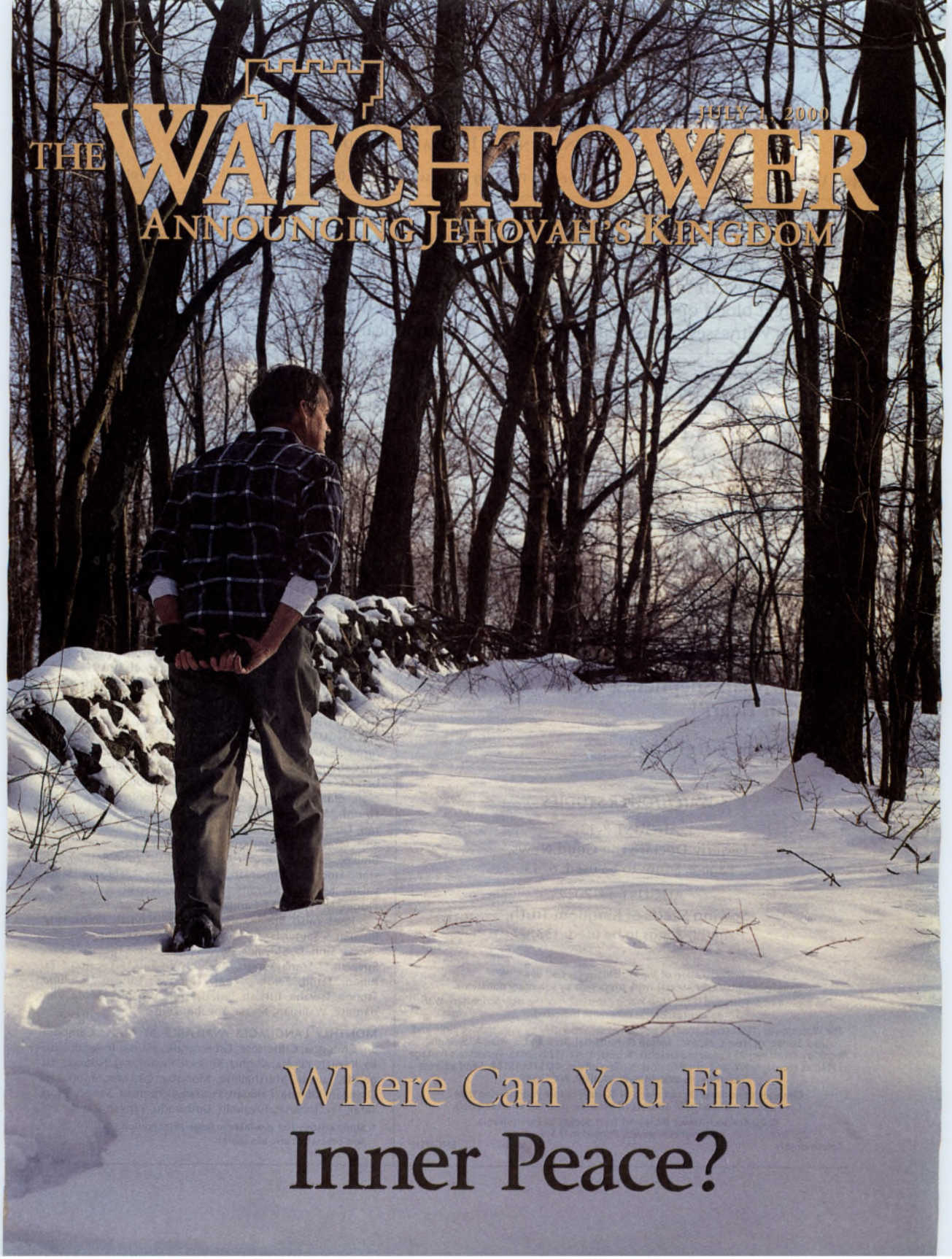
JULY 1, 2000

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Where Can You Find Inner Peace?

THE WATCHTOWER®
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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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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Can You Find Inner Peace?

Back in 1854, American author Henry Thoreau wrote: "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." Evidently, in his day most people did not enjoy inner peace. That, however, was almost 150 years ago. Are things different today? Or do Thoreau's words still apply? What about you personally? Are you content, at peace? Or are you insecure, uncertain about the future, 'quietly desperate,' to paraphrase Thoreau's words?

Do you yearn for inner peace?

UNHAPPILY, there are many things in the world that rob people of inner peace. Let us mention just a few. In many countries unemployment and low income bring poverty and with it economic desperation. In other lands many expend most of their energy chasing wealth and material possessions. Often, though, the competitive life-style involved brings anxiety, not peace. Illness, war, crime, injustice, and oppression also rob people of peace.

They Sought Inner Peace

Many are unwilling to put up with the world as it is. Antônio* was a labor leader in a huge factory in São Paulo, Brazil. Hoping to improve living conditions, he took part in protests and demonstrations, but this did not bring him peace of mind.

Some hope that marriage will bring a measure of tranquillity to their life, but they may be disappointed. Marcos was a successful businessman. He got involved in politics and became mayor of an industrial city. However, his homelife was a disaster. When his children left home, he and his wife separated because of irreconcilable differences.

Gerson, a street child in Salvador, Brazil, wanted adventure. He drifted from city to city, traveling

* Some names have been changed.

with truck drivers. Before long he was a drug addict, robbing people to pay for his vice. Several times he was caught by the police. Despite an aggressive, violent personality, however, Gerson longed for inner peace. Could he ever find it?

While Vania was still young, her mother died, and Vania became responsible for the home, including the care of her sick sister. Vania attended church but felt abandoned by God. She certainly had no peace of mind.

Then there was Marcelo. All Marcelo wanted was a good time. He liked to party with other young people—dancing, drinking, and abusing drugs. One time he got into a fight and injured another youth. Afterward, he was overcome with regret for what he had done and prayed to God for help. He too wanted peace of mind.

These experiences illustrate some situations that can destroy peace of mind. Was there any way that the labor leader, the politician, the street child, the overworked daughter, and the partygoer could attain the inner peace that they sought? Does what happened to them teach us anything? The answer to both questions is yes, as we will see in the next article.

Where Can You Find Inner Peace?

There are many differences between our time and that of Thoreau, mentioned in the preceding article. One major difference is that today there is no shortage of advice on how to gain peace of mind. Psychologists and writers of self-help books—even newspaper columnists—offer their ideas. Their advice might be of some short-term help; but for long-term solutions, something more profound is needed. That is what the individuals mentioned in the preceding article discovered.

ANTÔNIO, Marcos, Gerson, Vania, and Marcelo came from different backgrounds and had different problems. But they had at least three things in common. First, there was a time when they "had no hope and were without God in the world." (Ephesians 2:12) Second, they longed for peace of mind. And third, all of them found the inner peace they wanted after they accepted a Bible study with Jehovah's Witnesses. As they progressed, they came to realize that God is interested in them. Indeed, as Paul told the Athenians of his day, God "is not far off from each one of us." (Acts 17:27) Being sincerely

convinced of this is a major factor in gaining inner peace.

Why So Little Peace?

The Bible gives two basic reasons for the lack of peace in the world—be it inner peace or peace between people. The first is explained at Jeremiah 10:23: "To earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." Man has neither the wisdom nor the foresight to rule himself without help, and the only help that has real value comes from God. Humans who do not seek God's guidance will never attain lasting peace. The second reason for the lack of peace is seen in the words of the apostle John: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) Without divine guidance, man's efforts to gain peace will always be frustrated by the activities of the unseen but very real—and very powerful—"wicked one," Satan.

For these two reasons—that most people do not seek God's guidance and that Satan is very active in the world—the human race as a whole is in a sorry state. The apostle Paul well described it: "All creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now." (Romans 8:22) Who can disagree with that assessment? In wealthy nations as well as poor ones, family problems, crime, injustice, personality conflicts, economic uncertainty, tribal and ethnic hatreds, oppression, sickness, and much more, rob people of their peace of mind.

Where to Find Inner Peace

When Antônio, Marcos, Gerson, Vania, and Marcelo studied God's Word, the Bible, they learned things that changed their lives. For one thing, they learned that the world situation will one day be different. This is not just a vague hope that everything will turn out all right in the end. It is a real, well-founded confidence that God has a purpose for mankind and that even now we can benefit from that purpose if we do his will. They applied in their lives what they learned from the Bible, and things improved for them. They found more happiness and peace than they had thought possible.

