

GROWING UP A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS

1960 - 2010

Religious belief has power to shape a person
unlike any other

A person raised as a Jehovah's Witness
Has a unique way of thinking
That is difficult for others to comprehend

The best way to understand how a Witness thinks
Is to look at the information they receive
As they develop and grow

Let's imagine a child called Matthew
Born in 1960
To Jehovah's Witness parents

We can trace what he is taught to believe
Through the Watchtower
In order to understand his view of life

Jehovah's Witnesses are directed by a Governing Body
A Witness can only be understood by comprehending
The power these leaders have over them

The Governing Body claim to be God's "Faithful & Discreet Slave"
And that God uses them to dispense "truth" through the Watchtower
Matthew must follow information in the Watchtower as if it is from God

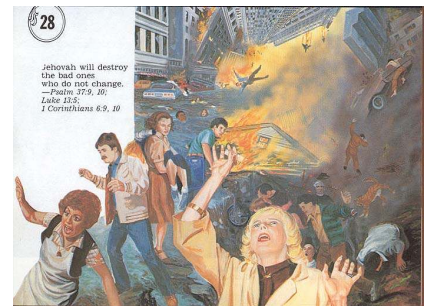
"[Have] complete confidence in
the truth as it is revealed by
Jehovah God through his Son,
Jesus Christ, and "the faithful
and discreet slave." -
Watchtower 2001 Aug 1 p.14

"Since Jehovah God and Jesus
Christ completely trust the
faithful and discreet slave,
should we not do the same?" -
Watchtower 2009 Feb 15 p.27



As a child
 One of the first things Matthew learns
 Is ***Jehovah alone is God***

Since only Jehovah's Witnesses
 Worship Jehovah
 Only they will survive Armageddon

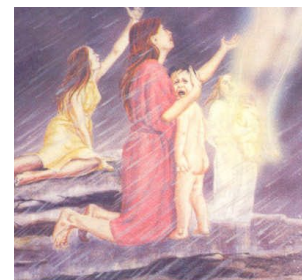


“There is no middle ground. We are either actively for Jehovah God or actively or tacitly for the gods of this world. Make your choice, and know that your decision means life or death for you.”
 - *Watchtower* 1965 Feb 15 p.119

“Yes, today, with Armageddon staring us in the face, we must keep in mind the sobering thought that millions, even billions, of lives may shortly come to a swift and decisive end, putting their onetime owners beyond the reach of any expression of love on our part.” - *Watchtower* 1965 Apr 1 p.212

Children will die with their parents

“... at Armageddon ... parents will be held accountable for their children, and children will suffer for the failure of their parents.”
 - *Watchtower* 1968 Feb 1 pp.83-84



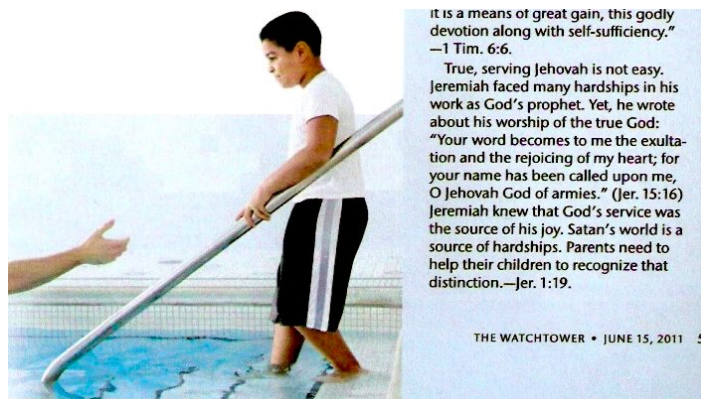
So Matthew preaches to save them

“Are you training your children in the field service? And when you work in the field service with your children or others, do you see that they have a part?” - *Kingdom Ministry* Nov 1978 p.8

As a minor in his teens
 Matthew will be encouraged
 To be baptized

“... at 12 and a half years of age, Dustin was baptized at a circuit assembly.”
Watchtower 1985 Jun 1 p.30

“On the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, have you repented of your sins and dedicated yourself to



Jehovah to do his will? ... Do you understand that your dedication and baptism identify you as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in association with God's spirit-directed organization?"
Watchtower 1985 Jun 1 p.30

