



JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

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Jehovah's Witnesses—Who Are They? What Do They Believe?
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Who Are They?

IT IS the desire of Jehovah's Witnesses that you become better acquainted with them. You may have met them as neighbors and fellow employees or in other daily affairs of life. You may have seen them on the street, offering their magazines to passersby. Or you may have spoken briefly with them at your door.

Actually, Jehovah's Witnesses are interested in you and your welfare. They want to be your friends and to tell you more about themselves, their beliefs, their organization, and how they feel about people and the world in which all of us live. To accomplish this, they have prepared this brochure for you.

In most ways Jehovah's Witnesses are like everyone else. They have normal problems—economic, physical, emotional. They make mistakes at times, for they are not perfect, inspired, or infallible. But they try to learn from their experiences and diligently study the Bible to make needed corrections. They have made a dedication to God to do his will, and they apply themselves to fulfill this dedication. In all their activities they seek guidance from God's Word and his holy spirit.

It is of vital importance to them that their beliefs be based on the Bible and not on mere human speculations or religious creeds. They feel as did the apostle Paul when he expressed himself under inspiration: "Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar." (Romans 3:4, *New World Translation**) When it comes to teachings offered as Biblical truth, the Witnesses strongly endorse the course followed by the Bereans when they heard the apostle Paul preach: "They received the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, carefully examining the

*They are
interested in you*

* Bible quotations in this brochure are from this translation, unless otherwise stated.

*They are dedicated to
God to do his will*

*They believe the Bible
is God's Word*

*God's personal name
in ancient Hebrew*

Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so.” (Acts 17:11) Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that all religious teachings should be subjected to this test of agreement with the inspired Scriptures, whether the teaching is offered by them or by someone else. They invite you—urge you—to do this in your discussions with them.

From this it is apparent that Jehovah’s Witnesses believe in the Bible as the Word of God. They consider its 66 books to be inspired and historically accurate. What is commonly called the New Testament they refer to as the Christian Greek Scriptures, and the Old Testament they call the Hebrew Scriptures. They rely on both of these, the Greek and the Hebrew Scriptures, and take them literally except where the expressions or settings obviously indicate that they are figurative or symbolic. They understand that many of the prophecies of the Bible have been fulfilled, others are in the course of fulfillment, and still others await fulfillment.

THEIR NAME

Jehovah’s Witnesses? Yes, that is the way they refer to themselves. It is a descriptive name, indicating that they bear witness concerning Jehovah, his Godship, and his purposes. “God,” “Lord,” and “Creator”—like “President,” “King,” and “General”—are titles and may be applied to several different personages. But “Jehovah” is a personal name and refers to the almighty God and Creator of the universe. This is shown at Psalm 83:18, according to the King James version of the Bible: “That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.”

The name Jehovah (or Yahweh, as the Roman Catholic *Jerusalem Bible* and some scholars prefer) appears almost 7,000 times in the original Hebrew Scriptures. Most Bibles do not show it as such but substitute “God” or “Lord” for it. However, even in these Bibles, a person can usually tell where the original Hebrew text uses Jehovah because in those places the substituted words are written in large and small capitals, thus: GOD, LORD. Several modern translations do use either the name Jehovah or the name Yahweh. Hence, the *New World Translation* reads at Isaiah 42:8, “I am Jehovah. That is my name.”

The Scriptural account that Jehovah's Witnesses draw on for their name is in the 43rd chapter of Isaiah. There the world scene is viewed as a courtroom drama: The gods of the nations are invited to bring forth their witnesses to prove their claimed cases of righteousness or to hear the witnesses for Jehovah's side and acknowledge the truth. Jehovah there declares to his people: "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour."—Isaiah 43:10, 11, *American Standard Version*.

Jehovah God had witnesses on earth during the thousands of years before Jesus was born. After Hebrews chapter 11 lists some of those men of faith, Hebrews 12:1 says: "So, then, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also put off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." Jesus said before Pontius Pilate: "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." He is called "the faithful and true witness." (John 18:37; Revelation 3:14) Jesus told his disciples: "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth."—Acts 1:8.

Hence, some 6,000,000 persons today who are telling the good news of Jehovah's Kingdom by Christ Jesus in over 230 lands feel that they properly refer to themselves as Jehovah's Witnesses.

*The name as related to
a courtroom drama*

*Some 6,000,000 Witnesses
in over 230 lands*

Their Modern Development and Growth

THE modern history of Jehovah's Witnesses began more than a hundred years ago. In the early 1870's, a rather inconspicuous Bible study group began in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., which is now a part of Pittsburgh. Charles Taze Russell was the prime mover of the group. In July 1879, the first issue of the magazine *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence* appeared. By 1880 scores of congregations had spread from that one small Bible study into nearby states. In 1881 Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was formed, and in 1884 it was incorporated, with Russell as president. The Society's name was later changed to Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Many were witnessing from house to house offering Bible literature. Fifty persons were doing this full time in 1888—now the average number worldwide is about 700,000.

