

Some Facts You Should Know about the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (JW.ORG)

Deviations from *the faith which was once delivered to the saints*-
Institute of Biblical Discipleship Bible Study # 47
by Nolan McFadden

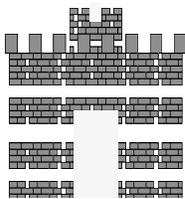


Many of us know or have been visited by someone who is involved with the Jehovah's Witnesses. You may have a friend, neighbor or relative who is a Jehovah's Witness. Usually, they will offer you literature from the **Watchtower Bible and Tract Society**. Most Jehovah's Witnesses are very sincere. However, they are sincerely deceived by the father of lies (John 8:43-44). Since our Lord Jesus commanded us, "...**Take heed that no man deceive you.**" in Matthew 24:4, it is essential that we understand how this

false religion differs from biblical Christianity. Therefore, using the Bible as the basis of our study, let's evaluate the beliefs and practices of this religion.

I. Understand the history and false prophecies of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

A. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society was founded by and built upon the teachings of Charles Taze Russell and his followers. Russell was born on February 16, 1852 in Allegheny, Pennsylvania. At an early age, he rejected both his Presbyterian upbringing and his brief membership in a Congregational Church. In 1870, he organized a Bible class in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The class elected Russell as pastor in 1876. This group later merged with a Rochester, New York group under the leadership of N. H. Barbour. However, Russell eventually broke away from Barbour due to a doctrinal dispute regarding Christ's death. It should be noted that Charles Russell had no formal training in Bible or theology. In 1881, Russell established an unincorporated society known as **Zion's Watchtower Tract Society**. This organization was incorporated with a legal charter in Pittsburgh, PA during December of 1884. In 1896, the name of this group was changed to the **Watchtower Bible and Tract Society**. The term "Jehovah's Witnesses"



was not adopted by the organization until 1931. The society's headquarters is located in Brooklyn, New York.

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society is "**God's visible organization**" on the earth (*The Watchtower*, 10-1-67, p.587 and 1-15-83, p.12). Yet, over the years, this same society has set forth a number of **documented false prophecies**. See Deuteronomy 18:20-22 regarding false prophets and false prophecies. During the time of Charles Russell's leadership, the Watchtower predicted 1914 to be the date of the **Battle of Armageddon**. This was also to mark the time of Christ's full establishment of God's kingdom on earth and the end of the earth's kingdoms.

When these events did not occur as predicted in 1914, the organization changed the predicted date to 1915 (*The Time Is At Hand*, 1906 Edition, pp.99-101 and the 1915 Edition,



pp.98-101).

After Russell's death on October 31, 1916, while Joseph Rutherford was president of the society, 1918 was predicted as the year in which the Battle of Armageddon would transpire. The **Millennium of Christ** was also to begin that year (*The Finished Mystery*, 1918, pp.404, 485). When these prophecies failed, the organization **changed** the predicted date to 1925. The resurrection and visible return to the earth of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and other Old Testament prophets was also predicted to occur in 1925 (*Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, 1920, pp.88-90). Of necessity, the society set forth teachings to explain away those false prophecies and dates as referring to **"invisible" events** and **"human" mistakes**. Nevertheless, many members left the organization as they became increasingly aware of its real nature.



B. Likewise, in 1966, Frederick Franz predicted the Millennium of Christ would begin during the Fall of 1975 (*Life Everlasting in the Freedom of the Sons of God*, 1966, p.29). As a result, many in the society eagerly expected the Battle of Armageddon and the visible establishment of Christ's reign on earth to occur in 1975. In fact, many Jehovah's Witnesses sold their homes and property in expectation of the events. **Again, due to this false prophecy, many more left the organization.**

II. Original sources of the doctrines of the Jehovah's Witnesses include Western Occultism, Theosophy and Unitarian Universalism.

A. Western Occultism, Theosophy and Unitarian Universalism deny the existence of **"hell"** (or **"the lake of fire"** Revelation 20:10-15, KJV) as a literal place of eternal punishment of the unsaved. This occult teaching of universalism was embraced by Charles Taze Russell who was the founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, International Bible Students). C. T. Russell practiced religious syncretism. Russell was heavily influenced by the teachings of the Knights Templar Freemasonry of his day. Likewise, Mr. Russell embraced other satanic teachings and symbols found in Western Occultism, Theosophy and Unitarian Universalism and included them in his teachings. This blend of false teachings was then passed on to his disciples – the Jehovah's Witnesses in their indoctrination. See the evidence set forth in the book entitled *The Watchtower and The Masons* by Fritz Springmeier. Log on to www.jesus-is-savior.com/FalseReligions/Illuminati/watchtower-masons.pdf

Although many contemporary Jehovah's Witnesses have gone to great efforts in their attempts to discredit the historical facts, these occult teachings were

included in forming the belief system of the JW.ORG religious cult which began in Pennsylvania in the late nineteenth century.

