**THE WATCH TOWER SOCIETY**

***John 8***

Sunday School Lesson 6

*Answers to Questions & Misconceptions About Salvation*

08/25/2019

**Introduction:** In this week’s lesson, we are going to take a more direct approach in witnessing to those who hold to a false religion that is prevalent throughout the world today. That false religion is found in the teachings of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Currently, there are reported to be more than twenty million people worldwide who identify as being a part of this false religion. Every month, over 42 million copies of the Watchtower magazine are printed and sent to people around the world. The Watch Tower society is the de facto headquarters that leads the Jehovah’s Witnesses, through the leadership of their governing body. While Jehovah’s Witnesses assert that their salvation is through Jesus Christ, their true beliefs are a combination of works-salvation, denominational-reliance, and many other erroneous beliefs. Members of this denomination are very active in their own outreach efforts. In fact, a person is not deemed to be a true Jehovah’s Witness by the Watchtower unless they are active in outreach efforts. Consequently, this makes it very challenging to witness to a member of this false religion. Another hurdle is that the Jehovah’s Witnesses are taught that they cannot possibly understand the Bible without the monthly teachings of the Watchtower Society. This means that the most discerning way to witness to them is to ask them questions in hopes that they will consider them, and that they will respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. Here are some of the questions that you can ask them.

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW WHO JESUS IS IN ORDER FOR A PERSON TO BE SAVED? (JOHN 8:23-25, 58-59, 10:30-33, 20:29; COLOSSIANS 1:15-16, 2:9; HEBREWS 1:1-8)

**The Jehovah’s Witnesses do not believe in the Deity of Christ!** While they teach that salvation comes through knowing Who Christ is, the Jehovah’s Witnesses do not actually know Him. They believe He is the Son of God, but they do not believe that He is God. They believe that Jesus is the same as the archangel Michael. Certainly, they fit into a perfect description of those who will stand before the Lord and speak of how they prophesied in His name, yet He will say for them to depart because He never knew them. Not only do they not believe in the true Deity of Christ, but they also do not believe in a bodily resurrection. They believe that Jesus only resurrected in Spirit. Of course, we can easily show that the Bible teaches us Who Christ really is and that He had a literal bodily resurrection. Jesus clearly taught that it is impossible for someone to be saved unless they believe in Who He is. We can also point out how the religious leaders were visibly angry when Jesus spoke of His Deity. Jesus spoke of these same religious leaders as being those who were of their father, the Devil. A challenging question may be to ask how the Lord Jesus would respond to having His Deity called into question. Of course, as a result, the Jehovah’s Witnesses refuse to worship Jesus. They only “worship” God the Father. They point to examples where Jesus declined worship from certain people. Yet, the Bible shows us that Jesus’ own disciples worshipped Him, and He did not rebuke them.

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT A PERSON CAN ONLY BE SAVED IF THEY BECOME A JEHOVAH’S WITNESS? (ROMANS 10:9, 13; 1 JOHN 4:2-3, 15; MARK 9:39)

**The Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that only those who are a member of their organization will be saved from the Battle of Armageddon.** If you ask this question, you will probably be given a very neutral answer. Officially, Jehovah’s Witnesses have been trained to tell people that only Jesus knows who will be in Heaven, and that it is not their job to judge. However, this is deceptive because they don’t really believe this. In their 1983 Watchtower article on requirements for salvation, it states: “To receive everlasting life in the Earthly Paradise, we must identify that organization and serve God as part of it.” Their position has been reiterated on many occasions throughout the years in their monthly publications. Once you are able to get an honest answer from them, you can then point to the Word of God. Is there any point where the Lord puts such a stipulation on salvation? The Bible is clear that salvation is for every person who puts their faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. The disciples told Jesus how they had forbidden a disciple from casting out devils because he was not a part of their group, yet Jesus explicitly told them not to forbid him. Clearly, this wouldn’t align with the Watchtower teaching because that disciple was not a part of Jesus’ organization. A challenging question may be to ask if requiring membership in their society as part of salvation places the onus more on faith in their denomination or faith in Jesus Christ.

