

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

July 15, 1986

Reproduction of Life

-By Evolution or From God?



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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 Reproduction of Life

—By Evolution or From God?

"MIRACULOUSLY complex." Thus the journal *Science News* describes a woman's reproductive system. But an egg from a woman's ovaries cannot produce life on its own. For this to happen, a sperm cell from the male reproductive system must combine with the nucleus of the egg. But what does the sperm do to make the egg develop? That question still puzzles scientists.

Belief in evolution gives rise to another question: If the male and the female reproductive organs evolved, how had life been proceeding before the complete formation of *both*?

Reproduction involves other marvels. The genetic material in a fertilized egg can only be seen with the aid of a micro-

scope. Yet it represents "vast libraries of information," as Professors Frair and Davis express it in their book *A Case for Creation*. "There is no other example of miniaturization remotely comparable to this," they add. This microlibrary directs the growth of all the body parts, including such details as the color of the eyes and the hair.

Soon after fertilization, the cell divides into two, the two become four, and so on, until there is a mass of cells. Cell division involves duplicating and arranging millions of molecules. It is like a factory automatically dividing into two separate establishments complete with identical machinery that supplies the same product, and with this multiplication being

What Evolutionists Admit About Reproduction

"We do not even in the least know the final cause of sexuality; why new beings should be produced by the union of the two sexual elements, instead of by a process of parthenogenesis [reproduction requiring only one parent] . . . The whole subject is as yet hidden in darkness."—Charles Darwin, 1862.

With reference to Darwin's view, *Science News*, September 8, 1984, adds: "He might have been writing today."

"This book," states Professor George C. Williams in the preface of *Sex and Evolution*, "is written from a conviction that the prevalence of sexual reproduction in higher plants and animals

is inconsistent with current evolutionary theory."

In his book *The Evolution of Sex*, Professor John Maynard Smith presents "a scheme for the origin of sex," calling it "the best scheme I can offer." He states in conclusion: "I cannot pretend to much confidence in this explanation."

"Sex is the queen of problems in evolutionary biology. . . . It seems that some of the most fundamental questions in evolutionary biology have scarcely ever been asked . . . The largest and least ignorable and most obdurate of these questions is, why sex?"—*The Masterpiece of Nature*, by Professor Graham Bell.

repeated over and over again. Then another amazing thing happens.

Differently shaped cells begin to form—nerve cells, muscle cells, skin cells, and all the other types that make up the human body. Cell differentiation is a mystery. So is cell aggregation. “No one knows for sure,” says *Science Digest*, “why certain cells aggregate to form a kidney while others join to form a liver, and so on.” Eventually, the human body reaches full growth, being made up of some 100,000,000,000,000 cells.

According to the theory of evolution, human life evolved from simple microorganisms. But, unlike humans, most microorganisms come from just one parent. They reproduce on their own. How

could this form of reproduction have evolved into the more complex form requiring two parents? Evolutionists find this hard to answer, as shown in the panel on the preceding page.

This big jump is glibly described as “the invention of sexual reproduction.” But some scientists have the courage to object. Professor Jaap Kies, of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa, describes it as “outrageous speculation.”

There is only one satisfying explanation for the reproduction of life. It is a gift from the all-wise Creator, Jehovah God. As the Bible says: “Every good gift and every perfect present is from above.” —James 1:17.

Do You Respect God's Gift of Procreation?

“**A**S I lay upon a hard, slim delivery-room table,” recalls Joanne, “the excruciating pain reached its peak. The doctor was washing his hands but not fast enough. ‘Doctor,’ cried the nurse, ‘the baby is here.’ Rushing to the table, he urged: ‘Once more.’ The pain was almost unbearable! And then?”

“‘Congratulations,’ said the doctor, ‘you have a beautiful little girl.’ How the pain of only a moment ago paled into insignificance as that warm, soft little body was placed close to my breast. My husband’s hand in mine, we gazed upon this beauti-

ful little miracle for which mutual love was responsible.”

God’s gift of procreation is something at which to marvel. After decades of medical practice, Dr. Joseph Krinsky wrote: “Conception and birth are miracles beyond our understanding . . . The very emotion of love and ecstasy that brings about the union of male and female germ cells is a mystery . . . that science cannot explain.” —*The Doctor’s Soliloquy*.

The Bible’s Explanation

‘The emotion of love and ecstasy’ enjoyed by marriage partners is a gift from

God. To married men, the Bible says: "Rejoice with the wife of your youth . . . With her love may you be in an ecstasy constantly." (Proverbs 5:18, 19) Evidently, God purposed that sex relations between a man and his wife should contribute toward a warm and lasting bond. Children resulting from such a union would have a good start in life. Thus God's purpose for humans to fill the earth would be fulfilled in a fine way.—Genesis 1:27, 28.

But many have not enjoyed a good start in life. Some have grown up in a bad moral environment and others come from divided homes. What went wrong? The Bible explains how the first human pair rebelled against God and broke his command. Their children were conceived sometime after that pair sinned. (Genesis 3:1-4:1) Thus their offspring inherited imperfection and the inclination to sin. (Romans 5:12) Because of this, God's gift of procreation has been abused.

Have Clergymen Promoted the Bible's View?

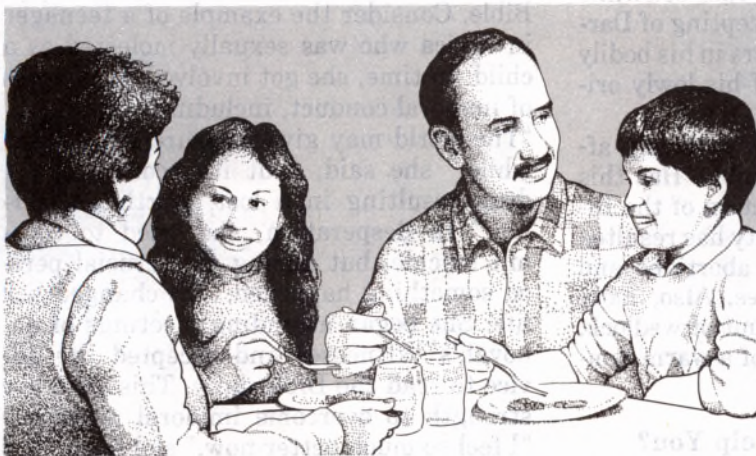
Today, the abuse of sex has reached an extreme. Why is this? Over the past cen-

tury, millions have looked to Christendom's churches for moral guidance. Have the clergy used their influence to promote a respect for procreation?

"The Protestant churches of the main tradition—Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Congregational, Methodist, and many Baptist communities—adjusted themselves relatively easily . . . to the idea of evolution," explains *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*. But consider: Is evolution something to which those claiming to represent the Bible can 'adjust'? No, because evolution is a theory that knows nothing of morality. It denies both the creatorship of God and man's need of salvation from sin and death.—Genesis 2: 7, 18, 19; 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22.

The Catholic Church has also bowed to evolutionary theory. In 1950, Pope Pius XII encouraged evolutionary research in his encyclical *Humani generis*. During 1982, 11 scientists were invited to Vatican City for a discussion on evolution under the chairmanship of the president of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Afterward, the highest scientific body of the Catholic Church published a book containing the claim that "the lineages leading to man, chimpanzee and gorilla seem to have diverged from their common ancestor . . . 5 to 7 million years ago."

The theory of evolution is a rejection of the Bible, which states that man and animals were created separately 'according to their kinds.' (Genesis 1:20-27) And it is interesting that the Bible foretold: "Because of the increasing of lawlessness the love of the



Children need a warm family atmosphere in order to get a good start in life

greater number will cool off." (Matthew 24:3, 11, 12, 33) Has evolution contributed to an "increasing of lawlessness"?

Has Evolution Promoted Moral Lawlessness?

By going along with the theory of evolution, many clergymen have undermined confidence in the Bible. 'If the Genesis account of creation is not true, then what about the rest of the Bible?' people ask. And even clergymen challenge what the Bible says about premarital sex and homosexuality, as well as the Bible's view of the life of the unborn.—Exodus 20:13, 14; 21:22, 23; Leviticus 18:22; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

There is another way in which evolutionary theory has contributed to lawlessness. Recently, during prime television time, millions in a certain "Christian" country watched the story of a father who sexually molested his daughter. According to the journal *Science* 85, the assumption was made that "no person can be held totally responsible for his or her behavior when passion grows strong." Millions of people, the magazine states, are prepared to go along with this view. Why? Because they believe that "humans are so closely related to animals." People, admits this scientific journal, "have become too accepting of Darwin's view that 'Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin.'"

Evolutionary thinking has seriously affected people's view of the Bible. Has this brought blessings? No. Rejection of the Bible's fine standards of morality has resulted in an alarming increase in abortions and sexually transmitted diseases. Also, more and more children are born out of wedlock, never knowing the blessing of a warm family life.

How Can the Bible Help You?

The Bible reveals mankind's Creator, Jehovah, to be a God of mercy. (Psalm

103:10-13) He desires to help human sinners reach his moral standards. (Isaiah 1:18; 55:6-9) For example, consider the ancient city of Colossae, where premarital sex and adultery were common. "In those very things you, too, once walked when you used to live in them," states a Biblical letter addressed to Christians in Colossae. (Colossians 3:5-7) Yet, through the encouragement of God's Word and through the power of his holy spirit, many Colossians made wholesome changes in their life-style. They became true Christians.

Consider, too, the inhabitants of ancient Corinth. There was an immoral city where homosexuals and prostitutes abounded. "That is what some of you were," declares a Biblical letter addressed to Christians living there. "But you have been washed clean, but you have been sanctified, but you have been declared righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the spirit of our God." —1 Corinthians 6:9-11; see also Luke 11:13.

