

1 **TRANSCRIPTION AND RECORD OF A JEHOVAH’S WITNESS JUDICIAL**
 2 **COMMITTEE MEETING WITH ERIC BOTTORFF AND THREE OF THEIR**
 3 **ELDERS THAT TOOK PLACE SEPTEMBER 2012**

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 5 -----
 6 **Introduction and notes on this transcript and the entire tribunal:**

7
 8 This English-language transcription is based on four YouTube videos that I released in September of 2012 on
 9 the JWStruggle YouTube channel. These were originally labeled “Apostasy Trial” parts 3, 4, 5, and 6. Parts
 10 1 and 2 were introductory videos prior to the actual judicial committee meeting and have not been
 11 transcribed. Driving to the meeting, small-talk prior it’s start, etc. was not included in the text. Small words,
 12 stutters, and other redundancies were also omitted. Comments are occasionally added for clarity or
 13 commentary and are bracketed in red. Sometimes bold has been added to show it is a significant statement or
 14 change in the discussion. Legal line numbering has been included for reference purposes.

15
 16 The Elder chairing the meeting and seated in the center is named Cosmo, about 50 or so years of age. The
 17 younger man to the right is named Eric, who was a new elder at the time (less than a year) and is 31 or 32
 18 years of age. The third elder who participates in the discussion the least is named Dennis, who is about 55
 19 years of age. I will refer to the accused (myself) as “Eric B” since two of us share the same first name. I
 20 would like it known that I did not record nor publish this experience with the intention of having the elders
 21 humiliated or disparaged, and have in fact defended them from unfounded ad hominem attacks online that
 22 I’ve come across. They are not evil men, but simply tools of the Watchtower, “captive to the concept”, as
 23 Ray Franz said in his perennial work *Crisis of Conscience*. I firmly believe that these secretive, closed-door
 24 meetings are not in line with the Holy Scriptures or with enlightened jurisprudence in any country of the
 25 world. I say this as one that had formerly presided over dozens of these star-chamber trials when I was an
 26 ‘asleep’ Jehovah’s Witness elder, and also as one that has endured it as an “accused person”. It is hoped that
 27 this transcription will allow people to independently decide for themselves whether this is so or not. It is my
 28 position that the subject of the Watchtower’s harmful shunning and kangaroo-court proceedings is more
 29 important than any of us that were in the room that evening.

30
 31 The meeting took place at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses located at 1279 South 13th Street,
 32 Grover Beach, CA 93433 on the date of September 5, 2012, with a brief second meeting taking place on
 33 September 7, 2012 at the same address.

34
 35 **COLOR KEY:** Black text is spoken dialogue. **Comments and explanatory text is in red.** Elder’s names are in
 36 light blue. My name is in green.

37
 38 **Appendix:** Following the main text of the Judicial Committee meeting an appendix is attached. It has three
 39 letters. The first is my correspondence with the two elders that were assigned by the body to investigate my
 40 alleged wrongdoing. I wrote them to try and explain the state of affairs that existed in my home at that time
 41 and the problems I was having with my wife. After a failed attempt to meet with us both and then privately
 42 with me, a registered letter was sent in August of 2012. My letter responding to theirs then follows. Finally
 43 some facts about the transcription itself that some may find interesting are included.

44

45 -----
46
47 **JEHOVAH'S WITNESS JUDICIAL COMMITTEE MEETING FOR "APOSTASY" - OPENING PRAYER**
48

49 **COSMO:** Before we start we should open with prayer. [Pointing to Dennis]
50

51 **DENNIS:** Jehovah our dear heavenly Father we approach your throne of undeserved kindness at this time
52 tonight. We pray that your spirit be upon our meeting with Eric Bottorff. We appreciate our brothers and
53 sisters and we appreciate him. And we pray that Father that all things can be based on you Word of Truth
54 and the guidance that you provide for us and what we use and that we can somehow help this dear brother
55 if we can. We pray Jehovah that you bless all the efforts of the brothers earthwide that endeavor to serve
56 you. Please forgive us for our many sins and many shortcomings, in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.
57

58 **COSMO:** You understand this [indecipherable] no recording devices are to be used?
59

60 **ERIC B:** I understand.
61

62 **COSMO:** You understand that this is a judicial committee?
63

64 **ERIC B:** Yes.
65

66 **COSMO:** I always like to make sure so there's no [indecipherable] in understanding. We'll turn in our Bibles
67 if you can to Galatians chapter 6. And verse 1 and Eric would you like to read that?
68

69 **ERIC:** *"Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, YOU who have spiritual*
70 *qualifications try to readjust such a man in a spirit of mildness, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear*
71 *you also may be tempted."*
72

73 **COSMO:** So the hope here is that we're looking to gain you. We miss you.
74

75 **ERIC B:** I appreciate that.
76

77 **COSMO:** I'd also like to go to James chapter 5, verse 13... [indecipherable]
78

79 **DENNIS:** *"Is there anyone suffering evil among you? Let him carry on prayer. Is there anyone in good spirits?*
80 *Let him sing psalms. Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call the older men of the congregation to*
81 *[him], and let them pray over him, greasing [him] with oil in the name of Jehovah. And the prayer of faith*
82 *will make the indisposed one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, it will be*
83 *forgiven him."*
84

85 **COSMO:** So we understand Jehovah's arrangement- Jehovah cares about us...if we go on a path, he may
86 correct us, he loves us. So do know what you are accused of? Apostasizing?
87

88 ERIC B: Actually I don't really know what I'm accused of. I still haven't heard from whoever these individuals
89 are.

90
91 COSMO: In the letter I think we gave you...the sin? The sin you were accused of?

92
93 ERIC B: In the letter you said that I'd been accused of spreading false teachings. But I don't know who these
94 accusers are, I don't what it is that they told you that I said which is of course hearsay. You know I would
95 like to know, obviously who these individuals are, and what it is I supposedly said to them in a private
96 conversation. And Matthew 18 says that if a brother has sinned against you, you should go and lay bare
97 that sin between them alone. And for whatever reason these people have just skipped right over Matthew
98 18 and gone straight to you brothers.

