

False Teaching On the Resurrection Proves Jehovah's Witnesses Are Not "God's People"

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A simple proof that Jehovah's Witnesses do not comprise "God's organization" or "God's people" is found in their doctrine that false teachings about "the resurrection of the saints" constitute apostasy. The following argument proves this using only the Bible and Watchtower publications.

The April 1, 1986 *Watchtower* magazine argues (pp. 30-31) that anyone who disagrees with JW doctrine, even in the smallest degree, is an apostate even if the person has full faith in God. To prove it, the article cites the passage in 2 Timothy 2:17, 18 where the apostle Paul talks about Hymenaeus and Philetus teaching that "the resurrection has already occurred" and says that "these very men have deviated from the truth". The Society then comments:

There is nothing to indicate that these men did not believe in God, in the Bible, in Jesus' sacrifice. Yet, **on this one basic point, what they were teaching as to the time of the resurrection, Paul rightly branded them as apostates, with whom faithful Christians would not fellowship.**

From this we may conclude that the Watchtower Society teaches that anyone who teaches that the resurrection has already occurred, when it has not, is an apostate, with whom true Christians would not fellowship.

Unfortunately for the JWs, this perfectly describes what the Watchtower organization taught for much of its history. Note what the *1975 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* (p. 148) had to say about the Society's early view of the resurrection:

Advancement in understanding God's Word brought about some other adjustments in Christian thinking. According to Grant Suiter, the late 1920's were noteworthy along these lines. He says: "Modification of viewpoints respecting scriptures and matter of procedure seemed to be constant during these years. For example, **it was in 1927 that *The Watch Tower* pointed out that the sleeping faithful members of the body of Christ were not resurrected in 1878 [as once thought].**

Consistent with this, the book *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom* described C. T. Russell's and his Bible Students' teachings (p. 632):

Based on the premise that events of the first century might find parallels in related events later, they also concluded that if Jesus' baptism and anointing in the autumn of 29 C.E. paralleled the beginning of an invisible presence in 1874, then his riding into Jerusalem as King in the spring of 33 C.E. **would point to the spring of 1878** as the time when he would assume his power as heavenly King. **They also thought they would be given their heavenly reward at that time. When that did not occur, they concluded that** since Jesus' anointed followers were to share with him in the Kingdom, **the resurrection to spirit life of those already sleeping in death began then.**

In other words, until 1927 the Society was teaching that "the resurrection has already occurred", so all Bible Students who accepted and taught this false doctrine were apostates.

Therefore, according to their own words as stated in the April 1, 1986 *Watchtower*, “on this one basic point, what they were teaching as to the time of the resurrection,” Watchtower leaders up to 1927 may properly be branded “as apostates, with whom faithful Christians would not fellowship.” This negates the Society's teaching that in 1919 Christ appointed Watchtower leaders “over all his belongings”, for how could Christ appoint apostates over anything? So Watchtower leaders are guilty of setting themselves up as leaders of Christians and of lording it over the “flock of God”, whereas the only leader Christians are supposed to have is Christ.

Of course, the above conclusion can be refuted by showing that the reasoning presented in the April 1, 1986 *Watchtower* is false, namely, by showing that it is not true that anyone who teaches something that contradicts the Bible is an apostate. But that would be arguing that the *Watchtower's* argument is false, which means that JW leaders are false teachers and therefore, by their own definition, “false prophets”. Furthermore, the Society has for decades been disfellowshipping people for what it calls “apostasy”, which is nothing more than believing or teaching things that contradict Watchtower teachings—which the Society claims perfectly represent Bible teachings. But if its teaching does not perfectly reflect Bible teaching—and the above example about the resurrection proves that it does not—then the Watchtower is guilty of wrongfully disfellowshipping people merely for disagreeing with it. Since disfellowshipping is essentially declaring that a person is grossly and unrepentantly wicked, wrongfully disfellowshipping someone is declaring that an innocent person is wicked. What does Jehovah think of this? Note what Proverbs 17:15 states:

Anyone pronouncing the wicked one righteous and **anyone pronouncing the righteous one wicked—even both of them are something detestable to Jehovah.**

So according to the Watchtower Society's own arguments, the Watchtower organization is either apostate or is detestable to Jehovah. So, we may conclude, are the people who, despite knowing these things, support it.

Finally, one might argue that anyone who *today* teaches something false about the resurrection is an apostate, but that it was alright for the Bible Students to do so back before 1927. But then one would be guilty of holding a double standard, which is again a gross sin, according to Proverbs 20:23: **“Two sorts of weights are something detestable to Jehovah, and a cheating pair of scales is not good.”**

In conclusion, no matter which way one argues, one cannot refute the clear implication of the false teaching about the resurrection that was held by Watchtower leaders such as C. T. Russell and J. F. Rutherford from before 1878 until 1927, or of a false teaching about what constitutes apostasy: Jehovah's Witnesses did not have God's backing in 1919, and they do not have God's backing today. They do not constitute “God's organization” nor are they “God's people”.