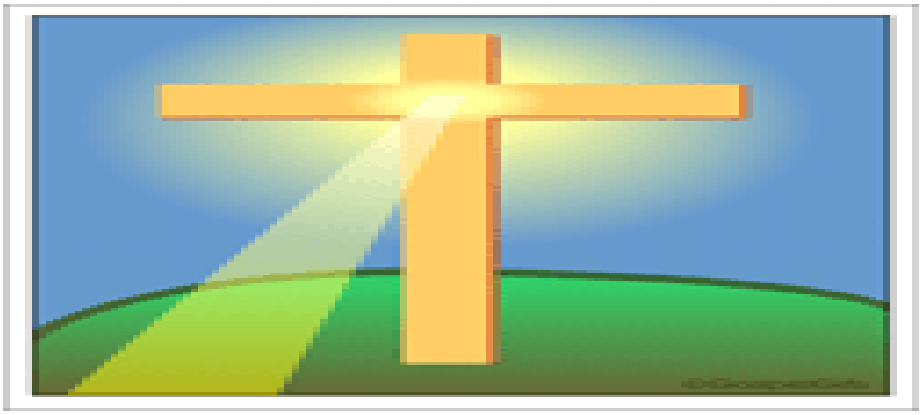
Jehovah's Witnesses and the 144,000
Announcing Biblical Truths of our Lord

Articles

The Worlds Most Dangerous Book and What Greek Scholars Really Think of It!
144.000 JW's Going to Heaven? Impossible....
Jehovah's Witnesses and the Trinity
Did Jesus die on a Cross or a Stake?



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THE WORLDS MOST DANGEROUS BOOK AND WHAT GREEK SCHOLARS REALLY THINK OF IT!

Research by W. I CETNAR

Would you place your trust in a surgeon who was about to perform a major operation on you, if he refused to give you his name or credentials?

OR . . .Would you place your faith in an attorney, who was defending you against false accusations of felony charges, if he also refused to give you his name or credentials?

We can see how important it is that we rely on the names and credentials of those who serve us in the important aspects of our life. As in the case of the lawyer , it is essential to know these things, for without this knowledge, we would have no assurance that he would truly and honestly represent you. It is therefore of the utmost importance to know the men, the credentials and the qualifications of those to whom we entrust our spiritual lives!

The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society has failed the public at this most crucial point, as they refuse to give to their followers the names and credentials of the Translating Committee of their Bible, The New World Translation of The Holy Scriptures (see pg. 258 of Jehovah' s Witnesses in the Divine Purpose).

This is more important than the Watchtower Society will admit since the New World Translation Committee has deceived many in their translation of the Bible in the following ways:

1. They have invented non-existent rules of Greek grammar and then proceeded to follow these rules only when necessary to support their peculiar theology. A clear example of this is John 1:1, where the Translation Committee has rendered the Greek," and the Word was a god".

We cite the appendix of another Watchtower publication The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures, (page 1158) for their footnote concerning John 1:1. " The reason for their rendering the Greek word Divine and not God is that it is the Greek noun, Theos' without the definite article . . ..

May we call the Watchtower Society's attention to verses 6 , 12 and 13 (also found in the first chapter of the Gospel of John) . Here the Greek noun Theos appears without the definite article (as in John 1:1) and yet the Translating Committee has translated each verse as (Jehovah) God.

Another example of non-existent rules followed only when needed to support their theology is found in the forward of the afore mentioned Kingdom Interlinear Translation (pg. 1 8). Here we are taught how to restore the Divine name.

We are instructed that we can render the Greek words, "Kyrios" (Lord) and "Theos", (God) into the Divine name by determining if the Christian (Greek) writers have quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). If so, we can render, "Kyrios", (Lord) and " Theos" , (God) as Jehovah God.

Once again, the Watchtower, "rule", is avoided by the Translation Committee as they translated Philippians 2:11 The Apostle Paul quotes Isaiah 45:23 as he states that,

"every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Jehovah God (Kyrios) to the glory of God the Father.

2. The Translation Committee has made up a Greek tense that is non-existent. We cite the 1950 edition of their New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures rendering of John 8 :58 where they have translated " ego eimi" as " I have been" and state that it is " properly rendered in the "perfect indefinite tense", in the Greek language.

