

Ex-Jehovah's Witnesses Convention

Program 1

Ankerberg: Today on the John Ankerberg Show, you will meet four former Jehovah's Witnesses who will share with you the startling evidence that proved to them that they had been deceived by their own religious organization. David Reed became an atheist in His teens, went to Harvard University and after a year left in a determined search for God. Jehovah's Witnesses befriended him and he joined the Watchtower, but over time reading his Bible and examining the claims of the Jehovah's Witnesses, he realized that he had been deceived. He left the Watchtower organization and put his belief in Jesus and His Savior. Lorri MacGregor became a member of the Jehovah's Witnesses at age eighteen and later almost died refusing a blood transfusion. When she began to honestly question what the Watchtower taught, she was excommunicated and cut off. Eventually her study of the Bible brought her to true belief in Jesus Christ. Duane Magnani was a child of Jehovah's Witness parents. He left the Watchtower and later was recruited as an adult; eventually the evidence led him to leave the Jehovah's Witnesses. Duane is now recognized as a fully qualified expert in court cases on beliefs and practices and has testified in over 110 child custody cases. Joan Cetnar was raised in a Jehovah's Witness home and was one of the heirs to the S.S. Kresge fortune. Joan married a Jehovah's Witness leader and joined him in Brooklyn Headquarters in New York. She was able to observe first hand how the president and other leaders of the Jehovah's

Witnesses lived. She left the Watchtower Society and became a Christian when she realized the Watchtower was not teaching her what the Bible said. Her convictions separated her from her family and cost her an inheritance which would have made her a millionaire. We invite you to listen as our guests present the evidence they discovered concerning the false teachings and claim of the Jehovah's Witnesses organization.

Ankerberg: Welcome!. We're here in beautiful Pennsylvania and we are here with a group of folks, that the majority of them used to be Jehovah's Witnesses. This is an ex-Jehovah's Witness Convention and these folks, along the way, gained information that caused them to leave the Watchtower Society and if you listen to our program today you will understand why. Maybe you are a Jehovah's Witness and you will want to see if they are telling the truth and you've thought about these things yourself.

And on stage today, we have guests that all grew up as Jehovah's Witnesses. We actually have among them a former elder, who actually taught in the Kingdom Hall--their little churches that they call Kingdom Halls; and we have two ladies that went door-to-door in what they call "pioneer work" just like you might have had somebody come by your house and knock on the door and give you a little Watchtower Magazine. They did that, and one of them actually worked at the Brooklyn headquarters. And then we have a fellow that, although he grew up in the Jehovah's Witnesses, is now an expert court testifier, if you will, a witness in court trials concerning the affairs of the Jehovah's Witnesses, and he is considered to be one of the experts in

the world on what they believe.

And folks, we're really glad that you're here, and we're going to start off with something that is very, very interesting, and that is that all of you came to the conclusion that this Watchtower Society that gave you your religious beliefs, you all decided at one time or another that the Society itself had

lied to you. And in fact, let's go one step further, they actually have a doctrine, you say, that's called Theocratic War Strategy. You've got to define terms for us, Lorri. Start us off., you used to go door to door and you used to teach the things of the Jehovah's Witnesses. What is Theocratic War Strategy? What does that mean, first of all, and what is a theocratic war strategy, and what does it have to do with lying?

Lorri MacGregor: Ok. Theocratic begins with "theo," which is the word for God, so it's really "God rule." and War Strategy, another way that we could define that would be as "justified lying." So there are times in the life of a Jehovah's Witness where they feel quite justified in lying. Their publications tell them that they only have to tell the truth to those who are entitled to know the truth.

Ankerberg: Who are those that are "entitled"?

MacGregor: Well, they decide. If it's going to be harmful for them, then you're not entitled.

Ankerberg: So, if you come to the door, and all of a sudden I start to kind of bring up some things that you're not comfortable with, what would you do?

MacGregor: Well as a Jehovah's Witness we always said you have to leave now, because we've got another appointment. We didn't have another appointment, John. We just wanted to get off the porch and out from under the fire.

Ankerberg: Duane, would Jehovah's Witness's actually lie under oath in court and would the Watchtower Society urge them to do so?

Duane Magnani: I'll tell you, John, this is the most nefarious publication I think the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society has ever put out.

Ankerberg: What is it?

Magnani: It's called "Preparing for Child Custody Cases." And it actually is a manual, I believe, for perjury. Let me give you an example. One of the judges in one of the cases made this statement in his final opinion.

Ankerberg: And we need to tell the folks that are listening in right now, you are called as an expert witness, in a court case, specifically with child custody cases where you might have a divorce going on, or there's a separation between a Jehovah's Witness and a non-Jehovah's Witness partner, and so, tell me a little about the background of what goes on here.

Magnani: Well, before I read this to you, the scenario is that you have both a

Jehovah's Witness and a non-Jehovah's Witness parent, in essence in a battle over this child. The problem is that you have two lifestyles which are so diametrically opposed

that the Jehovah's Witness feels that he is in a battle in the courtroom, and the only way that he can make a court feel that the child is normal, is to basically lie about the aspiration of the child, the lifestyle of the child, and so

forth. And this judge picked it right up in regards to his feeling about what this manual says. Listen to this: He says "Members of

the Jehovah's Witness's group are furnished with a booklet prepared by the Watchtower Society, entitled 'Preparing for Child Custody Cases,' the purpose of which is to instruct adherents of the group involved in custody disputes, how to testify so as to conceal from the courts the true limitations and restrictions placed upon children by the lifestyle and beliefs of the group." And he goes on to say "The booklet 'Preparing for Child Custody Cases,' recommends the giving of testimony under oath which is known to be untrue."

Ankerberg: Goodness' sakes. David, right along that line, you've got a quote from the 1957 Watchtower magazine itself about lying. What is it?

David Reed: Yes, looking at the May 1, 1957 Watchtower, and it's an article titled "Use Theocratic War Strategy." And this two-page article instructs Jehovah's Witness's exactly how to lie and just when to do it. In particular, it says in time of spiritual warfare, it is proper to misdirect the enemy by hiding the truth. And Jehovah's

Witness's feel they are in spiritual warfare much of the time, especially in a court case. But it's

interesting that this article does say that on a witness stand, he is obligated to speak the truth if he speaks at all. So they're actually contradicting their own teaching in the Watchtower by what they have in the booklet that Duane just quoted from.

Ankerberg: Ok. Now you were an elder in the Kingdom Hall. Did you teach this stuff? That the people were supposed to lie?

Reed: Well, if people asked me about that subject, I would tell them that it was

Theocratic War Strategy, and it was appropriate under some circumstances to lie.

Ankerberg: Yeah, let's get to the bottom line here for you. Lorri, I mean, the fact is you are taught to lie. There is something fundamentally wrong here if you are representing God and you have to lie in doing so. I mean, what's the bottom line here?

MacGregor: Well, the bottom line is that if you're a Jehovah's Witness, and you have the truth, and everyone else is wrong, that puts you in God's territory, and it puts everybody else in Satan's territory. So they consider, for instance, when they go into a courtroom that this sure isn't God's territory, this is Satan's territory, and so they feel perfectly fine if it suits the needs and desires of the organization to employ Theocratic War Strategy or justified lying in that court of law, because, those people aren't entitled to know the truth.

Ankerberg: Ok. We're going to take a break and we're going to come right back and Duane, when we come back I want to talk about what does go on inside of the courtroom and I also want to talk more about this thing of you were lying for God. Why did you have to lie for God, if God is telling the truth, He's not afraid of us finding out what He actually says so why are we covering it up from somebody. And we'll

talk about that when we come right back.

BREAK

Ankerberg: Alright, we're back. And we're here at an Ex-Jehovah's Witness Convention.

On stage we have our panel of experts. And Duane, we're talking about this thing of lying, and again the question comes up here: why were you lying for God? Does He need some kind of help? What were you trying to cover up?

Magnani: Well, I don't think a Jehovah's Witness thinks of himself as lying. I think he thinks of himself as defending the truth. And I think that Jehovah's Witness's basically are honest people. I think that their organization is dishonest, and I think unfortunately, they have been forced into saying things that are not true, and of course it comes in the courtroom.

Ankerberg: How concerned are you in court that the Jehovah's Witness's will lie?

Magnani: Well, this is a matter of a child's welfare. This is a matter of how that child

is going to be raised. Is he going to be raised with principles, for instance, which teaches him that truth is truth, that it's really important to always tell the truth, or is he going to be raised in the environment of a

Jehovah's Witness family which, sometimes, in some cases, and particularly in the courtroom has to tell lies to defend their belief system. Probably the best example is in the booklet "Preparing for Child Custody Cases" I was telling you about. On just one page, they have a section called "Evidence of Young People," and this is direct examination and responses for young Jehovah's Witness's. And the first line says-- and this is training a Jehovah's Witness child to testify in the courtroom--the first line says "this can be used to show that they are normal." Alright? In other words, they want

to make certain that this child looks normal to the court, in other words, like other kids. Here's a couple of examples of how this is brought out. "Be careful," it says, "they don't get the impression that they are in a demonstration at the Circuit Assembly..." Now the Circuit Assembly is an assembly of Jehovah's Witness's that's held a couple of times a year. "...where they would show that the first things in life are service and going to the Kingdom Hall. In other words, that's the number one thing for a Jehovah's Witness kid, and he doesn't want to get the impression that he's supposed to tell that to the judge. That is bad.

Ankerberg: Let me go through this. Is this the impression that you had as a group, when you were in the Jehovah's Witness's that you had to lie to protect what you were

doing?

Cetnar: I don't think we thought of it as lying. We just felt as though we had to defend what the Watchtower said, because it is God's organization. But they did have Watchtower articles about it, and used people from the Bible, like David, and how

he pretended he was insane so he would not be in danger in Philistine territory. So they did make a point of, if it's necessary, you don't have to tell the truth.

Ankerberg: The thing about that, Joan, is that who are you protecting? We come back to this thing of trying to protect God, and yet you were saying God is God, and He's got this truth, and the whole world is supposed to know, but you didn't really want to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Cetnar: I think it's a good example of how you're under mind control, and you do not realize that you are lying.

Ankerberg: What other things did the Watchtower lie to you about? Besides having an out for you to lie, how did they lie to you?

Reed: They lied quite a bit about their history. The Watchtower would present failed prophecies in a very favorable light, as

if they had really been speaking the truth, and events really did fulfil their words, even though the prophecies were not fulfilled.

Ankerberg: Yeah, David. Let's get it down for the people, that The Watchtower

claims to be the official channel of truth for the entire earth, for all people. It comes only through them, Right?

Cetnar: Right.

Ankerberg: So God, this theocracy, God rules directly, through the Watchtower, and in the process He makes statements that show up in the Watchtower magazine, and in

some of your stuff. Give me something that

they said, either Charles Taze Russell, or Rutherford, or Knorr or somebody of the Presidents that put it in officially into print, said "this is going to happen", and it just was a blatant lie.

Magnani/Reed: Prime example was their book "Millions Now Living Will Never Die" that was published in 1920. And it declared that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be resurrected in 1925. That obviously didn't happen, and yet the Watchtower covers that in some of their history books today, and they present it in a very favorable light. It

doesn't show up as a false prophecy.

Ankerberg: So they're actually saying that the Old Testament characters Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were supposed to resurrect, and show up in 1925. Where were they supposed to show up?

Reed: Well, the society later built a house for them in San Diego, California, called Beth Serene. And the deed to that house was actually made out in the name of the ancient patriarchs and kings of Israel that were supposed to live there. They didn't,

and the society eventually sold the building, because nobody was ever resurrected to live there. Judge Rutherford, the president, lived there. But now when they cover that in their Watchtower history books, they just gloss it over and pretend that there was no false statement made about it.

Ankerberg: Alright. Now if biblically, even according to the Watchtower's own literature, if somebody claims to be speaking for God, and says a lie--makes a false prophecy-- then what does the Watchtower say about that prophet?

Reed: They would say that's a false prophet, condemned by God, but they have various excuses why their statements don't fall into that category.

Ankerberg: Give me one.

Reed: They say they never spoke in the name of Jehovah. They say that they didn't say that this would actually happen, this was just their hope of what would happen.

Ankerberg: But if course, if they're putting

it officially in print and saying it, and they are God's spokesmen on earth, then God said it, didn't he?

Magnani: Yes in fact there are some of their prophecies where they actually said, these are Jehovah's words through Jesus Christ.

Ankerberg: Joan

Cetnar: If they admit that it was a false

prophecy, then they are not a false prophet. That's their definition of a false prophet is one who does not acknowledge and admit his error. So if I admit it, I'm not a false prophet.

Ankerberg: Lorri, give me another false prophecy that you came across, that the Watchtower actually had in print, and when you discovered it. Tell me what it was, first of all.

MacGregor: Well, for me, I was really looking forward to 1975. That was supposed to be the end of the world, Armageddon, the ushering in of the millennium. That wasn't the first lie they told. Right from the get-go they told me if I'd be a Jehovah's Witness they promised me a happy family life, they promised a life forever on a paradise earth, and that what a wonderful group we'd be in Jehovah's Witness's. But they really were no different than other people. There was backbiting and fighting and squabbling and yes, there were some really close relationships I formed there. But the fact is, there really wasn't an extra special group of people. 1975 failed, and many people were left very unhappy.

Ankerberg: For those of us who weren't Jehovah's Witness's we have a little tough time here with what you've just said. We've got to go over this a little more slowly. They said that the end of the world was going to happen in 1975?

MacGregor: Yes, they certainly did.

Ankerberg: I mean, that's mind boggling to us that are listening. And you guys were

basically, you were believing that?

MacGregor: We absolutely believed it. Some of us, like myself, sold our home and moved to an area the Society recommended to us so that we could preach in a district where there weren't so many Jehovah's Witness's. We really believed them and looked to them as our mother organization.

Ankerberg: The world didn't come to an end in 1975 as far as I know, cause we're still here, and so what, I mean, when it didn't happen, then what?

MacGregor: Well, they glossed it over, as usual. They came up with several implausible excuses. They said they maybe counted wrong, cause they weren't absolutely sure how much of a time lapse there was between the creation of Adam and Eve and you know, that could make a difference they said months but not years. But then years went by.

Ankerberg: But after you have believed them and they lied to you, and you know that, how many chances do you give them on that kind of a thing?

MacGregor: I can't believe how many chances we all gave them. We said, well, everybody makes mistakes and how could they be a false prophet, if they admit that they made a mistake, and I wish I'd done a few things like read their constitution, in their amendment to their constitution it says that their purpose is to prophesy.

Ankerberg: But they're prophesying

falsely. We've only got about a minute left here. Duane, help me out in terms of a person that is a Jehovah's Witness that is listening to us right now, and says, you know, there are some other prophecies that I've seen that aren't right either. Alright? I mean, how many of those do you need to see before you take some action, and what action would you recommend?

Magnani: Well, in the case of 1975, one third of all Jehovah's Witness's left the movement, so not everybody wants to continue in a false prophet organization. I

think with the Internet right now, with the fact that we can get this information out throughout the world, that people can start understanding the history of the movement. People who love truth, and many of them are Jehovah's Witness's, there's four here, ex-Jehovah's Witnesses who love the truth, and there's an audience of people here who love truth. The main thing is knowing that Jesus Christ is the truth, the way, the truth and the life, and knowing that He wouldn't lie, and so why should we if we want to be Christians?

Ankerberg: Joan, for people that love Jesus, and yet they don't know, really, who he is, what would you advise them to do, if they're Jehovah's Witness's, realizing that the Watchtower Society has lied to them over here, they don't want to be abandoned to nothingness out here. How do they go? How did you go when you hit this kind of dead end, how did you talk to Jesus at that point?

Cetnar: I really didn't know if I was supposed to talk to Jesus at all. And so I

said, "Father in Heaven, I'm not really sure who Jesus is," and I began reading the Bible, and seeing that what I had been taught.... Of course, when I found out that they were false prophets, I lost trust in the organization, and so I knew that I could trust the Bible and I knew I could trust God, and so I went to the word of God, and I began to see that what I had been taught all my life was not the truth about Jesus. But it took me a while before I found out, but when I did find out that it says that Jesus is the way and the truth and the life, I realized it wasn't an organization, it was an individual that I had to put my trust in, and that He would

never let me down.

