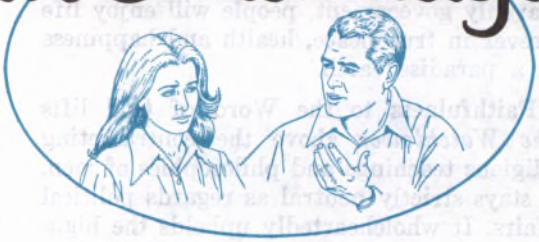
The WATCHTOWER

How the Bible Can Help Your Marriage



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DO NOT LET YOURSELF BE SIDETRACKED IN THE RACE FOR LIFE

AUGUST 15, 1975

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

August 15, 1975
Vol. 96, Number 16

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

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

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

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

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How the Bible Can Help Your Marriage

A YOUNG wife in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, found herself becoming frustrated in her married life. Her having to care for her home and four children without receiving any loving cooperation from her husband seemed to be weighing her down.

While she was in the Women's Air Corps, she had developed a degree of independence. Now as a wife, what she read on 'women's liberation' added to this. Finally she told her husband that she planned "to resign as a wife, mother and housekeeper and turn everything over to him." You can imagine the result. As she put it, "Due to my radical views my husband withdrew more and more and our children became increasingly more difficult."

If you are married, you likely can sympathize with this couple. No matter who was at fault, their situation was not pleasant. How nice it would be if such problems did not exist! But they do. What would you think as to the prospect for this marriage? Could the problem be solved? If so, how? Where could they get real help?

You may not have met up with so serious a problem. But no doubt you have observed that many marriages are fraught with problems. Perhaps there are areas in which you would like to see improvement in your own marriage. Individuals enter marriage full of mutual love and a desire to share happiness, but, in time, many are robbed of their joy by misunderstandings, conflicts and pressures. If the couple do not separate or get a divorce, their marriage may often be characterized by endurance, rather than enjoyment.

Just consider the extent of the problem. Under the title "Family Life in Danger," the London *Daily Mail* said: "The lives of at least 250,000 people—parents and their children—are being adversely affected by divorce each year." Early this year a headline in the United States read: "More 'I Dos' Ending in 'I'm Throughs,'" a fact borne out by the rising divorce rate. That so many married couples experience serious problems has led numerous persons to believe that marriage should not even be viewed as a permanent arrangement. Said the Frankfurter *Allgemeine Zeitung:* "There is a sizable majority in the [German] Federal Republic . . . who think that making marriage a temporary contract is a good idea."

FOR SUCCESS: HELP FROM WHERE?

Yes, marriage problems are prevalent. Yet there is a source of real help. In the event there is room for improvement in your own marriage, you too can avail yourself of that help. Note what occurred with the family in Florida.

The husband's boss at his secular work,

one of Jehovah's witnesses, invited them to attend a meeting at the Kingdom Hall. Then a weekly *Bible study* was arranged in their home. The wife says: "As we studied what the Bible says about headship, everything fell into place. We began to apply what we learned, and for the first time in our married life we began to be a family. My husband took his responsibility as a loving family head seriously. I, in turn, did not resent my part, and the children began to respond to this loving arrangement. The change in our life has been tremendous! I have watched my entire family 'blossom.' "

Does that sound too good to be true? If you have similar difficulties you may feel, 'It wouldn't work for us.' But is that really so? Why not go to the Bible for help? If you were having marriage problems, your friends might urge you to seek advice from a psychologist or a marriage counselor. Why? Is it not because they might feel that such a person has knowledge and experience that could help you?

Yet, when it comes to knowing humans, no one surpasses Jehovah, the Author of the Bible. He created man and woman in the first place, and so he has complete knowledge of our physical and emotional makeup. (Ps. 139:13-16; Job 10:9-13) He is aware of our deepest emotional needs. He can even read hearts. As First Samuel 16:7 says: "Mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is."

Then, there is the matter of experience. At best any marriage counselor can offer advice based on what he or she has read or observed in some twenty or thirty years of experience. Jehovah, however, is the Originator of marriage. He has observed every marriage that has ever existed. He has seen millions of examples of what results if a husband or a wife acts in this way or that, what can be the outcome if he or she displays these certain qualities or does not. No matter what a couple's problems, has not Jehovah observed far more similar cases than has any human counselor? He is the One to whom to turn.

How comforting it is to know that we can benefit from Jehovah's knowledge and experience, for in the Bible he provides us with perfect counsel, counsel that can lead to happiness and success in marriage! As Psalm 19:7, 8 assures us: "The reminder of Jehovah is trustworthy, making the inexperienced one wise. The orders from Jehovah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice." There are many different problems that have caused marriage difficulties. But let us consider just two examples of how the Bible can help to solve these problems.

Roles of Husband and Wife

A common problem in many marriages involves a failure of one mate, or of both mates, to accept and live up to his or her responsibilities. When one mate feels that the other one is thus negligent, friction develops. What can be done about that?

Recall the couple in Florida. They had a problem of this sort. Their course highlights an important aspect of the Bible's advice.

Jehovah, in establishing the marriage arrangement, outlined dignified roles for both husband and wife. In speaking of these as "roles," we do not mean "sexist roles" in which one sex is exalted and the other is debased in position or duties. These Bible-designated roles honor both parties and make for success and happiness in marriage. The husband is assigned the responsibility of being the loving head of the family, and the wife is to be a complement, a helpmate. Note this balanced advice: "Wives, be subject—be submissive and adapt yourselves—to your own husbands

as a service to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the church . . . Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her . . . He who loves his own wife loves himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and carefully protects and cherishes it."—Eph. 5:22-29, *The Amplified New Testament.*

This headship betokens considerate leadership, not harsh dominance. Do you not know of marriages where the husband either is harsh and dominating or is unwilling to accept his responsibility to lead and protect? Would not those marriages be helped if the husband applied God's counsel, if he strove to provide loving, considerate headship for his wife? If you are a husband, do you think that this counsel may help you, too, in fulfilling your role?

If you are a wife, would you not respond favorably if your husband was a loving head and applied this advice: "You husbands should try to understand the wives you live with, honoring them as physically weaker yet equally heirs with you of the grace of life"? (1 Pet. 3:7, *New Testament in Modern English*) This is how the wife in Florida responded when her husband took his responsibility as a loving family head seriously. She says: "I, in turn, did not resent my part." Note: "my part." What she meant was her responsibility to follow the Bible's counsel to 'be submissive and adapt yourself to your husband,' looking to him for leadership and guidance. That may not be easy, especially if problems have already developed. But if you as a wife have such a problem and truly desire improvement in your marriage, applying that counsel may be well worth the effort. Do not think that being a true helpmate is demeaning. It was Jehovah himself who said that the wife is to be her husband's "helper," but He also described Himself as a "helper," only not as a "counterpart" of us humans. Surely that does not downgrade God, does it? Neither does being a helper downgrade you.—Gen. 2:18; Hos. 13:9; Heb. 13:6.

"I am willing to try, but my mate will not," some may feel. True, the greatest success comes when both mates follow God's counsel. Yet improvement is possible even if only one mate holds to the Bible.

For instance, a woman in Georgia admitted: "I wasn't happy with my marriage." Maybe both she and her husband were at fault, but she says that, for her part, she neglected her home duties. "My house was always dirty, and my children weren't as clean as they should be." In August 1974 one of Jehovah's witnesses met her. Soon, in her home, they began a study of the Bible counsel on "Building a Happy Family Life."* The results were soon apparent, even though her husband did not share in the study. After only six months, she wrote: "As I studied the Bible, things started happening. I was keeping house better, my children were cleaner. Little by little my marriage started to go right. Jehovah has blessed me since I've been studying the Bible." As she came to fulfill her Bible-assigned role as a wife, her marriage improved.

Communication in Marriage

Dr. Theodore I. Rubin, who writes on family problems, recently commented: "Using my mail as a criterion, the most common problem seems to be the poor communication within the family. . . . This is especially true of husbands and wives." In fact, a Canadian study revealed that poor communication between mates ranked first among marital problems, being listed in 92 percent of the cases.

Likely you can see that even the small amount of Bible advice that we have here

* Chapter 20 in the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life.*

considered would, if followed, greatly relieve the problem of lack of communication between husband and wife. If a husband 'loved his own wife as the Christ loved the church, protecting and cherishing her,' would he not talk with her, confiding in her and listening to her? Sociologist Jack Balswick observed: 'Women expect their spouses to have the ability to share emotions, to share feelings, to say "I love you." Yet affection and love are the most difficult feelings for most men to express.' But surely a husband is aided to do just that when he knows that Jehovah God urges him to do so and when he sees that his wife is making the effort to be 'submissive and adapting herself' to him. No doubt about it!

Regarding a wife's communicating with her husband, a factor that may bring tension and cause him to be unresponsive is nagging on her part. The Bible does not ignore this factor. It offers frank counsel, such as: "Better to live out in the desert than with a nagging, complaining wife." (Prov. 21:19, *Today's English Version*) Further, it says, wisely: "As apples of gold in silver carvings is a word spoken at the right time for it." (Prov. 25:11) It may not be "the right time for it" just as soon as he gets home from work, or when he is under some pressure or is absorbed in another matter. A wife applying the Bible's advice will consider such things and will 'adapt herself to her own husband.' This will make conversation more welcome.

Of course, sometimes today a lack of communication results when one of the mates has been offended or hurt by the other. In addition to stifling communication, resulting resentment may affect the couple's sexual relations, or their mutual efforts in handling the budget or in dealing with each other's relatives.

Does such a situation sound familiar? You probably can think of couples who have experienced this very thing. It may have happened even to you. Does the Bible provide counsel that could be applied to solve this difficulty? It certainly does. On one occasion Jesus spoke of a person who was taking some step to please God but realized that his brother had something against him. Jesus said: "First make your peace with your brother, and then, when you have come back, offer up your gift [to God]. Be about settling matters quickly with the one complaining against you." (Matt. 5:23-25) How beneficial it is when married persons too 'settle matters quickly' if one has a complaint against the other! So, husbands and wives who accept God's advice do well to try to communicate kindly with each other about any hurt feelings or offense. This, in turn, will make for better communication on other matters. It will increase happiness.

