹⁴ Regaining a good relationship with him means regaining lost privileges in his service. He extends to us an opportunity to share in the work he is presently doing, namely, the spreading of the Kingdom message. He invites us to share, not as lowly slaves, but as his "fellow workers." (1 Cor. 3:9) We are afforded the honor of "working together with him." (2 Cor. 6:1) Today, more than 2,000,000 "fellow workers" enjoy the privilege of sharing with him in this lifesaving work.

¹⁵ Even though we exert ourselves vigorously, God does by far the biggest share of the work. Our assignment is simply to bear the good news to those about us, doing what we can to teach those who respond. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) We can be grateful that He thoughtfully assigns to us such a wholesome, worthwhile activity that gives us opportunity to exercise our minds and abilities to the full. We do the best we can, but we realize that it would be presumptuous for us to take credit for the results. It is Jehovah who has opened the hearts of the hundreds of thousands who have responded, removing the barriers that have kept them in ignorance. When his law comes to be found in their hearts, it is because he put it there according to His new covenant. (Heb. 10:

14. What privilege is extended to those in a good relationship with Jehovah?

15. Even though we work hard, what must we acknowledge about the results?

16) The monumental changes made in their lives can be attributed, not to our skillfulness as instructors, but to the operation of his powerful holy spirit.

¹⁶ When we see new believers take a firm stand, we are witnessing visible evidence of God's spirit in operation. It is really a miracle of God every time a person's heart is opened to accept the Bible truth. We are obliged to marvel each time one is healed of spiritual blindness and delivered from the Devil's snare. When people ultimately dedicate their lives and submit to water baptism to become Jesus' disciples, all credit must go to the Father. Jesus himself acknowledged that fact when he declared: "No man can come to me unless the Father . . . draws him." (John 6:44) What a privilege for one, not only to be accepted as his friend, but to be entrusted with responsibilities as a worker at his side! Appreciation moves us to be profoundly grateful.

CHRIST REVEALED OUR RESPONSIBILITIES TOWARD GOD AND MAN

¹⁷ Jesus, by his example and teachings, helps us to see where we stand in our relationship with his Father and the responsibilities we bear in this favored position. His Father expects us to trust Him. In no way did Jesus rely on his own judgment. He sought his Father's guidance and help in all things, praying to Him incessantly. (Luke 6:12) Obedience is also vital. Further, obedience of the right kind is essential. God wants neither the abject servitude of an unreasoning slave, nor a fearful obedience prompted simply by dread of punishment. Jesus set the example, being, not just a "righteous" man, but a "good" one. He did not avoid wrongdoing simply because God's law forbids it. He did so because he himself would not toler-

ate it. Like his Father, he "loved righteousness, and . . . hated lawlessness." (Heb. 1:9) It was unthinkable for him to entertain thoughts of something bad. —Matt. 16:22, 23.

¹⁸ Examining the motive behind Jesus' perfect example elevates our thinking so as to appreciate the high plane on which his Father will deal with us when we eventually attain perfection. When men demonstrate the godly attribute of goodness as Jesus did, extensive laws become unnecessary. Paul confirmed that, saying: The "law is promulgated, not for a righteous man, but for persons lawless and unruly." (1 Tim. 1:9) After recounting the fruitage of God's spirit, he added: "Against such things there is no law." (Gal. 5:22, 23) When men are motivated by righteous inclinations from within, they are in no way restricted or hampered by written laws. Reaching perfection, we will do what is right because as perfect men we choose to love what is right. We "will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21) A voluminous code of laws will be obsolete. All the guidance needed by man will be summed up in the simple injunction "to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God." (Mic. 6:8) Solomon summed it up in fewer words, saying that "the whole obligation of man" is: "Fear the true God and keep his commandments." —Eccl. 12:13.

¹⁹ We should strive to be as near Jesus' perfect standard as possible. If we have his mental attitude, we will never view God's law negatively, obeying to the barest extent necessary to comply with it. Because we love righteousness and hate lawlessness, we will never feel anything is all right as long as the Christian congregation cannot punish us for it. Nor will

16. To what extent must we give credit to Jehovah for new disciples?

17. (a) In our relationship, what does Jehovah expect of us? (b) What perfect example did Jesus set in this regard?

