

Lighting a Lamp

for the
Jehovah's Witnesses



Written by Joshua Berry

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“... Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” – John 18:37.

Chapter 1 Predictions and Publications

Jehovah's Witnesses was started by a man named Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) in Pennsylvania in the year 1879. When Russell was around 20 years old he left the Presbyterian church because he refused to believe a merciful God would send people to Hell for eternity. He then sought out other religions that better suited what he wanted to believe. Since there was no other religion that satisfied Russell, he eventually just started his own doctrines and teachings. In 1872, Russell started a Bible study group called the Bible Student Movement, which later became the Jehovah's Witnesses after his death.

While Russell was a skeptic, after leaving the Presbyterian church he became acquainted with an Adventist named William Miller. Miller introduced Russell to the idea of using the Bible to predict the exact date of Christ's return and the end of the world. However, Miller already had several previous failed predictions of Christ's return. These predictions included the years 1843, March 1844, then again on October of 1844. Miller's prediction of October 22, 1844 became the most notable failed prediction, earning it the name "The Great Disappointment of 1844". The Great Disappointment brought much distress to his followers, causing nearly all of them to abandon the Advent movement. Followers of Miller at that time truly expected the return of Jesus Christ and gave up their belongings and prepared themselves for the end of the world. When the end of the world didn't come, there came an overwhelming wave of criticism and even violence.

Russell's exposure to William Miller led him also to make predictions of when Jesus Christ would return to Earth. Combining his fascination with the study of the Great Pyramid, Russell drew up what he called the "Chart of The Ages" that appeared in his 1913 book titled "The Divine Plan of the Ages and the Corroborative Testimony of the Great Pyramid in Egypt, God's Stone Witness and Prophet". In this chart, Russell predicted the end of the world taking place in 1914. When Russell's prediction of 1914 failed, he then changed it to 1915, which of course failed as well.

After Russell's death in 1916, Joseph Rutherford, Russell's successors, made more predictions of 1918 and 1925. Another was made in 1975 by the standing leader of the Watchtower, Nathan Knorr. Today the Watchtower tells its members that Christ came back in a "spirit" form in the year 1874. In 1920, Joseph Rutherford wrote how it is FACT we could expect the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and others in 1925.

"...Scriptures definitely fix the fact that there will be a resurrection of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and other faithful ones of old, and that these will have the first favor, we may expect 1925 to witness the return of these faithful men of Israel from the condition of death, being resurrected and fully restored to perfect humanity and made the visible, legal representatives of the new order of things on earth" - Joseph Rutherford, "Millions Now Living Will Never Die!" p.88.

During this religion's founding, Charles T. Russell traveled around the world speaking to crowds and was able to persuade many, however he was unable to impress any competent man well learned in biblical theology. Russell's goal was to get his message to every man, woman, and child in hopes that the world would have "a great awakening". The problem is Russell rejected nearly every essential doctrine of Christianity, but still called his new religion a Christian belief system. Russell published his own 6 volume "Scripture Studies" books to explain what he

considers to be what the Bible is truly trying to teach us. Russell seemed to have believed the Bible didn't really interpret itself, as many theologians have taught for hundreds of years. Russell even goes as far as to say his books are more authoritative than the actual Bible itself, and that you can be, and stay, saved reading his material alone!

*"If the six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES are practically the Bible, topically arranged with Bible proof texts given, we might not improperly name the volumes THE BIBLE IN AN ARRANGED FORM. That is to say, they are not mere comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself... Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SCRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years – if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience show that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, **and had not read a page of the Bible**, as such, he would be in the light at the end of two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures." - Charles T. Russell, "The Watchtower", 1910, September 15, p. 298.*

Russell's claim here is probably one of the boldest statements any one person can make, period. He is saying that if someone ONLY has his Scripture Studies, they don't even need the Bible. He is saying we can discard the Bible altogether, and maintain salvation through reading HIS writings alone. I wonder, do Jehovah's Witnesses know of such statements by its founder? To me, it sounds very similar to the Protestant Reformers protesting the Papacy when the Pope said his authority is higher than the word of God. Many Protestants died to spread scripture to the common people, to get Bibles into the hands of those who desperately needed it, and in a language they needed it in. It is my thoughts that perhaps we should have more respect for those that became martyrs for the authority of the God's scripture alone.

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." - Psalm 118:8 KJV.

Jesus and the Apostle Paul made much of their ministries rebuking, warning, and correcting many of the false teachings of the religious leaders of their days. The Bible warns many times about false prophets, and we are to stay away from those that speak of strange doctrines. Here is a list of a few among the many warnings:

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." – Galatians 1:8 KJV.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." – Matthew 7:15 KJV.

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the

ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” – 2 Corinthians 11: 13-15 KJV.

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” – 2 Peter 2:1-2 KJV.

There is one final point I would like to touch on in this chapter... Before the 1950's the Watchtower taught that Jesus Christ was to be worshiped equally as God. But as the years went on, they slowly changed their charters and publications to reflect the exact opposite. (Just to be clear, a charter is “a document, issued by a sovereign or state, outlining the conditions under which a corporation, colony, city, or other corporate body is organized, and defining its rights and privileges” - Dictionary.com.) The Jehovah's Witnesses charter in 1945, (part 7 section 2) instructs its members to:

*“...send out to various parts of the world Christian missionaries, teachers and instructors in the Bible and Bible literature, and for the public Christian **worship of Almighty God and Christ Jesus.**” - Jehovah's Witnesses Charter, 1945.*

Over time, as more publications were printed in various materials by the Watchtower, worship of Jesus Christ was slowly made into idolatry. The first statement that made it official not to worship Jesus Christ didn't appear until 1954 in the Jehovah's Witnesses Jan 1 edition of the Watchtower magazine stating,

"Should we worship Jesus? Consequently, since the Scriptures teach that Jesus Christ is not a trinitarian co-person with God the Father, but is a distinct person, the Son of God, the answer to the above question must be that no distinct worship is to be rendered to Jesus Christ now glorified in heaven. Our worship is to go to Jehovah God. However, we show the proper regard for God's only-begotten Son by rendering our worship to God through and in the name of Jesus Christ. Even now when we kneel in prayer, as Paul did according to Ephesians 3:14-19, we offer prayer in the name of Jesus Christ in obedience to his own directions (John 15:16; 16:23-26), but the prayer itself is addressed, not to Jesus, but to God his Father. In this way we keep things in their relative positions." - Watchtower Magazine, 1954 Jan 1, p. 31.

Moving further through this timeline, continued statements were published over the following years in the Watchtower magazine concerning the worship of Jesus Christ stated,

"Trinitarians who believe that Jesus is God, or at least the second person of the triune God, do not like to have Jehovah's witnesses say that it is unscriptural for worshipers of the living and true God to render worship to the Son of God, Jesus Christ" – Watchtower Magazine, 1964 Nov 1, p.671.

"Though some claim that prayer may properly be addressed to others, such as to God's Son, the evidence is emphatically to the contrary." - Insight on the Scriptures, Volume 2, p.667.

In 1999 the Jehovah's Witnesses charter was finally changed, omitting the "worship of Jesus Christ",

"...arrange for and hold assemblies for religious worship". - Jehovah's Witnesses Charter, 1999.

And in the year 2000, Jehovah's Witnesses explained to its members in detail how they are to reject Jesus Christ as God and to render no worship to Him.

"Reverent adoration should be expressed only to God. To render worship to anyone [such as Jesus Christ] or anything else would be a form of idolatry, which is condemned in both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures. Accordingly, true Christians do well to direct their worship only to Jehovah God, the Almighty." - Awake!, 2000 Apr 8, p.26-27, [] added for clarity.

Without faith alone in Jesus Christ as their expressed savior to which they gain salvation from, the Jehovah's Witnesses now teach salvation lies only in their ability to "earn" it by door-to-door recruitment into their religion. The Watchtower today has mastered its ability to print millions of publications per year. For many years the Watchtower and Awake! magazines have been some of the top circulated magazines in the entire world.

*"The Watchtower has a circulation larger than any other magazine in the world. Each issue has a print run of more than **42 million** copies. Awake! is second, with a circulation of **41 million** copies each issue. Both magazines are published by Jehovah's Witnesses and are distributed in 236 lands... The Watchtower is translated into more than 190 languages, and Awake! into more than 80. By comparison, Reader's Digest is published in 21 languages, though content varies from country to country. In order to do our best to declare the "good news" to "every nation and tribe and tongue and people," we produce literature in over 750 languages." - www.jw.org, "The Watchtower—No Other Magazine Comes Close", "How Is Our Literature Written and Translated?"*

These magazines cannot be purchased, but instead are gladly brought right to your door by its eight million plus followers. This is one of the main reasons the Jehovah's Witnesses have been so successful in gaining it's followers. The Watchtower prides itself on the amount of published material it is able to produce out of its headquarters in Brooklyn. After all, the Watchtower is a publishing company.