YOUR MARRIAGE

We have considered here just two of the main problems in marriage, those involving headship and communication. There are other factors that may rob some marriages of joy: Jealousy, sexual dissatisfaction, in-law trouble, conflicts about children, alcoholism, violent temper and others. Maybe you feel that one of these is harming your marriage. The wisest counsel on any of such problems is found in God's Word. He knows what is best.

We urge you to turn to the Bible. Learn from it what Jehovah advises. Jehovah's witnesses in your area will be glad to help you. Take advantage of opportunities you have to study the Bible with them, for they are pleased to aid persons to learn what the Bible's counsel is. By following in your marriage the course indicated in Proverbs 3:5, 6, you may enjoy a rich blessing: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart . . . In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight."

Insight on the News

Pentateuch in Russian

● The Communist revolution in Russia took place in 1917. Since then no Bibles have been published there. Now, Viktor N. Titov, deputy chairman of the Soviet Union's Council for Religious Affairs, has announced that the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible, will be reproduced in Russian. Some religious leaders view this as a sign of "detente" extending to the religious sphere. It remains to be seen in what quantity these copies become available and how the government regulates their distribution. At any rate, a little is better than nothing.

High Cost of Sainthood

● Next month, on September 14, at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, Elizabeth Seton will formally be declared the first U.S.-born "saint." The road to sainthood has been long and costly.

In 1882, Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore began pushing Mrs. Seton's candidacy. Since then, thousands of workers have been involved, including some 12,000 nuns. As "The Wall Street Journal" reports, these have raised money and labored in a project that has "been more arduous than any political campaign and certainly just as expensive as most." Priest Francis X. Murphy, an authority on Catholic sainthood, "believes that millions of dollars were spent on Mother Seton's cause." Why all the expense?

Those backing the candidacy had to pay for Italian translations of all Mrs. Seton's personal documents so that Vatican theologians could study these and see if the candidate had any 'serious personal flaws.' Claims of miracles attributed to her were reviewed by Church investigators and then by doctors. All of these had to be paid. The "beatification" ceremony (an intermediate step in making a Catholic saint) brought a $10,000-rental fee for the use of St. Peter's Basilica. The candidate's body was exhumed and bones were removed (one went to the pope; fragments of others were boxed and sent to those who labored most on behalf of the candidate's sainthood). This, too, cost money. The actual canonization ceremony in Rome will involve "enormously expensive pageantry." The bill goes to the new saint's supporters. They have $100,000 set aside for that.

But more than money is involved in becoming a "saint." Despite all efforts, a candidacy can fail if it "doesn't fit into the world political situation," according to priest Francis Litz, who is working on sainthood for two other American candidates. The nearness of Mrs. Seton's canonization to the U.S. bicentennial in 1976 seems more than coincidental to many observers. Joel Wells, editor of a Catholic quarterly, says that the Vatican's choice of Mother Seton is designed to "lift sagging morale in the U.S. church," but he doubts that it will.

Talk Peace —Arm for War

● Leaders of the world's "superpowers" periodically issue calls for reduction of arms and similar steps to assure peace. "Ceilings" limiting the number of nuclear missiles have been agreed on by the U.S. and the Soviet Union. More recently, pacts to outlaw techniques for changing the weather for military purposes and also to ban new systems of mass destruction have been urged. Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev recently described these latter as "more terrifying" than existing nuclear weapons. But along with all the talk, what actually goes on?

Last year alone the world spent more than $210 billion on arms—most of this by the U.S. and the Soviet Union to build arms stockpiles that the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute terms "wildly in excess of any conceivable need, military or political, of either power." The U.S. now has over 8,000 strategic weapons deployed and the Soviet Union has 2,800 missiles (individually more destructive than those of the U.S.). The weakest of these is at least three times as powerful as the bomb that devastated Hiroshima, Japan; some are 16,000 times as powerful! Yet, research, production and deployment of still more weapons goes right on. Speaking of the "losing race between human needs and military madness," an editorial in the New York "Post" asks: "How much hunger in the world could be overcome if sanity prevailed?"

ARGENTINA RECEIVES The "Good News of Peace"

"RELIGIOUS questions are irrelevant now. We need to give more attention to real problems like social welfare." Such a response is common when the subject of religion comes up with many Argentineans. A lawyer voiced the more extreme view of some: "I am a Communist. When we get into power we are going to do away with religion!"

These views reflect the explosive issues that are deeply affecting people's attitudes toward what really matters in life. The tendency of many is toward religious apathy or atheism. On the other hand, interest grows in movements that promise to better material and social conditions. Even some Catholic priests have swung far from religious duties into social activism.

However, there is also a calming influence at work. Many former Communists, urban guerrillas, hippies and others have made marvelous changes in their troubled lives after hearing the "good news" about God's solution to human problems. Upon learning how his Kingdom government will permanently resolve social injustices, many sincere persons have rechanneled their energies from giving support to violence and destruction into supporting constructive, lifesaving activity on behalf of the "good news of peace."

A young woman from the northwest province of Jujuy felt that she could not remain indifferent to poverty, misery and inequality, so she joined a political group. Protest marches and demonstrations became a regular part of her life. An armed extremist group trained her in various forms of violence.

But then something changed all of this —a free Bible study offered by Jehovah's witnesses. "I soon understood what Jesus meant when he said, 'My kingdom is no part of this world,'" she relates, "so I severed my political connections. Five months later I was engaged in *peaceable* activity, telling others about how God's kingdom can and will bring justice to the earth."—John 18:36.

Marta Tortoni of Bahía Blanca wanted to promote justice through a career in law. But when she learned about a more practical way to serve the ends of justice, she gave up her law studies. When she was criticized by her concerned father for doing so, her loving response was: "Papa, you wanted me to become a good lawyer to defend justice. As one of Jehovah's witnesses, I have come to know true justice and I am helping as many persons as I can to learn about it." About 30,000 Argentineans have taken up this same peaceful activity.

LIVES ARE CHANGED

Rather than try to improve the world, some persons may become so discouraged that they consider giving up on life altogether. Señora Etelvina Nanni was on the verge of committing suicide when a Witness called with the good news concerning

God's kingdom. As she learned about the righteous conditions soon to bless mankind, her despondency gave way to joy. Now she contemplates, instead of death, the richness of the life ahead, and is busy telling others about her newfound hope.

Bible principles changed the life of a former professional football (soccer) player from Germany. After studying the Bible for just a short time, Cristian Rudsky decided to take a trip back to Germany. Why such a costly trip? Because sometime previously he had left without fulfilling his paid contract to a football club there. Imagine their amazement when Rudsky returned money to cover the year he had failed to play! Back in Argentina, Cristian is now teaching others the principles of truth and honesty that changed his life.

Many Jewish persons in Argentina have also made great changes in order to embrace the Christian good news. In fact, the Parque Centenario Congregation in Buenos Aires enjoys the fellowship of nineteen persons of Jewish descent. When her father died, Nora Cohen's Jewish faith could not give her a satisfying answer as to why man dies, so she sought the answer from spiritism and astrology. Finally, Jehovah's witnesses called with the Bible's reasonable answer. Now, despite ostracism by her family, Nora is delighted publicly to declare her hope in God's kingdom.

REACHING THE PEOPLE

Jehovah's witnesses are determined to reach all the people of Argentina with the good news. They spend much of their own time, energy and financial resources to do so. Several Christian women, for example, from the Comodoro Rivadavia Congregation saved their money so that they could carry the good news to four isolated towns best reached by small aircraft. Imagine their delight when one man they had contacted there traveled 1,860 miles (3,000 kilometers) to attend a Christian assembly!

Full-time preachers also went to Río Grande and Ushuaia, at the far tip of Argentina—two of the southernmost cities in the world. Within just a few months some of the local people were telling the good news right alongside their visitors!

APPRECIATING ASSOCIATION

In Argentina, assembling for Christian meetings is not always just a matter of a short ride in the family auto or on public transportation. Walking for miles through deep mud is a regular part of getting to meetings in the rain-forest areas of the extreme northeast. One family that regularly attends meetings lives on a cattle and sheep ranch. They must walk well over two miles and then ride a bus for the remaining thirty-seven miles. To go home, they have to wait until 3:30 a.m. for the returning bus! And in the south, many appreciative persons with limited means still travel hundreds of miles down from Andes Mountain villages to the Río Negro valley for large Christian assemblies. Almost 50,000 here in Argentina were present at twelve assemblies held in late 1974!

This appreciation is displayed, too, when traveling circuit overseers visit with special filmed slide presentations. Attendance often far exceeds the number of local Witnesses. One congregation of 167 had 432 present. Another had 98, with only 11 local Witnesses, and in another place just 16 welcomed 111 interested persons to this instructive program! The fact that many thousands more are reaching out for this good news was also evident when 66,641 attended the Lord's Evening Meal held on March 27, 1975.

Thus the peaceful work of Jehovah's witnesses is thriving in Argentina, bringing real confidence and hope to people disillusioned by the failures of this present world. For such persons, it is truly "good news of peace" that they bring.—Eph. 6:15.

A CAPITAL FOR THE UNIVERSE

YOU have no doubt looked at the starry heavens and have observed their orderly and punctual movements. Then you have turned your eyes downward to the earth, with its amazing ecology. In doing so, have you not wondered if the Creator of these marvels has a center of government from which all these things are directed?

The Bible answers that he does. In fact, the Bible also tells us that, besides material creation, there are invisible "heavens," inhabited by intelligent persons, and these are higher and more complex than the visible heavens and earth. These heavenly ones, too, are creations of God. There are myriads of angels that carry out God's will in the universe. (Rev. 5:11; Ps. 91:11; 103:20) Jehovah God is the great Father of them all, and they constitute a family, with God as their Life-Giver. He is the Originator of the family arrangement, being spoken of as "the Father, to whom every family in heaven and on earth owes its name."—Eph. 3:14, 15.

WHY A NEW "CAPITAL" PURPOSED BY GOD

Jehovah God has always been Head and Sovereign over his universe. But his sovereignty was challenged by a spirit creature who rebelled. This rebellious spirit was able to get supporters for his side of the issue by inducing Adam and Eve, the first human pair and the parents of all mankind, to step out independently against God. This brought about a disruption of the human family soon after its start and an eventual deterioration of the human family as a whole.—Gen. 3:1-6; John 8:44; Rev. 12:9.