18. When men become perfect, to what extent will they require written laws?

19. If we imitate Jesus, how will we view wrongdoing?

we see how close we can come to wrongdoing without breaking some law, or persist in something questionable because the elders cannot command us to do otherwise. Because we love Jehovah, we will "hate what is bad" and keep as far from it as possible.—Ps. 97:10.

²⁰ A close relationship with Jehovah is the finest thing to be experienced by man. Its reward far excels any materialistic treasure. The praiseworthy qualities of goodness and love for others that it produces in us are priceless. Appreciation impels us to invite others to join us in this family relationship with God. Eagerly we beckon them to "come! . . . take life's water free." (Rev. 22:17) With personalities now molded by the genuine love Jesus taught us, we rise above the imperfect tendency to think just of ourselves to the exclusion of others. That love teaches us that a refusal to share the benefits of his undeserved kindness is to miss its purpose. (2 Cor. 6:1) As our appreciation deepens for this godly quality, our concern for the welfare of others becomes greater.

²¹ No relationship can be maintained with the heavenly Father without such concern. An acceptable standing before him will perpetually depend upon our willingness to imitate his love in our dealings with others. Every expression of kindness he demonstrated was repeated in Jesus' actions toward us, emphasizing his Father's profound love for mankind. Anyone showing a selfish disregard for his fellowman can never be made perfect in his love for God. Consideration for others is a fundamental necessity for right relations with him.

²² Appreciating that, we are sincerely interested in others. Those about us in the Christian congregation are of special concern. We are anxious to "work what is

good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith." (Gal. 6:10) In every way we reach out to give help when the needs of our brothers, whether spiritual or material, become manifest. But our love is by no means limited to the narrow scope of our spiritual brothers; it is widened out to encompass all men, even those now alienated far from God. We have a feeling of compassion toward them, which motivates us to work for their best interests as we desire others to do for us. (Matt. 7:12) For them to learn the things Jesus taught is to learn the way to life. Our preaching the Kingdom message helps them to gain a right relationship with Jehovah and shows the highest regard for their welfare. (Matt. 28:18-20) It is one of the finest ways in which we can do good to them. Joyfully we grasp every opportunity to participate, not satisfied with a mere token effort. We continually analyze the use of our time and available resources with the goal of creating extra opportunities to preach. Pioneering, serving where the need is greater, and so forth, we regard as choice privileges that allow us really to demonstrate the genuine quality of our love.

²³ This work results in good for everyone concerned. Jehovah takes delight in our willing obedience and effort to vindicate his name. Jesus rejoices to have us as prospective subjects under his millennial rule. Our spiritual brothers draw close to us in a warm bond of unity. Sheeplike ones feel a lasting debt of gratitude for what we have lovingly done in their behalf. Indeed, our hearts rejoice to see the marvelous blessings that accrue from our relationship with Jehovah! How glad we are that we have been allowed to "make friends" with him and to receive his assurance of a future in "everlasting dwelling places"! —Luke 16:9.

20, 21. (a) What does appreciation motivate us to do?
(b) Why is this necessary for a good relationship with Jehovah?

22. (a) How can we show genuine love for our brothers?
(b) How can that love be shown to those outside the congregation?

23. What benefits are produced by our effort to maintain a good relationship with Jehovah?

²⁴ Jehovah has surely proved himself to be the best, most trustworthy friend we will ever know. Getting to know him as a close companion is the most enriching experience in our life. As the "happy God," he is already fulfilling his promise to make

²⁴ Why should we appreciate our relationship with Jehovah?

us happy too. (1 Tim. 1:11) Success in firmly cementing that bond of friendship will sustain our unending joy. Appreciating the security, peace of mind and hope we have found in our relationship, we are moved to express our deepest, most heartfelt thanks to our best friend, Jehovah.

A PEOPLE

Zealous
FOR

FINE WORKS

A LIFE that has purpose has meaning. When the heart and mind unite in pursuit of a worthwhile goal, the things a person does each day have significance, giving substance to that one's existence. People of this kind are to be counted among the world's happiest; those who live life aimlessly, among its most disappointed. A natural desire to be happy is reason enough to build our lives around works that accomplish good for ourselves and others. Zeal in accomplishing such works brings a rich reward in blessings.

