

Concern

No. 17

Summer 1996

Topics and News from First & Last Ministries

PROPERLY ADDRESSED?

**Just who is listening
to the JW's prayers?**

ONE of the most wonderful aspects of the Christian life for a believer is being able to bring their petitions before God in prayer knowing that their requests have been heard.

In the New Testament, and down through the ages, Christians have been obeying Jesus' commandment in John 14:14 to "ask ME anything in my name and I will do it."

But Jehovah's Witnesses find themselves in a very confused situation when it comes to whom they address their prayers to.

When challenged the JW will say truthfully that, in the Kingdom Hall, prayers are addressed to Jehovah, but through Jesus Christ. This belief is not found in any Bible scripture but in the Watchtower book "Insight on the Scriptures", volume two, where it says:-

"Though some may claim that prayer may be properly addressed to others, such as God's son, the evidence is emphatically to the contrary"

The JW will say 'we pray THROUGH Jesus but not TO Jesus'.

We need to help them to see that prayer to or through

by Tom & Ella McCrea

Jesus means one and the same thing.

For example, if I write to the Queen through her secretary, it means that I am aware that the secretary will read my letter and hopefully present it to Her Majesty.

If I travel to England through Scotland, I must go TO Scotland first.

Sincere Roman Catholics believe if they pray to Mary she will hear and convey those petitions to her Son Jesus, (a practice condemned by the Watch Tower Organisation, and by Christians who believe there is only ONE Mediator between man and God, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim 2:5)

So when Christians pray to or through Jesus, it is with the assurance that He bears their prayers and intercedes for them before His Father. Hebrews 7:25.

There are also accounts in Scripture when Christians

Who will
hear me?



prayed directly to Jesus. Acts 7:59; 2 Cor. 12:8,9.

The idea that we can call upon the name of a God who cannot hear us, or pray through Jesus who again cannot hear us, makes nonsense of saying we pray through Jesus.

If the Father alone can hear prayer, then He would have to relay all our petitions back to the Son, and that would make nonsense of Jesus as our Mediator.

If we believe that Jesus can hear the prayers of his people all over the world day and night, as they arise simultaneously, then He has to be Deity.

This agrees with Scripture that states:-

...The Word was God.

John 1:1

...Christ, because in him all the fullness of deity is resident in bodily form. Colossians 2:9.

INSIDE
Read our new
cartoon.

Welcome

Dear Reader,

HERE we are again with another issue of *Concern*.

At the moment we are in the quiet season, with the Jehovah's Witnesses seemingly in hibernation.

It seems that when their summer meetings come along (Twickenham, etc.) the JW's disappear.

Is it our imagination, but when some football clubs allow the JW's to use their grounds for meetings, it's not long afterwards that many of these clubs are relegated to a lower division. Has your local club suffered a similar fate?

On a different note, we sometimes receive cries for help from families and individuals who have been in contact with the Watch Tower Society.

Should you feel you might like to talk with these people then please let us know and we can put you in contact with them.

Finally, we would like to share a scripture with you that we have found to be so good and true:

Nahum 1:7

*The Lord is good,
A stronghold in the day of trouble;
And He knows those who trust in Him.*

Les Kerr & Bill Bacon,
First & Last Ministries.

Readers Needs



MARTIN Barrow has written in to tell us of a new tract he has produced.

Jehovah's Witnesses and the Generation of 1914 deals with the recent shifts and changes in the Watch Tower Society's end-time theory.

If you would like copies and information on the new tract then call:

Stoke - 01782 208284
or

Nuneaton - 01203 341243

NEW products from First & Last Ministries may mean you never losing your place in your favourite book again.



A new range of bookmarks and keyrings recently produced by us are already proving popular among our readers.

Made from hard wearing bonded leather, these smart items come in a variety of colours.

For more details and prices contact Les Kerr

*'First & Last Ministries
6 Chertsey Mount
Carlisle
CA1 2PH.*

ARE YOU MOVING?

Make sure you send your new address to us as soon as possible if you don't want to miss future issues of *Concern*.



TO THE EDITOR

THANK you for sending the magazine *Concern*. There were many interesting comments in it.

