

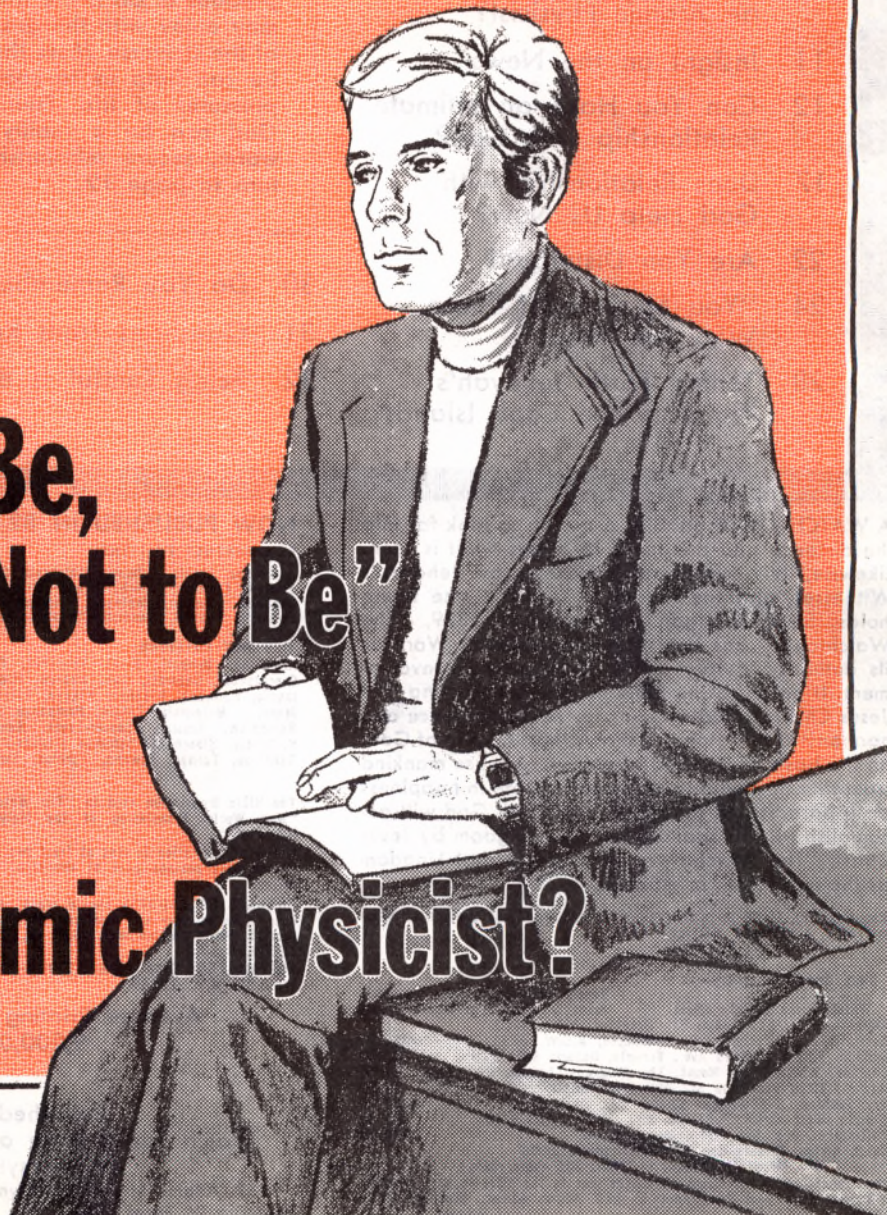
APRIL 15, 1979

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

**“To Be,
or Not to Be”**

**—an
Atomic Physicist?**



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True friendship is precious. Most precious of all is the friendship we may enjoy with the grand Creator of the Universe. More than anyone, he can help us to cope with the pressures of life. Friendship with God can be a reality—a close, warm, secure relationship. Please turn to page 12.

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A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

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Be Wise —Count the Cost

"COUNT the cost." "Calculate the expense."* Thus counseled Jesus Christ, the wisest man that ever walked on the earth. He spoke those words in discussing the matter of a person's becoming one of his disciples. Nevertheless, they state a principle that can have wide application in our everyday affairs. How so?

With regard to acquiring material possessions: Due in large measure to the great amount of advertising done in the media—newspapers, magazines, TV and radio—people's desires and wants often far outstrip their ability to pay. But for many, their longings for these things are so strong that they cannot resist the blandishments of a salesman who assures them that they can afford such things by means of installment buying: "Enjoy things while you are paying for them. Why do without them until you have enough money saved up to pay for them?" No wonder *U.S. News & World Report*, November 20, 1978, states: "People Going Deeper in Debt: 'It's Really Worrisome.'" It went on to show that private debts in the United States amounted to \$2,500,000,000,000.

With what result? For many, it means personal bankruptcy due to unforeseen circumstances. Thus, in a recent year, there were a quarter million bankruptcies in the United States, 85 percent of these being, not of a business nature, but of a personal one. What do most of these bankruptcies indicate? A failure to use sound

judgment; failure wisely to count the cost of extending oneself financially.

The wisdom of first counting the cost is also apparent when it comes to marriage. How many persons enter into marriage without giving due thought to all that is involved, and this is particularly true of young folks! That is why separa-

tions and divorces are so much more numerous among teen-agers than among people of any other age group. What does this suggest? That especially these persons had failed to count the cost—not just in dollars and cents.

To make a success of marriage costs a great deal. It often means paying the cost of making allowances for the shortcomings of others in the interest of peace, patiently enduring what cannot easily be changed, if at all. It means not only thinking of "us" instead of just "me," but also being willing to put the interests of one's mate ahead of one's own. All of this implies a realistic view of oneself and of the other person, recognizing that no marriage is perfect and that one must take the bitter, 'tribulation in the flesh,' with the sweet. (1 Cor. 7:28) Yes, far more marriages would be lasting and happy if those entering them had first of all counted the cost. In the case of many young folks, this most likely would have meant wisely waiting a few years until they were better equipped in every way, mentally, physically, emotionally and financially, to assume the responsibilities of marriage.

And there are other aspects of life where a person may err, betray a lack of wisdom, by not first counting the cost. Young folks may persuade their parents to make purchases of some costly items needed for pursuing a particular hobby, only for the youngsters soon to tire of it. The youth did not count the cost of what it took in time, energy and attention to make such an

* Luke 14:28, Revised Standard Version, New World Translation.

investment worth while, and so not only was his father's money wasted but so was the time that the youth had spent on the hobby.

As noted earlier, "count the cost" was originally said by Jesus Christ in discussing the matter of a person's becoming one of his disciples. Does becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ cost something? Indeed it does! Thus, regarding a promising popular TV star who decided to become a follower of Jesus Christ as a witness of Jehovah God, an article in the New York Sunday *Daily News* commented as follows:

"[She] could be living in snooty Bel Air, driving a sleek Rolls Royce, decked out in St. Laurent's latest fashions. She could be having headlined romances, be drinking, playing around and causing a lot of talk. . . . Gone is her marvelous opportunity to become an instant millionairess, television superstar, night club sensation."

Why?

"Mainly because she refused to permit anything or anyone to compromise her newly-found religion, Jehovah's Witnesses. . . . A little more than a year ago, she thought nothing of dancing semi-nude, gambling, guzzling, gadding about. As she puts it, 'I did all kinds of things before I came into the truth. I was in darkness and ignorance, and therefore I followed the standards of the world.'"

Yes, for her to become a true Christian cost her something. Did she benefit from counting the cost? Yes, for as that article went on to say: "She's never been happier." Much of that happiness is due to her being a full-time preacher of the good news of God's kingdom. As a Christian with faith, she knows that far greater happiness is in store for her.

The *Toronto Star*, September 12, 1978, told of a hockey player who, in 1977, was the highest scoring defenseman on his team, but decided to quit. The article quoted him as saying: "I feel that I can't devote myself to hockey and serve Jehovah. I would be splitting my devotion. It cen-

tres around principles in the Bible . . . It was no snap decision. I had thought about it a year ago." Then after giving details about his career as a sportsman, the report further quoted him as saying:

"I went to an assembly in Montreal over the summer and was baptized there, shortly after I was married. It all began when I started reading a few (Witness) publications. I felt it sounded so right. I always believed in a God, but I wasn't totally sure. I simply came to the conclusion it is more important to serve Jehovah than to play hockey."

After telling that he does door-to-door preaching, the article in conclusion quoted him as saying: "I don't have to work for a while—my accountant invested well for me. I realize the money I made was quite a lure, but it's more important to do what is pleasing to Jehovah." No question about it, he also counted the cost and willingly began paying it.

However, there is one aspect about what Jesus said as to counting the cost that is not generally appreciated. What is that? Just what did Jesus mean when he said to his disciples back there to "count the cost"? Did he mean for them to weigh, in the first place, all the pros and cons as to whether an individual would want to become a disciple of his or not? (Such would be the case, of course, in such matters as investing in material things.) No, the counting of the cost that Jesus referred to was not as to a person's deciding whether he would become a disciple of his or not, but, rather, as to inquiring about what is involved.

As *The Watchtower* once expressed it: "God's Word counsels us to count the cost. Not so as to determine whether we should dedicate ourselves [to do God's will] or not—there is but one answer to that question—but so as to appreciate what is involved. So that we will be prepared to say, as Jesus on that occasion also put it, 'good-

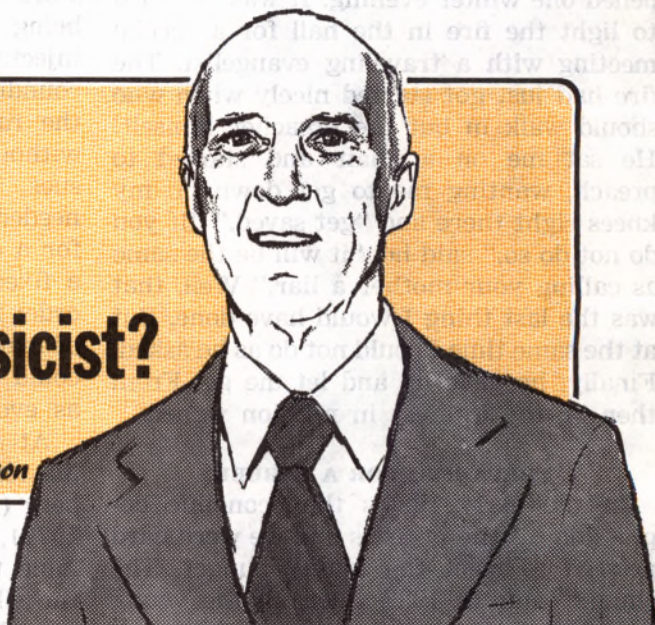
bye to all our belongings,' should that be necessary."

