



The contrary of a truth can never be demonstrated - Thomas Aquinas

Confident Christians

The Jesus of the Jehovah's Witnesses

Good salesmen know that one of the most important tasks in any serious engagement with a potential customer is to get the hopeful convert to change their opinions and beliefs to those that conform to the concept of what the salesman is selling.¹ Once this is done, the actual sale is inevitable.

It can easily be argued that the hat Satan wears most is that of a salesman. In his pursuit of unsuspecting men and women, the devil works hard to spin distortions of God's truth so that the beliefs of those he engages are altered to be false. Once the sale is complete, the eternal destiny of the one deceived matches that of the salesman. Perhaps the most frightening and sad verse in all the Bible is Matthew 15:14 where Jesus, describing the Pharisees, says "Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit." Jesus states that both the deceiver and the deceived fall into destruction, which is a very tragic end result for those who are victims of spiritual deception.

It is not surprising that one of the things that all cults sell is a false Jesus. The enemy knows that a counterfeit Christ cannot save any soul and so he markets one that is anything but the real Jesus proclaimed in Scripture. In particular, all cults deny that Jesus is God. This is certainly true of the cult known as the Jehovah's Witnesses who present a Messiah that is nothing more than a concoction of imagination and lies spread by the enemy of mankind.

To combat cults like the Jehovah's Witnesses, Christians should understand the attributes of the Watchtower's fake Christ as well as how they rewrite the Bible to accommodate their twisted view of the Savior. More importantly, the Church needs to be able to defend the accuracy of the Bible and the true Christ that it presents, as the doctrine of Christ's divinity alone can cause the complete disassembly of the cult's movement. As Walter Martin said, "The Deity of Christ then is a prime answer to Jehovah's Witnesses, for if the Trinity is a reality, which it is, if Jesus and Jehovah are 'one' and the Same, then the whole framework of the cult collapses into a heap of shattered disconnected doctrines incapable of even a semblance of congruity."² Once the real Jesus is available and visible, a Jehovah's Witness can then turn from the errors contained in the bag of false goods they have been sold and see the light that exists in the true One who died for them.

Investigating the Jesus of the Watchtower

The problem of false prophets and counterfeit Christs is nothing new. The Bible is replete with warnings about both, with every book in the New Testament except Philemon sounding the alarm on the subject.³ It is amazing that in such a short time after the death and resurrection of Christ, Paul references those on the scene of the early Church who preach "another Jesus".⁴ What does the false Jesus proclaimed by the

¹ Steve W. Martin, *Heavy Hitter Selling* (Rancho Santa Margarita, CA: Sand Hill Publishing, 2004), v.

² Walter Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers), 84.

³ Ron Rhodes, *The Challenge of the Cults and New Religions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 19.

⁴ 2 Corinthians 11:4. New American Standard Bible.

Jehovah's Witnesses look like and where do those of the Watchtower go to find support for their portrayal of him?

The Watchtower Christ is a Created Being

The deity of Jesus is under direct assault by the Jehovah's Witnesses, with their false depiction of Christ being summed up as the following⁵:

- Jesus is a 'mighty god', but not God Almighty
- Jesus is the first and direct creation of God
- Jesus made all 'other' things for God
- Jesus was the chief of the angels - the Archangel Michael
- Jesus was raised a spirit creature and did not bodily rise from the grave
- Jesus returned invisibly to the world in 1914 and has expelled Satan from earth

Needless to say, by denying the deity of Christ, the Watchtower also denies the Trinity, and states, ". . . Satan is the originator of the trinity doctrine", with the Holy Spirit being an invisible active force and not a person.⁶ Jehovah's Witnesses take great pride in pointing out that the word 'trinity' is not in the Bible; however they overlook the fact that neither is the word 'Jehovah' as any number of vowels can be inserted in the YHWH or JHVH names for God found in the Bible (e.g. Johevah, Jihivih, etc.)⁷

The New World Translation of the Bible

Faithfully carried by all Jehovah's Witnesses is the New World Translation of the Bible, which is the Watchtower's attempt at rewriting the scriptures to conform to the heretical teachings of the cult. In addition, various elevated texts are used to support the cult's teachings with claims being made by the group that one is better off reading the founder's teachings (Charles Taze Russell) than the Bible itself.⁸ The group says the New World Translation was introduced to remove the influence of human traditions and paganism that the cult claims entered the Bible throughout the years, but it has been well documented that the real purpose was to produce a text that backed the teachings of the cult's founder.

