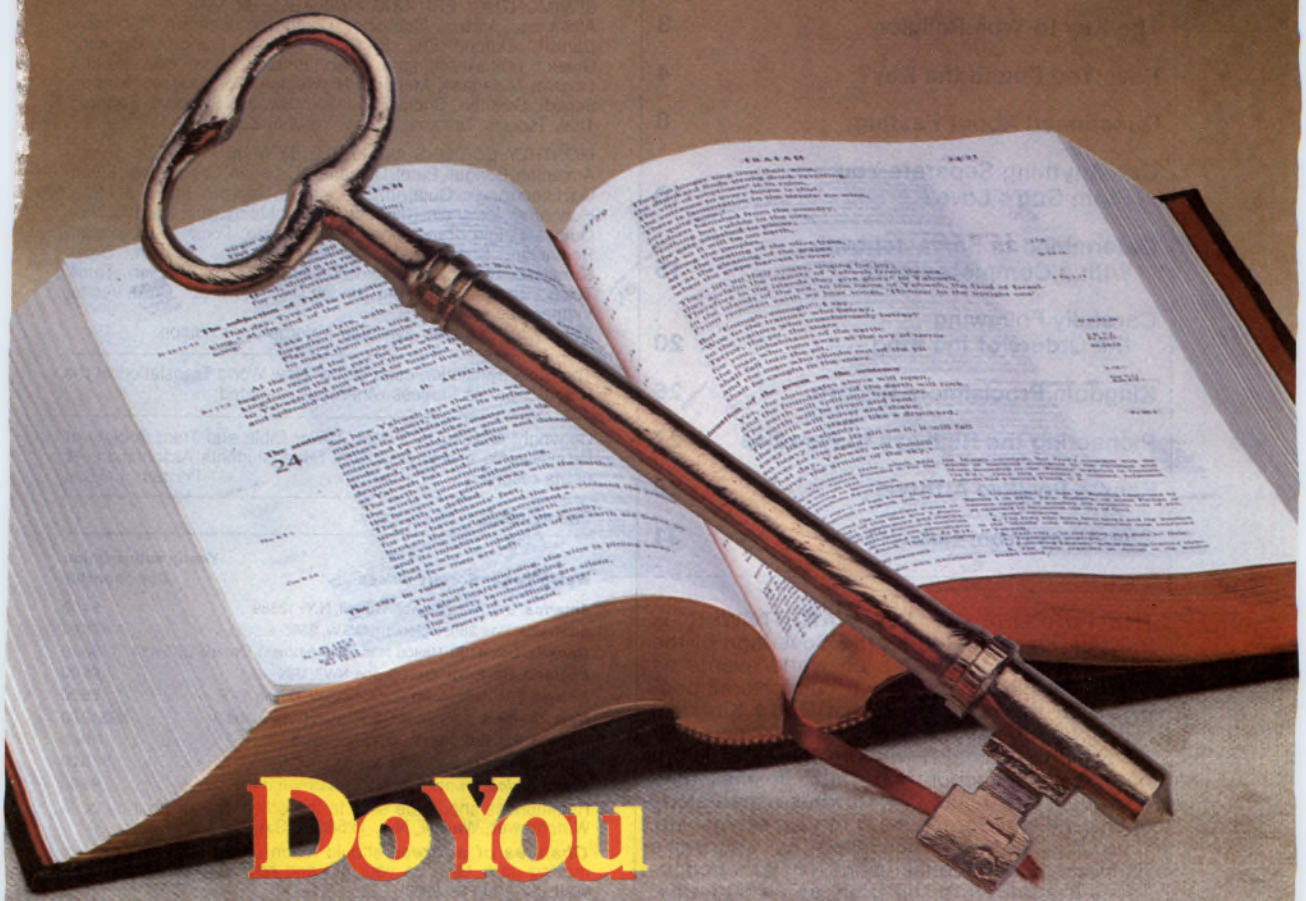
June 1, 1986

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



Do You Have the Key to True Religion?

June 1, 1986
Vol. 107, No. 11

The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

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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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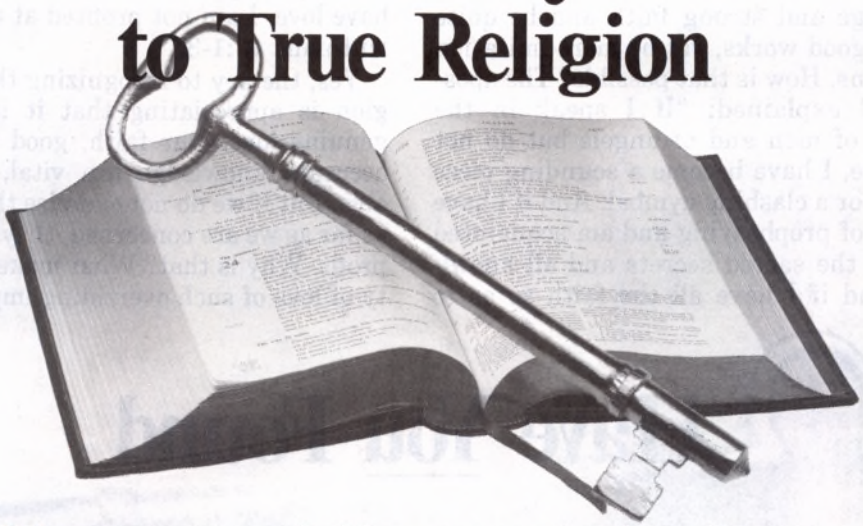
The Key to True Religion



IN THIS 20th century, more people claim to belong to the Christian religion than to any other. Yet this century has been the most troubled in human history. Why the paradox?

For one thing, many do not take their religion seriously. To them, Christianity is just a casual thing, not a dominant force in their lives. Moreover, those who *do* take their religion seriously subscribe to many contradictory beliefs and even to differing moral standards. And they are divided by national, racial, and economic differences. In addition, they have victimized one another, even persecuting, waging war with, and killing one another. Thus, the two greatest wars in history were basically *fought* between "Christian" nations.

What conclusion can we draw from this? That either Christianity is not the true religion or there is a big difference between merely claiming to be a Christian and actually being one. According to Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity, the second conclusion is the correct one. On one occasion, he spoke about some who would address him as "Lord, Lord." In other words, they would claim to be Christians, accepting Jesus as their Lord. And they would be very busy doing seemingly important works in his name. Yet Jesus would say to them: "I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness."—Matthew 7:22, 23.

Surely, none of us want to be in that situation! So how can we determine whether we are real Christians or not? Is there a key to the true religion?

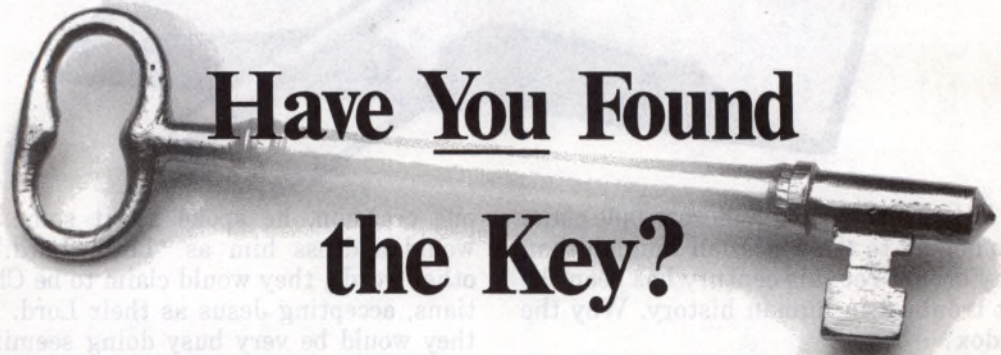
The Key

Yes, there is. Of course, Christianity involves many things. For example, the real Christian has to have a strong faith in God, for "without faith it is impossible to please [God] well." (Hebrews 11:6) He also has to be engaged in right works. The disciple James warned that "faith without works is dead." (James 2:26) Moreover, the apostle Paul stressed the importance of having "accurate knowledge of [God's] will

in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension." (Colossians 1:9) But none of these things provide the key to Christianity.

The fact is, we may have a good Bible knowledge and strong faith and be quite busy in good works, yet be mere imitation Christians. How is that possible? The apostle Paul explained: "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become a sounding piece of brass or a clashing cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophesying and am acquainted with all the sacred secrets and all knowledge, and if I have all the faith so as to transplant mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my belongings to feed others, and if I hand over my body, that I may boast, but do not have love, I am not profited at all."—1 Corinthians 13:1-3.

Yes, the key to recognizing the true religion is appreciating that it is based on genuine love. Our faith, good works, and accurate knowledge are vital, indispensable. But if we do not exercise them in love, as far as we are concerned, they are of little profit. Why is that? What makes the quality of love of such overriding importance?



Have You Found the Key?

WHY is love so important for Christians? Because of the kind of God they worship. The apostle John described him in these words: "God is love." (1 John 4:8) Just as many parents hope that their children will follow in their footsteps, so Jehovah God wants Christians to try to be like him. Thus, the apostle Paul urged: "Become imitators of God, as beloved children, and go on walking in love."—Ephesians 5:1, 2.

Love also balances the other Christian qualities. In the days of Jesus, the Jews —particularly their leaders—were diligent students of the Bible. But consider what Jesus said to them: "You are searching the Scriptures, because you think that by means of them you will have everlasting life; . . . but I well know that you do not have the love of God in you." (John 5: 39, 42; Luke 11:42) If they had had love as well as knowledge, they would have recognized Jesus as the Messiah. As it was, most of them lost out on the opportunity to be among the first members of the Christian congregation.

