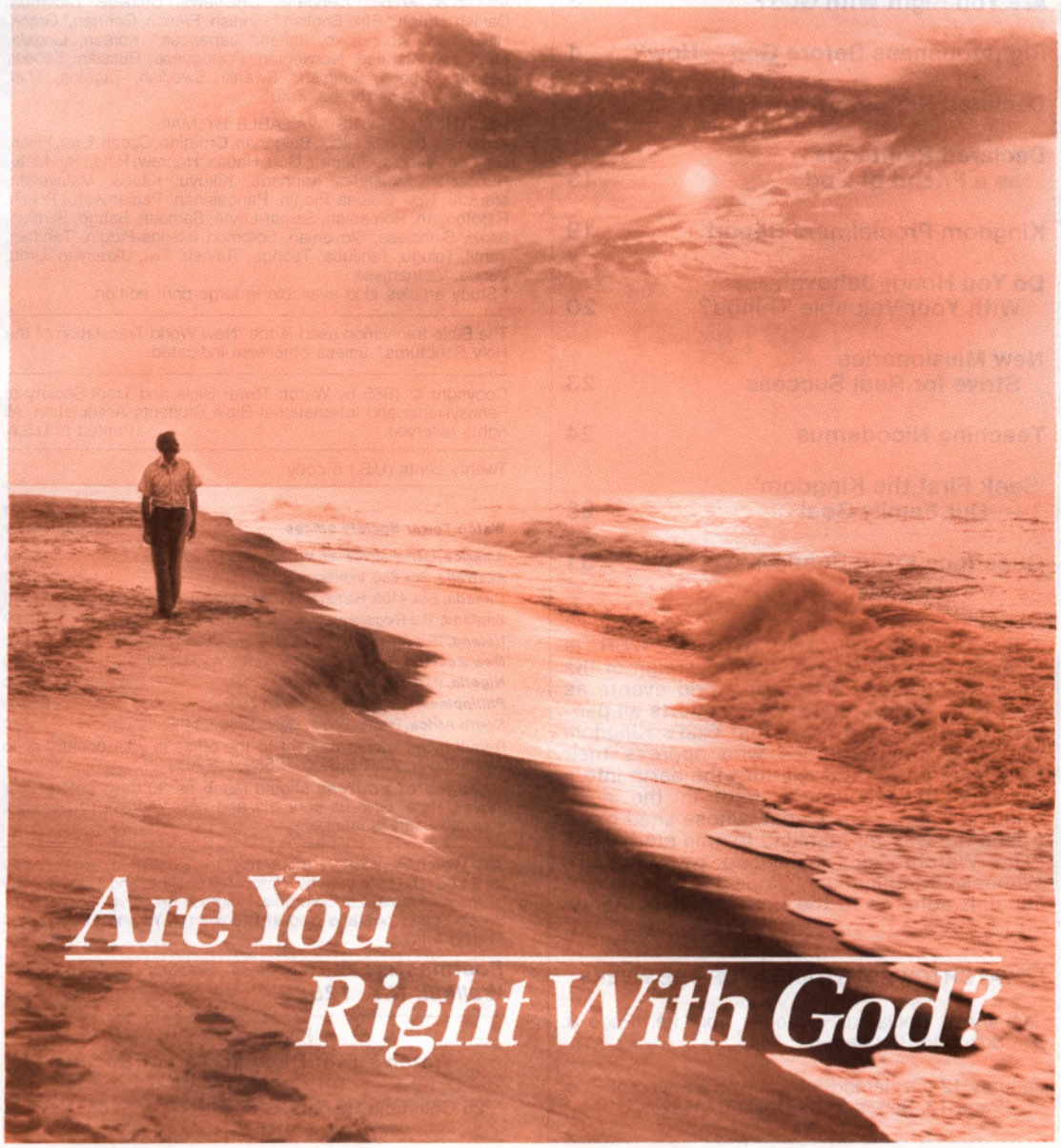
December 1, 1985

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



Are You Right With God?

The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

December 1, 1985
Vol. 106, No. 23

In This Issue

Are You Right With God?	**3**
Righteousness Before God—How?	**4**
Declared Righteous "for Life"	**8**
Declared Righteous as a Friend of God	**13**
Kingdom Proclaimers Report	**19**
Do You Honor Jehovah With Your Valuable Things?	**20**
New Missionaries Strive for Real Success	**23**
Teaching Nicodemus	**24**
'Seek First the Kingdom' —Our Family Goal	**26**
Questions From Readers	**31**

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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Are You Right With God?

MANY people may see no point in that question. In their view, feeling right with oneself is more important. 'Do your own thing' is a popular maxim these days. 'Don't feel guilty' is another.

This is not just the viewpoint of a few youngsters imbued with the 'me-first' philosophy of life. For example, in France, where 82 percent of the population are baptized Catholics, a survey carried out in 1983 revealed that only 4 percent of the people accept the idea of sin. As to the United States, several years ago Dr. Karl Menninger, said to be the "father of American psychiatry," felt prompted to write a whole book on the subject *Whatever Became of Sin?* In it he wrote: "As a nation, we officially ceased 'sinning' some twenty years ago." The cover of the book stated: "The word 'sin' has almost disappeared from our vocabulary."

Indeed, the concept of sin is so obscure today that many people, even those claiming to be Christian, would have trouble explaining what sin really is.

Modern-Day Misgivings

In spite of this devaluation of the notion of sin, several recent developments on the world scene have set people thinking. One is the large number of abortions in many of the world's most developed countries. Some of these, although predominantly "Christian," have very liberal abortion laws. This glut of fetal killings has produced reactions that people who reject the concept of sin must find hard to explain.

Why, for example, should some women whose philosophy of life permits them to have an abortion have feelings of guilt afterward, even to the point of becoming psychologically ill? Yet, "studies show a high proportion of abortees to be maladjusted," even in communist Yugoslavia. (*The New Encyclopædia Britannica*) Professor Henri Baruk, member of the French Academy of Medicine, explains this phenomenon as being due to the violation of "a fundamental principle written in the heart of all people." Written by whom?

Another recent phenomenon that has set people thinking is the worldwide spread of sexually transmitted diseases. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), with its high death rate, has triggered a wave of doubt and anguish among many people for whom promiscuous sex had supposedly brought liberation from outmoded taboos. The high price many are paying for their sexual "freedom" is causing some of them to wonder if, after all, they are not being punished. Punished by whom?

Such modern-day reminders that man cannot with impunity flout moral principles are making some thinking people reassess their opinions of sin and accountability to God.

The Churches and Sin

"The sin of this century is the loss of all sense of sin." Pope Pius XII made that forceful statement as early as 1946. Obviously, the situation has worsened since then. In his recent document on sin and confession, called "Reconciliation and

Penance," Pope John Paul II quoted those words of his predecessor and deplored what he called the eclipse of the concept of sin in today's secularized society.

The pope also reminded Catholic priests, and Catholics in general, that collective confession and absolution, as practiced in many Catholic churches today, is not good enough. He stated that individual confession is "the only ordinary and normal way" of observing the sacrament of penance. In Catholic dogma penance is associated with good works in reconciling the sinner with God.

Most Protestant churches deny the need for private confession to a priest. They hold that confession to God is sufficient for the forgiveness of sins, but some favor general confession and absolution at the "Communion service." Many Protestants believe that faith alone is necessary to be justified before God.

Such conflicting doctrines within the so-called Christian churches on the subject of confession, penance, and justification, or how to find a right standing before God, leave many people perplexed. They have a vague feeling that they should be doing something to get right with God, but they do not know how to go about it.

The following article will explain why we need to be put right with God, and it will examine the Catholic and Protestant viewpoints on "justification." Two other articles will explain what the Bible teaches on the subject of obtaining a righteous standing before God, and how this affects you.

Righteousness Before God—How?

"GOD 'e say 'im alrite." Such is apparently the way "justification" has been presented in a recent New Guinea Pidgin version of the "New Testament." As quaint as this may seem, it does express the basic idea behind the word translated in many English-language Bibles as "justification," or "declaration of righteousness," as expressed in Romans 5:16.

On the other hand, some people say: 'I lead a decent life. I do good to others when I can. I am prepared to meet my Maker.' They apparently understand justification to mean self-justification. According to the Bible, the doctrine of "justification" relates to the way *God* regards us and the way *he* deals with us. Jehovah is "the Creator." (Isaiah 40:28) He is "the Judge of all the earth." (Genesis 18:25) Nothing, therefore, could be more important than the way *he* considers us.

Why We Need to Be Put Right With God

The Bible says of Jehovah: "The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he." (Deuteronomy 32:4) He is the embodiment of righteousness. As the Creator and Life-Giver, he has

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
teaches that justification makes man *really* righteous, but that justification can be lost by mortal sin or enhanced by personal merit

the right to set the standard, or norm, for determining what is right and what is wrong. That which is in conformity with God's standard is righteous.

Thus, God sets the mark that his intelligent creatures must reach if they wish to live in harmony with their Creator. Missing that mark, or standard, is what the original languages of the Bible call sin. Sin is, therefore, unrighteousness. It is a failure to conform to God's definition of right and wrong. Consequently, sin is also a form of disorder, a form of lawlessness.—1 John 5:17; 3:4.

Jehovah "is a God, not of disorder, but of peace." (1 Corinthians 14:33) Originally, all his creatures in heaven and on earth were perfect. They were endowed with free will. (2 Corinthians 3:17) They enjoyed "the glorious freedom of the children of God." (Romans 8:21) As long as his righteous standards were respected, peace and order prevailed throughout the universe. Disorder intruded into the universe when, first in heaven, later on earth, some creatures became lawless before God, rejecting his right to rule over them. They deviated from God's standard of right and wrong. They missed the mark and thus made sinners of themselves.

This was the case with our first parents, Adam and Eve. (Genesis 3:1-6) "That is why . . . sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Romans 5:12) Ever since their rebellion, sin has "ruled as king with death," because all Adam's descendants "have sinned and fall short" of God's righteous standard. (Romans 5:21; 3:23) Hence our need to be put right with God.

The Catholic View of "Justification"

This need for reconciliation with God is recognized by all the churches that claim to be Christian. However, the understanding of the way in which it is attained and of the Christian's standing before God differs in Catholic and Protestant doctrine.

As to Catholic dogma, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* states: "Justification denotes that change or transformation in the soul by which man is transferred from the state of original sin, in which as a child of Adam he was born, to that of grace and Divine sonship through Jesus Christ, the second Adam." *A Catholic Dictionary* further explains: "We confine ourselves here to the process by which adults are elevated from a state of death and sin to the favour and friendship of God; for with regard to infants the Church teaches that they are justified in baptism without any act of their own."