The article by Phil Mawson on the '144,000 or Many More' is useful. We have used it to very good effect as we have helped Christians witness to the JWs.

Regarding the excellent article by Pastor Gary Hall, the Watchtower book 'Revelation Its Grand Climax at Hand', 1988, says this regarding the paradise mentioned in Rev. 2:7:-

"Since they have no prospect of living in an earthly paradise, how is it that anointed Christians, such as those Ephesians, are rewarded with eating of 'the tree of life', which is in the paradise of God?"

This could not be the restored paradise on earth, since the 144,000 anointed Christians, including those of the congregation of Ephesus, are bought from among mankind to rule with the Lamb, Christ Jesus, on the heavenly Mount Zion as spirit sons (Eph. 1:5-12; Rev. 14:1-4).

Hence the reference here must be to the heavenly gardenlike realm inherited by these conquerors. There 'in the paradise of God', yes, in the presence of Jehovah himself, these overcomers who have been granted immortality will continue to live eternally, as symbolised here by their eating of the tree of life."

So, what Christians can do when the JWs talk to them about paradise is to say, "yes we too hope to be with Jesus in the paradise mentioned in Rev. 2:7, the heavenly one."

We pray God will continue to bless your fine work and witness.

Your friends in Christ,
Ella & Tom McCrea,
Newtownabbey, N.Ireland.



TO THE EDITOR

MANY thanks for sending me the very helpful *Concern*.

Please find enclosed a cheque to cover the cost of sending me further issues.

I am an ex-JW who now reaches out, with the love of Jesus, to JWs in my locality.

I would be very happy to write articles for your magazine. I could share my testimony or share with your readers about how I reach out personally to them.

I have been a Christian for eight years, after being with the JWs for three years. I am currently co-ordinator of Hebron Christian Training Centre, which is an evangelistic training centre based in Bradford.

We are very small as we have only been around for a short time, but my work, amongst other things, is to teach about cults and N.R. movements.

If there is any way I can help you then please let me know.

May God bless you in this vital and most precious work.

Yours in Jesus,
Tony Brown,
Shipley, W. Yorks.

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

First & Last Ministries
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Essex IG10 2LR

THE *Watchtower*:

Does it really promote the Bible?



AN open Hebrew-language Bible adorns the cover of the October 1, 1994 Watchtower magazine along with the caption, "THE BIBLE What Is Its Real Value?"

The articles inside appear, at first, to place high value on the Bible, but then they go on to indicate that the sacred Book is of value only when accompanied by explanations provided by the Watchtower Society - and worthless otherwise.

The second article, beginning on page four, is titled "THE BIBLE: A book meant to be understood." However, it explains that God provided for this understanding to come only through "his organisation":

"It is obvious that we need help if we are to understand the Bible. ...the fact is that we cannot understand the Bible on our own. We need help. ...Jehovah, through his organisation, however, has allowed his loyal servants to understand its meaning today."

The article then proceeds to discuss Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, emphasizing that the Ethiopian could not understand what he read in the Bible book of Isaiah without Philip's help.

The two situations, however, are not parallel. The Ethiopian was struggling to understand a passage fulfilled by Jesus Christ - whom he had never heard of!

Philip filled in his knowledge by telling him the gospel of Christ, and then went on his way.

There is no indication that the Ethiopian remained forever in need of Philip's continued indoctrination and domination as is the case with Jehovah's Witnesses and the Watchtower Society. Rather, since he had become a real Christian, he no longer needed anyone to teach him. ("you do not need anyone to be teaching you" - 1 John 2:27 NWT)

The articles conclude with a box on page eight titled "CHANNEL TO UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE."

The box refers to Bible passages in an effort to prove its point. First it claims that Jesus "assured us" that "he would raise up a 'faithful and discreet slave' that would serve as his Channel of communication," citing Matthew 24:45-47.

However, an actual reading of that passage in its immediate context - verses 37-51 - shows Jesus was encouraging followers to be watchful regarding his coming; he was not appointing a "channel of communication."

He showed the outcome for two men in the field, one taken and the other left; two women at the mill: a householder who could turn out to be watchful or careless, and a slave who could turn out to be faithful or evil.

