



## **Why I Left Jehovah's Witnesses - by Jean Eason**

as published in the *Lamplighter Magazine*

I was a third generation Jehovah's Witness (JW). When I recall the days of my youth it seems that what I heard most often was, "How wrong the religionist" were, and how right the JWs were. I realize now the vast difference between religion and Christianity. As a JW, I was concerned with works - not only doing such things as preaching from house to house, but with the things I must **not do** such as celebrating the holidays and birthdays. Every word written by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (WBTS) was considered "truth" that must be followed to the letter, whether it's taking a blood transfusion, voting, or participating in a war. To do otherwise was sinning against Jehovah, resulting in the possibility of losing the hope of eternal life.

I was married and had three children before I began having serious doubts about the WBTS being God's **only** channel of communication. These doubts began to emerge when I had to make some very important decisions that simply went against the grain of my personality. You would think that making decisions such as refusing a blood transfusion could bring about doubts. Like signing papers to let a baby die rather than take blood. I had an RH factor blood condition and in those days they transfused the baby at birth should a problem occur. Fortunately, I was spared - but I was ready and willing to let my children die! Why? Because I was convinced that the WBTS had the "Truth" and should I do differently, I would lose the hope of eternal life and so would my child, should death occur. I began doubting when the WBTS got "new light" (additions to what had been previously taught).

"New light" said, "If you see JWs sinning and do not report them, you are guilty of that sin yourself. A sister in our congregation took blood when she hemorrhaged at childbirth. My options were - report her - and if I didn't, the sin fell on me. Both options bothered me! You see, when you are ignorant of having a relationship with Christ, you follow people blindly, trusting them to be in God's will. Like a good JW, I reported her and she had to appear before a committee of elders.

This, along with other "new light" caused me to start thinking about "where and how" they get their new light! I inherited a WBTS library from one of my relatives, and began reading the older publications. I learned they had changed their interpretation many times. I took note that the modern literature quoted often from the older publications. Now I was able to pick up the very book they quoted from - and guess what? They often misquoted - took out of context - and

misapplied their own writings! After two years of research I realized I was following an organization - led by man's interpretation of the Bible.

I stopped attending meetings, and all JW activities, but entered a state of spiritual loneliness. Where could I go? All religions were false, so I had been taught! Where is "Truth" found? After a great deal of searching, I decided to try out a Christian Church. We attended for awhile, but had not come to know the true person of Christ. I was not yet convinced the churches were not of the devil. After all - all churches believe in the concept of the Trinity, hellfire, and a soul leaving the body at death. I didn't believe any of these doctrines! While I was trying desperately to sort out doctrines, the WBTS got "new light" saying if any JW attended church, they would be disfellowshipped. Not knowing whether I was following Satan or Jesus - I submitted to the elders, when called to a committee meeting - and stopped attending church - I was not ready to be disfellowshipped for something I was not yet sure of.

Fifteen years later, my Catholic sister-in-law shared that she was born again. I'd never heard of a born-again Catholic! I saw a change in her life - she was giving up bad habits such as smoking - she was aglow with something. I didn't know what (but of course it was the Holy Spirit!). She spoke of prayer meetings in the Catholic Church. (I'd never heard of that either). She challenged me to a meeting. I went out of curiosity. Right away, I realized this was not a typical "Catholic" meeting. The speaker shared the love of Jesus in such a way that I'd never heard before. He spoke in various denominations, and it was obvious that his focus was on the personage of Jesus Christ. Oh, how I needed this message! When he finished, he asked that we stand, join hands, and sing the Lord's Prayer. Something very unexpected happened. Suddenly, I felt God's liquid love pour over me from the top of my head to the tip of my toes! Without knowing what had happened, I instantly realized I had been searching for "the truth" in all the wrong places and the Truth was there all the time! John 14:6 says, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes to the Father except by me." Yes, Jesus is the Truth and "He was there all the Time!" No wonder a song was written by that title. The song, "He Touched Me," came to mind - now I understood that, also. I felt such a joy in my heart - I just wanted to rejoice - but restrained myself thinking people would notice a strange look on my face!

When we left, my friend said, "How did you like it?" I just started laughing - I couldn't hold it in any longer! She said, "Something happened to you, didn't it?" I replied, "Yes, - I can't explain it - but I feel as though I've been cleansed from head to toe!" I realize now that I was touched by the power of the Holy Spirit. God knew I could never find the "Truth" by searching through the definitions of words - I had my Watchtower blinders on - I couldn't believe the simple gospel, I had to experience it!

Now I understood why Paul had to be knocked from the horse to become a believer - some of us are just like that! I thought sure my new-found joy would be gone the next morning, but it wasn't! I woke up anxious to read the Bible and

pray! As I read through the book of John, I wondered when the word, "Jesus" was added to so many pages - seems like I had never realized that before! On my knees in the privacy of my living room, I asked Jesus to come into my life - that I would do **anything** He asked of me. Well, don't pray this prayer if you're not willing - for I had no idea what He had in store!

My husband liked the change in me - then he was willing to visit prayer meetings, and finally, church. (Yes, we were reported by a JW when seen going into a church - we were visited by two JW elders telling us we were being disfellowshipped - yes - after being out for fifteen years)! Since then, this practice has stopped, but the end results are the same - they are ostracized. My husband accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior. The next year was spent in deprogramming ourselves - we had to learn **everything** over! Then the Lord put it on my heart to write a book of my testimony. I kept all my research that went into this book, now in the third printing. I was invited to appear on national TV along with three other former JWs. Soon, all of us began receiving a ton of mail! I had not expected to go into ministry any more than I expected to write a book - but here I was - living out my promise, "I'll do **anything**!" Before I knew it, I was sharing my research and my learned orthodox views with hundreds of JWs and Christians who needed to help loved ones in the JWs. I became a Christian discipler overnight! My JW discipline skills came in handy! I feel so very privileged to lead many JWs to Christ - it was such a joy to explain to them who the true person of Jesus Christ *really* is! (JWs believe Jesus is also Michael the archangel - that he was Jehovah's first creation). The concept of the Trinity is very offensive to them.

We've been privileged to have Dave Reagan and Dennis Pollock from Lamb and Lion Ministries speak at our conferences on the cults. We met Dave in '85 and he's been our encourager ever since. We've thrived on Lamb and Lion's teaching and encouragement.

We continue ministering to those ensnared by the cults, as well as have support groups when needed. We are very happy in a spiritually strong church, Hill N' Dale Christian Church. I'm especially thrilled to see our Youth Minister educating the young people in becoming servants of Christ - verses being entertained! He is teaching them to witness to others! I encourage all Education Ministers to teach their members the concept of the Trinity and include a teaching on the cults. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!