² Jehovah is the God of fine works, and he is zealous in getting them accomplished. Everything he does is for the good of those serving him. Jesus set a perfect example, imitating his Father. Godly people who want to please Jehovah can also be identified by fine works. An effort by Jesus' disciples to follow his example would produce for his Father a "people peculiarly his own, zealous for fine works." (Titus 2:14) The fine works of a Christian are those that benefit others. The most beneficial thing we can do for another person

is to help him to know and serve Jehovah. The preaching and discipling work of the Christian congregation is a fine work of the greatest benefit. Its need and urgency make it worthy of our strongest zeal.

³ What is zeal? It is ardor. It is an earnest desire to do what is right and proper. Where there is zeal there is life, enthusiasm, vibrance. A keen interest in the outcome prompts personal concern about getting results. The mental attitude is one of concentration, wholeheartedness. When zeal is lacking, the manner of one's action is perfunctory. Personal involvement is superficial. The attitude is uninspired, yes, apathetic. So, can you be described as zealous?

⁴ Yes, ask yourself whether you are zealous for fine works. Can your support of the preaching activity of your congregation be described as ardent, whole-souled? Have you been moved by a sincere desire to do all you can to help others to learn about Jehovah's purposes? Or, have you been content just to participate, displaying a bare minimum of interest and

1. What reasons should cause us to be zealous for fine works?

2. (a) Whose example can we imitate? (b) What fine work will that motivate us to do?

3, 4. (a) What is zeal? (b) What questions should we ask ourselves?

effort? Have you just been 'going through the motions' without really being involved?

⁵ Your attitude will tell you much about the intensity of your zeal. A truly zealous disciple will not allow nonessential personal interests to take precedence, ahead of the preaching and disciple-making work. When you share, is your participation always governed by the clock? Do you physically participate while mentally you are elsewhere? Are your thoughts centered on interests to be pursued afterward, such as a favorite television program or a social engagement? Service activity could be viewed as something to be quickly dispensed with so you can get on to the things you really want to do. You may regard it as simply your "duty" as one of Jehovah's witnesses, fulfilling it as only an obligation that involves little heart desire.

⁶ You may not have the personality of an extrovert. For you it may be a very difficult thing to take the initiative to talk to others, especially to strangers. What others seem to do naturally is a challenge for you. It may require personal discipline, even by your forcing yourself at times, to keep speaking out. Such does not necessarily mean that you lack in zeal. In some respects, your zeal could be more intense than others' because what you do may represent a stronger and deeper conviction, requiring extra effort. The important thing is that you have an earnest desire in your heart. You understand that real faith is accompanied by an outward expression of love for Jehovah and your fellowman. Zeal to prove your faith helps you to overcome your inhibitions. Intense love produces boldness that dispels fear of man. The resulting public declaration of faith is a fine work that expresses a genuine zeal.

5. What does our attitude reveal about our zeal? —

6. Why does the need for personal discipline not necessarily mean that we lack zeal?

ZEAL NOT MEASURED BY QUOTAS

⁷ Attempts have sometimes been made to standardize the efforts of everyone with certain quotas established as common goals for all. Zeal in many cases would then be measured by success in meeting such goals. Invariably this has resulted in a tendency to compare ourselves with one another, which has never proved to be an accurate or approved measurement of love or zeal. (2 Cor. 10:12) Search as we may, we can find no quotas set forth in God's Word as a minimum preaching requirement. The *amount* of work we do has little to do with Jehovah's estimation of our zeal. He is far more concerned with our motives, the desires within our heart. The only uniform requirement for all is simply that we "work at it whole-souled." (Col. 3:23) God opens up a wide range of opportunities and then lets each one of us do "just as he has resolved in his heart." Not being "under compulsion," our effort truly reflects what is in our heart. (2 Cor. 9:7) What our heart moves us to do becomes the *real* measure of our zeal.

⁸ When each one gives from the heart, Jehovah can regard our efforts as all being equal, uniform, even though there may be a wide variety in the amount each one does. Personal circumstances are different in every case. Age, health, family responsibilities, secular work, and so forth, are all factors affecting our level of activity. One with favorable circumstances may be able to talk to considerably more persons about God's kingdom than can another. Someone with added responsibilities may be able to talk to only a fraction of that number of persons. Because of varying circumstances, a certain number of hours might represent an extraordinary effort in one case but only a token effort in another. So, our ability and opportunity to

7. (a) Why is it unwise to establish quotas or goals? (b) What is the real measurement of zeal?

