



WIN Program: Witnessing in Neighborhoods

Advanced Class on Jehovah's Witnesses

Week Five: The Cross and Salvation

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CROSS OR STAKE?

There are three passages that clearly indicate a cross and not a stake. In John 20:25 Thomas says: "**The other disciples therefore said unto him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said unto them, 'Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger in into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.'**" (KJV) (underlines added) Also, The New World Translation uses the plural form of nail as we can see here: "**Consequently the other disciples would say to him: 'We have seen the Lord!' But he said to them: 'Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print of the nails and stick my hand into his side, I will certainly not believe.'**" (NWT) (underlines added) In John, Thomas used the plural form of nail meaning two or more nails were used. The January 15, 1966 WATCHTOWER is in agreement with the plural form of nail on page 63: "**In one instance, he invited Thomas to inspect the wounds inflicted in his hands by means of the nails.'**" (underlines added)(4) The Watchtower March 15th 1997 on page 6 echoes the plural use nail: "**'Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print of the nails and stick my hand into his side, I will certainly not believe,' Thomas declared.'**" (underlines added) If Jesus was impaled on a stake, how many nails were needed for His hands?

Jesus told Peter that he would die with outstretched hands in John 21:18,19: "**'I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead where you do not want to go.'** Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him 'Follow me!'"(NIV) With Peter's hands outstretched, how was he impaled on a stake?

Matthew says in 27:37, "**Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**"(NIV) (underline added) If Jesus died on a stake, Matthew would have said, "above his hands." Because Matthew said "above his head," Jesus must have died on a cross.

Written By Christian Witnesses

<http://www.christianwitnesses.net/88501.html>

Salvation: What Does it Mean to Be a Christian?

Theologically speaking, a Christian is someone who has received the Lord Jesus as Savior ([John 1:12](#)), trusts Him alone for the forgiveness of sins ([Acts 4:12](#)), has put no trust in his own efforts ([Isaiah 64:6](#)) to please God, and repented from his/her sins ([Mark 1:15](#)).

Experientially speaking, the life of a Christian does not consist only of theological knowledge. It is theology that defines who Jesus is and what He has done, but it is not the end of all things. We are Christians who believe the above points, yes, but we have a living and open relationship with the Lord Jesus. We experience Him through His indwelling Spirit. As Christians, we seek to do the will of the Lord, to follow in His footsteps, and to honor and glorify God in all he does.

It is not necessary as a Christian to perform good works IN ORDER to please God because, first of all, our good deeds are but filthy rags to God ([Isaiah 64:6](#)) and, most important, we are made righteous in the eyes of God by the finished work of Jesus on the cross (Rom. 5). This is one of the areas where the cults error. They confuse good works with the forgiveness of sins. They combine the two and teach that God will not accept us if we are not trying to be good. Because they have a wrong view of who Jesus is, they have a wrong view of salvation.

A common objection to this doctrine of justification by faith is that if a Christian believes in God the way I say, then he does not need to do anything good, that he could then go out and sin all he wanted. First of all, this objection is answered in Romans 6. We are not saved for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification ([1 Thess. 4:7](#)). We do not use the grace of God to sin. Second, a Christian is called to be Holy ([1 Pet. 1:16](#)). Third, a Christian is called to do good works ([Eph. 2:10](#)); it is just that these works are not combined with our faith to merit the forgiveness of our sins. They are, instead, a natural result of our saved condition; we do good works *because* we are Christians, not to *become* Christians.

Additionally, being a Christian means that you are serving the true Jesus, not a false one. In order for a person to follow Jesus, he must first accurately understand who He is. If someone called their pet iguana Jesus, even though he had great faith in Jesus the iguana, his faith is useless. Faith is only as good as the object in which it is placed.

The Mormon Jesus is the brother of the devil begotten through sexual intercourse from a god and goddess who used to be people on another planet (Mormon Doctrine, by Bruce McConkie, p. 321). The Jehovah's Witness Jesus is Michael the archangel who became a man, died on a torture stake, did not rise from the dead in the same body he died in, and then went back to being an angel (Aid to Bible Understanding, p. 1152; New Heavens and a New Earth, p. 30). The New Age Jesus is a man in tune with the divine consciousness. In opposition to this, the Jesus of Christianity is both God and Man. See *The Two Natures of Jesus* for more information on this.

Being a Christian Means Fellowship with Jesus

Why did God create? Was there some lack in God that moved Him to create the universe and man in it? Was God lonely? We can't fully answer these questions, but we can look into the Bible for clues to their answer.

[1 John 4:8](#) says that God is love. [John 3:16](#) says that "...God so loved the world He gave..." The nature of love is to give. It is "other" centered. It focuses on another. Read 1 Cor. 13 for confirmation of this. That is why God gave His Son. That is why, I believe, that God created us: to love us, to give to us Himself which is the very best thing in the universe. But sin entered the picture and God, in His loving mercy, sent His Son into the world to save the world.

Love is not a doctrine, it is an experience, an action. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve walked with God. They actually walked with the creator of the universe. They had fellowship with Him. Fellowship is an intimate communion between two or more persons. Adam and Eve had this intimate communion with the Lord. But when they sinned, that fellowship was broken. God then shed blood, by killing an animal to get the skins, and covered Adam and Eve. Incidentally, Jesus said in [John 6:46](#) that no one has ever seen the Father. If Adam and Eve were walking with God in the Garden of Eden, but it wasn't the Father, then who was it. It must have been Jesus.

So God sought Adam and Eve, remember they hid themselves from Him. In [Exodus 25:8](#), God told the Israelites to build a sanctuary so that He might dwell among His people. In [John 1:14](#), Jesus, God in flesh, dwelt again among His people. In [1 Cor. 1:9](#) we are called by God to be in fellowship with Jesus. In these statements are profound clues. We are called to have a personal relationship, the way it was in the Garden of Eden, with Jesus. This can only be done through Jesus.

Additionally, the word for 'fellowship' in the Greek is the same word used for 'communion.' When we partake of communion, we are partaking in fellowship with the Lord. Communion is a covenantal sign of the promise of God to give us eternal life and it is representative in that sense of God's promises to be with His people. But the real communion, the real fellowship with the Lord, is through the indwelling Holy Spirit who always bears witness of Jesus ([John 15:26](#)). Therefore, the Christian, the true Christian, will have an intimate and real personal relationship with the Lord Jesus.

The cultist cannot have this intimate and personal relationship with Jesus. First, because their Jesus is false ([Matt. 24:24](#)). Second, because their Jesus is not prayed to the way the Jesus of the Bible is ([Zech. 13:9](#) with [1 Cor. 1:1-2](#); [Acts 7:55-60](#)); third, because their Jesus is not worshiped equally with the Father ([John 5:22-23](#); [Matt. 2:2,11](#); [14:33](#); [28:9](#); [John 9:35-38](#); [Heb. 1:6](#)); and fourth, because their Jesus is not their Lord and God ([John 20:28](#); [Heb. 1:8](#)).

The Jesus of the cultist is not God (he might be one god among many, or he might be a lesser god). Therefore, he is not to be sought in a personal and intimate way.

The Christian, on the other hand, has a real relationship with the real Lord Jesus. This is accomplished only through the real Jesus. The Jesus of the Bible.

To be a Christian is to experience the Lord, to have a sweet and real fellowship with Jesus, to be able to pray to Him, and seek Him.

"God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord," ([1 Cor. 1:9](#)).

Written By CARM