

AUGUST 1, 1993

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

COMMUNICATION
MORE THAN
JUST TALK



THE WATCHTOWER®

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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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"We just can't seem to talk!"

MICHAEL, a lawyer, had to be a dynamic communicator. His job demanded it. But after 16 years of marriage, Michael was forced to recognize that when he came home to his wife, Adrian, his communication skills seemed to vanish. "Carping, picking, throwing little innuendoes around," Michael recalls, "Adrian and I were always at each other, and I thought it was just going to wear us out. I wondered if that was marriage, the continual barrage of discontent and aggravation. If that was to be our lot for the rest of our lives together, I wanted to bail out—no kidding. I just couldn't face 20, 30, 40 years of that kind of constant aggravation and tension."

Sentiments like this are by no means unique to Michael and Adrian. They are reality for many couples whose relationship alternates between combat and cease-fire.

The simplest conversations erupt into verbal warfare. They "hear" things that are not said. They say things that are not meant. They attack and accuse, then retreat into resentful silence. They do not separate, but neither are they truly "one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) The relationship is deadlocked. Moving backward would mean splitting up; moving forward would mean confronting differences head-on. To avoid the pain of either choice, these couples resign themselves to keeping at a safe emotional distance from each other.

Such couples need to 'acquire skillful direction' in their marriage. (Proverbs 1:5) This direction is available in God's Word, the Bible. Paul's second letter to Timothy affirms that the Bible is "beneficial for teaching, for reproof, for setting things straight." (2 Timothy 3:16) This proves to be the case in healing the breakdown in marital communication, as we shall see.

COMMUNICATION

More than just talk

IMAGINE a crowd of tourists viewing a picturesque landscape. Although the entire group beholds the same scene, each person sees it differently. Why? Because each individual has a different vantage point. No two persons are standing precisely at the same location. Furthermore, not everyone focuses on the same portion of the scene. Each person finds a different aspect to be particularly intriguing.

The same is true within marriage. Even when they are highly compatible, no two partners share precisely the same outlook

on matters. Husband and wife differ in such factors as emotional makeup, childhood experience, and family influence. The dissimilar perspectives that result can become a source of bitter contention. The apostle Paul stated frankly: "Those who marry will have pain and grief."—1 Corinthians 7:28, *The New English Bible*.

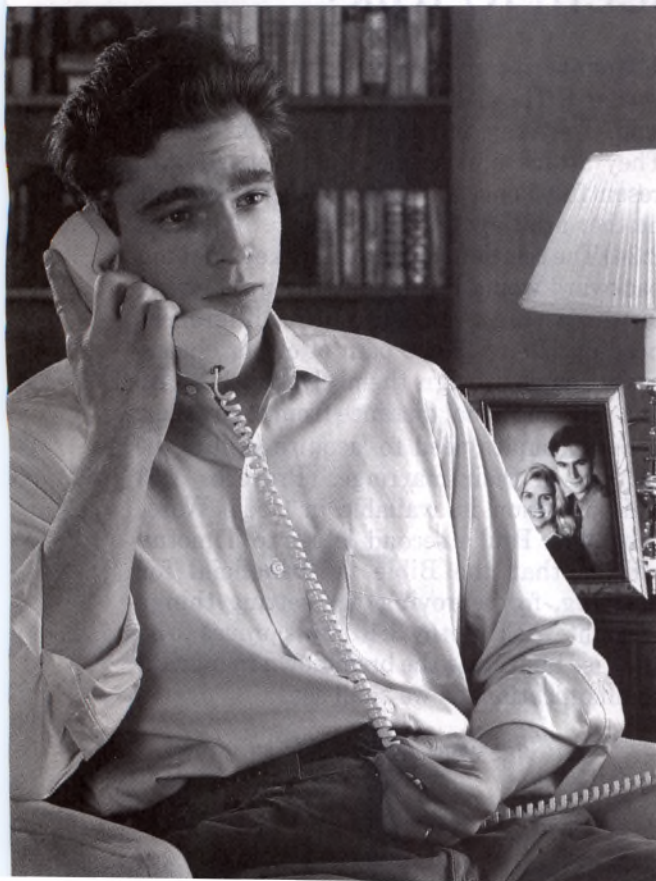
Communication includes the effort to blend these differences into a one-flesh relationship. This requires making time to talk. (See box on page 7.) But much more is involved.

Showing Insight

A Bible proverb states: "The heart of the wise one causes his mouth to show insight, and to his lips it adds persuasiveness." (Proverbs 16:23) The Hebrew word here translated 'causes to show insight' basically means to be prudent, to weigh matters carefully in the mind. Therefore, the focal point of effective communication is the heart, not the mouth. A good communicator must be more than a talker; he must be an empathetic listener. (James 1:19) He must discern the feelings and issues that lie beneath a mate's surface behavior.—Proverbs 20:5.

How? Sometimes this can be accomplished by observing the circumstances surrounding a conflict. Is your spouse under heavy emotional or physical strain? Is an illness contributing to your mate's disposi-

When a conflict arises, attack the problem rather than each other



tion? "What a joy it is to find just the right word for the right occasion!" says the Bible. (Proverbs 15:23, *Today's English Version*) So considering the circumstances will help you to respond accordingly.—Proverbs 25:11.

Often, though, the cause of a conflict is rooted in matters outside of present circumstances.

Understanding the Past

Experiences in childhood do much to shape our thinking in adulthood. Since marriage mates come from different families, conflicting views are inevitable.

An incident recorded in the Bible illustrates this. When the ark of the covenant was returned to Jerusalem, David publicly expressed his enthusiasm. But what about his wife Michal? The Bible relates: "Michal, Saul's daughter, herself looked down through the window and got to see King David leaping and dancing around before Jehovah; and she began to despise him in her heart."—2 Samuel 6:14-16.

Michal displayed the faithless disposition of her unrighteous father, Saul. Bible commentators C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch suggest that this is why Michal is referred to in verse 16 as "Saul's daughter" rather than as David's wife. In any case, the ensuing dispute between them makes it clear that David and Michal did not share the same view of this joyous event.—2 Samuel 6:20-23.

This example demonstrates that subtle influences from upbringing can cause a husband and a wife to view matters quite differently. This is true even if both are unitedly serving Jehovah. For example, a wife who was not given adequate emotional support as a child may exhibit an extraordinary need for approval and reassurance.

This might perplex her husband. "I could tell her I love her a hundred times," he may exclaim, "and *still* it would not be enough!"

In this instance, communication involves "keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others." (Philippians 2:4) To communicate, a husband must see his wife from the perspective of *her* past rather than from that of his own. And, of course, a wife should be moved to do the same for her husband.—1 Corinthians 10:24.

When the Past Was Abusive

Personal interest is especially crucial when a mate has been raped or sexually abused as a child—sadly, a growing problem today. A wife, for example, may find that at times of sexual intimacy, she cannot separate the present from the past, her



"The garbage got more time!"

A HUSBAND and wife who were experiencing marital difficulties were asked to estimate how much time they spent taking out the garbage each week. Their answer was about 35 minutes a week, or 5 minutes a day. They were then asked how much time they spent in conversation together. The husband was shocked. "The **garbage** got more time!" he declared, adding: "We're fooling ourselves if we think that five minutes a day is enough time to maintain a marriage. And it certainly isn't enough time to make the marriage grow."

mate from the perpetrator, or sexual relations from sexual abuse. This can be frustrating, especially if the husband does not consider this delicate matter from his wife's perspective.—1 Peter 3:8.

While you cannot undo the past nor completely cure its effects, you can do much to comfort a distressed mate. (Proverbs 20:5) How? "You husbands should try to understand the wives you live with," wrote Peter. (1 Peter 3:7, *Phillips*) Understanding the past of your spouse is a vital part of communication. Without empathetic compassion, your words will be useless.

Jesus "felt pity" when encountering those who were ailing, even though he had never personally experienced their maladies. (Matthew 14:14) Similarly, you may not personally have experienced the same neglect or abuse as did your wife, but instead of downplaying her anguish, acknowledge her past, and give her your support. (Proverbs 18:13) Paul wrote: "We, though, who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong, and not to be pleasing ourselves."—Romans 15:1.

Trapped by Resentment

A marriage is like a priceless vessel. When it is damaged by adultery, incalcula-

ble harm occurs. (Proverbs 6:32) True, if the innocent mate decides to forgive, the pieces may be glued together through reconciliation. But the cracks remain, and during an argument, there may be an inclination to look at those cracks and to use the past as a weapon.

Resentment is a normal response to a mate's unfaithfulness. But if you have forgiven your mate, guard against letting a lingering indignation undo the good that you achieved through the act of forgiveness. Whether it boils silently inside or is mercilessly unleashed, ongoing resentment harms both mates. Why? One doctor suggests: "If you're feeling hurt by your partner, it's because you still care about him. So by retreating or by reaching for retribution, you're not only wounding your mate but destroying yourself. You further dismantle the relationship you wish were whole."

