

Exploring Jehovah's Witnesses and the Scriptures

*An Exploration of the Bible and the Teachings
of the Jehovah's Witnesses*

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Introduction:

When going on a trip or journey we should be asking at least three very pertinent questions...

1. Are you listening to the right people?
2. Are you getting the right directions?
3. Are you going to end up in the right destination?

There are various answers that could be given to those questions, but that begs another question... "In light of what the Bible teaches versus what the Jehovah's Witnesses teach, which is true?" When it comes to our eternal soul we want to be absolutely sure we are listening to the right people (God, apostles, prophets, teachers, etc.), that we are getting the right directions (Scriptures, the plan of salvation, practices, etc.), and that we will end up in the right destination (heaven, hell, end-times, etc.). This is our chance to see how the Jehovah's Witnesses answer those questions as opposed to how biblical Christianity answers those questions.

Before we answer those questions let's do a brief perusal of the history of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

A Brief History of the Jehovah's Witnesses

The Watchtower organization can trace its roots back to its founder, a man by the name of Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916).

Charles Russell was born in Pittsburg Pennsylvania in 1852 and as a teenager found that he was unable or unwilling to accept some of the teachings of the Presbyterian Church he was attending. Specifically,

1. Hell
2. The Trinity
3. The Deity of Jesus Christ

So, in 1870, at the age of 18, Charles Russell organized a Bible study in Pittsburgh, at which time he began to share his unorthodox beliefs with others. As the Bible study grew, the group eventually made him pastor. In 1879, Charles Russell started his own magazine to promote his doctrines. That magazine, still in publication today, is now called *The Watchtower*. The Watchtower organization prints and disseminates over 37 million of these magazines twice a month in 174 different languages.

Another publication that is produced today is *Awake!* (also published twice a month, in nearly the same quantities (36.7 million in 82 languages). The Watchtower organization continued to grow after Russell's death in 1916.

By 1940, there were only about 95,327 Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States. Today there are 6 million Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide, attending some 90,000 Kingdom Halls.

The modern day Jehovah's Witness organization is officially known as: *The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society*. The Watchtower organization is lead by a group of men, known as "The Governing Body", and is based in Brooklyn, New York. This group of men, or the "Governing Body", oversees every aspect of the organization including the material that is written and produced for the Watchtower such as periodicals, and books. The Watchtower organization claims to be God's sole "channel for communicating" truth to humankind today. (*The Watchtower*, 15 July 1963, pp.443-444.)

Other claims they have made concerning being under "God's direction" and the *only* bearer of God's truth are:

"Jehovah's theocratically controlled organization under the immediate direction of Jehovah God Himself." (*The Watchtower*, 1 June 1965, p. 352)

"Is not the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society the one and only channel which the Lord has used in dispensing his truth continually since the beginning of the harvest period." (*The Watchtower*, 1 April 1919, p. 6414)

“Jehovah’s organization alone, in all the earth, is directed by God’s holy spirit or active force.”
(*The Watchtower*, 1 July 1973, p. 402)

“We must not lose sight of the fact that God is directing his organization.” (Ibid. p. 24)

“Jehovah’s organization has a visible part on the earth which represents the Lord and is under his direct supervision.” (*The Watchtower*, 1 May 1938, p. 169)

Now, of course, if these statements are true as the Watchtower teaches, then this means that all other Christian organizations are not directed by God and are therefore deceptive or being deceived and are of the devil.

It is here that we must explore whether those that Jehovah’s Witnesses are listening to are worthy of being trusted. In other words, “Are they listening to the right people?”

Question #1: Are You Listening to the Right People?

Both Christians and Jehovah's Witnesses alike agree that we come from God and that we are not simply a cosmic accident. There's also agreement that God has made Himself known through His Son, apostles and prophets and the written Scriptures.

But it is here that we must explore whether the God of the Jehovah's Witnesses is the true God of Scripture, if the Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses is the true Jesus of Scripture, and whether the apostles and prophets of the Jehovah's Witnesses can be trusted like those of the Scriptures. Let's start with the latter and ask, "Is the Watchtower Society God's chosen organization on the earth?" Or in other words...

Explore...

"Does the Watchtower Society Speak for God?"

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that God personally and visibly set up the Watchtower Society and that they are His sole representatives on the earth. (*The Watchtower*, 1 December, 1981, p. 27) If this is the case there should be evidence of this in God's Word. Is there any? According to Jehovah's Witnesses the answer is "yes" and it is found in answering the following question with the following Scripture passage...

Is the Jehovah's Witness Organization God's "Faithful and Discreet Slave"? (Matt. 25:45-47)

In **Matthew 24:45-47** in the **New World Translation**, this passage reads: "Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings." According to Jehovah's Witnesses this faithful and discreet slave is the Watchtower Society and it is they alone that can that are appointed stewards over all that is God's. But is this consistent with the meaning of the passage?

The answer is “no”. Eisegesis (putting meaning into) is being practiced here. Good exegesis (drawing meaning out of) makes clear that Jesus is comparing any follower of Him to a servant that has been put in charge of what his master owns. He will either carry out the task faithfully or unfaithfully. It says nothing of an organization.

Ask...

- *Would you please read **Matthew 24:45-47**. Where do you see any hint of an organization that is the dispenser of God’s truth?*
- *If this did speak of the Watchtower Society being God’s mouthpiece, and the Watchtower Society didn’t come into existence until the late nineteenth century, does this mean God left His people with no representatives on the earth for almost 2,000 years?*

After asking these questions, emphasize that the idea of God having no true representatives on earth for so many centuries clearly goes against what we learn elsewhere in Scripture regarding the continued survival, growth, and health of the church throughout history. For example, in Matthew 28:20 Jesus said to His followers: "I am with you **always**, even to the end of the age" (emphasis added). This implies that there would **always** be followers of Jesus on the earth. (How else could Jesus be "with" them "always" if they weren't there?) There is no hint in this passage that there would be an eighteen-century period during which Christ would have no true representatives on earth (cf. Ephesians 4:11-16).

So, what does the parable in **Matthew 24:45-47** actually mean? In this parable, Jesus likens a follower or disciple to a servant who has been put in charge of his master's household. In the parable, Jesus contrasts **two possible ways** that each professed disciple could carry out the task—faithfully or **unfaithfully**. Each respective servant has the potential to be faithful **or** unfaithful in regard to his duties.

