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The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

What
Is the Secret
of
HAPPINESS
?



The Watchtower[®]

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THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER" is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a Paradise. It encourages faith in the now-reigning king, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. "The Watchtower," published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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What Is the Secret of Happiness?



TO BE happy, you must be rich, beautiful and popular. You might think so, if advertisements, films and novels are to be believed.

But, in the long run, do money and great possessions result in real and lasting happiness? Are youth and physical beauty essential for you to be happy? Playful children often seem happy. But what really is the secret of happiness?

Can God Promote Our Happiness?

You may be told that happiness really depends on having a good relationship with God. Yet many people find it difficult to believe in a Supreme Being. They do not see him, do not know him and think that they must merely *accept* his existence. So they cannot see how God could promote their happiness.

True, because "God is a Spirit" we cannot see him with our eyes. (John 4:

24) Yet, is there not much that is invisible although we accept its existence? We enjoy friendship but do not *see* what we and our friends really *feel*. We think, but has anyone ever seen thoughts? We are alive, but can we see the life-force?

Everything on earth that is still unspoiled by man bespeaks order, beauty and efficiency. So there must be someone who has carefully considered and designed things, someone with great feeling for form and beauty—yes, someone who knows what will make us happy. A writer of ancient times made the striking observation that the invisible qualities of God are perceived by the things He has made. Does not a beautiful painting or carving reveal much about the artist responsible for it? Well, the same is true with God. It is possible to "see" him in creation and in everything he does for us.—Romans 1:20.

What Does God Do for Us?

God can help us to be happy, even though we see only some of his might, wisdom and love in his creative works. In contrast with many worldly rulers, he does not coldly keep a distance from those over whom he rules. Out of love Jehovah God liberally provides his creatures with instruction that can help them to live happy lives. In fact, the Bible is filled with God's "reminders" that promote happiness.—Psalm 25:8-10.

Citing certain laws that let us know how God views various actions, Jesus Christ said: "You must not murder, You

must not commit adultery, You must not steal, You must not bear false witness, Honor your father and your mother, and, You must love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 19:18, 19) What do you think the world would be like if such instructions were applied? Surely, if nobody was a murderer, an adulterer, a thief and the like, mankind would be much, much happier.

The Scriptures say: "Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah!" (Psalm 144: 15) How true! Many have applied God's counsel, and this has given them the tranquillity and confidence that are indispensable for true happiness. (Philippians 4:6, 7) Let us note what a few of them have to say.

What could make a drug-addicted illegal squatter happy? He had chosen an immoral life, heavy drinking, interest in "pop" festivals and fighting. Of course, he could see that the society he hated was not changed by the things he did. All that remained for him, he felt, was to enjoy himself and do what he pleased. But the parents of the girl he married showed him the way to a new society now developing. He says: "Once married, I was, as it were, forced to see that the life I had led until then could result only in disaster. I now possess the deep-seated realization that following the Bible's advice can bring about great changes for good in a person's life. Together with my wife and two children, I serve God as a baptized witness of Jehovah." This man has found true happiness as a Christian.

Please consider another case. But first ask yourself: How happy would I be if I had just been operated on for cancer, was still receiving radiation treatment and would probably have to undergo a second operation? A certain woman who is going through this traumatic experience once was known throughout her neighborhood as a prostitute. It took a

long time before she was able to put into practice all the Scriptural counsel she received. But reliance on God has enabled her to make great changes in her life. In her own village in the Netherlands, where everyone knows of her former reputation, she now goes from house to house in order to declare the "good news" and help others find real happiness. Although this woman has serious health problems, she says: "I have put all my trust in Jehovah God, and he will help me." She, too, knows real happiness.

The experience of an elderly woman in Amsterdam proves that a person does not lose true happiness in spite of many setbacks in this unhappy world. This woman had been happily married for 57 years, but a few months after becoming a widow she could say: "I am quite happy, feel safe in my house and am not afraid." What is the secret of her happiness? She says: "If you obey God's laws, then you are happy."

Happiness Can Be Yours

So it would seem that inner tranquillity and joy do not depend so much on such circumstances as health, wealth, honor, and so forth. Lasting happiness depends on a good conscience, self-respect, true friends—and, above all, friendship with God. Why not try to "see" him by looking at his creation with more understanding and especially by making a study of the Bible? Who knows how happy you may be because you take to heart what you read in God's inspired Word?

But are people who become witnesses of Jehovah *always completely happy*? To be quite honest, No. As the following article shows, imperfect humans all have problems and need help in coping with them. Yet God's Word, the Bible, helps sincere Christians to keep walking along the path to endless happiness.



Is There a Way out of Unhappiness?

HOW people can be at odds with themselves! It can happen suddenly, just because of what someone has said or done or due to an unpleasant experience. At such times we can hardly think of anything else. And we find that, seeing no way out of our difficulty, our relationship with God can suffer. We may even think of giving up the fight for the faith. (Jude 3) Our joy wanes and we are engulfed in a spirit of dejection. (Proverbs 18:14) We sincerely desire to remain on the "path of life," but it seems that the course is becoming too difficult for us.—Psalm 16:11.

What can be done when our circumstances are so distressing? Must we just keep struggling unhappily? Or is there some way out of unhappiness?

Looking at Ourselves

People differ greatly in their response to problems. So when we are facing difficulties, it is good to look at ourselves honestly. There may be something in us that requires adjustment.—Psalm 139:23, 24.

Certain people can experience great suffering in silence, and some seem to get

over their difficulties much sooner than others do. This could be due to upbringing, personality or state of health. For instance, if an individual has had lack of love and of good training in his youth, he may have a more difficult time in later life.

Those who were deprived of love in early life often are too quick to think that people do not like them and have therefore treated them badly. On the other hand, those who were spoiled with too much attention often expect everything in life to revolve around them, and for that reason their friendships may not last long. For those who have health problems, any injustice and humiliation can be very trialsome. They often have the feeling that they are unable to bear anything more. So if we are inclined to be very sensitive, it is good to think of these factors, especially when we feel that we have fallen in a stream of insurmountable difficulties.

When we are worrying about something, are we also inclined to be withdrawn from those around us? This is a natural reaction, but it should not be allowed to go on very long. Otherwise, the danger exists that, absorbed as we are with our problems, we will begin to find everyone around us troublesome. We may unwisely isolate ourselves, and,

as it were, our house may become full of mirrors in which we continually look to see what a difficult time we are having. —Proverbs 18:1.

The lower our spirits become the more likely we are to place the blame on those around us. If we also make the mistake of attributing wrong motives to them, this can give rise to great tension. How much better not to be unduly suspicious! —Compare 1 Timothy 6:4.

Are we perhaps oversensitive about the faults of those with whom we associate? Life would be much more pleasant if we were to show patience and understanding. Remember that Jesus Christ said: "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." Instead of brooding over the way people have treated us, we should pray to Jehovah, asking him to help those who have rebuffed us. After all, are they not doing more harm to themselves than to us? Yes, "for whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." —Matthew 6:14; Galatians 6:7.

When we are hard pressed, perhaps we pray to Jehovah in a somewhat child-like way, asking him to make us happy again. We may do this, of course. But can we expect that he will immediately remove every unpleasant thought and distressing memory? Certain things have happened, but wherein lies the greater potential for unhappiness? Is it in remembering what has taken place or in our wrong reaction to it? Is it not our taking of offense, our anger and our self-pity that mostly rob us of our joy and spiritual balance?

We would, therefore, be wise to quell such exhausting feelings as soon as they bubble up in us. Otherwise, we may so whip up our emotions that we will get into an almost hopeless state. If we then call to Jehovah, he will help us. But we

cannot expect miracles, for we may have to retrace a wrong path we have taken. So put things right at once, if necessary. Walking about with a bad conscience and an unhappy spirit is much more distressing than admitting mistakes. Let us honestly 'explore our ways' and, with renewed energy, determine that we will work in God's strength to do better. —Lamentations 3:40-42.

Controlling Our Thoughts

Actually, whether we are truly happy or not depends greatly on us. That is why we need to have our thoughts under control. Otherwise, unpleasant memories, silly fancies or even wicked promptings will soon gain the upper hand. If we find ourselves in an unhappy frame of mind, we might well ask: What was I thinking about just before I suddenly became so downhearted? Of course, we can switch off a bad television program, but wrong thoughts, when there, are not so easily dismissed. However, what a blessing it is that we can pray for God's help! By means of his holy spirit, or active force, Jehovah will gladly help us to keep our thoughts under control. The psalmist David once said: "When my disquieting thoughts became many inside of me, your own [Jehovah's] consolations began to fondle my soul." —Psalm 94:19.

If we implore Jehovah for help, for whatever reason, we must listen to him when he speaks to us. His infinite wisdom and love are reflected in the Scriptures, and counsel on every situation that we are likely to experience is clearly set forth in the Bible. Hence, our happiness can be restored or made sure if we apply Jehovah's counsel in life. Jesus said: "Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!" —Luke 11:28.

We can give beneficial direction to our thoughts by keeping a particular Bible

text in mind for a few hours or even a whole day. Whenever we come across especially comforting or strengthening words in our study of the Bible, we can fix these in mind. Then time after time, when we feel the need, we can repeat these portions of Jehovah's Word. In this way "the God of all comfort" will aid us, and "the peace of God" will 'guard our hearts and mental powers.' Then, despite our problems, we will be able to persevere in his service with joy. Yes, not only should we learn what God thinks about matters but we should also do what he tells us to do.—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4; Philippians 4:6, 7.

Enjoying What God Gives Us

We certainly should listen to God, for he shows us love and gives us "every good gift." (James 1:17) At times of strain and discouragement, we may forget that there is still much that is enjoyable. Moreover, our heavenly Father desires that we avail ourselves freely of all the good things he provides. And he wants us to be happy, even as the congregator indicated when saying: "The best thing that I myself have seen, which is pretty, is that one should eat and drink and see good for all his hard work . . . For not often will he remember the days of his life, because the true God is preoccupying him with the rejoicing of his heart." (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20; 9:7-10) We all experience some sorrows, but if we keep our eyes open, we will still see the "sunshine," even through some "clouds."