There is NO " perfect indefinite tense" in any language! After the Watchtower Society was informed of this fact, they made the change to the "perfect tense indicative" but as the Greek student knows, it is present tense and is correctly translated " I AM" (see Exodus 3 :l 4).

3. They have added words to Scripture which changes the meaning of the texts to agree with their theology. Notice the Watchtower' s rendering of Colossians 1: 16, 17, where the word "other" , has been added four times to the text, completely changing its meaning. When Paul wrote those passages that the Son created all things, it is obvious that the Son was not himself-created. The Watchtower, however, believes that the Son is also a created being and has therefore added, "other", not found in the Greek Biblical text at all -to make it appear that the Son is also a creature.

As mentioned before the Translation Committee has added the word " a", to John 1:1. to make the Son a creature rather than God Himself. Take note also of the same deceitfulness displayed in Philippians 2 :9 where the word " other" is again added, when it is not found or even suggested in the original. Greek.

4. The men who comprised the Translation Committee had no adequate schooling or background to function as critical Bible translators. The self-appointed "scholars" who made up this Translation Committee were:

N. H.Knorr , F.W. Franz, A.D. Schroeder, G.D. Gangas and M. Henschel. Aside from F.W. Franz (who later became the President,) none of the Translation Committee members knew Biblical Greek or Hebrew and Franz' s ability is open to serious question.

This came out in the Scottish Court Sessions in November, 1954 (just four years after the release of the Watchtower Scriptures) . The following exchange of questions and answers between the attorney and Franz is taken from the trial transcript:

Q. Have you also made yourself familiar with Hebrew?
A. Yes . . .
Q. So that you have a substantial linguistic apparatus at your command?
A. Yes, for use in my Biblical work.
Q. I think you are able to read and follow the Bible in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Spanish, Portuguese, German and French?
A. Y es . . . (Pursuer' s Proof, Page 7)
Q. You, yourself, read and speak Hebrew, do you?
A. I do not speak Hebrew.
Q. Y ou do. not?
A. No.
Q. Can you, yourself, translate that into Hebrew?
A. Which?
Q. That fourth verse of the second chapter of Genesis.
A. You mean here?

Q. Yes.
A. No. I wouldn't attempt to do that.
(Pursuer' s Proof, Pages 102, 103).

What Franz failed to do was a simple exercise with which an average first or second year Hebrew student in any seminary would have no difficulty.

It is also interesting to note that no Greek scholar with any credentials will endorse the New World Translation. The late Bill Cetnar, in 1954 (while still a Jehovah's Witness working at Bethel), was assigned to interview a well known Bible translator, Dr. Edgar J . Goodspeed, asking him for his evaluation and recommendation of the New World Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Dr. Goodspeed replied: No, I'm afraid that I could not do that. The grammar is regrettable . . .

We agree with Dr. Goodspeed and go a step further and state that the theology brought forth in this translation is a fatal distortion of Biblical truth.

We ask you not to put your trust in such a bias translation of Holy Scripture or in the Society that has deceived many in the writing of it ; we ask that your faith and trust be placed in the Lord Jesus Christ who said that unless you believe that HE IS THE ETERNAL GOD (Ego Eimi - I AM) you will die in your sins (John 8 :24) .

It is because of the danger of the perversion of the New World Translation of Holy Scriptures that this warning has been written. Our concern is for you to come to know the TRUE LORD Jesus Christ. . .

What do the real scholars think of the Watchtower Society's Translation?

Following are comments by some of the experts in the field of Biblical languages:

Dr. J. R. Mantey (who is quoted on pages 1158-1159) of the Witnesses own Kingdom Interlinear TransIation): "A shocking mistranslation. "Obsolete and incorrect." It is neither scholarly nor reasonable to translate John 1 :1 "The Word was a god.'

Dr. Bruce M. Metzger of Princeton (Professor of New Testament Language and Literature): "A frightful mistranslation." "Erroneous" and "pernicious" "Irepre-hensible" , " If the Jehovah's Witnesses take this translation seriously, they are polytheists."

Dr. Samuel J. Mikolaski of Zurich, Switzerland: "This anarthrous (used without the article) construction does not mean what the indefinite article "a'" means in English. It is monstrous to translate the phrase "the Word was a god."

Dr. Paul L. Kaufman of Portland, Oregon: "The Jehovah's Witnesses people evidence an abysmal ignorance of the basic tenets of Greek grammar in their mistranslation of John 1 :1 "

Dr. Charles L. Feinberg of La Mirada, California: "I can assure you that the rendering which the Jehovah's Witnesses give John 1 :l is not held by any reputable Greek scholar" .

