

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



**Is the Bible Still
Relevant Today?**

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IS THE BIBLE RELEVANT TODAY?

With all the information available in today's high-tech world, is the Bible too old to be relevant? The Bible says:

"All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial."—2 Timothy 3:16.

This issue of *The Watchtower* examines the Bible's claim that it can guide us in every aspect of life.



Vol. 139, No. 1 2018 ENGLISH
Produced Each Issue: 69,804,000
Available in 327 LANGUAGES

THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, honors Jehovah God, the Ruler of the universe. It comforts people with the good news that God's heavenly Kingdom will soon end all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) Issue 1 January/February 2018 is published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Walkkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. © 2017 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

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Is the Bible's Guidance Relevant Today?



SOME SAY NO. One doctor compared using the Bible for guidance to using a textbook from the 1920's for teaching a chemistry class. A skeptic might even ask if you would use a manual for an old defunct computer to guide you in using a new up-to-date computer. In other words, some see the Bible as hopelessly outdated.

Why would anyone use such an ancient guide in today's modern, high-tech world? After all, countless websites and blogs send out a steady flow of the latest advice and guidance. TV pundits and talk shows feature a stream of knowledgeable psychologists, lifestyle gurus, and authors. And bookstores publish a flood of self-help books, fueling a multibillion-dollar industry.

With all that up-to-the-minute information available, why turn to the Bible—a book that was completed almost 2,000 years ago? Would not skeptics be right in saying that using such an ancient book for guidance is like using an outdated chemistry book or computer manual? Actually, the analogy is flawed. **Science and technology change rapidly, but has human nature changed?** People still want to find meaning in life as well as to have a reasonable measure of happiness and security, good family relations, and rewarding friendships.

As old as it is, the Bible addresses those needs and more. It also claims to be inspired by our Creator. It offers to guide us in every aspect of life and to equip us for any challenge that matters. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) What is more, it claims to convey counsel that is timeless—advice that *never* becomes obsolete! The Bible itself says: “The word of God is alive.”—Hebrews 4:12.

Can the Bible's claims really be true? Is it out-of-date, or is it really the most relevant and practical of books—in effect, a living book? The purpose of this edition of *The Watchtower*, the first in a series of special issues, is to help you find the answers to these questions.



Bible Teachings —Timeless Wisdom

PICTURE THIS: You are touring a museum full of ancient monuments. Most are pitted, weathered, and eroded. Some have great chunks missing. One, though, is remarkably intact; its intricate design is clear in every detail. “Is this one newer than the others?” you ask your guide. “No,” he responds, “it is older than most, and it has never been rebuilt.” “Has it been sheltered?” you ask. “No,” says your guide, “this one has faced the worst wind and rain. And many vandals have tried to mar it.” Perhaps you would wonder in amazement, “What is it made of?”

In a way, the Bible is like that remarkable monument. It is a very ancient book—older than most. There are other ancient books, of course. But like eroded old monuments, most old writings have

been badly damaged by the passage of time. Their statements on science, for instance, have been contradicted by new knowledge, provable facts. Their medical counsel often seems more dangerous than helpful. And many ancient writings are mere fragments of what they once were; parts have been lost or badly damaged.

The Bible, though, stands out as different. The writing of it began over 35 centuries ago, yet the Bible is intact. And though it has been attacked again and again over the centuries—burned, banned, and belittled—its statements have weathered every onslaught. Far from being proved obsolete in the face of new knowledge, the Bible says much that shows amazing foresight.—See the box “Outdated or Ahead of Its Time?”



VALUES WE NEED TODAY

You may wonder, though, ‘Are Bible teachings really practical for our modern day?’ To answer, ask yourself: ‘What are the worst problems facing mankind today? Which ones are the most terrifying?’ Perhaps you think of warfare, pollution, crime, or corruption. Now consider some principles that the Bible teaches. As you do, ask yourself, ‘If people lived by these values, would the world be a better place?’

LOVE OF PEACE

“Happy are the peacemakers, since they will be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9) “If possible, as far as it depends on you, be peaceable with all men.”—Romans 12:18.

MERCY, FORGIVENESS

“Happy are the merciful, since they will be shown mercy.” (Matthew 5:7) “Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely even if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Just as Jehovah* freely forgave you, you must also do the same.”—Colossians 3:13.

