

A
JEHOVAH'S WITNESS
FINDS
THE TRUTH

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Dedication and Acknowledgements

I dedicate this book to all TRUTH seekers. Jesus said, “I am the way, and the truth and the life . No one comes to the Father except by me.” (John 14:6)

I particularly want to thank my husband for being so patient with me through my years of searching for the TRUTH.

I’m thankful to my oldest son for forgiving me for neglecting his preparation for school (I thought we would be in the “New World”).

I appreciate my Sunday night Bible Study Group who was so patient with me while I was sorting out spiritual truth for myself.

I appreciate Frances Ann who shared Christ, (the Real Truth) with me.

I’m thankful for my friends, Hazel, Betty, Olive and Dotty who have encouraged me.

I’m thankful to ex-Jehovah’s Witnesses and Pastor Bill McDonald for guiding me spiritually.

But most of all, I’m thankful to our Almighty God, for answering my prayers; to Jesus Christ for coming into my life, and to the Holy Spirit for teaching me.

Although I did the research in this book, some information in the appendix was researched by Randall Watters, David Henke, and Duane Magnani. Bible quotations are quoted from the King James translation, the New English Bible, and the New International Version.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses have influenced my life in one way or another from childhood until now. At the time of this third printing (1999) I still have one sister, and her family who have not spoken to me since I was disfellowshipped, in 1981. We were good friends until then. My crime was identifying with a religion other than Jehovah's Witnesses. Her shunning me is the product of the *Watchtower* teaching.

When I was baptized into the Watchtower organization, I believed with my whole heart, soul and mind that I was becoming a foot-step-follower of Christ Jesus. I believed that Armageddon, the end of the world as we know it, was approaching and that I would be living in a renovated earth within a few months or years.

Little did I realize that in fact I had only joined a human organization. I didn't know that years later I would be struggling with their continuous changes of biblical interpretation. My conscience was seared as I endeavored to conform to *Watchtower* teaching. The final blow came in my personal life with the teaching that anyone who has ever been a Jehovah's Witness (no matter how long he's been out of the organization) will be excommunicated if he ever goes to another church or prayer meeting. We were forbidden to even say "hello" to those who had committed this terrible sin. The problem was I was guilty of just this "crime."

Finally I made the traumatic decision not to rear my two younger children as Jehovah's Witnesses. They would have been the fourth generation of Jehovah's Witnesses in my family.

My life had been centered in the Watchtower teachings; therefore, I felt very isolated and lonely when I no longer attended meetings. I wanted so much to search for the "Truth" but found I couldn't attend church anywhere for all religions are "off limits" to Jehovah's Witnesses. To attend anywhere would bring punishment in the form of disfellowshipping! Then my parents must ostracize me which means they could never ever speak to me again, unless I repented and returned to the JWs—a decision they would never make on their own. If they didn't, they too would be disfellowshipped. Things of this

nature were not in the picture when they were baptized. In fact, I can't imagine my parents joining any religious group that embraced such beliefs! For we were a very loving family and never believed in shunning family! I allowed this fear prevent me from attending any church for fifteen years! Finally, in desperation to straighten out my spiritual life I attended church and found the *real* Truth!

Now that I know that Jesus Christ, the *real* Truth, (Jo. 14:6) is the only mediator. I encourage everyone to seek Him for salvation – not an organization.

Today, thousands of new religious groups are springing up every day claiming to be God's prophet and they teach salvation only comes through *their* interpretation of the Bible. Beware of those who make this claim!

God, through His Spirit is the one who convicts of sin and shows our need for the Savior. As Christians we have the privilege to give an answer for the hope we have.

Know God's word. Know what you believe and why you believe it. It is my prayer that people be set FREE from any bondage which restrains them from enjoying complete freedom in Christ Jesus.

FAMILY HISTORY

Learning about Jesus as a Child

My earliest recollection of love for Jesus was when my mother taught me the song, “Jesus Loves Me.” I was about four or five years old. I can still feel the love swelling in my heart for Jesus and for my Mom. The gentle support of her loving arms and that sweet song on a beautiful sunny day, the love of Jesus pounding in my heart, even at such a tender age was over-whelming. This love for Jesus grew even dearer every time I heard the beautiful music coming from the church just across the street. How I longed to be inside! It wasn’t until I was much older that I realized why my parents never took me.

My Dad

The members of my father’s family were of the Christian denomination. His family background included ministers of that faith and also Presbyterian. In fact, one of my father’s ancestors, Adam Rankin built three churches in and around Lexington. How I enjoyed the beautiful, loving stories of my father’s long walks to church when he was a child, where his family always took part in singing and other activities. Strong Christian family values built his character and he departed them to us. His most precious gift was love. He gave much love and devotion to his wife and children, and to all he met. During the depression, after losing everything he had, he went to Michigan to work, sending every penny home for the family. He wrote Mom regularly and even sent each of his six children post cards. I still have mine, and I’ll always cherish them. He set a fine example as husband, father, provider, comforter, teacher, counselor, disciplinarian, and protector. He taught us pride, independence, and most of all, he instilled a deep mutual love within the members of his family.

Although a man of profound love he absolutely detested one thing, quarrelling, especially within the family. It hurt him deeply to see any family members not being on speaking terms. He was very young when there was an incident in his family, causing division. Family members stopped speaking to each other. His memory of this was

very unpleasant. He talked a great deal about things of this nature, saying, “I hope nothing like this ever happens in my family.”

I recall another incident when he went all the way to another state to speak with his brother, who was shunning his own daughter because she had married out of his favor. The visit was successful. His brother decided to reconcile with his daughter. They came together with much joy and celebration. How happy my father was about this! This is the kind of man he was! I realize now, that his Christian upbringing proved to be very valuable in his life. Oh, how I wish he had learned how to defend his faith! He would have never become one of Jehovah’s Witnesses!

He constantly encouraged us to recognize Mom’s need, to make her happy and do our best in everything we did. He carried these same loving principles not only through the depression, but through a serious car accident which almost took his life. There was no income and how he hated to see his young children become providers for nine months! During this time he continued steadfast in showing the traits of his strong moral character doing everything he could, determined to carry his share of responsibility. For a period of time, he couldn’t walk, but he would do little things like peeling potatoes or anything else to help lighten Mom’s load. Through all of this he never lost his keen sense of humor. How I loved those evenings sitting around the old fireplace popping corn, playing checkers, making music with a jew’s-harp and harmonica. Times were hard financially but we felt so rich. When I look back, one of the worst times for our family created the happiest memories for me.

Later, when the children were grown and he was no longer afraid of risks, he started a trucking business and made a great success at the age when most men retire. He continued this business until he was seventy-two. He retired then only because Mom was ailing and she needed his care. He lived a healthy, happy life for ninety-one years.

Dad’s family and friends will always remember him by his special gift of love. He kept his love and admiration for Mom right until the last, when he kissed the ring on her finger the afternoon before he died. His love will live in my heart forever.

My Grandfather

My Mom's father was a Methodist Sunday-School Superintendent in the 1890's when he heard that his cousin had lost his mind. It seemed this cousin was talking about some very strange thing – the end of the world was coming in 1914! Grandpa rode his horse over for a visit and found him sane, but somewhat confused. He was reading literature written by Charles T. Russell, the first president of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. (Russell believed that God had revealed an accurate understanding of the Bible to him).

Until this time, Grandpa had been a typical Methodist Christian, with a wife and seven children. He was a very loving, kind gentleman with no bad habits and was a respected farmer in the community. Like most Christians, he believed the salvation plan of the Bible was the acceptance of Jesus Christ. Grandpa was fascinated with Russell's book. They seemed to teach so much about the Bible. Russell's books were interpreting the Bible in such a way that really excited Grandpa. These beliefs were new to him! They taught that Christ was enthroned in heaven invisibly, in 1874, (the second coming of Christ) and the Gentile times would end in 1914, at which time the earthly kingdom would begin under the rule of two heavenly classes residing with God and Christ. The central doctrine was that the ransom sacrifice of Jesus covered all mankind from Adam until the present time. Grandpa was pleased with the idea that everyone living on the earth (including all those resurrected) would live in a world of righteousness, not being judged until the end of the millennium. To grandpa, this was true justice! Grandpa accepted this teaching as well as the work ethics that went along with it (*The Divine Plan of the Ages, 1886*, appendix A).

Grandpa accepted Russell's teachings to be the absolute "truth" of God's word, and was baptized around 1900. After resigning as Sunday School Superintendent, he left his church to become what he thought was a foot-step follower of Jesus Christ, to proclaim these "truths" to everyone by selling Russell's books for a contribution of the cost of printing. He felt a great urgency to reach as many as possible before the setting up of God's kingdom on earth, in 1914. All those accepting these teachings would live forever in heaven. Grandpa and his cousin built a tabernacle and preached to large

crowds. He held meetings in his little country home regularly. He allowed his children to continue attending church, but told them not to join since the preachers didn't have the "truth." Although Russell did not believe the churches had the truth, he didn't seem to hate them as did the succeeding president of the Watchtower Society, J.F. Rutherford, who took control after Russell's death.

In regard to how Russell felt toward other churches, he said:

"It should not be considered a sinful thing for us to visit some of the nominal churches. I could go into nearly any Methodist or Presbyterian congregation and feel sure I could have a good time with them. If they love God, if they revere the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and if they are seeking to walk with honesty, and soberly, and decently, let us be glad to give them recognition to that extent. These matters are for each one's own conscience and if anybody thinks differently, God bless him. Let him follow his own conscience." ("What Pastor Russell Said," page 479)

After 1914 came and they were not taken to heaven as expected, no doubt Russell's followers were sadly disappointed. After Russell died in 1916, there were several splits in the organization. While one group continued publishing Russell's books, J.F. Rutherford became president of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, writing his own books. Those who continued to identify with Russell's publications were classified by Rutherford as "the evil slave class." In Rutherford's book, *Vindication, 1931*, he had this to say: *"The evil servant class claim to be the anointed of God and, these being false, they are therefore false Christs."* Rutherford's group came to be known as **Jehovah's Witnesses**, in 1931. Until then, they were known as International Bible Students.

Grandpa continued his studies in Watchtower literature. He persisted in distributing these publications in his community. These books were pointing to 1925, as end of civilization, and when this time passed other changes began to take place. The first radical change from Grandpa's views was that of the restitution. This was the doctrine that interested Grandpa in the first place. That every person would be resurrected and judged in a righteous world on earth, under the rulership of the heavenly class. Now he must accept the "new light" that not everyone would be resurrected. (These changes and similar ones will be discussed in greater detail later in this book). He wrestled with the

many important changes and even reversals in doctrine. Since he had totally embraced *Watchtower* teaching, that only *they had the "truth"* - where could he go?

I have childhood memories, of sitting on the front porch with Grandpa and Mom. Their conversation was always interesting. Grandpa truly believed that the prophets of the Old Testament would return just any day. He always quoted the Bible, in an attempt to prove this teaching. For many years the Witnesses looked forward to the resurrection of the ancient prophets before Armageddon, and that event was always promised to occur, "any day now." The Society even built a house and deeded it to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When people scoffed at them they called it persecution and accepted it gladly, even encouraging it as evidence that they were true followers of Christ

As Grandpa grew older, it became more and more difficult to keep up with the "new light" since there was not a congregation in his hometown. His eyesight was failing, so Mom always read the latest *Watchtowers* when he came to visit, but he still believed the old teachings and the love for them were still in his heart. I recall his expressions of anxiety when he came to visit. Mom continually read the new publications, but Grandpa kept holding on to the former biblical interpretations of Russell. He began to wonder if he was really going to heaven after all. He even asked Mom to write a letter to the Society, asking if he should partake of the memorial emblems. (Only those of the heavenly class, the 144,000, partake of the bread and wine, see appendix B).

It concerned me and made me very sad, that my Grandfather was now questioning his heavenly hope. He longed so much to hear Russell's teachings once again – his first love for what he believed was "truth." One day he turned on the radio and heard a program called "Frank and Ernest." They were teaching Russell's beliefs! He was overjoyed! But now he had a dilemma! The Society viewed these people to be the evil-slave class. Mom did her best to convince him that one had to keep up with the "new light" and Grandpa always quoted Scripture the way he learned to interpret them. In fact, an example of a teaching which really troubled him, is the following: He learned from Russell that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah would be resurrected – he was still arguing this point but Mom read to him

the "new light" giving new biblical interpretation that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah would not be resurrected after all (appendix C). Soon after his death, the Society reversed its position, saying again that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah would be resurrected after all (*Watchtower*, 3/1/65, page 138).

Grandpa lived to be ninety-seven years old. The last thing I remember hearing him say about his "heavenly hope" was, "I will be happy wherever God wants me." Mom was very concerned about how God would judge Grandpa since the Society taught that all organizations, religious and political, exclusive only to itself, were of the devil. She worried for Grandpa had espoused the beliefs of the followers of Russell, who now had their own organization, branded by the Society as "the evil slave." But then, she consoled herself with the possibility that, due to his poor eye sight and his inability to meet with a congregation to keep up with the latest "truth" he would be judged favorably by Jehovah God. But not so according to the Society's standards.

My Mom

I had a beautiful relationship with Mom, I doubt if there is a daughter anywhere who loved her mom more than I. I was born when she was thirty-five years old. We were very close until she died at the age of eighty-nine. Never did a week pass without communication between us. She depended on me for many things, and I always wanted to accommodate her. Dad loved spoiling her, and he encouraged the children to spoil her also. They were a very devoted couple during their sixty-nine years of marriage.

Around 1935 a very kind and gracious lady knocked at our door. She called herself a **Jehovah's Witness**. My, was Mom excited! Certainly she was familiar with all the *Watchtower* teachings and welcomed her with open arms. There weren't any Witnesses in towns where she lived before moving to Lexington. A home Bible-study was started. Watchtower meetings were held in another home forming a congregation of around ten or eleven people, the total number of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lexington. At this time, the Society didn't believe in putting money into buildings for meetings. But as was often the case, out of necessity, they received "new light" when they outgrew their homes.

Mom was baptized in 1940, and became a very zealous Jehovah's Witness. When Dad saw Mom really getting interested in following this religion he had many objections. He objected for a long time, but Mom finally influenced him to accept these beliefs and he was baptized a few years later. I was around eleven years old when I first attended *Watchtower* meetings. Soon, when Witnesses out-grew the home meetings we met in a rented duplex.

By this time, there were only three children left at home and World War II was approaching. Mom was so sure Armageddon would come very soon. She tried her best to influence her sons not go to war. Jehovah's Witnesses don't believe one should enter the military in any country. My brothers were grown when Mom became adamant about following *Watchtower* teachings. They were not taking her preaching seriously. I was in High School at this time, and I remember the teacher asking us to approach our parents about buying war bonds. Mom replied, "Tell your teacher the government is going down very soon, and there's no use buying bonds." (Of course the Society didn't believe in buying bonds anyway). The teacher gave her reply, "If the government goes down, nothing will be any good anyway." I pondered her comment, thinking she made a good point.

I respected Mom for taking a strong stand for what she believed, and Dad as he gradually agreed with her. They studied the teachings and knew what they believed, as well as teach others. Little did I realize that so many changes would take place in the future, nor did they!

Chapter 2 THE "TRUTH" OF THE FIFTIES

When the war ended my sweetheart, Bill, returned and wanted to marry me. We had known each other since I was six years old. He lived in our neighborhood. In our congregation, there weren't any boys my age, and besides, I was not a dedicated Jehovah's Witness at this time in my life. Bill was raised Catholic, and you can imagine the dilemma we had. Needless to say, neither of our parents approved of our marrying someone of a different religion, but they accepted it.

We married in 1946, and our first son, Kenny, was born in 1948. Bill did not take the Catholic religion seriously; in fact, he never attended religious services while serving in the army. It was not at all difficult to convince him to study with Jehovah's Witnesses. Mom was so happy! But Bill's mom wasn't! However, she never interfered. The Witness who came to our home weekly was a staunch JW. He had spent the war years in prison because of rejecting the draft. He was a very dedicated JW and knew how to convince people by using only the Bible, while teaching *Watchtower* interpretation. We were very impressed with his method. He taught us how to take notes and mark certain verses in our Bibles. However, later he was reprimanded for not using the Society's books when studying with people.

Within six months, I was ready for baptism, and began selling the Society's literature from house to house, trying to demonstrate that this literature was necessary to understand the Bible. Bill joined the ministry school at the Kingdom Hall and became active in field service. Building Kingdom Halls became new light of the fifties.

I can't express on paper how excited I was! Even though I had heard about this religion all my life, now I was accepting it for myself along with Bill. We were convinced Jehovah's Witnesses were the only people in the whole world who had absolute TRUTH! With our whole heart, we believed every other religion was false, and would be destroyed as would all people who refused the message of Jehovah's Witnesses. We felt we had part in a great work – that of preaching the Good News of God's Kingdom before the end of the world which would come very soon.

Indoctrination: Our home-Bible study covered the following subjects: **God's name is Jehovah.** He doesn't hear prayers unless the name is used. We were told that other religions didn't even know this very important name. A great emphasis was put on using this name, and they used it in conversation as well as in their prayers.

Only 144,000 will go to heaven and reign with Jehovah and Jesus. This heavenly class will rule and reign over the earthly government. These are faithful followers, chosen from the time of Jesus' resurrection until about, generally speaking, the year 1935. The earth will be transformed into a perfect paradise and will be inhabited by a great multitude which no man can number. On this new earth, mankind will live forever in perfect peace and harmony. They will never again need policemen, fire departments, nursing homes, prisons or armies. Every man will sit under his own vine and fig tree, paradise home. Satan will be bound for one thousand years and let loose to go out and deceive, then he and those following will be destroyed forever. Great emphasis was placed on the hope of living on the new earth. The Society's imaginative writers made it sound very good and we began to look forward to such a wonderful paradise. It was pointed out that the people in the churches didn't know anything about the new earth, and furthermore, they believed when one died he went straight to heaven or hell and the earth was destined to burn up.

The concept of the Trinity: It was interesting to learn the word Trinity, was not even in the Bible. This was really stressed! The doctrine of the Trinity was of pagan origin, and false. Jesus was Jehovah's first creation (Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15). He was Michael the archangel whose life-force was transferred from heaven to the womb of Mary. He was born a perfect man, but was not God.

When Jesus died, He did not exist in any form during the three days his body was in the grave. On the third day, he was raised as a spirit creature (actually recreated). No one knows for sure what happened to his body. When he appeared on the third day after his death, he manifested bodies, so he could be seen. Human reasoning was always encouraged in the interpretation of carefully selected scriptures to prove all points. Such as, "If there are three gods in one, (the phrase they used to define the doctrine of the Trinity) to whom was Jesus praying – himself? When Jesus was a baby who was ruling the

universe, if He was God? Who resurrected Jesus – himself?" We felt that logic and scriptures were proving that these people truly had "The Truth!"

The soul. Many isolated texts were used in both the Old and New Testament in an attempt to demonstrate that the soul, or spirit, did not live after death. Famous quotations were Ezek. 18:4; Gen. 2:7. It was explained that when the breath of life was breathed into man, he became a living soul. When he died his breath went forth and the body returned to dust. Nothing lived on. If one had been allowed by Jehovah to entertain a heavenly hope, then he would be raised to life at death, as a spirit creature, becoming a part of the heavenly kingdom of 144,000. If one had an earthly hope he would be resurrected with a fleshly body with the hope of living forever on earth. The reasoning: If the soul went to heaven or torment immediately at death, what was supposed to happen on the day of resurrection? What would a soul need with a body? It was pointed out that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is taught in virtually every church and this was said to be false doctrine.

The second coming of Christ. This happened in 1914, when Christ began to rule as King in the heavens. At that time, the dead in Christ were resurrected in the spirit. This was the most difficult subject of all for me. I hated to teach it, as it was more difficult to apply the scriptures and make them fit! Reference included Matthew, 24; Luke 16, and many other scriptures saying they were prophecies fulfilled, marking the beginning of the end, 1914. Many obscure references, isolated texts and questionable dates were used to construct a somewhat shaky chronological scheme complicated (but not profound) almost to the point of inexplicability.

Worldly governments. We learned that it was wrong to vote and one should not enter the military under any circumstances. Under ordinary controlling factors, men who didn't believe in taking up arms, entered the military as conscientious objectors and the government gave them other duties not subjecting them to combat. But the Society did not allow this either. This was considered being part of the world. They reasoned, by saying Jehovah's Witnesses were the only ones who wouldn't kill their brothers, while Catholics killed Catholics, Baptist killed Baptist, etc. Witnesses often went to prison rather than serve in

the armed forces. The commandment, “Thou shalt not kill” meant just what it said (yet one could kill for self- protection at home).

Blood transfusions. The Society believes Acts 15:19,20 should be taken literally and that taking a blood transfusion was the same as eating blood. One should die rather than accept a blood transfusion. When we were baptized one was not disfellowshipped for taking blood, but later it became grounds. More on this, later.

These doctrines are considered by JWs to be basic. They were also discussed in a book, *The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life*, a very popular aid that was used in their home Bible studies.

It took about six months to complete this study. We had conformed our minds to *Watchtower teaching*. We believed with all our hearts, they were the only people on earth who truly understood the Bible! We thought of ourselves as being foot-step-followers of Christ Jesus. We believed our little son would never see the day he would enter school, in 1954. Armageddon would come soon!

Did the Society name this date? No! Then how did we reach this conclusion? Well, The Society’s leaders indicated that the forty-year period had a crucial prophetic significance, in a book titled, *What has Religion Done for Mankind?* (p.135,145,168,176,182). They made statements, leaving one under the impression that forty years from 1914 (when Christ returned invisibly) would end in 1954. The indicating or hinting regarding tantalizing important dates has been a typical pattern of Jehovah’s Witnesses’ writings.

They say just enough to indicate that Armageddon is coming in a certain year, but not quite clearly enough to get them in trouble when the implied and inferred prophecies fail. In the area of chronology, their speech is usually vague and almost dishonestly misleading; but for those who are desperate enough to actually desire the end of the world, any little tid-bit from the Society can cause excitement and emotional fervor. But when the going gets tough, the Society always backs down. As the “critical year” approaches, they always become less and less powerful and certain in their declarations. Finally, when the “marked year” comes and goes, they then turn on the readers and followers, blaming them for speculating. I remember a perfect stranger who read this book –(*What has Religion Done for Mankind?*) it was her first *Watchtower* publication, yet she could see it was leaving the reader under the impression that Armageddon would come

in 1954. This idea came to be firmly rooted in our thinking, as it did many others. We believed it with our whole heart, soul and mind.

We were now on our way in training our young son for life in God’s new world instead of preparing him for school and harsh realities for this life. I was teaching him that Jehovah’s Witnesses were the only ones who were right and those not listening to us would lose their hope for eternal life. I remember one day as Mom and others were out in service (knocking on doors) when a person refused taking literature. Our son, then about three years old remarked, “He will be destroyed, won’t he?” We laughed and allowed him to continue in that destructive pattern of thinking.

The next difficult tasks were that of preaching *Watchtower* doctrine to our friends and Bill’s family. It was not easy for his family to accept the fact that they would never have birthdays, Easter, or Christmas, with their first grandchild. They must now understand they’ll never receive cards for special occasions, not even on Mother’s or Father’s Day. They lived with this decision as well as any Catholic family would. Let me share a funny experience. Bill’s Mom was a lovely woman who exercised a great deal of patience. I can imagine now what we put her through! One day while washing dishes together in the kitchen, I was telling her how wrong the Catholics were and right the Witnesses were. I was taking dishes out of the rinse pan and wiping them with a towel. As she became more and more agitated, (and I don’t blame her) she started slinging the dishes into the dishpan so that water splashed all over me! I have to laugh now when I think of it – I probably would have done much worse had I been in her shoes!

As we preached to our friends and met with opposition we felt it was part of the persecution to expect. We noticed they didn’t come around so often now, which was fine with us, because we were encouraged to choose our friends among Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Then the day came for our son to enter school. He was the only JW child there. I didn’t think this day was suppose to come! (Now the *Watchtower* was hinting, count the forty years from 1918 – so maybe 1958??). Teachers weren’t very tolerant of JWs in those days. In the days to come, I sent him off with literature for the teacher (after all – we wanted her to escape Armageddon). I recall thinking how I felt sitting outside school waiting for him. “All these children will be destroyed at Armageddon – how awful!”

I wanted him to be a very strong Witness for Jehovah and encouraged him to literally hate holidays, that they were pagan and Jehovah didn't like for us to have part in them. I realized later that instead of spending so much time in the Witness work, I should have been giving him instruction for his future in school. I was absolutely convinced that Armageddon would come and he wouldn't enter school, so I was doing what I felt to be most important. Needless to say Kenny was set up for failure. Although we were told he was capable of making the best grades, he was doing the poorest. To make matters worse he had a learning problem that the schools didn't recognize in those days. Along with other problems, life became miserable for him and for us for the next ten years when he finally dropped out of school in the ninth grade. A book could be written about this subject alone, but that is all that must be said at this point. The agony we experienced in the years to follow were horrible for all of us.

By now, we were getting over our first expectation of living in a paradise earth right away. We had already experienced one disappointment – Armageddon didn't come in 1954. By now, we were also realizing that Jehovah's Witnesses were not superior people. (Image means a lot to JWs. The Society always describes them as exemplary people, etc.) They had faults just like others. Some gossiped, some drank too much, some were worldly, some had holiday joys and toys without the tree and Easter Bunny, some took valentines to school, and also pretended to salute the flag. Many other violations of the Society's regulations occurred covertly. But we did have many good friends and met many fine persons who endeavored to live up to the Bible standards as interpreted by the Society. We decided that our priority now was to simply take a firm stand for "the truth" and run the endurance race, for the wait for Armageddon surely could not continue much longer.

The practice of our religion demanded every spare moment of our time and made significant changes in our lifestyle. We had less time for my husband's family. When invited to their house for holidays, we refused to go. We were told it was wrong to decorate graves, so we didn't join his family on Memorial Day either. We couldn't discuss politics for it was wrong to vote. Before Bill became a JW he had been very close to his family, but as we conformed to the thought-

patterns of the Society, we became increasingly isolated from everyone outside of JWs. It's a wonder his family didn't abandon us permanently, but they loved us unconditionally. We realize now they were the ones who truly demonstrated God's love!

Yes, we were typical Witnesses, but it seemed that I had more questions than anybody, and always questioned "new light." This will be discussed in greater detail in a later chapter. I didn't like these nagging doubts and was always searching for answers. If I couldn't find them, I went to a servant (later called elders) and if that didn't satisfy me, I wrote the Society.

Our First Kingdom Hall

Witnesses were out-growing their home meetings everywhere. The necessary "new light" came out – it was now scriptural to build Kingdom Halls for meetings! By 1952, we had thirty-seven publishers in Lexington. (Publishers are JWs who sell literature from house-to-house).

We pooled our money and built the first Kingdom Hall in Lexington, on N.Broadway (later sold to another church). We did as much work ourselves as possible to save on expense. Other than the monthly payments on a building, the only expense for the congregation is utilities and maintenance. Witnesses do all the cleaning and yard work. There are no paid ministers. The congregation is expected to fill the Kingdom Halls, by going from house to house, leaving literature with the people, calling back in hopes they will study and become Jehovah's Witnesses, then they are trained to do the same. When the Kingdom Hall has two hundred publishers, they divide and build another. (Later in years, they learned how to construct a Hall in three days with seven hundred Witnesses from other counties and states sharing in the work).

