

The

WATCHTOWER



Do You Yearn For "The Good Old Days"?

NOVEMBER 15, 1977

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

November 15, 1977
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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. One 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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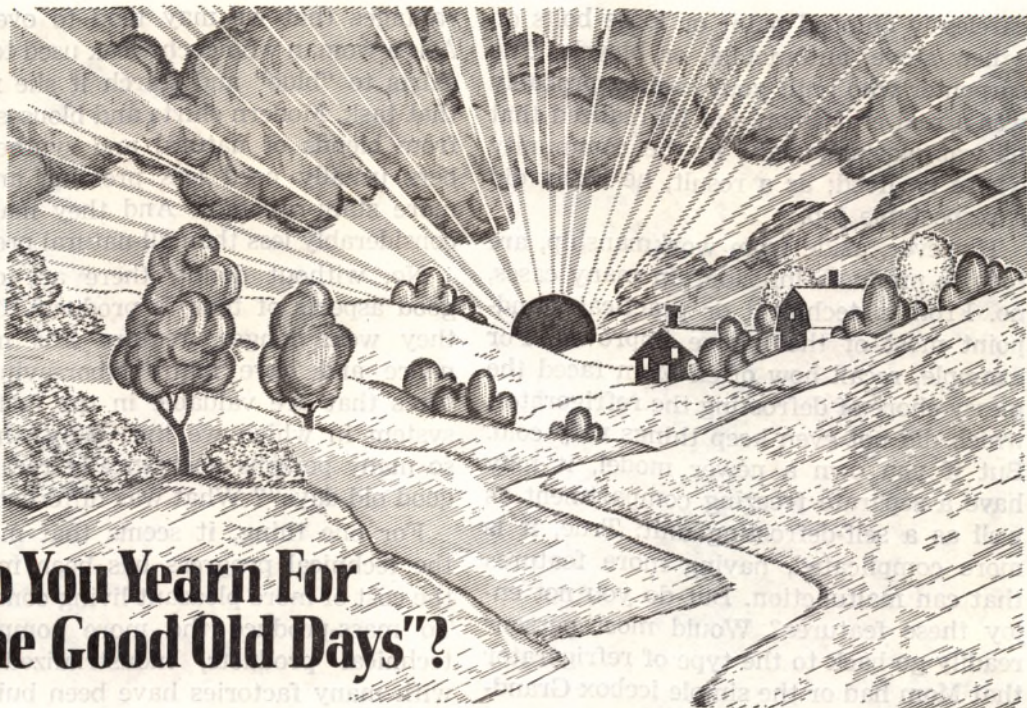
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Do You Yearn For "The Good Old Days"?

"THEY just don't make cars the way they used to." "Mom's refrigerator lasted twenty years, but this is the third time ours has quit in two years." "The old days seemed so much nicer, more peaceful."

Do those remarks sound familiar? You likely have heard others speak that way, and may have said such things yourself. Many persons yearn for what are called "the good old days." They remember fondly how things used to be, and prefer that to how things are now.

But were "the good old days" in *all* respects better than now? What makes this question even more interesting is the fact that the Bible counsels: "Do not say: 'Why has it happened that the former days proved to be better than these?' for it is not due to wisdom that you have asked about this." (Eccl. 7:10) What is the point of that counsel? Does it mean that we should ignore the fact that crime is on

the increase and that there is more family breakdown and pollution than in the past? What is the balanced view, and how can gaining this outlook contribute to our finding increased contentment now?

There is a variety of reasons why persons speak nostalgically of "the good old days." Sometimes they have in mind the fact that products such as cars, appliances, clothing or houses seem to have been better in the past. Others may be thinking more about the general way of life or the atmosphere that prevailed in years gone by. It will be revealing to examine both aspects.

WERE ALL THINGS BETTER?

With regard to manufactured goods, there is little doubt that craftsmanship was generally better in past years. Workers used to take more pride in what they did. You could see that in the finished products. Years ago you were not as likely to find

carelessly chipped paint or loose bolts on a new stove, automobile, or bicycle. The carpenter who built your cabinet probably was a real craftsman and he realized that he was working right in the community where he lived; as a result, he likely did a respectable job.

However, aside from workmanship, are today's products inferior? In many cases, no. From a technical or practical standpoint most of them have improved. For example, recall how often Mom faced the messy chore of defrosting the refrigerator, which did not even keep things very cold. But if you own a newer model, it may have a separate freezing compartment as well as a self-defrosting unit. True, it is more complicated, having more features that can malfunction. But do you not enjoy these features? Would most persons readily go back to the type of refrigerator that Mom had or the simple icebox Grandma had?

Similar points could be made about new houses or automobiles. Someone may think of his old car as being more sturdy than that of today. Yet, was its ride as comfortable and safe as that of recent models? It probably was harder to start on cold days, more difficult to steer and took more effort to bring to a stop than today's models that have better ignition systems, better power steering and improved brakes. Perhaps you used to consider it normal to change the oil in your car after 2,000 miles (3,200 km.) and put in new spark plugs after 15,000 miles (24,000 km.). With today's advanced engineering you may go 9,000 miles (14,500 km.) before replacing the oil, and your plugs may be good for 30,000 miles (48,000 km.).

As to materials, plastics or polyesters may not have the same natural or rich "feel" as wood, leather, cotton or wool products that were common in bygone years. However, they have their own ad-

vantages that we may tend to overlook. Ask a woman who each week used to have shirts to "blue" and starch if she misses that task. Modern shirts and blouses made from blends of natural and synthetic fibers usually need less pressing and are more stain-resistant. And they may cost considerably less than all-natural products.

No, without doubt, there are certain good aspects of today's products. Usually they wear longer, require less maintenance and have many laborsaving features that are valuable in the fast-paced system in which we live. Why, then, do so many persons nostalgically recall "the good old days"? What was different then?

For one thing, it seems that much of the technical progress has been made at the cost of more pleasant living conditions. To mass-produce the more complicated technical products, industrialized cities with many factories have been built, and these are recognized as chief contributors to the present pollution problem. The industrialized way of life has had its effect on the workers too. They have been pressed into leading more hectic, nervous lives, as well as living in dirtier, less healthful surroundings. This has taken its toll on the emotions and stability of people. True, the Bible says that mankind's Creator disapproves of 'those who are ruining the earth' and He purposes to cleanse the earth of them. (Rev. 11:18) But as of now the distressing problems associated with today's industrialization still exist, causing people to be unsettled and to long for "the good old days."

MORE THAN "THINGS"

But there is more to the widespread yearning for "the good old days" than just an overlooking of the technical progress mankind has made. As mentioned earlier, some persons particularly long for the way of life or the atmosphere that used to exist. They may recognize that today's

manufactured goods are in certain respects superior to yesterday's products, yet that alone does not bring them contentment. They personally may sense that some fundamental need is not being satisfied to the extent that it was in former times. Furthermore, some thinking persons may wonder

whether this basic lack of satisfaction may be contributing to the general moral breakdown that we see abounding despite man's material progress.—2 Tim. 3:1-5.

Let us, then, examine why it is that a different spirit or atmosphere seems to exist today, and what we can do about it.



Grasping The Spirit of "The Good Old Days"

AMERICAN basketball player Julius Erving was interviewed after having signed a 3.5-million-dollar contract to play ball. It is reported that when Erving was asked: "Is there anything you want that you still can't buy?" he answered: "There might be emotional or spiritual things that no one can buy, but nothing material."

By his comment, this millionaire basketball player may have touched on a basic reason why so many people today speak longingly of "the good old days." Whereas in many parts of the earth persons are experiencing unprecedented material or technological progress, many are still not content. The fact is that the satisfying of our emotional and spiritual needs is not related, necessarily, to the material goods

that we have. Nor can we buy emotional and spiritual satisfaction. In fact, the efforts that many persons put forth to get more money for advanced technical things today often interfere with satisfying their basic spiritual and emotional needs.

Jesus himself called attention to the fact that humans are not just materialists. Once when Jesus was hungry and the Devil urged him to misuse his miraculous power by turning stones into bread, Jesus replied: "It is written, 'Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth.'" (Matt. 4:1-4) Jesus thus called attention to the fact that we are not mere animals with physical needs so that the more abundantly these are supplied the happier we automatically must be. Rather, humans

have spiritual and emotional needs too. And if these are not being satisfied, we will not be truly happy or find real joy in living.

Partially illustrating this is what was noted by some researchers at the University of Connecticut. They studied seventy-five men who had given up executive jobs for lower-paying positions that would mean less pressure on them. The result? Even though the men could not have as much materially, they "often had happier lives and better marriages." Another recent study of successful speculators in the stock market indicated that they tended to be failures in romance. Why? It appears that their self-involvement with moneymaking 'precluded them from getting close to someone else.'

So, while many persons find that they have more money and material things than in past years, they still may be fondly recalling "the good old days." True, years ago most persons had to work hard to earn a living, often putting in longer hours than is common today. But it was normally a matter of their working to get the basic necessities of life, and then enjoying them. On the other hand, today many persons are desperately pursuing ever more advanced technical products, but the fact is that the acquisition of these seems to bring them less real satisfaction. The counsel of the wise man is thus even more appropriate today:

"For what does a man come to have for all his hard work and for the striving of his heart with which he is working hard under the sun? For all his days his occupation means pains and vexation, also during the night his heart just does not lie down. This too is mere vanity. With a man there is nothing better than that he should eat and indeed drink and cause his soul to see good because of his hard work."
—Eccl. 2:22-24.

Yes, the spirit of things seems to be different today. Because many persons in our

time are seeing less 'good for all their hard work,' they tend to yearn for "the good old days."

