



INTRODUCTION

All false doctrine originates with only a slight deviation from the truth.

--Reinhold Niebuhr - 19th century philosopher

The apostle was quick to reveal his amazement that there were those who had traded a knowledge of the truth for a false teaching (Galatians 1:6). They had been led astray by those willing to distort the truth and destroy the simplicity of the good news. There have always been those people . . . willing to misuse and abuse the scriptures, either unscrupulously for their own promotion, or through ignorance and misguidance from others. A single changed word, an expanded or unauthorized definition, a personal bias, a small mistake, can, with time and transmission, become a stumbling block to many. Nothing seems to cement false teaching as rapidly as sheer blind acceptance. The unwillingness to search and find the truth, along with a contentment to accept at face value what is taught, often becomes the albatross of many lives.

The primary purpose of this book is to examine carefully the scriptures in contrast with the teaching of Jehovah's Witnesses. It is dedicated to an elevation of the truth, and is not designed to be a bludgeon instrument in the hand of the uncaring.

Truth will stand on its own. Likewise, false doctrine will crumble from its own inherent weakness when compared to the absolute standard. Mr. Caskey has prepared an excellent treatise on truth. His simple application, logical approach and careful examination of the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses make for an excellent reading for those who hunger for the truth.

Any false doctrine, when carefully examined, possesses some facsimile to the truth. Indeed, most false teaching tends to shore up its ramparts with a mixture of scripture and Biblical thoughts. It is this mixing and mingling of the truth and untruth that all too often becomes the pitfall for the less careful student.

Anyone who has been trained and skilled in the presentation of twisted rules of hermeneutics and the misrepresentation of the meaning of any context of scripture can

easily manipulate the unsuspecting. Often such a distorted presentation may appear on the surface to be logical and scriptural. Only complete examination can reveal otherwise! **A Reply to a Jehovah's Witness** has been able to expose any misrepresentation of text by carefully examining the original Greek words along with a thorough discussion of the context.

This book is expertly written, with a scholastic overtone, yet on a level that portrays a deep and intimate love for the lost and, particularly, those who would "come to a knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." It should never be substituted for scriptures, but is only a catalyst to ignite the fire for hope and light in the hearts of just and honest men.

I am confident it will be well received. It is commended to you, the reader. May God richly bless your search!

Dr. M. Ralph Williams
Arlington, Texas
May, 1985

<p>Note: All scripture quotes in this publication, unless otherwise noted, are from the New King James translation of the Bible.</p>

A REPLY TO A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS

Some years ago when I lived in South Africa and was working to establish the Lord's church among all the ethnic groups of that country, I was a staff writer for a Christian magazine. One of the columns I wrote regularly was a question box and many of the letters which came to that office dealt with doctrinal, even controversial, Bible subjects. Quite often questions came to us about various doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses. One came from a lady in Queenstown: "A Mr. . . . has been here professing that we have no immortal soul, that there is no hell and describing the Holy Trinity as the confusing doctrine. Mr. . . . 's main argument seems to be based on the translation of certain Greek and Hebrew words. We will be exceedingly grateful if you can spare the time to give us your version on the above."

Since that time in South Africa, many interested people from different parts of the world requested that I write **A Reply To A Jehovah's Witness**. Discussions with these people were conducted in South Africa and in the Caribbean Islands where we lived and worked for a number of years.

The teachings of this religious group are so illogical and, therefore, erroneous, one wonders how there could be any noteworthy acceptance of them. I found their teachings to be a conglomerate of Universalism, Adventism, Materialism, Premillennialism, and Infidelity. This is rather severe language and it may be unpleasantly sharp, but, as we proceed in this discussion to examine the tenets of their creed, it is likely you will concur with me.

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This booklet is not intended to be an exhaustive study of their religion, but we will carefully scrutinize their major beliefs and inspect and analyze their principal dogmas and show, in the light of the Scriptures, how fallacious and self-contradictory the whole body of their doctrine is. It is my aim to show that this system is illusory. I mean by that, to point out that it is unreal, deceptive, and misleading while assuming the appearance of being true to the word of God.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESS, A MISNOMER

The name this religious group has chosen to call themselves is a misdesignation. It is not only inaccurate, but, more than that, it is false and misleading. What I am saying is: They are not *witnesses* of Jehovah! The word *witness* belongs to a family of New Testament words which are used almost 200 times. I have examined a number of New Testament language scholars as to its meaning and use. Here is what they have to say about that word which is translated *witness*. (*martureo* - μαρτυρέω): "To affirm that one has *seen* or *heard* or *experienced* something. Of the apostles, as those who had been eye and ear *witnesses* of the extraordinary sayings, deeds, and suffering of Jesus, which proved his messiahship. So, too, Paul, as one to whom the risen Lord had visibly appeared" (Thayer). Kittel, in his *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* defines the word thus: "Establishment of events or actual relations or facts of experience on the basis of direct personal knowledge." He says that it was a legal term: "One who can and does speak from personal experience about actions in which he took part and which happened to him." (He was defining the cognate *martus* - μάρτυς). He further elaborates upon it in its original sense: "The man who can speak about them from his own direct knowledge." And, he reiterates: "On the basis of first hand knowledge."

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Thayer, in defining the term *martus*, says: "A witness, one who avers, or can aver, what he himself has seen or heard or knows by any other means. One who is a spectator of anything."

So, I can deny that they are Jehovah's Witnesses! In the light of what the Bible says on the subject, we must contradict and refute the claim they make. The passages they quote to substantiate their profession are taken out of context and, therefore, do not apply. They are but a false front in an effort to bolster their allegation.

It was to the apostles that Jesus said: "You shall be *witnesses* to Me . . ." (Acts 1:8). It was concerning the apostles Peter made reference when he said: "We are His witnesses . . ." (Acts 5:32). It was the apostles who had been put into the common prison (v. 25) and, in verse 29, Luke relates, "But Peter and the other apostles . . ." There is absolutely no way for these people to be witnesses. They were not spectators. They have neither **seen** nor **heard** what originally transpired and what was taught by Jesus. In fact, if these people who call themselves Jehovah's Witnesses had never lived, the word of God would still be true. It was through these *original witnesses* that the word of God was **revealed** (I Corinthians 2:8-10; Hebrews 2:2-4), and it was by these same *inspired witnesses* that the word of God was **confirmed** (Mark 16:20). No man today can **reveal** the word of God. No man today can **confirm** it, **establish** it, or **verify** it! So, no man today can be a *witness*. We can **relate** the word of God to others; we can **tell** the story of God's love and sacrifice; but be assured that the message would be true and irrefutable if none of us had ever been born!

Let us proceed to observe further some of the teachings of this sect and examine them in view of what the scriptures teach on the subjects under consideration.

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DOES THE SOUL OF MAN LIVE ON AFTER DEATH?

In reply to Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrine about the soul, look closely at, and examine point by point, these passages in the word of God which have to do with all of the uses of the term. Here are some of Jehovah's Witnesses' statements in their official publications about the soul of man:

"There is not one text in the Bible that states that the human soul is immortal." This statement is taken from one of their books, *Let God Be True*, p. 60, which is published by their publishing house and has their imprimatur upon it. That is, it has their license, their sanction, their approval. So, these quotes (and all others I shall give in this book) are not from some outsider who is telling what he thinks Jehovah's Witnesses teach. They represent the supreme authority of that denomination. But, hear another quotation from the above mentioned book and the same page: "Thus we see that the claim of religionists that man has an immortal soul, and therefore differs from the beast is not Scriptural."

In discussing the nature of man, Jehovah's Witnesses claim that man is totally mortal. Listen to these quotations: "What is the soul? It is a living, breathing creature. Every man is a soul, but no man possesses a soul. . . By what authority is the claim made that death is merely the separation of the body and that the soul lives on. That claim is based wholly on the Devil's lie" (J.F. Rutherford, *Enemies*, p. 174). Still another of their statements about the total mortality of man: "The Scriptures, without contradiction, show that the dead are unconscious, out of existence" (J.F. Rutherford, *Religion*, p. 100).

A strenuous effort has been made on the part of these people to support their assertions by employing a few passages of Scripture in which the word *soul* is found to apply to the whole man, or to his animal life. Such is a perversion of the word of

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God, and this we have proved conclusively in our numerous discussions with them. Incidentally, they have refused to meet us again, and the reason is obvious. Their assertions are groundless; totally without Biblical support, and the casual Bible student who reads the word of God with an open mind soon discovers this fact. The apostle John destroys this false doctrine with just one solid blow: "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice. . ." (Revelation 6:9, 10). John saw the **souls** of people who had been martyred for the cause of Christ. He did not see their **bodies** but their **souls**, and they were alive, for "they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'" (Revelation 6:10) These were souls that were alive after death; after they had passed from this earth.

The Lord also does havoc to this fallacious and damnable theory in the story he tells in Luke chapter 16: "So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom . . ." (Luke 16:22).

Let us pause long enough to ask: "Did the angels convey the **body** of Lazarus to Abraham's bosom, or was it his **soul**? Mr. Thayer, eminent Greek lexicographer, says, with reference to the meaning of the Greek in this passage: "To obtain the seat next to Abraham, i.e., to be partaker of the same blessedness **of Abraham in paradise** - to be borne away to the enjoyment of the same felicity with Abraham." This same authority further says that the Jewish rabbis understood that *Abraham's bosom* was a phrase to *designate bliss in paradise*. Was this bliss, peace and blessedness of Abraham's bosom enjoyed by Lazarus after his death? It certainly was! Then, this is irrefutable evidence that the **soul** lives after the body, for the Lord says, "For dust you are, And to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). But, let us continue the quotation from Luke 16: "The rich man also died, and was buried; And being in

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torment in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember . . ." (Luke 16:22–25). Now, observe some of the things which occurred **after the death** of the rich man: (1) he lifted up his eyes in hell (hades - ᾗδης), (2) he was in torment, (3) he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom, (4) he cried unto Abraham, (5) he implored Abraham to send Lazarus to him, and (6) he remembered. Would the honest searcher after truth get the

impression from these passages of scripture that man is annihilated at death; that he becomes non-existent?

These people insist that this story is a parable, as though that somehow affects the truthfulness of what Jesus was saying. A *parable* is a narrative, brief or extended, true or fictitious, related for the purpose of teaching some moral or spiritual lesson. To attempt to dilute the strength and effectiveness of the story by the remark, "But this is a parable," is to handle the word of God deceitfully.

The serious mistake of those who espouse this unreasonable system is their failure to accept what the Bible says about the *soul* in all of its uses and applications in the Scriptures. They want to attach only one meaning to the word *soul*, the animal life of man, for they tell us he does not differ from the beast.

VARIOUS MEANINGS OF NEPHESH

In this section we will look at the Hebrew word *nephesh* and study briefly the different uses of it in the Old Testament. It is used 453 times and is translated *soul*, never *spirit*.

1. **Breath of life** (Genesis 1:20, King James version): ". . . the moving creature that hath life."

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2. **Soul by which the body lives - the vital principle.** "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls (*nephesh*); for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul" (Leviticus 17:11). If the *soul* is that which the animal possesses (they tell us that man does not differ from the beast), or if man does not have a soul but is a soul, how could the blood make atonement for him, and of what value would it be?

Notice another passage, Genesis 35:18: "And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Benoni; . . ." From what did her soul depart? It departed from her body, of course, for this is where her soul had been living. But if man does not possess a soul, it would be impossible for it to depart from the body! In this passage, this is precisely what the inspired word of God affirms with reference to the soul of Rachel. He does not say that her soul became extinct, or that it was *annihilated* but that it departed.

3. **The mind as the seat of the senses, the affections and various emotions.** "Rejoice the soul (*nephesh*) of Your servant, for to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul (Psalm 86:4). David's soul both rejoiced and was lifted up. This is more than mere animal existence. It is an expression of the emotions and spiritual faculties of the innermost man. David said to Solomon, ". . . serve him (God) with a loyal heart and with a willing mind (*nephesh*): . . ." (I Chronicles 28:9). The translation may say *mind*, but it is the same word which is generally translated *soul*. There was some moral and spiritual power and

capacity within Solomon, more than animal life and apart from it, with which he could serve God. It would be the height of ridiculous to assert that an animal possesses that ability.

4. **The heart - the faculty of understanding and thinking.** "I will praise You; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are Your works; and that my soul (*nephesh*)

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knows right well (Psalm 139:14). He said that his soul **knew** these things. His soul was that part of him that could think, understand, and reason. It was susceptible to divine instruction and influence. "Then said Jonathan unto David, Whatsoever thy soul (*nephesh*) desireth, I will even do it for thee." (I Samuel 20:4, King James Version). The soul can desire, which is an emotion of the heart. One is hard pressed for a doctrine, and harder pressed still for an argument, who would try to make the word soul here mean the animal life which is in man.

5. **A living creature.** ". . . and man became a living soul (*nephesh*) (Genesis 2:7, King James Version).

6. **People, persons.** "And all the souls (*nephesh*) that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls" (Exodus 1:5, King James Version). Here soul refers to the whole man, but it would be inaccurate, even absurd, to contend that it always conveys this meaning and never anything else.

7. **Animal life, or animals.** "And levy a tribute unto the Lord . . . one soul of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep:" (Numbers 31:28, King James Version).

8. **Myself, or thyself, used as a pronoun.** ". . . for their bread for their soul (*nephesh*) shall not come into the house of the Lord" (Hosea 9:4, King James Version).

To handle aright the word of God and thus arrive at the truth upon this subject, we must accept all the different uses of the word soul (*nephesh*) in the Old Testament in their proper contexts. It is a deliberate wresting of the Scriptures to emphasize a few passages which show one application of the word *nephesh* and disregard or ignore, or even deny, all else that God has said upon the subject. False doctrines are promulgated and many people are deceived by resorting to this method of interpretation. Any belief can be adduced and any religious system advanced by mishandling the word of God in this manner.

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**OTHER HEBREW WORDS
CLARIFY THE SUBJECT**

To enjoy a fuller understanding of this subject, let us give attention to other Bible words which bear directly upon it.

1. **Nedibah** is used only one time in the Old Testament and is translated *soul*. It does not, of course, refer to animals, but to man. "Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind . . ." (Job 30:15, King James Version). The word *soul* here could not mean the animal life, for the enemies of Job were not seeking to kill him; not does it refer to Job *as a soul*. They could not very well pursue him, for he was ill. His body was covered with sores and he was *flat on his back*, so to speak. Yet, the record says that the adversaries of Job were pursuing his *soul*.

2. **Neshamah** is another Hebrew word translated **soul** and it never refers to animals. ". . . and the souls which I have made (Isaiah 57:16). It is translated *spirit* in Job 26:4: "To whom have you uttered words? And whose spirit came from you?" Though Job was using sarcasm against his enemies, it clearly shows that the *soul* of man comes from God and that it is something distinct from the body. In other words, Job was asking these men: "Are you God that men receive their *souls* or *spirits* from you?" "The spirit (*soul* - *neshamah*) is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the inner depths of his heart" (Proverbs 20:27). No reasonable person could ever conclude that this was in reference to the animal life in man, or to man *as a soul*.

