

## ARTICLE 1

### Does Jehovah require *an* Organization?

Jehovah does not *need* an organization, nor has he used an organization for most of human history. For 2,500 years, from *Genesis* until the Israelites, there is no mention of any organization; God dealt directly with individuals. From the death of the Apostles until the 1800's, Watchtower cannot identify any group as representing God's organization. Yet the most important concept behind being a Jehovah's Witness is that you need to follow the Watchtower organization for salvation.

If Jehovah has always had an organisation, why didn't Russell join it, instead of starting a new one?

Watchtower makes the claim that "Jehovah has always guided his servants in an organized way." (*You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* p.192) If that is the case, how were they guided and organised during the dark ages? What group represented God's organization immediately prior to the formation of the Watch Tower Society in the 1884 by Charles Russell, and why didn't Russell just follow them?

The Watch Tower Society, in its many forms, is promoted as representative of Jehovah's modern day organization. To be part of "Jehovah's organization" requires identifying as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, following the directions coming from the Watch Tower Society. Whilst there may be ambiguity around whether the Watch Tower Society is a legal or theocratic instrument, Watchtower quotes show that Watch Tower and Jehovah's Organization is used interchangeably.

Glady Accepting Jehovah's Direction - Watchtower Library 2013 - English Edition

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us, sharing in projects that required cooperation with others. Of course, we had done that before, but now we would be part of a much larger group—the headquarters Bethel family. We gladly accepted this new assignment as an evidence of Jehovah's direction.

A major part of my work involved matters in connection with news service. Because of the desire for sensational stories and because of getting information from prejudiced sources, the press had written some nasty things about Jehovah's Witnesses. We endeavored to improve that situation.

Brother Knorr wanted to be sure that we all had plenty to do, so there were other assignments too. Some of these drew on my training as a commercial artist. Others involved the Society's radio station, WBBR. There was work to do in connection with motion pictures produced by the Society. Theocratic history was, of course, part of the Gilead course, but now various projects were undertaken to acquaint more of Jehovah's people with details of that history of the modern-day theocratic organization and to make this available to the public too. Another aspect of Gilead training involved public speaking, and work needed to be done to make more of the basics of public speaking available to the brothers in the congregations. So there was plenty to do.

### Gilead on a Regular Basis

In 1961, with training of traveling overseers and branch personnel in the offing, Gilead School was moved to Brooklyn, where the [Watch Tower Society](#) has its principal offices. Again I was back in the classroom—this time not as a substitute instructor but as a regular member of the faculty. What a privilege I am firmly convinced that Gilead School is a gift from Jehovah, a gift that has benefited his entire visible [organization](#).

In Brooklyn the Gilead classes had opportunities unknown to students in previous classes. There were more guest lecturers and there was close association with the Governing Body and extensive fellowship with the headquarters Bethel family. It was also possible for the students to get training in office procedures, in Bethel home operations, and in various aspects of factory work.

Over the years the number of students varied, and so did the number of instructors. The location of the school changed several times too. Now it is in lovely surroundings in Patterson, New York.

### Working With the Students

It has been such a joy to teach these classes! Here are young people who are not interested in doing things in the old system. They leave behind their family, their friends, their home, and people who speak their language. The climate, the food—everything is going to be different. They do not even know what country they will be going to, but their goal is to be missionaries. You do not have to motivate people of that sort.

When I went into the classroom, it was always my aim to make the students feel at ease. No one learns well when he is

"Wisdom Is With the Modest Ones" - Watchtower Library 2013 - English Edition

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The Watchto...	2009	11
The Watchto...	2008	7
The Watchto...	2007	7
The Watchto...	2003	7
The Watchto...	2002	7
The Watchto...	2001	11
The Watchto...	2000	17

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he would most likely pass unnoticed. Furthermore, Gideon approached his assignment with due caution. He took along ten servants—perhaps so that some could stand guard while the rest helped him to destroy the altar and the sacred pole.<sup>8</sup> In any event, with Jehovah's blessing, Gideon carried out his assignment, and in time he was used by God to liberate Israel from the Midianites.—[Judges 6:25-27](#).

### Displaying Modesty and Discretion

<sup>13</sup> There is much we can learn from Gideon's modesty. For example, how do we respond when a privilege of service is extended to us? Do we think first of the prominence or prestige that will result? Or do we modestly and prayerfully consider whether we can fulfill the demands of the assignment? Brother A. H. Macmillan, who finished his earthly course in 1966, set a fine example in this regard. C. T. Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Society, once asked Brother Macmillan for his thoughts on who might take charge of the work in his absence. In the discussion that followed, Brother Macmillan did not once promote himself, though it would have been quite convenient for him to do so. In the end, Brother Russell invited Brother Macmillan to consider accepting the assignment. "I stood there half dazed," Brother Macmillan wrote years later. "I did think it over, very seriously, and prayed about it for some time before I finally told him I would be happy to do all that I could do to assist him."

<sup>14</sup> Not long afterward, Brother Russell passed away, leaving the office of the [Watch Tower Society's](#) presidency vacant. Since Brother Macmillan was in charge during Brother Russell's final preaching tour, a brother remarked to him: "Mac, you have a strong chance of getting in yourself. You were Brother Russell's special representative when he was gone, and he told all of us to do as you say. Well, he went away and never did return. It looks like you're the man to carry on." Brother Macmillan responded: "Brother, that's not the way to look at this matter. This is the Lord's work and the only position you get in the Lord's [organization](#) is what the Lord sees fit to give you; and I am sure I'm not the man for the job." Then Brother Russell recommended someone else for the position. Like Gideon, he had a modest view of himself—a view we do well to adopt.

<sup>15</sup> We too should be modest in the manner in which we carry out our assignment. Gideon was discreet, and he strove not to anger his opposers unnecessarily. Similarly, in our preaching work, we should be modest and discreet about how we talk to others. True, we are engaged in a spiritual warfare to overturn "strongly entrenched things" and "reasonings." ([2 Corinthians 10:4, 5](#)) But we should not talk down to others or give them any valid cause for taking offense at our message. Instead, we should respect their views, emphasize what we may hold in common, and then focus on the positive aspects of our message.—[Acts 22:1-3](#); [1 Corinthians 9:22](#); [Revelation 21:4](#).

### Jesus—The Supreme Example of Modesty

<sup>16</sup> The finest example of modesty is that of Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup> Despite his intimate relationship with his Father, Jesus did not hesitate to acknowledge that some matters were beyond the scope of his authority. ([John 1:14](#)) For instance, when the mother of

Watchtower makes this a critical issue by saying association with *this particular organization* is essential for [salvation](#).

"Come to Jehovah's organization for salvation" *Watchtower* 1981 Nov 15 p.212

The leaders of this organization, the Governing Body, are said to be appointed by Christ and the only means by which he directs his true followers today.

"Consider, too, the fact that **Jehovah's organization alone**, in all the earth, is **directed by God's holy spirit** or active force. (Zech. 4:6) Only this organization functions for Jehovah's purpose and to his praise. To it alone God's Sacred Word, the Bible, is not a sealed book." [\*Watchtower\* 1973 Jul 1 p.402](#)

"However, the **Governing Body** are **appointed through the holy spirit** under the direction of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ." *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.18

"These overseers faithfully seek to apply **instructions received from Jehovah** God and Jesus Christ **by means of** the faithful and discreet slave and its Governing Body." *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.20

"**Christ thus leads** the congregation **by means of** the spirit-anointed "faithful and discreet slave" and its **Governing Body**." *Examining the Scriptures Daily* 2007 p.34

"Jehovah's visible organization can use you, but can get along without you too. But you cannot get along without it. Fruitless ones are eventually pruned off and never missed as new ones are grafted in. Pruned-off branches soon wither and die, being cut off from the circulating, life-giving sap." *Watchtower* 1950 Jan 15 p.26

Trusting the Organization is equated to trusting Jehovah!

"Demonstrating trust in Jehovah also involves trusting his organization and those whom he is using to take the lead ... Now more than ever before, it is important to demonstrate complete trust in Jehovah" *Elders Meet With Regular Pioneers, Special Pioneers, and Field Missionaries* Oct 2020 S-211-21-E 10/20

The word "Organization" does not appear in the Bible.

This is the most significant concept behind being one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Believing in God is not what makes a Witness unique, as a large portion of people believe in God. Trusting in the Bible is not the key factor to being a Witness, as billions of people believe they follow the Bible. It is belonging to the "Watchtower Organization" that distinguishes one of Jehovah's Witnesses and makes them feel solely worthy of salvation.

This raises the following questions;

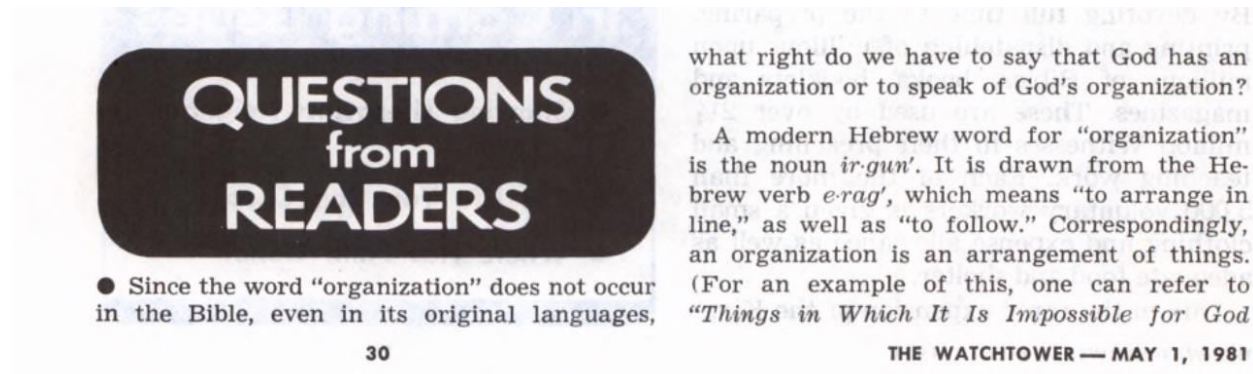
- Is membership of an organization essential for salvation?
- Has Jehovah always operated through an organization?

("Watchtower" is used on [jwfacts.com](#) as an umbrella term referring to Jehovah's Witnesses as a religion, organization and corporation. This includes the parent corporation that oversees the religion, The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, founded in 1884, along with Watchtower's numerous other legal entities. The legal and spiritual role of the governing

body has evolved over time and jwfacts.com uses "[Governing Body](#)" in reference to Watchtower's earthly theocratic leaders.)

### Requirement of Salvation

The word "organization" *never* appears in the Bible, yet appears *16,789 times* on the 2006 Watchtower Library CD.



This is because belonging to an organization is not a Scriptural requirement, but rather a common concept high control groups use to build conviction and unity.

Neither the Old or New Testaments mention following an organization, yet Watchtower claims belonging to an organization is essential for salvation.

"**To receive everlasting life** in the earthly Paradise we **must identify that organization** and serve God as part of it." *Watchtower* 1983 Feb 15 p.12

The Bible repeatedly states that faith in Jesus and the Father results in everlasting life.

"... obtain the **salvation** that is in **union with Christ** Jesus along with everlasting glory." 2 *Timothy* 2:10

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising **faith in him** might not be destroyed but **have everlasting life** ... He that exercises faith in the Son has everlasting life." *John* 3:16, 36

"And yet YOU do not want to **come to me** that YOU may have life." *John* 5:40

"**I am the door**; whoever enters through me will be saved, and he will go in and out and find pasturage." *John* 10:9

"This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." *John* 17:3

"Hence let no one be boasting in men; for all things belong to YOU, whether Paul or Apol'los or Ce'phas or the world or life or death or things now here or things to come, all things belong to YOU; in turn YOU **belong to Christ**; Christ, in turn, belongs to God." *1 Corinthians* 3:21

To appreciate the level of adulation Watchtower followers are expected to have for the organization, it is revealing that the *Watchtower* April 2013 study article titled "Make Sure of the More Important Things" uses the term "organization" 24 times, but Jesus only 18 times. The following article then contains an image outlining the composition of the organization that does not even include Jesus, but rather the Governing Body directly below Jehovah on his throne.



*Watchtower* 2013 Apr 15 p.29

The *Watchtower* 1975 Sep 1 p.531 asks "**Where** could we turn if we would leave God's organization today? There is **nowhere** else! (John 6:66-69)". This quote references *John 6* for support that there is nowhere other than the Organization. However, *John 6* makes a very different point:

"Simon Peter answered him: "Lord, **whom** shall we go away to? **You** have sayings of everlasting life.'" *John 6:68*

One cannot help but wonder how Jesus feels having Watchtower applying this Scripture to themselves, rather than to him.

### **Does God require an Organization?**

As the word "organization" does not appear in the Bible, the Watchtower uses *1 Corinthians 14:33* - "God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace" - to indicate that an

Organization is necessary. In similar vein, *Watchtower* 1981 May 1 p.30 claims Jehovah indicates he needs an organization because wants "an arrangement of things."

It is a big leap to insist descriptions of God as orderly and arranged proves he needs a human organization to represent him.

The existence of an organization does not guarantee order, nor is an organization a prerequisite for orderliness. This does not mean that organization is not necessary. People need to be organized for efficient operation of congregations and preaching. Rather, it is unquestioning allegiance to the leaders of an Organization that is not supported Scripturally.

Early Christians were *organised* into congregations, as are Christian religions today. For the spread of Christianity it has been necessary to create organizations. For example, in modern times religious groups often need to establish legal entities or organizations in order to purchase halls to meet in and for the publication of literature.