99
100 COSMO: Of course, if it's a gross sin, Matthew 18 doesn't apply, neither does Matthew 5... [indecipherable]
101 It's not a Matthew 18 matter.

102
103 ERIC B: Jesus didn't say which kind of sin it was though did he?

104
105 COSMO: He said if he sins against you. This is a sin against Jehovah.

106
107 ERIC B: In fact Matthew 18 says that it could be serious enough for him to be removed, right? And it would
108 still be a Matthew 18 matter.

109
110 COSMO: It could be. It depends though.

111
112 ERIC B: It could be.

113
114 COSMO: But gross sin isn't a requirement.

115
116 ERIC B: Gross sin like fornication or murder.

117
118 COSMO: Something you could be disfellowshipped for... [indecipherable]

119
120 ERIC B: May I ask a question? I don't have a lot of questions and I honestly am not gonna go on and on and
121 on because I know your brothers' time is valuable and I appreciate that. I do have some small notes- one
122 piece of paper.

123
124 COSMO: Are you trying to clear up something?

125
126 ERIC B: Well yeah there are two main questions that I would like clarified if you can answer them. The first
127 one, is I want to know has this matter already been decided by you three brothers? Have you three
128 brothers already decided I'm guilty of apostasy?

129

130 COSMO: Have we made already made a decision? If we had decided you would already be
131 disfellowshipped.

132

133 ERIC B: So I'll have an opportunity to address whatever it is I allegedly said? And they told you that they
134 recollect hearing? Because that's what we're really talking about is this, "Oh yeah he said this...and now I'm
135 telling you and you're trying your best to remember what they told you what they remember me saying."

136

137 ERIC: That was what was expressed in that letter- that you would have that opportunity.

138

139 ERIC B: Okay. The other question that I have is that my father-in-law, Bob Gallaty, was informed that you
140 had enough evidence to proceed against me with a judicial committee...

141

142 COSMO: Informed by who?

143

144 ERIC B: Well I'm not going to say who informed but I do know for a fact that at the District Convention that
145 confidential information was divulged to Brother Gallaty by the elders. I don't know which one of you did
146 talk to him, but one of you talked to him and it came back to me.

147

148 COSMO: We have to know who.

149

150 ERIC: Well that's just hearsay.

151

152 ERIC B: Well I guess I have to know who it is that is supposedly accusing me but Bob talked to quite a few
153 people ...and I still have a few friends that love me. So it got back to me that he's going around at the
154 District Convention while people are trying to "Safeguard their Heart" [that's the title of the current
155 convention] and he was told confidential information about this matter by somebody on this body.

156

157 ERIC: In front of this individual that informed you?

158

159 COSMO: In front of this individual?

160

161 ERIC B: No, he went and told this person, "Well I know all about it because the elders told me and know we
162 have enough to move against my son-in-law."

163

164 ERIC: Bob supposedly told this person...

165

166 ERIC B: Oh yeah, of course he didn't think that it would get back to me. This has really bothered me and
167 hurt me greatly. There are two sides to every story. My wife has gone around and slandered me- she's suing
168 me for everything. In a public court she said that I struck and shoved her...which of course is false. In 21
169 years of marriage the police have never been called. In 21 years of marriage there has never been an
170 accusation of me doing anything physical against my family. And yet, the slander and the gossip against me
171 has continued. And I've sought advice from different brothers, and I thought, "Why would I want to come
172 back to a place where they think that I am an abuser, and they've been told by my soon-to-be ex-wife who

173 is suing me... hauling me to court. I begged her to go to counseling; she refused and told me it's a waste of
174 time...and I was an apostate.

175

176 COSMO: Before we get too far into those things...

177

178 ERIC B: So those are the things that bother. You are right I guess it really isn't that germane. I would just
179 like to know if it's been handled.

180

181 COSMO: It could be in some circumstances...but as far as we know [indecipherable] we don't know anybody
182 that told Bob about this matter.

183

184 ERIC: It is a matter that we take seriously Eric and as far as we can tell there has been no breach of
185 confidentiality.

186

187 DENNIS: I appreciate the letter you sent and we respect everything you said in that letter. Until we had a
188 third brother, due to the fact that there were allegations of apostasy, only the three of us, that was gonna
189 be on the committee, and that's Cosmo. None of us have talked to Bob Gallaty. None of us.

190

191 ERIC B: Ok.

192

193 ERIC: [indecipherable] If any other elders in the congregation did... [indecipherable]

194

195 ERIC B: Well I appreciate that. But somebody did. Because I know for a fact- somebody did. [In actuality an
196 email was forwarded to me, written by my father-in-law himself so my proof was solid on this. However I
197 did not want to delve into it anymore and so let the matter go.]

198

199 COSMO: As you alluded to us, it's hearsay if it's third party.

200

201 ERIC B: Right.

202

203 COSMO: Just the same as what you were saying to us.

204

205 ERIC B: Yeah.

206

207 COSMO: Have you expressed differing views than what you were taught in this organization:?

208

209 ERIC B: Well I think that you could line up a hundred publishers and you could get a hundred different
210 answers on a lot of things. Let me clarify what I mean. I know older sisters that would swear up and down
211 that their husband is going to resurrected and they are going to get married again. Does that make them
212 apostate? Even though that's not really what the Watchtower teaches.

213

214 COSMO: I've never had an older sister tell me that.

215

216 ERIC B: I have- more than once. The reason that I mention it is so I can answer your question. There was an
217 elderly brother in Porterville, loved his dogs... sweet brother- he just insisted that his dogs were gonna get
218 resurrected. Does that make him an apostate? Even though he expresses a different view of what we
219 understand to be Bible truth?

220

221 COSMO: I understand where you're going with this... we're not dealing with and older brother or an older
222 sister, we don't know all the circumstances. We're dealing with you. We've had individuals come forth, and
223 tell us that you don't believe [indecipherable] and that you've been lied to all these years... we had
224 someone say you told them that 1914 is... well I won't use the word. And that you have been lied to all your
225 life. Are those true statements?

