

Introduction

There has been a lot of confusion concerning Jehovah's Witness and mainstream Christianity being similar in belief systems. Jehovah's Witnesses consider themselves to be the only true Christian religion on the earth today and that only their interpretation of the Bible is correct; however, there is a big difference with mainstream Evangelical Christians.

The purpose of this paper is to point out serious differences between their system of beliefs and those of true Christianity. These differences are so extreme in nature that this group has to be considered as a cult and a false religion. The very essence of being a "Christian" is to acknowledge the very deity and redemptive work of Jesus Christ in His death, burial and physical resurrection. As always, the central question always comes back to Jesus!

1 John 2:22-23

Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist — he denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

A Little History

Officially known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, the Jehovah's Witnesses are a product of the life work of Charles Taze Russell, born February 16, 1852, near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Without any formal theological training he started a Bible class in his teens whose members made him "pastor."

In 1879 he founded the magazine Zion's Watchtower in which he published his own unique interpretation of the Bible. There are no "articles of faith" or authoritative doctrinal statements issued by the Watchtower.

During his missionary work, he faced several scandals including separation from his wife after 18 years of marriage, and the accusation of fraud for selling "miracle wheat" for a very high price.

Upon Russell's death in 1916, Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford, a Missouri lawyer who had defended Russell in several of his legal battles, succeeded him as president of the society. Rutherford officially incorporated the group in 1931 as the Jehovah's Witnesses with the legal title, "The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society." Rutherford developed Russell's ideas into a formal doctrinal system. He also transformed the congregational structure of the sect as it was under Russell into a rigid theocracy; with the power to make all policy decisions. Rutherford laid the foundation for the cult as we know it today.

Rutherford died in 1942 and was succeeded by Nathan H. Knorr. When Knorr died in 1977, Fredrick W. Franz took his place. He died in 1992 and was succeeded by Milton G. Henschel. He died in 2003 and was succeeded by the current president Don A. Adams.

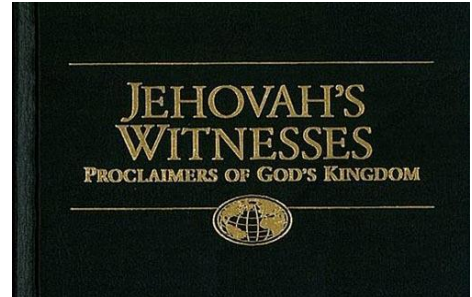
Today, their theological views are found in their various publications, including The Watchtower, Awake and "What Does the Bible Really Teach?"; a 220-page book now used as the official textbook in all Bible studies conducted by the Jehovah's Witnesses. The doctrine that proceeds from these works is considered authoritative among their circles.

The Bible

Although the Watchtower contends that the Scriptures are their final authority, we find they constantly misuse the Scriptures to establish their own peculiar beliefs. This is accomplished chiefly by quoting texts out of context while omitting other passages relevant to the subject. For all practical purposes their publications take precedence over the Scriptures; they have their own version of the Bible- the New World Translation.

The Watchtower has this to say about itself: "It is God's sole collective channel for the flow of Biblical truth to men on earth" (Watchtower, July 15, 1960, p 439).

F.W. Frantz, president of the Watchtower, relaying how interpretations come from God, stated, "They are passed to the Holy Spirit who invisibly communicates with Jehovah Witnesses – and the Publicity Department" (Scottish Daily Express, November 24, 1954). We conclude from these statements that the Watchtower believes itself to be the organization that speaks for God in today's world.



Even though the Watchtower Society claims to believe that the Bible is the inspired and accurate Word of God, we need to remember the old saying, "Don't watch what someone says – watch what he does."

Until 1950, Jehovah's Witnesses generally used the Authorized (King James) Version of the Bible. However, the use of this faithful translation of the Scripture presented great problems for Witnesses in their proselytizing efforts, because a straightforward reading of the text clearly contradicts every major teaching of the Watchtower Society.

In the 1940s, Nathan Knorr, then president of the Watchtower Society, proposed that Jehovah's Witnesses produce their own new translation of the Bible. Work was begun in 1947 and completed in 1960, and was undertaken by a team of men whose names the Watchtower Society has refused to reveal.

