

## **How to Witness to a Jehovah's Witness THE GLORY OF GOD**

In a previous study we briefly answered the question, "What is a Cult?"

The four basic things that define a religious group as a cult are:

1. Extra-Biblical Authority.
2. Denial of Justification by Grace through Faith Alone.
3. Devaluation of Jesus as the Christ and a denial of His deity.
4. The Group as the Exclusive Community of the Saved.

Tonight we will consider a particular cult, the "Watchtower Bible and Tract Society" better known as "**Jehovah's Witnesses.**"

They were founded in 1879 by Charles Taze Russell

You have probably seen their publications, The Watchtower and Awake, left on tables in doctor's offices and other such places where people would find them or, brought to your doorstep.

A local congregation is called a **Kingdom Hall**.

### Doctrine

[Some of their basic tenets that oppose historic Christianity]

Reference: Watchman Fellowship Profile

### Trinity

They deny the Trinity: One God in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

They hold to one true God the Father, known as Jehovah.

They say Christians worship three Gods.

### God the Father

They write, "There was, therefore, a time when Jehovah was all alone in universal space." Being alone, the first creative act of Jehovah was to create his Son.

### God the Son

Because of their concept of only one God, thus the Son is the First-born, the Only-begotten, was created by God.

## God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit has no personal name and is not an intelligent person. It is the impersonal, invisible, active force that finds its source in Jehovah God that he [God] uses to accomplish his will...

## Man's Destiny

Man has three possible destinies.

The Anointed [144,000] will be in heaven to reign with Jehovah God.

The rest of Jehovah's Witnesses [not the 144,000] will live forever on paradise earth. The status will be determined by their extent of membership and door-to-door spreading the message of the Watchtower.

Those people who are not members of the Watchtower organization will be destroyed by Jehovah God and cease to exist [annihilation]. There is no concept of eternal punishment or hell in Watchtower theology.

## Prophecies

They have predicted the end of the world in 1914, 1918, 1925, 1975, and 1989.

## Medical Practices

They refused vaccinations, organ transplants, and blood transfusions and caused the deaths of many members. Recently they have accepted vaccinations and organ transplants contradicting earlier teachings.

## Politics

They deny their members any involvement in political causes and the military.

## Holidays

Believing many customs to be pagan in nature, the Watchtower rejects celebrating personal birthdays, Christmas, Easter, Mother's and Father's day as well as most other holidays.

## How to Witness to a Jehovah's Witness

Because of an experience in my driveway about 20 years ago I am convinced that my house is "marked." I have seen pairs of "Witnesses" across the road and next door but they no longer come to my house.

What I will share with you later is basically what I said to the man and two women on that occasion. I could tell the man was very uncomfortable with my words and that the women were listening carefully. Only the Lord knows if any one of them was pulled from the grip of Satan.

However, a few months ago, at a local gas pump, I was once more given the opportunity to witness a Jehovah's Witness. Every JW that I have ever encountered seems to be a nice and polite person. Furthermore, they are all serious students of their version of the Bible and are committed to their faith. I wish that more Christians were as zealous for their faith.

If you were given the opportunity to dialog with a Jehovah's Witness, this is the line of thought that I would suggest as to how to witness to a Jehovah's Witness.

In order to present the Gospel to anyone you need to settle the question of authority. The Holy Bible, in a valid translation is authoritative and sufficient for all matters concerning salvation.

Personal opinions aren't worth the effort it takes to express them.

"Well I think God is like..." So what!

The Bible tells us about God and unless the Bible shapes our opinion of God, it will be wrong.

Ah, but which Bible? Dealing with a Jehovah's Witness is especially challenging because they have their own "translation" called the New World Translation. In it the translation committee attempted to alter the texts that clearly reveal the deity of Jesus Christ and the equality of Jesus the Christ with God the Father.

The best {worst} example is John 1:1 & 14. They changed the actual words, substituting an indefinite article for the definite article, even though the Greek text has the definite article. Thus Jesus becomes "*a god*" and "*an only begotten son.*"

In the matter of witnessing to the Jehovah's Witness, you have two choices of a bible: accept a translation that was first produced in 1950 by a group that has an obvious bias, i.e. Jesus is not very God; or use translations with centuries of testing.

The JW will not accept any other translation than the New World Translation; so just use the NWT to show that Jesus the Christ is very God. In order to do that let's read a few passages from the NWT and then compare them with the New King James Version [NKJV] translation [or whichever valid translation you may have, KJV, ASV, NASB, ESV, NIV].

\* \* \*

NWT: John 1:1

In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.