3. **Ruach** is translated *spirit*, never *soul*, and is used 235 times in the Old Testament. It refers to God, angels, devils, man, or some abstraction in all instances except one. "Who knows the *spirit* of the sons of men, which goes upward, and the *spirit* of the animal, which goes down to the earth?" (Ecclesiastes 3:21). Solomon is here discussing the knowledge and experiences of men. From a human standpoint, who knows that the *spirit* of man goes upward and the *spirit* of the beast

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goes downward? Who, from actual knowledge and experience, knows that the animal has not the same *spirit* that man has? He was taking a bitter and cutting gibe at knowledge. But he shows, in the asking of this question, that the animal does not possess that divine principle which man has, and whose *spirit* goes upward, returns to God (Genesis 6:3; Exodus 31:3; I kings 10:5; Ezekiel 13:3; Joel 2:28).

NEW TESTAMENT WORDS BEARING ON THE SUBJECT

1. **Psuche** (ψυχή) is a Greek word translated *soul* 57 times and translated *life* 41 times. Six times it means **person**. ". . . a few, that is, eight souls were saved through **water** (I Peter 3:20). The souls referred to were the eight *persons*, Noah and his family, who were saved from the deluge.

"Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:41). Approximately three thousand *persons*, upon hearing the gospel preached by Peter and the other apostles, believed and obeyed it and were added to the church by the Lord.

The Bible teaches that God has a soul. "Behold! My servant whom I have chosen, My beloved in whom My *soul (psuche)* is well pleased!" (Matthew 12:18).

In the book of the Jehovah's Witnesses titled *Let God Be True*, on page 61, is a division given over to the discussion of *The Soul Mortal*. The author says: "The fact that the human soul is mortal can be simply proved by a careful study of the Scriptures." This word *psuche*, translated *soul*, is supposed to prove that man is wholly mortal, according to their doctrine (ibid. page 62, paragraph 12); but this same word is also applied to God in the passage which we have just read. Does this make God mortal? And, if this word means the animal life of man, does it also mean that God has animal life and only animal life? The author of the work to which referred says that man does not differ

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from the beast, and that man does not possess a soul but is a soul. But, let us notice the conclusion of such reasoning: Man is a soul (*psuche*) and does not differ from the beast; therefore, God also is a soul (*psuche*) and differs none from the beast. Nothing but a diabolical doctrine could ever induce a man to do such reasoning, if indeed, it can be called reasoning at all!

The soul (*psuche*) cannot be destroyed by physical means and, therefore, means more than mere animal life or existence. "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul (*psuche*). But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (*gehenna*)" (Matthew 10:28).

This passage teaches that the body and soul are distinct and that man is not able to kill the soul. But, if the soul is mortal, mere animal life - that which becomes non-existent at death - then man could kill it. While we are considering this passage, let us give attention to the last part of it. These people claim that the destruction here mentioned, which God is able to bring upon both soul and body, is annihilation. "The destruction in Gehenna (hell - γέεννα) here referred to means that death from which there is no resurrection to future life as a soul" (ibid. page 63). In other words, God will completely obliterate, blot out of existence, the wicked, so that they will not be raised, but will remain eternally dead. But, let us examine the meaning of the word *destroy* as used in this and many other passages of the New Testament. The word is *apollumi* (ἀπόλλυμι). Here is its meaning according to the Greek scholars: "to lose, to be deprived of " (Matthew 10:42); "to be lost, to stray" (Matthew 10:6) (*The Greek Analytical Lexicon*, Harper). Again, "to devote or give over to eternal misery" (Matthew 10:28; James 4:12) "to destroy, i.e., to lose. Used of sheep straying from a flock" (Thayer).

Observe how the word is used in these passages: "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:6). If this word means *annihilation*, then Jesus sent his disciples to people who did not even exist! "For the Son of Man is come to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Did Jesus come to save those who had no existence, who had been completely obliterated or extinguished?

2. Pneuma is translated *spirit* 276 times in the New Testament and never refers to animals. It is contended by the advocates of this doctrine that spirit means *breath* or *wind* because it is so translated in some places, but let us examine a few passages in which the word is used and see if that is so. "The spirit (*pneuma* - πνεῦμα) indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41). Did the Lord mean that the breath of Peter, James, and John was willing to watch with him in that hour of trial? "unless one is born of water and of the Spirit (*pneuma*) . . ." (John 3:5). Does this mean that one is born of the breath or wind of God in order to enter the kingdom of heaven? "God is Spirit" (John 4:24). Is this the wind or breath of God to which Jesus refers? "Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth." (Mark 9:20). Does this sound as if a spirit is no more than wind or breath? "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit . . ." (Luke 10:21). Was it the breath of Jesus that rejoiced? No one who reads the Bible with an open and honest heart could ever reach such a conclusion.

MAN POSSESSES A SPIRIT

"But there is a spirit in man . . ." (Job 32:8). There are times in the Bible when the spirit differs from the soul, although the words *spirit* and *soul* are often used interchangeably. "There is a spirit in man" would certainly say that the *spirit* and *body* are separate entities. Man is a triune being - body, soul, and spirit. "Now may the God of peace

Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thessalonians 5:23). Man has life, as the animal has. He has a fleshly, mortal body, as the animal has. But, he has a spirit, made in the image of God, which is capable of thinking, reasoning, understanding, believing, obeying, rejoicing, etc. This part of man is susceptible to divine impressions and influence to do good or evil, and it is that part of man which tabernacles in this tenement of clay and which will live on throughout eternity, either to enjoy the blessings of God or suffer his vengeance and retribution, depending upon whether or not he has lived for and served him faithfully in keeping with His word in this life.

THEY TEACH THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE BIBLE

Jehovah's Witnesses tell us men cannot have the true light apart from their publication, *Studies In The Scriptures*. They are not only a commentary upon the scriptures, they tell

us, but they take their place so that men may see and understand what God's will to mankind is.

Take a look, from these writings of theirs, at some of the arrogant and presumptuous assertions they make:

"If anyone lays *Scriptural Studies* aside even after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them ten years, 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" (*Watch-Tower*, September 15, 1910, page 298).

"If the six volumes of *Scriptural Studies* are practically the Bible topically arranged, with Bible-proofs given, we might not improperly name the volumes - *The Bible in Arranged Form*. That is to say, they are not merely comments on the Bible, but they are practically the Bible itself" (ibid.).

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It is difficult to imagine such effrontery, such unashamed impudence among people who profess to have any respect for the Bible. First, such statements infer that *Pastor Russell*, the original author of *Studies in the Scriptures*, and his cohorts had the ability to write about and explain Bible subjects in plainer, more easily understood terms than God. That is a reflection upon the wisdom of God. Secondly, it asserts that *Studies In The Scriptures* is superior to the Bible itself, and such insolence and audacity will not go unchallenged! The New Testament is God's final, complete and perfect revelation of Himself and His will to man. It is the most explicable, the most self-defined book that has ever been written upon the subject of religion. For someone to maintain that what has been written by man supersedes the Bible, making the Bible somewhat inferior and obsolete as compared to the Jehovah's Witnesses' replacement, is contemptuous in the highest degree. Paul calls the "will of God . . . good and acceptable and perfect " (Romans 12:2).

Jesus promised the apostles that he would send them the Holy Spirit, and that he would teach them ". . . all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26). Only a short while later, Jesus further promised them: ". . . he will guide you into all the truth" (John 16:13). A summary of these two verses says: (1) He will teach you all things; (2) He will bring to your remembrance all that I have taught you; and (3) He will guide you into all truth. Yet, Russellism says that if you know all these things which the Holy Spirit has given to you through the apostles, and have known them for ten years, that within two years you will go into darkness if you have just the Bible alone, without *Studies In The Scriptures*. Can you believe that? John says: "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God" (II John 9). Is this the teaching of Christ that *Studies In The Scriptures* are better than the Bible for producing well-informed and steadfast Christians?

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There is a strong prohibition issued by the apostle Paul against adding to, taking from, or in any way, perverting the gospel of Christ. "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-8).

The apostle Peter, inspired by God, gave us the standards by which we are to be governed in all of our preaching and teaching: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11). The Greek term for oracles is *logia* (λογία) and simply means words. He is saying, "If any man speak, let him speak the very *words* of God." In the face of such plain teaching in the Bible, Russell and his followers would have you believe that the better choice is to accept the words of *Studies In The Scriptures*. Both Paul and Peter affirm that the word of God provides all our needs and will make us complete in him. "All scripture is give by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16, 17). "as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called by glory and virtue" (II Peter 1:3). These passages certainly do not need any clarification by man. We only need to examine what they say. It is evident that the scriptures provide us with everything we need in our spiritual lives and in our walk as Christians, and they insure our growth to maturity. There is no need that man has but that is fully supplied by God through his word. "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

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From the passages which we have read on the subject of God's revelation to us, you, no doubt, observed the repeated use of the word **all**. To sum it up, this is what was said: He will guide you (apostles) into **all** the truth; He will bring to your remembrance **all** that I have taught you; He will teach you **all** things. The inspired scriptures will equip you for **all** good works. Through the knowledge of him, in this revelation of the New Testament, is granted to us **all** things that pertain to life and godliness; and God thus supplies **all** our needs.

From what has been said in these passages, we can be sure that God has given us his full, complete, final, and perfect revelation of Himself and His will to us. There has not been a revelation from God since the one he gave to the apostles and those inspired men upon whom the apostles laid their hands. The claim that revelation has been *progressional* is false. New and added revelations are the figments of the fertile imaginations of men. There are many things wrong with this position of additional revelation, but mainly it is fallacious, deceptive, and self-deluding. If there are still revelations coming from God, then his promise that the apostles would be given **all** that God intended for us to have is not true. Let every man be a liar, but let God be true! I challenge Jehovah's Witnesses, or any other group who claims additional revelation, to name just one truth which we have

today that was not revealed in the Bible! The anathema of heaven is upon anyone who would add to that original disclosure of God's will to man.

TEACH ONLY ONE PERSON IN THE GODHEAD

One of the reasons I stated early in this book that the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses have a mixture of false doctrines, including the ingredient of infidelity, is this dogma they espouse. "The careful student of the preceding chapters has found abundant testimony from the Scriptures, to the effect that there is one Almighty God" (*Studies In The Scriptures*,

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Vol. V, page 166). Another statement from the same source: "Verily, if it were not for the fact that this Trinitarian nonsense was drilled into us from infancy, and the fact that it is soberly taught in the Theological Seminaries by gray-haired professors, in many other ways apparently wise, nobody would give a moment's consideration."

You are able to see from those quotations that Jehovah's Witnesses deny the doctrine of the trinity, the Triad nature of the Godhead. They say in their publications; "Never was there more a deceptive doctrine advanced than that of the trinity. It could have originated only in one mind, and that the mind of the devil" (*Reconciliation*, J.F. Rutherford, page 101).

They have decided what others believe about Deity, the Godhead, Trinity, and have fabricated their own definition. "The doctrine is, in brief, that there are three gods in one; to wit, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, all three equal in power, substance, and eternity" (*ibid.*, page 100). In the first place, let it be understood that Christians do not believe that there are *three gods in one*, but they do believe that there is one God, or Godhead, in which there are three Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that all are of the same substance (*χαρακτήρ* - literally, *character*; Hebrews 1:3). They are infinite in being, omnipotent, omniscient, and everywhere present.

It is inconceivable how anyone could read the New Testament with any care and reach such conclusions as are expressed in the above quotations from these people. Either a total blindness and inability to understand plain language or a reckless unconcern for inspired truths could contribute to such a distorted and perverse position. The honest seeker after truth wants to know, always, what the Bible has to say about a subject. It has much, indeed, to say on this

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topic! We will examine enough of what it says to convince the honest doubter, strengthen the believer, and put to flight the false teacher!

Let us first observe some of the things Jesus has to say: "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Helper . . . the Spirit of truth" (John 14:16, 17). Three are mentioned in the Deity in this passage: (1) **I**, (2) **the Father**, and (3) **the Helper**, who is the Spirit of truth. In verse 26 of the same chapter, Jesus continues, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name." The three are here seen again. In chapter 15, verses 26 and 27, Jesus continues: "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning." How positively and unequivocally clear are these passages on the triad nature of God - Christ, the Father, and the Spirit are referred to. Note also a former truth mentioned - they were *witnesses* because they had been with him from the beginning.

The very opening verse of the Old Testament necessarily implies the plurality of Persons in the Godhead. "In the beginning God (*Elohim*) created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). The Hebrew word *Elohim* is plural, and that should not be surprising, for both God and Christ were involved in creation. But so, also, was the Holy Spirit. Verse 2 of the first chapter of Genesis says, "And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." In verse 26, Jehovah speaks in plural terminology again: "Let Us make man in Our image." Just as the Bible speaks positively of three Persons who have the essence of Deity, so it also proclaims decisively and conclusively that God is One.

Near the close of his life and ministry, Jesus gave the apostles the commission to go into all the world and make disciples, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the

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Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). He here speaks of relationship. People who are taught the gospel and accept it, change their relationship from the world - that is, their affiliation and connection with the world - to a union and association with God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

Jehovah's Witnesses would disclaim all these passages, and others that refer to Christ and the Holy Spirit as Deity, for they allege that Christ was a created angel before he came to earth. "As He (Christ) is the highest of Jehovah's creation, so also he was the first, the direct creation of God, the only begotten" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. V, page 84). So, as you will observe from their writings, the stand they take is that Christ is a created being, the first being God ever created, and he is, they declare, a secondary, inferior god. They like to use Revelation 3:14 as a proof text for their belief. John called Christ in that verse "the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God." This statement, "the Beginning of the creation of God," is supposed to bolster their position; but let us examine the passage and see if there is any support for their stand that Christ is a created being.

The word *beginning* (*arche* - ἀρχή) means "to be chief, leader, ruler" (Mark 10:42; Romans 15:12). Thayer further defines it: "the origin of the creation, that by which anything begins to be; the cause, the agent." This is, without doubt, the truth of the matter

and corresponds with what inspired writers of the New Testament have to say on the subject. "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation" (Colossians 1:15). The word for *first-born* is *prototokos* (πρωτότοκος) and is defined by Thayer thus: ". . . of the supreme rank by which he excels these other sons." Kittel, the eminent German scholar who authored the ten volumes of *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* says in defining this word: "First in rank." He elaborates: "What is meant by the unique supremacy of Christ over all creatures as Mediator

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of their creation." Arndt & Gingrich agree in this comment and definition of the term: "of Christ as the first-born of a new humanity . . . the new community of saints."

These passages just read have reference to his having been created by God, for Colossians 1:16 and 17 states: "For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on earth . . . all things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." This is a positive declaration that (1) He existed before anything was created; (2) He created all things; and (3) He holds all things together. If Christ were a created being, as Jehovah's Witnesses affirm, how could he (1) be before all things and (2) create all things? The logic of this would be that he created himself! How foolish can people get? How absurd can a doctrine be? When one sets out to uphold and promulgate a false teaching, he usually entraps himself in his own nonsense!