This parable indicates that those who profess to serve Christ must make a pivotal choice: be faithful servants, doing the Lord's will at all times, or be unfaithful servants, neglecting God's will and living self-indulgently. Those who are faithful will be rewarded at the Lord's

return, entering His kingdom; those who are unfaithful will be punished at the Lord's return, being excluded from His kingdom. (Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses*, p. 33)

To sum up, then, this passage is not referring to an organization (the Watchtower Society) that is permanently distinct from a separate group (apostate Christendom). Rather it is referring generally to all who profess to follow Christ and is exhorting them to be faithful as opposed to unfaithful servants of Christ. (ibid., p. 33)

Can We Study God's Word Without the Watchtower Organization? (2 Peter 1:20-21; Acts 8:30-31)

The New World Translation of **2 Peter 1:20** says, "For you know this first, that no prophecy of Scripture springs from any private interpretation."

The Watchtower Teaching

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that this means no one is to interpret the Bible on their own apart from the guidance of the Jehovah's Witness Organization. But is that what this passage means?

The Biblical Teaching

The word "interpretation" in the Greek literally means "unloosing" and is said to mean that no prophet can unloose their own prophecy apart from receiving it from God. Therefore, this passage is not about the interpretation of Scripture but the origin of Scripture. Besides this, the Apostle Paul taught that we are to test all things according to Scripture and the Bereans in the book of Acts were commended for testing what even Paul said against Scripture... this was all without an organization to guide them.

With this in mind, let us consider verses 20 and 21 together: "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own [unloosing], for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (NASB). Now the word "for" at the beginning of verse 21 carries an explanatory function—indicating that verse 21 explains verse 20 by restating its contents and then pointing to God as the author of Scripture.

Hence, the context of verse 21 indicates that the collective focus of verses 20 and 21 is Scripture's origin, not its *interpretation*.

In keeping with this, we must emphasize that the word "moved" (in the phrase "men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God") literally means "borne along" or "carried along." Luke uses this same word in the Book of Acts to refer to a ship being borne along or carried along by the wind (Acts 27:15, 17). The experienced sailors on the ship could not navigate it because the wind was so strong. The ship was being driven, directed, and carried about by the wind. (ibid., p.39)

This is similar to the Spirit's driving, directing, and carrying the human authors of the Bible as they wrote (2 Peter 1:20,21). The word "moved" is a strong one, indicating the Spirit's complete superintendence of the human authors. Of course, just as sailors are individually active and consciously involved while on a ship, in the same way, the authors of God's Word were individually active and consciously involved in writing Scripture. But it was the Spirit who ultimately directed them or carried them along. (ibid., p. 39)

In view of the above facts, 2 Peter 1:20,21 cannot be used to support the Watchtower Society's view that people are not to come up with their own private interpretations of what Scripture means. As we have seen, the passage has to do with Scripture's **origin**, not its **interpretation**.

Besides, contrary to the Watchtower position, the apostle Paul said that Christians are to test everything (whether the teaching of an individual **or** an organization—1 Thessalonians 5:21). The Berean Christians were commended for testing Paul's teachings to make sure that what he said was in accord with the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). We are called upon by God to test our beliefs! Instead of unquestioningly swallowing the interpretations of an organization like the Watchtower Society, we are to measure such interpretations against what all of Scripture teaches. (ibid., p. 39)

Ask...

- Please read **Acts 17:11**. Were the Bereans right to test what Paul said?
- Should we obey the Apostle Paul's instruction to test all things as written in **1 Thess. 5:2**?
- How do you reconcile this with the Watchtower's teaching that "we are to give heed to what is set forth by the Watchtower Society?"

The Watchtower Society also teaches that its organization is displayed in **Acts 8:30-31**. But again, we must ask if this is what this passage is teaching.

Ask...

- Would you please read **Acts 8:30-31**. Where do you see any hint of an organization in this passage?
- Did Phillip use Scripture alone to guide this man to Christ, or did he need additional literature?
- If Scripture alone was sufficient here, isn't Scripture alone sufficient today?

Is There a Need for the Watchtower Society?

Acts 8:30-31

The Watchtower Teaching

According to Acts 8:30,31, Philip encountered a man reading the Book of Isaiah and asked him: "Do you actually know what you are reading?" (NWT). The man said: "Really, how could I ever do so, unless someone guided me?" Philip then sat down with the man to instruct him.

The Jehovah's Witnesses cite this verse to support their view that the Watchtower Society is God's Bible-interpreting organization on earth. They say that humankind **needs** the Watchtower Society in order to understand Scripture, just as the man reading Isaiah needed Philip. Indeed, the Watchtower book "**Your Will Be Done on Earth**" says that "in order to understand God's Word and discern his will we . . . need the help of his dedicated, organized people [anointed believers in the Watchtower Society]. The Ethiopian Bible reader acknowledged that fact."

The Biblical Teaching

The Jehovah's Witnesses are reading something into this passage that simply is not there. Yes, this passage does indicate that guidance is sometimes needed to help people understand Scripture. The meaning of certain Scripture passages is not always self-evident, even to those who are earnest seekers. (Peter even acknowledged that some of the apostle Paul's writings were hard to understand—2 Peter 3:16.) This is one reason God gives teachers to the church (Ephesians 4:11). As well, this is the reason for the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12).

But **no—there** is no evidence in this passage of an organization whose infallible views must be accepted by all true followers of God. In our text, **one man** (Philip) preached to an Ethiopian man **directly from Scripture** (not from literature designed by an organization), after which time the Ethiopian confessed his faith in Christ and became baptized (Acts 8:34-38).

Significantly, the Bible tells us that "when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, *and **the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing***" (Acts 8:39, emphasis added). The eunuch did not have to join and submit to an organization.⁴⁴ Indeed, the eunuch never saw Philip again! As well, he had no sense of loss when his teacher left, but rather went on his way rejoicing in the Savior.

Ask...

- *Where in the biblical text do you see any support for the idea that people must join an organization and submit to the interpretations of such an organization? (Only one man—Philip—is mentioned in the text. And after this single encounter, the eunuch never saw him again.)*
- *Did Philip use Scripture alone in talking to the eunuch, or did he have to use additional literature?*
- *If Scripture alone was sufficient for Philip and the eunuch, is not Scripture alone sufficient for us as well?*

Is the Bible Sufficient?

2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Watchtower Teaching

The **New World Translation** translates 2 Timothy 3:16,17 this way: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproof, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."

Jehovah's Witnesses say they believe this passage but then turn around and say one cannot grow or even be saved apart from Watchtower literature. One former Jehovah's Witness said that to gain eternal life, he was told that certain things were necessary: "[I was told] I should study the Bible diligently, and only through Watchtower publications." (Edmond Gruss, *We Left Jehovah's Witnesses*, p. 41)

We see this same mentality illustrated in the Watchtower publication **Studies in the Scriptures**: *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 shows 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 the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.* (Leonard and Marjorie Chreitien, *Witnesses of Jehovah*, p. 33)

The Biblical Teaching

There are two key questions posed by scholar Ron Rhodes that must be asked of the Jehovah's Witness in regard to this issue. (These questions are similar to some of the ones asked earlier, but they are critically important.)

