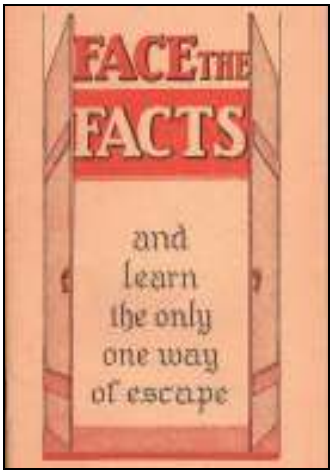
DICTIONARY of JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

F

Uploaded the first time: 2023
Updated: 2026

FACE THE FACTS (1938)



A booklet authored by Rutherford in which he predicted:

> These facts, which cannot be disputed, disclose the Roman Catholic Hierarchy's determination to act as a kind of spjritual super-government over the dictators of the world, forming a part of the monstrosity, and which violently opposes Jehovah and his kingdom under Christ Jesus. (p.16)
>
> The totalitarian combine is going to get control of England and America. You cannot prevent it. (p.27
>
> The Roman Catholic Hierarchy of authority, the Fascists and the Nazis are conspiring together to gain conrol and rule all the nations by dictators. (p.30)

The booklet also taught that married "Jonadabs" (i.e. members of the "great crowd" who anticipate eternal life on Earth) ought not to have children due to the closeness of Armageddon, which would occur in "a few years", and should wait until after Armageddon:

> …after Armagedon ends … they may exercise their divinely given functions. (p.49)
>
> Those Jonadabs who now contemplate marriage, it would seem, would do better if they wait a few years, until the fiery storm of Armageddon is gone… (p.50)

We are now three generations beyond those "few years" and the "Jonadabs" of 1938 who postponed "exercising their divinely given fuctions" have almost died out. Many JWs followed WTS counsel and never married, or if married never had children. They doubtless thought themselves "spiritually minded" but trusted in false prophecy and lived an illusion. They deserved an apology, compensation and for once some true Bible prophecy but did not get any of this.

Furthermore, the Nazis and Catholics did not achieve control over England and America. Instead of a conspiracy with the Catholic Hierarchy to rule the world, Hitler's plan was to eliminate the Catholic Church and all Christianity after the war and execute "many of the bishops". (Weinberg 2005) JWs have never apologized to the Catholic Churfch for their false and inflammatory statements.

FACTOR VIII
A blood-derived preparation which enables hemophiliacs to achieve a normal life-span.

A letter from the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York Hospital Information Services dated September 19, 1988, said in part:

> Edinburg, VA 22824
>
> Dear Brother Juliano,
>
> It is our understanding that Factor VIII is processed from pooled blood … a single lot of Factor VIII may be prepared from the pooled blood of as many as 25,000 donors, all of them potential carriers of disease. Quite a few hemophiliacs have developed one or more of the infectious diseases, such as hepatitis or AIDS, in using Factor VIII concentrate….

Raymond Franz in *Crisis of Conscience* (1983) writes:

> For many years inquiries sent by hemophiliacs … received the reply that to accept such blood fraction *one time* could be viewed as not objectionable, as, in effect, "medication." But to do so *more than once* would constitute a "feeding" on such blood and therefore be considered a violation of the Scriptural injunction against eating blood.
>
> Years later, this ruling changed… (p.107)

FACTS
Rutherford often a included what he called "facts" and "physical facts" into his reasoning:

> When prophecy is fulfilled we describe the facts of its fulfillment as physical facts. (Comfort for the Jews 1925, 9)

Modern inventions and knowledge, for example were "physical facts" which (along with other "facts") proved the "fulfillment" that the Time of the End began in 1799 and Jesus returned in 1874:

> Fulfilled prophecy is the record of physical facts which are actually existent and definitely fixed. Physical facts do not stultify themselves. They stand as silent witnesses whose testimony must be taken as indisputable. (The Harp of God 1921, 228-235)

Many of Rutherford's indisputable "physical facts" were ignored by later JWs leaders because the doctrines that the physical facts supposedly proved, such as Jesus' return in 1874 and the restoration of Israel, were discarded or revised, and this made the "physical facts" irrelevant and false reasoning.

FAEROE ISLANDS
See: *FAROE ISLANDS*

FAITH
JWs leaders teach that faith is based on knowledge. (Aid to Bible Understanding 1971, 561-562) Faith must be based on Bible knowledge, not on what comes "from man":

> Faith cannot be based upon the information coming from man…
> A man who harangues the people and states his conclusions or the conclusions or opinions of other men is ... a 'windjammer'.
> To believe in the doctrines of men or that which is promulgated by the organization of men does not constitute faith at all. (Riches 1936, 138-139)

These statements in *Riches* together with the observation that JWs doctrines continually change, some totally discarded, imply that JWs' belief "does not constitute faith at all" but is the "opinions of other men" and "windjammers".

FAITHFUL AND DISCRETE SLAVE"
Jesus spoke of a "slave", "servant" or "steward" who could be either "faithful" or "wicked" and whom "the master has put in charge of his household":

> "Who then is the faithful and wise slave, whom the master has put in charge of his household, to give the other slaves their allowance of food at the proper time?
> Blessed is that slave whom his master will find at work when he arrives.
> Truly I tell you, he will put that one in charge of all his possessions...
> (Matthew 24:45-47; Mark 13:34-37; Luke 12:35-48)

The Christian interpretation is that every Christian can be either faithful or unfaithful in his Christian life. Jesus explained that the "slave" or "manager" is potentially everyone: "From everyone to whom much as been given, much will be required…" (Luke 12:48)

The JWs identification of "that servant" was a central "Bible truth" of JWs since 1881, but repeatedly revised, ever changing like the wind.

20th Century

During most of the 20th century JWs believed that the "wise servant" is a "class" or group of 144,000 "spirit anointed" people chosen between 33 CE and 1935 who go to heaven after they die. Those of the 144,000 who died before 1919 were resurrected in 1918. Those who die from 1918 onwards are all JWs and get immediately recreated (resurrected) as "spirit creatures" in heaven.

JWs labelled the 20th-century "slave" the "remnant" and the "little flock" because its members were the remaining ones or "remnant of the 144,000". Only this "heavenly class" partook of the "emblems", the bread and wine, at their annual "Memorial" of Christ's death.

Until 2010 the sect believed that the remnant or "faithful and discreet slave class" is God's sole channel of communication to humans, the only reliable guide to understanding the Bible:

> Today, a "faithful and discreet slave" has been appointed…
> Jehovah, by his spirit reveals deep Scriptural truths by means of this loyal slave… (w1996 1/1 30)

> How vital it is for everyone in God's family to submit loyally to the teachings and arrangements of the Great Theocrat, Jehovah, and his King-Son, Christ Jesus, as transmitted through the 'faithful slave' on earth! (w1982 6/1 17)

To be taught by this "slave" was to be "taught of Jehovah" and receive "revealed truth" and "God's Word":

As part of Jehovah's family of worshippers, we maintain unity because all of us are "taugth of Jehovah" and hold firmly to his revealed truth. (John 6:45; Psalm 43:30) Since our teachings are based on God's Word, all of us speak in agreement. We gladly accept the spiritual food made available by Jehovah through "the faithful and discreet slave." (w1996 7/15 16-17)

The Russellites

In 1881 C.T. Russell interpreted the "faithful servant" as the "little flock", these being "consecrated servants" or people in his cult (and a few outsiders who were yet to be converted):

...that 'little flock' of consecrated servants who are faithfully carrying out their consecration vows—the body of Christ ... the whole body individually and collectively, giving the meat in due season to the household of faith—the great company of believers.
(Proclaimers 1993, p.142; wr1881 October-November, p.5)

The wise steward — Russell

In 1895, Russell's wife Maria interpreted the "faithful slave" as referring to one man, her husband, C.T. Russell. Initially he declined this suggestion and suggested it applies to the *Watch Tower*, not just its editor.

However, from 1895 the Russellites geneally believed that the "slave" one man — C.T. Russell. In 1913 Elder E D Sexton stated:

Then you believe that Brother Russell is that servant? Yes I believed that for eighteen years... (Convention Report 1913, 102)

In 1897 Russell agreed that Christ, by using the pronoun "he", meant one individual, "*one channel* for dispensing the meat in due season" — and "if unfaithful he will be deposed entirely". Russell's cult quickly accepted him as "faithful and wise servant" since he did vitually all the Bible interpretation and was the president of the WBTS:

However much we might endeavor to apply this figure to the Lord's people collectively, the fact would still remain that the various items stated would not fit to a company of individuals. For instance, in the 42nd verse, in the common version it is rendered, *that* faithful steward; the revised version, *the* faithful steward; as though a particular one were meant and the term not used indefinitely for a number. Turning to the Greek text we find that the emphasis is there also and in double form—the faithful, the wise steward. ...since the servant mentioned is to dispense food to the other members of the body, his fellow-servants, the term seems to be limted to some particular individual. However, just as we said of Peter, that he was not by reason of special use made a lord over the brethren, so we say of whoever is meant in this passage, that in no sense of the world would this constitute him a lord, or dictator or master, or imply his inspiration... This servant if found faithful, would be intrusted more and more with the distribution of every feature of present truth as represented in the parable... (wr1904 4/15 1356)

This description pointed to Russell; the Russellites knew of no one else.

In 1909 the WBTS

In 1909 Russell wrote:

...whoever the Lord will so use, as a truth-distributing agent, will be very humble and unassuming" and "he would not think of claiming authorship or ownership of the truth." (wr1909 10/1 4482)

Our opponents are ready to admit that Lord has used the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society as his channel or servant in forwarding the harvest message in a most remarkable degree—in a manner and to an extent hardly to be believed and never equaled—in many tongues and at the hands of many "fellow servants," colporteurs, pilgrims, volunteers, etc. They admit that there is no question that a remarkable service has been rendered, and hence that it is indisputable by any who believe that there is a harvest work in progress and that the Society has been a servant of the harvest message in a most profound and peculiar sense, even if they dispute that it has fulfilled Matthew 24:45, as being "that servant." (wr1909 10/1 4483)

Russell "that servant" since 1878

After Russell's death, his identity as "the faithful and wise servant" was plainly stated:

Thousands of the readers of Pastor Russell's writings believe that he filled the office of "that faithful and wise servant," and that his great work was giving to the Household of Faith meat in due season. His modesty and humility precluded him from openly claiming this title, but he admitted as much in private conversation. (w1916 12/1 5998)

In 1917, the preface of *The Finished Mystery*, stated:

> Pastor Russell being the messenger to the Laodicean Church, and occupying the position of the Lord's special servant to give the Household of Faith meat in due season... (p.4)
>
> that "wise and faithful servant" of the Lord... (p.5)
>
> ...to him was granted the privilege of bearing from the hands of the Lord to the "Household of Faith" meat in due season... (p.6)

Additional confirmation appeared on pages 53, 125, 237, **418-422** including that Russell had been "That servant" since 1878!

Until 1923 Rutherford affirmed:

> Without doubt Pastor Russell filled the office. (The Harp of God 1921, 239)
>
> Pastor Russell was the Lord's wise and faithful servant... (w1923 11/15 342)
>
> Pastor Charles T. Russell, as the Laodicean messenger of the church, faithfully filled the office of "that faithful and wise servant" while here on earth, and seven years ago enjoyed his change, as we believe, to spiritual glory... (w1923 12/1 360)

1923 — The WTS

In 1923 Rutherford distinguished an "office" from the person who occupies it.

He argued that Russell had filled the office of "that servant" until 1916. After 1916 the office was filled by the "Society". By "Society" he meant the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society. (w1923 3/1 67-69)

1927 — back to the 1881

The Watch Tower (1927 1/15 19) speaks of "the servant class" and "the faithful servant class".

It refers to Jesus together with the 144,000, also to the 144,000 excluding Jesus:

> Seeing then that The Servant of Jehovah is The Christ, and that The Christ is composed of Jesus and the faithful members of his body, we find it proper to apply the term "Servant" to Jesus Christ alone or to Jesus Christ and the members of his body collectively as one; and sometimes it is applied only to the members of the body of Christ yet on earth. (w1927 2/15 53)

The new "truth" was similar 1881 when the "servant" was the "little flock", the "body of Christ".

Russell, now, was no longer the "faithful slave". His removal was a logical necessity because if Russell was the servant who provided "meat in due season" his death meant there could be no new "meat". Yet Rutherford was issuing new "meat" in the form of prophecies and new interpretations. The initial solution in *The Finished Mystery* (1917, 144) was that Russell was in heaven as a spirit and supervised the work from there. Critics regarded this teaching as communication with the dead — i.e. spiritualism!

1932 — The Post-1918 Remnant

In 1932 Rutherford limited the "faithful slave" to the 1918 remnant of the 144,000 who remained "faithful" in 1918. These were allegedly pictured by Naomi (in the book of Ruth) and appointed in 1919:

> The part played by Naomi at this point in the drama particularly pictures those found faithful in 1918, and whom the Lord then constituted "the faithful and wise servant class..." (w1932 11/1 340; Preservation 1932, 45-46, 280, 195)

1942 — Again the WTS

In 1942, after Rutherford's death, "that servant" was again briefly interpreted as the WTS:

> Jesus Christ, Jehovah's great Apostle or Sent One, and who is at the temple, has 'laid hands' upon 'The Society' as his 'faithful and wise servant' and visible representative. (2 Tim. 1:6) 'The Society,' acting as the servant and representative of the Lord, commits the testimony work to the Lord's faithful witnesses now on the earth. (w1942 10/15 317)

All of the 144,000 from 33 to 1935 CE

Further revision defined the slave as all of the 144,000 from 33 CE to 1935, the entire "body of Christ", not just the 20th century remnant, therefore 1900 years old

> Now that the long-expected Kingdom had become an established reality in heaven, surely its growing interests in the earth after 1919 would not be left in the hands of a novice organization of spiritual babes. And that proved to be true. It was the 1900-year-old "faithful and discreet slave," the old Christian congregation, that was entrusted with this precious Kingdom service. (w1960 7/15 436-437)
>
> Properly, then, to this 1900-year-old "faithful and discreet slave" with its

> thousands of cleansed "domestics" Jesus next says: "Truly I say to you [plural, collectively], He will appoint him over all his belongings." (w1960 7/15 437)
>
> That "slave," according to Jesus' description, would be on hand when the Lord departed for heaven and would still be alive at the time of Christ's return. Such a description could not possibly fit an individual human. But it does fit Christ's faithful anointed congregation viewed as a whole. (United in True Worship of the Only True God 1983, p.119)
>
> This slave could not be just one individual because he was to provide spiritual food from when the Christian congregation began at Pentecost until the Master, Jesus Christ, came to make an accounting. The facts indicate that this faithful and discreet slave class comprises all anointed Christians as a group on earth at any given time. (w1995 5/15 16)
>
> Over a period of more than 1,960 years, that work of education has continued, preparing a little flock made up of people from "every tribe and tongue and people and nation" to serve with Christ in his heavenly Kingdom. (Yearbook 1996, 3)

JWs, however, have never identified any people between the 2nd century and Russell's time who were members of the "slave" class, because no one during all those centuries believed what the Russellites and JWs believed.

If there was a "faithful slave" in the 1870s it could only have been the people who converted Russell, the Advent Christian Church or its ministers. JWs would deny this but have not identified any alternative group. There was no 1800-year-old slave-group which Russell joined.

Although not even one member could be identified from about 100 CE to 1870s CE, JWs insisted the "slave" is more than 1900 years old!

Appointed in 33 CE, 1879 or 1919?

Included in the doctrine is the claim that Jesus inspected all religions in 1919 and identified the Russellites associated with the WTS as the only group faithful to Him. These were the modern component of the "slave" class:

> "One body" is the Christian congregation, of which Jesus is the "head." (Ephesians 1:22, 23) The individual anointed members of this united congregation would all receive the same spiritual food. To that end, their "master" appointed a collective "faithful steward" class, the body of anointed Christians on the earth since Pentecost 33 C.E. Since the "master" found the remaining ones of this body faithfully and discreetly giving out "food supplies" when he arrived for inspection in 1919, he appointed them "over all his belongings." (Luke 12:42-44) The facts show that since 1919 this "steward" has faithfully cared for these "belongings." (w1983 9/15 19-20)

The appointment of "the slave" in 1919 seems inconsistent with it existing since 33 CE; and with Russell's cult being chosen around 1879; and that the WTS was used by God from its founding in 1884; and that true Christianity returned in the 1870s:

> ... in many ways the evidence was beginning to accumulate that, of all the early voices heard, Jehovah had chosen the publication we now call The Watchtower to be used as a channel through which to bring to the world of mankind a revelation of the divine will and, through the words revealed in its columns, to begin a division of the world's population into those who would do the divine will and those who would not. For this reason 1879 was a turning point in the work. This little group, headed by C.T. Russell, had now been tested and had been found fit to undertake the great preliminary campaign leading up to the climax expected in 1914. (Divine Purpose 1959, p.22)

During the alleged inspection by Jesus in 1919 he would have noticed the statement in *The Finished Mystery* (1917) that He (Jesus) was responsible for that book. *The Finished Mystery*, however, included approximately 1300 interpretations of Bible verses that JWs later changed. JWs would today regard *The Finished Mystery* as "spiritual poison" and excommunicate anyone who promoted it.

The slave in Christ's prophecy is appointed "over all his [Christ's] belongings" which to JWs included their entire Organzation together with the right and responsibility to supply the doctrines (spiritual food). This created the inconsistency that new leaders in the Organization converted after 1919 could not have been appointed in 1919. Any alleged "slave" members who died prior to 1919 were also not appointed in 1919.

In 1935 came the doctrine that the selection of people to join the 144,000 had ceased and that thenceforth the "great multitude" had to be converted. It also became "truth" that new directors appointed to the WBTS, and new

appointees to the Governing Body, had to be of the 144,000 whose selection ceased in 1935.

Apparently no new appointments were made to the WBTS and Governing Body from 1944 to 1971. After that, with the "remnant" of the 144,000 decreasing it became difficult to find replacements for Governing Body members who died.

However, the doctrine allowed for new additions to the 144,000 as replacements if someone defected. Therefore prospective Governing Body members merely announced themselves to be of the "remnant" and it was assumed that Satan had tempted someone to defect.

Governing Body represented the slave

Governing Body members, according to official doctrine, "represented" the "faithful slave" when making policy decisions, appointing elders, interpreting the Bible or otherwise "directed" the Organization. The **entire** "slave" class, not just the Governing Body, provided "spiritual food":

> Thus we see a clear Scriptural basis for saying that all anointed followers of Christ Jesus make up God's "servant," with Jesus as its Master. Accordingly, that servant, or "slave," as a collective body provides spiritual food for all the individuals of this congregation, which make up the household of "domestics." (w1981 3/1 26)

Thereforen from the 1940s onward JWs believed that "slave" members wordwide sent new spiritual information to headquarters where the Governing Body examined it to produce the publications.

In reality consultation between "remnant" and Governing Body rarely occurred. The producers of new interpretations were the officers of the WBTS — especially Rutherford from 1916 to 1941 and Frederick Franz until the 1970s, and Governing Body members since the 1970s. These often assigned others to do research and even got them to write it up but ignored more than 99% of the "remnant".

Former Governing Body member Raymond Franz wrote:

> The fact is that not even 1 percent of the number of "anointed" ones have the slightest part in determining what Jehovah's Witnesses receive in the way of Biblical material or in the forming of policy or the directing of the activities... (In Search of Christian Freedom 1991, p.154)

Faithful and Discrete Slave Can Not Be Challenged

JWs have throughout their history had to agree with their so-called "faithful slave" whether that "slave" was C.T. Russell, the WTS, the so-called "anointed remnant". Without reliance on these the Bible allegedly cannot be "properly understood" and alternative views are just "personal opinions":

> The facts show that Christ has a composite "faithful and discreet slave," the remaining ones of the body of Christ, to represent him. This slave serves as God's channel of communication. To act consistently with our baptism for life and into the Greater Noah we must submit to and cooperate with that slave and its legal instrument, the Watch Tower Society. (w1959 10/1 583)

> Thus the Bible is an organizational book and belongs to the Christian congregation as an organization, not to individuals, regardless of how sincerely they may believe that they can interpret the Bible. For this reason the Bible cannot be properly understood without Jehovah's visible organization in mind. (w1967 10/1 587)

> Let us face the fact that no matter how much Bible reading we have done, we would never have learned the truth on our own. (w1990 12/1 19)

> All who want to understand the Bible should appreciate that the "greatly diversified wisdom of God" can become known only through Jehovah's channel of communi-cation, the faithful and discreet slave. (w1994 10/1 8)

> ...a mature Christian must be in unity and full harmony with fellow believers as far as faith and knowledge are concerned. He does not advocate or insist on personal opinions or harbor private ideas when it comes to Bible understanding. Rather, he has complete confidence in the truth as it is revealed by Jehovah God through his Son, Jesus Christ, and "the faithful and discreet slave." (w2001 8/1 14)

> Since Jehovah God and Jesus Christ completely trust the faithful and discreet slave, should we not do the same? (w2009 2/15 27)

2009-2013 — Remnant demoted

The removal of Russell as "that slave" in 1927, ironically happened also to his replacement, the so-called "anointed remnant", beginning in 2009.

In 2009 *The Watchtower* announced that the "anointed" have no special insights:

> Christians who have truly received this anointing do not demand special attention. They do not believe that their being of the anointed gives them special insights... (w2009 6/15 23-24

Only a small group, the Governing Body, now has special insight:

> When the time comes to clarify a spiritual matter in our day, **holy spirit helps responsible representatives of "the faithful and discreet slave" at world headquarters** to discern deep truths that were not previously understood. (Matt. 24:45; 1 Cor. 2:13) **The Governing Body** as a whole considers adjusted explanations. (Acts 15:6) What they learn, they publish for the benefit of all." (w2010 7/15 22-23)

The 128th annual meeting of the WTS in New Jersey (2012, October 6) established this major revision:

> ...the faithful and discreet slave was appointed over Jesus' domestics in 1919. That slave is the small, composite group of anointed brothers serving at world headquarters during Christ's presence who are directly involved in preparing and dispensing spiritual food. When this group work together as the Governing Body, they act as 'the faithful and discreet slave.' (Wikipedia)

Additional comment explained that the slave had to "logically" appear after Christ's presence began in 1914. This discarded the previous logic that the "faithful slave" existed since Pentecost and was mature and spiritual because of its great age of 19 centuries. The new logic makes the "faithful slave" an unspiritual baby!

In 2013 the changes were published decisively:

- The Governing Body alone, not all of the "remnant", is the "slave" class;
- It was appointed in 1919 not 33 CE and therefore not 19 centuries old;
- The "domestics" are no longer just the "remnant" but now include the "other sheep";
- The "evil slave" can potentially be any member of the Governing Body;
- The Governing Body is put in charge of "all possessions" when they reach heaven after the start of the great tribulation. (w2013 7/15)

The Proof – "Overwhelming"

The JWs proof for identifying the, "remnant of the 144,000" as the faithful slave had been their theology or "spiritual food", regarded as "God's progressive revelations in these last days":

> The abundance of spiritual food and the amazing details of Jehovah's purposes that have been revealed to Jehovah's anointed witnesses are clear evidence that they are the ones mentioned by Jesus when he foretold a "faithful and discreet slave" class that would be used to dispense God's progressive revelations in these last days. Of this class Jesus said: "Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings." (w1964 6/15 365)

Much of this spiritual food consisted of eighty 20th-century parallels to Bible stories. They interpreted many Bible stories as "prophetic dramas" that picture events after 1918:

> OVERWHELMING CREDENTIALS
> Does the "faithful and discreet slave"class have any more credentials? Yes, an abundance of them! A partial list shows that the Christian remnant today since 1919 are referred to or represented in more than eighty Scriptural and prophetic designations. With more than eighty strokes by the finger of Biblical prophecy, the God of heaven has painted a vividly accurate portrait of his official servant class on earth. The reality of this portrait in all its divinely foreordained details stands out on the world stage for all to see. The credentials are established beyond a shadow of doubt. (w1960 7/15 437)

> The "faithful and discreet slave" has abundant credentials. Following is a partial list of Scriptural and prophetic designations applying to or being represented in the remnant of Jesus Christ's anointed followers since the notable year 1919: (w1981 3/1 27)

The prominent good guys in biblical stories such as Noah's wife, Samson, Naomi, Ruth, David, Jehu (designated king of Israel), Mordecai, Esther and many others pictured the "remnant". Secondary good guys, such as Jehu's helper Jonadab (Salvation 1939 pp 67-68) and David's friend Jonathan (Salvation 1939 pp 117, 122), who assisted the prominent good guys, pictured the "great crowd" from 1935 onward.

The bad guys such as Goliath, Haman, Philistines, Assyrians, etc, pictured groups such as the Nazis, Catholics, Catholic hierarchy, ex-JWs, Communists, big business, religion, etc. The defeat or death of the bad

guys in the Bible stories usually pictured Armageddon or preliminary events to Armagedon.

Overwhelming no more

The modern-day Samson parallel as explained in the book *Government* (1928) had Samson representing nominal Christians. His pulling down the Philistine temple represented nominal Christions pulling down all the world's governments.

This and other features of the parallel were changed a decade later. Samson in the late 1930s interpretation now pictured "the remnant". But pulling the temple down no longer pictured destroying the governments — that would be treason if JWs claimed they would do this — it now pictured destroying the doctrines of false religion!

In an updated explanation of the parallel in 1967 Samson still pictured the "faithful slave" class — the 144,000 including the 20th century remnant:

> This "slave" organization of true, devoted Christians, particularly the remnant thereof in modern times, was well typified by Samson of old. (w1967 2/15 106)

Since 2012, however, the remnant are no longer the "faithful slave" — the Governing Body alone is. Who then does Samson now picture, the Governing Body or the demoted "slave", or something else?

Many details of the "overwhelming credentials" need new clarification!

Another overwhelming credential is that the "remnant" is God's 20th-century prophet, picured by the prophet Ezekiel. The entire 400-page book *The Nations Shall Know that "I Am Jehovah"* (1971) describes parallels between Ezekiel and the "remnant":

> As regards our twentieth century, the prophet Ezekiel well pictures the anointed remnant of Jehovah's Christian witnesses since the year 1919 C.E... (The Nations Shall Know... 1971, p.53)

That book predicted the "great tribulation" (including Armageddon) for "within our 20th century" (p.216). Who now, therefore, is the falsely prophesying prophet — "remnant", Governing Body or both?

The basic stupidity of their theology of parallels is that anyone can imagine parallels. As an eight-year-old I imagined myself being like the Shadow (a fictitious crime-fighter). Other boys with whom I had disputes I mentally compared to the bad guys whom the Shadow defeated. Parallels that boost one's ego but pour dirt on others are easily imagined, even by an 8-year old!

The Governing Body Condemns The Governing Body

In a 1981 discussion of the "faithful slave", the Governing Body condemned the 2009-2013 reinterpretation as "self deception" and "spiritually damaging":

> Jehovah's Witnesses believe that this parable pertains to the one true congregation of Jesus Christ's anointed followers. Beginning with Pentecost, 33 C.E., and continuing through the 19 centuries since then, this slavelike congregation has been feeding its members spiritually, doing so faithfully and discreetly... Witnesses of Jehovah understand that the "slave" is comprised of all anointed Christians *as a group* on earth at any given time during the 19 centuries since Pentecost. Accordingly, the "domestics" are these followers of Christ as *individuals*.
>
> Some readers may feel that this is a rather sectarian view of matters. Or they may object to the idea that the "slave" and the "domestics" represent the same class, one as a composite body and the other as individuals. The objectors may argue that not all of Christ's anointed disciples have a share in preparing the spiritual food, so that perhaps the "slave" pictures only the leading ones, and the "domestics" those they serve in the congregation. There is no point in trying to force an interpretation of the parable. Self-deception is of no benefit and is spiritually damaging. Therefore, we must look to the Scriptures for an understanding. In doing this, what do we find?...
>
> Thus we see a clear Scriptural basis for saying that all anointed followers of Christ Jesus make up God's "servant," with Jesus as its Master. Accordingly, that servant, or "slave," as a collective body provides spiritual food for all the individuals of this congregation, which make up the household of "domestics."
> (w1981 3/1 24-26)

Furthermore, survival at Armageddon and everlasting life depended, at that time in 1981, on one's "treatment" of the "remnant" or "faithful slave", also called "aninted brothers of Christ":

> Your attitude to the wheat-like anointed "brothers" of Christ and the treatment you accord them will be the determining factor as to whether you go into

everlasting cutting-off" or everlasting life". (w1981 8/1 26)

The 2012 removal of the "remnant" as "faithful slave" was shocking — perhaps worst treatment than any apostates of JWs ever did to them! Thus the Governing Body of 1981 predicts "everlasting cutting off" for the Governing Body of today!