Dr. James L. Boyer of Winona Lake, Indiana: "I have never heard of, or read of any Greek Scholar who would agree to the interpretation of this verse insisted upon by the Jehovah's Witnesses . . . I have never encountered one of them who had any knowledge of the Greek language."

Dr. Walter Martin (late) (who did not teach Greek but had studied the language): "The translation "a god" instead of "GOD' is erroneous and unsupported by any good Greek scholarship, ancient or contemporary and is a translation rejected by all recognized scholars of the Greek language many of whom are not even Christ-ians, and cannot fairly be said to be biased in favor of the orthodox contention." .

Dr. William Barclay of the University of Glasgow, Scotland: "The deliberate distortion of truth by this sect is seen in their New testament translations John 1:1 is translated: ". . the Word was a god," a translation which is grammatically impossible. . .. It is abundantly clear that a sect which can translate the New Testament like that is intellectually dishonest."

Dr. F. F. Bruce of the University of Manchester, England: "Much is made by Arian amateur grammarians of the omission of the definite article with "God" in the phrase "And the Word was God." Such an omission is common with nouns in a predicative construction. . .. "a god" would be totally indefensible".

(Barclay and Bruce are generaIIy regarded as Great Britain's Ieading Greek scholars. Both have New Testament translations in print!)

Dr. Ernest C. Colwell of the University of Chicago; "A definite predicate nominative has the article when it follows the verb; it does not have the article when it precedes the verb. . . this statement cannot be regarded as strange in the prologue of the gospel which reaches its climax in the confession of Thomas. "My Lord and my God."- John 20; 28.".

Dr. Philip B. Harner of Heidelberg College: "The verb preceding an anarthrous predicate, would probably mean that the Iogos was "a god" or a divine being of some kind, belonging to the general category of theos but as a distinct being from ho theos. In the form that John actually uses, the word "theos" is placed at the beginning for emphasis."

Dr. J. Johnson of California State University, Long Beach: "No Justification whatsoever for translating theos en ho logos as "the Word was a god." There is no syntactical parallel to Acts 23:6 where there is a statement in indirect discourse; John 1: l is direct. . . I am neither a Christian nor a trinitarian."

Dr. Eugene A. Nida, head of Translations Department, American Bible Society: "With regard to John. 1 .1, there is of course a complication simply because the New World Translation was apparently done by persons who did not take seriously the syntax of the Greek." (Responsible for the Good News Bible- The committee worked under him.)

Dr. B. F. Westcott (whose Greek text not the English part is used in the Kingdom InterIinear Translation): "The predicate (God) stands emphatically first, as in iv. 24. It is necessarily without the article. . .. No idea of inferiority of nature is suggested by the form of expression, which simply affirms the true deity of the Word. . .. in the third clause "the Word" is declared to be "GOD." and so included in the unity of the Godhead."

Dr. J. J. Griesbach (whose Greek text, not the English parts used in the Emphatic Diaglott): "So numerous, and clear are the arguments and testimonies of Scriptures in favor of the true Deity of Christ, that I can hardly imagine how, upon the admission of the Divine authority of Scripture, and with regard to fair rules of interpretation, this doctrine can by any man be called in doubt. Especially the passage, John 1: 1-3, is so clear and so superior to all exception, that by no daring efforts of either commentators or critics can it be snatched out of the hands of the defenders of the truth".

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144.000 JW's Going to Heaven? Impossible....

Of all the peculiar doctrines or teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses their thoughts on the 144,000 mentioned in Revelation is probably one of the most recognized. Unfortunately most Witnesses have never thought the teaching through or examined the Watchtowers history on the subject.

There are some key ideas which the Watchtower Society is built on. Some of them are the 1914 date at which time Michael was to have begun to reign in heaven, the 1935 date which they claim was the year when the number of the "anointed class" was completing for all practical purposes. the preaching of the "Kingdom" throughout the world, which includes the "new earth," organization, governing body, and "new light,"just to name a few.

But all of these concepts are built upon the foundational teaching that only 144,000 are "anointed" and that some of them are living today. However, if it can be proven that not one of the 144,000 "anointed" could have lived in the 20th century, then all of the rest of the building blocks in the superstructure of the Watchtower Society crumbles.