Ask...

- *How did people understand the Bible for the nineteen centuries **prior** to the existence of the Watchtower Society? (If one cannot understand the Bible without Watchtower*

literature, as claimed, then apparently people could not understand the Bible for nineteen centuries.)

- *What kind of a God would give His people a Bible with no means of understanding it?*
- *After helping the Jehovah's Witness to understand the implications of these questions, you can then turn your attention to 2 Timothy 3:16,17. To lay the groundwork for these two verses, first point the Jehovah's Witness to verse 15, where Paul tells Timothy that "from childhood you have known the sacred writings **which are able to give you the wisdom** that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (NASB).*

To give us a better understanding of the passage it's critical that we know that in Timothy's era, Jewish boys formally began studying the Old Testament Scriptures when they were five years of age. Timothy had been taught the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother beginning from childhood. Clearly, verse 15 indicates that the **Scriptures alone** were sufficient to provide Timothy with the necessary wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ. And for us today, the **Scriptures alone** are still the sole source of spiritual knowledge. Consider these questions by Jehovah's Witness expert Ron Rhodes...

Ask...

- *According to **2 Timothy 3:15**, were the Scriptures alone sufficient to provide Timothy what he needed to know to be saved?*
- *If the Scriptures alone were sufficient for Timothy, then aren't the Scriptures alone sufficient for us?*

Then, verses 16 and 17 tell us that **all Scripture** is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (NASB). This verse does not say that Scripture **as seen through the lens of the Watchtower Society** is "profitable for teaching, for reproof," and so forth. It is **Scripture alone** that does these things. And the reason Scripture can do these things is that "all Scripture is inspired by God" (verse 16a). The word "inspired" means "God-breathed." Scripture is sufficient

because it finds its source in God. Watchtower literature, by contrast, finds its source in sinful humanity. (Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses*, p. 37)

It is noteworthy that the word "adequate" (in the phrase "that the man of God may be adequate") means "complete, capable, fully furnished, proficient in the sense of being able to meet all demands." (John F. Walvoord and Roy Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, p. 757) Scripture alone makes a person complete, capable, and proficient. Scripture furnishes all that one must know to be saved and to grow in grace.

Did God Say He Would Only Use the Jehovah's Witnesses to Disseminate His Word?

John 17:3

The Watchtower Teaching

The **New World Translation** renders John 17:3: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."

This verse allegedly points to the need for the Watchtower Society's Bible study—something they say helps people "take in" knowledge of God (David Reed, *Jehovah's Witnesses Answered*, p. 81). And since this taking in of knowledge leads to eternal life, the Watchtower Bible study is exceedingly important. One issue of **The Watchtower** magazine boldly invites people: "Come to Jehovah's organization for salvation." (*The Watchtower*, 15 November 1981, p. 21)

The Biblical Teaching

You must first point out to the Jehovah's Witness that the **New World Translation** mistranslates this verse. Indeed, the verse is more literally translated *from the Greek text*, "Now this is eternal life: that **they may know you**" (*emphasis added*). Jesus is thus talking about **personal** knowledge of God, not **general** knowledge of the Bible. (Robert M. Bowman, *Understanding Jehovah's Witnesses*, p. 81) The Greek word for "know" in this context is one that specifically indicates great intimacy with **another person**. (*The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, p. 331)

This is consistent with what we learn elsewhere in Scripture. For example, Jesus indicates that general knowledge of the Bible is insufficient in itself to save someone. Jesus told a group of Jews: "You diligently study the Scriptures, because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (John 5:39,40). These lost Jews had a knowledge of the Bible but had no intimate knowledge or relationship with Jesus so their knowledge did them no good.

Ask...

- *According to John 5:39,40, is knowledge of Scripture sufficient for salvation?*
- *What is required for salvation, according to this passage?*

Explore...

Are the Watchtower Society's Prophets Accurate and Trustworthy?

After concluding that the Watchtower Society is not God's representative on the earth we must ask if its prophets are true prophets of God. If so, their prophecies will be 100% accurate just like the prophets of Scripture.

We must first note that if anyone claimed to be a prophet in Bible times and what they prophesied proved to be false, they were stoned to death (**Deuteronomy 18:22**). A thorough study of Scripture proves that all that the biblical prophets prophesied came to fruition.

But how do the *Watchtower* Society's prophets measure up? Remember, we want to make sure we are listening to the right people, giving the right directions so that we end up in the right destination.

False Prophecies By Watchtower Society Prophets

There is a long history of erroneous prophecies by the Watchtower Society, and while it only takes one to deem a prophet false and a deceiver, we will look at four major false prophecies of the Watchtower Organization here...

- *The Watchtower Society admitted it was wrong in its prediction of the second coming of Christ in 1874. (1980 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses)*
- *The Watchtower Society in "Studies of the Scriptures" predicted that all human governments would be overthrown and that God's Kingdom on earth would be established in 1914. This didn't happen.*
- *In their 1920 publication titled "Millions Now Living Will Never Die" said "1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the faithful prophets of old." This also didn't happen.*
- *In the publication titled "Our Kingdom Ministry" in 1968 the Watchtower Society claimed: "There are only about ninety months (7 ½ years) left before 6,000 years of man's existence on earth is completed."*

Ask...

- *Does it concern you that the Watchtower Society was wrong in its predictions of such major prophecies as made in 1874, 1914, 1925, and 1975?*
- *What does this tell you about the Watchtower Society?*

After looking at the misinterpretations of certain Scripture passages supposedly predicting the need for the Watchtower Organization and the false prophecies by its prophets we must explore another question.

Conclusion of "Does the Watchtower Society Speak for God?"

We have seen in this chapter that the Watchtower Society is **not** God's visible representative on earth today; is **not** God's channel of truth for believers today; is **not** the sole authoritative interpreter of the Bible; is **not** God's "faithful and discreet slave"; and **cannot** justify its existence from the pages of Scripture (like it claims to be able to). Instead, we have seen that the Watchtower Society consistently twists the true meaning of Scripture to suit its own ends.

We can now ask and explore, “Is the God of the Jehovah’s Witnesses the true God of the Scriptures and the Almighty Creator and Sustainer of the universe? Does He only go by the name “Jehovah” and is that His divine name as purported by Jehovah’s Witnesses and their New World Translation of the Bible?”