In these days it is quite likely that some did not fully count the cost when dedicating themselves to do God's will and to follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Because of this, as tests came of one kind or another, such as persecutions or tempta-

tions as to materialism or immorality, they fell by the way. How sad! Jehovah's reward for faithfully serving him is certain, for his promises never fail—be it this year, next year, or in the resurrection. The wise Christian, having counted the cost of what is involved in becoming a follower of Jesus Christ, has no regrets.—Josh. 23:14.

"To Be, or Not to Be" —an Atomic Physicist?

As told by Fred Wilson



"THAT is the question" that confronted me back in the early 1940's. 'Not such a difficult question,' you say. Well, on the surface it appears easy, for the world was just entering the atomic era. For physicists, lucrative jobs were plentiful. And the work was intensely interesting, even absorbing. Why, then, the question?

Basically, because religion was involved. Yes, something even more interesting and more absorbing entered my life. But let us go back a few years and get the background.

Our family lived in a typical small village on the Canadian prairies where everything depended on the wheat crop. At an

early age we were taught the value of hard work, and after school we would earn money working in stores, sawing wood, hauling grain or driving horses. At home, we four brothers bemoaned the lack of a sister, for that meant we had to prepare meals, do the dishes and wash and iron clothes. Only years later did I really appreciate the value of what I learned in those earlier days.

EARLY RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Religion played a definite part in life, in spite of our efforts not to "get involved." Mother belonged to a strict "hellfire" group that met in the "Gospel Hall," the only name we ever knew for our religion. Dad

was a Mason and left religion up to mother. How I envied him as he sat at home reading the newspaper while we had to go to Sunday school! My mother and grandfather had daily Bible readings and, if we were careless enough to be around the house at the time, we had to take part.

What turned me against religion, even as a young boy, was something that happened one winter evening. It was my turn to light the fire in the hall for a special meeting with a traveling evangelist. The fire had just got started nicely when who should walk in but the preacher himself! He sat me on a chair and started to preach, wanting me to get down on my knees right there and "get saved." "If you do not do so," said he, "it will be the same as calling your mother a liar." Well, that was the last thing I would have done. But at the same time I could not do as he asked. Finally, he gave up and let me go. From then on my interest in religion waned.

PREPARING FOR A CAREER

In the early 1930's the economic depression hit the prairies and we were hard pressed to meet the family budget. The climax came in 1937 when all the young men had to leave home to look for work in provinces where disaster had not hit so hard. I, with others, headed for Manitoba. After a few months of work, we mailed our money back and returned home.

This money helped pay tuition fees and lodging during my studies at the University of Saskatchewan. The curriculum covered a variety of courses, among them biology, which included instruction in the basics of evolution. In view of my hellfire religious experience, this theory seemed plausible. To have questioned the theory would have meant to 'accept the unacceptable,' that is, creation. So ours was a blind faith in a theory, with no questions asked.

After graduation in 1938, I decided to

go on to specialize in atomic physics. Things began to be a little easier financially since we graduates were hired as laboratory instructors for the undergraduate classes. I also worked as a technician in a radon plant operated at the university by the cancer clinic for treatment of surface cancers. As a technician, my job was to pump off the radioactive gas radon and store it in a fine, gold tubing, which, after being cut into small "seeds," would be injected by the doctor into the tissue surrounding the cancer. The radiation from the radon attacks the cancerous tissues without unduly affecting the healthy tissues. We could determine the strength needed for use in any operation planned for a certain time, since radon decays at a fixed rate. This evidence of design and order in radioactive materials was just one of many facts that made me wonder: How could all of this happen just by chance, as evolution would have us believe?

At that time I was working for my Master of Arts degree under Dr. G. Herzberg (Nobel Prize winner for chemistry in 1971), conducting experiments to determine the distance between the atoms in the silicon sulphide (SiS) molecule. This was done by measuring the wavelength of lines in the absorption spectrum of SiS and by the use of complicated mathematical formulas. Here again was evidence of

In Coming Issues

- Hope—the Power for Endurance
- Is Your Trust in God—Or in a Man?
- What Is Happening to Recreation?

order and design. Why, it meant that behind all of this there must be a Scientist and Mathematician! But vital questions remained unanswered: Who? How? When?

We graduates all applied for scholarships, and how elated I was to receive offers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Cornell University in the United States! However, the world scene was changing at an alarming rate. I remember how we in the physics department felt the day when the newspapers announced "The atom has been split!" Dr. Herzberg's words carried a sense of doom as he said with great emotion: "What won't they do next?" As World War II progressed, we wondered how it would affect us. Then Canada closed its borders, so that no science graduates could leave the country. Consequently, I applied for and (in 1941) received a scholarship from the National Research Council so as to continue my studies at the University of Toronto.

There I completed the curriculum for my PhD degree, at the same time working at the university as a civilian instructor for the army in fundamental radar. When these courses ended in 1943, the instructors had to make a choice: either go into industry or into the navy as radar operators along Canada's vulnerable east coast, until such time as we might be able to continue our studies. However, in 1942 I had married a physiotherapy student and most of Grace's graduation class were entering the Nursing Corps. Since this meant that we would be separated, we decided against joining the armed forces, and I obtained work as an experimental physicist for an aircraft instruments firm.

THE QUESTION BEGINS TO TAKE FORM

Although neither of us was very religious (in fact, I began to teach Grace the basics of evolution), we did feel that we should belong to some church. So we at-

tended different ones. After each visit we would analyze what we had heard: a book review in one, a sermon for army recruiting in another! With so little to choose from, we decided just to buy a Bible and read it on our own. Some weeks later a lady called and read some Bible texts to my wife, offering to call again. "I told her I was busy studying for my final exams and that she could come back in a couple of months," Grace told me later. "Oh, well," I answered, "she probably won't come back." But I was mistaken, for she did return. Since we had guests, a visit was arranged for the following evening.

We were quite apprehensive when the woman returned with her husband. One of the first questions I asked was: "What do you believe about hell?" "It really doesn't matter what we believe," was the answer. "What is important is what the Bible teaches. Do you have a Bible?" Then we were shown in our own new Bible that in certain places where the text reads "hell," marginal notes read "or, the grave." This really set us thinking! Thus began a series of Bible discussions with Teije and Elsie Hoornveld, who devoted all their time to this preaching work. After a few visits, they told us that they, as Jehovah's Witnesses, were banned in Canada. This did not overly concern us, since we were enjoying what we were learning. In fact, it was not long before my wife and I began to accompany them in declaring the "good news" from house to house. Three months later, on August 22, 1943, we were baptized at a convention in Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

At that time many of us believed that Armageddon was just around the corner. (Rev. 16:14, 16) So we felt that we should devote more time to the preaching work, as Teije and Elsie were doing. Also, my conscience began to bother me because of my work. Was it consistent with Christian neutrality? We were telling others about

the Kingdom, and Jesus Christ had said: "My kingdom is no part of this world." (John 18:36) So was I part of it as I helped to produce instruments for war planes? (Isa. 2:2-4) On the other hand, in view of my years spent studying to be a physicist, should I give up such work? After much consideration, I handed in my resignation in November 1943 and began working as a full-time proclaimer of the "good news."

MEETING THE QUESTION HEAD ON

Until that time I had been exempt from military service, since my work was considered essential to the war effort. Then, however, my exemption was canceled and along came my call for military service. In letters to the authorities I explained my desire to continue as a full-time minister and, as such, requested exemption from compulsory service. Their answer came on December 25 in the form of six policemen. Two of them stood at the front door, two at the back door and two entered the home where we were living. And where was I? In the bathtub! It was my last comfortable bath for some time. I was arrested, charged with nonfulfillment of compulsory service, and sentenced to one month in jail at Toronto, after which I would be turned over to the military.

Now I really had time to think about my position. It seemed that the question "‘To be, or not to be,’ an atomic physicist?" was being answered in the negative. But, strangely enough, I was not depressed. 'Sometime in the future I will be able to continue my studies,' I thought. More important questions had been answered satisfactorily. I knew that there is a Creator whose name is Jehovah. (Ps. 83:18) Also, I knew of his purpose to establish a new order of peace and righteousness. More than that, we could share in it. I knew where we were going and why. So during that month in jail I used my

time wisely, reading through the entire Bible. How this served to strengthen my decision!

However, I was brokenhearted to receive a letter from my religious mother. "I never thought that one of my boys would be a criminal," it read. Yet, my unreligious father wrote: "Son, if that is what you believe, don't let anyone, not even [Prime Minister] Mackenzie King change your mind." The reaction of each parent was just the opposite of what I had expected!

During my first few days in jail, the other prisoners in our cell block ridiculed me. And what a crowd they were—thieves, drug addicts and filthy drunkards! Among them was the then Public Enemy No. 1, Mickey MacDonald, awaiting trial for hijacking a truck loaded with whiskey. One day when the others were heaping abuse on me, he said: "Listen, you guys! We are all here because we broke the law. But this fellow did nothing wrong. Leave him alone or else!" After that, no one bothered me.

After serving my sentence I was handed over for induction into the army. The commanding officer signed all the papers and I was now a soldier. Upon my refusal to obey certain orders, I was remanded for a court-martial. At the trial, I was given full opportunity to present my defense before the three judges. It was a new and thrilling experience for me to feel how 'the holy spirit teaches you the things you ought to say,' for it aided me to recall appropriate texts, such as John 17:16 and Daniel 2:44. (Luke 12:11, 12) After the trial, one of the judges took me aside. He could not understand why I did not want to serve, since I had already received a commission in the army through the Officers Training Corps at the university. So he suggested that I enter the army as a chaplain, in which case they would drop the proceedings. The essence

of my refusal was: "Who is more reprehensible, the one who blesses the rifle or the one who pulls the trigger?" So I was sentenced to six months in a military detention camp at Niagara-on-the-Lake.

This camp consisted of a small barracks with about a dozen cells and a large, fenced compound. In no uncertain terms, the officer in charge—a short, stocky man with the voice of a bull—let us know what was expected of us. There would be absolutely no talking and everything would be "on the double." We scrubbed floors until our hands were cracked and blistered. Then it was around the compound on the double in the hot sun until the sweat ran down our backs. If anyone slowed down, the guard was there to give him a boost with the butt of his rifle. Next, we might have to lift a tub of water over our heads, and then, on the double again, we had to run around the compound with this cold water splashing over us. This was the daily routine.

Three of us Witnesses were detained in this camp. But after a short time one decided to join the army. While awaiting his release, he was given freedom to talk with me in an attempt to convince me to follow his course. But I realized that what knowledge I had of God's purposes had been received in association with Jehovah's Witnesses. So I was determined to stick with them.