### **Has Jehovah always had a Representative Organization?**

Watchtower claims God has always operated through a *single* organization.

"The Bible shows that Jehovah has **always** guided his servants in an organized way. ... The nation of Israel was called "Jehovah's congregation." (*Numbers* 20:4; *1 Chronicles* 28:8) If you were a true worshiper of Jehovah back then, you had to be part of that congregation of worshipers, not separate from it. Did Jehovah ever use more than **one organization** during any period of time? In Noah's day only Noah and those with him inside the ark had God's protection and survived the floodwaters. (1 Peter 3:20) Also, in the first century there were **not two or more Christian organizations**. God dealt with just the one. There was just the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Ephesians 4:5) Likewise in our day Jesus Christ foretold that there would be only one source of spiritual instruction for God's people." *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* p.192

Bible history shows this is not the case. For the majority of Bible history, no organization is associated with Jehovah. At other times he operated predominantly through individuals, or dealt with more than one group at a time.

Originally God dealt directly with Adam and Eve. He continued to deal directly with Abel, and also directly with the unrighteous man Cain. (Gen 4:15) For the next 2000 years there is no mention of any organization or intervention by God, except for when God dealt with two individuals; Enoch and Noah.

After the flood, Jehovah continued to deal with individuals rather than with an organization. He concurrently dealt separately with individuals such as Lot and Abraham.

### **Israel**

There is only one period of time during which it can be claimed that God dealt with an organization. This was not until 2,500 years after the creation of mankind, with the formation of

the Nation of Israel under Moses. Yet even whilst he dealt through this group, he continued to deal with individuals and other groups.

During the time of the nation of Israel, Jehovah dealt with individuals not associated with the Israelites. For example, it was during this time that Jehovah was involved directly with Job, a man "blameless and upright, and fearing God and turning aside from bad the greatest of all the Orientals. (*Job* 1:1-3)

After many decades, Jehovah instituted a King in Israel. This was not will, but because of their insistence on requiring a visible king. This desire for a human leader was considered a rejection of Jehovah, who stated:

"... it is I whom they have rejected from being king over them." *1 Samuel* 8:7.

During the history of Israel, God did not deal only with the King. In fact Saul, the very first king, attempted to kill David and so David fled to live in the apostate land of Philistia with Achish the king of Gath, all the time protected by Jehovah. Jehovah also operated through Levites, the Priests and a variety of Bible writers of diverse stations. He regularly rose up independent prophets to chastise his erring kingly representative. Generally these individual prophets were sent by Jehovah to condemn the Israelites. What cannot be overlooked is that from the first leader and for most of its history, Israel were apostate rejecters of Jehovah.

At the death of only the third king Jehovah foretold "Here I am ripping the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and I shall certainly give you ten tribes. And the one tribe is what will continue his for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel." (*1 Kings* 11:31-32) After Solomon's death God proceeded to split the Israelites into two separate nations, each with their own priestly class. Until the destruction of Israel, Jehovah dealt with the Northern kingdom separately from the Southern kingdom.

For a short time after the fall of Jerusalem, God continued to deal directly with individuals, such as Daniel. After the release from Babylon, God was with Ezra and Nehemiah and was involved with the rebuilding of the temple. Then a period of 500 years ensued with no record of any intervention from God until the time of Jesus, no evidence that God actively dealt through this visible organization.

### **Christian Times**

When Jesus arrived, the priesthood was still God's representative. The Jews were considered to be God's Nation until the the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. However Jesus and his disciples stood up against that organization and publicly condemned the Priests, in effect setting up a second rival organization to the one still representing God.

While this second group was following Jesus, the Bible shows that there were individuals unattached to Jesus followers whose worship was also considered acceptable.

"John said to him: "Teacher, we saw a certain man expelling demons by the use of your name and **we tried to prevent him, because he was not accompanying us.**" But Jesus said: "Do not

try to prevent him, for there is no one that will do a powerful work on the basis of my name that will quickly be able to revile me; for **he that is not against us is for us**. For whoever gives YOU a cup of water to drink on the ground that **YOU belong to Christ**, I truly tell YOU, he will by no means lose his reward. But whoever stumbles one of these little ones that believe, it would be finer for him if a millstone such as is turned by an ass were put around his neck and he were actually pitched into the sea." *Mark 9:38-42*

Here Jesus shows that a person could belong to him without following the group of apostles. Belonging to an organization was not as important as it was to "belong to Christ."

After Jesus death, his disciples actively went against the nation of Israel and the high priest, even whilst they were still considered God's earthly representative. *Acts 5:27-29* describes such an occasion:

"And the high priest questioned them and said: "We positively ordered YOU not to keep teaching upon the basis of this name, and yet, look! YOU have filled Jerusalem with YOUR teaching, and YOU are determined to bring the blood of this man upon us." In answer Peter and the [other] apostles said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."

During all this time, early Christianity was loosely structured, unlike the Watchtower organization today. There was no formal incorporation and no multibillion dollar property empire of kingdom halls and Bethel buildings.

### **How Directed?**

"But in reply he said: "I tell YOU, If these remained silent, the stones would cry out."" *Luke 19:40*

Presuming that God needs an earthly organization shows lack of faith in his ability to operate through individuals. Early Christians were not directed by an organization but by the words of Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"I have many things yet to say to YOU, but YOU are not able to bear them at present. However, when that one arrives, **the spirit of the truth, he will guide YOU into all the truth**, for he will not speak of his own impulse, but what things he hears he will speak, and he will declare to YOU the things coming." *John 16:12-13*

*John 4* contains a discussion between Jesus and a Samaritan woman. Samaritans and Jews, both descendants of Abraham, had differing opinions of who represented God's organization. Jesus explained, "the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ... Nevertheless, the hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for indeed, the Father is looking for ones like these to worship him." True worship is spiritual, it is not about fleshly organizations.

Jesus promised that he would direct his followers no matter how few were gathered together.

"Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there **I am in their midst!**" *Matthew 18:20*



It was under the guidance of Holy Spirit that followers of Jesus accomplished their work.

"... with the power of signs and portents, with **the power of holy spirit**; so that from Jerusalem and in a circuit as far as Illyricum I have thoroughly preached the good news about the Christ." *Romans* 15:19

*Acts* 2:1-4 describes the Holy Spirit speaking truth through 120 disciples and *Acts* 4:31 says;

"... they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness."

Christian congregations met in houses with like minded people worshipping Christ. Paul explained this was for "upbuilding" each other (*1 Corinthians* 14:5). Holy Spirit appointed mature older men to oversee (*Acts* 20) whilst the older women were teachers of good (*Titus* 2:3, 4).

There was freedom within congregations to discuss different points of view without fear of retribution, as shown by open discussion on circumcision. Consensus was reached at *Acts* 15 that circumcision was not required, but that it was necessary to abstain "from things sacrificed to idols (v29)". Yet even this statement was not binding regulation, since Paul later explained at *1 Corinthians* 8 that food sacrificed to idols need only be avoided if eating it would cause a brother to stumble.

The formation of congregations indicates order, but does not imply an elite group of specially directed leaders in a position to demand unquestioning obedience.

An organization or corporation can be useful in maintaining order. They may be necessary in fulfilling the legal requirements involved in running a religion. For instance, the *Proclaimers* book mentions the "Peoples Pulpit Association" as:

"A New York corporation formed in 1909 in connection with the Society's moving of its principal offices to Brooklyn, New York." [\*Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom\* p.73](#)

However, the *Proclaimers* book goes on to discuss how members from this male dominated corporation were also involved in electing the next Watchtower leader following the death of Russell. It was not until 1971 that the Watch Tower Society members stopped being part of the process to "vote in members of the anointed Governing Body." (w2001 1/15 p.29)

CHURCH  
FEDERATION  
*COUNTING THE COST*  
BROOKLYN  
ACADEMY OF MUSIC  
AT 3 O'CLOCK P.M.  
SUNDAY JAN. 16 | SUNDAY JAN. 30  
*What* Congregationalists | *What* Episcopalians  
Methodists & Presbyterians | Catholics & Lutherans  
Must Surrender | Must Surrender  
SUNDAY JAN. 23 | SUNDAY FEB. 6  
*What* Baptists | *The* Church Militants  
Disciples & Adventists | Surrender to  
Must Surrender | *The* Church Triumphant  
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE  
PEOPLES PULPIT  
ASSOCIATION  
OF NEW YORK

This cross pollination of church, corporation and organization does not parallel with any Scriptural structure. This is a typical corporate approach without any demonstration of spirit

guidance, despite how the Watchtower leadership try to mystify their role as spiritually appointed leaders that must not be questioned.

## **Historical Development**

When Russell started publishing *Zion's Watch Tower*, he was not a link in an unbroken chain extending through history as Jehovah's organization. He had turned his back on organized religion and gone out alone. He promoted this rebellion against organization, writing:

"(2) Beware of "organization." It is wholly unnecessary. The Bible rules will be the only rules you will need. Do not seek to bind others' consciences, and do not permit others to bind yours. Believe and obey so far as you can understand God's Word today, and so continue growing in grace and knowledge and love day by day."

**(2) Beware of "organization." It is wholly unnecessary. The Bible rules will be the only rules you will need. Do not seek to bind others' consciences, and do not permit others to bind yours. Believe and obey so far as you can understand God's Word today, and so continue growing in grace and knowledge and love day by day.**

*Watchtower* 1895 Sep 15 reprints p.1866.

Being a genuine Christian was what was important.

"We are in fellowship with all Christians in whom we can recognize the Bible as the only standard. We do not require, therefore, that all shall see just as we do in order to be called Christians, realising that growth in both grace and knowledge is a gradual process." *Watchtower* 1882 Apr reprints p.344

"The test of membership in the New Creation will not be membership in any earthly organization, but union with the Lord as a member of his mystical body;" *Millennial Dawn - The New Creation* (1904) p.74

However, as time went on, Russell started to promote the importance of his own writings as essential to learning truth. Thirty years after he started publishing, he was being referred to as Pastor, accepted the title of Faithful Slave and wrote that his books were essential for an understanding of the Bible, in fact more important than to read the Bible alone.

"Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SCRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years - if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had earnest heed to the opportunities for service and consider that merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, and had not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures." *Watchtower* 1910 Sep 15 reprints p.344

Whilst this concept that Watchtower publications are essential for knowing truth continues to this day, the reality is that anyone holding to Russell's teachings is considered apostate by Jehovah's Witnesses.

Following Russell's death, Rutherford proceeded to enforce an organisational structure upon Watchtower followers. In 1919, congregations were to "register as a service organization within the Society..." (*Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* p.95), moving congregational control under international direction. In 1920, it became a requirement to report participation in witnessing. Direction of the preaching work became the reasoning behind a stricter organisational structure.

"The efficiency with which the witness must be given of necessity depends largely upon the organized efforts made in the field." *Watchtower* 1922 Dec 15 reprints p.389

In 1932, Rutherford changed the elder arrangement, stating it was "not according to the principles of the great Theocrat, who rules his sanctuary from the top down." (*Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* p.127). The concept of a theocratic organization was not introduced until 1938.

"Continued advancement brought them the understanding that both Jehovah and his enemy, Satan, have an invisible organization. .... It was in 1938 that *The Watchtower* published an article on organisation that showed how God's organization should be theocratic." *Watchtower* 1965 Jul 15 p.428

Far from Jehovah always using an organization, Watchtower sprung onto the scene, and then took many decades to morph into the tightly controlled organization it is today that accepts no dissonance.

Whilst pushing that belonging to Jehovah's organization is [essential for salvation](#), it claims the opposite when preaching against other religions that try to say the same.

"We must seek to be genuine Christians in every sense of the word. Does that mean we have to join a church organisation in Christendom? Ask yourself now, Did Christ Jesus, who set our example and told us to follow his example to gain life, join any church organization in his day? No, God does not require us to do that; but he requires us to worship him, to preach the good news of the Kingdom, to be Christians, to follow the example Jesus set, living in unalterable devotion to Jehovah God; to praise God and respect his supremacy, to resist all efforts to turn us from decency and to endure in faith. We have the Bible to show us the right way. Certainly it is not necessary for a person to become a member of a church to gain everlasting life." *Watchtower* 1953 Mar 1 p.143

## **Conclusion**

Whilst Watchtower says Jehovah has always had an organization and leader, that is not the case at all. According to the Bible, God has had a chosen people that he directed for a very small part of recorded human history, and that group has been inaccessible to most humans. The coverage of the Israelites and Early Christians encompassed just a small part of the human population.

Watchtower leaders constantly promote that following them as the earthly leaders of Jehovah's Organization equates to following Jehovah. This concept becomes so ingrained that *followers cannot distinguish the difference between leaving the religion and leaving Jehovah.*

Watchtower describes itself as Jehovah's "wife" and "earthly instrument".

"However, what we see exemplified in God's woman, his heavenly universal organization, we should look to see in his visible organization. Why? Because his higher, greater universal organization uses it as her earthly instrument. That is why we do see those motherly traits, those traits and acts of a virtuous woman, in the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and in the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, because these profess to represent and serve God's woman. We thank God for providing and using them. So we stand up respectfully and bless his faithful organization, his queenly "woman" in heaven which makes all these loving provisions for us as children of God." *Watchtower* 1950 Oct 1 p.348 "

Referring to Watchtower as Jehovah's earthly organization creates an air of divine authority. Personification as a motherly woman creates fear of displeasing "her". In reality, Watchtower is a company with a Charter, incorporated in America. It is a worldly corporation run by progression of men. Like any company, its foremost concern is ultimately growth and financial viability, achieved through book sales and donations.

