



JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
FAITH IN ACTION
PART 1: OUT OF DARKNESS

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DVD Transcript: Jehovah's Witnesses

Faith in Action

Part 1: "Out of Darkness"

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

Samuel F. Herd: For more than 100 years, Jehovah's Witnesses have proclaimed the Bible's message that God's Kingdom will rid the world of wickedness, restore the earth to paradise, and raise mankind to perfection. Sharing this truth however, has often resulted in persecution from powerful institutions. But why has such a positive message elicited such a negative reaction? And how have we overcome that opposition to get to where we are today? This is the story of a people intent on living in the light of Bible truth, no matter what hostility they may face. As you watch, note the determination of Jehovah's modern day servants to study diligently, preach zealously, and keep serving God faithfully. This video is more than just history; this is *your* story. It's a reminder that Jehovah God is in full control and that this is his organization. It is a story that begins over 6,000 years ago the story of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Narrator: In the Bible, light is associated with truth, whereas darkness is associated with falsehood. When God completed his creative works, there was no spiritual darkness. But after Adam and Eve sinned, human society came under the control of Satan. Shunning the light would become the foremost goal of wicked people. Anyone seeking truth in such a world would be opposed. The light of truth shone brightly when Jesus Christ walked the earth. All who truly followed Jesus reflected the light he radiated. But Jesus foretold that after the death of his apostles, there would be a falling away from pure worship. That apostasy would be so extensive that genuine disciples would practically disappear until '*the conclusion of the system of things.*' (Matthew 13:40). At the same time, a counterfeit form of Christianity would flourish. And so it happened. So-called Christian churches deviated from Christ's teachings. The result was the abuse of power and untold suffering. This was a period of deep darkness.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: In the centuries after the establishment of the Christian congregation, we see how many of those who were taking the lead in the Christian church, or the Christian congregation, started to likewise love worldly wisdom. These ideas that came from Plato and other of the Greek philosophers started to infiltrate the so-called Christian thinking.

David H. Splane: And so the apostates wished to blend Christian teaching and Christian tradition with pagan religious ideas. And the idea was to make these things more acceptable to other pagans so that pagans could be drawn into the Christian religion.

Narrator: As the centuries passed, apostate religious leaders obscured the light even further by keeping the Bible in Latin, a language no longer understood by most people. Yet, at certain points during this darkness, there were still individuals who felt keenly the need to read and understand God's Word. For example, in the 1100s, a French merchant known as Vaudès {Peter Waldo} commissioned a translation of Bible books into the language of the common people. Two centuries later, Catholic priest John Wycliffe wrote powerfully against unbiblical practices of the church. By 1382, Wycliffe's team released the first translation of the Bible into English. His students, known as Lollards, preached the Bible's message to anyone who would listen. By 1495, the invention of movable type made it possible to print all or part of the Bible in 12 languages. Soon, people were reading it for themselves. And some who did began to discern that the church had gone off course. In the 1500s, such men as Huldrych Zwingli, Martin Luther, and John Calvin preached the need to return to the original principles of Christianity. These men and others tried to expose hypocritical practices and uphold Bible teachings even though this put them at odds with powerful religious authorities.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: You can see ones that were willing to stand out as being different even though they didn't have a full knowledge of the truth.

Narrator: But standing out led to persecution. And persecution often led to compromise, especially when it came to preaching. Nevertheless, in many lands, the 1600 and 1700s were marked by a strong upsurge in Bible study. In England, many learned men refuted the Trinity doctrine as unscriptural. Among them, scientist Sir Isaac Newton, poet John Milton, and chemist Joseph Priestley. Besides rejecting the Trinity doctrine, Priestley declared that the teaching of the inherent immortality of the soul was false. He held that the first century Christians had the true faith and that any change to that pattern of belief was a corruption. His opinions sparked a heated controversy both in the church and in the government. In 1791 a mob destroyed Priestley's house and laboratory. The pressure mounted for three more years until he fled to the United States. He was followed by many others who held his views, among them Henry Grew. By 1807, at age 25, Grew was invited to serve as pastor of the Baptist Church in Hartford, Connecticut.