Remember, too, the Roman Catholic conquistadores who carried their religion to the New World. They must have had a strong faith and a fierce zeal to accomplish what they did. But it was certainly not tempered by love. Otherwise, they would never have robbed, tortured, raped, and killed the native inhabitants of the American continents.

Thus, love is the key Christian quality. Who should be the object of this love? Jesus tells us: "'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole

mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.'"—Matthew 22:37-39.

In fact, a Christian's love goes even further. Jesus also said: "Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you; that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the heavens, since he makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous." (Matthew 5:44, 45) In other words, a Christian's love embraces almost everyone! But what does this mean in practice?

If We Really Love God

For one thing, if we really want to love God, we will need to get to know him better. God himself has made that possible by providing the Bible, which is, in effect, a letter from him to us. When we receive a letter from a loved one, most of us read it immediately no matter how busy we are. Should it be any different with reading the Bible? Of course not. True, for many, life today is full of distractions, and most seem to prefer watching television to serious reading. But real Christians do not let that stop them from reading God's Word. Thus, they are like the psalmist who wrote: "My soul has kept your reminders [which today are found in the Bible], and I love them exceedingly."—Psalm 119: 167.

In the Bible, God tells us how he wants us to act. Just as parents set standards of conduct for their children, Jehovah has set standards that he expects us to maintain —standards that are *not* negotiable. For example, the Bible tells us: "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom." (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10) That is quite a list! But anyone who really loves God will be happy to take notice of it. Why? Because as the apostle John pointed out: "This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments."—1 John 5:3.

Unfortunately, many of the practices condemned in the Bible are becoming acceptable today, even among "Christian" people. A report issued in Canada by a Protestant denomination recommended considering the acceptance of homosexuals for ordination as ministers, asserted that sex without marriage may be acceptable under certain circumstances, and suggested that marital fidelity need not exclude adultery. No doubt the authors of that report wanted to appear broad-minded and caring. But were they showing love, either toward God or toward those they were encouraging in such immoral ways? Hardly, since Paul said that practicers of such things would not inherit God's Kingdom. How much more loving it is to hold fearlessly to God's standards, helping weak ones to do the same, rather than sentimentally encouraging them to follow an easier course that will eventually lead to disaster!

Moved to Share With Others

When we read the Bible, we also learn of the wonderful things God has purposed for mankind. We learn that "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) We also learn of God's purpose to rid the earth of wickedness and bring in a peaceful, paradisaic system of things by means of his Kingdom under this same Jesus. (Matthew 6:9, 10; Revelation 21: 3, 4) As the Bible promises: "Just a little

while longer, and the wicked one will be no more . . . But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Psalm 37:10, 11.

In fact, the Bible's message is exactly what the human race needs. That is why it is sad to read of Christendom's missionaries who are so distracted by the poverty and injustice that they see in poorer lands that they get involved in politics and even in revolution. Revolution will not solve the problems of those countries. Do such missionaries really love God? If so, would they not show faith in his promises and point their flocks toward his Kingdom? Shepherds who really love their flocks would surely show them how obedience to God's law can help even now, rather than getting them involved in political schemes that can only end in frustration.

The truth is, the Bible's message is so wonderful that no loving person could possibly keep it to himself. That is why love moves real Christians to share what they know with others. In Christendom the work of talking to others about the Bible is usually left to a small, paid, professional class—the clergy. This has had bad results. As a Lutheran pastor admitted in the magazine *Christianity Today:* "The Church is weak today because spiritual leaders have failed to train a body of believers to do the same kind of work they do. Or because believers have failed to recognize and accept such a ministry."

Real Christians do "recognize and accept such a ministry." They take seriously these words of the apostle Paul: "Let us hold fast the public declaration of our hope without wavering, for he is faithful that promised." (Hebrews 10:23) Their motive? The same as that which impelled a group of Christians in the first century who were warmly commended by the apostle Paul: "The latter are publicizing the Christ out of love."—Philippians 1:16.

Love for Fellow Christians

Yes, love is the key to real Christianity in that it affects every aspect of the lives of real Christians. They thus become quite different from the people around them. Why? The apostle John said about this world: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) The wicked one is Satan the Devil, and the world reflects his values in much of its activity. Satan's influence is seen in the rampant dishonesty, immorality, injustice, racial tension, and economic unfairness that exist today. A Christian, worshiping a loving God and imitating him by cultivating the quality of love, has to be different!

Now, this is not easy to do alone. Hence, the Bible also encourages us to seek out those who have a similar appreciation for the quality of love. Thus, Christians can help one another. That is why the apostle Paul wrote these encouraging words: "Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, . . . encouraging one another."—Hebrews 10:23-25.

If you would like to respond to that encouragement, Jehovah's Witnesses would be delighted to introduce you to a group of people who are trying hard to manifest godly love in their lives. There is undoubtedly such a group in your community, and God's spirit is upon them because, in the final analysis, that is the source of true, Christian love. "The fruitage of the spirit is love." (Galatians 5:22) Associating with them will help you to give heed to the apostle Peter's encouragement: "Have love for the whole association of brothers."—1 Peter 2:17.

Cultivate Love

How tragic it would be to find oneself among those who, after trying hard to serve God, hear the fateful words of Jesus: "I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness." (Matthew 7:23) If we cultivate love, the key to real Christianity, that will not happen to us. Love will motivate us to read the Bible, live according to its standards, seek out other Christians to associate with, and speak to others about the good things the Bible contains. Yes, love will move us to do what God wants us to do. And, as Jesus said, it is "the one doing the will of [his] Father who is in the heavens" who will inherit God's promises. The apostle John added: "He that does the will of God remains forever."—Matthew 7:21; 1 John 2:17.

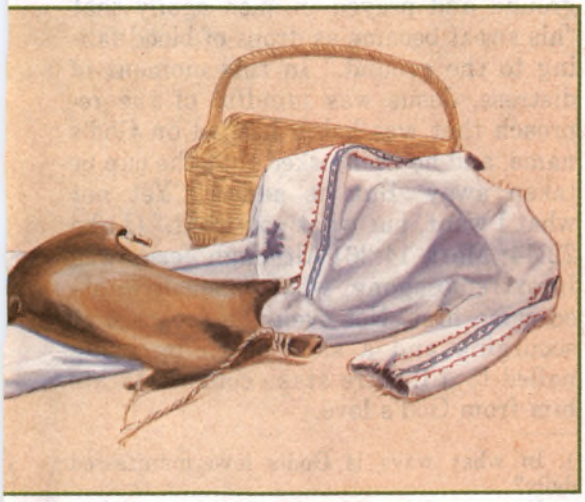
Yes, cultivate love. Let it motivate you to do God's will. Thus, you will prove yourself a real Christian, since Jesus said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) And you will enjoy the eternal rewards that God has promised for those who love him.

Questioned About Fasting

ALMOST a year has gone by since Jesus attended the Passover of 30 C.E. By now, John the Baptist has been imprisoned for several months. Although he wanted his disciples to become followers of Christ, not all of them have.

Now some of these disciples of the imprisoned John come to Jesus and ask: "Why is it that we and the Pharisees practice fasting but your disciples do not fast?" The Pharisees practice fasting twice a week as a ritual of their religion. And John's disciples perhaps follow a similar custom. It may also be that they are fasting to mourn John's imprisonment and wonder why Jesus' disciples do not join them in this expression of grief.

In answer Jesus explains: "The friends of the bridegroom have no reason to mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, do they? But days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast."



John's disciples should recall that John himself spoke of Jesus as the Bridegroom. So, while Jesus is present, John would not consider it appropriate to fast, and neither do Jesus' disciples. Later, when Jesus dies, his disciples do mourn and fast. But when he is resurrected and ascends to heaven, they have no further cause for mournful fasting.

Next, Jesus tells these illustrations: "Nobody sews a patch of unshrunk cloth upon an old outer garment; for its full strength would pull from the outer garment and the tear would become worse. Neither do people put new wine into old wineskins; but if they do, then the wineskins burst and the wine spills out and the wineskins are ruined. But people put new wine into new wineskins." What do these illustrations have to do with fasting?

Jesus was helping John's disciples to appreciate that no one should expect his followers to conform to the old practices of Judaism, such as ritual fasting. He did not come to patch up and prolong old worn-out systems of worship that were ready for discarding. Christianity would not be made to conform to the Judaism of the day with its traditions of men. No, it would not be as a new patch on an old garment or as new wine in an old wineskin. **Matthew 9:14-17; Mark 2:18-22; Luke 5:33-39; John 3:27-29.**

- Who practiced fasting, and for what purpose?
- Why did Jesus' disciples not fast while he was with them, and afterward how did cause for fasting soon disappear?
- What illustrations did Jesus tell, and what do they mean?

Can Anything Separate You From God's Love?

"For I am 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 8:38, 39.

GOD is love. In life-sustaining ways this is expressed to us daily. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat—all come as manifestations of God's love. Moreover, they come to good and bad alike, whether appreciated or not. Jesus testified to this when he said of his heavenly Father: "He makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous." (Matthew 5:45) Every living creature on earth owes thanks to God for its sustenance.—Psalm 145:15, 16.

[2] For human creatures God's love went far beyond just sustaining this present life that fades like the flower and withers like the grass. (1 Peter 1:24) He made provision for mankind to live forever: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) This provision was made at great cost to both Father and Son. In Gethsemane on the night before his death, Jesus fell upon the ground and prayed in such agony that "his sweat became as drops of blood falling to the ground." In this moment of distress, Jesus was mindful of the reproach that was being heaped on God's name, and he even asked that the cup be taken away. But he added: "Yet not what I want, but what you want." (Luke 22:44; Mark 14:36) Although Jesus was in extreme agony, what Jehovah wanted came first. Not even the prospect of scourging and a slow death by being nailed to a torture stake could separate him from God's love.