Is the same thing happening today? Yes, for after reading past issues of this magazine, thousands have been helped to bring their lives into harmony with the Bible. Consider the example of a teenager in Africa who was sexually molested as a child. In time, she got involved in all sorts of immoral conduct, including lesbianism. "The world may give pleasure for a short while," she said, "but it becomes like a drug resulting in a lost, worthless feeling." In desperation, she tried to commit suicide, but during this crucial period something happened that changed her life. She began attending meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses and accepted the advice to read the Bible daily. This gave her strength to overcome immoral practices. "I feel so much better now," she says. "It's amazing what Jehovah can do for a person."



God-fearing parents should help children to get the right view of procreation

Youngsters who grow up in a warm Christian family have an advantage. Christian parents should do all they can to explain to their children the marvels of procreation. (Ephesians 6:4) Such children will thus be helped to respect their reproductive organs and not use them as playthings. Self-abuse is often the first step toward more serious forms of immorality.*

* Please see the articles "A Mother Talks to Her Daughters" and "A Father Talks to His Son" in *Awake!* of July 8, 1965, and December 8, 1968. See also chapter 5 in the book *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

Today, there is an urgent need to overcome immoral practices. "On account of those things," the Bible warns, "the wrath of God is coming." (Colossians 3:5, 6) Yes, Jehovah's mercy has limits. He is also a God of justice. (Deuteronomy 32:4) After foretelling the modern-day 'increase of lawlessness,' Jesus said: "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." (Matthew 24:11, 12, 21) This action by God will bring an end to lawlessness and will introduce a righteous new system.—Psalm 37: 9-11, 29.

Plucking Grain on the Sabbath

SOON Jesus and his disciples leave Jerusalem to return to Galilee. It is springtime, and in the fields there are ears of grain on the stalks. The disciples are hungry. So they pluck heads of grain and eat. But since it is a Sabbath, their actions do not go unobserved.

Religious leaders in Jerusalem had just sought to kill Jesus for alleged violations of the Sabbath. Now Phari-

sees bring an accusation. "Look! Your disciples are doing what it is not lawful to do on the sabbath," they charge.

The Pharisees claim that picking grain and rubbing it in the hands to eat is harvesting and threshing. But their strict interpretation of what constitutes work has made the Sabbath burdensome, whereas it was meant to be a joyous, spiritually upbuilding time. So Jesus counters with Scriptural examples to show that Jehovah God never purposed such an unduly strict application of His Sabbath law.

When hungry, Jesus says, David and his men stopped at the tabernacle and ate the loaves of presentation. Even



Jesus' Life and Ministry

though the loaves had already been removed from before Jehovah and replaced by fresh ones, they were ordinarily reserved for the priests to eat. Yet, under the circumstances, David and his men were not condemned for eating them.

Providing another example, Jesus says: "Have you not read in the Law that on the sabbaths the priests in the temple treat the sabbath as not sacred and continue guiltless?" Yes, even on the Sabbath the priests carry on butchering and other work at the temple in preparing animal sacrifices! "But I tell you," Jesus says, "that something greater than the temple is here."

Admonishing the Pharisees, Jesus continues: "If you had understood what

this means, 'I want mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless ones." Then he concludes: "For Lord of the sabbath is what the Son of man is." What did Jesus mean by that?

Jesus was referring to his peaceful Kingdom rule of a thousand years. For 6,000 years humankind has suffered laborious enslavement under Satan the Devil, with violence and war being the order of the day. On the other hand, the great sabbath rule of Christ will be a time of rest from all such suffering and oppression. **Matthew 12:1-8; Leviticus 24:5-9; 1 Samuel 21:1-6; Numbers 28:9; Hosea 6:6.**

- ♦ What charge is made against Jesus' disciples, and how does Jesus answer it?
- ♦ What failing of the Pharisees does Jesus identify?
- ♦ In what way is Jesus "Lord of the sabbath"?



Keep Walking in Divine Light

“God is light.”—1 JOHN 1:5.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES are grateful for divine light and intend to keep walking in it. Doing so is not easy, however, for even early disciples of Jesus Christ were faced with apostasy. But Jesus' loyal apostles restrained its spread, and one who 'acted as a restraint' was the apostle John. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12) As a very old man living in or near Ephesus about 98 C.E., he wrote his first divinely inspired letter. Its counsel helped first-century Christians to keep walking in divine light. But what about us?

² John's words are just as helpful to 20th-century Christians. So during private study of this article and the two that follow it, be sure to read all cited portions of his first inspired letter as they are being considered. In the apostle's letter and our remarks thereon, such pronouns as “we” and “us” refer chiefly to Jesus' anointed followers. But basic principles relating to righteousness, love, faith, and the like, also apply to Christians with earthly hopes.

Sharing That Brings Joy

³ John first speaks about a joyful “shar-

- 1, 2. When and where was First John written, and to whom does it apply?
3. What evidence is there that God's Son lived, suffered, and died as a human, and why is he called “the word of life”?

ing.” (*Read 1 John 1:1-4.*) Jesus, “the word of life,” was with Jehovah “from the beginning” as God's first creation, by means of whom “all other things were created.” (Colossians 1:15, 16) Certain first-century apostates claimed to be sinless and denied Christ's rightful place in the divine arrangement. But Jesus' apostles heard him speak, viewed him attentively, and touched him. They knew that God's power operated through him. So there was eyewitness evidence that he was God's Son who had lived, suffered, and died as a human. He is “the word of life” because “life [eternal] was made manifest” through Jesus, by means of whom God has provided the ransom.—Romans 6:23; 2 Timothy 1:9, 10.

⁴ By what the apostles said and wrote, they ‘bore witness’ about the sinless human Jesus Christ. John ‘reported’ such matters so that anointed ones might have “a sharing,” or fellowship, with other Kingdom heirs, with the Father, and with His Son. This “sharing” denotes unity and causes great joy. (Psalm 133:1-3; John 17:20, 21) Apostates who hate former associates in Jehovah's service no longer have such fellowship with God and Christ.

4. What is denoted by the “sharing” that anointed ones have?

During congregational study of this article and the two that follow it, the conductor should have the cited portions of First John read as time permits

"God Is Light"

⁵ Stated next is a "message" the apostles received from Jesus. (*Read 1 John 1:5-7.*) It is this: "God is light and there is no darkness at all [nothing unholy, immoral, untrue, or wicked] in union with him." So Jehovah's Witnesses shun all sinful practices associated with darkness. (Job 24:14-16; John 3:19-21; Romans 13:11-14; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:6-9) Since certain apostates did not believe that there are sinful works, they were in spiritual darkness. They claimed to have secret knowledge, but God is light, not dark secrecy. He gives spiritual light only to his faithful witnesses.—Matthew 5:14-16; 1 Peter 2:9.

⁶ If we say we have "a sharing" with God but "go on walking in the darkness," leading a sinful life, we "are lying and are not practicing the truth," or living in harmony with it. But if we pursue a course harmonizing with the truth, we are in the light, even as God is. We have "a sharing" with fellow Christians, all of whom are unified in doctrine, spiritual outlook, disciple-making work, and other aspects of pure worship.

⁷ Unlike certain early apostates, we who 'walk in the light' acknowledge that sin is unclean. Jesus' blood "cleanses us from all sin" because we are not willful sinners. (Matthew 12:31, 32) Grateful we are, indeed, that God shows mercy even to erring but repentant Christians.—Psalm 103:8-14; Micah 7:18, 19.

Basis for Propitiation

⁸ John next cites the basis for cleans-

5. What "message" did the apostles receive from Jesus, and how does it affect the conduct of Jehovah's Witnesses?

6. If we 'practice the truth,' what blessing is ours?

7. Why can Jesus' blood 'cleanse us from all sin'?

8, 9. (a) On what basis will Jehovah forgive us?

(b) As regards sin, what were certain apostates saying, and why were they wrong?

ing from sin. (*Read 1 John 1:8-2:2.*) If we say, "We have no sin," we deny the fact that all imperfect humans are sinful, and "the truth is not in us." (Romans 5:12) But God is "faithful" and forgives us "if we confess our sins" to him with a repentant attitude that moves us to abandon wrongdoing. (Proverbs 28:13) God said of those in the new covenant: "Their sin I shall remember no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:7-12) In forgiving them, he is faithful to that promise.

⁹ Furthermore, God is "righteous," always adhering to his standards of righteousness. He has satisfied justice through the ransom and can 'forgive our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness' if we confess our sinfulness with faith in Jesus' sacrifice. (Hebrews 9:11-15) By his death the Messiah carried sins away, even as the sin-laden goat was sent into the wilderness on Atonement Day. (Leviticus 16:20-22; Isaiah 53:5, 8, 11, 12; 1 Peter 2:24) Certain apostates said, "We have not sinned," thus 'making Jehovah a liar.' But "God . . . cannot lie," and his Word shows that all imperfect humans are sinful. (Titus 1:2; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23) Why, saying that "we have not sinned" would mean that God's word is not "in us," is not in our hearts!—Compare Hebrews 8:10.

¹⁰ John writes "these things" about sin, forgiveness, and cleansing so that we may not practice sin. His words should move us to strive earnestly not to sin. (1 Corinthians 15:34) But if we do commit "a sin" and are repentant, we have "a helper with the Father"—"Jesus Christ, a righteous one," who pleads our cause with God. (Hebrews 7:26; compare John 17:9, 15, 20.) Jesus is "a

10. In what way is Jesus "a propitiatory sacrifice"?

Are you showing appreciation for Jesus' sacrifice?

propitiatory sacrifice." His death satisfied justice and made it possible for God to extend mercy and remove the charge of sin in the case of spiritual Israelites and 'the whole world,' including the "great crowd." (Romans 6:23; Galatians 6:16; Revelation 7:4-14) How we appreciate that sacrifice!