Among our finest gifts from God are our Christian friends. How we long for them when we are going through a difficult time! It is then that we need someone who is willing to listen to us with understanding. We often know what we should do, but we just cannot draw it from our wounded heart. Well, why should we

be ashamed to ask a cherished associate in the Christian congregation for a little loving attention? Experienced elders in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses will be glad to help us in practical ways and especially by providing aid based on God's Word.—James 5:13-16.

Wherever we live on earth we also have many 'small friends' all around us. We only need to win their confidence, and a variety of animals and birds are sure to seek us out if we provide a little food for them. How enjoyable it is when they become tame enough to eat out of our hand!

What about children in the neighborhood? They will be glad to call on us if we are kind or generous or let them help with some little job. No, we need not be lonely or unhappy if only we reflect on our blessings and enjoy everything that Jehovah gives us.

It is restful and helps put upbuilding ideas in our minds if we go out in the open air. Brains that get too little oxygen are not likely to promote a relaxed spirit. Many a man has regained his spiritual balance after a long walk. And when we are walking past gardens or in the woods, we should try to comprehend *what* we see. All too often we walk or sit in the open air staring in front of us and are

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- **Honor Godly Marriage!**

assailed by all sorts of gloomy thoughts. But every tree, every plant, every animal and even the sky can tell us something about the Creator, if only we will let the beauty of the design, the splendor of the colors and everything we discover have an effect on us. As we look at the starry heavens on fine evenings, words such as these of the psalmist can well up in us: "The heavens are declaring the glory of God; and of the work of his hands the expanse is telling." (Psalm 19:1) At such moments all human cares grow dim, and we sense something of God's grandeur. Then we shall have no difficulty pushing our concerns into the background and sending up words of thanks and praise to our Grand Creator.

Our sleep is another of God's gifts. At the end of a busy day we may take our rest, fully trusting in God's protection. This helps us to start the next day with renewed energy. But if we sleep badly, what can we do? We can pray to our heavenly Father, also remembering our fellow believers in such petitions. We can think about his Word and grand promises. (Psalm 77:6; Ephesians 6:17-20) How much better than thinking only about all our problems! We need to fill our mind with many good things of a spiritual sort. Then we might simply say to ourselves, 'Well, goodnight.'

We Are Not Alone

Of course, we are not the only people with problems. If we were to ask others about their difficulties, we would probably think: Well, it is better to be silent. In fact, we might prefer our own problems to those that plague many others.

As dedicated Christians, we cannot be free of all hardships at this time, for Jesus said his followers would experience persecution. (John 15:20) We are not alone in undergoing what our archene-

my, Satan the Devil, may bring upon us, for "the same things in the way of sufferings are being accomplished in the entire association of [our] brothers in the world." Most importantly, however, we and our fellow Christian sufferers have divine aid. So let us trust in "the God of all undeserved kindness," who is with us. And may we look with confidence to the day so near at hand when our tribulations will exist no longer.—1 Peter 5:6-11; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10.

The difficult time all faithful Christians are now having is soon to end, for we are rapidly approaching a new, happy era. We are on the threshold of "a new heaven and a new earth." (Revelation 21:1-4) What a cause for happiness!

Jesus Christ taught his followers to ask God prayerfully: "Let your kingdom come." (Matthew 6:10) So let us really hope in that Kingdom and look to the future with joy. Jesus was able to endure the great shame and agony of the torture stake because, in all his suffering, he kept in mind "the joy that was set before him." (Hebrews 12:1-3) He was soon to see his heavenly Father again face to face and would be surrounded by all his happy heavenly associates.

In the course of the centuries, Christ's followers have endured many trials, even facing wild beasts in the Roman arena and the horrors of concentration camps. They have been able to undergo all of this because they have sought to please Jehovah and have kept their eyes on the prize of everlasting life. Jehovah God will not forget them. Neither will he forget us if we are faithful as his worshipers and remain on the "path of life." So, with our wonderful hope in view, we can cry out joyfully: "You [our God, Jehovah] are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing."—Psalm 145:16.

Modesty— A Fine Ornament for Young and Old

MODESTY is a winning quality. It can make its possessor a likable person. And who does not appreciate being liked by others? With good reason, then, it might be said that modesty is a fine ornament for young and old.

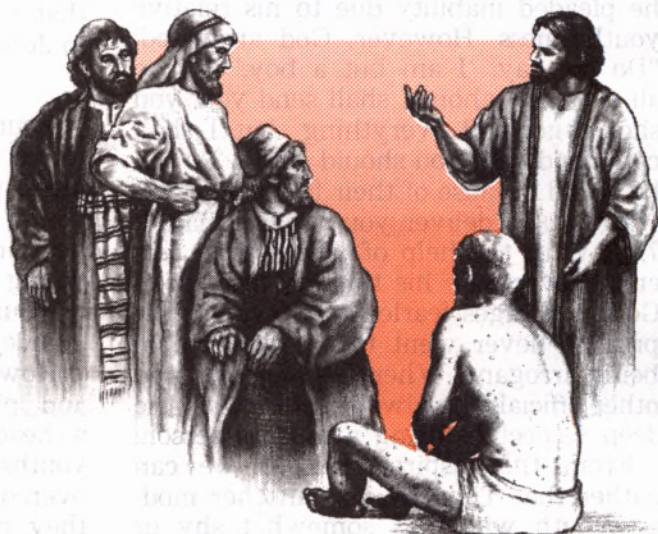
However, it seems that youths in particular have a problem developing proper balance as regards modesty. On the one hand, there are those young persons who seem to be overly modest. They are timid about accepting responsibility, being painfully aware of their own limited knowledge and lack of experience. On the other hand, many youths are overly confident, apparently unaware of their limitations due to lack of experience. The Bible gives examples of both kinds of young persons.

Contrasting Examples

That a lack of modesty can have dire consequences was illustrated in the case of King Solomon's son Rehoboam. He was quite a young man when he succeeded his father on the throne of the 12-tribe kingdom of Israel. When the people pleaded with Rehoboam to reduce their burdens, what course did he take? Although the older counselors urged him to show compassion, he rejected their wise advice. Instead, Rehoboam ac-

cepted the counsel of the younger men, who advised him to deal harshly with the people. So he told them: "My father laid a heavy yoke on you; I will make it heavier. My father used the whip on you; but I will use the lash." Had Rehoboam been a modest young man, he would have listened to the older counselors and reduced the burdens on the people. Failing to do so, he lost 10 of the 12 tribes.—1 Kings 12:3-24, *The New English Bible*.

In striking contrast with Rehoboam was Elihu. He set a fine example for all



Youthful Elihu
modestly waited to speak the truth

young men today, being neither excessively reserved nor overly self-confident. Even though Elihu had all the answers, so to speak, for days he listened patiently to Job and his hypocritical would-be comforters. Only when 'the words of Job had come to an end' did Elihu, with due modesty, speak up. "Young I am in days and you men are aged," he said. "That is why I drew back and was afraid to declare my knowledge to you men."—Job 31:40; 32:4-7.

How much more effective and weighty Elihu's words were because he waited until those older men had their say! Elihu apparently had the key to the problem, whereas they had made it apparent that they did not understand what was involved. And what was involved? The issue of the rightfulness of Jehovah God's sovereignty and whether He could have people on earth that would prove faithful to Him regardless of what they had to suffer.—Job 1:7-2:10.

Consider also Jeremiah. When Jehovah God commissioned him as a prophet, he pleaded inability due to his relative youthfulness. However, God answered: "Do not say, 'I am but a boy.' But to all those to whom I shall send you, you should go; and everything that I shall command you, you should speak. Do not be afraid because of their faces, for 'I am with you to deliver you.'" (Jeremiah 1:7, 8) With the help of God's spirit, Jeremiah overcame his timidity and spoke God's messages fearlessly. However, the prophet never went to the extreme of being arrogant. When before kings and other officials, he always spoke with the deep respect befitting a modest person.

From the inspired Record we can gather that Timothy was another modest youth who was somewhat shy or reserved. While the Bible does not specifically state this, we may reach such a conclusion from what it does say. Please

note that Timothy was told by his older friend the apostle Paul: "Let no man ever look down on your youth." Had Timothy had plenty of self-assurance, doubtless it would not have been necessary for Paul to tell him that. Most likely it was also because of Timothy's modesty and reserve that Paul found it necessary to counsel the Corinthian congregation: "If Timothy arrives, see that he becomes free of fear among you, for he is performing the work of Jehovah, even as I am. Let no one, therefore, look down upon him."—1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Corinthians 16:10, 11.

Obviously, Christians young and old would want to avoid the unwise, immodest course of Rehoboam. But they are wise to imitate the respectful, modest manner of Elihu. And from Jeremiah and Timothy it is possible for younger Christians to learn that they should modestly yet courageously go forward in Jehovah's service, even though they may be somewhat shy or reserved. If they persevere, they will in time gain something that will greatly enhance their service to Jehovah.

The Value of Experience

Younger persons have much for which to be thankful. Regarding their privileges, wise King Solomon said: "Rejoice, young man, in your youth, and let your heart do you good in the days of your young manhood, and walk in the ways of your heart and in the things seen by your eyes."—Ecclesiastes 11:9.

However, with an abundance of health and physical energy, and often with a head crammed with book learning, youths frequently are inclined to be overconfident as to their abilities. Thus they may believe they can solve the problems that have plagued older men for generations. But with all their learning, eagerness and physical strength, the

fact remains that youths lack experience. Likely, that is why the Roman dramatist Plautus observed that "modesty becomes a young man." Experience usually tempers a person's enthusiasm, eagerness and self-confidence. Thus it has been said that a young doctor starts out in life with a hundred remedies for every sickness, but with years of experience discovers that there are a hundred ills for every remedy!