Briefly put, the Catholic Church teaches that "justification" is an act of God whereby a person who is baptized in the Catholic faith is really *made righteous* and *sanctified* by the gift of divine "grace." It also claims that such justification can be (1) increased by personal merit, or good works; (2) lost by mortal sin and by unbelief; (3) regained by the sacrament of penance. Within this arrangement, the justified Catholic must confess his sins to a priest and receive absolution. Any "temporal punishment" still due after absolution can be atoned

MANY PROTESTANTS believe in justification, or declared righteousness, by faith alone, and that belief in Jesus ensures salvation. Some believe that justification is predestinated

for by good works or remitted by means of an "indulgence."*

The Protestant View

The abusive sale of indulgences in the early 16th century sparked the Protestant Reformation. Catholic monk Martin Luther attacked this practice in the 95 theses he posted on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, Germany, in 1517. But, in reality, Luther's disagreement with official Catholic dogma went deeper than that. It embraced the church's entire doctrine of justification. Confirming this, *A Catholic Dictionary* states: "The difference of belief on the way by which sinners are justified before God formed the main subject of contention between Catholics and Protestants at the time of the Reformation. 'If this doctrine' (*i.e.* the doctrine of justification by faith alone) 'falls,' says Luther in his *Table Talk,* 'it is all over with us.'"

What, exactly, did Luther mean by 'justification by faith alone'? As a Catholic, Luther had learned that man's justification involves baptism, personal merit, and good works, as well as the sacrament of penance administered by a priest, who hears confession, grants absolution, and imposes compensatory works that can involve self-punishment.

In his efforts to find peace with God, Luther had expended all the resources of Roman dogma on justification, including fasting, prayers, and self-punishment, but to no avail. Unappeased, he read and reread the Psalms and Paul's letters, finally finding peace of mind by concluding that God justifies men, not because of their merits, good works, or penance, but solely because of their faith. He became so enthused by this thought of "justification by faith alone" that he added the word "alone" after the word "faith" in his German translation of Romans 3:28!*

Most of the Protestant churches basically adopted Luther's view of "justification by grace through faith." In fact, this had already been expressed by the French pre-Reformer Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples. Summing up the difference between Catholic and Protestant views on justification, *A Catholic Dictionary* states: "Catholics regard justification as an act by which a man is really made just; Protestants, as one in which he is merely declared and reputed just, the merits of another—viz. Christ—being made over to his account."

Neither Catholic nor Protestant "Justification"

Catholic dogma goes beyond what the Bible teaches when it claims that "a man is *really* made just," or righteous, by the gift of divine grace bestowed at baptism. It is

* According to Catholic dogma, sin involves guilt and two kinds of punishment—eternal and temporal. Guilt and eternal punishment are remitted by means of the sacrament of penance. Temporal punishment must be atoned for in this life by good works and penitential practices, or in the next life in the fire of purgatory. An indulgence is a partial or a full (plenary) remission of temporal punishment by the application of the merits of Christ, Mary, and the "saints," that are stored up in the "Treasury of the Church." The "good works" required to obtain an indulgence can include a pilgrimage or the contributing of money to some "good" cause. In the past, money was thus raised for the Crusades and for the building of cathedrals, churches, and hospitals.

* Luther also cast doubt on the canonicity of the letter of James, considering that his argumentation in chapter 2, that faith without works is dead, contradicts the apostle Paul's explanation of justification "apart from works." (Romans 4:6) He failed to recognize that Paul was speaking of works of the Jewish Law.—Romans 3:19, 20, 28.

not baptism that washes away original sin, but it is Christ's shed blood. (Romans 5: 8, 9) There is a big difference between *really* being made righteous by God and being counted, or considered, as being righteous. (Romans 4:7, 8) Any honest Catholic, struggling in his fight against sin, knows that he has not *really* been made righteous. (Romans 7:14-19) If he were *really* righteous, he would have no sins to confess to a priest.

Furthermore, if Catholic dogma followed the Bible, the sin-conscious Catholic would confess his sins to God, asking forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:9–2:2) The intercession of a human priest at any stage of "justification" has no foundation in the Bible, no more than the accumulation of merits upon which the doctrine of indulgences is based.—Hebrews 7:26-28.

The Protestant concept of justification, as meaning a Christian's being declared righteous on the merits of Christ's sacrifice, is without a doubt nearer to what the Bible teaches. However, some Protestant churches teach "justification by faith alone," which, as we will later see, overlooks specific reasonings presented by the apostle Paul and by James. Those churches' spiritually smug attitude is summed up by the phrase "once saved, always saved." Some Protestants believe that it is sufficient to believe in Jesus to be saved and, therefore, that justification precedes baptism.

Further, certain Protestant churches, while teaching justification by faith, follow the French reformer John Calvin and teach personal predestination, thus denying the Biblical doctrine of free will. (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20) It can, therefore, be stated that neither the Catholic nor the Protestant concepts of justification are totally in harmony with the Bible.

THE BIBLE teaches that man has free will and that Christ's ransom sacrifice opens up two hopes, one heavenly and the other earthly. Both hopes involve receiving a righteous standing before God

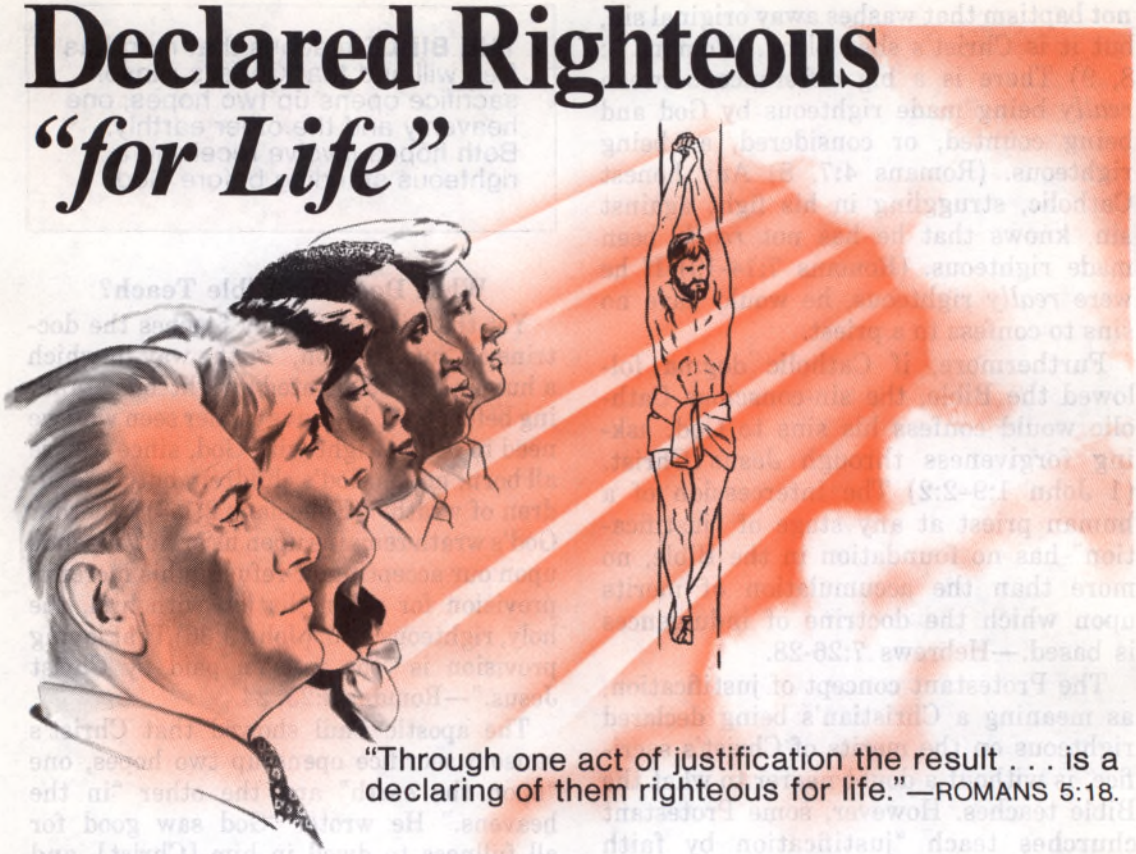
What Does the Bible Teach?

Yet the Bible definitely teaches the doctrine of "justification," or the way in which a human can be granted a righteous standing before God. We have earlier seen why we need to be put right with God, since we are all born, not as God's children, but as "children of wrath." (Ephesians 2:1-3) Whether God's wrath remains upon us or not depends upon our accepting or refusing his merciful provision for reconciliation with him, the holy, righteous God. (John 3:36) That loving provision is "the ransom paid by Christ Jesus."—Romans 3:23, 24.

The apostle Paul showed that Christ's ransom sacrifice opens up two hopes, one "upon the earth" and the other "in the heavens." He wrote: "God saw good for all fullness to dwell in him [Christ], and through him to reconcile again to himself all other things by making peace through the blood he shed on the torture stake, no matter whether they are the things upon the earth or the things in the heavens."—Colossians 1:19, 20.

To share in either of these two hopes, it is necessary to have a righteous standing before God, and this involves much more than merely "believing in Jesus." Just what is involved for Christians who have the heavenly hope and for those whose hope is to live forever in a paradise on earth will be considered in the following two articles. Please read on, and do not hesitate to ask the witness of Jehovah who supplied you with this magazine to discuss these articles with you, Bible in hand.

Declared Righteous "for Life"



"Through one act of justification the result . . . is a declaring of them righteous for life."—ROMANS 5:18.

"HAPPY are those hungering and thirsting for righteousness, since they will be filled." (Matthew 5:6) Such thirst for righteousness will be fully satisfied not only for those to whom "the kingdom of the heavens belongs" but also for those who "will possess the earth." (Matthew 5:10; Psalm 37:29) Both classes share in the hope expressed by the apostle Peter when he wrote: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his [God's] promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Peter 3:13) Yes, Jehovah God has promised a righteous new heavenly government, "the kingdom of the heavens," and a righteous "new earth," or human society in a paradise earth.

1. Who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and how will their desire be fulfilled?

[2] But what exactly is to be understood by *righteous* new heavens and a *righteous* new earth? It means that both the new heavenly government and mankind on earth ruled by it must recognize God's standard of right and wrong. Jehovah is "the abiding place of righteousness." (Jeremiah 50:7) Righteousness is the very foundation of his sovereignty, or throne

2. What relationship exists between Jehovah, righteousness, and our hope for a peaceful New Order?

position in the universe. (Job 37:23, 24; Psalm 89:14) For there to be peace in the universe, Jehovah's creatures have to recognize his right to establish the standards for what is righteous and for what is wicked. Conversely, our hope of a righteous New Order depends on Jehovah's abiding by his standards.—Psalm 145:17.

