

The Jehovah's Witnesses

Edited by Scott Shifferd Jr.

History:

- The Handbook of Denominations reports that **the Jehovah's Witnesses were founded in 1870, and in 1999, their membership consisted of 990,340 in 11,257 congregations** (Mead, Frank S; Hill, Samuel S.; and Atwood, Craig D. *Handbook of Denominations in the United States. 11th ed.* Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001. P.178).
- The Handbook of Denominations also notes, **“It was Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) who established the Witnesses, and until 1931 they were known as Russellites, Millennial Dawn People, or International Bible Students. Russell, the first president, is acknowledged not as founder (there is no human founder), but as general organizer. Witnesses claim to have been on earth as an organization for for more than 5,000 years** (based on Isa. 43:10-12; Hebrews 11; John 18:37).

Russell was deeply influenced by Adventist thought, which captivated American attention around the middle of the nineteenth century. He developed his own Adventist ideas based on personal study of the Bible, and his lectures attracted huge crowds. To date, some thirteen million copies of his books have been circulated, and they have profoundly influenced the Witnesses. The first formal Russellite group was organized in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1870, and soon after a board of directors was elected by vote of all members who subscribed ten dollars or more to support the work (a practice discontinued in 1944). In 1884, Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was incorporated. In 1939, the name of the corporation was changed to Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, and it remains one of the world's largest publishers.

When Russell died in 1916, Joseph F. Rutherford (1869-1942), known widely as Judge Rutherford, became president. He had been a lawyer and occasionally sat as a circuit court judge in Missouri. **His numerous books, pamphlets, and tracts supplanted those of Russell, but his neglect of some aspects of Russell's teaching brought dissension”** (Mead, 179).

- The Jehovah's Witnesses present, **“THE modern history of Jehovah's Witnesses began more than a hundred years ago. In the early 1870's, a rather inconspicuous Bible study group began in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., which is now a part of Pittsburgh. Charles Taze Russell was the prime mover of the group. In July 1879, the first issue of the magazine *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* appeared.** By 1880 scores of congregations had spread from that one small Bible study into nearby states. **In 1881 Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was formed, and in 1884 it was incorporated, with Russell as president.** The Society's name was later changed to Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society” (“Their Modern Development and Growth.” *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>)
- Concerning **the name “Jehovah's Witnesses”**, the Watchtower says, **“The Scriptural account that Jehovah's Witnesses draw on for their name is in the 43rd chapter of Isaiah.** There the world scene is viewed as a courtroom drama: The gods of the nations are invited to bring forth their witnesses to prove their claimed cases of righteousness or to hear the witnesses for Jehovah's side and acknowledge the truth. Jehovah there declares to his people: **'Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour.'**—Isaiah 43:10, 11, *American Standard Version.*”
- The Jehovah's Witnesses present themselves, **“Jehovah's Witnesses have demonstrated that it is possible to achieve unity in belief and action even in today's disunited world. In their ranks are former members of many different religions and ethnic groups. Other Witnesses were formerly agnostics or atheists.** Still others simply gave no serious thought to religion. Out of this diversity of

religions, cultures, and philosophies have come individuals who now enjoy a religious unity that is not otherwise seen in the world today.

The basis for such unity is God's Word, the Bible. Of course, Jehovah's Witnesses realize that they cannot dictate to others what to do. But they appreciate the privilege of encouraging others to learn from the Bible so as to base their choice in matters of worship upon that solid foundation. In this way, many more can share in the benefits that come from worshiping God 'with spirit and truth.'" ("Which Religion Should You Choose?" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- About Charles Taze Russell's predictions, the Watchtower now states, **"A crucial time was drawing close. In 1876 the Bible student Charles Taze Russell contributed the article 'Gentile Times: When Do They End?' to the *Bible Examiner*, published in Brooklyn, New York, which said on page 27 of its October issue, 'The seven times will end in A.D. 1914.'** The Gentile Times is the period referred to in another Bible translation as 'the appointed times of the nations.' (Luke 21:24) **Not all that was expected to happen in 1914 did happen**, but it did mark the end of the Gentile Times and was a year of special significance. Many historians and commentators agree that 1914 was a turning point in human history. " ("Their Modern development and Growth." *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>)

