

# The Discerner

the voice of... **Religion Analysis Service**

A QUARTERLY EXPOSING  
UNBIBLICAL TEACHING & MOVEMENTS

Volume 36, Number 1

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Eckankar

Confucianism

Hare Krishna

Freemasons

Jehovah's Witnesses

Humanism

Jainism

Judaism

Neopaganism

MOONIES

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Islam

~~Hinduism~~  
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MORMONS

BAHA'I FAITH

Buddhism

Scientology

Satanism

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*"Hereby know we the spirit of truth  
and the spirit of error" 1 John 4:6*

# The Discerner

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## WITH THIS ISSUE

We want to thank all of you for your generous giving during the last year that has made it possible for Religion Analysis Service to continue our mission in defense of biblical truth.

In this issue, I am excited to share with our readers the exciting and inspirational testimony of Cindy Marty concerning her life as a Jehovah's Witness and her journey from the Watchtower to faith in Jesus Christ.

This issue also contains the final installment of my article *Jehovah's Witnesses War and Neutrality* which shows how the Watchtower has distorted and twisted the views of the early Christian Church towards war.

Among Christians of the first several centuries following Christ there were pacifists opposed to war and killing, who were yet patriotic toward Rome. Others opposed war primarily due to the idolatrous compromises often required of soldiers. The Watchtower cannot claim support for their position among either of these factions since both groups remained patriotic supporters of Rome, despite their objections to killing or idolatry respectively.

Finally, I show in the article that there was a third group of Christians in the early church that, in fact, did serve in the Roman armies, and with great distinction.

Our last two articles relate to the mind control used by cults. Bruce Laughton does a masterful job explaining how cults recruit, retain, and abuse members. I have a brief adjoining article to compliment Bruce Laughton's article noting the biblical basis exposing cultic tactics.

Finally, please enjoy our quiz, this time on the subject of the gospels and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

As always, we appreciate your prayers for this ministry. We love to have feedback from our readers and are happy to answer your questions about cults, apologetics, the Bible, and theology. You can contact us by e-mail at [info@ras.org](mailto:info@ras.org) or by telephone at 1-800-562-9153 (Locally: 612-331-3342). Also, please check our webpage ([ras.org](http://ras.org)) regularly as we will be making some exciting changes in the coming months.

## **INTRODUCING NEW BOARD MEMBER: DAVE BRITAIN**

We are excited to announce our newest board member to Religion Analysis Service, Dave Brittain. Dave and his wife Kathy live in Burnsville, Minnesota. They are members of the Eagan Hills Alliance Church. Dave is a retired truck driver. He has been actively witnessing to cultists and proclaiming the gospel for many years, including a vibrant Internet ministry. We anticipate Dave will be a blessing to our ministry in many ways including an improved RAS web presence. We are pleased to have Dave join our team!

## SET FREE TO SERVE HIM

by Cindy Marty

It all began one day when the Jehovah's Witnesses came to the door of our home. I was just a baby at the time. They told my mother that if she became a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses, she could live in a paradise earth forever. If not, she would be destroyed at Armageddon, or the end of the world, which they predicted was coming soon. They came back regularly and taught her their doctrines from their books and their own version of the Bible called the New World Translation.

As my mother got more and more involved with the Jehovah's Witnesses over several months and years, my father's drinking problem became worse. In the beginning, it seemed so innocent. It was just a Bible study, wasn't it? My father had no idea he was about to lose his wife and family to the Watchtower Organization and eventually, my parents were divorced.

My parents had five children and we were all raised as Jehovah's Witnesses by our mother. As I was growing up, I believed everything I was taught at the Kingdom Hall, which is what they call their church. I was told that all other churches were from Satan the devil and that the Watchtower organization was the only true church on earth. I went to several meetings each week and I was completely indoctrinated into their teachings as a small child. I believed everything they told me was from God and that they were the only true Christians.

As I was growing up I didn't celebrate any holidays—no birthdays, no Christmas or Easter. This didn't bother me since I believed this is what Jehovah God wanted me to do. We were not to participate in any of the activities of the world and worldly people.

I wasn't allowed to salute the flag or to be patriotic to my country. This was considered bowing down to an idol. I literally would have rather died than take a blood transfusion, which was forbidden by the Jehovah's Witnesses. I even carried a card in my wallet that stated just that.

I went door to door at least one day every week selling the publications of the Watchtower and Awake magazines. In fact, this was a requirement of all members and we were given territories to go

into each week that covered every home in the city. I really believed that if the people in the homes we visited didn't become Jehovah's Witnesses, that they would die at Armageddon, or the end of the world, which was coming soon.

My whole world revolved around this organization, all of my friends, all of our activities. I was discouraged from taking part in any extra-curricular school activities and no plans were made for college or the future.

In the late 1960's, my mother took my brother's and sister's and I to a large international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Atlanta, Georgia. There was an announcement made by the leaders of the organization that the world was going to end in 1975 and that they would have the chance to live in a paradise earth. The crowd cheered and roared with happiness because finally they thought, this world was going to end. As a result of this false prophecy, thousands of people made many mistakes for their lives that would affect their future. Many members decided not to have children and they sold their homes. They spent all their time going from door to door to recruit as many people into the organization as possible before the end of the world would come.

At that time, I was 14 years old and my parent's had recently been divorced. I began to live in fear because they said that only Jehovah's Witnesses that were good enough in God's eyes and had worked hard enough for Jehovah God, would survive the great Armageddon that was coming and live forever on a paradise earth. I knew I wasn't good enough. How good is good enough? How much work do you have to do to actually be saved?

The fact is, as a Jehovah's Witness, there is no assurance of salvation. You can only hope to do enough good works to earn your salvation. But Ephesians 2: 8-9 says "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this not from your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." This is God's promise for all of us.