JWs doctrines are like the wind

Although JWs publications constantly describe their doctrines as "the truth", "Bible based", "revealed" and "flashes of light" from God, their truth changes like the wind whereas the Bible stays the same:

> We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. (Ephesians 4:14)

JWs beliefs, although constantly changing, are supposedly "revealed by Jehovah God". This implies infallibility, but Apostle Peter would probably call them "bombastic nonsense". (II Peter 2:18 NRSV)

(See also: *INFALLIBLE*)

FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT — QUOTATIONS FROM THE RUSSELL ERA

Below are some more quotes from WTS publications regarding "that servant" or "faithful slave class":

> Jehovah and his "messenger of the covenant," Jesus Christ, came to inspect the spiritual temple in 1918 C.E. Judgment then began with the "house of God" and a period of refining and cleansing commenced. (Mal. 3:1-3; 1 Pet. 4:17) Something else also occurred. Men manifesting the marks of an "evil slave" came forward and figuratively began 'beating' their fellow slaves. Jesus Christ had foretold how such ones would be dealt with. At the same time he showed that a "faithful and discreet slave" class would be in evidence, dispensing spiritual food.—Matt. 24:45-51.
>
> The identity of the "faithful and discreet slave," or "faithful and wise servant" (*King James Version*), was a matter of quite some concern back in those years. Much earlier, in 1881, C. T. Russell wrote: "We believe that every member of this body of Christ is engaged in the blessed work, either directly or indirectly, of giving meat in due season to the household of faith. 'Who then is that *faithful* and *wise servant* whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household,' to give them meat in due season? Is it not that 'little flock' of consecrated servants who are *faithfully* carrying out their consecration vows—the body of Christ—and is not the whole body individually and collectively, giving the meat in due season to the household of faith—the great company of believers?"
>
> So it was understood that the "servant" God used to dispense spiritual food was a class. With the passing of time, however, the idea adopted by many was that C.T. Russell himself was the "faithful and wise servant." This led some into the snare of creature worship. They felt that all the truth God saw fit to reveal to his people had been presented through Brother Russell, that nothing more could be brought forth. Annie Poggensee writes: "This caused a great sifting out of those who chose to stay back with Russell's works." In February 1927 this erroneous thought that Russell himself was the "faithful and wise servant" was cleared up. (Yearbook 1975, p.88)
>
> We believe that every member of this body of Christ is engaged in the blessed work, either directly or indirectly, of giving meat in due season to the household of faith. "Who then is that *faithful* and *wise servant* whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household," to give them meat in due season? is it not that "little flock" of consecrated servants who are *faithfully* carrying out their consecration vows — the body of Christ — and is not the whole body individually and collectively, giving the meat in due season to the household of faith — the great company of believers? (wr1881, p.291)
>
> In our examination of this text we seem to have treated the term "that servant" as though the Spirit had erred in saying "that servant" when it meant servants (plural), and we applied it to *all true servants* of God. Since then we have been met from various quarters with objections to so general an application, and the suggestion that it would be wrong to allow modesty or any other consideration, good or bad, to warp our judgment in the exposition of the inspired Word; to which proposition we agree. (wr 1896 March 1, p.946)
>
> There has arisen a witness for God and his Christ, as expositor of Bible truth, such as may be safely said has not hitherto appeared. "The question is, 'Is this man's testimony of God?" I believe it is. He claims little, but he teaches much. He teaches that the conflicting creeds of Christendom are out of harmony with God; and that even some of the most

cherished doctrines regarded as orthodox are wrong. If what this man writes is true, he is the veritable John the Baptist of this age, or at least the voice of one crying in witness to the second presence (not coming) of Jesus, the Son of God. If his interpretations are true, he is '*that servant*' now engaged in 'giving meat in due season to the household of faith.'—Matt. 24:45,46. (wr 1899 June 15, p.2489)

However much we might endeavor to apply this figure to the Lord's people collectively, the fact would still remain that the various items stated would not fit to a company of individuals. For instance, in the 42nd verse, in the common version it is rendered, *that* faithful steward; the revised version *the* faithful steward; as though a particular one were meant and the term not used indefinitely for a number … but since the servant mentioned is to dispense food to the other members of the body, his fellow-servants, the term seems to be limited to some particular individual. (wr1904 April 15, p.3356)

…he would have us understand that the appropriate message for each appropriate time or epoch in the church's experience would be sent by the Lord through a particular star or messenger whom he would particularly commission as his representative. (wr1905 June 1, p. 3570)

Mrs. Russell became very enthusiastic in my support [in 1894]. It was she who first called attention to Matt. 24:45-47, applying it to me in a meeting at Allegheny and subsequently in another meeting with the New York church. I demurred that I had not thought of the passage thus, and declined to make any personal application of it, although I could not deny the force of the argument that it pointed out "that servant," and "fellow servants" and "the household," apparently clearly and designedly distinguishing between these terms. Some little objection was aroused by her interpretation and I urged great moderation in the making of any personal application, suggesting that the WATCH TOWER rather than its editor might be considered "that servant." (wr 1906 July 15, p.3811)

Thousands of the readers of Pastor Russell's writings believe that he filled the office of "that faithful and wise servant," and that his great work was giving to the household of faith meat in due season. His modesty and humility precluded him from openly claiming this title, but he admitted as much in private conversation. (wr1916 December 1, p.5998)

THE WATCH TOWER unhesitatingly proclaims Brother Russell as "that faithful and wise servant." (w1917 3/1 57)

1920-1923 — Russell "filled the office"

In 1920 to 1922 the WTS ceased to call Russell "that servant", instead claimed he "filled the office of that faithful and wise servant":

No one in present truth for a moment doubts that Brother Russell filled the office of the "faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season." (w1920 4/1 100)

Therefore fulfilled prophecy, or physical facts, and the circumstantial evidence are conclusive proofs that Brother Russell filled the office of that faithful and wise servant. (w1922 3/1 74)

The evidence is overwhelming concerning the Lord's second presence, the time of the harvest, and that the office of "that servant" has been filled by Brother Russell… Then to repudiate him and his work is equivalent to a repudiation of the Lord. (w1922 5/1 132)

Satan has attempted by many attacks upon this fact to break it down, to cause the Lord's people to believe; (1) Brother Russell was *not* the ONLY channel to which the Lord would lead his people; and (2) that the Society in its organized capacity could not be a channel for the Lord. (w1922 9/15 279)

Satan would have such cast away much that the Lord has provided for his people and has brought forth upon his table through his wise and faithful steward. He would have them cast away "Tabernacle Shadows," the greater part of the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, to disregard all the evidence of the second presence of the LORD, and to deny, of course, that Brother Russell filled the office of the wise and faithful steward... But no true child of God will be thus deceived. (w1922 12/1 374)

Pastor Charles T. Russell, as the Laodicean messenger of the church, faithfully filled the office of that "faithful and wise servant" while here on Earth... (w1923 12/1 360)

As the 1920s progressed Russell was sidelined and the WTS was "God's channel" and occupied the "office" of "faithful servant".

The "remnant" -- the "faithful slave"

From the 1940s the JWs leaders proclaimed the remnant of the 144,000 still living on Earth as the modern-day "faithful slave" of Matthew 24:45-47. Jesus, they claimed, appointed a "faithful and wise steward class" in 33 CE. In 1919 he inspected all religions and found only the Russellites preaching the truth. He therefore appointed them as his one and only "faithful slave class" who would carry out the endtime preaching to all nations:

[14] Down through the years the slavelike congregation has been feeding its true members faithfully and discreetly. From Pentecost, A.D. 33, up to this very present hour this has been lovingly and carefully performed. Yes, and these "domestics" have been fed on progressive spiritual food that keeps them abreast of the "bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established." (Prov. 4:18) All this has proved to be "food at the proper time," as stated by Jesus. (w1960 7/15 435)

Evidences are now conclusive that Jesus Christ was enthroned in heaven in 1914 C.E. and that he accompanied Jehovah to his temple in 1918 C.E., when judgment began with the house of God. (1 Pet. 4:17) After cleansing those belonging to this house who were alive on earth, Jehovah poured out his spirit upon them and assigned them the responsibility of serving as his sole visible channel, through whom alone spiritual instruction was to come. Those who recognize Jehovah's visible theocratic organization, therefore, must recognize and accept this appointment of the "faithful and discreet slave" and be submissive to it. (w1967 10/1 590

The facts of modern history show that in the year 1919 [Jesus] revived these much afflicted disciples and gathered them together in a united body. Then he appointed them as his "slave" class "over all his belongings," that is, over all his royal interests at the earth. (w1971 12/15 750)

[20] As we now know, this watchman class of the "faithful and discreet slave" was being cleansed for still greater watchman service in the turbulent years to follow their restoration in 1919. Previously, in the spring of 1918, Jehovah came to his temple of earthly Christian servants for inspection and cleansing. (Mal. 3:1-3) The many bad ones were disfellowshiped by Him and sent away...

[21] A faithful remnant of some thousands of the "domestics" of the "faithful and discreet slave" class survived this time of testing...

[22] Now that the long-expected Kingdom had become an established reality in heaven, surely its growing interests in the earth after 1919 would not be left in the hands of a novice organization of spiritual babes. And that proved to be true. It was the 1900-year-old "faithful and discreet slave," the old Christian congregation, that was entrusted with this precious Kingdom service. Rich in its loyalty and integrity, long in its patient suffering of persecution, strong in its ancient faith in Jehovah's precious promises, confident in the leadership of its invisible Lord, Jesus Christ, obedient in its centuries-old commission to be witnesses in the earth, finally cleansed by a fiery test by 1918, the matured "slave" as represented by a remnant now stood ready for new assignments of service.

[23] Of all the so-called Christian groups following World War I, only the awake witnesses of Jehovah were prepared to undertake the heavy global commission to preach the final witness...

[24] Properly, then, to this 1900-year-old "faithful and discreet slave" with its thousands of cleansed "domestics" Jesus next says: "Truly I say to you [plural, collectively], He will appoint him over all his belongings." (Matt. 24:47) Those belongings are the interests of Christ's kingdom on earth. With practical wisdom Jesus entrusts these Kingdom interests to his veteran, proved "slave" class. Thus from 1919 forward this "slave" class, using the Watch Tower Society, has found itself in the unique position of responsibility and leadership concerning this kingdom, which it had previously heralded as to its coming, for over thirty years prior to 1914.(w1960 7/15 436-437

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that this parable pertains to the one true congregation of Jesus Christ's anointed followers. Beginning with Pentecost, 33 C.E., and continuing through the 19 centuries since then, this slavelike congregation has been feeding its members spiritually, doing so faithfully and discreetly. (w1981 3/1 24)

…their "master" appointed a collective "faithful steward" class, the body of anointed Christians on the earth since Pentecost 33 C.E. Since the "master" found the remaining ones of this body faithfully and discreetly giving out "food supplies" when he arrived for inspection

in 1919, he appointed them "over all his belongings." (Luke 12:42-44) The facts show that since 1919 this "steward" has faithfully cared for these "belongings."
The clergy of the numerous churches and sects of Christendom were not found to be distributing proper spiritual "food supplies" to Christ's "body of attendants." (w1983 9/15 20-21

It is vital thaty we appreciate this fact and respond to the directions of the 'slave' as we would the voice of God, because it is his provision. (w1957 6/15 370)

We'll see in the next paragraphs that this "voice of God" was not God's "provision" after all. Despite their age of 1900 years and appointment in 1919 by the "master", apparently Christ, they were dismissed after 2010 by the Governi ng Body.

New Doctine in 2010-2013
Slave = Governing Body since 1919

Jesus was referring, not to an individual, but to a composite "slave"—a group working together as one body. Jesus said that the slave (1) is appointed to a supervisory role "over [the master's] domestics" and (2) gives the domestics spiritual "food at the proper time."

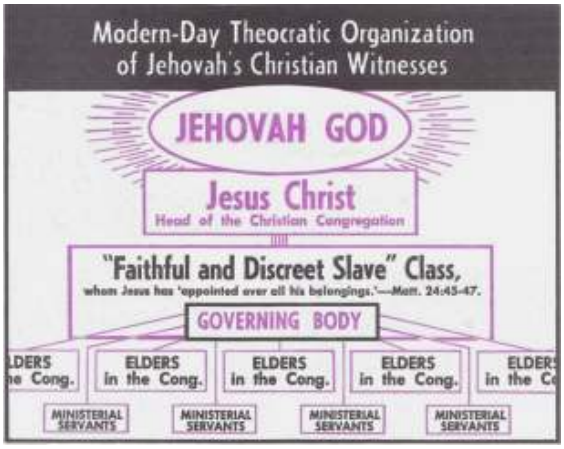
From 1919 on, there has always been a small group of anointed Christians at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses. They have supervised our worldwide preaching work and have been directly involved in preparing and dispensing spiritual food. In recent years, that group has been closely identified with **the Governing Body** of Jehovah's Witnesses.

The evidence points to the following conclusion: "The faithful and discreet slave" was appointed over Jesus' domestics in 1919. That slave is the small, composite group of anointed brothers serving at world headquarters during Christ's presence who are directly involved in preparing and dispensing spiritual food. When this group work together as the Governing Body, they act as "the faithful and discreet slave." (w2013 7/15)

A hierarchical position demolished

This picture below of hierarchical positions in the JWs Organization appeared in w1971 12/15 749.

Notice that the Faithful Slave Class is above the Governing Body. Many critics of JWs argued that this official hierarchical structure was misleading because the "slave" had virtually no authority and gave little or no input to doctrine and prophecy.



And the critics were right. A similar picture in w2013 4/15 depicts the relative level of authority in "The Earthly Part of Jehovah's Organization" and lists:

1. The Governing Body
2. Branch Committees
3. Traveling overseers
4. Bodies of elders
5. Congregations
6. Individual publishers

The "slave Class" and "anointed remnant", which previously was also "God's prophet", is missing. The revised hierarchical structure lists the Governing Body directly below Jehovah and Jesus. The entire slave class, more than 19 centuries old, the exclusive channel through which God supplied Bible truth, is absent, discarded.

FAITHFUL SERVICE
Service of anyone who works or preaches for the JWs Organization for many years and is always obedient.

FALKLAND ISLANDS
Publishers and Memorial attendance on the Falkland Islands and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
2015	11	258	26	109
2016	12	243	19	153
2017	11	265	23	127
2018	15	194	24	121
	Av.			
2019	14	214	31	104
2020	14	214	17	176
2021	14	286	17	235
2022	16	250	20	200
2023	12	333	16	250
2024	10	400	21	190
2025	7	571	18	222

The 2023 publishers-total is the peak for the year, but the ratio is based on the average.

FALL OF BABYLON (Revelation 18:2)
The "fall of Babylon" in the first instance was the Medo-Persian conquest of Babylon in 539 BCE.

In *The Watchtower*'s second fulfillment of this event "the fall of Babylon" was God's rejection of Christendom and its loss of favour in1878. (The Finished Mystery 1917, 273)

This was reinterpreted and the "fall of Babylon" then meant:

> … the beginning of the downfall of ecclesiasticism which began in Russia in 1918. (Millions 1920, 114)

A further reinterpretation made the "fall of Babylon" refer to the release of Rutherford and seven accomplices from the Atlanta Federal Penitentiart in 1919. (The Nations Shall Know… 1971, 300) [See also: *BABYLON'S FALL*]

FALL OF BABYLON, THE (1918)
A condenced version of *The Finished Mystery* (1917) with the prophetic dates removed.

FALSE CHRISTS (Matthew 24:3, 5, 23-26)
Interpreted by JWs as political/economic systems:

> Not particularly in the form of individual men, but in political and economic systems… (w1974 12/15 761)

FALSE PROPHECY
See: *PROPHECY; DATES*

FALSE PROPHETS
A false prophet is someone who claims to speak for God but whose counsel is faulty and whose predictions fail to come true.

Nations, according to JWs, can also be false prophets. The false prophet of Revelation 16:13-16 "…means the nations claiming to speak with divine authority…" (Deliverance 1926, 273-274)

Men whose predictions fail are "false prophets" even though they may not have called themselves prophets:

> Any prophet whose message tends to turn people against God and his Word or to plant doubts in their hearts, or who denies or contradicts the Word of God, is a false prophet…
>
> The true prophet of God *today* will be telling forth what the Bible teaches, and those things that the Bible tells are soon to come to pass. He will not be sounding forth man-made theories or guesses, either his own or those of others…
>
> In the New Testament, and in our day, with word "prophet" has a thought similar to that of our word "teacher", in the sense of a public expounder. Hence when the term "false prophet" is used, we shall get the correct thought if we think of a false teacher…
>
> The false prophets of our day are the financial, political and clerical prognosticators. They assume to foretell future events; but their dreams or guesses never come true and are always contrary to the teachings of God's holy prophets. Let us note some examples of false teachings which are contrary to the teachings of Jesus and his apostles and which are put forth by the three classes just mentioned; namely, politicians, clerics and financiers…
>
> In 1914-1918 these same three classes told the whole world that the great world war would end all wars and make the world safe for democracy... Their prophecies did not come true. Therefore, they are false prophets; and the people should no longer trust them as safe guides... (w1930 5/15 155-156)

Franz taught that false predictions make the person "guilty of false prophesying":

> True, there have been those in times past who predicted an end to the world, even announcing a specific date. Some have gathered groups of people with them and fled to the hills or withdrawn into their houses waiting for the end. Yet, nothing happened. The end did not come. <u>They were guilty of false prophesying</u>. Why? What was missing? Missing was the full measure of evidence required in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Missing from such people were God's truths and the evidence that he was guiding and using them. (g1968 10/8 23)
>
> Sometime between April 16 and 23, 1957, Armageddon will sweep the world! Millions of persons will perish in its flames and the land will be scorched.' So prophesied a certain California pastor, Mihran Ask, in January 1957. Such false prophets tend to put the subject of Armageddon in disrepute. (w1958 10/15 613)

The JWs leaders, however, claim to be different because God guides them, they teach "Bible truth", and their organization is:

> …the only organization on earth that understands the deep things of God. (w1973 7/1 402)

Yet the WTS has published false predictions for close to 30 dates including that Armagedon would occur in the 20th century. (See: *ERROR; DATES; PROPHECY*) Therefore the JWs leaders are "guilty of false prophesying".

Householders sometimes call JWs false prophets, but it is the leaders, Russell, Rutherford, and today the Governing Body, who do the actual prophesying. Most JWs merely publicise WTS material. Some know it is false which makes them colluders; others act in ignorance or on trust, which makes them victims.

FALSE PROPHETS IDENTIFIED 2

When predicting, in the book *The Nations Shall Know*... (1971), the destruction of all religions "within our twentieth century", the JWs leaders also predicted that they will not be "a false prophet". (pp 216, 286)

This prediction that they won't be false became itself false when Armageddon failed to occur in the twentieth century.

"False prophet" is what JWs call Christian ministers:

> Many false prophets have arisen to deceive the people; and particularly among these are the clergy. (Government 1928, 174)

> The false prophets and prophetesses and false Christs are all classed together, and include the clergy, male and female, the political and financial predictors, and those who have received some truth and become unfaithful to their covenant…

> These false prophets speak their own mind and conclusions, and claim the Lord for their authority, when the Lord has not authorized them to speak… They have spoken their own wisdom, and not the Word of God, and are therefore the most reprehensible before God and the greatest reason for the trouble that is coming upon "Christendom". They have taken their stand against the Lord and against his anointed, and for this reason God will not permit them to stand in the day of his battle at Armageddon. (w1938 9/1 270-271)

> A false prophet is one who claims to speak for God but does not. (g1940 9/4 16)

Rutherford's words, "These false prophets speak their own mind and conclusions, and claim the Lord for their authority", perfectly describe Russell and himself and the Governing Body. The JWs leaders can bluff and boast and get away with it because they:

- Keep their followers too busy to research the the history of the sect;
- Publish ever more publications to replace previous publications;
- Excommunicate followers who uncover the ever-changing "Bible truth" to stop them from informing other JWs;
- Order JWs to never obtain or read literature published by other religions;
- Discourage direct Bible study, relacing it with the study of WTS books which allegedly explain the Bible;
- Threaten that "disloyal" ones will be executed at Armgeddon and this event is "imminent".

The Prophet of JWs is the "remnant"

The JWs leaders have not openly claimed the title of "prophet" for themselves, but teach that the remnant of the 144,000, appointed as the "faithful slave" in 1919, is collectively God's modern day prophet:

> However, Jehovah, did not let the people of Christendom, as led by the clergy, go without being warned… He had a "prophet" to warn them. This "prophet" was not one man, but was a body of men and women. It was the small group of footstep followers of Jesus Christ, known at that time as International Bible Students. Today they are known as Jehovah's Christian witnesses. (w1972 4/1 197)

> As regards our twentieth century, the prophet Ezekiel well pictures the anointed remnant of Jehovah's Christian witnesses since the year 1919 C.E… (The Nations Shall Know... 1971, p.53)

> Who is Ezekiel's present day counterpart, whose message and conduct correspond with that of that ancient prophet of Jehovah? Of whom today was he a "sign" or "portent"? Not of some individual man, but of a group of people. Being made up of a unified company of persons, the modern Ezekiel is a composite personage, made up of many members… (ibid p.58)

Apparently the dismissal of the "remnant of the 144,000" as the "faithful slave" in 2012 also dismissed them as God's "prophet".

Jesus

JWs have promoted 140 years of confusion on the identity of the faithful slave not counting their confusion in countless other topics! Jesus implied that the "faithful slave" is every and any Christian who faithfully serves other Christians. (Luke 12:48) It's easy to grasp. Probably only JWs still get it wrong after repeatedly revising it for 140 years!!

FALSE RELIGION

JWs regard all other religious faiths as "a product of Satan". (w1984 10/15 12)

The number of occurrences of "true" and "false" phrases on Watchtower Library CD (2007) include:

- True religion 1247
- False religion 2756
- True worship 2810
- False worship 646
- True Christianity 763
- False Christianity 14

Among JWs the phrase "false religion" refers to all the world's other religions collectively. JWs speak of "false religion", "false worship", "false creeds of Christendom" and "false doctrine". JWs themselves allegedly have "true religion", "true worship", "true docrine", etc.

To JWs "true worship" and "true Christianity" refers to accurate understanding of the Bible plus adherence to its moral teachings:

> True religion is based upon divine revelation, not upon 'the varieties of human experience.' First and foremost, it revolves around the interests of the Creator, not around the 'topics that of greatest concern to man.' False religion, on the other hand, like philosophy, is based on human experience and puts human interests uppermost. (g1989 10/8 21)

> ...true worship does not emphasize ritualistic ceremonies. Though it does involve regular association with other worshipers, it also embraces every other aspect of one's life. It is a pattern for living, a *way of life*. That is why the Bible speaks of true Christianity as "The Way" and "the way of the truth." (w1976 4/1 214)

> So, from the beginning, we find as hallmarks of true worship insistence on sexual morality and respect for marriage. This is even involved in the Bible's concern for property rights and condemnation of stealing... Firm adherence to such divine morality has consistently identified true religion. We can ask, How does our worship of God compare with that? (w1978 4/15 12)

Logic

In logic the notions of truth and falsity apply to individual statements and assertions. The statement "Males are on average taller than females" is either true or false. From this notion of true and false it is meaningless to call a religion "true" or "false" unless the phrase "false religion" means "Many of the statements made by that religion are erroneous." Similarly the phrase "true religion" might be a short way of saying "Most of the statements made by that religion are correct."

Calling a religion "false" would then amount to a statistical claim that a high percentage of its claims and beliefs are mistaken.

However, it is difficult to get objective statistics on the number of errors taught in various religions. A provisional estimate for WTS literature is that the older publications average one statement every four pages that JWs no longer agree with. The total for the first 100 years would be many thousands of statements that JWs would now consider false. This identifies JWs as a "false religion".

(See: *ERRORS*)

FALSE SHEPHERDS

A JWs description of ministers and leaders in Christian denominations and sometimes of leaders in all other religions:

> The false shepherds of Babylon have not fed or cared for these sheep. (Yearbook 1985, 64)

FALSE TEACHERS

A JWs label for ministers, pastors, priests and elders of other religions.

FAMILY BOMBER

A bomb exploded at a Kingdom Hall in the Sydney suburb of Casula in 1985 killing one man and injuring 13 others.

In 1980-1985 Leonard Warwick (1946-2025) committed three murders and other violent attacks, targeting mainly Family Court judges and their families, over a custody battle with his wife.

The Kingdom Hall became a target because its

members had helped Warwick's ex wife move away from Sydney after she moved out of the family home. (Panagopoulos 2025)

FAMILY HEAD
Russell's teaching about the husband as head of the house is still accepted by JWs.

Headship does not imply tyranny or that "man is a master and woman is slave". Rather headship implies "a responsibility, a charge, a care, a provision". It signifies: "a special care, as provider, foreseer, arranger, protector, guide, example."

Successful headship without excessive conflict required that: "…no woman marry a man beneath her in character and talents." (Studies VI, 491-500)

FAMILY MURDERS and KILLINGS
JWs killing other JWs, including members of their own family, is not something the sect advertises. Whether killing or murder is as common among JWs as the general public is unknown. The official teaching is that JWs are the best, most law-abiding, people in the world.

A few examples, summarized from reports found on the Worldwide web, follow. The list is not comprehensive or thorough, but merely a sample of what has occurred.

Jehovah's Witness Charged With Murder By Neglect (1947)

The Canberra Times (29 March, 1947, page 3) reported: "Police said that Quinn told them he could not get medical aid for his mother, because of his interest in Jehovah's Witnesses."
The man's mother had starved to death in her bed.

https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/2711110

Murder conviction upheld (1990/2004)

William Carlson was charged with first-degree murder in the 1990 shooting deaths of his parents, when he was 18, and pleaded guilty in 1992 and sentenced to 90 years in Stateville Correctional Center in Joliet. The conviction was upheld in 2004.

Carlson's parents were JWs and he had feared getting in trouble because he sold some of his father's gold collection

https://jwdivorces.bravehost.com/molestation1.html

Murdered her baby (1997)

Racquel Phifer served about 10 years at the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women for the second-degree murder of her baby.

Her background included being raped at age 11, failure at high school, and undiagnosed mental illnesses.

She had sex before marriage, which would have horrified her devout JWs parents, therefore she concealed the pregnancy, gave birth alone at home, and got rid of the body in garbage.

Police also found suicide letters which Phifer wrote after being raped at age 11 by a male relative.

Google: "Racquel Nicole Phifer"

Killed wife, children and 12 others (1999)

Mark Orrin Barton (1955-1999) of Stockbridge, Georgia, killed 12 people at two Atlanta trading firms, making him Atlanta's greatest mass murderer. Prior to the shooting spree he murdered his second wife and two children with hammer blows. Barton was a "day trader" and, judging from notes left with the bodies of his wife and children, was reacting to his recent financial losses.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1999_Atlanta_day_trading_firm_shooting#Killing_spree

---

Woman drowned newborn son (1999)

California JW mother Donna Michelle Knight was sentenced 15 years to life in prison for the second-degree murder of her newborn son by drowning him in a toilet.

The Prosecutor had argued that the unmarried woman had kept her pregnancy secret, then killed her newborn baby intentionally, because her church regards sexual relations outside marriage as grounds for excommunication

https://ssristories.net/archive/show3199.html?item=344
Or Google Donna Michelle Knight

Murder of 12-year-old daughter (2001)

Larry Slack, 46, was convicted of the first-degree murder of Laree Slack in 2001 at the family's home, and found guilty of aggravated battery of Laree's younger brother.

The violence started because Laree and her five siblings could not find a lost credit card.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_of_Laree_Slack
For more reports Google: "Laree Slack"

Christian Longo (2001)

Christian Longo (b. 1974), a JW in Oregon, suffered from financial problems, killed his wife and three children, and fled to Mexico but was recognized, arrested and taken back to the USA.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Longo
Google also: "Christian Longo"

JW murdered wife (2002)

JW tow-truck driver, Kevin Hensley strangled his wife of 22 years, Nancy, aged 45, in their Boston bedroom in 2002.