Antônio is no longer involved in protests and labor strife. He knows that changes brought about in that way are only limited and temporary. This former labor leader has learned about God's Kingdom. It is the Kingdom that millions pray for when they recite the Lord's Prayer (or, the Our Father) and say to God: "Your kingdom come." (Matthew 6:10a, *New International Version*) Antônio learned that God's Kingdom is a real heavenly government that will bring genuine peace to mankind.

Marcos learned to put into practice the Bible's wise counsel on the subject of marriage. As a result, this former politician is now happily reunited with his wife. He too is looking forward to the time, soon to come, when God's Kingdom will replace this greedy, selfish world system with a better one. He has a far deeper understanding of the sentence in the Lord's Prayer that reads: "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10b, *NIV*) When God's will is done on earth, humans will experience a quality of life never before seen.

Man has neither the wisdom nor the foresight to rule himself without help, and the only help that has real value comes from God

What about Gerson? He is no longer a drifter and a thief. The life of this former street child now has meaning because he uses his energy helping others to find inner peace. As these experiences show, studying the Bible and

applying what it says can greatly change a person's life for the better.

Inner Peace in a Troubled World

The central historical figure in the outworking of God's will is Jesus Christ, and when people study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, they learn a lot about him. The night he was born, angels sang God's praises: "Glory in the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of goodwill." (Luke 2:14) When Jesus grew up, he was concerned about improving people's lives. He understood their feelings and showed extraordinary compassion for the afflicted and the sick. And, in harmony with the words of the angels, he brought a measure of inner peace to the meek. At the end of his ministry, he said to his disciples: "I leave you peace, I give you my peace. I do not give it to you the way that the world gives it. Do not let your hearts be troubled nor let them shrink for fear."—John 14:27.

> Knowledge of God and Jesus Christ can lead to an intimate relationship with Jehovah God that will help us attain peace of mind

Jesus was more than a humanitarian. He compared himself to a shepherd, and he likened his meek followers to sheep when he said: "I have come that they might have life and might have it in abundance. I am the fine shepherd; the fine shepherd surrenders his soul in behalf of the sheep." (John 10:10, 11) Yes, in contrast with so many leaders today who care first and foremost about themselves, Jesus gave his life for his sheep.

How can we benefit from what Jesus did? Many are familiar with the words: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Exercising faith in Jesus requires, first of all, knowledge about him and his Father, Jehovah. Knowledge of God and Jesus Christ can lead to an intimate relationship with Jehovah God that will help us attain peace of mind.

Jesus said: "My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them everlasting life, and they will by no means ever be destroyed, and no one will snatch them out of my hand." (John 10:27, 28) What warm, comforting words! True, Jesus uttered them almost two thousand years ago, but they have as much force now as they had back then. Never forget that Jesus Christ is still alive and active, ruling now as the enthroned King of God's heavenly Kingdom. Just as when he walked on earth those many years ago, he is still concerned about meek ones who long for peace of mind. Further, he is still the Shepherd of his sheep. If we follow him, he will help us to gain inner peace, which includes a confident expectation of seeing in the future total peace—which will mean the absence of violence, war, and crime.

Real benefits come from knowing and believing that Jehovah, through Jesus, will help us. Remember Vania, who as a young girl was left with heavy responsibilities and thought that God had forgotten her? Now Vania knows that God has not abandoned her. She says: "I learned that God is a real person with endearing qualities. His love moved him to send his Son to earth to give us life. It is very important to know this."

Marcelo testifies that his relationship with God is real. This former partygoer comments: "Young people often do not know what to do, and they end up harming themselves. Some get involved in drug abuse, as I did. I hope that many more will be blessed, as I was, by learning the truth about God and his Son."

Through a careful study of the Bible, Vania and Marcelo developed a strong faith in God and a confidence in his willingness to help them handle their problems. If we do what they did—study the Bible and apply what it says—we will discover a large measure of inner peace, just as they did. Then the encouragement of the apostle Paul will really apply in our case: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."—Philippians 4:6, 7.

Following Bible counsel contributes to a peaceful family life

Finding Genuine Peace Today

Jesus Christ is guiding truth-hungry people along the way that leads to everlasting life in an earthly paradise. As he guides them to the pure worship of God, they experience peace similar to that described in the Bible: "My people must dwell in a peaceful abiding place and in residences of full confidence and in undisturbed resting-places." (Isaiah 32:18) And that is only a foretaste of the peace that they will enjoy in the future. We read: "The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace. The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Psalm 37:11, 29.

So can we have inner peace today? Yes. Moreover, we can be sure that in the near future, God will bless obedient mankind with peace as never before. Why not, then, ask him in prayer to give you his peace? If you have problems that rob you of peace, pray in the way that King David prayed: "Distresses of my heart have multiplied; from the stresses upon me O bring me out. See my affliction and my trouble, and pardon all my sins." (Psalm 25: 17, 18) Be assured that God listens to such prayers. He stretches out his hand and grants peace to all who seek it in sincerity of heart. We are lovingly assured: "Jehovah is near to all those calling upon him, to all those who call upon him in trueness. The desire of those fearing him he will perform, and their cry for help he will hear, and he will save them."—Psalm 145:18, 19.

EAGERLY DECLARE THE GOOD NEWS

"Be aglow with the spirit. Slave for Jehovah."—ROMANS 12:11.

A YOUNG man is excited about a new job. On his first day at work, he anxiously awaits his employer's instructions. He looks forward to his first task and takes it very seriously. He is eager to do his best.

[2] In a similar way, we as Christians could view ourselves as new workers. Since our hope is to live forever, it could be said that we have just started working for Jehovah. Surely our Creator has numerous tasks in mind for us that will keep us busy into eternity. But the very first commission we received was that of declaring the good news of his Kingdom. (1 Thessalonians 2:4) How do we feel about this assignment from God? Like the young man, we want to carry it out to the best of our ability, with zeal, with joy—yes, with eagerness!

[3] Granted, maintaining such a positive attitude can be a challenge. In addition to our ministry, we have many other responsibilities, some of which may tax us physically and emotionally. For the most part, we manage to care for these things while giving adequate attention to the ministry. Still, it can be an ongoing struggle. (Mark 8:34) Jesus emphasized that our success as Christians would require vigorous effort.—Luke 13:24.

[4] With so many things to do, it is easy to feel overwhelmed or weighed down at times. "Anxieties of life" could choke our zeal and appreciation for theocratic activities. (Luke 21:34, 35; Mark 4:18, 19) Because of our imperfect human nature, we might leave 'the love we had at first.' (Revelation 2:1-4) Certain aspects of our service to Jehovah could become somewhat routine. How does the Bible provide the needed encouragement for us to keep our zeal for the ministry alive?

1, 2. What attitude do Christians strive to maintain as preachers of the good news?

3. What is required in order to succeed as a minister of the good news?

4. How may daily anxieties affect our spiritual outlook?

Like "a Burning Fire" in Our Hearts

[5] The ministry that Jehovah has entrusted to us is far too precious to be allowed to become commonplace. The apostle Paul considered the preaching of the good news a very great privilege, and he viewed himself as unworthy to be entrusted with it. He said: "To me, a man less than the least of all holy ones, this undeserved kindness was given, that I should declare to the nations the good news about the unfathomable riches of the Christ and should make men see how the sacred secret is administered which has from the indefinite past been hidden in God, who created all things."—Ephesians 3:8, 9.

[6] Paul's positive attitude about his ministry is an excellent example for us. In his letter to the Romans, he stated: "There is eagerness on my part to declare the good news." He was not ashamed of the good news. (Romans 1:15, 16) He had the right attitude and was eager to carry out his ministry.

5, 6. How did the apostle Paul view his privilege of preaching?

Christians imitate the zeal of Paul and Jeremiah

[7] The apostle Paul recognized the need for maintaining a zealous viewpoint, so he admonished the Christians in Rome: "Do not loiter at your business. Be aglow with the spirit. Slave for Jehovah." (Romans 12:11) The Greek word translated "loiter" carries the thought of being "sluggish, slothful." While we may not actually loiter in our ministry, all of us need to be alert to any early symptoms of spiritual sluggishness and make appropriate adjustments in our attitude if we perceive such symptoms in ourselves.—Proverbs 22:3.

