



**CAN THE  
BIBLE MAKE YOUR  
LIFE BETTER?**

# Awake!®

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# Can the Bible Make Your Life Better?

3 An Ancient Book for Modern Life

---

4 Physical Health

---

6 Emotional Health

---

8 Family Life and Friendships

---

10 Financial Stability

---

12 Spirituality

---

14 The Most Helpful Book in History

---

16 Can the Bible Make Your Life Better?

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# An Ancient Book for Modern Life

Many people respect the Bible for its religious significance. However, the Bible offers more than religious guidance. It has practical advice for everyday living.

Consider, for example, what some people say about how they have personally benefited from reading the Bible and applying its advice in their life.

“My life is more balanced. My mental and emotional health has improved. I have gained a more positive outlook.”—**Fiona.**

“From studying the Bible, I have found real purpose and meaning in life.”—**Gnitko.**

“My life has changed immeasurably for the better. I now have a simple, family-oriented lifestyle.”—**Andrew.**

These are not isolated experiences. Many people around the world have found that the Bible has much practical guidance for everyday life.

Let us consider how the Bible can help people enhance their . . .

- Physical health
- Emotional health
- Family life and friendships
- Financial stability
- Spirituality



The following material will show how the Bible truly is not only a sacred book but also one that can benefit you in tangible ways.



# Physical Health

The Bible is not a medical textbook. Yet, it promotes a healthful course of life. Consider some Bible principles that can improve your life physically.

## TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “No man ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cherishes it.”  
—Ephesians 5:29.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** This Bible principle encourages us to do what we can to care for our physical health. One study shows that many health problems are related to personal lifestyle choices. Hence, making the right personal choices can lead to better health.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- **Nutrition.** Take charge of your nutrition by eating healthful foods and drinking enough water.

- **Stay Active.** Physical activity can improve your health regardless of your age, even if you are disabled or limited by chronic illness. While loved ones and health practitioners can assist you with your exercise program, only you can make it work!
- **Get Enough Sleep.** Prolonged sleep deprivation is associated with risks for serious illnesses. As a result of the choices they make, many people do not get enough sleep. Yet, by choosing to sleep enough, you choose to live better.

## AVOID HARMFUL HABITS

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit.”—2 Corinthians 7:1.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** We benefit from not polluting our bodies with harmful substances such as

## OTHER BIBLE PRINCIPLES

### BE SAFETY CONSCIOUS.

“If you build a new house, you must also make a parapet for your roof, so that you may not bring bloodguilt on your house because of someone falling from it.”

—DEUTERONOMY 22:8.

### CONTROL YOUR ANGER.

“The one who is slow to anger has great discernment, but the impatient one displays his foolishness.”

—PROVERBS 14:29.

### AVOID OVEREATING.

“Do not be . . . among those who gorge themselves.”

—PROVERBS 23:20.

tobacco products, which are known to be a major cause of disease and death.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Set a date to quit, and mark it on your calendar. Just before that day, dispose of cigarettes, ashtrays, lighters, and other paraphernalia associated with this harmful habit. Avoid places where others engage in habits like this. Tell supporting friends about your decision.



You may obtain a printed copy of the Bible by contacting one of Jehovah’s Witnesses in your community



## Emotional Health

The Bible warns against emotions that are harmful and encourages us to cultivate those that are beneficial.

### ANGER

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “The one slow to anger is better than a mighty man.”—Proverbs 16:32.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** We benefit when we develop the strength to control our emotions. Although some anger may be justified at times, uncontrolled anger is destructive. Modern researchers point out that in the heat of the moment, angry people often say or do things that they will later regret.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Learn to control your anger before it controls you. While some people think that uncontrolled anger is a sign of strength, we are wise to recognize that it is really a sign of weakness. “As a city broken through, without a wall, is the man who cannot control his temper,”

says the Bible. (Proverbs 25:28) A practical way to control your anger is to get the facts before reacting. “The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger.” (Proverbs 19:11) We do well to listen carefully to both sides of a matter, which may provide insight that can steady our emotions.