Yes, experience—that is what makes the difference! The Bible even states that Jesus Christ was made perfect for his office as King and High Priest by experience, by reason of the things that he suffered. (Hebrews 4:15; 5:8, 9) It has been said that experience is a costly teacher, but fools will learn from no other. Of course, the world is full of people who lack the modesty needed to learn even from experience. Yet experience truly can help to make the modest person wise.

Aids to Modesty

Christians young and old may be aware that modesty is a fine ornament. But how can this desirable quality be developed? Well, among the aids to the cultivating of modesty is the daily reading of the Bible, the Word of God. This gives us a proper perspective and helps to keep us from taking ourselves too seriously. Bible reading also helps us to see things from God's standpoint. For instance, the Scriptures indicate that to God men are like mere grasshoppers and even entire nations are as drops of water falling from a bucket. (Isaiah 40:15, 22) The Bible, in effect, counsels us to be modest when it asks: "What is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be *modest* in walking with your God?" And just what it means to be modest the apostle Paul

shows, in saying: "I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind." It is necessary to think something of ourselves, but the modest individual is careful not to overestimate his worth.—Micah 6:8; Romans 12:3.

Note that the counsel just mentioned is directed not merely to youths but to all, the old as well as the young. However, the Bible does indicate that modesty is particularly becoming to youth. Moreover, from the time of Moses to the days of Jesus' apostles, the Scriptures show that congregational responsibility is to be shouldered by "older men," the elders. (Exodus 3:16; 1 Peter 5:1-3) Also, the Bible states: "You younger men, be in subjection to the older men." This means that the younger men should not be proud or high-minded. But does such counsel apply only to the younger men? No, for the apostle Peter goes on to say: "All of you gird yourselves with lowliness of mind toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones." Humility and modesty are close cousins, so to speak.—1 Peter 5:5.

All of us will be helped to be modest if we keep reminding ourselves that acting with modesty is the course of wisdom for young and old alike. Modesty will spare us much trouble, for it will keep us from presuming too much and from promising more than we can deliver. It will keep us from arousing in others the spirit of competition, or rivalry, and will make us more likable persons. Modesty also promotes peace of mind and contentment, qualities that are basic to happiness. So, not in vain did wise King Solomon say: "Wisdom is with the modest ones."—Proverbs 11:2.

James

Urges Clean and Active Worship

HOW do you view counsel from an older man? What if it is spiritually sound and quite straightforward? Will you follow it?

The letter of James, written before 62 C.E., contains such direct counsel. Its writer was an older man—one with some 30 years' experience in dealing with the problems of his fellow worshipers. Yes, the Christian elder James, a half brother of Jesus Christ, could write frankly from firsthand experience. (Mark 6:3) Fortifying his dynamic style were pointed illustrations and penetrating questions making it clear that unclean, passive religion does not please Jehovah.

As guided by God, James gave sound instruction that is as practical today as it was in the first century. By reasoning on his divinely inspired counsel, we can obtain answers to some important questions. And his words should spur us onward in *clean* and *active* worship.

How Should We View Trials?

James wrote to the "twelve tribes" of spiritual Israel scattered throughout the then-known world. But his counsel also applies to the "great crowd." (Revelation 7:4-9; Galatians 6:16) He urged fellow worshipers to view trials with joy because lasting happiness will result if we endure them in faith. We should confidently ask God for wisdom to live so as to please him, especially when facing trials. Jesus' anointed followers who faithfully endure trial will receive the "crown of life," immortality in heaven. Faithful endurance by the "great crowd"

will result in eternal life on a Paradise earth.—James 1:1-12; Luke 23:43.

When experiencing trial, we should not conclude that God is trying to induce us to commit sin, for he does not do this. Rather, wrong desire within us serves as an inducement to sin. Jehovah is not the source of evil but of everything good, including the grand gift of spiritual birth.—James 1:13-18; Ephesians 1:13, 14.

What Is True Religion?

To be practicers of true religion, we must be quick to respond to God's word obediently. We must also be slow about expressing anger and must rid ourselves of all that God considers filthy. Removing badness from heart and mind allows the word of truth to flourish there, and we must be not just hearers of the word but also doers of it, really letting the Scriptures be our guide. Consider this: After looking at his face in a mirror, a man goes away and forgets what sort of person he is. To worship Jehovah acceptably, however, we cannot be forgetful hearers. Rather, we must peer into the "perfect law," embracing everything required of Christians, and must act in harmony with it.—James 1:19-25.

If God is to view us as true worshipers, we must also bridle the tongue, restraining it from slanderous talk, backbiting and the like. Moreover, from Jehovah's standpoint, the worship that is "clean" (holy, pure) and "undefiled" (untainted by badness) includes active concern for the needy. Also required is 'keeping ourselves without spot from the world'

of humans that do not serve God. We cannot please Jehovah while doing the unrighteous things the world does. Of course, James did not list all the requirements of true worship. But he did show that genuine service to Jehovah is *clean* and *active*.—James 1:26, 27.

Is There Anything Wrong With Class Distinctions?

James showed that clean worship also calls for impartiality in dealing with the rich and the poor alike. Some professing Christians were rendering wicked decisions by showing favoritism to the rich and thus making class distinctions. May we never become guilty of such ungodly partiality!—James 2:1-4.

Surely, Christians must admit that, as a class, the rich have blasphemed Christ's name by persecuting his followers. Therefore, rather than sinning by having class distinctions and showing favoritism to the wealthy, we should follow the "kingly law" by displaying love for all our neighbors. How can we expect to enjoy God's mercy if we are not merciful and loving toward the poor? Indeed, class distinctions within the congregation would not harmonize with clean worship.—James 2:5-13; Matthew 22:39; Acts 10:34, 35.

How Can We Prove That We Have Faith?

The apostle Paul showed that it is not through works of the Mosaic Law but because of their faith in Jesus Christ that people are declared righteous by Jehovah God. (Romans 3:19-28) James agreed with this, but pointed out that our faith must be proved to be alive by the godly works it motivates us to do. Faith that does not prompt us to do good works is not genuine and will not result in our salvation. To illustrate: If a fellow believer is insufficiently clad and lacks food, words alone will not help him; there

must be tangible aid. Even the demons *believe* there is one God, but they perform no good works. So professed faith without good works to back it up is inactive, having no effectiveness as regards the attaining of salvation. Abraham, the "father" of all those having true faith, showed his faith by works when he offered up Isaac. Rahab also had active faith, for she was "declared righteous *by works*" in protecting the Israelite spies. Hence, whereas mere professed faith is as lifeless as a corpse, by engaging in properly motivated Christian works we prove that we have genuine living faith.—James 2:14-26.

Why Control the Tongue?

Clean, active worship also calls for definite action in controlling the tongue. For one thing, all Christians—and especially teachers in the congregation—must avoid expressing wrong views. James indicated that as horses can be controlled by bridles, we can control the rest of our sin-inclined bodies if we bridle the tongue. Why, even a large ship can be manipulated by a small rudder! But if we fail to control the tongue, it can cause widespread devastation, as does a raging fire. By means of slander, false testimony, misrepresentation and the like, the unbridled tongue also "spots up" the whole body, defiling the speaker's entire self. Moreover, the uncontrolled tongue can set aflame the whole course of life and can be destructive like Gehenna.—James 3:1-6.

Of course, tongue control takes great effort. Although sinful man has trained all sorts of animals, he has not been able to achieve perfect tongue control. But we must work at restraining the tongue. Because the uncontrolled tongue can make abusive, slanderous remarks, can mislead through false teaching, and so forth, it is an injurious thing filled

with death-dealing poison. And just think how inappropriate it would be to misuse the tongue—created primarily to praise God—to call down evil upon humans he has created! This would be as incongruous as getting both sweet and bitter water from the same fountain or olives from fig trees.—James 3:7-12.

Who Really Is Wise?

True wisdom is needed by all Christians and especially by teachers of others engaging in clean worship. A truly wise person shows proper fear of God and is meek. In fact, to serve acceptably as a teacher a man must be mild, not harsh, proud and opinionated. Moreover, jealousy and contentiousness certainly do not befit a Christian teacher or any other follower of Christ. Rather, the wisdom of those having such ungodly traits is animalistic, even demonic.—James 3:13-16.

Heavenly wisdom is chaste, peaceable, reasonable and “ready to obey.” For instance, the reasonable Christian teacher does not make mere assertions. And among other things, heavenly wisdom is full of “good fruits,” which include all actions that harmonize with goodness, righteousness and truth. Naturally, for righteousness to flourish, there must be peace. Teachers and others in the congregation who promote peace show that they really are wise.—James 3:17, 18.

How Can We Prevent Strife?

The peace of James’ fellow worshipers was being disrupted because some among them were guilty of such things as showing favoritism, improperly judging others and yielding to jealousy. This resulted in congregational strife. And what was the source of this fighting? Why, unfulfilled cravings for sensual gratification! Such wrong desires led to rank covetousness and to a hateful, murderous spirit.—James 4:1-3.

To prevent congregational strife we



must shun friendship with the world, which constitutes spiritual adultery. This calls for avoiding the attitude, goals, methods and actions of the world of people alienated from God. Though the tendency to envy promotes strife and exerts great pressure on sinful humans, it can be counteracted through God’s spirit, certainly an expression of his undeserved kindness. That help is available to Jehovah’s humble servants who persistently pray for his assistance and obey him. They can successfully oppose the Devil. Of course, any professing Christians who have manifested a wrong attitude should draw close to God in prayer, humble themselves before him and desist from speaking against their brothers or unjustly judging them. How improper it is for sinful humans to judge their neighbors when Jehovah is the Supreme Lawgiver and Judge!—James 4:4-12.

Avoiding boastful self-confidence will also contribute to congregational peace. Since life in this system is like a mist that vanishes, we would be foolish to concentrate on it and brag about what we plan to do. Rather, at least in our hearts we should say, “If Jehovah wills.” After all, we can accomplish nothing lasting

without his favor and help, and he does require humility and acknowledgment of him as the source of life and all good things. We should act in accord with this knowledge, for to do otherwise is to sin.—James 4:13-17.

Why Exercise Patience?