8. (a) Why is there a difference in what each one can do? (b) What is the important thing?

do much give us no reason to boast and, conversely, our limited service through no fault of our own should not make us feel ashamed. The important thing is that we have zeal that moves us to take advantage of whatever opportunities are available to us.

⁹ The intensity of our zeal is reflected in our alertness to seize and make opportunities to declare the good news, searching for ways to 'buy out' time to do more. (Eph. 5:15, 16) When other responsibilities are occasionally reduced temporarily, our willingness to use the extra time available in Jehovah's service is a fine evidence of zeal. Also, taking the initiative to maneuver our circumstances to allow more time for service shows that we have an earnest desire to give our best. A zealous publisher may carefully analyze his secular work, looking for ways to minimize its obligations. Rather than passively accepting unnecessary limitations for the sake of material advantages, he may request adjustments that will give him more freedom for Kingdom work. Zealous ones seek to use their time and resources to the best advantage, always keeping Kingdom interests first.

¹⁰ Appreciation for the increasing urgency to get the work done is a proof of zeal. A hardworking farmer well knows that a successful crop requires periods of extraordinary work at planting and harvest times. Because he feels a personal responsibility and is keenly interested in the outcome, his efforts are not governed by any "trade union" standard that requires only a minimum effort and extra compensation for anything more. He is glad to work long hours and to exert himself strenuously when necessary. If we are ardent in our desire to help others, we will give freely of our time and energies with no thought

of what may be expected of us. When things need to be done, and we are given an opportunity to help, the unselfish giving of ourselves is a commendable evidence of zeal.

FINE WORKS NOT LIMITED TO KINGDOM- PREACHING AND DISCIPLE-MAKING

¹¹ While we properly emphasize the preaching work because of its urgency, it is by no means the only activity to be included in the definition of "fine works." "Work" can be defined as "a specific task, duty, function or assignment often being a part or phase of some larger activity." The preaching of the good news is part of a larger activity that includes many fine works performed by Christians out of love for others. It would be a mistake to regard other fine works as of little consequence. While certain works may receive greater emphasis at times, in the overall view they are all equally important. Each fine work makes its own contribution to the strength, unity and productivity of the Christian congregation.

¹² In his letter to Titus, Paul gives us an insight into the broad scope of a Christian's fine works. Men were encouraged to be "moderate in habits, serious, sound in mind, healthy in faith, in love, in endurance." Women, in turn, should be diligent to "love their husbands, to love their children, to be sound in mind, chaste, workers at home, good, subjecting themselves to their own husbands." This conduct in the home would directly contribute toward the spread of the good news. The Word of God would not be "spoken of abusively," and outsiders would have "nothing vile to say about us." Such would ultimately serve to "adorn the teaching of our Savior, God, in all things." (Titus 2:1-10) Clearly,

9. In what ways can we demonstrate our zeal for the preaching work?

10. In what respects is a hardworking farmer a good example in zeal?

11. Are preaching and disciple-making the only fine works of a Christian, and, if not, how must other works be viewed?

12. What fine works are described by Paul in Titus 2:1-10?

then, these are also fine works for which a Christian can rightly be zealous.

PRODUCING FINE WORKS IN THE FAMILY CIRCLE

¹³ Parents, are you zealous in showing love for your children? Genuine concern for their welfare means more than just providing for their material necessities, taking them to meetings or conducting a weekly Bible study with them. Zeal for their welfare is shown by a sincere interest in all their needs and problems. Ask yourself: Do I really know what my children think about God's requirements? Have I prepared them for problems that they may face in the future? Am I alert to aid them in overcoming weaknesses such as pride, selfishness, laziness, and so forth? Do I know what they are being taught in school and to what extent they are being influenced by worldly thinking? Do my children feel free to approach me about problems or do I have to prod them? Can I tell by their expression or tone of voice that something is amiss? Am I patient in trying to find out what it is? Am I understanding and sympathetic, continually assuring them of my love? When you really try to get to know your children well, to understand their problems and help them spiritually, you are performing a fine work that results in a blessing to your family and a witness to Jehovah's name in the community.

