

Knock Knock - Who's There?

Part 1 - Introduction, Revelation, The Bible, Authority

I. Introduction

They knock at your gate or your door or come in your shop and say they want to talk to you about the Kingdom of God, or living in Paradise here on Earth or some other similar subject. They are the Jehovah's Witnesses. But who are they? What they say sounds "Ok" but what do they really believe?

A "*Christian denomination*" is a group of churches that agree on a public understanding of what the Bible says. Different "*Christian denominations*" have minor differences in their history or what they think the Bible says. But "*Christian denominations*" agree on the important issues of what the Bible says

A "*Cult*" is a group that can be identified by the following things:

1. They have one central Leader or group that determines correct thinking and teaching for the entire group.
2. The Leader or group has a special understanding or has been given a "secret" knowledge that others do not have.
3. They often have special additional books that give a "corrected" understanding of the Bible. And they will teach that the Bible can't be understood correctly without their special knowledge and teaching.
4. They will have their own special teachings about Jesus, God and why Jesus died on the Cross.
5. They will have their own special teaching about what a person must do to be forgiven or accepted by God.

II. Who are Jehovah's Witnesses?

A. Their History

The Jehovah's Witnesses was begun by Charles Taze Russell in 1872. He was born on February 16, 1852. In 1879 he joined with another man named N. H. Barbour who published a magazine named "*The Herald of the Morning*". By 1884 Charles Russell owned the magazine and he renamed it "*The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom*" and founded Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society (now known as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society).

Jehovah's Witnesses have their head office in Brooklyn, New York. Their material may be printed in other countries, it may be printed in other languages but it all comes from Brooklyn, New York because that is where Jesus Christ came back to Earth in 1914.

The main materials printed by the Jehovah Witnesses are called "The Watch Tower" and "Awake" magazine.

B. What do they believe?

There are four requirements for a Jehovah's Witness. They are as follows:

- 1) Prayer.
- 2) Obey God's laws.
- 3) Join God's only organisation.
- 4) Be loyal by advocating his kingdom rule to others.

Now those sound good. They sound Ok. The problem comes about when you find out what they mean when they use those phrases.

III. Revelation

What God "Reveals" to us. - God revealed Himself to us in two ways.
We call those two ways "General Revelation" and "Special Revelation".

A. General Revelation

General Revelation is God revealing Himself in a "General" way to all people on the earth. This is what we can see and know about God by looking at life, nature and the universe.

Now here is why Christians believe in General Revelation:

Psalms 19:1-4

1 The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

2 Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

3 There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;

4 yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.

Romans 1:18-20, NET

18- For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of people who suppress the truth by their unrighteousness, 19- because what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. 20- For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, because they are understood through what has been made. So people are without excuse.

Acts 14:16-17, NET

16- In past generations he allowed all the nations to go their own ways, 17- yet he did not leave himself without a witness by doing good, by giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying you with food and your hearts with joy."

B. Special Revelation

"Special Revelation" is God revealing Himself through his acts in the history of Israel, most clearly through Jesus Christ and through the Bible. The history of God revealing Himself is recorded for us in the Bible.

Now here is why Christians believe in "Special Revelation". These verses also explain why Christians say the Bible is our primary guide for living and our authority on God and knowing Him:

Deuteronomy 4:1-2

So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. 2 You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the Lord your God with which I am charging you.

Isaiah 40:8

8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

2 Timothy 3:15-17

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, 15 and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

Romans 10:17

17 So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

Psalms 119:103-105

103 How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

104 Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

All "Christian denominations" teach that the Bible is God's history of His revelation of Himself and His relationship to His creation. All "Christian denominations" teach that the Bible is our authority for knowing God, Jesus Christ and how we should live. That is why Christians say that the Bible is our guide, the lamp to our feet and a light to our path.