The evil slave is not someone different from the faithful slave. Verse 48 is still speaking of the same slave when it goes on, "But if ever that evil slave should..." So the point of the parable is that Jesus is encouraging each individual follower to be watchful rather than careless and to be faithful and discreet rather than evil. The Bible does not say that Jesus appointed a "channel of communication." The box on page eight claims, "The apostle Paul identified this channel to the Ephesian Christians when he wrote that 'there might be made known through the congregation the greatly diversified wisdom of God...' (Ephesians 3:10,11)"

To the indoctrinated JW the

congregation" today consists of fewer than 9000 'annointed ones', the nucleus of their 4.7 million active membership, as represented by the governing body - i.e., God's "channel" that they look to for instruction and leadership.

However, looking again at the context reveals that The Watchtower is twisting the meaning of Ephesians 3:10-11 by omitting part of verse 10. The part The Watchtower omits shows that the wisdom of God is made known through the congregation "to the governments and the authorities in the heavenly places" (NWT), "to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (RSV).

Thus, although the Watchtower organisation advertises itself as promoting the Bible, it is actually devaluing the Bible by claiming that it is a book that "we cannot understand...on our own."

And the organisation's leaders are elevating themselves above the Bible by saying that all men must come to them to understand it.

Their attitude toward the Word of God is blasphemous, and their attitude toward their own organisation is idolatrous.

Article taken from

Comments from the friends

Winter 1995



COMING

Soon.

*Inspector Berean
investigates another
Watch Tower crime.*

COULD YOU WRITE FOR

Concern?

COULD you write an article for a future issue of *Concern*?

We are currently seeking articles on various Watchtower subjects including news on the local congregations in your area. Perhaps you run a particular ministry and have hints and advice for others who could start a similar outreach service in their area.

Or, maybe, you could share your testimony of God's wonderful saving grace with our readers.

If so we would like to hear from you.

No writing experience is necessary as we can advise and help you put an article together.

There is no limit to the length of article, but longer ones may have to be used in two or more editions.

Any article should be written or typed out and be double spaced between lines.

If you would like to submit an article, please phone or write to the address on the back page, just in case somebody else is preparing a similar article.

Please be patient if an article you have sent in has still not appeared in *Concern*.

First & Last Ministries.

DOES THE WATCHTOWER BOOK KNOWLEDGE ~~That~~ Lead\$ to Everlasting Life



A SERIES OF ARTICLES
BY
PASTOR GARY HALL

RELEASED by the Watch Tower Society last year the "Knowledge" book contains a number of new teachings among its usual contents of old chestnuts.

Pastor Gary Hall, of Liverpool, this month continues to share his thoughts on this latest publication which claims to contain the Knowledge that leads to everlasting life.

In the chapter entitled "The Book that reveals the knowledge of God" mention is made of the Messiah being betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (see page 19).

Since this reference is Zechariah 11:12 it does well to read what it says.

"They proceed to pay my wages, thirty pieces of silver." (New World Translation) But why end with verse 12? Read verse 13, "At that Jehovah said to me: Throw it to the treasury - the majestic value with which I have been valued from their standpoint." (NWT)

Even the Watch Tower have to admit that this is what happened concerning Jesus, yet it is Jehovah that is speaking.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus only became the Christ at His baptism. This line is restated on pages 36 and 65. It says that "Jehovah anointed Jesus with holy spirit, Jesus became the Christ."

This would mean that Jesus was not the Christ from his birth until His baptism by John.

If this is true how does it tie in with regards to Simeon in Luke 2:26, which reads; "And it happened to him, being instructed by the Holy Spirit, he was not to see death before he

would see the Christ." (MKJV)?"

The NWT says almost the same thing. If Simeon didn't see the Christ, as the Bible said he did, then the Lord lied to him.

Besides weren't the shepherds told; "For to you is born today in the City of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11 MKJV)

Also, are we to believe that a mere man, John the Baptist, was "filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:14 MKJV), but God's only Begotten Son had to wait thirty years? Someone is lying, but it is not the Bible.

