

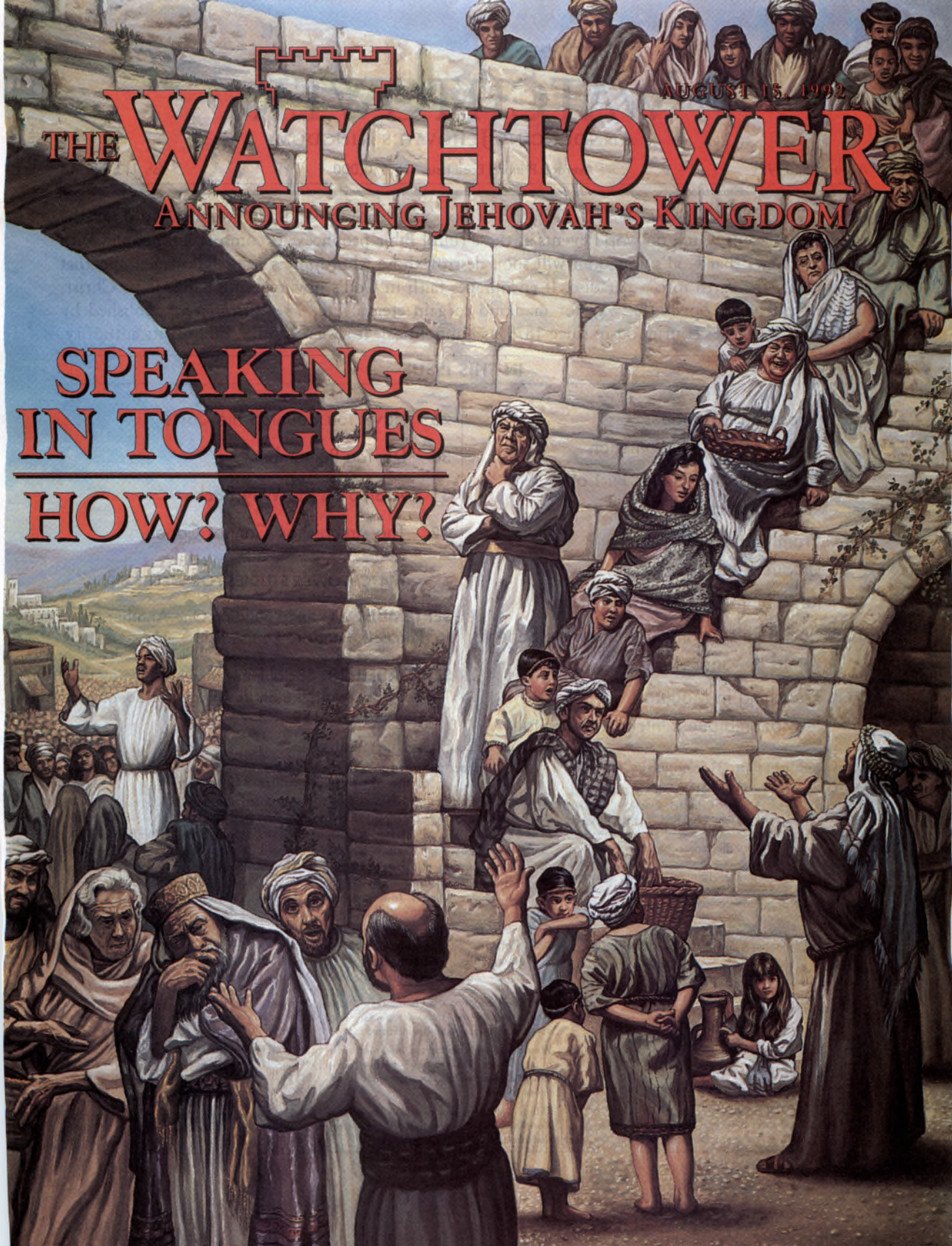


THE WATCHTOWER
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

AUGUST 15, 1992

**SPEAKING
IN TONGUES**

HOW? WHY?



THE WATCHTOWER[®]

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

August 15, 1992

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these 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 God's 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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Speaking in Tongues

—A Growing Phenomenon

“A POWER had taken ahold of my tongue and the words just flowed like water. What a joy it was! There was a feeling of supercleanliness. I have never been the same since,” exclaimed one who had the extraordinary experience of speaking in an “unknown tongue.”

There you have a person's description of his first experience of speaking in an “unknown tongue.” ‘But what is that?’ some may rightly ask. It refers to a practice or belief in some churches whereby men and women claim to be moved by God's spirit to speak in foreign or strange languages that they do not know.

It is a growing religious phenomenon. Once viewed as an occurrence exclusive to Pentecostal believers, speaking in tongues now transcends traditional denominational boundaries to include Baptists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics. The condition of a person when in this state has been described as ecstasy, frenzy, trance, and hypnotic. Some even call it a hysterical experience. There is a mystique and charisma associated with speaking in tongues, or glossolalia.

Why the Desire Today for the Gift of Tongues?

In his book *Tongues of the Spirit*, Cyril G. Williams suggests that there may be a “correlation between a sense of failure, and the desire for ‘tongues.’” He describes it as a release mechanism that has “therapeutic

value as a reducer of tension” and a “resolver of inner conflict.” Frustration in church work, emotional stress, failure in a career, bereavement, domestic tensions, or illness in the family are cited as factors that contribute to such ecstatic speech.

Similarly, in *The Psychology of Speaking in Tongues*, John P. Kildahl says that “anxiety is a prerequisite for developing the ability to speak in tongues.” Through personal research and careful interviewing, it was found that “more than 85% of the tongue-speakers had experienced a clearly defined anxiety crisis preceding their speaking in tongues.” For example, a mother wanted to speak in tongues so that she could pray for her son who was sick with cancer. A man began to speak in tongues during his period of indecision over an offered job promotion. A woman began speaking in tongues within a week after her husband joined Alcoholics Anonymous.

What Does One Experience?

Another who had spoken in tongues for the first time reported: “I felt a burning all through me, and chills and great beads of perspiration, a trembling and sort of a weakness in my limbs.” Associated with the tongue-speaking experience, there is often unusual behavior that some find disturbing. For instance, “one girl nearly choked on her own saliva as she stretched out on a chair, her neck resting on the back of it, her heels on the floor, her legs stiff.” During

one congregation meeting “a man somersaulted from one end of the church to the other.”

“For some people,” writes Professor William J. Samarin, “speaking in tongues is a condition for being baptized in the Holy Spirit.” Without it, they are “made to feel a little incomplete.” It is viewed also “as an answer to prayer, an assurance of divine love and acceptance.” Others have said that it leaves them with a feeling of inner har-

mony, joy, and peace, and with a “greater sense of power” and “a stronger sense of identity.”

Is ecstatic speech really an evidence of the operation of the holy spirit? Does the experience distinguish a person as a true Christian? Is speaking in tongues a part of acceptable worship today? These questions deserve more than a cursory answer. Why? Because we want our worship to have God’s approval and blessing.

Is the Gift of Tongues Part of True Christianity?

I FELT, as I listened to him praying in tongues, as if there were an electrifying charge in the air,” said Bill after he and six others had gathered before the preacher near the church altar. Do such experiences repeat the first-century operation of the holy spirit? Do they identify the religion of the Bible? We can find satisfying answers by carefully examining the Scriptures.

The Bible record reveals that when any miraculous gift of the spirit was transmitted, at least one of the 12 apostles or the apostle Paul was present. The first of three recorded instances of speaking in tongues occurred among 120 of Jesus’ disciples gathered in Jerusalem at Pentecost 33 C.E. (Acts 2:1-4) Three and a half years later, while a group of uncircumcised Italians were listening to Peter preach, they received the spirit and began “speaking with tongues and magnifying God.” (Acts

10:44-48) And 19 years after Pentecost, about 52 C.E., Paul spoke to a group in Ephesus and laid his hands upon 12 disciples. They too “began speaking with tongues and prophesying.”—Acts 19:6.

Why the Gift of Tongues?

Just before he ascended to heaven, Jesus told his followers: “You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and . . . to the most distant part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) Notice that he thus gave indication of just how this monumental witness work would be accomplished—with the assistance of the holy spirit.

Modern communication technology that enables us to send messages earth wide in many languages did not exist back then. The good news had to be spread primarily by word of mouth, and in this the miraculous gift of speaking in foreign tongues

would prove very helpful. Such was the case as first-century Christians preached to Jews and proselytes in Jerusalem at Pentecost 33 C.E. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Cretans, Arabians, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, and the district of Asia, as well as sojourners from Rome, heard "the magnificent things of God" in their own language and understood what was said. Three thousand quickly became believers.—Acts 2:5-11, 41.

An oft-overlooked fact is that speaking in tongues was just one of the nine operations of the holy spirit that the apostle Paul mentioned in his letter to the Christians in Corinth. Although Paul viewed speaking in tongues as a lesser gift, it was valuable to the early congregation in spreading the good news about the heavenly Kingdom of God. It was one of the "gifts" that contributed to the numerical growth and upbuilding of the infant congregation of Christians.—1 Corinthians 12:7-11; 14:24-26.

The various operations of the holy spirit in the first century, including speaking in tongues, were also a visible evidence that God was no longer using the 1,500-year-old congregation of Israel as his special people. Unquestionably, his approval now rested with the new Christian congregation, established by his only-begotten Son.—Compare Hebrews 2:2-4.

These manifestations of the spirit were key building blocks in establishing the young Christian congregation and helping it to grow to adulthood. Paul explained that after having served their purpose, these miraculous gifts would cease: "Whether there are gifts of prophesying, they will be done away with; whether there are tongues, they will cease."—1 Corinthians 13:8.