Obey God and Show Love

¹¹ To keep walking in divine light, we must obey Jehovah. (*Read 1 John 2:3-6.*) We realize that we "have come to know" God, understanding him and his qualities, if "we continue observing his commandments." Anyone claiming to know Jehovah but failing to obey him "is a liar." Conversely, "the love of God has been made perfect," or complete, if we observe his word. "By this" evidence of obeying and loving God, we know we are "in union with him." And we are obliged to walk as his Son did, in the disciple-making work, in our relationships with others, and so forth.

¹² Brotherly love is also vital. (*Read 1 John 2:7, 8.*) John is writing "an old commandment" that the faithful have had "from the beginning" of their lives as Christians. It is "old" because Jesus gave it years earlier when he told his followers to 'love one another just as he loved them.' (John 13:34) Yet it is also "new" because it goes beyond the neighbor love required by the Law and calls for willingness to

surrender one's soul in behalf of fellow believers. (Leviticus 19:18; John 15:12, 13) Since our self-sacrificing love proves that compliance with this "new commandment" is 'true both in Christ's case and in ours, the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining' among us.

¹³ Yet, who really is "in the light"? (*Read 1 John 2:9-11.*) Well, "he that says he is in the light and yet hates his brother" is in spiritual darkness "up to right now." But "he that loves his brother remains in the light," and in his case there is no "cause for stumbling." Here the Greek word suggests a baited animal trap and denotes something that can bring about a fall into sin. Actually, a professing Christian who hates his brother "does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes." (Matthew 13:13-15) Will this warning move you to avoid spiritual darkness by refusing to let personal differences, the lies of apostates, or anything else destroy your brotherly love?

Basis for Confidence

¹⁴ John next expresses confidence in the "little [young] children," apparently meaning the whole congregation. (*Read 1 John 2:12-14.*) Our sins have been forgiven 'for the sake of Christ's name,' for only through him has God made salvation possible. (Acts 4:12) Anointed ones "know the Father" because he has begotten them by his spirit. Some are "fathers"—likely older, more experienced, and spiritually advanced believers. They know Jesus, who existed "from the beginning" in that God created him before all other things.

11. By what evidence do we know we are "in union with" God?

12. What "old commandment" do Christians have, and how is it also "new"?

13. According to 1 John 2:9-11, who is "in the light" and who is not?

14. Who are the "little children" and the "fathers" addressed by John?

¹⁵ The "young men" John addresses may be younger, less experienced Christians. They "have conquered the wicked one," Satan, by not succumbing to his "designs." (2 Corinthians 2:11) For example, today this would include avoiding unclean entertainment, sensual music, and pornography, which can erode Christian principles and result in a fall into sexual immorality. The "young men" are victorious over Satan because they are spiritually "strong" and "the word of God" remains in them. May we be like them in accepting God's spiritual provisions, rejecting apostasy, and continuing to walk in divine light.

A Love We Must Not Have

¹⁶ Whether we are younger or older Christians, there is a love we must not have. (*Read 1 John 2:15-17.*) We must 'not love the world or anything in it.' Rather, we need to keep from becoming spotted by the corruption of unrighteous human society and must not breathe in its "spirit," or be motivated by its sinful dominant attitude. (Ephesians 2:1, 2; James 1:27) If we were to have worldly views and aspirations, "the love of the Father" would not be in us. (James 4:4) That really is food for prayerful thought, is it not?

¹⁷ "Everything in the world" does not originate with God. This includes "the desire of the flesh," the satisfying of which means gratifying such sinful yearnings as immoral sexual desires. (1 Corinthians 6:15-20; Galatians 5:19-21) Also to be avoided is yielding to "the desire of the eyes."

15. (a) Who are the "young men" John addresses, and how have they "conquered the wicked one"? (b) Give an example of how we might 'conquer' Satan today.

16. What love must we not have, but what would be true of us if we had worldly views and aspirations?

17. Christians must not satisfy what worldly desires?

The visually desirable forbidden fruit enticed Eve, and David's viewing of Bathsheba while she was bathing led to gross sin. (Genesis 3:6; 2 Samuel 11:2-17) To keep walking in divine light, then, we must avoid debased entertainment and other things that appeal to sinful desires and corrupt the heart.—Proverbs 2:10-22; 4:20-27.

¹⁸ Also originating with the world is "the showy display of one's means of life." A proud person may boast about his wealth, his wardrobe, and the like, all of which can be lost. His "showy display" may impress some people and bring fleeting praise but not divine blessing.—Matthew 6:2, 5, 16, 19-21; James 4:16.

¹⁹ Remember that "the world is passing away" and will be destroyed. (2 Peter 3:6) Its desires and hopes will perish with it, as will individuals loving it. "But," says John, "he that does the will of God remains forever." So let us keep eternal life in view by 'repudiating worldly desires' and continuing to walk in divine light.—Titus 2:11-14.

Guard Against Apostasy

²⁰ John now warns against antichrists. (*Read 1 John 2:18, 19.*) He reminds fellow believers that from the apostles they "heard that antichrist is coming." The appearance of "many antichrists" proved that it was the "last hour," the final part of the apostolic period. Although those 'against Christ' formed a composite "antichrist," many individual antichrists pretended to worship God but "were not of our sort" and abandoned true Christianity. We are glad that the departure

18. Why is "the showy display of one's means of life" pointless, and what does it fail to bring?

19. What will happen to this world, and how should this fact affect us?

20. Those 'against Christ' were called what, and their appearance proved that what had arrived?

or expulsion of such ones today prevents corruption of the congregation.

²¹ Apostate views are rejected by loyal spirit-begotten Christians. Since “an anointing from the holy one,” Jehovah, helps them to understand his Word, ‘all of them have knowledge.’ (*Read 1 John 2:20, 21.*) They surely know “the truth” as it relates to Jesus Christ, whereas the apostates have erroneous ideas about him. Since “no lie originates with the truth,” all lovers of Jehovah reject such false views and those advocating them.

²² After all, “who is the liar if it is not the one that denies that Jesus is the Christ,” God’s Anointed One? (*Read 1 John 2:22-25.*) Why, ‘the one that denies the Father and the Son is the anti-christ’! Interestingly, when an early associate of Bible student Charles T. Russell denied the ransom, Russell withdrew from fellowship with him and began publishing this journal, which has always declared the truth about Christ’s origin, Messianic role, and loving service as the “propitiatory sacrifice.”

²³ Apostates who deny Christ do not have Jehovah as their Friend. (*John 5:23*) But we who publicly ‘confess the Son have the Father,’ being in an approved relationship with God. (*Matthew 10:32, 33*) Jesus’ loyal early followers clung to what they had heard about God’s Son “from the beginning” of their lives as Christians. And if the same truth is in our hearts, we will “abide in union” with both God and Christ and will receive “the promised thing,” everlasting life.—*John 17:3.*

21. Why do spirit-begotten Christians “have knowledge,” and what “truth” do they know?

22. What did C. T. Russell do when one of his early associates denied the ransom?

23. How does ‘confessing the Son’ affect our relationship with God, and our prospects?

What Are Your Answers?

☐ What evidence does John give that God’s Son lived, suffered, and died as a man?

☐ In what way is Jesus Christ “a propitiatory sacrifice”?

☐ What command do Christians have that is both “old” and “new”?

☐ What will happen to this world, and how should this fact affect us as Christians?

☐ How can anointed ones be sure that they are walking in divine light?

Taught by Jehovah God

²⁴ To walk in divine light and not be misled by apostates, we need proper spiritual instruction. (*Read 1 John 2:26-29.*) Spirit-begotten ones have an “anointing” by holy spirit, have come to know God and his Son, and “do not need anyone [an apostate] to be teaching” them. By his anointing spirit, God “is teaching” spiritual Israelites “about all things” needed in order to worship him acceptably. (*John 4:23, 24; 6:45*) We are delighted that as Jehovah’s Witnesses we receive such spiritual instruction from God through “the faithful and discreet slave.” —*Matthew 24:45-47.*

²⁵ John urges well-instructed anointed ones to “remain in union with” God. Those “in union with” Jehovah are similarly at unity with his Son. (*John 14:19-21*) Such unity is urged so that “when he [Christ] is made manifest we may have freeness of speech and not be shamed away from him at

24. Who have an “anointing” by holy spirit, and why do they “not need anyone to be teaching” them?

25, 26. (a) Why can anointed ones have “freeness of speech”? (b) What does it mean to ‘practice righteousness’?

his presence," that is, during his Parousia.

²⁶ Since we are now living during Jesus' "presence," how can we make sure that we have nothing to be ashamed of and are really walking in divine light? By 'practicing righteousness.' 'If we know that God is righteous,' John reasons, 'we are aware that everyone practicing righteousness has been born from him.' 'Practicing righteousness' means obeying God's commandments,

avoiding unrighteousness, and engaging in such fine works as making disciples and assisting fellow believers. (Mark 13:10; Philippians 4:14-19; 1 Timothy 6:17, 18) Being "born from" God means being "born again" as his spiritual children.—John 3:3-8.

²⁷ So John has shown how to keep walking in divine light. Next he shows how to live as God's children. What does this require?

27. What will the apostle John show us next?

Go On Living as Children of God

"Everyone who does not carry on righteousness does not originate with God, neither does he who does not love his brother."—1 JOHN 3:10.

JEHOVAH has a universal family, and some humans now are part of it. They are God's children. But how do they differ from others?

² In his first divinely inspired letter, the apostle John identifies these highly favored humans. He also provides counsel that assists them to go on living as children of God. And what he says will benefit all dedicated witnesses of Jehovah.

How Great God's Love!

³ John cites the hope of anointed Christians. (*Read 1 John 3:1-3.*) What great love Jehovah has shown by adopting them as spiritual sons, making them "children of God"! (Romans 5:8-10) Their godly spirit,

1, 2. As we continue our study of First John, what counsel of the apostle will we consider?