Yes, you simply cannot reconcile differences in your marriage without quieting your anger. Therefore, at a time when emotions are not heated, discuss your feelings with your mate. Explain why you feel hurt, what you need in order to feel reassured, and what you will do to preserve the relationship. Never use the past simply as a weapon to gain leverage in an argument.

Addiction Wounds Communication

A marriage undergoes intense distress when a mate abuses alcohol or drugs. The nonaddicted mate may be in a situation similar to that of Abigail, as reported in the Bible. While her husband Nabal "was as drunk as could be," Abigail was strenuously attempting to reverse the consequences of his unwise behavior. (1 Samuel 25:18-31, 36) Marriages in which one spouse is torn by addiction and the other is caught up in attempts to change the addict's behavior often resemble the household of Nabal and Abigail.*

Understandably, great relief is felt when an addict begins recovery. But this is just the beginning. Imagine a severe hurricane wreaking havoc upon a small town. Houses are collapsing, trees are being uprooted, telephone lines are falling to the ground. There is great joy when the storm is over. But now extensive repair work is needed. The same is true when a mate begins recovery. Collapsed relationships must be reconstructed. Trust and integrity must be reestablished. Lines of communication need to be rebuilt. For a reforming addict, this gradual reconstruction is part of "the new personality" that the Bible requires Christians to cultivate. This new personality must include "the force actuating your mind."—Ephesians 4:22-24.

A Bible study enabled Leonard and Elaine to stop abusing drugs, but the force actuating the mind had not come into full play.* Soon other addictions surfaced. "For 20 years we tried to apply Bible principles and have a satisfying marriage, but it was always out of our grasp," says Elaine. "Our addictions were deeply rooted. We were unable to study or pray them away."

* Help for families of alcoholics is discussed in the May 22, 1992, issue of *Awake!*, pages 3-7.

* Names have been changed.

Establish Ground Rules

- ☐ Discuss one subject at a time
(1 Corinthians 14:33, 40)
- ☐ Express feelings; do not make accusations (Genesis 27:46)
- ☐ No hitting (Ephesians 5:28, 29)
- ☐ No name-calling (Proverbs 26:20)
- ☐ Aim to reconcile, not to win
(Genesis 13:8, 9)

Leonard and Elaine sought counseling to understand the causes of their addictions. Timely material from "the faithful and discreet slave" on child abuse, alcoholism, and respect for women has been of particular aid.* (Matthew 24:45-47) "We have been helped to repair the damage and draw back together," says Elaine.

Resolving Problems

Rebekah felt unbearable anguish over her son Esau's wives. Fearing that her other son, Jacob, would follow Esau's example, Rebekah vented her frustration by saying to her husband, Isaac: "I have come to abhor this life of mine because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob ever takes a wife from the daughters of Heth like these from the daughters of the land, of what good is life to me?"—Genesis 27:46.

Note that while Rebekah spoke firmly about her feelings, she did not attack Isaac personally. She did not say, "It's all your fault!" or, "You should have better control of

* See *Awake!* issues of October 8, 1991, May 22, 1992, and July 8, 1992.



**Express feelings; do not
make accusations**

understood because . . .” is much more effective than “You frustrate me!” or, “You never understand me!”

More Than Endurance

The marriage of the first human couple, Adam and Eve, endured for centuries, producing a family of sons and daughters. (Genesis 5:3-5) But this does not mean that their marriage was worthy of imitation. Early on, a spirit of independence and a disregard for the Creator’s righteous laws marred their one-flesh bond.

Similarly, a marriage today might be enduring, yet may lack vital elements of communication. Strongly entrenched rea-

this situation!” Rather, Rebekah used the pronoun “I” to describe how the problem affected her. This approach evoked Isaac’s empathy, not his desire to save face. Not feeling personally attacked, Isaac’s response to Rebekah’s plea was apparently immediate.—Genesis 28:1, 2.

Husbands and wives can learn from Rebekah’s example. When a conflict arises, attack the problem rather than each other. Like Rebekah, express your frustration from the standpoint of how it affects you. “I am frustrated because . . .” or, “I feel mis-

sonings and inappropriate personality traits may have to be uprooted. (Compare 2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.) This is an ongoing educational process. But the effort is worthwhile. Jehovah God is deeply interested in the marital arrangement, since he is its Creator. (Malachi 2:14-16; Hebrews 13:4) Therefore, if we do our part, we can be confident that he will recognize our efforts and supply us with the wisdom and strength necessary to heal any breakdown in marital communication.—Compare Psalm 25:4, 5; 119:34.

KINGDOM PROCLAIMERS REPORT

A Young Railway Enthusiast Learns the Truth



Courtesy of the Austrian Railways

IF A person's heart is inclined toward righteousness, then Jehovah God, using Christ Jesus and the heavenly angels, will see to it that such a sheeplike person is eventually contacted with the Kingdom good news. In due time that person may come to Jesus' right side of favor. (Matthew 25: 31-33) This was true of a young railway enthusiast in Austria who became acquainted with the truth in a unique way.

The most exciting part of this young man's hobby was to ride along in the cab of locomotives, with the permission of the railway administration. He recorded each trip on his video camera so that he could view it again in his home. On a journey he made from Vienna to Salzburg, the train's engineer was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. He used the opportunity to talk about the Kingdom to the railway enthusiast. At first the young man was surprised to hear the engineer talking about God and the Bible, but during the trip, he concentrated more on the scenery than on what the engineer was saying to him.

Home again, this young enthusiast viewed his video recording not once but ten times, as he was very interested in this journey. Since he had also recorded the sound, he heard time and time again what the Witness had told him. The more he viewed the video, the more familiar he became

with what he had been told. He now began to think about it, and finally he became enthusiastic about the wonderful information presented from the Bible. He wanted to know more.

He remembered the name of the engineer and knew that he lived somewhere in Vienna. So he went to the post office and started to dial one number after another listed under that name in the directory. His question to those who answered the phone was: "Are you a train engineer?" If the answer was no, he would call another number. Finally, he found the engineer. He told him his story and that he was interested in the Bible's message that he had heard on the video.

The Witness made arrangements through the branch office for a call to be made by someone who lived near the young man. It so happened that in the local congregation, there was another Witness who was also a railroad engineer. This second engineer visited the railway enthusiast, and a Bible study was started. In the summer of 1991, the young man was baptized.

Jehovah, who searches all hearts, must have seen that this person had a sincere love for righteousness. Hence, he brought him into contact with the truth of the Bible—although in a unique way.—1 Chronicles 28:9; John 10:27.



SUCCEED IN AVOIDING THE SNARE OF GREED

"Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare."

—1 TIMOTHY 6:9.

THE word "snare" may call to mind a hunter setting a camouflaged device to catch unsuspecting prey. However, God makes clear that for us the most dangerous snares are, not such literal devices, but what may ensnare us spiritually or morally. The Devil is an expert in setting such snares.—2 Corinthians 2:11; 2 Timothy 2:24-26.

² Jehovah helps us by identifying some of

1. Why should we be concerned about snares?
2. (a) How does Jehovah help us to avoid dangerous snares? (b) What particular type of snare comes in for attention now?

Satan's many and varied snares. For example, God warns that our lips, or mouth, can be a snare if we speak unwisely, rashly, or about what we ought not. (Proverbs 18:7; 20:25) Pride can be a snare, as can keeping company with people given to anger. (Proverbs 22:24, 25; 29:25) But let us turn to another snare: "Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin." (1 Timothy 6:9) What is behind that snare or the basis for it can be summed up in the word "greed." Though greed is often

evidenced by a determination to be rich, greed is really a snare with many facets.

Jehovah Warns Us of Danger

³ Basically, greed is an inordinate or excessive desire to have more, whether that be money, possessions, power, sex, or other things. We are not the first to be endangered by the snare of greed. Away back in the garden of Eden, greed ensnared Eve and then Adam. Eve's mate, who was more experienced in life than she was, had been personally instructed by Jehovah. God had provided them with a paradise home. They could enjoy an abundance of good and varied food, raised on unpolluted land. They could expect to have perfect children, with whom they could live and serve God endlessly. (Genesis 1:27-31; 2:15) Would that not seem to be enough to satisfy any human?

⁴ Yet, someone's having enough does not prevent greed from becoming a snare. Eve was ensnared by the prospect of being like God, having more independence and setting her own standards. It seems that Adam wanted an ongoing companionship with his beautiful mate, no matter what that cost. Since even these perfect humans were ensnared by greed, you can appreciate why greed can be a danger for us.

⁵ We must guard against being ensnared by greed because the apostle Paul warns us: "Do you not know that unrighteous persons will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be misled. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor *greedy persons* . . . will inherit God's kingdom." (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10) Paul also told us: "Let fornication and un-

cleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned among you." (Ephesians 5:3) So greediness is not even to be a topic of conversation for the purpose of gratifying our imperfect flesh.

