

Jehovah's Witnesses

A "Non-Prophet"

Heresy

Presented by

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How Should Christians Defend Truth and Expose Error?

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I. What is the difference between a “religion” & a “denomination”?

- The term “denomination” is a _____ under the word religion.
- Mustang is to _____ like denomination is to _____ ~
or like _____ is to Christian.

II. What is the difference between a “religion” and a “heresy”?

Let's talk about the differing ways that the early church viewed other religions vs. how they viewed heretical teachings.

- *Biblically, the early Christians had more tolerance for pagans and other religions than for heretics.*
- *In Acts 17:30 Paul said, “The times of ignorance God overlooked...”*

• *In Acts 14:16 Paul said, "In past generations God allowed all nations to walk in their own ways."*

Heresy

But by contrast, there was much less tolerance for those who twisted and distorted the Scriptures (the heretics) – ones who should have known better – but deliberately taught contrary to the Scriptures.

In Gal 1:9, Paul says "If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed."

In 2 Cor. 11:13-15 he says they are, "false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan himself disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds."

The Apostle John likewise has harsh words for them in 2 Jn 7, "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is a deceiver and the antichrist."

And the Apostle Peter (2 Pet 3:16) refers to Paul's letters and how the "ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures." All of these are making reference not to those

who simply embraced a competing religion, but ones who distorted and twisted the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

III. Are JW's Christians?

- *“Who is Jesus” is a pivotal question*
- *They claim to be “followers of Jesus Christ” but which Jesus do they follow?*

IV. We Have Been Warned!

- *Jesus Warned us (Mt. 24:4-5 and 24:24-25)*
- *Paul Warned Us (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Cor. 11:4, 13-15)*
- *Jude Warned Us (Jude 3)*

V. Jude 3 - “Contending for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.”

1) This is a call for _____ (contend) on the part of the Church. Puritan author Thomas Manton wrote of this verse, *“Truth is honored by a bold and resolute defense of it.”*¹

¹ Thomas Manton, *Commentary on Jude*, p. 121.

- 2) This is for “_____” faith – there is only one.
- 3) Once for _____ – it never changes
- 4) It was _____ – It was not invented

Acts 20:28-31

- Don't be _____ when a professing believer falls away from the faith – in spite of good teaching and preaching from your Pastor.
- If it happened to the Apostle Paul, it will happen to _____.
- Ultimately, we entrust _____ into God and HIS grace (20:32), which alone is able to keep you.

VI. What is “the” Faith that we are supposed to believe?

- the “_____” of Scripture. What this means is that there are certain things in the Bible that are crystal clear and they are major teachings that all believers will embrace.
- Major doctrine > Who is _____?
- Major doctrine > How is someone _____?

Heresy of JW's

- JW do not believe in the same _____ that the Bible teaches
- JW's do not believe in salvation by _____ alone through faith alone

VII. Apologetics

1. Defending the _____ ~ deity of Jesus, justification by faith, Bible is trustworthy
 2. Exposing the _____ ~ false gospel, another Jesus, heresies of group
- Though it is tempting to ONLY "*expose the error*" (point out all that is wrong with JW's) this is a tragic mistake because:
 - a. If you " _____ " that people know the truth, you are usually wrong. Don't assume
 - b. Though it is tempting to dwell on the errors of JW's, it is actually **MORE** important that you _____ truth, than that you can recognize error
 - c. False teachers will invariably _____ the Scriptures to distort truth ~ deceive you
 - d. We need to know how to use God's Word _____, otherwise we are just as bad as the false teachers we are critiquing. (2 Tim. 2:15)

- e. Only focusing on the errors of other groups invariably fosters _____ in our own hearts.