The Watchtower faithfully protected the identity of their translation committee for years, but the truth emerged over time as to who they were. Court proceedings are available that show the cult's founder and other members of the translation committee perjured themselves under oath during trials where it was proven that none had extensive backgrounds or training in Hebrew or Greek, and therefore were unqualified to create a translation of the Bible.⁹

Rather than restoring an accurate portrayal of Christ in their translation, the Jehovah's Witnesses have produced a text that leads many astray by depicting Christ as a creature instead of the Creator. Such

⁵ Martin, 52-3, 58.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, 75.

⁸ Ibid, 46.

⁹ Ibid 72.

false teaching is one of the hallmarks of every popular cult and is used by the god of this world to obscure the identity of the real Jesus, without whom can no salvation be had.

Refuting the False Christ of the Watchtower

The person who wishes to contest the phony Christ offered by the Jehovah's Witnesses will likely need to work through two main areas when dealing with members of the Watchtower. First they will need to make the biblical case for the deity of Jesus, and second, they will need to explain verses that appear to cast doubt on Jesus' divinity.

The New Testament's Case for Christ's Deity

To prove that the Bible clearly depicts Jesus as God, one should use points 7-9 of Norman Geisler's 12 apologetic points that show Christianity is true:

7. The New Testament Documents Proclaim Jesus to be God
8. Jesus is Miraculously Proven to be God
9. Therefore, Jesus is God¹⁰

There is no need to use points 1-6 of Dr. Geisler's apologetic system as the Jehovah's Witnesses do believe in a theistic God who can work miracles, and they do believe the original New Testament documents to be accurate in terms of correctly recording events that happened. With respect to the Bible, there is overwhelming evidence in the New Testament that Jesus considered Himself to be God, as did the writers who faithfully recorded His words and early Church events. This can be demonstrated by three lines of evidence:

1. Christ's very words
2. Christ's actions
3. The testimony of the New Testament writers

Jesus said He was God

There is little doubt when a thorough investigation is made of the New Testament that Jesus spoke in a way that showed He believed Himself to be God in the flesh. There are at least two major categories of statements Christ made that prove He believed He was deity.

First, Jesus made numerous descriptive statements about Himself in the New Testament that were a direct reference to the one true God proclaimed in the Old Testament.¹¹ No mere man would dare take on the descriptions God used to portray Himself in the Old Testament in the way Jesus did if He did not think Himself divine. Table 1 below lists a number of the most important parallels Christ drew of Himself and God:

¹⁰ Norman Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 37.

¹¹ Norman Geisler and Ron Brooks, *When Skeptics Ask* (Grand Rapid, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 106.

Table 1
Old Testament Descriptions of God taken by Christ

God in the Old Testament	Christ's Claim in the New Testament
The Great I AM	
<p>“Then Moses said to God, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I will say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?”¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” Exodus 3:14-15.</p> <p>“Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.” Isaiah 48:12.</p> <p>“See now that I, I am He, and there is no god besides Me;” Deuteronomy 32:39.</p>	<p>“Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.” John 8:58.</p> <p>“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.” John 8:18.</p>
The Shepherd	
<p>“The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.” Psalm 23:1.</p>	<p>“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” John 10:11.</p>
The Light	
<p>“The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear?” Psalm 27:1.</p>	<p>“Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me</p>

will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.” John 8:12.

Ruler of All

“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6.

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’”. Matthew 28:18.

The First and the Last

“Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.” Isaiah 48:12.

“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, ¹⁸and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.” Revelation 1:17-18.

“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” Revelation 21:12.

The Bridegroom

For *as* a young man marries a virgin, so your sons will marry you; and *as* the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so your God will rejoice over you. Isaiah 62:5.

“It will come about in that day,” declares the LORD, “That you will call Me Ishi (my husband) and will no longer call Me Baali (my master). Hosea 2:16.

“Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.” Matthew 25:1.