⁶ Jehovah has recorded many examples to alert us to the danger of greed. Recall Achan's greed. God said that Jericho was to be destroyed, but its gold, silver, copper, and iron were for His treasury. Achan may initially have intended to follow that direction, but greed ensnared him. Once in Jericho, it was as if he were on a shopping trip where he saw unbelievable bargains, including a beautiful garment that seemed perfect for him. Picking up gold and silver worth thousands of dollars, he could have thought, 'What a fortune! It's almost a steal.' Exactly! Coveting what should have been destroyed or turned in, he stole from God, and that cost Achan his life. (Joshua 6:17-19; 7:20-26) Consider, too, the examples of Gehazi and Judas Iscariot.—2 Kings 5:8-27; John 6:64; 12:2-6.

⁷ We should not overlook the fact that the three mentioned above were not pagans ignorant of Jehovah's standards. Rather, they were in a dedicated relationship with God. All of them had witnessed miracles that should have impressed on them God's power and the importance of retaining his favor. Still, the snare of greed was their downfall. We too can ruin our relationship with God if we let ourselves be ensnared by greed in any form. What types or forms of greed may be especially dangerous to us?

Ensnared by Greed for Wealth or Possessions

⁸ Most Christians have heard clear warnings from the Bible against developing a

6, 7. (a) What Bible examples underscore how powerful greed can be? (b) Why should those examples be a warning to us?

8. The Bible gives what warning regarding wealth?

3, 4. Ancient human history contains what lesson about greed?

5. How important is it for us to avoid the snare of greed?

love of riches, a craving for wealth. Why not review some of these, as found at Matthew 6:24-33; Luke 12:13-21; and 1 Timothy 6:9, 10? While you may feel that you accept and follow such counsel, is it not likely that Achan, Gehazi, and Judas would have said that they agreed with it too? Clearly, we must go beyond mere intellectual agreement. We have to take care that the snare of greed for wealth or possessions does not affect our everyday lives.

⁹ In daily life, we often have to make purchases—food, clothing, and items for the home. (Genesis 42:1-3; 2 Kings 12:11, 12; Proverbs 31:14, 16; Luke 9:13; 17:28; 22:36) But the commercial world stimulates a desire for more and newer things. Many advertisements filling newspapers, magazines, and TV screens are masked appeals to greed. Such appeals may also exist at stores with racks of blouses, coats, dresses, and sweaters, with shelves of new shoes, electronic gear, and cameras. Christians may want to ask themselves, ‘Has shopping become a highlight or chief pleasure in my life?’ ‘Do I truly need new items that I see, or is the commercial world just fertilizing seeds of greed in me?’—1 John 2:16.

¹⁰ If shopping seems to be a common snare for women, getting more money is one for countless men. Jesus illustrated this snare with a rich man who had a good income yet was determined to ‘tear down his storehouses and build bigger ones to gather in all his grain and good things.’ Jesus left no doubt as to the danger: “Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of covetousness” or greed. (Luke 12:15-21) Whether we are rich or not, we should heed that counsel.

9. Why should we examine our attitude toward shopping?

10. What snare of greed is particularly a danger for men?

¹¹ Greed for more money, or things that money can buy, is often fostered under camouflage. A scheme to get rich quickly may be presented—perhaps a once-in-a-lifetime chance for financial security through a risky investment. Or one may be tempted to make money by questionable or illegal business practices. This covetous desire may become overpowering, ensnaring. (Psalm 62:10; Proverbs 11:1; 20:10) Some within the Christian congregation have begun businesses with the expectation that their trusting brothers would be the main customers. If their objective was not simply to provide a needed product or service by ‘hard work, doing with their hands what is good work,’ but to make money hastily at the expense of fellow Christians, then they are acting out of greed. (Ephesians 4:28; Proverbs 20:21; 31:17-19, 24; 2 Thessalonians 3:8-12) Greed for money has led some into gambling through raffles, sweepstakes, or lotteries. Others, ignoring empathy and reasonableness, have hastily started lawsuits in hopes of a large award or settlement.

¹² The preceding are areas in which a self-examination is in order so that we can see honestly whether greed may be at work in us. Even if it is, we can change. Remember that Zacchaeus changed. (Luke 19:1-10) If anyone finds greed for wealth or possessions to be a problem, he should be as determined as Zacchaeus was to escape the snare.—Jeremiah 17:9.

Greed in Other Aspects of Life

¹³ Some find it easier to see the danger of greed as respects money or possessions than

11. How might a Christian be ensnared by greed for more money?

12. Why do we know that greed for wealth can be overcome?

13. Psalm 10:18 calls to our attention what other snare of greed?

other ways in which it appears. One dictionary of Greek says that the group of words rendered "greed" or "covetousness" has the sense of "wanting more," with a reference to power etc. as well as property." Yes, we could be ensnared by greedily wanting to exert power over others, perhaps to have them tremble under our authority.—Psalm 10:18.

¹⁴ Since early days imperfect humans have enjoyed having power over others. God foresaw that a sad result of human sin would be that many husbands would "dominate" their wives. (Genesis 3:16) This failing, however, has extended beyond the marital scene. Thousands of years later, a Bible writer noted that "man has dominated man to his injury." (Ecclesiastes 8:9) You likely know how true that has been in political and military matters, but could it be that in our own spheres, we strive for more personal power or control?

¹⁵ All of us relate to other humans—in our immediate or extended families, at our secular work or at school, among friends, and in the congregation. We may occasionally, or often, have some voice in what will be done, as well as how or when. That in itself is not wrong or bad. Do we, though, excessively enjoy using any authority that we might have? Could it be that we like having the final say and want it more and more? Worldly managers or bosses often show this attitude by surrounding themselves with yes-men, who offer no dissenting views and who do not challenge their superiors' worldly quest (greed) for power.

¹⁶ This is a snare to avoid in dealing with fellow Christians. Jesus said: "You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over

them and the great men wield authority over them. This is not the way among you; but whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister." (Matthew 20:25, 26) Such humility should be evident as Christian elders deal with one another, with ministerial servants, and with the flock. Might a desire for power be reflected, for instance, by a presiding overseer who consults with fellow elders only on minor matters but makes all key decisions on his own? Is he truly willing to delegate tasks? Problems could result if a ministerial servant handling a meeting for field service was unreasonably demanding in his arrangements, even making rules.—1 Corinthians 4:21; 9:18; 2 Corinthians 10:8; 13:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:6, 7.

¹⁷ Food is another realm in which many are ensnared by greed. Of course, it is natural to find enjoyment in eating and drinking; the Bible speaks approvingly of that. (Ecclesiastes 5:18) Yet, it is not uncommon for a desire in this connection to grow over a period of time, extending far beyond what is reasonably enjoyable and sufficient. If this was not an appropriate area for concern by God's servants, why would Jehovah's Word say at Proverbs 23:20: "Do not come to be among heavy drinkers of wine, among those who are gluttonous eaters of flesh"? Yet, how do we avoid this snare?

¹⁸ God does not suggest that his people subsist on some austere food regimen. (Ecclesiastes 2:24, 25) But neither does he approve of our making food and drink a dominant part of our conversation and planning. We might ask ourselves, 'Do I often become excessively enthusiastic when I describe some meal I had or plan to have?' 'Am I always talking about food and drink?'

17. Why is it appropriate to consider food when discussing the snare of greed?

18. What self-examination about food and drink might we make?

14. In what areas has a desire for power been harmful?

15, 16. In what respects might a Christian be ensnared by a desire for more power? (Philippians 2:3)

Another indicator may be how we react when we have a meal that we did not prepare or pay for, perhaps when we are a guest in another's home or when food is available at a Christian assembly. Could it be that we are then inclined to eat far more than usual? We recall that Esau permitted food to become unduly important, to his lasting harm.—Hebrews 12:16.

¹⁹ Paul gives us insight into another snare: "Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as it befits holy people." (Ephesians 4:17-19; 5:3) Indeed, greed for sexual pleasure can develop. This enjoyment, of course, has an appropriate expression within the bonds of marriage. The close affection associated with this pleasure plays a part in helping husband and wife stay devoted to each other over many years of marriage. Few people would deny, though, that today's world has put extreme emphasis on sex, presenting as normal what is actually a reflection of the greediness that Paul mentioned. Especially is such a wrong view of sexual pleasure easily adopted by those who expose themselves to the immorality and nudity common today in many films, videos, and magazines, as well as at places of entertainment.

²⁰ The account of David's sin with Bathsheba shows that one of God's servants can be trapped by the snare of sexual greed. Though free to enjoy pleasure within his own marriage, David let illicit sexual desire grow. Noting how attractive Uriah's wife was, he gave free rein to the thought—and deed—of finding illicit pleasure with her. (2 Samuel 11:2-4; James 1:14, 15) Certainly we must shun this form of greed. Even with-

19. How could greed be a problem as regards sexual pleasure?

20. How can Christians show themselves alert to the danger of greediness in sexual matters?

in marriage it is fitting to shun greed. This would include the rejecting of extreme sex practices. A husband determined to avoid greed in this area would be genuinely interested in his mate, so that any choice the two of them made about family planning would not rate his pleasure as more important than his wife's present or future health.—Philippians 2:4.