Matthew is taught Armageddon is about to happen

Awake 1969 May 22 p.15

"They expect it to come at any hour, and almost certainly within the next 10 years." - *Watchtower* 1968 Aug 1 p.466

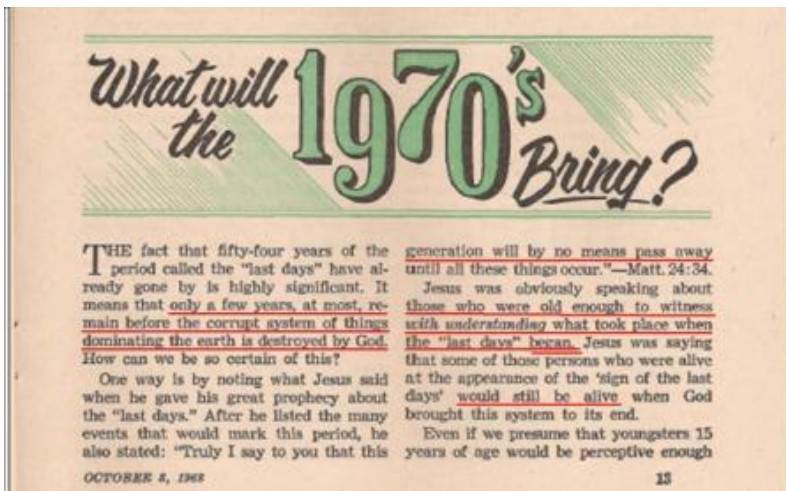
Matthew was told he would

- ... Never finish school
- ... Never fulfill a career
- ... Never grow old

"Reports are heard of brothers selling their homes and property and planning to finish out the rest of their days in this old system in the pioneer service. Certainly this is a fine way to spend the short time remaining before the wicked world's end." - *Kingdom Ministry* May 1974 p.3

If you are a young person, you also need to face the fact that you will never grow old in this present system of things. Why not? Because all the evidence in fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicates that this corrupt system is due to end in a few years. Of the generation that observed the beginning of the "last days" in 1914, Jesus foretold: "This generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur."—Matt. 24:34.

Therefore, as a young person, you will never fulfill any career that this system offers. If you are in high school and thinking about a college education, it means at least four, perhaps even six or eight more years to graduate into a specialized career. But where will this system of things be by that time? It will be well on the way toward its finish, if not actually gone!



WHY ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO 1975?

WHAT about all this talk concerning the year 1975? Lively discussions, some based on speculation, have burst into flame during recent months among serious students of the Bible. Their interest has been kindled by the belief that 1975 will mark the end of 6,000 years of human history since Adam's creation. The nearness of such an important date indeed fires the imagination and presents unlimited possibilities for discussion.

¹But wait! How do we know their calculations are correct? What basis is there for saying Adam was created nearly

²In the marginal references of the Protestant Authorized or King James Version, and in the footnotes of certain editions of the Catholic Douay version, the date of man's creation is said to be 4004 B.C.E. This marginal date, however, is no part of the inspired text of the Holy Scriptures, since it was first suggested more than fifteen centuries after the last Bible writer died, and was not added to any edition of the Bible until 1701 C.E. It is an insertion based upon the conclusions of an Irish prelate, the Anglican Archbishop James Ussher (1581-1656).

"As One Brother put it, stay alive till 75"

1968 District Convention talk by Charles Sunutko

Matthew is told he will never die

Never Die?

"THERE are thousands of millions of persons living on earth today. Millions of these are now learning of the wonderful opportunity of keeping on living upon it without ever dying off it." - *Watchtower* 1983 July 1 p.17

Despite destroying Billions of people,
God will save Witnesses
And allow them to live forever

“They’ll run screaming out of their houses with this striking them, and yet they’ll see that Jehovah’s Witnesses are untouched.”

1967 District Convention talk by Charles Suntuko



How can a person be convinced that God
Will soon murder billions of people
But that they are so special as to never die?

