

Are You Most Loyal To God or an Organization – **WHICH?**

The following information has been taken from The "Report" Book Volume I pages 149-152 and 158-167.

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines a "loyal" person as being one who is:

"faithful in allegiance to one's lawful sovereign or government; faithful to a private person to whom fidelity is due."

Yes, an individual who is "loyal" is 'faithful in his allegiance to his sovereign.' He shows 'fidelity to the one whom it is most due.' Therefore, in view of this definition, would you say that you are a loyal person that is to Jehovah God, the Sovereign of the Universe? But before you answer that question, let us notice an interesting situation that tested the loyalty of Christians, many years ago. As pointed out by the *Watchtower* magazine, in their August 15, 1990 issue, the experience is given of Emperor Constantius I who had great respect for Christians. However, in order to test the loyalty of Christians, particularly those attached to his palace, he told them they could remain in his service only if they agreed to "sacrifice to idols." And if they refused . . . then "vengeance at his hand." Now that was quite a test, wouldn't you say? Nevertheless, he had a particular aim in putting this test upon those Christians. And what was that?

A SIMPLE TEST

Well, the *Watchtower* magazine explains:

"By this simple ploy, Constantius wanted to identify those who would never compromise their loyalty. Those who proved loyal to God and his principles were retained in the emperor's service, some even becoming trusted counselors. Those disloyal to God's commands were ignominiously dismissed." - See *Watchtower* 8/15/90, pg. 12, 11.

What a shrewd test! Yes, he wanted to see who would remain loyal or "faithful" to Jehovah God. Would they obey or not? Would they remain "loyal" to God's Laws? Would they stay completely free of idolatry, or emperor worship? This is what he wanted to know. And after determining who was really obedient, the emperor 'dismissed all who disloyally disobeyed God's Commands.' However, he promoted many of those who refused to participate in this act of treason against God. In other words, he dismissed all "apostates," or those who participated in Apostasy against God. What a switch!

And so we see by his use of this simple but revealing test, the emperor was able to successfully identify

those who were really "loyal". Yes, the ones who would be ready to 'lay their life on the line,' if necessary, in order to remain "faithful" to Jehovah, their true "sovereign." This test clearly illustrates that sometimes a Christian can be tested in a most unique way, in an unexpected way, to find out if he is really "loyal" to his Creator or not. Remember, for those who capitulated, it demonstrated to the king that they were not "loyal" to Jehovah, the Person they claimed to worship and put first in all things. Then, of course, after seeing their disloyalty to their God, how could the king believe that they would remain completely "loyal" to him, in a secondary sense, that is, if the right amount of pressure were put upon them to do otherwise. He would have to conclude, yes be forced to conclude, that these same so-called Christians would, in the end, compromise again if enough pressure were put upon them!

THE "HOUR OF TEST" FOR CHRISTIANS UPON US

But wait! There is a serious problem facing God's servants today. Yes, one that will test the loyalty of all who call themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses." But what is that?

Well, Jesus foretold this critical "test" for all Christians, in our day and time, by accurately predicting a similar situation. Speaking directly to the "Angel of the Philadelphia Congregation," Jesus said at

Revelation 3:10:

"Because you kept the word about my endurance, I will also keep you from **the hour of test**, which is to come upon the whole inhabited earth, to put a test upon those dwelling on the earth."

"Impossible!" you say. "No such test will come upon God's Name People, Jehovah's Witnesses..." you say. Well, even though you may initially feel this way before reading this article, please keep in mind that God's Word never fails, it is sure to come to pass. Actually, "tests" are nothing new for God's people. They have been "tested" many, many times, in the past, in the case of their "loyalty."

JEHOVAH "TESTS" HIS PEOPLE AT TIMES

For example: Wasn't it a "test" when Jehovah Himself put the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad" in the middle of the garden. Yes, it was a "test" since Adam and Eve had the freedom to "eat" from it, if they so chose. Yes, it was a "test" for them. It would prove whether or not they would be obedient to Jehovah's stated Commands. It would prove whether they were "loyal" or not. - Genesis 2:15-17

Further, Jehovah Himself tested the Israelites in the wilderness as recorded at **Deuteronomy 8:2, 3** which says:

"And you must remember all the way that Jehovah your God made you walk these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, **to put you to the test so as to know what was in your heart**, as to whether you would keep his commandments or not. So he humbled you and let you go hungry and fed you with the manna, which neither you had known nor your fathers had known; in order to make you know that not by bread alone does man live but by every expression of Jehovah's mouth does man live."

