



A Biblical Response to Jehovah Witness in Surabaya, Indonesia

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Abstract

Issues around Christology are never ending. Both from within and outside Christianity the existence of Jesus as God continues to be discussed. From within the ranks of Christians who systematically deny the Divinity of Jesus are Jehovah's Witnesses. Their spirit of visiting from house to house is commendable and it doesn't matter if Christians are visiting, but what makes noise is visiting non-Christian homes. This is a separate issue in a Muslim-majority Indonesia as a Christianization project. On the other hand, visiting Christian households has also created problems in the ecclesiastical sphere. Many have left the church and became members of Jehovah's Witnesses. That is why it is necessary to investigate the cause of such a move. This study uses a qualitative method and a literature study related to Christology and field studies were conducted through interviews with three groups of informants. The result is that the understanding that Christians have, is only built from the belief that 'just believe that Jesus is God'. Even if there is an argument, it is also too weak to be accounted for logically and even easy to break, because the Jehovah's Witnesses even use the original language (Greek) approach, even though only for certain verses that are important to talk about or argue about. Mainstream Indonesian Christians met the group of Jehovah's Witnesses in diverse ways, namely: being randomly visited when they came from house to house, being introduced by friends to help answer important questions, being invited to attend an event held by Jehovah's Witnesses, then also through the printed media which had an interesting design and because of their own curiosity, and then they were ultimately bound.

Keywords: Biblical Response, Christology, Jehovah Witness, Surabaya, Indonesia



Introduction

All major religions were born from the East. But those who come into direct contact with Jesus Christ are Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Of these three, only Christians uphold the divinity and humanity of Jesus. Whereas Judaism and Islam accept the humanity of Jesus alone with various designations for His office. The rejection of the divinity of Jesus dates back to the era of the Church Fathers, until the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE and the councils of Chalcedon in 451 CE which formulated Jesus' identity as informed by the Holy Bible. Over time, the existence of the name Jesus spread widely, to the American continent and it was from there that in the 19th century, two major schools of thought were born which are now found worldwide. These include the Mormons who were founded by Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805-1844) and the Jehovah's Witnesses founded by Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916). The alter group are a millenarian restorationist Christian denomination with non-trinitarian beliefs which differ considerably from mainstream Christian denominations (Stark & Iannaccone, 1997).

The Jehovah's Witnesses has worldwide membership of about 8.7 million adherents and they are involved in evangelism (Knox, 2018). and eventually spread in Indonesia and are growing rapidly, especially in Surabaya, which is the second largest city in Indonesia. When this work was written, according to <https://apps.jw.org/> there were 12 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in the city of Surabaya. Starting from a place in the Raya Jemursari area (2009) they have developed throughout Surabaya. Their place of worship is not like a church in general. On the front of the building which is the place of worship it is written: Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. In Surabaya there are three Kingdom Halls. The existing congregations worship in the three places, according to their respective schedules.

Even though Jehovah's Witnesses are included in the category of Christian denominations in Indonesia, this is actually not the case, bearing in mind that there are many teachings that are not the same as Orthodox Christian teachings, which in this study specifically highlights the doctrine of Christology. This is the most urgent basis in the Christian faith because it will also be related to the Trinity Doctrine. Although on the other hand, apart from their use of the Bible in general, they also have their own published Scriptures, in accordance with the beliefs of the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Some of the Jehovah's Witnesses beliefs about God and Jesus

Jehovah's Witnesses are renowned for the dispersal of their beliefs, and they visit people going from house to house where they hand out booklets published by the Watch Tower Society (Crompton, 1996). They attempt to begin a Biblical study process with any non-member so as to get them to join. Jehovah's Witnesses are instructed that they Scripturally duty-bound to participate in public preaching (Holden, 2002). Colossians 1:15 is an important Scripture Jehovah's Witnesses use to validate their belief that Jesus is a created being: "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." (Colossians 1:15).

They assume that Jehovah is the only true God, and also the creator of all things, and he is the "Universal Sovereign" so any worship should be toward him, and he is not part of a Holy Trinity (Rogerson, 1969). God is stressed and Christ is hugely minimized in value than on Christ, and even the Holy Spirit is God's active force and not a person in a Triune Godhead (Beckford, 1969). they also maintain that Jesus is God's only direct creation, and



everything else was created through Christ because of God's power. Also creation identifies Jesus as God's "only-begotten Son" (Hoekema, 1963). Jehovah Witnesses have confidence in the idea that while on earth Jesus was a perfect man. However, before and after his earthly presence he was (and still is) the archangel Michael.