C. What do Jehovah's Witnesses say about Revelation and the Bible**1. Revelation:**

"It should be expected that the Lord would have a means of communicating to his people on the earth, and he has clearly shown that the magazine called The Watchtower is used for that purpose." (1939 Yearbook Of Jehovah's Witnesses, P 85)

"The Watchtower is a magazine without equal on earth because God is the author." (W.T. April 15, 1943 pg.127)

"Respond to the directions of the organization as you would the voice of God." (WT 6/15/1957, p. 370)

2. Bible:

"There has been no clear understanding of the Bible for centuries. (Watchtower 9/15/1911, p. 4885)

"An individual must have the Watchtower *magazine* to understand the Bible." (1983 yearbook)

"Bible classes and Bible studies all to no purpose until the Lord, in due time, sent them the 'Bible keys,' through the *Watchtower Society*" (Watchtower 10/1 /1909, p. 4482)

"The bible is a sealed book except to the "*Jehovah Witnesses*" organization." (Watchtower 7/1/1973 p.40)

"The Bible is organization-minded it cannot be fully understood without our having the theocratic organization in mind." (Watchtower 9/1/1954 p.164)

The Bible is an organizational book.... For this reason the Bible cannot be properly understood without Jehovah's visible organization in mind." (WT 10/1/1967, p. 587)

The Bible was a problem for Jehovah's Witnesses for many years. So in 1961 they started printing their own copy of the Bible. They call it "The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures". They have since printed their version of the Bible in 72 different languages. Read what one of the Jehovah's Witnesses leaders wrote about the people who did their translation:

"The New World Bible translation committee had no known translators with recognized degrees in Greek or Hebrew exegesis or translation." (Walter Martin, *Kingdom of the Cults—Expanded Anniversary Edition*, October 1997, Bethany House Publishers, p. 123.)

An Observation:

Now, you remember the four requirements for a Jehovah's Witness. They are as follows:

- 1) **Prayer.**
- 2) Obey God's laws.
- 3) Join God's only organization.
- 4) Be loyal by advocating his kingdom rule to others.

I want you to read a quote about what they say about prayer.

1) "Prayer is taking in knowledge. How does a Jehovah's Witness dedicate himself to God's service? You should approach God in Jesus' name and tell him in prayer that you want to be his servant that you want to belong to him. In this way you dedicate yourself to God. This is a personal Private matter. No one else can do it for you. After you have made your dedication to God he will expect you to live up to it. So prove that you are a person of your word by sticking to this decision, or dedication as long as you live." (YOU CAN LIVE FOREVER IN PARADISE ON EARTH, 1982, p. 251)

For Christians, Prayer is completely different because God wanted a relationship with us. So for a Christian prayer, is a two-way conversation with God.

2- "I, the LORD, do these things. I, the LORD, form the plan to bring them about. I am known as the LORD. I say to you, 3- 'Call on me in prayer and I will answer you. I will show you great and mysterious things which you still do not know about.' (Jeremiah 33:2-3, NET)

14- if my people, who belong to me, humble themselves, pray, seek to please me, and repudiate their sinful practices, then I will respond from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14, NET)

6- Do not be anxious about anything. Instead, in every situation, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, tell your requests to God. 7- And the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7, NET)

16- So confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great effectiveness. (James 5:16, NET)

16- Therefore let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and find grace whenever we need help. (Hebrews 4:16, NET)

V. Conclusion:

So we have talked about Revelation. We have talked about why we place the Bible as our authority and why the Jehovah's Witnesses consider the Watchtower magazine as a greater authority than the Bible.

Part 2 - God, The Trinity, Jesus, The Holy Spirit & Salvation

I. Introduction

It is happening every day. They knock at your gate or your door or come in your shop and say they want to talk to you about the Kingdom of God, or living in Paradise here on Earth or some other similar subject. They are the Jehovah's Witnesses. But what do they really believe?