God, Christ, and the Spirit:

- Concerning **God**, the Jehovah's Witnesses believe, **"Contrary to popular belief, God is not present everywhere at all times. Rather, he dwells in the spirit realm, in an 'established place of dwelling,' or residence.** (1 Kings 8:39; 2 Chronicles 6:39) **The Scriptures also refer to a specific place where God lives and has his 'throne.'** (1 Kings 22:19; Isaiah 6:1; Daniel 7:9; Revelation 4:1-3) However, from his 'established place of dwelling,' he can use his active force to reach out into every corner of both the spirit realm and the physical realm.—Psalm 139:7" ("Is the Holy Spirit a Person?" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Regarding **Jesus' Deity**, the Watchtower states, **"JESUS never claimed to be God. Everything he said about himself indicates that he did not consider himself equal to God in any way—not in power, not in knowledge, not in age.**

In every period of his existence, whether in heaven or on earth, his speech and conduct reflect subordination to God. God is always the superior, Jesus the lesser one who was created by God" (" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- About **Jesus being the Archangel Michael**, "At times, individuals are known by more than one name. For example, the patriarch Jacob is also known as Israel, and the apostle Peter, as Simon. (Genesis 49:1, 2; Matthew 10:2) **Likewise, the Bible indicates that Michael is another name for Jesus Christ, before and after his life on earth.** Let us consider Scriptural reasons for drawing that conclusion.

Archangel. God's Word refers to Michael 'the archangel.' (Jude 9) This term means 'chief angel.' Notice that Michael is called *the* archangel. This suggests that there is only one such angel. In fact, the term 'archangel' occurs in the Bible only in the singular, never in the plural. Moreover, Jesus is linked with the office of archangel. Regarding the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Thessalonians 4:16 states: 'The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, with an archangel's voice.' Thus the voice of Jesus is described as being that of an archangel. This scripture therefore suggests that Jesus himself is the archangel Michael" ("Who Is Michael the Archangel?" *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- The JW's **New World Translation reinterprets John 1:1** as "In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was a god**" ("New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures." *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org/e/bible/joh/chapter_001.htm>).

- **How do the Jehovah's Witnesses reject the Deity of Jesus?** They teach that, "One example of a Bible verse that is often misused is John 1:1. In the *King James Version*, that verse reads: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God [Greek, *ton the-on*], and the Word was God [*the-os*].' This verse contains two forms of the Greek noun *the-os*' (god). The first is preceded by *ton* (the), a form of the Greek definite article, and in this case the word *the-on*' refers to Almighty God. In the second instance, however, *the-os*' has no definite article. Was the article mistakenly left out?" ("Is Jesus God?" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- The **New World Translation of John 8:23-24 and 58** state, "So he went on to say to them: 'YOU are from the realms below; **I am from the realms above**. YOU are from this world; **I am not from this world**. [24] Therefore I said to YOU, YOU will die in YOUR sins. **For if YOU do not believe that I am [he], YOU will die in YOUR sins**. [...] [58] Jesus said to them: "**Most truly I say to YOU, Before Abraham came into existence, I have been [I am]**" ("New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures." *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Concerning **the Holy Spirit**, the Watchtower teaches, "**No, the holy spirit is not a person and it is not part of a Trinity. The holy spirit is God's active force that he uses to accomplish his will. It is not equal to God but is always at his disposition and subordinate to him**" ("The Holy Spirit – God's Active Force." *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- The Jehovah's Witnesses also state, "WHAT is God's holy spirit? **In its opening words, the Bible speaks of the holy spirit—also rendered 'God's active force'—as 'moving to and fro over the surface of the waters.'** (Genesis 1:2)
In the Bible, God's holy spirit is identified as God's power *in action*. Hence, an accurate translation of the Bible's Hebrew text refers to God's spirit as 'God's active force.' (Genesis 1:2) This concept is well supported throughout the Bible" ("Is the Holy Spirit a Person?" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Regarding **creation**, the Jehovah's Witnesses say, "MANY people claim that science disproves the Bible's account of creation. But the real contradiction is between science and, not the Bible, but the opinions of so-called Christian Fundamentalists. **Some of these groups falsely assert that according to the Bible, all physical creation was produced in six 24-hour days some 10,000 years ago.**
The Bible, however, does not support such a conclusion. If it did, then many scientific discoveries over the past hundred years would indeed discredit the Bible. A careful study of the Bible text reveals no conflict with established scientific facts. For that reason, **Jehovah's Witnesses disagree with 'Christian' Fundamentalists and many creationists.** [...]
 What about the length of the creative days? **Were they literally 24 hours long? Some claim that because Moses—the writer of Genesis—later referred to the day that followed the six creative days as a model for the weekly Sabbath, each of the creative days must be literally 24 hours long.** (Exodus 20:11) **Does the wording of Genesis support this conclusion?**
No, it does not. The fact is that the Hebrew word translated 'day' can mean various lengths of time, not just a 24-hour period. [...]
 Contrary to the claims of some Fundamentalists, Genesis does not teach that the universe, including the earth and all living things on it, was created in a short period of time in the relatively recent past. Rather, the description in Genesis of the creation of the universe and the appearance of life on earth harmonizes with many recent scientific discoveries" ("Does Science Contradict the Genesis Account?" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- About **evolution**, the Watchtower teaches, "**Evolutionists generally claim that a population of animals gradually developed into a population of humans, denying that there was once only one man. However, the Bible presents a very different picture. It says that we originate from one man,**