Yes, the Bible is clear that the gift of tongues would cease. But when? Acts 8:18

reveals that the gifts of the spirit were received "through the laying on of the hands of the *apostles*." Evidently, then, with the death of the last apostle, the passing on of the gifts of the spirit would stop—including speaking in tongues. Hence, when those who had received these gifts from the apostles also passed off the earthly scene, the miraculous gift would cease. By then the Christian congregation would have had time to become well established and would have spread to many lands.

"Unknown Tongues" and Their Interpretation

The present-day resurgence of speaking in tongues has been "regarded by some as the emotional extravagance of unstable exhibitionists, while others regard it as identical with the phenomenon of speaking with tongues of Apostolic times." In modern-day church gatherings where speaking in "unknown tongues" occurs, it usually involves an ecstatic outburst of unintelligible sounds. Accordingly, one person confessed: "I use my gift of tongues mostly in private for my own meditation. . . . I feel a little embarrassed in front of other people." Another related: "I hear my own words, I don't understand them, but I keep feeling my tongue pushed to talk."

What information of real value is conveyed by such unknown tongues, and what about an interpretation? Those who claim to interpret this speech have offered different explanations of the same unintelligible utterances. Why different? They explain away such a disparity by saying that "God gave to one person one interpretation of the speech and to another person another interpretation." One individual acknowledged: "I have noted occasions where the interpretation was not of the accurate type." D. A. Hayes, in his book *The Gift of Tongues*, referred to

an instance where a man refused to interpret the speech of a woman who spoke in an unknown tongue because "the language was the vilest of the vile." What a contrast that is to the speaking in tongues that existed in the first century and that was actually for building up the congregation!—1 Corinthians 14:4-6, 12, 18.

Some today do claim to have heard wonderful interpretations, and they may sincerely believe that God uses this gift when he "wishes to give a direct message to the people." But what message from God do we need today that Jesus Christ and the apostles did not supply for us? Paul, who was himself gifted with holy spirit, said: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

The fact is, the Christian congregation is no longer in its infancy, and thus divine revelations or miraculous gifts of the spirit are no longer needed to confirm its role. The Bible cautions: "Even if we or an angel out of heaven were to declare to you as good news something beyond [“at variance with,” *The New English Bible*] what we declared to you as good news, let him be accursed."—Galatians 1:8.

Miraculously speaking in tongues is no longer necessary, and there is no Biblical basis for believing that it is part of true Christianity today. Now that the Bible is complete and widely available, we have what we need in the Word of God. It allows us to gain an accurate knowledge of Jehovah and his Son that leads to everlasting life.—John 17:3; Revelation 22:18, 19.

Even in the first century, the apostle Paul was compelled to write the congregation in

Corinth to correct their view of why the gift of tongues was given to early Christians. Seemingly, some had become fascinated with the gift of tongues, and they were acting like little children, spiritually immature. Too much importance was being attached to "tongues." (1 Corinthians 14:1-39) Paul emphasized that not all Christians in the first century spoke in miraculous tongues. It was not necessary to their salvation. Even back then when it existed, the gift of tongues was secondary to miraculous prophesying. Speaking in tongues was not, and is not, a requirement for Christians to gain everlasting life.—1 Corinthians 12:29, 30; 14:4, 5.

The Force Behind Unknown Tongues Today

Some believe that the driving force behind today's tongue-speakers is charismatic church leaders who prompt members of their flock to acquire this ability. In some cases it is brought on by emotionalism and imbalance. Cyril G. Williams, in *Tongues of the Spirit*, says it has become "in many instances a badge of elitism within the group" and gives a person "stature and authority in the sight of the group and also in their own eyes." The motivation, therefore, could be a desire to belong to the superior unknown-tongue group.

Then Loyola University president Donald P. Merrifield noted that "tongues could be a hysterical experience, or, according to some, a diabolical one." Clergyman Todd H. Fast said: "Tongues is controversial. The devil has many ways of working at us." The Bible itself warns that Satan and his demons are able to influence people and control their speech. (Acts 16:17, 18) Jesus acted against a demonic spirit that had moved a man to shout and fall to the floor. (Luke 4:33-35)

Paul warned that ‘Satan would transform himself into an angel of light.’ (2 Corinthians 11:14) Those today who seek the gift of tongues that God no longer bestows on his people are really opening themselves to deception by Satan, who, we are warned, would use “every powerful work and lying signs and portents.”—2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10.

Tongues—And True Christianity

The first-century Christians who received the gift of speaking in tongues used it to explain the magnificent things of God. Stress was laid on the need to interpret clearly the message conveyed in tongues so that it could be understood by all and result in the edification of many. (1 Corinthians 14:26-33) Paul admonished: “Unless you through the tongue utter speech easily understood, how will it be known what is being spoken? You will, in fact, be speaking into the air.”—1 Corinthians 14:9.

While the spirit of God granted early Christians the gift of tongues, it did not cause them to speak unintelligible or untranslatable gibberish. In harmony with Paul’s counsel, the holy spirit provided speech that resulted in the good news being more quickly “preached in all creation that is under heaven.”—Colossians 1:23.

Concerning these last days of the present system, Jesus Christ commanded: “In all the nations the good news [of the established Kingdom] has to be preached first.” (Mark 13:10) As in the first century, all creation must hear the message of the Kingdom. This is possible because the Bible has now been translated, in whole or in part, into almost 2,000 languages. The same spirit that infused early Christians to speak boldly and courageously is now supporting the great and wondrous preaching work of the present-day congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses. By word of mouth and by using modern printing technology to make available Scriptural truth by the printed page, they speak the “pure language.” This message is going out to over 200 countries and islands of the sea. Jehovah’s Witnesses stand alone as the people that are moved by God’s spirit to make known to all the magnificent things of God.—Zephaniah 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:13.



▲ Door-to-door witnessing in Japan

▶ Ship-to-ship witnessing in Colombia

▼ Below: Bible study in Guatemala

▼ Bottom: Rural witnessing in the Netherlands





From Historic Hospital to Unique Kingdom Hall

IN 1770 the famous English explorer Lieutenant James Cook was sailing the 369-ton bark *Endeavour* along the unexplored east coast of Australia. On the evening of June 11, the vessel struck a coral reef in a remote area toward the north of the continent. The oak hull was seriously damaged. Repairs were urgently needed if the crew was to survive. The mouth of a nearby river proved to be an ideal location for the repairs, which took six weeks. One hundred and three years later, gold was discovered in this region. The gold rush was on! Tens of thousands came to seek their fortunes. Cooktown was born.

In 1879 government permission was granted to construct a permanent hospital to care for the sick and those injured in mining accidents. In the same year, on the other side of the world, July 1 saw the first edition of *Zion's Watch Tower*. Since then, this magazine has provided a program for the spiritual health of

millions of God-fearing people. It was not then known that the Cooktown hospital building would one day have close links with this magazine.

After more than a century, the Cooktown Hospital needed replacing. Government funds were available for a new structure, so tenders were called for the removal of the old hospital building. The National Trust of Queensland showed great interest in this historic building. However, the costs involved in relocating and restoring the building proved too high. No tender was offered.

At about the same time, the small congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Cooktown was looking for a permanent place to hold Christian meetings. They owned no land and had only \$A800. How could they build a Kingdom Hall? Representatives of the local congregation volunteered to relocate the hospital building and offered

no payment. How would Jehovah direct things? Exciting news! Their tender was accepted!

Now to the next matter—land for the building. Yes, they were told, it seemed government land might be made available free of cost, provided the building was preserved and restored. However, by this time opposition to the proposed project was growing in an unfriendly segment of the community. A petition was prepared that was designed to bring a halt to the plans of the Witnesses. A rumor was circulated that Jehovah's Witnesses would take over Cooktown, close all the hotels and gambling premises, and forbid the sale of tobacco. Of course, this never happened, but getting the land re-zoned and obtaining the necessary approvals for building became increasingly difficult. The deadline was fast approaching for the removal of the building. The intervention of the State Government of Queensland was sought. (Compare Romans 13:2.) Permission for use of government land was quickly granted, and a building permit was issued. With both land and the building in hand, what next?

Enter a team of hundreds of Witnesses, experienced tradesmen and assistants from various parts of the State of Queensland, who freely volunteer their time and have developed the expertise to build Kingdom Halls very quickly. This project presented special challenges: moving sections of the two-story hospital to the new location and then reassembling the building. The monsoon season was fast approaching, threatening torrential rains. Would the work be completed in time? Some of the townsfolk had reservations. However, what seemed to some to be an impossibility was soon accomplished. In April 1986 the building was relocated and thereafter restored to its original glory.

All of this activity did not go unnoticed, as is evident by comments in the *Anglican Newsletter* in Cooktown. In part it stated: "No doubt I'll be taken to task, but . . . have a look around the Church and see how full it isn't and have a look at the other mob [Jehovah's Witnesses] and see how full it's getting . . . , getting full with Anglicans and Roman Catholics . . . Did you know that a certain organization . . . [has] purchased the old Hospital to rebuild into what they might call a church building because the School is too small to hold them all? . . . How weak we have been, to allow this to happen."

Thousands of tourists visit Cooktown each year. They come to enjoy the beautiful rain-forest setting and the Great Barrier Reef and to learn of the history of the area. The Captain Cook Museum is a popular attraction for most visitors. Since 1989 the historic Cooktown Hospital in its new role as a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses has also been a major tourist attraction. Souvenir stores sell tea towels and T-shirts that have a picture of the Cooktown Hospital-Kingdom Hall printed on them. During the tourist season, between six hundred and a thousand persons visit the building each week to see firsthand its unique 1879 architecture.