* Jehovah is God’s name as revealed in the Bible.—Psalm 83:18.

RACIAL HARMONY

God “made out of one man every nation of men to dwell on the entire surface of the earth.” (Acts 17:26) “God is not partial, but in every nation the man who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”—Acts 10:34, 35.

RESPECT FOR THE EARTH

“Jehovah God took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to take care of it.” (Genesis 2:15) God will “bring to ruin those ruining the earth.”—Revelation 11:18.

HATRED OF GREED AND IMMORALITY

“Guard against every sort of greed, because even when a person has an abundance, his life does not result from the things he possesses.” (Luke 12:15) “Let sexual immorality and every sort of uncleanness or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as is proper for holy people.”—Ephesians 5:3.

HONESTY, HARD WORK

“We wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things.” (Hebrews 13:18) “Let the one who steals steal no more; rather, let him do hard work.”—Ephesians 4:28.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HELPING THOSE IN NEED

“Speak consolingly to those who are depressed, support the weak, be patient toward all.” (1 Thessalonians 5:14) “Look after orphans and widows in their tribulation.”—James 1:27.

The Bible does not merely list those values. In practical ways, it teaches us to value such principles and to apply them in our day-to-day life. If more people actually applied the teachings we have listed, would there not be a great impact on mankind’s worst problems? Really, then, Bible principles are more relevant and timely than ever! What, though, can Bible teachings do for you right now?

HOW BIBLE TEACHINGS CAN BENEFIT YOU NOW

The wisest of men once said: “Wisdom is vindicated by its results.” (Matthew 11:19, footnotes) Would you not agree? The real test of wisdom is how it works when you apply it. So you may reason: ‘If the Bible really is practical, should it not produce results in my life? How is it useful for the problems I face right now?’ Consider an example.

For Delphine,* life was busy, full, and rewarding. Suddenly, though, she suffered a series of tragic losses. Her teenage daughter died. Her mar-

* In this article and the three that follow, some names have been changed.

riage disintegrated. Her finances fell into chaos. She recalls: “I had no idea who I was anymore—no daughter, no husband, no home. I felt I was nothing—no identity, no strength, no thought of the future.”

Never before had Delphine seen so vividly the truth of these words: “The span of our life is 70 years, or 80 if one is especially strong. But they are filled with trouble and sorrow; they quickly pass by, and away we fly.”—Psalm 90:10.

Delphine turned to the Bible in her hour of need. What it did for her is remarkable. As the following three articles will show, many others have

OUTDATED OR AHEAD OF ITS TIME?

SCIENCE

THE BIBLE IS NOT A SCIENCE TEXTBOOK, YET IT CONTAINS STATEMENTS THAT WERE WAY AHEAD OF THEIR TIME. CONSIDER A FEW EXAMPLES.

• Did the physical universe have a beginning?

Leading scientists once felt strongly that the answer was no. Now they generally accept that there was a beginning to the universe. The Bible said that clearly all along.—Genesis 1:1.

• What is the shape of the earth?

In ancient times, many people thought that the earth was flat. In the fifth century B.C.E., Greek scientists suggested that it was a sphere. But long before that—in the eighth century B.C.E.—the Bible writer Isaiah referred to “the circle of the earth,” using a word that may also be rendered “sphere.” —Isaiah 40:22; footnote.

• Are the physical heavens subject to decay?

Greek scientist Aristotle, of the fourth century B.C.E., taught that decay happens only on the earth, while the starry heavens could never change or decay. That view prevailed for many centuries. But in the 19th century, scientists formulated the concept of entropy. It suggests that all matter, whether heavenly or earthly, tends to decay. One of the scientists who helped to advance this concept, Lord Kelvin, noted that the Bible says about heaven and earth: “Just like a garment they will all wear out.” (Psalm 102:25, 26) Kelvin believed, as the Bible teaches, that God could choose to prevent such decay

from destroying His creations. —Ecclesiastes 1:4.

• What holds up planets such as our earth?