A close look at the Bible and Watchtower writings clearly prove that if only 144.000 are among those who are "anointed" and go to heaven, that this number was filled early in the history of the Christian church.

The Watchtower teaches that since Pentecost of 33 C.E. Jehovah God has been selecting those who are to make up the 144,000 who are to reign with Michael in heaven. They further teach that the thousands mentioned in the Book of Acts who became Christians are included in this number. (See The Watchtower, June 15, 1970, page 382.)

A careful reading of the Book of Acts reveals that there were many thousands in the early church, which of course was the true church. For example, in Acts 2:41, 3,000 were added. 2:47 "daily those being saved." 4:4 "about five thousand." 9:42, 17:12, & 19:18 "many." 13:48, "All those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers." and 26:10 says there were "Many of the holy ones."

But the most important verse of all is Acts 21:20 which reads, "You behold, brother, how many myriads [in the Greek] of believers there are among the Jews.""[The same word 'myriads" is used in the text in Jude 14 in the New world Translation. There is a footnote in the large revised 1984 edition which says. "holy tens of thousands.")

Thus James, whom the Watchtower says was one the members of the governing body, said that there were "many tens of thousands of believers".

He could easily be talking about fifty thousand or many more true believers just among the Jews. By adding those mentioned in the Book of Acts alone, the number of the anointed would easily be 100.000. That doesn't leave many of the 144,000 left.

The early Christian church was made up exclusively of Jews who would be both physical and spiritual Jews. This number is believed to have been at least 250,000 and might have been as high as one million. Thus if only 144.000 go to heaven, then the number would have easily been filled in the first century.

It is well known that true Christianity spread to most of the known world of that day, so this would ad many Gentiles to the number of the true church. Here a quote from the Watchtower publications Revelation Climax on page 62 helps us to understand something of the growth of the early church where they us give the following quote."

."..growing out of the rapid extension of Christianity and the consequent rage of the heathen population within his providence."

Thus we see that not only was there a large number of Jewish believers, but there was also "the rapid extension of Christianity" among the Gentiles which would greatly enlarge the number of the first century Christians.

More light is shed on this subject in the 1993 Watchtower publication JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES Proclaimers of God's Kingdom, On page 31 they write,

"They [Christians carried out a disciple making work with outspokenness and zeal; as a result, literally thousands of persons abandoned false religions systems and became Christians."

This was not speaking about Jews, but about Gentiles. Again we note that "thousands" were converted to Christianity, further increasing the number of Christians. Another quote from the same book on page 32 is very important. It reads.

"History confirms that persecution by authorities of the Roman Empire failed to stamp out the early Christian witness of Jehovah."

On the same page there is a picture of martyrs dying in a Roman coliseum. It is believed that at least 250,000 died as martyrs during this early persecution.

Charles Russell confirms this persecution in the book The Finished Mystery on page 27 where he wrote about this Roman persecution and said that in the year 95 C.E. alone there were 40,000 who suffered martyrdom.

History also shows us that there was great persecution of the Christians under the Roman Emperor Diocletian from February 23, A.D. 303 to June 13, A.D. 313.

Again in the book The Finished Mystery on page 29 we learn of the extent of this persecution where (Charles Russell claims there were 861,000 martyrs in this ten year period alone. We know that all of the true Christians would not be martyred so the number of Christians, even in the fourth century. would have been very large.

By adding up all these number of true Christians it would come into the million which is far greater than 144,000. Rev. 20:4 says.

"Yes. I saw the souls of those executed with the ax [martyrs] for the witness they bore to Jesus and for speaking about God, and those who had worshiped neither the wild beast nor its image and who had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand. And they came to life and ruled as kings with the Christ [Michael] for a thousand years."

The Bible says that these martyrs are the ones who live and reign with Christ in heaven for one thousand years. (The Bible never identifies the l44,000 as living and reigning with Christ. Only in Rev. 20:4 and 6 do we have an identification of those who live and reign with Christ.)

In the June 15, 1970 Watchtower on page 383 it identifies those who die as martyr's as being among the anointed.

The evidence is very conclusive from Watchtower publications that if only 144,000 are "anointed" and go to heaven that this number was filled very early in the history of the Christian church. There are two arguments I have found given by the Watchtower Society trying to prove that the 144,000 were not filled in the early church.

