



Jehovah's Witnesses

The Jehovah's Witnesses were founded by Charles Taze Russell

- Born February 16, 1852 – Died Oct 31 1916.

Russell managed various "men's furniture stores" until he was 25 years old.

He was always known to reject doctrines of hell and the substitutionary atonement of Christ.

In 1870 (Pittsburgh), Russell organized a bible class; this class in 1876 elected him 'pastor'. In

1879 he started the watchtower publication "*The herald of the morning*" which later turned into "*The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*"

Russell wrote 6 "*Studies in the Scriptures*" (originally called *the millennial dawn*). There was a 7th study that was compiled after his death called "*The Finished Mystery*." This book caused a split bible class. The larger group followed J.F. Rutherford (2nd president) and became what is called the Jehovah's Witnesses; the smaller became "*The Dawn Bible Students Association*"

Presidents

2nd J.F. Rutherford

3rd Nathan Homer Knorr

4th Frederick W. Franz

5th Milton George Henschel (1947-2003)

6th Don Adams

The group has over 4 million members worldwide. The Watchtower Society statistics indicate that 740 house calls are required to recruit each of the nearly 200,000 new members who join every year.

Publications:

In 1879 Russell started the Herald of the Morning and printed 6000 copies, this periodical became The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom – Today 22 million in 126 languages.

Awake magazine now prints 19 million in 81 languages

Russell's lifetime

In 1870, Charles Taze Russell began an independent Bible study, focusing on the second coming of Christ and biblical chronology. He published his views in several books and began lecturing in 1878. In 1879, Russell founded the monthly publication *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* which were used by the study groups he established.

Zion's Watch Tower and Tract Society was incorporated in 1884 with Russell as president. From 1886 until his death in 1916, Russell wrote a series of books called *Studies in the Scriptures*. Their contents formed the basis of Jehovah's Witnesses' unchristian theology.

Russell was succeeded as president in 1917 by his legal assistant, Joseph Franklin Rutherford. Rutherford continued Russell's authoritarian leadership style. He was imprisoned briefly in 1918 for preaching against military service. He was a charismatic speaker who often railed against Christian churches and biblical scholars. He died in 1942. Other Jehovah's Witnesses presidents

included Nathan H. Knorr (1942-1977), Fredrick W. Franz (1977-1992), and Milton G. Henschel (1992-2000). The organization expanded worldwide under these men's leadership, from about 113,000 in 1942 to more than 6 million in 2000.

In 1951 Jehovah's Witnesses said they no longer held to Russell's teaching and said they neither publish nor distribute his writings. *Awake, May 8, 1951 pg 26*—seems to have subsided in the last few years especially with the people at my door.

Rutherford constantly had advertisements in the back of his books for Russell's books. Constantly quoted. In 1953, after the above statement, the Watchtower published "Jehovah's witnesses, communists or Christians?" and quoted Russell 5 times and referred to him with pride.

What they believe today ...

Scripture

The Jehovah's Witnesses use their own translation of the scriptures called "The New World Translation." *The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* is a version of the Bible which was prepared specifically by and for the *Jehovah's Witnesses*. Previously, they had made use of the King James Version, the American Standard Version of 1901, and the Emphatic Diaglott, which is a Greek-English interlinear containing an English translation done by Benjamin Wilson.

The NWT was prepared and circulated by the *Watchtower Bible and Tract Society*. They claim it was translated from the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek manuscripts by a group of scholars who "*wish to remain anonymous even after death.*" Many critics say "they" wish to remain anonymous because the NWT is a plagiarized King James Version.

The New World Translation New Testament was completed and published in 1950. The Old Testament was issued periodically in five sections. The entire Bible was completed and published in a single volume in 1961. **It has undergone several revisions**, the most recent being in 1984.

The NWT is an example of what scholars refer to as a *Tendentious Translation* (i.e.: one which fosters the distinctive views of a particular sect in this case: the *Jehovah's Witnesses*).

"It is marred throughout by its very obvious bias in favor of the peculiar doctrines of the sect which produced it" (*The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Vol. 1, p. 580).