Under the rigorous conditions in the camp, time passed slowly. But finally came my release and transfer back to the army barracks. The procedure was repeated and soon I received notice of a second court-martial.

The next sentence was also for six months, but in a civil work camp at Burwash, in northern Ontario. The trip was unforgettable, for I went as part of a chain gang, handcuffed in pairs and then all joined together by a heavy chain. As we walked through the streets of downtown

Toronto to the railroad station and settled in our seats on the train, still chained together, we were the object of many curious stares. I was the only Witness in the gang.

In Burwash, life was better than in the military prison, for we worked outside cutting trees and logging them through the snow during the winter of 1944. In the evenings, we could read and talk. So I was able to do considerable witnessing to other prisoners. After about five months I was on my way out, having been dishonorably discharged from the army. I had been classified as deficient under the PULHEMS health test. In this test each of these letters stands for a part of the human body (U-upper limbs, and so forth) and anyone who received an "8" under any letter would be discharged. I got an "8" under the "S" (Sense perception). Simply put, I was considered mentally unbalanced.

THE QUESTION HAPPILY RESOLVED

Even with that 'risky recommendation,' I was invited to help in the printery used by the Watch Tower Society. Grace already was working there. Operating a press was a new experience but enjoyable, and it was a delight to work with a fine group of fellow believers. After four years, in June 1944, the ban was lifted, the Society's office in Toronto was reopened and soon plans were under way to get the Kingdom-preaching work moving openly.

In December 1945, we were assigned to work in the Society's literature depot at Vancouver. Two years later, we were participating in the circuit work, visiting the congregations in beautiful Fraser Valley. After a year of this exciting work, we were thrilled to be invited to the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead to receive training as missionaries. How this strengthened our faith in the Source of the "dynamic energy" manifest in the tiny

atom! (Isa. 40:26) All too soon, graduation day came and went and we were packing our bags for a foreign assignment. Eliminating the unnecessary items, I hesitated a long time over two books by Dr. Herzberg on atomic and molecular structure, volumes that had served as the basis for my studies. Finally, they were left behind. The question had definitely been resolved.

On December 29, 1949, we reached our assignment in Santiago, Chile. At first, Spanish was a problem. But then we began to see that our labors were producing fruit in the form of productive Bible studies with honest-hearted persons, some of whom had never before seen the Scriptures. Several of these loving Chileans became our spiritual brothers and sisters. How heartwarming it was to see their enthusiasm and zeal for the truth! The Kingdom-preaching work grew by leaps and bounds as more missionaries joined us and congregations were formed throughout the land. Our new vocation truly was rewarding!

With the years came new privileges of service: helping in the Society's expanded branch office at Santiago, serving as Kingdom Ministry School instructor and visiting branch offices and missionary homes in nine neighboring countries in order to give encouragement and to help to unify the preaching work. What joy and satisfaction to see Jehovah's blessing as the number of his praisers in these lands continued growing!

April 1969 brought a big change in our lives. We were assigned to the branch office in São Paulo, Brazil. Yes, it was necessary to learn a new language, Portuguese. Leaving Chile was not easy after having seen Jehovah's people there increase from 200 to 6,000 over a period of 19 years. Among these persons were several of our spiritual children and grandchildren, as well as many of those with

whom we had worked for years. However, our motto was, "Here I am! Send me." (Isa. 6:8) So, with heavy hearts, we said "*Hasta luego*" to them all, but with many happy memories to cherish in the years ahead.

In Brazil there already were 55,000 persons zealously proclaiming the "good news." The work was making progress in this Catholic land where so many lean toward spiritism. Yet, here is found the same willing spirit in serving Jehovah, with thousands accepting Bible truths each year and dedicating their lives to God. Through their diligent work there are now over 106,000 Kingdom publishers in 2,012 congregations in Brazil. In São Paulo, the Bethel family, which cares for the needs of these congregations, has grown from 40 to 155. Five years ago, we rejoiced in the dedication of a new factory for printing *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* in Portuguese. Now, crowded to overflowing, we are again in the midst of a building program involving a new Bethel home and factory, located in a peaceful setting among Jehovah's marvelous creations 140 kilometers (87 miles) from São Paulo. And only Jehovah knows what increases are still in store for his people in this land.

So do I ever regret not having answered affirmatively the question: "'To be, or not to be,' an atomic physicist?" I still find atomic physics intensely interesting, absorbing. But how could there be regrets over having come to know the great Scientist and Mathematician who designed and created the atom? How can we regret using most of our lives in making him known to others? Can there be regrets over having become part of a worldwide spiritual family dedicated to Jehovah? Far from regrets, I feel just as did Asaph, who declared: "The drawing near to God is good for me. In the Sovereign Lord Jehovah I have placed my refuge, to declare all your works."—Ps. 73:28.

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● The "international language" of Esperanto passed its first 100 years of existence last December with very little note. London's "Daily Telegraph" reports that "there was no celebration, no birthday cards, not even a telephone call from any of the 1,500 members of the British Esperanto Association."

Hope for Esperanto Dims

Esperanto's inventor devised it as a universal language in the hope that it could help to end all war. (The word literally means: "He who hopes.") The general secretary of the Association admits: "We now accept that he was wrong."

Certainly a language spoken by all could be a real benefit. However, the hatreds and warfare that exist even among those who speak the same language make it obvious that ideas of well-intentioned humans cannot bring an end to wars. Only our Creator, the One who "is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth" has the power to do what is necessary. This he has promised to do, not by means of any social programs, but, rather, by the judgment and "destruction of the ungodly men" who foment divisions among their fellows.—Ps. 46:9; 2 Pet. 3:7.

● The new pope, John Paul II, has stated: "(There is) repressive and discriminatory action practiced against vast numbers of citizens, who have had to suffer all sorts of oppression, even death, simply in order to preserve their spiritual values, yet who, despite this, have never ceased

Insight on Pope's Declaration

to cooperate in everything that serves the true civil and social progress of their country."

In an editorial commenting on this, Argentina's "Buenos Aires Herald" stated: "The Pope, obviously, was referring specifically to religious persecution in the Communist countries. Yet sadly enough, almost every word he uttered could be applied to Argentina today. . . . religious freedom is denied to several thousand [over 30,000] Jehovah's Witnesses in this country."

The editorial notes that Witnesses are arrested, beaten and their children expelled from school, yet they "are hard-working,

honest, God-fearing people. . . . and their religion is based on the teachings of the Bible. If all other modern, stable and pluralistic democracies in the world can tolerate the Jehovah's Witnesses there is no reason why this government cannot do so."

"The whole issue could be defused by a few sensible measures which will allow the Jehovah's Witnesses the religious freedom that the Pope has called for. There are good Argentines who are only asking to be allowed to serve their God and their country, in that order. Indeed, patriotism would probably be strengthened in Argentina if more stress was placed on inward dedication and commitment to the country and its constitution and less on an outward show of observance of symbols."

● "It is difficult to believe," reports "The Indian Express" of Bombay, "but it is true that priests and nuns sing bhajans [devotional songs] squatting barefoot on the floor, perform 'arati' [wave a plate containing incense and camphor flame] instead of swinging the thurible [censer]," and follow

India's Catholic Hinduism

other Hindu practices. The newspaper observes that "it is now not uncommon in churches in Kerala, with its hoary tradition of a 2,000 years, to hear the Upanishadic hymn 'Asatho ma sad gamaya, thamaso ma jyothirgamaya, mruthvorama amrutham gamaya' being chanted before starting the holy mass."

India's Roman Catholic Cardinal Joseph Parecatil, said to be "a strong advocate of Indianisation of the church," declares that "this movement is destined to win ultimately." According to the "Express," Cardinal Parecatil said that it "was in the fitness of things to draw on the rich resources of Hinduism" for certain features of Catholic worship among Indians.

As broad-minded as such a philosophy may sound, does it reflect a true Christian view of worship? Hardly. The Catholic "New American Bible" commands: "Do not yoke yourselves in a mismatch with unbelievers. After all, what do righteousness and lawlessness have in common, or what fellowship can light have with darkness? . . . what common lot between believer and unbeliever?"—2 Cor. 6:14-18.

Can You Have An Intimate Relationship With God?

"The intimacy with Jehovah belongs to those fearful of him, also his covenant, to cause them to know it."—Ps. 25:14.

GOD, as Creator, has a certain relationship with all people. The apostle Paul said to a group of philosophers in Athens: "He himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things." (Acts 17:25) But those who are persistently wicked cannot enjoy intimacy with him. (Prov. 3:32) Nevertheless, he allows them to have children, to enjoy the good things of the earth, and to have opportunity to repent, if they are so inclined.—Acts 14:16, 17.

² However, a closer relationship than being a mere creature of God is necessary to receive his favor and to have him as a friend and close companion. Harmony with him and his purposes is essential if one hopes to gain everlasting life. The marvelous thing is that everyone can have this relationship if he really desires it after having the opportunity opened to him, for the apostle Paul told the Athenians that God has also provided for men "to seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us."—Acts 17:27.

³ What is involved in seeking God? And what action does he take toward the sincere seeker? The hindrance to our ap-

proaching God is human sinfulness. Our sins can block off communication just like a heavy cloud mass. (Compare Lamentations 3:44.) They may keep us from even wanting to appeal to God; they may make us feel unclean and unworthy of approaching him. Nevertheless, if we do not recognize that we are all sinners, doing things that even our own consciences condemn each day, we are not in a position to approach God, and God will not hear the prayers of those who do not recognize this fact that applies universally to all humans.—1 Pet. 3:12.

CHRIST'S DEATH AND RESURRECTION THE FOUNDATION

⁴ Actually, God himself has made the first move toward a relationship with him by making an arrangement to remove this barrier to communication and intimacy. What is this arrangement? The apostle Paul answers: "God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8) Christ was a perfect, sinless man when on earth, but he took on himself the punishment of all sinners just as though he were the sinner. Though innocent, he suffered the complete penalty for mankind's sins. The apostle Peter tells us: "He himself

4. How did God make the first move toward removing the barrier to communication and intimacy with him?

1. What relationship does God have with all people?
2. What is required in order to receive God's favor, and can this requirement be met by humans?
3. What barrier must all persons who hope to approach God recognize as existing between God and themselves?

bore our sins in his own body upon the stake . . . And 'by his stripes you were healed.'"

(1 Pet. 2:24) This was purposed by God centuries earlier, as the prophet Isaiah foretold: "He was being pierced for our transgression; he was being crushed for our errors." (Isa. 53: 5) Jesus Christ's action in substituting for mankind counterbalanced all demands of justice for sins committed and laid the foundation for removing condemnation from all who acknowledge their own sins and exercise faith in God's arrangement.—Rom. 8:1.