Aristotle taught that all the heavenly bodies were encased in crystalline spheres, each one nested tightly within the next, with the earth innermost. By the 18th century C.E., scientists were accepting the idea that stars and planets might hang in a void. But in the book of Job, of the 15th century B.C.E., we read that the Creator is “suspending the earth upon nothing.”—Job 26:7.

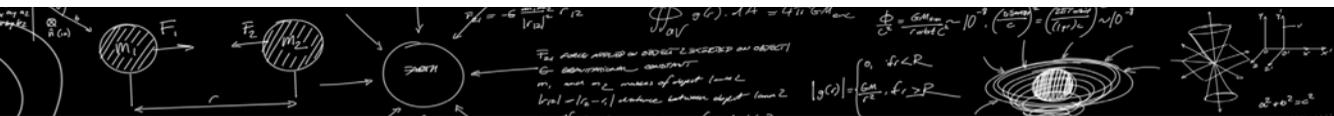
also found that the Bible has done wonders for them when they applied its counsel to the problems of life. They have come to feel that the Bible is like that monument described at the outset. It is quite unlike the countless books that grow old and obsolete. Is that because the Bible, in effect, is made of something different? Might it actually contain God's thoughts—and not merely man's? —1 Thessalonians 2:13.

Perhaps you too have found that life is short and full of problems. When problems threaten to overwhelm you, where do you turn for comfort, support, and reliable advice?

Let us consider three key ways in which the Bible can prove practical in your life. It can teach you how to

- 1** **avoid** problems where possible.
- 2** **resolve** difficulties when they arise.
- 3** **cope** successfully with situations you cannot change.

The following articles will discuss these three areas.



MEDICINE | THE BIBLE, THOUGH NOT A MEDICAL TEXTBOOK, CONTAINS SOME PRINCIPLES THAT REFLECT ADVANCED KNOWLEDGE OF HEALTH.

• **Isolating sick people.**

The Mosaic Law prescribed keeping people with leprosy separate from others. Not until the plagues of the Middle Ages did medical doctors learn to apply this principle, which is still deemed effective.—Leviticus, chapters 13 and 14.

• **Washing after touching a dead body.**

Until late in the 19th century, physicians often worked on corpses and then on living patients—without washing their hands in between. That practice caused many deaths. Yet, the Mosaic Law stated that anyone who touched a dead body was ceremonially unclean. It even directed that water be used for ceremonial cleansing in such cases.

Those religious practices surely had health benefits as well.—Numbers 19:11, 19.

• **Waste disposal.**

Each year, over half a million children die of diarrhea, largely because of exposure to human waste that is not disposed of properly. The Mosaic Law said that human waste should be buried, disposed of away from human habitation.—Deuteronomy 23:13.

• **Timing of circumcision.**

God's Law stipulated that a male child should be circumcised on the eighth day of life. (Leviticus 12:3) In newborn babies, the blood's ability to clot is understood to reach normal levels after the first

week. In Bible times, before advanced medical treatments were available, waiting for over a week before circumcision was a wise protection.

• **The link between emotional health and physical health.**

Medical researchers and scientists say that positive emotions such as joy, hope, gratitude, and a willingness to forgive have some beneficial effects on health. The Bible says: "A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit saps one's strength." —Proverbs 17:22.

1

Help to **Avoid** Problems



The Bible says that its counsel is inspired and “beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight.” (2 Timothy 3:16) Is that true? Consider how Biblical wisdom has helped people to avoid some of life’s hardest problems before they became entrenched.

MISUSE OF ALCOHOL

Delphine, mentioned in the preceding article, felt that her anxieties were pushing her toward overdrinking. The Bible does not condemn the moderate use of alcohol, but it says: “Do not be among those who drink too much wine.” (**Proverbs 23:20**) Misuse of alcohol has been linked to serious health problems, broken and damaged relationships, and millions of untimely deaths each year. Much of this trouble could be avoided if people followed the Bible’s wise advice.

Delphine did. She now says: “I realized that the alcohol was not solving my anxiety. I applied the wisdom of **Philippians 4:6, 7**, which says: ‘Do not be anxious over anything, but . . . let your petitions be made known to God.’ Each night when I felt my thoughts racing and anxiety rising, I petitioned Jehovah. I defined all my feelings, including anger, hurt, and despair, and I pleaded with him to help me find ways to feel more positive. In the morning, I made sure that I had truly let go of those feelings. That habit seemed to focus my mind on what I *had* rather than on what I did *not have*. I chose never to drink alcohol again. Because the peace that I found was so precious, I just could not risk losing it.”

