WHO ARE JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES? – Their History, Beliefs and Practices

1. History of The Watchtower Organization:
   - Founder: Charles Taze Russell, born in 1852
   - 1870’s Russell studied the doctrines of Second Adventists: George Storr, Jonas Wendell, George Stetson and Nelson Barbour.
   - 1879: Russell began publishing Zion’s Watchtower And Herald of Christ’s Presence (Precursor to The Watchtower magazine)
   - 1881: Main Legal Entity Founded - Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania
   - 1916: Charles Taze Russell died
   - 1917-1942: Second Watchtower President “Judge” Joseph F. Rutherford
   - 1931: The name “Jehovah’s Witnesses” adopted.
   - 1942-1977: Third Watchtower President Nathan H. Knorr
   - 1978-1992: Fourth Watchtower President: Frederick W. Franz
   - 1992-2000: Fifth Watchtower President: Milton George Henschel
   - 2000: Change in Organizational Structure:
     - Three Corporations Formed: Christian Congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Religious Order of Jehovah’s Witnesses, Kingdom Support Services
     - Watchtower “Governing Body” relinquished control of the organization to the Board of Directors, under Don A. Adams

2. Jehovah’s Witness Statistics in 2004:
   - 6 Million active Jehovah’s Witnesses
   - 1.2 Billion hours spent annually in door-to-door proselytizing
   - The Watchtower and Awake! magazines distributed in over 230 countries
   - 6 Million “Bible Studies” (one-on-one Watchtower indoctrination lessons) conducted with potential converts
   - 98 Thousand Congregations

3. Adventist Theology Adopted in Jehovah’s Witness Literature:
   - Christ’s Invisible Presence occurred in 1874, Date was later changed to 1914
   - Investigative Judgment = Christ’s Inspection of Spiritual Food from 1874-1878, Later changed to 1914-1919
   - Conditional Mortality, Soul Sleep = Soul does not survive death, Resurrection of only the worthy, No Hell
   - Restoration of Paradise Earth

4. False Prophetic Dates:
   - 1874: Date for Christ’s “invisible presence,” changed to 1914
   - 1914: End of the world
   - 1915: Replaced 1914 for the end of the world
   - 1918: End of the world, the destruction of churches
   - 1925: End of the world with the return of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob
   - 1929: “Beth Sarim” House of Princes built in San Diego, deeded to king David and other biblical prophets for their “soon” return upon the earth
   - 1940’s: End of the World would come with the “soon” battle of Armageddon
   - 1975: 6,000-years of human history, the end of the world would come within “months, not years.”
   - 1994: 80-year Generation of 1914 should bring the end of the world, 1995 redefined the word “generation” to be symbolic of general readiness for the end.

5. Controversial Practices
   - No holiday or birthday celebrations
   - No participation in flag salutes, voting, politics or war activities
   - No blood transfusions
   - Limited higher education
   - Limited contact with non-Jehovah’s Witness friends and family
   - Shunning of former Jehovah’s Witnesses
   - Forbidding critical thinking and disagreement
   - Forbidding literature critical of the group
   - Forbidding non-Jehovah’s Witness religious broadcasting and church attendance
   - Mandatory door-to-door proselytizing

6. Jehovah’s Witness Bible - New World Translation
   - Translators had insufficient knowledge of biblical manuscripts
   - Translation distorts the Deity of Christ at John 1:1; 8:58; Hebrews 1:8 and other passages to support Watchtower doctrine
   - Inserts God Name “Jehovah” into the New Testament without manuscript support.
### 7. Jehovah’s Witness vs Christian Doctrine Comparison Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watchtower Doctrine</th>
<th>Christian Doctrine</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Father alone is the only true God “Jehovah.”</strong></td>
<td>Jehovah God is Father, Son, Holy Spirit. – Matthew 28:19; Isaiah 48:16; Zechariah 2:8-11; 11:13; 12:10; 2 Samuel 23:2-3; John 1:1-3; 20:28; Hebrews 1:8</td>
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<td><strong>Jesus is the created Archangel “Michael.”</strong></td>
<td>Jesus is not created. He is Almighty God. – Isaiah 9:6; Hebrews 7:3; Isaiah 44:24 c.f. John 1:3; Isaiah 48:12 c.f. Revelation 1:7-8, 17, 18; 2:8; 22:12-13, 20</td>
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<td><strong>Jehovah raised Jesus from the dead in an angel “spirit body,” devoid of His human body.</strong></td>
<td>Jesus raised His physical body from the dead, fully human and fully God. – Luke 24:39; John 2:18-22; 10:17-18; Acts 17:31; Philippians 2:5-11</td>
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<td><strong>God’s “holy spirit” is an impersonal force.</strong></td>
<td>The Holy Spirit who is God is also a Person. - Romans 8:27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 3:17</td>
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<td><strong>Only a special group of 144,000 people interpret Scripture.</strong></td>
<td>All believers are free to interpret Scripture by the leading of God’s Spirit. – John 16:13; 1 John 2:27</td>
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<td><strong>Salvation is found through faith in Jehovah, Jesus and performance in the</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The human soul ceases to exist at death.</strong></td>
<td>The human soul survives death into eternity. – Matthew 10:28; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23-24; Revelation 6:9-11</td>
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<td><strong>Hell does not exist as a place of torment, but is symbolic of the common grave.</strong></td>
<td>Hell is eternal</td>
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<td><strong>Watchtower organization.</strong></td>
<td>Jesus is the mediator for all who place their faith in Him. – 1 Timothy 2:5-6</td>
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<td><strong>Heaven and the born-again experience is only for 144,000 Christians who lived from 33 A.D. – 1935 A.D.</strong></td>
<td>All believers are born-again and enjoy eternal life in Heaven – John 3:3-7; 1:12; 1 John 5:1; Revelation 7:9-15; 19:1</td>
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<td><strong>Survivors of Armageddon will rebuild the earth to make it into a Paradise during Christ’s 1000-year reign.</strong></td>
<td>After the 1,000-year reign of Christ, God will completely destroy this present universe and recreate a new heavens and a new earth. – 2 Peter 3:7, 10-13; Revelation 21:1-2</td>
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<td><strong>All Old Testament believers and Christians who are not in the 144,000 group will live on earth eternally.</strong></td>
<td>All believers will be able to live in both Heaven and Earth and be able to go back and forth between both places like Jesus did in His resurrected body. – Matthew 8:11; Luke 13:28-29; Hebrews 11:13-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; Acts 1:11; 1 John 3:2</td>
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<td><strong>Jesus died on a upright torture stake and not a cross. The cross is shunned as a “pagan” symbol.</strong></td>
<td>Jesus did not die on an upright stake, but on the cross. The cross is viewed as a symbol of spiritual life in Christ. – John 20:25; Matthew 27:37; 1 Corinthians 1:18</td>
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<td><strong>Christians avoid being involved in war, voting and political activities.</strong></td>
<td>Christians brings a “salt and light” influence into every aspect of culture, including war and politics. – Matthew 5:13-16; 8:5-13; Acts 10; Romans 16:23; Ecclesiastes 3:8</td>
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