*"The Watchtower," from
6,000 in one language to
more than 22,000,000 in
over 132 languages*

By 1909 the work had become international, and the Society's headquarters was moved to its present location in Brooklyn, New York. Printed sermons were syndicated in newspapers, and by 1913 these were in four languages in 3,000 newspapers in the United States, Canada, and Europe. Books, booklets, and tracts had been distributed by the hundreds of millions.

In 1912 work began on the "Photo-Drama of Creation." By slides and motion pictures with sound, it covered from earth's creation to the end of Christ's Thousand Year Reign. Showings started in 1914, with 35,000 seeing it daily. It was a pioneer in motion pictures with sound.

THE YEAR 1914

A crucial time was drawing close. In 1876 the Bible student Charles Taze Russell contributed the article "Gentile Times: When Do They End?" to the *Bible Examiner*, published in Brooklyn, New York, which said on page 27 of its October issue, "The seven times will end in A.D. 1914."

The Gentile Times is the period referred to in another Bible translation as “the appointed times of the nations.” (Luke 21:24) Not all that was expected to happen in 1914 did happen, but it did mark the end of the Gentile Times and was a year of special significance. Many historians and commentators agree that 1914 was a turning point in human history. The following quotations illustrate this:

“The last completely ‘normal’ year in history was 1913, the year before World War I began.”—Editorial in the *Times-Herald*, Washington, D.C., March 13, 1949.

“Increasingly, the 75-year period from 1914 to 1989, covering two world wars and the cold war, is being seen by historians as a single, discrete epoch, a time apart in which much of the world was fighting war, recovering from war or preparing for war.”—*The New York Times*, May 7, 1995.

“The whole world really blew up about World War I and we still don’t know why. Before then, men thought that utopia was in sight. There was peace and prosperity. Then everything blew up. We’ve been in a state of suspended animation ever since . . . More people have been killed in this century than in all of history.”—Dr. Walker Percy, *American Medical News*, November 21, 1977.

More than 50 years after 1914, German statesman Konrad Adenauer wrote: “Security and quiet have disappeared from the lives of men since 1914.”—*The West Parker*, Cleveland, Ohio, January 20, 1966.

The Society’s first president, C. T. Russell, died in 1916 and was succeeded the following year by Joseph F. Rutherford. Many changes took place. A companion magazine to *The Watchtower*, called *The Golden Age*, was introduced. (Now called *Awake!*, with a circulation of more than 20,000,000 in over 80 languages.) Door-to-door witnessing received greater emphasis. To distinguish themselves from the denominations of Christendom, in 1931 these Christians embraced the name Jehovah’s Witnesses. This name is based on Isaiah 43:10-12.

The radio was used extensively in the 1920’s and 1930’s. By 1933 the Society was using 403 radio stations to broadcast Bible lectures. Later, the use of the radio was largely replaced by increased house-to-house visits by

*A turning point in
human history*

Witnesses with portable phonographs and recorded Bible talks. Home Bible studies were started with anyone who showed interest in Bible truth.

COURT VICTORIES

During the 1930's and 1940's, there were many arrests of Witnesses for doing this work, and court cases were fought in the interest of preserving freedom of speech, press, assembly, and worship. In the United States, appeals from lower courts resulted in the Witnesses' winning 43 cases before the Supreme Court of the United States. Similarly, favorable judgments have been obtained from high courts in other lands. Concerning these court victories, Professor C. S. Braden, in his book *These Also Believe*, said of the Witnesses: "They have performed a signal service to democracy by their fight to preserve their civil rights, for in their struggle they have done much to secure those rights for every minority group in America."

*A signal service to
civil liberties*

SPECIAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

J. F. Rutherford died in 1942 and was succeeded in the presidency by N. H. Knorr. A concerted program of train-

ing began. In 1943 a special training school for missionaries, called the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, was established. From that time onward, graduates from this school have been sent to lands all over the earth. New congregations have sprung up in countries where there had been none, and branches established internationally now number more than 100. From time to time, special courses have been established for training congregation elders, voluntary workers at branches, and those engaged full time (as pioneers) in the witnessing work. A number of specialized types of schooling for ministers have been offered at an educational center operated in Patterson, New York.

N. H. Knorr died in 1977. One of the last organizational changes in which he shared before his death was the enlargement of the Governing Body, located at the world headquarters in Brooklyn. In 1976 administrative responsibilities were divided up and assigned to various committees made up of members of the Governing Body, all of whom have many decades of experience as ministers.

