

A photograph of a man with white hair and glasses, wearing a dark jacket over a light shirt, sitting on the edge of a hospital bed. A woman with dark hair, wearing a white hospital gown and a white headband, is lying in the bed, looking up at him. They are in a hospital room, with a doorway visible behind them. The room is dimly lit, with a strong light source from the doorway creating a bright glow and casting long shadows. The floor is dark and reflective, showing the silhouettes of the man and the bed. The walls are dark, and there are some medical equipment and a fire extinguisher visible in the background.

WHEN TRAGEDY STRIKES  
**HOW** YOU CAN COPE

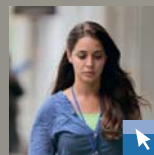


## When Tragedy Strikes

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## TEENAGERS



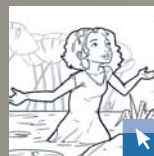
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- “How Can I Explain My Beliefs About Sex?”
- “What if People Are Gossiping About Me?”
- “How Can I Stop Procrastinating?”

Also watch the video *What Your Peers Say—Money*.

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)

## CHILDREN



Read illustrated Bible stories. Use the activity pages to help your children improve their knowledge of Bible characters and moral principles.

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > CHILDREN)

Vol. 95, No. 7 / Monthly / ENGLISH  
Printing Each Issue: 44,748,000 in 99 Languages

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

*Awake!* (ISSN 0005-237X) is published monthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Awake!* 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299.

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### UNITED STATES

In 2012, 14.5 percent of U.S. households—a total of 49 million people—were “uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough **food** to meet the needs of all their members” at some time during the year, according to Department of Agriculture statistics.

### SPAIN

A study of university students found that about 56 percent of women and 41 percent of men admitted to **binge drinking**, which this study defined as consuming at least eight standard drink units (for men) or six standard drink units (for women) in one sitting.



### PACIFIC OCEAN

Scientists who took samples at a depth of some 36,000 feet (11,000 m) in the Mariana Trench found that **bacteria and other microbes** flourish there—despite complete darkness, crushing pressure, and near-freezing temperatures. Previously, it had been thought that life at such depths would be scarce.



### UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

In an effort to combat increasing **obesity**, the authorities of Dubai recently offered residents one gram of gold, at that time worth approximately \$45 (U.S.), for every 2.2 pounds (1 kg) of body weight that they lost. To receive the gold, people had to register and then lose a minimum of 4.4 pounds (2 kg) during the month of Ramadan.





# WHEN TRAGEDY STRIKES

SOONER or later, almost everyone is hit by some type of tragedy. That includes people who seem to have everything.

## THE BIBLE SAYS:

“The swift do not always win the race, nor do the mighty win the battle, nor do the wise always have the food, nor do the intelligent always have the riches, nor do those with knowledge always have success, because time and unexpected events overtake them all.”

—Ecclesiastes 9:11.

The question, then, is not *whether* you will face adversity but how you will react when you *do*. For instance:

- What if you lost all your possessions in a natural disaster?
- What if you were diagnosed with a life-threatening illness?
- What if you lost a loved one in death?

Jehovah’s Witnesses, the publishers of this magazine, believe that the Bible can help you not only to cope when tragedy strikes but also to have a solid basis for hope. (Romans 15:4) Consider three experiences that illustrate how.





# LOSS OF POSSESSIONS

On Friday, March 11, 2011, a magnitude 9.0 earthquake struck Japan, claiming more than 15,000 lives and causing over \$200 billion (U.S.) in damage. On being warned of the impending tsunami, 32-year-old Kei found safety on higher ground. “The next morning, I went back home to collect what I could,” he says, “but everything had been washed out to sea, including my apartment. All that was left was the foundation.

“It took some time for me to grasp that I had lost not just individual items but my entire environment. It was all gone—my car; the computers I used for my work; the tables, chairs, and sofa I had used to entertain guests; my keyboard, guitar, ukulele, and flute; my equipment for working in watercolors, oils, and pastels; all my paintings and drawings.”