This doctrine makes Jesus inferior to God. Let us pursue this a little further. Paul, in speaking of Christ, mentions "his eternal power and Godhead" (Romans 1:20). In Colossians 1:19, the writer says that "it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell." Later, in the same letter Paul avows, "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead (Deity) bodily" (Colossians 2:9). How can you have more than **all the fullness of Deity**? Inspect their blasphemous denial in this quotation: "The great Jehovah is The God. The Son, the Logos, is A God. The name god is applied to mighty ones, even to angels and to magistrates. The name god is therefore properly applied to the Son because he is a mighty one . . . The names Jehovah, Almighty God, and Most High are never in the Scriptures applied to Jesus, the Son of God . . . In truth, when Jesus was on earth, he was a perfect man, nothing more and nothing less . . . Jesus was not God the Son" (ibid., pages 106, 111, 113).

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Jehovah's Witnesses declare that Jesus was *a created god*. The Bible says that he has always been God - "his eternal deity." Jehovah's Witnesses assert that the Scriptures never apply such names as Almighty God and Most High to Jesus. Isaiah said "His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Earlier, Isaiah said concerning him, ". . . and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). Matthew tells us centuries later that this means "God with us" (Matthew 1:23).

I would like for you to observe some other passages which declare that Jesus is God - that He is Deity in the fullest sense of the word. "To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:1). This passage says that **God** and our **Savior Jesus Christ** are one and the same person. Or, if you please, that Jesus Christ is God. Read another passage: "looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). Paul here affirms that Jesus Christ our Savior is the great God. These two passages illustrate the use of the Greek rule of grammar. In *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* by Dana and Mantey, we have this rule under the heading of **Special Uses of the Article With Nouns Connected by Kai**: "The following rule by Grandville Sharp of a century back still proves to be true: 'When the copulative *kai* (and) connects two nouns of the same case, the article *ó* (the) or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; that is, it denotes a further description of the first named person.' " This is the construction in the passages which I have just quoted, and what this means is that the nouns **God** and **Savior Jesus Christ**, and **the Great God** and **our Savior Jesus Christ** refer to the same person. And, Dana and Mantey say that this is always the case.

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The Bible speaks of Jesus being on equality with God. "Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God" (Philippians 2:6). Jesus himself expressed it in these terms, "I and My Father are one" (John 10:30). Long years later, the writer of the Hebrew letter testified concerning Jesus: ". . . who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person . . ." (Hebrews 1:3). I call your attention again to this important wording. The term *express image* is from the Greek word *charakter* (χαρακτήρ) and it means "an engraving, an imprint, an exact expression; the essential quality, nature or kind." He is of the same essence of God. In emptying himself, doing the work and rendering the service he came to do, the Father was greater. "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). So, it may be said that *officially* God was greater. That is borne out in such statements: "I must work the works of him who sent Me . . ." (John 9:4). "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me" (John 4:34). "Nevertheless, not as I will but as You will" (Matthew 26:39).

HIS DEITY ESTABLISHED

Like the Moslems and some others, Jehovah's Witnesses deny the deity of Jesus. Let us investigate Biblical testimony in order to evaluate and determine what God's truth on the subject is.

1. The prophets. By inspiration, the prophets knew that Jesus Christ was God. We have read passages from Isaiah which tell us that Jesus is Immanuel, God with us. He called him *Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*. Later, in chapter 54 and verse 5, he makes this statement: "For your Maker is your

husband; the Lord of hosts is His name; and your Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth" (Isaiah 54:5).

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2. John the Baptist. The harbinger of Christ attested to his divinity in many ways. Look at this statement of his, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! . . . And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God" (John 1:29, 34).

3. Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ proclaimed his divinity on many occasions. "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him" (John 14:7). In verse 30 of chapter 10, he states: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). He takes a very strong stance as he addresses and affirms the subject of His divinity (deity) in issuing this categorical imperative: ". . . you will die in your sins, for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24). There are a number of implications in this statement of His: (1) He was born of the virgin Mary. (2) He performed miracles. (3) He lived a sinless life. (4) He taught and lived the highest and noblest standard of life the world has ever known. (5) He died for the sins of the whole world. (6) He was raised from the dead. (7) He is seated at the right hand of God as King of Kings and Lord of lords. (8) He is able to save all who come to God by him. "Unless you believe this," he is telling us, "you will die in your sins, and where I am, there you cannot come." Another declaration of his deity is found in the oft-repeated statement that employed the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet: "I am the Alpha and the Omega" (Revelation 1:8). This refers to his infinity. He is the *first* and the *last*. To put it in our language, boundless, limitless, neither beginning of days nor ending of life. There is no way to measure him for he is God.

4. The apostles. The apostles and other writers of the New Testament affirmed his deity. Paul declared that God was *manifested in the flesh* (I Timothy 3:16). Thomas answered him, "My Lord, and my God" (John 20:28).

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In the opening verses of his record of the gospel, John expressed the *infinity* and the *deity* of Jesus in these words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). Jehovah's Witnesses claim that this passage supports their theory that Jesus is *a god* and not *the God*. Their supposed proof is the last clause of verse 1, "and the Word was God." In the Greek, *God* is not preceded by an article (the); so, these people assume that it should be translated, ". . . and the Word was a God (god)." Dana and Mantey discuss a rule of Greek grammar under the heading of **The Absence of the Article**. "This (the noun without the article) places stress upon the qualitative aspect of the noun rather than its mere identity. An object of thought may be conceived of from two points of view: as to *identity* or *quality*. To convey the first point of view, the Greek uses the article; for the second (point of view), the anarthrous (without the article) is used." Throughout their discussion of this rule, Dana and Mantey continue to emphasize the fact that the article with the noun is for identification. The noun without the article is

used for qualification, nature, essence. A.T. Robertson, in his *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, also says that the qualitative force "is best brought out in anarthrous (without the article) nouns." The Greek scholars are telling us that the noun without the article is expressing character or essence, as in Hebrews 1:1-3. John is affirming (John 1:1) that the essence of the Word is *Deity*. The noun with the article is used for identification. "In the beginning was **the** Word." This identifies him, tells us not only who he is but that he was here in the beginning.

In verse 14, he continues the affirmation, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." In I John 1:2, the apostle calls him, "that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us."

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It was the divinity of Jesus that Paul pointed up when he said to Titus, ". . . looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people zealous for good works" (Titus 2:13, 14). He calls him *the great God* and further identified him as (1) Savior, (2) the One who gave Himself for us, (3) the One who redeemed and purified us, and (4) the One who is our blessed hope and who will appear. You ask, "who is this Great God?" These four things said about him in these verses tell who he is without equivocation. Peter calls him "our God and Savior Jesus Christ" and, as he proceeds, he speaks of *his divine power* and *his divine nature*" (II Peter 1:1-4).

5. God. God himself declares the deity of Christ. "But to the Son he says, Your throne, O God, is forever and ever: A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom" (Hebrews 1:8). In the prayer of Jesus in John 17:5, reference is made to the glory he had with the Father before the world began. Hebrews 1:10-12 says, "You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail."

This is but a fraction of what the Bible adduces regarding the deity of Christ. More than just advancing his deity, it substantiates it. No teaching in the Bible is more fortified and reinforced that the divinity of Jesus. Peter said to the Sanhedrin council, "And we are his witnesses to these things; and so also is the Holy Spirit" (Acts 5:32). What sustains his deity - that he is God - is his resurrection from the dead. "And declared to be the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4; I Peter 1:3, 3:21). Peter, authenticating his divinity, said to that audience on Pentecost: "Therefore,

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(David) being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption" (Acts 2:30, 31). There are three truths in this passage to which I call your attention: (1) The soul of Jesus was in the hadean world for three days, separate from the body. Hades is that state of the unseen between death and the resurrection. Jehovah's Witnesses deny that man has a soul and affirm that when he dies, he becomes non-existent. Will they please explain (1) how the soul of the Lord Jesus Christ was not left in hades; (2) how He is seated on His throne as Lord and King; and (3) how His flesh did not see corruption? What greater enforcement could one have for the divinity of Christ?

DENIAL OF HIS ASCENSION

These false religionists deny his resurrection as well as his deity: "Our Lord's human body was, however, supernaturally removed from the tomb; because, had it remained there, it would have been an insurmountable obstacle to the faith of the disciples. We know nothing about what became of it, except that it did not decay or corrupt.

"Whether it was dissolved into gases, or whether it is still preserved somewhere as the grand memorial of God's love, of Christ's obedience, and of our redemption, no one knows: nor is such knowledge necessary" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. II, pages 125-130). Such wild speculation, totally without any grounds, common sense, or Biblical support, could hardly be found anywhere outside the heathenistic idolatry of paganism. Even the animists of Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world, never fabricated a doctrine more spurious than this. Listen to the inspired writers of the New Testament: "After these things (his resurrection), Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias" (John 21:1).

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Early in his ministry, Jesus told his apostles: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They did not understand. The Jewish temple had taken forty-six years to build and they wondered how he could rebuild it in three days. "But he was speaking of the temple of his body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that he had said this to them; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had said" (John 2:19-21). The trouble with Jehovah's Witnesses is that they "do not believe the scripture or the word which Jesus spoke." Listen to them again on the subject: "It was necessary, not only that the man Jesus should die, but just as necessary that the man Christ Jesus should never live again, should remain dead, should remain our ransom price for all eternity" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. V, page 443). Do you wonder why I said in the outset of this lesson that I found their system to be one of *infidelity*? Without the resurrection, there would be no gospel (good news). "Who [Jesus] was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification" (Romans 4:25).

When Paul wrote to the Corinthian church the death and resurrection was the center of all that he preached. He was determined to know nothing else (I Corinthians 2:2). "I declare to you the gospel . . . by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and He was buried, and that He rose again the third day . . . and that He was seen of Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain in the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that, he was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me . . ." (I Corinthians 15:1-7).

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Besides these many witnesses to undergird the fact of his resurrection, there were the miracles which the Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to perform which served to further support and corroborate what they had seen (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:2-4). Along with the other apostles, Thomas could very well document his resurrection: Jesus said to him, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing" (John 20:27). Can you believe that people who present themselves as Christians would deny this and allege instead that "we know nothing about what became of it (his body). Whether it was dissolved into gases, or whether it is still preserved somewhere . . .?" And, can you believe that people who pretend to believe the Bible would maintain that Jesus died and that he is forever dead? Peter said, "whom God raised him from the dead" (Acts 3:15).

THEY DENY THE DUAL NATURE OF JESUS

From that same source, which they claim is better than the Bible, Jehovah's Witnesses disavow that Jesus was both human and divine: "Neither was Jesus a combination of the two natures, human and spiritual . . . When Jesus was in the flesh He was a perfect human being and since his resurrection He is a perfect spiritual being of the highest or divine order" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. I, page 179).

Although I have already offered Bible proof that disclaims and repudiates this erroneous position, it is good to refresh your memory and offer additional passages in confirmation of his divinity and humanity. In reading the New Testament, I am impressed with the great many times these two expressions, *The Son of man* and *The Son of God*, are used. *The Son of man* expresses his human nature; the *Son of God* tells of his divine nature. No one should be surprised at that, nor should they find it difficult to accept. Jesus repeatedly told his

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disciples that he came from God and would return to God (John 8:14, 42; 14:12). John declared that Jesus was God, has always been God, and that he became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1-14). Paul alleged that Christ Jesus was on equality with God, but that he emptied himself and took the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men (Philippians 2:6, 7). Paul told Timothy that God was manifested in the flesh and later was received up into glory (I Timothy 3:16). The writer of the Hebrew letter tells us that Jesus was tempted in every way just as we are, yet without sin (Hebrew 4:15). That sounds very human, does it not? When Jesus had fasted for a long period of time, the inspired record says that "afterward he was hungry." Does that sound as though he was human? (Matthew 4:2). After traveling some forty-six miles on foot, he came to a village in Samaria and sat on the curb of a well. The Book says that he was weary with his journey (John 4:4-6). The word John used to describe him means that he was *worn out, exhausted*. Literally, it means *to be beat*. That sounds very human. But, on the other hand, he forgave sins (Matthew 9:2). "Who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark 2:7).

The prophets of the Old Testament foretold that he would tabernacle in the flesh (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23). He was begotten of the Holy Spirit: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you: therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Matthew puts it in these words: "She was found with child by the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18). John, in the apostle's shorter letters, made these very crystal-clear statements upon the subject: "Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God . . ." (I John 4:3). Again: "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist" (II John 7). He lived like we live, with all the human feelings, desires, longings, and temptations which are

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common to man, yet without sin. But he was also divine. He came that men might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). "And he is also able to save to the uttermost . . ." (Hebrews 7:25). No one but God can do this.

To be consistent in their issue with the Bible and what it says about the dual nature of Jesus, the Jehovah's Witnesses must contradict his atonement for the sins of the human race. "We shall see subsequently," they say, "when we come particularly to consider the ransom feature of His work, that it was absolutely necessary that He be a man - neither more nor less than a perfect man" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. V, page 95). Jehovah's Witnesses here call in question again the deity of Christ. It is almost as though they had never read the New Testament. Paul speaks of his everlasting power and divinity: "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made namely, even His eternal power and Godhead" (Romans 1:20).

The divine word of God attributes the creation to Christ, the Word (Colossians 1:16-18). The Roman passage quoted above says that these things are clearly seen by the "things

which are made." John declared: "All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:3). I call your attention to the fact that Paul, in Romans 1:20 quoted above, speaks of his *eternal deity*. This false system which we are studying contends that Jesus was a created being, a kind of secondary god, and, when he came to earth, they tell us, he was nothing more than a mere man. It maintains also that after his resurrection, he was not a man but wholly a divine being. So, he relinquished his divinity and became a man and later took up his deity again. How could this be *eternal deity*?

Pursuing this line of thought, the apostle insists that Jesus is fully God: "For it pleased the Father that in him all the fullness should dwell" (Colossians 1:19). In their contradiction of what Paul so unequivocally set forth about Jesus being the fullness of God, Jehovah's Witnesses say that he was a man, neither

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more nor less. But, let us examine this further as Paul proceeds: "For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). There are two words here at which we should take a closer look. One is *fullness, pleroma*, (πλήρομα), which means "full of, abounding in, wholly occupied, complete, perfect" (Harper's *Analytical Greek Lexicon*). He is affirming that Jesus is *perfectly, completely, and wholly God*. They say that he is a man, nothing more. The other word is *deity, theotetos*, (θεότητα) and means "the true God, divinity, deity, godhead, divine majesty" (ibid.). There are so many instances in the life of Jesus which point up his divine majesty. One, near the close of his earthly life, when the multitude of soldiers and officers came out to the garden to arrest him, he asked: "Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matthew 26:53). During the three and a half years of his ministry, he performed many miracles: opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, loosed the tongue of the mute, healed the leper, calmed the storm, and raised the dead. And, yet, these people have the audacity to say: ". . . it was absolutely necessary that He should be a man, neither more nor less than a perfect man."