David H. Splane: And he had a very interesting philosophy on the study of the Bible: '*Let Scripture interpret Scripture.*' Grew's point was that the Bible was its own best interpreter. Now, as he studied the Bible, he began to realize that the doctrine of the Trinity was false. Well, you couldn't be a Baptist minister and not believe in the Trinity.

Narrator: After four years, Grew and several others withdrew from the church. In later years, Grew published writings in which he used the Bible to refute the Trinity, hellfire, and the inherent immortality of the soul.

David H. Splane: And Grew argued that immortality according to the Bible is a gift that God bestows on the faithful. It is not a gift that he bestows on the wicked. So how could the wicked have an immortal soul?

Narrator: Grew's pamphlet would have far reaching effects. His work caught the attention of Methodist minister George Storrs. Intrigued, Storrs spent the next three years studying the matter. [Storrs: "*The Scriptures are clear on this point.*"] Yet, his findings met with little interest by his fellow ministers. ["*In Ezekiel 18:4: The soul that sinneth, it shall die.*"]

David H. Splane: And finally by 1840 his conscience troubled him so much over the difference between what the Bible was teaching and what he was being obliged to teach as a Methodist Episcopal minister, that he resigned his position.

Narrator: In 1842, Storrs began publishing a monthly magazine entitled '*Bible Examiner.*' Before long, he met Henry Grew in person. The two became close friends and collaborated in debates against proponents of the immortal soul doctrine. [Storrs: "*Yes, and that scripture, Ezekiel 18:4, that one I thought was...*"] George Storrs believed that in order for everyone living during the time of Christ's return to have an opportunity for salvation, a global preaching campaign was needed. He had no idea how such a thing could be accomplished, but in faith he wrote: "*Yet, too many, if they cannot see just how a thing is to be done, reject it, as if it were impossible for God.*" Storrs died in 1879 at his home in Brooklyn, New York, in the very neighbourhood that would become the focal point of the worldwide preaching work he had so eagerly anticipated. The stage was now set for light to emerge from darkness.

Chapter 2: C. T. RUSSELL

Narrator: It was in 1845 that Joseph and Ann Eliza Russell emigrated from Ireland to Pennsylvania, U.S.A. They would have five children, among them, Charles Taze. But times were hard. His brother Thomas, died at age five. Before Charles turned nine, two more of his siblings died. Then his mother died.

That same year, 1861, the United States became embroiled in a civil war that would send 618,000 to their graves. Thousands perished on battlefields not far from where the Russells lived and worked.

David H. Splane: And they would be able to see firsthand the havoc that war wreaks on people, the suffering, the death.

Narrator: Young Charles Russell thought often about what happens to the dead. Most religions held that God created man immortal and that He made a fiery hell in which to torment people forever, except those predestined for salvation. Russell's feelings about such teachings came through in what he wrote: "*A God that would use his power to create human beings whom he foreknew and predestinated should be eternally tormented, could be neither wise, just, nor loving. His standard would be lower than that of many men.*"

David H. Splane: He could never reconcile the teaching of 'eternal torment' with the description in the Bible of a loving God. As he examined the creeds of the great churches, when he saw that they taught that the wicked are tormented eternally, why, he just could not accept that.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: The religious culture at that time was a matter of believing that God was a God of vengeance.

John Wischuk: And Russell knew that the Bible said, as it does at 1 John 4:8, '*God is love.*' "*How could a God of love do this?*" And so his faith wavered.

Narrator: He felt he could do the most good for people through business and philanthropy. As a preteen, he became his father's partner in a growing chain of clothing stores. Charles Russell enlarged the business, eventually operating a number of stores by himself. By age 25, he possessed over \$300,000, the equivalent of \$7 million dollars today. Yet, his search for truth continued. In 1869 something happened that would help re-establish his faith. [Charles Russell: "*Seemingly by accident one evening I dropped into a dusty, dingy hall to see if the handful who met there had anything more sensible to offer than the creeds of the great churches.*" Male preacher: "*Let us take note of the words of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus himself, to the apostles in the gospel.*"

Chapter 3: AN UNEASY ALLIANCE

Charles Russell: "There, for the first time, I heard something of the views of Second Adventists from the preacher Mr. Jonas Wendell. Though his Scripture exposition was not entirely clear, it was sufficient, under God, to reestablish my wavering faith in the divine inspiration of the Bible."]

