

Understanding and Answering Jehovah's Witnesses

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Jehovah Witness Teaching

Started by Charles Taze Russell, a former Presbyterian, 1870's.

He rejected the concept of eternal punishment and the doctrine of the Trinity

Watchtower produces billions of pieces of literature and members devote billions of man-hours distributing the literature,. Twice monthly printing in excess of 16 million copies per issue. and in 121 languages

He translated Matthew 24:3 that Christ would be present (not coming) and said Christ was present starting in 1874 and in 1914 would mark the year when Christ's kingdom would be fully established on earth. This is also due to his calculation using Daniel 4 and mixing it with Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6

As the 1914 date approached, the urgency moved the organization to go door to door to distribute literature.

Since Christ did not come in 1914, many members left. Russell died in 1916 and Judge Joseph Franklin Rutherford took over.

Rutherford built a massive empire and made another prediction for Old Testament patriarchs coming in 1925.

Jehovah Witness Teaching

- In 1931 Rutherford changed the name to Jehovah Witnesses.

The members would go door to door playing a phonograph recordings of Rutherford. Rutherford died 1942

Nathan Knorr took over after Rutherford and produced their “New World” translation Bible. He also developed training so members could give presentations at the door and defend their teachings.

The next failed prophecy was that the world would end in 1975. Over 390,000 left the organization when that prediction failed.

Frederick Franz took over and his nephew Raymond created a crisis when he wrote a tell all book about the organizations false prophecies, altered teachings and policies and the lying and cover-ups.

The organization continues to have “new light” in its explanation of the failed 1914 date. Everything from kids over fifteen years old (“this generation”) would be alive to see the end of the world. In the 1980’s it was revised to those over 10 years old and then all babies alive in 1914.

Jehovah Witness Teaching

In 1995 a final revision based on “new light” Milton Henschel said the generation in Matthew 24 was all wicked people who see the sign of Christ’s appearance but still do not mend their ways

They used to prohibit blood transfusions but now can be forgiven if they repent.

The forbid celebrating birthdays due to a twisting of Genesis 40:20-22 and Matthew 14:6-10

Raymond Franz identified the New World Bible translators and none had Hebrew or Greek training. created a crisis when he wrote a “tell all” book about the organizations false prophecies, altered teachings and policies and the lying and cover-ups.

They do not have full time ministers

They discourage higher education and independent study

The Authority of the Watchtower Society (WS)

- They are God's voice on earth.
- They demand unquestioned obedience
- Reading Bible with their interpretation only
- Shunning or disfellowshipping of members, family members, friends, etc. can lead former member to depression and other psychological damage.

They are worldwide and
present themselves as Christians



Summary

	Christian Teaching	Watchtower/Jehovah Witness Teaching
Authority	Bible alone	Watchtower society
God	Trinity	No Trinity
Who is Jesus?	God. Second person of Trinity	Michael the arch angel/ a created being
Jesus death	Died as the God-man	Died as a man
Jesus resurrection	Physical	Spiritual
How will Jesus return?	Physical in the future	He already came back spiritually in 1914
How are you saved?	By grace alone through faith	By good works and deeds
Who goes to Heaven?	All Christians	144,000
Hell	Yes	No

Comparison

	Christian	Jehovah Witness
Trinity	Yes. He exists eternally in three persons: The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit, who are one in essence and equal in power and glory. Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Isaiah 43:10, Is 44:6, Is. 44:8, Isaiah. 45:5, 1 Timothy 2:5	Father is Jehovah God. Son is the first created thing. Holy Spirit is God's active force.
Creation	There is one being of God who is creator and maker of the universe. Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Ps. 102:25-27; Psalm 33:8-9; Psalm 148:5; Rev. 4:11	God created Jesus and Jesus was God's master worker who created all the "other things." Wisdom=Jesus in Proverbs 8:30
Bible	The 66 books of the Bible is the inspired Word of God, His revealed truth and is the infallible rule of faith for our lives and the standard we test truth claims. We affirm the Chicago Statement on Inerrancy. 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Peter 3:16; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; Deuteronomy 18:18; 1 Corinthians 2:18; John 14:26; John 16:13; Acts 17:11; Matthew 15:3	The use their New World Translation which is a perverted translation with numerous errors and additions not backed up by Greek manuscripts or affirmed by Greek scholars.