### GRATITUDE

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “Show yourselves thankful.”—Colossians 3:15.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** It has been said that only a grateful person can be happy. Even those who have gone through tremendous loss can attest to this. They point out that the key to their emotional survival has been to focus on—not what they lost—but what they have to be grateful for.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Each day, make a list of the things that you are grateful for. These do not have to be major things. Reflect on even the small things, such as a beautiful sunrise, a pleasant

## OTHER BIBLE PRINCIPLES

### WALK AWAY FROM ARGUMENTS.

“Beginning a fight is like opening a floodgate; before the quarrel breaks out, take your leave.”

—PROVERBS 17:14.

### AVOID UNNECESSARY WORRY ABOUT THE FUTURE.

“Never be anxious about the next day, for the next day will have its own anxieties. Each day has enough of its own troubles.”

—MATTHEW 6:34.

### THINK THINGS THROUGH INSTEAD OF REACTING MERELY ON THE BASIS OF EMOTION.

“Thinking ability will keep watch over you, and discernment will safeguard you.”

—PROVERBS 2:11.

conversation with a loved one, or simply having another day of life. These positive things can do much to boost your emotional health—if you take the time to notice and appreciate them.

It can be especially beneficial to think about why you are grateful for your family and friends. When you have identified what you appreciate about other people, tell them about it, either in person or in a letter, an e-mail, or a text message. This will likely strengthen your relationships and enable you to experience the happiness that comes from giving.—Acts 20:35.



You can download audio recordings of the Bible. They are available in some 40 languages on [jw.org](http://jw.org)



## Family Life and Friendships

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Many find it daunting to maintain strong personal relationships. Consider some Bible principles that can help you improve your life socially.

### BE UNSELFISH

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “Look out not only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others.”—Philippians 2:4.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** Successful relationships are more about giving than about receiving. If you follow a selfish course of life, you can damage your relationships with others. For example, a selfish marriage mate may be disloyal to his or her partner. Additionally, nobody wants to make friends with a person who always boasts about what he owns or knows. Thus, as the book *The Road to*

*Character* says, “self-centeredness leads in several unfortunate directions.”

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- **Help others.** Strong friendships stem from a sense of commitment and trust. Some studies indicate that people who help others suffer less from depression and boost their own self-esteem.
- **Show empathy.** Empathy has been described as feeling another person’s pain in your heart. If you show empathy, you will be less likely to use biting sarcasm, that is, sharp and often ironic expressions intended to hurt the feelings of another person.

When you show empathy, you also become tolerant of others. Thus, empathy can help you to avoid being prejudiced and also to



## OTHER BIBLE PRINCIPLES

### AVOID HURTFUL SPEECH.

“Thoughtless speech is like the stabs of a sword.”

—PROVERBS 12:18.

### BE GENEROUS.

“The generous person will prosper.”

—PROVERBS 11:25.

### TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WANT TO BE TREATED.

“All things . . . that you want men to do to you, you also must do to them.”

—MATTHEW 7:12.

make friends from different cultures or backgrounds.

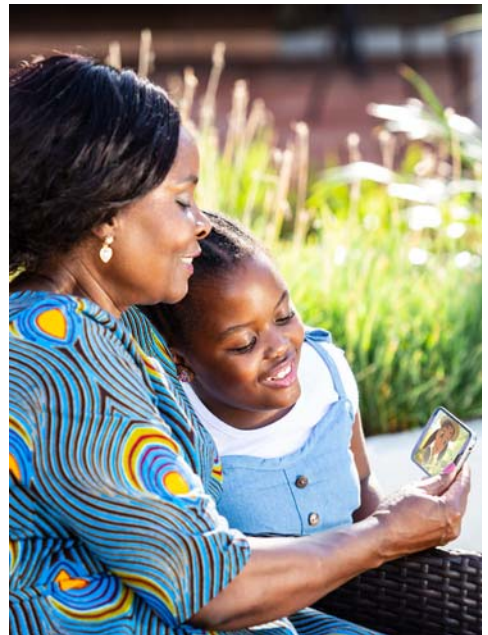
- **Give of your time.** The more time you spend with others, the better you will get to know them. You need to have meaningful conversations with others to make real friends. So be a good listener. Show interest in your friends' concerns. A recent study states that “deep conversations may actually make people happier.”