But the resulting *New World Translation* of the Bible, now the official Bible version of the Watchtower Society, reveals an entirely different agenda - to produce a "Bible" whose text would agree with Jehovah's Witnesses' teachings, no matter how much the original Hebrew and Greek text had to be ignored, twisted, or embellished. The irony here is that Jehovah's Witnesses are guilty of the very thing they denounce the Roman Catholic Church of doing in the Bible versions it has produced in the past.

The Bible Alone Is Not Enough

Like all other cults, Jehovah's Witnesses in practice deny the inspiration and authority of the Bible. Founder Charles Taze Russell taught that man's reason has authority over Scripture. Men should "examine the character of the writings claimed as inspired (the Bible) to see whether their teachings correspond with the character we have reasonably imputed to God." (Charles Taze Russell, *Millennial Dawn* (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1902), page 41.)

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that their religion is the "sole visible channel" of God in the world, and that the Bible cannot be understood except through the matrix of the pronouncements of the Watchtower Society, which they call God's "visible organization." (*Watchtower Magazine* (Brooklyn, New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society) October 1, 1967, pages 587 and 590.) It is well to note that this is essentially the same position taken by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Apostle Paul crystalized the greatest threat to the early church as it is today, and it's not persecution; rather it's the infiltration of false doctrines and teachers who distort the Scriptures in order to gather a following after themselves.



Acts 20:29-31

I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

1 Timothy 4:1-2

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

However, the Jehovah's Witnesses have no single document that embodies an official doctrinal position. Various books and publications of the Watchtower organization have been put forth as "official" at different times through the cult's history. And as we shall see, they have often taken conflicting positions.

Jehovah's Witnesses give the impression of knowing their Bible. They flip back and forth to their favorite "proof" texts with the greatest of ease, "proving" their points and defeating your arguments - or at least stirring up enough dust to cloud the issue. But, in reality, most Jehovah's Witnesses don't know the Bible. What they do know is those few dozen "proof" texts, taken out of context by their organization and re-assembled to form arguments far afield from what the Bible actually says. The Witnesses are taught to believe they "study the Bible" more than other religions, but their study material actually consists of Watchtower Society publications. Bible verses are quoted, but out of context. Not only is the context omitted, but the verses are actually placed in a different context, namely the context of the Watchtower material.

When discussing matters among themselves, Jehovah's Witnesses will reference and turn to Watchtower publications to prove a point or to determine what they should believe. Turning to a Bible verse is never sufficient, because they know their beliefs really depend upon the Society's interpretation of the verse. In fact, Jehovah's Witnesses routinely search their publications for the Society's latest interpretation, if they have been in the organization long enough to see "the light get brighter" on various matters- always changing.

When the Society revises failed prophecies or reverses doctrinal positions, it often uses the very same verses to support the new teaching. The old interpretation is simply discarded and a new interpretation supplied as the official meaning of the verse in question. Occasionally, however -- such as when some internal upheaval in the organization frightens the leadership into using strong language to keep the members in line- a statement is published that betrays their real attitude:

"Jehovah God has also provided his visible organization, his 'faithful and discreet slave,' made up of spirit-anointed ones, to help Christians in all nations to understand and apply properly the Bible in their lives.

Unless we are in touch with this channel of communication that God is using, we will not progress along the road to life, no matter how much Bible reading we do." The Watchtower December 1, 1981, page 27.

When speaking with outsiders, the Witnesses are trained to quote and cite only the Scriptures- not the Watchtower publications that form the real basis for their beliefs.

Examples of Distortions of Scripture

Unfortunately, many purposeful mistranslations exist in their version of the Bible to support their tenets. For example, in the New Testament, "Lord" is translated <Jehovah> except where it refers directly to Christ.

To affirm that Jesus was created, they add the word "other" to Colossians 1:16, "For by him all things were created..."; "By means of Him, all other things were created in the heaven and upon the earth... All other things have been created through him and for him. Also, He is before all other things and by means of Him all other things were made to exist."

John 1:1-2, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

In the famous John 1:1, the Jehovah's Witnesses version is mistranslated as, "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." Their false assumption is that Jesus is not God in flesh, but Michael the archangel who became a man. Therefore, since they deny that Jesus is divine, they have altered the Bible in John 1:1 so that Jesus is not divine in nature.

