

No False Teachings or Prophecies – Why Not?

HERE is another interesting study that shows what can happen to man's thinking and reasoning ability when God lets an operation or error go to them.⁹⁴

The Governing Body realizes that Jesus would never have appointed an *unfaithful* or *indiscreet* false teacher or false prophet over *any* of his earthly interests let alone *all* of them.⁹⁵ And therefore, in order to uphold the lie that "the Society is God's organization" (which they believe to be the truth), they have had to eliminate every trace of Russell's and Rutherford's teachings that were false.

But how can they convince anyone (including themselves) that those men never had a single false teaching or prophecy when they had so many of them? Here is how they accomplish this seemingly impossible feat...

Removing the Word "False"

They simply eliminate the word "false" in connection with anything the Society has ever taught no matter how false it was. In place of the word "false" such teachings have been referred to as "past *truths*"—thereby not only avoiding the word "false" but using the word "truth" in its place. The word "false" is reserved for all other religions which just happened to be full of "false teachers," "false teachings," "false prophets" and "false prophecies" and therefore are "false religions." On the other hand, according to the Society, they themselves have never had a single one of any of these and therefore it is "the *true* religion." Or as they so often refer to it, "The *only* true religion."

Jehovah's Witnesses have been so conditioned by this line of reasoning that they look forward to "new truths."

According to the "Proclaimers" book, the Society has never had one single false teaching or prophecy! How is this possible?

They remove the word "false" then refer to those teachings as "past truths."

⁹⁴ 2 Thessalonians 2:10,11

⁹⁵ Matthew 24:47

They refer to their prophecies as “Bible prophecies” until they realize that they are not true. They then drop the word “prophecy.”

See page 55 for a long list of the terms they use once they realize that what they had been prophesying or teaching was not true.

Rather than being negative evidence indicating that a previous teaching must have been false—which would suggest that the Society may not be God’s organization—“new truths” are viewed as positive evidence which prove that ‘God is continuing to refine his organization.’ This is another indication of how deeply captive everyone is to the concept that “the Society is God’s organization” and therefore why it is so difficult for them to escape from it.

Removing the Word “Prophecy”

They also remove the word “prophecy” in connection with their prophecies once it is realized that they are not true. All during the period of time Russell’s and Rutherford’s dates/events were being proclaimed they were said to be “in fulfillment of Bible prophecy.” This has been true of every prophecy that has ever come from the Watchtower Society. That’s why Jehovah’s Witnesses have believed them. But once their prophecies are discarded, the word “prophecy” is also discarded.

Since all those dates/events in Chapter 3 have been changed or dropped because they did not occur or come true, it means that they were not *Bible* prophecies after all. They were only *Watchtower* prophecies – prophecies that originated with men rather than Jehovah God. That would explain why none of them came true. If they had come from Jehovah they *would* have come true. These conclusions are based upon the Bible’s simple explanation of what false prophets do...

1. They present what they say “in the name of Jehovah”
2. But “the word does not occur or come true” ⁹⁶

The *Proclaimers* book states more than once that Russell never took credit for any of the dates/events he came up with. When, for example, it is realized that he said that all his dates were “[Jehovah’s] dates,” and Rutherford said that

⁹⁶ Deuteronomy 18:20-22. None of their prophecies have ever been presented “in the name of the Watchtower Society.” Rather, as they say on page 365 of the June 15, 1964 *Watchtower*, “Jehovah is the one behind all of it” (i.e. their “prophesying”). - See top of page 55 of this chapter.

the date of 1925 was “based upon the promises set forth in [Jehovah’s] Word”—and and yet what these men so often said did not occur or come true—it looks like the Bible is trying to tell them that those men were false prophets. But the Governing Body will not allow the Bible to tell them that. Why not? Because such a conclusion does not fit what they have chosen to believe; what they *need* to believe.

Notice how they respond when someone tries to point these things out to them...

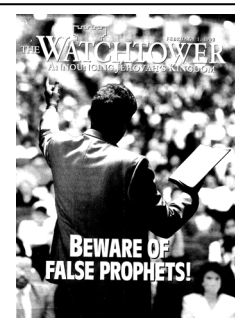
Some opposers claim that [Russell and Rutherford were] false prophets. These opponents say that dates have been set, but nothing has happened.⁹⁷

The Governing Body knows that the above “opposers” and “opponents” are correct. Their *Proclaimers* book shows that many “dates *have* been set, but *nothing* has happened” over and over again. And so why doesn’t this fact convince them that Russell and Rutherford were **at least false teachers if not false prophets?**

Again, the answer to this question cannot be found in the evidence. It is hidden in **the realm of their need to believe what they want to believe.** In order for their entire lives not to have been wasted by following an illusion, these men must be able to believe that the Society is God’s organization no matter what contrary evidence exists. But they know they cannot believe it if Russell and Rutherford were false teachers/prophets. And they also know (even if only subconsciously) that if those men were false teachers/prophets then they themselves as members of today’s Governing Body are out **of a job.** If Russell and Rutherford were not part of Jesus’ “faithful and discreet slave class” then the present members of the Governing Body aren’t either.

And so, in order for the Watchtower Society to exist today, these men must be able to explain what those men did in such a way that they don’t come out looking like false teachers or false prophets. They accomplish this in the above article by using the two techniques mentioned previously. Here is how they answer the above “opposers”...

The Governing Body will not allow the Bible to tell them that Russell and Rutherford were false teachers or false prophets.



How is it possible for a false prophet to warn others to “beware of false prophets” and yet not notice that they are talking about themselves? This chapter tries to explain how they are able to do it.

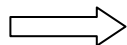
⁹⁷ March 15, 1986 *Watchtower*

They avoid the words “false” and “prophecies” and then say they are not false prophets.

Yes, [we] have had to revise **expectations** from time to time...but the need to revise **our understanding** somewhat does not make us false prophets...[Such revisions were just for] **expectations needing some adjustment.**⁹⁸

Here they not only avoid the word “false,” they change their prophecies into “**expectations**,” “our understanding,” and “expectations needing some adjustment.” Another example: Although the *Proclaimers* book mentions *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* several times, it never uses the words “false” or “prophecy” in connection with it. But during the time they are teaching or proclaiming such things they use terms like the following...

What they call their teachings and prophecies during the time they are proclaiming them.



“the truth”
 “rich truths”
 “Bible truths”
 “great truths”
 “revealed truths”
 “precious truths”
 “jewels of truth”
 “unsealed truths”
 “Scriptural truths”
 “established truths”
 “liberating truths”⁹⁹
 “pure language”
 “Bible teachings”
 “Bible prophecies”
 “Scriptural beliefs”
 “unfailing prophecy”
 “extraordinary prophecy”
 “the Creator’s promise”
 “the teachings of Jehovah”
 “Jehovah’s prophetic word”
 “the sure word of prophecy”
 “true teachings of the bible”
 “revealed truths of Jehovah”

They reinforce these expressions by saying that God is responsible for all their “prophesying”...

⁹⁸ What they have had to revise are Russell’s and Rutherford’s false teachings and false prophecies, not simply their “expectations needing some adjustment.” - See Chapter 3.

⁹⁹ They used to refer to current teachings as “present truth.” - See *Proclaimers* book, page 121. They look forward to “new truths.” They refer to their religion as “The Truth.” They have also used “infallible truth,” “Christian truth” and “God’s truth.” About the only term they don’t use is “the Gospel truth.”

*Through [the Watchtower Society, Jehovah] is having carried out prophesying on an intensified and unparalleled scale. All this activity is not an accident. **Jehovah is the one behind all of it.***¹⁰⁰

But once they realize that Jehovah was *not* behind what they had been “prophesying” they then change what they call them into...

“errors”
 “mistakes”
 “misplaced zeal”
 “unrealized hopes”
 “previous failures”
 “misinterpretations”
 “misunderstandings”
 “our understanding”
 “misplaced optimism”
 “wrong expectations”
 “hopes and expectations”
 “premature expectations”
 “misplaced expectations”
 “disappointed expectations”
 “errors in their teachings”
 “incomplete concepts”
 “inaccurate concepts”
 “serious disappointments”
 “formerly cherished views”
 “mistakes in their understanding”
 “views in need of refinement”
 “an expressed opinion”
 “cherished errors”
 “wrong beliefs”
 “old truths”
 “past truths”
 “expectations needing some adjustment”
 “matters on which corrections of viewpoint have been needed”
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This substitution technique allows them to openly discuss their failed prophecies like *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*, even showing large billboards advertising it¹⁰²

What they call their teachings and prophecies after they stop proclaiming them. They never use the words “false” or “prophecies” in connection with them.



After 1925 president Rutherford stopped teaching that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were going to be resurrected in 1925. Instead of referring to his previous teaching as “false,” he said it had only been “an expressed opinion.”

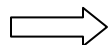
¹⁰⁰ June 15, 1964 *Watchtower*, page 365

¹⁰¹ Most of these expressions are scattered throughout the *Proclaimers* book. The last one comes from page 136 of their *Reasoning from the Scriptures* book.

¹⁰² *Proclaimers* book, pages 163, 426

The word “false” is only used when referring to other religions and their teachings.

If these terms should rightly be applied to teachings that are not true, then Jesus would have applied them to all those 48 “godless myths” mentioned in Chapter 3. What are the chances he would have then said, “Well done, good and faithful slave”? (Matthew 25:21)



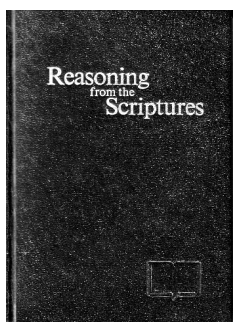
since it was only “an expressed opinion.”¹⁰³

But when other religions teach things that the Society says are not true, they use a different set of expressions...

“falsehoods”
 “false stories”
 “false teachers”
 “false teachings”
 “false doctrines”
 “false prophets”
 “false prophecies”
 “false religious views”
 “false religious teachings”
 “false religious philosophies”
 “doctrines with pagan religious routes”
 “God dishonoring doctrines of Babylon the Great”
 “the disfiguring of God”
 “nauseating teachings”
 “God dishonoring”
 “pagan doctrines”
 “godless myths”

Russell & Rutherford Fit the Society’s Own Definition of False Prophets

The Governing Body insists that what Russell and Rutherford did does not come under the Bible’s definition of false prophets at Deuteronomy 18:20-22. What about their own definition?



False Prophets

*Individuals and organizations (1) proclaiming messages that they attribute to a superhuman source but that (2) do not originate with the true God and (3) are not in harmony with his revealed will.*¹⁰⁴

Russell and Rutherford (1) attributed *their* messages to a superhuman source, (2) none of *their* messages men-

¹⁰³ Their willingness to admit their “mistakes” is presented as a sign of their humility and therefore further evidence that ‘this is truly God’s organization.’ But they have never admitted to what they have *really* been guilty of doing. To be truly candid they would have to admit to having produced numerous false teachings and false prophecies. But that would make them a false teacher and a false prophet which would then disqualify them as Jesus’ “faithful and discreet slave” which in turn would bring an end to the Watchtower religion. To date they have been unable to face such a reality.

¹⁰⁴ *Reasoning from the Scriptures*, page 132. Also on page 4 of the April 15, 1995 *Watchtower* they define prophecies as follows: “Information written in advance about what definitely would occur in the future.”

tioned in Chapter 3 originated with God and (3) they were not in harmony with his revealed will. Therefore they were *not* false prophets? According to their own definition they were.¹⁰⁵

Russell & Rutherford did what the Society says false prophets do.

What Doesn't Matter

In their efforts to convince themselves that Russell and Rutherford were not false prophets, the Governing Body has apparently not noticed that **it doesn't matter if they were false prophets or not**. Note again what former President Frederick Franz said in his *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has approached...*

*The serving of food, **the right sort of [Bible teachings] at the proper time** was the issue. It had to be according to this that a decision must be rendered by [Jesus].*¹⁰⁶

If Rutherford's *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* was a false prophecy it certainly was not "the right sort of food at the proper time." *But even it was just "a mistake" it was still not the right sort of food or the proper time to be serving it.* Even if Rutherford was not a false prophet he was still guilty of providing wrong spiritual food relative to the extremely important matter of Christ's Kingdom, along with all the rest of the improper, untimely spiritual food he provided from both his own and Russell's writings.

And even if none of the teachings considered in Chapter 3 come under the Bible's definition of false prophecies, they were still teachings that were not true on very serious matters such as the time of Jesus' Second Coming and the end of the world.

And so it doesn't matter what the Governing Body chooses to call all those failed attempts to set dates.¹⁰⁷ They were all wrong food at the wrong time which, according to

Even if all of the teachings in Chapter 3 were just "mistakes," they were still wrong spiritual food at the wrong time. None of them would have passed an examination by Jesus Christ.

¹⁰⁵ On page 136 of *Reasoning from the Scriptures* they excuse themselves by saying that they "do not claim to be *inspired* prophets." But the Bible doesn't say that it's OK to put Jehovah's name on their teachings and prophecies by calling them "the teachings of Jehovah" or "the Creator's promise" as long as they don't claim to be inspired. **NOTE: They don't need to point out that they are not inspired.**

¹⁰⁶ Pages. 349-355

¹⁰⁷ See page 55 for the very long list of what they have chosen to call their failed attempts to set dates.

the way they interpret Matthew 24:45-47, disqualified them as Jesus' "faithful and discreet slave." And according to their June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* not a single one of those teachings/prophecies mentioned in Chapter 3 should have ever appeared in the Society's literature because none of them were "what God reveals in his Word."