NKJV: John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [The Greek has it ... and God was **the** Word]

John 1:1

1:1

'Εν		ἀρχῆ	ἦν	ὁ	λόγος,	καὶ
PD		NFSD	V3SIAI	AMSN	NMSN	CCK
In	the	beginning	was	the	Word,	and
<u>1722</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>746</u>	<u>2258</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>3056</u>	<u>2532</u>
En		archeé	eén	ho	Lógos	kaí

ὁ	λόγος	ἦν	πρὸς	τὸν	θεόν,	καὶ	θεὸς
AMSN	NMSN	V3SIAI	PA	AMSA	NMSA	CCK	NMSN
the	Word	was	with		God,	and	God.
<u>3588</u>	<u>3056</u>	<u>2258</u>	<u>4314</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>2316</u>	<u>2532</u>	<u>2316</u>
ho	Lógos	eén	prós	tón	Theón	kaí	theós

ἦν	ὁ	λόγος.
V3SIAI	AMSN	NMSN
was	the	Word
<u>2258</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>3056</u>
eén	ho	Lógos

NWT: John 1:14

So the Word became flesh and resided among us, and we had a view of his glory, a glory such as belongs to **an** only-begotten son from a father; and he was full of undeserved kindness and truth.

Comment: “an” and “only” are self-contradictory.  
That’s like saying something is almost unique.

NKJV: John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of **the** only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Greek: John 1:14

14

Καὶ	ὁ	λόγος	σὰρξ	ἐγένετο	καὶ
CCK	AMSN	NMSN	NFSN	V3SAMI	CCK
And	the	Word	flesh,	was made	and
<u>2532</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>3056</u>	<u>4561</u>	<u>1096</u>	<u>2532</u>
Kaí	ho	Lógos	sárx	egéneto	kaí

ἐσκήνωσεν	ἐν	ἡμῖν,	καὶ	ἐθεασάμεθα	τὴν
V3SAAI	PD	OP1_PD	CCK	V1PAMI	AFSA
dwelt	among	us,	(and	we beheld	
<u>4637</u>	<u>1722</u>	<u>2254</u>	<u>2532</u>	<u>2300</u>	<u>3588</u>
eskeénoosen	en	heemín	kaí	etheasámetha	teén

δόξαν	αὐτοῦ,	δόξαν	ὡς	μονογενοῦς	
NFSA	OP3MSG	NFSA	TP	JMSGX	
glory,	his	the	glory	as	of the only begotten
<u>1391</u>	<u>846</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>1391</u>	<u>5613</u>	<u>3439</u>
dóxan	autoú	dóxan	hoos	monogenoús	

παρὰ		πατρός,	πλήρης	χάριτος	καὶ
PG		NMSG	JMSNX{JMSGX}	NFSG	CCK
of	the	Father,)	full	of grace	and
<u>3844</u>	<u>9999</u>	<u>3962</u>	<u>4134</u>	<u>5485</u>	<u>2532</u>
pará		Patrós	pléerees	cháritos	kaí

ἀληθείας.  
 NFSG  
 truth.  
225  
 aleetheías

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\* \* \*

NWT: John 3:16

For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.  
 [Here the NWT reads “his only-begotten Son,” not “an only-begotten Son”]

The translators were not consistent in many instances.

NKJV: John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Greek: John 3:16

16

Οὕτως	γὰρ	ἠγάπησεν	ὁ	θεὸς	τὸν
<b>BX</b>	<b>CCX</b>	<b>V3SAAI</b>	<b>AMSN</b>	<b>NMSN</b>	<b>AMSA</b>
so	For	loved		God	the
<u>3779</u>	<u>1063</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>2316</u>	<u>3588</u>
Hoútoos	gár	eegápeesen	ho	Theós	tón

κόσμον,	ὥστε	τὸν	υἱὸν	τὸν	μονογενῆ
<b>NMSA</b>	<b>CSR</b>	<b>AMSA</b>	<b>NMSA</b>	<b>AMSA</b>	<b>JMSAX</b>
world,	that		Son,	his	only begotten
<u>2889</u>	<u>5620</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>5207</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>3439</u>
kósmōn	hoóste	tón	Huión	tón	monogeneé

ἔδωκεν,	ἵνα	πᾶς ὁ	πιστεύων	εἰς	αὐτὸν
<b>V3SAAI</b>	<b>CSF</b>	<b>JMSNX</b>	<b>AMSN</b>	<b>V_PAPMSN</b>	<b>PA</b>
he gave	that	whosoever	believeth	in	him
<u>1325</u>	<u>2443</u>	<u>3956</u>	<u>3588</u>	<u>4100</u>	<u>1519</u>
édookēn	hína	pás ho	pisteúōōn	eis	autón

μὴ	ἀπόληται	ἀλλ’	ἔχη	ζωὴν	αἰώνιον.
<b>TN</b>	<b>V3SAMS</b>	<b>CCV</b>	<b>V3SPAS</b>	<b>NFSA</b>	<b>JFSAX</b>
not	should perish,	but	have	life.	everlasting
<u>3361</u>	<u>622</u>	<u>235</u>	<u>2192</u>	<u>2222</u>	<u>166</u>
meé	apóleetai	all	échee	zooeén	aióónion

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\* \* \*

NWT: Colossians 2:9

Because it is in him that all the fulness of the divine quality dwells bodily.

