

False Prophets Part 4, Jehovah's Witness

A sermon by Pastor Byron Chesney 06-27-2018

† **Galatians 1:6-10** I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. 10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

As we continue with our studies of false prophets and false religions, our focus tonight will be upon the Jehovah's Witnesses.

First of all, I want us to recognize some signs of a false religion (or cult).‡

1. They always believe they are the ONLY true religion.
2. They believe that God ONLY speaks through them.
3. They are always adding additions to the Bible.
4. They typically target true believers.
5. They always teach a works-based salvation.
6. They have a distorted view of Christ and his finished work on the Cross.

We do not have time to go into the full history of Jehovah's Witnesses, but we need to understand how they originated and why they are considered a false religion. So, we will look at the basic history and teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses.

WHO started the JW's?

Charles Taze Russell was the founder of what we now know as **The Jehovah's Witnesses**. Russell started out as a Presbyterian, his family were all members of a Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA. At age 13 Russell left the Presbyterian Church and joined the Congregational Church. His fear and hatred toward the Bible doctrine of hell, both horrified him and drove him to explore different religions, not just so-called "Christian" religions. He became heavily involved with the occult and their Satanic teachings. He even stated this in his very first issue of **Zion's Watch Tower**: "**a truth presented by Satan himself is just as true as a truth stated by God...and ... accept truth wherever you find it.**"

Hmmm, well that's interesting considering what Jesus told the Pharisees in the Gospel of **John 8:44**: **Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.** I believe that contradicts what Charles Russell said...

Russell was not only involved in the Occult but also dabbled in Free Masonry and had an infatuation with Egyptian Pyramids. He claimed that the pyramids in Egypt are divine omens and that they contained prophetic secrets known only to him.

Well, eventually Russell became involved with the Seventh Day Adventists and picked up on a lot of their beliefs, which is basically where the foundation of Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine comes from.

Sometime in the 1870's, Russell began a Bible study group. He believed that the end of times had begun in **1799** and the Christ had returned invisibly in **1874** and would be crowned King of Heaven in **1878** which would begin the rapture of the

Church. He believed that the **Battle of Armageddon** would begin in **1914**. So, he devoted his life teaching and preaching about the events that would occur when that happened.

Well, when 1878 rolled around and passed by and there was no rapture, Russell decided that he had "miscalculated" the date and distanced himself from the Seventh Day Adventists but continued preaching. He then started "**Zion's Watch Tower**" in 1879 which eventually led to the founding of "**The Zion Watch Tower Tract Society**" which later became known as just "**Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society**." Then in 1917, a year after Russell died, the new President shortened the name to just, "**The Watch Tower**." The publications produced by the Watch Tower were, and still are, to teach the doctrine and beliefs of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

In his lifetime, Russell's denomination was NOT known as "**Jehovah's Witnesses**," it was called the "**Bible Student Movement**," and was known as that until after he died in 1916. It was the second President, **Joseph Franklin Rutherford**, in 1931, who named the group, "**Jehovah's Witnesses**." He took the name from **Isaiah 43:10** **Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.**

In 1935 Rutherford named the JW's houses of worship as "**Kingdom Hall**." So, a lot of the present day JW theology and doctrine actually comes from Rutherford and not Russell.

Russell did not claim to have visions or dreams the way that the Mormon's Joseph Smith did, rather he made up his own beliefs based upon his twisted mis-interpretation of the Bible.

