



The Voice Of Truth

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Which One Will You Take Your Stand With? Part VII

By Jimmy Pettigrew

We have been looking at different faiths and their authority for guiding them in their worship. Let us examine the Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Jehovah's Witnesses had its beginning in 1872, in America, by Charles T. Russell. The Jehovah's Witnesses do not have a specific set of Articles of Faith. The anonymous books and booklets published since 1942 are now considered their doctrinal guide.

The Jehovah's Witnesses claim to urge upon people only the Word of God. For example, they write, "We shall let God be found true by turning our readers to his imperishable word." This sounds good; however, as we examine their theology, we shall see that this is not an honest statement of what they believe and practice at all. Actually, instead of accepting scripture only and imposing that on others, they impose their system upon the scripture and force it to comply with their teaching. Notice this quote concerning one of their booklets: "Not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see also, that if anyone lays the 'Scripture Studies' aside, even after he has read them for ten years - if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness; on the other hand, if he had merely read the 'Scripture Studies' with their reference

and had not read a page of the Bible as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the scriptures."

Can there be any doubt that they do not believe in the Bible only? It has become quite clear that despite the claim of this movement to stand on the Bible alone, the real source of authority is the interpretation handed down by Watch Tower headquarters.

The scriptures teach that God speaks to us in these last days through Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2). We will be judged by Him and His word (John 12:48). There is a curse placed on anyone, including an angel that preaches any other gospel than that which was preached (Galatians 1:8-9). Jude tells us that in the first century the faith had "once for all" been delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Revelation 22:18-19 pronounces a curse on those who add to or take from the word. God's word, The Bible, further teaches that it is a sufficient guide for men (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 2 Peter 1:3). It is to be read and understood by everyone (Ephesians 3:4; Acts 17:11; 1 Peter 2:2). Our only creed is Christ and the Bible (Matthew 22:29; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We must give up all false ways (2 Corinthians 6:17). Any system that denies the Bible alone is opposed to God!

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that there are two classes of people being saved and the way of salvation is not the same for both. There is the "anointed class" and the "other sheep". "All who by reason of faith in Jehovah God and in Christ Jesus dedicate themselves to do God's will and then faithfully carry out their dedication will be rewarded with everlasting life (Romans 6:23). However, that life will not be the same for all. The Bible plainly shows that some of these, that is, the 144,000, will share in heavenly glory with Christ Jesus, while others will enjoy the blessings of life down on earth (Revelation 14:1,3; Micah 4:1-5). [Let God Be True, p. 298]. The problem with this Jehovah's Witnesses doctrine is in taking a highly figurative passage and making it literal and building a doctrine around it that is not found in the Bible. Revelation 7 does not say that the 144,000 and the great multitude are different groups. John "heard" the 144,000 and upon looking he "saw" the great multitude. There is nothing in the text that would lead us to believe these are different groups. Further, Revelation 7:15 indicate this group is "before the throne of God." This presents a great dilemma for the Jehovah's Witnesses. In order to attempt to get around this, they say the great multitude is truly before the throne, but down on the earth. However, the verse says they "serve him day and night in his temple." And, Revelation 11:19 and 4:2 tells us that the temple is in heaven. These verses show that the great multitude is the heavenly class and not just the 144,000. The fact of the matter is there are not two distinct groups.

In effort to justify these two classes that are to be saved, the Jehovah's Witnesses use John 10:16. "Other sheep I have, which are not this fold ..." They try to make the case that, therefore, Jesus has two folds. But verse 16 says they shall become "one flock."

The so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses" refuse to believe in the existence of eternal punishment, described by Jesus as "hell fire" (Matthew 18:9). The so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses" affirm that, "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" (**Let God Be True, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, p. 80**). God's standard of justice is not man's standard (Jeremiah 10:23). His thoughts are not man's thoughts, and His ways are not man's ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). The Bible clearly teaches that God has reserved a place of punishment for the wicked, and the New World Translation (**JW Bible**) teaches it in (Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:22-24).

The so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses do not like to speak of the visible return of Christ. In fact, they deny His visible return. According to their theology Jesus was enthroned as King in heaven in 1914, and this was His "second coming." Again, to refute such false teaching, all that is necessary is to cite the following passages from the New World Translation (Revelation 1:7; Matthew 26:64).

The so-called "Jehovah's Witnesses deny that there is a part of man which lives after the death of the body. They say, "The claims of religionists that man has an immortal soul, and therefore differs from the beast, is not scriptural (**Let God Be True, p. 59, 60**.) There are passages where the word "soul" and "spirit" refer to a part of man which differs from his body, and lives on after the body dies. The New World Translation teaches this (Matthew 10:28; Eccl. 12:7). Which one will you take your stand with?

(Part 8 printed in next week's bulletin)