In the Greek in John 20:28 Thomas said to Jesus, "ho kurios mou, kai ho theos mou," "*The Lord of me, and the God of me.*" If Jesus was not God, but "a" god, then shouldn't Jesus have corrected Thomas? Shouldn't Jesus have said, "No Thomas, I am not **the** God. I am **a** god."? But Jesus did not. To do so would have been ludicrous. Nevertheless, the Jehovah's Witness will say that Thomas was so stunned by Jesus' appearance that he swore. This is ridiculous because it means that Thomas, a devout man of God, swore in front of Jesus and used the Lord's name in vain in violation of Exodus 20:7. This is hardly the case since we find no New Testament equivalent of a disciple of Christ using God's name in vain.

False Prophecies

The Jehovah's Witnesses are also preoccupied with Armageddon- the final clash between the forces of good and evil. Here God will destroy the old system of creation and establish Jehovah's Kingdom. A group of 144,000 spiritual sons of God will rise to heaven, rule with Christ, and share their happiness with the others. However, the wicked will undergo complete destruction. Russell said that this Armageddon could not happen later than 1914. (He had given specific dates and times on three earlier occasions, but was wrong). From 1920, Rutherford proclaimed that "millions now living will never die"; he also expected the "princes of old"- Abraham, Isaac, and the others- to come back to life by 1925 as rulers over the New World.

After so many mistaken predictions, the Watch Tower Society of the mid-20th century no longer specified an exact date for all of this to happen; but it repeated that "this generation will by no means pass away until all things occur." More recently, Nathan Knorr, who succeeded Rutherford in 1942 as head, predicted that the world would end in 1974; the world itself did not end, but this world did for Knorr—he died in 1974. Nevertheless, Witnesses are deeply convinced that the end of the world will come within a very few years.

2 Peter 3:15-16

Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

The Big Differences: The Bible

Christianity

Jehovah's Witnesses

The Bible is our final authority for all matters that pertain to life and conduct; inspired, inherent and infallible- contains no errors from the original.	Believe the Bible has been corrupted over the centuries and is only understood clearly when interpreted in light of their Watchtower publications.
Our modern translations of the Bible were taken from the original manuscripts. Dozens of Greek & Hebrew scholars, educated and well known did the work.	In 1960, the New World version was published by a team of men whose names the Watchtower Society has refused to reveal.
Christian evangelical churches do not make end time predictions, because they rely on what is already stated in Scripture as true and unchanging.	Numerous false prophecies have been made over the years about the end of the world. This alone reveals the fallacy of their religion.

The Trinity

Christianity is monotheistic, the Bible clearly teaches that God is one and is expressed in three persons, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit- co-equal and co-divine. From the Old Testament Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...'" to the New Testament Matthew 28:19, "...in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The Scriptures are crystal clear!

The Watchtower makes it clear they do not believe in the doctrine of the Trinity. "The trinity doctrine was not conceived by Jesus or the early Christians" (Let God Be True, 1952, p. 111). "The plain truth is that this is another of Satan's attempts to keep the God-fearing person from learning the truth of Jehovah and His Son Christ Jesus" (Let God Be True, p. 93). In Watchtower theology neither Jesus Christ nor the Holy Spirit is God. The Jehovah's Witnesses say that Jesus is God's Son, but is inferior to God. Ironically, however, when they baptize, they use the formula, "...In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

According to the Jehovah's Witnesses, there is one God, and since 1931, they have insisted that He be called "Jehovah." This is a corruption in the pronunciation of the Hebrew <Yahweh>, which occurred about the third century B.C. and was carried into the King James Bible's translation of <Yahweh> in Exodus 6:3. The New International Version does not use the term "Jehovah" but rather translates <Yahweh> as "LORD".

Jesus Christ

The totality of the Christian experience is founded upon the person of Jesus Christ. To attack the sovereign deity of Jesus sums up the spirit of the Anti-Christ in this age as I quoted on the first page-1 John 2:22-23.

Jude 4

For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

2 Peter 2:1-3

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

In the theological system of the Jehovah's Witnesses, Jesus Christ is not God in human flesh, but rather a created being. "Jesus, the Christ, a created individual, is the second greatest personage of the Universe. Jehovah God and Jesus together constitute the superior authorities" (Make Sure of All things, p 207).

