

How much Control does the Governing Body and the Leaders of the Watchtower Society have over the average Jehovah's Witnesses?

The Watchtower, June 15, 1957 Issue, Page 370:

Respond to the directions of the organization as you would the voice of God

The Watchtower, September 15, 2002 Issue, Pages 16-18:

Rather than being critical, let us maintain a spiritually healthy view of the information received through personal study and congregation meetings.

The Watchtower, October 1, 2002 Issue, Page 16:

Strong faith, in turn, fortifies us to obey Jehovah, even when his requirements seem to go contrary to human reasoning.

The Watchtower, October 1, 1967 Issue, Page 590:

....[Jehovah's Witnesses] must recognize and accept this appointment of the "faithful and discreet slave" and be submissive to it.

The Watchtower, January 1, 1942 Issue, Page 5:

God uses The Watchtower to communicate to his people: it does not consist of men's opinions

The Watchtower, May 1, 1957 Issue, Page 274:

We must recognize not only Jehovah God as our Father but his organization as our Mother.

Pages 283-285:

Showing respect for Jehovah's organization really resolves itself down to our attitude toward God's visible channel and the trust that we place in our proved, faithful brothers. If we have become thoroughly convinced that this is Jehovah's organization, that he is guiding and directing his people, then we shall not be unsettled by anything that happens.

We will not 'forsake our mother's teaching' by immediately beginning to criticize and find fault....

....gratefully and willingly show our respect for Jehovah's organization, for she is our mother and the beloved wife of our heavenly Father....

The Watchtower, June 1, 1982 Issue, Page 20:

At times, some bring to the attention of the "slave" class various doctrinal or organizational matters that they feel ought to be revised. Certainly, suggestions for improvement are proper, as are inquiries for clarification. The proper spirit after offering suggestions is to be content to leave the matter to the prayerful consideration of the mature brothers directing the work in Jehovah's organization. But if those making the suggestions are not content with that and continue to dispute the subject in the congregations with a view to getting others to support them, what then? That would create divisions, and could subvert the faith of some. So Paul counsels: "Keep your eye on those who cause divisions and occasions for stumbling contrary to the teaching that you have learned, and avoid them." Paul also counseled Titus to "reprove those who contradict," adding: "It is necessary to shut the mouths of these, as these very men keep on subverting entire households by teaching things they ought not.... For this very cause keep on reproving them with severity." -Romans 16:17, 18; Titus 1:9-13.

The Watchtower, August 1, 1967 Issue, Pages 469-470:

It is true that some points are difficult to grasp at first, but instead of complaining or arguing about them.... it may be better to leave it alone for a while, waiting further clarification....

....we must avoid complaining even about small things....

The Watchtower, February 1, 1952 Issue, Pages 79-80:

If we do not see a point at first we should keep trying to grasp it, rather than opposing and rejecting it and presumptuously taking the position that we are more likely to be right than the discreet slave.

We should meekly go along with the Lord's theocratic organization and wait for further clarification....

Qualified to be Ministers Book (Published in 1955), Page 156:

If we have love for Jehovah and for the organization of his people we shall not be suspicious, but shall, as the Bible says, 'Believe all things,' all the things that the Watchtower brings out, in as much as it has been faithful in giving us knowledge of God's purposes....

The Watchtower, June 1, 1955 Issue, Page 333:

....today the power of appointment of all servants in congregations rightfully rests with the governing body of the "faithful and discreet slave" class, which is under the direct supervision of Christ Jesus at the temple.

The Watchtower, June 1, 1956 Issue, Page 345:

Newcomers must learn to fall in line with the principles and policies of the New World society and act in harmony with them. Sometimes it becomes rather difficult for some of our new associates to make the change. They are prone to be a little rebellious or unruly. But to become genuinely a part of the New World society it is imperative that proper respect for theocratic arrangement and order be shown. A humble, obedient mental attitude is required.

The Watchtower, November 1, 1956 Issue, Page 666:

Who controls the organization, who directs it? Who is at the head? A man? A group of men? A clergy class? A pope? A hierarchy? A council? No, none of these. How is that possible? In any organization is it not necessary that there be a directing head or policy-making part that controls or guides the organization? Yes. Is the living God, Jehovah, the Director of the theocratic Christian organization? Yes!

The Watchtower, October 1, 1967 Issue, Page 587:

....the Bible cannot be properly understood without Jehovah's visible organization in mind.

The Watchtower, June 1, 1985 Issue, Page 20:

Although walking with confidence in Jehovah's leadership may not be easy at times...To turn away from Jehovah and his organization, to spurn the direction of the 'faithful and discreet slave,' and to rely simply on personal Bible reading and interpretation is to become like a solitary tree in a parched land.

The Watchtower, January 15, 1983 Issue, Page 22:

Avoid Independent Thinking

Avoid.... questioning the counsel that is provided by God's visible organization.

How is such independent thinking manifested? A common way is by questioning the counsel that is provided by God's visible organization.

The Watchtower, January 15, 1983 Issue, Page 27:

....some who point out that the organization has had to make some adjustments before, and so they argue: "This shows that we have to make up our own mind on what to believe." This is independent thinking. Why is it so dangerous?

Fight against independent thinking.

The Watchtower, March 15, 1986 Issue, Page 17:

Beware of those who try to put forward their own contrary opinions.

The Watchtower, July 1, 1994 Issue, Pages 12-13:

As loyal servants of Jehovah, why would we even want to peek at the propaganda put out by rejecters of Jehovah's table....

The Watchtower, August 1, 1960 Issue, Page 474:

Jehovah's witnesses, though international, are 'one heart and soul,' of the 'same mind' and the 'same line of thought.'

The Watchtower, June 1, 1967 Issue, Page 338:

....in Jehovah's organization it is not necessary to spend a lot of time and energy in research, for there are brothers in the organization who are assigned to that very thing....

The Watchtower, August 1, 1972 Issue, Page 458:

....the Watchtower study conductor, who presides over this meeting, has an important responsibility. This study enables all to be united in the same line of thought.

The Watchtower, August 1, 1980 Issue, Page 19:

Thus, the one who doubts to the point of becoming an apostate sets himself up as a judge. He thinks he knows better than his fellow Christians, better also than the 'faithful and discreet slave,' through whom he has learned the best part, if not all that he knows about Jehovah God and his purposes.

The Watchtower, March 15, 1986 Issue, Page 12:

Do you wisely destroy apostate material?

Page 14:

Why is reading apostate publications similar to reading pornographic literature?

The Watchtower, February 1, 1987 Issue, Page 19:

First of all, there is the matter of being obedient and ready to respond to encouragement. When direction and encouragement come from the proper source, it is only right that we should respond readily.

We also remember that one feature of 'the wisdom from above' is being 'ready to obey.' (James 3:17) These are qualities that all Christians are encouraged to put on. Due to background and upbringing, some may be more given to independent thinking and self-will than others. Perhaps this is an area where we need to discipline ourselves and 'make our mind over' so that we can perceive more clearly what the 'will of God' is. Romans 12:2.

The Watchtower, September 15, 1989 Issue, Page 23:

"In the world, there is a tendency to reject leadership. As one lecturer said: ;'The rising education level has improved the talent pool such that followers have become so critical that they are almost impossible to lead.' But a spirit of independent thinking does not prevail in God's organization, and we have sound reasons for confidence in the men taking the lead among us."