In *The Myth of Certainty: The Reflective Christian & the Risk of Commitment* (InteVarsity Press, 1986, 1992) pp.29-30 Professor Daniel Taylor warns:

"The primary goal of all institutions and subcultures is self-preservation. Preserving the faith is central to God's plan for human history; preserving particular religious institutions is not. Do not expect those who run the institutions to be sensitive to the difference. God needs no particular person, church, denomination, creed or organization to accomplish his purpose."

The concept of Jehovah having one single organization that he directs by means of a Governing Body is used to support the concept that being a Jehovah's Witness is essential for salvation. Though the Bible consistently says it is faith in Jesus that is important, Watchtower shifts attention to the Organization with statements such as "we must uphold the truth of that organization." (*Watchtower* 1961 May 1 p.276) The Governing Body uses this principle to set itself as a spiritual authority above the Bible, such as when stating:

"Thus the Bible is an organizational book and belongs to the Christian congregation as an organization, not to individuals, regardless of how sincerely they may believe that they can interpret the Bible. For this reason the Bible cannot be properly understood without Jehovah's visible organization in mind." *Watchtower* 1967 Oct 1 p.587

Though an organization is never mentioned by Jesus, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that all other Christian religions will be [destroyed](#) by God, because they do not follow Watchtower defined truth. Jesus said "He that believes has everlasting life"(John 6:47) and "I know my sheep and my sheep know me"(John 10:14). When a Jehovah's Witness reads passages like these they are trained to understand "whoever believes *what the Watchtower says about Jesus may have everlasting life*", and "the sheep know me, *only by means of the Watchtower Society*". This is not

unique; it is common that "the cult and its beliefs become the only true path to salvation."  
(*Combating Cult Mind Control*, Hassan, p.202).

It is apparent that for most of the history of the Bible, Jehovah did not have a visible organization. Even during the short period that he used the Nation of Israel, he regularly dealt with individuals in preference to the leaders of that nation. This was also the case during early Christian times. Furthermore, belonging to these groups was no guarantee of being acceptable to God, as from the start both the Jews and early Christians were plagued with corruption and apostasy.

## ARTICLE 2

The Aug. 1, 1981, Watchtower then addresses and defines the conditions for eternal life. On page 26, it states, "Your attitude toward the 'wheatlike anointed brothers' of Christ and the treatment you accord them, will be >>>the determining factor as to whether you go into 'everlasting cutting-off' or receive everlasting life."<<<

Above, we see JW teaching not only salvation by works, but salvation by denomination!

What does Holy Scripture state?

Ephesians 2:8-9

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that >>>not of yourselves;<<< it is the gift of God, 9 >>>not of works,<<< lest anyone should boast.

Which teaching is correct? The JW or God's?

"Similarly, Jehovah is using >>>only one organization<<< today to accomplish his will. >>>To receive everlasting life<<< in the earthly Paradise >>>we must identify that organization<<< and serve God as part of it." Watchtower 1983 Feb 15 p.12

You HAVE TO identify THEIR organization if you expect to receive ETERNAL life?

God's Version:

Acts [4:12](#)

Nor is there salvation in any other, for >>>there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."<<<

Jesus is Savior! – NOT any denomination!!!

"And while now the witness yet includes the invitation to come to Jehovah's organization >>>for salvation,<<< the time no doubt will come when the message takes on a harder tone, like a "great war cry." Watchtower 1981 Nov 15 p.21

You HAVE TO come to THEIR organization for Salvation? Holy Scripture says Jesus is Savior!!!

"But if we were to draw away from Jehovah's organization, there would be >>>no place else to go for salvation<<< and true joy." Watchtower 1993 Sep 15 p.22

1993 and they, like today, are still pushing this garbage! If YOU LEAVE the JW you LOSE your salvation - NOBODY but the JW offers salvation?

Isaiah [43:11](#)

I, even I, am the Lord,  
And >>>besides Me there is no savior.<<<

"But Jehovah God has also provided his visible organization, his "faithful and discreet slave", made up of spirit-anointed ones, to help Christians in all nations to understand and apply properly the Bible in their lives. >>>Unless we are in touch with this channel of communication that God is using, we will not progress along the road to life, no matter how much Bible reading we do."<<< Watchtower 1981 Nov 15 p.27

Bible ... HOLY BIBLE, who needs that - ACCORDING TO THE JW if you are NOT one of THEM - you don't progress.

2 Peter [1:20](#)

knowing this first, >>>that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation,<<<

"They must appreciate that identifying themselves with Jehovah's organization >>>is essential to their salvation."<<< Kingdom Ministry 1990 Nov p.1

It's ESSENTIAL to IDENTIFY yourself as a JW for salvation?



Acts 4:12

Nor is there salvation in any other, for >>>there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”<<<

According to God, NO one needs their organization! And according to God, they are a FALSE witness who teaches another way of salvation!

The JW organization is a CULT!!!

### **A CULT...**

When any denomination, religious group/organization or work deviates (departs from) the historicity of Jesus by adding to or subtracting from Biblical doctrine at the direction of an individual or group, etc. you are dealing with cultic mindset.

When following false teachers, you'll see that those victims (who have been deceived) will place their faith in man/denomination OVER God. They will abandon, twist and alter the Holy word of God as to line up the cult's teaching, all at the expense of the Gospel.

Like any CULT, when compared to Holy Scripture, their falsehoods are obvious to all but the blind!

## ARTICLE 3

<https://jwfacts.com/watchtower/organization.php>

### **Does Jehovah require *an* Organization?**

Jehovah does not *need* an organization, nor has he used an organization for most of human history. For 2,500 years, from *Genesis* until the Israelites, there is no mention of any organization; God dealt directly with individuals. From the death of the Apostles until the 1800's, Watchtower cannot identify any group as representing God's organization. Yet the most important concept behind being a Jehovah's Witness is that you need to follow the Watchtower organization for salvation.

If Jehovah has always had an organisation, why didn't Russell join it, instead of starting a new one?

Watchtower makes the claim that "Jehovah has always guided his servants in an organized way." (*You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* p.192) If that is the case, how were they guided and organised during the dark ages? What group represented God's organization immediately prior to the formation of the Watch Tower Society in the 1884 by Charles Russell, and why didn't Russell just follow them?

The Watch Tower Society, in its many forms, is promoted as representative of Jehovah's modern day organization. To be part of Jehovah's Organization requires identifying as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, following the directions coming from the Watch Tower Society. Whilst there may be ambiguity around whether the Watch Tower Society is a legal or theocratic instrument, Watchtower quotes show that Watch Tower and Jehovah's Organization is used interchangeably.

Gladly Accepting Jehovah's Direction - Watchtower Library 2013 - English Edition

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w99 8/1 Gladly Accepting Jehovah's Direction p. 30

us, sharing in projects that required cooperation with others. Of course, we had done that before, but now we would be part of a much larger group—the headquarters Bethel family. We gladly accepted this new assignment as an evidence of Jehovah's direction.

A major part of my work involved matters in connection with news service. Because of the desire for sensational stories and because of getting information from prejudiced sources, the press had written some nasty things about Jehovah's Witnesses. We endeavored to improve that situation.

Brother Knorr wanted to be sure that we all had plenty to do, so there were other assignments too. Some of these drew on my training as a commercial artist. Others involved the Society's radio station, WBBR. There was work to do in connection with motion pictures produced by the Society. Theocratic history was, of course, part of the Gilead course, but now various projects were undertaken to acquaint more of Jehovah's people with details of that history of the modern-day theocratic organization and to make this available to the public too. Another aspect of Gilead training involved public speaking, and work needed to be done to make more of the basics of public speaking available to the brothers in the congregations. So there was plenty to do.

### Gilead on a Regular Basis

In 1961, with training of traveling overseers and branch personnel in the offing, Gilead School was moved to Brooklyn, where the [Watch Tower Society](#) has its principal offices. Again I was back in the classroom—this time not as a substitute instructor but as a regular member of the faculty. What a privilege I am firmly convinced that Gilead School is a gift from Jehovah, a gift that has benefited his entire visible [organization](#).

In Brooklyn the Gilead classes had opportunities unknown to students in previous classes. There were more guest lecturers and there was close association with the Governing Body and extensive fellowship with the headquarters Bethel family. It was also possible for the students to get training in office procedures, in Bethel home operations, and in various aspects of factory work.

Over the years the number of students varied, and so did the number of instructors. The location of the school changed several times too. Now it is in lovely surroundings in Patterson, New York.

### Working With the Students

It has been such a joy to teach these classes! Here are young people who are not interested in doing things in the old system. They leave behind their family, their friends, their home, and people who speak their language. The climate, the food—everything is going to be different. They do not even know what country they will be going to, but their goal is to be missionaries. You do not have to motivate people of that sort.

When I went into the classroom, it was always my aim to make the students feel at ease. No one learns well when he is

"Wisdom Is With the Modest Ones" - Watchtower Library 2013 - English Edition

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The Watchto...	2009	11
The Watchto...	2008	7
The Watchto...	2007	7
The Watchto...	2003	7
The Watchto...	2002	7
The Watchto...	2001	11
The Watchto...	2000	17

Most Occurrences Categories

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he would most likely pass unnoticed. Furthermore, Gideon approached his assignment with due caution. He took along ten servants—perhaps so that some could stand guard while the rest helped him to destroy the altar and the sacred pole.<sup>8</sup> In any event, with Jehovah's blessing, Gideon carried out his assignment, and in time he was used by God to liberate Israel from the Midianites.—[Judges 6:25-27](#).

### Displaying Modesty and Discretion

<sup>13</sup> There is much we can learn from Gideon's modesty. For example, how do we respond when a privilege of service is extended to us? Do we think first of the prominence or prestige that will result? Or do we modestly and prayerfully consider whether we can fulfill the demands of the assignment? Brother A. H. Macmillan, who finished his earthly course in 1966, set a fine example in this regard. C. T. Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Society, once asked Brother Macmillan for his thoughts on who might take charge of the work in his absence. In the discussion that followed, Brother Macmillan did not once promote himself, though it would have been quite convenient for him to do so. In the end, Brother Russell invited Brother Macmillan to consider accepting the assignment. "I stood there half dazed," Brother Macmillan wrote years later. "I did think it over, very seriously, and prayed about it for some time before I finally told him I would be happy to do all that I could do to assist him."

<sup>14</sup> Not long afterward, Brother Russell passed away, leaving the office of the [Watch Tower Society's](#) presidency vacant. Since Brother Macmillan was in charge during Brother Russell's final preaching tour, a brother remarked to him: "Mac, you have a strong chance of getting in yourself. You were Brother Russell's special representative when he was gone, and he told all of us to do as you say. Well, he went away and never did return. It looks like you're the man to carry on." Brother Macmillan responded: "Brother, that's not the way to look at this matter. This is the Lord's work and the only position you get in the Lord's [organization](#) is what the Lord sees fit to give you; and I am sure I'm not the man for the job." Then Brother Macmillan recommended someone else for the position. Like Gideon, he had a modest view of himself—a view we do well to adopt.

<sup>15</sup> We too should be modest in the manner in which we carry out our assignment. Gideon was discreet, and he strove not to anger his opposers unnecessarily. Similarly, in our preaching work, we should be modest and discreet about how we talk to others. True, we are engaged in a spiritual warfare to overturn "strongly entrenched things" and "reasonings." ([2 Corinthians 10:4, 5](#)) But we should not talk down to others or give them any valid cause for taking offense at our message. Instead, we should respect their views, emphasize what we may hold in common, and then focus on the positive aspects of our message.—[Acts 22:1-3](#); [1 Corinthians 9:22](#); [Revelation 21:4](#).

### Jesus—The Supreme Example of Modesty

<sup>16</sup> The finest example of modesty is that of Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup> Despite his intimate relationship with his Father, Jesus did not hesitate to acknowledge that some matters were beyond the scope of his authority. ([John 1:14](#)) For instance, when the mother of

Watchtower makes this a critical issue by saying being part of *their* particular Organization is an essential requirement of [salvation](#).

"Come to Jehovah's organization for salvation" *Watchtower* 1981 Nov 15 p.212

The earthly leaders of this organization, the Governing Body, are said to be appointed by Christ and the only means by which he directs his true followers today.

"Consider, too, the fact that **Jehovah's organization alone**, in all the earth, is **directed by God's holy spirit** or active force. (Zech. 4:6) Only this organization functions for Jehovah's purpose and to his praise. To it alone God's Sacred Word, the Bible, is not a sealed book." [\*Watchtower\* 1973 Jul 1 p.402](#)

"However, the **Governing Body** are **appointed through the holy spirit** under the direction of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ." *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.18

"These overseers faithfully seek to apply **instructions received from Jehovah** God and Jesus Christ **by means of** the faithful and discreet slave and its Governing Body." *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.20

"**Christ thus leads** the congregation **by means of** the spirit-anointed "faithful and discreet slave" and its **Governing Body**." *Examining the Scriptures Daily* 2007 p.34

"Jehovah's visible organization can use you, but can get along without you too. But you cannot get along without it. Fruitless ones are eventually pruned off and never missed as new ones are grafted in. Pruned-off branches soon wither and die, being cut off from the circulating, life-giving sap." *Watchtower* 1950 Jan 15 p.26

Most significantly, following and trusting the Organization is equated to trusting in Jehovah God.

"Demonstrating trust in Jehovah also involves trusting his organization and those whom he is using to take the lead ... Now more than ever before, it is important to demonstrate complete trust in Jehovah" *Elders Meet With Regular Pioneers, Special Pioneers, and Field Missionaries* Oct 2020 S-211-21-E 10/20

The word "Organization" does not appear in the Bible.

