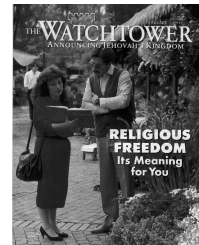


# Jehovah's Witnesses

## BASIC NOTES

### IDENTIFYING MARKS

- ◆ Two by twos around the doors talking about Jehovah and the Kingdom.
- ◆ Smartly dressed carrying a briefcase or shoulder bag.
- ◆ Meet in buildings called Kingdom Halls.
- ◆ Bring their magazines, 'The Watchtower' and 'Awake!'
- ◆ Hold large conventions in sports grounds during July and August.
- ◆ Use a bible called the 'New World Translation.'



### ORIGINS

The Jehovah's Witnesses started its life in Pittsburgh USA in the early 1870's when several young people began studying the Bible to discover the date of Christ's return. The name Jehovah's Witnesses was not applied until later, their original name being 'Bible Students.' The organisation was incorporated as the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society and this is still their 'official' name.

The work in early days under its founding President Charles Taze Russell had room for differences of opinion and expression. The second President Joseph Franklin Rutherford however made many changes to the Witnesses, especially during the 20's and 30's and it is doubtful if Russell would recognise the group that he started. Many did not like the changes and left to start their own splinter groups, some of which still survive today although they are very small in comparison to the main group.

## MAIN BELIEFS

- JEHOVAH alone is God. There is some similarity here in that Christians believe that the Father is God but the difference is in the fact that they believe He *alone* is God. They also believe that all true Christians should call God by this name.
- JESUS is the first created being of Jehovah. They try to prove this by a mistranslation of Revelation 3:14 among other Scriptures. They also believe that Jesus is called Michael the Archangel in Scripture. Jehovah created Jesus and then used Jesus to create all other things. Jesus is not God but a lesser god. They also teach that although Jesus is called mighty God in Scripture, He is never called Almighty God and so He must be lesser than Jehovah.
- THE HOLY SPIRIT is an active force, likened to electricity. He is therefore not even a person and certainly cannot be God.
- THE TRINITY is a pagan doctrine invented in the 4th century.
- There is no hope of SALVATION outside the Organisation and a true understanding of the Bible can come only through that Organisation.
- 1914 has always been an essential date but has had different meanings. Today it is the date for the end of the Gentile Times and the invisible return of Jesus Christ to take his throne in the heavens. Until November 1995, it was also taught that the generation that was alive in 1914 would not pass away until Jehovah's Kingdom was set up on earth. Now it is today's generation.
- There are only 144,000 with Jesus in heaven. The rest, the GREAT CROWD, will have eternal life on a paradise earth.
- All who are worthy will be RESURRECTED [more akin to recreation] and after ARMAGEDDON will be given a second chance of salvation.
- Only ACTIVE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, doing God's will by serving the organisation, will survive through Armageddon - the outpouring of God's wrath on the earth. The remainder of earth's population will be destroyed with no hope of resurrection.

- HELL does not exist, only annihilation.
- There is nothing ETERNAL in man. After death, he ceases to exist until God remembers and recreates.
- Other secondary beliefs include the teaching that blood transfusions are forbidden by God, Jesus died on a stake not a cross and Christmas, Easter and birthdays should not be celebrated.

## MAIN ACTIVITIES

- ◆ Constant door-to-door work giving the impression that they are the only organisation that God uses.
- ◆ Basis of their message is fear. If you do not join them, you have no hope of surviving 'Armageddon' which is always just around the corner!
- ◆ Members attend 5 hours of meetings each week mostly based at the local Kingdom Hall. Four of these meetings are based on a series of questions that all members are encouraged to answer. These questions, found at the bottom of the page in their books, magazine articles etc., are a subtly form of mind control. A passage is written by the Society with a bias towards their belief; you are asked a question written by the Society in such a way to get you to repeat what was written in the passage; you cease to think for yourself but become a mouthpiece for the organisation.
- ◆ Once you become a member of the Society, they will encourage you to cut all ties with friends and relatives, especially those who do not approve of Jehovah's Witnesses. In this way, you become more dependent on the organisation for friendship, care, etc.
- ◆ The threat of being disfellowshipped is held over your head if you do not agree entirely with what the leadership of the Society tells you. Disfellowshipping means that you have no hope of surviving Armageddon and no active Jehovah's Witness will even talk to you. You can lose friends, family and business. Disfellowshipping offences include wanting to save your child and allowing them a blood transfusion or talking to a great friend of yours who has already been disfellowshipped from the Society.

## COMPARISON CHART

<b>EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY</b>	<b>WATCHTOWER SOCIETY</b>
God the Father is omniscient and all powerful	<i>Only the Father is God and delegates power only to His organisation - the Watchtower Society</i>
Jesus Christ is eternal not created. He is part of the Godhead and is almighty.	<i>Jesus is a created being known also as the Archangel Michael. Jesus is 'a god' but not Almighty God</i>
The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead.	<i>The Holy Spirit is not a person, nor God. 'It' is likened to electricity.</i>
Salvation is a complete finished work that is a free gift - we cannot earn it.	<i>A two-tier salvation – 144,000 in heaven and the rest 'the great crowd' on earth. You earn your salvation by the way you treat the leaders of the Society.</i>
The Bible is God's unchanging inspired Word.	<i>They say that the Bible is the inspired Word of God but have changed it many times.</i>
Man has an eternal spirit that goes back to God at death.	<i>There is no eternal spirit in man, he simply goes back to dust</i>
Death is both spiritual and literal and Hell is a literal place of eternal destruction away from God	<i>Death is the opposite of life and Hell does not exist but is simply the common grave</i>
Christians are promised a resurrection body and are now new creatures in Christ	<i>Resurrection involves reactivating the life pattern. Keep the same identity as had when died - not new in Christ.</i>



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