Among other things, James next emphasized the need to exercise patience. Likely, within the congregations there were a few rich persons who realized, as he did, that material wealth is worthless as compared with the spiritual riches Christians possess. However, as a class, the rich oppressed the poor and opposed the righteous. James indicated that we must bear these and other hardships with patience until judgment comes upon the oppressors during the "presence of the Lord" Jesus Christ. We need to be like the farmer who patiently awaits the harvest. If we were to become impatient and failed to endure faithfully, we would lose out on the relief and blessings that come during the Lord's presence.—James 5:1-8.

As true worshipers, we must also be patient with our fellow believers, not becoming vexed with them, improperly groaning or sighing deeply against them in a spirit of great dissatisfaction. James next pointed out that Jehovah's prophets furnish an example of suffering evil and exercising patience. Like Job of old, we can take comfort in the fact that we will experience Jehovah's great compassion and mercy if we patiently endure with clean hearts firmly fixed on God.—James 5:9-11.

How Effective Is Prayer?

After admonishing fellow Christians not to be taking indiscriminate and frivolous oaths, James urged them to be prayerful. Especially is prayer important if one suffers spiritual weakness or sickness. It would then be appropriate to call

the congregation's older men, who can express comforting Scriptural reminders that are like soothing oil. These elders will pray over the one needing help, and such "prayer of faith" will be effective. Jehovah will forgive the sins that a humble, repentant person may have committed and will restore him to spiritual health. That "a righteous man's supplication . . . has much force" is proved by the fact that the prayers of Elijah were answered by Jehovah.—James 5:12-18.

What if a Christian should wander away from the path of truth? Spiritually qualified individuals should try to help him by means of earnest prayer and diligent application of God's Word. If the erring one is thus 'turned back from the error of his way,' his soul—the sinner himself—will be saved from condemnation and eternal death. The person who reproved him has thus worked toward the covering over, or pardoning, of the erring one's sins.—James 5:19, 20.

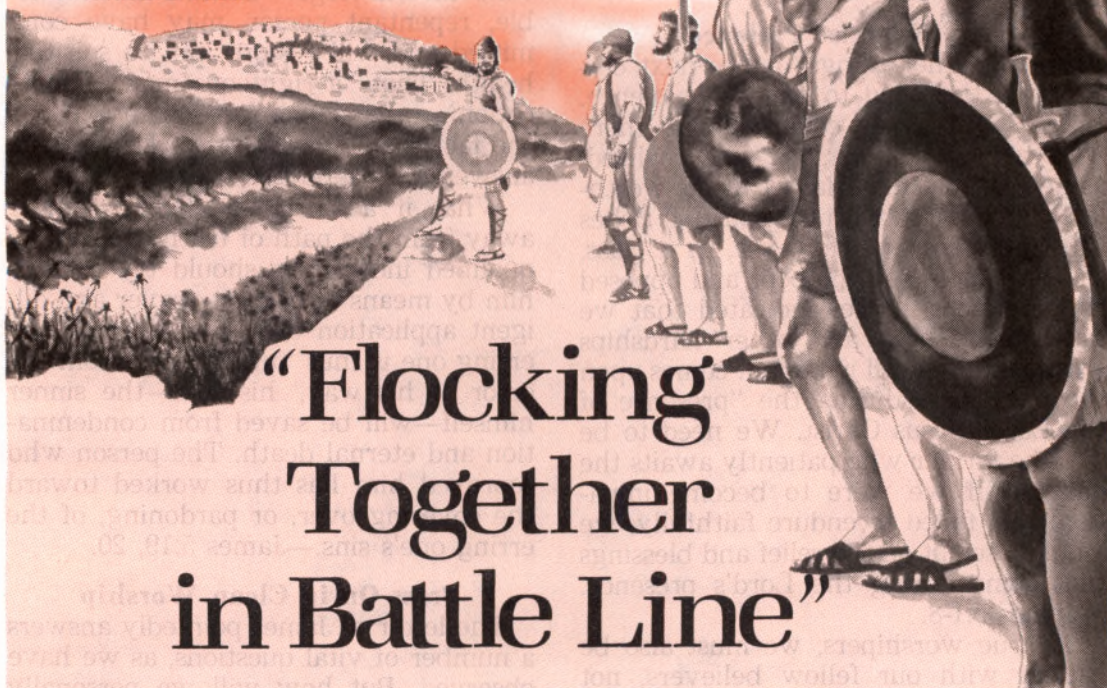
Press On in Clean Worship

The letter of James pointedly answers a number of vital questions, as we have observed. But how will we personally view this divinely inspired counsel from an experienced older man? It is straightforward and spiritually sound. So will we follow it?

If we earnestly apply the counsel of James, it will help us to endure trials, to practice true religion, to avoid showing favoritism and to prove by good works that we have genuine, living faith. Moreover, it will assist us to control the tongue, to act with heavenly wisdom, to prevent congregational strife and to exercise patience as humble, prayerful witnesses of Jehovah. In essence, because of following the counsel of James, we will be better able to honor our loving heavenly Father by pressing on in clean and active worship.

"All these were men of war,
flocking together in battle line;
with a complete heart they
came to Hebron to make
David king over all Israel."

—1 CHRONICLES 12:38.



"Flocking Together in Battle Line"

SOUND loud the battle call! Let all valiant witnesses of Jehovah muster for duty! The war against the enemy is approaching a critical stage. The days are urgent. We cannot afford to lapse into easygoing attitudes or be lulled into thinking that the warfare has abated. That is what the enemy would have us think, for he knows his time is short. Therefore, we may expect the enemy to make a sudden onslaught in the hope of catching the fighters for truth unawares.

—1 Thessalonians 5:1-6.

² Jehovah sees his faithful witnesses

today as fighters engaged in a spiritual warfare that is rapidly moving on to a climax. When called for, Jehovah becomes a "manly person of war" whose right hand can shatter and throw down his enemies. (Exodus 15:3, 6, 7) His promise to ancient Israel who were to be led by his angel still stands: "If you strictly obey his voice and really do all that I shall speak, then I shall certainly be hostile to your enemies and harass those who harass you."—Exodus 23:20-22.

³ Prophetic truth reveals to our eyes of faith that, since the fall of the year

1. What urgent situation today calls for alertness?

2. Why do Jehovah's Witnesses not need to fear their enemies? (Psalm 24:8)

3. (a) Describe Jesus' position since 1914 C.E. (b) In what warfare has he been engaged? (c) Why are the anointed followers of Jesus today under attack?

1914 C.E., the glorified Christ Jesus has been appointed by Jehovah as Field Marshal of the heavenly hosts of warrior angels. (Psalm 110:1, 2; Matthew 25:31) Swiftly he led these forces against the Devil and his angels, sweeping the heavens clear of their polluting presence and cornering them in the vicinity of planet Earth. And now, while awaiting the final signal from Jehovah to destroy the enemy, Christ Jesus conducts a visible earth-wide activity that also involves warfare. (Revelation 12:7-9) Satan and his demon hordes, realizing their time is short, wrathfully wage war with the remaining ones of the anointed followers of Jesus. Why? Because they are obediently proclaiming the Kingdom of their God and his Christ.—Revelation 12:17.

'Soldiers of Christ Jesus'

⁴ It follows that all those associating with and supporting the remnant of God's anointed people likewise become the target of this vicious warfare. Hence, to each one who is thus serving as one of Jehovah's Witnesses today comes Paul's stirring exhortation: "As a fine soldier of Christ Jesus take your part in suffering evil. No man serving as a soldier involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order that he may gain the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier." (2 Timothy 2:3, 4) Every other activity in life must take second place to our service for Jehovah's great Field Marshal.

⁵ The reality and the nature of this spiritual warfare comes home to us as we consider these reminders of the apostle Paul: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage warfare accord-

ing to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things. For we are overturning reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God; . . . and we are holding ourselves in readiness to inflict punishment for every disobedience, as soon as your own obedience has been fully carried out." (2 Corinthians 10:3-6; see also Ephesians 6:12.) As soldiers of Christ Jesus, we want to demonstrate for all to see that we are submissive to his battle orders and ever ready to share in and carry out the strategies that he chooses. To encourage us, then, in the field of spiritual contest, let us turn back the pages of God's Word to a historical event in ancient Israel. Here we can find meaningful prophetic types of happenings now taking place.—Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11.

A Choice of Kingship —Past and Present

⁶ Consider the situation in the time of King David, God's choice as king for all Israel. Following Saul's death the men of Judah were the first to recognize God's choice of David as their king. The rest of the tribes chose Saul's son Ish-bosheth as king, and this resulted in continued strife. (2 Samuel 2:1-11; 3:1) With the assassination of Ish-bosheth some two years later, the way was paved for the other tribes to join Judah. In time David was duly anointed king over all Israel. (2 Samuel 4:5-12; 5:1-3) But in the interim many individuals had to make up their minds as to whom they would serve. They had to consider the credentials of this young man David. Was he truly God's anointed? Was he the one who would have Jehovah's blessing in contrast with the divine disapproval of Saul? Would David

4. Explain what constitutes "a fine soldier of Christ Jesus."

5. (a) How does Paul describe the Christian's spiritual warfare? (b) What is the determination of Christian soldiers, and what will encourage them in the contest?

6. Describe the events leading up to David's acceptance as king and how this affected individuals.

successfully be able to lead the armies of Israel against surrounding enemies?

⁷ Evidently some Israelites decided in favor of the condemned house of Saul. Others decided on the basis of personal expediency. Still others remained indecisive. But sooner or later the choice had to be made, and happy were those who wholeheartedly chose to support David's kingship! These were not selfish or taking the course of least resistance. They were not double-minded. Rather, their support for Jehovah's king led them to adopt an active role as David's subjects and soldiers. As 1 Chronicles 12:22 reports: "Day by day people kept coming to David to help him, until it was as a great camp, like the camp of God."