The last time we talked we studied a little about the history of the Jehovah's Witnesses. We talked about God revealing Himself to His creation. In that study we talked about the most important difference between Christian churches and the Jehovah's Witnesses. For Christian churches our most important authority is the teachings of Jesus and the teaching of the Bible. For Jehovah's Witnesses, the most important authority is "The Watchtower" magazine.

II. God

We have already talked about Christian churches teaching that we know God because He chose to reveal Himself to us. That tells us that God cares about us and that He wants to have a relationship with us.

A. What Christian churches teach about God.

There are many things we can say about God. We are just going to talk about a few.

1. God is Spirit. God is Holy. That means he doesn't exist like we do. That is not a surprise. God is the creator. We are the created. So it should be clear that God does not exist like we do.

Psalm 95:3-7

3 For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods. 4 In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also. 5 The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed. 6 O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! 7 For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

John 4:21-24

21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."

2. God is Righteous. That means He will not accept sin. But God did establish a way for us to seek forgiveness for our sin.

Psalms 145:17-20

17 The Lord is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings. 18 The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry, and saves them. 20 The Lord watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy.

3. God is Love/Wrath. That means that you can't have a personal God that loves you without having a personal God that will punish you when you do wrong.

Jeremiah 23:23-24

23 Am I a God near by, says the Lord, and not a God far off? 24 Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them? says the Lord. Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord.

Psalms 139:1-6

1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me. 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. 3 You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. 4 Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. 5 You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

4. God Acts Consistent with His Nature.

That means God never does something and then goes, "What was I thinking? Why did I do that?"

Now this is important because that means we can know who God is by the things He has done. That is the reason the Bible is so important to us. It is the history of what God has done in His relationship with His creation.

B. What Jehovah's Witness Teach.

Now this may come as a surprise but Jehovah's Witnesses do not spend a lot of time teaching about who God is. It is taken for granted that He exists. There isn't much to teach you about God because you are never going to "know" Him anyway. The most important thing they want to teach about God is that He only speaks to people through the organization in Brooklyn, New York

"The Watchtower is a magazine without equal on earth because God is the author." (W.T. April 15, 1943 pg.127)

"Respond to the directions of the organization as you would the voice of God." (WT 6/15/1957, p. 370)

C. Summary on teaching about God

So there is a real difference in what Christian churches teach about God and what Jehovah's Witnesses teach about God. Christian churches teach that God desires a personal relationship with all people so He can guide us to salvation from our sins. Jehovah's witnesses teach that God's only communication with people is through the leadership in Brooklyn, New York. And the only acceptable attitude for a Jehovah's Witness is obedience.

D. There are four requirements for a Jehovah's Witness. They are as follows:

- 1) Prayer.
- 2) Obey God's laws.**
- 3) Join God's only organization.
- 4) Be loyal by advocating his kingdom rule to others.

Remember these? We have already talked about Prayer earlier. This time we will talk about #2.

Obey God's Laws.

That sounds Ok. But, for Jehovah's Witnesses there is only one source of God's Law. The source for God's Law is the leadership and the organization in Brooklyn, New York. For Jehovah's Witnesses the organization in New York has become their God. And there is only one way for a Jehovah's Witness to respond to "God".

"Working hard for the reward of eternal life. (WT 8/15/1972 p.491)

What can we say, is the basic principle underlying the movement of Jehovah's living organization? It can be expressed in one word; OBEDIENCE." (Watchtower 6/1/1967 p.338)

For the Jehovah's Witnesses there are only rules, regulations and Laws. They will never admit it, they can't see it, but they have substituted the God Jehovah that they say they worship for the Watchtower Society. It is the Society that directs their lives. It is to the Society that they are accountable. It is for the Society that they work. It is to the Society that they give absolute obedience of their lives. Because for Jehovah's Witnesses the Society has become God. Please read this quote.