[3] The question thus arises as to how the holy and righteous God Jehovah could have dealings with unrighteous sinners. (Compare Isaiah 59:2; Habakkuk 1:13.) How could he, while remaining faithful to his exalted standards of righteousness, choose from among sinners those who are to share in the righteous governmental "new heavens" and accept as his friends those who will be a part of the righteous "new earth"? To answer this, we must understand the Biblical doctrine of justification, or declaration of righteousness.

A Merciful Credit Arrangement

[4] In the Scriptures, sins are likened to debts. (See Matthew 6:12, 14; 18:21-35; Luke 11:4.) All men are sinners and are, therefore, heavily in debt before God. "The wages sin pays is death." (Romans 6:23) Since they had been "sold under sin" by their forefather Adam, his descendants could do nothing to relieve themselves of this crushing debt. (Romans 7:14) Death of the debtor alone could wipe it out, "for he who has died has been acquitted from his sin." (Romans 6:7) No good works done during a sinner's lifetime could buy back what Adam lost, nor even give him a righteous standing before God.—Psalm 49:7, 9; Romans 3:20.

3. In view of Jehovah's absolute righteousness, what question comes to mind?

4. Why is fallen mankind heavily indebted to God, and why can we not relieve ourselves of this debt?

[5] How could Jehovah provide relief for fallen mankind without compromising his own standards of righteousness? The answer highlights Jehovah's wisdom and undeserved kindness. The apostle Paul explains this beautifully in his letter to the Romans. He writes: "It is as a free gift that they [sinners] are being declared righteous by his undeserved kindness through the release by the ransom paid by Christ Jesus. God set him forth as an offering for propitiation through faith in his blood. This was in order to exhibit his own righteousness, because he was forgiving the sins that occurred in the past while God was exercising forbearance; so as to exhibit his own righteousness in this present season, that he might be righteous even when declaring righteous the man that has faith in Jesus."—Romans 3:24-26.

[6] By his undeserved kindness, Jehovah accepted Jesus' sacrifice in behalf of Adam's descendants. (1 Peter 2:24) It was an equivalent, or corresponding, sacrifice seeing that, as a perfect man, Jesus bought back what the perfect man Adam lost. (See Exodus 21:23; 1 Timothy 2:6.) Justice having been satisfied, Jehovah is lovingly willing to "wipe out," or 'blot out,' the sins charged against the account of "the man that has faith in Jesus." (Isaiah 44:22; Acts 3:19) If such a man remains faithful, not only does Jehovah refrain from 'reckoning to him his trespasses' but He actually credits righteousness to his account. (2 Corinthians 5:19) By means of this merciful credit arrangement, 'many have been constituted righteous.' (Ro-

5. How did Jehovah provide relief for sinful mankind while still respecting his perfect justice?

6. (a) How were Jehovah's standards of justice satisfied by Christ's sacrifice, and what is Jehovah thus willing to do? (b) How can God credit righteousness to the account of a person having faith?

mans 5:19) This is one aspect of justification, the act of God whereby a person is accounted guiltless. (Acts 13:38, 39) Who are the ones who have been justified, or declared righteous, during this system of things?

144,000 "Holy Ones"

[7] Naturally, Christ himself needed no credit of righteousness, since he was *really* righteous. (1 Peter 3:18) Having proved faithful unto death as a perfect man ("the last Adam") and having sacrificed his right to life on earth, Jesus was resurrected by his Father, Jehovah. Jesus was "declared righteous in spirit," that is, pronounced fundamentally righteous on his own merit and raised as "a life-giving spirit." (1 Corinthians 15:45; 1 Timothy 3:16) By his sacrificial death, he provided the basis whereby Jehovah could credit righteousness to men and women of faith. —Romans 10:4.

[8] Logically, those whom Jehovah chooses to make up the righteous "new heavens," or Kingdom government under the King Jesus Christ, are the first to benefit fully from this merciful arrangement in this system of things. The book of Daniel depicts the ceremony in the heavens by which Christ, the Son of man, receives "rulership and dignity and kingdom," so that "the peoples, national groups and languages [on earth] should all serve even him." Then Daniel shows that "the kingdom and the rulership" are also given to "the holy ones of the Supreme One," Jehovah.—Daniel 7:13, 14, 18, 27; compare Revelation 5:8-10.

[9] The number of such "holy ones" chosen to rule with the Lamb Jesus Christ on the heavenly Mount Zion is revealed as being 144,000, "bought from among mankind." (Revelation 14:1-5) These, together with Christ, make up the righteous "new heavens" of Jehovah's new system of things.

Counted Righteous—How and Why?

[10] The Bible book that is doubtless the most explicit on God's declaring men righteous is Paul's letter to the Romans. Interestingly, he addressed this letter to those "called to be holy ones." (Romans 1: 1, 7) This explains why the doctrine of "justification," or declaration of righteousness, as outlined by Paul, is used in connection with the 144,000 "holy ones."

[11] The thrust of Paul's reasoning in Romans is that neither Jew nor Gentile can obtain a righteous standing before God by means of works, whether these be done to conform to the Mosaic Law or simply out of respect for instinctive moral law. (Romans 2:14, 15; 3:9, 10, 19, 20) Jew and Gentile alike can be declared righteous only on the basis of faith in Christ's ransom sacrifice. (Romans 3:22-24, 29, 30) However, the counsel in the closing chapters of Romans (12–15) shows that such faith must be backed up by godly works, as James also explains. (James 2:14-17) Such works simply prove that the justified Christian has the faith that is a prerequisite for justification by God.

[12] Still, for what impelling reason do Christians who are "called to be holy ones" need to be declared righteous? This is where the second aspect of justification

---

7. In what way was Christ declared righteous, and what therefore became possible?
8, 9. (a) Who are the first ones to benefit by a credit of righteousness, and why? (b) Who make up the "new heavens," and over what will they rule?
10. (a) Which Bible book is the most explicit on justification, and to whom was it written? (b) Who are principally involved in the *Bible* doctrine of justification?
11. What relationship is there between faith, works, and justification?
12, 13. (a) Why do the 144,000 "holy ones" need to be declared righteous? (b) What do they do with the life rights they receive?

There are two aspects to justification, or the declaration of righteousness:

(1) God's accounting that person guiltless

(2) God's declaring that person perfect and worthy of everlasting life on earth

The 144,000 anointed Christians are declared righteous in both respects. They sacrifice their human life rights and are begotten as spiritual "sons" called to become kings and priests with Christ in the "new heavens"

comes into account, namely, God's declaring a person worthy of life as His perfect human son. Due to the role they are called upon to play in the righteous "new heavens," the 144,000 must renounce and sacrifice forever any hope of life everlasting on earth. (Psalm 37:29; 115:16) In this sense they die a sacrificial death. They 'submit themselves to a death like Christ's.'—Philippians 3:8-11.

13 Now, in line with the principle set forth in the Mosaic Law, any sacrifice presented to Jehovah must be without defect. (Leviticus 22:21; Deuteronomy 15:21) The 144,000 "holy ones" are spoken of as "righteous ones who have been made perfect."—Hebrews 12:23.

Adopted as Spiritual Sons

14 While still living in the flesh, these "righteous ones" undergo a symbolic death. The apostle Paul explains: "Seeing that we died with reference to sin, how shall we keep on living any longer in it? Or do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him through our baptism into his death, in order that, just as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, we also should likewise walk in a newness of life . . . because we know that our old personality was impaled with him, that our sinful body might be made inactive, that we should no longer go on being slaves to sin. For he who has died has been acquitted from his sin."—Romans 6:2-7.

15 During their human life, the 144,000 "holy ones," of whom only a small remnant remain on earth in this time of the end, 'die with reference to sin.' After their symbolic death, those "called to be holy ones" are raised up to "a newness of life." Having declared them righteous, Jehovah is in a position to beget them by his spirit to be his spiritual "children." They are "born again" and adopted as "God's sons." (John 3:3; Romans 8:9-16)* They become spiritual Israelites and are taken into the new covenant.—Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:20; Romans 9:6.

Heirs to Priesthood and Kingship

16 As adopted spiritual "sons" of God, the 144,000 "holy ones" also become

14, 15. (a) What change with reference to sin do the 144,000 undergo? (b) In what way are they raised up to "a newness of life"?

* For an in-depth discussion of being "born again," please see *The Watchtower* dated February 1, 1982, pages 18-29.

16. To what do the 144,000 "holy ones" become heirs?

'heirs.' (Galatians 4:5-7) Paul wrote to fellow spirit-begotten Christians: "If, then, we are children, we are also heirs: heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ, provided we suffer together that we may also be glorified together." (Romans 8:17) What is Christ's heritage? Jehovah has made him a King-Priest "according to the manner of Melchizedek forever." (Hebrews 6:19, 20; 7:1) As "joint heirs" with Christ, spirit-begotten Christians are also anointed by Jehovah as spiritual priests. (2 Corinthians 1:21; 1 Peter 2:9) Furthermore, one of the ultimate objects of their being declared righteous by Jehovah is for them later to "rule as kings in life through the one person, Jesus Christ."—Romans 5:17.

17 While yet on earth, these anointed Christians, although declared righteous, still have to fight their sinful tendencies. (Romans 7:15-20) They need Christ's blood to cleanse them from their daily sins of imperfection. (1 John 1:7; 2:1, 2) When they remain faithful until the end of their earthly lives, they literally die and are resurrected "to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance" as part of the righteous "new heavens."—1 Peter 1: 3, 4; 2 Peter 3:13.

"Waiting for the Revealing of the Sons of God"

18 How does all of this affect those—far more numerous than the 144,000 spiritual "sons of God"—who hunger and thirst for righteousness but whose hope is to possess the earth? Of these, the apostle Paul writes: "For the eager expectation of the creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility . . . on the basis of hope that the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God."—Romans 8:19-21.

19 Such human "creation" whose hope is to live forever in a paradise earth are living in "eager expectation" of the time —now near—when the King Jesus Christ and the resurrected "sons of God" will be 'revealed' in destroying the present wicked system of things and thereafter ruling as kings and priests "for the thousand years." (Revelation 20:4, 6) During the Millennial Reign of Christ, human "creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption."

20 Just how humans living in the righteous "new earth" will finally attain to "the glorious freedom of the children of God," and how the Biblical doctrine of justification affects them even now, will be considered in the following article.