They argue that Jesus did not die on traditional cross but rather on a single upright post and he and he served as a redeemer and a ransom sacrifice for atonement with God for all the sins perpetrated by humanity (Penton, 1997). Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Jesus was ultimately resurrected with only a "spirit body", and he only assumed human form for a short while after his resurrection. Jesus is also viewed by them as the only intercessor and high priest between God and humanity, and he is God's as the king and judge in his kingdom (The Watchtower, 1995). 1 Timothy 2:5 makes it clear to us that no simple human could have been an acceptable intermediary between God and Mankind, except if he was both fully God and also fully man as the *Theanthropos* (Nicolaidis, 2019).

Methodology

The difference in understanding of Christ between Christianity in general and the Christology of Jehovah's Witnesses is indeed an interesting study related to how to market their Christology among Christian congregations in general. They are more interested in approaching Christians who are then brought to the faith of Jehovah's Witnesses, rather than bringing beliefs from non-Christian religions. That is why Christian leaders in Surabaya often teach Christology either through seminars in general, or in church cell groups to equip the people to face the currents of Jehovah's Witnesses. However, there are still many, and many more are still converting to become members of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

Through this research we wanted to find out what the basic cause of the move is by people to be Jehovah's Witnesses, that is how it is that Christians who initially acknowledged the Divinity of Jesus, ultimately refused to accept it. The research began with observations, then continued using the qualitative method of literature review related to Christology and the Jehovah's Witnesses and then field studies through interviews that were conducted with three groups of informants. These comprised of namely- First: Christians, Second: Christians who are adherents of Jehovah's Witnesses, Third: Adherents of Jehovah's Witnesses who returned to mainline Christianity. The research location was in Surabaya and it was conducted in 2022. There were five main questions asked, namely: What do you know about Jesus Christ? Have you ever done Bible study yourself about Jesus Christ by studying the Bible in depth? What do you know about Jehovah's Witnesses? How did you first meet them? What do you think of their Christological teachings?

Jehovah's Witnesses in Surabaya

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that there is only one God, namely Jehovah God - Almighty Jehovah and Creator. In the translation Jehovah's Witnesses confirm through Isaiah 42:8, "I am JEHOVAH, that is My name." And Jesus is his creation. The development of the view that Jesus is not Almighty God from Jehovah's Witnesses, has been increasing rapidly from time to time and has disturbed various church leaders (Asali, 2006: iii). According to Budi Asali, this anxiety is because the teachings and doctrines of the



Jehovah's Witnesses, especially about Christ, are increasingly deviating from the prevailing doctrines in universal churches (Asali, 2005: 5-6).

Jehovah's Witnesses say, Jesus, neither more nor less than a perfect man, became the ransom that properly compensated for what Adam had lost (Watch Tower Bible And Tract Society of New York, 1989: 15). The true God is one Person, separate from Jesus Christ (Watchtower Bible And Tract Society, 1995: 31). Jesus is god, but not the almighty God they call Jehovah. On the other hand, it is said that Jesus is a "created individual" who is the second greatest figure in the universe (Branon, 1992: 2-3). Thus, Jehovah's Witnesses are adherents of subordinationism, that is, an ideology that places Jesus in a lower position or degree than the Father (Kuhl, 1998: 120). As the Indonesian translation of The New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures for John 1:1-2 becomes, "1:1 In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god. 1:2 This One was with God in the beginning." or Philippians 2:6 being, "who, though he existed in the form of God, never considered taking a position, that is, that he might be equal to God."

A BIBLICAL THEOLOGICAL RESPONSE

Pre-Existence of Jesus

Paul said: "Jesus, although he was in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped" (Philippians 2:6). It is not said here that Jesus "had the form of God" (*morphén Theou echôn*), but that He was "in the form of God" (*en morphéi Theou huparchon*). This expression states that before becoming human he already had pre-existence (Abineno, 2009:57). The pre-existence of Jesus is also described by the apostle John as coming from eternity. John gives the statement that Jesus "In the beginning was the Word; The Word was with God and the Word was God" (John 1:1). The expression "in the beginning" (Greek, *en archei*), according to Walvoord, seems to refer to a time in the past eternal that it would be impossible for us to get to. The verb used is also chosen to express eternity, because the word "is" (Greek, *en*) means continuous existence (Walvoord, 1969: 17).