The basic teachings of Charles Russell and still held by the JW's today:

- ✦ **Hell:** He did not believe in a literal Hell. He could not entertain the thoughts of a Holy God condemning anyone to hell. Instead of people going to hell, he claimed that their soul just ceased to exist.
- ✦ **Heaven:** He claimed that there would be 144,000 "anointed" saints who would be allowed entrance into Heaven. Everyone else are considered "other sheep," and would receive an earthly resurrection and remain here on earth in "**Paradise**" for eternity.
- ✦ **Jesus:** He claimed that Jesus was a created god and was actually **Michael the Archangel** in human form. They teach that Jesus was the "first born of all creation." Prior to his incarnation, he existed as Michael the Archangel in Heaven. Michael became Jesus. Upon his earthly birth, Michael became Jesus, but he was only a man. He was not empowered as Christ until he was baptized. He believed that Jesus died on a torture stake and his body was dissolved by God the Father. The Father then recreated Jesus' body 3-days later, in a spiritual form but not physical form, and then he ascended back to the Father and as he went back to being Michael the Archangel.
- ✦ He rejected the **deity of Jesus Christ**; therefore, he also rejected the doctrine of the **Trinity**: He claimed that the Holy Spirit was just the "**force of God**," but was not a person.
- ✦ **Salvation:** He rejected the Bible teaching of Salvation by Faith in Christ alone. He believed in an added "**works salvation**."

If you go to the official **JW.ORG website** and look at their “**What Is Salvation?**” section, you will find this: *“To gain salvation, you must exercise faith in Jesus and demonstrate that faith by obeying his commands. The Bible shows that you must have works or acts of obedience, to prove that your faith is alive.”*

On whether or not you can “lose” your salvation they state this: *“Yes. Just as a person saved from drowning could fall or jump back into the water, a person who has been saved from sin but fails to keep exercising faith could lose out on salvation. For this reason, the Bible urges Christians who have received salvation “to put up a hard fight for the faith.” It also warns those who have been saved: “Keep working out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”* This “work” of course is following the rules and doctrine of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, being part of the JW organization, knocking on doors every Saturday, etc.

✚ **JW Bible:** While they claim to be “Christians,” they reject a large percentage of the Christian doctrine that is found in the Bible. So, in 1950 they had to come up with their own Bible translation called the “**New World Translation.**” Up to that point they had used the same King James Bible that we use. They published their NWT through their Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in 1961. It is based upon the corrupt Wescott & Hort text, the same as used in the NIV and other new modern Bible versions.

They change the words of the Scripture to suit their heretical beliefs. Let me give you some examples.

☉ **Since they reject the doctrine of the Trinity:**

In Genesis Chapter 1 we are all familiar with what our KJV Bible says: **Genesis 1:1-2** *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And **the Spirit of God** moved upon the face of the waters.*

Well, their NWT says this: **Genesis 1:1-2** *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 Now the earth was formless and desolate, and there was darkness upon the surface of the watery deep **and God’s active force** was moving about over the surface of the waters.*

Notice the difference? Our KJV says “**Spirit** with a capital S **of God.**” Theirs says “God’s active force” (lower case). Since they reject the teaching of the Trinity they remove any indication from the Scriptures that the Holy Spirit is a member of the triune God-head and they have to change it to “**active force.**”

☉ **Since they reject the deity of Christ,** look at what they have done with John 1:1:

Our KJV says this: **John 1:1:** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

Their NWT says this: **John 1:1:** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.*

They clearly do not believe that Jesus is God, therefore they have pulled his rank down to just “a god,” right on the same level with Zeus, Mercury, or Poseidon.

☉ **Since they reject the teaching of the Cross:**

Our KJV says this in **Mark 15:30** *Save thyself, and come down from the cross.*

But their NWT says this: **Mark 15:30** *save yourself by coming down off the torture stake.*

Again, because of their rejection of a cross being the device used to crucify Jesus upon, they have to change all references of the cross to a “**torture stake.**” I wonder what they sing? *“On a hill far away, stood an old rugged torture stake.”*

These are just a few of the heretical mistranslations in their New World Translation Bible and they use it as part of their deception.

Sometimes they start out by reading the same Scripture that you will find in your King James Bible and they will use it to try and manipulate you. Eventually they will interject their Watchtower Society material. Their goal is to “**cause you to see the truth**” according to them.