"This version (in many cases a perversion) demonstrates several attempts to support so-called 'Jehovah Witness' doctrine through erroneous translating and biased wording. Their translation is a biased translation of the Bible published to prove the peculiar teachings of the Watchtower Society, which they cannot prove by reference to the standard translations" (an excerpt from a tract entitled *The NWT Does Not Uniformly Teach Jehovah's Witness' Doctrine*, by Garland Elkins, 1977).

Jehovah's Witness' say they learn their theology by reading the Bible alone, BUT the Watchtower which says that is not possible:

- ✓ "Let us face the fact that no matter how much Bible reading we have done, we would never have learned the truth on our own. We would not have discovered the truth regarding Jehovah, his purposes and attributes, the meaning and importance of his

name, the Kingdom, Jesus' ransom, the difference between God's organization and Satan's, nor why God has permitted wickedness." (Watchtower 12/1/1990, pages 19)

- ✓ "Thus the Bible is an organizational book and belongs to the Christian congregation as an organization, not to individuals, regardless of how sincerely they may believe that they can interpret the Bible." (The Watchtower, Oct. 1, 1967. p. 587.)

The Watchtower says only its organization understands the Bible (mark of a cult)

- ✓ "Only this organization functions for Jehovah's purpose and to his praise. To it alone God's Sacred Word, the Bible, is not a sealed book." (The Watchtower; July 1, 1973, pp. 402.)
- ✓ "All who want to understand the Bible should appreciate that the "greatly diversified wisdom of God" can become known only through Jehovah's channel of communication, the faithful and discreet slave." (The Watchtower; 10/1/1994; p. 8.)

Therefore, whatever argument the JW offers is not from their understanding of the Bible, but from the watchtower's interpretation of it.

- ✓ Can the Watchtower be trusted especially since it has made false prophecies?
 - i. "...the 'battle of the great day of God Almighty' (Revelation 16:14), which will end in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced." (The Time Is at Hand, page 101 (1908 edition).
 - ii. "The date 1925 is even more distinctly indicated by the Scriptures than 1914." (The Watchtower 9/1/22, page 262.)
 - iii. "Our thought is, that 1925 is definitely settled by the Scriptures. As to Noah, the Christian now has much more upon which to base his faith than Noah had upon which to base his faith in a coming deluge." (The Watchtower, page 106 4/1/23.)
 - iv. "Receiving the gift, the marching children clasped it to them, not a toy or plaything for idle pleasure, but the Lord's provided instrument for most effective work in the remaining months before Armageddon." (The Watchtower, 9/15/41, page 288.)
 - v. "There was a measure of disappointment on the part of Jehovah's faithful ones on earth concerning the years 1917, 1918, and 1925, which disappointment lasted for a time...and they also learned to quit fixing dates." (Vindication, page 338.)
 - vi. "Why are you looking forward to 1975?" (The Watchtower, 8/15/68, page 494.)

The Watchtower says if you read the Bible alone, you'll become a Trinitarian.

- ✓ "From time to time, there have arisen from among the ranks of Jehovah's people those, who, like the original Satan, have adopted an independent, faultfinding attitude...They say that it is sufficient to read the Bible exclusively, either alone or in small groups at home. But, strangely, through such 'Bible reading,' they have reverted right back to the apostate doctrines that commentaries by Christendom's clergy were teaching 100 years ago..." *The Watchtower, August 15, 1981.*

What are the apostate doctrines of 100 years ago? The Trinity.

God the Father

God/Trinity

- ✓ *The true God is not a nameless God. His name is Jehovah (Deut. 6:4; Ps. 83:18).*
- ✓ *His principal attributes are love, wisdom, justice, and power. God is a "spiritbeing," invisible and eternal, but has a spiritual body and is not omnipresent (Insight, vol. 1, p. 969-970).*

The word Jehovah is a mispronouncing of the *Tetragrammaton* (meaning "having four letters" -- a reference to *YHWH*), they nevertheless insist that this is God's true name and that it should be used exclusively. Insisting that the original Scriptures have been "tampered with" in regard to the

Divine name. JW's use only the name "Jehovah" in both the OT and NT. "YHWH" appears 6828 times in the OT, but in the NWT the word "Jehovah" appears 6973 (an additional 145 occurrences). "YHWH" never appears in the NT, and yet the NWT uses "Jehovah" 237 times in the NT.