[8] God's spirit can also help us when we are discouraged. For instance, on one occasion the prophet Jeremiah found himself discouraged, and he considered stopping his prophetic work. He even said of Jehovah: "I am not going to make mention of him, and I shall speak no more in his name." Was this an evidence of a serious spiritual deficiency in Jeremiah? No. In fact, Jeremiah's strong spirituality, his love for Jehovah, and his zeal for the truth empowered him to continue prophesying. He explains: "In my heart [the word of Jehovah] proved to be like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I got tired of holding in, and I was unable to endure it." (Jeremiah 20:9) It is natural that faithful servants

7. In his letter to the Romans, what did Paul warn against?

8. (a) What became like "a burning fire" in the heart of Jeremiah, and why? (b) What lesson can we learn from Jeremiah's experience?

Our eagerness in the ministry is motivated by love of God and neighbor

of God experience discouragement from time to time. But when they pray to Jehovah for help, he will read their hearts and freely impart to them his holy spirit if, like Jeremiah, they have his word in their hearts.—Luke 11:9-13; Acts 15:8.

"Do Not Put Out the Fire of the Spirit"

9 The apostle Paul admonished the Thessalonians: "Do not put out the fire of the spirit." (1 Thessalonians 5:19) Yes, actions and attitudes that run contrary to godly principles could impede the activity of the holy spirit in our behalf. (Ephesians 4:30) Christians today have the assignment to preach the good news. We treat this privilege with deep respect. It comes as no surprise to us that those who do not know God treat our preaching work with contempt. But when a Christian purposely neglects his ministry, it might result in extinguishing the fire of God's motivating spirit.

10 Some outside the Christian congregation may view our ministry as mere distribution of literature. Others may erroneously conclude that we go from house to house simply to receive donations. If we allow such negative views to influence our attitude, this may reduce our effectiveness in the ministry. Rather than allowing such thinking to affect us, let us maintain the view that Jehovah and Jesus have toward our ministry. The apostle Paul voiced that lofty view when he declared: "We are not peddlers of the word of God as many men are, but as out of sincerity, yes, as sent from God, under God's view, in company with Christ, we are speaking."—2 Corinthians 2:17.

11 Shortly after Jesus' death, his disciples in Jerusalem faced a period of persecution. They were threatened and commanded to stop preaching. Yet, the Bible says that they were "filled with the holy spirit and were speak-

9. What could impede the activity of holy spirit in our behalf?

10. (a) How could the view of our fellowman affect us? (b) What lofty view of our ministry is expressed at 2 Corinthians 2:17?

11. What enabled the first Christians to remain zealous even under persecution, and how should their example affect us?

ing the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4: 17, 21, 31) Paul's words to Timothy some years later demonstrate the positive disposition that Christians should maintain. Paul said: "God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind. Therefore do not become ashamed of the witness about our Lord, neither of me a prisoner for his sake, but take your part in suffering evil for the good news according to the power of God."—2 Timothy 1:7, 8.

What Do We Owe Our Neighbor?

12 In order to have a proper attitude toward our ministry, we must have the right motive. Why do we preach? The main reason is seen in the words of the psalmist: "Your loyal ones will bless you [Jehovah]. About the glory of your kingship they will talk, and about your mightiness they will speak, to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts and the glory of the splendor of his kingship." (Psalm 145:10-12) Yes, we preach in order to praise Jehovah publicly and to sanctify his name before all mankind. Even when few listen to us, our faithfully proclaiming the message of salvation brings praise to Jehovah.

13 We also preach out of love for people and in order to avoid bloodguilt. (Ezekiel 33:8; Mark 6:34) Related to this are the words of Paul when speaking of those outside the Christian congregation: "Both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to wise and to senseless ones I am a debtor." (Romans 1:14) Paul felt that he owed it to people to declare the good news to them, since it is God's will that "all sorts of men should be saved." (1 Timothy 2:4) Today, we feel the same love for and obligation toward our neighbor. Jehovah's love of mankind moved him to send his Son to earth to die for them. (John 3:16) That was a great sacrifice. We imitate Jehovah's love when we expend time and effort telling others about the good news of salvation based on Jesus' sacrifice.

14 Jehovah's Witnesses view fellow humans as potential members of the Christian brotherhood. We must preach with boldness, yet our boldness is not confrontational. For a fact, the Bible does use strong terms when speaking of the world in general. The word "world" itself is used in a negative sense by Paul when he speaks of "the wisdom of this world" and "worldly desires." (1 Corinthians 3:19; Titus 2:12) Paul also reminded Ephesian Christians that when they walked "according to the system of things of this world," they were "dead" spiritually. (Ephesians 2:1-3) These statements and others like them are in harmony with the apostle John's words: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one."—1 John 5:19.

15 Remember, though, that such statements refer to the world in general that is alienated from God, not to individuals. Christians do not presume to prejudge how any individual will respond to the preaching work. They do not have a basis for describing any individuals as goats. It is not for us to say what the outcome will be when Jesus comes to separate "the sheep" from "the goats." (Matthew 25:31-46) Jesus is the appointed judge; we are not. Besides, experience has shown that some who were deeply involved in even the worst conduct have accepted the Bible's message, changed, and become clean-living Christians. Hence, while we may not seek association with certain individuals, we do not hesitate to speak to them about the Kingdom hope as

12. What is the main reason why we preach the good news?

13. What impels us to tell others of the hope of salvation?

14. How does the Bible describe the world outside the Christian congregation?

15. Regarding individuals outside the Christian congregation, what do we not do, and why not?

the opportunity presents itself. The Scriptures speak of certain individuals who, while still unbelievers, "were rightly disposed for everlasting life." They eventually became believers. (Acts 13:48) We can never know who is thus rightly disposed until we have offered a witness—perhaps many times. With this in mind, we treat those who have not yet accepted the message of salvation with "mildness" and "deep respect," hoping that some among them may yet respond to the message of life. —2 Timothy 2:25; 1 Peter 3:15.

[16] Developing skills as teachers will enhance our eagerness to declare the good news. To illustrate: An exciting game or sport may be uninteresting to a person who does not know how to play it. But to one who plays it well, it is enjoyable. Similarly, Christians who develop the "art of teaching" increase their joy in the ministry. (2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:9) Paul advised Timothy: "Do your utmost to present yourself approved to God, a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of the truth aright."

16. What is one reason why we want to develop the "art of teaching"?

A Brief Review

- Because of the anxieties of life, what could happen to our zeal in the ministry?
- In what way should our desire to declare the good news be like "a burning fire" in our hearts?
- What negative attitudes toward the ministry should we avoid?
- In general, how should we view those who do not share our beliefs?
- How does Jehovah help us to maintain our zeal in the preaching work?

(2 Timothy 2:15) How can we develop our teaching skills?

[17] One way is by taking in additional accurate knowledge. The apostle Peter encourages us: "As newborn infants, form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word, that through it you may grow to salvation." (1 Peter 2:2) A healthy baby instinctively longs for milk. However, a Christian may need to "form a longing" for Bible knowledge. This can be done by cultivating good study and reading habits. (Proverbs 2:1-6) Effort and self-discipline are required if we are to become skillful teachers of God's Word, but such efforts bring rewards. The delight that comes from examining God's Word will make us aglow with God's spirit, eager to share with others the things we learn.

[18] Christian meetings also play a vital role in our skillful use of God's Word. When Bible texts are read during public discourses and other Scriptural discussions, we do well to follow along in our own Bibles. We are wise to pay close attention to meeting parts, including those that deal specifically with our preaching work. Never should we underestimate the value of demonstrations, perhaps allowing ourselves to become distracted. Again, self-discipline and concentration are needed. (1 Timothy 4:16) Christian meetings build up our faith, help us form a longing for God's Word, and train us to be eager proclaimers of the good news.

We Can Count on Jehovah's Support

[19] Christians who are "aglow with the spirit" and who are eager to declare the good

17. How can we "form a longing" for Bible knowledge, and how will such knowledge benefit our ministry?

18. How can Christian meetings equip us to handle the word of the truth aright?

19. Why is a regular share in the preaching work vital?

news strive to share regularly in the ministry. (Ephesians 5:15, 16) True, circumstances vary, and not all can spend the same amount of time in this lifesaving work. (Galatians 6: 4, 5) Yet, perhaps more important than the total amount of time we spend in the preaching work is the frequency with which we speak about our hope to others. (2 Timothy 4:1, 2) The more we preach, the more we will appreciate the importance of this work. (Romans 10:14, 15) We will grow in compassion and fellow feeling when we regularly come in contact with sincere people who are sighing and groaning and who are without hope.—Ezekiel 9:4; Romans 8:22.