VIII. Witnessing to JW's while Obeying the Great Commandment (and the 2nd)

- Mt. 22:37-40
- 1 Cor. 4:7
- Eph. 2:8-9
- 1 Cor. 2:13-14

IX. Reasoning From the Scriptures

- Teach thru Q & A
- discuss to stimulate minds
- ends in dispute often
- challenge wrong beliefs
- Acts 17:2-3; 18:4; 18:19; 19:8-9

Major Doctrines & Teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses

Origins > Founded by former Presbyterian *Charles Taze Russell*, in 1884. Has grown to over 7 million active JW's today (2014). Their name comes from Isaiah 43:30, "You are my witnesses, declares the LORD."

Jehovah > They teach that only the true people of God use the name, "Jehovah" & claim that it is crucial to use this name especially in prayer.

TRUTH: Jehovah is not actually what the Hebrew Bible teaches – this is the German form of the transliteration of "YHWH" > "Yahweh" would be closer to what the Hebrew says. There is not a single NT manuscript with "Jehovah" in it. God's "name" doesn't mean His title, but His character (self-existent one – form of the verb "to be" – "I am" – Jesus in John 8:58). Acts 4:12 calls Jesus' name the highest & the model prayer of Mt. 6 does not contain "Jehovah" nor does Jn. 17:1; Mt. 11:25; Lk. 10:21.

Publications > The New World Translation (NWT) is their perverted translation of the Bible. It is corrupt in that the name "Jehovah" is inserted 237 times without any textual warrant. Contains numerous changes in key passages to fit preconceived theology of JW's. Other sources are the "Watchtower" and "Awake" plus "Reasoning From the Scriptures" which are all authoritative.

God's Attributes > They say God is not omnipresent since his throne is in heaven. He is not omniscient & does not know the future. He only knows that He can work all things together to make his will come about. God does not predestine anyone to salvation.

TRUTH: The JW God is a very small god – we will see this in depth later. Our God is most definitely Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnipotent and Eternal.

Trinity > They say this teaching was originated by Satan since the term nowhere occurs in Scripture.

TRUTH: Though the word “trinity” is not found in Scripture, neither are the words “organization, Bible or theocracy” (all important JW terms). The concept of the Trinity is clearly taught, which we will review later.

Jesus > They say he was created as Michael the arch angel, and that He is not God. He is powerful as a “god” (small “g”), but not the One True God. After he was created as Michael, he became Jesus the man, and then again became Michael after his resurrection. He was the first creation of Jehovah God.

TRUTH: He is fully God and fully man and the second person of the Trinity. He is not created, but in fact is the Creator of all things including Michael and the other angels (Jn. 1:3; Col 1:16).

Holy Spirit > They say he is a force like an X-ray and not a person, nor is He God. They translate Gen 1:2 by calling Him “God’s active force.”

TRUTH: He is fully God and co-equal with the Father and the Son and the third person of the Trinity. See handouts.

Anointed Class vs. Other Sheep > They say there are only 144,000 (anointed class) who go to heaven to be with Jesus. The only hope for all others (“other sheep” of Jn. 10:16) is for an earthly paradise. Only the anointed can have the Lord’s Supper.

TRUTH: The hope of all Christians is for heaven in the presence of Jesus Christ. Scripture does not make the artificial divisions that the JW’s do. Their belief makes much of the Bible totally irrelevant to the average believer.

Blood Transfusions > They say this cannot be done since the Bible forbids eating blood (Gen 9:4; Lev. 17:11; Acts 15:29). A committed JW would rather die than have a blood transfusion.

TRUTH: There is a huge difference between *drinking* blood as a sacrifice to pagan gods and using blood as a means of saving a life for medicinal purposes. The biblical passages forbid the former but not the latter.

Salvation > They say the “other sheep” must earn their salvation by proving themselves worthy to Jehovah God. They cannot be justified, born again, regenerated, filled with or sealed by the Spirit since these things are only true of the anointed.

TRUTH: Scripture says we are saved by grace through faith not works (Eph. 2:8-9). We cannot make ourselves worthy (Rom. 3:10-18). The Bible makes no such division like the JW's do. All of the listed works of God are true for all believers in Jesus Christ throughout history.