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Another thing that appeals to many about years gone by is the fact that people then seemed friendlier. You got to know other people as friends. Neighbors were not simply persons living nearby—they were also friends. There was less attention to material things and more attention to personal relationships.

In this regard, when millionaire basketball player Julius Erving was asked: "Are there any drawbacks to having a lot of money?" he replied:

"You're a target in many respects. It's difficult to have a genuinely open relationship. You have to read people, you have to have your suspicions. The vast majority are going to be acquaintances. You can say 'friend,' but it really means acquaintance."

Erving was simply confirming the Bible's proverbs: "Wealth is what adds many companions, but one that is lowly gets separated even from his companion. . . . Everybody is a companion to the man making gifts." (Prov. 19:4, 6) That was usually the situation in King Solomon's day. And it is often the case today when 'what you have' or 'what you can get' seems so important to many. And, clearly, the scarcity of real friends is not the problem of just the wealthy. Today's exaggerated emphasis on possessions rather than relationships causes persons of all statuses to lack true friends. They therefore are inclined to yearn for "the good old days."

Also related to the "spirit" of that past time is the situation in the family. Years ago family members did not constantly "isolate" themselves from each other in front of a television or a motion-picture screen. Nor did they have the sophisticated means of transportation that enable modern parents and youths to "zoom" away

at high speeds in different directions. Families did more things as a unit. The members were closer. Often entire families joined in reading the Bible together, responding to the spiritual need that the Creator implanted in humans. This also contributed to more family conversation.

WHAT TO DO

But what is the value of being aware of these good aspects or the "spirit" that was more common in "the good old days"? Can we change how things are now?

The fact is that we personally cannot undo all the technical progress that has been made. Nor do we necessarily want to, such as by trying to live as our great-grandparents did. Today is today. We have to face that fact. What would be the point of dwelling overmuch on what was?

In a sense this corresponds with the import of the inspired counsel: "Do not say: 'Why has it happened that the former days proved to be better than these?' for it is not due to wisdom that you have asked about this." (Eccl. 7:10) There is no wisdom in unrealistically dwelling on the past as if everything then was fine and nothing is now.

We can take this to heart today too. It certainly is true that, despite man's technical advancement, some persons are still starving. Others are resorting to crime as a means of livelihood, and the general moral climate is truly getting worse. But there is no need for a person's outlook to be predominantly negative.

That is well illustrated with the positive, optimistic spirit of Jehovah's Witnesses, who are not preoccupied with nostalgic remembrances of "the good old days." Jehovah's Witnesses have found that study of the Bible enables them to satisfy now their spiritual and emotional needs in a way that is even beyond what many older persons recall fondly about "the good old days."

Really, is it not what one could expect, that study of the Bible helps one to satisfy spiritual and emotional needs? Jehovah God provided the Bible. Not only is he our Creator, the One who best knows our deepest emotional needs and how we can satisfy these, but he also made us so that we could appreciate our spiritual need, our need to worship him. The psalmist truthfully wrote:

"The law of Jehovah is perfect, bringing back the soul. . . . The orders from Jehovah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice; the commandment of Jehovah is clean, making the eyes shine. The fear of Jehovah is pure, standing forever. The judicial decisions of Jehovah are true; they have proved altogether righteous. . . . In the keeping of them there is a large reward."—Ps. 19:7-11.

By studying and applying God's Word, you can receive intense emotional and spiritual satisfaction. When this is done as a family, just as Jehovah himself recommends, all the family members are drawn closer to one another and closer to their Father in heaven. Hence, while not renouncing the accomplishments and benefits of man's material progress, persons are not left as frustrated materialists or idle dreamers about the past.

There is also the resulting blessing of becoming part of a group of persons who form genuine friendships. In *Religious Movements in Contemporary America*

IN COMING ISSUES

■ **Fighters Against God
Losing the Battle.**

■ **Christmas—Is It Part
of True Worship?**

■ **Cain and His Wife.**

(1974) Lee R. Cooper presents his observations on some black Jehovah's Witnesses living in a large city. He came to see that "in their own congregational life Witnesses form a genuine community of trust and acceptance." And he concluded that "the Jehovah's Witnesses offer [a person] an alternative life strategy that gives its adherents a way to find identity and self-respect, a community of acceptance, and hope for the future." That hope centers on God's promise to do away with, not only the undesirable aspects of man's technical advancement, but also the effects of human imperfection. It is true that the present is correctly described in the Bible as the "last days" marked by many persons' being 'lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, disobedient to parents, unthankful, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, without self-control, headstrong, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.' (2 Tim. 3:1-4) But God assures us that he will soon change things.

He will accomplish this by wiping wick-

edness off the face of the earth and by establishing a new order of righteousness. Describing that time, which the evidence shows will shortly be here, Revelation 21:4 says: "And [God] 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." A similar prophecy in Isaiah 65:17 states: "For here I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart." The conditions that God will provide will be so thoroughly better in every way than what formerly existed that there will be no reason for nostalgia. Yes, at that time there will be no impulse to yearn for "the good old days."

If you would like to know more about the good days soon to come, Jehovah's Witnesses will happily aid you in studying the Bible so that you too can find great satisfaction in life right now and the assured "hope for the future" that is a recognized aspect of their lives.

New Members of the Governing Body

On September 7, 1977, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses came to the decision to invite three anointed brothers to join with them in service at Brooklyn. The new members of the Governing Body are Carey W. Barber of the United States, John E. Barr of London, England, and Martin Poetzinger of the Federal Republic of Germany. Brother Barber has been in full-time service since 1923 and has served at Brooklyn Bethel and in the traveling service. Brother Barr has served for more than thirty-seven years in the full-time service in the British Isles; he has been in the London Bethel in various services and lately has been

secretary-treasurer of the International Bible Students Association. Martin Poetzinger entered the Kingdom service in 1926 and entered pioneer service in 1930. He is a graduate of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. His full-time service was interrupted temporarily when he was imprisoned in a concentration camp during the Nazi years of persecution. We look forward to having these three brothers join in the work of the Governing Body as the Kingdom service continues to grow. There are now eighteen members of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.



The Challenge of Rearing Three French Boys

As told by Paul Petit

MY WIFE Andrée and I were living in the prosperous industrial town of Tourcoing in the north of France, near the Belgian border. I was an accountant, and I would study late into the night with the goal of becoming successful in business.

We had recently become parents to three sons, Jacques born in 1946, Paul in 1948 and Pierre in 1950. We wanted to prepare them to become successful in life, which, most people seemed to believe, would depend on their ability to make a lot of money. But then something that we learned completely changed our views.

A REAL MEANING TO LIFE

I'd always believed that there must be a God; I was a practicing Catholic. Yet God was not that real to me; I felt no personal relationship with him, nor did I feel that he had a purpose that involved us here on earth. But then my wife and I began to study the Bible, and what we learned completely changed our outlook.

The Bible teaching that especially impressed us is that God is *not* the ruler of

this system. (2 Cor. 4:4; John 12:31) In fact, Jesus and his disciples spoke about the "end of the world," meaning, as we came to appreciate, not the end of our planet Earth and the starry heavens, but, rather, of this corrupt, worldwide political, commercial and religious system. (Matt. 13:40, 49; 24:3, 14; 1 John 2:15-17) We also learned about God's purpose to form a righteous new system, and we came to have full confidence in what the Bible teaches about this: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell."—2 Pet. 3:13.

What would we do now? This knowledge presented a challenge. If we really believed what we were learning about 'the end of the world' and the bringing in of a new system under God's kingdom, we would have to do something about it, wouldn't we?

In September 1950 I dedicated my life to serve Jehovah, the God of the Bible, and symbolized this by water baptism. Two years later Andrée did likewise. I quit the

courses of study that were taking up so much of my time, and we devoted ourselves to helping others appreciate the wonderful things that we had learned. Over the years our attitude of considering God's will in all our decisions and actions made a lasting impression on our boys.

EARLY TRAINING

Rearing three young boys is never easy. But what made it especially challenging is that in 1953 I was appointed "congregation servant," as the presiding overseer of a Christian congregation was then called by Jehovah's Witnesses. Taking oversight of congregational activities took much of my time and energy, so Andrée had to assume a large share of the early training of the boys. It was difficult managing them. At times it was necessary during meetings to take them outside for some discipline.—Prov. 23:13, 14.

From the time that they were small, Andrée also conducted a personal Bible study with the boys. This was a happy day of the week for them. After the study they enjoyed a special afternoon snack and then a walk in the park. Finally they all walked over to meet me as I left the office. When the boys became older, I conducted a study with the whole family.

Very early, too, my wife and I took the boys along with us in our house-to-house witnessing work. Often on Sunday mornings they accompanied a seventy-five-year-old Witness. How happy that elderly man and the boys were to go out in the witnessing activity together! They became firm friends, thus refuting the theory that only persons of the same age-group are suited to each other.

We instilled a sense of regularity in the boys so that it would not even occur to them to miss a meeting, or to miss sharing in the preaching activity, except in un-

avoidable circumstances. It was those years of early training, I'm convinced, that produced the results stated in the Bible at Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it."

A MAJOR DECISION IN OUR LIVES

In 1958 Christian families of Jehovah's Witnesses were warmly encouraged to move to areas where there was a greater need for Kingdom preachers. In northern France, where we lived, the congregations were spiritually strong and well supported by many capable Witnesses. But other parts of the country were crying for help, reminiscent of the situation in ancient Macedonia.—Acts 16:9.

Our conscience began to bother us. What was preventing us from answering the call? Was it our three young sons? their schooling? our cozy flat? our relatives? secular work? the congregation? Excuses were not lacking on each of these points, but they did not stand up to serious examination. So after praying for divine help and guidance, we finally decided to respond to the invitation to serve Jehovah elsewhere.

