

Watchtower history about

Holy Spirit

Current Guidance

After Knorr replaced Rutherford, Watchtower ceased saying it was directed by angels. Guidance was attributed simply to the Lord in 1943.

These directions CAME TO US FROM THE LORD through his established agency directing what is required of us and for those who really love the lord and are guided by his counsel, that is a reasonable service requirement. 7/1/1943 page 205

Rutherford's claim that the modern day organization is directed by angelic revelation is now contradicted by the Organization.

"Those who make up the one true Christian organization today do not have angelic revelations or divine inspiration. But they do have the inspired Holy Scriptures, which contain revelations of God's thinking and will." *Jehovah's Witnesses - Proclaimers of God's Kingdom* (1993) p.708

Watchtower guidance is still to be trusted though, as it is provided by God, or Jesus, or the holy spirit, through the faithful slave.

A Governing Body member scrutinizes each Watchtower to ensure it represents truth.

"To this day the Governing Body follows similar guidelines. Each article in both The Watchtower and Awake! and every page, including the artwork, is scrutinized by selected members of the Governing Body before it is printed. Therefore, you can read The Watchtower and Awake! with confidence." *Watchtower* 1987 Mar 1 p.15

In many articles, there is no room for any doubt that the Watchtower must be upheld as from Jehovah. It has even stated that we can have more confidence than Noah had, who personally spoke with God. The following quotes make the reader feel the Watchtower contains infallible opinion of God. How then can it be fallible?

"Holy spirit, working through God's organization, will also help us to gain a wonderfully clear understanding of what Jehovah has in store for those who love him. After explaining that prominent people of this system of things cannot understand God's purposes, Paul wrote: "It is to us God has revealed them through his spirit.'" *Watchtower* 1993 Aug 15 p.11

"... spiritual food provided by God through the faithful slave." *Watchtower* 1992 Nov 15 p.20

"Christ used his authority by actively leading his congregation on earth. He did this by means of the holy spirit, the angels, and the governing body made up of the 12 apostles and the elders of the Jerusalem congregation. Jesus stated that he would be with his disciples right up to the conclusion of the system of things, where we now are. In the following article, we will see how **he is still the active Head** of the Christian congregation and how **he is leading his "sheep"** today." *Watchtower* 1987 Aug 1 p.15

"Today, Jehovah provides instruction by means of "the faithful steward." (Luke 12:42)" *Pay Attention to Yourself and to All The Flock* p.13

"MARKING A CENTURY OF DIVINE DIRECTION - By the year 1970 a century had passed since Charles Taze Russell and a few associates began meeting for earnest, prayerful study of the Scriptures. Through all those decades, Jehovah's servants had enjoyed spiritual enlightenment and divine direction." *Yearbook* 1975 p.245

"The point is that Christians have implicit trust in their heavenly Father; they do not question what he tells them through his written Word and organization. Things work out well for those who in this trusting way go along with God's way of doing things. For example, Jehovah through his organization has for years warned his people of the harmful effects of using tobacco, and those who heeded this advice were benefited both physically and spiritually." *Watchtower* 1974 Jul 15 p.441

"Those who believe that God uses The Watchtower as a means of communicating to his people, or of calling attention to his prophecies, should study The Watchtower with thankfulness of heart and give Jehovah God and Christ Jesus all the honor and credit and give neither honor nor credit to any man." *Watchtower* 1942 Jan 1 p.5

"As to Noah, the Christian now has much more upon which to base his faith than Noah had (so far as the Scriptures reveal) upon which to base his faith in a coming deluge." *Watchtower* 1923 Apr 1 p.106

Appointments to Positions of Authority

Holy Spirit is said to be directly involved in appointments.

"Elders, for instance, are appointed by holy spirit. (Acts 20:28) But not all spirit-anointed ones serve as overseers in the congregation. What are we to conclude from this? Simply that God's spirit operates in different ways on members of the congregation." *Watchtower* 2011 Dec 15 p.25

"First, holy spirit moved the Bible writers to record the qualifications for elders and ministerial servants. ... Second, those recommending and making such appointments specifically pray for Jehovah's spirit to direct them as they review whether a brother meets

the Scriptural requirements to a reasonable degree. Third, the individual being recommended needs to display the fruitage of God's holy spirit in his own life. (Gal. 5:22, 23) So God's spirit is involved in all aspects of the appointment process." *Watchtower* 2014 Nov 15 p.28

Holy Spirit receives the credit for appointing people to "privileges" within the congregation. For instance, the appointment of an elder is at the recommendation of the body of elders and put before the Circuit Overseer who "prayerfully considers the recommendations" (*Watchtower* 2014 Nov 15 p.29).

