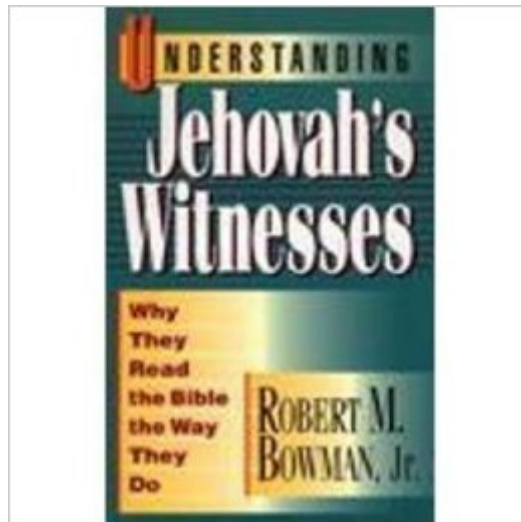


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Understanding Jehovah's Witnesses: Why They Read The Bible The Way They Do



Synopsis

Book by Bowman, Robert M.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Most everyone in America has had some contact with the Jehovah's Witnesses. From their appearances at your door to their street corner distribution of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, they are an ubiquitous though oft ridiculed part of modern American religious culture. Most Christians just ignore their doorstep invitations to discuss the Bible and those who do are often bewildered by the strange amalgamation of passages used to support their unorthodox doctrines. The closed system of interpretation they have developed over a century can seem impenetrable to an outsider and well meaning attempts to explain orthodox Christianity to them falls on deaf ears as the two participants talk past each other. Robert M. Bowman is well versed in the exegetical methods employed by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (the authoritative arm of the Jehovah's Witnesses) and has published his insights in *Understanding Jehovah's Witnesses*. The book, primarily aimed as a tool for dialogue between Evangelical Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses, is a detailed critique of the Jehovah's Witnesses' use of Scripture backed up with extensive references. While vehemently disagreeing with the Watchtower organization's methodology, he does not resort to questioning the motives or sincerity of individuals in the organization. This is considerably different from many other critiques focusing on the alleged "cultic" elements of the Jehovah's Witnesses while paying scant attention to the underlying premises of their belief structure. Bowman begins with two introductory chapters setting the basis for the examination in terms agreeable to both parties.

Robert M. Bowman Jr. (born 1957), is Director of Research at the Institute for Religious Research, and specializes in the study of apologetics. He is also the author of books such as *The Word-Faith Controversy: Understanding the Health and Wealth Gospel*, *Why You Should Believe in the Trinity: An Answer to Jehovah's Witnesses*, etc. He wrote in the Preface to this 1991 book, "The focus of this book is on understanding Jehovah's Witnesses, not attacking them. In fact, the first two chapters do not criticize the Jehovah's Witnesses at all, and even the rest of the book is more concerned with understanding the Witnesses than with criticizing them. In a sense, I have written the book more for orthodox Christians than for Jehovah's Witnesses... Of course, I do hope that Jehovah's Witnesses will read the book, too." Here are some quotations from the book: "Some Jehovah's Witnesses, in private conversations and discussions with evangelicals, have found it useful to deny that God's organization is to be identified with the Watchtower Society. The Watchtower Society, they argue, is actually only a corporation that God's people use to get their work done. This technicality does not, however, alter the facts. The leaders of the Watchtower Society on Brooklyn are not merely administering a corporation, they are controlling the doctrines believed by the millions of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide." (Pg.

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