The Bible's practical guidance can help us avoid some problems



IMMORALITY

Few problems cause as much heartbreak and misery. But Bible principles can help us avoid such problems by addressing some of the leading causes—for example, inappropriate flirting and pornography. “It was so easy to flirt,” says a young man named Samuel. “Sometimes I was not attracted to the other person, but I could tell that she liked me—and that made it entertaining to flirt.” Samuel found that he was accused of flirting so often—even when he did not intend to—that he finally decided to go ahead and flirt on purpose. But the habit bothered him. “It was harmful,” he now says, “because it develops very selfish tendencies.”

Samuel read an article for young people published on the website jw.org. And he thought about **Proverbs 20:11**, which says: “Even a child [or, “boy,” footnote] is known by his actions, whether his behavior is pure and right.” How did that help? Samuel realized that his flirting was neither pure nor right. He now says: “I also learned that a youth who flirts is developing qualities that make for being a bad marriage mate. I started thinking how my future wife would feel if she saw me flirting with another woman. That made me realize that the habit is not harmless. The fact that it’s easy doesn’t make it right.” Samuel changed.

Avoiding flirting has also helped him to avoid immorality.

Antonio was in even greater danger from immorality: He was addicted to pornography. Although he was married to a woman he dearly loved, he found himself giving in to that habit again and again. He says that thinking about **1 Peter 5:8** really helped him. It says: “Keep your senses, be watchful! Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone.” Antonio comments: “Pornographic images are all around us in this world, and those images can stick in the mind. That verse really helped me to think about the source of these temptations. I needed to make it a reflex to associate those dirty images with their despicable source. Now I know that only Jehovah can help me ‘keep my senses and be watchful’ so that I can fight off those attacks on my mind, my heart, and my marriage.” Antonio received the help he needed, and at last he has put his bad habit behind him. That, in turn, has helped him to avoid even worse troubles.

Clearly, the Bible provides practical advice that can help us avoid serious problems. But what about problems that have already taken root and prove to be persistent? Let us see how God’s Word can help us to resolve such difficult issues.

2

Help to Resolve Problems



Some of life's problems tend to persist, sometimes for years; they may take root before we are fully aware of them. Does the Bible give us the wisdom to resolve such persistent and frustrating problems? Consider some examples.

EXCESSIVE WORRY

Rosie says, "I got hung up on certain worries by making things worse in my mind or imagining the worst-case scenarios." What Bible verses helped? One of them is **Matthew 6:34**: "Never be anxious about the next day, for the next day will have its own anxieties. Each day has enough of its own troubles." Rosie now says that those words of Jesus helped her to stop worrying about what might happen tomorrow. She adds, "I had enough troubles as it was, without adding worries about situations that hadn't happened and probably wouldn't happen."

Yasmine too sensed her anxiety taking control over her. "I would cry a couple of days during the week, and I couldn't sleep some nights. I felt that negative thinking was eating me alive." What scripture helped? She refers to **1 Peter 5:7**: "Throw all your anxiety on [God], because he cares for you." Yasmine says: "As time went on, I kept praying to Jehovah, and he answered my prayers. I felt as if a big weight had been lifted off of my shoulders. My negative thinking does come back from time to time, but now I know how to handle it."

PROCRASTINATION

A young woman named Isabella says: “I think procrastination is genetic because my dad has it too. I put off important things in order to do nothing—just to relax or watch TV instead. It’s a harmful habit because it increases stress and causes a person to do a poor job.” A principle that helped her is reflected at **2 Timothy 2:15**, which says: “Do your utmost to present yourself approved to God, a workman with nothing to be ashamed of.” Says Isabella, “I didn’t want Jehovah to be ashamed of my work just because I procrastinated.” She has improved greatly.

Similarly, Kelsey comments: “I would have a project due and put it off till the last second. I would cry, lose sleep, and worry. It wasn’t good for me.” Kelsey found help at **Proverbs 13:16**: “The shrewd person acts with knowledge, but the fool exposes his own foolishness.” She explains what meditating on this scripture taught her: “It is wise to be practical and to plan ahead. Now I have a journal that I keep on my desk to schedule upcoming work, and this helps me to schedule myself, not leaving things till the last minute.”

