

A Message to Jehovahs Witnesses

by John Ecob

The doorbell rings and we open the door. Two ladies with briefcases at their feet and a magazine in their hand smile sweetly and wish us, Good morning. They explain that they are here with a message of hope in a hopeless world and wonder if we would like to accept their offered magazine. It has interesting articles on.....

If we are busy we may feel irritated; if we are interested we may ask questions; but if we are a Christian we may feel a concern for a couple of nice people who have been deceived by the arch-enemy of souls. But how do we answer them.

Many Jehovah's Witness (JW) converts are like a lady I spoke to recently who had given up on attending their meetings but was quick to say, "But I still hold to their teaching". I soon learned what their teaching was. "I can't accept the Trinity - I was a seventeen year old Roman Catholic", she said, "but what they said made sense. I attended their Bible studies and left the Catholic Church."

How could I help this young woman? I spoke to her about salvation and she freely admitted her hopes depended on the life she lived. I took her to Ephesians 2:8-10. It clearly said *"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast"*

I turned to Titus 3:5 *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us."* I thought that would be the end of the matter but it wasn't. She couldn't explain those verses but the concept of works for salvation was so deeply ingrained in her thought patterns there must be another explanation so she changed the subject. It was easy for the JWs to show this lass the error of Catholicism and if they were right on that point surely the rest of their teaching must be right; but was it?

Our conversation was cut short by a phone call to pick up her little girl from school and I left her with some literature to read and an offer to talk again.

On contemplating our conversation I realized that this young

woman's problem went much further than seeing that salvation was by faith alone and if she had admitted that her works could not save, what, or who would she believe in? The God that the JW's had introduced her to was not the God of the Bible and the Jesus they had introduced her to was not the Jesus of the Bible. To her Jesus was a created being who was sent by Jehovah to show by his wonderful life how we should behave in order to be saved. To her the whole concept of Jesus Christ being one with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the Godhead was just a relic of pagan Catholicism. The word Trinity was not in the Bible and, to her, was anathema. Her prayers had long been directed to Jehovah. How could she now invite Jesus Christ to come to dwell in her heart? What's more, the Holy Spirit was just an influence; the breath of God. He was not a person, let alone a person in the Godhead - or so she had been taught. The whole concept of becoming a Christian was like changing Gods, and so it was. But how could I help her to see who Jesus Christ really was?

The Word of God our only Authority

Throughout history men have debated the divine character of Jesus Christ. Church Councils have been set up to define it and Bishops have been exiled or reinstated according to how they understood His person. For this reason it is futile to appeal to creeds and decisions of Councils of the Church for no sooner do we quote one theologian than another may be produced to support an alternative point of view. The question is, What does the Word of God teach?

Who was Jesus?

During the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ the same debate raged. The question of who this Galilean Teacher was became a much-discussed topic and Jesus was very much aware of it. As a consequence He asked His disciples "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man am?" (Matt.16:13). They replied, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets"

Jesus then asked, "But whom say ye that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt16:14-16).

Since it is undisputed, among any who claim to believe the Bible to be the infallible Word of God, that Jesus Christ was sinless, we

must view any statement made by Christ about Himself as being transparently truthful. If others made statements about Him which may have misled the multitude then in all honesty, He would repudiate them. It would be sinful not to. Otherwise He could justly be accused of accepting titles to which He was not entitled and that would be dishonest and negate any claim to sinlessness.

When Peter made his historic answer Jesus not only accepted it but verified it with the words: *"Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven"*.

In other words, It is absolutely true, and God has revealed it to you.

Equal with God

Jesus had acknowledged that He was the Son of man and now He accepts the title the Son of God.

We know that the Jews understood the title, Son of God, as a claim to equality with God. In John 10:30 Jesus stated that He was equal with the Father in the words *"I and my Father are one"*. The Jews understood this very clearly as equality with God and took up stones to stone Him for the blasphemy as they said, *"Thou being a man, makest thyself equal with God"* (John 10:33). Since Jesus was sinless and could not lie, and because He did not refute their charge, He must have agreed with the statement that He was in fact, equal with God.

On another occasion Jesus healed a man on the sabbath and referred to Himself as the Son of God. The Jews sought to stone Him because He not only broke the sabbath *"but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God"* (John 5:17-27). If Jesus were not God He would have instantly refuted the charge but instead He expanded on His relationship with the Father and stated that *"all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him"* (John 5:23).

That statement would be blasphemy if Jesus was not God. When Satan tried to take over the throne of god he said, *"I will be like the most High"* (Isa. 14:14) and for that pride he was cast out.

Jesus Emmanuel

The names given to Jesus Christ bear testimony to His Deity. The angel of the Lord told Joseph that the babe was to be called *"Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins"* and that, because He was to be born to a virgin, He would also be called *"Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us"* (Matt1:23).

