

Growing up a Jehovah's Witness

Being raised a Jehovah's Witness is a unique experience which can have mixed results. On one hand, strong, loving families are encouraged. Ironically, it is the opposite for those that leave the religion. It is estimated two thirds of Witness children leave the religion. The families of those disfellowshipped are told to keep contact to an absolute minimum.

"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

Children raised as Jehovah's Witnesses develop an unusual perspective on life. Not only do they realize love is conditional on remaining part of the religion, they also are taught the following bizarre concepts:

NEVER GROW OLD

"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**. ... Therefore, as a young person, you **will never fulfill any career** that this system offers. If you are in highschool 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!" *Awake* 1969 May 22 p.15

NEVER DIE

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

CELEBRATIONS

"Birthday ... Christmas... Easter. ... 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

UNIVERSITY

"What though of higher education received in a college or university? ... Such education wastes valuable youthful years that could best be used in Jehovah's service." *Watchtower* 2008 Apr 15 p.4

WORLDLY PEOPLE

"... the majority of people in the world are 'dead in their trespasses'" *Kingdom Ministry* 1986 Dec p.1
"We must also be on guard against extended association with worldly people." *Watchtower* 1994 Feb 15 p. 24

SPORT

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



Jehovah's Witnesses live by a strict moral code based on a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible. They are known for their effort to make converts through door-to-door distribution of Watchtower literature.

The main Watchtower message is:

- Jehovah alone is God
- *Soon* God will turn earth into an eternal paradise

The flip side is that paradise will be preceded by Armageddon, a war with God, during which billions of humans that have not become Jehovah's Witnesses will be eternally destroyed.

"There are billions of people who do not know Jehovah. Many of them in ignorance practice things that God's Word shows to be wicked. If they persist in this course, they will be among those who perish during the great tribulation." *Watchtower* 1993 Oct 1 p.19

Salvation is dependant on conversion and then limiting association with people of the world.

"While some contact with worldly people is unavoidable - at work, at school, and otherwise - we must be vigilant so as to keep from being sucked back into the death-dealing atmosphere of this world." *Watchtower* 1987 Sep 15 p.12

The Watchtower is classified as a high control religion because the leaders claim:

- To be directed by God's holy spirit
- They alone teach truth
- Salvation is only possible through association with the group

Who are Jehovah's Witnesses?

- Unquestioned obedience
- Dissenters are to be disfellowshipped and shunned

The leaders go by the title "faithful and discreet slave" and state:

"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

"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 communication, the faithful and discreet slave." *Watchtower* 1994 Oct 1 p.8

Disfellowshipping

A concerning aspect of Watchtower doctrine is disfellowshipping.

"... "disfellowshipping" is what Jehovah's Witnesses appropriately call the expelling and subsequent shunning of such an unrepentant wrongdoer... a simple "Hello" to someone can be the first step that develops into a conversation and maybe even a friendship. Would we want to take that first step with a disfellowshipped person?" *Watchtower* 1981 Sep 15 pp.22,25

A Witness can be disfellowshipped for openly questioning any doctrine or practice, or no longer believing the "Slave" is directed by God. They are subsequently shunned by all Witness family and friends. This causes terrible trauma. Anyone considering baptism needs to be fully aware of Watchtower history, doctrine and practices prior to such commitment.

Do Jehovah's Witnesses have the Truth?

A number of key Watchtower doctrines are based on flawed assumptions.

Blood

Every year, Jehovah’s Witnesses die refusing blood transfusions, on the basis of the religion’s interpretation of Scriptural admonition to avoid eating blood. However, the history of this doctrine should put doubt as to its validity.

- Prior to 1945, the Watchtower allowed blood transfusions
- In 1945, they banned blood transfusions and *all* fractions
- Since 2000, many of these fractions are now allowed again

Who should be held accountable for those that died refusing fractions that are now claimed to be acceptable to God? Could you allow your child to die refusing a transfusion?

607 – 1914

The Watchtower’s claim that the Last Days started in 1914 is solely based on Jerusalem falling to Babylon in 607 B.C. However, it is universally accepted by historians that Jerusalem fell in 587 B.C. These are the same historians the Watchtower trusts as a basis for all other prophetic interpretations.

Although they claim 607 is necessary to make Bible prophecy accurate, this is incorrect. Jerusalem could equally fall in 587 and line up with Scripture. The real reason 607 is used is 1914 is fundamental to Watchtower doctrine and there is too much vested interest to admit it is wrong.

Jehovah

The Watchtower claims worship of Jehovah and use of the word are essential for salvation. Yet this name has never been found in any of the 1000’s of ancient New Testament manuscripts. The Watchtower spuriously adds it 237 times to the New Testament of its *New World Translation* in order to support the way it wants to interpret the Bible.

Can the Watchtower be Trusted?

Watchtower leaders request trust.

“The point is that Christians have **implicit trust** in their heavenly Father; they **do not question** what he tells them through his written Word and **organization.**”
Watchtower 1974 Jul 15 p.441

Does the organization deserve unquestioned trust? For example, read what was written prior to 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

Compare this with what is claimed to have been said:

“... Jehovah’s witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance, as marking **the start** of “the conclusion of the system of things.”” *Awake* 1973 Jan 22 p.8

The Watchtower is an apocalyptic, end-time religion. In addition to falsely predicting Armageddon would end by October 1914 (w 1892 1/15 p.23), consider the following statements.

“... we may expect **1925** to witness the return of these faithful men of Israel from the condition of death, being resurrected and fully restored to perfect humanity and made the visible, legal representatives of the new order of things on earth.” *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* p.88

“... the Lord’s provided instrument for most effective work in the remaining **months before Armageddon.**”
Watchtower 1941 Sep 15 p.288

“Shortly, **within our twentieth century**, the “battle in the day of Jehovah” will begin against the modern antitype of Jerusalem, Christendom.”
The Nations Shall Know That I Am Jehovah p.216

“Some of that “generation” could survive until the **end of the century.** But there are many indications that “the end” is much closer than that!”
Watchtower 1984 Mar 1 pp.18-19

Watchtower predictions have been consistently false, proving God does not direct what is presented by its leaders. What effect have these falsehoods had on the lives and decisions of followers?

“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

The Watchtower claims there have always been Jehovah’s Witnesses.

“Jehovah’s witnesses have a history almost 6,000 years long ...” *Jehovah’s Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* p.8

In reality, the religion was started by “Pastor” Russell in 1879, as a breakaway group of Second Adventists. For the 1,800 year period between the death of the Apostles and Russell, the Watchtower has been unable to identify a single group that adhered to all the teachings they claim are required for a “true Christian” to be acceptable to God.

Russell’s prominent teaching that the great tribulation would occur in 1914 was taken from Adventists, and incorporated popular pyramidology.

“Thus the Pyramid witnesses that the close of 1914 will be the beginning of the time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation-no, not ever shall be afterward.” *Thy Kingdom Come* (1916 ed.) p.342