LONELINESS

“My husband walked out on our marriage, leaving me with four young children,” relates Kirsten. What Scriptural principle came to her aid? **Proverbs 17:17** reads: “A true friend shows love at all times, and is a brother who is born for times of distress.” Kirsten reached out to others who serve Jehovah as she does. What did she find? “My friends rallied around me in so many ways! Some left groceries and flowers on my doorstep. Three times a small army of people helped my children and me to move from one house to another. One person helped me find a job. My friends were always there for me.”

Delphine, mentioned earlier, likewise struggled with loneliness. She recalls after all her losses: “I felt as if I were outside the store of life looking in on everybody else. I felt very lonely.” One scripture that helped her was **Psalms 68:6**: “God gives

those who are alone a home to dwell in.” She explains: “I knew that the verse could not just mean a home in a physical sense now. Rather, I came to understand that God offers us a spiritual home, a place of real safety that provides genuine connections and emotional attachment to others who love Jehovah. But I knew that I could not get closer to others until I first got closer to Jehovah. So **Psalms 37:4** helped with that: ‘Find exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will grant you the desires of your heart.’”

She concludes: “I realized that I needed to attach myself more firmly to Jehovah. He is the finest of the fine. Then I made a list of activities that I could enjoy with others, so that I could form connections with them that were based on spiritual values. I learned to see the good in others and to treat them as if that were all that I could see.”

Of course, friends who serve God are still imperfect. Jehovah’s Witnesses struggle with problems just as everyone else does. But Bible training motivates people to help others whenever possible. It is wise to make such friends. However, can Bible principles also help with problems that cannot be solved today, such as chronic health issues and grief?

Applying Bible
counsel can help you
find supportive friends

3

Help to Cope With Problems



There are problems that for now can neither be avoided nor resolved. For example, if you have lost a loved one in death or if you face a chronic illness, you may have no choice but to find ways to cope with your pain. Can the Bible help in such dire situations?

The Bible can help you find comfort even in the darkest times

CHRONIC ILLNESS

Rose says: “I have a genetic disorder that causes me severe and constant pain. My quality of life has plummeted.” One of her greatest concerns was that she was sometimes unable to focus her mind on her study of the Bible and spiritual matters. But she was greatly helped by Jesus’ words recorded at **Matthew 19:26**: “With God all things are possible.” Rose learned that there is more than one way to study. Because her pain made reading nearly impossible at times, she began listening to recordings of the Bible and Bible literature.* “Without those options,” she says, “I don’t know how I would have maintained my spirituality.”

When Rose is saddened over being unable to do what she once could, she finds comfort in the words recorded at **2 Corinthians 8:12**: “If the readiness is there first, it is especially acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what a person does not have.” Those words remind Rose that God is pleased with what she does, because she does all that she can within her limitations.

* Many such recordings are available on the website jw.org.

GRIEF

Delphine, mentioned earlier, recalls: “After my 18-year-old daughter died, the pain was so great that I did not believe that I would be able to continue living. Nothing would be the same.” She found great comfort, though, in the words of **Psalm 94:19**, wherein the psalmist said to God: “When anxieties overwhelmed me, you comforted and soothed me.” She says, “I prayed to Jehovah to help me find things to do that would help me soothe the pain.”

She threw herself into meaningful volunteer work. In time, she came to liken herself to a child’s crayon—even the broken ones are still useful for coloring. Similarly, though she felt broken, she learned that she could still help others. She recalls: “I suddenly found that when I used Bible principles and Scriptural ways of thinking to comfort my students, that was Jehovah’s way of

soothing and comforting me.” She made a list of Bible characters who went through periods of intense grief. “Without exception,” she found, “they were all people of prayer.” She also learned that “there can be no answers if your Bible is closed.”

Studying the Bible has taught Delphine something else—to focus on the future, not the past. The hope mentioned at **Acts 24:15** comforts her: “There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.” How sure is she that Jehovah will resurrect her daughter? Let Delphine answer: “I see my daughter in the future. Our next ‘date’ is already scheduled, as if it were on my Father’s calendar. I see us together in our garden as clearly as I saw and loved her the day she was born.”

