

Evidence That Jesus Is God: The Jehovah's Witness **sermonaudio.com**
New World Translation Bible is Wrong

Evidence that Jesus is God

By Larry Wessels

Bible Text: John 1:1, John 20:28
Preached on: Saturday, April 9, 2011

Christian Answers of Austin, Texas
9009 Martha's Drive
Austin, TX 78717

Website: www.biblequery.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/christiananswers

Announcer. If you would like a free newsletter on this or other subjects, just give us a call at Christian Answers. The phone number is (512) 218-8022 or you could email us at cdebater@aol.com. Thank you.

Christian Answers presents:
Evidence that Jesus is God

with host,
Larry Wessels, Director of Christian Answers
and special guest,
James White, Author, Speaker, Director of Alpha & Omega Ministries

"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." John 20:28

Larry Wessels. We have a very special guest with us today to help us in talking about a topic that is very misunderstood when it comes to theological issues. The theological issue: is Jesus God Almighty in the flesh or is he just a great prophet or was he just a good man or who was Jesus? We're going to get into all that vast topic because when you look at all the religions across the world, many of them say many different things about who Jesus is, particularly those that come to your door, knocking, trying to give you a magazine called "The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society," and called "The Watchtower Magazine" or "Awake." You may have heard that, commonly known as the Jehovah's Witnesses and that's their literature.

Well, before we get into all of that, I want to introduce my very special guest, James White. Greetings, once again, brother. You've done other shows with us and you're here again to do another topic and we're very happy about that. I'd like to mention James's credits if I could for a moment. James holds a Bachelor's Degree in Bible and a minor in biblical Greek from Grand Canyon University, Phoenix, Arizona. He graduated summa cum laude and was a ?? scholar. He holds a Masters Degree in Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. He's an ordained Baptist minister and he has

served as adjutant professor teaching church history at Grand Canyon University. He's also written several books entitled "Letters to a Mormon Elder," dealing with the Mormon religion. You've written two books dealing with Roman Catholicism entitled "The Fatal Flaw, Answers to Catholic Claims," and several other books on Christian doctrine such as "God's Sovereign Grace, Drawn by the Father, and Justification by Faith," and of course, one of your most recent booklets that is growing to a larger version called "New Age Bible Versions Refuted," dealing with the King James controversy and, of course, you are coming out with an actual book probably about 300 pages or more dealing with the King James controversy coming out by Bethany House. It's not out at the time of this taping but probably by the time most people see this, it will be out and they can contact our ministry for any of these books or information about my very special guest, James White. He's done many debates, has many lectures and other materials available and so those are yours to be had by simply calling or writing us.

Now James, I started off the show talking about how many people, many religions have many concepts about who Jesus Christ is, in fact, it reminds me of that classic passage in Matthew 16 when Jesus was talking to his disciples and he asked them, verse 13, I'll just go ahead and read it, Matthew 16:13, "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And of course, Jesus then blessed him and said that, "flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." So we have a very clear example from the scriptural record itself that people had all kinds of wild ideas about who Jesus was but apparently from this text, Peter gave the right answer. But looking at this, "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," this still, let's take the example as I mentioned before of the Jehovah's Witnesses who are just one of many religions that have what we believe to be a concept of Christ that's not in accord with what we find in the Scripture...

James White. Directly contradictory there.

Larry. Exactly. I was just saying it in a soft manner, you see, not to be too offensive here. But anyway, looking at this passage, "thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," still most people like the Muslims or whoever, Jehovah's Witnesses, they can look at that passage and still end up with the wrong concept of who Jesus really is because they redefine terms or they have their own concepts and just feed their meaning into what they see here. So for our viewing audience right now, can you maybe put a little more meat into what Peter is saying here and tie that in to other passages of Scripture that show directly who Jesus Christ is according to the biblical record?

James. Well, it's important to recognize that when Jehovah's Witnesses come knocking on your door, they have been trained and have been taught from, oftentimes from the cradle to a great age, many of them have been going door-to-door for many many years, that Jesus Christ is, in fact, the first creation of Jehovah God. The one true God is Jehovah, his first created thing was Michael the archangel who became Jesus Christ, but

Michael the archangel is the first thing that Jehovah created and then through Michael the archangel, Jehovah created all other things. The first thing that he creates is Michael, then through Michael he creates all other things. Michael becomes Jesus, sort of, in Watchtower theology. There is actually somewhat of a disjunction between Michael and Jesus when he becomes a man. We'll talk about that a little bit later. But most Jehovah's Witnesses in their mind will identify Michael as Jesus and today Jesus is Michael the archangel yet once again.

So the first thing that Jehovah creates is Michael. An important thing obviously there is that there can be no doctrine of the Trinity when Jesus Christ is identified as Michael the archangel as a created being who has not eternally existed. One cannot believe that God has eternally existed in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit when one says that the Son, himself, is a created being. But this is what they've been taught and they have been given literature, they have had literature literally pumped into them that very plainly teaches this. They have been given a Bible translation and I use the term translation very very loosely at that point, it is a Bible mistranslation that is specifically designed to foster this concept.

Larry. You're talking about the New World Translation.

