

Q How Did Jehovah's Witnesses Begin?

The Watchtower Claims...

Apostasy and Restoration

Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Christianity fell into general apostasy under Emperor Constantine in the 4th century AD. To restore pure worship in the last days, God appointed Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916), who established the Watchtower organization to provide spiritual truth for Jehovah's true worshipers through literature such as *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

Adventist Influence

In the 1870s Russell rejected the concept of eternal torment and joined a group of "Second Adventists" who taught that the wicked do not suffer in hell, but cease to exist when they die. In 1879 Russell split from the Adventists and began publishing *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, incorporating many Adventist beliefs such as rejection the Trinity, eternal punishment, and the immortality of the soul. Russell also declared that Christ's "invisible presence" (not physical return) began in 1874 and would end human government and restore paradise to earth by 1914.

You Should Also Know...

Troublesome Teachings

- Russell shifted the date for the end of the world from 1914 to 1915, then to 1918.
- Early Watchtower publications claimed that the Great Pyramid in Giza, Egypt, foretold dates for the end of the world, based on the lengths of its passageways. When these dates failed, the measurements were lengthened to accommodate new dates.
- Russell's successor was "Judge" Joseph Rutherford (1869–1942). He moved the date for the world's end to 1925, proclaimed that "Millions Now Living Will

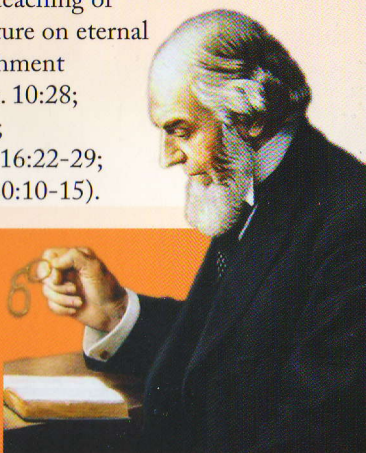
A The Bible Teaches...

No General Apostasy

The Bible warns that in the last days some will depart from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1), but nowhere does it indicate that true Christianity would almost entirely fall away. Instead, Jesus promised that the "gates of hell" would never "overpower" his church (Matt. 16:18). The apostle Paul also proclaimed that God would receive glory in His church "throughout all generations" (Eph. 3:21).

Russell and the Bible

Scripture warns of a time when people "will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires" (2 Tim. 4:3). Russell did this when he rejected the clear teaching of Scripture on eternal punishment (Matt. 10:28; 25:46; Luke 16:22–29; Rev. 20:10–15).



Charles Taze Russell, founder

Never Die!" and built a house in San Diego for the anticipated return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other "ancient worthies." • Rutherford taught that Jehovah "governs his universe" from Alcyone (a star system in the Pleiades cluster) and that black skin is a sign of the biblical curse on Cain.

2 Q Is God's True Name Really "Jehovah"?

The Watchtower Claims...

God's Personal Name

Calling God by His personal name—"Jehovah"—is of utmost importance. In the Watchtower's *New World Translation*, Psalm 83:18 reads: "That people may know that You, whose name is Jehovah, You alone are the Most High over all the earth." God's true followers can be identified by their use of "Jehovah" in their prayers, congregational singing, preaching, and Bible study. (Many Witnesses believe that if "Jehovah" is not invoked in prayer, the prayer may go to some other "god.")

God's Name in Scripture

Where nearly all other Bibles have "LORD" for God's name in the Old Testament, the *New World Translation* (NWT) renders it "Jehovah"—and even "restores" the divine name to the New Testament. This is evidence of the Watchtower's superiority to apostate Christendom. Proverbs 30:6 and Revelation 22:18–19 warn about those who would "add" or "take away" from God's Word; thus, Bibles that take away God's name by inserting "LORD" where it should say "Jehovah" are not trustworthy.



The Tetragrammaton, God's holy name as written in Hebrew

You Should Also Know...

Pronouncing the Name

The original, ancient manuscripts of the Old Testament were written in Hebrew—all in consonants, with no vowels. Later, when scholars added vowel points (markings to indicate pronunciation) to the Hebrew text, no one could be sure what vowels to put into God's name, which is transliterated in English as "YHWH." For centuries, when Scripture was read aloud by the Jews their custom has been to keep God's name holy by saying "Adonai" (Lord) instead of pronouncing it. So, scholars chose to

A The Bible Teaches...

"Father" or "Jehovah"?