Chapter 2 Russell vs. Ross

In June of 1912 a man named Reverend J.J. Ross who was the pastor of the James St. Baptist Church in Hamilton, Ontario published a pamphlet titled "Some Facts About the Self-Styled 'Pastor' Charles T. Russell." This publication was a major blow to Russell, questioning his qualifications in biblical scholarship and theology, and the founding of his new style of "Christianity". In this snippet of his article, Reverend J.J. Ross writes,

"He [Russell] never attended the higher schools of learning, knows comparatively nothing of philosophy, systematic or historical theology, and is totally ignorant of the dead languages, and yet he is successful in making his disciples believe that the most difficult passages in the Old Testament and the book of Revelation are as simple as a sunbeam to him..."

"...Russell has published a set of books, bound in six volumes, including about two thousand pages, which he now calls 'Studies in the Scriptures.' The title is misleading and is intended to deceive the Christian public... The whole system of Russellism is anti-rational, anti-scientific, anti-Biblical, anti-Christian and a deplorable perversion of the Gospel of God's dear Son... They [Russell's writings] contradict almost every fundamental of evangelical Christian faith by a bold denial of the proper deity, incarnation, resurrection, ascension and high priestly intercession of Jesus Christ... Every reader is warned against this false teacher and his teaching as dangerous in the extreme." - J. J. Ross, "Some Facts About the Self Styled 'Pastor' Charles T. Russell", 1912, p. 3-4, 7-8.

In response to the pamphlet, Russell filed for a lawsuit in the High Court of Ontario for "defamatory libel". Looking at the timing of the release of the publication and the time it took for Russell to send Reverend Ross court summons, it would appear that Russell was trying to retaliate before the pamphlet was widespread, it having the potential to expose him and his doctrine as a fraud. Reverend Ross welcomed the lawsuit to prove just that publicly. Not long after, in March 17th of 1912, the hearing took place. Both parties were sworn in to "tell the truth and nothing but the truth" and then something very interesting took place. Russell testified and swore that the statements in Reverend Ross's publication concerning his educational background were false, but with further examination and pressure he finally admitted to only having attended public school for 7 years and quit when he was 14 years of age. Pressing forward, here is dialogue from the examination of Russell from Reverend Ross's attorney, Mr. Staunton.

(Staunton): "Do you know the Greek alphabet?"

(Russell): "Oh yes."

(Staunton): "Can you tell me the correct letter if you see them?"

(Russell): "Some of them; I might make a mistake on some of them."

(Staunton): "Would you tell me the name of those on top of the page, page 447, I have got here?"

(Russell): "Well I don't know that I would be able to."

(Staunton): "You can't tell what those letters are? Look at them and see if you know."

(Russell): "My way..." [he was interrupted at this point and not allowed to explain]

(Staunton): "Are you familiar with the Greek language?"

(Russell): "No."

(The previous, and following, examination notes and transcripts are taken from a reproduction of the "Russell v. Ross" transcript on file in Brooklyn at the Watchtower Headquarters.)

The examination went on for 5 hours leading Russell to also admit he knew nothing of Latin or Hebrew as well. Russell also admitted to never attending a school or course in philosophy, systematic theology, or higher learning of any kind. Before the trial, he had also claimed to have been ordained as a seemingly "superior pastor" by proper accredited ministers. Attorney Staunton drilled this topic demanding Russell answer "yes" or "no" to the following question...

(Staunton): "Is it true you were never ordained?"

(Russell): "It is not true."

With the help of the magistrate, Attorney Staunton rephrased the question and Russell was forced to answer more directly.

(Staunton): "Now, you never were ordained by a bishop, clergyman, presbytery, council, or any body of men living?"

(Russell, after a long pause): "I never was."

At this point, Charles Taze Russell dropped the case himself, but not before being branded a premeditated perjurer.

It's extremely clear that Russell was a very well-crafted con man that reminds me more and more of an earlier version of Frank William Abagnale. For those of you who are unfamiliar with Frank Abagnale, he was able to convince Pam Am airlines that he was a pilot, a hospital that he was a chief doctor, and also a law firm that he was a high credited lawyer, all before he turned the age of 19. While at the same time Abagnale forged checks in all 50 states and 26 different countries racking in over 4 million dollars of stolen money.

Like Abagnale, Russell was also able to convince great crowds that he was a supreme theologian with absolutely no proof and created a rather exceptional following. Today the common Jehovah's Witness knows very little of Charles Taze Russell, and if they do know the name their knowledge is typically inaccurate. When the witness does look up Charles Taze Russell, the Watchtower paints a very positive and colorful picture of Russell. However, the Watchtower will argue that Russell was not their founder at all.

*"...Among that group of sincere Bible students was a man named Charles Taze Russell. While Russell took the lead in the Bible education work at that time and was the first editor of The Watchtower, he was not the founder of a new religion."
- www.jw.org, "Who Was the Founder of Jehovah's Witnesses?"*

I have read this in many pro-Jehovah's Witness sources, but the more I researched other trusted historical sources the more I found Russell indeed was the stated founder over and over again. The Watchtower began with its first publication of the "Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence" magazine in July of 1879, which was the beginning of Russell's authorship and the creation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

"In 1879 he [Russell] started a Bible journal, later called The Watchtower, and in 1884 he founded the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, which became an extensive publishing business" - www.britannica.com, "Charles-Taze-Russell".

Another entry by a well-known and trusted encyclopedia concerning the founding of Jehovah's Witnesses,

"Jehovah's Witnesses Religious sect founded in the 1870s by Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916) of Pittsburgh. The sect believes in the imminent end of the world for all except its own members. They hold to the theory of a theocratic kingdom, membership of which cannot be reconciled with allegiance to any country. They deny most of the fundamental Christian doctrines." - World Encyclopedia, 2005

Chapter 3 Who is Christ?

In the Rose Publishing pamphlet titled "Christianity, Cults and Religions" under the explanation of who Jesus Christ is to Jehovah's Witnesses, it states:

"Jesus is not God. Before he lived on earth, he was Michael the archangel. Jehovah made the universe through him. On earth he was a man who lived a perfect life. After dying on a stake (not a cross), he was resurrected as a spirit; his body was destroyed. Jesus is not coming again; he "returned" invisibly in 1914 in spirit. Very soon, he and the angels will destroy all non-Jehovah's Witnesses." - Rose Publishing, "Christianity, Cults and Religions", product code: 404X.

Michael the archangel is only mentioned 5 times in the original texts, Daniel 10:13, Daniel 10:21, Daniel 12:1, Jude 1:9, and in Revelation 12:7. In the verses of Daniel, it speaks of Michael as "one of the chief princes".

"But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia." – Daniel 10:13 KJV.

"But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince." – Daniel 10:21 KJV

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." – Daniel 12:1 KJV.

While Jude and Revelations does speak about Michael being an archangel.

"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." – Jude 1:9 KJV.

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels," – Revelation 12:7 KJV.

So how did the Jehovah's Witnesses get their belief of Michael turning into Jesus? Where is this teaching taken from in scripture? One of the reasons Jehovah's Witnesses come to this conclusion is by the verses 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:” - 1 Thessalonians 4:16 KJV.

Since the Lord will descend with a shout, and that shout will sound like an archangel, Jehovah’s Witnesses believe this is proof Michael was/is Jesus. But, we just learned that Jehovah’s Witnesses do not believe Jesus Christ is “Lord” (God). And if Jesus is not “Lord” (God), and Michael is only an archangel and chief prince, how does this observation come together to make sense? For this to make sense, either Jesus Christ or Michael have to be promoted to God.

Is it possible that Jesus could make the same sounding shout as an archangel? Or perhaps an archangel will do the shouting, announcing Jesus’s entrance? Also something to consider, is Michael the only archangel? What I get from this scripture is the audible sound of Christ’s return will either be comparable to, or that of, the voice of an archangel.

Another reason the Jehovah's Witnesses believe Michael is Jesus is described on their website, stating

“The Bible states that “Michael and his angels battled with the dragon... and its angels.” (Revelation 12:7) Thus, Michael is the Leader of an army of faithful angels. Revelation also describes Jesus as the Leader of an army of faithful angels. (Revelation 19:14-16) And the apostle Paul specifically mentions “the Lord Jesus” and “his powerful angels.” (2 Thessalonians 1:7) So the Bible speaks of both Michael and “his angels” and Jesus and “his angels.” (Matthew 13:41; 16:27; 24:31; 1 Peter 3:22) Since God’s Word nowhere indicates that there are two armies of faithful angels in heaven,—one headed by Michael and one headed by Jesus—it is logical to conclude that Michael is none other than Jesus Christ in his heavenly role.” - www.jw.org, “Who Is Michael The Archangel Jesus”.