They had two sons and two daughters, and had been separated several weeks when he beat her and choked her to death.

https://www.jehovahs-witness.com/topic/94560/more-demented-jw-murders-news
Or Google "Kevin Hensely jw"

Family of six found dead (2002)

Robert Bryant (1964-2002) of Oregon (USA) shot his wife, four children, ages 9 to 15, and then himself inside their home.

A former neighbour said the Bryants were JWs. Robert Bryant got into an argument over the Bible three years earlier, when the family lived in California, resulting in being shunned by other JWs including relatives.

https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/a-familys-new-life-ends-in-bloodshed/article1022155/

https://murderpedia.org/male.B/b/bryant-robert.htm

Shot self and son (2003)

Carl Dennis Mackey, 41, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, fatally shot himself and his 12-year old son after an argument with his wife.

Google: "Carl Dennis Mackey"

Killed mother, wife and son (2004)

Martin Kracht, 24, was newly disfellowshipped when he strangled his mother, and killed his wife Vinese Bell-Kracht (21) and his infant son, at his mother's home.

Martin Kracht was baptized by JWs two years earlier. His wife left him after recurring domestic abuse.

Google: "Martin Kracht" or "Martin Kracht jw"

Armageddon and Drugs (2005)

From age 4 Antonie Dixon grew up on stories of demons, Armageddon, and a new world order.

At age 34, after a methamphetamine binge he sliced off the right hand of his girlfriend and the left hand of a former girlfriend with a samurai sword in the New Zealand village of Pipiroa, and then shot dead a stranger.

Dixon was a career criminal with 160 convictions since he was 15, yet was considered likeable and had two children with a former partner.

Apparently committed suicide in prison.

For multiple reports Google: "Antonie Dixon"

JW man shoots wife and self (2005)

Bronx man Julio Lopez, 45, accused his wife, Sharoll Medina, of straying from the faith and gunned her down and then killed himself.

http://www.nydailynews.com/2005/11/02/jehovahs-witness-kills-wife-himself/

JW man burns girlfriend (2006)

Lester Parson, 49, was a JW regarded as "a nice, quiet, easygoing guy".

He visited his girlfriend, Tanya Hughey, at the Mobil petrol station where she worked, bought some petrol, doused her with it, and lit a match.

Parson was in the Palm Beach County Jail infirmary with severe burns when a blood clot moved to his lungs, and he died.

Hughey had third-degree burns over 90 percent of her body and also died.

Google: "lester parson tanya hughey"

Man killed wife and daughters (2006)

Eloy Leon Kings was a well-liked, devout, respected man in his JWs community, a loving husband and father.

One morning after reading his Bible he cut the throat of his 8 year old daughter, then stabbed his wife repeatedly, and cut the throats of his two younger daughters (of whom one survived), and cut his own throat but also survived.

Google: "eloy leon kings jw"

Disassociated wife killed (2007)

Eugena Smith, 33, was found murdered in her bedroom in June, 2007. A 5-page letter addressed to the WTS of JWs, stating she was leaving the church, was found on the floor.

Her estranged husband, was charged for first-degree murder…

http://www.jehovahs-witness.net/jw/friends/176202/1/Murdered-woman-left-5-pg-letter-disassociating-herself-Husband-on-Trial

---

Devout JW murdered his wife (2008)

In 2008, after 20 years of marriage, Kelle Lee Jarka fractured his wife's head with a blunt object to collect $1.3 million in life insurance, covered the crime by staging a burglary, and was convicted in 2009 for first-degree murder. He was a "devout Jehovah's Witness".

https://abcnews.go.com/2020/kelle-jarka-accused-wifes-murder/story?id=9115145

Also Google: "Kelle Lee Jarka"

Beheaded infant (2009)

A 33-year-old Texas woman, described as a "devout Jehovah's Witness" but diagnosed with schizophrenia, confessed to decapitating her infant son and eating part of his body.

First Assistant District Attorney Cliff Herberg said: "You can still be prosecuted if you have some form of mental illness… The question is whether or not you know your act is wrong."

https://www.seattlepi.com/national/article/Texas-woman-accused-of-beheading-eating-infant-1305342.php

---

Religious Man Jailed for Life (2009)

Kenneth Pickett pleaded guilty to the murder of the mother of his 13 children, and was sentenced to life in jail.

The WA Supreme Court was told Pickett is a Jehovah's Witness and an extremely religious man.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-07-02/murder-victim-andrea-picketts-family-sues-wa/5566736

Man Strangles Wife (2009)

Rodolfo Ortega, a 47-year old JW and welder, confessed to police to killing his wife after a Sunday morning argument and was charged with second-degree murder…

http://jwdivorces.bravehost.com/familicide2.html

Shunned JW killed husband, Two adult children and herself

Lauren Stuart suffered from "mental scars from alleged sexual abuse as a child … by a relative", ostracism by her JW church, and depression. She had left JWs but apparently still believed as indicated in a suicide note: "I killed my family because I know my death would stumble them. At least now they will not suffer and will be resurrected into love forever in peace."

https://www.freep.com/story/news/2018/05/18/keego-harbor-murder-suicide-lauren-stuart/620709002/

Killed his wife, then himself (2022)

A murder-suicide of two former JWs of Thornton, Colorado, on Christmas Day. The man earlier threw a "bomb-like device through a widow" of the Kingdom Hall causing only minor burning. Afterwards shot his wife, then himself.

https://www.cbsnews.com/news/thornton-colorado-jehovah's-witness-kingdom-hall-investigation/

Hamburg Shooting; Seven killed 2023

Seven were shot dead at a JWs meeting in Hamburg, including an unborn baby and the shooter, a former JW who shot himself.

https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-64910415

Murder of mother of five (2023)

The pair had met 15 years earlier "as members of the same Jehovah's Witness congregation" in Australia. They reconnected through Facebook but he felt betrayed when she wouldn't leave her fiancé.

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-12-04/clifford-neuman-sentenced-to-20-years-in-jail/104683718

Child killers may be seeking Paradise for them

Are some JW killers of family members, particularly of children, trying to get them into paradise and everlasting life?

JWs believe that only their sect, and only those members who remain faithful, will survive Armageddon which is always "imminent", "at hand" and "very near". Anyone not of their faith will be killed:

> Jehovah and his Son, Jesus Christ, truly want all kinds of people to have the opportunity to learn Bible truth.... As a result, they become members of an international brotherhood known for cleanness and good manners, the worldwide congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. In harmony with Ephesians 4:24, these sincere Christians have "put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." Soon the world will be filled with such people because <u>these will be the only ones who will survive and live forever</u>. (w1999 6/15 6)
>
> If we want to survive Armageddon we must remain spiritually alert and keep the symbolic garments that identify us as faithful Witnesses of Jehovah God. (w1999 12/1 18)

According to official JWs doctrine, people who die prior to Armageddon, and therefore are not directly executed by God's angels will be resurrected (restored to bodily life) in the "paradise earth." JWs who leave the sect and survive until Armageddon will, according to their doctrine, die at Armgeddon and perish forever.

Therefore some JWs might reason that the surest way to get their children into "God's new world" is to kill them and let God wake them up after Armageddon. A bonus would be that killed children would also avoid the stresses and anxieties of life in the current "Satan-controlled" world.

Evidence that some JW killers of children may have their children's salvation in mind is a letter left by Mark Barton in 1999:

> I killed Leigh Ann [his wife] because she was one of the main reasons for my demise… I know that Jehovah will take care of all of them in the next life... Please know that I love Leigh Ann, Matthew and Mychelle with all my heart. If Jehovah's willing I would like to see them all again in the resurrection to have a second chance. I don't plan to live very much longer, just long enough to kill as many of the people that greedily sought my destruction. (Wikipedia)

Also, quoted above is Lauren Stuart who killed her family and wrote: "At least now they will not suffer and will be resurrected … forever in peace."

The JWs publications have never stated that children could be "saved" by killing them. It is, however, an inference that some JWs have made from their theology about salvation.

Blood transfusions are a special case. JWs believe that an adult's death from rejecting a needed transfusion, or letting a child die from not getting one, exhibits a faith that will lead to resurrection in "God's new world".

A case that went to trial occurred in Australia in 1959-1960. Alvin Jehu and wife refused an exchange transfusion for their baby which

suffered from severe jaundice. Mr Jehu was interviewed after the trial:

> "The welfare of the child is a parent's God-given right," he said.
> If the doctors did give a blood transfusion against his wishes it would be their sin.
> "If I consented to a transfusion the baby would not be resurrected," he said.
> "But if it was done against my will I believe it would be resurrected."
> (Victorian Truth, April 2, 1960)

From these beliefs it appeared reasonable to let his baby die.

FAR ALONG
"Far along" is another phrase employed in WTS publications to "spur" JWs to increase their preaching. Here are some examples:

> ...this old world is now **far along** in its "appointed time of the end" (w1958 11/1 657)

> The evidence that we are **far along** in the "last days" can be either good news or bad news to you, depending on the position you take. (g1968 10/8 23)

> 1914 was the start of what the Bible calls "the last days." The last days of what? Not of the earth, nor of the human race. But the last days of the present world system that is ruining the earth. When will this time period end and the foretold destruction come? As recorded at Matthew 24:34, Jesus answered: "Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur." The generation seeing the start of "the sign" in 1914 is now **far along** in years. Time is obviously running out! (Kingdom News, No. 16, 1973, Is Time Running Out for Mankind? p.3)

> Since this work of sealing spiritual Israel is evidently **far along**, exciting events soon to happen are portended. For one thing, "the great tribulation," when the four winds of destruction are let loose upon the earth, must be very near. (w1995 2/15 20)

"Far along" could imply that most of the period called "the last days" or "time of the end", as counted from 1914, has passed. If so then the first two quotes, from 1958 and 1968, are already false predictions because more time has passed since 1958 and 1968 than prior.

FAROE ISLANDS
Publishers and Memorial attendance on the Faroe Islands (situated in the North Atlantic) and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	55	701		
1975	77	525		
1980	70	618	116	373
1985	94	483	148	307
1990	122	393	188	255
1995	91	489	137	325
2000	74	606	105	427
2005	88	548	119	405
2010	124	392	175	278
2015	119	421	192	261
2016	134	358	203	236
2018	123	413	170	299
	Ave.			
2019	127	409	235	221
2020	126	421	170	312
2021	128	414	179	296
2022	131	412	184	293
2023	132	417	187	294
2024	133	414	197	279
2025	122	451	181	304

FASCISM OR FREEDOM? (1939)
Booklet by Rutherford.

FAST APPROACHING
A phrase used regularly to remind JWs of Armageddon's nearness. To JWs Aramgeddon is always "fast approaching" although every date for it has failed:

> They cry unto God amid this earth's present distress and particularly in view of the great Armageddon storm that is **fast approaching**, and he hears them and shows his mercy toward them. (w1946 9/1 271)

> What all this means is that we are **fast approaching** the end of this lawless system of things. (g1968 1/8 19)

> The time is now very near for the arrival of Jehovah's "new earth". The alarm is sounding, signaling the **fast-approaching** destruction of this wicked system of things by God's hand. The opportunity to take in life-giving knowledge from God's Word is still before you like the open door of the ark built by Noah before the Flood. But it will soon swing shut. Therefore, now is the time to show that you really want life. (Zephaniah 2:2, 3) Use the remaining time wisely so that when time finally runs out for this system you will be one who has the happy prospect of survival. (g1984 10/22 11)

> The time is now very near for the arrival of Jehovah's "new earth". The alarm is

sounding, signaling the **fast-approaching** destruction of this wicked system of things by God's hand. (g1984 10/22 11)

The *parousia* or presence, of Christ has now run for 70 years, and his "coming" for "Jehovah's day" of execution against Satan's world is **fast approaching**... (w1984 12/1 19)

FAST RUNNING OUT
Another phrase the Governing Body uses to scare JWs into being zealous in preaching, generous with donations, and obedient:

They are asleep to the fact that the **time is fast running out** for this old wicked system of things and that they must get out of it if they would not go down with it. (w1953 10/1 579)

This means that **time is fast running out**. (g1969 4/22 19)

Satan himself knows that his days as world ruler are **fast running out**. (w2001 10/15 6)

FATE
JWs opposes the notions of fate and predestination. They believe an individual's future — whether salvation or destruction — is not predetermined but chosen.

FAULT
When WTS publications discuss problems within Christian churches they sometimes ask, "Whose fault is this?" Their answer is:

The clergymen are to blame... (w1963 1/1 26)

When it comes to problems in JWs — such as failed prophecies, joylessness, defection and child abuse — the JWs leaders never accept blame despite possessing power and control so extreme and absolute that few clergymen can compare.

FAULTFINDER
A pejorative term for defectors and others who question the rightness of anything taught by the WTS.

FAVOR
Jews collectively had 1,845 years of "favor" ending 33 CE followed by 1,845 years of disfavor ending 1878. Then "favour" began to return. (Three Worlds 1877, 93; Comfort for the Jews 1925, 74-77)

In 1931 JWs discarded this doctrine of favor returning to Jews. They ceased to take Bible predictions about Israe's restoration and future properity literally, and claimed that these prophecies are fulfilled in the 20th century history of the "remnant" and the JWs Organization.

The "favor" since 1931 that JWs are interested in is obedience to the JWs leaders. Obedience to the leaders results in being "favoured" with "accurate knowledge", "holy spirit", joy, and success at witnessing.

FAVORED PEOPLE (1934)
Booklet by Rutherford. The "favoured people" were his followers — JWs.

FEAR
Rutherford argued:

The leaders have frightened the sincere ones into believing that if they leave the church organizations it will be disastrous for them. Therefore the timid ones stay in the churches because of fear induced by what the clergy tell them. They are virtually prisoners, and the Scriptures designate them as "prisoners". (Righteous Ruler 1934, 33)

This supposed situation in other religions reads like a blueprint for the situation in Rutherford's Organization. Rutherford's doctrine of Armageddon which is always only "months" or a "few years", and will kill everyone who deserts his organization, "frightened" many timid JWs into staying.

FEAR
Besides their fear of Armageddon JWs also fear:

<u>Worldly People</u>
Relationships, friendships or socializing with non-JWs is discouraged and criticized as getting involved with "bad associations." The Watchtower teaches that everything outside the Organisation is controlled by Satan, therefore non-JWs are a spiritual threat to be avoided as much as possible.

<u>Close Relationships</u>
Even among themselves JWs fear close relationships because if one confides too much to a close friend, such as a doubt or discovery of false predictions in WTS books, the friend will tell this to the elders. JWs are under instructions from the Governing Body to expose anyone who expresses disloyalty or admits to committing a sin.

Satan and the Demons
To the JW mind, everything in the world outside the Organisation is demonized. Demon influence can stick to objects and books previously owned by "apostates" or by people of other religions and will enter the mind of any JW who acquires these previously owned objects. Demon influence can also come through television programs, religious meetings of other religions, songs on radio, and study courses in college or university.

Publications of other religions
JWs refuse to accept publications from other religions. They assume that one viewpoint, the Governing Body's, is sufficient and that in any disapreement the other side is always wrong and demonic. JWs are also fear the websites of other religions especially websites of ex members. Rather than defend the JWs position against criticism the Governing Body instills fear.

Doubt
JWs view their religion as "The Truth" but have seen people leaving "the truth", often expressing doubts about the WTS prior to leaving. JWs therefore fear doubt and therefore fear looking into anything that might produce doubt including their own older publications.

Leaving the Organisation
JWs fear leaving their Organization even when its false prediction, thousands of revisions to its theology, and lies to cover these things up, are exposed. The consequences of leaving would include being shunned, rejected by family and "friends", isolation, the loss of one's entire emotional support system. JWs don't know how to study the Bible independently because their "truth" has always come second-hand from the WTS leaders via the WTS publications. They also fear going to other religions since these have always been presented as deceived by Satan. Leaving the JWs Organization therefore means to be set adrift to sort out all reality alone from scratch without knowing how to proceed. It's a terrifying prospect which sometimes leads to suicide.

Fear of Armageddon
The threat of destruction at Armageddon is constantly drummed into the minds of JWs. Annihilation at Armageddon is always "very close", "fast approaching", "imminent", "at a hand", etc.

Fear of the Elders
JW elders regard suspiciously anyone who shows independence. The elders have the power to form a Judicial Committee which can put a JW on trial in secret sessions and disfellowship them.

FEAR OF MAN
Derogatory phrase applied to persons who obey men other than the JWs leaders in matters of religion or politics. Often we read:

> Jehovah's Witnesses do not succumb to fear of man. (w1984 10/15 13)

However, whenever the JWs leaders alter their doctrines or make excuses for failed predictions the majority of JWs remain silent and conform. It is due to the fear of excommunication, a type of "fear of man".

FEET MEMBERS
Christ's physical body allegedly represented Christians throughout the ages. The "feet members" were the final members of the 144,000 from 1878 who would be whisked off the Earth up to heaven by 1914. (Studies III, 236-239)

The phrase continued in use until the 1940s. (w1940 1/1 6, 9)

FEKEL, C.J. (1897-1977)
Governing Body member appointed in 1974, who was born in Bohemia of Lutheran and Catholic background.

The family immigrated to USA in 1905. Fekel heard Russell speak on *To Hell and Back* and was baptized 1916. He became a WTS colporteur in 1917, was rrested 1918, colporteured again in 1919, and entered service at Brooklyn Bethel in 1921.

FERENZ, CAROL (1940-2004)
Carol Ferenz turned down a blood transfusion after her 42-year-old, mentally ill son stabbed her with a kitchen knife on December 31, 2003 in their Greenwich (New York) home.

Stephen Ferenz was charged with assault but authorities considered charging him with homicide. The cause of death was blood loss from stab wounds, but death would likely have been prevented with a blood transfusion.

In a Californian case in 1998 a drunken driver hit Jadine Russell, a JW, who died after rejecting blood. The driver blamed the death on Jadine's religious faith but was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 10 yhears.
https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/prison-folio/conversations/topics/1999?var=1

FERULI, ROLF JOHANN (1942-)



From Wikipedia

A Norwegian academic JW, professor emeritus in Semitic languages at the University of Oslo until he retired in 2011.

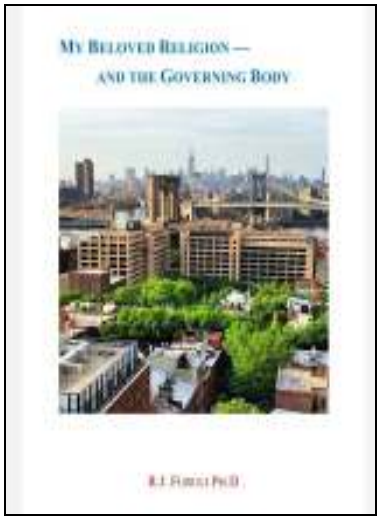
He writes: "I have taught courses in Akkadian, Aramaic, Ethiopic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Syriac, and Ugaritic. I have translated documents from the mentioned languages and Sumerian into Norwegian."

Feruli served as a district overseer in the 1970s and has attempted to support JWs beliefs academically, authoring (among other academic works) the following books:

- 1999 *The Role of Theology and Bias in Bible Translation with a special look at the New World Translation of Jehovah's Witnesses*, Elihu Books
- 2002 – *Science and Bible translation — "Christianizing" and "mythologizing" of the Hebrew text of the Bible*
- 2006 – *A New Understanding of the Verbal System of Classical Hebrew — An attempt to distinguish between pragmatic and semantic factors*
- 2012 *Assyrian, Babylonian, Egyptian and Persian Chronology Compared with the Chronology of the Bible*... Volumes 1 & 2, Second edition, Awatu Publishers
- 2011 – *The Role of Theology and Bias in Bible Translation With a Special Look at the New World Translation of Jehovah's Witnesses, Second edition*, Stavern, Norway: Awatu Publishers
- 2017 – *When Was the Book of Daniel Written? A Philological, Linguistic, and Historical approach*, Awatu Publishers

Furuli has defended the religious views of JWs including the ban on blood transfusions and that the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 607 BC instead of the historical date 586 BCE.

In 2020 Furuli was disfellowshipped from JWs after he published the book *My Beloved Religion and the Governing Body*.



In this book he claims that the core doctrines and biblical chronology of JWs are correct but the authority of the Governing Body is excessive and unbiblical: "the present governing Body has no biblical legacy and should be dissolved."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolf_Furuli
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolf_Furuli#/media/File:RolfFuruli-bw

FESTIVALS OF THE JEWS

The ancient Israelites held three great festivals annually:

- Festival of unfermemted (unleavened) cakes: Seven-day festival from Nisan 15-21 (commencing the day after the Passover).
- Festival of Weeks: Held on the 50th day after Nisan 16. (Leviticus 23:15-21).The Jewish high priest, on the 50th day, waved two loaves baked from the first new-harvest grain, as a "wave offering" to God.
- Festival of Tabernacles (or Booths): Seven-day festival held in the 7th month — Tishri 15-21 — to celebrate the fruit harvest and also remember the Exodus from Egypt. It was also called the Festival of ingathering. (Deuteronomy 16:16; Exodus 23:16-17)

Christian parallels

The New Testament assigns Christian parallels to these festivals.

Unleavened cakes represents Christians giving up "wickedness" and living with sincerity and truth. (1 Corinthians 5:6-8)

The Festival of Weeks has Christian parallels in Pentecost (the 50th day after Christ's resurrection). Pentecost began the Christian "harvest" — the two loaves the high priest waved may have a counterpart in Christianity "havesting" both Jews and Gentiles.

The Festival of Booths corresponds to Christians leaving the "world" to follow Christ, and becoming part of the "harvest" by conversion (beginning at Pentecost).

On each day of the festival the high priest carried a pitcher of water from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple courtyard and poured it into a basin at the SW corner of the altar. To Jews this recalled the salvation out of Babylon (Isaiah 12:3); to Christians it compared to the Holy Spirit. (John 7:2,10, 14, 37-39)

Jesus foretold a "harvest" of people who would follow him as his disciples: "The harvest is..." (Matthew 13:39)

The Festival of Booths was marked by the illumination of the Temple courtyard by four candelabra each of which burned combustible oil in four basins. Jesus probably alluded to this light when he declared:

> "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12

For Christians the light associated with the Festival of Booths represents the truth about Jesus.

JWs parallels

JWs give the Christian applications of the Old Testament festivals a JWs twist. (w1980 2/15 8-24)

For example, to JWs Matthew 13:39 "the harvest is the end of the age" [or "conclusion of a system of things"] means the year 1919:

> Did the "harvest" or ingathering of the "wheat"class of true Christians being in that year [1914]? No … Jehovah's dedicated Christian worshippers were dispersed during World War I that began in 1914. Their worldwide organization was broken up by the enemies of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom, the heavenly kingdom that was zealously being proclaimed by those spirit-begotten, anointed disciples of Christ, the reigning king…
>
> Matthew 24:31…foretold a gathering together of Christ's "chosen ones"… This gathering began taking place in the post-war year of 1919… Thus it was in that memorable year that the antitypical festival of ingathering, or booths, started going into effect. (w1980 2/15 16)

Consider in these quotes the words "true Christians", "Messianic kingdom", "zealously being proclaimed by those dedicated Christian worshippers … spirit begotten, anointed disciples of Christ".

The "kingdom" preached by the WTS cult until 1925 was a kingdom set up in 1878 by a Jesus who, they claimed, returned invisibly in 1874. It was a non-existent kingdom. (See: *KINGDOM*)

Not only do the leaders of JWs twist the New Testament parallels of the Old Testament into a JWs mould, but they also routinely lie about JWs history, and glorify false prophecy by calling its advocates "true Christians".

Temple illumination antitype

Rather than proclaiming Jesus as the antitype of the Temple illumination *The Watchtower* says:

> …the fulfillment of the festival of booths began in that post war year [1919]… For the anointed remnant who had begun to enter into the modern antitype of the festival of booths, spiritual illumination from Jehovah's heavenly temple beamed forth… Jesus' parable of the sheep and the goats, as recorded in Matthew 25:31-46, was given special illumination for the enlightenment of their understanding. (p.19)

This "special illumination", the WT goes on to explain, is the doctrine that the ingathering of the "sheep" of Matthew 24:31-46 started in 1935 and consisted of JWs who would get eternal life on Earth. (pp 20-21) These sheep were "part of the sign that proves the reigning Jesus Christ to be invisibly present…" (p.21)

This "special illumination" however, like most JWs interpretations, has been revised. In the revision the "sheep"of Matthew 25 were not gathered in the 20th century after all, but will be gathered near the time of Armageddon!

The Christian undersanding, that Jesus is the "light of the world" represented by the Temple illumination during the Festival of Booths, is still in force, unlike JWs "truth" which constantly changes.

FEUERBACHER, ALAN (1951-)

Feuerbacher writes:

> My family has been involved with JWs since my paternal grandfather, in 1918, stood overnight on his porch with a shotgun, protecting a near-dead Bible Student colporteur who had been tarred and feathered in his small Oklahoma town of Shattuck.
>
> The townsmen were caught up in the fever of WWI and did their patriotic

"duty". Grandpa never became a Bible Student, but grandma did in 1920…

My dad (1917-2001) was a member of the Brooklyn Bethel staff from1938 until he married my mom (born 1927) in 1946.

I was born in 1951. My dad was the Congregation Servant at the Kingdom Hall in Hempstead, New York.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Watchtower Society encouraged the JW community to believe that 1975 would probably bring the battle of Armageddon. I didn't go to college, after graduating high school in 1969, because I was caught up in the fever of that belief. However, I went to college in 1978, after the 1975 date proved wrong.

I graduated from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1982 with a BS in electrical engineering. I now have an MS in that field, and work for an international semiconductor company, designing microchips…

Feuerbacher also did an anthropology course, and began to write a paper about Noah's Flood and the spread of languages from Mesopotamia. He found the Watchtower references unusable, "scholastic dishonesty" not supportting the points made:

This, along with my disappointment in the failure for 1975, led to my quitting the Witnesses about 1980.

In 1975 I married a JW "pioneer sister". We had one daughter, born in 1985. By 1986 my wife came to realize that I was never again going to be an active JW… We divorced in 1994-96.

He became active on the Internet and learned about child molestation among JWs. In 1999 his daughter, at age 14, left her JW mother and came to live with him. Although not baptized she was shunned by the young people she grew up with.