¹⁴ The trend toward more aggressiveness and independence by women has produced much strife in the home and a soaring divorce rate. How praiseworthy to see a Christian wife display a zeal for fine works by loving submission to her husband! She goes beyond what might be expected in the world, demonstrating an earnest desire

to contribute to his happiness and well-being. When their personal preferences differ, respect for his headship prevents her from trying to force him to do what he has already turned down. She performs household duties joyfully, being rewarded by the appreciation of the family. The preparation of meals is not just a routine chore but a choice opportunity to fill a need that adds much to the well-being of those she loves. She finds satisfaction in maintaining a neat, attractive home because her family enjoys pleasant surroundings. These are fine works appreciated by her family, and for these she rightly "procures praise for herself."—Prov. 31:30.

¹⁵ A zealous husband expresses love for his wife. In a multitude of little ways he tries to please her without sacrificing his headship or the best interests of the family. He does not insist on getting his own way in everything; he is considerate of her feelings. He has high esteem for his wife, not regarding her as simply a means by which to satisfy his sexual passion. He makes her feel needed, which helps her to be an even more capable wife and helpmate. Zeal in expressing his affection, in turn, brings benefits that add immeasurably to his own happiness.

¹⁶ It is proper for a Christian to be zealous toward his secular work. This does not mean an ardent pursuit of material things to ensure the financial security of the family. Rather, necessary obligations to an employer are fulfilled in a whole-souled way, "as to Jehovah." (Col. 3:22, 23) There is a desire to perform work that excels in quality. He tries to be a cooperative, helpful and honest employee. Working hours are used to the best advantage without needless waste of time or materials. He strives to earn a reputation for being reliable and true to his word. For these

13. (a) What questions may help parents to measure their zeal for the welfare of their children? (b) What benefits result from such zeal?

14. How can a wife be zealous for fine works in the home?

15. In what ways can a husband show his zeal?

16. (a) How can a Christian show zeal for his secular work? (b) What are the benefits?

reasons, employers have often expressed a preference to hire our spiritual brothers. Even more importantly, these qualities enhance the attractiveness of the good news that they bear to others.

¹⁷ A deeper appreciation for the fine works described in God's Word should cause us to take a good look at ourselves. In many respects our works may show we have an ardor for what is fine. In other areas we may have to admit that we have been something less than zealous. If we want to be worthy followers of our Exemplar, Jesus, more may be needed in time and effort to cultivate greater zeal. Personal progress may require much effort, but the satisfying, useful benefits will be well worth it.

MODERN EXAMPLES OF ZEAL

¹⁸ It is an encouragement to see others who are zealous for fine works. We take heart when we see our brothers manifest their zeal even when subjected to trying circumstances. For example, a brother in a southwestern state of America serves as an appointed elder and has a large family. With congregational responsibilities, family obligations and a demanding secular job, much is required of him. Nevertheless, he has viewed secular and nontheocratic activities as merely the means to an end, namely, to help to make it possible for himself and his family to share as fully as possible in the fine works of the congregation. His secular work was limited to the needs of his family, leaving him time to serve as a temporary pioneer on four occasions during the past year. When asked why he did so, he simply answered: "It is just a matter of what you put first in your life . . . what is really first in your heart." The far-reaching benefits of his zeal may be reflected in the fact that

twenty-nine publishers in that congregation shared with him in the temporary pioneer service during the same year.

¹⁹ A married sister has demonstrated a similar zeal. With three children and an unbelieving husband, she dedicated her life to Jehovah about five years ago. Being a successful businessman with little inclination toward religion, her husband was quite skeptical about the genuine quality of her professed faith. In the past, she had often failed to display a "quiet and mild spirit" in family relationships and association with others. (1 Pet. 3:1-4) The change in her manner and conduct soon convinced him otherwise. He saw less emphasis on material things and more concern about proper Christian conduct. While much of her time was diverted to activities in the practice of her faith, at the same time, he found that she took an increased interest in him. A sincere willingness to submit now to his headship marked a decisive change for the better in their relationship. He saw a renewed enthusiasm to take good care of the home. Concern for the children went beyond their material needs or secular education; periods of Bible instruction became an integral part of the daily routine. Friends of the family could not help but notice the change, not only in the happier spirit of the family, but also in her conduct outside the home, which included her visits to their homes to share the Kingdom message. Her zeal in applying Bible principles made her a better wife and mother, strengthened family ties and highly recommended the virtues of pure worship to others.