James. The New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures, the Hebrew Old Testament together called the New World Translation which the Jehovah's Witnesses will almost always be carrying with them. Sometimes they carry it in a interlinear format known as the Kingdom Interlinear Translation, it used to be known as the Purple People Eater because it was in a purple cover, now it's in a blue cover since 1985. But the Society provides the New World Translation, the Kingdom Interlinear Translation at extremely low cost to their people because they have such huge printing facilities. You can buy a leather-bound New World Translation for about \$7.

Larry. Even though the translation itself was not translated by any reputable recognized Greek scholar.

James. That's very true but your Jehovah's Witness doesn't know that. He honestly thinks that it was.

Larry. In fact, just for the benefit of the viewing audience, I'll let you know that the translators of the New World Translation of the Jehovah's Witnesses were Frederick W. Franz, who was the President of Watchtower...

James. He recently passed away.

Larry. Right, at the time of this taping. Then there's Nathan A. Moore who was also a Watchtower President, and there is G. D. Gangas, Albert Shroeder and at the current time of this taping as well, Milton Henschel. I think this video may be floating around for years to come but Milton Henschel is the fifth man. None of these men were recognized

Greek scholars or Hebrew scholars yet they came out with a translation that, in your opinion, would intentionally pervert the meaning of the original scriptural text.

James. Yes. No two ways about it. The theological bias of the NWT leads them to gross mistranslations, many of which we will note. Many Jehovah's Witnesses may ask you how do you know who translated it? Because you can look in the front of the New World Translation and you will not find those names listed. Well, the names came out really twice, once in a trial in Scotland in the mid 1950's and then when Raymond Franz left the Watchtower Bible Tract Society, he also revealed the names of the translating committee.

Larry. In fact, he was on the governing body of Jehovah's Witnesses and he came out with a book called "Crisis of Conscience" and in there he revealed who it was.

James. Right. Right. Well, the Jehovah's Witness who comes to your door honestly feels the New World Translation that he has in his hands is scholarly and is the most accurate translation available. He has the Kingdom Interlinear Translation. He has had taught to him for many many years from the pulpit of the Kingdom Hall in the Watchtower Bible and Watchtower Magazine and the Awake Magazine this concept of Jesus as a created being. He's had it drilled into his mind that the doctrine of the Trinity is a pagan invention that did not even evolve until the fourth century at the Council of Nicea, and he has given to him normally rather butchered quotes in such things as their field service ministry manual known as "Reasoning from the Scriptures," where he can look up the topic of the Trinity and there will be all sorts of quotations listed there allegedly from scholarly sources, but that almost always is taken out of context and has these neat little ellipses in there where you can take things out that don't agree with your theology. You're talking to a person there are your door who is very very strongly opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity and has been misled very much by his religious leaders. Not only that, he may not even have an accurate knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity itself or the deity of Christ.

The Watchtower Society, I believe, has very purposefully misled its people through its publications. You can find in certain Watchtower publications like you can live forever in paradise on earth, which is their current study book they use for the first time. Individuals are studying with it and its red on its cover. You will find correct definitions of the Trinity within a page of incorrect definitions of the Trinity and so they are specifically misleading their people as to what the doctrine of the Trinity is so that the average Jehovah's Witness says, "Well, you don't know what the doctrine is. I don't know what it is either because no one really knows. It's just a mystery and it's irrational and there is no reason, really, to discuss it." This is a purposeful action on the part of the Watchtower Society to further insulate their people against the truth of the doctrine of the Trinity that is found in Scripture.

Larry. By the way, I know that black Muslims utilize Jehovah's Witness literature as well as other groups, the literature that the Jehovah's Witness have put out, to attack the doctrine of the Trinity and the deity of Jesus Christ so they can bring people into their own religious group rather than them believing, let's say, historical orthodox doctrine.

James. Right. Well, as long as it works, I guess that people will utilize it to attempt to accomplish something.

Larry. So the importance of this discussion is that although we're probably be centering mainly on dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses, their arguments and counter-replies, the importance here is that a discussion such as this will help people all across the spectrum, not just dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses but with, let's say, the black Muslims who use the same arguments, the Mormons deny the Trinity and the deity of Christ in the sense that he's not part of the, it's just their policy, they don't go along with the monotheism of the Scriptures and so forth. The Muslims, they deny that God has a Son. They'd have real trouble with this passage I just read out of Matthew a while ago, the Son of the living God. In Islam they don't believe that.

James. Well, any person who is talking to someone else and they have some sort of common basis in the Scriptures, this discussion will be for them and specifically for Jehovah's Witnesses in a sense, and that is that Jehovah's Witnesses tend to be extremely close-minded to any information that is contrary to the Society's perspective and if you can take their Bible or a translation they will at least allow to be used, and demonstrate the deity of Christ to them, almost every Jehovah's Witness that either has spoken to who left the Society and was converted to Christ, there are many Jehovah's Witnesses, sadly to say, who have left the Society and are now in a spiritual wasteland, they don't believe anything because they still accept the Watchtower's documentation that all the rest of man's religions are wrong, but now they've found out the Watchtower is wrong and therefore they don't believe in anything at all. They're just out there in a spiritual wasteland, there are literally a million of these people since 1975. They're just out there and they're not involved in any religious group at all which is a terrible thing. But if you're talking to a person who's left the Society and become a Christian, almost every single one of them will tell you that at some point in time they ran into a Christian who knew their Bible and was able to provide meaningful answers for the questions that they themselves had in regards to the person of Christ, and I really believe that God is honored when Christians in our land, when the cultists come to us, that we know the word so well that we can provide a reason for the hope that is within us.