Some of the other bazar beliefs of the JW’s are:

- They do not believe in people having blood transfusions. They base this upon a misinterpretation of the Scriptures which deal with the Jewish laws of not allowing the eating or ingesting blood.
- They do not believe in celebrating any special occasions or holidays. They base this on all holidays and celebration days having pagan origins. (I wonder how they keep up with the days of the week and months? They all have pagan origins as well...)
- They do not believe in the symbol of the cross such as we use in our church. They also claim it to be a pagan origin and not what Jesus was crucified upon. They claim he was crucified on a single pole, yet they have no evidence of that. I guess we will have to change the Old Rugged Cross to the Old Rugged Pole. So, they shun all cross symbols.
- They do not believe in saying the pledge of allegiance to the flag or participating in any patriotic activities.
- They do not believe in joining the military or fighting for our country. Again, they base this belief upon their misinterpreting of the Scriptures. They use Isaiah 2:4 as their proof text on why they do not believe in going to war: **Isaiah 2:4** *And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.* What they fail to realize is that this is not speaking about our the current world we live in – it is referring to the future Messianic Kingdom where there will be peace on this earth for 1,000 years.
- They also use Matthew 26 as the reason they do not believe in wielding weapons: **Matthew 26:51-52** *And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest’s, and smote off his ear. 52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.* The only problem with that applying that to all circumstances, is that it was only applied to this particular event. The disciples certainly carried weapons and were not forbidden to. But in this particular instance Jesus is teaching Peter that what is happening is what is supposed to happen. If he tries to go up against these soldiers, he is going to die.

Let me give you 7 of the chief false beliefs of the JW's.^s

1. Jesus Christ is not God. Rather, he is Michael the archangel.
2. The Holy Spirit is not a person, but an "active force." J.W.'s are unitarians, denying the Trinity.
3. When you're dead, you're dead. Man has no eternal soul, any more than animals.
4. Jesus Christ was not raised bodily from the grave but was recreated as a new "spirit body."
5. Jesus returned invisibly in 1914. There is no "visible coming" planned in the future.
6. There is no hell. Just like animals, when we die, it is over.
7. Only 144,000 people achieve heaven. The rest, faithful Witnesses who have died, will be recreated on earth during the kingdom of the "New World."

I think we can all agree that they are a false religion and not Christian since they do not worship the same God that we do and they do not believe in the same Jesus that we do and they also reject most of the basic truths of Christianity.

A few statistics on current Jehovah's Witnesses:

1. There are approximately 7 million practicing members of the Jehovah's Witnesses.
2. There are around 100,000 Kingdom Halls world-wide in 230 countries.
3. The Watch Tower has produced literature in 432 languages.
4. There are around 6 million Home Bible studies being conducted by JW's all around the world.
5. The Watchtower prints 28 million copies published in 155 languages.
6. The Awake! Magazine is published in 81 languages and has an average printing of 34 million copies.
7. Their two magazine publications have the largest circulation of any religious magazines in the world.

So, what do we do about all of this?

1. Well, first of all we need pray for these people and ask the Lord to soften our hearts toward them.
2. Second, we need to recognize that God loves the people that are caught up in the false religion of Jehovah's Witnesses just as much as he loves you.
3. The ones that come around knocking on your door are sincere about their beliefs but unfortunately, they are sincerely wrong.
4. We need to show them the love of a Christian instead of belittling them or their beliefs. They have been very deceived and that's the reason they are JW's. Most JW's were indoctrinated because someone came to them during a difficult time in their life and showed them kindness and compassion.
5. We need to pray for them. You can offer them a Bible tract but they most likely will not accept it from you as they are forbidden by the organization from reading anything outside of their approved literature.
6. If you want to try and convert them, you will need to listen to their spiel first. Be patient with them and let them say what they came to say and do this without interrupting or disputing.
7. After they have told you everything they came prepared to tell you, ask them if they would now allow you the same time to ask them some questions. You

must be confident enough to try to present Scripture to them that refutes their beliefs. REMEMBER: They are heavily indoctrinated. They spend hours and hours studying and they know more about the Bible than the average Christian does.

