

## JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Charles Taze Russell (1852 – 1916) was the founder of a religious sect originally known as Russellites or Millennial Dawnists. This group later came to be known as Jehovah's Witnesses.

Wikipedia states: *"In July 1879, Russell began publishing a monthly religious journal, Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence. In 1881 he co-founded Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society with William Henry Conley as president; in 1884 the corporation was officially registered, with Russell as president. Russell wrote many articles, books, tracts, pamphlets and sermons, totaling approximately 50,000 printed pages. From 1886 to 1904, he published a six-volume Bible study series originally titled Millennial Dawn, later renamed Studies in the Scriptures, nearly 20 million copies of which were printed and distributed around the world in several languages during his lifetime. (A seventh volume was commissioned by his successor as society president, Joseph Rutherford, and published in 1917.) The Watch Tower Society ceased publication of Russell's writings in 1927, though his books are still published by several independent groups."*

In 1897, after 18 years of childless marriage, tensions arose between Russell and his wife over her role as associate editor of the *Watch Tower*. In 1903 she sued for divorce. It was a scandalous case involving accusations of alleged affairs between Russell and women parishioners.

On March 22, 1911, *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reported another scandal involving "Miracle Wheat". Russell sold the wheat for \$60 per bushel, far above the average cost of wheat at the time. A government expert said the "Miracle Wheat" tested low in the Government's testing. The newspaper investigated the "Miracle Wheat" and said it "was low in the Government tests". The newspaper vowed to show that Pastor Russell's cult was nothing more than a money making scheme.

After Russell died, Joseph F. Rutherford became the President of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Dr. David Reagan points out that in 1929, during the Great Depression, Rutherford built himself a beautiful villa in San Diego which he used as his winter palace. There he lived like royalty, drinking imported liquor, smoking cigars, and driving around in a Cadillac. He claimed he built the palace for the patriarchs, judges, and kings named in Hebrews 11 which he expected to return soon. In an interview with *Time* magazine in March of 1930, Rutherford said, *"I have purposely landscaped the place with palm and olive trees so that these princes of the universe will feel at home."*

At the time he built the palace, Rutherford was predicting that at any moment God would kill every man, woman and child on planet earth except faithful Jehovah's Witnesses. The biblical heroes of Hebrews 11 would then return to earth, and under the leadership of King David, they would use the palace as their headquarters to rule the world.

Dr. Reagan points out that today most Jehovah's Witnesses know nothing about this scam. The property was quietly sold in 1948, and the teaching that David and the patriarchs would soon return was dropped in 1950. Since that time, the Watchtower leaders have gone to great lengths to cover up this hoax.

Dr. Reagan continues: “From its inception, the organization has been characterized by false prophecy. Originally, the prophecies were issued in the name of the president — first, Charles Taze Russell and then Joseph F. Rutherford. But since Rutherford’s death in 1942, the prophecies have been issued in the name of the organization’s governing body which is headquartered in Brooklyn, New York.

The first date the organization set for the Lord’s Second Coming was for the year 1914. It was later narrowed down to October of that year. Listed below are just a few of the prophecies that were issued over the years pointing to the date of October 1914.

1880 — “We need not here repeat the evidences that the seventh trump began its sounding in 1840 and will continue until the end of the time of trouble, and the end of the times of the Gentiles in 1914.” (Zion’s Watchtower, November 1880, page 1)

1888 — “... the full end of the times of the Gentiles, i.e., the full end of their lease of dominion, will be reached in 1914... at that date the Kingdom of God... will obtain full, universal control... and it will then be set up, or firmly established, in the earth on the ruins of the present institutions.” (The Time is at Hand, 1888, pp. 76-77)

1889 — “... the setting up of the Kingdom of God has already begun... and the battle of the great day of God Almighty ([Revelation 16:14](#)) which will end in 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth’s present rulership, is already commenced. Remember that... the Gospel age harvest will end October, 1914, and that likewise the overthrow of ‘Christendom,’ so-called, must be expected to immediately follow.” (Studies in the Scriptures, vol. 2, 1889, pp. 101 and 245)