The magazine now known as *The Watchtower* is freely available to visitors. Since 1879 this magazine has grown in circulation to over 15 million copies semimonthly in 111 languages. It directs individuals to the Bible's promise that some of the generation of 1914 will be alive to see good physical and spiritual health restored to mankind. (Isaiah 33:24) The entire earth will be transformed into a paradise by millions of willing volunteers. (Psalm 37:29) Why not visit a Kingdom Hall in your vicinity? You will find something of far greater value than all the gold ever mined in the Cooktown region.—Proverbs 16:16.



KEEP BUILDING ONE ANOTHER UP

"Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth, but whatever saying is good for building up."—EPHESIANS 4:29.

"SPEECH is the magic thread that binds friends, families and societies together . . . Out of the human mind and the coordinated contractions of [the tongue's] muscle sets, we make sounds that inspire love, envy, respect—indeed any human emotion."
—*Hearing, Taste and Smell.*

² Our tongue is much more than an organ for swallowing or tasting; it is a part of our ability to share what we are thinking and

1, 2. (a) Why can it rightly be said that speech is a marvel? (b) What caution is appropriate as to how we use our tongue?

feeling. "The tongue is a little member," wrote James. "With it we bless Jehovah, even the Father, and yet with it we curse men who have come into existence 'in the likeness of God.'" (James 3:5, 9) Yes, we can use our tongues in fine ways, such as in praising Jehovah. But being imperfect, we can easily use our tongues to speak hurtful or negative things. James wrote: "It is not proper, my brothers, for these things to go on occurring this way."—James 3:10.

³ While no human can perfectly control
3. We should give attention to what two aspects of our speech?

his tongue, we surely should strive to improve. The apostle Paul advises us: "Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth, but whatever saying is good for building up as the need may be, that it may impart what is favorable to the hearers." (Ephesians 4:29) Observe that this injunction has two aspects: what we should strive to avoid and what we should attempt to do. Let us consider both aspects.

Avoiding Rotten Speech

⁴ Ephesians 4:29 first urges us: "Let a rotten saying not proceed out of your mouth." That may not be easy. One reason is that profanity is so common in the world around us. Many Christian youths hear cursing daily, for schoolmates may think that it adds emphasis or makes them appear tougher. We may not fully be able to avoid hearing foul words, but we can and should make a conscious effort not to absorb these. They have no place in our minds or mouths.

⁵ Underlying Paul's warning is a Greek word that relates to spoiled fish or decayed fruit. Visualize this: You observe a man get impatient and then outright furious. Finally he explodes, and you see a putrefied fish come out of his mouth. You then see stinking, decayed fruit tumble out, splashing all nearby. Who is he? How terrible if he were any of us! Yet, such an image could fit if we 'let rotten sayings proceed out of our mouth.'

⁶ Another application of Ephesians 4:29 is for us to avoid being constantly critical. Granted, all of us have opinions and tastes about things we do not like or accept, but

have you been around someone who seems to have a negative comment (or many comments) about every person, place, or thing mentioned? (Compare Romans 12:9; Hebrews 1:9.) His speech tears down, depresses, or destroys. (Psalm 10:7; 64:2-4; Proverbs 16:27; James 4:11, 12) He may not realize how much he resembles the critical ones Malachi described. (Malachi 3:13-15) How shocked he might be if a bystander told him that a putrefied fish or decaying fruit was slipping out of his mouth!

⁷ While it is easy to recognize when someone else constantly makes negative or critical comments, ask yourself, 'Do I tend to be like that? Really, do I?' It would be wise to reflect occasionally on the spirit of our words. Are they primarily negative, critical? Do we sound like Job's three false comforters? (Job 2:11; 13:4, 5; 16:2; 19:2) Why not find a positive aspect to mention? If a conversation is mainly critical, why not steer it into upbuilding matters?

⁸ Malachi presented this contrast: "Those in fear of Jehovah spoke with one another, each one with his companion, and Jehovah kept paying attention and listening. And a book of remembrance began to be written up before him for those in fear of Jehovah and for those thinking upon his name." (Malachi 3:16) Did you notice how God responded to upbuilding speech? What was the likely effect of such conversation on associates? We can personally learn a lesson regarding our daily speech. How much finer for us and others if our typical conversation reflects our 'sacrifice of praise to God.'—Hebrews 13:15.

4, 5. (a) What battle do Christians have regarding foul language? (b) What image could fit the phrase "rotten saying"?

6. How does Ephesians 4:29 apply to critical, negative speech?

7. What self-examination should each of us make?

8. Malachi 3:16 provides what lesson as to speech, and how can we show that we are applying the lesson?

Work at Building Others Up

⁹ Congregation meetings are excellent occasions to speak 'whatever is good for building up as the need may be, that it may impart what is favorable to hearers.' (Ephesians 4:29) We can do that when giving a talk on Biblical information, sharing in a demonstration, or commenting during question-and-answer parts. We thus verify Proverbs 20:15: "The lips of knowledge are precious vessels." And who knows how many hearts we touch or build up?

¹⁰ The time before and after meetings is convenient for building others up with conversation that is favorable to the hearers. It would be easy to spend these periods in pleasant talk with relatives and a small number of friends with whom we are comfortable. (John 13:23; 19:26) However, in line with Ephesians 4:29, why not seek out others to speak with? (Compare Luke 14:12-14.) We could determine beforehand to go beyond saying just a formal or passing good-day to certain new ones, older folk, or youngsters, even sitting down with young ones so as to be more on their level. Our genuine interest and periods of upbuilding speech will make others even more able to echo David's sentiments at Psalm 122:1.

¹¹ Another aid to upbuilding conversation is varying where we sit at meetings. A nursing mother might need to sit close to the restroom, or an infirm one might need an aisle seat, but what about others of us? Mere habit may lead us back to a certain seat or area; even a bird returns instinctively to its

9. Why are Christian meetings fine occasions to build up others?

10. After reflecting on whom we have usually conversed with, what adjustment might be in order? (2 Corinthians 6:12, 13)

11. (a) What habit have many developed as to seating? (b) Why do some intentionally vary where they sit?

roost. (Isaiah 1:3; Matthew 8:20) Frankly, though, since we can sit anywhere, why not vary our location—right side, left side, near the front, and so forth—and thus get better acquainted with different ones? While there is no rule that we do this, elders and other mature ones who vary where they sit have found it easier to impart what is favorable to many instead of to just a relatively few close friends.

Build Up in a Godly Way

¹² A Christian's desire to build up others should move him to imitate God in this respect rather than to follow the human tendency to make large numbers of rules.* Imperfect humans have long tended to rule those around them, and even some of God's servants have succumbed to this leaning. (Genesis 3:16; Ecclesiastes 8:9) In Jesus' time Jewish leaders 'bound heavy loads on others but were unwilling to budge them themselves.' (Matthew 23:4) They turned harmless customs into mandatory traditions. In their excessive concern about human rules, they overlooked things that God identified as of greater import. No one was built up by their making many unscriptural rules; their way just was not God's way.—Matthew 23:23, 24; Mark 7:1-13.

¹³ Christians genuinely want to adhere to divine laws. Even we, though, could fall victim to the tendency to make numerous burdensome rules. Why? For one thing, tastes or preferences differ, so some may find ac-

* Within a family various rules may seem advisable, depending on circumstances. The Bible authorizes parents to decide matters for their minor children.—Exodus 20:12; Proverbs 6:20; Ephesians 6:1-3.

12. What undesirable tendency has been manifest throughout history?

13. Why is it inappropriate to devise numerous rules for fellow Christians?

ceptable what others dislike and feel should be ruled out. Christians differ, too, in their advancement toward spiritual maturity. But is making many rules the godly way to help another to progress toward maturity? (Philippians 3:15; 1 Timothy 1:19; Hebrews 5:14) Even when a person is actually pursuing a course that appears to be extreme or perilous, is a prohibiting rule the best solution? God's way is for qualified ones to try to restore an erring person by mildly reasoning with that one.—Galatians 6:1.

¹⁴ True, while using Israel as his people, God did set out hundreds of laws about temple worship, sacrifices, even sanitation. This was fitting for a distinct nation, and many of the laws had prophetic import and helped to lead Jews to the Messiah. Paul wrote: "The Law has become our tutor leading to Christ, that we might be declared righteous due to faith. But now that the faith has arrived, we are no longer under a tutor." (Galatians 3:19, 23-25) After the Law was canceled on the torture stake, God did not give Christians an extensive list of rules on most aspects of life, as if that were the way to keep them built up in faith.

¹⁵ Of course, we are not without law. God commands us to abstain from idolatry, fornication and adultery, and misuse of blood. He specifically forbids murder, lying, spiritism, and various other sins. (Acts 15:28, 29; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; Revelation 21:8) And he offers in his Word clear counsel on many matters. Yet, to a far greater degree than with the Israelites, we are responsible to learn and apply Bible principles. Elders can build up others by helping them to find and consider these principles rather than just to look for or make rules.

14. What purposes were served by the laws that God gave Israel?

15. What guidance has God provided for Christian worshipers?

Elders Who Build Up

¹⁶ Paul wrote: "To what extent we have made progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same routine." (Philippians 3:16) In line with that godly viewpoint, the apostle dealt with others in a way that built up. For example, a question arose about whether to eat meat that may have come from an idol temple. Did this elder, perhaps in the name of consistency or simplicity, set out some rule for all in the early congregations? No. He acknowledged that variety in knowledge and progress toward maturity might lead those Christians to differing choices. As for him, he was determined to set a fine example.—Romans 14:1-4; 1 Corinthians 8:4-13.