⁵ Additionally, the fact that Christ did not remain dead, but was resurrected and now lives, guarantees his ever-present help, so that a person can enjoy a close relationship with God. The Scriptures assure us:

"He was delivered up [to suffering and death] for the sake of our trespasses and was raised up for the sake of declaring us righteous."

(Rom. 4:25) He appeared in God's presence to present the value of his sacrifice. Today he is the glorified Jesus whom John saw in vision in the midst of seven golden lampstands, representing the Christian congregation, and with seven stars, or the body of anointed overseers, in his right hand. (Rev. 1:12-16) Of him as our living High Priest, it is written: "He is able also to save completely those who are approaching God through him, because he is al-

5. Why was not only the death of Jesus, but also his resurrection, essential to us?



ways alive to plead for them.”—Heb. 7:25.

⁶ Therefore, the person putting faith in Christ can live not as one spiritually dead because of his sins, blocked from communication with God, but as one alive, serving God, in a positive, upbuilding way, actively obeying God’s commands, upbuilding others. About this, the apostle says to the “holy ones” in Rome: “For we know that Christ, now that he has been raised up from the dead, dies no more; death is master over him no more. For the death that he died, he died with reference to sin once for all time; but the life that he lives, he lives with reference to God. Likewise also you: reckon yourselves to be dead indeed with reference to sin but living with reference to God by Christ Jesus.”—Rom. 1:7; 6:9-11.

⁷ Here the apostle points out that Christ came to earth for the specific purpose of dealing with that unclean, detestable thing—sin—a thing hated, yes, loathed by both God and Christ. (Heb. 1:9) Though Christ always took delight in doing his Father’s will, sin is an enemy, and, in doing away with sin, Jesus had to undergo many distasteful and disagreeable experiences. Just before he died, he said: “It has been accomplished!” (John 19:30) So he suffered and died with reference to sin—to do away with sin. But now “he lives with reference to God.” He is glorified in heaven, forever, in association with God, for his sacrifice does not need to be repeated. This being accomplished he could enter on an upbuilding work, to bring people into close intimacy with God again, and to bring about God’s will toward all who want life.—Heb. 7:25; 8:1; 9:28.

GOD DRAWS MEN TOWARD CHRIST

⁸ Jehovah God expressed great love and undeserved kindness toward humans by making this arrangement. And even more

6, 7. How is it that Christ died “with reference to sin” but lives “with reference to God”?

8, 9. How does God draw persons to Christ?

than that, God is working in connection with his purpose. It is God who draws right-hearted persons to Christ. Jesus said: “No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him.” He spoke of his apostles as being *given* to him from the Father.—John 6:37, 39, 44.

⁹ How does God do the drawing? Certainly it is not done arbitrarily, partially, or by forcibly compelling the person. The will of the stubborn, sinful human does not naturally, of itself, incline to submit to God. But God can effect a change in the person’s will. He knows what is deepest in a person’s heart. He can then not only cause him to hear about Christ and the way of salvation, but also give *understanding* of the arrangement. He can open blind eyes. God’s drawing of men and women to put faith in Christ during this system of things, though they would never *of themselves* have done so, is the *getting into their hearts* a knowledge of the fineness of Christ, the wonderful advantage of being united with him.

¹⁰ Then, on the part of the individual, he *desires* from the heart to follow Christ and unite with him, just as people, when they really see and realize the goodness of a good person, desire to approach him and become his friend. An example of God’s action in drawing hearts is found in the people of ancient Israel in the days of David the son of Jesse. God had promised David the kingdom. When it came time for God to give David the kingdom, he drew the hearts of the people to David, to serve willingly under him. (2 Sam. 2:4; 3:36; 5:1-3) So God draws the hearts of men to Christ.

INDIVIDUAL WILL MUST BE EXERCISED

¹¹ It is not that the will of the individual

10. What effect does God’s drawing have on the sincere individual?

11. What part does the will of the individual play in coming to Christ, and how is the will of the uninformed one changed?

has nothing to do with the matter. Though he may not initially have a will actively to come to Christ, that will can change when he learns—when the ‘eyes of his heart’ are opened. (Eph. 1:18) Jesus quoted from the prophecy of Isaiah concerning those who become the children of Jehovah’s heavenly woman, Zion, during this system of things, saying: “It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by Jehovah.’ Everyone that has heard from the Father and has learned comes to me.” (John 6:45; Isa. 54:1, 13) The person, seeing and understanding, changes his will. If he does not want to do so, he is not compelled to change. Understanding brings faith, and the individual’s faith moves God and his Son to accept that one, just as Jesus later told his followers: “He that has my commandments and observes them, that one is he who loves me. In turn he that loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will plainly show myself to him. . . . If anyone loves me, he will observe my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our abode with him.”—John 14:21-23.

¹² Since the Father has always been invisible to humans, he reveals himself through Christ, for Jesus, when on earth, revealed the fine personality of God, so that he could say: “He that has seen me has seen the Father also.” (John 14:9) Coming to Christ, those exercising faith come to know the Father more and more closely as Christ opens up to their hearts the depth and fineness of God’s qualities.

¹³ On the part of the individual, then, what are the steps to be taken to achieve approach and intimacy with God? A per-

son must have a sense of need, a feeling that not everything is fully satisfactory in his life. He must see himself as imperfect, not self-sufficient, recognizing that he is a sinner, and realizing the futility of his situation. If anyone does not have a full appreciation of his needy situation, a consideration of the Law given by God through Moses to Israel will convince him that he is thoroughly a sinner. The Law’s purpose was to show that no man is righteous and also to direct the honest-hearted, searching one to see the need of a redeemer.—Gal. 3:19, 24.

¹⁴ Feeling this need, the right-minded person will look in sincerity and earnestness into the Bible and learn of God’s way through Christ. When he comes to realize his total lack of relationship with God, he also is convinced of the real badness of sin and what it has done to him. He sees that he is actually an *enemy* of God. Then he wants to change. (Rom. 5:10) Accordingly, he repents and asks for forgiveness. All along he must recognize that it is not his own superior insight or goodness, but *God* who is drawing him. The individual has found that he can get this forgiveness on the basis of Christ’s atonement sacrifice. Having come to know and appreciate God’s purpose, he expresses the desire and decision to become a fully dedicated servant of God, and demonstrates this faith and decision before others by requesting water baptism.

A NEW STATUS WITH GOD

¹⁵ By this baptism, the person is making request to God for a good conscience. (1 Pet. 3:21) A “good conscience” means that the feeling of guilt for past sins no longer weighs on his conscience. It means, in addition, that he has a new relationship

12. How does Christ, in turn, bring the person closer to God?

13. What view must a person have of himself, in order to be able to make an acceptable approach to God?

14. What further steps are required on the part of the individual who wants to have a relationship with God?

15. What is the “good conscience” for which one being baptized makes request?

with God and Christ as his friends. (John 15:14, 15) This is for the reason that his faith in Christ's sacrifice gains for him pardon from his past sins and also even more than that.

¹⁶ To use an example: A pardon from a worldly authority wipes out a criminal's past crimes. But the criminal is then only back where he started. He has no comfort or assurance that he will receive future help, or that the wrongs that he may commit in the future will not be charged against him. But the one exercising faith in Christ is accepted by God as a friend, one with whom God continues to deal as an intimate, *now* and *in the future*, until that one finally is made perfect. (1 Pet. 5:10) As long as he maintains that same faith and faithfulness, he can pray for forgiveness of his day-to-day sins and preserve that intimate relationship. Of course, he should not "accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose." (2 Cor. 6:1) He cannot rightly think that he may presume on that intimacy and continue to hold his good standing with God.

ENTRUSTED TO CHRIST'S CARE

¹⁷ When God has drawn a person to Jesus Christ, what is his (or her) situation? Jesus acknowledged that all persons belong to the Father and that those whom Jehovah draws are given to Jesus, turned over to him for their care and Christian growth. (John 17:9, 10) God had promised through the prophet Isaiah about Christ: "Because of the trouble of his soul he will see, he will be satisfied." (Isa. 53:11) Jesus Christ therefore looked to God to cause his work and sacrifice to bear fruit. Jesus said also that God had given him authority over *all flesh*. (John 17:2) By exercising this authority he can

protect those whom God draws to him, safeguarding them from wicked, vicious opposers of the truth. Of the given ones, Jesus said: "I give them everlasting life, and they will by no means ever be destroyed, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. What my Father has given me is something greater than all other things, and no one can snatch them out of the hand of the Father." (John 10:28, 29) Accordingly, no persecution, sickness, hardships, opposition, or anything else, even death, should be feared by the Christian.—Rom. 8:38, 39.

¹⁸ Under Jesus Christ the Fine Shepherd, those who follow him faithfully are assured of everlasting life. Jesus said: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life."—John 3:16.

¹⁹ Everlasting life! Even though a person may die, his hope is not dimmed. For Jesus expressed the permanency and unbreakableness of the fine relationship of the Son with those the Father brings to him as members of the "little flock" of his sheep when he said: "Everything the Father gives me will come to me, and the one that comes to me I will by no means drive away."—Luke 12:31, 32; John 6:37.

²⁰ Consequently, under the care of the Fine Shepherd those who come to him can expect aid and guidance in every avenue of life, with hope of everlasting life ahead. What could be better, then, than establishing a fine relationship with God and his Son? But, in the day-to-day affairs of life, how does that fine relationship prove to be a reality—a close, warm, secure relationship?

16. What good standing does such a person now have with God, and how can he maintain that standing?

17. When God has drawn a person to Christ, what does Christ then do for the person?

18. What is the final result to the person who follows the Fine Shepherd faithfully?

19, 20. What, then, is the value of having an intimate relationship with God?

DOES RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD HELP US NOW?

"Jehovah is near to all those calling upon him, . . . and their cry for help he will hear, and he will save them."—Ps. 145:18, 19.

KING DAVID, who was also a prophet, spoke of the happiness of the man to whom God counts "righteousness apart from works," saying: "Happy are those whose lawless deeds have been *pardoned* and whose sins have been *covered*; happy is the man whose sin Jehovah will by no means *take into account*." (Rom. 4: 6-8; Ps. 32:1, 2) Such a man has his sins forgiven—he is *clean* in God's sight. Jehovah accepts him as a close intimate, viewing him as having no unrighteousness, for unrighteousness causes a separation from God.

² Referring to the fineness of having this standing with God, David further said: "Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and do not forget all his doings, him who is forgiving all your error, who is healing all your maladies, who is reclaiming your life

1, 2. How do David's words show us the fine situation of the man who has an intimate relationship with God?

from the very pit, who is crowning you with loving-kindness and mercies, who is satisfying your lifetime with what is good; your youth keeps renewing itself just like that of an eagle."—Ps. 103:2-5.