Ankerberg: We're going to talk more about getting to know Jesus, who he is, and we're going to talk about that. But we want to leave you with some hope, alright. The fact is that there's a whole lot more that these folks have to say that they've discovered, that this audience has discovered, and you might be in despair, you might be discouraged right now, listening, and realizing some of these things are going to burst your world view, so to speak. Hang in there and don't give up hope. Some of these folks have been there, and they've got good news for you, and it's wrapped up in Jesus and in knowledge about Him that actually comes from that Bible that you've been carrying around. So hang in there with us, and next week we're going to look at one of the key prophecies that have been given and held to, and changed throughout the Watchtower's history. And so I hope that you'll join us next week when we talk about the 1914 generation.

Program 2

Ankerberg: Welcome. We are coming to you from beautiful Pennsylvania, at a very occasion. As you look across this audience, most of the people who are here are Former Jehovah's Witness, or they have family

members that are JW's right now. And on stage we have four former Jehovah's Witnesses.

David, let's start with you this week. The JW's have this neat little thing called "New Light." That is when God is supposed to speak through the Watchtower organization, and it's a theocratic society, that God rules through them and they're the ones, and you guys had to do what the boys in Brooklyn said. Alright?

Now, the fact is that when they said something, and then they wanted to change that slightly in the name of God, they called that what?

Reed: New light.

Ankerberg: New light. That's a neat phrase.

Reed: New truth.

Ankerberg: What does it actually mean, and how did it work?

Reed: Well, we would wait anxiously for each new issue of the Watchtower or Awake magazine. And when we got a new issue, we'd look very quickly for something new in it. Also, at our conventions, especially the large conventions in the summer time, we would hang on every word of the speaker, waiting for some new information that was different from what we had been taught before.

Ankerberg: Goodness. What was the new light that came on this thing that you called the "1914 Generation Prophecy". That's a real mouthful there, Lorri, what does that all mean?

MacGregor: Basically what this was the generation that saw 1914 would also see Armageddon. But you had to be of an age, we believed in the 60's that you would comprehend the events of 1914, the world wars and so on.

Ankerberg: Alright. Slow that down, because it's not familiar to us that are not JW's. A lot of you guys, you know these words here, but the fact is Armageddon. What did Armageddon mean?

MacGregor: Well, Armageddon was the great fiery battle, the end of the world, when Jehovah God would come and zap everybody except JW's.

Ankerberg: Alright. And that was supposed to happen when?

MacGregor: Well, it was supposed to happen within the generation from 1914. So in order to understand the events then, you had to be born around the turn of the century. And of course this is why 1975

looked so good, but when people began to getting really long in the tooth, you know, they had sort of rethink this.

Ankerberg: David, what have you got there?

Reed: Well, I've got the Awake magazine. The Watchtower put that prophecy in each Awake magazine between 1988 and the end of 1995. And specifically they said, "This magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world, before the generation that saw the events of

1914 passes away." That was repeated over and over again every Awake magazine.

And

the important point is that it said it was the Creator's promise, and it said that this would happen before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passed away.

Ankerberg: So they were really nailing it down that God said this?

Reed: Really. Yes.

Cetnar: Every Awake magazine after November 8th will have a changed mast

head. And it says in there "The Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things." No reference to the 1914 generation any more.

Ankerberg: So they changed it

Cetnar: They sure did. They changed the Creator's promise. They can't do that.

Ankerberg: Yeah, Duane, can you actually change the Creator's promise?

Magnani: Well, if you're the Watchtower

Bible and Tract Society. It seems like they have that authority, because it's been a regular thing over the last 100 years or so with prophecies. But the problem is that even though, every time this happens the Watchtower Tower comes up with an excuse, you know, such as, we really didn't exactly say it, people inferred that we said it, or nobody's perfect, and we were just trying, and we really wanted these things to happen.

In fact, they really did say that this was God who actually said this, in fact one of the strongest position points that they made on this is in this May 15, 1984 Watchtower which shows a bunch of older folks from the turn of the century who were part of this generation, and of course the heading is "1914, the Generation That Will Not Pass Away." Interestingly, on pages 6 and 7 there is this quote, John, which kind of sums up the whole thing, I think. It says, "Jehovah's prophetic word, through Jesus Christ, is 'this generation of 1914 will by no means pass away until all these things occur.

' Luke 21:32. And Jehovah, who is the source of inspired and unfailing prophecy will bring about the fulfillment." So you can't say it any stronger. They said God said it, He didn't, so they are false prophets.

Ankerberg: Now, why are we bringing this thing up. Why is this so important?

Magnani: God forbids false prophecy. He condemns false prophecy. He says false prophecy is something not of his people. And he warns his people about false prophets. And that's why I left JW's. I truly believed that if I left school in 1973 and I didn't pursue my law career, that within 18 months I would be in paradise, and I believed

that, because the Watchtower organization stated that in their magazines.

Ankerberg: And then it didn't happen. What happened to you, Duane?

Magnani: Praise God!

Ankerberg: Why do you say praise God?

Magnani: Well, I'll tell you what happened. Joan Cetnar's wonderful husband, Bill, one day shared with me first of all, that I was not in the truth. And the way he shared it was the types of things we're talking about today, John: false prophecies of the organization. One after the other, and many of the other lies of the organization. And so my whole foundation crumbled. What was left was an open ear to hear Jesus Christ. At that point in time I could hear him, and instead of knocking on doors, he knocked on my heart.

Ankerberg: So what you're saying is that hitting that brick wall of a false prophecy, that this started to bring you to the true knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Magnani: Exactly.

Ankerberg: Alright. We're going to take a break, and we're going to come back and we're going to talk about this thing of what do you do when you see that the Watchtower Society has straight out lied in their publications: you go toward suicide, you give up hope, you realize you may lose your family, if you make a decision here. Joan, it cost you a fortune, millions of dollars. We're going to talk about it. These folks on stage have gone through it, so if you're a JW, you stick with us. We've got a

lot to talk to you about. Hang in there.

BREAK

Ankerberg: Alright, we're back, and we're here at a convention full of people that have

been a part of the Watchtower Society, they've been JW's, and then decided to leave, or they have family members that are still in the Watchtower Society. And on stage we have four former JW's. And I'd like to come to a former elder, the guy that actually did the preaching and teaching in the Kingdom Hall. And David, this thing of false prophecy, it's so hard for that are not JW's to understand this, but I mean, there's a whole bunch of these statements about the end of the world, or Jesus coming back, or all kinds of things. Tell us some of the things you used to teach and believe yourself.

Reed: Yes, the 1914 generation failure was just their most recent prophetic failure. When Charles Taze Russell began pushing

Zion's Watchtower in 1879, he was teaching that Christ had returned invisibly in 1874, and there would be a 40 year harvest period leading up to the end of the world in 1914. When that didn't happen, his disappointed followers just came to expect that 1918 would see the end. When that failed they were led to believe that 1925 would be the end of the world, along with the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. After that they began looking to the 1940's. They believed that World War II was the beginning of Armageddon, and that it would continue and end up in the end of the world,

When I became a witness, when I started studying in 1968, the teaching was that the world would end around October 4 or 5 1975. And I had close friends who sold their business and went out with the money

they had left, speaking door-to-door full

time. And I myself neglected dental care, because 1975 was going to be the end of the world. So this organization didn't just make a mistake on the 1914 generation, they have a long history as false prophets.

Ankerberg: You know we've got people in New York and Los Angeles that are in these condominiums and high rises that are JW's that are listening in, okay? And they're saying, You know, I wonder if he's right? You see, if you're right, what does this mean?

Reed: Well, it means that the Watchtower fits the Bible's definition of a false prophet. Deuteronomy 18 says that a prophet who speaks that something will happen, and then it doesn't happen, and he speaks in God's name, he is a false prophet, he is condemned, and you shouldn't follow such a person. So the thing that this means is that the JW's need to look somewhere else to find a way to God, not to that organization.

Ankerberg: And not only that, but the thing that you're saying, the reason that it's so deadly, if we could use that term is that if they actually can go back and can find these books that we're quoting, it's in there.

Reed: Absolutely. Every one of these, they can find in their own Kingdom Hall library, or in their own book shelves.

Ankerberg: Lorri, you've got another one that sounds unfamiliar to us that are not JW's, called the doctrine about the sheep and the goats. What in the world is that all about?

MacGregor: Well, again, it's misinterpretation, probably, of Matthew 25. The sheep are, of course, God's people, and the goats are the unbelievers, or those that won't receive the Gospel. So the JW's consider themselves the sheep. And as the sheep, they went out door-to-door, because, this wasn't just knocking on doors to count time, but we really believed we were doing this biblical separating work. If we knocked on a door and the guy was rude and said "I'm not listening to this" and shut the door in our face, then Jehovah would look down from heaven and he would say, "There's a goat. He's not going to make it through Armageddon. He'll never be a JW. Gone is his life. And so we really believed that we were operating under angelic protection. We were told that the angels were watching us. How they would have loved to go and do the separating work of the sheep and the goats. But no, we were the privileged ones to go and do this very important Bible work of the last days. Well, it was sure a let down for those that worked their whole lives

Ankerberg: I was just listening to what you were saying here in terms of this thing of going door-to-door. You had to go door-to-door because unless you,... if you did go door-to-door what would happen to you?

MacGregor: Well, Jehovah God would look at your service report, of course, and see how much time you had put into the door-to-door work, and how many Bible Studies you were conducting, and apparently he has some sort of system of brownie points. So maybe your works

would be good enough to get you through Armageddon, maybe they wouldn't.

Ankerberg: Let's explain to the folks that

are watching in real quickly here, and maybe, David, you can help me out on this thing. There are three classes in terms of who gets what in terms of the end results here. Go through the three classes in Jehovah's Witnesses in terms of salvation here.

Reed: Well, JW's believe 144,000 will go to heaven, and out of that number...

Ankerberg: Only 144,000.

Reed: Only 144,000. In fact, most of those are people from ancient Bible history, and so only about 8,000 of the people who go to the Kingdom Hall today will get into heaven. There are 15 million people going to Kingdom Hall. They believe that out of those, the ones who are being fully obedient and comply with everything that the organization tells them, they'll live in a paradise earth when the earth is wiped, all the rest of the people are wiped out from the earth.

Ankerberg: But they only get to go to paradise earth if they go door-to-door, right?

Cetnar: Right

Reed: Oh, yes. If they're not going door-to-door, they're not witnessing for God, so they're not a witness.

Ankerberg: And then if you get into that millennial kingdom, that's not a sure thing

either, because then you've got to perform over there, and then maybe you get to go on beyond that right?

Reed: That's right.

Ankerberg: And then the third class is what?

Reed: Well, the third class would be everybody else in the world: people who are Baptist, Pentecostals, Catholics...

Ankerberg: The bad guys.

Reed: And they are going to all be just totally wiped out and destroyed.

Ankerberg: Or some of them get another chance, isn't that right? Some of them?

Reed: They believe that those who die before Armageddon will get resurrected during that 1000 year period, and they'll be under the rule of the Watchtower, and if they conform at that time, they'll be able to earn everlasting life.

Ankerberg: Was it good news to hear that Jesus said that "Whosoever will may come?"

Lorri: It's wonderful news.

Ankerberg: You know, nobody is excluded from heaven. It's not just a special club for 144,000. But I mean everybody gets to go if they want to believe in Christ.

Cetnar: That's right.

Reed: Amen. That's one of the verses we tended to gloss over. We didn't focus on that one.

Cetnar: It wasn't for us.

Ankerberg: Joan, how has this sheep and goats thing changed in the Watchtower?

Cetnar: Well, no longer are the sheep and goats being separated by the Witness work. They are pointing to the future when Jesus himself as the king will separate the sheep and the goats. Got to say I think they are closer to right. But this is a terrible let-down for these people who have been working all their lives thinking that they were the ones doing the work of God.

Ankerberg: Duane, in terms of folks that are in the Watchtower, what's the current state of Armageddon?

Magnani: Well, that's a very tough question. Recently the organization said that the JW's could see the end of their preaching work by the year 2000. We're talking not to far from now. But they changed it immediately and said that, basically, they're not quite sure. So right now JW's are a little nervous. They don't know how long this is going to go on. And as a former JW I can tell you that is a very, very unhappy feeling. One thing you are looking forward to is Armageddon, because paradise is on the other side. So they just don't know.

Ankerberg: Isn't there something, Lorri, that we want people to understand is that, look, God doesn't operate this way.

MacGregor: You've got that right.

Ankerberg: I mean, sum this up in about a minute and a half here. How does God operate?

What's the good news, what did you find out. Don't leave people in despair that are out there saying, hey I can check out my Watchtowers and I can check out all these false prophecies and realize that we were lied

to. I mean, that's not an upper, ok. What's the upper here?

MacGregor: Well, the upper is that there is a condition called grace. And grace means that you don't work for it, you don't have to have a bunch of apprehensions: have I done enough, given enough, gone door-to-door, will Jehovah find me worthy, am I loyal enough to the organization? Maybe I saw someone smoking and I didn't turn them in. Is that going to get me a black mark? You know, we were in a constant state of apprehension, but how wonderful to just read the word of God, I don't mean the distorted one the Watchtower Society put out, but I mean the real word of God that

says we can know that we have eternal life. Not that we might earn it, or it might come some day, pie in the sky by and by. But once we receive Christ, "as many as received him" past tense, to those he's given this wonderful hope of eternal life. And I'm so glad to know that I know that I know that I know I am secure in Christ and he will never leave me nor forsake me.

Ankerberg: David, added to that the fact is, how did you start a relationship with the

Jesus that you came to realize the Bible was really presenting to you?

Reed: Well, I think that as a JW I was afraid to even talk to Jesus, because we were told that you just pray to Jehovah in Jesus name. But by reading about the account of Stephen being stoned to death, I saw that he turned to Jesus and actually appealed to him directly. Now the witness try to dismiss that. They say he was having a vision. But he had the vision in the Sanhedrin. He was dragged outside the city of Jerusalem, and he was

stoned. This was quite a while after the vision. He turned to Jesus. He spoke to Jesus. When I saw that in the Bible I realized that I too could talk to Jesus and he would hear my appeal.

Ankerberg: Would you lead the folks in a prayer that might start their conversation and their relationship with Jesus if they'd like to pray along with you. Would you pray for them?

Reed: Sure thing. Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your son to save us. Thank you father for making the provision that we don't have to work to earn our salvation, we don't have to be in the right organization to be saved. We just have to turn to your son. Thank you, Father, for recognizing me as a sinner, helping me to see myself as a sinner, and that I can't save myself. So I trust now in your son Jesus to save me. And I commit myself to follow his lead and his rulership as my leader, my Lord. I trust, Father, that you have given me salvation through the name and the blood of your son, Jesus. Amen.

Ankerberg: Now, one of the things that, if you prayed that prayer, that you recognize is you may be disfellowshipped out of our Kingdom Hall. And if you are a non-JW and you don't know what that's like, you need to tune in next week. We're going to talk about disfellowshipping and the tragic result this can have in families, and the pressure this puts on JW's that are listening to us in this program and might want to look at Christ in a different way. They may want to look at the New Testament and question what they've been taught before. But if they do, it may cost them their family, it may cost them their job, and it may cost them some other things.

And that's what we're going to talk about next week, so I hope that you'll join us.

Program 3

“Changes in the Watchtower Society”

Ankerberg: Welcome! We're here in beautiful Pennsylvania and we're here with a group of folks that the majority of them used to be Jehovah's Witnesses. This is an Ex-Jehovah's Witness Convention. And these folks along the way came to information that caused them to leave the Watchtower Society, and if you'ss listen to our program today, you'll understand why. Maybe you are a Jehovah's Witness and you want to see if they're telling the truth, and you've thought about these things yourself.

On stage we have four former Jehovah's Witnesses and, folks, we're glad that you're here. Duane, you grew up in the Watchtower Society. You are now considered to be an expert in court cases across our country concerning the beliefs and practices of the Jehovah's Witnesses. What we want to zero in on is, what the Jehovah's Witnesses held concerning education. You were going toward a practicing or a law career and you were in school and you didn't finish it because of the Watchtower Society. How in the world can that be? What is their policy?