Sin > They say Jesus paid for our Adamic sin nature on the torture stake (not the cross) but we have to individually work off our personal, individual sin by witnessing, repentance & faithfulness to the JW organization & then we *might* survive Armageddon.

TRUTH: We cannot work off any of our sin. Jesus paid for all the sins of the elect on the cross (1 Pet. 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:26-29). Our salvation is not in doubt since God purchased us (Eph. 1:13-14; 1 Pet 1:3-5).

False Prophecy > The JW's have been notorious for setting dates for the time of Jesus' return only to have every one of them fail. They then attempt to deny making such statements or try to reinterpret their own wording to accommodate their erroneous dates. They have claimed that Jesus would return in 1874, 1914, 1918 and 1975. Their current explanation is that His return is a spiritual “presence” and not a visible and physical one.

TRUTH: Jesus was very clear about trying to set dates (Mt. 24:36; Acts 1:7) and the Scriptures give clear tests for a false prophet (Dt. 18:20-22). Jesus' return will be visible, not invisible (Rev. 1:7; 1 Thes 4:16-17; Mt. 24:30; Acts 1:11).

Misused Verses by Jehovah's Witnesses

THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

John 1:1 > The JW Bible (NWT) translates the last phrase, "the Word was a god," meaning that Jesus is powerful, godlike and divine, but not God Himself.

TRUTH: There is not a single reputable Greek scholar who would translate the verse like this. The JW's involved in translating their Bible were NOT Greek scholars themselves. This verse teaches that the Word (Jesus) was distinct from the Father, yet still equal with the Father. He is not a "lesser" god, since this would be polytheism.

Prov. 8:22 > JW Bible says this verse proves Jesus was created, "Jehovah created me..."

TRUTH: This is yet another mistranslation since this verse is clearly speaking of wisdom (see Prov. 8:1 & 12) and not to a person. If the Lord "created" wisdom, then this means there was a time when God lacked wisdom.

Rev. 3:14 >> JW's say this verse proves Jesus was created since it calls him the "beginning of the creation of God..." They claim he was Jehovah God's "first" creation.

TRUTH: The Greek word "arche" means "origin, chief, head or ruler. When we speak of an "archangel" (chief angel), or an "architect" (head designer) or an "archbishop" (ruling bishop) we don't mean first sequentially but first in importance or rank. Also note that the same word is used in speaking of God Himself in Rev. 21:6 and 22:13

Col. 1:15 >> JW's say this verse calls Jesus the "firstborn" which means he is the first created by Jehovah God and therefore Jesus cannot be God Almighty.

TRUTH: There are separate words in Greek for "firstborn" and "firstcreated." Paul was careful in what he said. Firstborn is speaking of rank, importance or pre-eminence. Context of Col 1:18 says Jesus has "first place in everything." Also Ps 89:27 refers to David as the

firstborn & Ex. 4:22 speaks of Israel as the firstborn yet both are speaking of their importance & rank, not of their creation. In Jer 31:9 Ephraim is called the firstborn yet Gen. 41:51 says Manasseh was born first. See also Deut 21:15-19.

John 20:28 >> JW's say that either these words refer to both Jesus (my Lord) and the Father (my God), OR that Thomas is simply exclaiming surprise at seeing the resurrected Jesus ("Oh my God!") OR that since 20:31 calls Jesus the "Son of God" that Jesus cannot here be referred to as the Lord God.

TRUTH: The passage clearly says Thomas said, "to Him" (Jesus alone) not to "them" (Jesus and the Father). Thomas did not use the Lord's name in vain since Jesus did not rebuke him but instead commended him for believing that He (Jesus) was the Lord God (20:29). JW's do not understand the humanity of Jesus Christ.

John 14:28 >> JW's say that since the Father is "greater" this means Jesus is not God.