Feuerbacher lists various previous and current "Cartoonish Beliefs" of JWs, including:

- God lives on the star Alcyone in the Pleiades constellation (a belief abolished in the early 1950s);
- Vaccinations are a work of the devil (1920s until 1952);
- Ban on blood transfusions (began 1945);
- The Great Pyramid of Gizeh was built at God's direction and marked important dates in Bible chronology (taught until 1929);
- The medical establishment is a complete fraud (this idea was a theme in *The Golden Age* magazine from 1920);
- Christ had returned invisibly in 1874 (changed to 1914);
- The complete end of all nations by 1914;
- Tbe "resurrection of the saints" in 1878 (changed to 1881);
- Armageddon in 1918;
- Armageddon in 1925;
- The ancient worthies" would live in the mansion named "Beth Sarim" built in 1929;
- Organ transplants are cannibalism (1967-1979);
- The physical heart is the seat of human emotion, and carries on "conversations" with the brain, which determines what a person does.
- Armageddon would come by 1975;
- The generation of 1914 would see Armageddon (revised in 1995);

FEW YEARS

A phrase which implies that the end of "this system" to too close for JWs to do anything meaningful other than go door-to-door or work voluntarily in the WTS's factories. This and similar phrases are published regularly to motivate JWs to be zealous. For example:

A <u>few more years</u> will wind up the present order of things, and then the chastened world will stand face to face with the actual conditions of the established kingdom of God. (wr1894 2/15 1622)

Let us, then, proceed with the work of sacrificing these earthly bodies, which are the Lord's—not that we should use them up in a suicidal way, without regard to the strain npon the flesh, but in a reasonable, sane manner let us daily, hourly, glorify God in our bodies, continuing our sacrifice even unto the end, <u>whether that end be a few weeks off or a few months or a few years</u>. (wr1916 9/1 5949)

But admitting that even so great a work could be accomplished under the Lord's blessing and direction in a very short time, we could still not expect the results in less than <u>about three years</u>. We are not fixing the time, however, for we know of no time feature applicable before us—even as Elijah and Elisha were not sent to any definite place after reaching Jordan. We are merely giving our surmise—that a great work is before us, and that we cannot see how it could be accomplished in much less than <u>three years</u>. (wr1916 9/1 5950)

We see no reason for doubting, therefore, that the Times of the Gentiles ended in October, 1914; and that <u>a few more years</u> will witness their utter

collapse and the full establishment of God's kingdom in the hands of the Messiah. (wr1916 9/1 5950)

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the other faithful prophets described by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 11 are promised a better resurrection... Hence these faithful men may be expected on earth within the next few years. They will constitute the legal representatives of the Christ in the earth. (The Harp of God 1921, 339-340)

The proof cited herein shows that the old world (the Devil's organization) ended and began to pass away in 1914, and that this will be completed in a few years and righteousness fully established. (The Harp of God 1921, p.333)

Now the decisive battle is on, and the victory is certain; for it is only a matter of a few short years until Satan will be bound. (w1922 11/1 347)

The proof cited herein shows that the old world (social and political order) ended and began to pass away in 1914, and that this will be completed in a few years and righteousness fully established… (Restoration 1927, 333)

It is a special pleasure to announce that the next few years will witness the full establishment of that kingdom which is to be the desire of all nations. (w1929 10/1 302)

All these scriptures, and all the facts now well known to exist, prove that the downfall of Satan's organization and the beginning of restoration are only a few years away at most. (Health and Life 1932, p.28)

Those Jonadabs who now contemplate marriage, it would seem, would do better if they wait a few years, until the fiery storm of Armageddon is gone, and to then enter the marital relationship and enjoy the blessings of participating in filling the earth with righteous and perfect children. (Face the Facts 1938, pp 47 and 50)

As the last student returned to his seat, a resolution was presented by one of the student body and unanimously adopted. It expressed in a forceful way their resolve to show faithfulness during the few remaining years until the new world is established... (w1950 4/15 128)

Is the work finished as far as preaching the good news is concerned? Certainly not! Because if 16,000 came in during this year, how many more thousands can come into the truth in the remaining few years? (Yearbook 1951, 62-63)

Already forty years of this generation that is doomed to feel the wrath of Jehovah's day have passed. Only a few years remain. In the most urgent sense, then, "the day of Jehovah is near upon all the nations." (w1954 10/15 615)

Babylon the Great's fall presages her destruction, even as ancient Babylon was destroyed after she had fallen; only in our day the destruction of Babylon the Great will not be delayed for centuries but only for a few short years, as Jesus intimated... (w1965 10/1 603)

Just as right association helped to keep the Jewish nation and early Christians close to Jehovah, so it will serve the same purpose for God's people today in these few and all-important years before Armageddon. (w1966 1/15 42)

It is to come within the generation that has already seen two world wars and is only a few short years ahead of us. (w1967 4/15 244)

What all this means is that we are fast approaching the end of this lawless sytem of things. There remain very few years before Jehovah God exercises his right to take over all control of earth's affairs and eliminate lawlessness. (g1968 1/8 19)

In 1921 the resurrection of the "ancient worthies" had been calculated for 1925-1926. The "few years"-quote in *The Harp of God* (1921) therefore meant in 1925-1926. "A few years" therefore meant four or five years, which agrees with how most people would understand the phrase "a few years".

The "very few years" in the 1968 *Awake!* were considered "very few" because of the JW belief (at that time) that Armageddon was due in the mid 1970s. The subsequent paragraphs state:

Until God acts shortly, men and demons will continue to be more vicious, more degraded and more immoral as this system speeds to its end. (2 Tim. 3:13) It is just as a former United States Secretary of State noted in the June 13, 1960, issue of U.S. & World Report. He declared that our time is "a period of unequaled instability, unequaled violence," and warned: "I know enough of what is going on to assure you that, in 15 years from today, this world is going to be too dangerous to live in."

> Fifteen years from 1960 brings us to 1975. He predicted that by 1975 this world would be too dangerous! Interestingly, this date is also the one indicated by the most reliable Bible research as marking the end of 6,000 years of rebellion of men and demons against God.
>
> We can be confident that soon, now, Almighty God, Jehovah, for a certainly will bring this lawless system of things to an end. (g1968 1/8 19)

The prediction of a "few years" (until the destruction of other religions, or Armagedon, or the resurrection, or the arrival of paradise on Earth) has been wrong every time that the JWs leaders published it.

FEW YEARS AT MOST

Another phrase employed to motivate door to door activity. Rutherford used the phrase in the 1930s and Franz in the 1960s (when Armageddon and paradise on Earth were predicted for the mid 1970s).

The phrase "a few years at most" implies that the remaining time (for something to occur) is less than a few years!

> …the beginning of restoration are only a <u>few years away at most</u>. (Health and Life 1932, 28)
>
> The immdediate future is certain to be filled with climactic events, for this old system is nearing its complete end. Within <u>a few years at most</u> the final parts of Bible prophecy relative to thse "last days" will undergo fulfillment, resulting in the liberation of surviving mankind into Christ's glorious 1,000-year reign. What difficult days, but, at the same time, what grand days are <u>just ahead</u>! (w1968 5/1 272)
>
> …<u>a few years, at most</u>, remain… (g1968 10/8 13)

The prediction of Armageddon or the "new world" in a "few years" or a "few years at most" was false every time.

FIELD, THE

A general term for all areas and places where JWs go to actively promote their faith.

FIELD SERVICE REPORT

Printed forms that JWs fill out weekly or monthly to report how many hours they spent in "field service", and how many return visits they made, and the number of publications they distributed.

(See also: *PUBLISHERS FIELD SERVICE REPORT*)

FIGHTING FOR LIBERTY ON THE HOME FRONT (1943)

An anti-Catholic WTS booklet which teaches that the Catholic Hierarchy aims to rule the world:

> Thus the "Hierarchy of Authority" aims to rule the entire earth in the stead and place of Christ Jesus and his heavenly church, and hence is anti-Christ. (p.19)
>
> This [the JW preaching] exposes the fraudulent doctrines and practices of the Hierarchy and uncovers its covetous plot for world domination and its sly conspiracy against the freedom of the people and the democratic and liberal institutions. So the Hierarchy sets its religious-political machinery to work in every land to put the witnesses of the Lord God out of action. (p.20)

World domination and the end of democracy and freedom were among the goals of "Judge" Rutherford" for the WTS. The JWs leaders regularly accuse other religions of what they themselves are guilty of so as to deflect the spotlight away from JWs.

(See: *GOAL OF WORLD DOMINATION*)

FIG TREE (Matthew 24:32)

A representation of the Jewish peoples. (Life 1929, 328-330)

FIJI

Publishers and Memorial attendance in Fiji and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	453	1,163		
1975	588	952		
1980	728	849	2,319	267
1985	1,049	667	3,740	187
1990	1,542	472	5,691	128
1995	1,591	450	6,639	108
2000	2,009	386	7,408	105
2005	2,071	389	7,042	114
2010	2,709	313	10,885	78
2013	3,222	271	12,397	70
2015	3,097	286	11,845	75
2018	3,250	281	11,131	82
	Ave.			
2019	3,082	289	11,186	80
2020	2,982	300	9,476	94
2021	3,071	294	12,411	73
2022	3,023	301	12,452	73
2023	2,932	312	12,901	71
2024	2,907	310	12,047	75
2025	2,946	306	11,744	77

FILL THE EARTH
A phrase referring to JWs becoming the one and only religion on Earth after Armageddon:

> God's United "Mighty Nation" to Fill the Earth (w1984 3/15 14)

After Rutherford's prophecies of world rule in 1925 by the resurrected heroes of the Bible failed, he created a "united theocracy" ruled by himself. The plan was to convert the world by united preaching. To this end he made the WTS into a united, totalitarian organization where everyone acted on orders in unity and everyone was responsible to the next level up in the hierarchy.

In the 1930s it became clear that "filling the earth" would mainly occur after Armageddon. However, we also get statements implying it could largely occur before Armageddon:

> The ranks of kingdom proclaimers grew from about 4,000 in 1918 to over 260,000 in 1948… Today there are more than ten times as many Kingdom proclaimers throughout the world as there were in 1948! … And we can say this with confidence: Far more is to come in the immediate future! (w1984 3/15 17-18)
>
> (See: *GOAL OF WORLD DOMINATION*)

The JWs hierarchy always predicts more increase even as Armageddon repeatedly fails to occur.

FILMS
In the 1950s and 1960s the WBTS produced motion pictures or films to promote its message:

- *The New World Society in Action* (1954)
- *The Happiness of the New World Society* (1958)
- *Proclaiming "Everlasting Good News" Around The World* (1963)
- *God Cannot Lie* (1965)
- *Heritage* (1966)

FINAL END
Originally the word "end" was synonymous with Armageddon and was supposed to occur in 1912-1914. When this failed the word "end" was made to mean "legal end" so that the world "ended" legally in 1914.

The term "final end" was rarely employed in the 1920s. In the 1921 quote below, it refers to the *Millions Now Living...* proclamation and its termination in 1925/1926. The next quote seems to anticipate a preaching period beyond 1925 and includes an insinuation (which a few years later became strident and definite) that salvation depends on preaching Rutherford's message:

> The plain commission to the church is, then, to declare this message to Christendom as a witness before the final end. (w1921 1/1 7)

> These recognize that this message must go to the nations of the earth as a testimony and that it must be delivered before the final end. No one, then, could reasonably expect ultimately to stand approved before the Lord unless he becomes a servant of the truth in proclaiming the message of the kingdom. (w1924 2/15 61)

> This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached throughout the world as a witness to all nations, and this must be done before the final end. (w1924 5/15 153)

Rutherford claimed that the Greek "telos" means "final end". (Deliverance 1926, 267) Actually "telos" allows for no distinction between an end and a final end as if there were two ends or an end in two parts. "Telos" merely means "end" or limit.

The Rutherford fiction of an end in two parts was a trick to help obscure the fact that every prophecy for 1914 had failed.

In the 1930s and early 1940s the phrase "FINAL END" was capitalized and referred to Armageddon, which was awaited in the early 1940s.

Chapter 11 of *The New World* (1942) interprets Daniel 11:40-45 — concerning a war between the "king of the north" and "king of the south" — as Hitler's war machine which would impose totalitarian rule worldwide and then face its FINAL END at Armageddon. This prophecy failed when Germany lost WWII. The phrase "FINAL END" was then dropped.

The verses in Daniel that JWs interpreted as Hitler's rule were in the 1950s reinterpreted as Communism which interpretation was also dropped after Communism in the Soviet Union fell.

FINAL PART OF THE LAST DAYS
In 1930 Rutherford changed the start of the last days from 1799 to 1914.

Every so often he stimulated the zeal of JWs by announcing that the last days were nearly finished or that the "final part of the last days" had arrived. This trick is still regularly employed by the Governing Body today. For example:

> What is taking place on the world scene today is clear evidence that this system of

things is indeed in the final part of 'the last days'. (w1985 1/15 16)

(See also: *DATES; CONTROL*).

FINAL WAR, THE (1932)

Booklet by Rutherford explaining that:

> An organization is a systematic arrangement employed to carry on a fixed purpose. (p.3)
>
> …the religious leaders of "organized christianity" call themselves by the name of Christ and hypocritically do, because they deny God and Christ and the Bible as true. (p.10)
>
> The three elements that ruled ancient Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, to wit, the commercial, political and religious, now rule all the nations of so-called "Christendom". (p.10)
>
> The universal organization of Jehovah is frequently mentioned in the Bible under the name or title of Zion. It is made up of cherubim, seraphim and a host of angels, with God as chief over all. (p.11)
>
> There is therefore a clear distinction between professed Christians who form part of Satan's organization and true Christians who are of God's organization. (p.15)
>
> The enmity between the two seeds or organizations will reach a climax in the greatest battle of all time. It will be a battle of Satan and his organization aganst the might organization of the Lord under the leadership of Christ. (p.19)
>
> …the greatest war that ever came upon the nations of theworld **is just ahead**… It is to be a war between the seen and unseen forces of the universe. (p.38)
>
> While God proceeeds with this preparation, he causes notice of his purposes to be delivered to the nations, and such notice is being given by men and women calling upon the people with books explaining the Bible…
>
> By his great prophecy the Lord marked 1914 as the end of the world and the beginning of the exercise of kingly power by earth's rightful Ruler. The Scriptures show that the first work of this great ruler Christ was the ousting of Satan from heaven, and that three and one-half years thereafter, to wit, 1918, Christ began to build up the temple of God, and then follows the preparation for the destruction of Satan's organization. The exact date of that great battle no man knows, but the facts well known show that it necessarily must be in the very near future. (p.41)

FINAL YEARS

Another phrase used to stir JWs to zeal:

> As Jehovah's forward-moving organization approaches the final years of its preaching activity toward this world, there is no doubt that the scope of the work will grow. (w1981 11/15 21)
>
> (See also: *FEW YEARS*)

FINANCE, POLITICS and RELIGION

Finance, politics and religion are, according to Rutherford, the three main branches of Satan's organization.

Rutherford promoted a conspiracy theory in which the three great segments of "Satan's organization" — financical (or "big business"), political (including all governments), and religious — cooperate to oppress the people of the world and try to silence God's "faithful representatives". *The Golden Age* magazine explains:

> Through these various competitive organizations, financial, political and religious, the Devil has succeeded in keeping the minds of the people from study of what would be for their real blessing, and succeeded in making them believe that their real blessings would come from supporting these organizations of the Devil. Every honest man on earth knows that all the corruption, all the crime, all the oppression, all the graft and bribery on earth is associated with these organizations of the Devil; viz, the political, financial and religious institutions of the earth. These three great branches of Satan's empire represent organized oppression…
>
> But Satan had another object in organizing these institutions. All through the ages God has had His faithful representatives in the earth declaring His purposes as rapidly as they became due to be known, and Satan has used his rich, powerful and popular "trinity" of organizations, Big Business, Big Politics and Big Clergy, to awe, frighten and persecute the Lord's representatives in order to keep them from telling the Lord's message of hope, comfort and cheer to the people. (August 22, 1928, p.762)

FINISHED MYSTERY, THE (1917)

A 600-page book compiled by two assistants Rutherford appointed. The book also: "…is of the Lord—prepared under his guidance." (p.126)

A book of truth

The Finished Mystery contains the word "truth" applied to itself and/or to Russellism hundreds of times. For example:

> Pastor Russell was the most prolific writer of Biblical **truth** that ever lived. (p.65)

> In his [Russell's] search for Biblical **truth** and harmony he is without peer in this Age… He has been too busy spreading Divine Truth… (p.125)

> Present **Truth** was not to go to the heathen, the drunkards, unbelievers, but to the Christian people of the world, the spiritual house of Israel… If the message of Present **Truth** had been sent to the heathen with its glad tidings for all, they would have turned from devil worship to worship the true God… In eastern and southern Africa a believer in Present **Truth** found his way from Nyassa to the Cape, and many thousands of natives embraced the **Truth** and were baptized… Champions of Christendom met him [Russell] on the debating platform; each encounter widened and strengthened the witness for Present **Truth**… No argument could be delivered to stem the flood of **Truth**, only a ban on the reading of the books… The enemies of **Truth** were wholly unable to check the spread of knowledge. (p.382)

> The clergy, trying to stem the tide of **Truth**, to uphold an effete ecclesiasticism tottering to its fall, put every restraint on the influence of Pastor Russell… Church members have been urged to get rid of every scrap of paper bearing the Message of Present **Truth**; the **Truth** has been preached against in practically every church in the English, German and Swedish speaking world; people have been warned against reading the Truth; **Truth** people have been discharged or refused employment… Neither Pastor Russell nor his fellow-believers were permitted to utter the Bible **Truth** before the congregations of ecclesiasticism. (p.390)

Provisional counts put the occurrences of "truth" and "Present Truth" in *The Finished Mystery* at 349 and 61 respectively. The word "false" — usually applied to other religions and/or their doctrines — occurs 64 times.

An ad for the book in *The Watch Tower* of 1917 said in part:

> The book explains every verse in Revelation and Ezekiel—just what so many are interested in at this time. Even secular editors are freely quoting passages from these prophecies in connection with the world-war. Give them the true interpretation. "The Finished Mystery" contains a condensed statement of every feature of the Divine Plan with thousands of references to the Bible and to the preceding six volumes of SCRIPTURE STUDIES… (November 1 p.334)

The Finished Mystery says "truth is irefutable". (p. 83) About 1000 Bible verses interpreted in the book are now, however, interpreted differently by JWs including most of Revelation and Ezekiel. It's estimated that 1300 statements in *The Finished Mystery* conflict with present JWs dogma including prophetic statements for 1918, 1919, 1920, 1922, 1925.

Eulogy and insults

The book includes much praise of Russell who is:

> …strong, humble, wise, loving, gentle, just, merciful, faithful self-sacrificing; one of the noblest, grandest characters of all history. (p.125)

The Finished Mystery contains many insults and accusations against Christian ministers including "dumb dogs" and "enemies of truth":

> "yelpings of little men—of the D.D.s of Christendom… (383)
> "enemies of Truth" (382)
> "clerical foes of truth" (383)
> "the Bible has been perverted" (384)
> "The clergy tried to stem the tide of Truth" (256, 390)

The book was banned in Canada (1918 February 12) and USA (1918 March 14). WTS leaders still praise followers who sold the book during the ban as "faithful Christians" who "dared as did Jesus, to speak God's Word without fear, exposing the hypocrisy of the clergy with true faith and courage." (Yearbook 1979, 110-113)

Persons who refused to peddle the book had "the spirit of rebellion". If the book's 1300 discarded interpretations were "God's Word" and the sellers "faithful Christians" why do JWs today reject all those previous interpretations and yet call themselves "faithful"?

Admit mistakes?

Whenever JWs leaders imply the book is accurate, which they've done often, they are condemned by own logic that: "…false prophets do not admit to making mistakes." (w1972 11/1 644)

The JWs leaders failed to admit mistakes whenever they whitewashed *The Finished Mystery* with claims such as:

> It does not contain any erroneous doctrines. (w1920 4/1 103)
>
> The Finished Mystery is the first and only book that has ever made clear the prophecies of Revelation and Ezekiel. (Millions 1920, 111)
>
> …the clergy have kept the people from the truth and led them into darkness... Now the mask is torn off, and nothing ever published so exposes the nefarious course of this instrument of Satan as does The Finished Mystery. (w1921 3/15 93-94)
>
> …a stinging exposure of the clergy. (Qualified to Be Ministers 1955, 314)
>
> …a stinging exposure of these false shepherds. (Divine Purpose 1959, 73)
>
> …sweet to the spiritual taste. (Then Is Finished The Mystery of God 1969, 258)
>
> …drawing the fire of all these enemies and resulting in their exposure as enemies of truth was the publication 'The Finished Mystery'. (Yearbook 1973 106)
>
> …pure worship (Yearbook 1979, 110)
>
> …a stinging exposure of Christendom's clergy class. (g1984 12/8 10)
>
> This book exposed the clergy of Christendom including their involvement in the Great War that was then raging in Europe. (w1989 5/1 4)

The cause of contention

The Finished Mystery split Russellism apart:

> …this book crystallized the opposition of the 'evil slave' class. (Qualified to be Ministers 1955, 314)
>
> This volume...was the focal point around which an opposition party arose within the society. (Convention Report 1950 Day 3 p.2)
>
> Actually they had no cause for contention at all… (DivinePurpose 1959, 70)

If 1300 false statements are "no cause for contention", why do the JWs leaders make alleged error in other religions a "cause for contention"? The Australian Branch manager of the WTS in 1918, Mr. Nicholson, stated his objections to *The Finished Mystery* by letter to Rutherford:

> This brought, instead of a reply to these objections, a demand for a change of attitude… (Peoples Paper 1918, June)

Australian dissenters founded the *Peoples Paper* wherein they exposed many of the errors in *The Finished Mystery* including its false prophecies and slander. A New South Wales doctor wrote:

> …its vindictive and slanderous aspersions of other religious thought, and its scurrilous cartoons, in no way indicating the spirit of Christ, made me throw it aside… (September 1)

Rutherford's demand for a "change in attitude" — so that followers call false prophecy and other errors "Bible truth" and preach it — became entrenched in JWs history.

In 1918 the WBTS in the USA was required by law to remove eight pages (pp 247-253) from *The Finished Mystery*. This is now called a "compromise". (Divine Purpose 1959, 91) Yet, the WTS itself now bans the entire book by hindering public access it — in effect removing 600 pages!

FINLAND

Publishers and Memorial attendance in Finland and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	10,620	442		
1975	13,237	355		
1980	13,426	355	21,997	217
1985	15,334	319	25,149	195
1990	17,531	283	27,649	179
1995	19,419	263	29,452	173
2000	20,120	257	27,911	185
2005	19,044	275	26,951	194
2010	19,045	281	27,114	197
2013	18,754	289	26,810	202
2015	18,574	295	25,924	211
2016	18,477	297	26,061	211
2018	18,324	301	24,814	222
	Ave.			
2019	18,178	304	25,064	220
2020	18,009	307	24,160	229
2021	18,091	306	27,975	198
2022	18,068	307	26,435	210
2023	18,112	307	26,038	214
2024	18,224	308	25,989	216
2025	18,264	309	25,716	219

FIRST RESURRECTION
The raising to life of dead members of the 144,000 who died from the first-century onwards, alleged to have occurred in 1918 when these were given ghostly spirit-bodies to live in heaven.

Russell's taught that the first resurrection occurred in 1878 — this was one of his "fixed dates".

FIRSTBORN

> The firstborn is primarily the oldest son of a father (rather than the firstborn of the mother), the beginning of the father's regenerative power (De 21:17); also, the initial male offspring of animals, at times designated as firstlings." (Insight I 1988, 835)

The *Insight* article fails to clarify that *prototokos* may also refer to a foremost or most important individual who may not be "firstborn" in the literal sense. In the Bible God says of David:

> I will make him the first-born, The highest of the kings of the earth. (Psalm 89:27)

Jesus was the "firstborn from the dead" and the "firstborn of all creation…" (Colossians 1:15, 16) JWs interpret "firstborn of all creation" to mean that Jesus was the first of God's creations.

FIXED DATES
Russell had many "fixed dates", dates supposedly definite and unchangeable:

> We have marked, too, the fixed dates to which the Prophet Daniel calls attention. The 2,300 days point to 1846 as the time when God's sanctuary would be cleansed of the defiling errors and principles of Papacy; and we have noted the cleansing there accomplished. We have noted the fulfilment of the 1,260 days, or the time, times and half a time, of Papacy's power to persecute, and the beginning there, in 1799, of the Time of the End. We have seen how the 1,290 days marked the beginning of an understanding of the mysteries of prophecy in the year 1829, culminating in the great movement of 1844 known as the Second Advent movement, when, according to the Lord's prediction, the wise virgins went forth to meet the Bridegroom, thirty years prior to his actual coming. We have seen the fulfilment of the predicted tarrying; and for fifteen years the midnight cry, "Behold the Bridegroom!" has gone forth. We have marked with special delight the 1,335 days, pointing, as they do, to 1874 as the exact date of our Lord's return; and we have since that time experienced the very blessedness promised—through the clearer unfoldings of the wonderful mysteries of the divine plan. Then we have seen the great harvest work, in its appointed time and order, beginning in the autumn of the year 1874, gradually and silently, but rapidly, progressing. We have marked the bundling and binding of the tares, and the gathering of the wheat. And what blessing and joy come to us in the assurance that since the summer of 1878, when the King took his great power and began his reign by the resurrection of those who slept in Jesus, it is no longer needful that his members should "sleep" and wait for glory, but that for each the moment of finishing his course in death is the moment of the joyful "change" to the full perfection of the divine nature and likeness. Indeed, "blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth" forever. (Studies 111, 305-306)

FLAG SALUTING
Flag-saluting was introduced in the USA to commemorate 400 years since the discovery by Columbus and in the 1920s became part of the school program. There was no legal compulsion to salute — it was moral, peer pressure, and at schools a school ruling.

In 1917 Russellism's attitude was:

> Suppose the city or state officials should issue an order requiring, or even requesting, that all persons display the American flag. What should we do? We answer, We think it would be right to display the flag in obedience to such order or request. The American flag was adopted as an emblem of liberty.It is the national emblem. While some have insisted that it now represents war, this is hardly in keeping with the facts. It may represent war to those who desire war, but to those who love liberty and peace, the flag represents liberty and peace. However that may be, the displaying of the American flag can do injury to no one. If commanded or requested to display the flag, it should be done, out of respect to the Government under which it is the privilege of Christians to live...
>
> Recognizing that the Government of the United States has been the special refuge of Christian people from intolerable persecution; that it was founded as an asylum of religious liberty and freedom of speecb, every one in America should take pleasure in displaying the American flag—especially when requested so to do. (wr1917 5/15 6086)

Flag-saluting is not here mentioned but was probably acceptable in Russellism because it is not worship of supernatural gods but a symbol of respect for the nation, expressing the intention to obey all laws that agree with one's conscience.

However, in the 1930's Rutherford decided that saluting is religious idolatry and got JWs to refuse to salute any national flag. Individual JWs had no choice in this other than to either obey or be expelled to die at Armageddon.

Sectarian religions such as the Mennonites, Eagle Voice Society (an offshoot from Russellism) and the Church of God which opposed flag-saluting began experiencing confrontations over the issue. In Germany the JWs viewed the "Heil Hitler" greeting as a similar act of idolatry as flag-saluting.

In 1935 some JW children refused to salute at school and Rutherford declared: "All who act wisely will do the same thing." By 1939 200 JWs children in 20 US states had been expelled from achool.

The WTS had a competent legal department which aimed to get the issue before the USA Supreme Court and JWs parents sued only if directed. The first case, Nicholls vs Lynn in 1937 was lost.

The children of Walter Gobitis, a grocery store manager in Pennsylvania, refused to salute in October 1935. A District Court trial took place in 1938 which Gobitis lost. It went to the Supreme Court in 1940. The WTS's lawyer, O.R. Moyle, had meanwhile defected from the cult. Therefore Rutherford assisted by H.C. Covington managed the WTS's legal office. Court proceedings were disrupted by Rutherford wanting to present the flag issue as a battle of God's Organization vs the Devil's Organization. The Supreme Court case was lost.

By 1943 2000 children in 48 states were expelled from schools and taught in private classes by JWs teachers.

The flag salute issue was a factor in 20% of all mobbings and riots involving JWs. In some instances the JWs met mobs with shotgun fire and were arrested for attempted murder. (See: *PERSECUTION*)

According to JWs propaganda the mobbings were systematic efforts by the Catholic Church to crush the source of truth because JWs threatened Catholic-Nazi schemes for world rule.

Manwaring (1962), however, found no evidence for other than official neutrality by the Catholic Church regarding JWs. (p.176)

On June 14 1943 the Supreme Court overruled the Gobitis decision. (Divine Purpose 1959; Manwaring 1962)

In many other countries the salute issue continued until the 1970s. For example *The News* (South Australia) reported in 1972:

> JOHANNESSBURG, Today (AAP-Reuter): Children of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Transvaal are to defy a new ruling ordering them to salute the South African flag and singing the national anthem, or face suspenion from school.
> Headmasters of State schools have been empowered to suspend immediately any child refusing to salute the flag or sing the national anthem, under a new ruling published in the Provincial Gazette.
> But Mr. Henry Myrdal, an official of the sect, said Jehovah's Witnesses did not salute the flag or sing the anthem of any country.
> "We are a law-abiding people," he said. "We obey every law of the country until it clashes with God's law, then we stop obeying man's laws."
> Another sect official said that, while they would not venerate a symbol, such as a flag, they would not show disrespect for it.
> Although the national anthem was a prayer set to music "we pray and sing only to God."
> Children are required to salute the flag and sing the anthem under the South African Government's "youth preparedness scheme."
> Jehovah's Witnesses have been criticised and gaoled in the past for refusal to join the armed forces.
> Anyone refusing to join can be imprisoned for six months initially, and can then be repeatedly gaoled until he changes his mind.
>
> (November 22 1972)

FLASHES OF LIGHT

A phrase the JWs leaders employ to stress the rightness of their religion. They call their revisions in theology "flashes of light" and claim the "flashes" come from God:

> To them God has given a clearer vision of his plan than they had before. In harmony with his prophecy there have come flashes of light from the temple, illuminating the minds of the faithful ones. (w1927 2/15 55)

> From time to time flashes of light, reflected from the temple, are given to the anointed ones who are the temple class; and these are permitted to see and understand the precious promises that

specifically apply to the church at this time. (w1927 3/15 87)

FLASHES OF LIGHT – w1995 May 15

The Watchtower for May 1995 has three articles about *Flashes of Light*. These appeal to Psalm 97:11 and Proverbs 4:18 as justification for past JWs errors:

> Light itself has flashed up for the righteous one, and rejoicing even for the one upright in heart. (Psalm 97:11 NWT)

To JWs this means that they regularly receive "flashes of light" in the form of new interpretations from God. These flashes are transmitted to JWs via their "faithful slave class" which was formerly the "remnant of the 144,000" but is now the Governing Body. (That change was itself a "flash" which the alleged channel for flashes never anticipated!)