Moving was no small project. This became clear to us when we made an investigative trip to an area in the south of France where the need for Christian witnesses was greater. We discovered that accommodations were expensive and hard to find, secular work was scarce, and wages were low. Happily, we did not allow these difficulties to discourage us. Within a few months, a local family found a small place for us to stay temporarily. For solving our other problems, we put our trust in Jehovah.

Finally, in 1959, we left Tourcoing for Mornas, a community not far from Orange in southeast France. Adapting ourselves to

the new situation was difficult in the beginning, but things gradually improved. The local traveling overseer of Jehovah's Witnesses soon asked us to help a small congregation in Avignon about twenty-five miles (40 kilometers) away. We gladly accepted the invitation.

How did all of this affect our three lads? At their age, they were not aware of the difficulties. They rejoiced over the changes, the traveling and the momentary interruption of their schooling. For them it was all a big adventure!

CONTINUED TRAINING

To help our boys to become well-balanced adolescents, we realized that the daily presence of their father was important. So we acquired the habit of having our three meals together every day. Although I was working more than fifteen miles (25 kilometers) away from home, I came back for lunch. I felt that the cost was more than outweighed by the advantages of a family meal.

What a lot of problems were solved around the family table! Everybody felt free to express himself. Mother told me everything about the children, whether favorable or unfavorable. Mealtime was the time for setting things straight. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) Is it not true that over a good meal you feel less aggressive and more understanding? Those regular contacts, three times a day, were very beneficial and contributed greatly toward the success of the children's training.

Another helpful part of our sons' upbringing was the time Andrée would spend with them reasoning on their failures and disappointments. Naturally, each had his own qualities, and shortcomings. For instance, one was very touchy and could suddenly become inflamed with anger. He became red in the face one day, as his

anger mounted. Then smash! His elbow crashed through a windowpane.

On that day verbal reproof was not enough. The "rod of discipline" had a literal application, in keeping with the inspired advice: "Foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy; the rod of discipline is what will remove it far from him." (Prov. 22:15) No more broken panes after that!

Yes, three sons, three different personalities, each requiring special, individual attention. We admit that we sometimes felt discouraged at endlessly having to repeat the same things to them over and over again. But we remembered the words of Paul to the Philippian Christians: "To be writing the same things to you is not troublesome for me, but it is of safety to you."—Phil. 3:1.

Andrée and I believe that something else contributed to the success in rearing our sons. We encouraged them to get to know the other children in the congregation. We allowed them to engage in wholesome entertainment, but, at the same time, we endeavored to exercise oversight so that this did not become detrimental to their spirituality.

SCHOOLING

What about schooling? Schools have a strong and not always good influence on children, particularly when it comes to morals. So we sought and found a solution.

Since schooling was then compulsory in France only up to age fourteen, Andrée and I decided to take the boys out of school at that age. We then arranged for them to receive extra schooling by means of government-approved correspondence courses.

What subject would they study by means of the correspondence courses? We chose bookkeeping. Being an accountant by profession, I was able to help them with their

homework. They eventually obtained diplomas, which later enabled them to find secular employment. Thus, our three boys spent their teens at home under our guidance. Sharing their company at all times, we got to know their personalities better, and this helped us a lot in training them.

Since the home instruction program left our sons free time, they were sometimes able to engage in temporary full-time preaching work. In 1964 Jacques, our eldest boy, began to "pioneer," continuously devoting a hundred hours a month to public witnessing. In 1966 Paul also started in the full-time witnessing work.

COURTING AND MARRIAGE

We thus managed to bring our sons successfully through childhood and adolescence. One final stage was yet to come and, intuitively, we keenly observed its developments. We could see their interests turn toward the opposite sex.

I don't know if the same thing happens in every household with grown-up, marriageable sons, but in mine, when one caught the "virus," it somehow spread to the others. One after the other, our sons contemplated associating with persons of the opposite sex. Limits were imposed on them, with appropriate explanations given. How happy we were for the timely counsel provided on the subjects of dating and courtship in *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

Eventually the three boys married Christian girls, "in the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:39) Two of them now have their own children. All three are elders in the Christian congregation, and one of them is a traveling overseer who visits congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in the south of France.

JUST THE TWO OF US—NOW WHAT?

The year 1974 saw our household reduced to two persons, Andrée and me, with

twenty-nine years of happy marriage behind us. One day, after our youngest son had married and left home, I found a phonograph record that had been slipped under our front door. It was a present from a friend. He had chosen that particular French song because its words go: "Our youngest son has just got married. Our children are now happy without us. How about now giving some thought to ourselves?"

Actually, long before receiving that disc, we had been thinking about our future when the boys would be gone. Our secret desire, if circumstances allowed, was to serve full time in the preaching work. But we were now both well over fifty. And we had no retirement benefits, nor any financial resources. Many questions rushed into our minds, and excuses were not lacking.

But after prayerful consideration, in October 1974, one month after our youngest son's wedding, our application for "pioneer" service was accepted. We were appointed as special pioneers. Later I had the privilege of serving as a temporary circuit overseer, accompanied by my wife. At present, my activities are limited by a very painful disease called polyarthrititis. But with Andrée's devoted help, I still do my utmost to serve Jehovah.

Looking back over the years, my wife and I are aware of the amount of work, and sometimes grief, worries and problems involved in rearing three boys. (Eph. 6:4) But faithful to his promise, Jehovah never abandoned us, neither materially nor spiritually. (Heb. 13:5) All the effort has been more than compensated for by the joy of seeing our sons walking along the road to life. Now, with God's promised new system so near, we look forward confidently to inheriting everlasting life, along with our children and Christian brothers and sisters world wide.—Isa. 66:22.



WHY PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS?



JEHOVAH'S Christian witnesses are usually well liked as persons by their acquaintances. Many admit that they are good neighbors and do not cause any trouble. On the other hand, some hate them, not for what they are as persons, but for what they believe, and especially because they talk freely about their beliefs. Actually, it would be strange if the Witnesses, as Christians, were not bitterly opposed, because Jesus told his disciples: "Now because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you. Bear in mind the word I said to you, A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also; if they have observed my word, they will observe yours also."—John 15:19, 20.

One reason for this persecution is that the world has its practices that it does not want to give up. The Bible truths and principles preached by Jehovah's Witnesses make many people feel condemned. (Compare Hebrews 11:7; Matthew 14:3-5; John 8:45-47.) They do not understand why the change comes about in an associate of theirs who becomes one of Jehovah's Witnesses. On this point the apostle Peter says: "The time that has passed by is sufficient for you to *have* worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries. Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you."—1 Pet. 4:3, 4.

In all of this Jehovah's Witnesses are not being

sanctimonious or self-righteous. Neither are they seeking persecution or martyrdom. They love and enjoy life and want to keep living in peace. Therefore they devote themselves to learning Bible principles and living according to them. (1 Pet. 3:10, 11) And they also want others to enjoy the fine things that they have found, and to have a hope and a purpose in life. So they call at the homes of the people because they do not want to overlook anyone and thereby fail to offer every person the life-giving message of the "good news." (Compare Acts 20:26, 27; Ezekiel 33:2-5.) They call repeatedly, because they know that circumstances change, and a person not listening today may experience a change in his situation and in his thinking later on.—Eccl. 11:6.

It is actually out of love for the people that the Witnesses call at their homes. They know that people's lives are in danger and they want to help them. They are not making any personal profit, but they have the joy of seeing individuals learn the truth and take a stand on the side of Jehovah's universal sovereignty. They have received free and they give free.—Matt. 10:8.

HATED FOR OBEYING THE 'LAW OF THEIR GOD'

The apostle Peter wrote to Christians: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a busybody in other people's matters. But if he suffers as a Christian, let him not feel shame, but let him keep on glorifying God in this name." (1 Pet. 4:15, 16) Since Jehovah's Witnesses try to follow this counsel, their persecutors have been forced to follow the tactics of the prophet Daniel's enemies in the Persian Empire. They said to one another: "We shall find in this Daniel no pretext at all, except we have to find it against him in the law of his God."—Dan. 6:5.

In accordance with the apostle Peter's instructions, then, Jehovah's Witnesses are brought before courts, not on charges of immorality, thievery or other forms of illegality, but because they follow the Bible's injunctions. For example, they are hated by religious leaders because they do not teach that God is going to torment people in an eternal hellfire, a thing that the Scriptures themselves do not teach, and that insults and reproaches the God of love.

Some are opposed because the Witnesses do not take blood transfusions. This refusal is not a rejection of all medical treat-

ment. Jehovah's Witnesses often turn to doctors or surgeons in their sicknesses. But their refusal to take or give blood for transfusions is wholly Bible-based. It is a sticking to God's Word, which specifically says: "Abstain . . . from blood." (Acts 15:19, 20, 28, 29; Gen. 9:4; compare Leviticus 17:13, 14.) But the Witnesses do not tell people who believe in taking blood not to do so.*

The Witnesses are neutral as to warfare and strife between the nations, as well as being clean from all political involvement, not even voting, because they fulfill Jesus' description of them as being "no part of the world." (John 17:14) For the same reason they do not salute the flag or emblem of any nation. For a Christian witness of Jehovah to give devotion, worship or service to, or to bow to or salute any image or idol is a grave sin in the eyes of God.—1 John 5:21; Acts 15:29; compare Exodus 20:4, 5; Deuteronomy 5:8, 9.