So what I want to do in dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses is I want to suggest some other directions to go in demonstrating the deity of Christ rather than just the classical passages. I'll give you an example. I do not suggest using John 1:1 as the beginning of your conversation with Jehovah's Witnesses and there's a very simple reason why this is. As we know, the New World Translation of Jehovah's Witnesses mistranslates this passage. It says "the Word was a God," and you can go into all of that and may need to go into all of that eventually, but most Jehovah's Witnesses can respond to the citation of John 1:1 in a comatose state. In other words, they don't have to start thinking. They don't have to start interacting.

Larry. They're already expecting you to use the verse.

James. They're expecting it. They've heard it a thousand times. They've responded to it a thousand times. You're not starting any thinking process. The same with John 10:30. They'll refer you over to John 17 so fast your head will spin and you're not accomplishing anything. What I would like to try to suggest to people is a doctrine like the deity of Christ being as it is taught all through the Scripture, allows for more than one way of demonstrating it and I have found one particular way to be the best way to open the door, get the Jehovah's Witness thinking with you, examining the Scriptures with you and then you can go to the classical passages. But there's another way to open the door to them and that is to remember that for Jehovah's Witnesses, the name Jehovah and the person Jehovah is extremely important and if you show familiarity with the name Jehovah and I guess I should explain that that name is really Germanized but Anglicized, not even a translation, it's a mispronunciation of the divine name in the Old Testament which in Hebrew is Yuh-Hey-Vav-Hey, probably translated Yahweh, but has been rather mistranslated as Jehovah. But that's what they're familiar with using and there's no reason to really argue with them about a particular pronunciation outside of certain areas.

Anyways, they are very focused in upon that name Jehovah. Many of them think they're the only people who even know about the name Jehovah. They'd be very surprised to walk into your church and find you singing a song about Jehovah on a Sunday morning out of your hymnal. But since Jehovah is God to the individual Witness, I believe, I would like to suggest to people that one of the most effective ways to getting the Jehovah's Witness to start following you and thinking with you is to start off by demonstrating that Jesus is identified as Jehovah by the Scriptures, and since the Watchtower Society has not been quite as sensitive to this perspective in the past, they have not had the opportunity of mistranslating the NWT to attempt to hide their references. So you can utilize the NWT and, in fact, in one of the examples that we're going to look at today, the center column references in the New World Translation itself which were probably borrowed from other versions of the Bible other than the NWT...

Larry. Well, it had to be because since none of them were Greek scholars, they simple took other translations and pieced it together the way they wanted it to be.

James. Yeah, in the center columns, the center column reference is the cross referencing system, I think it was pretty much borrowed from someone else because at a particular point we're going to look at later on, you will find that the center column reference will refer you back to the Old Testament passage that identifies Jesus as Jehovah even in the NWT. So you can actually utilize their own, and in the Greek Interlinear you can do that.

Larry. I've got that marked out very clearly. In fact, their forward to their Interlinear, I think it's page 18 if my memory serves me correctly, I've done this so many times at Jehovah's Witness conventions, but their own forward shows that their references there for Yahweh and Jehovah interlink, I think, when it ties in with Philippians but it's too complicated to explain now, but I'm just saying like you're saying, you can use Jehovah's Witness literature. There are so many references concerning the topic you're about to bring up on the deity of Christ they couldn't hide them all.

James. Exactly. There are so many of them and it's also, and this is something I haven't seen a lot of people using, when you identify Jesus as Jehovah, in the Watchtower person's mind the Father is Jehovah. When you show the Son being identified as Jehovah and then the Spirit is the Spirit of Jehovah, you can utilize this to help explain to them the name Jehovah is being used of the being of God shared by three persons, the Father, the Son and the Spirit, and they start to understand what the doctrine of the Trinity actually is. So it is a two-pronged thing that is very effective.

Now there are many many passages that identify Jesus as Jehovah. I'm only going to talk about two because they are the two that I think are the plainest, clearest, and if we just throw a lot of Bible verses out, some people, it just may become too much, but there are two that I use in talking with almost every Jehovah's Witness that I speak with about this subject.

The first one is to be found in Hebrews 1. Hebrews 1, actually the entire first chapter of Hebrews teaches the deity of Christ from verse 2, of course verse 6, "let all the angels of God worship him." The NWT attempts to hide that by when they encounter the Greek term *proskuneo* in the New Testament, whenever it's used of the Father they translate it "worship," when it's used of the Son they now translate it "to obeisance to." They used to say....

Larry. They used to say worship. It still says worship. That has caused them so much grief they've now changed it.

James. Changed it to "do obeisance to," that's correct. But even verse 8, "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," they have the translation, "God is your throne." So they have done their best to attempt to hide the references to the deity of Christ here in Hebrews 1, but there wasn't anything they could do about the most startling reference to the deity of Christ in Hebrews 1 and that's because it begins at verse 10. I'm going to read from the New King James Version, Hebrews 1:10, "And: 'You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail.'" Now when you read this in context, this passage is being applied to the Son. Verse 8 said, "But to the Son He says: 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.' And: 'You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth,'" verse 10. So it is very plainly about the person of Jesus Christ.

