






Source: <https://www.the-fourth-watch.eu>

2019-05-18

## „I’m studying the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses. What should I watch out for?“

Are you studying the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses? The following information will give you an overview of the strong points, but also the weak points and hazards concerning Jehovah’s Witnesses. We speak from our own experience and observation from 20 years within this brotherhood. Of course, after careful consideration you will make your own decisions.

For simplicity, we use the pictograms

 positive     questionable     harmful

Let’s get started!



### **Sound Bible Knowledge**

In a Bible study with Jehovah’s Witnesses (called „home Bible study“), you can get a systematic overview of the basic structure of the Bible and its main topics. You will learn valuable links between the Old and New Testament: a solid foundation for your Christian faith.

### **Thorough Bible Study**

There is a lot of emphasis on understanding the meaning, explanation of biblical passages, also historical context, and practical application of principles. [Over the years, however, this deep Bible study has become significantly flattened.]

### **Who is God?**

The identity of the Almighty God YHWH („Jehovah“) is well worked out. The wonderful personality of our loving Heavenly Father is often in focus, and He is addressed by name (though the pronunciation „Jehovah“ is doubtful) – something that is lacking in most evangelical churches.





## Who is Jesus?

It gets problematic when it comes to the identity of Jesus Christ. Although Jehovah's Witnesses acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, they also teach that Jesus is the Archangel Michael – which, though being justified by some biblical passages, is not valid and very much downgrades our Savior. Because of His direct descent from YHWH, Jesus is also of divine nature, and as our mediator He is, of course, our personal contact who deserves the same honor as His father (which is according to YHWH's will) – these facts are almost completely ousted.

## The Bible of Jehovah's Witnesses (New World Translation)

The New World Translation (NWT) is fairly literal and close to the original text – and therefore sometimes a bit bumpy to read. A freer Bible translation (e.g., „Good News“ or „Hope for All“) is easier and more understandable, but sometimes inaccurate and deviates from the original sense. We recommend that you add at least one more Bible translation to the Bible study for comparison, for example:


- the King James Version,
- the New International Version.


## The Name of God YHWH in the Old Testament

It is very positive that the NWT reproduces the proper name of God YHWH wherever it has been replaced by the meaningless title of LORD in most other Bible translations. This honors God and counteracts the general trend to *„make His people forget God's name“*.  
(*Jeremiah 23:27*)

## The Name of God in the New Testament

In the New Testament, God's name YHWH actually does not appear in the original text. In many places, the NWT replaced the word „Lord“ with the name „Jehovah“:

 At *clear literal quotations* from the Old Testament that contained the name YHWH, which is completely correct. These quotes are introduced by sentences like, **„As it is written: ...“**

 but also in many other places where the context does not justify making that change – be it because it is not clearly a quote from the O.T. or because the context clearly shows that „Lord“ must point to our Lord Jesus.



An example from the New World Translation:

**„For everyone who calls on the name of *Jehovas\** will be saved.“**

(Romans 10:13)

View the context in The Bible in Living English:

**„4 For *Christus* is the end of the law for righteousness to every believer.  
9 because if by your mouth you acknowledge *Jesus to be Lord*, and in your heart you believe that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.  
13 for «everyone who shall call on the *name of the Lord* shall be saved«.“**

(Romans 10:4, 9, 13)



This is not only questionable, but even harmful, because in many other places the focus is diverted away from Jesus to Jehovah. But this does not correspond to the will of the Father, on the contrary: He wants us *to honor his glorified ,Son as we honor the Father‘*. (John 5:23)

As a result, Jesus's sheep are kept at a distance, they do not call on Jesus's name, they do not learn to pray to Him, and He is not much more to them than the ransom that gives them access to the New World, and the postman who delivers their prayers to the Father. **They do not build a real personal relationship with their personal savior.** What a mental poverty. But it even gets worse ...



## The Memorial or Holy Communion

Jesus told his disciples to keep celebrating this memorial service of his sacrificial death until he returned. Jehovah's Witnesses celebrate the Memorial once a year on the 14th of Nisan (usually in March / April). But you will notice: Almost all those present pass on the symbols of bread and wine untouched, **nobody eats and drinks of it!** (By the way ... in the same way Satanists deliberately reject Christ and offend YHWH God.)

Of course, the rank and file Jehovah's Witness does not want to reject or offend, he or she does it in the best of beliefs.