226

227 ERIC B: No. Now I can say this, the entire time I was brought up- and I know you two brothers are old
228 enough, you weren't raised in the truth though Cosmo but I was told I would never get out of High School. I
229 was told that I would never grow old in this system. I was told that the end was imminent- that it was
230 coming soon. I was told hundreds and hundreds of times by my mother, and by the brother that studied
231 with me when I was a teenager that we were deep into the end of the end times. And I would never even
232 have a reason to save or get a career in this system. And of course we've found out that this isn't the case.

233

234 COSMO: So are you trying to indict the organization?

235

236 ERIC B: No.

237

238 COSMO: Then what are you saying? So you are saying they lied to you your whole life?

239

240 ERIC B: I'm trying to answer your question. I said that my mother told me that. The brother that studied
241 with me told me that. I know I heard a talk in 1974 by Sunitko, a famous district overseer that said, "Stay
242 Alive Til '75!" There's a 1968 Awake that says that young people will never grow old in this system and
243 there's no reason to pursue a worldly career because 1975 is coming soon. So I know there's some things
244 that I've read in the magazines that have caused me confusion. It's been hard for me to understand. And so
245 what I started to do was I started to do an intensive study of the publications. The Proclaimer's Book makes
246 all sorts of references to Brother Russell- and there's references to the Watchtower from the 1800s and the
247 early 1900s. And I looked all those up and read every one of them. The references..and the things that I
248 found were shocking. If Brother Russell was alive today he would be disfellowshipped. We don't study
249 Russell's writings, even though he founded this organization because if we studied his writings, he'd
250 branded a heretic. So brother Russell is somebody we look up to- I always looked up to him. We have some
251 of the really old publications in the library that are still there. There's articles that encourage us to dig in
252 and read these older books. I actually did that. And what I found was shocking. The things that I found were
253 things I couldn't believe I was hearing. What we have is... we have a problem with dissident Witnesses. I
254 found that there are literally...

255

256 COSMO: Now I'm going to stop you- because we are going down a road, and you are trying to convince us
257 of something..

258

259 ERIC B: No I'm not, honestly I'm not. I have a point, and I have a question that I want to ask you because I
260 don't know the answer to it. Cosmo I did not come here with all the answers I don't have all the answers.
261 And I also didn't come here...A friend of mine said to me well you don't even have to go to this meeting and
262 I said I know that. I want to. I respect you brothers. I have feelings for you. I'm not here to try to tear down
263 anyone's faith. I told that to my friend Joe Turner. Who is no longer a friend to me, he refuses to even talk
264 to me even though I have apologized repeatedly and told him that I am not trying to stop [him] from
265 coming to the Kingdom Hall.

266

267 **I do not want to stop anyone from serving Jehovah. That is not my intention. I love Jehovah I love the**
268 **friends. But there is a dissident movement not of hundreds, but of thousands of active Witnesses. There**
269 **are dozens and dozens of elders...well let me just show you this... [I pull out a printout containing a list of**
270 **files that are available for download online. Pandemonium ensues! All three of them recoil and begin to**
271 **speak at once telling me not to show it to them, thinking it is "apostate literature".]**

272

273 COSMO: I don't want to see it!

274

275 ERIC B: You don't have to see it. What it is...all it is...

276

277 ERIC: Did it come off the JW.org website?

278

279 ERIC B: No.

280

281 ERIC: There's only one official website that we log onto to.

282

283 ERIC B: No- look, this is not literature, all it is, is a printout from a guy- he's an elder, he regularly uploads all
284 the letters to the body of elders, kingdom ministries, he uploads them all online anyone can download
285 them whenever they want. [Thank you Atlantis from www.jehovahs-witness.net!!] This brother's been
286 doing it for eight years. This is not apostate literature; all it is it's just a list of recent literature. The recent
287 September 1st letter to the body of elders about the adjustments in cost...

288

289 COSMO: [indecipherable] that's for the body of elders that's not [indecipherable]

290

291 ERIC B: Yeah.

292

293 ERIC: And he put that online.

294

295 ERIC B: Yeah.

296

297 ERIC: And he says he's an elder.

298

299 ERIC B: Well it's obvious that he is he logs into JW.org. But what I'm saying is...

300

301 DENNIS: Doesn't that strike you kinda peculiar, that confidence that we have with your situation and this is
302 supposedly an elder, with confidential information posting it online, and you're endorsing it? [His tone
303 shows that he is outraged]

304

305 ERIC B: No I'm not endorsing it.

306

307 DENNIS: Well you were handing it to us!

308

309 ERIC B: All I wanted to do is show that that's what it is. There's no confidential information printed on this,
310 [holding up the printout] this just establishes that happened, I'm literally three minutes away from getting
311 to my point

312

313 ERIC: [indecipherable and speaking in the background]

314

315 ERIC B: ...Here's my point, I have a couple notes but I don't really need them much, here's the thing: **There**
316 **are dozens of elders that regularly post everything that goes on. Every letter to the body of elders. My**
317 **goodness the KS10 Shepherd Book [their secret elder handbook that no one is supposed to even see the**
318 **cover of but JW elders] was online before you brothers even got it at the school couple years ago. And I**
319 **would like to know...what does that mean?**

320

321 Does that tell you something Dennis?

322 Does that tell you something Cosmo?

323 Does that tell you something Eric?

324

325 [Several speaking at once]

326

327 **What does it mean?**

328

329 ERIC: **Well it tells me that just as Jesus said would be, there would be apostates.**

330

331 ERIC B: Right... [I answered this sarcastically without even realizing it because his statement struck me as so
332 absurd. I don't believe Jesus ever said "there would be apostates" anywhere in the Bible.]

333

334 COSMO: And it tells me that these brothers have overstepped their bounds. And they need to be corrected.

335

336 ERIC B: Okay.

337

338 COSMO: Because you can't do anything [indecipherable] when you were baptized to follow the rules of this
339 organization... or when you become an elder you have a duty and agree to keep confidential things
340 confidential... [indecipherable] My wife doesn't know anything about any congregation matters because
341 that confidence hasn't been broken.