Title of Divinity of Jesus

When talking about the divinity of the person of Jesus, it must be related to the Triune God that is, One God in three persons. The word God in Greek is *Theos* (Thayer, 1992: 287), while in Hebrew it is *Elohim* (Town, 1995:9). The word *Elohim* is a combination of two words, namely the singular form of the word *Eloah* and the word *Im*. The word ending *im* refers to a plural form (Satyabudi, 2006:14). Some see the use of this plural form as a remnant of polytheism, others see it as a sign referring to the Trinity. But more likely is the example of its common usage in Hebrew, where the use of the plural is meant to intensify or broaden the idea expressed in the singular. Thus *Elohim* directs attention to the unending fullness of God, to the abundance of life in God (Douglas, 2003: 33). The word *Elohim* which has been translated as Allah has the singular form *Eloah*. The word *Eloah* has the same meaning as *El*, (Douglas, 2003: 38), namely strength or power (Douglas, 2003: 33). Concerning the essence of God, Nicolaidis (2019) states:

In the Eastern Orthodox faith the adherents believe in a single God who is both three entities and yet and one (triune); the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, "one in essence and undivided". The Holy Trinity is thus three



distinct divine persons (hypostases), who each share in one divine essence (ousia); and they are uncreated, immaterial and eternal. The Father is the perpetual cause of the Godhead, from whom the Son is begotten everlastingly and also from whom the Holy Spirit or Paraclete proceeds forever. The essence of God is that which is outside all human understanding and He cannot be demarcated or approached by human understanding. The thematic study of the God-Man has a prodigious significance for our salvation and is a great challenge for us all to seek truth and profounder meaning in life in the very person of Jesus Christ the Theanthropos. The notion of God-man (Gk. *Theanthropos*) refers to the incarnation and the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ, which is Christianity's most widely acknowledged and respected christological doctrines. (Nicolaidis, 2019:3)

Regarding the title Allah, all religious people agree in interpreting 'Allah' as the Most High, but the meaning of the Most High is different (Huijbers, 1992: 19 and Hadiwiyono, 1974: 41). According to polytheism there is more than one God. This is in accordance with human experience, that the universe has different facets, all of which reflect a divine power (Huijbers, 1992: 20). The gospel of John, Scripture unquestionably presents Jesus to us as God in numerous verses (John 1:1,3,14, 8:58, 10:30, 14:11, 20:28)

On the other hand, as the Bible describes and as asserted by Nicolaidis (2019), there are titles that are devoted only to Jesus. Contemplating these titles leads believers to the greatness of figures who are the center of Christian life (Darmawijaya, 2003: 7). All the titles of Jesus together testify that in Jesus it is actually God who acts to judge and save this world, and these titles call everyone so that people recognize that Jesus is indeed one with God and worthy of worship, as befits God. himself (Douglas, 2011: 598).

God's Title

In the Bible there are many places where the title God is applied to Jesus. The term God in Greek, is *Kurios* (Menziess, 1998: 64). In everyday usage at the time Jesus lived on this earth, this term could mean 'beloved father', 'beloved teacher', 'respectable lord', 'ruleful king', and 'God who is worshiped' (Marantika, 1983: 11; Berkhof, 2009:29-30). In the New Testament this term is used variously ([http://www.gkri-exodus.org/image-up-load/DOC27 Trinity 11.pdf](http://www.gkri-exodus.org/image-up-load/DOC27Trinity11.pdf)), because it is important for the reader to investigate in what portion this word God is applied to Jesus.

The title Lord for Jesus in synoptic books is often meant as an honorific title, somewhat similar to the common title 'lord' in popular speech (Guthrie, 2003: 327). The mention of God in this sense is also recorded in the Gospel of John, namely, in Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman (John 4:11-19). The Samaritan woman greets Jesus with 'Lord' (verse 11) in the sense of respect only (not as God or God who is worshipped).