3. How have some been made "children of God," and how does the world view them?

objectives, and hopes are not shared by the "world"—unrighteous human society. Such worldly society hates Christ and his followers and thus the Father also. (John 15:17-25) So the world may know anointed ones as individuals but not as God's children because "it has not come to know" Jehovah.—1 Corinthians 2:14.

⁴ Right now, anointed ones are God's children. "But," says John, "as yet it has not been made manifest what we shall be" after dying in faithfulness and being resurrected to heavenly life with spirit bodies. (Philippians 3:20, 21) However, when God is "made manifest," they will be "like him" and will "see him just as he is," as "Jehovah the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:17, 18) Everyone having "this hope" of heavenly life

4. Everyone having the hope of heavenly life should do what?

should be moved to purify himself "just as that one [Jehovah] is pure." Although anointed ones are now imperfect, they should be living clean lives that harmonize with their hope of seeing the pure, holy God in the heavenly realm.—Psalm 99:5, 9; 2 Corinthians 7:1.

Practice Righteousness

⁵ Living as God's children also means doing what is righteous. (Read 1 John 3: 4, 5.) "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness" from the standpoint of Jehovah, whose laws the sinner violates. (Isaiah 33:22; James 4:12) All "sin is lawlessness," a transgressing of God's laws. Practicing sin is contrary to the Christian spirit, and we are grateful that Jesus Christ "was made manifest" as a human "to take away our sins." Since "there is no sin in him," he was able to present to God the one completely satisfactory sin-atoning sacrifice.—Isaiah 53: 11, 12; Hebrews 7:26-28; 1 Peter 2:22-25.

⁶ "Everyone remaining in union with him [the Son] does not practice sin." (Read 1 John 3:6.) Being imperfect, we may commit an act of sin at times. But sinning is not a practice with those who remain in union with the Son and, hence, in union with the Father. Practicers of sin have not "seen" Jesus with the eye of faith; nor do such habitual sinners as the apostates "know" and appreciate Christ as the sin-atoning "Lamb of God."—John 1:36.

⁷ John warns against being misled. (Read 1 John 3:7, 8.) "Let no one mislead you," says the apostle, adding: "He who

5, 6. Everyone practicing sin is doing what from God's standpoint, but in this regard, what is true of those remaining "in union with" Jesus Christ?

7, 8. According to 1 John 3:7, 8, the deliberate practicer of sin originates with whom, but God's Son "was made manifest" to do what in this regard?

carries on righteousness [by keeping God's law] is righteous, just as that one [Jesus Christ] is righteous." Our sinfulness prevents us from being righteous to the same degree as the Great Exemplar. But by Jehovah's undeserved kindness, Jesus' anointed followers can now go on living as children of God.

⁸ The deliberate practicer of sin "originates with the Devil," who has been sinning "from the beginning" of his career of rebellion against Jehovah. But God's Son "was made manifest" to "break up" Satan's "works" of promoting sin and evil. This includes undoing the effects of Adamic death by sin atonement through Christ and the resurrecting of those in Sheol (Hades), as well as the crushing of Satan's head. (Genesis 3:15; 1 Corinthians 15:26) Meanwhile, let us, the anointed remnant and the "great crowd," guard against practicing sin and unrighteousness.

Keep God's Law

⁹ John next distinguishes between God's children and those of the Devil. (Read 1 John 3:9-12.) Everyone "born from God does not carry on sin," or make it a practice. Jehovah's "reproductive seed," or holy spirit that gives one "a new birth" to a heavenly hope, remains in the individual unless he resists and thus 'grieves' the spirit, so that God withdraws it. (1 Peter 1: 3, 4, 18, 19, 23; Ephesians 4:30) To remain one of God's children, the spirit-begotten Christian "cannot practice sin." As a "new creation" with the "new personality," he strives against sin. He has "escaped from the corruption that is in the world through lust," and it is not in his heart to be a habitual wrongdoer.—2 Corinthians 5: 16, 17; Colossians 3:5-11; 2 Peter 1:4.

9. In what sense is it that the spirit-begotten Christian "cannot practice sin," and why is this so?

¹⁰ One way to distinguish between God's children and those of the Devil is this: "Everyone who does not carry on righteousness does not originate with God." Unrighteousness is so characteristic of the Devil's children that they "do not sleep unless they do badness, and their sleep has been snatched away unless they cause someone to stumble," which is what apostates would like to do to loyal Christians. —Proverbs 4:14-16.

¹¹ Furthermore, "neither does he [originate with God] who does not love his brother." In fact, the "message" we have heard "from the beginning" of our lives as Jehovah's Witnesses is that "we should have love for one another." (John 13:34) So we are "not like Cain," who showed that he "originated with the wicked one" by 'slaughtering his brother' in a violent manner characteristic of the manslayer Satan. (Genesis 4:2-10; John 8:44) Cain slaughtered Abel "because his own works were wicked, but those of his brother were righteous." Surely, reflecting on Cain's course should move us to guard against similar hatred of our spiritual brothers.

10. What is one way to distinguish between God's children and those of the Devil?

11. (a) What is another way to identify those who are not God's children? (b) Reflecting on Cain's course should move us to do what?

In Our Next Issue

■ Are the Dead Alive?

■ Youths—Do Not Be Deceived

■ Is Your Young Child 'Growing to Salvation'?

Love "in Deed and Truth"

¹² If we were to copy Cain, we would be spiritually dead. (*Read 1 John 3:13-15.*) He hated his brother so much that he killed him, and we are not surprised that the world similarly hates us, for Jesus foretold this. (Mark 13:13) But "we know [or, are confident that] we have passed over from [spiritual] death to life [eternal], because we love the brothers," our fellow witnesses of Jehovah. Because of that brotherly love, coupled with faith in Christ, no longer are we 'dead' in trespasses and sins, but God has lifted from us His condemnation, and we have been raised out of spiritual death, being given the hope of everlasting life. (John 5:24; Ephesians 2:1-7) Loveless apostates have no such hope, for "he who does not love remains in [spiritual] death."

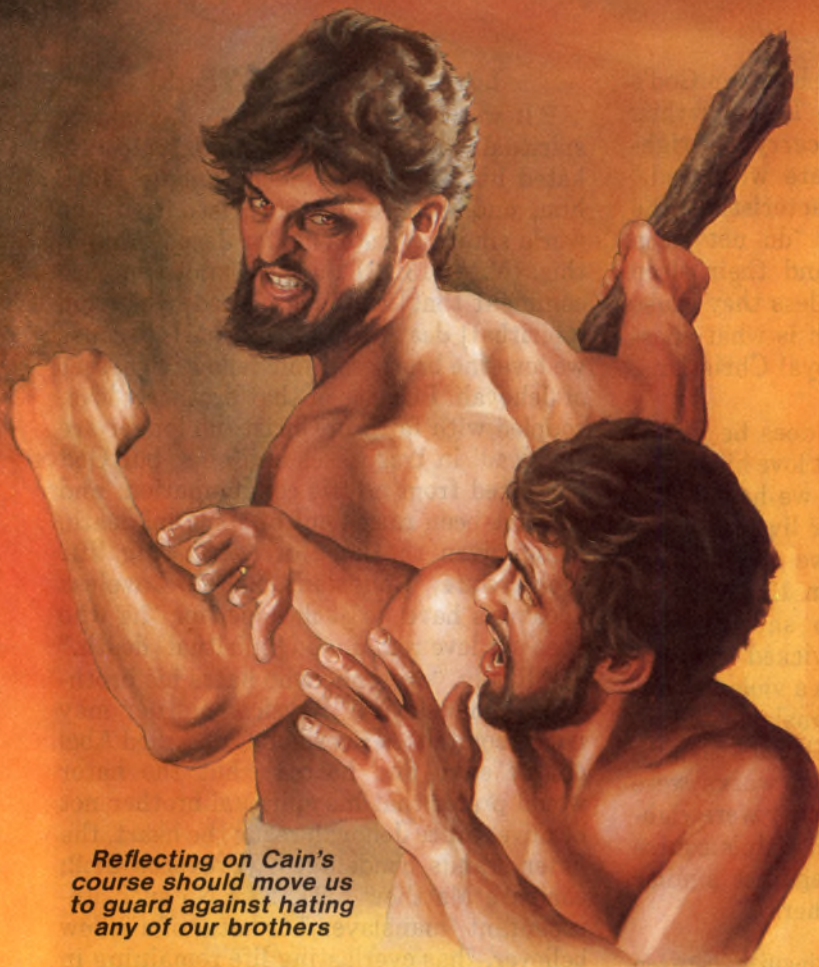
¹³ Really, "everyone who hates his brother is a manslayer." Physical murder may not be committed (as when Cain killed Abel out of envy and hatred), but the hater would prefer that his spiritual brother not be alive. Since Jehovah reads the heart, the hater stands condemned. (Proverbs 21:2; compare Matthew 5:21, 22.) No such unrepentant "manslayer," or hater of a fellow believer, "has everlasting life remaining in him." So if we hate any fellow Witness secretly, should we not pray for Jehovah's help in changing our spirit to one of brotherly love?

¹⁴ If we are to go on living as children of God, we must show brotherly love in word and deed. (*Read 1 John 3:16-18.*) This should be possible, for "we have come to know love, because that one [Jesus Christ] surrendered his soul [or, "life"] for us." Since Jesus showed love to that extent, we

12. How do "we know we have passed over from death to life," and what does this mean?

13. If we hate our brother, why should we make this a matter of prayer?

14. To what extent are we called upon to show brotherly love?



Reflecting on Cain's course should move us to guard against hating any of our brothers

should display similar principled love (Greek, *agápe*) for fellow believers. In times of persecution, for example, "we are under obligation to surrender our souls for our brothers," even as Prisca and Aquila "risked their own necks for [the apostle Paul's] soul."—Romans 16:3, 4; John 15:12, 13.