Magnani: Well, particularly at that time—this was about 1975, John—Jehovah's Witnesses believed that the end was coming very soon, as they still do, but they had a year at that time. 1975 was the end. At that time they were saying that, why would you spend your time going and getting a long education when you didn't have much time to actually have a career? In other words, you couldn't really fulfill the time. And isn't it better to educate yourself in the

new world in a paradise condition than it is right now? And not only that, who would you be going to school with? You'd be going to school with non-Jehovah's Witnesses and that might infiltrate, you know, your faith in the Watchtower organization's teachings.

Ankerberg: So the policy was basically, don't get a higher education.

Magnani: Basically. It was very, very difficult for a Jehovah's Witness at that time to pursue a higher education.

Ankerberg: We have a Harvard student here. You were going to Harvard and as a student at Harvard, you still were not immune to believing what the Watchtower was presenting. Can you tell us how that happened and then when you actually got into it, it caused you to leave Harvard? How could that be, David?

Reed: Well, even though I was well educated, I was biblically illiterate. And so when Jehovah's Witnesses gave me a guided tour through the Bible, I didn't know I wasn't seeing the real Gospel message but just certain Scriptures they pulled out of context. So I did fall for the Witness teachings. Now, this took place at a time when I was on a leave of absence from Harvard University and I could have gone back to school. I was scheduled to go back. I would have received my Harvard scholarship and my national merit scholarship both reinstated when I went back. But because Jehovah's Witnesses taught us that the end was coming very closely and a college education wasn't appropriate, I chose not to go back to

Harvard University.

Ankerberg: Lorrie, How did this policy on education affect you?

Lorrie: Well, I became a Jehovah's Witness out of high school, I was already enrolled for a degree in honors English and Latin, and the elders soon approached me and said to me that I would be wasting 4 years of my life because the important work of separating the sheep and goats was going on and I had to get out there and knock on doors, and they suggested that I take a quick course & learn how to type so I could support myself while I did their important work. How sad that I not only missed out on my university education, but now I find out that all the years I knocked on doors, I wasn't really separating sheep and goats anyway

Ankerberg: And Joan, how did this affect you?

Cetnar: Well, being raised in a Watchtower family—a fourth generation witness—it was not even presented to me as an option when I graduated from high school, although I was an honor student and my principal was appalled that I was not going on to higher education. My parents said, “No way. The end is too close!” Even in 1952 the end was too close. And so my options were full-time service—either go to Bethel, Watchtower Headquarters, go into missionary work, or go full-time pioneer work. I chose to go to Bethel. So it wasn't even an option for me.

Ankerberg: Where is it at right now, Duane? What is the current teaching on

education for Jehovah's Witnesses?

Magnani: Well, there's been a change. In 1992, apparently the organization realized that Jehovah's Witnesses couldn't make enough money in some of the more menial jobs without some higher education to support themselves part-time so that they could go full-time knocking on doors or working in some other capacity in the organization. So since 1992, they are allowed “some” higher education.

Ankerberg: Alright, now is this significant with your guys that were under the old regime, in a sense, how does that hit you right now, in terms of even talking about this charge.

Ankerberg: Alright, now is this significant with your guys that were under the old regime, in a sense, how does that hit you right now, in terms of even talking about this charge.

Magnani: Well, to me it's fantastic because if I'm a JW, I get an opportunity to learn what other people believe. JW's live in some kind of semi-communal atmosphere, all their friends are JW's, all their associations, so you really only get one world view. If you get out into college, you can learn things. And some of them aren't the greatest things, but at least you get to meet other people and see other ideas.

Ankerberg: You think the Watchtower's afraid of that?

Magnani: Deathly Afraid.

Ankerberg: So what's going to happen?

Magnani: Well, I'm already seeing the signs in the literature that they recognize they've made a mistake on this. And so I think it's probably going to be reversed, which is not unusual for the Watchtower ?????.

Ankerberg: I think we have to say to that as you have all decided to leave the Watchtower Society, you have left it, and you have decided to embrace Jesus Christ. That once you realized the truth about Jesus Christ and come into a relationship with Him you don't have to fear what you learn at the secular institutions, you don't have to worry about God messing up on saying false prophecy, you don't have to worry that what you are going to learn in higher education is going to rip your faith away. The fact is that God has His evidence that's there. But does this, talk to the JW's that are out there in terms of the truth question. I mean, why are we bringing this thing up about education? What's the significance about this?

Cetnar: It's the change that's been made. If you're getting your information from God, as they claim, and this is the truth, why is this truth changing even though it's only about education? It's controlling the lives of these people. They cannot think for themselves whether or not they want to go to college. I had no choice. Jehovah's organization said, "No!" And I could not question that because that came "straight from God."

Ankerberg: Duane, you've also done this

on the military. What is the policy on military? What has it been in the past?

Magnani: Well, let me read you something that is fascinating, I think. It's from the history of Jehovah's Witnesses out of an early *Watchtower* magazine statement by Charles Taze Russell, the founder. Now, get this: "There could be nothing against our conscience in going into the Army.

Wherever we would go, we would take the Lord with us, the Captain of our salvation; and wherever we would go, we could find opportunities to serve him and his cause."

They go on to say that, of course, you can't shoot anybody because that would be against God's law; but you could go out there and make yourself a target.... But you could go. You could be in the military at this point in time, early on.

Ankerberg: And that has changed now.

Magnani: That has radically changed.

Ankerberg: How so?

Magnani: After about 1918, Jehovah's Witnesses actually at that time had a split in their movement. Some people took a firm stand against World War I. Others decided that they would go in the military. And eventually what happened is, all Jehovah's Witnesses were forbidden from entering military service—even working in alternative service like, you know, at a hospital or doing charity-type work for the government.

Ankerberg: And again, what we've got to tell the people that are watching in saying why this is significant is because the Watchtower is really "God's spokesman on earth." What the Watchtower says is

basically what God is saying. God is speaking directly to the people across earth through the Watchtower, so when God says, “Hey, you shouldn’t be a part of the military,” or “You should be a part of the military,” and then changes His mind, you say, “Hey, is God changing His mind? Is He flip-flopping back and forth on this stuff?”

Now, sometimes they’ve gotten away with this because the length of time. Some of you guys did not know some of the things they had said before you had gotten into it.

You just cam into it, you just had this little slice of History right here, you were cruising right along, and you believed that God was speaking through the Society then all of a sudden you hit a brick wall on some of these things and you started researching it and you realized you have a history of how many years on this thing David?

Reed: Oh, it goes back, as Duane mentioned it goes all the way back to the 1st world war, they were changing the doctrine on that point.

Ankerberg: So, this goes back to all of these years of time, and the only way you can check this out is to read the literature.

Why didn’t you guys read the literature, you know, while you were in it?

Cetnar: Too busy with the “new light.”

MacGregor: John, you don’t realize, five meetings a week; having to make up your quotas of magazines; having to spend so many hours out in the service; having to prepare for all these meetings, studying your

Watchtower, reading the things assigned, going to the theocratic ministry school. We could barely breathe when were weren’t doing the current stuff

Cetnar: And that’s old “light.” Why would you want to go back there and find out what they said? We’ve got the latest “light.”

Ankerberg: But how about contradictory “light”? It’s not old “light,” it’s contradictory. I mean, it’s black and white here.

Reed: That’s what we ran into in 1996. The

May 1st *Watchtower* of that year announce “new truth” that young men among Jehovah’s Witnesses could take alternative service work assigned by their draft board. They could go to work in a hospital instead of going to prison. But the amazing thing about it is, a former governing body member, Raymond Franz, wrote a book exposing the inner workings of the leadership and he points out there that ever since 1978, a majority of the governing body wanted to allow this to happen. They wanted to let their young men work in hospitals instead of going to prison. But they needed a two-thirds majority to present it as a new truth in the *Watchtower*. And that two-thirds couldn’t be achieved until a couple of the older members died and the membership changed, and finally, in 1996, they came out with this new truth. In the meantime, countless numbers of Jehovah’s Witness young men went to prison and had their lives ruined.

Ankerberg: So here, in the name of God, you have flip-flopping sentences and statements and advice of how to live your

life. People followed it and got ruined in the process. And you came to realize that this was not really God's society. This was not where you needed to be.

And then, when you made the decision that you had to question it, or that you wanted to look up some information and you wanted to check out some things, you were encompassing another problem, namely that if you did, even while you were researching it, asking sincere questions from the bottom of your heart, the people in the Kingdom Hall, if they thought you're going too far, they could disfellowship you—which would mean....well, we're going to find out what that means. We're going to take a

break and we'll come right back. Stick with us.

[BREAK]

Ankerberg: All right we're back. We're here in a convention of ex-Jehovah's Witnesses, and that is, these folks that you are looking at right here. The majority of them were in the Watchtower Society, they know what it is to be a JW and then they left. And they left for the reasons that we're talking about. And we have four former Jehovah's Witnesses on stage. And you might find this hard to believe but if a Jehovah's Witness actually started to question what he was being taught in his Kingdom Hall, if he was questioning what he was reading in his *Watchtower* magazine, that caused him another problem.

David, you faced this thing. It's called "Disfellowshipping." What in the world is "Disfellowshipping?"

Reed: Well, "Disfellowshipping" means being put on trial in front of a judicial

committee of Elders. And they order that you're disfellowshipped, you're shunned. That means the Witnesses who are friends of yours can't talk to you anymore. Your family who are Witnesses can't have you into their home. If a Witness sees you on the street, they can't even say "Hello" to you. I experienced that myself because when I questioned things at the Kingdom Hall in my talks, they wouldn't let me give talks anymore. When I questioned from the floor at a microphone....

Ankerberg: Hey, you were an Elder; you were the preacher at one time and then the fact is, you started doing too many questions and so you were parked down there in the congregation and then you weren't even allowed to ask questions after a while.

Reed: That's right. And so I began writing articles on some of those questions. When they found that out, they put me on trial and disfellowshipped me.

Ankerberg: Now, what did that mean to you in terms of family, friends, work, the whole shooting match?

Reed: Well, in my case, my family members had already been disfellowshipped. My mother and my sister were caught in the change in the smoking doctrine, and when they ruled smoking a disfellowshipped offense, they were both thrown out of the organization, so most of my family was out. The rest of my family happily didn't cut me off, but instead left along with me.

Ankerberg: Lorri, did that happen to you?

MacGregor: My experience was, I asked honest-hearted questions of the Elders. I

wanted to know how they explained that Jesus was Michael because I got to the point I just couldn't see it anymore. One of the Elders banged his fist on the Bible and said, "If the Watchtower Society says Jesus Christ is Michael the Archangel, then that's who he is and don't ask any more questions!"

The other one said, "If you continue to pursue this questioning, you will be disfellowshipped."

And they were as good as their word. I continued to ask questions and they did disfellowship me. So when I was disfellowshipped, I thought it was kind of cute—the announcement they made at the Kingdom Hall finally was, I was disfellowshipped for "conduct unbecoming a Christian." I guess it's unbecoming of a Christian to ask honest-hearted questions.

After I was disfellowshipped, not too long after, I was walking along the street and two former brothers were holding up the magazines and I knew them very well, had known them for many years. I went up to them to say "Hello," and to my amazement, their formerly friendly faces contorted with hatred and they turned away from me. And so I had no choice. I had my two small children with me. I just walked further on up the street. What I didn't know was that a woman who was studying with Jehovah's Witnesses was coming along the street behind and she saw them spit on the ground behind me. That's how "Christian love" can

turn to hate if the organization decides that you are disfellowshipped.

The happy ending is that she discontinued her study with Jehovah's Witnesses and came to Christ later on.

Ankerberg: Let me ask—this is just a

general question to any of you on the stage, somebody in the audience said to me that when her daughter was disfellowshipped, she was a JW in good standing, and she was told that she could not pray for her own daughter who was now wayward. Is that true? How about the other thing, if that's true, if you couldn't even pray, that caught her attention. Is it...can't God do something about these people that go wayward and have questions? The other one is were you taught to actually "hate" the person that was disfellowshipped? David?

Reed: Yes. Disfellowshipped people are viewed as pretty much the lowest of the low. The absolute lowest are the ones that are called apostates who go on and actually go on and speak against the Watchtower organization. And, of course I...

MacGregor: We all qualified!

Ankerberg: What did you do when you saw that Jesus in the New Testament said that we're to love not only our friends, but we're to love even our enemies, not hate anybody?

Reed: That's what helped my wife and me to wake up. We saw changes in this disfellowshipping doctrine. In 1974 they said that Jesus wouldn't treat a man of the nations or a tax collector that badly. We thought that was great. Well, in 1981 they reversed the teaching and told us to go ahead and hate those people and not talk to them anymore—exactly what they said was unChristlike before. And that helped my wife and myself to start reexamining our beliefs.

Ankerberg: Duane, many times you have

seen the disastrous effects of disfellowshipping in the lives of people. Give me a couple of illustrations.

Magnani: Well, as David was talking about, the saddest thing, I think, in a disfellowshipping or shunning situation is that a parent can actually hate their own child. I had a situation I can recall when a young girl came over to our place and she had been kicked out of her home by her mother because the mother's other daughter had left Jehovah's Witnesses voluntarily and this young 14-year-old kid wanted to know why her sister left. She loved her sister.

Her mother said, "You can't go over there! Don't go over there. There will be dire consequences."

She went anyway because she was so curious. When she was at her sister's house, the mother had a postman deliver a Death Certificate to the child. A 14-year-old kid. Al right? And I met with this little girl and we talked about Jesus and she could see the other side. That's the good part of it. But I don't know if they ever got together again, John.

Ankerberg: Yes. Horror stories, just horror stories, and yet. Joan, when I heard your story the first time, I don't think anything's ever topped it. You broke my heart when I heard how you and Bill, here you were up at the

Headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, and Bill was answering questions for the Watchtower for a whole quarter of the United States. And you are working there and then you started to question, and as a result of your questioning, it split you off from your own wonderful mother and father. Tell us a little bit about that.

Cetnar: Well, we were already married at the time that we actually were disfellowshipped. Actually, he was disfellowshipped first. We were living in a home that my parents owned. He was working for my father. And when we decided that we were not going to make a move to come back to the organization when he was disfellowshipped, they just asked us to leave the house and find another job, because "you're not welcome here anymore." And we ended up in California where, happily, we met the Lord and were saved and came back to Pennsylvania in 1975. What is interesting now is, I live only a half mile away from the home that I was asked to leave. I often see my sister and my mother in the grocery store or in some other store and they don't see me. I was at my father's funeral and it was like I was invisible. People just looked through me because they're obeying the organization feeling that they're obeying God. And I love them. I love my mother. I pray for her and my sister, and all the rest of my family that are still Jehovah's Witnesses because I know they are deceived and that they just need to know that the organization is not going to come through with the promises that it has made for their salvation. There is only one way and that's Jesus, not an organization.

Ankerberg: In essence, what you have is an organization that in the name of God is giving false teaching and to cover it up and protect that, the people that ask questions that might discover that are kicked out. And you're to hate those people and you're told not to talk to them, not to fellowship with them—that's why it's called disfellowshipping. And in terms of your mom and dad, you see them in the store....

Cetnar: It has been 35 years...I've been in this home since 1975 and none of my family has ever set foot in my house. That's mind control.

Ankerberg: That's mind control and for the person that's facing that, Joan, how in the world did you face that and how do you keep on facing that? How do you bear up underneath that? Where did you get the strength?

Cetnar: Well, at first it was strength that we derived from one another because we did not know Jesus at that time. We just knew that we were going to stay together no matter what. But when we did come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, I forgave everything that ever happened. I could not hold that against them anymore. And He gave me a love in my heart for them and for all Jehovah's Witnesses. I can't hate them.

Ankerberg: David, wrap this up for us. If somebody wants to know how to start a relationship with Jesus for real, they've been reading even their Interlinear of their New World Translation or their New World Translation itself and God Himself has shown them even in that distorted version the fact of the truth about Christ—that He is actually God—don't understand it, don't comprehend all of that, but the fact is, He's God, He died and paid for our sins, and He is offering Heaven to everybody, how would you suggest to somebody to come into a relationship with Him that's scared to death out there listening to us right now?