Though the Jehovah's Witnesses insist on calling God "Jehovah" in prayer, in the Lord's Prayer Jesus tells us to address God as "Father" (Matt. 6:9–13). (The name "Jehovah" does not appear in the Lord's Prayer, even in the NWT.) For Jesus, sanctifying God's name has more to do with honoring what it stands for than with pronouncing His name. He also shows that His disciples are now "adopted" into God's family. As "sons" of God they now have the right to call God "Father," whereas before they could only refer to Him by His formal titles or name.

"Jehovah" in the New Testament

The Watchtower may be justified in rendering God's name as "Jehovah" in its version of the Old Testament, but not in inserting it 237 times in the New Testament. Of the 5,000 Greek manuscripts we possess today of the New Testament, not a single one contains God's full name. (The expression "Hallelujah" in Revelation 19:1–6 contains a shortened form of the name, "Jah.") In this respect, the NWT is guilty of adding to God's Word by inserting His name where it doesn't belong in the text. By inserting "Jehovah" where there is no evidence that the New Testament writers used God's name, the *New World Translation* distorts Jesus' identity by creating an artificial distinction between Him and Jehovah God.

insert the vowel points of "Adonai" (Lord) into "YHWH," rendering it "YaHoWaH" or "Jehovah."

3

Is the Trinity Really a Pagan Doctrine?

The Watchtower Claims...

Worshiping Three Gods

Christendom's idea of three persons in one God is really a pagan doctrine, comparable to the triadic "gods" of Babylonian and Egyptian mythology. There is no biblical or ancient church basis for the Trinity doctrine, and no such term appears in the Bible. Instead, the Father (Jehovah) and His Son (Jesus) are two separate "gods"—Jesus is an inferior "god" serving under Jehovah (who is the "only true God"). The holy spirit is God's "invisible active force," comparable to radio waves or electricity.

You Should Also Know...

Misconception of the Trinity

The "Trinity" is the historic Christian view that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three distinct persons revealed in one God. Many people, including the Witnesses, mistakenly believe that in the Trinity, Jesus and the Father are somehow the same person. Pointing to biblical passages that speak of Christ's distinction from the Father and His submission to the will of the Father, they proclaim that the Trinity doctrine contradicts Scripture.

The Trinity in History

The Watchtower Society claims that ancient Christian leaders rejected the Trinity; however, this is not true. For example, in its pamphlet *Should You Believe in the Trinity?* the Watchtower claims that Clement of Alexandria considered Jesus "not equal" to the Father. Yet Clement actually praised Jesus as "the Divine Word, He that is truly most manifest Deity, He that is made equal to the Lord of the universe." He further explained: "I understand nothing else than the Holy Trinity to be meant; for the third is the Holy Spirit, and the Son is the second,

The Bible Teaches...

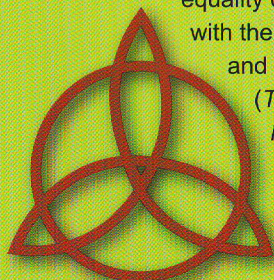
The Trinity in Scripture

Evidence of God's tri-unity is seen throughout Scripture. The Father (1 Pet. 1:2), Son (John 1:1; 20:28), and Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4) are each called "God." Yet, they operate distinctly from one another, indicating personhood. Given the emphatic declaration that there is only one true God (for example, Deut. 6:4, John 17:3), we conclude that this "one God" exists in three unique Persons. Many passages ascribe divine attributes to all three Persons or list the three together (as in the words used for baptism in Matthew 28:19).

Answering Objections

Most objections focus on the "subjection" of the Son to the will of the Father and Jesus' statement that the Father is "greater" than He (John 14:28). Phil. 2:5-11 explains how Christ subjected Himself in taking on human nature to redeem mankind. While Jesus was on earth, the Father was in a "greater" position than He, but position doesn't denote an inferior nature.

by whom all things were made according to the will of the Father....the Word itself, that is, the Son of God, who being, by equality of substance, one with the Father, is eternal and uncreated" (*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2, pp. 202, 468, 574).



The triquetra, an ancient symbol representing the Trinity

4

Is Jesus Christ God?

The Watchtower Claims...

Jesus = Michael the Archangel

Jesus began his existence as Michael the Archangel (whose name means "Who is like God?"). He was the first one created and used by Jehovah God to create everything else. Since Satan (a created angel) is called "god" at 2 Corinthians 4:4, we may also regard Jehovah's spirit Son, Jesus, as a "god."