"Respond to the directions of the organization as you would the voice of God." (WT 6/15/1957, p. 370)

Christian churches teach that there has been a complete shift from a life of rules and laws to a life of relationship. For the Christian, God guides us to follow His will as we response to His love for us. For Christians, God's Law is written on our hearts.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32- Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 33- But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34- And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

III. The Trinity

Now a lot of people get confused when Christian churches start talking about the Trinity. And because they are confused some groups say Christians have three(3) gods. That is what Muslims say about Christians. It is not true but that is what they say. And that is not what Christian churches teach.

A. What Christian churches teach about the Trinity

The teaching about the Trinity can be confusing because it talks about how God Himself exists in Heaven. It is beyond my understanding.

And now we are going to talk about the Trinity or how God exists in Heaven. I am going to tell you up front that you are not going to fully comprehend what I am getting ready tell you. Why? Because God does not exists like we do. God is greater than our little brains can comprehend.

Deut. 6:4

4 Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.

The whole point of this verse is to say that our God is one God. One!
But then Jesus comes and says this:

John 10:30

30 The Father and I are one.

John 14:16-18, 23

*16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you **another Advocate**, to be with you forever. 17 This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, **and he will be in you.** 18 **"I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you.** . . . 23 Jesus answered him, **"Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.***

John 17:11

11- And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

It was only after the coming of the Holy Spirit of God living in the disciples of Jesus that they began to grasp the idea of the Trinity. It was as the Holy Spirit brought back to memory the words of Jesus that they began to understand what Jesus meant when he said them. Then suddenly things that were said in the Old Testament began to make sense.

Genesis 1:26

26- And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

God does not exist as we exist like we exist. He is greater than we can completely comprehend. The only way we can understand the fullness of God is through analogies to things we can comprehend.

An example is a man. He is the son of a father. But he is also the husband to a wife. And he is also the father to a child. So the man is a son, a husband and a father. You can't take a knife and separate the son from the husband or the father from the son and husband. If you try you will have nothing. We know them as three different persons in one man and they can't be separated. But the persons in that man are very different and unique.

God is one God. He has revealed Himself to us as God the Father that we see in the Old Testament. And God's Word became flesh and lived among us so we could see God/Jesus clearly. So if you want to see God, look at Jesus. And now the living presence of God Himself lives in us as God's Holy Spirit to guide us and lead us to salvation. God is one God. But we see him in the three persons as He has revealed Himself. That is what Christian churches teach about the Trinity.

Now two(2) points to remember.

1. God is not confused about how He exists.
2. "How can you expect me to believe something is true when you can't fully comprehend it or understand it or explain it?"

B. What Jehovah's Witnesses teach about the Trinity

Jehovah's Witnesses have a completely different teaching about the Trinity. They teach that God is the first part of the Trinity. Then they teach that the second part is "Jesus".

"Heavenly Father is the first and foremost, the greatest part of that wonderful trinity. We find that the Lord Jesus was to be the second person in that marvellous trinity." (1915 Convention Report, p. 123)

That sounds Ok, doesn't it? But when they say "Jesus" they don't mean what we mean when we say "Jesus".

"Michael the Archangel is no other than the only begotten son of God, now Jesus Christ. That Jehovah directly created only one thing, Michael the arch angel and that Michael created all other things". (United in worship p.29)

"Michael the great prince is none other than Jesus Christ himself - Dan.12:1" (Watch Tower 12/15/1984 p.29)

So when we say "Jesus" and Jehovah's Witnesses say "Jesus" the two names have completely different meanings. When they say they believe in Jesus they mean something completely different than any Christian church.