After the convention where the end of the world had been prophesied, I went into a terrible rebellion. For about two years I rebelled against everything. When I was sixteen, I decided to leave the Watchtower Organization. This was the beginning of many difficulties in my life. My mother asked me to leave our home so I went to live with my alcoholic father. Even though I had left the Jehovah's Witnesses physically, I didn't realize how fully indoctrinated I was in their teachings. I lived in constant fear. I was afraid to go into a church

because I had been taught that Satan was in all other churches. Why would I go there? This is the type of fear that the Watchtower organization instills in their members to prevent them from leaving.

As the years went by, I made many mistakes in my life, believing there was no hope for me. I was married at eighteen, I had two small children and was divorced by the time I was twenty two years old. In the meantime, 1975 came and went. You can't imagine the fear that I had at that time, thinking that my children and I were going to die, and then, it didn't happen, the world didn't end!

The Watchtower Organization was guilty of being a false prophet. But of course, most of their members didn't see it this way. The Jehovah's Witnesses said they had just made a mistake and that the world was still going to end soon. Further, they even denied their prediction that the world would end in the fall of 1975, though their publications prove otherwise, and I was there when they said it! It is impossible to express what an impact the Watchtower's false prophecy concerning 1975 had on my life and the lives of millions of Jehovah's Witnesses who lived through it.

As time went on I continued to live in fear. I prayed to God. I really wanted Him in my life, but I didn't really believe that He heard my prayers. I had made so many mistakes. Why would He have anything to do with me? I called myself a Christian because I knew I believed in God. In fact, everyone thought I was a Christian. On the outside, my life looked wonderful. I was now married to a wonderful Christian man, who I had met in the neighborhood I grew up in many years before. We had children, a beautiful home, I had everything. But on the inside, I was miserable and I especially had a great fear of where I would go when I died.

Our family went to church every Sunday and just being in the church was a great fear to me. Symbols of the church like the cross and stained glass windows frightened me and I would sit there week after week and doubt everything the Pastor said for the entire service, not even really realizing I was doing this!

My husband would say "You have to believe me—the Jehovah's Witnesses have lied to you." Many people were praying for me. Friends and family who were Christians and knew I grew up in the Watchtower Organization could see that I was struggling and they tried to help me. They gave me literature and tapes about the organization. But what they didn't realize is, as a Jehovah's Witness, you are taught not to even touch those things, that it was just hate

literature. So I took these things from them and thanked them but went home and put them all in a box without even looking at them.

In the meantime, my children were becoming Christians and I was still living in darkness. I even began thinking, should I leave my husband and family and go back to the Watchtower Organization? I didn't know what to do or which way to turn. I lay in bed at night and cried, I was so confused. I even began thinking about taking my own life. I remember feeling like I couldn't live like this any longer and I begged God to help me.

Then one Sunday, as I was standing in the church, the pastor read a passage of Scripture from the Bible. It was from Romans 10:9 which says "For if you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." And as I confessed those words, I was saved.

Romans 10:10 says "For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved." Romans 10:13 says "Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

That is exactly what happened to me that very day. I was saved. Whereas, I had denied Jesus Christ as my Lord and my God, and His bodily resurrection; now I believed in the real Jesus Christ and the power of His resurrection!

That day I was filled with overwhelming joy, peace that passes all understanding, and God's love was poured out in my heart. One of the most wonderful things that happened is that the fear was gone. The fear of death and dying, the fear of not knowing what would happen to me when I die, it was all gone. Praise God!

On that day I became a new person. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

I was 30 years old, and that day was the beginning of my new life in Christ! I was spiritually dead and I was now alive in Christ!

I was so enjoying this new found peace that had come over me. I was filled with bubbling joy and I had such love for others, like never before. It was God's love. Romans 5:5 says: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

One day, shortly after this happened to me, I found the box where I had placed all of the literature about the Watchtower that had been given to me over the years. Now that the fear was gone, I began

looking through these things. I found a tape that was a recording of a radio program with two former Jehovah's Witnesses speaking. They were talking about how the Watchtower leadership had been prophesying the end of the world for more than 100 years. I couldn't believe what I was hearing!

But what hurt me the most was that they said the Jehovah's Witnesses had changed God's Word to fit their doctrine. When I heard that, it was like a light went on and I realized at that moment I had been lied to my entire life. I just sat there listening to that tape over and over again. God used the words of those men to open my eyes and to see how I had been deceived.

I now had a desire to read the Bible and for the first time in my life, I could understand God's Word. I couldn't get enough! I read for hours and hours. It's like the Words literally jumped up off the page, and for the first time in my life, I could understand the Bible and that it was God speaking to me through His Word. I could now see how the Watchtower Organization had changed Bible verses that I had learned as a young girl, and especially the verses that were proof of the deity of Jesus Christ. I cried so many tears when I realized what they had done.

As I read John chapter three, where Jesus said "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." In John 3:5 Jesus said "Truly, truly unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." I remembered back to when I was a little girl and how I had read that verse in my Bible and wondered what did it mean? When I asked my mom about it, she told me "No, Cindy, those verses aren't for you—they are only for 144,000 that have been chosen by God to go to heaven. She said "All other Jehovah's Witnesses will live on a paradise earth." This continued to bother me for all of my life but now I knew that these verses were for me and that is exactly what had happened to me, I was born again. Thank You Jesus!

In John 14:6, Jesus says "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." The Jehovah's Witnesses say that they are the truth, but God's Word clearly tells us that Jesus Christ alone is the Truth. This was such a revelation to me! I read these words over and over and over again!

One of my favorite Bible verses is John 8:32 where Jesus says "You shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall set you free." Truly, Jesus Christ has set me free from the bondage of the Watchtower Organization and He has given me a whole new life! Praise God!



I was so grateful to God for setting me free that I cried tears of joy for a year! I couldn't get enough of reading and studying His Word and my heart was so filled with love for Him.

I spent the next ten years recovering and relearning Scripture, going to church and loving it, just being free. Every day I woke up so grateful that I was free and I was so in love with Jesus and I still feel this way, every single day. I still can't get over the fact that He saved me, even after all the mistakes and bad things I had done in my life. He has forgiven me and my whole life belongs to Him!