NKJV: Colossians 2:9

For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

\* \* \*

Hebrews 1:8 [My test verse for the validity of any translation]

NWT: But with reference to the Son: "God is your throne forever, and [the] scepter of your kingdom is the scepter of uprightness.

NKJV: Hebrews 1:8 But to the Son He says:  
"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever;  
A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.

Some other translations:

Heb 1:8

But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. KJV

Heb 1:8

But of the Son *He says,*

"THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER ,  
AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM. NASB

Heb 1:8

But about the Son he says,

"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever,  
and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. NIV

Heb 1:8

But as to the Son, He says to Him, Your throne, O God, is forever and ever (to the ages of the ages), and the scepter of Your kingdom is a scepter of absolute righteousness (of justice and straightforwardness). AMP

Heb 1:8

But of the Son he says,

"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever,  
the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom.       ESV

And even the NWT: Hebrews 1:6 says "... And let all God's angels **worship** him."

Even the NWT says to worship the Son!

Therefore my approach to witnessing to the JW's is that if Jesus is merely "a god" then He is not due any more worship than the "god of this world," which is the devil. If Jesus is not to be worshipped as the unique expression of God the Father, the Word, then He is not to be worshipped at all. The emphasis should be placed on how the NWT translates Hebrews 1:6 & 8.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 4.

If I have a favorite text, this must be it. This is at least the eleventh time I have taught from this text (the fourth time here at VPBC) and the reason I use this text again and again is that it absolutely demands the equality of Jesus the Christ, who is God the Son, with God the Father, and with God the Holy Spirit.

#### **2 Corinthians 4:1-7**

**Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. 2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. 6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.       NKJV**

Now to look more closely at 2 Corinthians 4:1-7; Three main lessons:

1. The Authority of the Scriptures Established.
2. The Doctrine of Revelation Confirmed.
3. The Glory of God is Proclaimed in Jesus the Christ.

## Chapter 4:1-7 Christ is Revealed.

- vs. 1 we don't quit
- vs. 2 we don't deceive
- vs. 3 why falsehood is successful
- vs. 4 where truth is found
- vs. 5 we preach that Jesus is God
- vs. 6 the power of the Creator to reveal Himself
- vs. 7 God is God, not us and not creation itself

With that as an introduction, let's look at three main lessons:

### 1. The Authority of the Scriptures Established.

- vs. 2 If the Word of God is not final, authoritative, and sufficient why would it matter how you "handled" it?

You have to settle this matter in your mind and heart. This is God's word and it is objective truth. Objective Truth does not depend on my or your acceptance of it for validity. One of the signal thoughts of the New Age Movement (NAM) is that each of us has his own "truth." My truth and your truth; anything but objective truth that can rightly judge us.

The cardinal rule of Postmodernism is "NO JUDGEMENT".

This creed has been successfully ingrained into our culture by Star Trek, where "alien life-forms" and their culture were not to be judged by earth peoples' standards. Then Jerry Seinfeld's most used phrase was, "Not that there is anything wrong with that."

One of the marks of a cult is extra-biblical authority, e.g. in the Mormon cult the Christian Bible of the past hundreds of years must be understood by reading The Book of Mormon. It is not credible to claim to accept the Bible if you discount its authority.

This is what the Roman Catholic Church does. The Bible says there is **one mediator**.... but they overrule the very Word of God and teach that there are many "mediators" (angels, saints, the Virgin Mary, priests, and the Pope).

Now with the NAM we have the mutterings of Maharesi somebody, or a Shirley MacLaine.

As a Jehovah's Witness you have to settle to which translation you are going to invest your eternal soul. The Nature and Person of Jesus Christ is the issue.

## 2. The Doctrine of Revelation Confirmed.

Not the “occult,” i.e. hidden, only available to the initiated, but that which is revealed is the same truth and known by all who are redeemed by the blood of Christ.

The doctrine of revelation (vs. 4, 6) says that man is indeed dead in trespasses and sins, is blinded by Satan, the god of this age, and man does not have the innate ability to learn about the true God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. God must take the initiative to remove the veil that blinds all natural [unregenerate] men. What is the difference between occultism and revelation?

