

Jehovah's Witnesses #2 - the Ten Misapplied Texts Pt. 1

by Mike Theule

This sermon explores the Jehovah's Witnesses' misapplied texts and examines the biblical evidence for Christ's eternity and deity.

Duration: 45:23

Scripture: Exodus 3:14, Micah 5:2, John 8:58, Romans 4:8, Hebrews 7:2

Topics: "False Religions", "Trinity Doctrine"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that worshiping riches is not the same as worshiping God. He refers to Isaiah 43-45 and Galatians 4:8 to highlight the importance of recognizing that there is only one God by nature. The preacher also discusses the authority of the Watchtower and the need to break it down in order to interpret verses correctly. He mentions the example of Christ's submission to the Father and explains that this submission is temporary until the mediatorial office of Christ comes to an end. The preacher concludes by mentioning the concept of the Trinity and the belief in one God by nature, which is why Jehovah's Witnesses identify themselves as such.

Transcript

Before we get into these misapplied texts, John 8, 52 through 9, verse 4. In this 1950 edition, by the way, this was the standard recognized edition, the only one available, clear up until 1965. Now they used this until 1965. So for 15 years, this was the final authority.

Now look at John 8, 58. Jesus said to them, most truly I say to you, before Abraham into existence, I have been. Okay, now, this I have been has been inserted here because the Jehovah's Witnesses want to get away from linking what Jesus said in this verse to what Jehovah said to Moses in Exodus 3, 14.

Remember when Moses was at the burning bush? He said, what is your name? Who shall I say sent me when the people shall ask? And God spoke from the burning bush. And I believe this was a theophany. This was Christ speaking to Moses, saying, I am is my name.

And that's my name forever. I am that I am. And it, it's literally translated, he who is the eternal one.

So the, the tetragrammaton that the Jehovah's Witnesses use on the back of their cars, the YHWH, which is the, the root from which they derived Jehovah is that statement. I am. Now, if the Jehovah's Witnesses

wanted to be more correct, they should, if they wanted to call themselves by God's name, they should say I am because that is his name.

And Jehovah is only a, a traditional word which people use to identify him. Now there's only a, say a one chance in five that Jehovah is correct. And it's probably even less than that because there's not even a J in the Hebrew language.

So the YHWH has been used by the Jehovah's Witnesses and by many scholars as the base for God's name. And they insert vowels in between those consonants, but they don't really know which vowels go in. So there's no hard and fast rule that Jehovah is the name.

Okay. Now it's very important to look at John 8 58 and realize what Jesus was actually saying. He was saying, before Abraham sprang into existence, I am.

He's using the same statement said to Moses back in Exodus 3 14. But look at the footnote at the bottom of the page and see what the Jehovah's Witnesses say about this. You have seen Abraham.

Has Abraham seen you? I have been ago, Amy, after the heiness infinitive clause and hence properly rendered in the perfect indefinite tense. Okay. They're trying to say that this is not the same as the Exodus 3 14.

And the reasons they say it's not the same is this is properly rendered. I have been in the perfect indefinite tense of the Greek verb to be. There is no such Greek verb.

This is a complete fabrication. The perfect indefinite tense is a watchtower fabrication. It's a lie to cover a lie.

And later they've corrected it. Now there's no way they can say that this is a mistake. You don't make mistakes in your footnotes.

The footnotes are to prove that you didn't make a mistake in the text. So this is a, it's just a bold, flat lie. There is no such tense, but they had to get away from the fact that Jesus Christ said, I am, and they, they have gone on record as saying it's better to have a lie told than to disrupt the unity.

So we'll go into that next week. Okay. Now in the footnotes, in the margin of the New American Standard, it will say, I have been as a possibility.

That's a possibility. But when you say it's properly rendered because of such and such a Greek tense, that is an unjustifiable lie. And it's a, it's scholastic dishonesty.

