

A black and white, upside-down photograph of a city skyline with various skyscrapers and buildings. The image is inverted, with the top of the buildings at the bottom of the frame.

MATTHEW

The Upside umog Kingdom

Matthew 11

Jesus doesn't fight physical battles: He fights spiritual ones.



Matthew 11:1-15

Jesus' ministry looked different than people expected

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Jesus' ministry looked different than people expected

- John the Baptist questioned whether Jesus was really “the One.” He had been declaring that Jesus was the Lamb of God.
- He was the prophet who prepared the way for Jesus (Mark 1:3).
- He even leaped for joy in the womb when he first “met” Jesus (Luke 1:41).



Jesus' ministry looked different than people expected

- John was now in prison, and Jesus wasn't turning out to be exactly the Messiah that John thought He would be.
- Jesus didn't chastise John for lack of faith as He did the disciples in the storm (Matthew 8:23–26).
- He didn't pronounce woe on him as He did the Pharisees (Matthew 23:13–33).



Jesus' ministry looked different than people expected

- He pronounced a blessing on him if he persevered (verse 6).
- Jesus called him the greatest man who had ever lived (verse 11), His forerunner (verse 10), and promised in the prophets (verse 14).
- Jesus did not criticize John for his doubts.
- We will all have doubts at times, even the most faithful of us.



Jesus' ministry looked different than people expected

- When John's disciples asked Jesus if He were really the One, Jesus simply pointed to the signs of His ministry.
- Jesus referred to Isaiah, knowing John would recognize the passage (Isaiah 35:5–6).
- John's questioning was understandable. Jesus hadn't yet done the things John had declared He would do.



Jesus' ministry looked different than people expected

- After they left, Jesus talked to the crowd about John.
- John was not weak like a reed in the wind, swayed by the world.
- John was a true prophet. He is the Elijah promised at the end of the Old Testament, the messenger who would prepare the way for the Lord (verses 10, 14; Malachi 4:5).



Jesus' ministry looked different than people expected

- All of this is Jesus' assurance that He really is the promised Messiah. He really is the son of David who will reign forever over the kingdom of God.
- That kingdom just looks a bit different than they expected. Many Jews thought the Messiah would overthrow Rome and sit on the physical throne in Jerusalem over the nation of Israel.



Matthew 11:16-24

Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

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Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

- Jesus pronounced a harsh judgment on His current generation using graphic illustrations: comparing them to children in the marketplace who whine that other children won't play their games.
- In an ancient culture that didn't value children, this would strike ancient hearers as spoiled and obnoxious.



Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

- John and Jesus came to the people from different angles.
- They criticized John for not eating and drinking, but when Jesus ate and drank, they called him a glutton and a drunkard.
- Jesus called them spoiled brats who weren't happy no matter what you offered them.



Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

- In rejecting their message, the critics charged them with very serious offenses.
- They said John had a demon, which would have been punishable by excommunication or even death.
- What they accused him of was a capital offense, which slandered his reputation.



Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

- Jesus proclaimed woe on the three cities:
- Capernaum - Peter's hometown, served as Jesus' home base.
- Bethsaida - where the Jordan River flows into the Sea of Galilee.
- Chorazin - three miles inland from Capernaum, on a hill.

Capernaum



Bethsaida



Chorazin





Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

- Proclaiming “woe” on someone in the ancient world was a statement of judgment from a prophet of God.
- The people of Israel expected their prophets to pronounce woes on their enemies but to vindicate and praise them.
- Isaiah (13–23), Jeremiah (46–51), Ezekiel (25–32), and Amos (1) all pronounced woes on other nations.



Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

- Many other times, these prophets proclaimed woe to the people of Israel (Isaiah 22, Jeremiah 2–22, Ezekiel 24, Amos 2–3).
- Though the people may have felt that their status as God's chosen people exempted them from judgment, God never said that.
- He preached judgment to them just as much as any other nation when they turned from Him to worship other gods.



Entrance into the kingdom is based on faith

- Many times Jesus praised Gentiles and sinners for their faith:
- The Roman centurion (Matthew 8:5–13), the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4), the sinful woman at the Pharisee's feast (Luke 7:36–50), and the Canaanite woman in Tyre and Sidon (Matthew 15:21–28).



