

# JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

## An Examination of the Teachings of the Watchtower Society

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### The Origin of the Jehovah's Witnesses

The modern day Jehovah's Witness organization (**JW.org**) is officially known as "The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society." It traces its roots back to a man by the name of Charles Taze Russell. Russell was born in 1852 near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As a young teenager, Russell attended a Presbyterian church, as well as a Congregational church. He found himself unable to accept their teachings concerning:

1. **Hell**
2. **The doctrine of the Trinity**
3. **The deity of Christ**

So in 1870, at the age of 18, Russell organized a Bible study in Pittsburgh, where he began to share his unorthodox beliefs with others (some of which we'll consider in a few minutes). This Bible study grew and the group eventually made him their pastor.

In 1879, Charles Russell started his own magazine to promote his doctrines. The name of the magazine? *Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence*. The subheading of the magazine ("Herald of Christ's Presence") was related to the fact that Charles Russell and his followers believed the Second Coming of Christ had happened invisibly in 1874. And they declared that to be the case for 40 years. The followers of his teachings have since changed the date of Christ's coming to 1914. And we'll talk more about this in a little while. (The change of date is something that very few Jehovah's Witnesses know about today.)

The magazine that Charles Russell started is still in publication today. It is now called *The Watchtower*. You've probably received a copy on your porch. As of 2014, the Watchtower organization prints 45 million of these magazines twice a month in 210 different languages, making it the most widely circulated magazine in the world. [[www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/activities/publishing/global-printing](http://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/activities/publishing/global-printing). Accessed 4/26/14].

In 1908, Charles Russell moved the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society's headquarters from Pennsylvania to New York City. Soon the society owned entire blocks in Brooklyn. Russell prophesied that the year 1914 would be the year that Armageddon would begin in which God would destroy all human governments and

establish His kingdom on the Earth.

Well, something happened in 1914 that led many to believe Charles Russell was indeed a genuine prophet of God. World War I broke out. Charles Russell confidently said, "The present great war in Europe is the beginning of the Armageddon of the Scriptures." [*Pastor Russell's Sermons*, 1917, p. 676]

Of course Armageddon never quite materialized in 1914, 1915, 1918 or any of the other years Jehovah's Witness leaders said it would occur. Charles Russell died in 1916, a failed prophet. But he would not be the last. Subsequent presidents of the Watchtower Society predicted 1925, 1941, and 1975 as years that Armageddon would occur.

Despite the false prophecies, the Watchtower Society has grown into one of the largest, most influential cults of our time. As of 2014, there are nearly 8 million Jehovah's Witnesses attending some 113,000 "Kingdom Halls" (where the witnesses meet to study) all over the world. [Source: [www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses](http://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses)]

One of the reasons Jehovah's Witnesses have been so effective in spreading their teachings is because all Jehovah's Witnesses (men and women, young and old) are required to engage in public door-to-door distribution of Watchtower literature.



## Eight Unbiblical Teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses

**1. Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus is a created, angelic being, inferior to God the Father.**

In fact, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus was just a physical manifestation of Michael the archangel. Well, we disagree. And we have strong Biblical grounds to do so.

The Bible clearly teaches that there is only one God (Isaiah 43:10, 1 Cor. 8:4) and that *Jesus* is God. Where do the Scriptures speak of Jesus' deity? Here are some examples...

- **Isaiah**, the Old Testament prophet, said that the Messiah would be called "Mighty God" in Isaiah 9:6, the very title ascribed to God the Father in Isaiah 10:21
- **John** called Jesus "God" in the opening verse of his Gospel when he said that the Word [a ref. to Jesus, see v. 14] was God" (John 1:1)
- **Thomas** called Jesus "My Lord and my God" (John 20:18)
- **Paul** called Jesus "our great God and Savior" (Titus 2:13)
- **Jesus** took the name of God in the Old Testament, "I AM" (Exodus 3:14), and applied it to Himself in John 8:58. In John 5:18, Jesus claimed to be "equal with God." In John 10:33, He made Himself "out to be God."
- God the **Father** called Jesus "God." Hebrews 1:8 "But to the Son He [God the Father] says: 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your Kingdom.'" [Quoting Psalm 45:6-7]