The historic Christian doctrine of the Trinity is denied.

- ✓ *"The dogma of the Trinity is not found in the Bible, nor is it in harmony with what the Bible teaches. It grossly misrepresents the true God" (Reasoning, p. 424).*
- ✓ *"The obvious conclusion is, therefore, that Satan is the originator of the Trinity doctrine." (Let God be True, pg 102)*

With regard to the concept of the *Trinity*, the Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that the Holy Spirit is a person/being. In their notes, which appear at the end of the NWT, they write, *"The holy spirit is not a person in heaven with God and Christ...it is an active force, not a person."* As a result of their belief that it is just an "energy from God," and not a divine being, the words "holy spirit" are *never* capitalized in the NWT

The Bible teaches that God exists in the three persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (see Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 8:6; 12:4-6; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; 13:14; 1 Pet. 1:2).

Jesus – First created being of God

- ✓ *Jesus had three periods of existence. In his pre-human existence he was called "God's 'only-begotten Son' because Jehovah created him directly. As the 'first-born of all creation', Jesus was used by God to create all other things (Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14) . . . After Jehovah brought him into existence, the Word [Jesus] spent ages with God in heaven before becoming a man on earth" (Knowledge, p. 39).*
- ✓ *"John 1:1 says that 'the Word' (Jesus in his prehuman existence) was with God 'in the beginning'. So the word was with Jehovah when 'the heavens and earth' were created" (Knowledge, p. 39).*
- ✓ *"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, Page 47).*
- ✓ *He also had the personal name Michael (the archangel) (Insight, vol. 2, p.394).*
- ✓ *"The Second Stage of Jesus' life course was here on earth. He willingly submitted as God transferred his life from heaven to the womb of a faithful Jewish virgin named Mary" (Knowledge, p. 40).*
- ✓ *He became the Messiah at his baptism, who was executed on a torture stake, and rose again spiritually "Though the Bible reports on Jesus' death, he is now alive! He is a mighty reigning King! And very soon now, he will manifest his rulership over our troubled earth" (Knowledge, p. 41).*

The Bible teaches that Jesus was not created but was deity from all eternity and coequal with the Father. He came to earth in bodily form to reveal God's nature and character to mankind. He now reigns with the Father in heaven and will return some day to close the age and judge all people. The Jehovah's Witnesses NWT translation of John 1:1, John 8:58, and Revelation 3:14 are biased against Jesus' deity. There is no biblical basis for identifying Jesus with Michael the archangel (see

John 1:1-14; 5:17-18; 8:56-59; 10:30-33; Col. 1:15-20; 2:9).

They teach "the son of God *was created*, and only Jehovah was pre-existent." They further write, "The son is inferior to the Father both before and after coming to earth." God and Christ are "one" only in the sense of husbands and wives being said to be "one." They are "always in complete harmony," but certainly not equal! **This belief has found its way into the NWT in several places.**

1. In Colossians 1:16-17 the word "other" has been added to the text a total of four times to imply that Jesus was just one among many "other" created things.
2. In Titus 2:13 the NWT reads, "**we wait for the happy hope and glorious manifestation of the great God and of *the* Savior of us, Christ Jesus.**" 2 Peter 1:1 reads, "**the righteousness of our God and *the* Savior Jesus Christ.**" In both of these passages the definite article "*the*" has been *added* to the text to make a separation between God and Jesus. In point of fact, the text literally speaks of Jesus as being "our God *and* Savior." The JW's do not believe Jesus is the former, and thus seek to make a distinction between the two.
3. John 1:1 reads, in the NWT, "**In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word *was a god.***" Vs. 14 says that Jesus was "**full of *undeserved* kindness and truth.**" This clearly teaches polytheism; Jesus and God are not one, but Jesus is merely "a god," upon whom *the* God (Jehovah) has bestowed *undeserved* favor!!

John 20:28 The literal Greek says, "The Lord of me and the God of me."

John 8:58 Ego eimi (present tense, indicative mood=I AM) Jesus claims preeminence and God's name as His own...see John 8:42-9:12

Holy Spirit – God's Active Force, not God.

