
Captives of a Concept

Second Edition

Don Cameron

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Body of Elders of Jehovah's Witnesses
www.CaptivesOfaConcept.com

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(See his Commentary & Essays at <http://www.commentarypress.com/>)

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Important Terms

Watchtower (or Watch Tower) Society: A world-wide religious organization with its Headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. Its most well known publications are *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Its claimed founder, Charles Taze Russell,¹ published the 1st issue of “Zion’s Watch Tower” in July 1879. – See Appendix, p.144

Jehovah: The English rendering of the “Divine Name” for God the Father. Some religions prefer the Hebrew “Yahweh.”

Jehovah’s Witnesses: The millions of people associated with this religion. Prior to 1931 they were known as “Bible Students.”

Governing Body: A dozen or so elderly Witnesses in Brooklyn who have had the final say on the organization’s teachings since 1976. Prior to 1976 the one man who was the president at the time made all the final decisions.²

JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom: The Governing Body’s very important 750-page book of the history of the Watchtower Society published in 1993. Although it contains thousands of details that don’t matter, it also contains a few that do. It’s a matter of knowing what to look for and where to find them.

Charles Russell & Joseph Rutherford: What needs to be known about this religion centers on the teachings of these two men from about 1876 to 1919. **Note:** Although Russell is thought of as the Society’s first president, page 576 of the *Proclaimers* book says that a man by the name of W. H. Conley was the initial president from 1881 to 1884. Russell didn’t officially become its president until the Society was legally incorporated in 1884. But he had always been the driving force behind this religion from the early 1870s until his death in 1916.

“Christ’s invisible presence”: This term corresponds to what everyone else calls “the Second Coming of Christ” referred to at Matthew 24:3. The Society teaches that Jesus returned to begin his “invisible presence” in 1914. But they explain that it was “not by his personally returning, even invisibly, to the vicinity of the earth, but by his directing his attention toward the earth as ruling King.” - See Appendix, p. 143

Mathew 24:45-47: This is the most important Scripture in Watchtower theology because its claim that it *is* “the only true religion” is based upon the way they interpret this passage. – See Chapter 2, page 18.

Proverbs 4:18: This may be the 2nd most important Scripture in Watchtower theology because it is used to explain away all their former teachings which suggest that it is *not* “the only true religion.” – See Chapter 8, page 63.

¹There are many “Bible Students” today who feel that although Russell was the founder of the WatchTower Society in the late 1800s, he is *not* the founder of the religion of Jehovah’s Witnesses. They believe that Joseph Rutherford is their founder. See their reasoning at http://www.nsbible.org/pastor_not_founder.htm

² *Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*, pp. 109,110.

Foreword

ACCORDING to the annual report for the year 2004 in the February 1, 2005 *Watchtower*, 6.5 million Jehovah's Witnesses spent almost 1.3 billion hours distributing hundreds of millions of pieces of literature while going door-to-door and conducting 6 million Bible studies in 235 lands. All that activity resulted in 16.7 million people attending their annual "Memorial of Christ's Death."

But, as will be shown, all this effort has been in support of an illusion—an illusionary concept that has become the 'foundation cornerstone' of the Watchtower religion upon which everything else rests; a concept that dominates and controls the thinking of those who write the literature as well as the Witnesses who read it.

In order to understand this illusionary concept and how it affects Jehovah's Witnesses it is *not* necessary to compare the teachings of the Bible (or other religions) with the teachings of the Watchtower Society because...

It isn't what Jehovah's Witnesses believe about the Bible that has made them captives of a concept. It is what they believe about the Watchtower Society that has done it.

But there are two things that *are* necessary to compare...

1. *The Society's interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47 (the most important Scripture in Watchtower theology)³ with...*
2. *Watchtower history as it relates to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47.*

The reason why this comparison is necessary is because the concept holding Jehovah's Witnesses captive is based upon the outcome of it. If the way they interpret Matthew 24:45-47 *and the specific event mentioned in verse 47* did in fact happen in Watchtower history, then everyone on earth may want to consider leaving their present religion and joining this one. But if it didn't happen, then Jehovah's Witnesses may want to consider leaving it. This single Scripture/Event is *that* important to the existence of their religion today.

Those who make this comparison *before* they get baptized by the Watchtower Society don't get baptized. Most who make it *after* they got baptized re-

³ Although Witnesses don't think of it this way, Matthew 24:45-47 is the most important Scripture in Watchtower theology because their religion stands or falls on what did or did not happen in connection with it.

alize that they made a mistake.⁴ For when this comparison is made, at least three things become evident...

1. God and Jesus Christ have never had anything to do with the Watchtower organization.
2. Its Governing Body has not told Jehovah's Witnesses the whole truth about the organization's history, especially as it relates to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47.
3. Their repeated warnings about former Witnesses, whom they like to call "apostates," turns out to be Watchtower propaganda that does not protect Jehovah's Witnesses from being misled. Rather, it prevents them from noticing that they are already being misled—not by those they *distrust* the most *outside* their organization but by those they *trust* the most *inside* their organization.⁵

An example of the above point #3 appears on page 11 of the March 1, 2002 *Watchtower*⁶ where what is said is obviously not designed to encourage Witnesses to examine anything for themselves. Rather, they demonize those who try to encourage Witnesses to check up on what their Governing body has told about the organization's history by labeling them 'apostate servants of Satan.' Their propaganda then goes like this...

If we entertain the false reasoning of such ones, our confidence in Jehovah's Word of truth, the Bible, can be weakened and our faith can die.

While it is true that some Witnesses who "entertain" what so-called "apostates" have to say *do* lose confidence in the Bible and their faith in God *does* die, it is not because of "the false reasoning of such ones." Rather, it is because of coming to realize that the false reasoning and the false history was coming from their religious leaders who claimed to represent "the only true God" in "the only true religion."

Others simply lose confidence in the Watchtower Society. And what dies in the process is their faith in its Governing Body. Then they begin looking for an alternative way to worship God.⁷

This brings up the question, How is it possible for such men to be anything but completely truthful with those who depend on them for all of their "direc-

⁴ See Chapter 5, "The One Mistake All Jehovah's Witnesses Have Made"

⁵ See Chapter 9, "Watchtower Propaganda Keeps Them Captive"

⁶ See also pages 17 and 18 of the September 15, 2002 *Watchtower*.

⁷ See page 136, "An Alternative to 'God's Organization.'"

tion and guidance in matters of worship”?⁸ The first answer that may come to mind is that the Society’s religious leaders are no different than the religious leaders of Jesus’ day whom he said were ‘hypocrites, serpents, and offspring of vipers.’⁹ But there is something that the apostle Paul said that might be an alternative explanation that doesn’t necessarily require these men to be hypocrites, serpents or offspring of vipers...

Because they did not accept the love of the truth
...that is why God lets an operation of error go to them that
they may get to believing the lie. – 2 Thessalonians 2:10,11

Only God knows if this is how He has been dealing with these men, but if this is what is going on it would explain a lot. Once they “get to believing the lie” then the lie becomes the truth in their minds. And once that happens it doesn’t matter what the Bible says or what went on in the Society’s history. *Nothing will be allowed to disprove the lie.* Anything that is contrary to it will either be ignored, as is done throughout their *Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom* book, or else it will be manipulated to force it to apparently fit the lie, as is also done throughout their *Proclaimers* book. And yet *they will do these things while thinking they are being candid in their efforts to uphold the truth.*¹⁰ Apparently this is one of the strange ways the human mind is capable of working when “God lets an operation of error go to them that they may get to believing the lie.”¹¹

And so, what is the particular lie that God has let the Governing Body get to believe? It is the concept or premise upon which their religion rests. A concept so powerful that upholding *it* rather than upholding *the truth* is what influences and ultimately controls the decision-making process of not only the men of the Governing Body but all the rest of Jehovah’s Witnesses as well.

⁸ March 15, 1998 *Watchtower*, p. 21

⁹ Matthew chapter 23

¹⁰ In the *Foreword* to their *Proclaimers* book they say they “have endeavored to be objective and present a candid history.” But they cannot be truly candid because their history does not agree with their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47. See Chapter 3.

¹¹ *Captives of a Concept* leans toward this explanation as to why the men of the Governing Body think and act the way they do. This explanation doesn’t excuse them when they mislead Jehovah’s Witnesses about the organization’s history, but it does offer a possible explanation why they are able to do it without apparently bothering themselves. Several examples in this study will demonstrate their inability to always tell the truth which would seem to indicate that they have not yet accepted the *love* of the truth. – See Chapter 12, “What They Say Is Not What They Always Do.”

The Concept

THE concept that held about one hundred members of The Branch Davidians captive was their belief that **David Koresh was God's chosen individual** to teach them what he wanted them to believe.

The concept that held about one thousand members of The People's Temple captive was their belief that **Jim Jones was God's chosen individual** to teach them what he wanted them to believe.

The concept that still holds millions of Jehovah's Witnesses captive is their belief that **the Watchtower Society is God's chosen organization** to teach them what he wants them to believe; that all of God's directions to mankind comes through this one "channel of communication."

A main difference between the above concepts is the one through whom God is thought to 'speak.' In the cases of Koresh and Jones, it was *men*. But with Jehovah's Witnesses it is *an organization* – "**God's organization**."¹²

The following statement by former Governing Body Member Raymond Franz may well be *the best explanation that has ever been written about what makes Jehovah's Witnesses 'tick'...*

*I try in my own mind and heart to understand the feelings of all [Jehovah's Witnesses], including those of the Governing Body. Based on my own [60 years] experience among them I believe that they are, in effect, the **captives of a concept**. The concept or mental image they have of "**the organization**" seems almost to take on a personality of its own, so that the concept itself controls them, moves them, or restrains them, by*

The concept that holds Jehovah's Witnesses captive is their belief that the Watchtower Society is God's organization.

¹² The Society promotes the belief that whatever *they* say, it is as if *God* is the One who is speaking. For example, the February 1, 1967 *Watchtower* says, "What (the Witnesses) are telling people is what God in his Word says; he is the one talking.... So too, God uses men to speak to those within the congregation of believers... When they give counsel...it is God who is speaking by means of them.' The article also asks, "How can one identify the organization through which God is speaking to mankind today?" p. 72. On page 15 of the May 1, 2000 *Watchtower* the Governing Body reminds Witnesses that, "Jehovah speaks to us through the Bible and by means of 'the faithful and discreet slave' [organization]." – See Chapter 6, "Who Is God's Organization?"

***Their
concept of
“the
organization”
is the
dominant,
controlling
force in their
lives without
them
realizing it.***

***Everything is
explained
and
understood
from the
standpoint
that the
Society is
God’s
organization.***

*molding their thinking, their attitudes, their judgments... **The ...concept of “the organization”... becomes, in fact, the dominant, controlling force.***¹³

Total belief in this concept explains why Jehovah’s Witnesses are so willing to accept whatever comes to them from the Watchtower Society no matter how complicated it is or how impossible it may be to understand, and even if it doesn’t make any sense to them. They view what comes from “God’s organization” as coming from God himself.¹⁴

Once people become thoroughly convinced that God is speaking to them directly or by means of some other person or organization they must act in harmony with their belief or else feel guilty before God Almighty if ever they were to disagree or fail to follow the directions being given. This is certainly true with Jehovah’s Witnesses. It is likely that it was the same with the followers of Koresh and Jones. The destruction of the World Trade Center buildings on 9/11/01 and suicide/homicide bombings show how far people are willing to go when they believe that what they are doing is what God wants (or requires) them to do.