This is the most significant concept behind being a Jehovah's Witness. Believing in God is not what makes a Witness unique, as a large portion of people believe in God. Trusting in the Bible is not the key factor to being a Witness, as billions of people believe they follow the Bible. It is belonging to the "Organization" that distinguishes one of Jehovah's Witnesses and makes them feel solely worthy of salvation.

This raises the following questions;

- Is membership of an organization essential for salvation?
- Has Jehovah always operated through an organization?

Throughout this site, I use the term "Watchtower" to refer to the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses as a whole, including the parent corporation that oversees the religion, The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, founded in 1884, along with the numerous other legal entities

used by Jehovah's Witnesses, with the Governing Body as the leaders. The role of the Governing Body has experienced ongoing change ever since inception, both spiritually and legally. To avoid argument over semantics, I use "Watchtower" to refer to Jehovah's organisation, and "Governing Body" as the human leaders of Watchtower.

## **Requirement of Salvation**

The word "organization" *never* appears in the Bible.

However, organization appears 16,789 times on the 2006 Watchtower Library CD. This is because belonging to an organization is not a Scriptural requirement, but rather a common concept amongst high control groups as a technique of building a member's high degree of conviction and uniformity.

Watchtower claims that belonging to an organization is essential for salvation.

"To receive everlasting life in the earthly Paradise we **must identify that organization** and serve God as part of it." *Watchtower* 1983 Feb 15 p.12

It is not stated in either the Old or New Testaments that membership of an organization is a requirement of salvation. The Scriptures repeatedly state that it is faith in Jesus and the Father that results in everlasting life.

"... obtain the **salvation** that is in **union with Christ** Jesus along with everlasting glory." 2 *Timothy* 2:10

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising **faith in him** might not be destroyed but **have everlasting life** ... He that exercises faith in the Son has everlasting life." *John* 3:16, 36

"And yet YOU do not want to **come to me** that YOU may have life." *John* 5:40

"**I am the door**; whoever enters through me will be saved, and he will go in and out and find pasturage." *John* 10:9

"This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." *John* 17:3

"Hence let no one be boasting in men; for all things belong to YOU, whether Paul or Apol'los or Ce'phas or the world or life or death or things now here or things to come, all things belong to YOU; in turn YOU **belong to Christ**; Christ, in turn, belongs to God." *1 Corinthians* 3:21



*Watchtower* 2013 Apr 15 p.29

To appreciate the level of adulation Watchtower followers are expected to have for the organization, it is revealing that the *Watchtower* April 2013 study article titled "Make Sure of the More Important Things" uses the term "organization" 24 times, but Jesus only 18 times. The following article then contains an image outlining the composition of the organization that does not even include Jesus, but rather the Governing Body directly below Jehovah on his throne.

The *Watchtower* 1975 Sep 1 p.531 asks "**Where** could we turn if we would leave God's organization today? There is **nowhere** else! (John 6:66-69)". This quote refers to *John* for support that there is nowhere other than the Organization. However, John makes a very different point:

"Simon Peter answered him: "Lord, **whom** shall we go away to? **You** have sayings of everlasting life.'" *John* 6:68

One cannot help but wonder how Jesus feels having Watchtower applying this Scripture to themselves, rather than to him.

### **Does God require an Organization?**

As the word "organization" does not appear in the Bible, the Watchtower uses *1 Corinthians* 14:33 - "God is a God, not of disorder, but of peace" - to indicate that an

Organization is necessary. In similar vein, *Watchtower* 1981 May 1 p.30 claims Jehovah indicates he needs an organization because wants "an arrangement of things."

It is a big leap to insist descriptions of God as orderly and arranged proves he needs a human organization to represent him.

The existence of an organization does not guarantee order, nor is an organization a prerequisite for orderliness. This does not mean that organization is not necessary. People need to be organised for efficient operation of congregations and preaching. Rather, it is unquestioning allegiance to the leaders of an Organization that is not supported Scripturally.

Early Christians were *organised* into congregations, as are Christian religions today. For the spread of Christianity it has been necessary to create organizations. For example, in modern times religious groups often need to establish legal entities or organizations in order to purchase halls to meet in and for the publication of literature.

In an attempt to enforce the authority of the Watchtower Society, articles claim God has always operated through a *single* organization.

"The Bible shows that Jehovah has **always** guided his servants in an organized way. ... The nation of Israel was called "Jehovah's congregation." (*Numbers* 20:4; *1 Chronicles* 28:8) If you were a true worshiper of Jehovah back then, you had to be part of that congregation of worshipers, not separate from it. Did Jehovah ever use more than **one organization** during any period of time? In Noah's day only Noah and those with him inside the ark had God's protection and survived the floodwaters. (1 Peter 3:20) Also, in the first century there were **not two or more Christian organizations**. God dealt with just the one. There was just the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Ephesians 4:5) Likewise in our day Jesus Christ foretold that there would be only one source of spiritual instruction for God's people." *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* p.192

Bible history proves that this is not the case. For the majority of history God has not used any organization. He predominantly has operated through individuals, and has regularly dealt with more than one group at a time.

Originally God dealt directly with Adam and Eve. He continued to deal directly with Abel, and also directly with the unrighteous man Cain. (Gen 4:15) For the next 2000 years there is no mention of any organization or intervention by God, except for when God dealt with two individuals; Enoch and Noah.

After the flood, Jehovah continued to deal with individuals rather than with an organization. He concurrently dealt separately with individuals such as Lot and Abraham.

## **Israel**

There is only one period of time during which it can be claimed that God dealt with an organization. This was not until 2,500 years after the creation of mankind, with the formation of the Nation of Israel under Moses. Yet even whilst he dealt through this group, he continued to deal with individuals and other groups.

During the time of the nation of Israel, Jehovah dealt with individuals not associated with the Israelites. For example, it was during this time that Jehovah was involved directly with Job, a man "blameless and upright, and fearing God and turning aside from bad the greatest of all the Orientals. (*Job* 1:1-3)

After many decades, Jehovah instituted a King in Israel. This was not will, but because of their insistence on requiring a visible king. This desire for a human leader was considered a rejection of Jehovah, who stated:

"... it is I whom they have rejected from being king over them." *1 Samuel* 8:7.

During the history of Israel, God did not deal only with the King. In fact Saul, the very first king, attempted to kill David and so David fled to live in the apostate land of Philistia with Achish the king of Gath, all the time protected by Jehovah. Jehovah also operated through Levites, the Priests and a variety of Bible writers of diverse stations. He regularly rose up independent prophets to chastise his erring kingly representative. Generally these individual prophets were sent by Jehovah to condemn the Israelites. What cannot be overlooked is that from the first leader and for most of its history, Israel were apostate rejecters of Jehovah.

At the death of only the third king Jehovah foretold "Here I am ripping the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and I shall certainly give you ten tribes. And the one tribe is what will continue his for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel." (*1 Kings* 11:31-32) After Solomon's death God proceeded to split the Israelites into two separate nations, each with their own priestly class. Until the destruction of Israel, Jehovah dealt with the Northern kingdom separately from the Southern kingdom.

For a short time after the fall of Jerusalem, God continued to deal directly with individuals, such as Daniel. After the release from Babylon, God was with Ezra and Nehemiah and was involved with the rebuilding of the temple. Then a period of 500 years ensued with no record of any intervention from God until the time of Jesus, no evidence that God actively dealt through this visible organization.

### **Christian Times**

When Jesus arrived, the priesthood was still God's representative. The Jews were considered to be God's Nation until the the temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. However Jesus and his disciples stood up against that organization and publicly condemned the Priests, in effect setting up a second rival organization to the one still representing God.

While this second group was following Jesus, the Bible shows that there were individuals unattached to Jesus followers whose worship was also considered acceptable.

"John said to him: "Teacher, we saw a certain man expelling demons by the use of your name and **we tried to prevent him, because he was not accompanying us.**" But Jesus said: "Do not try to prevent him, for there is no one that will do a powerful work on the basis of my name that will quickly be able to revile me; for **he that is not against us is for us.** For whoever gives YOU



a cup of water to drink on the ground that **YOU belong to Christ**, I truly tell YOU, he will by no means lose his reward. But whoever stumbles one of these little ones that believe, it would be finer for him if a millstone such as is turned by an ass were put around his neck and he were actually pitched into the sea." *Mark 9:38-42*

Here Jesus shows that a person could belong to him without following the group of apostles. Belonging to an organization was not as important as it was to "belong to Christ."

After Jesus death, his disciples actively went against the nation of Israel and the high priest, even whilst they were still considered God's earthly representative. *Acts 5:27-29* describes such an occasion:

"And the high priest questioned them and said: "We positively ordered YOU not to keep teaching upon the basis of this name, and yet, look! YOU have filled Jerusalem with YOUR teaching, and YOU are determined to bring the blood of this man upon us." In answer Peter and the [other] apostles said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."

During all this time, early Christianity was loosely structured, unlike the Watchtower organization today. There was no formal incorporation and no multibillion dollar property empire of kingdom halls and Bethel buildings.

### **How Directed?**

"But in reply he said: "I tell YOU, If these remained silent, the stones would cry out."" *Luke 19:40*

Presuming that God needs an earthly organization shows lack of faith in his ability to operate through individuals. Early Christians were not directed by an organization but by the words of Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

"I have many things yet to say to YOU, but YOU are not able to bear them at present. However, when that one arrives, **the spirit of the truth, he will guide YOU into all the truth**, for he will not speak of his own impulse, but what things he hears he will speak, and he will declare to YOU the things coming." *John 16:12-13*

*John 4* contains a discussion between Jesus and a Samaritan woman. Samaritans and Jews, both descendants of Abraham, had differing opinions of who represented God's organization. Jesus explained, "the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ... Nevertheless, the hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for indeed, the Father is looking for ones like these to worship him." True worship is spiritual, it is not about fleshly organizations.

Jesus promised that he would direct his followers no matter how few were gathered together.

"Where there are two or three gathered together in my name, there **I am in their midst!**" *Matthew 18:20*

It was under the guidance of Holy Spirit that followers of Jesus accomplished their work.

"... with the power of signs and portents, with **the power of holy spirit**; so that from Jerusalem and in a circuit as far as Illyricum I have thoroughly preached the good news about the Christ." *Romans* 15:19

*Acts* 2:1-4 describes the Holy Spirit speaking truth through 120 disciples and *Acts* 4:31 says;

"... they were one and all filled with the holy spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness."

Christian congregations met in houses with like minded people worshipping Christ. Paul explained this was for "upbuilding" each other (*1 Corinthians* 14:5). Holy Spirit appointed mature older men to oversee (*Acts* 20) whilst the older women were teachers of good (*Titus* 2:3, 4).

There was freedom within congregations to discuss different points of view without fear of retribution, as shown by open discussion on circumcision. Consensus was reached at *Acts* 15 that circumcision was not required, but that it was necessary to abstain "from things sacrificed to idols (v29)". Yet even this statement was not binding regulation, since Paul later explained at *1 Corinthians* 8 that food sacrificed to idols need only be avoided if eating it would cause a brother to stumble.

The formation of congregations indicates order, but does not imply an elite group of specially directed leaders in a position to demand unquestioning obedience.

An organization or corporation can be useful in maintaining order. They may be necessary in fulfilling the legal requirements involved in running a religion. For instance, the *Proclaimers* book mentions the "Peoples Pulpit Association" as:

"A New York corporation formed in 1909 in connection with the Society's moving of its principal offices to Brooklyn, New York." [\*Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom\* p.73](#)

However, the *Proclaimers* book goes on to discuss how members from this male dominated corporation were also involved in electing the next Watchtower leader following the death of Russell. It was not until 1971 that the Watch Tower Society members stopped being part of the process to "vote in members of the anointed Governing Body." (w2001 1/15 p.29)

**CHURCH FEDERATION**  
*COUNTING THE COST*  
 BROOKLYN  
**ACADEMY OF MUSIC**  
 AT 3 O'CLOCK P.M.

<b>SUNDAY JAN 16</b> <i>What Congregationalists Methodists &amp; Presbyterians Must Surrender</i>	<b>SUNDAY JAN 30</b> <i>What Episcopalians Catholics &amp; Lutherans Must Surrender</i>
<b>SUNDAY JAN 23</b> <i>What Baptists Disciples &amp; Adventists Must Surrender</i>	<b>SUNDAY FEB 6</b> <i>The Church Militant Surrender to The Church Triumphant</i>

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE  
**PEOPLES PULPIT ASSOCIATION**  
 OF NEW YORK

This cross pollination of church, corporation and organization does not parallel with any Scriptural structure. This is a typical corporate approach without any demonstration of spirit

guidance, despite how the Watchtower leadership try to mystify their role as spiritually appointed leaders that must not be questioned.

## **Historical Development**

When Russell started publishing *Zion's Watch Tower*, he was not a link in an unbroken chain extending through history as Jehovah's organization. He had turned his back on organized religion and gone out alone. He promoted this rebellion against organization, writing:

"(2) Beware of "organization." It is wholly unnecessary. The Bible rules will be the only rules you will need. Do not seek to bind others' consciences, and do not permit others to bind yours. Believe and obey so far as you can understand God's Word today, and so continue growing in grace and knowledge and love day by day."

**(2) Beware of "organization." It is wholly unnecessary. The Bible rules will be the only rules you will need. Do not seek to bind others' consciences, and do not permit others to bind yours. Believe and obey so far as you can understand God's Word today, and so continue growing in grace and knowledge and love day by day.**

*Watchtower* 1895 Sep 15 reprints p.1866.