So we have the possibility, the, it can be translated, I have been, but we have the, in the main margin or in the main text, we have, I am, in almost every Bible you'll see, it'll say, I am, because that's the way it's generally, yes. Well, I'm not sure exactly what the technical tense would be, but with God, everything is the present. There's no past, future.

He looks at history through, he's not bound by time and space. When he looks at history, everything is now. He can see back from before the foundation of the world and Christ is the center.

And he looks forward into eternity and he sees time as just a little parenthesis in the long spans of eternity. Right. Right.

I have been is just one little part of that tense. It also encompasses, I have been, I will be. Back in Exodus 3.14, they say, I will prove to be.

So they, they messed that up also. Question. Right.

It's, it's ho-on in the Septuagint. It's the equivalent statement. It's not ego ame.

I had Jim Harris go over that at length and he wrote Greek on a page that long explaining that ego ame is the, is the exact equivalent statement of what the Father or Christ said to Moses in the burning bush. Okay. Any more questions? Okay.

Okay. That's a, that's a real tricky verse because the Jehovah's Witnesses don't like to admit that Christ is a God, unless you're about that verse. Now, if you call them a polytheist, they'll get upset because they, they say they believe in only one God, but they say Christ is a God.

He's not the almighty God, but he's a mighty God. Then they'll classify Satan in the same category and say, he is called the God of this system of things. So he is a God.

The problem we have to deal with is there is only one God by nature. You can make a God out of anything you want to, but that does not make him a God by nature. If you worship riches, you can make money your God, but money is not a God by nature.

There's only one God by nature. And we find that in Isaiah 43 through 45, very heavily emphasized. We'll look at a couple of those verses.

And in the New Testament, Galatians 4.8 is the main verse that we can fall back on. This is very important on this particular topic. Galatians 4.8, albeit at that time, not knowing God, you were in bondage to them that are by nature, no gods.

Okay. You see that verse, it's talking about people being in bondage to demons, but those demons are by nature, no gods. They are called gods.

They are supernatural beings, but they're not gods. They'll use the verse, there are gods many and Lords many from the Old Testament, from Psalms. But even though we know there are many gods, many Lords, there's only one by nature.

You have to keep going back to that point because they'll get you going around and circles on that. Right. Okay.

We've, we talked a little bit about that last week and we're going to go into it some more this morning. Before we get into these misapplied texts, I've got to say one thing. Without the material we went over last week, you're going to be crippled in using the material for today because you've got, you've got to have a foundation for interpreting these verses.

The thing you've got to do before you can discuss a doctrinal verse with a Jehovah's witness is to break down the authority of the watchtower. Once you've shown that the watchtower is dishonest and inconsistent and unreliable, then in the light of that, you can interpret verses. But before you do that, you'll be going around and around in circles.

They'll be saying, this is your opinion. The watchtower says such and such. So unless you demoralize them at the start and prove to them that the New World Translation is dishonest, then it's almost fruitless to discuss anything else because they'll always go back to the New World Translation as their final authority and they'll say, but the watchtower translates it this way.

And then you're nowhere. You're back where you were before. Okay.

The first verse, Revelation 3.14. We touched on this last week. These things sayeth the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God. Now the New World Translation says the beginning of the creation by God.

They take that of God and they change it to by God to show that they're talking about Christ being created by the Father. If we look into the Greek, we see that it's properly translated of God, not by God. Now the problem we have at this point is the word beginning.

Does that word beginning mean first thing created? It says beginning of the creation of God. So if you look in the footnote in the New American Standard, you'll see it has two possibilities there. It's talking about the word beginning as being properly translated or an alternate translation being origin or source.

If we use the word origin or source in place of the word beginning, the verse becomes more clear. These things sayeth the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the origin of all God's creation as the New English Bible states. The origin or the prime source.

There's about five different translations that have origin or source or prime source in there. Okay, we have any questions on that? Sometimes a Jehovah's Witness will say, no way can the word beginning be translated origin. But back in John 1.1 in their 1950 edition, I'll read this to you.