Our schedule in the fifties (typical of all active JWs) went something like this:

Sunday a.m. - - - - - Sell literature from house-to-house
Sunday 3:00 – 5:00- - - - - Lecture and *Watchtower* study
Tuesday 7:00 p.m.- - - - -Study Society's latest book
Wednesday a.m.- - - - - Sell books house-to-house
Wednesday 1:00 – 4:00 - -Make return calls, start studies
Thursday 7:00-9:00 - - - - Ministry School/Service meeting
Saturday - - - - - Sell *Watchtower*, *Awake!* magazines

Witnesses paid for the literature at the Kingdom Hall when they purchased it. If it wasn't sold, then it was their loss. JW's always seemed to have unsold literature in their closets. Every JW paid for subscriptions for the *Watchtower and Awake!* They also bought books for their personal copies as well as the Society's translation of the Bible. So an abundance of literature was sold before it was printed!

Home Bible Studies could be held anytime in the homes, and for that matter, they could do service at their own convenience as well, except during times of meetings. From time to time, we were asked to serve where the need was great (areas where there were no JW's). We did service on weekends, in nearby towns. All who possibly could were encouraged to pioneer (spend one hundred hours per month). If you couldn't do this, you were encouraged to give some time during the year for "vacationing pioneering" (spend seventy-five hours per month). Later, they were called "auxiliary pioneers," requiring sixty hours. Teenagers were especially encouraged in this area during the summer out of school. All in all, to stay healthy spiritually, one must put in at least ten hours per month. Those not doing this were considered "immature" (not truly accepted by the average JW). Service was continually stressed at the meetings and through the literature. In my notes from one convention was, "All should pioneer unless they were sick or had small children. If you don't have the desire, then cultivate it." I recall one Circuit Servant (one sent by the Society every six months to build up the congregation) saying, "Your Bible Studies (persons you are teaching to become JW's) may be your recommendations for getting into the New World." Another time, the statement was made, "When you are witnessing to one at the door, not only is he being judged by his attitude toward your message, but one hearing it from another room is being judged also." They made one feel guilty for shirking his duty. In fact they said the people's blood would be on our hands.

Local (surrounding towns) and District (surrounding states) conventions were held often, and all were expected to attend. Those not attending were made to feel guilty. We attended two International Conventions in New York. Soon, Yankee Stadium was not large enough to accommodate them.

Wherever one was held, Witnesses canvassed the town renting rooms to accommodate all who didn't want motels. The purpose of

the conventions were to "build up" the people, and encourage them to remain loyal to the organization and continue faithful in the preaching work.

My Husband Leaves the "Truth"

Bill was never the type of person who liked to converse a great deal, and he certainly did not like debating, so common among JW's. (It was necessary to debate with folks while witnessing). He always believed in "live and let live." He took his stand on all the controversial issues as a good JW, but it was very difficult for him. He took part in the Ministry School, but disliked what he was learning to do – go from door-to-door and give talks. He never felt qualified, but did it faithfully, feeling he "had to" as a requirement from Jehovah. He refused to give the one-hour lectures and conduct home book studies, and because of this, he was not thought to be very "Theocratic." The servants were always trying to get him do more. I recall how my friends and I persuaded him to be baptized (he didn't really want to). He was faithful in taking us to all the assemblies, and attended all meetings regularly. After about five years of this, he decided he was not going to be "pushed" any more and simply stopped going to all meetings. He didn't discuss it – never argued about it- never criticized anyone, never encouraged me to quit – he just simply stopped and became interested in other things – mostly sports. According to the Society there was no hope for Bill if he stopped going to meetings. I was shattered! I hated the thought of him not living in the New World with us. The brothers visited him, reminding him he would lose his hope of everlasting life, but that didn't change his mind.

This caused changes that were to me, unbelievable! I was now among those with a husband "out of the truth." Our best friends stopped inviting us to their homes. "Brother and Sister Very Mature" forgot to come to dinner at our house on two occasions. It took me awhile to realize what was happening! We had been so very close! We had shared our very lives with each other. We shared the preaching work often. We were in each other's homes practically every week. Oh boy, did this hurt! My husband was "out of the truth!" There was not one change in his life except that he had stopped attending the meetings. I realized, we would no longer enjoy the company of the servants and their wives as we had been accustomed. Now I knew how other women felt whose husbands were "out of the truth." It's rather like

standing on the outside looking in. (By this time, we had two more children). It wasn't easy dressing a baby, a two-year-old and twelve-year-old, going to all the meetings alone. It was even more difficult attending the assemblies without him. But I knew I must continue, I must "endure" or lose my hope of everlasting life, along with my children.

By now, I began to realize that perhaps our younger children might be going to school in this world! No longer was I swallowing all that "Armageddon is here" stuff, so I started training them for living NOW and not "just" for the New World. I was spending time with them, not concentrating all my energy on preaching to others. The Society was now publishing articles, "*The Joy of Raising Children*." I was glad we got in on this "new light!" Many Witnesses began having children! The Society was going to great length in teaching the Witnesses how to train their children. Later many were adopting children. I wondered why God changed his mind – how I wished for children during those ten years! One of my best JW friends (considered weak in the faith) adopted a baby before it became "new light." She was severely criticized. She couldn't fully enjoy her new baby, for the remarks and facial expressions of disapproving JWs. (However, this was reversed once again in later years).

Anxiety of the Blood Issue

I knew about the Society's teaching, abstaining from blood transfusions when I was baptized, but I never thought about the impact it could have on one until I actually lived through some trying experiences. The refusal of blood transfusions was "revealed" to the Society in 1945. My first encounter was when my oldest son was around seven. A cyst had to be removed from his leg. I recall the puzzled look on the doctor's face when I told him under no circumstances could he have blood. During the surgery, I suffered the mental pressure, thinking, "What if there are complications and they tell me he will die without blood?" I was preparing myself to stand firm for Jehovah no matter what happened. The next encounter was when a person with whom I was studying accepted a blood transfusion right after her child was born. She had not yet been baptized (which made it not so bad) and I remember her words so very well, when she said, "All I could think of – was who will take care of my children if I

die?" Suddenly, I realized the weight of responsibility! What if she had died! What if the Society's interpretation is erroneous?" Would I be without blame? Think about it!

The expected addition to our family made us joyful when I became pregnant, but there was anxiety, because I had an RH blood factor. In those days, all they could do, if there was a problem, was completely transfuse the baby's blood. I discussed this with my doctor. Witnesses are encouraged to handle problems before they arise. He asked, "Who said it's wrong to take blood?" (Later, I found out he was a Christian). I replied, "The Bible" and gave him a booklet to read. Then he asked, "Did you see that in the Bible before someone interpreted it for you?" I knew what he was hinting, but said nothing more. But just those few words left a thought with me. Words could never express those fears for nine months! I was thankful the RH factor didn't present a problem – I was fortunate! Not all were – many babies were made wards of the state and given blood to save their lives, then returned to their parents. I imagine these parents were "secretively" relieved!

Chapter 3

TROUBLED BY “TRUTHS” OF THE SIXTIES

Additions

We studied the Society’s literature in preparation for three weekly meetings, totaling five hours, as well as reading the *Year Book* which included a “daily text.” We also read the *Awake!* magazine, printed semimonthly. Keeping up with the Society’s writings made it easy to detect new thoughts. These new additions could have severe consequences. One thought stated that it took one pint of blood to make gamma globulin, which was used to inoculate children who had been exposed to measles. It was also given when one contacted polio (a dreaded disease in those days, causing death, or leaving a child handicapped). In those days, some contracting measles, were reported having ill effects such as blindness and deafness. In 1964, the Society changed their position. What about the children who were denied gamma globulin? Perhaps many were severely handicapped? How do people feel when they actually refuse a medical preventive only to have the Society permit it later! I began asking myself, “Whose conscience am I following - mine, or men in Brooklyn?”

Witnesses would never reveal their feelings regarding things of this nature to a person of the “world” (one outside the organization). They go through many anxieties and keep their thoughts to themselves, as they would never want to make the organization look bad – after all – it’s God’s organization! I recall discussing the blood issue with a Witness nurse – she could see how anxious I was over my child having surgery. She tried to encourage me by saying, “Well, you will have a good opportunity to witness to the doctor.” Here I was worrying about my son, and she thought she was comforting me with the thought that I’d have the opportunity to witness to the doctor, a *Watchtower* interpretation on the blood issue! To be “Theocratic” we always upheld the Society’s views. To do otherwise, would be viewed as causing dissension for which one could be reprimanded.

To some, these additions may not seem worth mentioning, but everything published and decreed by the Society became very literally the actual law of God in our lives. No matter how slight the Society

commented, every word was bound to impact forcefully upon the life of every good Witness. These additions did not represent abstract teachings, but actually changed the way we lived. For example: The “new light” was revealed that it would be a sin against Jehovah for a child to stand during the National Anthem. This obviously impacted upon Witness children every day, creating feelings of guilt and alienation.

Still another addition: The requirement that one ask his grocer whether the meat had been drained of blood, for eating blood was seen as a direct violation of divine law. How embarrassed I was to ask this! The grocer was astonished, and replied, “Do you think I would sell meat with blood in it?” We were told to examine labels on cans and meat packages to see if any blood products were there. Perhaps many people would laugh at one who would readily obey these additions – if one believes that the Society is God’s channel of communication, then it’s declarations actually are interpreted as the very law of God. You will obey, if you are at all “Theocratic.”

Yet another significant example of an addition that changed lives: “Children should play only with other Witness children.” What, however could one do when the children come home from school – keep them inside – or travel across town to find another Witness child? Believe it or not – some would be very dogmatic about things of this nature.

Here is yet another example: “One not baptized as a JW must not pray at the table.” Now, we had to be careful when inviting guests, making sure we didn’t ask the wrong person to pray. (Of course you would never ask one of another religion to pray).

Another example: “One must not work in a religious hospital.” A nurse in our congregation quit a job she loved, to seek employment in a state hospital. Another, clerking in a religious hospital, who didn’t quit, was reprimanded for not doing so.

And this addition really bothered me: “If you see a brother sinning (doing something the Society says is wrong) you must report him to a servant.” I knew I had written a letter in 1957 to the *Watchtower* asking if taking a blood transfusion was a disfellowshipping offence. There answer was, “No” (see appendix F). Now, we had “new light” on the subject.

A sister in our congregation had taken a blood transfusion right after giving birth to her baby girl. When I heard about it, I regretted the very thought of reporting her. I hoped she would do it herself. We were told that if we didn't report these things it was the same as sinning ourselves. So, finally, I did what was expected of me. She had to appear before a committee and was put on probation (a warning before disfellowshipping – see her story in appendix E).

Still another addition: “If one is divorced for anything other than adultery, he/she cannot date.” Many were disfellowshipped just for dating.

And the addition that brought the additions! We had been taught that if one lost one's mate before Armageddon, he/she would be reunited with the mate afterwards, and have children in the New World. Around 1958, “new light” said, “If you lose your mate before Armageddon, you will not be joined together to have children in the New World.” So, many couples began having children. I had never seen so many pregnant women as when I attended the next Witness convention! Soon, *Watchtower and Awake!* magazines were circulating with beautiful pictures of families on the cover. They began printing many articles on raising children and how to prevent their leaving the organization. Many couples were having children after being childless for years! We added two, ourselves, I wondered how couples felt who were too old to have any. (During the 40's Witnesses were encouraged not to have children (*Children*, p. 313). Earlier, they were encouraged not to even marry! (See appendix D). I wonder how many Witnesses longed for children, but out of good faith, obeyed the organization.

There were many more changes and I was beginning to have nagging doubts about following the Society. I thought about the scripture, “I Jehovah change not.” I pondered the thought, “If Christendom will be held accountable for it's teachings – what will happen to an organization who claim they are God's channel of communication, and lead people to actually live by their standards only to change it later. I was also thinking of the responsibility before me in raising our children. How far will I go in my obedience to the organization – am I really to obey it even if I don't think something might be scriptural – their answer would be, “YES” – there must be

unity at all costs! The joys I had in the past of presenting the “truth” were being weighted down with a list of legalisms to grow and groan.

I was miserable with my doubts, and when they threatened my spirituality I called for help. The 1965 *Watchtower*, page 351 said that Jehovah himself appoints the servants; therefore, one should call on them for any problem. It also said, “*Jehovah's theocratic government is now in full control of the people of God..... Jehovah's organization is under the immediate direction of God himself*”....*If you can't accept it, just put it on the shelf – if it isn't right, Jehovah will straighten it out in time. Where else can you go?*” The contents of my shelf were beginning to pile up!

I inherited some old books, written by Russell and Rutherford, which had been owned by Grandpa's cousin – I decided to look them over before storing them away. At the same time, I was studying the Society's recent book, *Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose*. This was a history of the organization. It explained from a modern viewpoint, when looking back at the events taking place in the organization one could see Bible prophecy fulfilled. I wanted to relive history through the pages of old issues of *Watchtower* literature containing reports of these conventions. I wanted to imagine myself being right there - in the midst of fulfillment! Of these conventions the *Divine Purpose* book said:

“During the seven years 1922-1928 the Kingdom announcement went forward and God's judgments were pronounced. For the second time at Cedar Point, Ohio, an international convention was held, September 5-13, 1922. On this second occasion also, Jehovah's active force upon his organized people authorized and fortified them in fulfilling their responsible mission....truly a feast of stimulating new truth was spread before Jehovah's people on this occasion. Emphasizing the theme of the Kingdom, Brother Rutherford delivered a historic lecture on the subject: “The Kingdom.””

In the *Divine Purpose* book, the Society attempted to demonstrate to the reader that Jehovah was leading the organization the entire time. One was expected to believe that all things quoted in these publications of the past actually fulfilled Bible prophecy. So when I checked out old *Watchtowers* to relive famous conventions, I was flabbergasted!

“The Kingdom” taught at those assemblies, would begin to exercise direct power over the earth, and fully manifest itself as God’s Kingdom in 1925! During the early twenties, the Society often used the slogan: “Millions Now Living will Never Die!” While this stirred the hearts and minds of many whom actually expected to live forever, millions of them are now dead. A blanket condemnation descended with violent language upon Christian leaders and Christian churches. Believing 1925 to be the end of the world, they adopted this resolution: (The International Bible Students became JW’s, 1931)

“The international Bible Students in convention assembled deemed it a duty and privilege to send this message to the nations of earth...Relying upon the Word of God and his providential dealings with mankind through Christ Jesus, we as his Witnesses hold and testify as follow, to-wit:...

That Satan, long the god of this world, has deceived the statesmen, financiers and the clergy, by inducing them to believe that by international agreement or other combined efforts they can bring the desire of all nations; that all of the world’s present organization constitutes the visible part of Satan’s empire or organization, and that Satan’s empire must now fall before the forward march of the King of glory; That all international conferences and all agreements or treaties resulting therefrom, including the League of Nations compact and all like compacts, must fail, because they do not constitute any part of the kingdom of Messiah.”

The Witnesses have always despised any efforts towards agreement between nations, a world government, brotherhood cooperation, international harmony, etc.

After reading *Watchtowers* of the twenties I was shocked! As far as I was concerned it was obvious that the entire theme of those conventions were built on error, or false prophecies. I began to question, “Why did the brothers just pick out certain statements and print them, being careful not to let the reader know what was really said?” In current literature how could they say, “Truly a feast of stimulating new truths was spread before Jehovah’s people on this occasion,” **knowing** that those “new truths” were in error. I also observed, that the scriptures quoted to prove these things in the old

Watchtowers were now being explained with another interpretation in a new book. I thought, “It’s one thing to be in error about something, but it’s quite another thing to quote from an erroneous teaching hopefully proving what Jehovah was doing among ‘his people’ in the twenties.” No doubt, this was **deliberate** deception!

As I read this book, *Divine Purpose*, I read from many of the old publications which it quoted from, and found the same pattern as the above example. By the time I finished, I was asking myself, “Is this how we ‘let God be found true,’ and at the same time, condemn other religions as false?” But where could I go? Surely Jehovah will straighten out my thinking – I must continue going to the meetings and “endure.”

Babylon the Great has Fallen! (or has she?)

It was always exciting to receive a new publication. We read it quickly to see what new truths Jehovah was giving the “faithful and discreet slave” (the biblical term the Society used to describe themselves). Witnesses studied these new releases in small groups. The book, *Babylon the Great*, was released in 1963, printing one million copies, to be distributed by the Witnesses, as was the case of all the Society’s publications. On the inside cover, it said:

Dedicated to God the Almighty, Who caused the Fall of Babylon the Great in the Eternal Interest of True Religion.”

While studying this book, I became very interested in Grandpa’s old *Watchtower* books, because they were quoted from often. I read them in sequence – they were written from 1896 forward. I had journeyed through time and now had the knowledge of the Society’s past. I relived the history of “God’s organization” from the publications themselves. Since the new publications were quoting from the older ones, then what was wrong with my reading those old books. Yet, I knew we were discouraged from reading their old literature. I was beginning to realize why! After reading the *Babylon* book I made a list of questions and sent them to the Society for answers – my last attempt to cure my “spiritual sickness!” (We believed we were spiritually sick if doubting the Society). I also noticed the harsh

statements made toward others. Suddenly, their reasoning seemed to backfire! Following, are excerpts from the *Babylon* book :

Page 215: “*Fortune-tellers, diviners, astrologers, political forecasters who made unfavorable predictions toward Jehovah’s people – all these Jehovah has proved to be frustrated fools, having things backward.*” Is this a theocratic statement? Notice what Matt. 5:22 says: “*Whoever says, ‘you despicable fool! Will be liable to the firey Gehenna.*”

Page 356: “*Thus, in a sense, the fall of Babylon meant the establishment of the kingdom of God.*”

Babylon is supposed to represent modern religion. New churches are built every day – did Babylon *really* fall in 1914?

Page 462: “*This angel flew relatively near to the earth, for Revelation 19:17 speaks also of ‘all the birds that fly in midheaven.’ From this relatively low position the flying angel spoke, in the vision, directly to those dwelling on the earth regardless of nation, tribe, tongue and people. His was an international message. In the fulfillment of this vision in the ‘time of the end,’ this all important message is not delivered directly, audibly by any angel in midheaven where now our airplanes as well as birds fly. It is delivered to people on earth by worshipers who fear God and give him glory. These are the followers of the Lamb, who obey his word given long ago in his prophecy on the end of this world or system of things.*”

According to this, it was an angel who “inspired” the international message upon the world. Is the Society being honest by saying an angel gave a message when they know that message changed?

Page 463: “*The news of God’s kingdom, even when it was yet coming, was gospel or good news. The news that God’s kingdom was already set up and put in operation in the heavens was still better news. First in 1920, did we discern that the good news of God’s Kingdom as “established” in the heavens in 1914 (AD) was to be preached in fulfillment of Matthew 24:14. This verse was the theme text of the article ‘Gospel of the Kingdom’ that was published in The Watch Tower in English under date of July 1, 1920*

The literature shows that without a doubt the chronology believed by the old Witnesses was nothing like that believed today. For example, “the beginning of the end” was supposed to have commenced in 1799, while modern Witnesses say that the “last days” began in 1914. The “second presence” (second coming) of Christ occurred, said the older writings, in 1874, while modern Witness ‘prophets’ say this happened in 1914. Older writings said God’s purpose was to free the Jews so they could return to Palestine to begin the earthly phase of the kingdom to be governed by two heavenly classes. This view has now been completely discarded.

Page 464: This page tells of an international assembly held in 1922. J.F. Rutherford addressed the crowd: “*Thus we see that those of the temple class are clearly designated as the Lord’s witnesses at this time, to bring a message of consolation to the people, that the kingdom of heaven is here, and that millions now living will never die.....The kingdom of heaven is at hand!.....Clearly, then, is set forth the proof that the temple class must continue to declare this message of the kingdom until their earthly career is ended. They must be his faithful witnesses until Babylon’s walls crumble to the ground.....You are his publicity agents. Therefore, advertise, advertise, advertise the King and his kingdom” (Pages 336,337 of the Watch Tower, 11/1/1922).*

Why doesn’t the Society tell the truth about Rutherford’s slogan, “Advertise, advertise, advertise the king and his kingdom?” Rutherford interpreted the prophecy of Daniel (1260 & 1290 days) to be fulfilled by 1925 at which time the earthly phase of the kingdom would be in full swing, thus his reasoning that millions would not die because they would experience this fulfillment.

Page 466: “*...world were notified that Jehovah had his Christian witnesses on the earth for making known his name and his purposes. Since that time a ‘great crowd’ of seekers after God have accepted the witness given by the remnant and have associated themselves with the remnant and have chosen likewise to be called by that Biblical name Jehovah’s Witnesses (Watch Tower 9/15/1931).*

If the Society is going to quote from their older publications, why can’t they be honest and tell what was *really* said? We can find out by

reading, *RICHES* (1931): The “new light” in this book revealed that only one class, 144,000 named Jehovah’s Witnesses would live in heaven, and the “great crowd” known as Jonadabs would have an earthly hope. What a change! No wonder people like grandpa was disturbed – can you imagine how you would feel – thinking you would live in heaven as one of the “great crowd” and now learn that you will never go to heaven, but live on the “new earth?”

The end of the world has come and now the gospel must be preached for the sake of the “great multitude” to be spared. If these Witnesses fail to tell the truth – they will be destroyed, says Rutherford.

Page 502: “*In the very heart of Christendom it (war) broke out in the summer of 1914. It continued into the fall of 1918. At that time Christendom dominated the world empire of Babylonish religion, and its four great sections were all on the world stage, namely, the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Protestant Church system. Of the twenty-seven empires and nations involved in that war, only Japan, China, Siam and Turkey were no part of Christendom, but their religious systems were part of Babylon the Great. The churches, instead of using their mighty power over hundreds of millions in Christendom to prevent it, joined in the war, although it put their church members on opposite sides in the world conflict. They persecuted Christians who did not join them in the killing.*”

The Society claimed those who came under the heaviest persecution by Christendom were the Witnesses. Why is the Society accusing the churches of persecuting them? Is this a fair statement? There is no historical verification of such a thing! It is clearly an assertion without foundation, since all those who did not participate in war efforts were doubtlessly treated equally.

Page 503: It speaks of the *finished Mystery* published in 1917. It then mentions that as a result of this publication the Society’s president and seven others were sentenced to eighty years imprisonment in a Federal penitentiary. It then says that armistice brought World War I to an end, with Christendom in particular bleeding from terrible wounds, suffering from pestilence, etc with a shameful record of religious

persecution. It continued, “*All this was tangible proof that the Gentile Times had ended in 1914 and that God’s kingdom had been born in the heavens and His Messianic King, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, had stood up in power on the heavenly Mount Zion, to be joined there soon by his 144,000 followers.*”

The Finished Mystery (1917), was centered in Russell’s beliefs in the world ending, (1914 – later, 1918). Is it honest for the Society to elevate this book in current literature even though they reject the teachings in it? In fact, after Russell died, and the organization split, the other group continued to print all of Russell’s books, whereas Rutherford, as the new president, began printing his own biblical interpretation of the Bible. The other organization, printing Russell’s books were branded as the “evil slave” and were to be shunned by Rutherford’s followers. The so-called “evil slave” has their own story, stating that Russell was their first president. Their story was found among Grandpa’s books (see appendix G).

The Finished Mystery has, to some large extent been discarded and replaced by other theories, including those of the *Babylon* book and of a more recent book, *Then is Finished the Mystery of God* (from which these quotes are taken) and not meant to harmonize with the earlier work. Is it honest to say that God’s people were persecuted for distributing a book which they, themselves, banned later?

Page 515: It states that according to Jesus’ parable a separating work began in 1919 when Babylon fell. It mentioned the fact that 1919 was the year when the remnant on earth of the 144,000 kingdom heirs began to be freed from Great Babylon. It continued by saying that that year the message of God’s established kingdom began to be preached from house to house in a fearless way.

Notice it says a separating work began in 1919 when “Babylon the Great” fell and was condemned to eternal destruction. Usually, when we say a city “falls,” it has already been conquered by another kingdom – in this case, God’s Kingdom.

Although the Society claimed, in 1919, that people were being separated from “false” religion and brought into the “true” religion, most of the things said to be “true” at that time are now denied. So when those people were converted to the admittedly “false” teachings of the Witnesses (International Bible Students of 1919), had they not

actually moved from one false religion to another? For example, when they were converted to the “truth,” they must believe the following: The “beginning of the end” was 1799; Christ’s invisible return took place in 1874; the world “ended” (figuratively) in 1919 as the kingdom was coming to earthly power then; the elect would, at any moment be caught up in the rapture; the “great crowd” were those with an inferior heavenly hope; Adam and all of Christendom would be resurrected; the ancient prophets would return any day to live in the house the Witnesses were building for them in California.

Few teachings, in fact, have remained recognizable stable since that time. Most have undergone unbelievable transformations. Only the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity, a burning hell, and soul-sleep have remained unscathed by the passage of time. And there are other organizations whose beliefs are similar in these basic doctrines. But according to the Society none of these people will have a hope of everlasting life, unless they become a part of them.

Page 517: *“The facts prove that the invisible Son of man, crowned and seated on the symbolic white cloud, has thrust into the earth his sharp sickle for separating work. Soon the earth will be reaped of all the ‘sons of the kingdom,’ the anointed Kingdom heirs.....All faithful Christian witnesses of Jehovah will escape what comes upon the religionists who remain with Great Babylon.”*

The Society’s message went forth – the separating work began. Why would Jehovah excuse “his own people” for printing “errors” and not excuse other religions for their errors? And this was supposed to be a work that spread “the Truth” while exposing false religion! In order for the *Watchtower* authors to quote from the Society’s older publications, *they had to know* what was said. Is it honest to quote from them making applications just the opposite what was *really* said? And just think – an organization still printing these older books from which the Society still quote today, are labeled the “evil slave.” Does this make sense?

Page 532: This speaks of men having part in various political functions and asks how did Jehovah view such men. They answer, *“Although they were stricken with a ‘hurtful and malignant ulcer’ that would spell their eventual death. This included the clergymen of*

Christendom and of pagandom, whose religious flocks had taken part in World War I and had supported the Peace Treaty, including the provisions for the League of Nations. They refused to recognize that the Gentile Times had ended and that God’s Messianic Kingdom had been set up in the heavens.”

The continual references to the “clergy of Christendom,” as if these men all thought alike and acted alike in naive. Yet the Society continues to blame all for what was done by only a few. Nothing came down out of heaven that year. Were world leaders expected to submit the rulership of their nations to J.F. Rutherford? What were they supposed to do?