[20] Jehovah has entrusted us with the good news. This is the first commission that we receive from him as his "fellow workers." (1 Corinthians 3:6-9) We are eager to fulfill this God-given responsibility whole-souled, to the best of our ability. (Mark 12:30; Romans 12:1) There are still many rightly disposed people in the world who hunger for the truth. There is much work to do, but we can count on Jehovah's support as we fully accomplish our ministry.—2 Timothy 4:5.

[21] Jehovah offers us his spirit and equips us with "the sword of the spirit," God's Word. With his help we can open our mouths "with freeness of speech to make known the sacred secret of the good news." (Ephesians 6:17-20) Let it be said about us what the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Thessalonica: "The good news we preach did not turn up among you with speech alone but also with power and with holy spirit and strong conviction." (1 Thessalonians 1:5) Yes, let us declare the good news with eagerness!

20, 21. (a) What work is still ahead of us? (b) How is Jehovah supporting our efforts?

SOWING SEEDS OF KINGDOM TRUTH

"In the morning sow your seed and until the evening do not let your hand rest."—ECCLESIASTES 11:6.

AGRICULTURE played a vital role in ancient Hebrew society. That is why Jesus, whose whole life as a human was spent in the Promised Land, incorporated agricultural themes into his illustrations. For example, he likened the preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom to the sowing of seed. (Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23; Luke 8:5-15) To this day, whether we live in an agricultural society or not, sowing spiritual seed in this way is the most important work that Christians do.

[2] It is a great privilege to share in the sowing of Bible truth in this time of the end. Romans 10:14, 15 well expresses the importance of this work: "How, in turn, will they hear without someone to preach? How, in turn, will they preach unless they have been sent forth?

1. In what sense are Christians sowing seed today?

2. How important is our preaching work, and what are some of the things being done today to carry it out?

Just as it is written: 'How comely are the feet of those who declare good news of good things!'" Never has it been more important to press ahead with a positive attitude in fulfilling this God-given commission. For that reason Jehovah's Witnesses are fully immersed in the production and distribution of Bibles and Bible-study aids in 340 languages. The preparation of this material requires over 18,000 volunteers at their headquarters and at branch offices in various lands. And almost six million Witnesses share in distributing this Bible literature around the world.

3 What is the fruitage of this hard work? As in the early days of Christianity, many today are embracing the truth. (Acts 2:41, 46, 47) More important, however, than the large number of newly baptized Kingdom publishers is the fact that this great witness contributes to the sanctification of Jehovah's name and to his vindication as the only true God. (Matthew 6:9) Further, a knowledge of God's Word is improving the lives of many and can lead to their salvation.—Acts 13:47.

4 The apostles were fully aware of the life-giving importance of the good news, and they felt deeply for those to whom they preached. This is clear from the words of the apostle Paul, when he wrote: "Having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us." (1 Thessalonians 2:8) In manifesting such genuine concern for people, Paul and the other apostles were imitating Jesus and the heavenly angels, who are very much involved in this lifesaving work. Let us review the important roles that these heavenly servants of God play in the sowing of Kingdom truth, and let us see how their example encourages us to fulfill our role.

3. What is being accomplished through the sowing of Kingdom truth?

4. To what extent were the apostles concerned about the people to whom they preached?

Jesus—The Sower of Kingdom Truth

5 Jesus, a perfect man, had the power to provide many good things in a material way for the people of his time. For example, he could have cleared up many of the medical misconceptions of his day, or he could have advanced human understanding in other sciences. Yet, he made it clear very early in his ministry that his commission was that of preaching the good news. (Luke 4:17-21) And toward the end of his ministry, he explained: "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) So he occupied himself with the sowing of seeds of Kingdom truth. Teaching his contemporaries about God and His purposes was more important than any other education Jesus could have given them.—Romans 11:33-36.

6 Jesus alluded to himself as the Sower of Kingdom truth. (John 4:35-38) He spread seeds of good news at every opportunity. Even as he was dying on the stake, he proclaimed good news about a future earthly paradise. (Luke 23:43) Moreover, his deep concern that the good news be preached did not end with his death on the torture stake. Before his ascension to heaven, he commanded the apostles to continue sowing seeds of Kingdom truth and to make disciples. Then Jesus made a remarkable promise. He said: "Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things."—Matthew 28:19, 20.

7 With these words Jesus made a commitment to support, direct, and safeguard the work of preaching the good news *"all the*

5. In what work did Jesus primarily occupy himself when on earth?

6, 7. (a) What remarkable commitment did Jesus make before his ascension to heaven, and how is he fulfilling it? (b) How does Jesus' attitude toward the preaching work affect you personally?

Like farmers in ancient Israel, Christians today spread seeds of Kingdom truth generously

days until the conclusion of the system of things." Right down to our own day, Jesus continues to have a personal interest in the evangelizing work. He is our Leader, in charge of the sowing of Kingdom truth. (Matthew 23:10) As Head of the Christian congregation, he is responsible before Jehovah for this worldwide work.—Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18.

The Angels Declare Glad Tidings

8 When Jehovah created the earth, the angels "joyfully cried out together, and . . . began shouting in applause." (Job 38:4-7) Ever since then, these heavenly creatures have displayed a keen interest in human affairs. Jehovah has used them to convey divine pronouncements to humans. (Psalm 103:20) This is especially true in connection with the spreading of the good news in our day. In the revelation given him, the apostle

8, 9. (a) How have the angels displayed a genuine interest in human affairs? (b) In what sense might it be said that we are a theatrical spectacle to the angels?

John saw an "angel flying in midheaven" who has "everlasting good news to declare as glad tidings to those who dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people, saying in a loud voice: 'Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of the judgment by him has arrived.'" —Revelation 14:6, 7.

9 The Bible refers to angels as "spirits for public service, sent forth to minister for those who are going to inherit salvation." (Hebrews 1:14) As the angels eagerly carry out their assigned duties, they have the opportunity to observe us and our work. As if on a very conspicuous theater stage, we carry out our work in front of a heavenly audience. (1 Corinthians 4:9) How sobering and thrilling to know that we are not working alone as sowers of Kingdom truth!

Jehovah's Witnesses produce and distribute a wide variety of Bible-based publications in 340 languages

We Eagerly Fulfill Our Role

10 Why are Jesus and the angels so interested in our work? Jesus gave one reason when he said: "I tell you, joy arises among the angels of God over one sinner that repents." (Luke 15:10) We too share that genuine interest in people. Hence, we do our best to spread seeds of Kingdom truth everywhere. The words of Ecclesiastes 11:6 can be applied to our work. There the Bible admonishes us: "In the morning sow your seed and until the evening do not let your hand rest; for you are not knowing where this will have success, either here or there, or whether both of them will alike be good." Granted, for every person who accepts our message there may be hundreds or even thousands who reject it. But like the angels, we rejoice when even "one sinner" accepts the message of salvation.

10. How can the practical advice at Ecclesiastes 11:6 be applied to our evangelizing work?

11 Much is involved in the preaching of the good news. One important aid in this work is the Bible-based printed material used by Jehovah's Witnesses. In some respects, these publications are also like seeds that are spread everywhere. We do not know where they will have success. Sometimes a publication may change hands before someone reads it. Jesus and the angels may even guide events in some instances to make this happen for the benefit of righthearted ones. Consider some experiences that illustrate how Jehovah can work out unexpected and wonderful results using literature that has been left with people.

The Work of the True God

12 In 1953, Robert, Lila, and their children moved from a big city into a dilapidated

11. How effective can the use of Bible-based publications be?
12. How was an old magazine instrumental in helping one family to come to know Jehovah?

old farmhouse in rural Pennsylvania, U.S.A. Shortly after moving in, Robert decided to install a bathroom underneath an enclosed flight of stairs. After removing several boards, he discovered that behind the wall, mice had stowed away shredded papers, empty walnut shells, and other debris. There, in the midst of it all, lay a copy of *The Golden Age* magazine. Robert was particularly interested in an article on the subject of raising children. He was so impressed by the clear, Bible-based direction given in the magazine that he told Lila that they were going to join "the religion of *The Golden Age.*" Within just a few weeks, Jehovah's Witnesses came to their door, but Robert told them that the family was interested only in "the religion of *The Golden Age.*" The Witnesses explained that *The Golden Age* now had a new title, *Awake!* Robert and Lila began to study the Bible regularly with the Witnesses, and eventually they got baptized. They, in turn, sowed seeds of truth in their children and reaped bountifully. Today, more than 20 members of this family, including all of Robert and Lila's seven children, are baptized servants of Jehovah God.