So now Jehovah's Witnesses have God and Jesus, who is really Michael the angel, as the first two parts of their "Trinity". The third part of the "Trinity" for Jehovah's Witnesses is themselves. After they die, if they worked hard enough, they come back to life as Gods and they become the third part of the "Trinity"

"Heavenly Father is the first and foremost, the greatest part of that wonderful trinity. We find that the Lord Jesus was to be the second person in that marvellous trinity. We find that the third person in that trinity was not to be an influence, disposition or power merely, nor was the third part to be a single individual. The Bible gives us to understand that the third member in the trinity will be those who have faithfully followed in the footsteps of our dear redeemer...'That they may all be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.' There is the trinity,' there we have three in one- the Father, the Son and those who follow in the footsteps of the Son. (1915 Convention Report, p. 123)

"Our high calling is so great, so much above the comprehension of men, that they feel that we are guilty of blasphemy when we speak of being 'new creatures'- not any longer human, but 'partakers of the divine nature.' ' ..it is claiming that we are divine beings- hence all such are Gods,. Thus we have a family of God Now we appear like men, and all die naturally like men, but in the resurrection we will rise in our true character as Gods ... " (Watchtower, 10 & 11/1881, p. 10, Reprints, p. 301)

"Now we appear like men, and all die naturally like men, but in the resurrection we will rise in our true character as Gods."(Watchtower 12/1881, p. 301)

C. Summary on teachings about the Trinity

So Jehovah's Witnesses may tell you they believe in the Trinity. But what they believe is completely different than what Christian churches believe or teach.

IV. Jesus

When Christian churches and Jehovah's Witness talk about Jesus they talking about two completely different things. The only thing that is the same is the name "Jesus".

A. What Christian churches teach about Jesus.

There is a lot that we can say about Jesus but we are just going to talk about a few things that the Bible teaches us about Jesus. Because of time we are only going to look at a few of the verses from the Bible about Jesus.

1. Jesus was promised by God.

Isaiah 42:1

I "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

Isaiah 7:14

14- Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 53:3-6

3- He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4- Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5- But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6- All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

2. Jesus is the Saviour. Christian churches teach that Jesus came to be God saviour for all people. Please read these verses and you will see why we teach this.

Matthew 1:18-21

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19- Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20- But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21- And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

John 3:16-19

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. 17- For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18- He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19- And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

2 Timothy 1:10

But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

1 John 4:14

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Christian churches teach that Jesus was the one promised and sent by God to save men from their sins.

B. What Jehovah's Witnesses teach about Jesus.

As we have seen earlier Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus was really Michael the angel that appeared to Mary. They also teach that Jesus/Michael was created by God. Please read these quotes.

"Michael the Archangel is no other than the only begotten son of God, now Jesus Christ. That Jehovah directly created only one thing, Michael the arch angel and that Michael created all other things". (United in worship p.29)

"Michael the great prince is none other than Jesus Christ himself Dan.12:1" (Watch Tower 12/15/1984 p.29)

Jesus who is an angel who was the first and only thing created by Jehovah God (the father).... this Son was actually a creature of God" (Aid to Bible Understanding p. 918)

Jehovah's Witnesses also teach that faith in Jesus is not enough for us to receive God's grace and forgiveness. Please read the quotes:

Does "accepting the gracious provision" simply mean faith in God? Is having faith on what Christ has done sufficient? No, the society absolutely declares, "However more than faith is needed." (YOU CAN LIVE FOREVER IN PARADISE ON EARTH,, 1982, p. 250)

"There must also be works to demonstrate what your true feelings are about Jehovah."(Ibid.)

What part do the works play? "Such works will show that you are choosing life." (Loc. cit., p. 251)

C. Summary on Jesus

Christian churches teach that Jesus was always with God and is God. They teach that through the prophets in the Old Testament Jesus was promised by God. They teach that Jesus came to save men from their sins. They teach that by dying on the cross, Jesus has opened the doors of Heaven. And all people are offered forgiveness for their sins by the grace of God through our faith in Jesus Christ.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus was created by God. They teach that he is really the angel Michael who appeared as Jesus. They teach that Michael/Jesus did not complete the work of salvation for men. Men must work for the Jehovah's Witnesses society and by that work they may be allowed to live on the Earth after God judges the world.

V. The Holy Spirit

Christian churches and Jehovah's witnesses also have very different teachings about the Holy Spirit. We must remember that two different groups can use the same words in the same way but still have completely different meanings. This will be seen in the teachings of each group about the Holy Spirit.

