

J.W. who, at the end of his/her intellectual rope, hurl the accusation of "demon possessed" at a rational individual who wins the debate. The planet is not populated with evil Satanic people. Most people are trying to pay the bills, raise a family and do the best they know how. Certainly, there is a small minority of the population who make up the criminal element, but at the other end of the continuum, are some fine, noble individuals. In between, are the rest of us, making mistakes, trying and sometimes failing, but wanting to be respected and thought well of. (By the way, I wonder if J.W.'s would consider people of noble character to be "angel possessed" -seems as logical to me as the demon possessed hypothesis).

Enter "the world" with an open mind and expect to find many who will become as close to you as the former "brothers and sisters" you lost. (3) *Don't throw out the baby with the bath water.* Try to separate the wheat from the chaff. There were many fine ideas you learned like: the fruits of the spirit, brotherly love, seeking knowledge and understanding. Many of the scriptures you know by heart can be sources of comfort. Try not to overreact and become cynical and empty spiritually. (4) *Pray to the God of your understanding.* Just as the chemically dependent person has to begin a total program to recover, so too, the organizationally dependent must begin such a program. You may have withdrawal symptoms just as severe as the chronic alcoholic. For the alcoholic, *Alcoholics Anonymous* insists on a spiritual program along with physical and emotional recovery. They stress that we must seek "though prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for a knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out." (Step #11 of the Twelve Steps of AA). Such a program brings together people of all backgrounds and walks of life to "clear up the wreckage of the past." A lot can be

learned from such a simple, honest, direct and non-dogmatic approach for making a new beginning. (5) *Rebuild your life "one day at a time."* You did not become a Jehovah's Witness overnight, nor did you prepare to disengage yourself from "the organization" in one day. Therefore, your recovery and readjustment to a new life will be a process, not one dramatic event. Enjoy today, thank God today, help a friend today. The past is gone forever, only a memory remains. Use those memories to help yourself grow.

(6) *A promise to you:* As a psychologist, I have witnessed some miraculous cases of personal recovery-true testimonies to the healing power God has built into the human physiology. Again, I would like to borrow from AA literature and quote from their Eleven Premises. "If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door to it. Fear of people and economic insecurity will leave us. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace ... Are these extravagant promises? We think not, they are being fulfilled among us; sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them." (AA -*The Big Book*, pp.83-84)

Please ... help yourself, help others. I believe these promises will come true for you. May this letter bring the hope, encouragement and support that you need.

With love and understanding, Your Brother,

**Carl Thornton**

**P.S.** Carl Thornton was a third generation J. W. Carl's thirst for knowledge led him to college where he obtained a PhD in Psychology. □

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## ***The Watchtower Society Misrepresents Its History***

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"Should History Be Rewritten?," was an article appearing in the *Awake!* magazine of December 22,1974. This article pointed out that there were times when it would be appropriate to rewrite a certain history if there were new facts available to correct a previously held view. However, it went on to point out that such a practice could be inappropriate and offered the following information in this regard: "There is, of course, an obvious danger here. The usual tendency when rewriting history in an effort to support a certain

view is to 'pick and choose' information, finding that which paints a noble picture of the writer's side of the story. This is somewhat like the method of a clever lawyer who sifts through evidence and selects only the material that will benefit his client while ignoring or suppressing other information. When this 'pick and choose' spirit dominates, the rewritten version of history is likely to be as lopsided as an earlier one. " - *Awake!*, December 22,1974, p.17

The publishers of the *Awake!* -The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society-often directs its readers to its own history usually in an effort to substantiate its role as a modern-day prophet of Jehovah God. Millions of Jehovah's Witnesses read and accept these writings as a fair and accurate history of the movement. While most witnesses realize that the Watch Tower Society is capable of making mistakes few would concede that it would deliberately rewrite its own history in order to misrepresent itself. Therefore, when they read something like the following they accept, Without question, that what is said about its history is true: "Of all men used by God to prophesy, Jesus is outstanding. Based on what he said, along with the words of Daniel and John, Jehovah's Witnesses pointed to the year 1914, *decades in advance*, as marking the *start* of 'the conclusion of the system of things.' (Daniel 4; Matthew 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; Rev. 6: 1-8) Within the period of one generation, outstanding war, food shortage, pestilence, and other terrible conditions *were predicted* to strike before God destroyed this system and replaced it with a new order." -*Awake!*, January 22, 1973, p. 8 (Italics added)