13 Some 40 years ago, William and Ada, a married couple from Puerto Rico, had no interest in studying the Bible. Whenever Jehovah's Witnesses knocked on their door, the couple pretended not to be at home. One day William visited a junkyard to purchase an item needed for a repair at home. As he was leaving, he noticed a bright lime-green book lying in a large trash container. It was *Religion,* a book published by Jehovah's Witnesses back in 1940. William took the book home and was thrilled to read about the difference between false and true religion. The next time Jehovah's Witnesses called, William and Ada gladly listened to their message and began to study the Bible with them. Some months later they were baptized at the Divine Will International Assembly in 1958. Since then, they have helped more than 50 individuals to become part of our Christian brotherhood.

14 Karl was only 11 years old and somewhat mischievous. It seemed to him that he was always getting into trouble. His father, a German Methodist preacher, had taught him that bad people burn in hell after death. So Karl was very afraid of hell. One day in 1917, Karl noticed a printed piece of paper on the street and picked it up. As he read it, his eyes quickly focused on the question: "What is hell?" The paper was an invitation to a public

13. What moved a couple in Puerto Rico to develop an interest in the Bible?

14. As shown by an experience, what potential does our Bible-based literature have?

lecture on the subject of hell, sponsored by the Bible Students, known today as Jehovah's Witnesses. About a year later, after several sessions of Bible study, Karl was baptized, thereby becoming one of the Bible Students. In 1925 he was invited to work at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses—where he still serves. A Christian career spanning over eight decades began with a piece of paper on the street.

15 True, it is beyond human ability to determine if and to what extent the angels were directly involved in these experiences. Still, we should never doubt that Jesus and the angels play an active role in the preaching work and that Jehovah can guide matters as he sees fit. These and many similar experiences illustrate the potential for good that our literature may have after it leaves our hands.

We Have Been Entrusted With a Treasure

16 The apostle Paul spoke of a "treasure in earthen vessels." That treasure is the God-given commission to preach, and the earthen vessels are the humans to whom Jehovah has entrusted this treasure. Since those humans are imperfect and limited, Paul goes on to say that the result of their being given such a commission is that "the power beyond what is normal may be God's and not that out of ourselves." (2 Corinthians 4:7) Yes, we can count on Jehovah to furnish the power needed to enable us to accomplish the work at hand.

15. What can Jehovah do, as he sees fit?
16. What can we learn from the words of 2 Corinthians 4:7?

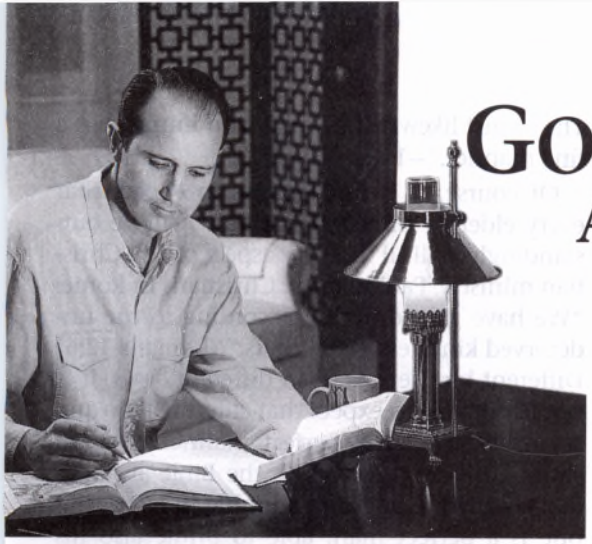
What Did We Learn?

- In what ways is our sowing work producing good results?
- How are Jesus Christ and the angels involved in the evangelizing work today?
- Why should we be generous as sowers of Kingdom truth?
- When we encounter apathy or hostility in our ministry, what should motivate us to persevere?

17 Often we have to make sacrifices. It may be uncomfortable or inconvenient to work in some territories. There are areas where most people seem extremely apathetic, even hostile. Much effort may be expended in such localities with no apparent success. But no effort is too great when so much is at stake. Remember, the seeds you sow can give people happiness now as well as everlasting life in the future. The words of Psalm 126:6 have proved true many times: "The one that without fail goes forth, even weeping, carrying along a bagful of seed, will without fail come in with a joyful cry, carrying along his sheaves."

18 Let us seize every appropriate opportunity to sow seeds of Kingdom truth generously. May we never forget that, although we are the ones who plant and water the seeds, it is Jehovah who makes them grow. (1 Corinthians 3: 6, 7) Yet, just as Jesus and the angels accomplish their part of the work, Jehovah expects us to accomplish our ministry fully. (2 Timothy 4:5) May we pay constant attention to our teaching, to our attitude, and to our eagerness in the ministry. Why? Paul answers: "By doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you."—1 Timothy 4:16.

17. What will we encounter as we sow seeds of Kingdom truth, and why should we nevertheless maintain a positive attitude?
18. How can we pay constant attention to our ministry, and why should we?



GOOD EXAMPLES
Are You Benefiting From Them?

"YOU came to be an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia." The apostle Paul wrote these words to faithful Christians living in Thessalonica. The example they set for fellow believers was truly commendable. Still, the Thessalonians were themselves responding to the example that Paul and his associates had set. Paul said: "The good news we preach did not turn up among you with speech alone but also with power and with holy spirit and strong conviction, just as you know what sort of men we became to you for your sakes; and you became imitators of us."—1 Thessalonians 1:5-7.

Yes, Paul did more than preach sermons. His very life was a sermon—an example of faith, endurance, and self-sacrifice. Because of this, Paul and his associates came to be a potent influence in the lives of the Thessalonians, moving them to accept the truth "under much tribulation." By no means, though, were Paul and his fellow workers the only positive influence on those believers. The example of others who endured tribulation was also an encouragement. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: "You became imitators, brothers, of the congregations of God that are in Judea in union with Christ Jesus, because you also began suffering at the hands of your own countrymen the same things as they also are suffering at the hands of the Jews."—1 Thessalonians 2:14.

Christ Jesus—The Foremost Exemplar

Although Paul himself had set an example worthy of imitation, he did not fail to point to Jesus Christ as the primary example that Christians should follow. (1 Thessalonians 1:6) Christ was and is our foremost Exemplar. The apostle Peter wrote: "To this course you were called, because even Christ suffered for you, leaving you a model for you to follow his steps closely."—1 Peter 2:21.

However, Jesus finished his life as a human almost 2,000 years ago. Now he "dwells in unapproachable light" as an immortal spirit creature. As such, "not one of men has seen or can see" him. (1 Timothy 6:16) How, then, can we imitate him? One way is by studying the four Bible accounts of Jesus' life. The Gospels provide insight into his personality, life course, and "mental attitude." (Philippians 2:5-8) Additional insight can be gained by carefully studying the book *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived,* which discusses the events of Jesus' life in great detail and in chronological order.*

Jesus' self-sacrificing example had a powerful effect on the apostle Paul. He told the Corinthian Christians: "For my part I will most gladly spend and be completely spent for your souls." (2 Corinthians 12:15) What a Christlike attitude! As we contemplate Christ's perfect example, we too should be moved to imitate him in our own life course.

For instance, Jesus taught us that we should rely on God's promise to provide materially. But he did more than that. He demonstrated

* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

such faith and confidence in Jehovah on a daily basis. He said: "Foxes have dens and birds of heaven have roosts, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay down his head." (Matthew 6:25; 8:20) Do material concerns dominate your thinking and actions? Or does your life give evidence that you are seeking the Kingdom first? And what about your attitude toward Jehovah's service? Is it like that of our Exemplar, Jesus? The Bible shows that Jesus did not simply preach zeal but demonstrated fiery zeal on many occasions. (John 2:14-17) Further, what a fine example Jesus set when it came to love! Why, he sacrificed his own life for his disciples! (John 15:13) Are you imitating Jesus by showing love to your Christian brothers? Or do you allow the imperfections of some to hinder your love for them?

It is not realistic to expect that every elder or ministerial servant will be outstandingly skillful in every aspect of the Christian ministry

In our striving to follow Christ's example, we will often fall short. But surely Jehovah is pleased by our efforts to "put on the Lord Jesus Christ."—Romans 13:14.

"Examples to the Flock"

Are there individuals in the congregation today who can serve as examples for us? Certainly there are! Brothers in appointed positions of responsibility must especially set an example. Paul told Titus, who served congregations in Crete and who appointed overseers, that each appointed elder must be a "man free from accusation." (Titus 1:5, 6) The apostle Peter similarly admonished "older men" to become "examples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:1-3) And what about those serving as ministerial servants? They must likewise be "men who minister in a fine manner."—1 Timothy 3:13.