¹⁵ If we would give our lives for our brothers, we should be willing to do less demanding things in their behalf. Suppose we have "this world's means for supporting life"—money, food, clothing, and the like,

15. If a brother is in need and we have "this world's means for supporting life," what does love require of us?

made possible by the world. We may 'behold' a brother in need, not just casually seeing this but gazing upon the situation. His plight may cause "the door" of our "tender compassions," or deepest feelings, to be opened. But what if we slam that "door" shut by allowing selfishness to thwart our intention to help him? Then "in what way does the love of God" remain in us? It is not enough merely to talk about brotherly love. As God's children, we must manifest it "in deed and truth." For example, if a brother is famished, he needs food, not mere words.—James 2:14-17.

Hearts That Do Not Condemn Us

¹⁶ John next points to assurances that we are Jehovah's children. (*Read 1 John 3:19-24.*) "We shall know that we originate with the truth" and are not victims of apostate delusion "by this"—the fact that we display brotherly love. Thus we "assure our hearts" before God. (Psalm 119:11) If our hearts do condemn us, perhaps because we feel that we have not shown fellow worshipers enough love, remember that "God is greater than our hearts and knows all things." He is merciful because he is aware of our "unhypocritical brotherly affection," our fight against sin, and our efforts to live in a way pleasing

16. (a) How is God "greater than our hearts"? (b) According to John, why does Jehovah answer our prayers?

to him. (1 Peter 1:22; Psalm 103:10-14) "If our hearts do not condemn us" because there are deeds proving our brotherly love, and we are not guilty of concealed sins, "we have freeness of speech toward God" in prayer. (Psalm 19:12) And he answers our prayers "because we are observing his commandments and are doing the things that are pleasing in his eyes."

¹⁷ If we expect to have our prayers answered, we must keep God's "commandment" involving these two requirements: (1) We must have faith in Jesus' "name," accepting the ransom and acknowledging his God-given authority. (Philippians 2:9-11) (2) We must also "be loving one another" just as Jesus commanded. (John 15:12, 17) Surely, anyone with faith in Christ's name should love all others exercising such faith.

¹⁸ A person observing God's commandments "remains in union with him," at unity with Jehovah. (Compare John 17:20, 21.) But how do "we gain the knowledge" that God is "remaining in union with us"? We know this "owing to the [holy] spirit which he gave us." Possession of God's holy spirit and the ability to display its fruitage, including brotherly love, proves that we are in union with Jehovah. —Galatians 5:22, 23.

Be on Guard!

¹⁹ John next shows how we must be on guard. (*Read 1 John 4:1.*) We must not believe every spirit, or "inspired expression," but we should "test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God." Why? "Because many false prophets have gone forth into the world."

17. God's "commandment" involves what two requirements?

18. How do we know that Jehovah is "remaining in union with us"?

19, 20. Why "test the inspired expressions," and what help does John provide in this regard?

At least some of these deceptive teachers were then traveling about, associating with various congregations, and seeking to "draw away the disciples after themselves." (Acts 20:29, 30; 2 John 7) So the faithful needed to be on guard.

²⁰ Some first-century Christians had "discernment of inspired utterances," a miraculous gift of God's active force evidently enabling them to determine whether inspired expressions originated with Jehovah. (1 Corinthians 12:4, 10) But John's warning seems applicable to Christians in general and is helpful today when apostates try to subvert the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses. Although the spirit's gift of 'discerning inspired utterances' has passed away, John's words provide the means of determining whether teachers are moved by God's spirit or by demonic influences.

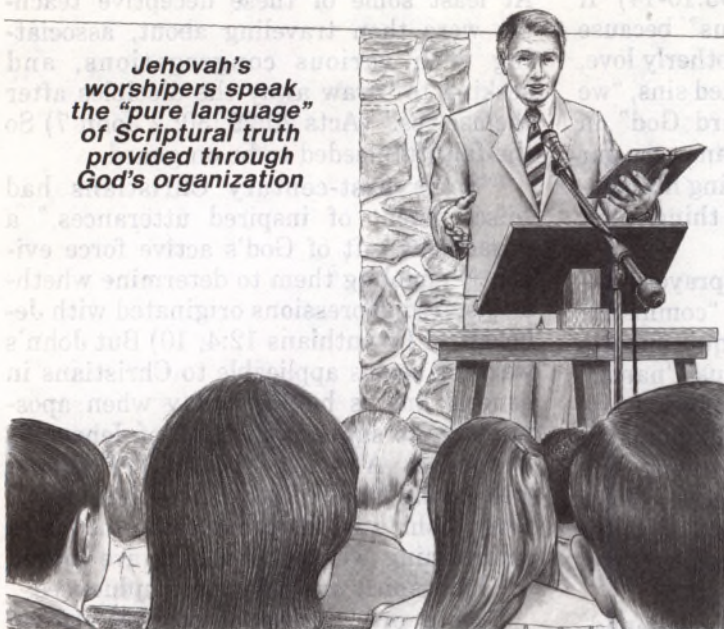
²¹ Note one means of testing. (*Read 1 John 4:2, 3.*) "Every inspired expression that confesses Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh originates with God." We acknowledge that Jesus once lived as a human and is God's Son, and our faith moves us to teach others such truths. (Matthew 3:16, 17; 17:5; 20:28; 28:19, 20) "But every inspired expression that does not confess Jesus does not originate with God." Rather, "this is the antichrist's inspired expression" against Christ and against Scriptural teachings about him. Evidently, John and other apostles had warned that "the antichrist's inspired expression" was coming. (2 Corinthians 11:3, 4; 2 Peter 2:1) Since false teachers then threatened true Christians, John could say, "It is already in the world."

²² Another way to test "inspired expressions" is to note who listens to them. (*Read 1 John 4:4-6.*) As Jehovah's

21. What was one means of testing "inspired expressions"?

22. What is another way to test "inspired expressions"?

**Jehovah's
worshippers speak
the "pure language"
of Scriptural truth
provided through
God's organization**



servants, we have "conquered," or overcome, the false teachers, triumphing over their attempts to draw us away from God's truth. This spiritual victory has been possible because God, who is "in union with" loyal Christians, "is greater than he [the Devil] that is in union with the world," or unrighteous human society. (2 Corinthians 4:4) Because apostates "originate with the world" and have its wicked spirit, "they speak what proceeds from the world and the world listens to them." Since we have Jehovah's spirit, we can detect the unspiritual nature of their "inspired expressions" and therefore we reject them.

²³ But we know that "we originate with God" because "he that gains the knowledge of God listens to us." Sheeplike ones realize that we teach the truth based on God's Word. (Compare John 10:4, 5, 16,

23. Who listen to us and recognize that we are led by God's spirit?

26, 27.) Of course, "he that does not originate with God does not listen to us." The false prophets, or teachers, did not listen to John or to others who 'originated with God' and imparted spiritually sound instruction. So "this is how we take note of the inspired expression of truth and the inspired expression of error." We who comprise the family of Jehovah's worshippers speak the "pure language" of Scriptural truth provided through God's organization. (Zephaniah 3:9) And from what we say, it is evident to sheeplike ones that we are

led by God's holy spirit.

²⁴ To this point, John has set forth some basic requirements we must meet if we are to go on living as God's children. Next he will show why we must always display love and faith.

24. What will John next point out?

What Is Your Reply?

- ☐ How are some made "children of God"?
- ☐ How can we distinguish between God's children and those of the Devil?
- ☐ Reflecting on Cain's course should move us to do what?
- ☐ To what extent should we show brotherly love?
- ☐ How can "inspired expressions" be tested?

Always Display Love and Faith

"He that remains in love remains in union with God." "And this is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith."

—1 JOHN 4:16; 5:4.

JEHOVAH is the personification of love, and those desiring to please him must display this godly quality. The apostle John makes this clear in the latter part of his first inspired letter.

² True Christians must also display faith. Only in this way can they overcome the world and remain secure in Jehovah's favor. As we study the final portion of John's letter, then, let us prayerfully consider the importance of displaying love and faith.

'Let Us Love One Another'

³ John emphasizes the importance of love. (*Read 1 John 4:7, 8.*) Christian "beloved ones" are urged to "continue loving one another, because love is from God," Jehovah being its Source. "Everyone who loves has been born from God [as a spirit-begotten individual] and gains the knowledge of God," being acquainted with Jehovah's qualities and purposes, and how he expresses love. Today this "knowledge of God" has also been acquired by the "great crowd" of Christ's "other sheep."

⁴ Knowing God means truly appreciating his qualities, loving him completely, and sticking to him as our Sovereign. But "he that does not love has not come to know

God." Those who do not display Christian love have not "come to know God, because God is love." Yes, love is Jehovah's dominant quality, evident in his spiritual and material provisions for mankind.

⁵ Cited next is the greatest evidence that "God is love." (*Read 1 John 4:9, 10.*) John says: "By this the love of God was made manifest in our case [as sinners worthy of death], because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him." Jesus is Jehovah's "only-begotten Son" in that he was God's sole direct creation. (John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:13-16) And Jesus 'was sent forth into the world' by becoming a human, publicly carrying out his ministry, and then dying a sacrificial death. (John 11:27; 12:46) 'Gaining life eternal through him,' whether in heaven or on earth, calls for faith in the merit of his ransom sacrifice.

⁶ We were yet sinners who did not love God when "he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." Christ's sacrifice made it possible for us to attain a restoration to right relations with God. (Romans 3:24, 25; Hebrews 2:17) Do you appreciate this greatest manifestation of unmerited love on the part of our heavenly Father?

1, 2. What qualities are particularly emphasized at 1 John 4:7-5:21?

3, 4. What relation does displaying love have to our knowing God?