342

343 ERIC B: But you see the confidence has been broken.

344

345 COSMO: Well by some...

346

347 ERIC B: There are brothers on the hospital liaison committee that started a website called jwreform.org.
348 They started it not because they're unbelievers...but because they're believers. Not because they hate the
349 organization but because they love it. But they want...

350

351 ERIC: What kind accusations are they making why are they talking against the organization?

352

353 ERIC B: That's a black and white kind of a yes or no question that's not really- without you going and looking
354 at it which is not saying that's what you have to do...

355

356 ERIC: What are you thinking?

357

358 ERIC B: Here's what's happening – there's not hundreds, but there's thousands of brothers and sisters. Now
359 I know there's seven million active Witnesses right? So we're talking about a percentage. Jesus said he
360 would leave the 99 and go after the one. There is a large dissident movement of Witnesses that see there
361 are some serious problems- **there are some serious problems they're not local problems they're systemic**
362 **problems. They start at the top and work down.** [One definition: "A systemic problem is a problem due to
363 issues inherent in the overall system, rather than due to a specific, individual, isolated factor. Contrast with
364 pilot error, user error or mistake."]

365

366 ERIC: Doesn't every organization have problems?

367

368 ERIC B: I'm not talking about "He stumbled me, he's a mean guy."

369

370 ERIC: **But there are mistakes that are made and there are refinements that are made.**

371

372 ERIC B: **Right, that's true. One example is that after the memorial each year there's thousands of brothers**
373 **that partake at home privately of the emblems. If they do it at the Kingdom Hall, they'll be ridiculed,**
374 **they'll be considered mentally unbalanced as the Watchtower said recently.** But they know in their heart
375 they are part of the body of Christ.

376

377 COSMO: Can I ask a question? ...Does light hide in the darkness?

378

379 ERIC B: No.

380

381 COSMO: This is all things people are doing [indecipherable] if there's any truth to them they would do it out
382 in the open regardless of what anyone says about you. [indecipherable] ...quite frankly you're talking
383 against it.

384

385 ERIC B: I don't believe that I have committed any serious sins against Jehovah, [or] Jesus. The Bible says we
386 need to love him with our whole heart mind soul and strength- I do that. I share my faith with others, all
387 the time. At work...

388

389 COSMO: The good news, as it was taught to you?

390

391 ERIC: Even some things that the Governing Body might not support do you share those things?

392

393 ERIC B: No I do not talk about the governing body...

394

395 DENNIS: No- things they would not support.

396

397 ERIC: Like 1914?

398

399 ERIC B: No that's not what I talk about. I informal witness all the time at work, and what I talk about, "What
400 do you think is happening with the world do you think it's going to last..." etc. Something that I could say at
401 any door as any one of us has been trained. What I'm trying to get at brothers is that just because a
402 brother disagrees with something, does that make him a heretic? Does that make him an evil wicked
403 mentally diseased...I'm not trying to choke my fellow slaves. I am not a leavening influence with these
404 brothers I don't seek out brothers and try to subvert their faith, quite the contrary, and I can tell you, I've
405 spoken to a former circuit overseer, that feels that same way as the rest of us that are in the dissident
406 movement, I've spoken to former Bethelites, lots of elders have emailed me. I had an elder the other day
407 email me and said look, "I got no body to talk about this- I can't talk to my wife, I certainly can't talk to my
408 fellow brothers on the body." They don't know who else to talk to.

409

410 ERIC: Would they be considered a heretic?

411

412 ERIC B: **What I'm saying is, we're talking about elderly brothers and sisters, brothers that have been**
413 **active for decades, that are seeing that there's problems, serious problems. But there's no avenue for**
414 **those problems or questions to be addressed. In fact you can't even ask certain questions...**

415

416 ERIC: **Here's an answer; in the New System when we're perfect those questions will be satisfied.**

417

418 ERIC B: **Right...**

419

420 COSMO: **You can address questions to the organization.**

421

422 ERIC B: **Not anymore. We had a questions from readers on that a year or so ago. They're not interested in**
423 **anymore letters.**

424

425 COSMO: You're saying all those years these individuals had no answer they had an answer... they can write
426 a letter I wrote letters when I had them.

427

428 ERIC B: Oh yeah, I've read lots of them. There's tons of them online.

429

430 COSMO: It's not that I don't care what other people are doing, we have to look at each individual case, be
431 in their congregation...if they're not in our congregation then the elders can't know every circumstance that
432 can transpire. We have no jurisdiction.

433

434 ERIC: So at one point Hymanaeus and Philetus thought Jesus came back in the flesh... [indecipherable]
435 something to consider.

436

437 ERIC B: Well Paul certainly spoke of them in a bad light. They were denying the Christ. A pretty fundamental
438 doctrine.

439

440 ERIC: Yeah- so do you see how that could be true today? You talk about a person's dog being resurrected
441 we're talking about doctrinal things that the organization teaches...that the scriptures have taught us to
442 stay close to.

443

444 ERIC B: Well let me give you an example, [holding out a half-slip of paper in my hand] this is not an apostate
445 piece of literature this is what brother Russell wrote...maybe you're afraid to look at it? [They remained still
446 with folded arms] It's just a quote from Brother Russell in a Watchtower: [It reads]

447

448 *"Beware of "organization." It is wholly unnecessary. The Bible rules will be the only rules you will need. Do*
449 *not seek to bind others' consciences, and do not permit others to bind yours. Believe and obey so far as you*
450 *understand God's Word today, and so continue growing in grace and knowledge and love day by day."*

451

452 That's the September 15 Watchtower, 1895 page 1866. So brother Russell was dead set against
453 establishing creeds, doctrines, organizations,. They were fighting the Catholic church. But you see what
454 happened was the Watchtower society and all these corporations that publish the literature have become
455 a hierarchy and an organization just like the Catholic church. In fact the society lawyers just recently
456 referred to their policies as a hierarchy, and a church in court in defending some lawsuit. Russell started out
457 saying we don't need an organization to tell us every single thing we must believe.