Of course, it is not realistic to expect that every elder or ministerial servant will be outstandingly skillful in every aspect of the Christian ministry. Paul told the Christians in Rome: "We have gifts differing according to the undeserved kindness given to us." (Romans 12:6) Different brothers excel in different areas. It is not reasonable to expect that elders will do and say everything in a perfect manner. "We all stumble many times," says the Bible at James 3:2. "If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man, able to bridle also his whole body." In spite of their imperfections, however, elders can still, like Timothy, "become [examples] to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness." (1 Timothy 4:12) When elders do so, those in the flock will readily apply the admonition of Hebrews 13:7: "Remember those who are taking the lead among you, . . . and as you contemplate how their conduct turns out imitate their faith."

Other Modern-Day Examples

Over the past few decades, countless others have shown themselves to be good examples. What of the thousands of self-sacrificing missionaries who have "left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands" to fulfill the Christian commission in foreign fields? (Matthew 19:29) Consider, too, the traveling overseers and their wives, the men and women who serve as volunteers at the offices of the Watch Tower Society, and the pioneers who minister to the congregations. Can such examples motivate others? One Christian evangelizer in Asia recalls a missionary from the eighth class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. He said that this faithful brother was "willing to face the swarms of mosquitoes and the oppressive humidity. . . . More impressive still was his ability to make presentations in both the Chinese and Malay languages though he was from England." The effect of this fine example?

unfailingly care for both the material and spiritual needs of their families; sisters—including single mothers—who handle the pressures of child-rearing while still having an active share in the ministry; aged and infirm ones who continue faithful in spite of increasing frailty and impaired health. Are you not moved by such examples?

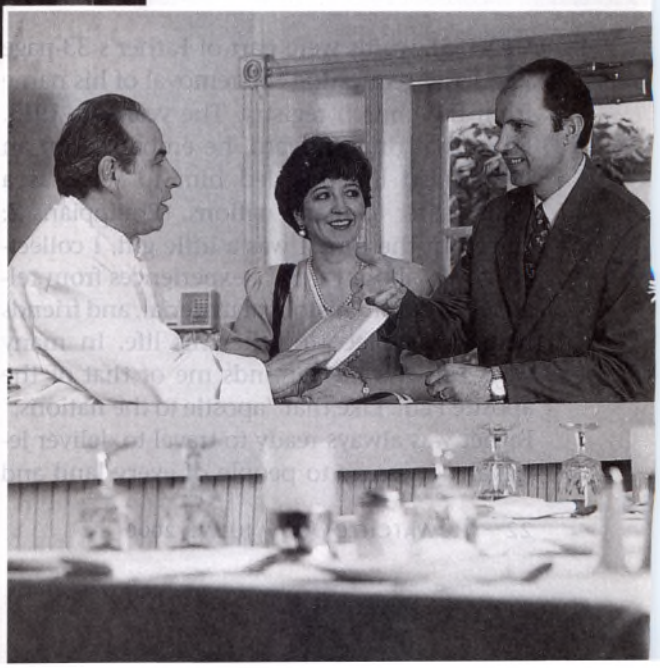
Granted, the world is full of bad examples. (2 Timothy 3:13) Nevertheless, consider Paul's exhortation to Christians living in Judea. After recounting the exemplary behavior of many ancient men and women of faith, the apostle Paul urged them: "So, then, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also . . . run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus." (Hebrews 12:1, 2) Christians today are also surrounded by a 'great cloud' of good examples—both ancient and modern-day. Are you truly benefiting from them? You can if you are determined to be "an imitator, not of what is bad, but of what is good."—3 John 11.

Elders are to be "examples to the flock"

The brother said: "His calmness and confidence inspired me to want to become a missionary when I grew up." Not surprisingly, this brother did become a missionary.

The *Watch Tower Publications Index* contains a list of dozens of life stories that have appeared in the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. These stories tell of individuals who have forsaken worldly careers and goals, overcome weaknesses, made dramatic personality transformations, maintained a positive disposition in the face of adversity, and displayed industriousness, endurance, loyalty, humility, and a self-sacrificing spirit. One reader wrote regarding these accounts: "They make me a more humble and thankful Christian as I read what others have gone through, and they have helped me *not* to think too much of myself or be selfish."

In addition, do not forget the fine examples in your own congregation: family heads who



A LIGHT BEARER TO MANY NATIONS

THE STORY OF GEORGE YOUNG
AS TOLD BY RUTH YOUNG NICHOLSON

"Why, then, this silence in our pulpits? . . . What kind of men should we be if we kept silent after we had proved these things whereof I write to be true? Let us not keep the people in ignorance, but let us proclaim the truth in no apologetic or hidden manner."

THESE words were part of Father's 33-page letter requesting the removal of his name from the church registry. The year was 1913. From that time forward, he embarked on an event-filled life that led him to serve as a light bearer to many nations. (Philippians 2: 15) From the time I was a little girl, I collected stories about Father's experiences from relatives and from historical material, and friends helped me piece together his life. In many ways Father's life reminds me of that of the apostle Paul. Like that "apostle to the nations," Father was always ready to travel to deliver Jehovah's message to people of every land and island. (Romans 11:13; Psalm 107:1-3) Let me tell you about my father, George Young.

The Early Years

Father was the youngest son of John and Margaret Young, Scottish Presbyterians. He was born September 8, 1886, soon after the family moved from Edinburgh, Scotland, to British Columbia in western Canada. His three older brothers—Alexander, John, and Malcolm—were born in Scotland a few years earlier. Marion, the boys' younger sister, whom they affectionately called Nellie, was two years younger than Father.

Growing up on a farm in Saanich, not far from Victoria, British Columbia, the children enjoyed themselves. At the same time, they learned to shoulder responsibility. So when their parents would return from a trip to Victoria, outside chores were finished and the house was tidy.

In time, Father and his brothers became interested in mining and also in the timber trade. The Young brothers developed a fine reputation as timber cruisers (men who inspected land for possible lumber yield) and as buyers and sellers of timber. Father handled the financial transactions.

Eventually, Father's inclination toward spiritual matters led him to decide to become a Presbyterian minister. About that time, however, newspaper sermons by Charles Taze Russell, first president of Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society, profoundly affected his life. What Father learned moved him to compose and send the letter of resignation mentioned at the outset.

Father kindly but clearly used Bible verses to disprove the church teachings that the human soul is immortal and that God will torment human souls eternally in hellfire. He also exposed the doctrine of the Trinity, proving that it was of non-Christian origin and entirely unsupported by the Scriptures. From then on he pursued the Christian ministry in imitation of Jesus Christ, humbly using all his abilities and strength to Jehovah's glory.

In 1917, under the direction of the Watch Tower Society, Father began serving as a pilgrim, as traveling representatives of Jehovah's Witnesses were then called. In cities and towns across Canada, he gave lectures and presented the motion picture and slide program known as the "Photo-Drama of Creation." Theaters were packed for Father's visits. The schedule for his pilgrim visits appeared in *The Watchtower* until 1921.

A Winnipeg newspaper reported that Evangelist Young spoke to 2,500 and that many could not gain entrance because the hall was so crowded. In Ottawa, he spoke on the subject "To Hell and Back." There an elderly man reported: "When it was over, George Young invited a row of clergymen to the platform to discuss the subject with him, but none of them moved. I knew then I had found the truth."

My father, on the right, with his three brothers

Father tried to squeeze in as much spiritual activity as possible on his pilgrim visits. Afterward, he rushed to catch the train for another scheduled stop. When traveling by car, he was often on his way to his next assignment long before breakfast. In addition to being zealous, Father had the reputation of being a considerate man and was known for his Christian deeds and generosity.

Among the many early conventions he attended, an especially memorable one was held in Edmonton, Alberta, in 1918. All of his family were there for the baptism of Nellie. It was also the last time the boys were together. Two

years later, Malcolm died of pneumonia. Like his three brothers and his father, Malcolm entertained the hope of heavenly life, and they all remained faithful to God to their death. —Philippians 3:14.

Off to Foreign Fields

After Father completed a preaching tour of Canada in September 1921, he was directed by Joseph F. Rutherford, then president of the Watch Tower Society, to proceed to the islands of the Caribbean. Everywhere Father presented the "Photo-Drama of Creation," it was well received. From Trinidad, he wrote: "The place was packed, and large numbers were turned away. The second night the building was thronged with people."