Now where is this being taken from? Most Jehovah's Witnesses are not aware. The 1984 reference edition of the New World Translation will have the cross reference in its footnotes but you can cross reference this back to where it came from and it's Psalm 102:25-27 and it's a very direct quotation from Psalm 102, except when you look at Psalm 102, there is something you need to point out to your Jehovah's Witness friend

who is standing there at the door or sitting in your front room or wherever else it might be, and that is this passage is about Jehovah God. In fact, using the New World Translation, if you refer to, for example, verse 22, the name of Jehovah will be right there at the end of the verse. "When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve Jehovah." But here it is about Jehovah God, beginning in verse 25, "Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will have no end." This is about Jehovah God. So here you have a New Testament writer quoting Psalm 102 and notice it's not about the Messiah in the sense of a messianic function, this is talking about the immutability, eternity and creatorship of Jehovah God himself. This is talking about how he laid the foundation of the earth, his years will never change, he is unchanging. Clearly about Jehovah God in Psalm 102 and it's cited of the Lord Jesus in Hebrews 1:10.

Larry. Now what do you do, though? What do you do when in their translation, of course, they've known about verse 8 here in Hebrews 1:8, it says, "unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God," and of course, they get rid of this and say, "God is your throne," and they're trying to make it look like this is talking about God's throne or something.

James. But verse 9, I've never had a Jehovah's Witness actually try to go that direction because it is so plain. In fact, the Watchtower knows this. Do you know how I can tell they know this? The Watchtower Society inserted the name Jehovah 237 times into the text of the New Testament, 237 times. Now there are some times when I don't mind that it's inserted, specifically when they're citing Old Testament passages where it was used, but they didn't put it into Hebrews 1:10-12. You see, if they followed their own rules, at verse 10 they would have had, "You, Jehovah, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth." If they had followed their own rules as to why we insert the name Jehovah in the New Testament, the New World Translation doesn't say that.

Larry. They do that, "You, Lord." You're totally correct. I've used that same argument with Jehovah's Witnesses on, well, you mentioned before, John 1:1. They say it's an amorphous noun, that's why they can have "a God," and you find amorphous nouns throughout the Scriptures dealing with theos a couple of hundred times, but they only follow their translation rule only 6% of the time.

James. 6% of the time, 94% of the time they break their own rule.

Larry. Right, 94% of the time so wherever it suits them, they change it and don't want the reader to know about it.

James. That is the real character of the New World Translation. Interestingly enough, though, just to let people understand, one of the very first times I ever spoke with Jehovah's Witnesses, I went out to a city in Arizona called Mesa, Arizona, it's on the east part of the valley of the sun there, and I met with a Jehovah's Witness woman who was basically a housewife, and this has happened to me twice, in that meeting she gave me a

five minute pre-memorized recitation on the significance and lack of significance of the definite article in the Greek language, and anarthrous constructions in John 1:1 and all the rest of this stuff. Well, when I carry a Bible, I have an English text and then I carry along with me a Greek text and it is a Greek text without English in it, it's not an interlinear text. So I opened up my Greek text when she finished her little recitation to John 1:1 because she had just been talking about that, and so I just turned it and I asked around the room to her, I said, "Could you show me a definite article in John 1:1?" And she didn't really even know which way to hold the book as to which way was up or down, but the point being not to mock her but to point out the fact that she trusts what the Watchtower Society has to say implicitly. Absolutely implicitly. "This is Jehovah's organization. I trust anything they have to say." So when the Society tells them, "Well, this is the truth about John 1:1," whether it's the truth or not is irrelevant. The Society has said it, that makes it the truth.

So anyways, back to Hebrews 1. By focusing upon it and in dealing with any group, in dealing with the Mormons, in dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses, I think it's extremely important that Christians recognize that to communicate best with them, don't just sit there and say, "Well, compare Hebrews 1:10-12 with Psalm 102:25-27, what do you think of that?" It doesn't accomplish anything. You're not communicating anything. Reading the passages, establishing the context, talking about what I talked about with you, what is Psalm 102 talking about? It's talking about Jehovah's unchanging nature, the fact that he created all things, providing the context. Giving a way in which it can be understood is extremely important.

Larry. So you're talking more about, like, a Socratic method of inquiry, I mean talking it with them. I found with Jehovah's Witnesses you don't lecture to them, you have to kind of, "Well, here's a verse of Scripture, Hebrews 1:8 and following and I see it as this way. How do you feel about that? Or what do you see here? And does that relate?" And you can lead them along and have a fruitful conversation.

James. Yeah, it's not so much the Socratic method as it is just making sure that they realize that you're not just giving them a Bible reference. You have studied it, you know what it's talking about and you're giving the context of the passage.

Larry. Well, when I mentioned Socratic I'm mainly saying you get them involved in the conversation where you're not just pounding them over the head and saying, "This is my interpretation. You'd better believe it or you're out of here, buddy." You interact with them is what I'm basically saying.

James. Exactly. So Hebrews 1:10-12 with Psalm 102:25-27, one of the first places that I would go because you have the New World Translation basically on your side. Even though they don't put Jehovah in there, you can actually point that out later on as one of the inconsistencies, why don't they.

