

**WORLD RELIGIONS: SESSION NINE**  
**JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES: THE WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY**

**I. Introduction**

**A. History**

1. Charles Taze Russell (b. 1852- d. 1916)
  - a. Zion's Watchtower Magazine 1879
  - b. Established Headquarters in Brooklyn (1908)
  - c. Prophesied that the Kingdom of God would be fully established on the earth by 1914; changed that to 1918 when 1914 came and went.
2. "Judge" Rutherford (President from 1916 to 1942)
  - a. Door to door witnessing with phonographs
  - b. Prophesied that Abraham, Issac and other OT Prophets would return in 1925.
3. Nathan Knorr (President from 1942 to 1977)
  - a. Trained door to door witnessing
  - b. New World Translation of the Bible 1961
  - c. Prophesied that the corrupt system of the world would be destroyed in 1975.

**B. Current Membership**

1. 8.2 Million "Publishers" worldwide
2. 19 Million associate with the JW's.

**C. View of the Christian Church**

1. Very few true Christians left on the earth after the apostasy
2. Great apostasy and introduction of pagan beliefs

**D. Peculiarities**

1. "Healthful Pattern of Words"
2. Allegorical interpretation of Scripture, especially the Old Testament.

**II. Three Keys to Understanding Jehovah's Witnesses**

**A. "The Faithful and Discreet Slave"; Matthew 24:45-47**

1. "The Faithful and Discreet Slave" = \_\_\_\_\_
2. "Domestics" = \_\_\_\_\_
3. "Give them their food" = \_\_\_\_\_
4. "Master on arriving" = \_\_\_\_\_
5. "He will appoint him" = \_\_\_\_\_
6. Control of members
7. Disfellowshipping and shunning

**B. "The Little Flock" and "The Other Sheep"; the two-class system**

1. The Little Flock
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ (Rev. 7:4)
  - b. The anointed
  - c. Heavenly Hope
  - d. Partakers at "the Memorial"
2. The Other Sheep
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ Rev. 7:9
  - b. Under the direction of the anointed class

- c. No assurance of salvation
- d. Earthly hope; "Paradise on earth"
- e. Cannot partake at "the Memorial"

**C. "No part of this world"; John 17:16 and John 18:36**

- 1. No part of government: voting, pledging allegiance, government employment, military
- 2. No holidays except "The Memorial"
- 3. No birthday celebrations
- 4. No connection at all with any other church (even to attend a wedding)
- 5. No blood transfusions

**III. Beliefs**

**A. God**

- 1. Reject Trinity
- 2. God's name, "Jehovah"
- 3. "Jehovah" inserted into New Testament 237 times (even though it is not in any Greek manuscript)

**B. Jesus Christ**

- 1. "First creation"; "a god"
- 2. Michael the Archangel
- 3. "Used by Jehovah" to create everything else.
- 4. Sent by Jehovah to provide a ransom for sin, by dying on the "torture stake"
- 5. After Jesus died, God resurrected him "as a mighty spirit person."
- 6. His "presence" (the 2nd coming) and kingdom rule began in 1914.

**C. Holy Spirit**

- 1. The Holy Spirit is not a person
- 2. God's "active force".

**D. Death and Hell**

- 1. Human beings do not have "souls"
- 2. No Hell; those who are condemned by God will be annihilated

**E. Salvation**

- 1. The anointed class are declared "sons of God" and righteous, so long as they do not leave the organization.
- 2. The "other sheep" class are "provisionally saved", with accurate knowledge and faith.
- 3. God's requirements for eternal life: avoiding immorality (as defined by the Watchtower), Watchtower membership in good standing, and participation in proselytizing (door to door witnessing)

**"[Belief] involves taking in accurate knowledge of God's purposes and his way of salvation. Then faith has to be exercised in Jesus Christ as the Chief Agent of salvation...This places the Christian in a saved condition, but he must now persevere in doing God's will and continue to adhere to all of God's requirements for the rest of his life. Only then will he be saved to eternal life." (The Watchtower, Dec. 15, 1989, p. 30)**

**F. End Times**

- 1. Rutherford taught that the generation alive in 1914 "would not pass away" before "this system of things" had ended in the great battle of Armageddon.
- 2. In 2006 they backed away from this prophecy, and now just say the end times are coming "soon".