PRINTING FACILITIES EXPAND

The history of Jehovah's Witnesses in modern times has been filled with dramatic events. From the one small Bible study in Pennsylvania back in 1870, the Witnesses by the year 2000 grew to some 90,000 congregations worldwide. All literature was, at first, printed by commercial firms; then, in 1920, the Witnesses produced some literature in rented factory buildings. But from 1927 on, much more literature was turned out in the eight-story factory building in Brooklyn, New York, owned by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. This has now expanded into other factory buildings and an office complex. There are additional buildings nearby in Brooklyn to house the ministers who volunteer to operate the publishing facilities. In addition to this, a combination farm and printery is operated near Wallkill, in upstate New York. It handles printing of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines and produces some of the food for the ministers serving in the various locations. Each volunteer worker receives a small monthly reimbursement to cover incidental expenses.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

In 1893 the first major convention was held in Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. It was attended by 360, and 70 new ones were baptized. The last big single international convention was held in New York City in 1958. It used both Yankee Stadium and the then-existing Polo Grounds. Peak attendance was 253,922; new ones baptized numbered 7,136. Since then international conventions have been held as a series in many countries. In all, such a series may involve a thousand conventions in lands around the globe.

What Do They Believe?

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES believe in Almighty God, Jehovah, Creator of the heavens and the earth. The very existence of the intricately designed wonders in the universe surrounding us reasonably argues that a supremely intelligent and powerful Creator produced it all. Just as the works of men and women reflect their qualities, so do those of Jehovah God. The Bible tells us that "his invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made." Also, without voice or words, "the heavens are declaring the glory of God."—Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1-4.

People do not mold clay pots or make television sets and computers without a purpose. The earth and its creations of plant and animal life are far more marvelous. The structure of the human body with its trillions of cells is beyond our understanding—even the brain with which we think is incomprehensibly wonderful! If men have a purpose in bringing forth their comparatively insignificant inventions, surely Jehovah God had a purpose in his awesome creations! Proverbs 16:4 says that he does: "Everything Jehovah has made for his purpose."

Jehovah made the earth for a purpose, as he stated to the first human pair: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth . . . , have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth." (Genesis 1:28) Because they became disobedient, this couple failed to fill the earth with righteous families who would lovingly care for the earth and its plants and animals. But their failure does not make Jehovah's purpose fail. Thousands of years later, it was written: "God, the Former of the earth . . . , did not create it simply for nothing." He "formed it even to be inhabited." It is not to be destroyed, but "the earth endures for ever." (Isaiah 45:18; Ecclesiastes 1:4, *The New English Bible*) Jehovah's purpose for the earth will be realized: "My

*EARTH . . . created by
Jehovah . . . cared for by
man . . . inhabited forever*

WHAT JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES BELIEVE

Belief	Scriptural Reason	Belief	Scriptural Reason
Bible is God's Word and is truth	2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; John 17:17	Only a little flock of 144,000 go to heaven and rule with Christ	Luke 12:32; Rev. 14:1, 3; 1 Cor. 15:40-53; Rev. 5:9, 10
Bible is more reliable than tradition	Matt. 15:3; Col. 2:8	The 144,000 are born again as spiritual sons of God	1 Pet. 1:23; John 3:3; Rev. 7:3, 4
God's name is Jehovah	Ps. 83:18; Isa. 26:4; 42:8, AS; Ex. 6:3	New covenant is made with spiritual Israel	Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:10-13
Christ is God's Son and is inferior to Him	Matt. 5:17; John 8:42; 14:28; 20:17; 1 Cor. 11:3; 15:28	Christ's congregation is built upon himself	Eph. 2:20; Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42
Christ was first of God's creations	Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14	Prayers are to be directed only to Jehovah through Christ	John 14:6, 13, 14; 1 Tim. 2:5
Christ died on a stake, not a cross	Gal. 3:13; Acts 5:30	Images should not be used in worship	Ex. 20:4, 5; Lev. 26:1; 1 Cor. 10:14; Ps. 115:4-8
Christ's human life was paid as a ransom for obedient humans	Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 1 Pet. 2:24	Spiritism must be shunned	Deut. 18:10-12; Gal. 5:19-21; Lev. 19:31
Christ's one sacrifice was sufficient	Rom. 6:10; Heb. 9:25-28	Satan is invisible ruler of world	1 John 5:19; 2 Cor. 4:4; John 12:31
Christ was raised from the dead as an immortal spirit person	1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:17, 18	A Christian ought to have no part in interfaith movements	2 Cor. 6:14-17; 11:13-15; Gal. 5:9; Deut. 7:1-5
Christ's presence is in spirit	John 14:19; Matt. 24:3; 2 Cor. 5:16; Ps. 110:1, 2	A Christian should keep separate from world	Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15; John 15:19; 17:16
We are now in the 'time of the end'	Matt. 24:3-14; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Luke 17:26-30	Obey human laws that do not conflict with God's laws	Matt. 22:20, 21; 1 Pet. 2:12; 4:15
Kingdom under Christ will rule earth in righteousness and peace	Isa. 9:6, 7; 11:1-5; Dan. 7:13, 14; Matt. 6:10	Taking blood into body through mouth or veins violates God's laws	Gen. 9:3, 4; Lev. 17:14; Acts 15:28, 29
Kingdom will bring ideal living conditions to earth	Ps. 72:1-4; Rev. 7:9, 10, 13-17; 21:3, 4	Bible's laws on morals must be obeyed	1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Heb. 13:4; 1 Tim. 3:2; Prov. 5:1-23
Earth will never be destroyed or depopulated	Eccl. 1:4; Isa. 45:18; Ps. 78:69	Sabbath observance was given only to Israel and ended with Mosaic Law	Deut. 5:15; Ex. 31:13; Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:9, 10; Col. 2:16, 17
God will eliminate present system of things in the battle at Har-Magedon	Rev. 16:14, 16; Zeph. 3:8; Dan. 2:44; Isa. 34:2; 55:10, 11	A clergy class and special titles are improper	Matt. 23:8-12; 20:25-27; Job 32:21, 22
Wicked will be eternally destroyed	Matt. 25:41-46; 2 Thess. 1:6-9	Man did not evolve but was created	Isa. 45:12; Gen. 1:27; Matt. 19:4
People God approves will receive everlasting life	John 3:16; 10:27, 28; 17:3; Mark 10:29, 30	Christ set example that must be followed in serving God	1 Pet. 2:21; Heb. 10:7; John 4:34; 6:38
There is only one road to life	Matt. 7:13, 14; Eph. 4:4, 5	Baptism by complete immersion symbolizes dedication	Mark 1:9, 10; John 3:23; Acts 19:4, 5
Human death is due to Adam's sin	Rom. 5:12; 6:23	Christians gladly give public testimony to Scriptural truth	Rom. 10:10; Heb. 13:15; Isa. 43:10-12
The human soul ceases to exist at death	Ezek. 18:4; Eccl. 9:10; Ps. 6:5; 146:4; John 11:11-14		
Hell is mankind's common grave	Job 14:13, Dy; Rev. 20:13, 14, AV (margin)		
Hope for dead is resurrection	1 Cor. 15:20-22; John 5:28, 29; 11:25, 26		
Adamic death will cease	1 Cor. 15:26, 54; Rev. 21:4; Isa. 25:8		