Yes, Jehovah God Himself puts his people "to the test" at times, to see what is really in their hearts. He wanted to see if they would remain obedient to His Commandments or not. He wanted to see if they would remain "faithful" to their "Sovereign," the one to whom they owed their "allegiance" and honor. He wanted to see if they were truly "loyal."

At this point, we want to make a distinction, between "testing" individuals and "tempting" them. No, Jehovah does not "tempt" man toward sin. Neither does Jehovah 'try men with evil things.' He will not place a wicked or evil thing right in front of a man in order to "try" him or "tempt" him toward sin. No, but this is the type of ploy that Satan often uses. (James 1:13, 14) However, even in these cases, Jehovah will allow the person to be "tried" by the evil thing, in order to see if he will, when tempted, remain "loyal." An excellent way to understand the differences in the two situations is this: Jehovah planted the "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad" in the middle of the Garden and told man not to eat from it. But Satan took it further. He suggested to Eve that she should eat from it since breaking God's Law would, in the end, prove beneficial to herself and her family. Yes, he went so far as to make the idea attractive to her. He told her how her 'eyes were bound to become opened and she would be just like Jehovah, knowing Good and Bad.' What an awful thing to do! Nevertheless, do we see the difference? Yes, Jehovah would not do such a thing. That would be "tempting" the person with the evil thing.

However, a "test" can really be a good thing. For example: What wise instructor or school teacher do we know that does not, from time to time, give "exams," " " or "tests," if you will, to see how his or her students are really faring in class. Indeed, most teachers even give unexpected "pop quizzes" from time to time, to see if the students are really paying attention in the classroom. Yes, by way of these examinations, oral or written, the teacher can see if the students are really progressing, or learning in the class. In this way, he/she can monitor their progress systematically throughout the school year. Therefore, we can see that a "test" is not a bad thing, in itself. No, but in fact, it is a very good thing. It is something that is needed.

But what about this test of "loyalty" of all true Christians spoken of earlier? Well, the test of "loyalty" for all of God's servants, worldwide will be: What will these Christians do when put, unexpectedly under pressure to compromise. Yes, what should a "loyal" witness of Jehovah do when their own leading men, teachers, and Governing Body staff invites them to involve themselves in spiritual adultery and idolatry?

-----continuation of article covering pages 158-167 of *The "Report" Book Volume I.*-----

EXAMPLES OF COMPROMISE EVEN NOW

On the question of obedience, are you more concerned with pleasing the Watchtower Society than Jehovah God? Does the Watchtower Society command your loyalty and obedience? Even our attitude can betray a lack of loyalty to Jehovah God. Yes, even our attitude and personal viewpoints. Perhaps, you have heard brothers make statements such as these:

"I would rather be wrong with the Watchtower Society than be right by myself."

Or, how about this one:

"It doesn't matter what the Watchtower Society decides to do...Jehovah doesn't hold us responsible for what the Watchtower Society does...if they should do something wrong, or maybe make a wrong decision, Jehovah will discipline them, not us. Jehovah is not going to discipline us for something the Society does."

Have you heard individual witnesses make such statements? Have you? Well, even though many individuals have made such statements, in actuality, these views are erroneous, scripturally speaking. Let's examine the first statement.

There is always virtue in standing for "right," no matter that the individual has to stand "alone". And, under no circumstances would a Christian "rather be wrong," or 'want to be wrong' with anyone, including the Watchtower Society. No, he does not. The plain fact of the matter is this: if you are standing for "right," then you are never alone! No, because Jehovah God and His loyal Son, Jesus are standing right beside you. Yes, because they always stand for "right." Think about it.