Staying on the theme of the divinity of Christ, it is interesting that John 3:16 is used on page 39 as evidence of Jesus being "God's only-begotten son because Jehovah created him directly." Even a new believer in Christ can spot that this verse does not teach that Jesus is a created being.

As usual the word "other" is added to Colossians 1:15 to say that Jesus isn't the creator. They also persist in using Proverbs 8:22-31 as proof of Jesus being created, when in fact these verses refer only to wisdom.

Jesus is constantly attacked in all

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Watch Tower publications, and the "Knowledge" book is no exception. Page 40 states, "God transferred his life from Heaven to the womb of a faithful Jewish virgin named Mary. Jehovah's powerful holy spirit, or active force, overshadowed Mary, causing her to become pregnant."

"If Simeon didn't see the Christ, as the Bible said he did, then the Lord lied to him."

Yet page 82 says; "This life force does not have any of the characteristics of the creature it animates." Does this mean that Jesus was a non-person?

KINGDOM CAPERS



"Obviously he wasn't at the meeting this morning."

They must see Jesus as a non-person to promote their teachings. Look what is written on page 68; "Upon being raised to life in Heaven, he became a life-giving spirit."

Therefore, since the Holy Spirit isn't a real person because He is a spirit, Jesus must

be a non-person also since He is now only a "life-giving spirit."

Luke 24:39-42 proves that Jesus was raised in His flesh and bones, and that He was able to eat natural food.

So in the mind of the Jehovah's Witnesses Jesus and the Holy Spirit are not real persons, but, "The Devil is a malicious manslayer. The Bible reveals that he is a real person" (page 55).

Another attack is made upon Jesus on page 65. Only because Jesus is the "Last Adam" and is the "Corresponding ransom for all" is He known as "Eternal Father."

This is a weak and foolish invention to destroy what Jesus is and what He came to do.

This destroying of the ministry of Jesus is very revealingly brought to the surface on page 69 - "Yet, our salvation is not the most important reason for Jesus' life and death on earth."

This is why the Watch Tower Organisation pays so little regard to Jesus and has sought to remove all honour to Him in the NWT and books.

It is little wonder that they say on page 82; "Human death does not differ from that of the animals."

NEXT ISSUE
Is the Watch Tower Society
God's Channel to mankind?

Journey from the Watch Tower



The testimony of Susan Pickering.

AS a child I grew up with many confusing ideas about God. My mother being Greek and my father English I was baptised in both churches. This all meant nothing to me at the time.

I believed in God from a very early age but I never knew Him. Never knew Him as a loving father or a dear friend. To me he was a distant God - unreachable.

During my teenage years I dabbled in many things to find the origins of life and what it all meant. I delved into astrology, palmistry and spiritism - anything mystical interested me.

My search was long and had many twists and turns along the way, and still I had an emptiness.

As a young housewife with two small children I answered the door one day to two smiling young women who asked me what I thought of the world today, with so much violence, marriage break-downs and suffering, and if I would like to live in a peaceful paradise earth where there would be no more suffering and pain.

I thought to myself; "who wouldn't like that".

Together with my friend Pauline this was to be the start of a 15 year association with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Sometimes I went along to the Kingdom Hall where I met many nice people, quite normal I thought.

I studied at home with them going through their book "The Truth that

Leads to Eternal Life"

At times I did feel pressured into being baptised, but something always held me back so I never did. Thank the Lord He had His hand on me.

Jehovah's Witnesses were very good at pointing out certain scriptures although they had taken it all out of context which I later discovered, as much as they tried they still could not answer my many questions.

However, I did go along with their way of thinking and they did play a big part in my life.

Pauline and I did not see each other for some time, both her parents became ill so she spent most of her time caring for them.

I went back to work now my children were older, and it is here that things changed for me.

Having worked at my present job for 18 months a work colleague and good friend said to me one day "Jesus is God". I looked at him but could not answer. All this time we worked together we never talked about religion and now, here he was, bold and so sure telling me Jesus was God.

Well I was stunned. It was so unexpected and out of the blue, but what an impact it had on me though. I kept thinking to myself how can he be so sure what he said is true?

***Next Issue
A Change of Heart***

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