Reed: Well, I think they have to stop looking to the Watchtower and start looking

to the Bible. I shunned my own mother when the organization told me to do that, even though the Bible said "honor your father and your mother." Witnesses have to learn to put the Bible above the Watchtower and by putting the Bible above the Watchtower, they can see that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Their organization called itself "the truth." Well, Jehovah's Witnesses aren't in the truth. The Truth is Jesus and they need to transfer their loyalty from that organizational headquarters to Jesus Christ because He will lead them to the Father.

Ankerberg: Yes. Put your trust in Him. He's the Savior.

Next week we're going to talk about blood transfusions and how this has actually killed people in the name of truth. And we're also going to find out—if you're a Jehovah's Witness, you're going to find out that even that—you might have sacrificed a son or a daughter in years past, you'll be shocked to find out that is changing as well. We're going to talk about that next week.

Program 4
“Blood Transfusions”

Ankerberg: Today on the John Ankerberg Show, you will meet four former Jehovah’s Witnesses who will share with you the startling evidence that proved to them that they had been deceived by their own religious organization. David Reed became an atheist in His teens, went to Harvard University and after a year left in a determined search for God. Jehovah’s Witnesses befriended him and he joined the Watchtower, but over time reading his Bible and examining the claims of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, he realized that he had been deceived. He left the Watchtower organization and put his belief in Jesus and His Savior. Lorri MacGregor became a member of the Jehovah’s Witnesses at age eighteen and later almost died refusing a blood transfusion. When she began to honestly question what the Watchtower taught, she was excommunicated and cut off. Eventually her study of the Bible brought her to true belief in Jesus Christ. Duane Magnani was a child of Jehovah’s Witness parents. He left the Watchtower and later was recruited as an adult; eventually the evidence led him to leave the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Duane is now recognized as a fully qualified expert in court cases on beliefs and practices and has testified in over 110 child custody cases. Joan Cetnar was raised in a Jehovah’s Witness home and was one of the heirs to the S.S> Kresge fortune. Joan married a Jehovah’s Witness leader and joined him in Brooklyn Headquarters in New York. Shw was able to observe first hand how the president and other leaders of the Jehovah’s Witnesses lived. She left the Watchtower

Society and became a Christian when she realized the Watchtower was not teaching her what the Bible said. Her convictions separated her from her family and cost her an inheritance which would have made her a millionaire. We invite you to listen as our guests present the evidence they discovered concerning the false teachings and claim of the Jehovah’s Witnesses organization.

Ankerberg: Welcome. We’re here in a beautiful mountain retreat–Blue Mountain Christian Retreat in Pennsylvania. And we’re with people, the majority of whom were Jehovah’s Witnesses and left the Watchtower Society for reasons that we’re talking about. They are now called “Witnesses Now for Jesus.” On stage we have four former Jehovah’s Witnesses that left the Watchtower Society because of some of the things that we’re talking about and put their faith in Jesus Christ, the Jesus of the Bible. If you’re a Jehovah’s Witness, I’d like you to stay tuned and listen today because what they have to say is very important, especially concerning the doctrine the Jehovah’s Witnesses have been espousing for years concerning blood transfusions.

David, I’m going to start with you on this program. We’re all familiar with the untimely deaths of innocent people at Jonestown and Waco, Texas, and “Heaven’s Gate” in San Diego, so people across our country, they’ve got this word c-u-l-t, cult, as a real dirty word here. Okay? And how do Jehovah’s Witnesses compare with these other groups in terms of being dangerous and dangerous as a cult?

Reed: Well, those other groups made the headlines because you saw large numbers of dead bodies that could be scanned on the TV

cameras. Jehovah's Witnesses dying, refusing blood transfusions or organ transplants or vaccinations, are dying one at a time, usually in a very private situation without making the news. But occasionally the Watchtower has brought them together. On May 22, 1994 in the *Awake!* Magazine,

they show the picture of about 26 young people on the front cover and they called these "Youths Who Put God First." What it turns out, though, is that these young people died refusing blood transfusions. On page 2 of this same May 22, 1994 *Awake!* Magazine it says concerning these young people, it says, "In former times thousands of youths died for putting God first. They are still doing it, only today the drama is played out in hospitals and courtrooms with blood transfusions the issue."

So, the Watchtower gives us some idea of the numbers of people dying refusing blood transfusions.

Ankerberg: Lorri, you were almost a statistic because of the doctrine of blood transfusion. Tell me why.

MacGregor: Well, I was a young mother in childbirth with my first child. I had complications followed by a massive hemorrhage, and they told me in order to live I had to take blood. I ever had the nurses there in tears begging me not to let my child be an orphan and to please take the blood. But I stood firm. I was a Jehovah's Witness. I would have laid down my life for that organization. I took four units of blood substitute and somehow I pulled through and I lived. I was really in a near-death situation. I was a big hero at the Kingdom Hall. I was held up as an example. People phoned me and said what

a lovely example of faith it was that I had nearly died at this time. But you know, it was eight years before my blood returned to full normal—that's how far down I was. It was really a very difficult time in my life.

Ankerberg: Duane, a lot of us that are not

Jehovah's Witnesses, we don't get it. What in the world is the Watchtower Society teaching about blood transfusions? Where did this start? Charles Taze Russell didn't have this prohibition, did he?

Magnani: No. The Watchtower organization under Russell did not refuse blood transfusions. But it's just another example of changing "new light." The "new light" would be superior.

Ankerberg: So when did it first come in, then, this vaccination thing?

Magnani: That was in the 1920s and developed through the 30s and 40s and actually became quite crisis, particularly during the World War II period when you had large amounts of men isolated from others in the encampments.

Ankerberg: How did it start via vaccination? I don't follow. How did that start?

Magnani: Well, the Jehovah's Witnesses believed that the serums from the vaccinations were poisonous to the body and so all of this results from a lack of medical understanding.

Ankerberg: Okay, so they tied that poison thing to—what was the next step?

Magnani: The next step was injecting anything into your body and blood was the next step.

Ankerberg: Okay. And so when did they come out with their full-blown thing on blood transfusions?

Magnani: In 1945 they started teaching that blood transfusions were a violation of God's law. By 1961 it was now a disfellowshipping offense so that if you got a blood transfusion in a dire emergency or you allowed your child to get a blood transfusion, you were kicked out of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Ankerberg: Duane, how many people died because of this doctrine?

Magnani: They don't tabulate it, but in talking with literally thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses over a long period of time now and hearing the testimonies of people, it has got to be in the thousands, John.

Ankerberg: Okay, but now you're telling me also—and maybe some of the Jehovah's Witnesses listening in right now don't realize that you're saying things are starting to change on this doctrine. So here's Lorri who almost dies upholding this doctrine, and all of a sudden the thing is starting to slip. It's starting to change. What's happening?

Magnani: Well, there's an actual bombshell as to what has actually happened without the Jehovah's Witnesses realizing it. In 1980...up until 1980, I should say, the Society had forbid organ transplants because they considered it actually cannibalism—taking someone's body into your body. All right? But by 1980,

apparently so many Jehovah's Witnesses had died for lack of the medical care that they could have received with an organ transplant that they changed the teaching. Now, what's interesting and that the Jehovah's Witnesses are now beginning to understand is that an organ transplant contains whole blood. In fact, in the *Watchtower* of May 15, 1984, it's

pointed out...the question is pointed out to Jehovah's Witnesses: "Could a Christian accept a bone marrow transplant"—now, get this—"since blood is made in the marrow?"

In other words, when you get a bone marrow transplant, you are receiving another person's blood and it's like a time bomb. That bone marrow is there for only one purpose and that's to produce human blood in your body—another person's human blood. So when you receive a bone marrow transplant—and that's allowed by Jehovah's Witnesses organization and all other types of transplants—you are receiving whole blood. Jehovah's Witnesses are receiving blood today.

Ankerberg: Let me see if I've got this right. In the name of God, you can't have a blood transfusion, but you can have an organ transplant. And you can have bone marrow stuff done. Okay. Now, Joan, something else is happening in Bulgaria. Bring us up to speed here.

Cetnar: Okay. In Bulgaria the Watchtower organization wanted to have their charter removed as a religious organization there and because they would not allow blood transfusions and they would disfellowship if someone received a blood transfusion, the Human Rights Commission took the Watchtower to court basically and said, "If

you don't change this, then your charter will not be renewed." And so they essentially changed it that now it was up to the individual to decide if he wanted a blood transfusion.

Ankerberg: The Watchtower Society itself said that it was now up to the individual in Bulgaria.

Reed: I have the document. This is a document from the European Commission of Human Rights, March 9, 1998. And it contains the voluntary agreement between the Watchtower Society and the government of Bulgaria and in that agreement—I'll read directly from it—the Watchtower said that "Members should have free choice in the matter for themselves and their children without any control or sanction on the part of the association." So that meant Jehovah's Witnesses could choose a blood transfusion and there would be no penalties for making that choice.

Ankerberg: Alright, we're going to take a break and we're going to come back, and, Lorri, you showed me that the charter of the Jehovah's Witnesses was amended and it was amended to say that they had complete legal control of all the Jehovah's Witnesses all over the world, including Bulgaria. So now, when they make this little statement over here that Bulgaria is free to choose, I want you to explain to all the Jehovah's Witnesses that are listening why they're not free to choose here in America. We'll do that right when we come back.

[BREAK]

Ankerberg: We're back and we're talking with a convention full of people that used to

be in the Watchtower Society, the majority of them here, Jehovah's Witnesses. And then, for many of the reasons we're talking about, the evidence showed them that they needed to leave and it cost them a bunch in terms of family and disfellowshipping and all kinds of things.

On stage we have four former Jehovah's Witnesses and we're talking about

the crucial doctrine of blood transfusion that can cost lives of Jehovah's Witnesses here in the United States. And just before we went to break, we found out that Bulgaria has been allowed to choose whether or not they'll have blood transfusions so that their Human Rights Commission there in Europe will not forbid them from existing.

Now, what's interesting about that, Lorri, is you showed me some of the changes in the charter that were brought about and I want to read one little statement in the charter of the Watchtower. It says, "The purposes of this Society are 1.) To act as the servant of, and the legal worldwide governing agency, for that body of Christian persons known as Jehovah's Witnesses." So they're the legal worldwide governing agency. In other words, God is speaking through them not only theocratically but the fact is, legally we're going to tell you what to do here.

Now, Bulgaria had to get permission from the boys in New York at the Watchtower. Now explain to all the Jehovah's Witnesses that are listening in why they can't make up their own mind about whether or not to have a blood transfusion. Why you almost died and nobody said, "Listen, Lorri, we'll let you choose."

MacGregor: Well, wouldn't it be lovely if that was binding on all the rest of the world and Jehovah's Witnesses could really make a choice about blood. Jehovah's Witness leadership thought they were doing something in an obscure little corner of the world before a non-religious commission that nobody would notice anyway, but they forgot about the Internet. The Internet was just buzzing with all this information and many questions were going back and forth.

So what does the Society do when they're confronted with a lie? They throw up a great big smokescreen. I have here a letter from the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society to a person inquiring about what happens in Bulgaria, and here they say, "Does this agreement mean that Jehovah's Witnesses have changed their stand in connection with medical treatment? No." So they're taking the hard line there and they're saying if one refuses to uphold Bible standards, including the Bible standards regarding the misuse of blood, then this may at times lead to the scriptural action of disfellowshipping. So they did it in Bulgaria; it's a matter of record. But, again, here's the justified lie. They say in here that this has always been what they've done and it will be what they continue to do. This has always been their viewpoint. And it hasn't.

Ankerberg: Duane, this is going to have to hit the fan.

Magnani: Yes. You know, it's already causing dissension among Jehovah's Witnesses. In fact, one of the most exciting things about this whole thing—and I couldn't be more excited about this issue because I

think it truly is life and death for people, and in fact it comes down to that for people to make a decision for Jesus Christ—but what's so neat about it is, there was a tract that was just put out by people who are Jehovah's Witnesses. All right? They are Associated for Reform on Blood. It's a diverse group of Witnesses from all kinds of countries, including Elders and former members of hospital liaison committees—those are the agencies that operate from the Watchtower Society with hospitals on blood transfusion issues. And they are now fighting. And

we've been in contact with them. It's a matter of all like-minded people, including Jehovah's Witnesses, to stand up right now particularly for the children of Jehovah's Witnesses who don't have the choice.

Ankerberg: Is the Watchtower in big trouble here? Could they be sued for this thing if they are the legal arm and they're allowing some in another part of the world? Is this going to hit the fan legally?

Magnani: It's going to be interesting to see what happens because obviously you do have different rules for different Jehovah's Witnesses. So as regarding the legal, I can't speak as an attorney on that and I don't want to, but I can say this. I have talked to a lot of doctors about this issue and they are scared because they don't know exactly what the ethical part of this is. What are they supposed to do in a given situation for a person who is unconscious if he's a Jehovah's Witness? Where is he living at the time? What are they supposed to do? I think the legal ramifications are tremendous.

Ankerberg: Joan, take us back biblically. You fought this thing through in your own

mind. You believed this thing about blood transfusions. Your own parents faked a vaccination on your arm and so on. But somewhere along the line you went back and researched what the Bible really had to say about this. Tell us what you found out.

Cetnar: Well, the Bible doesn't have anything to say about blood transfusions in the first place. It's an interpretation of the Watchtower Society that eating blood is transfusing blood because they tried to combine intravenous feeding with blood

transfusion and there is no connection between the two. We've got medical people in the audience that can tell you that very quickly, that blood transfusion and intravenous feeding are different. The body does not feed on the blood that is being transfused into the body. And so this is what we began to see is that blood transfusion, intravenous feeding, are different. But I think what's interesting and what Witnesses should realize is that in their own booklet, *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Question of Blood*, on page 41 it says, "Blood transfusion is essentially an organ transplant." And so it is. It's just using a different word, "transfuse," because we're talking about liquid instead of a solid, basically. And so if a Witness would look in his own blood booklet, he's allowed to have a transfusion.

Ankerberg: Yes. Because if you can have an organ transplant, then you can have a transfusion.

Cetnar: That's right.

Ankerberg: Lorri, what I am really curious about is the fact of, all right, you almost died

upholding the Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrine about blood transfusion, namely, that you can't have one. What made you go that far that you were willing to give your life for this thing?

MacGregor: It's because above all else at all times in my life, I have loved God above everything. And I really believed I was serving God in the Watchtower organization. I now know that I was deceived but I was doing it because I thought God required it of me.

Ankerberg: Now, what I'm saying is, there are probably a whole bunch of other people out there that are listening that are right in the spot that you were at where the Watchtower here in America is saying you can't have one and they desperately need one, and they're planning to tough it out and see if they live. And they may die. I want you to talk to those ladies right now. What would you say to them?

MacGregor: I would say to them that there is no biblical basis for refusing sound medical treatment and if that takes a blood transfusion to save your life, so be it. There's nothing in Scripture that would indicate that they could not have it. So, for goodness' sakes, think of your families above the organization.

Ankerberg: And David, you were in the organization and you left Harvard and didn't return to Harvard simply because the organization put you in a different direction. How did you break the grip of the Society and the fear of going against the Society? You came to the conclusion that the Bible was saying one thing, the Society was saying something else, but you still had to

cross the Society. How did you do that?

Reed: Well, we actually learned...my wife and I felt that we were relying on God and Christ, and as long as we were loyal to God and Christ, an organization could be either faithful or unfaithful. We saw the examples in Scripture, times when God's organization in Israel consisted of unfaithful kings and unfaithful priests at Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem. And there were faithful individuals who were prophets who looked to God Himself and we felt that was the example to follow.

