

CHAPTER 6

FALSE ADVERTISING, FALSE PROPHECY AND FALSE CHRISTIANITY

In this chapter it will be shown that the Watchtower Society is guilty of false advertising, that it stands condemned by its own words as a false prophet and that it requires its faithful membership to accept unreservedly its pronouncements under the threat of disfellowshipping and ultimate annihilation.

I. FALSE ADVERTISING

After the reader has studied the book to this point he cannot help but be aware of the fact that *The Watchtower* has taken its readers through a maze of conflicting and contradictory interpretations. Statements have been quoted from this magazine which are irreconcilable. Yet, in spite of this glaring lack of consistency, actually *undependability*, the following was published in advertising *The Watchtower*:

Since 1879 it has been published regularly for the benefit of sincere students of the Bible. Over that extended period of time *The Watchtower* has consistently proven itself dependable.¹

How could a claim be more blatantly false? Jehovah's Witnesses who today would accept and propagate the prophetic understanding and time calculations of earlier Watchtower positions would actually be disfellowshipped!

Another example of false advertising relative to *The Watchtower* is found on the back cover of the January 8, 1970 issue of *Awake!*

¹ *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1950), p. 793.

For ninety years this faithful journal has been pointing forward to this very time, urging people to turn to the Bible because of the spiritual famine that the Bible itself foretold was to come in our generation.

It is obvious from what has been presented elsewhere in this book, that this statement is also false and that it almost completely expunges the prophetic interpretations, observations and views on chronology given by Russell between 1877 and 1914. The present Witness leadership has cleverly and conveniently forgotten the past!

The fact remains that these two ads for *The Watchtower* are obvious examples of *false advertising*.

II. FALSE PROPHECY

It is one thing for the present writer, on the basis of the Bible and other evidence, to declare that the Watchtower Society is guilty of false prophecy and that individuals such as Russell, Rutherford and other leaders were individually false prophets. It is another thing to find that the Society, through its own publications, reveals itself and its leaders to be false prophets without God's enlightenment. How can this be?

The following is quoted from the October 8, 1968 *Awake!* article, "A Time to 'Lift Up Your Head' in Confident Hope":

True, there have been those in times past who predicted an "end to the world," even announcing a specific date. Some have gathered groups of people with them and fled to the hills or withdrawn into their homes waiting for the end. Yet, nothing happened. The "end" did not come. They were guilty of false prophesying. Why? What was missing?

Missing was the full measure of evidence required in fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Missing from such people were God's truths and the evidence that he was guiding and using them.²

While it is true that the Bible Students or Witnesses of today did not flee to the hills or withdraw to their homes to wait for the end, it is also true that the movement did set specific dates for the "end of the world," for example, 1914. Such an erroneous prediction would make them, too, "guilty of false prophesying." How is this false prophesying explained? "Missing from

² XLIX (October 8, 1968), p. 23.

such people were God's truths and the evidence that he was guiding and using them" says *Awake!* Would this not also apply to the Watchtower Society? Surely the Society cannot escape the implications of its own words.³

III. FALSE PROPHECY AND FALSE CHRISTIANITY

That false prophecy and wrong dates for events of the "last days" have been published by the Society has already been established. What makes these errors even more reprehensible is that Jehovah's Witnesses must accept them as they are published, without questioning. The Society may change its views on an interpretation at any time. But a Witness who, after the study of the Watchtower understanding of a passage, concluded that it was wrong and persisted in this view *before* it was so identified by the Society, would be disfellowshipped. It is clear from the portion of the trial transcript which follows, that the authority of the Watchtower hierarchy, and the unity of the organization shown by support of the Witnesses' current views are *more important than truth* to the Society's leadership. The testimony is taken from the Pursuer's Proof of a trial held in the Scottish Court of Sessions, in November, 1954. Legal counsel for the Society, Haydon C. Covington, answered the questions of the attorney for the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

Q. You have promulgated—forgive the word—false prophecy:

A. We have—I do not think we have promulgated false prophecy, there have been statements that were erroneous, that is the way I put it, and mistaken.

Q. . . . It was promulgated as a matter which must be believed by all members of Jehovah's Witnesses that the Lord's Second Coming took place in 1874?

A. I am not familiar with that. You are speaking on a matter that I know nothing of. . . .

Q. You have studied the literature of your movement?

A. Yes, but not all of it. I have not studied the seven volumes of "Studies in the Scriptures," and I have not studied this matter that you are mentioning now of 1874. I am not at all familiar with that.

