**The Errors of Jehovah’s Witnesses
(aka The Watch Tower Society)**

https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/the-top-ten-errors-of-jehovahs-witnesses

1. **Only the Father is God Almighty.**

The WTS has consistently rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, and its understanding of the second and third Persons of the Trinity is radically different from Christianity. It claims that the Trinity doctrine had its origins in paganism and hence must be vehemently rejected by Christians.

Rejection of the doctrine of the Trinity is one of the primary reasons Jehovah’s Witnesses cannot be considered Christians. One cannot be a Christian while at the same time rejecting the Divinity of Christ.

JWs maintain that only the Father is “Almighty God,” and only he possesses divine attributes such as omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and virtues in perfection. For JWs, Jesus is a created being – not of the same substance as the Father – in direct opposition to what Christians have asserted since the Nicene Creed in the 4th century.

1. **Jesus is Michael the Archangel.**

JWs conclude that Michael is actually Jesus in his prehuman existence.

Doing so effectively relegates Jesus to the status of a creature—however exalted they might consider him to be—and not God himself. Catholics, on the other hand, identify Michael as one of seven archangels, three of whom are explicitly mentioned in the Bible—the other two being Raphael and Gabriel.

JWs have had an equally convoluted history of their approach to Jesus/Michael in terms of whether or not he should be worshiped. In their earliest days JWs were taught that Jesus should be worshiped, but since then the WTS —as it is wont to do—has jumped back and forth on its teachings, resulting in the following subsequent doctrinal positions: Jesus should only receive “relative” worship (that is, the worship of Jehovah through Jesus), relative worship is forbidden, and finally that Jesus should flat out not be worshiped at all.

1. **The Holy Spirit is God’s active force, not a Person.**

A natural consequence of the WTS rejection of the Trinity is that the Holy Spirit also is downgraded from the orthodox position of being eternal God, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity. The Holy Spirit fares even worse than Jesus does; while Jesus is a personal entity who is godlike, the “holy spirit” (in WTS publications) is not even a person. Instead, “it” is an “active force” that motivates believers to do God’s will.

The WTS teaching on the Holy Spirit is aptly summed up in this excerpt:

The holy spirit, therefore, was the specific means employed not only at Pentecost but also in all cases of inspiration. God’s holy spirit is his active force and is not a personality. It is God’s energizing force which he uses to produce visible results and to accomplish his purposes. It is manifested in many ways, that is, it produces different visible results, yet it is all the one and same active force originating from God (The Watchtower, April 15, 1952, 244).

1. **Christ did not die on a cross.**

As with masculine/personal references to the Holy Spirit, one can also find plenty of references to “the cross” in earlier WTS publications. In fact, for at least fifty years this was the case. Starting around 1936, WTS publications began to refute the traditional shape of the instrument of Jesus’ death.

Jesus, they claim, did not die on two wooden beams placed at right angles to each other; rather, He was nailed with His arms over His head to a single, upright piece of wood that WTS publications refer to as the “torture stake.”

There is an abundance of biblical, historical, archaeological, and patristic evidence that demonstrates clearly that Jesus died on a cross-shaped device.

1. **Hell doesn’t exist.**

The idea that eternal torment awaits those who knowingly reject God through mortal sin is a doctrine clearly taught in the Bible, but JWs find it untenable. They assert it is unreasonable, repugnant to justice, inconsistent with a loving God, and unscriptural.

Jesus himself spoke about hell on several occasions to warn us (e.g., Matt. 5:22, 25:41; Luke 16:24), thus confirming its existence and making it a serious consideration. Emotional aversion to hell based on our own flawed sense of love and justice notwithstanding. If we choose to reject God, he will honor that request; and since the offense is against an eternal God, the punishment is of eternal duration.

1. **The soul is not immortal.**

Going hand in hand with the previous error is the WTS denial of the soul’s immortality. After all, if the soul is not immortal, then there’s no corresponding need for a place of unending torment. Rejecting the Catholic understanding of human nature as comprising a physical component (body) and a spiritual component (soul), JWs instead claim a human being does not have a soul but *is* a soul.