Then, in 1923, Father was assigned to Brazil. There he spoke to large audiences, at times using hired interpreters. *The Watchtower* of December 15, 1923, reported: "From June 1 to September 30 Brother Young has held 21 public meetings, with a total attendance of 3,600; 48 class meetings, with an attendance of 1,100; distributed free literature in Portuguese to the number of 5,000 copies." Many responded with interest when Father delivered the talk "Millions Now Living Will Never Die."

When new facilities were dedicated in Brazil on March 8, 1997, the dedication brochure reported: "1923: George Young arrives in Brazil. He organizes a branch office in the center of Rio de Janeiro." Although Bible literature was available in Spanish, there was a need for it also in Portuguese, the primary language of Brazil. Thus, on October 1, 1923, *The Watchtower* began to be published in Portuguese.

Father made many memorable contacts in Brazil. One was a well-to-do Portuguese man by the name of Jacintho Pimentel Cabral, who offered his home for meetings. Jacintho soon accepted Bible truth and later became a member of the branch staff. Another was Manuel da Silva Jordão, a young Portuguese gardener. He heard a public talk by Father that motivated him to return to Portugal to serve as a colporteur, as full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses were then called.

Father traveled extensively by railroad throughout Brazil, and he managed to locate interested ones. On one of his trips, he met Bony and Catarina Green, and he stayed with them for about two weeks, explaining the Scriptures to them. About seven of the family then symbolized their dedication to Jehovah by water baptism.

Another contact was that made with Sarah Bellona Ferguson in 1923. In 1867 as a young girl, she, along with her brother Erasmus Fulton Smith and the rest of the family, had moved to Brazil from the United States. Since 1899 she had regularly received the *Watchtower* magazine by mail. Father's visit was the long-awaited opportunity for Sarah, her four children, and someone Father called Aunt Sallie to be baptized. That was on March 11, 1924.

Before long, Father was preaching in other South American countries. On November 8, 1924, he wrote from Peru: "Have just finished putting out 17,000 tracts in Lima and Callao." Next he was off to Bolivia to distribute tracts there. Regarding that visit, he wrote: "Our Father is blessing the effort. An Indian helped me. His home is on the headwaters of the Amazon. He is taking 1,000 tracts and some books back with him."

Through Father's efforts, seeds of Bible truth were spread in many countries of Central and South America. The December 1, 1924, *Watchtower* reported: "George Young has now been in South America for upwards of two years. . . . It has been the privilege of this dear brother to carry the message of the truth to Punta Arenas, in the Straits of Magellan." Father also spearheaded the preaching work in such countries as Costa Rica, Panama, and Venezuela. He carried on even though he had contracted malaria and his health was affected.

Next to Europe

In March 1925, Father set sail for Europe, where he hoped to distribute 300,000 Bible tracts in Spain and Portugal and to arrange for Brother Rutherford to deliver public lectures. After arriving in Spain, however, Father expressed reservations about having Brother Rutherford give such lectures in view of the atmosphere of religious intolerance.

In response, Brother Rutherford wrote, quoting Isaiah 51:16: "I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people." (*King James Version*) With that, Father concluded: "Surely it is the Lord's will that I go ahead and leave the results for him."

On May 10, 1925, Brother Rutherford delivered his lecture through an interpreter at the Novedades Theater in Barcelona. More than 2,000 were in attendance, including a government official and a special guard on stage. A similar procedure was followed in Madrid, with 1,200 in attendance. The interest generated from these talks resulted in the establishing of a branch office in Spain that was placed, as the *1978 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* says, "under the guidance of George Young."

On May 13, 1925, Brother Rutherford spoke in Lisbon, Portugal. His visit there was also a great success, despite attempts by the clergy to disrupt the meeting by yelling and smashing chairs. Following Brother Rutherford's lectures in Spain and Portugal, Father continued showing the "Photo-Drama," and he also arranged for Bible literature to be printed and distributed in those places. In 1927 he reported that the good news "has been published throughout every city and town in Spain."

Preaching in the Soviet Union

Father's next missionary assignment was the Soviet Union, where he arrived on August 28, 1928. A letter he wrote, dated October 10, 1928, reads in part:

"Since coming to Russia, I can truly pray, 'Thy kingdom come' with all

Father (standing) with Brothers Woodworth, Rutherford, and Macmillan
Below: Father (far left) in group with Brother Russell

intensity of heart. I am learning the language, but it is slow. My interpreter is a very exceptional man, a Jew, but he believes in Christ and loves the Bible. I have had some interesting experiences but do not know how long I will be permitted to remain. Last week I got notice to leave in 24 hours but got it fixed up so I could remain longer."

Contact was made with some Bible Students in Kharkov, now a major city in Ukraine, and the resulting warm exchange brought tears of joy to their eyes. A little convention was held each night until midnight. Writing later about this meeting with the brothers, Father noted: "Poor brethren, their few books seized and the authorities unfriendly, yet they are happy."

Father and Mother

Below: Their wedding day

Father's ministry in the Soviet Union was highlighted in a special brochure provided for those who attended the June 21, 1997, dedication of the new branch facilities in St. Petersburg, Russia. The brochure says that Father was sent to Moscow, and it reports that he obtained permission "to produce 15,000 copies of the booklets *Freedom for the Peoples* and *Where Are the Dead?* for distribution in Russia."

After returning from Russia, Father was assigned to pilgrim work in the United States. In South Dakota he visited the home of Nellena and Verda Pool, fleshly sisters who years later became missionaries in Peru. They expressed fond appreciation for Father's tireless ministry and noted: "Brothers in those old days definitely had the pioneer spirit as they went out to these foreign places with little of this world's goods but with a heart full of love for Jehovah. That is what pushed them to accomplish what they did."

Marriage and Second Tour

Through the years Father had been corresponding with Clara Hubbert of Manitoulin Island, Ontario. They were both in attendance at the convention in Columbus, Ohio, on July 26, 1931, when the Bible Students adopted the name Jehovah's Witnesses. (Isaiah 43:10-12) A week later they were married. Soon, Father was away again, on his second missionary tour through the islands of the Caribbean. There, he helped to organize meetings and to train others in the house-to-house ministry.

Mother received pictures, cards, and letters from Suriname, St. Kitts, and many oth-

With David and Mother some years after Father's death

er places. The letters reported on the progress of the preaching work and sometimes included facts about birds, animals, and plants in the particular country he was in. In June 1932, Father completed his assignment in the Caribbean and, traveling steerage as usual, he returned to Canada. Thereafter, he and Mother shared in the full-time preaching work together, spending the winter of 1932/33 in the Ottawa area with a large group of other full-time ministers.

A Brief Family Life

In 1934 my brother, David, was born. When he was just a child, he would stand on Mama's hatbox and practice giving his "talks." All his life, he has shown zeal for Jehovah like his father. The three of them traveled by car, with sound equipment tied to the roof, as they visited congregations from the east coast of Canada to the west coast. I was born in 1938 while Father was serving in British Columbia. David remembers Father putting me on the bed and Father, Mother, and David kneeling around it while Father gave a prayer of thanksgiving for me.

In the winter of 1939, we lived in Vancouver while Father visited congregations in that area. Among the many letters we have collected over the years was one dated January 14, 1939, written when he was in Vernon, British Columbia. Father addressed it to Clara, David, and Ruth, saying: "Just a little kiss and a hug." In it there was a message for each of us. He talked about the harvest being great there but the workers few.—Matthew 9:37, 38.

A week after returning to Vancouver from his assignment, Father collapsed at a meeting. A subsequent diagnosis revealed that he had a cancerous tumor on the brain. On May 1, 1939, he finished his earthly course. I was nine months old, and David was nearly five years old. Our beloved mother, who also had the heavenly hope, remained faithful to God until her death on June 19, 1963.

How Father felt about his privilege of carrying the good news to many countries is beautifully captured in one of his letters to Mama. He said in part: "Jehovah graciously permitted me to go to these lands as a light to bear the Kingdom message. His holy name be praised. Through frailty and incompetence and weakness, his glory shines."

Now George and Clara Young's children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren are also serving our loving God, Jehovah. I was told that Father frequently quoted Hebrews 6:10, which says: "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name." We too have not forgotten Father's work.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Can Your Life Have Greater Meaning?

The Resurrection Hope Is Sure!