Aside from the pseudo-biblical justification which you can check [here](#) – how would you feel if you invited friends to dinner, even explicitly encouraging them: **„Eat and drink!“**, and no one does so? Wouldn't you be snubbed? Jesus Himself said:



**„UNLESS you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have NO LIFE in yourselves.“ !!!**

(John 6:53, NWT)



## ? The Thing with 1914

Jehovah's Witnesses are convinced that Jesus returned invisibly as early as 1914 and since then has reigned as king. But this can not be true:

- From a historical point of view, the starting point of their calculation (the date 607 BC) is wrong,
- The date 1914 comes from the pyramidology, and
- From a biblical perspective, the return of Christ is inseparable from the rapture of Christians into heaven (1 Thessalonians 4: 15-17, and this event had not been observed in 1914, did it?)

## ? Clinging to 1914

The leadership of Jehovah's Witnesses (called the „Governing Body“) has been pointed out this error for decades, but they still stick to it. Why?

Because their own authority builds on 1914 (see next section: „Faithful and discreet slave“). An error that is not corrected becomes a lie.

## ? The „Faithful and Discreet Slave“

The 8-headed leadership of JW's describes himself as the „faithful and discreet slave“ appointed by his lord to distribute spiritual food. They take a question from Jesus literally (Matthew 24:45, 46) and relate it to themselves. Is that justified? No, because in Jesus's parable the slave will not be rewarded until his master has returned. Has Jesus already come back? See section „The Thing of 1914“ ... Thus, from a biblical point of view, the authority of the „slave“ is based on – nothing.



## ✘ The Authority of the „Slave“: Rules, Commandments of Men ...

A woman should wear a skirt in the Kingdom hall and in the ministry. A man should be clean-shaven and wearing a tie, otherwise he will not be considered „exemplary“ and will not be allowed to perform any responsible duties in the congregation. Regular preaching service is a must for every Witness (the hourly rate is not fixed, but the more, the more prestige), and every month he should give a report slip on it, otherwise he is considered „inactive“, no matter how much he actually does. He may be very diligent in other branches of the Christian ministry, visiting the elderly and the sick, encouraging the depressed, etc.

This creates a kind of subliminal performance pressure or competitive spirit. Many witnesses know the feeling of „never doing enough for Jehovah“.

These human commandments are unlikely to be freely revealed to you until you are baptized, and you can not find them in the Bible. On the contrary, the Bible says:



**„But you, when making gifts of mercy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your gifts of mercy may be *in secret*. Then *your Father who looks on in secret will repay you.*“ (Mat. 6:3, 4)**

Nevertheless, they are in force and are being conveyed subliminally.

### ... Faith According to Regulation ...

The „Slave“ determines how Bible passages are to be understood. Independent research is not desired; one should completely rely on the publications of the „Slave“. If you find an error in the biblical interpretation and address the elders, the Bethel or the headquarters in Warwick (USA), you usually don't get a helpful conversation but silence, and it can happen that you get „invited“ to an internal legal proceedings („Judicial Committee“).

This practice violates the basic values of the Bible, which says that no one is **„the Lord of our faith“** (2 Corinthians 1:24), that each one stands or falls before God for himself, and that like the Christians of Beroea, we should **„carefully examine whether these things are so“** (Acts 17:11).

### ... Denunciation and Secret Court

Anyone who utters deviant biblical ideas is quickly labeled in a negative way, such as **„spiritually weak,“ „proud,“ „rebellious,“** or **„apostate,“** even though he may just follow his Christian conscience and humbly let himself be guided by the Holy Spirit.

When other believers inform the elders about such utterances, they are praised for their faithfulness, instead of speaking first to the person in question according to the biblical model. This borders on denunciation (sneaking) and creates a climate of mistrust and secrecy

A „Judicial Committee“ is (in complete contrast to biblical models) a secret court that can emanate either a rebuke or disfellowshipping for the summoned. There are **no** observers admitted, there is **no** written indictment, **no** protocol, **no** written justification of the „judgment“. The person in question sits alone opposite three elders. This also applies to women, adolescents and even children, which is extremely disturbing.

We ourselves have witnessed cases in which people were sentenced in absentia without knowing the specific charges - and they have not experienced them until now because they were disfellowshipped.

### The Guillotine of the „Slave“: Disfellowshipping and Shunning

The disfellowshipping puts an abrupt end to ALL contacts of the person affected with his fellow-believers. Every Jehovah's Witness around the world should shun him, not talk to him, not even greet him. This also applies to his own relatives (if he does not live with them under one roof). Grandparents no longer see their grandchildren grow up, young people lose the support of their parents and friends, people despair of the total loss of their social environment (because they were exhorted to minimize contact with people of other faiths).



The disfellowshipping is a social execution and under this shock, more than a few Witnesses commit suicide.

Of the survivors, 80% entirely lose their faith in God.