But another one is one that a lot of Christians are not familiar with at all and it's found in John 12, beginning really at verse 37 is where I will start. "But although He had done so

many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?' Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again: 'He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him." Now verse 41 is the key passage we need to focus in on and it's right here that we have an assistance from the center column reference in the New World Translation because here you have basically, and again this is where you want to establish with the Jehovah's Witness that you're not just throwing verses at them. John 12 beginning here, this is the summary of Jesus' public ministry. Beginning at John 13, Jesus is going to be speaking with his apostles in private in 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 before his betrayal. This is really the wrapping up of the public ministry as recorded by the Gospel of John. And in this process, we have quotations from the Old Testament to sort of summarize the disbelief, the unbelief of the Jews, and in verse 40 you have a citation from Isaiah 6:10.

Now what is Isaiah 6? Isaiah 6 is one of the most beautiful passages of the Bible in my opinion, and when I first had opportunity to preach in the church that I joined about five or six years ago now, or so now, this was, Isaiah 6 is what I preached from because I couldn't think of a more fantastic passage of Scripture to stand behind that pulpit and minister to God's people. Isaiah 6 is Isaiah's temple vision of the Lord, of Jehovah God, and there is tremendous truth to be found in Isaiah 6. But this is where it's being taken from and verse 40 is from Isaiah's temple vision. Verse 41 says, "These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him." The only "Him" in the context is Jesus. Look at verse 42, "Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue." Obviously the "Him" all the way through here is Jesus Christ.

Well, this verse 41, most Jehovah's Witnesses have never considered what does he mean? Isaiah said, "when he saw His glory and spoke of Him," when did Isaiah see his glory? Well, there is a reference on this verse in the center column of the New World Translation that refers you back to Isaiah 6:1. So you go back to Isaiah 6:1 with them, and I ask them to read it from the New World Translation because in the New King James, NIV, it'll say, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple." But the New World Translation says, "In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw Jehovah sitting on His throne high and lifted up, the train of His robe filled the temple." So even though the Hebrew term here specifically in 6:1 is Adonai, the NWT renders it as Jehovah, "I saw Jehovah sitting upon His throne."

So the question that I want to ask Jehovah's Witnesses is this: whose glory did Isaiah say he saw in Isaiah 6? And the only way that they can answer this, verse 3, "And one cried to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Jehovah of hosts,'" Yahweh Sabaoth in Hebrew, "'The whole earth is full of,'" what? "'His glory!'" So whose glory? Jehovah's glory.

Alright, Isaiah said he saw Jehovah's glory, now go back with me back to John 12. So you go back to John 12. Now verse 41, whose glory does John say Isaiah saw? He saw Jesus' glory. Who, therefore, is Jesus? Who did Isaiah see?

Why go this direction? Because the Jehovah's Witness has almost never, I mean, I cannot think of a single Jehovah's Witness with whom I have ever spoken that says, "I've already seen this." That any Christian at any door, and it's somewhat sad really, had ever shared with that Jehovah's Witness.

Larry. The problem is most Christians don't even know about it.

James. I think that's why we're here, isn't it? I think that's what we're doing here. You're exactly right, most Christians, this is one of those dry things called theology. It's that systematic theology and it's supposed to not be relevant to your Christian life. Now who the majesty of Jesus Christ can't be relevant to your Christian life, I can't....

Larry. Don't you know theology is just a feeling in your heart, that warm fuzzy feeling?

James. Yeah, yeah. Let's not start preaching about that. We'll be at it forever.

This is an excellent passage because they haven't seen it before and so you don't have the automatic, you've seen it. I've seen it, it's like the shades are going down, a wall comes down, they start packing up their little book bag, they're getting ready to head straight out the door type situation. This type of verse really causes Jehovah's Witnesses to think because as one former Jehovah's Witness I know, it was these passages that took him out of the Society and this was his comment, "God or a God is one thing, but if he's Jehovah, it doesn't matter whether he's God or a God, he's God." If he's identified as Jehovah to the Jehovah's Witness, all the arguments about John 1:1 become absolutely academic and irrelevant and that's why if you start here, you've established a base, you've opened up a door and you have the person thinking. Now that does not mean that I'm immediately going to go over to John 1:1. There are some other passages that I would suggest going to, but the nice thing about using the fact that Jesus is identified as Jehovah is that you can use the NWT at that point without causing any problems, and almost any other passage you're going to go to in dealing with the deity of Christ, you're going to have to deal with a mistranslated New World Translation.

Larry. Right. They try to cover the straightforward biblical doctrine of the deity of Christ. So what you've shown here to the audience now are two very effective biblical passages that can be used either in your own regular translation whether it be a King James or a New American Standard or whatever, and the Jehovah's Witness translation which is the New World Translation.

Now I know that the Mormons like the King James so when you're dealing with the Mormons, you don't have these kinds of problems. The only problem you've got there is dealing with all those extrabiblical doctrines because the Mormon doctrine kind of almost supersedes biblical revelation.

James. There is something I need to mention. If you're using the New International Version at John 12:41, there is a little freedom in the rendering there and it says, well, I'm just putting this in, "These things Isaiah said when he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him." And the Jehovah's Witness may say, "Well, mine says his glory," and that may put them on to attempting to say it's someone other than Jesus. So I just wanted to mention that. Now I don't want anyone to get the wrong idea there, in regards to the classical passage on the deity of Christ, the single strongest translation in my opinion and I've created some charts to demonstrate this and so forth, but the single strongest translation in my opinion in English on the classical passages on the deity of Christ which I would include as John 1:1, John 20:28, John 1:18, Acts 20:28, Romans 9:5, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 1:15-17, Colossians 2:9, Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1, those being the classical passages that either use the term God of Jesus Christ or describe in such awesome ways as to only and possibly be....