In addition to these passages that directly *refer* to Jesus as God, there are lots of other passages that *infer* Jesus is God. I'm talking about passages like Hebrews 1:6 where we're told the **angels** will worship Jesus at the Second Coming: "And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, 'And let all the angels of God worship [Greek: *proskuneo*] Him.'" Worship, of course, is something that is strictly forbidden by God of any created being (see Rev. 22:9). Jesus said in Matthew 4:10, "It is written, You shall worship [Greek: *proskuneo*] the Lord your God, and serve Him only." And yet, the Bible says in Hebrews 1:6 that God is going to encourage the angels to worship [*proskuneo*] Jesus at His Second Coming. This of course infers that Jesus is equal with God in nature.

For these reasons and many others, we have a much higher view of Jesus than the Jehovah's Witnesses. We believe He was and is far more than an angel. He is God. For more help understanding and defending the deity of Christ, please see:

- **20 Reasons Christians Believe Jesus is God**
- **An Examination of the Verses the Cults Use to Disprove the Deity of Christ**

I also have a DVD and CD on this topic: **"The Jesus of Scripture: A Verse-by-Verse Response to Attacks on Jesus's Deity"** (DVD, CD)

## 2. Jehovah's Witnesses deny that Jesus rose bodily from the grave.

Well then, how do Jehovah's Witnesses explain the empty tomb? They do acknowledge the tomb is empty. Well, Jehovah's witnesses are taught that Jesus' body was (these are direct quotes from their literature):

- "Supernaturally removed from the tomb."
- "Whether it was dissolved into gases or whether it is still preserved somewhere as a memorial of God's

love...no one knows.”

Dissolved into gases?! Oh, but they're not finished.

- “Jesus’ fleshly body was disposed of by Jehovah God, it was dissolved into its constituent elements or atoms.”

Jesus’ body was disposed of? Thrown away? Dissolved? Now, after saying this regarding Jesus’ *body*, they go on elsewhere to say that His spirit *was* resurrected:

- “Jesus Christ was not made a human creature at his resurrection but was made a spirit, which accounts for his invisibility.”

So, according to the Watchtower, Jesus’ spirit was resurrected (We're not sure what happened to his body, but his spirit is alive!). Elsewhere they say:

- “We deny that He was raised in the flesh, and challenge any statement to that effect as being unscriptural.”

And hold on to your seat, they say:

- “The man Jesus is dead, forever dead.”

Can you imagine your pastor trying to preach that on Easter Sunday? Now, why would the Jehovah Witness organization say these kinds of things? Well, their unbiblical theology—their unbiblical view of Jesus as Michael the archangel—forces them to get rid of Jesus’ earthly body because Jesus’ spirit needed to get back to animate the creature from which he originally came: Michael the archangel.

This is what happens when you deviate from God’s Word and start inventing doctrines. You’re required to come up with all kinds of bizarre teachings to make sure nothing contradicts your invention. And before you know it, you have Jesus’ body being dissolved...and eventually your own edition of the Bible: *The New World Translation*.

Well, we have a big problem with the Witnesses’ view of Jesus’ resurrection!

The Bible teaches that Jesus rose from the grave *bodily* and in the very same physical body that was laid in the tomb. Turn over to Luke 24:36. This scene takes place after Jesus’ resurrection.

Luke 24:36-39

Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, “Peace to you.” But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. [The disciples initially made a similar error to that of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. The disciples “supposed” Jesus was a “spirit” or ghost. And Jesus corrected them.] And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”

Jesus told His disciples here that He was not a spirit! He says, in effect, ‘Friends, it’s Me. Touch me. I have a body of flesh and bones!’

In John 20:27, Jesus told Thomas to feel the nail wounds in His hands and to put his finger into His side. Why was He able to say that? Because Jesus walked out of the tomb in the very body that had been

crucified.

Another Biblical indication that Jesus rose bodily is in John 2:19. There Jesus said, "Destroy this temple [referring to His body, v.21] and in three days I will raise it up."

God did not dispose of Jesus' body or dissolve it into gases. He raised it up from the grave, just as He will resurrect our bodies one day! The Watchtower has seriously erred when it comes to Jesus' resurrection.