"Our Leader uses this Governing Body to appoint qualified men - whether spirit-anointed or not - as elders in the local congregations. In this regard, the holy spirit, which Jehovah has given Jesus authority to employ, plays a pivotal role. (Acts 2:32, 33) First of all, these overseers must meet the requirements set out in God's Word, which was inspired by holy spirit. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 2 Peter 1:20, 21) The recommendations and appointments are made after prayer and under the guidance of the holy spirit. Additionally, the individuals appointed give evidence of producing the fruitage of that spirit. How reassuring to know that Jesus Christ provides leadership to his disciples today through the Governing Body, the holy spirit, and the angels!" *Watchtower* 2002 Mar 15 p.14

"There is another factor that indicates how the holy spirit operates in the recommendation and appointment of overseers. Jesus said that 'the Father in heaven gives holy spirit to those asking him.' (Luke 11:13) So when the elders in the local congregation meet to recommend men for congregational responsibility, they pray for God's spirit to guide them. They base their recommendations on what is stated in God's inspired Word, and holy spirit enables them to discern whether an individual being considered for appointment meets the Scriptural requirements." *Watchtower* 2001 Jan 15 p.14

"Under the direction of the holy spirit, Branch Committees recommend mature, spiritual men to serve as circuit and district overseers. After being appointed directly by the Governing Body, they serve as traveling overseers. Traveling overseers submit reports to the branch office. With the **help of the holy spirit and the inspired Scriptures.**" *Watchtower* 1990 Mar 15 p.20

"We are living also in the time of final fulfillment of the prophecy to which the apostle Peter referred on the day of Pentecost (Joel 2:28, 29, AS; Acts 2:16-18) We should therefore expect the spirit's activity to include appointing overseers. In consideration of the spirit's fruitage produced by the candidate and in harmony with the written requirements set out in the Holy Scriptures written by men under the operation of the holy spirit, the governing body acts, being itself moved by the holy spirit for which it prays to God that it may guide the governing body. So today as well as in Paul's day it may be said that the holy spirit appoints overseers over the flock of God that he purchased "with the blood of his own Son." *Watchtower* 1958 Jan 15 p.45

If Holy Spirit is involved, then any elder who is sinning will be revealed and not appointed. Yet, part of the process prior to announcing the appointment of a brother is to ask him:

"Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment? Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation?" *Shepherd the Flock of God* p.35

This question nullifies the claim of supernatural guidance. Despite asking for God's holy spirit to assist with the recommendation, the elders need to ask the person in order to find out of any wrongdoing that disqualifies them.

When I was 19, my father who was the Presiding Overseer, said I was going to be announced as a Ministerial Servant at the meeting that night. He asked if there was any reason for which I would not qualify as a Servant. I had no idea that they had been considering me. I was in shock, as there were things I was doing that meant I should not take the position, but I was too embarrassed to tell my father I did not qualify. It took away from the joy of the appointment as I felt incredibly guilt when I was announced.

Real life examples bring the theory of spirit directed appointments face-to-face with reality. I personally know numerous examples of brothers appointed as elders and ministerial servants whilst breaking committing fornication, adultery and homosexuality, some for in excess of 20 years, proof the Holy Spirit is not involved in appointments, disfellowshipping and reinstatement.

Some high profile cases have been amongst the Governing Body themselves, brothers said to be chosen by Jehovah.

"This appeared in the issues of June 1 and 15 and proved conclusively that Jehovah's organization must henceforth be guided and directed by Jehovah's spirit through the visible governing body made up of those servants whom Jehovah himself would appoint." *Watchtower* 1965 Jun 1 p.352

During the 1980's three members of the Governing Body stepped down. Raymond Franz resigned in 1980, concluding that the Watchtower did not represent true Christianity. Ewart C. Chitty resigned in 1980. The *Yearbook* 1980 p.258 simply stated, "In the past year Ewart C. Chitty resigned, so that at present there are 17 members of this body." This was not due to apostasy, but for homosexual conduct prior to his appointment to the Governing Body.

In 1984, Leo Greenlees resigned. Though there was no written statement, the following breakfast announcement occurred at Brooklyn Bethel.

"This is to inform the Bethel family that Leo Greenless is no longer a member of the Bethel family and the matter is closed."²

This too was for homosexual conduct prior to his appointment, and a result of accusations against Greenlees from Mark Palo. A vague indication of what this was for appeared in the Watchtower.

"Shocking as it is, even some who have been prominent in Jehovah's organization have succumbed to immoral practices, including homosexuality, wife swapping, and child molesting." *Watchtower* 1986 Jan 1 p.13

It would seem unlikely that "Jehovah himself" appointed people to the most important position in his earthly organization when they had engaged in such wrongdoing prior to their appointment.

Disfellowshipping

Wrongdoers are said to be disfellowshipped under the guidance of holy spirit. A judicial committee of generally 3 elders will determine the matter after a prayer for the guidance of God's spirit.

"The judicial hearing should be opened with prayer with the accused present. The judicial committee should feel free to seek Jehovah's wisdom through prayer at any time during their private deliberations." *Shepherd the Flock of God* p.89

Disfellowshipping is claimed to include the direction of angels.

"In addition, Jehovah's angels can maneuver matters so that any who cause others to stumble are removed from among Jehovah's people." *Watchtower* 2007 Mar 1 p.24

If Holy Spirit is involved, people will always be disfellowshipped justly. There will be a revealing of sinners, just as Joshua discovered Achan's theft at the direction of Jehovah.

Despite claims of guidance, the Elder's Book provides a procedure for when the elders are in disagreement over a person's guilt, with a majority decision being upheld.