"He was a god, but not the Almighty God, who is Jehovah" (Let God be True, p33).

"If Jesus were God, then during Jesus' death God was dead in the grave" (Let God be True, p91).

"The truth of the matter is that the word is Christ Jesus, who did have a beginning" (p88).

The denial of the deity of Christ is nothing new in the history of the Church. It is a revival of the ancient heresy known as Arianism (named after the fourth century A.D. heretic Arius). Arianism teaches that the Son was of a substance different than the Father and was, in fact, created. To the Jehovah's Witnesses, Jesus is not equal Jehovah God. He was rather, Michael the Archangel in his preexistent state, having a brother named Lucifer who rebelled against God while he (known then as Michael) remained obedient (see J Rutherford, The Kingdom Is At Hand, p 49).

Upon His resurrection He went back to His former state as an invisible spirit, no longer having a body. That's right, Jehovah's Witnesses do believe in a bodily resurrection of Jesus. They believe that Jesus' body was "annihilated" by God, not risen; that He was resurrected as a "spirit creature"- what about Luke 24:37-38.

They do not believe that Jesus Christ was God coming in the "**flesh**" to our earth to save mankind from their sins. This one right here completely disqualifies them from being a pure true branch of Christianity. Here is the verse from our Bible that completely nails them on just this one issue alone. These teachings echo the heresies which the early Church condemned beginning at the council of Nicea in 325AD. 1 John 4:1-3.

Jesus was never apologetic or sheepish about His divinity as God, and the Jews were willing to stone Him to death on a few occasions on the charge of Blasphemy. Either Jesus was the greatest liar that ever lived, was absolutely crazy or simple told the truth; there is no arguing who He said He was and backed it up with miracles and His resurrection from the dead to prove it.

Matthew 1:23, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"— which means, "God with us."

John 10:30-33

"I and the Father are one." Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?" "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

John 8:58-59, "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

Holy Spirit

According to the Watchtower Society the Holy Spirit is not part of the Godhead. Both the personality and the deity of the Holy Spirit [defined as “the invisible active force of Almighty God which moves His servants to do His will” (Let God Be True, p. 108)] are denied. The personality of the Holy Spirit is consistently rejected through the New World Translation by not capitalizing the term “spirit” when referring to the Holy Spirit.

In other words they would define the Holy Spirit as the “force” in the “Star Wars” movies. An impersonal force or power not a real person; which conveniently fits with their rejection of the Trinity. Yet if the Holy Spirit is just some mystic comic force then...

- Why is He called God (Acts 5:3-5)?
- How is it that He can teach (John 14:26)?
- How is it that He can be blasphemed (Matthew 12:31-32)?
- How can He be the one who comforts (Acts 9:31)?
- How is it possible for Him to speak (Acts 28:25)?
- How then can He be resisted (Acts 7:51)?
- How can He be grieved (Ephesians 4:30)?
- How can He help us in our weaknesses (Romans 8:26)?

If the Holy Spirit is a force, then how is it possible that the above mentioned characteristics are attributed to Him? A force can't speak, teach, comfort or be grieved and blasphemed.

Works Based Salvation

In Watchtower theology, salvation is not regarded as a free gift from God based upon Jesus Christ's work on the cross. Rather, their literature stresses a salvation by works. Russell wrote, “They must be recovered from blindness as well as from death, that they, each for himself, may have a full chance to prove, by obedience or disobedience, their worthiness of life eternal” (Charles Taze Russell, Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. 1. P. 158). Elsewhere they state: “All who by reason of faith in Jehovah God and in Christ Jesus dedicate themselves to do God's will and then faithfully carry out their dedication will be rewarded with everlasting life...” (Let God Be True, p. 298).

Each member is considered an ordained minister to give witness to Jehovah by announcing His approaching Kingdom. He may do this by door-to-door evangelization, by meeting with others for home Bible studies, or by standing at street corners to display Watch Tower literature. Preaching the good news is the only means of salvation. Ordinarily, the entry level Jehovah's Witness is called a “servant”. A “publisher,” attends five hourly meetings a week and is to devote 10 hours a month witnessing. A “pioneer” gives 100 hours a month to the society.