A. What Christian churches teach about the Holy Spirit.

Christian churches teach that the Holy Spirit is not a "thing" but is the spiritual presence of God living in Christians. Please read these verses.

John 14:16-18

16“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— 17“the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

John 16:7-11

7“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. 8“And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: 9“of sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10“of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; 11“of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

1 Corinthians 3:16

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Christian churches teach that the first work of the Holy Spirit is to convict the world of sin. The second work of the Holy Spirit is to guide Christians in how they should live. This is why the Holy Spirit of God lives in us.

B. What Jehovah's Witnesses teach about the Holy Spirit

This time I would like you to read the quotes from the Jehovah's Witnesses teachings first and then we will talk about what they teach and what it means.

Holy Spirit" merely refers to the "invisible active force of the Almighty God that moves his servants to do his will" ("Let God Be True," rev. [1952], p.89).

The Scriptures themselves unite to show that God's holy spirit is not a person but is God's active force by which he accomplishes his purpose and executes his will" (Aid to Bible Understanding, Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1969, 1971, 1543).

The Bible's use of "holy spirit" indicates that it is a controlled force that Jehovah God uses to accomplish a variety of his purposes. To a certain extent, it can be likened to electricity, a force that can be adapted to perform a great variety of operations... The action of the spirit in such instances is like that of radio waves transmitting messages from one person to another far away. (website- The Holy Spirit—God's Active Force http://www.watchtower.org/e/ti/article_07.htm

The quotes you have just read make it clear that for Jehovah's Witnesses the Holy Spirit is not the presence of God. It is not part of the Trinity because it is not part of the person of God. That means for Jehovah's Witnesses that there is no relationship of any kind with God. They have no hope of the presence of God. They are completely and absolutely alone.

C. Summary for the Holy Spirit

The differences in the understandings and the teaching between Christian churches and Jehovah's Witnesses are as far from each other as you can get. For the Christian the Holy Spirit is the living presence of God with us, guiding us and helping us as we live. For Jehovah's Witnesses the Holy Spirit is irrelevant in their lives. They are completely and absolutely alone.

VI. Salvation of Man

A. What do Christian churches teach about the Salvation of Man

Christian churches teach that all people have sinned against God by choosing to do what they want to do and not what they know is what God wants them to do. That is "sin". The only way we can re-establish that relationship is to ask God to forgive us and ask Him to restore our relationship with Him.

The Good News is that God loves us and He sent Jesus Christ to open the way for our new relationship with God. If we live our life seeking to follow Him; then when this life is over He promises us that we will be with Him in heaven for all eternity. That is why the early church used the term Good News.

Now I would like us to look at just of a few of the Bible verses that will show why Christian churches believe what we believe.

Romans 3:10-12

10 As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one."

Romans 6:23

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Luke 13:3

3 "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

Romans 5:8

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 1:9

9- If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

1 John 5:13

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life."

This is the reason Christian churches teach that we are saved by "faith". Our "faith" is in the work and promises of Jesus Christ not in any "work" that we have done.

B. What do Jehovah's Witnesses teach about Salvation

For Jehovah's Witnesses our faith in the work and promises of Jesus is not enough for a person to be saved because for Jehovah's Witnesses the work of Jesus is not enough to cause God to forgive us or save us. I would like us to look carefully at these quotes.

Does "accepting the gracious provision" simply mean faith in God? Is having faith on what Christ has done sufficient? NO , the society absolutely declares, "However more than faith is needed." (YOU CAN LIVE FOREVER IN PARADISE ON EARTH,, 1982, p. 250)

"There must also be works to demonstrate what your true feelings are about Jehovah."(Ibid.)

What part do the works play? "Such works will show that you are choosing life." (Loc.cit., p. 251)

For Jehovah's Witnesses the only hope a person has is that if they work hard enough to make God happy with them, then God might forgiving them and let them live on the earth after God has killed off everyone else.