By belonging to a law driven group
With a unique set of rules
To set them apart from others

Matthew is repeatedly told Witnesses are unique

“Who are no part of the world ... ONLY Jehovah's Witnesses.” *Watchtower* 1992 Apr 1 p.12

“Who in our time demonstrate ... love? ... ONLY Jehovah’s Witnesses.” *Watchtower* 1989
May 1 p.28

“ONLY one group of people is doing this work that Jesus foretold ... Jehovah’s Witnesses.”
Watchtower 1994 Jun 1 p.18

“Jehovah's Witnesses [are] the happiest people on earth.” *Kingdom Ministry* 2002 p.1

"Jehovah's servants are the most loving, united, peaceful, law-abiding people on earth." *Watchtower*
2007 Aug 15 p.26

He will be warned against
Those around him
And told normal, healthy
Activities are wrong

Non-Witnesses

"It is the satanic 'air' breathed by the world today, ... the satanic thinking that permeates every aspect of life outside Jehovah's organization." *Revelation - Its Grand Climax at Hand* (rev. 2006) pp.233,234

"We must also be on guard against extended association with worldly people." *Watchtower* 1994 Feb 15 p.24



Celebrations

"Birthday celebrations ... Christmas ... Easter, ... Halloween ... All Saint's Day ... New Year's Day ... Valentine's Day ... May Day ... Mother's Day.

We appreciate it very much when teachers kindly excuse our children from participation in all activities that in any way commemorate these holidays." *School and Jehovah's Witnesses* pp.18-21

Sport

"Witness parents feel that schools often overemphasize sports. ... Participation in organized sports, we believe, would expose Witness youths to unwholesome associations." *School and Jehovah's Witnesses* p.23

Dancing

"The essence, the soul, of disco was shown to be free, "liberated" sexual expression.... Satan is manipulating this world for his own purposes, shouldn't we expect that he would also use the world's entertainment in his efforts to turn people from true worship?" *Awake* 1979 Dec 22 p.20

"Dancing in the past, and at the present, has often been done in a way so as to arouse sexual passions and to lead people into sexual immorality. ... Therefore, favor home gatherings with whole families present." *Awake* 1984 Apr 22 pp.12,13

On the topic of sex

Sex is used as a source of guilt
Even Masturbation

"The real question, then, is, not how much physical harm could result from masturbation, but whether spiritual harm results. ... to help to avoid or reduce sexual tension... you may find it helpful to sleep on your side rather than on your back or face down. Another thing that may be helpful is to see to it that your clothing does not unnecessarily cause friction with the sexual organs. ... In fact, masturbation can lead into homosexuality... Contrary to

what many persons think, homosexuals are not born that way, but their homosexual behavior is learned." *Your Youth - Getting the Best Out of It* pp.35,42

University Education Is Discouraged

"Rather than being content with "sustenance and covering," those who devote themselves to getting a "higher education" usually want to be able to enjoy "the rest of the things" that money can buy." *Watchtower* 1967 Feb 1 p.76

"The time left is reduced"! ... For all its presumed benefits, would four years or more in a university be the best use of that remaining time?" *Awake!* 1989 May 8 p.13

Rather, volunteer labour
To grow the organization
Is promoted

"In the early years, put before your children theocratic goals - regular pioneering, Bethel service or missionary work." *Kingdom Ministry* Oct 1983 p.2

It is the 1980's and Matthew has reached his twenties

He was told he was not going to leave school
Now he has a job
And considers starting a family

Even that is discussed

"... Christians to ask themselves how getting married or, if married, having children will affect their share in that vital work. ... During all this pre-Flood period, Noah's sons and their wives had no children." *Watchtower* 1988 Mar 1 p.19

(Fortunately most ignore that advice)

Matthew may start having doubts
But is told this comes from the Devil

"Be assured that the Devil is ready to sow seeds of doubt and revolt in such fields of impatience. Endurance and faith are needed." *Watchtower* 1986 Mar 15 p.17

If Matthew discusses his doubts
He risks being disfellowshipped
And shunned as an apostate by family and friends

"The fact is that when a Christian gives himself over to sin and has to be disfellowshipped, he forfeits much: his approved standing with God; . . . sweet fellowship with the brothers, including much of the association he had with Christian relatives." *Watchtower* 1981 Sep 15 p.25

“The situation is different if the disfellowshipped or disassociated one is a relative living outside the immediate family circle and home. It might be possible to have almost no contact at all with the relative. Even if there were some family matters requiring contact, this certainly would be kept to a minimum...” *Watchtower* 1988 Apr 15 p.27