Ankerberg: All right. I sure appreciate this information, and next week we're going to talk about one of the key, key things that keeps Jehovah's Witnesses from putting their faith in the Jesus of the Bible, and that's the doctrine of the Trinity. If there's only one God, how can the Father be God, the Son be God, and the Holy Spirit be God? They say, "Isn't that a confusing doctrine?" And you guys all taught that it was and it was a satanic doctrine and yet you changed your mind and we need to find out in a hurry how you did that and what evidence brought you to that conclusion to help a lot of other folks that want to know about that as well. We're going to talk about the Jehovah's Witnesses and how you might inform a Jehovah's Witness that the Trinity is actually taught in the Bible—not the word but the concept, the teaching. We'll talk about that next week.

Program 5 "The Trinity"

Ankerberg: Welcome! We are at a very interesting convention in Pennsylvania where the majority of our audience are people that were a part of the Jehovah's Witnesses for most or all of their lives until they came across some information that persuaded them that they had been deceived, that they were wrong, and they became Christians. We also have guests on stage that came out of the same situation. Some of them grew up as Jehovah's Witnesses. Some of them converted into the Jehovah's Witnesses. But then, after a time, they learned some information that caused them to leave and also place their faith in Jesus Christ as being God.

Now, to many of you that are listening that aren't Jehovah's Witnesses, you might say, "Well, that's not so strange." But to Jehovah's Witnesses, that is strange. And especially, if you've ever had one come by your door, one of the first things they'll talk about is the fact of the corruption of Christian teaching and that there's one that's really big at the top of their list that's really satanic, and that's the doctrine of the Trinity. And they've had some real solid teaching. In fact, they might have shown you a book like this: *Should You Believe in the Trinity?* In fact, let's just take a little survey of all the folks here in the audience. How many of you folks, you can remember this one here? You actually received this and gave it out yourself? Put your hands up. Okay. So you all knew about this one, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?* This one was printed in 1989 and at that point it says that they had printed 5 million copies of this little book. And this is, of course, a long time after 89 so you wonder how many

of these little books are in circulation.

This is an important question. Does God reveal Himself as the Father being God, the Son being God, and the Holy Spirit being God—there only being one God? And we’re going to talk about that with our panelists today who all believed that the doctrine of the Trinity was satanic at one time in their life. Lorri, let me start with you. In this publication here, the Witnesses are told that the Christian doctrine of the Trinity is really a false doctrine. What do you think about this publication?

MacGregor: Well, we were most interested to examine this publication but the Watchtower publishers made it extremely hard on us. They deliberately left off page numbers, authors, publishers, edition years, and used long out-of-print books in their quotes. But I want to say, we researchers persevered and we tracked down every last one of their quotes that they used in this book, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?* And we have some very interesting conclusions to bring to you today and I think every honest-hearted Jehovah’s Witness should stay tuned in because they’re really going to learn something about their organization.

Ankerberg: Let’s take it at the top, David. Jehovah’s Witnesses claim in this booklet that confusion is widespread in the Christian church regarding the Trinity and they quote the *Encyclopedia Americana*, of all things, that they quoted in this booklet that they hand out by the ton here. Did they quote correctly? Tell us about it.

Reed: Well, they only quoted it partially. They did the same thing that they do often with Bible verses—just quote part of it out of

context. If you read the rest of what the *Encyclopedia Americana* said, it went on to say that the doctrine of the Trinity was not contrary to reason and may be apprehended, though it may not be comprehended, by the human mind. So really, the Watchtower is using this quote to say something different than what the *Encyclopedia Americana* meant to say.

Ankerberg: Give us the quote as it appears in here.

Reed: The Watchtower quoted it, they say, “The *Encyclopedia Americana* notes that the doctrine of the Trinity is considered to be ‘beyond the grasp of human reason.’”

Ankerberg: And that’s where they stopped.

Reed: Yes.

Ankerberg: And yet when you read the article, what does it say?

Reed: The article goes on to say that “it is not contrary to reason and may be apprehended, though it may not be comprehended, by the human mind.” So it’s really the opposite of what the Watchtower left people with.

Ankerberg: So they’re deceiving people using the *Encyclopedia* to deceive them.

Reed: By just giving a partial quote, yes.

Ankerberg: That’s right. Joan, on page 4 of this booklet, this book says, Jehovah’s Witnesses say that, “Trinitarians are not agreed among themselves about this doctrine.” Where did they get that?

Cetnar: That particular quote was from the *Dictionary of Religious Knowledge* which has been out of print since 1875. And they neglected to include the portion where the early Church Fathers supported the Trinity doctrine. And here's what the *Dictionary* really says: "It is certain, however, that from the Apostolic times they paid worship to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." And the article goes on to say, "The Bible represents God to us as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." "**The Bible represents God.**" So it's the exact opposite from what the Trinity booklet is trying to portray.

Ankerberg: Duane, let's keep going on this thing, all right? It says in this booklet they point that the word Trinity is not used in the Bible at all. So they ridicule Christians for using the word Trinity, for using the word mystery when discussing the Trinity. Comment on this portion in their book.

Magnani: Well, I guess if we were to say that the word Trinity is not a valid word, then neither is "theocracy" because you can't find "theocracy" in the Bible, either, but you can find the concept: God rule. I think that the Witnesses are just picking on the word Trinity because their organization has decided to do that. As far as "mystery," yes. On page 5 they call it "a confusing mystery" and they claim that's because God is not a God of confusion. But, you know, if you look in the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*, which is their Greek to English translation, they themselves use "mystery" right in connection with God at Colossians 2:2. So, you know, they're using "mystery." I think that "God is not a God of confusion," either, and I think they ought to clear up the confusing illustrations that they've got in their magazines about the

Trinity because they are using the word mystery themselves.

Ankerberg: Let's keep going here, Lorri. Give us some more quotes right out of this publication that they have told you as Jehovah's Witnesses before and is still being circulated today.

MacGregor: All right. They have a method they use throughout this booklet. It's a devious technique and I can only describe it as the judicious use of "dots." That is, they join up unrelated phrases, sentences, partial statements with the ever-popular Watchtower dots. We found partial quotes, John, that were pages apart from each other in the original and yet they were linked up by the Watchtower with their everlasting dots. And in almost every case, the original said the opposite of the view the Watchtower was presenting in this booklet. I call this deliberate misrepresentation of the facts. The Jehovah's Witnesses, however, might have another name for it: theocratic war strategy, justified lying.

Ankerberg: Yes, and this thing should bother Jehovah's Witnesses that are listening, okay? Let's get real here. Okay? You can't do this and be honest. You can't do this in the name of God because God doesn't have to lie to persuade people to follow Him. Okay? God tells us the truth in Scripture and what we're saying here, before we actually get to unscrambling and presenting the biblical evidence for why a person might believe that Jesus is God, the Father is God, and the Son is God, and as Matthew 28 says, "Go and preach/teach in the name"—singular—"of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," the fact is, that is the evidence. We might not be able to explain it all, but

that's what God told us about Himself. Before we get to that, all right, if the evidence is being distorted, there's something wrong with that group of people. All right? You don't lie in the name of God. And what you're saying here is you can go through this thing quote by quote and you actually—what you folks actually do is, you looked them up. They're lying through their teeth.

Cetnar: That's right.

Ankerberg: You found a doctrine that is false that they are trying to teach. Is that where you're coming from, Duane?

Magnani: It's the "lie" issue. It truly is. You know, I have a book here. It's written by Jews. These are not Christians; these are Jews. In fact, it's a Jewish response to missionaries, and this book is honest enough to state that if you happen to believe the words of Jesus Christ Himself or if you happen to believe what Jesus Himself taught about the Trinity as Christians believe it, in other words, if you believed what Jesus said, you would be a Trinitarian. But they don't accept the New Testament, but at least the Jews who are witnessing to Christians about their faith accept the fact that Christians believe in the Trinity and it's found in the New Testament. It's just that the Jews don't accept the New Testament. I think that's at least honest, John.

Ankerberg: Yes. We're going to take a break here, Duane, and we're going to come back and talk more about this book. And the reason that we're centering in on this book is that if you're a Jehovah's Witness out here, you've probably got one. Not only have you got one, but you're teaching

from this and you believe it!

Cetnar: Right.

Ankerberg: We're going to look at some more quotes so if during the break, if you want to, go find this thing and bring it back and we're going to talk about it some more and we'll look at some of these "dots" and what was missing. Okay? So stayed tuned.

[BREAK]

Ankerberg: All right we're back and we're talking about the Jehovah's Witnesses and their doctrines that they teach and the ones they deny. And one of the sticking points between Christianity and the Watchtower Society that keeps many of the Jehovah's Witnesses from accepting the Deity of Jesus Christ is the doctrine of the Trinity. In fact, they've printed up more than 5 million of these books, *Should You Believe in the Trinity?* And if they come to your door, they may give you this book. And they believe this. The problem is, if you look at the quotes for where they're getting their "evidence," we're finding out they lied in the quotes. They're not giving you solid information.

You say, "Where is that? Where can I prove that? Where can I see that evidence?" Well, Joan, let's look at another one. Page 7 – they quote the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* and they do it in such a way that it seems to support their view of God. All right, unscramble it. First of all, tell us what they say and then show us where they've deceived people.

Cetnar: What they're trying to prove is that the Trinity doctrine never existed before 325 A.D. in the fourth century. So they quoted

the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* where it says this: “The formulation ‘One God in three Persons’ was not solidly established, certainly not fully assimilated into Christian life and its profession of faith prior to the end of the fourth century [dot, dot, dot]...”

I want to know what’s missing. Well, what’s missing starts out—it’s usually a “however” or something else. In this case it’s a “but.” “**But** it is precisely this formulation that has first claim to the title ‘the Trinitarian dogma.’”

And then later on as you go down further, it says, “Among the second century apologists, little more than a focusing of the problem is that of plurality within the unique Godhead.”

Ankerberg: So the very thing they’re trying to deny, if you looked it up, it would affirm it.

Cetnar: That’s right.

Ankerberg: And the fact is, the liberals do this a whole lot, too, is they keep saying that, you know, that the Creeds were formulated by the Councils and so on, forgetting that there’s a whole bunch of statements by the Apostles in the New Testament to start with and the Church Fathers were talking all about it before we ever got down to the Creeds. And so you’re saying the same thing.

Duane, go on. They talk about the fact that this thing is not ever taught in the Old Testament. Give us the quote where they’re taking that from and then roll on with it.

Magnani: Well, they say that the publication, *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, they say out of that, referring

to that, that the Trinity is not taught in the Old Testament.

Now, again, as we’ve seen before, this is a case of “abrupt stop” too soon. All you have to do is go on with the quote to get the truth here. It says, “As we continue, in many places of the Old Testament, however, expressions are used in which some of the Fathers of the Church saw references of the foreshadowings of the Trinity.”

Why leave that out? I mean, obviously, that’s the whole point!

Ankerberg: That’s right.

Magnani: That’s the whole point, that the Church Fathers saw not only the Trinity in the writings of the Apostles and in the New Testament, but all the way from Genesis.

Ankerberg: David, they have the audacity to quote the *New Encyclopedia Britannica* as saying the Trinity doctrine “doesn’t appear” in the New Testament! Is that what the *New Encyclopedia Britannica* really says?

Reed: No. In their misquoting by just quoting part of it, what they actually quote in their booklet says, “Neither the word trinity nor the explicit doctrine appears in the New Testament.” But if you continue to actually read the article in the *Encyclopedia*, you find out that they’re saying that the doctrine does appear implicitly in the New Testament. And the article concludes by saying, “Thus, the New Testament established the basis for the doctrine of the Trinity.” So it’s just as if I had said, “I didn’t walk into the room and I didn’t run into the room, but I jumped into the room,” and somebody quotes me and says, “Well, he said he didn’t walk or run

into the room, so he wasn't there."

See, they're leaving out the fact that the *Encyclopedia's* point is that the doctrine is implicitly taught in the New Testament and they're quoting just the first part which makes it appear the opposite.

Ankerberg: So if you look up all of the quotes in whether or not you should believe in the Trinity, you will.

Reed: Absolutely!

Cetnar: That's right.

Reed: That's right. If you don't focus on the "dots" but you focus on what they really said, you'll believe it.

Ankerberg: And what do you conclude, Lorri, about an organization that takes the facts and deliberately distorts and lies to the people about what they're presenting?

MacGregor: Well, I want everyone to know that in the world of the cults there are two classes of people. At the high levels are the deceivers; and at the lower levels are the deceived. And perhaps tonight some Jehovah's Witnesses will recognize that they have been deceived because if they honestly check this out and read the full quotes, they will have no choice but to believe the Trinity doctrine was taught in the Bible.

Ankerberg: Okay. But now we've got to unscramble this. Just because they lied about this doesn't mean we have shown that the God of the Bible is really Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the One God. And this was a hard one. What was the evidence? How did you unscramble this? Start any place that you want. How did you come to

this idea that Jesus was God?

MacGregor: Well, in my own case I set myself free from the Watchtower Society by reading their purple *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*. I didn't read the Watchtower side, I looked at the words underneath the Greek. I found out Jesus was called "*ha theos*," "the God." I found that even the Father called Him God, "*ha theos*," in Hebrews. And I also found out that all the fullness of the Godhead was dwelling in Christ, even in the flesh. I further found out that there was only one true God in the Bible. All other gods were false. If this one true God was called the Father, and He was, then the Father is that one God. If the Son is called God, and He is, then the Son is that one God. If the Holy Spirit is called God in the Scriptures, and He is, then the Holy Spirit is that one God. And since there is only one true God, then the three Persons are the one true God.

Ankerberg: I tell you, it's amazing. You guys probably know that Julius Mantey, one of the leading Greek scholars in the world, was constantly quoted by *The New World Translation*.

Cetnar: Yes.

Ankerberg: And I have his quote about what he thought about *The New World Translation*. He says, "It is a distortion of the New Testament. The translators used what J. B. Rotherham has translated in 1893 in modern speech and then changed the readings in scores of passages to state what Jehovah's Witnesses believe and teach. That is distortion, not translation."

Now, the fact is, you've got Bruce Metzger at Princeton; you've got a whole

group of Greek scholars that have examined *The New World Translation* and simply have said that this is not honest; this is not accurate; it is not true. To the person who would say, "I'm going to at least give you a few seconds here to open my mind to who Jesus really is," what were the things that you were taught about Jesus and then unscramble that for the folks that are listening.

MacGregor: I was taught that Jesus Christ was a secondary God, the archangel Michael; and on earth only a good man. When he died and was resurrected, he became Michael the archangel in the heavens again. But what Jesus Himself says about Himself is far more important, and Jesus took the divine name of God and applied it to Himself in John 8:24 where He told the people then, He said, "I said therefore to you that you shall die in your sins for unless you believe that **I am**, you will die in your sins."

Also, Acts 20:28 says that God purchased the church with His own blood. How much clearer do we have to be? If you have the right Jesus Christ, you are right for all eternity. If you have the wrong Jesus Christ, you are wrong for all eternity. Please, Jehovah's Witnesses! Take a look at some of the stuff you're being fed by Headquarters. It is a lie; it is a deception. Don't believe it. Trust in Jesus Christ and cry out to Him for your salvation.

Ankerberg: David, besides saying that Jesus is God, what else did you have to learn? What was the good news besides learning that He was God that Jesus also told you that you didn't know as a Jehovah's Witness?

Reed: Well, I was told as a Jehovah's Witness that Jesus was not my Mediator; He was only the Mediator for the 144,000 of whom only 8,000 were left on earth. So that left me with them as my mediator and they weren't a very good mediator. But I learned that Jesus is my Mediator and not only that, He's my Savior. Being in a certain organization doesn't save me. I chose to let Him be my Lord rather than follow and obey the Watchtower organization. Jesus really cares about me. He loves me and I'm glad to obey Him and follow Him.

Ankerberg: Yes. I think those of you that are Jehovah's Witnesses that are listening in, if you recognize that your own publications have been lying to you, distorting the truth, and you would say, "If Jesus is God, why is that good news?," if you're a sinner and I'm a sinner and Jesus is offering a gift, I mean, you can work your way to Heaven if you want to, but if Jesus is saying, "Look, you don't have to. I'll give you a gift. I've done it all"—in fact, you better realize that He did do it all and He is willing to take all of your sin problem, take all the sweat, all your going door to door, forget all that, just accept His gift of eternal life, He promises you Heaven like He promises anybody that will come to Him and accept His gift. Is that in the New Testament? Yes, it is. We'll talk about it a little bit more next week and we're going to have "Questions and Answers"—questions from our people in the audience and answers from our people on stage, maybe the very question that you are asking at home, so I hope that you'll join us.