Continue to Be Determined to Avoid Greed

²¹ Jehovah does not provide cautions or warnings out of any distrust. He knows that his devoted servants want to serve him loyally, and he is confident that the great majority will continue to do that. About his people as a whole, he can make an expression similar to what he said of Job when speaking to Satan: "Have you set your heart upon my servant Job, that there is no one like him in the earth, a man blameless and upright, fearing God and turning aside from bad?" (Job 1:8) Our loving, trusting heavenly Father alerts us to dangerous snares, such as those connected with forms of greed, because he wants us to continue untainted and faithful to him.

21. Why should our discussion of greediness not discourage us?

What Have I Learned?

- ☐ Why should we be concerned about the snare of greed?
- ☐ In what ways might greed for wealth or possessions ensnare us?
- ☐ How might greed in other areas of life present real dangers?
- ☐ What should be our attitude toward any weakness we have in regard to greed?

²² Each of us has inherited a tendency toward greediness, and we may have developed this further under the influence of the wicked world. What if during our study of greediness—as respects wealth, possessions, power and authority, food, or sexual

22. What should we do if our study has revealed an area of personal danger or weakness?

pleasure—you saw some area of weakness? Then take to heart Jesus' advice: "If ever your hand makes you stumble, cut it off; it is finer for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go off into Gehenna." (Mark 9:43) Make what changes are called for in attitude or interests. Avoid the deadly snare of greed. Thus with God's help, you may "enter into life."

LET NO ONE SPOIL YOUR USEFUL HABITS

"Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits."

—1 CORINTHIANS 15:33.

WHAT a powerful emotion parental love is! It moves parents to sacrifice for their children, to teach and advise them. The apostle Paul may not have been a natural father, but he wrote to Christians in Corinth: "Though you may have ten thousand tutors in Christ, you certainly do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have become your father through the good news."—1 Corinthians 4:15.

² Earlier, Paul had traveled to Corinth, where he preached to Jews and Greeks. He helped to form the congregation in Corinth. In another letter Paul likened his care to that of a nursing mother, but he was like a father to the Corinthians. (1 Thessalonians 2:7) As does a loving natural father, Paul admonished his spiritual children. You may benefit from his fatherly counsel to the Christians

1, 2. (a) How did the apostle Paul feel toward the Corinthian Christians, and why? (b) What particular counsel will we consider?

in Corinth: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Corinthians 15:33) Why did Paul write that to the Corinthians? How can we apply the advice?

Counsel for Them and for Us

³ In the first century, the Greek geographer Strabo wrote: "Corinth is called 'wealthy' because of its commerce, since it is situated on the Isthmus and is master of two harbours, of which the one leads straight to Asia, and the other to Italy; and it makes easy the exchange of merchandise from both countries." Every two years the renowned Isthmian Games brought vast crowds to Corinth.

⁴ What of the people in this city that was a center both of governmental authority and of the sensuous worship of Aphrodite? Professor T. S. Evans explained: "The population [was] probably about 400,000. Society

3, 4. What do we know of first-century Corinth and its population?

[was] of high culture, but in morals lax, even gross. . . . The Greek inhabitants of Achaia were marked by intellectual restlessness and a feverish hankering after novelties. . . . Their egoism was as fuel ready laid for the torch of sectarianism."

⁵ In time even the congregation became divided by some who still were inclined toward proud speculation. (1 Corinthians 1: 10-31; 3:2-9) A major problem was that some were saying: "There is no resurrection of the dead." (1 Corinthians 15:12; 2 Timothy 2: 16-18) Whatever their exact belief (or misbelief), Paul had to correct them with clear proof that Christ had been "raised up from the dead." Thus, Christians could trust that God would give them the "victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:20, 51-57) Had you been there, would you have been in danger?

⁶ In the course of providing firm evidence that the dead are to be resurrected, Paul told them: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits." The point of this counsel concerned those associated with the congregation who disagreed on the resurrection doctrine. Were they merely uncertain about a point that they did not understand? (Compare Luke 24:38.) No. Paul wrote that "some among you *say* there is no resurrection," so those involved were expressing disagreement, tending toward apostasy. Paul was well aware that they could spoil the good habits and thinking of others.—Acts 20:30; 2 Peter 2:1.

⁷ How can we apply Paul's warning about associations? He did not mean that we should decline to help someone in the congregation who was finding it hard to under-

5. What danger did the Corinthian brothers face?

6. Paul's counsel at 1 Corinthians 15:33 was particularly applicable to whom?

7. What is one setting in which we could apply 1 Corinthians 15:33?

stand a Bible verse or teaching. Indeed, Jude 22, 23 urges us to give merciful help to sincere ones with such doubts. (James 5: 19, 20) Paul's fatherly counsel, however, should certainly come into play if someone keeps taking exception to what we know to be Bible truth or keeps making comments of a skeptical or negative nature. We should be on guard against association with that type of person. Of course, if someone became definitely apostate, the spiritual shepherds would have to act to protect the flock.—2 Timothy 2:16-18; Titus 3:10, 11.

⁸ We can also apply Paul's fatherly words at 1 Corinthians 15:33 when it comes to those outside the congregation who promote false teachings. How might we be drawn into association with them? It could happen if we did not distinguish between those who might be helped to learn the truth and those who are just raising a challenge so as to promote a false teaching. For example, in our witnessing work, we may encounter a person who disagrees on some point but who is willing to discuss it further. (Acts 17: 32-34) That of itself need not present a problem, for we happily explain Bible truth to anyone who genuinely wants to know such, even returning to present convincing evidence. (1 Peter 3:15) Yet, some may not really be interested in finding Bible truth.

⁹ Many people will debate for hours, week after week, but not because they are seeking truth. They just want to undermine another's faith while flaunting their own supposed education in Hebrew, Greek, or evolutionary science. When encountering them, some Witnesses have felt challenged and have wound up having extended association centered on false religious belief, philosophy, or scientific error. It is noteworthy

8. How may we act with discernment when someone disagrees on a Bible teaching?

9. How should we react to challenges to our beliefs?

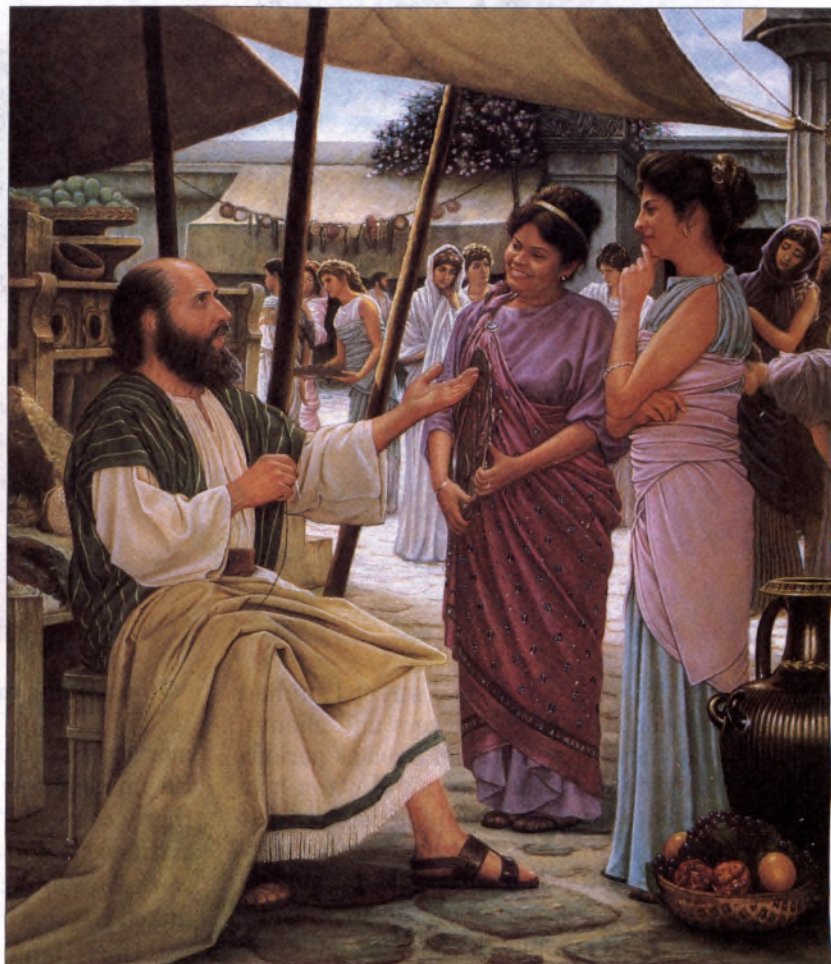
***Paul used the workplace
to further the good news***

that Jesus did not let that happen to him, though he could have won debates with religious leaders who were schooled in Hebrew or Greek. When challenged, Jesus replied briefly and then turned his attention again to humble ones, the real sheep.—Matthew 22:41-46; 1 Corinthians 1:23-2:2.

