

True Religion
(March 3, 2019 by Rev. Anthony Menzel)

***Before dismissing the children, I want to wish everyone a Happy Palm Sunday ...

Today we commemorate a very special day, the day of the triumphal arrival of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem, and one of the main things that this day reminds us is that we should always praise the Lord Jesus...

Scripture 1: John 12:12-16

¹² The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out:

“Hosanna!

‘Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the LORD!’
The King of Israel!”

¹⁴ Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:

¹⁵ “Fear not, daughter of Zion;
Behold, your King is coming,
Sitting on a donkey’s colt.”

¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him.

Scripture 2: Psalm 34:1

I will bless the LORD at all times;
His praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

Distribute the palms...

Sermon...

The title of the message is “True Religion.”

As I think of Palm Sunday, one of the reasons to praise the Lord Jesus that comes into my spirit is that the Lord Jesus does not make following Him hard to understand...

Scripture 3: 1 John 5:2-5

² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. ⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—^[a]our faith. ⁵ Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

The Lord Jesus wants us to win souls...

Scripture 4: Proverbs 11:30

The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life,
And he who ^[i]wins souls *is* wise.

However, we do not have to win a single soul to go to heaven...

Scripture 5: Luke 23:39-43

³⁹ Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, ^[i]“If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us.”

⁴⁰ But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? ⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² Then he said ^[k]to Jesus, “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.”

⁴³ And Jesus said to him, “Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.”

I am not here to encourage people to wait until the very end of their life to seek the Lord Jesus, but I do praise Him that there is hope for each one of us as long as there is breath in our bodies...

I also want to go to a very important verse that came into my spirit this week as I was thinking about this message...

Scripture 6: James 1:26-27

If anyone ^[e]among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. ²⁷ Pure and

undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

We see three items that are critical...

- 1) To watch what you say...
- 2) To be there for people who are in need...
- 3) Keep ourselves unspotted from the world...

One of the most rewarding parts of being a Christian is to win other souls for the Lord Jesus...

When I see people who the Lord has used me to bring to His path, it is one of the things that fills me with the greatest joy...

That's why I say that the best gift any of you can give me is simply to walk with the Lord Jesus...

However, you can win souls for the Lord Jesus and end up in hell...

Scripture 7: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may □obtain *it*.²⁵ And everyone who competes *for the prize* □is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*.²⁶ Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air.²⁷ But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Passages like **James 1:26-27** teach us the importance of being pure...

If the only way to achieve greatness or greater importance in the world's eyes is by compromising our principles, it is better to the Lord Jesus that we remain smaller and less important...

Many of the leaders of our church feel that it is not good to be in a worship service where people are worshiping different gods...

Saying that all religions worship God is ecumenicalism, and it is not true Christianity unless all the religions are different Christian churches...

We should not be in worship services with Muslims and Jehovah's witness, for example...

Scripture 8: 2 Corinthians 6:14-18

¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what ^[d]fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what ^[e]communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you^[f] are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

“I will dwell in them
And walk among *them*.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.”

¹⁷ Therefore

“Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you.”
¹⁸ “I will be a Father to you,
And you shall be My sons and daughters,
Says the LORD Almighty.”

Scripture 9: 1 John 2:18-25

¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the^[d]Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you^[e] know all things. ²¹ I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth.

²² Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

Let Truth Abide in You

²⁴ Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the

Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life.

Joseph Smith started off in Christian circles...https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Smith

Charles Taze Russell of the Jehovah's Witnesses also started off as a Christian...https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Taze_Russell#Early_life
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_World_Translation_of_the_Holy_Scriptures

Until the release of the *New World Translation*, Jehovah's Witnesses in English-speaking countries primarily used the *King James Version*.^{[7][8]} According to the publishers, one of the main reasons for producing a new translation was that most Bible versions in common use, including the *Authorized Version* (King James), employed archaic language. The stated intention was to produce a fresh translation, free of archaisms.^[9] Additionally, over the centuries since the *King James Version* was produced, more copies of earlier manuscripts of the original texts in the Hebrew and Greek languages have become available. According to the publishers, better manuscript evidence had made it possible to determine with greater accuracy what the original writers intended, particularly in more obscure passages. They said linguists better understood certain aspects of the original Hebrew and Greek languages than previously.^[10]