⁸ From the details of the record we note that among these multitudes were those "having a knowledge of how to discern the times to know what Israel ought to do." (1 Chronicles 12:32) These were not lukewarm in their allegiance to the king. They were well armed so as to present themselves as ready to accept David's lead in warfare. They did not expect an easy life. They 'discerned the times' and knew that the kingdom was surrounded by enemies that were ready to swallow up Israel and blot out the worship of Jehovah. Those from east of the Jordan River were "men of war, flocking together in battle line" and ready to serve under David with a "complete heart."—1 Chronicles 12:38.

⁹ How thrilling it now is to observe unfolding before our very eyes a modern-day antitype of that situation! The Greater David, Christ Jesus, has been chosen by Jehovah and is now ruling as heav-

enly King. Worldly nations are opposed to his kingship. They threaten to wipe out the King's subjects on earth. (Psalm 2:1-3) Therefore, individuals worldwide are being called upon to take their stand on one side of the issue or the other. That issue is: Are they for the Kingdom of Jehovah's Son or against it? Multitudes are indecisive. Others determine their position merely by what is expedient, only selfishly considering their own personal safety and gain.—Zephaniah 2:2, 3; Joel 3:14.

¹⁰ As the fame of God's royal representatives on earth continues to spread far and wide, more and more persons are enabled to make an intelligent choice. (Micah 4:1-3; Zechariah 8:23) Many are undecided only because they lack knowledge of the facts; they lack discernment as to the meaning of these times and the urgent need for them to take their stand solidly for God's Kingdom. Multitudes therefore are still under the influence of Satanic propaganda and in danger of being dragged down to destruction along with Satan and his accomplices. Hence, the urgent call is for all of Jehovah's Witnesses to rally to the side of the Greater David, Christ Jesus, armed and equipped to do battle with the enemy.—Compare Matthew 12:30.

Who Are Qualified for Battle?

¹¹ In their spiritual warfare all soldiers of Christ must meet some very important requirements. For example, Paul showed how their own obedience to the Christ must be "fully carried out." (2 Corinthians 10:5, 6) How can we determine whether this is now being reflected in our own course and attitude? The following ques-

10. (a) Why are many undecided about accepting Christ's kingship? (b) What responsibility now rests on Jehovah's Witnesses?

11. Explain how Jesus showed the way that our obedience to Christ can be "fully carried out."

7. What was involved in accepting David's kingship?

8. How does 1 Chronicles 12:32, 38 identify those accepting David's kingship?

9. (a) Do we find a modern-day parallel to the situation in David's day? (b) What issue confronts all people today?

Meeting regularly at the Kingdom Hall (1) strengthens us for spiritual warfare, (2) helps us "discern the times" and (3) shows us how to serve with a "complete heart"

tions should help us in our individual determination:

Have we truly put our service to God and Christ far ahead of any human relationship? (Matthew 10:37)

Have we got rid of any ambition to be rich in material things or to be well spoken of in worldly circles? (Luke 6:20-26)

Are we anxious to please our Leader and Commander instead of being anxious about those things Jehovah has promised to provide—food, clothing and shelter? (Matthew 6:25-32)

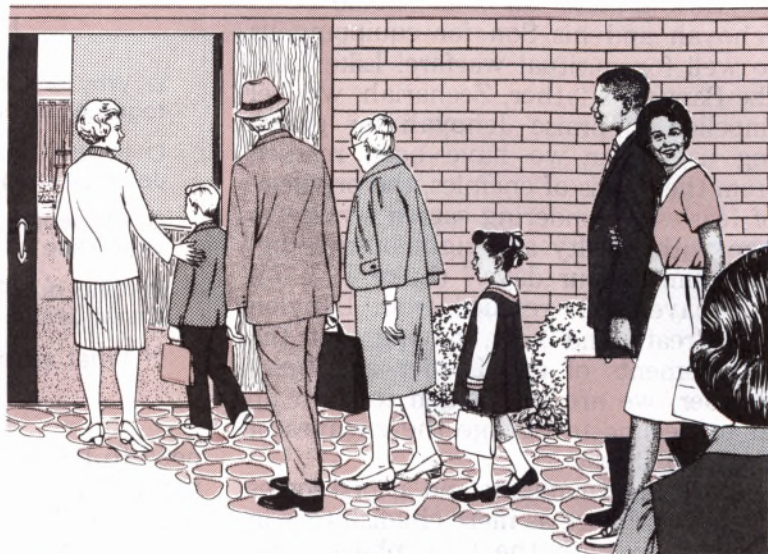
Have we stopped judging and criticizing our fellow soldiers of Christ so as not to introduce disunity and dissension in the holy ranks? (Luke 6:37; Psalm 133:1-3)

Do we truly love our brothers and seek the welfare of all enrolled in this spiritual warfare against God's enemies? (John 13:35; 1 Peter 4:8)

These are searching questions that all of Christ's followers must answer personally.

¹² Another important matter to be considered in our Christian warfare is our having a clear vision of the gulf that separates God's clean organization from the permissive, immoral organizations of this world. (Genesis 3:15; Psalm 97:10) Opposed armies in a war have to

12. In what way can friends and foes of God's Kingdom be identified? (Matthew 25:31-46)



be able to distinguish clearly between friend and foe. This is made possible by their distinctive uniforms and armorial equipment. We have been instructed as to the fruits of the spirit of God. We have been made aware of the works of the flesh, which are also manifested just like fruits. (Galatians 5:19-24) So there is really no gray area between God's organization and Satan's organization.

¹³ Further, do we show by our course of action that we are regularly 'conscious of our spiritual need'? (Matthew 5:3; Hebrews 10:25) In carnal warfare it is essential that officers and other personnel have briefing sessions so as to be kept up-to-date on the movements on the battlefield and the latest enemy strategy. Likewise, our meetings at the Kingdom Hall or elsewhere are vital so that we may be regularly strengthened by the Word of God and his holy spirit, as well as being kept alert to the movements of the enemy.—1 Peter 5:8.

13. Regular meetings serve what purpose in our spiritual warfare?

¹⁴ How grateful all of us should be to Jehovah and his Son for equipping us so well for spiritual warfare! Like John the Baptizer's father, Zechariah, we feel impelled to praise Jehovah for granting us, "after we have been rescued from the hands of enemies, the privilege of fearlessly rendering sacred service to him with loyalty and righteousness before him all our days." (Luke 1:74, 75) We have been rescued from Babylon the Great. And now, having met the requirements of our Leader and Commander, we are in position to form up in battle line to engage the enemies of God and Christ.

¹⁵ All the armaments and armed forces of this world are as mere childish toys in comparison with the false philosophies and traditions of men inspired by Satan and his demon hosts. Aspiring to be like God in majesty and power, Satan has propagated his lying doctrines far and wide. He contradicts the true God and deceptively claims that he himself is the fountain of knowledge. He teaches that man has no need for Jehovah, that, on his own, man can progress to the point of being like God. The Devil denies God's rights of creatorship, palming off on humankind the notion that man is a product of evolution. He has managed to have multitudes believe that there is no real death, that what seems like death is actually a change to some other form of life. He has promoted various forms of government, all rooted and grounded in selfishness. These and many more are the "reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God." —2 Corinthians 10:5.

¹⁶ Those 'strongly entrenched ideas'

14. How may the words of Zechariah at Luke 1: 74, 75 well express our feelings?

15, 16. (a) Satan has implanted what "reasonings" and "entrenched things" in the minds of men? (b) How only can these be 'overturned,' and to what extent is this taking place?

In summary:

- ☐ Why is it now urgent to 'flock together in battle line'?
- ☐ In what kind of warfare are Jehovah's Witnesses engaged?
- ☐ All people today face what vital issue?
- ☐ Who qualifies as a "soldier of Christ Jesus"?
- ☐ What victory is now assured?

need to be overturned, exposed, so that victims of delusion may be mentally and spiritually liberated. (2 Corinthians 10:4) We have the necessary arms and armor — *faith* as a shield, *truth* as a strengthening girdle, *righteousness* as a protection for the heart, the *hope of salvation* as a helmet, the *Word of God* as a sword and the *good news of peace*, for helping those who want to submit to the King of Jehovah's choice. (Ephesians 6:14-17) By the use of such spiritual weapons the Christian witnesses of Jehovah are setting countless captives free!

Victory Is Assured

¹⁷ The time draws ever nearer when Jehovah will signal his chosen King to engage the enemy in a final war. Addressing that Leader of heavenly armies, Jehovah will call out in the words of Psalm 45:3, 4: "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one, with your dignity and your splendor. And in your splendor go on to success; ride in the cause of truth and humility and righteousness, and your right hand will instruct you in fear-inspiring things." The outcome of that action is certain. Satan's entire organization, visible and invisible,

17. Psalm 45:3, 4 points to what outcome when Christ engages the enemy in the final war?

will be removed, ridding the earth of all wicked and oppressive rule. What a happy day that will be for the survivors, with all oppressors, liars, fornicators and ruiners of the earth gone forever!—Revelation 11:16-18; 19:11-21.

¹⁸ How marvelous it is to see the fulfillment of dramatic situations recorded in the Scriptures now taking place! In our day, the anointed spiritual brothers of Christ Jesus were the first to accept him as their King, following his enthronement in 1914 C.E. They have all 'flocked together in battle line.' Then, particularly since 1935, when light flashed forth on Revelation 7:9-17, a "great crowd" have recognized the true source of success and blessing and have 'flocked together.' They have joined themselves to the

18. Since 1914 C.E., how has there been a "flocking together in battle line"?

modern spiritual Israelites, all appearing in battle formation, ready to share in the sufferings and hardships of open spiritual war with Satan's entire organization—to the honor and glory of Jehovah.—Zechariah 2:11.

¹⁹ Clearly, then, the days are urgent. This is no time to think the spiritual warfare is over. May the enemy never catch us unawares in the approaching critical stage of our sacred service. Whether we are of the remnant of spiritual Israelites or of the "great crowd" of their companions, let us all 'flock together in battle line, with a complete heart.' May we continue boldly sounding out the battle call because Jehovah assures us of the victory!—2 Chronicles 20:15.

19. What, then, should be the determination of each valiant witness of Jehovah?

What Is Our Position Toward Opposers of the Truth?