¹⁰ Modern computers have opened other avenues to bad association. Some commercial firms enable subscribers using a computer and a telephone to send a message to electronic bulletin boards; a person can thus post on the bulletin board a message that is open to all subscribers. This has led to so-called electronic debates on religious matters. A Christian might be drawn into such debates and may spend many hours with an apostate thinker who may have been disfellowshipped from the congregation. The direction at 2 John 9-11 underscores Paul's fatherly counsel about avoiding bad associations.*

* Another danger in such bulletin boards is the temptation to download copyrighted programs or publications without the permission of the original owners or authors, which would be in conflict with international copyright laws.—Romans 13:1.

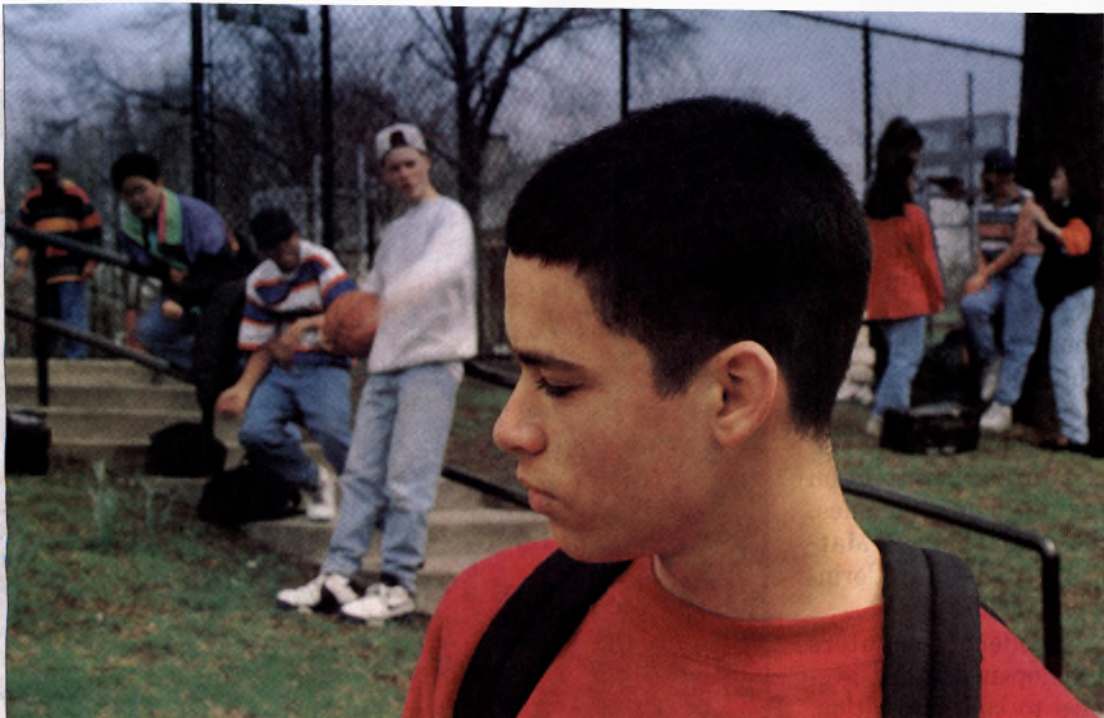
10. Why is caution appropriate for Christians who have computers and access to electronic bulletin boards?



Avoid Being Misled

¹¹ As noted, Corinth was a commercial center, with numerous shops and businesses. (1 Corinthians 10:25) Many who came for the Isthmian Games would dwell in tents, and during that event merchants would sell from portable booths or covered stalls. (Compare Acts 18:1-3.) This made it possible for Paul to find work there making tents. And he could use the workplace to further the good news. Professor J. Murphy-O'Connor writes: "From a shop in a busy

11. The commercial situation in Corinth offered what opportunity?



market . . . on to a crowded street Paul had access, not only to co-workers and clients, but also the throng outside. In slack periods he could stand in the door and button-hole those whom he thought might listen . . . It is difficult to imagine that his dynamic personality and utter conviction did not quickly make him a 'character' of the neighbourhood, and this would have drawn the curious, not merely the idlers but also those genuinely seeking. . . . Married women with their attendants, who had heard of him, could visit on the pretext of coming to buy. In times of stress, when persecution or simple harassment threatened, believers could encounter him as clients. The workshop also brought him into contact with municipal officials."

¹² Paul would have recognized, though, the potential for "bad associations" in the workplace. We should too. Significantly, Paul quoted an attitude that prevailed among some: "Let us eat and drink, for to-

12, 13. How can 1 Corinthians 15:33 fittingly apply at the workplace?

Other youths can spoil your Christian habits

morrow we are to die." (1 Corinthians 15:32) He immediately followed that with his fatherly counsel: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits." How might the workplace and the seeking of enjoyment be linked in creating a potential danger?

¹³ Christians want to be friendly with workmates, and many experiences bear out how effective this can be in opening the way for giving a witness. A fellow worker could misinterpret friendliness, however, as inviting association in order to have a good time together. He or she might extend a casual invitation to lunch, to a brief stop after work for a drink, or to some recreation on the weekend. This person might appear kind and clean-cut, and the invitation might seem innocent. Yet, Paul advises us: "Do not be misled."

¹⁴ Some Christians have been. They grad-

14. How have some Christians been misled through associations?

ually developed a relaxed attitude toward association with workmates. Maybe it grew out of a common interest in a sport or a hobby. Or a non-Christian on the job might be exceptionally kind and thoughtful, which led to spending increasing amounts of time with that one, even preferring such company to that of some in the congregation. Then the association might lead to missing just one meeting. It could mean being out late one evening and breaking the pattern of sharing in the field ministry in the morning. It could result in watching a film or a video of a type that the Christian normally would refuse. 'Oh, that would never happen to me,' we might think. But most of those who have been misled may first have responded that way. We need to ask ourselves, 'Just how determined am I to apply Paul's counsel?'

¹⁵ What we just considered as to the workplace applies also to our association with neighbors. Certainly, the Christians in ancient Corinth had neighbors. In some communities it is normal to be quite friendly and supportive of neighbors. In rural areas neighbors may rely on one another because of isolation. Family ties are particularly strong in some cultures, giving rise to many invitations to meals. Obviously, a balanced view is important, as Jesus manifested. (Luke 8:20, 21; John 2:12) In our dealings with neighbors and relatives, are we inclined to carry on as we did before we became Christians? Rather, should we not now review such dealings and consciously determine what limits are appropriate?

¹⁶ Jesus once likened the word of the Kingdom to seeds that "fell alongside the road, and the birds came and ate them up." (Matthew 13:3, 4, 19) Back then, soil along

a road became hard as many feet walked back and forth on it. It is that way with many people. Their lives are filled with neighbors, relatives, and others coming and going, keeping them busy. This, as it were, tramples the soil of their hearts, making it hard for seeds of truth to take root. A similar unresponsiveness could develop in one who is already a Christian.

¹⁷ Some worldly neighbors and relatives may be friendly and helpful, though they have consistently shown neither interest in spiritual things nor love for righteousness. (Mark 10:21, 22; 2 Corinthians 6:14) Our becoming Christians should not mean that we become unfriendly, unneighborly. Jesus counseled us to manifest genuine interest in others. (Luke 10:29-37) But equally inspired and necessary is Paul's counsel to be careful about our associations. As we apply the former counsel, we must not forget the latter. If we do not keep both principles in mind, our habits can be affected. How do your habits compare with those of your neighbors or relatives as respects honesty or obeying Caesar's law? For instance, they may feel that at tax time, underreporting income or business profits is justified, even necessary for survival. They might speak persuasively about their views over a casual cup of coffee or during a brief visit. How could that affect your thinking and honest habits? (Mark 12:17; Romans 12:2) "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits."

Youthful Habits Too

¹⁸ Young people are particularly affected by what they see and hear. Have you not noted children whose gestures or mannerisms are very much like those of their

15. What balanced attitude should we have toward neighbors?

16. How are Jesus' words at Matthew 13:3, 4 to be understood?

17. How could association with neighbors and others affect us?

18. Why does 1 Corinthians 15:33 apply also to youths?

parents or siblings? We should not be surprised, then, that children may be influenced greatly by their playmates or schoolmates. (Compare Matthew 11:16, 17.) If your son or daughter is around youths who speak disrespectfully of their parents, why imagine that this will not affect your children? What if they often hear other youths use obscene language? What if their peers at school or in the neighborhood get excited about a new style of shoes or a fashion in jewelry? Should we think that young Christians will be impervious to such influence? Did Paul say that 1 Corinthians 15:33 has a minimum age limit?

¹⁹ If you are a parent, are you conscious of that counsel as you reason with and make decisions concerning your children? It will probably help if you acknowledge that this does not mean that all other youths whom your children are around in the neighborhood or at school are no good. Some of them may be pleasant and decent, as some of your neighbors, relatives, and workmates are. Try to help your offspring to see this and to grasp that you are balanced in your application of Paul's wise, paternal counsel to the Corinthians. As they discern the way

19. What view should parents try to inculcate in their children?

Do You Recall?

- ☐ For what particular reason did Paul write 1 Corinthians 15:33?
- ☐ How can we apply Paul's counsel in the workplace?
- ☐ What balanced view of neighbors should we have?
- ☐ Why is 1 Corinthians 15:33 especially appropriate counsel for youths?

you balance things, it can help them to imitate you.—Luke 6:40; 2 Timothy 2:22.