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17. (a) Although declared righteous, what do anointed Christians need to do daily? (b) How do they receive their reward?

18, 19. (a) What is human "creation" awaiting? (b) How will "the sons of God" be 'revealed,' and why is human "creation" living in eager expectation of this?

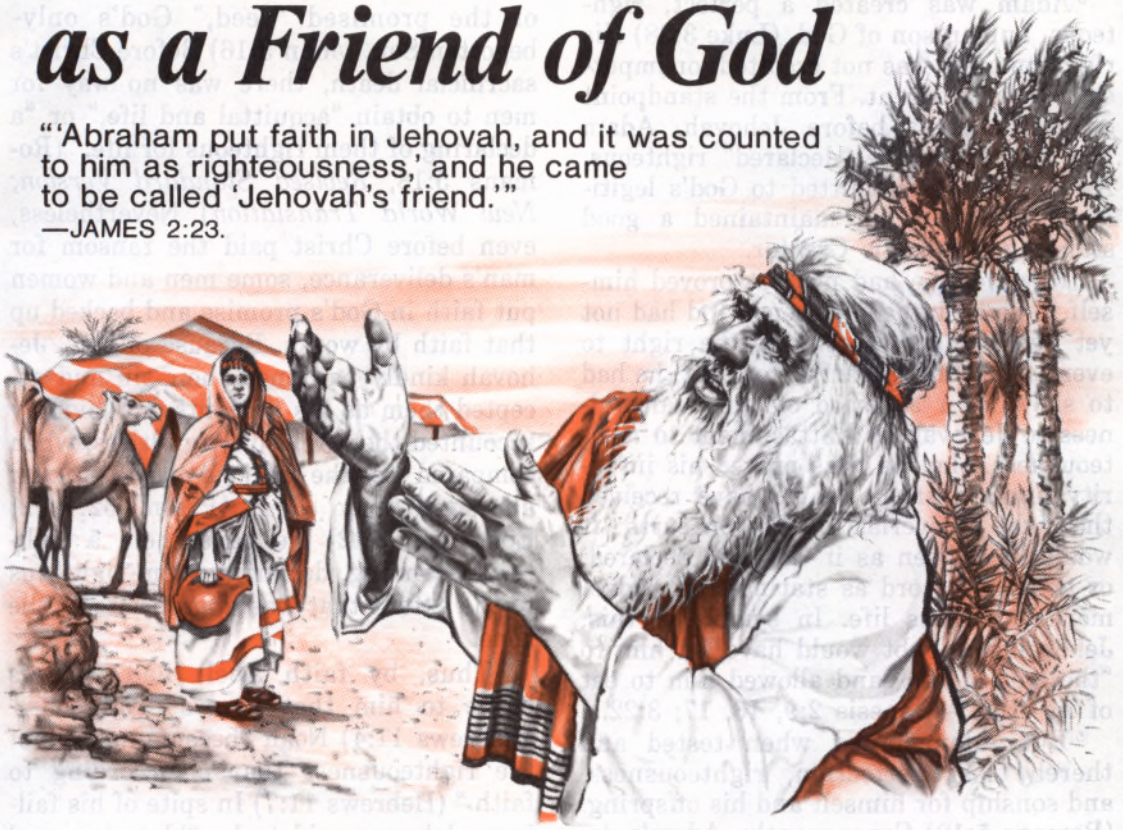
20. What will be considered in the following article?

With regard to God's declaring men righteous—

- □ What does the Bible mean by righteous new heavens and a righteous new earth?
- □ Why does mankind need to be put right with Jehovah?
- □ How were Jehovah's standards of righteousness satisfied?
- □ Why are the 144,000 the first ones to be declared righteous, and what do they do with the life rights received?
- □ To what do the 144,000 become heirs with Christ?

Declared Righteous *as a Friend of God*

"'Abraham put faith in Jehovah, and it was counted to him as righteousness,' and he came to be called 'Jehovah's friend.'"
—JAMES 2:23.



"GOD saw good for all fullness to dwell in him [Christ], and through him to reconcile again to himself all other things by making peace through the blood he shed on the torture stake, no matter whether they are the things upon the earth or the things in the heavens." (Colossians 1:19, 20) This divine purpose of reconciliation is moving to its climax.

[2] "The things in the heavens" are not spirit creatures, for angels are not ransomed by Christ's blood. Rather, they are the humans bought with the Lamb's blood to be "a kingdom and priests" with Christ in the "new heavens." These have already been fully declared righteous through the blood of Christ. In addition, for some 50 years now, Jehovah has been making peace with "things upon the earth," those humans who will become a part of the righteous "new earth." (Revelation 5:9, 10; 2 Peter 3:13) This gathering of "all things together," both things earthly and things heavenly, "is according to his

1, 2. How are "things in the heavens" and "things upon the earth" being reconciled to God?

[Jehovah's] good pleasure which he purposed in himself."—Ephesians 1:9, 10.

God's Purpose for His Son Adam

[3] Adam was created a perfect, righteous, human son of God. (Luke 3:38) His righteousness was not credited, or imputed. It was inherent. From the standpoint of guiltlessness before Jehovah, Adam had no need to be "declared" righteous. As long as he submitted to God's legitimate rulership, he maintained a good standing before his Creator.

[4] However, he had not yet proved himself to be an integrity keeper and had not yet been judged worthy of the right to everlasting life on earth. For that, he had to show, over a period of time, faithfulness to Jehovah and attachment to righteousness. Had he thus proved his integrity under test, he would have received the right to everlasting life on earth. It would have been as if God had declared, or gone on record as stating, that Adam merited endless life. In symbol of this, Jehovah no doubt would have led him to "the tree of life" and allowed him to eat of its fruit.—Genesis 2:9, 16, 17; 3:22.

[5] But Adam failed when tested and thereby lost perfection, righteousness, and sonship for himself and his offspring. (Romans 5:12) Consequently, Adam's descendants were all born estranged from God, inherently unrighteous. (Ephesians 2:3; Romans 3:10) Thus, human creation "was subjected to futility" but "on the basis of hope," which hope of deliverance from sin and death was given immediately after the rebellion in Eden.—Romans 8:20, 21; Genesis 3:15.

3, 4. What was Adam's standing before God, but in what respect did he still need to be declared righteous?

5. (a) What did Adam lose for himself and for his offspring? (b) What hope of deliverance from sin and death did Jehovah give to human creation?

Declared Righteous Before Christ —How So?

[6] Mankind's hope for deliverance from sin and death depended on the coming of the promised "seed," God's only-begotten Son. (John 3:16) Before Christ's sacrificial death, there was no way for men to obtain "acquittal and life," or "a declaring of them righteous for life." (Romans 5:18, *Revised Standard Version; New World Translation*) Nevertheless, even before Christ paid the ransom for man's deliverance, some men and women put faith in God's promise and backed up that faith by works. Because of this, Jehovah kindly pardoned their sin and accepted them as his servants. He lovingly accounted them relatively guiltless, when compared to the majority of mankind alienated from God. (Psalm 32:1, 2; Ephesians 2:12) He gave them a righteous standing, declaring them righteous to the extent that was appropriate at the time.

[7] Thus, by faith Abel "had witness borne to him that he was righteous." (Hebrews 11:4) Noah "became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith." (Hebrews 11:7) In spite of his failings, Job was said to be "blameless and upright." (Job 1:1, 22; 7:21) Phinehas showed zeal for pure worship, "and it came to be counted to him as righteousness." (Psalm 106:30, 31; Numbers 25: 1-13) "By faith" and by her works of kindness toward God's people, the non-Israelite harlot Rahab received a righteous standing, or was declared righteous.—Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25.

6, 7. (a) To what extent were some humans declared righteous before Christ's sacrificial death? (b) What are some examples of pre-Christian servants of Jehovah who received a righteous standing?

How Abraham Was Accounted Righteous

[8] The case of Abraham deserves particular attention. His being declared righteous is mentioned by two writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures, both of whom were writing to first-century Christians who were called to be a part of the 144,000 members of spiritual Israel.—Romans 2:28, 29; 9:6; James 1:1; Revelation 7:4.

[9] In his letter to the Romans, Paul argues that those "called to be holy ones" (1:7), both Jews and Gentiles (1:16, 17), are declared righteous "by faith apart from works of law." (3:28) To substantiate his argument, he opens a long explanation (4:1-22) and quotes Genesis 15:6 in saying: "Abraham exercised faith in Jehovah, and it was counted to him as righteousness." Then, in the concluding verses of chapter 4, Paul says that Jesus "was delivered up for the sake of our trespasses and was raised up for the sake of declaring us [that is, "the holy ones" (Romans 1:7)] righteous." "Us" cannot include Abraham, since he died long before Christ's death and resurrection. Consequently, when, in the following chapters, Paul speaks of those who are to "rule as kings" and of their being declared righteous "for life" with a view to becoming "God's sons" and "joint heirs with Christ," he was obviously speaking of something quite different from God's attributing righteousness to Abraham. —Romans 5:17, 18; 8:14, 17, 28-33.

8, 9. (a) Whose righteousness is the main topic of Paul's letter to the Romans? (b) In what respects does the declaration of righteousness of the "holy ones" go beyond that of Abraham?

[10] James also mentions Abraham as an example to prove that faith must be backed up by godly works. After stating that Abraham was declared righteous, quoting Genesis 15:6, James adds a comment that helps us to see the scope of Abraham's justification. He writes: "The scripture was fulfilled which says: 'Abraham put faith in Jehovah, and it was counted to him as righteousness,' *and he came to be called 'Jehovah's friend.'*" (James 2:20-23) Yes, due to his faith, Abraham was declared righteous *as a friend* of Jehovah, *not as a son with the right to perfect human life* or to kingship with Christ. Interestingly, in his *Synonyms of the Old Testament,* Robert Girdlestone wrote concerning Abraham's righteousness: "This righteousness was not *absolute, i.e.* such as would commend Abraham to God as a rightful claimant of the inheritance of sonship."