Is it not possible to have one army with more than one commander of that army? I was in the United States Army in my youth and of course there were several commanders, while we were still only one army. It literally is describing a chain of command, something every military has had for thousands of years. Even businesses and churches have a chain of command. We would not say the President (Commander in Chief) is the same person as a Base Commander. Jesus Christ is definitely the commander in chief of an entire army of faithful angels, while Michael is perhaps second in command and so forth.

Then if Jesus Christ is not Michael, who is He? In John 1:1 we read,

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” - John 1:1 KJV.

When someone reads this for the first time they may naturally think of “the Word” as being the Bible. And, of course, it is. However, that is not what this verse is referring to. This concept might be a bit to grasp, but follow me for a second if you can. If in the beginning “the Word was with God” at the same time “the Word was God”, then a much deeper way to explain this would be when God speaks His words are as Himself, at the same time they are Him. God’s words then take on life, at the same time they create life as He speaks. And since God has no beginning, then God’s word would likewise have no beginning. God’s words are ALIVE as much

as they are God himself, speaking things into existence. Reading further into John chapter one verse 14,

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,...” - John 1:14 KJV.

I want you to notice the word “made” in that last verse. The original Greek word used in this passage for the word “made” is “ginomai”. This word is used 31 times in the texts where the English word “become” or “becometh” is written. Insinuating that “the Word” was never created, but rather God “became” flesh. That fits the idea of John 1:1 perfectly since “the Word” is God himself. Who in the Gospels claimed to be God in the flesh? Jesus Christ did, which is why He angered many of the hard core religious leaders of the day. If we wanted to summarize these last two verses together we might say, In the beginning was God, the Word was, and is, God, who ‘became’ flesh and dwelt among us. This does not show that “the Word”, Jesus, did not exist until He came to Earth, nor in any way teach that Jesus was Michael the archangel before He came to Earth.

It’s interesting that the New World Translation (NWT) Bible of the Jehovah’s Witnesses subtly changed John 1:14 by adding a single letter making it read, “...and the word was ‘a’ god.” In the footnotes of the NWT for John 1:14 it adds, “or, was divine.” This tiny change actually makes the verse open to all sorts of confusion. We believe there is only ONE true God, so there really can be no mistake here. This addition to the scripture indirectly insinuates there could be any number of gods. Satan himself could even claim deity, which is actually his ultimate goal.

Pressing forward, 1 John 5:7-8 also supports “the Word” having divinity.

“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” - 1 John 5:7-8 KJV.

This verse, combined with John 1:14, is probably of the most obvious verses depicting the divinity of Jesus Christ. It also supports the doctrine of the trinity in a monotheistic sense, which the Jehovah's Witnesses also do not accept.

However, the NWT Bible does not say this at all. The NWT, similar to many other modern Bible versions, actually instead omits verse 7 and then splits verse 8 to make up for it. No longer do we have the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost that “bear record in heaven”, but instead we now read,

“7. For there are three witness bearers: 8. The spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.” - 1 John 5:7-8 NWT.

Another example of this is in Acts 20:28 where it’s written,

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” - Acts 20:28 KJV.

Did you catch that? God purchased His church with “His own” blood! Who shed their blood to pay our debt and buy us back to Himself? If we are reading this correctly, Jesus Christ is

God and died to purchase His own church. The NWT does yet another subtle word change to distort the scriptures and take divinity away from Christ. The NWT of the Jehovah's Witnesses states in Acts 20:28,

"Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son." - Acts 20:28 NWT.

Now we read that the congregation of God was not purchased by God himself, but only by "his own Son." This clever word play supports the Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine that Jesus Christ is not God; keeping Christ from divinity and God in Heaven. This change also contradicts belief in a triune God, which supports the Jehovah's Witnesses beliefs as well. It's as if the scriptures were changed to suit a specific narrative.

Another huge clue we get that tells us who Jesus was is the fact that He indirectly, yet very bluntly, claimed to be God in many passages of the Gospels. You have to consider the time period and how the people listening understood Jesus's statements. For instance, we read Jesus saying,

"I and my Father are one." - John 10:30 KJV.

Jesus here is saying He IS God, and the Jews to whom He was speaking with understood very well what He meant. They understood so well, they picked up stones to kill Him. The Jehovah's Witnesses like to explain this away by stating this about the word "one" in the previous verse,

"Or 'at unity'... The Greek word here rendered 'one' is, not in the masculine gender (denoting 'one person'), but in the neuter gender (denoting 'one thing'), supporting the thought that Jesus and his Father are 'one' in action and cooperation, not in person." - www.jw.org, Online NWT Bible notes.

Very well respected Vine's Dictionary of NT words says quite the opposite of Jehovah's Witnesses explanation for their definition of the Greek word used, exposing the above statement by jw.org as a crafted lie.

"Heis – One: the first cardinal numeral, masculine (feminine and neuter nominative forms are 'mia' and 'hen', respectively), is used to signify... 'one' in contrast to many, e.g., Romans 5:18" – Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.

And here is a look at Romans 5:18, referenced by the Vine's Dictionary entry above.

"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." - Romans 5:18 KJV.

Just a few verses previous from Romans 5:18 we read a verse similar that uses the same Greek word "heis".

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:” - Romans 5:12 KJV.

When Paul use the word “Heis” in these passages, he was not talking about two people being in agreement with each other. Paul was writing specifically about Adam as a single person. This word “one” (heis) is used 272 times in 235 verses throughout the New Testament, all used in the same context.

Very important question, why would the Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus if He only said He agrees with God? Didn’t the Jew’s also do their best to agree with God as well? Wasn’t that the whole point of the Jew’s faith? This would have put Jesus and the Jew’s in agreement, but it definitely did not! Another example of this is in John 8:58 we read,

“Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.” - John 8:58 KJV.

When Jesus Christ said “I AM” to the Jews, that would have been another extremely direct way of telling them He is God. The Jews had been living by the Old Testament laws of Moses for over 2400 years. They would have had the book of Exodus memorized word for word, especially where in chapter 3 verse 13 and 14 it says,

“And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.” - Exodus 3:13-14 KJV.

So the Jews again knew EXACTLY what Jesus was implying; that He was God. And again picked up stones to kill Him. To the Jews this was blasphemy and punishable by death! Jesus Christ’s claims to be God was the main reason why the Jews hated and crucified Him. If you don’t know what blasphemy is, it’s defined as,

“The act of claiming the attributes of a deity” – www.merriam-webster.com.

An interesting side story to note here is in the Gospel of John when Jesus is in the Garden of Gethsemane and a band of men come to arrest Him.

“Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.” - John 18:3-6 KJV.

Notice the display of power we are shown when Jesus speaks His name to a “band of men and officers”, which is guessed to be perhaps 300 to 600 men. When Jesus said “I AM he” all the men and officers were flung backward to the ground! Wow!

If Jesus Christ had not claimed to be God, then He quite possibly would have never been killed. Honestly, what was the reason for Jesus Christ’s death if He was not claiming deity? Do you think the Jews misunderstood Jesus? Perhaps the Jehovah’s Witnesses think Jesus was a liar. The facts given in the original gospel record remain strong. And that is, the religious leaders plotted together, arrested Jesus in the middle of the night, charged Him with blasphemy (claiming deity), and crucified Him for it. It seems to me the religious leaders viewed this as a pretty severe crime to warrant such a horrific punishment.

“Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.” - Mark 14:63-64 KJV.

It’s recorded in scripture that even Thomas, being a doubter, called Jesus Christ “My Lord and my God” after seeing the resurrected Jesus.

“And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.” - John 20:28 KJV.

God the Father is also found calling Jesus Christ “O, God” in Hebrews 1:8 as a direct connotation to Jesus’s divinity and his eternal reign in Heaven.

“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.” - Hebrews 1:8 KJV.

In Matthew we read,

“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” - Matthew 1:23 KJV.

This last example is from the book of John.

“Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” - John 14:8-9 KJV.

If you are still not convinced, would you go as far to say that Jesus Christ and His followers were frauds perhaps? Consider that all of the disciples faced very heavy persecution, and many died extreme deaths because of their belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ. After Jesus’s death, before his resurrection, the disciples thought it was all over. Some of them gave up and went back to their homelands and old occupations. What could have happened to so drastically change their minds and make them suddenly and so powerfully proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their own horrific deaths? If you ask me, seeing the physically resurrected

Christ would be sufficient enough to change my mind! And if they didn't see the resurrected Christ, was it all just a lie? Would you die a horrible and excruciating painful death for a lie? This is a very important question. Better yet, could you find a whole group of people that would be willing to be put to death for a lie? I would bet that if the story of Christ's resurrection was a lie, some of them would come clean before their executions to save their skin. If you want to know just how horrible these deaths were, you might want to consider reading "Foxe's Book of Martyrs" by John Foxe.