Let’s start with latter revolving around the divine name of God and whether Jehovah is that name.

Explore...

Is the God of the Jehovah’s Witnesses the One True God?

We’ve now discovered that the Watchtower Organization is not needed and that its prophets are false. Which is beginning to answer the question of whether they’re listening to the right people. But let’s now explore if the God of the Jehovah’s Witnesses is that of Scripture.

Is “Jehovah” God’s Divine Name?

Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that “Jehovah” is God’s divine name and that superstitious Jewish scribes removed it from the Bible. Jehovah’s Witnesses have supposedly restored the divine name and inserted anywhere in Scripture that the Father is referred to. However, there is no evidence whatsoever from any of our archaeological or historical records showing this to be the case.

Let’s explore 7 different things here in regards to God’s name being Jehovah. We will answer the 7 following questions:

1. Is Jehovah God’s name in Scripture?
2. Is Jehovah the only name He is known by?
3. Did Jesus ever refer to the Father as “Jehovah”?
4. What name did believers in the New Testament refer to God by?
5. In whose name is salvation found?
6. Who is it that is consistently glorified and lifted up in the New Testament?
7. Who is it that we are to be witnesses of?

(1) Is Jehovah God's Name In Scripture?

No, the term "Jehovah" is actually a manmade term. The ancient Jews had a fear of misusing God's name violating the third commandment (**Exodus 20:7**) so they substituted the name *Adonai*. The fearful scribes later decided to insert the vowels from the word *Adonai* into God's holy name YHWH and it became *Yahowah* which later became *Jehovah*.

Ask...

- Since "Jehovah" is a manmade term and not found in the pages of Scripture that were given by God Himself, how can you say that "Jehovah" is God's divine name?

(2) Is Jehovah the Only Name God Is Known By?

God is identified in Scripture by many other names. He is called *the Lord of Hosts* (**Psalm 89:6,8**), our *rock* (**Deut. 32:4-31**), our *fortress* (**Psalm 18:2**), and many other names throughout both the Old and New Testament.

Ask...

- *Since God is called by many names in Scripture, how can the Watchtower Society say His only name is Jehovah?*

(3) Did Jesus Ever Refer to the Father as "Jehovah"?

Jesus never once called the Father "Jehovah" in the Scriptures. The New World Translation puts "Jehovah" in Jesus's mouth numerous times but it does so in direct violation with the thousands of Greek manuscripts that we have. Even in Jesus's prayer in **Matthew 6:9** we have Him addressing the Father as "Father", not as Jehovah.

Ask...

- *Since Jesus never addressed the Father as "Jehovah" and neither do any of the New Testament writers, doesn't this mean that "Jehovah" couldn't possibly be God's divine name or only name?*

(4) What Name Did Believers In the New Testament Refer to God By?

Believers had the unique privilege of referring to God with the intimate name of Father (**Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6**). This negates the teaching that the Watchtower Society purports regarding God only being able to be called “Jehovah” according to **Exodus 3:15**. In fact, this passage simply speaks to the infinite and independent nature of God, but says nothing of this being the only name by which He can be called.

(5) In Whose Name Is Salvation Found?

It is the name of Jesus that must be called upon in order to be saved, not Jehovah. The New World Translation renders passages like **Romans 10:13** to say, “Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.” The word for Jehovah is actually “Lord” and we can know definitively that the “Lord” in this passage is Jesus. One only need to read the passage in context (**Romans 10:9-13**) to know that calling upon the name of Jesus is what brings about salvation. **Romans 10:13** is actually a direct quote from **Joel 2:32**, “And everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord (Yahweh) will be saved.” This means that calling upon Jesus and calling upon YHWH are seen as the same thing.

(6) Who is It That is Consistently Glorified and Lifted Up In the New Testament?

Over and over again it is the Lord Jesus Christ, not Jehovah. Consider the following questions from Ron Rhodes book Reasoning From the Scriptures with the Jehovah’s Witnesses:

Ask...

- *In whose name should we meet together (**Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 5:4**)?*
- *Demons are subject to whose name (**Luke 10:17; Acts 16:18**)?*
- *Repentance and forgiveness should be preached in whose name (**Luke 24:47**)?*
- *In whose name are you to believe and receive the forgiveness of sins (**John 1:12; 3:16; Acts 10:43; 1 John 3:23; 5:13**)?*
- *By whose name, and **no other**, do we obtain salvation (**Acts 4:12**)?*
- *Whose name should be invoked as we bring our petitions to God in prayer (**John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23,24**)?*
- *In whose name is the Holy Spirit sent (**John 14:26**)?*

- *Whose name and authority was invoked by the disciples in healing the sick and lame (Acts 3:16; 4:7-10,30)?*
- *Whose name did Paul tell us to call upon (1 Corinthians 1:2)?*
- *Whose name is above every name (Ephesians 1:21; Philippians 2:9-11)?*

(7) Who Is It That We Are To Be Witnesses Of? (Isaiah 43:10)

The Watchtower Teaching

The **New World Translation** says in **Isaiah 43:10**, " 'You are my witnesses,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'even my servant whom I have chosen.'" Appropriating this verse for themselves, the Jehovah's Witnesses believe that out of all the religious groups on planet earth, **they alone** are chosen by God and have been deemed His "witnesses."

The Biblical Teaching

In context, **Isaiah 43:10** is referring **strictly to Israel** as a collective witness to God's majesty, authority, faithfulness, and truth. This is in marked contrast to pagans who cannot witness to such attributes in their false gods. Israel as a witness was to testify that Yahweh is the only **true** God. It is a wild, wild leap to take a verse referring to Israel as God's witness to the pagan nations in Old Testament times (over seven centuries **before** the time of Christ) and claim its fulfillment in a modern-day religious group some nineteen centuries **after** the time of Christ. (Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning From the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses*, p. 29)

Ask...

- *If the Jehovah's Witnesses are the **only** true witnesses for God, and if the Jehovah's Witnesses as an organization came into being in the late nineteenth century (which is a historical fact), does this mean God was **without a witness** for over eighteen centuries of church history? (ibid. p. 30)*

In the New Testament the clear focus becomes being a witness of Jesus, not Jehovah.