For this reason, God determined upon an administration of matters according to which he would "gather all things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth." This administration of God would involve his setting up a kingdom in heaven that will rule over all mankind. (Eph. 1:9, 10) Since the rulers in this kingdom will be exalted to God's own right hand, they will form a capital organization for all of God's universe. (Eph. 1:20; Rev. 3:21) What will this capital organization be called?

THE "NEW JERUSALEM"

Logically, that capital organization is to be in heaven, in the invisible realm. It will have authority over all the created universe. But it will be under the sovereignty of the Administrator, the Most High God himself. Even though it is over all other created things, including the angels in heaven, yet it must be subject to God. For God is greater than all his universe, and his sovereignty is over all. (Ps. 29:10; 145:13) This was illustrated in the prophecy of Daniel, where a "stone" was described as being cut out of a great "mountain," and the explanation was given that God would establish a kingdom that would break in pieces all earthly kingdoms. (Dan. 2:34, 44, 45) Jesus Christ's kingdom, the "stone," is here revealed as owing its existence to Jehovah's own sovereign kingdom.

Zechariah's prophecy gives a similar picture, showing a mountain as splitting in two, the original mountain being symbolic of Jehovah's great sovereign kingdom over all, and the second mountain symbolizing the kingdom under Christ ruling over all the earth. In this way "Jehovah must become king over all the earth."—Zech. 14: 4, 9.

The capital organization through which universal rulership will be exercised is called in the Bible the "New Jerusalem." (Rev. 21:2, 9, 10; 3:12) This is in harmony with the fact that God chose Jerusalem of old as capital, representing his sovereignty in ancient Israel. There kings of the line of David sat on "Jehovah's throne" and there God's priesthood functioned. (1 Chron. 29:23) The heavenly "New Jerusalem," therefore, pictorially stands for God's "royal priesthood," the members of which are selected from among mankind to be heavenly kings. It is the Christian congregation of 144,000 sealed persons, after the members thereof have been resurrected into the heavens.—1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 14:1, 3, 4.

HOW IT COMES TO HAVE UNIVERSAL AUTHORITY

What is there to show that the authority of the "New Jerusalem" will actually be so great as to make it *the capital of the universe?* Well, these 144,000 associates of Christ, comprising the "New Jerusalem," are spirit-begotten sons of God who are not only 'heirs of God,' but also "joint heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:16-18) Christ being King, they as heirs with him will share in his ruling as King. Christ makes them, as those bought with his blood, "a kingdom and priests to our God, and they are to rule as kings *over the earth.*" (Rev. 5:9, 10) Furthermore, the "New Jerusalem" is the "bride" or "wife" of Jesus Christ and shares with him in *the kingship that he exercises.* (Rev. 21:2, 9-11; 22:17) For a thousand years they will rule as priests and kings over all mankind, the living and the dead.—Rev. 20:4, 6.

However, the apostle Peter said of the scope of Christ's authority: "He is at God's right hand, for he went his way to heaven; and *angels and authorities and powers were made subject to him.*" (1 Pet. 3:22) The apostle Paul also writes of the exalted position that God has given to Jesus Christ: "He emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake. For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him *the name that is above every other name,* so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of *those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground,* and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father [whose kingdom remains supreme]."—Phil. 2:7-11.

The apostle John was given a vision of the "New Jerusalem" and what its rule will mean for the earth. John wrote: "I saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. With that I heard a loud voice from the throne say: 'Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.' "—Rev. 21:2-4.

Looking further at the vision, we get a view of the city's glory, its cleanness and

beauty. John's angelic "guide" said: "Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." "So," says John, "he carried me away in the power of the spirit to a great and lofty mountain, and he showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God and having the glory of God. Its radiance was like a most precious stone, as a jasper stone shining crystal-clear."

John continues: "And I did not see a temple in it, for Jehovah God the Almighty is its temple, also the Lamb is. And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God lighted it up, and its lamp was the Lamb. And the nations will walk by means of its light . . . But anything not sacred and anyone that carries on a disgusting thing and a lie will in no way enter into it; only those written in the Lamb's scroll of life will."—Rev. 21:9-14, 22-27.

With Jehovah God and Jesus Christ personally present, the 144,000 who make up that "city" will not need a temple through which to approach God. These heavenly heirs with Christ will have direct access to the face of Jehovah himself. (1 John 3:2; Rev. 22:3, 4) We can be sure that this symbolic "city," by the light of which the nations will walk, will render justice to all under its rule.—Rev. 21:24.

A thousand years of the rule of this "city" over mankind will accomplish God's purpose to bring all things together on earth under Christ. (Rev. 20:4, 6) This will include "those under the ground," that is, those who are dead, who will be resurrected to learn the way of righteousness. (Phil. 2:10) Christ will bring all things into harmony with God.

The apostle Paul, indicating what this thousand-year rule accomplishes, says: "Next, the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has brought to nothing all government and all authority and power. For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing. For God 'subjected all things under his feet.' But when he says that 'all things have been subjected,' it is evident that it is with the exception of the one who subjected all things to him. But when all things will have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone."—1 Cor. 15:24-28.

God's special administering of affairs having accomplished its purpose, 'all things having been gathered together again,' the royal Son of God will then turn his authority over to the Almighty God. (Eph. 1:10) Thus the sovereignty will be Jehovah's alone, just as it was at the beginning, when Adam and Eve were placed on earth and told to "be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it," and to have in subjection all the animal creation. (Gen. 1:28) God will be "all things to everyone."

Satan the Devil, who, during the thousand years was in the abyss of inactivity, will then be released for "a little while," to provide a final test. He will attempt to turn humankind against God's sovereignty. (Rev. 20:1-3, 7, 8) Those who faithfully support God's sovereignty during the thousand years and through the time for the loosing of Satan will receive everlasting life, having their names written indelibly in the "book of life." Those taking a rebellious course will be destroyed. (Rev. 20:9-15) Having been vindicated, God's direct sovereignty will then, ever afterward, hold its proper relationship toward mankind and all the universe, to the eternal blessing of his entire family in heaven and earth.

DO NOT LET YOURSELF Be SIDETRACKED in the RACE FOR LIFE

"Man must not live by bread alone. . . . It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service."—Luke 4:4, 8.

CHRISTIANS are in a very unusual race. Winning does not depend so much on swiftness as it does on endurance and adhering to the rules of the race. And while it may appear strange, the race is won, not just by a single winner, but by all who stay in the race to the finish. It is the race along the racetrack, really the cramped road entered through a narrow gate, to everlasting life in God's new system of things. (Matt. 7:14) The grand prize of eternal life goes to all who finish successfully, and it is worth all the persistent training and the sacrifices needed in order to win.

[2] But this race is not easy. It is not completed in one day. And there is an ever-present danger of being sidetracked, of being turned aside from the more difficult road to life, into the broad and spacious road that Jesus described as leading to destruction. (Matt. 7:13) In this strenuous race for life, if the weaknesses of the fallen flesh from within and the pressures and attractions from the world without are not looked upon continually as hurdles to get over, they will become diverting barriers that turn one aside from the race.

1. In what vital race are Christians participating, and what is the prize for those who finish successfully?
2. Why is this race not easy, and how should the hurdles along the way be viewed?

Among these major things that can sidetrack a Christian, we will deal with materialism first.

THE PROPER VIEW OF MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

[3] Man, made by God to live on the earth and to enjoy its bounties, naturally desires the good things of life provided by his Creator. That in itself is not wrong, but how can one enjoy any material possessions without life and a measure of health? (Matt. 16:26) God is the Life-Giver, and he has the right to set forth reasonable requirements that must be met in order to retain this gift of life. He is very frank in telling man that ingrates and mere pleasure-seekers will not have a permanent inheritance on earth. They will be cut off. Moreover, one's seeking only material advantages and comforts now, without developing spiritual and moral values that are rooted deeply in the true worship of God, results in a very empty and frustrating life.

[4] Jesus put things in proper focus when he warned: "Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of covetousness, because even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." He then illustrated the point with the parable of the rich man

3. Why is the proper view of material possessions important?
4. How did Jesus illustrate the deceptive value of material riches?

who tore down his storehouses in order to build bigger ones for his ever-increasing produce. Thinking the future to be very secure for him now, he said to himself: "Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, enjoy yourself." However, Jesus went on to say of this man who had put his trust in material possessions: "But God said to him, 'Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your soul from you. Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?' " Driving the point home in conclusion, Jesus said: "So it goes with the man that lays up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God."—Luke 12: 15-21.

5 So what is the danger here? It is the danger of getting so involved in gaining things to satisfy one's fleshly desires. In this way one forgets that God created the earth and man upon it, and that hence a person cannot really be happy and fulfill the purpose for living by putting trust in what he can rake up around him as material security or creature comforts. Invariably such a person becomes self-centered. The welfare of his neighbor is not important. While he is seeking to protect his possessions from the greed of others, violence and killing often result. Self-confidence leads to self-reliance. God does not really count, is even dismissed as the real Provider. And the promise of everlasting life becomes just an unrealistic dream. Why pursue some illusionary thing, such a one often reasons, when it is possible to have material comforts *now?* Thus a materialistic philosophy can easily sidetrack one from the race to everlasting life or prevent one from ever starting it.

6 In contrast, the successful runner does not indulge himself but follows a strict routine of exercise and diet that keeps him in shape. In the race, he is stripped down to bare essentials, and he is very careful not to stumble or disqualify himself. (1 Cor. 9:24-27; 2 Tim. 2:5) Drawing on the experiences of ancient runners, Paul counseled Christians: "Let us also put off every weight and the sin [the lack of faith] that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus." Yes, Jesus had run this course himself and exemplified how it could be done successfully. While the victorious conclusion of the race for him led to death on a torture stake and the shame associated with it, afterward God gave him the prize of glorious immortal life in the heavens at His right hand. In view of such a fine outcome, Paul admonished: "Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests, that you may not get tired and give out in your souls."—Heb. 12:1-3; 3:12, 13.