own counsel will stand, and everything that is my delight I shall do.”—Isaiah 46:10.

Hence, Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that the earth will remain forever and that all people, living and dead, who will fit in with Jehovah’s purpose for a beautified, inhabited earth may live on it forever. All mankind inherited imperfection from Adam and Eve and, hence, are sinners. (Romans 5:12) The Bible tells us: “The wages sin pays is death.” “The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all.” “The soul that is sinning—it itself will die.” (Romans 6:23; Ecclesiastes 9:5; Ezekiel 18:4, 20) Then how can they live again to share in the earthly blessings? Only through the ransom sacrifice of Christ Jesus, for he said: “I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life.” “All those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out.”—John 5:28, 29; 11:25; Matthew 20:28.

How will this come about? It is explained in “the good news of the kingdom,” which Jesus started to proclaim while on earth. (Matthew 4:17-23) But today Jehovah’s Witnesses are preaching the good news in a very special way.

The Good News They Want You to Hear

WHEN Jesus was on earth, his disciples came to him and asked: “What will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?” He replied that there would be wars involving many nations, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, an increasing of lawlessness, false religious teachers misleading many, a hatred and persecution of his true followers, and a cooling off of the love of righteousness in many people. When these things would start to happen, it would indicate that Christ was invisibly present and that the heavenly Kingdom was at hand. This would be news—good news! So Jesus added these words as a part of the sign: “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 24:3-14.

In themselves, recent world happenings are bad, but what they signify is good, namely, Christ’s presence. The conditions mentioned above started to be evident in that widely heralded year 1914! It marked the end of the Gentile Times and the beginning of the transition period from human rule to the Thousand Year (Millennial) Reign of Christ.

That there was to be a transition period is indicated by the 110th Psalm, verses 1 and 2, and Revelation 12:7-12. There it is shown that Christ would sit at God’s right hand in heaven until the time for his becoming King. Then war in heaven would result in Satan’s being cast to earth, bringing woe to the earth, and Christ would rule in the midst of his enemies. The complete end of wickedness would come by means of a “great tribulation,” culminating in the war at Har-Magedon and followed by Christ’s Thousand Year Reign of peace.—Matthew 24:21, 33, 34; Revelation 16:14-16.

“But know this,” the Bible says, “that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming,

*“Critical times
hard to deal with,”*

*BUT “then the end
will come”*

haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power; and from these turn away.”—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Some may argue that these things have happened before in human history, but the fact is that they have never occurred to the same extent. As the historians and commentators say, there has never been a time on earth like the one experienced from 1914 onward. (See page 7.) The woes have been far more extensive than ever before. Moreover, as to other features of Christ’s sign of the last days, these facts should be considered: The earth-wide proclamation of Christ’s presence and Kingdom has been of a magnitude unprecedented in history. Persecution for preaching has never equaled that visited upon Jehovah’s Witnesses. Many hundreds of them were executed in Nazi concentration camps. To this day Jehovah’s Witnesses are under ban in some places, and in others they are arrested, imprisoned, tortured, and killed. This is all part of the sign Jesus gave.