First word, originally. Now we have the word arche in the Greek. Arche is the same word in Revelation 3.14 as it is in John 1.1. They have it translated originally the word was and the word was with God and the word was a God.

Okay, so there we have a prime example that the word arche can mean either beginning or origin or originally depending on the context. So we can't prove conclusively that it should be translated origin or source, but neither can they prove conclusively that it should be beginning and it makes Christ a creature. It does not.

If you read it in the proper sense, it shows that Christ is the origin of all God's creation, which is also borne out in Colossians 1.16 through 24. Number two, Colossians 1.15. Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature? Okay, this one is a little bit easier to prove conclusively. Okay, now the word that we're dealing with here is the word firstborn.

And the word firstborn, the Jehovah's Witnesses will tell you, is equivalent to first created. They want you to see that word and think Christ is a creature. They want you to think Jehovah created Christ.

But let's look at what the word firstborn really means. Okay, the word firstborn in the Greek is prototokos, which means the primary one. We talked a little bit about this last week.

We'll go into it in detail. Prototokos is the word used in this passage. The Jehovah's Witnesses want you to think that the word is first created, which is a separate Greek word, which is protoktosis, a completely

separate word.

If Paul wanted us to realize that Christ was a creature, he would have used the proper word, since there were two. Since he used *prototokos*, the primary one, there is no way we can construe this verse to mean that Christ was the first thing created. By the way, the text that we're going from is taken from *Masters of Deception*, page 12 through about page 27.

It's got all these verses listed, and after that, it's got an explanation of each one. And if you want detailed information on this, I suggest you get the book from the bookshack. It's well worth the money.

It's got some of the best articles on Jehovah's Witnesses that I've ever seen. It's written in a little bit, the language is a little too strong in the book to hand it to a Jehovah's Witness and say, read this, because they'll be offended. And, you know, that's unfortunate.

But you can read it and kind of tone it down a little bit, so you don't turn these guys away at the door, just thinking you're coming down hard on them. You don't want to do that with a Jehovah's Witness. With a Mormon, yes.

But a Jehovah's Witness, they feed on that. And they think when you're doing this, when you're calling the shots and don't pull any punches, that you're persecuting them. And that, in their mind, reinforces their belief that they are correct, because if they don't get persecution, then they're of the world.

But they go out of their way to get it. So don't give it to them. It just kind of feeds the fire.

Question. It's the same word. The word's primary one are an explanation of firstborn.

We're going into that. Now, in verse 18, it calls Christ the firstborn from the dead. Now, if it doesn't mean first created, then what does it mean? That's the problem.

In verse 18, Christ is said to be the firstborn from the dead. Now, was Christ the first one raised from the dead? No. Christ raised Lazarus from the dead before he died.

Therefore, that's at least one instance where somebody was raised from the dead before Christ. So that would eliminate the possibility of Christ being the first one raised. Back in the Gospels and in the Old Testament, there were many more people raised from the dead before Christ.

But Christ was the primary one. Right. But Christ was the primary one raised from the dead.

It doesn't say anything about firstborn from the dead in a glorified body. It just says firstborn from the dead. Question.

That's true. But that's not what they're talking about in this verse. You know, you can say, well, he was the first one to be raised from the dead that could walk through walls.

You know, there's there's lots of things you could say about that. But we're talking about the word firstborn, meaning the primary one. In Colossians 1:17, it says, and he is before all things.

If Christ was before all things, then he couldn't be a creature. Because things have been created and Christ is before all things. So this the whole context of Colossians bears out the fact that Christ is not a creature.

Look back at the beginning of the verse we're looking at, who is the image of the invisible God. Christ is the image, the express image of the father. He is God in a body.

So keep that in mind when you're discussing this verse. What does God look like? Yeah. Nobody has seen him at any time.