Being a genuine Christian was what was important.

"We are in fellowship with all Christians in whom we can recognize the Bible as the only standard. We do not require, therefore, that all shall see just as we do in order to be called Christians, realising that growth in both grace and knowledge is a gradual process." *Watchtower* 1882 Apr reprints p.344

"The test of membership in the New Creation will not be membership in any earthly organization, but union with the Lord as a member of his mystical body;" *Millennial Dawn - The New Creation* (1904) p.74

However, as time went on, Russell started to promote the importance of his own writings as essential to learning truth. Thirty years after he started publishing, he was being referred to as Pastor, accepted the title of Faithful Slave and wrote that his books were essential for an understanding of the Bible, in fact more important than to read the Bible alone.

"Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the divine plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the SCRIPTURE STUDIES aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with them, after he has read them for ten years - if he then lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had earnest heed to the opportunities for service and consider that merely read the SCRIPTURE STUDIES with their references, and had not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures." *Watchtower* 1910 Sep 15 reprints p.344

Whilst this concept that Watchtower publications are essential for knowing truth continues to this day, the reality is that anyone holding to Russell's teachings is considered apostate by Jehovah's Witnesses.

Following Russell's death, Rutherford proceeded to enforce an organisational structure upon Watchtower followers. In 1919, congregations were to "register as a service organization within the Society..." (*Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* p.95), moving congregational control under international direction. In 1920, it became a requirement to report participation in witnessing. Direction of the preaching work became the reasoning behind a stricter organisational structure.

"The efficiency with which the witness must be given of necessity depends largely upon the organized efforts made in the field." *Watchtower* 1922 Dec 15 reprints p.389

In 1932, Rutherford changed the elder arrangement, stating it was "not according to the principles of the great Theocrat, who rules his sanctuary from the top down." (*Jehovah's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose* p.127). The concept of a theocratic organization was not introduced until 1938.

"Continued advancement brought them the understanding that both Jehovah and his enemy, Satan, have an invisible organization. .... It was in 1938 that *The Watchtower* published an article on organisation that showed how God's organization should be theocratic." *Watchtower* 1965 Jul 15 p.428

Far from Jehovah always using an organization, Watchtower sprung onto the scene, and then took many decades to morph into the tightly controlled organization it is today that accepts no dissonance.

Whilst pushing that belonging to Jehovah's organization is [essential for salvation](#), it claims the opposite when preaching against other religions that try to say the same.

"We must seek to be genuine Christians in every sense of the word. Does that mean we have to join a church organisation in Christendom? Ask yourself now, Did Christ Jesus, who set our example and told us to follow his example to gain life, join any church organization in his day? No, God does not require us to do that; but he requires us to worship him, to preach the good news of the Kingdom, to be Christians, to follow the example Jesus set, living in unalterable devotion to Jehovah God; to praise God and respect his supremacy, to resist all efforts to turn us from decency and to endure in faith. We have the Bible to show us the right way. Certainly it is not necessary for a person to become a member of a church to gain everlasting life." *Watchtower* 1953 Mar 1 p.143

## **Conclusion**

Whilst Watchtower says Jehovah has always had an organization and leader, that is not the case at all. According to the Bible, God has had a chosen people that he directed for a very small part of recorded human history, and that group has been inaccessible to most humans. The coverage of the Israelites and Early Christians encompassed just a small part of the human population.

Watchtower leaders constantly promote that following them as the earthly leaders of Jehovah's Organization equates to following Jehovah. This concept becomes so ingrained that *followers cannot distinguish the difference between leaving the religion and leaving Jehovah.*

Watchtower describes itself as Jehovah's "wife" and "earthly instrument".

"However, what we see exemplified in God's woman, his heavenly universal organization, we should look to see in his visible organization. Why? Because his higher, greater universal organization uses it as her earthly instrument. That is why we do see those motherly traits, those traits and acts of a virtuous woman, in the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and in the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, because these profess to represent and serve God's woman. We thank God for providing and using them. So we stand up respectfully and bless his faithful organization, his queenly "woman" in heaven which makes all these loving provisions for us as children of God." *Watchtower* 1950 Oct 1 p.348 "

Referring to Watchtower as Jehovah's earthly organization creates an air of divine authority. Personification as a motherly woman creates fear of displeasing "her". In reality, Watchtower is a company with a Charter, incorporated in America. It is a worldly corporation run by progression of men. Like any company, its foremost concern is ultimately growth and financial viability, achieved through book sales and donations.

In *The Myth of Certainty: The Reflective Christian & the Risk of Commitment* (InteVarsity Press, 1986, 1992) pp.29-30 Professor Daniel Taylor warns:

"The primary goal of all institutions and subcultures is self-preservation. Preserving the faith is central to God's plan for human history; preserving particular religious institutions is not. Do not expect those who run the institutions to be sensitive to the difference. God needs no particular person, church, denomination, creed or organization to accomplish his purpose."

The concept of Jehovah having one single organization that he directs by means of a Governing Body is used to support the concept that being a Jehovah's Witness is essential for salvation. Though the Bible consistently says it is faith in Jesus that is important, Watchtower shifts attention to the Organization with statements such as "we must uphold the truth of that organization." (*Watchtower* 1961 May 1 p.276) The Governing Body uses this principle to set itself as a spiritual authority above the Bible, such as when stating:

"Thus the Bible is an organizational book and belongs to the Christian congregation as an organization, not to individuals, regardless of how sincerely they may believe that they can interpret the Bible. For this reason the Bible cannot be properly understood without Jehovah's visible organization in mind." *Watchtower* 1967 Oct 1 p.587

Though an organization is never mentioned by Jesus, Jehovah's Witnesses believe that all other Christian religions will be [destroyed](#) by God, because they do not follow Watchtower defined truth. Jesus said "He that believes has everlasting life"(John 6:47) and "I know my sheep and my sheep know me"(John 10:14). When a Jehovah's Witness reads passages like these they are trained to understand "whoever believes *what the Watchtower says about Jesus may have everlasting life*", and "the sheep know me, *only by means of the Watchtower Society*". This is not

unique; it is common that "the cult and its beliefs become the only true path to salvation."  
(*Combating Cult Mind Control*, Hassan, p.202).

It is apparent that for most of the history of the Bible, Jehovah did not have a visible organization. Even during the short period that he used the Nation of Israel, he regularly dealt with individuals in preference to the leaders of that nation. This was also the case during early Christian times. Furthermore, belonging to these groups was no guarantee of being acceptable to God, as from the start both the Jews and early Christians were plagued with corruption and apostasy.

Related to the topic of an Organization are the articles:

- [Was there a first century Governing Body?](#)
- [Who are the Faithful and Discreet Slave?](#)
- [Have there Always Been Jehovah's Witnesses?](#)

Written 2007. Latest update Oct 2020.

## ARTICLE 4

<https://jwfacts.com/watchtower/governing-body.php>

### Governing Body

The Watchtower claims to structure its leadership hierarchy after a model set by a first century, Christian governing body. However, the term "governing body" does not appear in the New Testament. Neither does the concept of a small, centralised group of leaders.



### First Century Governing Body?

Jehovah's Witnesses are strongly controlled by a central leadership, known as the Governing Body. They are said to be appointed by holy spirit, and pass on instructions from Jehovah and Jesus.

The term "Governing Body" never appears in the Bible

"However, the Governing Body are **appointed through the holy spirit** under the direction of Jehovah God and Jesus Christ." *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.18

"These overseers faithfully seek to apply **instructions received from Jehovah** God and Jesus Christ by means of the faithful and discreet slave and its Governing Body." *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.20

"**Christ thus leads** the congregation **by means** of the spirit-anointed "faithful and discreet slave" and its Governing Body." *Examining the Scriptures Daily* 2007 p.34

The Watchtower claims that a formal governing body was established in the first century, which is used as the basis for how the Governing Body of the Watchtower Society operate today.



## 14 GOVERNING BODY

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The Governing Body is the group of men with the heavenly hope who are used by God to direct the work of his people. In the first century, Jehovah used a governing body to guide the early Christian congregation in their worship and their preaching work. (Acts 15:2) Today, the group of brothers who serve as the Governing Body take the lead in directing, guiding, and protecting God's people. When these brothers make decisions, they rely on guidance from God's Word and his holy spirit. Jesus spoke of this group of anointed men as "the faithful and discreet slave."—Matthew 24:45-47.

*How to Remain in God's Love* (2017) p.243

"While all anointed Christians collectively form God's household, there is abundant evidence that Christ chose a small number of men out of the slave class to serve as a visible governing body. The early history of the congregation shows that the 12 apostles, including Matthias, were the foundation of the first-century governing body." *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.11

The term "governing body" is 'loaded language' as it *never* appears in the Scriptures and so has unique application within the pages of the Watchtower. How does the Watchtower justify a Governing Body when the term does not exist in the Bible? This is by reference to the issue of circumcision as discussed in *Acts* chapter 15. This is the sole Bible example of brothers convening to establish doctrine.

On this occasion, it cannot be said that the decision was made by an established governing body. *Acts* 15:2 says:

"... they arranged for **Paul and Barnabas and some others** of them to go up to **the apostles and older men** in Jerusalem regarding this dispute."

Rather than showing the existence of a small number of 12 leaders being referred to as a governing body, *Acts* describes a large gathering. This was comprised of the apostles, older men (elders), Paul and Barnabas, who were travelling missionaries, and others. This large group combined to decide on an important issue affecting the local congregations.

The history of the Apostle Paul also shows that there was no centralized governing body directing the early Christians. After Paul's conversion, he did not convene with a governing body or go to Jerusalem to receive an assignment. Rather, he immediately embarked on his missionary work under direction of the Holy Spirit. Paul did not make his first trip to Jerusalem until three years after his conversion, and even then he did not meet with a group of leaders, but just with Peter and James.

*Galatians* 1:17-19 "Neither did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles previous to me, but I went off into Arabia, and I came back again to Damascus. Then three years later I went up

to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him for fifteen days. But I saw no one else of the apostles, only James the brother of the Lord."

Paul then did not go back to Jerusalem for another fourteen years (*Galations 2:1-3*), possibly for the occasion described in *Acts 15*.

Schaff's *History of the Christian Church* shows that after the issue of circumcision was resolved, "we have no trace of Councils before the middle of the second century."

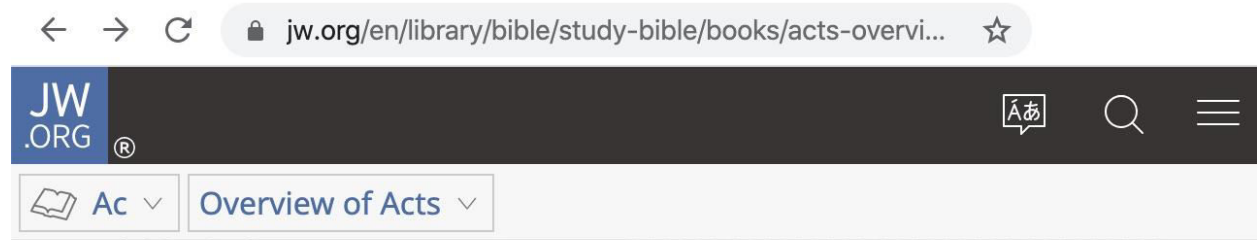
Whilst the term Governing Body, or even the concept of a Governing Body in the format of the Watch Tower Society, does not appear in the Bible, the 2013 edition of the *New World Translation* has unfaithfully added the term to its "Outline of Contents," subconsciously making this appear to be a Bible concept.

# ACTS OF APOSTLES

## OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Address to Theophilus (1-5)  
Witnesses to the ends of the earth (6-8)  
Jesus ascends to heaven (9-11)  
Disciples gather in unity (12-14)  
Matthias chosen to replace Judas (15-26)
- 2 Holy spirit poured out at Pentecost (1-13)  
Peter's speech (14-36)  
Crowds respond to Peter's speech (37-41)  
    3,000 baptized (41)  
Christian fellowship (42-47)
- 3 Peter heals a lame beggar (1-10)  
Peter's speech at Solomon's Colonnade (11-26)  
    "Restoration of all things" (21)  
    A prophet like Moses (22)
- 4 Peter and John questioned (1-4)  
    Believers now number 5,000 men (4)  
Trial before the Sanhedrin (5-22)  
    "We cannot stop speaking" (20)  
Prayer for boldness (23-31)  
Disciples share possessions (32-37)
- 5 Ananias and Sapphira (1-11)  
Apostles perform many signs (12-16)  
Imprisoned and set free (17-21a)  
Brought before the Sanhedrin again (21b-32)  
    'Obey God rather than men' (29)  
Gamaliel's advice (33-40)  
Preaching from house to house (41, 42)
- 6 Seven men chosen to minister (1-7)  
Stephen accused of blasphemy (8-15)
- 7 Stephen's speech before the Sanhedrin (1-53)  
    Era of the patriarchs (2-16)  
    Moses' leadership; Israel's idolatry (17-43)  
    God does not live in man-made temples (44-50)  
Stoning of Stephen (54-60)
- 8 Saul the persecutor (1-3)  
Philip's fruitful ministry in Samaria (4-13)  
Peter and John sent to Samaria (14-17)  
Simon tries to buy holy spirit (18-25)  
The Ethiopian eunuch (26-40)
- 9 Saul on the way to Damascus (1-9)  
Ananias sent to help Saul (10-19a)  
Saul preaches about Jesus in Damascus (19b-25)  
Saul visits Jerusalem (26-31)  
Peter heals Aeneas (32-35)  
Generous Dorcas resurrected (36-43)
- 10 Cornelius' vision (1-8)  
Peter's vision of cleansed animals (9-16)  
Peter visits Cornelius (17-33)  
Peter proclaims good news for Gentiles (34-43)  
    "God is not partial" (34, 35)  
Gentiles receive holy spirit and get baptized (44-48)
- 11 Peter reports to the apostles (1-18)  
Barnabas and Saul in Antioch of Syria (19-26)  
    Disciples first called Christians (26)  
Agabus foretells famine (27-30)
- 12 James killed; Peter imprisoned (1-5)  
Peter miraculously set free (6-19)  
Herod struck by an angel (20-25)
- 13 Barnabas and Saul sent as missionaries (1-3)  
Ministry on Cyprus (4-12)  
Paul's speech in Antioch of Pisidia (13-41)  
Prophetic command to turn to the nations (42-52)
- 14 Increase and opposition in Iconium (1-7)  
Mistaken for gods in Lystra (8-18)  
Paul survives stoning (19, 20)  
Strengthening the congregations (21-23)  
Returning to Antioch of Syria (24-28)
- 15 Dispute in Antioch regarding circumcision (1, 2)  
Question brought to Jerusalem (3-5)  
Elders and apostles meet together (6-21)  
**Letter from the governing body (22-29)**  
    Abstain from blood (28, 29)  
Congregations encouraged by letter (30-35)  
Paul and Barnabas go separate ways (36-41)

In the online version, "governing body" appears in the "Overview of Acts" (as of 25th March 2020.)