¹⁷ The Christian Greek Scriptures show that the apostles did provide helpful advice on some personal matters, such as about clothing and grooming, but they did not resort to making blanket rules. Today this is a fine example for Christian overseers, who are interested in building up the flock. And it actually extends a basic approach that God followed even for ancient Israel.

¹⁸ God did not give Israelites elaborate laws about dress. Evidently men and women used similar mantles, or outer garments, though a woman's might be embroidered or be more colorful. Both sexes also wore a *sa-dhin'*, or undergarment. (Judges 14:12; Proverbs 31:24; Isaiah 3:23) What laws about clothing did God give? Neither men nor women were to wear clothes identified with the opposite sex, evidently with homosexual intent. (Deuteronomy 22:5) To show their being separate from surrounding nations, Israelites were to put a fringed edge on their garment, with a blue string above

16, 17. The apostles set what fine pattern as to making rules for fellow worshipers?

18. Jehovah gave what rules to Israel as to clothing?

the fringe, and maybe tassels on the corners of the mantles. (Numbers 15:38-41) That basically is all the direction the Law gave about clothing styles.

¹⁹ While Christians are not under the Law, do we have other detailed rules about dress or adornment set out for us in the Bible? Not really. God provided balanced principles that we can apply. Paul wrote: "I desire the women to adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind, not with styles of hair braiding and gold or pearls or very expensive garb." (1 Timothy 2:9) Peter urged that rather than concentrating on physical adornment, Christian women should concentrate on "the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit." (1 Peter 3:3, 4) That such counsel was recorded suggests that some first-century Christians may have needed to be more modest and restrained in their dress and grooming. Yet, instead of requiring—or forbidding—certain styles, the apostles simply provided upbuilding advice.

²⁰ Jehovah's Witnesses should be and generally are respected for their modest appearance. Nonetheless, styles vary from country to country and even within an area or a congregation. Of course, an elder having strong opinions or a certain taste in dress and grooming may decide accordingly for himself and his family. But as to the flock, he needs to bear in mind Paul's point: "Not that we are the masters over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy, for it is by your faith that you are standing." (2 Corinthians 1:24) Yes, resist-

19, 20. (a) What direction does the Bible give Christians on dress and grooming? (b) What view should elders have about making rules concerning personal appearance?

ing any impulse to set rules for the congregation, the elders work to build up others' faith.

²¹ As in the first century, at times a new or spiritually weak one may follow a questionable or unwise course in dress or the use of makeup or jewelry. What then? Again, Galatians 6:1 offers guidance for Christian elders who sincerely want to help. Before an elder decides to offer counsel, he may wisely consult with a fellow elder, preferably not going to an elder whom he knows shares his taste or thinking. If a worldly trend in dress or grooming seems to be affecting many in a congregation, the body of elders could discuss how best to provide help, such as by a kind, upbuilding part on a meeting or by offering individual assistance. (Proverbs 24:6; 27:17) Their goal would be to encourage the outlook reflected at 2 Corinthians 6:3: "In no way are we giving any cause for stumbling, that our ministry might not be found fault with."

²² Christian elders 'shepherding the flock

21. How can elders provide upbuilding help if someone goes to an extreme in dress?

22. (a) Why should it not be disturbing if minor differences of viewpoint exist? (b) What fine example did Paul provide?

Points for Review

- ☐ Why is change appropriate if we tend toward negative or critical speech?
- ☐ What can we do to be more upbuilding in the congregation?
- ☐ What is the godly pattern about making many rules for others?
- ☐ What will help elders to avoid making human rules for the flock?

of God in their care' want to do as Peter outlined, that is, not 'lord it over those who are God's inheritance.' (1 Peter 5:2, 3) In the course of their loving work, questions may arise on matters where there could be differing preferences. Perhaps it is a local custom to stand to read paragraphs during the Watchtower Study. Group arrangements for field service and many other details about the ministry itself may be handled in a customary way. Still, would it be a disaster if someone had a slightly different way? Loving overseers desire that "things take place decently and by arrangement," which expression Paul used regarding the miraculous gifts. But the context shows that Paul's main interest was "the upbuilding of the congregation." (1 Corin-

thians 14:12, 40) He showed no inclination to make an endless number of rules, as if absolute uniformity or complete efficiency were his prime objective. He wrote: "The Lord gave us [the authority] to build you up and not to tear you down."—2 Corinthians 10:8.

²³ Paul unquestionably worked to build up others by positive and encouraging speech. Rather than fellowshiping with just a small circle of friends, he went out of his way to visit many brothers and sisters, both the spiritually strong and those who especially needed to be built up. And he stressed love—rather than rules—for "love builds up."—1 Corinthians 8:1.

23. What are some ways in which we can imitate Paul's example of building others up?

SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT —ENJOY THE BENEFITS, AVOID THE SNARES

"There is nothing better than that [a man] should eat and indeed drink and cause his soul to see good because of his hard work."—ECCLESIASTES 2:24.

JEHOVAH'S guidance brings his servants many advantages. We can see this in the realm of entertainment. His direction helps Christians to avoid extremes at either end of the spectrum. Some religionists, who insist on severity in dress and conduct, view almost any pleasure as sinful. On the other

hand, most people pursue pleasures even if such conflict with Jehovah's laws and principles.—Romans 1:24-27; 13:13, 14; Ephesians 4:17-19.

² What, though, about God's people? Many who begin studying the Bible are surprised to learn that God actually created humans with

1. In what ways does God's guidance help his people regarding entertainment?

2. What gave early indication of God's view of entertainment?

the capacity to enjoy life. He gave our first parents work to do—but not the depressing drudgery that has marked the lives of most imperfect humans. (Genesis 1:28-30) Think of the numerous wholesome ways in which all who live in an earthly paradise might find enjoyment. Imagine their joy in watching wild animals that would pose no threat and a variety of domestic ones that could be part of daily life! And what meals they would have from “every tree desirable to one’s sight and good for food”—Genesis 2:9; Ecclesiastes 2:24.

³ Those activities can, in fact, be viewed as entertainment, the purpose of which in Paradise would be the same as now: to refresh and to rejuvenate one’s vitality for further productive activities (work). When entertainment accomplishes this, it is beneficial. Does that mean that true worshipers can make a place in their life for entertainment even if not yet living in Paradise? Yes. *Insight on the Scriptures* says about entertainment among Jehovah’s ancient people:

⁴ “The amusements and diversion of the Israelites are not prominently portrayed in the Bible record. Nevertheless, it shows them to be viewed as both proper and desirable when in harmony with the religious principles of the nation. The principal forms of recreation were the playing of musical instruments, singing, dancing, conversation, as well as some games. The propounding of riddles and difficult questions was much esteemed.—Jg 14:12.”—Volume 1, page 102.

⁵ When David returned in victory, Hebrew women used lutes and tambourines while *celebrating* (Hebrew, *sa-chaq*). (1 Samuel 18:

3-5. (a) What purpose should entertainment serve? (b) Why can we be sure that God did not discourage the Israelites from finding enjoyment?

6, 7) The Hebrew word basically means “laugh,” and some versions speak of “merry-making women.” (*Byington, Rotherham, The New English Bible*) While the Ark was being moved, “David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before Jehovah with all sorts of instruments.” Michal, David’s wife, had an unbalanced view, for she objected to David’s share in the entertaining activities. (2 Samuel 6:5, 14-20) God foretold that the returning exiles from Babylon would share in similar joyful activities.—Jeremiah 30:18, 19; 31:4; compare Psalm 126:2.

⁶ We too should seek to be balanced about entertainment. Do we appreciate, for instance, that Jesus was not an ascetic? He took time for refreshing meals, such as the “big reception feast” that Levi spread. And when self-righteous ones criticized him for eating and drinking, Jesus rejected their views and ways. (Luke 5:29-31; 7:33-36) Recall, too, that he both attended a wedding and contributed to the festivities. (John 2:1-10) Jesus’ half brother Jude mentions that Christians had “love feasts,” apparently meals where needy ones could enjoy food and pleasant, relaxed fellowship.—Jude 12.

Social Entertainment in Its Time and Place

⁷ Ecclesiastes 10:19 speaks favorably of ‘bread for the laughter of workers and wine that makes life rejoice.’ That does not sound as if entertainment were inherently wrong or bad, does it? Yet, the same book says: “For everything there is an appointed time, . . . a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to wail and a time to skip about.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4) Yes, while not condemning appropriate entertainment, the Bible offers us cau-

6. How do the Christian Greek Scriptures help us in our view of entertainment?

7. How does God’s Word encourage balance respecting entertainment?

tions. These include counsel to keep social entertainment in its place as to time and quantity. It also warns us about pitfalls that have been all too common with large social gatherings.—2 Timothy 3:4.

⁸ We noted that Jews returning from Babylon—who had much hard work to do—would share in joyful relaxation. Yet, Jeremiah earlier said that he would not ‘sit down in the intimate group of those playing jokes nor begin exulting.’ (Jeremiah 15:17) He was divinely assigned to deliver a message of impending punishment, so it was not the appointed time for him to be making merry.

⁹ Christians today are assigned to proclaim God’s message of hope as well as to pronounce his judgments against Satan’s wicked system. (Isaiah 61:1-3; Acts 17:30, 31) It should thus be evident that we ought not to allow entertainment to become prominent in our lives. We can illustrate the point with a pinch of salt or a special seasoning that enhances the flavor of food. Would you pour on the flavoring in such large amounts that it even overpowers the food? No, indeed. In line with Jesus’ words at John 4:34 and Matthew 6:33, our prime concern—our very food—should be the doing of God’s will. So recreation becomes like seasoning. It should refresh and enhance, not exhaust or overwhelm.