Q. Assume from me that it was promulgated as authoritative by the Society that Christ's Second Coming was in 1874?

³ *Ibid.*

A. Taking that assumption as a fact, it is a hypothetical statement.

Q. That was the publication of false prophecy?

A. That was the publication of a false prophecy, it was a false statement or an erroneous statement in fulfilment of a prophecy that was false or erroneous.

Q. And that had to be believed by the whole of Jehovah's Witnesses?

A. Yes, because you must understand we must have unity, we cannot have disunity with a lot of people going every way, an army is supposed to march in step. . . .

Q. Back to the point now. A false prophecy was promulgated?

A. I agree to that.

Q. It had to be accepted by Jehovah's Witnesses?

A. That is correct.

Q. If a member of Jehovah's Witnesses took the view himself that that prophecy was wrong and said so he would be disfellowshipped?

A. Yes, if he said so and kept persisting in creating trouble, because if the whole organisation believes one thing, even though it be erroneous and somebody else starts on his own trying to put his ideas across then there is disunity and trouble, there cannot be harmony, there cannot be marching together. When a change comes it should come from the proper source, the head of the organisation, the governing body, not from the bottom upwards, because everybody would have ideas, and the organisation would disintegrate and go in a thousand different directions. Our purpose is to have unity.

Q. Unity at all costs?

A. Unity at all costs, because we believe and are sure that Jehovah God is using our organisation, the governing body of our organisation to direct it, even though mistakes are made from time to time.

Q. And unity based upon an enforced acceptance of false prophecy?

A. That is conceded to be true.

Q. And the person who expressed his view, as you say, that it was wrong, and was disfellowshipped, would be in breach of the Covenant, if he was baptized?

A. That is correct.

Q. And as you said yesterday expressly, would be worthy of death?

A. I think —

Q. Would you say yes or no?

A. I will answer yes, unhesitatingly.

Q. Do you call that religion?

A. It certainly is.

Q. Do you call it Christianity?

A. I certainly do.⁴

Covington's testimony for the Society is certainly significant. (1) As the Society's legal counsel and its former Vice-president, he admits that he had never even read the seven volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*, all of which, except for the last volume, were written by C. T. Russell, the Society's founder! (2) He agrees that the Society had been guilty of publishing and promulgating "false prophecy." (3) The statements he makes or accepts concerning unity are certainly an example of false, not true Christianity. A "unity at all costs . . . based upon an enforced acceptance of false prophecy" under the penalty of eternal death, is not Christian teaching. It is not surprising that the attorney asked Covington: "Do you call it Christianity?" A true Christian unity is not created, sustained, safeguarded and enforced by any human institution. Where in the Bible does one find the principle or statement that God urges "unity at all costs" or at the expense of the truth? Such a position as that set forth by Covington as the representative of the Watchtower Society must be rejected as a clear example of *false Christianity*.

⁴ A microfilm copy of the complete trial can be obtained from: The Scottish Record Office, H. M. General Register House, Edinburgh, Scotland. The order should

ask for the Pursuer's Proof of Douglas Walsh vs. The Right Honourable James Latham Clyde, M.P., P.C., as representing the Minister of Labour and National Service. The microfilm copy costs a little over \$35.00. The pages quoted above were pp. 340-343. Obvious errors of *spelling* have been corrected without so indicating in the quote.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

A review of some of the important conclusions reached in this study are now to be stated. The important question, "Why a Witness of Jesus Christ—Not a Jehovah's Witness?"—which relates to the author's own experiences, concludes the chapter.

I. CONCLUSIONS

In the Introduction to this work the crucial importance of 1914 to the Witnesses was reviewed. It was pointed out that if this date was incorrect,

not only would the claim that the Society represents God's visible organization and "channel" for the revelation of His truth for this age be invalidated, but the major teachings in a number of Witness books and magazines must, of necessity, be rejected

The Witnesses' position on 1914 was first stated, then it was examined and found to be incorrect. Thus, the Introduction's statements must be applied. The Society does not represent God's visible organization and "channel." On this point alone, many of its major teachings must be rejected.

The methods employed in the calculation of 1975 were examined and found to be unsound. Many problems inherent in the Witnesses' 6,000-year theory would indicate that the approach, as well as the view itself, is untenable. In addition, 1975 is now past history.

The survey in Chapter 5 of the pronouncements by the Society since its beginning, should convince any objective researcher that this movement stands guilty of false prophecy. It should also convince him that urgency and the stress on Armageddon have been utilized by the Society to gain converts and

to stimulate the Witnesses to greater activity. As Chapter 6 showed, the Watchtower Society has even distorted its own history and the Bible in order to better exploit its eschatological emphasis and hierarchical authority.