- I. Paul's First Missionary Tour (13:1-14:28) . . . . . +
- J. The Jerusalem Meeting Regarding Circumcision (15:1-35) . . . . . -
  - The dispute in Antioch regarding circumcision brought to Jerusalem (15:1-5)
  - The apostles and elders in Jerusalem meet; testimonies from Peter, Paul, and Barnabas (15:6-12)
  - James' proposal based on the Scriptures (15:13-21)
  - Letter from the governing body in Jerusalem (15:22-29)
  - The congregations encouraged by the letter (15:30-35)

What exactly does the passage at chapter 15 say? Does it use the term "governing body"? Does it say the apostles alone were involved in this doctrinal decision? Not at all.

*Acts 15:22,23* "Then the apostles and the elders, together with the whole congregation, decided to send chosen men from among them to Antioch, along with Paul and Barnabas; they sent Judas who was called Barsabbas and Silas, who were leading men among the brothers. They wrote this and sent it through them:"

Decision making was not vested in a small group of leaders. Rather the congregation, including the apostles, elders, Paul and Barnabas all were involved in coming to agreement on the issue and composing the letter to distribute their findings. A small, controlling group of leaders did not have total power over the early Christian congregations.

### Historical Development

Since incorporation in 1884, the Watchtower Society was led by a President and board of directors. The first three Presidents, Russell, followed by Rutherford and Knorr, had complete control over doctrine. It was not until 1976 that this power was shifted from a single individual to a group, referred to as the Governing Body.

The term governing body was not applied to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society until the *Watchtower* 1943 July 15 p.216, which described it as a "legal governing body". In the *Watchtower* 1944 November 1 p.328, it was discussed that "a visible governing body under Jehovah God and his Christ" be involved in the election of elders and the 1955 *Qualified to be Ministers* p.381 applied this term to "the board of directors of this corporation." Although this governing body had legal and operational powers, matters of doctrine remained at the discretion of the President.



Board of Directors, referred to as a governing body between 1944 and 1971. Left to right - Lyman Swingle, Thomas J. Sullivan, Grant Suiter, Hugo Reimer, Nathan H. Knorr (President), Fred W. Franz (Vice-President) and Milton G. Henschel.

Until 1971, the term governing body was spelt with a small g and b, as a description of the operational function the board played. In the *Watchtower* 1971 December 15, the term was capitalised as the "Governing Body of Jehovah's witnesses", and explained to be the group leading the religion, separate from the board of directors, although the membership of the board of directors was comprised only of Governing Body members until 2000. Their power was still limited until January 1st 1976, when authority was shifted from the President to operating committees comprised of Governing Body members.

To see the distinction between the capitalisation of Governing Body, see the *Watchtower* 2001 January 15 pp.28-29. This shows the formal introduction of the word as a proper noun when applied to the Watchtower leaders in 1971, as opposed to a governing body in the first century and when applied to the Watchtower board of directors.

When introducing the new concept of a Governing Body that represents the Faithful and Discreet Slave, the *Watchtower* 1971 made the claim that "a governing body made its appearance" after the 1884 formation of Zion's Watch Tower Society (December 15 p.761). This backdating attempted to include Russell and the early leaders as part of the governing body.

Attempting to include the early leaders and board of directors as the governing body creates the discrepancy that Hayden Covington, who was not one of the anointed and was a Director and

Vice President between 1939 and 1945, must be considered one of the governing body, despite this only being open to the anointed. (See *Watchtower* 2001 Jan 15 p.28.)

The Watchtower shows dishonesty by presenting a revisionist history when it indicates that there was a Governing Body since 1944, by capitalising the letters GB, even though the term was not capitalised until 1971 and the "theocratic" leadership was not shifted from the President to the Governing Body until 1976. An example of this appeared in 2012.

"After his evening discourse in a school, Hugo Riemer, who later became a member of the Governing Body, answered Bible questions until past midnight." *Watchtower* 2012 Aug 15 p.31

Hugo Riemer was not a member of the Governing Body, but rather the governing body, from 1943 until his death in 1965, whereas the Governing Body was not established until 1971, six years after Riemer's death.



Governing Body 2007

### **Watchtower Leaders**

The Governing Body claim to have theocratic guidance and to be directed by holy spirit.

"God's visible organization today also receives theocratic guidance and direction. At the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York, there is a governing body of older Christian men from various parts of the earth who give the needed oversight to the worldwide activities of God's people. This governing body is made up of members of "the faithful and discreet slave." It serves as a spokesman for that faithful "slave."

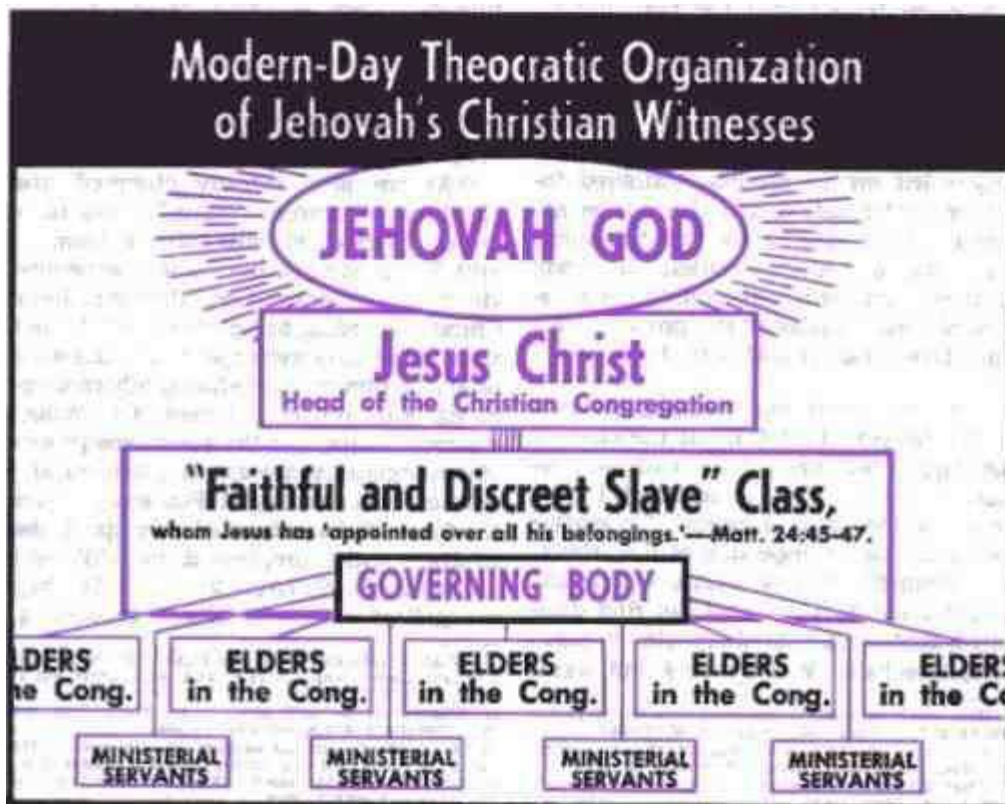
The men of that governing body, like the apostles and older men in Jerusalem, have many years of experience in God's service. But they do not rely on human wisdom in making decisions. No, being governed theocratically, they follow the example of the early governing body in Jerusalem,

whose decisions were based on God's Word and were made under the direction of holy spirit." *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* p.195

They are God's self-proclaimed spokesman.

"In prophetic fulfillment, Elihu pictures the governing body in Jehovah's New World society on earth today. Through this zealous spokesman, Jehovah has brought correction and admonition to his witnesses on earth, building them up in right doctrine, cleansing them from sanctimonious religious practices and making clear their responsibility to proclaim his glorious kingdom by Christ." *Watchtower* 1961 Aug 15 p.491

A 1971 illustration from the *Watchtower* positions the Governing Body as representatives of the Faithful and Discreet Slave, which included all of the Anointed.



*Watchtower* 197

1 Dec 15 p.749

This was never in effect the case, as only the Governing Body ever had any final say over procedure and doctrine. In the Annual Meeting of 2012, the Governing Body finally openly proclaimed that they alone had this power vested in them, and alone hold position as the [Slave](#).

The Governing Body rules by fiat; that is, they have absolute authority. It is said that the Watchtower Governing Body must be submitted to because Jesus actively directs them.

"Naturally, all elders must submit to Christ's "right hand" of control, guidance, and direction, which he exercises by means of the spirit and the spirit-begotten members of the Governing Body." *Watchtower* 1987 Aug 1 p.19

The Governing Body has gone as far as to change the text of *Micah* 6:8 in their 2013 *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (NWT) in order to be able to demand loyalty. Early versions of the NWT used the word "kindness", in line with *Strong's Concordance*.

NWT 1961 - *Micah* 6:8 "And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love **kindness** and to be modest in walking with your God?"

kindness

H2617

כֶּחֶד *cheded*

Strong's Definitions [?]

(Strong's Definitions Legend)

כֶּחֶד *cheded*, keh'-sed; from H2616; kindness; by implication (towards God) piety; rarely (by opposition) reproof, or (subjectively) beauty:—favour, good deed(-liness, -ness), kindly, (loving-) kindness, merciful (kindness), mercy, pity, reproach, wicked thing.

Virtually all translations use either the word kindness (AMP, AMPC, ESV, ESVUK, EXB, ICG, LEB, MEV, NASB, RSV, ASV, YLT) or mercy (KJV, NKJV, GNV, GW, JUB, KJ21, NLT, NIV, TLB, WEB, HNV, BRG, DRA).

In 2013, NWT changed "kindness" to "loyalty", despite few other translations using the concept of loyalty (ERV, MSG) or faithfulness (HCSB, NET).

NWT 2013 - *Micah* 6:8 "And what is Jehovah requiring of you? Only to exercise justice, to cherish **loyalty**, And to walk in modesty with your God!"

This change in the 2013 edition has opened way for Watchtower leaders to start using *Micah* 6:8 in application to themselves.

"Today, as in the past, Jehovah wants all of his servants to be loyal to him and respect those whom he allows to have authority.—Read *Micah* 6:8." [Watchtower Simplified 2016 Feb p.22](#)

As shown in the chapter on the [Mediator](#), the Governing Body also assumes the role of spiritual mediators for the Great Crowd. Being aware that the Governing Body has inserted itself as an intermediary in place of Jesus is important, as it is a common practice by groups using coercive persuasion. In Robert J. Lifton's *The Future of Immortality and Other Essays for a Nuclear Age* (New York, Basic Books, 1987) he writes;

"Mystical manipulation can take on a special quality in these cults because the leaders become mediators for God."

The claim that there is just one true Organization and that Jehovah uses the Governing Body of the Watchtower Society to direct his followers gives these leaders great power. It becomes justification for why a Jehovah's Witnesses must unquestioningly obey edict written in the Watchtower as if it is "the voice of God" (*Watchtower* 1957 June 15 p.370). It allows the Governing Body to [disfellowship](#) as apostates anyone that does not agree with all their doctrine, regardless of the ongoing changes that are being made. It allows them to add to the reasons that



the Bible specifically lists as worthy of shunning. It has also permitted the Governing Body to create rules covering all areas of worship; such as, how many meetings to attend, how to preach, what to wear, what to say, how often to go and how to report, criteria that have become viewed as important for salvation. Anything coming from the Governing Body is to be followed, regardless of how followers may feel about the directions.

"At that time, the lifesaving direction that we receive from Jehovah's organization may not appear practical from a human standpoint. All of us must be ready to obey any instructions we may receive, whether these appear sound from a strategic or human standpoint or not." *Watchtower* 2013 Nov 15 p.20

Power is known to corrupt, and leaders relish the power they have over their followers. Paul offered sage advice:

*1 Corinthians 7:23* "You were bought with a price; stop becoming slaves of men."

The Governing Body attempts to draw a parallel between themselves and the structure of Christianity in first century, drawing upon Acts chapter 15. However it is simply not the case that this Scripture can be used to imply there was a small, set group of leaders, referred to as governing body.