Earth and Beyond

When Jesus came to earth, He ceased to exist as Michael and became merely a perfect human. At death, Jesus' human body was "disposed" of by God's power, and Michael rose from the dead as the "resurrected Jesus Christ." Since angels are invisible, Jesus fabricated physical bodies resembling His original body to convince His disciples that He had risen from the dead. Since 1914, when Jesus' "invisible presence" on earth began, He has been reigning from heaven, awaiting the future battle of Armageddon in which He will rid the earth of human governments and set up "Paradise" under "Jehovah's Kingdom government arrangement."



The Archangel Michael, mosaic

You Should Also Know...

The Only True God

Does Satan's title "god of this world" prove that Jesus is "a god" like Satan? No! Paul clarifies the matter about other "gods" mentioned in Scripture when he declares that "even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, yet for us there is *but* one God, the Father... and one Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 8:5-6). Since there is only one true God, all other "so-called gods" fall under the "false god" category. The Bible calls Satan "god of

The Bible Teaches...

Jesus Is God

Jesus is the one true God who "is the same, yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:7-8). Coming to earth, Jesus added human nature to His divine person and is forever the God-Man (Acts 17:31; 1 Tim. 2:5). He never ceased being God (Phil. 2:5-11), nor did He cease being human when He rose from the dead (Luke 24:39; John 2:19-22). One day "every eye will see Him" physically return to earth (Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:30) in the same manner that He visibly ascended into heaven (Acts 1:9-11).

Jesus Isn't Michael

The Watchtower's attempts to link Michael and Jesus are not supported by scripture; the verses used never clearly identify Jesus as Michael the Archangel. Hebrews 1 and 2 present Jesus as greater than the angels. Jude 9 states that Michael the Archangel did not have authority to rebuke Satan, yet Jesus did on a number of occasions (for example, Matt. 16:23).

this world" because the deceived world worships him as such, but he is a false "god" and can save no one. In the same way,

Jesus is either the one true God or He is a false "god."

"...And we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John 5:20).

"For in Him [Jesus] all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form" (Col. 2:9).

5

Is the Holy Spirit Just God's "Active Force"?

The Watchtower Claims...

An "Active Force"

The holy spirit is an impersonal "active force" which emanates from Jehovah to perform assorted supernatural operations. Since the holy spirit is said to "dwell" within believers, it never appears as a person in Scripture.



The Bible Teaches...

A Real Person

Throughout Scripture, qualities of personhood are attributed to the Holy Spirit. He is seen as one who testifies (John 15:26), intercedes (Rom. 8:26), teaches (John 14:26), and guides believers (Rom. 8:14). He has a mind (Rom. 8:27) and a will (1 Cor. 12:11). He can be grieved

(Eph. 4:30), lied to (Acts 5:3), blasphemed (Matt. 12:31), and tested (Acts 5:9). Just as demon spirits of Jesus' day retained their personhood while entering in and dwelling within people (Luke 8:27-30), so the Holy Spirit is no less a person because He can dwell within believers (Eph. 5:18).

Personification or Personhood?

When faced with verses that attribute personality to the Holy Spirit, Jehovah's Witnesses explain them by claiming that they are merely "personifications" of abstract qualities like wisdom, which is personified in the book of Proverbs. However, wisdom is personified in highly poetic passages in Proverbs, whereas the Holy Spirit is attributed personality in various non-poetic contexts (historical narratives, sermons, and epistles). There is simply no comparison between the personification of inanimate objects or abstract qualities in Scripture and the attributions of personal characteristics to the Holy Spirit.

You Should Also Know...

The Holy Spirit Is God

Since Jehovah's Witnesses view the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force, they also deny that He is God. But in Acts 5:3-4, Scripture proclaims the Holy Spirit is God when Ananias lies to the Holy Spirit and is told, "You have not lied to men but to God." Second Corinthians 3:17 declares that "the Lord is the Spirit." Acts 28:25-27 reveals the Holy Spirit as the Lord God of Isaiah 6:8-10.

The Spirit Taken Away?

Scripture proclaims that the Holy Spirit leads "all" who are adopted as children of God (Rom. 8:14-15). Today, most Jehovah's Witnesses would be surprised to learn that on pp. 216-217 of the 1939 Watchtower book *Salvation*, the Society proclaimed that "In the year 1918... the holy spirit that had been the guide of God's people, having performed its function, was taken away." The Watchtower no longer teaches that the Holy Spirit has left the earth, but they now claim that only people who make up a special group of 144,000 are able to be "spirit anointed" and adopted into God's family.

6

Will Only 144,000 People Go to Heaven?

The Watchtower Claims...