Okay. Now look at Micah 5.2. Micah 5.2 is a very important verse. You got to make sure that you remember that one.

But thou Bethlehem, Epaphratha, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall come forth unto me one that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from old, from everlasting. You see the significance of this verse? Christ's goings forth are from everlasting. Now you can't have a beginning if your goings forth are from everlasting because everlasting goes back as far as you want to go and beyond.

So that verse coupled with Hebrews 7.2 are proof that Christ is not a creature. Question? Okay. Now the father has never been seen by anyone and we don't say that Christ is the father.

Does that explain a little bit? There's a lot of confusion. When we say God, a lot of times we mean the father. Sometimes we mean Christ.

So it's best when we're talking about that, whenever we can think of it, when we want to be specific, use the father. No man has seen the father at any time. Even when Moses was getting the law, God put him in the cleft of a rock and his glory passed before him.

That wasn't the father, that was Christ. So even in the Old Testament where it says the angel of the Lord or the Lord or God, whenever somebody appears to an Old Testament saint, it's never the father, it's always Christ because he is the Word of God. Right.

But many times the Jehovah's Witness does not have an accurate knowledge of what we believe, but he thinks he does. So in his mind, we believe that there are three gods in one or one God acting in three capacities. But neither one of those is correct.

We believe that the Bible teaches that there is only one God by nature. And this God is manifested to us in three persons, distinct and separate, the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. And we can prove from scripture that each one of these persons is God, yet there's only one God.

That's the problem. I can't logically understand how they can come together and be one. But I cannot, from the evidence in scripture, say anything different than within the unity of the one God there exists three persons because there is only one God.

And no matter what you say about other gods, there's only one God by nature. And when we talk about a God, we don't have to mention a specific name because there's only one. You can't confuse them with anybody else.

There's one God. That's one of the reasons the Jehovah's Witnesses call themselves Jehovah's Witnesses. They have to be identified with Jehovah because they believe there's so many other gods they don't want to be confused.

Okay, any more on that verse? Right, let's look that up. Hebrews 7, verse 3. Here it talks about Melchizedek, who is a type of Christ. And Christ is called a priest, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedek.

And Melchizedek, in the Old Testament, there's no genealogy or records given of him because he is a type of Christ. And Christ had no beginning of days nor end of life. He is eternal.

And verse 3 says, without father, without mother, without genealogies, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually. So that verse, coupled with Micah 5.2, is evidence that Christ is eternal. Also, Christ is worshiped.

We're not going to get into this. This is a study in itself. But Christ is worshiped all through the New Testament.

And especially when we pray to Christ, that's an act of worship. And in John 20.28, Thomas says to Christ, my Lord and my God. If Christ was not his God, Christ would have stopped that right then and there and said, wait a minute, I may be your Lord, but I'm not your God.

But he accepts that worship and that statement from Thomas as being true. And he says, blessed are those that realize this, although not having seen it. Okay, the main difference here in the New World Translation is they have the statement, my Lord and my God, in quotes, with an exclamation point after God, saying that Thomas here is using the name of God in vain.

He's swearing in front of Christ, saying my Lord and oh my God type thing. That's the Jehovah's Witness explanation of this verse. From the very first chapter of John to the very last, the theme is that Christ was God in a body.

And we can see all through the book. Well, it seems that you get a lot of different explanations on what Thomas was thinking when he said that, but we really don't know. All we know is what the Bible says.

And since Christ is truth, he would not let a false statement like this be recorded in God's Word for all time. Now, if this was wrong, if this was false doctrine, it wouldn't be in the Bible. So we've got to accept it as being true.

Okay. Now, we had a question last week on Proverbs 8, 22 and 24. That's one of the three main verses that the Jehovah's Witnesses use to prove that Christ is a creature.