B. Consider seven examples:

- 1) C.T. Russell advocated a semi-Gnostic view of Christ's resurrection believing it occurred only in "spirit."
- 2) The Watchtower teaching of the "invisible" return (or "appearance") of Christ in 1914 is similar to the occult teaching of the "reappearance" of the Christ spirit propagated by Occult/New Age teachers.
- 3) As found in New Age/Occult religions, the Holy Spirit is viewed by Jehovah's Witnesses as a "life force" or "active force" of energy instead of an eternal Person.
- 4) Mr. Russell held the occult/satanic belief in the spiritual power of the pyramid (triangle) and even requested to be buried under a giant occult, Masonic pyramid at his gravesite.
- 5) Russell blended ancient, pagan Egyptian occult symbols in his writings and books (pagan Egyptian winged-sun-disk, the symbol of Knights Templar Freemasonry, etc.)
- 6) Russell frequently used Masonic words and concepts in his books and writings including: "New World"; "Golden Age"; "mystery"; "secret"; "initiated"; "the Divine Order"; "Grand Master"; "Grand Architect of the Universe"; "new light"; etc.
- 7) Russell's "Old Light, New Light" doctrine is a form of open revelation. Open revelation is also believed by Theosophists, New Agers, Hindus, etc.

Sufficient evidence is presented in the book entitled *The Watchtower and The Masons* by Fritz Springmeier to demonstrate that the same terms and symbols used by C.T. Russell in Watchtower literatures had been previously recorded in the writings of both high level Freemasonry and the English Theosophical Society of his day. Mr. Russell merely "borrowed" their teachings and blended them with his own distorted views.

III. From the historical background presented above, we should note four important facts about the history of the Jehovah's Witnesses:

1. False prophecies

"But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have **not** commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which **the Lord hath not spoken**, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." (Deuteronomy 18:20-22)

2. Blending of pagan, occult teachings with Christian teaching (religious syncretism)

The apostle Paul warned, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For

in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.” (Colossians 2:8-10)

3. Change of teachings to rationalize their false prophecies and occultism

“For ever, O Lord, thy w_____ is s_____ in h_____.”

(Psalm 119:89)

4. A spirit of error is identified

*“We are of G_____: he that k_____ God h_____ us; he that is **not** of God h_____ n_____ us. Hereby know we the s_____ of t_____, and the spirit of e_____.”*

(1 John 4:6)

IV. Recognize that many key Bible doctrines are rejected by the Jehovah’s Witnesses.

A. Fundamental Bible doctrines rejected by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society:

**Jehovah
Witness
doctrine**

VS.

**Bible
truth**

1. The Watchtower Society rejects the biblical doctrine of **the Trinity**. Whereas, the Bible presents

God as **one in three persons**. All the attributes of Deity and personality are ascribed to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures (Matthew 28:19, John 5:18; 10:30; 14:9-15, Philippians 2:6-7, Colossians 2:9). Jesus declared, *“I and my Father are **one**.”* (John 10:30 KJV)

2. The Watchtower Society denies the biblical doctrine of **the deity of Jesus Christ**.

Whereas, Jesus is specifically declared to be **God** in the Bible (Isaiah 9:6, John 1:1; 10:33; 20:28; Acts 20:28, Titus 1:3-4, 2:13, Hebrews 1:8). The apostle John taught, *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word [Jesus] was God**.”* (John 1:1 KJV) Speaking to our Lord Jesus Christ, Thomas declared, *“**My Lord and my God**.”* (John 20:28 KJV) In like manner, King David said to our LORD [Jehovah] in Psalm 35:22-24, *“This thou hast seen, **O LORD [JHVH]: keep not silence: O Lord, be not far from me. Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, even unto my cause, **my God and my Lord**. Judge me, **O LORD my God**, according to thy righteousness; and let them not rejoice over me.”*** Also, in Hebrews 1:8 we read, *“**But unto the Son [Jesus] he saith, **Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.**”***

3. The Watchtower Society rejects the biblical doctrine of **the incarnation of God our Savior**. Whereas, the Bible teaches God became a man and lived among us (John 1:1-14, Acts 20:28, Colossians 2:9, 1 Timothy 3:16). The **LORD [Jehovah]** became a man and lived on this planet. His name was **Jesus** of Nazareth (Isaiah 44:6-Revelation 22:13-16). John proclaimed, *“And the Word (Jesus) was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”* (John 1:14 KJV) Referring to Jesus, the apostle Paul said, *“**God was manifest [revealed] in the flesh...**”* (1 Timothy 3:16)

4. The Watchtower Society denies the biblical doctrine of **the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ**. Whereas, the Bible records eyewitness accounts of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ (John 2:19-22; 20:25-29, Luke 24:37-43, Philippians 3:20-21). In an encounter the disciples had with Jesus after his bodily resurrection, Luke reported, *“But*

they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he (Jesus) said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? **Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.**” (Luke 24:37-40 KJV)