7 In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus stated the principle: "No one can slave for two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot slave for God and for Riches." Then after telling of Jehovah's caring for the needs of the animal and plant creations, and how humans are "worth more than they are," he stated: "So never be anxious and say, 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?' For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all

5. What attitudes can easily develop when one is selfishly pursuing material possessions and comforts?
6. (a) How can we as Christians imitate the runner in a race in preparing for and running the race for life? (b) How did Jesus set the perfect example for us to imitate?
7. (a) What principle did Jesus set out that shows that it is impossible for one to divide one's loyalties? (b) What is Jehovah's promise as to necessities, allowing us to put what first?

these other things will be added to you." —Matt. 6:24-33.

[8] The apostle Paul warned: "For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains." Rather than letting themselves be sidetracked into this course that plunges "men into destruction and ruin," Paul encouraged Christians "to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God, who furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment; 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. 6:9, 10, 17-19.

[9] We, of course, have need of our daily requirements, and we should work honestly and honorably for these as we run the race set before us. Indeed, the man not providing the necessities of life for his family would be disqualified from the race, he having thus "disowned the faith and [being] worse than a person without faith." (1 Tim. 5:8) But we cannot run the race successfully by letting any glamour associated with the work we do or the wages earned therefrom become the big things in life. Our having a place to live is a necessity, but our buying a house beyond our means and letting the furnishing and upkeep of this occupy all our time could easily cause us to drop out of the race for life. The same could be said regarding a car or a boat, an inordinate desire for new and stylish clothing, taking expensive trips for pleasure or excessively occupying ourselves with hobbies. Remember, the Devil has many years of experience in knowing how to use material possessions to capture the heart and lead the unwary astray from the race for life.

[10] In looking to the race ahead, learn to ask respecting material things: Is this something that is necessary in order for me to keep living and serving Jehovah? Will this help me to be a better servant of Jehovah, or will it slow me down? What obligations or weights will this impose on me? Do I really need this in order to provide for my household? Will I have to go into debt to get it? Will it cut down on the time I have for Bible study, Christian meetings and the preaching of the Kingdom message? Is this in any way going to sidetrack me from my purpose in life?

[11] Parents, train your children to keep in focus the Kingdom hope, in order to avoid materialistic tendencies. Youths today are encouraged to carve out careers for themselves in this materialistic world. But this would be like the young man out looking for a job after years of schooling, and who applied for a job with what appeared to be a growing and progressive company, while he ignored the sign on the door: "GOING OUT OF BUSINESS. BUILDING CONDEMNED FOR NEW GOVERNMENT PROJECT." This old system, too, will soon be out of business, even though it is humming with materialistic pursuits. To have a real future, we should plan every move in relation to Jehovah's new government for this earth by his King Jesus Christ.

[12] Resources and abilities that we might possess should be used to advance Kingdom interests, rather than letting them serve as hindrances in the race for life. For instance, if you have an extra house, could you sell it and use the money to enter the pioneer service instead of working hard to maintain both houses? If you

8. What two contrasting treasures did Paul write about, and what results in pursuing either of these?
9. (a) As to obtaining necessities, what responsibility rests upon a Christian, and especially the head of the house? (b) How can the Devil cause one to become sidetracked by material possessions?
10. What questions might one ask oneself in determining the advisability of obtaining certain material possessions?
11. Why is it futile to make the big thing in life a career in this system of things?
12. In our putting the Kingdom and its interests first, what might the making of personal adjustments permit us to do?

have retired or will soon retire from secular work, does your heart move you to use the increased freedom for a fuller share in the Kingdom preaching? Even though your resources may be limited, how can they be used best in serving Jehovah?

[13] The objective should be to make material things serve us as needed, and not for us to become enslaved to them. If we truly appreciate spiritual values and put our relationship with Jehovah above all else, he will help us to keep running the race with endurance and to gain the prize. The world with its desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life "is passing away . . . but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:15-17.

KEEPING FREE FROM NATIONALISM

[14] Another barrier erected to sidetrack Christians from the race for life involves nationalism. This hurdle is being raised higher and higher in all countries as we get deeper into the time of the end. Often on one's confronting this hurdle, it is made to seem that the wise and practical course for one is just to give up the race and to turn aside. To do so would seem to enable one to avoid the public criticism and violent acts that are used many times by officials and mobs who seek to force compliance with unscriptural laws or attitudes. On the other hand, nationalistic propaganda is designed to stir national or racial pride. It is made to appear as an attractive cause in which to get involved. In fact, in many countries nationalism has become a religion. As a result, each national group thinks its country and way of life are the best and it becomes intolerant of others.

[15] Author Ivo Duchacek observed in his book *Conflict and Cooperation Among Nations:* "Nationalism divides humanity into mutually intolerant units. As a result, people think as Americans, Russians, Chinese, Egyptians or Peruvians first, and human beings second—if at all." Former U.N. Secretary-General U Thant observed: "So many of the problems that we face today are due to, or the result of, false attitudes —some of them have been adopted almost unconsciously. Among these is the concept of narrow nationalism—'my country, right or wrong.' "

[16] Nationalism is not new. It got its start in Babylon with Nimrod, the first one who set himself up as king in opposition to Jehovah. Centuries later the Hebrews in captivity in this infamous city felt keenly the cruel and unreasonable demands of nationalism. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were among the subjects Nebuchadnezzar gathered on the plain of Dura and who were instructed to bow down in worship before the national state image. These Hebrew worshipers of the true God Jehovah, however, refused to bow down, even on the threat of being thrown into the fiery furnace alive. They had the courage to tell the raging king: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are under no necessity in this regard to say back a word to you. If it is to be, our God whom we are serving is able to rescue us. Out of the burning fiery furnace and out of your hand, O king, he will rescue us. But if not, let it become known to you, O king, that your gods are not the ones we are serving, and the image of gold that you have set up *we will not* worship."—Dan. 3:16-18.

[17] Do we today feel the same way as did these faithful servants of God in the past? When national law or community

13. If we truly love life, how will we view material possessions?
14. What hurdles involving nationalism face Christians in running the race for life?
15. What attitude does nationalism promote?
16. How did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego face up to the issue of nationalism in Babylon?
17-19. (a) What similar questions on Christian neutrality face us today? (b) How did Jesus set the example when being examined by Pilate? (c) To what did involvement in nationalism lead the Jews who rejected Jesus?

pressure seems to make it imperative that we bow down before national emblems or salute them in an act of worship, vote for political leaders or support nationalistic schemes, will we compromise and get disqualified and sidetracked from the race for life? Or, rather, will we do as Jesus and the early Christians did?

[18] Jesus set the perfect example when before the Roman governor Pilate for trial. The Jews lyingly claimed that Jesus had made himself an earthly king. If true, this would be treasonous. But to Pilate's query, Jesus said: "My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source." Pilate was ready to release Jesus on the basis of this truthful reply, but his Jewish accusers answered: "If you release this man, you are not a friend of Caesar. Every man making himself a king speaks against Caesar." Pilate remonstrated with them: "Shall I impale your king?" The chief priests answered: "We have no king but Caesar."—John 18:33-38; 19:12-16.

[19] History records the terrible consequences of their choosing "Caesar" rather than Jesus as the Messiah, when Jerusalem was destroyed thirty-seven years later with a great loss of life, the remainder of her inhabitants going into slavery among the nations. Who, in this instance, maintained neutrality with respect to the affairs of this world while maintaining strict loyalty to God's kingdom? Jesus Christ!

[20] What did the early Christians do? Daniel P. Mannix, in his book *Those About to Die,* stated: "Christians refused to . . . sacrifice to the emperor's genius—roughly equivalent today to refusing to salute the flag or repeat the oath of allegiance. . . . Very few of the Christians recanted, although an altar with a fire burning on it was generally kept in the arena for their convenience. All a prisoner had to do was scatter a pinch of incense on the flame and he was given a Certificate of Sacrifice and turned free. It was also carefully explained to him that he was not worshiping the emperor; merely acknowledging the divine character of the emperor as head of the Roman state. Still, almost no Christians availed themselves of the chance to escape."

[21] From the first century down until today nationalism has caused bitter persecution of Christians. But those who loved God and kept their eyes on the prize at the end of the race did not compromise. It is not strange to them that they have these obstacles to contend with, since it was thus foretold. Jesus said to his disciples: "Be on your guard against men; for they will deliver you up to local courts, and they will scourge you in their synagogues. Why, you will be haled before governors and kings for my sake, for a witness to them and the nations." While God would allow this as a test for his people and for them to give a witness, Jesus added: "And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." —Matt. 10:16-18, 28.

[22] The Bible particularly warns that, during the "time of the end," the Devil's political organization would apply an economic lockout against God-fearing people in that those not bowing to pressure to worship this beastly system would not be able "to buy or sell except a person having the mark" of the beast. (Rev. 13:17) If it should happen in your country that identification with a political party is required

20. How were early Christians tempted to become sidetracked by nationalism?

21. Why do Christians expect persecution because of not becoming involved in nationalism?

22. Why now, deep into the "time of the end," is it increasingly difficult to keep free from nationalism?

in order to get employment or other advantages, what would you do? Of course, you need employment to care for your family. Under pressure, what will you do? In whom do you put your confidence for the necessities of life? Will you panic and forget that you have prayed to God: "Give us today our bread for this day"? (Matt. 6:11) Jehovah knows that we have need of food, clothing and shelter, but it is important to remember that the Adversary, Satan the Devil, presses the issue of integrity into all aspects of life. As in the case of Job, he may raise the charge with respect to any one of us that we will turn against God if deprived of some of our material needs. But the warning is given that the name of not one of those who worship this beastly system is written in the scroll of life. (Rev. 13:8) By maintaining our loyalty to Jehovah under test, we can be assured that He will open the way and provide relief.

[23] Sometimes social, racial and religious barriers and prejudices result in hardship and oppression for many. They often make the Christian's race for life much more difficult. The tendency is to speak out, to fight back, to take things into one's own hands, to demand justice. For example, a minority group may strike out for more rights. Protest marches may be organized to put pressure on the government. Boycotts may be arranged to bring pressure on merchants. Leaders among the group may appeal to the pride of their people, and by speech or by coercion they may seek the Christian's support. What will you do if you are faced with this situation or a similar one? Again there is a need to maintain neutrality and avoid getting involved in the affairs of this world. Rest assured that Jehovah will settle accounts for any wrongs committed. "Return evil for evil to no one. Provide fine things in the sight of all men. If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says Jehovah.' "—Rom. 12:17-19.