Two Classes of Christians

The 144,000 Christians who were living between Pentecost (c. AD 30) and 1935, called the "anointed class" or "little flock," will live in Heaven as spirits forever. Virtually everyone who became a Jehovah's Witness after 1935, along with those who never heard of Christ from all ages but were not wicked, are the "other sheep" and will have a chance to live forever as human beings in a paradise on Earth. The earthly class will never see God or Jesus Christ. These two classes will remain eternally separated.

New Covenant Privileges Only for the 144,000

Only members of the heavenly class are parties to the new covenant. They alone have Jesus as their mediator, are "born again," have "adoption" as God's children, are members of the "Christian congregation" (the church), may partake of the "memorial emblems" of Jesus' last supper once a year, and will rule from heaven over the earth.

You Should Also Know...

Who Are the 144,000?

The only two Bible references to 144,000 are in Revelation 7 and 14. Christians who take the number literally also take the twelve Israelite tribes of 12,000 literally (Rev. 7:4-8). It makes no sense to take the number 144,000 literally but not the twelve groups of 12,000 that the text adds up to get 144,000. Christians who take the twelve tribes in this passage as symbolizing the church consistently regard the number 144,000 as symbolic. There is no basis in Revelation 7 or any other passage for dividing Christians into two classes.

The Bible Teaches...

All Believers Will Live Together in the New Heaven and New Earth

When believers in Christ die they go immediately into Christ's presence (Luke 23:43; Phil. 1:21-24). All believers from all ages will be resurrected with immortal human bodies like Christ's (Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:42-54; Phil. 3:21) and live together in the New Heaven and New Earth (Matt. 5:5; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1). Believers in Christ will "reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). (This "reign" may refer to God's intention for people to exercise dominion on earth [Gen. 1:26, 28], or to Christians ruling over the redeemed from past ages.) All of the redeemed will see God and Christ (Matt. 5:8; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 21:3-4).

All Believers Are in the New Covenant
Christ is the mediator between God and all people who are redeemed in him (1 Tim. 2:5-6). Everyone who has faith in Christ is already "born again" (1 Pet. 1:3; 1 John 5:1). Everyone who knows God as Father through Jesus Christ has the "adoption as sons" (Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:4-6) and are God's children (John 1:12-13). All baptized believers are part of the church, the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).



Tips for Talking with Jehovah's Witnesses



D Do pray before each encounter with the Jehovah's Witnesses and invite the Holy Spirit to lead and guide the conversation. Ask that He would fill their minds and hearts with the Truth of His Word.

D Don't depend on evidence and argumentation alone. Rely on the Holy Spirit to guide you. It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict of sin, righteousness and judgment.

D Do approach Jehovah's Witnesses in a humble, loving attitude. Identify with them in genuine concern and treat them respectfully, realizing they probably would not have joined had they known all the facts.

D Don't approach them with a superior attitude, belittle them, or act like you have something they don't.

D Do ask the Jehovah's Witness to help you understand how to reconcile their beliefs with the Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses are trained to teach, not to listen to you. Questions can be a powerful tool to break through their programmed responses and to get them to "think" for themselves.

D Don't confront Jehovah's Witnesses in an argumentative manner, trying to "teach" them. Jehovah's Witnesses believe they have "the Truth" and that you don't have anything to offer them.

D Do challenge the Jehovah's Witnesses' trust in the Watchtower by showing discrepancies in their own literature. Jehovah's Witnesses are not allowed to read anti-Watchtower literature, so use their literature and Scripture alone.

D Don't engage in deep scriptural discussion too soon. Witnesses are told they can't understand the Bible apart from Watchtower literature, so their trust in the Watchtower needs to be broken before they can begin to interpret the Bible for themselves.

D Do pray to "Jehovah God" with Jehovah's Witnesses and pray about personal things that are happening in their lives. Emphasize the "Father" aspect of "Jehovah" in your prayer and how He cares for you personally.

D Don't pray to "God" or "Lord" without addressing the prayer to "Jehovah" at some point. Jehovah's Witnesses fear that if a prayer doesn't have Jehovah's name, it may end up in Satan's hands. Also, don't ask if you can pray with them for healing of sickness (unless they approach you privately). They're taught that God doesn't "heal" today and anything miraculous is done by Satan to deceive the unsuspecting.

D Do tell Jehovah's Witnesses about your personal relationship with Jesus and how He answers prayer and personally works in your life. Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe God cares as much for them as He does for the organization, so your testimony can make them hungry for a real relationship with the true God.

D Don't try to force the Jehovah's Witness to "agree" with you. They're not allowed to disagree with the Watchtower, so plant seeds of doubt through your questions and let the Holy Spirit do His work.