(1) The first is found in the Dec. 15, 1988 Watchtower on page 9 which reads, "Thus, beginning particularly at Pentecost 33 C.E.. a second invitation was extended to the despised and lowly ones of the Jewish nation. But not enough responded to fill the l44,000- places in God's heavenly Kingdom."

But this clearly is not in harmony with the Bible. As we saw before. in Acts 21:20. James said that there were **"many tens of thousands of believers among the Jews."**

Then there were many more Jews that were believers besides those mentioned in the Book of Acts. So this statement of the Watchtower Society clearly contradicts the Bible.

(2) The second and most commonly used excuse used by Jehovah's witnesses is found in the Oct. 15, 1988 Watchtower on page 12. They say, **"Moreover, after the first century a great apostasy set in, and the priestly anointed Christians were surrounded by flourishing "weeds, apostates."**

This can very easily be shown to not be a valid argument from a number of ways through Watchtower publications. As we noted before, on page 29 of The Finished Mystery, Charles Russell said there were 861,000 Christian martyrs from A.D. 303 to 313 alone.

So there had to be a very strong church up to the fourth century to have so many Christians who were faithful unto death. But not all the Christians were martyred at this time.

Again we turn to Charles Russell and page 30 of The Finished Mystery for proof. He wrote about the Arian controversy that brought about the Nicene council in A.D. 325. The Watchtower Society believes that Arius had the truth and since he had so many followers to have enough influence to cause the Nicene Council to be called. this would reveal that there were still many Christians even after 861,000 were martyred in first part of the fourth century.

However, if we take what the Watchtower said was true that "a great apostasy" had set in after the first century, and there were 861,000 true Christians still living in the year 303 A.D., this would prove that the number of Christians in the first century had to be in the many millions if there were still millions left in the fourth century.

This also proves that the number of l44,000 would have been filled early in the first century if only 144,000 are of the anointed and go to heaven.

But there is still another way to prove from Watchtower writings that there could not have been "a great apostasy" like they claim. In the book Revelation Climax on pages 113-119 in chapter 19 titled "Sealing the Israel of God" they state that those who are among the "anointing" have a special sealing and protection so that the greater majority of them will make it to heaven.

After using 2 Cor.1:21, and some other verses, they say: **"Thus, when these slaves are adopted as God's spiritual sons, they receive a token in advance of their heavenly inheritance--a seal, or pledge."**

There is another statement in an article on this subject in the Dec. 1, 1973 Watchtower on pages 730-733 titled "Sealing' of the chosen ones." The article explains this sealing and uses Eph.1:13. So the Watchtower Society clearly teaches that the "anointed" have a sealing which entities them to a special protection from God and the assurance of being among the heavenly class.

But probably the strongest statement is found in the Feb. 1,1982 Watchtower on page 28 in an article which discusses the condition of the anointed. We read, **"Of course, any individuals [meaning any anointed] proving unfaithful would need to be replaced. But understandably, these would be comparatively few."**

Since the Watchtower teaches those who would become "apostate" among the anointed would be "comparatively few" because of this special "sealing", the argument that many fell away in the early church is not valid and contradicts their own publications.

The above material proves conclusively that it was impossible for any of the l44,000 to have lived even in the second century let alone in the 20th century.

The Watchtower teaches that all the members of the Governing Body must be of the "anointed' class." In the Dec.15.1971 Watchtower in an article describing the "Theocratic Organization" it says on page 758,

"Let us keep in mind that the governing body must be made up of dedicated, baptized Christians who are anointed with God's spirit, and are begotten by Him to be his spiritual children, and who are to be united with the glorified Jesus Christ in the heavenly kingdom."

Since all the members of the Governing Body of the Watchtower Society must be of the "anointed" class, and since it is impossible for any of the "anointed", 144,000 to be living today, this leaves the Watchtower with out any authority or direction from God.

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Jehovah's Witnesses and the Trinity

The Trinity

In another essay (Jehovah's Witnesses: Witnessing to the Witnesses) I discussed effective evangelistic strategies when sharing the faith with Jehovah's Witnesses. We covered some effective techniques such as the Witnesses' record of false prophecy, the name "Jehovah", the bodily resurrection of Christ, and the personality of the Holy Spirit. In this essay I would like to teach you how to defend the doctrine of the Trinity, a truth clearly denied by Jehovah's Witnesses. Before we can defend this doctrine, however, we must have a clear understanding of the Trinity. Too many Christians lack a solid understanding of the Triune nature of God.