- ✓ *"With this viewpoint, it is logical to conclude that the holy spirit is the active force of God. It is not a person but is a powerful force that God causes to emanate from himself to accomplish his holy will" (Reasoning, p. 381).*
- ✓ *"The holy spirit is the invisible active force of Almighty God that moves his servants to do his will." (Let God Be True, page 108)*
- ✓ *"The Holy Spirit is God's impersonal active force," (The Watchtower, June 1, 1952, p. 24.)*

The Holy Spirit is personal and called God throughout the New Testament.

- A. He called God (Acts 5:3-5)
- B. He can teach (John 14:26)
- C. He can be blasphemed (Matt. 12:31,32)
- D. He can comfort (Acts 9:31)
- E. He can speak (Acts 28:25)
- F. He can be resisted (Acts 7:51)
- G. He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30)
- H. He can help us in our weaknesses (Rom. 8:26)

Salvation – By works

Good works are necessary for salvation,

- ✓ *"The human life that Jesus Christ laid down in sacrifice must be exactly equal to that life which Adam forfeited for all his offspring: it must be a perfect human life, no more, no*

less...This is what Jesus gave...for all men of all kinds.” (You may survive Armageddon Into God’s New World, 1955, page 39)

- ✓ *“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.” Studies in the Scriptures, Vol. 1, pp. 150, 152.*
- ✓ *“Immortality is a reward for faithfulness.” (Let God Be True, page 74)*

There are four requirements for salvation as taught by the Watchtower magazine of Feb. 15, 1983, p. 12. One of them deals with the Watchtower organization.

1. Jesus Christ identified a first requirement when he said in prayer to his Father: "This means everlasting life, their *taking in knowledge* of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ includes knowledge of God’s purposes regarding the earth and of Christ’s role as earth’s new King. Will you take in such knowledge by studying the Bible?
2. It is to *obey God’s laws*, yes, to conform one’s life to the moral requirements set out in the Bible. This includes refraining from a debauched, immoral way of life.—1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; 1 Peter 4:3, 4.
3. A third requirement is that we *be associated with God’s channel*, his organization. God has always used an organization. For example, only those in the ark in Noah’s day survived the Flood, and only those associated with the Christian congregation in the first century had God’s favor. (Acts 4:12) Similarly, Jehovah is using only one organization today to accomplish his will. To receive everlasting life in the earthly Paradise we must identify that organization and serve God as part of it.
4. The fourth requirement is connected with loyalty. God requires that prospective subjects of his Kingdom support his government by *loyally advocating his Kingdom rule to others*. Jesus Christ explained: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth." (Matthew 24:14) Will you meet this requirement by telling others about God’s Kingdom?

- ✓ *“Therefore, let us show our gratitude for the love displayed by God and Christ by exercising faith in Jesus’ ransom sacrifice” (Knowledge, p. 69).*

Requirements for salvation, in addition to faith, include baptism by immersion, active association with the WBTS, righteous conduct, and absolute loyalty to Jehovah. There is no assurance of salvation, only hope for a resurrection. Those who fail to live up to the above requirements or who are disfellowshipped by the WBTS have no hope of salvation.

Salvation is “by grace through faith” in Jesus Christ alone. No amount of works or membership in any organization guarantees salvation. It is totally through faith in Christ (see Rom. 4:4-5; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). Good works are the natural response to salvation already received, not its cause (see Eph. 2:10). Salvation is eternally assured for those who have accepted Christ as Lord and Savior (see John 1:12; 5:24; 1 John 5:13).

144,000 – Heaven - Hell

Only 144,000 faithful elect Jehovah’s Witnesses, known as the “Anointed Class” will go to heaven at death to rule with Jesus. Only those born since 33 C.E. (A.D.) can be part of that number (based on Rev. 14:1-3). Most Jehovah’s Witnesses hope to be among the “other sheep” or “great crowd” who will not go to heaven, but, after Armageddon and the millennium, will live forever in Paradise on earth (based on John 10:16; Rev. 7:9).

The WBTS' doctrine of a duality of saved people is not supported by a careful study of the Scriptures. The Bible makes no distinction of two classes of saved people (see Matt. 5:12; Phil. 3:20). In Revelation 7 and 14, both the 144,000 and the "great crowd" or "multitude" are "before the throne" in heaven. All born-again Christians will live forever in heaven (see John 3:16; 14:3). In Rev 14 is taken literally (as they claim) the 144,000 would be Male, Jewish, and virgins.