And real quick, in Proverbs 8, 22 through 24, it talks about wisdom personified, and that wisdom personified is Christ. Now, in 1 Corinthians 1, 24, Christ is called the power and the wisdom of God. Now, was there ever a time when the power and wisdom of God never existed? That is the statement you've got to ask the Jehovah's Witnesses.

There never was a time when the power and wisdom of God did not exist. They say that when they're talking about this verse in Proverbs, when it says, when there was no depths, I was brought forth. They take that statement brought forth to mean that Christ was created by Jehovah at this point.

But if he was, and he is the power and the wisdom of God, as the Bible says, then the Father was without his power and his wisdom, and he was before that time. So this really doesn't prove anything. Let me read you a quote from the Masters of Deception, page 16.

What does this text mean? The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old. In the dim ages of antiquity, before the worlds were formed, beyond the beginning of time, it was decreed in the eternal counsels of God that the Son of God would be the wisdom and power by which the worlds were to be made. This is not to say that the Son was created at this point, for wisdom declares, I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him, Proverbs 8.30. Notice the word always.

The Son was always beside the Father, but now wisdom becomes the Father's master workman. It is in this sense that wisdom was brought forth. Or to put it another way, the wisdom of God became active in creation.

And we saw this in Colossians 1.16. So that's the sense of the passage. There's really no problem here because you can't say Christ was created from this. It just doesn't make sense to say God was foolish before he created wisdom.

Okay, now here's the one that says, I go to my Father, for my Father is greater than I. John 14.28. Is everybody familiar with Philippians 2 verse 5? Okay, let's have Philippians handy when we look at this verse. Philippians 2.5, that kind of explains it. That whole section is good.

We looked at verse 9 last time. And verse 10 and 11, keep this mind in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he was existing in God's form, gave no consideration to a seizure, namely that he should be equal to God. Now, the Jehovah's Witnesses say that this verse in Philippians is talking about Christ seizing the power that belonged to the Father.

But what it really means is when Christ existed in the form of God, he did not consider equality with God a thing to cling to. So he let go of it. He laid aside the attributes he had with the Father and the prerogatives he had as God.

And he voluntarily laid them aside and became a slave. Now, this verse that we're talking about in John 14.28, Christ was speaking as a man, not as God. Christ was a perfect man when he was on earth.

And the main statement to remember on this verse is when Christ was on earth, he was less than himself. And then take the Jehovah's Witness back to Philippians 2, 5 and 6. Christ was less than himself. He laid aside the glory he had with the Father.

So if Christ was less than himself, of course the Father is greater, but only positionally. Okay. Now, when we talk about positionally inferior or the Father was positionally greater, we have the illustration of a family.

We have the woman who has the man as the head, and then we have the man who has Christ as the head. But when you're talking about a family relationship, the man is greater than the woman. But the woman is not inferior in essence or quality.

She is of the same essence and quality. She is only positionally inferior. And Christ is not saying here that the Father is better than I. Another illustration I use sometimes is, I'm a fireman.

The captain at my station is greater than I, but he's not better. He's just in a higher position. I am no less of a human being than my captain.

And Christ is no less God than the Father. But at this point in time, the Father is positionally greater. So just remember, one time I had to say to a lady, at least ten times, Christ was less than himself before she

finally understood what I was saying.

So just remember that. Okay. Number five.

Mark 13, 31, and 32. Christ said, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

Okay. Now Christ didn't know that because he chose not to know. You can again go back to Philippians where he laid aside the power he had and the prerogatives he had, took on the form of a slave.

Now he resisted all the temptations and everything that we go through as a perfect man, not God. He did not have the powers of God when he was on earth because he chose not to use them. It was like a captain sailing under sealed orders in wartime.

He can open those letters, those orders, any time he wants, but he chooses for different reasons to sail under sealed orders. The people that give him the orders don't want him to know any more than necessary. When Christ was on earth, he knew that if he had all the knowledge and the power of God, then he couldn't be a perfect man and resist all these temptations.