HOW CAN GOD HELP US?

The Bible’s answer is clear. It states: “Jehovah is near to all those calling on him, to all who call on him in truth. He satisfies the desire of those who fear him; he hears their cry for help, and he rescues them.” (Psalm 145:18, 19) Is that not heartwarming? How, though, will God answer the prayers of people who sincerely look to him for guidance?

• BY GIVING US STRENGTH:

Problems can often discourage and drain us—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. (Proverbs 24:10) But Jehovah “gives power to the tired one and full might to those lacking strength.” (Isaiah 40:29) The apostle Paul, who endured serious trials, said: “For all things I have the strength through the one who gives me power.” (Philippians 4:13) Paul

was empowered by God’s holy spirit. You too can ask God to give you holy spirit.—Luke 11:13.

• BY GIVING US WISDOM:

What if you need help to understand and apply the Bible’s counsel? The disciple James writes: “If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching, and it will be given him.” (James 1:5) You can work in harmony with your prayers by reading the Bible and applying its teachings. (James 1:23-25) As you do, you will learn firsthand how wise its counsel is.

• BY GIVING US PEACE:

Even when you suffer deep anxiety, Jehovah can help you to feel calm. His Word says: “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 surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6, 7) Why not ask Jehovah to grant you peace?

What, though, if your problems are not quickly resolved? Do not conclude that God has forsaken you. Even if your problems persist, God can give you the courage and strength to endure. (1 Corinthians 10:13) The Bible also promises that the time will come when our problems will be resolved permanently!



The Bible and Your Future

IMAGINE you are walking along a dark path late one evening. Although the sun has long since set, you do not feel hopelessly lost, for you have in your hand a powerful flashlight. When you point it downward, you see clearly what is immediately in front of you. And when you point it forward, its piercing beam illuminates your path far into the distance.

In some ways, the Bible is like such a flashlight. As we considered in the preceding articles, God's Word can help us deal with what is immediately in front of us—the day-to-day problems that we all face in this uncertain world. But the Bible does more. It also provides an illuminating view of the future, enabling us to see and follow a path that leads to lasting happiness and contentment. (Psalm 119:105) How so?

Let us consider two ways in which the Bible gives us a practical hope for the future: **1** It helps us find purpose in life, and **2** it teaches us how to build an eternal friendship with our Creator.

1 PURPOSE IN LIFE

The Bible offers solid advice for dealing with our problems, yet it is far more than a mere self-help book. Rather than encouraging us to focus solely on personal concerns, the Bible teaches us to see ourselves as part of a bigger picture. Only then can our lives have real meaning.

Take, for example, this Bible principle: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” (Acts 20:35) Can you think of a time when you helped someone in need materially? Or perhaps when you gave of yourself by listening as a friend poured out his or her heart? Did you not feel a sense of fulfillment in helping to brighten someone else's day?

We find the greatest happiness when we give without expecting anything in return. One author noted: “It is virtually impossible to give yourself away without getting back more than you

give—provided you give away with no thought of any reward.” Yet, when we give of ourselves—especially to those who have no way of returning the favor—we *do* receive a reward. We become part of a bigger picture. Indeed, we are working hand in hand with the Creator himself, who views such acts of kindness as a loan made to him. (Proverbs 19:17) He greatly values what we do for the lowly, and he promises to repay us with nothing less than eternal life in a paradise earth—truly a thrilling hope for the future!—Psalm 37:29; Luke 14:12-14.*

Above all, the Bible teaches us that we can find real purpose in life by worshipping the true God, Jehovah. His Word encourages us to give him the praise, honor, and obedience he deserves. (Ecclesiastes 12:13; Revelation 4:11) When we do so, we accomplish something that is astounding to contemplate: We affect our Creator in a positive way. Indeed, he urges us: “Be wise . . . and make my heart rejoice.” (Proverbs 27:11) Just think—when we wisely make decisions based on the principles set out in the Bible, we bring joy to the heart of our loving heavenly Father. Why? Because he cares for us and wants us to benefit ourselves by following his guidance. (Isaiah 48:17, 18) Really, what greater purpose could we have than to worship the Sovereign of the universe and live in a way that brings joy to his heart?