Page 533: This page presents a message given by president Rutherford, referring to Christendom’s endorsement of the League of Nations instead of endorsing God’s kingdom: *“Thus they denied the coming of the Lord and his kingdom to bless mankind, and openly allied themselves with the devil’s scheme, and then blasphemously attempted to offer this before the Lord. Like their prototype...the nominal systems (of Christendom).”*

Notice the accusations made against Christendom – they refused God’s Kingdom! Is this true? No! They refused to believe what Russell was saying in those days – that is, his interpretation that Jesus had returned invisibly in 1878. All those who refused to believe this were condemned as blasphemers by the Society. But now comes the clincher – the Society no longer believes this either! Did most people in Christendom even *know* about Russell’s teachings? No! The evidence indicates that his was only one of many minority Millenarian groups of the late nineteenth century, and to this day most people have never heard of his name. Certainly during his own life only a fine fraction of the population had ever read any of his writings, yet he condemned, as did his followers, the mass majority of mankind for not espousing his doctrinal and chronological theories. In retrospect, it is fair to say that this was, more than anything else, a case of sour grapes. Russell became angry, not because “truth” was being rejected, but because he and his works were being generally ignored. He then struck out furiously, at a world that refused to recognize his “genius” and “greatness.” In truth, he made no significant impact upon history, although he did tremendously affect many individual lives. This fact

made him bitter and vindictive – traits that still continue to affect the older writers of the Society.

Page 534: This speaks of a resolution adopted by 18,000 people, in 1922. It said that the first of “seven angels” in the heavens was pouring out the first bowl into the earth. It said that in God’s sight they were afflicted with a “hurtful and malignant ulcer” that is incurable. It continued by saying ulcerous men refused to recognize the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 and to yield their sovereignty on earth over to God’s established heavenly kingdom.

What strong language again! They are accusing men to be “ulcerous” for not believing the Gentile Times ended in 1914. One of the facts they gave proving this was, for example: The Jews were returning to Palestine. Of course, when this didn’t happen, “new light” became necessary.

Again, the Society is claiming an angel gave this message, but they have never explained just exactly how they receive these messages from the angels. Notice what Rev. 14:5 says, referring to the 144,000: *“And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.”*

Page 543: This says that the religious doctrines of Christendom are not life-giving like water but are death-dealing like spilled blood. These words were included in a resolution adopted by 35,000 people attending a convention in 1924, entitled “Civilization Doomed.” The speaker continued, *“Jesus Christ is the great Prince of Peace. He said, ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ He taught his disciples and his followers to refrain completely from the use of carnal weapons. Yet the clergy, who claim to be teachers of his doctrines, have sanctified war and made it a holy thing. They have delighted to have their portraits and statues exhibited side by side with those of bloody warriors. They have hailed the greatest warriors as the greatest heroes of all time. Like Constantine and Charlemagne).”*

While criticizing Christian churches relentlessly for having confused chronologies, at the time here referred to, Jehovah’s Witnesses were teaching that the end of the world was going to come in 1925. Instead of bitterly criticizing other religions, as is repeatedly done in the *Babylon* book, the Witnesses would do well to probe the depths of

their own history. The skeletons they find tucked away in their own closets might give them a frightful shock, awakening them from condescending complacency so evident in such statements as the one just quoted.

Would they be operating today, if someone hadn’t fought for their freedom? They have used our courts many times to protect their religious freedom. Why is it wrong to fight to protect your country and not wrong in fighting to protect one’s home? The Society approves defending yourself if attacked personally.

Chapter 4

IN SEARCH FOR THE REAL TRUTH

Finally, I reached my saturation point of reading all the quotes from current *Watchtower* publications – quotes that I had at my disposal in the originals! How many people had such an opportunity? Who would ever know that the quotes weren't honest unless they saw the originals? It became obvious to me that certainly an *angel* had not revealed these teachings to the Society. Certainly, it was not *Jehovah!* This left me with a penetrating question that was *freighting* me! Am I following God or man? How can an organization with a record such as this dare to claim it is the only *true religion!* Does Jehovah require me to accept every teaching as Truth, teach it to others, and at the same time, condemn ALL others as false? Am I a free moral agent – or not? I was not supposed to read and understand the Bible without their interpretation. I was not able to even express my doubt to others – I would feel so guilty – I could also be reprimanded! I was concerned with the future additions – could I accept them? We were told they didn't claim to be infallible – yet, we had to follow their decisions to the letter, or risk excommunication. But where could I go? Nowhere! So once again, I made one more attempt to relieve my “spiritual sickness.” I mailed my notes and questions to the Society, and anxiously awaited their answer (see letter, appendix I).

On page two, in this letter, it says that Jesus gives this “food” (teaching) to the “anointed” (Society) to dispense to the world. Now one thing I knew for sure—neither Jesus nor angels give false teachings to anyone! Yes, it is true the apostles didn't understand everything, and that's why they asked questions – but did they teach in error? I knew that Jesus said he came to give life – more abundantly and I was missing this somewhere!

I had to make a very serious decision, as our second son was now beginning the first grade. Was I going to raise him and my little daughter as Jehovah's Witnesses? If so, I had to begin teaching him the many things he couldn't do in school permissible to other children. My faith in the organization was too weak – I just couldn't teach him that all the children, as well as his teacher were part of the devil's

world. I decided to stop going to the meetings, and just simply read the Bible to them, without any interpretation. I read Proverbs often – maybe that's why they grew to be such “wise” children. My most repeated prayer became, “Jehovah, please show me the truth – I will return to the organization if that's where you want me – if not, lead me to the right one.” I became very spiritually lonely. I felt like a preacher without a church – a man without a country. I felt so very, very empty.

I was curious about denominational churches. I wanted to know the reasons why a person would leave a particular denomination to start a new one. I checked out books from the library and read the history of the main-line churches. I read about John Wesley, Alexander Campbell, John Calvin, and many others. I found out they agreed basically on central doctrine, but in their attempt to imitate the early church, they started another denomination, in spite of themselves. That was not always their intention. I took note of the fact that each of them built their doctrine on the personage of Christ Jesus, and none of them were saying one had to belong to that particular church to be saved.

Since the main-line denominations believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, the immortality of the soul and a burning hell, I wasn't interested in any of these religions because I was convinced that all these doctrines were false and of the devil.

So I sent for *Dawn Bible Students* literature (the first *Watchtower* split), who continued printing Russell's books. I just couldn't seem to get away from those basic *Watchtower* doctrines! But after reading their material, I had the feeling that something wasn't quite right. I studied the Mormon, Adventist, and Christian Science literature and discarded *their* teachings. Then, I came across a magazine entitled, *The Plain Truth*. Now what could be plainer than the *Plain Truth?* Surely this must be the right one! Their basic doctrines were very similar to that of the *Watchtower*. By this time I was very wary of any group that claimed to have a corner on “truth.”

In my search for Truth, I had not studied church doctrine from their viewpoint. I decided to research. I bought a book on the doctrines of Christianity, and began a study of the Bible. I found traditional Christian writers had supporting evidence from the Bible, too.

Since all major religions accept the concept of the Trinity, I studied this first. Oh my, am I studying a pagan doctrine? The Society says we

should not worship Jesus, yet in my research, I learned that Russell believed He should be worshipped (appendix J).

Just the very thought of accepting this teaching would put one on the road to destruction! I checked out a book, concerning the Nicene Creed, where the big debate on this subject first arose. I learned that Arius, one of the city's leading pastors, in the second century, took issue with Bishop Alexander about Christ's nature. According to the report:

“Now from the very beginning, always and everywhere, the Church has taught that there is but one God in three divine persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This teaching was included in the Master's last commission to His disciples, for He ordered them to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”(Matt. 28:19). *Arius claimed that Christ is not God, but merely a creature, a man deified or adopted as divine. He argued day after day at length that ‘the Son is a creature, fashioned and made; He is not of the substance of the Father.’ The majority concluded that Arius was either deluded or perverse. Arius and his supporters said that they were not the same in substance or nature. On the other hand, Alexander of Alexandria and his deacon, Athanasius, contradicted this by claiming that Christ was the same in substance: ‘homoousios’ or ‘consubstantial.’ Although a distinct divine person, He had the same divine nature as the Father. The Nicene Father drew a formula of belief, a creed which states: We believe in one God, the Father Almighty maker of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, that is of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, begotten not made, of the same substance with the Father, through whom all things were made both in heaven and on earth; who for us men and for our salvation descended, became incarnate, and was made man, suffered and rose again the third day, ascended into heaven and will come to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost. Those who say: there was a time when He was not, and He was not before He was begotten, and that He was made out of nothing; or who say that He is of another hypostasis or another substance (than the Father), or that the Son of God is created or*

susceptible or change or alteration, them – the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes.”

Deacon Athanasius put it this way: ‘The Fathers of Nicaea...never said concerning faith, it is decreed,’ but ‘thus believes the Catholic Church’ and at the same time that they declared what they believed, they declared it to be not a recent innovation, but an apostolic doctrine. And these things they committed to writing, not as discovered by themselves, but as the same thing which the Apostles had taught’ (Athanasius, on Synod, 4).

When I understood the true meaning of the Trinity, it was a rude awakening! I realized that the Society's arguments against this concept were very misleading. For example, a Witness might ask, “If Jesus was God, who was running the universe when he was a baby? If he was God – who was he praying to – himself?” This implies that those believing in the concept of the Trinity could not believe that God was in heaven or everywhere and be Jesus at the same time.

The Society attempts to prove that Jesus was God's first creation, by quoting such scriptures as Proverbs 8:22: *“Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was.”* After reading the entire chapter, I asked, “Who are the scriptures referring to when speaking of ‘I’?” I found out by reading verse 12: *“I wisdom have made prudence my dwelling and find out knowledge and discretion.”* When reading the whole chapter it is obvious that verse 22 is referring to “wisdom,” and calls her “she.” If verse 22 refers to Jesus, then Jesus is female, for in Proverbs 9:1, it says, *“Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars...”*

Another text they use in their denial of the Trinity is Colossians 1:15: *“He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers, or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and all things hold together.”*

In a misleading way, the Society uses this text in an attempt to prove that Jesus was Jehovah's first creation. When witnessing to people, I eagerly quoted this text saying, “See, Jehovah created Jesus – therefore, he can't possibly be God!” But now I realize that the word “firstborn”

does not mean he was created first. Just as the firstborn son had certain privileges and right in the biblical world, so also Christ has certain rights in relation to all creation—priority, preeminence and sovereignty. It does not say, “He was created before all things,” but He is before all things.”

Other texts support this: “*The second son he named Ephraim...*” (Genesis 41:52). Ephraim was the second son, but he is called the firstborn: “*...and Ephraim is my first born son*” (Jeremiah 31:9). When the Jews used the term “firstborn” they recognized it as one’s right to rule.

Another example in Scripture is Psalms 89:27: “*I will also appoint him my firstborn, the most exalted of the kings of the earth.*” David was the last son of Jesse – not the first, yet he is called the “firstborn” because of position of special honor and rights.

My continued search for truth led me to discover texts in the Old Testament making reference to God the Father, were quoted in the New Testament, referring to Jesus. Some of the texts are:

Isa. 40:3 “*A voice of one calling: In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our Our God.*”

Matt. 3:3 “*This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: A voice of one calling in the desert, Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.*”

Another example: “*Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is he, the King of glory? The LORD Almighty – he is the King of glory (Psalm 24:7-10).*”

“*None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written: ‘No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit’ (1 Corinthians 2:8-10).*”

The only way a Witness can cope with these Scriptures is explain them away, like they do on all orthodox doctrines. Sometimes they resort to another translation, to support the Society’s New World translation, such as John 1:1 “*...the word was a god.*” They back it up with Johannes Greber’s translation, also using “a god.” I began reading from this (Grandpa had one – no doubt he ordered it just for the very reason that it agreed with the Society’s interpretation of Jo. 1:1). I found it to be very strange! For example, notice how I Corinthians 13:2 reads: “*...And if I were a speaking-medium, and knew all mysteries, and had all knowledge, and were so strong in faith that I could move mountains, but had no love, all this would be of no value to me. (8-10)...love never dies, even through the speech of God’s spirits through mediums, be it in their mother tongue or in foreign languages, may cease, and even though the knowledge gained through clairvoyance may vanish. For the truths of God are revealed to us in part by our own gifts of clairvoyance and clairaudience, and in part by spirits using human trance-mediums: Chapter 14:1: ‘Exert yourself to the utmost to obtain love. Also be eager, of course, to enter into communication with God’s spirits. Above all, strive to become instruments through which God’s spirits speak to you in your mother tongue.*”

The author of this translation, J. Greber, wrote a book entitled, “*Communication with the Spirit World of God.*” I learned the Society ordered a copy of it, along with several translations for their libraries, Dec. 29, 1980 (letter, appendix K). I’m sure however, they’ve had a translation for many years, since they’ve quoted from it. I decided if the Society could read his literature, I could too, and listen to what it says on the inside of the front flap of the book, *The Spirit World of God*:

“*One day he was informed that a small group of his flock were holding spiritual services, in which a farmboy manifested higher wisdom. The medium during mysteriously induces trances, would impart to his listeners unheard of tidings, revealing an importance, as uttered by prophets in Biblical times. Deciding that the reported events needed impartial examination, the author was astounded by the wealth of supernatural truths propounded by the youthful medium that never remembered a single word after the trance had ended. Some of the medium’s utterance in unmistakable clearness pointed out to the author*”

distant places and people where he could gather the final literary foundations for the great book.”

Is it honest to quote from a translation whose author believes in spirit mediums? The Society has always been opposed to mediums of any sort! I would be afraid to trust anything published by a medium! I wondered why the Society wanted his book, *The Spirit World of God!* Later, the Society stopped quoting from Greber’s translation and went so far as denounce him. Perhaps it’s because “apostates” exposed it.

I studied many books along with the Bible on the subject of the Trinity, including, *Bible Answers for Jehovah’s Witnesses*, by Charles Trombley. I reached the conclusion that much had been made of the doctrine by the Witnesses, which had been misleading. Believing, as the Nicaea Creed Stated, “...*the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father...*” and saying that Trinitarians believed that Jesus was God in the sense that He didn’t exist outside the body of Jesus was a gross misrepresentation. After reading *Apostolic Fathers (90-180 AD)* by Lightfoot, I learned that the translations of the Epistles of Clement, Ignatius and Polycarp, along with many others believed in the concept of the Trinity and immortality of the soul.

Much later in my study I came to realize the majesty of God! God is omnipotent (all powerful) omniscient (all knowing) and omnipresence (present everywhere at the same time). God is truly all in all!

I began to get an entirely different view from the Bible regarding the concept of the Trinity, and began researching the teaching on soul and hell, also considered false, pagan doctrines by the Society.

Does the soul, or spirit leave the body at death and go to heaven or hell? The Society would say, “Absolutely not!” They quote scriptures such as Ezekiel 18:4: *Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die...*”

This is suppose to prove the soul dies, meaning something within a person does not continue living at death. But when I read the whole chapter, I realized what was actually said, notice the following verses:

Ezekiel 18:9 (KJ) “*Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just; he shall surely live saith the Lord God. (13) Hath given forth upon usury and hath taken increase: shall he then live? He shall not live: he hath done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be upon him. (20) The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. (21) But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. (27) Again, when the wicked man turneth away from the wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. (28) Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.*”

Is it fair to quote Ezek. 18:4, attempting to prove the soul will die and not quote verse 27, saying the soul can stay alive? I continued my research and learned what the Old Testament had to say about those who died in God’s favor:

Genesis 25:8 (KJ) “*Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.*” Gen 25:17 says Ishmael was “gathered to his people” when he died. God speaks to Moses, in Deuteronomy 32:50: “*And die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people; as Aaron thy brother died in mount Hor, and was gathered unto his people.*”

Could these “gathering” scriptures possibly refer to a burial place? No, because no one knows where Moses was buried: “*And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.*” Judges 2:10 says a whole generation was “gathered.” Job 27:19 speaks of those “not gathered.”

It is evident that these people were not gathered to the same burial place, because they were not all buried in the same place. Could it mean that they just simply died? How does one find out what the Bible means unless he accepts the interpretation of men? Well, how do the men get their knowledge? They have to rely on Hebrew and Greek

scholars. None of the men on the Society's governing body can read these languages (Scottish Court Sessions, Nov. 1954, Pursuer's Proof, p. 102, 103).

So I went to the *Gesenius' Hebrew Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament* (the Society quotes from it). On page 67, in reference to the meaning, "gathered" here is what it says, "*To be gathered to one's people, to one's father; used of entering into Hades, where the Hebrews regarded their ancestors as being gathered together. This 'gathering to one's fathers, or one's people,' is distinguished both from death and burial. The principle is different of the passages in which a (Hebrew word) is used of gathering the dead bodies of those slain in battle for burial.*"

Notice what Paul had to say about departing this life: "*If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ which is better by far;*" (Philippians 1:22, 23)

It is evident that Paul believed he would be with Christ the moment he died. He also alluded to this in 2 Corinthians 5:1-8.

Much more can be said about this subject of soul or spirit, but again for further details, I refer you to other material, such as *Bible Doctrines*, by Cambron.

Now, what about hell! Don't tell me I must believe in a horrible place with fire and brimstone! Would a God of love send souls, or spirits to such a place to be tortured throughout eternity? Russell really had a fixation on the subject of hell. He was deeply disturbed on this subject when he found the Adventist religious group. When he learned they didn't believe in a burning hell, he joined them. After all, if the soul slept, what's to burn? Grandpa talked more about this subject than anything else. When I look into my past, I can just see him now prancing up and down the floor, relentlessly, preaching about how wrong the "religionist" are to believe in such a place! How could a God of love allow such a place! On and On he would go!

I thought the Trinity was a difficult study – but it was a piece of cake compared to hell! Could I ever believe in such a place? I knew I had been deceived by the Society. Now, I must learn what the Bible *really says*.

I was eager to learn so I looked up every scripture in the Bible that had hell in it and read the whole chapter. I read definitions in the

Greek and Hebrew Lexicons. I learned that hell is described as a dark dismal place in the very depths of the earth, as well as a place of torture. When I was a Witness I always had problems with "explaining away" certain Bible texts as Luke 16 and Rev. 14:11, "*And the smoke of their torment rises for ever and ever. There is no rest day or night for those who worship the beast and his image, or for anyone who receives the mark of his name.*"

Daniel 12:2 says, "*Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.*" I have a hard time believing that "contempt" means one sleeping in the grave throughout eternity. And even the demons spoke of their future torture in Matt. 8:29.

I've come to realize there are two popular views on hell: The traditional view: A place of eternal, conscious suffering for those who reject the Lord. This view has carried the stamp of orthodoxy ever since it was endorsed around 400 AD by the great theologian, St. Augustine, in his book, PSYCHOPANNYCHIA (reference reading: *Death and the Afterlife*, by Robert Morey).

Conditionalist view: The unrighteous will be resurrected, reanimated, judged, and consigned to hell where they will suffer conscious pain for periods of time proportional to their sins. They will then experience annihilation through the death of their bodies and souls (reference reading: *The Fire That Consumes*, Edward Fudge).

Whatever the true definition of hell is, the Bible says it, I believe it and that settles it! I don't plan to go there, so I don't worry about it. I believe that Jesus loved us enough to save us from it. I put the research on all of these subjects to rest and still didn't have a clue what salvation was *really* all about.

I began looking at the lives of those around me. I had a neighbor, named Kay. I had observed her on occasions in the neighborhood. She and her family went to church every Sunday. She seemed to be at peace with herself. Oh my – how I wanted this peace! I wanted to know her better. Kay will never know what she meant to me when we became close friends. I needed so much just to have someone love me. At first, I really felt guilty making close friends with one "outside the truth." It was evident her family had the love of God in their hearts and applied Christian principles in their daily living. They certainly practiced "loving their neighbor." I couldn't imagine how a loving and

just God would destroy them just because they refused to accept the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses. Having God's love, why would they feel it necessary to buy a book from someone knocking at their door? I thought, "Maybe these 'religionists' were not ruled by Satan after all. Must she believe that Jesus returned invisibly in 1914? Must she refuse to believe in an immortal soul, a burning hell, and the doctrine of the Trinity? Must she be in the organization of JW's to be saved?" I pondered over these things as I continued to search for the real truth. As Kay's family became friends with our family, I could see they were "walking testimonies" in the love of Christ Jesus.

Chapter 5 "NEW TRUTHS" DIVIDE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

I became increasingly concerned with the spiritual welfare of our children, as well as Bill and me. It wasn't easy making a decision to attend church. Can you imagine what it's like, the very thought of walking into a church, when you've believed all your life that it's of Satan? I was so "spiritually lonely." Even though I decided to no longer attend the meetings at the Kingdom Hall, I didn't feel like I was giving up on God. I still loved Him and wanted to serve Him with all my heart! I wanted to know "who" had the truth! Perhaps the churches weren't all that false, after all! I had a great desire just to attend one. My constant prayer was, "Lord, please show me the truth." I asked Bill to *please* go with us.

For a period of time, the TV became my "church." As I watched the preachers minister to the congregation, it *seemed* so God-like. I often cried silently when they sang, "When you Pray, will you Pray for Me." More than anything, I wanted God's love. Bill said he would go to church with us. We chose a Christian church for it seemed to be a "middle ground" denomination. We found some things in the traditional church not only inoffensive, but very attractive. We had been attending regularly for about two years when the "faithful and 'slick' slave class" went to the printing press once again with a new message from God. In their book, *Your Word is a Lamp Unto My Foot (1967)*, they presented a new approach which was to cause radical changes in many lives. On page 184, it said that if any member is reported for openly reproachful conduct, even if he no longer comes to meetings, action will be taken against him. It went on to say that one was not relieved of accountability simply because he no longer came to meetings. It said that if one chose to live immorally or took up false religious practices, there would have to be an investigation. (Attending another church is considered to be "taking up false religious practice").

The elders must now become involved with the lives of people even though they have been out of the organization for years! This means they must be disfellowshipped (excommunicate) people who are not even attending meetings! In this same book, "new light" reveals how

this disfellowshipped person must be treated. They said none in the congregation should greet such persons – either in public or in homes. This included relatives (page 180).

This new information shattered the lives of thousands throughout the world, as family and friends deserted them completely. The same Society which took advantage of liberal American laws and kind public attitudes of tolerance in order to win their own freedom now practice a form of psychological brutality against their own members.

Let me explain how this new information affected two families right here in Lexington. I had a friend whom I had known since early childhood. Hazel had become a Jehovah's Witness, but left after about five years. We had children the same ages and visited each other often. When this book, *Lamp Unto My Foot*, was published, it had been many years since she attended the meetings, and she was now attending another church. Evidently she was reported to the JWs, so two elders and a Circuit Servant came to her home and told her she would be disfellowshipped if she didn't stop attending church. Her answer was, "I'm under no man's law – I have no reason to stop!" So it was announced in the Kingdom Hall that she was disfellowshipped for conduct unbecoming a Christian, and no one was to speak to her (see Hazel McChesney's testimony, appendix L).

“New Light” Grieves a Child

I don't consider raising children an easy job, but things like what I'm about to reveal make it more difficult. My little girl was only seven when I had to tell her we could no longer see our disfellowshipped friend. My friend's daughter had been her playmate since they were babies. My little girl had not been to the Kingdom Hall since she was four, (except on occasion, like Memorial service) and she didn't *really* know what JWs were all about. How do you explain something like this, to a very sensitive youngster? Well, I did the best I knew how – it went something like this: “Well, before you were born, our friend and our family went to the same congregation. This congregation has made a new rule that says you can't go to a different church, and if you do they will disfellowship you. This means that if anyone who has ever gone to that congregation in the past can't speak to them. Now, we wouldn't pay any attention to that man-made rule, but your grandmother and grandfather go to that

congregation. If we don't obey their new rule, Mommy and Daddy would be disfellowshipped and Grandmommy and Granddaddy couldn't have anything to do with us, or they would be disfellowshipped. Since your grandparents are getting older, we sure don't want to hurt them – they need our help.

She looked at me with eyes of understanding, but I could see tears in her agonized and innocent eyes, that she would never get to play with Becky again. Hazel and I discussed how we would handle this. It hurt me deeply to tell her we could no longer visit in each other's home. She kept our children when I worked periodically. Now, I'm expected to shun her! I couldn't believe we were being governed by someone in Brooklyn – an organization we were no longer a part of! When I watched my little girl becoming a nervous wreck, the cruelty of the new regulations penetrated the depths of my spirit.

We Were Warned of Disfellowshipping

Then our turn came! We received a letter (appendix M) signed by three elders. This letter said that it had been called to their attention that we were identifying with a religious organization other than Jehovah's Witnesses. We were given a time to meet with them. If we chose not to go, we would automatically be disfellowshipped. I'll never forget that cold night! The three elders gave the *Watchtower* admonition. I knew this was not easy for them either. And of course they would not have chosen this on their own. This was a very sad meeting. Their hearts seemed cold as they explained to us that we would be disfellowshipped if we didn't stop attending church. I can't tell you how we felt! We felt doomed! Here I was trying to sort out doctrines – attempting to find the Truth – I wasn't *really* convinced yet, that we were doing the right thing.

We *knew* what would happen if we didn't comply. We had such a wonderful relationship with my parents and one JW sister and her family. I always wanted to be the daughter who would look after her parents in their senior years. My parents had not been happy with the fact that we were attending church. They knew how I felt about the Society. But they were the kind of parents that never withheld their love from their children. But now things were different – they didn't have a choice! The Society's new book laid down a law. They discussed it with me – they were so afraid we would be separated! Had

I known then, what I know today, I realize I would have to put God first, but at that time, I was still unsure of myself. I wasn't ready to sever my relationship with them, nor did I want to put my children in such a position. So we decided to comply. Now, I had to tell the children we weren't going to church anymore!

Since we couldn't go to church, we decided once again to attend the Kingdom Hall, rather than raise our children with "no religion." We only went on Sunday morning for the lecture, as we didn't want our children indoctrinated by the *Watchtower* teaching. Soon, we felt "unaccepted" for not attending all the meetings and going in service (knocking on doors). So we decided just to resort to private Bible reading, not teaching our children any doctrine so far as soul, hell, and Trinity – only the love of God, and Jesus, and the importance of applying biblical principles. We read a lot from Proverbs – they are pretty wise kids! I was thankful they were good students in school, learning to cope and love others. Since we made a decision not to raise them to think as JWs, we didn't want them to be different from other children, and gradually allowed them to have Christmas, Easter, birthdays, etc.

How awful it was – being denied the privilege of attending church! Every time we went out of town on vacation, we attended. We truly enjoyed the campground services! Every time we passed a church, I longed to be inside. I had such a hunger!

Daughter Hurt Again!

A JW friend often confided in me. She came from England and ended up with an entire JW family. I think she felt trapped and became a Witness feeling there was nothing else to do. She always had problems with her feelings toward them. She visited often, bringing her little girl to play with Suzy. One day she took my daughter home to play. They were around eight years old. Suzy told her daughter she was getting a doll for Christmas. Her daughter said, "That's of the devil!" When little Suzy objected, the mother scolded her, saying "Jehovah doesn't approve of Christmas – it is of the devil!" No doubt she wanted to reinforce her *Watchtower* teaching before her daughter.

Jehovah's Witnesses take a strong stand on all issues. When people oppose them they feel it's a form of persecution. When they oppose

others, they think it's the right thing to do. And now, I was on the other side of the fence and could see the effect of their opposition.