Despite their objections and feeble efforts to discount his atonement, open you New Testament to these passages: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. . . . Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Romans 5:6-10). "By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). "And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours but also for the whole world" (I John 2:2).

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NOT DIVINE UNTIL AFTER HIS RESURRECTION

Hear what they have to say on this subject: "The human nature had to be consecrated to death before he could even receive the pledge of divine nature. And not until that consecration was actually carried out and He had actually sacrificed the human nature, even unto death, did our Lord become a full partaker of the divine nature" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. I, page 179). Such irreconcilable contradictions can hardly be imagined. They certainly cannot be explained or justified. In one breath they deny the resurrection of Christ; in the next they declare it was not until this event, which they call the sacrificing of his human nature by death, that he became divine. If he were not raised, how can they account for the fact that he existed after this purported event?

"Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty" (I Corinthians 15:12-14). It sounds as though Jehovah's Witnesses borrowed their skepticism and infidelity from some people Paul was addressing in Corinth who refused to believe in the resurrection and were disinclined to accept the fact of Jesus' resurrection. Jehovah's Witnesses put themselves into this inextricable dilemma by asserting that he was a mere man while he lived here; nothing more than a man; by denying the resurrection, and then by asserting that he is now living as a spiritual being. There is no way to disentangle oneself from such an *unholy mess!* The New Testament is replete with proof of his divinity while he lived in the flesh. His resurrection from the dead is the very heart and soul of the gospel message, and his ascension to God to take his throne and reign until the final day is beyond any question. To this we will give more attention later.

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This counterfeit doctrine, not genuine in every detail, promulgates the theory that Christ was no longer the same person after his resurrection. Listen to this statement of theirs: "If our Lord is still the man Christ Jesus . . . then instead of being exalted higher than the angels, and every name that is named in heaven as well as in earth, He is still a man." But what does the Bible have to say about this? The two angels who stood by the apostles when Jesus ascended into heaven, said, in the strongest terms possible: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus who was taken up from you into heaven, will also come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

This is the same Jesus they had known before his death and after his resurrection. It is true that after his ascension, they did not regard him from a fleshly point of view (II Corinthians 5:16). They no longer considered him as a Jew, but that does not mean that they did not believe him to be the same person. It must have been difficult, even for the apostles, not to think of Jesus as a Jew. In fact, it took them a considerable time to learn the lesson. Racial prejudice is a powerful deterrent to the preaching and the acceptance of the gospel. But Jew or Gentile, in the flesh or out, this same Jesus whom they watched go into heaven will come in like manner. Years later, Paul wrote to the Ephesian Christians and proclaimed: "He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the

heavens, that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10). The writer of the Hebrew letter substantiates and presents that same position about who Jesus was and is: "But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, . . ." (Hebrews 10:12). Who sat down at the right hand of God? Answer: the same Jesus who offered himself a sacrifice for sins for all men and for all time!

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A DENIAL OF HIS MEDIATORSHIP

"In our issue of 1906, page 26, we said, 'Our lord Jesus, in His own person, has been the Mediator, between the Father and the household of faith, during the gospel age.' This statement is incorrect. No scripture so declares. It is a part of the smoke of the dark ages, which we are now glad to wipe from our eyes" (*Watch Tower*, September 1909, page 283). This statement embracing this belief is so void of the truth; so contrary to Biblical fact, it is hardly worth our time to give any attention to it. How they fabricate such a monstrous falsehood and expect God fearing and Bible respecting people to *swallow* it is not conceivable. The plea of ignorance would not justify such a misrepresentation, for we live in a land of Bibles and the language of the Bible on the subject is so distinct and unmistakable they are without excuse!

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all . . ." (I Timothy 2:5, 6). "And for this reason He is the mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." (Hebrews 9:15). "And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins . . ." (I John 2:1, 2).

The word *advocate* in this passage is *parakletos* (παράκλητος) and it means "one who stands by another's side and pleads his cause." The word *propitiation* is *hilasmos* (ἵλασμός) and it means "atonement, one who makes expiation." So, one who has satisfied God with the sacrifice he made for the sins of mankind, and who stands by his side to plead his cause, is a mediator. This verse says he is a go-between for the word *mediator* itself, *mesites* (μεσίτης), means "one that acts between two parties; one who interposes to reconcile two adverse parties." He is repeatedly called our *High Priest* and,

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in the Old Testament, the High Priest stood between man and God to make known man's needs to him (Hebrews 2:17; 3:1; 4:14; 5:10; 7:26; 9:11).

THE HOLY SPIRIT ONLY AN ACTIVE FORCE

Hear them as they present their doctrine: "Such language by Jesus (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 5) gives us to understand that the spirit is a power, and not a person. It is God's holy active force of which he is the inexhaustible force" (*This Means Everlasting Life*, page 165). "As for the 'Holy Spirit', the so-called third person in the trinity, we have already seen that it is not a person, but God's active force . . . Water is not a person nor is the Holy Spirit a person" (*The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life*, page 24). "Jesus sending the spirit and baptizing the disciples in it or pouring it out upon them proves it is an impersonal active force subject to Jesus. It is not a Trinitarian person coequal with God and Jesus" (*This Means Everlasting Life*, page 166).

Another quotation from their inspired writings, which you must know are not inspired at all: "And equally consistent is the Scripture teaching respecting the 'Holy Spirit' - that it is not another God, but the spirit, influence or power exercised by one God, our Father" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. V, page 165).

Let Us Examine Carefully What The Bible Says On The Subject:

1. The Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person. As a person, he possesses self-consciousness. "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been give to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (I Corinthians 2:12, 13). The passage says: (1) we have received the Spirit from God;

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(2) the Spirit **taught** the words which we impart; and (3) the Spirit interpreted spiritual truths. If one respects the word of God, he would never conclude from this passage that the Spirit is "an impersonal active force!"

2. The Spirit subsists in individuality and identity. "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:16). The Holy Spirit tells us through God's words what to do to become and be Christians. When we comply with that from our hearts, our witness and the Spirit's testimony is that from our hearts, our witness and the Spirit's testimony is that we are the children of God. If the Spirit can testify and bear witness, does that sound as though he is *an impersonal force* instead of a person?

3. The Spirit is endowed with intuitive (knowing) reason. "For what person knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? So also no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:11). This needs no explanation. In fact, neither does any other passage of scripture on the subject. We simply need to read it with open and sincere hearts and analyze what he is saying to us. We need to listen to what he has said in the Book! Clearly, positively, and intelligibly, Paul is telling us that the Spirit **understands** the thoughts of God. These people, Jehovah's

Witnesses, repeatedly aver that the Spirit "is not a person, but God's active force." But, the Bible teaches that the Spirit "knows the things of God;" and that is personality.

4. He possesses a rational nature. "And one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed (signified) by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world" (Acts 11:28). This passage says that the Spirit enabled Agabus to make this prediction.

5. He possesses free will. "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28).

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The Holy Spirit has personality; the sum total of all those qualities which make a person a person. He is not a glorified *it*, or merely an influence, or an impersonal, vague force. He is not a fluid that can be poured out like water. Of course, figures of speech are used about the Holy Spirit as they are used with God and Christ. Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5). That is a figure of speech. "For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers" (I Peter 3:12). That is a figure of speech, for you must know that God does not have eyes and ears as we do. He is a Spirit. "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh" (Acts 2:17). That, also, is a figure of speech! Jehovah's Witnesses take some figures of speech (word pictures) in the Bible which are used of the Holy Spirit and manufacture from them ridiculous arguments which make no sense at all. By misuse of the scriptures, you can invent about any kind of theory upon which you set your hearts to believe and practice. Jesus once said, "I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7, 9). I wonder what kind of doctrine they could concoct out of that statement? Jesus is called "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). One would not be surprised that these inventors of false doctrine would fabricate a theory that Jesus' body was covered with sheep's wool! Because Joel, the prophet, said, "I will *pour out My Spirit on all flesh*" (Joel 2:28), Jehovah's Witnesses conclude that the Spirit must be liquid or some spiritual influence and could not possibly be a person.

The passages which we have read teach that the Holy Spirit possesses all the attributes of individuality: life, thought, volition, action, character, and influence.

Let me give you a list of some of the things the Holy Spirit does which proves beyond any possibility of doubt that he is a person. These passages establish that truth:

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1. He quickens, makes alive (John 6:63; Romans 8:11; II Corinthians 3:6; I Peter 3:18).

2. He gave the apostles utterance - that is, the ability to "speak out, to speak forth, announce" (Acts 2:4).
3. He signifies, shows (Acts 11:28; Hebrews 9:8).
4. He refuses, forbids. (Acts 16:7).
5. He helps (Romans 8:26).
6. He makes intercession (ibid.).
7. He revealed (Ephesians 3:5; I Corinthians 2:10).
8. He searches (ibid.).
9. He changes men (II Corinthians 3:18).
10. He promises (Galatians 3:14-18; Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:8, 29).
11. He strengthens (Ephesians 3:16).
12. He sanctifies (II Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 15:16).
13. He invites (Revelation 22:17).
14. He seals (Ephesians 1:13; 4:30).
15. He writes (II Corinthians 3:3).
16. He makes overseers, elders (Acts 20:28).
17. He moved men (II Peter 1:21).
18. He dwells in the body of Christians (I Corinthians 6:19).
19. He houses in the temple of God, the church (I Corinthians 3:16)

The Holy Spirit is not simply an active force or influence, as Jehovah's Witnesses contend, for:

1. He has affections (Romans 15:30).
2. He possesses a will (I Corinthians 12:11).
3. He can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30; Isaiah 63:10).
4. He can be resisted (Acts 7:51).
5. He can be lied to (Acts 5:3).
6. He can be blasphemed (Matthew 12:32).

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The work of the Holy Spirit establishes the truth that he is a person:

1. It is called the gospel of the Spirit (I Thessalonians 1:5, 6).
2. The Spirit saves (Titus 3:5).
3. The Spirit sanctifies (II Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 15:16).
4. The Holy Spirit had a part in building the church (Ephesians 2:22).
5. The Spirit revealed the Son of God (Luke 2:26; Romans 1:4).
6. He indwells the Christian (Romans 8:9, 10; John 14:17).
7. We are born of the Spirit (John 3:5, 8).
8. The Spirit is love and manifests love (Romans 15:30; Philippians 2:1).
9. The Spirit is light in that he reveals the light of God's word (Ephesians 5:13).

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES AND CHARACTERISTICS

Let us look a little more particularly at some of the attributes of the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit has a mind. "He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is" (Romans 8:27).

The Holy Spirit speaks. "Now the Spirit expressly **says**" (I Timothy 4:1). One translation has it, "The Spirit **clearly says**." "Then the Spirit **said** to Philip, 'Go near and overtake this chariot.'" (Acts 8:29). "While Peter thought about this vision, the Spirit **said** to him, 'Behold . . .'" (Acts 10:19). Does this sound like some *impersonal farce*? "The Holy Spirit *spoke* rightly through Isaiah the prophet, to our fathers, *saying* . . ." (Acts 28:25-28).

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The Holy Spirit teaches. ". . . by which the Holy Spirit teaches, . . ." (I Corinthians 2:13). "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things I said to you" (John 14:26). He not only taught the apostles everything they needed to know to spread the gospel across the world, but he called to their *remembrance* everything that Jesus had taught while living with them. It is inconceivable what lengths false teachers will go in constructing and defending erroneous doctrine!

The Holy Spirit bears witness. "When the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me." (John 15:26). "We are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has give to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32).

The Holy Spirit guides and leads. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God" (Romans 8:14). The Spirit forbade Paul and his companions one time to preach the gospel in Asia (Acts 16:6-10).

The Holy Spirit gives knowledge and wisdom. "But the manifestations of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge . . ." (I Corinthians 12:7ff).

I have given you a long list of the works of the Spirit - that is, who he is and what he does. There is no possible way to refute them. One wonders why anyone would want to deny what is so explicit and unambiguous. It is clear that it has only one possible meaning. God does not say things that may have two or three or a dozen different meanings! He sets forth clearly what he wants us to know and accept.

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The *Watch Tower* and *Tract Society* make fun of the idea that the Holy Spirit could dwell in the Christian as a person. Listen to their disparagement: "They all became filled with the holy spirit (they refuse to capitalize these words and thus deny that he is a person, G.V.C.) . . . were they filled with a person? No, but they were filled with God's active force" (*The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life*, page 24). These people do not teach nor accept what the Holy Spirit does and accomplishes in our lives and in the church. There must be grave doubts in the minds of the readers about the honesty of people who would disregard this long list of what the Holy Spirit has done and what he does in the lives of Christians. The evidence that we have given from the word of God is overwhelming. There is no way to deny or counter it.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS DEITY

He possesses the attributes of divinity: (1) He is eternal. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!" (Hebrews 9:14). (2) He is omniscient - that is, all-wise, all-knowing. "But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God . . . Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God" (I Corinthians 2:10, 11). (3) He is omnipotent - that is, all-powerful. The prophet spoke of being "full of by the Spirit of the Lord" (Micah 3:8). "You send forth Your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth" (Psalm 104:30). (4) He is omnipresent - that is, he is everywhere present. "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there. . . . If I take the wings of the morning, And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, Even there Your hand shall lead me, And Your right hand shall hold me" (Psalm 139:7-9).

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A further examination of the New Testament scriptures reveals that the Holy Spirit is called God. "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and have kept back part of the price of the land for yourself? . . . You have not lied to men but to God' (Acts 5:3, 4). So, in lying to the Holy Spirit, Ananias and Sapphira lied to God!

The Holy Spirit begat Jesus, and he is called the Son of God. "She was found with child of the Holy Spirit . . . for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18-20). "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

The Holy Spirit is seen as one in the Godhead. Jesus instructed the apostles that as they went to all nations, they should disciple them, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). And Paul spoke of the unity, the oneness of the three: *one God, one Lord, and one Spirit*. (Ephesians 4:4-6). In further

affirming his deity, Paul asserts, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (II Corinthians 3:17).

Note the cooperation of the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name . . ." (John 14:26). In order to properly, accurately, and permanently reveal God's will to mankind, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, the *paraclete* (παράκλητος): "one called to another's side; one who pleads another's cause before a judge; a counsel for defense, an advocate; an advisor, a counselor, a helper." All three are named in this verse, as they are often in the New Testament (John 16:13-15; 14:16-18). Jesus calls the Holy Spirit *the paraclete*. He is one who stands by one's side and pleads his cause to another. Does this sound like the Holy

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Spirit is just an *active force* or some kind of an *influence*? No sensible or honest person would draw any such conclusion!

There are wonderful promises recorded in the New Testament that all three, Father, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, make to Christians: "But if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live. Those who are led by the Spirit are the sons of God . . . but you received the Spirit of adoption (or spirit who makes you sons). And by him we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs - heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed, we share in his suffering in order that we may also share in his glory" (Romans 8:13-17).

Paul invokes the blessings of all three: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (II Corinthians 13:14).