## COPING WITH TRAGEDY

- Try to focus on what you still have rather than on what you lost. The Bible says: “Even when a person has an abundance, his life does not result from the things he possesses.” (Luke 12:15) Kei recalls his situation: “At first,” he says, “I made a list of what I wanted, but this just reminded me of everything that had washed away. I decided to include on my list only the things that I really needed, and I updated it as my needs were cared for. That list helped me to reestablish my life.”
- Rather than become self-absorbed, use your experience to comfort others. “I received a lot of help from both public relief work and personal assistance, but as I grew accustomed to receiving, I began to lose my self-respect,” Kei says. “Then, I called to mind the Bible’s statement at Acts 20:35 that ‘there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.’ Since I was limited in what I could give materially, I set out to give words of encouragement to other victims of this disaster. Showing generosity in this way was a big help to me.”
- Pray to God for practical wisdom to deal with your circumstances. Kei trusted the Bible’s assurance that God will “pay attention to the prayer of the destitute.” (Psalm 102:17) You can do the same.

**Did you know?** The Bible foretells a time when no one will need to worry about loss as a result of a natural disaster.\*—Isaiah 65:21-23.

\* To learn what God’s purpose is for the earth, see chapter 3 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses. It is available online at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).



# LOSS OF HEALTH

Mabel, in Argentina, led an active life and worked as a physical-rehabilitation therapist. In 2007, she began to feel especially tired and to have severe headaches daily. “I went to several doctors and tried all kinds of medications,” she says, “but nothing helped.” Finally, Mabel had an MRI scan, which showed that she had a brain tumor. She says: “I was stunned! I couldn’t believe that I had been living with this enemy inside me.

“Still, I didn’t really understand how serious my situation was until after I had surgery. When I woke up in intensive care, I couldn’t move. All I could do was stare at the ceiling. Before the surgery I had been active and independent. Suddenly I could do nothing. My days in intensive care were filled with confusion and noise from medical equipment, emergency alarms, and moans from other patients. I felt as though I could breathe the pain and suffering in the air.

“Today, I have recuperated to a certain degree. I can walk without help and even go out by myself at times. But I have double vision and still lack muscle coordination.”

## COPING WITH TRAGEDY

- Maintain a positive viewpoint. At Proverbs 17:22, the Bible says: “A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit saps one’s strength.” Mabel recalls: “During my recovery, I faced the same challenges that my own patients had faced. The exercises were very painful, and at times I thought of giving up. I had to force myself to dismiss such negative thinking, knowing that the effort would eventually bring good results.”
- Build hope in order to endure. “From the Bible, I knew why tragedies occur,” says Mabel. “But I also knew that with each passing day, we are closer to the time when pain will be gone forever.”\*
- Recognize God’s concern for you as an individual. (1 Peter 5:7) Mabel recalls how this helped her: “When they took me in for surgery, I experienced the truth of Isaiah 41:10, where God says: ‘Do not be afraid, for I am with you.’ I felt an immense peace knowing that Jehovah God cared about what happened to me.”

**Did you know?** The Bible teaches that a time will come when mankind will no longer be plagued by health problems.—Isaiah 33:24; 35:5, 6.

\* For more information, see chapter 11 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* It is available online at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).



# LOSS OF A LOVED ONE

Ronaldo, in Brazil, was in a car accident that took the lives of five family members, including his mother and father. “I was in the hospital for two months before I was told that they had died in the crash,” he says.

“At first, I could not believe that they were gone. How could they *all* be dead? Once I realized that it was true, I was shocked. I had never felt such pain. In the days that followed, I felt that life was not worth living without them. I cried every day for months! I blamed myself for letting someone else drive the car. If only I had been driving, they might still be alive.

“Sixteen years have passed, and I have been able to get back to my routine of life. However, their tragic death has left a void in my heart that has yet to be filled.”

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This series of articles discusses **how you can cope with tragedy**. For Bible-based information on **the reasons for human suffering**, see the series of articles “*Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People?*” in the July 1, 2014, issue of our companion journal, *The Watchtower*.

## COPING WITH TRAGEDY

- Grieve over your loss. The Bible says that there is “a time to weep.” (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4) Ronaldo says: “Every time I felt like crying, I allowed myself to do so. Fighting back tears was futile anyway, and I felt relief afterward.” Of course, not everyone grieves in the same way. So if you do *not* outwardly display sorrow, this does not mean that you are suppressing your emotions or that you should force tears.
- Avoid isolating yourself. (Proverbs 18:1) “I tried not to give in to the urge to remain socially isolated,” says Ronaldo. “People visited me, and I welcomed them. I also poured out my feelings to my wife and close friends.”
- Remain calm if someone says painful words. These might include expressions such as “It was for the best.” Ronaldo recalls, “Some comments that were meant to comfort me had the opposite effect.” Rather than dwelling on sayings that hurt, follow the Bible’s wise advice: “Do not take to heart every word that people say.”—Ecclesiastes 7:21.
- Learn the truth about the condition of the dead. Ronaldo says: “At Ecclesiastes 9:5, the Bible shows that the dead are not suffering, and that fact gives me an inner peace. The Bible also teaches that there is going to be a resurrection and that those who are dead will be brought back to life. So I think of the loved ones I have lost in death as if they were away on a trip.”—Acts 24:15.