When Suzy came home from visiting her friend, and being told she was of the devil, this opened up the old wound she received the previous year (when she could no longer see her other friend because of the disfellowshipping). Now, she blamed God for taking her friend away, but felt guilty for her feelings. One night when she couldn't sleep, I was trying to comfort her. With tears streaming down her cheeks, she said, "Mommy, I hate God!" This was just too much for a young sensitive child – it affected her emotionally. She became very fearful again and went through days and nights of doing all sorts of odd things – she was put under the doctor's care and finally came out of it. I was thankful these things didn't bother our young son, but he didn't have the JW relationships like she had.

I never lost interest in my search for the "truth." But since I was restrained from attending church, I now turned my efforts toward raising my children and working with children in school. I really loved this and began learning all I could about learning problems. I was offered a job as a reading and math tutor and poured my love and devotion into this area for the next eighteen years.

No Way Out!

From time to time, we were invited to special functions at a church. I hated not being free to attend, and at the same time worrying about getting caught if I did go, so I wrote to the Society, directing questions toward my "getting out," so I could avoid this dilemma. I found out I couldn't resign – the only way out was by disfellowshipping! I couldn't believe it – I couldn't get out of something I never joined! They boast that they don't have a "membership" like the churches, and have nothing to sign. When I was baptized, I felt I became a witness for God – I didn't realize I was "joining" an organization, to be in subjection to IT forever!

Oddly enough, even though I was now on the "outside," I continued to subscribe to the *Watchtower and Awake!* magazines, and Mom always brought the latest books, keeping me informed with current news. I think I kept up to see what they were up to next! I kept my notes up-dated – little did I realize one day they would end up in this book!

Chapter 6

I FOUND THE REAL “TRUTH”

Through my years of wandering in spiritual never-never land, I continued searching for the “truth,” by reading religious books. I didn’t know I could find it by simply reading the Bible. All I can say is, I always had my “*Watchtower*” glasses on, and just couldn’t get the blinders off!

Sometime during 1978, longing to worship, I called my favorite JW overseer, one whom I loved and respected very much (and still do) to come by for a chat. I asked if the rules had changed regarding disfellowshipping, for attending another church, for I longed to get my spiritual life straightened out. Prior to this, I wrote to my JW sister, asking the same question (see answer from the Society written to her, appendix N). Oh, how I hated the thoughts of being disfellowshipped! When it’s announced at the Kingdom Hall that one is expelled for “conduct unbecoming a Christian,” others don’t know but what you’ve committed adultery, drunkenness, etc. I explained how embarrassing it would be – when word gets out (and it always does) that a Reading Tutor had been kicked out of a church! How would you explain to one of your students that you’d been kicked out of a church – especially when you’re not in it! He said the rules had not been changed in this particular offence, and encouraged me to try again attending the meetings, that things were somewhat different, and perhaps I could associate again. I was longing so much for the “truth” and was willing to try anything! I made a decision that this time I was going to find what I was looking for and didn’t care what I had to go through to find it. I no longer cared if I was disfellowshipped – I had to get my spiritual life in order! I really felt desperate! My husband was not interested in this plight, so I set out alone.

I took the brother’s advice, and began attending the Kingdom Hall on Sunday mornings. It wasn’t too difficult sitting through the lectures, but I simply could not tolerate any of the other meetings! By this time, Mom wasn’t able to attend meetings, and in poor health. But

Dad went and was still knocking on doors at the age of 90. Mom highly encouraged him to get those magazines out even when he didn’t feel like it! They were so thrilled to see me going to the meetings once again, but it didn’t last long! However, it was nice seeing old friends again, I really did love them!

Meanwhile, my Catholic sister-in-law, Frances Ann, came to visit one day with a tape by a Catholic Priest – it was all about God’s love – loving people of all Christian religions and how the Holy Spirit works in people’s lives. She explained that she was “born again” and was attending prayer meetings in the Catholic Church. I had never heard of a born again Catholic! I couldn’t believe it! I said, “Aren’t you afraid you will get kicked out of the church?” “Nope,” she said, “The Pope says it’s okay.” I saw a change in her life – she began reading the Bible for the first time and giving up bad habits. She challenged me to come to church and hear Father Dean Braun share his testimony. I thought, “Here I am looking for “the truth,” and how am I going to find it if I don’t investigate – I’ll just go everywhere I’m invited!”

It had now been fifteen years since I stopped going to the Kingdom Hall regularly. Walking into church is difficult for any Witness, but it is even worse to enter a Catholic Church! (The Society attacks them more drastically than others). I decided to sit in the rear and near the door so as to make a quick exit, if necessary. I was extremely conscious of being near demonized people, and wasn’t taking any chances! I saw people there I knew and noticed they were of all religions. (I secretly hoped a JW didn’t see me enter).

Father Braun began to give his testimony – I was over-whelmed with the love he expressed. I had never heard anything like this anywhere! Even though his message was great, I was still very skeptical. I had taken my critical spirit with me. When he finished speaking he asked for all to stand and sing the Lord’s Prayer. As we sang, something happened to me, totally unexpected! It seemed as though something was pouring over me from head to toe! I felt a peace and joy from the innermost part of my being, difficult to explain. I felt like laughing – with a happiness I never knew before! When the meeting was over I tried to talk with friends, but it was difficult to keep a straight face – I wanted to grin from ear to ear! I wish I could have shared right then how I felt – I would have danced all over the place! All of a sudden I knew what the song, “*He Touched Me*,” meant. Suddenly I realized

that, “*HE WAS THERE ALL THE TIME!*” Now I KNEW I had been looking for “the truth” in man-made doctrines – now I realized the “truth” was CHRIST JESUS! All of the sudden, for the first time, I KNEW HIM! An inward healing had started. I felt I was glowing – I wondered if I looked different – I certainly felt different! When we started home, I wondered if my friend noticed a smile on my face – a BIG SMILE! We got into the car and I couldn’t hold it back any longer – I started laughing and laughing! My friend said, “Something happened to you, didn’t it?” I replied, “It sure did – I can’t explain it – but something happened to me inside – I have a feeling of joy that I have never experienced in my whole life!”

When I arrived home, my husband said, “How was church?” (He wouldn’t go with me – he was through with religion forever – so he thought). I just laughed and laughed! He said, “You didn’t go to church, did you?”

I thought sure when I awoke the next morning, I would be back to my normal self – but I was still a changed person! I was so happy! I kept remembering, “He was there all the time!” The Comforter had comforted me! I knew I was searching for the “truth” in the wrong places – through knowledge – not of Christ, but of doctrines – now I knew for the first time **who** the truth was – and didn’t Jesus say, “*I am the truth and the life? (John 14:6)*”

Hungry for the Word

No longer was I interested in reading all those different opinions about what the Bible taught – now I just wanted to know the Word! I wanted to read and read and read – for the love of God from deep within me was nourished for the first time! I started in the New Testament and read straight through. I noticed something I never saw before. **Jesus** was on every page! I always thought the Kingdom was the theme of the New Testament!

I did something I’ve never done before. I got on my knees and prayed a prayer that went something like this: “*Dear Jehovah – Father of Jesus – with the aid of the Holy Spirit – if there is such a thing of inviting Jesus into my heart – I now open the door – come in – come in today – come in to stay.*” For the first time I knew what all those “religionist” had when I knocked at their door, telling them I

wanted to share the good news of the Kingdom – no wonder they didn’t want it – **THEY ALREADY HAD IT!**

I started every morning with Bible study and prayer, before going to school. I attended a prayer meeting every month, when Ann Gunther came from Louisville. I had never heard a message of love like she was expounding, using only the Bible. She shared the testimony of her healing which had freed her and three children from a fatal disease. Now I was wrestling with the problem of whether God actually healed people. I had been taught that miracles of healing went out with the apostles. I began reading I Corinthians 12 and 13 every day from a different translation. I knew that some Christians other than Witnesses believed that the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in I Cor. 12, ceased. By now I was learning to read the whole chapter instead of just a couple of verses. I studied I Cor. 13:8-13 (NIV):

“Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known, and now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

I prayed to understand I Cor. 13:9: What does it mean, “*When perfection comes?*” The word “perfect” in *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon* is translated from the word “*taleos*” and means: “*Perfect state of all things, to be ushered in by the return of Christ from heaven, of men full grown adult, of full age, mature.*”

Now, notice I Cor. 13:12: “*Now we see but a poor reflection, then we shall see face to face.*” According to the *Greek Lexicon*, reflection means: “*Locally, of the sphere in which we are looking.*” What does the word “*then*” mean? The *Lexicon* says, “*When the thing under discussion takes place.*” What does “*face to face*” mean? Again, the *Greek Lexicon* says, “*See God face to face*” (in direct interaction).

Now, if I'm to depend on a widely accepted authority, such as the *Thayer's Greek Lexicon*, then the gifts mentioned in chapter 12 are for today, and when we see God face to face we will no longer need the gifts!

I realized that when I used to quote 1 Cor 13:8, proving these gifts were not for today, and ceased, I never read all the way to the end of the chapter. And I accepted the *Watchtower's* interpretation that the gift of healing ceased at the death of the apostles. What if these gifts are for us today – if God is healing people, and I say He is not, could I be sinning against the Holy Spirit? (The Society taught us that if one rejected the working of the holy spirit, it could be a sin against it The holy spirit is an “it” to them). I had so much to learn!

Now, that I had found the *real Truth*, I wanted all God had for me but I also wanted to be able to “rightly divide” what was of God and what was not. From the Scriptures, I could no longer say God doesn't heal today, but why doesn't He heal everyone? I reasoned, “I'll believe it when I see someone get out of the wheelchair!”

God Healed Me!

I had been having difficulties with my health for several years. Three doctors said I needed a hysterectomy. I kept putting it off and was getting weaker and experienced pain more and more. Finally, surgery was scheduled, Dec. 18, 1979. I'd had surgery before and was not dreading it, but looking forward to being healthy again.

I was thinking about teachings on the subject of healing, when Ann Gunther announced she would no longer be visiting each month, that her ministry in the future would not include as much traveling. Through her teaching and prayers many testified they were learning how to allow God to work in their lives. According to many testimonies, broken homes were mended, many inner and physical healing were taking place, many prayers were answered, so I decided to let her pray for me and see if anything happened. When she prayed, I felt a power come over me which literally sat me down! I did not expect this!

A few days later, as I was beginning my day with Bible reading, and prayer, God spoke to my heart saying, “Jean, you've been healed – why don't you accept it?” I quickly replied, “Okay, Lord, I will – thank you.” At that moment I received a burning in my body and I

knew I had been healed! I wish I knew how to put into words, the joy, the excitement, the assurance I had, and how it feels to be personally touched by God's healing power. No longer was I a doubting Thomas! What better way could God show me that He was working with us on a one-to-one! “*Seek and ye shall find – knock and the door shall be opened.*”

When I told my husband God had healed me, he just looked at me questionably saying, “*Really?*” I knew he didn't believe me! “Bill,” I said, “What must I do – I'm supposed to check into the hospital on December 18 – I don't want to embarrass the doctor by having him find nothing wrong?” He didn't answer – I'm sure he was afraid I'd make a fool of myself. So, I called the office and explained to the nurse what had happened – she seemed excited!

By nature, I'm an insecure, doubting person. With my JW training, I am very critical. But I am neither by this time! I can't tell you how excited I was the day I went for my examination. I had no doubt whatsoever! God's presence was with me the entire forty-five minutes on the examining table. Finally, the doctor came in, saying, “What's this I hear about your not needing surgery?” I replied, “I just haven't had any symptoms lately and feel I don't need it.” As he examined me, dictating to the nurse medical terms, describing my condition, I understood some words, such as, “tumors have disappeared – everything is normal... Merry Christmas!”

I asked the nurse later about the doctor's reactions. She quoted him as saying, “If God chose to heal her through prayer instead of surgery – that's okay with me.” I was glad he was a Christian – I'd heard he always prayed before every surgery.

As I left, driving toward home, tears of joy were streaming down my face – not because I was avoiding surgery, but knowing that God does work in our personal lives! I was asking Him – how do I handle my healing – whom do I tell first? Again, He spoke to my heart and said, “Go tell Olive.” Olive was a special reading teacher and we worked together for many years, becoming good friends. I feared she'd think I was crazy, or something, but I *knew* I must obey God!

I knocked on her door. When she answered, I said, “Olive, I've been healed!” She said, “Come in and tell me about it.” She said she was very happy for me (later she confessed she was skeptical).

Olive's husband was dying with cancer. This is never an easy time for a person, but it was a particularly bad time for her, as she had only retired the year before. She had been looking forward to relaxing times with her husband. She was already in a tired and run-down condition, having nursed her mother and father for several years through sickness and death, while holding down her teaching position. I was most concerned for her – how will she handle all this? When she saw the joy of the Lord in me, she said, “Oh Jean, I need His presence in my life now in the worst way!” Soon, I realized why the Lord sent me to her. After receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit, she was more able to handle her husband's death. Soon afterward, she met with three Bible studies per week and began ministering to ever so many people! The influence she's had on her family has produced an entire family of Christians, including grandchildren and great grandchildren. All are very mature Christians. At the third printing of this book, Olive, at the age of eighty-two is still sharing the Love of the Lord with her community and church. And we still meet monthly for a prayer meeting. She is such a blessing!

New Beginnings

So many things were beginning to happen in my life by this time. I had a new excitement and joy and I was so afraid it would leave me – surely, I won't have this always! But I do – now I understand Jesus' words, “I will keep you in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on me.” and “I will never leave you or forsake you.”

Oh, how I wanted to share what I had with Mom and Dad. Bill and I along with his sister and husband attended our very first Charismatic retreat. I didn't know so much love could be poured out in one weekend! Most were Catholics but there were many there from other denominations. I was beginning to experience Christian fellowship. I spoke to one of the leaders about my dilemma of attending church. I *knew* in my heart that it was time we took our stand, that we *must* attend church. We had been “slipping” in and out of church from time to time, attending prayer meetings. I made the decision that when I arrived home I would explain to Mom and Dad, what was going on with me. For a time, I felt I should not worry them, now that they were quite elderly and not healthy, but now I realized the time had come for my obedience to God. I prayed earnestly to God to show me

how to talk with them. But when I arrived home, Dad had suffered a heart attack. He only lived a few days afterward and I'm glad he didn't need to worry about my being ostracized. Mom lived another year. I debated what to tell her. At the age of eighty-eight and coping with poor health and losing her husband, what must she hear? This was so very painful for me. In fear of her hearing that we were attending church, I felt she must be told. Mom had difficulty hearing even with aids. I always sat very close to her when conversing. A subject came up and I had to either tell her the truth or lie. I certainly couldn't lie to her, so I said, “Mom, I'm going to tell you something that will hurt awfully bad.” She said, “Nothing could hurt more than losing Dad.” When I told her that Bill and I were attending church, and what a blessing we now had, (bless her heart) she acted as though she didn't hear me and changed the subject! That was her way of escaping the ordeal of facing it and especially reporting it to the elders! This was such a painful event, that I couldn't bring myself to write about it in the first and second edition. I loved my parents so very much and never wanted to hurt them.

Bill's Miracle

By now, Bill wanted to get in on the joy and was attending the prayer meetings. Since Ann Gunther would not be continuing the monthly visits, we decided we should look for a church home. I asked Bill to choose one and after attending a number of different churches, he kept returning to Calvary Assembly. Every time we went, he wanted to sit in a different section – first the front, then the back, etc. When I questioned him, it seemed to make him nervous – he didn't want to discuss it. (By now you probably realize what a private person Bill is!) Suddenly, he wanted to have his eyes checked (it wasn't time for an appointment) and I just couldn't imagine what was happening. Finally, one night, he said, “Do you ever see a light around the cross?” I said, “No – there's no light around the cross – do you?” “Yes,” he said, “Every time I go!” He was speaking of the large cross that hung on the wall behind the pulpit.

I've read about auras, but didn't know much about them. I know God can do anything to get our attention. He even knocked Paul to the ground with a bright light, which caused him to become a follower of Jesus Christ.

Speaking of the cross, the Society teaches it is a pagan symbol and is truly a disgusting thing. Now, this was new light after Russell died, as there is a cross on his tombstone. Randall Watters, an ex-Bethel resident (one who worked at the Brooklyn Headquarters full time) had some very interesting information in his book, *Governing Body*, on the subject of the cross.

Sharing the *Real Truth* Together

For the first time in all our marriage, we were beginning each day with prayer, together – not just at breakfast, discussing a “daily text,” as the Witnesses do, but praying for each other as well as others, from our heart. We could now see our lives changing as we walked closer with God. Now I know why God wanted us to be in that particular church. Bill McDonald, our pastor, taught us what it meant to abide in Christ! This was his favorite subject at that time, and we needed to learn this desperately! I’m so thankful for his teaching. He loved us with the love of Christ and helped us through our difficult time of exchanging the false gospel for the true one. And we got baptized again!

The Society talks about a relationship with Jehovah, but not with Christ. God’s love could now be seen in us. We could see a change in each other as we drew closer to Him. What a difference from our first religious experience! We loved people more – wanting to pray for their needs; where as before, our concerns had been only for the Witnesses and the organization, causing us to feel completely detached from all who were not Witnesses, including family. We had always striven to accept the *Watchtower* rules, pretending that they were Christianity in action, while in reality we had been in spiritual bondage. We had found it necessary, in fact, to weigh each word lest we say something that might contradict the Society.

Chapter 7 PERSECUTED FOR THE *REAL TRUTH*

The Big Dread – Disfellowshipped!

No one likes to be “kicked” out of anything, but it’s even worse when you’re not in it! No one bothered to inform me that the Society discontinued using the phrase “disfellowshipped for conduct unbecoming a Christian” when they announced publicly that one was expelled. They dropped the phrase, “for conduct unbecoming a Christian” because many ex-Witnesses were suing the Society for defamation of character. Later, they simply announced that one was disassociated due to their course of action. And, I learned later that one could write them a letter of disassociation. The results are the same however, in that the ex-JW is shunned. I knew that sooner or later some JW would see us entering a church. I thought about reporting myself, and wrote several letters, but never felt led to mail them – oh, how I longed to be freed from this terrible burden. I found a poem I wrote during my spiritual days of misery, written to my former Witness elder:

*Please let me go – so I may get to know
The thing my heart asks for – for I feel so low
There’s nothing to this world – for it’s passing by
To live for it would be living a lie
For if one can’t worship as his heart dictates
Soon life will be over and it’ll be too late
So why take part in tampering with people’s hearts
To do this – is taking the wrong part.*

Disfellowshipping is a very humiliating experience to any Witness. For one thing the fear of it has been ingrained deep within. They’ve been told that it’s the worse thing that can happen to them, that one is lost forever, with no hope of a resurrection, unless he repents and returns to the organization. A division occurs among JW family members, for they must be shunned. One cannot get out with dignity.

The September 15, 1981 *Watchtower*, under the subject, “If a Relative is Disfellowshipped,” relates the following: If it’s the father, he must not lead the family in Bible study or prayer, discuss or teach

his religious ideas. If a minor child, the parents must not conduct a Bible study directly with him. If it's a relative not living in the same home, the JW is encouraged not "to mix" and certainly could not be any part of a wedding party. In fact the JW is encouraged not to even invite the disfellowshipped person to a wedding. The JW family must not even have a JW funeral for the expelled person. This article leaves the reader to believe that Jehovah believes that going to another church is a "hateful practice" and detested by God; that he is judged by God as "unrighteous" and will not inherit the kingdom. If a person simply decides he no longer wants to be a part of the congregation and disassociates himself, he is to be treated the same as a disfellowshipped person who has committed gross sin, by the Society's standards. The members are told not to even say "hello" to either disassociated or disfellowshipped persons.

Dad died in April, 1980 – I'm so glad he didn't have to face my trial of disfellowshipping, for he never believed in folks not speaking – especially among the family. He would have had no choice in the matter, or he too, would have been expelled. Mom died June, 1981 – I'm glad too, she didn't know about it.

I knew, sooner or later, that someone was bound to see us entering church and we would be reported. But I was absolutely shocked in regard to the way it was handled. It happened during the time Mom had just come home from a week's stay in the hospital. She had only been home a few hours when she had a severe stroke, paralyzing one side of her body. She was unable to speak and went into a coma. There was nothing we could do for her except make her comfortable. Anyone who has ever gone through a trauma like this knows the heartaches one has. I was so very close to her, and seeing her in this condition was very traumatic. It was the most heart-breaking experience in my whole life!

So, it was during this time when I was worn out from the daily visits to the hospital and taking turns spending the night with her when the JW brothers came to our house to find out if it was true that we were attending church. I wondered why they couldn't have waited until this tragedy was over! One of the two elders was our very close friend in the past. He was also the blood brother of the one I called informing him about Mom's illness.

As soon as this elder began to speak, I realized why I had never been led to mail those letters asking them to disfellowship me. Suddenly God's peace came over me in such a powerful way! It caused me to feel love for them with my whole inner being. God spoke to my heart saying, "My child, I will get you through this." I knew I would never have known this peace if I had mailed a letter. I actually thought that these elders loved me enough that they wouldn't put me through a thing like this while Mom was dying. So it also made me realize that the only love they truly feel for a person is a conditional acceptance erroneously called "love" which fully depends upon one's giving up one's ability to think and letting them make all the decisions.

Can you believe that someone in Brooklyn is calling the shots that effect so many lives - lives of people who are not even practicing the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses? I said to the elders, "Why do you feel you must do this – you know I actually disfellowshipped myself (in reality) seventeen years ago, when I stopped going to the Kingdom Hall. So in reality, the only accomplishment from this meeting will result in our being ostracized." He said, "Well, we have to keep the organization clean." I replied, "How are we dirtying it up, when we aren't even in it?" He said, "Well, it's Jehovah's arrangement – you are in good standing, and it must be done." I replied, "How can I be in good standing when I'm not going to the meetings? A number of years ago, before the book, *Lamp Unto My Foot*, came out, you would not have done this. Because it wasn't Jehovah's arrangement – the time may come when this will be changed – you may look back at what you are doing to us today – I don't want you to feel badly, because I know you are doing this out of obedience to the organization. I've known you for twenty-seven years and I know the kind of person you are – you wouldn't do anything like this unless you were obeying the *Watchtower*. But rest assured I'll always love you – could we pray together?" He answered, "No." As they were leaving Bill came in from work and the elder told him he was going to be disfellowshipped for attending church. Bill's face flushed, and said simply and quietly, "Okay." I shared with the elder that I was a child of God, and had much peace and joy in my heart. That I didn't believe I had to go through Jesus PLUS an organization in order to have everlasting life, that I hope the day would come when all could worship together in the

real truth. With God's grace, I was able to tell the elder, in love, good-bye forever, knowing he would never speak to us again.

A few days later, just before their meeting at the Kingdom Hall the same elder called saying, "Jean, we are going to announce tonight that you and Bill are being disfellowshipped – OK?" I thought, "How can he do this NOW?" I simply replied, "Do what you must!" Mom died the next day. I lost my best friend, but I have so many wonderful memories. She will live in my heart forever.

We carried out Mom's wishes, including provisions for a JW funeral. I had two brothers and two sisters at the funeral who never became JWs (only one other sister did, and she couldn't make it to the funeral). They were shocked that not one flower was sent by a JW. Dad had received many when he died, so I guess it was because of me. I can't express how I felt, standing before the casket, viewing my mom, and within inches was my former JW elder, the one to give the discourse. He would not say a single word of comfort to me. In fact, he would obey his instructions and not say a word all afternoon. At the cemetery, with the family sitting on the front row, under the tent, when he said his final words, he didn't even shake hands – I suppose he hated to shake theirs and not mine – again, he didn't say one word to me. I felt the whole thing was very unmerciful, but God's grace was sufficient, and I knew I had to be obedient to the greatest commandment, "love one another" so I could still love him.

My sister and I were the only ones of the six children who became Witnesses. Nancy and I had a special closeness, sharing the JW beliefs. We've never had a disagreement, yet she has not spoken one word to me, no correspondence of any kind – I'm "dead" to her. As I up-date this book, 1999, she is 82 and I am 73. I doubt if I'll ever see her again, nor have a conversation. She and I are the only girls left in our family, and one brother. Just think of the enjoyment we are missing!

I couldn't help thinking, "When I was a Witness going from house-to-house and people slammed the door in my face, I thought I was persecuted. But just what was I doing? I was trying to draw them from their churches, saying they had to be in the JW organization to be saved. Would that not mean two mediators – that there are two intermediaries or mediators between God and man? Yet, the Bible speaks of only one mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ.

Now, I'm being rejected by the organization for going to church – really – which is considered persecution for following Jesus? Isn't this similar of how the some Jews treated Jesus and his followers for not adhering to the law? They couldn't understand that Jesus had freed them!

Witnesses feel they must always make the organization look good. When they are questioned about the way JWs are treated for attending church, their answer will be deceiving. It is embarrassing to explain to someone "of the world" that they ostracize people, when they've done nothing but attend a church other than the Kingdom Hall! They'll make misleading remarks, such as, "Well, we disfellowship people for many reasons, for adultery, drunkenness, etc. This way, the listener, if he does not know the inside story, is led to believe that the Witnesses disfellowship people only for the worst sins. In other words, the disfellowshipped person is subject of hushed gossip in quiet tones; his name usually travels the Witness grapevine, often many states within the space of a single day. It is generally implied that there is something either sinister or pitiful about the disfellowshipped person. And since speaking to him is forbidden, the true, impartial story almost never is heard.

One of my very best friends had a JW knock at her door. My friend related that she didn't feel it was scriptural to treat people as the JWs treated me just for going to church – especially when one had been out of JWs for many years, as I had. The JW left enough doubt in her mind as to whether I had actually been disfellowshipped "just for going to another church," that she asked me if I had done something else. I knew one friend, disfellowshipped for going to church, who wouldn't tell a soul that she had been expelled for fear people would believe she had been immoral. Witnesses view disfellowshipped persons as very bad people (appendix O).

During the next few months, I can't tell you how much our prayer group meant to us. Their prayers – their love meant so much! There was absolutely no hate for the Witnesses by any of them. The shocking truth was, I now began to understand, that JWs were the ones expressing all the hatred, calling members of other religious groups such things as "spiritual fornicators" and saying that they served Satan. I now saw the naked state of JWs and when they said that other groups

hated them, it was in the end, only a projection of their own hatred for others.

We Found Out That We Aren't Alone

As our circle of Christian friends began to widen, we were absolutely amazed at the freedom they experienced in their Christianity. They had the same One in the center of their lives, Jesus Christ. Even though they were of different denominations, the fellowship experienced was a bond of love. All believed in the same salvation plan, which comes through Christ, only.

We found out that we weren't the only ones who left cults and were now followers of Jesus. We met "Jews for Jesus," "Mormons for Jesus," "Christian Scientist for Jesus," "Moonies for Jesus" and many others coming together as one body with other Christians – not forming another organization, or denomination for all went to different churches, but simply accepting Jesus Christ as the "One Way" for salvation.

