

Jehovah's Witnesses
Sunday June 13, 2004

History:

Founder is Charles Taze Russell who was raised in a Christian home but later denied that teaching because he didn't believe that a loving God would allow people to eternally suffer and that hell wasn't a true place. He founded what later became the organization/cult in 1879. During this time he published a six volume series entitled *Studies in the Scriptures* these volumes are what in essence make up the doctrine and theology of the Jehovah's Witness'.

Was a divorced man

Denied the eternal torment and the complete atonement of Christ (org. still hold to those things today, and many more as we will see)

Never attended high school or any educational systems that promoted systematic theology, Philosopher.

Miracle Wheat Scandal

- He lied in Court under oath

- Lost the case because of his own evidence against himself.

- Russell made 990 of every 1000 given to the company. The organization tried to say that Russell made no money from it, obviously false

Many other scandals that he was a part of.

Since Russell the foundation has only had four other presidents since then

Judge Joseph Rutherford (1917-1942)

- Changed the name from what Russell had it (Zion's Watch Tower) to Jehovah's Witnesses. Made the organization popular and helped to solidify the teachings of the organization and become the new prophet from God.

- Was sued along with the organization in 1944 and had to reward an ex witness \$25,000 in libel charges and penalties.

- Continue to misinterpret the Scriptures and made sure that Russell's writings were published but made sure that any changes were accepted as being from the mouth of God and that he was Jehovah's prophet.

Nathan Knorr (1942-1977)

Great growth occurs in membership, publications, buildings, evangelism and so forth. The first president that did not make many new "revelations" from God even though at times it seemed that way.

Frederick Franz (1977-1992)

Besides Russell Franz is the only other person that affects the doctrine of the Witness' so much. This was the case since he first came into the organization and the

corp. office in 1920. He is also one of the principle “translators” of the *New World Translation*

Milton Henschel (1992-2000)

Voluntarily gave up his presidency when the organization decided to restructure and come up with a different way of governing things.

Doctrine of Jehovah’s Witnesses

Christ (Hints for Witnessing helps in refuting this doctrine)

- Was a created being, the firstborn of all creation.
- Christ created all things after himself but God created him
- Was Michael the Archangel before and after coming to earth as a human
- Is not God, therefore is not Deity
- Salvation is not through him (We will discuss this in greater detail later)
- Jesus is just another God

Trinity

- The trinity is of the Devil and is not from God, God is only one person not multiple
- Holy Spirit is then not deity
- There is only one God
 - This means that Jesus cannot be another God because they claim that Jehovah God is the only God that exists.

Refuting this Doctrine

- Don’t be alarm that the word “trinity” is not found in the Bible, neither is the word “biblical”
- John 14 and 16 help in showing that the Holy Spirit is God
- Genesis 1 shows the Trinity at work
- Acts 5:3-4
- Acts 13:2, 4
- See handout from *Handbook of Today’s Religions*
- Another way of refuting the Doctrine of the Trinity according to Jehovah’s Witness is by proving that Christ is Deity. But in this heading we have focused just on the deity of the Holy Spirit.

Annihilation

- The body and soul are inseparable and when one dies so does the other.
- Does not believe that we will be eternally punished/tormented.
 - For them this goes against the nature of God and who he is
- From this they get their theology on the resurrection of Christ and what must have happened there.

Refuting the Doctrine of Annihilation

- Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)
- A good understanding of the Greek will show that the verses that they use to determine this doctrine does not allow for that interpretation of the Scriptures. Nowhere in the Bible is a word used for total destruction and “annihilation” as some would believe. It is also perfectly just for God to allow someone who does not accept him to live in torment for that.

- Descriptions of Hell itself
 - Weeping and gnashing of teeth

Resurrection of Christ

- Not a physical resurrection but a spiritual/invisible one
 - Denies that Christ actually visited his disciples in the same body that he had when he died on the cross.

Refutation of this Doctrine

- Appearance to the Disciples
 - Luke 24:13-49
 - Emmaus Road
 - John 20:10-21:19
 - Thomas
 - Jesus eating on the shore

Salvation (For Refuting this doctrine see Hints for Witnessing)

- It is **NOT** a free gift from God but is only found in doing good works
- Must be a member of the Jehovah's Witness
- All others are not "truly" saved
- Can be lost
 - Only if you leave the Jehovah's Witness
- Two categories of the saved
 - 144,000
 - They know exactly who these people are but the number has already been reached. No new people come into this fold but instead are part of the "Great Crowd", "Great Multitude", and "Other Sheep".
 - This number is from Revelation 7 and Luke 12
 - Fight in the Battle of Armageddon
 - Only ones in Heaven
 - Great Crowd
 - All other saved members of the Jehovah's Witness.
 - Comes from Revelation 7 as well
 - Are merely observers of what takes place in the end
 - Do not participate in the Battle of Armageddon
 - Stay on earth, never reach heaven

Witnessing To The Jehovah's Witnesses

Focus on the Deity of Christ

- "I Am" also known as the name of Jehovah in the Old Testament, see Exodus 3:13-15); Christ uses the same words and construction concerning himself, (see John 8:23-24, 58-59; 13:18; and also in Matthew 26:63-66)
- Grammatical way of showing that he is deity
 - Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6
 - John 20:28 the confession of Thomas
 - "Alpha and Omega" and "First and Last"
 - Revelation 1:8; 22:12-13
 - "Lord God" is "the Alpha and Omega"
 - "Alpha and Omega" is "the First and Last"

-Revelation 1:17-18

-Jesus is the “living One” who “was dead” and is “alive forevermore” is “the first and Last”

-This refutes the non-deity of Christ and also annihilation

-If Christ is the “First and Last” (Rev. 1:17) then He must be the “Alpha and Omega” (22:13). If He is the “Alpha and Omega” then He must be Lord God, the Almighty (Jehovah) (Rev 1:8). See also Isaiah 44:6

-John 14:9

-If you have seen Christ you have seen the Father. This means that Christ and Jehovah must be the same if you see one you also see the other.

Always have your Bible with you. Do NOT let them read from the *New World*

Translation make sure that your Bible is with you.

Have them define what they mean when a term of similarity comes up (see attached sheet)

Also Focus on Salvation that is By Grace alone (Ephesians 2:9-10)

-Ask, are you a child of God (Acts 26: 17-18)

-If no, ask “whose child are you?”

-If yes, ask them “how did you become a child of God”?

-Ask, are you “born-again” (John 3:3-6; 1 John 5:1)

-If yes, then he must be one of the 144,000

-Ask him if he were stand before Jehovah tonight, on what basis would Jehovah allow him into heave?

-Most likely the answer is going to do with works and obeying the Watchtower organization.

-If necessary have them show you were in the Bible it says that only the 144,000 are saved.

-This is impossible to my understanding John 3:16 should refute this.

-If no, ask him why he is not.

-Ask, do you have eternal life (1 John 5:1, 11-13)

-Ask him how he can believe in Jesus Christ and not have eternal life? [At this point you could possibly point out or they will point out for you that something must be wrong with their understanding of Jesus and/or salvation.