**Did you know?** The Bible promises a time when God “will swallow up death forever.”\*—Isaiah 25:8. ■

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\* For more information, see chapter 7 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* It is available online at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org).



# How to Show Texting Manners



## THE CHALLENGE

You are talking face-to-face with a friend when you receive a text message. What should you do?

**A:** Read the text message while still talking to your friend.

**B:** Say “excuse me” to your friend and read the text message.

**C:** Ignore the text message and keep talking to your friend.

Does it matter which option you choose? The answer is yes!

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Texting one friend while talking to another is like playing your favorite sport without adhering to the rules of the game. ‘But these are my *friends*,’ you might say. All the more reason to be mannerly. Not that you have to become straitlaced and formal. But here is a fact of life: *If you are unmannerly with your friends, sooner or later they will no longer be your friends.*

Why is that so? Because people do not like to be treated rudely. A young woman named Beth\* says, “It’s annoying when I’m talking to a friend who keeps checking her phone as if she’s waiting for something better to happen!” How long do you think Beth will tolerate having a friend like that?

Considering your cell-phone manners, look back at the scenario under “The Challenge.” Which option seems best to you? Likely, you realize that Option **A** is unmannerly. But what about Options **B** and **C**? Is it rude for you to interrupt a conversation just to check a text message? Or is it rude for you to ignore a text message just to continue a conversation?

As you can see, manners can get complicated. But the Bible can help. It says: “Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them.” (Luke 6:31) You can apply that advice to texting. How?

\* Some names in this article have been changed.





## WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Text only at appropriate times.** “Sometimes I receive a text message really late at night,” says a young man named Richard. “It’s not even for anything important, and it disturbs my sleep!” Ask yourself, ‘Do I text people at times when they might be resting?’—*Bible principle: Ecclesiastes 3:1.*

**Check your tone.** Communication is carried by words, voice inflection, facial expression, and body language. Unfortunately, most of those elements are missing when you text. So how can you compensate? “Use common courtesy,” suggests a young woman named Jasmine. “Ask, ‘How are you?’ and use words like ‘please’ and ‘thank you.’”—*Bible principle: Colossians 4:6.*

**Be discerning.** Look again at the scenario under “The Challenge.” If you are expecting an important message, it might be necessary to excuse yourself from a conversation. Often, though, the message can wait. “Your phone will still be there when your friend has finished talking,” says 17-year-old Amy, “but your friend may not be there when you finish texting.” You can use similar discernment when at a gathering. “Don’t text the whole time,” says 18-year-old Jane. “That tells people, ‘I don’t care about your company; I’d rather be somewhere else.’”

**Think before you hit the send button.** Might your text message be misunderstood? Would emoticons help convey the right feeling? “If you’re joking about something, put a smiley face there,” says 21-year-old Amber. “People get their feelings hurt—and fights can even start—because they take a lighthearted remark to be serious.”—*Bible principle: Proverbs 12:18.*

Clearly, your cell-phone manners really matter!

**To think about:** Good manners are based on love. How is that quality displayed? The Bible states: “Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous. It does not brag, does not get puffed up, does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked.” (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5) Which aspect of love do you need to work on? ■

## KEY SCRIPTURES

“There is an appointed time for everything.”—*Ecclesiastes 3:1.*

“Let your words always be gracious, seasoned with salt.”—*Colossians 4:6.*

“Thoughtless speech is like the stabs of a sword.”—*Proverbs 12:18.*



ELENA

“Young people tend to be risqué in their texts, thinking that they aren’t actually saying the words. Really, off-color language shouldn’t be part of any form of conversation—texting or otherwise.”



EVAN

“Since you’re not right in front of the person you’re texting, you might let your guard down and say something hurtful. If you wouldn’t say it in person, don’t say it in a text.”