We were overjoyed to find out there were many, many JW's who were now accepting Christ Jesus as the One Way. Many of these stories can be read: *Why We Left Jehovah's Witnesses*, by Edmond Gruss. We attended an International Convention, WITNESSES NOW FOR JESUS, and met many fine people, who were enjoying their new freedom in Christ. Many attended different churches, while others enjoyed fellowship groups. But one thing we all shared – the hurt we received from the division in families caused by the Society. I met people who had been in Bethel (full time workers for the Society), former Circuit and District servants and people who were second, third, and fourth generation JW's. We also met many Christians who came to offer encouragement. The purpose of the convention was to encourage and build up one another. Soon other former JW's arranged conventions for the same purpose – none working under anyone else.

As we made new friends with Christians of many different denominations we found they all shared a common faith. Some differ from their brothers on non-essentials, and no doubt there are bodies that are very much divided, but I believe generally speaking, it is safe to say they don't teach that others are of the devil and have no hope for everlasting life. I believe most of them would be in agreement with the words of Jesus, "*Know the truth and the truth will make you*

free" (John 8:32). Read the whole chapter and find that the truth Jesus is speaking of is himself – that He came from His Father – that He is the *I AM* (John 8:58). The Pharisees didn't accept this fact, that Jesus was of the Father, and came to free us from the law and sin. JW's would have you believe the truth Jesus is speaking of is their verbal and printed interpretations of isolated biblical texts. Christians believe that when Jesus said, "*I am the way the truth and the life and no man comes to the Father except by me*" (John 14:6), he meant just that! Jesus Christ is the only mediator – not an organization.

Witnesses will quote Ephesians 4:4-6 to support the Society's interpretation that "one faith" means "one religion." "*There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*" Christians, however, would look at this text and say, "The one Lord is God; the one faith – is Christ, and the one baptism is in Christ.

The organization of JW's was a part of me for many years – in fact it has influenced me in one way or another all my life. I used to love the organization, for she was my mother. (An expression used by the Society referring to "*Jerusalem above is our mother, and she is free*"). She taught me who Jehovah was and I learned a lot about the Bible. I truly loved my brothers and sisters, and still do, but she hurt me, when she made me feel I would be going against God by disagreeing with her.

When I was baptized, no one told me I was joining an organization and must obey it the rest of my days, whether I agreed with their changes or not. She never told me they had changed their biblical interpretations many times and would continue to do so as they saw fit. She never told me they would continually have additions that I must accept, and if I didn't I would suffer the consequences. And most importantly, she never told me that they had continually made people believe that Armageddon was very near, thus causing them to put off planning a future – especially an education. Mom told me not to plan college in 1945 – there wasn't time – Armageddon was too near. (Besides, they don't really encourage college anyway).

The organization led me to believe that those in the churches didn't live righteous lives – that they can do anything, and not be disciplined, that adultery, homosexuals, drunkenness, or anything is allowed. They

quote instances of certain ministers who marry homosexuals, making it seem as though it's a common practice. No doubt some of this is true, but it is not the norm.

In regard to other sins such as premarital sex and adultery – while religion in general certainly do not endorse it – just because they don't kick people out, doesn't mean they believe in it. Instead, they would pray for them. If statistics were known, I imagine one would find that a Christian would repent more quickly and more sincerely than a disfellowshipped JW. For his repentance would have to come from the heart, versus fear of an organization.

As far as partaking of alcoholic beverages, I would say far more JWs have drinking problems than Christians, as the percentage of abstainers would be among the latter. The Society condones drinking in moderation; however, among Witnesses you will find many degrees of the definition, “moderation.” Some get real “tipsy” and call it moderation.

Are JWs Presentations Honest?

If JWs were *absolutely* honest when they knock on your door, the presentation would sound something like this:

“I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I have come to share my belief with you. I belong to an organization that believes its members are the only ones in the world who have discovered the truth. God is using them to teach the world the truth. I want you to study their books with me and look up all the scriptures it quotes and believe with me that everything you read in these books is the truth, straight from God. Then I expect you to go to all their meetings, assemblies, and door to door, teaching others the same thing. Then you must devote all your time to distributing books and magazines and call this ‘worship.’ I want you to think and teach others that the end is very close. Now from time to time the organization will change their minds on what they believe. It will be necessary for you to change your thinking along with theirs. If you don't – you must not mention it – keep it to yourself. You cannot have any biblical opinions of your own. You must believe that every other religion is false and will be destroyed, because they are of the devil. You must refrain from making close friends with any who are not JWs. You and your children must not salute the flag, vote, go to war, celebrate any

holiday, birthday, or take blood transfusions, etc. You must continue this course until you die and hopefully you will be resurrected into the new earth where you can live forever, if you are obedient. Jesus is not your mediator, he is mediator only for the 144,000 (appendix P). You are being warned – choose life by accepting this message and if you refuse, you can be lost forever!”

Compare this salvation message to Christianity. Most churches are instrumental in leading people to Jesus Christ, accepting Him as their personal Savior, that He is the one and only way to eternal life. I Timothy 2:5-7 says:

For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men – the testimony given in its proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle – I am telling the truth, I am not lying – and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.” (NIV)

The Church will not reject one for disagreeing with non-essential biblical interpretations. If one is a Christian, he will study the Bible, pray and associate with fellow believers, while not shunning those of a different faith. The church is instrumental in helping the Christian experience God's direction their lives.

When a Christian reads and listens to the Word of God, his life is changed by the power of the Holy Spirit working in his heart. In this sense the Holy Spirit is our teacher:

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, who the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and will remind you of everything I have said to you” (John 14:26).

The Society does not leave room for the Holy Spirit to teach – in fact they recognize the “holy spirit” as an active force. And since JWs must adhere to their interpretation, they must accept what they teach regarding I Cor. 5:11:

“But now I have written unto you not to keep company if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one do not eat.”

They use this text with their shunning practice instructions including those who have done none of these things, but simply left the Witnesses and identified with another religion. It's obvious that Paul is talking about wicked conduct. Do you honestly believe there is

anything in this chapter that makes you believe one should be shunned for attending a different church?

We have a Fellowship Bible study group meeting in our home. If there was one “having his father’s wife,” as mentioned in I Cor. 5:1, I’m sure we would not continue having fellowship with him if he refused to conform to God’s word – and no man would have to tell us.

It is so very important to consider Scripture in context. The Society also applies 2 John 10, 11 to their shunning practice:

“If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.”

Much of first, second and third John was written, defending the faith against Gnosticism. The NIV Study Bible has this to say in the introduction to I John:

“One of the most dangerous heresies of the first two centuries of the church was Gnosticism....some said that Christ only seemed to have a body, ..others said that the divine Christ joined the man Jesus at baptism and left him before he died.”

The introduction to 2 John says, *“During the first two centuries the gospel was taken from place to place by traveling evangelists and teachers. Believers customarily took these missionaries into their homes and gave them provisions for their journey when they left. Since Gnostic teachers also relied on this practice, 2 John was written to urge discernment in supporting traveling teachers; otherwise, someone might unintentionally contribute to the propagation of heresy rather than truth.”*

Now, isn’t it ironic that the Society is the one who is guilty when considering 2 John? Notice verse 7:

Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.”

Who came in the flesh according to the Society? Here is their answer: *“Reasonably, then, the archangel Michael is Jesus Christ.”* This appears under the heading: *“Is Jesus Christ the same person as Michael the archangel?”* (*Reasoning from the Scriptures*, p. 218). Could an angel be called the Son of God?

Apparently not, according to Heb. 1:5-8: *“For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son; today I have become your*

Father? Or again, ‘I will be his Father, and he will be my Son?’ And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, ‘Let all God’s angels worship him. In speaking of the angels he says, ‘He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire. But about the Son he says, ‘Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom.”

So an angel came in the flesh according to the Society. The Society believes that the word “anointed” refers to “The Christ,” and they teach that He became The Christ (anointed) at baptism. From the above definition of Gnostics, you can see they also believed that Jesus did not become the Christ until baptism. Luke 2:11 says Jesus was Christ at birth: *“Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”* Jesus was Christ at birth.

In fact one could question statements made by the Society on the subject of “The Christ.” In their publication, *REVELATION*, (1988), p. 12, it says:

“They become a secondary part of the seed, Christ Jesus being the primary part. The congregation of these spirit-begotten Christians on earth make up God’s visible organization that serves under his womanlike organization in the heavens, where they will be united with Christ Jesus at their resurrection” Galatians 3:16, 29. Though not part of the seed, millions of other sheep out of all nations are being united to serve with God’s organization on earth.”

Look at Galatians 3:26-29: *“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*

The Society interprets this scripture, saying the anointed (144,000) are Abraham’s seed. If Jesus is the primary part of the seed and the anointed are the secondary part of the seed does this imply they still hold to the old doctrine that the 144,000, along with Christ, form “The Christ?”

Rutherford had this to say: *“The Christ is composed of Jesus, the Head, and the church, which is ‘his body’ and being composed finally of 144,000 members. It is not unusual for the Scriptures to refer to The Christ collectively, or as one...That this thought was in the mind of the*

apostle Paul is clearly proved by his words when he refers to all anointed Christians as 'one body,' meaning the Christ." (Watchtower, 1941, page 155)

It is evident to Christians that Galations 3:29 tells us if we belong to Christ, then we become Abraham's seed, but this is only through adoption. If Gal. 3:29 applies only to 144,000 and only they belong to Christ, then to whom do the "great crowd" belong? In reality, they belong to the *Watchtower* authors, and now that those left on the governing body (averaging 80 years old) we wonder how many authors are of the "great crowd).

Looking again to 2 John, 7-11, we can understand that John was warning the early Christians, who had church in the homes, not to have these Gnostic teachers come in and teach them, for they believed in a different Jesus.

"For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough" (11Cor. 11:4).

Today, as well as in the first century, false teachers are preaching a different Jesus. Just as it was important in the days of the apostles to warn people of false teaching, so it is today:

"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God" (1Jo.4:1).

Yes, Christians have the freedom to disagree on the nonessentials, but there is a true and a false gospel. We are warned against a false gospel:

"But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned." (Gal. 1:8)

Christians truly enjoy a relationship with the Lord. Religion is a practice of things set forth by a belief system. Christianity is a relationship. They can truly appreciate the scriptures that speak of this relationship: *"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: But as the same*

anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it had taught you, ye shall abide in him." 1 John 2:27, KJ)

Chapter 8

JESUS IS THE TRUTH

Where can one go?

Every once in awhile, (but not often) while knocking on doors, some one would attempt to witness to me. Mostly, they were Baptist. They asked, “Are you saved?” Then, some would quote John 3:16, telling me all I had to do was believe in Jesus. I gave the Society’s pet answer, quoting James 2:19 “*You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.*” I explained that if that’s all one must do, then the demons will be saved. It’s times like this when Witnesses really feel superior because they are “educated in the Bible,” often thinking others are foolish. When people told us that faith in Christ was all that was required, we would mock them for their secure, smugness that “knowledge” was the most important thing.

I looked up the word “believe” in *Thayers Greek Lexicon*. I read the definitions in context of John 3. Here is what is said:

“Used especially of the faith by which a man embraces Jesus – a conviction- full of joyful trust- that Jesus is the Messiah- divinely appointed author of eternal salvation in the Kingdom of God, conjoined with obedience to Christ – rest our faith relationship of Christ with God and close ethical intimacy with him, as well as the true ‘life’ to be derived from Christ as it’s source.’ The conviction that the universe, with all its facets, is under the direct, immediate control of God and that therefore not a single thing can happen –not even a sparrow can fall – which does not, in the final analysis, serve out best eternal interests.”

Now I realize the word “believe” has a much greater significance than I had anticipated. I may believe that a certain person is president of the United States, but I certainly don’t have a relationship with him.

We can actually have fellowship with God and Jesus: “*We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him*

yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin” (I John 1:3-7 NIV).

How can we have fellowship with God and Jesus? We must be born of God. I John 5:1 says: “*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.*”

Notice this verse says, “everyone” who believes is born of God – it doesn’t say just 144,000 as the Society claims. We become sons of God when we receive Jesus: “*Yet to all who receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but BORN OF GOD”* (John 1:12,13). (Caps by author.)

Man was created in the “image of God” (Gen. 1:26). In Hebrew, “image” means “the shadowing forth.” Man exists only as a reflection of a portion of God’s glory, as Paul showed when he said we see through a glass “darkly.” We are born in the flesh, yet we are in the “shadow” of God. But when we are reborn into Christ, and share in His love, we have the ultimate experience of koinonia.

Even though man lost life when he sinned, we have inherited the “image of God” likeness. James is speaking of the tongue in James 3:9 (NEB) where he also speaks of God’s likeness:

“We use it to sing the praises of the Lord our Father, and we use it to invoke curses upon our fellow men who are made in God’s likeness.”

Man, being born in sin, is likened to a new house that is wired for electricity, but has not yet been activated. The owner must make a call for this service. Once this is done he can choose from a variety of lighting fixtures, any shape, size or color. Like the house, we stand in darkness until we make a call upon the name of Jesus, at which time we receive our connection with Him. Then, the “image of God” within comes to life, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (II Corinthians. 3:18 NIV)

“For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ make his light shine in our hearts to give

us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (II Corinthians 4:5,6 NIV).

This power operates within each individual according to our abilities, personalities, intelligence, and our yielding to God's gifts. According to Romans, chapter 14, even our consciences are different; not only should we not compare ourselves with others, but we are not to judge, either. God sent his Son, begotten by the Spirit. We become adopted sons of the Father, by receiving his Son:

Now if God who had made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come." "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (II Corinthians 5:5, 17 NIV).

From that time forward, we have Christ pleading for us. *"Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them" (Hebrews 7:25 NIV).*

Abide in his promises, given in the word, and he will dwell in us. *"Jesus replied, 'If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him'" (John 14:23 NIV).*

Should we Criticize Other Believers?

God has miraculously preserved his word, the Bible. All Christian denominations accept it as their authority. Religious buildings are likened to the houses – having many varieties of lighting. If we don't like certain lights in the windows are we going to "shoot them out?" Just because another religion doesn't agree with us – are we to judge?

"Always speak and act as men who are to be judged under a law of freedom. In that judgment there will be no mercy for the man who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13 NE).

Who can judge who belongs to Christ? *"You are looking only on the surface of things. If anyone is confident that he belongs to Christ, he should consider again that we belong to Christ just as much as he" (II Corinthians 10:7).*

Once we are empowered by the Holy Spirit, what is important? How do we differ? Must we think exactly alike? If we read I Corinthians 13, we will see that love is the most important gift for each Christian. Loving God gives us his nature by which we may become obedient to his calling:

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4:11-16 NIV).

Rather than criticize other believers we should be on guard against the devil's power, for he comes to kill and destroy, and cause evil. Sometimes, well meaning Christians will judge the beliefs and practices of other Christians as evil. Actually what is the definition of evil?

"These men are blemished at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm – shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted – twice dead. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever." "These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage" (Jude 12, 13, 16).

Christianity teaches that these things just mentioned are wrong. Notice Paul's comparison of light versus darkness:

"Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men. At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that having been

justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of everlasting life. This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone” (Titus 3:1-8 NIV).

If all believers put their shoulders together and fight the “real problems” outside the body of Christ, could not more people in the world see the love of Jesus in us, and desire Him? Paul, in his letter to Timothy admonishes us not to dispute over mere words:

“Keep reminding them of these things. Warn them before God against quarreling about words; it is of no value, and only ruins those who listen. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place, and they destroy the faith of some. Nevertheless, God’s solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are his, and ‘Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness.’ In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble” (II Tim. 2:14-20).

One in Christ

Can believers be “one in Christ” and yet be of different denominations? I Corinthians 1:10 says:

“I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.”

It seems the Corinthians were dividing themselves into groups and recognizing certain individuals as their leader, verses followers of Jesus: *“What I mean is this: One of you says, ‘I follow Paul;’ another, ‘I follow Apollos;’ another, ‘I follow Cephas;’ still another, I follow Christ” (I Corinthians 1:12,13 NIV).*

Paul, in this chapter, and also I Corinthians 2 explains the importance of receiving the Spirit of God. He tells us in I Corinthians 2:13, 14 that we are taught these things by the Holy Spirit:

“This is what we speak, not in the works taught us by human wisdom but in works taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (NIV)

So, we can be “one in Christ” and be baptized or taught by different men and denominations. What is the difference – all have sinned:

“This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished – he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies the man who has faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:22-26 NIV).

Christ is over his whole house:

“He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God’s house. Jesus had been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself. For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Moses was faithful as a servant in all God’s house, testifying to what would be said in the future. But Christ is faithful as a son over God’s house. And we are his house, if we hold on to our courage and the hope of which we boast” (Heb 3:2-6 NIV).

We must remember we’re following Christ and not man. In Matthew 10, the rich young ruler asked Jesus what he must do to get everlasting life. Part of Jesus’ answer was “follow me.” JWs will have you think this means going from house to house. They will say this is what Jesus did, and quote instances where apostles went from house to house. They are told they must do this, while at the same time claiming that practically all of the New Testament is written for the heavenly class, 144,000 (less than 8,000 alive today) and doesn’t apply to the majority of Witnesses (the rest have hope of the new earth.) So they must work like the “anointed heavenly class” but can’t be anointed, or born again.

Does the Bible teach that every person must go from house to house? Do all persons have the same gift? Hebrews 2:4 says: “*God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*”

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men” (1 Cor. 12:4-6 NIV).

“Are all apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts.” (1 Cor. 12:29-30 NIV)

The Society expects all to live up to their definition of a teacher and preacher of the good news. In practical terms, this means that all members are coerced into distributing books and magazines printed by the Society. This is most difficult for introverts, and many are miserable. It also causes tension for many children, for while some are “gifted” in knocking on doors, others are timid and feel inferior. Children only five and six years old are told that the heavy responsibility of “defending God’s name” rests upon them, also.

Much is expected from JW children. They are expected to take their stand for their beliefs in school and at the same time, hopefully, set a fine example in every way. This puts an added pressure on the parent’s expectations also. Working among teachers for many years, I’ve heard many comments about these children most of what is negative. Some of these comments, each from a different teacher are as follows:

“I have Christians, Jews, Jehovah’s Witnesses and children who profess no faith at all, but I don’t feel scrutinized by any except JWs. I feel the parents are watching for me to do something wrong. I think they are establishing an unhealthy relationship with the child and teacher.”

“When I had my first encounter with JWs, I wanted to establish a good relationship. I wanted to accept their faith and them, but soon I felt it was one-sided. I felt they were trying to teach me what to do. This particular child, just couldn’t cope. He was bright, but couldn’t follow through. I feel there is a conflict – the child is taught he doesn’t

have to do some things at school and he seems confused in regard to ‘respect.’”

“It’s very hard on the children never taking part in some activities. I would always have to explain to the class why they couldn’t say the pledge or sing patriotic songs which really embarrassed the child. I thought it odd that they could accept gifts at Christmas, but couldn’t give any.”

The parents don’t want them to take part in certain activities. Some children follow through with the parent’s wishes – other don’t. I leave it up to the child – I’m not going to ‘police’ him into obeying their religious rules if he chooses not to. I think some parents would be surprised at what their children do.”

“Although some children are very well adjusted, and very bright, I really feel sorry for them as they never fit in with other children. They act as though there’s something wrong with associating with others.”

“I don’t appreciate the parents sending long letters trying to convince me of their beliefs, nor do I appreciate them sending literature by their children. It isn’t fair to put responsibilities on the child of that nature.”

“Young children do not pick up on the JW children. The problem they have is more social. Their not being allowed to take part in the holidays, having to sit in the office during parties and plays no doubt takes its toll on them, as sitting in the office during these times is the same punishment for those who have misbehaved. They would like to bring the teacher a gift as others, and even do so after the event. I notice they always are ‘up-tight’ around the holidays. Some are hard to handle at this time. I believe it interferes with the learning process at times.”

Chapter 9 ARE YOU IN THE TRUTH?

The reader must realize that Jehovah's Witnesses believe with their whole heart, soul and mind that they are "in the truth." This means believing whatever the Society is teaching for they alone are God's representatives on earth. They insist on "unity:" even though they do not claim to be infallible. Fred Franz (the Society's fourth president) said: "*Truth is consistent with ITSELF.*" (He said this in order to prove religion false, because they differ one from another). The Society's *truth* has certainly not been consistent during the past 100 years! While the average Christian can comfortably ignore these speculations, a Witness feels that in order to have God's favor, he must conform his way of thinking to the letter printed by the Society. It amounts to an obsession with detail, a fascination with specks in the eye that overlooks the rafter entirely. Let's take a walk through some of these so-called "truths."

If you were a JW in 1910, you were in the truth if you believed:

The beginning of the end started 1799; Daniel's prophecy of the 2335 days point to 1874, when Christ was enthroned in heaven. Fleshly Israel is returning to Palestine – an outward sign in fulfillment of prophecy pointing to the earthly kingdom to begin 1914. 6,000 years from Adam ended, 1872. The dead in Christ were resurrected, 1878. The "abomination of desolation" – the Papacy began 539. The King of the South is Egypt; the king of the North are the Romans. The "woman" in Rev. 12:1 is the earthly church. The "generation" which saw these things began in 1780. (*Studies of the Scriptures, volume 4, 1897*).

If you were a JW in 1927, you were in the truth if you believed:

Adam is still going to be resurrected, along with billions, including the people who were destroyed in Sodom and Gomorrah; the second coming of the Lord still is 1874, and that date and the years 1914-1918 are especially marked dates with reference to his coming. Christ came to the temple, 1918; prophecy cannot be understood until it has been fulfilled or is in course of fulfillment; from 1874 to 1914 the prophecy concerning the Lord's coming was being fulfilled and could

be understood by the faithful of the Lord, but not by others. The Lord's second coming was in four parts – day of preparation, the end of the world, the coming to his temple and Armageddon. The clergy cannot understand these prophecies for they are part of Satan's organization. To understand the events concerning the Lord's second presence from 1874-1914 requires one to be spiritually minded, and the clergy are not spiritually minded. The wicked are those who claim to represent the Lord, but who are part of the devil's organization.

The King of the North (Daniel's prophecy) is Great Britain, the King of the South is Egypt. The beginning of Papacy was 539 – add 1260 days and this brings us to the date, 1799. (days, were interpreted years) The year 1874, the time of the Presence marked many prophecies being fulfilled, like all new inventions, such as the explosion of inventions and new ideas evident in the Industrial Revolution and succeeding years. From 1874-1914 is the gathering of people announcing the "kingdom is at hand," and millions now living will never die. Many, instead of rejoicing, have scoffed at those who have taught the second presence of the Lord, and have resorted to all manner of slander and persecution of the meek and humble. "Time" in the Bible is both literal and symbolic. Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles, until fulfilled. The Lord's presence began 1874 and the Lord's favor started turning to the Jews – they began returning. (Notes from *Creation, 1929*)

In 1929, you were in the truth, if you believed: The time has now come for fulfillment of Bible prophecy for those who see and understand, rejoice. The time has come for the regathering of Israel – for the salvation of the world. The Gentile Times began 606 BC – ended in 1914 – Jerusalem has been trodden down during that time, but no more, for the Jews have been returning. God's favor turned to the Jews in 1914. The war of 1914 was fought exactly on time – God's purpose was to free the Jews from other countries so they could return. 1878 – Return of Christ – 40 years later – 1918 corresponds with the date of complete fall of Palestine and beginning of official reestablishment Jews in Palestine. Note the physical facts! "Valley of bones" – applies to Zionism. All will be brought back in the resurrection and judged during the millennium. All others are wrong – WE HAVE THE TRUTH! (Notes from *Life, 1929*)

In 1931, you were in the truth, if you believed: Some have rebelled against the light and began to fall away – they are the evil servant. The time is near! – the Jews returning to Israel does not necessarily mean natural Jews – the time is now for the Anointed to give a warning to all Christendom – that we have the TRUTH. In the resurrection, all will be brought from the graves – except the evil slave class. The other sheep must be warned. “Time of trouble” is near. Everyone is false but this organization. (Notes from *Vindication*, 1931)

In 1936, you were in the truth, if you believed: The faithful work of God done on earth from 1878-1918. The Lord came to the temple – 1918. We have a new name – **Jehovah’s Witnesses**. The new name applies ONLY to the anointed, the 144,000. The other sheep – called Jonadabs, are the great multitude who associate with the anointed, rendering them aid and if faithful they will live through Armageddon which is very near. All others will be destroyed at Armageddon. The ransom sacrifice now cover only those that render themselves in full obedience to God’s law. The so-called doctrine of universal salvation is entirely wrong and completely out of harmony. It therefore follows that any man, men or organization that has kept you in ignorance of the Bible, and induced you to refrain from READING THE BOOKS THAT EXPLAIN THE BIBLE, had been instrumental in keeping you in IGNORANCE of God’s means of bestowing his blessings upon you.

The entire period of time from Pentecost until the second coming of Christ and his Kingdom is occupied in the selection of those who will be associated with Christ Jesus in his kingdom. These 144,000 must die to inherit heaven (they used to think they would be changed instantly). They must render house-to-house service. The end of the world has come and now this gospel must be preached for the sake of the great multitude to be spared. For 1900 years now the Royal family of 144,000 is now about completed. The Jonadabs are those who are in sympathy with Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Wise Servant Class. If these Witnesses fail to tell the TRUTH they will be DESTROYED! Now is the time just before the battle. The “higher powers” in Romans 13:1-3, refer to Jehovah and Christ Jesus – ALL THOSE WHO DENY THIS ARE OF THE DEVIL! (The Society denied this

later). When the Lord cleansed the temple (1918) he brought all his people into unity. From that time on – the faithful message of God is to declare a message against all Christendom. The combined hypocritical and wicked religionists shall be destroyed; and this information is now given for the benefit of the remnant and Jonadabs, or great multitude. The end is at hand, and behold the great multitude appears – they are not foot-step-followers as the remnant. If the tribulation mentioned is the “great tribulation” such as never was (Matthew 24:21) and which comes at the end of the world, then the great multitude could not be a class developed through-out the years past. All others are false – this is the only true organization. {Notes from *Riches*, 1936 }

In 1941, you were in the truth, if you believed: Christ was enthroned as King, in 1914. Only those who accept “the truth” and Witnesses will be spared – all others will be destroyed. Those living in the past who never heard the “truth” will be brought back. The willful wicked will not be resurrected. 1914 marks the end of uninterrupted rule of Satan; Armageddon in very near. Those living in the new world will bear children. The three sons of Noah and wives did not begin to have children for two years after the flood – a prophetic picture. That would appear to indicate it would be proper that those who will form the “great multitude” should wait until after Armageddon to bring children into the world. {Notes from *Children*, 1941 }

In 1942, you were in the truth, if you believed: King of the North – the religious – totalitarian world power who claim the right to rule the earth in an absolute way. King of the South – one ruling in the name of democracy. The princes (prophets of the Old Testament) are expected to be raised any day now. The Scriptures give good reason to believe that it shall be shortly before Armageddon begins. A house was built in California for them, which has been much publicized with malicious intent by the religious enemy, scoffing. The most recent facts show that the religionists of the doomed world are gnashing their teeth because of the testimony which the “House of Princes” bears to the new world. “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.” The remnant shall live

out Armageddon by divine protection. All religions are false but this one. {Notes from *The New World*, 1942}

The “truth” taught from 1959 forward, is discussed in other parts of this book. The Society continues the pattern of teaching that only THEY have the “truth.” As long as the Witnesses accept every interpretation, they are in good standing. They still include the threat of Armageddon, and the world-wide pervasive presence of demons or evil spirits; the obliteration of all religions except JW’s is still considered to be imminent; and the mass-murder of man kind – all who are not JW’s and many who are – continues to be held over the heads of members.