After Jesus' resurrection from the dead, in general He was called God only in a special sense, namely as the God who is to be worshiped (Marantika, 1983: 12). Peter said, "But sanctify Christ in your hearts as Lord!" (1 Peter 3:15 cf. Isaiah 43:10). Only GOD, God alone should be placed in the heart in such a position. Thus Peter has said that Jesus is the LORD, God, because otherwise it means that Christians have two Gods (cf. Deuteronomy 32:39; Isaiah 43:10; 44:6; 44:8; 45:14). Placing Jesus as lord (God) in the heart is placing oneself as a servant/servant of Jesus; servants who worship Jesus. Therefore, when someone says with all their heart that, "Jesus is Lord", it means that he



or she is expressing absolute loyalty and total surrender of their life to Jesus Christ our Lord (Barclay, 2008: 194).

The word God (Latin: *Dominus*) means: a person who has power over something or someone, by virtue of his legal rights; people who have full power over their own (Niftrik, 2000: 2013). As the ruler and by virtue of His legal ownership rights, it is Jesus who acts as the Great Shepherd, the sustainer of human life. Thus, it is appropriate for humans to cry out to Jesus, as their Lord (Psalms 23:1; John 10:11-12; 7:37; 14:14; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 12:8-9; Acts 7:59). In fact, Jesus himself before his death once said to his disciples: "You call me teacher and Lord, and you are right in your words, because indeed I am teacher and Lord" (John 13:13). The saying "indeed I am the Teacher and God" demands awareness of God's mention of Himself essentially, as owner, as God in power, and as the God- man (Nicolaidis, 2019). He is God who has full authority over our life and death, over our bodies and souls, over our deeds, words and thoughts, over the Church and the world. He is God, now and here, and forever and ever! (Niftrik, 2000: 225).

The Title in Isaiah 9:5

In Isaiah 9:5 Christ is declared not only as the 'Wonderful Counselor' but also as the 'mighty God', the 'eternal Father' and the 'Prince of Peace'. The Indonesian Bible Society explains it as follows: What is meant by a miraculous counselor here will be the embodiment of perfect wisdom and one who has the words eternal life; as a counselor, He will reveal the perfect plan of salvation and as the Mighty God, because in Jesus all the fullness of the Godhead will dwell bodily. As the Eternal Father, because He not only came to introduce the Heavenly Father, but He Himself will act toward His people eternally like a merciful Father who loves, protects, and provides for the needs of His children. And as the Prince of Peace, because His reign will bring peace with God to humanity through deliverance from sin and death (The Abundant Life Guide Bible, 2009: 1057).

The Title “Alpha and Omega”

Jesus is called the Alpha and Omega (Revelations 1:8; 22:13). God also says he is the Alpha and the Omega “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:8). He also states “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. (Revelation 21:8). Jesus tells us, “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay everyone for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” (Revelation 22:16). So we see that the title Alpha and Omega refers to both the God the Father and the Son interchangeably. When the Apostle John saw Jesus, he fell down like a dead man, then Jesus put His right hand on him and said, “Don't be afraid! I am the Beginning and the Last... .” (Revelations 1:17). In other passages it is said that God is the Beginning (*Alpha*) and the Last (*Omega*). So if Jesus admits that He is the First and the Last, it means He claims His equality with God and also with the Paraclete (Counselor) the Holy Spirit. Indeed, this teaching which has a tone of equality between the Son and God is also expressed a lot in the Book of Revelation (5:13; 6:16; 7:9-10) (Santoso, 2005: 203). Another convincing piece of evidence for the deity of Christ are the “titles” that are bestowed on both the Father and the Son. Here are a few examples.

Jesus is also the First and the Last. God says: Thus says the Lord (Yahweh), the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the Lord (Yahweh) of hosts: “I am the first and I am the last;



besides me there is no god.” (Isaiah 44:6). Clearly, the title, “I am the first and the last” in this verse is in reference to the Lord. We read of Jesus as well: “When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades” (Revelation 1:17-18).