There wouldn't be any question about it. Of course, as God, he could resist anything Satan could throw his way, but he voluntarily limited himself. But you've got to remember, when Christ rose from the dead, he received all power and all authority, and now Christ knows the day of the hour because now Christ has all the knowledge that he once had before the foundation of the world, all the power he had with the Father.

Number six, it is written, the head of every man is Christ, the head of the woman is the man, the head of Christ is God. Okay, here we have a divine example. We have the father and the son and the husband and the woman in kind of a chain of command.

We also have the father committed to fulfill the wishes of the son, and we have the son committed to fulfill the wishes of the father. Now, you cannot have true submission unless there is equality. The best you can get is obedience.

You can't get submission from a dog because he's not on the same level as a person. You can get obedience, but in order to have true submission, it must be done voluntarily. So we have the example written for us to raise our family, that even the son is subject to the father, but this only takes place until the Christ's office of mediator comes to an end.

Right now he is the mediator, and before the foundation of the world, he was the lamb slain. So the mediatorial office of Christ goes back to past ages, but there is coming a time when Christ is going to put down all rule and all authority and all power, and that office is going to come to an end. And I don't know what's going to happen after that, but the example here is so we can raise our families and have a divine principle to look up to.

It does not mean that Christ is inferior to the father. Just as we talked about that woman is not inferior to the man. Is that clear to everybody? John 16.23 and Luke 2.51. This verse talks about Christ being in subjection to Joseph and Mary.

We read, where Jesus went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them. Does this mean that Jesus was less than Mary and Joseph at this point? No. Christ at that point was positionally inferior to Mary and Joseph, but we can apply the same verse to 1 Corinthians 11 and show because Christ subjected himself to his parents.

It wasn't because he was less than or inferior to them. It was because that's the way it should have been done and that's the way he did it. About the mediator, we've got 1 Timothy 2.5. Christ is the one mediator between God and men.

And in 1 Corinthians 15.24, we gather that this office is only temporary. Number 7, when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that put all things under him that God may be all in all. 1 Corinthians 15.28. Revelation 13.8 is the reference for the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.

And that's when the mediatorial office began, way back then, before the foundation of the world. And in Hebrews 1.2, the Father used the Son as mediator to create the worlds. However, this is a quote from Masters of Deception.

However, there is a time coming when Christ's work as mediator will finally come to an end. And this comes about, or takes place, when the mediatorial Son puts down all rule, all authority, and all power. The Son then enters back into the former state of equality which he shared with the Father before the creation of the universe.

And throughout the endless ages of eternity, the triune God Jehovah will permeate the universe with his love and glory. And God will then be immediately known by all. The problem with the verse here is that Jehovah's Witnesses try to prove that this office, or this subjection, is going to extend on into eternity.

But I don't think they can prove that from this. Any questions? Exactly. Just like we talked about before, you can only have subjection when there's equality.

Now, there wouldn't be any problem, in my mind, if Christ was to remain in subjection. But from what we get from Scripture, it's going to be temporary. And, you know, I don't have the final say-so, and I can't say, you know, this is how it's going to be for sure.

But there is no problem here, as far as I'm concerned, either way. But they use this verse to teach that Christ is inferior to the Father. This is a good one, number eight.

Jesus said to him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is God. Luke 18, 19. Okay.

We've got to realize, when Christ made this statement, he is not stating that I am not good. He's asking the guy a question. Why do you call me good? Do you realize that there is only one that's good, and he's God? Do you realize that I'm God? He's not making a statement, he's asking a question.

He's trying to draw this guy, draw some faith out of this guy. And at no time does Christ say, I'm not good, only God is good. Jehovah's Witnesses want to infer that's what he's saying.

He's saying, do you realize what you're saying? Christ claimed to be God. He's not just, as some teach, a good teacher. Either he was God, or he was the biggest liar that ever came upon the face of the earth.

You can't have it both ways. So Christ is saying to this guy, do you realize I'm God?

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