You Can Remain Chaste in an Immoral World

CHRISTIAN SHEPHERDS, *'Open Wide Your Heart'!*

"JEHOVAH is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing." With those words, David expressed his complete confidence in his God. Jehovah led him, spiritually speaking, to "grassy pastures" and "well-watered resting-places," directing him "in the tracks of righteousness." When surrounded by opposers, David received support and encouragement, prompting him to say to Jehovah: "I fear nothing bad, for you are with me." Having such a Supreme Shepherd, David was determined to "dwell in the house of Jehovah to the length of days."—Psalm 23:1-6.

God's only-begotten Son also experienced the loving care of Jehovah, and he perfectly mirrored this care in his dealings with his disciples during his earthly sojourn. The Scriptures therefore refer to him as "the fine shepherd," "the great shepherd," and "the chief shepherd."—John 10:11; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 5:2-4.

Jehovah and Jesus Christ continue to shepherd those who love them. Their shepherding finds expression, in part, in the loving provision of undershepherds in the congregation. Paul addressed such undershepherds when he said: "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son."—Acts 20:28.

Shepherding the flock in accordance with the pattern set by Jehovah and Christ Jesus is no easy task, but it is more vital now than ever before. Think of the over one million Witnesses who have been baptized within the past three years! Such new ones do not have the spiritual background that comes from years of activity. Think, too, of those Witnesses who are still children or teenagers. They need attention not only from their parents but also from the congregation's undershepherds.

Indeed, every Christian is subject to outside pressures, including peer pressure. All must struggle to resist the strong pull to follow the world's path of self-indulgence. In some countries, Kingdom publishers may be discouraged because of the lack of response to their message. Many publishers have serious health problems. Financial troubles may be robbing others of their incentive to seek the Kingdom first. In truth, all of us—including those long in the truth—need and deserve the help of loving shepherds.

Proper Motivation

First-century Christians were admonished: 'Open wide your heart'! (2 Corinthians 6:11-13) Christian elders do well to follow this advice in caring for their shepherding duties. How can they do so? And what about ministerial servants, many of whom are prospective shepherds?

If Christian elders are to be a blessing to the flock, they must be motivated by more than a sense of duty. They are counseled: "Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but *willingly;* neither for love of dishonest gain, but *eagerly.*" (1 Peter 5:2) Effective shepherding therefore involves a willingness and an eagerness to serve others. (John 21:15-17) It means seeing the needs of the sheep and

being quick to respond. It means demonstrating the fine Christian qualities known as the fruitage of God's spirit while dealing with others.—Galatians 5:22, 23.

Shepherding sometimes includes visiting brothers in their homes.* But shepherds who 'open wide their heart' expend themselves. That is to say, they do more than make occasional shepherding calls. They take advantage of every opportunity to shepherd others in the flock.

Training Others to Become Shepherds

Any brother, regardless of age, who "is reaching out for an office of overseer . . . is desirous of a fine work." (1 Timothy 3:1) Many ministerial servants have demonstrated a willingness to reach out for additional privileges. Thus, elders gladly help these willing brothers to take this important step in "reaching out for an office of overseer." This means training them to be effective shepherds.

Because of adhering closely to God's high standards, Jehovah's Christian congregation has not been weakened by false shepherds like the ones described at Ezekiel 34:2-6. These were contemptible in Jehovah's sight and rightly so. Instead of feeding the flock, they fed themselves. They failed to strengthen the sick, to heal the ailing, to bandage the broken, or to bring back the dispersed or the lost. Acting more like wolves than shepherds, they tyrannized over the sheep. The neglected sheep were scattered, aimlessly roaming with no one to care for them.—Jeremiah 23: 1, 2; Nahum 3:18; Matthew 9:36.

Unlike those unfaithful shepherds, Christian shepherds follow Jehovah's example. They help to lead the sheep to spiritual "grassy pastures" and "well-watered resting-places." They endeavor to direct them "in the tracks of righteousness" by helping them to understand Jehovah's Word properly and to apply it personally. They can do this effectively because they are "qualified to teach." —1 Timothy 3:2.

Much of the elders' teaching is done from the platform during congregation meetings. However, elders also teach on a personal level. Of course, some are better at teaching in a one-on-one situation, while others are more gifted at giving talks. But a lesser degree of ability in one aspect of teaching does not necessarily disqualify someone as a teacher. Elders teach, using all avenues open to them, including shepherding. Some shepherding is done on a formal basis, for example, on organized visits. But much shepherding can also be done in a more informal way, which is also of great benefit.

Shepherds and Teachers All the Time

A doctor needs knowledge and experience in order to perform his work. But his patients appreciate it when he shows kindness, compassion, concern, and sincere interest. These qualities must be part of his personality. Similar qualities must likewise become a part of the personality of a good teacher and shepherd, part of his everyday self. A real teacher will be prepared to instruct those around him whenever necessary. "A word at its right time is O how good!" says Proverbs 15:23. The "right time" may be when he is speaking from the platform, when he is preaching from house to house, or when he is having a conversation in the Kingdom Hall or on the telephone. Likewise, a good shepherd strives to display fine, caring qualities at all times, not just when he is making shepherding calls. Having 'opened wide his heart,' he will take advantage of every opportunity to shepherd the sheep, giving them the care they need at the right time. This is what makes him beloved in the eyes of the sheep.—Mark 10:43.

Wolfgang, now an elder, recalls a social visit made on his family by a ministerial servant

* Suggestions for making shepherding calls can be found in *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1993, pages 20-3, and of March 15, 1996, pages 24-7.

Christian Shepherds

- Serve eagerly and willingly
- Feed and care for the flock
- Help others to reach out to be shepherds
- Visit the sick and care for them
- Are alert to help their brothers at all times

and his wife. He says: "Our children were thrilled with the attention they got and the pleasant time we had. They are still talking about it." Yes, this ministerial servant showed that he cared; he was 'opening wide his heart.'

Another opportunity to 'open wide one's heart' is by visiting the sick, sending them a short note of encouragement, or calling them on the telephone—anything to let them know that you *care!* Offer help when needed. If they want to talk, listen attentively. Talk about positive, exciting theocratic activities in the local congregation and elsewhere. Help them to focus on the glorious future reserved for those who love Jehovah.—2 Corinthians 4:16-18.

In Addition to Shepherding Calls

Keeping in mind the purpose of shepherding, it is obvious that making formal shepherding calls at brothers' homes, although important, is only part of what is involved. A loving shepherd 'opens wide his heart' by being approachable under all circumstances and at all times. The warm relationship he cultivates with his brothers assures them that in times of darkness, they need fear nothing

ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 7, 2000

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the members of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held on October 7, 2000, 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 9:15 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 during July.

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 1. 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 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.

bad, knowing that their loving brother, the Christian shepherd, cares for them.—Psalm 23:4.

Yes, all of you Christian shepherds 'open wide your heart.' Demonstrate sincere love for your brothers—encourage them, refresh them, build them up spiritually in every way you can. Help them to be steadfast in the faith. (Colossians 1:23) Blessed with Christian shepherds who 'open wide their heart,' the sheep will lack nothing. They will be determined, as was David, to dwell in the house of Jehovah to the length of days. (Psalm 23:1, 6) What more could a loving shepherd want?

Whether in field service, at meetings, or on social occasions, elders are always shepherds

Why Be Forgiving?

"SCIENTISTS have launched research that has begun to demonstrate that forgiveness can positively enhance emotional—and, quite possibly, physical—health," reports *The Toronto Star* of Canada. Yet, Professor Carl Thoresen of Stanford University, U.S.A., lead researcher for the Stanford Forgiveness Project, notes that there are "very few people who understand what forgiveness is and how it works."

Genuine forgiveness is considered a vital aspect of Christianity. *The Toronto Star* report defines it as "recognizing you have been wronged, giving up all resulting resentment, and eventually responding to the offending person with compassion and even love." It must be differentiated from condoning, excusing, forgetting, or denying an offense; nor does it mean putting yourself back into an abusive situation. The report says that the key to true forgiveness is "letting go of anger and negative feelings."

Researchers say that more study into the physical benefits of forgiveness is needed. However, they do report psychological benefits, including "less stress, anxiety and depression."

A noble reason for being forgiving is expressed at Ephesians 4:32, which says: "Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, *freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you.*" When it comes to forgiveness, as in other respects, we are urged to become imitators of God.—Ephesians 5:1.

Refusing to forgive others when there is a basis for mercy can adversely affect our own relationship with God. Jehovah expects us to forgive one another. Then we can pray that he will forgive us.—Matthew 6:14; Mark 11:25; 1 John 4:11.

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