Peter points out that the salvation of man was provided by all three: "Who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood" (I Peter 1:2).

All of these scriptures are powerful and effective in establishing who the Holy Spirit is and what he does. Even confronted by these passages, as surely they must have been in reading the New Testament, the writings of Jehovah's Witnesses on the subject of the Holy Spirit continue to portray him as "God's active force" and spell his name with small letters (*New Heavens And A New Earth*, page 165). This is not surprising, however, for they, in the same paragraph, pervert and distort the work of the Holy Spirit. The author of the above mentioned work, whoever he is, in writing of entrance into God's kingdom, said: ". . .that of being born again, born from above, born from water (symbolic of Biblical truth) and spirit" (ibid.). Who told this gentleman that

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Jesus meant *truth* when he said *water* in John 3:5? How does one arrive at such conclusions when there is nothing in the context to indicate that *water* means *truth*. It seems a weak and unwarranted interpretation of God's word and a false construction that leads to a mutilation of the language of Jesus.

DENIAL OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE KINGDOM

I have before me a copy of *Volume I, Studies In The Scriptures, The Divine Plan Of The Ages*, written by Charles Taze Russell, copyright 1886, in which he says on page 249: "Nor was the kingdom of God set up at the first advent of Christ (Luke 19:12). Then and since then God has been selecting from the world those who shall be accounted worthy to reign with Christ as joint-heirs of that throne. Not until his second advent will Christ take the kingdom, the power and the glory and reign Lord of all." In this same *Studies In The Scriptures* look at two more quotations: "To whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom in an age to follow this" (the gospel age) (Vol. I, page 72). That kingdom, they tell us, is not to be established until the Millennium: "In the end of this age, and the dawn of its successor, the Millennial age, Satan is to be bound and his power overthrown, preparatory to the establishment of Christ's kingdom" (Vol. I, page 73).

Russell produced a number of drawings to illustrate the world that was, the present evil world, and the world to come, which he represents as the Millennial period and the establishment of the kingdom of Christ.

Such misconstruction and garbled use of the word of God is inexcusable. You see, these people, along with other Premillennialists, profess to get their scripture proof of the Millennium from Revelation, chapter 20:4: "I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded

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because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast . . . they came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (New International Version). I would like for you to observe three important differences between what the passage says and what Jehovah's Witnesses say:

1. The tense of the verbs: "Had been given authority." That is past tense. So also are these events: "had been beheaded;" "they had not worshipped the beast;" "they came to life and reigned." The theory, which is not even akin to this passage, says "they **shall** be given authority, and they **shall** reign," "they shall sit upon them." There is a vast difference between **shall reign** and **they reigned**.

2. It was "souls" John saw, not bodies. You would think that Jehovah's Witnesses would repudiate this verse in its entirety because they deny the existence of the *soul* apart from the body. They allege, without any proof, that man is a *soul* and does not possess a *soul*. At death, they tell us, he becomes extinct; i.e., is no longer in existence. The wicked

are forever dead; a non-entity. The righteous go through a re-creation rather than a resurrection. But the point of this passage is that John saw *souls*; yet, the theory asseverates that, in the grand Millennial period, it will be the *bodies* that participate in the kingdom of God on earth.

3. They have the wrong people reigning. The pronouns "they" and "them" are used throughout the verse. But, the theory says "we." I am sure you have no difficulty seeing that there is an enormous difference between they and we. Sometimes, as an example, I speak of the immensely wealthy people in my country, but I must always use the pronoun they! I cannot say we, when I have reference to economic circumstances, for I am not among the rich!

4. Not one word is said in this verse about "reigning on the earth." And, yet, their theory states positively and with great confidence that all of this is going to take place on a refurbished and renovated earth.

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5. These were a particular people, not Christians in general. These people who lived and reigned with Christ were those who had been "beheaded because of the testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God." They were martyrs, people tortured and killed because of their beliefs. While the theory varies widely from denomination to denomination, none of them comports with this picture drawn in Revelation 20:4 by the apostle John.

6. This language is filled with symbolism. John begins the letter with these words: "And he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John" (Revelation 1:1). The word the apostle used here is *semaino* (σημαίνω) and the definition of it is "to indicate by a sign, to signal, to set forth by sign." There is no basis in this symbolism for a one thousand year reign of the saints (other sheep, as they call them, G.V.C.) on earth, either before or after the second coming of Christ. It is pure fantasy to force upon this apocalyptic language a literal interpretation. It has been inexplicable to me that these people do not take literally the *frogs* which came out of the mouth of the dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, not do they take literally the beast and the ten horns and the bottomless pit (Revelation 20:3; 17:16; 20:2), but the thousand years which is mentioned in the same verse has to be a literal period of time around which they have invented a complex doctrine of an imagined future reign of Christ on the earth. I repeat: There is not one thing taught in Revelation 20:4 that these people claim it teaches! You may be sure it is purely contrived; trumped-up out of the inexhaustible fountain of the human imagination!

DOES THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST EXIST NOW?

The word kingdom, as it has to do with the kingdom of Christ in the New Testament, refers to the type of government the Lord installed and maintains over his people, the church. In

this context, the definition of it is "royal power, kingship, dominion, rule; the reign of the Messiah" (Thayer). Mr. Thayer further says: "Jesus employed the phrase *kingdom of God* to indicate that perfect order of things he was about to establish, in which all of those of every nation who should believe in him were to be gathered together into one society dedicated and intimately united to God, and made partakers of eternal salvation."

There are four essential features of a kingdom. There must be (1) a king, (2) a territory over which to rule, (3) citizens, and (4) laws by which those citizens are governed. All these components are found in the New Testament and are now applicable - that is, they belong to this Christian dispensation in which we live and are relevant to us.

1. There must be a king.

Christ is the king and he is now reigning. His rule is not some future, nebulous kingdom over which he will reign for a thousand years upon the earth. There are all sorts of hazy and far fetched theories about Christ coming back to the earth to call all Jews to Palestine, convert them to himself, set up the old kingdom of David and Solomon, drive out his enemies, destroy world governments, and, then rule over the earth for a period of one thousand years.

The New Testament teaches that Christ is now King and that he has all authority. Read carefully these passages which point up the Kingship of Jesus in this present age:

"Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). Look at these succinct truths: (1) Now is the age of *regeneration*. The Christian age in which we live, and have lived, since Pentecost, is the age when men are regenerated - that is, a time when men

are born again. (2) During this time when men are born again, Jesus is seated on the throne of his glory. (3) The twelve apostles are seated on twelve thrones reigning over Israel. We know that there are no twelve tribes of fleshly Israel. The term has application to God's people, to Christians in this dispensation.

Let us examine in the New Testament scriptures the term *regeneration* or *born again*. It comes from the Greek word *paliggenesia* (παλιγγενεσία), and it simply means new birth or regeneration. Jesus told Nicodemus, "unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). Many years later, Peter makes this statement about the new birth: "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth . . . having been born again, not of corruptible seed incorruptible through the word of God which lives and abides forever" (I Peter 1:22-23). Now, let us return to the passage in

Matthew 19:28. Jesus forcefully states here that during the time, the period, the age, in which men are born again, the Son of man will be seated on the throne of his glory. There are two things which are very decisive in this statement: (1) if Jesus is not now reigning as King, he has not been glorified and (2) if Jesus is not now reigning as King, men are not born again! That is tantamount to saying, "If Jesus Christ is not now King, men cannot become Christians.

Examine with me some other passages which affirm that Jesus is now King and that he has been since he ascended to heaven to take the throne:

"Therefore, being a prophet (David), and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, . . ." (Acts 2:30-33).

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This passage clearly sets forth three truths: (1) God promised David that he would raise up one of his descendants to sit on his throne, (2) he had reference to the resurrection of Christ, and (3) he fulfilled his promise, raised up Christ, seated him at God's right hand, and he is now both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).

"Which he will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and the Lord of lords" (I Timothy 6:15). Premillennialists ignore or deny these plain scriptures, but you will be able to see that Paul here declares that Jesus is now King of kings!

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians about the resurrection, he told them: "For he (Christ) must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death" (I Corinthians 15:25, 26). Later, in this chapter, he shows that death will be destroyed by the *resurrection*. So, in fact, Paul is saying: (1) Christ is now reigning and (2) He will continue to reign until he comes again and the dead are raised. The original language in which Paul wrote makes this truth even more apparent: "It behooves him to be king until he puts all his enemies under his feet." The word which should be translated *to be king or to reign as King is basileuein* (βασιλεύειν).

As **king** over his kingdom, the church, he has all authority. "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28:18). "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church" (Ephesians 1:22).

There are three branches of government:

(1) **Legislative.** That means the power and the right to make or enact laws. Only Christ has that authority. No man or group of men has the right, the prerogative, to legislate what men are to believe and practice in religion.

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(2) **Executive.** This is the authority, the power, to put those laws which have been enacted into practice. Only Jesus has that power. There are those throughout the various bodies of Christendom which assume the right to enforce the laws of Christ, but it is purely presumed.

(3) **Judicial.** This is the power or the right to *judge* or *interpret* those laws which have been enacted. Again, men in various denominations claim the prerogative of interpretation. There are those who assert that the average person cannot understand the Bible. It must be interpreted for him by the *church* or some group of earth's wise men.

Jehovah's Witnesses are among these people who claim the exclusive right to interpretation of the Bible. Thereby, they deny the absolute total authority of our Lord Jesus Christ as King over his kingdom. Men need to learn that **the church in government is a kingdom, not a democracy**. It is not a representative form of government. Men cannot meet in councils and synods and decide what the followers of Christ shall believe and practice.

One is able to see from their writings in their official publication how contradictory they (Jehovah's Witnesses) are of themselves and of the word of God. Once they taught, "Beware of organization. It is wholly unnecessary" (*The Watchtower*, September 15, 1895, page 216). "It is plain that the forming of a visible organization of such gathered out ones would be out of harmony with the spirit of the divine plan" (*The Watchtower*, December 1, 1894). The truth I am pointing up here is more than their repeated contradictions of themselves and the Bible; it is the fact that they do not believe that Jesus Christ is King with all authority - **legislative, executive, and judicial**. It is further a denial of the all-*sufficiency* of the word of God. This organization, which they disavowed at the first, constitutes the mouthpiece of the Lord for latter-day revelations!

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2. The second element necessary to comprise a kingdom is a territory.

One must have a dominion, an estate, or land over which to rule as king. Inasmuch as the kingdom of God is not an earthly, physical kingdom, it would be better to say that his dominion is a sphere of power, influence, and service. This passage tells of the geography of that territory: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world . . ." (Matthew 24:14). The *marching orders* Jesus gave the apostles were: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Those early Christians well understood the expansive nature of the Lord's message and kingdom: "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). When Paul was

sent out, the Lord said to him, "I have set you as a light to the Gentiles (nations), That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth" (Acts 13:47). These passages tell us the size of his territory.

3. There must be citizens in order to have a kingdom.

Christians are citizens in that kingdom. They sustain a spiritual relationship to Christ as subjects. He rules as King in their hearts and lives. They "are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19). Christians are those who were born into his kingdom, and are citizens, therefore, by virtue of spiritual birth (John 3:5). Their ultimate citizenship, of course, is in heaven, toward which they look for a savior (Philippians 3:20). When we subject ourselves to the rule of the King, we thereby become his subjects. Once we were aliens, living in a foreign land, but now we have "been brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13). So, we are assured of the rights, privileges, and blessings of citizens in the kingdom of Christ. There are also obligations that devolve upon us and may we never be unmindful of these!

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4. There must be laws to govern a kingdom.

If there were no laws by which citizens were governed, it would become a state of anarchy. People who have no laws to govern them or refuse to respect and submit to the laws of a country are destined for destruction. Chaos and violence follow in the wake of lawlessness. But the kingdom of Christ has rules by which its citizens are governed and guided in every facet of their lives. That system is called the *perfect law of liberty* (James 1:25). John calls the rules *the teaching of Christ* (II John 9). "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God." Early in his ministry, Jesus laid down this principal: "Whoever hears these sayings of mine and does them . . ." (Matthew 7:24). "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11).

From these passages, we have well established that: (1) Christ is now King and has been since he took his seat at the right hand of God; (2) the church is his territory and it extends to the whole world; (3) Christians are citizens in that kingdom; and (4) the law by which these citizens are governed is the New Testament. Further, it has been shown that the church in government is a kingdom and not a democracy! Jehovah's Witnesses brand of premillennialism, or any other brand, has been thoroughly refuted.

MAN-MADE RULES

In the September 15, 1922, issue of *The Watchtower*, on page 279, is this statement: "God gave Brother Russell to the church to be the mouthpiece for him; and those who claim to have learned the truth apart from Brother Russell and his writings have been manifested by the Lord as deceivers, ready to lead the flock of God in their way."

In the April issue of *The Watchtower*, 1904, page 126, Russell states that the Lord would ". . . use one member of his church

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as the channel." Anyone who is well acquainted with the history of this religious movement knows that Russell was in total control of it, by himself. He made himself president of the New York corporation for life. The other officers were elected each year to fill their positions. What seems incredible to everyone who has read their literature is that the organization now disavows that Russell was ever that *faithful and wise servant!* They even say that he never did claim to be such. You will not be inclined, I am sure, to accept such bold-faced contradictions!

Honest, Bible reading Christians wonder if one could not learn the truth apart from Mr. Russell and his writings. What on earth did those people do about the truth and becoming Christians all through those first 1900 years of this Christian age? Does it make any sense to you that people, for almost 2000 years, could not become children of God because "those who claim to have learned the truth apart from Brother Russell and his writings have been manifested by the Lord as deceivers?"

The ruling body of Jehovah's Witnesses now *affirms* that God's *prophet*, through which God speaks to his people, is a small body of people. Listen to what they say: "So does Jehovah have a prophet to help them, warn them of dangers and to declare things to come? The question can be answered in the affirmative" (*The Watchtower*, April 1972, page 197). In that same publication, this is their answer to the question raised: "He has a *prophet* to warn them. The *prophet* was not one man, but was a body of men and women. It was the small group of footstep followers of Jesus Christ known at the time as *International Bible Students*. Today they are known as Jehovah's Christian Witnesses." They claim that this group speaks as a *prophet* in his name, "as was done toward Ezekiel back there in 613 B.C.E."

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WHAT ABOUT THEIR PROPHECIES?

Here are a few paragraphs that will give you a sampling of their prophecies:

"Be not surprised, then, when in subsequent chapters we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that the *battle of the great day of God Almighty* (Revelation 16:14), which will end in 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership, is already commenced. The gathering of the armies is plainly visible from the standpoint of God's word" (*The Time Is At Hand*, 1888-1911 edition - page 101). A prediction like this does not need to be refuted. The passing of time has completely devastated it!

By 1914 God's battle against earthly governments was to be brought to an end with the "complete overthrow of earth's present rulership." How do Jehovah's Witnesses explain the communist government of the Soviet Union and all of her satellites and subordinate nations which either depend upon her or are sympathetic with her cause? In consideration of such obvious and disastrous contradictions, it is a marvel that anyone would be converted to such a system or would follow such false leaders!