I would also highly recommend the books "The Case For Christ" and "The Case For The Real Jesus" by Lee Strobel. I would also recommend "More Than A Carpenter" by Josh and Sean McDowell. These are ALL wonderful books with explosive evidence for Jesus Christ and the Gospels. Lee Strobel and Josh McDowell were both severe skeptics that ridiculed Christians and both angrily set out to disprove and destroy Christianity. They too, like millions, were changed forever and came to faith in Jesus Christ upon examining the historical evidence.

Chapter 4 The Cross And The Stake

One thing nearly all historians can agree on is a Jewish historian and Roman citizen named Titus Flavius Josephus (37 AD – 100 AD) recorded this in his writings,

“At this time there was a wise man who was called Jesus. And his conduct was good, and was known to be virtuous. And many people from among the Jews and the other nations became his disciples. Pilate condemned him to be crucified and to die. And those who had become his disciples did not abandon his discipleship...” - Flavius Josephus, translated from the 10th Century Arabic Text by historian Schlomo Pines in 1972.

Although there may be some slight controversy on the translation of this statement from its original written language, the main context of this historical event is translated well enough to make the main point very clear. There was a real man named Jesus, and He was most definitely crucified by Pontius Pilate. Josephus was not the only historian of the time to record events of Jesus, two other well-known historians named Tacitus and Pliny the Younger also wrote of Him.

“Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome... Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty: then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind.” - Tacitus, Annals 15.44, cited in “The Case for Christ” by Lee Strobel, p. 88.

“They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god, and bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to any wicked deeds, but never to commit any fraud, theft or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble to partake of food – but food of an ordinary and innocent kind.” – Pliny the Younger, Letters, transl. by William Melmoth, rev. by W.M.L. Hutchinson

There are many external evidences, outside the Bible, that gives the gospel record of Jesus Christ and the beginnings of the Christians that much more credibility. But how do the original texts explain what Jesus Christ was crucified on? Of course the most common depiction of Christ’s crucifixion is on a cross. However, the Jehovah’s Witnesses have condemned the idea of Christ dying on a cross and have replaced all translations of the word cross in their NWT with the word “stake”. Why did they do this? They will make the argument that the Greek word “stauros”, which is used for the word “cross” in the original texts, actually translates “upright

pole or stake". While this is partly true, it's true for the Homeric and Classical Greek translations up until the 4th century BC. During the Hellenistic and Roman period, throughout the life of Jesus Christ and the time the New Testament was written, Koine Greek was being used. The meaning of "stauros" in Koine Greek referred to the cross as a device of capital punishment with not just a pole in the ground, but also with a crossmember at the top. The writers of the New Testament used this word correctly to explain exactly what they had either seen with their own eyes, or understood from the accounts of the disciples and bystanders.

Another reason the Jehovah's Witnesses did this word swap was of the supposed pagan history of the cross. They inform us that the symbol can be traced all the way back to Mesopotamia, over 2000 years before Christ, where "T" was used as a symbol for Tammuz, an ancient man who was eventually worshiped as a pagan god. I'm sure I don't need to mention the distinct difference between the "T" and a cross. However, Jehovah's Witnesses claim the entire world has been misled into idolizing a blasphemous pagan symbol. Consider, EVERYTHING on this planet, at some point, has been used as a pagan symbol (Triangles, trees, torches, hand gestures, specific combinations of colors, flowers, an eye, stars, certain animals, rocks, forms of gold, specific clothes; the list infinitely goes on). Many are reluctant to think the Romans were giving special attention to what they were crucifying Jesus Christ upon. But instead of going any further into the Greek translation of the word "stauros", or the history of pagan symbols, I would much rather bring attention to several verses right in our Bible that proves Jesus Christ most definitely died on a cross and not a stake.

First thing I want you to pay attention to is the number of nails it would have taken to crucify Jesus. Since the popular consensus says Jesus died on a cross, almost everyone would quickly guess three nails were used; one nail for each of His hands and one for His feet. But, if Jesus was nailed to a stake only two nails would be needed; one for BOTH of His hands and one for both of his feet. But what do we read here in the book of John?

"The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." - John 20:25 KJV.

Notice the word "nails" is plural, twice, when talking about Jesus's hands. The only way this verse makes sense is if each of His hands were nailed over His head separately. But even if that were a plausible explanation, there is still a problem explaining other verses such as Matthew 27:37.

"And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS." - Matthew 27:37 KJV.

If Jesus was crucified on a stake, He would have had the weight of his body pulling him down, with his arms extended to the sky, leaving no room for anything above His head. Instead the sign would have to have been above His hands. How do we reconcile this verse? The answer is simple; Jesus's hands were stretched out to the sides.

"Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left." - Matthew 27:38 KJV.

*“And with him they crucify two thieves; the **one on his right hand, and the other on his left.**” - Mark 15:27 KJV.*

*“And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, **one on the right hand, and the other on the left.**” - Luke 23:33 KJV.*

THREE TIMES the scriptures say, “on the right hand” and on Jesus’s “left”! This is a case where one word can make all the difference. And of course, the NWT Bible of the Jehovah’s Witnesses omits the word “hand” in all of these verses. This is a deliberate change of the scripture to support the idea of Jesus on a stake instead of a cross. But, the NWT still maintains a somewhat correct translation of verse Matthew 27:37, where it is recorded as Jesus having a sign “over his head”. The NWT is filled with contradictions like this, where one area has been changed, rendering it contradictory in other parts that have been left unchanged.

Another thing to consider concerning the differences between being nailed to a stake rather than a cross, is the fact that you would die much faster being nailed to a stake. This is something of great importance on this argument. Here is where I would encourage the reader to give this next part their full attention... In scripture we know that Jesus suffered for many hours before actually dying. The Gospel accounts tell us,

“And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.” - Mark 15:25 KJV.

“And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” - Matthew 27:46 KJV.

According to the Jewish timetable, the first hour of the day would have been 6am. The “third hour” would have set the time at 9am, and the “ninth hour” at 3pm. This puts Jesus on the cross for six hours! But would someone last that long with their hands nailed over their head on a stake? This is the million dollar question. In a similar instance in history we can actually answer this question. During WWII the Germans would hang people from stakes in the exact manner that the Jehovah's Witnesses claim Jesus Christ was hung. The following statement was recorded in 1953 by a man who made observations of the Germans exercising this practice.

“Eye witness accounts by prisoners of war in Dacchu during WWII reported that victims suspended from beams by their wrist, which were tied, expired within ten minutes if their feet were weighted or tied down and within one hour if their feet were unweighted and the victim was able to raise and lower himself to permit respiration. Death in this manner, which is one form of crucifixion, was the result of suffocation.” - P. Barbet, 1953, “Les Cinq Plaies du Christ” 2nd ed. Paris: Procure du Carmel de l' Action de Graces.

It would be impossible for anyone to have lived for six hours with their hands stretched over their head in this fashion. Any form of crucifixion locks a person’s lungs into the inhale position, so if a person wants to exhale they would have had to use their arm strength to pull themselves up while also pushing up with their nailed feet.

“Death ultimately occurred through a combination of constrained blood circulation, organ failure, and asphyxiation as the body strained under its own weight. It could be hastened by shattering the legs with an iron club, which prevented them from supporting the body’s weight and made inhalation more difficult, accelerating both asphyxiation and shock.” - www.britannica.com, “Crucifixion”.

Nailing a person’s arms out to the sides instead, and then their feet to bottom would allow the crucified to push themselves up for breath. This would allow the person to live significantly longer, and prolonging the suffering. Perfecting ways of torture was something the Romans were masters of, and quite proud of as well. Having a person’s arms directly over their head would increase the difficulty of exhaling quite significantly, making them suffocate much faster.

Contradictory to recent Jehovah’s Witnesses teachings, for the first 70 years or more after its founding, they informed its members that Jesus Christ died on a cross. Also, many of the early study materials and publications were shown to have depictions of a cross within a crown. This was favorably used by the founder Charles Taze Russell. The first president of the Watchtower, after Russell’s death, was even quoted saying,

“The cross of Christ is the greatest pivotal truth of the divine arrangement, from which radiate the hopes of men.” - Joseph Rutherford, 1921, “The Harp of God”, p. 141.

If I may, I would like to pose just a few honest questions. Can we feel good about believing that people from early centuries passed, up until now, have been completely misled, on a global scale, that Jesus Christ died on a cross when He actually died on a stake? How do we reconcile the millions of carved crosses on stones, wood, cross drawings, images in ancient writings, and millions of other depictions all throughout the two thousand plus years of Christian history? Would you be bold enough to say the whole world has been hoodwinked, including early Christian believers and writers? The Apostle Paul writes,

“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” - 1 Corinthians 1:17-18 KJV.

Chapter 5 Resurrection And Salvation

The physical resurrection of Jesus Christ is the single most important event in the Christian faith. It's also how Jesus proved to the world that He was who He claimed to be, and verifying everything He said and taught was true. Without this event, there is no Christian faith. Without this even, I wouldn't be writing this book.