The Bible clearly teaches we are saved by grace through faith alone- Ephesians 2:8-9. Man's good works can never contribute to his salvation- Acts 15:9; 26:17; Ro. 3:28; 4:5; Gal. 2:16; Titus 3:5.

John 6:28-29, “Then they asked him, ‘What must we do to do the works God requires?’” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

After Life

Hell

The Watchtower denies the existence of hell as a place of everlasting punishment for the wicked. They argue, "The doctrine of a burning hell where the wicked are tortured eternally after death cannot be true mainly for four reasons: (1) It is wholly unscriptural; (2) it is unreasonable; (3) it is contrary to God's love; and (4) it is repugnant to justice" (Let God Be True, p 9). They tell their followers that hell is the "grave" where we are buried in when we die, and that the wicked will simply cease to exist (Annihilation) and will not have to suffer any type of eternal punishment and torment.

Jesus made it very clear in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30, of a place of darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then in the parable of the sheep and the goats, Matthew 25:31-46, those on his left will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life:

Matthew 25:41-42

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

The Bible does not teach soul sleep as the Jehovah's Witnesses do, consider the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. This is not a parable, but an actual account of an event that Jesus had narrated.

The doctrine of everlasting punishment is neither contrary to God's love nor justice, as the Watchtower claims. Jesus Christ has taken the sins of the world upon Himself and offers everlasting life to all who will call upon His Name in Faith and confess Him as Savior and Lord- Romans 10:9-10. One of the greatest acts of love is for God to judge and quarantine all sin and evil in the Lake of Fire so that it would not like a cancer destroy all of God's creation. Humans are eternal spirit beings; where they spend eternity is based on what they do with Jesus- Accept or Reject Him. Sin has to be punished; if people reject His offer then they must suffer the penalty for their own sins- Matthew 10:28; Mark 9:43, 47-49.

John 3:35-36

"The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

John 8:24

"I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins."

Heaven

Witnesses also have a different view of heaven than mainstream Christianity. Based on their reading of prophetic books like Daniel and Revelation, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that only 144,000 people will go to heaven to rule with God and Jesus. The remainder of the righteous will enjoy paradise on earth - a restored Garden of Eden in which there is no sickness, old age, death or unhappiness. Jehovah's Witnesses look forward to a theocracy, in which all human governments are abolished and God rules the entire earth himself. This is expected to occur soon. Although Witnesses once predicted specific dates for this event, they now state that "the Bible does not give a date for these events, but it provides evidence to show that we are living in 'the last days' of this troubled world."

How to Witness to Jehovah's Witnesses at Your Door

Despite their cordial smiles and happy appearances, most Jehovah's Witnesses you meet at the door are under stress and have no spiritual peace. Because of their belief that Armageddon will occur at any moment, they feel constant pressure to perform and have no assurance that they have been doing enough to be acceptable to Jehovah God. Love in the organization is conditional upon performance. If they do not perform or are caught doing an unapproved act (such as reading anti-Jehovah's Witness literature), they will be "marked" as a spiritually "weak" person to be watched or avoided, and if the act is serious enough, they will even be "dis-fellowshipped" (kicked out of the organization) and "shunned" by all of their friends and family members in the organization. There is simply no way for a Jehovah's Witness to experience true unconditional love in the Watchtower.

If you are prepared, you can show them a different way. Demonstrate the unconditional love of Christ in your words and actions. Let them know that regardless of whether they agree with your beliefs, you care about them and want to be their friend. When you've finished a tough discussion with them, always let them know that you love them and will be praying for them. This will plant a seed of truth and love that will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

Remember, Jehovah's Witnesses are bound to the teachings of the Watchtower organization. So, until they are ready to leave their religion, do not expect them to agree with you on the doctrinal differences that come up in conversations. Just plant seeds of Scriptural truth with love and let the Holy Spirit drive it home in their hearts. Someday, you may even have the privilege of seeing the Holy Spirit open their eyes to His Truth- John 14:6. So, be patient and do not pressure them into agreeing with you. You must understand that Watchtower policy strictly prohibits Jehovah's Witnesses from reading anything critical of their beliefs and practices. The Watchtower Society has even published articles explicitly warning Jehovah's Witnesses not to accept literature from the people they meet at the door. Thus, if a Jehovah's Witness is discovered to possess "apostate" (anti-Jehovah's Witness) literature, he runs the risk of being dis-fellowshipped.