5. What is the greatest evidence that "God is love"?

6. While we were yet sinners who did not love God, what did he do?

***Since Jehovah loved us while
we were yet sinners, 'we
are under obligation to
love one another'***

⁷ God's love for us should affect our attitude toward others. (*Read 1 John 4: 11-13.*) Since he loved us while we were yet sinners, "we are ourselves under obligation to love one another." Among humans, "at no time has anyone beheld God." So we cannot say that we love Jehovah because of having seen him. (Exodus 33:20; John 1:18; 4:24) By displaying love, however, we show that we love the Source of this quality. Our brotherly love proves that "God remains in us and his love is made perfect," or reaches full expression, in us. And we know that "we are remaining in union with" Jehovah "because he has imparted his spirit to us." Our display of brotherly love proves that Jehovah's spirit operates within us, for love is one of its fruits. (Galatians 5:22, 23) This shows that we know God and have his approval.

⁸ There is additional evidence that we are "in union with God." (*Read 1 John 4: 14-16a.*) Having "beheld" what Jesus did on earth and how he suffered in behalf of mankind, John could 'bear witness that the Father has sent forth His Son as Savior of the world' of sinful mankind. (John 4:42; 12:47) Moreover, 'God remains in union with us and we with him' if we make heartfelt confession that Jesus Christ is his Son. This calls for exercising faith and giving public testimony that Jesus is the

7. (a) Since we cannot say that we love Jehovah because of having seen him, how can we show that we do love him? (b) Our display of brotherly love proves what?

8. What additional evidence is there that we are "in union with God"?

Son of God. (John 3:36; Romans 10:10) Our confidence in "the love that God has in our case" provides further evidence that whether we are of the anointed remnant or of the "other sheep," we are in union with Jehovah.

⁹ John next shows that love can be "made perfect." (*Read 1 John 4:16b, 17.*) We are reminded that "God is love." Because we 'remain in love,' displaying this fruit of Jehovah's spirit, we 'remain in union with God.' If love for Jehovah "has been made perfect with us," having reached full expression toward him, we will love fellow believers. (Compare verse 12.) "Perfect" love also promotes "freeness of speech" toward God in prayer now and "in the day of judgment" that is associated with Christ's presence. Those displaying such love will then have no reason to fear that God's judgment will be adverse. If we display love, in that sense "just as that one [Jesus] is, so are we ourselves in this world." Yes, we are like him in enjoying favor as God's children in this world of mankind alienated from God.

¹⁰ Those within whom love has been made "perfect" do not experience fear that inhibits prayer. (*Read 1 John 4:18, 19.*) "Fear exercises a restraint" that would keep us from approaching Jehovah freely. So if we are experiencing such fear, 'we have not been made perfect in love.' But if we have been "made perfect in love," this quality fills our hearts, impels us to do the divine will, and moves us to stay close to our heavenly Father in prayer. We certainly have reason to love Jehovah and pray to him, for as John says, 'We love, because God first loved us.'

9. (a) In what sense can love for God be "made perfect," and how will this affect our relationship with others? (b) "Perfect" love promotes what?

10. Those within whom love has been made "perfect" do not experience what?

¹¹ Of course, it is not enough merely to say we love God. (*Read 1 John 4:20, 21.*) Anyone saying, "I love God" while hating his spiritual brother "is a liar." Since we can see our brother and observe his godly traits, showing love for him should be easier than loving an invisible God. Indeed, "he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot be loving God, whom he has not seen." So it is reasonable that we obey this "commandment": "The one who loves God should be loving his brother also."

Who Conquers the World?

¹² John next shows what loving God really means. (*Read 1 John 5:1-5.*) First, the apostle points out that "everyone believing that Jesus is the Christ" (the Messiah, or Jehovah's Anointed One) "has been born from God," or been spirit-begotten by Jehovah. Moreover, everyone who loves the Begetter, Jehovah, loves anyone else "born from that one." Yes, all of God's anointed children love him and would be expected to love one another. Such brotherly love also is characteristic of the "great crowd" of "other sheep" having earthly hopes. —John 10:16; Revelation 7:9.

¹³ 'We know we love God's children when we love God and keep his commandments.' In fact, 'the love of God means that we observe his commandments.' Since we love God and righteousness, we are happy to keep his commandments. John says that they are not "burdensome" to us "because everything that has been born from God conquers the world." "Everything" may denote God-given power to 'conquer the

11. Why is it reasonable that we obey the command: "The one who loves God should be loving his brother also"?

12. Since we love God, what other love would we be expected to have?

13. (a) Why are God's commandments not "burdensome" to us? (b) How do we 'conquer the world'?

Our faith in God, his Word, and his only-begotten Son enables us to 'conquer the world'

world,' or triumph over unrighteous human society with its temptations to break Jehovah's commandments. (John 16:33) "The conquest that has conquered the world" is "our faith" in God, his Word, and his Son. If we have "faith that Jesus is the Son of God," we 'conquer the world' by rejecting its wrong thinking and immoral ways, and by keeping God's commandments.

¹⁴ Since faith in Jesus is so important to our being 'world conquerors,' John cites evidence given about Christ by "three witness bearers." (*Read 1 John 5:6-8.*) John first says that Jesus "came by means of water." When Jesus was baptized in water to symbolize the presenting of himself to God, Jehovah declared: "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved." (Matthew 3:17) Christ was also shown to be God's Son "with the blood" he poured out in his death as a ransom. (1 Timothy 2:5, 6) Moreover, John says, "the [holy] spirit is that which is bearing witness, because the spirit is the truth." The descending of the spirit upon Jesus at his baptism proved him to be God's Son. (Matthew 3:16; John 1:29-34) Jehovah's spirit enabled Jesus to carry out his commission and perform powerful works. (John 10:37, 38; Acts 10:38) By the spirit, God caused unusual darkness, an earthquake, and the rending of the temple curtain when Jesus died, and then by the same spirit God resurrected him. —Matthew 27:45-54.

14. (a) How did Jesus come "by means of water"? (b) How was Christ shown to be God's Son "with the blood"? (c) How did the holy spirit 'bear witness' about Jesus Christ?

¹⁵ Thus "there are three witness bearers" to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. These are (1) the holy spirit, (2) the water of Jesus' baptism and what it stood for (the presenting of himself to Jehovah), and (3) the blood he poured out in death as a ransom. These three "are in agreement" in giving evidence that Jesus is God's Son, in whom we must have true faith if we are to receive eternal life.—Compare Deuteronomy 19:15.

Witness Borne by God

¹⁶ God himself has borne witness concerning his Son. (*Read 1 John 5:9-12.*) "If we receive [as truthful] the witness [imperfect] men give [as we customarily do in conversation and in court], the witness God gives is greater." (John 8:17, 18) Since 'God cannot lie,' we can place implicit trust in 'the witness he has borne concerning his Son.' And Jehovah has said that Jesus Christ is his Son. (Titus 1:2; Matthew 3:17; 17:5) Moreover, God was behind the "three witness bearers," that is, His holy spirit, the water of Jesus' baptism, and Christ's shed blood.

¹⁷ "The person putting his faith in the Son of God has the witness given in his own case," or "in himself," because all the evidence convinces him that Jesus is God's Son. But "the person not having faith in God" as a reliable witness concerning His Son makes Jehovah appear to be a liar. Of course, the sum of the witness given is "that God gave us everlasting life, and this life is in his Son." Only through faith in Jesus as God's Son is salvation to eternal life possible. (John 11:25, 26; 14:6; 17:1-3) So "he that has the Son" by believing in him has the undeserved gift of life eternal.

15. What are the "three witness bearers"?

16. How has Jehovah borne witness concerning Jesus?

17. What is the only way that salvation is possible?

(John 20:31) But "this life" will not be enjoyed by anyone lacking faith in Jesus as God's Son.

Prayer Works!

¹⁸ John next gives the underlying purpose of his letter and discusses prayer. (*Read 1 John 5:13-15.*) He has written "these things" so that it may be known 'that we have life everlasting.' This is our conviction as those putting faith in the "name" of God's Son. (Compare 1 John 3:23.) And apostates, who are not of our sort, cannot destroy that faith.—1 John 2:18, 19.

¹⁹ Toward God we have "confidence," or "outspokenness," that no matter what we ask in prayer "according to his will, he hears us." We rightly pray for such things as the sanctification of Jehovah's name, his spirit, godly wisdom, and deliverance from the wicked one. (Matthew 6:9, 13; Luke 11:13; James 1:5-8) And "we know we are to have the things asked since we have asked them of him," the "Hearer of prayer."—Psalm 65:2.

²⁰ John next speaks of prayer and two types of sin. (*Read 1 John 5:16, 17.*) "A sin that does not incur death" is not willful, and it would not be wrong to pray that the repentant wrongdoer be forgiven. (Acts 2:36-38; 3:19; James 5:13-18) But it would be wrong to pray concerning "a sin that does incur death" because this is willful sin against the holy spirit, for which forgiveness is impossible. (Matthew 12:22-32; Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-31) Such sinners go to Gehenna, experiencing eternal destruction in "the second death." (Reve-

18. Why has John written "these things"?

19. (a) According to 1 John 5:14, 15, we have what "confidence" toward God? (b) What are some things for which we can rightly pray?

20, 21. (a) What is "a sin that does not incur death"? (b) Why is it wrong to pray concerning "a sin that does incur death"?



The holy spirit, the water of Jesus' baptism, his shed blood, and Jehovah himself bore witness that Jesus Christ is God's Son

lation 21:8; Matthew 23:15) So while Jehovah is the final Judge, we do not risk displeasing him by praying for a sinner when the evidence indicates that he is guilty of willful "sin that does incur death."

²¹ Hence, "if anyone [especially a spirit-anointed elder] catches sight of his brother sinning a sin that does not incur death ["second death"], he will ask, and [God] will give life to [the sinner]," saving him from eternal destruction. Of course, "all unrighteousness is sin," or a missing of the mark as far as God's righteous standards are concerned. "Yet there is a sin that does not incur death" because it results from our imperfection, we are repentant, and the sin is covered by Christ's sacrifice.