- ✓ *"Only a little flock of 144,000 go to heaven and rule with Christ...the 144,000 are born again as spiritual sons of God (Jehovah's Witnesses in the Twentieth Century-electronic Edition)*
- ✓ *"Who is responsible for this God-defaming doctrine of a hell of torment? The promulgator is Satan himself." (Let God Be True, page 98)*
- ✓ *"At death a man's spirit, his life-force, which is sustained by breathing, 'goes out.' It no longer exists...when they are dead, both humans and animals are in the same state of complete unconsciousness...that the soul lives on after death is a lie started by the Devil." (You Can Live, page 77)*

Resurrection of Christ

- ✓ *Jesus did not rise from the dead in his physical body, Awake! July 22, 1973, p. 4.*
- ✓ *Jesus was raised "not a human creature, but a spirit." Let God be True, p. 276.*

The Watchtower organization says that Jesus did not rise from the dead in the same body he died in (You Can Live Forever on Paradise Earth, p. 143-44). Instead, it says that He rose as a spirit creature and that the material body of Jesus was taken away by God the Father. Therefore, they deny the physical resurrection of Christ.

1 Cor. 15:14 says, *"If Jesus is not raised, then our faith is in vain."* In other words, if Jesus did not rise from the dead, then Christianity is a waste of time and we are then still dead in our sins. It is obvious that the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus is a vital and essential element of Christianity.

It is obvious from Jesus' own words in John 2:19-21 that He would raise Himself from the dead: *"Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." ²⁰The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" ²¹But He was speaking of the temple of His body."*

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus did not rise from the dead in the same body He died in. This is a dangerous doctrine that contradicts the Bible and condemns those who believe it to eternal destruction because it is denying His physical resurrection which is the proof that He conquered death. Jesus rose from the dead in the same body He died in. At His ascension people watched Him rise to be with the Father. They saw His body ascend. That is why it can be said that Jesus, the man, is the mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). It isn't an angel or a spirit creature that is the mediator. It is Jesus the man.

Return of Christ

Jesus returned to earth, invisibly, in 1914, *The Truth Shall Make You Free*, p. 300.

- ✓ **1874**
Taught to be the start of Christ's invisible presence. This is Russell's most important prophesy. *Three Worlds* p175, Until around 1904, Russell taught that this year marked the start of the Battle of Armageddon, *Watchtower* 1/15/92 p21. It was abandoned in 1930.
- ✓ **1914**
Christ's invisible return, start of His reign as King, end of last days. From 1922 this was held to be start of Christ's *reign*, from 1930 also the start of invisible presence (use to be 1874). Until recently, the *Watchtower* taught that some of those who experienced the events in 1914 would be alive to see the end of the world. This "1914 generation" doctrine was removed in November 1995. See *Watchtower* 11/1 1995 p17.
- ✓ **1915**
The end of the world. From ~1912 until start of WWI this year replaced 1914 in Russell's writings, since 2520 years from 606BC ends in 1915 not 1914 as Russell had thought.
- ✓ **1975**
This is the end of 6000 years of human history after Watchtower chronology. Strongly hinted to be end of the world; could only be a matter of "days and months, not years" before Armageddon. *Life Everlasting* p26-30...Abandoned and sometimes even denied after 1975

Watchtower

- ✓ "If we are to walk in the light of truth we must recognize not only Jehovah God as our Father but his organization as our mother." *The Watchtower*, May 1, 1957, p. 274.
- ✓ "To receive everlasting life in the earthly paradise we must identify that organization and serve god as part of it." *The Watchtower*, Feb 15, 1983: Page 12)
- ✓ "We cannot claim to love God, yet deny his word and channel of communication." *The Watchtower*, October 1, 1967, p. 591.
- ✓ "Make haste to identify the visible theocratic organization of God that represents his king, Jesus Christ. It is essential for life. Doing so, be complete in accepting its every aspect." *The Watchtower*, October 1, 1967, p. 591
- ✓ "It should be expected that the Lord would have a means of communication to his people on the earth, and he has clearly shown that the magazine called *The Watchtower* is used for that purpose." (1939 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, p. 85.)
- ✓ "Consider, too, the fact that Jehovah's organization alone, in all the earth, is directed by God's holy spirit or active force (Zech. 4:6). Only this organization functions for Jehovah's purpose and to his praise. To it alone God's Sacred Word, the Bible, is not a sealed book . . . How very much true Christians appreciate associating with the only organization on earth that understands the 'deep things of God'! . . . Furthermore, this organization alone is supplied with 'gifts in men,' such as evangelizers, shepherd and teachers..." *The Watchtower*, July 1, 1973.