“And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” - 1 Corinthians 15:14-17 KJV.

In the NWT we read something very similar.

“But if Christ has not been raised up, our preaching is certainly in vain, and your faith is also in vain. Moreover, we are also found to be false witnesses of God, because we have given witness against God by saying that he raised up the Christ, whom he did not raise up if the dead are really not to be raised up. For if the dead are not to be raised up, neither has Christ been raised up. Further, if Christ has not been raised up, your faith is useless; you remain in your sins.” - 1 Corinthians 15:14-17 NWT.

One thing I found very interesting is that the Watchtower does not teach a physical bodily resurrection. They instead teach that Jesus's body was destroyed and His spirit turned back into Michael the Archangel. Additionally, they also teach that recorded sightings of Jesus were only of Him appearing as a spirit or ghost to His followers.

If Jesus's body was destroyed and His spirit was turned back into Michael the Archangel, then how does Jesus's spirit still exist? Or should I instead ask what exactly turned back into Michael; Jesus's body, His spirit, or nothing at all and Michael just reappeared back in Heaven? If it was Jesus's body that turned back into Michael, why is it taught that the body was destroyed. If Jesus's spirit turned into Michael, how then does Jesus still exist as spirit? Great confusion comes out of this when closely examined. And while the Watchtower is teaching this, the Jehovah's Witness reads this in the book of Luke out of their NWT,

“But because they were terrified and frightened, they imagined that they were seeing a spirit. So he said to them: “Why are you troubled, and why have doubts come up in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones just as you see that I have.” And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. But while they were still not believing for sheer joy and amazement, he said to them: “Do you have something there to eat?” So they handed him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it before their eyes.” - Luke 24:37-43, NWT.

The study notes from www.jw.org explain Jesus's physical body in these verses by stating to it's members,

“This was to prove that like angels in the past, he had materialized in order to be seen by the disciples.” - www.jw.org, online bible, marginal references.

Nowhere in this particular part of scripture does it imply that Jesus had to temporarily manifest Himself for the disciples. The implication given in chapter 24 of Luke is that Jesus was physically alive and well.

This made me look at several other accounts recorded where Jesus appears. One account being when Mary the mother of James, Salome, and Joanna are told by an angel that Jesus has risen. They then were on their way to tell the disciples:

“And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.” - Matthew 28:9, KJV.

Did Jesus also “manifest” Himself into flesh here as well? Another instance in particular we could look at would be when Jesus walked with two of the disciples to the village of Emmaus.

“And behold, two of them were going that very day to a village named Emmaus, which was about seven miles from Jerusalem. And they were conversing with each other about all these things which had taken place. And it came about that while they were conversing and discussing, Jesus himself approached, and began traveling with them. But their eyes were prevented from recognizing him” – Luke 24:13-16, KJV.

“But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.” - Luke 24:29-30, KJV.

Could two people walk for several miles with Jesus without noticing He was a spirit? Would they have invited Jesus in to eat if they thought He was a spirit? Wouldn't Jesus need physical hands to break the bread? Did Jesus also “manifest” Himself here as well? In another example it's recorded that Jesus was given fish and the disciples actually watched Him eat. Can a spirit physically eat fish?

“And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.” - Luke 24:42 KJV.

Another example is given in the book of John.

“Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.” - John 20:27 KJV.

Could Thomas thrust his hand into Jesus Christ's side if He was only a spirit? The author, John, would have to be speaking of physical wounds from a physical body for this to make sense. We would really have to assume, according to the Watchtower, that nearly every time Jesus appeared to others He was "manifested" in flesh, while also needing scripture to validate that claim for each instance.

And lastly we have Paul recording more than 500 people seeing Jesus Christ all at the same time.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." - 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 KJV.

Why did none of the authors of the New Testament that saw Jesus, or was told of these events, describe Him as a "spirit" or "ghost" here instead of speaking of Jesus as any other walking/breathing person?

The English words "spirit" and "ghost" (or "pneuma" in the Greek - πνεῦμα) are used interchangeably in the New Testament, showing up 385 times in 350 verses. These words are used to describe the "Holy Spirit" to the "spirit" of people. Yet this Greek word was not used even once to describe the appearance or presence of Jesus Christ after His resurrection. Why not? Paul says,

*"But if there be no **resurrection of the dead**, then is Christ not risen:" - 1 Corinthians 15:13, KJV.*

When I read "resurrection of the dead" in this last verse, I never considered it to be a "spirit" rising from the dead. Don't we ALL have spirits that rise up and go on after leaving our bodies? And if we ALL have spirits that rise up and leave our bodies, why then do we put so much emphasis on the rising of Jesus's spirit, as if it's something out of the ordinary? Why make it sound as though Jesus's spirit otherwise would NOT have rose up? Instead, when I read "resurrection of the dead", and look at the Greek word for resurrection, it's a stretch for me to think of anything other than a person died and physically came back to life. When I believe it's simply a physical resurrection, I also don't have to explain and reinterpret the following verses in scripture that mention Jesus's appearances.

The ultimate question here is how can anyone believe there is salvation if they do not believe Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead? Remember, Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised up, your faith is useless; you remain in your sins." (1 Corinthians 15:17 NWT). The Jehovah's Witnesses will tell you that the only way to be safe from the impending wrath of God is to do good works by spreading their teachings, and to join Watchtower which is God's organization on Earth. But Paul says if you do not **believe** in the **resurrection of Christ** "you REMAIN IN YOUR SINS." By this definition, it wouldn't matter how many people you speak to, how good you are, or even if you claim to subscribe to an organization, "...your faith is vain..."

In verse John 14:6 Jesus says,

“...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” - John 14:6 KJV.

We have no hope of obtaining salvation apart from Jesus Christ. We cannot earn our salvation. However, if you have a conversation with a Jehovah’s Witness, they will tell you they are saved by grace. But if you press it enough you will find it’s really more about works and they will quote verses from James chapter 2 that speak of faith without works being dead. Their version of “grace” is more of the idea that God gave them the grace to work towards salvation; not the same thing we think of when speaking of grace.

Evangelical Christians know Jesus Christ already did the work for us, that is the good news of the gospel! The work that we, ourselves, could never do was completed for us. Jesus Christ lived a perfect sinless life and willingly took our punishment for sin that we all deserve. Not a single person on Earth can do that, because it is impossible for any one person on Earth to live a sinless life. The punishment for sin is death, so Jesus Christ’s death or yours?

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” - Romans 6:23 KJV.

By Jesus Christ’s work alone are we saved, by believing in Him and the sacrifice He made for us. That’s it! That’s what it’s all about!

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” - Ephesians 2:8-9 KJV.

What do Jehovah’s Witnesses teach about salvation and death? Again, in the pamphlet “Christianity, Cults and Religions” we read:

“Be baptized as Jehovah’s Witnesses. Most followers must earn everlasting life on earth by “door-to-door work.” Salvation in heaven is limited to 144,000 “anointed ones.” This number is already reached.” - Rose Publishing, “Christianity, Cults and Religions”, product code: 404X.

“The 144,000 live as spirits in heaven. The rest of the righteous, “the great crowd,” live on earth, and must obey God perfectly for 1,000 years or be annihilated.” - Rose Publishing, “Christianity, Cults and Religions”, product code: 404X.

This is contrary to what Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-9. And the unfortunate belief they hold is their members do not go to heaven since it’s already maxed out with the 144,000 “anointed ones”. How depressing! The passages that teach salvation by faith are also in the NWT, even while they are still translated incorrectly from the Greek, it’s clear that salvation is exclusively by faith alone.

“By this undeserved kindness you have been saved through faith, and this is not of your own doing; rather, it is God’s gift. No, it is not a result of works, so that no one should have grounds for boasting.” - Ephesians 2:8-9 NWT.

“Therefore, no one will be declared righteous before him by works of law, for by law comes the accurate knowledge of sin.” - Romans 3:20 NWT.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses are actually contradicting their own scriptures! The Watchtower teaches that if you work hard enough now to avoid Jehovah's wrath when He returns, you then need to obey Jehovah's law perfectly for another one thousand years, or Jehovah will annihilate you. So even after Jehovah cleanses the earth, and you have worked your whole life to **earn** grace, you still have to be perfect in sight of the law by your own works? Sounds impossibly exhausting, and it is. But the worse part is you NEVER KNOW IF YOU ARE SAVED until the day Jehovah comes back to earth to annihilate all non-Jehovah’s Witnesses and those Jehovah's Witnesses that did not do enough to earn salvation. For this reason many Jehovah's Witnesses live a very stressful, paranoid, and depressed life!