[24] Hence, do not let yourself be sidetracked from the race for life by the propaganda or pressure designed to cause you to compromise on your Christian neutrality. You will be criticized because of this, since the trend in Christendom today is for both the parishioners and their ministers to get involved in social causes. They have stopped waiting for God's kingdom to bring the real remedies that are needed for man's social problems, and they have taken sides. But they fail to recognize that no matter on what side a person may place himself in this world, he is still on the Devil's side, if he actively supports any of the nationalistic programs and policies put forward by this system of things.

[25] Hence, let neither materialism nor nationalism cause you to be sidetracked from your course as a Christian. Put your complete trust in God and his kingdom by his Son, Christ Jesus. "Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For he has said: 'I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.' So that we may be of good courage and say: 'Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?' " (Heb. 13:5, 6) But there are other obstacles that can take a Christian out of the race for everlasting life, and in subsequent studies we will deal with these.

23. (a) What conditions could make it easy for Christians to get involved in nonneutral causes? (b) Why do we not need to feel that we should take matters into our own hands when social injustices are committed against us?

24. What course has been taken by some claiming to be Christian, but what do they fail to recognize about this?

25. Why can we put our complete trust in Jehovah in facing future issues regarding materialism and nationalism?

DO NOT LET YOURSELF Be Ensnared by Fads and Entertainment

"[Instruct] with mildness those not favorably disposed; as perhaps God may give them repentance leading to an accurate knowledge of truth, and they may come back to their proper senses out from the snare of the Devil, seeing that they have been caught alive by him for the will of that one."
—2 Tim. 2:25, 26.

HUNTERS know the need to conceal their traps in order to catch animals off guard. Before the unwary victims know it, the trap snaps upon them or they are held tight by a snare. Some traps are baited, and many are the animals that have been caught because they let a tempting morsel resting between the steel jaws of a trap cause them to put aside caution. God's adversary, Satan the Devil, has created a system motivated by selfish desire, and this system is filled with traps and snares in which a Christian can easily be fatally caught if he is not continually on the alert.—Ps. 119:110.

[2] And living as we are deep into the "time of the end," there is more danger than ever of some not only getting ensnared in the tempting entrapments of this world, but also letting the great day of Jehovah come upon them as a snare. They being so entangled with worldly pursuits, Jehovah's time for the destruction of the wicked will confront them like a hidden snare that has suddenly been triggered to their destruction. (Luke 21:34, 35) "Thorns and traps are in the way of the crooked one; he that is guarding his soul keeps far away from them."—Prov. 22:5.

[3] Fads and entertainment have our attention in this study since they can prove to be some of the most subtle of the baited traps of the Devil in seducing Christians. A fad is defined as a custom or amusement followed for a time with exaggerated zeal. It is a craze or passing notion. There are many fads, but perhaps the most common are associated with clothing and grooming styles, and diet. Even though fads are pursuits of a temporary nature, they can capture a Christian's affections and time in such a way that the important things having to do with true worship and meeting God's requirement for life become of little or no importance.

[4] In some areas of the world clothing styles for both men and women change very little from year to year, but, in many lands, for some years there has been a growing trend toward the more extreme and immodest styles, some even adopting the attitude that "anything goes." The mere entertaining of immoral, proud or rebellious thoughts is not enough for them. There is a compulsion to go farther and advertise and even flaunt these attitudes before others by their grooming and clothing styles. In some Western lands we find men dressing more like women, and

1. In what ways are Satan's methods of capturing the affections of human creatures likened to traps or snares?
2. Why do Christians need to be even more alert today?
3. How is a fad defined, and what danger is there in pursuing fads?
4. What extremes in clothing styles have developed in recent years?

women dressing more like men. Many styles that are now popular were considered odd a few years ago.

[5] Because of these conditions, how can Christian men and women determine what to wear or not to wear? Naturally, they do not desire to stand out as being old-fashioned or out of style, but to go to the other extreme and let the old world lead one along completely in clothing and grooming styles would be to fall right into these alluring fad-traps of the Devil. He knows all too well that when one can be lured into taking the first step of outwardly identifying oneself closely with the styles of this world under his control, it often is not difficult to tempt the person to take further steps into worldly pursuits.

[6] At 1 Timothy 2:9, 10, Christian women are admonished to have well-arranged dress, to adorn themselves with modesty. This principle, of course, also applies to men in the congregation. In determining whether to wear a particular style, we can ask if the clothing or grooming reflects modesty, or whether it is immodest and proves embarrassing to others. Tight trousers tend to be immodest for a man, just as short or revealing dresses can be immodest for a woman. When a sister bends over or tries to seat herself modestly on the platform, does she have difficulty because of her short dress? Do we possibly, by what we wear or by our grooming, mislead others into thinking that we have loose morals or have a proud, militant attitude?

[7] Jehovah's Christian witnesses are servants of Jehovah, the great Sovereign of the universe, and this realization should definitely govern how we dress. What do people in a particular area expect of God's servants? Styles differ around the world and thus it does not rest upon the governing body of Jehovah's witnesses to determine what specific styles are appropriate or modest for each country or community. If there is serious question about a particular style, then it would be better not to wear it. Better to be viewed as a little out of fashion than as immodest or proud or unkempt.

[8] If slacks or pantsuits for women are frowned upon by many in the community, likely some different style of apparel for public dress would be advisable for a Christian sister. During cold weather she likely could arrange to be exposed to the weather for shorter periods of time, or pause more frequently to warm herself. But in frigid climates, where everyone in the community wears clothing appropriate to the weather, such as slacks, surely it is proper for Christian women to do the same. In some places, pioneers have been aided thus to maintain robust health for putting in long hours in service. If a Christian sister is unsure about a particular style, she can discuss the situation with her husband or an elder in the Christian congregation. The elders should not seek to impose their own preferences on others, but likely are in position to offer advice on what might be acceptable in their respective communities. Children should be obedient to their parents in the matters of dress and grooming.

[9] Extreme hair styles can easily lead one into a trap of the Devil also, and cause others to stumble. For example, a young man in the United States was making fine progress in his study of the Bible, and he was moved to share with an experienced Witness in preaching to others about the good things he was learning from the Bible.

5. How can clothing and grooming styles serve as a trap of the Devil?
6. What will guide a Christian in selecting clothing styles and in grooming?
7. What important fact will help Jehovah's Christian witnesses to dress appropriately, regardless of location in the earth?
8. How can a sister tell whether it would be appropriate for her to wear pantsuits or slacks in her community?
9. What experience illustrates the need to make adjustments in personal appearance, where advisable, in order to avoid putting an obstacle in the way of others' learning the way to life?

From early youth he had let his beard grow, and since some in the business community wore beards, he felt that his wearing one in preaching to others would be acceptable generally. But in speaking to a lady he was unable to do more than introduce himself, when she said: "I'm sorry, young man, I do not want to become involved in student revolt." No amount of explanation after this sufficed to clear up the misimpression. After the conversation ended with the closing of the door, he asked the experienced Witness what had happened. He was invited to consider his appearance in relation to what he claimed to be, a servant of God. Not wanting to be responsible for even one person's being stumbled so as to miss the way to everlasting life, this new Kingdom publisher shaved off his beard. Would you be willing to do the same or to make similar adjustments if your appearance gave the wrong impression in a certain community?

[10] We must take into consideration that Jehovah's people are under scrutiny by the world. The message of the Kingdom that they are taking to the people is sometimes judged by the appearance of those bringing it. There is the possibility that a Christian brother or sister dressed in a certain style might so attract the attention of the person at the door that the person does not pay attention to what the Christian is saying, or concludes that we are no different from worldlings in morals or principles. If this is the case, then the message bearer is defeating the whole purpose of his or her field service. We are called upon, at times, to sacrifice our own convenience, to a greater or lesser degree, according to the need, in order to avoid stumbling some. This was the attitude of the apostle Paul: "In no way are we giving any cause for stumbling, that our ministry might not be found fault with; but in every way we recommend ourselves as God's ministers."—2 Cor. 6:3, 4.

10. How can one, by clothing or grooming styles, defeat the purpose of going into the community to preach the good news of the Kingdom?

HEALTH FADS CAN BE A SNARE

[11] Many fads have developed in connection with eating and the care of one's body. But health fads, too, can become a snare to us. There is a danger of becoming so preoccupied with diet and disease that these matters become more important than the preaching of God's kingdom and looking to the new system where there will be a real healing of the body. Of course, we need to use practical wisdom now in looking after ourselves, and certain diets or medicines may be beneficial for our own conditions, but these should be personal matters that are incidental to our service to Jehovah. Paul strongly counseled against making an issue over foods. (Rom. 14:1-23) "Therefore, whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God's glory." (1 Cor. 10:31) Hence, do not let food or health fads become a snare to you or a stumbling block to others.

[12] We should recognize that fads, whether connected with clothing, grooming or food, or other things, can cause us to get away from doing God's will and to be ensnared with the things of the world. Often fads involve extra expense, and this, in turn, involves doing more secular work in order to pay for such things. Fads, then, are nothing more than subtle traps of the great Adversary, Satan the Devil. "So keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked. On this account cease becoming unreasonable, but go on per-

11. How can health fads become a snare to a Christian?
12. What will a practical analysis of fads, in the light of the Bible, tell us?

ceiving what the will of Jehovah is." —Eph. 5:15-17.

NOT LETTING ENTERTAINMENT ENSNARE US

[13] Our loving heavenly Father, in creating man, gave us the capacity to enjoy pleasures of various kinds, including the ability and means to entertain ourselves and others. But it often happens that the Devil takes the capacity for enjoying something good and perverts it so that it becomes something bad, shameful or hurtful for man. This has been particularly true with respect to entertainment. Christians recognize that wholesome entertainment fills a certain need. It provides a pleasurable change of pace and activity, so that our bodies and minds get the needed relaxation and refreshment. However, for entertainment to be profitable, it should be upbuilding and encouraging, not deleterious, either physically or spiritually.