Interpreting Psalm 97

Psalm 97 consists of pairs of phrases or clauses of similar meaning. Observe this from the first verse onwards:

> The LORD is king! Let the earth rejoice;
> Let the many coastlands be glad! (97:1 NRSV)

Notice that "earth" is repeated as "coastlands" and "rejoice" as "be glad".

Likewise in the two phrases of 97:11. "Light" and "righteous" in the first phrase correspond to "joy" and "upright" in the second.

"Light" therefore means "joy" and refers to a joyful, secure life. "Light" does not refer to errors published by religious leaders who intimidate followers into believing them and after a while change them.

What should readers of Psalm 97 rejoice over? The the power and rulership of God (97:2-5, 9), God's glory (97:6), his superiority over all other gods (97:7), and his love and protection. (97:10)

One Bible commentary explains 97:11:

> …light and life are synonymous. Hence 'see light' should not be taken in the sense of mental illumination, but as denoting the experience of a full, free satisfying life.

Proverbs 4:18-19

> But the path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established.
>
> The way of the wicked ones is like the gloom; they have not known at what they are stumbling. (NWT)

The book of Proverbs describes how to acquire wisdom — it outlines the rules for being wise and the conduct that shows wisdom. Reading chapter 4 in its entirety reveals that verses 18-19 contrast the benefits to the "righteous" of obeying a wise father, with the damage to the wicked who forsake wisdom.

Proverbs 4:18, therefore, does not justify replacing doctrines and failed prophecies with new doctrines and prophecies. False teachings and false predictions are "false words" and Proverbs 13:5 says:

> A false word is what the righteous hates.

The JWs use of 4:18 is wrong; they unwisely make it teach the opposite to what it teaches! Verse 19 states the consequence of ignoring or changing the Proverb — "they do not know what they are stumbling over." JWs are indeed constantly "stumbling" and don't understand why.

The First "Flashes" Article

The first of the three *Flashes* articles — titled *Flashes of Light in Apostolic Times* (w1995 5/15 10-15) — calls various New Testament teachings "brilliant light", "flashes of light", "stream of light", etc.

The article applies these phrases to the resurrection of Lazarus, Jesus being recognized as Messiah, circumcision seen as unnecessary, etc.

Second "Flashes" Article

The second *Flashes* article, titled *Flashes of Light Great and Small*, uses the same "light" phrases, which the first article used to describe the New Testament, to describe JWs doctrines. For example the JWs doctrines that the Holy Spirit is a force, Christ's return is invisible, and that the "faithful and discreet slave" of Matthew 24:45 is a class dispensing Christian truth.

The second article calls JWs doctrines "light", "striking flash of light" and "brilliant light", etc, about 60 times. By using Proverbs 4:18 for New Testament statements **and for** JWs doctrine the Governing Body imply that they are as accurate and reliable as the Bible itself!

Indeed, the JWs leaders elsewhere imply they are infallible. For example they claim that:

- They publish "no man's opinion". (w1931 11/11 327; 1936 3/15 85).

- The interpretations they publish come from God. (w1943 7/1 202-203)

- Angels deliver what is published. (Preparation 1933, 36-37, 64)

- JWs are "the only organization on earth that understands the 'deep things of God.'" (w1973 7/1 402)

[See the entry: *INFALLIBLE*]

The first *Flashes* article concludes:

> …the Master [Jesus] returned and found 'the faithful and discreet slave' giving the 'domestics' their food at the proper time. As a result Jesus Christ appointed that slave 'over all his belongings'. (p.15)

That appointment of the "slave" occurred, according to JWs, in 1919. (w1977 1/1 14) The basis for appointment was that the message at that time was, "**accurate and well founded**" (Revelation — It's Grand Climax Near At Hand! 1989, 164) and the "slave" was "faithful" and:

> …proclaiming Jehovah's kingdom and announcing its establishment in A.D. 1914. (w1943 1/1 7)

> …the serving of food, **the right sort of food**, at the proper time was the issue. It had to be according to this that a decision must be rendered by the returned master. (God's Kingdom Of A Thousand Years Has Approached 1973, 350)

This so-called "accurate and well founded" message and "right sort of food" included hundreds of errors such as:

> The 'Time of the end,' a period of one hundred and fifteen (115) years, from A.D. 1799 to AD 1914 is particularly marked in the Scriptures. (Thy Kingdom Come 1891, 23)

> Bible prophecy shows that the Lord was due to appear for the second time in 1874. Fulfilled prophecy shows beyond a doubt that he did appear in 1874. (w1922 11/1 333)

> …we present proofs that the setting up of the Kingdom of God is already begun, that it is pointed out in prophecy as due to begin the exercise of power in A.D. 1878, and that the 'battle of the great day of God Almighty' (Revelation 18:14)…will end in A.D. 1915, with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership… (The Time Is At hand 1889, 101)

> In the year 1918…Christendom shall go down as a system to oblivion… (The Finished Mystery 1917, 513)

Consider again the claim (w1995 5/15 15) that, "Jesus … returned and found the…slave giving … food at the proper time." (p.15)

At that time, until 1927, the WTS taught that the "slave" was one man, C.T. Russell. (wr1916 12/1 5998; The Finished Mystery 1917, 418)

After 1927 the revised teaching demoted Russell and identified the "slave" as a large group — the "remnant". Such a major error is not "food at the proper time"! But it gets worse — the "food" or "flash" taught from 1927 to 2010 identified the "slave" as the "anointed remnant" — i.e. the group which was predicted to ascent to heaven by 1914 but didn't. This revised "flash of light" itself got extinguished around 2010 when the "faithful slave" was removed from its position and the Governing Body became the "faithful slave".

Flashes of Light Great and Small mentions some past doctrines, such as Armageddon being a social/political revolution and the Bible predicting a literal restoration of Israel, as things "once thought." (pp 18-19) Actually such beliefs were not merely "thought". Rather they had entire chapters, even entire books written about them and were taught as "divine light". (The Battle of Armageddon 1897; Comfort for the Jews 1925)

Furthermore, in 1919 when Christ appointed the "slave" — who in 2012 turned out to be wrongly identified — the WTS also sponsored the absurd public lecture *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. This was published as a book in 1920 and taught:

> We may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the faithful prophets of old. (p.93)

The "accurate and well founded ... right sort of food" in 1919 included the obscene doctrine that the Great Pyramid of Egypt was the Bible in stone, inspired like the Apostles. Pyramid passages measured in "pyramid inches" allegedly pointed to biblical periods measured in years that ended in 1874, 1878, 1910, 1914, 1918 and 1926. Rutherford removed the Pyramid from Bible truth in 1929, although Jesus himself, ten years earlier, considered the Pyramid "accurate and well founded."

Light-Gets-Brighter Doctrine Revised

The light-getting-brighter doctrine existed in 1881 when Russell wrote:

> New light never extinguishes older light but adds to it… So it is with the light of

> truth, the true increase is by adding to, not by substituting one for another. (wr1881 p.188)

At that time (February 1881) Russell taught that the "saints" would rise physically to heaven in Autumn. That "light", however, was **extinguished** when the prediction failed and Russell substituted the doctrine that the selection for heaven ceased in 1881 and the saints would ascend to heaven by 1914!

In this way Russell's light-gets-brighter doctrine itself required new light. However, he apparently never corrected the claim that "the true increase is by adding to, not by substituting".

20th Century Light

In the 20th century the "flashes of light" that extinguished and/or replaced previous light numbered hundreds!

w1976 says:

> …as the light of understanding shines even brighter, old ideas have been replaced. Now, in these 1970s, it can truly be said that **'the day is firmly established'** among Jehovah's people… (w1976 7/1 400)

However, numerous doctrinal changes since 1976 show that "the day is not firmly established" after all! Major revisions in doctrine since the 1970s include:

- Tissue transplants stopped being "unscriptural" cannibalism in 1980;
- Armageddon is no longer in the mid 1970s;
- The "Communist king of the north" is no longer the Soviet Unions and currently lacks identity;
- "This generation" of 1914 which would live to see Armageddon was redefined in 1995 and has now died out;
- the so-called "faithful and discreet slave class" is not the "anointed remnant" but the Governing Body, and is no longer appointed over all of Christ's possessions in 1919 but after Armageddon.

Why do JWs follow men who attach God to lots of lies? One reason is repetition. The *Flashes* articles call JW doctrines "light" about 60 times. In the course of a year the JW doctrines are called "light", "education", "accurate knowledge", "truth", "true Christianity" and similar things in print more than thousand times! And Christianity is routinely summed up negatively as "apostate", "Babylonish", false, "deceitful", etc.

JWs follow their ever-changing "flashes" because they are indoctrinated by repetition, and ordered by their Governing Body to not read other religions' publications.

JWs are also undemocratic — no matter how many thousands of false claims the leader make in God's name, the leaders can not be voted out. The only way for rank-and-file JWs to avoid complicity in lies and false prophecy is to leave the sect. And if they leave they get ostracized, lose all their friends, their entire emotional support system, and have to start from scratch to sort out what to believe.

Jesus must have known that deceitful cults would arise when he said: "If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!" (Matthew 6:23; 24:24)

(Based on *Investigator Magazine*, September 1995)

FLEEGLE, GAGE (c.1970-)

One of two new Governing Body members appointed in January 2023 — the other was Jeffrey Winder.

Fleegle was raised by JWs parents in Pennsylvania, got baptized in1988, regular pioneered in 1989, entered Bethel service in Brooklyn in 1991 and worked in the Bindery for eight years, then the Service Department. After his marriage to Nadia in 2006 they served in the Spanish field for ten years. In 2022 he was appointed assistant to the Service Committee of the Governing Body.

Fleegle's background — raised in a JWs family, decades of service without complaining or criticizing, and not highly educated — is usual for the top leadership and assures strong indoctrination, resistance to free thought and poor ability to analyze beliefs objectively, hence "loyalty".

FLESH

JWs distinguish "flesh" from "spirit" and understand the resurrection to heaven — which they claim started in 1918, but in their previous chronology started in 1878 — as an immaterial ghost-like existence.

They base this on 1 Corinthians 15:50 — "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God..." However, the Greek "soma" in 15:53 means "body", and refers to something physical or material — "this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality...

Christ also was quite physical after his resurrection and denied being a ghost. (Luke 24:36-43) But JWs get around this by claiming that Christ materialized a new physical body temporarily.

Perhaps a change in interpretation is pending because *Insight* (1988) speaks of a "change of organism" for those who go to heaven.

FLIP-FLOPS
A term introduced by critics to denote JWs doctrines that were changed, then changed back to what they were before. Whether the people of Sodom and Gommorah will be resurrected has, for example, flipped-flopped five or six times.

FLOOD (Revelation 12:15-16)
Interpreted by Russell as the French Revolution. (Studies III, 65; The Finished Mystery 1917, 191)

Reinterpreted by Rutherford as a "flood" of criticism of the Watchtower cult by its 1918 splinter groups, and from 1919: "schemes such as peace treaties, conferences, parleys, and political propaganda and a cavorting by the clergy, all of which was directing the people away from God to Satan's schemes. (Light Volume 1, 1930, 252)

Reinterpreted by Fred Franz as Nazism/Fascism. (Then Is Finished The Mystery of God 1969)

FOLLOWERS OF MEN
Pejorative label applied to anyone who advocates a religion, government or opinion other than that of the JWs leaders.

Rutherford often stated that the Witnesses follow no man and the publications contain no human opinion. That was of course nonsense since in thousands of now discarded interpretations and failed prophecies the JWs followed their leaders. This, in Rutherford's own words, makes JWs "fools" fit for "destruction":

> To follow the teachings or traditions of men, therefore, leads into destruction. The man who ignores God's Word and follows the way of man is designated as a fool by the Word of God. (Salvation 1939, 34)

FOOD
Doctrines and interpretations of the JW leaders published by the WTS are referred to as "food" and "spiritual food". JWs believe that no other religion serves good food:

> There is no spiritual food in any part of Satan's organization... (Yearbook 1938 Text September 18)

The only "spiritual food", therefore, is that of the JWs and includes thousands of false interpretations and failed predictions.

FOOD [MEAT] AT THE PROPER TIME (Matthew 24:45)
Russell's interpretation of Matthew 24:45, using "meat" rather than "food", was:

> Truth, when due, becomes meat for the household of faith that they may grow thereby. (Studies I, 349)

The JWs leaders call their doctrines "food", "good food", "excellent food", etc. The followers are "well fed" and have "an abundance". The clergy don't give food and churchgoers are therefore "hungry". (w1983 9/15 20)

> The false shepherds of Babylon have not fed or cared for these sheep. (Yearbook 1985, 64)

> Jehovah promised: "Then your stores of supply will be filled with plenty; and with new wine your own press vats will overflow." Has our loving God fulfilled his promise in our day? From a spiritual standpoint—yes, he certainly has fulfilled his promise! The "floodgates of the heavens" have been opened, and Jehovah has 'emptied out a blessing until **there is not more want.**'—Proverbs 3:10; Malachi 3:10. (w1982 5/1 30)

Numerous doctrinal changes since 1982 prove that "our loving God" had not by 1982 "fulfilled his promise", and JWs have since 1982 suffered much "more want"! Indeed they suffered so much "want" that millions have left the sect since 1982 despite the terrible emotional cost of ostraicsim by friends and family.

Considering their ever-changing interpretatations and ever-failing predictions, numbering thousands, the JWs leaders must be included in the words: "The false shepherds of Babylon have not fed or cared for these sheep."

FOOD FOR THINKING CHRISTIANS (1881; 1884)
A164-page book authored by C.T. Russell.

FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT
The volunteers responsible for preparing and serving food at conventions of JWs. The "department" often included a cafeteria serving cooked meals and stands selling snacks for "script" or tickets purchased in advance. After 1990 food-selling was discontinued and food instead offered for a donation. In 1995 food service at conventions ceased and people attending conventions

brought their own food or went to nearby shops.

FOOLISHNESS
Proverbs 18:23 which says, "it is foolishness to reply to a matter before you hear it", is quoted by JWs to get people of other religions to listen to them.

However, JWs are required by their Governing Body to close their minds to critics of Watchtower errors, and to refuse to read anything from other religions, but also to declare how wrong those religions all are, thus "replying to a matter before hearing it".

FORBEARANCE — 40-YEAR PERIOD
Ezekiel lay on his left side for 390 days to mimic the siege of Jerusalem and then on his right side for 40 days. (Ezekiel 4)

Rutherford gave this a second fulfilment. The 390 days meant 390 years from 1531 to 1921 and applied to Catholicism. The 40 days meant forty years and applied to the Protestants:

> Forty years added to 1881 marks the year 1921, at which time the forty-year period of forbearance of Jehovah with Protestantism would end. (Vindication I 1931, 51)

> It was in the year, 1921, that *The Watch Tower*, by the Lord's grace, was permitted to identify and did identify and publish the truth concerning "the beast", "the image of the beast," and "the abomination that maketh desolate". (Revelation 13) (See *Watch Tower*, 1921, p.11)

The "truth" in 1921 about the "beast" which had come "by the Lord's grace" was changed in the 1940s and "the Lord"s grace" turned out ungracious. The supposed second fulfilment of the 390 days and the 40 days as 390 years and 40 years ending in 1921 was discarded too. (See: *BEAST*; *BEASTS*)

FOREGLEAMS OF THE GOLDEN AGE (1919)
A book authored by the Berean Bible Institute which was founded in Melbourne (Australia) in 1919 in protest against Rutherford's false predictions for 1918.

The 304-page book makes no mention of Russell or the WTS. It presents Russell's doctrines and prophecies with the dates omitted.

FOREKNOWLEDGE & FOREORDINATION
If God knows people's future then no one can act contrary to what God already knows. How is this consistent with individual free will and freedom of choice?

> ...is God's exercise of foreknowledge selective and discretionary, so that whatever he chooses to foresee and foreknow, he does, but what he does not choose to foresee or foreknow, he does not? And, instead of preceding their existence, does God's determination of his creatures' eternal destiny await his judgment of their course of life and of their proved attitude under test? (Insight 1988 Volume I, 852)

The Watchtower answer is, yes. "Jehovah" cannot know the future without being held responsible for it. Therefore Jehovah blinds himself to the outcome. No one, according to JWs theology, is "saved" until their life is over and they've passed every test and been judged. Hence no individual is predestined. The number 144,000 is predestined but not the individuals who make up that number.

JWs do not believe that God is omniscient/all-knowing. They distinguish an ability from the exercise of that ability. God has the ability to know future eternity in advance including the ultimate situation of each individual, but does not necessarily exercise that ability. He makes discretionary and selective use of his foreknowledge. (w1983 1/8 16)

However, the potential of God being able to know if he looked still implies the no one can act contrary to what God can potentially know if he decided to look.

The idea that God does not know how individuals will turn out is challenged by Psalm 139:4, 13-16 and Romans 8:28-39.

FORM OF GODLY DEVOTION
The JWs leaders apply the words "form of Godly devotion but proving false to its power" (II Timothy 3:5) to other religions. (w1984 10/15 3-7)

However, verses 6-7 add that such people will:

> …slyly work their way into households and lead as their captives weak women loaded áown with sins.

55% of Witnesses are women. And if the published conversion stories are any guide most were "weak" and "loaded down with sins". They were also approached "slyly". To be told that JWs declare "light of truth", and "Bible truth" when in fact every prophecy of theirs for 30 dates has failed, is "sly" indeed!

And verse 7, "always learning and yet never able to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth", reminds one of the thousands of changed interpretations accumulated by JWs.

Many JWs do not even know what the "gospel" in the New Testament refers to, because to JWs the "gospel" or "good news" means 1914!

The Bible says that the Gospel is, "veiled among those who are perishing"! (II Corinthians 4:3)

(See also: *DATES, TRUTH; PROPHECY; ERROR*)

FORNICATION

A disfellowshipping offence among JWs. (w1973 10/1) The Greek word "porneia" was defined in1972 as sexual intercourse with a person of opposite sex other than one's marriage mate. (See: *DIVORCE*)

The JWs leaders teach that a rape victim is guilty of fornication if she did not scream and resist to the death. (See: *Investigator* #65)

FORTY YEARS

The Israelites under Moses wandered in the Sinai desert for 40 years. To the Russellites these 40 years pictured either the period 1881-1921 or 1878-1918. (Millions 1920, 114)

FOX, ARNOLD (c.1937-)

A former JW in Canada whose wife and two youngest children disappeared in 1975, two months after he was disfellowshipped for smoking.

Fox had run away at 16 from his JW mother, returned years later and in 1957 married Catherine Lilley Brecknell who converted to JWs.

Fox accused JWs of organizing his family's disappearance and paid an investigation company to find them but never saw them again.

His missing daughter phoned in 1999 to say that his missing wife, Catherine, committed suicide three years earlier.

The story by reporter Susan LeBlanc was published in *The Halifax Herald* (February 13, 2000) and is on the Internet.

FRANCE

Publishers and Memorial attendance in France and their ratio to the population:

Year	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1930	700		c.1000	
1939	1,000		1,500	
1950	5,400			
1960	14,400			
1970	36,700	1376		
1975	64,100	821		
1980	69,700	769	140,400	382
1985	87,300	631	178,500	309
1990	114,300	495	221,600	255
1995	126,500	459	228,800	254
2000	115,100	515	204,200	290
2005	119,100	508	203,400	298
2010	123,400	510	210,400	299
2015	127,400	504	219,700	292
2018	130,000	502	222,800	293
	Ave.			
2019	129,800	502	222,900	292
2020	131,100	498	226,900	288
2021	134,600	486	251,477	260
2022	135,700	476	228,100	284
2023	136,800	474	230,000	282
2024	138,600	491	233,200	292
2025	139,548	492	228,800	300

JWs have progressed little in France since 1995 possibly due to improved containment tactics by the Catholic Church and the failures of the prediction of Armageddon for "this generation" and "within our twentieth century". For a discussion of future prospects see *GOAL OF WORLD DOMINATION*.

FRANZ, FREDERICK WILLIAM (1893-1992)

Governing Body member since 1944 and WBTS president 1977-1992.

Franz was a bachelor, Bible interpreter, writer and public speaker, and acquainted with nine languages including some Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek. He was the main translator of the *New World Translation* of the Bible completed in 1961.

Franz regularly traveled world wide to address large audiences of JWs including their largest religious convention in New York, 1958.



Franz beneath the speakers' stage; Adelaide, 1984.

Born in Covington (Kentucky, USA) in 1893 Frederick Franz and family moved to nearby Cincinnati where he taught Sunday school in the Presbyterinn Church and planned to become a minister.

He commenced at the University of Cincinnati in 1911and studied Greek and Latin but left University in 1914 to become a colporteur for C.T. Russell's cult.

Franz describes his exit from the Presbyterian religion

> What a glorious feeling it was to be free from bondage to a religious system that was teaching falsehoods! How good it was to be taken into the congregation of the International Bible Students, who were so loyal to God's Word! On April 5, 1914, in Chicago, Illinois, I symbolized my consecration—as we used to call dedication—by water baptism. (w1985 5/1 25)

The words "a religious system that was teaching falsehoods" and "International Bible Students, who were so loyal to God's Word" ignores the thousands of changes made to Russellism (involving every major doctrine) scores of which, and perhaps hundreds, Franz himself made. When Franz finalized his biography in 1985 he was an unrepentant sectarian liar dismissve of the Bible's teaching that liars will be judged and condemned. (Revelation 21:8)

In 1920 Franz moved to the New York headquarters where he sang tenor on their radio station and became a travelling representative lecturing on *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*. According to this message Abraham, Issac, Jacob and other Bible heroes were to rise from the dead in 1925 and introduce paradise on Earth.

In 1927 Franz became a proofreader for the WTS. He also assisted "Judge" Rutherford, leader of the cult, with research. A letter by Franz in *The* W*atchtower* of July 1929 debunked the doctrine that the Great Pyrnmid of Egypt was the "Bible in stone" and "inspired", which had been a major, official doctrine for about 30 years.

In 1945 Franz became the vice president and chief theologian of the Organization which then entered its greatest period of growth. New training programs intended to turn JWs into "minsters" helped boost expansion to nearly 20% yearly several times.

This prepared for the doctrine (in the Sabbath chapter of Franz's 1946 book *Let God be True*) that Armageddon followed by a "World Society" composed of JWs would come about within the 20th century. Franz also clearly linked the final generation of this world to 1914. The previous interpretations made the last generation start in 1799 and then 1878.

The increase rate of JWs slowed in the 1960s; therefore Franz spurred renewed growth by implying Armageddon and "Peace on Earth" could occur in the mid 1970s. When he became president of the Organization in 1977 widespread disappointment with this "false prophecy" led to mass defection in many countries, the opening of hundreds of anti-JW s ministries, and to protests at JWs conventions and even outside their world headquarters! Some groups distributed leaflets comparing Franz to a murderer (because of his anti-blood-transfusion doctrine) and even to Adolf Hitler!

A strict policy of shunning critics, especially ex-JWs, comparing them to "Satan" and their writings to vomit, plus constant emphasis on Armageddon being "immediately ahead" led to stabilization in the early 1980s and renewed steady increase.

Mr Franz's last visit to Australia occurred in 1984. He spoke to large crowds in major cities and visited the newly built Convention Halls of the sect.

In the final year of his life Mr Franz was blind and deaf and stayed in the infirmary at the New York World headquarters where he died of a heart attack in December.

Events in Franz's Life Correlated with Memorial Attendance and its Ratio to the World Population:

Event	Memorial Attendance	Ratio to World Population 1 to
1893 Birth	1,500	1,200,000
1913 Baptism	13,000	134,000
1920 Brooklyn	22,000	82,000
1945 WBTS Vice President	186,000	12,300
1958 New York	1,172,000	2,430
1977 WTS President	5,108,000	810
1992 Death	11,431,000	480

In Franz's lifetime the Memorial attendance became more than 7000 times bigger.

FRANZ — RHODES SCHOLARSHIP

JWs believe Frederick Franz was elected a Rhodes Scholar but turned it down.

Franz testified at a court trial in Scotland in November 1954 as follows:

Franz: Yes, in the University of Cincinnati we studied the famous Westcott and Hort edition of the Greek text.
Attorney: I think you yourself left Cincinnati University without taking a degree, as Mr. Leslie elicited, but I do not think you told us one other matter. Is it the case that you sat for and were awarded a Rhodes Scholarship?
Franz: Yes, I was offered a Cecil Rhodes Scholarship, I took an examination for that in the University of Ohio, the State University at Columbus, Ohio.
Attorney: What year was that when you were nominated a Rhodes Scholar?
Franz: That was in 1914, but in view of my decision as to the ministry as one of Jehovah's Witnesses I turned that down. (Douglas Walsh Trial Transcript p.178)

Macmillan in *Faith on the March* writes:

> A scholar from his youth, Franz is a keen student of the Bible. Born in Covington, Kentucky, in 1893, he carried away the honors of the University of Cincinnati and was offered the privilege of going to Oxford or Cambridge in England under the Rhodes Plan. Instead, in 1914, he entered the full-time ministry. (p.181)

In his autobiography, "Looking Back Over 93 Years of Living" (w1987 5/1) Franz wrote:

> What a blessing it was to study Bible Greek under Professor Arthur Kensella! Under Dr. Joseph Harry, an author of some Greek works, I also studied the classical Greek. I knew that if I wanted to become a Presbyterian clergyman, I had to have a command of Bible Greek. So I furiously applied myself and got passing grades...
>
> I had been chosen to go to Ohio State University to take competitive examinations with others to win the prize of the Cecil Rhodes Scholarship...
>
> ...my professor in Greek at the university, Dr. Joseph Harry, informed me that I had been chosen to receive it. (w1987 5/1 24)

Paul Blizzard, a former JW, writes:

> I have obtained a copy of Franz's 1911 Woodward High School Yearbook...
>
> While his transcript shows he was an above-average student, earning a 3.63 grade-point average on a scale of 4.0, he could not have "carried away any honors," as Macmillan stated, because he did not graduate. He completed six semesters and earned 84 credit hours. He dropped out in the middle of his junior year in the spring of 1914.

Investigator Magazine reported:

> Following the *Investigator* biography of sect leader Frederick Franz ... reader Frank Russo phoned the University of Cincinatti. Franz studied there from 9/1911 to 12/1913, completed 36 "classes" scoring 23 A's, 8 B's and 5 C's. He did 90% of the studies for a degree before discontinuing. (November 1993, No. 33)

The Rhodes Scholarship Trust deny Franz was "elected" but agree he passed the qualifying examinations, including in Greek, in October 1913 which made him a candidate. This success was only the first step in the selection process. The Rhodes Scholarship have no records of him continuing.

It is therefore true that Franz was a candidate, and probably true that he wrote a letter advising of his loss of interest, but false that he "was offered a Cecil Rhodes Scholarship".

Languages

Franz apparently knew German and Portuguese. He studied Latin, starting in high school, for 7 years. Macmillan (1957) described Franz as conversant with French and Spanish. Also:

> He is also a scholar of Hebrew and Greek as well as of Syriac and Latin, all of which contribute to making him a thoroughly reliable mainstay on Knorr's editorial staff. (pp 181-182)

At University Franz studied classical Greek New Testament Greek and Latin. Syriac and Hebrew were apparently not taught at the University he attended and his biography does not state that he studied them. Franz therefore could not have been what Macmillan says, a "scholar" in these languages.

FRANZ, RAYMOND (1922-2010)
Former member of the Governng Body who was disfellowshipped in 1981.

Raymond Franz's parents were followers of Russell as were three grandparents and four uncles (one brother of his mother and three brothers of his father including Frederick Franz). One uncle (a younger brother of Fred Franz) left the cult after predictions for 1925 turned out false.

Franz's parents raised him in the Bible Students movement. At 16, along with his two older sisters, he began going door to door for

JWs. He was baptized on January 1, 1939 and entered full time service 1940.

He attended Gilead Missionary School for five months in 1944. After graduation he was appointed a "circuit servant" in Arizona and California. In 1946 Franz was assigned to Puerto Rico and was branch servant there for eight years (1946-1954); after that he served in the Virgin Islands. He got married to "Cynthia" c.1959.

In 1965 the WTS president, Nathan Knorr, asked Franz to cease missionary service and assigned him to the New York Headquarters Writing Department. He became a major contributor to *Aid to Bible Understanding* (1971) a Bible dictionary and the main JWs reference work until 1988.