FRIENDS OF GOD

³ Such a person can call on God as Father. (Matt. 6:9) When he errs and sins, as do all imperfect humans, he can, when he finds that he has done so, appeal to God for forgiveness and cleansing, thereby preserving that right standing. The apostle John wrote about this: "If we make the statement: 'We have no sin,' we are mis-

leading ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous so as to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John 1:8, 9.

⁴ How, in day-to-day living, does an intimate relationship with God 'satisfy your lifetime with what is good'? And what is such a relationship like? Jesus revealed the kind of closeness that he had with his faithful apostles when he told them: "I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15) Furthermore, "he is not ashamed to call them 'brothers.'" (Heb. 2:11) It is true

3. (a) With what term of endearment can those whose sins are forgiven through Christ's sacrifice be permitted to address God? (b) How is this standing preserved by the individual?

4. How did Christ show his closeness to those who are his disciples?

that the Bible speaks of Christians as slaves of God and of Christ. But often the Bible uses human terms, that is, terms familiar to us, to make certain matters clear to us. This is because of our imperfection and sometimes because of our immaturity in Christian knowledge and understanding. (Compare Romans 6:19; 1 Corinthians 3:1, 2; see also Luke 17:7-10.) So, although the word "slave" is used, Jesus Christ actually loves us far more than any master ever loved a slave, and desires us to be assured that he views us as his *friends*.

⁵ Jesus pointed out that God is equally close to those who come to Christ, when he said: "If anyone loves me, he will observe my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our abode with him." (John 14:23) What closer relationship could one desire? (Compare Revelation 3:20.) After telling his disciples that he was going away to be with his Father, Jesus showed that God

5. How did Jesus reveal the closeness and affection of God for those who love him?

was closer to them than they imagined when he said: "In that day you will ask me no question at all. Most truly I say to you, If you ask the Father for *anything* he will give it to you in my name. Until this present time you have not asked a single thing in my name. Ask and you will receive, that your joy may be made full. I have spoken these things to you in comparisons. The hour is coming when I will speak to you no more in comparisons, but I will report to you with plainness concerning the Father. In that day you will ask in my name, and *I do not say to you that I shall make request of the Father concerning you. For the Father himself has affection for you, because you have had affection for me and have believed that I came out as the Father's representative.*"—John 16:23-27.

PROTECTION FROM DOING WRONG

⁶ Certainly one having intimacy with God would enjoy protection against falling into badness. Jesus said that we should pray to God: "Do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one." (Matt. 6:13) This

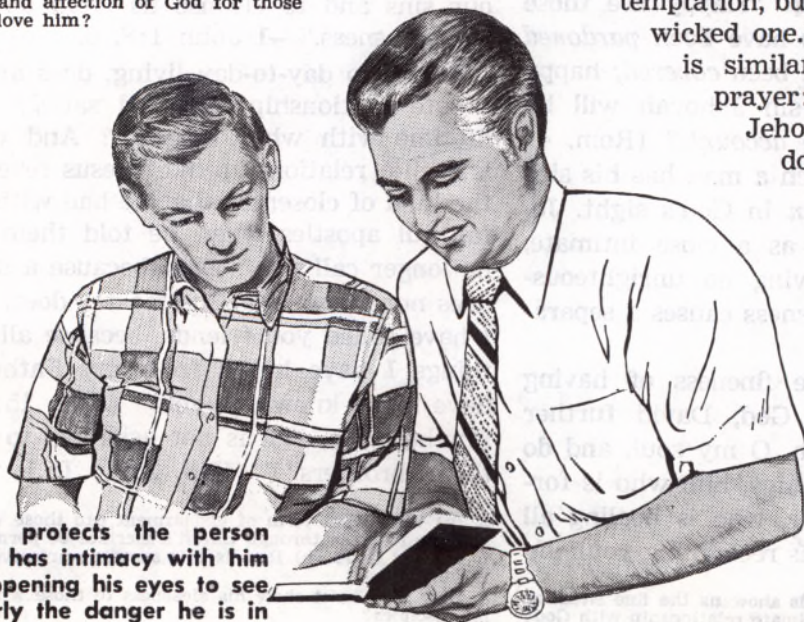
is similar to the psalmist's prayer: "Do set a guard, O Jehovah, for my mouth; do set a watch over the door of my lips.

Do not incline my heart to anything bad."—Ps. 141:3.

⁷ Even though he allowed Christ to encounter temptation, a thing common to all men, God does not try anyone

6, 7. (a) Does God actually tempt anyone to sin? (b) How does he 'set a guard and a watch' over us?

God protects the person who has intimacy with him by opening his eyes to see clearly the danger he is in



with bad things. (Jas. 1:13) On the other hand, he will not forcibly prevent a person from choosing a bad course. Rather, when temptations or trials arise, God protects the person who has intimacy with him by opening his eyes clearly and sharply to the danger that he is in. He 'sets a guard and a watch' over him. One associated with God will have strong warning signals presented to his attention.

⁸ For example, a person tempted to steal or to speak slanderously will be reminded immediately of certain alarming facts: the bad act will strain or damage his fine relationship with God; such acts are against the law of love; they bring reproach upon the good name of God and Christ, because the Christian professes to be their representative; if he gives in to such wrong desires he will bring reproach and sorrow upon himself and his loved ones; he will disgrace the Christian congregation, of which he is a member. The good conscience he asked for when exercising faith in Christ's sacrifice for sins will be sorely hurt. These warning thoughts arise because of the Christian's constant reading of the Bible and by the prompting of God's spirit, or, sometimes, of a fellow Christian. They will act as deterrents to his going headlong and precipitately into following a fleshly desire, as would be the case with a person not having the safeguard of a good relationship with God.—Compare Proverbs 7:22, 23 and David's experience, at 1 Samuel 25:32-35.

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND SPEECH

⁹ A major blessing that results from having a relationship with God is the enjoyment of great freedom of thought and speech. For proof of the power of God's Word in this matter, look at the nations

8. How does God answer the prayer, "Do not bring us into temptation"?

9. How is the power of God's Word shown when we consider the nations called "Christendom"?

called "Christendom." Though they have never really been close to God, they have, in the past two centuries, generally allowed free circulation of the Word of God. The Bible has become a household book, and though it is rejected now by many, there have been men, even in ruling positions, that have tried to follow the Bible's fine moral principles. This has promoted freedom of thought and speech and has liberated men from the shackles of religious traditions and the superstition of the Dark Ages. In proportion to the Bible's circulation in these lands, the living standards of the people have been improved.

¹⁰ While such incidental association with God through his Word has brought enlightenment and better living, people who really read the Bible and make it a guide in their lives profit in far greater measure. The patriarch Job points out that more than a surface knowledge of God is necessary. After remarking about some of the marvelous facts of creation that scientists can understand and explain only after much research, he says: "Look! These are the *fringes* of [God's] ways, and what a whisper of a matter has been heard of him!" Later, Job points out that the *real wisdom* requires more of us than learning the mere "fringes of his ways"—something more than mere scientific facts. We must come to know the fineness of God's personality, to fear him as the One who upholds right principles, and to follow these principles. This wisdom can be gained only by a study of his Word. Job says: "Look! The fear of Jehovah—that is wisdom, and to turn away from bad is understanding." (Job 26:14; 28:28) To one who seeks, by looking into the Bible, to achieve a relationship with God, the psalmist wrote: "Happy is the one you

10. (a) How far into an understanding of God have scientists and others gone who study the marvels of creation? (b) What must a person do who really wants a close relationship with God?

choose and cause to approach, that he may reside in your courtyards. He will certainly be satisfied with the goodness of your house.”—Ps. 65:4.

WHO CAN ENJOY INTIMACY WITH GOD?

¹¹ Consequently, a relationship in which God recognizes the individual as his friend would have infinitely great and lasting blessings. The one whom God would choose for such intimacy is described at Psalm 15:

“O Jehovah, who will be a guest in your tent?

Who will reside in your holy mountain?
He who is walking faultlessly and practicing righteousness

And speaking the truth in his heart.

He has not slandered with his tongue.

To his companion he has done nothing bad,

And no reproach has he taken up against his intimate acquaintance.

In his eyes anyone contemptible is certainly rejected,

But those fearing Jehovah he honors.

He has sworn to what is bad for himself, and yet he does not alter.

His money he has not given out on interest,

And a bribe against the innocent one he has not taken.

He that is doing these things will never be made to totter.”—Ps. 15:1-5.

¹² Only such a person will come to fear God and really come to know him. Such a friend of God faces the same general problems that everyone else encounters. But he is not left without help.

HELP DURING ILLNESS

¹³ The Christian may become seriously ill. Often, physical illness has an undesirable effect on one's spiritual health. Good balance is hard to maintain during sickness. God deeply sympathizes with the sick one. More than that, he gives help. The psalmist says: “Jehovah himself will

sustain him upon a divan of illness; all his bed you will certainly change during his sickness.” (Ps. 41:3) God does not promise that his servant will in all cases recover full health. But he assures the Christian that he will stand by him and make his sickness bearable. The language of the psalm reminds one of a nurse who constantly attends a patient so that no part of the body is uneasy, or of a parent lovingly taking care of a sick child, making him comfortable, washing him, changing and smoothing his bed, so that he feels refreshed and cheered up. If it is best for the individual, God can raise him up out of his sickbed and turn it into a bed of health. But even if he does not recover, God causes all things to work for his good. (Rom. 8:28) Spiritually he is made stronger, and endures the sickness, regarding it as a form of discipline or training that is shaping him to be a stronger, more considerate, more sympathetic Christian. He remembers that Christ suffered. Jesus' experience worked for his benefit, and ours. God did not forsake Jesus, and his reward for patient endurance was great.—Heb. 4:15; 5:8, 9.

AID DURING PERSECUTION

¹⁴ Because of the Christian's stand for Bible principles, opposition and even persecution may come. This happened to David, who was hunted as an animal by King Saul, betrayed by a close friend and conspired against by his own sons when he was sick. (1 Sam. 24:2; Ps. 41:9; 2 Sam. 15:31; 1 Ki. 1:1, 5) Yet, from personal experience, he wrote: “He [Jehovah] will hide me in his covert in the day of calamity; he will conceal me in the secret place of his tent.” “In case my own father and my own mother did leave me,

11, 12. What kind of person will God accept into close, friendly relationship with him?

13. What does God do for a Christian who is seriously sick, and how does the Christian view endurance under illness?

14. Should we be surprised if persecution comes, and what assurance of help do we have?

even Jehovah himself would take me up.”
—Ps. 27:5, 10.