Indeed, before ascending into heaven, Jesus told the disciples, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **you shall be My witnesses** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (**Acts 1:8** NASB). As we examine the rest of the New Testament, it becomes clear that the disciples did indeed become **Christ's** (not **Jehovah's**) witnesses. And the consistent central feature of their witness was Christ's **bodily, physical** resurrection from the dead. This doctrine is the heart of the gospel (**1 Cor. 15:1-4**) and is made a matter of salvation by the apostle Paul (**Romans 10:9,10**). (Ibid. p. 30) Here are just a few examples:

- "This Jesus God raised up again, to which **we are all witnesses**" (**Acts 2:32** NASB).
- Jesus was the one" whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which **we are witnesses**" (**Acts 3:15** NASB).
- "And with great power **the apostles were giving witness** to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all" (**Acts 4:33**).

Ask...

- *According to these passages, were the early Christians witnesses of Jehovah or of Jesus Christ?*

Now that we have clearly seen it is the name of Jesus that is consistently lifted up, called upon for salvation, and is the central figure of the New Testament we must ask, "Is the Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses consistent with the true Jesus of Scripture who is said to be God Almighty and the only Savior of the world?"

Exploring the Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses and Scripture

Explore...

Is the Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses the True Jesus of Scripture and History?

According to Watchtower theology there are five things they believe about Jesus Christ that are not consistent with the Scriptures. (1) Jesus was first created as Michael the archangel billions of years before God used him to create all other things. (2) Jesus is a mighty god, but not God Almighty. (3) Jesus was crucified on a stake and not on a cross. (4) Jesus only spiritually

resurrected from the dead, but not physically. (5) The second coming of Christ was a spiritual return and happened in 1914.

(1) Was Jesus Created As Michael the Archangel Billions of Years Before He Was Sent to Earth? (Daniel 10:13,21; 12:1)

The Watchtower Teaching

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that based off these verses Jesus was Michael the archangel in his prehuman state. They also teach that the prophecy in **Daniel 12:1** point to Michael's (Jesus's) enthronement as King in heaven.

The Biblical Teaching

In **Daniel 10:13** Michael is called "one of the chief princes", meaning there are many others. In **John 3:16** Jesus is called God's *only* Son and the Greek word for *only* is *monogenes* and means "unique" or "one of a kind". Jesus is not one among equals but the One and only.

We must also note that according to **Hebrews 1:5** no angel is ever called God's Son and in **Hebrews 1:6** Jesus is worshipped by the angels. We also see that in **Hebrews 2:5** the world is not in subjection to an angel. If no angel can rule the world then Jesus cannot be an angel.

(2) Was Jesus Created as a Mighty god or is He the Creator and God Almighty? (Colossians 1:15-17)

The Watchtower Teaching

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that since Jesus is the "firstborn over all creation" he must have been created. They then translate verse 16 to say he created "all *other* things".

The Biblical Teaching

"Firstborn" does not mean "first created". The Greek word used for "firstborn" is the word *prototokos* and means "preeminence". In other words, He is sovereign over everything in creation. King David was called "firstborn" in **Psalms 89:27** and yet he was the last-born son of Jesse.

In regard to **Colossians 1:16-17** where the Jehovah's Witnesses have interpreted this to say that Jesus "created all *other* things" Ron Rhodes gives us this helpful insight...

*The Watchtower's own Greek interlinear version of the Bible shows that the Greek word **panta** means "all" things and not "all other" things. Despite this, the Watchtower Society continues today to deceive people by inserting the word "other" into the text of Colossians 1:16,17 in the **New World Translation**.*

*What about the Watchtower claim that Christ played a "junior partner" role in the creation since the New Testament says that God made the world **through** (Greek: **dia**) Christ? This is unacceptable for several reasons. First, while it is true that the Greek word **dia** is used several times of Christ's role as Creator of the universe (**John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2**), the New Testament also states that the world came into being through (**dia**) God (**Romans 11:36**), specifically through (**dia**) the Father (**Hebrews 2:10**). Hence, as I point out in my book **Christ Before the Manger: The Life and Times of the Preincarnate Christ**, the Greek word **dia** cannot be taken to indicate a secondary, lesser role. Though the New Testament teaches that the world was created "through" Christ, it also teaches that the world was created "through" the Father. Hence, Christ did not act as a junior partner in the creation of the universe. (Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses*, p. 77)*

On top of all this, **Isaiah 44:24** says,

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer,

who formed you from the womb:

"I am the Lord, who made all things,

who alone stretched out the heavens,

who spread out the earth by myself.

This verse alone makes it impossible to say that Jehovah created all other things through Christ, and coupled with **Colossians 1:16** it proves that Jesus is God Almighty.

While there are a number of other passages showing the absolute deity of Jesus we will simply explore a few more here.

Isaiah 7:14

Jesus is given the name “Immanuel” and literally means “With us is God.” This unequivocally points to the absolute deity of Jesus as this leaves no room for Jesus being a lesser god but declares Him as God Almighty.

Zechariah 12:10

It is Yahweh (Jehovah) who is speaking in this verse and it is therefore Yahweh (Jehovah) who goes to the cross and is pierced. Thus, Jesus is God Almighty. We see this fulfillment of Jesus being Yahweh (Jehovah) also spoken of in **Revelation 1:7**.

Titus 2:13

A careful study of the Old Testament shows that Yahweh (Jehovah) alone is the Savior. **Isaiah 43:11-12** states,

I, I am the Lord,

and besides me there is no savior.

I declared and saved and proclaimed,

when there was no strange god among you;

and you are my witnesses,” declares the Lord, “and I am God.

This is a clear reference to the deity of Jesus since He is called the Savior. Jesus being called the “Savior” also appears in **Luke 2:11** and **John 4:42** among many others.

Hebrews 1:8

Jesus is called “God” with the definite article here, making Him God Almighty. It is also clear from the context of the passage (**Hebrews 1:5-2:18**) that Jesus, as God, is superior to the prophets, angels, Moses, and everything else in all of creation. This only makes sense in light of His deity, not Him being an angel or just a man.

In conclusion it must be noted that Jesus Himself accepted worship as God Almighty on numerous occasions in Scripture. He accepted worship from Thomas (**John 20:28**), the angels (**Hebrews 1:6**), the wise men (**Matthew 2:11**), a leper (**Matthew 8:2**), and the disciples (**Matthew 28:17**), just to name a few.

Not that we have explored the true identity of Jesus, God Almighty in the flesh, we can explore how He died on behalf of mankind.

(3) Was Jesus Crucified On a Stake or a Cross?