In the *Awake!* magazine, 1982, under the subject, “*Soon no one Will Say, ‘I am Sick,’*” at the end, speaking of the kingdom, they ask the question: “*When will it come?*” They answer that Jesus foretold how we could know that we were nearing the end: suffering from wars, food shortages, diseases, etc, and this clearly identifies *out time* as the one foretold. They then quote the Scripture, “*When you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near.*” They ask, “*How near?*” Then quote, “*Truly I say to you, **this generation will by no means pass away until all these things occur.***” They go on to mention that from the evidence given, no other conclusion can be reached than this: “**Before this generation passes, sickness will be conquered forever!**”

In the same issue, there is an article entitled, “*Closing Churches in Italy,*” and “*Faithless Religious Teachers*” and last but not least it mentions that JW’s have become “*the most important group of the non Catholic religions in Italy.*”

They have the need to protect their members by continuing the shunning practice: “*The expelled mate has proved that he is not the sort of person that we want to be around...so maybe a visit can be made when the disfellowshipped one is known to be out of the house*” (*Watchtower*, Jan. /1983). The faithful JW, following their teaching, no doubt feels he is being very “scriptural” in “punishing” the wrong doer. He must also remember the consequences if he disagrees with the Society.

Will the younger generation continue their faithfulness to the organization? How long will the Society be able to maintain such control?

I know a sister who was in the organization many years ago, and stopped attending meetings along with her husband. After their son was grown, the husband decided to come back to the organization. They became active. Soon, the wife came back. She had hardly returned when “new light” came out – anyone smoking must quit or get disfellowshipped. She was unable to quit, and was expelled. About a year later her husband died. I felt she must be very lonely, losing her husband, and since her only son can’t visit her, I gave her a call. After sharing that I had accepted Jesus, with a new joy in my life, I was amazed at her typical JW response: “The devil is making you feel that way!” I found that she still believed the JW teaching to the letter! I suggested that surely she would feel better by returning to the JW meetings. “No,” she said, “I can’t go – I would dirty up the congregation.” So, there she sits, lonely and depressed, and at the same time believing she should not make close friends with the “world.” She has no bitterness for anyone, but believes she’s lost with no hope of everlasting life because she’s not associating with the congregation. How sad!

How do we know we’re in the right Christian fellowship? Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Who is controlling my life?
2. Do I love all people or just those in my fellowship?
3. Am I a free moral agent?
4. If I have questions, can I get my answer from the Bible, or must I ask a “leader?”
5. How far will I go in obeying a leader?
6. Will I lose my hope of everlasting life by choosing to worship in some other church?
7. Am I willing to sacrifice my child’s future at the risk of “truth” even though I don’t *really* believe it?
8. Am I willing to accept everything my leader says, as coming from God?
9. What must I do to be saved?
10. If my religion had not been established, which one would I be affiliated with?

11. Can I speak my mind and heart or am I fearful?
12. Do I feel persecuted because I'm defending Christ or am I defending an organization?
13. Am I in bondage to rules and man-made laws?
14. Is Christ Jesus alone, my Savior, or is it Christ PLUS something else?

TRUTH is absolute truth, consistent and in unity with ITSELF. This would apply to the one hundred-year-old Watchtower Society. If you decide the organization or church you're in is not the truth, then you need to be set free. You can do this by believing that Christ Jesus is the One and only Way. (John 14:6)

Then choose the Bible as your only authority. It has much to say in regard to your standard of living, saying nothing about belonging to a particular organization or church to be saved.

Paul admonishes believers: *“For your own part, what you say must be in keeping with wholesome doctrine. Let the older men know that they should be sober, high-principled and temperate, sound in faith, in love, and in endurance. The older women similarly, should be reverent in their bearing, not scandalmongers or slaves to strong drink; they must set a high standard, and school the younger women to be loving wives and mothers, temperate, chaste, and kind, busy at home, respecting the authority of their own husbands.”* (Titus 2:2-5)

“For the grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all mankind; and by it we are disciplined to renounce godless ways and worldly desires, and to live a life of temperance, honesty, and godliness in the present age, looking forward to the happy fulfillment of our hopes when the splendor of our great God and Savior Christ Jesus will appear. He it is who sacrificed himself for us, to set us free from all wickedness and to make us a pure people marked out for his own, eager to do good” (Titus 2:11-14)

“But when the kindness and generosity of God our Savior dawned upon the world, then, not for any good deeds of our own, but because he was merciful, he saved us through the water of rebirth and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. For he sent down the Spirit upon us plentifully through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, justified by his

grace, we might in hope become heirs to eternal life. These are words you may trust (Titus 3:3-8)

How does God feel toward all professing his name and his Son's name on earth? Will he not take into consideration their sincerity? Charles Russell thought he was right, but was sincerely wrong. Rutherford thought he was right. How many teachings of the modern Society may prove wrong in the future? For example, in the matter of forbidding blood transfusions, is it possible that God may hold them responsible for murder? How many died during the years they forbade vaccinations for smallpox? What about those who refused organ transplants during the years they were forbidden?

How many mothers committed suicide after refusing a blood transfusion for their babies? I have a letter from a JW who was really upset because she couldn't help her JW friend, a twenty-two year old who put a gun to her head, after refusing a blood transfusion for her baby who died.

It seems the Society has brought much attention to herself through these controversial issues, but oddly enough it has brought growth. First, in the forties there were the court cases that fought for their freedom to sell literature from door-to-door on Sunday. This would have been avoided if they merely taught the Bible from house to house. Then the issue of saluting the flag arose. Many children were out of school for five to six years during this court battle. Does this have anything to do with Christ? Is the pledge to a flag really worship? Then the blood issue came with many court battles being fought. Legal custody was taken over by the state long enough for the child to be treated. Is taking a blood transfusion truly forbidden by the Bible? Are these the things that transfigure us to the likeness of Christ?

“Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (II Cor. 3: 17,18 NIV).

Time will tell about their next step. Time causes their prophecies to change as in 1914, 1925, and 1975. They claimed the last generation which was living in 1914 (Christ's second coming, or presence) would not pass away until “all these things be fulfilled.” This has changed since the last printing of this book – see chapter 11.

Would it not be better if the Society reverted to the belief of their first president, where Russell answered a question in the early 1900's:

Question: (1915) What should be our attitude toward nominal church people? Must we differentiate between them and their doctrine?

Answer: "The Bible says that we should 'do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the Household of Faith.' (Gal.6:10) Therefore we should do good to our Roman Catholic neighbors, our Methodist neighbors, and all other neighbors. We should be glad to do good to every one. But if we have the choice of doing something for the saints or for a neighbor, then we should give the preference to the Lord's saints, whether they be Presbyterian saints or what not. That would include whoever is a son of God. We are the children of God, and we are glad to serve any other child of God, though we would be glad to see them all enjoying the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, not being entangled in any yoke of sectarian bondage. If the Son makes us free, then are we free indeed. (What Pastor Russell Said, page 598).

If Jehovah is directing the Society to teach his people, why would his law of love change so drastically from the above thought to the present one?

Yes, wouldn't it be nice if all Christians could join hands, looking to the good things they're doing? For two thousand years, the Christians have fought for righteous principles, yet have certainly not been without mistakes. It is undeniable that the Bible, wherever it has touched human beings, has served as an extraordinary power, that has transformed lives. Without its influence, the fear and ignorance of the world would be multiplied a hundredfold. Christian ethics has also given rise to a social conscience that has led to the development of public education. The Bible's influence on the development of the free state in the history of modern democracy is so well documented that it is often taken for granted. Its influence has also been major in such areas as social programs, care for the elderly, the establishment of hospitals, aid for the needy, drug rehabilitation, etc. Therefore, claims that the Christian way is irrelevant to modern life are both historically and socially wrong.

If these Christian principles had not ruled our country, could the Society have created the Watchtower organization? Had we been a

communist country, I'm sure the answer would be NO! Yet, the Witnesses would have you believe, as Rutherford proclaimed so loudly and vigorously, *"Religion is a racket and snare unto the people."*

The Society's sales pitch is similar to a sales company I worked for once. Their approach was "create a problem – magnify it – solve it." The JW's come to your door, presenting a problem: "World conditions are getting worse and worse – it can't possibly continue much longer – the Bible indicates time is running out – accept the organization, follow IT and you can live in a wonderful world of paradise."

Like many products we buy – for some, it isn't all that was expected; however, many thousands of people are becoming JW's every day, and testimonies appear regularly in their literature, stating their life has been one of happiness. On the other hand, thousands are leaving for obvious reasons.

We Must Walk in the Light

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him, yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin" (1 John 1:5-7).

How to Identify Those "Not in The Truth":

"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:15-17).

Warning Against Antichrists

"Dear Children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us. But you have an anointing from the Holy one, and all of you

know the truth. I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth. Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist – he denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also” (1 John 2:18-23 ASV).

According to these Scriptures, antichrist are those who deny Christ. It does not say an antichrist is one who denies a church or organization. If one accuses another of being antichrist for turning away from a particular group, is the group claiming to be synonymous with Christ?

I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray. As for you, the anointing you received from Him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, no counterfeit – just as it has taught you, remain in him” (1 John 2:26-27 NIV).

There exists an elite group in the Society, consisting of about eight thousand people, called “the anointed.” They claim to be the remnant of the 144,000. The governing body of the *Watchtower Society* is made up from this group. They claim the Bible is written primarily for them. They deny that the Bible was written for all humanity; they even deny that it was written for all JW’s. Yet parts of the Bible that can be interpreted to manipulate others are used by this group. For example, Christ told his disciples to preach the gospel; this applies to all JW’s, declare the Society; yet, texts relating to being “born again” only applies to the “anointed.” Who gave them the authority to declare who does or does not belong to Christ?

Where in the Bible does it say that the anointing is only for 144,000? The entire New Testament addresses only one class of people who are blessed by God. They are believers – those who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

How to Identify One As A Child of God

“A child of God does not commit sin, because the divine seed remains in him; he cannot be a sinner, because he is God’s child, that is the distinction between the children of God and the children of the

devil: no one who does not do right is God’s child, nor is anyone who does not love his brother. For the message you heard from the beginning is this: that we should love one another unlike Cain, who was a child of the evil one and murdered his brother” (1 John 3:9-11 NE)

“My children, love must not be a matter of works or talk; it must be genuine, and show itself in action. This is how we may know that we belong to the realm of truth, and convince ourselves in his sight that even if our conscience condemns us, God is greater than our conscience and knows all. Dear friends, if our conscience does not condemn us, then we can approach God with confidence, and obtain from him whatever we ask, because we are keeping his commands and doing what he approves. This is his command: to give our allegiance to his Son Jesus Christ and love one another as he commanded. When we keep his commands we dwell in him and he dwells in us. And this is how we can make sure that he dwells within us: we know it from the Spirit he has given us” (1 John 3:18-24).

Notice the Scripture just quoted says we give our allegiance only to Jesus Christ – does it say Jesus plus anything?

We Must Test the Spirits

“But do not trust any and every spirit, my friends, test the spirits, to see whether they are from God, for among those who have gone out into the world there are many prophets falsely inspired. This is how we may recognize the Spirit of God: every spirit which acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit which does not thus acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is what is meant by ‘antichrist,’ you have been told that he was to come, and here he is in the world already! But you, my children, are of God’s family, and you have the mastery over these false prophets, because he who inspires you is greater than he who inspires the godless world” (1 John 4:1-4 NE).

God’s Love and Ours

“Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God. Everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God, but the unloving know nothing of God. For God is love, and his love was disclosed to us

in this, that he sent his only Son into the world to bring us life. The love I speak of is not our love for God, but the love he showed to us in sending his Son as the remedy for the defilement of our sins. If God thus loved us, dear friends, we in turn are bound to love one another. Though God had never been seen by any man, God himself dwells in us if we love one another, his love is brought to perfection within us.” (I John 4:7-12)

Proof of God’s Love in Us

“Here is proof that we dwell in him and he dwells in us: he has imparted his Spirit to us. Moreover, we have seen for ourselves, and we attest, that the Father sent the Son to be the savior of the world, and if a man acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwells in him and he dwells in God. Thus we have come to know and believe the love which God has for us. God is love: he who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him (I John 4:13-16 NE).

We Must Have Faith in the Son of God

“Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. And everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God has overcome the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. This is the only one who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water and the blood, and the three are in agreement. We accept man’s testimony, but God’s testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life, he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.” “We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so

that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true - even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal Life” (I John 5:2-12, 20 NIV).

Who Are The Real Deceivers?

“Many deceivers have gone out into the world, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. These are the persons described as the Antichrist, the arch-deceiver.” “Anyone who runs ahead too fast, and does not stand by the doctrine of the Christ, is without God; he who stands by that doctrine possesses both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you who does not bring this doctrine, do not welcome him into your house or give him a greeting; for anyone who gives him a greeting is an accomplice in his wicked deed.” (II John 7,8,10,11)

After reading these scriptures one should be able to judge quickly whether he is **in the Truth**, or not. If you are about to become affiliated with a group that declares **itself** as part of God’s plan for salvation, BEWARE! Some examples of requirements are: giving large amounts of money for Bible courses, (a practice of “The Way International,” who proselytize on college campuses). Selling roses, (a practice of the Moonies). Peddlers of any literature that promote their own groups as the only people who have the truth. Also groups that are “somewhat of a secret.” Be wary of any group that calls you to perform any kind of other activity that is not scriptural.

What would happen if the Witnesses stopped distributing the Society’s literature? Would they grow? Have you ever seen a report showing the amount of money received by the Society for literature? Can you imagine the tremendous sum resulting from every piece of literature being paid for by each JW when it’s purchased?

Miraculously, the Bible has been preserved and has the answer to our problems. We need to look to IT as our source, depending on God Almighty to guide us through life. We should heed the last verses in Revelation:

“I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. He who testifies

to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. AMEN."

Chapter 10

SUICIDE

It was around midnight, March 11, 1992, when we heard someone knocking on our door. We were sound asleep. Who could be knocking on our back door at this hour? Bill hurried to answer. Our son and daughter stood there with a face of gloom. The police had contacted them with the news that our oldest son, Kenny, was dead from what appeared to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound. One can't begin to imagine what goes through a mother's heart when this kind of news is received. My husband and I held each other tightly as the news ripped our hearts open. Our minister came at 4:00 a.m. to give us comfort. We were so glad he came – imagine someone getting up so early to minister to a member of his congregation. We grieved through the wee hours of the morning. Jesus promised us the Holy Spirit and He indeed was our comforter during the next trying days, weeks and months.

Our son's death was ruled as a suicide. What makes one take his life at the age of forty-four when he is in perfect health, has a good job and owns his own home? Unfortunately, many JW's take their lives – yet others seem to be well adjusted. I can only share with you what I feel led to our son's suicide in hopes it will help others.

I believe with all my heart that a child's formative years are crucial. My mistake was believing with all my heart, soul, and mind that the *Watchtower* organization had the "Truth" – that Jehovah God was revealing to them all the right answers. My husband agreed, my parents and grandfather agreed and all my close friends were JW's. Our Kenny, a very bright little boy, was eager in his formative years to please Jehovah. He enthusiastically explained to his Catholic grandparents and great-grandmother that Jehovah didn't like the Christmas trees and he refused to look at their tree. At the tender age of three and four he took his stand before others that it was wrong to celebrate holidays (See page 12).

We were convinced that Armageddon was just around the corner and soon thereafter the earthly phase of the kingdom would begin. Kenny looked forward to a paradise on earth where all the animals would be tame and he would play with them. I took him in service (knocking on

doors) often and to meetings three times every week; two hours on Sunday, one hour on Tuesday night and two hours on Thursday night.

If the snow was too deep for the car, Bill pulled us by sled – we were very “Theocratic” (a term used by those of us who followed the Watchtower Society to the letter). Those most admired by our peers were the ones who spent many hours in service and attended all the meetings. This was the way we showed our love for Jehovah with our whole heart, soul, and mind, so we were taught.

Kenny was a hyperactive child and sitting in all those meetings took its toll on him (Witnesses do not believe in Sunday Schools). When I look back on those early childhood days the memories are very unpleasant. I recall a time when he was around four years old. It was impossible for him to sit still through two-hour meetings, geared for adults. He actually dug his fingernails into his arms, leaving them sore. Children and babies were expected to sit through those meetings without making a sound.

Needless to say, Kenny was not prepared for school. Being the only little JW boy in the school was even more difficult. To make matters worse, Kenny had a learning problem that went undetected in those days. This caused him to be unsuccessful in the first grade. As if this religious problem (being the only child who didn’t celebrate anything, or salute the flag) wasn’t enough, the principal, using her worse judgement, told us to punish him every day. She advised us to send him to his room each afternoon for not completing his schoolwork.

He repeated the second and seventh grades, and became a dropout in the eighth. This very handsome, intelligent boy was now a total failure in school. He was too young for vocational school. We begged for him to be accepted in an electronics school. Fortunately they broke a rule and accepted him. He was very gifted in this field and did outstanding work.

In spite of all those meetings and field service, Kenny believed what he had been taught and always took his stand; however, by the time he turned eighteen, he became rebellious. He no longer wanted to attend meetings at the Kingdom Hall. Now that the war in Vietnam was in full force, Kenny really had a dilemma. The *Watchtower* had always taught that Witnesses should not enter any area of military service. They taught the only way one could be a conscientious objector was by putting in one hundred hours per month in field service, called

“pioneering.” Even then, the draft did not always excuse JWs who did this, sometimes they were still sent to prison. Kenny could not conceive the idea of going to prison! He didn’t want to be a pioneer, so he chose the lesser of the three evils and joined the Army. Can you imagine what this meant? He had never even saluted the flag, now he must train to fight for it! My goodness, we had never even voted! JWs are taught it’s wrong to vote or take part in politics. Needless to say, the two years spent in the military were difficult, but we were thankful he was never sent overseas. By the time he came home he could see that our ideas toward the “Truth” were changing. I’m thankful that I began to get some common sense by the time our other two children were born, who were ten and twelve years younger than Kenny. Even though the other children spent their formative years under the Watchtower teaching, I never subjected them to the Watchtower extremes. By this time, I was researching and learning we had not been in the “Truth” at all but had indeed been deceived.

There’s no doubt in my mind that Kenny’s upbringing had a great deal to do with his suicide, but I won’t blame all of his problems on the Watchtower Society – some of them lay directly at the feet of the ignorance of his parents. But praise God for His mercy and grace, we’ve been forgiven!

We experienced this forgiveness when we came to know the true person of Jesus Christ (see chapter 6). When we finally came to the *real* Truth, we shared Jesus with our children. Kenny listened and welcomed the change in us. I’ll never forget one of the early sermons we heard on love. The speaker talked about parents and children and said, “If you haven’t shown the proper love to a wayward child, go home and give him a bear-hug and tell him you love him.” The very next time Bill saw our oldest son, he did that very thing (Kenny was wayward in that he was drinking too much). In the months to come we had a real Bible study with Kenny, this time not from Watchtower study aids but from the Bible! We told Kenny we were sorry for all the mistakes we had made and how much we wanted him to have the *real* Truth. I treasure one particular memory. One night Kenny called Bill and me into the living room and said, “Mom and Dad, I want to say a prayer.” His prayer went something like this, “Dear God, I just want my parents to know I forgive them for any mistakes they feel they’ve made in raising me and I stand before you now, that I am responsible

for myself.” Bill and I cried and appreciated so very much that he had forgiven us.

Kenny tried church, but it was very difficult for him – he did read his Bible and seemed to be doing so much better two years before he died.

I honestly believe his fiancée (just two months away from the wedding date) was changing her mind about marriage. This pain, added to his previous trauma, was just too great. He put a gun to his temple, killing himself right in front of her. She believed it was an accident and tried to convince us that it was not intentional. We’ll never know for sure, but we think he knew too much about guns to be an accident.

I treasure my notes from Kenny, which included his drawings of Christ. This showed me that Ken realized the radiant love of Jesus had been revealed to him. He often shared dreams and thoughts about Jesus’ love. Among his notes was this one:

“Christ died for us and in that one hard long suffering, gave us the hope and the way for a future, to communicate with our Father in heaven through His son, Jesus Christ, and gave us love, compassion, and respect for our fellow man and the promise we shall see each other again.”

I believe in my heart that Kenny experienced God’s love, and made it to heaven – he may not receive any rewards, but we can only leave judgement to God. Oh, how I’ve wished a zillion times, to live Kenny’s life over. Those who commit suicide have no idea how it leaves everyone feeling guilty – what if – what if! No, they wouldn’t do it if they had any idea of what it puts the family through!

As I add another chapter to this book, I’m happy to say that our other son and daughter, along with their spouses are very mature Christians (see chapter 12). They are doing a fine job of raising our five grandchildren. Just think – they would have been the fifth generation JWs. Praise God it stops here!

We have been blessed with many spiritual sons and daughters. We met one of these in the last two years at the WITNESS NOW FOR JESUS convention. His name is Stephen. We sat behind him. He

was about the same size as Kenny, and dresses like him. There were those keys hanging from his belt. When you lose someone, it seems like you’re always looking for someone like him. Every time I looked at him, I cried silently. The next year, when he shared his testimony, he told how he almost committed suicide. He was raised a JW, and because he left and has now become a *real* Christian, his parents have ostracized him. At this convention which is held annually in PA, there is much healing for ex JWs and Mormons and sometimes others from groups who have a different gospel. One night after we heard a wonderful sermon by one of the former JWs, I looked around at this young man, and tears were streaming down his face. He walked over and said, “Will you be my mom? It was such a joy to feel his big strong arms hugging me. Bill felt all my emotions, and cried. We decided to “adopt” him.

This is a common experience at this convention where former Witnesses find many new friends who are affectionate, caring and making lasting relationships.

We learn many things from those who attend the PA conventions. One thing we learned from the last one was that some Witnesses who have been shunning their loved ones in the past are now fellowshipping on a limited basis. In the past the Society has disfellowshipped Witnesses for not shunning their loved ones so what has happened to cause the change? When the names of disfellowshipped members were announced at the Kingdom Hall that one was expelled for conduct unbecoming a Christian, it appeared as though that person had committed some kind of horrible sin. Some former disfellowshipped Witnesses resented this announcement because all they had done was leave the JWs and identify with another religion. The elders refused to announce the true reason even though it was requested. So they sued the Watchtower Society for defamation of character. Due to so many lawsuits the Society decided to change their public Kingdom Hall announcement. They changed it by saying the person had disassociated themselves by their course of action, nevertheless, the Society expected the shunning to continue.

Evidently the Society has not been pleased with all the negative publicity they’ve gained regarding the requirement for members to follow the rules of the organization. They would much rather have

Witnesses say they are following Jehovah! They don't want them to get the idea that they're following a man.

So now, the Society is doing their best to convince the Witnesses they are following their own conscience. No doubt they have no intention of the JW's doing that, but it is happening anyway. We're hearing of more and more Witnesses who are having fellowship with disfellowshipped persons even though it's rare and limited.

My prayer for the Society is that they find the *real* Truth, and teach it to others to teach others.... I sincerely love Jehovah's Witnesses. They are good sincere people, who really desire to follow God. I'm thankful for every Christian who takes the time to witness to them. Many are coming out because God is raising up people to show them what the *real* Truth is all about.

Chapter 11 “NEW TRUTHS” OF THE ‘90’s

Since the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society has continually made doctrinal additions and subtractions, I have permission to quote excerpts from David Reed's booklet, NEW TRUTHS OF THE '90's. I encourage you to order it:

Comments From the Friends
P.O. Box 819, Assonet, MA 02702
Services@cftf.com <http://cftf.com>

The Watchtower's Newest Way To Punish Dissidents: “Until recently there were two ways a Jehovah's Witness could leave the Watchtower organization: voluntarily, by ‘disassociating’ himself; or involuntarily by being ‘disfellowshipped.’ But now JW elders are taking a new approach in cases involving dissident Witnesses who do not voluntarily disassociate themselves: the elders are taking it upon themselves and announcing to the congregation that the individual ‘is no longer associated’ with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Still, regardless of the method used, the end result is the same. The individual must be shunned by friends and relatives remaining in the organization, even close family members being advised to limit their contacts to ‘necessary’ family business such as settling an estate. In effect, the shunned individual becomes a non-person who is neither welcomed into the home nor greeted if encountered on the street.” The new policy just instituted caught its first victims unawares. Not charged with any disfellowshipping offense, all were shocked to learn that the elders were going to declare them 'no longer associated' - requiring other Witnesses to shun them. One observer compared it to being sentenced to death without a trial and without even being accused of a capital offense.”

The Watchtower Reverses Policy To Avoid Tax : “The Spring 1990 issue of *Comments from the Friends* reported that the Watchtower Society had filed a ‘friend of the court’ brief in Jimmy Swaggart Ministries’ tax case and the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled against Swaggart....On February 25th a letter from Brooklyn headquarters,

dated the 9th, was read at Kingdom Halls throughout the United States, announcing a major switch in Watchtower policy. Reversing the practice of the past 110 years, prices would no longer be set for books, magazines or subscriptions.” In a subsequent letter dated February 21st, the Society explained the new policy this way:

By adopting a method of literature distribution based completely on donation, Jehovah's people are able to greatly simplify our Bible education work and separate ourselves from those who commercialize religion.

Losing his appeal before the U.S. Supreme Court, Jimmy Swaggart ended up paying \$183,000 in sales taxes on some \$2 million worth of sales. Those figures look large until placed alongside the Watchtower Society's. According to the January 1, 1990, *Watchtower*, page 24, the Society's New York factories alone produced 35,811,000 Bibles, books, and brochures during the previous year. Assuming an average price of \$2.00, those publications would account for an annual sales volume of over \$71 million. Taxed at the rate Swaggart had to pay, that would give the Society a sales tax liability of some \$6 ½-million-for the New York factories alone!

Whether the new “complete donation arrangement” will actually free the Watchtower organization from paying sales tax in all jurisdictions remains to be seen.”

The Watchtower Society Modifies Its Position On Education:
Many children raised as Jehovah's Witnesses have grown up to regret being deprived of the opportunity to receive a college education. Their organization's official position has been this:

“Often the very best and most beneficial studying you do is that done when you read a new Watchtower or Awake! Or a new book with the joy of getting the new truths and a fresh view.” WT, 6/1/67 p 338

And therefore, higher education was viewed as unnecessary:

“Many schools now have student counselors who encourage one to pursue higher education after high school, to pursue a career with a future in this system of things. Do not be influenced by them. Do not let them ‘brainwash’ you with the Devil's propagand to get ahead, to

make something of yourself in this world.” WT, 3/15/69, p. 171

Recently, however, the Watchtower Society has announced a change in policy allowing higher education:

“...the general trend in many lands is that the level of schooling required to earn decent wages is now higher than it was a few years ago. ...So no hard-and-fast rules should be made either for or against extra educationIf Christian parents responsibly decide to provide their children with further education after high school, that is their prerogative.” WT, 11/1/92, pp. 18-20

But, as in the case of Witnesses who went blind or died during the years (1967-1980) when the Society prohibited cornea and organ transplants, those who prematurely ended their education and now find themselves working long hours sweeping floors will gain little comfort from the latest change in Watchtower policy on education.”