FREEDOM FROM ECONOMIC FEARS

¹⁵ Even the economic situation should not overly concern the Christian. The apostle Paul wrote: “Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For he has said: ‘I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.’ So that we may be of good courage and say: ‘Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” (Heb. 13:5, 6) David also declared: “As for those seeking Jehovah, they will not lack anything good.” Again, he said: “A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread.”—Ps. 34:10; 37:25.

15. Why should the Christian not fear that he will fail to have the material necessities of life?



Just as a parent
lovingly cares for a sick child
God works good toward ill Christians

THE WATCHTOWER — APRIL 15, 1979

PEACE, AND THE JOY OF HELPING OTHERS

¹⁶ Among the greatest present advantages of an intimate relationship with God are peace of mind and freedom from fear of the things coming on the world and on one's own self. The Christian, having experienced God's loving care and his protection for those intimate with him, has the assured hope of better things to come. According to God's promise, he looks for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness is to dwell. (2 Pet. 3:13) He has the hope that, even if he should die, he will experience a resurrection into that righteous system of things. (Acts 24:15) Daily he has the proof of what the apostle Paul said from his own experience: “The peace of God that excels all thought [everything fine of which the Christian could conceive] will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 4:7.

¹⁷ Enjoying this fine relationship, the Christian can help others to learn of these things. There is no greater joy than that of aiding others to come to a knowledge of God's truth and to be drawn into a good relationship with Jehovah and his Son. That is why Jehovah's Witnesses visit the homes of the people, throughout all the earth, telling them the “good news,” and calling again to conduct Bible studies.

Thus, as new ones are brought into association with the Christian congregation, they, too, experience the joy of knowing intimately the Father and the one whom he sent forth, Jesus Christ. To all of such, “this means everlasting life.”—John 17:3.

16. What are some of the most valuable benefits that the Christian has now by reason of his relationship with God?

17. What further joy may the Christian have due to having intimacy with God?

are you DISTURBED?



FROM many lands the reports are much the same. Dishonesty has become a plague. Many people are shoplifting. Employers find that they are experiencing heavy losses from employee theft. Bribery has become common in the business world. Fraud, extortion and embezzlement abound. By far the majority seem to be getting away with their dishonesty. Even among those who are caught, few are punished to the extent that their crimes merit.

How is this moral breakdown affecting you? Many are inclined to say, "What's the use of being honest?" They begin to look with envy at the prosperity of lawless men. But is the success of dishonest persons to be envied?

Many centuries ago an inspired answer was given to this question. And rightly so, for moral corruption is not something new. It has been the source of disturbance to righteously inclined persons throughout many centuries of human existence. Over 3,000 years ago, God-fearing King David, for example, witnessed lawlessness among his own people, the Israelites. Under inspiration, he set forth excellent admonition as to how to maintain a proper course when seeing wrongdoers prosper.

David urged: "Do not show yourself heated up because of the evildoers. Do not be envious of those doing unrighteousness. For like grass they will speedily

wither, and like green new grass they will fade away." (Ps. 37:1, 2) Yes, what really is to be gained by becoming unduly upset about the way lawless men seem to escape punishment? If we envy the wealth they get, what will that change? Nothing really, but we may well be making ourselves unhappy and discontented. So the wiser course is to keep in mind that the material prosperity of evildoers is but temporary. Even if justice does not catch up with them, they cannot extend their life-span indefinitely. Because of the shortness of human life, the wicked are like grass that, when cut, quickly withers. They are like lush green grass that fades away when it dries up. As evildoers come to their finish, so does their ill-gotten gain.

Another thing that will prevent us from envying wrongdoers is our recognizing that the Most High can and will correct matters in his due time. The psalmist continued: "Trust in Jehovah and do good; reside in the earth, and deal with faithfulness." (Ps. 37:3) Confident that Jehovah God will right matters, we should continue to do what is good and not let the seeming success of lawless persons cause us to deviate from a right course. The psalmist also recommends that we "reside in the earth" (evidently referring here to the land that was David's home and, hence, in our case, meaning the land

of our residence). While continuing to live among lawless persons, we should trust in divine help and prove ourselves faithful or upright in all that we do.

In this way, we shall maintain a fine relationship with the Creator—something of far greater value than material things. The psalmist gives this advice: "Take exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will give you the requests of your heart. Roll upon Jehovah your way, and rely upon him, and he himself will act. And he will certainly bring forth your righteousness as the light itself, and your justice as the midday."—Ps. 37:4-6.

According to these words, our real delight, pleasure or happiness should be found in our God, in serving him faithfully. If we stand approved before him, he will grant us the 'requests of our hearts,' as we will be making our petitions in harmony with his will. (1 John 5:14, 15) We can roll upon him whatever burdens or cares we have, committing all our affairs into his hands and looking for his help, guidance and direction. If we rely on him, he will not fail to act in our behalf. Though we may be misrepresented by others and our upright conduct may be obscured as if by a dark cloud, Jehovah God will, in his due time, make our righteousness and justice stand out as clearly and brightly as the sunshine at midday or noon.

THE NEED FOR PATIENCE

But before such vindication comes, what should we do? The psalmist answers: "Keep silent before Jehovah and wait longingly for him. Do not show yourself heated up at anyone making his way successful, at the man carrying out his ideas. Let anger alone and leave rage; do not show yourself heated up only to do evil. For evildoers themselves will be cut off, but those hoping in Jehovah are the ones that will possess the earth."—Ps. 37:7-9.

What is the psalmist here telling us? He is pointing out that we need to wait patiently for Jehovah God to act in his due time, not voicing complaints. We need to restrain ourselves from getting so angry about the success of dishonest men that we act rashly and jeopardize our standing with God. What will help us in this respect is to keep in mind that evil-doers will be cut off. Even in the natural outworking of matters, lawless action works against any lengthening of life. The person leading a debauched life, for example, may well die far earlier than if he had remained upright. So, in a general sense, persons who hope or trust in God enjoy a longer, more satisfying life.

In the case of the Israelites, to whom the words of the psalmist were originally directed, their continuance in the Promised Land and their enjoying long life depended on their obedience to God. Continued lawlessness, on the other hand, would result in the withdrawal of God's blessing and protection. Often this meant death at the hands of enemy nations or from famine and disease.—Lev. 26:3-39; Amos 4:6-5:3.

From his own experience in life, the psalmist David came to appreciate that in the long run it is always best to conform to God's righteous commands. He stated: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread. Watch the blameless one and keep the upright one in sight, for the future of that man will be peaceful. But the transgressors themselves will certainly be annihilated together; the future of wicked people will indeed be cut off."—Ps. 37:25, 37, 38.

Persons who have grown old in Jehovah's service in modern times have had the same experience. God sustained them in times of suffering, and many of them

witnessed the death of oppressive rulers who were bent on destroying them. As these blameless servants of God look back on what has happened, they can see how their life has turned out well.

The fact that they are still alive proves that God provided what they needed. They have enjoyed peace, an inner calm and tranquillity. Why? Because they maintained a clean conscience and were spared the anxieties of a life that centers exclusively around material things and has only death in view. Furthermore, they confidently look to the future when Jehovah God will use his Son Jesus Christ and an-

gelic forces to eradicate all corruption and lawless ones from the face of the earth and usher in an era of lasting peace. —2 Thess. 1:6-10.

Truly, the words of the psalmist help us to view life realistically. Yes, it is disturbing, in fact distressing, to see lawlessness flourish. But there is nothing to be gained by getting unduly upset about it. To yield to wrongdoing ourselves would ruin our relationship with the Creator. The wise course, then, is to endure patiently, confident that God will act and that our future is secure when we commit our affairs into his hands.



"SURVIVAL of the fittest"—the strong live at the expense of the weak. Cold and cruel? "No, actually good and beneficial," say proponents of the evolution theory, for they claim that this brings improvement. But even many of these persons were deeply shocked when they learned of the attempts of the Nazi Third Reich to implement this "law" toward fellow humans that they viewed as weak or undesirable.

Is such a horrifying demonstration required to convince a person that the weak should be regarded kindly and not be oppressed or destroyed? Not among persons who have a sincere esteem for the Bible,

for God's Word is much more than just passive or tolerant of the weak. It is sensitive to them. It directs that they be assisted, helped and supported. (Acts 20: 35; 1 Thess. 5:14) But, do not other authorities and agencies advocate compassion toward the weak? Yes, but the Bible is unique in that it can effect *continued* response to the needs of the weak.

The Bible's ability to motivate persons to assist the weak is closely related to its power to produce real love, humility and faith. Continually assisting the weak requires these qualities, for weak ones, unlike the strong, often cannot reward or repay another for his help. (Luke 14:12-

14) Additionally, the Bible convinces its reader that assisting the weak not only pleases God and Christ but is required for their favor. In our imperfection, we all have weaknesses for which we need the help of God and Christ. (Heb. 4:15, 16) Could we be assured of their helping us with our weaknesses if we did not help others with theirs?—Compare Matthew 6:14, 15.

WRONG VIEWS OF WEAK PERSONS HINDER ASSISTANCE TO THEM

A great barrier to assisting the weak occurs when the stronger person becomes more conscious of another's weakness than of his own. Additionally, another's weakness can so dominate the mind that the person is viewed negatively. The result is that the weak one is not assisted and the strong person may feel justified for not extending help. However, the Scriptures lead a person to appreciate that a considerable number of undesirable circumstances in the lives of humans may often be due to weakness, requiring assistance rather than disapproval.

An example is the Scriptures' attention to the poor. One could take a rather objective view, thinking that generally people are poor because they fail to exercise good judgment and so reap the inevitable results. The compassionate person, though, will view the poor as worthy of his help, *in spite of the fact* that a lack of good judgment or some other weakness may have been involved. God's law to Israel was specific in the matter: "And in case your brother grows poor and so he is financially weak alongside you, you must also sustain him. . . . I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to give you the land of Canaan, to prove myself your God." "You must not harden your heart or be closefisted toward your poor brother."—Lev. 25:35-38; Deut. 15:7.

On their own, Israel could never have escaped from Egypt and taken possession of Canaan. They were too weak, needing Jehovah's help. How inappropriate, then, for an Israelite having gained some material means not to help his financially weak brother, thus failing to imitate his God! Wisely he would fear God, knowing Jehovah's response to the course he took toward the weak: If a closefisted course was observed, then it would become sin on his part. But if a person was of a generous eye, then Jehovah God would bless his every deed and undertaking.—Deut. 15:8-11.