As foretold at Revelation 11:18, ‘the nations have become wrathful’ against Jehovah’s faithful Witnesses, and this indicates that Jehovah’s “own wrath” will be expressed against those nations. This same scripture says that God will “bring to ruin those ruining the earth.” Never before has there been a time in human history when the earth’s capacity for sustaining life has been threatened. However, now it is different! Many scientists have warned that if man continues to pollute the earth, it will become uninhabitable. But Jehovah “formed it even to be inhabited,” and he will get rid of the polluters before they complete their ruin of the earth.—Isaiah 45:18.

EARTHLY BLESSINGS UNDER THE KINGDOM

The thought of people living on earth as subjects of God’s Kingdom may seem strange to many Bible believers who think of all those saved as being in heaven. The Bible shows that only a limited number go to heaven and that those who will live forever on earth will be a great crowd of unlimited number. (Psalm 37:11, 29; Revelation 7:9; 14:1-5) That God’s Kingdom under Christ will fill the earth

and reign over it is shown by a prophecy in the Bible book of Daniel.

Christ's Kingdom is there represented as a stone cut from Jehovah's mountainlike sovereignty. It strikes and destroys an image that represents powerful nations of the earth, and "the stone that struck the image . . . became a large mountain and filled the whole earth." The prophecy continues: "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite."—Daniel 2:34, 35, 44.

Netherlands

It is this Kingdom and the Scripturally supported hope of everlasting life on a cleansed and beautified earth that Jehovah's Witnesses wish to tell you about. Millions now living and many, many millions now in their graves will have opportunity to dwell therein forever. Then, under the Thousand Year Reign of Christ Jesus, Jehovah's original purpose for creating the earth and putting the first human pair on it will be realized. This earthly Paradise will never become boring. Just as Adam was assigned work in the garden of Eden, so humankind will have challenging projects in caring for the earth and the plant and animal life on it. They "shall long enjoy the work of their hands."—Isaiah 65: 22, *Revised Standard Version*; Genesis 2:15.

Nigeria

Many scriptures could be presented to show the conditions that will exist when the prayer that Jesus taught us is answered: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:10) However, let this one suffice for now: "I heard a loud voice from the throne say: 'Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.' And the One seated on the throne said: 'Look! I am making all things new.' Also, he says: 'Write, because these words are faithful and true.'"—Revelation 21:3-5.

Ways They Use to Share the Good News

CHRISTIANS are commanded to “make disciples of people of all the nations,” but this does not mean that they are to use pressure or convert others by force. Jesus’ commission was to “tell good news to the meek ones,” to “bind up the brokenhearted,” to “comfort all the mourning ones.” (Matthew 28:19; Isaiah 61:1, 2; Luke 4:18, 19) Jehovah’s Witnesses seek to do this by declaring the good news from the Bible. Like the prophet Ezekiel of old, Jehovah’s Witnesses today try to find those who “are sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done.”—Ezekiel 9:4.

The best-known way they use to find those who are distressed by present conditions is by going from house to house. Thus they make a positive effort to reach the public, just as Jesus did when “he went journeying from city to city and from village to village, preaching and declaring the good news of the kingdom of God.” His early disciples did likewise. (Luke 8:1; 9:1-6; 10:1-9) Today, where it is possible, Jehovah’s Witnesses endeavor to call at each home several times a year, seeking to converse with the householder for a few minutes on some local or world topic of interest or concern. A scripture or two may be offered for consideration, and if the householder shows interest, the Witness may arrange to call back at a convenient time for further discussion. Bibles and literature explaining the Bible are made available, and if the householder desires, a home Bible study is conducted free of charge. Millions of these helpful Bible studies are conducted regularly with individuals and families throughout the world.

Another way in which “the good news of the kingdom” is told to others is through meetings held at local Kingdom Halls. The Witnesses conduct meetings there weekly. One meeting is a public lecture on a subject of current interest, followed by a study of some Biblical theme or prophecy, using the *Watchtower* magazine as source material. Another

Hawaii

Venezuela

Yugoslavia

meeting is a school for training Witnesses to be better proclaimers of the good news, followed by a part devoted to discussing the witnessing work in the local territory. Also, once a week Witnesses assemble in private homes, in small groups, for Bible studies.

All these meetings are open to the public. No collections are ever taken. Such meetings are beneficial for all. The Bible says: “We ought to see how each of us may best arouse others to love and active goodness, not staying away from our meetings, as some do, but rather encouraging one another, all the more because you see the Day drawing near.” Private study and research are necessary, but meeting with others is stimulating: “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens the wits of another.”—Hebrews 10:24, 25; Proverbs 27:17, *The New English Bible*.