458

459 What movie we must watch. Whether we can go to jury duty or not...I'm a brand new elder years ago and
460 I've got publishers 20 years older than me saying, "Do I go to jury duty?"

461

462 DENNIS: Eric I'm going to have to stop you I have to speak up. I'm not interested in what Russell said.
463 You know this as well as all of us here. Part of the reason we're in the truth... are you going to listen?

464

465 ERIC B: Uh huh, I will listen.

466

467 DENNIS: Thank you. We made a vow to support the faithful and discreet slave. That is our stance. It is a
468 progressive organization. Are you saying that we should go back to the thinking that Russell had? Russell
469 had brothers that didn't progress. You read in the Proclaimer's book, those that didn't progress stayed in
470 the pipeline. There's always going to be dissidents in this organization until the end times. Always. The

471 rebellious talk of Korah... look at that. Read that account. Do you think they were out of their minds, or
472 high-minded heretics?

473

474 **They followed the wrong thinking, that Jehovah did not want them to think but they thought they were**
475 **right. Those that progressed with what was current!** We're trying to reach your heart brother there's
476 apostate websites. Apostate websites that we're warned against. Do you still agree with the Watchtower
477 magazine?

478

479 **ERIC B:** Is that a question?

480

481 **DENNIS:** Yes.

482

483 **ERIC B:** Sorry I thought it was rhetorical...I try to read all the issues. There's a lot of good articles there.

484

485 **DENNIS:** Do you agree?

486

487 **ERIC B:** I agree with the vast majority of everything that we believe, that I've been taught since I was a little
488 boy. That's one thing I've tried to get across to my wife. She kept saying you're leaving God and I said "No
489 I'm not!" Just because my Christian conscience...has prayed and agonized for hours and hours over certain
490 topics. For hours and hours I've studied and researched the publications, and I can't- there's certain things
491 that we don't have right. There's just certain things that we don't have right.

492

493 **DENNIS:** What was the greatest quality did Jesus say that we would have as a Christian? [indecipherable]
494 What was the biggest thing he said we should have?

495

496 **ERIC B:** Well I know the two greatest commandments are to love Jehovah with your heart soul strength and
497 mind and love your neighbor as yourself.

498

499 **DENNIS:** Why did Jehovah pick Moses?

500

501 **ERIC B:** Because he was a humble meek man.

502

503 **DENNIS:** Sometimes you don't understand things Eric. But if we're humble, that light gets brighter and
504 brighter all the time.

505

506 **ERIC B:** Yeah. My goal is too...humble myself...accept counsel, encourage as many people as I can. That is
507 what I have tried to. That's what I'm still doing. Even though it may not look like that to you brothers. You
508 tell me that Joe and his wife were bothered by me sending them some texts, or saying what I said. I would
509 love to have the opportunity to apologize to them and I have texted Joe and told him, "Brother I love you
510 we've been friends for 20 years. Even though you refuse to even talk to me anymore that's okay I'm still
511 your friend I still consider you a brother."

512

513 He chooses to not even respond to me, which again shows that there is a systemic problem. **There is a**
 514 **problem with legalism, there's a problem with judgmentalism in this organization and I'm including**
 515 **myself because I did it for years. We judge on the outward appearance.** The other day I'm in line to get
 516 something and Cheo Serrano is in front of me. I love Cheo. I love that brother. I tap him on the shoulder and
 517 I say,

518 "Hey it's good to see you!"

519 He looks at me and says,

520 "What's that??" [My voice was imitating him so they would understand. He was very stern and grumpy in
 521 his demeanor which is uncharacteristic of his friendly personality.]

522 And I said,

523 "How's Sherry, what's going on?" with a smile.

524 "What's that?" [pointing to my goatee]

525 And I said,

526 "It's hair man, what's going on?" [Jokingly, trying to make light of my beard.]

527 And he goes,

528 "What's that for?"

529 And I tried to joke it off and said,

530 "Well you're jealous."

531 And then he grabs his bag and says,

532 "Well I gotta go." And he scurried away. He just scurried away...

533

534 Now I forgive Cheo. He's just responding to what he's been taught. To judge anyone that doesn't use the
 535 right little phrases, and anyone that doesn't look the way you're supposed to look. And all the sudden
 536 you're an apostate. You're an evil, mentally diseased person. You see that is what he has been trained to
 537 think. And unfortunately many but not all have been indoctrinated to think [that way]. That's wrong
 538 brothers. That's fleshly. Samuel went to pick the next king of Israel and Jesse's oldest son was handsome a
 539 good looking man oh "He must be the one!" [God said] "I have rejected him." Then they bring out this
 540 freckle-faced, red-haired kid, and that's the one.

541

542 So to take something as mundane and banal and unimportant as hair on my face...

543

544 COSMO: We're not talking about Cheo... [indecipherable]

545

546 ERIC B: We're *not* talking about Cheo.

547

548 COSMO: You're talking about something unrelated.

549

550 ERIC B: Not in my opinion Cosmo. And I'm not trying to consume time unnecessarily.

551

552 COSMO: Are we judging you in the area of [indecipherable]?

553

554 ERIC B: I don't know I can't read your heart.

555

556 ERIC: You're doing the same thing with Cheo isn't that what you're doing?

557

558 ERIC B: It was quite obvious what he was thinking.

559

560 ERIC: But really you don't know.

561

562 ERIC B: I can't read his mind. But **what I'm saying is, there's some serious problems where we have gone**
563 **beyond the things that are written. The apostle Paul said that in 1 Corinthians 4** and in fact if I could share
564 that with you, in 1 Corinthians 4 he had something to say about being judged. Starting with verse 3:

565

566 *"Now to me it is a very trivial matter that I should be examined by YOU or by a human tribunal. Even I do*
567 *not examine myself. 4 For I am not conscious of anything against myself. Yet by this I am not proved*
568 *righteous, but he that examines me is Jehovah. 5 Hence do not judge anything before the due time, until the*
569 *Lord comes, who will both bring the secret things of darkness to light and make the counsels of the hearts*
570 *manifest, and then each one will have his praise come to him from God."*

571

572 And then of course in verse 6 he says (later on) **"Do not go beyond the things that are written,"** So first of
573 all in verse 3 he says look you can assemble whatever human tribunal you want to judge me...