That can be the start of a spiral into depression
Living an unwanted life out of fear of loss

Loss of family
Loss of friends
Loss of identity and belief

It is 2010 and Matthew is now 50
Some may say the Watchtower has changed

But the Watchtower still
Directs to SHUN loved ones



“Is strict avoidance really necessary? Yes... Loyal Christian family members do not look for excuses to have dealings with a disfellowshipped relative not living at home.” *Keep Yourself in God's Love* (2008) p.207

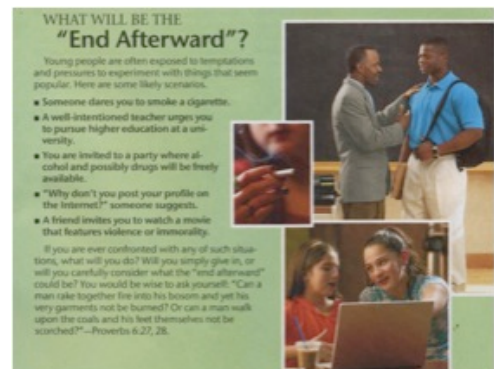
Witness children are still told
They won't grow old

“Those blessed with a lasting place in the new earth will not grow old and inevitably die.”
Watchtower 2000 Apr 15 p.16

Still discourage university

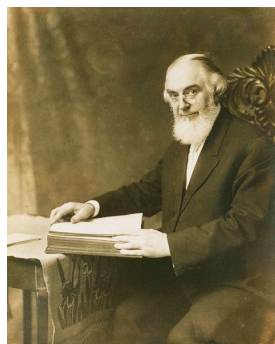
"What though of higher education received in a college or university? This is widely viewed as vital to success, yet, many who pursue such education end up with their minds filled with harmful propaganda. Such education wastes valuable youthful years that could best be used in Jehovah's service. ... Rather than looking to the advanced educational systems of this world for security, a Christian trusts in Jehovah."

Watchtower 2008 Apr 15 p.4



From its inception in the 1800's
The Watchtower has said
The world is about to end

It was supposed to end in 1914



“... we consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world, and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God, will be accomplished at the end of A. D. 1914.”

The Time Is At Hand (1889) p.101

CAN IT BE DELAYED UNTIL 1914?

Seventeen years ago people said, concerning the time features presented in *MILLENNIAL DAWN*, they seem reasonable in many respects, but surely no such radical changes could occur between now and the close of 1914: if you had proved that they would come about in a century or two, it would seem much more probable.

What changes have since occurred, and what velocity is gained daily?

“The old is quickly passing and the new is coming in.”

Now, in view of recent labor troubles and threatened an-

archy, our readers are writing to know if there may not be a mistake in the 1914 date. They say that they do not see how present conditions can hold out so long under the strain.

We see no reason for changing the figures—nor could we change them if we would. They are, we believe, God's dates, not ours. But bear in mind that the end of 1914 is not the date for the beginning, but for the end of the time of trouble. We see no reason for changing from our opinion expressed in the view presented in the WATCH TOWER of January 15, '02. We advise that it be read again.

And soon thereafter ever since

“... the remaining months before Armageddon.” *Watchtower* 1941 Sep 15 p.288

100 years later, Witnesses are still told
It will be SOON ... In the next few years

“... the good news that soon God will rock the nations at Armageddon.” - *Watchtower* 2006
Apr 15 p.24

For how much longer will Jehovah's Witnesses continue to be misled to believe the fantasy that they will never die?

We have seen the Watchtower has a strong emphasis on eschatology and attempts to differentiate itself through excessive use of rules.

A religion that enforces shunning of family members violates the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 12, which states:

“No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation.”

Although I am averse to suggesting governments encroach on freedom of choice, there should be sanctions when religions encourage breaking the law.

More importantly, the education system needs to teach critical thinking skills so humans learn to be less vulnerable to manipulation, be it by politics, corporations or religion.

That witnesses are so gullible as to believe their religion is the only truth, despite its false predictions of the world's end, and ongoing contradictory changes, is a shameful reflection on the intellectual capabilities of humans and shows how badly our education system still fails.

I look forward to the ongoing progression of human rights through dissemination of information now widely available through medium such as the Internet.