The Witnesses also make good use of openings for talking about the good news as they come in contact with other people in their daily lives. It may be a few words exchanged with a neighbor or with a fellow traveler on a bus or a plane, a longer conversation with a friend or a relative, or a discussion with a fellow worker during lunch hour. Much of the witnessing that Jesus did when he was on earth was of this kind—as he walked along the seashore, sat on a hillside, dined at someone’s home, attended a wedding, or traveled in a fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee. He taught in the synagogues and at the temple in Jerusalem. Wherever he was, he found opportunities to talk about God’s Kingdom. Jehovah’s Witnesses endeavor to follow in his footsteps in this regard also.—1 Peter 2:21.

*Kingdom Halls, practical
in design, are places for
Bible discussion*

PREACHING BY EXAMPLE

None of these ways of telling you the good news would be meaningful to you if the one telling you did not apply the teachings to himself. To say one thing and do another is hypocrisy, and religious hypocrisy has turned millions away from the Bible. The Bible is not rightly blamed. The scribes and Pharisees had the Hebrew Scriptures, but Jesus denounced them as hypocrites. He spoke of their reading from the Law of Moses, then added to his disciples: "All the things they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds, for they say but do not perform." (Matthew 23:3) A Christian's being an example of right living says more than hours of sermonizing. This was pointed out to Christian wives who had unbelieving husbands: "They may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct."—1 Peter 3:1, 2.

Therefore, Jehovah's Witnesses try to recommend the good news to others in this way also: by being exemplary in the Christian conduct that they recommend to others. They try to 'do unto others as they would have others do unto them.' (Matthew 7:12) They try to be this way with all men, not just with fellow Witnesses, friends, neighbors, or relatives. Being imperfect, they do not always succeed 100 percent. But it is the desire of their hearts to do good unto all people not only in telling them the good news of the Kingdom but also in extending a helping hand whenever possible.—James 2:14-17.

In their family life and in contacts with others, the Witnesses sincerely try to do the things that they advocate

Practical Value of the Good News to Your Community

IN TODAY'S world we often hear the opinion expressed: "The principles of Christianity are not practical. They just will not work in today's complex society." However, in a reported conversation between the Hindu leader Mohandas K. Gandhi and the former British Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin, a very different sentiment was expressed. It is said that Lord Irwin asked Gandhi what he thought would solve the problems between Great Britain and India. Gandhi picked up a Bible and opened it to the fifth chapter of Matthew and said: "When your country and mine shall get together on the teachings laid down by Christ in this Sermon on the Mount, we shall have solved the problems not only of our countries but those of the whole world."

That sermon speaks of seeking spirituality and being mild-tempered, peaceable, merciful, a lover of righteousness. It condemns not only murder but being wrathful with others, not just adultery but lustful thoughts as well. It speaks against irresponsible divorce actions that break up homes and victimize children. It tells us: 'Love even those who dislike you, give to the needy, stop judging others unmercifully, treat others as you would like to be treated.' All this advice, if applied, would yield tremendous benefits. The more people in your community who practice them, the better your community becomes!

Jehovah's Witnesses are an influence in this direction. The Bible teaches them to respect marriage. Their children are trained in right principles. The importance of the family is stressed. United families are a boon to your community, even to your nation. History is filled with examples of world powers crumbling when family ties weakened and immorality increased. The more individuals and families that Jehovah's Witnesses influence to live by Christian principles, the less delinquency, immorality, and crime you will have in your community.

One of the big problems plaguing communities and nations is racial prejudice. In contrast, the apostle Peter said: "I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." And Paul wrote: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one person in union with Christ Jesus." (Acts 10:34, 35; Galatians 3:28) Jehovah's Witnesses accept this. All races and colors live and work together at their world headquarters, at the branches, and in the congregations.

In Africa certain tribes cannot mix together without clashes. However, in assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses there, people from many different tribes eat, sleep, and worship together in complete harmony and warm fellowship. Government officials are amazed when they see this.

*All races and colors
work together*

*Christianity is practical.
What else has worked?*

An example of the unifying effect of true Christianity was commented on by the New York *Amsterdam News* of August 2, 1958. The comment was inspired by observing the international assembly previously mentioned where over a quarter of a million Witnesses assembled in New York City.

“Everywhere Negroes, whites and Orientals, from all stations in life and all parts of the world, mingled joyously and freely. . . The worshipping Witnesses from 120 lands have lived and worshiped together peacefully, showing Americans how easily it can be done. . . . The assembly is a shining example of how people can work and live together.”

Many may say that the principles of Christianity are not practical for this modern world. However, what else has worked or will work? Christian principles can be of real value if applied to your community now, and they will be the basis for uniting all ‘nations, tribes, and peoples’ earth wide under the rule of God’s Kingdom over mankind.—Revelation 7:9, 10.