The following teaching from scholar Ron Rhodes shows us why this question matters so much... *The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the cross is a pagan religious symbol. Christians adopted this symbol, we are told, when Satan took control of ecclesiastical authority in the early centuries of Christianity. The Witnesses say that Christ was not crucified on a cross but on a stake. Thus, for people to wear crosses today dishonors God and constitutes a form of idolatry.*

*It is interesting to note that early Watchtower literature indicated a belief that Christ was crucified on a **cross** not on a **stake**, as the Watchtower Society currently teaches.⁵⁴ Illustrations in early Watchtower literature even contained pictures of Jesus crucified on a cross. Examples of this include a 1927 Watchtower publication entitled **Creation**⁵⁵; the January 1, 1891, issue of **The Watchtower** magazine; a 1921 Watchtower book entitled **The Harp of God**; and the Watchtower book **Reconciliation** (1928).*

*However, according to the 1975 **Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses**, "beginning with its issue of October 15, 1931, **The Watchtower** no longer bore the cross and crown symbol on its cover." The November 8, 1972, issue of **Awake!** magazine said that "no biblical evidence even intimates that Jesus died on a cross." Along these same lines, the August 15, 1987, issue of the **Watchtower** magazine said, "Jesus most likely was executed on an upright stake without any crossbeam."*

Ask...

- Would a true prophet of God change their mind on such an important topic as this?

To support the view that Jesus died on a cross and not a stake, you might want to ask the Jehovah's Witness to open the New World Translation and read aloud from John 20:25: "Consequently the other disciples would say to him: 'We have seen the Lord!' But he [Thomas] said to them: 'Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print of the nails and stick my hand into his side, I will certainly not believe'"

Ask...

- If Jesus was crucified on a stake as opposed to a cross why is the plural of “nails” used as opposed to the singular “nail” when it comes to the nails in His hands?

Not only does Watchtower theology take away from the cross work of Christ but it takes away from His powerful resurrection from the dead.

(4) Did Jesus Rise From the Dead Physically or Just Spiritually?

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus was crucified in the flesh but only rose spiritually and use verses like **1 Peter 3:18** to say the spirit and flesh are put in contrast with one another. The rendering of this verse in this way becomes impossible when you simply read **Luke 24:39**.

Ask...

- Please read **Luke 24:39**.
- If Christ explicitly said He is not a spirit and that His resurrection body is made of flesh and bones how do you reconcile this with the Watchtower teaching that Jesus was only raised as a spirit creature?

Further support for the physical resurrection of Jesus is found in **John 2:19-21**.

Ask...

- Please read **John 2:19-21**.
- How does Jesus define “temple” here?
- Since Jesus refers to the “temple” as His physical body doesn’t this mean it would have to be a physical resurrection? How do you reconcile this with a spiritual resurrection only as taught by the Watchtower Society?

(5) Did Jesus Return Spiritually and Invisibly in 1914?

The **New World Translation** renders **Acts 1:9-11**, "And after he had said these things, while they were looking on, he was lifted up and a cloud caught him up from their vision. And as they were gazing into the sky while he was on his way, also, look! two men in white garments stood alongside them, and they said: 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus who was received up from you into the sky will come thus in the same manner as you have beheld him going into the sky.'"

Jehovah's Witnesses argue that the "manner" of Jesus' ascent was that He disappeared from view, and His departure was observed only by His disciples. The world was not aware of what had happened. Acts 1:9-11 indicates that the same would be true of Christ's Second Coming—that is, the world would be unaware of Christ's invisible coming. And, indeed, the world **was** largely unaware of Christ's invisible coming in 1914.

In Acts 1:9-11, the Watchtower Society confuses "manner" with "result." The **manner** of Jesus' ascent was not "disappearing from view"; rather, the **result** of Jesus' ascent was "disappearing from view." The actual **manner** of Jesus' ascent was **visible** and **bodily**. Jesus visibly and bodily ascended, with the end result of disappearing from view. Likewise, at the Second Coming, Christ will come visibly and bodily and will **appear** into view.

The mention of a cloud in **Acts 1:9** is significant, for clouds are often used in the New Testament in association with God's visible glory. For example:

- We read that while Jesus was speaking on the Mount of Transfiguration, "a **bright cloud** enveloped them; and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!'" (**Matthew 17:5**).
- Speaking of His future Second Coming, Jesus said, "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on **the clouds of the sky**, with power and great glory" (**Matthew 24:30**).
- When Jesus replied to the high priest at His trial, He said, "In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the **clouds of heaven**" (Matthew 26:64, emphasis added).

God's visible glory is often associated with clouds in the Old Testament as well. For example:

Recall that "while Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the Lord **appearing in the cloud**" (**Exodus 16:10**).

- When the tabernacle in the wilderness was completed, the glory cloud settled upon it, preventing human entrance: "Then **the cloud** covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Moses could not enter the Tent of Meeting because **the cloud** had settled upon it, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle" (Exodus 40:34,35, emphasis added).
- God's glory was also seen in a cloud when Solomon's temple was dedicated: "When the priest withdrew from the Holy Place, **the cloud** filled the temple of the Lord. And the priests could not perform their service because of **the cloud**, for the glory of the Lord filled his temple" (**1 Kings 8:10-11**).

Revelation 1:7 in the **New World Translation** reads, "Look! He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief because of him. Yes, Amen."

Jehovah's Witnesses say that the reference to "coming with the clouds" means **invisibility**. After all, when an airplane is in a thick cloud, people on the ground usually cannot see it. Since Christ is coming "with the clouds," this means that human beings will not be able to see it.⁶⁹ It will be an invisible event.

If Christ's Second Coming is invisible, then in what sense will "every eye" see him? Well, this is not to be taken literally. Jehovah's Witnesses say that people will **discern** from events on earth that Christ is invisibly present and is spiritually ruling. Especially when judgments are poured out on the wicked, it will be clear that these come from the hand of Christ. This will be a striking evidence of his "presence." With this in mind, the book *Let God Be True* tells us, "His return is recognized by the eyes of one's understanding, such eyes being enlightened by God's unfolding Word. Christ's arrival and presence are not discerned because of a visible bodily nearness, but by the light of his acts of judgment and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy."

The Watchtower argument that Christ's "coming with the clouds" means an invisible coming is a complete distortion of Scripture. As noted earlier, clouds are often used in association with God's visible glory (Exodus 16:10; 40:34,35; 1 Kings 8:10,11; Matthew 17:5;24:30; 26:64). John F. Walvoord explains that just "as Christ was received by a cloud in His ascension (Acts 1:9), so He will come in the clouds of heaven (Matt. 24:30;26:64;Mark 13:26;14:62;Luke 21:27)." Just as Jesus left with a **visible** manifestation of the glory of God (clouds were present), so Christ will return with a **visible** manifestation of the glory of God (clouds will be present).