²⁰ You who are yet young, try to discern how to apply the counsel of Paul, knowing that it is important for every Christian, young or old. This will be challenging, but why not be willing to meet the challenge? Realize that just because you have known some of those other youths from childhood does not mean that they cannot affect your habits, cannot spoil the habits you are forming as a Christian youth.—Proverbs 2:1, 10-15.

Positive Steps to Protect Our Habits

²¹ All of us need association. We must be alert, though, to the fact that our associates can affect us, for good or for bad. That proved true with Adam and with everyone over the centuries since then. For example, Jehoshaphat, a good king of Judah, enjoyed Jehovah's favor and blessing. But after he permitted his son to marry the daughter of King Ahab of Israel, Jehoshaphat began to associate with Ahab. That bad association nearly cost Jehoshaphat his life. (2 Kings 8:16-18; 2 Chronicles 18:1-3, 29-31) If we make unwise choices as to our associations, it can be just as dangerous.

²² Let us, then, take to heart the loving counsel that Paul offers us at 1 Corinthians 15:33. Those are not merely words that we may have heard so often that we can repeat them from memory. They reflect the fatherly affection Paul had for his Corinthian brothers and sisters, and, by extension, for us. And without doubt they contain counsel that our heavenly Father provides because he wants our efforts to succeed.—1 Corinthians 15:58.

20. Youths, what challenge do you face?

21. (a) What need do we have regarding association? (b) Why can we be sure that some associations can be dangerous?

22. What should we take to heart, and why?

JEHOVAH, MY CONFIDENCE FROM YOUTH ON

AS TOLD BY BASIL TSATOS

The year was 1920; the place, the hills of Arcadia in beautiful Peloponnisos, Greece. I was in bed, seriously ill with the dreaded Spanish influenza that was sweeping the world.

EACH time the church bell rang, I realized that it announced the death of another victim. Would I be next? Fortunately, I recovered, but millions did not. Although I was then only eight years old, this frightening experience still lives vividly in my memory.

Early Spiritual Concerns

A short time later, Grandfather died. After the funeral, I remember Mother joining my sister and me on the balcony of our home. No doubt trying to soften our grief, she said quietly: "Well, children, all of us must get old and die."

Even though she phrased it so gently, her words troubled me. 'How sad! How unfair!' I thought. But both of us brightened when Mother added: "When the Lord comes again, though, he will resurrect the dead, and we won't die anymore!" Ah, that was comforting!

From then on I became keenly interested in finding out just when that happy time might come. I asked many people, but no one



was able to tell me, nor, for that matter, did anyone even seem interested in discussing the matter.

One day when I was about 12, my father received a book from his brother who lived in the United States. It was entitled *The Harp of God*, published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. I looked down the table of contents, and my eyes lit up when I saw the chapter "Our Lord's Return." I read it with great interest, but I was disappointed that no year was given for the return. The book, however, indicated that it was not far off.

Soon I began to attend high school and became engrossed in my studies. From time to time, though, my uncle in America sent copies of *The Watchtower*, which I enjoyed reading. Also, each Sunday, I attended Sunday school, where the bishop would often come and talk to us.

On one particular Sunday, the bishop was very agitated and said: "Visitors are filling our city with heretical publications." He then held up a copy of *The Watchtower* and

shouted: "If any of you find publications like this at home, bring them to church, and I will burn them."

His tone of voice disturbed me, but his vindictive spirit even more so. Hence, I did not comply with his request. However, I wrote my uncle and asked that he not send any more Watch Tower publications. Yet, I continued to ponder the matter of Christ's return.

Spiritual Appetite Grows

When summer vacation came, I got out my suitcase to pack my clothes. There at the bottom were three booklets printed by the Watch Tower Society. Somehow I hadn't noticed them before. One was called *Where Are the Dead?*

"That looks interesting," I thought. Although remembering the bishop's warning, I decided to read the booklets carefully to find the errors I thought they contained. I took a pencil and cautiously began my search. To my surprise, everything in the booklets seemed reasonable, and each statement had scriptures cited so that the reader could check the Bible.

Since we did not have a Bible, I wondered whether the scriptures cited had been misapplied to suit the purpose of the writers. So I wrote to my uncle and asked him to send me a copy of a complete Bible. He promptly did so. I read it straight through twice, and although there was much in it that I could not understand, I was intrigued with the books of Daniel and Revelation. I wanted to understand the things they predicted, but there was no one around who could help me.

I left school in 1929, and soon afterward my uncle in America again sent me copies of *The Watchtower*. I began to enjoy them more and more and asked him to send them to me regularly. I also started talking to others about the hope for the future that I was

learning from the magazines. But then my life changed dramatically.

Spiritual Progress in Burma

My mother's brothers had immigrated to Burma (now Myanmar), and the family decided that if I joined them, it would widen my horizons and perhaps open up business opportunities for me. The Orient had always fascinated me, so I was excited at the prospect of going there. In Burma, I continued to receive *The Watchtower* from my uncle, but I never personally met one of the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called.

One day I was thrilled to find an announcement in *The Watchtower* for the *Light* books, two volumes that explained the Bible book of Revelation. In addition, I learned that the activity of the Bible Students in Burma was cared for by the India branch of the Watch Tower Society, located in Bombay. I immediately wrote to request the *Light* books, and also to ask that Bible Students in India be sent to preach in Burma.

The books arrived promptly by mail, and a week or so later, local Burmese Bible Students visited me. I was happy to learn that there was a small group of them where I was living in Rangoon (now Yangon), Burma's capital. They invited me to attend their regular Bible study class and also to share with them in preaching from house to house. I was a little reluctant at first but soon began to enjoy sharing Bible knowledge with Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims, as well as with nominal Christians.

The India branch then sent to Rangoon two full-time ministers (called pioneers), Ewart Francis and Randall Hopley. Both were originally from England but had been serving in India for several years. They encouraged me greatly, and in 1934, I was baptized in symbol of my dedication to Jehovah.

A Courageous Witness

In time the India branch sent more pioneers to Burma. Two of them, Claude Goodman and Ron Tippin, called at a railway station and spoke to Sydney Coote, the stationmaster. He accepted the books, read them through, and began writing his married sister, Daisy D'Souza, in Mandalay. She too found the books interesting and asked for more.

Daisy, who had been a practicing Catholic, was a person with unusual courage. She began visiting her neighbors and telling them of the things she was learning. And when she was visited by the parish priest, who inquired why she had stopped attending church, she showed him that the Bible did not support things he was teaching, such as a burning hell.

Finally, he asked her: "After all these years of telling them about a burning hell, how can I now tell them there is no such place? Nobody will want to come to church."

"If you are an honest Christian," Daisy responded, "you will teach them the truth, regardless of the consequences." Then she added: "If you don't, then I will!" And she did.

Dick and Daisy and their two older daughters were baptized in Rangoon at the same time as I was. Three years later, in 1937, I married their second daughter, Phyllis.

Escape to India

Japanese forces invaded Burma during World War II, and Rangoon fell on March 8, 1942. Foreign civilians were forced to make a hasty exit to India. Hundreds tried to make it through the jungles, but many died en route. I happened to know personally the officer in charge of evacuation, so I was able to secure tickets on one of the last cargo boats to leave Rangoon for Calcutta. Leaving our house and most of our belongings in

such a hurry was a sad moment for all of us. Burma was occupied by the Japanese from 1942 to 1945.

Our finances were low when we reached India, and finding employment was not easy. This resulted in a test of faith. I met a British officer who offered me a lucrative noncombatant job, but it involved serving as part of the military establishment. With Jehovah's help, I was able to turn down the offer and thus keep a clear Christian conscience. (Isaiah 2:2-4) In other ways too, we felt the loving hand of Jehovah.

We settled in New Delhi, India's capital, where accommodations were almost impossible to get. Nevertheless, we found a spacious apartment right in the heart of the city. It had a large lounge with an independent entrance, and this room served for the next few years as the Kingdom Hall for the Delhi Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. However, because of the ban placed in 1941 on all Watch Tower Society publications in India, we were unable to obtain Bible literature.

How the Ban Was Lifted

One Sunday in 1943, those attending services at Delhi's churches received a leaflet signed by 13 clergymen of different churches. It warned: "CITIZENS OF DELHI BEWARE OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES." The charge was that we had been banned in India for political reasons.

With the approval of the branch office in Bombay, we quickly printed and distributed a leaflet that exposed the clergy. Since I was the presiding overseer, my name and address were printed at the bottom of the strongly worded leaflet. Soon afterward, when the police found Margrit Hoffman and me distributing copies of the leaflet, we were arrested and imprisoned. However, we were soon released on bail.



My family with Brothers Henschel and Knorr in Burma (Myanmar) in 1947

Later, in the course of her ministry, Margrit called at the home of Sir Srivastava, a well-known minister in the Indian viceroy's cabinet. Sir Srivastava received her hospitably, and during the conversation, she told him that our literature had been unjustly banned in India. That day Margrit happened also to meet a parliament member from the state of Madras. He was in the city to attend a parliament meeting. She mentioned to him the unfairness of the ban placed on our literature, and he promised to raise the question at an upcoming meeting.