Of course, there were difficulties as I tried to share what I had found with my family who were still Jehovah's Witnesses. I tried to tell them about what I was learning in the Bible. When I called my sister and told her what had happened to me, she hung up on me and wouldn't speak to me for years. My grandmother wouldn't see me for eight years! Even my own mother disowned me for many years. It was very difficult, very painful but I never gave up praying. Even now after more than thirty years of praying, I'm not giving up! I know God hears my prayers for my family every day. They are deceived just as I was and God can do the same thing for them that He did for me. I believe in His perfect timing, they will come to Him.

After going through this time of recovery, the Lord began to give me several opportunities to share my testimony about how He rescued me from the Watchtower organization in churches and even on the radio and TV.

I heard about ministries that were helping people who were lost in cults. It was in 1994 that I received a newsletter in the mail from a ministry called Witness, Inc. This ministry was helping people all across the former Soviet Union who had been deceived by the many cults that had poured into their country when the wall came down. I read an article called "To Russia with Love," which was all about how the Jehovah's Witnesses were growing and expanding in that part of the world and it mentioned a large international convention that took place in Kiev, Ukraine. There were nearly seventy thousand people in attendance and more than six thousand people were baptized as Jehovah's Witnesses at just this one event.

I still remember the day I read that article. From that moment on, I had an incredible burden in my heart for the people in the former Soviet Union. I couldn't stop thinking that those people are being deceived like I was. Lord, can I do something? Can I please go to Ukraine? But how and what could I do to help? What would my husband and family do there? My husband was a chiropractor here

[in the United States] but what would he do over there? It seemed impossible but I knew that with God, all things are possible. I continued to pray.

In God's providence, He began to work through our circumstances. After much prayer and with the support of our home church, we took a huge step of faith and we bought tickets to go to St. Petersburg, Russia to visit the Center for Apologetics Research. We met some really wonderful people who were helping people in cults all across the former Soviet Union. I was invited to share my testimony and I just knew I wanted to move to that part of the world and do more of this work to help people lost in the cults but we still wondered what my husband Paul would do? How would we be able to provide a living for ourselves and our family?

The Lord gave us a Bible verse as we were travelling back to the United States from Russia and some words from a book I was reading called "Hinds feet in High Places." These were words of encouragement that Hannah received from the Lord as she felt Him calling her to be a missionary in Palestine many years ago. "Hold on to what God has shown you, even though it seems to make no sense at all." "Faithful is He Who calls you, for He will do it"(1 Thessalonians 5:24). We held on to God's promise through that Bible verse.

The burden continued. Every time I heard the word Ukraine I would cry. I just knew God wanted us to go there. I continued to pray, "Please Lord, can we go to Ukraine?" God opened the door for Paul and I to go to Ukraine for the first time in 1996 and it was there that the Lord worked in Paul's heart. He saw firsthand the difficult situation in Ukraine. Eighty percent of the men, especially in the villages, didn't have work and the people were very poor.

I had the privilege of sharing my testimony in many churches on that trip, and even though I was nervous about getting up in front of so many people, I was compelled by my love for Jesus and I could do anything with His help. "The love of Christ compels me"( 2 Corinthians 5:14).

Paul and I prayed together and told the Lord that we were open to whatever He might call us to do, where ever He would want us to go. We arrived home from our journey and continued to pray.

One day, in the spring of 1997, my husband Paul was driving to his office. He was listening to Christian radio and heard about a Christ centered micro-enterprise development program. He memorized their website and when he got to the office, he wrote to them to ask if they

were doing anything in Ukraine. They wrote back and said they had been praying for nine months for a director for a new microfinance program they wanted to start in Ukraine!

Paul was invited to be the director of the first Christian micro-finance program in Ukraine to help the poorest of the poor with small business through an organization called Hope International. Within a few months, we sold our home, stored all of our furniture and household belongings. Paul's brother, who is also a chiropractor, took over the care of Paul's patients and in October of 1997, our family moved to Zaporozhye, Ukraine. Praise the Lord!

At a send off party for our family, a friend told us that the Lord gave her a Bible verse for us and she said "Faithful is He Who calls you, for He will do it." In some ways, I had the feeling that many of the people there thought we were crazy, going to a foreign country, leaving everything safe and familiar behind. That Bible verse was a huge confirmation for us that we were doing the right thing by taking this huge step of faith and that God was with us.

Oh and what an adventure it was for us filled with God's blessing! Yes, there were difficulties, yes there were hardships. We faced a lot of challenges. There were a lot of spiritual battles. Definitely one of the most difficult things was the disruption of the lives of our children. Looking back now, we can see how God's hand was there helping us through each one of these difficulties each step of the way.

It was amazing to watch God's hand working in and through our lives from the very first day we arrived. In His Sovereignty, He brought us together with all the right people in His perfect timing to begin building the ministry that Hope International sent us to start. I was invited to teach English at the Zaporozhye Bible College, where most of my students were pastors. This opened the door for me to share my testimony in many churches. My interpreter, a driver and I would get into a little Russian car called a Lada. I brought my TV and VCR to the churches so I could show a Russian language version of the documentary Witnesses of Jehovah. The video showed the deceptions of the Watchtower and I shared ways that the people in the churches could help. Oh, what a great privilege it was to share my testimony in the churches of a former communist country! Billy Graham once said we should share the gospel through our testimony every chance we get. I never forgot that, and that is exactly what the Lord allowed me to do. I just loved every minute of it and I loved those people so much. I knew this was exactly where God wanted us.

Before we left the United States to go and live in eastern Ukraine in a city called Zaporozhye, we were asked by the founder of Hope International if we would pray about bringing the idea of children's Bible clubs to Ukraine. I couldn't imagine that we could do anything more than we already had planned but with God all things are possible. We had only been in Ukraine a few days when the Lord brought us together with the people He wanted us to work with and what started out as one children's Bible club in December of 1997 has now grown into Tomorrow Clubs International.