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1. In what ways is God's love manifested daily?
2. How was Jehovah's great love for mankind shown, and how did Jesus show appreciation for what Jehovah wanted?

[3] What Jehovah wants also comes first with Jehovah's Witnesses who today are walking in Jesus' footsteps. "If God is for us," they say, taking up the words of the apostle Paul, "who will be against us? Who will separate us from the love of the Christ? Will tribulation or distress or persecution or hunger or nakedness or danger or sword? To the contrary, in all these things we are coming off completely victorious through him that loved us." (Romans 8:31, 35, 37) During this century Jehovah's Witnesses have been mobbed, beaten, tarred and feathered, mutilated bodily, raped, starved, murdered by firing squads, and even beheaded in Nazi concentration camps—all because of their refusal to separate themselves from God's love.

[4] Forty-four years ago, a young man, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, wrote his parents from a Nazi concentration camp, saying, in part:

"It is now 9 o'clock of the day of my trial, but I must wait till 11:30. I am writing these lines in a solitary cell of the state military court. I have such peace, which is really hardly believable; but I have also committed all to the Lord, and so I can calmly wait for this hour and to the constant fetters. They told you that I shall not be chained. Lies! Day and night: only to dress and undress and for cell cleaning is one unchained . . .

"12:35. It is all over now. In view of the fact that I maintained my objection [to their demand that he give up his worship of Jehovah God], the death sentence was decreed. I listened, and then after I had spoken the words 'Be thou faithful unto death' and a few other words of our Lord, it was all over. But never mind that now. I have such peace, such tranquillity, that you can't possibly imagine. . . . This peace, this joy which came over me already in the courtroom, which the world can never understand, suffused and overwhelmed me as I re-entered my cell . . . Do not weep. . . . This is the best that I can give you, and all beloved brethren today, the last Sunday before my execution (beheading), on which day I am unfettered."*

3. What words of Paul do Jehovah's Witnesses today take up as their own, and with what consequences to themselves?

4. How are you impressed by one young man's refusal to separate himself from God's love?

"He Will Make You Firm, He Will Make You Strong"

[5] This young man was separated from life but not from God's love. Similar atrocities have been inflicted on Jehovah's Witnesses down through the centuries. The ability of God's servants to endure such persecutions, even unto death, is not in their own strength but in God's. "God is faithful," we are assured by Paul, "and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it." (1 Corinthians 10:13) When under test, Jehovah's faithful witnesses today have been able to say as did Paul when he was imprisoned: "The Lord stood near me and infused power into me."—2 Timothy 4:17.

[6] The apostle Peter, after warning us to be on guard against the Devil, who prowls about like a roaring lion seeking to devour us, gives assurance: "After you have suffered a little while, the God of all undeserved kindness, who called you to his everlasting glory in union with Christ, will himself finish your training, he will make you firm, he will make you strong." (1 Peter 5:8-10) Considering all this divine support, one thing is apparent: God's love is unfailing; any separation from it will be our fault, not his.

* *The Watchtower,* August 1, 1945, pages 237, 238.

5, 6. What assurances given by Paul and Peter are comforting to those who are sorely tried because of holding fast to God's love?

[7] Satan does not always attack like a roaring lion. Many times he comes on as a 'subtle serpent' and even as an apostate "angel of light." He has evil designs on us, and we must be alert so as not to be overreached by him. We must put on the complete suit of armor from God "to stand firm against the crafty acts of the Devil." (Genesis 3:1, *The Jerusalem Bible;* 2 Corinthians 2:11; 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:11, *Ref. Bi.,* footnote) At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Satan came to him quoting scriptures, misapplying them in an effort to tempt Jesus into wrongdoing. Three times he tempted Jesus and three times he failed. Jesus turned aside Satan's twisting of Scripture with properly applied texts. Then Jesus told Satan to go away. But Satan only "retired from him until another convenient time."—Luke 4:13; Matthew 4:3-11.

[8] Satan is persistent. He keeps coming back in different guises. He returned to Jesus by means of the religious clergy of that time. Jesus understood this and frankly told them: "You are from your father the Devil." Some people may even serve Satan's ends unintentionally. The apostle Peter did this when he, though well-meaning, rebuked Jesus, saying: "Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this destiny at all." Jesus had to admonish Peter sternly: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me." (John 8:44; Matthew 16:22, 23) Similarly, Satan's purposes may be inadvertently served by an employer, a workmate, a schoolmate, a friend, a relative, a parent, or a marriage mate. We must constantly be on guard and allow nothing to weaken our relationship with Jehovah.

7. What tactics did Satan use with Jesus, and how did Jesus defeat him?

8, 9. In what deceptive ways did Satan return to attack Jesus, and what did Paul direct us to do for our protection?

[9] So it is essential to "put on the complete suit of armor from God that you may be able to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil; because we have a wrestling, not against blood and flesh, but against . . . the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places."—Ephesians 6:11, 12.

Sin's Grip on the Fallen Flesh

[10] Satan strikes where we are weak. He accordingly makes our fleshly inclination to sin a favorite target. (Psalm 51:5) The Greek word translated sin is *ha·mar·ti'a.* The verb is *ha·mar·ta'no,* which basically means "to miss the mark." (Romans 3:9, *Ref. Bi.,* footnote) The more we miss the mark and fail to keep God's commandments, the more we draw away from God's love, for "this is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments." (1 John 5:3) Adultery, fornication, sexual perversions, drunken bouts, wild parties, free rein of fleshly passions, jealousies, fits of anger, materialistic covetings—all such things separate us from God's love, and "those who practice [them] will not inherit God's kingdom."—Galatians 5:19-21.

[11] Movies, books, plays, TV programs —peppered with materialistic, me-first, sexually oriented commercials—promote the pursuit of unrestrained and uninhibited pleasure. The first sin makes the second easier, the third and fourth follow, and soon the plunge into worldliness is at full speed. Ultimately, those who are "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God" become preoccupied with "planning ahead for the desires of the flesh." (2 Timothy 3:4; Romans 13:14) Both old and young are swept into the maw of sin, and their consciences become totally seared. "Hav-

10. What does the word "sin" mean, and what practices will separate us from God's love?

11. How can sin progressively take hold of us, with what result eventually?

ing come to be past all moral sense, they gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness."—Ephesians 4:19; 1 Timothy 4:2.

12 Those determined not to be separated from God's love must fortify themselves against sin's grip on the fallen flesh. It is a formidable foe, as the Bible repeatedly stresses: "Every doer of sin is a slave of sin," "all [are] under sin," "all have sinned," "do not let sin continue to rule as king in your mortal bodies," "you are slaves of him because you obey him," "the wages sin pays is death," and all are in "the custody of sin." (John 8:34; Romans 3:9, 23; 6:12, 16, 23; Galatians 3:22) Paul was "sold under sin," a "captive to sin's law," causing him to lament: "The good that I wish I do not do, but the bad that I do not wish is what I practice." (Romans 7:14, 19, 23) So he cries out: "Miserable man that I am! Who will rescue me from the body undergoing this death?" Then comes the joyous answer: "Thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"—Romans 7:24, 25.

13 Until Christ Jesus came, "sin ruled as king with death." (Romans 5:14, 17, 21) But with Jesus' death and resurrection, king sin was dethroned for those who respond to God's loving gift of His Son. He saved us from our sins, washed them away, cleansed us from them, loosed us from them, and completely blotted them out for us. (Matthew 1:21; Acts 3:19; 22:16; 2 Peter 1:9; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5) Thus not only the apostle Paul but all those putting faith in the shed blood of Christ Jesus should give thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord for opening the way for release from the miserable fleshly bondage to sin and death.

14 So it is imperative not only to avoid any separation from God's love but also to remain in the love of Christ. The formula for remaining close to Jesus is the same as it is for drawing close to God. Jesus pointed this out, saying: "Just as the Father has loved me and I have loved you, remain in my love. If you observe my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love."—John 15:9, 10.

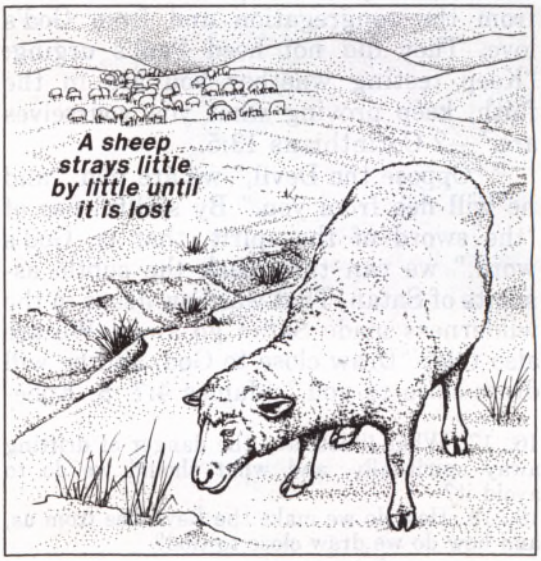
12. What scriptures show sin's power over us, and how did Paul lament this?

13, 14. (a) By what means are we freed from sin? (b) How can we remain in the love of Christ?

The Danger of Drifting Away

15 Do not lose this liberation from bondage to sin and death by slipping back or drifting away. It can happen so gradually that we may be taken unawares. As Galatians 6:1 says: "Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, you who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust such a man in a

15. To what are we vulnerable, and what must we do to avoid the danger?



spirit of mildness, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear you also may be tempted." Even as one counsels another, he must 'keep an eye on himself.' We are all so vulnerable! "It is necessary for us to pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us, that we may never drift away."—Hebrews 2:1.