David H. Splane: Now remember, at this point Russell is not an atheist, but he's just discouraged. He doesn't feel that truth can be found anywhere. And that sermon by a Second Adventist was enough to get him to get his well-worn Bible off the shelf was enough to get him and to start digging again. [Charles Russell: "As we've already seen, the word 'Trinity' doesn't appear anywhere in the Bible."]

Narrator: Fired with enthusiasm, Charles, his father Joseph, and a few acquaintances in Pittsburgh and Allegheny formed a class for Bible study.

David H. Splane: They would take a subject. They would get a Bible concordance. They would look up every single scripture that had a bearing on the subject. And then they would write down their conclusions. And then they would say: 'All right. This is what the Bible teaches. We are going to believe that.' [Charles Russell: "Yes, and God's Word is clear".]

Narrator: After five years of study, the religious thinking of these men had undergone remarkable change. [Charles Russell: Christ's return will mean great blessings for obedient mankind.] Their study of the Bible led them to major conclusions that challenged the prevailing religious views of the day. For example, while most religions taught that man *has* a soul, Russell and his associates concluded that man is a soul and that the soul can die. And, whereas Christendom's churches teach that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one person, these students held that Jehovah is one God, and not part of a Trinity.

In addition, while some churches were teaching that Christ would return in the flesh and that the earth would be destroyed, this small group came to understand that Christ would return invisibly in the spirit with the purpose of blessing obedient mankind.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: So it wasn't just philosophizing, just talking about 'what if' or 'perhaps this way,' but they were focused on trying to actually find the truth. And the fact that they decided to write down those conclusions showed that they had a belief that there is some truth to be found.

David H. Splane: We only see light when it's Jehovah's time to reveal light. And so this was the beginning of Jehovah's time to lead his people out of darkness into the wonderful light.

Narrator: Charles Russell never professed to be divinely inspired. He acknowledged the assistance he had received from Jonas Wendell, from George Storrs, and from someone who also brought about one of his greatest tests of faith, Nelson Barbour, publisher of the journal '*Herald of the Morning*.'

On a business trip, Russell received a copy of the '*Herald*.' Its contents were a surprise. Like Russell, Barbour held that Christ's return would be invisible. Russell arranged a meeting with Barbour. Soon, Russell's Bible study group of about 30 merged with Barbour's larger group. Russell contributed funds to print '*Herald of the Morning*.'

By this time, Russell began to sell out his business interests in order to preach full time. [Charles Russell: "...yes, and all that is needed for me to leave this business behind and start a new life. There you are." "Thank you! And I wish you well in your new endeavours."]

He was convinced that the presence of the Lord is of utmost importance. [Charles Russell: "*The presence of Christ is not compared to the Flood, but to the days of Noah*". Ecclesiastes 1:4...] At the age of 25, he went from city to city to speak at various public gatherings, on the streets, and to Protestant churches and their clergy.

Richard E. Abrahamson: He didn't want to form a church. There were already enough denominations in his mind. There he presented these main Bible teachings to them and urged them to study the matter and then to use their pulpits to preach that message. But, of course, they laughed and made fun of him and went their way. And then that's why Russell decided, '*Well, somebody had to preach these things*.' So he would use his time and energies to do it.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: You would assume that being well-off, he could have supported someone else, he could have taken the easy way out and perhaps funded someone else to do the work. He allowed his whole life to centre around it, by selling his business and getting involved personally with it. You can see the passion, the love, that he had for the truth.

[“Here's the mail, Mr. Russell.” Charles Russell: “Thank you.”]