As we approach the twenty year anniversary of the Tomorrow Clubs, the Lord is using this ministry to reach children with the gospel and to build the churches all across Eastern Europe. There are now nearly six hundred clubs reaching nearly sixteen thousand children each week with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are more than two thousand volunteer leaders from the local Baptist churches who work with these children in the towns and villages. Many of the children that have come to Christ in the clubs are now, many years later, leading their own clubs and reaching others for Jesus. Tens of thousands of children and their families have found hope in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Praise God! All the glory goes to Him. Only He could do such a thing.

As we travel across Eastern Europe and to other parts of the world, I am very thankful for every opportunity the Lord has given me to bring the gospel and to share my testimony of how He saved me from the Watchtower Organization. I love Him with all my heart. Thank You Lord!

God uses ordinary people who are willing to surrender their lives to Him and be obedient to do whatever it is that He calls them to do. Is God calling you? Do you have a burden to do something that God has put on your heart? Are you ready to say "Yes Lord," here am I, send me" to whatever it is that He is calling you to, whether it is right here at home or across the ocean?

Thirty years ago, I never would have dreamed I'd be sharing a story like this. Are you ready for the adventure that He has planned and prepared for you? "Faithful is He Who calls you, for He will do it."

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age"(Matthew 28:19-20).

# **JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, WAR, AND NEUTRALITY, PART 5**

by Steve Lagoon

## **The Christian's Dual Citizenship**

The proper view of a Christian's relationship to government is to understand that Christians are citizens of two kingdoms. Of course, our highest loyalty is to our Lord. The Apostle Paul stated: "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20).

But we are also citizens of the earthly governments in the lands we dwell. And so we pay taxes to support our governments as Jesus taught his followers to do:

'Show me the coin used for paying the tax.' They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, 'Whose image is this? And whose inscription?' 'Caesar's, they replied. Then he said to them, 'So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's' (Matthew 22:19-21).

But more than just paying taxes, Christians are to honor our governmental leaders as Paul also taught: "Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor" (1 Peter 2:17).

Indeed, while Jesus taught us to pray in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come" (Matthew 6:10), yet while we await the Lord's return, we are taught to pray for our earthly government:

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Christians are not only to honor and pray for their leaders, but more than that to be subject to them:

Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone (Titus 3:1-2).

Finally, Jesus taught us the importance of not only receiving the benefits of government, but also the importance of our positive contributions to the nations in which we live:

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 'You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5: 13-16).

While we should not expect to bring about the kingdom of God on earth through the political process, and while we should guard our time and make sure that we are properly dedicated to the Lord's work, nevertheless, it is both a privilege and a responsibility for Christians to be that salt and light to our culture as Jesus taught.

Indeed, one need only consider that if all Christians withdraw from the political process, what can we expect from the rest of those uniformed by the Scriptures, or the voice of the living God?

This is why we see examples of Christians in the New Testament that were involved both in the military (Cornelius in Acts 10) and local government positions such as "Erastus, who is the city's director of public works" (Romans 16:23).

### **The Early Christian view of War**

In an attempt to prove their position, the Watchtower appeals to the beliefs and practices of Christians during the early church period concerning war and neutrality and suggests that the views held by Jehovah's Witnesses today are in agreement with those held by the early Christian Church.

We shall first consider the Watchtower's characterization of the views of the early church concerning military service, and then see how that presentation agrees with the actual history of the period.

For example, speaking to the view of war held by Christians in the early church the Watchtower states:

The example of early Christians. The *Encyclopedia of Religion and War* states: 'The earliest followers of Jesus rejected war and military service,' recognizing those practices as 'incompatible

with the love ethic of Jesus and the injunction to love one's enemies.' Likewise, German theologian Peter Meinhold said of those early disciples of Jesus: 'Being a Christian and a soldier was considered irreconcilable.'<sup>1</sup>

The Watchtower's *Insight on the Scriptures* Bible dictionary adds:

Early Christians refused to serve in the Roman army, in both the legions and *auxilia*, considering such service wholly incompatible with the teachings of Christianity. Says Justin Martyr, of the second century C.E. , in his 'Dialogue With Trypho, a Jew (CX): 'We who were filled with war, and mutual slaughter, and every wickedness, have each through the whole earth changed our warlike weapons,—our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into implements of tillage.' (*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. I, p. 254) In his treatise "The Chaplet, or De Corona" (XI), when discussing "whether warfare is proper at all for Christians," Tertullian (c. 200 C.E.) argued from Scripture the unlawfulness even of a military life itself, concluding, "I banish from us the military life."—*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 1957, Vol. III, pp. 99, 100. "A careful review of all the information available goes to show that, until the time of Marcus Aurelius [121-180 C.E.], no Christian became a soldier; and no soldier, after becoming a Christian, remained in military service." (*The Rise of Christianity*, by E. W. Barnes, 1947, p. 333) "It will be seen presently that the evidence for the existence of a single Christian soldier between 60 and about 165 A.D. is exceedingly slight; . . . up to the reign of Marcus Aurelius at least, no Christian would become a soldier after his baptism." (*The Early Church and the World*, by C. J. Cadoux, 1955, pp. 275, 276) "In the second century, Christianity. . . had affirmed the incompatibility of military service with Christianity." (*A Short History of Rome*, by G. Ferrero and C. Barbagallo, 1919, p. 382) "The behavior of the Christians was very different from that of the Romans. . . . Since Christ had preached peace, they refused to become soldiers." (*Our World Through the Ages*, by N. Platt and M. J. Drummond, 1961, p. 125) "The first Christians thought it was wrong to fight, and would not serve in the army even when the Empire needed soldiers." (*The New World's Foundations in the Old*, by R. and W. M. West, 1929, p. 131) "The Christians. . . shrank from public office and military service." ("Persecution of the Christians in Gaul, A.D. 177," by F. P. G. Guizot in *The Great Events by Famous Historians*, edited by R. Johnson, 1905, Vol.