In stark contrast, the main doctrine for Christianity is simple... Jesus was 100% God while 100% man at the same time. Jesus lived the perfect life we can not, due to our sin, and took the punishment that we all had coming to us and could never save ourselves from. Jesus physically rose from the dead 3 days later proving He was God and that He defeated Death, the wages of sin. He then ascended to Heaven, and is still alive today! If you have faith and believe all this to be true, you are forgiven of your sin NOW, here on earth, and can have a direct relationship with our Lord God. But there is something that makes many hesitate with Christianity, and makes Jehovah's Witnesses so attractive; no Hell. No eternal punishment. The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that you become annihilated. No punishment for the wicked?

Chapter 6

Hell Is Forever

Jehovah's Witnesses, like many people and religions, do not believe in any place of eternal punishment. "How can an all loving God send people to Hell for eternity?" many ask frequently. But I would like to know how an all loving God would NOT have an eternal punishment for those who rebel against Him? Of course, many would smirk at me if I asked them this. Allow me to explain.

This literally has to start with the topic of "Free Will". When God created us, He wanted our love for Him to be genuine true love. God didn't want to create a bunch of robots that are programmed to love Him. That is not love. Anyone knows that if you want love in any relationship, you can't force it. If it's forced, is it genuine love? Not likely. Genuine love has to be a choice. God created us able to make the choice to love Him or reject Him. Most people forget to consider that in order for us to have free will, God would also have to respect both choices equally. If someone chooses to reject God, He respects that choice as much as if they chose to love Him. If God did not respect the choice to reject Him, would it really be a choice at all?

Founder of the Calvary Chapel, Pastor Chuck Smith gave this example. Let's say you walked into an ice cream shop and looked at the posted menu to make your choice of flavor. You chose mint chocolate, but the clerk says there is none. So you look again and choose cookie dough, again the clerk says there is none. So you look again and again, each time until the clerk finally says they only have vanilla. With no other choice, you take the vanilla cone and be on your way. In this instance you really had no choice. Adam and Eve was also given a choice. That was the purpose of God placing the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden of Eden. God needed to provide an option for Adam and Eve to reject Him, allowing them to have a choice and exercise their free will. If there is nothing to choose from, how can it be free will?

God is not only a God of love, but also a just God. Can there be love without justice? That is the question most people skip over when thinking about God's punishment. If a person was standing in a court room being convicted of murder, would it be love if the suspect was proven guilty but set free? I suppose it seems like it would be, but what about those that were hurt because of the crime? Would it be fair? Would it be justice? What would the world be like with no justice? If everyone who was guilty was simply set free, why have the laws at all?

Love and justice go hand in hand. Perfect love demands perfect justice, and we have a perfect God. But to have perfect justice, you obviously have to perfectly uphold the laws. If God did not uphold the law, the law would basically become useless. And if the law is useless, we would not know what sin is?

We can't bend the laws, overlook them, or keep reinterpreting them allowing people to get away with evil. God gave us His laws and would have to uphold those laws perfectly to be truthful and loving. If there were no written laws explaining right from wrong, would this world be a loving place?

God did not write His laws so He could follow you around waiting to point His finger angrily at you when you make a mistake. God gave us the law because He loves us and knows the destructive repercussion of sin in our lives. The laws are there to protect us and draw us closer to Him, not enslave us. I think this is one of the biggest misconceptions that keeps people from Christianity. People that reject Christianity are deceived into thinking they will lose freedoms by serving God rather than gaining anything. Not only is this an extremely selfish approach, it also shows the amount of ignorance people have concerning what God has already done for them. God has done EVERYTHING short of forcing people to choose him! There are

laws that enslave people, and laws that set people free. A lawless world is not a free world. And a world with laws that does not enforce them is not a free world either.

Aside from free will, there is another purpose of the law. The other purpose is to expose what sin is.

"...for by the law is the knowledge of sin." - Romans 3:20 KJV.

We have no way of understanding what is right or wrong if there is nothing saying it's right or wrong. When is the last time you went somewhere that didn't have rules and procedures that were expected of people while they were there? Aren't most rules put in place to keep order, peace, and safety? Or do you view rules of establishments as a hindrance to your personal freedom? Let me give you an example...

If you went to the zoo and the rules stated you should not cross over the fence into the lion's area, would you say that rule is a hindrance to your experience at the zoo? Would you be offended that the zoo posted these rules? Would you be angry with the **ZOO** if you chose to ignore the rules and end up a victim of a lion attack? That would be ridiculous, they warned you in their posted rules.

Much like when you live your life apart from God and then blame God for the bad things that happen when you sin; God also warned you. Do you think the zoo made this rule thinking, "I can't wait for someone to break this rule so I can watch them being attacked and then ban them from this zoo?" I would sincerely hope not. I would hope you are more willing to say the zoo cares about the safety of the visitors. God's laws are no different. He made this place, He ought to know how to be safe in this zoo He created. God even provided rules that help us avoid being devoured by a lion.

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." - 1 Peter 5:8 KJV.

So we know that the law of God was given out of love, and also to expose what sin is so that we can stay away from it as much as possible. Of course none of us can perfectly keep the law. As Christians, we do our best in repentance as a reaction to God's love for us. God already loved us first so much that He took the punishment we deserve so we may have the choice to spend eternity with Him.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." - John 3:16 KJV.

How much love is in this verse? Consider soldiers that go to war and one soldier jumping in front of another, taking a bullet for them. Most people would instantly say, "I owe you my LIFE!" I mean let's face it, that would be an act of love that would never be forgotten. Compare that with what Jesus Christ did on the cross for us. Jesus saved us from AN ETERNITY IN HELL! Is that somehow not good enough for the same kinda response?

You see, Christians don't want to obey God because they are forced to, or think their salvation is solely depended on it. Christians obey because they are overwhelmingly grateful for what Christ did and want to return the love shown to them. We also know that sin separates us from God, and we recognize God knows what's best for us. But, there are many who would rather refuse God's law because they view it more like a cage, limiting their personal freedom to

enjoy activities such as sex outside of marriage. Yet, divers will gladly get in cages before they dive into waters that have swarms of sharks. Why not just jump in? This world is Satan's shark tank, and I thank God for provided me a cage for protection.

There are also those who take it to the other extreme and attempt to follow the law absolutely perfect, which is impossible even for the holiest person on Earth.

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" - Romans 3:10.

God is a God of absolute truth, love, and justice. As we discussed, God would have to uphold the laws that He put in place. This means there would have to be a punishment for those who reject His laws and plan for salvation. We also discussed the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses believe those who do not earn salvation, or are not Jehovah's Witnesses, will be annihilated. How is this any form of justice? How is becoming nonexistent a form of punishment? If someone believes there was no real punishment for their sins other than simply ceasing to exist, why would they care if they followed the law or not? There would be zero initiative to do so. Why spend your life trying to achieve the super high standards of God? Why not just please your flesh every day in lust, sex, drunkenness, wealth, and not have a care in the world about anyone if when you die it will be as if you never existed?

There has to be a justified punishment for breaking the law, or there is no real justice. And without real justice, there is no real love. And without real love, there is no real truth. Hell is the punishment for our sins apart from Christ. Jesus spent as much time teaching about Hell as He did anything else. And when Jesus taught about Hell it was always accompanied with words such as "eternal" or "everlasting", which also rules out the idea of Hell being temporary for a fixed amount of time.

So what is Hell, exactly? We can get a better understanding of what the Bible teaches about Hell if we go back to its original words that Hell is translated from. The English word "Hell" is a pretty ambiguous translation for quite a few Hebrew and Greek words. While the word Hell gets the point across quite well today, when someone actually starts studying the original words, it can tend to get a little confusing. Not every English translation of the word Hell means a place of "eternal" punishment. In the original languages you may end up reading words like Sheol, Hades, Tartaroo, Gehenna, and even Limne Pur. I would like to take just a moment here to explain each of these words so we can get a true understanding of what is meant by the English use of the word Hell.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word "Sheol" is actually translated into three separate English words. The first word Sheol translates to is "Hell", however it's also translated to the words "grave" and "pit". Sheol is NOT eternal, this is something that will be explained in detail as you read through the remainder of this chapter.

When the Old Testament Hebrew word Sheol is translated to the English word "grave", we need to be aware this is not speaking of the actual earthly grave-site. This in particular is referring to the spiritual location for the dead, and is not always speaking of a place of torment; remember this. Even though "Sheol" is used as the Hebrew root word for "grave", there is a little more explanation needed. This is an example of the word Sheol being translated to "grave" in English, but does not include the idea of torment.

"And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave [sheol] unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him." - Genesis 37:35 KJV, [] added for clarity.

We read above that Jacob, when speaking of his son Joseph, said he would weep until he sees his son again in “the grave”. Surely Jacob did not mean he would see his son while in torment. Sheol has two separate distinct areas, a side of peace and a side of torment. The peaceful area in Sheol was later called Abraham’s Bosom by Jesus, in Luke 16.

“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;” - Luke 16:22 KJV.

Now when Sheol is translated as the English word “Hell” and “pit” in the Old Testament, we are obviously speaking about the unfavorable side, opposite of Abraham's Bosom.