Chapter 4: THE BIBLE STUDENTS

Narrator: After two years of association with Nelson Barbour, a dispute arose that would test the loyalty of each member of the Bible study group. Barbour had written an article for the '*Herald*' spurning the teaching that Christ's death could provide a ransom for sinners. Though professing to believe in the ransom, Barbour wrote that the notion that Christ's death paid for mankind's sins was 'unscriptural, and obnoxious to all our ideas of justice.' Russell, his young co-editor, disagreed. Through the pages of the '*Herald*,' Russell went to great lengths to defend this Bible truth. [Charles Russell: "*Unpleasant though it be, I feel it necessary to take exception to an article by my brother on this subject. I make the objection, not from a spirit of controversy, but because I believe the doctrine assailed in that article to be one of the most important teachings of God's word. Jesus Christ by the grace of God, tasted death for every man.*"]'

In the '*Herald*,' Barbour fired back: "*I tell you such a theology is false, and such justice an abhorrence to the principle of right and wrong.*"] Dismayed by Barbour's refusal to accept this Scriptural teaching, Russell asked him privately either to resign or to sell his share of the paper. [Charles Russell: "*While I still feel that you are a brother in Christ, the points of variance seem to me to be so fundamental and important that full fellowship no longer obtains between you and me. I feel that our relationship should cease.*"] After months of controversy, Russell's group withdrew from Barbour's. Eventually, Russell severed all ties with '*Herald of the Morning*.'

John Wischuk: Brother Russell realized that he could not restore this man's wavering faith, in fact, lack of faith. And so he took it as the Lord's will that he begin to publish another magazine, '*Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*.' First issue: July 1879.

Narrator : In the same year that Thomas Edison patented the electric light, Charles Russell had gone from student to publisher. Thus dawned a new era of both literal and spiritual light.

Narrator: From its first instalment, '*Zion's Watch Tower*' championed firm belief in the ransom. Many who had associated with Nelson Barbour sided with Russell on this issue. In 1879 and 1880, Russell and the readers of '*Zion's Watch Tower*' formed 30 congregations. Those who joined them became known simply as the Bible Students.

Guy H. Pierce: People who love the truth want to have answers to questions. Who is God? Why are we here? Where are we going? And they're disillusioned by what they see in the churches. And so they're searching, and so, they found something.

Narrator: Next, Russell and other dedicated Christians established a nonprofit Bible society to enable them to give wider distribution to Bible literature in various languages. From the very beginning, it was agreed there would never be any begging or petitioning for money. The work would always be advanced through voluntary donations.

With the annual commemoration of Christ's death came opportunities to hold large conventions. In time, these were held regularly. Christian baptism was customary. The Bible Students sought to adhere to the Scriptural command to '*not forsake the assembling of themselves together*.'

Another arrangement intended to encourage the small but growing number of Bible Students came in 1894. Traveling representatives, called pilgrims, were dispatched to conduct meetings and to assist these fledgling congregations. About that time, Russell began to publish books containing the results of his Biblical research, eventually writing six volumes. These books came to be known as '**STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**.' As people read these books, they were moved to share with others what they learned.

Gerrit Lösch: Obviously, people that were honest-hearted could hear the ring of truth. They just saw that this is the truth. And it was quite different from what other Christian denominations were teaching. The impact of these volumes on the people was that, really, some immediately changed things in their lives.

Narrator: The Bible Students were putting into practice what they were learning from the Scriptures.

Chapter 5: INTO ALL THE EARTH

Narrator: In 1881 the article 'Wanted 1,000 Preachers' invited readers of *'Zion's Watch Tower'* to distribute Bible literature publicly. Some full time preachers—called 'colporteurs' preached from house to house, bringing the message directly to people's homes. The July 1881 *'Watch Tower'* reminded readers that all true Christians have a responsibility to preach.

Guy H. Pierce: They knew this was the truth, and they were telling people about it. Like every individual Witness today knows he has the truth and he has to tell people around him; and that's what it amounts to.

Narrator: In 1899 *'Zion's Watch Tower'* proposed a new method of preaching: handing publications to people after they left church on Sunday.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: At one stage, Russell endeavoured to talk to the religious leaders. He could see then that there wasn't a chance to help modify those church systems, but rather it was more important to approach individuals on an individual basis and give them the opportunity. You can imagine the reaction, the feelings of those that would come out. They've gone to an established church or religion, they've seen a man who, in their view, perhaps has been educated, knows what he's talking about. They go outside. Here are humble people trying to tell them something from the Scriptures.