Now, what about the Watchtower Society's interpreting the statement "every eye will see him" to mean "every eye of understanding will see him"? A plain, unbiased reading of the text indicates that **every eye** on earth will see Christ coming in glory. This is consistent with numerous other Scripture passages. For example, **Matthew 24:30** says of the Second Coming, "At that time the sign of the Son of Man will **appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man** coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory".

In **Revelation 1:7** the Greek word for "see" is *horao*. In the *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, William Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich say the word in **Revelation 1:7** means "see, catch sight of, notice **of sense perception.**" Likewise, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* says *horao* is used in **Revelation 1:7** in the sense of "to see with the eyes [physical organs]." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* defines *horao* as "bodily vision." In the context of **Revelation 1:7**, then, no possibility that the intended meaning is "see with the eyes of one's understanding, such eyes being enlightened by God's unfolding Word." Clearly this passage is referring to an observation made with the eyes—the physical, bodily organs.

Explore...

Is the Holy Spirit God, or a Force?

Watchtower theology teaches that the Holy Spirit is not a person nor is He God, but He is an impersonal and active force. To back this claim Watchtower theology and teachers say that because the Holy Spirit fills people He cannot be a person but must be a force. They also say that He has no personal name like the Father and the Son, therefore, He is an impersonal force.

There are five things regarding the Holy Spirit that we find in Scripture that make it abundantly clear that He is both God and personal. (1) Scripture tells us He is God. (2) The Holy Spirit is described in Scripture with personal attributes. (3) The Holy Spirit is treated as a person in Scripture. (4) The "Holy Spirit" is the Holy Spirit's name. (5) A body doesn't define personhood, but a mind, will, and emotions do.

(1) Scripture Tells Us the Holy Spirit is God.

In **Acts 5:3-4** we are told that lying to the Holy Spirit is to lying to God. In **2 Corinthians 3:17-18** the Holy Spirit is called Lord and in **Numbers 24:2-4, 12, 13** He is identified with Yahweh. Scripture also shows us that the Holy Spirit has all the same attributes as God the Father and God the Son when it says He is omnipresent (**Psalms 139:7**), He is omniscient (**1 Corinthians 2:10**), He is omnipotent (**Romans 15:19**), and He is eternal (**Hebrews 9:14**).

(2) The Holy Spirit is Described in Scripture with Personal Attributes.

What constitutes personhood is not having a physical body but having personal attributes, which would include a mind, emotions, and a will. The following excerpts from Ron Rhode's book Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses shows us that the Holy Spirit possesses all three...

The Holy Spirit Has a Mind. This is made clear from a number of passages. For example, the Holy Spirit's intellect is seen in **1 Corinthians 2:10**, where we are told that "the Spirit searches all things" (cf. **Isaiah 11:2; Ephesians 1:17**). The Greek word for "searches" means to thoroughly investigate a matter. The Holy Spirit—with His mind—investigates the things of God and makes these matters known to believers. Note that Jesus once told a group of Jews, "You **search** the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life" (John 5:39 nasb, emphasis added). The Lord used the same Greek word there that is used in 1 Corinthians 2:10. Just as the Jews used their minds to search the Scriptures, so the Holy Spirit uses His mind in searching the things of God.

We are also told in **1 Corinthians 2:11** that the Holy Spirit knows the thoughts of God. How can the Spirit "know" the things of God if the Spirit does not have a mind? A force does not know things. Thought processes require the presence of a mind.

Romans 8:27 tells us that just as the Holy Spirit knows the things of God, so God the Father knows "the **mind of the Spirit**" (emphasis added). According to Arndt and Gingrich's highly respected **Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature**, the word translated "mind" in this verse means "way of thinking, mind(-set), aim, aspiration, striving." A mere force does not have a "way of thinking, mind-set, aim, aspiration," or "striving."

The Holy Spirit Has Emotions. That the Holy Spirit has emotions is clear from a number of passages. For example, in **Ephesians 4:30** we are admonished, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God." Grief is an emotion, and emotions cannot be experienced by a force. Grief is something one **feels**. The Holy Spirit feels the emotion of grief when believers sin. In the context of

Ephesians, such sins include lying (verse 25), anger (verse 26), stealing (verse 28), laziness (verse 28), and speaking words that are unkind (verse 29).

To illustrate my point, it is noteworthy that the Corinthian believers experienced **sorrow** after the apostle Paul wrote them a stern letter (**2 Corinthians 2:2,5**). There we see the same Greek word that is used in **Ephesians 4:30** (translated "grieve"). Just as the Corinthian believers experienced sorrow or grief, so the person of the Holy Spirit can experience sorrow or grief.

The Holy Spirit Has a Will. We are told in **1 Corinthians 12:11** that the Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts "to each one individually as He **wills**" (NASB). The phrase "He wills" translates from the Greek word *bouletai*, which refers to "decisions of the will after previous deliberation." The Holy Spirit makes a sovereign choice regarding what spiritual gifts each respective Christian receives. A force does not have such a will.

It is noteworthy that the same Greek word used to describe the Holy Spirit's will is used to describe Jehovah-God's will in **James 1:18**. Just as the person of the Father exercises His will, so the person of the Holy Spirit exercises His will.

Another key example of the Holy Spirit exercising His will is found in **Acts 16:6**. Here, the Spirit forbids Paul to preach in Asia and then redirects him to minister in Europe.

Ask...

- How do you reconcile the Watchtower teaching that the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force the personal attributes used to describe Him in Scripture?
- Please read **Acts 13:2**. Why does the Holy Spirit refer to Himself as "me" and "I" if He is just an impersonal force?
- Please read **Matthew 28:19**. Did you know that the word "name" is used 228 times in the New Testament and in all but four place-names used, it's always used to refer to a person?

Explore...

Is the Biblical God a Trinity?

The Watchtower publication **Should You Believe in the Trinity?** asks, "If people were to read the Bible from cover to cover without any preconceived idea of a Trinity, would they arrive at such a concept on their own? Not at all."

The Watchtower goes on to give numerous reasons they believe this is the case. We will simply explore a few here and see if they are legitimate. The following examples are fleshed out from Ron Rhodes book, Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Jehovah's Witnesses.

A Pagan Concept?

Is there any substance to the Watchtower claim that the doctrine of the Trinity is a pagan concept? By no means! First, it is critical to recognize that the Babylonians and Assyrians believed in **triads** of gods who headed up a pantheon of many other gods. But these triads constituted three separate gods (polytheism), which is utterly different from the doctrine of the Trinity—which maintains that there is **only one God** (monotheism) with three persons within the one Godhead.

Simply because pagans spoke of a concept remotely resembling something found in Scripture does not mean that the concept was stolen from outside Christianity.

Ask...