TRUTH: This is again speaking of position and rank, not nature. As a man Jesus was lower than the angels (Heb 2:9) & was tempted (Mt. 4:1), got thirsty (Jn 19:28), hungered (Mt. 4:2), became weary (Jn 4:6) was distressed (Mk 14:33) & died (Acts 20:28; Lk 23:46). This does not make Jesus inferior, just different positionally just as the President of the US is "greater" than us but not "better" than us. Jesus "added" human qualities, not "subtracted" the nature of deity.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Gen. 1:2 >> The NWT changes the words, "the Spirit of God" for "God's active force" since they believe the Holy Spirit is a force like an X-Ray, not a person, or God.

TRUTH: This is a blatant distortion of Scripture. The Holy Spirit is not an "it," nor is He a force since He speaks (Acts 13:2), can be grieved (Eph 4:30) has knowledge (1 Cor 2:10-13) & sovereignly makes decisions (1 Cor 12:11) & can give instruction to God's people (Neh 9:20).

Acts 5:3-4 >> Since JW's deny that the Holy Spirit is God or is even a person, these verses are problematic for them.

TRUTH: This passage says you can “lie” to the Holy Spirit. How can you lie to a force or an X-Ray? Only a person can be lied to. Furthermore in 5:4 lying to the Holy Spirit is equated with lying to God.

MAN

Eccles. 9:5 >> JW’s use this verse to deny the existence of hell. They teach that unbelievers will be annihilated at the end of time.

TRUTH: Ecclesiastes looks at life from the futility of life from man’s perspective without God (“under the sun”) instead of viewing life with God involved. Eccles 9:5 is from a human (godless) view without considering God just as 9:2 is.

Ezek 18:4 >> JW’s use this verse to prove that there is no conscious life after death. They deny that man’s soul lives after death – either in heaven or in hell.

TRUTH: This verse has nothing to do with whether or not there is life after death. This is not saying that a person’s inner life ceases with his death, but only that his individual life has ceased upon the earth. The word “soul” can be used in reference to the whole of man.

John 3:3 & 7 >> JW’s do not believe that these words apply to anyone other than the 144,000 whom they say will go to heaven. Only the 144,000 will be with Jesus in heaven.

TRUTH: There is nothing in the context of this verse to limit it to certain people. Furthermore, Scripture is clear that *only* those with the Holy Spirit are God’s children (Rom. 8:8-16; Gal. 4:6-7; Titus 3:5-7; Eph. 1:13-14)

THE END TIMES

Rev. 7:4-8 >> JW’s teach that only 144,000 people living between Pentecost & the year 1935 will go to heaven to be with Jesus. The only hope for others is an earthly paradise.

TRUTH: The context is clearly speaking of Jews who accept Jesus since it lists the tribes (7:5-8). If this is “spiritual Israel” as JW’s assert, then the number 144,000 must also be symbolic.

Luke 23:43 >> JW's rearrange the comma so that this verse reads, "*Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise.*" They make this change to avoid saying that this thief would be with Jesus in heaven right after death since it does not fit their theology (he will be in the earthly paradise at the end of the age).

TRUTH: This makes Jesus' words redundant. Jesus is obviously talking with him "today," so why bother saying the word? The words "truly I say to you" followed by a pronouncement by Jesus occurs 102 times & never with the JW view. Their view completely changes the meaning of the Scriptures. This is a good reminder that even a comma can alter our theology.

Understanding the Trinity

The Bible clearly teaches monotheism (the belief in one God) in both the Old and New Testaments (see for example, Deut 6:4; Isa 44:6-8; and John 5:44; 1 Tim. 1:17). On the other hand, the Bible also uses the term “God” in three different ways:

1. The One True God (Gal. 4:8; Isa. 43:10)
2. A false god (Ps. 96:4-5; 1 Cor. 8:4-6)
3. A ruler or person in authority:
 - a) Good (Ex. 7:1; 4:16)
 - b) Evil (Ps. 58:1-2; 82:6; 2 Cor. 4:4)

When Christians speak of the Trinity, they are referring to category #1 above. Certainly a God Who is worthy of our worship & praise must be greater than those described in category #2 or 3.