One of the things that makes the Watchtower’s organizational concept so powerful is that nobody notices that it is “in fact, the dominant, controlling force” in their decision-making process. But it controls them by molding the thinking of those who write the literature (under the direction of the Governing Body) as well as the Witnesses who read it. *Everything is explained and understood from the standpoint that the Watchtower Society is God’s organization.*

The following is the kind of statement that is accepted, not because it is stated or even suggested anywhere in the Bible, but because those reading it are captives of this organizational concept...

¹³ *Crisis of Conscience*, p. 296.

¹⁴ One Witness expressed her personal feelings in front of her congregation this way: “When I receive my *Watchtower* magazine in the mail I feel that I am getting a letter from God.” But it is not likely that she or any Witness would say this in front of non-Witnesses who are not captives of the same concept.

If we highly respect God's inspired prophets of by-gone days, and particularly God's Son [which Witnesses do], should we not also respect the human agency that Jehovah is using today [i.e. the Watchtower Society]?¹⁵

Such reasoning only works on those who believe that the Society is “the human agency that Jehovah is using today.” For everyone else there is no connection between respect for God's Son in heaven and the Watchtower Society on earth.

It isn't just that Jehovah's Witnesses simply *believe* this concept – *it's what that belief does to them.*¹⁶ Among other things it prevents most of them from noticing anything wrong no matter how wrong it is. And in case anyone does think they notice something wrong, they are warned that they must never try to do anything about it but simply wait for God to do something about it because, after all, ‘It is *his* organization’ ...

If [you]¹⁷ have become thoroughly convinced that this is Jehovah's organization that he is guiding and directing his people [i.e. Once you are a captive of this concept], [you] shall not be unsettled by anything that happens ... If [you] really have faith [you] will know that if something is wrong God will straighten it out eventually.¹⁸

The more Jehovah's Witnesses allow themselves to be controlled by the above reasoning, the more spiritually mature they are considered to be. But of course, the only way “God will straighten it out eventually” is if the Society is in fact ‘God's organization that he is guiding and directing his people.’ Once this concept is accepted, some pretty strange

This concept blocks most Jehovah's Witnesses from noticing anything wrong no matter how wrong it is.

“If you really have faith you will know that if something is wrong God will straighten it out eventually.”

¹⁵ June 1, 1997 *Watchtower*, p.10

¹⁶ Raymond Franz explained what it did to him: “My belief in the organization as God's only agency on earth caused me to do what I did at that time without particularly great qualms of conscience. - *Crisis of Conscience*, p. 47

¹⁷ The original pronouns in this quote were “we” which give the false impression that the counsel being given even applies to the religious leaders who are providing it. But in actual practice it only applies to everyone else. Since 1976 it applies to everyone except the Governing Body. When *they* think “something is wrong” they change it. None of the rest of Jehovah's Witnesses are allowed to change anything. – See Chapter 6, “Who Is God's Organization?”

¹⁸ May 1, 1957 *Watchtower*, p.284.

**The
Society's
religious
leaders
have made
themselves
indispensable
to the
salvation
of mankind.**

**To
question,
doubt or
disagree
with 'God's
organization'
is to
question,
doubt and
disagree
with God!**

See
Footnote 22

things can be said without bothering anyone. For example, although they know that the Bible says that one must come to Jesus Christ for salvation, it doesn't concern them when the Society claims that mankind must also come to *them* for salvation...

*[Our] witness yet includes the invitation to **come to Jehovah's organization for salvation.***¹⁹

They know the Bible doesn't say such a thing but since they believe that when Armageddon strikes (in the very near future) only those who are in "approved association"²⁰ with the Watchtower Society will be saved, they don't see anything wrong with such a statement. But again, if the Society *isn't* God's organization then it has nothing to do with the salvation of anyone.

Belief in this concept has given the men of the Governing Body tremendous control over the thinking of the rest of Jehovah's Witnesses. To question *them*, to doubt *them*, to disagree with *them* becomes the same as questioning, doubting and disagreeing with God himself! And since Witnesses are very sensitive about doing anything that would displease God, they try hard not to notice anything that might cause them to question, doubt or disagree with "his organization."²¹

Witnesses are reminded often enough that it is very offensive to Jehovah God if ever they were to question or doubt anything provided by his "faithful and discreet slave organization"...

[YOUR] VIEW OF THE [ORGANIZATION]
*If [you] have once established what instrument God is using as his "slave" to dispense spiritual food to his people, **surely Jehovah is not pleased if [you] receive that food as though it might contain something harmful.** [You] should have confidence in the channel God is using.*²²

¹⁹ November 15, 1981 *Watchtower*, p.21. – Also see Chapter 6, "Who Is God's Organization?"

²⁰ April 1, 1986 *Watchtower*, p.31.

²¹ See Chapter 6, "Who Is God's Organization?"

²² February 15, 1981 *Watchtower*. Here again the original pronouns were plural "we." But surely the Governing Body never thinks that the food *they are providing* "might contain something harmful."

Here they begin their reasoning by reminding the Witnesses of the concept (“the instrument God is using”), and end with another reference to it (“the channel God is using”), and then make their point in the middle that ‘surely Jehovah is not pleased if anyone doubts anything that the men of the Governing Body are providing in the way of spiritual food.’ Again, this kind of reasoning is very intimidating to people who are captives of the Watchtower’s organizational concept.

Witnesses don’t notice how often they accept what comes from the Society simply because they believe it is God’s organization rather than because they can prove it to themselves from the Bible.

It is just as former elder Peter Gregerson so often observed during some fifty years of association with the Watchtower Society...

*It seemed that **everything always** [comes] back to the question: **Is the Watchtower Society and its leadership the “faithful [and discreet] slave [organization]?”***²³

***Everything
always comes
down to the
question,
Is the
Watchtower
Society
God’s
organization?***

The Point: Of all the things that *can* be known about this religion, there is only one thing that *needs* to be known...

What <u>Can</u> Be Known	What <u>Needs</u> To Be Known
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paradise earth 2. Everlasting life (You will never die) 3. God’s name “Jehovah” 4. God’s name is not “God” or “Lord” 5. God is not a Trinity 6. Jesus is not God 7. Jesus didn’t die on a cross 8. The soul is not immortal 9. Hell is not hot 10. The dead are not conscious 11. The earth will not be destroyed 12. The sign of the last days 13. The new heavens 14. The new earth 15. God’s Kingdom (Government) 16. Christian neutrality 17. Blood Transfusions 18. The “sign” of Christ’s presence 	<p>Is the Watchtower Society God’s organization?</p>

***Of all the
things that
can be
known about
the Watch-
tower
religion,
there is only
one thing
that needs to
be known.***

²³ *Witnesses of Jehovah* video - <http://www.goodnewsdefenders.org/>

**All
Watchtower
teachings are
dependent
upon what
“God’s
organization”
currently
says the
Bible says.**

See p. 82,
“The Final
Authority of
Watchtower
Teachings”

**Whatever is
going on today
has nothing
to do with
whether or not
the Society is
God’s
organization.**

19. Christmas, birthdays, holidays 20. How to identify the true religion 21. World Empire of false religion 22. Armageddon 23. The resurrection of the dead 24. When “death will be no more” 25. Born Again 26. The “superior authorities” 27. The “end of the Gentile times” 28. Baptism 29. Etc.	<p>Is the Watchtower Society God’s organization?</p>
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The reason why the answer to the question in the right hand column is the only thing that needs to be known is because all other Watchtower teachings are dependent—not on what the Bible says but, as will be shown, *on what “God’s organization” currently says the Bible says.* This has been proven to be true over and over again by the Witnesses’ willingness (i.e. *requirement*) to change what they believe the Bible says whenever “God’s organization” changes what it says the Bible says.²⁴

If the Watchtower Society truly is God’s one and only organization that he is using to teach mankind the truth from his Word the Bible (which is what Witnesses believe), then all anyone needs to do is believe everything that currently shows up in the above left hand column whether they understand it or not (which is what Witnesses do).

If you could ask them, “Do you believe the Watchtower Society is God’s organization?”—they will all confidently answer, “Yes.” But if you asked them *why* they believe that it is you will get a variety of answers which usually have to do with what the Society is teaching and doing today.²⁵ But according to their official teaching, *whatever is going on today has nothing to do with whether or not the Watchtower Society is God’s organization.*

²⁴ See Chapter 3 to get an idea of just how often Jehovah’s Witnesses have had to change what they believed the Bible says. And that was just relative to the Society’s teachings between 1876 and 1919. There have been many other beliefs that have changed since 1919.

²⁵ The June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* lists several “identifying marks” that “determine who today has divine backing.” They include, (1) “They base their teachings on the Bible,” (2) “They use and publicize God’s name, Jehovah,” (3) “They reflect God’s joyful personality,” (4) “They base their conduct and their decisions on Bible principles,” and (5) “They are organized in the manner of first-century Christian congregation.” - p.13,14. But according to their official teaching based on their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47, whatever the Society is teaching or doing today has nothing to do with whether or not it is, or ever has been God’s organization.

The Only Way An Organization Could Be God's Organization

It is evident that the only way any organization could be God's organization would be if God appointed it as such. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Watchtower Society received that appointment **in the spring of 1919** in fulfillment of the most important Scripture in Watchtower theology—Matthew 24:45-47.²⁶

On the Watchtower's official website under the heading, "What Jehovah's Witnesses Believe" they list forty of their teachings. But their most important teaching, the only teaching that needs to be known — "The Watchtower Society is God's organization"—is not mentioned.²⁷

Which Comes First?

The usual way of thinking is that if Jehovah's Witnesses can first see that things they believe about the Bible (in the above left hand column) are not true, *then* they will realize that the Watchtower Society is not God's organization. But it usually has to work the other way around.

They need to at least begin to have serious doubts about the Society first before they can allow themselves to begin to consider that what they believe about the Bible may not be true.

NEXT: The following chapter will explain their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47 followed by an examination of the organization's history to see if the way they interpret this Scripture did in fact happen in Watchtower history. If their interpretation and history do agree with each other then there may be a chance that the Watchtower Society is God's organization today, but if they do not agree then there is no chance no matter what they are teaching today.

The only way any organization could be God's organization would be if God appointed it to be His organization.

Jehovah's Witnesses usually need to come to realize that what they believe about the Watchtower Society may not be true before they can allow themselves to consider that what they believe about the Bible may not be true.