Judge of all Nations

“Let the nations be aroused and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations.” Joel 3:12.

“For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,” John 5:12.

Second, Jesus made a number of statements about Himself that were clearly understood by the audience He was addressing. For example, John records the following encounter with Jesus and a group of Jews: “But He answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.” For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.”¹² Another confrontation occurs in John where Jesus yet again claims to be God when He says, “I and the Father are one.” The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, “I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?” The Jews answered Him, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out *to be* God.”¹³

Finally, Jesus made a number of very telling statements to His disciples and others that clearly demonstrated He believed He was divine. Declarations such as “He who has seen Me has seen the Father”,¹⁴ claiming the Son of Man reference from Daniel 7 during His trial,¹⁵ and stating that He shared God’s glory in the beginning when God clearly says in the Old Testament that He shares His glory with no one¹⁶ are enough to show that Jesus believed Himself to be equal with God.

¹² John 5:13.

¹³ John 10:30-33.

¹⁴ John 14:9.

¹⁵ Mark 14:61-62,

¹⁶ Luke 9:16, John 17:5, Isaiah 42:8.

Jesus Acted like God

Not only did Jesus make verbal statements about His deity, He acted in ways that no God-fearing Jew would otherwise act. For example, Jesus accepted worship some nine times in the New Testament. Never once did He stop those who worshipped him, which is in stark contrast to other episodes in the Bible where both men and angels put quick ends to attempts made to worship them.¹⁷

Jesus also forgave sins. Christ said “Your sins are forgiven” to both the paralytic in Mark 2 as well as the woman in Luke 7. The Pharisees, for once, made a good observation when they discussed among themselves that only God could forgive sins. Jesus, however, openly made such statements, which further demonstrates He believed He was God.

Christ also said to pray in His name. In John 16:23-24 Jesus says, “In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.”

Christ also spoke with authority as no man ever had. Unlike the prophets who preceded Him, Jesus never once prefaced his teachings or commands with a “Thus saith the Lord”. He always said “I say to you . . .”, because God need not reference anyone but Himself when dispensing truth.¹⁸

Finally, Jesus said that converts to Christianity be baptized in His name. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus says, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.” It is interesting to note that this verse not only affirms the deity of Christ and the Father, but also the Holy Spirit. The word “name” is singular, yet three distinct Persons follow prefaced by “the” indicating one God that consists of three Persons – the Trinity.¹⁹

The New Testament Writers Believed Jesus to be God

The nine authors of the twenty seven books of the New Testament obviously believed Jesus to be God because they wrote as such. The writers declared Christ’s deity in two ways. First, like Jesus, they referenced a number of Old Testament descriptions of God and applied them to Christ. Four times in Titus, Paul references as Savior the names Jesus and God, and yet in Isaiah 43:11, God says there is no Savior other than Him. Paul also says in Philippians 2:11 that every knee will bow at the name of Jesus and every tongue confess that He is Lord, but God says in Isaiah 45:23, “That to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear *allegiance*”. Finally, in Revelation 1:7, John states that every eye will see the pierced Christ and will mourn over Him, which is exactly what God says about Himself in Zechariah 12:10.

Next, the New Testament writers made many new proclamations of Jesus’ deity in their writings. John includes in his gospel three of the clearest declarations of Jesus’ divine nature. The first verse in John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Verse fourteen then says, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” In the same chapter, John the Baptist is found declaring the eternity of Christ when he says, “This is He on behalf of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’”²⁰ The third strong statement about

¹⁷ Acts 14:12, Revelation 19:9-10.

¹⁸ Rhodes, 227.

¹⁹ Ibid, 96.

²⁰ John 1:29.

Christ and God being one in the same comes in John 20:28 when Thomas, after coming face to face with the resurrected Christ, proclaims “My Lord and my God!”

Paul leaves little doubt in many of his epistles that Jesus is God. Paul states that Jesus is God over all (Romans 9:5), that He emptied Himself of being God during his incarnation (Philippians 2:5-8), that He is the creator of all things (Colossians 1:16-17, 19) including angels (demonstrating that Jesus cannot be the angel Michael), that all the fullness of deity dwells in Christ (Colossians 2:9-10), that He is King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Timothy 6:15), and that He is our God and Savior (Titus 2:13).