A Biblical Response to Jehovah's Witnesses

This is great article I thought I would give you from the Christian Apologetics Research Institute

1. Their attacks on the Deity of Jesus.

- A. Why did Jesus pray to the Father? (John 17).
 - i. Because as a man He needed to pray to the Father.
 - ii. Because He was both God and man (Col. 2:9; John 8:58 with Ex. 3:14).
 - a. The two natures of Christ are why we have two types of scripture concerning Jesus: those that seem to focus on His divine-side, and those that seem to focus on His human-side. The Jehovah's Witnesses are simply ignoring, or changing, the divine-side scriptures and concentrating on those that describe His human-side.
- B. Why did He say the Father was greater than He (John 14:28)?
 - . This is because His position was different than that of God, not His nature.
 - i. Heb. 2:9 that Jesus is made for a little while lower than the angels; that is, when He became a man. The Father sent the Son (1 John 4:10).
- C. Why did He say, "*Why call me good, only God is good?*" (Luke 18:19)?
 - . Jesus was confirming His own deity because what He was doing was good.
 - i. Ask them, "Was Jesus good?"
- D. Why did Jesus say that He could only do those things that He saw the Father do? (John 5:19).
 - . This is an interesting verse and it is one that proves the divinity of Christ, not that He wasn't God.
 - i. Ask the Jehovah's Witness who can do the same things God the Father can do? Could an angel? Could a man? Of course not. Jesus, however, says He could do whatever He saw the Father do. "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does."
- E. The answer to these and other verses like them is that Jesus has two natures. Jesus was fully man as well as fully God and as a man there will be verses that show His humanity.

2. Witnessing Approaches using the Bible.

- A. **John 1:1:** They translate as "*In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was a god.*"
 - . Ask if Satan is a true god or a false god. The Jehovah's Witness will say a false god. Then have them read aloud John 1:1 again in their Bible and ask them if Jesus is a true god or a false one. If he says "true god," he's in trouble because that would make Jesus true God -- which the JW's do not believe. If he says "false god," he's in trouble because that would make Jesus a false God.
 - i. If Jesus is a god, then doesn't that mean there are two gods? They often answer, "Yes. But Jesus is not the Almighty God, He is only the mighty god. And besides, there are those in the Bible who are called gods but really aren't."
 - . But, in Isaiah 10:21, God is called the Mighty God. So if Jesus is not the Almighty God and only the mighty God, then that makes Jesus God since GOD is called the mighty God.
 - ii. The problem with this is that every God besides Jehovah is a false God. God says to have no other God before Him (Exodus 20:3) because they are not by nature gods (Gal. 4:8).
 - . But, there are those who are called gods such as Exodus 7:1 where God says to Moses, "*See, I make you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet,*" (NASB). God is not, of course, making Moses a god, but He is saying that Moses will exhibit the power of God.

But Jesus is not said to be God in the same sense as Moses was said to be "as" God.