Larry. It's unfortunate, I had turned to one of those passages you just referenced.

James. Well, let me just mention the strongest translation of all of them in the rendering of all of those passages is the NIV. The NIV is the plainest in rendering all of those in the clearest possible way in regards to the deity of Christ so I don't want anyone to take what I mentioned in regards to John 12:41 as somehow saying the NIV is not good to use in dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses, in point of fact it's very good.

Larry. Now I want to tie in, the reason I picked one of these classical passages here to go to next just for exposition, it seemed to resemble what you were saying from the Isaiah and John 12, and that of course, is in Philippians 2. So I'd like to go there and have you expound a little bit on this passage of Scripture. As you know, down in verse 10 that ties in with Romans 14:11 and I've seen many Jehovah's Witnesses I've dealt with, and I've dealt with hundreds over the years believe me, and this passage I've used many years and it has messed up all the Jehovah's Witnesses. So if you could expound for the viewers this passage, it's Philippians 2 starting in verse 6 and going on down the page.

James. I would love to and what you have to do is step on my toe if I start preaching too much because this is one of the most beautiful passages of Scripture in all the Bible, it is one of the plainest references to the deity of Christ, and I remember sitting with two pioneer ministers, you know who pioneers are among Jehovah's Witnesses, two women pioneer ministers and I remember going through this, what is called the Carmen Christ, the hymn to Christ as God, and using it to help them to understand what the New Testament teaches about the deity of Jesus Christ and I remember looking at one lady, she was sitting just over to the right of me, I remember looking in her eyes and when I got to the point of explaining what the whole point of this passage was, I saw it hit her. It was the wall going up and it scared her. She saw exactly what the passage was talking about.

Larry. The wall going down?

James. No, it was the wall coming up. She saw what I was talking about and it scared her. She had never seen it before and she physically sat back when she realized what the passage was talking about.

Larry. You know, I've seen that many a time myself either with this passage or with that passage dealing with the beginning and the end, alpha and omega in Revelation. There is a passage in Revelation 21.

James. But there are so many passages.

Larry. It's outstanding. Go ahead.

James. The important thing, there are two things. First of all, you're right in that verse 10 is pulling from Isaiah 45:23 which, again, is about Jehovah, to Jehovah the knee will bow and so on and so forth, but before you ever get to that wonderful thing, I like to use verses 4 through 9 to help the Jehovah's Witness understand the nature is Christ. The fact that you have one person with two natures, the divine and the human, and Philippians 2 is great in doing that because the first thing you've got to do with this passage, you must do with this passage is say, "Now what is Paul talking about?" And you read through verses 3 and 4 and you explain the humility of mind with which Christians are to treat one another. We are to be concerned about others and this topic of humility, what is it to be humble? It's to have certain rights. I have certain rights as a Christian but I lay these rights aside in service for others. That's what humility of mind is all about and Paul brings up as his classical example of what it is to act in humility of mind toward others, Jesus Christ.

Verse 5, have "this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Okay, here's my example, Philippians. Here's what I am going to tell you about in regards to how it is that you're to be humble. Jesus Christ is our example of humility.

In verse 6 he says, "who, existing in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped or held onto." Now the New World Translation gives the most wooden, horrific, horrible translation of this passage that I've ever seen in any translation in the world. It is absolutely juvenile in nature. It is so bad from any standpoint, English, Greek. It's bad in Swahili. It is bad in every language you could possibly put it into because it's just actually tortuous the way that it's put.

Larry. I think we're dealing here with the New World Translation with people who actually know what they're doing. They are intentionally deceiving those who will be reading this text. They know what it says but they do not want the truth of what the text says to get to the people so they intentionally torture the text, twist it.

James. They most definitely did. This passage is extremely important. First of all, the word for "existing" is a participle. It is a present participle. It's ongoing. He eternally existed in the morphe of God, the form of God. That's important. Remember that it says he existed in the form of God, not saying that at some point in the past he existed, he

came into existence in the form of God. No, it just simply asserts that in eternity past, he existed in the form of God, the form of God because we're going to run into that term in just a moment and it's going to be very very important.

Then when it says he did not give consideration, he did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, of course the people who deny the deity of Christ says, "Well, what this is, of course, is that he didn't even consider trying to become equal with God." People who deny the deity of Christ say this is what it's talking about, he wasn't equal with God and he did not give consideration to try to become equal with God. Well, there is a bunch of problems with that. First of all, nobody has ever said to exist in the form of God other than God himself. Angels don't have the form of God. Only God has the form of God.

Larry. I remember a Jehovah's Witness in a laundromat once telling me...

James. Saying that angels existed before God which is allegedly just spiritual, but we're going to see there's a problem with that.

What I like to do is I like to say there are two ways of understanding verse 6 and then close the door once I get down to verse 7. One is this concept of those who deny the deity of Christ saying he didn't try to become equal with God, and the other is he eternally existed equal with God but did not consider that something that he had to hold onto at all costs. And I don't try to answer that question yet. I want to go on and get a little bit more of the passage to lay the foundation. "But he made himself of no repute." As you used it, the kenosis passage, the Greek term that's used here. He emptied himself doing what? "Taking the morphe of a servant, the form of a servant." Now I ask the Jehovah's Witness was he truly a servant? If he was truly a servant because he has the morphe of a servant, in verse 6 he had the morphe tu theu, the form of God and, therefore, what was he then? He takes the form of a servant, "being made in the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man, He humbles himself becoming obedient unto death even the death of the cross."

