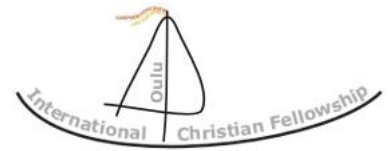


## International Christian Fellowship of Oulu Info Session



Date & Time: Sunday, 8.2.2009 at 15.30

Place: Chapel of St. Luke

Info Session: Jehova's Witnesses

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Dear Heavenly Father! We praise You, because You are worthy of our praise! We worship You and adore You, because that's what You have created us for. Our faith that You have given us has made us yearn for Your Word, so that we could use it as a double-edged sword according to Your intention. We would like to live up to the calling that You have given us through Christ. We now ask that Your Holy Spirit would be stronger in us than our human nature, our thoughts and our will. Please, convince us in terms of sin, truth and judgement. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.

1.

As Olli has shared in his message before this info session, God will never again destroy this Earth through a flood. But He also made it clear, that this world will come to an end, when He returns. Let's read Matthew 24:36. „But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.” Jesus talks about His second coming in this verse. He clearly states that there are going to be certain signs prior to that. But he also says that no one will know the day or the hour. Please, think through the following question and the possible answers given:

If Jesus asks us to be ready for His second coming, why then does He not make the day and the hour known to us?

-if He did, that would cause a major chaos

-no one would take it seriously. It would be like revealing something holy for all people, like „throwing pearls in front of pigs”...

-it would make the preparation of those who live at other ages, who are not alive when He is coming back, meaningless

-your opinion:

We cannot define the time of His coming to the minute, it wouldn't even make sense. Of course we can come to certain conclusions through some signs and events based on His Word. But going out to the mountain top convinced of his imminent coming would be foolish. Deceit is also at work in the minds and hearts of people. For the end of the world has inspired many minds. In the beginning of the 20th century, the movement of the Jehova's Witnesses became famous for predicting the time of the end of the world, when the chosen ones will go up to Heaven. Many were deceived by them. If we ask Jehova's witnesses about this today, they will avoid giving us a straight answer. It is not by coincidence, that Jesus says that you cannot predict, when His kingdom will come. Jehova's witnesses already lost their respect in the eyes of many commonsense people based on this.

So far I talked about the time of the coming of the Kingdom. Now I would like you to lay on your hearts, what they imagine the Heaven that the Son of God promised to every believer to be like. Jehova's witnesses teach about two kinds of heaven: a real heaven and a sort of second-class heaven. Only a hundred and forty four thousand people are invited to the real one. Of course they think, the way to get there is not through the Lamb of God by faith, but it is reserved only for the true witnesses of Jehova. (Scripture mentions this number, hundred and forty four thousand in several verses, for instance in Revelations 14, 1 to 3. But it signifies the number of those redeemed from the rest of mankind, who kept themselves pure and who are faultless.) As for the other heaven, that's gonna be reserved for everyone else. But in reality, Scripture clearly states that there are no two heavens, there is only heaven and hell as a destination.

2.

Let's focus on another subject now. Let's start with a quotation from the gospel of John, where Jesus compares himself to the good shepherd. At the end of this parable we can find

one of the testimonies dearest to our hearts as Christians about the subject of our faith. Jesus states there, that „I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30) Please, think a little about:

Why is it important for us to know that Jesus and the Father are one?

- It raises our awareness not to rely on our minds, but to draw close to God through faith
- It excludes all other deities except for Jesus and the Father
- It shows us that there is no difference between Jesus and the Father, that they are one
- Your opinion:

Don't you find it difficult to say anything about God and this invisible unity? It's, in fact, a very abstract doctrine of the Bible. I go further, the word „Trinity” is not even found in the Scriptures. Nevertheless, it is a clear and basic Christian teaching based on the Word of God as a whole, impossible to fully understand with our human minds, but easy to believe with our faith. If you would like, you can check out some quick tips on how you can witness to a Jehovah's witness about the person of Jesus that's crucial to our faith based on their own translation of the Bible. These tips come from Ron Carlson, an American Christian teacher on the cults, who spent his life studying in what different cults believe in:  
<http://www.christianministriesintl.org/articles/15.html>

3.

When I met Christians in Hungary, I often asked them to show me the edge of their Bible. It clearly speaks about what parts of the Bible we read more often, and parts that we have seldom read before. The problem is not that we have our favorite books in the Bible. It only becomes a problem, when we don't know other books beyond our favorite ones. This is actually what Jehovah's witnesses do. Except, they don't chose favorite books in their Bible, they simply don't understand some parts of Scripture.

Let's read the following verses that Paul wrote to Timothy: „All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness...” II Timothy 3:16 There is a strong emphasis here on the word all. We should never abandon the basic Biblical principle that every word of the Bible is inspired by God. But to really believe it, we have to experience, that it is actually coming from God and has a real effect on our lives. What do you think:

If God's Word is so powerful, why do we not then experience it in our lives?

- we don't see it as having power and authority
- because we often add our own opinion to the Word of God
- we sometimes take the sharp edge of Scripture, because due to our sins it makes us feel uncomfortable what others would say
- your own opinion:

As a pastor, I found the Bible to be a wonderful book. Whenever I have the opportunity to read it in the original Hebrew or Greek, I get carried away with excitement. I wonder at how the words proclaimed thousands of years ago by a Perfect God in human languages talks with such power and authority and without fault. I'm filled with awe at the might and authority of God's Word. I know, that many of us are like that, which makes it difficult to understand, why people holding this Scripture in their hands would rather listen to what other people say -like Jehovah's witnesses do.

We must examine here whence Jehovah's witnesses gain their knowledge that they confront us with on the street or in our homes. It is not their own opinion that they voice. Their wisdom is not gained from the Scriptures through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. No: they are taught centrally, so they only recite what they are told. They have two sources, their two magazines: the Watchtower and Awake! (Herätäkää!, Vortiotorni). In these two publications we can find all sorts of teaching that denies everything we hold holy and pure. They deny what the Bible is ever so clear about: that Jesus is God embodied. They deny that when Jesus was resurrected, his body was also resurrected – even though he appeared to his disciples in his bodily form.

The Scriptures clear teach that God is the Triune God. (Gen 22:2, Jn 17:21, 23, Col 2:9, Jn 14:9), God in three persons. But Jehovah's witnesses deny the divinity of both the Holy Spirit and of Jesus Christ (Mt 3:11, Joel 2:28, Rom 8:16). They falsely believe that he is a Force – but then how can he act, how can we say he is wise, how can he love? (Rom 15:30). John

16:13 speaks of the Holy Spirit as „the Spirit (pneuma) of truth” But the neuter word „pneuma” is referred to by „ekeinos”, the masculine form of the Greek pronoun meaning „he”.

Finally, a brief anecdote: My mother used to work as a teacher. A long time ago she used to tell us about a pupil of hers who was unusually unruly. My mother could not discipline him, could not reason with him – which, knowing my mother, was quite difficult to imagine. That boy would not do anything; he would not even sit still. One time she went to visit the child’s family, and realised that the entire family were Jehova’s Witnesses. The boy never celebrated Christmas, nor any other holidays or festivals that other children could enjoy. This child never even had a weekend, because weekends were spent in Kingdom Halls, where the children were made to sit in silence all day. They were not allowed to run around outside with the other children. How awful, isn’t it.

So I hope you get the point of what I have shared with you about Jehova’s witnesses today. I pray that it would encourage you not be to look down on them when you meet them. But rather to know that they are slaves, but the Truth of Christ can set them free!

Oulu, 08.02.2009.

György Attila