Highlights of John's Letter

²² John now summarizes basic points in his letter. (*Read 1 John 5:18-21.*) Everyone "born from God" as a spirit-anointed

22. Who "does not fasten his hold" on a loyal Christian, and for what can such a person pray with confidence?

Christian "does not practice sin." Jesus Christ, "the One born from God" by holy spirit, "watches him, and the wicked one [Satan] does not fasten his hold on him." Such a loyal anointed Christian can pray confidently for deliverance from the wicked one and can, with "the large shield of faith," escape spiritual harm from Satan's "burning missiles."—Matthew 6:13; Ephesians 6:16.

²³ Since anointed ones have evidence that they are spiritual sons of Jehovah, they can say, "We know we originate with God." The fact that they have faith in Christ and do not practice sin proves that they are God's children on whom Satan has not been able to "fasten his hold." "But the whole world [unrighteous human society] is lying in the power of the wicked one," Satan the Devil. (Ephesians 2:1, 2; Revelation 12:9) The world yields to Satan's wicked influence and domination, making no effort to break free so as to do the divine will.

23. How does 'the whole world lie in the wicked one's power'?

²⁴ Certain false teachers held that Christ had not come in the flesh. (2 John 7) But evidence cited in this letter enables John to say, "We know that the Son of God has come." (1 John 1:1-4; 5:5-8) Moreover, Jesus "has given us intellectual capacity," or "mental perception," so that "we may gain the knowledge of the true one," a progressive understanding of God. (Matthew 11:27) So "we are in union with the true one [Jehovah God], by means of his Son Jesus Christ."—Compare John 17:20, 21.

²⁵ Those in union with the true God, Jehovah, whether of the anointed remnant or of the "other sheep," wish to please him in every way. But temptations to engage in idolatry existed in the first century, even as they do today. So John fittingly ends his letter with the fatherly counsel: "Little children, guard yourselves from idols." As Christians, we do not bow before images. (Exodus 20:4-6) We also know that it would be wrong to put ourselves, pleasure, or anything else in place of God. (2 Timothy 3:1, 2, 4) And our dedication to him precludes our worshiping the political "wild beast" and its "image." (Revelation 13:14-18; 14:9-12) So with a view to pleasing our heavenly Father and receiving his gift of eternal life, let us be resolute in our determination to avoid all idolatry, never allowing it to destroy our precious relationship with Jehovah through Jesus Christ.

Abiding Help for Us

²⁶ John's first inspired letter helped early Christians to shun idolatry. It enabled them to counter the lies of apostates, and it serves a similar purpose today. For ex—

24. To what end has Jesus "given us intellectual capacity"?

25. As Christians, how can we apply the counsel at 1 John 5:21?

26. What are some noteworthy features of First John?

ample, it proves that Jesus Christ lived as a man and died as "a propitiatory sacrifice" for sins. The letter identifies "the anti-christ" and distinguishes between the children of God and those of the Devil. It shows how to test "inspired expressions" to see whether they originate with Jehovah. Moreover, John's words convince us that "God is love," that true faith conquers the world, and that Jehovah hears the prayers of his loyal witnesses.

²⁷ In the face of worldly temptations, how wise it is to keep in mind John's warning against loving the world! If personal differences should place a strain on our relationship with certain fellow believers, the apostle's words can remind us that we can prove ourselves lovers of God by displaying brotherly love. With divine help and by applying John's counsel, we can avoid practicing sin and can maintain faith that conquers the world. So let us show our gratitude for this inspired letter as we keep walking in divine light, go on living as children of God, and always display love and faith to the glory of our heavenly Father, Jehovah.

27. In what ways can John's first divinely inspired letter help us?

How Would You Respond?

- ☐ If we love Jehovah, how should this affect our relationship with fellow believers?
- ☐ How can we 'conquer the world'?
- ☐ What are the "three witness bearers" concerning God's Son?
- ☐ Regarding prayer, what "confidence" can we have?
- ☐ First John can help us in what ways?

Insight on the News

Church as Power Broker

With increasing openness, the churches of Christendom are aggressively stepping into volatile political issues. In a feature article entitled "Stepping Down From the Pulpit Into the Streets," *The Toronto Star* of Canada focused attention on the "rising number of instances of [political] intervention by church leaders." Writer Jack Cahill noted that the Roman Catholic Church had "played a critical role in the overthrow of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines" and in ending the rule of Jean-Claude Duvalier in Haiti. Cahill added: "In South Africa, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu . . . and other members of the clergy have warned the government they will encourage confrontation with the state" over the apartheid issue.

Some view such a confrontational approach as appropriate Christian activity when it seeks change of unpopular regimes or laws. Though it is true that Jesus Christ sent his followers into the streets, it was not to help to bring about political changes. Instead, they went to public places and to the doors of the people to proclaim a heavenly Kingdom as the means of blessing mankind. (Matthew 10:5-7; 24:14) When Jesus Christ was charged with political activities—making himself a king—he clearly indicated that such activities were not to be expected of him or his followers. He told the one judging that "mine is not a kingdom of this world." In keeping with this, Jesus' true followers have always taken a neu-

tral stand in political matters, for he had said of them: "They are no part of the world."—John 18:36, Catholic *Jerusalem Bible*; John 17:14.

Hail Mary Vetoed

The recent unprecedented move by Brazil's president, José Sarney, banning the showing of the controversial film *Hail Mary* sparked a wave of protest both inside and outside the Catholic Church. "I disagree," Bishop Mauro Morelli declared, "that the Catholic Church, as it did in the time of the Inquisition, should supplicate the State to take measures in defense of the faith." And federal deputy Eduardo Matarazo Suplicy complained that the Brazilian president was "succumbing to the pressures of the conservative wing of the Church." "We have returned to union of altar and throne," wrote Campinas University professor Roberto Romano in the newspaper *Folha de S. Paulo*. "It has occurred without even a clear-cut concordat existing, as in the case of the Lateran Treaty with Mussolini and the Imperial Concordat with Hitler. No, it all happened furtively behind the closed doors of government offices."

Such religious pressure-tactics and the reaction to them call to mind the Bible's pictorial description of a symbolic harlotlike religious woman who "has a kingdom over the kings of the earth." These rulers, it says, eventually will come to "hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, . . . and will completely burn her with fire."—Revelation 17:1, 2, 15-18.

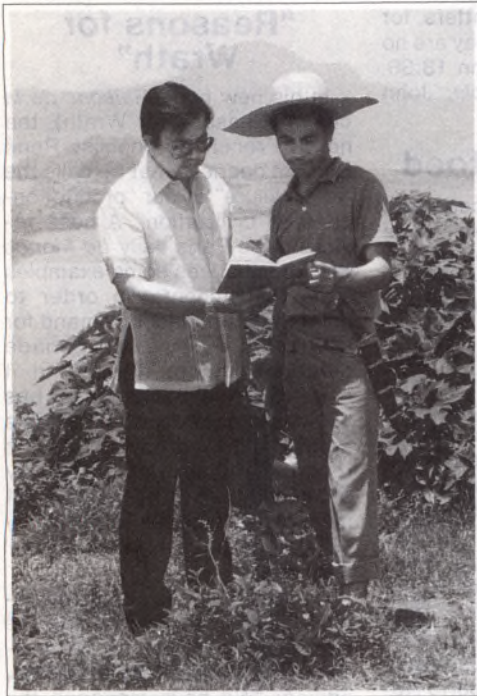
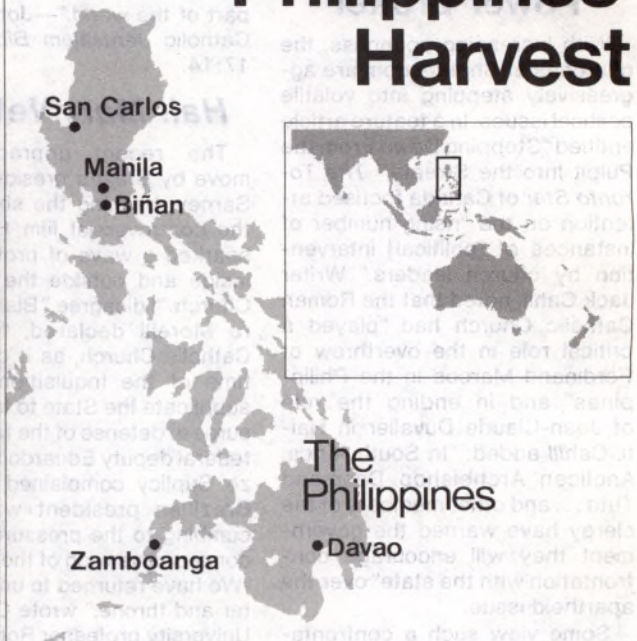
"Reasons for Wrath"

In his new book *Raisons de la colère* (Reasons for Wrath), the noted French agronomist René Dumont decries what he calls the "total failure" of our "production-oriented civilization." A book review in the Paris daily *Le Monde* thus summarizes some examples cited by Dumont: "In order to meet the tremendous demand for newsprint, every year Canada cuts down more trees than it can grow; the Soviet Union has worked to death two thirds of its arable land. And even France is reportedly 'destroying the fertility of her soil, built up by centuries of manure and fodder farming,' by using chemical instead of natural fertilizers."

Dumont also accuses the industrial nations of 'perverting' the planet by wastefulness and mismanaged distribution of goods, adding: "We have managed the world economy so badly that we deserve to lose our supremacy." He claims that the Western model of development "has ruined the economy of the Third World" and has sucked people away from agricultural development into "hideous cities" that have grown in the less developed nations.

If such conditions give "reasons for wrath" to humans who foresee the peril, how much more reason for wrath should these factors give to the One who created this planet? Thus the Bible prophetically describes the fast-approaching time when mankind's ruinous activities will bring God's "own wrath," causing him to "bring to ruin those ruining the earth."—Revelation 11:18.