At the time, I was working as a physiotherapist at a local hospital. Well, Sir Srivastava happened to sustain an injury, and the hospital sent me to see if physiotherapy might help him. I found Sir Srivastava to be an amiable person, and as we chatted, I mentioned casually that Miss Hoffman and I had been released from prison on bail. I explained that it was because of clergy pressure that our Bible literature had been banned on political grounds but that we were absolutely nonpolitical. Our branch representative, Edwin Skinner, I continued, had made requests for an interview to ex-

plain our position, but he had been turned down.

A couple of days later, Sir Srivastava told me: "Mr. Jenkins [the government official who had been unfavorable toward our work] will be retiring in a few days, and his place will be taken by Sir Francis Mudie. Ask Mr. Skinner to come up, and I will introduce him to Sir Francis."

Sir Srivastava arranged the meeting as he had promised. During it, Sir Francis Mudie told Brother Skinner: "I cannot promise you anything, but I will look into the matter." Since parliament was to open in a few days, Brother Skinner stayed to see the outcome. True to his word, the parliament member from Madras stood up and asked: "Is it true that the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society's publications are banned for political reasons?"

"No, the ban was imposed on precautionary grounds," Sir Francis Mudie replied, "but the government has now decided to rescind the ban."

What a thrilling moment it was for us when we heard that news! A week later the branch office in Bombay received a letter confirming the end of the ban.

Back to War-Ravaged Burma

British rule returned to Burma after World War II, and ten of us Witnesses went back to Rangoon a few months later. We were glad to see the few remaining local Witnesses again. The country was in a sad state. Public services, including electricity and public transportation, were unavailable. So we bought a jeep from the military and put it to good use in hauling people to the meetings that we had organized soon after our return.

An interested person offered us land, and with the help of kindly people in the area, we built a good-sized Kingdom Hall. It was constructed of stout bamboo posts, matted bamboo walls, and a thatched roof. Here, in April 1947, Nathan H. Knorr, then president of the Watch Tower Society, and his secretary, Milton G. Henschel, gave talks during their visit to Rangoon. At the time, we had 19 Witnesses in all of Burma. But Brother Knorr's public talk, held at the New Excelsior Theatre, was attended by 287!

We Settle in Australia

On January 4, 1948, Burma was granted independence from Great Britain, and most Europeans considered it best to leave



***Basil Tsatos and his wife, Phyllis,
in Australia***

the country. After prayerful consideration, Phyllis and I decided to take our daughter and immigrate to Australia. We settled in Perth, Western Australia's capital.

Leaving Burma again, and this time permanently, was a very sad moment for us. From time to time, we heard from the dear ones there, and we were happy to

know that the Kingdom work was moving ahead steadily in that country.

Beginning in 1978, for four years we had the pleasure of serving all the Greek-speaking congregations in the major Australian cities. This meant extensive travel, since it is over 2,600 miles from the west coast to the east coast of this large country. After a while, the climate, which differs considerably from one state to another, contributed to a decline in our health. So we again settled in Perth, where I continue to serve as an elder in one of the city's 44 congregations.

As the years have gone by, my eyesight has grown poorer, and reading has become difficult. Yet, despite health problems, our hearts are still young. We are both waiting confidently for the happy day when all who fear Jehovah will see the sunshine of his favor "shine forth, with healing in its wings; and [we] will actually go forth and paw the ground like fattened calves."—Malachi 4:2.*

* On December 13, 1992, while this life story was being completed, Brother Tsatos fell asleep in death.



Jehovah Remembers the Sick and the Elderly

HAVING to face a "time of calamity" can be very hard. (Psalm 37:18, 19) Such a time may come in the form of advancing age and the weaknesses that go with it. Some enter a time of calamity when they suffer serious, long-term illness. They may feel as if their disease is taking charge of their life, dominating all their thoughts and actions.

It is reassuring, though, to remember that Jehovah keeps his eyes on all his servants. It makes his heart rejoice when his devoted servants continue to display loyalty and wis-

dom in spite of old age, sickness, or other trying circumstances. (2 Chronicles 16:9a; Proverbs 27:11) King David assures us: "Jehovah is near to all those calling upon him, . . . and their cry for help he will hear." Yes, he is aware of their struggle; he strengthens them with his spirit. "And he will save them." He remembers them and helps them to endure. (Psalm 145:18, 19) But what about us? Do we, like Jehovah, remember the sick and the elderly?

Weaknesses due to sickness or old age are realities of life in this present system. They

are facts that we must contend with until Jehovah brings to fruition his purpose for the earth and mankind. Today, more and more people live to quite an advanced age, so a great number are acquainted with the weaknesses of such. Additionally, while still young, many are struck by life-threatening or disabling accidents or diseases. Until this old world passes away, sickness and old age will continue to be major challenges.

How we appreciate our sick and elderly ones who continue as examples in "the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience"! Yes, "we pronounce happy those who have endured." (James 5:10, 11) Many older ones whose powers are now reduced have shared for decades in the teaching, training, and molding of those who now take the lead in the congregation. A number of older ones also rejoice to see that their children have shared in the full-time ministry.—Psalm 71: 17, 18; 3 John 4.

In a similar way, we appreciate those among us who are seriously ill and yet, despite their sufferings, manage to encourage us through their faithfulness. When these give proof of their hope without wavering, the result is most stimulating and faith strengthening. Their peace of mind and contentment reveal a faith that is truly worth imitating.

It is a shock for someone suddenly to be struck by cancer, a stroke, or some other condition that totally changes that one's life. It is also a hard test for parents to see their children fall ill or suffer as a result of an accident. What can others do to help? Any such time of calamity is a test for the whole Christian brotherhood. It is an opportunity to show that 'a true companion is a brother that is born for when there is distress.' (Proverbs 17:17) Naturally, not all sick ones and elderly ones can expect personal assistance from each and every member of the

congregation. But Jehovah will see to it that through his spirit many feel moved to help in various ways. And the elders can keep their eye on things to be sure that no one is overlooked.—See Exodus 18:17, 18.

Try to Understand

In trying to help someone, it is important to have good communication, and that takes time, patience, and empathy. As a helper, you naturally desire to 'strengthen with words'; but listen carefully before you speak or act, or you may end up becoming a 'troublesome comforter.'—Job 16:2, 5.

The sick and the elderly will at times find it hard to hide their frustration. Many have cherished their hope of living to survive the great tribulation, and now they feel caught up in a race with time, a race that they do not feel sure they will win. Also, their condition often makes them tired and anxious. Keeping faith alive and strong is a struggle, especially when one can no longer follow the heart's desire of having a full share in the Christian ministry. One Christian elder visited an elderly sister; when praying with her, he asked that Jehovah forgive our sins. After the prayer he noticed that the sister was crying. She explained that she felt she needed Jehovah's special forgiveness for not being able to share in the house-to-house preaching anymore. Yes, the feeling of being

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How to Strengthen Marriage Bonds

Why You Need to Attend
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Succeeding in the Struggle
With Alcoholism

GIVING PRACTICAL HELP *with understanding*

FRIENDS and relatives should acquire an elementary but correct knowledge of how to care for sick and elderly ones. Above all, they can be encouraged to keep a positive attitude toward life, to feel needed and appreciated, and to have a feeling of self-worth. Thus their quality of life will remain on a plane that will preserve their joy in Jehovah, despite their aches and pains. It has been noted that many of Jehovah's Witnesses live to a ripe old age. A powerful contributing factor is no doubt their living interest in the hope ahead, their bright mental disposition, and their participation in Kingdom activity to the extent possible. The late president of the Watch Tower Society Frederick W. Franz, who died

peacefully in his 100th year after a joyfully productive life, was a splendid example of this. —Compare 1 Chronicles 29:28.

Generally, attention to the basic matters of daily care can mean much: good hygiene, proper nutrition, sufficient liquids and salt, reasonable exercise, fresh air, gentle massage, and stimulating conversation. Proper nutrition can contribute to better hearing, eyesight, mental function, and physical well-being, as well as to higher resistance to disease. To elderly people the simple matter of proper nutrition and plenty of liquids can mean the difference between a good condition and senility. It may require some thought to find a form of physical exercise that suits the

incapable or inadequate, though often unwarranted, can make a person very sad at heart.

Be aware that anxiety and fatigue can affect mental balance. Because of the weaknesses of old age or the stress of debilitating sickness, a person may feel forsaken by Jehovah, perhaps saying: "What have I done? Why me?" Remember the words of Proverbs 12:25: "Anxious care in the heart of a man is what will cause it to bow down, but the good word is what makes it rejoice." Try to find good words that will comfort. Elderly ones who are in pain may even, like Job, express a desire to die. This need not be shocking; try to understand. Such complaints are not necessarily evidence of a lack of faith or trust. Job prayed to be 'concealed in Sheol,' yet his words right after that expression reveal his solid faith that Jehovah would later raise him up. Strong faith makes it possible to go through periods of anguish and depression and still stay close to Jehovah. —Job 14:13-15.

