

A Letter in Love

I write this to you because I believe you have been misled. As you know sincerity will not get anyone into God's kingdom, only truth. All I ask is that you consider what I have to say prayerfully and Biblically. Here are my complaints against the Watchtower:

1) The Watchtower's system of authority seems too much like Roman Catholicism which takes away the right of the individual to interpret the Bible as he or she feels led by the Holy Spirit (see 1John 2:27-27). The Catholics have a papal hierarchy, which they are forced to agree with without any room for disagreement even on minor issues such as the use of contraceptives or blood transfusions. The Watchtower has declared itself as Pope of the Jehovah Witnesses. If you disagree on one minor point they will excommunicate you. They demand everything they teach to be embraced. This should not be because they do make mistakes. Out of the hundred years of Watchtower prophecy they have a 100% failure rate. Check the dates in JW prophetic history of 1799, 1874, 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925, and 1975 (all failed prophecies; see Deuteronomy 18:20-22).

The Watchtower, like the Catholic hierarchy, have fostered a fear in you to obey without thought as is seen in their command not to read any opposing literature (not unlike the Catholic's "Index of forbidden books" which was finally abolished in the 20th century). True Christianity welcomes the opposition to present their case because we do not fear false doctrine because we have such confidence in the true doctrine and its superiority. Also Roman Catholicism is based on a system of works the believer must perform in order to gain the acceptance of God. The Watchtower is the same with its strict legal code. This leads to my second concern:

2) I have talked with about 100 different Jehovah Witnesses and I see no love - only fear. This is because the Watchtower does not teach of the possibility of our having a personal relationship with God (Hebrews 4:14-16). I have witnessed thousands of people's experience of a personal relationship with Him through His Son. The Bible teaches that we can experience eternal life right now. 1 John 5:13 in the Greek (see also John 10:10).

3) The Watchtower's view of grace is faulty. A definition of grace is clear in Ephesians 2:8-9, which teaches that we are saved by grace through faith excluding works. Works will be the natural consequence of salvation as verse 10 shows, but they are not the cause of salvation. We can't earn our way to God, so Christ did for us (see John 3:16; Galatians 3:10-14; Romans 3:21-24). Romans 4:5 is crystal clear, "However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness." We are saved by trusting in Christ, and we continue being saved by faith not works (see Galatians 3:1-5).

The Watchtower has you going out door to door to earn your acceptance from God; this rules out God's love. When we become a child of God through faith, He accepts his children, even when they are bad. The difference is not sinlessness; it is relationship. 1 John 3:1-3 makes this clear. We obey Him because He loves us and we love Him, not because we want to earn His acceptance. The Watchtower's view not only rules out God's love (should you treat your child like the Watchtower says God treats his children: conditional love which says I'll love you if...?),

it also rules out any real love on your part. Your real motive for witnessing is not based on love and compassion for the lost; it is based on your own need of acceptance from God. Christians, who are already accepted completely by God, can witness from the pure motive of love. Many Jehovah Witnesses who began to witness to me gave up when they saw I was going to be tough because they were not interested in me; they were only interested in a convert. I love to go out door to door witnessing, but I do it out of love for God and the people I am witnessing to.

4) Another concern I have is that the Watchtower's strict exclusivity makes Matthew 16:18 seem to be a farce. Jesus said that the gates of hell will not prevail against the church. Christ found the church and has sustained it throughout the centuries in spite of Satan's attacks against it from within and without. But if the Watchtower is correct, the church has ceased to exist from the New Testament times to the 19th century when Charles Russell began teaching. There has been no group of people who held to the Watchtower's beliefs until the 19th century. There have been anti-Trinitarians but even Arius believed in the personality of the Holy Spirit and so would therefore be considered a heretic by the Watchtower. This is a direct accusation against God's capability of sustaining the body of Christ, the church.