D Do be available, persistent and patient. If they're asking questions, they're starting to think for themselves. This is the first step to leaving the Watchtower.

ROSE
PUBLISHING

© 2006 RW Research, Inc.
4733 Torrance Blvd., #259
Torrance, CA 90503 U.S.A.
email: info@rose-publishing.com
www.rose-publishing.com

ISBN-10: 1-59636-120-4

ISBN-13: 978-159636-120-1

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Stock #582X *10 Questions & Answers on Jehovah's Witnesses* pamphlet

Retailers: Package of 10 pamphlets = Stock #583X (ISBN-13: 978-159636-121-8)

Q Can Only Jehovah's Witnesses Be Saved?

The Watchtower Claims...

Salvation Requirements

Jesus died as a "ransom sacrifice" to buy back what Adam lost: the right to perfect life on earth. Most Witnesses hope to be found worthy enough to be "saved" from destruction in the future battle of Armageddon and to survive into God's new earthly system of rule, when "paradise" will be restored to Earth. The four requirements for salvation are: 1) taking in knowledge of Jehovah God and of Jesus Christ; 2) obeying God's laws and conforming one's life to the moral requirements set out in the Bible; 3) belonging to and serving with God's one true channel and organization (that is, the Watchtower Society); and 4) being loyal to God's organization.

No Assurance

Salvation is earned through a combination of faith plus good works. True Christians can have no assurance of eternal life. They must work toward perfection throughout this life, and then throughout Christ's 1,000-year reign on earth. Next they must pass the final test of Satan (during which Satan is released from the pit to tempt all faithful Witnesses one last time) before God will grant them eternal life. If they fail at any point they are at risk of annihilation (eternal destruction).

You Should Also Know...

Only Two Destinies

Contrary to Watchtower thinking, there will be no 1,000-year period for people who have died to be given a second chance at perfection. Revelation 20:5 states that those who are not part of the first resurrection will "not come to life until the thousand years" are completed. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be admitted to Heaven, while the rest of the dead will be condemned to the "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). After the final judgment, God

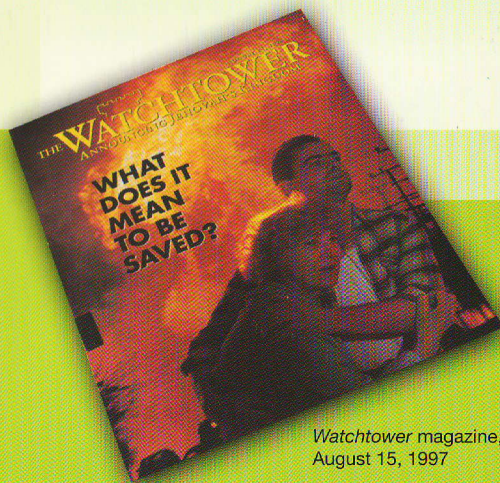
A The Bible Teaches...

Good Works Can't Save

The Bible declares that "all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment" (Isa. 64:6) and that "There is none righteous.... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:10, 23). To be saved one must come to Jesus empty-handed, offering one's sin in exchange for His righteousness (Phil. 3:9; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 2:8-9). Good works are the fruit (evidence), not the root (cause), of a saved relationship with God (Mark 4:20; Eph. 2:10).

Full Assurance

No one can earn or deserve salvation; it is a "free gift" from God based on Christ's merit, not human worthiness (Rom. 6:23). Those who "have the Son" have the full assurance of eternal life (1 John 5:10-13). Thus, only because of Jesus, true Christians will rise from death, made perfect in Christ (Heb. 10:10, 14; John 5:24).



Watchtower magazine,
August 15, 1997

will bring about the New Heaven and New Earth with no trace of sin's curse (2 Pet. 3:7, 10-13; Heb. 1:10-12; Rev. 21).

8 Q Is the Watchtower's *New World Translation* Reliable?

The Watchtower Claims...

Humble, Honest Translators

The *New World Translation* (NWT) is the official Bible of the Watchtower Society. It is the most accurate, unbiased Bible version available today. The translators remain anonymous so that all glory for the translation will go to Jehovah God.

Other, Distorted Translations

Referring to other English translations, the 1950 NWT states that "while each of them has its points of merit, they have fallen victim to the power of human traditions. ... [I]nconsistency and unreasonableness have been insinuated into the teachings of the inspired writings." By contrast, "The endeavor of the New World Bible Translation Committee has been to avoid this snare of religious traditionalism." In 1969, the Watchtower published *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures* (KIT), "a literal word-for-word translation into English under the Greek text." The foreword claims that by using the KIT "the accuracy of any modern translation can be determined."