And how about the second attitude expressed above concerning the question of bearing responsibility for wrong decisions or actions? For example, how about Jesus' statement at Matthew 13:14:

"Let them be. Blind guides is what they are. If, then, a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

Yes, if the 'blind lead the blind,' then "both" will fall into the pit. There is no escaping it. If the Watchtower Society is leading the Jehovah's Witnesses in a wrong path, then 'both will fall into the pit.' Remember, leadership always affects the followers, for good or bad. Take for example Adam and Eve. Certainly, their example has had disastrous effects upon us, their offspring, even though we had nothing to do with their original sin in the Garden of Eden. And how about the ten unfaithful spies who were sent to spy out the promise land. Did not their 'bad report' and faithless example have a detrimental effect upon the whole nation? Yes, their example and counsel caused the whole nation to wander in the wilderness for 40 years! - Numbers 13:25 thru 14:39

Then, take the example of David and Bathsheba. Again, not only did David suffer because of his adulterous affair with the death of the offspring of this union, but his whole family suffered with constant turmoil and disunity with rebellions from Absalom, Adonijah, and the raping of his daughter, Tamar. Clearly, others are affected by the actions of their respective leaders, whether in the family arrangement or on a national level. - 2 Samuel chapter 11; 2 Samuel chapter 15; 1 Kings chapter 1; 2 Samuel 13.

In addition to expressing wrong attitudes that betray a lack of "loyalty," we, as Jehovah's servants, might be surprised to know that we may have ALREADY COMPROMISED our loyalty and obedience to Jehovah in another very subtle way. For instance, to maintain complete obedience to themselves from

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Jehovah's Witnesses, the Governing Body gives constant reminders that one cannot receive salvation without the Watchtower Society's guidance and direction, by way of its publications and its "special" representatives. Is that what the Bible teaches? Think about it. Further, we have noticed that the brotherhood has been taught to look at the Watch Tower Society's word as being the same as God's Word. Maybe, you have noticed this yourself in your dealings with Jehovah's Witnesses. However, would you say that this is appropriate? Well, to answer that question, let's take a close look at an ancient example in Ahithophel, David's trusted advisor.

Ahithophel's personal advice and counsel were considered so accurate, his words so wise, that David and others began to formulate an unrealistic viewpoint concerning him. According to *Smith's Bible Dictionary* under the heading of "Solomon" page 292,

"Ahithophel was renown throughout all of Israel for [his] worldly wisdom and political sagacity."

The Bible itself confirms the truthfulness of the foregoing statement at 2 Samuel 16:23 by saying:

"And the counsel of Ahithophel, with which he counseled in those days, was just as when a man would inquire of the word of the [true] God. That was the way ALL the counsel of Ahithophel was both to David and to Absalom."

As we know, this man became unfaithful by counseling treason and murder against David. When Jehovah foiled his plot by making Hushai's counsel appear better, he committed suicide. Yes, he was disloyal in the end, much to the chagrin of Absalom and his followers, and to the dismay of David, who viewed him as a close and trusted friend. (2 Samuel 17:23) This man was a prototype of the infamous Judas Iscariot, the traitor. - Psalms 41:9; John 13:18

But what we want to remember about this situation is this: David and others had a distorted view of Ahithophel's counsel! Do we not see a problem here??? Take another look at the scripture. Yes, Ahithophel's word was viewed "just as when a man would inquire of the word of the [true] God." It did not say his "word" was the "word of the [true] God" neither did it say that he was a "seer" or a "man of the [true] God" like Samuel, Moses, Elijah and other prophets who strictly delivered Jehovah's messages to the people. No, but he was simply David's advisor and counselor. David and others, unwittingly, attributed an unwarranted status to "his word." And so, it was David and the people who were at fault, because it was they who attributed such weight to this man's words. And it certainly, in the end, gave rise to serious problems as we have seen. Yes, "his word" was placed on the level with God's Word! It was "his word" and not God's Word that received such attention from the people.

But you may say, "what has this got to do with the Watchtower Society and it's leaders?" Well, is it any different today? Is not the Watchtower Society's WORD viewed this way by the brothers in general? It is viewed as equal, tantamount to, or the same as God's Word, the Bible. Let us examine a few examples of this.

WATCHTOWER SOCIETY'S WORD VIEWED AS GOD'S WORD

The Watchtower Society says when Public Speakers are announced from the platform of the Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses to give Bible lectures, (particularly Circuit and District Overseers during their visits, as well as those who have Assembly program assignments) they are to be announced as "Representatives of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society." Do you see anything wrong with that??? Should not it be "Representatives of Jehovah God?"

Is this not a subtle compromise of your loyalty and exclusive devotion to Jehovah God??? Think about it.