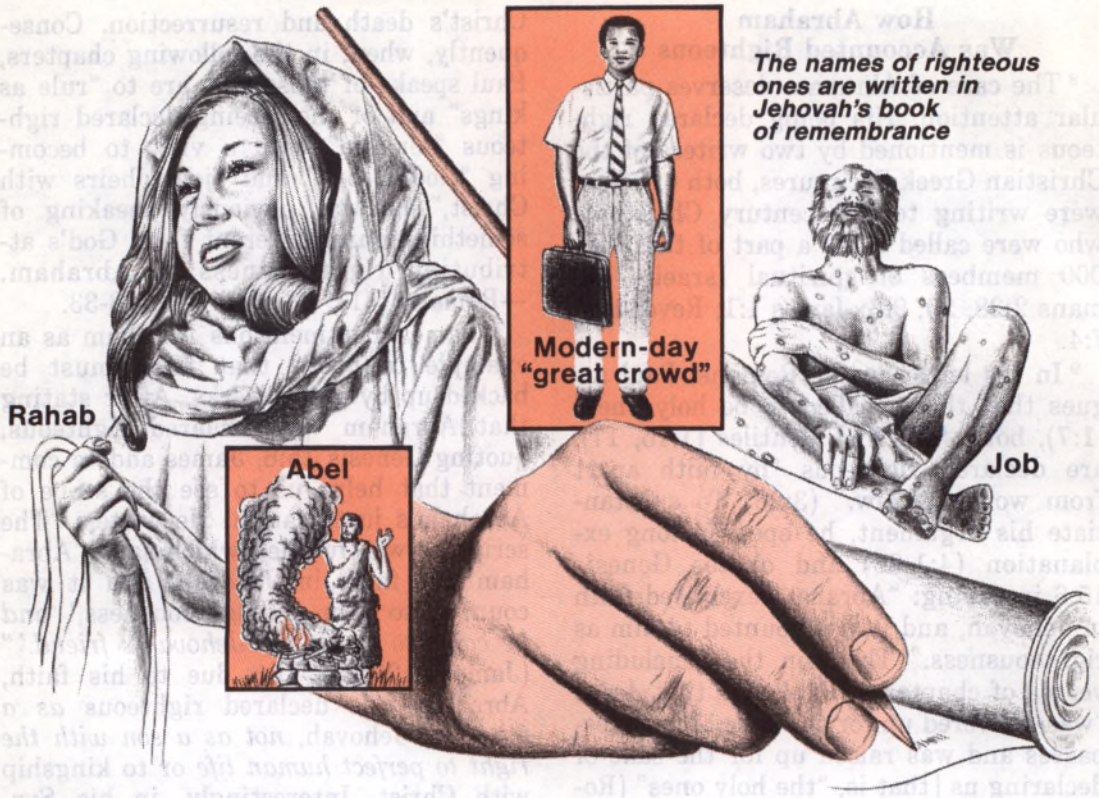
Jehovah's Book of Remembrance

[11] The credit of relative righteousness to faithful men and women before Christ was a token of the real, or actual, righteousness and perfection associated with everlasting life that they may gain in God's new earth. In view of their life prospects, they may be viewed as having their names written in a book of remem-

10. How does James shed light on the scope of Abraham's being declared righteous?
11. Whose names are written in Jehovah's book of remembrance, and why?

In Our Next Issue

- **Are You Grateful for What Jesus Did?**
- **Declare Abroad the Kingdom of God**
- **Self-Control —Vital for Christians**



brance. (Compare Malachi 3:16; Exodus 32:32, 33.) It contains the names of those who are viewed by Jehovah as "righteous ones" who have demonstrated their faith by righteous works, and who are in line to receive everlasting life on earth. —Psalm 69:28; Habakkuk 2:4.

[12] However, such names are not yet written in Jehovah's "book of life." (Revelation 20:15) When such faithful men and women of the past come back on earth in 'the resurrection of the righteous,' they will no doubt accept with faith Jehovah's provision for life through Christ's ransom sacrifice. (Acts 24:15) Thus they will become a part of Jesus' "other sheep," together with the "great crowd" who will have survived the "great tribulation." (John 10:16; Revelation 7: 9, 14) So doing, they will keep their names in Jehovah's book of remembrance.

12. What will the "righteous" who are resurrected have to do to keep their names in Jehovah's book of remembrance?

Accounted Righteous as Friends for Survival

[13] The Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ, is now bringing in "other sheep" that are not of the "little flock" of 144,000 "holy ones" to whom the heavenly Kingdom is given. (Luke 12:32; Daniel 7:18) These "other sheep" listen to the voice of the

13. Whom is the Fine Shepherd now bringing in, and how do they get inscribed in Jehovah's book of remembrance?

Fine Shepherd. (John 10:16) They exercise faith in Jehovah and in his Son. They dedicate their lives to Jehovah on the basis of Christ's ransom sacrifice. They are baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit" and recognize the need to cultivate "the fruitage of the spirit." (Matthew 28:19, 20; Galatians 5:22, 23) Their names are written in Jehovah's book of remembrance.

14 These "other sheep" gathered in this time of the end will make up the "great crowd" whom the apostle John saw in vision, after he had seen the 144,000 members of spiritual Israel. (Revelation 7:4, 9) He described the "great crowd" as having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (Verse 14) Because of their faith in the Lamb's shed blood, a degree of righteousness is credited to them. This was depicted by their symbolic white robes. They have a clean standing before Jehovah, and "that is why" he allows them to 'render him sacred service day and night in his temple.' (Verse 15) Still, each day they must confess their sins to Jehovah and ask for forgiveness through Jesus Christ.—1 John 1:9-2:2.

15 That the "other sheep" are God's friends and even now have a relatively righteous standing before him is also made clear in Jesus' prophecy on 'the sign of his presence,' which includes the illustration of the sheep and the goats. Because the "sheep" do good to the remnant of Christ's 144,000 "brothers" still on earth, they are blessed by Jesus' Father and are called "righteous ones." Like Abraham, they are accounted, or declared, righteous as friends of God. Their righteous standing will also mean survival for them when the "goats" depart into "everlasting cutting-off." (Matthew 24:3-25:46) They will "come out of the great tribulation" that will mark the end of the present wicked system of things.—Revelation 7:14.

14. What gives the "other sheep" a clean standing before Jehovah, but for what do they need to ask God?

15. (a) How does the parable of the sheep and the goats show that the "other sheep" have a righteous standing with God? (b) To what extent are they declared righteous at the present time?

Brought Up to Perfection

16 The "great crowd," who survive the "great tribulation," are not already declared righteous *for life.* We can see this from the fact that the chapter that mentions them goes on to say: "The Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them, and *will guide them to fountains of waters of life.*" (Revelation 7:17) So, even though God previously counted them as righteous compared to mankind in general and as his friends, they need additional help, or steps to be taken, so that they can be declared righteous *for life.*

17 During the Millennium, the enthroned Lamb, Christ Jesus, together with his 144,000 associate kings and priests, will apply a program of spiritual and physical "curing of the nations." (Revelation 22:1, 2) Such "nations" will be made up of the survivors of the great tribulation, any children born to them after Har-Magedon, and those who come back in the "resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) All who put faith in Christ's blood and accomplish appropriate "deeds" will even-

16. How do we know that the great crowd are not declared righteous for life before the "great tribulation"?

17. (a) What is meant by "the curing of the nations"? (b) Who will need to have their names inscribed in "the book of life"?

By faith in "the blood of the Lamb," the "other sheep" are given an approved standing before Jehovah and are thus declared righteous for friendship with him and for survival during the "great tribulation." They will attain to perfection by the end of the Millennium. After the final test they will be declared righteous *for life.*

tually have their names written in "the book of life."—Revelation 20:11-15.

18 By the end of Christ's Millennial Reign, those of earth's inhabitants who have shown that they accept Christ's ransom and will live by Jehovah's standards will have been raised to perfection. (Revelation 20:5) They will be as Adam was before he sinned. Like him, they will be tested as to their obedience.

"Glorious Freedom" as "Children of God"

19 Immediately after the Millennium, Christ will hand over to his Father a perfect human race. (1 Corinthians 15:28) "Satan will be let loose" for a decisive test of mankind. (Revelation 20:7, 8) The names of any who fail under test will not be "found written in the book of life." They will symbolically be "hurled into the lake of fire," which "means the second death."—Revelation 20:15; 21:8.

20 Those who prove loyal to Jehovah will have their names indelibly written in the "book of life," as being perfect in integrity and worthy of the right to everlasting life on earth. Jehovah himself will then declare them righteous in the complete sense. (Romans 8:33) They will have been justified to life eternal. God will adopt them as his earthly sons, and they will enter into the promised "glorious freedom of the children of God." (Romans 8:20, 21) Peace and harmony will have been restored to the universe. Reconciliation with God will be complete for "things upon the earth" and "things in the heavens." (Colossians 1:20) Jehovah's merciful arrangement of justification will have served its purpose. To the question, "Are you right with God?" every creature in heaven and on earth will be able to answer yes and add: "To the One sitting on the throne and to the Lamb be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the might forever and ever."—Revelation 5:13.

18. To what condition will earth's inhabitants have been raised by the end of the Millennium?
19. (a) What will occur immediately after the Millennium? (b) What will happen to those whose names are not found written in "the book of life"?
20. (a) Whom will Jehovah declare righteous for life, and why? (b) How will Jehovah's merciful arrangement of justification have served its purpose?

Concerning the standing of the "other sheep" before God—

- ☐ Why was Adam not declared righteous?
- ☐ To what extent were Abraham and other men and women before Christ declared righteous?
- ☐ Whose names were written in Jehovah's book of remembrance?
- ☐ To what extent do the "other sheep" have a righteous standing at the present time, and when will they be brought to perfection?

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

Love, the "Perfect Bond of Union"

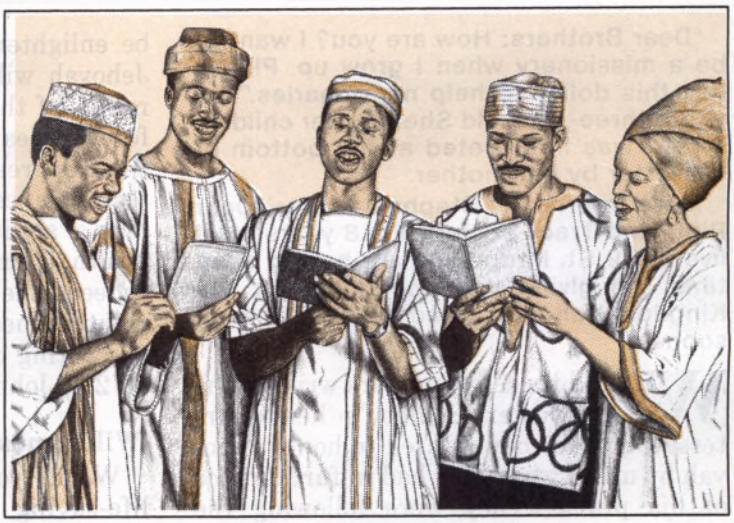
LOVE among Christians is "a perfect bond of union," and when displayed it results in a worldwide brotherhood. (Colossians 3:14) This "perfect bond of union" is manifested by our brothers in Africa as they show love for one another and for Jehovah, the Giver and Sustainer of Life.—Psalm 36:9; Acts 17:28.