Comparison

	Christian	Jehovah Witness
Human Sinfulness	Man was created by God in His image, free as to choice and responsible to his Creator. Tempted by Satan, he separated himself from God by voluntary disobedience. As a consequence, all men are born with a sinful nature and have need of reconciliation with God. Genesis 1:26, 27; Romans 3:10, 23	Affirm original sin
Salvation	Man can be saved from the consequence of sin, which is eternal death, by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and in repentance of sin. Man cannot earn nor work for his salvation. When one is saved he is said to be “born again” by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. We affirm the 5 Solas: sola scriptura (Scripture alone), solus Christus (Christ alone), sola fide (faith alone), sola gratia (grace alone), and soli Deo gloria (glory to God alone). John 1:11, 12; Ephesians 2:8, 9; 2 Peter 3:9; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 4:1-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 2:15-3:14	Must have total obedience to the Watchtower and by works. This includes distributing literature door to door, home Bible studies, baptism.
Virgin Birth	Yes. Matthew 1:18	Yes by God's active force (Holy Spirit)

Comparison

	Christian	Jehovah Witness
Humanity of Jesus	Yes. He is fully man in his human nature. John 1:14; Heb. 2:17-18; Heb. 4:15; Was born-Luke 1:35; 2:6-7; needed food Luke 4:2, needed rest-John 4:6; Needed sleep Luke 8:23; Died-John 19:33	Jesus was just a man.
Deity of Jesus	God has revealed Himself to man in the person of Jesus Christ. He is fully God and fully man. John 1:1, Titus 2:13; Jer. 17:10/Rev 2:18; Ps. 102:25-27/Heb. 1:10-12; John 1:14	Jesus is a lesser god, the first thing God created and Jesus created everything else. He is Michael the Arch-angel. (Michael means “one who is like God”)
Substitutionary Atonement	Yes. Isaiah 53:5; Hebrews 1:3; 1 Cor. 5:21' 1 Pet. 2:24;1 Pet. 3:18;	Jesus died for Adam sin and now we can save ourselves through righteous works. Jesus gave up his life as a ransom.

Comparison

	Christian	Jehovah Witness
Bodily resurrection of Jesus	Yes. Mark 16:19; Matthew 28; Luke 24:31-43; Matt. 25:1-30; John 20:21; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8	Spiritual resurection not bodily
Return of Christ	The Lord will come visibly again for both salvation and judgment. Acts 1:9-11; Matthew 24:30; 1 Timothy 2:5-8; Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:22-23; John 9:39; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:11-15;	Already returned spiritually and invisibly in 1914 Brooklyn New York
The Church	The Greek word for church is Ekklesia which is an assembly of believers (followers of Jesus). The assembly of believers joined to Christ's spiritual body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13) at the moment of regeneration (Tit. 3:3-6), when an individual place their faith in the Lord Jesus as their savior (Acts 16:31). If still on earth they are members of a local church that meet regularly (Heb. 10:25) for edification (Eph. 4:12), worship (John 4:24), and participation in the ordinances. Paul addresses most of these in his epistles (e.g. "to the church of God which is in Corinth"- 1 Cor. 1:2). The local building is the physical church and the invisible Church is the Spiritual House – Christ is the chief cornerstone and the apostles are the foundation. 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 2:11-21; Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8; Eph. 2:20	They claim they are true prophets and the Watchtower organization is the only witness of Jehovah. Membership in the Watchtower is mandatory.

Comparison

	Christian	Jehovah Witness
Eternity	People were created to live forever. One will either exist eternally separated from God in a place called hell, or through faith in Christ, will be eternally united with Him in heaven. Revelation 20:11-15; John 3:16; Matthew 25:41-46	People go out of existence until God remembers them. The wicked will be raised, judged, and annihilated. Two people: 144,000 that go to heaven (anointed class) the rest go to earthly paradise. (other sheep).