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1 JW.org, About us, <https://www.jw.org/en/jehovahs-witnesses/faq/why-dont-you-go-to-war/>, 2015.

III, p. 246) “While they [the Christians] inculcated the maxims of passive obedience, they refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defense of the empire. . . . It was impossible that the Christians, without renouncing a more sacred duty, could assume the character of soldiers, of magistrates, or of princes.”—*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Edward Gibbon, Vol. I, p. 416.<sup>2</sup>

The Watchtower gives it explanation as to why Christians have traditionally been willing to serve in the military:

A radical change took place in the fourth century. The Catholic work *A History of the Christian Councils* explains: “Many Christians. . . under the pagan emperors, had religious scruples with regard to military service, and positively refused to take arms, or else deserted. The Synod [of Arles, held in 314 C.E.], in considering the changes introduced by Constantine, set forth the obligation that Christians have to serve in war, . . . because the Church is at peace (*in pace*) under a prince friendly to Christians.” As a result of this abandonment of Jesus’ teachings, from that time until now, the clergy of Christendom have encouraged their flocks to serve in the armies of the nations.<sup>3</sup>

These quotes from Watchtower materials are representative of the typical claims the Watchtower makes concerning the views on war and neutrality held by the early church. Based on the material in these quotes, the Watchtower affirms that the early Christian Church held to neutrality and as such opposed military involvement. However, with the rise of Constantine in the fourth century, the Christian view of military involvement changed abruptly and became supportive.

### **The Actual Early Christian View Toward the Military**

As one would suspect, the actual picture of the early Christian view toward military service is much more complicated than the simplistic and misleading picture portrayed in Watchtower literature.

Certainly, there were many Christians in the early church that did indeed oppose military involvement. However, their reasons for resisting military service were different from the Watchtower’s view, either because they were pacifists or because they rejected the idolatrous acts that were sometimes required of soldiers.

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<sup>2</sup> *Insight On the Scriptures*, Volume 1, Brooklyn New York (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 1988)175-176.

<sup>3</sup> *Watchtower*, May 1, 1996, 18.



In neither of these cases is neutrality the issue, and in fact most Christians in the early church were patriotic toward the Roman Empire.

Further, despite the impression the Watchtower seeks to create, there were in fact many Christians in the early church who not only did not object to military service, but willingly served in the Roman military.

As a consequence, we shall see that the Watchtower is quite judicious in its handling of these matters, offering many misleading statements to create an impression that cannot be supported by the facts.

It will most instructive to consider a very fair and comprehensive summary of the early Christian view of military involvement by Church historian Louis Swift:

There were two sides to the issue. The most vocal and the most articulate side was pacifist. In this school Tertullian, Origen and the early Lactantius stand out as the most reflective and persuasive writers . . . they leave no doubt that for them violence of any kind is incompatible with the demands of the Christian faith. The other side is non-pacifist . . . It appears, then, that these examples from Scripture were being cited by some as reasons for not following a strictly pacifist line of thought, and the very fact that Tertullian speaks at length about the moral dimension of military service is evidence that the whole issue had not been settled in the Christian community.<sup>4</sup>

### **The View of Tertullian (160-220 A.D.)**

It will be helpful to examine the views of Tertullian concerning Christian involvement in the military since the Watchtower cites him frequently in support of its neutrality position.

It should be noted in passing the irony involved in that the Watchtower's appeals to Tertullian since he was one of the strongest advocates of the doctrine of the Trinity and the deity of Christ in the early Church.

Swift provides a balanced assessment of Tertullian's views on military service:

He [Tertullian] is the first Church writer to wrestle with the issue of military service in a concrete way, and his attitude

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<sup>4</sup> Louis J. Swift, *The Message of the Fathers of the Church: The Early Fathers On War and Military Service*, Wilmington DE (Michael Glazier, Inc, 1983) 27-28.

toward Christian participation in war is anything but sympathetic. It is fair to say that he is the first articulate spokesman for pacifism in the Christian Church . . . If he takes a rather trenchant position against Christian participation in war, he is not always consistent on this point. Thus, in his Apology, which was written around 197 A.D. and which is a plea for fair treatment of the Christians, a certain amount of ambiguity is created by the pride he takes in the spread of Christianity even to the camps.<sup>5</sup>

Let us remember that Tertullian's opposition to military service is from his pacifist perspective against the use of force and killing. As such, his view offers no support to the Watchtower position which opposes war on the ground of neutrality rather than pacifism.

Swift then provides this most telling comment from Tertullian:

Thus, we [Christians] live in the world sharing with you the forum, the market, the baths, the shops, the factories, the inns, the market days and all other commercial activities. We, no less than you, sail the sea, serve in the army, farm the land, buy and sell (42.2-3).

### **Christians in the Early Church Did Serve in the Roman Military**

One of the greatest Church historians, Philip Schaff, summarized the period this way:

In regard to military and civil offices under the heathen government, opinion was divided. Some, on the authority of such passages as Matt. 5:39 and 26:52, condemn all war as unchristian and immoral; anticipating the views of the Mennonites and Friends. Others appealed to the good centurion of Capernaum and Cornelius of Caesarea, and held the military life consistent with a Christian profession. The traditions of the *legio fulminatrix* indicates that there were Christian soldiers in the Roman armies under Marcus Aurelius, and at the time of Diocletian the number of Christians at the court and in civil office was very considerable.<sup>6</sup>

Another highly regarded church historian, Kenneth Scott Latourette stated:

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<sup>5</sup> Louis J. Swift, *The Message of the Fathers of the Church*, 38.

<sup>6</sup> Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Volume 2, Ante-Nicene Christianity, A.D. 100-325, Grand Rapids MI (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1910) 344-345.

