

## **The Mindset of the Jehovah's Witnesses**

Since my days in military detention I have been fascinated by the Jehovah Witnesses ("JW's") group and over the years I have not only forged some good friendships but have also discovered some interesting facts re: The JW's.

Currently I am having some quality discussions on the internet and have yet again gained a friend. We have been discussing some verses and one thing led to another and we began chatting about the fact that the JW's treat the Watchtower magazine as if it is an inspired message from God. There are doubtless many lessons for us to learn too in considering this posting and I think you all will find the letter very interesting. I asked my friend, who was very involved in the inner structures of the JW organisation what his thoughts were and this is what he wrote in reply...

I think the best way to understand Jehovah's Witnesses and their attitude is to see them as devotees to a concept. This was proposed in a book you can buy out there called Jehovah's Witnesses: Captives of a Concept. The concept is really quite simple and based on the WTBS's interpretation of Matt. 24:42-47. You will usually hear it referred to as the "Faithful and Discrete Slave", or FDS doctrine on this forum and elsewhere because Jesus speaks of a "faithful and discrete slave" who gets appointed over everything his master owns.

In short, the teaching is that in 1918, Jesus invisibly visited the earth on his father's behalf and inspected all faiths claiming to represent God and Christ. Out of all the groups world wide, he only found the Bible Students who were loyal to the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (WTBTS) and its new president Joseph F. Rutherford to be loyally doing God's will. So, he appointed this group to be his sole representatives on this earth and the ones through whom the rest of the world must go to receive the "true" teachings about God and his purposes. They thus became the "faithful and discrete slave" of Jesus' prophecy at Matt. 24.

Within the next several decades several other things occurred. The first was that Rutherford took away the liberty of Bible Student ecclesias which looked to the WTBTS and made them completely subject to the dictates of the WTBTS, a printing company. By 1928, Rutherford declared in the yearbook that Jehovah had set up "Zion" or the organization of Bible Students gathered around the WTBTS as the only place where worship to God could be acceptably offered. Thus, the WTBTS now became the mouthpiece of God as far as that group, which took the name "Jehovah's Witnesses" a few years later was concerned.

*With the closing of the heavenly calling being declared by the organization in 1935, the WTBTS now began to teach new ones that the FDS is made up of the remaining ones who have the heavenly calling left on the earth today. Modern Witnesses are taught today that the FDS are God's appointed representatives in the earth and make up God's "earthly organization" which supposedly uses the WTBTS to publish what God directs. In practice, a small group of men called the "Governing Body", numbering about twelve today, dictate what everyone among Jehovah's Witnesses must believe. Conformity is strictly enforced and anyone who is found to deviate is punished by either restrictions or expulsion from the group, with everyone treating the expelled one as if he/she is dead.*

*As people become involved with the Witnesses, they are taught to consider the organization*

*(WTBTS) as God's mouthpiece. They are also taught to regard every word emanating from its presses or the mouths of its representatives as if it comes from the very mouth of God. Since the Governing Body reserves the right to change its teachings at any time, every Witnesses are obliged to keep an up to date library of all the current literature in order to stay current on "revealed truth". they are also obliged to attend all meetings and conventions, sometimes at great expense, for the same reasons. To do otherwise is considered disloyalty to God's arraignment and can expose a one to informal sanctions, such as being socially ostracised by others as "weak" if one does not conform.*

*Since truth is so fluid in the organization and one can fall behind, it becomes vitally important that one does whatever one can to get their hands on the literature if imprisoned, as the Witnesses you spent time in detention with did their best to, or where the organization is banned and the literature must be smuggled in as still goes on in some countries. It is even considered a matter of loyalty to risk what ever to get the literature from the "mother" organization.*

*Witnesses are taught that nobody outside the organization can really be trusted to tell the truth when it comes to Bible teaching or things concerning the organization. Thus, they view any source other than the WTBTS with distrust. As I said earlier, the rank-and-file Witnesses are taught to treat every word coming out of the organization as if it comes from God. So that if I were a loyal JW and you and I were discussing your beliefs and you informed me that the WTBTS was misinforming me of your religion's doctrine, I am to take their word over yours and consider you a liar. That is why if you check the posts concerning the Watchtower's involvement with the UN from 1991 to 2001 you will find the resident JW apologist denying the proof he is pointed to and implying that we are either misled by apostate and enemies of the WTBTS or ourselves lying. That is why JWs are so narrow in their views. The WTBTS defines its members realities.*

*Ronnie van Rooyen*