¹⁰ Stop and consider, though: Would not most people say that the time and attention they give to entertainment is moderate? If they felt otherwise, they would have made an adjustment. Does this not suggest that each of us should pause and seriously, frankly, analyze what place entertainment *actually* holds in our life? Might it stealthily

8, 9. Why should the time in which we live and our God-given assignment have a bearing on entertainment?

10. Why should all of us reexamine our entertainment as to time?

have become rather prominent? For example, do we automatically turn on the TV whenever we return home? Have we formed a pattern of blocking out a large chunk of time for entertainment each week, such as every Friday night or Saturday night? Would we feel let down if that time arrived and we were at home with no recreation planned? Two additional questions: On the day after a gathering, do we find that we stayed out so late or traveled so far that we are exhausted, maybe too drained to share in the Christian ministry or to give our employer a good day’s work? If our entertainment occasionally, or often, has that effect, is it really proper and balanced fun?—Compare Proverbs 26:17-19.

¹¹ It may also be good for us to review, too, the nature of our entertainment. Our being servants of God is no guarantee that our entertainment is fitting. Consider what the apostle Peter penned to anointed Christians: “The time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries.” (1 Peter 4:3) He was not wagging his finger, as it were, accusing his brothers of copying what those in the world were doing. Yet, alertness is vital for Christians (then and now) because one can easily fall prey to harmful entertainment.—1 Peter 1:2; 2:1; 4:7; 2 Peter 2:13.

Be Alert to Snares

¹² To what type of snare ought we be alert? Well, Peter mentioned “excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches.” A German commentator explained that the Greek

11. Why is a review of the nature of our entertainment fitting?

12. First Peter 4:3 highlights what sort of snare?



A host or a director at a gathering is responsible to see that guests are not ensnared

words used “chiefly applied to social drinking at the banquet.” A Swiss professor wrote that those practices were common back then: “The description must pertain to organized gatherings or even regular clubs in which the shameful activities described were carried on.”

¹³ Having alcoholic beverages at large social gatherings has ensnared many. It is not as if the Bible forbids moderate use of such beverages, for it does not. As an evidence of this, Jesus made wine at a wedding feast in Cana. There must have been no overdrinking, for Jesus would uphold God’s counsel to avoid being among heavy drinkers. (Proverbs 23:20, 21) But consider this detail: The director of that feast said that at other feasts good wine was served first ‘and when people were intoxicated, the inferior wine’

13. How has the use of alcohol at gatherings been a snare? (Isaiah 5:11, 12)

was served. (John 2:10) So it was common for Jews to get drunk at weddings where abundant wine was available for all.

¹⁴ Accordingly, some Christian hosts have decided to provide wine, beer, and other alcoholic drinks only if they can personally oversee what their guests are served or consume. If a group is larger than the host can directly oversee, such as the Jewish weddings mentioned, alcohol in quantity can be a dangerous snare. A person might be present who fought and overcame a problem with drinking. You can appreciate that general, unregulated access to alcohol could tempt him to overindulge and ruin the occasion for all. An overseer and father in Germany commented that his family benefits from pleasant association at social gatherings with fellow believers. He added, though, that the potential for problems was definitely greater when beer was easily available.

14. In what ways might Christian hosts cope with the snare that alcoholic beverages can present?

¹⁵ The wedding in Cana had a “director of the feast.” (John 2:8) This is not to say that a family having a group to their house for a meal or a period of association would have to appoint a director. The husband would be responsible for oversight of the event. But whether a group is just two families or is somewhat larger, it should be clear that someone is responsible for what goes on. Many parents check on this when their son or daughter is invited to a social gathering. They contact the host to ask who will oversee the entire occasion, including being present to its end. Christian parents have even adjusted their own schedule to be present so that both older and younger ones could enjoy mutual fellowship.

¹⁶ The Canada branch of the Watch Tower Society writes: “Counsel relative to limiting the size of social gatherings has been understood by a few elders to mean that large gatherings at wedding receptions are in violation of the counsel. They have concluded that if we are counseled to keep our social gatherings to a small, manageable size, it would be wrong to have 200 or 300 people at a wedding reception.”* Rather than overemphasizing an arbitrary size, prime attention should be given to proper oversight, however many will be there. The quantity of wine that Jesus provided indicates that quite a sizable group attended the wedding in Cana, but evidently it was suitably overseen. Other feasts back then were not; their size may have been a factor leading to inade-

* *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1984, contained balanced advice on weddings and wedding feasts. A prospective groom and his bride, as well as others who will help them, can beneficially review this material before making their wedding plans.

15. How can proper guidance of social gatherings be achieved?

16. What are appropriate considerations as to the size of gatherings?

quate oversight. The larger a gathering, the greater the challenge, because it is easier for weaker ones, who are inclined toward excesses, to assert themselves. At unsupervised gatherings they may promote questionable activities.—1 Corinthians 10:6-8.

¹⁷ Fine oversight of a social gathering includes its planning and preparation. This does not require devising a catchy theme to make it unique or memorable but which would imitate worldly parties, such as costume balls or masquerade parties. Can you imagine faithful Israelites in the Promised Land planning a party where all were to dress like pagans in Egypt or another land? Would they plan sensuous dancing or wild music that might be the rage among pagans? Back at Mount Sinai, they did get ensnared in music and dancing such as may have been current and popular in Egypt. We know how God and his mature servant Moses viewed that entertainment. (Exodus 32: 5, 6, 17-19) Hence, the host or overseer of a social event should consider whether there will be any singing or dancing; and if so, he should be sure that it is consistent with Christian principles.—2 Corinthians 6:3.

¹⁸ Finally, we remember that ‘Jesus and his disciples were *invited* to the marriage feast.’ (John 2:2) Granted, an individual Christian or a family might simply visit others for a pleasant, upbuilding time. But for planned social events, experience shows that determining beforehand who will be there helps to prevent problems. The importance of this was stressed by an elder in Tennessee, U.S.A., who has reared sons and daughters who are in the full-time ministry.

17. How may Christian balance be shown when a gathering is being planned?

18, 19. What insight may we gain from Jesus’ having been invited to a wedding, and how might we apply this?

Before he or his wife would accept an invitation, or give his children permission to attend, he contacted the host to be sure that the attendees were predetermined. His family was protected from snares that have befallen some at gatherings open to all, whether for a meal, a picnic, or exercise, such as playing ball.

¹⁹ Jesus discouraged inviting to a gathering just relatives, old friends, or ones of similar age or economic situation. (Luke 14: 12-14; compare Job 31:16-19; Acts 20:7-9.) If you carefully choose whom to invite, it is easier to include Christians with a variety of different ages and circumstances. (Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2) A few of them might be spiritually weak or new ones who can benefit from association with mature Christians.—Proverbs 27:17.

Entertainment in Its Place

²⁰ It is fitting for us as God-fearing people to be interested in our entertainment and to be concerned that such is proper and that we are balanced in the amount of time we use

20, 21. Why may entertainment fittingly have a place in our lives?

What Have We Learned?

- ☐ What balanced view do we find in the Bible about enjoying social entertainment?
- ☐ Why should consideration be given to the aspect of time and the nature of the entertainment?
- ☐ What are some things that a Christian host can do to guard against snares?
- ☐ If it is proper and balanced, what can entertainment accomplish for Christians?

for it. (Ephesians 2:1-4; 5:15-20) The inspired writer of Ecclesiastes felt that way: "I myself commended rejoicing, because mankind have nothing better under the sun than to eat and drink and rejoice, and that it should accompany them in their hard work for the days of their life, which the true God has given them under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 8:15) Such balanced pleasures can refresh the body and help to offset problems and frustrations that are common in the present system.

²¹ To illustrate, an Austrian pioneer wrote to an old friend: "We had a very nice outing the other day. About 50 of us set out for a small lake near Ferlach. Brother B—— led the procession in his van, carrying three grills, folding chairs, tables, and even a table-tennis table. We enjoyed it tremendously. One sister had an accordion with her, so there were a lot of Kingdom songs. The brothers, young and old, enjoyed the companionship." She had fond memories of well-supervised recreation that was kept free of snares such as overdrinking or loose conduct.—James 3:17, 18.

²² Paul urged us to be careful not to yield to the desires of the imperfect flesh, not even making plans that expose us to temptations. (Romans 13:11-14) That includes plans for social entertainment. When we apply his advice to such, we will be able to avoid circumstances that have led some to spiritual shipwreck. (Luke 21:34-36; 1 Timothy 1:19) Rather, we will wisely choose wholesome recreation that will help us to maintain our relationship with God. We will thus benefit from social entertainment that can be considered one of God's good gifts.—Ecclesiastes 5:18.

22. While enjoying social entertainment, what warning should each of us keep to the fore in our thinking?

Preaching in

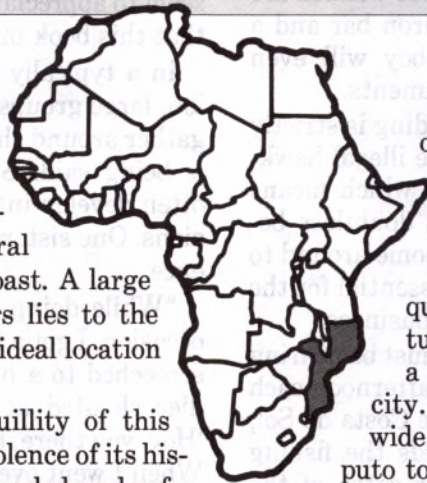
M · A · P · U · T · O

Mozambique's Intriguing Capital!