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Jehovah Witness	Christian	Ask
Jehovah Witness will try to tell you the church was corrupted and they have the true teachings	There was additional “tradition” added but this was addressed as part of the Reformation	Ask them to show you where in history and how.
They believe Jesus died on a wood stake or pole not a cross. They forbid wearing a cross. They teach the cross is pagan	Scripture for the nails (plural)(John 20:25) or that Matt 27:37 says a sign was put above Jesus head not hands or that John 21:18-19 says outstretched hands.	Ask them to show you where in history the cross was pagan and how do they explain the verses.
Jesus is Michael the arch angel	Colossians 1:16 — Jesus/God created angels. Daniel 10:13 — Michael is only “one of” the chief princes. .He is among may He is not unique. Remember if Jesus is creates all things and is the first and highest as Bible says then why would he be only one of many princes as Michael is? Rev. 19 — Jesus King of kings, not chief prince. Hebrews 2:5 — No angel can rule the world. Jude 9 — Michael could not rebuke Devil. Michael couldn't rebuke satan in Jude 9 but Jesus did in Matt 4:10 16:23; Mark 8:33)	Ask: If no angel can rule the world (Heb. 2:5) and Scripture says Jesus rules the world (Luke 1:32-33; Rev. 19:16) then can Jesus really be Michael the arch angel?

Jehovah Witness	Christian	Ask
Jesus is Michael the arch angel 1 Thess.4:16	At His Second Coming He will be accompanied “with the voice of an archangel.” Just as Jesus will be announced “with a shout” and “with the trumpet of God,” so will He be accompanied “with the voice of an archangel.”	<p>If Jesus’ descension from heaven “with the voice of an archangel” makes Him the archangel Michael, then does His descent “with the trumpet of God” not also make Him God?</p> <p>Why don't they mention Michaels name in 1 Thess. 4:16 ?</p>
Rev. 7:4 and 14:1-3 -144,000 are the anointed class(Little flock Lk. 12:32) that go to heaven. The rest are the “other sheep”(Jn. 10:16) that will live on paradise earth. Anointed filled up so JW’s now say it means symbolically all the JW that will be on heaven on earth as the great multitude (Rev. 7:9)	<p>Luke 12 is referring to the disciples.</p> <p>144,000 are virgin men (Rev 14: 4) and many of the JW leaders had kids</p> <p>John 5:1 says “everyone...”</p> <p>Heb 11 includes OT saints</p>	<p>Where in Luke does it refer to the 144,000?</p> <p>Where does it say the little flock would end in 1935?</p> <p>Are there any clear verses Jesus limited heaven to 144,000?</p> <p>Why switch from literal to figurative in the middle of Rev. 7:9?</p> <p>Are there any women in the 144,000?</p>

**Take Away – Read the entire passage
and ask them to justify their position.**

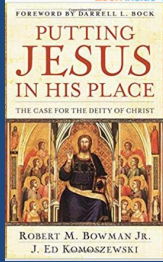
**When they default to the
Watchtower, ask what did they
people do before the watchtower?**

