

A LOOK AT THE “JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES”

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The religious organization known as the “Jehovah’s Witnesses” is familiar to most people, usually for their door-to-door evangelistic efforts and “kingdom halls.” It would be helpful to take a closer examination of this group. The Bible teaches us to “test all things” (1 Thessalonians 5:21; cf. 1 John 4:1). Those who are seeking to learn and follow the truth of God welcome such examinations whether public or private. Those who teach things contrary to Bible truth will avoid any occasion of study and discussion where their beliefs may come under scrutiny (John 3:20-21). What can we learn about the “Jehovah’s Witnesses?”

BEGINNING, FOUNDER, AND HEADQUARTERS

Charles Taze Russell was the founder of the religious organization known today as the “Jehovah’s Witnesses.” He was born on February 16, 1852 (died 1916) and began a movement that grew into a large following. In 1884, he incorporated “Zion’s Watch Tower Tract Society” at Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, for various publishing efforts. Under the subsequent leadership of J.F. Rutherford (1869-1942), the movement took on the name “Jehovah’s Witnesses.”

The headquarters of the “Jehovah’s Witnesses” is the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, founded in 1896 and presently in Brooklyn, New York. The Society is regarded as “God’s Organization,” the “faithful and wise servant” of Matthew 24:45. The Society controls and publishes all Jehovah’s Witnesses literature (book, magazines, study guides), and claims that God controls and works through the Society. Therefore, all publications and pronouncements from the Society are regarded as having the authority of God.

Observations: *For the truth seeker, many problems are encountered here. The Bible is given by the inspiration of God and provides all truth (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Jude 3). Nowhere in the Bible will one find the name or organization called the “Jehovah’s Witnesses.” They claim to follow the Bible and to be the only true interpreters of it but they cannot even find themselves mentioned in it! Jesus the Christ is the founder of the church, His church, the church of Christ – God’s people today (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22-23), not Charles Russell. There was no such group known as the “Jehovah’s Witnesses” before Charles Russell, so it could not be the church established by Jesus. If one follows just the Bible, seeking to be a member of the New Testament church, he will not become a “Jehovah’s Witness” – he would simply become a “Christian.”*

The true church has no earthly headquarters, or “Society,” through which God speaks and directs His people. The “faithful and wise servant” of Matthew 24:45 is not the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, but a description of every faithful child of God who is obedient and eagerly watching for his Savior’s return. An earthly headquarters is a form of human control and is typical of denominations and cults of men. The headquarters of the true church is in heaven, where our King is reigning at the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:33). God speaks to us, not through a human Society, but by His Son in the Word (Hebrews 1:2).

SOME DOCTRINES TAUGHT BY THE JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES:

Jesus is Not Deity, God, Jehovah

According to the Jehovah’s Witnesses, “...the true Scriptures speak of God’s Son, the Word, as ‘a god.’ He is a ‘mighty god,’ but not the Almighty God, who is Jehovah” (*The Truth Shall Make You Free*, 47). They believe that Jesus is a created being, a “god,” the first of God’s creation, and therefore not fully deity or eternal.

Answer: *The Bible clearly affirms the deity of Jesus, despite the claims of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. In a prophecy of Jesus’ birth, the prophet Micah stated that the Messiah’s “goings” have been from “everlasting,” or the days of eternity (5:2). This is a description that can only be applied to deity. The Son of God is referred to as “God” and “Jehovah” in the Old Testament quotations in Hebrews 1:8-10. Jesus referred to Himself as the “I AM,” a name only*

fit for the Almighty God (John 8:58). The Jews understood His words to teach that He was God, and Jesus did try to change their thinking (John 10:30-36). The Scriptures affirm that "in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead [Deity] bodily" (Colossians 2:9). How could this be true if Jesus is not God in the fullest sense? The Jehovah's Witnesses are wrong on this very fundamental truth about Jesus.

Man does not have an Immortal Soul and there is no Eternal Punishment

Again, Jehovah's Witnesses state, "so we see that the claim of religionists that man has an immortal soul and therefore differs from the beast is not Scriptural" ("*Let God Be True*," p. 68). "The doctrine of a burning hell where the wicked are tortured eternally after death cannot be true..." (*Ibid.*, p. 99). We see that one doctrine follows the other. If man has no immortal soul, then there is no need for an eternal place of punishment for evil men who will just die and be gone.

Answer: *Again, the Jehovah's Witnesses deny what the Bible clearly affirms. Jesus said, "And do not fear those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Matthew 10:28). Man is both body and soul, the body being mortal and the soul immortal. After death, this soul, or spirit, returns to God who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7; cf. Genesis 1:26). Jesus also taught the truth of eternal punishment: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:46).*

Kingdom of God Established in AD 1914

Our Jehovah's Witness friends tell us, "Beyond all doubt, the evidence points to 1914 as the year when the kingdom of God went into operation..." (*The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life*, p. 93). This was also the time that Jesus made an invisible second coming, according to the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Answer: *This "evidence" about 1914 cannot be from the Bible, because Jesus said long before 1914, in the days of the Roman Empire, that "the time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15). In fact, people were already being "translated into the kingdom" in the first century (Colossians 1:13). The Jehovah's Witnesses are too late with their kingdom and very wrong in their teaching. Please do not be deceived by the false teachings of men!*