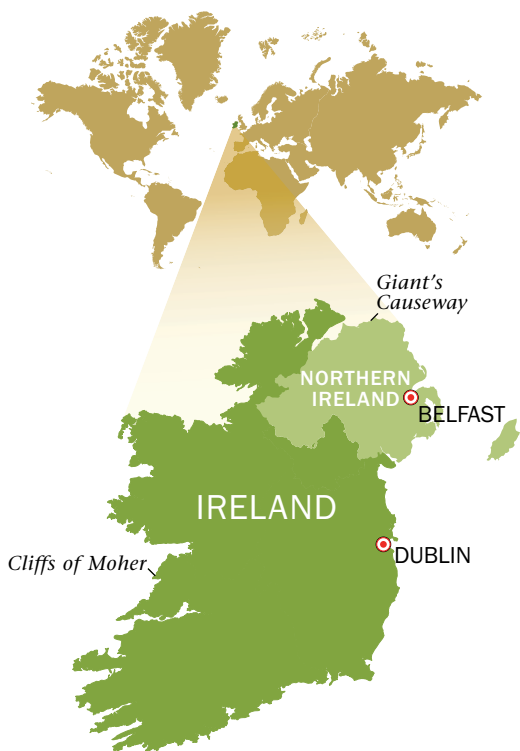
## A Visit to Ireland

THE “Emerald Isle” comprises two countries: the larger is the independent Republic of Ireland, and the smaller is Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom.

Ireland is called the Emerald Isle because its abundant rainfall results in a vivid-green countryside. Scenic lakes and rivers together with coastal highlands and rolling hills add to its natural beauty.

The Irish people have endured much hardship. For example, some estimate that from about 1845 to 1851, approximately one million people died of starvation and disease when blight ruined the potato crops. To escape crippling poverty, many emigrated to countries such as Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States. Today, some 35 million Americans trace their ancestry to Ireland.

The Irish are known for being warmhearted and hospitable. Favorite pastimes include horseback riding and team sports, such as cricket, rugby, soccer (which they call football), and Gaelic football (which is similar to soccer). Women in particular enjoy a team sport called camogie, which is similar to field hockey.





A thatched-roof cottage



Giant's Causeway



An Irish band

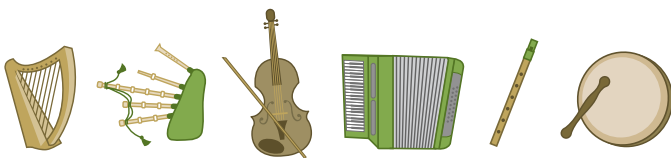


Cliffs of Moher

The people of Ireland also take delight in conversation, and they love music. Irish step dance is famous worldwide. Dancers keep their upper body rigid while performing quick and precise movements with their feet.

Jehovah's Witnesses have been in Ireland for over a hundred years. Currently, more than 6,000 Witnesses live there and are active in teaching the Bible. ■

Traditional Irish music uses instruments such as those shown below, from left to right: the Celtic harp, the Irish bagpipes, the fiddle, the accordion, the tin whistle, and the bodhran (drum)



## FAST FACTS

**Population:** About 4.5 million in the Republic; about 1.8 million in Northern Ireland

**Capitals:** Dublin in the Republic; Belfast in Northern Ireland

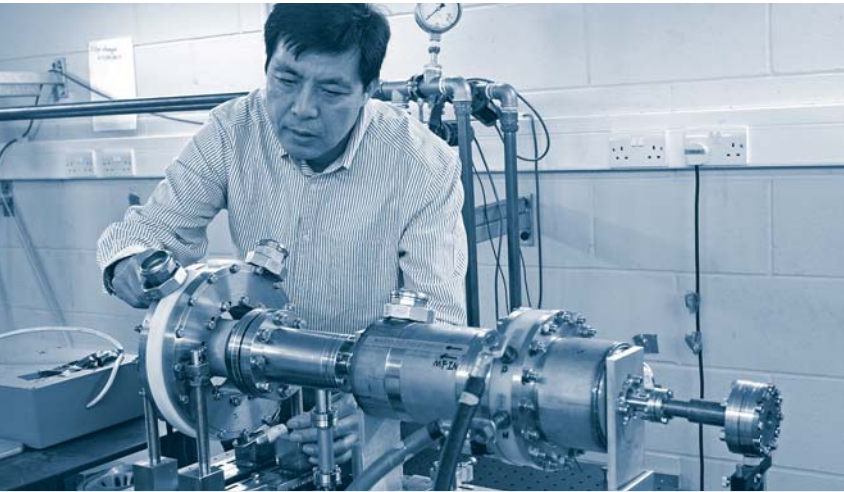
**Languages:** Irish and English

**Climate:** Temperate with frequent rain showers

**Main religions:** Mostly Catholic in the Republic; Protestant and Catholic in Northern Ireland

**DID YOU KNOW?** The Giant's Causeway, on the northern coast of Northern Ireland, consists of thousands of basalt stone pillars that were formed when ancient lava flows cooled on meeting the sea.