Indeed, in its earliest days the Church seems to have regarded with complacency the baptism of soldiers and not to have required them to resign from the army. Coolness towards the enlistment of its members in the army appears to have brought no very marked embarrassment to the Church . . . To most Christians, however, at least in the first three centuries, the ethical problem involved in military service was not an issue.<sup>7</sup>

Louis Swift stated:

It was during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.) that the legend of the Twelfth Legion (*legio XII fulminata*) and the Miracle of the Rain arose. According to accounts of this event given by Tertullian (*Apology* 5.6; *To Scapula* 4.6) and Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History* 5.5.1-6) the Roman legion in its campaign against the Germans and Sarmatians was hard pressed at one point by thirst and was on the verge of a serious defeat. Through the prayer of Christian troops on the battleline a saving rain occurred, which brought relief to the Roman army and enabled it eventually to triumph . . . What is significant is that there was a sufficient number of Christians in the Twelfth Legion to gain credence for the account in the Christian community and their presence in the army created no apparent scandal. It seems safe to assume that Christian soldiers were in the legion for some time prior to 173 A.D., the approximate date of the event.<sup>8</sup>

### **Idolatry, Not Military Service, the Issue**

Church historian Karl Baus points to a major problem for Christians in the early church regarding military service:

In all these cases the conflict had a religious foundation; the Christians in question were not opposed to military service as such; they were refusing to take part in an act of pagan worship, which is what the various forms of honor paid to the emperors signified for them, after the rulers had proclaimed themselves sons of Jupiter and Hercules.<sup>9</sup>

Schaff provides further clarification of the problem of idolatry and military service:

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7 Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Volume 1, *The First Five Centuries*, San Francisco (Harper Brothers Publishers, 1937) 268.

8 Louis J. Swift, *The Message of the Fathers of the Church*, 37-38.

9 Karl Baus, *Handbook of Church History*, New York (Herder and Herder Publishers, 1965) 398.

Tertullian expressly says that nothing was more alien to them than politics. Their conscience required them to abstain scrupulously from all idolatrous usages, sacrifices, libations, and flatteries connected with public offices.<sup>10</sup>

### **The Great Christian Military Martyrs**

At this point, we want to consider some examples of heroic Christian faithfulness on the behalf of Christians who served in the Roman military, but who steadfastly refused to compromise their faith through an idolatrous act of Caesar worship.

The first individual of this kind about whom we have any detailed information is Marinus, a legionnaire stationed in Palestine, who was beheaded ca. 260 A.D. On the eve of being promoted to the rank of centurion he was denounced by a rival as being unfit for the honor 'because he was a Christian and would not offer sacrifice to the emperors' (Martyrdom of St. Marinus 10-11). Although given a chance to recant, he persisted in his belief and was executed . . . Marinus' impending promotion indicated that his career as a soldier had not created problems of conscience up to that point.<sup>11</sup>

Although it is lengthy, it will be a most fitting conclusion to the present work to include a detailed account of a Christian soldier serving in the Roman military who refused to compromise his faith; who when forced, chose Jesus as Lord rather than Caesar:

In the year 303 or 304 A.D. After the emperor had issued orders requiring all the troops in the army to sacrifice to pagan deities, Julius [a veteran legionnaire] was brought before the prefect Maximus and charged with refusing to comply with this injunction. The dialogue which ensued between the prefect and the legionnaire is both revealing and touching. 'You know, do you not,' said the prefect, 'about the emperors' edicts enjoining you to sacrifice to the gods?' 'I know about them,' Julius replied, 'but I am a Christian, and I cannot do what you ask of me. I must not be unmindful of my living and true God.'

Maximus the prefect said, 'What harm is there in burning some incense and going about your business?' Julius answered, 'I cannot show contempt for God's commandments and give the appearance of being disloyal to my God. Never in the twenty-seven years that I foolishly and mistakenly—so it seems—spent

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10 Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, Volume 2, Ante-Nicene Christianity, A.D. 100-325, Grand Rapids MI (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1910) 344-355

11 Louis J. Swift, *The Message of the Fathers of the Church*, 71.

in military service was I called before a magistrate and charged either with a crime or with mischief-making. I have served in seven campaigns and never stood behind anybody or fought less bravely than anyone. My commanding officer never found fault with me. Do you think, then, that if I have been faithful in the past, I can be otherwise with commands of a higher order?"

"What is your military record" asked the prefect Maximus. "I served in the army," replied Julius, "and when my tour of duty was up, I re-enlisted. All the while I have worshipped in reverence the 'God who made heaven and earth' (Acts 4.24), and even up to this moment I openly serve him." The prefect Maximus said, "Julius, I can see that you are a wise and responsible man. Take my advice. Offer sacrifice to the gods and receive a generous reward." Julius replied, "I refuse to do what you ask in order to avoid eternal punishment."

"If you consider it a sin," replied the prefect Maximus, "let me be at fault. I am the one who's exerting the pressure in order to avoid the appearance that you collaborated voluntarily. After it's over, you can go home without any fuss, collect your ten-year stipend and never be bothered by anyone again."

Julius answered, "Neither this money of Satan that you talk about nor your clever suggestion can rob me of eternal light. I cannot disown God. Pass sentence on me, then, as a Christian." "If you don't show some respect for the emperors' decrees and offer sacrifice," said Maximus, "I will have you beheaded."

"That's a good idea," replied Julius. "I beseech you, my good prefect, by the prosperity of your rulers to carry out your design and pass sentence against me so that my prayers may be answered." Maximus the prefect said, "Unless you change your mind and offer sacrifice, you'll get your wish." "If I deserve to suffer in this way," replied Julius, "eternal glory is in store for me."

"I'm giving you some advice," Maximus said, "If you were suffering for the sake of civil laws, you would be held in perpetual honor." "I am certainly undergoing these sufferings for the sake of laws," answered Julius, "but they are the laws of God." "You mean the laws," said Maximus, "that were passed on to you by someone who was crucified and is now dead? How silly it is for you to be more afraid of a man who is dead than you are of rulers who are alive."

