

"Contend Earnestly For the Faith" Part 10: Jehovah's Witnesses

by Erik Olsen

"...contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." – Jude 3

--THE ROOTS OF THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS ORGANIZATION

--in 1870, at the age of 18, Charles Taze Russell organized a Bible Study in Pittsburgh, PA.

--Russel first began to question orthodox Christian doctrine, such as the deity of Christ, and eventually promoted his aberrant theology as absolute truth, claiming that the Bible could only be correctly understood by his interpretations and that the church had bought into the lie of Satan. In reality, Russel, along with Joseph Smith and many other false teachers, are the ones who bought into the lie of Satan... "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy..." (1 Timothy 4:1-2)

--what began as a single Bible study has grown into a centrally controlled movement that pumps false doctrine based on the teachings of Charles Taze Russell around the world...

--the Jehovah's Witnesses' publishing house churns out over 300 million copies of it's two magazines every year and hand delivers them door to door.

--the Jehovah's Witnesses rewrote the Bible as *The New World Translation* with subtle changes to better accomodate their false doctrine

--for every 740 Jehovah's Witness house calls, there is one new Jehovah's Witness convert (200,000 total new converts every year)

--JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES PREACH "ANOTHER JESUS..." (2 Cor. 11:4) AND SUBSTITUTE LEGALISM FOR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS

--Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Jesus is not God, but rather He was Michael the Archangel in the form of a man

--if you take away the deity of Christ, then the wonderful, central truth of Christianity – a love-based, personal relationship with God – degenerates into fear-based legalism

--Matthew 16:16-19: "Simon Peter answered and said, **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**" 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and **on this rock I will build My church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. "

--2 Corinthians 11:2-4: "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have **betrothed you to one husband**, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. 3 But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from **the simplicity that is in Christ.** 4 For if he who comes preaches **another Jesus ...**"

--v.2 "I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."
--exclusive, personal relationship with God compared to exclusive marriage relationship
--if Jesus isn't God, as JW's claim, then this passage has a different meaning...
"betrothed" to Michael the Archangel??

--v.3 "the simplicity that is in Christ..."
– love-based, personal relationship with Jesus...

--either dead to the law and alive in relationship or dead in relationship and alive to the law...

--Romans 7:3-4: "Therefore, my brethren, you also have become **dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another** — to Him who was raised from the dead..." (nkjv)

--Galatians 2:19-20: "**For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God.** 20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me [*through the Holy Spirit, also called "the Spirit of Christ" – Romans 8:9*]; and the life which I now live in the flesh **I live by faith** in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

--faith is what pleases God... seeing God through the eyes of faith as our greatest love...

--Hebrews 11:5-6: "But without faith it is impossible to please Him..."

--Romans 14:23: "for whatever is not from faith is sin."

--Galatians 5:5-6: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision [*legalism...*] avails anything, but **faith working through love.**"

--when we see God through the eyes of faith, we love God and love others because of God's love for us...

--1 John 4:19: "**We love Him because He first loved us.**"

--by denying the deity of Christ JW's change God's love..

--John 15:12-14: Jesus said, "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends."

--according to JW's Jesus isn't God. If Jesus isn't God, then God did not die and the cross; and therefore God did not perform the greatest act of love!

--JW's obscure this consequence of denying the deity of Christ by rewording this passage in their "New World Translation" Bible: "No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul on behalf of his friends."

--chain reaction...

Ⓡ denial of the deity of Christ Ⓡ God's love obscured Ⓡ fear becomes the basis for obedience rather than God's love(*refer to 1 John 4:17-19 in previous section*)

--"love one another as I have loved you..." JW's change God's love... which in turn changes our love to fear...

--1 John 4:17-19: "Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have **boldness in the day of judgment**; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 **There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear**, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 **We love Him because He first loved us.**"

--we may have "boldness in the day of judgement" because our entrance to heaven isn't based on our righteousness, but rather it is based on the righteousness of Christ which is "credited" (Romans 4:11) to our account.

--Colossians 2:12-15: "And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 **having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us**, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. "

--JW theology obscures God's love and therefore obscures the "boldness in the day of judgement" that we can have because of God's love.

--JW's teach that only 144,000 elite Jehovah's Witnesses will go to heaven; all other Jehovah's Witnesses will spend eternity on the new earth

--during JW communion services, only those who are supposedly part of the 144,000 can partake of communion; all others pass the cup without partaking of it.

--JW's also claim the Holy Spirit isn't God, which results in a parallel chain reaction... (*see previous section*)

Ⓡ denial of the Holy Spirit's deity Ⓡ connection to God through the Holy Spirit obscured Ⓡ God's presence through the Holy Spirit obscured

--*the Holy Spirit is also called "the Spirit of Christ" (Romans 8)*

--vibrant, personal relationship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit is the key to overcoming the flesh, not the "self-imposed religion" of false teachers... (Colossians 2:23)

--JW's exemplify "self-imposed religion":

--Colossians 2:23: "...the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in **self-imposed religion**, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of **no value against the indulgence of the flesh.** (*see also verses 18-22*)

-example of "neglect of the body": JW's doctrine about not taking blood transfusions

--living, vibrant relationship with Jesus is the key to overcoming the flesh:

--Colossians 2:6-7: "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so **walk in Him**, 7 **rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith**, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving."

--we can "walk in Christ" and "be rooted and built up in Him..." because He is God and we are connected to Him through the Holy Spirit!

--because of our relationship with God, we can talk to Him in prayer when we struggle...

--Romans 8:15-16: "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received **the Spirit of adoption** by whom **we cry out, "Abba, Father."** (*endearing term*)

--Hebrews 4:15-16: "**Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace**, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

--CHRISTIANS MUST BE CAREFUL TO NOT REGRESS INTO LEGALISM AND LOSE INTIMACY WITH GOD!

--Galatians 3:1-4: "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? 2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are you so foolish? **Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?**"