But Jehovah's Witnesses know that "all those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted." (2 Tim. 3:12; Mark 10:30; John 15:20) Therefore, while not seeking persecution or enjoying the suffering that persecution brings, they are nonetheless happy because it is an added evidence to them that they are taking the right course and are pleasing their God Jehovah. (Matt. 5:11, 12; Acts 5:41) They are not embittered because of persecution, but continue to declare the "good news" to all, and are seeing many honest-hearted persons gladly accept the "good news" and join them in carrying it to others.

* See the booklet *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Question of Blood*.

Insight on the News

- A highly controversial new book published in England challenges the traditional Church teaching that Jesus is God. Entitled "The Myth of God Incarnate," the book's authors, seven noted British theologians, argue that Jesus was not God in human form but "a man approved by God" for a special role.

Theologians Torpedo Trinity

"There is actually nothing new about the central themes of this book," says John Hick, the book's editor, who is professor of theology at Birmingham University. "That the historical Jesus did not present Himself as God incarnate is accepted by all [theologians] . . . Christian laymen today are not fully aware of it." Jesus, says Hick, "did not teach the doctrine of the trinity." In a section of the book, Frances Young, lecturer at Birmingham University, suggested that the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ was adopted by the early church through a fusion of pagan and Jewish traditions.

Though the theologians who wrote this book do not present Jesus Christ as the Bible does, as truly 'the Son of God,' they have drawn attention to the falseness of the Trinity doctrine, as taught by Christendom's churches. Jesus himself never claimed to be God but said: "The Father is greater than I am."—Luke 1:35; John 14:28. See also John 20:17.

- "Our philosophy of rehabilitation has been shipwrecked," said Sweden's chief prosecutor Holger Romander.

Rehabilitation Reexamined

"Criminality will not be cured through prison rehabilitation." Though Sweden's prison system is regarded as one of the most progressive in the world, the rate of return to prison among those with previous convictions is more than 70 percent. This is as high as any in the world. Thus, a western-European prison expert said: "It is disheartening. In my country we are still in the Middle Ages compared to the Swedish approach to criminals."

What do criminals themselves say about rehabilitation? According to a recent Rand Corporation study of 49 habitual Californian criminals, most said that nothing would have prevented their return to crime—not even

harsher treatment in prison, longer sentences, or the strong likelihood of being caught. The majority clearly favored crime as their career. "I wasn't equipped to handle the outside world," explained one. "I always felt really uncomfortable with straight people."

Evidently "wicked people exist," as noted by James Q. Wilson, professor of government at Harvard University, in his book "Thinking About Crime." Of course, human rehabilitation systems also may not reach the hearts of some persons. But we can be sure that man's Creator, who knows the heart, will soon take action to remove the truly wicked from the earth, as God's Word promises: "Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more. . . . But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth."—Ps. 37:10, 11.

- Once every 10 years the Bavarian town of Oberammergau in Germany puts on what has been called the "world-

"Playing" with the Truth

renowned Passion Play." Because the Second Vatican Council condemned anti-Semitism, the script for the drama has come under scrutiny. The village recently voted to spend \$387,000 for trial performances of a revised version, assigning guilt to the Roman soldiers, instead of to the Jewish religious leaders, who, in the Bible, are shown responsible.—Acts 3:12-15.

Not all were happy with the revised version, and 820 of the town's 4,800 population signed a petition protesting the changes. Why? For the sake of the truth? No, apparently money was the main factor, as the protesters feared that any changes might jeopardize the profits that the village made on the play. (In 1970, the 93 performances of the drama netted the village a profit of close to \$8 million.)

But whether the town council finally approves the new version or not, it is ironical that any proposed play about Jesus' death would disregard the truth—especially since Jesus told Pilate on the day of his death: "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) Of course, anti-Semitism is definitely wrong, but nothing is accomplished by trying to change the facts of history.

**"The commandment is a lamp,
and a light the law is,
and the reproofs of discipline
are the way of life."—Prov.6:23.**



'REPROOFS ARE THE WAY OF LIFE

WE IMPERFECT humans often err in word, attitude and action. Writing to fellow Christians, the apostle John said: "If we make the statement: 'We have no sin,' we are misleading ourselves and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8) The Christian disciple James acknowledged: "We all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man, able to bridle also his whole body." (Jas. 3:2) How, then, can we gain and maintain a fine standing before God?

² We need to have our sins forgiven. This

1. In view of what condition of humankind does the question arise as to how we can gain and maintain an unblemished standing before Jehovah? (Rom. 3:23)
2. (a) What must a person do to be viewed as clean by Jehovah? (1 Ki. 8:46-50; Isa. 1:16-18; 55:6, 7; Col. 1:13, 14; Rev. 7:14) (b) How does Bible-based reproof help us to maintain an unblemished standing before the Almighty? (Prov. 3:12; Rev. 3:19)

The December 1, 1976, *Watchtower* carried a series of articles on the subject of reproof. Many readers appreciated the material and expressed the desire that additional information be published, enlarging on points therein contained. The study articles in the present issue have been prepared with this in mind.

requires that we confess our transgressions to the Most High, show true repentance or regret, and pray for forgiveness on the basis of Jesus' atoning sacrifice. "If we confess our sins," says the Bible,

"he is faithful and righteous so as to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) Reproof based on God's Word and its righteous principles

can show us just how we are sinning and, therefore, helps us to take the necessary steps to gain God's forgiveness and thereby maintain an unblemished standing before him. Such reproof can also aid us to avoid more serious wrongdoing.

³ In reading the Bible or Bible-based

3. What may prompt us to reprove ourselves, and how do we do so? (Prov. 1:20-25)

counsel or when hearing God's Word discussed at a congregation meeting, we may come to realize that we have sinned in some respect. We may sincerely regret our failings, pray to be forgiven and request the help of God's spirit in making further progress toward harmonizing our life with his will. In thus *taking to heart* Bible counsel and *applying* it, we reprove ourselves.

WHEN TROUBLED AT HEART

⁴ Then, again, a person, on becoming involved in wrongdoing or due to his sinful nature, may feel unworthy to approach God in prayer. His spiritual distress may affect his physical well-being. This may happen even though the individual really hates the wrong and sincerely wants to do what is right. When finding himself in such a state, what should a person do? The disciple James answers: "Let him call the older men of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him." (Jas. 5:14) On hearing the fervent, heartfelt prayer of an elder in his behalf, the distressed person may be strengthened to draw close to Jehovah in prayer. Moreover, he may be helped to reason rightly: 'If others are confident that Jehovah will answer prayers in my behalf, can I not also be confident that he will answer my prayers?'

⁵ Such a repentant person does not need reproof by someone else to make him aware of the seriousness of his sin. His own heart has already reproved him, in fact, condemned him. (1 John 3:19-22; compare 2 Samuel 24:10; Psalm 32:3-5.) So, the elders may need to remind the spiritually weakened one of Jehovah's mercy and his willingness to hear our prayers. (Neh. 9:17; Matt. 7:7-11) Arrangements

may have to be made to build up the individual spiritually, this being done progressively over a period of weeks or even months. One who is thus in need would certainly not want to underestimate the help that can be provided through the elders.

DEALING WITH UNWHOLESOME TRENDS

⁶ There are times, of course, when elders need to reprove individuals or, in a general sense, the congregation collectively respecting certain attitudes or actions. Unwholesome trends may be developing. Some may have lost 'the love that they had at first' and be seriously neglectful of their spiritual responsibilities. (Rev. 2:4; 3:15-18) Perhaps worldliness is creeping into their social gatherings. (1 Pet. 4:3) Certain ones may be engaging in hurtful gossip or may in other ways be failing to control their tongues. (Eph. 4:29, 31; 5:3, 4) Parents may be very lax in training their children. (Eph. 6:4) There may be those who are immoderate in drinking alcoholic beverages or who take liberties in their association with the opposite sex. (Eph. 5:18-20; compare 1 Timothy 5:1, 2.) When conditions of this kind exist in the congregation, it would be good for the elders to discuss together just what might be done to help individuals and the brothers as a whole.

⁷ Possibly, appropriate chapters from the Bible or Bible-based articles could be read and discussed privately with one who is having serious spiritual problems. By making sure that the individual needing help understands what the scriptures being considered mean and how they apply to his situation, the elders will be correcting or reproofing him. Often this can be done by one or two elders in the informal atmo-

4. (a) Why might a person come to feel unworthy about approaching Jehovah in prayer? (b) What should a person who is in spiritual distress do, and how can this help him?

5. (a) Why is there no need to give reproof to a person who is deeply distressed over sins that he may have committed? (b) What might the elders do to help such a repentant person?

6. What might be some unwholesome trends that could develop in a congregation, and what should the elders consider?

7. What is one way in which elders can give Scriptural reproof in the homes of their brothers?



We may be reproved in various ways, such as by reading the Scriptures or a Bible-study aid, being talked to personally and hearing a Scriptural talk at a congregation meeting



sphere of the person's home.

—Compare Acts 20:18-20, 31.

^s On the other hand, the elders may consider it advisable to give Scriptural talks that come to grips with and reason on undesirable developments in the congregation. (2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:10-14) The clear, forceful Biblical presentation should move the

8. How can Bible-based talks about undesirable developments in the congregation serve as a reproof to the hearers?

hearers to examine themselves and to make the necessary changes in their lives. (Compare James 1:22-25.) When they recognize that the scriptures being considered apply to them personally, they will be reproofed.—Compare 1 Corinthians 14:24, 25, where the reference is to an unbeliever's being reproofed by what he hears at a congregation meeting.

INCIDENTS OF SERIOUS WRONGDOING REQUIRING REPROOF

⁹ As in the first century, so also today some baptized Christians commit gross sins that bring reproach on the congregation. (For examples of such wrongs, see 1 Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 5:19-21 and 1 Timothy 1:9, 10.) They may err gravely only once or they may continue in a course of sin for a period of time. One who commits a gross wrong, though only once, remains unclean in God's eyes until such time as he turns to Jehovah in repentance and seeks divine forgiveness.

