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TowerWatch Ministries

Now Serving the Lord and not an organization

My Watchtower Journey

I was reared in a Christian household, my mother made sure I got to Sunday school every week from an age earlier than I can remember. I was active in Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, sang in the church choir, played on the church basketball team. I participated in several church plays, attended church summer camp, I was involved in the church youth group. The church I attended had a restaurant booth at the Ohio State Fair and I worked there every year I attended that church. I was very active in the church -- but I never took the time read the Bible in-depth or develop a personal relationship with the Lord.

After high school I attended Ohio State University and began to associate with a small group of Christians on campus. As I listened to them talk about their faith and quote Scripture from memory I realized how little I knew about the Bible. Shortly after being made aware of my limited Bible knowledge I came in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses and they offered me a free home Bible study. This seemed to be just what I needed so I accepted and in 1961 I began studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. They called our study a Bible study but we never really studied the Bible. We studied one of their publications with questions printed at the end of every paragraph designed to get their teachings across. Every three or four paragraphs we would go to the Bible and read a Scripture to prove the point being made. Before long it seemed like they had all the answers. Of course it was easy for them to have all the answers they were asking all the questions. At first the subjects studied were easy for all to agree on, but gradually they got into their doctrine. By the time they got to their doctrine they made the idea of reading two or three paragraphs about their teachings in their publication and lifting scriptures out of context to prove their point seem like the accepted way of Bible study. We were using the New World Translation Jehovah's Witnesses own translation of the Bible, translated completely at Watchtower headquarters without the aid of a single Greek scholar. They claimed this was the most accurate translation available, but they had actually altered many Scriptures to fit their teachings.

A word of warning here, any time someone presents an idea then goes to the Bible with a scripture from one place then another somewhere else, **BE VERY AWARE**. The Lord preserved the Bible for us to read, meditate over and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal the wonderful truths to us. Anyone that uses the Bible to

prove a preconceived idea by playing Bible hopscotch is misusing God's Word.

Soon I completed the two required Watchtower publications and in 1964 I officially became a Jehovah's Witness. I married a beautiful and wonderful young Witness in 1963 and by 1966 we had 2 children and our lives became very busy. (As of this writing we have spent 40 wonderful years together, have 4 children and 11 grandchildren). In time I became a Ministerial Servant, the equivalent of a Deacon in some churches, while still a Ministerial Servant I became a book study conductor (small group leader) and later I was appointed as an Elder in our local congregation.

The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society was really pushing the idea that the end was coming in 1975 in their teachings at the congregation meetings and at the conventions. They used that carrot constantly. In early 1975 I quit my fulltime job, took my retirement savings I had at the time, found part-time work and became a full time pioneer (a Jehovah's Witnesses that devotes 100 hours a month to the door to door work). I served as a full time pioneer for 2 years before I had to return to fulltime work and part-time door to door work for the Witnesses. This might seem to some to have been an irresponsible act, but I had a wife and two children I was responsible for. I was so convinced that the end was coming in 1975 that I wanted to be doing all I could so that we could survive into the new system as a family.

After 1975 came and went uneventfully the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society said that the members were guilty of making too much of something the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society only referred to occasionally. I am sure that those who became Jehovah's Witnesses after 1975 and those now studying with Jehovah's Witnesses believe that to be true. I was there. We were constantly warned at our meetings that the end would be here in 1975. It was always presented as a certainty never as a probability. Every Jehovah's Witness I knew was convinced that the New World would be here by October 1975. Those that doubted were considered apostates. I remember the saying among Jehovah's Witnesses at that time was "Stay alive till 75". The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society was of course very careful about what they put in print.

I served as an Elder for over 20 of my 35 years as a Jehovah's Witness. Jehovah's Witnesses do not have any clergy and the Elders serve as the teachers in the congregation. For over 17 years I taught one of the main meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses, the Theocratic Ministry School. I continued as a book study conductor and do not remember a time that I was not a book study conductor once I started. I loved giving the Sunday public lectures, and once a month I traveled to another Jehovah's Witness congregation in the central Ohio area to give a public talk as a guest speaker. I also served on the hospital visitation committee and sat on countless judicial committees (3 Elders that decide the

guilt or innocence of a Jehovah's Witness who has broken a Watchtower Bible and Tract Society rule).

For 35 years our family life revolved entirely around what we called “The Truth”. We thought we were among God’s chosen people.

In 1990 my 95-year-old grandmother came to live with us after an extended hospital stay, she needed around the clock care. My wife Jean and I began alternating meetings in order to care for her. Being the Theocratic School Overseer and a book study conductor I went to our meetings on Tuesday and Thursday and Jean would attend the Sunday meetings. We also alternated our field service time on weekends. Before long the other elders began to pressure to me get me to all the meetings. Of course this was not possible short of hiring someone to stay with my grandmother 3 days a week. When their attempts to pressure me into getting to all the meetings failed they began to pressure me to give up my assignment as school overseer an assignment I had for the past 17 years. My pleas for help with my assignments fell on deaf ears. Soon I resigned as a book study conductor, later as school overseer and eventually I resigned my assignment as an elder.

Without the responsibilities of an elder in the congregation I stayed home to care for grandma more and more. I found a great deal of joy in the freedom of staying at home evenings and weekends. Without the constant exposure to Watchtower teachings I began to doubt that they were the one true religion as they claimed. I would occasionally attend a meeting but I told God that I would not go back out in the door to door work unless He showed me very clearly that that was what I was to do. I never again went door to door as a Jehovah's Witness. My grandmother passed away in 1994 but I did not return to the meetings.

From the time I began studying with Jehovah's Witnesses they claimed that the generation that saw the events of 1914 would be alive when God ushered the New World. They would use Psalms to show that a generation was 70 or 80 years. Add 80 to 1914 and you get 1994 and the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society had another failed prophecy. In 1995 the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society changed their view of the term generation. They now claim that they misunderstood the term generation as used by Jesus when He said, “This generation will not pass away until the end comes”. They say he meant generation as used when one says “the generation of Noah’s day”, a general term used to describe a period of time that could include many generations.

To me it had become obvious the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society was not God’s channel of communication. In 1999 I wrote a letter to my local congregation and officially terminated my affiliation with the Jehovah’s Witnesses. I accepted Christ as my savior shortly after, and I am very pleased to tell you that my wife and all four of our children have also left the Witnesses and have accepted Christ as their Savior.

The teachings of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society are very works oriented, it is a “work harder work faster” organization. Followers are controlled by being

consistently told they must work harder because the end is so close. Looking back over those 35 years I do not see how I could have done more as a Jehovah's Witness and still have provided for my family, and yet there was not one day that I felt sure of my salvation. I regularly prayed to God to not let the end come to soon because I was sure I was not doing enough to survive.

Since leaving that organization I have accepted Christ as my savior and I now know that I am a sinner saved not by my works but by the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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