²⁶ Jehovah's Witnesses don't think of Matthew 24:45-47 as the most important Scripture in their organization's theology because their Governing Body doesn't present it to them that way. This may be because their Governing Body may not think of it this way either. But that doesn't mean it isn't the most important Scripture in their theology. **This religion could not exist without the way they interpret this Scripture.** Just as the Christian religion could not exist if Jesus is not God's **Son**, the Watchtower religion could not exist if the Watchtower Society is not God's **organization**.- See Appendix, p. 147.

²⁷ http://www.watchtower.org/library/jt/index.htm?article=article_01.htm

* Matthew 24:45-47 *

The Most Important Scripture In Watchtower Theology

THEIR most detailed explanation of Matthew 24:45-47 is presented in the book *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached*.²⁸ It was written by the Society's most respected "eminent Bible scholar" Frederick Franz.²⁹ He was the president of the Watchtower Society from 1977 until his death in 1992.

IMPORTANT NOTE: For the purpose of this study it is only necessary to *understand* their interpretation of this passage of Scripture—not to agree or disagree with it. Whether it is *Biblically* correct doesn't matter. The only concern here is if it is *historically* correct. That is, does what went on in their history agree with the way they interpret Matthew 24:45-47...

It is not necessary to disagree with their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47. It is necessary to understand it, and then hold them to it.

45 Who really is the faithful and discreet slave [**organization**] whom [**Jesus**] appointed over his [**disciples**], to give them their [**spiritual**] food at the proper time? **46** Happy is that slave [**organization**] if [**Jesus**] on arriving [**in 1914**] finds him doing so. **47** Truly I say to you [**in the spring of 1919**] he will appoint [**the Watchtower Society**] over all his [**earthly interests**].

Their teaching is that Jesus returned in 1914 to begin his Second Coming or "invisible presence"³⁰ in fulfillment of Matthew 24:3. Then in 1918 he began to make an examination of all the religions claiming to represent him to see if any of them had been faithfully and discreetly providing

²⁸ Published in 1973. See Chapter 17, "THE SLAVE WHO LIVED TO SEE THE 'SIGN,'" pages 349-357.

²⁹ *Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, page 109. Frederick Franz was the uncle of Raymond Franz.

³⁰ See explanation of "invisible presence" in "Important Terms." It is only important to know that their "invisible presence" corresponds to what everyone else refers to as "the Second Coming of Christ" of Matthew 24:3. For the purpose of this study, it helps to temporarily assume that Jesus did return in 1914 and then hold them to that teaching.

true teachings of the Bible (spiritual food) at the proper time during his absence. They say that the only religion he found doing so was the Watchtower Society and therefore **Jesus appointed them over all his earthly interests in the spring of 1919.**

Notice that the *only* reason Jesus would have made the above appointment is *if he had found them providing 'spiritual food at the proper time.'* Their *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached* book explains this very critical point under the heading "Time of Inspection by the Slave's Master." On pages 350-355 Frederick Franz explains...

*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 [Jesus]... On inspecting [the Society] in the year **1919** C.E... Jesus Christ did find the appointed "slave" faithful and discreet in the feeding of his [disciples].*

Jehovah's Witnesses know that this "food" and "feeding" refers to the teachings that come from the Watchtower Society. It is evident that Jesus would not base his decision in 1919 on what the Society would be teaching today.³¹ Rather, as Franz explained on pages 349 and 350...

*Could they, by even their latest record [of teachings] **down till 1919** prove that they themselves were the composite "faithful and discreet slave" class of Jesus Christ?... The **quality** of the food itself was to be considered. – para. 40*

And so Jesus would make his decision in 1919 based upon what they had been teaching "down till 1919." He would check the "quality" of those teachings to make sure they were *the right things to be teaching and the right time to be teaching them* ("the right sort of food at the proper time"). What was Jesus' decision? The book simply asserts that they "met the test." – p. 350, para. 40

The most important event in Watchtower history.

It is evident that Jesus would not have made a decision in 1919 based upon what the Society is teaching today.

³¹ The Governing Body prefers to draw attention to what the Society is teaching *today*, as they do in that June 1, 2001 *Watchtower*.

This then is the very precise way they interpret and apply Matthew 24:45-47. This is the only official basis for their claim to being God's "faithful and discreet slave organization" and "the only true religion" today.

And so when Jehovah's Witnesses are asked, "Why do you believe the Society is God's organization," they all *should* answer...

Because of Jesus' appointment in 1919 in fulfillment of Matthew 24:45-47.

If they were to think about this matter (which they usually don't), especially if they were reminded of President Franz's explanation in their *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached* book, some might be able to agree that whether or not the Society has God's backing today as His organization ultimately depends upon what decision Jesus would have made in 1919—a decision based solely upon what they had been teaching down till 1919.

Jesus' Decision in the Spring of 1919

(The Most Important Event in Watchtower History)

The only way to know if the Watchtower Society is God's organization today is to examine the same teachings they say Jesus examined in 1918-1919.

If Jesus acknowledged the Society as his "faithful and discreet slave organization" and appointed them "over all his earthly interests" in 1919, then there is at least a chance that they are still God's organization today. But again, if he didn't make that appointment in 1919, then there is no chance, no matter what they are teaching today.³²

There is only one way to know what decision Jesus would have made in 1919. Therefore, there is only one way to know if the Society is "God's organization" today. And that is by ***carefully examining the same record of the Society's teachings that they say Jesus examined in 1918-1919.*** Jehovah's Witnesses have never done this. - See "The One Mistake All Jehovah's Witnesses Have Made," page 44.³³

³² On page 16 of the June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* it says that people 'reach the conclusion that Jehovah's Witnesses are practicing the true religion based on the Society's teachings and conduct *today*.' But they *should* reach this conclusion based only upon the Society's teachings and conduct *down till 1919*.

³³ See page 161, paragraph 4 in the *Knowledge That Leads To Everlasting Life* book in the Appendix, p. 145

1	<i>The</i>	1	The Society's teachings since	T
8	<i>Teachings</i>	9	1919 were not part of the	O
7	<i>Jesus</i>	1	record that Jesus would	D
6	<i>Examined</i>	9	have examined in	A
			1918-1919.	Y

***What
the Society
is doing or
teaching
today would
not have
entered into
Jesus'
decision
in 1919.***

Although the Society no longer publishes any of the literature that they say Jesus examined in 1918-1919, they have made such an examination possible today with the publication of the organization's history in their book *JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*. It contains enough direct statements and references to other books that Jesus would have examined (which are available on the Internet)³⁴ so that it is possible today to know what decision he would have made in 1919.

Using Watchtower Standards To Judge Watchtower Teachings

The religious leaders of the Watchtower have always set strict standards when judging other religions. According to Matthew 7:2 Jesus would have judged the Society's teachings from 1876 to 1919 using those same standards.³⁵ The first two are the same ones mentioned by President Frederick Franz. The last two are stated on page 14 of the June 1, 2001 *Watchtower*.³⁶ The following 'Standards Chart' will visually show which of the forty-eight teachings being considered did or did not meet the Society's standards...

***The
standards
used to
judge the
Society's
teachings
are the same
ones they use
to judge
everyone else.***

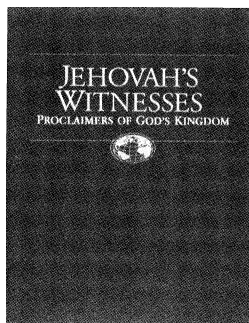
<i>Watchtower Standards</i>	Yes	No
1. Right Teachings		
2. Right time to be teaching them		
3. Teaching that God revealed his Word		
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		

³⁴ Search for "Studies in the Scriptures," and "The Finished Mystery." Hardbound volumes and ready-to-read transcripts are available on several websites.

³⁵ Matthew 7:2: "With what judgement you are judging, you will be judged." One of the websites that provides a tremendous amount of material and information from 1876 to 1919 is www.freeminds.org

³⁶ The June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* says, "Logically, to enjoy God's backing, one must (1) teach only what God reveals in his Word, and (2) reject teachings based on human wisdom or tradition." Logically then, in order for the Society to have "God's backing" today they "must" have met these two standards from 1876 to 1919.

48 Teachings Jesus Examined



#1

The Second Coming of Christ

40 Years Too Early Then 29 Years Too Late

Surely Jesus would have noticed what they were teaching about his Second Coming, or “invisible presence” as they prefer to call it. – Matthew 24:3³⁷

Today they teach that he returned to begin his Second Coming in 1914. But the *Proclaimers* book explains that this was *not* what they were teaching before, during and for many years after Jesus' “inspection” in 1918-1919. On pages 46 and 47 it explains that in 1876...

Even if Witnesses are able to notice what their “Proclaimers” book says, they do not realize what it means.

[Second Adventist Nelson Barbour] succeeded in convincing Charles Taze Russell that Christ's invisible presence [Second Coming] had begun in 1874.

Page 133 mentions this again along with a footnote explaining that “a clearer understanding of Biblical chronology” [pointing to 1914] was published in 1943.³⁸ Even if Witnesses are able to notice what is being said about this matter, they are unable to notice what it means.

What It Means

1. The first thing it means is that the Society didn't meet any of their own standards relative to their teaching about the Second Coming of Christ. Their 1874 date was never (1) the right teaching, or (2) the right time to

³⁷ See “Important Terms” for their explanation of Christ's “invisible presence.” It corresponds to what most everyone else refers to as “the Second Coming of Christ” in fulfillment of Matthew 24:3. Most translations render this verse, “What will be the sign of your coming?” But the Society's *New World Translation* renders it, “What will be the sign of your presence?” The Greek word in question is “parousia.” – See Appendix B of “The Sign of the Last Days – When? – ‘Coming’ or ‘Presence’ – What Do the Facts Reveal?” by Carl Olof Jonsson—Wolfgang Herbst, Commentary Press, P.O. Box 43532, Atlanta, Georgia 30336

³⁸ The footnote refers to the 1943 book *The Truth Shall Make You Free* that changed the date of Jesus' return from 1874 to 1914. Page 209 of *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached* refers to this same 1943 book where the Society's new understanding of the end of six thousand years of man's existence “did away with the year 1874 C.E. as the date of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

NOTE: There is some evidence that Rutherford first mentioned 1914 as the beginning of Christ's Second Coming in the 1930s. But the *Proclaimers* book doesn't mention any date prior to 1943. Either way it wouldn't make any difference because the change of date was made long after Jesus' examination was over.

be teaching it. (3) It had not been what God reveals in his Word, and (4) had been based on human wisdom. Therefore it should have been rejected when Russell first heard about it from Nelson Barbour in 1876.

<i>Christ's Second Coming In 1874</i>	Yes	No
1. Right Teaching		X
2. Right Time to be teaching it		X
3. Teaching that God revealed in his Word		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

2. It also means that if Jesus did return in 1914, neither President Russell nor President Rutherford ever knew it.³⁹ It is possible that there is not a single Jehovah's Witness who realizes this. What are the chances that God would select such prominent men for his sole "channel of communication" but then never communicate to them when His Son had returned?
3. It isn't just that they didn't know that Jesus' Second Coming began in 1914. They both insisted that they *did* know that it happened in 1874. What are the chances that "the God of *truth*" would deliberately allow his earthly channel to misinform the whole world about his Son's return **for almost seven decades** (1876-1943)?
4. The title of *The Watchtower* magazine included the words "Herald of Christ's Presence"...