## An **Experimental Physicist** Explains His Faith

WENLONG HE first studied physics in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China. He helps edit an international journal of technology and has had dozens of papers published in scientific literature. At present, Wenlong He works for Scotland's University of Strathclyde. As a youth, he believed in evolution, but later he concluded that life was created. *Awake!* asked him about his faith.

### **Tell us about your background.**

I was born in 1963 and grew up in China, in a village south of the Yangtze River in Jiangsu Province. It is a subtropical area famous for its food production, so it is often called the land of rice and fish. As a child, I used to wonder: 'Why does nature provide so many tasty foods? Did they come

about by chance? Which came first—the chicken or the egg?' Atheism is predominant in China, so at school I was taught about evolution.

### **What about your family?**

My parents were atheists. My mother did farmwork, while my father worked as an architect and established a construction company. I'm the el-

dest of their five sons. Sadly, two of my brothers died young. That caused me much grief, and I wondered: 'Why do people die? Will I ever see my brothers again?'

### **Why did you study science?**

I wanted to study physics because I was intrigued by the natural world and I thought physics might answer the questions that had intrigued me since childhood.

### **What is your field of research?**

I explore ways of accelerating charged particles to speeds close to the speed of light. I do this to study the structure of atoms. I also investigate



## As a physicist, my job is to understand nature. So I decided to give the facts some careful thought

how to generate high-power radiation with a frequency between that of microwave and infrared radiation. Although my research has commercial value, it is also linked to efforts to understand how the universe began.

### How did you become interested in the Bible?

In 1998, two of Jehovah's Witnesses visited my home. They offered to show me the Bible's answers to my questions. My wife, Huabi, who is also a research scientist, joined us. We had never seen a Bible before, but we were impressed by its practical advice. We noticed how the Witness couple who visited us benefited by applying Bible principles. They were happy and enjoyed an uncomplicated way of life. But what the Bible says about God set me to wondering again whether the universe could have been created. As a physicist, my job is to understand nature. So I decided to give the facts some careful thought.

### What facts did you consider?

First, I knew that a closed system cannot become more organized or remain organized

unless acted upon by an external agent. That is the second law of thermodynamics. Since the universe and life on earth are highly ordered, I concluded that they must be products of an external agent, a Creator. The second fact was that the universe and the earth seem to be specifically designed to support life.

### What evidence of design did you see?

Practically all life on earth depends on energy from the sun. This energy travels through space as radiation. It comes to earth in a vast spectrum of wavelengths. The shortest are the lethal gamma rays. Then come X-rays, ultraviolet rays, visible light, infrared, microwaves, and the longest of all, radio waves. Remarkably, our atmosphere blocks much harmful radiation while allowing other needed radiation to reach the earth's surface.

### Why did that fact impress you?

I was intrigued by the introduction to the Bible's creation account and its reference to light. It states: "God said: 'Let there be light.' Then there was light."<sup>1</sup> Only a very

narrow band of the vast spectrum of solar radiation is visible light, but light is vital for life. Plants need it to produce food, and we need light to see. The atmosphere's special transparency to light cannot be a coincidence. Even more remarkable is the tiny amount of ultraviolet light that reaches the earth's surface.

### Why is that significant?

Some ultraviolet radiation is critical. We need a small amount of it on our skin to produce vitamin D, which is vital for bone health and evidently for protection from cancer and other diseases. However, too much of this particular radiation causes skin cancer and eye cataracts. In its natural state, the atmosphere allows only a tiny amount of this ultraviolet radiation to reach the earth's surface—and it is just the right amount. For me, that is evidence that someone designed the earth to sustain life.

Gradually Huabi and I became convinced that there is a Creator and that he inspired the Bible. In 2005, we became Jehovah's Witnesses, and now we share in teaching the Bible to others. ■

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1. Genesis 1:3.