Is the above a fair and honest reporting of the pre-1914 witness work carried on by the Watch Tower Society or is it rather an example of the "pick and choose" method alluded to in the previous quotation? It says that "decades in advance" of 1914 they pointed to that year" as marking the start of 'the conclusion of the system of things.'" The following sentence enlarges on this by adding "Within the period of one generation, outstanding war, food shortages, pestilence, and other terrible conditions were predicted to strike before God destroyed this system and replaced it with a new order." Is this truthful? Is this what they were preaching in the pre-1914 period? If the reader of this material published in 1973 accepted it as a faithful statement of historical facts they would be completely misled as to the reality of matters. The only true statement in the above is that "Jehovah's witnesses pointed to the year 1914, decades in advance." The rest is all fiction, things. I tell you that every unprofitable saying that men speak, they will render an account concerning it on Judgment Day; for by your words you will be declared righteous, and by your words you will be condemned." -Matthew 12:35-37, *NW*.

The Watch Tower publications often speak of their activity as corresponding to or being foreshadowed by some famous Bible personality such as John the Baptist, Elijah or one of the other prophets. This

practice is what writer James W. Sire calls "virtue by association," and is just the opposite of "guilt by association." By linking Watch Tower preaching to that of one of Almighty God's approved servants they attempt to add stature and significance to their own utterances. Examination shows that there is no such linkage in fact. A true prophet does not have to continually restructure his prophetic message because nothing he says happens as he said it would. Nor does he have to rewrite the record to make it appear that his prophetic service was authentic. The prophetic utterances of the prophets pointed to the person and the work of Jesus Christ. It is completely inappropriate for an individual Christian or a group of Christians to glorify themselves in this way. As the Scriptures say "for the bearing witness to Jesus is what inspires prophesying." (Rev. 19: 10) The unlawful appropriating of prophetic utterances by those whom Jehovah God has not commissioned to act as prophets is discussed in the book *Paradise Restored to Mankind-By Theocracy*," published by the Watchtower Society in 1972. Commenting on Zechariah 5: 3,4 they say the following regarding false prophets:

"They put on an appearance of being a prophet by saying, as if under inspiration: 'an utterance!' Then they really steal the name of Jehovah by attaching it to their own 'utterance' to which it does not belong. They dream up false dreams for the future so as to influence the people. against Jehovah's true mouthpieces. Because of their false dreams and their boasting regarding the future, they cause the people to go astray religiously and spiritually and leave them unprepared for the real things to come. Jehovah did not send them or command them, for which reason they have no right to steal God's name from its rightful place and use it for their deceptive purposes. Such thieves benefit no one." -*Paradise Restored to Mankind-By Theocracy*, 1972, pages 212,213

Of course, this condemnation had others in mind but the historical record shows it is a very accurate description of the Society's record. It is certainly true that their "'utterances" in the 40-year period prior to 1914 did not prepare people "for the real things to come." Attaching God's sacred name to these "utterances" did not sanctify them as truthful. Their failures in this regard continue right up to the present moment. They would hardly find it necessary to rewrite their history if it in any way demonstrated that they had been sent by Jehovah God. Later, in the same book, events in connection with the year 1919 and the supposed changed in their spiritual condition that was

supposed to have occurred are discussed. That year, according to the Watch Tower Society brought about a dramatic change in their religious territory or "land." About this they said the following:

" And it must occur in that day, ' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies, 'that I shall cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they will no more be remembered; and also the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness I shall cause to pass out of the land. And it must occur that in case a man should prophesy anymore, his father and his mother, the ones who caused his birth, must say to him, 'You will not live, because falsehood is what you have spoken in the name of Jehovah.' And his father and his mother, the ones who caused his birth, must pierce him through because of his prophesying.'" Zechariah 13:2,3. (pages 350,351) "As regards our time since the year 1919 C.E. Jehovah of armies is here speaking about the spiritual estate of his restored remnant of spiritual Israelites.'" (page 351) And, then, attempting to explain away their own miscalculations, they add: " Any attempted interpretation of prophecy, if it proved to be incorrect in the light of historic events and the clearer understanding of the Bible, was corrected, regardless of who had offered the interpretation. Loyalty to God and to his inspired Word was the issue here to be met ... such a false prophet would be expelled, disfellowshipped, from the Christian congregation. By such loyalty on the part of all members of the restored remnant, the 'prophet' of falsehood would be made to pass out of their 'land'" (pages 352,353)

As we have already seen, the booklet *Millions Now Living Will Never Die* was published in 1920, a year after 1919. when the Watch Tower Society teaches they were restored to God's favor. The Prefatory of that booklet is addressed to Judge J. F. Rutherford, who is credited with the information contained therein. As it turned out this was another false prophecy. Did the so-called "restored remnant" cast Rutherford and/or others responsible for this false prophecy out of their "land?" No, they did not. Rutherford remained the president of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society until his death in 1942.

To "steal" the words of God's prophets and apply them to human schemes is a very serious matter as the above book acknowledges. That they can write these things demonstrates that they are knowledgeable of this seriousness. It reminds one of Paul's words to certain religionists in his own day: "If, now, you are a

Jew in name and are resting upon law and taking pride in God, and you know his will and approve of things that are excellent because you are orally instructed out of the Law; and you are persuaded that you are a guide of the blind, a light for those in darkness, a corrector of the unreasonable ones, a teacher of babes, and having the framework of the knowledge and of the truth of the Law-do you, however, the one teaching someone else, not teach yourself? You, the one preaching 'Do not steal,' do you steal? You, the one saying 'Do not commit adultery,' do you commit adultery? You, the one expressing abhorrence of the idols, do you rob temples? You, who take pride in law, do you by your transgressing of the Law dishonor God? For 'the name of God is being blasphemed on account of you people among the nations; 'just as it is written.'" -Romans 2:17-24, NW.

We can be assured that God is not one to be mocked. What we sow in word and deed in this life will have an accounting before the judgment seat of Christ. ( Ga1.6:7; 2 Cor.5: 10) Oftentimes, the Watch tower Society and Jehovah's Witnesses like to compare themselves to other religious groups thinking that, by comparison, they are superior as Christians. They like to speak of their unity and their moral standard. They view their door-to-door witnessing as the hallmark of Christian activity. But these are not the issue. The issue is whether-or-not the Watch Tower Society has acted and is continuing to act as a false prophet and whether they are guilty of covering this up, or attempting to cover it up, by rewriting their history. If a man is charged with embezzlement, the question facing the court is not whether he was a good neighbor or a good family man. The issue facing the court is: did he take the money? He may not consider himself an embezzler. He may have only intended to borrow the money and pay it back later. But his intention in this regard is not the issue. The issue is: did he take money that did not belong to him? If he did then he is guilty of embezzlement.

Every Christian is capable of sin and does sin. When that happens we need to confess our sin and ask for God's forgiveness. We are promised that if we confess our sins God will forgive us. ( 1 John 1:9 ) But what if we refuse to acknowledge our sins? What then? I believe we compound the seriousness of our sinfulness when we do that.

Denial of wrongdoing prevents us from repenting and without repentance there can be no forgiveness. It appears to me that the Watchtower Society has missed

many opportunities to be humbled by their rash presumptuousness. Instead they have chosen a course of denial and self-justification. That course does not bode well for the future of the Watchtower Society or

Jehovah's Witnesses no matter how large they may grow, how much property they may acquire or how sophisticated they may become. □