"Generally, those serving on a judicial committee should endeavour to be unanimous in their decisions. Any difference of opinion can usually be resolved by discussing matters thoroughly as a judicial committee, researching the Scriptures and Christian publications, praying for wisdom and direction, and even consulting with an experienced elder outside the congregation. However, if the committee is unable to reach a unanimous conclusion, the minority should give support to the decision reached by the majority." *Shepherd the Flock of God* p.95

This is an admission that elders are not guided after all, but simply presenting their personal opinions.

The procedure to disfellowship a person also includes an appeal process. This two is an indication that Watchtower knows the decisions are not directed, nor can be trusted. If it was, then the decision of the first group of elders would always be correct.

The converse example is the reinstatement of wrongdoers persisting in their sins. Disfellowshipped people who view the Watchtower Society as a cult have formulated their return via internet chat rooms and been reinstated, solely so they can continue to associate freely with family members, or as an attempt to help them leave the Watchtower Society.²

Two-thirds Majority

Decisions in the first century are said to have been *unanimous*.

"At a meeting that was convened, some apparently argued in favor of circumcision, while others presented the opposing view. ... After hearing all the pertinent testimony, the governing body **unanimously agreed** that there was no need for Gentile Christians to get circumcised and come under the Mosaic Law." *Watchtower* 2003 Mar 15 p. 22

The Governing Body today only needs a 2/3 majority to establish a new doctrine.

"At a session three weeks later, April 30 [1975], President Knorr surprised us by making a motion that henceforth all matters be decided by a two-thirds vote of the active membership." *Crisis of Conscience* (Commentary Press Fourth Edition 2004) Ray Franz p.85

"A major factor in Governing Body decisions was the two-thirds majority rule. This produced some strange effects at times. The rule was that a two-thirds majority (of the total active membership) was needed to carry a motion. I personally appreciated the opportunity this allowed for a member to vote differently from the majority or simply to abstain without feeling that he was, in effect, exercising "veto power." On minor matters, even when not in complete agreement, I generally voted with the majority. But when issues came up that genuinely affected my conscience I frequently found myself in the minority - seldom alone, but often with only one, two or three other members expressing conscientious objections by not voting for the motion." Ibid p.115

"Consider what might happen because of the two-thirds majority rule: If out of fourteen members present, nine favoured removing the disfellowshipping offense "label" and only five favoured retaining it, the majority was not sufficient to change the disfellowshipping label. Though a clear majority, the nine were not a *two-thirds* majority. (Even if there were ten of them favouring change this was still not enough, for though they would be two-thirds majority of the fourteen present, the rule was two-thirds majority of the *total active membership*, which during much of the time was seventeen.) " Ibid p.116

See also *In Search of Christian Freedom* (Commentary Press Fourth Edition 2002) Ray Franz pp.268-269 - [Click here for scan](#)

If some members of the Body vote for a change, and some against, which are the ones not being directed by God? This helps explain why doctrine can change over time, as the composition of the Governing Body changes. Doctrinal changes are not Jehovah's new light, but rather the result of new Governing Body members having different opinions to those that they replaced.

Conclusion

Watchtower states that only Jehovah's Witnesses receive holy spirit.

More than that, for one to receive holy spirit he must also be in touch with God's channel of communication. Just as in the days of Jesus and the apostles receiving of holy spirit was dependent upon contact with God's channel of communication, his earthly representatives, so also today. The facts show that that channel is found with the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses.—Acts 19:1-7.

[Watchtower 1962 Apr 1 p.215](#)

The Governing Body makes strong claims that holy spirit guides it to interpret the Bible correctly and to appoint men.

"[A mature Christian] has complete confidence in the truth as it is **revealed** by Jehovah God through his Son, Jesus Christ, and "the faithful and discreet slave." *Watchtower* 2001 Aug 1 p.14

Claiming Jehovah reveals truth through the Slave is a direct proclamation of inspiration.

In total contradiction, the Governing Body says Holy Spirit does not direct the Organization to have *infallible* interpretation of Scripture. Accuracy is no longer necessary for God, even though it was in Bible times. If Truth can morph in an ongoing manner, why the importance of following these leaders and not the leaders of another similarly unguided Organization? It is illogical to demand total obedience, claim its guidelines are to be followed as "the voice of God", yet admit mistakes.

Watchtower publications clearly state that Jehovah directed:

- Imperfect people to infallibly write the Bible

- The first century Apostles to make infallible guidelines when directing the early Christian congregations
- The Governing Body to provide the Watchtower in our day - but this time God's Organization is being guided with the inclusion of mistakes

Jehovah has always been able to provide infallible information, even though the humans used were fallible. When Holy Spirit directed Jehovah's followers, the recorded statements have always been accurate. There is no room for erroneous teachings if an Organization makes the claim Jehovah directs it and is God's only true path to truth and salvation. Holy Spirit does not direct an Organization that claims to be fallible.

Errors make it apparent Holy Spirit does not guide Watchtower doctrine any more so than it has in any other religion. Neither has Holy Spirit guided appointments. Keep this in mind when delving into the reality of Watchtower truth.