Finally, the other New Testament authors echoed Paul and the gospel writers that Jesus is God. Peter says that Jesus is our God and Savior (2 Peter 1:1). The writer of Hebrews provides a vertical cosmological argument for God when he says that Christ made the world and is “. . . the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power (Hebrews 1:2-3). Concerning verse three and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, Walter Martin points out, “It would be illogical, and unreasonable, to suppose that Christ, who is the image imprinted by Jehovah’s *Substance*, is not of the Substance of Jehovah and hence God, or the second Person of the Triune Deity.”²¹ The writer of Hebrews also references the Father calling the Son God and says that His throne will be forever (Hebrews 1:8). Christ’s unchanging divine nature is declared in chapter thirteen of the same book where Jesus is said to be the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). John rounds out the New Testament references to Christ being God when he calls Jesus the true God (1 John 5:20), and then, like Paul, calls Jesus King of kings and Lord of lords two places in Revelation (17:14, 19:16).

Does the New Testament proclaim Jesus to be God? The overwhelming evidence found in Christ’s own words, the manner in which He lived, and the testimony of the New Testament writers declares “absolutely!” However, just because it can be proven that Jesus and the New Testament writers thought He was God does not mean that He is. To prove that Christ is indeed God, one needs to look at how Jesus was confirmed to be God Almighty through various miraculous events.

Jesus is Miraculously Proven to be God

Jesus was miraculously proven to be God in three distinct ways:

1. By fulfilling biblical prophecy
2. By living a miraculous and sinless life
3. By rising from the dead

Prophesied to be God in the Flesh

There are numerous Bible prophecies made in the Old Testament concerning the coming of the Messiah that were miraculously fulfilled in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Several in particular point to the Christ being God in the flesh. Isaiah says that the virgin will give birth to a Child who will be called God with us (Isaiah 7:14). Isaiah also says that this Child will hold the titles “. . . Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father . . .” (Isaiah 9:6).

Other prophecies fulfilled in Jesus include One being born in Bethlehem whose existence has been “. . . From the days of eternity.” (Micah 5:2), and God being valued for thirty shekels of silver (Zechariah 11:13), which was the exact amount Judas betrayed Jesus for.

²¹ Martin, 89. Emphasis in original.

A Miraculous and Sinless Life

Jesus performed some thirty-five miracles in the New Testament and used these evidences to prove His identity as Messiah to John the Baptist (Matthew 11:5). In addition, Jesus lived a sinless life – something no one in the flesh has ever done – which was confirmed in the fact that his enemies could find no fault in him, nor could Pilate during His trial.

The Cornerstone Event of Christianity

The Bible states numerous times that God raised Jesus from the dead.²² Yet in John 2:19, Jesus is found saying, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Even when speaking of His resurrection, Christ affirmed His deity.

Jehovah’s Witnesses do not deny Christ came back from the grave, but they say He came back a “divine spirit being” that was not physical in nature. This false teaching is easily refuted by first referencing Paul, who said that the *man* Christ Jesus is our one mediator between God and mankind,²³ and then the resurrected Jesus Himself who stated to His disciples, “See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.”²⁴

The only conclusion that can be reached after confirming Jesus fulfilled the biblical prophecies about God becoming man, that He lived a miraculous and sinless life, and that He raised Himself bodily from the grave is that He is who the Bible proclaims Him to be – God.

Answering Scriptural Arguments from the Jehovah’s Witnesses

The Jehovah’s Witnesses will attempt to refute that Jesus is God by cherry-picking various verses that appear to cast doubt on Christ’s divinity and using them to support their false Messiah. The verses can be categorized as those that appear to depict Jesus as a created being and those that seem to represent Christ as inferior to the God the Father.

Christ is not a Created Being

Colossians 1:15 is a favorite verse plucked from the Bible by the Watchtower as it says, “And He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” The word “firstborn” seems to indicate that Christ was the first creation of God, but in reality, that is not how the word is used. Instead, it indicates preeminence and can be translated “Original Bringer Forth”.²⁵ The Old Testament describes King David, the last-born son of Jesse, as “firstborn” to indicate he was the preeminent son (Psalm 89:27).²⁶ The Jehovah’s Witnesses continue to error in Colossians by inserting the word “other” into verse sixteen of their New World Translation so that it reads, “by means of him all [other] things were created in the

²² Acts 2:24-32, Acts 3:15, Romans 4:24, Romans 8:11, 2 Corinthians 4:14, Galatians 1:1.