The Title - ‘The Word’

In the beginning of the Gospel of John, Jesus is also called by the title of the Word (Greek: *Logos*) (Barclay, 2003: 52) and the Word is God (John 1:1). Some translators render this incorrectly: “The Word was divine (a God)”. They translate it this way because the word Allah is not preceded by the article *ho* (*theos ēn ho logos*). But the article *ho* is often omitted in NT Greek when it is connected with an adjective that precedes the verb. As an adjective *Theos* expresses the character of the Word. On the other hand, *theos* is a noun, not an adjective: so the saying emphasizes the ultimate deity and not the mere divinity of the Word. Moreover, as explained by Wescott, *Theos* must not use the article, because if the article is used, it allows other misunderstandings, for example Sabelianism, which states that the one God reveals himself from diverse three aspects (Guthrie, 1988: 275). If every noun that is not preceded by *ho* must be translated before the word 'a', then the consequence is that the word God which is directed to God the Father in John 1:6, 12, 13 and 18, must also be added the word 'a' (Herlianto, 2004: 148-149). If John 1:1 were translated the word was a god, it would contradict Titus 2:13 and Hebrews 1:8. It is impossible in one part of the Bible to call Jesus a god and in another to call Jesus the God? (Asali, 2006: 22-23). In Titus 2:13 and Hebrews 1:8 explicitly mention Jesus as God, and in these 2 verses, the word "God" in Greek uses the definite article (English: the). For the word "God" in Titus 2:13 the Greek *Tou Theou* is used, while for the word "God" in Hebrews 1:8 the Greek word 'O *Theos*' is used, where the words 'Tou' and 'O' are the definite article. Because it is clear that the word cannot be translated 'a god'.

The word, which in Greek is *Logos*, does not only mean word, but also means mind and reason (Darmawijaya, 1991: 273). It is explained that "for the Jews the *Logos* was not just a voice (voice of God) in the air, but a very effective force, dynamic and creative force. *Logos* not only states something, but does something (cf. Isaiah 55:11). Then for Diaspora Jews, *Logos* is the same as 'Sabda Allah' (*Debar Yahweh*), and it sometimes means *Hockmah*, 'wisdom' which is personified in Proverbs Solaiman (Marantika, 1983: 28). If the Word is interpreted as God's 'mind' and 'reasoning', then the Word originates from eternity, existed with God before time and the world existed (Barclay, 2003: 63). Certainly there was no time when God as a person lacked wisdom. It is with wisdom or mind and reason, that God uses His power to create. Jesus, who is called the Word, says, “In the beginning was with God” (John 1:2). The word 'together with' in this verse comes from the word *pros* (face to face) which in Greek thought means one unit, showing the oneness of the Word with God (Marantika, 1983: 16). The preposition *pros* not only refers to physical closeness to the Father, but also the intimacy of fellowship (Erickson, 1999: 431). The Word is in God; Jesus had His pre-existence as the Word within God. Jesus is the Word that is in God. The Word was not created by God but has existed since God existed (Roni, 2008: 11). Thus, the revelation of the Word is also part of God's existence, because it is impossible for the revelation of something from within God apart from God himself.

The presence of the human Jesus in the world bearing the title 'Word', shows that He is not solely the messenger of God, but Himself is the message. The Word is not a 'revelator' with the meaning of informer, but revelation (Groenen, 1992:55). Thus the 'words' and



'behaviors' of Jesus are things that must be scrutinized as the Word. The person of Jesus himself is the kingdom of God, the word of God and the love of God (Dister, 1994: 141).

Jesus' Deeds

There is a clear behavior of Jesus to identify Him as God. He has exercised divine rights that belong only to God. These divine rights include: Forgiving sins and receiving worship (Woodworth, 1989: 74). Maybe some people will identify Jesus as God because Jesus has performed miracles. While this may be indicative, it should be noted that many other people also performed miracles. The author identifies Jesus as God because of something very clear apart from the miracles He has done, namely His words which say: "Have power to forgive sins" (Luke 5:24). Floyd said that Jesus had used God's right to forgive sins, even though only God himself had this right (Mark 2:7; Woodworth, 1989: 74).

Apart from forgiving sins, Jesus also declared himself to be God by allowing himself to be worshiped. The Old Testament (Exodus 34:14) and Jesus himself (Matthew 4:10 cf. Kings 10:25-26; Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9) state that only God is worthy of worship, so when Jesus He is not God, so that means He blasphemes (Thiessen, 1997: 147). Worshiping Jesus is not only allowed by Him but is indeed a necessity for all (Hebrews 1:6; John 5:23).