Program 6

“Questions & Answers”

Ankerberg: Welcome. We're here in beautiful Pennsylvania at the Blue Mountain Christian Retreat and we are with former Jehovah's Witnesses. These folks that you are looking at, many of them spent most of their life or all of their life until they came into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Jehovah's Witnesses. And others that are here, they've got family and friends that actually are still in the Jehovah's Witnesses and on stage we have four former Jehovah's Witnesses, two of which actually grew up in Jehovah's Witness homes and two of which actually converted in their adult years into the Jehovah's Witnesses. One fellow was actually going to Harvard. So the fact is that just because you're up in higher education does not leave you immune from some of the things that the cults are teaching.

And so we've got a very interesting panel today and we're going to have questions and answers from people that are here at this convention that, remember, they have been a part of this lifestyle and have come out. We're going to try to present the questions that they still have today or that they might be asking on behalf of some of you that are Jehovah's Witnesses that are listening, things that helped them along the way. So let's see what happens today.

First question.

Audience: The first question is for Mr. Magnani. In the courtroom, do Jehovah's Witnesses admit that they teach that only their people will survive Armageddon?

Duane Magnani: In court case after court

case the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society is now presenting the message that it's not just Jehovah's Witnesses who will survive Armageddon but that in fact, people who are just sincere, including Catholics, and, in fact, in the last few cases they've actually claimed that atheists can survive Armageddon. And they claim that the Bible supports that in their literature. Of course, we know the Bible clearly says that you must believe that Jesus is Lord and that God rose Him from the dead and that's how you're saved.

Ankerberg: All right, another question.

Audience: This question is for David. I was wondering, what difference do you feel the Internet has made in your ministry to Jehovah's Witnesses? And have you seen any changes or adjustments the Watchtower organization has made to prevent Witnesses from being influenced by this medium?

David Reed: I think the Internet has made a tremendous difference. Over the years before the arrival of the Internet, I would often be contacted by Jehovah's Witnesses secretly who would dare to phone me. I have a tape on an answering machine that Witnesses can call 24 hours and there were some who called during the night so the family members wouldn't observe them listening to this tape. Well, with the advent of the Internet, Witnesses are able to act anonymously now to get information that they would have had to contact me directly to get or they would have had to go into a Christian bookstore and show their face in the daylight. Well, Witnesses are now able to access this information. I'm running into large numbers of Jehovah's Witnesses who are finding the information about the

organization, discovering this on the Internet, and then making contact afterwards, sometimes using anonymous e-mail names and addresses so that they can't be found out in case there are spies lurking on some of the chat rooms.

Ankerberg: I've got a question for you that relates to what you folks used to believe in terms of Jesus. Jesus, according to the Watchtower, used to be Michael the archangel, and then he ceased to exist and you have Jesus being the one who is recreated, just a man, living on earth. He comes to the end, He dies. He is recreated—not resurrected, recreated. Charles Taze Russell said, “Jesus Christ for all practical purposes ceased to exist.” He's dead. All right. Now, that was a mind-blower to me.

Now, you have this “new and improved” Michael the archangel that is now existing after Jesus died, and then, where was it? 1914 or somewhere along the line, Michael the archangel invisibly came back to the earth. How did we switch from Jesus returning—which most of the Christians that are listening in tonight would say, we can understand that—it's not even Jesus that returned. Bring me up to speed on that.

Reed: Well, it's very confusing doctrine for people who aren't Jehovah's Witnesses. But the Witnesses have somewhere in the back of their minds that whenever they're talking about Jesus Christ, they're referring to the first angel that God created. The Watchtower says in one of its publications, “This first angel that God created became like a son to Him.” Well, they are thinking of Jesus Christ but it's not the Jesus Christ of the Bible. It's a different Jesus Christ

who supposedly is an angel. Personally, I dealt with this when I was coming out of the Witnesses by the realization that the Bible gives a much more prominent position to Jesus. The first thing that broke through in my case was the fact that Jesus is the Savior for everyone who believes and He actually comes to live in your heart by His Spirit. Now, an angel can only be in one place at one time, just like a human. So for Jesus to actually come and live in the hearts of Christians all over the world, I realized He couldn't be an angel; He must be God.

Ankerberg: Not only that but the fact is that the biblical teaching about Jesus that He was “preexisting.” You go into Philippians 2, “Who, being”—that was continually existing—“in the form”—the essence—“of God.” Okay. Now maybe it was because nobody ever studied Greek or they distorted the Greek, but the fact is, that was as plain as you can get that His taking on human flesh was not where Jesus started. The fact is, He was God the Son, way before that ever took place.

Are there other things that came to mind, and what's this thing about, why did you have Michael the archangel coming back “invisibly”? What was that all about?

Reed: Well, actually, that involves the Watchtower's history. Jehovah's Witnesses sort of believe that their organization came into existence because God wanted to restore the truth. It was actually an outgrowth of Adventism, and there were Adventists throughout the 1800s who believed that Christ was about to return on certain dates and when those dates failed to materialize, some of those Adventists believed that Christ returned invisibly.

Now, Charles Taze Russell, who

started the Watchtower, was an Adventist for nine years; from 1869 to 1879 he fellowshipped with Adventists. He was an assistant editor at an Adventist magazine that taught that Christ returned invisibly. So when he started publishing the *Watchtower*, he just picked up this teaching from Adventism and added to it his own personal ideas about Christ being Michael the archangel. Actually, the Adventists he came from were Trinitarians, so he adopted it. But it wasn't his idea, it was something he got from the Adventists.

Ankerberg: And what's Michael supposed to be doing right now?

Reed: Well, they believe that Jesus is ruling in Heaven as Michael. They believe God has given this angel the authority to be the King of the universe for a period of time.

Ankerberg: And actually Jesus, the man, does not exist. He's dead.

Reed: That's right. In fact, the *Watchtower* said that the body that was missing from the empty tomb didn't rise. They say it was dissolved into gases and God just got rid of that body.

Ankerberg: Any other verses that come to your mind here, Joan or Lorri, in terms of this?

MacGregor: Well, concerning Michael, one of my questions to the Elders was, "How come in the Book of Daniel it refers to Michael as 'one of the chief princes'? Isn't Jesus Christ unique?"

I pressed a Jehovah's Witness on this one time: "If Michael is just one of the chief princes and he's Jesus, who are the others?"

And he surprised me by saying, "Satan, of course."

I mean, it's so confusing. There is no way that the eternal Son of God is any kind of an angel.

Cetnar: Hebrews chapter 1 says, "To what angel did I say, 'Thou art my Son'?" That's God speaking—no angel, no Michael, nobody.

Ankerberg: Yes.

Magnani: John, if the man is dead, Paul doesn't know it. He says that, "Between God and man there is a Mediator." Guess who. Not Michael the archangel. "The man, Jesus Christ." And that is in the present tense.

Ankerberg: Yes. Another question.

Audience: A fundamental question. The decisions people make regarding their relationship with God and their salvation are very, very serious. It means "eternal, everlasting life" decisions. And my question to you is, why do the Jehovah's Witnesses not go and check out what they're being told to see if it's true or not, with these being such serious decisions?

Cetnar: That's called "independent thinking" and that is an anathema. They were told in a *Watchtower* very clearly, there is to be no independent thinking. That's satanic, basically. I wish I had the article in front of me because it scares a Jehovah's Witness to think that he can think for himself. He has to go to the Elders or to the Watchtower for what he is supposed to be thinking on that subject.

Ankerberg: Before you ever jumped in, okay, my question would be, what proof did they give that you would believe them the first time?

Cetnar: Well, they use the Bible. They're very adept at using Scripture to prove their point. And if you don't know anything about the Bible or you have no prior knowledge of what Scripture teaches, they have wrapped a very interesting and acceptable package to someone who doesn't know any better.

Ankerberg: Yes. It's really interesting that you can go from quoting Jesus to all of a sudden the Society being the authority and bypassing what Jesus actually says in the Book.

Cetnar: And that's their first goal is to get you to believe that God only deals with the people on the earth through an organization. He did it in the past; He's doing it today; and the Watchtower organization is it.

Ankerberg: Duane?

Magnani: You know, John, when I came to Christ, I had to have a wall that was between me and the man who was witnessing to me broken down, and that was that wall of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. Once that wall fell, I could see clearly what the Bible was saying. It was like I had "Watchtower glasses" on when I was reading Scriptures. I couldn't really understand it. As Paul talks about the mind being corrupted, you can't really see the simplicity which is in Jesus, I couldn't see it. And once the organization no longer became my Savior, once that was off Scripture, the Bible was illuminated and I

could see Jesus Christ.

Ankerberg: Lorri, in one of the programs that we've done before you talked about how the Book of Revelation, real quick, showed you, even in your *New World Translation*—the Jehovah's Witnesses' false translation—even if you used that, they hadn't corrupted it enough so that it showed you that Jesus actually was saying He was God. Can you share it real quick?

MacGregor: Well, it's just from Revelation chapter 1 and, again, Revelation chapter 22. Revelation chapter 1 has "the Alpha and the Omega" speaking and saying He is coming again and He's God Almighty. And then, if you go a little later on in Revelation, in the last chapter of Revelation, "the Alpha and Omega" gives Himself another name—"the First and the Last." And so when you take that back to the first chapter of Revelation,

you find out that "the First and the Last" was alive—"but was dead and is now alive again" and it's definitely Jesus Christ. And so I saw that Jesus Christ could be no one less than the Lord God Almighty. After all, it says, "Who is, who was, and who is to come." And who is coming? It's Jesus! The First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and Omega, and the Lord God.

Ankerberg: What did you guys do with John 8 where Jesus said, "Before Abraham was I Am," and the Jews then picked up the rocks to stone Him?

MacGregor: Well, Jesus was only supposedly claiming a preexistence because they changed "I am" to "I have been." They're always fooling with tenses, you

know? They're not Greek scholars but they'll invent something if they have to.

Ankerberg: And they picked out one that doesn't even exist, right?

Cetnar: That's one place where their *Interlinear*, the Greek side, does not agree with the English side. The Greek side does say, "I Am."

Ankerberg: Yes, and the reason that's dynamite is that goes back to Exodus 3 where Moses is standing at the burning bush and God says, "Now listen, I'm sending you over here to Pharaoh in Egypt and to Israel and, by the way, Israel's going to take off and you're to tell both Israel and Pharaoh."

Moses says, "Oh, one little thing. They're going to ask me, 'Who sent you?'"

And God says, "Okay, go and tell them that the great I Am has sent me to you. And my memorial name for all generations will be the I Am."

So when Jesus said, "Boys, I'm the I Am, I'm the one who brought your forefathers out of Egypt," that's why they went for the rocks.

Cetnar: That's right.

MacGregor: But you see, there's a happy footnote in the Watchtower publications that says, "Not the same as Exodus."

Cetnar: Yes.

Magnani: But I'll tell you what, John, the interesting thing is that the Watchtower organization itself says that their *Interlinear* is to be the final authority on the translation. You are to judge the freer translation by the *Interlinear* translation. Therefore, go to

John 1:1. Who is Jesus in the *Interlinear* translation? "God Almighty."

Ankerberg: I keep hearing you guys bring up these little quirks they've got in the *New World Translation*, and I wonder, somewhere along the line are they going to clean up their act?

All right, another question.

Audience: In talking with Jehovah's Witnesses, I know that it's very easy to document where the Society has lied to them, where they have made numerous false prophecies. But the problem is, conveying this information to the person that we are

talking to because they refuse to look at the photocopies and anything critical of the Society, even going to far as to call photocopies of their own material "spiritual pornography." How can you share with somebody who is not willing to look at the evidence?

Reed: Well, you have to work with their mind control and not try to fight against it. You see, you're dealing with people who have been warned ahead of time sort of almost in a post hypnotic suggestion that someone is going to come to them and try to lead them out of the organization and that the devil is responsible for sending that person. So when you start showing them evidence against the Watchtower, they become terrified. They think, "What the Witnesses said was true. Somebody has come to try to get me out. And the devil must have sent them."

So they become very afraid. They don't want to see or listen to what you're saying.

But they're also taught in their mind

control that they're there to help people and to answer people's questions. So you take the same photocopies and you come to them and say, "I'm interested in your religion. I'd like to know more about it. I have questions. Can you help me with my questions?"

Well see, then their response is going to be a positive one. You can show them the very same photocopies not in a confrontational way but ask them a question about each one. Ask them to take them back to their Kingdom Hall and check in the library and make sure the photocopy is accurate. And in that way you can get them to listen to you.

Ankerberg: Lorri?

MacGregor: We have another little method that has worked quite well. If the person is non-threatening to the Jehovah's Witness, you can say to them, "I have this video here that's about Jehovah's Witnesses and seeing as you are a Jehovah's Witness, would you mind watching it and checking it out and telling me if it's correct or not?"

Ankerberg: Yeah, and give them this one. Question.

Audience: Many people watching the show this evening are going to be in the same dilemma that I was in during my last ten years as a Witness. They're going to be confused now to some degree on some points. And they cannot go to the Elders; they cannot go to their friends for fear of being disfellowshipped; they cannot go to you—you are apostates. Some people do not trust a computer. What can you do or say to these people so they won't spend the last ten years like I did trying to get out of the

Witnesses?

Ankerberg: Boy, now there's a good question. And those of you that are watching, you may be right in that boat right now, so let's listen. All you guys were in that boat, too, so it's coming from personal experience. Who wants to lead off? Okay, Dave.

Reed: We were in that situation, my wife and I, and what we found ourselves doing was turning to God. We believed that He was really there and we turned to His Word, the Bible. And before we got into any contact with Christians and before we started talking to any Christian ministries or reading Christian books, we just immersed ourselves in the Bible and in prayer. And God is there. He is really there. He listens; He cares, and He will answer your prayers and His Word, the Bible, will open your eyes to these things.

Ankerberg: Are you saying that God is alive, Dave?

Reed: Absolutely!

Cetnar: Amen!

Ankerberg: And that God actually cares about these people that are sweating this out?

Reed: As a Jehovah's Witness Elder, it used to always bother me that we were coming to Kingdom Hall and reading books about Christianity and studying about God and I would see in the New Testament that those people had a living relationship with God. I knew we didn't have it. I knew we were just going out door-to-door bringing other people in so they could study about it. It

was book learning, book knowledge. But the people in the New Testament had a living relationship with God and I found out that Christians today have the same thing because I have it now.

Ankerberg: Yes. ???Timothy??? [2 Peter 3:9] says that God is “not willing that any should perish.” He wants all to come to the knowledge of the truth and is willing to help. So that’s a big one. God actually is more interested in you coming to Him than you are of getting there, if you can think that way. And so you may want to start off by just saying, “Hey, Lord, if you’re really there and you’ve got some information, I’m open.” Oh, when you say that one, watch out!

Lorri?

MacGregor: And what I did, because I didn’t trust any person or any publication written by anybody about anything, I got myself a concordance. And I looked up things like “Jesus Christ,” and “God,” and “Holy Spirit.” And then I looked up the Scriptures in the *Interlinear* if I could and I began to make notes about who God was. And I prayed, too, that God would help me to really find the truth. It just drove me to God and His Word and all that hours and hours of study that I did every single day have stood me in good stead as a Christian because I’ll never be fooled by the counterfeit again.

Ankerberg: You know, I wasn’t a Jehovah’s Witness but I was going to the university and struggling with questions, and the reason I say you pray and then open yourself up and kind of laughed there is, I can remember doing that when I had a question and how fast God could usually get

that answer to me. And so I just say to you, try that in the sense of go to your Bible and say, “God, if you’ve got something for me here, I’m open to it, wherever this takes me.” And the fact is, that book, as the folks have been saying, is going to come alive! It’s going to be like electricity in your hands. God does speak through His Book.

Duane, you were going to say something.