Franz was appointed a member of the Governing Body October 20, 1971 bringing the total GB members to eleven. He says: "This circumstance brought me face to face with some realities that I had never expected to encounter." (Crises of Conscience, p.31)

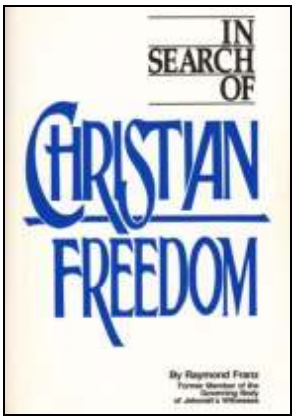
He resigned from the Governing Body in May 1980 and moved to Alabama and was disfellowshipped December 31, 1981 — the immediate reason being he had lunch with Peter Gregerson his landlord, employer and an ex-JW who had disassociated from sect in March, 1981.

Franz authored *Crisis of Conscience* (1983; 2004) which sold 70,000 copies in seven languages, and *In Search of Christian Freedom*. (1991)

He worked for a supermarket, co-owned by Gregerson, until 1986 and also received gifts from wellwishers. With wife Cynthia he moved to Georgia and constructed a house west of Atlanta where they received guests from many countries and letters from all over the world. They did not join another denomination but studied the Bible with friends meeting in a household group.

On 30 May 2010, at age 88, Franz suffered a stroke; life support was discontinued on June 2.

FRANZ, RAYMOND — *IN SEARCH OF CHRISTION FREEDOM* (1991)



In Search of Christian Freedom is Raymond Franz's second book after leaving the Governing Body and being disfellowshipped.

The book has 732 pages, a useful index, and exposes many inconsistencies in JWs teachings. For example:

> ...I found it increasingly difficult to harmonize the organizational self-approval, self-praise, and self-identification as God's channel, with its simultaneous calls for humility and meekness on the part of everyone else.
>
> Most of all I felt deeply disturbed at its interposing of itself between the individual and God…
>
> There seemed to be a definite infringement upon Jesus' divine role. If no one comes to the Father except through him, then—according to the published statements already presented—it was being claimed that no one comes to Christ except through the Watch Tower organization, which thus inserts itself between the individual and God's Son. Logically, this makes the human organization an essential for salvation. 110-111)

Franz devotes much of his book to rebutting the Governing Body's abuse of authority, legalism and breaking up of families.

In his own "search" Franz distinguishes grace and law as follows:

> A Christian's not being under law does not, certainly should not, make him lawless. Because of being under God's grace his freedom from subjection to law should result, not in a lack of righteousness, but in a *superior* righteousness, a righteousness from God, based on faith, love and truth, rather than on obedience to a religious code. (p.179)

FRAUDS

> These religious frauds are defamers of Jehovah's name and are to be transported to their everlasting abode… (w1933 9/1 260)

"Frauds" is a JWs label for, or description of, the clergy. In 1925, J. F. Rutherford was scheduled to speak in Paris on the topic "The Frauds of the Clergy Exposed" but was stopped when a group of priests invaded the premises.

FREE BIBLE STUDENTS

A group founded by the WTS's Central European Branch manger, C.C. Binkele, after he left "the truth" (Yearbook 1980, 63) when Rutherford's predictions for 1925 failed.

FREE HOME BIBLE STUDY

A scheduled discussion conducted by a publisher with a prospective convert usually in their home for an hour each week examing a WBTS book paragraph by paragraph.

It is called "Free home Bible study" when offering it to the public but among themselves JWs omit the "free" and call it a "study" or "Bible study".

FREE THOUGHT AND INQUIRY

Awake! magazine for February 22, 1999 seemingly supports free thought and inquiry:

> Francis bacon, a seventeenth century English philosopher, essayist,jurist, and statesman, advised searchers for truth to weigh and consider. And an early U.S. president, Thomas Jefferson, said: "Reasonand free inquiry are the only effectual agents against error… They are the natural enemies of error. So if we are genuinely searching for truth, we will 'weigh and consider' and pursue 'reason and free inquiry'."
>
> Identifying why such an approach is vital, British scientist Sir Hermann Bondi noted: 'Since at most one faith can be true, it follows that human beings are extremely liable to believe firmly and honestly in the field of revealed religion. One would have expected this obvious fact to lead to some humility, to some thought that however deep one's faith, one may conceivably be mistaken'.

The above sentiments are noble, and the JWs leaders also criticize the "ecclesiastical class" for suppressing people who point out the "errors of their non-Biblical beliefs" thereby proving themselves "among the worst enemies of religious freedom and truth":

> Once again the ruling ecclesiastical class suppressed efforts to make God's Word available to their flock. They violently silenced a voice [Cyril Lucaris - in 1638] that pointed to some of the errors of their non-Biblical beliefs. They proved to be among the worst enemies of religious freedom and truth. Sadly, this is a stance that in various ways survives even to our day. It is a sobering reminder of what happens when clergy-instigated intrigues stand in the way of freedom of thought and expression. (w2000 2/15 290

By pointing the finger at other religions the JWs leaders convey that they themselves are different — they are an ecclesiastical class that never suppress God's Word, never silencees anyone who criticizes them, and never "stand in the way of freedom of thought and expression".

JWs leaders not different

Wikipedia contradicts the freedom-loving facade of the JWs leaders. The JWs leaders are oppressive offenders against freedom, as bad as many political dictatorships:

> Doctrines of Jehovah's Witnesses are established by the Governing Body, without consultation with other members. The religion does not tolerate dissidence about doctrines and practices; members who openly disagree with the religion's teachings are shunned. Watch Tower Society publications strongly discourage followers from questioning its doctrines and counsel, reasoning that the Society is to be trusted as "God's organization". It also warns members to "avoid independent thinking", claiming such thinking "was introduced by Satan the Devil" and would "cause division". Those who openly disagree with official teachings are condemned as "apostates" and "mentally diseased".
>
> Former members Heather and Gary Botting compare the cultural paradigms of the religion to George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four*, and Alan Rogerson describes the religion's leadership as totalitarian. Other critics charge that by disparaging individual decision-making, the Watch Tower Society cultivates a system of unquestioning obedience in which Witnesses abrogate all responsi-ility and rights over their personal lives. Critics also accuse the Watch Tower Society of exercising "intellectual domiance" over Witnesses, controlling information and creating "mental isolation", which former Governing Body member Raymond Franz argued were all elements of mind control.

Noble ideals, like in *Awake!* quoted above, often receive lip service from the Governing Body because naïve readers will conclude "That's what the Governing Body and JWs are like". In practice freedom of inquiry is prohibited to JWs, and any who do it and are found out are severly pressured to stop.

Official JWs stance

The official JWs stance is:

> The worship of Jehovah God is truly liberty-giving...
>
> In fact, secular truth may well do the opposite; it may lead one into bondage if not used in the right way. Thus nations today are facing a bondage to the "scientific elite," because of the advantages that scientists have by reason of their possessing many secular truths. In medicine this has resulted in a "medical priesthood" that seeks to force judges and lawmakers to do their bidding even to the extent of robbing patients of their God-given and Constitutional rights to heed their consciences in accepting medical treatment. Clearly, secular truth can lead men into bondage. (w1967 12/1 733)

The article goes on to list freedoms that result from "the truth that comes from God":

- Freedom from sin and death;
- Freedom from "bondage to Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion;
- Freedom from political systems and ideologies of this world;
- Liberty to refuse blood transfusions, and preach, and attend meetings.

Bible suppressed

Russell taught that to understand the Bible it is better to leave the Bible unread and study his books than to leave his books unread and study the Bible.

So-called "Bible study" in the *Watchtower* religion has, since its start in the 1870s, consisted of the study of its official publications and looking up some of the Scriptures listed which allegedly support what is being taught. This is often merely a study of the opinions of the leaders of the sect, not of the Bible.

The consequence has been thousands of doctrinal errors, some of them revised back and forth multiple times, and failed predictions for dozens of dates. And no JW is ever allowed to challenged anything without being excommunicated.

When various Russellites realized that much of their "Bible education" is sectarian deception many of them asked questions and wanted answers. The disputes that resulted produced about 100 daughter cults of the WTS in the 20th century. After the 1930s organized break-away cults became fewer, but defectors opting out individually eventually numbered several million.

Governing Body autocratic, not freedom-loving

United In Worship Of The Only True God (1983) is an official book in which JWs are urged to respect and obey the WTS and the "faithful slave". To do otherwise is said to disparage Christ and God. Obedience to the Organization and the Bible provides "freedom", "real freedom" and "great freedom". (pp 40-41)

Sociologists have found that JWs are are not democratic and members are expected to conform in everything especially the current doctrines. This is enforced firstly by "counsel" from the elders, secondly by withdrawal of friendship by other JWs, and thirdly by excommunication and shunning.

Sociologist Andrew Holden (2002) states that defectors are not allowed a dignified exit and describes the administration as autocratic.

Problems arise when individual JWs read older WTS books — books still routinely described as containing "the truth" — and finds that some of them read like a different religion, containing numerous claims that would now lead to excommunication.

The JW who does this realizes he has been lied to, year after year, by his lying leaders.

His "freedom" is now limited to a choice of either shutting up and being a colluder in lies for the rest of his life, or speaking out and getting shunned, losing all his friends and entire social support network. Neither decision facilitates mental health. The situation does not feel like freedom, real freedom or great freedom, but is stressful, coersive and emotionally desctructive, sometimes suicidal.

(See: *DISFELLOWSHIPPING*; *APOSTATES*)

FREE WILL

JWs leaders disagree with predestination and the notion that God has unlimited foreknowledge. Whether a person gets salvation or not is therefore entirely up to him — he has "free will" because even God does not know the individual's outcome.

JWs do not consider the related problem of causation.

Most people believe that everything has a cause. However, if everything is caused then so are the chemical/neuronal events in the brain and nervous system. Since these events generate the conscious mind, therefore the mind's content, beliefs and actions too are caused — so argue some philosophers.

An individual's beliefs and attitudes may therefore result from causal chains going back to childhood and even conception. If so, then the person may think or feel he has "free will" but it would be an illusion. Postulating God as ignorant regarding the outcome does not solve the problem.

FREEDOM BAPTIST CHURCH
The church in Morgan County, Missouri, of which "Judge" Rutherford's parents and siblings were members.

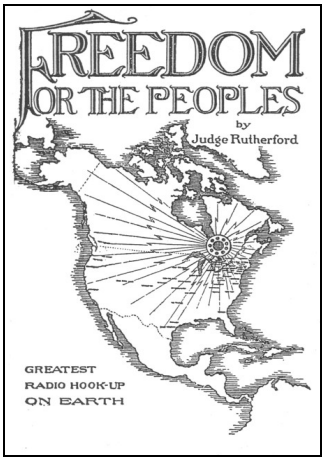
The information sheet of the State Historical Society of Missouri says:

> Freedom Baptist Church was organized on 3 August 1844 as the United Baptist Church at New Hope. Eleven charter members from the Glensted community near Versailles adopted the articles of faith of the Concord Baptist Association, and the church was affiliated with that organization until the Lamine Baptist Association was formed in 1872. The congregation selected D. N. Johnson as its first pastor and Dave Bogar as clerk. In July 1845, the name Freedom Baptist Church was adopted. The earliest meetings were held in the homes of members and in a local store building. Construction began on a permanent church building in 1870 and was completed in 1874. Freedom Cemetery, adjacent to the church, was established shortly thereafter. The church building served the congregation until declining membership in the 1950s and 1960s led to the dissolution of the church in December 1969.
> https://shsmo.org/manuscripts/rolla/r0418.pdf

FREEDOM FOR THE PEOPLES (1927)
An official WBTS booklet in which Rutherford ponders, "What good has Christendom brought us?"

He attacks "high financiers":

> They produce no wealth but obtain it through fraud and deceit upon the peoples, and then use it … to oppress the multitudes and keep them under control. (p.24)



Rutherford, by using false predictions to motivate followers to sell his books, was doing the same as the "high financiers" whom he criticized — "produced no wealth but obtained it through fraud and deceit..."

Page 27 says: "The overwhelming weight of evidence therefore shows that we stand now almost in the shadow of Armageddon." A century has passed, proving that they did not stand "almost in the shadow of Armageddon."

Rutherford also attacks Christianity. His purpose, as seen in the following quote, was to stampede great numbers of people into his WTS Organization:

> The word of God and the physical facts prove that "organized Christianity" or "Christendom" is a failure. She is even worse than that. She is menace to peace and prosperity. She is an instrument of Satan the Devil. Abandon her and flee from her as rats flee from a sinking ship. She is sinking into oblivion never again to rise. She is going down in a time of trouble such as never before was known. To the people the Lord now says therefore: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (p.37)

JWs never seem to balance their critical commentary against Christianity with mention of the great Christian works which benefit JWs and the entire world every day. Included in these great works are:

- Creation of scientific disciplines which improved life in all nations — physics, electronics, genetics, oceanography, and modern medical treatment including surgery, nursing, hygiene and antibiotics.
- Numerous inventions — printing press, microscope, mechanical harvesters, vaccination, Braille, vulcanization of rubber, telephone, etc.

- Biblical research including biblical archaeology, Bible translation, concordances, Bible dictionaries, Bible commentaries, and the preservation and copying of thousands of ancient manuscripts.
- Preaching for 2000 years during which millions of Christians were killed for their faith.
- Setting up of thousands of schools, hospitals, and ministries for the public good.
- The "Green Revolution" of the 1970s which saved the world from global famine came about from improved strains of rice and wheat with the latter invented by a Christian.

Jesus said that his followers will do greater works than he did (John 14:12) which Christianity has done. JWs in contrast have produced false predictions and false beliefs, supposedly getting them from God, and opposed the higher education necessary to make the world more prosperous.

FREEDOM IN CHRIST

The name of a quarterly newsletter about cults published 1981-1993 in Australia by disfellowshipped JW Jan Groenveld. The name was changed to *Cult Awareness and Information Centre* in 1994.

FREEDOM OF RELIGION of JWs

Freedom of worship and religion short of breaking the law is granted in most democracies:

> Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.
> (Article 18, Universal Declaration Of Human Rights, 1948)

Awake! magazine (1999 1/8) featured religious freedom and seemingly JWs are for it:

> "Religious freedom is a fundamental requirement before any society can be described as free. . . . Without freedom of religion and the right to disseminate one's faith there can be no rights of conscience and no genuine democracy,'' observed sociologist Bryan Wilson in his book *Human Values in a Changing World.*
>
> Freedom of religion is like part of the foundation of a building. Other freedoms—civil, political, cultural, and economic—are built upon it. If the foundation is undermined, the whole edifice suffers. (g1988 1/8 5)

The same *Awake!* edition portrays discrimination against JWs as unjustified, unmerited and unfair. The routine claim of JWs, repeated in their publications since 1918 can be paraphrased as follows:

> JWs are good citizens, honest, decent and law-abiding and peaceful. They are persecuted, banned and hated because, like Jesus, they believe the truth and preach the good news of God's kingdom. Satan, governments and religions are against the truth because it exposes their lies and therefore they persecute JWs to silence them.

In Russia a new law legislated prior to the war with Ukraine gaves courts the power to outlaw religious groups convicted of inciting hatred or intolerance — which JWs are accused of.

Seemingly JWs here are again the vicims of intolerance. But it's not that simple.

Religious freedom of JWs

Awake! mentions the threat to basic freedoms when "one group has a monopoly on the media":

> Basic freedoms are also threatened when one group has a monopoly on the media. Unfortunately, this is increasingly the case in many countries. For example, in an attempt to define what is religiously correct, anticult organizations have set themselves up as prosecutor, judge, and jury and have then tried to impose their biased view on the public through the media. However, as the French newspaper *Le Monde* said, in so doing, these organizations sometimes show ''the same sectarianism that they are supposedly fighting and risk creating a 'witch-hunt' climate.'' (g1999 1/8 8)

This, however, describes exactly what the JWs leaders do. The *Watchtower* religion has incited hate and intolerance toward other religions and toward their own so-called "apostates" for 150 years!

The official WTS literature is replete with slander, misrepresentation, bigotry and insults directed against so-called "Christendom" and so-called "apostates" — thousands of expressions of hate, loathing and desire for their destruction.

For example, "*Revelation Its Grand Climax At Hand!*" says:

> ... the clergy of Christendom have been the most prominent members of Satan's seed." (p.30)
>
> All her hundreds of millions of church members, if they continue to support Christendom's religion, become like scorched blades of grass, spiritually wilted in God's eyes. (p.134)
>
> No one looking at the fruits of the third of the world occupied by Christendom can deny that she is groping in gross spiritual darkness. She is most blameworthy, for she claims to be Christian. Hence, it is only proper that the fourth angel should trumpet the fact that Christendom's "light" is, in fact, darkness, and her sources of "light" are Babylonish-non-Christian. (p.140)
>
> Christendom is truly the most reprehensible part of Satan's system of things. (p.141)
>
> In other places, the Kingdom literature continues to expose Christendom's Babylonish doctrines and ways, bringing her deserved harm in a figurative way. (p.154)

Using the term "Christendom" as if 2000 million people are all identical and all equally evil is the error racists make when they speak of "the Jew" or "the black man" as if all Jews or all Negores are evil, worthless and deserve death.

Toward former JWs, who conscientiously dissent because the Governing Body's supposed "Bible truth" is constantly changing, *The Watchtower* incites hatred:

> True Christians share Jehovah's feelings toward such apostates; they are not curious about apostate ideas. On the contrary, they "feel a loathing" toward those who have made themselves God's enemies, but they leave it to Jehovah to execute vengeance. (w1993 10/1 19)

Such words are inconsistent with "freedom of religion and the right to disseminate one's faith..."

The *Awake!* edition already referred to additionally says:

> Rejection, persecution and discrimination towards those who have taken a different path remain a major cause of intolerance. (g1999 1/8 4)

JWs quote such fine sentiment to impress the public but do not regard it as something to adopt into their religion. In reality JWs promote hate and bigotry against all other religions as well as their own ex members, thereby ignoring Jesus' instruction: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them; this, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean." (Matthew 7:12 NWT)

JWs need to remember their thousands of false interpretations and failed predictions for dozens of dates — ever-changing rubbish that they have discarded — and stop pretending it was all "Bible truth" and that others are "fase Christians" for rejecting it.

(See also: *APOSTATES*; *DISFELLOWSHIPPING*)

FREEDOM OF SPEECH -- American law

Tony Mauro — Supreme Court correspondent for American Lawyer Media and author of *Illustrated Great Decisions of the Supreme Court* — writing in May 2000, says: "Thank JWs for speech freedoms".

His comments include:

> But before you shut the door on a Jehovah's Witness the next time, pause to consider the shameful persecution they suffered not too long ago, as well as the rich contribution they have made to the First Amendment freedoms we all enjoy.
>
> The legal clashes Jehovah's Witnesses had with government authorities over their proselytizing and practices led to an astonishing total of 23 separate Supreme Court rulings between 1938 and 1946...
>
> Perhaps the longest-lasting contribution the Witnesses made to First Amendment freedoms came in a 1940 case, Cantwell vs. Connecticut. The Supreme Court said Jehovah's Witnesses Newton Cantwell and his two sons, Jesse and Russell, should not have been arrested for soliciting without a license on the streets of New Haven, Conn. Before the Cantwell decision, it was not legally clear that the First Amendment protected religious practitioners against restrictions at the state and local levels as well as federal. But the Supreme Court in Cantwell said it did, thereby ushering in an era of greatly strengthened religious freedom.
>
> All religions have the Jehovah's Witnesses to thank for the expansion of that freedom....

Alternative view

Mauro has swallowed JWs propaganda on what happened in the 1940s. Another writer of similar stance is S.F. Peters author of *Judging Jehovah's Witnesses* (2000).

A Book Review of S.F. Peters' book says:

> Peters' book shares a fundamental flaw with previous accounts of the legal history of the Jehovah's Witnesses. He has chosen to passionately and unequivocally support the Witnesses' side of each and every one of the legal battles he describes. In Peters' hands every episode in the Witnesses' legal struggles becomes a story about how an extraordinary brave and dedicated Witness challenged an indefensible rule of law, and how every case ultimately resulted in either a watershed victory for liberty, or a disheartening judicial failure to protect our freedom. (Allen Rostron (2003-2004)

JWs have no love of democracy and its legal mechanisms that enhanced freedom of speech. In the late 1930s JWs predicted that democracy in Britain and America would perish and the dictatorships would take over. After that failed to occur they predicted (in *Your Will* 1958) the destruction of Western nations and Communism together at Armageddon which in other references they dated to within the 20th century and in the 1970s.

The JWs leaders/Governing Body do not permit the freedom of speech within their sect that the law grants them in America. Despite a background of false predictions for more than 20 dates and thousands of errors in theology presented as "Bible truth" JWs who challenge or disagree with anything face ostracism. This means loss of their friends and social network (often including their family). Having lost their entire social-emotional support system they also receive repeated barrages of reputation-destroying insults and judgments in WTS publications. There are even implications that ex-JWs are alive because the nations are not at present "theocratic nations" and therefore can't be executed like in the time of Moses. What, however, if Rutherford's goal of "converting the world by preaching" comes about? Then the JWs leaders would be under no legal restraints.

JWs also try stop other religions from preaching to JWs, even getting such persons arrested by the police. *Comments From The Friends*, a magazine published by former elder David Reed, reported the following:

> **At Summer Convention Jehovah's Witnesses have police arrest Baptist Minister:**
>
> Baptist pastor C.G. Spangler walked onto the Pontiac Silverdome grounds and began handing out gospel tracts. JW security personal surrounded him immediately and summoned the police.
>
> The pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Rochester Hills, Michigan was arrested, locked up, fingerprinted and brought before 50th District Court Judge Leo Bowman, according to a July 12 report in the Oakland Press-all for handing out free Bible literature.
>
> He was charged with trespassing. According to a Comments reader who spoke with Spangler afterward, he had been handing out a tract titled "This Was Your Life" by Chick publications, generic invitation to repent and return to Christ — not "apostate" or anti-Witness literature by any means.
>
> The newspaper quoted the pastor saying he had been to communist Cuba twice doing the same tract distribution work and "was never bothered" there. He defended his actions as "a matter of principal". Interestingly, the Watchtower Society often points to the arrest of JW's distributing literature as evidence of "persecution" identifying the JW's as Christ true followers. But, when the tables are turned, the Society uses police against others. How quickly the persecuted become the persecutors.

WTS of JWs in the 1940s extended American laws on freedom of religion and speech by means of the courts: "The Society's legal office, in cooperation with lawyers around the country, took up the fight for freedom of speech and freedom of worship."

However, JWs view this the result as "freedom of speech and freedom of worship" for JWs to try to convert others, not as freedom of others to convert JWs. To hinder or stop others from reaching out to JWs the Governing Body does everything they can legally do or get away with!

FREEDOM OF SPEECH 2

In an article entitled "The Historical Development of Freedom of Speech", *Awake!* magazine says:

> Freedom-loving people are hard-pressed to understand why some governments and religions would withhold this freedom from their people. It is denial of a basic human right, and many people throughout the world suffer under suppression of this freedom. (g1996 7/22)

The "Freedon-loving people" here refers primarily to JWs. Are they actually "freedom-loving"? *ICSA E-Newsletter* Vol. 6, No. 2, 2007 reports:

Jehovah's Witnesses Lose Court Battle to Suppress Freedom of Speech

William Bowen

In a Denmark court ruling, December 2006, Jehovah's Witnesses lost a key decision to suppress freedom of the press. They were ordered to pay legal fees of 50,000 kroner to one of the largest newspapers in Denmark, Ekstra Bladet[1]. Ekstra Bladet had published a series of articles on the epidemic of child abuse within the Jehovah's Witness organization. Since May of 2002, media worldwide have circulated reports of child-abuse problems. Stories include those from The New York Times, Dateline, and eight different countries offering testimony from sexually abused kids within the religion.

In the autumn of 2004, the Denmark newspaper ran a series of articles that blasted the religion for polices of covering up abuse allegations.

The Jehovah's Witnesses local Branch Office Committee in Denmark filed a 350,000-kroner slander lawsuit against Ekstra Bladet and the editor of the newspaper. The religion went further and attacked victims of abuse who had been interviewed for the newspaper articles. Victims were told they would be sued into poverty if they did not retract the stories of being raped as children, which they had given to the newspaper. Because of intimidation, one girl withdrew her story, and other victims went into hiding.

Jehovah's Witnesses have long touted their record as an organizationthat is a defender of "freedom of speech." They currently claim on their Website that they have won more than 50 lawsuits that supposedly establish the freedom of people to speak as they wish or to practice their faith. A film/propaganda piece is circulating around the United States of America called Knocking that will soon air on PBS; the piece touts how Jehovah's Witnesses protect freedom. Yet another side the public are not informed of is the inverted use of these legal victories to punish and humiliate people the Jehovah's Witnesses do not like.

"Disfellowshipping," a word created by Jehovah's Witnesses, is used as aweapon within the religion to destroy families and silence members through intimidation to obey whatever they are told to do. If members are disfellowshipped, all family and church members view them as deadand will not acknowledge their existence; even if a disfellowshipped son walks into the same room with his mother, she will not speak to him. The shunning is indefinite until the deposed members renounce anything the church tells them to and submit totally to church leadership. For example, victims of child abuse have been disfellowshipped for attempting to expose the member who molested them. The victims' freedom of speech was indirectly taken away because no church member was allowed to talk to them; and in some instances, their families put them out on the street at the direction of church leaders. The right of the Jehovah's Witnesses religion to diminish such freedom of speech of certain members has in large part been won by the sect's successful Supreme Court litigations [2].

How could a documentary film on Jehovah's Witnesses miss this common practice in the religion? Jehovah's Witnesses are well known on their Website for press releases that tout their legal victories in the international courts [3]. Sadly, however, there is no reference to the Denmark decision anywhere on this Website. In recent California court decisions, Jehovah's Witnesses have also lost key court rulings on civil child-abuse litigation against the church; but again, this information has been omitted from the Jehovah's Witnesses Website [4]

When the Jehovah's Witnesses lose their court battles to suppress freedom of speech, they appear to be silent. Could one of the reasons be that they misuse donated funds to hurt people? When a Jehovah's Witness calls at your home, he has been taught to memorize this commentary at the end of offering you some free literature: "Our literature is offered without charge, but we would gladly accept a small donation for the Worldwide Work of Jehovah's Witnesses."

When the public reach into their pockets and make donations to this group, they are funding many different things. Although part of the money goes to make more magazines and books, a significant amount goes to fund litigation. In the past five years, more than 70 lawsuits that involved the mistreatment of abused kids were filed against the Jehovah's Witnesses. When you donate to the "Worldwide Work," you may be funding the defense of child molesters. In the Denmark litigation, 50,000 kroner of "Worldwide Work" donations will be spent to pay legal fees, the goal of which was to suppress newspaper exposés of the organization's child-abuse policy...

Professor Marci Hamilton's online article at FindLaw notes the irony of the Denmark case:

It is extraordinarily ironic, then, that the Jehovah's Witnesses have recently, in Denmark, taken the position that speech, including speech by the press, should be punished and suppressed. It appears that when the topic is alleged clergy abuse within the organization, its position on freedom of speech makes a 180-degree turn. Apparently, the Jehovah's Witnesses support free speech for themselves, but not for their critics.
Copyright ©1997-2010 ICSA, Inc.

FREEMASONS
Claims are sometimes made that Charles Taze Russell was a Freemason, the front cover of *Zion's Watch Tower* contained masonic symbols, and Russell's gravestone bears a masonic crown and cross.

Russell was not a Freemason. The symbols on *Zion's Watch Tower* and the cross and crown are not exclusively masonic. The cross and crown is not on his gravestone in Rosemont United Cemetery, Pittsburgh, but on a memorial erected later.

In 1913 Russell gave a public address in a San Francisco masonic hall during which he said, "I have never been a Mason." However, during his speech, he employed masonic imagery saying, "Now, I am a free and accepted Mason. I trust we all are. But not just after the style of our masonic brethren… True Bible believers may or may not belong to the masonic fraternity, but they are all masons of the highest order, since they are being fashioned, chiselled and polished by the Almighty to be used as living stones in the Temple Built Without Hands…"

FREEMASONS INFLUENCE
Some argue that Russell was a high level Freemason. They point to several Masonic symbols on his publications such as the "Cross and Crown" on *Watch Tower* covers, and the "winged-sun-disc" of Egyptian mythology on the covers of *Studies in the Scriptures* from 1911.