¹⁰ What responsibility do the elders have toward those who become involved in serious wrongs? Every effort should be made to help these persons spiritually, aiding them to come to repentance, if they have not already done so. The elders need to give careful and prayerful consideration as to how this can best be accomplished.

¹¹ At times the individual caught up in gross wrongdoing is sad in a godly way and expresses a firm determination to do what is right. His words reveal that he understands just how bad his sin was. So, he does not need to be convinced of the seriousness of this particular wrongdoing with a view to bringing him to repentance. But he may not appreciate fully that there were other sins that led to his serious

failing. The individual may have slipped into a corrupt pattern of thinking. He may have been careless about his choice of reading matter and forms of entertainment. By allowing himself to come under strong worldly influences, he may have dulled his perceptive powers so that he has difficulty in distinguishing right from wrong. (Heb. 5:11, 14) Therefore, he definitely needs reproof, and it may require considerable time for the elders to help him to see just what it means to be a Christian in the fullest sense of the word. They may have to point out to him just how he repeatedly disregarded Scriptural admonition. They may also need to make him aware of the importance of repenting, not just over the gross sin, but also over the lesser sins that led up to it.

¹² So that the congregation might have a wholesome fear of getting involved in a like course of sin, the elders may decide to present to the congregation a Scriptural discussion dealing with the wrongdoer's problem. Though his name may not be mentioned, he himself will know that he is being reproofed before all, and so will those who are aware of the situation. (1 Tim. 5:20) In determining whether there should be public expression of reproof as regards the wrong conduct of an individual, elders should consider whether it is truly in the best interests of the congregation, including the repentant wrongdoer. They should also give thought to what restrictions, if any, should be imposed upon the one who is reproofed.

MAINTAINING A FAMILY-LIKE ATTITUDE

¹³ In reproofing erring ones, elders need to keep in mind that the congregation is like a family, an 'association of brothers.' (1 Pet. 5:9) Those in the congregation should be treated kindly and respectfully

9. (a) What kind of sins can bring great reproach upon the congregation? (b) Why might a person who has committed a gross sin only once still be in an unclean position before Jehovah?

10. What responsibility do elders have toward persons guilty of gross sin?

11. Why may a person who is repentant over his gross wrongdoing need further reproof?

12. What factors might move elders to reprove a member of the congregation publicly?

13. How does the fact that a congregation is like a family govern the way erring ones should be treated?

as one would treat members of one's own fleshly family. (1 Tim. 5:1, 2) Good parents do not handle the wrongdoing of their children as does a judge in a court, simply getting the facts and then rendering a decision. They try to help wayward children to come to their senses and in the future to conduct themselves in a way that will bring credit, not disgrace, to the family.

¹⁴ Often parents handle matters privately with a child that gets into trouble, not exposing their son or daughter to shame before the whole family. But when they deem it necessary, they may let all the other children know what has happened, the discipline given to the disobedient member of the family thus serving as a warning example to them. Parents may, for a time, put up patiently even with the wrongs of an adult son or daughter still living at home. Then, after repeated disciplinary efforts fail to correct a bad situation, they may demand that the grown son or daughter leave the house. (Compare this with what Israelite parents did in harmony with the command at Deuteronomy 21:18-21.) In taking this action, they may also have in mind shielding their younger children from a corrupt influence.

¹⁵ Though they are like older brothers rather than parents of those in the congregation, elders similarly should first do everything that they can to bring erring ones to repentance. This may take time so that appropriate Scriptural reproof can be given. Even Jesus Christ, with reference to the woman Jezebel in the Thyatira congregation, said: "I gave her time to repent, but she is not willing to repent of her fornication." (Rev. 2:21) When, as in the case of that woman Jezebel, there

is no willingness to repent, elders should take disfellowshipping action, removing corrupting "leaven" from the congregation.—1 Cor. 5:6, 7.

¹⁶ So that elders can be of real assistance to erring ones, they must look at matters in the light of the complete Word of God and not just a few passages that mention specific wrongs. On the surface, a particular case of wrongdoing may appear to be identical to one handled previously. However, the circumstances, attitudes and motives of the individuals involved may be very different. All the factors should be weighed carefully in the light of the Scriptures, to ascertain what is in the best interests of the congregation and the erring one. Any Scriptural reproof given should fit the needs of the individual. After getting a complete picture of what has happened and what led up to the wrongdoing, the elders who are caring for the problem may have to take time for personal meditation and prayerful consideration of the Scriptures before getting together as a group to discuss what should be done. This will put them in a far better position to give sound reproof and needed spiritual aid.

¹⁷ Scriptural reproof definitely plays a vital role in helping all in the Christian congregation to follow a course that leads to everlasting life. May we, individually, remain attentive to the reproof found in the Bible, resisting temptations to become involved in conduct that would bring reproach upon the Most High God and the congregation of his devoted people. If we do, we can rest assured of Jehovah's blessing now and the reward of everlasting life in his coming righteous new order.—John 17:3.

14. How might good parents handle matters in connection with the wrongdoing of their children?

15. When it comes to wrongdoers, what should be the first objective of elders, and when only would they take disfellowshipping action?

16. What are some of the things elders will need to do in order to be of the greatest help to erring ones?

17. As members of the congregation, what should we be determined to do, and what rewards does this hold out?

GENUINE REPENTANCE — HOW IS IT IDENTIFIED?

"A heart broken and crushed, O God, you will not despise."—Ps. 51:17.

ELDERS are not 'father confessors' who have been authorized to forgive all the sins that members of the congregation may commit. It is Jehovah God who forgives the sins of repentant ones, doing so on the basis of his Son's atoning sacrifice. Therefore, a person's being forgiven by Jehovah is not dependent upon his confessing his sins to the elders. (1 John 1: 8, 9; 2:1, 2) However, by serious transgression, a person can also sin against the congregation. This is the case because gross wrongdoing can bring much reproach and trouble upon the congregation with which the wayward one is associated. Hence, elders representing the congregation should make sure that the individual is genuinely repentant before extending forgiveness to him for the bad name that he has given to the congregation.

² That the congregation can forgive or withhold forgiveness in certain cases is evident from what the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians about accepting a repentant disfellowshipped man back into their midst. He wrote: "You should kindly forgive and comfort him." (2 Cor. 2:7) The apostle recommended forgiving this

man because the 'rebuke given to him by the majority' had served its purpose in bringing him to repentance. (2 Cor. 2:6) Because the man had sincerely repented and straightened out his life to conform to Jehovah's righteous requirements, it was right for the congregation to receive him back. He had sought Jehovah's forgiveness for his sin and now the congregation also forgave him, not in the sense of granting "absolution" for his sin, but in forgiving him for the trouble, reproach and sorrow that his wrongdoing had brought upon the congregation.

³ In certain cases a person's record of sin, when brought to light, may be very shameful. For a period of months or even years he may have conducted himself in a way that would be considered sinful even in the world. Later, he may come to the elders, stating that he recently stopped his wrongdoing and prayed to God for forgiveness. He may feel that he has reproved himself. Or, upon being confronted with evidence of his shameful conduct, he may tell the elders that he reproved himself and, therefore, did not consider it necessary to approach them about the matter. What should the elders do? They should determine what kind of spiritual help the individual needs and whether he is indeed

3. What should elders do when persons who have committed grave sins claim that they reproved themselves?

1. (a) To gain forgiveness, to whom should sins be confessed, and why? (b) Why can a sin against Jehovah God also be a sin against the congregation?

2. (a) What do we learn from 2 Corinthians 2:7 about the congregation's forgiving sin? (b) Of just what did the congregation forgive the repentant Corinthian man?

truly repentant. This may require more than one discussion with him in order to ascertain his true feelings, motivations and needs. The truly repentant one will welcome and humbly accept such loving help from the elders.

WORLDLY SADNESS OR GENUINE REPENTANCE—WHICH?

⁴ A wrongdoer should, of course, have feelings of sadness, remorse and regret as regards his sinful course. Depending upon the emotional makeup of the individual, these feelings may or may not be accompanied by tears. However, elders should keep in mind that not all sadness, remorse or regret is necessarily proof of genuine repentance. The Christian apostle Paul wrote: "Sadness in a godly way makes for repentance to salvation that is not to be regretted; but the sadness of the world produces death." (2 Cor. 7:10) Hence, elders properly seek insight as to what motivates the wrongdoer's sadness.

⁵ Worldly sadness may stem simply from a sense of personal failure and accompanying disappointment, or from concern over the loss of esteem or of certain benefits, or from the prospect of undergoing discipline or shame. This is a sadness over the undesirable and hurtful results of the wrongdoing, or over the fact that the wrongdoing came to light. Though normal in themselves, if these feelings are the sole reasons for sadness, then the individual does not truly regret having committed the sin but is distressed about having been exposed. He is not really concerned about the reproach that his transgression has brought upon God.

⁶ This is well illustrated in the case of Esau. For one meal he sold his birthright to Jacob. Years later, when Jacob received

the blessing that was due the firstborn, Esau gave way to an emotional outburst of sorrow. He cried out "in an extremely loud and bitter manner," wanting to persuade his father Isaac to change his mind about blessing Jacob. Esau did not regret the unspiritual attitude that prompted him to 'despise his birthright.' No, he regretted the fact that he had lost benefits through his course of action.—Gen. 25:29-34; 27:34; Heb. 12:16, 17.