²³ 1 Timothy 2:5.

²⁴ Luke 24:39.

²⁵ Martin, 92.

²⁶ Norman L. Geisler and Ron Rhodes, *When Cultists Ask* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books), 259.

heavens and upon the earth . . . ”²⁷ Not only would the Witnesses do well to adhere to the warning of God cursing anyone who adds to His words (Revelation 22:18), but they fall into a biblical trap as the Old Testament in Isaiah 44:24 proclaims that God alone created the earth²⁸: “Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, ‘I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, stretching out the heavens by Myself and spreading out the earth all alone’”.

Revelation 3:14 is referenced on the heels of Colossians 1:15 by the Watchtower as it quotes Jesus as saying, “To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God . . .” The word “Beginning” is translated from the Greek word *arche* from where the word “architect” is derived, so in essence the verse says Jesus is the architect/ruler over all creation. Further, the same word (beginning) is used to describe God in Revelation 21:6 so the word cannot be referring to something first created.²⁹

Jesus is not lesser in Nature than the Father

Three sets of verses are used by the Jehovah’s Witnesses to position Christ as being less than the Father. First, John 14:28 records Jesus as saying, “The Father is greater than I”. Next, Luke 18:19 presents Jesus asking the rich young ruler, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.” Finally, Matthew 24:36 has Jesus declaring, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”, which seems to suggest that Christ doesn’t possess omniscience. Collectively viewed, these three sets of verses appear to show that Christ is inferior to the Father, and therefore not God.

The verse in John does not deny Christ’s deity in terms of Him having the same nature as God, but demonstrates his position in human form and the office he holds within the Trinity. Philippians 2:7 describes how Jesus laid aside His godly form and chose to become a man during His incarnation. Further, ontological equality and functional hierarchy are two different things.³⁰ Jesus holds a lesser office than the Father, but is equal to Him in nature.

With respect to the verse in Luke, Jesus is in essence asking the young rich ruler to examine his words. Either Jesus is good, and therefore God, or not good and not God. Jesus Himself said that He was good when he stated in John 10:11, “I am the good shepherd”. Christ is asking the man to think about what he is asking – in other words, “Are you calling me God?”³¹

Finally, the verse in Matthew demonstrates the effects of Christ becoming man. The Bible reports that Jesus “increased in wisdom” (Luke 2:52), which is in keeping with His human nature. The incarnation did not subtract deity, but added humanity, with the end result being certain limitations to Christ in his human form. For example, did Jesus get tired or hungry? As God no, but as man, yes.

²⁷ Martin, 75.

²⁸ Ibid, 260.

²⁹ David A. Reed, *Jehovah’s Witnesses Answered Verse by Verse* (Grand Rapid, MI: Baker Books), 104.

³⁰ Geisler and Rhodes, 184.

³¹ Geisler, *Apologetics*, 130.

Why Belief in the Real Jesus Matters

Satan, being the master salesman that he is, does not care which false Christ someone eventually puts their faith in as long it is not the true Messiah presented in the Bible. He knows that one can be right about many things, but be wrong about the real Jesus and still be lost. Jesus Himself confirms that in Scripture when he says in John 8:18, "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." Jesus is literally saying that a person must believe in the real Messiah and not one that is a counterfeit for true salvation to occur. In other words, a fake Christ produces a fake salvation that leads to a very real Hell.

The Jesus presented by the Jehovah's Witnesses is one of the enemy's many false distortions of the true Son of God. By rewriting Scripture to support their phony Christ, and working fervently to make disciples for the Watchtower, they mirror the Pharisees that Jesus spoke of when He said, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."

Just as people die everyday of diseases that could be completely stopped by the right medication or medical procedure, so too do people fall into eternity lost because they have failed to obtain the truth about the real Jesus and have instead followed a deceptive cult that is piloted by the father of lies. Without question, believing in the real Jesus matters.

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