1894 — “We see no reason for changing the figures — nor would we change them if we could. They are, we believe, God’s dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date of the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble.” (Watchtower, July 15, 1894, p. 266)

1897 — “Complete destruction of ‘the powers that be’ of ‘this present evil world’ — political, financial, ecclesiastical — [will occur] about the close of the ‘time of the Gentiles’ in October 1914.” (Studies in the Scriptures, vol. 4, 1897, p. 622)

1902 — “In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished by the end of 1914.” (The Time is at Hand, 1902 edition, p. 99)

Note: this same statement was contained in the 1908 edition of the same book.

1904 — “According to our expectations, the stress of the great time of trouble will be on us soon, somewhere between 1910 and 1912, culminating with the end of the ‘Times of the Gentiles’ in 1914.” (Studies in the Scriptures, vol. 6, 1904, p. 579)”

## THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND JESUS

In my opinion the most dangerous teaching of the Jehovah's Witnesses involves Jesus. You can be wrong about many things and still be saved as long as you are right about Jesus. To preach another Jesus, however, is satanic (2 Cor. 11:1 – 4) Paul insisted: **“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11)**. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Him (Jn. 1:6). It is the plan of God to unite all of heaven and earth under one head, even Christ (Eph. 1:10). Since God even commands all the angels to worship Jesus (Heb 1:6), the refusal of Jehovah's Witnesses to do so is a serious doctrinal error.

Jehovah's Witnesses did worship Jesus until 1954. At that time their doctrine changed and worshipping Jesus was considered idolatry. If their new position is correct it means that they have been a polytheistic religion for most of their history. It also raises the question of what other doctrines will be changed. The initial *Watchtower Charter's* specified that establishment of the Watchtower Society was to promote the worship of Jehovah *and* Jesus. After 1954, however, they are no longer permitted to do so. This change in doctrine came in association with the release of the New World Translation of the Bible. The word for “worship” in the Greek language is “proskuneo”. It is used 17 times with reference to Jesus but to protect their new doctrine they translated it as “obeisance”. They believe Jesus is “a god” but not “The God”. They are wrong!

## JESUS IS GOD

No matter what anyone says, Jesus is still God. Recognizing His true identity is not a peripheral issue but is foundational to the Christian faith. Jesus did not consider His equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied Himself of His Deity and became a man (Phil. 2:5 – 11). John said that Jesus came to earth to make God known (Jn. 1:18). Paul wrote to Timothy that He is God manifest in the flesh (I Tim. 3:16.)

Jesus is also the "Word" of God (John 1:1) A word is a vehicle of communication. Jesus, therefore, became the vehicle by which God communicates His nature to His people. Jesus reveals and explains God (Jn. 1:18), In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead in a body, and you are complete in Him (Col. 2:9-10,) The very essence of Christianity involves the realization that God became flesh and dwelt among us. His name is "Emmanuel," which means, "God with us" (Matt. 1:23).

The people of the world have sought for God in every generation (Acts 17:27). One reason we do so, is that God has placed a God shaped vacuum in every human heart (Eccl. 3:11.) Though God is not far from any one of us, most people have no idea what He is like. The pagans, for example, pictured God by means of crude images and idols. In their ignorance, they did not know God. Even the Jewish people did not have a clear concept of God. This is why they crucified Jesus. The Law had only a "shadow" of good things to come, and not substance (Heb. 10:1.) God is substance and not a shadow (Ja. 1:17.) No one can have an accurate view of God, or anyone else, from a shadow. Shadows are ever changing, but God is never changing.