### **3. Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus' Second Coming occurred spiritually and invisibly in 1914.**

Why didn't He come back visibly? Well, remember, according to the Watchtower, He couldn't! He doesn't have a body! It was dissolved or disposed of you remember. So, He came back spiritually and invisibly in 1914 they say.

Well, we have a problem with that. Turn over to Revelation, chapter 1.

Revelation 1:7 "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen."

Did every eye see Jesus come back in 1914? No. Did *any* eye see Jesus come back in 1914? No.

The Watchtower tries to get out of the clear implications of this verse (Rev. 1:7) by saying: 'The eyes spoken of here speak of eyes of understanding....Those who had spiritual eyes to understand this is what took place in 1914, realize that Jesus did come back.' (see *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, p. 146)

That is an incorrect interpretation of Revelation 1:7.

The word "eye" (Rev. 1:7) is the Greek word "ophthalmos." That is the same Greek word used for the literal physical eyes of the blind people Jesus healed (e.g., Matthew 20:34).

The word "every" (Rev. 1:7) is the Greek word "pas" and it means just what it says: "every" or "all."

So, the Second Coming is not going to be some mysterious, secret coming. The whole world will witness it. And when we allow Scripture to interpret Scripture, we see that this is precisely what other verses affirm. Speaking of His Second Coming, Jesus said in Matthew 24:30, "and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory."

In that same passage, Jesus warned about those, in the last days, who would come on the scene and say the Messiah had already returned to Earth:

Matthew 24:23-27

23 "Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' [pointing to some person] or 'There!' do not believe it. 24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. 25 See, I have told you beforehand. 26 "Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, He is in the desert!' do not go out; or 'Look, He is in the inner rooms!' [i.e., somewhere you can't see Him visibly] do not believe it. 27 For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be."

Like a flash of lightning that fills the entire sky with light, Jesus' Second Coming is going to be sudden, out

in the open, and very evident to all.

#### 4. Jehovah's Witnesses claim only a special group of 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses will be able to go to Heaven.

According to the Watchtower, that number filled up in 1935 and if you were not around in or prior to that date, you will never go to Heaven. We'll talk about what they think happens to *non* Jehovah Witnesses in a few minutes. But what happens to Jehovah Witnesses who aren't part of the 144,000? Well, the Watchtower teaches that the rest of the Jehovah's Witnesses will remain unconscious after they die until they are resurrected to spend eternity on a paradise Earth. One of their popular books spells this out right in the title: *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*.

In response to this, nowhere does the Bible limit Heaven's capacity to 144,000 persons. It teaches that *all* those who put their faith in Jesus Christ will have everlasting life in the presence of the Lord. Notice what Jesus said:

John 12:26a

"If *anyone* serves Me, let him follow Me; and **where** I am, **there** My servant will be also."

According to Jesus' words here in John 12:26, if you serve Him, if you are one of His followers, you will be "where" He is! Where is Jesus? In His Father's house, in Heaven. Right?

John 14:2-4

"In My **Father's house** are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that **where** I am, there you may be also."

Another way of verifying that there will be far more than 144,000 people in Heaven can be found in Revelation 7. In Revelation 7, John gets a glimpse into a future scene in Heaven. I want you to notice how many people John sees:

Revelation 7:9-10

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number..."

Let's pause there for a moment. This is a massive, *uncountable* number of people—far more than 144,000 people! We have no problem counting 144,000 people today. Oceanside, California, where I grew up, has 183,095 people. Got 'em all counted. California has 38,332,521 people. That's a big number, but we managed to count them. John sees a number of people in Heaven who he says "no one could number."

Revelation 7:9-10

"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing **before the throne and before the Lamb**, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'"

Where was this massive uncountable number standing? On a "paradise Earth"? No. They are standing in Heaven "before the throne" (Revelation 7:9).

The Watchtower justifies their unbiblical teaching regarding the 144,000 by misinterpreting what the Book of Revelation says about the 144,000 persons whom God will seal during the great tribulation (12,000 from each of the 12 tribes of Israel, Rev. 7:4-8).

One of the problems for the Watchtower, regarding their interpretation, is that a careful reading of the Bible reveals that the 144,000 will be:

- Jews (Rev. 7:4)
- Males (Rev. 14:4)
- Virgins (Rev. 14:4)

We read this about the 144,000 in...