## CHOOSE FRIENDSHIPS WISELY

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “Bad associations corrupt good morals.”—1 Corinthians 15:33, footnote.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** The people you spend time with have a great influence on you—for good or for bad. Sociologists agree that such influence can affect your life. For example, they say that if you surround yourself with people who smoke or who are getting divorced, you may be more likely to start smoking or to want a divorce.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Make friends with people who display qualities and have values you admire or want to imitate. For instance, seek association with people who are tactful, respectful, generous, and hospitable.



Watch Bible-based videos designed to help married couples, teenagers, and young children improve their family life



# Financial Stability

Many people have minimized their money problems by applying Bible principles.

## HAVE A GOOD PLAN

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “The plans of the diligent surely lead to success, but all who are hasty surely head for poverty.”—Proverbs 21:5.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** Diligently sticking to your plans is an important key to success. Therefore, plan before spending. Remember, you likely cannot buy everything you want. Thus, spend your money wisely.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- **Stick to a budget.** Write down all your expenses, and put them in categories. Then allocate funds for each expense. If you overspend in one category, take money from another to cover the difference. For example,

if you spent more than you planned on automobile fuel, take money set aside for a less important purpose—for example, dining out.

- **Avoid unnecessary debt.** To the extent possible, avoid going into debt. Instead, save up to buy the items you need. If you use a credit card, try to pay off your balance in full each month to avoid paying interest. If you are in debt, set up a repayment plan, and then stick to it.

One study suggests that when paying with a credit card, people are prone to spend more. So if you have a credit card, use it with restraint.

## BEWARE OF HARMFUL ATTITUDES

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “The lazy one does not plow in winter, so he will be begging during the harvest when he has nothing.”—Proverbs 20:4.

## OTHER BIBLE PRINCIPLES

### DO NOT WASTE TIME AND RESOURCES ON BAD HABITS.

“A drunkard and a glutton will come to poverty, and drowsiness will clothe one with rags.”

—PROVERBS 23:21.

### AVOID UNDUE STRESS.

“Stop being anxious about your lives as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear.”

—MATTHEW 6:25.

### AVOID ENVY.

“An envious man is eager for wealth, not knowing that poverty will overtake him.”

—PROVERBS 28:22.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** Laziness can contribute to poverty. Therefore, be a diligent worker, and to the extent possible, plan your financial future.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- **Work hard.** Protect your source of income by being industrious and dependable at your job. Employers appreciate diligence.
- **Be honest.** Do not steal from your employer. Dishonesty could mar your reputation and make it difficult for you to find employment later on.
- **Avoid greed.** An unbalanced approach to money can eventually damage your health and your relationships with others. Remember, there is more to life than money.



Read the Bible online, available in hundreds of languages on [jw.org](http://jw.org)



# Spirituality

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As noted at the outset, many people consider the Bible to be a sacred book. They find that when they read it and apply its guidance, they feel uplifted spiritually and come to understand their purpose in life.

The Bible uses the word “spirituality” to refer to an attitude or an approach to life. (Jude 18, 19) Unlike a fleshly-minded person, who focuses more on self, those with a spiritual outlook value God’s standards.—Ephesians 5:1.

## HOPE

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “If you become discouraged in times of trouble, your strength will be meager.” —Proverbs 24:10, footnote.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** Discouragement can sap us of the strength we need in order to deal with life’s problems. On the other hand, hope can give us the courage to keep going. It can be com-

forting to acknowledge that the problems we face may well be temporary; in fact, something good may come from them.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Try to have an optimistic view of the future. Instead of worrying about what ***might*** happen or waiting for the perfect set of circumstances, take action in harmony with your goals. Granted, “unexpected events” can occur. (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Realistically, though, things often turn out better than we may expect. Thus, using an agricultural metaphor, the Bible says: “Sow your seed in the morning and do not let your hand rest until the evening; for you do not know which will have success, whether this one or that one, or whether they will both do well.” —Ecclesiastes 11:6.

## ANSWERS TO LIFE’S BIG QUESTIONS

**BIBLE PRINCIPLE:** “Give me understanding . . . Your word is truth.”—Psalm 119:144, 160.

## OTHER BIBLE PRINCIPLES

### BE AWARE OF YOUR NEED FOR SPIRITUALITY.

“Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need.”