Adam. The Bible account presents Adam as a historical person. It gives us the names of his wife and some of his children. It tells us in detail what he did, what he said, when he lived, and when he died. [...]

The idea that God directed evolution in order to produce man is also incompatible with what the Bible says about God's personality. If God guided the process of evolution, it would mean that he guided mankind into its present diseased and distressed state. [...] Therefore, mankind's present suffering is not the result of God-directed evolution. It is the result of one man's losing perfection for himself and his offspring by rebelling against God" ("Is Evolution Compatible with the Bible?" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

Scriptures: *God:* Gen. 1:1-2, Psa. 110:1, **Isa. 9:6, 48:16**, 61:1, Mic. 5:2, Matt. 12:46-47, 13:55-56, 28:19, Luke 3:22, John 1:1, 14, Acts 7:55, 10:38, Rom. 8:9, 9:5, 15:30, 2 Cor. 3:17, 13:14, Phil. 2:5-8, Col. 1:15-20, Heb. 9:14, 1 Pet. 1:2, 3:18, 1 John 4:2; *Creation:* Gen. 1:26-27, Exo. 20:11, Matt. 19:4-5, Mark 10:6-8, Luke 11:50-51, Rom. 1:20.

Christ's Words and the Scriptures:

- The "Jehovah's Witnesses confess their faith that, **"From this it is apparent that Jehovah's Witnesses believe in the Bible as the Word of God. They consider its 66 books to be inspired and historically accurate.** What is commonly called the New Testament they refer to as the Christian Greek Scriptures, and the Old Testament they call the Hebrew Scriptures. They rely on both of these, the Greek and the Hebrew Scriptures, and take them literally except where the expressions or settings obviously indicate that they are figurative or symbolic" ("Who Are They?" *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- About **the Jehovah's Witnesses' translation of the Bible**, the Watchtower reports, **"Millions of readers of this journal favor using the *New World Translation*. Why? Because they agree with the approach taken by its translation committee**, as stated in the foreword to the first English edition: 'We offer no paraphrase of the Scriptures. Our endeavor all through has been to give as literal a translation as possible, where modern English idiom allows and where a literal rendition does not for any clumsiness hide the thought.'

The *New World Translation* has been printed in whole or in part in more than 60 languages, with a total printing of more than 145,000,000 copies!" ("How You Can Choose a Good Bible Translation." *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

Scriptures: Luke 1:1-3, **1 Cor.** 1:1-2, 10, **2:13**, 2 Cor. 1:1, Eph. 2:20, 3:3-5, Col. 4:16, 2 Thess. 2:15, 2 Tim. 3:16-17 (cf. 1 Tim. 5:18), 2 Pet. 1:16-21, 3:15-16, 1 John 1:1-4.