In 1991, Jehovah's Witnesses were given legal recognition in Mozambique. Since then the preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom has been making spectacular progress in this tropical country on the southeastern coast of Africa. Following is an account of how Jehovah's Witnesses carry on their Bible educational work in Mozambique, especially around Maputo, the capital.

ITS weather influenced by the warm Indian Ocean, Mozambique enjoys a balmy climate. Exquisite palm-fringed beaches and coral reefs abound along the coast. A large bay with sheltered waters lies to the south of the country—an ideal location for its capital, Maputo.

The beauty and tranquillity of this land, however, belie the violence of its history. For centuries it struggled under foreign domination, first the Arabs and then the Portuguese. These latter came with the full blessing of the Catholic Church to plunder the land for its treasures—ivory, gold, and slaves. Finally, after centuries of colonial oppression, a bitter internal struggle broke out that led to independence in 1975. Unfortunately, the change did not make life more secure, as the country became embroiled in civil war, resulting in much suffering for the people, particularly for the innocent rural population.



Maputo, the Capital

In the last decade, thousands of Mozambicans have fled to the relative safety of the towns and cities. This is especially noticeable in Maputo, where a mixture of quaint Portuguese architecture and colorful Africa lends a vibrant atmosphere to the city. Taking a stroll down the wide, tree-lined avenues of Maputo today, the first thing you will notice is the throngs of people bustling about their daily business. But there is a difference. "In spite of the congestion and hardship of everyday life, the people are always ready with a smile," observes Rodrigo, a missionary in Maputo. "You hardly ever find rude people!" Yes, the Mozambicans are known to be a spontaneous and friendly people.

Of course, as with most of Africa, the natural place to meet the people is at the local market. To get there you can take a ride on a *Chapa 100*, the local name for the

many pickup trucks that are used for public transport. As usual, more people seem to be clinging to the outside of the truck than are inside. Perhaps it is better to walk.

Mozambicans are incurable entrepreneurs. A visitor to Maputo cannot help but notice how many employ themselves by setting up tiny stalls on pavements and street corners. Would you like to buy fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, or spices? There is more than enough to go around. What about a live chicken, cashew nuts, or reeds with which to build your house? Nothing is too much trouble, and everything is done in a friendly spirit. Services such as having your shoes polished or your car washed are also available. Using a hot iron bar and a sheet of plastic, a young boy will even laminate your precious documents.

Actually, not all street trading is strictly legal. It is done anyway. The illegal hawkers are called *dumba nenge*, which means "rely on your feet." This is doubtless because when the authorities come around to inspect, fleetness of foot is essential for the survival of their precarious business.

Judging by the smell, we must be nearing the fish market! In the late afternoon each day, along the beaches of the Costa do Sol, a flurry of activity surrounds the fishing boats as they bring in their catch of the day. In addition to fish of all shapes and sizes, there are crabs, lobsters, and, of course, the famous Mozambican prawns. However, you may be interested in another kind of fishing that is going on in and around Maputo.

"Fishers of Men"

Since gaining legal recognition in Mozambique, Jehovah's Witnesses have received a fine response from the public. One man expressed his appreciation by saying: "In London I have seen many of you on the

streets. In fact, wherever I have been, I have seen Jehovah's Witnesses. Now it makes me feel good to see you here too."

If the acceptance of Bibles and Bible-based literature in Portuguese and Tsonga, the local languages, is any indication, then this is indeed a spiritually inclined people. Paula, another missionary, reports that on an average Saturday morning, it is quite possible to place well over 50 magazines at the bazaar, or central market. The book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work* is proving to be extremely popular. Many young people have been displaced or orphaned by the war, and they seem to appreciate the values and direction that this book provides.

In a typically uninhibited African fashion, large groups of interested persons will gather around the missionary to hear what is being said. Such pavement gatherings often develop into lively Scriptural discussions. One sister recalls an exciting experience.

"While doing street witnessing on one occasion, I got a fright when a military jeep screeched to a halt near me. A young soldier shouted at some of the bystanders: 'Hey, you there, tell that lady to come here.' When I went over to him, the soldier's face broke into a broad smile as he said: 'You are good people. We are happy to see you here. I believe you have a book about young people. I would like one too.' I replied that I did not have any, but I assured him that as soon as they were in stock, I would deliver one to his home."

Depot Deliveries

To meet the increasing demand for literature, the Watch Tower Society's branch office in South Africa delivers literature supplies to a depot in Maputo every two

weeks. Manuel, a missionary, looks after the depot and is responsible for organizing the distribution of literature.

One morning a middle-aged man sauntered in and asked what this place was used for. Manuel replied that this was a depot for Bible literature. The man walked out, but within a minute he was back.

"You said these were Bible books, didn't you?" he asked.

"Yes, that's right," replied Manuel.

"What organization is this for?" the man asked.

"Jehovah's Witnesses," Manuel replied, adding, "We keep our local congregations supplied with this literature."

"Ah, Jehovah's Witnesses!" The man's face lit up. "There is so much I like about you people. But at the same time, there is something I don't like about you."

"Well, what do you like about us?" asked Manuel tactfully.

"I love the interesting and educational books that you produce," the man explained. "What I do not like is that I can never get enough of them. You cannot believe how hungry we are in Maputo for literature like yours." Then he pulled out a written list of publications by the Watch Tower Society, including many back issues of *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, that he had missed.

"I carry this list around with me," he told Manuel. "Whenever I meet Jehovah's Witnesses, I try to get whatever publications they have. If you can help me get what I

have on my list, I am willing to pay the price of gold."

A conversation ensued. Manuel learned that the man first came in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses during the 1950's when he read the book *Creation*. But since the work of Jehovah's Witnesses was



The congregations enjoy a fine turnout for Christian witnessing on Saturday mornings

banned under the Portuguese government, little progress was made.

When he subsequently paid a visit to the man at his office, Manuel noticed that all the Watch Tower publications he had were wrapped in plastic and neatly filed. Manuel was able to supply the publications the man needed to complete his collection, and he arranged to conduct a Bible study with the man and his family.

All this spiritual planting and watering is starting to bear much fruit as God keeps on "making it grow." There are strong indications that the harvest of righthearted individuals is going to yield a bumper crop in Mozambique!—1 Corinthians 3:6; John 4:36.

Theocratic Advancement Despite Obstacles

Today, there are more than 50 congregations in and around Maputo city. However, there is not a single Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses to be found. Why is that so? Because of poor economic conditions, the congregations have not been able to



Meet 5-year-old Jaimito. He was born in a detention camp. Today, Jaimito's parents are happy to be back in Maputo. Each week Francisco, Jaimito's father, gets the entire family together for a Bible study. Both parents spend much time training their children to be effective teachers in the field service. Jaimito enjoys placing literature at the central market place

build even though some have owned land for a number of years.*

Yet, such obstacles do not hinder progress. At present there are well over 5,000 home Bible studies being conducted in the southern part of Mozambique. So great is the demand for studies that certain priorities must be set. If someone requests a study, it is usually taken for granted that

* If a man is fortunate enough to find a job here, the average wage is from \$20 to \$30 per month.

he will attend all the congregation meetings.

One congregation located in a squatter area recently had 189 at the Sunday meetings even though there are only 71 publishers of the good news. This large group meets in the open air in the courtyard of a home. The area is screened off from public

view by a corrugated iron and reed fence. Before each meeting, the area is swept clean, and a large proportion of the audience, including many adults, sit on reed mats on the ground. What rapt attention they pay to the program! Since many new ones do not have a copy of *The Watchtower* with which to follow the study, they learn to pay close attention during the reading of the paragraphs, and most

hands are up in response to the questions that the conductor asks.

Another congregation of 59 publishers regularly has more than 140 in attendance. They normally meet on an open terrace. But during rainy weather, the congregation squeezes into the two rooms of a small apartment. The overflow from the audience spills into the hallway, the kitchen, and the balcony. Once again, one cannot help but notice the appreciation and attentiveness as everyone, including many youths, follow the program intently.

Nowhere is the potential for future growth in Mozambique more apparent than at assemblies. Recently a circuit assembly was held at the old bullfight arena in the city center. Can you imagine the surprise on the part of the approximately 3,000 publishers

when more than 10,000 attended the sessions?

"The Harvest Is Great"

Such experiences clearly indicate that there is still much work to be done in Mozambique. Some congregations have only recently received their first visit by the traveling overseer sent out by the branch office. They are receiving much-needed assistance to help them implement proper organizational procedures in the congregations.

The congregations also appreciate greatly the recent arrival of Gilead missionaries. Francisco, an elder in Maputo, observes: "This is a great step forward for us. We had the zeal. We had the love. Still, we were out of touch with many organizational matters. What we really need is someone with firsthand experience to teach us how things are to be done. Now, we are so happy to have the missionaries with us."

The missionaries, for their part, are glad to be of service to their brothers. Hans, who was recently assigned to Mozambique after serving for 20 years in Brazil, sums it up this way: "Working in the Mozambican field is a great privilege! We sense that we

are on the verge of a massive increase here. There is so much work to do. We could use another 10 or 20 missionaries just in Maputo alone."