Showing Honor to Sick and Elderly Ones

It is of utmost importance to treat sick and elderly ones with honor and dignity. (Romans 12:10) If they do not react as quickly as before or cannot do as much, do not lose your patience. Do not be quick to step in and take charge. No matter how well-meaning we are, if we behave in a domineering or authoritarian way, it invariably deprives the other person of self-esteem. In a doctoral thesis published in 1988, a researcher, Jette Ingerslev, explained what a group of 85-year-olds themselves considered most important for their quality of life: "They gave three areas high priority: being with relatives; good health; and last but not least, being able to make their own decisions." Notice that the patriarch Jacob was not patronized by his sons when he had grown old; his wishes were respected. —Genesis 47:29, 30; 48:17-20.

Those who are ill must also be treated with dignity. An elder lost his ability to speak, read, and write because of a mistake made

individual. One sister who comes to read to an aged and almost blind sister begins and finishes each weekly visit with gently dancing around the room with the sister. The tape recorder is always ready with selected music, and both enjoy this "workout."

In many countries, assistance organizations can provide valuable practical help and give information and advice as to specific conditions and how to cope with them. (Of course, a Christian should always take care not to be sidetracked into activities that distract from our true Christian ministry.) Sometimes aid is given in the form of the loan of a hospital bed, supports, braces, wheelchair, hearing aid, and so forth. Since many elderly ones feel that they do not need anything or that it does not pay to acquire such new things, relatives must often give sound advice or even use persuasion. A practical handle for the bathroom

door can cause more real joy than a bouquet of flowers.

Caring for elderly ones can induce great mental stress, especially if the person becomes senile. Senility often approaches insidiously. One can try to counteract it by preventing the patient from being unnecessarily passive. A senile person can suddenly take offense at someone to whom he used to be strongly attached. Relatives must realize that an aging person can even forget everything that has to do with the truth—a sad result of physical breakdown, not evidence of loss of faith.

If the patient is in a hospital or a nursing home, good contact with the personnel is necessary so that staff members know what to do in connection with birthdays, Christmas, or other worldly holidays. If an operation is necessary, relatives can explain and document the views the patient has held as to blood transfusion.

during an operation. This was a severe blow, but his fellow elders decided to do whatever they could to prevent him from feeling useless. They now read all congregational correspondence to him and include him in the planning of other congregational matters. At elders' meetings, they attempt to find out what his opinion is. They let him know that they still consider him to be a fellow elder and appreciate his presence. In the Christian congregation, all of us can make an effort so that no sick or elderly ones feel 'thrown away' or left out.—Psalm 71:9.

Assistance to Gain Spiritual Strength

All of us need spiritual food to keep our faith alive and strong. That is why we are encouraged to read the Bible and Bible publications daily and to share zealously in Christian meetings and preaching activities. Often, sick and elderly ones need help to accomplish this, and it is important to do what is realistic in their particular case. Happily,

many can still attend meetings if given transportation and a little assistance in the Kingdom Hall. Their attending such meetings is of great encouragement to the congregation. Their endurance is stimulating and faith strengthening.

In many cases sick and elderly ones can also have a meaningful share in the Christian ministry. Some can be included in a car group for witnessing, and they will no doubt feel refreshed by being able to make a few calls. When this is no longer possible, they can find joy in witnessing informally to individuals with whom they come in contact. A sister who was struck by cancer decided to spend whatever remained of her life in a special effort to advance the good news. Her bold preaching was an encouragement to all. She even planned her own funeral so that a fine witness would be given to unbelieving relatives, workmates, and neighbors. Her distressing circumstances thus "turned out for the advancement of the good news," and her determination to express faith and

confidence gave her final days special meaning.—Philippians 1:12-14.

It is good to help sick and elderly ones to be spiritually strengthened. Families can invite them to share in a family evening, or part of their family study can occasionally be transferred to the home of one who cannot go out. One mother brought her two youngest children to the home of an older sister so that they could read *My Book of Bible Stories* together. This made the elderly sister happy, and the children enjoyed the attention she gave them.

There are times, however, when an infirm person should not be disturbed too much, and it may then be best just occasionally to read some material aloud to them. Remember, though, that if someone is physically too weak to share in a conversation, this one may still need and desire some spiritual association. We can pray with such ones, read to them, or relate experiences; but we should be careful not to stay longer than they can handle.

There is one sacred service that most sick and elderly ones can still perform: *prayer in behalf of others*. The early disciples attached great importance to this ministry. On one occasion they distributed the work load in the congregation in such a way that the apostles could concentrate on prayer. Faithful Epaphras is mentioned as 'exerting himself in behalf of others in his prayers.' (Colossians 4:12; Acts 6:4) Such prayer is most important and beneficial.—Luke 2:36-38; James 5:16.

Jehovah remembers the sick and the elderly and looks after them in their time of calamity. He rightly expects that we too consider what we can do to help and support them. The concern we show reflects our determination to keep our own integrity. And we are happy to think of the words of King David: "Jehovah is aware of the days of the faultless ones, and their very inheritance will continue even to time indefinite." —Psalm 37:18.

ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 2, 1993

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held on October 2, 1993, at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey. A preliminary meeting of the members only will convene at 9:30 a.m., followed by the general annual meeting at 10:00 a.m.

The members of the Corporation should inform the Secretary's Office now of any change in their mailing addresses during the past year so that the regular letters of notice and proxies can reach them shortly after August 1.

The proxies, which will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting, are

to be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than August 15. Each member should complete and return his proxy promptly, stating whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not. The information given on each proxy should be definite on this point, since it will be relied upon in determining who will be personally present.

It is expected that the entire session, including the formal business meeting and reports, will be concluded by 1:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter. There will be no afternoon session. Because of limited space, admission will be by ticket only. No arrangements will be made for tying in the annual meeting by telephone lines to other auditoriums.

QUESTIONS FROM READERS



Should John who baptized Jesus be referred to as "John the Baptist" or as "John the Baptizer"?

Both designations are correct and Biblically supported.

John was "to get ready for Jehovah a prepared people," which he did by "preaching baptism in symbol of repentance for forgiveness of sins." (Luke 1:17; 3:3) The apostle Matthew wrote: "John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying: 'Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.' . . . Then Jerusalem and all Judea . . . made their way out to him, and people were baptized by him in the Jordan River, openly confessing their sins." —Matthew 3:1-6.

Notice that Matthew identifies John as "the Baptist." Matthew, who was evidently tailoring his account to Jews, must have felt that the Jews would know who "the Baptist" was. He used "the

Baptist" as a sort of surname. Jesus and his disciples used "John the Baptist," as did the servants of Herod.* —Matthew 11:11, 12; 14:2; 16:14.

The disciple Mark reports a similar use of "the Baptist." (Mark 6:25; 8:28) But when introducing John, Mark called him "John the baptizer." (Mark 1:4) The Greek involved at Mark 1:4 differs slightly from that of the other verses. Mark 1:4 might also be rendered "the baptizing one." Mark was highlighting what John was doing;

he was the one doing baptizing, the baptizer.

It does not appear, however, that we must distinguish between these ways of referring to John. At Mark 6:24, 25, we read about Salome: "She went out and said to her mother: 'What should I ask for?' She said: 'The head of *John the baptizer*.' Immediately she went in with haste to the king and made her request, saying: 'I want you to give me right away on a platter the head of *John the Baptist*.'" The two designations were used interchangeably.

Some people might understand "the Baptist" according to the second definition in a dictionary: "A member or adherent of an evangelical Protestant denomination marked by congregational polity and baptism by immersion of believers only." John certainly was not that.

Hence, both "John the Baptist" and "John the Baptizer" are correct and proper.

* The Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote of "John, surnamed the Baptist."

Seeking Hidden Treasure

IN 1848 gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in California, U.S.A.

By 1849 thousands were converging on the area hoping to strike it rich, and the greatest gold rush in the history of the United States was under way. In a year's time, the nearest port, San Francisco, grew from a small town to a city of 25,000. The prospect of sudden wealth proved to be a powerful lure.

King Solomon of ancient Israel knew how energetically men dig for hidden treasure, and he referred to this when he wrote: "If, moreover, you call out for understanding itself and you give forth your voice for discernment itself, if you keep seeking for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you keep searching for it, in that case you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will find the very knowledge of God."—Proverbs 2:3-5.

You can do many things with gold and silver, but you can do more with understanding and discernment. These will help you to make right decisions, solve problems, succeed in marriage, and find happiness. (Proverbs 2:11, 12) Similarly, true knowledge and wisdom will help you to know your Creator, understand his purposes, and obey and please him. Gold can give you none of these things.

The Bible's words are true: "Wisdom is a shelter as money is a shelter, but the advantage of knowledge is this: that wisdom preserves the life of its possessor." (Ecclesiastes 7:12, *New International Version*) While many dream of sudden riches, how much wiser it is to open the Bible and dig for the discernment, understanding, knowledge, and wisdom that are true wealth.