Way of Salvation:

- About **the spirit and the soul**, the JWs state, **"A further study of God's Word will show you that nowhere in the entire Bible are the terms 'immortal' or 'everlasting' linked with the word 'soul.' Instead, the Scriptures state that a soul is mortal, meaning that it dies. (Ezekiel 18:4, 20) Therefore, the Bible calls someone who has died simply a 'dead soul.'**—**Leviticus 21:11.** [...]

The soul and the spirit are not the same. The body needs the spirit in much the same way as a radio needs electricity—in order to function. To illustrate this further, think of a portable radio. When you put batteries in a portable radio and turn it on, the electricity stored in the batteries brings the radio to life, so to speak. Without batteries, however, the radio is dead. So is another kind of radio when it is unplugged from an electric outlet. **Similarly, the spirit is the force that brings our body to life. Also, like electricity, the spirit has no feeling and cannot think. It is an impersonal force.** But without that spirit, or life-force, our bodies 'expire, and back to their dust they go,' as the psalmist stated.

Speaking about man's death, Ecclesiastes 12:7 states: 'The dust [of his body] returns to the earth just as it happened to be and the spirit itself returns to the true God who gave it.' When the spirit, or life-force, leaves the body, the body dies and returns to where it came from—the earth. Comparably, the life-force returns to where it came from—God. (Job 34:14, 15; Psalm 36:9) This does not mean that the life-force actually travels to heaven. Rather, it means that for someone who dies, any hope of future life rests with Jehovah God. His life is in God's hands, so to speak. **Only by God's power can the spirit, or life-force, be given back so that a person may live again** ("Soul and Spirit: What Do These Terms Really Mean?" *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- The Watchtower states, **"Many people have been told that 'believing on Jesus' is a single act and that our faith does not have to be strong enough to prompt obedience.** But the Bible disagrees. **Jesus did not say that people who *begin* the Christian course are saved.** Instead, he said: 'He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved.' (Matthew 10:22) The Bible likens our Christian course to a race, with salvation being the prize at its end. And it urges: 'Run in such a way that you may attain it.' — 1 Corinthians 9:24" ("What Must I Do to Be Saved?" *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Concerning **baptism**, the Jehovah's Witnesses state, **"Jehovah's Witnesses baptize only those who, on the basis of a thorough study of the Bible, want to serve God as one of his Witnesses.** (Hebrews 12:1) **These symbolize their personal dedication to God by water immersion.**—Matthew 3:13, 16; 28:19" (""" *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Regarding **baptism and the "holy spirit"**, the Watchtower says, "What do these baptisms reveal about the new birth? They show that the new birth takes place by means of a twofold process. Note that Jesus first got baptized with water. Then he received the holy spirit. [...]"

The first part of this twofold process (baptism with water) is initiated by the individual; the second part (baptism with spirit) is initiated by God. When a person undergoes both baptisms, he has experienced the new birth." (""" *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- About the **process of being baptized**, the Watchtower states, **"There is another important step to take before being baptized. You must *dedicate* yourself to Jehovah God.**

When you dedicate yourself to Jehovah God in earnest prayer, you promise to give him your exclusive devotion forever. [...]"

Let the coordinator of the body of elders of your congregation know that you want to get baptized. He will arrange for some elders to review with you a number of questions that cover the Bible's basic teachings. If these elders agree that you qualify, they will tell you that you can be baptized at the next opportunity. A talk reviewing the meaning of baptism is usually given on such occasions. The speaker then invites all baptism candidates to answer two simple questions as one way to make a verbal 'public declaration' of their faith.

It is the baptism itself that publicly identifies you as a person who has made a dedication to God and is now one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Baptism candidates are fully immersed in water to show publicly that they have made a dedication to Jehovah" ("Baptism and Your Relationship with God." *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- The Watchtower replies to the question, **"Do you believe that you are the only one who are going to be saved?"** answering, **"No. Many millions who have lived in centuries past and who were not Jehovah's Witnesses will come back in a resurrection and have an opportunity for life.** Many now living may yet take a stand for truth and righteousness before God's time of judgment, and they will gain salvation. Moreover, Jesus said that we should not be judging one another. Humans look at the outward appearance; God looks at the heart. He sees accurately and judges mercifully. God has

committed judgment into Jesus' hands, not ours.—Matthew 7:1-5; John 5:22, 27.” (“Our Beliefs: FAQ.” *Jehovah's Witnesses*. 6 June 2012. <jw-media.org>).

