

The Cults Class # 3 - Jehovah's Witnesses

A brief history of the Jehovah's Witnesses:

- Charles Taze Russell
 - Established the 'Watchtower' organization in the late 1870's
 - Published *The Herald of the Morning*, (forerunner of today's *Awake*)
 - Rejected the doctrine of eternal torment,
 - Later rejected the Trinity and the immortality of the soul.
- After Russell's death in 1916 the organization split...
- J.F. (Judge) Rutherford
 - Much of the same teachings,
 - The name "Jehovah's Witnesses" (Columbus, OH in 1931)
- The JW organization
 - Condemns any dissension, criticism or doubt on the part of its members
 - Headquarters are in Brooklyn, NY.

Jehovah's Witnesses beliefs... "Are they biblical?"

- Jehovah is the only proper name for God; he should not be addressed in any other way. Is this biblical?
- The proper use of God's 'correct' name Jehovah is essential to salvation. Is this biblical?
- The Holy Spirit is not a person...
 - The word Trinity isn't in the Bible so the doctrine can't be true.
 - The Trinity is a pagan doctrine
 - There can't be three Gods in one God or three Gods in one person.
- Christ was the "firstborn" of all creation and was created billions of years ago...
 - The Christ (Jesus) was originally created as the archangel Michael...
 - Through this created angel (become Jesus) all things were created...
 - Jesus is a mighty god, but not God Almighty like Jehovah is...
 - Jesus is a lesser god than Jehovah, for He said, "The Father is greater than I."...
 - Because Jesus didn't know the day or the hour of His second coming, He could not be God in the same sense as the Father. ...
 - Jesus is not to be worshipped like Jehovah...
 - Following His crucifixion, Jesus was raised an invisible spirit creature...
 - Christ's second coming was invisible and spiritual, and took place in 1914. He has been ruling since then through the Watchtower Society...

Some Jehovah's Witnesses false prophecies concerning end times: (Deuteronomy 18:21-22)

- The Watchtower Society predicted that Christ would come back in 1874.
- The Watchtower predicted that in 1914 human government would be overthrown, and the Kingdom of God would be established on earth. Later predictions were 1915 then 1918.

- The Watchtower predicted that in 1925 select Old Testament saints would rise from the dead and come to live in San Diego.
- The Watchtower predicted that in 1975 human history would end and the thousand year reign of Christ would begin.

***How is one saved in the Jehovah's Witnesses organization?**

- Salvation depends on works. Grace is considered 'the opportunity' to earn salvation by total obedience to the Watchtower Society. (examples)
- The Watchtower teaches that only 144,000 Jehovah's Witnesses go to heaven; only the 144,000 are born again.
- The rest of the JW's live on a paradise on earth and will never see God or Jesus Christ.
- JW's must belong to, be loyal to and serve God's one true organization.
 - They must work towards perfection in this life, (and throughout the 1,000 year reign of Christ)
 - At any time they may fail, and risk annihilation.

Miscellaneous info:

- JW publications are written without author credit;
 - they say to preserve humility;
 - Detractors say to prevent evaluation of the author's credentials.
- The Witnesses' standards are:
 - The *Watchtower* organization
 - The *New World Translation* of the Bible
- JW's don't celebrate birthdays, national or religious holidays (such as Memorial Day or Christmas).
- JW's won't salute the flag, fight in wars, get involved in politics or vote.
- JW's believe unbelievers are annihilated at death.
- JW's prohibit blood transfusions, believing it similar to intravenous feeding, which they believe is the same as eating blood.