□ Because of the recent three-year drought in Zimbabwe, many areas were in a desperate condition. This, of course, affected our brothers who live in those areas. However, fellow Witnesses responded wonderfully to the call for help. In fact, so much clothing was donated that it was necessary to inform the brothers not to donate more until further notice. This, plus the aid given by the government, provided most of our brothers with the help they needed. "Those still in need are also being cared for," reports the Society's branch office.

This loving aid on the part of our brothers has not gone unnoticed. One unbelieving husband told his wife, who is a Witness: "While others are draining the people of all they have, you [Witnesses] are providing them with food and clothing." Favorable comments have been made by others also.

Love among Jehovah's Witnesses serves as "a perfect bond of union," and identifies them as true Christians.—John 13:35.

□ Another example of the love and unity among Jehovah's people was seen at the "Kingdom Unity" District Convention held in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Delegates came to this convention from Guinea and Liberia, as well as from different parts of Sierra Leone. Two sessions ran simultaneously—one in English and Krio, the other in Kisi and French. The branch report describes the love and unity manifest on this occasion. It says:



"It was a thrilling moment when the Kisi- and French-speaking brothers joined the English session for the final song and prayer. Many shed tears of joy as they watched more than 400 delegates walk across the field to join them in unitedly worshiping Jehovah in song and prayer." It quotes one observer as saying: "Jehovah knows how to organize his people. What a clear demonstration of unity!"

This unity is emphasized when we consider that the ones gathered were from different tribes, and yet they met together in peace. It requires Jehovah's spirit to accomplish this. This unity was foretold in Revelation 7:9: "After these things I saw, and, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes; and there were palm branches in their hands." Verse 10 of this same chapter shows the secret of this unity: "And they keep on crying with a loud voice, saying: 'Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb.'"

Do You Honor Jehovah With Your Valuable Things?

"Dear Brothers: How are you? I want to be a missionary when I grow up. Please use this dollar to help missionaries." So wrote three-year-old Shelley. Her childish scrawl was interpreted at the bottom of the letter by her mother.

More informally, Stephen wrote: "Dear Bible and Tract Society. I'm 8 years old. I live at 89 St. I hope you are having a fun time. I'm giving you one dollar for the Kingdom Hall fund. Send me a letter back soon."

WHY did these youngsters write to the Watchtower Society's headquarters? Because they wanted to honor Jehovah by using what they had in furtherance of his praise. They were following the Biblical injunction: "Honor Jehovah with your valuable things and with the firstfruits of all your produce."—Proverbs 3:9.

Certainly Jehovah is worthy of this honor. None can be compared to him. As Revelation 4:11 states: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created." Not only is it true that "by him we have life and move and exist," but he has provided the very best for us. (Acts 17:28) As the Bible writer James reminds us, God is the Giver of "every good gift and every perfect present."—James 1:17.

However, not all appreciate the need to praise and honor Jehovah. In fact, millions of people have not even learned his name! Many worship the things created "rather than the One who created." (Romans 1:25) Sincere-hearted ones need to be enlightened. They need to know that Jehovah will soon swing into action. By means of the rulership of his Son, he will forever clear the earth of oppressors and their oppression, set things back in perfect balance, and restore Paradise and man's ability to live forever in perfect health. (Daniel 2:44; Revelation 21:1, 3, 4) Indeed, the very lives of those seeking righteousness depend on their taking in and acting on such knowledge.—Zephaniah 2:3; John 17:3.

Willingness and Appreciation Needed

Would you also like to share in this life-saving work? Much is involved in spreading the "good news" of that Kingdom to "all the inhabited earth." (Matthew 24:14) Willing workers have to be trained, equipped, and sent out to preach. How gratifying it is to see over 2,800,000 people now honoring Jehovah by preaching the Kingdom good news worldwide! Record numbers of these are doing so on a full-time basis, many even moving to areas where there is a greater need. Thousands of missionaries have already been sent to pioneer the preaching work in other lands, and more are continually being added to their ranks.

To oversee, maintain, and support all this activity requires a vast organization. New branch facilities and missionary homes around the globe have had to be built and expanded. Local places of worship—Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls—are presently being constructed at an unprecedented rate. It is heartwarming to see

how willingly Jehovah's people have responded, showing a readiness to use their all in Jehovah's service. (Psalm 110:3) But the foretold 'speeding up' of the ingathering work in these last days now calls for an intensified willingness to honor Jehovah with our valuable things. (Isaiah 60:22) What, then, is required of us?

Appreciation is one thing—appreciation for all that Jehovah has given us. Yes, our assets are actually gifts from Jehovah. "Indeed," asks the apostle Paul, "what do you have that you did not receive?" (1 Corinthians 4:7) And for what purpose has God given them to us? So that we can use such gifts in honoring him!—1 Peter 4: 10, 11.

These gifts include our physical, mental, spiritual, and material assets—yes, life itself. And how generous Jehovah has been to each one of us! What a fine example he has set in giving! Surely, having received so much of Jehovah's bounty should move us to show appreciation for such provisions. Are we thus not moved to honor him with what we have?

Perhaps you feel limited in what you can do. After all, not everyone can serve as a missionary in a distant land or devote himself to some other feature of full-time service. Nor do most of us have the ability or means to go and assist on construction projects. Individual circumstances also limit those who can devote their lives to serve at branch offices where vital publications, such as this magazine, are printed. Yet each of us can experience the greater happiness that comes from giving. (Acts 20:35) And all of us can use our lives and speech in ways that please God and bring honor and praise to him.—Colossians 3:23.

How It Can Be Done

Though of tender years, Shelley and Stephen found a way. They realized that their contribution to the Watchtower Society would be used for the furtherance of the worldwide preaching work. And their donation, regardless of the amount, was certainly appreciated. Stephen received his letter of acknowledgment. So did little Shelley. It is not the amount but the motive that counts, for to be acceptable a gift must be completely voluntary. (2 Corinthians 9:7) Jehovah is pleased with our contributions, whether large or small, when they represent our whole-souled devotion to him.—Luke 21:1-4.

Appreciation, then, is followed up with action. Have we taken stock of what valuable things we have that may be used for honoring God? Our lives, with whatever vigor and strength we have, are certainly precious and not to be wasted on vain pursuits. Do we spend as much time as we can in developing and strengthening a close, personal relationship with Jehovah? Do we honor him by proclaiming his name and message with our lips? (Hebrews 13: 15, 16) Young children are also a precious possession given by Jehovah. (Psalm 127:3) Do we encourage them toward dedicating their life in service to God?

Then there are our literal gold, silver, and other monetary assets. Contributions of such a nature support our local congregations, including the maintenance of the Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls that serve as centers of Bible instruction and preaching activities in our communities. When sent to the Watchtower Society's headquarters or branch office in a particular country, these contributions help advance the worldwide Kingdom-preaching work. Such gifts can be earmarked for use in whatever avenue we wish. Young Shelley, with her goal of missionary service in mind, wanted to help missionaries. Stephen, hearing of the great need for hundreds of additional Kingdom Halls and the tremendous expense involved, wanted his

donation added to the Society Kingdom Hall Fund. Others contribute toward special needs, such as providing relief in times of disaster.

Oftentimes, though, individuals prefer to let the branch office determine how the money will be spent, since those brothers know which need is the most pressing. One contributor wrote: "Please find enclosed check for the Society to use as they see fit in furthering the preaching work. We're very happy to see the fine increase due to the efforts of all of Jehovah's people with Jehovah's blessing on the work." Another letter said: "Recently, upon retirement, I was the recipient of a lump-sum distribution from the company I had worked for. It is the sincere desire of both my wife and myself that some of this money be put to use in furthering the Kingdom proclamation. So please find the enclosed check offered on behalf of us and our children. May Jehovah bless you as you determine how this money may best be used."

Jehovah is pleased to see such willingness to honor him with our valuable things. He continues with the promise: "Then your stores of supply will be filled with plenty; and with new wine your own press vats will overflow." As in ancient Israel, so today Jehovah abundantly rewards such a generous spirit. The use of one's valuable things in honoring him does not mean depletion of them but their being increased due to Jehovah's blessing on the giver!—Proverbs 3:9, 10.

What a privilege we have to be able to honor Jehovah and stand out as different "among a crooked and twisted generation"! And what a privilege is ours to be able to share in the Kingdom proclamation, the work he has assigned to be done before this wicked system of things ends. (Philippians 2:15; Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) Soon the inspired vision will be fulfilled when "every creature," no matter where, will everlastingly ascribe honor, glory, and might to Jehovah. (Revelation 5:13; 7:12) By all means, let us even now honor Jehovah with our valuable things.

"Just How Is Your Work Financed?"

Many ask this question. They are surprised when Witnesses calling at their door do not solicit funds. Others are likewise amazed when, attending a Witness assembly or visiting a Kingdom Hall for the first time, they find that no collection is ever taken. How, then, is the witness work financed? The answer: through voluntary contributions from those who want to honor Jehovah with their valuable things. Following are some ways this is accomplished.

Gifts: Donations of money may be sent directly to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201, or in other countries to the Society's branch office located there. A brief letter stating that such is a donation should accompany these contributions. Property can also be donated.

Conditional Donation Arrangement: Money, stocks, bonds, and property can be given to the Society with the provision that, in cases of personal need, returns may be made to the donor. This method avoids the expense and uncertainties of probate of will, while ensuring that the Society receives the property in event of death.

Insurance: The Watch Tower Society may be named as the beneficiary of an insurance policy and should be thus informed. Likewise, bank savings accounts can also be placed in trust for the Society.

Wills: Property or money may be bequeathed to the Watch Tower Society by means of a legally executed will. A copy should be sent to the Society.

Further information or advice can be obtained by writing to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Office of the Secretary and Treasurer, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201 or to any local branch office.

New Missionaries Strive for Real Success

SUNDAY, September 8, 1985, was a historic day for the 4,351 who crowded into the beautiful Jersey City Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses to witness the graduation of the 79th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead.

The day was historic in that it witnessed the first use of the Assembly Hall after its official dedication. Then, too, it was the first time since 1970 that virtually the whole United States Bethel family had been together under one roof. This family, including workers at Brooklyn and the Society's farms, has come to number more than 3,500. With the completion of the Jersey City Assembly Hall, there is at last a facility that can hold them all.

The day was especially historic for the 24 young servants of Jehovah from ten different countries who made up the 79th class. They had spent the previous five months in an intensive Bible-study and missionary-preparation course. Now, in the words of Albert Schroeder, chairman for the day, they ceased to be Gilead students and became Gilead graduates.