The Watchtower Society says (in the April, 1991, *Our Kingdom Ministry* under the article "Start and Conclude Meetings on Time") this disturbing yet revealing statement:

" . . . Public speakers should adhere to the timing indicated on the Watchtower Society's outline and not include in the talk extraneous matters, such as greetings."

Greetings are considered by the Watchtower Society as "extraneous" matters??? How unloving! Why, if you will check, you will find that just about every book in the Christian Greek Scriptures addressed to a congregation contained warm "greetings" from the writer of the letter (and his companions or penman/secretary) to the congregation. - See Romans 16:22; 1 Corinthians 16:21.

The Watchtower Society asks (in the same *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert, pg. 3) the following question:

"What can we do to draw closer to the Organization?"

Draw closer to the Organization? How can a living, breathing human "draw closer" to an impersonal organization? To the contrary, at James 4:8 it says:

"Draw close to GOD, and He will draw close to you."

Does not that make more sense? Think about it.

The Watchtower Society asks (according to the February 1991 *Our Kingdom Ministry* under the article

"Fulfilling Our Kingdom Ministry as Jehovah's Witnesses") this subtle question:

"Do you know what OUR official view is on advanced education, autopsies, killing in self-defense, or public welfare assistance?"

Did they say: "Our official view?" Shouldn't it be what God's official view or what the Bible's official viewpoint is on these important matters? Can we not see from these and numerous other examples that the Watchtower Society has set itself up as an ICON of worship? They are taking the credit, even worship, that should go ONLY to Jehovah God. (Exodus 20:3; Isaiah 42:8) And the Jehovah's Witnesses are, unwittingly, giving this adulation to this ICON of worship!

Perhaps someone at this point would say: "The word `worship' used in **"THE REPORT"** is a bit too strong a word to use in describing the misguided loyalty Jehovah's Witnesses express toward the Watchtower Society. It is very difficult to see how faithful, conscientious, devoted publishers of long-standing activity could be unwittingly lured into worshipping the ORGANIZATION itself over Jehovah God." Let us examine an even more serious situation, to see just how far the Watchtower Society has gone in courting the "loyalty" of all Christians who are called by God's Name.

NEW BAPTISMAL QUESTIONS CHALLENGES CHRISTIAN'S LOYALTY TO GOD

The Watchtower Society has, in the 35-year tenure of the Governing Body arrangement, made *drastic* and *irreverent* encroachments upon Jehovah God's position as Supreme Sovereign in the Christian congregation. The Watchtower Society has misused and abused their authority, and have, as it were, "placed their threshold with Jehovah's threshold and their doorpost beside Jehovah's doorpost." They have, by their actions, asserted equal status with Jehovah in His own "temple" arrangement! (See Ezekiel 43:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4) And this, of course, has escaped the notice of millions of trusting individuals in the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide. One notable example of how this has been done is their subtle changes in the questions for baptismal candidates since the year of 1985. To really see the difference, let's notice the questions for baptism before that year. They are as follows:

1) Have you recognized yourself as a sinner and needing salvation from Jehovah God? And have you acknowledged that this salvation proceeds from him and through his ransom, Christ Jesus?

2) On the basis of this faith in God and in his provision for redemption have you dedicated yourself unreservedly to Jehovah God, to do his will henceforth as that will is revealed to you through Christ Jesus and through God's Word as his Holy Spirit makes it plain? (See *Watchtower* 1970 pg. 309 par. 20.)

Now compare these questions with the new ones propounded to baptismal candidates since the year of 1985. The new questions are as follows:

1) On the basis of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, have you repented of your sins and dedicated yourself to Jehovah to do his will?

2) Do you understand that your dedication and baptism identify you as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in association with God's spirit-directed organization? (See *Watchtower* June 1, 1985 pg. 30 par. 3, 4.)

Do you notice anything different???

"Why, yes!" you say.

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In the first instance, the emphasis is placed on the individual being a sinner in need of salvation from Jehovah God. Next, the individual acknowledges Jesus' role in this salvation as ransom of mankind. Secondly, the individual responds to the thought that he has dedicated his life to Jehovah God. The individual understands that God's will is revealed through His Word under the direction of Holy Spirit and therefore have the final say in the person's life, always. This is what the individual agrees to before Jehovah, forevermore. Did you make such an agreement? The questions are certainly proper and serve to remind all of us of our grave responsibility to be completely loyal to him!