**Circular reasoning: The Watchtower
says we can only trust the
Watchtower**

Warnings

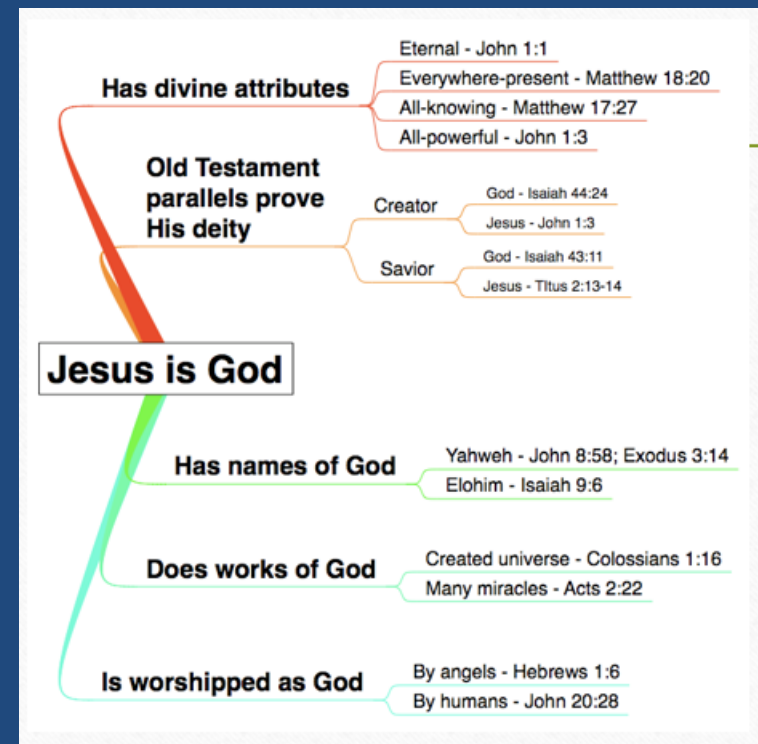
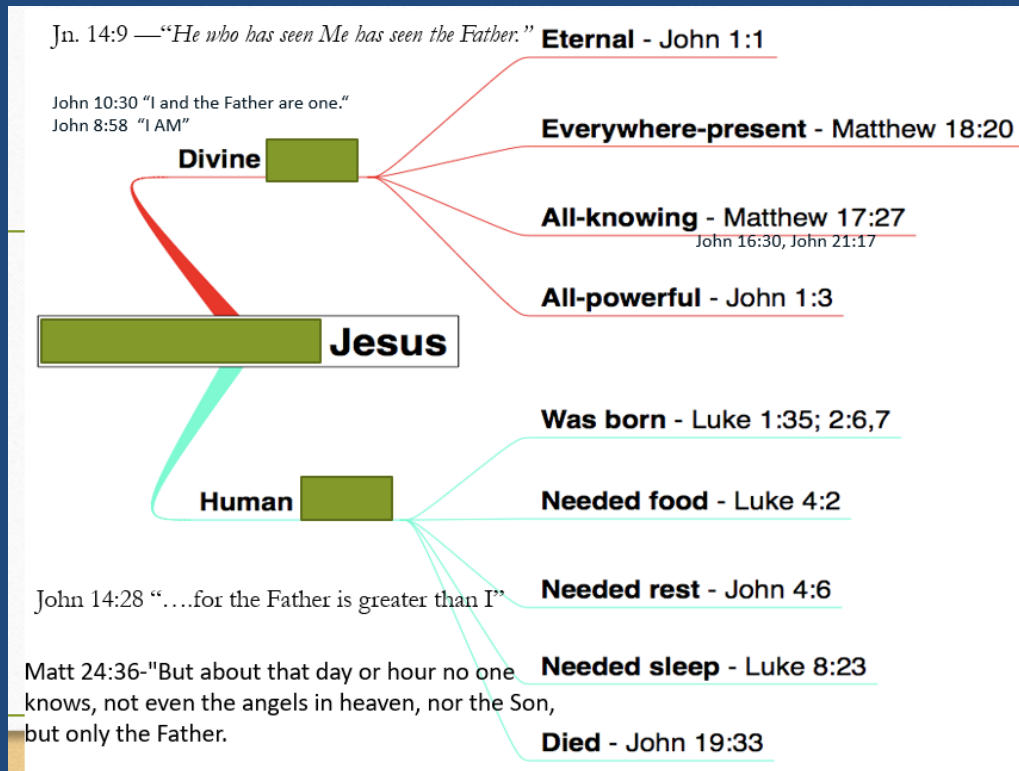
- 2 Cor. 11:4

For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, *this* you tolerate *very* well!



Jesus is Fully God and Fully man

HANDS- Jesus shares Honor with God, Atributes of God, Names of God, Deeds of God and Seat of God



JW's focus is on the human nature. Get them focused on the deity

The Holy Spirit is a person not an impersonal force.