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN BORN AGAIN AND WILL GET TO SPEND ETERNITY IN HEAVEN? (JOHN 3:3-7, 14:2; I JOHN 5:1-13; GALATIANS 4:5-6; ROMANS 8:8-16; 1 PETER 1:3-5)

**The Jehovah’s Witnesses do not believe that every person who puts their faith in Christ will go to Heaven (only 144,000 of the “anointed” one’s will have such a privilege).** As cults often do, the Watchtower Society offers a special privilege to only its most anointed followers. Every other person who is a member of their false religion believes that they will only have eternal life on earth. They will not be a part of the Lord’s Heavenly kingdom. Consequently, the person that you are speaking with may or may not believe that they are a part of that select group that has been born again and will go to Heaven. If the person believes they are a part of that group, you might challenge them with their own false doctrine. The second president of the Watchtower Society proclaimed in 1935 that all of the 144,000 positions in the Heavenly Kingdom had been filled. Of course, as the denomination grew, their more recent leaders have changed that doctrine to state that there may still be positions opened. More than likely, though, the person you are speaking with will not believe that he is a member of that exclusive club. In either case, you can address the issue with the Word of God. The Bible says very clearly that whosoever believes in Jesus Christ has been born of God. Further, the Bible says that those who are born of God have been born to the Spirit. Finally, the Bible also shows that whatsoever is of the flesh cannot please God. This means that those who have not been born again cannot please God. Additionally, you can show them how the Lord promised many mansions that He is preparing in Heaven, and the Bible reiterates the promise of Heaven specifically in 1 Peter 1:3-5. A challenging question may be to ask them why over 144,000 people every year partake in the memorial that is only supposed to be reserved for those who have been born again and are anointed.

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE BIBLE IS THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR TRUTH IN THIS WORLD THAT WE LIVE IN? (2 TIMOTHY 2:5, 3:16-17; 1 THESS. 2:13; HEBREWS 4:12; 1 PETER 1:23)

**The Jehovah’s Witnesses do not believe that the Bible is sufficient for the believer.** The person you are speaking with will most likely boldly proclaim that they believe the Bible is the sole authority for truth. This is different from other false religions, who may openly acknowledge that they have other “revelations” that they use in forming their doctrines. Yet, at its core, the Watchtower Society uses extra-Biblical material to form its doctrinal positions. It uses the same subtilty that was used in the dark ages as a means to suppress believers from studying God’s Word on their own. The founder of the Watchtower Society stated plainly that his desire was for his followers to read his Watchtower study guides over the Bible, as he thought that they would be more helpful for them. The Jehovah’s Witnesses do not believe that a follower can study and understand the Bible for themselves. Instead, they believe that the Bible should only be studied alongside their Watchtower study manual. Their core tenants state that the Bible is an organizational book not an individual book. They do not want their followers to read It without the guide or without an “anointed” person giving them instruction. Yet, we see many examples in the Word of God where an individual is instructed to study the Word of God. It is referred to as a sword to be used individually by all believers. Of course, we also understand that preachers and teachers have been given to help instruct non-believers to salvation and believers to a closer relationship with Christ, but that instruction should never supersede the authority of the Word of God.

1. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT INACCURATE BIBLICAL PROPHESY WOULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE FAITH OF A BELIEVER? (DEUT. 18:20-22; JER. 14:14-15; HEBREWS 10:23; 1 THESS. 5:24)

**The Jehovah’s Witnesses believe very strongly in prophesy, but they fail to acknowledge the false prophesies of the leadership.** If you ask this question to a Jehovah’s Witness, they will state plainly that they believe that it is essential to the faith that Bible prophesy be proven true. Like you and I, they will tell you that everything that the Bible says will happen will most definitely happen. Their core belief about the 144,000 specially chosen people comes from the book of Revelation. After the person acknowledges he believes that Bible prophesy is important, you should now ask him about the prophesies that former Watchtower leaders have made. If the Bible’s prophesy is important, surely, they must believer that the Watchtower prophesy is important as well. Again, the Jehovah’s Witness will agree that those prophesies are essential. At this point, you can bring up some of those prophesies. In 1914, their founder prophesied that the final Battle of Armageddon would take place. In 1929, the Watchtower leadership bought a home in California to house those they prophesied would soon be resurrected. In 1918, their leader proclaimed that millions living at that time would never die. They also incorrectly predicted the end of the world in 1975. Needless to say, there is much evidence to show that this false religion is a hoax. If we can show these people the errors of their religion, the door may then open to present the true Gospel. Let’s pray for wisdom in witnessing to the witnesses.