## Is Disfellowshipping Biblical?

In no way in this form. There was an isolated incident in which the Apostle Paul ordered that a completely unrepentant incestuous incinerator be roused by believers withdrawing from him (1 Corinthians 5: 1-5). But:

- It was about a serious, perverted sin,
- There was no repentance,
- The disfellowshipping was only for a short time, not permanent,
- And it was performed by some Christians, but not by all.

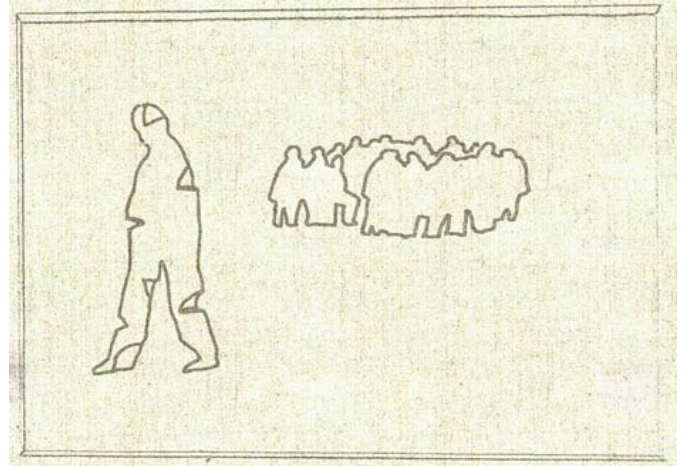
How much milder was this measure compared to what the jurisdiction of Jehovah's Witnesses does! This is very nicely shown in 2 Corinthians 2: 5-8::

***„Now if anyone has caused sadness, he has saddened, not me, but all of you to an extent – not to be too harsh in what I say. This rebuke given by the majority is sufficient for such a man; now you should instead kindly forgive and comfort him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sadness. I therefore exhort you to confirm your love for him.“***

## „No one is disfellowshipped who has remorse.“

You may hear this phrase when you ask about the disfellowshipping. In practice, unfortunately, that's not true. Here are some real examples:

- Some are excluded because of weaknesses that they regret very well, but do not yet have fully under control, such as alcohol abuse, nicotine addiction or porn addiction. Each relapse is interpreted as a „lack of remorse“, which is both psychologically and medically complete nonsense and is an additional heavy burden to the person concerned.
- A young bride and groom had sex before marriage, they were reprimanded and again came „too close“ just before the wedding. The wedding ceremony in the Kingdom Hall was canceled, the young couple was disfellowshipped and had to master the first difficult years completely on their own.
- A young brother sinned, repented, continued to attend meetings without anyone speaking to him. After a year, he asked for recovery and was dismissed. After a second year the same misery. The reason: He could not cry tears on command; thus, the elders concluded that there was not enough remorse.





Then there are the Christians who, for reasons of conscience and Christian conviction, view or handle things differently than the leadership of Jehovah's Witnesses. Did they commit a sin they would have to regret? Are they really „apostates“? Or did they act **exemplary**, in the sense of Acts 4:19 and 5:29:

**„But in reply Peter and John said to them: „Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves.“ ... In answer Peter and the other apostles said: „We must obey God as ruler rather than men.“**  
?



### „Disfellowshipping is a Loving Measure.“

Allegedly, the disfellowshipping should motivate a sinner to repent and return to Jehovah. In fact, most Witnesses come back for the reason that they want to get in touch with their loved ones again – which is natural. Repentance and the relationship to YHWH God play a subordinate role.

It would be truly loving for elders and fellow believers to take time for detailed, friendly and repeated conversations, to accompany the person in his difficult phase and to help him develop in a positive direction. This type of counseling is often heard in theory, but it is extremely rare in practice, it is even exceptionally. A plant grows better when it is potted and fertilized than when threatened with a lawn trimmer. Also a kind of violence ...

By the way: The „**slave**“ in Jesus' parable had the task of distributing food – not judging his fellow believers. YHWH God has given the whole judgment to Jesus. Whoever judges his brothers now, instead of raising them when they have stumbled, sits on the judgment seat of our mighty King Jesus!



### Now Something Positive: Conscientious Objection

Jehovah's Witnesses deny any service with the weapon because that is not compatible with the commandment „**Thou shalt not kill**“ and „**Love thy neighbor as thyself**.“ A big plus. The only thing is – no Witness should be forced to conscientious objection by threatening him with disfellowshipping.



### Profits from the War Industry

Unfortunately, the Watchtower Society is taking profits from various stocks in the war industry. Not very consistent. You can find more information [here](#).