‘Julius answered, ‘That man ‘died for our sins’ (1 Cor. 15.3) in order to give us everlasting life. This very same Christ is God who exists forever. Any man who denies him will suffer eternal punishment.’ ‘Out of pity,’ Maximus said, ‘I am giving you some advice. Sacrifice and go on living with us.’ ‘Living with you,’ Julius replied, ‘will be death to me, but if I die in the presence of God, I will live forever’ (*The Martyrdom of Julius the Veteran 1.4-3.5*).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Louis J. Swift, *The Message of the Fathers of the Church*, 75-78.

# MIND CONTROL

by Bruce Laughton

- Peoples Temple (The Jonestown Massacre)
- Sun Myung Moon (the Moonies)
- Hare Krishna

Everybody know that groups like these vanished in the 80's—they are no longer stalking you, your family and friends—Right? Don't you believe it! Those that disappeared were replaced by dozens of new ones. They are more plentiful and destructive today than ever before. They are also smarter, richer, and often surrounded with respectability.

Who are they? How do they get normal, intelligent people to give up their free will and drop out of the mainstream of life? And, most importantly, how can you and your family recognize and avoid them?

You could try to memorize the names of the 3000 groups known to use Mind Control . . . or you could learn to recognize the approach they all use. Once you learn to recognize the tactics of mind control, you will have at your command the very best weapon for combating it: an informed and free mind!

## **Why do Group Members:**

- Give up family, friends, school and careers?
- See their strange new lifestyle and behavior as normal?
- Fail to recognize manipulation by the group leaders?
- Seem unaffected by solid proof of group's lies, abuses, contradictions, and corruption?

Because:

They lack the only tool one can use to grasp reality and test truth . . .  
A Free Mind

## **Recruitment Phase**

- Deception—Group identity and/or true motives are not revealed. The group teaches members to withhold truth from outsiders.

- \*Emotional Leverage/Love Bombing—Instant friendship, extreme helpfulness, generosity and acceptance. Group recruiters ‘lovingly’ will not take “no” for an answer—invitations impossible to refuse without feeling guilty and/or ungrateful. “Love,” “generosity,” and “encouragement” are used to lower defenses and create an ever increasing sense of obligation, debt, and guilt.
- Exploit Personal Crisis—They use an existing crisis as a means of getting you to participate. They exploit vulnerability arising from:
  - \* Broken Relationship
  - \* Death in the Family
  - \* Loss of Job
  - \* oneliness/Depression
  - \* Guilt/Shame
  - \* Stress/Fear
- Crisis Creation—They employ tactics designed to create or deepen confusion, fear, guilt or doubt. i.e. “You aren’t serving God the way He intended.” Question areas of faith never before examined or explored and other faiths specifically.
- All the Answers—Provid simple answers to the confusion they, themselves, create. Support these answers with material produced or ‘approved’ by the group.

### **Programming Phase**

- Intense Study—Focus is on group doctrine and writings. Bible, if used at all, is referred to one verse at a time to “prove” group teachings.
- Opposer Warnings—Recruits are told that “Satan” will cause relatives and friends to say bad things about the group to try to “steal them away from God.” Recruit soon believes group members alone are truthful/trustworthy.
- Guilt and Fear—Group dwells on member’s “sinful nature” (many use public confession). Guilt and fear arising from “failing God” are magnified to manipulate new member.



- **Schedule Control & Fatigue**—Study and service become mandatory. New member becomes too busy to question. Family, friends, jobs, and hobbies are squeezed out, further isolating new member.
- **Attack Independent Thought**—Critical thinking is discouraged as prideful and sinful, blind acceptance encouraged.
- **Divine Commission**—Leader(s) claim “New Light” (New Revelation) from God, within past 200 years, in which all but their group are rejected by God. They, alone, speak for God.
- **Absolutism**—They insist on total, unquestioning obedience and submission to the group, both in actions AND thoughts. Group “love” and acceptance becomes dependent upon obedience and submission. Unconditional love . . . Isn’t.
- **Totalism**—“Us against them” thinking strengthens group identity. Everyone outside of group lumped under one label.

### **Retention Phase**

- **Motive Questioning**—When sound evidence against the group is presented, members are taught to question the motivation of the presenter. The verifiable (sound documentation) is ignored because of doubts over the unverifiable (presenter’s motives). Compare with Opposer Warnings.
- **Information Control**—Group controls what convert may read or hear. They discourage (forbid) contact with ex-members or anything critical of the group. May liken such material to “spiritual pornography” making it not only sinful and dangerous to read, but shameful as well. Ex-members become feared and avoidance of them becomes a “survival issue.”
- **Isolation, Separation, & Alienation**—Group becomes substitute family. Members encouraged to drop worldly (non-member) friends. May be told to change jobs, quit school, give up sports, hobbies, etc.
- **Coercion**—Disobedience, including even minor disagreement with group doctrine may result in expulsion and shunning.
- **Phobias**—The idea is planted that everyone who leaves goes into a life of depravity and sin, loses their sanity, dies, or will have children die, etc. Constant rumors of bad things happening to people who leave. No one ever leaves for “legitimate reasons.”

- Striving for the Unreachable—Group membership and service are essential for salvation. Members taught they must “Work your way into God’s favor.” No matter what the member does, it is never enough.

### **Results of Cultic Involvement**

- Dependency—Members adopt a childlike dependency on the group.
- Personality Disorders—Depression, disorientation, anxiety, stress, neurotic, psychotic, and even suicidal tendencies may result.
- Logic Deterioration—Member loses ability to think clearly and critically. A decrease in intellectual capacity. Member is not able to see how the group has manipulated them. Logical contradictions in doctrine have little or no impact on member.
- Broken Relationships—Family and friends are cast aside.
- Exploitation—Member is exploited financially, physically, and/or mentally. May be manipulated into giving all possessions to group, leaving school or job to put in long hours selling group literature or other items, providing low cost manual labor for the group, etc.