- B. **Col. 1:15:** Is used by the Jehovah's Witnesses to say that Jesus is the first created thing. This verse says, *"He [Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation."*
- The Jehovah's Witnesses maintain that "firstborn" means first created. This cannot be the case because...
- There is a Greek word for "first created" and it is not used here.
 - a. "First born" is proto, "first," with tikto "to bring forth, bear, produce."
 - b. There is no word used in the New Testament for "first created." However, if there were, the construction would be proto, "first," with ktizo "to create." And this is not the construction used in Col. 1:1
 - i. Firstborn can certainly mean the first one born in a family. However, it can also mean preeminence. For example:
 - In Jeremiah 31:9, the firstborn title is attributed to one of the tribes of northern Israel. *"They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son."*
 - ii. Understanding biblical culture is important when interpreting Scripture. Firstborn was a title, not only of the first born male, but also of preeminence which is precisely what is occurring when it is said that Jesus is the firstborn.
3. **Col. 1:15-17** in the Jehovah's Witness Bible has an addition of four words. Their version reads, *"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; because by means of him all [other] things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. 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,"* (Their word "[other]" is in their Bible with the brackets. They maintain that they know it isn't in the original Greek Scriptures but the word is implied and should be there.)
- A. Instead of refuting the bad translation, simply ask them if this means that Jesus created everything. They will say yes. Review this and be very clear and get them to admit that it was Jesus who created everything. Then turn to...
 - Isaiah 44:24 *"This is what the LORD says -your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb: I am the LORD, who has made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself."*
 - i. If Jesus created everything, then why does it say that the Lord (Jehovah in the Hebrew) did it by Himself?
 - ii. The only answer is that Jehovah is not simply the name of the Father, but that it is the name of God the Trinity. Therefore, since Jesus is God in flesh, it could be said that Jesus created all things and that Jehovah did it alone.
 - B. You can also ask them to try to read the section of verses and omit the word "other". You will find it to be an interesting experience.
4. **John 8:58** in the Jehovah's Witness Bible says, "...Before Abraham came into existence, I have been."
- A. They have translated the present tense ego eimi, in the Greek, into the perfect tense, I have been. Though this can be done rarely in the New Testament, it is not correct here because Jesus was quoting the O.T. verse of Exodus 3:14 where God was telling Moses who He was: *"God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM."*

This is what you are to say to the Israelites: "I AM has sent me to you."" Jesus was purposely using the divine title: I AM.

- B. The Jehovah's Witness won't agree. So ask him if Jesus was saying that He "had been" before Abraham, then why does it say in the next verse that the Jews pick up stones to kill him?
 - C. Additionally, about 250 years the Jews translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. It is called the Septuagint, also known as LXX. In the Septuagint Exodus 3:14 is translated in the Greek in a present tense, i.e., I AM... The correct translation is, therefore, *"Before Abraham was, I AM."*
 - D. If this verse should really be translated as "I have been" then why did the Jews want to kill Jesus? The answer is simple: They knew He was claiming to be God, see the next example.
5. **John 10:30-34** is a section of verses where the Pharisees say that Jesus is making Himself out to be God (v. 33).
- A. *"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."
 - B. You can say, "See, even the Jews knew He was claiming to be God. The Jehovah's Witness (if he's quick enough) will say something like, "Jesus wasn't God, the Jew's only thought that Jesus was claiming to be God." Then you can say, "Oh, I see. Then let me get this right. You agree with the Pharisees, Jesus wasn't God? Is that correct? The Jehovah's Witness will not like it that he agrees with a Pharisee."

6. **Plurality in the Godhead**

- . The following group of scriptures strongly suggests a plurality within the Godhead. These verses are translated correctly in the Jehovah's Witness Bible so you can encourage them to use it. The NIV is not as literal in its translation in the Amos verses, so I recommend using either the King James or the New American Standard Bible when doing your own.
 - . Gen. 1:26, *"Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness"*
 - . They will say that angels are the ones who helped God make man. However, there is no scriptural evidence for that. God is the only creator.
 - a. You can also take him to Col. 1:15-17 where it says that Jesus is the creator of all things--including man.
 - i. Gen. 19:24, *"Then the LORD rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven."*
 - . Is this saying there are two Lords, two Jehovah's?
 - ii. Amos 4:10-11, *"I sent a plague among you after the manner of Egypt; I slew your young men by the sword along with your captured horses, and I made the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils; yet you have not returned to Me," declares the LORD. 'I overthrew you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah"*
 - . Jehovah is the one talking and He says, *"I overthrew you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah..."* Very interesting.
 - iii. Isaiah 44:6, *"Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides me'"* See also, Isaiah 48:1
 - iv. If you are reading these verses to a Jehovah's Witness he might say something like, "Are you trying to show the Trinity from these verses?"