Now let me ask you something. We're talking about humility here. Remember the context I laid? The context I laid was Paul is exhorting the Philippians to humility, then he gives the example of Jesus Christ. What would be an example of humility? Would it be an example of humility not to be equal with God and not to try to become equal with God? That's humility, to be a lesser being and just seek not to become equal with God? That's not humility. Remember what we said, humility is having certain rights and laying them aside in the service of others. Would we say that Michael the archangel was humble for not trying to become equal with God? Of course not. Would we say that the janitor in the White House is humble if he does not try to take over the President's office? No, of course not. It would be stupidity for him to do so. In the same way then, the example here, the context demonstrates what Paul's talking about. The humility that Jesus shows is due to the fact that he eternally existed in the form of God but he did not consider that equality with the Father that was his, something to be held onto at all costs. What does he do? He lays it aside for what reason? For you and for me. He takes on the form of a servant. He's found in the likeness of man for what purpose? For the death of the cross.

Humility is having rights but doing what for others? Serving others. What does Jesus Christ do? He gives his life on Calvary's tree for God's people.

Larry. He sheds his blood for their sins and then three days in the grave, rises again for their justification and eternal salvation. That's the Gospel message.

James. That's the Gospel message and that is why in verse 9, "because of this God is highly exalted and given Him the name which is above every name." They put in the word "other, every other name," because they want Jehovah's name to stay above Jesus even though it's not in the text.

Then you have verse 10, "in order that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and under earth, every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord," and literally it is that Kyrios Iesus Christos, that Lord is Jesus Christ under the glory of God the Father and that is taking from Isaiah 45:23 where Jehovah says, "Every knee shall bow to Me." So you have the fullness of the entire passage being brought out demonstrating that Jesus Christ eternally exists in the form of God, yet he takes on the form of a servant, the God-man. It's an example of humility so obviously he had to have existed equal with God or the entire example of humility is done away with. There is no example of humility here if you do not understand it in the Trinitarian sense. Paul is making absolutely no sense at all.

It was at that point when I brought out that example of humility, that that one pioneer minister, it was just like, "Wow. Oh no, what am I going to do now?"

Larry. I never thought of that.

James. I never thought of that. Then when you tie it in with verse 10 and Isaiah 45:23, you have another example where Jesus...

Larry. And it falls in line with the very Jehovah's Witness, you know how you were mentioning before, in their own New World Translation and their Kingdom Interlinear, they say that the reason inserting this word "Jehovah" is whenever they find a reference in the New Testament that ties in with the Old Testament, then they can insert Jehovah because it's tied directly to the Old Testament Jehovah or Yahweh as you mentioned. Well, this is one passage where they should have followed the rule....

James. Should have put it in but they didn't.

Larry. ...and they made a mistake, though, if my memory serves me correctly because I remember one Jehovah's Witness that I mentioned a moment ago, when I used this passage and I use it at almost every Jehovah's Witness I deal with, there is a cross reference here in Philippians 2:10 to Romans 14:11. Romans 14:11, it says there, "For it is written as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God." Isaiah 45:23. So what you have here in the New Testament is a double reference to Isaiah 45:23 and according to their own rules should be translated the way

they're doing it as Jehovah, but they put it in Romans. They don't put it here because it's too obvious.

James. We have a tract entitled "Hiding the Divine Name" and the New World Translation, Jehovah's Witnesses are very upset when you say that they're involved in hiding the divine name but the New World Translation does hide the divine name. For example, in regards to this Jehovah issue, you'll notice at the bottom of their footnotes in their reference edition, they refer to what I call the "J" documents. The "J" documents are nothing more than Hebrew translations of the New Testament and none of them are really old, but they use those to say, "Well, see, these 'J' documents use the term Jehovah here in the New Testament so we will too." We've documented a number of places where the "J" documents they drew from identify Jesus as Jehovah. We have the photocopies of where there is the name Yahweh right there in the Hebrew text identifying Jesus as Jehovah. Like when Paul said no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit, some of those "J" documents say no one can say Jesus is Jehovah except by the Holy Spirit.

Larry. That's why I was mentioning before about their Kingdom Interlinear on page 18 of their forward, they had same thing down there in a footnote. I didn't bring it with me today. I didn't know we were going to do this show.

James. But there are many passages like this that you can share with people. Just a couple of others I want to make sure to hit. One of them that I really suggest for people, especially for memorization, if you want to memorize a Scripture and I strongly encourage you if you are going to engage in witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses with any sense of regularity, that Scripture memorization be a part of your routine because you're going to find Jehovah's Witnesses to be very very oriented toward Scripture memory themselves and very very good at handling the text.

Larry. Well, if they can't remember, they've got their little book "Reasoning from the Scriptures," and some other helps and they can sit there and read out of that.

James. That's true but you will find Jehovah's Witnesses to be very biblical literate people, at least Watchtowerly biblically literate people. That doesn't necessary mean....

Larry. They have the rose-colored glasses and they're reading the Bible, it's like Bill S. once said, he said, "Here are people perishing with Bibles in their hands," because what they're really doing is not believing what the Bible says. They don't believe what the Bible says, they believe what the Watchtower says the Bible says.