574

575 COSMO: Are you saying this is a human tribunal?

576

577 ERIC B: **Well I'm not saying it is, but it does seem sort of like a parallel** and I'm certainly not putting myself
578 in the place of Paul because he's a lot more righteous than I ever could be. [Dictionary definition of
579 'tribunal': "A committee or board appointed to adjudicate in a particular matter. Something that has the
580 power to determine or judge."]

581

582 DENNIS: Then why did you read the scripture?

583

584 ERIC B: Because it applies to what we're talking about.

585

586 ERIC: You do think this is a tribunal.

587

588 ERIC B: I didn't say that.

589

590 COSMO: Well I'm asking you.

591

592 ERIC B: It's mainly the part after that- he says, *"It's trivial to be judged by his fellow men"* because they can't
593 read his heart. Isn't that what he's talking about? That's what I get out of it. Verse four he says *"I'm not*
594 *conscious of anything against myself."*

595

596 DENNIS: We can't read your heart.

597

598 ERIC B: Well yeah. I can't read your heart.

599

600 DENNIS: So? I'm still baffled as to why you're reading it!

601

602 ERIC B: The point is Paul is saying God is the one that judges. But the problem was when Jesus came on
603 the scene there was a group of religious leaders that had taken it upon themselves to be in the seat of
604 Moses. They had taken it upon themselves to put all these rules on the people. They were the ones that
605 said you can do this but you can't do that. You see when you go through the publications you find out
606 that there are hundreds and hundreds of rules and policies and things we are told we can and can't do.
607 We're told what fraction of blood we can abstain from and what fraction of blood we don't have to abstain
608 from. There's no scripture anywhere that says one way or the other. So why isn't it up to a brother's
609 conscience? Who is it that sits all day long and decides what blood fraction we can take, and what blood
610 fraction we can't take? Isn't that going beyond the things that are written?

611

612 ERIC: [Impatiently] Can I ask you a question now?

613

614 ERIC B: Yeah.

615

616 ERIC: You see a lot of things. And if you can see it then others can see it. You know Jehovah sees it too. If
617 he can live with it why can't you?

618

619 ERIC B: Maybe he's not living with it.

620

621 ERIC: Do you think he's using you to correct the matter?

622

623 ERIC B: I don't think he's using me personally I'm not a prophet if that's what you're saying.

624

625 ERIC: Does it seem like he's correcting the matter?

626

627 ERIC B: [Sighs] Micah 7:7 says I will show a waiting attitude. I will wait on Jehovah. I've been waiting on
628 Jehovah for the last couple years as I've agonized with my conscience over all the things that I've been
629 discovering. Things we're not supposed to know. The Watchtower Society was a member of the United
630 Nations for ten years!

631

632 ERIC: You're right but Jehovah can correct that.

633

634 ERIC B: Yeah he did- he has... [My meaning was that it has already been exposed and many people know
635 The Truth About The Truth now.]

636

637 ERIC: Back to that question then: *He can live with it.*

638

639 ERIC B: He can't live with it.

640

641 ERIC: Why can't he?

642

643 **ERIC B:** He can't live with it. You're saying, *"Oh Jehovah can live with it."*

644

645 **ERIC:** And you're saying you need to be patient. Not patient the last couple years but you've been patient
646 your whole life. [indecipherable] But has anything changed really?

647

648 **ERIC B:** Yeah- a lot has. You raise a good point Eric that goes right along with Bible history. Jeremiah was
649 raised up as a prophet. He preached for decades, forty or fifty years, to his own people. Because they had
650 apostatized. The leaders had apostatized And they hated him for it. And they wanted to kill him. Now
651 you three brothers whom I respect, and I love, you're going to dismiss me in a little bit, that's part of the
652 procedure. And then you're going to decide whether you're going to spiritually execute me. You're going
653 to decide whether you want to spiritually stone me or not. But whether you do or not- I just want to
654 finish this sentence- whether you decide to or not Paul said it's a trivial thing because God's the one that
655 judges.

656

657 And when you get up on the platform and read a little slip of paper announcing that [name of a recently
658 disfellowshipped person] is no longer a Witness... Eric Bottorff is no longer a Witness...whoever it is. That
659 has nothing to do with what Jehovah thinks. And what the judge- the judge is not Jehovah it's Jesus. John
660 5:22-24 he said all the authority, all the judging has been given to Jesus. Jesus is the one that's in charge
661 right now. He's the one that's under his Heavenly Father that's going to decide these things..

662

663 **ERIC:** How do you apply 1 Corinthians 5:11-13 when it tells us that the men of the congregation are to
664 judge?

665

666 **ERIC B:** Those scriptures certainly have validity but the older men of ancient times and in the first century
667 there was no official appointment where you had to get rubber stamped back at Bethel in New York. It
668 didn't work that way. There's dozens, scores of older brothers that could serve. In fact the way that the
669 judging took place, it's right in the Insight book. I actually had looked that up earlier, it's under Volume 1,
670 "Court , Judicial". And it says, [reading from the quote]

671

672 *"The local court was situated at the gate of a city... the publicity that would be afforded any trial at the gate
673 would tend to influence the judges toward care and justice in the trial proceedings and in their decisions."*

674

675 Then it applies it to the Christian congregation like I said this is from the Insight book page 518,

676

677 *"Paul tells the congregation that they... must judge those... weighing the evidence without prejudgment..."*

678

679 [We are interrupted by a knock on the door. This happened more than once as regular meetings were in
680 progress just outside the room and the walls and doors are not sound-proofed and the rooms are not
681 isolated in any way at Kingdom Halls. This is something I never could understand why was not done when
682 designing the plans for these buildings.]