Revelation 14:3-4

“They sang as it were a new song before the throne [Look at that! They’re in the same place as the uncountable multitude we just read about in Revelation 7], before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the Earth. These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins.”

So, not only are the 144,000 Jewish, they are male Jews. And not only are they male Jews. They are male virgins (as the context here in Revelation 14 implies)! This completely rules out the married men and women (non virgins) who are part of the Watchtower and who consider themselves to be some of the few remaining 144,000.

## 5. Jehovah's deny the existence of a literal Hell that is the ongoing place of punishment for the wicked.

The Watchtower teaches that God will annihilate non Jehovah’s Witnesses and they will simply cease to exist. This teaching known as *annihilationism*. Annihilationism is another false doctrine that contradicts the Bible.

The Bible teaches that the suffering of those who end up in Hell will be without end. This is made clear in passages like Revelation 19-20.

If you’ve studied the Book of Revelation, you know that in Revelation 19, at the end of the Tribulation, Jesus returns to the Earth on a white horse (19:11, 14). Immediately following His coming to the Earth, the Antichrist and the false prophet “are thrown alive into the lake of fire” (19:20). Following this, Jesus sets up His kingdom on the Earth and rules and reigns for a thousand years. This is spoken about in Revelation chapter 20 and elsewhere. But I want you to notice what happens at the *end* of the thousand year reign of Christ. Revelation chapter 20:10 says:

Revelation 20:10

“And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast [a reference to the Antichrist] and the false prophet **are** [not “were”]...”

That’s interesting. Stay with me on this. The coming Antichrist and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire right at the *beginning* of the thousand year reign of Christ. Then at the *end* of the thousand year reign of Christ, the devil is thrown into the lake of fire. Now, here’s the important thing to notice: The Antichrist and the false prophet are still there! Look at Revelation 20:10 again:

Revelation 20:10

“And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast [a reference to the Antichrist] and the false prophet **are** [not “were”] also...”

I point this out to you to show you that the lake of fire does not annihilate people! The Antichrist and the false prophet will still be there despite having been thrown in a thousand years earlier. And look at the rest of the verse 10:

Revelation 20:10b

"...and they will be tormented day and night [for how long?] forever and ever."

So, it says "**They** will be tormented"—not just the devil, but THEY, referring to all three of them: the devil, the Antichrist and the false prophet. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever. The "lake of fire" does not annihilate anybody. And here's the sobering truth. The Bible teaches that all who reject God's offer of reconciliation will end up in that very place.

Revelation 20:15 says, "And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into [Where?] the lake of fire."

The unsaved are going to the very place the Antichrist, the false prophet, and the devil will go: the lake of fire. And Revelation 14:11 says of the unsaved, "The smoke of their torment ascends **forever** and ever; and they have no rest day or night..."

And there are many other verses that make this clear. Notice what Jesus said:

Matthew 25:41, 46

"Then [at His second coming] He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **everlasting** fire...And these will go away into **everlasting** punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Just as a Christian's "everlasting" life (John 3:16) is going to go on through eternity, so too will the punishment of the unsaved. This is one of the reasons it's so important that people turn to Jesus and be reconciled to God before the Day of Judgment.

We dare not tamper with the truth of God's Word to create something "more palatable," as the Watchtower organization has done. Their Scripture twisting—their watering down of Scripture—removes that which would rightly stir up a fear of judgment (thereby further endangering men's souls). The nonbeliever thinks, "Why follow the Lord? If the worst thing that's coming my way is annihilation, let's eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we'll die and just cease to exist!" God forbid that Jehovah's Witnesses lead more people to fall for that lie!

**For more help** answering the tough questions people ask about the doctrine of Hell, please see our section devoted to this topic. I also have a DVD and CD on the topic: **Answers to the Tough Questions About Hell (DVD, CD)**

## 6. Jehovah's Witnesses deny that salvation is by grace alone through faith alone.

In order to find good standing in God's sight, the Watchtower Society teaches that you must be a baptized, active member in their organization. According to the Watchtower there is no salvation outside of the organization.

Listen to this quote right out of one of their books, *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* (p. 255): "There will only be one organization—God's visible organization—that will survive the fast-approaching 'great tribulation.' It is simply not true that all religions lead to the same goal. You **must be part of Jehovah's organization**, doing God's will, in order to receive his blessing of everlasting life."