To Russell's followers, the Cross and Crown symbolized the death of Jesus and his glorification as King in the 1878 Kingdom of God. Resemblance to anything Masonic is probably coincidental.

FRENCH GUIANA
Publishers and Memorial attendance in French Guiana and their ratio to the population:

	Peak	Ratio 1 to	Memorial	Ratio 1 to
1970	129	310		
1975	193	233		
1980	270	167	746	60
1985	385	190	1,155	63
1990	660	174	2,103	55
1995	1,351	109	5,493	27
2000	1,500	105	5,293	30
2005	1,764	103	6,920	26
2010	2,096	103	8,094	27
2015	2,429	100	9,401	26
2016	2,515	97	9,975	24
2018	2,694	108	10,535	28
	Av.			
2019	2,754	106	11,318	26
2020	2,853	105	9,636	31
2021	2,946	104	11,326	27
2022	2,892	105	10,154	30
2023	2,869	109	10,469	30
2024	2,944	105	11,545	27
2025	2,984	98	10,463	28

FREYTAG, ALEXANDER F.L. (d.1947)
Swiss Russellite who assisted in the preparation of Russell's 1911 visit to France. Replaced Lanz at the Geneva Branch Office in 1916.

Freytag translated Russell's writings into French but removed some of the failed prophecies. WTS leaders complain he:

…began taking liberties, inserting his own ideas into the Watch Tower. (Yearbook 1980, 46)

However, the WTS itself repeatedly revised Russell's *Studies In The Scriptures* including the false prophecies "inserting their own ideas".

A major break occured with the April 1919 issue of the French *Watch Tower*. On page two Freytag is no longer listed as the manager of the Geneva Office but as the "editor" of *The Watch Tower*. In the September issue he announced that God's truth would henceforth come through him in Geneva.

Rutherford closed the Geneva office and transferred to Berne, Switzerland. After court action Freytag made restitution.

Freytag claimed special revelations and published *Jedermanns-blatt* [Everybody's Paper]. He called himself the Ambassador of the Age and wrote a detailed constitution for the Kingdom of God. He preached vegetarianism, reforestation, rejection of medicine, and abstinence from alcohol and tobacco.

The sect was called "Eglise du Royaume de Dieu". It was banned during the Nazi era but

re-emerged in1945 and some 14,000 attended a convention in Paris in 1946.

After Freytag's death Bernard Sayerce (1912-1963) and Lydie Sartre (a former Huguenot) took over the sect in France. The sect is also established in Austria, Germany and Belgium.

The Swiss section of Freytrag's sect, with headquaters at Cartigny, broke away from the French section after his death. It has about 2000 members. (See also: *DIVISIONS/SPLINTER GROUPS*)

FRIENDS
"Friend" and "Friends" was a term of address among Russellites.

JWs believe that non-JWs have only "superficial" love and friendships. (w1985 5/15 3) JWs are different because:

> These genuine Christians enjoy such good relations... (w1985 5/15 7)
>
> …the warmth of such loving friendships is strongly felt among the dedicated, baptized witnesses of Jehovah… (p.10)

However, the "warmth" and "love" is withdrawn when WTS doctrine is questioned.
(See: *SHUNNING*; *DISFELLOWSHIPPING*)

FROM OUR READERS
A page in *Awake!* magazine with letters or comments from readers commenced in June 1981.

FROST, ERIC (1900-1987)
German "district servant" who in Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, 1942, composed the song "Fest Steht" (Stand Firm) which in the English songbook (*Sing Praises to* Jehovah, 1966) became "Forward You Witnesses".

The song is a militant call to stand firm during opposition and begins:

> Firm and determined in this time of the end
> Prepared are God's servants the good news to defend
> Tho' Satan against them has vaunted,
> In God's strength they keep on undaunted. (Song number 29)

Frost is regarded in the sect as a faithful Witness. But others argue he was a traitor whose treachery led to the arrest and execution of other leading JWs in Germany.

Early Life

Erich Hugo Frost was born in Leipzig, baptized by the German "Bible Students" on March 4, 1923 and discontinued music studies.

In 1924 he was superviser of the WTS literature depot in Leipzig and in 1928 helped organize showings of the *Photo-drama of Creation* in Germany, and after 1930 became a "pilgrim" (similar to later "circuit overseers") who visited, monitored and lectured individual congregations.

Arrested three times

The Nazi regime arrested Frost in 1934 and released him after ten days.

He was arrested again on June 13, 1935 and spent five months in Columbia concentration camp in Berlin .

In 1936 Rutherford appointed Frost for the underground work of JWs in Germany where he organized a nationwide leaflet campaign for December 12,1936.

He was arrested on March 21, 1937 and sent to Esterwegen concentration camp, and transferred to Sachsenshausen around 1940.

His wife in July 1937 was also arrested and they lost custody of their son.

Frost also spent time in the concentration camp on the Channel island, Alderney. After that he was transferred to Austria where he was liberated in May, 1945

Frost headed the WTS branch in Magdeburg until East Germany banned JWs (August 30, 1950).

He became overseer of their new branch office in Wiesbaden. He resigned in 1955 but continued there in other positions until the 1960s. He also spoke at JWs assemblies during the 1950s into the 1960s.

Accused

JWs claim that the East German State Security Ministry tried to recruit Frost in 1956. They failed, therefore sought to destroy his reputation beginning with the pamphlet: *Erich Frost - The Traitor to the Cause of Jehovah.*

East Germany was supposedly behind an article in the West German news magazine *Der Spiegel* (July 19, 1961, pp 38-39) which accused Frost of betraying other JWs leaders in 1937 to the Gestapo.

Faithful and loyal

In July 1961 Frost addressed a JWs convention in Germany, with WTS president Nathan H.

Knorr present, and gave a positive account of his war-record.

In *The Watchtower* article "Deliverance from Totalitarian Inquisition Through Faith in God" he writes:

> Upon returning to Germany in May, 1935, I took part in the underground work. On the night of June 13 I was arrested at my hotel and taken to Berlin's "Columbia House," where I spent the worst five months of my life. Clubbed and stepped on, always in solitary confinement, vexed and humbled daily, I learned then that humans could become beasts. A Gestapo agent's senseless questions failed to convict me of being a revolutionist. Unexpectedly I was released and soon faded back into the underground to serve Jehovah further.
>
> Preparations got under way for a convention in Lucerne, Switzerland. Meanwhile, the Nazis began a new drive against us. Already most of the brothers holding responsible positions had been arrested. My efforts were to pick up the loose ends and get things going again. Numberless back doors and windows provided narrow escapes from the Gestapo, but my mother and brother were arrested. (w1961 4/15 245)

The WTS's final verdict on Frost says he "continued to serve Jehovah faithfully" and includes him with the "loyal ones":

> Erich Frost finished his earthly course on October 30, 1987, at the age of 86. Born on December 22, 1900, he was baptized on March 4, 1923, and entered the full-time ministry in 1928. In 1936 he was put in charge of the underground work of the persecuted witnesses of Jehovah in Germany, caring well for that assignment for eight months until he was incarcerated in a concentration camp. After the war, from 1945 to 1955, he served as the overseer of the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Germany. (See The Watchtower, April 15, 1961, pages 244-9.) Thereafter, he continued to serve Jehovah faithfully. God does not forget the work of such anointed Christians or the love they show for his name.-Hebrews 6:10. (w1988 3/15 21)

Traitor? When?

Notice in Frost's testimony regarding his imprisonment of June 13, 1935: "Unexpectedly I was released and soon faded back into the underground to serve Jehovah further."

Was Frost released because he agreed to collaborate?

German JW Ilse Unterdörfer writes in *The Watchtower* that in September 1936 Rutherford appointed Frost to reorganize the JW work in Germany. Frost, therefore, would have known all the "regional service directors" [or district overseers] in Germany personally and be in a position to betray them. She gives the date of Frost's next arrest as March 21, 1937:

> In August 1936, the German gestapo (secret police) began a concerted campaign against our underground organization. Fritz Winkler, who had oversight of our work, and most of the regional directors were arrested and imprisoned.
>
> In September 1936, I was able to get to Lucerne, Switzerland, for a convention, along with about 300 others from Germany. There J. F. Rutherford, then the president of the Watch Tower Society, entrusted Erich Frost with the responsibility of reorganizing our badly disrupted underground activity, and some days later I was appointed to work along with him....
>
> Then, on March 21, 1937, less than two weeks after I first met Elfriede, Brother Frost and I were arrested. About the same time, certain regional service directors also fell into the hands of the gestapo. Brother Heinrich Dietschi, a regional service director who was still free, assumed oversight of the work in Brother Frost's absence.
> (w1979 11/1 9-10)

Frost confirms that his arrest occurred shortly before March 27, 1937 and:

> The annual Memorial celebration of Christ's death was due March 27, 1937. I had arranged to meet with ten brothers at that time to discuss the underground activity. At two o'clock in the morning came heavy blows and kicking against the apartment door! In seconds I hid a small roll of paper containing vital information in the mattress of my couch. In came ten secret police: "All right, get up and get dressed, Frost. The jig is up!" I prayed to Jehovah and proceeded to dress while they turned the room into shambles. The small roll was never found. (w1961 4/15 246)

Thus, Frost was arrested on March 21, 1937, six days before he was due "to meet with ten brothers". Unterdörfer says: "About the same time, certain regional service directors also fell into the hands of the gestapo."

Presumably the "service directors" Unterdörfer refers to are the same "ten brothers" Frost refers to — or among the ten. The timing of their capture, within six days after Frost's arrest and at about the time he was scheduled to meet with them, looks suspicious.

Jerry Bergman writes:

> The Gestapo document *Haftbuch Nr. 292, des Geheimen Staatspolizeiamtes in Berlin, Dienststelle II B 2* has Frost's signatures on the protocol. No torture was used and yet Frost supplied the names of seven other district servants. These were Otto Dauth, Albert Wandres, Fred Meier, Walter Friese, Arthur Nawroth, Heinrich Ditschi, and Karl Siebeneichler. From Sachsenhausen Frost was moved to the much better location of Alderney (a German-occupied channel Island).
> (Bergman, J. The Watchtower's Nazi Conflicts: A History of Watchtower Cowardliness and Witness Perseverance, *JW Research Journal*, 1999 January-June)

Bergman implies that these seven were betrayed when Frost was in Sachsenhausen which was several years after 1937. If so, these seven "district servants" would not be the same ones betrayed in 1937.

Overall it's probable — based on the dates of the 1937 arrests, Frost's insider information, and his imprisonment being relatively lenient — that Frost collaborated in the capture of other WTS leaders in Germany. If so the American WTS hierarchy overlooked his betrayal because after 1945 he returned to full loyalty and his story and song was an inspiration to other JWs.

Is loyalty to the WTS Life-saving?

Comparing Frost's alleged loyalty with three other JWs who were "traitors" *The Watchtower* says:

> These traitors each came to a bad end. As the Nazis said, they loved the betrayal but not the betrayer. All three were sent to the eastern front and never came back. How different it turned out for those who never gave up friendship with God and his people! Many of the loyal ones, among them Erich Frost and Konrad Franke, who suffered much for the Lord's sake and later became branch overseers in Germany, returned alive from the fiery furnace of persecution. (w1989 5/1 12)

To better work out mathematically whether loyalty to JWs was safer in Nazi Germany than leaving JWs we need to compare larger numbers.

Using rough and ready figures: JWs in Germany declined from about 20,000 to 6000 between 1933 and the late 1930s, a loss of 14,000. Apparently up to about 1000 of the 6000 sufferered premature death by execution, and there would also have been premature deaths from other causes. The total premature deaths of the 6000 would have to be compared with the total premature deaths of the 14,000 to determine whether staying or leaving the JWs was safer. However, the numbers are not known.

To whom is loyalty due?

Also, the conclusion that they "suffered much for the Lord's sake" is misleading due to the numerous false doctrines and false predictions of JWs in the 1940s which they've now revised. What they "suffered for" is the indoctrination, bigotry and ignorance imposed by Rutherford.

FROM PARADISE LOST TO PARADISE REGAINED (1959)
Official WTS book intended for children.

FRUITS (Matthew 7:16)
Interpreted as good outward moral conduct plus doctrine acceptable to the WTS. (g1988 1/8 27)

FRYE, RONALD
Second-generation American JW who served as an overseer in five congregations, special pioneer, and circuit servant [circuit overseer].

Frye left JWs and published 52 issues of *The Christian Respondent* from 1984 to 1991, followed by *The Christian Challenge* which commenced in 1989. He then became editor of *Biblical Research & Commentary International*.

Frye was among the casualties of the upheavals that followed the failed prophecies for the 1970s. He worked to organize support groups to outreach thousands of former JWs who were isolated and devastated by the WTS shunning policy. Frye's daughter, for example, remained a JW and shunned her parents.

Also authored:

The Father/Son Relationship — an 87-page analysis of the concepts of God, messiah, deity and son.
My Christian Quest From Jehovah's Witness to Son of God (2006) — which chronicles Frye's painful exit from JWs and the resulting family conflict.

FULLTIME WORKERS

"Fulltime workers", often mentioned in JWs *Yearbook*s and the January 1 *Watchtower*, referred to the total of pioneers, missionaries, travelling overseers, and workers and staff in WTS factories and branch facilities.

Each year had a peak and an average number, with the average fulltime workers roughly equivalent to 12-14% of the average publishers.

Fulltime workers other than ordinary pioneers receive some financial support from the WTS.

	Peak	Average	Support $millions
1992	931,521	605,600	$45.2m
1993	890,231	623,000	$48.9m
1997		706,270	
1998		698,781	

FUNDAMENTALISM

A conservative movement in American Protestant denominations, associated with 19th century millenarianism, and emphasizing the "fundamentals" of Christianity.

The "fundamentals" included the literal interpretation of the Scriptures, biblical inerrancy, creation, the Ten Commandments, the Virgin Birth, reconciliation with God through Christ's death, the bodily resurrection of the dead, and the physical Second Coming of Christ and his millennial (1000-year) reign.

In the 20th century Fundamentalism was represented by numerous churches, educational institutions and creationist organizations.

History

The expectation in the 1830s-1840s of Christ's early return was incorporated into the movement known as the Niagara Bible Conference initiated by New York City Baptist minister James Inglis around 1870. This movement attracted prominent Baptist and Presbyterian leaders and held annual summer conferences at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, until 1899.

In the 1890s the rise of liberal biblical criticism in major denominations prompted many church members to join the Fundamentalist movement.

Various groups that defended the Bible cooperated to found the American Bible League in 1902 and produced 12 pamphlets titled "The Fundamentals". The pamphlets attacked the arguments of biblical critics and reasserted the authority of the Bible. Nevertheless liberalism increasingly established itself in the Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian denominations.

After 1914 the new generation of leaders of the Niagara Conference divided into rival factions, and the two leading millenarian periodicals, *Watchword and Truth* (founded by Methodist minister A.C. Graebelein), and *Our Hope* (edited by Baptist minister Robert Cameron), were in open opposition to each other.

Conferences in New York City and Philadelphia gave rise in 1919 to a larger organization, the World's Christian Fundamentals Association.

This group believed that the Bible could not be reconciled with evolution and lobbied for legislation to stop evolution being taught in public schools. Tennessee passed such a statute which was challenged in the courts in 1925 at the instigation of the American Civil Liberties Union when science teacher John T. Scopes went to trial on the charge of having taught evolution.

During the 1930s and 1940s some fundamentalist Presbyterians and Baptists broke away from their denominations to form the Presbyterian Church in America and the General Association of Regular Baptists. Many fundamentalists joined either these or one of the sects that still believed in biblical literalism and premillennialism, such as the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Plymouth Brethren, and the Evangelical Free Church.

The modern structure of fundamentalism is provided by Bible institutes and Bible colleges. The Moody Bible Institute in Chicago and the Bible Institute of Los Angeles publish periodicals, broadcast from their own radio stations, hold conferences, and have speakers ready to speak on public occasions when invited.

There are also associations of Fundamentalists among doctors, scientists, athletes, social workers, historians, businessmen, nurses and students. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and Campus Crusade for Christ exist on hundreds of university and college campuses.

The evolution controversy resurfaced in the 1960s when "scientific creationists", who presented creationism and evolution as alternative scientific models, tried to get evolution banned from being taught in public schools or at least get Genesis taught alongside it. Then came "Intelligent Design" with its pro-creation biology books intended for school libraries and and supposedly suitable for school curriculums, but the courts ruled that it's still religion and contravened the separation of church and state.

Also during the late 20th century the so-called "Moral Majority", a fundamentalist citizens organization headed by Baptist minister Jerry Falwell of Virginia, crusaded against legalized abortion and homosexual rights, but for school prayers, and supported anticommunist foreign policy.

Fundamentalist attitudes have not greatly changed since the time of the Niagara conferences. Most fundamentalists still believe in the inerrancy of the original biblical Scriptures, avoid cigarettes, alcoholic drinks and public entertainment venues, oppose evolution and Communism, and expect the soon-return of Jesus and his millennial reign.

Fundamentalism and JWs

Although JWs oppose evolution, teach biblical inerrancy, promote ethics based on the Ten Commandments, and have their own sectarian interpretation of the resurrection and the millennium, they were never considered part of the Fundamentalist movement. Fundamentalists are Protestants, Trinitarian and in the main consider each other as Christians, whereas JWs are anit-trinitarian and consider themselves as the only organization of genuine Christians who truly understand the Bible.

JWs, however, get many of their converts from among dissatisfied believers in the mainstream churches. Therefore the divisons within Fundamentalism and its conflicts with liberal churches have contributed to the growth of JWs.

FUNDAMENTALISM

An article by Dr Bob Potter from *Investigator Magazine* #40, January 1995:

EXPLORATIONS OF FUNDAMENTALISM

Each of us views the world through cognitive 'goggles' — lenses constructed from the theories and hypotheses we have inherited and developed in our journey through life. 'Religion' is one of the ways we choose to look at the world. There are other ways — 'science' and 'politics'. Of course, these ways are not separate; they overlap and none of us uses exactly the same mental constructs.

For more than twenty years I have been interested in religious approaches to the world. As I have been an atheist since childhood, it may seem odd that I chose to research religious attitudes — I could just as easily have chosen to investigate political views and groupings. These were areas in which I had been much more involved...and, ironically, it was for precise)y that reason, because I had spent much of my life committed to various forms of the secular-Marxist religion, that I chose to escape my own 'hang-ups' in the political field and research religion. (It was soon to become very obvious that the mechanisms of the one area were readily applicable to the other!)

The Christian religion is the readiest to hand and it is for this reason and this reason alone that I began by overviewing the nature and function of fundamentalist Christianity, attempting to explain its 'success' and to explore the personality characteristics of a fundamentalist believer and the interactive nature of fundamentalist groups — why they attract particular individuals and how they 'transform' the lives of their members.

T.S. Eliot's frequently quoted remark 'Christianity is always adapting itself into something which can be believed' may be partly true of the 'official' church, but it misses an important point, for there are many elements in Christendom that do not 'keep up with the times' and it is precisely those elements that appear to become the major growth areas.

One cannot speak of Christianity, either as doctrine or as social institution, as if it were a monolithic entity existing in isolation. The church, like every other social institution, is a network of smaller units interacting with one another and with the world outside and reflecting different, often opposing, social and individual interests. What goes on within one unit, the ideology it develops for integrating and articulating its views of the world, therefore influences the attitudes and values of the units and the people who are members of these units within the general structure of society.

As a research psychologist I have been interested to learn something about the people who choose to identify themselves with fundamentalism - that style of religious belief that often takes as its starting point' a dogmatic insistence that the Bible is the *literal* 'word of God'. My investigation was psychological, therefore, not theological and my interest in the individuals was related to their 'style of thinking' rather than the content of their belief. (For those interested in making the 'political' comparisons as we proceed, the Marxist 'fundamentalist' would be the individual who 'wins' a political argument by producing the appropriate quotations from Marx or Engels or Trotsky or...)

* * *

The tension within Christianity between fundamentalism and liberalism manifests itself, as I have already indicated, in contrasting views about the status of the Bible. In AD312, the Roman Emperor Constantine declared

Christianity to be the religion of the State. In AD325 he presided over the Nicean Council which decided which 'scriptural' books were 'inspired': the following year he ordered that all 'heretic' writings were to be destroyed. From this point in time Church dogma evolved as part of the ideology of the ruling classes, as a means of explaining the differing social standings of the peoples while, at the same time, justifying the status quo. Scriptural interpretation was seen as an adjunct of political policy making.

Only an extreme minority of faithful were able to read, so insistence on a literal acceptance of the gospels was rarely at issue. Arguably, the first fundamentalist was Lactantius, a fourth century theologian who used the Bible to 'prove' the world was flat. His argument was developed more fully by Cosmas Indicoplaustes, writing in AD547, who derided those who wasted their time taking measurements and doing sums — the appropriate way to learn astronomy was to read the appropriate chapters in the Old Testament.

By the eighth century the cosmology of Cosmas had been abandoned, even by the fundamentalists, although regularly sects sprang up preaching a 'flat earth'. A popular anecdote of the thirteenth century relates how the congregation of one church was surprised to hear the voices of sailors coming from the sky and to see an anchor suspended above their heads, down which a sailor descended, dying of suffocation as he reached the ground. Tragedy had struck a boat cruising on the waters above the firmament!

Throughout the Middle Ages, Christian orthodoxy insisted that the Bible was literally true and the continued illiteracy of the masses and the unavailability of the texts allowed this claim to be largely unquestioned. All academic knowledge was grounded in religious conceptualisations, and prior to the Renaissance theological disputes were synonymous with metaphysical arguments — whatever the point of view being advocated it was always possible to find verses somewhere in the Bible to quote in support.

The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw rapid developments in science. Man (and woman!) needed to expand his astronomical knowledge in order to explore and exploit the globe. The Biblical view of the world could no longer be accepted: there is a basic contradiction between believing an eclipse is one of the modes whereby the Almighty expresses His anger with humanity *and* the ability of mathematicians to predict these 'supernatural' occurrences. The difficulties Bruno and Galileo encountered with established theology illustrated the developing conflict between religion and science, although the details of these clashes have been crudely over-simplified. (Many of the Jesuits were enlightened scholars who were not, in principle, hostile to the Copernican system. What the church would *not* tolerate was Galileo's claim that certain passages in scripture 'look as if they differ from truth'.)

The scientific revolution was accompanied by the invention of the printing press, and soon the Biblical texts were accessible to lay people. Historian A.G. Dickens tells us that ILutherism was from the first the child of the printed book'. In 1516, as Luther prepared to nail his ninety-five theses on the door of Wittenberg's church, Erasmus produced his New Testament. In 1539, Henry VIII had Bibles placed in English parish churches, so the congregations could read them and interpret them for themselves.

The initial Lutheran challenge to Roman Catholicism was on the grounds of the preservation of purity through adherence to the literal word of God (or opposed to the authority of the Catholic Church, based on tradition) but Luther himself was far from being a fundamentalist — indeed he insisted that some Bible books were more important than others and he dismissed, for example, the letter of James as 'an epistle of straw'.

Luther was undoubtedly one of the most viciously reactionary individuals in human history, whose anti-Semitic ravings make the later speeches of Adolf Hitler appear moderate in the extreme, but his reform served as a catalyst for fundamentalist and millenarian movements which he and his associates neither wanted nor could control. In this situation it became increasingly necessary for the church authorities to be 'seen' as endorsing the truth of scripture. The basis for a movement combining ecclesiastical conservatism and Bible literalism was being laid.

Close on the heels of religious reformation there began to develop a revolutionary ferment against the disintegrating European federal system, identifying itself with the Protestant reformation and manifesting hostility to the Established Church. The French revolutionaries of 1789 saw the Church as part of the feudal structure they overthrew. The elite theocrats in Rome may once have seemed enlightened 'humanists', but now the church was forced to become the blatant representative of the old order.

In England, the hierarchy of the national church usually reacted to change by identifying itself with the forces of reaction. Biblical interpretation became a device to preserve the Establishment and oppose reform; it was not untypical that when the Reform Bill of 1832 (to enfranchise the middle

class) came to the House of Lords, twenty-one of the twenty-three bishops opposed it. Again, the following year, only two of the twenty-three bishops supported the bill to abolish slavery — they cited Exodus 21:2-6, for example. Although Christian apologists today often accredit their religious forebears with many social advances of the nineteenth century, most reformers of the day, like Jeremy Bentham, Robert Owen, Francis Place and James Mill, were atheists. The first important scientific theory that could not be easily reconciled with Biblical literalism was Darwin's evolutionism, as expounded in *The Origin of Species* published in 1859. This was the point where the two factions comprising the church polarised and separated. To this day, at the popular level, evolution is often *the* issue that defines the boundaries of fundamentalism.

An early attempt to rationalise religion *from within* was that of David Friedrich Strauss, who in 1835 published *The Life of Jesus Christ Critically Examined*. Strauss argued that the Gospel narratives were myths representing essential truths. Although he carefully 'took the New Testament apart', highlighting the numerous contradictions and absurdities, he saw himself as a defender of Christianity:

We have outgrown the notion that the divine omnipotence is more completely manifested in the interruption of the order of nature than in its preservation, he argued, rejecting out of hand the need to believe in 'miracles' as historical facts.

A few years later, Ludwig Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity* (1841) argued that the religious individual worships not God but an idealised human nature. Men look about them and observe that their ideals of perfection are not realised in particular human beings, assume that they must be realised in some being and postulate a God. The more they 'give' to God, the more they take from themselves. Marx and Engels have described the enthusiasm with which Feuerbach's early delineations of 'alienation' were greeted by contemporary radicals — and Marx himself was to develop more fully this idea of the roots of religion being found in man's alienation:

> The abolition of religion, as the illusory happiness of the people, is the demand for their real happiness. The demand to abandon the illusions about their condition is a demand to abandon a condition which requires illusions.

Strauss and Feuerbach, then, were the founders of modem liberal and humanistic theology — a development to be continued by Rudolf Bultmann, Paul Tillich, John Robinson and more recently Don Cupitt. The latter has developed his 'humanism' to the point of rejecting the godhead in the traditional sense:

> It seems doubtful whether there is any immense cosmic or supracosmic creator-mind. Even if there is, it is hard to see what it or he could have to do with religion.

The consequences of liberalism

A theme that will be explored later in this text is that one of the essential functions of traditional religion is that it offers security and stability in an increasingly uncertain world.

It is glaringly obvious, therefore, that the individual who joins a religious community because it appears as a sanctuary in an ambiguous and frightening world, will react strongly against modem attempts to 'de-mythologise' Christianity.

I have referred to the way in which early attempts to rationalise theology were countered by the Establishment — and this, of course, is what those who needed religion as a refuge wanted. In Great Britain, for example, membership of the traditional churches steadily increased, especially from the beginning of the nineteenth century until the period of the First World War. For most of that time, membership increased faster than the population; but during and after the 1914-18 War the numbers sharply declined in all the major churches apart from the Roman Catholic.

Interestingly the decline in membership correlated positively with the increasing liberalisation of theology. Equally interesting is the fact that throughout this period there had been no similar move to rationalise the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church and its numbers continued to rise. This trend has continued to more recent times.

One could say that the religious history of Western civilisation during the last five hundred years is largely a history of secularisation. Since the Reformation and the rise in science the external supports of the Christian faith have fallen away. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the power and prestige of the clergy declined dramatically — empirical methods and mechanical models left little room for revelation. The Christian who needed to remain faithful found his faith weakened by the social environment; increasingly he must 'withdraw' from the world.

The origin and growth of 'fundamentalism'

The rejection of liberal Christian thought took two forms — firstly the insistence on the literal truth of the Bible and secondly the acceptance

of millennial beliefs, the conviction that mankind was living in the 'last days' and that God would soon intervene to 'cleanse' the world.

No historical period lacks a millenarian movement. In America, the rejection of religion based on the new secular sciences culminated in the intense millennial expectation of William Miller, a Baptist preacher from New York, who in 1818 declared that study of the Bible had convinced him that the present world system was about to end. He eventually decided that Christ would return to Earth some time between 21st March 1843 and 21st March 1844. At their height the Millerites had a hard-core following of fifty thousand and probably another million were interested but not convinced. They did not form a distinct sect, remaining within their various congregations.

The failure of the prophecy did not lead to the demoralisation that might have been expected - indeed it led in many cases to increased enthusiasm: 'I have never witnessed a stronger and more active faith', declared one of the Millerite leaders in July 1844. The date of Christ's return was postponed until the following 22nd October. As this date approached thousands gave up work, closed their workshops and stores. Last goodbyes were said and the faithful remained at home waiting for the Lord. The intense distress following this second disappointment destroyed the Millerites in their original form. The movement shattered into three factions.