Scriptures: Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:16, John 6:53-56, 16:7-13, **Acts 2:38, 41, 47**; 3:19, 8:38, 22:16, Rom. 6:3-7, Gal. 5:4, Col. 2:11-12, 1 Tim. 2:4, Heb. 6:4-6, 1 Pet. 3:21, 2 Pet. 1:10, 3:9, 1 John 1:5-2:6.

The Church & Church Government:

- The Jehovah's Witnesses present, **“The overall direction comes from the Governing Body at the world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. The Governing Body sends representatives each year to various regions worldwide to confer with the branch representatives in those regions. In the branch offices, there are Branch Committees of about three to seven members to oversee the work in the lands under their jurisdiction.** Some of the branches have facilities for printing, some operating high-speed rotary presses. **The country or area served by each branch is divided into districts, and the districts, in turn, are divided into circuits.** Each circuit has in it about 20 congregations. **A district overseer visits the circuits in his district in rotation. Two assemblies are held annually for each circuit. There is also a circuit overseer, and he visits each congregation in his circuit usually twice a year, assisting the Witnesses in organizing and doing the preaching work in the territory assigned to that congregation.**

The local congregation with its Kingdom Hall is the center for telling the good news in your community. The areas under each congregation are mapped out in small territories. These are assigned to individual Witnesses who endeavor to visit and speak with the people in each home therein. **Each congregation, consisting of from a few to some 200 Witnesses, has elders assigned to look after various duties. The individual proclaimer of the good news is the vital one in the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses.** Every one of the Witnesses, whether serving at the world headquarters, in branches, or in congregations, does this field work of personally telling others about God's Kingdom” (“Their Worldwide Organization and Work.” *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- About the **“Governing Body”**, the Watchtower reports, **“The world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses is in New York. Located there is the Governing Body, a central group of experienced elders who oversee the worldwide congregation”** (“How Jehovah's Witnesses are Organized.” *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- The Jehovah's Witnesses state, **“[U]nlike the Protestant movement, which has splintered into hundreds of denominations, Jehovah's Witnesses have maintained a united global brotherhood.** When it comes to Bible doctrine, Jehovah's Witnesses in over 230 countries follow the apostle Paul's counsel to “speak in agreement.” There are no divisions among them” (“Are Jehovah's Witnesses a Protestant Religion?” *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- About **belonging to a church**, the Jehovah's Witnesses believe, **“These examples clearly show that in the past God has always dealt with his people as an organized group. The few individuals with whom God had dealings personally—Noah, Moses, Jesus, and others—were, in fact, used by Him to communicate with a closely associated group”** (“Should You Belong to a Church?” *The Watchtower*. 5 June, 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Concerning **church discipline and disfellowship**, the Jehovah's Witnesses state, **“God's fatherly discipline, which can affect our spiritual lives, can take many forms. One is his arrangement to exclude from the Christian congregation a person who no longer wants to live by God's standards, or who refuses to do so. A person who is thus strongly chastised or disciplined may repent and turn around. In the process, the congregation of loyal ones are also disciplined in that they learn the importance of conforming to God's high standards”** (“Discipline that Can Yield Peaceable Fruit.” *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

- About collection, the JW's report, "Their work is financed by voluntary contributions. [...] **Anyone who wants to make a donation can do so by placing it in a discreetly located contribution box in the Kingdom Hall.** Jehovah's Witnesses produce the Bible literature they use, which keeps costs down, and their modest Kingdom Halls and branch facilities are mostly constructed by volunteers" ("Jehovah's Witnesses: Who Are They?" *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Scriptures:** Acts 14:26, 20:28, **Eph. 1:22**, 4:11-12, Phil. 1:1, Col. 1:18, 2:19, 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

