



Why I Left the Watchtower Organization

By Cynthia Hampton

My first introduction to the Watchtower Organization was in 1970, when my mother began to study with an old friend of hers who had become a Jehovah's Witness. I was in the 8th grade at the time. Soon my mother began dragging us all to the Kingdom Hall and had stopped going to our church. We had been raised in the Roman Catholic Church up until then. After going to several assemblies and through heavy [indoctrination](#), I decided the Watchtower was the truth; I was baptized in 1972.

We all believed that [Armageddon](#) was coming in 1975. Everyone was speculating as to when it might arrive. Some even speculated that it might be 1974 instead of 1975. I remember the District Overseer, Brother Sales, (I believe it was him, not entirely sure) giving a talk at the International Assembly in Oakland in 1973. His words were, When an alarm clock is ready to ring, just before it rings, there is a click and just a split second before the alarm actually rings. Well we are in that time period between the click and the actual ringing of the alarm clock. That's how much time we have left before Armageddon! All everyone ever talked about was how little time we had left before Armageddon.

Because there was so little time left many young teenagers began to get married quite young. It is traditional and typical for a Jehovah's Witness to marry young. Since one is not allowed to date unless you intend to be married, anyone who dates is expected that they get married. However, since Armageddon was so close, it just seemed like there was a frenzy of young teens getting married. We had been told that since we didn't know whether there would be marriage in the new system. Since it wasn't for sure that we might be able to get married in the new system, many decided that they would be married before Armageddon, rather than have to remain single for eternity. When young hormones are raging, this thinking is dangerous. Many young people ended up in very unhappy marriages, including me. I was married to another young Jehovah's Witness in 1974 at the age of 18. It was the worst mistake of my life.

This guy was a [wife beater](#) and got away with it. He began to hit me exactly one week after we were married. When I approached the elders with the fact that he beat me, their response was of disinterest and said there was no WT policy on this and it wasn't a disfellowshipping offense. It was to be considered a family problem and they could not get involved. Well this family problem translated into a lot of physical and mental abuse. I always carried bruises all over my body and no one cared. I was told to not to discuss this with anyone and to quit nagging. Apparently they thought that I nagged my husband too much and that was the reason for the beatings. He was disfellowshipped eventually in 1976 for smoking. So I began to think, is smoking a worse sin than beating up your wife?

I knew something was wrong with this picture! When he was disfellowshipped, I was pregnant with my son at the time.

In 1976, after my son was born, I decided I could no longer take the abuse, so I left my husband, moved out and went back to live with my parents. I subsequently divorced him after a year went by. The elders told me that I wasn't "scripturally divorced" and was not allowed to date. I was 20 years old at the time.

A year later, I enrolled in community college and decided I liked going to college, after all I hadn't studied as well as I should have in high school. What for ??? Armageddon was just around the corner. So here I was and I had no means to get a job, and I certainly didn't want to be a cleaning woman or do janitorial work, as I am not cut out for that type of work and prefer working at a desk. I knew I had a brain up there and it was time to put it to use by going to college. It was already 1977 and [Armageddon still hadn't arrived](#).

After a while, it began to seem to me that those in the KH were not as intellectual as I was becoming. I was learning to do critical thinking and believed in asking questions at a time when independent thinking was starting to be frowned upon. I remember talking to an elderette (an elder's wife) one day and telling her that I was taking a psychology class and that I was enjoying it. Do you know what her response was??? She actually had the audacity to tell me that I was studying "[doctrines of demons](#)" and that I should get out of my psychology class immediately. I didn't listen to her; I did my own thing.

By 1979, I had all but quit going to the meetings. I think I went to one day of the district convention that year in Tucson, and I did not go out in field service at all by that time. I had it by then! In February 1980, I wrote a handwritten letter to the elders letting them know I wasn't going to any more meetings and not to consider me a Jehovah's Witness any longer. I gave the letter to my brother to hand deliver to the elders.

I always had a few doubts about the Watchtower Organization and that made it easier to leave, I think. For example, I never truly believed that it was wrong to get a blood transfusion, so I never carried one of those "[No Blood Transfusion](#)" cards. I always knew that if I were looking death in the face, I would accept a blood transfusion to save my life. Another thing that always bothered me was that the Watchtower made an issue out of whether or not a woman screamed if she were being raped. The Watchtower rule was if a woman did not scream, then she must have enjoyed it, and therefore was [committing adultery or fornication](#) and would be disfellowshipped. How could any woman in her right mind agree with that kind of thinking and that policy?