According to what they teach today, **from 1879 to 1914** it was announcing that he was present *when he wasn't!*

If Jesus' Second Coming began in 1914 it means that neither Russell or Rutherford ever knew it.

See Footnote

According to what they teach today, for thirty-five years (1879 to 1914) their magazine announced that Jesus was present when he wasn't.

³⁹ Russell died in 1916. Rutherford died in 1942. According to the *Proclaimers* book, the date for Christ's Second Coming ("invisible presence") was not changed to 1914 until the year following Rutherford's death. Therefore, if Jesus returned in 1914 neither man ever knew it. This should come as quite a surprise to most Witnesses if they were able to realize it. See Chapter 21, "Correcting Their Mistake."

Jesus said that at his arrival and knocking they were to open to him “at once.” But if he arrived in 1914 he would have had to knock for 29 years since they didn’t realize he returned in 1914 until 1943.

The Society’s interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47 and what went on in their history do not agree.

5. Since they believed that Jesus had returned in 1874 it means that they were not watching for his return in 1914. And yet, in Luke’s parallel account (12:37) Jesus said that they would be “happy” only if ‘on arriving (he) found them watching for his return.’ But he would not have found them watching in 1914 because **they believed he had already arrived forty years earlier.**
6. Luke 12:36 says, “At (Jesus’) arriving and knocking they may **at once** open to him.” But if he arrived and began knocking in 1914 but they didn’t acknowledge his arrival until 1943, it means that he would have had to knock for **twenty-nine years** before they opened to him.
7. Since in 1914 they were the only religion that believed that Jesus had already returned, it means that **they were the only Christian religion that was not watching or waiting for his return in 1914.** And yet Jehovah’s Witnesses have been led to believe that they were the only religion that *was* watching for his return in that year.⁴⁰

Why It Matters

Again, the purpose of this examination is to make sure that what was going on in the Society’s history agrees with their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47. In this case it is evident that they don’t agree. There is nothing in Jesus’ illustration or the Society’s interpretation of it that allows for his “faithful” slave to not realize that he had returned until almost 30 years after the fact (1914 to 1943). And it certainly doesn’t allow his “discreet” slave to so indiscreetly misinform the whole world about when he had returned for almost seven decades (1876-1943).

Surely the Society had not been either faithful or dis-

⁴⁰ Page 713 of the *Proclaimers* book refers to the December 1, 1984 *Watchtower*. That magazine contains a series of articles dealing with “Christian watchfulness.” On page 14 it says, “So when Christ’s invisible presence began in 1914, happy were [Jehovah’s Witnesses] to have been found watching.” But that is not true. There wasn’t anyone associated with the Watchtower Society who was watching for Christ’s “invisible presence” to begin in 1914 because they believed that it had already begun forty years earlier. In the same way, today they are still not watching for his “invisible presence” to begin – not because they believe that it happened in 1874, but because now they believe it happened in 1914.

creeet relative to the time of the Second Coming of Christ. And yet the only way they even have a chance of being God's organization today is if they had been both faithful and discreet from 1876 to 1919.

How The Governing Body Explains It

The *Proclaimers* book simply ignores all the above as if there is no significance to the fact that the Society's two presidents misled everyone who listened to them about *the most important event in Christian history since the First Coming of Christ – the Second Coming of Christ*. Instead, they 'spin' this very negative fact into something positive when they say...

C.T. Russell was a man of positive conviction. Convinced that Christ's invisible presence had begun [in 1874], he was determined to proclaim it to others[He] felt that Christ's presence must be proclaimed.
- p. 47⁴¹

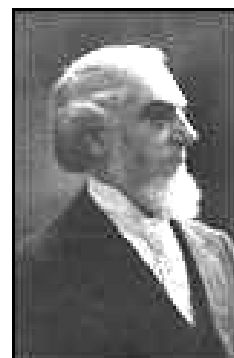
But no matter how "positive" Russell's "conviction" was; no matter how "convinced" he was; no matter how "determined" he was doesn't change the fact that what he "proclaimed" for the rest of his life wasn't true. But again, the *Proclaimers* book simply ignores any significance to this fact while pointing the finger at everyone else when it mentions a pamphlet that Russell wrote in order "to counteract wrong views regarding the Lord's return."⁴² But Russell was never able to counteract *his own* wrong view. It wasn't counteracted (according to what they teach today) until 27 years after his death.

In a personal letter to me dated 2/20/85 they said...

Those in Christendom professing to be Jesus' disciples did not discern his invisible presence, from and after 1914, therefore proved to be asleep and unworthy of receiving any privileges in connection with dispensing spiritual food.

They had not been "faithful" by waiting for God to reveal the date of Christ's Second Coming. And they had not been "discreet" when they announced the wrong date not only down till 1919 but all the way down till 1943 (67 years).

C.T. Russell



⁴¹ Obviously the Governing Body's thinking here is not being molded by the truth but by their need to uphold their illusionary "God's organization." And that concept does not allow for Russell to have been a false teacher about anything, let alone something as important as the Second Coming of Christ.

⁴² *The Object and Manner of Our Lord's Return*

But the Society didn't discern his invisible presence from and after 1914 either.⁴³ If the lack of discernment on the part of Christendom proved that *they* were asleep and unworthy of receiving Jesus' appointment, then wouldn't the Society's identical lack of discernment mean that *they too* were asleep and therefore just as unworthy of receiving any privileges in the dispensing of spiritual food?

Their letter may not be so much a deliberate attempt to mislead as it is an indication of the lack of clear thinking on the part of the Society's religious leaders and their writers. And yet these are the men Jehovah's Witnesses depend on for their entire spiritual "food at the proper time."

#2

"We Are Not Your Faithful & Discreet Slave."

For 30 years (1897 - 1927) the Society's official teaching was that Russell was Jesus' faithful and discreet slave.

Therefore the official teaching was that the Society was not that slave.

Today the Governing Body teaches that Charles Taze Russell (by himself alone) never was "the faithful and discreet slave" of Matthew 24:45. But the *Proclaimers* book points out that there was a critical period of time in the Society's history when *they taught that he was*.⁴⁴

On page 142 it explains that in 1881 Russell originally taught the he was *not* that "slave" – just as they teach today. But on page 143 it acknowledges the extremely important point that a few years later *he changed his mind...*

Over a decade [after 1881] Brother Russell's wife publicly expressed the idea that Russell himself was the faithful and [discreet slave]. The view that she voiced concerning the identity of the "faithful [and discreet slave]" came to be generally held by (Jehovah's Witnesses) for some 30 years.⁴⁵ Brother Russell did not reject their view...[After those 30 years] the understanding expressed by Brother Russell in 1881

⁴³ If Jesus' invisible presence (Second Coming) began in 1914, the Society discerned it twenty-nine years too late.

⁴⁴ Until their 1993 *Proclaimers* book it has been very difficult for the Governing Body to admit that the Society used to teach that Russell was "the faithful and discreet slave." But now when they do admit it, they do so in such a way that obscures the significance of what that fact means. It's possible that this is because even the men of the Governing Body don't get the sense of what it means.

⁴⁵ The teaching that Russell was this "slave" was more than just "generally held." It was the Society's official teaching from 1897 to February 15, 1927. This would be like saying, "It is generally held that 1+1=2."

[that he was not that “slave”] was reaffirmed in The Watch Tower of February 15, 1927.

What this is saying is very important. It is saying that from about 1897 to February 1927 (30 years) the Society was teaching that Russell was “the faithful and discreet slave” and therefore that *the Society was not that slave*. What this means is even more important...

Witnesses do not get the sense of what this means.

What It Means

The first thing this means is that if they are correct today when they teach that Charles Russell was **not** Jesus’ “faithful and discreet slave,” then what they were teaching from 1897 down till 1919 was not true. It had been based on Russell’s wife’s “human wisdom.”⁴⁶

<i>Russell Was “Faithful and Discreet Slave”</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teaching		X
2. Right time to be teaching it		X
3. Teaching that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

According to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47, in 1919 Jesus was saying, ‘You are my faithful and discreet slave.’ But according to their history they were saying, ‘We are not your faithful and discreet slave.’

It also means that according to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47, in the spring of 1919 Jesus was saying to those associated with the Society...

You are my faithful and discreet slave.

But according to their history, they were saying...

We are not your faithful and discreet slave!

They believed Charles Russell was Jesus’ “slave.” And since he died in 1916 they taught that **he was in heaven with Jesus**. Therefore they were teaching that the Society was not the “faithful and discreet slave.” If Jesus did in fact try to appoint them in 1919 *they rejected it*.⁴⁷ And they continued

⁴⁶ On page 143 of the *Proclaimers* book it says, “Brother Russell’s wife expressed the idea that Russell himself [alone] was the faithful and [discreet slave].”

⁴⁷ Until February of 1927 Rutherford said that to deny that Russell was Jesus’ faithful and discreet slave was “a repudiation of the Lord.” - See May 1, 1922 *Watch Tower*, page. 132.

In order for the Society to be God's organization today, their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47 and their history must agree.

This is another important instance where they do not agree.

In order to uphold their illusion the Governing Body has to misrepresent the reality.

In order to recognize when they do this one needs to know the reality.

to reject his offer every day for the next eight years until February of 1927.

If in 1919 Jesus (or anyone else) had asked the question in Matthew 24:45, “Who really is the faithful and discreet slave?” they would have answered according to what they believed – “Charles Taze Russell.” There wasn’t anyone on earth or in heaven who could change Rutherford’s mind until he himself changed it in 1927. But that was too late.

Why It Matters

This is another case where the Society’s history does not fit their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47. There is no suggestion in Jesus’ illustration or the Society’s interpretation of it that this slave didn’t know who he was and therefore would mistakenly refuse to accept Jesus’ appointment for even one day let alone almost three thousand days (eight years). Surely this was not “proper and timely spiritual food” relative to the identity of the most important slave on earth.⁴⁸

How The Governing Body Explains It

They don’t even try to explain it in the *Proclaimers* book. They simply treat this matter as if it doesn’t matter. But when they *do* try to explain it they often misrepresent what the Society was teaching at that time, as they do on page 16 of the January 15, 1994 *Watchtower* where they say, “In **1919** that slave was identified as the remnant of anointed Christians.” But that’s not true. They didn’t identify that slave this way until **1927**. In 1919 that slave was still identified as Charles Russell. – See pages 26-28

3

The Sewing Machine & Christ’s Thousand-year Reign—1873

Today Jehovah’s Witnesses are looking forward to the beginning of the one thousand-year Reign of Jesus Christ. But the ‘food’ that Russell had provided right up to his

⁴⁸ See paragraph 4 on page 161 of *Knowledge That Leads To Everlasting Life* in the Appendix, p. 145.

death was that his Reign had *already* begun. In his *Foreword* to the 1916 Edition of *The Time Is At Hand* he said...