Magnani: Well, I just feel that anybody who starts doubting is going to doubt themselves right out of the group. And they make not want to look at “apostate” literature and so forth, but at a certain point in time, they’re going to have to say, “Is the *Watchtower* apostate literature?” Because it’s the *Watchtower* that is causing them to doubt. So I just think the Holy Spirit—and I’ve seen it over and over and over again where someone will be afraid to talk to me or talk to somebody else and so forth—but it’s the Holy Spirit who draws. And that person will get so many doubts, their shoulders will just be weighted down with them, John, and at that point in time they’re going to cry out for Christ.

Ankerberg: Well, you ladies remember the last time we did a program together, people used to write to us in manila envelopes and then they would say, “Please send it back in a manila envelope and don’t put ‘The John Ankerberg Show’ on there so nobody will understand that I’m getting stuff from you.” Okay? Fine. If that’s the way you want to do it, that’s what we’ll do, because we’re interesting in helping you. And these folks can all comprehend of where you’re at right now if you’re in that dilemma.

We need some help here. They’re going to be able to turn the corner. If they

do this, it's not going to all be black. The fact is, God is going to step in. Joanie?

Cetnar: John, I just want to let them know that because they're questioning the Watchtower organization, don't think that God doesn't love you and that He doesn't want to help you; that He has abandoned you because you're questioning the Watchtower Society. I hope that we have given them enough evidence that there is no connection between the Watchtower Society and God. Whatever you call Him: Jehovah or Yahweh or whatever, He loves you and He sent His Son to die for you. And so don't think just because you're questioning the men at Brooklyn Headquarters that God doesn't love you.

Ankerberg: Yes, and in fact, the reason they've got the doubts is because they're listening to the Society and not God. And the Society, realize, has lied to you. So that's another reason that you've got a lot of problems.

Cetnar: God does not lie.

Ankerberg: And God doesn't lie and God does love you. Give yourself a chance to get to know God. Open yourself up to Him. And you know, we're talking like God is alive—He is alive. And He can handle this thing. And this is kind of a new concept to some of you. You don't have to go through the Society.

Cetnar: That's right.

Ankerberg: God loves you so much that He has made it possible for you to come right to Him and ask for help. He has also made a Mediator that has taken your sins upon

Himself. He paid for every one of your sins. So you don't have to work that sin off; you don't have to impress God. In fact, God says He is not impressed and He's offering you a gift which is complete freedom from the penalty of your sin and, further, His gift of eternal life, plus a relationship with Him and a whole ton more. So take it step by step and God Himself will step in if you'll give Him the chance.

Another question.

Audience: It has been mentioned and you just mentioned it again that salvation does not depend on works. And I know as a former Jehovah's Witness, their first reaction will be, "Well, what about the Scripture, "Faith without works is dead"? So I think it might be wise to answer it.

Ankerberg: Yes. And I'd like even to back up for the guys that aren't Jehovah's Witnesses that are listening, and that is, how many works did you guys think you had to do to impress God here? I mean, how long was your list?

MacGregor: Well, I lived in the day of quotas, so it was 10, then it was 12 hours a month of door-to-door service; at least one Bible study. It was different quotas on magazines but 10 was considered pretty good for a month. And then, of course, you had so many back calls and all the other things, so we were always trying to be good enough for God.

Ankerberg: And you did that because you felt that if you didn't do that, what was God going to do?

MacGregor: Well, He was keeping score with His little "brownie points" and you

might not make it through Armageddon.

Ankerberg: But nobody told you how many points you had to have at the end of the day, right?

MacGregor: Well, yes, the Society told you.

Ankerberg: Really?

MacGregor: It gave you quotas and you had to meet those quotas to be even minimally eligible.

Ankerberg: Yes. Joan?

Cetnar: I think the *Watchtower* of February 15, 1983 makes it pretty clear how you get eternal life. It says there are four requirements. The first is taking in knowledge, which requires five meetings a week unless you're flat on your back. Obey God's laws, not only the ones in the Bible but every one that the Watchtower Society lays down. You must be associated with "God's Channel," baptized into the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses. And the third is, you must be loyally advocating His Kingdom rule to others. You must be out, going from house to house, knocking on doors, putting in time. These are all...these are the four requirements for eternal life.

Those of us who are Christians, what's missing? Jesus! Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the whole New Testament. This is works. Ephesians 2:8,9 says it's "by grace through faith."

Ankerberg: Let me throw something in here because a lot of people get messed up on this thing of faith and faith plus works, okay? And faith is not you conjuring up a certain amount of energy on the

speedometer, odometer, whatever you want to call it. And this thing goes up and it blinks up here and you've arrived. No. It doesn't depend on you. Faith is really you just kind of holding out your hand and God filling that hand with His gift.

To show you how faith is not the thing that saves you in one sense, but it's the receptacle, picture a two-story building and it's burning and you're at the top, and you get to the top and the fact is, you realize there's no escape. So you go over to the edge on the top of this building, you look down, and here comes the fire department. And the guys get out and there's eight guys with a net. And one guy looks up and he says, "Hey, buddy, jump!"

You say, "You've got to be kiddin'! I'm up here two stories."

He says, "Don't you have faith?"

"Yeah, I've got a lot of faith."

He says, "Well, jump!"

You say, "But I'm up here two stories."

Finally, you say, "Okay." Your faith motivates you to put yourself in the hands of those firemen. All right? So you jump. Now, if you're like me, if you get a story down and you forgot your glasses, a story down you look and you realize that the firemen are not standing around holding a net; they're standing around holding hands, singing, "Cumbayah."

Now, you're got faith. I want to know, how much will your faith save you in that situation? Your faith is **not** what does the saving. Your faith can actually lead you wrong and put you in the hands of the wrong organization, which some of you that have gone toward the Watchtower, you have faith and your faith is only as valid as the object that it's placed in. What you want is, you want a real set of firemen down there

holding a real net that will save you. And when it comes to eternity, you want a real Savior that can pull off the job of forgiving your sins and saving you. The faith can motivate you to put your hand over there, but in reaching out, you better make sure you're putting it in the right object. And the Lord Jesus is the right object.

Now, faith plus works is Catholicism.

Cetnar: Well, in James it's not talking there about how we get saved. He's talking more, I believe, about how you know that I'm a Christian. If I don't have Christian works, how do you know that I'm a Christian? God knows who I am, but how do you know? So I think James is talking about the horizontal, not the vertical.

MacGregor: In fact, the subject is not salvation at all, it is faith. So why are they using a Scripture on faith and not a Scripture on salvation? It's because the salvation Scriptures all say that it is free and by grace. That's why.

Ankerberg: Yes, it's this thing of "gift." It's hard to work "works" into a "gift." No matter how hard you try, it's hard to get works into a gift.

You guys that were dating a girl here along the way, if you brought her a box of candy and said, "Here's a gift. I would love to give you this box of candy. All you have to do to get this box of candy is to go out and wash my car," what would she say?

You see? You can call it a gift, but they're smart. They know there's a lot of guys that'll give them that candy without going out and washing the car. All right?

God says, "The gift of God is" what? "Eternal life" through who? "Jesus Christ."

Okay? Didn't say anything about works there.

By the way, if Jesus paid it all, then you don't have to do anything because He paid it all.

Cetnar: Amen.

Ankerberg: Got a question?

Audience: Yes, I do. As you know, I was in the circuit when I had the joy of discovering, with God's help, of course, the essentials about the Gospel. And I began to preach in Brazil as a missionary what I knew about Jesus and I was very enthusiastic about it. After such heretical sermons—I thought they were pretty good myself—but the sisters, the elderly sisters especially, would come up and weep and say things like, "You don't believe in Jehovah anymore because you're always talking about Jesus!"

Additionally, a few years later, when the thing got very much more serious and I still continued to talk about Jesus—I had returned to the United States by this time—an Elder came up to me just when I was going to be appointed as an Elder and he said, "We've got bad news, Don. You've been talking about Jesus again!"

I'd already done it once before and I had been talking about Jesus a second time.

Finally, before 25 of us were kicked out of the "kingdom" into the "Kingdom" because we were talking about Jesus, we were told as a group to, "Shut up about Jesus!"

Now, my question is, simply, "Did you encounter this kind of resistance and evident fear of even the name of Jesus when you were departing from the Society? Or can you explain the mystery anyway?"

Ankerberg: Dave?

Reed: My wife encountered a very similar situation. As we began reading a lot of the New Testament, she naturally came out with a lot of expressions about Jesus and a close friend of hers said, “Jesus, Jesus, all you talk about is Jesus! I don’t want to hear about Jesus anymore.”

So this is a typical Jehovah’s Witness reaction. The Watchtower Society has published a series of hymn books or song books down through the years and I’ve researched the difference from each one as they’ve changed them. And in one of their most recent song books, the Watchtower actually boasted that they formerly had more songs about Jesus but now they’ve taken those out and only about 20 percent of the songs are about Jesus and the rest are about Jehovah. So the Watchtower organization has systematically removed Jesus from the teaching materials and the thinking of Jehovah’s Witnesses. So when they hear Christians make expressions about Jesus, this is very foreign to them and they’re frightened by it.

MacGregor: After all, what would we expect from an organization that printed a big headline on the *Watchtower* magazine, “Come to Jehovah’s organization for salvation”? What an invitation. Don’t accept it.

Ankerberg: I was going to ask you, why do the Jehovah’s Witnesses call themselves “Christians” if Jesus is dead and doesn’t even exist anymore?

Cetnar: Another case of “theocratic war strategy.”

Ankerberg: Duane?

Magnani: That is so true. Oftentimes I find—and of course, at the heart of the Gospel is the Resurrection of Christ. I mean, this **is** the message, 1 Corinthians 15. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus was the whole picture in the Book of Acts and is the Gospel today.

Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the organization, said, “Jesus is dead, forever dead.” All right? The Bible as know says there is a man, Jesus, right now and He’s coming back for us. And one of the things that really impressed me as I was coming to Christ was that in John chapter 2 Jesus said, “You destroy this temple and in three days, **I’m** going to raise it up.”

And John later says that was the temple of His body and the believers in verse 22 believed him. And we know Thomas, when he believed that Jesus had been resurrected, he looked past just the human nature and he called him “God.”

Ankerberg: I was thinking while you were talking about John 14, Jesus said, you know, “Hey, listen, don’t sweat it. If you’re heart’s troubled, don’t worry about it. You believe in God, believe also in Me.” Then He goes on and He says these words, “In My Father’s house”—which is not Boston—“In my Father’s house”—which is Heaven—“are many mansions. If it were not so, **I** would have told you so.” And then He says, “I go to prepare a place for you.”

If He is dead, as Russell said, He’s not preparing any place. Why would you believe Him in anything else He said?

“I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will **come again** and receive **you**”—not to

paradise earth, not just 144,000 to a compartment in Heaven—"I will receive **you**"—talking about all who will believe—"unto Myself that where I am, there **ye** may be also."

Now, look, if Jesus is telling the truth, then He's telling the truth. And if He's not telling the truth, then skip reading those passages, period.

MacGregor: But you see, the Society tells people those passages were not written to you of the earthly class. They were written only to those of the 144,000 class. So I used to read Scriptures like that and say, "Oh, I sure wish I'd lived earlier in the century when I could have been part of that heavenly class and been close to Jesus. But here I am in the wrong time period. Now I have to be a 'other sheep' instead of an 'anointed.'" And I was kind of unhappy about that because I earned to be close to Jesus. But that's how the Watchtower Society gets around those Scriptures. If you bring them up to them, they'll say, "[It's] not talking to you, sister."

Ankerberg: Did anybody ever ask you and say, "Well, if it was talking to those Apostles only back there or the 144,000, and Jesus is actually dead, as Russell said, then He's going to gather all those 144,000 to Himself where He's dead"?

Magnani: He's going to have a real big problem with that.

Ankerberg: Yeah, I mean, that doesn't make sense either.

Cetnar: Obviously, they got rid of that doctrine that Jesus is dead.

Reed: The passage that convinced me that the hope that Jesus was calling us to was a heavenly hope was in John chapter 17. Even reading it in my Jehovah's Witness Bible, I read in John 17, Jesus was praying to the Father and in verse 20 He said, "I make requests, not concerning these only, but also concerning those putting faith in me through their word."

So I realized this applied not just to the Apostles back then, but to everyone in the future putting faith in Him through the word of the Apostles, which would include anyone who reads Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and puts trust in Jesus. And what did He request? Well, in verse 24 He said, "Father, as to what you have given me, I wish that where I am, they also may be with me in order to behold my glory."

So He was requesting that all future believers would be with Him to behold His glory.

Ankerberg: Question.

Audience: When I studied with Jehovah's Witnesses, I remember sitting with a conductor and I said to him, "I will never, ever be convinced about the blood issue. I will never, ever give any of my children up for the blood issue." Ten years later I did that. I don't believe that I was deceived; I believed I was brainwashed. Do any of you feel the same way, that Witnesses are brainwashed?

Reed: Yes. It is definitely a form of mind control. The experts tell us that, technically, brainwashing means coercion at the time that you're being indoctrinated. Jehovah's Witnesses are not coerced at that time. Coercion does come in later on. But technically, it is mind control, and if you

read secular psychologists who write about mind control, they'll list a number of steps and those are the same steps Jehovah's Witnesses follow in their indoctrination. How else could someone stay inside a burning compound at Waco, Texas with their children? Well, people recognized that was mind control. Well, how else did you let your child bleed to death on the orders of the Watchtower Society? Jesus said, "What man of you, if his child or even his animal fell into a pit wouldn't pull him out on the Sabbath day?"

Well, of course, the Sabbath was a law for the Jews. Jesus said, "You'd break a law like that to pull your child out."

Well, even if blood transfusions were a law, God says, "Reach in and take your child out. Do the thing that will save the child's life."

People who don't do that are under mind control.

MacGregor: And I might say, too, that I wish I had known back in the days when I refused a blood transfusion and nearly died that the penalty in the old law of Israel for eating blood—which they equate to transfusing blood—was that you go outside the camp, wash your clothes and bathe in the water and be unclean until sundown. There you're clean again.

So, if you ate blood it was no big deal. How dare Jehovah's Witnesses say people are doomed to lose their eternal life! The penalty was not that great.

Audience: I left the organization in 1986 after watching The John Ankerberg Show and research and what I learned. And I sent in a letter of resignation and I heard through the grapevine weeks later, they said all kinds of lies about why I was disfellowshipped.

And I resigned. And I understand that they've made some changes regarding disfellowshipping and would you explain that and the process and how to actually have the final word as to when an individual is disfellowshipped?

Magnani: Well, the Jehovah's Witnesses are very concerned with legal action. In other words, if a person leaves of his own volition, the Watchtower organization wants to make absolutely certain that it doesn't look like there is being pressure put on that particular person for legal reasons. So I think in the last, oh, particularly 15 years, the organization has been very careful about that.

Audience: As Jehovah's Witnesses, most of them think that they are going to inherit the earth and plan to live on the earth in paradise and have animals and that kind of thing. How do you explain their earthly hope, the great crowd, the meek inheriting the earth? How do you explain that in view of the Scripture?

Reed: Well, Jehovah's Witnesses find people who don't already know God. People know the things around them; they know the life that they're experiencing. People who know God want to be in Heaven with Him. People who know Jesus look forward to doing to be with the Lord. People who don't yet know Jesus don't have that hope. And so the Watchtower publications are full of beautiful pictures of the earth—fancy homes, beautiful gardens—and these things are naturally appealing to the flesh. And if you're only thinking in the flesh and not in the Spirit, you're not drawn to going to Heaven with God.

I remember as a Jehovah's Witness actually walking door to door and people would look at one of the large houses, a big mansion we'd walk by and they'd say, "Well, when those people are destroyed at Armageddon, I'm going to get that house!" And that was very typical. I've heard many Jehovah's Witnesses say the same thing. So it's a fleshly, earthly desire that's being fulfilled by this idea of possessing the earth and possessing the riches that other people have. But the riches in Christ are far, far greater.

Cetnar: Amen.

Audience: Yes, I have a question concerning the Trinity. And bear in mind, this was penned after Jesus' ascension. This is 1 Corinthians 11:3, "I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ." So if Christ is equal to God, then why does it say that God is the head of Christ?

Cetnar: We're not talking about His nature here. They are both God. But it is talking about rank. I guess you could liken it to the President of the United States and us. We're all of humankind, but his rank is higher than ours.