Related to the topic of governing body are the articles:

- [Is an Organization Required?](#)
- [Who are the Faithful and Discreet Slave?](#)
- [Have there Always Been Jehovah's Witnesses?](#)

Written 2006, latest update Mar 2020

## ARTICLE 5

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “God’s Visible Organization,” *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, 191-202, accessed December 29, 2020, <https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1101989113>

### Chapter 23

#### God’s Visible Organization

1. What does the Bible say about God’s invisible organization?

WHY CAN WE be certain that God has a visible organization? One reason is that he has an invisible organization. Jehovah created cherubs, seraphs and many other angels to do his will in the heavens. ([Genesis 3:24](#); [Isaiah 6:2, 3](#); [Psalm 103:20](#)) Jesus Christ is the Archangel over and above all of these. ([1 Thessalonians 4:16](#); [Jude 9](#); [Revelation 12:7](#)) The Bible describes the angels as being organized into “thrones or lordships or governments or authorities.” ([Colossians 1:16](#); [Ephesians 1:21](#)) All of them serve at Jehovah’s command, unitedly doing the work he has for them to do.—[Daniel 7:9, 10](#); [Job 1:6; 2:1](#).

**Comment: So far, so good. I would acknowledge that God has a visible church.**

2. How does the way that God created our material universe show that he puts great importance on organization?

<sup>2</sup>We also get an idea of the importance God puts on organization when we consider his material creations. For example, there are thousands of billions of stars in the universe that are arranged in huge groups called galaxies. These galaxies travel through space in an orderly way, and so do the individual stars and planets within these galaxies. Our planet Earth, for instance, each year makes a trip around the sun, which is our nearest star, in exactly 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 45.51 seconds. Yes, the material universe is highly organized!

**Comment: Again, this is not controversial. The argument has been made that the Universe, our solar system, our world and life on this world show evidence of fine tuning and intricate programing.**

3. What does the fine organization among God’s invisible creations and in his material universe teach us?

**Comment: That God is an all-powerful, supremely intelligent being that has intricately arranged the material universe.**

<sup>3</sup>Does this marvelous organization among God’s invisible creations and in his material universe teach us something? Yes, it teaches us that Jehovah is a God of organization. Surely, then, such a God would not leave humans on earth who really love him without guidance and organization.

**Comment: God has hardly left humans without guidance and organization. We have nature which proclaims God's presence (general revelation) and the Bible (special revelation). In addition there is the visible church proclaiming God's Word and ministering to people.**

#### GOD'S VISIBLE ORGANIZATION—PAST AND PRESENT

4, 5. How do we know that God led his people in an organized way in the days of Abraham and of the nation of Israel?

<sup>4</sup>The Bible shows that Jehovah has always guided his servants in an organized way. For example, men of faith such as Abraham led their families and servants in worshiping Jehovah. Jehovah made known his will for Abraham by speaking with him. ([Genesis 12:1](#)) And God instructed him to pass this information on to others, saying: "I have become acquainted with [Abraham] in order that he may command his sons and his household after him so that they shall keep Jehovah's way." ([Genesis 18:19](#)) Here was an orderly arrangement for a group of people to worship Jehovah properly.

**Comment: This was a family arrangement. God dealt with Abraham as an individual. During Abraham's life God also dealt with Lot. There is no argument that God worked through the people of Israel, God's chosen people to demonstrate his presence in the world.**

<sup>5</sup>Later, when the Israelites increased in numbers and became millions, Jehovah did not let each one worship in his own way, separate from any organized arrangement. No, the Israelites were formed into a nation of organized worshipers. The nation of Israel was called "Jehovah's congregation." ([Numbers 20:4](#); [1 Chronicles 28:8](#)) If you were a true worshiper of Jehovah back then, you had to be part of that congregation of worshipers, not separate from it.—[Psalm 147:19, 20](#).

**Comment: The Israelites were God's chosen people. God provided them with rules and regulations. There was a structure for the nation. It did not keep them from apostasy and punishment. The model showcases man's inability to follow God. (John 1:11 "He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.")**

6. (a) How did God show that his favor was on Christ's followers? (b) What evidence is there that Christians were organized for worship?

<sup>6</sup>What was the situation in the first century? The Bible shows that Jehovah's favor was upon the followers of his Son Jesus Christ. Jehovah poured out his holy spirit upon them. To show that he was now using this Christian organization rather than the nation of Israel, he gave certain early Christians power to heal the sick, raise the dead and to perform other miracles. You cannot read the Christian Greek Scriptures without being impressed by the fact that Christians were organized for worship. In fact, they were commanded to meet together for this purpose.

([Hebrews 10:24, 25](#)) So if you were a true worshiper of Jehovah in the first century, you had to be a part of his Christian organization.

**Comment: The early church demonstrated that God’s blessing was upon it. It was following Jesus who had been vindicated as God’s son through the resurrection. It was demonstrated to be God’s Church through the presence of miracles and the movement of the Holy Spirit.**

7. How do we know that Jehovah did not use more than one organization in any particular period?

<sup>7</sup> Did Jehovah ever use more than one organization during any period of time? In Noah’s day only Noah and those with him inside the ark had God’s protection and survived the floodwaters. ([1 Peter 3:20](#)) Also, in the first century there were not two or more Christian organizations. God dealt with just the one. There was just the “one Lord, *one faith*, one baptism.” ([Ephesians 4:5](#)) Likewise in our day Jesus Christ foretold that there would be only one source of spiritual instruction for God’s people.

**Comment: Noah was not an organization. He was an individual following God. In the first century churches were not organized as an “organization”. They were individual congregations with loose relationships to other congregations. There were other disciples who went to Egypt and India. Their congregations did not even get reported. There was not an overarching structure. Even as Jesus ministered, he did not demand that everyone become part of his group. (Mark 9:38ff. “John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.”)**

8. How did Jesus show that there would be just one visible organization of God on earth in our day?

**Comment: It does not appear that he did any such thing.**

<sup>8</sup> When telling of his presence in Kingdom power, Jesus said: “Who really is the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time? Happy is that slave if his master on arriving finds him doing so. Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings.” ([Matthew 24:45-47](#))

**Comment: This is one of several warnings in Matthew 24 about being ready when Jesus returns. This particular statement is followed by a warning of what will happen to the slave who is not faithful. It is not intended to apply to an individual or an organization. There is no exegetical argument for seeing the “faithful and discreet slave” as real individual. This is actually a form of circular reasoning. We know that this applies to the Governing Body**

**because the Governing Body has told us it is so. The Governing Body knows because they are the faithful and discreet slave. No person, without being taught that this is the correct understanding would ever arrive at that conclusion on their own.**

On his return in Kingdom power in the year 1914, did Christ find a “faithful and discreet slave” class providing spiritual “food,” or information? Yes, he found such a “slave” made up of the remaining ones on earth of his 144,000 “brothers.” ([Revelation 12:10; 14:1, 3](#)) And since 1914 millions of persons have accepted the “food” they provide, and have begun practicing true religion along with them. This organization of God’s servants is known as Jehovah’s Witnesses.

**Comment: The Bible, a historical document, gives us a place, a time and witnesses so that we can know the message is true. Where is the documentation of this stupendous event? Other events claimed for the 1914-1919 period were originally set in the 1870s. How does a historical event relocate in time?**

9. (a) Why do God’s servants bear the name Jehovah’s Witnesses? (b) Why do they call their places of worship Kingdom Halls?

<sup>9</sup> Jehovah’s Witnesses look to God and his Word for direction in all that they do. Their very name Jehovah’s Witnesses shows that their main activity is to witness about the name and kingdom of Jehovah God, even as Christ did. ([John 17:6; Revelation 1:5](#)) Also, they call the place where they meet for worship the Kingdom Hall because God’s kingdom by the Messiah, or Christ, is the theme of the entire Bible. Since it is clear that first-century Christianity had God’s approval, Jehovah’s Witnesses pattern their organization after it. Let us look briefly at that early Christian organization and then note the similarities with God’s visible organization today.

**Comment: The Bible explicitly tells us we are to witness to Jesus (Acts 2:32, 18:5, Rev. 17:6) It was not until 1933 that the emphasis was put on Jehovah.**

#### THE FIRST-CENTURY PATTERN

10. What were some features of the first-century Christian organization?

<sup>10</sup> Wherever there were Christians in the first century, they gathered together in groups for worship. These congregations met regularly for fellowship and study. ([Hebrews 10:24, 25](#)) Their main activity was to preach and teach about God’s kingdom, even as Christ did. ([Matthew 4:17; 28:19, 20](#)) If a member of the congregation turned to a bad way of life, he was put out of the congregation.—[1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 John 10, 11](#).

**This seems right, congregations were organized but not in the central sense the article is suggesting.**

11, 12. (a) What proves that early Christian congregations received guidance and direction from the apostles and “older men” in Jerusalem? (b) What is meant by “theocratic” direction? (c) What was the result of the congregations’ accepting such direction?

<sup>11</sup> Were those Christian congregations in the first century independent of one another, with each making its own decisions on matters? No, the Bible shows that they were united in the one Christian faith. All the congregations received guidance and direction from the same source. Thus, when a dispute arose over the matter of circumcision, congregations or individuals did not decide for themselves what to do. No, but, instead, the apostle Paul, Barnabas and others were directed to “go up to the apostles and older men in Jerusalem regarding this dispute.” When these mature men, with help from God’s Word and his “holy spirit,” made their decision, they sent out faithful men to inform the congregations.—[Acts 15:2, 27-29](#).

**Comment: The passage also notes that the Apostles and the Elders discerned God’s Will. The whole assembly listened. It notes that the verse 22 the whole church consented. This is not an indication that there was a theocracy but that the early church was cohesive and met together to resolve difficult issues. The circumcision party had evidently come from Jerusalem so Jerusalem needed to clarify what was appropriate. This model was used in the first 500 years of the church to resolve theological issues. People came together and debated issues drawing out a consensus.**

<sup>12</sup> What resulted from the congregations’ receiving this theocratic, or God-given, guidance and direction? The Bible says: “Now as they [the apostle Paul and his companions] traveled on through the cities they would deliver to those there for observance the decrees that had been decided upon by the apostles and older men who were in Jerusalem. Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day.” ([Acts 16:4, 5](#)) Yes, all the congregations cooperated with what that body of older men in Jerusalem had decided, and they grew stronger in the faith.

**Comment: The early church functioned by consensus. They looked to the Apostles because they had known Jesus and therefore their input carried great weight. The arranged council had made a decision and that decision affected the way the Gospel was presented.**

#### THEOCRATIC DIRECTION TODAY

13. (a) From what place on earth and through what body of men does God’s visible organization today receive guidance? (b) What relationship does the governing body have to “the faithful and discreet slave”?

<sup>13</sup> God’s visible organization today also receives theocratic guidance and direction. At the headquarters of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York, there is a governing body of older Christian men from various parts of the earth who give the needed oversight to the worldwide activities of God’s people. This governing body is made up of members of “the faithful and discreet slave.” It serves as a spokesman for that faithful “slave.”

**Comment: There are a number of assumptions that have arisen in the last paragraph. First, can we say with any certainty that God has a visible “organization” in the sense that the Watchtower means? There is a visible church. It is represented by a myriad of individual congregations. Why would we assume that the Watchtower is God’s visible organization? Has God, anywhere in his word explicitly called people to follow the**

**Watchtower? Is there a historical record of God appointing the Watchtower? Is the account falsifiable or must we trust an otherwise anonymous source? What is the Biblical evidence that the “faithful and discrete slave was meant to be an individual (or even a corporate individual)? The chapter is a warning for everyone to be diligent until Jesus returns. Therefore, the idea of “God’s channel” and that of the “faithful and discrete slave” both lack any kind of verifiable claim and moreover would not have been evident to any reader of Scripture who was not prejudiced by JW teaching.**

14. Upon what does the governing body of God’s people rely in making its decisions?

<sup>14</sup>The men of that governing body, like the apostles and older men in Jerusalem, have many years of experience in God’s service. But they do not rely on human wisdom in making decisions. No, being governed theocratically, they follow the example of the early governing body in Jerusalem, whose decisions were based on God’s Word and were made under the direction of holy spirit.—[Acts 15:13-17, 28, 29](#).

**Comment: The church as a whole follows scripture and is led by the Holy Spirit. It is of some interest that Russel taught that the Holy Spirit was no longer necessary since Jesus was installed as king. Angels brought God’s instructions directly to the GB (Rutherford). Two points dovetail off this. First the use of messages by angels prevented other competing groups from claiming inspiration by God’s Spirit. Second, there is a dearth of teaching in the Bible about 1914.**

**“This pictures the heavenly messenger or angels of the Lord, now used by the Lord in behalf of the remnant. These angels are invisible to human eyes and are there to carry out the orders of the Lord. No doubt, they first hear the instruction which the Lord issues to his remnant and then these invisible messengers pass such instruction on to the remnant. The facts show that the angels of the Lord with him at his temple have been thus rendering service unto the remnant since 1919.”<sup>1</sup>**

## DIRECTING A WORLDWIDE ORGANIZATION

15. Why do Jesus’ words at [Matthew 24:14](#) show that God would have a large organization on earth during the time of the end?

<sup>15</sup>Jesus Christ gave an idea of the size of the organization that God would have on earth during this time of the end when he said: “This good news of the kingdom will be preached in *all the inhabited earth* for a witness to *all the nations*; and then the end will come.” ([Matthew 24:14](#)) Think of the tremendous amount of work needed to tell earth’s thousands of millions of people about the established kingdom of God. Is the modern-day Christian organization, which looks to its governing body for guidance and direction, equipped to do this great work?