16 Drifting is effortless. That is why it is so easy—and so dangerous, spiritually speaking. You can find yourself separating from God's love before you realize it. It is like the sheep that strays. How does it get lost? A shepherd explains: 'It nibbles itself lost. It sees a tuft of green grass a few feet off to one side, goes over to nibble on it. It spots another patch ten feet away and goes to nibble there. A third patch looks inviting, and the sheep goes to nibble on it. Soon it is far from the flock. It has nibbled itself lost.'

17 So it is with those who drift spiritually. It may start innocently enough with a few material things, or worldly associations, or speculations on certain scriptures. But little by little, such ones move farther and farther from the flock of God, and soon they have separated themselves from the congregation and from God's love. They did not heed Paul's urging: "Keep testing whether you are in the faith, keep proving what you yourselves are."—2 Corinthians 13:5.

18 "Oppose the Devil," we are told, "and he will flee from you." By skillful use of "the sword of the spirit, that is, God's word," we can turn back the subtle assaults of Satan. That was how Jesus in the wilderness made Satan go away. We are also told: "Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you." (James 4:7, 8; Ephesians 6:17) Like the writers of the Psalms, we should keep close to God by clinging to his word: "The reminder of Jehovah is trustworthy, making the inexperienced one wise." "To your reminders I keep showing myself attentive. Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway. . . . From your reminders I have not deviated."—Psalm 19:7; 119:95, 105, 157.

19 By prayer, by studying God's Word, by loving our brothers and meeting with them regularly, by telling others about God's Kingdom—in all these ways we draw close to God and his love as manifested in Christ Jesus our Lord.—1 Thessalonians 5:17; Romans 12:2; Hebrews 10:24, 25; Luke 9:2.

20 In a sweeping and powerful declaration, Paul voiced the determination of all of Jehovah's faithful witnesses on earth today, saying: "I am 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 [made visible, *JB*] in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Romans 8:38, 39.

16, 17. What illustrates the danger of drifting away spiritually, and what should we do to avoid it?

18, 19. How do we make the Devil flee from us, and how do we draw close to God?

20. What determination did Paul declare that Jehovah's Witnesses today make their own?

Do You Recall?

- How is Jehovah's love shown in his provisions for life?
- To separate Jehovah's Witnesses from God's love, what methods has Satan tried?
- What scriptures show sin's grip on us, and how may this grip be broken?
- Why is drifting away so dangerous, and how can it be countered?

Determined to Serve Jehovah With a Complete Heart

"Serve him with a complete heart and with a delightful soul; for all hearts Jehovah is searching, and every inclination of the thoughts he is discerning."
—1 CHRONICLES 28:9.

THE scripture quoted above raises some questions about the heart. If it is referring to the physical heart, how could a person live with anything less than a complete heart? Could anyone live, for example, with half a heart? Does Jehovah, like a modern-day heart specialist, search the physical heart for flaws? As for the inclination of the thoughts, do thoughts reside in our heart? Some Bible references seem to say so, speaking of 'the inclination of the thoughts of the heart.' (Genesis 6:5; 1 Chronicles 29:18) Does Jehovah scan our physical hearts to discern our thoughts? What really is meant by 'serving him with a *complete* heart'?

[2] The ancient Egyptians believed that the physical heart was the seat of intelligence and the emotions. They also thought that it had a will of its own. The Babylonians said that the heart housed the intellect as well as love. The Greek philosopher Aristotle taught that it was the seat of the senses and the domain of the soul. But as time passed and knowledge increased, these views were discarded. Finally the heart became known for what it is, a pump to circulate the blood throughout the body.

[3] Yes, it is primarily a pump, but what an awesome one, faithfully gushing out the red stream of life every second of our lives! Little larger than a fist, weighing less than a pound, the human heart beats 100,000 times a day, pumping the blood of life through the body's 60,000-mile cardiovascular system—some 2,000 gallons daily, tens of millions of gallons in a lifetime.* The heart's beat is initiated by a concentration of cells making up its pacemaker, sending out electrical impulses that govern the rate of the heartbeat. No muscle in the body works harder, longer, steadier, decade after decade, than the heart. Under emotional stress or vigorous exercise it can step up its output fivefold. Remove the heart from the chest and it will continue to beat for a while. Even cells cut from the heart will, under favorable circumstances, continue to do so. Only the brain requires more nourishment and oxygen than the heart.

[4] God's Word speaks of the heart nearly a thousand times. A few of those occurrences refer to the literal heart. A few others refer to the center or midst of a thing, such as "in the heart of the open sea" and "in the heart of the earth." (Ezekiel 27:25-27;

1. What questions are raised by 1 Chronicles 28:9?
2. What beliefs concerning the heart were held by the ancient Egyptians, the Babylonians, and the Greek philosopher Aristotle?

* One mile = 1.6 kilometers.
One gallon = 3.8 liters.

3. What facts make the heart so awesome?
4, 5. (a) What qualities do the Scriptures attribute to the heart? (b) According to the Scriptures, what emotions and motivations dwell in the heart?

Matthew 12:40) In nearly a thousand other references, however, heart is used in a figurative sense. Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* lists many scriptures under "heart" for each of the following headings: "In the heart dwell feelings and emotions, desires and passions." "The heart is the seat of understanding, the source of thought and reflection." "The heart is the seat of the will, the source of resolves." "Thus the heart is supremely the one centre in man to which God turns, in which the religious life is rooted, which determines moral conduct."

5 Emotions and motivations dwell in this figurative heart. According to many scriptures, the heart can be cheerful, gloomy, darkened, enlightened, desperate, trusting, faint, hard. It can be hot with anger or melt in fear, proud and haughty or mild and humble, intensely loving or filled with hate, pure and clean or guilty of adultery. It is inclined to evil, but it can impel us to do good.

Be Neither Halfhearted Nor Doublehearted

6 The literal heart must be whole to function, but the figurative heart can be divided. The psalmist, evidently a man after God's own heart, wrote under inspiration: "The halfhearted ones I have hated." (Psalm 119:113) Among such were those Israelites whom Elijah challenged, saying: "How long will you be limping upon two different opinions? If Jehovah is the true God, go following him; but if Baal is, go following him." (1 Kings 18:21) Halfheartedly, they 'limped upon two different opinions.'

7 Similarly, after a partial return to Jehovah by Judah, it is recorded: "Nevertheless, the people were still sacrificing upon the high places; only it was to Jehovah their God." (2 Chronicles 33:17) With divided hearts, they claimed to worship Jehovah but in an unauthorized way and in locations where they had previously worshiped Baal. Jesus said: "No one can slave for two masters." (Matthew 6:24) In those days slaves were like a piece of property. They were on call to their master 24 hours a day. Their time could not be divided between two masters—half for one and half for the other. Jesus was making this point: no halfhearted service to Jehovah!

8 There is only one literal heart in each person, but, figuratively speaking, one person can have two hearts. David referred to such persons, saying: "With a smooth lip they keep speaking even with a double heart ["with a heart and a heart," *Ref. Bi.*, footnote]." (Psalm 12:2) One heart posed for public display, the other secretly connived for selfish advantage. This two-faced, doublehearted posture is described in the Scriptures: "For as one that has calculated within his soul, so he is. 'Eat and drink,' he says to you, but his heart itself is not with you." "Although he makes his voice gracious, do not believe in him, for there are seven detestable things in his heart." —Proverbs 23:7; 26:25; Psalm 28:3.

9 Such hypocrisy in human relationships is deplorable, but when sown in Jehovah's worship, it reaps calamity. "Do not put your trust in fallacious words, saying, 'The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah they are!' Here you are putting your trust in fallacious words—it will certainly be of no benefit at all. Can there be stealing, murdering and commit-

6, 7. (a) What kind of people did the psalmist hate, and by what actions in both Israel and Judah is this condition illustrated? (b) How did Jesus illustrate that halfhearted service to Jehovah is unacceptable?

8. Figuratively speaking, how can one person have two hearts, and what scriptures reflect this?

9. What shows that doublehearted worship existed in both Jeremiah's day and Jesus' time?

ting adultery and swearing falsely and making sacrificial smoke to Baal and walking after other gods whom you had not known, and must you come and stand before me in this house upon which my name has been called, and must you say, 'We shall certainly be delivered,' in the face of doing all these detestable things?" (Jeremiah 7:4, 8-10) Jesus denounced such double-hearted hypocrisy among the scribes and the Pharisees, saying: "You hypocrites, Isaiah aptly prophesied about you, when he said, 'This people honors me with their lips, yet their heart is far removed from me.'" —Matthew 15:7, 8.

10 From all of this it is clear why Jehovah said to Samuel: "Not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." (1 Samuel 16:7) Hence, when Jehovah takes a man's measure, it is not based on superficial evidence; he probes to the very heart of the matter. Christ Jesus identified the heart as the motivating force behind our conduct, whether it is good or bad: "A good man brings forth good out of the good treasure of his heart, but a wicked man brings forth what is wicked out of his wicked treasure; for out of the heart's abundance his mouth speaks." Also, "Out of the heart come wicked reasonings, murders, adulteries, fornications, thieveries, false testimonies, blasphemies."—Luke 6:45; Matthew 15:19.

11 Christ Jesus, to whom judgment is committed, also looks where Jehovah looks: "I am he who searches the kidneys ["deepest emotions," *Ref. Bi.*, footnote] and hearts, and I will give to you individually according to your deeds." (Revelation 2:23) For this reason, "more than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life."—Proverbs 4:23.

