

Jehovah's Witnesses.

Summaries and evaluations taken from GotQuestions.org articles unless otherwise noted.

CJ's quick notes on Jehovah's Witnesses. I have noted differences by bolding and underlining in the NWT.

NKJV John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

New World Translation (NWT) John 1:1 "The Word was in the beginning with God and was a god."

NKJV Colossians 1:15-18 "¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

NWT Colossians 1:15-18 "¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; ¹⁶ because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and on the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ Also, he is before all other things, and by means of him all other things were made to exist, ¹⁸ and he is the head of the body, the congregation. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might become the one who is first in all things;

Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe in the Trinity. Only the Father is God.

What do Jehovah's Witnesses believe about the end times and eternal state?

It is the view of Got Questions Ministries that 2 Peter 3:7–12 is describing a literal event in the future. “The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. . . . That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat” (2 Peter 3:10, 12). This earth will not last, and God has something better planned. John records seeing “‘a new heaven and a new earth,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away” (Revelation 21:1).

Jehovah's Witnesses do not believe that this earth will pass away and be replaced by a new heaven and earth. They believe that God will never destroy the earth, that they will survive the battle of Armageddon to inherit a paradise earth and live upon it for 1,000 years, and then, if they pass the final test, they will live forever on the earth. The Witnesses say only 144,000 persons since the time of Jesus will ever go to heaven.

The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that, before the outbreak of the Great Tribulation (“‘Your Deliverance is Getting Near!’” Watchtower, July 15, 2015, p. 14–19), those of their anointed heavenly class (the remnant of the 144,000 still alive) will die and then be taken up into heaven in spirit form (“‘Caught Away to Meet the Lord’—How?” Watchtower, January 15, 1993, p. 4–7). All other Witnesses (about 8 million) will be left on earth to go through the Great Tribulation.

Jehovah's Witnesses take the prophecy of Ezekiel 38:11 about the attack of Gog of Magog and apply it to themselves. They anticipate a time of unprecedented persecution when both the religious and political elements of this world (under the control of Satan) will turn on them because they refuse to submit to the Antichrist and those who follow him.

In heaven, the 144,000 co-rulers with Christ who were taken there before the Great Tribulation will receive authority to share with Jesus in wielding “an iron rod” of destruction against all enemies of God's Kingdom. (God's Kingdom Rules!, chapter 21, 2014, page 228).

Jehovah's Witnesses believe Armageddon will happen before the millennial reign of Christ Jesus and that the only survivors will be faithful and obedient Witnesses ("Stay Faithful Through the 'Great Tribulation,'" Watchtower—Study Edition, October 2019, p. 14–19). They believe that God speaks through their organization, and that "Jehovah's servants already belong to the only organization that will survive the end of this wicked system of things" (Watchtower, December 15, 2007, p. 14). The survivors will inherit a "paradise earth" ruled by Jesus Christ in heaven. The majority of Jehovah's Witnesses do not want to go to heaven but are looking forward to the paradise on earth.

The Jehovah's Witnesses have been anticipating the battle of Armageddon since before 1914. They see Armageddon as the time when God will destroy all earthly governments and false religion—which includes all Trinitarian churches and all denominations that do not promote and use the name Jehovah ("Who Is the Antichrist?" Watchtower, June 1, 2015, p. 14–15).

The Jehovah's Witnesses also believe that billions of people who died before Armageddon will be resurrected with physical bodies to return to earth, and they will be given a "second chance" to repent. Not all the dead will be raised, however.

This is how Jehovah's Witnesses understand those Bible verses that speak of the new heavens and a new earth (e.g., 2 Peter 3:13 and Isaiah 65:17):

Sometimes when the Bible speaks of "the earth," it means the people who live on the earth (Genesis 11:1). So the righteous "new earth" is a society of people who receive God's approval . . . "The wicked one will be no more . . . But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth" (Psalm 37:10–11). "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it" (Psalm 37:29) (What Does the Bible Really Teach, p. 33–34).

Jehovah's Witnesses believe the planet remains but the wicked inhabitants (those who are not Jehovah's Witnesses) will perish. Their 1992 leaflet "Will This World Survive?" explains the destruction by fire mentioned in 2 Peter 3:7 this way:

The Bible does not mean that the literal earth or the starry heavens will pass away, even as these did not pass away in Noah's day (Psalm 104:5). Rather, this world, with its "heavens," or governmental rulers under the influence of Satan, and its "earth," or human society, will be destroyed AS IF by fire (John 14:30; 2 Corinthians 4:4). This world, or system of things, will perish just as surely as did the world before the flood.