Watchtower Society Drops “1914 Generation” Prophecy:
Suddenly Jehovah's Witnesses no longer believe in ‘the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.’ Why this major change in teaching? What happened?

This new interpretation drops the thought that the world will end during the lifetime of the people who were alive to see the events of 1914. Instead, it has Jesus speaking of the ‘wicked generation’ – people who see the sign of his invisible presence but fail to become JWs – with no time period attached.

Watchtower Reverses Itself On Policy That Sent JWS To Prison For Years: A ‘NEW TRUTH’ in the May 1, 1996 *Watchtower* now allows Jehovah's Witnesses to perform civilian ‘alternative service’ as conscientious objectors to the military draft.

Prior to this draftees who reported to civilian hospitals for such noncombatant work faced the punishment of being shunned by family and friends as “disassociated persons.” In order to be accepted as faithful JWs, young men had to insist on total exemption as “ministers” – or, if this exemption was not granted, they had to go to prison as draft

refusers. This policy resulted in the imprisonment of thousands of 'faith' Witness boys in recent decades, and in the enforced shunning of many others.

Ironically, a majority of the JW Governing Body at Brooklyn headquarters had been opposed to the policy ever since 1978, but kept falling short of the two-thirds majority required to enact such a 'new truth.' (See pages 101-102 of the book *CRISIS OF CONSCIENCE* by former Governing Body member Raymond Franz.)

The death of longtime leaders Frederick Franz in 1992 and George Gangas in 1994, the appointment of new Governing Body member Gerrit Losch in 1994, and the incapacity of certain older members since then must now have made possible the required two-thirds majority vote, allowing the May 1, 1996 issue of *the Watchtower* to announce its "new truth."

In the meantime, for nearly 18 years, JW young men kept going to prison to comply with a new policy that even most of the sect's Governing Body members did not believe in and that has finally been discarded.

The Great Crowd "Are Not Declared Righteous...Are Declared Righteous..."

Clarifications" or "adjustments" in Watchtower teaching on 'the great crowd' continue to take place: "*The great crowd to not serve God in the condition pictured by the inner priestly courtyard. They are not declared righteous for the purpose of being God's adopted, spiritual sons. (Ro 8:1, 15) Nevertheless, by exercising faith in Jesus' ransom, they have a clean standing before Jehovah. They are declared righteous with the purpose of being his friends. WT 7/1/96, p. 20*

The new point is that the great crowd "are declared righteous" but not in the New Testament sense.

Ever since second Watchtower Society president J.F. Rutherford introduced the idea that the "great crowd" of Rev. 7:9 designated an earthly class excluded from the new covenant, new JW converts have been taught that they do not receive justification as believers in Christ:

"The 'great crowd'...will not be justified or declared righteous either now or then as the 144,000 heavenly joint heirs have been

justified while still in the flesh." *Life Everlasting –in Freedom of the Sons of God* (1966, p. 391).

But in recent years Christian Ex-Witnesses have been exposing the JW leadership's presumptuousness in telling millions of followers the New Testament promises do not apply."

Can JWS Now Join the Army? No. However, many JWs are confused about the recent change allowing young men to accept a draft board's assignment to civilian alternative service work without their being viewed as "disassociated" persons. One Witness told his son that there has been no change in the doctrine but that the Watchtower Society 're-worded' its instructions to draft-age young men this way because if they put it 'in black and white' that their followers could not join the military they could face prosecution in some lands.

Although *The Watchtower* said a JW would have to make a 'personal decision' about submitting to a draft into the army, the surrounding language and verses cited show exactly what that decision *must* be in order to avoid punishment by a judicial committee.

The real change in the May 1, 1996 *Watchtower* is that a JW who accepts civilian alternative service now 'remains in good standing' whereas previously a judicial committee would have declared that he disassociated himself."

NEW LIGHT ON BLOOD

Permission has been given to inform you about some liberal JW's who have done outstanding work on the subject of blood transfusions. They have produced a tract and articles. I encourage you write them:

Web site www.visiworld.com/starter/newlight/

Email: jwreformers@anon.nymserver.com

P.O. Box 190089 – Boise, ID 83719-0089 USA

The following are excerpts taken from their tract:

DO JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES REALLY ABSTAIN FROM BLOOD?:

The associated Jehovah's Witnesses for Reform on Blood, is a diverse group of Witnesses from many countries, including elders and other organization officials, Hospital Liaison Committee members, Doctors, Lawyers, Child Advocates and members of the general public who have volunteered their time and energies in an effort to bring about an end to a tragic misguided policy that has claimed thousands of lives, many of them children.

Is a blood transfusion a feeding on blood? At one time the Watchtower Society taught that it was. Then in the mid-1960's they learned that transfused blood is not digested but retained in the body much like a transplanted organ. Tragically, by then many Jehovah's Witnesses had already died. Since the Governing Body believed that the end was extremely near, and that Science would soon provide an effective alternative to blood, the blood ban was retained, but more and more of the separate blood products were permitted. The current policy has been developed in a careless fashion over the years and there are many similarities to the Watchtower's previous bans on vaccines and organ transplants. Simply stated, to receive a nutritional benefit from blood, you would have to eat and digest it so that it could be broken down and used as food. *No nutritional benefit accrues from a blood transfusion.*

The Watchtower has tried to overcome this fact by arguing that a blood transfusion is no different than being fed intravenously with dextrose or alcohol. These comparisons are misleading, however, because sugar and alcohol can in fact be used by the body as food without digestion. Transfused blood cannot be used by your body as food anymore than can a transplanted heart or kidney.

Consider two patients who are *unable to eat*, and are admitted to a hospital. One is given a blood transfusion and the other intravenous feedings, *which one is receiving nourishment and will live?* Clearly, doctors do not prescribe blood transfusions to treat malnutrition, but rather to replace something your body has lost, usually the red cells needed to transport oxygen and keep you alive.

Since it cannot be established that a blood transfusion is a feeding on blood or the equivalent of eating blood, then the critical link necessary to Biblically support the Watchtower blood policy does not exist.

HOW DOES THE WATCHTOWER SOCIETY JUSTIFY THEIR PARTIAL BAN ON BLOOD?

No reputable modern doctor or scientist would state that a blood transfusion is a feeding on blood, or the equivalent of eating blood, but rather *an organ or liquid tissue transplant* as the Society itself now acknowledges. To overcome this fact the Watchtower has created a new law for Witnesses by stating that it's wrong to *sustain life* by means of blood. The problem here is that *nowhere in the Bible do we find such a restriction on blood stated in those terms.* Is eating and sustaining life the same as the Watchtower argues? Well, there are many things that we do to sustain our lives like drinking, breathing, sleeping, etc. Eating is just one of the things necessary to sustain life. This word shuffle is both dishonest and reckless on the Watchtower's part, and obscures the truth of God's word, "going beyond the things that are written." (I Cor. 4:6) Most Jehovah's Witnesses would answer a resounding YES! But as even this brief consideration of the facts has shown, the answer is *no*. Can you explain why the Watchtower Society permits the use of blood products like albumin, EPO, blood serums/Immunoglobulins, and hemophiliac treatments (clotting factors VIII & IX since these are clearly taken to *sustain life*? How can this honestly be considered as abstaining from blood? The obvious answer is that it cannot. If the

medical use of blood is wrong, we cannot pick and choose which blood fractions or products we will abstain from anymore than we can engage in a little fornication or a little idol worship. Such reasoning is seriously flawed.

In previous decades untold numbers of Jehovah's Witnesses loyally supported the bans on vaccines and organ transplants. In some cases this loyal support cost them their lives, and we are left wondering how their families must have reacted when the Watchtower Society finally received "new light," and reversed their previous position.

Loyal adherence to the blood doctrine has cost thousands of Witnesses their lives. Despite this fact, many elders, Hospital Liaison Committee members and longtime Watchtower observers believe it is only a matter of time before the organization reverses their blood policy, and the use of all blood products becomes a matter of conscience.

In the meantime, you are encouraged to fully educate yourself on the issues so that you can make an informed and conscientious choice regarding the use of blood or blood products. Seek alternative non-blood therapies under the advice of qualified medical professionals who can best advise you as to the risks and potential benefits of both accepting or rejecting the use of all blood products, regardless of whether or not these products are presently approved for use by the Watchtower Society.

WALKING IN THE TRUTH **1999 UPDATE**

As I ponder over the sixteen years since the first printing of this book, Bill and I both consider them to be the happiest ones in our entire lives, when it comes to serving the Lord. Christians who grow up in the faith have no idea what they take for granted. Does this mean they do not have problems? Of course not! Nor does it mean that there are no problems in the churches. But the major difference is that Christians turn to Christ for every need, and not to a "channel." What a major difference!

So I will share with you what the Lord has done in my life since the first printing of this book. Betty Stephens (testimony in the appendix), Bill and I started a ministry, Tutors for Christ. Betty has been a real blessing to me, personally. She truly has a gift of prayer, and really knows how to do spiritual warfare! She has been there for me through thick and thin. I doubt if I could have ever given a public talk without her prayers. Public speaking was so much against my nature, that it was always a battle for me. I believe with all my heart that the Lord wanted me to depend totally on Him.

We did not seek a ministry, but it was dropped in our laps after I appeared on the national TV John Ankerberg Show along with Joan Cetnar, Lori MacGregor and Helen Ortega. All of us received a ton of mail! Many of them were Witnesses who just happened to be flipping the channels and watched the program. What a treat it was, answering all their questions. Soon, the mail became so great, that I started a newsletter so I could communicate with many of them through it. I even set up a net work across the nation, among Christians to help me disciple them. What a joy it was when one came to know the *true person of Jesus Christ!* I've met some of these wonderful people at the Witnesses Now For Jesus convention, which Joan and Bill Cetnar started. Our quarterly newsletter was sent for seven consecutive years. The friends we've made make up for many times over the ones we lost.

David Maestas was one of those friends. Actually we claim him as one of our "spiritual" sons. He was about to be baptized into the JW's when he wrote us. He, like all the rest needed to be deprogrammed. Soon, he came to know the "real" Jesus. Not long after, he started a

ministry of his own, (Jude 3 Outreach, P.O. Box 6755, Albuquerque, NM 87197). He often flies here, and rides to the PA convention with us. We love him dearly.

Our ministry has also sponsored a number of seminars in Lexington, where people could learn about those with a different gospel, such as Mormons, JW's, The New Age, The Way International, etc. Christians have expressed their appreciation for what they've learned and many of them have taken the information back to their home churches. I believe an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

I never asked to speak anywhere, but word got around about my testimony. Soon, I was asked to speak practically every week, somewhere. I've shared in more than fifty churches, (many of them more than once), at seminars, at Leaders' Workshops, Seminaries, as well as the PA convention. I was an area speaker with Women's Aglow for awhile. Being a very timid person when it comes to public speaking makes me realize what the Lord can do in one's life, when we are obedient to Him.

For all of these years, hardly a week goes by without someone calling me for help. It may be that a Witness is calling on them, or perhaps one of their loved ones is becoming involved with a cult. It became necessary to set up support groups, which we've held continuously as needed. I can't begin to tell you how many Christians have come to a better understanding of the Bible, as a result of learning how to defend their faith. Some have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior for the first time.

One day I heard Dr. David Reagan speak on the radio. What a powerful message he had – he was talking about the cults. He founded a ministry called Lamb & Lion. He speaks out on all the issues confronting society, as well as his main topic, Prophecy. He also teaches a New Heaven and a New Earth! I had not heard this in the churches (not that they didn't believe in it – it just wasn't discussed). When I told Dave how delighted I was to hear this teaching, he said, "Jean, don't throw out the baby with the bath water!" I learned he was speaking at Hill 'n Dale Christian Church. This is where we first met him. He read my book, and let me know right away how much he appreciated it. When we invited him to speak at our first conference, I was surprised when he said there was no charge for his services (they do accept love offerings). How

different this was from some, charging as much as \$3,000 for one speaking. From that time on we always involved Lamb & Lion Ministry in our conferences. Dave became my encourager, and he'll never know how much his encouragement meant to me, for you don't always get this in the churches. I think it's difficult for people in the churches, and some ministers to understand what those go through when coming out of the cults. You can learn a lot from the Lamb & Lion newsletter: *Lampighter*, POB 919, McKinney, TX, 75069.

One thing I've felt somewhat amusing – as a Witness I had the idea that the Trinity was taught in the churches, but now I realize that most churches neglect the study altogether. No wonder so many Christians are easily influenced by the cults – they haven't learned how to defend their faith. Christians convert unbelievers, the cults convert Christians! Most churches are more interested in teaching the Christian how to live the Christian life, and how to have a relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, (really – very important!). But for some reason, the subjects of Trinity, soul and hell have been neglected.

Yes, I believe the churches concentrate on the important issues such as the Christian's relationship with the Lord. I learned more about this through our first Bible Study that began (around 1980), and some of that group still meet every month, for prayer. I've spoken of Frances Ann, Betty and Olive. The other one is Dottie Jordan – another one of my special friends. Dottie is also a great prayer warrior and one can learn a lot about "living" the Christian life by observing her life. I have truly come to realize how very important prayer is in a Christian's life.

Do you remember I spoke of Bill McDonald who was our first pastor? (Assembly of God) Well, he and his wife, Connie and daughter, Leah went to Ecuador as missionaries. Bill and Connie went through a very trying battle after losing two babies, born with a brain deficiency, while he was pastor, here in Lexington. This was a difficult time for all of us, for we believed in healing and didn't understand why they weren't healed. Since then, I've learned that there are some things we'll never understand this side of heaven. Sometimes God heals and sometimes He doesn't. We may never understand why, we only need to trust Him. Later, the McDonalds went to the mission field and the Lord blessed them with another son, Seth who is very normal! They finally got their miracle!

So many in Ecuador have been blessed through their ministry, and they have planted a number of churches there. Bill invited Betty, Bill and I to come and help toward the effort of combating the false gospel spread by Jehovah's Witnesses. Many new Christians were being confused. We not only held a seminar there for ministers in the area, making an abundance of literature available for them, but I shared my testimony in many churches. It was a real joy spending time with our first pastor and ministering with him.

Bill McDonald shared how he felt like he had not always done a good job, as a pastor in his first church in Lexington. We told him that we were so "green" we wouldn't have known the difference! We had to learn everything from "scratch" and that wasn't easy with our JW critical spirit. But Pastor Bill was very patient and understanding with us. We thought he was a great preacher! We love him and his family dearly.

Many who have embraced a false doctrine for as many years as we, have problems finding a church home where they are comfortable. We've attended scores of retreats and churches. Before settling in Hill 'n Dale Christian Church, where we now attend, we rotated among our four favorite denominations, for two years! We learned to appreciate the Methodist, Baptist, Christian, and Assembly of God. We trusted God to plant us where we belonged. This was a very rewarding experience for we could readily see a spiritual balance by attending all four. There is no doubt in our minds that the Holy Spirit works in each of them. Those who find enough fault to keep them out of church, makes me wonder if God will say to them on judgement day, "You mean to say you couldn't find one to please you out of all of them?"

We got use to all styles of preaching. Some spoke with a very loud voice. I remember one, in particular, who was almost screaming – I thought sure I'd have to cover my ears! But a sweet little lady came up to me afterward saying, "Well, I feel like I've really been preached to, today." Some spoke in such a monotone, that it almost put me to sleep – others loved it. I've come to appreciate all of them! We've been at Hill 'n Dale since 1988 and we know this is where God wants us – at least for now. To us, the Christian church is a good "middle" road.

I believe what I came to appreciate more than anything, was communion! Oh my – taking communion for my first time was a real blessing! Understanding it was for me – not just 144,000! Oh my, now I realized I was one of the *anointed* ones – and so are you if you are in Christ. The Christian Church takes communion every Sunday – others at different times. I believe "how often" is one of those nonessential beliefs. Communion is so very important – a time when we reflect on God's mercy, love, and forgiveness. What a terrible sin it is for the *Watchtower* to deny that this is for *all believers*!

My daughter, Suzy and her family moved back to KY and I felt that the Lord would have me stop my newsletter (giving me more time) and minister to my two little families, here in Lexington. Their children were five, three and one years old. For awhile they lived in an attached apartment with our son and his family. This was a precious time! With the son's two children just a little younger than hers, they really bonded. I kept the children while she went to Ladies Bible Study every week. I invited the grands over often and shared baby sitting with her, keeping the son's children when his wife, Cindy, went back to teaching. During this time Suzy really began to grow, spiritually.

Prior to Suzy moving back to KY, she had been attending church, but was not active. It was interesting what encouraged her in the first place. When they were stationed in S.C., she said,

"One day I was standing at the kitchen window washing dishes and noticed the Christian couple across the street. It was evident they were Christians by the way they lived. I was a believer, but was not a practicing Christian. I wasn't a bad person, but suddenly I realized I needed God in my life. When we did finally start attending church, I still didn't study the Bible, but when I moved back to KY and mom kept the children, I really began studying the Bible, and truly enjoyed it. I never liked leaving my children, and I was comfortable leaving them with Mom.

I think it's so very important attending church and studying the Bible, for if you're out there alone – Satan can pick you off! You need to replace things that takes God's place in your life with the Word of God. Our minds are filled with worldly things – they may not be 'bad' things, but yet, they are not good things either. Even if you haven't come out of a cult, you still need to associate with God's people – it's

important to choose a church and be determined never to forsake assembling with God's people."

She studied her Bible, prayed, and began maturing in the Lord. And wouldn't you know – she just happened to run into a JW at her children's school! When the JW began witnessing to her, Suzy took her on! She did a great job of showing her the difference between the true and false gospel. Soon, she was teaching Sunday school.

Then, our son and his wife became interested in a closer walk with the Lord. This is how the Holy Spirit works in people's lives. All of them had been attending church, but that was all. (In other words, they were just pew sitters).

Have you ever thrown a rock into the water and watched the ripples flow out to the bank? I think of the Holy Spirit working in a person's life – He just seems to flow from one person to the next, just like the ripples traveling on and on. That happened in our son's house. Gradually, our son Daryl, became more and more interested in the Bible, and so did his wife, Cindy. She read through the Bible that first year. Daryl attended a Promise Keepers Rally – his first experience of being with 60,000 men praising God. He just continued maturing in the Lord. Last year we asked him to M.C. our seminar. It was so special having our son and daughter attending one of our seminars for their first time! And it was even more special when Daryl agreed to M.C. He commented:

"One of the milestones in my life was making the decision to MC the seminar. At first I thought I just couldn't possibly do it – I have no speaking ability – no wit – no humor – and I'm totally uncomfortable with it. But when I stepped out in faith, knowing I couldn't do it in my own strength, the Lord empowered me – I knew I had to depend on God, totally! I knew I could do physical labor for the church – I could mow lawns, etc. - I could depend on myself for those kinds of things. But now I had to depend on the Lord! I realized that in our weakness, He is made perfect. I sailed right through it with a joy I never dreamed of!"

Today, Daryl continues to study the Bible. He leads a prayer group every Sunday afternoon; he and his family attend a home fellowship group every week. He enjoys being a deacon and serving the needs of

the church. I feel so blessed to have such faithful Christian parents for my grandchildren. So many ex-Witnesses have lost their entire families. Please pray for them.

We've been blessed to see Suzy, Allen and the children often after they went back into the Air Force for they were only a couple of hours away, but they will be stationed in Japan, soon, for three years. Allen is an extremely busy man, serving as a Captain, but he still finds time to read the Bible and Christian books. It will be interesting what the Lord has in store for them in Japan. Suzy has been studying in *Precepts Bible Study* and continues to grow spiritually.

At the printing of this book, five of our grandchildren are twelve and under; our oldest, Kenny's son, is twenty-seven. I can't begin to tell you what a blessing it is to watch these parents teach their children the Word of God, teaching them how to pray and have a relationship with God. What a contrast to the JW life!

We've weathered many storms. One, last year when our church had a split. This is nothing new, these things happen from time to time. It happened in the early church (I Corinthians 1). But God works through these difficulties. The Bible tells us not to forsake the assembling ourselves together, and I believe God knows best, so we just have to be patient. Patience has really paid off for our church. It has really strengthened us watching God work through a difficult situation. As a result, we have five new ministers, all of whom focus on Jesus Christ. They have put a study of God's Word into motion like you've never heard! They plan to help us realize what our gifts are to the body of Christ, and use them.

I've weathered the personal storm of losing my two older sisters. One had dementia, and died at the age of eighty-two. One was very healthy until she was eighty-five, and died with cancer – was gone in six months! I'm thankful I could be there for both of them. I've given up hope of ever seeing or talking to my JW sister, now eighty-two, and her family. But the Lord has given me strength to walk through these things. There are times when I feel very close to the Lord and there are times when I have to remind myself that He is there all the time, even when He is silent.

Bill and I are now seventy-three years old. We will celebrate our fifty-third anniversary this year. Bill has been the backbone of our ministry. He never fails to shed tears every time he hears my

testimony. I could not have possibly done the things I've done without his help. Not only is he my encourager, but my best prayer buddy!

I don't know how many years we have this side of heaven, but we truly enjoy going to church every Sunday morning and night. We have a Home Fellowship Group meeting in our home weekly, for seven years now. We have a great time studying the Word of God, and going on outings together. Through these friends, we have learned the ultimate concept of "fellowship" for this is indeed what it's all about! We laugh, pray, study and cry together. When one family has a problem we are there for them. If there is illness, we take in food, and sit with each other at the hospital when a loved one is in surgery. My husband, Bill, is always there on these occasions. These Christian friends are truly a blessing to us. All those folks out there who are believers and yet won't attend and get involved in church are truly missing God's plan for mankind. We participate in activities at church, and truly enjoy our "freedom in Christ."

I don't believe there's anything wrong with taking the gospel from house to house, as long as it isn't a false gospel. How else can every person hear the gospel? I don't believe this ministry is for everyone, because we don't all have the same gifts. So we were delighted when we heard about a ministry, *Celebrate Jesus 2000*. It's across the nation, and their goal is reaching every home with the gospel by 2000. We are working with them, at present, along with a large number of churches of different denominations. Won't it be exciting knocking on JW doors? Well, anyway, I'm excited to see Christians getting involved with this type of evangelism.

People still call me when JWs knock on their doors. JWs weren't growing in Lexington for a long time (perhaps my testimony alerted too many Christians) so the Society sent in many, many JWs to serve where the need is great. So a few Kingdom Halls have been built in recent years; however, I heard just recently that the Circuit Servant gave a "harsh" talk about their hours – they just aren't working hard enough! His comment was, "If all the halls in Lexington, were combined, there still aren't enough hours for one hall!" I wonder what's happening?

I pray God will continue using me until I go to be with Him. I'll always feel inadequate in my own strength, but I pray I'll always be in

tune with the Holy Spirit's leading. Our God is an awesome God! The more I learn, the more I realize there is to learn, but one thing I encourage everyone, is seek the wise counsel of Jeremiah 29:11-13:

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope, and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

May God bless you in a mighty way!

Appendix A

Charles T. Russell, in his publication, *The Divine Plan of the Ages, 1886*, set the stage for a psychology to be adhered to by the Society for the next one hundred, plus, years. One thing they have NOT changed is the fact that all must work for salvation, that “they,” the Witnesses, are the pure in heart, that only “they” have the Truth; therefore, the responsibility rests on them, to spread this “truth” throughout the world. Notice the quotes from this book:

“It is the light from the Sun of Righteousness in this dawning of the Millennial Day that reveals these things as ‘present truth,’ now due to be appreciated by the sincere – the pure in heart” (p. 10).

“Are you still willing, according to your covenant of consecration, to give up all? – to give up your own plans and methods, and the theories of yourselves and others, to accept of God’s plan and way and time of doing his great work? Are you willing to do this, at the cost of earthly friendships and social ties?” “The sincerity of your sacrifice of self will be tested in full and will, prove you either worthy or unworthy of membership in that ‘little flock,’ the overcoming Church, which will receive the honors of the kingdom” (p. 346, 347).

“Truth, when due, becomes meat for the household of faith, that they may grow thereby. Whoever comes in contact with truth, realizing its character, has thereby a responsibility with reference to it. It must be either received and acted upon, or rejected and despised. To ignore it does not release one from responsibility. If we accept it ourselves, we have a responsibility TOWARD IT also, because it is for ALL the household of faith; and each one receiving it becomes its debtor, and, if a faithful steward, must dispense it to the other members of the family of God” (p. 348, 349).

Appendix B

Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, NY (March 11, 1959 letter to author). This letter from the Society said that they were the “faithful and discreet slave” that Jehovah God was using. They went on to say,

“There are organizations that have not kept up with the progressive light of truth and there are some who have affiliated themselves with the ‘evil slave’ class.’ These should be avoided by Jehovah’s people for Jehovah is using only one organization and we are privileged to be part of it as Jehovah’s Witnesses.”

Appendix C

Watchtower, 1/15/60 p.53, (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, NY) This magazine was speaking of “divine judgments.” It said that since Jehovah God never makes a mistake, there would never be reason for Him to take under review any judgment that he has passed. It stated that His judgments are final. It goes on to say that the people in Noah’s day, the people of Sodom and Gomorrah and Adam and Eve have all had their day before the great Judge of the universe and they were sentenced to destruction, they will never have a conscious existence again. It goes on to say that the same applies to those who will be destroyed at Armageddon.

Appendix D

Face the facts, 1938 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society) “Would it be Scripturally proper for them to now marry and begin to rear children? No, is the answer, which is supported by the Scriptures” (p. 46). “Those Jonadabs who now contemplate marriage, it would seem, would do better if they wait a few years, until the fiery storm of Armageddon is gone, and to then enter the marital relationship and enjoy the blessings of participating in filling the earth with righteous and perfect children” (p. 50). Doubtless thousands of lives were ruined by this “advice,” for Jehovah’s Witnesses saw these suggestions as coming straight from Jehovah! (Note: I Tim. 4:1-5).

APPENDIX E

Betty Stephens
(Reported for taking blood)
Testimony

I was born into a Christian family. Some of my earliest memories are time spent in church. I joined a Christian Church (Disciple of Christ) when I was twelve. I can remember to this day my decision to walk down the aisle and take the preacher's hand. I cannot remember accepting Christ as my Savior, so I doubt that it happened. I was baptized in a pond at my cousin's home.

My family moved from a small town to Lexington. My father remarried. My mother died when I was eleven. At this time we started going to a Baptist Church. I thought this was strange, because my father had not always spoken kindly of Baptist people. Nevertheless, I joined the Baptist Church and was baptized again when I was fourteen.

When I was eighteen I married a man who was also Baptist and this was the church we were going to when I had my first encounter with a Jehovah's Witness. Lo and behold it was a childhood friend, in fact we had at one time been best friends through the years, thirteen to seventeen. Then we drifted apart. I remember her telling me about a new world, and how things would be perfect there. It sounded too good to be true. She came back and we started a Bible study.

