

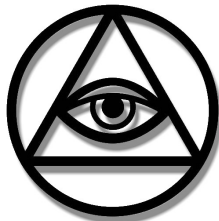
Cults and Other “Gospels”

Recognizing and Understanding the Differences



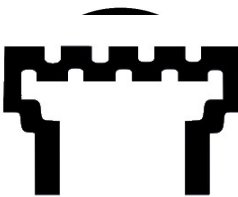
Cults and Other “Gospels”

- ♦ **Remember our definition of a “cult”**
 - ♦ **I've recommended six questions to ask yourself about any religious groups that seem at least potentially suspicious to you...**
 1. **Does the group have a prophet/founder who is revered by followers and claims to have *special* revelation from God or from angels?**
 2. **Are there authoritative writings or scriptures *in addition to* or *instead of* the Bible?**
 3. **Does the group view itself as the one *true* church, founded because the *true* gospel was lost in the early centuries of the church?**
 4. **What does the group believe regarding the Trinity? Is Jesus fully God, the second person of the Trinity? Is the Holy Spirit fully God, the third person of the Trinity?**
 5. **How does the group believe we are *saved*? By grace alone, through faith in Jesus Christ, or by faith plus good works?**
 6. **What belief does the group hold regarding life after death? What is its concept of Heaven and Hell?**



Cults and Other “Gospels”

- ♦ Introduction to Cults
- ♦ Peoples Temple
- ♦ Latter-Day Saints (“Mormons”)
- ♦ **Jehovah's Witnesses**



Jehovah's Witnesses

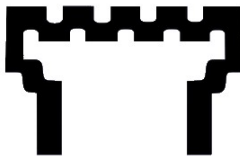
- ◆ So, carrying on with our six questions...
 - ◆ Does the group view itself as the one *true* church, founded because the *true* gospel was lost in the early centuries of the church?
 - ◆ They *absolutely* believe that everyone else is so messed up that to believe them is to lose your chance at salvation—and with Armageddon coming soon, you can see why the JWs are terrified of ever apostatizing
 - ◆ “To leave Jehovah's organization... we would lose not only the privilege of doing God's will but also the hope of life in God's new world..”
—*Watchtower* (June 15, 2016) p.26

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SIMPLIFIED EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
AUGUST 1-28, 2016

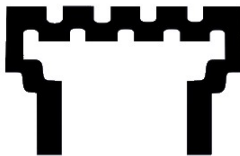
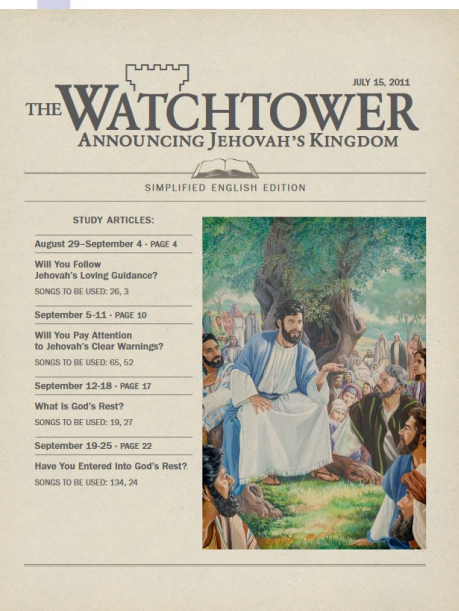


Jehovah's Witnesses



Funky little teaching moment...

- ♦ In 2011, the *Watchtower* answered several questions about “false teachers” who would deceive you in an article entitled, “Will You Pay Attention to Jehovah’s Clear Warnings?”
 - ♦ “How do false teachers fool people? They do this in a very clever way. Apostates “quietly” bring their ideas into the congregation, like criminals who secretly bring things into a country. Apostates use “counterfeit words.” This means that they say things that make their false ideas sound true, like criminals who make false documents look real. They try to get as many people as possible to believe their “deceptive teachings.” Peter also said that they like twisting the Scriptures. They explain Bible verses in the wrong way to make others believe their ideas. Apostates do not care about us. If we follow them, we will leave the road to everlasting life...”

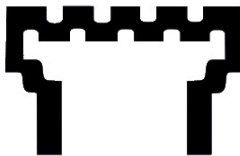
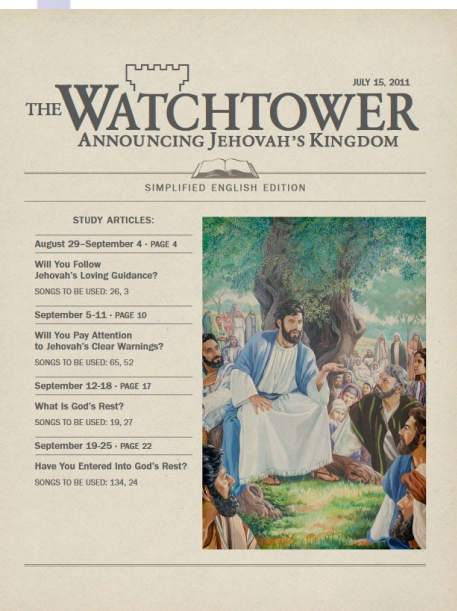


Jehovah's Witnesses



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- ◆ In 2011, the *Watchtower* answered several questions about “false teachers” who would deceive you in an article entitled, “Will You Pay Attention to Jehovah’s Clear Warnings?”
- ◆ “How can we protect ourselves against false teachers? The Bible tells us exactly what to do. The clear instruction in the Bible is: “Avoid them.” That means that we have to stay away from them. The warning from the Bible is like a warning from a doctor who tells you to avoid a person who has a disease that may spread to others. The doctor knows that if you get this disease, you will die. His warning is clear, and you will do what he says. The Bible says that apostates are mentally diseased and that they use their teachings to make others think like them. Jehovah is like that good doctor. He clearly tells us to stay away from false teachers. We must always be determined to follow his warning.”