- Did you know that pagan religions taught a mythological view of the world being flooded as well as a messiah like figure named Tammuz that supposedly rose from the dead? Does this mean the flood and Messiah were stolen from pagan religions?

1 Corinthians 14:33—Jehovah: Not a God of Confusion

The Watchtower Teaching

The **New World Translation** renders 1 Corinthians 14:33, "God is [a God], not of disorder, but of peace." Jehovah's Witnesses say that because God is not a God of disorder or of confusion, the doctrine of the Trinity cannot possibly be true since it is so unreasonable. After all, how can the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each be God and yet there be only one God? It just doesn't make sense.

In "**Let God Be True**," we read this of the Trinity: "To excuse it with the word 'Mystery!' is not satisfying. If one has in mind the apostle's words, 'God is not the author of confusion' (**1 Corinthians 14:33**), it is at once seen that such a doctrine is not of God. Well, one might ask, if God is not the author of this confusing doctrine, who is?" The implication is that the doctrine originated with Satan.

The Biblical Teaching

Just because one is unable to fully comprehend a doctrine does not mean that it is false. For humans to be able to understand everything about God, they would have to have the very mind of God.

The Bible shows that human beings cannot possibly understand everything about God or His ways.

For example:

- "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!" (**Romans 11:33**).
- " 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,' declares the Lord. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts'" (**Isaiah 55:8,9**).
- "Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (**1 Corinthians 13:12**).

Ask...

- Did you know that even Watchtower publications state that one cannot understand everything about God, and yet we accept some things as a mystery beyond our comprehension?

Consider the following from the Watchtower book *Reasoning from the Scriptures*, human beings cannot fully understand that God did not have a beginning. After quoting Psalm **90:2**, which addresses God's eternal nature, this book asks:

Is that reasonable? Our minds cannot fully comprehend it. But that is not a sound reason for rejecting it. Consider examples: (1) Time. No one can point to a certain moment as the beginning of time. And it is a fact that, even though our lives end, time does not. We do not reject the idea of time because there are aspects of it that we do not fully comprehend. Rather, we regulate our lives by it. (2) Space. Astronomers find no beginning or end to space. The farther they probe into the universe, the more there is. They do not reject what the evidence shows; many refer to space as being infinite. The same principle applies to the existence of God.

Let's look now at 1 Corinthians 14:33 in its proper context. When Paul said, "God is not a God of confusion but of peace" (NASB), what was he communicating to the Corinthian believers?

Consulting the context of 1 Corinthians makes everything clear. This was a church plagued by internal divisions and disorder (1 Corinthians 1:11). One issue that was causing disorder in the worship services at Corinth had to do with the proper usage of spiritual gifts. Apparently there were situations in which too many people were speaking in tongues and giving prophecies—all at the same time. This led to disarray in the church.

Thus, Paul tells the believers in this church that only one person at a time should speak in tongues, and only two or three people should do this in any one service (**1 Corinthians 14:27**).

Moreover, so the entire church can benefit, there must be an interpreter present. If no such interpreter is available, then the person must remain quiet (verse 28). In context then, this verse has nothing to do with the Trinity.

The Word "Trinity" Doesn't Appear In the Bible

Does the fact that the word "Trinity" is not in the Bible constitute evidence that the doctrine is a false one? By no means! Though the word is not mentioned in the Bible, the concept of the Trinity is clearly derived from Scripture.

The word Jehovah does not appear as such in the Bible. In fact, Jehovah does not appear in **any** legitimate Hebrew or Greek manuscript of the Bible. The word was originally formed by superstitious Jewish scribes who joined the consonants **YHWH** with the vowels from "Adonai." The result was Yahowah, or Jehovah. So, if one is going to argue that the doctrine of the Trinity is unbiblical because the word "Trinity" does not appear in the Bible, then by that same logic the doctrine of Jehovah must be considered false.

Does the Concept of the Trinity Show Up In the Bible

Although the word "Trinity" doesn't show up in the Bible the concept of three persons constituting one God absolutely does. The following examples make this abundantly clear:

- All three persons possess the attribute of omnipresence (everywhere-present): the Father (**1 Kings 8:27**), the Son (**Matthew 28:20**), and the Holy Spirit (**Psalms 139:7**).
- All three have the attribute of omniscience (all-knowingness): the Father (**Psalm 147:5**), the Son (**John 16:30**), and the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 2:10**).
- All three have the attribute of omnipotence (all-powerful): the Father (**Psalms 135:6**), the Son (**Matthew 28:18**), and the Holy Spirit (**Romans 15:19**).
- **Holiness** is ascribed to each of the three persons: the Father (**Revelation 15:4**), the Son (**Acts 3:14**), and the Holy Spirit (**Romans 1:4**).
- **Eternity** is ascribed to each of the three persons: the Father (**Psalms 90:2**), the Son (**Micah 5:2; John 1:2; Revelation 1:8,17**), and the Holy Spirit (**Hebrews 9:14**).
- Each of the three persons is individually described as the truth: the Father (**John 7:28**), the Son (**Revelation 3:7**), and the Holy Spirit (**1 John 5:6**).
- Each of the three is called Lord (**Luke 2:11; Romans 10:12; 2 Corinthians 3:17**), everlasting (**Romans 16:26; Hebrews 9:14; Revelation 22:13**), almighty (**Genesis 17:1; Romans 15:19; Revelation 1:8**), and powerful (**Jeremiah 32:17; Zechariah 4:6; Hebrews 1:3**).

To finish the evidence for the Trinity in the Bible we will hone in on one more verse...

Matthew 28:19—The "Name" of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

It is critical to note that the word "name" is singular in the Greek text, indicating that there is one God, but three distinct persons *within the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*.⁴⁰ Theologian Robert Reymond draws our attention to the importance of this verse for the doctrine of the Trinity:

*Jesus does not say, (1) "into the names [plural] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," or what is its virtual equivalent, (2) "into the name of the Father, and into the name of the Son, and into the name of the Holy Spirit," as if we had to deal with three separate Beings. Nor does He say, (3) "into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," (omitting the three recurring articles), as if "the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" might be taken as merely three designations of a single person. What He does say is this: (4) "into the name [singular] of **the** Father, and of **the** Son, and of **the** Holy Spirit," first asserting the unity of the three by combining them all within the bounds of the single Name, and then throwing into emphasis the distinctness of each by introducing them in turn with the repeated article.*

Now that we have discovered that the Trinity is a biblical concept and that both Jesus and the Holy are equally God along with the Father, despite repeated attempts to take away from their deity by the Watchtower Society with its New World Translation, we must explore and ask...