In the early Christian congregation, those needing the assistance of others included many more than just the materially poor. When writing to the Thessalonian congregation, Paul placed a responsibility on all the brothers, not just the elders, to respond actively to a variety of needs: "We exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all." (1 Thess. 5:14) In other letters Paul discusses extensively the condition of those who are weak in conscience. These, too, needed consideration. (Romans chapter 14; 1 Corinthians chapter 8) Yes, among early Christians there were persons with a wide range of weaknesses—but all were to be understood and assisted.

It is difficult for a strong person to bear being looked down on or perhaps avoided. How much more difficult for a weak person who experiences these things! Although not generally thought of as weak, David underwent just such a difficult period in his life: "Show me favor, O Jehovah, for I am in sore straits. With vexation my eye has become weak, my soul and my belly. . . . Because of my error my power has stumbled, and my very bones have become weak. From the standpoint of all those showing hostility to me

I have become a reproach, and to my neighbors very much so, and a dread to my acquaintances. When seeing me out of doors, they have fled from me. Like someone dead and not in the heart, I have been forgotten; . . . But I—in you I have put my trust, O Jehovah. I have said: 'You are my God.' My times are in your hand." (Ps. 31:9-15) Rather than seeing his brothers coming to his assistance, he saw them avoiding him. David felt assisted by God alone.

What could cause a weak person to be treated in this manner? One cause could be our allowing another's negative view of someone to influence our estimation of him. Confusing weakness with wickedness could be another. The Pharisees seem to have erred in both these regards. In response to their murmuring against Jesus for spending time with those whom they considered to be not merely weak but sinful, he said: "Persons in health [strong ones] do not need a physician, but the ailing do. Go, then, and learn what this means, 'I want mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners."—Matt. 9:12, 13; Mark 2:17.

Even when disfellowshipping must be considered, a question that needs to be answered is, Is this person really wicked or simply weak? If it is a matter of weakness, the individual may respond to genuine, loving assistance patiently shown. To what extent has help been given to the erring one? Could more effort and time be extended to reach the heart of the individual so as to encourage him to change his course?

While the interests of the individual are important, the effect of his actions on the congregation and its righteous standing before God are also important. If elders fail to act to remove wickedness from the congregation, harm results. (1 Cor. 5:6-13) However, it is possible to take action hastily, unlovingly or with a lack of

discernment. If, as a consequence, harm comes to an individual who sinned due to his being weak, not wicked, this too is damaging to the congregation and adversely affects its righteous standing before God.

Taking the proper course toward those who are taking a false step requires insight. But as the Christian works in this regard, his perceptive abilities increase not only in identifying true weakness but also as to what help, counsel or action may be most needed at the time. (Heb. 5:14) If he errs in his efforts to deal with the problem, may it not be because of failing to show kindness and mercy.—Ps. 25:6, 7; 51:1; Jas. 2:13; Jude 22, 23.

So when young folks or others exercise poor judgment (which may happen in a number of areas), what is our reaction? How good it is when we hold back from immediately condemning them, reflecting instead on what we might do to be of assistance to them! When someone makes a serious mistake in the congregation, do we find ourselves redoubling our efforts in behalf of that one? How much more helpful this is than making that one's mistake a topic of conversation among other brothers. And when conversation may turn to the weakness of another, how considerate it is when effort is made to change the direction of the discussion, perhaps as to how help or assistance may be given in the matter. "The one covering over transgression is seeking love, and he that keeps talking about a matter is separating those familiar with one another," says the inspired proverb.—Prov. 17:9; 11:13.

HOW CAN WE ASSIST THE WEAK?

Having the spirit of helpfulness and not viewing weak ones in a disparaging way are primary requirements for assisting them. Next, we want to ascertain the underlying problem: Is it loneliness, lack of understanding or very little love in the

home? Could it be economic strain or personal disappointment, failing health or a feeling of uselessness because of old age? These are only a few of the possible problems that could cause an ebbing of strength in the weak one. In every case there is also a need for a deeper comprehension of the Scriptures and of God's love. Careful reflection on the person's situation in life along with a warm, heartfelt visit could help in determining the underlying difficulty.

Those who are really interested in helping the weak have for their guidance the example of the apostle Paul. He said: "Who is weak, and I am not weak?" (2 Cor. 11:29) Paul sympathized with all. He felt what others felt and was affected by their distress. To what extent? Judging from his counsel at Acts 20:35, his compassion surely went beyond kind words: "By thus *laboring* you must assist those who are weak." He responded to the weak in the spirit of the apostle John's later exhortation: "Let us love, neither in word nor with the tongue, but in deed and truth."—1 John 3:18.

While forceful in encouraging assistance for the weak, the Scriptures do not describe in detail what an individual should do in their behalf. Why? No doubt it is because no matter how extensive such instruction might have been, never could all circumstances have been considered. But the Bible's direction is firm that we develop genuine, sympathetic compassion for the weak. We *must* act in response to their needs. This counsel, while simple and general, produces specific results among right-hearted Christians.

EVERY INDIVIDUAL ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONGREGATION IS PRECIOUS

All in the congregation will be aided in fulfilling their responsibility to help the weak if they come to recognize the value of each member of the congregation.

But if a member is weak and must be assisted, of what positive value is he? Is he not rather a liability to the congregation? Paul did not see it that way: "Much rather is it the case that the members of the body which seem to be weaker *are necessary*, . . . God compounded the body, giving honor more abundant to the part which had a lack, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its members should have the same care for one another." (1 Cor. 12:22-25) The congregation that values every individual and treasures his participation in Christian activities within the framework of his limitations is a warm, happy congregation, full of life and vigor.

Who can say how any effort put forth to help the weak may turn out? "In the morning sow your seed and until the evening do not let your hand rest; for you are not knowing where this will have success, either here or there, or whether both of them will alike be good." (Eccl. 11:6) Especially can we be assured of God's help when we assist others spiritually. How many who are today very fine servants of Jehovah received lasting spiritual assistance at a time when they were weak!

A weak person cannot become strong quickly. Just as recovery from physical weakness may be slow, so some may take a long time to become strong spiritually. But do we exercise patience with the weak? Do we love them just as much as if they were strong? When this love is shown, what blessings come to all! The weaker brother has the blessing of being cared for and supported in his difficulties. The stronger one realizes the greater blessing that only giving can bring. The congregation as a whole experiences an ever-growing warmth as each member depends on and takes an interest in others. Honor goes to God and Christ as their own matchless assistance of the weak is reflected in their earthly servants.

TELLING FORTH JEHOVAH'S PRAISE IN THE COOK ISLANDS

"LET them attribute to Jehovah glory, and in the islands let them tell forth even his praise," wrote the Hebrew prophet Isaiah. (Isa. 42:12) In keeping with those words, the praises of Jehovah are being heard in the Cook Islands of the South Pacific.

The 15 islands of this group are spread over an area of 751,000 square miles (1,945,000 square kilometers), yet their combined land area is only 93 square miles (241 square kilometers). Polynesian migrations to these islands took place in the seventh and eighth centuries C.E. Europeans came along much later. Reportedly, Pukapuka was first seen by Spanish navigators in 1595. During the 1770's the Southern Group was explored by the noted British seafarer Captain James Cook, after whom these islands are named.

In 1823, John Williams of the London Missionary Society visited many islands of the Southern Group and introduced the Bible to the populace. For many years Christendom's missionaries exercised rigid control over the people. Today, the Bible in the Rarotongan language is found in most homes. Many older people have deep respect for the Scriptures and can quote from them verbatim.

For a long time, the Cook Islands were "off the beaten track," having limited ship and air links with the rest of the world. Only since completion of the international airport on Rarotonga in 1973 has that island (home of half the total population of 18,112) been included in main air routes. Also, small planes now fly regularly between Rarotonga and the islands of the Southern Group.

PRAISING JEHOVAH ON RAROTONGA

Apparently, the first of Jehovah's Witnesses to declare the "good news" in the Cook Islands was Sydney Shepherd. In the early 1930's, for about two years he traveled through these waters by boat, witnessing on Rarotonga and other islands. Although little was done to follow up this activity, in 1939 a family from



New Zealand briefly visited four of the Cook Islands.

Brother and Sister Bruce Clarke came to Rarotonga in 1962. Their interest in serving here had been aroused by a Cook Islander with whom they conducted a Bible study in New Zealand. The woman wanted her people to hear the "good news."

In 1962 only five individuals attended the Lord's Evening Meal in Rarotonga. The opposed Roman Catholic wife of one man, Alex, prevented his attendance by damaging his bicycle with an ax. Nevertheless, Alex persevered and was baptized as a dedicated witness of Jehovah in 1963. With his wife, Nane, present as an observer, he translated the baptism talk, answered the two questions asked of baptismal candidates, and then was immersed in the lagoon. Not many months later, his wife, too, was baptized. They were the first Cook Islanders to become dedicated Christians, and today Alex and Nane Napa serve as special pioneers.

LET US DO IT AGAIN

Generally, travel and permit problems curtailed earlier visits by traveling elders. But how upbuilding it was when circuit overseers came to Rarotonga!

During one such visit, in 1965, the local Witnesses put on a small circuit assembly having

the theme "You Are the Light of the World." They enjoyed the program so much that when the traveling overseer's plane flight was delayed for a week, the assembly was repeated, much to the delight of all those present.

ISOLATION TAKES ITS TOLL

After four years in Rarotonga, the Clarke family had to leave because of illness. In time, communication with Jehovah's people elsewhere became quite limited and isolation set in. With no outside help, the small group of spiritually young Witnesses became despondent and gradually slipped into virtual inactivity.

But circumstances began to improve in 1969, when a New Zealand Witness and his wife moved to Rarotonga on a work contract. Soon regular Christian meetings were being held and the Kingdom-preaching activity was revitalized. Since then the Kingdom work has continued moving ahead.

MAORI SPECIAL PIONEERS SPUR INCREASE

There is a close resemblance between the New Zealand Maoris and the Cook Islanders (also called "Maoris" here), and this similarity extends to their language. Hence, when Maori special pioneers Sam and Agnes Whare-rau began serving on Rarotonga in 1970, they were soon able to speak the local Rarotongan tongue. As a result, during their four-year stay they aided many islanders to learn Bible truth.

Increase was in evidence, and a private home no longer was adequate as a meeting place. A Kingdom Hall was needed. With Jehovah's blessing, a lease was arranged for ideally situated property at Arorangi. By early 1971 work on the building was under way, and in a few months the congregation had moved into their new hall. All seemed to be going well.

However, a serious problem arose in 1974. Under advice from the Religious Advisory Council, the government passed a bill restricting religions in the Cook Islands to long-established churches. Of course, Jehovah's Witnesses applied for recognition, but for a time could not hold meetings in the Kingdom Hall or any public place. However, by 1975 verbal approval had been received for use of the hall as a meeting place. Happily, this was followed on June 1, 1976, by a letter approving Jehovah's Witnesses as the sixth recognized religion in the Cook Islands.