From all that has been presented, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society's claim, "that 'THE SOCIETY' is the visible representative of the Lord on earth" and "under the direct supervision of Christ Jesus at the Temple,"¹ rests on the slender thread of its own identification, a self-identification which is impossible to maintain in the light of the present study.

II. WHY A WITNESS OF JESUS CHRIST—NOT
A JEHOVAH'S WITNESS?

Shortly after this writer had been "born again" (I John 5:1-5; John 3:3-7) by the simple acceptance of what the Bible stated, he encountered a new emphasis in his contacts with true Christians. This new emphasis was the prominence given to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in contrast to that of Jehovah so often stressed by the Jehovah's Witnesses. The question which confronted this writer was, "Which position was right—Why the emphasis on Jesus Christ?"

The answer was found in the New Testament. The message preached by the Christian believers during the first century is recorded in the Book of Acts—the church carrying forth the commission received from Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Without exception, the salvation message of the early church centered on the theme of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection.² The Bible witnesses were witnesses of Jesus Christ! The Saviour spoke to His own before His ascension and said:

But 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, *New World Translation*)

¹ *The Watchtower*, 1938, p. 182, cited in *The Watchtower*, LXXVI (June 1, 1955), p. 333.

² For the message of the early church in Acts: 2:22-40; 3:13-26; 4:2, 10-12, 33; 5:30-32, 42; 8:4-6, 35; 9:20; 10:39-43; 11:20, 26; 13:28-41; 16:30-32; 17:2-4, 18, 31; 18:5; 19:13; 20:21; 24:24; 26:22, 23.

"You will be witnesses of me," reveals that the message of the early church was to be the simple message of who Jesus Christ was and what He had done. A further study of Acts shows that except for quotations from the Old Testament, the name in which the work of the ministry was carried forth was the name of Jesus Christ.³ Richard B. Rackham wrote:

To the Jews the revelation of God was summed up in *the Name*, i.e., the divine name of JHVH which might not be uttered; but in the Acts the *Name* is always that of Jesus Christ; the Christians *call upon His name* (as upon that of JHVH), and his name is borne by them.⁴

In further explanation Rackham stated:

The Israel of old had been separated from the world by the Name of JEHOVAH. They were the people who called upon the Name of the Lord and upon whom his Name was called. But the divine Name which the new sect bears is *the Name* of the Lord Jesus Christ. Into this Name they were baptized; in it they live and speak and work; for it they suffer. Accordingly by "this Name" they are known. They are the people "who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus"; and "upon whom his name is called." And when at last a distinctive name had to be invented for the new body, it was taken from this Name, and they were called CHRISTIANS. The Jews however could not recognize a name which implied the truth of this faith . . . So they called his disciples in contempt Nazarenes or Galileans.⁵

To follow in the footsteps of the Christian witnesses of the Bible, then, an individual or a group must be a witness of Jesus Christ—a witness of His sacrificial death, His burial and glorious resurrection. Through this message alone it is proclaimed that "there is no salvation in anyone else, for there is not another name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must get saved" (Acts 4:12, *New World Translation*).

Those who rejected the testimony of Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry would not place themselves under the only name of salvation in Acts 4:12 and the commission of Acts 1:8 and "remained Jehovah's Witnesses."⁶

³ Acts 2:38; 3:6, 16; 4:7, 10, 12, 17, 18, 30; 5:28, 40, 41; 8:12, 16; 9:14-16, 21, 27, 29; 10:43, 48; 15:26; 16:18; 19:5, 13, 17; 21:13; 22:16.

⁴ *The Acts of the Apostles* (fourteenth ed.; London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1901), p. lxxiii.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁶ Philip Elliott, *"Jehovah's Witnesses" in the First and Twentieth Centuries* (Second ed. revised; Stirling, Scotland: Drummond Tract Dept, n.d.), p. 15.