The largest group, including Miller himself, decided he had erred in calculating the date - Christ would now return in 1849. The descendants of this group remain active in the US today. The second faction, the spiritualisers, decided that Miller had been correct, that Jesus had indeed returned as predicted, but in spirit form. This theme, with regular modifications of the critical dates, was to lead to the eventual foundation of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The third faction was to develop into today's Seventh-day Adventists. They argued that Miller's date was correct but that it referred to Christ's activity in heaven. Virtually all of today's fundamentalist Christian sects originated in the disintegration of the Millerite movement.

The name 'fundamentalism' arose in the USA during the First World War. Mention has already been made of the development of liberal thinking in the established churches of this period, and it was as a conservative reaction to this process that millionaire Lyman Stewart financed the publication of twelve booklets entitled *The Fundamentals: a testimony of truth* during 1910-12. Three million copies were sold expounding the central doctrines of:

a) the Bible is without error;
b) the virgin birth of Christ;
c) salvation through Christ;
d) the need to be 'infilled' by the Holy Spirit;
e) the imminent second coming of Christ;
f) the urgency of speedy evangelisation of the world.

These points remain the essence of twentieth century fundamentalism.
The influence of this new fanatical trend within the United States cannot be overstated. During the 1920s, for example, no less than seventeen anti-evolution bills were introduced into twenty state legislatures in attempts to eliminate this theory from the public schools.

The main thrust of contemporary fundamentalism still comes from America where since the mid-1960s Bible literalists, describing themselves as 'scientific creationists', have set up numerous organisations dedicated to campaigning against almost every objective of enlightened secular education. With impressive literature, videos and films, expeditions travel abroad seeking evidence supporting the Biblical creation myths — as, for example, the recent excavations in Turkey claiming to have found Noah's Ark, capable of holding fifty thousand animals.

The relative 'success' of the 'born again' approach to religion is measurable in that the growth rate of the various Christian groupings seems to correlate positively with the degree to which they endorse fundamentalist doctrine. Reference has already been made to the steady decline in the traditional congregations that has accompanied liberalisation. From October 1962 to December 1965 the Roman Catholics in Council, now known as Vatican II, met the groundswell of opinion for reform from within the church for 'liberty to study, liberty to discuss, liberty to differ, liberty to converse with all other men'. Limited though the reforms may have been in the eyes of the non-Catholic population, the church suffered a similar fate to that of mainstream Protestantism. For example, in this country during the years 1966 to 1992 the adult Sunday Mass attendance fell by 38% - from 2.1 million to 1.3 million participants. (Had Pope John Paul I, who was almost certainly murdered in September 1978 only thirty three days after his election, remained in office, even more vigorous reforms in the area of 'birth control' would have followed. One can only speculate what the effect of this liberalisation would have been!)

As every denomination has its own method of assessing numerical strength, it is difficult to make comparisons. However, if one accepts their own figures as being accurate, mainstream churches in general are, on

average, losing up to 20% of their members with the passing of each decade.

On the other hand, fundamentalist communities continue to expand. For example, and typically, during the period 1980-1992 in the United Kingdom Jehovah's Witnesses increased their membership by 54%.

Two very important points need to be made regarding these comparative data:

1. If 1 accept the *Catholic Directory*'s calculation that there were 4,280,000 Catholics in England and Wales in 1992, the figure doesn't really mean much. Many of these individuals may attend an occasional Mass and have no other involvement in their 'religion'.

2. But if I accept the Jehovah's Witnesses' calculation that there were 127,000 'Witnesses' active in this country in 1992, then the figure tells me, quite literally, that there were 127,000 individuals who attended five meetings every week *and* spent time selling their magazines on the doorstep every week. There is no such thing as an 'inactive Witness' and failure to comply with tile above mentioned requirements as a *minimum* would automatically remove them from the 'census'!

One other important point needs to be borne in mind when interpreting the meanings of the membership figures. From my own investigations, I have frequently found that even *within the mainstream churches* it tends to be the 'fundamentalist' congregations that recruit and expand: if it were possible to 'extract' the 'born again' gatherings from the mainstream churches, the collapse of the traditional 'liberal' congregations (e.g. Anglican, Methodist, Unitarian) and the inverse rapid expansion of the 'evangelicals' would be accurately reflected in the figures.

The fundamentalist personality

There appear to be at least six general psychological characteristics that go to make the fundamentalist individual. Not every fundamentalist has each of these characteristics, but the majority have most of them. Indeed, research has shown that it is possible to identify, with impressive accuracy, to which community individuals belong by noting the extent to which they conform to each of these dimensions. (Although these characteristics have been identified with reference to members of religious communities, the reader familiar with fringe political groupings will possibly 'recognise' these personality types!)

1. A rootless, alienated and isolated person who feels estranged from society and 'the world'. He will readily admit to 'not fitting in'.
He will often report that prior to joining he was troubled by loneliness and had never been able to form 'deep' relationships. Admittedly this problem will remain and he will have difficulty relating to others *within* the new congregation - but this will no longer be a problem: now there are so many things urgently requiring to be done in preparation for the 'second coming'. There just isn't time, now, for 'socialising'.

2. An individual who is obsessed by his own perceived personal inadequacy. He will attempt to prove his worth by finding tasks he can accomplish - great emphasis will be placed on rejecting smoking, drugs, alcohol, the wearing of immodest clothes.
The fundamentalist will often report that before joining he was an insignificant nobody — but now, along with his colleagues who have also been 'saved', he becomes part of an *ever-expanding* invincible organisation, possibly under the personal command of the Lord himself.
(Fundamentalists are often obsessed with statistics. Every single hour spent by every single Jehovah's Witness is recorded and documented world-wide in the annual 'Yearbook'. Constant growth is evidence that they have God's endorsement - if 'other' communities are growing, *that* is evidence of Satan's influence.)

3. An essentially self-centred person whose only 'way out' of his own perceived insignificance is seen in terms of joining an exclusive 'elite' possessing esoteric knowledge not shared with the rest of humanity. If he 'does good 'it is not from a 'social conscience' but rather because this is the price to be paid for membership of the elite.

I remember asking one Jehovah's Witness of forty years standing what we should do about the starving millions in the Third World. 'Nothing', was her reply, 'whatever we did would be as if we attempted to warm up the sea by emptying a kettle of boiling water into it'. When I asked the congregation overseer the same question he assured me that 'Jehovah is going to put this right in the near future — we don't want to do his work for him'.

4. An anti-intellectual largely engendered by his own exclusion from the academic world and/or past failures to gain 'recognition'. Although he will often claim to be a 'student', study will consist of reading the superficial pamphlets of his own group. His bookcase will not contain scholarly works or Bible criticisms - his object is to confirm his faith, not explore it.

He will not be a deep thinker: rather he will fear the thought processes and the dilemmas and ambiguities that result from them.

His conversion will have been sudden - *not* the consequence of long periods of contemplation. In discussions with outsiders the opinions of the other person will not be regarded as worthy of serious consideration - rather as a means of developing his 'debating skills'.

Indeed points of view from outsiders are viewed as a great danger. Not untypical of the attitude to the views of 'outsiders' is the following warning that appeared in the Watchtower (15th March 1986) regarding alien literature:

> ...what will you do if you receive a letter or some literature, open it, and see right away that it has come from a hostile source? Will curiosity cause you to read it, just to see what it has to say? You may even reason: 'It won't affect me; I'm too strong in the truth. And besides, if we have the truth we have nothing to fear' ... In thinking this way, some have fed their minds upon apostate reasoning and have fallen prey to serious questioning and doubt.

Alongside this text is a picture of a believer wisely throwing the alien literature, unopened, into the dustbin. In fact, in 1992, the Watchtower Society instructed their readers they should not read hostile literature - and this includes their own publications older than the year 1960!

5. A person with a deep fear of uncertainty and chaos. The great attraction of the religious community is that it is seen as an impregnable system totally managed by the Almighty and/or his agents on earth. Fundamentalists are fearful of the future and often admit they could never be happy if the future were uncertain. Perhaps this is related to their sense of inadequacy — if it is difficult to cope with the present, how can it be possible to cope with the unknown problems of the future? Hence the need to 'determine' the future through Bible prophecy — often with embarrassing consequences: since the founding of the *Watchtower* organisation, - for example, the following years have been specified by them as the date when 'Armageddon' is due: 1874, 1914, 1918, 1925, 1941 and 1975.

The 'fear of future' is bound up with the perceived urgency of their proselytisation. It is because the presence of 'the End' is so close, a point that is emphasised in *every* meeting, in every conversation, that the fundamentalist 'elders' are able to keep their followers too busy to have time to think deeply about their beliefs and doctrines. Jehovah's Witness elders are removed from their post in the congregation if they allow their children to enter into Higher Education — there is just no time for study, the End is so near. And anyway, they will add, the educational institutions are in the hands of the Devil and his demons. 'There will be plenty of time for study after Armageddon', I have often been told.

6. Finally, quite literally, the fundamentalist person is a psychotic individual. Indeed, if the mythologies are to be taken at face value, the founders of most religions were psychotic people who regularly talked with angels and heard voices from heaven announcing who they were or asking why the listeners were persecuting the true God. (Read the New Testament for many examples!)

Living in a world that, it is literally believed, is peopled by demons (Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Satan sends his agents to every Kingdom Hall meeting in order that he may also discover the Truth!) it should surely come as no surprise to learn that fundamentalists are much more likely than the population norm to collapse into psychotic illness. A considerable amount of research in many countries, but especially in Australia and the United States, has found significant positive correlations between fundamentalist beliefs and mental illness. Specifically, for example, Jehovah's Witnesses are between four and ten times more likely to be diagnosed schizophrenic than the population at large.

In the next section it is proposed to look at the function of the group *for* the individual. Could it be likely that there might be support for the view that Freud was correct to characterise 'religion' as a 'mass neurosis'? Perhaps 'fundamentalism, may be a 'mass psychosis, — that by joining one of these communities the vulnerable person may avoid the necessity of constructing *his own* 'individual' psychosis.

The individual and the group

In his book *The True Believer*, Eric Hoffer suggested that there is often a point in time where a person's psychological structure disintegrates and he is then ripe for recruitment to the first sect that happens to come along. Perhaps another variable needs to be considered, namely that different groups offer different attractions, so each group appeals to a different type of person.

A weakness of this kind of explanation is that it may disregard the active role of the group in generating and intensifying this process. Basing our theory on the 'alienation' of the recruit makes no allowance for the *attractions* of the community in question. There is clearly an interactive process between the individual and the group. Individuals search their world for an appropriate community that matches

their psychological needs; but at the same time groups themselves engender a 'group psychology' that endeavours to attract new members. There are at least five possible attributes that can make a group attractive:

1. They are *fixed* communities. To have a conversion is nothing much - the real thing is to be able to continue treating it seriously!

2. Experiences are *shared*. Members do more than share ideas — their creed becomes a living reality, constantly being re-confirmed in every day's experience.

3. The most effective persuasion is that initiated by the convert himself - in telling and re-telling his experience he is re-convincing himself while 're-structuring' his memories in the light of the group ideology.

4. Because each group has its own specific attraction, handles its own particular 'problems', those who join have much in common. Individuals are influenced most by those they perceive as being similar to themselves, so converts are constantly reinforcing themselves by eliminating feelings of isolation.

5. Groups are strengthened by the kinds of problems they address: sufferers readily embrace a new system of ideas promising relief or comfort.

One need only look at the procedure and functions of a group like Alcoholics Anonymous to appreciate the common features of group interactions — the AA 'catechism' reminds one of a typical Pentecostal dialogue:

> a) at every meeting each member must confess his 'sinfulness' — 'my name is ... and I am an alcoholic';
>
> b) recovery only begins after experiencing the depths of despair, recognising that one's own efforts at self-control are insufficient and accepting the aid of a power greater than oneself;
>
> c) members maintain and reinforce their own insecurity and instability in a threatening world by proselytisation, spreading the message to other alcoholics.

The similarity of process, fundamentalist and AA, is inescapable. (Ironically, there may well be other common factors. Research has found that alcoholics are more likely than controls to have a religious background!)

The other attractions of the community have already been hinted at: the warm social atmosphere to replace the earlier isolation and alienation, the offering of status, boosting the self-confidence of the individual by training him and helping him to perceive himself as an important person carrying out God's task. The challenging nature of the community's activities *outside* their group meetings may often arouse the hostility of the general population, thus creating a ghetto mentality and so enhancing even more the strong feeling of social solidarity that can, at times, even lead to personal immolation. Tremendously positive transformations can occur in the individual's life as a consequence of his joining the community — his morale is boosted, he leaves the barren, hostile world; he now has the opportunity to identify himself with a transcendental process engaged in changing reality.

The convert is probably not conscious of the pressures on him to 'internalise' group norms and values. He believes his decision to join originated in his 'free will; the changes in his outlook, mediated by his group membership, are seen by him as the consequences of his *own* ingenuity.

An essential function of daily community is that it may enable the individual member to achieve an acceptable image of himself. He remains committed as long as he feels his membership contributes to his sense of 'positive social identity'.

Visit any meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses at their Kingdom Hall and what will you find? You will find a tightly-packed hall of about two hundred individuals of all ages — from young children to the very old. All will be immaculately dressed — and, before the meeting begins, the noise will resemble that of a meeting of a local cricket club.

There will be immediate silence when the meeting begins. If it is the weekly 'Watchtower Study', the presiding elder will read, verse by verse, the designated article from the current edition. Every member of the congregation will have previously studied this article before the meeting.

After reading aloud the first paragraph, the elder will ask a question:
'What did Paul mean when he said blank, blank, blank?' Immediately more than a hundred hands will be raised, offering to answer the question. Congregation servants holding microphones will wait for the presiding elder to indicate who will be given the opportunity to answer - and as soon as the elder announces 'Sister Bloggs' a microphone is rushed to the designated woman. It matters little who is given the opportunity — the answer will be identical because they are all printed at the bottom of that page in the Watchtower! Almost an hour will be spent working through the article in this manner, and a very successful confidence-building exercise it is. Almost everybody gets a chance

to talk to the congregation (with a micro-phone!) and everybody gives the 'correct' answer. Members leave the meeting pleased with themselves, they have demonstrated their 'understanding' of the relevant doctrines, they are confident they will be able to confront the householders they will meet on the next door-to-door ministry.

But this is just the beginning of the confidence-building exercise. Another meeting they will attend each week will be the 'Theocratic Ministry School'. Here a rank-and-file male member will deliver a 'bible reading' from the platform. His performance will be carefully studied by an appointed elder who will make detailed notes marking him for his diction. Did he arouse interest by an introductory speech? Was his speech the correct length? Did he encourage the audience to use the Bible? Did he speak with the appropriate volume? Did he pause correctly between themes? — in all he will be graded in thirty-six items, not only on his speech but also regarding his personal appearance, clothing, confidence and poise.

The elder's assessment is discussed briefly before the assembled congregation and later in greater detail with the rank-and-file member. He is given an overall grade and is expected to improve on this the next time around. You will never meet a Jehovah's Witness who will not tell you how his speaking confidence and ability has been transformed in this process.

There is a similar exercise for the female Witnesses. The 'Ministry School' mounts role-play activities: two of the sisters, armed with literature, canvass a householder who 'answers the door' and responds in a hostile manner. At the end of the role-play there is a general discussion where individuals from the floor are encouraged to suggest how the canvassers *should* have responded to the misguided housewife.

Again the congregation's sisters benefit tremendously from these practice runs - not surprisingly their confidence is built up and in a very short time they become very adept at 'holding their own' with the general public, often far better educated than the Watchtower supporters, but *not* used to tackling the specific, carefully structured questions that are posed. Unskilled, non-academic, poorly-educated 'disciples' can 'hold their own' on *their* terms.

The Jehovah's Witness community is more authoritarian, more centralised, more 'organised from above' than other fundamentalist groupings — but *all* groups to a greater or lesser degree serve similar functions.

Every fundamentalist body can provide status, purpose, legitimacy and stability. 'Me greater the 'need' for these enhancements, the more sharply drawn are the boundaries between members of the 'in group' and everybody else. The 'closed mind' is the final 'defence mechanism' of the insecure individual — and nowhere is this better illustrated than in the field of fundamentalist religion. Let's examine this question further, again using the Jehovah's Witness to illustrate some points.

Opening the closed mind

It is rare to find a Witness who is unaware of the evidence exposing the dishonesty of the *Watchtower*. Why then do they not see a problem? Obviously there is something that prevents them from objectively analysing factual information. Frequently I have attempted to show Witness canvassers old copies of the Watchtower to demonstrate the regular doctrinal changes made by their organisation — *always* they refuse to look at this material. If one cannot succeed in getting them to examine critically their own material, one can appreciate the impossibility of expecting them to study 'other' sources: they will happily spend hours discussing evolutionary theory — but they will refuse to read any text by Charles Darwin. Their minds appear to have an in-built mechanism which causes them to stop short of doubting anything propagated by their elders.

What is the powerful motivation that prevents the Witness entering the 'dangerous' waters of critical investigation? The motivation is fear; the underlying problem is misplaced 'security'. Convincing the Witness that his organisation is deceptive is like trying to convince a five-year-old child who loves his parents that his father is in prison for armed robbery ~ he simply can't believe his father is dishonest. In fact, he can't tolerate the thought, since he has placed all his security and trust in his father and mother. The truth is too fearful and devastating to consider. To protect his source of security, he must reject factual information as being a lie.

The more and more he ignores the facts, the more narrow-minded and adamant he becomes that he will never change, and the more convinced he becomes that he indeed is in possession of the truth. He digs himself into a trench, erecting all sorts of mental barricades against his real enemy, which is *doubt*.

The question, surely, is what can we do to help open this closed mind? There is the very real danger that if we approach the problem incorrectly we could very easily risk the Witness closing the door even more firmly ~ he will refuse to discuss with you further

because you are perceived as a threat to his security.

The solution, then, must be to try to shift his security base. Initially, this may best be achieved by simply being a friend — it isn't necessary to spend every moment (or, initially, any moment) demonstrating the absurdity of his beliefs. If, like the majority of Witnesses, he has been in the organisation for a number of years, he will have learned there is no true friendship within that body — he may well welcome a friend he can trust. But if your opening discussions are based around your 'clever' dismissal of *Watchtower* doctrines, you will immediately be seen as part of Satan's organisation and the contact will cease. The 'official' *Watchtower* view is that if you are a non-believer you are being manipulated by the Devil!)

The American 'pop' psychologist Dale Carnegie used always to say that the hest way to get a person to change his mind is to do it in such a way that the person thought it was his idea in the first place. This is the strategy I would suggest using on our Witness friend as slowly the conversations move into his chosen areas.

The kinds of questions that might be asked of our newly acquired friend:

If I were making a study of the Mormons, do you think I should read books written by ex-Mormons?
(The Witness will say 'yes'...)

If I were making a study of the Witnesses, should I read books by ex-Witnesses?
(Witnesses are forbidden to do so!)

What do you think of the many cults that forbid their members from reading texts from other groups?
(Again, the Witness has a problem — for they are forbidden to read other literature.)

How could I identify a false prophet?
(Deuteronomy 18: 20-22 tells us clearly that false prophets are those who foretell the future, and it doesn't happen. Witnesses know their organisation has often done this — this is a major reason why earlier publications have been withdrawn from all Kingdom Hall libraries.)

Opening the closed mind is the most difficult task imaginable. You are attempting to force the person to break down the wall they have erected in their mind that protects them from questioning the authority and security of their 'mother'.

Above all, remember, you will never open a closed mind by brilliant argument. The individual hiding in his refuge is there because the world before the *Watchtower* came along was a lonely, miserable place. Only when an offer of a possible haven in the rational world is seen as a possibility will the target person gradually become willing to reason, to question, to agree on common principles. If this willingness cann6t be engendered, you are wasting your time. The closed mind is only opened by successfully building up the self-esteem of the fundamentalist individual. This is a tremendously difficult task — BUT THERE IS NO OTHER WAY!

FURMAN STREET BUILDING

The building at 360 Furman Street is located on the Brooklyn waterfront between Atlantic Avenue and Joralemon Street. It was constructed in 1928 as the Trade Facilities Building and acquired by the WTS in 1983.

For 20 years the building was the principal shipping facility for WTS publications produced in Brooklyn.

In 2002 the WTS announced plans to redistribute much of the Brooklyn printing operation to other locations, and in 2003 announced the intention to sell the one-million-square-foot Furman Street building.

FUTURE OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

A Bible Students, pro-Rutherford, newspaper-format publication reported the WTS convention in Ohio, USA:

> It was the beginning of a tremendous new movement by the I.B.S.A. which the leaders predict will sweep all countries. (Peoples Pulpit, Melbourne, 1922 12/1 1)

In 1925 Rutherford visited the German branch office. William Schnell remembered:

> …he [Rutherford] began to tell us that we should not selfishly anticipate going to heaven in 1925, when there was so much work still to be done on earth… and he showed us a great world organization. He pictured vast billions coming out of all the kingdoms of the world, person after person and class after class, slowly learning the kingdom.
> (Thirty Years A Watch Tower Slave, 1971, Abridged, Baker Book House, pp 47-48)

Two kingdoms— Heaven and Earth

In Russell's theology God set up a Kingdom in heaven in 1878. The Old Testament "worthies" including the patriarchs and prophets would be resurrected in 1914 and set up the "earthly phase of the kingdom", centred in Jerusalem, to which the whole world would submit. Jesus

and the saints in the "heavenly kingdom" would rule the world by proxy through the "earthly kingdom" starting in 1914/1915.

The resurrection of the "ancient worthies" failed in 1914 and again in the 1920s. There was no "earthly phase" of God's Kingdom in existence to take world control.

That is the reason for Rutherford's creation of "Theocracy", "God's Organization" and a hierarchy of power. He needed an Organization to take the place of, and function as, the "earthly phase of the Kingdom" — a physical, visible, entity for the whole world to submit to.

Two new kingdoms

In 1925 Rutherford moved the 1878 Kingdom of heaven to 1914. From 1919 to 1938 he also turned the loosely organized "Russellites" into a hierarchy where people at each level submitted to and reported to the level above — ultimately to the WTS president.

He banned everything among JWs that might cause disunity or distract from distributing WTS publications. He banned voting, birthday and Christmas celebrations, movie attendance, and all but banned love and marriage. He insisted that children should not waste school holidays but should urge their parents to take them door to door. Meetings consisted of reading *The Watchtower* magazine and answering set questions by quoting *The Watchtower* — unplanned comment was disallowed. To enforce all this, dissenters were shunned by "loyal ones" who in turn were motivated by threats of imminent Armageddon.

Rutherford's idea and goal, it appears, was that comparatively small numbers of united people, controlled by an authoritarian dictatorship would eventually dominate the divided majority and take over:

> Join us in the great movement that will prevent further bloodshed and revolution and usher in the new world. (Peoples Pulpit 1922 November 1)
>
> After the wise men have failed to convert the world, God purposes to do it by the simple and seemingly foolish method of preaching. (w1929 10/15 316)
>
> That righteous Kingdom rule must keep growing and expanding until it fills the whole earth. (Yearbook 1985, 61)

In the1940s the new leaders, Knorr and Franz, predicted that the preaching and Armagedon would finish within the generation of 1914 and within the 20th century. In the late 1940s they urged all congregations to strive for a 20% yearly increase. If such increase had been achieved and maintained it could have led to a JWs world in the 1990s. But in the mid 1950s the expansion rate slowed.

JWs in the Western World felt discouraged when the word "generation" was redefined in 1995 so that it no longer referred to the human life span. (See: *GENERATION*) Forecasts that Armageddon and paradise on Earth would be a reality by 2000 CE also failed.

The future

Past survival of JWs from their prophecy failures suggests they will survive their recent failures and eventually recover in all countries.

Perhaps their unity across over 200 countries may become decisive as societies advance toward a "global village". A vast Organization, united across 240 countries, preaching peace in hundreds of languages, politically neutral, controlled by a central authority (religious dictatorship), might be courted by governments if the world experiences problems that require united, global effort to overcome. This could then be a repeat of Emperor Constantine seeking to unify the Roman Empire by making Christianity the Empire's official religion.

Working against the goal of world rule supervised allegedly from heaven, is the loss of credibility due to the many failed prophecies. The prophecies were useful to motivate people to join up and preach. But now that the JWs Organization is one of the biggest in the world it is getting ever more attention by scholars and former members. The failed predictions and numerous doctrinal changes, almost forgotten in the 1960s, are being made known, especially via the Internet, and this is a drag on further rapid expansion.

JWs may therefore settle down with reduced demands on members' time and energy, conform more to society, and become just another denomination.

Progress

Worldwide attendance at the Memorial and the ratio to world population demonstrates steady progress until 2010. In the following table the percentages refer to the average % increase per year from the previous date. For example, the attendance of 2500 at the Memorial in 1900 increasing to 22,000 in 1920 represents an annual increase, similar to compound interest, of 11.5%.

Memorial Attendance and its ratio to the world population

	Memorial	Average % Annual Increase	Ratio 1 to
1900	2,500		1/626,000
1920	22,000	11.5%	1/85,000
1940	97,000	7.7	1/24,000
1960	1,520,000	14.8	1/2,000
1980	5,727,000	6.9	1/760
1985	7,792,000	6.4	1/620
1990	9,950,000	5.0	1/530
1995	13,147,000	5.7	1/430
2000	14,872,000	2.5	1/410
2005	16,383,000	2.0	1/395
2010	18,707,000	2.7	1/370
2015	19,863,000	1.2	1/370
2019	20,919,000	1.3	1/370
2020	17,845,000	-17	1/440
2022	19,722,000	5.1	1/410
2023	20,462,000	4.3	1/390
2024	21,119,000	3.2	

The world population figures used for the ratio calculations came from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estimates_of_historical_world_population

The ratio to world population has not improved since 2010. "World conquest" by the WTS could still threaten if the annual percentage increase of JWs returns to 5% and world population stabilises at 10 billion. (See also: *GOAL*)

REFERENCES:

Bednarski, W. & Matusiak, S. 2016 *Ever-Changing Teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses*, Gdansk

Feruli, R. J. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolf_Furuli

Franz, R. 1983 *Crisis of Conscience*, Commentary Press

Franz, R. 1991 *In Search of Christian Freedom*, p.154

Holden, A. 2002 *Jehovah's Witnesses: Portrait of a Contemporary Religious Movement*, Routledge

Investigator Magazine #29, March 1993, Sect Leader Dies

Investigator Magazine #64, January 1999, World-Rule Goal Slows

Investigator Magazine #78, May 2001, Myth of the Faithful Slave

McCann, V. Spotlight Ministries, 2000 www.spotlightministries.org.uk

Manwaring, D.R. 1962 *Render Unto Caesar*, University of Chicago Press

Mauro, T. Thank JWs for speech freedoms. *USA Today*, 30 May 2000. http://cgi.usatoday.com/usatonline/20000530/2310079s.htm)

Panagopoulos, J. Family Court bomber dies at 78, *The Weekend Australian*, February 15-16, 2025, p. 2

Peters, S.F. 2000 *Judging Jehovah's Witnesses: Religious Persecution and the Dawn of the Rights Revolution,* University of Kansas Press

Rostron, A. Demythologizing The Legal History of the Jehovah's Witnesses and the First Amendment www.quinnipiac.edu/prebuilt/pdf/SchoolLaw/LawReviewLibrary/27_22QLR493(2003-2004).pdf

Schnell, W. 1971 *Thirty Years A Watch Tower Slave*, Abridged, Baker Book House, pp 47-48

Service Year Reports of JWs Worldwide [since 2017] https://jw.org/

The Douglas Walsh Trial *The Watchtower Under Oath*, Court of Session, Scotland, November 1954

Victorian Truth, April 2, 1960, Baby Killer says "I 'd do it again"

Weinberg, G.L 2005 *Visions of Victory*, Cambridge University Press, pp 28-29

WBTS 1959 *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose*

Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses (various dates) WBTS

https://friendlyatheist.patheos.com/2020/05/26/in-new-book-a-prominent-jehovahs-witness-trashes-the-faiths-governing-body/

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolf_Furuli#/media/File:RolfFuruli-bw

https://friendsofraymondfranz.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/CC2004-Eng.pdf

https://jwtalk.net/topic/32011-rolf-furuli-new-book/

https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/worldwide/

https://ed5015.tripod.com/

https://investigatormagazine.net