[14] Thus, in choosing entertainment, we should train ourselves to ask: Is it in harmony with Christian principles? How will it affect our hearts and minds? How will it affect others? This alertness will prevent entertainment from becoming a trap that captures our affections and interests so completely that we are led away from the faith or ensnared in unchristian conduct.

[15] One of the chief means of entertainment in the world is either observing or participating in sports. Since World War II there has been great enthusiasm for the various sports. The arenas are bursting at the seams. Fans brave bad weather, travel long distances, and pay exorbitant prices to attend the games. Some can relate endless statistics about the players and the games, showing to what extent these matters occupy their time and attention. [16] The apostle Paul, in giving directions to the young overseer Timothy, stated: "Be training yourself with godly devotion as your aim. For bodily training is beneficial for a little; but godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:7, 8) Thus the apostle Paul recognized that bodily training can be of benefit to the body, but it must be kept in its subordinate place in relation to the primary aim of godly devotion. In moderation, sports can provide wholesome association, entertainment and physical exercise, which is good for both the body and the mind, but overindulgence in such pleasure can rob one of necessary sleep or rest. This would not be wise. We can begin to take sports too seriously and get involved too strenuously. Serious injuries can result. Sports can develop the spirit of competition. The balanced Christian, however, avoids a competitive spirit that leads to taking pride in beating others in games. (Gal. 5:26) Moderation is necessary in order to conserve one's energy as well as time for the primary things relating to godly devotion. The Bible counsels: "Let your reasonableness become known to all men." (Phil. 4:5) Jesus warned against letting the "pleasures of this life" choke out the "word of God" that is planted in the heart.—Luke 8:11, 14.

[17] Young Christians at school have to be particularly careful that they do not allow sports to become the big thing in their lives. Excessive participation in sports can lead to neglecting Bible study and Kingdom activities. The glamour of being on the team, the excitement of winning games, are subtle snares that can trap the Christian before he knows it. Neglecting oneself spiritually, while at the same time one is being pulled down by bad

13. (a) How has the Devil used man's desire for entertainment to man's detriment? (b) When it is arranged, what should entertainment accomplish?
14. What questions will help in choosing upbuilding and encouraging entertainment?
15, 16. (a) What shows the intense interest in sports as entertainment? (b) What balanced view should Christians have toward sports?
17. Why do young Christians at school need to watch that they are not ensnared by athletic activities?

associations, the spirit of competition and the desire to be popular—all this adds up to a combination that has within it the potency of death. "The law of the wise one is a source of life, to turn one away from the snares of death."—Prov. 13:14.

[18] Can one turn to the movies, to television, or to stage plays for relaxation? This, of course, is a matter of personal decision. But the Bible warns: "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) Christians have to face the fact that Satan is "the god of this system of things," and the majority of humans living today have come under his evil influence. "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (2 Cor. 4:4; 1 John 5:19) This is evident when we consider most of what is presented for viewing on the movie and television screens and on the stage today. Producers are in the business to make money, and most are frank in telling you that what sells today is sex and violence. Hence, if members of a Christian family are going to turn occasionally to motion pictures or the stage for some entertainment, a responsibility rests upon them to exercise careful selectivity.

[19] But, despite efforts to be selective, you may find yourself on occasion watching television or being present in a theater where the program has gone beyond being simply informative, entertaining or relaxing. It is corrupting. Will you have the courage to get up and turn off the television set or to leave the theater? Constantly we must be alert to what is entering our minds and hearts, not feeling that we must get to know about badness in order to be convinced that it is bad. There is no room for meditation upon what is immoral or violent or crooked if we *"continue considering"* the things that are "of serious concern, . . . righteous, . . . chaste, . . . lovable, . . . well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is."—Phil. 4:8.

[20] Analysts report that the average child in the United States spends 500 to 1,000 hours a year watching television. Some parents put their children in front of a television set to keep them quiet, not wanting to be bothered with them. But what is this doing to the children, whose minds are highly impressionable? Child psychiatrist Dr. Arthur R. Timme warned that such conditioning has "a very deleterious effect on the mind of growing children. . . . They grow up with a completely distorted sense of what is right and wrong in human behavior." The news sources daily report on children who are involved in violent crimes and depravity, and it is evident where they received most of the ideas to do such appalling things. Parents, are you closely monitoring what your children are watching on TV?

[21] It is observed, too, that some adults turn on the television set and watch, as a distraction, whatever is featured in place of reading, thinking, or carrying on other constructive activity. Often the room is filled with noise, and, if there is quiet for any period, restlessness becomes evident. But true servants of God cannot let themselves become a part of this "Age of Distraction." Time is too precious to waste. On these occasions, how refreshing it would be just to turn the TV off and quietly read a portion of God's Word! This takes discipline, but it is greatly rewarding.

[22] Dancing is another form of entertain-

18. If one turns to movies, television or the stage for entertainment, why should one exercise careful selectivity?

19. Why can we not take a chance with entertainment that is not wholesome?

20, 21. (a) Why should Christian parents monitor closely what their children watch on television? (b) Instead of letting a program of little or no value waste one's time, what is recommended?

22. If a Christian chooses to dance for entertainment, what questions and principles might guide him?

ment. It was used in Bible times as a form of expressing joy and praise to God. (Ps. 149:3; 150:4) Can a Christian participate in modern dancing? Each one must decide what he can do in this regard. There are some determining factors to consider. With whom will a Christian dance? With whom will he or she be associating? Where will the dancing take place? What is the origin of the dance? What movements are involved? Does it have a tendency to cause impure thoughts to come to mind, or is it strictly for exercise and wholesome pleasure? If married Christians dance, it is advisable for this to be with their own mates. When single Christians of the opposite sex dance, this should be done with modesty and not in such a way as to excite each other sexually. Dancing in worldly dance halls can be dangerous, not only because of the atmosphere, usually away from fellow Christians, but also because of bad associations. Even when Christians get together to dance, it is best to avoid large groups, as activities can easily get out of control and some may go beyond wise limits. We want to act in such a way as not only to safeguard ourselves, but also to avoid stumbling others. (1 Cor. 8:9; Rom. 13:14) If we enjoy dancing, let us be selective, modest and decent in this type of entertainment, doing all things for God's glory.—1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Pet. 1:15, 16.

IN COMING ISSUES

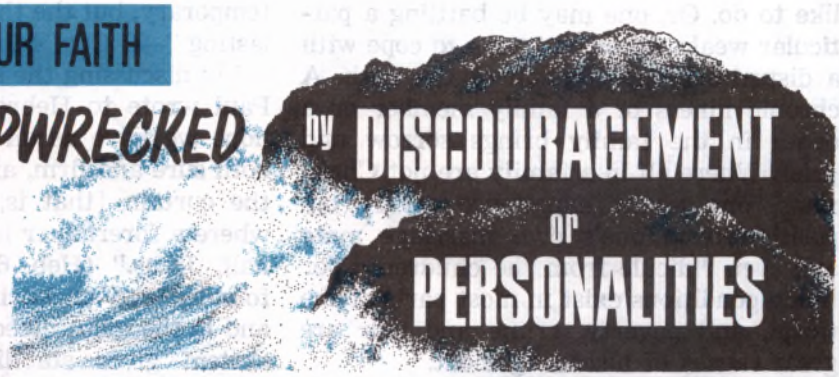
- **What Will Armageddon Really Mean for Mankind?**
- **Christian Love Based on Jehovah's Love.**
- **Have You Stopped 'Storing Up Treasures on Earth'?**

[23] Music can be a fine means of entertainment, but this, too, can be a snare to us if we let it. Much of the music composed and played today is for the purpose of exciting one's selfish desires. Hence, there is a need for the Christian to ask regarding any form of music: What is its origin? What is its purpose? What will be its effect on me? Does my music disturb others? Certain music, such as some of the current "rock 'n' roll," reflects the spirit of rebellion and often includes suggestive lyrics or encouragement to violence. The Christian does well to select from the wide variety of music that which will entertain, refresh and leave him with a good conscience.

[24] While this world sinks deeper and deeper into the mire of its own corruption and soon will be destroyed, Christians know the importance of not being ensnared and trapped by the spirit of this world. They recognize that fads and the entertainment of this world are like lures to attract all of mankind into "the snare of the Devil." (2 Tim. 2:25, 26; Ps. 140:4, 5) He already has the majority of mankind entrapped, but he would like to lure servants of God into his trap also, as he attempts to keep trapped any sincere ones who are trying to escape from his clutches. Very soon now he himself will be chained and abyssed, but meanwhile, in the short time remaining, we can keep free from his snares of death if we watch carefully how we walk before Jehovah, keeping his Word of truth shining constantly on our path ahead. (Rev. 20:1-3; Ps. 119:105) And it is our privilege to help those seeking to break free by declaring to them the truth that sets men free and by showing that we truly are lovers of God and not mere lovers of pleasures.—2 Tim. 3:4, 5; John 8:32.

23. How can one who wishes to please Jehovah avoid letting music become a snare to him?
24. (a) What is the objective of the Devil in setting traps associated with fads and entertainment? (b) As we keep free from these snares of death, what obligation should we feel toward those sincere ones who want to break free?

DO NOT LET YOUR FAITH Be SHIPWRECKED by DISCOURAGEMENT or PERSONALITIES



> "Go on waging the fine warfare; holding faith and a good conscience, which some have thrust aside and have experienced shipwreck concerning their faith."
> —1 Tim. 1:18, 19.

CHRISTIANS in this unrighteous world of mankind are like ships in the open sea. Both are faced with constant dangers. Storms that stir the sea to violence can break a ship in two. Reefs and icebergs can rip gaping holes, sending the ship quickly to the bottom of the ocean. Poor visibility or loss of power or steering can cause collisions with other ships or a running aground. Likewise, Christians can experience the shipwreck of their faith if they are not always alert to the perils of this world. The millions of people in this world who do not know God are like a restless sea, and Christians are as though afloat in this sea of mankind. (Isa. 57:20, 21) Jesus recognized that his disciples would have to continue on for a while in this world, but they were to be no part of it. (John 17:11, 14-16) Like a ship, they can be in the sea, but, when the sea begins to get into the ship, that is cause for immediate alarm.