In his booklet, *"Jehovah's Witnesses" in the First and Twentieth Centuries*, Philip Elliott presented parallels between the Jehovah's witnesses (Israel, Isa. 43:10, 11) of Jesus' day and the modern Jehovah's Witnesses. The twentieth century Jehovah's Witnesses are in the same position of unbelief as the rejecting Jews of the New Testament: they deny the Deity and bodily resurrection of Christ, and they oppose the church of Christ. In so doing they reject the work of the Holy Spirit within every believer. Elliott concluded: "They are just as much in the dark as were the Jehovah's Witnesses of the first century."⁷

Walter E. Stuermann also saw the strong Old Testament Judaistic emphasis of the group and observed:

Almost everywhere they subordinate Christian and New Testament themes to those of Judaism and the Old Testament. One wonders sometimes whether Jehovah might not just as well dispense with his chief executive officer, Jesus Christ. They will, of course, vigorously deny it; but, in this writer's judgment, the Witnesses are more accurately considered a mutation of a conservative, apocalyptic Judaism rather than a variant of Christianity.⁸

That Stuermann was right is illustrated by a former Jehovah's Witness who wrote to *Christianity Today*:

I was raised a Baptist, but in my teen years became associated with Jehovah's Witnesses. While I maintain great respect for their fundamental knowledge of Bible *texts* and morality, my six years with them left me in a spiritual dearth. Why? No Christ! How wonderful it is to read and hear about Christ again! One learns a lot about ancient Israelitish history from them, but so little about Christ.⁹

In addition to the references already cited, the name of Jesus Christ as the object of faith permeates the Bible. Those who are saved, or are to receive salvation, must "believe in his name" (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13; 3:23). Christians are baptized in the name of Christ (Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:4, 5). Christians suffer in the name or for the name of Christ (Acts 5:41; 15:26; 21:13). Christians are to gather together in the name of Jesus Christ (Matt. 18:20; I Cor. 5:4). Every creature

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-22.

⁸ "The Bible and Modern Religions: III. Jehovah's Witnesses," *Interpretation*, X (July 1956), p. 345.

⁹ IX (December 18, 1964), p. 305.

will render homage to Jesus Christ: "... At the name of Jesus Christ every knee should bow ..." (Phil. 2:10). The instruction is given to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus ..." (Col. 3:17). Finally, it is in the name of Jesus that Christians have been cleansed, sanctified and justified (I Cor. 6:11).

Every true Christian has confessed "that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:11). The requirements for salvation are clearly stated by Paul in Romans 10:9: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

At the beginning of this study the writer stated that he had been "born again." He also can give witness to the knowledge that he has everlasting life. On what basis? On the basis of God's Word, accepted and believed without sectarian tradition or organizational "progressive light." Two questions should be considered. "Who are born again?" "Can one know that he has everlasting life?" The answers to these questions will be brief.

Quoting from I John 5:1-5 in the *New World Translation*:

Everyone believing that Jesus is the Christ has been born from God, and everyone who loves the one that caused to be born loves him who has been born from that one. By this we gain the knowledge that we are loving the children of God, when we are loving God and doing his commandments. For this is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments; and yet his commandments are not burdensome, because everything that has been born from God conquers the world. And this is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith.

Who is the one that conquers the world but he who has faith that Jesus is the Son of God?

Can the reader answer "yes" to the following two questions? (1) "Do I believe that Jesus is the Christ?" (2) "Do I believe that Jesus is the Son of God?" If the answers are "yes," he must accept the testimony that he must also be "born from God." It is an arbitrary interpretation which would steal the "born again" experience from all who would become Christians. Yet, the Watchtower Society has taken these verses and others away from the average Witness who is said to be a member of the "Great Multitude."¹⁰

¹⁰ It was in 1935 that Joseph F. Rutherford presented a new interpretation which took away being Spirit begotten and the heavenly hope from the "Great Multitude" ("Great Company" or "Great Crowd"). Until this time it was taught that

Another passage should be examined. John 3:3-7 mentions the "born again" experience several times. Verse 3 in the *New World Translation* reads in part, "Most truly I say to you, Unless anyone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Verse 5 would indicate that to "see" the kingdom of God means to enter into it. The Witnesses claim that only the heavenly class (144,000) can make up or enter the kingdom.¹¹ The faithful men of old, such as Abel, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the prophets, according to the Witnesses, are not in the kingdom of God but will be representatives of God on the earth and subjects under the kingdom.¹² This position is not in accord with what Scripture demands in Luke 13:28, 29:

... When YOU see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves thrown outside. Furthermore, people will come from eastern parts and western, and from the north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God.

Matthew 8:11, 12 is a parallel passage which substitutes "kingdom of the heavens" for "kingdom of God." Acceptance

this class was made up of "second-rate spirit begotten Christians." (For a full development of thinking relative to the "Great Multitude" see: *The Watchtower*, February 15, 1966 issue, pp. 116-123).