10, 11. Where do Jehovah and Christ Jesus look when judging a person, and why?

12 Our worship of Jehovah must be neither halfhearted nor doublehearted, but wholehearted. This demands diligent effort on our part. Why so? Because the heart is treacherous and can be very deceptive. It is frightening how skillful it is in rationalizing the wrongs that attract our fallen flesh. While it may deceive us and hide our real motives from us, Jehovah sees it for what it is. He puts us on notice of this, saying: "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it? I, Jehovah, am searching the heart, examining the kidneys, even to give to each one according to his ways, according to the fruitage of his dealings."—Jeremiah 17: 9, 10.

Acquiring a Complete Heart

13 Concerning religionists of his day, Jesus said: "The heart of this people has grown unreceptive, and with their ears they have heard without response, and they

12. Why does being wholehearted in Jehovah's service demand diligent effort on our part?
13. What did Jesus say about some religionists of his day, and because of such conduct, what was the result for them?

have shut their eyes; that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back, and I heal them." (Matthew 13:15) Because of preconceived religious notions, they closed their eyes and ears and hardened their hearts to Jesus' teaching. Rejecting reproof, they failed to gain a properly motivated heart: "The one listening to reproof is acquiring heart ["is acquiring good motive," *Ref. Bi.*, footnote]." (Proverbs 15:32) They claimed to worship God, but they performed their "righteousness" to be seen by men.—Matthew 6:1, 2, 5, 16.

14 How much better it is to be like King Jehoshaphat of Judah who 'prepared his heart to search for the true God.' (2 Chronicles 19:3) The best preparation in your search for God is heartfelt prayer. When distressed Hannah prayed fervently to Jehovah, "she was speaking in her heart," and her prayer was answered. Also needed is a willingness to listen. Jesus' mother listened: "His mother carefully kept all these sayings in her heart." She began "drawing conclusions in her heart," and she became a faithful disciple of Jesus. Jehovah helps the sincere seeker. God-fearing Lydia listened to Paul, "and Jehovah opened her heart wide to pay attention to the things being spoken by Paul." She got baptized. (1 Samuel 1:12, 13; Luke 2:19, 51; Acts 16:14, 15) Always it is the figurative heart —the feelings, the emotions, the good motives—that allows the truth to enter and inhabit the person.

15 To acquire a complete heart, we must be prepared emotionally to set aside preconceived opinions, willing to let God be found true even if it does demolish some of our pet ideas or cherished doctrinal views.

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14. What examples show the means by which truth enters to dwell deep within us?
15. To acquire a complete heart, what must we be prepared to do?

(Romans 3:4) Selfish motives must be purged to make our hearts receptive to Jehovah's will and ways. Jehovah once wrote his laws on stone, but later he wrote laws on human hearts. The apostle Paul also wrote on hearts. And you, too, can "write [loving-kindness and trueness] upon the tablet of your heart."—Proverbs 3:3; Hebrews 10:16; 2 Corinthians 3:3.

16 Does your heart qualify as a suitable writing surface for Jehovah's principles and precepts? Will you cleanse it of preconceptions to make way for divine truth? Will you then continue to study, to make your mind over, to strip off the old personality, and to put on the new one fashioned in the likeness of God? Will you do your utmost to be a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of truth aright?—Romans 12:2; Colossians 3:9, 10; 2 Timothy 2:15.

Maintaining a Complete Heart

17 David told Solomon: "And you, Solomon my son, know the God of your father and serve him with a complete heart and with a delightful soul; for all hearts Jehovah is searching, and every inclination of the thoughts he is discerning." Solomon did start out serving with a complete heart, but as the years passed, he did not maintain it: "And it came about in the time of Solomon's growing old that his wives themselves had inclined his heart to follow other gods; and his heart did not prove to be complete with Jehovah his God like the heart of David his father." —1 Chronicles 28:9; 1 Kings 11:4.

18 Will you succeed where Solomon failed? Having dedicated yourself as a witness of Jehovah, having put aside all halfheartedness or doubleheartedness in your worship, having complied with Jesus' words to "love Jehovah your God with your whole heart," will you now be determined to keep your heart completely devoted to Jehovah's service? (Matthew 22:37) Satan will not like it, and he is a wily adversary. Your heart will become his target. He knows its inclination to sin, and he can worm his way into it if you let down your guard. Did he not 'put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus?' (John 13:2) Money, materialism, entertainment, pride, secular careers, showy displays, fleshly desires—he knows our vulnerable spots and aims his fiery darts at them. Will you quench all of them with the shield of faith?—Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 2:15-17.

19 And when all these satanic devices fail, he is not through. He becomes a roaring lion trying to devour Jehovah's faithful witnesses by violent mobs, beatings, imprisonments, and even death. But through it all Jehovah will strengthen those whose hearts are complete toward him.—James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8-10; Revelation 2:10.

16. What questions highlight the steps one must take to have a complete heart for Jehovah?
17. How did David admonish his son Solomon, and why did Solomon fail to follow the advice?
18, 19. (a) What various means will Satan use to make you fail to maintain a complete heart? (b) If these more subtle efforts of Satan fail, how will his tactics change?

Do You Recall?

- ☐ What are the many qualities attributed to the figurative heart?
- ☐ How may we avoid being halfhearted or doublehearted?
- ☐ Why do Jehovah and Christ Jesus look at the heart when judging?
- ☐ How can we acquire and maintain a complete heart?

[20] The literal heart needs a checkup from time to time. Is it at regular intervals receiving good nourishment in sufficient amounts? Is its beat steady and strong or sluggish and weak? Does it maintain the proper blood pressure? Is it getting the exercise it needs? (To be healthy the heart needs to pump vigorously for long periods of time.) Does its pacemaker vary its speed to meet the changing needs? Is it being subjected to an emotional environment that puts it under heavy stress?

[21] If the physical heart needs checkups, how much more so does the figurative heart! Jehovah examines it; so should we. Does it get sufficient amounts of spiritual food through regular personal study and meeting attendance? (Psalm 1:1, 2; Proverbs 15:28; Hebrews 10:24, 25) Do its feelings and deep emotions move us to zealous service in the field ministry—at times perhaps causing us to exert ourselves vigorously in auxiliary pioneering? (Jeremiah 20:9; Luke 13:24; 1 Corinthians 9:16) What about its environment? Is it surrounded by other hearts that are unified and complete with like feelings and motivations? —2 Kings 10:15, 16; Psalm 86:11; Proverbs 13:20; 1 Corinthians 15:33.

20, 21. (a) What questions might be asked in examining the literal heart? (b) How may similar questions be used to check up on the figurative heart?

[22] If your checkup enables you to answer yes to the above questions, then you are safeguarding your figurative heart. You will succeed, along with millions of other faithful Witnesses, in your determination to serve Jehovah with a complete heart. All such ones have this assurance: "The peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."—Philippians 4:7.

22. What will ensure success in our determination to serve Jehovah with a complete heart?

Carefully Following the Orders of the King

"With your orders I will concern myself, and I will look to your paths. For your statutes I shall show a fondness. I shall not forget your word."
—PSALM 119:15, 16.

EVERYONE and everything is under the orders of the Almighty God Jehovah, the King of eternity. He is the One who created the universe. He is the Source of all life. He formed the earth and prepared it for habitation. He is a God of order, and by the enforcing of his statutes, orderliness will be maintained throughout his creation.—Psalm 36:9; Isaiah 45:18; Revelation 15:3.

[2] It was Jehovah God who ordered the starry heavens to spread out like a tent over the earth and then invited his people: "Raise your eyes high up and see. Who has created these things? It is the One who is bringing forth the army of them even by number, all of whom he calls even by

1. Why is everyone and everything under the orders of Jehovah?
2. Who controls the starry heavens, and how?

name." It was Jehovah who asked Job: "Have you come to know the statutes of the heavens, or could you put its authority in the earth?" It is His laws of gravitation and motion that bind together the millions of galaxies with their billions of stars and that govern the movements of the earth as it travels through space.—Isaiah 40:26; Job 38:33.

[3] He is the One bringing forth the green plants that carpet the earth. It is by his orders that seeds sprout and grow and reproduce. Innumerable varieties of animal life are abundant in the earth—from polar regions to tropical forests, from high in the atmosphere to deep in the soil, from the ocean's surface to its darkest depths. To exist, each of the countless kinds must live as ordered by Jehovah. By means of instinct, he programs into them his orders for survival. "They are instinctively wise." (Proverbs 30:24) But what if the little blackpoll warbler in Alaska said to itself, 'I am not going to fly thousands of miles to South America. Why should I?' That little warbler would die in the winter blizzards. But it will not say that. It is programmed to migrate for survival. So it is with all the animals. They instinctively follow the orders planted in them by Jehovah their Creator. They have no choice.

[4] It is different with people. We are created in the likeness of God, and we do have a choice. However, while Jehovah did not program us to act wisely by instinct alone, neither did he leave us in ignorance. Through his Word the Bible, he gives us his orders for gaining life. If we *carefully* follow those orders of the King, we will live. If we use our freedom to ignore them and take a road of our own independent choosing, we will die. We must program ourselves for survival. It is that simple. "Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway," said the psalmist. On the other hand, a different "road may seem straightforward to a man, yet may end as the way to death." (Psalm 119:105; Proverbs 14:12, *The New English Bible*) In this time of the end, it is imperative that we take as our own the words of Psalm 119:15, 16, as addressed to Jehovah: "With your orders I will concern myself, and I will look to your paths. For your statutes I shall show a fondness. I shall not forget your word."