The best way to witness to the Jehovah's Witnesses who show up at your door is for you to invite them into your home for a friendly conversation on the differences between Biblical Christianity and Jehovah's Witness beliefs. While it may be tempting to argue with them by saying: "You are wrong because the Bible says..." Avoid this temptation because you can win an argument but lose the heart of the person; as the old saying goes: "Convince a man against his will and he is of the same opinion still!"

Rather than you telling them what you believe, it is far more effective to challenge their beliefs by asking logical and Scriptural questions in a gentle and loving way. Since Jehovah's Witnesses pride themselves in being able to answer anyone who challenges them on their beliefs, if you know the effective questions to ask, you can raise serious doubts in their minds that the Holy Spirit can use to convict them of the truth. So, be patient and do not force them to agree with you when they cannot answer your questions right away. Allow them to save face by humbly acknowledging their struggle with the contradiction you raised and then let the issue rest. You can do the same if they ask you a tough question that you can't answer right away. Just say:

"That's a good question. I never thought of it that way before. I would like to do some research on this subject this week and the next time we get together, can we talk about this?"

They will almost never say: "No!" to your request. By giving each other the opportunity to save face in this manner, you will be able to keep your discussions from turning into a debate.

Remember, your goal is not to win the argument, but to win the person. Don't expect them to change their beliefs and accept yours right away. They are representatives for the Watchtower organization, so even if they desire to change their beliefs, they can't, without leaving the Jehovah's Witness religion altogether.

There isn't an honorable way out of the Watchtower. Jehovah's Witness who leave the organization ("disassociate" themselves), are "shunned" by their friends and family the same way as those who are "disfellowshipped" for wrongdoing. Therefore, your goal is just to plant seeds of truth that God can use to convict their consciences. When they understand the point you made (whether they agree with you or not), you have accomplished your goal.

To be effective in witnessing, you must first recognize that Jehovah's Witnesses are not interested in debating or arguing with you about your beliefs. Since they believe that Christianity has "apostatized" from the teachings of the Bible, they do not believe that you have anything to offer them. They also believe that their leadership has been appointed by Jehovah God to "channel" truth to His people, so Jehovah's Witnesses will not accept an interpretation of the Bible that disagrees with the official teachings of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

Finally, they are trained to avoid people who know a lot about their history and beliefs and who attempt to get them to leave the Watchtower organization. So, if you come across as too knowledgeable, they will immediately reject anything you say and mark their records so that you will not receive any more visits from their Kingdom Hall. Thus, to avoid coming across as being too knowledgeable, we suggest that you preface any discussion about their beliefs with a question like this:

"I've heard that Jehovah's Witnesses believe... Is this true?"

One word of caution as you engage in dialogue with Jehovah's Witnesses: Stay on the topic that you or they bring to the table for discussion. It is common for Jehovah's Witnesses to try to distract their "student" (you) with unrelated Scriptures and arguments in an attempt to keep an edge of superiority over you when you ask them a question they don't know how to answer.

If you allow them to throw you off track, you can easily become frustrated. So, do not let them change subjects when you ask a question they do not know how to answer. Neither should you try to divert them from a topic that they want to discuss with you by bringing up an argument or question that is irrelevant to the topic being discussed.

It is in this way that both sides show respect for each other. If you expect the Jehovah's Witnesses to listen to you without interruption, you must show the same courtesy and respect to hear them out as well. Again, if they bring up a topic you don't know much about and feel unprepared to discuss, you can always ask if they would allow you time to research this topic and discuss the following week.



But in your hearts set apart 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 Peter 3:15

Questions Jehovah's Witnesses don't like to be Asked

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

ASK: "I can tell that you have a lot of respect for the Bible's principles, as do I. However, I'm wondering: Are you as a Jehovah's Witness allowed to believe the Bible when it disagrees with something you read in the Watchtower? For example, I've heard that Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that Jesus raised His physical human body, even though the Bible says that Jesus promised to 'raise' the 'body' that the Jews destroyed (John 2:18-22)?"