The very fact that He would save His people from their sins demanded that He be God for the Jews rightly said, *"Who can forgive sins but God only"* (Lu 5:21). Jews would repudiate the power of the priest to grant forgiveness in the confessional yet completely miss the significance of Jesus having that power. Only God can forgive sins. Jesus did not dispute this but added that *"the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins"* and immediately performed a miracle to prove His power (Luke5:24).

The name Jesus is the only occurrence of the name Jehovah in the New Testament. It is the translation of Joshua in the Old Testament and means *"Jehovah saves"*. Psalm 3:8 says *"Salvation belongeth unto the LORD (Jehovah)"*. And when Peter preached after Pentecost he said concerning Jesus Christ *"Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12). If salvation is of Jehovah and there is no other name but Jesus Christ that saves, then Jesus must God the Son!!! In Isaiah 43:11 we read *"I, even I, am the LORD (Jehovah); and beside me there is no Saviour"*. Titus wrote, *"God our Saviour"*(Titus 3:4).

God over All

Paul made it clear that Jesus Christ was God in Romans 9:5. He spoke of the Jews *"of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."*

God Manifest in Flesh

To Timothy Paul wrote: *"God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"* (1Tim 3:16). Some modern versions have changed this verse to *"He appeared in a body..."*(NIV). This is on the evidence of just a few corrupt manuscripts. The vast majority

of the manuscripts (total 5,250) read “*God was manifest in the flesh*” and that is how it is in the Received Greek Text which represents 95% of the 5,250 manuscripts of the New Testament.

The Alpha and Omega

In Rev.1:7-8 Jesus is called the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end and it is quite clear that it is Jesus because we read “*Every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced him*”. The Father wasn’t pierced but Jesus was therefore He is the subject of the passage. Jesus claims to be “*the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last....the Almighty*” (Rev. 1:8).

At the end of Revelation again we read: “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.*” There is no doubt this is Jesus speaking because he says, “*I Jesus have sent mine angelI am the root of David and offspring of David...*” (Rev.22:13-16).

In Isaiah 41:4 &48:12 Jehovah claims to be the FIRST AND THE LAST. “*I the LORD,(Jehovah) the first and the last; I am he*” and again in Isaiah 48:12. Therefore Jesus is Jehovah God.

In Romans 8 we see Jesus as part of the Godhead with the Father and the Holy Spirit. This bears out the truth of the Trinity which is clearly seen in Scripture as also in Matt.28:19 where Jesus commanded the disciples to baptize in “*the NAME (singular) of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost*”. One name and three persons! If Jesus were not equal with the Father and the Spirit in the Godhead, then such a statement would be blasphemy.

In the Trinity

Romans 8 brings out the Trinity clearly. Look at verses 9 to 11.

*“But ye are not in the flesh, but in **the Spirit**, if so be that the **Spirit of God** dwell in you. Now if any man have not the **Spirit of Christ**, he is none of his. And if **Christ** be in you, the body is dead because of sin....But if the **Spirit of him that raised up Jesus** (ie.the Father, Rom 6:4) from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by **his Spirit** that dwelleth in you.”*

We have here The Spirit, the Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ, Christ, and the Spirit of the Father who raised Christ - all referring to the Holy Spirit as He indwells the Believer.

Jesus spoke of this wonderful truth in John 14:16-23. He said:

“The Spirit of truth....shall be in you. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.....If any man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him”

We must remember that the Holy Spirit is a person and not just an influence. Peter said to Ananias *“Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?”*(Acts5:3). He can be grieved (Eph.4:30), quenched (1Thess.5:19), blasphemed (Mat 12:31). He strives with the hearts of men(Gen 6:3), convinces or reproves people (John16:8) and speaks the words of God (Acts1:16; 3:18,21; 13:2; 28:25) etc. He is clearly a person in the Godhead and not just an influence.

The Word was God

The Gospel of John was written to prove that Jesus was the Son of God and it was the general understanding that the title Son of God involved Deity, if it didn't the apostles would have made it abundantly clear. (John20:31). John begins:

“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...all things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made....and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth”(Jo1:1-14).

John stated that the Word was God yet JWs change this to “the Word was A god”. They do two things. First they insert the indefinite article before the word God, and secondly they reduce Jesus Christ to a created being. Yet Scripture clearly says that everything that was made was made by Christ. He certainly did not make Himself. Micah prophesied of Christ and said *“whose goings forth were of old, FROM EVERLASTING”* (Micah 5:2). It is clear that Christ had no beginning and therefore is God.

On what grounds do the JWs insert the indefinite article? They claim that when the Greek omits the definite article (the) it should always be read as indefinite (a). This is true in Greek with one exception; it is not necessary when the noun is Deity and this can be demonstrated in the same chapter; John Chapter one. No JW

will disagree that "God" in verses 6, 12, 13,&18 refer to Jehovah God. The context demands it. Yet none of these has the definite article before the noun in the Greek. To be consistent with their own argument they should translate all of these as "A god" but they don't. Their unbiblical theology on the person of Christ is the real reason for the insertion of the indefinite article.