Although they have figured out how to admit to making mistakes and say, "It doesn't matter," they have not figured out how to admit to making false teachings and prophecies and say, "It doesn't matter."

What The Watchtower Society Has Never Been Able To Admit

Despite the thousands of portions of 'wrong food at the wrong time' that Russell and Rutherford provided during all those years down till 1919, the Society has never been able to admit that those men were false teachers or false prophets. The most fundamental reason why not is because they simply cannot do so and still claim that the Watchtower Society is God's organization.

Although the leadership has figured out how to admit that Charles Russell and Joseph Rutherford had made *mistakes* and then say, "It doesn't matter," they have not been able to figure out how to admit that they were *false teachers* or *false prophets* and still say, "It doesn't matter."

Do Their Motives Matter?

One other factor that may help explain why Witnesses don't notice any false teachers or prophets associated with the Watchtower Society **has to do with motives**. One of the consistent things that comes through when reading the Governing Body's warnings about false teachers and prophets is that the *real* ones, they say, *deliberately* teach things that they *know* are not true and/or proclaim things that they *know* are false for the purpose of *intentionally* misleading others. But they view Russell and Rutherford (and themselves) as sincere men who **never intentionally tried to mislead anyone**. Whatever mistakes the Society has made have been due to their love for God and being "zealous – even overzealous—to see God's will accomplished."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁸ *Proclaimers* book, page 714. Also, on page 17 of the December 1, 2002 *Watchtower* they say, "Their motive is pure." Watchtower leadership has never accepted that 'pure motive' excuse when anyone else tries to use it. The standards they use to judge everyone else is, "Sincerity alone is not enough" and John 4:24's "Those worshipping God *must* worship in...truth."

If this is a factor that affects the leadership's thinking it is not based on the Bible. Although some false teachers and prophets may be deliberate frauds with the intent of misleading people for strictly selfish motives, the Bible (and even their own definition) doesn't say that such motives are requirements for false teachers and prophets. It doesn't matter how sincere they may or may not be. It isn't motives that label people false teachers and prophets. It is their false teachings and prophecies that do it. – See Deuteronomy 18:20-22 & Matthew 7:15-20

It isn't motives that label people false teachers and prophets. It's their false teachings and prophecies that do it.

A Spirit-Directed, Uninspired True Prophet?

Here is another example of how faulty reasoning eventually catches up with those who try to force the Bible to uphold their illusion...

The Governing Body does not deny that the organization claims to be, or acts as God's prophet.¹⁰⁹ **What they do deny is that they are inspired.**¹¹⁰ Somewhere along the way someone came up with the idea that it's all right to put God's name on their teachings and prophecies *as long as they don't claim to be inspired*. But this causes a problem that they apparently haven't noticed yet. According to the Bible there are only two kinds of prophets:

- **True Prophets**
- **False Prophets**

True prophets are inspired by God. False prophets are not...

- **Inspired true prophets**
- **Uninspired false prophets**

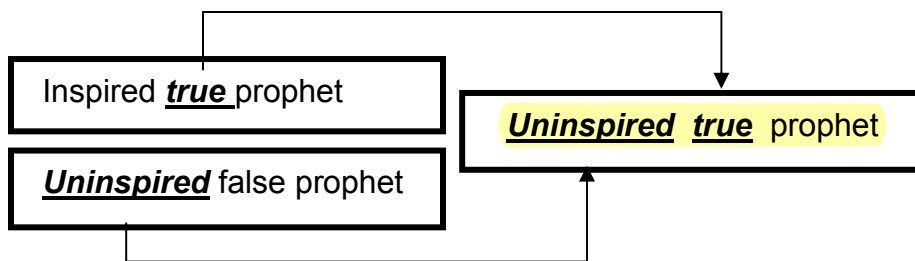
But the Watchtower's religious leaders have created a **third kind of prophet** that is a mixture or combination of

¹⁰⁹ See page 197 of the April 1, 1972 *Watchtower*. and pages 70 and 292 of the book, "The Nations Shall Know That I Am Jehovah." On pages 40, 41 of the January 15, 1959 *Watchtower* they ask, "Whom has God actually used as his prophet?" They answer, "Jehovah's Witnesses are deeply grateful today that the plain facts show that God has been pleased to use them." NOTE: Jehovah's Witnesses themselves are not the ones who have created the Society's prophecies. They have simply passed on the prophecies of their religious leaders.

¹¹⁰ On page 136 of *Reasoning from the Scriptures* they say, **[We] do not claim to be inspired prophets.**

They end up claiming to be God's 'spirit-directed, uninspired true prophet.'

both a true prophet and a false prophet...



Is it possible for a true prophet to be directed by God's Spirit and yet is not inspired by God's Spirit?

Added to this is the fact they also claim to be “God’s *spirit-directed* organization.”¹¹¹ Therefore, when you add up all the things they *do* and *don’t* claim to be, they end up a kind prophet that has never before existed. They now have an illusionary **Spirit-directed, uninspired true prophet** to go along with their illusionary **God’s organization**.

They Are Unable To See What They Are Saying

(March 22, 1993 *Awake!*)

Here is an example of the truth being right in front of their eyes and yet they are unable to see it. On the above *Awake!* masthead page they are trying very hard to explain why Russell and Rutherford “should not be viewed as false prophets such as those warned against at Deuteronomy 18:20-22.” On page 4 they explain why not...

*Never did they presume to originate predictions “in the name of Jehovah.” Never did they say, ‘These are the words of Jehovah.’*¹¹²

But then toward the bottom of *this very same page* they then go on to predict the following...

¹¹¹ “God’s spirit-directed organization” appears in their 2nd baptismal vow. See footnote # 156 on page 82.

¹¹² Deuteronomy 18:22 simply says that a false prophet is (1) one that “speaks in the name of Jehovah,” and (2) “the word does not occur or come true.” And that is the way it has been many times with the Watchtower Society. The Bible doesn’t say that one must claim to be inspired in order for this definition to apply. During the time they are proclaiming things as “revealed truths of Jehovah” or “the teachings of Jehovah” they never say, “But remember, we don’t claim to be inspired.” They only say this when explaining why something they use to teach “in the name of Jehovah” did not occur or come true.

*This [Awake!] magazine builds confidence in **the Creator's promise** of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.*

Is there a difference between saying **“These are the words of Jehovah”** and **“This is the promise of Jehovah”** (i.e. the Creator’s promise)? The above promise was printed in every *Awake!* magazine for many years until November of 1995 when the Governing Body finally realized that it wasn’t the Creator’s promise. It had only been *their* promise.

This does not seem to be so much a case of a deliberate attempt to mislead as it is an example of their inability to realize what they are saying. All they can see is that they are giving an explanation that satisfies themselves that Russell and Rutherford were not false prophets, even though their argument completely falls apart when **they then go on to say what they just got through saying the Society has never said**. It would seem to be one of the side effects of trying to force the Bible to uphold the lie they have committed themselves to believe.

The religious leaders of the Watchtower Society have always proudly put Jehovah’s name on all their teachings and yet deny that they have ever said anything “in the name of Jehovah.” But when talking about other religions *that don’t even use Jehovah’s name* they say, “Jehovah will expose the falsehood of these prophecies of the clergy. He will not fulfill *what they are saying in his name*.” - March 1, 1994 *Watchtower*, p. 11

Matthew 7:15-20

An operation of error shows up again when explaining Jesus’ simple illustration at Matthew 7:15-20 about **how to recognize false prophets**. The point he made was that they can be recognized by “their fruits” (verse 20). Just as we can recognize rotten apple trees by the rotten or worthless apples they produce, we can also recognize ‘rotten false prophet trees’ by the worthless false prophecies they produce.

They say they have never said, “These are the words of Jehovah.” But then on the very same page they go on to say, ‘This is the promise of Jehovah.’

Is there a difference between saying “These are the words of Jehovah” and “These are the teachings of Jehovah”?

See 9/1/80 Governing Body’s letter on page 78.

* Note from the author:

"I've tried not to compare what the Bible says with what the Society says. But here is one exception that I just could not let go by without pointing out the difference."

They change the subject of Jesus' illustration from "false prophets" to "the true religion."

But the Governing Body usually switches Jesus' subject from 'How to identify **false prophets**' (which looks like the Watchtower Society) to 'How to identify **the true religion**' (which always ends up being the Watchtower Society).

For example, under the heading, "Finding the True Religion" on page 6 of the March 1, 1982 *Watchtower*, they say...

*Jesus gave a rule [at Matthew 7:15-20] for recognizing **true religion**.... (He) said... 'Bad fruitage would identify the false religions, and good fruits would reveal the true.'*¹¹³

But that's not even close to what Jesus said. He didn't mention anything about how to identify the *true religion*. He was specifically and only talking about how to identify *false prophets*. — See verses 15 and 20.¹¹⁴

Jesus' illustration leads the reader to consider the possibility that the Watchtower Society may be one of the false prophets he was talking about. But their application of his illustration leads the reader to conclude that they are the true religion. That's quite a difference—a difference that not only the average Witness doesn't notice, but one that even their religious leaders may not notice. It is another example of how they will not allow the Bible to help them notice what they are not willing to notice.

NEXT: There are a couple of other Scriptures they routinely use to explain away everything the Society has ever taught that wasn't true.

¹¹³ They then go on to list several Watchtower teachings as the "good fruitage" Jesus was talking about as proof that the Society is "the true religion." They also list other teachings they don't agree with as "bad fruitage" which proves that all other religions are "false religions." But this is not what Jesus was trying to teach with this illustration. He introduced it with the words, "Be on the watch for the **false prophets** (v.15)." and ended it with, "Really then by their fruits you will recognize **those men** (v.20)."

¹¹⁴ On page 17 of the February 1, 1988 *Watchtower* they even go so far as to leave off verses 15 and 20 so that what Jesus was specifically talking about (i.e. "false prophets") doesn't show up. On page 208 of the April 1, 1973 *Watchtower* under the heading, "Avoid Distorting Scriptures to Prove a Point," they say, "It is imperative that we avoid willfully misapplying a text to prove our point." But here is an example where they *say* the right thing but *don't do* what they say. They distort Jesus' illustration to prove their point that the Society is the true religion. See Chapter 12, "What They Say Is Not What They Always Do."

Using The Bible To Keep Themselves Captive

THE Governing Body knows as well as anyone that the Bible *should* be used “for setting things straight.”¹¹⁵ But the *Proclaimers* book shows that they are unable or unwilling to allow the Bible to set things straight relative to the Society’s claim to being God’s organization. Here are some of the Scriptures they have found, and the way they use them, which only serve to keep themselves and their followers locked into the concept holding them captive...

Proverbs 4:18

“The path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established.”

While **Matthew 24:45-47** is the 1st most important Scripture in Watchtower theology because it is the basis for their claim that the Society *is* God’s organization, **Proverbs 4:18** may be their 2nd most important Scripture because it is so often used as the basis for explaining away most everything that suggests that the Society *isn’t* God’s organization. The *Proclaimers* book presents their interpretation of Proverbs 4:18 under the heading, “How Jehovah Leads His People”...

**The
Society’s
2nd most
important
Scripture is
Proverbs 4:18.**

*If a person has been in a dark room for a long period of time, is it not best if he is exposed to light **gradually**? Jehovah has exposed his people to the light of truth in a similar manner; he has enlightened them **progressively** - Proverbs 4:18 - p. 708*¹¹⁶

**Changes
in their
teachings
must fit the
way they
interpret
Proverbs 4:18.**

First of all, if Jehovah’s Witnesses would ever look up this verse for themselves they might notice that it doesn’t

¹¹⁵ 2 Timothy 3:16

¹¹⁶ The way they interpret Proverbs 4:18, it is as if they blame God whenever they misunderstand the Bible. For example: If God had revealed the correct date of Jesus’ Second Coming to Russell in 1876, then he, Ruth-erford and Knorr would not have announced the wrong date for 67 years. Therefore, whose fault was it that they got that date wrong?

mention anything about God or how he leads his people to understand anything. But since we are trying not to compare what the Society says with what the Bible says, our interest here is only, (1) to understand their interpretation of Proverbs 4:18 (as explained above), and then (2) see if that is the way it works when they apply it to their teachings that have changed.

The Second Coming of Christ ¹¹⁷

(Change of Date from 1874 to 1914)

The following graphic demonstrates what a progressive enlightenment of this 1914 event might look like...

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Russell (1876-1916) No Light ‘We don’t see the date.’ | Rutherford (1917-1942) ‘Some Light, but not enough to see the correct date yet.’ | *1943 To Date* Light of Truth is fully bright ‘We clearly see the date 1914.’ |
|--|---|--|

This would fit the way they interpret Proverbs 4:18. It would be as if the “light of truth” on this teaching was hooked up to a **DIMMER** switch that gradually brought this “light” from **OFF** to fully **ON** or bright over a period of 67 years. *But that’s not the way it happened.*

***Their
change
in this
teaching
does not
fit their
interpretation
of Proverbs
4:18.***

If we assume that Jesus returned in 1914, it means that all during those 67 years they taught that he returned in 1874 the “light of truth” on this matter was **OFF**. Presidents Charles Russell and Joseph Rutherford spent their whole lives in the above “dark room” where they were never able to see the time of Jesus’ return.¹¹⁸ It wasn’t until the year after Rutherford’s death that the next president (Knorr) simply turned the “old light” about 1874 **OFF** and the “new light” about 1914 **ON**. There was nothing gradual about it. Of course, if Jesus didn’t return in 1914 it means that Jehovah’s Witnesses are still in that dark room where the light of truth is still **OFF**.