For this reason, when the Bible says there is only one God by nature (Gal. 4:8), it is speaking of those things, which uniquely describe God. These are attributes and qualities that belong to God alone and are not descriptive of His creation. These would include:

- Omnipotence (all – powerful)
- Omnipresence (all – knowing)
- Omniscience (everywhere present at once)
- Eternal (no beginning or ending)

Since the Father (Jn. 17:3), the Son (Heb. 1:8) and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4) are each called “God” in the Bible, if we can demonstrate that the Scriptures teach that each of them is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and eternal, we have shown that they must be the one true God from category #1 above.

	Omnipotent	Omniscient	Omnipresent	Eternal
Father	Jer. 32:17	Ps. 139:2	1 Kings 8:27	Deut 33:27
Son	Heb. 1:3	Jn. 2:24	Mt. 28:20	Mic. 5:2
Holy Spirit	1 Cor. 12:11	1 Cor. 2:10-11	Ps. 139:7-10	Heb. 9:14

Therefore since we know that there is only one true God by nature and that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are each called "God" and exhibit the attributes of the One True God, therefore the Father, Son and Holy Spirit must be the one true God.

The Deity of Jesus Christ

Verses showing the Trinity

Job 40:6-9	Isa 11:2; 42:1; 48:16; 61:1
Zech 12:10 (Jn. 19:37)	Mt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14
Acts 20:28	1 Cor. 12:4-6; Eph. 4:4-6
Gen 1:26-27	Gen 19:24 / Isa. 13:19 / Amos 4:11

Who is the Creator?

Father	Isa. 64:8
Son	Jn. 1:3
Holy Spirit	Job 26:13; 33:4
Trinity	Gen 1:1-3 – Note, “and God <i>said</i> ...” Jesus is the “Word” of God in Jn 1:1 and 1:14

Who is the Lord?

Father	Mt. 11:25
Son	Rom. 14:9
Holy Spirit	2 Cor. 3:17

Who resurrected Jesus?

Father	Gal 1:1
Son	Jn. 2:19-22; 10:17-18
Holy Spirit	Rom. 8:11

OT Verses Showing Jesus' Deity in a NT Application

Ex 3:14 >> Jn 8:58; 18:1-6	Ex. 13:21 >> 1 Cor 10:4
Ps 8:2 >> Mt. 21:16	Ps. 23:1 >> Jn. 10:14,16
Ps. 33:6, 9 >> Jn. 1:1, 14	Ps. 45:6-7 >> Heb 1:8-9

Ps. 68:18 >> Eph. 4:8	Ps. 102:25-27 >> Heb. 1:10-12
Ps. 110:1 >> Mt. 22:43-45	Isa. 6:1-10 >> Jn. 12:37-42
Isa. 7:14 >> Mt. 1:23	Isa. 8:13-15 >> 1 Pet. 2:5-8
Isa. 40:3 >> Mt. 11:10; Mk. 1:2-3	Isa. 44:6; 48:12; 41:4 >> Rev. 1:8, 17; 22:13
Isa. 45:23 >> Phil. 2:10	Jer. 17:10; Ps. 139:1, 23-24 >> Rev. 2:23
Joel 2:32 >> Rom. 10:9-13	Mic 5:2 >> Mt. 2:6
Mal. 3:1 >> Mk. 1:2; Lk. 1:76	

Commonly Used Verses to Demonstrate Jesus' Deity

Jn 1:1; 5:18; 10:30; 10:33; 20:28	Phil. 2:5-8
1 Tim. 3:16	Heb. 1:3
Col. 1:16	

Lesser Known Verses Demonstrating Jesus' Deity

Isa. 9:6	Jer. 23:6
Jn. 10:28-29	Jn. 12:45; 14:7, 9
Jn. 14:23 (note "we" will come to him)	Acts 20:28
Rom. 9:5	Col. 2:9
Heb. 1:8 (The Father calls the Son, "God")	Rev. 1:7-8 (Who is coming?)
Rev. 3:21 (Is Jesus sitting on the Father's lap or is He one with Him?)	Rev. 22:7 (Who is coming?)