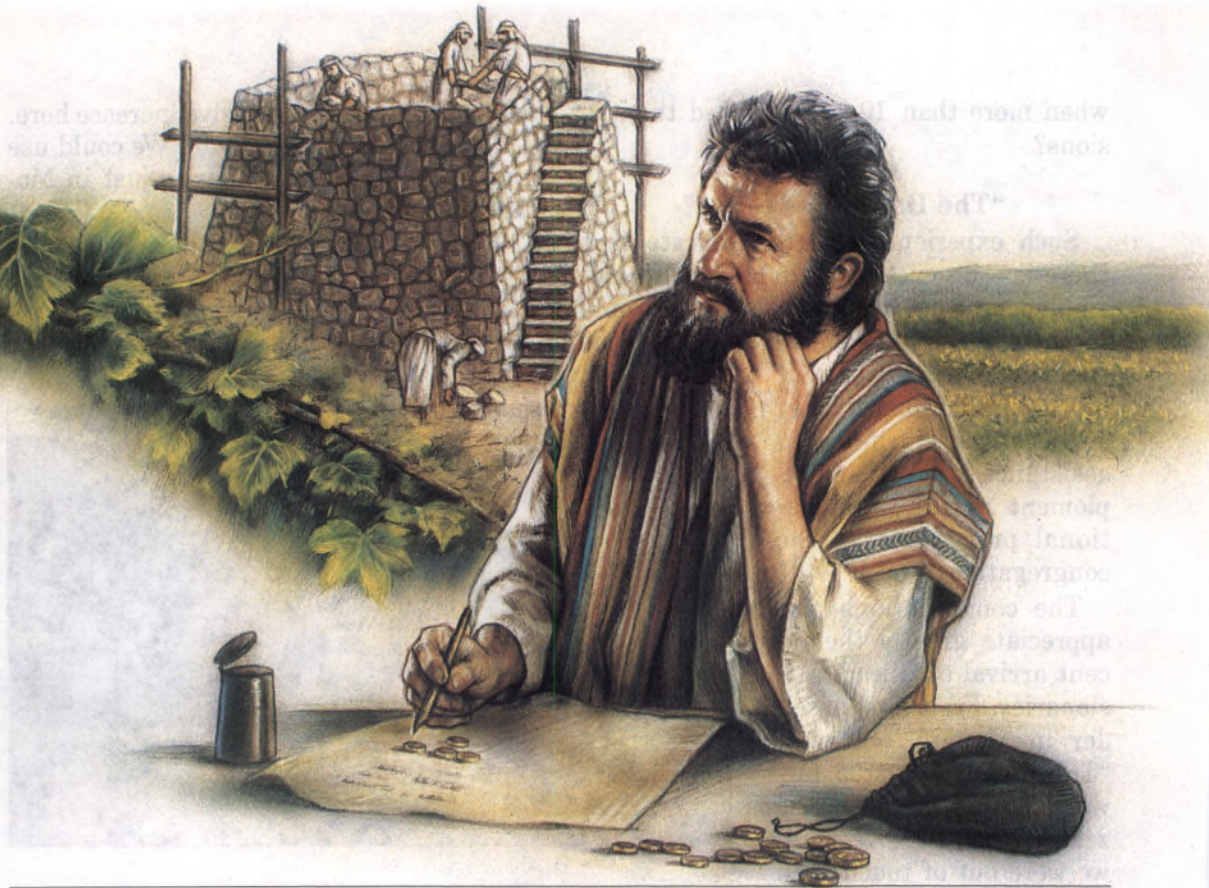
The theocratic momentum now picking up in Mozambique reminds one of Jesus' urgent words: "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the



The fact that congregations do not have Kingdom Halls at their disposal does not stop their progress. In most cases, more than double the number of publishers attend the meetings

Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Matthew 9:37, 38) There is every reason to believe that Jehovah will answer that urgent plea in behalf of his servants in Mozambique.

Thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses spent 12 years or more in detention centers in northwestern Mozambique. When some of them recently returned to Maputo, the only material possession they had was a piece of cloth to wrap around their loins. What they had in abundance was faith! Generous contributions of food and clothing from their fellow Witnesses in nearby lands helped them to get a new start in life.



HAVE YOU COUNTED THE COST?

“WHAT! You are turning down such a wonderful offer?” The supervisor could hardly believe what she had just heard. Her subordinate, a woman respected for her skill and fine conduct, had just refused an offer to study abroad for two years at company expense. Why did she do so?

To accept the offer, the woman explained, would mean being separated from her husband and two children for two years. She would miss them very much. More important, she would also be neglecting her God-given duties as a wife and mother. The emotional and spiritual cost would be too high a

price to pay. Thus, after counting the cost, she decided to turn down the offer.

What would you have done if you were in her shoes? Obviously, not everyone would agree with the decision that this Christian woman made. Some, such as her fellow employees, might feel she had squandered a golden opportunity for advancing her career. Others could even accuse her of not thinking of the future of her family, for, after all, two years would pass quickly. Yet, hers was not an impulsive or sentimental decision. It was based on sound reasoning and farsighted principles. What are these?

More Than Common Sense

The wisest man who ever walked on earth, Jesus Christ, provided the guideline in one of his parables. "Who of you that wants to build a tower does not first sit down and calculate the expense, to see if he has enough to complete it?" Jesus asked. "Otherwise, he might lay its foundation but not be able to finish it, and all the onlookers might start to ridicule him, saying, 'This man started to build but was not able to finish.'"—Luke 14:28-30.

Everyone would agree that it makes good sense to count the cost before deciding to do anything important. For example, if a person wanted to buy a house, would he rush into signing a contract without even finding out the cost and making sure he has the financial ability to complete the deal? He would be considered foolish indeed if he did such a thing. Yes, it is common sense to count the cost before one begins an undertaking.

What really, though, was the point Jesus was making with that parable? Just before introducing the parable, he said: "Whoever is not carrying his torture stake and coming after me cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27) Thus, the context shows that Jesus was not just giving some common-sense advice for our ordinary, everyday undertakings. Rather, he was talking about counting the cost in relation to becoming his disciple.

By his parable, Jesus pointed out that to become his disciple involves changes and sacrifices. Why? Because the present system of things is materially oriented and motivated by self-interest. Most people are mainly concerned with satisfying their fleshly desires, paying little or no attention to their spiritual needs or their relationship with God. (2 Timothy 3:1-4) This attitude,

or spirit, however, is in direct contrast to that shown by Jesus Christ. "The Son of man came," he said, "not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." He placed the highest value on spiritual rather than material things when he said: "It is the spirit that is life-giving; the flesh is of no use at all."—Matthew 20:28; John 6:63.

Consequently, when Jesus advised those who wanted to become his disciples to count the cost, he was speaking primarily, not of material values, but of spiritual ones. What is more important to them, the material advantages the world offers or the spiritual benefits that discipleship offers? This is why after giving the parable and a related one, he concluded: "Thus, you may be sure, none of you that does not say good-bye to all his belongings can be my disciple." (Luke 14:33) Is the would-be follower willing and ready to make such a sacrifice, or is it too high a price to pay?

A Balanced View

Even though material things may bring apparent benefits that are more noticeable and immediate, benefits from spiritual pursuits are far more lasting and satisfying. Jesus reasoned this way: "Stop storing up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break in and steal. Rather, store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes, and where thieves do not break in and steal." (Matthew 6:19, 20) In our time, inflation, stock-market declines, bank failures, and so forth, have caused the ruin of many who put their trust solely in material riches. Yet the apostle Paul urges us to "keep our eyes, not on the things seen, but on the things unseen.

Would he put spiritual activities first in life or a secular career?

For the things seen are temporary, but the things unseen are everlasting." (2 Corinthians 4:18) How, though, can we cultivate such a viewpoint?

We can do so by imitating our Model and Exemplar, Jesus Christ. When on earth, he was by no means an ascetic, as evidenced by the fact that he sometimes shared in wedding feasts and banquets. However, he obviously made spiritual things his priority. In order to accomplish his Father's will, he was willing to forgo even what are considered necessities. Once he declared: "Foxes have dens and birds of heaven have roosts, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head." (Luke 9:58) He considered the doing of his Father's will to be so vital and pleasurable that he said with heartfelt sincerity: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work."—John 4:34.

Jesus demonstrated his sense of values by the way he rejected Satan's temptations. The Devil tried to get Jesus to use His God-given power to benefit Himself, to satisfy His physical needs, and to achieve worldly fame and popularity. Jesus knew very well that such questionable benefits could be had only at a very high cost—the loss of God's approval—a cost higher than what he was willing to pay, for he treasured his good relationship with his Father above everything else. That is why he rejected Satan's offers unequivocally, without hesitation.—Matthew 4:1-10.

As Christ's followers, we certainly want



to have the same sense of values as our Master. In the present system of things under Satan's control, there are many things that may seem to promise fine benefits but can actually be damaging to our relationship with God. Such things as climbing the corporate ladder, pursuing higher education to advance one's position, courting unbelievers, or engaging in questionable business schemes can easily lead to a loss of faith and an eventual fall from Jehovah's favor. We must carefully count the cost when confronted with such temptations.

**True Wisdom
a Safeguard**

A few years ago, a young Christian man in a large city in the Far East had the opportunity to go abroad to further his study. Though he already had a good secular education and a well-paying job, he felt that this was not enough; he wanted to better his lot in life. Fellow Christians tried to reason with him in line with the Scriptural points we have just considered, but he was adamant and went ahead with the plan. Though he tried to hold on to his faith at first, gradually he lost his appreciation for Bible truth, and doubt began to set in. In just a year or so, he lost his faith completely and claimed to be an agnostic. Granted, gaining a higher

degree through advanced secular education brought him a measure of satisfaction. But for the temporary glory, what a heavy price he had to pay—the shipwreck of his faith and the risk of losing eternal life!—1 Timothy 1:19.

On the other hand, those who refuse to let anything jeopardize their relationship with God have reaped great blessings from Jehovah.