I never looked back, although I did attend the memorial that year in 1980 and I made the decision then to never set foot in Kingdom Hall ever again. In 1982, a good friend invited me to his church and I accepted the invitation. (You know nothing in life is ever a coincidence, it's a "God Incidence") I went to his church and discovered that Christians were warm and caring people who loved Jesus Christ. But I was still scared. Did I really do the right thing, by going to this church? Would something bad happen to me because I dared go into what the WT calls "Babylon"? As Jehovah's Witnesses, we were always

taught that demons were present in the churches of [Babylon](#).

Then I received my answer: After the church service was over, I looked around at the faces and saw a familiar face, I thought. No, it couldn't be, I'm thinking. But I think it was---it was another Ex Jehovah's Witness! I did a double take and yes, I did recognize this lady. I went up to her and asked her, Didn't I used to see you at the assemblies? Her eyes were wide open as she asked me, Did you just leave the Jehovah's Witnesses? I said yes, I left 2 years prior and this was my first time in the church since leaving the JW's. It turned out that this lady, her name is Mary Kling, well her husband is the first cousin of [M. James Penton](#), author of the book, *Apocalypse Delayed*! I was just so thrilled to know that I wasn't the only person who left the JW's who decided to go to church!

Mary took me under her wing and began showing me what was wrong with the Watchtower organization. See, at that time I knew that there was something wrong, I just didn't know how to prove it! She showed me old literature and how the WT taught that Jesus was the [mediator for only 144,000](#)! When I read that, then I knew that the WT was a false organization and that the truth could only be found in Jesus Christ. Shortly thereafter, I gave my life over to Jesus Christ in May, 1982.

It was no coincidence that out of all the churches in Tucson, Arizona, I happened to visit the one that Mary had been attending. I knew that God had His hand in this the whole time. However, it was not without a price. I told my father, who was not yet a baptized JW about my experience. He told my mother and my mother and I had the biggest, most awful blowout. It ended by her telling me that I was not welcome in her home ever again! She shunned me for 17 years.

At the end of the year, I moved to Los Angeles, CA and began a new life away from my old friends and family who were shunning me. I met [Randy Watters](#) of [Free Minds](#) and began attending his quarterly potlucks and eventually volunteering to help him in his home/office for his ministry, which was called Bethel Ministries at the time. (If I refer to Randy's Free Minds site frequently in my posts, it's because I used to type a lot of those articles that he wrote). I learned so much from Randy Watters and I will be forever grateful that he was my friend and teacher.

In the summer of 1998 I found that one of my JW cousins, Andy Burns, had leukemia at the age of 39. I had heard through the family "grapevine" that he had not been feeling well and suffering from some migraine headaches. After some tests and a diagnosis of acute leukemia, he was hospitalized for some intense chemotherapy. He lived another six weeks before he died. Of course, he being a JW elder, refused all blood transfusions. His blood count became so dangerously low that the chemotherapy treatments had to be discontinued. He is now memorialized on [AJWRB's Watchtower Victims Memorial](#).

Fast forward to 1999: For some reason, my mother decides she is speaking to me again. In 2000, she and my father come to my house and visit. They even go out to dinner with my husband and I. I don't know what's happening there, but I think they are tired of not knowing their grandchildren. You see, my brother is the only one of us kids in the family

who remained a JW and of course, he had been an elder. But he and his wife never had children!

Recently, I found out that my brother has stepped down from being an elder and has separated from his wife. (hmmmm) My sister and I both have children and my parents never have gotten to know them until recently. Sad isn't it? My two younger children were 10 and 13 when they first met my parents, their grandparents. I haven't seen my parents for months now and I know that the [August 2002 Kingdom Ministry](#) had once again instructed the JW's to shun the former members. I know longer know where I stand with my parents, except that I know my mother is very angry with me, as she did find out about this website. She also refused to acknowledge the recent issues regarding [Silent Lambs](#) concerning child sexual abuse in the Watchtower and claims it is all just "baloney". I feel sorry for her because she does not know the real Jesus. After all Jesus did say at John 14:6: "I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me". My mother's life is tied up with an organization that will NEVER show her Jesus Christ. It is an empty organization with false promises and [false prophecies](#). The Bible never talks about joining an organization for [salvation](#).

Some people, after leaving the Watchtower Organization ask, "Where else can we go?" This comes up, inevitably because the Watchtower has so effectively indoctrinated their followers that there is no place to go except the Watchtower Organization. For those of you who are at that point, I invite you to read this article: [Where Else Can We Go?](#)

I've been a Christian now for more 20 years and Jesus has been Lord of my life. So here we are, in 2003, and I currently moderate three groups on Yahoo. . I'm just thrilled that the internet and all the ministries here has been able to educate and inform so many of the falsities of the Watchtower organization. Praise God!