THE KINGDOM WORK REACHES OUT TO AITUTAKI

In the 1930's Sydney Shepherd first sowed the seeds of truth on beautiful Aitutaki, partly a coral atoll enclosing a lagoon nearly nine miles (14.5 kilometers) long. Tuaeivi Mose, a Polynesian, readily accepted the truth. Besides speaking about it to others on Aitutaki, he wrote to acquaintances on the island of Mangaia. Realizing the importance of having Christian publications in his native tongue, he began translating the books he possessed. Since no Witnesses visited Aitutaki before he left in 1964, it was not until moving to New Zealand that Brother Mose was able to get baptized in symbol of his dedication to Jehovah, made many years earlier. Because he spoke out about his beliefs, he became known on Aitutaki as "The Watchtower Man." Until his death a few years ago, Brother Mose stuck loyally to the truth.

The Kingdom work really got under way on Aitutaki in January 1972, when three Witnesses who had learned Bible truth in New Zealand went home for a visit, and nine publishers from Rarotonga joined them to give the island a good witness. They found much interest, and 60 people attended a public Bible talk. Sixteen were present for the first observance of the Memorial held on the island. January 1973 saw European Wayne Blake and his Aitutakian wife, Aileen, proclaiming the "good news" there, and the 71 present for the Memorial that year included interested observers from five local churches.

The Aitutakians cling to their traditions, but much of the former hostility toward Jehovah's people has subsided. It is realized that the Witnesses wish the people no harm and only desire to discuss the Bible with them. Even pastors no longer are hostile.

EXPANDING THE WITNESS TO THE OUTER ISLANDS

Although the "good news" is well established on Rarotonga and Aitutaki, another 6,000 people live on the other 10 inhabited islands of the group. During short visits through the years, some Bible literature has been placed with those reading English. But a real boon to the work has been the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* in the Rarotongan language.

In Mauke it is customary for the entire populace (710) to gather at the wharf when

a boat comes in and to provide *umukai* (a feast) for the visitors. An ideal time to offer the *Truth* book! Two visiting Christian women did so on one occasion, and an entire carton was empty in no time. So, it was back to the boat for more books. Soon, these, too, were gone, and still others wanted copies. To meet the need, 50 additional books were sent later to Mauke.

Similar success was experienced by Witnesses visiting Mangaia. They placed 769 books and 600 booklets with the 1,630 people on that island. The literature was not refused at a single home!

SCENE SET FOR FURTHER BLESSING

Considerable time, expense and effort have been required to spread the "good news" in these islands. But Jehovah God's blessing evidently has been on this activity. Today there are thriving congregations of 47 Kingdom publishers in Rarotonga and 16 publishers in Aitutaki. Moreover, there are good prospects for the establishing of further congregations on some of the outer islands.

Do You Remember?

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

- According to Psalm 1, what can contribute to a person's happiness?

It is essential to reject the advice of ungodly persons and to avoid their company. On the positive side, the individual would find real pleasure in fulfilling his desire to know and to apply Jehovah's law.—1/1 p. 28.

- How do we know that Psalm 45 is prophetic?

At Hebrews 1:8, 9, verses 6 and 7 of Psalm 45 are quoted and applied to Jesus Christ. There it is shown that Jehovah God serves as a "throne" for the Son, indicating that the Most High is the Source of his Son's kingdom and the One who upholds his kingship.—1/15 p. 13.

- Why was it important for the Jews in the

As the year 1978 drew to a close, Jehovah's Witnesses in the Cook Islands keenly desired to attend the "Victorious Faith" International Convention in Auckland, New Zealand. But how could that be possible? The economy in the islands is such that it would have cost each one a small fortune to make the convention trip. However, Jehovah's hand is not short. The hearts of loving spiritual brothers and sisters in New Zealand were stirred to contribute the round-trip air fares for some 60 of the islanders. These were present December 6-10, among the throng of 12,328 who shared in that grand feast. Native Cook Islanders took part in the program, and on the Saturday evening after the regular sessions, they appeared with others in colorful native dress to delight other overseas visitors with a program of native song and dance. Their joyful oneness with the Maori, Samoan, Niuean Islander and Caucasian conventioners was another living testimony that today Jehovah is gathering peoples of all nations and tribes into a worldwide unity in Christ Jesus.—Eph. 1:10.

time of Ezra to separate from unbelieving, idol-worshiping women?

The Jewish population was relatively small. Hence, if left unchecked, the practice of marrying unbelievers could have led quickly to the Jews' being assimilated into surrounding nations and pure worship could have completely vanished from the earth.—2/1 p. 30.

- After Israel's defeat at Ai, what did the leading men of the nation show by ripping their mantels, prostrating themselves before Jehovah, putting dust on their heads and remaining before the Ark until the evening? —Josh. 7:6.

The ripping of the garments as well as the putting of dust on their heads were signs of mourning. In prostrating themselves before Jehovah, they acknowledged that some sin had been committed against the Most High, causing him to withdraw his blessing. By remaining before the Ark until the evening, they gave evidence of deep concern over the matter and their fear of having incurred divine displeasure. Thus they looked to Jehovah for help in finding the cause of the problem and in regaining his favor.—2/15 p. 10.

● How did the Israelites, as an engaged virgin, demonstrate love for Jehovah?—Jer. 2:2.

Before coming into a wifely relationship with Jehovah at Mount Sinai, the Israelites demonstrated an initial trust in the Most High. They responded to the opportunity of leaving Egypt and then undertook a difficult journey through an inhospitable wilderness.—3/1 p. 9.

● How does the 'fear of Jehovah stand forever'?—Ps. 19:9.

Devoted servants of Jehovah will continue to have a wholesome fear toward their Maker for all eternity, demonstrating this by obedience to his commands. There will never be a time when such reverential fear will cease to exist.—3/15 p. 7.

● How are we to understand Moses' words to

the Israelites about their having God's 'commands on their hearts'?—Deut. 6:6.

The divine commands were to be not just a matter of the mind or memory but were to be appreciated at heart. Only then would the Israelites have a real love for the Creator and be in a position to instill such love in their children.—4/1 p. 4.

● Why are 'youth and the prime of life vanity'?—Eccl. 11:10.

The days of youthful strength and vigor pass quickly, as a person does not remain young forever. Even in his prime, a youth may get sick and die. The person who ignores these hard facts about youth may fail to use his physical energies and capabilities wisely, dissipating them and thus making adult life harder for himself.—4/1 p. 10.

QUESTIONS from READERS

● How are we to understand Job 3:14 about kings and counselors who build "desolate places for themselves"?

These words appear in a context of lying down in the sleep of death. (Job 3:13) According to a correction of the Masoretic text, the expression "desolate places" could be rendered "pyramids." As large tombs, the pyramids certainly were "desolate places" without any human inhabitants.

● Why did the Mosaic law prescribe capital punishment for anyone who called down evil on his parents?

God's law stated: "In case there should be any man who calls down evil upon his father and his mother, he should be put to death without fail. It is his father and his mother upon whom he has called down evil. His own blood is upon him." (Lev. 20:9) For a man to curse his parents, to want some dire calamity to befall them, would give indication of a

hateful, murderous disposition. It would be a shocking lack of gratitude for the care and attention given him by his parents. While not personally using a weapon to strike them down, such a man, at heart, desired that their death come about through another means. In the eyes of God, such a vicious spirit constitutes murder. (Compare Matthew 5:21, 22; 1 John 3:15.) Therefore, in his law to Israel, the Most High prescribed the same penalty for reviling parents as for actually killing them.

● The parentage of the skilled craftsman sent by Hiram to assist with the temple-building work during Solomon's reign is described differently in 1 Kings from what it is in 2 Chronicles. Why is this?

First Kings 7:14 reads: "He was the son of a widowed woman from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a Tyrian man." At 2 Chronicles 2:14, this craftsman is described as "the son of a woman of the sons of Dan but whose father was a man of Tyre." When these statements are viewed as complementary, the seeming discrepancy is readily resolved. His mother was a "widowed woman from the tribe of Naphtali" in the sense that she had been married to a man from that tribe. Her own tribe, however, was Dan. After her husband's death, she married a Tyrian, and from this union sprang the son who became a skilled craftsman.

Being Tactful Is Beneficial

One morning a Kingdom proclaimer in La Orotava, Tenerife Island, called at a door and a very sleepy man answered. Observing that she had awakened him, the Witness apologized and briefly presented Christian journals, which were accepted.

Later, this Witness and her husband visited this man, named Isidro. He remarked that, although he occasionally read the Bible, he could not understand it. Isidro accepted a copy of the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*.

Though Isidro originally had nothing between the pages of his Bible at the time of their first visit, when the Witness couple returned, they noted that it and his copy of the *Truth* book were full of religious pictures. During the discussion, one of these items fell to the floor. The visiting Witness picked it up, and placed the article on the table.

Later, Isidro told the Witness that this had been a trap, for he had heard that *protestantes* burned religious images when they visited a

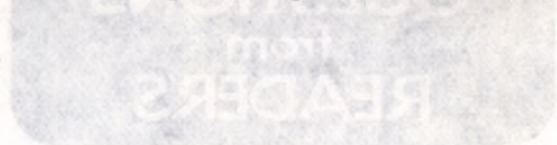
home. Of course, Jehovah's Witnesses are not Protestants, but Isidro obviously wondered what they would do. However, after studying a certain chapter in the *Truth* book, he and his wife personally removed all idolatrous items from their home.

Before long, however, Isidro and his wife had progressed spiritually and were planning to be baptized as true Christians. Also, through their efforts six of their relatives began studying the Bible. Three of them were discussing the Scriptures with Isidro himself—the cautious man who had been awakened one morning from a sound sleep and had benefited from tactful treatment.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

May 20: Can You Have an Intimate Relationship with God? Page 12. Songs to Be Used: 23, 18.

May 27: Does Relationship with God Help Us Now? Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 72, 82.



How are we to understand Job 3:14 about "associates" and "cousins" who build "associates" for themselves? These words appear in a context of going down in the ship of death (Job 3:17). According to a correction of the Masoretic text, the expression "associates" could be rendered "partners." As Jesus taught, the "partners" were "partners" without any human intermediaries.

Why did the Moslem law prescribe capital punishment for anyone who called down evil on his parents? God's law stated: "In case there should be any man who calls down evil upon his father and his mother, he should be put to death without fail. It is his father and his mother upon whom he has called down evil. His own blood is upon him." (Lev. 20:9) For a man to curse his parents to want some evil calamity to befall them would give indication of a