C. The four requirements for a Jehovah's Witness

You remember that we have already looked at the first two requirements for Jehovah's Witnesses. Now I would like us to look at the last two because they are linked to a Jehovah's Witness's work they must do to have any hope that God might let them live.

- 1) Prayer.
- 2) Obey God's laws.
- 3) Join God's only organization.**
- 4) Be loyal by advocating his kingdom rule to others.**

3) Join Gods only organization

For Jehovah's Witnesses the only hope they have is by joining with and working for the organization that has been set up in Brooklyn, New York. You will remember that they teach that it was in Brooklyn, New York that Jesus returned to earth in 1874 and then again in 1914. So The Jehovah's Witness organization teaches that serving the organization is the same as serving God.

"The Governing Body is necessary for submission to the headship of God's son."
(Watchtower p.755 Dec.15 1972)

"Respond to the directions of the organization as you would the voice of God." (WT 6/15/1957, p. 370)

To "receive everlasting life in the earthly Paradise we must identify with the organization and serve God as part of it." (WT 2/15/1983, p. 12)

Witnesses must believe there is no hope outside the Watchtower organization: "come to Jehovah's organization for salvation . . ." (WT 1/15/1981, p. 21)

Now these are quotes that come directly from Jehovah's Witnesses teaching materials.

4) be loyal by advocating his kingdom rule to others.

So what do Jehovah's Witnesses mean when they say be "loyal" by advocating Jehovah's kingdom rule? Part of what they mean by "loyal" is to be out there working to tell other people . . . make those visits . . . sell those magazines. The other part of what they mean by "loyal" is to accept whatever you are told. That means accept what you are told to do, accept what you are told not to do and, more important, accept what you are told to believe.

"God requires that prospective subjects of his kingdom support his government by loyalty, advocating his Kingdom rule to others." (WT Feb.15 1983 pp.12-12).

Do not criticize the organization. If Jehovah permits it, who are we to insist it should be different? (Watchtower 5/1/1957, p. 284)

Jehovah's Witnesses are told to accept what they are told. They are not encouraged to think for themselves. They may not read anything other than Jehovah's Witnesses material. They are not allowed to have friends outside of the Jehovah's Witnesses members. They are not allowed to join clubs or groups for hobbies or sports. There is a whole list of things they do not allow Jehovah's Witnesses to do. The reason is they do not want their followers to get in a situation where people might express opinions different than what they as Jehovah's Witnesses are told to believe. You can go to the Internet and do a search of "things Jehovah's Witnesses can't do" You can find several lists.

VII. Conclusion

So this brings our study on Jehovah's Witnesses to a close.

We have talked about the differences in what Christian Churches believe and teach and what Jehovah's Witnesses teach and believe. The only thing left to talk about is how to witness to a Jehovah's Witness if you are given a chance.

The truth is you probably won't be given much of a chance. They are taught to walk away if you start talking about what you believe. That is part of the reason they always visit in pairs. They are keeping an eye on each other. So the chances are you will only have a moment to say anything.

The best thing I can recommend is to tell them that you know that they want God to save them and that is why they are working so hard. Tell them that when they get tired of being afraid to come back and see you because the truth is God already loves them and wants to care for them.

Then if they ever come back, tell them the truth about Jesus Christ and how much God already loves them. Remember that they are afraid and that they will be afraid of you too.

They have no concept of living in relationship with a God that loves them. The idea that God cares about them and their lives will be an idea that is hard for them to accept. This is the greatest tragedy. Not only do Jehovah's Witnesses rob their followers of the truth of God's love they also rob them of any relationship that could lead them to salvation by the God that loves them.

So tonight I want you to do something. When you put your little ones to bed tonight stop and pray with them. . . . when you crawl into your bed, thank God that He loves you. And thank Him that He cares about you and wants to live with you to help you everyday of your life.

7 I say this because many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. (2 John 1:7)

12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:12-17)

10 At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. (Matthew 24:10-14)