In the air-conditioned comfort of the Assembly Hall, these 24 new missionaries were given a send-off that they will long remember. The chairman reminded them that at Gilead they had learned many facts. But Gilead had put the emphasis on something that was more important: spirituality. The chairman then introduced a number of speakers to address some final words to the graduates.

Carey Barber, a member of the Governing Body, spoke about the search for happiness. Solomon, he reminded the graduates, found that the pleasures of this world do not bring happiness. (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11, 17) Hence Jesus stressed the need for spiritual things in seeking happiness. (Matthew 5:3) Therefore, the graduates should follow Jesus' counsel. Then, even if their being missionaries involves giving up some fleshly comforts, they can still succeed.

The following speaker, John Booth, also of the Governing Body, reminded the audience that the older missionary Paul encouraged the younger missionary Timothy to keep on making progress in Christian conduct, personal study, and prayer. (1 Timothy 2:1, 8; 4:12-16) The new missionaries would need to make similar progress if they were to be successful. Then, the secretary-treasurer of the Society, Lyman Swingle, mentioned that recently he had asked missionaries in Brazil what counsel they would like to give new missionaries to help them succeed. "Tell them," he was urged, "that when they reach their assignments, they should keep on reading the Bible and doing Bible research."

David Olson, of the Service Department Committee, told the experience of a man who supervised part of the project that succeeded in putting a man on the moon. Later, this same man earned his living sweeping parking lots. He felt more of a success in his second career. Why? Because his new work allowed him time to serve Jehovah and care for his family. Truly, those who find delight in Jehovah, his law, and his service find real success. —Psalm 1:1-3.

Ulysses Glass, Gilead registrar, paid tribute to the graduates' seriousness and respectfulness. He noted the interest they had taken in their studies and their keen desire to come to a full understanding of matters. Such things, he said, would help them in their assignments. Gilead instructor Jack Redford added that the first year in their assignments would be a challenge. Nevertheless, to succeed they should work closely with other missionaries, be patient, and cultivate spiritual joy. —Ecclesiastes 7:8, 9.

The final speaker, Watchtower Society President Frederick Franz opened his talk with the words: "It was worth living for 92 years to be present at an occasion like this!" Then he told the graduates the history of how Gilead got started and urged them to stay faithful in their assignments.

After the talks, the students received their diplomas, and there was a break for refreshments. Then they gave comments on the current *Watchtower* study under the supervision of Dean Songer of the Factory Committee. And they delighted everyone with a presentation of experiences, music, and some skits that conveyed their joy at having been at Gilead and their determination to seek "the more important things." (Philippians 1:10) Finally, the graduates presented the timely drama: *Seek God's Righteousness for Survival.*

And so the historic day drew to a close. It was a day that will long be remembered by the students as they follow the advice they had heard and strive for real success in their missionary assignments.

Teaching Nicodemus

WHILE attending the Passover of 30 C.E., Jesus performs remarkable signs, or miracles. As a result, many people put their faith in him. Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish high court, is impressed and wants to learn more. So he visits Jesus during the darkness of night, probably fearing that his reputation with other Jewish leaders will be damaged if he is seen.

"Rabbi," he says, "we know that you as a teacher have come from God; for no one can perform these signs that you perform unless God is with him." In reply, Jesus tells Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God a person must be "born again."

Yet how can a person be born again? "He cannot enter into the womb of his mother a second time and be born, can he?" Nicodemus asks.

No, that is not what being born again means. "Unless anyone is born from

water and spirit," Jesus explains, "he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." When Jesus was baptized and holy spirit descended upon him, he was thus born "from water and spirit." By the accompanying declaration from heaven, 'This is my Son whom I have approved,' God announced that he had brought forth a spiritual son having the prospect of entering into the heavenly Kingdom. Later, at Pentecost 33 C.E., other baptized ones received holy spirit and were thus also born again as spiritual sons of God.

But the role of God's special human Son is vital. "Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness," Jesus tells Nicodemus, "so the Son of man must be lifted up, that everyone believing in him may have everlasting life." Yes, as those Israelites bitten by poisonous snakes had to look at the copper serpent to be saved, so all humans need to exercise faith in God's Son to be saved from their dying condition.

Stressing Jehovah's loving role in this, Jesus next tells Nicodemus: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." Thus, here in Jerusalem just six months after beginning his ministry, Jesus makes clear that he is Jehovah God's means for saving humankind. **John 2:23–3:21; Matthew 3:16, 17; Acts 2:1-4; Numbers 21:9.**

- What prompted Nicodemus' visit, and why did he come at night?
- What does it mean to be "born again"?
- How did Jesus illustrate his role in our salvation?

'Seek First the Kingdom' —Our Family Goal

By Stan and Jim Woodburn

"THIS message has robbed me of a whole family!" Looking back on close to 50 years now, it is not difficult to understand the chagrin of our church minister. All seven of us Woodburns, brothers and sisters, in quick succession became Jehovah's Witnesses in Whitehaven, England.

It started when John Woodburn, my eldest brother, purchased two books, one of them *The Harp of God,* from Ida Eccles, a full-time minister (pioneer) who is still faithfully preaching in Blackpool. John immediately started to attend the Witnesses' meetings, and in 1936 three of us brothers, John, Tom, and myself, Stan, motored to Glasgow, Scotland, to hear the then president of the Watch Tower Society, J. F. Rutherford, speak on the subject of Armageddon. Although this was our first assembly, we joined the 70 volunteers called for to serve as ushers at Brother Rutherford's public talk.

Into Full-Time Service —And the War!

In 1937 a zealous 26-year-old brother arrived from Brooklyn headquarters to take over supervision of the London branch office. He was Brother A. D. Schroeder, now a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. What a great encouragement he was to us younger ones who wanted to be full-time preachers! Early in 1939 three of us brothers, unattached and free of family responsibilities, accepted the call to pioneer.

The world scene was changing rapidly, and on September 3, 1939, came Britain's declaration of war against Germany. Pressure was on to stem the preaching work, and soon afterward we had to face the issue of Christian neutrality.

When I was called to face the tribunal as a conscientious objector, the jury of seven upheld my objection, and I was permitted to continue my ministry, much to the outspoken annoyance of the presiding judge. Tom also was exempted from military service. However, John, Jim, and Martin, another of my brothers, were not so fortunate. They all received prison terms.

We all had many thrilling experiences during those war years, and they were not without their amusing side. On one occasion a policeman put his head through the sound-car window to tell me that the villagers had reported that I was broadcasting and receiving messages from the Nazi enemy! But he soon saw for himself that the vehicle contained only a phonograph with amplification equipment, not even a radio receiver!

Jim, meanwhile, had moved south to Birmingham, in the industrial Midlands, where he received good training as a pioneer, visiting business houses while working alongside veteran preacher Albert Lloyd. The city suffered from the constant air raids, and the fine central Kingdom Hall was bombed. But the Kingdom preaching increased, and many congregations were formed in outlying districts.

Time after time, the brothers had good

Stan, Jim, and Martin Woodburn all in full-time service in 1950

reason to be thankful for protection as they went about the territory giving spiritual comfort to the people. And what a need there was! I can still vividly recall the very morning that war was declared. I was in a small Welsh village at the time, publicly playing the phonograph record "World's End." Groups of people quickly gathered and asked me for literature. In no time I had distributed 38 books! Little wonder that from 1939 to 1945 the number of Witnesses in the British Isles almost doubled, to reach a peak of 13,150 by the end of the war.

Parting of the Ways

Shortly after the war ended, I left England to attend the eighth class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in New York, in the United States. Jim and Martin, now appointed as circuit overseers, continued their privileges in the British field. At my graduation in 1947, I was assigned to the British Isles as a district overseer, and for five years I travelled throughout the country, overseeing circuit assemblies almost every weekend. Between us, Jim, Martin, and I covered the whole country during those years.

But there was a parting of the ways for us in 1950 when Jim was called to the 15th class of Gilead. He graduated at the international Theocracy's Increase Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses on July 30, 1950, with an assignment to serve in Ecuador, South America. He will now tell his part of the story.

Ecuador and the Missionary Field

Missionary life in Ecuador was a challenge. In spite of the difficult climate and different customs, we saw the influx of many new brothers and sisters. But it was not easy. For example, we had no funds to organize the first circuit assembly in Guayaquil. So we missionaries went out in the preaching work and pooled all the contributions we received for the literature placed. That gave us sufficient funds to cover the expenses for that assembly.

In 1959 I had a very happy change of assignment to La Libertad, where another missionary, Frances Kerr, already lived. She had picked up the pioneer spirit from her mother, who had pioneered from the year 1919. Frances and I had known each other for a while, and in 1959 we got married.

There were no Witnesses in La Libertad when the first missionaries arrived there, but in that section there are now three thriving congregations. Things moved quickly, and we had many different assignments, such as in Quito, Ambato, and Manta. During that period, we had the privilege of helping 147 new ones to serve

Jim and Frances Woodburn served as missionaries in Ecuador

Jehovah, and we were instrumental in strengthening many more.

Sickness and Back to England

After our 20 years of service there, Ecuador had truly become our home, but in 1971 we sadly returned to England since Frances needed specialized medical treatment. Nevertheless, I was determined to carry on in the full-time service and not to go back into secular work. Happily for us, there were many Spanish-speaking people in the Paddington area of London, and eventually we were able to form the first Spanish-speaking congregation in England.

London is always a challenge for Witnesses who desire to preach in the stores, offices, and hotels, where people of all nationalities are met. This was our assignment for six years. We covered a vast area of London, taking in Camden, Chelsea, Kensington, Mill Hill, Paddington, and Stepney. During that period we placed over 7,000 Bibles and Bible study aids. In one hotel the chef assembled the whole kitchen staff in the main dining room, and we were able to give a 15-minute talk. They were Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese, and many had never seen a Bible. The response was truly wonderful.

One day, while visiting offices in London's business centre, I came to a well-known bank and, looking inside, I saw a tall man, well groomed and imposing in appearance. Negatively, I thought he would turn the message down; but I said a short prayer and approached him. Without a word, he walked over to his desk, pulled out a green Bible and a *Watchtower* and said, "I also am one of Jehovah's Witnesses." It was a lesson for me to remember—do not prejudge people.

Witnessing at Schools

We always had the desire to return to Ecuador, and when Frances was fully restored in health, we were able to do so in 1977. What a joy that was for us! Our first assignment was Santo Domingo de Los Colorados. While there, we started to explore another avenue of activity. One morning while preaching from house to house, we found that most people were not at home. But there were three schools in the territory where there was plenty of activity—why not visit them? We prayed about the matter and then went to the teachers with the two publications *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It* and *Did Man Get Here by Evolution or by Creation?* The results were marvellous!