Guy H. Pierce: I don't think our work was ever to be confrontational, but it was to draw attention to the message. Confrontation came because we were there, because we're doing the work. But the idea was to draw attention to what the message from the Bible is.

Narrator: These booklets and tracts exposed the church's departure from Bible teachings. And they infuriated Christendom's clergy.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: Now this affected the money that was coming into many churches. Because once people saw the truth and they saw that they had been taught falsehood, it was only logical then that they would withdraw and would not give their support to religious institutions that were teaching falsehood.

Narrator: In 1903, Pittsburgh's Carnegie Hall became the scene of a six-day debate. E.L. Eaton, pastor of a Methodist Episcopal church and representing an alliance of Protestant clergymen, had one aim—to destroy Russell's influence, particularly with regard to his teachings about the condition of the dead.

Richard E. Abrahamson : They really wanted to expose Russell as a man who was ignorant of the Bible and a fraud who wasn't qualified to get on a platform and preach about Bible subjects. [Russell: "And the Lord God..."] Russell really did a very good job of presenting his arguments and establishing Bible truths, showing he was very qualified to deal with Scripture. ["...but that man *is* a soul."] People had a chance not only to see the contrast between the two, but had a chance to see that Bible truths were clear on many of those points. It was reported that one clergyman who had been there to support Eaton came up to Russell afterward and said: *'I'm glad to see you turned the hose on hell and put the fire out.'*

Narrator : The local newspaper published a full account of each debate the following day.

Richard E. Abrahamson : And then the brothers got the idea, why not have Brother Russell have a sermon printed each week in the newspapers simultaneously? And they in turn would telegraph the sermon out to all the newspapers in the United States, Canada, and even parts of Europe.

Narrator: Russell's sermons could be found in 2,000 newspapers, reaching 15 million readers. The message was spreading quickly, but the Bible Students were determined that it should penetrate to *all* corners of the earth. To that end, Russell prepared an even more intensive campaign. Up to 1908, the work had been directed from Russell's hometown, now a part of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. But to accomplish a more extensive, international work, the headquarters, known as the Bible House, were far too small. In 1908, Russell dispatched J.F. Rutherford and others to New York City to secure more suitable quarters. The place was named Bethel meaning "House of God." Those who lived there were called the Bethel family. Each a volunteer, each working vigorously to shine the Bible's light into all the earth.

As far back as 1891, Russell and some associates had been traveling to other lands to help people spiritually. [Russell: "*Brothers, I would like to take our preaching worldwide.*"] One 17,000-mile journey took them to Europe, Asia, and Africa.

John Wischuk: One of the results of that trip was this: there was a need seen for publications in various languages.

Geoffrey W. Jackson : Not long after he would visit a place, you could see these groups of Bible Students start to spring up. The work was starting to go international.

Narrator: But during the years 1909 through 1912, Russell intensified his efforts, traveling across Europe . . . the Middle East . . . and eventually around the world. His travels enabled him to observe millions of people, and to see firsthand what it would really mean to let the light of truth shine into all the earth.

Chapter 6: A NEW WAY TO REFLECT THE LIGHT

Narrator: By 1914 there were 5,000 Bible Students preaching in 68 lands. The world's population was approaching two billion. Was there a way to reach more people in less time? New technologies had opened up a possibility. [Charles Russell: *The 'Photo Drama of Creation' is presented by the IBSA, the International Bible Students Association. Its aim is public instruction along religio-scientific lines and in defense of the Bible as the inspired Word of God.*] The Bible Students did something that had never been done before. By synchronizing slides and film footage with music and dialogue, they produced an eight-hour audiovisual presentation. The idea was to show the development of God's purpose from the beginning of creation to the Millennial Reign of Christ. It was shown in two-hour segments over four nights. The first part dealt with each of the creative days: the Flood of Noah's day; and the faith of Abraham. Part 2 showed scenes of God's dealings with ancient Israel: from the Exodus; through the reign of the Judean kings. The third segment dealt with the destruction of Solomon's temple; and Messianic prophecies and their fulfillment. In Part 4, viewers saw the story of the spread of Christianity; the persecution that resulted; and the huge populations yet to be reached with the Kingdom message. Showings were organized so that 80 cities could be served each day. The Bible Students themselves paid all expenses needed to rent suitable theatres. The "*Photo Drama of Creation*" was a technical feat previously unmatched. It would be another decade before a full length commercial film would combine music, synchronized dialogue, and colour footage. In just one year, nine million people around the earth had seen the "*Photo Drama of Creation*"! And many who saw it were convinced that they had discovered the path of increasing light.