¹¹⁷ Matthew 24:3. The Society prefers “invisible presence.” – See “Important Terms,” p. 7

¹¹⁸ By way of review, the *Proclaimers* book says that Russell first learned of the date 1874 for Christ’s Second Coming in the year 1876. That’s what he then taught until he died in 1916. That’s what Rutherford taught until he died in 1942. The next president (Knorr) didn’t change that date to 1914 until 1943. See Chapter 3, “48 Teachings Jesus Examined,” page 22.

“Superior Authorities” of Romans 13:1

One example of progressive understanding the *Proclaimers* book mentions on page 147 has to do with the identity of the “superior authorities” of Romans 13:1. It explains that from 1929 to 1962 the Society incorrectly taught that these authorities were God and Jesus Christ. And that in 1962 “it was acknowledged that ‘the superior authorities’ were the secular rulers.” But neither is this an example of progressive understanding. From 1929 to 1962 they were not saying that the light of truth was not bright enough for them to clearly see who these authorities were. All during those 33 years they insisted that “light” was fully **ON**.¹¹⁹

The above article doesn’t mention that prior to 1929 they were teaching the same thing they have been teaching since 1962. As mentioned previously, this was one of the teachings that Russell got right. But in 1929 Rutherford used Proverbs 4:18 and turned that “light of truth” **OFF** when he said that these authorities were God and Jesus. Then 33 years later President Knorr used Proverbs 4:18 again to turn that light back **ON**. The following graphic shows the way their ‘light of truth switch’ worked relative to Romans 13:1...

**The
Society’s
“light of truth”
relative to
Romans 13:1**

**1876 - ON
1929 - OFF
1962 - ON**

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>* 1876 - 1929 * “Secular Rulers” Light of truth was ON</p> | <p>* 1929 - 1962 * “God & Jesus Christ” Light of truth was OFF</p> | <p>* 1962 To Date * “Secular Rulers” Light of truth is ON</p> |
|--|---|--|

Even if Proverbs 4:18 did have something to do with how God gradually and progressively reveals the proper understanding of the truth, this is certainly not an example of him doing so.

This same **ON-OFF-ON** switching was used relative to the identify of the “faithful and discreet slave.”¹²⁰

**This teaching
does not
fit their
Interpretation
of Proverbs
4:18.**

¹¹⁹ On page 312 of “The Truth Shall Make You Free” (1943) they said, “*The Watchtower* published the Scriptural exposition of Romans chapter 13. In 1929 the clear light broke forth. That year...the *Watchtower* showed that Jehovah God and Christ Jesus, rather than worldly rulers, are ‘The Higher Powers.’” But in actual fact, that *Watchtower* turned the “clear light” about the identity of “the higher powers” **OFF**. It then remained **OFF** for 33 years.

¹²⁰ If Russell was not this “slave” it means that the *Watchtower*’s “light of truth” was **ON** from 1881 to 1897–**OFF** from 1897 to 1927–**ON** since 1927.

Matthew 24:36

*“Concerning that day and hour [of the end of the world] **nobody knows**, neither the angels of the heavens **nor the Son**.”*

To show how far the Governing Body needs to push the Bible in order to force it to support their “progressive enlightenment” use of Proverbs 4:18, consider how they apply what Jesus said above...

Jesus said that he didn't know when the world would end. But Russell and Rutherford said they did know.

*Jesus, when on earth admitted that **he did not know** the day or hour that the present system of things would end.¹²¹*

The point they are making on pages 708 and 709 of the *Proclaimers* book is that this shows that God dealt with his Son the same way he dealt with Russell and Rutherford—by revealing things to all three of them progressively.

It is hard to believe that whoever wrote this didn't notice that while Jesus admitted that **he didn't know** when the present system of things would end, both Russell and Rutherford insisted that **they did know** (Russell/1914; Rutherford/1925). Jesus never tried to set a date for that event but was willing to faithfully and discreetly wait for his Father to reveal when this present system of things will end. Russell and Rutherford were not able to wait.

The Watchtower's Spiritual Light Switch

The Society interprets Proverbs 4:18 as if it was a DIMMER switch. But they use an ON/OFF switch.

The reason why their DIMMER switch application of Proverbs 4:18 doesn't support their progressive enlightenment explanation is because they don't use a DIMMER switch. They use a simple ON/OFF switch. Whatever they are currently teaching is most often said to be the result of the “light of truth” being fully “bright” or ON. But when they come to realize that what they have been teaching isn't true, they simply turn the old teaching OFF and call it “old light” and turn the new teaching ON and call it “new light.” Again, this is not the way they interpret Proverbs 4:18.

And then there is the Scripture they regularly use which

¹²¹ *Proclaimers* book, page 709

they say shows that Jesus' *disciples* were guilty of doing the very same thing that the Society has done...

Acts 1:6

"Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?"

What possible way could this one single question explain away everything the Society has ever taught that has not been true? They explain it this way...

*Does the fact that [the Society] has had some premature expectations¹²² [including all those mentioned in Chapter 3] mean that they are not being led by God? **Not any more than the disciples' question about the imminence of the Kingdom in their day mean that they were not chosen and led by God.** – Acts 1:6¹²³*

Here they are comparing all of the Society's "premature expectations"¹²⁴ which they have published in billions of pieces of literature all over the world for over one hundred years, with this one simple ten-word question the disciples asked **just one time in private, and saying that there is no difference.**

On page 78 of the *Proclaimers* book they specifically mention Rutherford's *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* as an example of 'a similar misplaced expectation.'

But what is the similarity between the disciples' **very private question because they didn't know when the kingdom would be restored,** and Rutherford's very public eight-year worldwide campaign during which he insisted that he *did* know when the kingdom would be restored?

What is the similarity between the disciples' question they asked just once, and those 67 years when Russell and Rutherford boldly announced to the whole world that Jesus had returned in 1874? And what is the similarity with all those other false dates/events that Russell insisted were "God's dates"?

They use Acts 1:6 to show that Jesus' disciples did the same thing that Russell and Rutherford did.

They say that Rutherford's "Millions Now Living Will Never Die" was no more of a mistake than the disciples' question in Acts 1:6.

¹²² They again change their "false prophecies" into "premature expectations." See page 55

¹²³ Page 709 refers to Acts 1:6 twice. It is also referred to on pages 78 and 639.

¹²⁴ See Chapter 7, "No False Teachings or Prophecies – Why Not?" page 51.

What is the similarity between the disciples simple question they asked just once, and those 67 years Russell and Rutherford proclaimed that Jesus had returned in 1874?

“Any portion of Scripture can be used to explain just about anything that Witness writers want it to.”

In order for there to be a similarity they would have done something similar. If they had gone out on a multiyear worldwide campaign publicly announcing the false message that Jesus was going to restore the kingdom to Israel on some specific date, *then* there might be a similarity. But of course they never did such a thing.

What does it mean when men can come up with such reasoning? And what does it mean when millions of Jehovah’s Witnesses don’t notice anything wrong with it?¹²⁵

Again, it would seem to be a case of everyone needing to believe what they want to believe so strongly that they won’t allow themselves to notice that there is no similarity between what Jesus said in Matthew 24:36 or the question his disciples asked in Acts 1:6, and all those things that Russell and Rutherford taught that were not true.

And so, while it is true that there is *no* reason to believe that the simple question Jesus’ disciples’ asked him means “that they were not chosen and led by God,” there *is* reason to believe that the multiple wrong answers Russell and Rutherford taught for decades *does* mean “that *they* were not chosen and led by God.”

The most fundamental reason why Jehovah’s Witnesses and their religious leaders are unable to notice the above difference is because the concept holding them captive won’t allow them to notice it.

They don’t subscribe to the idea that, “You can use the Bible to prove anything you want.” But their religious leaders have proven that *they* have that ability. So much so that former Witness and author James Penton stated...

*Watch Tower interpretations over the years have often become so bizarre that almost any portion of Scripture can be used to explain almost anything that Witness writers want it to.*¹²⁶

As long as they believe that the Watchtower Society is God’s organization Witnesses will continue to accept all of their interpretations no matter how bizarre they are.

¹²⁵ Some Witnesses may notice something is wrong but don’t dare to say or do anything about it. – See Chapter 17, “No Honorable Way Out of the Watchtower Religion.”

¹²⁶ *Apocalypse Delayed*, page 178.

In the “Foreword” to their *Proclaimers* book they say...

*The editors of this volume have endeavored to be objective and to present **a candid history**.*

But no matter how hard they may have endeavored for 750 pages to present a truly candid history, they couldn’t do it because they are unable to face a truly candid history, especially as it relates to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47. They inherited that interpretation and are now stuck with it. To date they have not been able to figure a way to get out of it.

In order to uphold their illusionary “God’s organization” they have to spin their history to force it to apparently agree with the way they interpret this Scripture. And they have also had to spin the Bible (Proverbs 4:18; Acts 1:6, etc) to force it to apparently explain all of Russell’s and Rutherford’s wrong food at the wrong time so that it either (1) comes out as right food at the right time, or else (2) that it doesn’t matter that it was wrong food at the wrong time.¹²⁷

NEXT: There is another major problem the Governing Body has had to deal with. Many former Witnesses and others *have* made the truly candid history of the Watchtower Society available in book form and on the Internet.¹²⁸ Their only defense has been to try to convince Jehovah’s Witnesses not to listen to anyone who has anything to say about the Society or its Governing Body. They have had to resort to a method that has been used throughout history by those in authority to keep those under their influence from learning what they prefer them not to know.

**The
Governing
Body
will not be able
to present
a candid
history
of their
organization
until they are
able to face
a candid
history of it.**

¹²⁷ See Chapter 7, “No False Teachings or Prophecies – Why Not?”

¹²⁸ See Chapter 18, “The Internet – The Watchtower’s Worst Nightmare” Most of the information that is being provided by ex-Witnesses and others is the Society’s own literature that Jehovah’s Witnesses have never seen.

Watchtower Propaganda Keeps Them Captive

THE Governing Body has had an excellent article about propaganda on their website.¹²⁹ If only Jehovah's Witnesses could apply the information *to the Society* they might be able to realize that they are the victims of Watchtower propaganda. But of course, if they did apply it that way they would be disfellowshipped.

It discusses various ways 'the cunning propagandist agitates the emotions by exploiting insecurities, by capitalizing on the ambiguity of language.' They then point out several 'tricks and tactics' such propagandists use "which prove all too effective."

Here is one of the tricks they say the cunning propagandist uses...

*Some people insult those who disagree with them by **questioning...motives** instead of focusing on the facts.*

**The
Governing
Body
does the
exact same
thing that
they say
"the
cunning
propagandist"
does.**

And yet this is *exactly* what the Governing Body does in their March 15, 1986 *Watchtower* where they are referring to "those who disagree with them"...

*Some opposers claim that Jehovah's Witnesses are false prophets. These opponents say that dates have been set, but nothing has happened. Again we ask, **What is the motive of these critics?** -p. 19*

Instead of "focusing on the facts" that the Society has indeed set many dates "but nothing has happened," they immediately 'insult those who disagree with them by questioning their motives,' *just like they say the cunning propagandist does.*

And there is something else they do that they say the cunning propagandist does—"Name-calling"...

¹²⁹ www.watchtower.org – Search "Propaganda." The article originally appeared in their June 22, 2000 *Awake!* magazine.

*Name-calling slaps a **negative, easy-to-remember label** onto a person, a group, or an idea. The name-caller hopes that the label will stick. If people reject the person or the idea on the basis of the negative label instead of weighing the evidence for themselves, the name-caller's strategy has worked.*

In the above March 15, 1986 *Watchtower* the Governing Body “slaps” those who disagree with them with the negative labels—**opposers**, **opponents** and **critics**. In that same article they repeatedly use their all-time favorite negative, easy-to-remember label—**apostate!** This latter label really sticks because it convinces Jehovah’s Witnesses to “reject the person or the idea on the basis of this negative label instead of weighing the evidence for themselves.”

Note their powerful propaganda in the same article that “agitates the emotions” and is obviously not designed to encourage Witnesses to weigh any evidence for themselves...

Their favorite Name-calling label is “apostate.”

The Devil and other opposers of true worship are skilled in deception. We should never forget that they stand every ready to break our integrity if they can. Their propaganda is designed to weaken our faith, to cool our love for God...The only satisfaction, of a perverted kind, may come in beginning to beat one's fellow slaves with slander and half-truths.... At Proverbs 11:9 we are told, “By the mouth of the one who is an apostate brings his fellowman to ruin.”...Therefore, resolve in your heart that you will never even touch the poison that apostates want you to sip. Heed the wise but firm commands of Jehovah to avoid completely those who would deceive you, mislead you, turn you aside into the ways of death. If we love Jehovah with our whole heart, soul, and mind, while loving our neighbor as we love ourselves, we will have no room for penetration by apostate thinking.¹³⁰

‘Anyone who reads “Captives of a Concept” is breaking the two greatest commandments Jesus gave to mankind.’