### **Message from a Victim of the People’s Temple**

When you meet the friendliest people you have ever known, who introduce you to the most loving group of people you have encountered, and you find the leader to be the most inspired, caring, compassionate and understanding person you’ve ever met, and then you learn that the cause of the group is something you never dared to hope could be accomplished, and all of this sounds too good to be true, it probably is too good to be true! Don’t give up your education, your hopes and ambitions, to follow a rainbow. (Jeanne Mills, former member of the People’s Temple and subsequent victim of assassination a year following the November 18, 1978 Jonestown suicides/murders of 911 adults and children.)

For further information on the subject of cultic mind control:

Steven Hassan, *Combating Cult Mind Control*, Park Street Press, 1988.

Ronald M. Enroth, *Churches That Abuse*, Zondervan, 1992

Jeff Van Vonderan & David Johnson, *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse*, Bethany House, 1991.

**FURTHER COMMENTS ON  
CULT MIND CONTROL**  
by Steve Lagoon

There are several thoughts that I would like to add to the excellent article on cult mind control written by Bruce Laughton (above).

To begin with, we want to thank Mr. Laughton for allowing us to share his article with our readers. The original format of the piece was a pamphlet which was the result of years of research on cult issues and was forged in the fire and scores of encounters with cult members.

One of the goals of the pamphlet was that it was not directed at any particular group, but was general enough to be useful to people trapped in any one of the hundreds of cults, large and small, operating today. Indeed, one effective use of the material is to show a cult member how another recognized cult manipulates its members and trust that the cultist will soon see the parallels with their own group.

Another thing to note is that this material deals with sociological and psychological aspects of cultic abuse. Though Religion Analysis Service's primary focus is on the biblical and theological analysis of group's teachings, nevertheless, it is helpful to understand how cults manipulate and abuse their members.

Jesus warned that Satan is a "thief that cometh to steal, kill, and destroy" (John 10:10). "He was a murderer from the beginning . . . a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). My personal experience with cults over several decades has shown conclusively that Satan uses false religions and cults to tear apart lives and destroy families.

There is no doubt that cults often appear to have the truth, yeah, to be the very last refuge of truth in the world; the only place of spiritual safety. Such is the nature of any counterfeit. But the apostle Paul warned that “Such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:16). Therefore, Paul exhorted Christians to “have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them” (Ephesians 5:11).

It should also be kept in mind that just as cultic teachings can arise within a good, Bible-believing church, so can cultic practices. We hope that Bruce Laughton’s preceding article will be helpful to church leaders in recognizing cultic tendencies that may arise in a congregation and how to combat them.

Finally, while Mr. Laughton’s article skillfully articulates how cults recruit, retain, control, and ultimately devastate cult members, it doesn’t deal with how to help reach cult victims.

A few things can be noted in this regard. The first imperative in how to relate to a loved one trapped in a cult is to love them with true unconditional love. Do not allow yourself to become embroiled in angry arguments. Such will only drive the deceived further into the manipulation of cult leaders and farther away from their loved ones.

Also, take the time to seriously learn about the cult your loved is involved in. If we want to be missionaries in a foreign country, it will be helpful to learn about that country’s language and culture. Likewise, it will be most helpful for you to learn about the cult’s history and teachings, to really understand things from the cultist point of view, so that you can more ably share truth with them.

Bruce Laughton referred to mind control and the need for the cultist to finally have a free mind. No doubt, such is reflected by the apostle Paul’s statement:

And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will (2 Timothy 2:24–26).

## EASTER QUIZ

1. According to the New Testament, who did Christ first appear to after his resurrection?
  - a.      The apostle Peter
  - b.      Mary Magdalene
  - c.      Mary, his mother
  - d.      The apostle John
  
2. Which disciple said he would not believe in the resurrection until he placed his hand in Jesus' side?
  - a.      The apostle Thomas
  - b.      Thomas Aquina
  - c.      Thomas the train engine
  - d.      Judas Iscariot
  
3. Whom did Mary Magdalene mistake Jesus for when He appeared to her after His resurrection?
  - a.      A gardner
  - b.      A shopkeeper
  - c.      A mourner
  - d.      A ghost
  
4. Jesus compared His future resurrection to the experience of which Old Testament figure?
  - a.      Daniel in the lion's den
  - b.      Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace
  - c.      Noah in the Ark
  - d.      Jonah in the belly of great fish (whale)
  
5. Jesus rose:
  - a.      with a physical body
  - b.      with an immaterial body
  - c.      only as a spirit
  - d.      as an angel

6. What disciple reached the tomb first following Mary Magdalene's report of the empty tomb?
- a. the apostle Peter
  - b. the apostle John
  - c. Peter and John arrived at the same time
  - d. neither went to the tomb resurrection morning
7. Why were the women going to Jesus tomb on Sunday morning?
- a. To lay memorial flowers at the tomb
  - b. to watch Jesus rise from the dead
  - c. to search for Jesus' body
  - d. to complete the burial process for Jesus' body
8. How many people saw Jesus after His resurrection?
- a. 5
  - b. 12
  - c. 40
  - d. over 500
9. Why didn't the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24) recognize Jesus as they travelled with Him?
- a. The disciples were simply in denial
  - b. Jesus had a new body that didn't look like His old body
  - c. The disciples were prevented by God from recognizing Him
  - d. The disciples had misplaced their eye-glasses
10. What happened to Jesus' body after it was removed from the cross?
- a. It was dissolved into gasses by Jehovah
  - b. It was placed in a common grave for criminals and likely eaten by dogs
  - c. placed in a new tomb belonging to a wealthy man named Joseph of Arimathea
  - d. it was cremated

**Answers:**

1, b; 2, a; 3, a; 4, d; 5, a; 6, b; 7, d; 8, d; 9, c; 10, c

**Personal Notes on the Articles:**

Please feel free to email us at [info@ras.org](mailto:info@ras.org) if you have any questions or comments.

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