683

684 **ERIC B:** [Resuming] I'm almost done:

685
686 *"Jesus commanded his disciples that if one sinned against another, efforts should first be made to settle the*
687 *matter personally between themselves."*

688
689 **The reason I read this is that the principle was that judging in the nation of Israel was transparent. People**
690 **could listen, they could watch, they could observe.** And the reason was, it says,

691
692 *"...The publicity that would be afforded any trial at the gate would tend to influence the judges toward care*
693 *and justice."*

694
695 **You see, we don't have that today. What we have here is called a star-chamber. Some of you might know**
696 **that phrase. A star-chamber is a place where men come in, they make a decision. It's not allowed to be**
697 **recorded, no one knows what happened. No one knows why the verdict was reached. All they know is**
698 **the person was found guilty. That person has no recourse; they have no way to defend themselves. So**
699 **what will happen is after you brothers decide, or if you brothers decide to spiritually stone me. You'll**
700 **make the announcement in a couple of weeks and then all the friends will just assume that I committed**
701 **fornication, or I got drunk every night, and that's why poor Michelle, the victim, had to leave me and**
702 **divorce me.**

703
704 You see, the slander against me and the harmful gossip will continue. And you know what that's okay, I've
705 got to let my ego go. I've had to humble myself more than I ever have in my entire life. I've had to endure a
706 prominent elder, my father-in-law going around at the District Convention going around telling people what
707 I'm doing...

708
709 **COSMO:** [indecipherable] There's no way you could know that's what he was doing...you don't know.

710
711 **ERIC B:** I know. Maybe you care about that, maybe you don't care I don't know.

712
713 **ERIC:** It's not a matter of we don't care it's just a matter of what we are able to do there.

714
715 **ERIC B:** You're right. Look I'm not asking you brothers to wave a magic wand and fix all the problems. But
716 what I'm saying is that there is serious problems with the organization. The leadership...we have a new
717 governing body member, Brother Sanderson. He's 47 years old, he's been partaking of the emblems for
718 who knows how many years... Is he mentally unbalanced? I mean I don't think he is...maybe he is spirit-

719
720 **[Interrupting , all talking at once]**

721
722 **COSMO:** There's no point in asking questions that we can't answer... [indecipherable] Let's stick to what we
723 can answer.

724
725 **ERIC B:** But the point is, all I'm saying is just because I have a different opinion on certain things. That makes
726 me wicked, evil, and you brothers are going to decide that I'm going to die at Armageddon, that's what
727 you're doing.

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ERIC: That's not what we're doing. That's not our decision that's Jehovah's decision. [It's actually Jesus' decision though according to John 5:22-24.]

ERIC B: It's what you will do if you decide that way.

ERIC: That's Jehovah's decision.

COSMO: you know, Eric, when you ask us a question and you want to paint it black and white. When we ask you a question you don't want to paint it black and white and you don't know the answer.

[END OF PART 3 ON THE YOUTUBE VIDEO]

ERIC B: **Some questions don't have a yes or no answer.**

COSMO: **Well this one does: Do you recognize the authority of the Slave?** [It has taken them almost 45 minutes to finally get to the loyalty questions. This of course is meant to indict me if I say that I do not believe in their mythical 'Faithful Slave', the men that run the Watchtower in upstate New York, USA.]

ERIC B: **Why would you ask me that question?**

COSMO: **Because it doesn't seem like you really value the arrangement. And it doesn't seem like you believe in the Slave and their direction.**

ERIC B: **Of course I believe in the faithful slave it's in the Bible, it's at Matthew 25:45-47.**

COSMO: **Do you believe that this organization... the brothers... [indecipherable] ...make up the faithful slave?**

ERIC: The Governing Body.

COSMO: The Governing Body.

ERIC B: See, it has to do with a scripture that you have to read you have to study it, you have to understand it. I don't want to add anything that's not there. **If all you're looking for are loyalty questions, McCarthy did that back in the Fifties and it didn't work too well.**

"Have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?"

770 They just wanted a yes or no answer, you see? And then they wanted to paint those people as 'Reds' and
 771 'Commisses'. So, when you ask that kind of a question... for example, **you opened up with two scriptures**
 772 **that implied my immediate guilt at the beginning.**

773
 774 **You read two scriptures about, [how] I need to confess my sins, and I need to tell the older men what my**
 775 **sins are so that you can forgive me.** Those are the first two scriptures you brothers read. Then the next
 776 thing I asked was, *"Have you already made up your mind?"*

777
 778 *"Oh no we haven't made up our mind!"*

779
 780 But yet the first two scriptures you read imply that I'm the sinner, and that I'm spiritually sick, and I need to
 781 confess to you. Those were the first two scriptures you read to me. And of course we read those because
 782 that's right out of the Shepherd book.

783
 784 **ERIC:** They give our attention there, [indecipherable] we have those accusations that were made on you but
 785 they are just accusations. We brought you together with us to see if these accusations are true or not. We
 786 didn't make a decision like you said like you just explained to us. There was no predetermined decision but
 787 our reading those scriptures ahead of time just sets that stage that we care about you and that we want to
 788 try and help you based on some false step that's been [indecipherable].

789
 790 **DENNIS:** And all those things, Eric, all these expressions...but it's like an agenda on your part to question
 791 those two scriptures that with our heart and soul before Jehovah we read those so we wanna reach your
 792 heart brother. That's why we read those... and now you're giving me that deer in the headlights look but I
 793 understand that [laughing nervously] but **it's like you are accusing us just for reading those scriptures and**
 794 **you took offense to it.**

795
 796 **ERIC B:** No I did not take offense to those scriptures.

797
 798 **DENNIS:** You just said...

799
 800 **ERIC B:** All I'm saying is [multiple people talking] if I pick up the Bible and read the one where Jesus called
 801 **the religious leaders whitewashed graves...** [indecipherable] Then I'd be implying that that's what you are
 802 **which I do not believe that you are. And I do respect you brothers as equals...as fellow brothers... But do**
 803 **you have power over me? I don't believe that you do.**

804
 805 **Do you have the right to exert your conscience over my conscience? I don't believe that you do. I don't**
 806 **believe that any man has the right on earth has the right to dictate anyone else's conscience.** That's what
 807 the Pope used to do. And he...

808
 809 **ERIC:** So the answer is no to Cosmo's question then?