Observe some more of their false and foolish predictions: "Our Lord, the appointed King, is now present, since October 1874, A.D., according to the testimony of the prophets, to those who have ears to hear it: and the formal inauguration of his kingly office dates from April 1878, A.D., and the first work of the Kingdom, as shown by our Lord, in his parables and prophecy (the gathering of his elect), is now in progress. 'The dead in Christ shall rise first,' explained the Lord through the Apostles; and the resurrection of the Church shall be in a moment" (*The Battle of Armageddon, Studies in the Scriptures Series IV*, 1897, page 62).

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"Surely there is not the slightest room for doubt in the mind of a truly consecrated child of God that the Lord Jesus Christ is present and has been since 1974 . . ." (*The Watchtower*, January 1, 1924, page 5).

"The date of the close of that battle is definitely marked in Scripture as October, 1914. It is already in progress, its beginning date from October 1874" (*The Watchtower*, January 15, 1892, page 22).

"But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble" (*The Watchtower*, July 15, 1894, page 226).

"The present great war in Europe (reference to World War I) is the beginning of Armageddon of the Scriptures" (*Pastor Russell's Sermons*, 1917).

Therefore we may confidently expect that 1925 will remark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the faithful prophets of old, particularly those named by the Apostle in Hebrews chapter eleven, to the condition of human perfection" (*Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, 1920, page 90).

May I interrupt some of these prophecies to ask a few questions and make a few comments! Jehovah's Witnesses, who are *inspired* like Ezekiel (?), keep telling us that all these predictions and dates *are evident in the Scriptures*. But, where in the scriptures is any of this found? They speak so positively and certainly, they tell us, because the Bible reveals it. **Where?** In this last prophecy which I have quoted from their so-called inspired writings, they tell us that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other patriarchs of that day would come back in 1925 "to the condition of human perfection." Please note, it was not said that they would be some kind of *spirit*

beings, invisible to human eyes, but men of *human perfection*. Do you honestly feel that such utter foolishness needs a reply?

Let us read more of their prophecies from their *theocratic arrangement* in which God supposedly speaks directly through them: "The year 1925 is here. With great expectations Christians have looked forward to this year. Many have confidently expected that all members of the body of Christ will be changed to heavenly glory during this year. This may be accomplished. It may not be" (The Watchtower, January 1, 1925, page 3). Their *foretelling of events* had failed so many times, they were a little more cautious here. I can't say I blame them!

Although none of their prophecies has ever come to pass, this does not deter them in continuing to make them

"Thus the end forever of Nazi-Facist-Hierachy rule will come, and that will mark the end forever of demon rule" (*The Watchtower*, December 15, 1941, page 377). If the devil no longer rules in men's hearts and in the nations of the world, as Jehovah's Witnesses predicted in 1941, how do you account for the millions who have been slain by Communist Russia and the tens of millions by those who have embraced the Communist philosophy in Cuba, Central America, and many countries of Africa like Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Ethiopia, Sudan, Libya, et al. What about Afghanistan? Poland? China? Uganda? And, the list goes on!

And, yet, these *inspired interpreters* (?) of the word of God told us that all of that ceased at the defeat of the Nazis! In fact, they told us much earlier that in 1914 earth's rulership would end and there would be no more evil sovereign governments to control affairs on the earth. All of their forecasting is *intellectual garbage*, if it could be called *intellectual*! Take note of what Judge Rutherford said in 1940:

"I stated that the Nazis and Fascists were bent upon destroying the British Empire, and that would be accomplished" (*Judge Rutherford Uncovers Fifth Column*, 1940, page 15). Could anybody be so naive or uninformed as to believe that Hitler destroyed (Jehovah's Witnesses believe this word means *annihilated*) the British Empire, which includes her many commonwealth nations?

In their *prevision* (?), Jehovah's Witnesses could see such men as Abraham coming back to earth and reigning as princes in this world:

"These men will be visible representatives of The Theocracy, which is the government created and built by the Almighty God as His capital organization and which shall rule the world. Further proof that these *princes* will **shortly take office** upon the earth as

perfect men is found in the prophecy of Daniel . . . we are now living at the *end of days*, and we may expect to see Daniel and the other mentioned princes any day now!" (*Consolation*, May 27, 1942, page 13).

THE YEAR 1975

1975 was another year to which Jehovah's Witnesses pointed as the end of world affairs.

"In view of the short time left, a decision to pursue a career in the system of things is not only unwise but extremely dangerous" (*Kingdom Ministry*, June 1969, page 3).

"Many young brothers and sisters were offered scholarships or employment that promised fine pay. However, they turned them down and put spiritual interests first" (*ibid.*).

"Reports are heard of brothers selling their homes and property and planning to finish out the rest of their days in this old system in the pioneer service. Certainly this is a fine way to spend the short time remaining before the wicked world's end - 1 John 2:17" (*Kingdom Ministry*, May 1974, page

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3). One wonders how these young people who refused jobs more than a decade ago have fared in this intervening period, And, one wonders also where those people who sold their homes have lived these many years! But, more than all of that, some of us wonder how these false prophets have attempted to explain these *unfulfilled prophecies* to their followers! But, Satan's servants have a great amount of zeal in the face of all the failed predictions!

They will be making other predictions, I am sure. Contradictions, proved false prophecies, seem never to discourage them in their fruitless efforts. One good thing you can say about these people is they never seem to flag in those exertions.

In the early days of this sect, Russell was elected by a small Bible class group as pastor of their movement. That was in 1876. In 1879, he founded what is known as *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom. The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society* was founded in 1896. This has become the *inspired voice (?)* of this movement, however, this name was not adopted until 1939. The name *Jehovah's Witnesses* was not used until 1931. This is about 1900 years too late to be the Lord's church! The *Watchtower Magazine* taught repeatedly and clearly, in that early day of the denomination, that Jehovah God was represented to his people through a single individual, who was variously called *that wise and faithful servant, prophet, the channel or instrument, mouthpiece*, etc.

This was their teaching and there was little doubt who that individual was: Charles Taze Russell. Listen to some of their earlier statements in their *inspired* (?) magazine, *The Watchtower*:

"There is no one in present truth today who can honestly say that he has received a knowledge of the divine plan from any source other than by the ministry of Brother Russell, either directly or indirectly" (*The Watchtower*, May 1, 1922, page 132).

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"The evidence is overwhelming concerning the Lord's second presence, the time of the harvest, and that the office of *that servant* has been filled by Brother Russell. This is not man-worship by any means" (ibid.).

Still another quotation: "Thousands of readers of Pastor Russell's writings believed that he fulfilled the office of *that faithful and wise servant*, and that his great work was giving to the Household of Faith meat in due season. His modesty and humility precluded him from *openly* claiming this title, but he *admitted* as much in private conversation" (*The Watchtower*, December 1, 1916, page 357).

"Brother Russell was the Lord's servant. Then to repudiate him and his word is equivalent to a repudiation of the Lord, upon the principle heretofore announced" (*The Watchtower*, May 1, 1922, page 132).

There is little doubt but that Pastor Russell believed that he was *that faithful and wise servant*. In *The Watchtower*, April 15, 1903, Russell said: "There would be no violation of principle, however, in supposing that the Lord at the time indicated would specially use one member of his church as a channel or instrument through which he would send appropriate messages, spiritual nourishment appropriate at that time." It was stated in *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1922, that "Satan has attempted by many attacks upon this fact to break it down; to cause the Lord's people to believe: that Brother Russell was not the channel by which the Lord would lead his people . . ."

After the death of Russell, Judge Rutherford became *that prophet, that wise and faithful servant*. In a court case in 1943, Fred Eranz, the president of the society, explained that the five-member editorial committee was disbanded in 1931. When questioned on the stand (where he was sworn to tell the truth), Judge Rutherford replied: "Who one earth, if anybody, had charge of what went in or did not go in the magazine?"

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WHAT THEY TEACH ABOUT SIN

Here is their teaching about sin: "Each one does not die for his own sin . . . The day in which every man (who dies) shall die for his own sin, only, is the Millennial or Restitution day" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. I, page 109). This is the old false

teaching of *inherited sin*. It is called *total, hereditary depravity*. Adam sinned, so, they tell us, every baby born into this world enters it contaminated with his sin. It is not only an erroneous doctrine, but it is repulsive and detestable. One denomination teaches that there are "babies in hell not a span long." Jehovah's Witnesses would not say this because they do not believe in hell! But sin cannot be inherited from Adam or anyone else.

Sin is an **act**, either of the mind or body, or both; and there is not the slightest possibility that one could inherit an act! My earthly father was a farmer. That is what he did for a living to provide for his family. I did not inherit that vocation. The apostle John tells us that "sin is lawlessness" (I John 3:4). The term *transgression, anomian* (ἀνομίαν) is used and means *lawlessness*. "To live without respect or regard for law, to refuse to subordinate oneself to law, to pay no heed to rule." This is the definition of the term John uses. The statement necessarily infers (1) individual responsibility. God is not going to charge you with something for which you are not responsible. Furthermore, one who has not reached the age of accountability is in no wise answerable for his acts. God does not make a baby liable for sin that Adam committed. (2) It is the infraction of law. One who is guilty of sin walks across the law of God. An infant cannot do that. Nor am I *guilty* because you are lawless, or because Adam was lawless. I may suffer the consequences of your sin, but not the guilt. You may become angry with me and, out of an evil heart, set fire to my house. I thereby suffer the consequences of your wickedness; I am forced to reap the

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product, the fruit of your criminal act, but that does not make me guilty of burning the house to the ground!

Jesus addressed the subject in Matthew 18:2, 3: "Jesus called a little child to him, set him in the midst of them, and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.' If little children inherit Adam's sin, they are sinners. If, then, we must become "like little children" to enter the kingdom of heaven, it follows that we must become sinners to enter the kingdom of heaven!

It is contended that Psalm 51:5 teaches congenital depravity, that is, existing as such from birth or resulting from one's hereditary environment. "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me."

The Hebrew scholars of the old testament, Keil & Delitsch, have this to say about the language: "Its meaning is merely that his parents were sinful human beings and that this sinful state operated upon his birth and even his conception."

We must be aware that the Bible teaches individual accountability and personal responsibility for our thoughts, words, and actions. That is clearly seen in the context of this passage: "For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight—" (Psalm 51:3,

4). You will certainly observe that it was an acknowledgement of **my transgressions**. He said "**my sin** is always before me." Further, "against You, You only, have **I sinned**."

Paul declares that sin entered the world through one man (Adam), "and death through sin, and thus death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). In the third chapter of this book he said, "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (verse 23). Jeremiah said in the context of the Old Testament, "But every one shall die for his own iniquity" (Jeremiah 31:30).

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WHAT THEY TEACH ABOUT CONVERSION

As I sit here turning through the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses, the differences between their teachings and the Bible almost literally leap out into my face! Such dissimilarity in the two should be noted, you would think, by anyone who has taken the time to examine their literature and the word of God. Some of their doctrines are so absurd that one hesitates to waste the time to give even brief consideration to them. But, it must be remembered that many people have never studied the Bible seriously and that what is foolish and nonsensical when examined and considered in the light of the New Testament, may seem plausible to them. They may not see the disparity and the glaring discrepancies that would otherwise be seen if they were well acquainted with what the inspired men of the Bible have taught and written.

These people tell us in their writings that God is not making any attempt to convert sinners in this, the Christian age, but that conversion begins in the Millennial age. Listen to what they say in *Studies In The Scriptures*: ". . . that the conversion of the world in the present age was not expected of the Church, but the mission has been to preach the gospel in all the world as a witness, and to prepare herself under divine direction for her great future work . . . he (God) has not yet even attempted the conversion of the world" (Vol. I, page 95). Another statement: "When the called-out company (called to be sons of God, heirs to God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord - who have made their calling and election sure) is complete, the plan of God for the world's salvation will be only beginning" (Vol. I, page 98).

Not one word of this is true. The undertaking of our Lord from the very beginning was to save sinners.

"For the Son of man has come to save that which was lost" (Matthew 18:11). Luke records it: "For the Son of

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man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He explained that he came into the world, not to judge it, but to save it (John 12:47).

Paul, speaking of his previous lost and undone condition, said: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (I Timothy 1:15).

John records this beautiful and stirring language of Jesus: "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Near the end of his earthly ministry, he sent the twelve apostles out to preach the gospel to the whole world. The reason for this was to give men an opportunity to hear, believe, and obey that good news that they might be saved (Mark 16:15, 16). When Paul was preaching to the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia, he told them: "To you the word of this salvation has been sent" (Acts 13:26). The writer of the Hebrew letter made this strong statement of assurance: "Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). In his second letter to the Corinthians, the apostle urged them not to receive the grace of God in vain: "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2).

When honest, inquiring students of the Bible read these passages and a hundred others on the same subject, I am confident they do not get the impression that *conversion* is a work of the church in an *imaginary age to come* called the **Millennium!** In his sermon on Mar's Hill in the city of Athens, Paul told those people from various parts of the world that God "now commands all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30, 31). Does this sound like *conversion*? "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him" (Hebrews 2:3).

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Peter's sermon on Pentecost is recorded in Acts, chapter 2; In that sermon, he told the multitudes who were hearing him, "Repent and each of you be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38). Within the next few days, in Solomon's porch of the temple, he told the crowds again, "Repent, then, and be converted (turn to God), so that your sins may be wiped out" (Acts 3:19).

This is the only age in which people will be given the opportunity to be converted. Death is that point beyond which there is no repentance. There is no second chance in another world. Jesus "is coming in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 1:7-9). When Jesus comes, it will be a time of judgment, of separation and sentencing. It is then that he will sit on the throne of his glory (Matthew 25:31). This is a **judgment** scene, not a **coronation** or **crowning** celebration. Jesus, as the Judge, will separate the people from one another as the shepard separates the sheep from the goats (verse 32). "Then they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life" (verse 46).

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES TEACH A SECOND CHANCE IN THE NEXT WORLD

The passages which we have just read clash with their doctrine. More than that, they contradict and refute it! I have their book, which is supposed to be better than the Bible, open before me. In discussing the subject of a **second chance**, here is what they say: ". . . of which the ransom for all was the basis, will be fully carried out in God's due time, and will bring to faithful believers the blessing of release from the Adamic condemnation and an opportunity to return to the rights and liberties of the sons of God, as enjoyed before sin

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and the curse . . . The ransom for all given by the man Christ Jesus does not give or guarantee everlasting life or blessing to any man; but it does guarantee every man another opportunity or trial for everlasting life." He goes on to say, "He is granted another, and an individual trial . . ." Such language is **blasphemy**. It reviles the sacrifice of Jesus and limits the ransom price paid for our redemption. Jehovah's Witnesses say that the "ransom for all" (I Timothy 2:6) does not provide any blessing for man in this time, but guarantees him a second chance. No profanity would exceed that!