If you want to be sure you will be saved, the Watchtower teaches that you must belong to their organization and be faithful and active in what they call "kingdom work," which for them is mainly door-to-door ministry (see *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, p. 250ff).

This amounts to a works-based salvation, something the Bible clearly rejects. The Bible teaches that salvation cannot be earned or merited. Over and over again the Bible teaches that salvation is God's "free gift" (Romans 6:23) to those who put their faith in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9

"For *by grace* you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the **gift** of God, ***not of works***, lest anyone should boast."

Romans 3:28

"Therefore we maintain that a man is justified [declared righteous by God] by faith ***apart from the works*** of the law."

Romans 10:9

"If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Some other verses that speak to this issue include: Romans 4:1-4; Galatians 2:16; Titus 3:5.

What great news that is! God has graciously done all the work necessary to secure salvation for us. Jesus died on the cross in our place for our sins. He rose from the grave the third day, and all God asks is that we receive what He's done for us by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. Have you done that? If not, I encourage you to do that right now. (Click [here](#) for help).

## **7. Jehovah's Witnesses teach that upon death, a person's soul goes into an unconscious state of sleep until the time of the resurrection.**

This is an incorrect, unbiblical doctrine known as "soul-sleep."

The Bible teaches that those who have died are conscious. Read the story of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16. Both of them—Lazarus (the righteous man) and the rich man (who was unrighteous)—were conscious after death.

The Bible *does* teach that when a person dies their *body* is laid to sleep (1 Thess. 4:14) but the Bible teaches that the *spirit* of the person remains conscious.

The unsaved go to Hades (Luke 16) to await the resurrection (John 5:29) and the judgment of the wicked that occurs at the end of the 1,000 year reign of Christ (Revelation 20:5-15).

The saved person who dies goes immediately into the presence of God. Why do we believe that?

2 Corinthians 5:8

"We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present [where?] *with the Lord*."

A believer who dies goes into the presence of the Lord. In Philippians 1, Paul said:

Philippians 1:21-23

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart [Where to? Into the ground until the resurrection? No.] and **be with Christ**, which is far better."

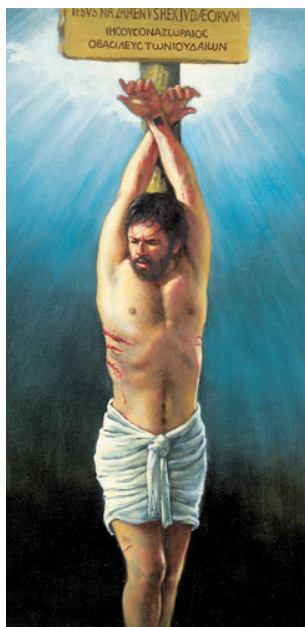
Jesus told the repentant thief on the cross, "Assuredly, I say to you, **today** you will be with Me [where?] in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).

Where is Paradise? Revelation 2:7 tells us that Paradise is in the presence of God. Soul sleep is an unbiblical doctrine.

*For extra consideration: Think of Moses and Elijah. Their souls were not asleep after they died. They appeared with Jesus at the Transfiguration (Matt 17:3)! Nor will the souls of the Tribulation martyrs be asleep after they die. See Revelation 6:9-11. They will be awake and able to speak to God.*

## 8. Jehovah's Witnesses deny that Jesus died on a cross and teach that the cross is a pagan religious symbol that was adopted by the church years later.

The Watchtower scoffs at the idea that Jesus died on a cross. Jehovah's Witnesses are taught that it was not a cross Jesus was hung upon but an upright post with no crossbeam—something they call a "torture stake" in the Watchtower's edition of the Bible (*The New World Translation*).



Jehovah's Witnesses are taught to abhor the cross and new converts are expected to destroy any crosses they have rather than simply dispose of them. Well, there is good evidence that Jesus died on a traditional cross. Perhaps you'll recall the conversation the disciples had with Thomas after Jesus' resurrection in John chapter 20...

John 20:25

"The other disciples therefore said to him [Thomas], 'We have seen the Lord.' So he said to them, 'Unless I see in His hands the print of the [What?] **nails**, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.'"

Thomas, having heard how Jesus was crucified, says here that he wanted to see the scars from the nails

(plural) in Jesus' hands.