8. If you decide to try and talk to them, do not making condemning accusations or call them a cult member – they will clam up and not listen to you if you do.
9. If they want to counter-react to you, ask them to wait until you are finished.
10. If they try to go back to the doctrine of the Watchtower magazine or the teachings of the organization, ask them to show you in the Bible where it lines up with Scripture.
11. Ask them if the Word of God is inspired. – they will say yes.
12. Ask them if their Watchtower literature is inspired. – they will say no.
13. Ask them how they can rely upon the words of the Watchtower if it is not inspired words?
14. Ask them if they would be willing to only use the Word of God to learn the truth?

If you are confident enough to try and witness to a JW, let me give you some advice from someone who is a former Jehovah's Witness. His name is Jerry Robinson. He became genuinely born again and got out of the JW's and now he tries to witness to JW's and also helps train others to witness to them.

Here are some of the guidelines that he gives for witnessing to a JW:

1. Do not try to preach to them.
2. Do not try to use your King James Bible to show them the Scripture because they believe it is corrupt and they will not listen to it.
3. Do not get into an argument with them. Only lovingly speak with them. He suggest that we remember what our Bible says in: **2 Timothy 2:23-26** *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. 24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*
4. Question to ask a JW to make them think: **What must I do to be saved?**
 - a. What about the thief on the cross?
5. Question two to ask: **Can I show you something in your Bible?** Use their own NWT Bible to prove who Jesus is. Have the JW read from his own Bible:

Revelation 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says Jehovah God, "the One who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty."

Ask them, who is the Alpha and Omega? – They will say Jehovah God

Revelation 21:6-7: And he said to me: "They have come to pass! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To anyone thirsting I will give from the spring of the water of life free 7 Anyone conquering will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

Ask them, who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end? – They will say Jehovah God

Have them read: Revelation 22:12-13: “Look! I am coming quickly, and the reward I give is with me, to repay each one according to his work. **13** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

Ask them, who is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end? – They will say Jehovah God

Have them read: Revelation 1:17-18: When I saw him, I fell as dead at his feet. And he laid his right hand on me and said: “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last, **18** and the living one, and I became dead, but look! I am living forever and ever, and I have the keys of death and of the Grave.

Ask them, when did Jehovah God die?

This typically will make them stumble. They will not have an answer for it because they do not believe that God ever died but they do believe that Jesus died, so it will cause them to have to think.

If they are still willing to stick around after that and learn more you can then take them to the Scriptures:

I want to show you what that Bible says about how we can examine our faith to see if it is true or not.**

KJV: **2 Corinthians 13:5** *Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*

NWT: **2 Corinthians 13:5** *Keep testing whether you are in the faith; keep proving what you yourselves are. Or do you not recognize that Jesus Christ is in union with you? Unless you are disapproved.*

Notice that their Bible wrongly translates that verse by removing the word “**in**” and adding the words “**union with**” in that verse. Those words are not from the original Greek text.

Ask them if Jesus Christ lives IN them?

Tell them to use their *interlinear (purple Bible)* which breaks down the Greek text and shows the English translation. Have them look this verse up. They will find that in their interlinear Bible it says: **2 Corinthians 13:5:** *Selves be you testing if you are in the faith, selves be you proving; or not you are recognizing selves that Jesus Christ in you? If not what disapproved you are.*

They will have to admit that the NWT translators removed “**in**” added in the words “**union with,**” to fit their theology and that it is not part of the original text.

The truth is, we could go on and on poking holes in their theology but the main thing we want to do is get them thinking and doubting their JW brainwashing.

† All Scripture from the Authorized King James Version

‡ Witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses: www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgEM6tON7al

§ <http://www.chick.com/bc/1985/jehovahswitness.asp>

** Lorri MacGregor – Ex-Jehovah's Witness speaks out.
www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=12250542425