Chapter 7: 1914—A MARKED YEAR

Narrator: In 1876, Russell had written an article in 'Bible Examiner' entitled '*Gentile Times: When Do They End?*' in which he stated that the 'seven times' will end in 1914. Russell concluded on the basis of the tree dream recorded in Daniel chapter 4 that the dynasty that began with King David would be restored 2,520 years after its overthrow. During those years, no Davidic king would rule. The Bible Students referred to that period as 'the Gentile times.' What would happen at the end of those years? They reasoned that since Jesus is the only one qualified to assume the throne of David, then Christ himself would begin ruling in 1914. What would that mean for the earth? Reasoning on Daniel chapter 2 and Matthew chapter 24, the Bible Students preached that a time of global anarchy would come, which would culminate in the end of the system of things. They believed that around that time, the congregation would be taken to heaven.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: They realized that 1914 had a significance, it meant the end of the Gentile times. Now, at that time, they felt that perhaps the work would be finished and they would go home, as it were. So they were looking forward to a time of reward.

Gerrit Lösch: They did understand that there was a significance to the year. Primarily, they thought that 1914 would just be the start of the judgment coming upon the world, or Armageddon.

Narrator: Yet, people in general were anticipating a different sort of future. Many who wrote memoirs about the summer of 1914 described it as one of '*exceptional tranquillity*,' '*full of hope and promise*.' Some analysts felt that in 1914 conditions were better than ever for achieving world peace. What the Bible Students had been preaching about global anarchy seemed highly unlikely. But the Bible Students counted the days and continued working. Then, on June 28, 1914, Austria-Hungary's crown prince and his wife were murdered. His assassin fired the shots that began the bloodiest war mankind had yet experienced. Notions of tranquillity were shattered as nation after nation became enmeshed in 'the Great War.' These and other historical events matched what Jesus said would characterize '*the conclusion of the system of things*.'

Gerrit Lösch: When World War I broke out in July, they felt vindicated and it strengthened their faith in the Bible, and in Jehovah's prophetic Word. But also, it enhanced their trust that Jehovah was using Brother Russell and his friends to explain truth to others.

Anthony Morris III: Just looking at the sign of the times that Jesus told us to look at is enough, but it's still significant that they could pinpoint that year. That's phenomenal.

Chapter 8: A TIME OF TESTING

Narrator: At Brooklyn Bethel on October 2, 1914, Charles Russell made a monumental announcement: "*The Gentile Times have ended. Their kings have had their day!*" Expectations were still running high. Many of the Bible Students were hoping for an immediate heavenly reward.

John E. Barr: And I might just say, my mother, she was ready to sell up everything in the home because she thought that the end was coming in 1914, and her feelings were that of a lot of the brothers back there.

Narrator: Despite such expectations, the distressing world conditions that erupted in 1914 would not mean that the Bible Students' job was done. Russell felt sure that a great work remained. He wrote: "*We should lose no time dreaming that the door is shut! There are people who are seeking the Truth—people who are sitting in darkness.*"—*The Watch Tower, February 15, 1915.* Yet, Russell would not personally reach those people. In 1916 in the course of a preaching tour, he died at the age of 64. He had spent his entire fortune preaching the Bible's message. Whereas the majority of the Bible Students kept studying the Bible and sharing its message, others simply could not overcome their disappointments. Disappointment that 1914 did not fulfill all their expectations, compounded by natural grief over Russell's death.