In October 1946, the president of the Watch Tower Society, [Nathan H. Knorr](#), proposed a fresh translation of the *New Testament*, which Jehovah's Witnesses usually refer to as the *Christian Greek Scriptures*.^[11] Work began on December 2, 1947 when the "New World Bible Translation Committee" was formed, composed of Jehovah's Witnesses who professed to be *anointed*.^{[12][13]} The Watch Tower Society is said to have "become aware" of the committee's existence a year later. The committee agreed to turn over its translation to the Society for publication^[14] and on September 3, 1949, Knorr convened a joint meeting of the board of directors of both the Watch Tower Society's New York and Pennsylvania corporations where he again announced to the directors the existence of the committee^[15] and that it was now able to print its new modern English translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Several chapters of the translation were read to the directors, who then voted to accept it as a gift.^[14]

The *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* was released at a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses at [Yankee Stadium](#), [New York](#), on August 2, 1950. The translation of the [Old Testament](#), which Jehovah's Witnesses refer to as the *Hebrew Scriptures*, was released in five volumes in 1953, 1955, 1957, 1958, and 1960. The complete *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* was released as a single volume in 1961, and has since undergone minor revisions.^[16] [Cross references](#) which had appeared in the six separate volumes were updated and included in the complete volume in the 1984 revision.^[17]

In 1961 the Watch Tower Society began to translate the *New World Translation* into Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish; the New Testament in these languages was released simultaneously on July 1963 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. By 1989 the *New World Translation* was translated into eleven languages, with more than 56,000,000 copies printed.^[18]

Translators[\[edit\]](#)

The *New World Translation* was produced by the New World Bible Translation Committee, formed in 1947. This committee is said to have comprised unnamed members of multinational background.^[19] The committee requested that the Watch Tower Society not publish the names of its members,^{[20][21]} stating that they did not want to "advertise themselves but let all the glory go to the Author of the Scriptures, God,"^[22] adding that the translation, "should direct the reader... to... Jehovah God".^[23] The publishers believe that "the particulars of [the New World Bible Translation Committee's members] university or other educational training are not the important thing" and that "the translation testifies to their qualification".^[23]

Former high-ranking Watch Tower staff have identified various members of the translation team. Former governing body member [Raymond Franz](#) listed [Nathan H. Knorr](#), [Fredrick W. Franz](#), Albert D. Schroeder, George D. Gangas, and [Milton G. Henschel](#) as members of the translation team, adding that only Frederick Franz had sufficient knowledge in biblical languages.^{[24][25]} Referring to the identified members, evangelical minister [Walter Ralston Martin](#) said, "The New World Bible translation committee had no known translators with recognized degrees in Greek or Hebrew exegesis or translation... None of these men had any university education except Franz, who left school after two years, never completing even an undergraduate degree." Franz had stated that he was familiar with

not only Hebrew, but with Greek, Latin, Spanish, Portuguese, German, and French for the purpose of biblical translation.^{[26][27]}

Frederick Franz also started off as a Christian...https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_William_Franz

As a side note, we will have an extra celebration this Easter weekend, not on Good Friday but on Holy Saturday. Normally we participate in the Dover Cross Walk, but the Episcopal priest did not respond to me when I asked about having our church be represented in the walk, so the Church Board has decided that we will go to see the movie "Breakthrough" on Good Friday...It is about a true life miracle...

Based on scriptures like **James 1:26-27**, I have to make sure that I try to show the love of Jesus Christ, not just talk about it...

Scripture 10: James 2:14-17

What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? ¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Moreover, I have to make sure I do not ignore my family...

As the saying goes, charity should start at home and then spread abroad...

Scripture 11: 1 Timothy 5:3-8

Honor widows who are really widows. ⁴ But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is ^[a]good and acceptable before God. ⁵ Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. ⁶ But she who lives in ^[b]pleasure is dead while she lives. ⁷ And these things command, that they may be blameless. ⁸ But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. There will be times when life is hard...

There may be times when we get tempted to be anxious about receiving the manifestation of our prayers...

We have to take that anxiety captive and make our thoughts obey Christ...

Sometimes we may have to ask God in the name of Jesus Christ to change the way we feel...

Based on scriptures like **James 1:26-27**, I am also asking Jesus Christ more and more to put a guard over my mouth so that I speak what will edify...

Scripture 12: Psalm 141:3

Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth;
Keep watch over the door of my lips.

Part of following the Lord Jesus is to use our mouths for good...
Praise the Lord Jesus all the time, like it says in **Psalm 34:1**