Ankerberg: Yes. The same place where you get "The Father is greater than I." Not in essence, but the fact is, in terms of "job description." That's why the Son "humbled Himself, took on the form of a servant and became a man." Okay?

Cetnar: The husband is head of the wife but that doesn't make him better than her or it doesn't make him a different "kind" than

her. They're both humankind. So just because the Father is the head of Christ doesn't make them unequal.

Ankerberg: Yeah, the husband and the wife have different positions as far as God has ordained, and the same is true in terms of the Godhead. And you were going to say something here?

MacGregor: I was going to say, you should never build a doctrine on a single Scripture. Galatians 3:28 says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free men; there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ." That doesn't mean that one might not be the head of another or be in a higher position but there is no inferiority of nature because of race, color, anything like that, sex, whatever. We're all one in Christ.

Reed: John, let's not forget also with Jesus we have two natures here: we have Deity and we have humanity. And Christ Jesus is a man. In John chapter 14 it says, "The Father is greater than I," and yet a few verses earlier in verse 12 Jesus talks about how the works of the disciples will be greater than Jesus'. So it's a matter of where in Scripture in the context that we've got to concern ourselves when we discuss these words.

Cetnar: Who but God could compare Himself to God and say, "The Father is greater than I"? It would be ludicrous for one of us to say that.

Ankerberg: Let me ask you guys, one of the things that they will say about the doctrine of the Trinity is that they can't understand it, even if it's true. How would you answer that, Dave?

Reed: Well, I would say that we can't really expect to fully comprehend God. We have human brains that were designed to help us gather food, raise families, and survive here on the earth. We were created to have a relationship with God, but not necessarily to be able to look at Him and dissect Him and fully understand Him. We understand in the way we understand each other. You know, I understand my wife; we know each other; I know God. But if I were to actually analyze my wife as to where thoughts come from, how the chemicals and electrons work in the brain, you know, where is her personality? Is it in the spirit, in the heart, in the brain? I can't figure those things out. Well, the same way if we try to dissect God. He didn't mean for us to dissect Him; He meant for us to have a relationship with Him, which we can certainly do.

MacGregor: And the early Church had a common confession—we might call it an early creed—that said, “And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness.” And it goes on to say, “God who was revealed in the flesh.”

Ankerberg: Yes, and I think we've got to get a little humble here at what we're trying to explain. In other words, one of our old guests used to say that if you could understand all that God says, you'd **be** God! And the thing is, we aren't God, all right? Not only do we have questions about what God has told us, we've got questions about our own world and our own body that we can't understand. This thing that is just about blinding us here, which is light, okay? Scientists say it's got two properties. All right? One is wave and one is particle. Now, those are contradictory, and along the

way when the scientists saw it was contradictory, they had a real struggle with that until they did all the scientific tests and they found out, “Goodness' sakes! We don't understand it but it's both wave and particle at the same time and we can't explain it but the evidence is there, so we will hold it.”

See, you can't even explain when you turn a light switch on and this thing called light has wave and particle, if you can't explain that, when God says in the one true nature of the living God there are three Persons, we can't explain it but we better accept it if the evidence is there—I think.

Cetnar: That's right.

Audience: When I was being raised as one of Jehovah's Witnesses and I was just a little child, my mother taught me that I was just like an animal. That when I died, that I just died; I went into the ground. And yet if I would be loyal to Jehovah's organization, then I would be resurrected. And you have addressed the issue of the hundreds of children and adults who have died because of refusing blood transfusions. I think because of the false belief system as far as eternity that there are a lot of suicides. In my own family there were two attempted and one successful suicide, and I know when we listen to the testimonies here of those of us who have left, that's very consistent, that there are a lot of us who have family who have committed suicide. And I just wonder what your...I feel it should be addressed and I'd like to hear what you would have to say.

MacGregor: Well, there's not much hope in the Jehovah's Witnesses. You can never know that you're saved; you don't know it if you make it through Armageddon somehow

because after that you're into the thousand years and you're going to be tested. And even if you're faithful all the way to the end, are you saved? No. Because at the end of the thousand years, Satan will be let loose and you're going to be tested and many will fall away. But even if you pass the test of Satan and you're off into eternity and doing all the things you're supposed to do according to the Watchtower, if at any time you disobey the Watchtower government, the 144,000 on Mount Zion, Zap! That's the end of you. So, no matter how good a Jehovah's Witness you are, it's this hopelessness! Also, teaching that man is no better than an animal and he just dies like a beast and he's annihilated, that's a pretty dreary thought. And really, their whole religion is dreary. It's no wonder that there are suicides in the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Reed: In Romans chapter 8, even in the *New World Translation* the Jehovah's Witnesses use, it says, "Therefore those in union with Christ Jesus have no condemnation." So those who are in Christ should not be feeling condemned. But Jehovah's Witnesses often do feel condemned. I remember when I was an Elder, a Witness woman was very prominent in the congregation. She played the organ at the Kingdom Hall. She was a full-time Pioneer, going from house to house. She told me privately, she said, "David, I'm not going to make it through Armageddon."

And I said, "What? How can you say that? You're doing everything you're supposed to do."

She said, "I'm not good enough." She said, "Jehovah knows I'm not good enough; I'm not going to make it."

Well, as a Jehovah's Witness Elder I just tried to convince her she was good

enough. I didn't have the real answer. None of us are good enough. We don't make it to Heaven because we're good enough; we make it to Heaven because Jesus paid that price. He died for us and He was good enough. But Jehovah's Witnesses don't know that and it can be very depressing. They don't know that those who are in Christ have no condemnation. They feel condemned very often.

Ankerberg: Everybody knows that Jesus lived a perfect life, never sinned once. Just think if you could stand before God with Jesus' track record. Would you feel comfortable? Yes. The interesting thing is, we are justified by faith, all right?

We put our faith in Christ; then here's the transaction that the Bible says will take place: God makes, first of all, a judicial declaration about that sinner and says, "Look, we're going to make a transfer. We're going to impute your sin from you over here to Jesus who died and paid for every one of those sins."

So the sin is "justly" taken care of. God's not going to say, "Boys will be boys and let this sin get by." No. He's a holy, just God. Every sin will be punished. Either you can pay for your own sin—which is Hell, which is another thing we could talk about; but the fact is, you can pay for your own sin, which you don't want to do; or, you can give it to Jesus who paid for every sin, and as a gift offers to forgive you. But along with the imputation, which is the transferring of this track record—okay? Your sins are transferred to Jesus, imputed—that's what the word means. On the return side, Jesus imputes His righteousness to you. The Bible says, "He wraps His righteousness around you so that when God looks at you, He sees Jesus."

Okay? And again, it's not your works; and we've got hope; and it doesn't depend on us. It's the gift of God to us. It's fabulous! It's fabulous! How do you get it? You transfer your **trust**. A guy says, "Hey, I've got to really...." No, no. You're trusting your own works, passing out your booklets, this, the rule book, whatever. Transfer your trust from all of that into Jesus' hands. The moment you do, you're going to connect and the Lord Jesus says **He** will save you.

Question.

Audience: I think it's kind of really important to remember that the reason we all got into this condition in the first place is because we chose not to believe God. My question is, I know there's a lot of superstition and paranoia and doubt and a lot of mental illness in the Watchtower organization, and that the Lord said in His holy Scripture that, "I am the Lord, I changeth not." And with so many changes in doctrine of the many years affecting so many thousands of lives, in what type of ways have the many changes affected the mental health of Jehovah's Witnesses? And in addition to that, what types of resources for recovery and wholeness are out there and available for them?

Magnani: We have a book called, **Jehovah's Witnesses and the Problem of Mental Illness**, a good friend of mine, Dr. Gerald Bergman, has written it. I've spoken to him over the years and he says the best thing for a Jehovah's Witness is to get out of the cult. It's amazing what can happen. And, of course, generally, the reason why a Jehovah's Witness gets out of the cult is because he's unhappy, and then the great Healer, Jesus Christ, can come in. And he himself, who has seen so many

people...in fact, when he was an Elder—he was a Jehovah's Witness Elder—and he said that one day he decided that he would try to help some of his brothers and sisters who were having mental problems, not to the point that they had to be hospitalized but they had neurotic experiences and so forth, and since he had experience in this area he said that he would try to help. He said, "Duane, I was just absolutely overwhelmed! It was like a third of the congregation came and needed help. I couldn't even handle it. And then the other congregation down the road found out about the situation, that I was helping people, and they started coming to me." He said, "I couldn't handle it. I had to get out of the whole thing." And he said, "Since he became a Christian himself," he says that "the only answer is Jesus Christ and it's amazing how fast that healing comes."

Ankerberg: Yes. The Bible says that "unless you repent, you will perish." And repent, in its very first, fundamental component, is you have got to turn away from whatever you're holding onto to get you to Heaven to get rid of your sin problem and you've got to let go of that and you've got to grasp hold of the Savior. And you can't believe and grasp hold of the Savior until you let go of trusting this thing over here. Okay? He's the only Savior. You've got to turn—and this is the tough part—let go of that; hold on to Jesus. Just transfer your trust from over here to Him. Joan?

Cetnar: Yes, that's the first and most important thing we've got to do. We've been trusting in an organization and men are going to let you down every time. But trusting in Jesus, if you can do that, if you

can place that trust that you've been talking about. And then there are other things out there to help a person come out of that [BAD PLACE IN TAPE???] This is one of them. It's a convention for Ex-Jehovah's Witnesses. If you.....and you want to talk to someone, don't be afraid to come. There hotlines out there for people to call; phone lines all over the country that they can call and listen to a message and then get a live person if they want. There are ministries and support groups that are just waiting with loving arms to talk to you and let you do your talking to them. So there are a lot of things in place now for someone who want to get free of the organization. You don't have to commit suicide.

Audience: My question is not doctrinal, but what are the assets of the Jehovah's Witnesses as far as business holdings and investments?

Reed: A recent Dun & Bradstreet report indicated that the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York at \$1.25 billion in sales in one year—I believe it was 1990. The *New York Times* reported that the real estate holdings of the Watchtower Society in New York City are \$147 million wrapped up in 30 buildings. That's just a very small part of what the Watchtower Society owns. So it is a very wealthy organization.

MacGregor: In Canada their latest tax returns show that just sitting around in their bank account was \$30 million.

Ankerberg: But they're asking you for all kinds of contributions and help if you're a part of the Witnesses, right?

Cetnar: Right.

Audience: My question is, how does the Watchtower Society change someone's personality and also control their minds?

Magnani: Well, I didn't want to be a Jehovah's Witness. I wanted to continue going to school. So when I went back to Jehovah's Witnesses, I didn't want to go back but I still went. So if they can take somebody that really didn't want to do what he did—which was to give up my business, to give up my career, give up my school, change my entire life because I believed that the organization was right and I was wrong, then I think with somebody that is socialized into the group, in other words, maybe they're lonely—and I think this is one of the reasons why people become Jehovah's Witnesses. There's a knock at the door. The woman is going nuts with a couple of kids and she's having a hard time taking care of things and all of a sudden a nice woman is at the door talking about the Bible and a free Bible study and so forth. That is much more inviting than my situation was. But if you can take an extreme situation like mine and have somebody like me believe the organization, I think, when you talk mind control, David, it's the whole thing. Anybody can be controlled by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. I've met people who have genius I.Q.'s, I've met people of all types who are controlled because they believe them. And Jesus is the only answer.

Reed: There are several concrete steps involved in imposing mind control. These are the same steps that the Moonies use, the same steps that others use who exercise mind control. A person who begins studying with Jehovah's Witnesses starts

learning repetitious material over and over again. The person's answers that are in harmony with what they're being taught are rewarded with praise and condemnation. The person is very soon warned against all other teachers: educational institutions, religious, government, everyone else is controlled by the devil. You become fearful of these others. Another step is, they tell you to start coming to the meetings. Now, once you start going to the meetings, you're going five times a week and listening repetitively to the same material, again, over and over again, where people raise their hands and they're commended if they give the right answer. You're also told to break off your association with family and friends who don't want to become Witnesses. You talk to them, you try to get them to become Witnesses. If they won't, then you back away from them. You stop celebrating holidays. You stop going to mother's on Mother's Day. You stop gathering with the family at Christmastime. You become isolated. Now, some cults put their people into compounds surrounded by barbed wire; but with Jehovah's Witnesses, they have 15 million people. You couldn't put them in a compound. They use "mental" barbed wire to isolate you from other people. And once you're isolated, once you're following their instructions not to read apostate material, not to listen to other religious people on radio or TV, not to talk to people who have left the organization, you're totally under their control. And then they have this judicial system that will punish you if you break any of their rules. Then the control is complete.

Ankerberg: All right, we've only got time for one more question.

Audience: I was a Jehovah's Witness many years and I didn't realize that we could have taken blood fractions, part of blood. Could someone speak to that? Is this still true that Jehovah's Witnesses can take different parts of blood?

Reed: In 1982 the *Awake!* Magazine came out with a "new truth" and the new truth was that you could take Factor 8 and Factor 9 that hemophiliacs use. You could take albumen from blood, and you could take your own blood back into your body if it's circulated through a machine. Even though it might have gone through a mile of tubing, you can take it back into your own body. But you could not take white blood cells or red cells or platelets. In fact, a doctor, Dr. Moramoto, recently wrote in the *Journal of Medical Ethics* that Jehovah's Witnesses can take all the ingredients of plasma, but they can't take plasma. So these arbitrary rulings from the Watchtower Society make it very clear that they don't derive their prohibition against blood from the Bible. It's just from their own imagination and it's arbitrary.

Ankerberg: What do you say we have a word of prayer and, Joan Cetnar, why don't you lead people that are watching in a prayer that they might say. They might have listened enough and heard enough evidence to realize that they've been deceived and they want to make a change and they recognize they're sinners and they'd sure like to go to Heaven. And they realize the Scriptures are saying that Jesus is God and they'd like to have a real personal relationship with Jesus if Jesus would establish it with them. There's a prayer that they could say and I'd like you to lead them. They could say it at home if you'd say it on

the platform. Just kind of sentence by sentence. And if they would say this, if they feel in their heart that they would want to say this, that the Lord Jesus would come in and forgive their sins and be their Savior. And the promises that are in Scripture would apply to them. Would you lead them in that prayer and you folks that are watching, if you would like to say this prayer along with Joan, you're saying it to God. If you mean it, God will look down and He'll see that you do mean it and He'll save you tonight. Joanie.

Cetnar: Dear Heavenly Father, I realize that I've been following a [TAPE RAN OUT] and that You would lead me and guide me through your Holy Spirit to where I need to go. Help me to understand the Bible. Father, just help me to know what I must do. I'm relying on You alone. I'm trusting in You. Please forgive me and let me be your child. Help me to love you, Lord, and to place all of my trust in You. For I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. [EDIT, TAPE RAN OUT]

Cetnar: Dear Jehovah, I realize after all the information that I have received that I've been following an organization. Jehovah, I thought that I was following you. But I realize now that there is no connection between you and this organization, and I've come to see that it is Jesus and knowing Him that I must do. So, Jehovah, help me to understand and to forgive me, Lord, for trusting in an organization instead of trusting in you alone. Lord Jesus, I ask you to come into my heart, to forgive me for what I've done, for the deception that I gave to others. Lord, just take this away from me and forgive me for all that I have done and make me your child. Fill me with your

Holy Spirit, Lord, so that I can understand your Word and so that you can lead me to truth. I thought I had the truth, but I didn't have the truth. I understand now that Jesus is the truth. And so, Lord, lead me, lead me to where you want me to go so that I can understand your Word. I want to be your child. Thank you, Jesus. I accept your forgiveness and I pray in your precious name. Amen.

Ankerberg: If you prayed that prayer, I'd sure like you to let us know, and we'll try to help in all the ways that we can if you'll let us know how we can help you. And David and Lorri and Duane and Joan, for all the information that you've given to us and for your time and for your lives and for the great love that you've shown in answering these questions, we want to say "Thank you for being our guests." And we trust that these folks that have listened to all of this information, it'll lead them to the true and living Christ. Thanks for being with us.