²⁰ Advancing years have not diminished the zeal of many of our older brothers. One faithful anointed brother associated with a New York city congregation has been zealously active in Jehovah's service

17. What may a personal examination reveal about ourselves?

18. How did one family head demonstrate his zeal?

19. How did a married sister show her zeal, with what blessing to her family?

20. How did an older brother prove his zeal?

since dedicating his life in 1915. The passing years brought assignments of responsibility that included practically every position of oversight in the congregation. Despite trying situations, he allowed nothing to dampen his zeal for fine works. Today, even at the age of seventy-eight, his zeal is exemplary. When failing health prevents him from attending the meetings or sharing in the field service, he is conspicuous by his absence. His conversation, comments in the meetings, as well as his prayers, are characterized by continuous expressions of appreciation for the truth, his love for the organization and concern for the well-being of others. To him it is unthinkable to pursue willingly a course that lessens his share in congregation activity. The congregation is blessed by the presence of one whose fine works so obviously identify him as one of the Messianic King's anointed "brothers."—Matt. 25:40.

NOW THE TIME TO BE ZEALOUS FOR FINE WORKS

²¹ The increasing urgency of the times underscores the value of fine works. As Jehovah's witnesses, we have become a shining 'light to the world.' (Matt. 5:14-16) The works and qualities that others see in us should move them to honor Jehovah. Jehovah himself should be able to see His own zeal for fine works reflected in us. Professed Christians display

21. What should others be able to see in us?

such works only periodically and for questionable reasons. If we are true Christians, everything we do each day will show that we have zeal for what is good, right and proper. The fruitage of Jehovah's spirit will be clearly identifiable in all that we do and say.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

²² The public declaration of our hope will not be limited to an occasional hour or two and otherwise be forgotten. We will regard any contact with another person as a potential opportunity to share our faith. Personal concern for sheeplike ones will give us joy in being able to use our time and abilities to teach them. Convinced of the excelling value of the good news, we will continue kindly to offer it even to those who initially reject it. Yes, "in all things" we will strive to prove ourselves "an example of fine works."—Titus 2:7.

²³ Our motivation to practice fine works springs from a deep-rooted desire to demonstrate our love for Jehovah and to prove that the concern we have for our fellowman is equal to that which we feel for ourselves. (Matt. 22:37-39) As the "great tribulation" draws near, we try even harder to "work what is good toward all." (Gal. 6:10; Rev. 7:14, 15) We are confident that our persistence in fine works will be richly rewarded. We joyfully anticipate the coming day when all men earth wide will zealously practice fine works in support of Christ's Kingdom rule.

22. If we are truly zealous, what will we find joy in doing?

23. What motivates us to persist in fine works, giving us what hope for the future?

They Live by the Bible

- All that a disabled war veteran in the state of New York knew about Jehovah's Christian witnesses was their view regarding neutrality and saluting the flag. As he put it, these were things "not likely to appeal to most people." But through a conversation with a friend who was studying with Jehovah's witnesses, he was moved to want to learn more about them. He writes: "I expected to find a rabble of wild-eyed fanatics; instead, I have found Jehovah's Witnesses to be gentle, decent people who present, quietly but forcefully, the principles of the faith by which they live: a consistent, coherent faith."

THE inspired Scriptures admonish Christians to be "ready for every good work." (Titus 3:1) What does this require of God's devoted servants? It calls for unhesitating response to the needs of others.

If we are able to do something positive in rendering aid, we would certainly not want to put it off for some later time nor leave it for someone else to do. Rather, we should even be willing to deny ourselves, if that becomes necessary, to help deserving ones.

There are many activities that can be described as "good work," beneficial to our neighbors and pleasing to our God. For instance, there is the work of encouraging fellow believers by word and example. An excellent opportunity to do this is at Christian meetings. The apostle Paul urged: "We ought to see how each of us may best arouse others to love and active goodness, not staying away from our [Christian] meetings, as some do, but rather encouraging one another, all the more because you see the Day drawing near." (Heb. 10:24, 25, *New English Bible*) Yes, it is "good work" to be regularly on hand at meetings of the Christian congregation, to cheer, hearten and upbuild our brothers. Even if we ourselves are not up to par physically, what an inspiration we can be to others who observe our weakness give way to strength by the help of Jehovah's spirit!

