

Evangelizing Jehovah's Witnesses

Jehovah's Witnesses are most well-known for their door-to-door preaching work, but they are more increasingly making an appearance in high-traffic, public spaces at mobile displays they call "carts." This is a great way to seek them out to casually strike up a conversation and plant some seeds. It is even possible to continue your discussion if you exchange numbers or arrange to meet up with them. You may find this method easier for you, as you can prepare ahead of time and be ready without being caught off guard if they were to visit you at home.

Typically, 2-3 Witnesses stand with the cart in 2–4-hour shifts waiting to be approached. On the cart will be magazines, sometimes a book called *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* (or similar), and their current "Bible study" book entitled, *Enjoy Life Forever*. No Bibles are visible, but they keep them on hand, only for the "sincerely interested." They will probably try to direct you to *jw.org* to get answers to any of your questions, but please kindly persist in drawing them out anyway.

Some known places Jehovah's Witnesses set up their carts (and if you know of others, please let us know!):

- Carilion Memorial Hospital
- South County Library
- Salem Farmers Market
- Salem Library
- DMV
- Vinton Library

Suggestions for conversations:

Please use these as templates and suggestions for starting conversations and breaking down barriers with the Witnesses to sow seeds of doubt in their organization, while also sowing seeds of truth from God's word. **Of course, these ideas may also be used at the door, if they come knocking.**

***Approach the cart and look at what is available and take something if you would like (for research purposes or to give it to JP/Ryanne). Smile, be friendly, and be genuine!**

1. Upon noticing the offer of a free Bible Study, ask some questions regarding its format...as the purpose is to set up a comparison between their tightly controlled organization versus the transparency and accountability of Biblical leadership – a good "stone in the shoe!" **Note:** Most Witnesses have never heard of **eisegesis** and **exegesis**.).

*"What is your Bible study like? Do you go through books of the Bible and discuss them together? The reason I'm asking is that I used to go to a church (or I've heard of churches) that took an approach to the Bible called **eisegesis**. (Explain that eisegesis is having a preconceived idea or bias and using scriptures to back it up, essentially cherry-picking verses to support claims, which is called proof-texting.) On the other hand, I go to a church now that practices **exegesis** – a fancy way of saying the pastor works his way slowly through whole books of the Bible, carefully drawing out what the original intent of the author was, being careful not to impose his own thoughts and ideas on the text. He has even told us to not take his word for it but to carefully search the Scriptures like Bereans to make sure his teaching is sound. Then later we get together in small groups, share a meal, and have an open discussion about the sermon. We are free to bring a concern to the pastor and other elders if we feel they are mistaken or that we feel something needs to be made clearer. Are you encouraged to do that? Do you study the Bible like that? (You might be able to encourage them to read the Bible on its own without any commentaries or ask them if they have ever done so.)*

2. *"What is your gospel – your good news?"* (Let them answer, they may or may not mention Jesus.) *May I share with you what I believe is the Gospel message?"* (Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and briefly explain it, perhaps using other verses like Romans 3:23; 6:23; and Ephesians 2.) This might lead to talking about the completeness of the atonement; be prepared for that. Isaiah 53 could be helpful in showing that Jesus died for our sins as individuals and not just our sin nature through Adam.
3. *"What would you say is the biggest difference between what you believe and traditional Christianity?"* (If they ask you your opinion, you could steer the conversation where you want. They may mention the Trinity, so it would be very beneficial for you to know ahead of time how to USE THEIR OWN BIBLE, the New World Translation, to show that Jesus is God. Do this in the form of questions rather than lecturing, such as by asking if they have ever thought about what these verses are saying or if they think there is a contradiction.)

Suggestions: Jesus is the uncreated Creator: Hebrew 1:8-12 compared to Psalm 102:1, 25-27; Jehovah does not share His glory with anyone, but Jesus shares His glory: Isaiah 42:8 compared to John 17:1, 5; Jehovah is the only Savior, but Jesus is also referred to as a Savior: compare Isaiah 43:11 to Titus 1:4; Jehovah is referred to as "the Alpha and the Omega," "the first and the last," and "the beginning and the end" in Revelation, but Jesus claims these titles for himself: Revelation 1:8 compared to Revelation 1:17-18.)

REMEMBER: Jehovah's Witnesses have been taught that Christians believe a Modalistic view of God, though they do not know that term. Agree with them that you also believe that to be untrue and that historic Christianity rejects it as heresy.

4. *"I heard something about what you all believe, but I wanted to hear a Witnesses explain it so I can understand."*

Suggested topics:

- a. *"Someone told me you believe that there are two different everlasting destinies for those who are saved. Could you show me that in the Bible?"* (They may walk you through verses about the "little flock" and the "other sheep") Ask: *"Have you ever thought that might just be talking about Jews (the little flock) and Gentiles (other sheep)? When I read the book of John (not just select verses), I can't help but see that."*
- b. *"I was told you believe Jesus already came. Can you explain that to me and show me in the Bible?"* (Use Matthew 24:23-27 to cast doubt on an invisible return, which is what they believe.)

Is their cart witnessing effective? From ExJWs on Reddit:

- "It is **very** effective: very effective at thrusting JW's into 'the world,' where they experience almost universal rejection or indifference, whereupon they swiftly return to the loving embrace of their fellow believers in the congregation; they commiserate together and bond to one another more firmly."
- "They are used as a billboard. That's the real reason. Watchtower wants to promote its brand."
- "Service isn't about effectiveness, it's about shared group trauma to create an "us vs them" mentality for bonding. It's a control tactic."

(Keep that in mind when you approach them, be respectful and nonconfrontational. Be "curious" without being deceitful as to your intentions. Ask thought-provoking questions. Genuinely care for these lost people and most importantly, PRAY!!)