Richard E. Abrahamson: Well, it was a big shock because they were used to his taking the lead, and they figured he was going to take the lead until the Lord came and took them all to heaven. And they just didn't know what to do for a while. They were totally shocked as to how to carry on.

Narrator: Some would sever all association with the Bible Students and attempt to draw others after them. What would happen to the Bible Students? Would they disperse as if followers of Russell?

David H. Splane: This is not a work of man. This is a work of Jehovah God. It's evident that Jehovah had already chosen this organization because of the faithfulness and the sincerity of the men who were behind it. It's obvious that Jehovah had already chosen this organization to get his work done. There were enough honest hearted men to, hungering for the truth, desirous of doing the will of God, to prevent the organization from collapsing.

Narrator: Rather than giving in to disappointment over what did *not* happen in 1914, the Bible Students kept their minds open to the significance of what *had* taken place. The world war and its aftermath had become the world-shaking events proclaimed by Russell almost 40 years earlier. The Bible Students were coming to the realization that Christ's presence began in 1914, and that the world's last days were underway! Two months after Russell's death, Joseph Rutherford was appointed to oversee the work. Rutherford had been a close associate of Russell, traveling with him and speaking in his defense. Like Russell, he believed that the good news had to be preached. He was dynamic and could not be intimidated. Yet, not everyone appreciated these traits—even among the Bible Students.

John E. Barr: Brother Rutherford, he was an entirely different personality, brusque in manner, and he didn't fear to tread on anyone's toes. I think this had a tremendous test on the brothers because they were really worshipping the creature, more than the Creator. Rutherford directed that Russell's notes for a seventh volume of 'STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES' be compiled into a new book called 'THE FINISHED MYSTERY.'

Richard E. Abrahamson: On the day that the book was completed, and he had a supply in his office, he arranged for brothers to put one at each table place in the dining room. And so, when the family came down to eat, each one had a copy of the book 'THE FINISHED MYSTERY.' Some were quite curious about it and wondered what it was all about, and enthused about it. But there was already a growing tension in the family because some of the responsible brothers sort of resented Brother Rutherford. Some of them had ambitions for themselves. So they used the occasion to bring accusations against Brother Rutherford for having gone ahead and published this without their permission and their knowledge. And the result was eventually about a five-hour tirade against Brother Rutherford, where a number brought a lot of unjust accusations against him. Brother Macmillan tells it, "*Well, that day, they left the dining room and most of the food was uneaten and the family was very sad.*"

Narrator: But in the community at large, people were taking note of 'THE FINISHED MYSTERY.'

Richard E. Abrahamson: They originally planned on a distribution of about less than a hundred thousand. And, within a short time, over 850,000 copies had to be printed.

Narrator: The clergy hated the book! It exposed their unscriptural teachings and practices. And it publicly condemned them for their involvement in the world war. The clergy fought back! Using the

heightened patriotism of wartime to their advantage, they falsely accused the Bible Students of sedition, espionage, and treason. And they urged the U.S. government to halt their work. On May 8, 1918, Joseph Rutherford and seven of his associates were arrested. On June 20, they were convicted on four counts of sedition. July 4, 1918: Rutherford and his associates were transported to the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia. The sentence? Twenty years in prison: George Fisher, Hugh Macmillan, Robert Martin, Frederick Robison, Joseph Rutherford, William Van Amburgh, Clayton Woodworth. Sentenced to ten years in prison: Giovanni DeCecca

George M. Couch: It was quite a shock to them to be put in prison. Did they do something that they shouldn't have done? Was the Lord displeased with them, or was the Lord permitting it? They just didn't know.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: The Devil stirs up people to oppose us either directly or indirectly. Now, the charge of sedition has been one often used against Jehovah's people. This is just another ploy. Those brothers certainly were not going around trying to undermine the U.S. government.

Narrator: On August 26, 1918, Brooklyn headquarters was shut down. Operations were moved back to Pittsburgh. In the minds of the clergy, the voice of the Bible Students had been silenced.