5. The Watchtower Society rejects the biblical doctrine of **the Holy Spirit as a divine Person**. Jehovah’s Witnesses teach the false doctrine about God found in Eastern Religions and Western Occultism that the Holy Spirit is a “life force” or “active force” of energy instead of an eternal Person. **Whereas, the Bible establishes that the Holy Spirit is God and a Person.** He has a mind (Romans 8:27), a will (1 Corinthians 12:1), and emotions (Ephesians 4:30). In fact, the Holy Spirit speaks, forbids, guides and teaches (John 14:26; 16:13, Acts 8:29; 13:2; 16:6-7). **He is called God** (Acts 5:3-4). The apostle Paul declared, “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, **the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.**”

(Acts 13:2 KJV)

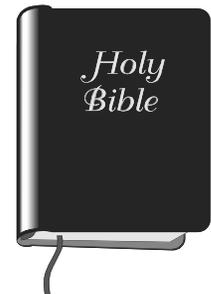
6. The Watchtower Society denies the biblical doctrine of **the visible, personal, bodily second coming of Jesus**. Christ’s return is viewed as an “invisible” event that occurred in 1914. Whereas, the Bible teaches that there will be a visible, personal, bodily second coming of Jesus (Zechariah 14:3-4, Matthew 24:30, Luke 21:27, Acts 1:9-11, Titus 2:13).

Concerning the second coming of “Jesus Christ”, the apostle John proclaimed, “**Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.**” (Revelation 1:7 KJV)

7. The Watchtower Society rejects the biblical doctrine of **the immortality of the souls of the unsaved**. Whereas, the Bible affirms that each person’s soul is immortal including those who reject Jesus and are “cast into the lake of fire” on Judgment Day (Ecclesiastes 12:7, Matthew 10:28, Luke 16:20-31, Revelation 20:4). In Hebrews 9:27 we read, “*And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:...*”

8. The Watchtower Society denies the biblical doctrine of **eternal punishment of the unsaved**. Whereas, the Bible confirms that eternal punishment awaits unbelievers (Matthew 25:46, Mark 9:43-44, Luke 16:20-31, Revelation 14:11; 20:10). John testified, “*And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, **If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.***” (Revelation 14:9-11 KJV)

9. The Watchtower Society rejects **the biblical doctrine of Heaven as the future destination of all saved people**. Whereas, the Bible makes it clear that Heaven is the future destination of all saved people (Luke 23:43, John 14:1-6, 2 Corinthians 5:8,



Philippians 3:20-21, 1 Peter 1:1-4) In John 14:2-3 Jesus promised his disciples, **“In my Father’s house [Heaven] 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 unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”**

In addition, the apostle Paul taught Christians at Philippi, ***“For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”*** (Philippians 3:20-21)

10. The Watchtower Society denies the biblical doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Whereas, the Bible teaches that there is a priesthood of all genuine believers (1 Peter 2:5-9, Revelation 1:6; 20:6). The apostle Peter taught, **“But ye [Christians] are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”** (1 Peter 2:9 KJV)

V. Some tips regarding how to witness to Jehovah's Witnesses

A. Pray. Recognize that Jehovah's Witnesses are satanically deceived through indoctrination in false teachings. Most will not get saved. Yet, God loves them and wants them to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:3-4). Don't be surprised or disappointed if they refuse your biblical message.



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B. Don't invite them to enter your home (2 John 9-11). They are coming with a "spirit of error." (1 John 4:1-6) Since Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the biblical doctrine of Christ, John commands, "*Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*" Speak to Jehovah's Witnesses at your door, outside or at their door.

C. As you witness, stay focused on the biblical gospel and the person of Jesus Christ. Don't allow them to get you sidetracked on other issues. Ask them to define "***the gospel of the kingdom.***" After they have incorrectly defined the gospel according to the Watchtower teaching, show them 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and Galatians 1:6-9. Recommend that they leave the Jehovah's Witnesses and begin studying the Bible at a biblical church where "*sound doctrine*" is taught.

D. Make them use the King James Bible. Their New World translation is corrupted with deliberate changes (additions and subtractions of words) to conform to their false doctrines.

E. Don't argue (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

F. Try to leave them gospel literature if possible (Romans 10:17).

G. JW's are trained to ask questions designed to plant seeds of **doubt** about your beliefs. But God's Word says, "*Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*" (Romans 12:21)

H. **USE SEED QUESTIONS to plant seeds of truth in their minds and hearts** so that *the Spirit of truth* might bring them to genuine, biblical salvation.

WRITE SEED QUESTIONS HERE:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

I. Remember their main attack areas (Trinity, deity of Christ, eternal punishment). Be prepared to back up everything you say with the Scriptures. Your real power lies in Christ Jesus and His Word (Matthew 4:4-7). Be prepared to witness by having three or four verses of Scripture memorized for each major doctrinal subject. Write down Scriptures to which you can turn. If possible, write down Scriptures for them to read later.