The **occult** is the supernatural to which man submits in order to control its forces. In doing so he becomes enslaved to the worship of the evil one.

**Revelation** is by the power of God and the knowledge gained is objective truth about Jesus, the Christ. Cf. Matthew 11:25-30

Matthew 11:25-30

<sup>25</sup> At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes. <sup>26</sup> Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. <sup>27</sup> All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*. <sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light." NKJV

### 3. The Glory of God is Proclaimed in Jesus the Christ.

What is the glory of God and where is it found?

There must first be objective truth, absolute and unchanging truth, not “truth” that is subject to the frailties of man. What is the authority?

The sovereign God who is not bound by man’s limited power must reveal objective truth and that is by divine revelation.

There are three words in vs. 6 that answer the question, “What is the glory of God and where is His glory to be seen?”

KNOWLEDGE

FACE

GLORY

a) **KNOWLEDGE** Greek: *gnosis*, a spiritual truth; that which is known and is important to the one who knows; a seeking to know; an active relationship between the one who knows and that knowledge.

b) **FACE** Greek: *prosopon*, the presence of a person; the most noble part; the person himself. E.g. the face expresses the mind.

c) **GLORY** Greek: *doxa*, primarily an **opinion**, and hence the honor resulting from the quality of that opinion. (The O.T. Hebrew word is *kabod*, from a verb that means weight, to honor.)

The hippies were biblical when they said, “That’s heavy man.”

What is your opinion of Jesus Christ?

Your opinion of Jesus Christ determines how much glory you see in Him.

Do you still glory in yourself? Do think so much of yourself that you don’t believe that you need a Substitute? Do you believe that God owes you something; that God would be unjust if He sent you to an everlasting hell?

You won’t be reincarnated regardless of what Shirley MacLaine and the NEW AGE MOVEMENT says.

And my dear Jehovah’s Witness friend, there is surely a hell!

{Jehovah’s Witness teach annihilation, thus denying the reality of hell.}

But we have the TRUTH, the KNOWLEDGE. And in the power of the Creator, the One who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, this KNOWLEDGE is REVEALED in the FACE (person) of Jesus Christ.

The GLORY (opinion) of God is found in the FACE (Person) of Jesus, the Christ.

IF JESUS OF NAZARETH is not very God come in the flesh; if He is merely “a god,” then the Messiah (Anointed) promised by the Father in the Old Testament has not yet come!

Furthermore, the New Testament is a lie because it says that Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment of the OT promise of Messiah. The words Christ and Messiah mean the same thing! ANOINTED.

There are many passages that we could use but I will only use one pair of Scriptures to make this point. Isaiah 6 and John 12.

Isaiah 6:1-3

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup> And one cried to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts;  
The whole earth *is* full of His glory!" NKJV

John 12:37-41

<sup>37</sup> But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, <sup>38</sup> that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

*"Lord, who has believed our report?  
And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"*

<sup>39</sup> Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

<sup>40</sup> *"He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,  
Lest they should see with their eyes,  
Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn,  
So that I should heal them."*

<sup>41</sup> These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him. NKJV

John says in 12:41 that the One he is speaking about is the fulfillment of Isaiah 6. John is clearly referring to Jesus. {The New World Translation missed this one!}

Jesus accepted worship. John 9:38 & Luke 24:52

John 9:35-38

<sup>35</sup> Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"

<sup>36</sup> He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"

<sup>37</sup> And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you."

<sup>38</sup> Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him. NKJV

Luke 24:50-53

<sup>50</sup> And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup> Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. <sup>52</sup> And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, <sup>53</sup> and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen. NKJV

Jesus did not rebuke them He received their worship!

Dear Jehovah's Witness will you worship Jesus? Your New World Translation declares that you will. (Philippians 2:11) Why not worship Him now to the saving of your soul?

In John 8:24, Jesus declares Himself to be the "I AM" of the Old Testament. (Exodus 3:13-14)

If you don't believe that Jesus is the "I AM" you will die in your sins!

In Hebrews 1, the Jehovah's Witness "translators" attempted to remove the force of verse 8 by changing the wording to "God is your throne," instead of "Your throne O God." But they missed verses 5 & 6, which command the angels to worship the Son! Do we worship any being other than God?

Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Jesus does that through His substitution on the cross. It is by revelation from God that you see your personal guilt and your just condemnation. It is by grace through faith alone that you have the ability to believe in Jesus as the Christ. If you add your good works to His perfect sacrifice for sin, you are rejecting the sufficiency of Christ's atonement.

Trust the Christ of the Bible, and yes, a truthful translation is essential.

Jim Gunn

Vineland Park Baptist Church, August 3, 2011