- i. He has a will - 1 Cor. 2:11
- ii. He speaks - Acts 13:2
- iii. He loves - Rom. 15:30
- iv. He can be grieved - Eph. 4:30
- v. He convicts of sin - John 16:8
- vi. He creates - Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4
- vii. He gives gifts - 1 Cor. 12:8
- viii. He Intercedes - Rom. 8:26
- ix. He teaches - John 14:26
- x. He testifies of Jesus - John 15:26
- xi. He baptizes - 1 Cor. 12:13
- xii. He guides - John 16:13
- xiii. He encourages - Acts 9:31
- xiv. He empowers - Micah 3:8
- xv. He gives joy - Rom. 14:17
- xvi. He comforts - John 14:16-26

Common terms they misunderstand

Begotten

The Greek word for begotten is monogenes comes from two Greek terms: monos meaning “one” and the noun genes which means “kind” or “type.” So, you put these two words together and you have monogenes which means: “unique,” “only,” or “one of its kind.” That’s what Jesus is talking about in John 3:16. He is not saying that God the Father created Him. He’s saying that He is God’s only, unique, one of a kind Savior.

Heb 11:17

“By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten(monogene) son;”

Abraham had many made/generated/created kids. Only one was begotten so begotten does not mean made. It is something that is eternal; it is an eternal begetting like the river from the spring or the sunbeam from the sun not something that occurs at a moment.

Nicene Creed-“We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, one in being with the Father. ..”

Common terms they misunderstand

Firstborne

First borne is the Greek word “prototokos” which means preeminent. A First born does not mean first created. Christ parented creation He produced creation He is the supreme creator (i.e. God).

David was firstborn (preeminent) but was the youngest son of Jesse. Jesus, in His human nature, was to be firstborn (Ps. 89:27) as a descendent of David. Also Col 1:18 Jesus is firstborn of the dead. Is he the first dead person? No he is the preeminent of the resurrected dead.

Ps. 89:20 “I have found David My servant; With My holy oil I have anointed him,²⁷ “I also shall make him My firstborn, The highest of the kings of the earth.

Exodus 4:22 -Israel is Gods firstborn .

Jeremiah 31:9- Ephraim is God’s firstborn but he was not the first child born.

Common terms they misunderstand

Worship

Worship is Greek word “proskuneó” which can refer to bowing before a king or earthly lord.

But when used in a religious context it also means Worship of God

Rev 22:8-9 John "Fell down to worship ((proskuneó) “ but the Angel said to get up
"Worship (proskuneó) only God“

Jesus gets the same worship as the Father.

Matthew 2:2, -Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship (proskynēsai) Him.”

Matt 2:11- After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped (prosekynēsan) Him

Matthew 14:33- And those who were in the boat worshiped (prosekynēsan) Him, saying, “You are truly God’s Son!”

Common terms they misunderstand

Worship

Hebrews 1-3 shows Jesus was higher than angels. No angel was ever called Son. Jesus was called Son (Mark 1:11) Jesus is worshipped by the Angels (Heb 1:6)- "and when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship (proskynēsātōsan) Him."

Even the fallen angels fell down before Him: Mark 3:11-Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!"

Practical Witnessing Tips

I. Demonstrate that the Bible is a “Jesus Book.”

- In whose name should we meet together (Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 5:4)?
- Demons are subject to whose name (Luke 10:17; Acts 16:18; 17:18)?
- Repentance and forgiveness should be preached in whose name (Luke 24:47)?
- In whose name are you to believe and receive the forgiveness of sins (John 1:12; 3:16)?
- By whose name, and no other, do we obtain salvation (Acts 4:12; Isaiah 43:11)?
- Whose name and authority was invoked by the disciples in healing the sick and lame (Acts 3:16; 4:7-10)?
- Whose name did Paul tell us to call upon (1 Cor. 1:2, Rom 10:13 vs Joel 2:32)?
- Whose name is above every name (Eph. 1:21; Phil. 2:9-11)?
- According to Acts 1:8, who are we to be witnesses of? Isaiah 43:10