"From among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves."—ACTS 20:30.

WHEN writing to the congregation in Corinth the apostle Paul told his fellow believers that the things written in times past were to serve as a

1, 2. (a) Of what benefit today are past events in Bible history? (b) What particular events in the history of Israel and the early Christian congregation now concern us, and why?

warning example to them. This principle has far-reaching effects, even to this day. Many past events in Bible history can and do have modern-day parallels that are helpful to us and give us proper direction in our lives.—1 Corinthians 10:11; Romans 15:4.

² It will be of benefit to us, then, to

consider some of these past events in the history of Israel and also of the early Christian congregation. We are particularly concerned with events or happenings related to those who opposed the work of God and how such things affected Jehovah's servants back then. These events help to alert us, as Jehovah's people, to parallel occurrences in modern times and to what our responsibilities are in this area.—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

³ Some 40 years before Jerusalem fell in 607 B.C.E., Jehovah commissioned his faithful servant Jeremiah to speak publicly about injustices being done in Judah. These would eventually lead to God's disfavor and to Judah's inhabitants' being taken captive into Babylon. Jehovah warned Jeremiah that some would oppose him. He said: "And they [opposers] will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.'" (Jeremiah 1:19) What great comfort this was to Jeremiah, strengthening him to carry out God's complete will for him!

⁴ One of Jeremiah's opposers was a man named Pashhur. He was the son of a priest in Judah and was a leading commissioner in the house of Jehovah. The Bible account in Jeremiah chapter 20 shows how Pashhur struck Jeremiah and had him put into the stocks. Jehovah delivered Jeremiah from those restrictions, but opposition continued. Hananiah, a prophet from Gibeon, spoke out against Jeremiah, accusing him of being a false prophet of doom. In fact, Hananiah said that the yoke of Babylon would be broken, and Judah would be restored. (Jeremiah, chapter 28) Even one of Judah's kings, Jehoiakim, opposed the words of

Jeremiah and fought against them, going so far as to throw the prophetic scrolls of Jeremiah into a fire! (Jeremiah, chapter 36) Others called for the death of Jeremiah and were responsible for throwing him into a muddy cistern to die. (Jeremiah, chapter 38) This was the experience of but one of the many faithful Hebrew prophets who spoke in Jehovah's name and were maligned and attacked by opposers of judgment messages from God.—See Hebrews 11:32-38.

'Let Them Alone'

⁵ Opposition to the truth was intense also in the first century when our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth. Opponents from among his own people sought to obstruct the good things done by Jesus. But as Jehovah proved to be with Jeremiah He also proved to be with Jesus, delivering him from his enemies. (Luke 4:14-30; 11:53, 54; John 7:1) Ridiculers of Jesus often made big issues out of very trivial things. They charged Jesus with being a gluttonous man given to drinking and consorting with tax collectors and sinners. (Matthew 11:19) They called his disciples Sabbathbreakers because they plucked heads of grain to eat on the Sabbath. (Mark 2:23-28) They derided Jesus' disciples because they did not "wash their hands when about to eat a meal."—Matthew 15:1, 2.

⁶ But such opposers went from the trivial to the denying of the power of God's holy spirit demonstrated in the miraculous works performed by Jesus. After Jesus cured a blind and dumb demon-possessed man, his opposers said: "This fellow does not expel the demons except by means of Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." (Matthew 12:22-28)

3. How was Jeremiah both warned and comforted?

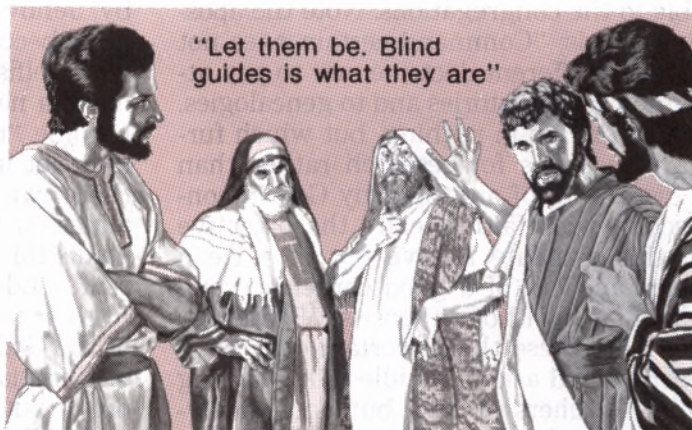
4. (a) What was some of the opposition Jeremiah had to endure? (b) What does the record at Hebrews 11:32-38 tell us about opposers of God's servants?

5. (a) To what extent did Jesus meet opposition? (b) What were some of the trivial issues raised by Jesus' opponents?

6. How serious did opposition to Jesus become?

They also charged Jesus with subversion against Caesar. (Luke 23:1, 2) Finally, they called for his death.—Luke 23:13-25.

⁷ How did Jesus react to those who opposed him? Speaking to his apostles, he said: "Let them be. Blind guides is what they are. If, then, a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit." (Matthew 15:14) Jesus' wise advice was: 'Let them alone.' In due time it would be evident what they were.



Opposition From Within

⁸ Following the death of Jesus, his faithful followers likewise met with much opposition. But please note: Just as the opposers of Jeremiah and Jesus arose *from within the Jewish nation*, so with the establishment of the Christian congregation there was to be opposition *from within*. (Acts 20:29, 30) Although this had been foretold, it would still come as a great test to those walking in faithfulness. Nevertheless, Jehovah would prove to be with his people to deliver them, even as he had been with Jeremiah and Jesus.—See 1 Peter 5:8-11.

⁹ This internal opposition in the first century had its small beginnings. Some opposers may have felt that they had a reasonable motive, but their desire to have the first place, to have their view prevail, led them into the role of being fighters against the truth and those associated with it when their viewpoints were not accepted as being correct. (1 Tim-

othy 1:19, 20) Interestingly, when the matter of circumcision came to be an issue and the special council met in Jerusalem to discuss the matter, one of the points mentioned in the message sent out to the congregation was this: "We have heard that *some from among us have caused you trouble with speeches*, trying to subvert your souls, although we did not give them any instructions." (Acts 15:24) Such persons *within* the Christian congregation were a cause of trouble, offering opposition to the teachings and doctrines of the body of older ones who were charged with the heavy responsibility to spread abroad the light of truth.

¹⁰ For example, evidently some in the congregation were saying that Jehovah's day had already begun. (2 Thessalonians 2:1, 2) Others contended there was no resurrection. (1 Corinthians 15:12-14) And still others said that the resurrection had already taken place. (2 Timothy 2:16-18) Paul warned Timothy of the need for being alert to those among such ones who would cause division and deviation from the body of Christian truth avail-

7. How did Jesus react to opposers of the truth?

8, 9. (a) What pattern of opposition similar to that experienced by Jeremiah and Jesus was foretold for the Christian congregation? (b) Describe how this was true regarding the matter of circumcision.

10. (a) What were some subversive doctrines that were taught in the first century by opposers of the truth? (b) What warning did Paul give Timothy regarding opposers of truth?

able to the congregations. Note the apostle's words: "Command certain ones not to teach different doctrine, nor to pay attention to false stories and to genealogies, which end up in nothing, but which furnish questions for research rather than a dispensing of anything by God in connection with faith. Really the objective of this mandate is love out of a clean heart and out of a good conscience and out of faith without hypocrisy. By deviating from these things certain ones have been turned aside into idle talk, wanting to be teachers of law, but not perceiving either the things they are saying or the things about which they are making strong assertions."—1 Timothy 1:3-7.

¹¹ What does all of that tell us? This: that there were problems of divisive thinking in the first-century Christian congregation. There was opposition *from within*, from among those who were claiming to be a part of the congregation of God. And what was the cause? Paul said at Philippians 1:15: "Some are preaching the Christ through envy and rivalry, but others also through goodwill." *Today's English Version* mentions such ones as having an improper motive, being "jealous and quarrelsome." Yes, the things written in times past do serve as a warning example to us, and more so now since we are living right at the end of the wicked system of things directed by the Devil.—2 Timothy 3:1-7.

Purpose of Opposers

¹² Turning our attention to modern times, do we see a parallel to these events we have discussed so far? Yes, there have been some from among us who have sought to tear down the good work done

11. Can we learn anything from the divisive thinking prevalent in the first-century congregation, and why is this so urgent today?

12, 13. (a) Do we today see any parallel to the first-century opposition to the truth? (b) What is the underlying purpose of present-day opposers?

by Jehovah's people worldwide. Some have become jealous, quarrelsome, filled with selfish ambition, often wanting to make a name for themselves. They may become "murmurers, complainers about their lot in life, proceeding according to their own desires, . . . admiring personalities for the sake of their own benefit." (Jude 16) All of this can lead to doubts, strife and division among God's people. In their faultfinding, such ones lose sight of the God-given and all-important work of Christians, namely, to be "not hearers only" but "doers of the word," accomplishing what Jehovah has commanded to be done by faithful followers of his Son, Christ Jesus.—James 1:22-25; Matthew 28:18-20.

¹³ The purpose of such opposers, in attacking the Christian congregation, is to undermine the faith of Jehovah's people, to draw some away as disciples after themselves. Paul warned the older men of Ephesus of this wicked attempt when he said: "From among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves." (Acts 20:30) Jude gave a similar warning, saying: "Certain men have slipped in who have long ago been appointed by the Scriptures to this judgment, ungodly men, turning the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct and proving false to our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ." (Jude 4) Similar situations have arisen in this 20th century within the congregation of Jehovah's people!

¹⁴ Such opposers do not find joy in sharing in the great work of making disciples. Rather, they subtly approach others who are already Witnesses, speaking in such a way as to weaken the resolve of these faithful ones to carry out in full

14, 15. (a) What is the subtle approach made by some opposers today? (b) What is overlooked by such opposers?

their dedication to Jehovah. The thought is conveyed that since Jehovah is such a loving God, he surely would not require all those wanting to please him to engage in such a difficult work as preaching from house to house and having to endure the persecution from opposers of the truth. No, they may argue, all that God wants us to do is to be good persons, care for others in a physical way and love our neighbors.