You can then say, "You got the Trinity out of these? That's very interesting."

- v. These verses and others are more fully developed in [The Plurality Study](#), which is a powerful tool for witnessing to the Witnesses.

7. **John 20:25** says, *"The other disciples therefore were saying to him, 'We have seen the Lord!' But he said to them, 'Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe'"* (NASB).

- . The Jehovah's Witnesses deny that Jesus was crucified on a cross. They say it happened on a torture stake where His wrists were put together over His head and a single nail was put through both. If that is true, then why does Thomas say *"Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails..."* In the Greek the word used here for "nails", *helos*, is in the plural. Therefore, there was more than one nail used in the hands of the crucifixion of Christ.

8. **First and Last**

- . How many firsts and lasts are there? In the Bible God is called the first and last and so is Jesus. Since God says there is no God apart from Him and Jesus and God are both addressed by the same title, then that poses a problem for the Jehovah's Witness.

- . Isaiah 44:6, *"This is what the LORD says -Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God."*

- i. Revelation 1:8, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."*

- ii. Revelation 1:17-18, *"When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades."*

- . Obviously, Rev. 1:17-18 can only refer to Jesus.

- iii. Revelation 22:12-13, *"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End."*

- . Here, both the "Alpha and the Omega" and the "First and the Last" are said to be one and the same.

- a. Also, at this point go to Titus 2:13 where it says that Jesus is the one who is coming soon, therefore, Jesus and Jehovah are the same.

9. **The Holy Spirit**

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the Holy Spirit is an active force like radar. They deny that He is alive, that He is a person. This is, of course, because they deny the Trinity. Yet, if the Holy Spirit is simply a force then...

- . Why is He called God (Acts 5:3-5)?

- i. How is it that He can teach (John 14:26)?
- ii. How can He be blasphemed (Matt. 12:31,32)?
- iii. How can He be the one who comforts (Acts 9:31)?
- iv. How is it possible for Him to speak (Acts 28:25)?
- v. How then can He be resisted (Acts 7:51)?
- vi. How can He be grieved (Eph. 4:30)?
- vii. How can He help us in our weaknesses (Rom. 8:26)?

- A. If the Holy Spirit is a force, then how is it possible that the above mentioned phenomena are attributed to Him? A force doesn't speak, teach, comfort, etc.

- B. Nor can you blaspheme against a force.

10. **The Resurrection of Jesus**

The Jehovah's Witnesses deny the physical resurrection of Jesus. They say that if the sacrifice of Jesus were real then the body had to stay in the grave. They say that He rose in a spirit body. This body was a manifestation similar to the way angels manifested themselves in the Old Testament.

The problem with their view is that the angels were not incarnated. Jesus became a man by birth, therefore, He had a real, physical body, a permanent body. In fact, right now, Jesus is in heaven in the form of a man. He still has two natures, God and man, and will eternally be that.

A. For scriptural proof of Jesus being raised in the same body He died in, consider the following verses.

In John 2:19-22 before the crucifixion Jesus said, *"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up...He was speaking of the temple of His body."* Since Jesus said He would raise the same body He died in, then it must be true.

This last verse is worth focusing on. Remember, Jesus said He would be the one to raise His body. So, it must be true.

i. John 20:27 -(to Thomas) *"reach your finger...and put it into My side..."*

If Jesus were not raised from the dead, then why did He have a physical body.

a. They will reply that it was a temporary body materialized so the apostles would believe that He was raised. Yet, this is not what Jesus said in John 2:19-22. He said He would raise His very body.

ii. Luke 24:39 - *"a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."*

Jesus said that He had "flesh and bones" not "flesh and blood." This is important because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 15:50). The blood of Jesus was the sacrifice for sin (Rom. 5:9). It is the blood that cleanses us of our sin (Heb. 9:22).

a. The blood of Jesus was shed on the cross and so, most probably, Jesus doesn't have any functioning blood in His body.

Books for further Reading

Kingdom of the Cults – Walter Martin

Why You Should Believe in the Trinity – Rob Bowman

Crises of Conscience – Raymond Franz (a former board member of the Watchtower)

Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses - Ron Rhodes and Hank Hanegraaff

Websites:

www.CARM.org