Mark 12:30,31

This article includes a picture with the caption, “Do you wisely destroy **apostate** material?” It shows a Witness

¹³⁰ March 15, 1986 *Watchtower*, page 14. When the Society exposes other religions they say that it is “in imitation of Christ.” But when others do the same thing to them it is ‘in imitation of Satan.’ - See *Proclaimers* book page 122

throwing a letter she just received in the garbage even before the mailman has left her porch. Next to it under the heading, “Have No Dealings With **Apostates**” the Governing Body again does the very same thing they say that the cunning propagandist does. Instead of “focusing on the facts” they ‘bend the rules of logic’ with the following reasoning...

*What will you do if you receive a letter or some literature, open it, and see right away that it is from an **apostate**? Will curiosity cause you to read it, just to see what he has to say? ... If out of curiosity, we were to read the literature of a known **apostate**, would that not be the same as inviting this **enemy of true worship** right into our home to sit down with us and relate his **apostate ideas**?... We need not conclude that we have to read a book¹³¹ or a pamphlet that is **filled with slander and half-truths** in order to refute the **false claims** and teachings of **opposers**.*

**The
Governing
Body always
reinforces
their
propaganda by
insisting that
what they are
saying is coming
from God.**

And if all the above isn't enough to convince Jehovah's Witnesses not to read anything *about* the Society that isn't written *by* the Society,¹³² they liken whatever “apostates” want them to look at to “pornographic material” that would result in “spiritual fornication.”¹³³ And, as they always do, they bring in their biggest ‘Gun’ of all...

*When a fellow human tells us, ‘Do not read this’ or, ‘Do not listen to that,’ we may be tempted to ignore his advice. But remember, in this case **Jehovah is the One who tells us in his Word what to do**. And what does he say about **apostates**? “Avoid them.”*

The March 1, 2002 *Watchtower* shows that nothing has

¹³¹ Two books the Governing Body was especially concerned about in 1986 (and ever since) were *Apocalypse Delayed* by Professor of History and Religious Studies James Penton, and *Crisis of Conscience*, written by their former associate and fellow member of their Body, Raymond Franz. The Governing Body has never attempted to point out any slander or half-truths in these books. Their only defense has been to try to convince Jehovah's Witnesses not to read what *anyone* has to say about the Watchtower Society or its Governing Body. Without ever mentioning names, this would include Penton and Franz.

¹³² The literature that these so-called “apostates” are trying to encourage Witnesses to look at is the Society's own literature. Their *older* literature that tells the truth about what the Society used to teach, and their *newer* literature that so often misrepresents what they use to teach. – See Chapter 12, “What They Say Is Not What They Always Do.”

¹³³ Again, the “material” that “apostates” want Witnesses to notice is their own literature.

changed since 1986...

*“Satan himself keeps transforming himself into an angel of light,” we are told. Likewise, **his servants, including apostates, are “deceitful workers”** who “also keep transforming themselves in ministers of righteousness.” If we entertain the **false reasonings** of such ones, our confidence in Jehovah’s Word of truth, the Bible, can be weakened and **our faith can die.** – page 11.¹³⁴*

In the February 15, 2004 *Watchtower* they ask, “How can we guard against being deceived by **apostates**?”¹³⁵ The answer of course is to know the truth about their organization. They cannot be deceived if they know the truth. But the Governing Body’s answer is for Witnesses to “avoid them by steering clear of their reasonings—whether in person, in printed form or on the Internet.”

If the Governing Body had told the Witnesses the truth about the organization’s history in the first place they would not now have to work so hard to try to keep them from listening to those who *are* telling them the truth. But of course, if they *had* told these people the truth in the first place they would not now be Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Their propaganda not only demonizes *people*, it also demonizes religious *literature* that isn’t written by the Watchtower Society...

*It would be foolhardy, as well as a waste of valuable time, for Jehovah’s Witnesses to accept and expose themselves to **false religious literature that is designed to deceive ...** Hence, it is out of wisdom and respect for God’s counsel that Jehovah’s Witnesses do not make a practice of exchanging valuable Bible study aids containing Scriptural truth for religious literature that disseminates error or **apostate** views.¹³⁶*

If the Governing Body had told the truth about the organization’s history in the first place they would not now have to work so hard to try keep the Witnesses from listening to those who are telling them the truth about it.

They demonize religious literature that isn’t written by the Society.

¹³⁴ In the December 1, 2002 *Watchtower* their propaganda shows up again when they say, “We can deflect and extinguish Satan’s burning missiles of false accusations and **apostate** teachings.” p. 22

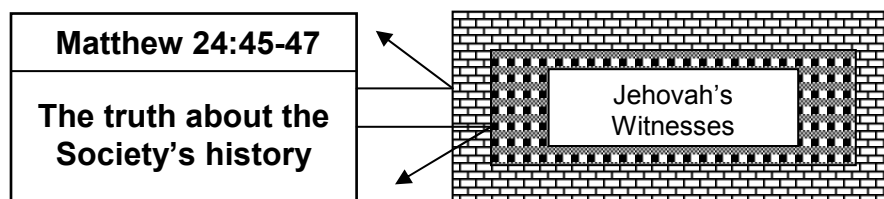
¹³⁵ “Apostate” is the most hateful, disparaging term in Watchtower vocabulary. And yet, on page 15 of the December 1, 1998 *Watchtower* the say, “It would be unscriptural for us to use disparaging terms when referring to ones who do not share our beliefs.

¹³⁶ May 1, 1984 *Watchtower*, “Questions From Readers,” p. 31. Here too, the so-called “false religious literature” that the Governing Body was most concerned about in 1984 was written by their former Governing Body member, Raymond Franz.

Those who are captives of their God's organization concept are unable to notice that what they are being told has nothing to do with "respect for God's counsel" but rather is simple propaganda that misleads them to distrust those outside their religion who are telling them the truth, while at the same time keeps them trusting those inside their religion who are unable and/or unwilling to tell them the truth.¹³⁷

The Governing Body's propaganda is like a thick brick wall that keeps those outside the organization (who know the truth) from reaching those on the inside (who don't know the truth). But it isn't just Watchtower **propaganda** that bocks them. Many have created their own inner wall of **willful blindness** that keeps them from wanting to notice anything that might suggest that the Watchtower Society may not be God's organization.¹³⁸

The truth about the organization's history has a difficult time reaching Jehovah's Witnesses.



Witnesses believe that if they remain loyal to "God's organization" they may never have to die.

There are numerous reasons why it is so difficult for Jehovah's Witnesses to want to find out that the Society is not God's organization. Some of them are discussed in Chapter 17, "No Honorable Way Out of the Watchtower Religion." One belief in particular is a major factor for many Witnesses. It is a hand-me-down from Rutherford's *Millions Now Living Will Never Die*.

They believe that the end of this present "system of things" is so close that as long as they remain loyal to God and "his organization"¹³⁹ they will continue to live on into God's "new world that is about to replace the present, wicked, lawless system of things" in which "death will be

¹³⁷ On page 17 of the March 1, 2003 *Watchtower* Witnesses are reminded, "Trusting in Jehovah means trusting those whom he trusts. For example, Jehovah has arranged for 'the faithful and discreet slave' to care for the earthly Kingdom interests... We trust in Jehovah's arrangement." This is another mistake all Witnesses make.

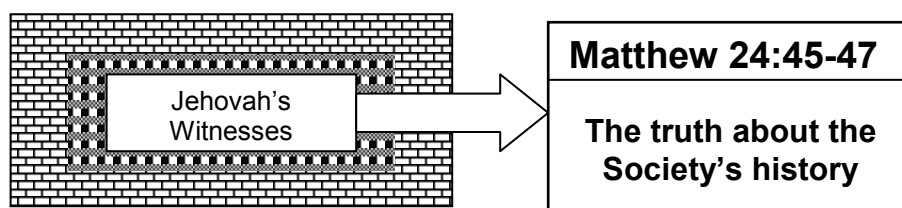
¹³⁸ I can recall a period of time when I purposely would not look into the organization's history because I wasn't ready to notice anything that might suggest that the Society was not what I thought it was.

¹³⁹ As explained on page 49, in order for Witnesses be loyal to "God's organization" they must be loyal to the men of their Governing Body by accepting whatever they are currently teaching whether it is true or not.

no more.”¹⁴⁰ It is this promise, which they are told is “the Creator’s promise,” that attracts many people to accept their offer of a free Bible study. Once they become convinced that the Society is God’s organization then that hope sustains them through whatever hardships they have to face.

But if the Society is *not* God’s organization then that would mean that that belief, as it is presented, may be just as much an illusion as is their “God’s organization.” It’s not easy to go from believing that you are never going to die to all of a sudden realize that you are. But this is one of the realities that Witnesses must eventually be willing to face if they want to stop living an illusion and let go of the concept that has been holding them captive.

In order to weigh the evidence for themselves they will have to somehow push through both their own inner wall of willful blindness and that outer wall of Watchtower propaganda, rhetoric, sophistry,¹⁴¹ intimidation and the guilt associated with questioning or doubting “God’s organization.” This is very difficult for them to do. In fact it may be impossible without divine intervention.¹⁴²



It's not easy for Witnesses to go from believing that they are never going to die to all of a sudden realize that they are.

It would seem that it will take divine intervention to overcome Watchtower propaganda.

NEXT: What about the fact they all believe the same no matter where they live on earth? They are told that this is one of the proofs that the Society is God’s organization. Doesn’t this count for anything? Not when it is realized *why* they have their “unity of belief.”

¹⁴⁰ The Scripture they like to quote when going door-to-door is Revelation 21:4, which says, “And [God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.” Who would not want to be around when that happens? But they believe that in order to be around when that happens one must have “approved association with Jehovah’s Witnesses.” See next chapter, p.80.

¹⁴¹ Sophistry: “Clever or plausible but unsound and tending to mislead.” - Webster

¹⁴² See “The Kind of Witness God Chooses to Help” on page 120.

Why Jehovah's Witnesses Have Unity of Belief

ONE of the things that keeps Jehovah's Witnesses convinced that the Watchtower Society is God's organization is the fact that no matter where they live on earth they all believe the same. But the question is, Why do they have their "unity of belief"? They will answer this question the same way the July 15, 1996 *Watchtower* answers it...

*Since our beliefs are based on God's Word, all of us speak in agreement.*¹⁴³

The actual reason why all Jehovah's Witnesses believe the same can be seen by looking at their teachings that have changed.

But this too is just an illusion. The real reason why they all "speak in agreement" can be seen by looking at their teachings that have changed, such as those mentioned in Chapter 3. What Witnesses don't notice is that they have had this same unity of belief even when the Society's teachings have *not* been based on the Bible.¹⁴⁴ This means that there must be another fundamental reason why they all believe the same.

One of the times this reason showed up was in a court case in Scotland in 1954. Although this example has to do with just one of their former teachings, the principle that came out of that trial applies to all their teachings whether they have ever changed or not.

The Walsh Court Case

During that trial, former Vice President Hayden Covington¹⁴⁵ was being questioned about the Society's former

¹⁴³ The June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* lists this as the first reason listed under the heading, "Identifying Marks of Those Having God's Backing" - p. 13

¹⁴⁴ Whatever they are *currently* teaching is *always* said to be "based on the Bible." But when a teaching has to be changed it should become evident to Witnesses that it had *not* been based on the Bible. But it doesn't register this way with them. Changes in teachings are always presented as 'progressive revelation (according to Proverbs 4:18), which proves that God is continuing to refine his organization.' And so this is how Witnesses view such changes.

¹⁴⁵ Covington was the Society's vice president from 1942 to 1945. — *Proclaimers* book, p. 91.

teaching that Jesus had returned in 1874 to begin his Second Coming. Note carefully the reason he gave as to *why* Jehovah's Witnesses had unity of belief about that teaching even though it was not true and therefore had not been based on the Bible...

Q: *It was promulgated as a matter which must [have been] believed by all members of Jehovah's Witnesses that the Lord's Second Coming took place in 1874...?*

A: *It was a false statement or an erroneous statement in fulfillment of a prophecy that was false or erroneous.*

Q: *And that had to be believed by the whole of Jehovah's Witnesses?*

A: *Yes, because you must understand we must have unity ...*

Q: *Back to the point now. A false prophecy was promulgated?*

A: *I agree to that.*¹⁴⁶

Q: *It had to be accepted by Jehovah's Witnesses?*

A: *That is correct.*

Q: *If a member of Jehovah's Witnesses took the view himself that that prophecy was wrong and said so, he would be disfellowshipped?*

A: *Yes ... Our purpose is to have unity.*

Q: *Unity at all costs?*

A: *Unity at all costs...*

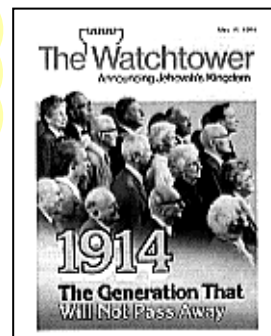
Q: *A unity based upon an enforced acceptance of false prophecy?*

A: *That is conceded to be true.*¹⁴⁷

Former vice president Hayden Covington acknowledged that unity of belief in this case was not because their teaching was based on the Bible but because it was "based upon an enforced acceptance of false prophecy."