### Jehovah's Witnesses do not get involved with Politics

Because they have already decided on God's kingdom with Jesus as king, Jehovah's Witnesses do not vote and do not hold any political office because „**one can not serve two masters**“. They refer to Jesus' admonition to be „**not part of the world**“, above all to political neutrality. Again: It is wrong to *coerce* anybody into political neutrality.






## **Jehovah's Witnesses abstain from blood**

Jehovah's Witnesses accept medical treatment, surgery and blood tests, but they do not consume blood. This is a controversial topic that is quickly becoming emotionally charged, as many are unaware of the excellent medical alternatives. From our point of view, it is biblically correct and also very beneficial in terms of health to refrain from blood transfusions. But here too, no pressure should be exerted on anyone: he himself stands in front of God with his decision, and he must also bear the health consequences himself.

## **Scandals surrounding Jehovah's Witnesses**

In every denomination there are scandals, but how do you deal with it? The leadership of the Jehovah's Witnesses **deny** towards their members

-  that there are serious problems with child sexual abuse and millions of donations go into trials and victims' compensation,
-  that the Watchtower Society receives income from questionable equity funds,
-  that the Watchtower Society was for years a NGO member of the UN (and thus violated its own commandment of political neutrality).

But Christians are called upon to „**speak truth to one another**“ (*Ephesians 4:25*). After all, we want to worship God „**in spirit and truth**“ (*John 4:24*) and not end up like Judas Iscariot or Ananias and Sapphira who became dishonest out of greed and concealed the truth.

## **And when does Harmagedon come?**

Harmagedon (the judgment of God) was often wrongly expected and postponed by Jehovah's Witnesses: 1874, 1914, 1925, 1975 ... Some interpretations of prophecies were similarly changeable. That's no problem as long as you admit: Guys, we were wrong, we apologize to you, and as long as you do not exclude anyone because he recognized the error a little earlier than the leadership and no longer wanted to spread the lie. Unfortunately, the opposite still happens today.





## Should I get baptized as a Jehovah's Witness?



### Ask your heart:

- Do I feel valued for my individuality, my being-as-I-am, being different, or am I rather being rewarded for my adaptability (clothing, hairstyle / shave, mindset, language, preparation, ...)?
- Do I feel welcome to ask questions until something is clear to me?
- Do I feel God's Spirit during my Bible study or in the Kingdom Hall?
- Is my own responsibility and freedom of conscience before God fully respected, appreciated and promoted, or do I somehow feel a little pushed, patronized or forced?

### Be aware that ...

... if you are to discover false teachings, you are expected to remain faithful to the official doctrine and spread those teachings to the outside world. Some try to fade out silently to at least keep their contacts, but sooner or later it comes to disfellowshipping, the „cold cut“.

### If you have children:

Be aware that certain doctrines, topics, illustrations, public talks, and congress films can **shape, upset, frighten, and even traumatize** your child. Children react differently to impressions than adults and process them in a different way. (We will provide you with more detailed information and testimonials.)

Also, be careful who you trust your child with. The Elders' procedures provide so much discretion to pedophile fellow believers that a state commission of inquiry titled Jehovah's Witnesses a „**Paradise for Pedophiles**“. Please do not take the slightest risk - do not allow any opportunities in which your child can be harmed!



### And then baptism ...

It is wonderful when a person dedicates himself to YHWH God and His son Jesus, to give them his life. There is only one catch: Jehovah's Witnesses not only baptize you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but also **the Jehovah's Witness organization emerges in your baptismal promises**. This is inappropriate and unbiblical!!

**„Little children, guard yourselves from idols!“** (John 5:21)





## „What prevents me from getting baptized?“

Do you first have to work through a list of questions and put your life in perfect order before you can be baptized? In the Bible, we do not read anything like that. Jesus himself said:

**„Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations,**

**(1.) baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit,**

**(2.) teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.“** (Matthew 28:19,20)

Note the order! There are only two conditions for baptism: **Faith** in the Lord Jesus as the Son of God and Redeemer, and **repentance**. Then your learning process begins at your own pace to let the Holy Spirit shape you in God's will.

**„Peter said to them: „Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the free gift of the holy spirit.“** (Acts 2:38)

Of course, you can do a home Bible study with Jehovah's Witnesses, even without joining the Jehovah's Witness community in the end. You can baptize yourself or with other Christians. You are not obligated to any human being – but YHWH God and our Lord Jesus joyfully welcome you with open arms.

Be aware that every denomination or church has its deficiencies, errors, and wrongdoings.

Whatever you decide on:

We wish you YHWH God's blessings, our Lord Jesus' company and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