3. By whose orders do animals survive, and what would happen if they disobeyed?
4. What choice do people have, and with what consequences?

Jehovah the Organizer of His People

[5] Jehovah spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, giving orders for Israel's guidance. Outstanding among these were the Ten Commandments, written on stone tablets by the finger of God. (Exodus 20:1-17; 31:18) In addition to being Israel's Lawgiver, Jehovah was their Judge, acting through Moses and other older men. Moses admonished such older men to remember: "You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the little one the same as the great one. You must not become frightened because of a man, for the judgment belongs to God." (Deuteronomy 1:17) Jehovah was also their King, organizing these millions of people for the efficient conduct of their affairs. In view of all of this, one of his prophets could later declare: "Jehovah is our Judge, Jehovah is our Statute-giver, Jehovah is our King."—Isaiah 33:22.

[6] The nation of Israel was organized into tribes, families, and households. As they traveled in the wilderness, Jehovah assigned each tribe its place in the march. When they camped around the tabernacle,

5. In what ways was Jehovah Israel's Judge, Statute-giver, and King?
6. How did Jehovah prove to be Israel's Organizer and Guide in the wilderness?

each tribe had its assigned location. (Numbers 2:1-34; Joshua 7:14) By means of a cloud, Jehovah ordered their moves: "Whenever the cloud would go up from over the tent, the sons of Israel would pull away right afterward, and in the place where the cloud would reside, there is where the sons of Israel would encamp. At the order of Jehovah the sons of Israel would pull away, and at the order of Jehovah they would encamp."—Numbers 9:17, 18.

7 When an organizational change was needed, Jehovah made it. Moses complained: "I am not able, I by myself, to carry all this people, because they are too heavy for me." Jehovah responded: "Gather for me seventy men of the older men of Israel, whom you do know that they are older men of the people and officers of theirs, . . . and they will have to help you in carrying the load of the people that you may not carry it, just you alone." (Numbers 11:14, 16, 17) Even when the people later demanded a human king, the great King of eternity did not abandon Israel. The human king had a copy of Jehovah's Law. Prophets declared Jehovah's judgments. Faithful kings still served as administrators for God as they 'sat on the throne of Jehovah.'—1 Chronicles 29:23; Deuteronomy 17:18; 2 Kings 17:13; Jeremiah 7:25.

The Perfect Example of Following the King's Orders

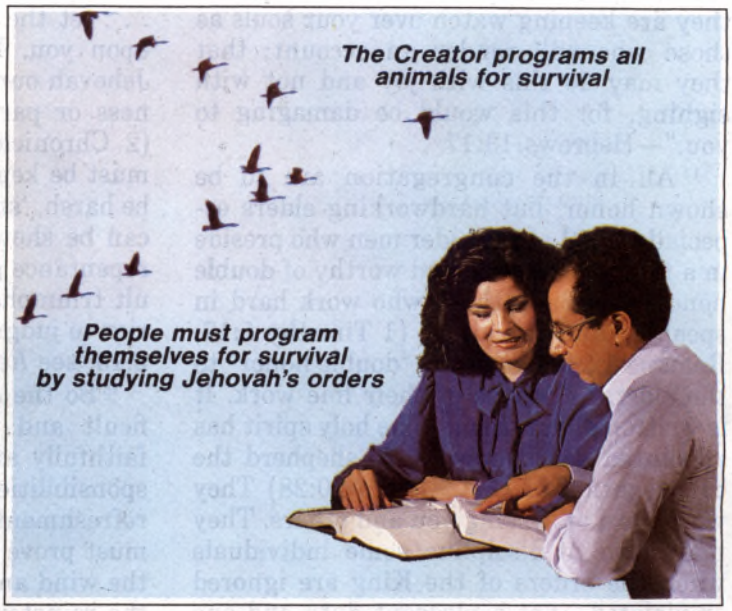
8 When Jesus arrived as the promised Messiah, he followed his heavenly Father's orders with a consuming zeal. With the start of the great Galilean ministry, he "commenced preaching and saying: 'Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.' Then he went around throughout the whole of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom and curing every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity among the people. Consequently great crowds followed him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from the other side of the Jordan." (Matthew 4:17, 23, 25; John 2:17) He did not limit his preaching to the synagogues. He proclaimed the Kingdom good news wherever there were people to listen: the temple, the seashore, the mountainside, the open country, the cities and villages, and the homes of the people. The crowds flocked to him, "listening to him with pleasure." They "kept hanging onto him to hear him."—Mark 12:37; Luke 19:48.

9 To his apostles he noted the need for more workers, so "these twelve Jesus sent forth, giving them these orders: 'Do not go off into the road of the nations, and do not enter into a Samaritan city; but, instead, go continually to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, preach, saying, "The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." Into whatever city or village you enter, search out who in it is deserving, and stay there until you leave. When you are entering into the house, greet the household; and if the house is deserving, let the peace you wish it come upon it; but if it is not deserving, let the peace from you return upon you.'" (Matthew 10:5-7, 11-13) He later sent out 70 more with similar instructions, and by carefully following these orders, they had success and great joy.—Luke 10:1, 17.

10 After his death and resurrection,

7. Who could and did make changes in the organization of Israel?
8. How, where, and with what results did Jesus proclaim Jehovah's Kingdom to come?
9. What did Jesus do to expand the preaching work, and what instructions did he give?
10. (a) After his resurrection, what further commission did Jesus give, and with what result? (b) Why were certain appointments of men needed, and what requirements were to be met?

Christ Jesus enlarged his followers' territory, telling them: "All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth. Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:18-20) When he ascended into heaven, he gave a similar order: "You will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) As his followers spread the Kingdom message, thousands joined their ranks. (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7) Congregations sprouted up everywhere. Overseers and ministerial assistants who met specific Scriptural qualifications were appointed to shepherd these flocks of men and women. The congregations flourished and grew in number. —1 Timothy 3:2-10, 12, 13; Titus 1:5-9.



[11] Today it is especially important for the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses to follow Jesus' example in preaching. To do so efficiently, they adopt the organizational structure that was established in the days of the apostles. We are in the time of the end, the time when Jesus foretold that a worldwide preaching work would take place: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) After World War I, a few thousand began declaring this Kingdom good news; now their numbers have skyrocketed past the three million mark! It is an urgent time to be following carefully the orders of both the great King of eternity, Jehovah God, and the King of kings, Christ Jesus.

11. What kind of organization do Jehovah's Witnesses have today, and why is an efficient one so necessary now?

The Elders Need Your Respect and Support

[12] In following the King's orders, congregation elders have a key role. They are to be exemplary: "Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:1-3) It is God's flock. He holds the elders accountable, but the obedient cooperation of everyone can make their work joyful: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for

12. What is required of elders today, and how can their service be made joyful?

they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you."—Hebrews 13:17.

13 All in the congregation are to be shown honor, but hardworking elders especially so: "Let the older men who preside in a fine way be reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching." (1 Timothy 5:17; Romans 12:10) Why the "double honor" to the elders? Because of their fine work. It is written about them: "The holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God." (Acts 20:28) They work hard at serving you and others. They may have to discipline some individuals when the orders of the King are ignored or violated—not a pleasant duty and one that may offend some. Counsel on dress or conduct may have to be given and may be resented. Yet all these things are done for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. The elders should be respected and shown honor.

14 At times elders must serve on judicial committees and make judgments—sometimes unpopular ones. How does this judging square with James 4:12? It says: "One there is that is lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But you, who are you to be judging your neighbor?" Yes, individuals are not to judge one another. Moreover the judgments elders make should not be according to their own opinion but according to Jehovah's Word. Note how King Jehoshaphat cautioned judges whom he appointed: "It is not for man that you judge but it is for Jehovah; . . . let the dread of Jehovah come to be upon you. Be careful and act, for with Jehovah our God there is no unrighteousness or partiality or taking of a bribe." (2 Chronicles 19:6, 7) The organization must be kept clean. Yet elders should not be harsh, 'smiters.' Mercy and forgiveness can be shown when remorse is deep and repentance genuine. Then, 'mercy will exult triumphantly over judgment, as superior to judgment.'—1 Timothy 3:3; James 2:13; see *Reference Bible* footnotes.

15 So the duties of elders are often difficult and demanding, but elders who faithfully and lovingly care for these responsibilities can be a source of spiritual refreshment and protection. "Each one must prove to be like a hiding place from the wind and a place of concealment from the rainstorm, like streams of water in a waterless country, like the shadow of a heavy crag in an exhausted land." (Isaiah 32:2) It is the kind and loving protector —not the hasty accuser or the harsh disciplinarian—that brings joy to all, earns respect and honor, and gains Jehovah's approval.

Be Patient With One Another

16 Whenever people work closely together, problems are likely to arise. Mistakes are made. When this happens, some become greatly disturbed. Some even use the mistakes of others as excuses for making the greatest mistake of all—they stop serving Jehovah! However, if they scrutinize their own mistakes as minutely as they do those of others, they will likely be less critical and more understanding. Moses made mistakes. So did David. So did

13. Why should the elders be shown double honor?

14. (a) In view of James 4:12, how only may the judgments rendered by elders be proper? (b) When can there be a yielding in judgment, and when can mercy be superior to judgment?

15. What services by elders merit respect and honor for them?

16. (a) How do some react to the mistakes of others, and what might make them less critical and more understanding? (b) How does Jehovah view faithful servants who make mistakes?

Peter. So do all of us. But Jehovah continued to use these faithful men of old, and he continues to use us. So, "who are you to judge the house servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for Jehovah can make him stand."—Romans 14:4.