⁷ Another case in point is King Saul. Told by the prophet Samuel that he had disregarded God's command to devote the Amalekites to destruction, Saul tried to justify himself, insisting that he had carried out the word of Jehovah. In unmistakable terms Samuel then set forth the king's failure and added: "Since you have rejected the word of Jehovah, he accordingly rejects you from being king." Hearing this, Saul admitted: "I have sinned; for I have overstepped the order of Jehovah and your words, because I feared the people and so obeyed their voice. And now, please, pardon my sin and return with me that I may prostrate myself to Jehovah." (1 Sam. 15:17-25) But this acknowledgment of sin was not true repentance. Why not?

⁸ Saul still minimized his sin, trying to excuse it on the basis that he yielded to fear of the people. He did not make a heartfelt acknowledgment of his having sinned against Jehovah. His words were evidently prompted by the fear of being rejected as king and experiencing public disgrace. This is evident from Saul's plea that Samuel return with him. How so? It was not just a matter of Samuel's returning to offer an intercessory prayer in Saul's behalf. When Samuel insisted on leaving, Saul pleaded: "Honor me, please, in front of the older men of my people and in front of Israel and return with me."

4. Is great sadness always evidence of true repentance? Explain.

5. What motivates worldly sadness, and why is it not genuine repentance?

6. What shows that Esau's emotional outburst in connection with Isaac's blessing Jacob was not true repentance?

7, 8. What reveals that King Saul's acknowledgment of sin was not genuine repentance?

(1 Sam. 15:30) Thus Saul was concerned about how he would appear in the eyes of others. He wanted to be honored by Samuel's presence, not disgraced by his absence. So, Saul's admission of sin was merely an expression of his lips. It was not "sadness in a godly way" over having offended Jehovah God.

⁹ From what the Bible says about Esau and King Saul, we can draw some vital points that can help elders to gain insight as to whether a wrongdoer is repentant. Tears may accompany expressions of true sorrow. Nonetheless, like Esau's tears, emotional displays are not in themselves proof of repentance. By the same token, the absence of such does not necessarily mean that the erring one is unrepentant. The important thing is that the individual deeply regrets the wrong, acknowledging it as a sin against Jehovah. He would bring into question any claimed repentance if he continued to justify or excuse his actions. The individual should come to hate the wrong course, loathing it. While there may be a natural measure of embarrassment in his having become guilty of grave sin, his primary concern should be not so much with the unpleasant consequences of his wrongdoing but, rather, the reproach he brought upon Jehovah God and the congregation of his people. He should sincerely regret having damaged his relationship with the Most High.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN TRUE REPENTANCE?

¹⁰ A person's feeling of sadness over bringing reproach upon Jehovah is not something necessarily apart or isolated from his feeling of remorse as regards harm done to his brothers and fellow humans. The apostle John shows that love for our brothers is evidence of love for

God, in fact, an inseparable part thereof. (1 John 3:11, 17; 4:7, 8, 11, 12, 20, 21) Wrongdoing is always, inevitably, harmful. If ever we should become involved in some serious wrongdoing, we might well meditate on such things as these:

¹¹ Having committed such a wrong, do we feel hurt at heart upon realizing that we have been unlike the loving upright God that we serve, acting in a selfish, even greedy way, not showing consideration for the interests of others? (1 Thess. 4:3-6) Could we really think that wrongdoing, such as immorality, could ever contribute to the true happiness of others? How much concern have we shown for their lasting good and their hope of life in God's favor? Our actions might not have *directly* touched others, but we still affect people by our example and influence. (Rom. 14:7) Are we, then, so self-centered that we will please ourselves even though we know we are setting a bad example, acting as a weakening influence that can erode others' spiritual strength? (Contrast Romans 15:2, 3.) According to Jesus Christ, the road to life is 'narrow and cramped and few are finding it.' (Matt. 7:14) We should know ourselves how much effort it takes to stay on the path of righteousness. So do we want to be like someone who, in effect, walks along in that narrow pathway and drops boulders that can make others stumble or at least make their progress more difficult than it already is? How unlike our heavenly Father that would be! (Isa. 40:11) As the apostle Paul states, we certainly "did not learn the Christ to be so." (Eph. 4:19-24) If we truly love and admire God and his Son for their splendid qualities, do we not feel deep shame and sorrow at acting so differently from them, betraying their trust in us? Yes, thoughts such as these are in line with true repentance.

9. What do we learn about repentance from the Scriptural record about Esau and Saul?

10. Why should a person's feelings of sadness over bringing reproach upon Jehovah also include remorse about the harm done to his brothers and fellow humans?

11. If we should ever become involved in grave wrongdoing, what are some things we should seriously consider?

Though King Manasseh had sinned greatly, his genuine repentance was proved by his zealously clearing out the idolatrous "sacred poles"



¹² Another vital part of repentance is illustrated in the case of King Manasseh of Judah. Regarding his sin, the Bible tells us: "He did on a large scale what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, to offend him." (2 Ki. 21: 6) Finally, as an expression of Jehovah's judgment, Manasseh was taken captive to Babylon. There he repented. The Scriptures report: "He softened the face of Jehovah his God and kept humbling himself greatly because of the God of his forefathers. And he kept praying to Him, so that He let himself be entreated by him and He heard his request for favor and restored him to Jerusalem to his kingship." (2 Chron. 33:12, 13) Thereafter Manasseh did what he could to rectify his wrongs, clearing out idolatrous practices from his realm, sacrificing to Jehovah and encouraging the people to serve the Most High. (2 Chron. 33:15, 16) This shows that true repentance involves both abandoning the wrong course and making a determined effort to do what is right.

¹³ So, then, a person who is truly repentant should be able to point to "fruit that befits repentance." (Matt. 3:8) This would include the individual's putting forth rea-

sonable efforts to rectify matters to the extent that he finds possible in his present circumstances. For example, his profession of repentance would have little substance if he showed no concern as to compensating for something he stole. Also, if he made no positive resolve to follow a right course, there would be a serious question about whether his repentance was genuine.

¹⁴ But how is the matter to be viewed if an individual's sin is very shocking and has given rise to much bad publicity? Again, whether the wrongdoer is expelled from the congregation or not depends upon his genuine repentance or lack of it.

¹⁵ Whenever evidence of sincere repentance is missing, the elders need to be careful that they do not allow themselves to be governed by sentimentality. They cannot condone wrongdoing, simply ignoring or viewing as of little consequence the reproach and trouble an unrepentant person's lawlessness has brought upon the congregation. Were they to do so, this could have a damaging effect on the con-

12. What point about repentance can we draw from the course King Manasseh followed after God forgave him?

13. What might "fruit that befits repentance" include, and why?

14. When a person's record of sin is very shocking and accompanied by bad publicity, what determines whether he should be disfellowshipped or not?

15. When is it proper for elders to take disfellowshipping action, and why?

gregation as a whole. Some members of the congregation might be emboldened to take liberties and to disregard the inspired counsel: "Be as free people, and yet holding your freedom, not as a blind for badness, but as slaves of God." (1 Pet. 2:16) Furthermore, the wrongdoer himself might come to regard sin lightly, exercise even less restraint in the future and get others involved in lawlessness. Wise King Solomon observed: "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in them to do bad." (Eccl. 8:11) So, when the genuineness of a wrongdoer's repentance is subject to serious question and when there is clear evidence that corruption is likely to result, elders should not hesitate to heed the admonition: "Remove the wicked man from among yourselves."—1 Cor. 5:13.

WRONGDOING BY ELDERS AND MINISTERIAL SERVANTS

¹⁶ Since elders have such weighty responsibility in the Christian congregation, their conduct should certainly be exemplary. Therefore, if an elder commits a grave wrong, he is morally obligated to inform the body of elders respecting this, even though he may have repented of his error. Why? Because, having ceased to be irreprehensible, he is now disqualified from continuing to serve as an overseer. (1 Tim. 3:2) For men with serious spiritual blemishes to serve as elders would not conform to God's standard of holiness.—1 Pet. 1:15, 16; compare the law at Leviticus 21:17-23, which prohibited men of Aaron's house from carrying out priestly duties if they had a physical defect.

¹⁷ Of course, like all other members of

the congregation, elders time and again fall short of reflecting Jehovah's image perfectly. Because of his repeated failings, an elder may come to feel that he no longer measures up to Scriptural requirements and may bring this to the attention of the other elders. After looking into the matter and also taking into consideration the conscientious feelings of the congregation as a whole, the other elders, however, may conclude that the kind of shortcomings involved do not call into question the man's qualifications to serve as an overseer. (See Galatians 2:11-14, where we learn of Peter's being reproved; this wrong did not disqualify him from continuing to serve as an elder.) Nevertheless, if this elder still conscientiously believes that he is no longer irreprehensible, the other elders should respect his feelings and relieve him of his responsibilities.

¹⁸ On the other hand, if there is a valid accusation against an elder or if he confesses to gross sin, the other elders should assume full responsibility for relieving him of his eldership and should reprove him as needed, imposing whatever restrictions are advisable. Or, where an unrepentant attitude on his part makes it necessary, they should take disfellowshipping action.

¹⁹ As in the case of elders, ministerial servants who become guilty of grave wrongs have a moral responsibility to let the elders know about this. Only men who are "free from accusation" are qualified to serve in that capacity. (1 Tim. 3:10) Therefore, instances of wrongdoing involving ministerial servants are dealt with like those involving elders.