At such gatherings there may be present some who are depressed, heartsick, burdened in spirit, sad. Your being on hand places you in a position to assist them.

"Ready for Every Good Work"

Your expressed concern about their welfare and your warmth in conversation can stir them to start thinking about better things. Not to be overlooked is the encouragement they can derive from your an-

swers to questions propounded from the platform.

It is really the spirit of Jehovah that will enable you to incite fellow believers "to love and active goodness." That spirit upon Jesus Christ made it possible for him to "comfort all who mourn, to give them garlands instead of ashes, oil of gladness instead of mourners' tears, a garment of splendour for the heavy heart." (Isa. 61:2, 3, *NE*; Luke 4:17-21) In imitation of Jesus Christ, are you, with the help of God's spirit, giving such comfort even to those not yet related to you in the faith?

Our sharing in the vital work of proclaiming the "good news" of God's kingdom can indeed bring comfort to many. Hence, we want to be sure that we are setting aside time for the essential service of going to the homes of the people in our neighborhood, seeking to interest them in God's message for people of this generation.

How strengthening it is to ourselves as we build up endurance in this work! It being a work Scripturally described as searching for lost "sheep," we cannot expect to find a genuine sheeplike person on every street or in every town or village. (Compare Matthew 10:6, 14.) So we should not become discouraged when we encour-

ter unresponsive people. Rather, we should want to persevere in the face of unresponsiveness as well as ignorant and blasphemous contradictions. Such perseverance produces endurance.—Rom. 5:3-5.

We also want to make good use of opportunities in our daily contacts to acquaint others with the comforting promises contained in the Bible. We may meet people while waiting for transportation, or while traveling, or we may have opportunity to talk briefly with strangers. Does it not display 'readiness' for "good work" when we direct their attention to what the Bible has to say about present world conditions and the fulfillment of prophecy? As such opportunities often present themselves, we could make it a practice to have with us a Bible study aid—a small book, booklet or a magazine—that could be offered to those who express some interest in the Kingdom message.

The Law given to the Israelites through Moses commanded them to be concerned about those who fell into poverty. (Deut. 15:7, 8, 11) Christian worshipers of Jehovah today should strive to be even more prepared in mind and disposition to discern and fill, to the extent possible, the needs of their poorer brothers. Deserving of their assistance and generosity would be those who, despite hardships, demonstrate a zeal for Kingdom work and a deep devotion to Jehovah God. We should want to imitate the generosity of the man Cornelius. Why,

even before his baptism he was recognized as a "God-fearing" man who gave "generously to the people" and "constantly prayed to God." In a vision, an angel told him: "Your prayers and your generosity have risen in God's sight, and because of them he has remembered you."—Acts 10:2-4, *New American Bible*.

In our day, as in the time of the apostles, there are traveling representatives of the worldwide Christian congregation who go from place to place building up the appreciation of the brothers for the grand privilege of serving Jehovah, and sharing with them helpful suggestions and experiences related to such service. These traveling brothers deserve our wholehearted and generous support, just as the apostle Paul in his letter to Titus (3:13, 14) recommended: "Equip Zenas the lawyer and Apollos carefully for their journey, so that they may lack nothing. And have our own people learn to apply themselves to honorable work to meet the urgent needs, that they may not be unproductive."—*New Berkeley Version*.

Of course, we may not always be aware of the physical and spiritual needs of our fellow worshipers, especially of those living in distant lands. Yet even when that is the case we can render "good work" in their behalf. What we cannot do personally in the way of reaching those in need can be done through the legal agency used by Jehovah's Christian witnesses, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Contributions forwarded to that Society are used to advance spiritual interests throughout the earth. Also, because of the generosity and readiness of mind on the part of a great crowd of brothers, funds are available to the Society for undertaking immediate relief measures in behalf of those suffering from some major

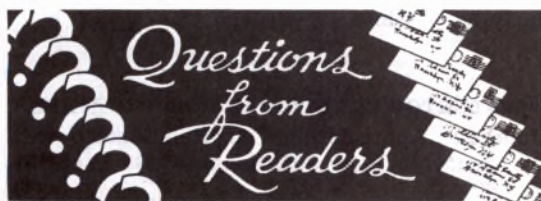
IN COMING ISSUES

- **Millions Have Left the Churches—Should You?**
- **Cultivate Intense Love for One Another.**

catastrophe or due to persecution heaped upon them.