—MATTHEW 5:3.

### LEARN MORE ABOUT THE GOD OF THE BIBLE.

“Seek God . . . and really find him . . . He is not far off from each one of us.”

—ACTS 17:27.

### READ AND REFLECT ON THE MESSAGE OF THE BIBLE.

“His delight is in the law of Jehovah,\* and he meditates on His law day and night. . . . Everything he does will succeed.”

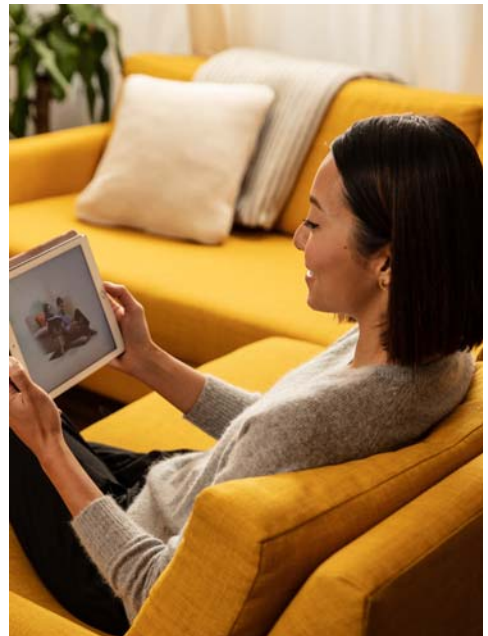
—PSALM 1:2, 3, footnote.

**WHAT IT MEANS:** The Bible provides answers to the questions that virtually everyone asks. For example, it answers such questions as

- **Where did we come from?**
- **Why are we here?**
- **What happens when a person dies?**
- **Is this life all there is?**

Millions of people around the world have improved their lives by examining the Bible’s answers to those questions and more.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO:** Examine for yourself what the Bible teaches. Ask any one of Jehovah’s Witnesses for help to understand the Bible. Browse our website, [jw.org](http://jw.org), or attend one of our meetings, which are free and open to the public.



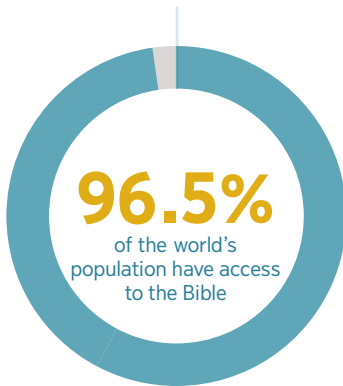
Watch the video *Why Study the Bible?* on [jw.org](http://jw.org). It is available in over 880 languages

\* Jehovah is God’s name as revealed in the Bible.

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\* Currently available in English and Portuguese.  
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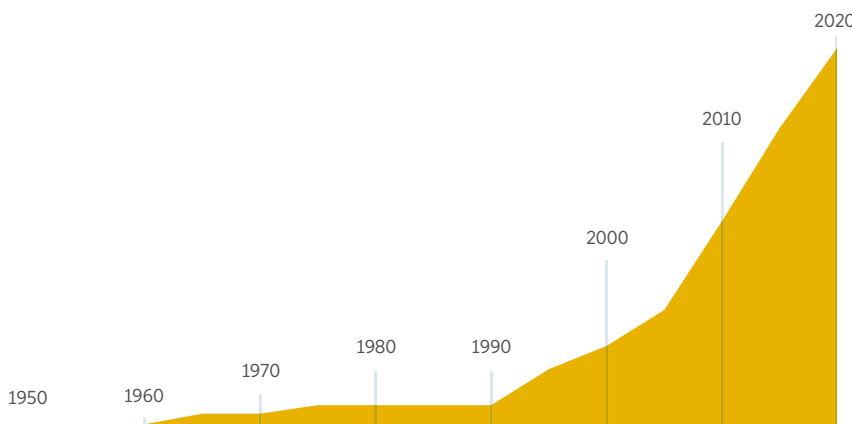
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- *The Bible in Living English, Byington*
- *The Emphatic Diaglott*
- *The King James Version*
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# IN THIS ISSUE OF AWAKE!

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- Emotional health
- Family life and friendships
- Financial stability
- Spirituality

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