There was no suggestion that their unity of belief on this subject was because it was based on the Bible. Covington knew that if it was the Society would still be teaching it in 1954, just as they would still be teaching it today. The reason he ultimately had to concede was that their unity of belief was "based on enforced acceptance." Witnesses were forced to either (1) accept that admitted "false prophecy" so the Society could maintain its "unity at all costs," or else (2) be disfellowshipped so the Society could maintain it.

In order to see that this is still the reality today, the following example will deal with their more recent former teaching that the generation of 1914 would not pass away before the "new world" will be here.



¹⁴⁶ This may be the only time in history when a Watchtower representative admitted that the Society has ever produced a "false prophecy." But this admission has never appeared in the Society's literature. See Chapter 7, "No False Teachings or Prophecies – Why Not?"

¹⁴⁷ See pages 24 and 25 of *In Search of Christian Freedom* for the transcript of this portion of the trial.

For many years that teaching was said to be “the Creator’s promise” in the masthead page of every *Awake!* magazine until it was abandoned in November of 1995.¹⁴⁸ As in the case of their teaching about Jesus’ Second Coming in 1874, this one too had to be believed as long as the Society was teaching it even though it had never been based on the Bible.

Governing Body’s Letter September 1, 1980¹⁴⁹

The Society’s teaching about the generation of 1914 was said to be “the Creator’s promise” until they stopped teaching it in 1995. Witnesses are told not to think of that teaching as having been “false” but that it was simply “an expectation needing some adjustment.”
See Chapter 7

By 1980 there were some Witnesses who had concluded on their own that the Society’s **generation** of 1914 teaching was not based on the Bible—fifteen years before the Governing Body was able to figure that out.

On September 1, 1980 the Governing Body sent a letter to all their traveling overseers, instructing them on how to handle Witnesses who refused to believe everything that the Governing Body was teaching at that time, which therefore included the one about the generation of 1914. The first thing to notice in their letter is that whereas in 1954 Witnesses would have to *say* or *promote* their contrary view in order to be disfellowshipped, this 1980 letter says...

*Keep in mind that to be disfellowshipped, an apostate¹⁵⁰ **does not have to be a promoter of apostate views.***

Keep their generation of 1914 teaching in mind while reading the Governing Body’s reasoning...

*If a baptized [Witness] abandons the teachings of Jehovah,¹⁵¹ **as presented by the faithful and discreet slave...***

¹⁴⁸Before November of 1995 the *Awake!* said, “Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator’s promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.” But in November of 1995 that statement was changed to read, “Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator’s promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.” Jehovah’s Witnesses don’t notice that this change means that prior to 1995 it must have been just the Governing Body’s promise.

¹⁴⁹ See photocopy of this letter on pages 292 and 293 of *Crisis of Conscience*.

¹⁵⁰ The Society uses the word “apostate” to refer to any Witness or ex-Witness who disagrees with whatever is currently being taught, even if what the “apostate” believes is true and the Society’s teaching is false!

Notice that they are not talking about abandoning “the teachings of Jehovah” as presented in the Bible, but “as presented by the faithful and discreet slave” which means the men of the Governing Body since they are the ones doing all the presenting. But their generation of 1914 teaching was *not* one of the “teachings of Jehovah” (as the Governing Body discovered fifteen years after they wrote this letter). Therefore, those who had abandoned *that* teaching had only abandoned one of the Governing Body’s false teachings. Their letter continues...

*If [a Witness] persists in believing other doctrine...if ...he continues to believe the apostate ideas and rejects **what has been provided through the “slave class”** then appropriate judicial action should be taken [i.e. Disfellowshipping].*

Here again their concern is for Witnesses who abandon, not what is provided through the Bible, but through the “slave class” which again refers to the men of the Governing Body since they are the ones doing all the providing.

Therefore, any Witness who abandoned that false generation of 1914 teaching before the Governing Body abandoned it in 1995 was to be disfellowshipped for apostasy even though it was the Governing Body that had been guilty of not only teaching something that wasn’t true, but had presumptuously put Jehovah’s name on it. It was just another one of the teachings of the Watchtower that they had falsely claimed was one of “the teachings of Jehovah.”

Notice how the above letter would look now that it is known that their generation of 1914 teaching was not true...

*‘If a Witness abandons **the Governing Body’s false teaching** about the generation of 1914; if he continues to reject **their false teaching** then he must be disfellowshipped.’*

If a Witness abandons a Watchtower teaching they are disfellowshipped for “apostasy.” But if the Governing Body abandons that same teaching, it is “new light from God.”

Why is it alright for the most responsible men in the organization to put God’s name on their false teachings by

¹⁵¹ Recall back on pages 60 and 61 when they said, “Never did they say, ‘These are the words of Jehovah.’” But again, is there a difference between saying, “These are the *words* of Jehovah” and “These are the *teachings* of Jehovah”?

calling them “the teachings of Jehovah,” but it is not alright for the most lowly Witnesses to reject such teachings? The answer? “Because the Society is God’s organization.”¹⁵²

April 1, 1986 Watchtower

Six years later the *April 1, 1986 Watchtower* warned Jehovah’s Witnesses again about the requirement that they must accept everything the Governing Body is teaching at any given time...

What goes unnoticed is that so many of the Society’s teachings that they said were “true teachings of the Bible” were not. And yet Witnesses have been required to believe them or be disfellowshipped.

Approved association with Jehovah’s Witnesses requires accepting the entire range of the true teachings of the Bible, including those Scriptural beliefs that are unique to Jehovah’s Witnesses. p. 31

When this article was written in 1986 the generation of 1914 teaching was still one of their ‘unique beliefs.’ Although it wasn’t a ‘true teaching of the Bible’ or a ‘Scriptural belief,’ Jehovah’s Witnesses were still *required* to accept it or be disfellowshipped. Such statements never take into account that so many of the Society’s teachings that they *said* were “the true teachings of the Bible” *were not*.¹⁵³

Once the Governing Body rejected that teaching in November of 1995, from then on in order to have “approved association with Jehovah’s Witnesses” everyone else had to reject it. In other words, in order to have unity of belief *before* 1995 Witnesses were required to *accept* that teaching. But in order to have their unity of belief *after* 1995 they were required to *reject* it. If the Governing Body would express themselves the way things are in actual practice, their above statement would look like this...

The Reality ➡

‘Your approved association with the men of the Governing Body requires that you accept the entire range of their teachings whether they are the true teachings of the Bible or not.’

¹⁵² Jehovah’s Witnesses don’t notice how often they accept the Society’s explanations and interpretations solely because they believe it is God’s organization rather than because they can really understand them or because they are clearly stated in the Bible.

¹⁵³ Chapter 3 only covers some of their teachings between 1876 and 1919 that have changed. Many others have changed since 1919.

This is the reality. But if they *did* express themselves this way, who would pay any attention to them? It's possible that they don't express it this way because *even they do not realize that this is the reality.*

Playing By Watchtower Rules Or Else!

When the leadership realizes that one of their teachings is not true they never call it “false.” Rather it is referred to as “old light” that is replaced with “new light” according to the way they interpret Proverbs 4:18.¹⁵⁴ Only those who are willing to play by these rules are granted “approved association with Jehovah’s Witnesses.”¹⁵⁵

Approved association with their religious leaders requires accepting the entire range of their teachings whether they are based on the Bible or not.

| Why Jehovah’s Witnesses Have Unity of Belief | |
|--|---|
| <i>Illusion</i> | <i>Reality</i> |
| Because they base all their teachings on the Bible. ¹⁵⁶ | Because their Governing Body does not allow anyone in their religion who disagrees with them—even if what they are teaching isn’t true. |

NEXT: Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that the Bible is the final authority for what they believe. But this too is just another illusion they must live in if they want to remain in good standing within “The Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses.”

¹⁵⁴ See Chapter 7, “No False Teachings or Prophecies – Why Not?”

¹⁵⁵ On page 136 of *Reasoning from the Scriptures* they explain: “Matters on which corrections of viewpoint have been needed have been relatively minor.” Question: Announcing the wrong date for the Second Coming of Christ for 67 years was “relatively minor”? How minor is it when a religion puts God’s name on their false teachings (i.e. “the teachings of Jehovah”) no matter how minor those teachings may be? And how minor is it for the Witnesses who have been disfellowshipped and lost their relationship with all of their friends and family members because they could not accept one of the Society’s relatively minor matters?

¹⁵⁶ In a footnote on page 633 of the *Proclaimers* book the Governing Body quietly acknowledges that the Society’s dates that turned out to be incorrect had been “based on misunderstandings” rather than based on the Bible. Unfortunately, many families have been destroyed because of the leadership’s “misunderstandings.” Many of their remarkably similar experiences are posted on the Internet.

The Final Authority of Watchtower Teachings

THE Watchtower has produced many fine articles dealing with the need to study the Bible in order to gain understanding and discernment of God's Will. One of the first Scriptures Witnesses learn is 2 Timothy 3:16...

All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.

Prior to 1985 the 2nd question of the Society's baptismal vows expressed it like this...

*Have you dedicated yourself to **God** to do his will henceforth as he reveals it to you through **Jesus Christ** and through the **Bible** under the enlightenment of the **holy spirit**?*¹⁵⁷

Jehovah's Witnesses think in terms of getting their Bible beliefs from God through Jesus Christ with the help of the Holy Spirit. But this too is just another illusion.

They may picture a sort of 'chain of command' looking something like this...



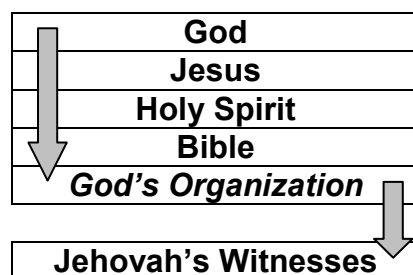
But this too is just another illusion because this is not how it works. The October 1, 1967 *Watchtower* makes it very clear that God doesn't reveal anything to anyone on

¹⁵⁷ In 1985 the Governing Body removed every direct reference to "God," "Jesus Christ," "the Holy Spirit" and "the Bible" from this 2nd question and replaced them with the Watchtower organization! Like this: "Do you understand that your dedication and baptism identify you as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in association with God's spirit-directed organization?" This states it the way things really are. This vow brings them into association with the men in Brooklyn, NY rather than the God in heaven. – June 1, 1985 *Watchtower*

earth apart from the Watchtower organization...

*The Bible is an organizational book and belongs to the Christian congregation as an organization, **not to individuals**, regardless of how sincerely they may believe that they can interpret the Bible. For this reason the Bible cannot be properly understood without Jehovah's visible organization in mind. [The Watchtower Society] is serving as "[God's] sole visible channel, **through whom alone spiritual instruction was to come.** Those who recognize Jehovah's visible theocratic organization therefore must recognize and accept this appointment of the "faithful and discreet slave" and be submissive to it.¹⁵⁸*

The following graphic represents what is being said here...



This correctly shows that Jehovah's Witnesses don't receive their "teaching, reproving and setting things straight" directly from the Bible. These things reach them *only after they have been filtered through "God's organization."* This explains why every time the organization gets something wrong all the rest of Jehovah's Witnesses also get it wrong. — See the forty-eight teachings in Chapter 3 that they all got wrong.

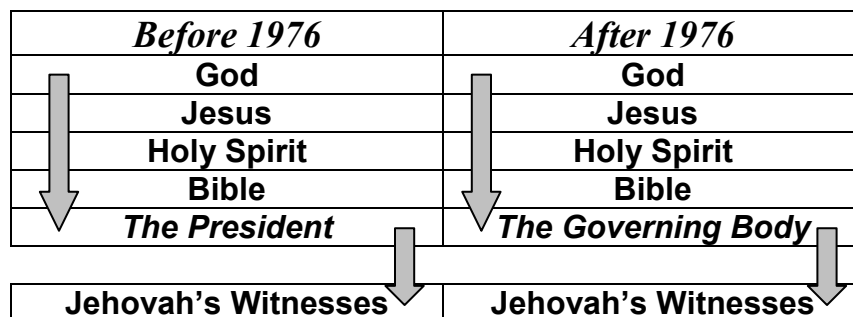
But this still doesn't show the reality. As explained previously, when it comes to the *source* of the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, the term "God's organization" refers to the men who are hidden behind that term. And so these men need to be seen...

Although they may not realize what they are saying, they are in fact saying, 'No one on earth can properly understand the Bible unless they are submissive to the men of the Watchtower's Governing Body!'

Witnesses receive their teachings of the Bible only after they have been filtered through "God's organization."

¹⁵⁸ October 1, 1967 *Watchtower*, pp. 587,590. One would *have* to be a captive of the Watchtower's organizational concept to be able to read this and not notice anything wrong with it.

Witnesses have never received their Spiritual instruction directly from the Bible. They have always received it from the few men forming the leadership of the Watchtower religion.



This now correctly shows that Jehovah's Witnesses have always received their "spiritual instruction," not from an abstract "God's organization," but from the very few men who have formed the leadership of the Watchtower religion. Today it is just as that **March 15, 1998 Watchtower** correctly states...

The Witnesses gladly look [not to the Bible but] to the mature brothers of the Governing Body for direction and guidance in matters of worship.¹⁵⁹

Although they have their own Bible translation and are encouraged to read it, they are not free to understand anything in it that is different than the way "the mature brothers of the Governing Body" understand it. Today, any Witness who tries to bypass the Governing Body in an effort to understand the Bible on their own becomes subject to being disfellowshipped for apostasy.