A "torture stake," as the Watchtower calls it, only requires one nail in the hands (nailed over the head) and this is exactly how the Watchtower consistently depicts the crucifixion in all of their literature (one nail; see image above). But the Bible says there were at least two "nails" used in Jesus' hands (John 20:25).

A second reason we believe Jesus died on a traditional cross is found in John 21. Notice what Jesus tells Peter here:

John 21:18-19

"Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will **stretch out** [Note that. Not stretch "up."] your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." This He spoke, signifying by what death he [Peter] would glorify God."

So, when Jesus described Peter's coming death—via crucifixion—He said that Peter's hands would be stretched out, not up. That's what happened to people who were crucified by the Romans in the first century. Their hands were stretched out. Why? Because they were crucified on traditional crosses with crossbeams.

A third reason we believe Jesus died on a traditional cross has to do with the placement of the sign in Matthew 27. Notice:

Matthew 27:37

"And they put up over His **head** the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS."

When the Roman soldiers mounted the sign above Jesus, the Bible says they hung it above "His head" not above His hands. So, this too bolsters our case that Jesus died on a traditional cross. The cross is not "a pagan religious symbol that was adopted by the church years later" as Jehovah's Witnesses contend.

So, the Jehovah's Witnesses have erred when it comes to:

- The Deity of Christ
- The Resurrection of Christ
- The Second Coming of Christ
- Heaven (the 144,000)
- Hell
- Salvation by grace alone
- Soul-Sleep
- The Cross of Christ

And that's just the tip of the iceberg really.

## Sharing the Truth with Jehovah's Witnesses on Your Porch:

If you want to be more effective in reaching out to these people who have been misled by the Watchtower Society, I encourage you to...

### 1. Greet them kindly.

Many Christians use what I call "the flame thrower approach" when it comes to witnessing to Jehovah's

Witnesses. They blast them with a list of disagreements:

- Jesus isn't Michael the Archangel! (Flames!)
- He didn't come back in 1914 (Flames!)
- Charles Taze Russell was a false prophet (Flames!)
- I've already got my own church. (Flames!)
- Goodbye!

I don't think this is the best approach.

1 Corinthians 13:1-2

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."

So we want to speak the truth, but we need to speak the truth in love, remembering that "our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 6:12).

Being rude or short-tempered with Jehovah's Witnesses will often only fortify them in their position. They'll walk away from your house quoting Jesus' words in John 15:20, "If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you." They think persecution is evidence that they are walking in the truth.

So if you're rude to them, they think it is only another evidence that they are walking in the truth. So I have a totally different approach (straight out of the Bible):

2 Timothy 2:24-26

"And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be **gentle** to all, able to teach, **patient**, in **humility** correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will."

God wants us to deal with them very humbly, realizing they are not the enemy. They have been taken *captive* by the enemy. They're not *purposely* going door-to-door to deceive. They themselves have been deceived. So, this verse says God wants us to "be gentle" with them.

## 2. Talk to them about what God has done in your life.

As soon as you appear to be friendly to them, they will typically launch into a memorized talk about the sad state of the world, God's plan for humanity on a paradise Earth, and that they think God's name is "Jehovah." (It's not. See this [article](#).)

When you have a chance to talk, rather than laying out your doctrinal disagreements, I encourage you to do something else:

Give them a glowing report about what God has done in your life. You might share with them a joyful, concise overview of:

- What you used to be like
- How you came to realize you were a sinner
- How Jesus came into your life

- How God has changed you
- What a joy it is to know and love Him
- How much you enjoy studying His Word and fellowshiping with His people

That's not too hard to do, right? Every Christian should be able to talk about what God has done in their life. You don't need to know Greek or have a seminary degree to do that. And your testimony poses a huge problem to the Jehovah's Witness. The Watchtower has taught them that nobody outside of their organization can be saved or find favor in God's sight. In fact, the Watchtower teaches its members that Jehovah is going to destroy the people that fill the churches at the battle of Armageddon.

But there you are, presenting to them living proof that God is alive and well *outside* of the Watchtower organization. This is shocking to Jehovah's Witnesses and can make a powerful impact on them. So, you greet them kindly. You share what God has done in your own life. Then what?