Worship and Assembly:

- About **Kingdom Hall**, the JW's report, "**Their meetings, which are open to the public, are essentially Bible studies, often allowing for audience participation.** One of their weekly meetings, the Theocratic Ministry School, helps congregation members develop teaching, reading, and research skills. Another is a 30-minute Bible discourse on a topic that may be of special interest to non-Witnesses. **It is normally followed by a study of the Bible by means of the *Watchtower* magazine. Meetings begin and end with song and prayer, and there is no solicitation of funds or passing of a collection plate.**—2 Corinthians 8:12" ("Jehovah's Witnesses: Who Are They?" *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Concerning **worship music**, the Watchtower states, "The early Christians of Ephesus and Colossae sang 'psalms and praises to God' (literally, 'hymns'). To these they added 'spiritual songs' that were sung in their hearts. (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) By both song and speech, they fittingly used their mouths to express praise. Had not Jesus declared that 'out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks'?—Matthew 12:34. [...]"

At Christian meetings held in Kingdom Halls in 234 lands, they begin and end their meetings, where possible, by singing songs to Jehovah. In major and minor key, beautiful melodies carry Scripturally based lyrics in praise of Jehovah God" ("Music that Pleases God." *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Regarding **the Lord's Supper**, the Jehovah's Witnesses report, "**Primarily, though, the Lord's Evening Meal is a communion meal.** Those involved are (1) Jehovah God, who arranged for the ransom, (2) Jesus Christ, 'the Lamb of God,' who provided the ransom, and (3) Jesus' spiritual brothers. **By partaking of the bread and wine, the latter show that they are fully united with Christ.** (John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17) They also show that they are in 'the new covenant' as spirit-anointed disciples of Jesus. These are the ones who will reign with Christ in heaven as kings and priests.—Luke 22:20; John 14:2, 3; Revelation 5:9, 10.

When should the Memorial be observed? The answer becomes clear when we remember that Jesus chose a particular date to institute this celebration—the Passover. God's people had annually been observing that date, Nisan 14 on their calendar, for over 1,500 years in order to commemorate a remarkable salvation that Jehovah performed for his people. Clearly, Jesus was directing his followers to use the same date to commemorate the far greater act of salvation that God would make possible through the death of Christ. Jesus' true followers thus attend the Lord's Evening Meal every year on the date corresponding to Nisan 14 on the Hebrew calendar" ("The Eucharist – The Facts Behind the Ritual." *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

Scriptures: Matt. 6:1-18, 15:1-9, 23, John 4:21-24; Acts 20:7, **1 Cor. 4:17, 11:2, 17-34**; 14, 16:1-3; Eph. 5:19; Col. 2:18-23, 3:16; 1 Tm. 2:11-12, Heb. 2:12, 10:24-25, 13:15-16.

Morality:

- The Handbook of Denominations reports, "**They refuse to salute the flag, bear arms in war, or participate in the political affairs of government, not because of pacifist convictions, but because**

they desire to remain apart from what they consider expressions of Satan's power over humankind” (Mead, P.181).

- Regarding **abortion**, the Jehovah's Witness teach, “Significantly, **the Bible describes a human life as existing in the womb.** The psalmist David wrote concerning God: 'Your eyes saw even the embryo of me, and in your book all its parts were down in writing.' (Psalm 139:16) David does not simply say 'an embryo' but 'the embryo of ME,' thus accurately revealing that **David's life began when he was conceived, long before his birth. Under inspiration by God, David also revealed that at conception the development of his body parts was according to a plan, or detailed 'written' instructions, which made him the person he was.**

Please note also that the Bible does not say that a woman conceives a piece of tissue. Instead, it states: '**An able-bodied man has been conceived!**' (Job 3:3) This too indicates that according to the Bible, **a child exists as a person from the time of his conception” (“Abortion – Why Is It Such an Issue?” *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).**