**Comment:**

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Rutherford, *Vindication* (New York: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1932.), 3:250, accessed March 16, 2018, <https://ia800209.us.archive.org/29/items/VindicationVolume3> ByJudgeRutherford/1932-VINDICATION-3.pdf.

“Beware of ‘organization’. It is wholly un-necessary. The Bible will be the only rules you need. Do not seek to bind other consciences, and do not permit others to bind yours. Believe and obey so far as you can understand God's word today, and so continue to growing in grace and knowledge day by day.”<sup>2</sup>

Q. “Would not an earnest, aggressive organization (or sect), built upon Scriptural lines, be the best means of spreading and publishing the real Good Tidings? We must have fellowship and sympathy. Union is strength. It is not the skirmishers that win the battle. but the disciplined and solid battalions.”

A. We believe that a visible organization, and the adopting of some particular name, would tend to increase our numbers and make us appear more respectable in the estimation of the world. The natural man can see that a visibly organized body, with a definite purpose, is a thing of more or less power; therefore, they esteem the various organizations, from which we have come out. in obedience to the Master's call. But the natural man cannot understand how a company of people, with no organization which they can see, is ever going to accomplish anything. As they look upon us, they regard us simply as a few scattered skirmishers-a “peculiar people” -with very peculiar ideas and hopes, but not worthy of special notice. But though it is impossible for the natural man to see our organization, because he cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God, we trust that you can see that the true Church is most effectually organized, and in the best possible working order. (See the plan of our organization, as stated in October issue, under the caption “The Ekklesia.”) The Apostle Paul urges all to unity of faith and purpose (Phil. 3:15, 16-Diaglott.) All led by the same Spirit may and do come to a knowledge of the same truth. Under our Captain, all the truly sanctified, however few or far separated in person, are closely united by the Spirit of Christ, in faith, hope and love; and, in following the Master's command, are moving in solid battalions for the accomplishment of his purposes. But, bear in mind, God is not dependent upon numbers (See Judges 7, as an illustration). Recognizing this organization, which is of the Spirit, and desiring no assimilation whatever with the worldly, who cannot see or understand it, we are quite willing to bear the reproach of a peculiar people. We always refuse to be called by any other name than that of our Head-Christians-continually claiming that there can be no division among those continually led by his Spirit and example as made known through his Word. We disown none of our Lord's dear children. The weakest child of the household of faith (in Christ, our Redeemer) we gladly recognize as our brother. Some, in ignorance of their privilege of the communion of saints, are mixed with the various worldly organizations, to their great detriment. Though we cannot follow them there, we gladly welcome them when-they come among us. Wherever we have hope of finding any such, in the various nominal Churches, etc., we tell them the “good tidings of great joy,” and, by word and example, say, “Come out from among them (the worldly, though professing Christians) and be ye separate.” How could we deliver this message if we were not obeying it? We have unbounded faith in our Captain; and this perfect organization, invisible to the world, marches on to certain and glorious victory.

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<sup>2</sup> Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Concerning Profitable Meetings,” *Zion's Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, September 15, 1895, 216, accessed August 3, 2018, [http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-  
wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1895%20The%20](http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-<br/>wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1895%20The%20) Watchtower.pdf.



“From victory unto victory, His army he shall lead; ‘Till every foe is vanquished, And Christ is Lord indeed.”<sup>3</sup>

16. (a) Why have Jehovah’s Witnesses established many large printing factories? (b) What is produced in these factories?

<sup>16</sup> Jehovah’s Witnesses are now preaching the Kingdom message in over 200 lands and islands of the sea throughout the earth. To help the more than 3,500,000 Kingdom publishers (in 1988) to accomplish this work, large printing factories have been established in many countries. Here Bibles and Bible literature are produced in very large quantities. Every working day, on the average, over two million *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines are printed and shipped from these factories.

17. (a) Why is this Bible literature prepared? (b) What are you invited to do?

<sup>17</sup> All this Bible literature is prepared in order to help persons to grow in knowledge of Jehovah’s grand purposes. In fact, the words “Announcing Jehovah’s Kingdom” are part of the title of the magazine *The Watchtower*. You are invited to share in distributing this Bible literature and to explain to others the Bible truths it contains. For example, is there someone with whom you can share the vital information that you have learned from this book, *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*?

18. (a) What kind of organization is God’s organization today? (b) Why do God’s people now need much encouragement?

<sup>18</sup> As in the first century, God’s organization today is *an organization of dedicated and baptized Kingdom preachers*. And it is set up to help all its members to share in this preaching activity. These persons need a great deal of encouragement and spiritual strengthening, since Satan and those whom he is able to influence oppose the Kingdom message. Such opposers had Jesus killed for preaching it, and the Bible warns that his followers would be persecuted too.—[John 15:19, 20; 2 Timothy 3:12](#).

19. (a) Who are provided now to help and to strengthen God’s people? (b) How is the congregation protected from bad influences that could corrupt it?

<sup>19</sup> As in the first century so today “older men,” or elders, are appointed to help and strengthen each congregation. They can help you also with Bible counsel to cope with various problems. These elders also protect “the flock of God.” Thus, if a member of the congregation turns to a bad way of life and refuses to change, the “older men” see to it that such a one is put out, or

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<sup>3</sup> Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, “Questions and Answers,” *Zion’s Watch Tower and Herald of Christ’s Presence*, March 1883, 6, accessed August 4, 2018 <http://www.watchtowerwayback.org/jw-wb/English/Magazines/The%20Watchtower/1883%20The%20Watchtower.pdf>.

disfellowshipped, from the congregation. Thus a healthy, spiritually clean congregation is maintained.—[Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Isaiah 32:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 5:13](#).

20. (a) Who in the first century were sent out by the governing body in Jerusalem, and for what reason? (b) Who are sent out by the governing body today?

<sup>20</sup> Likewise, just as the governing body in Jerusalem sent out special representatives, such as Paul and Silas, to deliver instructions and give encouragement to God's people, so today's governing body does in this time of the end. ([Acts 15:24-27, 30-32](#)) About twice a year an experienced minister, called a circuit overseer, is directed to spend a week with each congregation in his circuit.

21. How does the circuit overseer help the congregations of God's people?

<sup>21</sup> There are over 60,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout the world, and these are divided into circuits made up of about 20 congregations each. When visiting the congregations in his circuit, the circuit overseer builds up the Kingdom witnesses by going right along with them in their preaching and teaching activity. Besides stimulating them in this way, he offers suggestions to help them to improve in their ministry.—[Acts 20:20, 21](#).

22. (a) What further arrangement for strengthening God's people is made twice a year? (b) What invitation is extended to you?

<sup>22</sup> Further encouragement and strengthening are provided as, usually twice a year, the congregations in each circuit meet together for a one- or two-day assembly. On these occasions there may be anywhere from two or three hundred up to 2,000 or more persons present. You are invited to attend the next one in your area. We feel sure that you will find the assembly spiritually refreshing and personally beneficial.

23. (a) What other gatherings are held once each year? (b) What was the size of one of these conventions?

<sup>23</sup> Then, once a year, a much larger gathering called a district convention may be held for several days. Why not make a real effort to attend and see for yourself how pleasant and spiritually rewarding such a convention can be? Some years, instead of district conventions, there have been larger national or international conventions. The largest ever held in one location was in New York City's Yankee Stadium and Polo Grounds for eight days in 1958. On that occasion 253,922 persons were present for the public talk "God's Kingdom Rules—Is the World's End Near?" Since then no place has been big enough to handle such huge crowds, so arrangements have been made for facilities in many principal cities to be used for large conventions.

## MEETINGS WITHIN THE CONGREGATIONS

24. What five weekly meetings are held by the congregations of God's people?

<sup>24</sup> The governing body of Jehovah's Witnesses also arranges for the unified program of Bible instruction that is held in all the congregations of Jehovah's people. Each congregation has five meetings a week. These are the Theocratic Ministry School, Service Meeting, Public

Meeting, *Watchtower* study and congregation book study. Since you may not as yet have become acquainted with these meetings, we will briefly describe them.

25, 26. What purpose do the Theocratic Ministry School and Service Meeting serve?

<sup>25</sup> The Theocratic Ministry School is designed to help students to become more effective in speaking to others about God's kingdom. From time to time, those enrolled give short talks on Bible subjects to the entire group. Then an experienced elder offers suggestions for improvement.

<sup>26</sup> Generally on the same evening a Service Meeting is also held. The outline for this meeting is published in *Our Kingdom Ministry*, a monthly publication of two or more pages edited by the governing body. During this meeting practical suggestions and demonstrations on effective ways of talking to others about the Kingdom message are presented. In like manner, Christ encouraged his followers and gave them instructions on how to carry out their ministry.—[John 21:15-17](#);[Matthew 10:5-14](#).

27, 28. What kind of meetings are the Public Meeting, *Watchtower* study and congregation book study?

<sup>27</sup> The Public Meeting and also the *Watchtower* study are usually held on Sunday. Special efforts are made to invite newly interested persons to the Public Meeting, which is a Bible talk by a qualified minister. The *Watchtower* study is a question-and-answer discussion of a Bible article presented in a recent issue of the *Watchtower* magazine.

<sup>28</sup> While the whole congregation may meet at a Kingdom Hall for the meetings outlined above, smaller groups assemble in private homes for the weekly congregation book study. A Bible study aid, such as this book you are reading, is used as the basis for that Bible discussion, which may last up to one hour.

29. (a) What memorial do true Christians observe each year? (b) Who properly partake of the bread and the wine?

<sup>29</sup> In addition to these regular meetings, Jehovah's Witnesses hold a special meeting each year on the anniversary of Jesus' death. When first arranging for this memorial of his death, Jesus said: "Keep doing this in remembrance of me." ([Luke 22:19, 20](#)) During a simple ceremony Jesus used wine and unleavened bread as symbols of the life that he was about to sacrifice for humankind. So at this yearly Memorial meal the remaining ones on earth of the 144,000 anointed followers of Christ show forth their heavenly hope by partaking of the bread and wine.

30. (a) Who else properly attend the Memorial, and what are their prospects? (b) How are such persons described by Jesus?

<sup>30</sup> The millions of others who attend this Memorial in Kingdom Halls around the earth are glad to be observers. They also are reminded of what Jehovah God and Jesus Christ did to make possible their deliverance from sin and death. But instead of looking forward to heavenly life, they rejoice in the prospect of living forever in paradise on earth. They are like John the Baptizer, who spoke of himself as a "friend of the bridegroom" rather than part of Christ's composite bride of 144,000

members. ([John 3:29](#)) These millions of persons are part of the “other sheep” of whom Jesus spoke. They are not members of the “little flock.” However, as Jesus said, they serve unitedly with those of the “little flock,” so that all “become one flock.”—[John 10:16](#); [Luke 12:32](#).

## SERVING GOD WITH HIS ORGANIZATION

31. What evidence is there that God does not approve of those who remain a part of false religion and yet also try to be part of his organization?

<sup>31</sup> How clear it is that, as in times past, Jehovah God has a visible organization today! He is now using it to train people for life in his righteous new system. However, we cannot be part of God’s organization and, at the same time, be part of false religion. God’s Word says: “Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light have with darkness? . . . Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever?” So God commands: “Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves.”—[2 Corinthians 6:14-17](#).

32. (a) If we are to “get out from among them,” what must we do? (b) What blessing will we receive if we take positive action to serve God with his visible theocratic organization?

<sup>32</sup> What does it mean to “get out from among them”? Well, we could not be obeying that command by remaining a part of, or giving support to, a religious organization other than the one Jehovah God is using. So if any of us still belong to such a religious organization, we need to serve notice that we are withdrawing from it. If we now get out from among those who practice false religion and take positive action to serve God with his visible theocratic organization, we will be among those of whom God says: “I shall reside among them and walk among them, and I shall be their God, and they will be my people.”—[2 Corinthians 6:16](#).

### [Picture on page 192]

At the time of the Flood, did God have more than one organization?

### [Pictures on page 196]

## WORLD HEADQUARTERS OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES

### The EXECUTIVE OFFICES

Computer Systems

### BROOKLYN PRINTERY

Rotary Printing

Book Bindery

Shipping

### [Pictures on page 197]

## SOME OF THE MANY OTHER WATCH TOWER PRINTERIES

Brazil

England

South Africa

Wallkill, New York

Canada

**[Pictures on page 198]**

Some of the 253,922 at a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York

Polo Grounds

Yankee Stadium

**[Picture on page 201]**

A program of Bible instruction is enjoyed at meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses

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## ARTICLE 7

5 At some time during the second century C.E., the true Christian congregation began to be overrun by false Christians, who had adopted pagan teachings and who were hiding the truths found in God's Word. From that time until the late 19th century, there was no organized group of God's servants on earth. The weeds of false Christianity flourished and hid the identity of true Christians. (Matt. 13:36-43) Why is that fact significant? It indicates that what we read about the king of the north and the king of the south could not apply to rulers or kingdoms that held power from sometime in the 2nd century to the second half of the 19th century. There was no organized group of God's people for them to attack. However, we can expect that the king of the north and the king of the south would reappear in "an exceedingly large and mighty army." (Dan. 11:25) Throughout the last days, the Anglo-American alliance has been the king of the south. Who, though, has filled the role of the king of the north?

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, "The King of the North in the Time of the End." *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom (Study)*, May 2020, 3-4, accessed December 29, 2020, <https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/pc/r1/lp-e/1200273282/42/0>