Matthew 11:25-30

**A relationship with Christ is one of rest
and letting go of our burdens**

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A relationship with Christ is one of rest

- We often read this passage about finding rest in Jesus' easy yoke out of context.
- It is significant to remember that He said it in the context of contrasting the faith of Gentiles and sinners and the hardened hearts of the Pharisees and teachers of the law



A relationship with Christ is one of rest

- Jesus talked about putting heavy burdens or yokes on people's shoulders when talking about the scribes and Pharisees:
- "They tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger" (Matthew 23:4).



A relationship with Christ is one of rest

- The teachings of Jesus are not easier to follow than the Pharisees.
- His standard of righteousness is even greater than that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:20).
- The difference is that Jesus carries the yoke for us. He fills us with His Spirit, changes our desires to His desires, and grows His fruit in us so we can follow His law (Galatians 5).



A relationship with Christ is one of rest

- Jesus' metaphor of a yoke would have helped His ancient audience see this clearly.
- Dwight Pentecost (Dallas Theological Seminary) wrote:
- "When we are yoked with Jesus Christ, he bears the load, and we who are yoked with him share in the joy and the accomplishment of the labor but without the burden of the yoke."



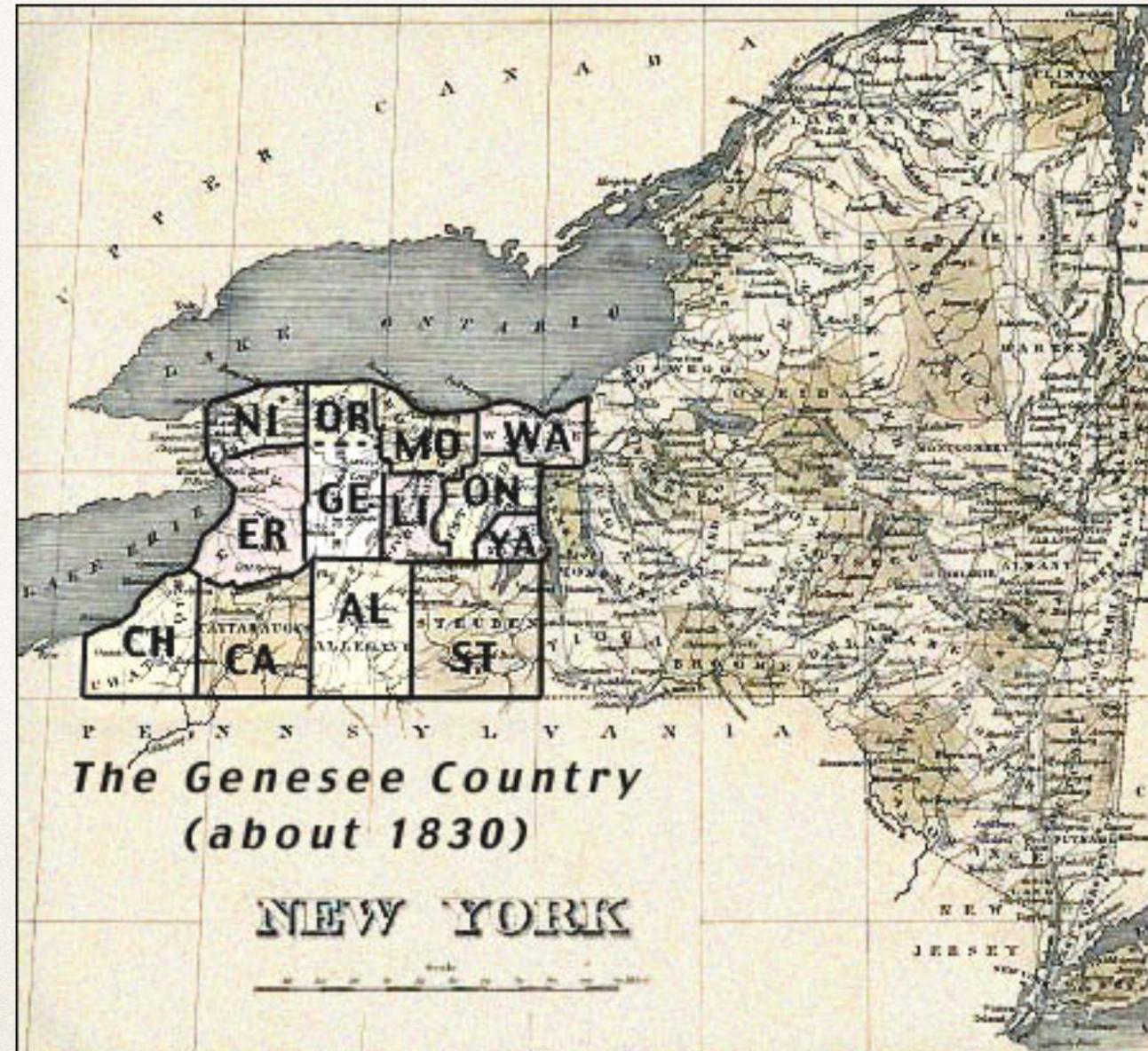
A relationship with Christ is one of rest