- Concerning **homosexuality**, the JWs states, “**Today, many people—even some clergymen—soft-pedal the issue of homosexuality. Yet, the Bible leaves no room for confusion. It tells us that Jehovah God made man and woman and that he purposed for sexual desires to be fulfilled only between husband and wife. (Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:24) It comes as no surprise, then, that the Bible condemns homosexual acts.—Romans 1:26, 27” (“Homosexuality – How Can I Avoid It?” *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).**
- About **blood transfusions**, “Yes. In fact, they seek the best possible care for themselves and their loved ones. Moreover, many Witnesses work in the medical field as nurses, paramedics, doctors, and surgeons. **However, Jehovah's Witnesses refuse blood transfusions. 'Abstain from blood,' the Bible states.** (Acts 15:28, 29) Interestingly, a growing number of physicians view nonblood medical care as the 'gold standard,' for through it the many health risks associated with the use of blood products are avoided” (“Jehovah's Witnesses: Who Are They?” *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

Scriptures: Matt. 15:19, Mark 7:20-23, Rom. 1:24-32, 12:9-15:13, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Gal. 5:16-6:10, Eph. 4:17-6:18, Col. 3-4:6.

Marriage and Divorce:

- The Watchtower states, “The Bible does not treat divorce casually. It states that Jehovah God views as treacherous and hateful the frivolous putting away of one's mate, perhaps with the motive of taking another spouse. (Malachi 2:13-16) Marriage is a permanent bond. (Matthew 19:6) Many marriages that broke up on trivial grounds could have been saved if partners had been more forgiving.—Matthew 18:21, 22.

At the same time, the Bible allows for divorce and remarriage on one ground—sexual relations outside the marriage. (Matthew 19:9) Therefore, if you learn that your mate has been unfaithful, you have the right to terminate the marriage. Others should not impose their views on you, and it is not the purpose of this article to tell you what to do. In the end, you are the one who will live with the consequences; therefore, you are the one who must decide.—Galatians 6:5” (“Is Divorce the Answer?” *The Watchtower*. 5 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

Scriptures: Matt. 5:31-32, 19:9, Mark 10:5-12, Luke 16:18, 1 Cor. 6:16-18, 7:10-15, Heb. 13:4.

The End Times & Afterlife:

- Regarding “**God's Kingdom**”, the JWs believe, “**It is the heavenly Kingdom for which Jesus taught all his followers to pray. Soon it will become the one government over all the earth and will solve mankind's pressing problems. The Bible does not give a date for these events, but it provides**

evidence to show that we are living in 'the last days' of this troubled world" ("Our Beliefs: Doctrinal Beliefs." *Jehovah's Witnesses*. 5 June 2012. <jw-media.org>).

- About the **144,000**, the JW's reports, "**This is an actual heavenly government with a King—Jesus Christ—and 144,000 corulers, who are 'bought from the earth.'** (Revelation 5:9, 10; 14:1, 3, 4; Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14) **They will rule over the earth, which will be cleansed of all wickedness and will be inhabited by many millions of God-fearing humans.**—Proverbs 2:21, 22" ("The Watchtower. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).
- Concerning **judgment and hell**, the JW's state, "**Jesus is God's appointed Judge who determines what each one's future will be. Those judged righteous will be given everlasting life on a paradise earth. Those judged unrighteous will not be tormented but will die and cease to exist.** Humans are not responsible for this judgment, nor will they be involved when God takes action to remove all wickedness from the earth" ("Our Beliefs: Doctrinal Beliefs." *Jehovah's Witnesses*. 5 June 2012. <jw-media.org>).
- The New World Translation translates Luke 16:22b-24, "Also, the rich man died and was buried. [23] **And in Ha'des he lifted up his eyes, he existing in torments**, and he saw Abraham afar off and Laz'a-rus in the bosom [position] with him. [24] So he called and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Laz'a-rus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because **I am in anguish in this blazing fire**'" ("The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures." *The Watchtower*. 6 June 2012. <watchtower.org>).

Scriptures: Matt. 24:29-51, 25:31-46, **Mark 9:1**, 13:24-37, Luke 21:25-36, John 14:1-4, 18:36, Acts 1:9-11, 1 Cor. 15:23-28, 50-53, Col. 1:13, 1 Thess. 4:13-5:11, 2 Thess. 2:1-12, Heb. 12:28, 2 Pet. 3:1-13, **Rev. 7:9**,