King of Kings

It is clearly stated that Christ is King. God Himself announced by saying, "I have installed My king in Zion, My holy mountain!" (Psalms 2:6) (Leaves, 2006: 80-81). Jesus (Newel, 1992: 207-212) will be the king who rules over all people on earth. His dominion is a dominion that is everlasting, that will not pass away, and His kingdom is a kingdom that will never be destroyed (Daniel 7:13-14). Jesus was given power not only over earth but also over heaven (Matthew 28:18; 1 Peter 3:22; Phillipians 2:9-10; Ephesians 1:22-23); it says in Hebrews 1:6, "All the angels of God must worship Him." How exalted is Jesus' position so that God's angels must worship Him who is eternal in His power (cf. Hebrews 1:13-14).

The surrender of the kingdom and the submission of the Son to the Father does not mean that henceforth He is no longer the Son or that He no longer has power. As a Son, He in His pre-existence already possessed the glory of God (Philippians 2:6ff; Colossians 1:15ff). Similarly, the nature of His honor and glory He receives at the time of His glorification is not temporary (Philippians 2:9ff; Ephesians 1:21). Therefore, as through Him all things exist, in Him all things have their purpose and subsistence (Colossians 1:16-17). The glory of those whom God appointed to be conformed to His image (Romans 8:29) includes the fact that they share in His power and reign (cf. Romans 5:17; 2 Timothy 2:12) (Ridderbos, 2008: 594).

The Human Nature of Jesus

Philippians 2:7 says Jesus is God who has taken an action, namely, that "He emptied Himself." If Jesus is essentially a creature or messenger of God alone, then with what can He be said to have equality with God (see Philippians 2:6)? The self-emptying of this equality is simply taking the 'form' of the renunciation of glory that He had before incarnation as a human being; but we can understand, it is impossible for Him to separate Himself from His person and His own nature (Baxter, 1999: 263; Nicolaidis, 2019).



In essence, Jesus is God; still God, even though He took the form of a servant and became one in the likeness of men (Philippians 2:6). Alluding to the problem of the divinity of Jesus when He took the form of a human servant of God, Walvoord argues, the facts show that although Christ in His human nature was limited, His divine consciousness was still omniscient and His divine will was still omnipotent (Walvoord, 1969: 130). The fact that Christ took the form of a servant does not include the removal of His God form. There is no exchange from one to another (Berkhof, 2009: 57). Käsemann argues that we must maintain unequivocally that He who became flesh did not cease to be God, did not undergo a “transformation” (Sagala, 2009: 101-102).

The Nature of Servanthood of Jesus

Although this servanthood was not the likeness of God from all eternity, yet He played this servanthood so perfectly; perfect as a true servant of God. In becoming man He assumed the form of a servant, that is, the outward form of a servant, and a human nature befitting Him (Walvoord, 1969: 128). He acted as befits a human who was created to need God and to obey God. During His life He placed himself as a servant of God, so that He was subject to the law (Galatians 4:4). In His role as a human who needs God, Jesus prayed to God.

Jesus who is actually God has taken the form of a Son of Man, who is also commonly called the Son of God. As a beloved Son, He is tasked with dedicating himself to being a servant, someone who wants to be classified as a small person; become a lamb that bears sin (cf. John 1:29) (Dister, 1994: 51). Jesus' act of taking the form of a servant was not something that He could not avoid. It is not fate that befalls Him from without. It was not the will of His Father that was forced upon Him (Abineno, 2009: 57).

Jesus' deity in the New Testament is clear, and in John 8:58 Jesus states, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.” He links Himself to the “I AM” of Exodus 3:13-15.

The Holy Bible educates us that Jesus was both fully man and fully God. There are many verses state the deity of Jesus Christ and only some of these follow below:

John 1:1 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 20:28 – Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”

Titus 2:13 – waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ

2 Peter 1:1 – Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ

Romans 9:5 – To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

Colossians 1:16 – For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.



The teaching of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity does not deny monotheism, as Jehovah's Witnesses assert, but it is rather a very sound revelation of the triune Godhead of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Nicolaides, 2019). In addition, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist on Sunday's is a requisite activity of the Church because the Eucharist establishes the Church as the Body of Christ, and if Jesus is not God there is no point in doing that (Nicolaides, 2021).