- Jesus can say His yoke is easy and His burden is light because when we yoke ourselves with Him, He takes all the weight.
- We walk alongside Him.
- Our relationship with Jesus isn't a burden because it isn't just a list of rules to follow. It is Jesus, the Master Himself, walking with us through life, showing us where to go and how to live.

Jehovah's Witness



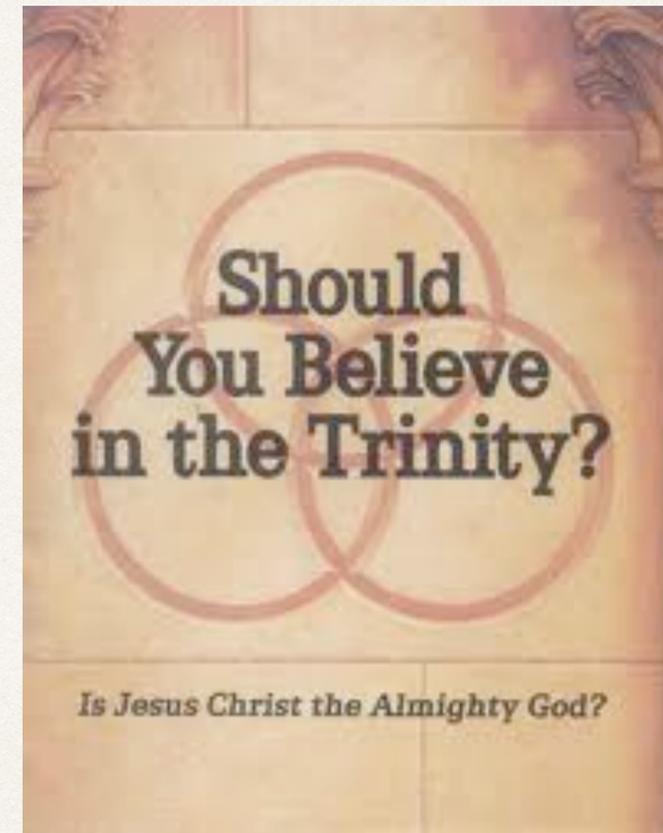
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Jehovah's Witness: Trinity

“There is no evidence that any sacred writer even suspected the existence of the (Trinity) within the godhead.”

Should You Believe in the Trinity?