You Should Also Know...

Translators Identified

The NWT translation committee was composed of six men, five of whom had no formal training in biblical languages. Frederick Franz, the head of the committee, was a knowledgeable amateur.

More Mistranslations

The NWT contains numerous examples of doctrinally biased renderings, including these:

Matthew 25:46: "And these will depart into everlasting **cutting-off**," rather than "punishment," because Witnesses don't believe the wicked will be punished forever.

Luke 23:43: "Truly I tell you **today**, You will be with me in Paradise." The NWT has the comma

A The Bible Teaches...

Jesus Christ Is God

The Bible's teaching that Jesus Christ is God is obscured in the NWT, as may be seen by comparing the NWT with the Greek-English text of the Watchtower's own KIT:

John 8:58: "Before Abraham came into existence, I **have been**" (NWT) / "Before Abraham to become I am" (KIT)

John 14:14: "If you ask anything..." (NWT) / "If ever anything you should ask **me...**" (KIT)

Colossians 1:16-17: Christ created "all [other] things" (NWT) / Christ created "all (things)" (KIT)

Colossians 2:9: "all the fullness of **divine quality**" dwells in Christ (NWT) / "all the fullness of the **divinity**" dwells in Christ (KIT)



after "today" because Witnesses don't believe human beings exist as spirits after death. (Jesus' frequent use of "Truly I tell you" makes it certain that "today" goes with what follows.)

1 Corinthians 15:44: "It is sown a **physical body**" (1 Cor. 15:44), instead of "natural," because Witnesses believe that Jesus was not raised in a physical body. (The same word is used in 1 Cor. 2:14, where the NWT also incorrectly has "physical.")

1 Timothy 4:1: "However, the **inspired utterance** says," instead of "the Spirit," because Witnesses don't believe that the Holy Spirit is a person.

9 Which Is the Final Authority: The Bible or the Watchtower?

The Watchtower Claims...

God's "Channel"

Throughout history, beginning with the nation of Israel, God has always led His people through a visible organization. When Israel refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah, God ordained a new, prophetic "channel of communication": the Christian congregation (that is, the church). After Christendom became apostate, God fulfilled Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24:45-47 that a "faithful and discreet slave" would dispense "spiritual food" to Jehovah's people in the last days. The Watchtower Society fulfills this passage through its worldwide teaching and publishing program.

No "Independent Thinking"

Spiritual truth is not given to God's people individually, but only through His ordained channel (the Watchtower). Thus, Jehovah's Witnesses must accept the Watchtower's interpretation of Scripture over their personal ideas and analyses; "independent thinking" is dangerous. Any Witness who challenges the Watchtower's current doctrines may be labeled prideful and "spiritually weak" and be subject to shunning by other Witnesses.

You Should Also Know...

The Real "Slave"

In Matthew 24:45-51 Jesus uses the example of a faithful slave whose master returns unexpectedly to warn His disciples to be alert for His return. Nowhere does He indicate that the parable applies only to an organization; rather, it is given to individual Christians. When Christ returns, everyone who is faithful will be rewarded by reigning with Him, while those who neglect their duties will be punished (as is the unfaithful slave in this story).

A: The Bible Teaches...

Truth Is a Person, Not an Organization

The Bible proclaims Jesus is the *only* mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). In the Old Testament people were required to approach God through sacrifices by the Israelite priestly organization; later, Jesus became the final sacrifice ending the separation between man and God caused by sin. Since Jesus is our ultimate High Priest (Heb. 6:20, 7:24), we no longer need an earthly organization to go to God. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me" (John 14:6).

Test All Things

The New Testament commends the Christians in Berea (Greece) for being "more noble-minded" because they tested Paul's message by Scripture (Acts 17:10-11). In 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22 Christians are encouraged to question prophetic claims ("examine everything carefully") and reject what is false ("abstain from every form of evil"), a pattern begun in the Old Testament (for instance, Deut. 18:21-22).

A Record of False Prophecy

Jesus warns His followers of false prophets who falsely announce His return (Matt. 24:23-34). The Watchtower Society fulfills the criteria of a false prophet, having pointed to 1874 as the date when Christ's presence began and currently teaching that it began in 1914. It is guilty of repeatedly predicting the end of the age: 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925, 1940's, and 1975. And while demanding absolute devotion to its teachings and proclaiming that it alone has "the Truth," the Watchtower has reversed itself on a number of doctrines.

10 Q: What Else Do Jehovah's Witnesses Believe?

The Watchtower Claims...