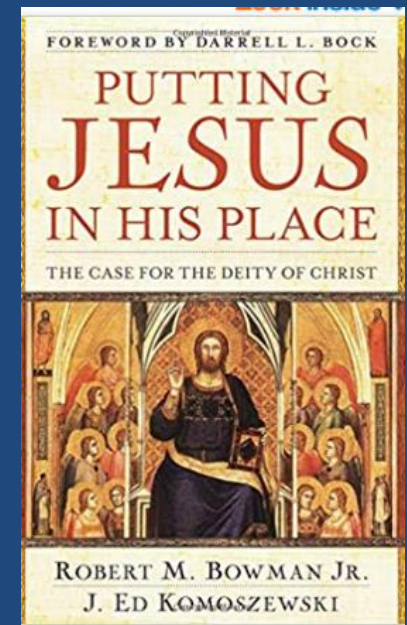
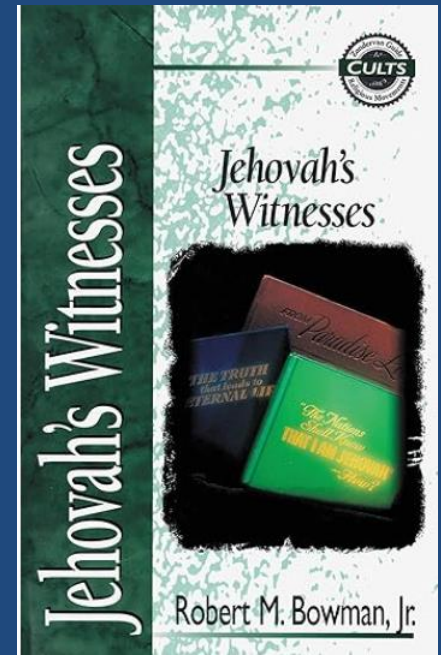
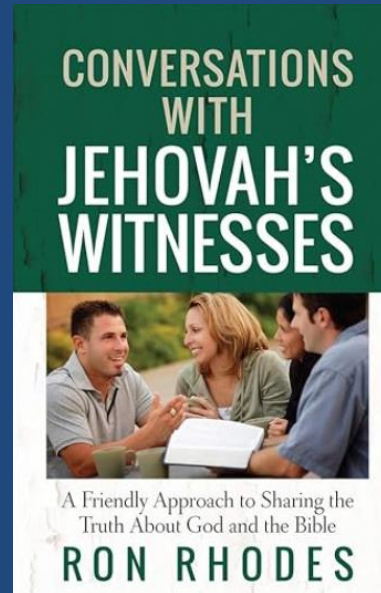
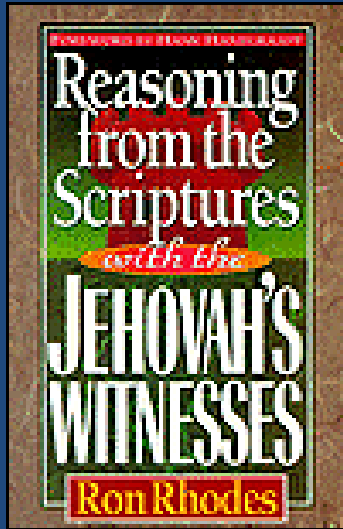
II. Discuss the Gospel

- Ask what the JW Gospel is and is that really good news?
- Ask if the JW Gospel would be enough to save the thief on the cross or a dying person?
- Ask what they think grace is. Do they think it must be earned? If so, why is it grace or a gift?
- Was the church without a witness until the late 1800's? What happened to all the Christians and what is their evidence?

II. Discuss the Gospel

- Eph 2:8-9
- "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast"
- Rom 5:1-2
- "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God
- Rom 4:4-6 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due and to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, Just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works:
- Rom 4:7-8- BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT."
- Ask if they are the blessed man? How do they interpret the passages above?

III. Resources



<https://carm.org/world-religions/jehovahs-witnesses/>

Short videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3OLi44wsSE>

Go to minute 22:45 to 26

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NrwwFWHn6dA>

14min

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTY0WbsMx9M>