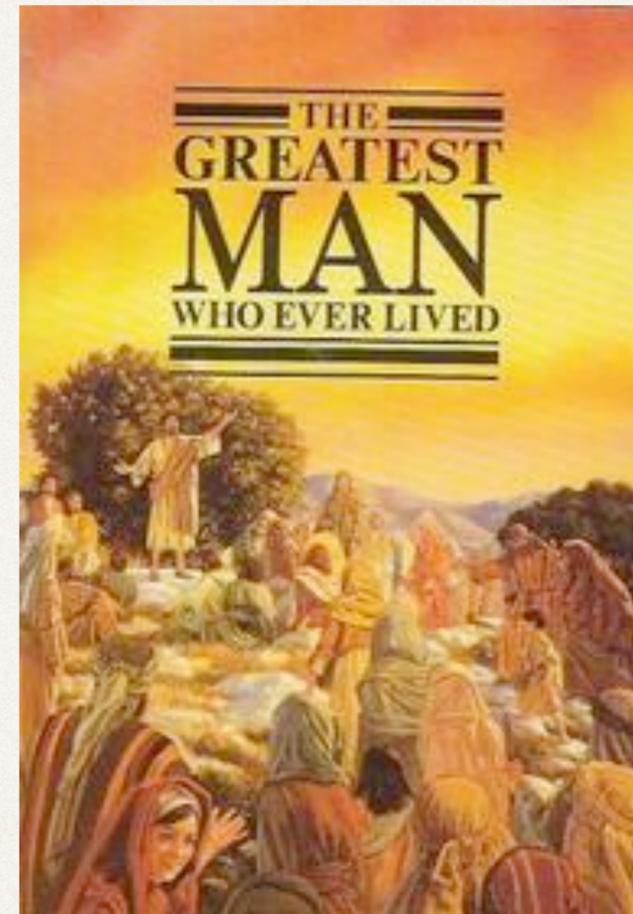
Jehovah's Witness: God

- ❖ Unitarian: God is one, God is personal.
- ❖ God has a spiritual body and a place to live (heavens), the same type of body that the 144,000 will receive who will live in heaven with Him.
- ❖ God works through the Holy Spirit (it is not a being), God is not omnipresent.

Jehovah's Witness: Jesus

- ❖ Jesus before the incarnation was Michael the Archangel, the first of God's creation.
- ❖ "In the beginning was the word the word was with God and the word was a god."

New World Translation



Jehovah's Witness: Holy Spirit

- ❖ The Holy Spirit is a force like electricity or fire and not a person.
- ❖ “As for the Holy Spirit, the so-called third person of the Trinity, we have seen that this is not a person but God’s active force.”

