

Sects and Cults

Jehovah's Witnesses' Mission Methodology

Why have the JW grown with leaps and bounds? They have left the established churches way behind in growth rate! What can we learn from them?

1. Every believer is a minister

The Watchtower Society mobilizes every member for their outreach program. They have no "comfortable pews." They have neither time nor room for inactive members. Their goal is to evangelize at all costs. Time is short! Let God Be True declares that "each Jehovah's Witness is a minister of the Gospel." When a convert is baptized, he is with this rite inducted into service. The latter is called "publishing", i.e. propagandizing, selling literature and teaching prospective members. A publisher devotes an average of about fifteen hours a month to proclaim his message; he attends four or five classes a week in the Kingdom Hall, and participates in Bible study groups. Children are also recruited for mission work. Even shut-ins are encouraged to write letters or have a telephone ministry.

The JW put us to shame with their dedication to their cause, which we believe to be unBiblical. Shouldn't we recapture the Biblical teaching of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:9)? Are we not called to be ambassadors of Christ in our apocalyptic times? (2 Cor. 5:20).

2. Literature

Literature has been an important feature in the growth of the Society. When it publishes a hardcover book, it starts with a first edition of 2.5 million copies. *The Truth That Leads To Eternal Life*, a doctrinal text, became the fourth-largest best seller of all times with 74 million copies in print. The *Watchtower* and *Awake* I have a total monthly circulation of almost 40,000,000.

These magazines have been excellent tools to gain entrance into the homes of prospective converts. Even in our television age, the use of attractive and readable literature still should be encouraged. This is especially true in underdeveloped countries, where the printed page is highly valued.

3. Methods of proselytizing

I have met JW's in different parts of Canada, yet their approach was always the same. They don't come to your door alone. They go out two-by-two's, and use a standardized speech. In their opening statement, they mention the calamitous world conditions and the evils of our times. Nothing is left to chance. These lay-missionaries are well trained in a carefully developed seven-step program.

"The first step is to get a Watchtower book or magazine into the hands of the householder. Each doorstep sermon concludes with an offer of a *Watchtower* publication."

"The second step is the 'back call' which is designed to encourage the purchaser to read and study the book(s) he has received."

"As a third step the Witness tries to get the prospect to agree to attend a weekly home Bible study session on the book(s) in question."

"The fourth step is to invite the prospective convert to join one of the area study groups."

"The fifth step is to invite the new candidate to attend the 'Watchtower Study' in a Kingdom Hall."

"As a sixth step the new candidate is asked to help bring in other people by calling on his neighbours even as someone called on him."

"The seventh and final step is to encourage the convert to be regular in his attendance at the various meetings, and to convince him that he must dedicate himself to God's service through water baptism." (pp. 195-197 *Dynamic Religious Movements*, edited by David J. Hesselgrave).

Since 1975, the Society has had its set-backs. Date-setting and its failures, internal strife and de-fellowshipping, have contribute to a first-time loss of membership. Yet, it is still a sect, whose members keep on knocking at doors in search for converts. They work and wait for the coming utopia. But we await the One of whom it is written: "Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him" (Rev. 1:7).

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