This point is so important that it needs to be demonstrated in greater detail. No man can follow God, without following Jesus. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and no man can come unto the Father except by Him (John 14:6.) There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus (I Tim. 2:5.) Note that everything which the Bible represents as pertaining to the nature of God, is also attributed to Jesus.

Therefore, God determined to manifest Himself to mankind in the person of Jesus Christ. Understanding this is essential to discipleship. We cannot accurately understand or follow a God whom we cannot see. Jesus made God visible. He came to leave us an example that we should follow in His steps (I Pet. 2:21.) John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, explained the miracle of the incarnation in these words: **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.” (Jn. 1:1 – 4),**

The Bible was not written to deceive or confuse us. The fact that God wants us to worship Jesus is clear from the following Scriptures.

- Both are the "First and the Last" (Is. 44:6, Rev. 1:11)
- Both are the great "I Am" (Ex. 3:14, John 8:58)
- Both are "Lord of Lords" (Neut. 10:17, Rev. 17:14)
- Both fill the heavens and the earth (Jer. 23:24, Eph. 1:20-23)
- Both do not change (Mal. 3:6, Heb. 13:8)
- Both are Creators (Gen. 1:1, Col. 1:16)
- Both are Judges (Rev. 20:12, II Cor. 5:10)
- Both are to be worshiped (Matt. 4:10, Rev. 5:12-14)
- Thomas was right to say to Jesus “My Lord and my God” (Jn. 20:28).
- **"No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18.)**

#### THE BIBLE ONLY MAKES CHRISTIANS ONLY

The word's “Jehovah's Witnesses” do not occur in the Bible. No one will every become a Jehovah's Witness by simply reading the Bible.

Just as no one can become a Mormon without the Book of Mormon, no one can become a Jehovah's Witness without the teaching of the Watchtower.

Here are some quotes made available through Matt Slick and the Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry. The Jehovah's Witnesses are obviously different from churches that only go by the Bible.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach:

- The Bible can only be understood via the Watchtower organization. Quote: "Only this organization functions for Jehovah's purpose and to his praise. To it alone God's Sacred Word, the Bible, is not a sealed book," (Watchtower, July 1, 1973, p. 402).
- Individuals are not able to rightly interpret the Bible apart from the Watchtower organization. Quote: "Thus the Bible is an organizational book and belongs to the Christian congregation as an organization, not to individuals, regardless of how sincerely they may believe that they can interpret the Bible," (Watchtower, Oct. 1, 1967, p. 587).
- If you don't understand something, meekly wait for the Watchtower to tell you what the truth is; otherwise, you are foolish. Quote: "We should eat and digest and assimilate what is set before us, without shying away from parts of the food because it may not suit the fancy of our mental taste . . . We should meekly go along with the Lord's theocratic organization and wait for further clarification, rather than balk at the first mention of a thought unpalatable to us and proceed to quibble and mouth our criticisms and opinions as though they were worth more than the slave's provision of spiritual food. Theocratic ones will appreciate the Lord's visible organization and not be so foolish as to put against Jehovah's channel their own human reasoning and sentiment and personal feelings," (Watchtower, Feb. 1, 1952, p. 79-80).
- The Watchtower magazine is the means of God's communication. Quote: "It should be expected that the Lord would have a means of communication to his people on the earth, and he has clearly shown that the magazine called The Watchtower is used for that purpose," (1939 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, p. 85).
- Cannot understand the Bible outside of the Watchtower organization. Quote: "We all need help to understand the Bible, and we cannot find the Scriptural guidance we need outside the 'faithful and discreet slave' organization," (Watchtower, Feb. 15, 1981).
- Those who think apart from the Watchtower's guidance are like Satan. Quote: "From time to time, there have arisen from among the ranks of Jehovah's people those, who, like the original Satan, have adopted an independent, faultfinding attitude...They say that it is sufficient to read the Bible exclusively, either alone or in small groups at home. But, strangely, through such 'Bible reading,' they have reverted right back to the apostate doctrines that commentaries by Christendom's clergy were teaching 100 years ago . . ." (Watchtower, Aug. 15, 1981).
- If you love God, then you accept the Watchtower. Quote: "We cannot claim to love God, yet deny his word and channel of communication," (Watchtower, Oct. 1, 1967, p. 591).
- The truth of God can be known only through the Watchtower organization. Quote: "All who want to understand the Bible should appreciate that the "greatly diversified wisdom of God" can become known only through Jehovah's channel of communication, the faithful and discreet slave," (Watchtower, Oct. 1, 1994, p. 8).

## THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Lord's Supper is an integral part of Christian worship. Paul wrote: **“ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took**

bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.” (1 Cor. 11:23 - 32)

If you just go by the Bible this is very simple. On the night before Jesus died He gave His disciples unleavened bread and fruit of the vine. He said to eat and drink in memory of His death. They did! The early church even broke bread in their homes (Acts 2:46). Breaking bread, was, in fact, the primary reason they gathered on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). It was something all believers did every week.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses, however, do not go by the Bible. They follow instructions from the Watchtower more than the Bible. Consequently, they do not take the Lord’s Supper every week, they take it only once a year. Further, not all their members are privileged to take the Lord’s Supper as Christ commanded. Only the 144,000 (known as the “anointed class”) are permitted to obey Christ and take communion. According to Watchtower, only 144,000 are “born again” and will go to heaven. All others will reign on earth.

It has been my experience that Jehovah’s Witnesses are trained to jump from one Scripture to another to exploit the ignorance of those whom they are trying to convert. When you simply open the Bible and go chapter by chapter and verse by verse they are soon befuddled and confused.

- Based on the Bible everyone who is saved is “born again”. We have physical life because a physical seed was planted in our mother’s womb. Every seed, however, produces after it’s own kind (Gen. 1:11). As Jesus said “Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit” (Jn. 3:6). Consequently, if you want spiritual life you have to be born of a spiritual seed. This is precisely what happens to all believers: **“For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God” (1 Pet. 1:23).**
- All of the believers came together to break bread (Acts 20:7).
- All believers will have an eternal body in heaven (2 Cor. 5:1 – 10; Phil. 1:21 – 24).
- Again I quote Matt Slick: *“According to the Watchtower there were 52,465 of the select 144,000 still alive in 1935. That means that in 1800 plus years, from the time of the apostles till 1879 God could find only 91,535 faithful Christians worthy of a heavenly*

*calling, but in the short span of 56 years He was able to find 52,465. It certainly does not seem reasonable that the preaching work of the apostles and the first century Christians would only reach 91,535 people not to mention the next 1700 years. Any thinking person would realize that the number of 144,000 Christians would have been filled long before 1879, most likely in the first century.”*

- Jehovah’s Witnesses ignore the plain teaching of the Bible and establish their own doctrine.
- Please consider this sincere warning from Paul: **“But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”** (2 Cor. 11:3)

### TEST THE SPIRITS

**“Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world”** (1 Jn. 4:1).

The story is told of a banker who was training new employees to recognize counterfeit money. Rather than show them hundreds of counterfeit samples, he merely showed them one genuine and authentic bill. Once he taught them how to recognize what was genuine, it was easy for them to recognize the counterfeit. Please study the Bible to show yourself approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15). Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Matt. 4:4).

There are MANY false prophets that have gone out into the world. The false prophets of the Jehovah’s Witnesses are not alone. Adding to and subtracting from the Word of God is a dangerous thing to do (Rev. 22:18 – 19)! The best defense against false prophets is the knowledge of the truth. We are specifically warned against helping all deceivers (2 Jn. 7 – 11).

The Scriptures command us: **“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect”** (1 Pet. 3:15).

If you know the truth and are able to skillfully use the Sword of the Spirit, then you will be prepared not only to defend your own faith, but perhaps snatch others from the fire and save them” (Jude 23).

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