They base this idea in part on Genesis 2:7, which states that after God breathed life into Adam he became “a living soul” (“a living being” in some Bible versions). JWs fail to realize that Scripture sometimes refers to an object—in this case, a man—by means of its principle component—in this case, his soul. Even in our own colloquial speech, for example, we will say that a certain number of “souls” perished in a shipwreck.

JWs also fail to acknowledge the Bible passages that speak of conscious existence after death (they explain them away), which is only possible if humans possess an attribute of their nature that survives beyond death (i.e., is immortal).

1. **Only the New World Translation of the Bible is valid.**

JWs formerly used any number of Bible translations in their preaching work, but since 1950, when the first portion of their own New World Translation (NWT) was released (subsequent portions were issued in the following years), things have changed. It would be rare today for a JW not to use the NWT.

The problem is, the NWT is a biased translation that mangles some key doctrinal passages to fit WTS theology. To illustrate, one example occurs at John 1:1, where the third clause of this verse in the NWT reads “and the Word was a god” (showing that Jesus is not Almighty God) as opposed to “and the Word was God” in mainline Christian versions (showing that he is).

The NWT’s problems are compounded by the fact that the members of its translating committee were never identified by the WTS because it “wanted the glory to go to Jehovah alone.” This anonymity prevents anyone from ascertaining if the translators had the requisite credentials to do such important work.

1. **God’s true name is “Jehovah.”**

Perhaps the most well-known aspect of JWs is their insistence on “using God’s name,” which they claim is “Jehovah.” From their perspective, failure to use God’s name shows a lack of respect and indicates ignorance on the part of believers, since God’s name is readily knowable and should be used.

The problem is, “[Jehovah](https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/jehovah)” is not God’s name, and, in a twist of irony, the name was the result of an error made by a thirteenth-century Catholic monk—ironic because Catholics are perceived by JWs as particularly misguided.

In the original Hebrew language, God’s name as revealed to Moses at the burning bush is rendered as YHWH—or Yahweh, meaning “I Am.” Ancient Hebrew was a consonantal language (no vowels). Out of reverence for God, faithful Jews would not even speak his name, so when YHWH was written in the biblical scrolls, the scribes would write the markings for the vowel sounds a-o-a for the word adonai (“Lord”) directly over YHWH so that anyone reading the scroll would know to say *adonai* rather than Yahweh. Along comes our monk and, seeing the vowel markings over YHWH, thought they were part of the actual spelling of God’s name and thus combined YHWH with a-o-a, making YaHoWaH, which eventually became “Jehovah.” So every time JWs insist on the use of God’s name, they are actually promoting a corrupted form of it.

1. **The timing of Armageddon can be predicted.**

Another characteristic of the WTS is its penchant for predicting dates for Armageddon, the final battle between the forces of good and evil that will occur at the end of human history. Throughout its entire existence the WTS has placed a primary emphasis in its publications—and hence in the JWs’ door-to-door preaching—that Armageddon is imminent.

At its inception in 1879, the WTS’s main magazine (then called Zion’s Watch Tower) began by speaking of Armageddon as being “already in progress” – clearly not true.

The WTS formally declared Armageddon would occur in 1914, 1915, 1918, 1925, and 1975, and it implied it would occur in 2000. Clearly there was a reason why Jesus spoke of the futility of attempting to know the exact time for the end of the world (see Matthew 24, especially verse 36), because this piece of information is just not available to us, and for his own good reasons the Father chose not to reveal it to humanity.

**10. Increasing ‘light’ justifies doctrinal changes.**

If anything is consistent about the WTS, it’s the changing nature of its doctrines.

In JW parlance, “light” refers to God’s truths, and in a bizarre twist of Proverbs 4:18 (“But the path of the just is like shining light that grows in brilliance till perfect day” [New American Bible]), the WTS has mistaken the just person’s path, or course of his or her life that improves over time as he or she continues to walk rightly with God, for God’s truth itself. Though the path is compared to an increasingly bright light, it is we who change, not the degree of truth in God’s word.

On the basis of this passage alone, the WTS has foisted countless doctrinal and interpretive changes upon its followers, all in the name of “increasing light”—that is, its alleged gradual improvements in Bible understanding.

The WTS’s predicament is that its doctrinal history has been all over the map: changes, reversals, novelties, and eliminations.