Pioneer Spirit Speeds Up Philippines' Harvest



IF YOU were in Manila back in 1935 and wanted to get in touch with Jehovah's Witnesses, you would have had to seek out a small apartment at 1134 Rizal Avenue. There, about 20 persons met regularly to study the Bible. That apartment was the first branch office of the Watch Tower Society in the Philippines.

Today, in the metropolitan Manila area, there are 103 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses with more than 9,000 Kingdom proclaimers! Similarly, 50 years ago there were no Witnesses in the city of Davao, in the far south of the Philippines. Now there are more than 2,800 of them in the 41 congregations in that city.

The increase in these two major cities is part of the evidence that those early Witnesses lived up to their name. (Isaiah 43:10-12) They have extended their preaching and teaching work to all parts of the Philippines. By examining the accompanying chart, you can see the fruitage of Christian disciple making during the past half century. What speeds the growth in the Philippine field?

Pioneer Spirit Aids Growth

Had it not been for a zealous pioneer spirit on the part of the early Filipino Witnesses, it would have been impossible to reach the hundreds of inhabited islands

Fifty years' increase in the Philippines

1935	20
1940	222
1950	10,055
1960	31,608
1970	54,789
1980	61,164
1986	88,113

with the good news. That spirit is still very much alive. For instance, the report for February 1986 showed that, in addition to 758 special pioneers, there were 9,090 regular pioneer ministers serving throughout the Philippines. This was more than double the number reporting just two years earlier! In April 1985, 26,630—a third of all the Witnesses in the country—were engaging in some form of full-time preaching work.

Yes, Jehovah's people in the Philippines feel the urgency of the times. This prompts them to spend as much time as possible preaching and teaching God's Word to their neighbors. Doubtless, you would be interested in learning how some are able to arrange their affairs to get into the full-time service and would like to know about the fine experiences they enjoy.

Making Adjustments to Pioneer

Felipe Ventura of Binalonan, Pangasinan, spent 13 years of his youth in full-time service before raising a family. As his family grew up, he desired to return to the pioneer work, but diabetes caused blindness in one eye. Then about four years ago

he became completely blind. Despite this, Felipe was able to continue running a small business to support his family and, with the help of his wife and children, was able to adjust his time so as to become a pioneer once again on April 1, 1985. Despite his handicap, he engages in the house-to-house ministry with the help of his son, who reads Bible texts for him. Brother Ventura also conducts several home Bible studies and is an appointed elder in the congregation. One of his sons serves as a regular pioneer along with him, and his daughter is an auxiliary pioneer from time to time.

Clodualdo Quiohilag, an elder in Biñan, Laguna, was a pioneer and traveling overseer in the 1960's until he and his wife had a child. But, as he says, "Once you have tasted the joy of full-time service, you always have a desire for it." So even though he had been successful in business and enjoyed a comfortable life with his wife and daughter, he did not consider this to be his real purpose in life. He comments: "All that I possess would be meaningless if my long-cherished dream of returning to the full-time service was not realized." To become a pioneer, he reduced his business activity to just half a day, using the mornings in the field ministry. His dream was realized on October 1, 1984, when he began serving as a regular pioneer. Although his income is about half of what it was, his expenses are also lower. Now his wife has joined him in the regular pioneer work, and from time to time his daughter serves as an auxiliary pioneer.

Serving Full-Time Though Blind

Because of a bout with German measles, Pantaleon Tatoy has been blind since he was three years old. In 1972 he heard the truth for the first time and began to study

the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. This soon helped him overcome his addiction to tobacco and liquor, and he symbolized his dedication to Jehovah by baptism on July 29, 1973.

When Pantaleon first started to preach to his neighbors, his older sister chided him: "How can you be a minister when you are blind and have only one pair of pants?" But this did not discourage him. Since he knew well the area around his home, he went out alone and preached the truth to his neighbors. In 1984 he rejoiced to be able to help his cousin and nephew to learn the truth, and they were baptized in September of that year.

Pantaleon has also been able to conduct a Bible study with his twin nieces, Lorna and Luz, who are both deaf-mutes. How does a blind pioneer study with such individuals? With the help of an assistant, he uses the illustrations in the publications extensively. When explaining the truth, his cousin Roquina translates what he says into sign language for the twins. Lorna and Luz were baptized on April 20, 1985, despite their big handicap. As for Pantaleon, after serving as an auxiliary pioneer for a year, he was appointed as a regular pioneer on March 1, 1985.

Full-Time Service as a Career

At a high school graduation, a certain student said to a Witness classmate: "Whenever I ask your people what course they are going to take after graduation, they all say, 'Pioneering.' What kind of course is that?" The young Witness explained what pioneering was. The fellow student became interested and accepted a Bible study, and she, too, soon had the goal of being a pioneer.

Others have found that college courses do not satisfy one's spiritual needs. In Bohol, a young sister who was in her last

year of college found that she had time to pioneer while completing her studies. Later, she attended the Pioneer Service School and commented that college could not compare with the school and the joy she felt in full-time service to Jehovah. She is now serving as a pioneer where the need for preachers is great.

Young and Old Share Willingly

The book of Psalms foretold that in the days of Kingdom power God's people would "offer themselves willingly." It also said that 'young men, virgins, old men and boys' would praise Jehovah's name. (Psalm 110:3; 148:12, 13) This has certainly proved true among God's people in the Philippines.

At last count, 1,159, or 13 percent, of the regular pioneers enrolled in the Philippines were under 20 years of age. What a joy to see young people like this unselfishly 'remembering their Creator in the days of their youth' instead of squandering it in selfish or worldly pursuits!—Ecclesiastes 12:1.

Some who started full-time service in their youth are now getting up in years but are still serving faithfully. Brother Leodegario Barlaan and his wife Natividad started pioneering on April 1, 1938. They went through the difficult war years and have served in many capacities, including the traveling work. Now Brother Barlaan is 72 and still zealously serves as a special pioneer in San Carlos, Pangasinan, along with his wife.

Others started full-time service later in life and continued into their old age. For example, Leoncio Sabandal started pioneering at age 52 and is still a special pioneer at 92. He and his wife have helped 118 persons to dedicate their lives to Jehovah. Similarly, Cipriano Sepulveda, Sr., started pioneering when he was 72 and

was a regular pioneer until his death at age 88 in 1985. Paula Mariano started pioneering at age 71 and is still in full-time service despite infirmities at 88. What sterling examples of faith and devotion these and other older ones are!

Rejoicing in the Progress Made

Looking back over the past half century, Jehovah's blessing on the zealous efforts of his Witnesses has been evident. From a handful in 1935, what a joy to see 88,113 share in the field ministry in February 1986! The one small congregation on Rizal Avenue in Manila has now grown to 2,454 congregations countrywide, organized into 120 circuits.

And what of prospects for the future?

An encouraging indication is the outstanding attendance of 268,526—more than three times the number of Witnesses in the country—at the Memorial celebration on April 4, 1985. Additionally, in February 1986, 63,248 home Bible studies were being conducted with interested persons. And no doubt continued growth will be seen with Jehovah's blessing and approval.

We are glad that Jehovah has made very fruitful the work started by his early anointed witnesses in these islands over 50 years ago. With his blessing and guidance, it is the goal of his people in the Philippines to continue expanding their preaching and teaching work in the days to come.

Questions From Readers

■ In Jesus' illustration about a rich man who was not rich toward God, who were the "they" that demanded the man's soul?

Jesus was not referring to any group of humans or angels. In Luke 12:20 he used an indefinite "they" simply as a way of expressing what was going to happen to the man.

This illustration is found at Luke 12:16-21. The rich man in it was not satisfied with his adequate material things. He continued to concentrate on his business so as to increase his wealth. Jesus concluded: "But God said to [the rich man], 'Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your soul from you. Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?' So it goes with the man that lays up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God."

Some translations use a passive rendering, such as: "This very night your soul is required of you."

(*New American Standard Bible*) "This very night the demand will be made for your soul." (*The Jerusalem Bible*) "This very night your life is being demanded." (*The Twentieth Century New Testament*) "This night your soul is to be called for." (*Byington*) However, Hebrew (in which Jesus spoke) and Greek (in which Luke wrote) employ an indefinite third person form. The Greek text at Luke 12:20 literally says "to this the night the soul of you *they are asking* from you." The verb is in the third person plural. Hence, rather than needlessly changing it to a passive form (as in the examples above), the *New World Translation* and others use renderings such as "*they are demanding*."

We do well, though, not to allow

grammatical technicalities to obscure Jesus' clear admonition about materialism. He was not specifying how the rich man would die. The point was that by some means the man was going to lose his soul, or life, that night. But how did he stand with God? Any of us could become absorbed in improving our material situation and similarly miss out on being rich toward God. The business world fosters a spirit of 'ever more.' Even people whose companies make substantial profits from sales in the millions of dollars, pounds, marks, and so forth, may be tempted to seek more—more employees, more sales, more profits, more luxuries, more in the bank. Jesus' question is as valid today as when he first posed it: "Who, then, is to have the things you stored up?"—Luke 12:20.

'They Lifted Me Out of Deep Depression'

A woman from England wrote:
"Dear Sir:

"In February I sent for your cassette album of *My Book of Bible Stories*, and, although I am a spiritualist, when they arrived I was so impressed with them! I had just come out of the hospital after a major operation and was in bed feeling really low and depressed. So when my husband brought the parcel up to me, I decided to play the tapes along with the book.

"They certainly lifted me out of my deep depression, and for the first time in ten days I actually felt like taking an interest in my surroundings. When my grandsons (6 and 8 years old) came to visit, I let them hear these, and they were so delighted with the part they had time to hear that I let them take them home to listen to all of them. Obviously as they have received so much pleasure from them, I would be grateful if you could forward me another set of the cassette tapes and book so that they can keep theirs."

She added this postscript: "During my life I have many times tried reading my Bible but have never enjoyed or understood it. Yet these tapes and book explain it all so clearly!"