Evaluation

In general, starting with the observation that there are three responses from Christians in dealing with them. First: they are indifferent or not taken seriously. But their envoys are militant and will continue to spread their teachings. Second: categorically refusing to enter into dialogue with them. Remember they like to share tracts or books and visit the Christian congregation's house two by two. Third: receive well and invite to discuss. And here is the problem, if the congregation is not well-equipped about Christian Christology, then it is easy to get trapped into believing their Christology which we believe is flawed.

Delegations of Jehovah's Witnesses who visit Christians' homes have indeed been equipped with techniques for starting a discussion and how to answer any questions. If attacked and unable to answer, they ask for time to meet again, then bring someone else who is more capable of answering a question posed. They may strike back and even bring various tracts and books, including their version of the Bible. Sometimes they even invite one to come to worship. The worship meeting takes place in the Kingdom Hall, "Most of the events involve audience participation, a kind of class discussion. Anyone who wants to can participate. No coercion. The program begins and ends with singing and prayer. You do not have to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses to attend our meetings. We invite everyone to come. This event is free. There is no collection or tithing," (<https://www.jw.org/en/saksi-saksi-yehuwa/pertemuan-worship/>). No collection or tithing is the main attraction.

They want to be friends and tell people more about who they are and what they believe (Association of Bible Students, 2005:3). The desire of Jehovah's witnesses should be used as an opportunity for evangelizing Christians to them, but unfortunately Christians tend to respond inappropriately to Jehovah's Witnesses. They position Jehovah's witnesses as 'enemies' who must be avoided, ignored or attacked. They should make Jehovah's Witnesses a target of love and mission (Handoko, 2009:2). Christians should be aware of their responsibility in giving accountability about their faith if someone asks or doubts anything (Handoko, 2009:3).

The results of the interviews with the five main questions show that an understanding of the biblical identity of Jesus was never truly possessed from the beginning. The understanding that Christians have, is only built from the belief 'just believe that Jesus is God'. Even if there is an argument, it is also too weak to be accounted for logically and is even easy to break, because the Jehovah's Witnesses even use the original language (Greek) approach, even though only for certain verses that are important to talk about or argue about. The interviewers' met the group of Jehovah's Witnesses in five ways, namely: being randomly visited them when they came from house to house, being introduced by friends to help answer a question being invited to attend an event held by Jehovah's Witnesses, through the media and because of their own curiosity, and then they are ultimately caught up in the faith.



Jehovah's Witnesses are good human beings and are very active in preaching their beliefs, even though what is being preached is not entirely correct relating to Jesus Christ our Lord. Their enthusiasm is however to be commended in carrying out their mission. They have various ways of operating and are very creative, in ways more so than other Christians. Many Christians do not display a sound approach when preaching their beliefs, but Jehovah's Witnesses do, which has the ultimate goal of bringing the people they meet to their version of Jehovah.

Conclusion

The divinity of Christ is the core Christian doctrine which is firmly rooted in Holy Scripture. First, the congregation needs to understand that God is the Supreme Person who has created everything and has power over everything, as the Jehovah's Witnesses also believe, that God is the Supreme Person, an Almighty Person who provides for human needs and requires humans to live according to His will. But it is necessary to emphasize that Jesus is the one God, because the apostle Paul said, that man and everything has been created by Jesus. The Apostle John also said that when Jesus came to this world, He came to His own. Jesus is the owner, in other words, He is the Lord of all creation. If Jesus is not God, those words deny the principle of the oneness of God which the LORD, God, has stated. There is no God but Him and He will not give His glory to anyone else. The titles of Jesus, the exercise of God's rights by Jesus and the prophecies concerning Jesus as the ruler who will act as the eternal Father testify that Jesus is God Himself who has come to man. God will not give His glorious titles and His rights to anyone, because He is a jealous God who has said He will not give His glory to others. Therefore, the Jehovah's Witnesses' denial of the divinity of Jesus as the almighty God was an act of giving rise to a new polytheism. Because fulfilling the demands of Jesus' titles to worship Him means the duplicity of God. Second, the congregation needs to be trained to be accountable for their faith and if necessary, they should not only be taught, but also create a simulation when their Christological understanding is attacked. With a comprehensive understanding like this, it will prepare the congregation for the presence of delegates from Jehovah's Witnesses.

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