Their Worldwide Organization and Work

THERE are several links used in directing the work of witnessing in the more than 230 lands where it is being done. The overall direction comes from the Governing Body at the world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. The Governing Body sends representatives each year to various regions worldwide to confer with the branch representatives in those regions. In the branch offices, there are Branch Committees of about three to seven members to oversee the work in the lands under their jurisdiction. Some of the branches have facilities for printing, some operating high-speed rotary presses. The country or area served by each branch is divided into districts, and the districts, in turn, are divided into circuits. Each circuit has in it about 20 congregations. A district overseer visits the circuits in his district in rotation. Two assemblies are held annually for each circuit. There is also a circuit overseer, and he visits each congregation in his circuit usually twice a year, assisting the Witnesses in organizing and doing the preaching work in the territory assigned to that congregation.

The local congregation with its Kingdom Hall is the center for telling the good news in your community. The areas under each congregation are mapped out in small territories. These are assigned to individual Witnesses who endeavor to visit and speak with the people in each home therein. Each congregation, consisting of from a few to some 200 Witnesses, has elders assigned to look after various duties. The individual proclaimer of the good news is the vital one in the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses. Every one of the Witnesses, whether serving at the world headquarters, in branches, or in congregations, does this field work of personally telling others about God's Kingdom.

Reports of this activity ultimately reach the world headquarters, and an annual *Yearbook* is compiled and published. Also, a chart is published each year in the January 1 issue of *The Watchtower*. These two publications offer

detailed reports of each year's accomplishments in bearing witness to Jehovah and his Kingdom under Christ Jesus. In recent years about 14,000,000 Witnesses and interested people have attended the Memorial of Jesus' death annually. Jehovah's Witnesses spend over 1,000,000,000 hours a year proclaiming the good news, and more than 300,000 new ones are baptized. Literature placements total into the hundreds of millions of copies.

Questions Often Asked by Interested People

If God is love, why does he permit wickedness?

GOD does permit wickedness, and millions on earth will fully make a practice of it. For instance, they declare wars, drop bombs on children, scorch the earth, and cause famines. Millions smoke and get lung cancer, practice adultery and get sexually transmitted diseases, use alcohol to excess and get cirrhosis of the liver, and so on. Such people do not truly want all wickedness stopped. They only want the penalties for it eliminated. When they reap what they have sown, they cry out, “Why me?” And they blame God, as Proverbs 19:3 says: “A man’s own folly wrecks his life, and then he bears a grudge against the LORD.” (*The New English Bible*) And if God stopped their evildoing, they would protest their loss of freedom to do it!

Jehovah’s main reason for permitting evil is to answer Satan’s challenge. Satan the Devil said that God could not put men on earth who would be true to Him under test. (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-10) Jehovah allows Satan to remain to have opportunity to prove his challenge. (Exodus 9:16) Satan continues to bring woes now, to turn men against God, as he tries to prove his challenge. (Revelation 12:12) However, Job kept integrity. So did Jesus. True Christians do now.—Job 27:5; 31:6; Matthew 4:1-11; 1 Peter 1:6, 7.

I would like to believe in an earthly paradise where people live forever, but isn’t that too good to be true?

Not according to the Bible. It seems too good to be true only because mankind has known the bad for so many centuries. Jehovah created the earth and told mankind to fill it with righteous men and women who would care for its plant and animal life and preserve its beauty instead of destroying it. (See pages 12 and 17.) Rather than that promised Paradise being too good to be true, the present sorrowful state is too bad to continue. Paradise will replace it.

**How can I answer
people who scoff and
say that the Bible
is a myth and
is unscientific?**

Faith in these promises is not a matter of credulity. “Faith follows the thing heard.” By studying God’s Word, its wisdom becomes apparent and faith grows.—Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:1.

Biblical archaeology confirms much of the Bible’s historical accuracy. True science harmonizes with the Bible. The following facts were in the Bible long before they were discovered by secular scholars: the order of stages through which the earth passed in its development, that the earth is round, that it hangs in space on nothing, and that birds migrate.—Genesis, chapter 1; Isaiah 40:22; Job 26:7; Jeremiah 8:7.

The inspiration of the Bible is shown by fulfilled prophecies. Daniel foretold in advance the rise and the fall of world powers, as well as the time when the Messiah would come and be put to death. (Daniel, chapters 2, 8; 9:24-27) Today, still other prophecies are being fulfilled, identifying these as “the last days.” (2 Timothy 3:1-5; Matthew, chapter 24) Such foreknowledge is not within man’s power. (Isaiah 41:23) For more confirmation, see the books *The Bible—God’s Word or Man’s?* and *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

**How can I learn
to answer questions
on the Bible?**

You must study the Bible and meditate on it, at the same time asking for God’s spirit to direct you. (Proverbs 15:28; Luke 11:9-13) “If any one of you is lacking in wisdom,” the Bible says, “let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching; and it will be given him.” (James 1:5) Also, there are Bible study aids worth consulting. Usually help from others is needed, as when Philip studied with the Ethiopian. (Acts 8:26-35) Jehovah’s Witnesses conduct Bible studies free of charge with interested people in their homes. Feel free to request this service.