5) Another concern I have is the Watchtower's belief of the single personality of God, which denies His self-sufficiency. God is love, but an attribute is not an attribute unless it is in use. Before God created He could not love if the Trinity is denied. If God is only one person then He had to create in order to love. He needed something outside of Himself to make Him complete, to make Him what He is. I believe there was perfect love within the Trinity throughout eternity and therefore God did not have to create out of necessity. The Trinity is difficult to understand, I agree, but if God could be totally understood He would not be God. He is infinite and beyond our finite ability to comprehend (Isaiah 55:8-9). But the Trinity is not illogical. It does not break any rules of logic (principle of identity-all A is A; noncontradiction-not both A and not A; excluded middle-either A or not A). We affirm one God manifested in three persons: not three persons and one person, not three Gods and one God, but three persons and one God. It is a mystery but it is Biblical and has been held by Christians from the 1st century on (Historical evidence proves this unlike the anti-Trinitarian movement which did not come around until the late 2nd and 3rd centuries). To reject this doctrine just because we don't understand it would be like a four year old who rejects the existence of calculus just because he can't understand it.

The real question is "Is this doctrine Biblical? The question is not "does it make sense to my finite and sin-tainted mind?" It is not "does it make me feel good?" It is not "does the Pope or the Watchtower agree with it?" Let's look at what the Bible says. If the Bible says in one single place that Jesus is not God then we must abandon this belief. If the Bible says in one place that Jesus is God then we must worship him as such. The fact is the Bible never says Jesus is not God. The Bible specifically says Jesus is God in four places (six places if you count John 1:18 and Titus 2:13 which the oldest and best Greek manuscripts verify). Read John 1:1; 20:28; Philippians 2:5-6 and Hebrews 1:8 carefully. Jesus cannot be "a god" because all other gods are idols and false gods according to the Bible (Isaiah 43:10-11; 44:8; 45:5; 18, 21-23; 46:9). Jesus is worshiped as God throughout the Bible even though worship is prohibited to anyone or anything but God (Exodus 20:1-4; 34:14; Revelation 22:8-9). Philippians 2:10-11 says every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord. This passage is a direct quote from

Isaiah 45:23-24 which specifically refers to Jehovah Himself. God is said to be the first and the last in Isaiah 44:6 and 48:12. Jesus is called the first and the last in Revelation 1:17; are there two first and lasts? Revelation 1:8 calls God the Alpha and Omega and then later calls Jesus the Alpha and Omega in 22:12. Jesus is the great "I AM" of the universe (John 8:58; Exodus 3:14).

Jesus is God. The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4), and he is a person. John 14:16-17, 26; 16:7-14 uses the personal pronoun "he" in the Greek signifying he is a person (this is highly unusual because "spirit" is a neuter noun). The Spirit can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30); you don't grieve a force or a breath; your breath might grieve a person, but a person does not grieve a breath. The Spirit teaches, testifies, comforts, and prays for us (Acts 2:13; 20:23; John 16:7; Romans 8:26). Jesus is God, the Spirit is God, and the Father is God, yet there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalms 96:4,5). This is why we baptize in the name, not the names, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; see also 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 and 2 Corinthians 13:14).

6) Christ was raised bodily (John 2:19-21). The Greek term Soma always means body, not soul or spirit as is seen in John 20:24-29. A supernatural, incorruptible body granted, but nonetheless a body (see 1 Corinthians 15:12-19). Your denial of this truth is simply unacceptable Biblically.

7) Lastly, I am concerned about the Watchtower's faulty translation of the Bible. I am a Greek scholar (I have taught Greek at the college level for five years), but only one of the five men who originally translated the New World Translation had any Greek or Hebrew background, and that was only two years of Greek. Their faulty scholarship shows. Translating from one language to another is basically the same no matter what language you are translating. You need to know the grammar and syntax of both languages well before a good translation is possible. No Greek or Hebrew scholars, whether secular or Christian, acknowledge the New World Translation. They all say it is a tragedy.

I admire the Jehovah Witnesses zeal, pacifism, and strong stance on the Bible but I fear it is zeal without knowledge and they are following "another Jesus" (2 Corinthians 11:4) and another gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). Put everything to the test (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22). Jesus is not Michael or any other angel (Hebrews 1), therefore the Watchtower is a false prophet and should be rejected. Real Christianity promises eternal life, joy, peace, love in an intimate relationship with God, with power to overcome sin and the devil. True Christianity is real, personal, powerful, and full of love. Please turn to Christ's atoning sacrifice and enter into fellowship with the real God.

Love,

Larry Siekawitch
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