ASK: "If there is 'not even one part of us [that] survives the death of the body,' what did Jesus mean when He said: 'And do not become fearful of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; but rather be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:28)? Doesn't this Scripture indicate that the soul is not 'destroyed' when the body is killed?"

ASK: "Regarding Jesus' resurrection, how can the Watchtower Society teach that Jesus 'raised' as a 'mighty spirit person' who is no longer 'human' when the Bible says that Jesus raised as a 'man' (Acts 17:31; 1 Timothy 2:5) with his 'body' (John 2:18-22) of 'flesh and bones' (Luke 24:39)?"

ASK: "At John 3:3, Jesus said that we must be 'born again' before we can see God's Kingdom. Are you born again? Why do Jehovah's Witnesses preach about a Kingdom that they will not be able to see?"

ASK: "If Jesus did not receive His authority as King of God's Kingdom until 1914, why did Jesus claim that after His resurrection: 'All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth.'—Matthew 28:18? If 'all authority' was given to Christ at his resurrection, what authority was left for Him to receive in 1914?"

ASK: "Before 1914 the Watchtower was predicting that God's Kingdom was to be set up on earth (not in heaven) in 1914? Quote, 'The times of the Gentiles' extend to 1914. And the Heavenly Kingdom will not have full sway until then, but as a stone the Kingdom of God is set up in the days of these Kings and by consummating them becomes a universal Kingdom- a great mountain and fills the whole earth' (Watchtower Reprints, Vol. I, March, 1880, p 82).? Jesus taught that no one knows the day or hour of His physical return to the earth- Matthew 24:36."

ASK: "Where in the Bible does it say that ONLY 144,000 people will be in heaven? Revelation chapters 7 and 14 are the only passages in the Bible that describe the group of 144,000. Yet, nowhere does Scripture say that this group of people is the ONLY group in heaven. In fact, Revelation 7:2-4 states that the 144,000 are 'sealed' on earth during the 'great tribulation' (see verses 1-4, 14). Has the 'Great Tribulation' come upon the earth yet?"

ASK: "How do you prove from the Bible that 1935 was the year that the selection to heaven (144,000) stopped due to being filled?" Correct me if I am wrong, but are you saying that new Jehovah's Witnesses that are converted after 1935 are not allowed into heaven? What about all the masses of people who were born and died before the late 19th century when your religion began?"

Summary of Difference

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that there is no Holy Trinity.
- Christianity teaches that there is the Holy Trinity, i.e., the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the Holy Spirit is only "a force" and not a real person.
- Christianity teaches that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person, i.e., the third Person of the Trinity.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ is not God, and that he is in fact only a creation of God.
- Christianity teaches that Jesus is God, and He is in fact the Creator of all things.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ was Michael the archangel who became a man.
- Christianity teaches that Jesus is almighty God who created Michael the archangel.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ was only a perfect man.
- Christianity teaches that Jesus Christ was God in flesh.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead in his physical body.
- Christianity teaches that Jesus Christ did rise from the dead in his physical (though glorified) body.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that only their church members will be saved.
- Christianity teaches that any person who believes in Jesus Christ as his/her savior will be saved.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that good works are necessary for salvation.
- Christianity teaches that faith in Jesus Christ sacrifice alone is necessary for salvation- 1 John 5:10-12.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the soul ceases to exist after death.
- Christianity teaches that the soul goes on in the afterlife to either be with God in heaven or to hell

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that only 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses will actually go to heaven.
- Christianity teaches that any person who believes in Jesus Christ as his/her savior will go to heaven.

- Jehovah's Witnesses teach that medical blood transfusions are a sin.
- Christianity teaches no such thing.

- Also, Jehovah's Witnesses refuse to vote, salute the flag, sing the "Star Spangled Banner," or celebrate Christmas or birthdays, and they are not allowed to serve in the armed forces.

Final Facts

The main office is in Brooklyn, New York. The Jehovah's Witnesses are highly centralized. Branch offices in important countries supervise the work and channel the distribution of publications. District and circuit servants regularly visit local congregations to meet local servants, pioneers and publishers. Exact statistics are kept of all activities. They currently claim a worldwide membership of approximately 9 million people in 205 countries. Approximately 4 million of them live in the United States. They also allege they are averaging 200,000 new members each year.