Here is a summary of future events as described in the 2014 book God's Kingdom Rules! (Chapter 21, p. 224–225): The precursor of the Great Tribulation will be a proclamation of peace and security. This is to be followed by the final sealing of the remnant of anointed Christians (Jehovah's Witnesses). The Great Tribulation begins with an attack on religion by the Wild Beast of Revelation (which they say is the United Nations). Events leading up to Armageddon include celestial phenomena, a pronouncement of judgment on the enemies of God's Kingdom by the Son of Man (Jesus), the all-out attack of Gog of Magog (Satan) on Jehovah's people, and then the gathering of the anointed ones. These things happen before Armageddon, at which point the Great Tribulation ends. The grand finale of the Great Tribulation is the execution of judgment at Armageddon.

Regarding the eternal state, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that, at the end of Christ's reign from heaven over the millennial kingdom, all those who were resurrected for a second chance and who remain faithful till the very end will live forever on a paradise earth.

The Jehovah's Witnesses use the global flood to teach that 2 Peter 3:10 and 12 do not mean a literal destruction of the earth by fire. But there is a big difference between the effects of water and fire. Whereas water covers, fire consumes and exposes. The flood was not about destroying the literal planet; however, when God uses fire, things are reduced to ashes. God has promised to expose earth's internal workings by fire, and "the elements will

burn and be dissolved” (2 Peter 3:10, CSB). There is nothing ambiguous about the wording of the prophecy:

“The heavens will vanish with a [mighty and thunderous] roar, and the [material] elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and the works that are on it will be burned up. . . . For on this day the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the [material] elements will melt with intense heat!” (2 Peter 3:10, 12, AMP).

In Revelation 21:1 God does a complete make-over of heaven and earth (Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:12–13). The new heaven and new earth will be the setting for the eternal state “where righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13). After the re-creation, God reveals the New Jerusalem. John sees a glimpse of it in his vision: “The Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (Revelation 21:2). This is the city that Abraham looked for in faith (Hebrews 11:10). It is the place where God will dwell with His people forever (Revelation 21:3). Inhabitants of this celestial city will have all tears wiped away (Revelation 21:4).

I am a Jehovah's Witness. Why should I consider becoming a Christian?

Perhaps the most important commonality between Evangelical Christians and Jehovah's Witnesses is our belief and trust in the Bible as the ultimate authority inspired by God, on issues concerning God and His expectations for us. While we may understand things differently, Jehovah's Witnesses are to be highly commended for their dependence on and diligence in studying the Holy Scriptures to know God and His will. Like the Bereans, we would be wise to examine all things in life, in light of the Scriptures. To that end, we shall examine verses of the New World Translation (the version of the Bible published by their Watchtower Society) to clear up some common misunderstandings.

A Rose by Any Other Name...

Christians get their name from being followers and worshipers of Jesus Christ, first called "Christians" in Antioch during Paul's ministry (Acts 11:26). Paul repeatedly made it clear that to be a Christian was to be a witness to men concerning the person of Christ, to be a witness to the words and works of Christ. Jehovah's Witnesses, on the other hand, believe that we are to focus our worship exclusively on God the Father (who is referred to in some Bible translations as "Jehovah"). The name Jehovah, however, was a hybrid name created by Christians by adding vowels to the tetragrammaton YHWH, which was the original rendering of what we now know as Yahweh. Evangelical Christians understand Jesus to be God in all His fullness, equal in deity but different in function from God the Father. Christians acknowledge that one of the historic names for God the Father is Jehovah; however, there are many other names and titles that the Scriptures use in reference to God the Father.

Jehovah's Witnesses understand Jesus to be Michael the Archangel, and categorically deny His deity. As we shall see, if we understand Jesus to be anything other than God, many verses present obvious contradictions. However, we know that God's Word is inerrant and does not contradict itself. Therefore, we must understand the truth of God's Word in a way that is consistent and faithful to His revelation. You will notice that these same

verses lack any contradiction if we understand Jesus to be God the Son—the fullness of God in bodily form—who surrendered His rights to be the suffering servant and sacrifice for our sin. (All verses are quoted directly from the Jehovah's Witnesses New World Translation.)

God's Glory

(Verses regarding God the Father)

Isaiah 42:8 “I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images.”

Isaiah 48:11 “...And to no one else shall I give my own glory.”

(Verses regarding Jesus)

John 8:54 “...It is my Father that glorifies me, he who you say is YOUR God”

John 16:14 “That one will glorify me...”

John 17:1 “...Father, the hour has come; glorify your son...”

John 17:5 “So now you, Father, glorify me alongside yourself with the glory that I had alongside you before the world was.”

Philippians 2:10 “so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground”

Hebrews 5:5 “So too the Christ did not glorify himself by becoming a high priest, but [was glorified by him] who spoke with reference to him; ‘You are my son; I, today, I have become your father.’”