Deity of Jesus Christ Verses in the NASB, NIV and ESV Bible Versions

Jn. 1:18	2 Thes 1:12 (marginal reading)
Titus 2:13	2 Pet 1:1
Jude 4-5	

The Epistle to Titus Proves Jesus' Deity

There is only One God (Deut 6:4; Isa. 44:6-8; Joel 2:27); God is the only Savior (Isa. 43:11; 45:21)

Titus 1:3 > God is the Savior

Titus 1:4 > Jesus is the Savior

Titus 2:10 > God is the Savior

Titus 2:13 > Jesus is the Savior (and He is God in NASB, NIV & ESV)

Titus 3:4 > God is the Savior

Titus 3:6 > Jesus is the Savior

Conclusion: Either Paul is quite confused or else Jesus must be God!

The Nature of Jesus Demonstrates that He is God

-He Forgives Sin (Mt. 9:2-6; Mk. 2:5-10; Lk. 5:20; 7:48 (Isa. 43:25))

-He Raises *Himself* from the Dead (Jn. 2:19-22; 10:17-18)

-He Knows the Heart of Man (Mt. 9:4; Lk. 5:22; Jn. 2:24-25; Acts. 1:24; Rev. 2:23
(1 Chron. 28:9; Ps. 94:11))

-He is Prayed To (Jn. 14:14; Acts 1:24; 7:59; 9:14, 21; 22:16; Rom. 10:13; 1 Cor. 1:2;
2 Cor. 12:8-10; 2 Tim. 2:22)

-He is the Creator of Everything (Jn. 1:3, 10; Eph. 3:9 (KJV); Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2)

-He is Worshipped (Mt. 2:2, 8, 11; 14:33; 28:9, 17; Jn. 9:38; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 5:13 (Lk. 4:8;
Deut 6:13))

-He is the Judge & the Father is the Judge (Jn. 5:30; 2 Tim. 4:1 >> Isa. 33:22)

-We can Sin Against Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 8:12)

-Jesus has replaced the OT temple as the place where God meets man since he IS the
temple (Mt. 26:61; Jn. 2:19)

-He is honored the same as the Father (Jn. 5:23)

-He resurrects (Jn. 6:40, 44, 54; 11:25-26)

-He gives eternal life (Jn. 5:40; 6:40, 54; 10:28)

-He opens the mind to understand the Scriptures (Lk. 24:45)

-He is Omnipotent (all powerful/all authority) (Mt. 11:27; 26:64; 28:18; Jn. 3:35; 5:26-27;
17:2; Rom. 14:9; Eph. 1:20-22; Phil 2:9-11; Col. 2:10; 1 Pet
3:22;

Heb. 1:3; Dan. 7:13-14)

-He is Omniscient (all knowledge) (Mt 9:4; 17:27; Jn. 1:42, 47-48; 2:24-25; 4:17; 6:61, 64;
11:11; 13:11; 16:30; 21:17; Acts 1:24; 15:8; Col. 2:3)

-He is Omnipresent (everywhere present at once) (Mt. 18:20; 28:20; Jn. 1:48-50;
Eph. 4:10; Jn. 3:13 (KJV))

-He is Eternal (Mic 5:2; Jn. 1:1, 14; Heb. 13:8; Rev. 1:8, 17; 22:13)

Ten Tips on Witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses

How do you reach a JW so that you can talk to him/her about the truth of the Scriptures? Several things should be kept in mind:

1. You will be tempted to _____ (Col. 4:5-6)
2. If it weren't for God's _____ you'd be deceived too
3. The JW is terribly _____
4. Goal is not merely to win an _____
2 Tim. 2:24-26
 - a) Don't _____ with them
 - b) JW's are not easy to _____ to
 - c) God has to _____ repentance
 - d) The _____ snare
5. Avoid terms like _____

6. Give them the beautiful _____
7. There is no _____ to witness to JW's
8. Guard _____
9. You don't have to know all the _____
10. Expect the _____ - The Sovereign
Holy Spirit!