In addition, the error created by this indefinite article assumes Christ is only one of many created gods. This was an error held by Arian heretics in the fourth century and by others who held the erroneous view that all matter was evil and since God could not create evil so He had to create other gods or emanations which did the supposedly dirty work of creating matter. Thus they consider Christ an emanation of God who did the creation for God. They water down the unequivocal statement that *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"* (Gen1:1). The Psalmist said *"By the word of the LORD (Jehovah) were the heavens made..."* (Ps 33:6). Since Jesus made all things He must be God and not a created god.

God calls Him God

The Epistle to the Hebrews ascribes full deity to Christ. He is *"the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his (God's) person"* (Heb1:3). To make it clear that Jesus was not just a created angel the Word says, *"Let all the angels of God worship him"*. To worship any created thing is idolatry so Christ has to be uncreated. Then we read: *"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom"* (Heb1:6-8). If the Father ascribes deity to the Son what right do JWs have to deny it.

Jesus Christ is Jehovah

No Bible believer would doubt for a moment that God is Sovereign over all creation and that every human being will one day have to bow their knee before Him.

The proud king Nebuchadnezzar had to confess that *"the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will"* (Dan.5:21).

Isaiah wrote of Jehovah:

"Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and

there is none else. I have sworn by myself....That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear" (Isaiah 45:22-23).

This verse is quoted concerning the Lord Jesus in the New Testament:

"Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation....and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name. That at the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father"(Phil 2:6-11).

If words mean anything Christ was in the form of God, and equal with God before He became flesh and dwelt among men to lay down His life to make atonement for sinful mankind. But He has risen and is now highly exalted and one day every soul of man will confess that Jesus Christ is Jehovah God.

Jehovah in the New Testament

It is interesting that the name Jehovah only appears once in the New Testament and that is in the name Jesus which translated means "Jehovah Saves". Elsewhere in the New Testament God is referred to as Lord which is the translation of the Greek word "kurios". A study of the contexts of each usage of "kurios" will indicate that it is used interchangeably with the Lord Jesus and Jehovah.

In Acts 4 we read *"Lord, thou art God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is....the rulers (of Israel) were gathered together against the Lord (Jehovah), and his Christ..."(Acts4:24-26).* Then the Holy Spirit records: *"With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 4:33).* Peter addressed the Lord in prayer(Acts 4:29) and Stephen, as he was being stoned cried *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" (Acts 7:59).*

The thing that infuriated the Jewish leaders was that Jesus claimed deity and His apostles preached it. It has been a mark of modernistic apostates down through the centuries that they would not bow to the Lordship of Jesus Christ but one day they will do so. They will confess that Jesus Christ is Jehovah to their eternal ruin.

Jesus is the I AM

When Moses was about to go to Egypt to deliver Israel from Pharaoh's power he asked God what His name was so that when the Israelites asked him *"What is his name?"*, he would be able to answer them. God said *"Thou shalt say unto them, "I AM hath sent me unto you" (Exod3:13-15)*. Those verses indicate that Jehovah, the *"self-existing One"*, was the *"I AM"*. When God addressed Abraham he addressed him by the name *"God Almighty"* but now to Moses He addresses him as *"Jehovah"*(Exod6:3).

Of course Abraham knew the name Jehovah (Gen 15:2,8), but God was now addressing Moses in that name. The name Jehovah was to be used to distinguish between the gods of Egypt and the God of Israel, of Abraham and Isaac. Pharaoh said *"I know not Jehovah"*(Exod 5:2) and referred to Jehovah as *"your God"* but eventually he said *"The LORD (Jehovah) is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. Intreat Jehovah (for it is enough)..."(Exod. 9:27-28)*.

When the Jews debated about Abraham, Jesus said, *"Before Abraham was, I AM"*(John 8:58). At this point they took up stones to cast at Him. They saw the implication. He had just claimed the name of Jehovah, the I AM! He said *"I AM from above; I AM the light of the world; I AM the door by me if any man enter in he shall be saved; I AM the vine; I AM the bread of life; I AM the resurrection and the life; I AM the way, the truth and the life; and I AM the Good Shepherd."* Compare this with Psalm 23 where David wrote *"Jehovah (the LORD) is my Shepherd"*. **Jesus is the I AM; the Jehovah of the Old Testament.**

David wrote by divine inspiration:

"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Psalm 2:12).

That is the best advice we can offer to anyone for,

"There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Now that you know who Christ is you can receive Him, trust in Him, and be assured of eternal life. *"As many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12).*

What will you do with Jesus?

Neutral you cannot be.

Some day your heart will be asking,

What will He do with me?

“Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the prince of Peace”
(Isaiah 9:6).

This is the One with whom you will have to deal.