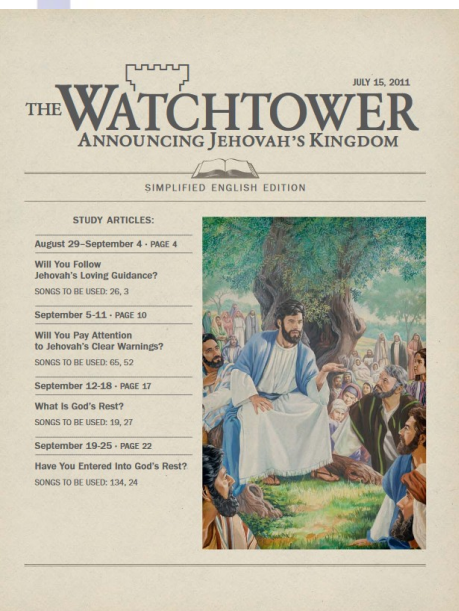
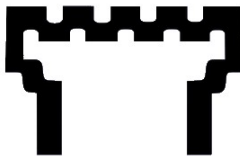
Jehovah's Witnesses



Funky little teaching moment...

- ◆ In 2011, the *Watchtower* answered several questions about “false teachers” who would deceive you in an article entitled, “Will You Pay Attention to Jehovah’s Clear Warnings?”
- ◆ “What must we do to avoid false teachers? We do not speak to them or invite them into our houses. We also do not read their books, watch them on television, read what they write on the Internet, or add our own comments about what they write on the Internet. Why are we so determined to avoid them? First of all, it is because we love “the God of truth.” So we do not want to listen to false teachings that go against the truth in God’s Word. We also love the organization that Jehovah uses to teach us wonderful truths. It was Jehovah’s organization that taught us about Jehovah’s name and what it means, his purpose for the earth, what happens to us when we die, and the hope of the resurrection. Do you remember how happy you were when you first learned these and other truths? Then do not allow the lies from false teachers to turn you against the organization that taught you these truths.”

—*Watchtower* (July 15, 2011) p. 11



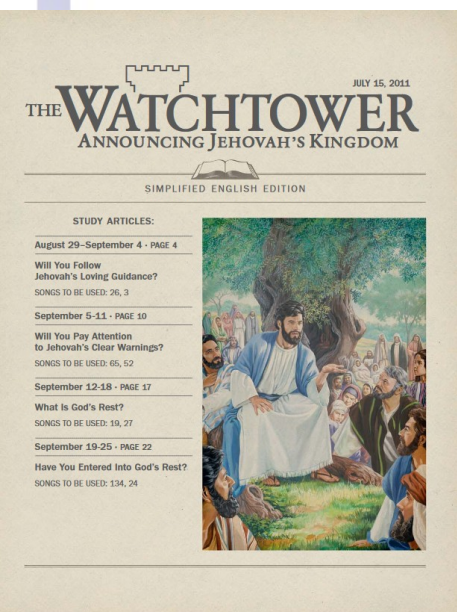
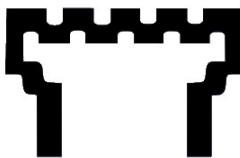
Jehovah's Witnesses



Funky little teaching moment...

- ◆ In 2011, the *Watchtower* answered several questions about “false teachers” who would deceive you in an article entitled, “Will You Pay Attention to Jehovah’s Clear Warnings?”
- ◆ The article later reminds us that Paul warned against believing “false stories” (see 1 Timothy 4:7)
 - ◆ “A false story is a religious story that has no connection with what is real... People who pay attention to these stories start having questions about things that are not true and then use their time trying to find the answers. Satan uses these made-up stories and religious lies to make people forget the most important things. Paul’s words are clear: Do not pay attention to false stories... What are some false stories that could fool us if we are not careful? We can say that a false story is any religious teaching that turns our ears “away from the truth,” that is, that makes us stop listening to the truth... For example, the religions of Christendom say that they follow Christ, but they teach lies like the Trinity and hellfire. They also teach that some part of humans lives on after the death of the body...”

—*Watchtower* (July 15, 2011) p. 13



Jehovah's Witnesses



Funky little teaching moment...

- ♦ In 2011, the *Watchtower* answered several questions about “false teachers” who would deceive you in an article entitled, “Will You Pay Attention to Jehovah’s Clear Warnings?”
- ♦ The article later reminds us that Paul warned against believing “false stories” (see 1 Timothy 4:7)
- ♦ So how do you reach out to people who are so conditioned to act as their own “thought police” and fear even to question the elements of faith with any kind of critical thinking?