The doctrine of the Trinity is the belief that there is one God who has revealed Himself in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three persons make up the one true God. These three persons are of the same substance, equal in power and glory. It is important we understand this doctrine because the wrong Jesus or the wrong God cannot save us from eternal death. Paul makes a clear warning of this in 2 Corinthians 11:4.

The Bible clearly states that there is only one God. Deuteronomy 6:4 states, "Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one." Isaiah 44:6 states, "I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides me." Clearly, these verses reveal that there is only one God. Yet, there are three separate persons in the Bible who are called God and have the characteristics only God can have. The Trinity is a difficult concept to grasp, because we are finite beings trying to explain an infinite God who is beyond our understanding.

Let's take a look at some verses that back up our doctrine of the Trinity. The Father is obviously called God as seen throughout the Bible. No one will argue that point. So there is one member of the Trinity, the Father. Jesus the Son, is a separate person but He is also called God. John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Titus 2:13 says, "Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus." So here we see clearly, the Son is also called God.

The Holy Spirit is also a separate person, and He is also called God. First, let us understand, the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force. He is a person and has the characteristics of a person. He can be grieved (Eph. 4:30), He speaks (Acts 13:2), and He can be lied to (Act 5:3-4). In Acts 5:3-4 the Holy Spirit is called God, "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?...You have not lied to men, but to God.'"

So we see clearly that there are three persons in the Bible, and all three are called God. Yet, we must remember, there is only one God according to the verses we looked at Deuteronomy 6:4 and Isaiah 44:6. Therefore, we come to the conclusion that the Trinity is made up of three separate persons who are the one true God. At this point we need to look at verses Jehovah's Witnesses use to attempt to disprove the Trinity and learn how to refute these arguments. Then we will look at the best verses to use in demonstrating the truth of the Trinity to Jehovah's Witnesses.

Jehovah's Witnesses and the Bible

I run in to many Christians who tell me, "The Jehovah's Witnesses know their Bible so well, and they've got so many verses memorized." The truth is, they don't know their Bible well, it's just that we Christians are lacking in our Bible knowledge. When it comes to the Trinity, Witnesses only know about 8 verses to defend their view. We'll be studying the main verses they use to try to disprove the Trinity.

In one approach they attempt to show that Jesus cannot be God because He was created. The verse they use here is Colossians 1:15, "And He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation." Here the Witnesses say Christ is the first-born which they say means, "first created being of God." Therefore, they conclude Jesus cannot be God since He was created.

The key to understanding this verse is understanding the term first-born, what does it mean? The Greek word for "first created" is the word Protoktioti. If Paul wanted to say Christ was the first created being, he would have used this word but he does not. He uses another term, Prototokos. Paul is referring to the Jewish use of the word first-born which not only means first one born but also is used as a title of sovereignty and pre-eminence.

Here's an example of the meaning of the word. In Psalm 89:27 God says of David, "I also shall make him My first-born, the highest of the kings of the earth." Let's take a good look and see how first- born is used here. Is David the first-born son of Jesse? No, he is the eighth and youngest son of Jesse. Then how is it that David is the first-born? In the Old Testament use of the word, he is first- born in that he is pre-eminent or sovereign of all the kings of the earth.

Now stick that usage of first-born into the context of Colossians 1:15, and it fits perfectly. Not only that, have the Witnesses read on with you to verse 18. Verse 18 shows that Paul is clearly talking about the pre-eminence of Christ for he says, "He is also the head of the body" and "the first-born" for the purpose, "that in everything he might be pre-eminent." If we were to replace first-born in verse 18 with the term pre-eminent, it would fit perfectly in the context. However, if we replaced it with first created, it would not fit in that context.

Another verse the Witnesses use to show Jesus was created is Revelation 3:14, "And to the angel of Laodicea write: 'The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the Beginning of the creation of God....'" Here the faithful witness is Jesus and He is called, "The Beginning of the creation."

The Greek word for beginning is arche, which is used in many ways. It is used to mean "origin or source of, or ruler," but not first creation. Turn with the Witness to Revelation 21:6. In these two verses, Jehovah calls Himself the beginning. Does that mean Jehovah was created? No. Therefore, the Witnesses use of the term beginning, is incorrect.

Jesus was never created. John 1:1 states, "In the beginning was the Word" Jesus was with God from eternity past; Jesus has no beginning because He is the eternal God.