No Blood Transfusions

Transfusing blood into one's veins violates God's law against eating blood in Leviticus 17:14 and Acts 15:29. Even when rejecting a transfusion costs a Jehovah's Witness his life, this helps secure a future place in Paradise.

No Holidays and Celebrations

Birthday and holiday celebrations have pagan origins. Jesus only commanded the celebration of His death, so true Christians do not commemorate anything but Jesus' death (and their own wedding anniversaries).

No Politics or War

Because they have "no part" in the "wicked system" of this world, true Christians do not involve themselves in politics, vote in elections, salute national flags, or fight in war.



You Should Also Know...

Christians in World Governments

At Matthew 5:13-16, Scripture encourages Christians to function as "salt" and "light" in their communities. This included prominent Bible characters who were both militarily and politically active. Daniel and his colleagues were high-ranking officials in the pagan government of Babylon. The Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 was in charge of the treasury. Jesus commends the centurion (captain of 100 soldiers) for his "great faith" in Matthew 8, and the soldier Cornelius is also commended as a "God-fearing man" in Acts 10. Paul mentions a Christian named Erastus, the city treasurer,

A: The Bible Teaches...

Eating, Not Transfusing

Scripture's injunction is against the eating of blood; transfused blood is neither digested nor metabolized by the body when it enters through the veins.

Birthdays and Holidays Celebrated

The memorial of Jesus' death was not the only event Jesus' followers observed. Since they were Jews, they likely observed all the Jewish holidays, just as they did Hanukkah (John 10:22). Watchtower objections to celebrations based on pagan origins can be answered by the fact that many customs today have lost their pagan significance. So, the principle of Christian freedom Paul gives in Romans 14 when addressing the subject of holiday celebrations and eating pagan sacrificial meat should hold true for all Christians. In verses 5 and 6 he writes, "Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord."

which was a politically appointed government job (Rom. 16:23).

Jehovah's Witnesses and Medicine

In addition to its changing positions on blood transfusions, the Watchtower Society has taken dogmatic and controversial medical stands which it later reversed. For decades, Watchtower publications condemned both pasteurization and the germ theory of disease, and campaigned vigorously against aluminum cooking utensils (calling them "a curse to humanity"). In years past the Society has forbidden its followers to accept vaccinations ("a crime against nature") and organ transplants ("cannibalism").

Glossary of Jehovah's Witness Terms

Adventists: Followers of the various movements inspired by the teachings of American preacher William Miller (1782–1849), who predicted that the Second Coming of Christ would take place in 1843 or 1844.

Anointed Class: The special people who are “anointed” with God’s Spirit, said to number 144,000; the only people going to Heaven according to Watchtower theology.

Apostasy: In general use, a falling away from one’s faith. For Jehovah’s Witnesses, a turning away from God by leaving His organization, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Jehovah’s Witnesses are forbidden to read “apostate” literature (literature critical of the Watchtower) or personal letters from “apostates” (people who have left the Watchtower).

Armageddon: The final battle between wicked mankind and Jehovah God to end world governments and bring about the establishment of Jehovah’s Kingdom rule on Paradise Earth.

Assembly: A large gathering of Jehovah’s Witnesses for Watchtower conventions.

Babylon: All non-Jehovah’s Witness religious organizations and worldly governments.

Bible Study: One-on-one home studies, using Watchtower literature, designed to recruit new people into the organization.

Christendom: Disparaging term used to describe “professed Christianity”—that is, all non-Jehovah’s Witness religions that claim to be Christian—in contrast with “the true Christianity of the Bible.” Viewed as under Satan’s control.

Christian Greek Scriptures: Jehovah’s Witness term for “New Testament.” The Old Testament is called “Hebrew Scriptures.”

Disassociate, Disfellowship: Terms applied to a Jehovah’s Witness who formally leaves the Watchtower organization of his own volition (disassociates) or is expelled from the Watchtower (disfellowshipped). In either case, active Jehovah’s Witnesses consider the one leaving an “apostate” and therefore subject to “shunning.”

Earthly Class: People who followed Jehovah God and lived on earth prior to Pentecost in AD 33 or became Jehovah’s Witnesses after 1935; their eternal destiny according to the Watchtower is everlasting life on Paradise earth.

Faithful and Discreet Slave: The servant commended in Jesus’ story in Matthew 24:45 who proved faithful in caring for his master’s provisions and was granted oversight of all his master’s belongings upon his return. The Watchtower applies the parable to its “Governing Body” leadership and claims that it alone has been granted spiritual authority over Jehovah’s people.