But there is still one final adjustment that needs to be made in the above graphic in order for it to fit the true reality of this religion. Although it correctly shows that the Witnesses don't get *their* Bible understanding directly from God through Jesus or the Holy Spirit, *it gives the false impression that their religious leaders do*. But it is evident that they didn't get any of those teachings mentioned in Chapter 3 from God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit or the Bible. Therefore, a graphic representation should show that fact...

¹⁵⁹ Witnesses who *don't* 'gladly look to the Governing Body for their guidance and direction' are disfellowshipped!

| <i>Before 1976</i> | <i>After 1976</i> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - | - |
| - | - |
| - | - |
| - | - |
| <i>The President</i> | <i>The Governing Body</i> |
| Jehovah's Witnesses | Jehovah's Witnesses |

OR

| <i>Before 1976</i> | <i>Since 1976</i> |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>The President</i> | <i>The Governing Body</i> |
| Jehovah's Witnesses | Jehovah's Witnesses |

← **The Reality**

This is the reality. This is obviously the way it has been when it comes to the Society's teachings that have not been true. It visually shows that those teachings did not come from God through Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit or the Bible. They came from the "misunderstandings" of their religious leaders. The reason those teachings were not true was not due to the Society's explanation that 'God chose to reveal the truth about them progressively' (according to the way they interpret Proverbs 4:18).¹⁶⁰ Those teachings were not true simply because they didn't get any help from God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit or the Bible—just as the above graphic depicts.

The reason why they have had to change their teachings is not because of Proverbs 4:18 but because they didn't get any help from God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit or the Bible.

But what about their teachings that really are "the true teachings of the Bible"? For example, they and the Bible both teach that "Jesus is the Son of God."¹⁶¹ Did they get that "Scriptural belief" from God through Jesus Christ under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit because they are God's organization? There are reasons to answer "No."

In the first place, according to their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47 there is no reason to believe that the Watchtower Society has ever been God's organization.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ See Society's interpretation and application of Proverbs 4:18 beginning on page 63.

¹⁶¹ John 20:31

¹⁶² See Chapter 3, "48 Teachings Jesus Examined."

***Their
concept of
“God’s
organization”
prevents
them from
noticing that
the Bible is not
the final au-
thority for
what they
believe.***

And so, there is no reason to believe that God has **exclusively** revealed anything to them. And secondly, the fact that they sometimes teach the same things the Bible teaches doesn’t prove anything more than the fact that David Koresh and Jim Jones sometimes taught the same things the Bible teaches.¹⁶³

| The Final Authority For What Jehovah’s Witnesses Believe | |
|---|--|
| <i>Illusion</i> | <i>Reality</i> |
| The Bible | Prior to 1976: The President Since 1976: The Governing Body |

NEXT: The following chapter will present a few important examples which show that although the men of the Governing Body understand what it means to be honest, they are not always able to tell the truth about the organization’s history because the truth doesn’t fit what they want (or need) to believe. This practice more than any other would seem to demonstrate their apparent lack of sufficient “love of the truth” that the apostle Paul mentioned. For if they *loved* the truth it would seem that they would not be able to do what they are so often caught doing in the next chapter.

¹⁶³ It would be difficult for the Society to have the Bible for over one hundred years and not understand *anything* correctly.

What They Say Is Not What They Always Do

THE Governing Body knows what it means to be honest as can be seen from the way they define the word...

What Does It Mean To Be Honest?

To be honest means to be truthful ...Honesty requires you to be ...straightforward...not deceptive or misleading...Reasonably, only truthful men qualify to represent [God].¹⁶⁴

Jehovah's Witnesses naturally assume that these men do what they say about honesty. They view them as the most honest men on earth since they claim to represent "the only true God" in "the only true religion." But, as will be shown, they do not always *do* what they *say* about what it means to be honest.¹⁶⁵

There is difference between **making a mistake** and **being dishonest**. For example, Russell made a mistake when he prophesied that God was going to bring an end to a earthly kingdoms by the end of 1914. And so if the men of the Governing Body were "truthful men" they *must* be "straightforward, not deceptive or misleading" and simply acknowledge Russell's false prophecy.¹⁶⁶ But they cannot acknowledge that fact if they plan on keeping their illusionary "God's organization" going. As mentioned previously, they know that God would never have had anything to do with Russell if he had been a false prophet or even a false teacher. And since they are not ready to admit such a thing, their only alternative is to be less than honest.

In the following example they not only don't tell Jehovah's Witnesses that Russell's prophecy about 1914 was false, *they mislead them to believe that it came true.*

There is a big difference between making a mistake and being dishonest.

In order to uphold their illusionary "God's organization" they cannot always be honest.

¹⁶⁴ February 15, 1988 *Watchtower*, p. 4

¹⁶⁵ The religious leaders of Jesus' day had this same problem. That's why Jesus said about them, "Do not do according their deeds, for they say but do not perform." – Matthew 23:3

¹⁶⁶ What made Russell's mistake so serious was when he said that the prophecy about 1914 came from God, when in fact it had only come from Russell. See next page under the heading "The World Magazine."

“The World Magazine”

(August 30, 1914)

On page 60 of their *Proclaimers* book is a small insert with the heading, “Look Out for 1914.” It then correctly quotes the August 30, 1914 issue of *The World Magazine* (shown below) where it said...

Although the Governing Body correctly quotes “The World Magazine,” they lead the reader to believe something that is not true.

In those days Witnesses were known as “Millennial Dawners” because they believed that Christ’s millennial Reign had begun, or dawned, in 1873. Russell’s “25 Year Prophecy” had been written in 1889 in his book “The Time Is At Hand.”

As it turned out, the time was not at hand for the end of all Kingdoms in 1914.

*The terrific war outbreak in Europe has fulfilled an extraordinary prophecy.*¹⁶⁷

THE World Magazine, August 30, 1914

END OF ALL KINGDOMS IN 1914

“Millennial Dawners” 25 Year Prophecy



According to the Calculations of Rev. Russell’s “International Bible Students,” This is the “Time of Trouble.” Spoken of by the Prophet Daniel, the Year 1914 Predicted in the Book “The Time Is at Hand,” of which Four Million Copies Have Been Sold, as the Date of the Downfall of the Kingdoms of Earth.

The terrific war outbreak in Europe has fulfilled an extraordinary prophecy.

For a quarter of a century past, through preachers and through press, the “International Bible Students,” best known as “Millennial Dawners,” have been proclaiming to the world that the Day of Wrath prophesied in the Bible would dawn in 1914.

“Look out for 1914!” has been the cry of the hundreds of travelling evangelists who, representing this strange creed, have gone up and down the country expounding the doctrine that “the Kingdom of God is at hand.”

The Bible speaks of a “time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation.” This prophecy of Daniel the Millennialists identify as the “Day of Wrath,” the “Battle of Armageddon,” the “Time of the Lord,” and the so-called “End of the World,” reference to which are plentiful in the Scriptures.

Although millions of people must have listened to these evangelists, although one of their books, “The Time Is at Hand,” has had a circulation of more than four million copies, and although their propaganda has been carried on through religious publications and a number press agencies involving hundreds of country newspapers, as well as through lectures, debates, study classes, and even moving pictures, the average man does not know that such a movement as the “Millennial Dawn” exists.

He knows the leader’s face, perhaps, having seen it hundreds of times at the head of some “religious world by the preaching of the Gospel? Would that it might be so! But the Scriptures show us that such will not be the case. It is evidently not the saints who are to constitute the Lord’s great army, referred to by the prophets. The army of the saints is but a “little flock,” while here is the Bible’s description of the army which they depend for defense,” he wrote, “are the armies of the common people. These millions of disciplined warriors have wives and sons and daughters and brothers and sisters and friends in the ranks of the common people, with whose interests their own are linked. Their armies of thousands and kingdoms is secured only by imposed orders, and made endurable by a remuneration which they are not willing to consider as satisfactory compensation for the hardships and privations they and their families must undergo, not to mention perils of

“...a strong people not in battle array.”

“Before their face the people shall be much pained, all faces shall gather blackness. They shall run like mighty men, they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall dash every one on his way, and they shall not touch their ranks. And they do not press one another, every one on his beaten track do they go forward; and they pass through between warlike weapons, and change not their purpose.”

“Into the city they hasten forward; they will run upon the wall; they shall climb into the houses, through the windows they make their entrance like a thief. The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army; for his camp is very great; for he is strong that smote his word; for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?” (Isa. 34: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.)

This, these Bible students have been claiming since 1894, is a Scriptural description of the army which was to overrun the earth in 1914. But what was there such an army? In the same book Rev. Russell speculated on the subject and reached two very definite conclusions.

First, this description did not apply to any undisciplined mob. Second, there was so little time for the prophecy to be fulfilled that the army must, even then, have been forming somewhere. The author did not declare it as an absolute certainty, but reasoned that the great army which was to destroy the nations was the very army already being recruited by them in order to perpetuate their national lives.

“The armies on which they depend for defense,” he wrote, “are the armies of the common people. These millions of disciplined warriors have wives and sons and daughters and brothers and sisters and friends in the ranks of the common people, with whose interests their own are linked. Their armies of thousands and kingdoms is secured only by imposed orders, and made endurable by a remuneration which they are not willing to consider as satisfactory compensation for the hardships and privations they and their families must undergo, not to mention perils of

¹⁶⁷ The first page of *The World Magazine* article (above) appeared on page 13 of the August 15, 1989 *Watchtower*. It is difficult to believe that this article was written by some unbiased news reporter. The wording and the reasoning comes across just like Russell’s way of writing. It is very possible that this is simply one of his articles that he was able to have published in this magazine. But the Governing Body quotes it to give the impression that even a worldly magazine recognized that Russell’s prophecy came true. The March 15, 1955 *Watchtower* quotes from this article on pages 173-176.

But the Governing Body must know, or they certainly *should* know that *that magazine was mistaken*. Russell had not prophesied the beginning of a war in Europe in 1914. In fact on page 226 of the July 15, 1894 *Watch Tower* he predicted the exact opposite...

*Bear in mind that the end of 1914 is **not** the date for the **beginning**, but the **end** of the time of trouble.*

The prophecy *The World Magazine* article was referring to was contained in its title, “**END OF ALL KINGDOMS IN 1914**” (which is not mentioned in the *Proclaimers* book). That was what Russell had prophesied twenty-five years earlier in 1889 on page 99 of *The Time Is At Hand*...

*Within the coming twenty-six years all present governments will be overthrown and dissolved.... We consider it an established truth that the final **END OF [ALL] KINGDOMS** of this world...will be accomplished by the end of A.D. **1914**. – 1889 Edition¹⁶⁸*

But obviously that’s not what happened in 1914. Not even *one* kingdom came to its end by God, let alone *all* of them. And so, why would the Governing Body ever want to refer anyone to this article which proves that Russell’s prophecy was false?

Apparently someone in the organization noticed that the title - “**END OF ALL KINGDOMS IN 1914**” - was *not* what happened. And so they realized that something needed to be done to explain this apparent false “extraordinary prophecy.” They’ve had two choices: (1) Admit that it was false, or (2) figure out a way to prevent the reader (and perhaps even themselves) from noticing that it was false. As stated above, the solution they chose in that insert on page 60 of the *Proclaimers* book was to simply not mention the article’s title. But on page 17 of the October 8, 1973 *Awake!*

What happened in 1914 was just the opposite of what Russell had foretold.

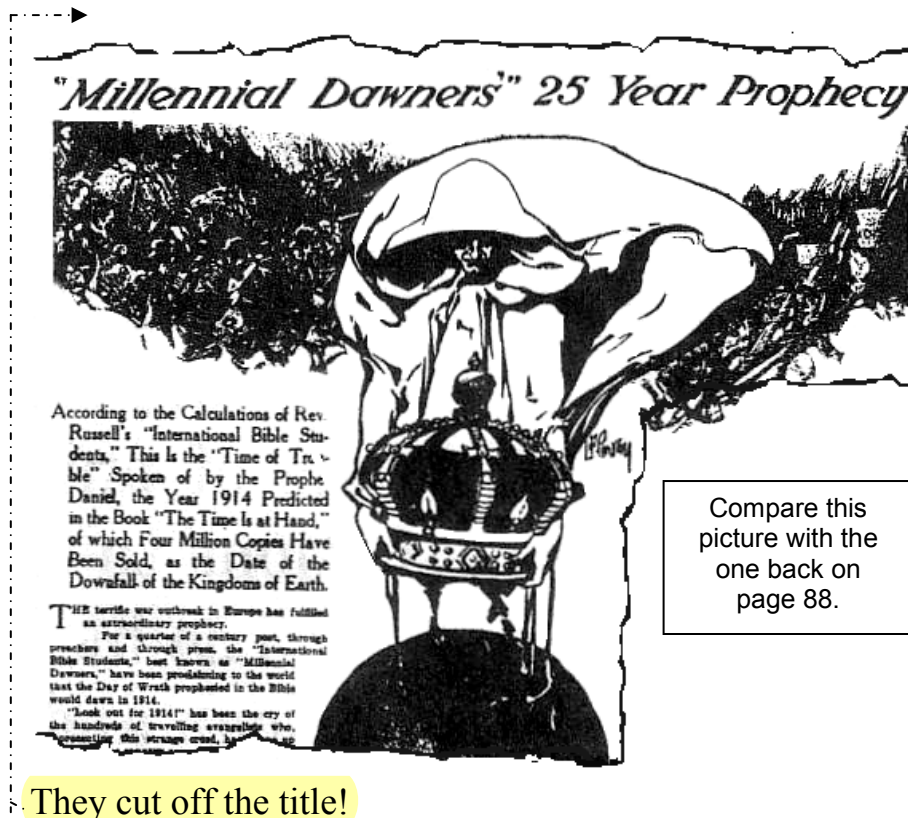


NOTE:

This clipping appears on page 560 of the *Proclaimers* book. It was originally written during World War I. It states that ‘for over 40 years Russell had taught that the present world war would commence in 1914.’ But that’s not true. Russell had foretold that “1914 is *not* the date for the *beginning* but the *end* of the time of trouble.”