¹⁵ This subtle approach can be difficult for some to cope with. It is true that Jehovah is loving and that he wants us to be good persons. He certainly wants Christians to demonstrate love for their neighbors by treating others in a kind way and by caring for their physical needs when that is necessary. (Luke 6: 35, 36) But that is not all! Those who oppose often forget that our Father Jehovah has also said—principally through his Son, Jesus Christ—that we should be disciple makers, teaching people, preaching the “good news of the kingdom” in all the world for a witness.—Matthew 24:14; John 15:17-27.

¹⁶ Consider some of the other “twisted things” used to mislead God’s people today. On occasion opposers will question the various teachings that Jehovah’s people hold in common. Often this becomes a debate about words, just as it was in the first century. (1 Timothy 6:3, 4) They may also question the need for an organization to direct the minds of God’s people. Their view is, God’s spirit can direct individuals without some central, organized body of men giving direction. They will declare that all one needs to do is to read the Bible. But Christendom has been reading the Bible for centuries. And look at the indistinct trumpet call coming from Christendom today! See the

16. By means of what other “twisted things” do opposers today try to mislead Jehovah’s people?



Never weaken in your resolve
to bear witness to the truth

confusion and misunderstanding as to the true message contained in God’s Word! What a contrast this is to the foretold peace and unity among true Christians who not only read the Bible but search out and zealously apply its teachings! —Ephesians 4:3-6.

Opposers Cannot Succeed

¹⁷ What, then, is our position toward those who oppose and seek to undermine the faith we have received through Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Christian organization Jehovah is using? Jesus’ counsel regarding opposers is: “Let them be. Blind guides is what they are.” (Matthew 15:14) To quarrel with such ones, to debate and argue, is futile and really not the Christian course. No one is forced

17. What, then, is our position toward opposers of the truth?

to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. It is a privilege and a responsibility that we have undertaken of our own free will. (Psalm 110:3) If some do not want to be a part of the arrangement approved by Jehovah, and which he has blessed, that is a decision for such ones to make.

¹⁸ Our aim should be to deal with opposers of the truth in a Christian way. However, there are certain things we should bear in mind. Paul wrote to those of the Roman congregation and advised them: "Now I exhort you, brothers, to keep your eye on those who cause divisions and occasions for stumbling contrary to the teaching that you have learned, and *avoid them*. For men of that sort are slaves, not of our Lord Christ, but of their own bellies; and by smooth talk and complimentary speech they seduce the hearts of guileless ones." (Romans 16:17, 18) It would be displaying a lack of good judgment to dispute publicly with those trying to cause division. Do not let these opposers disturb you. Their conduct will neither harm the truth nor stop Jehovah from accomplishing what his Word says he will do.

¹⁹ How comforting, therefore, are the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success, and any tongue at all that will rise up against you in the judgment you will condemn!" (Isaiah 54:17) The apostle Paul told Timothy about Jannes and Jambres, who resisted Moses, and he said their madness became plain to all men. (2 Timothy 3:8, 9) These, then, who cause division and seek to make turmoil for God's people are in a very perilous position before Jehovah. None of such should ever overlook Paul's

18. How does Paul's counsel at Romans 16:17, 18 apply to us today?

19. At Hebrews 6:4-8, what description does Paul give of those falling away from the truth?

warning words at Hebrews 6:4-8, where it is shown that those who deliberately sin against God's holy spirit can never be 'revived again to repentance.'

²⁰ Our position toward opposers is, therefore, clearly and distinctly marked out for us in God's Word. Always remember that we are not alone; we have the backing of Jehovah, Christ Jesus and all the holy angels. (Matthew 13:41, 42) We also have the assurance of Jesus himself that he would be with his followers "all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matthew 28:20) Hence, we need not become unduly disturbed when opposers rise up and fight against the truth. This is part of Satan's effort to halt the spread of the Kingdom good news. But by remaining loyal and setting a fine example of godly devotion by our conduct and word, we will be assured of 'coming off victorious in all things through him that loved us.' May we therefore continue steadfast, "convinced that neither death nor life nor angels nor governments nor things now here nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor any other creation will be able to separate us from God's love that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." —Romans 8:37-39.

20. (a) Why need we never be alarmed by what opposers might try to do? (b) By doing what can we be assured of 'never being separated from God's love'?

What do the following scriptures tell us about opposers of the truth?

☐ Acts 20:30; Jude 4

☐ Matthew 15:14; Romans 16:17, 18

☐ Jeremiah 1:19; Isaiah 54:17

Insight on the News

Arms Race Entering New Realm

The U.S. Air Force has established a Space Command, indicating that military planners are looking upon outer space as a possible battlefield. Though satellites have long been used for surveillance, the new systems being devised are different. "They are actual weapons rather than adjuncts to terrestrial military operations," reports *Scientific American*. "They raise the risk of extending the arms race to a new realm. . . . The Department of Defense has stated that the U.S.S.R. can now maneuver a killer satellite to within about a kilometer of a target satellite and there explode a shrapnel-filled warhead."

As for the U.S. space-weapons program, the above source said: "Work is under way on anti-satellite weapons and on hypothetical laser- and particle-beam weapons that would be placed in earth orbit. . . . The most effective countermeasure to laser satellites is also the most chilling form of space warfare, namely the detonation of a nuclear weapon in space."

In his prophecy about the end of this system of things, Jesus Christ indicated that the very heavens would be involved. Indeed, men have invaded the skies and outer space and have upset the normal balance of things. As the arms race advances to its new realm in outer space, thinking persons appreciate all

the more the solemn meaning of Jesus' prophetic words: "The powers of the heavens will be shaken."—Matthew 24:29; Luke 21:25, 26.

No. 1 Public Health Problem

U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop recently warned that violence in all its forms is the country's No. 1 public health problem. No one seems to know why violence keeps on growing, he declared. Murder rates in New York City reached a record 1,826 homicides in 1981, up 63 percent from 1970. A main reason for this rise, according to a New York police official, is the upsurge in impulse killings, many of which are committed by youths. "We have 12-year-olds, 13-, 14- and 15-year-olds committing the most brutal, stupefying cruelties," he declared.

With violence now a worldwide problem, we are living at a time similar to the pre-Flood days of Noah when, as the Bible reports, "the earth became filled with violence." (Genesis 6: 11-13) In fact, Jesus Christ drew a parallel between those days of Noah and the end of this present wicked system of things, saying: "Just as the days of Noah were, so the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matthew 24:37) In verse 12 of the same prophecy he also spoke about an "increasing of lawlessness." Such shocking increase in lawlessness and violence furnishes powerful evidence that we are near the end of this system.

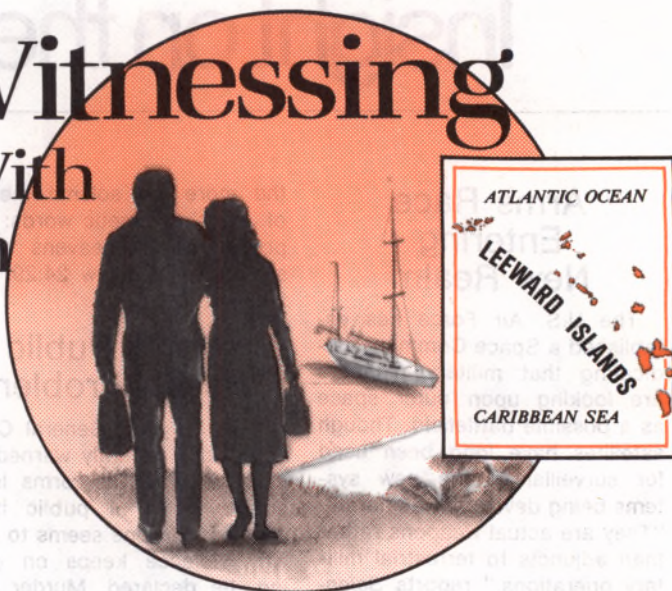
Money in Military Research

Pope John Paul II recently told scientists: "It is a scandal of our times that many researchers are dedicated to perfecting new arms for war." But what is the role of Catholic schools in this regard? After a study of the matter, the *National Catholic Reporter* published a front-page article under the headline "Military research expands at most Catholic schools." It said: "Little similar soul-searching is going on among Catholic academic leaders when the issue revolves around military contracts and weapons-related research. . . . NCR found only one Catholic institution, the University of Santa Clara, that is seriously examining its research policies in the light of current Catholic thinking on war and peace." Said the president of the University of Santa Clara: "Any school that has an engineering department is going to have to make choices," especially since "much more money is suddenly becoming available for military research."

Evidently money talks louder than the voices of Church leaders. And though Catholic bishops have spoken out specifically against nuclear warfare, Church leaders over the years have had no such reservations in backing their respective nations in any war they pursue. Such ambiguity no doubt leaves Catholic schools doing military research with few problems of conscience.

Island Witnessing That Began With a Honeymoon

More than 60 years of Kingdom preaching in the Leewards



LIKE an emerald necklace, the romantic Leeward Islands form the eastern boundary of the Caribbean Sea. It was in 1920 that W. R. Brown and his new bride visited Montserrat to proclaim the good news of God's Kingdom. During the course of the year they also witnessed to people on the islands of Dominica, Barbados and Grenada.

Regarding their activity, W. R. Brown stated: "It was a joyful honeymoon in Jehovah's service." Two years later he wrote to the Watch Tower Society: "By Jehovah's help I have given the witness throughout the majority of the Caribbean Islands and made disciples in many. Should I go over them again?" The reply: "Proceed to Sierra Leone, West Africa, with wife and child."

Disciple Making Continues

Today, more than 62 years after Brown's visit, over 700 witnesses of Jehovah are active in preaching the "good news" throughout the Leewards. And

many people are manifesting interest in the Bible's message.