[2] Thus Christians must be ever watchful that the practices and attitudes that are common in this system do not seep into the Christian congregation or bring shipwreck to their faith individually. Two common attitudes and practices that loom up as threats involve discouragement and the letting of personalities distract or turn one aside, and we will deal with these matters in this article.

1. How are Christians like ships in the sea?
2. While Christians can thus be in the sea of mankind, what danger exists regarding the attitudes and practices of this world?

COPING WITH DISCOURAGEMENT

[3] The effects of discouragement can be seen deeply etched in the sad faces of the masses of mankind. Satan has used discouraging circumstances for centuries to bring people into slavery to himself and his system, and he takes particular delight in seeing Christians, because of discouragement, slow up or turn away from their resolve to serve Jehovah. Thus the need for Christians to be ever alert that they are not swamped by the waves of discouragement.

[4] Many factors cause discouragement. A most common cause involves health. When one does not feel well, and especially so over a long period of time, there is a natural tendency to become withdrawn and to manifest self-pity. There is not the strength or incentive to do what one would

3, 4. (a) How has Satan used discouraging circumstances to keep mankind enslaved to him? (b) What factors often cause discouragement?

like to do. Or, one may be battling a particular weakness or be trying to cope with a disturbing imperfection of the flesh. A chronic illness of a family member or a death in the family brings sorrow and grief. Where all in a family are not Christians, one might experience severe opposition from one's own marriage mate and even ridicule from the children. Poor living conditions exist in most parts of the world, and poverty, crime and fear are great causes of discouragement.

[5] To fight against discouragement successfully, it is very necessary that Christians keep their minds fixed on their relationship with Jehovah and have implicit confidence that he will not fail in giving comfort and assistance to his people in every time of need. While he permits the integrity of his servants to be tested under severe trial at times, he will help those devoted to him to bear up, and he will give relief and deliverance in his time. (Jas. 1:5-8) David, who was faced with many trying situations, wrote under inspiration for our encouragement: "Be courageous, and may your heart be strong, all you who are waiting for Jehovah."—Ps. 31:24.

[6] The sure hope of the resurrection takes the sting out of sickness and the fear of death. Keeping our minds refreshed with Jehovah's grand promises, we are buoyed up in spirit and have the joy and comfort that only Jehovah can give. "Therefore we do not give up, but even if the man we are outside is wasting away, certainly the man we are inside is being renewed from day to day. For though the tribulation is momentary and light, it works out for us a glory that is of more and more surpassing weight and is everlasting; while we keep our eyes, not on the things seen, but on the things unseen. For the things seen are temporary, but the things unseen are everlasting."—2 Cor. 4:16-18.

[7] In discussing the sure promises of God, Paul wrote to Hebrew Christians: "This hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm, and it enters in within the curtain [that is, into heaven itself], where a forerunner has entered in our behalf, Jesus." (Heb. 6:19, 20) Thus, well-founded and anchorlike hope in Jehovah and in the guaranteed blessings of his new system gives stability and comfort to Christians despite their tribulations in the flesh and stormy conditions surrounding them in this world. "God is for us a refuge and strength, a help that is readily to be found during distresses. That is why we shall not fear, though the earth undergo change and though the mountains totter into the heart of the vast sea; though its waters be boisterous, foam over, though the mountains rock at its uproar."—Ps. 46:1-3.

[8] If sickness or other circumstances prevent you from doing all that you would like to do in Jehovah's service, you can still rejoice over what you are able to do, remembering Paul's encouraging and comforting words: "For God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering." (Heb. 6:10) And do not forget that a fine example in integrity and endurance is encouraging to others, even if some physical infirmity has slowed you down somewhat.—Compare 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

[9] To keep their faith strong and to beat back any feelings of despair and anxiety, Christians know the value of charting their course by God's Word and constantly

5. What is of first importance in fighting discouragement successfully?
6. Why can Christians face sickness and death without letting discouragement overwhelm them?
7. What serves like an anchor in providing stability now and in the stormy times ahead?
8. Why should it not be discouraging if one cannot do as much as one would like to do in Jehovah's service due to poor health?
9. Why are prayer and association with fellow Christians vital in fighting discouragement?

checking their position to see where adjustments are needed. They need to keep in close communication with their heavenly Father. "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6, 7) Association with fellow Christians is also vital. Paul wrote to the Christians at Rome: "For I am longing to see you, that I may impart some spiritual gift to you in order for you to be made firm; or, rather, that there may be an interchange of encouragement among you, by each one through the other's faith, both yours and mine."—Rom. 1:11, 12.

[10] If you crave association and yet feel somewhat left out, showing yourself to be more friendly may help you to have more friendly association, to cultivate an enduring relationship with others. While Christians have an obligation to be friendly toward all, and especially to do good "toward those related to us in the faith," it is more inviting for others to associate with us if we are pleasant, upbuilding and positive. (Gal. 6:10) Words of self-pity may gain sympathy but not always real respect.

[11] Ask yourself, too, what you can do to assist others rather than concentrating attention on yourself. At Acts 20:35 Paul calls attention to a principle set forth by Jesus: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." Happiness is greatly increased as we expend ourselves in behalf of others. "Consequently, my beloved brothers, become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) Peter counsels: "Above all things, have intense love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. In proportion as each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another as fine stewards of God's undeserved kindness expressed in various ways." (1 Pet. 4:8-10) Our own happiness is thus increased by using fully our opportunities to be encouraging to others. —Luke 6:38.

[12] The spiritual prosperity of Jehovah's organization gives Christians reason to be encouraged. When we read or hear of experiences of our brothers around the world, we see how Jehovah is adding his blessing as he strengthens his people to defeat persecution, hardship and discouragement. "Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people whom he has chosen as his inheritance." (Ps. 33:12) In their travels Paul and Barnabas related to others "in detail the conversion of people of the nations." The result? "They were causing great joy to all the brothers." (Acts 15:3) Do not fail to share your experiences in Jehovah's service with others for their encouragement, and, in turn, ask about or seek occasions to read about the experiences of others.—Ps. 122:1-9.

[13] Hence, to prevent shipwreck of our faith by discouragement, there is a need both to be encouraged by and to be encouraging to one another. "Therefore keep comforting one another and building one another up, just as you are in fact doing. . . . we exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all." (1 Thess. 5:11, 14) While there is turbulence all around us

10. If you feel that you lack Christian association, what might be done?
11. In what way are there reciprocal benefits when we reach out for opportunities to assist others?
12. How can the experiences of our brothers and sisters help us to defeat discouragement?
13. What provisions has Jehovah made to keep his people encouraged despite discouraging circumstances around them?

and conditions threaten to shipwreck our faith, we can confidently look to Jehovah to help us to ride out the storm and avoid being victims of discouragement. "And out of the stresses upon them he brings them forth. He causes the windstorm to stand at a calm, so that the waves of the sea keep quiet. And they rejoice because these become still, and he leads them to the haven of their delight. O let people give thanks to Jehovah for his loving-kindness and for his wonderful works to the sons of men."—Ps. 107:28-31.

PERSONALITIES CAN SHIPWRECK ONE'S FAITH

[14] Christians also face the danger of colliding with fellow Christians in such a way as to cause a shipwreck of their faith or the faith of others. Moreover, the Scriptures warn that a few in the midst of the Christian congregation would deviate from the faith and would try to influence others to follow after them. On the other hand, Christians trust and respect their proved and faithful brothers and sisters and appreciate the leadership and example of their faithful shepherds, but they must not let what other human creatures do cause them to experience "shipwreck concerning their faith." In charting their course, therefore, it is very necessary for servants of God to avoid letting personalities unduly affect or influence them.—1 Tim. 1:18, 19.

[15] Jude refers to some who slipped into the Christian congregation and sought to turn "the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct," and he describes them as "rocks hidden below water in your love feasts." "These men are murmurers, complainers about their lot in life, proceeding according to their own desires, and their mouths speak swelling things, while they are admiring personalities for the sake of their own benefit." (Jude 3, 4, 12, 16; compare 2 Peter, chapter 2.) Such persons, when discovered, are expelled or disfellowshiped as not deserving to be within the congregation. But if someone rejects the truth of God's Word, proving to be a chronic complainer while seeking to cover his apostasy and mislead others by admiring personalities, should we follow this one out of the truth and into destruction? How unwise this would be! Be careful that your faith is not shipwrecked by hitting one of these "rocks hidden below water"!

[16] In contrast, when shepherds and teachers in the congregation endeavor to help us to progress in the truth of God's Word, are we stumbled by personalities? Many who became Jesus' disciples liked some of his teachings, and were delighted to receive miraculous food and healings, but, when they were told that they must "eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood," this was shocking and the result was that "many of his disciples went off to the things behind and would no longer walk with him." They did not stay long enough to receive understanding on this vital teaching.—John 6:48-69.

[17] When Jehovah's "faithful and discreet slave" organization provides some new understanding based on God's Word, we may at times have some difficulty in fully grasping what has been published. But what should be done? Should we become critical and perhaps conclude that this is just how a few men at headquarters feel about it? Or, will we reflect the same attitude as the apostles when Jesus asked them on this same occasion when many disciples

14. How can personalities cause a shipwreck of one's faith?
15. How does Jude describe some who could exist as a threat in the congregation before being expelled?
16. (a) When an elder helps us to apply God's Word, what should be our attitude? (b) What contrasting attitudes were shown by some of Jesus' disciples?
17, 18. (a) How did the apostles show the right attitude in connection with a teaching that might be difficult to accept? (b) Why was the unfaithfulness of Judas Iscariot no reason for the other apostles to waver in faith? What can we learn from this?

turned away: "Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life; and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God."

18 The apostles were convinced from their comparison of Jesus' teachings and course of life with the Hebrew Scriptures that he was truly the Messiah, and they were not going to turn away from following him because he introduced some new teaching that was difficult at the moment to accept. Of course, one did later turn away, this being Judas Iscariot. Greed turned his head and his heart. But did the unfaithfulness of one of the chosen apostles ruin the faith of the eleven others? No, even though their faith wavered somewhat with the arrest and death of Jesus on the torture stake. They recovered spiritually, and Jehovah, by his holy spirit, strengthened them from Pentecost 33 C.E. onward.