I am now on page 143: "The second trial (or chance) will be more favorable than the first, because of the experience gained under the results of the first trial." Read more of this calumny against Christ and his scheme of human redemption: "If anyone chooses to call this a second chance, let him do so: it must certainly be Adam's second chance, and in a sense at least it is the same for all the redeemed race . . . Call it what we please, the facts are the same; viz., All were sentenced to death because of Adam's disobedience, and all will enjoy (in the Millennial age) a full opportunity to gain everlasting life under the favorable terms of the New Covenant" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. I, pages 130, 131).

It is in this world, in this life only, that we have opportunity to hear and accept the truth which was designed to make men free. Paul told the Thessalonians that some "perish because they did not receive the love the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thessalonians 2:10-12). The divine record states that "it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27). The theory says: "Man will have another chance after death, in the Millennial age;" but the scriptures say that "he will face God in the judgment."

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WHAT THEY TEACH ABOUT DEATH

1. Russellism teaches that death is a destruction.

They say: "The penalty is death, not dying; and death is the absence of life, destruction" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. V, page 465). There is not a word of truth in this theory. It is blatant, unverified supposition. When the rich man (sometimes called Dives) of Luke 16 died, his soul went to Hades. Though his body returned to the dust, he was still alive beyond the point of physical death. (1) He was conscious. (2) He was tormented. (3) He saw and recognized Lazarus. (4) He remembered that he had five brothers back on earth.

John, the apostle, saw *souls*, not bodies, under the altar and upon thrones (Revelation 6:9; 20:4). They were people who had been martyred for the cause of Christ. There is no way for us to know how long their bodies had been in the grave, but that is of no import. The fact is, they existed apart from their bodies and were very much alive. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been dead for approximately two millennia when Jesus spoke of them in Matthew 22:31, 32: "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

This was not some speculation or conjecture. Jesus was affirming that these patriarchs of old were still living. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus conversed with Moses and Elijah (Matthew 17:3); but these men had been dead for centuries. So, death is not the absence of life. It is not destruction as Jehovah's Witnesses claim.

2. Russellism teaches that death is annihilation.

This is what they have to say in their so-called inspired writings: "It should be remembered, however, that it is not the pain and suffering of dying, but death - the extinction of

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life - in which the dying culminates, that is the penalty of sin" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. I, page 154). There are some fourteen cognate (related, family) words for *destroy* and *destruction* in the New Testament. Through the years I have examined all of them, but none of them means *annihilation*! One of the very common words for destroy that is used is *apollumi* (ἀπόλλομι). It is the word which is used in Matthew 10:28: "do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to **destroy** both soul and body in hell."

Let us examine two or three passages in which the word *apollumi* is used and this should be sufficient to refute the false doctrine that death is *annihilation*.

"But go rather to the lost (*apollumi*) sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 10:6). If this word means *annihilation* (absence of life, extinction of life), pray tell me how Jesus could have sent the twelve out to preach to those who did not even exist?

"What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost (*apollumi*) until he finds

it?" (Luke 15:4). It is almost absurd to ask the question, "How could this shepherd go after a sheep which did not exist; that was *annihilated*?" As we sometimes say, "It is without rhyme or reason," yet we must realize that there are those who do not have access to the study of God's word and they may be misled, therefore, by false religionists. In this same chapter of Luke, a father lost one of his sons. He said, "for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost (*apollumi*) and is found" (Luke 15:24). It would be completely meaningless and nonsensical to say that he was *annihilated*. And yet, like some of the world religions of the East, Jehovah's Witnesses teach that death is a *non-entity* and that the expression *destroyed* means *annihilation*!

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3. Russellism teaches that death is unconsciousness.

Here is what they say: "As natural sleep, if sound, implies total unconsciousness, so with death, the figurative sleep: it is a period of absolute non-existence" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. V, page 329).

Perhaps many of you who read these pages will remember that these people were, in earlier times, called *Soul Sleepers* just because of this teaching. In I Thessalonians 4:13-18, the apostle speaks of death as a sleep. This is figurative speech, called a euphemism. The word *euphemism* means *good sounding*. It sounds better to say *sleep* than to say *death*. Besides being *good sounding*, Jesus and the apostles used many figures of speech to make their lessons more attractive and more meaningful. Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5). This is not literal language. This is a *word picture*. They beautify and intensify the lessons, but none of us thinks that, in every detail, Jesus was a vine.

So, death is like a sleep. You view the body of a deceased friend or relative in his casket, and you immediately make the comparison between death and sleep. You may remark: "He looks as though he is peacefully sleeping." But, for these people to contend that the dead man is unconscious and nonexistent is completely unwarranted in the use of the figure of speech, sleep, as it refers to death. It has been abundantly and conclusively shown already from many passages in both the Old and New Testaments that (1) one is alive after death, (2) is conscious after death, and (3) possesses the faculties of thinking, feeling, remembering, and wishing after death.

THEIR DOCTRINE ABOUT HELL

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that there is no eternal punishment for the wicked. Listen to their *inspired* (?) writings: "The

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theory of eternal punishment is inconsistent with the statement that 'the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all,' and that Christ died for our sins" (*Studies In The*

Scriptures, Vol. I. page 159). Here is another statement on the same page: "It is absurd to suppose that God would perpetuate Adam's existence forever in torment for any kind of sin which he could commit, but especially for the comparatively small sin of eating forbidden fruit."

You likely understand now why I stated in the outset of this dissertation that the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses was a mixture of many doctrines, one of which is *Universalism*. Reading from another publication of theirs, *The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life*, there are these quotations on the subject of *hell*: "The Bible hell is actually mankind's grave" (page 42). Those of you who read your Bible and are acquainted with what it says on this topic will conclude that it is something more than the grave. Jesus said: "And these (wicked) will go away into everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46). The rich man of Luke 16 realized that hell was more than the grave!

In an effort to reinforce and defend their position, they explain the whole matter away by affirming the story of Luke 16 is a parable. "Jesus was giving a parable or an illustration and not speaking of a literal place of torment" they tell us in the same source. This is tantamount to saying that because this is a parable, it is not true. If it is just an illustration, what does it illustrate? If it is a parable, what is the lesson? Does it mean that Jesus didn't intend any lesson to be gained by using the example? An illustration is supposed to make the lesson clear and easily understood. If Jesus is not talking about punishment, about torment, what is he talking about? Was his illustration false? In the first place, I am not sure that it was a parable. He began his story by saying, "There was a **certain** rich man . . ." But, these people ought to know that a parable is a narrative story, either true or fictitious, told to illustrate some moral or spiritual truth.

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They usually have an *answer* or a *dodge* to any passage that contradicts their theories. It may not be a plausible answer, but it takes up space. Hear what they have to say about this story told by Jesus and recorded in Luke the sixteenth chapter: "In this illustration the rich man stood for the class of religious leaders who rejected and later killed Jesus" (*The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life*, page 43). Who said it represented the religious leaders that killed Jesus? In trying to defend a false doctrine, their imagination runs wild! The main thrust of the story is that the rich man had an opportunity every day to help a poor, helpless beggar who lay at his gate. He went in and out of that gate daily, but never offered to relieve the needs of this man or help in the solution of his problem. Cold, hard, insensitive, and indifferent to the suffering of those around him, when he died, the rich man went to hell. They say it is an illustration of the religious leaders of the day, but they don't tell us what it illustrates! Does it illustrate the religious leaders who rejected and crucified Jesus as "lifting up their eyes in hell?"

It is easy to see that the purpose of Jehovah's Witnesses is to distract your attention from what Jesus is saying and divert your thoughts to induce you to accept their statements that hell is not real and that death is annihilation. They continue their empty, meaningless, and specious reasoning in these words: "So when Jesus said persons would be thrown into

Gehenna for their bad deeds, what did he mean? Not that they would be tormented forever. Jesus used that valley *Gehenna* of fire and brimstone as a proper symbol of everlasting destruction" (*The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life*, page 44). Their reasoning, which cannot be legitimately termed reasoning at all, is so ineffective that the casual reader of the Bible, particularly the verses we have used in addressing this subject, will be quick to see how vain and treacherous their argument is.

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Your attention is further called to their disparagement of the Lord and his teaching upon the subject of *everlasting punishment*. Notice how they minimize the importance of anything that does not comport with their dogma.

Russellism asserts that God would not punish anyone for any sin whatever in eternal misery, "but especially for the comparative small offence of eating forbidden fruit." This attitude on their part points up the fact that "'My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' says the Lord" (Isaiah 55:8). Who has the right to call into question the significance of anything God has forbidden? He enjoined on Adam and Eve a strong prohibition not to eat of the forbidden fruit and stated it in this clear and understandable language: "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:16, 27). How serious does this sound to you? Is it of little consequence for someone to deliberately infract the law of God? Can you transgress a plain prohibition which God has uttered to you and still be held guiltless? To down-play and minimize anything God has said is to be treading on exceedingly dangerous ground. You may be sure that it cannot be done with impunity! Human rationalization is no criterion for determining what is right and wrong. Simply because, from the human standpoint, we may not be able to account for God's condemning to eternal punishment one who has been guilty of stealing, lying, or insubordination, does not mean that it is not so. Men are not very disturbed about sin in their lives in our time. Often it does not look very bad to them. So, they sit in judgment as to how God must look at sin.

Not infrequently, someone I have taught the truth on such subjects as the *church* and *baptism* will come to the end of the study and remark: "After all, Mr. Caskey, these are not really very important. There are other things that are much

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more significant than these. Whether we comply with these teachings doesn't really matter that much." Who has the prerogative to sit in judgment of what God has spoken and then conclude: *This is not really all that important?* Whether they recognize it or not, this is defiance of God, and contempt for his word, and such arrogance will not be countenanced. "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire . . ." (Matthew 25:41). "These shall be punished with everlasting destruction . . ." (II Thessalonians 1:9). The Greek word for *destruction* in this passage is *olethros* (ὄλεθρος). Here is how it is used in the New Testament: "for the destruction of the flesh," (I Corinthians 5:5), said of

the eternal ills and troubles by which the lusts of the flesh are subdued and destroyed; ". . . the loss of a life of blessedness after death, future misery" (II Thessalonians 1:9) (Thayer).

TIME SETTING

One of the chief characteristics of Jehovah's Witnesses since their beginning a few years ago has been their penchant of predicting the fulfillment of prophecies and their strong fondness for setting dates for world events.

They maintain that Christ and the apostles have been living on the earth since 1874. Hear what they have to say on the subject: "1874 was the exact date of the beginnings of the times of restitution and hence our Lord's return" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. II, pages 170, 171). Again: "And while we therefore conclude that their resurrection is now an accomplished fact, and hence that they as well as the Lord are present in the earth, the fact that we do not see them is no obstacle to faith when we remember that, like their Lord, they (the apostles) are now spirit beings, and, like him, invisible to men" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. II, page 234). It seems rather strange that they would contend that Jesus and the apostles are now spirit beings on the earth, whereas Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are here with us in a state of "human perfection"!

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Paul refutes this false, wicked system, in one devastating blow: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are still alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we will always be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:14-17).

When Jesus came in 1874 (?), was his appearance with: (1) a loud command, (2) the voice of the archangel, (3) the trumpet call of God, and (4) the resurrection of the dead? We know, of course, that none of these things happened in 1874! Paul told the Corinthians, in I Corinthians 15:24, that when Jesus came, "then comes the end". These things did not occur in 1874, or in 1914, and so you may be sure there is not one word of truth in what these people teach on the subject.

Their doctrine was that all worldly kingdoms would end in 1914 and that the church would then be set up with Christ as the Head, and that he (Christ) would reign for a thousand years, giving people a second chance to be saved.

Here is what they have to say about it: "That the Lord must be present and set up his kingdom, and exercise his great power so as to dash the nations to pieces as a potter's vessel, is then clearly fixed; for it is 'in the days of these kings' - before their overthrow -

i.e., before A.D. 1914 - that the God of heaven will set up His Kingdom" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. II, page 170).

Prophecy is best understood in the light of its fulfillment. The

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year 1914 is history and none of this came to pass. So, what do we need to say? You don't have to make any argument or offer any proof against it. It rebuts and overthrows itself!

Let us observe some more of Jehovah's Witnesses nonsense on this topic of *time setting*: "Remember that the forty years of Jewish harvest ended October, A.D. 69, and was followed by the complete overthrow of that nation; and that likewise the forty years of the Gospel age harvest will end October 1914, and that likewise the overthrow of Christendom, so called, must be expected to immediately follow" (*Studies In The Scriptures*, Vol. II, page 245). Does it not seem incredulous to you that they have missed all their predictions and people still believe them? Their followers do not seem to be disturbed that their prognostications, which are supposed to be inspired, never come to pass!

Sixty-five years ago Judge Rutherford wrote and published a book which he titled, *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. Here are some things he said in that book: "Therefore we may confidently expect that 1925 will remark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the faithful prophets of old, particularly those named by the Apostle in Hebrews chapter eleven, to the condition of human perfection" (pages 89, 90). He further stated that they would be "fully restored to perfect humanity and made visible representatives of the new order of things on the earth" (page 88). Sixty years have gone by since his prediction was to have been fulfilled, and although he promised that they would be perfect and that they would be visible, I have not encountered any of these old patriarchs, and I have never heard of anyone who has! When one hears or reads this kind of *rubbish*, he immediately reflects on what God said a long time ago: "When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously, you need not be afraid of him" (Deuteronomy 18:22).

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Listen to another quotation from Rutherford's book (*Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, page 100): "Thus, when restoration begins (this was to occur in 1925, according to Rutherford) a man of seventy years of age will gradually be restored to a condition of physical health and mental balance. The Lord will teach him how to eat, and other habits of life; and above all, the truth, how to fix his mind upon holy things. And by the gradual process of restoration he will be lifted up by the great Mediator and restored to the days of his youth and live on the earth forever and never see death."

Those who know anything about the Bible and what it teaches about eschatology (*end things, like the resurrection, second coming of Christ, the judgment, etc.*) find this false teaching offensive. It is too preposterous to warrant serious consideration; and yet, two and a half million people in other countries and a half million people in this country have embraced this system that promulgates such ridiculous teaching. A Christian whom I knew some years ago, well acquainted with the scriptures, upon hearing this theory remarked: "I would be ashamed if I had no higher concept of heaven and eternity than that I would still be plowing the same ole grey mule in the sweet by and by."

Paul assured the Corinthian Christians: "What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body" (I Corinthians 15:42-44). Confronted with such explicit teaching on the subject of what we shall be in the next world, how does one justify espousing a teaching that asserts that old men, seventy years of age, will be restored to the days of their youth, will be taught what and how to eat, and will live on the earth forever? More than that, this arrangement was supposed to have begun in 1925!

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NO RESURRECTION FOR THE WICKED

We touched upon this subject in the discussion of Jehovah's Witnesses' belief about hell. Now I would like to add a few words about their stand on the resurrection of the wicked:

"There appears to be no scriptural authority for saying that the wicked will ever be resurrected" (*Children*, Page 36).