17 Let us also remember: Here on earth, Jehovah uses imperfect people—that is all he has at present. Actually, this reflects praise to Jehovah. He accomplishes so much with so little! Our weakness magnifies his power: "My undeserved kindness is sufficient for you; for my power is being made perfect in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9) The worldwide witnessing work prospers for the reason Jehovah himself gives: "Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit." (Zechariah 4:6) So let us be forgiving of the mistakes and imperfections of others so that our own can be forgiven. Remember: "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."—Matthew 6:14, 15.

Organized to Follow the King's Order to Preach

18 The apostles and older men located in Jerusalem constituted a governing body that made decisions giving unified direction to the early Christian congregations. (Acts 15:1-31; 16:1-5) Today Jehovah's anointed witnesses, "the faithful and discreet slave," have a Governing Body at their headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. (Matthew 24:45-47) It directs the tremendous worldwide Kingdom witnessing work now being done throughout the earth in fulfillment of the order to announce Jehovah's Kingdom. (Matthew 24:14) This work could never be done without an organization. An individual could never do it on his own.

19 No individual and no unorganized, scattered groups of individuals could preach in over 190 languages and in 205 lands, conduct regularly more than two and a quarter million home Bible studies, and baptize annually some 190,000 new ministers of the good news of the Kingdom. No, it took more than three million Witnesses nearly six hundred million hours of preaching to do that amount of work in the one year 1985. They could do it only because they were efficiently organized into nearly 50,000 congregations, all under the visible direction of their one Governing Body. Even then, it could only be done because the Governing Body, the 94 branches, the 50,000 congregations, and the 3,000,000 individual Witnesses all were united in carefully following the orders of the King.

17. In this matter of making mistakes and being judgmental about others, what additional points should we remember?

18. To give unified direction to the preaching of the congregations, what arrangement existed in the days of the apostles and exists now in our day?

19. What work that individuals alone could never do are Jehovah's Witnesses successfully doing by carefully following the orders of the King?

Do You Recall?

- ☐ How did Jehovah organize the nation of Israel?
- ☐ What perfect example did Jesus leave for accomplishing the work of announcing Jehovah's Kingdom?
- ☐ What many services performed by elders merit our showing them honor?
- ☐ Why could independent groups or individuals not do the witness work?

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

In Just Nine Days!

"AWESOME!" That single word was the headline of an editorial in a Vancouver Island, Canada, newspaper on August 14, 1985. The editorial described the construction of a 25,000-square-foot (2,300 sq m) Assembly Hall in just nine days.

Over the past ten years, Jehovah's Witnesses have developed a technique for the quick erection of local Kingdom Halls. And the Vancouver Island Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses is now the second such structure in Canada designed primarily for semiannual circuit assemblies of groups of congregations. The brand-new hall stands on an eight-acre (3 ha) site in Cassidy, British Columbia. Tall evergreens provide a handsome backdrop, while a pleasant creek runs through the lot behind the building. It includes a 900-seat auditorium, a 250-seat cafeteria, a refreshment area, a small tiled baptism pool, and a 200-seat Kingdom Hall used by local congregations. Even those who participated in its construction say it is difficult to believe that it was erected and finished in nine days.

Of course, before the nine-day construction, much preparatory work was done. The previous building on the site was dismantled and salvaged—in torrential rain. Volunteer workers braved wet, chilly October weather to harvest wood for cedar shakes—thick natural shingles made from the western red cedar. Plumbing, heating, air-conditioning, electrical, and other systems had to be designed. The site had to be prepared and a 25,000-square-foot concrete slab laid—among other things.

Finally, however, everything was in readiness. On Saturday, August 3, at 8:00 a.m., after consideration of a Bible text, volunteers with hammers stood at the ready around the concrete slab. "Brothers, start hammering!" came the call over the loudspeakers. Scores of hammers rang on nails as an estimated 4,500 volunteers got to work. Many volunteers and their families were from the United States and some from as far away as Newfoundland, Norway, and England. Sympathetic neighbors made their fields available for camping and parking, and tents, campers, trucks, and cars covered 35 acres (14 ha) around the site.

Onlookers were greatly impressed. A contractor brought his employees to observe the work and enjoy the atmosphere. Kindly neighbors donated vegetables to the food-preparation department, which prepared regular meals for the workers. Other neighbors pitched in to help with the actual work. One man, after visiting the site, said: "I can surely see that God is with you people." This man is now making fine progress in studying the Bible with the Witnesses.

An editorial in *The Ladysmith-Chemainus Chronicle* commented: "Regardless of your religious persuasion, or lack of, you've got to hand it to the 4,500 Jehovah's Witnesses who worked around the clock during the past week and a half to build a 25,000-square-foot Assembly Hall in Cassidy . . . To do this cheerfully without arguing, dissension or glory-grabbing is a mark of true Christianity."

On Sunday, August 11, at 6:00 p.m., the first meeting was held in the finished, landscaped Assembly Hall!

Pioneering the Highway to Paradise

ON A clear, crisp March day in New Jersey, some 4,300 gathered at the Jersey City Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. They hailed from all over the United States as well as from many other countries. This special meeting was triggered by events that took place 43 years ago when a special missionary training school was established under the direction of the then president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Nathan H. Knorr.

This March meeting was the graduation of the 80th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. But what prompted such a crowd to turn up for the graduation exercises? It was the anticipated quality of the program.

Missionary Attitudes —The Key to Success

The chairman for the program was Karl Klein, a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. He introduced the first speaker, former missionary in Japan, Lloyd Barry, and now a member of the Governing Body, who spoke on the theme "To Your Faith Add Works." He counseled: 'After five months of intensive Gilead training, your love and faith must be at a peak. Now, as you go out to your assignments, you must add works.' (James 2:22, 23) He said that like Jehovah they should 'get up early' and make good use of a full day in his service. —Jeremiah 7:25.

Daniel Sydlik, another member of the Governing Body, gave encouraging counsel on the subject "You Can Cultivate a Proper Attitude." In any situation, he said, you can take either a positive or a negative attitude. Basing his remarks on Malachi 3:15, 16, he illustrated how easy it is to find faults in a new country. "Be slow about finding fault," he continued. "Have a joyful attitude that God will bless."

Other speakers, including Ulysses Glass, the school's registrar, highlighted the need for endurance, satisfaction in accomplishment, and courage. Jack Redford, former missionary and one of the school instructors, gave practical counsel on keeping an open mind. Remember, he said, that "wise men change their minds, fools never do!" So he advised the new missionaries to be adaptable like the apostle Paul, who could even quote local poets. (Acts 17:28) "Bloom where you are planted. . . . Keep an open mind and heart," he concluded.

The principal graduation talk was given by the president of the Watch Tower Society, Frederick W. Franz, now 92 years of age. Under the theme of "Pioneering Now a Highway Back to Paradise on Earth," he reminisced on the founding of the Gilead School, "a war baby and a child of faith" that got started in the midst of World War II. Using Isaiah 62:10 as his theme text, he showed how these new missionaries would be participating in this great work of building up a wide, solid highway on which newcomers to true worship can walk on their way to Paradise restored. To close the morning program, diplomas were handed out to the 24 graduates.

The afternoon session included an entertaining review by the graduates of things they had learned at school, as well as a preview of future challenges they would face. The program ended with a full-costume Bible drama that vividly illustrated how Rahab, and later the Gibeonites, showed faith leading to deliverance.—Joshua, chapters 2 to 6 and 9.

With the 24 graduates of this 80th class of the Gilead School, a total of 6,234 missionaries have gone out all over the world to spearhead the preaching work in fulfillment of Matthew 24:14.

Keep a Positive Attitude

IT WAS an early summer morning. But the Middle Eastern sun was already shining brightly when a father received some distressing news. His firstborn son, 22 years old, had died in a car accident during the night.

How would you have reacted to that news? Because the family members were so close, as they are in the Middle East, the parents were indeed distraught. It would have seemed natural for them to become very bitter in response to this sudden tragedy. Yet, to the astonishment of the community, they showed a positive attitude, even on that first day. Although greatly saddened, they had full trust in Jehovah's ability to resurrect their son at His appointed time. They looked forward to God's promised new system where "death will be no more." (Revelation 21:4) Even today, years later, people who know that family still talk of the parents' attitude and of their exemplary faith.

What does it mean to have a positive attitude? A positive person keeps himself balanced despite changing circumstances. Even under trying conditions he does not turn sour, letting negative thoughts dominate. How is this possible? To find some answers, let us consider some Biblical examples.

When Faced With Fear of Men

In the year 1512 B.C.E., while the nation of Israel was in the wilderness of Paran, Moses sent 12 spies to check out the Promised Land. (Numbers 13:17-20) All the spies were chieftains in their tribes —men of influence who were supposed to be good examples. (Numbers 13:1, 2) But what a shame! After 40 days, ten of them gave such an unfavorable report that the Israelites rebelled against Jehovah's direction and wanted to return to Egypt! "The people who dwell in the land are strong," said the spies. "We are not able to go up against the people."—Numbers 13:28, 31.

What a negative attitude! And what a contrast was seen in the positive attitude of Joshua and Caleb, the remaining two spies: "The land that we passed through to spy it out is a very, very good land. If Jehovah has found delight in us, then he will certainly bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that is flowing with milk and honey." (Numbers 14:7, 8; 13:30) Both groups saw the same things while spying out the land. But what a difference in attitude! The negative attitude of the ten spies affected the whole nation, and they started murmuring. It resulted in all of those over 20 years of age dying in the wilderness. Only Joshua and Caleb, because of their positive trust in Jehovah, were privileged to enter into the Promised Land. (Numbers 14:22-30) Their example should encourage us in this day to stay faithful and keep a positive attitude when persecution or opposition comes or increases.