Russell's teaching is clear in the question and answer in *What Pastor Russell Said. "Question (1909)-1-Does the Great Company receive life direct from God on the spirit plane? Answer-Yes, they receive life direct in that they have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and when they are begotten they are just the same way as the little flock, because we are called in the one hope of our calling. They do not make their calling and election sure, but not being worthy of second death, they therefore receive life on the spirit plane" (p. 297).*

In 1932 Rutherford stated: "Ever and anon someone advances the conclusion that the 'great multitude' will not be a spiritual class. The prophecy of Ezekiel shows that such conclusion is erroneous. The fact that their position is seven steps higher than the outside shows that they must be made spirit creatures ... They must be spirit creatures in order to be in the outer court of the divine structure, described by Ezekiel" (*Vindication*, III, p. 204).

Rutherford's statement that the "great multitude" members "must be spirit creatures" has the ring of certainty! And why not? In the introduction of the same volume one reads: "That vision of Ezekiel concerning the temple has been a mystery for ages and generations, but now is due to be understood. The Scriptures and the physical facts both show that this prophecy was not due to be understood by God's people on earth until the year 1932" (p. 5). This "due to be understood" position on the "Great Multitude" was rejected in 1935! Can Rutherford's interpretations be accepted as from God?

A question for the reader: "Where in the Bible does it say that only the 144,000 will be Spirit begotten or 'born again'?"

¹¹ *Let God Be True* (second ed.; Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1946), pp. 136-138.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 263.

of these two passages refutes the Witnesses' understanding of who are to be "in" the kingdom of God. So when Jesus said "YOU people must be born again" (John 3:7), for entrance into the kingdom of God, it meant that *all* must be "born again," without exception!

Can one know that he has everlasting life? The reader is referred to the *New World Translation* at I John 5:9-13.

If we receive the witnesses men give, the witness God gives is greater, because this is the witness God gives, the fact that he has borne witness concerning his Son. The [person] putting his faith in the Son of God has the witness given, in his own case. The [person] not having faith in God has made him a liar, because he has not put his faith in the witness given, which God as witness has given concerning his Son. And this is the witness given, that God gave us everlasting life, and this life is in his Son. He that has the Son has this life; he that does not have the Son of God does not have this life.

I write YOU these things that YOU may know that YOU have life everlasting, YOU who put YOUR faith in the name of the Son of God.

Each honest person who wishes to please God is urged to examine what is stated in the above passage. Let the reader answer the following questions directly from the Bible without recourse to outside interpretations. (1) How does one make God a liar? (2) What is the witness concerning Jesus Christ? (3) How does one receive everlasting life? (4) Can one know that he has (right now) life everlasting? (5) Do you accept God's witness?

Do you accept the testimony of Jesus Christ in John 6:47? "Most truly I say to YOU, he that believes has everlasting life." (NWT)¹³

Can the reader say, "I have been 'born again.' I know that I have life everlasting?" God can give that assurance!¹⁴

A final word. Although it was never indicated in the book elsewhere, the author deeply believes that the return of Christ is very near. He also accepts the words of the Lord in Matthew

24:36 where He said "of that day and hour knoweth no man." Christ's Second Coming is the "blessed hope" of all Christians (Titus 2:13). The way to be ready for His coming is not by date setting or by joining an organization, especially one which urges membership with the words: "Therefore, take steps quickly to work for survival and for eternal life in God's new order."¹⁵

Salvation is not offered by God on the basis of human work or effort, but on the basis of: (1) a recognition that one is a sinner (Rom. 3:23), (2) a recognition that Christ died to meet the sinner's need (John 3:16) and (3) repentance from sin and belief in Christ (Acts 17:30; Acts 16:31; John 1:12, 13). True salvation, grounded in God's grace and received by faith as God's gift will *result* in "good works" (Eph. 2:8-10).

A person who truly knows Christ as Saviour and Lord can begin and end each day with the words recorded in Revelation 22:20, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

¹³Read John 6:35-65, especially verses 35 and 40.

¹⁴This section, "Why a Witness of Jesus Christ—Not a Jehovah's Witness?" is available in tract form at \$4.00 per hundred postpaid. Further information on this and other subjects are found in the author's 332-page book, *Apostles of Denial: An Examination and Expose of the History, Doctrines and Claims of the Jehovah's Witnesses*, published by Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co. (1970). The book (\$7.95 postpaid) and the tract may be obtained from: Department of Apologetics, Los Angeles Baptist College, P.O. Box 878, Newhall, California 91322.

¹⁵ *Awake!* XLIX (October 8, 1968), p. 29.