**Why do many oppose
Jehovah’s Witnesses
and tell me not
to study with them?**

There was opposition to Jesus’ preaching, and he said that his followers also would be opposed. When some were impressed with Jesus’ teaching, religious opposers retorted: “You have not been misled also, have you? Not one of the rulers or of the Pharisees has put faith in him, has he?”

(John 7:46-48; 15:20) Many who advise you not to study with the Witnesses are either uninformed or prejudiced. Study with the Witnesses and see for yourself whether your Bible understanding increases or not.—Matthew 7:17-20.

Why do the Witnesses call on people who have their own religion?

In doing this they follow Jesus' example. He went to the Jews. The Jews had their own religion, but in many ways it had turned away from the Word of God. (Matthew 15: 1-9) All nations have religions of some kind, whether so-called Christian or non-Christian. It is vitally important for people to hold beliefs that conform to God's own Word, and the efforts of the Witnesses to assist them in doing this constitute a showing of neighbor love.

Do the Witnesses believe that their religion is the only right one?

Anyone who is serious about his religion should think that it is the right one. Otherwise, why would he or she be involved in it? Christians are admonished: "Make sure of all things; hold fast to what is fine." (1 Thessalonians 5:21) A person should make sure that his beliefs can be supported by the Scriptures, for there is only one true faith. Ephesians 4:5 confirms this, mentioning "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." Jesus did not agree with the modern, relaxed view that there are many roads, many religions, all leading to salvation. Instead, he said: "Narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it." Jehovah's Witnesses believe that they have found it. Otherwise, they would look for another religion.—Matthew 7:14.

Do they believe that they are the only ones who will be saved?

No. Millions that have lived in centuries past and who were not Jehovah's Witnesses will come back in a resurrection and have an opportunity for life. Many now living may yet take a stand for truth and righteousness before the "great tribulation," and they will gain salvation. Moreover, Jesus said that we should not be judging one another. We look at the outward appearance; God looks at the heart. He sees accurately and judges mercifully. He has committed judgment into Jesus' hands, not ours.—Matthew 7:1-5; 24:21; 25:31.

What financial contributions are expected of those attending meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses?

Regarding money contributions, the apostle Paul said: "Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:7) At the Kingdom Halls and convention auditoriums of Jehovah's Witnesses, no collections are ever taken. Boxes are placed so that it is convenient for any who wish to contribute to do so. No one knows what or if others give. Some are able to give more than others; some may not be able to give anything. Jesus showed the right view when he commented on the treasury box at the temple in Jerusalem and those contributing: It is one's capacity to give and the spirit of giving that count, not the amount of money.—Luke 21:1-4.

If I become one of Jehovah's Witnesses, would I be expected to preach as they do?

When one becomes filled with the knowledge of the promised earthly Paradise under Christ's Kingdom, one wants to share it with others. You will too. It is good news! —Acts 5:41, 42.

Doing this is an important way of showing that you are a disciple of Jesus Christ. In the Bible, Jesus is called "the faithful and true witness." When on earth he preached, saying: "The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near," and he sent out his disciples to do the same. (Revelation 3:14; Matthew 4:17; 10:7) Later, Jesus commanded his followers: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them." He also foretold that before the end, "this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." —Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20.

There are many ways of declaring this good news. Conversation with friends and acquaintances often opens the way to do so. Some do it by writing letters or by using the telephone. Others mail literature containing material that they think an acquaintance would be especially interested in. Out of a desire to miss no one, Witnesses go from door to door with the message.

The Bible contains this warm invitation: "The spirit and the bride keep on saying: 'Come!' And let anyone hearing say: 'Come!' And let anyone thirsting come; let anyone that wishes take life's water free." (Revelation 22:17) Telling

others about the Paradise earth and its blessings is to be done willingly, out of a heart filled with a desire to share this good news.

We are sure that you have other questions about Jehovah's Witnesses and their beliefs. Perhaps some issues are controversial in nature. We would like to answer your questions. Space is limited in this brochure, so we invite you to ask the Witnesses locally. You can do so either at their Kingdom Hall meetings or when they visit you in your home. Or you may send your questions to Jehovah's Witnesses, using the appropriate address listed below.

OUR INVITATION TO YOU

We have enjoyed talking to you through the pages of this brochure. We hope that you have enjoyed learning more about Jehovah's Witnesses. Please accept our invitation to visit us at our local Kingdom Hall. See how our meetings are conducted. See how we endeavor to share with others the good news of a paradise earth under Christ's Kingdom.

God has promised it. "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Peter 3:13) Many centuries have passed. The waiting period approaches its end. World conditions signify this.

"As you behold the day drawing near," the apostle Paul said, "consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together." (Hebrews 10:24, 25) We invite you to heed Paul's advice by assembling with us.