19 Never forget that we, like the apostles, are following Jesus Christ and not some man or group of men as leaders on earth. Yes, imperfect men are being used to help us, from the governing body to the elders in our congregations, but these have the heavy responsibility to teach strictly in accord with the Word of God. They are to imitate the apostle Paul, who said to the elders at Ephesus: "I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house." (Acts 20:20) He solemnly charged Timothy as an elder to "preach the word" of God in building faith and in preparing the congregation for the period when some would 'not put up with the healthful teaching, but, in accord with their own desires, would accumulate teachers for themselves to have their ears tickled.' (2 Tim. 4:1-4) What do we want? Someone to tickle our ears and tell us that everything is all right, when it may not be all right, or someone who will speak to us truthfully, and yet kindly, and help us to walk in a way that will please God? (Eph. 4:11-15) Do not let personalities get in between you and your heavenly Father, Jehovah, and the Head of the Christian congregation, Christ Jesus!

19. (a) As to leadership within the Christian congregation, what important fact should we be conscious of at all times? (b) What responsibility rests upon elders, and as to personalities what should we not allow to take place?

GETTING ALONG WITH ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE

20 All of us having been born in sin and imperfection, there is a need, when we learn the truth of God's Word, to put aside the old personality traits and to work diligently to put on the new personality. (Eph. 4:23, 24) Jehovah will continue to mold us as long as we submit ourselves to do his will. Nevertheless, undesirable personality traits have a way of persisting despite our efforts to overcome them, and we may find ourselves still working on one of these traits long years after symbolizing our dedication to do Jehovah's will. Thus the need to be tolerant of one another. Moreover, differing personality traits may not necessarily reflect weakness, but merely the variety Jehovah arranged for in human creatures.

21 Love and tolerance will help us to avoid being oversensitive. Due to pressing problems, a brother may pass by without speaking or may speak sharply on occasion. Or a habit or trait of another may tend to annoy. Whatever the situation, the Bible counsels: "Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."—Col. 3:13, 14.

20, 21. (a) What factors make it necessary that we exercise patience and tolerance in dealing with one another? (b) What counsel does Paul give, at Colossians 3:13, 14, for preserving peace and the bond of love in the congregation?

22 Hence, do not let personality differences cause you to become shipwrecked in faith. Steer your course in such a way as to avoid colliding with your brother. If the Devil can get you so upset over the imperfections of your brother that you skip meetings or hold back from preaching the good news of the Kingdom, he is very pleased. Do you want to please the Adversary because of some irritation or spirit of pride? Does your relationship with Jehovah mean so little that you would quit serving him or slow down because one of the brothers commits a wrong? Remember, if Jehovah required perfection of your brother at this time, he would require it of you too. If you want God to forgive you your shortcomings, you must be willing to forgive those of your brother. Jesus predicated forgiveness of our sins upon our being willing to forgive others.—Matt. 6:12, 14, 15.

AVOID STUMBLING OTHERS

23 The tongue can do much damage if not properly controlled. James illustrates it in this way: "Look! Even boats, although they are so big and are driven by hard winds, are steered by a very small rudder to where the inclination of the man at the helm wishes. So, too, the tongue is a little member and yet makes great brags." Why should we let our tongues get out of control as a misguided rudder and cause us to crash into our fellow praiser of Jehovah? "Out of the same mouth come forth blessing and cursing. It is not proper, my brothers, for these things to go on occurring this way. A fountain does not cause the sweet and the bitter to bubble out of the same opening, does it?"—Jas. 3:4, 5, 10, 11.

22. (a) What could getting upset over a brother's imperfections cause one to do? (b) To be forgiven our trespasses by God, what is first necessary?

23, 24. (a) How is the tongue fittingly likened to the rudder of a ship? (b) What counsel does the Bible give about speaking the truth and that which is upbuilding?

24 When there is a tendency to express an angry word, or engage in hurtful gossip or slander, remember, it is the captain of the ship that controls the course of the vessel by way of the rudder. If we at heart do not think evil of our brothers, then we will not be motivated to speak harmful words with the tongue. "Now that you have put away falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor." "Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth, but whatever saying is good for building up as the need may be, that it may impart what is favorable to the hearers."—Eph. 4:25, 29.

25 Settle differences quickly. Often minor things can be overlooked without making an issue of them. If the problem persists, go to the offending brother and discuss the matter privately in a loving and kind way. And if a brother comes to you to discuss a cause for complaint, exercise self-control and listen first to what is said so that you understand the situation and do not quickly seek to defend yourself or resort to recrimination.—Eph. 4:26, 32.

26 Knowing that his time is short, God's adversary, Satan the Devil, causes the seas of mankind to grow more violent from day to day. (Dan. 7:2, 3; Rev. 13:1) This great opposer of God would like to wreck our faith by swamping us with discouragement or by causing a colliding with personalities. But by keeping our faith seaworthy and by watching carefully that we navigate according to the sure Word of God, with Jehovah's unfailing help and undeserved kindness, we will complete our voyage through these stormy times, right on through the "great tribulation" and into Jehovah's new system of things, where the "sea is no more." (Rev. 21:1) How thankful we will be to Jehovah at that time, that we did not let any of the attrac-

25. What counsel is given as to settling personal differences?

26. How are we assured from God's Word that we can successfully complete our voyage through the stormy times ahead and into Jehovah's new system of things?

tions or difficulties encountered cause the shipwreck of our faith and deny us the grand blessings to be enjoyed eternally by those who love God with complete devotion! "Now we are not the sort that shrink back to destruction, but the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul."—Heb. 10:39.

● Does the description of "Wisdom" in Proverbs 8:22-31 actually apply to Jesus, the Son of God?

Persons who accept only the Hebrew Scriptures or who do not believe in Jesus Christ often explain Proverbs 8:22-31 as applying to Wisdom personified only in some figurative way. That application of the verses, however, does not agree with what is known about God. Furthermore, accepting the sound view that the entire Bible, including Proverbs, is inspired, a person can see that the description of "Wisdom" here in Proverbs matches what is said elsewhere in the Bible about the Son of God. We read:

"Jehovah himself produced me as the beginning of his way, the earliest of his achievements of long ago. . . . Before the mountains themselves had been settled down, ahead of the hills, I was brought forth as with labor pains . . . When he prepared the heavens I was there; . . . then I came to be beside him as a master worker, and I came to be the one he was specially fond of day by day, I being glad before him all the time, . . . and the things I was fond of were with the sons of men." —Prov. 8:22-31.

Jewish commentators, objecting to any application of this passage to Jesus as the Messiah, have usually held that this is merely a literary personification of wisdom. Thus, W. Gunther Plaut, in his work *Book of Proverbs—A Commentary,* says that these verses apply to Wisdom "personified only in a figurative way." This passage, however, cannot be speaking merely about divine wisdom or wisdom in the abstract. Why not? Because the "Wisdom" that is here depicted was "created" or "produced" (Hebrew, *qa·nah'*)* as the beginning of Jehovah's way. The Scriptures show that Jehovah God himself has always existed. (Ps. 90:2; 1 Tim. 1:17) Since he is eternal and

* In the past, commentators and translators who held to the Trinity doctrine argued that *qa·nah'* should here be rendered "possessed." *Qa·nah'* can convey the sense of either "acquire (possess)" or "produce." (Gen. 4:1; Deut. 32:6; Ps. 139:13; Neh. 5:16) But scholars acknowledge that the context here points to the rendering "produced" or "created," since verses 24 and 25 speak of Wisdom as being "brought forth as with labor pains." This rendering is borne out by the Greek *Septuagint,* the Syriac *Peshitta Version* and the Targums. So now even translations by trinitarians, such as the Catholic *Jerusalem Bible,* use the rendering "produced" or "created."

ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 1, 1975

The annual meeting of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania on October 1, 1975, will be held at Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall, Buckingham, Pennsylvania, which was the site of the annual meeting on October 1, 1971. The meeting will be at 10:00 o'clock in the forenoon of Wednesday, October 1, 1975, at the assembly hall in Buckingham.

It will be appreciated if the members of the corporation will now see to it that the Secretary's Office has their present mailing addresses so that the regular letters of notice and proxies can reach them shortly after September 1.

The proxies, which will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting, are to be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 15. As each member knows, he should complete and return his proxy promptly whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not, and the information given on each proxy will be relied upon in determining in advance those who will actually be personally present. So this information should be given definitely on the proxy.

he has always been wise, then his wisdom has always existed; it never was created or produced; it was not "brought forth as with labor pains." (Job 9:2, 4; 12:9, 13; 28:20, 23; Rom. 11:33-36) Wisdom does not exist apart from a personality capable of possessing and reflecting it. Consequently, this "Wisdom" must be a personification picturing someone who was created "as the beginning of [God's] way."

The Christian Greek Scriptures aid a person to understand to whom this passage evidently refers. They repeatedly testify to the fact that the Messiah had a prehuman existence as the Son of God in heaven with Jehovah. (John 17:5; 6:62) In that prehuman existence he worked with Jehovah in creating all other things. John 1:3 says about this one: "All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence."—Compare Colossians 1:15, 16.

It is understandable that the Son of God could be depicted as created "Wisdom." Through him Jehovah's wise purpose, including the role of the Messiah whom the Jews were long awaiting, was made manifest. The apostle Paul said about Jesus: "Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge." (Col. 2:3) While King Solomon was renowned for his God-given wisdom, Jesus was "something more than Solomon." (1 Ki. 4:30-34; Matt. 12:42) Those who accepted Jesus Christ and had faith in him realized that he was "the power of God and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. 1:24, 30.

Accordingly, what we know about our eternally wise God and the information in the Christian Greek Scriptures about Jesus combine to make clear the appropriateness of applying Proverbs 8:22-31 to the Son of God who became the Messiah. That passage remarkably fits the origin and activities of that one whose fondness for mankind even led to his dying as a ransom sacrifice.—1 Tim. 2:5, 6; John 3:16.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

September 14: Do Not Let Yourself Be Sidetracked in the Race for Life. Page 493. Songs to Be Used: 12, 69.

September 21: Do Not Let Yourself Be Ensnared by Fads and Entertainment. Page 499. Songs to Be Used: 52, 60.

September 28: Do Not Let Your Faith Be Shipwrecked by Discouragement or Personalities. Page 505. Songs to Be Used: 101, 64.