Great Crowd: Group of people mentioned in Revelation whose number no one can count (Revelation 7:9). In the Watchtower’s interpretation these people are an “earthly class” relegated to live eternally on the earth.

Heavenly Class: Another name for the “Anointed Class” (*see above*).

Kingdom Hall: Building for weekly meetings of two to three local congregations of Jehovah’s Witnesses. (The word “church” is never used to refer to Watchtower meeting places.)

Little Flock: Another name for the “Anointed Class” (*see above*), based on a misreading of Luke 12:32. (Jesus was simply referring to the small size of his band of followers at the time.)

Other Sheep: Another name for the “Earthly class” (*see above*), drawn from John 10:16. (By “other sheep” Jesus meant Gentiles who would come to faith in Him.)

Overseer: An elder assigned to oversee specific responsibilities within the congregation or larger Jehovah’s Witness gatherings.

New Light: Watchtower euphemism for changes in doctrine.

New World: Paradise Earth, where only faithful Jehovah’s Witnesses who survived Armageddon will reside.

Paradise: Nature on Earth restored to pre-curse conditions, the Garden of Eden in Genesis.

Pioneer: A Jehovah’s Witness who participates full-time in the door-to-door “Preaching Work” for a set number of hours per month.

Preaching Work: Door-to-door distribution of Watchtower literature and home Bible studies conducted with potential converts.

Publisher: A baptized or unbaptized Jehovah’s Witness who participates in the “preaching work.” No set minimum number of hours is required.

Russellites: Nickname given to those who follow the teachings of Watchtower Society founder Charles Taze Russell, especially so-called “Bible Student” groups that reject teachings introduced by the Society after his death.

Shunning: A form of disciplinary exclusion in which “apostate” Jehovah’s Witnesses are ignored and treated as if dead by their Witness friends and relatives.

Tetragrammaton: The four Old Testament Hebrew consonants (transliterated into English as “YHWH”) from which God’s name is derived.

The Truth: Another name for the Watchtower organization’s changing doctrines.

Theocracy: God’s kingdom rule.

Resources

The inclusion of a work does not necessarily mean endorsement of all its contents or of other works by the same author(s).

LITERATURE

Jehovah’s Witnesses by Robert M. Bowman, Jr. (Zondervan, 1995). Also recommended are other related books by the same author, including *Why You Should Believe in the Trinity* (Baker Book House, 1989)

Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah’s Witnesses by Ron Rhodes (Harvest House Publishers, 1993)

Jehovah’s Witnesses Answered Verse by Verse by David A. Reed (Baker Book House, 1986). Also recommended are other related books by the same author, including *How to Rescue Your Loved One from the Watchtower* (Baker Book House, 1989)

Crisis of Conscience by Raymond Franz (Commentary Press, 1983)

What Does God Require? Biblical Answers to Questions Jehovah’s Witnesses Ask by Christy (Harvey) Darlington (Witnesses for Jesus, 2001)

Jehovah’s Witnesses: Their Claims, Doctrinal Changes, and Prophetic Speculation. What Does the Record Show? by Edmond C. Gruss (Xulon Press, 2001)

VIDEO/DVD

In the Name of Jehovah (North American Mission Board, 2004)

Witnesses of Jehovah (Good News Defenders, 1988)

The Witness at Your Door and The Witness Goes Out! (Jeremiah Films, 1992)

Battling Over the Children (Jeremiah Films, 1994)

Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Real Jesus (MMO Outreach, 1995)

POWERPOINT®

10 Questions & Answers on Jehovah’s Witnesses (Rose Publishing, Inc., 2006)

Quick Facts

Names: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society; International Bible Students Association

Year/Place Founded: 1879 (incorporated 1884); Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (USA)

Founder: Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916)

World Headquarters: Brooklyn, New York (USA)

Estimated Adherents: 16.3 million in over 200 nations and territories (2005)

Materials: Publishes magazines, books, and other materials in over 400 languages

INTERNET

Witnesses for Jesus, Inc.
www.witforjesus.org

FreeMinds, Inc.
www.freeminds.org

TowerWatch Ministries
www.towerwatch.com

Let Us Reason Ministries
www.letusreason.org

Facts About Jehovah’s Witnesses
www.jwfacts.com

Resources on the New World Translation
www.tetragrammaton.org

Silent Lambs
www.silentlambs.org

Watchtower Quotes
<http://quotes-watchtower.co.uk>

Jehovah’s Witnesses and Blood
www.ajwrb.org

Testimonies of Former Jehovah’s Witnesses
www.jwinfoline.com/Page/audio.htm

JW Research
www.premier1.net/~raines/index.html