²⁰ If God requires every member of the Christian congregation to be conscientious about pleasing him and keeping clean for

16. If an elder becomes guilty of serious wrongdoing, what should he do, and why?

17. What should be done if an elder feels that he is no longer irreprehensible?

18. What responsibility do elders have toward one of their number that becomes guilty of grave sin?

19. What should a ministerial servant who becomes involved in serious sin do, and why?

20. What good may result from an example of genuine repentance?

his service, those who are elders and ministerial servants should certainly be no less sensitive as to their conduct. They are generally more experienced in the Christian way of life and are held more responsible by God, for they are examples. (Compare Luke 12:48; 1 Peter 5:2, 3.) Even if they make a grave mistake, their sincere repentance, manifested by their turning around from their wrong and their bringing it to the attention of the body of elders, is an example. This may serve to help others who slip into serious sin to take a like repentant course. The zeal for clearing themselves before God, the earnestness, the indignation toward their own wrongs, the effort at righting the wrong, will work for the salvation of all. Moreover, it will maintain peace in the congregation—peace with God and with one another.—2 Cor. 7:11.

What did the Wise Man mean?

The Sad Plight of the Fool

Contrasting the effect of the wise one's words with those of a fool, Solomon wrote: "The words of the mouth of the wise one mean favor, but the lips of the stupid one swallow him up." (Eccl. 10:12) From the mouth of wise persons come forth words that impart what is good and favorable to the listener. (Compare Ephesians 4:29.) Their sayings also are more likely to receive a favorable response. But the speech of the stupid one exposes him to reproach and thus ruins him or 'swallows him up.'

²¹ How very vital genuine repentance is! Really, because of being imperfect, we daily fail in some way to reflect the image of Jehovah God perfectly. This is something we should rightly regret. But it should not cause us to torment ourselves over every minor fault or slip. Nevertheless, the realization that we often err in word and in deed should keep us humble and help us to be merciful when others sin against us. Then, when we pray to God for forgiveness of our trespasses, we can be confident that he will be pleased with our prayers. (Matt. 6:12, 14, 15) Thus, we will enjoy a clean conscience as we continue seeking to do his will. Yes, we will be truly happy, knowing that Jehovah has forgiven our sins and that he views us as his clean servants who have before them the prospect of everlasting life.—Ps. 32:1, 2; 103:10-13.

21. What wholesome effect can repentance have on us?

The "stupid one" utters foolishness from start to finish, often arguing from a wrong premise and winding up with false conclusions. Solomon describes this as follows: "The start of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end afterward of his mouth is calamitous madness. And the foolish one speaks many words. Man does not know what will come to be; and that which will come to be after him, who can tell him?" (Eccl. 10:13, 14) The fool thinks that he can do this.

Such a person makes life hard for him-

self also in other ways. Solomon continues: "The hard work of the stupid ones makes them weary, because not one has come to know how to go to the city." (Eccl. 10:15) Persons who fail to use good judgment may toil endlessly, tiring themselves out, and yet accomplish virtually nothing truly worth while. They stubbornly ignore what common sense should teach them. They miss even what is obvious, things comparable to the easily recognizable public thoroughfare leading to a city.

When Foolishness Exists Among the Ruling Class

Foolishness is bad enough when exhibited by the ordinary citizen. But when rulers fail to use good sense and sound judgment, this is to the ruination of the government and the hurt of its subjects. "How will it be with you, O land," asks Solomon, "when your king is a boy and your own princes keep eating even in the morning?" (Eccl. 10:16) It is indeed a sad situation when a ruler has the characteristics of an inexperienced youth and is surrounded by princes or counselors who have no interest in the affairs of state. If they spend their time eating in the morning when they should be attending to their duties, the kingdom will fall apart.

Contrasting the effect of good governmental administration, Solomon continues: "Happy are you, O land, when your king is the son of noble ones [hence, himself a wise and noble ruler] and your own princes eat at the proper time for mightiness [to gain strength for their work], not for mere drinking [not giving themselves up to self-indulgence]." (Eccl. 10:17) Yes, wise rulers can contribute much toward the happiness of their subjects.

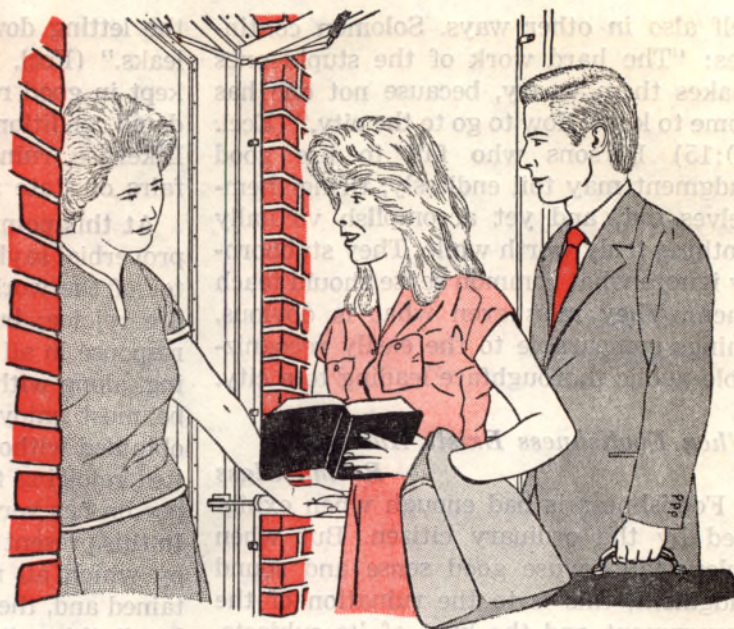
The proverbial saying that Solomon thereafter introduces illustrates that ruin and decay result whenever vital work is left undone. We read: "Through great laziness the beamwork sinks in, and through

the letting down of the hands the house leaks." (Eccl. 10:18) A house that is not kept in good repair will fall into a dilapidated condition. The roof will sag and leak. Likewise, ruination follows when the affairs of state are not cared for properly.

At this point Solomon presents another proverbial saying: "Bread is for the laughter of the workers, and wine itself makes life rejoice; but money is what meets a response in all things." (Eccl. 10:19) Eating, along with pleasant conversation, can be most enjoyable. But bread cannot be obtained without money, and there is limited rejoicing from drinking wine when a person has very little for life's necessities. In this present system, money is the means by which all material things can be obtained and, therefore, it "meets a response in all things." The thought behind Solomon's statement may be that through industriousness a man can get the money he needs for bread and wine, for the comforts that add to the enjoyment of life.

Next Solomon admonishes: "Even in your bedroom do not call down evil upon the king himself, and in the interior rooms where you lie down do not call down evil upon anyone rich; for a flying creature of the heavens will convey the sound and something owning wings will tell the matter." (Eccl. 10:20) Should the affairs of state be neglected by the ruling class, the wise person still does not take needless risks. If it is not within his power to correct a situation, of what benefit would it be to grumble and complain in the remotest part of the house? A person may think that no one can hear him. But at times things come to light in the most unusual and unexpected ways. So why endanger one's peace and security by making injudicious remarks about persons in authority? (Compare Matthew 12:36, 37; Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1, 2; 1 Peter 2:13-17.) How practical is Solomon's counsel!

ENLARGING YOUR SACRED SERVICE



“DO NOT hold back good from those to whom it is owing, when it happens to be in the power of your hand to do it.” (Prov. 3:27) Is this a principle that you follow in your life? Do you look for opportunities to do good to others? If so, you are undoubtedly a happy person, for those who generously give of themselves are the happiest.—Acts 20:35.

But how about giving of yourself in sacred service to God? Is it in the “power of your hand” to do more than you are doing at present? We owe our lives to Jehovah and, since we are dependent upon him as our Owner, our sense of gratitude should move us to do his bidding wholeheartedly. (Ps. 36:5, 9; 1 Chron. 16:8) A most privileged part of our sacred service is preaching the good news of the Kingdom to others. (Matt. 24:14) Is it possible to expand your share in this? Could you become wholly involved as a full-time proclaimer, a “regular pioneer” who spends twenty or more hours a week in making known the “good news”?

A Witness who has been a pioneer for several years recently wrote: “Pioneering has always been a pure delight for me.” She told of the eight persons with whom she is studying the Bible, and of the joy their steady progress gives her. She mentioned too that serving as a pioneer has given her more time to spend on “projects” with her husband and three children. She finds herself better organized, causing her to stay on a schedule that makes profitable use of her valuable time.

Have you thought of the good effect that pioneer service would have on your life? There would be the delightfully satisfying pleasure of knowing that every day you would have many opportunities to talk to others about Jehovah, helping them to know and love Him. (Ps. 96:1-4) Oh, it is true that one has opportunities to talk to others about the Kingdom even when not pioneering, but going from door to door on a daily basis improves your prospects of finding someone who is eager to learn. And just think, too, of how many more times every day you get to use the Bible.

Not only is this faith-strengthening, but, by skillfully wielding God's Word as a sword, you cut the imprisoned ones free from the bonds of false religious ignorance and error. (Eph. 6:17, 18) It seems, too, that there is always someone in your congregation who could benefit from a helping hand, and as a pioneer you are available to provide this help.—Rom. 12:10.

CONSIDER YOUR PRESENT SITUATION

Is what you are doing now as worth while as pioneer service? Could you make an adjustment in your circumstances that would allow you to be in the full-time service of God? Obviously it would require some changes, likely some sacrifices, but would these not be offset by the benefits derived? The first step would be to take the matter to Jehovah in prayer. Let your closest Friend know your feelings and desire, and see if he does not give you the direction you need.—1 Pet. 3:12.

You undoubtedly have certain responsibilities in life. These may be such that they prevent you from being a pioneer. If so, then care for these and happily serve Jehovah while doing so. But if you can make adjustments, then why not do so? It will mean buying out time from what you are doing. (Col. 4:5) Christian meetings, personal Bible study and related spiritual matters are inviolable, so time must be bought out elsewhere. There may be activities or recreation relating to this system of things from which time may be purchased, so here is a good place to look with a view to making adjustments.