¹⁶⁸ The March 15, 1955 *Watchtower* refers to the above August 30, 1914 *The World Magazine* article and includes the above quote from “The Time Is At Hand.” For whatever reason, the writer isn’t able to notice that what was going on by August 30, 1914 is not what Russell had prophesied in 1889. It didn’t happen “by the end of 1914” either. The post-1914 Editions of *The Time Is At Hand* changed “by the end of A.D. 1914” to “near the end of 1915 A.D.” But it didn’t happen near the end of 1915 either. As of the year 2005 it still hasn’t happened! See pages 99 and 101 of *The Time Is At Hand* at http://www.nsbible.org/sits_v2/v2s4.htm

they show the same front page of the article but with one important difference...



It doesn't bother Witnesses when their religious leaders don't tell them the truth because they don't realize they are not being told the truth.

Without a title the reader cannot see what 25-Year prophecy the magazine is referring to. The paragraph next to the *Proclaimers* book insert changes the prophecy from referring to the "end of all kingdoms in 1914," to the 'end of the Gentile Times in 1914.'¹⁶⁹ Although Russell *did* proclaim that the Gentile Times would end in 1914,¹⁷⁰ he did *not* proclaim that the terrific war outbreak in Europe would begin in 1914. But the way the insert and the paragraph next to it are written, they give the false impression that Russell's "extraordinary prophecy" came true when World War I broke out in Europe.

It doesn't bother Jehovah's Witnesses when their Governing Body misleads them like this because they don't realize that they are being misled. They tend not to notice anything their Governing Body doesn't tell them to notice.

¹⁶⁹ Russell's Gentile Times prophecy was a **38-year** (not 25-year) prophecy that he began to proclaim in 1876.

¹⁷⁰ See footnote #63 on page 36 where the Society changed the meaning of "the end of the Gentile Times."

They have been warned not to think beyond what they are told to think. Otherwise they may be accused of thinking independently of God and/or his organization which can easily gravitate to *disloyalty* to God and/or his organization.

It is not so easy to understand why it doesn't bother their Governing Body to publish information about the organization's history that they must know is not true. What molds their thinking in such a way that enables them to do this? One thing seems certain. It isn't molded by that love of the truth mentioned by the apostle Paul. And it would also seem that the operation of error he mentioned is very active in their thinking process. That error apparently convinces them that God doesn't mind if they are less than honest in order to convince those who listen to them that Russell's prophecy about 1914 came true.

The Point: Although Russell made a serious **mistake** when he put God's name on his own prophecy,¹⁷¹ what the Governing Body is doing to cover up his mistake is **dishonest**. And according to that principle Paul mentioned, the reason why they are dishonest is because they apparently do not have sufficient love of the truth to keep them honest. As long as they choose to believe the lie that "the Society is God's organization" they will never be able to be honest when talking about the organization's history that relates to that lie.¹⁷²

As long as they choose to believe the lie, they will be unable to be honest about the organization's history that relates to that lie.

Another example: Chapter 3 presented forty-eight instances when Russell and Rutherford had *dogmatically, immodestly, presumptuously and indiscreetly run ahead of God by wildly speculating* about numerous dates and events. With all these qualities in mind, take note of the following question and answer that the Governing Body allowed to be printed in the **June 1, 1997 Watchtower** where they state that the Society does not do *any* of these things...

¹⁷¹ Recall when Russell said that 1914 was one of "God's dates," not his. See bottom of page 33.

¹⁷² What if the Governing Body is not *deliberately* trying to mislead anyone? What if their misleading information is caused by living with their illusion for so long that they have lost track of what the reality is? If this is the case then they shouldn't be governing anyone.

QUESTION: *Why can we have utmost confidence in the faithful and discreet slave?*

ANSWER: *Modesty on the part of the faithful and discreet slave class...prevents it from **presumptuously running ahead** and **wildly speculating about things**...The slave class strives to avoid being **dogmatic**¹⁷³.... Never should we become impatient with Jehovah's [organization] **indiscreetly** trying to **rush ahead of God**.¹⁷⁴*

They say they do not do what the Society has done many times.

See 48 examples in Chapter 3

Rutherford said that the date 1874 was "Scripturally, scientifically, and historically correct beyond a doubt." How much more dogmatic can anyone be?

See footnote

They then conclude their point with this amazing statement...

*How reassuring it is to know that the channel Jehovah is using ... **does not do so**. It is both faithful and discreet.*

Such a statement is not just deceptive and misleading, it is outright false. The men of the Governing Body surely must know that Russell and Rutherford did all the things they say "the channel Jehovah is using does not do." And yet they allowed these dishonest statements to be published in millions of copies of their magazine all over the world.

Next example: On page 353 of *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached*, former President Frederick Franz is referring to their often mentioned Watchtower convention that was held in Cedar Point, Ohio on September 1-8, 1919. He said...

It indicated to the world who it was that the returned Lord Jesus had found to be his "faithful and discreet slave" class. This made the "slave" class happy.

But this too is not true. As explained in Chapter 3 under the heading "We Are Not Your Faithful & Discreet Slave," in 1919 the Society was still teaching that this "slave" was just one person, Charles Russell. They didn't teach that it

¹⁷³ While Rutherford was proclaiming the wrong date for Christ's Second Coming, he said that "present truth chronology" [pointing to 1874] was "Scripturally, scientifically, and historically correct beyond a doubt." How much more dogmatic can anyone be? But the year after his death the next president decided it wasn't "beyond a doubt" and changed the date to 1914. – See June 15, 1922 *Watch Tower*

¹⁷⁴ Here they are unintentionally saying that Russell and Rutherford were not discreet, because those men *did* "rush ahead of God" many times. Surely they had not been careful enough about what they said.

was a “class” of people until February of 1927. Rutherford and his associates would not have been “happy” about being Jesus’ “faithful and discreet slave” until that’s what they believed. And that didn’t happen until seven and one half years after the above Cedar Point convention. ➡

A final example of their misleading, deceptive kind of dishonesty shows up in the statement below. Here the Governing Body is quoting an unnamed Witness who was oblivious to the fact that he has ever been misled by the Society. His attitude is presented as an example that all Witnesses should have toward “Jehovah’s visible organization.” Under the heading “Confidence in the ‘Slave’” they quote this Witness as having said...

*Jehovah’s visible organization is a tremendously dependable source. **Never once has it misled me in any way.** Everything it has said has been based on God’s Word.*¹⁷⁵

While in the process of suggesting that they have never misled *anyone*, they are misleading *everyone*.

Whatever the cause of this practice¹⁷⁶ of not doing what they say about honesty, it comes as quite a shock to those who are able to notice it. Here is the reaction of a former elder from Ireland, Martin Merriman...

What really shocked me to my core was this: We were so convinced that the Governing Body would never tell one lie. They would always speak the truth no matter what the truth was. That is a fabrication; it is a lie. They have lied to us. They have deceived us. And we have the documented evidence. And because we have spoken about it, we were silenced. And that’s what will happen to any Jehovah’s Witness listening to this program. And he knows it in his heart.”¹⁷⁷

“How do such discrepancies get past the editors of the Watchtower? Are their writers so unfamiliar with their own history as published in their own literature? Or [have] even those who write the [literature] themselves become subject to the mind-altering effects of their own indoctrination? Otherwise, how can such blatant misrepresentations be defined as anything less than dishonest?”

Beacon

<http://www.xjw.com/1914lies.html>

¹⁷⁵ June 15, 1964 *Watchtower*, p.365. Note: None of the teachings considered in Chapter 3 were “based on God’s Word.” They were based on Russell’s and Rutherford’s “misinterpretations” of God’s word.

¹⁷⁶ These examples of dishonesty are not the exception. Whenever the dates 1914 or 1919 appear in their current literature, what is being said should be carefully checked to make sure that it is true. But checking up on “God’s organization” is something that is very dangerous for Jehovah’s Witnesses to be caught doing. When I was caught doing it I was told that Satan had gotten a hold of me.

¹⁷⁷ *Witnesses of Jehovah*, - <http://www.goodnewsdefenders.org/>

That “documented evidence” is contained in the Society’s own literature. This is why former elder Leonard Chretien said...

**“Their
greatest
enemy is
their own
literature.”**

*Their greatest enemy is their own literature.*¹⁷⁸

The evidence found in the *Proclaimers* book, for example, proves that so many of their teachings “down till 1919” did not meet their own standards set out in their interpretation of Matthew 24:45-47 (“right food at the right time”). Nor did they meet their standards they set in the June 1, 2001 *Watchtower* (“they must be only what God reveals in his Word”).

Astronomer Carl Sagan made the following observation about the Society’s explanation when the world did not end in 1914 as Russell had predicted for some thirty-eight years...

**‘It is
astonishing
that the
Watchtower
religion
has any
adherents
at all.’**

*One prominent American religion confidently predicted that the world would end in 1914.... It is astonishing in the face of such transparent evasions that this religion has any adherents at all... The fact that [the Watchtower Society] can be so **shamelessly dishonest**,¹⁷⁹ so contemptuous of the intelligence of [its] adherents, and still flourish does not speak very well for the tough-mindedness of [Jehovah’s Witnesses].¹⁸⁰*

THE WORLD HAS ENDED
Millions Now Living Will Never Die
Free Lecture by
HON. J. F. RUTHERFORD
Minister New York City Bar

To order that the world of this
lecture free of charge, send
your name, address, and
occupation to the Watchtower
Society, 1515 Broadway, New
York, N.Y. 10019.

AT HIPPODROME THEATRE
NATIONAL THEATRE
TEMPLE STREET NEAR ROSSLEY

There was a
period of time
after 1914 when
they taught that
the world
had in fact
ended in 1914.

While it is easy to apply the apostle Paul’s words about not accepting the love of the truth to the Society’s religious leaders, they may also apply to some of the rest of Jehovah’s Witnesses as well. Although it is true that they are the ones who are being misled, it isn’t as if they are helpless to notice when something is wrong. Their willingness to believe and teach everything they are told “no matter what happens” suggests that they too may not have sufficient love of the truth which would protect them from believing the lie.

¹⁷⁸ *Witnesses of Jehovah* video - <http://www.goodnewsdefenders.org>. See also <http://quotes.watchtower.ca/>

¹⁷⁹ They cannot always be honest about the organization’s history because of their need to uphold an illusion.

¹⁸⁰ *Broca's Brain*, (Ballantines Books, New York, 1982 pp. 332-3). Although Sagan doesn’t mention the Watchtower Society or Jehovah’s Witnesses by name, he is obviously talking about them when he refers to the American religion that “confidently predicted that the world would end in 1914.”

Some may practice willful blindness because their need for the security that comes from believing the lie outweighs their need to know the truth.¹⁸¹ They may be using the counsel they receive from those who are misleading them as an excuse not to accept any responsibility for allowing themselves to be misled.¹⁸² They may reason, “Surely God won’t hold *me* responsible if *his* organization is telling me something that is wrong.” Such reasoning is similar to Adam’s attitude when confronted about why he had disobeyed God. In effect he said to God, “Surely you won’t hold *me* responsible since I only did what that woman *you* gave me told me to do.” - Genesis 3:12

Of course, it is not possible to know what is going on in the hearts of the Governing Body members or the rest of Jehovah’s Witnesses. But many times the leadership inadvertently provides an explanation of their own conduct while they are in the process of explaining someone else’s conduct. An excellent example of them doing this appears on page 3 of the August 1, 2001 *Watchtower* under the heading “Belief Versus Truth”...

It does not take deliberate lies to develop mistaken beliefs. Often we believe a thing simply because we want to believe it. One professor says that even scientists ‘often fall in love with their own constructions.’ Their beliefs becloud their critical judgment. They may spend a lifetime in vain trying to shore up mistaken beliefs. – Jeremiah 17:9¹⁸³

If it did not take deliberate lies to *develop* their mistaken belief in a fictional “faithful and discreet slave organization,” then perhaps it doesn’t necessarily take deliberate lies to *uphold* that mistaken belief.

It is evident that the men of the Governing Body have fallen in love with their construction of “God’s organization.” And just like the above scientists, they have spent a lifetime trying to shore up their mistaken belief.

‘Surely God won’t hold me responsible if his organization is telling me something that’s wrong.’

They often inadvertently explain their own conduct while in the process of explaining someone else’s conduct.

They have fallen in love with their illusion.

¹⁸¹ See Chapter 17, “No Honorable Way Out Of The Watchtower Religion”

¹⁸² See the essay at <http://www.commentarypress.com/essay-brainwashing.html>

¹⁸³ Jeremiah 17:9 says, “The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it?”