*The Bible chronology*⁴⁹ *herein presented shows that the six great thousand-year Days, beginning with Adam are ended,*⁵⁰ *and that the great Seventh Day, the thousand years of Christ's Reign, began in 1873.*

Russell placed great emphasis on the *modern inventions* that had come into existence since 1873 as proof that Christ's thousand-year Reign had begun in that year. The very first invention he offered as proof was...

*The sewing machine, one of the first, began to reach its perfection 43 years ago.*⁵¹

The very first thing that Russell mentioned to prove that Jesus' 1000-year Reign had begun in 1873 was the perfecting of the sewing machine.

<i>Christ's Reign Began In 1873</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teaching		X
2. Right time to be teaching it		X
3. Teaching that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

The Governing Body again treats this incorrect teaching as having no significance other than the fact that Russell was mistaken. They are unable to allow themselves (or the rest of Jehovah's Witnesses) to think in terms of what Jesus would have thought about it when deciding if the Society had been truly faithful and discreet about what they had been teaching about his thousand-year Reign.

NEXT: Just about the time they say Jesus began his examination of the Society's teachings, the next president (Joseph Rutherford) changed the date of Christ's Reign. He did it in connection with what he said Jesus and his Father were going to do in the upcoming year of 1925. Keep in mind that *he was teaching these things all during Jesus' examination.*

⁴⁹ They always claim that their calculations are based on "Bible chronology." But when those calculations turned out to be incorrect it means that there were only Watchtower chronologies.

⁵⁰ Many years after 1919 they changed the date for the end of this six thousand years to 1975. Today the significance of the end of six thousand years of human existence is no longer mentioned.

⁵¹ "Foreword" to the 1916 Edition of *The Time Is At Hand*, pp. http://www.nsbible.org/sits_v2/v2s0.htm

J. Rutherford



4

“Millions Now Living Will Never Die!” ⁵²

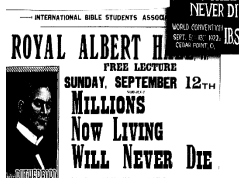
In February of 1918 (just when they say Jesus began his examination) President Rutherford began a worldwide public lecture campaign with the above dramatic title. In 1920 he published a booklet with the same name. The reason why millions of people then living would never die was because Jesus was going to begin his one thousand year Reign in 1925. He also assured everyone...

*We may confidently expect that 1925 will mark the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets of old.*⁵³

They and many other “faithful men of old” would then become “Princes” in all the earth to help in the administration of Christ’s Kingdom on earth. Then just as confidently he concluded...

*Based upon the promises set forth in the divine Word, we must reach the positive and indisputable conclusion that million now living will never die.*⁵⁴

But as it turned out, millions then living *did* die. Jesus *didn’t* begin his thousand-year Reign and he *didn’t* resurrect anyone in 1925.⁵⁵



All during Jesus’ examination Rutherford was teaching that millions then living would never die.

<i>Millions Now Living Will Never Die – 1925</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teaching		X
2. Right time to be teaching it		X
3. Teaching that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

⁵² See complete copy of *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* at www.heraldmag.org/olb/

⁵³ *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, page 89.

⁵⁴ *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, page 97

⁵⁵ 72 years later the Governing Body was still unable to let go of Rutherford’s catchy phrase. On page 11 of the January 1, 1997 *Watchtower* they ask, “Why can we confidently expect that “millions now living will never die?”” They answer: “In the early 1920’s, a featured public talk presented by Jehovah’s Witnesses was entitled ‘Millions Now Living Will Never Die.’ This may have reflected over-optimism at that time. But today that statement can be made with full confidence.” Also see page 32 of March 4, 1981 *Awake!*

Why It Matters

Jesus' illustration doesn't allow for his "faithful and discreet slave" to be proclaiming a false teaching or prophecy at *any time, especially not all during the time he was examining them.*

How the Governing Body Explains It

In this case the *Proclaimers* book *does* refer to Rutherford's "Millions Campaign" at least eight times and even points some of the above things out. On page 632 it says...

In the lecture "Millions Now Living Will Never Die," delivered by J.F. Rutherford ... attention was directed to the year 1925... On the basis of what was said... this year was associated with expectations of resurrections of faithful pre-Christian servants of God with a view to their serving on earth as princely representatives of the heavenly Kingdom.

The book doesn't tell us "what was said" but does admit that Rutherford was "mistaken." As with all their other teachings that were not true, this one is also treated as if it didn't matter that Rutherford's message was false. Note their following comments on page 425...

What an exciting message they proclaimed! ... Newspaper notices and billboards were used to advertise the lectures. The subject was intriguing.⁵⁶

What they are saying here is all true. The only problem with Rutherford's "exciting message" was that *it wasn't true.* The Governing Body presents this matter as if it didn't matter that Rutherford's message was false. On page 632 they go on to mention some of the wonderful blessings it would have meant for mankind *if* that message *had* been true. They then conclude with a very positive...

What a happy prospect! Though mistaken, they eagerly shared [Rutherford's false message] with others.

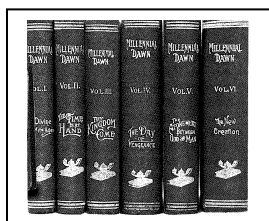
For seven years Rutherford had said that millions then

Rutherford kept proclaiming the false message that millions then living would never die throughout the entire period of time they say Jesus was examining him to make sure that what he was teaching was true.

The Governing Body simply ignores any significance to the fact that Rutherford's message wasn't true.

⁵⁶ Would Jesus have thought that Rutherford's "subject was intriguing"?

**Nathan Knorr
(the Society's
president
from 1943 to
1977) said that
God was re-
sponsible for
the preaching
of "Millions
Now Living
Will Never
Die."**



These books and/or transcripts of them are available on the Internet. Search for "Studies in the Scriptures" or by specific name such as "The Time is at Hand." See footnote 59

living were never going to die, and that Jesus' thousand-year Reign would begin in 1925, and that he was going to resurrect Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in that same year. Although none of these things happened the Governing Body appears to be proud of the fact that they eagerly shared that false message with others. It is difficult to picture Jesus finding anything worth sharing in Rutherford's message.⁵⁷

Even worse, if that's possible, on page 698 of the November 15, 1955 *Watchtower* President Knorr went so far as to say that *God was the One who was responsible for the preaching of Rutherford's message!* Under the heading, "Jehovah Is In His Holy Temple" it says...

*Stirring up increasing interest in them, **Jehovah caused to be preached** from 1918 the startling public message, "Millions Now Living Will Never Die."*

This is amazing. How can anyone say such a thing? And how can Jehovah's Witnesses read what they are saying and not notice anything wrong with it? The answer to both questions must be that it is one of the consequences of **believing what they want or need** to believe so deeply that such things can be said and read without bothering those who write and read them.

There was still much more that Jesus would have noticed during a 1918-1919 examination. Both Russell and Rutherford had set numerous dates for specific events that they said were arrived at by understanding "Bible chronology" and "Bible prophecy." Most of them are contained in a series of seven books called *Studies in the Scriptures*. Russell wrote the first six and Rutherford was responsible for the seventh.⁵⁸ Those books were the primary source of "food at the proper time" until several years after Jesus' inspection was over. The following is a partial list of other dates and events associated with them that the Society even-

⁵⁷ On the back cover of the May 22, 1989 *Awake!* the Governing Body used very large bold letters to again announce, "Millions Now Living Will Never Die." Although this had turned out to be just a wild assertion when Rutherford said it in the 1920s, they just as confidently insist that this time, "This is no wild assertion." They say the same things on page 31 of the April 8, 1984 *Awake!* On page 8 of the October 1, 1983 *Watchtower* is the article, "Millions Now Alive Will Never Die Off Our Earth."

⁵⁸ The *Proclaimers* book has at least 16 references to these books. Read them at www.nsible.org/library.htm

tually acknowledged were not true. Of course, Jesus would have known they were not true the moment they started teaching them...

38 Other Dates/Events That Didn't Happen

#5: 1799: The beginning of "the last days" or "time of the end"	<u>RUSSELL</u>
#6: 1829: The beginning of an understanding of the mysteries of prophecy	
#7: 1844: Wise virgins went forth to meet the Bridegroom	
#8: 1846: God's sanctuary was cleansed	
#9: 1873: End of 6000 years of human existence	
#10: 1874: The return of Christ to begin his Second Coming	
#11: 1874: The beginning of the 40-year Harvest or preaching work	
#12: 1874: Second cry, "Behold the Bridegroom."	
#13: 1874: The beginning of the Battle of Armageddon	
#14: 1878: God's Kingdom was "set up" in heaven	
#15: 1878: Beginning of Christ's Kingdom Rule	
#16: 1878: The fall of "Babylon the Great" (false religion)	
#17: 1878: Beginning of "Times of Restitution."	
#18: 1881: Close of "the heavenly calling" (spiritual Israel)	
#19: 1881: Resurrection of all the "dead in Christ"	
#20: 1914: The anointed Christians would be taken to heaven before 1914	
#21: 1914: The end of the "Harvest" or preaching work	
#22: 1914: God's Kingdom would be firmly established in the earth	
#23: 1914: Jesus would be present as earth's new Ruler	
#24: 1914: All Gentile nations would be destroyed by God by the end of 1914	
#25: 1914: Jerusalem would begin to rise from the dust of divine disfavor to honor	
#26: 1914: Israel's blindness would begin to be turned away	
#27: 1914: This year would be the farthest limit of the rule of imperfect man	
#28: 1914: Battle of Armageddon would end	
#29: 1914: Peaceful blessings would begin to be recognized on earth	
#30: 1914: Complete destruction of "Babylon the Great" (all other religions)	
#31: 1914: The "last days" would end in 1914	
#32: 1915: God's Kingdom will be fully established near the end of 1915	
#33: 1915: Anointed Christians would be taken to heaven soon after 1914	
#34: 1918: God's 'fire' from heaven would fall on Christendom	<u>RUTHERFORD</u>
#35: 1918: Millions of church members of Christendom would be destroyed by God	
#36: 1918: Christendom would go down to oblivion as a system.	
#37: 1918: God will destroy the churches wholesale	
#38: 1920: There would be worldwide all-embracing anarchy.	
#39: 1920: All earthly governments will pass away.	
#40: 1920: All republics will disappear in the fall of 1920	
#41: 1925: Anointed Christians would be taken to heaven.	
#42: 2914: End of the thousand-year Reign of Christ	

In the July 1894 *Watch Tower* Russell stated, "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." Rutherford said that his date of 1925 was "indisputable." All of the above dates/events were said to be in fulfillment of *Bible* prophecies. But they all turned out to be unfulfilled *Watchtower* prophecies.⁵⁹ Keep in mind that all of the teachings considered in this study are ones that *the Society* now acknowledges were not true.

⁵⁹ The references to all the above can be found at <http://www.freeminds.org/history/part1.htm> under the heading, "Spiritual Food at the Proper Time." Russell's *Studies In The Scriptures* and Rutherford's *The Finished Mystery* are available at <http://www.freeminds.org/sales/tempsale.htm>

Although the Governing Body treats all 48 teachings in this study as having no importance to Witnesses today, they would have been very important to Jesus in 1919.