2 FRIENDSHIP WITH OUR CREATOR

The Bible also teaches us to build a friendship with our Creator. “Draw close to God,” the Scriptures say, “and he will draw close to you.” (James 4:8) At times we may doubt whether it is truly possible to be friends with the almighty Creator. But the Bible assures us that if we “seek God,” we will “really find him,” for “he is not far off from each one of us.” (Acts 17:27) The Bible’s advice on becoming a friend of God is highly practical for our future. In what way?

* For more information about God’s promise of everlasting life in Paradise, see chapter 3 of the book *What Can the Bible Teach Us?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Consider: Try as we may, none of us on our own can escape the ultimate enemy—death. (1 Corinthians 15:26) However, God is eternal. He will never die, and he wants his friends to live forever as well. Using the following simple yet beautiful words, the Bible expresses what Jehovah wants for those seeking him: “May you enjoy life forever.”—Psalm 22:26.

How can you build such an eternal friendship with God? Keep learning about him through the pages of his Word, the Bible. (John 17:3; 2 Timothy 3:16) Seek his help to understand the Scriptures. The Bible assures us that if we sincerely “keep asking God” for wisdom, he will grant it to us.* (James 1:5) Finally, strive to apply what you learn, letting God’s Word serve as both “a lamp to [your] foot” and a “light for [your] path”—now and throughout eternity.—Psalm 119:105.

* Jehovah’s Witnesses offer a free Bible course that can help you grow in understanding of the Scriptures. To learn about this course, please see the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?* You can find it by going to jw.org, clicking the Search button, and entering the title.

God is eternal, and he wants his friends to live forever as well

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Can the Bible help you become God’s friend?

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE . . .

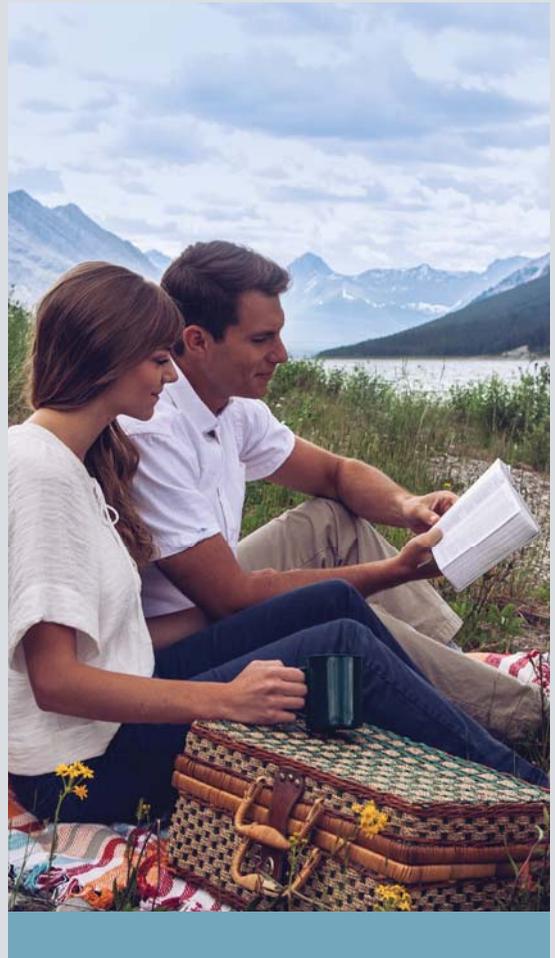
that they cannot be God’s friend because they feel unclean or sinful. Others say that God does not care about us. What do you think?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

God’s “close friendship is with the upright.” (Proverbs 3:32) If we obey God, we can become his friends.

WHAT ELSE CAN WE LEARN FROM THE BIBLE?

- God wants to be our Friend.—James 4:8.
- As our Friend, God is ready to help and forgive us.—Psalm 86:5.
- God’s friends love what he loves and hate what he hates.—Romans 12:9.



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What Can the Bible Teach Us?

For more information about how you can live in a way that pleases God, see chapter 12 of this book, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses. Also available at www.jw.org

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