“For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell [sheol], and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.” - Deuteronomy 32:22 KJV, [] added for clarity.

“But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit [sheol]; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD.” - Numbers 16:30 KJV, [] added for clarity.

In Luke 16 we actually get to read what separates Abraham's Bosom from the side of torment and fire.

“And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.” - Luke 16:26 KJV.

As for the word “Hades” in the New Testament, this is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word Sheol in the Old Testament. They are one in the same. This is an important key to know when comparing passages in the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Another word translated as Hell in the New Testament is the Greek word “Tartaroo”. This word is only used once and is commonly agreed to be a separate section of Sheol (or “Hades” in Greek), on the side of torment, that holds the angels that sinned in Genesis before the flood of Noah.

“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [tartaroo], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;” - 2 Peter 2:4 KJV, [] added for clarity.

Did you also notice the verse said the angels are “reserved unto judgment”? If they are already in torment, why are they awaiting judgment? Because Sheol (Hades), and Tartaroo, are actually not permanent. The “judgment” has actually not happened yet, but when it does, scripture tells us the wicked will enter the place of eternal punishment, called “Limne Pur” or in English, “Lake of Fire”. “This is the second death.”

“...and hell [hades] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell [hades] were cast into the lake of fire [limne pur]. This is the second death.” - Revelation 20:13-14 KJV, [] added for clarity.

These verses also tell us that those experiencing torment in Sheol are STILL THERE now, and will remain there until the judgment. But Abraham's Bosom would have to have been sitting vacant since Jesus Christ's resurrection, allowing everyone since then to go straight to Heaven.

“And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” - Matthew 27:52-53 KJV.

Finally, the most common New Testament word used for Hell is “Gehenna”. The phrase “Lake of fire” written in Revelation is actually just an adjective of Gehenna. Now Gehenna is very eternal! This is the word that Jesus is recorded using several times while teaching about a never ending punishment. In Mark 9:43-50 Jesus repeatedly speaks about Hell, Gehenna, where the fire is never quenched.

“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell [Gehenna], into the fire that never shall be quenched:” - Mark 9:43 KJV, [] added for clarity.

Jesus also makes this remark about eternal punishment in Revelation.

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night...” - Revelation 14:11 KJV.

There never seems to be any question about how long the fiery torment will last. It was always understood by the people of whom Jesus was teaching that He meant it is permanent. Not only is it permanent, but you also have all your senses in full working order, including the memories of your life. How do we know this? Jesus, at one point, tells us a story of a rich man and a man named Lazarus in the book of Luke. The rich man died and went to the place of torment while Lazarus went to Abraham's Bosom. This story gives us an excellent depiction of what people can expect to experience in Hades, and possibly even Gehenna after the “second death”.

“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.” - Luke 16:23-25 KJV.

This rich man in torment was able to see, cry, talk, beg, discern the intense heat, had physical feeling, and he was also told to remember details of his life. The rich man even asked if

Lazarus could go back to the surface and warn his five brothers so that they could avoid the place where he now is.

“Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.” - Luke 16:27-31 KJV.

To be completely fair, this story told by Jesus (Luke 16:19-31) has been in dispute as to whether it is a parable, or if Jesus was telling of a true account. I have read the arguments on both sides and there are decent arguments for both views. I personally think Jesus is telling of a true account. Either way, even if it's not a true account, this story still does not credit the teaching of “no Hell”. I doubt that Jesus would have given a parable that had unrealistic elements that are simply not possible, leaving people unable to relate or learn. The story given here would still need to be founded on an understood truth, parable or not. If Hades is nonexistent, why would Jesus make this portrayal? What point would there be to make? No one would be able to relate or learn anything. In other parables given by Jesus there are real practical elements and events that could actually happen. So if this is a parable, I would conclude that Jesus is STILL showing us what could literally happen.

Here are other examples that Jesus gave us.

“Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.” - Matthew 18:8 KJV.

“And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” - Matthew 5:30 KJV.

Mark 9:43-50 also are similar verses to the two above. Even though Jesus is using hyperbolic symbolism here, why would He teach about having a body that's cast into Gehenna if you are actually annihilated? Why would you care what happens to your body if you cease to exist as the Jehovah's Witnesses believe? Again, if there is no understood foundational truth for each hyperbole and parable Jesus uses to teach us and the masses, what lessons are learned from them?

In Matthew we read,

“And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” - Matthew 10:28 KJV.

Although this may seem like strong evidence for an annihilation doctrine, the Greek word used for “destroy” can actually be defined “to lose”, or “to ruin” as well. So you could actually say a person would “lose” or “ruin” both their soul and body in Gehenna. Think of this

in contrast to how God intended you to actually be. You would be choosing to “ruin” what God had intended you to become in Heaven.

So now for the real question; is Hell really eternal? Let’s go back again to the teachings of Jesus to find our answer. Here are multiple verses where Jesus teaches of eternal punishment, using the Greek word “aiōnios”, or “everlasting” in English.

“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” - Matthew 25:46 KJV.

“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;” - 2 Thessalonians 1:9 KJV.

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:” - Matthew 25:41 KJV.

Jesus uses the same Greek word in other verses when speaking of those who will spend eternity with Him.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” - John 3:16 KJV.

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” - John 3:36 KJV.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” - John 6:47 KJV.

We find in our Bibles that the word “eternal” is also used when speaking about God’s punishment for the wicked.

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” - Jude 1:7 KJV.

“But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:” - Mark 3:29 KJV.

Don’t be fooled into thinking Hell is a “scary fairy tale that was designed to control people in religious groups.” The scriptures state that even God, in His omnipresence, is present in Hell. Why would David make this statement in the scriptures of such a fictitious place if it wasn’t there?

“If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.” - Psalms 139:8 KJV.

In closing, if there is no eternal punishment for sin, then what was the purpose of Jesus Christ's death? What is it that Jesus saved us from? If we were only to be annihilated, why did Jesus go through all the pain and suffering on the cross? Why did Jesus Christ sacrifice himself?

Jesus sacrificed Himself, paid our debt for sin, and now we have been set free from this eternal sentence in Hell. God wants us ALL in Heaven with him, forever.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." - 2 Peter 3:9 KJV.

Chapter 7

Christ's Healing

Convincing a Jehovah's Witness that they are not in "God's organization", as they refer to it as, is a very sensitive process, successful or not. Jehovah's Witnesses are very carefully ingrained with meticulous deep-seated programming by the Watchtower. Members are taught to be extremely vigilant, and alarmed, of others, especially Christians, that warn them of being in a false religion. Jehovah's Witnesses are told that other Christian religions (churches of "Christendom"; as Jehovah's Witnesses call them) are extremely apostate and governed by Satan himself. Two things typically happen when Jehovah's Witnesses are cautioned by others about their religion; they mentally abandon or block all attention to arguments being made, and they also tend to view it as persecution, which to them, confirms they are truly in God's chosen organization. This, of course, makes them further ignore your arguments. And since Jehovah's Witnesses fear losing favor with Jehovah, or being disfellowshipped by the Watchtower, this only adds to the difficulty of showing them the discrepancies of their doctrines. But unfortunately, this is the half of the deception. They are warned by the Watchtower that if they are ever disfellowshipped, or leave the religion by their own choice, they will never have another chance to regain God's forgiveness or salvation. So many who are disfellowshipped lose faith in God and life altogether, believing they can never be reconciled, and live a life of drunken debauchery, drugs, and have no zeal for life. They certainly do not want to hear about another, what they have predestined to be, "apostate religion". Nor are they easily convinced now that Jesus Christ alone can, and will, save them.

As you can see, there are many emotional aspects happening here and anyone witnessing to a Jehovah's Witness needs to take this into consideration. Showing them the truth is one thing, but many do not consider or even know how to help the emotional trauma the Jehovah's Witness may face when they finally realize they are in a false religion themselves. Many of them may feel completely helpless and lost, diving straight into a pretty deep depression. The emotional and spiritual healing may take months, or even years. Just make sure that you have some sort of support group, or materials at the very least, to bring them to the Cross of Christ. I would not recommend venturing on a steadfast journey to help a Jehovah's Witness see the truth without having some sort of supporting plan at the finish. They will need it. Giving them seeds to question if they knock on your door, that is one thing. But if you are able to engage in ongoing dialogue, discussing doctrine and scripture, I would encourage you to consider the emotional implications and have a plan.

So if you were successful in helping the Jehovah's Witness remove the spiritual veil from their eyes, it's crucial that you explain the GOOD NEWS of the GOSPEL! And yes, I do mean, the awesome truth of the REAL Gospel! Jehovah's Witnesses may tell you they believe in Jesus Christ. They will tell you they believe Christ died for their sins, and they are saved by faith in Him. You may think, "Well where is the discrepancy then?" Don't be fooled. They believe that faith in Jesus allows them the **privilege** to earn salvation. This is a very different, yet clever, way of interpreting scripture to believe salvation is by faith in Christ, as Paul teaches, but also continue teaching salvation by their works as well.