Is Jesus Inferior to God?

Is Jesus inferior to God? Another way the Witnesses try to disprove the deity of Christ is to show that Christ is inferior in nature to God. The verses they use here are John 14:28 and 1 Corinthians 11:3.

John 14:28 reads, "You heard that I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I." They will ask you, "How can Jesus be equal to God if here He states 'the Father is greater than I'?"

The term greater refers to position, not nature. The term better refers to nature. Here is a good example I use in illustrating this passage. The President is greater than you or I, correct? Yes, as Chief Executive Officer of the United States he is greater than you or I. The Jehovah's Witness will agree. But, is the President better than you or I? What I mean is, is there anything about the President that makes him a superior being to you or me? No.

You see, greater refers to position, not nature. We see in Philippians 2:6-8, that Christ though He was in the form of God, did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied Himself and submitted Himself to the Father and took on the form of a servant. Though Jesus emptied Himself, He was always in nature God and equal to the Father in nature. If Jesus wanted to say He was inferior to God in nature, He would have said, "The Father is better than I."

Here is an example of the use of the term better in Hebrews 1:4 (NAS); it says speaking of Jesus, "having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they." The NI V reads, "So he became as much superior to the angels...." Here we see that Jesus is a being superior to the angels, so the term better, is used. Remember, in explaining this verse, the term greater refers to position, not nature.

Another verse the Witnesses will use is 1 Corinthians 11:3, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God." Here they say since the head of Christ is God, Jesus must be inferior to God.

Once again you use the same concept of equal in nature, but Christ submitted Himself to the Father. Here the principle of headship and submission established by God is displayed both in marriage and in the Trinity. Now show the Jehovah's Witnesses that in this passage, the head of the woman is man. "Does this mean that the husband is a superior being to his wife?" The answer is obviously, "No." The husband is greater than his wife by way of position but not by nature. The same applies to the Father and the Son. The Father is greater by position, but not better by nature.

Remember when you're Witnessing, you are not there to win an argument, but to show them the error of their ways in a loving and Christ-like manner, but also you are not to be afraid to boldly defend the faith.

Proving the Deity of Christ

One of the best defenses is a good offense. When defending the Trinity to Witnesses, take charge of the conversation. Don't let the Witnesses run you in circles. You pick the topic and keep them on the topic you choose, instead of having them ask you all the questions, you have some questions ready for them to answer.

The best way to do this, when they appear at your doorstep, is ask them, "What organization are you with?" They will reply, "We are Jehovah's Witnesses." Then ask them, "Whom do you say is the God of the Apostles?" They will reply, "Jehovah." You then reply, "How do you explain the fact that Jesus is the God of the Apostles?" They will be surprised and say, "No, that's not true, where do you find that?" Here you have

taken over the conversation. Now, stay in charge of the conversation and don't let them break off on another tangent.

Next, you turn to the first text John 20:28, where Thomas, after seeing the resurrected Lord, proclaims to Jesus," My Lord and My God." Here, Thomas calls Jesus God. The Witnesses have two responses to this. One, they may say, "Well, Thomas was so surprised at seeing Jesus that he shouted, 'My Lord and My God,' in surprise just as we shout, 'Oh, my God,' when we're surprised." There's a problem with that. Thomas was a devout Jew and never would have shouted "my God" in surprise for that would be blasphemy for a Jew. A second response they have is, Thomas looked at Jesus and said, "My Lord," then looked to heaven and said, "My God." There's a problem with that too because the context does not say that. If you look at the passage, Thomas says, "My Lord and My God" to Jesus. So Thomas saw clearly that Jesus was God.

The next verse to turn them to is John 1:1. Now here the Witnesses will think you're falling into their trap for they have a different translation. Their translation says, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was a god." Well, the first thing to do is to show them that both translations can't be right. Someone is wrong. Ask them, "If we were to go to the local library here, we would find over thirty translations of the Bible. How many would translate it your way?" The truth is only one would, theirs. Then ask them, "Are you willing to say all the translators for the past centuries have been wrong and only yours is correct?" If they're honest, they'll think about it. Others will say, "Yes, ours is the only true translation."