Chapter 9: ADVERTISE! ADVERTISE! ADVERTISE!

Narrator: On November 11, 1918, the world war ended. Prisoners of war were being released; Rutherford and his associates were not. It appeared that their opponents had succeeded. The Bible Students circulated a petition for the release of the eight men... [man: "We just need your signature right there."] and obtained 700,000 signatures! On March 12, 1919, Woodrow Wilson, president of the United States, conceded that the prison terms were excessive. On March 26, all eight men were released. The charges were later dropped.

George M. Couch: That the Lord was preparing them for the future. It was going to be a battle with the political, religious, and commercial world, and Brother Rutherford was geared and trained for that after he got out

Narrator: Upon their release, the men were consumed with zeal! Within six months, headquarters was moved back to Brooklyn and arrangements were made for a convention at Cedar Point, Ohio. It was here that they launched a companion magazine to 'The Watch Tower' called 'The Golden Age.' Its purpose? To explain the meaning of world events and to inspire hope in the supreme remedy.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: Rutherford and his associates had only just been released from prison. And then within a couple of months, they organized this tremendous convention, and announced the release of a new magazine 'The Golden Age.' Now, that's something that really is unbelievable. You go from one situation where there is hardly anything happening. The next thing, it's just full speed ahead.

Narrator: On September 8, 1922, another convention was held at Cedar Point. Here, Rutherford gave what would become perhaps his most memorable speech: "*Do you believe that the King of glory has begun his reign?*" Audience: "Yes!" "*Then back to the field! The world must know that Jehovah is God and that Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the day of all days. Behold, the King reigns! You are his publicity agents. Therefore advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom!*" And 'advertise' they did!

M. Stephen Lett: Well, it must have been daunting for them to contemplate the world as their territory and a few thousand harvest workers. They knew Jehovah would help them. They knew others would join them. So they knew the work would expand.

Geoffrey W. Jackson: You could imagine someone sitting there and saying, "How on earth would you ever get this done?" And that would seem to be quite a sensible question. But those brothers weren't concerned with that. They had full faith in Jehovah.

Theodore Jaracz: Well, our focus at the time in view of Brother Rutherford's talk was that we've got something to do and we've got to finish a work that we've been entrusted with. And our focus was to get on with the job and fulfill our commission as his servants here on the earth.

Anthony Morris III: Their faith was so huge. They didn't fully comprehend how it would all end up, but their faith in Jehovah was just, 'you get out and do it and leave the results to Him.'

Narrator: Like some who had gone before them, these students of the Bible had the courage to walk away from false beliefs. Yet, they were different in that they stuck together. And they refused to stop preaching, even in the face of serious opposition. Because of their endurance, they continued to know the profound joy of having emerged from darkness.

Now a huge work lay ahead of them. Their future would be one of increasing sacrifice and great accomplishment. But their faith that Christ had begun ruling, coupled with their appreciation for Jehovah's direction and backing gave them the courage they would need to let the light of truth shine into **all** the earth.

Worksheet: Jehovah's Witnesses
Faith in Action
Part 1: "Out of Darkness"

4/16

1. How did deep darkness develop after the death of the apostles?

2. Beginning in the 1100's, what developments helped people to discern that the church had gone off course?

3. Who were Henry Grew and George Storrs?

4. What events in the life of Charles Russell had a profound effect on him?

5. How did Brother Russell, his father, and a few acquaintances carry out their Bible study class, and to what Scriptural conclusions did they come?

6. How did this Bible study group come to merge with Nelson Barbour's group, but what caused Brother Russell to withdraw?

7. What occurred in July 1879 that began a new era of spiritual light?

8. Thereafter, what did the growing number of Bible Students do to spread the good news?

9. Years in advance, what did the Bible Students expect to occur in 1914?

10. What challenges did the Bible Students face after Brother Russell died?

11. What did the Bible Students do after Brother Rutherford and his associates were released from prison?

12. How has viewing this video deepened your appreciation for Jehovah's organization?

13. How has this video strengthened your determination to continue zealously preaching despite obstacles?

14. How could we use this video to help our relatives, Bible students, and others?