Well, I used to suggest, as step number three, that you open your Bible with the Jehovah's Witness and reason with them from the Scriptures. God may lead you to do that. I think there are times for that. But, I no longer suggest that you pursue doing that. For two reasons:

A. Jehovah's Witnesses use their own version of the Bible (*The New World Translation*) printed by the Watchtower organization.

This makes it very difficult to prove a point. Why? Because the Watchtower has deliberately added words, mistranslated words, switched commas around, invented tenses that don't even exist in the Greek language, etc. to make the Bible to say what they want it to say.

You'll read a verse to them that you think supports your point of view, and they will say "That is not what my translation says!" Very frustrating.

B. The Jehovah's Witness has a blind allegiance to the Watchtower Society, and is forbidden by the Watchtower from questioning its interpretations. Why is there such an allegiance? The Watchtower Society has convinced the Jehovah's Witness that it is:

- God's visible organization on earth
- God's sole channel of communication
- And that the organization is under Jehovah's direct supervision

Believing that to be true, the Watchtower's interpretations of the Bible cannot be wrong. No matter how often, and how clearly I have explained a passage of Scripture to a Jehovah's Witnesses, it is amazing to see them cling to what they've been taught rather than what the Bible actually says. Their allegiance to the "teaching of men" is staggering. It rivals the Pharisees!

So, here's what I recommend now, instead...

### 3. End the meeting by:

- Taking their magazines. That's one or two less in their hands to give to someone else! And they also make great kindling if you have a fireplace.
- Tell them you'd like to do a little research into their religion.
- Tell them you'd be interested in getting together again for another discussion (in a week or two—you want to give yourself a little bit of time to prepare for the next meeting).

Then what? Sometime that week...

#### **4. Go to AlwaysBeReady.com.**

Click on the link **Jehovah's Witnesses**. There you'll see a list of helpful articles, but I especially want to draw your attention to the article: **Sixty Five Questions to Ask Jehovah's Witnesses**.

Open up that article and print out a few of those questions (whatever ones you would feel most comfortable asking). These questions have been compiled by Lori MacGregor, a former Jehovah's Witness, who is now a Christian apologist seeking to help Christians share the truth with Jehovah's Witnesses.

#### **5. At your next meeting, ask them about the troubling issues you've discovered.**

Issues related to all their false prophecies, doctrinal flip flops, cover ups, bad Bible translation, etc.

#### **Your goal? Planting seeds.**

...seeds of truth and seeds of doubt regarding the trustworthiness of the Watchtower organization.

If your goal is to lead them in a sinner's prayer wherein they renounce the Watchtower organization on our porch, you're probably going to be disappointed! My goal is to just plant seeds, trust that God's Word is powerful, and then entrust them to the Lord and pray that other Christians will water the seeds. It's God's job to cause the growth.

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

"I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth...we are God's fellow workers..."

So, I encourage you brothers and sisters, when a Jehovah Witness comes to your door, share with them what God has done in your own life and then (or at a future meeting) take a few minutes to plant some seeds.

Many Jehovah's Witnesses who have come out of the Watchtower and embraced true Biblical Christianity talk about the one or two persons in all the years they went door-to-door who were willing to share the truth with them in love. They say, "It made a difference!" That verse or that question that a person asked them haunted them for years, until they were finally able to question the authority of the Watchtower and begin investigating the Bible on their own with an open mind.

So I exhort you...

**Be one of those persons to make a difference!**



## ABOUT CHARLIE H. CAMPBELL

Charlie Campbell is the Director of the Always Be Ready Apologetics Ministry and a popular guest speaker at churches and conferences. He is the author of numerous articles, books, and DVDs, including:

- *Scrolls & Stones: Compelling Evidence the Bible Can Be Trusted*
- *Evidence for the Existence of God*
- *One Minute Answers to Skeptics*
- *Archaeological Evidence for the Bible*
- *The End Times: Ten Upcoming Events in Bible Prophecy*
- *The Case for the Resurrection*
- *Teaching and Preaching God's Word*

His DVDs and books have been endorsed by Norman Geisler, Charles Colson, Chuck Smith, Ed Hindson, Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Jeremy Camp, and many others.

## WOULD YOU LIKE TO SCHEDULE CHARLIE TO TEACH?

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