



## WERE YOU ONCE ASSOCIATED WITH JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION?

Watchtower Magazine - Jan 15, 1988; pp 21-23: *The young man felt ashamed and deeply dejected. His clothes, tattered and torn, bore signs of once having been fashionable attire. Now they left no doubt that he had fallen upon hard times. As his mind drifted back to his distant homeland, he began to feel a deep revulsion for the debauched life he had been living...His empty stomach added to his misery, and he felt homesick. Why, even his father's servants back home were far better off than he was! Oh how he would love to be in their shoes....Like the prodigal son, have you left your home? Have you drifted away from your Father Jehovah, and his organization? Do you now also desire to "come home?"*

### **A Former Jehovah's Witness Responds:**

Regarding the article you sent (enclosed): I appreciate your concern, however I am more than a little offended by the inference that I am, "ashamed, dejected, fallen upon hard times" like the prodigal son, simply because I am a former member of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The article makes it sound like anyone who has chosen to no longer be a Witness is destined to be a down-and-out person who can never achieve anything resembling success without "Jehovah's Organization."

The truth is quite the contrary. Since leaving my Witness home, I have gone on to better myself through therapy, college, hard work, and spiritual enlightenment. I have obtained a degree, helped others in true service work, held steady employment, and maintained a happy marriage. I have found a healthy and happy relationship with God.

I find that God's will for me is to be kind to all living creatures, leave the world better than I found it, never judge another human, and never attempt to change another person's will or spiritual path. Yet because I do not worship the exact same way as my JW mother, aunt and uncle, for 25 years they have:

- \* Treated me like a stranger,
- \* Excluded me from even non-Witness family funerals,
- \* Excluded me from family photos at family funerals and functions,
- \* Refused to speak to me even at family functions,
- \* Remained absent at my graduation, wedding, and other milestones in my life,
- \* Refused to get to know me as an adult or acknowledge my growth and successes.

Is this Christian love? Is this what God has in mind? I sincerely doubt it! It not only causes me pain, but it causes me to be *less* likely, not more, to return to "Jehovah's organization."

Please do not assume that former Jehovah's Witnesses all have hard-luck stories. Some of us are enjoying very happy, healthy, and successful lives.