Who Molds Their Thinking?

It never enters the Witness' mind to apply this information to make sure that they have not allowed someone to mold their thinking without them being aware of it.

The ones Jehovah's Witnesses listen to "are themselves misled (and) corrupted in their thinking."

Watchtower leaders have deceived themselves.

THERE is an article in the April 1, 1999 *Watchtower* that asks the question, "Who Molds Your Thinking?" It explains how to protect one's thinking from being molded by someone else without them realizing it. But it never enters the Witness' mind to apply the counsel being given to make sure that *they* have not allowed *their* thinking to be molded by someone else without them realizing it. Note the following statements that Jehovah's Witnesses never think of applying to themselves...

Can you really be sure that someone is not, in fact, molding your thinking, without your even being aware of it?

Witnesses are so sure this hasn't happened to them that they cannot even conceive of such a possibility. This only makes it easier for their religious leaders to 'mold their thinking without them even being aware of it.'

The fact is that how you think, and hence how you act, is always influenced in some way by the feelings and views of those to whom you listen.

The *only* one Jehovah's Witnesses listen to is "God's organization"—the men of their Governing Body. Prior to 1976 they only listened to whoever was the president at the time.

If (the ones you listen to) are themselves misled or corrupted in their thinking, "deceivers of the mind," as the apostle Paul described them, then beware!

This is a major problem for Jehovah's Witnesses because their religious leaders "*are themselves misled*" and "*corrupted in their thinking*" because of their commitment to uphold a fictional "God's organization." In order to uphold it they *have* to be "*deceivers of the mind*" – their own minds first, and then the minds of all those who listen to them. Witnesses do not consider the possibility that their religious leaders have deceived themselves.

Do not become complacent and think that no one could ever influence you. Most likely it is already happening—more frequently than you might care to admit—without your even noticing.

But they *have* become complacent because they believe they have found the one and only organization that God is using to guide them into the “New World.” They feel that the One influencing them is God.

People tend to feel that everyone else is vulnerable, but they are not.

Jehovah’s Witnesses feel that they are the only people on earth who are not being misled.

We cannot be too seriously manipulated if we know what is going on.

But that’s just it—they *don’t* know what is going on. And many of them don’t want to know. They go out of their way not to notice anything that might suggest that the Society isn’t what they think it is—what they want it to be. This makes it very easy for them to be “seriously manipulated” by the people they trust the most.

Lack of information can be just as lethal as misinformation.

Witnesses not only lack information about the Society’s history in relation to Matthew 24:45-47, they continually receive misinformation about it from their religious leaders.¹⁸⁴

[To keep from being misled] the key is ‘knowing from what persons you learn things,’ to be sure that they are people who have your best interests at heart, not their own.

But they *don’t* know ‘from what persons they learn things.’ They think of the men of their Governing Body just like Martin Merriman use to think of them. And that is

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**They not
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history, they
often receive
misinforma-
tion about it**

**Whose
interests does
the Governing
Body have at
heart when
they misrep-
sent the
organization’s
history?**

¹⁸⁴ Here is one example of misinformation from their booklet, *Jehovah’s Witnesses In The 20th Century*: Under the heading “1914” they say, “*Not all that was expected to happen in 1914 did happen.*” But in order for that statement to be true it would have to read, “*Nothing that was expected to happen in 1914 did happen.*”

For example, they expected that 1914 would see the *end* of “the War of the Great Day of God Almighty” (Armageddon) which would result in the total destruction of all Gentile nations by Jesus Christ. But instead, 1914 only saw the *beginning* of a much smaller war that didn’t see Jesus destroy even one Gentile nation let alone all of them. See Chapter 12, pages 88-90.

that, “They would always speak the truth no matter what the truth was” because ‘they have the Witnesses’ best interests at heart, not their own.’¹⁸⁵ But as shown in the last chapter, they do *not* always speak the truth, which strongly suggests that they do not always have the best interests of Jehovah’s Witnesses at heart. Whose interests did they have at heart when they included that insert on page 60 of the *Proclaimers* book that misleads the reader to believe that Russell’s prophecy about 1914 came true?¹⁸⁶ If not their own, then whose?

You must be willing to fill your mind with the truth contained in “the holy writings,” God’s inspired Word, the Bible.

But Witnesses who fill their minds with anything different than the way the Governing Body tells them to fill it will be disfellowshipped.

The Problem This Kind of Article Causes For Jehovah’s Witnesses

***Witnesses are
unable to
apply this
information
to those who
are misleading
them.***

There is nothing wrong with this article. The problem is that Jehovah’s Witnesses are unable to apply it to whom they listen—to the men who are misleading them. Their illusionary God’s-organization concept prevents them from doing so. In their minds, if they were to try to apply this information to “God’s organization” it would feel to them as if they were checking up on God in order to make sure that he hasn’t been misleading them.

And so, this article doesn’t protect them from having their thinking adversely molded without them being aware of it. Instead, it reassures them that this hasn’t happened. As a result they go right on allowing their thinking to be molded by men who are themselves misled and corrupted in their thinking. The fundamental cause is their belief that God is dealing with them by means of the Watchtower’s so-

¹⁸⁵ See Martin Merriman’s comment on the bottom of page 93.

¹⁸⁶ See pages 88-90.

called “faithful and discreet slave organization.” As long as they believe this concept they will remain captives of it and gladly allow their thinking to be molded by their religious leaders without them even being aware of it.

Only when they can break free from the Watchtower’s organizational concept way of worshipping God will they be able to *stop* ‘gladly looking to the men of its Governing Body for direction and guidance in matters of worship.’¹⁸⁷

Only then can their thinking be molded by God through Jesus Christ under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. – See Chapter 11

***Witnesses
have always
allowed their
thinking to be
molded by
their religious
leaders with-
out them being
aware of it.***

| Who Has Molded Their Thinking? | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Illusion</i> | <i>Reality</i> |
| God | Prior to 1976: The President Since 1976: The Governing Body |

¹⁸⁷ March 15, 1998 *Watchtower*, p.21 says, “Jehovah’s Witnesses gladly look to the mature brothers of the Governing Body for direction and guidance in matters of worship.” See also Chapter 6, “Who Is God’s Organization?”

“Slaves of Men or Servants of God?”

THE above title leads a series of articles in the March 15, 1999 *Watchtower*. It warns of the “Dangers of Following Men”...

*A strong leader-oriented relationship can lead to an unhealthy emotional and spiritual dependency.*¹⁸⁸

Then as expected, the Governing Body goes on to assure the reader that this hasn’t happened to Jehovah’s Witnesses. They then say...

**The
Governing
Body
denies
that they
exercise au-
thoritarian
control over
Jehovah’s
Witnesses.**

*Some may have been told that Jehovah’s Witnesses belong to a religious organization that enslaves its members, exercises authoritarian control over them (and) unduly restricts their freedom.*¹⁸⁹

As much as the Governing Body may like to believe that they don’t exercise authoritarian control or restrict the freedom of Jehovah’s Witnesses, their official statements belie any attempt to deny such control.¹⁹⁰ For examples...

1. According to that 1954 Walsh Court Case, their insistence on “unity of belief at all costs” necessitates that Witnesses *must* accept even the Society’s false teachings and prophecies during the time they are being proclaimed—or else be disfellowshipped. (p.77)
2. According to the April 1, 1986 *Watchtower* they are *required* to accept “the entire range” of the Governing Body’s teachings, including the ones that are not true or be disfel-

¹⁸⁸ With Jehovah’s Witnesses, it is ‘a strong *organization*-oriented relationship’ which has “led to an unhealthy emotional and spiritual dependency.” They cannot conceive of worshipping God apart from “his organization.” This is one of the factors that makes it so difficult for them to consider leaving even when they become aware of very serious wrongs.

¹⁸⁹ The article then continues, “Jehovah’s Witnesses know that these concerns are unwarranted. Therefore they invite you to check for yourself. After careful consideration, draw your own conclusions. Are the Witnesses servants of God, as they claim, or actually slaves of men?” The answer to their question is obvious to everyone except Jehovah’s Witnesses.

¹⁹⁰ See Chapter 10, “Why Jehovah’s Witnesses Have Unity of Belief.”

lowshipped. (p.80)

3. According to that September 1, 1980 Governing Body letter, Witnesses are not even permitted to simply *believe* anything different than what the Governing Body is currently teaching, even if what they believe is true and what the Governing Body is teaching isn't (as was the case with their generation of 1914 teaching)—or else be disfellowshipped. (p.78)

How much more authoritarian can an organization be?

How much more authoritarian can an organization be?

Whom Have Jehovah's Witnesses Been Following?

Who were Jehovah's Witnesses following when they believed those forty-eight teachings mentioned in Chapter 3? Certainly not God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit or the Bible. In 1943 why did they all stop believing that Jesus had returned in 1874? Did everyone reach that conclusion at the exact same time because of their personal study of the Bible? Or was it because the Society's president stopped teaching it in 1943?

Who have Jehovah's Witnesses followed in regard to the identity of the "superior authorities" of Romans 13:1? Up until 1929 they would have said that they were following God's Word the Bible when they believed that these "authorities" referred to the earthly governments. But if that is a true teaching of the Bible (which it apparently is), then why did they all stop believing it when Joseph Rutherford stopped teaching it in 1929? And if what Rutherford was teaching was the *real* "Bible truth" then why did they all stop believing what he taught when the next president stopped teaching it 33 years later in 1962?

What this latter example shows is the extremely important point that even when the Society happens to be teaching something that is a true teaching of the Bible, that isn't the reason why Jehovah's Witnesses believe it. They believe it because "God's organization" is teaching it. If you asked them about this they would sincerely deny that this is

The most fundamental reason why Jehovah's Witnesses believe what they believe is not because the Bible teaches it but because "God's organization" teaches it.

true—not because it isn’t true, but because they just don’t realize that it is true.

The following graphic shows how the Branch Davidians and People’s Temple were bound to the dictates of their religious leaders—which Witnesses *are* able to see...

| | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| David Koresh | Jim Jones |
| The Branch Davidians ↓ | The People’s Temple ↓ |

But on page 19 of the March 15, 1998 *Watchtower* Witnesses are told how to avoid giving the impression that *they too* are bound to the dictates of *their* religious leaders...

It is not a false impression that Jehovah’s Witnesses are bound to the dictates of their religious leaders.

See Chapter 10

*In order to avoid misunderstandings, Jehovah’s Witnesses try to be careful about how they express themselves. Instead of saying, “the Society teaches,” many Witnesses prefer to [say], “the Bible says.” In this way they...avoid giving the **false impression** that Witnesses are somehow bound to the dictates of some religious sect.*

But as has been shown, they *are* bound to the dictates of their religious leaders. And so in order to avoid giving a false impression they *should* say “the Society teaches” rather than “the Bible says.” That’s what they should have said about every one of those teachings in Chapter 3 since none of them were what the Bible says.

The following graphic shows the way it has been with the Watchtower religion, which Witnesses are *not* able to see¹⁹¹

| |
|--|
| Russell - Rutherford - Knorr - Governing Body |
| Jehovah’s Witnesses ↓ |

Why Personal Study of the Bible Is Dangerous For Jehovah’s Witnesses

The December 1, 2001 *Watchtower* has a couple of

¹⁹¹ A main reason Witnesses haven’t noticed that they have been simply following men is **because the men they have been following deny it.** On page 117 of the *Proclaimers* book the Governing Body says, “In no way have Jehovah’s Witnesses become a sect built around the personalities of (Russell, Rutherford, Knorr, Frederick Franz, or the present Governing Body). Instead, they have but one leader, ‘the Christ.’” This is one of numerous instances where what they *say* is not the way it *is*. Jehovah’s Witnesses make the mistake of automatically assuming that what is said *is* the way it is.

articles instructing Witnesses on how to “Enjoy Personal Study of God’s Word.” Although it gives many practical suggestions on how to do this, it also sets the rules which limit what they are allowed to learn from their personal study of God’s Word...

[Your] private reading of the Bible is not enough. *Jehovah...uses his faithful and discreet slave [organization] to help [you] understand his Word at the right time. – Matthew 24:45-47.*

When people first start to study with the Watchtower Society they are told that the Bible is all they need to become “*fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.*”¹⁹² But later, after they are ‘captured,’ they are told that the Bible won’t do these things for them unless they receive “help” from “God’s faithful and discreet slave organization.”

But the Society’s leadership doesn’t just “*help* people understand his Word,” they *require* everyone to understand it *and misunderstand it* the same way they do. Witnesses who are unable or unwilling to understand it the way they are ‘helped’ to understand it are disfellowshipped for apostasy. The unstated reality of Bible study in this religion goes something like this...

Witnesses are not allowed to understand anything in the Bible that is different from the way they are ‘helped’ to understand it.

‘You should study God’s Word the Bible—but just make sure you don’t understand anything in it that disagrees with the way we require you to understand it, even if you are right and we are wrong - or else!’



The Reality

It is not only much *easier* for Jehovah’s Witnesses to leave all the serious study of the Bible up to their religious leaders, it is much *safer*.

| Who Have Witnesses Followed? | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Illusion</i> | <i>Reality</i> |
| Jesus Christ | Prior to 1976: The President Since 1976: The Governing Body |

NEXT: What about matters of conscience?

¹⁹² 2 Timothy 3:16