A case in point is that of a young man who owned an interior decorating business in the same city referred to above. Only a few months after he started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, he was confronted with a tempting offer—to do a \$30,000 renovation job. However, it would involve skirting the building codes and regulations to put up some illegal structure. Since he had learned that Christians must be law-abiding, he realized that to accept the job could mean losing God's favor. (Romans 13:1, 2) After weighing the matter carefully, he turned down the job. The outcome? This act of faith proved to be a turning point in his spiritual progress. Within the year, he advanced to the point of dedication and baptism. He sold his business and got a job that allowed him much more time for spiritual pursuits. He is now serving Jehovah with joy and zeal.

Both of these young men counted the cost. What made the difference in their choices? Godly wisdom! How so? Wisdom is the ability to put knowledge to use in a way that usually brings lasting benefits, and godly wisdom means using knowledge in line with God's purpose for us. While both young men had some Bible knowledge, their application of it led to different results. The book of Proverbs says: "When wisdom enters into your heart and knowledge itself

becomes pleasant to your very soul, thinking ability itself will keep guard over you, discernment itself will safeguard you, to deliver you from the bad way."—Proverbs 2:10-12.

God's Word, the Bible, is the source of true wisdom to which you always can turn for guidance when you have to make important decisions. Rather than becoming wise in your own eyes, heed the advice: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5, 6) We must be humble and willing to be taught, avoiding the self-willed and independent spirit of the world so prevalent today.

Yes, we cannot avoid reaping what we sow, and it is only fair and just that we have to bear the consequences of the decisions and choices we make. (Galatians 6:7, 8) So count the cost before every undertaking. Do not allow any seeming advantage to rob you of your spirituality or your relationship with Jehovah God. Pray for wisdom and good judgment to make the right decisions, for the decisions you make now may mean the difference between life and death—everlastingly!—Compare Deuteronomy 30:19, 20.

In Our Next Issue

Christendom's Harvest in Africa

All True Christians Must Be
Evangelizers

Jehovah Has Taken Good Care of Me

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Have you appreciated reading the recent issues of *The Watchtower*? Well, see if you can answer the following questions:

□ **What could well be foreshadowed by the added privileges of service that were given to the Nethinim and the sons of the servants of Solomon upon their return from exile in Babylon?** Today, as the remnant of spiritual Israel on earth go on decreasing, the other sheep go on increasing. Some of these sheeplike ones, like the Nethinim and the sons of the servants of Solomon, have now been assigned weighty responsibilities under the oversight of the remnant. (Isaiah 61:5)—4/15, pages 16-17.

□ **What did the prophet Zephaniah mean when he said: "Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger"? (Zephaniah 2:2, 3)** For anyone to be protected during the coming "great tribulation," it is not a case of once saved, always saved. (Matthew 24:13, 21) Concealment on that day will depend on a person's continuing to do three things: He must seek Jehovah, seek righteousness, and seek meekness.—5/1, pages 15-16.

□ **In what sense does Michael "stand up" in "the time of the end"? (Daniel 12:1, 4)** Since his installment as King in 1914, Michael has been "standing" in behalf of Jehovah's people. But soon Michael is to "stand up" in a very special sense—as Jehovah's Agent to remove all wickedness from the earth and as the Deliverer of God's people.—5/1, page 17.

□ **On what does true happiness depend?** True happiness depends on our precious relationship with Jehovah, his approval, and his blessing. (Proverbs 10:22) Hence, true happiness cannot be achieved apart from obedience to Jehovah and joyful submission to his will. (Luke 11:28)—5/15, pages 16, 19.

□ **When Jesus performed his healing miracles, was faith necessary on the part of the one healed?** A measure of faith was needed on the part of many in order to come to Jesus to be healed. (Matthew 8:13) However, no confession of faith was required for Jesus to perform his miracles, such as when he healed a lame man who did not know who Jesus was. (John 5:5-13) Jesus even restored the severed ear of the high priest's servant, who was among a group of Jesus' enemies. (Luke 22:50, 51) These miracles were performed with the power of God's holy spirit, not because of the faith of the sick individual.—6/1, page 3.

□ **What is represented by the "dragnet" spoken of in Jesus' illustration at Matthew 13:47-50?**

The "dragnet" represents an earthly instrument that professes to be God's congregation and that gathers in "fish." It has included both Christendom and the congregation of anointed Christians, the latter having continued to collect 'fine fish,' under the guidance of the angels, in line with Matthew 13:49.—6/15, page 20.

□ **What are some of the principles that judges in Israel had to apply in carrying out their assignments?** Equal justice for rich and poor, strict impartiality, and no accepting of bribes. (Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 16:19)—7/1, page 13.

□ **What should elders try to achieve by means of judicial hearings?** One aim is to find out the facts of the case, doing this with love. Once these are known, the elders must do whatever is needed to protect the congregation and to maintain within it Jehovah's high standards and the free flow of God's spirit. The hearing is also to save, if at all possible, an endangered sinner. (Compare Luke 15:8-10.)—7/1, pages 18-19.

□ **Why are fantasies relating to illicit sex so harmful?** In view of Jesus' words at Matthew 5:27, 28, all of those who persistently indulge in fantasies of illicit sex are guilty of committing adultery in their hearts. And there is the real danger that such fantasies may lead to immorality.—7/15, page 15.

□ **In what ways might Jehovah help us to view our trials properly and so endure them?** Scriptures may be brought to our attention by fellow believers or during a Bible study. Events maneuvered through God's providences may help us to see what to do. Angels may share in directing us, or we may receive guidance through holy spirit. (Hebrews 1:14)—7/15, page 21.

□ **Did the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E. establish or affirm the Trinity doctrine?** No, the Council of Nicaea only equated the Son with the Father in being "of one substance." The idea that the Father, Son, and holy spirit were each true God—a three-in-one God—was not developed by that council nor by earlier Church Fathers.—8/1, page 20.

□ **Was Job the only human faithful to Jehovah during the period that he lived? (Job 1:8)** No, the book of Job itself indicates that Elihu was accepted by God. Also, during the time Job lived, there were many Israelites living in Egypt, and there is no reason to think that all of these were unfaithful and unacceptable to God.—8/1, page 31.

A STEP ON THE WAY BACK

HE SPOKE to them with illustrations.' The Bible thus introduces Jesus' three memorable illustrations about mercy—the one lost sheep, the lost drachma coin, and the prodigal son.—Luke 15:3-32.

Two articles in *The Watchtower* of April 15, 1991, analyzed those illustrations and helped many readers to see how mercy can be extended today. A prime focus was on spiritual shepherds in taking the initiative to contact persons who were disfellowshipped but who might respond to kindly visits. What has been the result of these articles and the new procedure?

Soon after the magazine was published, a man in the state of Washington, U.S.A., wrote: "Proof of Jehovah's abundant loving kindness arrived in my mail today. I sit here with tears in my eyes and joy in my heart over the provisions and readjustment provided by the Most High. Only a truly just God can provide help for those sheeplike ones that are lost. . . . Yes, I am disfellowshipped but on the road to reinstatement." In October he was reinstated.

But what about the visits made by two congregation elders? A Christian wife wrote: "Words cannot express how I feel. My husband has been disfellowshipped for about 13 years. The elders visited him, as suggested in the article. Last night for the first time in many years, he went to one of the meetings. He is now trying to turn his life around and make a comeback."

As traveling overseers visit congregation after congregation, they do see the results. One circuit overseer wrote recently:



"When the April 15, 1991, *Watchtower* was published, many wondered what the response would be to elders making contact. The answer has become quite apparent.

"In our circuit, the last four congregations that I have visited have witnessed the return to the Kingdom Halls of nine people. Although only one has been reinstated, the other eight are making fine progress. The elders and congregations are excited to see the fruits of their labor and the wisdom of applying theocratic directions.

"We rejoice in this fine, merciful arrangement. As the one reinstated sister commented, 'I did not have the courage to return by myself, since I felt condemned before Jehovah. But when the elders called, it was the encouragement that I needed to come back.' Her enthusiasm has greatly encouraged the congregation."

Even if many who are visited do not respond, good is certainly being accomplished by this merciful initiative. Thus, beginning in September the elders in each congregation will review the names of those in the territory who are disfellowshipped and will arrange to visit all whom they feel might respond to mercy extended.

The Archbishop Cannot Cope!

LAST year, a consistory (solemn council of cardinals) was organized to discuss certain matters that are of great concern to the Catholic Church. One of these, according to the newspaper *Il Sabato*, is "the aggressiveness of the sects." However, the newspaper said: "It should be no problem for the cardinals to reach agreement on this point. All are in accord that there is a need for a more in-depth study of the phenomenon of new religious movements and also a need to prevent, as far as possible, their expansion."

Evidently, though, "the aggressiveness of the sects" is not just a problem in Italy. *Il Sabato* reports: "While visiting the Vatican recently, Archbishop Kirill of Smolensk [one of Russia's oldest cities] . . . asked the pope for ecumenical aid in coping with the overwhelming growth of Jehovah's Witnesses and similar groups in the Soviet Union."

In the first century, leaders of established religion had similar complaints when Christianity was spread aggressively by its adherents. On one occasion indignant Jews complained to the city rulers: "These men that have overturned the inhabited earth are present here also"! (Acts 17:6) Back then, religious leaders tried hard to stop the spread of Christianity, but they failed. Today also, any effort to stop the spread of true Christian doctrine is doomed to failure. God himself promises: "Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success, and any tongue at all that will rise up against you in the judgment you will condemn. This is the hereditary possession of the servants of Jehovah, and their righteousness is from me."—Isaiah 54:17.