By being "ready for every good work" we prove that we rest our hope on God. We can therefore be confident of his blessing now and in the future. This is what the apostle Paul pointed out when recommending a spirit of generosity. His admonition to Timothy was that he should encourage

certain fellow believers "to work at good, to be rich in fine works, to be liberal, ready to share, safely treasuring up for themselves a fine foundation for the future, in order that they may get a firm hold on the real life." (1 Tim. 6:18, 19) How fine it is to be able to share in "good work" and thereby to imitate God, who gives generously to all, both in material and spiritual things!—Matt. 5:45; Jas. 1:5.



● As a widow with teen-age children, I learned the truth of God's Word about a year ago. Should I insist that my children go to the congregation meetings, even though they may be reluctant to do so?

It is proper that a Christian parent require children to attend Christian meetings. God's Word admonishes: "You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord." "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it."—Col. 3:20; Prov. 22:6.

Progress in this, of course, will depend to a considerable degree on the age and response of the child, and you will have to decide how far it is wise to go in taking measures to enforce what you require.

In your case, the children have not been 'trained up' from birth in the principles of true worship, but there is still time to accomplish good in their behalf as long as they are in the home. "Chastise your son while there exists hope," says the inspired proverb. (Prov. 19:18) Of course, physically forcing a child, particularly those no longer of tender years, to attend is not usually the best way to handle the situation and may be actually counterproductive. But the right combination of loving counsel, patience, understanding and firmness in dealing with the attitude of a particular child

will often produce rewarding results. Do not give up on the child or be easily discouraged or overcome.

The obligation rests upon parents to provide not only materially but also spiritually for their children. Children may not like to go to school, but, knowing what is best for a child and having respect for "Caesar's" law that a child go to school up to a certain age or grade, most parents do not hesitate to require compliance with the law that children go to school. If this is important as far as a secular education is concerned, how much more important is it in connection with an education in Jehovah's life-giving law.

But circumstances vary. If a good measure of permissiveness prevailed in the home in the past, before Bible principles began to be introduced, it likely will take time before the children get acclimated to closer parental control. The Christian parent may find it advisable, first of all, to sit down with the children and kindly explain to them how and why adjustments will be made in the home in the future. This can be done progressively, step by step. Show how the Bible's counsel and requirements are reasonable and bring lasting benefits. Everlasting life is involved. Your acknowledging mistakes in judgment and training of the past will help the children to see that you, too, are changing your life to conform to God's better way. They will be more easily able to see that you are not being arbitrary or dictatorial, merely imposing your own will on them. It will point them to God as Ruler, and will encourage them to cooperate more readily. Keep the goal of regular attendance in mind,

as Bible principles are progressively put into effect in the home. Setting 100-percent attendance as the goal immediately may or may not be realistic. But be patient. Give the counsel of God's Word time to reach the heart. Help the children, as you go along, to see and appreciate this counsel and the better, happier relationship in the family. Be consistent by setting the right example in your own course of life. Example speaks louder than words in many instances.

Some children may be reluctant to change because they were established already in another religion. They may object to accepting different teachings. Do not ridicule them. Rather, just as you would do with others whom you teach Bible truth, teach your children. They need home Bible study just as you did.

Also, having to leave old friends and acquire new friends may be a factor. Try to be a better friend and companion yourself and encourage association with younger ones in the congregation.

As personalities and circumstances differ, the parent should take these things into consideration. Admittedly, situations of this nature

can be complicated at times and delicate to handle, but by your keeping in mind the objective of having the children understand the truth and become true Christians, and patiently and understandingly working toward this end for the children's everlasting good, Jehovah's blessing can be expected upon your efforts. The attending of Christian meetings is an essential part of Christian life. The spirit of Jehovah God is markedly manifest there, and regular attendance at these meetings is a strong influence for maintaining faith. Therefore every reasonable effort should be put forth by the parent, based on the above considerations, to be there with the children as regularly as possible.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

June 22: Appreciating Our Relationship with Jehovah. Page 305. Songs to Be Used: 21, 42.

June 29: A People Zealous for Fine Works. Page 311. Songs to Be Used: 32, 66.