Take the case of an elderly woman on the mountainous island of Dominica. During the course of her Bible study, Psalm 143:1, 10 was considered. There we read: "O Jehovah, hear my prayer . . . Teach me to do your will, for you are my God." Tears filled her eyes and rolled down her cheeks as she explained: "It has been years now that I have asked God to send someone to help me to know him. It is just now, I realize, that my prayer has been answered."

Through the encouragement of a traveling overseer, three young men decided to move to a more remote section of Dominica to declare the "good news." Their efforts have been richly rewarded. Within a short time they were conducting 16 Bible studies. Once, when one of the young men remained at home because of sickness, interested Bible students came to the house to seek out someone who would teach them the Scriptures.

In a secluded village of the Dominican

rain forest, a Catholic woman accepted from one of Jehovah's Witnesses the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. For more than a year she left it on a table beside her bed, occasionally reading portions of it while in bed. One day she read: "Little children, guard yourselves from idols." (1 John 5:21) Impressed by this scripture, she took the cherished idol of her "saint" from its pedestal in the corner and began to scrutinize it in comparison with what she had read. For years she had prayed before this darling of her eye. Her children were not permitted to run in the home, for fear of disturbing the idol. Now, in its back was an ugly hole where a mouse had eaten through the lace and plaster. In full view of her astonished children, the woman carried the statue into the yard, where she smashed it in the rubbish container.

Having completed a study of the *Truth* book with the help of a Witness family that had returned to the island, this woman and her son and daughter were baptized. A family of six from the same village later accepted a Bible study, and they also are now baptized servants of Jehovah. In time, 14 people were meeting there regularly to study the Bible and tell others about the truth that leads to eternal life.

Migration Affects Witness Work

Because many people come to the Leeward Islands temporarily as tourists or as workers, the effects of the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses are not always discernible here. Indicative of this is a letter received some time ago by the Leeward Islands branch office of the Watch Tower Society located on Antigua. The letter said:

"I am writing to try to get in touch with a sister with whom I started studying in 1970. I cannot remember her name. I was stubborn about my religion at the

time and gave her a hard time. After I left Antigua and came back to Mississippi [in the United States], I became more and more dissatisfied with our religion and its many changes. Two of Jehovah's Witnesses came to my door here, and I started studying again. Six of our family are all baptized Witnesses today, and our two youngest children, ages 10 and 8, love the truth too. I wanted to let this kind sister know that I am truly sorry for the way I treated her, for I was very blunt. But her efforts were not in vain."

Jehovah Gives the Increase

In view of the increases in the number of Kingdom proclaimers, Jehovah's Witnesses have been concerned about procuring suitable meeting places, Kingdom Halls. In 1977 a fine 500-seat hall, one of the largest in the islands, was completed in Antigua. The four congregations there rejoice in being able to use it for assemblies and special events. In several villages of the Leewards, Witnesses donated land for halls, shared in clearing building sites and contributed money toward the construction work.

Since W. R. Brown's query about the advisability of covering the islands again, Jehovah's Witnesses have devoted many hundreds of thousands of hours in proclaiming the good news in the Leewards. Attesting to the fact that there still is an urgent need to go over them is the large number of genuinely interested people among the 1,905 present at the 1982 Memorial of Jesus Christ's death. Many of these individuals have regular Bible studies conducted in their homes by Jehovah's Witnesses. Thus, by this and other Kingdom-preaching activities, these islands are continuing to hear the joyful proclamation: "Jehovah himself has become king!"—Psalm 97:1.

"Can You Spare a Moment?"

Often a question like that means an interruption. Though you may be willing to give a moment of your precious time to listen or to help someone, how genuine is your gift? Do you give of yourself along with your time?

What a delinquent boy said about a teacher who won him over illustrates the point nicely. "He's got dozens of kids waiting to see him," said the boy, "but when you're in there with him, you feel as though you're the only one in the world he cares about."

Therein lies the key to reaching people—the

willingness to give of yourself totally. The apostle Paul demonstrated such willingness in his efforts to help others when he said: "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to those under law I became as under law . . . To those without law I became as without law . . . To the weak I became weak . . . I have become all things to people of all sorts, that I might by all means save some." —1 Corinthians 9:20-22.

When you take time to help someone, do you think about the quality as well as the quantity?

Questions From Readers

■ Since Jesus said that Christians are to be "no part of the world," how should we act with regard to community issues or social concerns, such as environmental conservation?

Christians are not oblivious to community matters that affect people in general, even matters such as pollution or environmental conservation. But the extent to which they get involved in such things should be determined in harmony with the Scriptures and their primary obligation to God.

Jehovah has appropriate concern about public safety and health, as we can see from his laws for ancient Israel. For example, he encouraged restraining dangerous domestic animals, covering open pits and caring for roof parapets to prevent accidental falls and danger to people below. (Exodus 21:28-34; Deuteronomy 22:8) His interest in public health is plain from laws about quarantine and the disposal of excrement, which could

contaminate water supplies and spread disease. (Leviticus 13:1-59; Deuteronomy 23:9-14) As to pollution, conservation and the environment, God's Word tells us that he will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth."—Revelation 11:18.

It is to be observed, however, that God did not direct his servants—Israelites or Christians—to proselytize on those matters. The Jews were not told to campaign among the surrounding nations for improved sanitation procedures or for better health or building codes. Nor is there any evidence that they (or the Christians later) did so when dwelling in other lands. Furthermore, God said that HE was the one who would act against those ruining the earth; he did not indicate that this was to be a pri-

mary concern of 'his slaves the prophets and the holy ones and those fearing his name, the small and the great.'—Revelation 11:18.

Understandably, Christians today realize that there are things that might presently make life better for them and for people around them. They are not callous to human needs; rather, they appreciate and cultivate "human kindness." (Compare Acts 28:2, 7-9; Mark 7:24-30.) This may influence their course when certain issues come up involving community improvements. For example, people in a neighborhood may be asked to express their opinion about the need for more street lights or signs, new schools or better water supply and sewage facilities. There would generally be no harm in a Christian's expressing his opinion about such improvements. He might even feel that he could sign a request, or petition, for such.

But Christians should not overlook the fact that major matters affecting a community often become political issues. Groups begin to resort to political means to effect the changes they sincerely feel are best. Or some politician (or candidate) espouses an issue. Then individuals polarize along political lines or become aligned with "the rulers of this system of things, who are to come to nothing." (1 Corinthians 2:6, 8; Revelation 19:17, 18) If that occurred with a member of the Christian congregation, he could get to the point of no longer fitting Jesus' description: "If you were part of the world, the world would be fond of what is its own. Now because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you." Christ pointedly said about his faithful disciples: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world."—John 15:19; 17:16.

There are some issues that may not yet be political where we live, or that people in the area work for without using politics. Curbing pollution, conserving water and mineral resources or protecting wilderness areas might be matters of that sort. One might see good in these undertakings and feel that God would too. Yet we must not forget what work Jehovah has commissioned Christians to concentrate on: The spreading of the good news of the Kingdom, which will bring everlasting blessings to millions of people earth wide. (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) Doing that work will protect us against getting caught up in proselytizing efforts that have captivated the emotions of many.

The fact is that those human efforts cannot have as widespread and lasting good results as can the helping of people to develop godly

devotion, which "is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." (1 Timothy 4:8) Yes, even from a utilitarian standpoint, we can do the most good by helping people to become genuine Christians. That can help them to avoid practices that are harmful to health. We can help them to apply Bible principles so that they are greater assets to their community. Yet, as a greater blessing, our efforts will

enable them to "get a firm hold on the real life." (1 Timothy 6:19) The benefits they receive will be much more reliable than what might be realized from social or community endeavors. And as for Christians, our taking care not to be diverted from the work that God has assigned us will display our obedience to Jehovah, "to whom every family owes its name," health and prospects for the future.—Ephesians 3:15.

■ **What is meant by Paul's words at 1 Corinthians 14:36: "Was it from you that the word of God came forth, or was it only as far as you that it reached?"**

Basically, the apostle Paul was trying to help the Corinthians to see that they should not institute new ways to do things in the congregation. Such counsel was appropriate, as we can note from what Paul wrote earlier.

In the early days of Christianity, God provided miraculous gifts of the spirit, such as prophesying and speaking in tongues. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11) Some in Corinth had such gifts but used them in a way that created disorder. For example, they spoke in tongues when no one was present who had the miraculous gift of translation. Paul reasoned, "How will the man occupying the seat of the ordinary person say 'Amen' . . . , since he does not know what you are saying?" Unbelievers present might even think that those speaking in tongues were crazy.—1 Corinthians 14:13-16, 22, 23.

Confusion was also created by a number speaking at the same time. Paul urged, "If someone speaks in a tongue, let it be limited to two or three at the most, and in turns." Similarly, those moved by the spirit to prophesy were to

do so in a limited way and "one by one." This agreed with God's being a God of peace, not disorder.—1 Corinthians 14:27-33.

A problem seems to have existed, too, with women speaking out in meetings. That must have been more than answering a question or relating an experience. Apparently some women were trying to act as teachers and were arguing with the brothers in the meetings. That was out of harmony with the principle of headship.—1 Corinthians 14:34, 35.

So Paul wrote: "What? Was it from you that the word of God came forth, or was it only as far as you that it reached?" (1 Corinthians 14:36) Yes, he urged the Corinthians to remember that theirs was not the first congregation and that the "word of God" had not been declared to them alone. It was, then, wrong for them to handle matters in a manner drastically different from all the other congregations. They had no right to introduce innovations that were foreign to the Christian congregation and contrary to principles regarding peace and headship.

gained peace and freedom. But the matter is a matter of principle, not of expediency. They had no right to introduce innovations that were foreign to the Christian congregation and contrary to principles in

the Bible. Paul wrote: "What is the word of God? It is the word of life. It is the word of wisdom. It is the word of knowledge. It is the word of power. It is the word of peace. It is the word of love. It is the word of faith. It is the word of hope. It is the word of charity. It is the word of truth. It is the word of justice. It is the word of mercy. It is the word of grace. It is the word of forgiveness. It is the word of redemption. It is the word of salvation. It is the word of life everlasting." (1 Cor. 1:3-4)

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