It is then you say, "Let's say your translation is correct and mine is wrong, you still have a problem. How many gods do you have in that verse?" Then you take their Bible and count the number of gods with them. Say, "Well, here is one God with a capital G, what kind of god is He?" They'll say, "A true god." Then you go on and say, "Here's another god with a small g, what kind of god is He?" They must say," a true god." Then you ask them, "How many gods do you have?" This is where they get stuck for they must either say two gods and be polytheists or deny their translation. These are two great verses to use when witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Alpha and the Omega

As I have witnessed to many Jehovah's Witnesses, I have found some verses that work most effectively in proving the deity of Christ. Here are two of my favorite combination of verses.

The first verse is Revelation 1:8. I am reading from the Jehovah's Witness Bible, and it reads, "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says Jehovah God. Ask the Witness, "What does Alpha and Omega mean?" They'll reply,"The beginning and the end." Then ask them, "How many Alphas and Omegas can you have?" They'll answer, "Only one." Make sure you get this point across, there is only one Alpha and Omega.

Then turn to Revelation 22:12-13 which says, "Look I am coming quickly, and the reward I give is with me....I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." Ask the Witnesses, "Who do you say the Alpha and Omega is?" They will say, "Jehovah." Now take a careful look. The Alpha and Omega in verse twelve is coming quickly. Let's see who is speaking in verse twelve.

Look at verse sixteen, "I Jesus, sent my angel to bear witness to you people of these things for the congregations. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright

morning star." It is Jesus speaking in verse twelve. If there is any doubt go to verse 20 which says, "He that bears witness of these things says, 'Yes; I am coming quickly' Amen come Lord Jesus." So it is clear that the Alpha and the Omega in verse twelve is Jesus. Here is a strong proof text that Jesus is God because both Jehovah and Jesus are called the Alpha and the Omega.

Another pair of verses that are effective when used together are Isaiah 44:6 and Revelation 1:17-18. Isaiah 44:6 says, "This is what Jehovah has said, 'The king of Israel and the Repurchaser of him, Jehovah of armies, I am the first and I am the last.'" Ask the Witnesses how many firsts and lasts can you have? It's obvious to anyone you can only have one first and one last. Ask them, "Who is the first and the last?" They will say, "Jehovah." Now turn to Revelation 1:17-18 which says, "Do not be fearful; I am the First and the Last, and the living one; and I became dead but look! I am living forever." Who is speaking here? Obviously, it is Jesus for He died but is now alive, and guess what? He is called the First and the Last. Here again we see Jesus is God.

These are my favorite verses, and I have never had Witnesses refute these arguments. Remember, the Witnesses at your door won't convert right then and there. The key is to get them to start thinking and questioning the organization, and down the road, maybe in several years, they will seek answers and that will lead them out of the organization. Don't give up or be discouraged when sharing with Witnesses. Though they may be rude and show no signs that they are thinking, the Word of God is powerful and is working in their hearts even if we can't see it.

Remember Dr. Walter Martin (author of Kingdom of the Cults) went fifteen years without a convert, but he never gave up. Today we know of hundreds he pulled out of the organization. Continue to study the Word, and God bless you as you defend the faith.

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Did Jesus Die on a Cross or a Stake?

There are three passages that clearly indicates a cross and not a stake. In John 20:25 Thomas says: **"The other disciples therefore said unto him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said unto them, 'Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.'"** (KJV) (underlines added) Also, The New World Translation uses the plural form of nail as we can see here: **"Consequently the other disciples would say to him: 'We have seen the Lord!' But he said to them: 'Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print of the nails and stick my hand into his side, I will certainly not believe.'"** (NWT) (underlines added) In John, Thomas used the plural form of nail meaning two or more nails were used. The January 15, 1966 WATCHTOWER is in agreement with the plural form of nail on page 63: **"In one instance, he invited Thomas to inspect the wounds inflicted in his hands by means of the nails."** (underlines added)(4) The Watchtower March 15th 1997 on page 6 echoes the plural use nail**: "'Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print of the nails and stick my hand into his side, I will certainly not believe,' Thomas declared."** (underlines added) If Jesus was impaled on a stake, how many nails were needed for His hands?

Jesus told Peter that he would die with outstretched hands in John 21:18,19: **"'I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead where you do not want to go.' Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him 'Follow me!'"**(NIV) With Peter's hands outstretched, how was he impaled on a stake?

Matthew says in 27:37, **"Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS."**(NIV) (underline added) If Jesus died on a stake, Matthew would have said, "above his hands." Because Matthew said "above his head," Jesus must have died on a cross.

Written by Christian Witnesses