# RELIGION

## Why are there so many religions?

*“You let go of the commandment of God and cling to the tradition of men.”—Mark 7:8.*

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS** People have an innate “spiritual need” that they can fill by worshipping God. (Matthew 5:3) In trying to satisfy that need, people have created many religions that are based on the ideas of humans rather than those of God.

For instance, the Bible says about members of one first-century religious group: “They have a zeal for God, but not according to accurate knowledge. For because of not knowing the righteousness of God but seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.” (Romans 10:2, 3) Likewise today, a large number of religions exist that “teach commands of men as doctrines.”—Mark 7:7.

True religion is a way of life, not just ritual or formality



## Is it necessary to belong to a religion?

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS** Hebrews 10:25 uses the phrase “not forsaking our meeting together.” Those words show that God wants people to gather as an organized group for worship. But would each worshipper have his or her own interpretation of who God is and what he requires? No. The Bible says that those who worship in a way that God approves “should all speak in agreement” and “be completely united in the same mind and in the same line of thought.” (1 Corinthians 1:10) They would be organized into congregations and would “have love for the whole association of brothers” worldwide. (1 Peter 2:17; 1 Corinthians 11:16) Such united and organized worship is necessary to please God.

*“Let us consider one another so as to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking our meeting together.”—Hebrews 10:24, 25.*

## Can true religion be identified?

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS** Illustrating how to identify those who practice true religion, the Bible says: “By their fruits you will recognize them. Never do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, do they?” (Matthew 7:16) You need not be a botanist to distinguish a fig tree from a thistle; likewise, you need not be an expert on religion to tell the true from the false. What are some of the fruits, or identifying features, of true religion?

- True religion teaches the truth from God’s Word, the Bible. (John 4:24; 17:17) It is not based on human philosophies.
- True religion helps people get to know God, including knowing his name, Jehovah.—John 17:3, 6.
- True religion focuses attention on God’s Kingdom, not man’s governments, as the only hope for mankind.—Matthew 10:7; 24:14.
- True religion promotes unselfish love. (John 13:35) It teaches people to respect all ethnic groups, to use their time and resources to help others, and to avoid sharing in the wars of the nations.—Micah 4:1-4.
- True religion is a way of life, not just ritual or formality. Its members practice what they preach.—Romans 2:21; 1 John 3:18.

Jehovah’s Witnesses, the publishers of this magazine, strive to honor God in their speech and conduct. Why not attend a meeting at a Kingdom Hall and see for yourself? ■

*“By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves.”  
—John 13:35.*

To find the meeting times and location of a Kingdom Hall near you, visit our Web site, [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org). Look under ABOUT US > MEETINGS.



## The Gastric Brooding Frog's Reproductive System

THE Australian gastric brooding frog, thought to be extinct since 2002, had a bizarre means of reproduction. The female swallowed her fertilized eggs and incubated her young in her stomach for about six weeks. Her babies later emerged from her mouth as fully developed frogs.

To keep from digesting her eggs, it was necessary that the mother frog not only stop eating but also stop producing stomach acid. Evidently, chemicals released by the eggs and hatchlings inhibited the production of acid.

The mother would brood about two dozen eggs. By the time she gave birth, her young could make up almost 40 percent of her total body weight. This would be like a woman who weighed 150 pounds (68 kg) before she became pregnant carrying 24 babies weighing four pounds (1.8 kg) each! The young frogs stretched the mother's stomach to the point that it completely compressed her lungs, forcing her to breathe through her skin.

The baby frogs would normally emerge over a period of days as they became

ready. If the mother sensed danger, though, she would give birth by vomiting them out. Researchers once observed a female expel six young frogs together, shooting them about 40 inches (1 m) in the air.

If, as some claim, its reproductive system evolved, the gastric brooding frog would have had to make vast changes to both its physical makeup and its behavior all at once. "It is inconceivable to contemplate a slow and progressive change in its reproductive biology," wrote scientist and evolutionist Michael J. Tyler. "The habit is totally effective or it fails completely." The only plausible explanation, Tyler says, is "a single, huge, quantum step." Some would say that such a quantum step is called creation.\*

**What do you think?** Did the reproductive system of the gastric brooding frog come about by evolution? Or was it designed? ■

\* In his book *Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin stated: "Natural selection acts only by taking advantage of slight successive variations; she can never take a . . . leap."