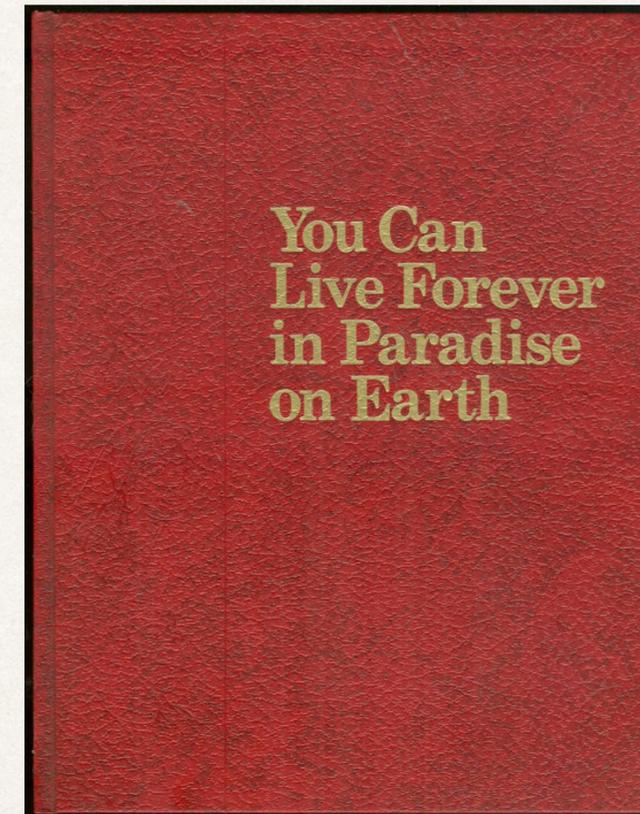
You Can Live Forever



The spirit can be compared to electricity

Jehovah's Witnesses: Man

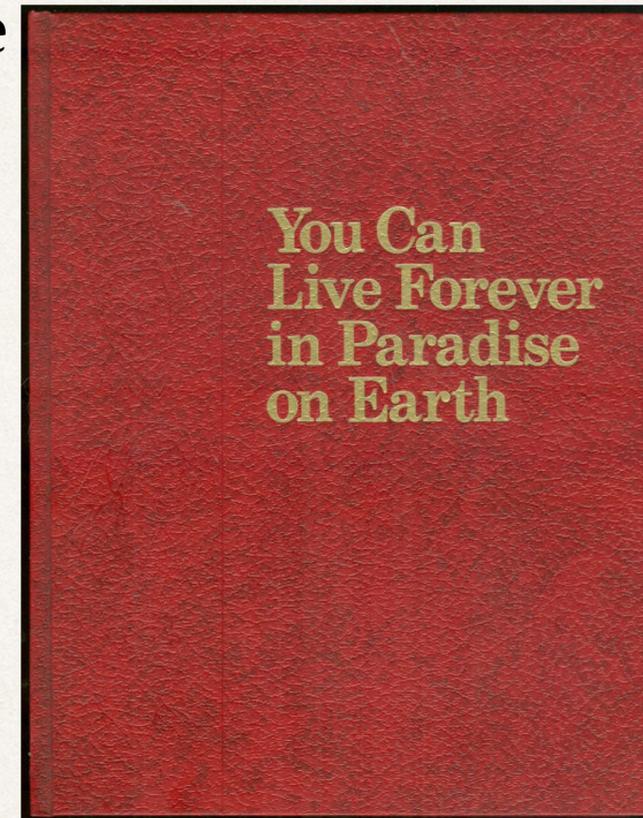
- ❖ Annihilation: once the body dies there is nothing left.
- ❖ Jesus' death only paid for Adam's sin.
- ❖ Salvation is only through the Watchtower organization.



Jehovah's Witness: Salvation

- ❖ Salvation comes from obeying and serving the organization.
- ❖ “But in what special way does God expect loyal support be given? ... Like Jesus and his early followers, they must be loyal spokesman or proclaimers of God's kingdom.

You Can Live Forever



Jehovah's Witness - Ethics

- ❖ Theocratic ethics - they are the ruling government.
- ❖ They have loyalty only to Watchtower organization, not to earthly governments. Do not pledge, do not serve in the military, etc.
- ❖ Do not celebrate birthdays or holidays.
- ❖ No blood transfusions: Acts 15:29 – abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, Leviticus 17:10, do not eat blood.

Jehovah Witness - Trinity

- ❖ Jehovah's Witness - "The word Trinity is not found anywhere in the Bible."
- ❖ Biblical teaching - There is one God revealed in three distinct persons the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each are equal in nature, substance and power.

Jehovah's Witness - Trinity

- Who raised Jesus from the dead?
 - Romans 6:4 – the Father
 - John 2:19 – Jesus
 - Romans 8:11 – the Holy Spirit

Jehovah's Witness - Trinity

- Who created the world?
 - Psalm 102:25 – the Father
 - John 1:1-3 – Jesus
 - Genesis 1:2 – the Holy Spirit

Christ's Warning

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them.”

Matthew 7:15

Christ's Warning

“At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ or there he is, do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear ... So if anyone tells you, ‘There he is, out in the desert,’ do not go out; or ‘Here he is in the inner rooms,’ do not believe it.”

Matthew 24:23-24

Deity of Christ

- ❖ Jesus declares Himself to be God
 - ❖ John 8:58 (Exodus 3:14)
 - ❖ Matthew 12:8
 - ❖ John 17:5

Deity of Christ

- ❖ The apostles declare Jesus to be God
 - ❖ Matthew 1:23
 - ❖ John 20:28
 - ❖ Titus 2:13

Deity of Christ

- ❖ God the Father encouraged worship of the Son
- ❖ Matthew 14:33
- ❖ Matthew 28:9
- ❖ Hebrews 1:6

Holy Spirit

- ❖ Acts 5 – He can be lied to
- ❖ Acts 13 – He speaks
- ❖ Ephesians 4:30 – He has emotions
- ❖ John 14: 26 – He teaches
- ❖ Acts 8:39 - He performs miracles
- ❖ Romans 8:26 – He intercedes

Witnessing to Witnesses

- ❖ Read about them: *Jehovah's Witnesses: Witnessing to the Witnesses – Understanding and Responding to False Doctrine*
- ❖ Get them to start asking questions.
- ❖ Encourage them to read the Bible for themselves.
- ❖ Present the gospel of grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- ❖ Pray