In a country that has been under ban for many years, a special pioneer was put in prison and treated very badly. He recalls: "The harder the officers came to be, the closer I felt to Jehovah. I sang Kingdom songs. I recalled all the scriptures that I knew. I realized that, although Jehovah was permitting this to happen, he was able—at any moment—to release me. All of this helped me to have a positive attitude. Like the apostles, I felt happy to

Keep a positive attitude, and many blessings and rewards will come to you

be beaten for the sake of Jehovah's almighty name. I prayed constantly for Jehovah to strengthen me. He came to my aid, so that only the first blow would hurt. I used every opportunity to preach to the other prisoners."

After his release from prison, this Christian said: "Since we have dedicated our lives to Jehovah and have promised to stay faithful to him, we should continue serving him despite any difficulties. He deserves our worship and complete devotion."

We, too, may face similar opposition in the future. Let us be equally determined to have no fear of men. Keep a positive attitude, and as was the case with Joshua and Caleb, many blessings and rewards will be given us.

When Service Privileges Are Lost

Moses, as leader of the nation of Israel, was the one who sent out the 12 spies. He had led the nation out of Egypt and doubtless expected to be the one to lead them into the Promised Land. However, Moses lost that privilege when, in a moment of exasperation, he failed to magnify Jehovah's name. (Numbers 20:2-13) How did Moses then react? In a song that he later composed, he said: "I shall declare the name 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 32:3, 4) What a positive attitude Moses had, although he had lost an important privilege of service!

If we ever have to face a similar situation, remembering this experience of Moses will help us. It may happen that a body of elders in a congregation recommends the removal of an elder or a ministerial servant, perhaps because he has come to lack one or more of the Scriptural qualifications required for this privilege of service. The brother may feel that he did not deserve the removal, become upset, and cause unnecessary disturbance. Having a negative attitude, he might start murmuring, finding fault with others, even gossiping. Eventually, he might stop attending meetings and sharing in the preaching work. What a bad state to come into! How much better to maintain a positive attitude and regard the deletion as discipline or training to become a better servant of Jehovah. He could well seize the opportunity to study and meditate on God's Word so as to regain the needed qualifications for serving Him to the full. Many who have done so have later been blessed with even greater privileges of service.—Hebrews 12:11.

When Unexpected Changes Occur

Life is full of unexpected changes that may cause some to become disappointed and adopt a negative attitude. How did you react the last time something did not go as well as you had hoped? Even minor events can discourage us if we let them. But never forget: Keeping a positive attitude will help you to face the changed situation better.

A good example to remember is that of Ruth. Widowed early in life, she returned to Israel with her mother-in-law, Naomi, when the famine there subsided. Without a husband to supply even the basic necessities, Ruth nonetheless maintained a positive attitude. Cheerfully, she went out to glean in the fields after the harvesters so that she and her mother-in-law would have food to eat. The hard work did not discourage her. She did not adopt a negative attitude, bemoaning the fact that she had lost her husband and now was far away from her family and friends. And as the record shows, Jehovah richly rewarded her for her fine course.—Ruth 4:13-17.

How to Keep a Positive Attitude

Keeping a positive attitude is difficult for some. The anxieties of life, especially in the troubled times in which we live, can rob one of joy—particularly when nagging problems persist. Yet, even in unfavorable circumstances, one can maintain a positive attitude. Many have done so in the most trying situations. How can we do the same?

Try not to dwell on negative things. Even during great difficulties, positive aspects can be found. The apostles were often persecuted or imprisoned, but they were still happy to be able to praise Jehovah. (Acts 13:50-52; 14:19-22; 16:22-25) We can meditate on what they and other faithful servants of Jehovah did in times of trial and seek lessons for our own lives. Why were they cheerful and positive? Because they had complete confidence and faith in Jehovah. They trusted his ability to resurrect and reward them. (Revelation 2:10) Similarly, keep your hope in Jehovah's righteous new system clear in mind. —Compare Hebrews 12:2.

We should also keep ourselves under scrutiny, lest negative thinking make inroads and take root in our hearts. How beneficial it is to keep close to Jehovah and pray for his help if we become discouraged! (Psalm 62:8) Upbuilding help can also be sought from the elders. Cultivate the spirit of humility and obedience. (Psalm 119:69, 70) Set wholesome, reachable goals in life. All these suggestions will help us keep a positive attitude and have the "peace of God" that will 'guard our heart and our mental powers.'—Philippians 4:6, 7.

True, it is not always easy to have a positive attitude. However, by diligent effort and motivated by strong faith, such an attitude can be cultivated. So, whatever our circumstances may be, let all of us be determined to keep a positive outlook. It will never mean a loss for us but, rather, will work toward many delightful rewards both now and in the future.

In Our Next Issue

- **Your Hope—God or Riches?**
- **How Can You Control Your Emotions?**
- **Doing Good Works on the Sabbath**

Questions From Readers

■ **Did Jonathan lose God's favor when he ate some honey after King Saul cursed any soldier who would eat before the fighting was over?**

Saul's rash oath brought Israel in line for a curse, but it does not appear that Jonathan merited Jehovah's disfavor because of going contrary to the oath.

First Samuel 14:24-45 relates this incident. The Israelites, emboldened by Jonathan's exploits, were fighting the enemy Philistines. King Saul said: "Cursed is the man that eats bread before the evening and until I have taken vengeance upon my enemies!" (Verse 24) Unaware of his father's oath, Jonathan energized himself by eating some honey. Other Israelite warriors, who were also worn out, sinned by slaughtering cattle and ravenously eating flesh that had not been drained of blood. Saul built an altar regarding that sin, but he did not know what his son had done.

When Saul sought God's direction for pressing the battle, Jehovah would not reply. Through the use of the Thummim (perhaps involving sacred lots), Saul learned that his son had violated the ill-advised oath. But, really, how guilty was Jonathan?

Recall the king's attitude when making the oath in the first place. He did not evidence a desire to honor God by a victory over the Philistines. Rather, Saul rashly spoke a curse on anyone eating "until *I* have taken vengeance upon *my* enemies!" Yes, the oath proceeded from such a misplaced view of kingly power or from a false zeal. That oath would not have God's support. The oath was a factor in the Israelite warriors' sin as to animal blood. If they had not been hampered by the oath, they might have been able to find food and so had the strength to pursue the Philistines until complete victory was won.

God did permit the use of the Thummim to determine that Jonathan had (in ignorance) violated Saul's oath, but this does not mean that He approved of the rash oath. The account nowhere says that God viewed Jonathan as culpable. In fact, though Jonathan was willing to accept the consequence of breaking his father's precipitate oath, circumstances were such that Jonathan's life was spared. The Israelite soldiers said that Jonathan had accomplished his feats "with God," and they somehow redeemed Jonathan. In the following years, it was Jonathan who continued to have Jehovah's approval as Saul committed one error after another.

■ **How many judges, such as Samson and Gideon, were there?**

When you count up the judges, the number you arrive at depends on how you view certain Israelites. But it can safely be said that 12 men served as judges between Joshua and Samuel.

During the days of Moses and Joshua, some older men in the congregation were judges in the sense that they were chosen to hear and decide legal cases. (Exodus 18:21, 22; Joshua 8:33; 23:2) After Joshua's death, Israel fell away from true worship and came to be afflicted by other peoples. Judges 2:16 says: "So Jehovah would raise up *judges,* and they would save them out of the hand of their pillagers." Jehovah first raised up as a judge, or 'savior,' the man named Othniel. (Judges 3:9) After that came Ehud, Shamgar, Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and Samson.

Aside from these 12, the Bible mentions Deborah, Eli, and Samuel in connection with judging. (Judges 4:4; 1 Samuel 4:16-18; 7:15, 16) However, Deborah is called first a prophetess, and she is linked with Judge Barak, who particularly took the lead in delivering the people from oppression. Similarly, Eli was principally a high priest, not a 'savior' who led Israel to freedom through battle. (Nehemiah 9:27) Hence, while Deborah and Eli had a role in judging Israel, there is reason not to list them with the 12 men who clearly and primarily were especially 'raised up' as judges. Acts 13:20 says that "judges [were given] *until Samuel the prophet.*" This limits what might be known as the period of the judges, and it shows why Samuel and his sons are usually not counted among the judges either.—1 Samuel 8:1.

Why You Should Attend the "Divine Peace" Convention

When terrorism, revolution, and war are the order of the day, how fine that beginning this *month* you can attend the "Divine Peace" Convention of Jehovah's Witnesses! There you will not only receive practical Christian instruction on maintaining peace but actually see thousands applying such instruction.

Be there from the opening session beginning at 1:30 Thursday afternoon. You will hear from longtime peace proclaimers. Also, you will learn of snares in social entertainment and how to avoid them. And at the conclusion of the session, you will receive something not only beautiful but useful in ministering to others.

Friday morning's program will feature the keynote address, "Divine Peace for Those Taught by Jehovah." You will be deeply moved by the drama "Preserving Life in Time of Famine." Don't miss it!

On Saturday, demonstrations, interviews, and instructive discourses will provide practical guidance for maintaining peace within the family circle. The program will conclude with the important address "Worldwide Security Under the 'Prince of Peace'."

Sunday morning a frank, hard-hitting modern-day drama will be presented emphasizing the need to seek God's righteousness for survival. In the afternoon, the powerful public talk, "Peace at Last! —When God Speaks," will be another highlight of the convention.

Since over 130 conventions are scheduled in the United States alone, there will be a convention not far from your home. Check with Jehovah's Witnesses locally for the time and place of the one nearest to you.