In this chapter I'm going to give you the best possible way to explain to the Jehovah's Witness, or anyone for that matter, what exactly Jesus Christ did for us on the cross and what it means for us. I'm also going to give you the answer the scripture gives for salvation so that, if they are ready, you can pray with them.

So we have learned that God is a god of love, but also in previous chapters we learned that God is a god of justice. And since God is a perfect god, He not only is perfectly loving, but also is perfectly just. But the awesome thing that most people don't necessarily understand is what Jesus Christ actually accomplished on the cross and how this applies to His love or justice. I'm here to tell you it was the most PERFECT, LOVING and JUST plan in the history of the UNIVERSE! "How is that?", you might ask? Well, I have heard it told many different ways, but the best way I have ever heard was from Chuck Smith. I will do my best to summarize.

Let's imagine that you are appearing in court for a serious crime, and you are undeniably guilty. While standing in front of the judge, you make your plea to the judge begging for mercy. You start your confession explaining how much of a "good person" you have been before committing this crime. The judge knows he can't let this crime go unpunished simply because you have been a "good person" up until now. This would make him a very unjust judge. There is nothing you can do for yourself to get out of it, and you are fined one million dollars and sentenced to life in prison! The gavel comes slamming down in a loud and heavy confirmation of your punishment. But, as the guards walk over to grab your arm, the judge cries out "STOP!" The judge then steps down from his higher seat, takes off his robe, and pays the officers the fine he just placed on you. He then sticks out his wrists for the officers and orders that he be cuffed and taken to prison in your place! Before the judge is walked out of the room he explains that he also placed billions of dollars in your bank account. The judge pleads for you to go have a clean start with a fresh perspective and new hope in life. The judge is then taken away and you are told you are allowed to leave as a free man/woman. Did the judge owe you? It would be ridiculous to think that you could earn this swap of judgment. It could only be done out of pure love for someone. All one needs to do is simply not argue with the judge and accept the offer.

This wonderful depiction shows what Jesus Christ did for us all on the cross. Jesus not only showed us how much He loves us, but at the same time He was able to uphold perfect justice. There is a catch... We have to accept that Jesus Christ took our place and paid our wages for sin. If you reject this offer, you will have no other means of saving yourself from this inescapable punishment. Do not assume that you do not have need to worry because you are a "good person". That belief is one of the biggest deceptions of all. We are all sinners by nature, and can do **NOTHING** to save ourselves.

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:" - Romans 3:10 KJV.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" - Romans 3:23 KJV.

We read in scripture that the punishment for sin is death, unless you accept God's gift, which is nothing that you have earned or could ever earn.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." - Romans 6:23 KJV.

***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."* - Ephesians 2:8-9 KJV.**

This verse is crucial. I recommend reading this passage repeatedly and really grasp what is being said. Many do not fully grip the impact of what is being said here. We are saved by "grace" through "faith". Understand that grace is undeserved, unearned, unmerited favor. And

to get this grace, you need only to have “faith” in Christ, whereby you have then already claimed salvation. There is no need to question if you are saved, it is a free gift. When you read verse 9 (from previous verse) it becomes abundantly clear that salvation is, “NOT of works...”. This levels the field so no one on Earth can brag or claim to be better than another. This is genius to me, and shows God’s awesome love once again. If grace and salvation were by works, there would be people boasting they deserve to go to Heaven more than another person. But this is not the case. All people that have put their faith in Christ have been rendered completely equal. High Priests, all the way to the homeless and destitute. The richest of the rich, all the way to the poorest of the poor. The worst criminal compared to the person who thinks they are the most godly on Earth. **The grace and forgiveness becomes equal for ALL!** That is great news my friends!

“How do I have faith and get this awesome gift?”, you might ask. Because God loves us, He made it very simple.

“...if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” - Romans 10:9 KJV.

Simply **confess** your sins out loud, **believe** in your heart that Jesus died on the cross to pay the punishment that you owe for being a sinner, and **believe** that He rose from the dead 3 days later.

I would also point out that it is a mistake to always expect an overwhelming spiritual experience, break out into tears, and so forth. As many that do have a conversion like this, many also feel as though nothing has happened at all. Always remember, either way, the salvation is still very real and immediate for everyone.

However, some might say, “I need to clean up my act before I go to God.” This is not the case at all. We are to go to God to be cleansed and be given a new start, not to cleanse ourselves to be presentable. God is in the business of forgiving our mess and helping us clean it up. Which brings me to my next point, do NOT expect immediate perfection after accepting Christ. Remember, we are sinners no matter how hard we try. There will be a spiritual battle within anyone the second they receive grace and the Holy Spirit. God will help the new spirit in us to grow and overcome our old carnal nature. But the best part is that we are already considered righteous by God, even though by our sinful nature we are not. This is the illustration I made above with the millions of dollars the judge gave the accused. Once some is saved and becomes part of the Lord’s kingdom, they immediately inherit Christ’s kingdom. It belongs to you as it belongs to Christ. Not only in the sense that we get to go to the kingdom, but that we are “joint-heirs” of the kingdom.

“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” - Romans 8:17 KJV.

You then become a “saint” of God as well, undergoing a process of “sanctification” which simply means you are being set apart from others. You are in training, so to speak. But during this training, while God works on building up the new spirit inside, He already considers you a righteous person, because your sins are already wiped clean. This training does require some effort on your part though. You should seek a relationship with the Father that just gave

you this grace and “took the bullet for you”. We seek and grow in a relationship with God by reading our bibles, prayer, and being involved in spreading this good news of God’s love.

Do not let your friends and loved ones be deceived. We only get one chance on this earth to get it right. Far too many are willing to buy into fairy tales and questionable doctrines, gambling with the very real eternity that awaits us all. There is enough historical and archaeological facts that overwhelmingly support Evangelical Christianity to make anyone, diligently searching for truth, confident in what they believe. Don’t wait, see for yourself!

Resources for Witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses

- **Websites**
 - www.4witness.org
 - www.4jehovah.org
 - www.jwfacts.com
 - <http://avoidjw.org>
 - www.jwanswers.co.uk
 - www.slientlambs.com
- **YouTube Channels and Videos**
 - JW Answers - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuQSxbREIzkUDVZVvxGsXkA>
 - WitforJesus - www.youtube.com/channel/UC8hNoLAnIxT7PivRkrghDHw
 - The Shocking Truth Behind Jehovah's Witnesses - https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=JmLIGeXXmLk&feature=emb_logo
- **Books**
 - Christian Conversations with Jehovah's Witnesses, by Christina R. (Harvey) Darlington - https://www.amazon.com/Christian-Conversations-Jehovahs-Witnesses-Questions/dp/1480004022/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=christian+conversations+with+jehovah%27s+witnesses&qid=1589907256&sr=8-1
 - The Kingdom of the Cults, by Walter Martin and Ravi Zacharias - https://www.amazon.com/Walter-Ralston-Martin-Kingdom-Hardcover/dp/B01FMVNZVM/ref=sr_1_2?crid=1UMSHQYIWZKLH&dchild=1&keywords=the+kingdom+of+the+cults&qid=1589907335&srefix=the+kingdom+of+the+cu%2Caps%2C190&sr=8-2
- **DVDs**
 - God the One and Only - <https://www.4jehovah.org/god-the-one-and-only-making-sense-of-the-trinity/>
 - Jehovah's Witnesses Questions - <https://www.4jehovah.org/jw-questions-answering-questions-jehovahs-witnesses-ask/>
 - Jehovah's Witnesses: Non Prophet Organization - https://shop.jeremiahfilms.com/products/jehovahs-witness-non-prophet-organization?_pos=1&_sid=89d20ba72&_ss=r
- **Network Program Concerning JW Child Abuse**
 - The Witnesses, Oxygen Network - <https://www.oxygen.com/the-witnesses>

Evangelical Christian Study Materials

- **Best Through the Bible Evangelical Teachings**
 - Pastor Chuck Smith, Founder of Calvary Chapel - <https://www.twft.com/pastorchuck/c2k>
 - Searchlight with Jon Courson - <https://www.joncourson.com/teachings>
 - YouTube Channel - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmDt_-Pdq-z8ABA6gPyoO9w
 - Love Worth Finding with Adrian Rogers - <https://www.lwf.org/>
 - Senior Pastor Isaiah del Pilar - <https://pleasanthillbaptistchurch.net/>
- **Bible Study Resources and Free Biblical College**
 - Blue Letter Bible - https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv/gen/1/1/s_1001
 - Scripture Mark - <https://www.blueletterbible.org/smark/index.cfm>
 - Blue Letter Bible Institute - <https://study.bible/welcome>
- **Radio Ministry (Listen Online)**
 - Prayz Radio Network - <https://prayznetwork.com/>