However, the new set of questions highlight something different. Yes, the individual is told to recognize the fact that he is a sinner in need of repentance, but it does not say that his salvation comes from Jehovah! That is left hanging in the air. The individual is left to possibly ponder that his salvation may come from Jehovah, but may also come from some additional source such as the "spirit-directed organization." This is not clearly stated in the first question! And, as you can see, the second question directly ties together the person's dedication and his identification with the association known as Jehovah's Witnesses, yes the "spirit-directed organization." Could the individual be, perhaps, dedicated jointly to Jehovah and the `spirit-directed' organization??? The implications are serious! You be the judge of that!

Clearly, the Watchtower Society is totally out of bounds in their presumptuous words and actions. After all, what's the point of changing the questions in the first place? The original questions were appropriate, entirely proper! What was their purpose in changing them??? Better yet, what was their real motive in changing the original baptismal questions! There must be one of grave significance. It has been reported that the Watchtower Society changed these questions for legal reasons, in case the individual decides to leave the organization and does not wish to be subjected to public branding and treatment as a "disfellowshipped" person. (See **"THE REPORT"** chapter 6 Administering Discipline Scripturally.) This new terminology will now help them in the courts, if it comes to that. However, no matter what the reason,

these changes have struck to the heart of the question: "Where is Your loyalty" - to God or to Man?

CONTRAST IN VIEWPOINT CONCERNING BAPTISM AND DEDICATION

In view of the above change in position by the Watchtower Society, let us take note of this comment taken from a Watchtower article written in 1955. It states:

"A Christian, therefore, cannot be baptized in the name of the one actually doing the immersing or in the name of any man, nor in the name of any organization, but in the name of the Father, the Son and the holy spirit."

Did we notice that the person is not to be baptized "in the name of any organization?" Yes, that would include the organization known as the Jehovah's Witnesses, wouldn't it??? (See July 1, 1955 pg. 411 par. 15) Let's take note of another enlightening comment taken from a 1966 Watchtower magazine. It

states:

"Jehovah is the giver of life. `For with you is the source of life.' (Ps. 36:9) We cannot keep everlasting life in view without staying close to Jehovah, the source of life...This is what we mean when we dedicate our lives to Jehovah. We do not dedicate ourselves to a religion, nor to a man, nor to an organization. No, we dedicate ourselves to the Supreme Sovereign of the Universe, our Creator, Jehovah God himself. This makes dedication a very personal relationship between us and Jehovah. For this reason, all dedicated ones are not only privileged but obligated to draw near to Jehovah in prayer. James 4:8 tells us: `Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.'"

The questions for those paragraphs read this way:

"What principles must we keep clearly in mind in our relationship to Jehovah? What should we know about dedication? What necessary thing will help us to stay close to Jehovah, keeping him always before us?" (October 1, 1966 pgs. 603, 604 par. 14, 15).

Therefore, it is clear that the Watchtower Society has certainly *changed their position* in this matter of dedication and baptism. Again, what is the reason given for this change? Notice the following.

SIMPLIFICATION OF QUESTIONS???

The Watchtower Society says they changed the baptismal questions to SIMPLIFY matters. This comment was made by the Watchtower Society in the April 15, 1987 *Watchtower* magazine pg. 12 par. 11. It states:

"By baptism you identify yourself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in association with God's worldwide congregation. Baptism validates a solemn agreement made with God."

The footnote at the bottom of the page makes this point:

"Recently the two questions addressed to baptismal candidates WERE SIMPLIFIED so that candidates could answer with full comprehension of what is involved in coming into an intimate relationship with God AND HIS EARTHLY ORGANIZATION."

But again, did they say: "intimate relationship with his earthly organization???" How can a living breathing person have an "intimate relationship" with a corporation or organization? Further, we see that the Watchtower Society has tried to explain away or justify the changes made in the baptismal questions by saying that they are simplifying matters. But we ask, "what could be more simplified than the original questions?" The individual has dedicated his life to Jehovah God only, and not to an organization! That's not complicated. However, it is much more complicated to tell a person that his `dedication to Jehovah God identifies him with a spirit-directed organization,' wouldn't you say? Which is least complicated? Judge for yourself. Also, did Jesus instruct his disciples to baptize in the name of a "spirit-directed organization?" Did he??? Or, did he simply state to baptize them in the name of the "Father, Son and the

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Holy Spirit?" Think about it. - Matthew 28:19, 20

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