<i>Russell's & Rutherford's 38 Dates/Events</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teachings		X
2. Right time to be teaching them		X
3. Teaching that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

Why It Matters

Although the Governing Body (and therefore the rest of the Witnesses) treats all this *wrong* food at the *wrong* time as having no importance today, these teachings would have been very important to Jesus in 1919 if he was examining them to make sure they were serving the *right* food at the *right* time.

On pages 200 and 201 the *Proclaimers* book specifically mentions four other “Practices That Have Been Abandoned” sometime *after 1919...*

43 Christmas

They didn't stop celebrating Christmas until *more than seven years after Jesus' inspection was completed.*

44 Birthdays

They didn't stop celebrating birthdays *until several years after 1919.*



45 The Cross

Today the cross is said to be of pagan origin. But it was predominantly displayed on the front cover of every issue of the *Watch Tower* magazine *up to October 15, 1931.*

46 The Great Pyramid of Gizeh

On page 201 the *Proclaimers* book explains...

*For some 35 years Pastor Russell taught that the Great Pyramid of Gizeh was God's stone witness, corroborating Biblical time periods.*⁶⁰

⁶⁰ One of those “time periods” was that Jesus' Second Coming began in 1874.

Russell used internal measurements of this pyramid—one inch equals one year (“inch years”)—to arrive at dates such as 1874 for the return of Christ, which he said corroborated the Bible’s date of 1874. In an edited version of a paper published in the JW Research Journal, Vol. 6, #2, July-December, 1999, Jerry Bergman, Ph.D. explained...

The pyramid was of such major importance to early Watchtower theology that a huge ten-foot concrete pyramid was selected as a fitting memorial to C.T. Russell when he died. It still stands close to Russell’s grave near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Russell specifically condemned mysticism as demonism and taught that the pyramid had nothing to do with mysticism but was a second revelation, a “Bible in stone” which both added to and confirmed the Holy Scripture record. (1904:313-376).



The *Proclaimers* book says that nine years after Jesus’ inspection was over Rutherford “abandoned the idea that an Egyptian pyramid has anything to do with true worship.”⁶¹ And 24 years after 1919 they also abandoned the year 1874.

<i>Christmas/Birthdays/Cross/Pyramid of Gizeh</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teachings		X
2. Right time to be teaching them		X
3. Teachings that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

THE
CORROBORATIVE TESTIMONY
OF
GOD’S STONE WITNESS
AND
PROPHET
THE GREAT PYRAMID IN
EGYPT

***All during
Jesus’
examination
they were
teaching that
the Pyramid of
Gizeh was
“the Bible
in stone.”***

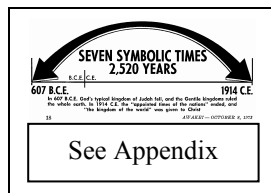
What It Means

Today these four teachings are considered so offensive to God that any Witness who believes or practices even one of them would be disfellowshipped—deserving of God’s

⁶¹ Russell’s book *Thy Kingdom Come* has a 69-page chapter dealing with the Great Pyramid of Gizeh in which he said that Jehovah God designed it and reasoned on “the conjecture that Melchizedek was its builder.” (pages 358,322) If the *Proclaimers* book is correct today when it says that this pyramid has nothing to do with true worship, it means that it had nothing to do with true worship all those years when Russell and Rutherford taught that it did. There are at least hundreds of statements in just this one chapter alone that were “based on human wisdom.” According to the June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* this entire chapter should never have appeared in the Society’s literature if they expected to have God’s backing.

NOTE: See Russell’s gravesite, which includes a large replica of the above pyramid with an engraved cross on one side at [http:// www.freeminds.org/ history/cemetary.htm](http://www.freeminds.org/history/cemetary.htm)

“everlasting punishment.” If they are so wrong today when the Society *doesn’t* teach them, they must have been just as wrong during all the years they *did* teach them. If these teachings would fail an examination by Jesus today, they would have failed his examination in 1918-1919.



For thirty-eight years Russell had foretold that the period of time God had allowed the Gentile nations to rule would come to an abrupt end in 1914 when God was going to destroy all of them. But that didn't happen in 1914.

As of 2005 it still hasn't happened.

47 “End of the Gentile Times”-1914

Of all the dates that Russell had set for so many specific events, there is only one that the Society retains today. They still teach that 1914 marked “the end of the Gentile times” (or “the appointed time of the nations”) in fulfillment of Jesus’ prophecy at Luke 21:24.⁶² But what Jehovah’s Witnesses don’t notice is that their religious leaders have changed the meaning of this expression.⁶³ They had to change it because none of the things that Russell said would happen - which would prove that the Gentile Times had ended - happened.⁶⁴ For example, on page 99 of his *The Time Is At Hand* (published in 1889) he said...

*Within the coming twenty-six years **all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved...** In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that **the final end of the kingdoms of this world ... will be accomplished by the end of AD 1914.***⁶⁵

In other words, “the end of the Gentile times” meant the literal end of the Gentile nations. But as it turned out not a single Gentile nation was “overthrown and dissolved” by God in 1914 let alone all of them.

⁶² Russell got this teaching from the same Nelson Barbour who convinced him that Jesus’ Second Coming began in 1874. - (See *Proclaimers* book, pages 134,135.)

⁶³ The meaning of “the end of the Gentile times” was changed from referring to the complete end of their rule, to refer to the end of their “uninterrupted rule” (1975 Yearbook, p. 72). Their rule being **invisibly** interrupted in 1914 by an **invisible** Jesus Christ who was **invisibly** present as he was being **invisibly** enthroned to begin his **invisible** rule from the **invisible** heavens! Jehovah’s Witnesses have no problem accepting this explanation because it comes from what they believe to be **God’s visible organization**. - May 15, 1976 *Watchtower*.

⁶⁴ See the seven predictions that Russell gave in 1889 which he said would prove that the Gentile Times will have ended in 1914 at <http://www.bibletoday.com/V2/Default.htm> But none of them happened.

⁶⁵ In the 1916 edition of *The Time Is At Hand* Russell changed “by the end of A.D. 1914” to “near the end of A.D. 1915.” But even as of A.D. 2005 “the final end of the kingdoms of this world” still hasn’t happened.

<i>End of the Gentile Times in 1914</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teaching		X
2. Right time to be teaching it		X
3. Teachings that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

How The Governing Body Explains It

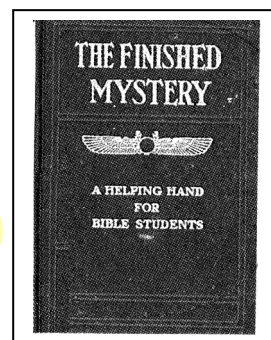
Once 1914 came and went without Russell's prophecy(s) being fulfilled, the leadership has had two choices: (1) Admit that their Gentile Times chronology, which they got from Nelson Barbour, was just as incorrect as the Second Coming chronology which they also got from Barbour, or (2) Change the meaning of "the end of the Gentile times"⁶⁶ so that they can continue to believe (and proclaim) that Russell's prophecy *was* fulfilled in 1914.⁶⁷ Unfortunately for the Witnesses they have chosen the latter. It's also unfortunate for those responsible for this switch because even though Jehovah's Witnesses don't notice what they have done, God surely does.

The Society got their 1914 "Gentile Times" chronology from the same person who gave them their 1874 "Second Coming" chronology.

#48 The 1,200 Furlongs of Rev. 14:20 (Scranton Pa. to Brooklyn, NY)

Jesus would not have completed an examination without taking a close look at their most up-to-date book of "food at the proper time"—*The Finished Mystery* published in 1917. Although the *Proclaimers* book has several references to this book it hardly, if ever, quotes from it. This is because there is little if anything in it that the Society still teaches today.

For example, on page 230 it uses a full page of calculations to prove that the "1,200 furlongs" mentioned in Rothham's translation of Revelation 14:20 referred to the distance between the place where *The Finished Mystery* was written (Scranton, Pa) and the place where it was printed (Watchtower headquarters in Brooklyn, NY). They no longer teach such a thing.⁶⁸



There are hundreds of statements in just this one book that the Society today says are not true. Jesus would have known this the moment the book was published in 1917.

⁶⁶ Footnote #63

⁶⁷ See pages 88-90 for misleading information about what was expected to happen in 1914.

⁶⁸ See the book's calculations at <http://www.escapefromwatchtower.com/food.html>

<i>The 1,200 Furlongs of Rev. 14:20</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teaching		X
2. Right time to be teaching it		X
3. Teachings that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

Romans 13:1: A Special Case

This was one teaching that they got right. They were correctly teaching that these “superior authorities” were the earthly governments, and so they would have passed Jesus’ examination on this particular subject.

This is one teaching that would have passed Jesus’ examination.

<i>Superior Authorities = Governments</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teaching	X	
2. Right time to be teaching it	X	
3. Teaching that God revealed in Bible	X	
4. Rejected because of human wisdom	X	

But the problem here is that ten years later in 1929 Rutherford changed these “authorities” into “Jehovah God and Jesus Christ.”⁶⁹

Rutherford threw out a teaching that was “revealed by God in his Word” and replaced it with one that was “based on human wisdom.”

<i>Superior Authorities = God & Jesus Christ</i>	Yes	No
1. Right teaching		X
2. Right time to be teaching it		X
3. Teaching that God revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom		X

The Society then provided that wrong food for the next 33 years until 1962 when they changed this teaching back to what it had been during Jesus’ examination.

What It Means

It means that the Society’s second president threw out a teaching that had been “revealed by God in his Word” and replaced with one that was “based on human wisdom.” This

⁶⁹ *Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*, page. 147.

was the exact opposite of what the June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* says “must” be done in order to have God’s backing.⁷⁰ Is it possible that a truly *faithful* and *discreet* slave of Jesus Christ would ever do such a thing?

True, Jesus would not have taken this into account since it happened after 1919, but it is an example to show that even after his examination was over they continued to provide spiritual food that was “based on human wisdom.”

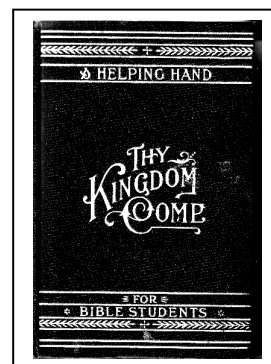
Thousands of Portions of Wrong Food Served Millions of Times

The forty-eight teachings considered in this study made up only a small portion of what Russell and Rutherford had mistakenly thought was “proper and timely spiritual food”⁷¹ from 1876 to 1919. All of their statements, arguments, applications, reasonings, interpretations, explanations, illustrations and chronologies that were used to support those teachings were also improper and untimely.

For example, in Russell’s *Thy Kingdom Come* (1891) he reasoned for sixty-seven pages that the Great Pyramid of Gizeh was “God’s stone witness and prophet.”⁷² Although that was just one false teaching, every sentence in those pages that supported it was also false.