The Savior

(About the Father)

Isaiah 43:3 “For I am Jehovah your God, the Holy One of Israel your Savior.”

Isaiah 43:11 “I am Jehovah and besides me there is no savior.”

Isaiah 45:21 “Is it not I, Jehovah besides whom there is no other God; a righteous God and a Savior, there being none excepting me?”

(About Jesus)

Luke 2:11 “because there was born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord...”

Acts 13:23 “From the offspring of this [man] according to his promise God has brought to Israel a savior, Jesus.”

Titus 1:4 “...May there be underserved kindness and peace from God [the] Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.”

Whose name are we to have faith in?

(said about Jesus or by Jesus)

John 14:12 “Most truly I say to YOU, He that exercises faith in me, that one also will do the works that I do...”

Acts 4:12 “Furthermore, there is no salvation in anyone else, for there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

Acts 26:18 “...and inheritance among those sanctified by [their] faith in me.”

Revelation 2:13 “I know where you are dwelling, that is where the throne of Satan is, and yet you keep on holding fast my name, and you did not deny your faith in me...”

John 20:28 “In answer Thomas said to him: My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him: Because you have seen me have you believed?

John 20:31 “ But these have been written down that YOU may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that, because of believing YOU may have life by means of his name.”

Acts 2:38 “Peter [said] to them: ‘Repent, and let each one of YOU be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ...”

1 John 3:23 “Indeed, this is his commandment, that we have faith in the name of his Son Jesus Christ...”

Created or Creator?

Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that Jehovah created Jesus as an angel, and that Jesus then created all other things. What do the scriptures say?

(About the Father)

Isaiah 66:2 “Now all these things my own hand has made, so that all these came to be.”

Isaiah 44:24 “...I, Jehovah, am doing everything, stretching out the heavens, by myself...”

(About Jesus)

John 1:3 “All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence.” If all things came into existence through Jesus, He could not have been created because He is included in the “all things.”

Status, Names and Titles of Jesus and Jehovah

Isaiah 9:6 “For there has been a child born to us, there has been a son given to us, and the princely rule will come to be upon his shoulder. And his

name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.”

Revelation 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says Jehovah God, “the One who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty.”

Revelation 1:17-18 “...I am the First and the Last, and the living one, and I became dead, but, look! I am living forever and ever, and I have the keys to death and of Hades.”

Revelation 2:8 “...These are the things that he says, ‘the First and the Last, who became dead, and came to life [again]’”

Revelation 22:12-16 “Look! I am coming quickly, and the reward I give is with me, to render to each one as his work is. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end...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, and the bright morning star.”

Revelation 21:6-7 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To anyone thirsting I will give from the fountain of the water of life free. Anyone conquering will inherit these things, and I shall be his God and he will be my son.” If Jehovah is the Alpha and Omega (the first and last Greek letters), then the “first and the last” must refer to Jehovah, so the Witnesses claim. But when did Jehovah become dead? The only “first and last” who died and lived again is Jesus.

Hebrews 1:13 “But with reference to which one of the angels has he ever said ‘Sit at my right hand, until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet’?”

Truth and Unity

Jesus’ substitutionary atonement was accepted for one reason: God accepts only His own righteousness. The righteousness of a man or an angel is insufficient to hold up to the holy and perfect standard of God’s righteous law. Jesus was the only suitable sacrifice because He was the

righteousness of God, and as God's law required shed blood, Jesus took on flesh so that He might be a ransom for all who believe in His name.

Notice that if we understand Jesus to be God incarnate, then all the above verses can be understood to be true and mutually consistent in their claims. They can also be understood clearly with plain reason, taken at face value. However, if we attempt to suggest that Jesus is something less than God—Michael the archangel—then these verses are mutually exclusive and cannot both be true, when taken in their natural context. Therefore, the truth of God's Word necessitates that we must come to another understanding in which all Scripture is unified, interconnected, interdependent, inerrant, and true. That unifying truth can be found only in the person and deity of Jesus Christ. May we see the truth revealed in Scripture as it is, not as we would each have it to be, and may God receive all the glory.

If you have any questions about Jesus as God incarnate, please ask us. If you are ready to place your trust in this God incarnate Jesus, you can speak the following words to God: "Father God, I know that I am a sinner and am worthy of your wrath. I recognize and believe that Jesus is the only Savior, and that only by being God, could Jesus be the Savior. I place my trust in Jesus alone to save me. Father God, please forgive me, cleanse me, and change me. Thank you for your wonderful grace and mercy!"

Have you placed your full trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior because of what you have read here? If so, please click on the "I trusted in Christ as Savior today" button below.