We found that teachers and students alike were very keen to study these two books. One schoolmaster, a Catholic priest, asked for a hundred copies of each to make sure that every student of three classes had a personal copy. In another high school, the director had studied both books

Stan Woodburn serves in full-time circuit work in England, accompanied by his wife, Joyce

and was anxious that the students also should read them. There were over 3,000 students, so we had to go three times to reach all of them in their classrooms. We left over a thousand books there!

At another Catholic school, the principal, a priest from Spain, had read the *Evolution* book with appreciation, so he gave us permission to visit each classroom and give a brief talk. We placed every publication we had with the students, and we had to return. Then we learned that they had been asked to do research in the *Youth* book on the chapter dealing with drugs. Apparently drugs were a growing problem in that school. We placed over 400 books on that occasion.

Our next assignment was the city of Ambato, surrounded by snowcapped mountains. Here again, with good results we were able to visit a Catholic training college, as well as several more schools in the district. In one, we visited every classroom and left 438 *Youth* books. Some of the teachers were so enthusiastic about the book that they did most of the talking for us and read out all the chapter themes to the students. They told the students that they should really get a copy, instead of buying worthless books.

On looking back, we have had the joy of talking to thousands of students and hundreds of teachers, leaving with them over 11,000 Bible study aids. Some of these people lived way back in inaccessible jungle areas where no car can reach. Yes, there is still a great work to be done in Ecuador.

Time has flashed by, and now, following a bout of ill health, we are back in London. For more than four decades Jehovah has backed us up with his holy spirit. What an expression of his undeserved kindness that we have been able to use our lives in his service, from our youth on! (Ecclesiastes 12:1) But now, let Stan tell you the rest of the story.

Preaching in Ireland

In 1949 there was much opposition to the witness work in Ireland, which was then under the care of the Watch Tower Society's London office. As a result of our open-air Bible talks, the presiding minister of the Northern Ireland Baptist Church challenged Jehovah's Witnesses to a debate on "The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ." The Society asked me as district overseer to take on this assignment. It was to be held in Portadown, where a small congregation was active.

The night of the debate saw the Town Hall packed to the doors. It appeared that the Baptists had hired it some hours previously for a prayer meeting. With a thousand people present from all over the area and some 70 clergy, Jehovah's Witnesses

were outnumbered. The Baptist pastor only engaged in sentimental religious emotion, trying to whip the crowd into opposition. After two hours of debate, he refused to explain 1 Peter 3:18 and other texts that prove that Jesus was raised a spirit.

Finally, when I reminded them of Gamaliel's advice at Acts 5:34-39, that they might be fighting against God, the pastor lost his temper and cried out, "Shut your doors on them! It's not wrong to shut your doors on the Devil!" However, several in the audience could see who had the truth. Some of his flock resigned, and that weekend the small Portadown Congregation went out to the people and placed more literature than in all the previous six months! Now there is a large congregation there with a fine Kingdom Hall and many congregations in other nearby towns.

Maintaining the Pioneer Spirit

In 1952 I married Joyce Cattell, a member of the London Bethel family, and in 1957 we had the joyful surprise of a daughter, Jane. This event brought a change in our pattern of life. Reluctantly, I went out to find secular work. But in spite of this we still kept the Kingdom first in our lives and experienced the proof of David's expression in a favourite psalm: "I have placed Jehovah in front of me constantly. Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be made to totter."—Psalm 16:8.

During the ensuing years, we moved to several areas, serving where the need was greater and sharing in auxiliary pioneer service from time to time. Brothers kindly helped with jobs, but I resisted the temptation to make the pursuit of material riches my principal goal in life. Necessary work for providing needed accommodations was available as I searched for them. I am so happy that I retained this pioneer spirit.

To South Africa, Ireland, and Back to Britain

Having served in many locations throughout the British Isles, including the remote Outer Hebrides, we moved to South Africa in the late '60's. There we worked among the coloured population and were happy to share in the increase of a small group of 5 Witnesses, which grew to 61. (1 Corinthians 3:6-9) For health reasons we returned to Northern Ireland in 1974, where we served along the border area amid terrorist activity.

During a trip over the border in 1975 while delivering some goods in my part-time work, I was stopped on the road by three hooded terrorists who ordered me to get out of my car. Questioned as to who I was and what I was doing, I quickly stated, "I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses." After making certain that I was not a spy for the English cause, they released me, and I went on my way, grateful for Jehovah's protection.—Proverbs 18:10.

In 1977 we returned to England. Then, what a joyous privilege we received. At the age of 62 I was invited back into circuit work! By this time our 20-year-old daughter, Jane, was a regular pioneer and well able to look after herself. So we sold the few possessions we had, and after two years in the circuit ministry, I again had the responsibility of serving in the district work, overseeing the assemblies at the Manchester Assembly Hall in the north of England. Truly, Psalm 16 was again being experienced, as verse 6 so beautifully reads: "The measuring lines themselves have fallen for me in pleasant places. Really, my own possession has proved agreeable to me."

Now we are happily serving in circuit work in areas I served years ago. But, oh, the difference! Yes, we meet the faithful older brothers we knew then, but expansion of the Kingdom work has brought

hundreds more along and many more congregations.

Although three of the original seven of the Woodburn family have now died, the rest of us—Beth, 80 years old, and Tom, now 78, along with Jim and me—continue to serve Jehovah. My brother Martin finished his course faithfully in 1973 after 34 years preaching full time, and Marie, his widow, is still active in Glasgow, Scotland. What a privileged family we have been! Counting all the children and grandchildren, 35 of us dedicated our lives to Jehovah. The love and kindness of many dear brothers, along with the protective love and blessings of Jehovah himself, have proved to all of us that "seeking first the kingdom" is the truly safe and wise course for our day.—Matthew 6:33.

Questions From Readers

■ Was the apostle Paul part of the Christian governing body?

It is reasonable to conclude that Paul was a part of the Christian governing body in the first century.

The Bible provides only limited detail about the composition of the early governing body, most of the information being in Acts chapter 15. That account indicates that in 49 C.E. the group of men forming the governing body consisted of "the apostles and older men in Jerusalem." Who were these?—Acts 15:2, 4, 6.

James, the half brother of Jesus, presided at that meeting to discuss the question of whether Gentile converts to Christianity had to keep the Mosaic Law, including circumcision. The apostle Peter shared in that discussion. The account speaks of Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas as "leading men among the brothers," but it does not specifically say that they were part of the governing body. (Acts 15: 7, 13, 22) The point is that the Bible does not give a complete list of names of those making up the governing body. Some have felt that Paul might not have been included since he was a traveling missionary and since he brought the question from the congregation in Antioch of Syria.

It is true that Paul was not one of "the twelve" who had walked with Jesus, for Matthias had been selected to replace Judas Iscariot.* But neither was the disciple James, though he clearly was part of the governing body. (Acts 6:2; 1:15-26) Furthermore, Jesus appeared to Paul and designated him as 'a chosen vessel to bear His name to the nations.' Paul thus became "an apostle, neither from men nor through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God." He called himself "an apostle to the nations."—Acts 9: 3-6, 15; Galatians 1:1; Romans 11:13; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15: 7, 8.

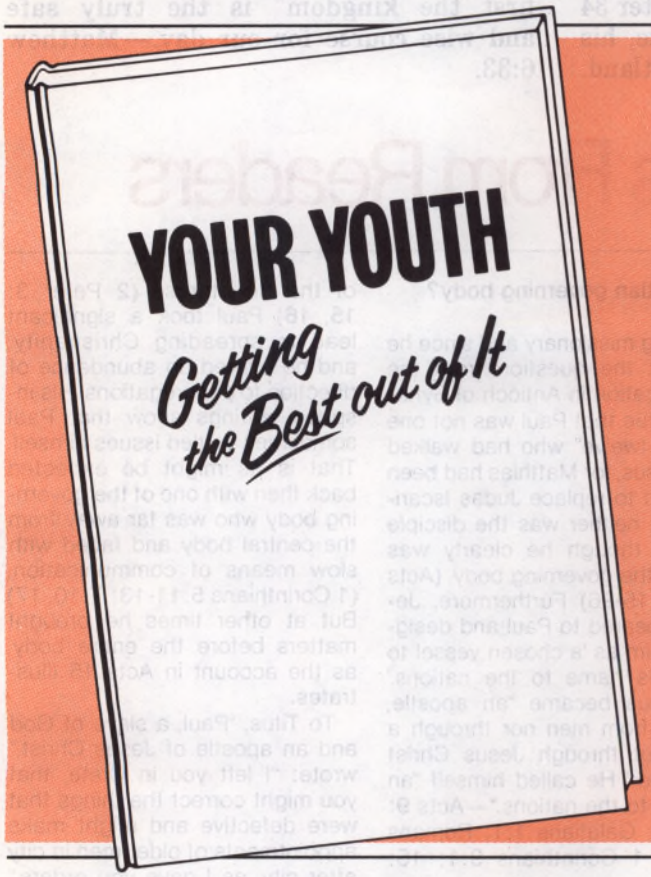
As further indication that Paul became part of the body of "apostles and older men" who directed the congregations, consider what he did under God's power. Paul wrote 14 books of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Peter equates the writings of "our beloved brother Paul" with "the rest of the Scriptures." (2 Peter 3: 15, 16) Paul took a significant lead in spreading Christianity, and he offered an abundance of direction to congregations. His inspired writings show that Paul sometimes settled issues himself. That is as might be expected back then with one of the governing body who was far away from the central body and faced with slow means of communication. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 7:10, 17) But at other times he brought matters before the entire body, as the account in Acts 15 illustrates.

To Titus, "Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ," wrote: "I left you in Crete, that you might correct the things that were defective and might make appointments of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders." (Titus 1:1, 5) So while traveling, Paul certainly spoke for the central governing body.—Acts 16: 4, 5.

So, even though his assignment from the Lord involved extensive travels and consequent absences from some meetings of the central governing body, the evidence of how he was used by God and Christ indicates that Paul was part of that body.

* By this time also the apostle James had been killed.—Acts 12:2.

'I Wish I Had Had It 70 Years Ago'



That is what an elderly woman said regarding the book *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It.* She wrote: "Some time ago I ordered and received from you a copy of *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It.* What a wonderful book! I wish I could have had something like it seventy years ago when I was a girl growing up! It is being used here, but now I am enclosing a check to you for four copies to be sent to my grandchildren who live far from me."