Every other chapter in just this one 380-page book is full of statements that the Society now says are not true.⁷³ For another example, Chapter 2 (“Study II”) uses thirty-six pages to prove that the “Time of the End” (“the last days”) began in 1799 and would end one hundred fifteen years later in 1914. But sometime after 1919 they changed that teaching and now say that the “last days” began in 1914 and will end sometime in the near future. Therefore, every sentence in that chapter that Russell used to support what he believed was also wrong spiritual food at the wrong time.

**Jesus
would have
examined
everything
Russell and
Rutherford
had taught and
how many
times they
taught them
from 1876 to
1919.**



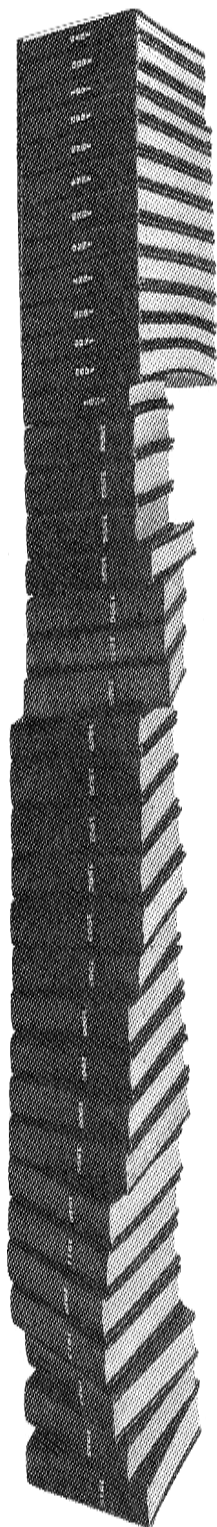
According to what they teach today, much if not most of what is contained in just this one 380-page book was ‘wrong food at the wrong time’

⁷⁰ That June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* says, “To enjoy God’s backing, one *must* teach *only* what God reveals in his Word and *reject* teachings based on human wisdom.”

⁷¹ See Page 161, paragraph 4 of the *Knowledge* book in the Appendix, p. 145.

⁷² *Thy Kingdom Come* (1891) pages 311-380.

⁷³ “Study IX” entitled, “Thy God Reigneth!” contains at least eighty-eight statements within its eight pages that were not true and therefore was ‘wrong food at the wrong time.’ – See pages 301-308



The same is true with some fifty pages of his chapter, “Restoration of Israel” in which he reasoned that God’s favor would eventually return to the nation of Israel. But after 1919 they changed their mind on that teaching too.

Russell and Rutherford provided *so much* wrong spiritual food *so often* for *so long* (both in print and public lectures) that it’s not possible to put a number on all of it. But to get an idea of just how high that number was, consider that one teaching about the 1,200 furlongs of Revelation 14:20 referring to the distance between Scranton, Pa. and Brooklyn, NY. Rutherford didn’t ‘serve’ that portion of spiritual food just one time in one public lecture. He served **850,000 times** in 850,000 copies of *The Finished Mystery*.⁷⁴ And all the wrong food in Russell’s *The Time Is At Hand* was served **4,000,000 times** in 4,000,000 copies of that book. How high would the number be when *all* of the Society’s wrong spiritual food from 1876 to 1919 was added up?

IMPORTANT NOTE: There are some teachings that have not changed since 1919. They include: God’s name is not “God,” God is not a Trinity, Jesus is not God, the soul is not immortal, hell is not hot, the dead are not conscious, and the earth will not be destroyed. But there were others who taught these same things before and after 1919.⁷⁵ If these teachings passed an examination by Jesus, they would have passed no matter who was teaching them.

* End of Jesus’ Examination *

NEXT: What would Jesus have thought about all this? What decision would he have made? According to the Society’s interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47, his decision in the spring of 1919 would be the most important event in Watchtower history because the Watchtower religion *now* stands or falls on Jesus’ decision *then*.

⁷⁴ The *Proclaimers* book refers to “the 850,000 edition” of *The Finished Mystery* on page 69.

⁷⁵ On page 622 of the *Proclaimers* book it acknowledges that Russell was not the only one who taught these things but it was just that he did a better job of publishing them than anyone else. See also page 45 under the heading, “Influence of Others.”

Matthew 24:47 - Most Important Event In Watchtower History

NEITHER Frederick Franz or Jesus Christ said that only *some* of their teachings had to be correct only *some* of the time. Franz said that in order to receive the appointment mentioned in Matthew 24:47 they “had” to have been providing (1) the *correct* Bible teachings (2) at the *proper* time. And according to the June 1, 2001 *Watchtower*, their teachings *must* also have been (3) *only* what God had revealed in his Word, and (4) that they had rejected *all* teachings that were based on human wisdom or tradition. But as the following chart shows, they didn’t meet *any* of their standards relative to *any* of the teachings considered in this study...

48 Pre-1919 Watchtower Teachings	Yes	No
1. Right teachings		X
2. Right time to be teaching them		X
3. Teachings that God had revealed in Bible		X
4. Rejected because of human wisdom?		X

Before considering what Jesus would have decided after reviewing *everything* Russell and Rutherford had provided in the way of “food at the proper time” from 1876 to 1919, it is interesting to read what the Governing Body has admitted about *some* of their wrong practices and teachings just between 1914 and 1918...

[Jehovah’s Witnesses] sold themselves because of wrong practices and came into bondage to the world empire of false religion [Satan’s organization...] An outstanding instance of this occurred during World War I of 1914-1918.⁷⁶

None of these 48 Watchtower teachings met a single Watchtower standard.

It is not necessary to prove that any of these teachings were not true. The Governing Body already admits they were not true.

See footnote 238 on page 122

The Society was in Satan’s organization from 1914 to 1918!

⁷⁶ November 15, 1980 *Watchtower*, pages 26, 27. Note: It was Russell and Rutherford who were the cause all their wrong practices. The rest of the Witnesses just believed what they were told to believe.

Then on page 17 of the August 15, 1991 *Watchtower* they say...

*In the year 1919... [the Society] came out of **Satan's organization**....*

These are amazing admissions. For, according to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47, in 1918 Jesus was checking to make sure that the Society qualified as *God's organization*, and yet he found them involved in *Satan's organization* ever since he arrived in 1914!

On page 621 of the *Proclaimers* book they ask, "Was God particularly using Charles Taze Russell?" They then explain under what circumstances he would *not* have done so...

*It certainly could not be expected that God would use C.T.Russell **if he did not loyally adhere to God's Word.***

Would Jehovah's Witnesses think that Russell "was indeed used by God in a special way" if they realized how often he did not "loyally adhere to God's Word"?

After reviewing just some of the things he taught when "he did *not* loyally adhere to God's Word," it would seem that they are leading their readers to conclude that God did *not* use Russell. But not so. In fact, they want them to conclude just the opposite...

*As Jehovah's Witnesses today review the work that he did, **the things he taught**, they have no doubt that Charles Taze Russell was, indeed, used by God in a special way.⁷⁷*

Apparently the things he taught they are referring to are not the same things reviewed in Chapter 3.

"The Very Stones Would Cry Out"

Finally, on page 622 the Governing Body says...

*Brother Russell ... did not claim credit for what he taught. He was an outstanding student of the Bible. But he explained that this remarkable understanding of the Scriptures was due to "the simple fact that God's due time had come." He said, "**If I did not speak... the very stones would cry out.**"— Luke 19:40*

⁷⁷ But Jehovah's Witnesses today have *not* reviewed the work that Russell did or the things he taught.

But what is so “outstanding” is how much Russell taught that *wasn't* true. One of the things that is so “remarkable” is that, according to what the Society teaches today, he never knew when Jesus returned to begin his Second Coming. It doesn't help his case to point out that “Russell did not claim credit for what he taught.” Surely God didn't claim credit for it either. And so it looks like it would have been far better if Russell “did *not* speak and *let* the very stones cry out.” Those stones would not have proclaimed a single incorrect teaching, date, event, chronology or prophecy.⁷⁸

*** The Appointment of Matthew 24:47 ***
The Most Important Event
In Watchtower History

And so, what would have happened at this most important event in Watchtower history? What decision would Jesus have made in the spring of 1919? Would he have agreed with former President Fredrick Franz who said...

Matthew 24:47
Jesus'
decision in the
spring of 1919

—
To appoint
or not
to appoint?

*Jesus **did** find the appointed “slave” faithful and discreet in the feeding of his disciples.*⁷⁹

Or would Jesus have agreed with former Governing Body Member Raymond Franz who said...

*It would be **an insult to Christ Jesus** to say that he selected this organization on the basis of what it was teaching as of 1919.*⁸⁰

Which
Franz
would
Jesus
have
agreed
with?

Jehovah's Witnesses will pick the wrong answer because they have *not* ‘reviewed the work that Russell and Rutherford did and the things they taught’—especially in connection with Matthew 24:45-47. They have all made this same mistake.

⁷⁸ On page 11 of the August 15, 2002 *Watchtower* they say, “[Jesus] loved divine truths far too much to replace them with his own thinking.” According to this reasoning, Russell and Rutherford must *not* have had this same ‘love of divine truths’ because they both made a practice of replacing divine truths with *their* own thinking.

⁷⁹ *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has approached*, pp. 349-355. As essential as this foundation teaching is to the very existence of the Watchtower religion, the *KNOWLEDGE That Leads to Everlasting Life* (1995) book explains it with the simple assertion that, “Proper and timely spiritual food was being dispensed by” the Society. - See page 161, paragraph 4 in the Appendix, p. 145.

⁸⁰ *In Search of Christian Freedom*, page 145.

The One Mistake All Jehovah's Witnesses Have Made

All Witnesses have failed to carefully examine the Society's claim to being God's "faithful and discreet slave organization" based upon what Russell and Rutherford had been teaching from 1876 to 1919 in fulfillment of Matthew 24:45-47.

ALL those who are now Jehovah's Witnesses have failed to carefully examine the Watchtower's claim of being God's "faithful and discreet slave organization" *based upon what Russell & Rutherford had been teaching down till 1919 in fulfillment of Matthew 24:45-47.* And all those who become Jehovah's Witnesses in the future will make this same mistake.

Although some of them may be familiar with some or even several of the teachings mentioned in Chapter 3, they don't get the sense of what they mean because they don't make the connection between those teachings and Jesus' examination of them to "make sure"⁸¹ that proper and timely spiritual food had been dispensed.

This is not just a little mistake. It's a big mistake! For once people come to believe that Jesus made that Matthew 24:47 appointment in the spring of 1919, from that moment on they become captives of that belief—captives of the illusionary concept that all of God's direction to mankind comes only through the Watchtower Society. It then dominates and controls the thinking of those who write the literature as well as the Witnesses who read it.