I continued going to the Baptist Church until she told me about the Trinity. She said Trinity means not one God but three gods in one – a three-headed god. I told her Baptist did not believe this, she said they did.

One Sunday morning I was in church singing the song, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, and at the end of that song, it said, "God in three persons blessed Trinity." I never went back to the Baptist Church. At that time I was twenty-five years old.

When I was twenty-six I was baptized again as a full blown Jehovah's Witness, doing all the things they do – going out in service, conducting Bible studies, placing magazines, going to all the

meetings. I didn't dare miss a meeting. I was afraid I would lose my life. This was a very hard time for me at home. My being a Witness tore my home apart. My husband objected strongly. He didn't like my going to meetings, especially he didn't want me to take our daughter. Things were not good between his family and me. They were upset because I would not celebrate Christmas. I would not attend the family dinners, etc.

I continued attending meetings, and going in service thinking I was serving God. I cut myself off from the friends I had. I had no friends outside the organization. I was not to associate with worldly people. My husband (not being a Witness) and I were never invited to social gatherings or to other Witness' homes. I was very lonely and a very sad person, but I thought this was the way God wanted me to be. Being persecuted was a good thing for a Witness. I was not taught to rejoice in the Lord.

When I was thirty-two I became pregnant. This was a happy, happy surprise for me. For ten years I had wanted another baby. Now God was giving me one. When my baby was born all did not go well. Before I left to go to the hospital I began to hemorrhage. The only thing I could think of – "IM going to lose my baby!" You see – I had never discussed the blood issue with my doctor. I found out later from the doctor, it was not the baby's life that was in jeopardy, it was my life! When I woke up the transfusing was already started. I asked, "Why?" and the nurse told me the doctor wanted me to have it. I said nothing more.

The next day two sisters came to see me. One was Jean Eason. I remember wanting to tell them what I had done. I felt so guilty! I didn't talk to anyone about the blood transfusion. My husband made a smart remark about it, only to make me feel worse. I didn't talk to God about this, but then I didn't talk to God much anyway. I felt unworthy to talk to God. All my life I had been told what to do, how to do, from my parents, my sister, my husband, my mother-in-law. I would do as I was told, rather than start an argument or have them upset with me. I guess I was afraid God would be mad at me. (How different it is today. I can talk to God about anything and know he listens and cares and loves me!) Oh! How wonderful my God is!!

Two months had passed and Jean Eason came to visit me at my home. In all the years I had known her this was the first time she came

to my home. She wanted to know if I had taken a blood transfusion when my baby was born. (Jean's neighbor knew I had and told her). I said, "Yes."

About two months after Jean's visit, I received a letter from the Congregation Servant that a hearing would be held. I assumed Jean had reported me for taking blood.

I remember how frightened I was as I walked into the Kingdom Hall. Four brothers made up the committee. One brother was supposed to be of the remnant. He was the hardest on me. One brother was a man whom I had known since I was thirteen. He was the brother of the one who introduced me to Jehovah's Witnesses.

I have tried very hard to remember what I said, and how I felt that night. The only thing I can really remember is the fear and the pain of what might happen to me. Even now the tears come just thinking about the awful hurting inside – that I was not worthy of God's love.

I was put on probation for a year. I was to report to the Congregation Servant each month. The first month I reported to tell the servant what I had been doing. He told me I didn't have to do that. It was something the organization recommended. I never told another person about this – one was not supposed to talk to others about such things.

The brother who was of the remnant, never let me forget what I did. I was sure he had told his wife, because I became a slave to them. When they needed transportation, I was called. (They never gave me money for gas, either). I gave her Bible studies I had established. She would ask me for them. She was a pioneer and placing books and magazines was a way she added to her income. (Pioneers are given a reduced price for literature). I felt trapped by their demands.

I'm not sure just when I became disillusioned. I knew I didn't like going door to door, but I went. One day I was at an assembly and the speaker was discussing Romans, chapter 13, where it tells of the higher authority. He was saying the "higher powers" meant governments. I thought I had heard wrong, because the organization had been teaching the "higher powers" were Jehovah and Christ Jesus. Having no confidence in myself, I thought I was wrong again. When the *Watchtower* came out, they had changed this teaching. I think this was when my attitude began to change. I started missing meetings. I didn't go out in service as much. Then I stopped going altogether.

For days I would not answer my phone. I would not answer the door when they came. I didn't want them to talk me into going back. It didn't matter anyway – all I felt was fear. The fear of what would happen if I stopped going, and the fear of going – which was worse?

Seventeen years had passed. In all this time I didn't go to any Kingdom Hall or church. I still had the fear of losing my life.

In the spring of 1981, Jean Eason called. She began to tell me about Jesus, how he had given her a new life, how He had healed her so she didn't need surgery. I thought I should not be listening to her. I wanted to hang up, but couldn't. I explained to her that I thought she was Satan. She understood. She invited me to a meeting at her home. She was to call me back when a certain speaker was in town. When she called to tell me where, and what time, I was shaking with fear. I couldn't go! She called again – still I didn't go.

During this time I began to read the Bible. (*Good News for Modern Man*). For the first time God's Word began to mean something to me. Also during this time period Jean was disfellowshipped. She continued to call me. I was invited to her home for lunch along with two other former Witnesses who had been disfellowshipped. I said I would come. The day I was to go, I knew I would never make it out there! I felt as if I would die from fear! You see - I had not been disfellowshipped and I could be, just for speaking to her!

Jean came by and left some tapes when I was not home. She called and invited me again to her home. This time I had the courage to go. I had listened to a tape about how Witnesses were supposed to be obedient to the organization. It reminded me of laws God gave to Moses. At that very minute I decided I did not want to be under the Law of the *Watchtower* organization anymore!

I went to church with Jean and the other ex-Witnesses. On August 21, 1981, I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior. What a beautiful day!

One day I was taking all the Witness literature out of my house. Again that awful fear came back! As I threw it into a sack, I was saying, over and over, "Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me!" The thought came to mind, "Why was I so afraid and who was I afraid of?" I realized it was Satan I was so afraid of! It was at that moment, I knew that the *Watchtower* organization belonged to Satan. Why else would I

have such fear? Fear does not come from God. All those years I had been held in that awful fear!

I am now set free, free to worship, free to praise my Lord. Free to go to the church of my choice. Free to choose my friends, and I have such good ones! Free to love – Oh! How great it is to feel that warm love. Free to accept that sweet spirit of Jesus who lives within me.

I was never disfellowshipped. I wanted to make a commitment to the church where I'm attending, and felt I couldn't with the possibility of being disfellowshipped hanging over my head. I wrote a letter asking them to disassociate me from the organization. The reason I had not been disfellowshipped for going to church was because no one had reported me.

On September 7, 1982, I was received as a member of the little church I'm attending – a place that is so dear to my heart. I know this is where God wants me. I love these people, and they love me. I love Pastor McDonald, and his wife, Connie. I feel secure in their love. Most of all – I am secure in God's love. That awful fear is gone! Praise the Lord!!

1999 update: Betty has continued to serve the Lord since the first printing of this book, 1983. Her love for children led her to teach Sunday School and she has been a great influence on many children for years! She served on the area board of Women's Aglow for several years, and attended many international conferences. Presently she is serving in the Women's Ministry program at her church that involves many activities. She continues working in our ministry, Tutors for Christ, and the Celebrate Jesus 2000 ministry.

Appendix F

Letter to author from Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, NY
(October 10, 1957)

In this letter I was told that one should not be disfellowshipped for accepting a blood transfusion. If one accepted a blood transfusion, the letter stated, there would be no reason to treat that person as one who has been disfellowshipped. Giving in to a blood transfusion was not to be compared with such sins as thievery, adultery and murder, which would justify disfellowshipping the guilty one and cutting him off from the association of Jehovah's Witnesses. This position has been reversed since then.

Appendix G

When Pastor Russell Died, Dawn Bible Students Association, 1957)

“Pastor Russell began his ministry as a very young man. Raised a Presbyterian, he took to heart the teachings of that denomination, particularly the doctrine of eternal torture for all who die unconverted. So thoroughly did he believe this superstition that at times he went up and down the street of his home city with chalk in hand, writing on the sidewalks special warnings to all sinners (p. 1).

“The Story of the *Seventh Volume* would not be complete should we fail to mention that in a remarkably short time after it was published it was virtually rejected by the publishers. It is well nigh impossible to believe, yet true, that whereas when this book was first published those who did not accept it were condemned and disfellowshipped, within a few years those who did accept it were disfellowshipped” (p. 7).

“Instead of love and the sheer joy of telling the world about a God of love, ‘great works’ of one kind or another kept the brethren whipped up to a frenzy of misguided zeal and self-sacrificing devotion to a false cause. An intermingling of fear and hate was the backdrop for these scenes of activity-fear of the second death if not faithful, and hate for those who did not accept the message, particularly for Roman Catholics” (p. 11)

“Samples of other and less important changes might be briefly noted: in 1930, Nebuchadnezzar represented Satan; in 1936, he represented God. In 1923, character development was work of God; in 1927, a delusion of the devil. In 1924, true religion was of God; in 1937, all religion was a snare of the devil, and a racket. In 1918, the church was not under the new covenant; in 1934, the church was under the new covenant” (P. 12).

“Others ‘left’ in connection with the *Seventh Volume* incident, and through the years, for one reason or another, other brethren withdrew their support from the ‘Society.’ Among these many who did not choose to remain in the ‘channel,’ various ‘movements’ developed, each with a different viewpoint of the needs of the times’ (P. 14).

“But when Brother Russell died there were those who thought God had appointed them to be special servants in the church, and that they were therefore the successors to Brother Russell. Have any of the individuals who have claimed the status of special servant in the church to succeed Brother Russell carried on with the work of Brother Russell? NO, not one! One and all of these have promptly set forth some new set of teachings” (P.20).

Appendix H

Watchtower, 4/15/09, Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, NY

This *Watchtower* article regarding Acts 15:22-29, makes the statement that abstaining from sacrifices to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from harlotry were “necessary things” not laws. It stated that these were recommended abstentions or recommendations but not laws. This position was reversed also.

Appendix I

Letter to author from the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, NY, dated November 9, 1964.

I had written the Society questioning certain quotations in the *Babylon* book. Some of the statements in their answer were revealing for example: they said that they would be wrong if they did not publish

the new and correct view of matters, but that the fact remains that even misunderstandings may be instrumental in bringing people into the truth. They went on to say that I shouldn't worry about discrepancies between what was now seen and what they preached in earlier days. They ended by saying they hoped that I would be able to see that the only organization on earth that is preaching God's established kingdom is the New World Society of Jehovah's Witnesses. That the Society is operating under Jehovah's direction with his blessing, and that I should see the importance of remaining within the organization.

Appendix J

Zion's Watch Tower, (July 15, 1898, p. 216):

“Yes, we believe our Lord Jesus while on earth was really worshipped, and properly so.....It was proper for Our Lord to receive worship in view of his having been the only begotten of the Father, and his agent in the creation of all things, including man.”

Watchtower, 7/15/59, (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, NY):

“Certainly for one to believe the teachings of Christ he must know and worship the God that Christ worshiped. Do not erroneously conclude that Christians are to worship Christ; that is not what he taught” (p. 421).

Appendix K

A letter from the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society dated Sept. 21, 1981:

This letter states that they, the Society, have only one address for the publishers of the New Testament by Johannes Greber. They indicate that the only copy they have is a 1937 edition. They did not give the present address.

A letter to the Johannes Greber Memorial Foundation from the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of NY dated December 20, 1980:

This letter was written by the Society to acknowledge receipt of the *New Testament* translated by Johannes Greber and his book *Communication with the Spirit World of God*. They send their

appreciation for these two books and say that on occasion they have even quoted from it, speaking of the *New Testament*. They go on to ask about the possibility of obtaining a few additional copies of the *New Testament*, by Greber for their four libraries.

Appendix L
HAZEL McCHESNEY
(“New light” separates old friends)
Testimony

My name is Hazel McChesney and I have known the author of this book for as long as I can remember. We grew up together and went to the same grade school and high school. We were friends while our children were growing up but were separated by the Jehovah’s Witnesses having disfellowshipped me, and reunited through the charismatic movement and her subsequent disfellowshipment.

I love her very much and pray that her book will be a great success bringing thousands to a better understanding of our great redeemer, Jesus Christ.

I am very honored that she asked me to have my testimony in this book and hope and pray it will be a blessing.

I was raised in the Christian Church and I was there every time the door opened for all the church services and special gatherings. I joined the church and was baptized when I was thirteen years old and continued going there until my marriage in 1947. My husband did not attend church and having moved to another town after my marriage, I fell away from church.

In 1947 my father died and in 1950 my sister died, and she being just 29 years old and leaving two small children this was a shock to our whole family. I turned away from God in my time of need and almost had a breakdown.

In 1951, I was going through a depression, and there was a knock on my door. There was a nice looking lady standing there. She was a Jehovah’s Witness, and she was holding this green and white tract with a picture of a tombstone on it with the words, “Where are the Dead.”

This was just what I needed! I was so glad to see her and welcomed her to discuss the subject of the tract. She didn’t have to ask to come in. I almost dragged her into the house. I really believe this is the reason so many go into the cults such as the Witnesses, because someone is there at a time when they really need some one.

I began studying with them in 1951 and moved back to my hometown in 1955. I had friends in the Witnesses (Jean was one of

them) there and continued going. I was baptized in 1956 at a convention and was quite active for three years, becoming a vacation pioneer and holding Bible studies with others. Through all of this there was a lot I could never accept, such as the 1914 prophecy, and their teaching on hell. I didn't just study their books, which is what most people do that start studying with the Witnesses. They are studying their books and what they believe, not the Bible. I studied a lot on my own and I couldn't see where all this prophecy tied together. Even as new as I was to studying, it seemed to me they took Scripture out of context to fit their belief. I could not accept "the light growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day," when I could not see or accept what I was reading before my very eyes. But, most of all I could never accept their treatment of people, judging them as sheep and goats as they went from house to house. As they left a house they would say, "That's a sheep, or that's a goat," and yet one could see how imperfect the Witnesses were. I often felt like the people in the houses were better than the ones who were judging them. A lot of the Witnesses are so self-righteous.

When I got to the point of finding myself skirting around paragraphs in books while teaching a Bible study, so I wouldn't have to say or teach something I didn't believe, I left. I couldn't compromise. This was in early 1960.

But I think the straw that broke the camel's back was in 1959. I decided I wanted a baby. I had a son eleven years old and during those years I was involved with the Witnesses we were encouraged not to have children. We were to preach the kingdom and wait and have children in the new earth after Armageddon. So when I decided I wanted to have a baby I was made to feel like a great sinner. Well, I got my child and she's been a great blessing to me. I have a little granddaughter and a new grandson.

When I left in 1960 I didn't go anywhere for about four years, but started going to church because I wanted to get my three year old daughter in church.

I had been gone from the Jehovah's Witnesses for eight years when I had another knock on the door and there stood two elders from the Witnesses with another man whom I didn't know. I asked them in and found out the other man was the Circuit Servant visiting the congregation. They told me they heard I was going to another church

and asked if I was going to stop. I said, "No, I'm not. Why should I?" So, they proceeded to tell me why I should and that if I didn't stop going I would be disfellowshipped. I don't recall all of the conversation but I know I let them know how I felt about the freedom to worship as I pleased and that I didn't feel they had the right to tell me what I could or could not do, or how I should worship.

I will never forget how mad the Circuit Servant was. He came into my home just like a judge and jury, of course that's what they are, aren't they? I asked him, "I would like to know what right you have to come into my home and judge me? You don't even know me and these two brothers with you don't know me well enough to judge me." Of course, I had known the two elders for years as Witnesses, but they didn't know me well enough to judge me. And, they certainly didn't love me. They hadn't been to see me the eight years I had been gone from the Witnesses. So the Circuit Servant was mad at me for my attitude. Can you believe this? I hadn't seen them or any Witnesses for eight years and they come into my home judging me and having power to change my life and get mad at me because I don't like it!

The way they found out I was going to another church, another Witness had left and came to the church where I was going. She was an older lady and I don't think she ever understood what the Witnesses were all about. She was just looking for friends. I suppose I would have gone on for another eight years undetected if this lady hadn't seen me. Isn't this ridiculous? No one I knew at that time ever thought of me as a Jehovah's Witness. How could I dirty up their organization? This is the reason they gave for disfellowshipping me. You can be gone eight years as I was, fifteen, twenty, or thirty and if they hear you're going to another church they disfellowship you to keep the organization clean. Try explaining this to a rational person. They probably wouldn't believe you – thinking there was more to it, that you were not telling, right?

I knew when I saw the elders at my door that day why they were there. They were being obedient to the organization. I was probably the first one in my hometown to be disfellowshipped for going to another church. The book, *Lamp Unto My Foot* hadn't been out long and in this book they were now told, to go after people that had been inactive for years, if they were attending another church. Jehovah's Witnesses follow all writings of the organization, the *Watchtower*,

Awake!, and all of their books, anything that comes out from the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society headquarters is accurate and all Witnesses are to obey. They are very dedicated and obedient to the organization, and strictly follow all so called, new light.

They did inform me I would be disfellowshipped and I could come to a meeting to defend myself. I told them I wouldn't even come to that, I also told them if they didn't announce I was being disfellowshipped for going to another church I would sue them. I would have it published in the newspapers far and wide. I told them I had two children growing up and that I did not want it announced I was being disfellowshipped for spiritual adultery, or conduct unbecoming a Christian, because that would give people the wrong impression.

I'll never forget how I felt when they left my home that day. I was so depressed. I sat down at the organ and played church songs and cried and cried. Not because of what had happened, I had made that decision eight years earlier – I had left eight years before. It was because they could come into my home and with a few words separate people for life. In America, this could happen! Where we are supposed to have freedom of religion to worship as we please. But once you become a Jehovah's Witness, you do not have this freedom. They have control through the threat of disfellowshipment. If you are disfellowshipped and you still have friends or relatives still in the Witnesses they cannot have anything to do with you. Not even speak to you if they meet you on the street. If they do and get caught they will be disfellowshipped also.

It is really ironic that they would keep their people in bondage like this, when they use the courts of our country so much to fight for their freedom to worship as they please. Most of you probably know they won't fight for their country. They will go to prison first. And, in the 1940's children were out of school as long as six year while in court fighting for the right not to pledge allegiance or salute the flag in school. There have been many court fights over blood transfusion also. Children have been taken away from their parents to save their lives because they refused to give them blood. They want the freedom, they deny others.

As the two elders and Circuit Servant were leaving that day – one of the elders turned at the door with tears in his eyes. I cannot remember

what he said but I know he was telling me how bad he felt about what was happening. I told him I knew he wouldn't be there if he didn't think he was doing the right thing. I don't know what else was said, but I know I let him know I held nothing against him. Isn't that sad? Those tears affected me more that day than anything that happened. Why is it Jehovah's Witnesses cannot see the way to win people is through love, not punishment by disfellowshipping, chastisement, and judging? I hope to see the day I see this elder crying for someone with the righteous motives of Christ in his tears, not some organization.

When I was disfellowshipped this affected Jean, the author of this book, her husband, Bill and I. We had been friends since childhood and when I called Jean and told her the elders had been here to see me, we knew what that would mean to our lives. We knew she would have to choose between me and my family, or her parents, her sister and her family. This was really hard on us saying goodbye, knowing we could never see each other again, not even speak. But, she had to choose her family, if not she would be disfellowshipped and not be able to associate with her parents, and they were in their late seventies at the time this happened.

Our older sons had known each other since birth, had spent many nights in each others homes, gone on vacations together and it was a bad time for them, but they were older. Jean had another son about the age of my daughter and a daughter younger than mine. These three were within three years of each other. Being born later in life and having no relatives their age, they thought they were cousins, so this was hard on them, especially the two little girls. They were real close. My daughter was nine years old and she really hated it, got mad, felt wronged. It was hard for her to understand and accept, but she was involved in Girl Scouts and church activities where we were going at the time. She had a lot of friends in the neighborhood, so she coped very well, But Jean's little girl – it really got to her.

These kinds of things are happening throughout the world in the name of "love." The Witnesses believe it is God's will to do things like this.

I have settled in Calvary Assembly Church and through my searching I have joy and peace. Bill McDonald is my pastor, and I love his preaching. I'm satisfied with where I am in understanding God's Word. I know there's still more to learn and God will reveal it as

needed. I'm not afraid, worried, or anxious about what is ahead. The Lord is with me and is going to lead me and guide me right on into His everlasting Kingdom.

All I need to know – is that Jesus loves me, He died for me, and He's coming to get me someday and I will be with Him forever!

If I could get just one point across there it would be this – it is not important what church you go to. It's a personal relationship between each individual and God. God does have an organization on earth. It's His body members, out of every nation, tribe, and tongue, and I hope to see all of you there in God's everlasting Kingdom. What a great day that will be!

1999 update: Hazel has continued serving the Lord all these years, since the first printing of this book, 1983. She loves to sing and has written a number of songs. She gave birthday parties at the nursing home for more than sixteen years. They enjoyed singing along with her. Every fourth Sunday, she shares a message from the Bible at a nursing home. She was instrumental in starting fellowship dinners at her church, when some are invited from other churches to sing. Often, she is invited to sing at other churches, and she truly enjoys sharing God's love through songs.

Appendix M

A letter to author from the Lexington Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, dated Dec. 17, 1967.

This was a letter to us by the elders of the local congregation saying that they had heard that we were identifying with a religious organization other than Jehovah's Witnesses. They said that in as much as we were dedicated and baptized witnesses of Jehovah, they felt this information could be one of a serious nature. They said they hoped we would tell them it was without foundation.

APPENDIX N

A letter from the Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of NY to the author's sister dated Sept. 5, 1978

My sister had written the Society asking if I would be disfellowshipped for attending or joining a church. They wrote back saying that the seriousness of attending one of Christendom's churches or joining a church had been emphasized in the Society's publications many times. They said the Bible made it very clear that doing so was "bad in Jehovah's eyes." They went on to say that such a course constitutes apostasy, which is a disfellowshipping offense, and even though I had not associated with the congregation for years they said that this would not automatically prevent the congregation's imposing sanctions against me. That the elders would have to look into this "serious wrongdoing" and take judicial action against me. The elders would receive copies of this letter.

APPENDIX O

Watchtower, 7/1/63 p. 411, 412 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society

Speaking of disfellowshipped ones this *Watchtower* stated that it was a great tragedy to be disfellowshipped because not only did this mean a cutting off, from God's visible organization on earth, but one would be cut off from Jehovah and his favor. It states that the disfellowshipping action taken by the congregation is the confirmation of what has already taken place in the heavens. It goes on to say that these visible agents of God have merely acknowledged what Jehovah has already done in heaven. Speaking further this article states that no one in the congregation should extend the hand of fellowship to a

disfellowshipped one, nor even say “hello” or “goodbye” to him. The disfellowshipped one would not be welcome in any Jehovah’s Witnesses’ home even if the home was used as a center of worship for a local group of Witnesses. It states that such a one may attend meetings at the Kingdom Hall but he would not be permitted to talk to individuals, address the congregation from the platform, or contribute to discussions by offering comments but he could purchase literature! And this article states that if an individual is reinstated, his position will never again be quite the same. He will never be given oversight of the congregation and he will suffer the loss of servant’s privileges on earth irrevocably.

APPENDIX P

Watchtower, 4/1/79, p.31 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)

Under the article “Question from Readers” the question was asked, “Is Jesus the “mediator” only for anointed Christians? After giving a brief explanation they said, “So in this strict Biblical sense Jesus is the ‘mediator’ only for anointed Christians.....”The ‘great crowd’ of ‘other sheep’ that is forming today is not in that new covenant. However, by their associating with the ‘little flock’ of those yet in that covenant they come under benefits that flow from that new covenant.”

APPENDIX Q

Kingdom Ministry, Mar., ‘68, p. 4 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)

“Just think brothers, there are only about ninety months left before 6,000 years of man’s existence on earth is completed....The majority of people living today will probably be alive when Armageddon breaks out, and there are no resurrection hopes for those who are destroyed then.”

Kingdom Ministry, June, ‘69, p. 3 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)

Speaking of full-time service to the youth, they said: “Which will you decide to take up? In view of the short time left, a decision to pursue a career in this system of things is not only unwise but extremely dangerous”..... “Reports are heard of brothers selling their homes and property and planning to finish out the rest of their days in this old system in the pioneer service. Certainly this is a fine way to spend the short time remaining before the wicked world’s end.”

Life Everlasting – In Freedom of the Sons of God, 1966, p. 29 (WBTS)

“According to this trustworthy Bible chronology six thousand years from man’s creation will end in 1975, and the seventh period of a thousand years of human history will begin in the fall of 1975 CE.”

Watchtower, 5/1/68, p. 271 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)

Speaking of Eve’s creation this article makes the statement that it would be logical that Jehovah God would have created Eve soon after Adam, maybe just a few weeks or months later in the same year, 4026 BCE. It states that Christians would note from God’s timetable that 6,000 years of human history would soon end and that this fact fills them with anticipation.”

Awake!, 10/8/68, p.51 (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society)

This article states that Adam and Eve were created, 4026BCE, and this would leave only seven more years from the autumn of 1968 to complete 6,000 full years of human history. It goes on to say that that seven-year period would be finished in the fall of 1975.

Zion’s Watch Tower, February 1881, p. 188 (Pittsburgh, PA)

“A new view of truth never can contradict a former truth. ‘New Light’ never extinguishes older ‘light,’ but adds to it. If you were lighting up a building containing seven gas jets you would not extinguish one every time you lighted another, but would add one light to another and they would be in harmony and thus give increase of light: so is it with the light of truth; the true increase is by adding to, not by substituting one for another.” **(I certainly do agree with this statement!)**

APPENDIX R

Informant, May, 1940, Watchtower Bible & Tract Society

Under the heading, “Much Work to Be Done,” the statement is made, “The year 1940 is certain to be the most important year yet, because Armageddon is very near. It behooves all who love righteousness to put forth every effort to advertise THE THEOCRACY while the privileges are still open.”

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We are rightfully wary of most books by “ex-s” of any kind. It is especially difficult for people who have changed strong religious loyalties to write about their former relationships or beliefs without being over critical or unfair. This book is different; Jean Eason avoids both pitfalls. Her personal integrity and the love for Christ and people always show through her writing. The result is a work that is believable and fair. It is a helpful treatment of many questions faced by Christians who want a better understanding of the Jehovah’s Witness movement.

Dr. Melvin Dieter (retired)
Prof. of Church History
Asbury Theological Seminary, Wilmore, KY

Many have called out to God in faith... “God, show me the truth!” Jean Eason is one who has received an answer! Jean’s words are an extension of God’s love for those who walk in darkness and desire to know the Truth. Her testimonies and teachings will be an inspiration to those who are searching.

Bill McDonald,
Missionary, Ecuador

Jean Eason is a searcher for the truth. Her life is a classic example of the biblical statement, “If you abide in my word, then you ... shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” She continues to search the Scriptures for truth, and she has a heart to share the truth she has thus far discovered with those who are in spiritual darkness, enslaved to the doctrines of men.

Dr. David R. Reagan, Senior
Evangelist for Lamb & Lion Ministries