I offer in refutation of this heretical, fallacious statement of doctrine by this cult these passages from the New Testament:

"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment (damnation)" (John 5:28, 29). ". . . having hope in God which these themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15).

Daniel, the prophet, speaking by inspiration, declared: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2).

J.E.H. Thompson, in his exegesis of this passage in the *Pulpit Commentary*, says: "We cannot deduce the many here includes all. This is a distinct reference to the resurrection of the body. It is those who sleep in the dust that shall awake. It is to be noted that at the

resurrection the condition of each is fixed finally - it is to *everlasting life* and *everlasting contempt*."

In Matthew 25:46, Jesus said: "These (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment." How could this be so, if the wicked are not raised from the dead? And further, if the wicked are non-existent? Such obvious falsehood will not be accepted by men of honesty and integrity!

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THEIR TEACHING ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER

Here is what they have to say about it in their so-called inspired writings under the heading of *The Passover*, Vol. VI: "Our Lord's evident intention was to fix in the minds of his followers the fact that he is the antitypical Lamb to the antitypical first-borns and the household of faith. 'This do in remembrance of me' implies that this new institution should take the place with his followers of the former one." The *Passover* was a purely Jewish feast to commemorate their hurried departure from Egyptian bondage, where they had been enslaved for approximately 215 years.

It is true that Jesus "is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). This means that he sacrificed himself. He is the offering to God to propitiate him for the sins of mankind (I John 2:1, 2). But the Lord's Supper was instituted and is kept by Christians for a different reason that the Israelites kept the Passover. Theirs was emancipation from human bondage. The Lord's Supper is observed to commemorate the death of Christ for the sins of the world. In it we: (1) remember his suffering and death, (2) declare our belief to the world of this central truth of Christianity, and (3) show our hope for his return. They may argue that the Lord's Supper is eaten for the remission of sins. Let it be well understood that the Lord's Supper is not a sacrament; it is a memorial.

In the same volume of their *Studies In The Scriptures* and on the same page, they tell us how frequently the Lord's Supper is to be observed in this age of Christians.

"We would not understand this to imply the doing of it without respect of time or place, etc., but as signifying that when this cup and unleavened bread thenceforth was used as a celebration of the Passover . . . as it would not have been lawful, proper or typical to celebrate the Passover at any other

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time than that appointed of the Lord, likewise it is still not appropriate to celebrate the antitype at any other time than its anniversary."

To keep alive and fresh in the hearts of Christians the memory of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the early disciples observed the Lord's Supper every first day of the week.

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread . . ." (Acts 20:7). The language is somewhat stronger in the original than in the English translation. It literally says: "And on the one of the weeks . . ." The plural of the word weeks is used and tells us that every week has a number one day! That is, *the first day - en de te mia ton sabbaton* (έν δέ τή μιá τών σαββάτων). These first century Christians were commanded not to forsake it (Hebrews 10:25). It was their practice to meet on the first day of the week for worship in honor of Christ. In that period of corporate worship on the first day of the week, they studied the apostles' teaching, sang psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, prayed, ate the Lord's Supper, and gave their money for the spread of the gospel and the care of the needy (Acts 2:42-46).

"On the first day of every week, each one of you should give as God has prospered him . . ." (I Corinthians 16:2). They continued steadfastly in these meetings (Acts 2:42). That means that they met regularly, consistently, in an uninterrupted line. Thayer defines it thus: "To persist in adherence to a thing; to be intently engaged in; to attend constantly; to be devoted to." Early history of the church fathers relates that the Christians of that day observed the Lord's Supper every first day of the week and that they did so for seven centuries without a break! Of course, the New Testament supports, even proves, this practice by: (1) command, (2) approved example, and (3) necessary inference. Look at it closely: the Hebrew writer commanded, issued an imperative, that the Christian not forsake that

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assembly; the example is that they did it on the first day of the week and were steadfast in assembling together; so, from the command and the apostolic example, we draw the necessary inference that we should continue to observe it as they did.

THEIR NEW WORLD TRANSLATION

This translation by Jehovah's Witnesses is supposed to correct the errors of other translations, serve as a panacea of the ills which standard translations have caused them, and present the truth as it came from God. They express their intentions of basing their doctrines only upon the scriptures. "Our appeal is to the Bible for truth" (**Let God Be True**, page 10). But, in examining their translation, does it really support their teaching? I here offer several quotations from it on various subjects to show that it does not uphold and sustain their creed!

For instance, in their book **Let God Be True**, page 80, there is this teaching about hell and punishment: "The doctrine of hell where the wicked are tortured eternally after death cannot be true, mainly for four reasons: (1) because it is wholly unscriptural; (2) because it is unreasonable; (3) because it is contrary to God's love; (4) because it is repugnant to justice."

I now refer you to the Jehovah's Witnesses' translation of Mark 9:43-48: "And if ever your hand makes you stumble, cut it off; it is finer for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go off into Gehenna, into the fire that cannot be put out. And if your foot makes you stumble, cut it off; it is finer for you to enter into life lame than with two feet to be pitched into Gehenna. And if your eye makes you stumble, throw it away; it is finer for you to enter one-eyed into the kingdom of God than with two eyes to be pitched into Gehenna, where their maggot does not die and the fire is not put out." Their translation in this passage lays waste to their

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doctrine that there is no hell. They even translated the word *Gehenna*, which is not really a translation but a transliteration, by affixing of English letters to the Greek letters. But the definition of *gehenna* (γέεννα) is "hell, the fires of Tartarus, the place of punishment in Hades (Greek Analytical Lexicon). The definition of the term is found in this bit of history: "Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, once celebrated for the horrid worship of Moloch, and afterwards polluted with every piece of filth, as well as the carcasses of animals and dead bodies of malefactors; to consume which, in order to avert the pestilence which such a mass of corruption would occasion, constant fires were kept burning; hence *hell, etc.*"

But I direct your attention to another passage on which they focus so often in their denial of punishment for the wicked after death. That passage is Luke 16:22-24. They tell us that this is a parable, only an illustration.

"Jesus was giving a parable or an illustration and was not speaking of a literal place of punishment" (*The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life*, page 42). I bring to your notice how their translation reads, and then you may judge whether it comports with their doctrine on the theme.

"Also the rich man died and was buried. In Hades he lifted up his eyes, existing in torment, and he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in the bosom position with him. So he called and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in anguish in this blazing fire.' "

Here are people who disbelieve that the wicked even exist beyond death and disclaim the Bible teaching that there is punishment for the worst of sinners. Yet, their translation in this passage declares: (1) the rich man was in torment; (2) he asked that his tongue be cooled; (3) he stated he was in anguish; (4) he declared he was in a blazing

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flame; (5) he lifted up his voice and called; (6) he saw Abraham and Lazarus afar off; and (7) he remembered he had five brothers back on earth. All of these things these people, who call themselves Jehovah's Witnesses, have disavowed in their writings and teachings.

This denomination denies the visible return of Christ. Their theology postulates the enthronement of Jesus as King in April of 1878, and this, so they contend, was his second coming. But they disprove and render this theory invalid by their own translation of the scriptures in *The New World Translation*: "Look! He is coming with the clouds and every eye shall see him, and those who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth will beat themselves in grief because of him. Yes. Amen" (Revelation 1:7). Another passage in their translation: "Jesus said to him: 'You yourself said (it).' Yet I say to you men, From henceforth, you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Matthew 26:64; see also Acts 1:11). In so many of their writings, these people propound the tenet that the kingdom was not established until 1914. This is the equivalent of saying that the kingdom did not exist for nearly two thousand years after Jesus lived on the earth. They tell us that the real benefits of the kingdom are not to be truly enjoyed until the Millennial age. But *The New World Translation* refutes their claim: "Truly I say to you, There are some of those standing here that will not taste death at all until first they see the kingdom of God already come in power" (Mark 9:1).

If you credit the words of Jesus, you can be sure that some of the people who stood that day and listened to what he said have lived to see the kingdom of God come with power. If it is not true that the kingdom of God was established in the lifetime of some of the people who Jesus addressed, then there are people who have lived, 2,000 years (until 1914); and that make Methuselah look like a child by comparison!

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SEVERAL QUESTIONS TO JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

1. Who translated your *New World Translation*? Where were they educated? What are their credentials? What manuscripts did they use?

2. Why did they translate *Kurios* (κύριος), which means Lord and *Theos* (θεός) which means God, with the word **Jehovah** 217 times in the New Testament of your *New World Translation*? There are more than 400 English translations of the New Testament today, and not one of them translated *Kurios* (Lord) **Jehovah** except you! Indeed, it would be interesting to hear your explanation!

3. Why did you insert the word *other* in your translation of Colossians 1:16? The translation of the Greek is correctly rendered: "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him."

But your translation reads: "Because by means of him all **other** things were created in the heavens and upon the earth. . ." Are you not aware of the fact that the word *other* is not found in the Greek text?

4. Would you justify or explain your translation of Titus 2:13? You have translated it, ". . . of the Great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ." The Greek rule of grammar states that when the copulative (something that connects or joins together) *kai* (καί) connects two nouns of the same class, if the article precedes the first noun and is not repeated before the second noun, the latter always refers to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun. In A.T. Robinson's *A Grammar Of The Greek New Testament In The Light Of Historical Research*, he has this to say about the subject.

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Several Attributives With Kai: "Several epithets apply to the same person or thing. Usually only one article is then used. This is the normal idiom in accord with ancient usage. When a second article does not occur, it accents sharply a different aspect of the person or phase of the subject." He goes on to say: "Outside of special cases . . . only one article is found when several epithets are applied to the same person." Then, Robertson gives several passages to illustrate what the rule is saying: ". . . through the righteousness of God and (kai) our Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:1). Then, in verse 11, there is the same construction: ". . . the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." These are simply statements of the deity of Christ. He is our God and Savior; he is our Lord and Savior. Jehovah's Witnesses have changed the grammar and construction of the passage to which I have made reference to deny that Jesus Christ is God. But Robertson says these are examples of *merely predicates of the same person* (page 785).

5. Why did your translators insert **a** in John 1:1? It is not found in any Greek manuscript extant. So, why did you use it? Its use declares several things: (1) Jesus was a secondary, inferior God; (2) a created being; and (3) polytheism. Are Jehovah's Witnesses polytheists?

Such a biased, slanted translation can have little, if any, credibility among serious students of the word of God.

CONCLUSION

From this rather lengthy discussion of the religious system of Russellism, I sincerely hope you will be able to see that Jehovah's Witnesses was begun by a man, Charles Taze Russell, who was born in 1852 and that this denomination, therefore, is of human origin.

I have said very little about the man because it is not the man whom I have attacked, but his doctrine and the doctrine of

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of others who followed after him and contributed to it. It is a system that is false from beginning to end. It is false in character and it is false in its source. Let me plead with you earnestly to measure every teaching with which you are confronted today with the only divine standard, the word of God. It is called the golden measuring rod (Revelation 11:1).

The apostle John warns us, "Whoever goes on and does not abide in the teaching which is from Christ does not have God (II John 9). And the apostle Peter requires us: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11). His directive is that we must speak the very words of God!

If, after careful examination and comparison of the doctrines in existence today with the divine measuring rod, you find they do not comport with New Testament teaching, reject them and consign them to the trash heap! Let me encourage you to continue in his word (John 8:31, 32), to know and love the truth by your study of it, and receive it with a willing heart and Jesus promises to make you free indeed!

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THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND JESUS

Jehovah's Witnesses teach many things that are contrary to the scriptures. The most abominable of these errors is what they teach concerning Jesus. According to the Witnesses, Jesus is "a god, but not the almighty God, who is Jehovah" (*Let God Be True*, p. 33). Instead, they say that Jesus is "a created individual" who "is the second greatest personage of the universe" (*Make Sure Of All Things*, p. 207).

These teachings are clearly contrary to what both the Old and New Testament teach concerning Jesus. The Old Testament teaches that the Messiah would have a quality known to no other man. He would be God. There Old Testament verses prove that Jesus—the Messiah—was to be God in the flesh.

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name **Immanuel**" (Isaiah 7:14). "Immanuel" literally means "God with us."

Matthew 1:21-23 makes it clear that Jesus was the Immanuel spoken of and that He is truly God with us. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

The above passage makes it plain that the Messiah, Jesus, would not only be a ruler but would also be "mighty God." This is the same term Isaiah used in referring to Jehovah in Isaiah 10:21. Thus, Jesus is not a second class God.

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2). Micah says the one who was to come

forth was "from everlasting," that He was eternal. Only God had existed from eternity, and the one who was to come forth, Jesus, existed with Him, therefore, He has to be God.

The New Testament teaches that Jesus is God in many passages. "In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made through Him,

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and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:1-4).

Here, as in these other passages in the New Testament (John 1:14; I John 1:1; and Revelation 19:13), the designated Word, or Logos, refers especially to Jesus. That John is referring to Jesus becomes clear when we look at John 1:14, where he said, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." John said, "The Word was God."

The Witnesses say the word God in the original appears here without the definite article the and should be translated a god. They fail to point out that the New Testament is filled with references to God without the use of a definite article in the Greek (two hundred and eighty-two times). Even the translators who render John 1:1 to read a god translate the exact same phrase as "God" in ninety-four percent of the other two hundred and eighty-one instances. To be consistent, these should say a god. This construction occurs twenty times in John's gospel alone. Should John 1:18, then, be translated, "No one has seen a god at anytime?"

John wasn't alone in saying Jesus was God. Paul repeatedly stresses the same great truth. "Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God" (Romans 9:5).

"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God" (Philippians 2:5-6).

"Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory" (I Timothy 3:16).

"Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

Jesus Himself claimed to be God. "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But you do not believe, because you are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give them eternal life,

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and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand. My father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and my father are one" (John 10:25-30).

The Jews knew what Jesus meant when He called God "my father" (John 10:25), claimed to be able to bestow eternal life (John 10:28), and said, "I and my Father are one . . ." (John 10:30). Because they understood He was claiming to be God they took up stones to stone Him. "You, being a man, make yourself God" (John 10:33).

Most assuredly I say to you, before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). Here Jesus uses the same title referring to Himself that Jehovah used in referring to Himself in Exodus 3:14. Because of this claim the Jews again took up stones to stone Him.

In John 14:8, Phillip asked Jesus to show them the Father. Jesus' answer is an unmistakable claim to deity. He said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9), and "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me" (John 14:10).

These great truths from the Scriptures about the deity of Jesus cannot be denied by the Jehovah's Witnesses or anyone else. They stand as proof that Jesus is God and that He and the Father are one.

Jesus fulfilled the prophecies about the one who would be God on earth. He manifested the attributes of the eternal God. Sinful men found Him to be sinless. He knew the Scriptures as no one else did. He did things only God could do. Jesus was born where the God-man was to be born, lived as the God-man should live, died as the God-man was to die, and lived again as only the God-man could live again.

Only when you realize that Jesus is God can you see Him as the source of life and understand the importance of His death. Therefore, I beseech everyone who reads this to make Jesus "your Lord and your God" the way Thomas did in John 20:28. Your eternal life depends on your doing this.

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