James. That's right. They have an authority above Scripture. Colossians 2:9 is the passage that I'm referring to. Colossians 2:9. Unfortunately it is mistranslated in the NWT but, "because in him is dwelling all the fullness of deity in bodily form," is how I would translate the Greek. Now the King James and the New King James use the term Godhead and unfortunately the term Godhead doesn't communicate a lot to almost anybody, let

alone Jehovah's Witnesses. They translate it Godship and they sort of do some messing around the kingdom....

Larry. Is that part of the Navy or something?

James. Yeah, I don't know but it's definitely not, it doesn't communicate a whole lot to anybody. But Colossians 2:9...

Larry. We're going to have to hurry now. We're running out of time. About five minutes to go.

James. Five minutes to go. Well, let me show you the background. Colossians 2:9 and Colossians 1:15-17 is another passage that is very important to the deity of Christ where Jesus Christ created all things whether in heaven or on earth, visible or invisible, over the principalities, powers, dominions or authorities, all things created by him and for him and he is before all things and in him all things hold together. The term "other" is inserted after every word "all." So he created "all other" things in the New World Translation. If you're dealing with the book of Colossians and dealing with Jehovah's Witnesses, what you need to remember is the background of the book of Colossians. Paul is writing the book against an early form of what's known as Gnosticism. The Gnostics believed that what's known as dualism, the idea that everything that's good is spiritual, everything that is evil is flesh. Anything that's fleshly and material is evil, everything that is spiritual is good. They were called dualists because this dual perspective of the world, and the Gnostics were dualists themselves and Paul is battling against that. Seemingly the people who had come into Colossae were willing to worship Jesus as sort of an intermediary being but not as truly God, sort of like Jehovah's Witnesses in a sense, even though they don't even use the term worship anymore, it's relative worship. But the point being Paul in Colossians 1 destroys one of their arguments by saying that Jesus Christ created all things. The Gnostics had had to say that the evil creation was created by a demiurge, a much lower being, and Paul is saying, "No, he created everything that exists whether in heaven or on earth." That automatically caused the Gnostics a real problem.

But here in Colossians 2:9, it's like he walks up and smacks them across the face. Someone may tell you to be more loving, well, Paul wasn't very loving to the Colossians here because he walked right up to them and he said, "Because in him is dwelling," present tense right now, "all the fullness of deity," the Greek term here is *theotatos*, this is one of the problems with the King James Version is it translates this term, *theotatos*, with the same word that it translates another term, Romans 1:20, which does refer to just divinity, the divine attributes. This term refers to that which makes God God. This is a very strong term. It's only used once in the New Testament and it's used of Jesus Christ. All the fullness of deity dwells right now in Jesus Christ, how? In bodily form.

Larry. Now you're saying in the King James it says the Godhead which kind of leaves people kind of wondering a little as well.

James. And it also translates a totally different Greek term in Romans 1:20 as Godhead, though the two Greek terms mean very different things. The point being that Paul says the fullness of that which makes God God is dwelling right now in the resurrected Jesus Christ in bodily form. The Gnostics go, "Ah!" because God cannot touch anything that's evil.

Larry. That is almost as powerful as you can get.

James. It is about as powerful as you can get and I would suggest to people if they want to memorize passages to deal with the Jehovah's Witnesses on the deity of Christ, Colossians 2:9 is one of the best ones to go to. We're running out of time but the other two that I wanted to get to eventually were Titus 2:13 and 2 Peter 1:1 which are correctly translated in the NASB, NIV, but are not correctly translated in the King James Version. Not because there is some bias against the deity of Christ by the King James translators but because it is a form in the Greek known as Granville Sharp's rule that the King James translators simply were ignorant of.

Larry. Now it's interesting because about two minutes ago, I was going to close the show on Titus 2:13. I had it all set up here but I've got a King James so I've got real problems now after what you just said.

James. Well, what can I say?

Larry. You've got the Greek text there, I'll read it in the King James and you give us a quick analysis here as our time runs out. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

James. The only thing wrong with that is it's ambiguous. It says "the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." The construction should be "of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" because both are referring to one person, Jesus Christ, and it's not referring to two separate persons but the King James allows that possibility by putting that extra word in there.

Larry. Not knowing about the Granville Sharp rule. I've got it all defined here but it's too complicated.

Well, we're just about out of time, James. I would like you to give some concluding comments and then I'll sign off the show.

James. Well, I think it's vitally important that we as Christians when we share with others, give a reason for the hope that's within us. The Bible teaches the deity of Christ very plainly. If we love Jesus Christ, we should be able to explain his majesty and his glory and his deity to those who would ask us why we believe in him.

Larry. Amen to that. Well, I'd like to invite anyone watching the show that they can call or write. The phone number and address are on your screen there and we have plenty of

literature available, Scripture references, other materials that may be of help to you. Please give us a call and we'll do what we can to provide you with the information you need.

Well, I'm Larry Wessels with James White signing off for today but may the Lord bless you and join us again next week. God bless.

Announcer. Check out our websites.

biblequery.org – This site answers 7,700 Bible questions.

historycart.com – This site reveals early church history and doctrine proving Roman Catholicism is not historically or doctrinally viable.

muslimhope.com – This site is a classic refutation of Islam, a counterfeit religion created by Mohammed.

Free newsletters are also available.