Are you young? Could you buy out time spent, say, on pleasures, entertainment, or in doing more secular work than necessary? One Witness who started pioneer service at eighteen years of age and has been in the full-time service for thirty-four years reflects that when he started he did not have what many of his friends considered necessities, such as a car and

a bank account, but he has never been in serious want. Moreover, his life has been filled with blessings that would never have come his way outside the full-time service.

Perhaps you are retired or are about to retire. Could you fill hours formerly spent in secular work with the preaching activity of pioneering, either on a regular basis or as an auxiliary pioneer—which would mean spending about two hours in God's service each day for a month or more? Are you a wife who is working to help to support the family? Is it possible that a reevaluation of your circumstances would prove that your present earning power is not essential to the family's survival? If this is the case, then could you give up your secular work and bring greater happiness to yourself and the rest of the family by pioneering? If it is in the power of your hand to pioneer, why not do so?

PIONEERS ARE NEEDED!

You may say to yourself, Are pioneers really needed now when we cover our territory often? Yes, even in such territory there are interested persons to be found. In some territories, such as in parts of the Hawaiian Islands, the people are called on nearly every week. And still the many pioneers are finding "sheep." But if you could move out to other pastures, you may find even more "sheep" waiting to be found. For example, in the United States and some other countries there are congregations that do not have the personnel and time to search through their assigned territories even once a year. If you write to the branch office they will be happy to direct you to such congregations.

Whether you serve as a pioneer at home or move out to other areas, it is necessary to have the right viewpoint about the work. To begin with, it is not to be viewed as a mere emotional experience or an ad-

venture. Pioneer service means work, work that is joyful and rewarding to be sure, but work that will take planning and energy nonetheless. (John 4:34; 5:17) Pioneers must meet the expenses of everyday living and obviously costs are high. So it is wise to find part-time secular work that provides the best return for the amount of time spent at it. Balance must be shown, too, in eating healthful foods and in getting the necessary sleep.

While one must have the right viewpoint about caring for the natural man, it is even more essential to look after the spiritual man. The strength to serve with vigor and to stick with pioneering comes from within the spiritual condition. Ask those who have been at it for years and they will assure you that their strength has been derived from a good diet of healthful words. (2 Tim. 1:13, 14) They have a practical program of personal study and they would not miss a meeting at the congregation or at an assembly if their health allows. They know that spiritual work requires spiritual food and the dynamic energy that only God's spirit can provide.—Isa. 40:29-31.

Our having the right motive in serving as a pioneer is vital. What is that? It is love of God and of neighbor. (Matt. 22:37-39) Do you recall the thought expressed at 1 John 3:17?—"Whoever has this world's means for supporting life and beholds his brother having need and yet shuts the door of his tender compassions upon him, in what way does the love of God remain in him?" The principle may be applied to pioneer service. If we have "this world's means for supporting life," including health and freedom from responsibilities, should not love move us to get involved in the full-time preaching and teaching work? Also, the side benefits to oneself are not to be overlooked, for when we show such unselfish love, our own hearts are made firm.—1 Thess. 3:12, 13.

GETTING READY FOR PIONEER SERVICE

Your own preparation and training are invaluable aids in enlarging your sacred service as a pioneer. The more effective you are in teaching others, the more enjoyable and productive your pioneer service will be. Therefore, it is the course of wisdom to work with accomplished publishers or other pioneers. Learn from them by talking with them about the methods that they have found best to reach the hearts of the people to whom they talk. Go along with them and watch and listen and learn. Do not wait to do this until you are ready to start as a pioneer, but get the training in advance.

Just as it is true that "bad associations spoil useful habits," so the converse is true that good associations will preserve and enrich useful habits. (1 Cor. 15:33) Your association with those who think positively about pioneer service will be of much help to you. It is such persons as fellow pioneers, circuit and district overseers, and zealous elders who are making "firm assertions constantly" that help you to keep your mind on "maintaining fine works." (Titus 3:8) Such encouragement sustains and buttresses your will to continue the fine work once you have started. Also, we tend to pick up the habits of those whom we admire. When those habits are the fine ones that they have learned from years of faithful activity in sacred service, we can profit immensely.—Compare 1 Corinthians 11:1.

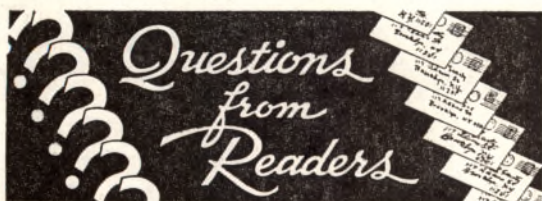
If your activity as a publisher is fairly low, then you may decide that it would be best for you to serve as an auxiliary pioneer for a few months before you actually start as a regular pioneer. There is an old adage that you cannot run until you have learned to walk. You may quickly see the wisdom behind this if you endeavor to jump from a few hours a month spent in Kingdom service to a consistent ninety hours a month.

A word of caution is in order. Do not assume that your life in the full-time service will always be easy. Look at it realistically. You will run into problems. Life is that way. You may have trouble getting part-time work. You may find that some persons will discourage you and suggest that you should quit. But be determined to stick with the work once you have started. Thousands of others have done so for many years. If they can do it, so can you.

Perhaps more than all else that is needed when it comes to enlarging your sacred service as a pioneer is to have strong faith and confidence in Jehovah's ability to look after you and to provide for you. More than one pioneer has found that it takes getting down to almost nothing materially to learn that Jehovah really means it when he says that he "cares for you." (1 Pet.

5:7) While there is a natural concern over what we will eat and what we will wear, we should trust Jehovah, as his Son reminds us, "your Father knows you need these things" and will look after you. (Luke 12:25-31) Our basic need is for food, clothing and shelter, and with these we should be content. (1 Tim. 6:8) Having such a loving heavenly Father who looks after us so tenderly, should we not trust him with all our heart and lean on him? —Prov. 3:5, 6.

Jehovah has allowed the door to the ark of preservation to stay open. For how long we do not know. Ask yourself, In my present situation could I help many to come inside? Do I have it within the power of my hand to spend more time in this most rewarding work? If you can answer yes to these questions, then make it your goal to serve as a pioneer!



● Is it wrong to take the life of an old or sick pet?

No, for the Bible shows that humans have the authority and responsibility to decide if, when and how to end an animal's life.

In saying this we definitely are not encouraging callousness or cruelty toward animals. Sad to say, human history right up till the present is filled with examples of vicious cruelty toward animals. That accords with the pattern set by brutal Nimrod. But it is not the pattern set by the God of love, mercy and compassion. (Gen. 10:9) God's Word specifically advises His worshippers to care for animals, to avoid being cruel to them.—Prov. 12:10.

We cannot ignore, however, the fact that Jehovah God gave humans dominion over the animals. (Gen. 1:26-28) Later he granted man-

kind permission to kill animals for food. And Bible examples show that animals may be killed for other reasons, including protection or to obtain material for clothing.* (Gen. 3:21; 9:3-5; Judg. 14:5, 6; Heb. 11:37) The Bible does not give rules on how such animals were to be killed. Yet, where possible to do so the manner logically should be in accord with what the Scriptures say about mercy and about avoiding needless cruelty to animals.

Whereas in Biblical times animals were mainly viewed from a utilitarian viewpoint, many persons today keep animals for pets. This often seems to involve a desire for companionship. Many persons develop strong emotional ties with their pet. So it may bring emotional pain to think of taking the life of a pet that has become very old, somewhat enfeebled or perhaps sick.

But the fact is that the Bible does not say that it is wrong to put such a pet to death. A person may even conclude that doing so in a quick and relatively painless manner is better than providing the animal with expensive treatment that merely prolongs its suffering.

* See "Keep a Balanced View of Animal Life" in *Awake!* of March 22, 1976.

The individual who is responsible for the animal, who is exercising dominion over it, is the person to determine if and how it is best to terminate its life.

● Why did Jesus say, in John 16:5: "Not one of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'" when Peter and Thomas had just done so?

The comments in mind had all occurred on the last night that Jesus was with his disciples. During the evening Peter asked: "Lord, where are you going?" (John 13:36) A little later Thomas said: "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How do we know the way?" (John 14:5) So it might seem a bit contradictory to read, in John 16:5, Jesus' statement: "Not one of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'"

It appears, however, that Jesus had a particular point in mind. The context of Peter's question suggests that Peter was manifesting considerable self-concern in what he asked Jesus, and Thomas' remark may have reflected his uncertainty about the disciples having adequate guidance. After their questions, however, the account goes on to include Jesus'

warning words about coming persecution. As John 16:6 reveals, those remarks evidently troubled the disciples and caused them to be absorbed with their own grief over that persecution and their losing Jesus. So when Jesus said: "Not one of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'" he was evidently not referring back to Peter's comment or Thomas' remark. Speaking in the present tense ("asks me"), he was referring to their reaction at that particular point in his discussion and the things he was then considering. Jesus' words thus would focus attention on the fact that the disciples, absorbed with their own grief, were not inquiring further of Jesus to find out about the glory to which he was going, what it would mean for true worshipers and how it fitted into the outworking of God's purpose.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

December 18: 'Reproofs Are the Way of Life.' Page 688. Songs to Be Used: 91, 110.

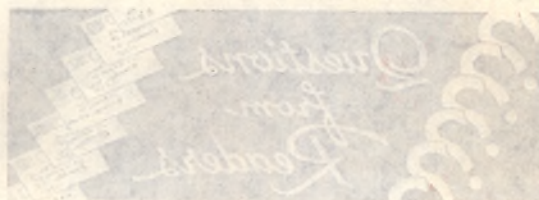
December 25: Genuine Repentance—How Is It Identified? Page 693. Songs to Be Used: 99, 108.

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