

Jehovah's Witnesses

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History

- The sect now known as Jehovah's Witnesses was started by Charles Taze Russell, who was born in 1852
- Russel was raised as a Congregationalist, but at the age of 17 he tried to convert an atheist to Christianity and ended up being converted instead--not to outright atheism, but to agnosticism
- Some years later he went to an Adventist meeting, and was told that Jesus would be back at any time and got interested in the Bible
- The leading light of Adventism had been William Miller, a preacher who predicted the world would end in 1843 and 1844
 - When his predictions failed, many people became frustrated and withdrew from the Adventist movement

History Cont.

- This diminished Adventism influenced Russell, and in 1879 he began the Watchtower-- what would later be known as the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, the teaching organ of the Jehovah's Witnesses
- Russell taught his followers
 - The nonexistence of hell and the annihilation of unsaved people, a doctrine he picked up from the Adventists
 - The nonexistence of the Trinity, he said only the Father, Jehovah, is God
 - The identification of Jesus with Michael the Archangel
 - The reduction of the Holy Spirit from a person to a force
 - The mortality, not immortality, of the soul
 - The return of Jesus in 1914

History Cont.

- When 1914 had come and gone with no Jesus in sight, Russell modified his teachings and claimed Jesus had, in fact, returned to Earth, but that his return was invisible
 - His return would come later, but very soon and would result in the final conflict between God and the Devil (the forces of good and evil) in which God would be victorious
 - This conflict is known to Witnesses as the battle of Armageddon, and just about everything the Witnesses teach centers around this doctrine
- Russell died in 1916 and was succeeded by “Judge” Joseph R. Rutherford
- Rutherford changed the name of the sect to the Jehovah’s Witnesses, which he based on Isaiah 43:10
 - “You are my witnesses” is the utterance of Jehovah

Jehovah's Witnesses - Who Are We?

According to jw.org/en/, the official website for Jehovah's Witnesses, "We come from hundreds of ethnic and language backgrounds, yet we are united by common goals. Above all, we want to honor Jehovah, the God of the Bible and the Creator of all things. We do our best to imitate Jesus Christ and are proud to be called Christians, Each of us regularly spends time helping people learn about the Bible and God's Kingdom. Because we witness, or talk, about Jehovah God and his Kingdom, we are known as Jehovah's Witnesses."

Geography

- The United States has the most Jehovah's Witnesses with a count of 1,242,976 publishers.
- The U.S. census counted 2.3million Jehovah's Witnesses.
- The state of Washington has 3% and Wyoming has 2% of their population as publishers with the remaining 48 states having 1% or less of their population as publishers.

Disease and Health Belief



- Well known for their refusal to receive blood transfusion even if it's their own blood
- Believing that it's against God's will to receive blood
- Accepting blood transfusion can lead to expulsion from the community
- Support medical research on alternative blood therapies
- Challenging in treating Jehovah's Witnesses patients with severe or acute anemia
- 1000 JWs die each year due to abstaining from blood transfusion

Diet

- Jehovah's Witnesses reject foods containing blood (for example in blood sausage or in animal meat if the blood has not been properly drained).
- Jehovah's Witnesses are not required to fast for religious reasons.
- Some Jehovah's Witnesses may be vegetarian and others may abstain from alcohol, but this is a personal choice.
- Jehovah's Witnesses **DO NOT** smoke or use other tobacco products.

<http://www.waht.nhs.uk/en-GB/NHS-Mobile/Our-Services/?depth=4&srcid=2005>



NO SMOKING

Health Care

NO BLOOD TRANSFUSION !

As a God-fearing Christian and a believer of Jehovah's word, the Bible, I hereby demand that blood, in any way, shape or form, is NOT to be fed into my body; however, blood substitutes may be used in case of extreme loss of blood.

YOU MUST NOT EAT THE BLOOD OF ANY SORT OF FLESH
LEVITICUS 17:14 NW

Signature _____

Witness _____ (Over)

Jehovah's Witnesses have access to health care.

Jehovah's Witnesses will accept medical and surgical treatment. They do not adhere to so-called "faith healing" and are not opposed to the practice of medicine. They are deeply religious and believe that blood transfusions are forbidden for them by biblical such as: "Only flesh with its soul- its blood- you must not eat." Genesis 9:3-4

Health Care Cont. Examples

- **Abortion:** Deliberately induced abortion simply to avoid the birth of an unwanted child is the willful taking of a human life and hence unacceptable. If (at the time of childbirth) a choice must be made between the life of the mother and that of the child, it is up to the individuals concerned to make that decision.
- **Advance Directives:** Jehovah's Witnesses carry on their person, an Advance Medical Directive/Release that directs no blood transfusions be given under any circumstances, while releasing physicians and hospitals of responsibility for any damages that might be caused by refusal of blood.
- **Autopsies:** Unless there is a compelling reason, such as when an autopsy is required by law, Jehovah's Witnesses generally prefer that the body not be subjected to postmortem dissection. The appropriate family member can decide if a limited autopsy is advisable to determine the cause of death.

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