How Their Free Bible Study Program Causes This Mistake

The Watchtower's free Bible study program is set up in such a way that Bible students become convinced that it is God's organization before they ever get to Matthew 24:45-47. Their 191-page "Bible Study Aid" (*Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*) doesn't even mention Matthew 24:45-47 until page 161. By then the student doesn't need

⁸¹ 1 Thessalonians 5:21. One of the first Scriptures Witnesses learn is the one that tells them to "make sure of all things." But they all failed to make sure of the most important thing—the Society's claim of Jesus' appointment in the spring of 1919.

any proof that the Society is God's organization and so the *Knowledge* book doesn't provide any. It simply asserts that "proper and timely spiritual food was being dispensed" down till 1919 and therefore, "using the 'faithful slave' and its present-day Governing Body, God directs his organized people" today.⁸²

Students have no reason to question this assertion because it is simply stating something they already believe. It's just that what they already believe isn't true.

Their Bible Study program leads the student to believe that the Society is God's organization for the wrong reasons.

How To Avoid Making This Mistake

It is much easier to avoid this mistake than it is to correct it after it has been made.⁸³ Before considering their offer of a free **Bible** study one should ask for a **history** study first in order to find out if this is in fact the organization that Jesus appointed to teach the Bible to the rest of mankind. But those who do a history study first don't ask for a Bible Study later. And Witnesses who do a history study later (after they were baptized) realize that they should have done it sooner (before they were baptized).

Those who do avoid or correct this mistake usually end up concluding the same thing Peter Gregerson concluded...

Those who do a history study sooner don't ask for a Bible study later.

Witnesses who do a history study later realize they should have done it sooner.

There is no possible way that Christ Jesus, as a Judge, could have looked at this information [from 1876 to 1919] and have given the authority that [is] claimed by the Watchtower Society.⁸⁴

Surely God would not have provided them with an interpretation that could only be fulfilled by rewriting and/or ignoring the Society's true history. And yet that is what the leadership has had to do in order to keep themselves and their millions of followers⁸⁵ convinced that those associated with the Society down till 1919 had been so faithful and discreet about what they had been teaching that they received the most important appointment that any earthly or-

The only way their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47 can agree with the organization's history is to rewrite the organization's history.

⁸² See page 161, paragraph 4 in the Appendix, p. 145.

⁸³ See Chapter 21 for suggestions on how to help those who have already made this mistake.

⁸⁴ *Witnesses of Jehovah* video - <http://www.goodnewsdefenders.org/>

⁸⁵ See page 101, "Whom Have Jehovah's Witnesses Been Following?"

***If the
Watchtower
Society could
pass an
examination
by Jesus
Christ today
it means that
they would
have failed the
same exam
in 1919.***

***The time to
pass an
examination
is when it is
given, not
several years
after it is over.***

***“God’s
organization”
exists only
in the
minds of
Jehovah’s
Witnesses.***

ganization could possibly receive—to be God’s sole “channel of communication” to all the rest of mankind.

It doesn’t register with Jehovah’s Witnesses that if the Society could pass a “food-at-the-proper-time” examination by Jesus Christ today, it means that they would have failed the same exam in 1919 because so much of what they had been teaching *then* was not what they are teaching *now*.

For example, if Jesus returned in 1914 to begin his Second Coming, they would pass that portion of his exam today because that is what they teach today. But they would have failed that part of the exam in 1919 because then they taught that he returned in 1874. The same is true with the rest of the forty-eight teachings mentioned in Chapter 3. They would have failed every one of them.⁸⁶ Even if the Society understands everything correctly today, it is too late. The time to pass an examination is when it is given, not years or decades after it is over. And according to the way they interpret Matthew 24:45-47, Jesus’ examination was over in the spring of 1919.

Up to this point the question has been, “Is the Watchtower Society God’s organization?” Once that question is answered, from this point on that organization does not exist in reality. It is just an illusion that exists only in the minds of Jehovah’s Witnesses. The organization that does exist is ‘The Watchtower’s organization,’ which is not governed by Jesus Christ from heaven but by a few elderly men from Brooklyn, New York.

NEXT: The following discussions will try to explain how the Watchtower’s religious leaders have been able to keep themselves (apparently) and millions of others convinced that their fictional “God’s organization” is real no matter what contrary evidence exists from inside or outside the Bible. It would seem to be a study of how the human mind is able to keep itself from having to face the truth when “God lets an operation of error go to them that they may get to believing the lie.” – 2 Thessalonians 2:10,11

⁸⁶ They would have also failed the thousands of statements, arguments, applications, reasonings, interpretations, explanations, illustrations and chronologies that they used to support those 48 wrong teachings.

Who Is “God’s Organization”?

A starting point in understanding this illusionary concept is to understand just *who* rather than *what* the expression “God’s organization” normally refers to in actual practice. There are several interchangeable terms that have been used to refer to it:

THE SOCIETY
THE ORGANIZATION
JEHOVAH’S ORGANIZATION
JEHOVAH’S VISIBLE ORGANIZATION
GOD’S THEOCRATIC ORGANIZATION
JEHOVAH’S EARTHLY ORGANIZATION
GOD’S CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION
GOD’S SPIRIT-DIRECTED ORGANIZATION
THE FAITHFUL & DISCREET SLAVE⁸⁷ ORGANIZATION

In order to see the reality of this religion it is helpful to understand just who the various terms for “God’s organization” refer to.

As with any organization, there is one person or a small group of people who make the final decisions that affect everyone else associated with that organization. It isn’t a faceless “organization” that makes those decisions. It’s these *people* who make them. Since 1976 these people in the Watchtower organization have been a dozen or so elderly men of “the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses.” The March 15, 1998 *Watchtower* explains...

Presently the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses is composed of ten (men)... They offer spiritual direction to [all other] Jehovah’s Witnesses... The Witnesses gladly look to the mature brothers of the Governing Body for...direction and guidance in matters of worship.⁸⁸ p. 21.

⁸⁷ Of all the terms used, “the faithful and discreet slave” is the only one that occurs in the Bible (at Matthew 24:45). But there is no suggestion in the Bible that this term refers to “God’s organization.” A more recent Christian-sounding term that they have come up with is “The Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses.”

⁸⁸ And as will be shown, those who *don’t* “gladly look to the mature brothers of the Governing Body for direction and guidance in matters of worship” are disfellowshipped! – See Chapter 10, page 76 ff.

On pages 109 and 110 of the *Proclaimers* book the Governing Body explains...

Only since 1976 have the activities been under the direction and control of a body of men. Prior to 1976 everything was under the direction and control of the one man who was the president.

NOTE: On October 7, 2000 public affairs director James N. Pellechia announced that the administrative duties of the organization would be taken over by "lower ranking members" so that the Governing Body can "concentrate more on the ministry of the Word."

Therefore, the few men of the Governing Body still determine what everyone else must believe.

Starting January 1, 1976, all the activities of the Watch Tower Society...have been brought under the supervision ...of the Governing Body....Jehovah's Witnesses were fed spiritually before 1976. But an examination of what has taken place since then under the direction of the Governing Body...reveals that the waters of truth have flowed out in ever greater quantities and in more diversified forms.

Prior to that time such direction and guidance was attributed to just the one man who was the president. The May 15, 1995 *Watchtower* acknowledges that prior to 1976...

The matter[s] of the operation [and teachings] of the Watchtower Society ...were largely **in the hands of its president.** - p. 22

Concerning the Society's President Charles Taze Russell, the *Proclaimers* book says...

Throughout his life **Russell had been 'the Society.'** The work centered around his dynamic determination. - p.63

The same was true with Rutherford and Knorr. But Jehovah's Witnesses tend not to think of any of these men. They simply think of "God's organization." But again, it is not an abstract "the organization" that decides what everyone else must believe. **Prior to 1976 it was the president who made those decisions.** Since 1976 a small governing body of men has made them. In actual practice then, the various terms used for "God's organization" refer to these men who are hidden behind those terms. The following example helps to show this to be the case.

Jehovah's Witnesses are often reminded of the need to be loyal not only to God but also to "his organization." For example, in the October 1, 2001 *Watchtower* they ask the question, "What does it mean to be LOYAL?" They answer, "Loyalty to God also includes loyalty to his organiza-

tion.” Witnesses certainly want to be loyal to God. But they are often reminded that they cannot be loyal to God if they are disloyal to his organization. Today the only way they can be loyal to “God’s organization” is to be loyal to the men of the Governing Body. In order to be loyal to them they must accept whatever they are currently providing in the way of spiritual food. Prior to 1976 ‘loyalty to God and/or his organization’ required acceptance of whatever was provided by the one man who was the president.⁸⁹

On page 296 of his *Crisis of Conscience* Raymond Franz explained it this way...

*When [the men of the Governing Body] urge “loyalty to the organization” they must know, they certainly should know, that...they are talking about loyalty to the source of the teachings, the source of the authority. Whether the Governing Body members acknowledge it or whether they prefer not to think about it, the fact remains that in these crucial aspects **they, and they alone, are “the organization.”***

The Men Hidden Behind “God’s Organization”

The illusion for Jehovah’s Witnesses is that they are being loyal to God by being loyal to “his organization.” The reality is that they have only been loyal to the men who have formed the leadership of the Watchtower religion—the *men who have been hidden behind the various terms used for “God’s organization.”*⁹⁰

The Illusion

“GOD’S
ORGANIZATION”

The Reality

- Prior to 1976 -
The man who was the
president

- Since 1976 -
The men of the
Governing Body

The illusion for Witnesses is that they are being loyal to God by being loyal to “his organization.” In reality they have only been loyal to the men who have been hidden behind the terms used for “God’s organization.”

⁸⁹ This has especially been true since Rutherford’s presidency.

⁹⁰ Rutherford was the one who first introduced the idea of “God’s organization.” Up until that time they had been thinking in terms of Russell as “the faithful and discreet slave” which eventually became the faithful and discreet slave “class” or “organization” once Rutherford decided that Russell was not that slave.

While their intention is to be submissive to God, Jehovah's Witnesses have ended up being submissive to men.

See Psalm. 146:3

One of the things that convinces Jehovah's Witnesses that religious groups like the *Branch Davidians* and *The People's Temple* did not have God's backing was because the men who were their leaders demanded unquestioning submission to their directions. Witnesses have no difficulty seeing that fact. But they are unable to see that they themselves are doing the very same thing when they give their **unquestioning submission** to "God's organization." In their way of thinking they are voluntarily giving their unquestioning submission *to God* by being submissive to *his organization*.

Despite the honor and respect that Watchtower leadership has always expressed toward the Bible as being God's Word, they have never been able to allow it to help them notice anything that would suggest that the Society is not God's organization. If it were some other religion with such a record of failed teachings and prophecies, they would be first in line to say that God and Jesus Christ would not have anything to do with it.⁹¹ But since it is *their* religion, and especially since they believe it is *God's* religion, their position is **"We shall not be unsettled by anything that happens."**⁹²

NEXT: Once this illusory concept is accepted as the truth (i.e. once they get to believe the lie),⁹³ **they will not allow anything to disprove it.** For example, no matter how many false teachings or prophecies the Society has ever had, they all *must* be explained in such a way so that the Society still ends up being God's organization. The following chapter shows how they have been able to eliminate every false teaching and prophecy the organization has ever had.

⁹¹ See Chapter 16, "What If This Was Another Religion?"

⁹² May 1, 1957 Watchtower, page 284.

⁹³ 2 Thessalonians 2:11