810
 811 **ERIC B:** What was the original question?

812

813 COSMO: Do you recognize the authority of this arrangement?
814

815 ERIC B: I don't feel that you've shown me any scriptures that show that you have the right to...
816

817 ERIC: [Annoyed] We showed you 1 Corinthians 5.
818

819 ERIC B: Yeah but **what I'm getting at is that you have these people that are accusing me of these serious**
820 **sins... but what is the serious sin that I've committed?** I told Joe that I had some problems with the
821 [indecipherable] I was going through agony- I had tears in my eyes when I spoke to Joe. And I all I did was
822 try to tell him that I'm confused I didn't know what to do he was one of my best friends. That's what you
823 get for talking one of your best friends about anything that goes against what's taught in the Watchtower.
824

825 ERIC: There's one thing about Joe... Eric we've got to bring out. I did get a text message forwarded that you
826 said 1914 was crap.
827

828 ERIC B: Right...it's sad but true. It's been 98 years and nothing's happened.
829

830 ERIC: Earlier you denied it and that's why I bring that out. We wanna help you but if you can't be honest
831 with us...
832

833 ERIC B: I'm trying to be honest. Look we all say things when we're worked up. I certainly don't go around
834 telling people that. It's another thing that makes me sad and makes me feel bad that we can't... you know
835 the whole calculation **Russell came up with that based on the width of the pyramid of Geeza, that's how**
836 **he came up with 1914. First it was 1874...**
837

838 ERIC: **We don't care about... we've done research too, that's not the point.**
839

840 ERIC B: **I doubt you have Eric.**
841

842 ERIC: We're talking about trying to reach you honestly and we're being honest with you but we're not
843 getting it in return.
844

845 ERIC B: I'm not being honest?
846

847 ERIC: No because at first you said that you didn't say that.
848

849 ERIC B: I didn't say it in the way that you guys are saying, you said that none of this was true...
850

851 [All talking at once]
852

853 ERIC B: So here's the thing- there's a little old lady [indecipherable] There's a lady in Brittan her name is
854 Grace Gough. Grace gave her testimony she was on a nationwide talk show it was in the news. The elders
855 made a shepherding call on her in Brittan and they said something about 1914 and she said,

856 "Well, I don't know if I believe in that."

857 And they said,

858 "What do you mean?"

859 "Well it doesn't make sense to me", etc. etc.

860

861 They disfellowshipped this lady because she didn't believe in 1914. So they shunned her, excommunicated
862 her, none of the friends speak to her, no one would come over and fix her leaky faucet. Is that loving? Is
863 that a loving arrangement?

864

865 DENNIS: We weren't there Eric. We're dealing with a situation [indecipherable]

866

867 ERIC B: [Frustrated] Now you don't want to answer that question.

868

869 COSMO: You're giving us information second hand. And so it's pointless isn't it we don't know all the
870 circumstances like any individual you brought up. We would have to talk with them, look at the
871 circumstances, see what it is that happened. [indecipherable]

872

873 DENNIS: I apologize for the "deer in the headlights" [comment] I haven't seen you in a while.

874

875 ERIC B: I don't know what I was doing with my eyes... I was looking straight at you. [all laughing]

876

877 DENNIS: All we can do is base...you know... you've been hurt a lot. I've got to tell you, in the letter that we
878 received from you, you know you have a tough skin, but it hurt me that you felt- It's interesting that you
879 quoted about a tribunal because that the letter you said earlier...that you don't want no star-chamber
880 [trial]. If you can't recognize the fact that Jehovah's [indecipherable] that we have now, we believe with all
881 our heart and soul as elders here, and they be brothers going out the back door, but we still believe this is
882 the truth- we believe this is the most effective way to reach brothers and sisters hearts. **This is as good as it
883 gets with imperfect men.**

884

885 **I know just as many friends of mine that are dissidents, and I got to tell you they are the most miserable**
886 **bunch I've ever been around. All they do is complain, nitpick.** They say they're preaching. None of them go
887 door to door. None of them talk about the Kingdom. None of them go to the Kingdom Hall. So where do
888 they go? The Lutheran church? Rent a hall someplace? So my point is this is as good as it gets. We're trying
889 to reach your heart because you're our brother. We're not a tribunal! [indecipherable] We're imperfect
890 men we do the best we can. **You quoted the Insight book- based on information that we have and we
891 agree to uphold the organization...we've taken an oath to uphold principles such as this.** Just to mention:

892 [He now reads from the Insight Volume 1, page 127:]

893

894 "Hymenaeus, Alexander, and Philetus. (1Ti 1:19, 20; 2Ti 2:16-19) Among the varied causes of apostasy set
895 forth in apostolic warnings were: lack of faith (Heb 3:12), lack of endurance in the face of persecution (Heb
896 10:32-39), abandonment of right moral standards (2Pe 2:15-22), the heeding of the "counterfeit words" of
897 false teachers and "misleading inspired utterances" (2Pe 2:1-3; 1Ti 4:1-3; 2Ti 2:16-19; compare Pr 11:9), and
898 trying "to be declared righteous by means of law" (Ga 5:2-4). While still making profession of faith in God's

899 *Word, apostates may forsake his service by treating lightly the preaching and teaching work that he*
 900 *assigned to followers of Jesus Christ. (Lu 6:46; Mt 24:14; 28:19, 20) They may also claim to serve God but*
 901 *reject his representatives, his visible organization..."*

902
 903 Now you know the scripture about heart... I'm going to share Joshua 24:14,

904
 905 *"And now fear Jehovah and serve him in faultlessness and in truth, and remove the gods that YOUR*
 906 *forefathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt, and serve Jehovah. 15 Now if it is bad in YOUR*
 907 *eyes to serve Jehovah, choose for yourselves today whom YOU will serve, whether the gods that YOUR*
 908 *forefathers who were on the other side of the River served or the gods of the Am'or-ites in whose land YOU*
 909 *are dwelling. But as for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah."*

910
 911 **What I'm meaning Eric, is that we're going to stick to this organization and follow the direction we're**
 912 **given.**

913
 914 **ERIC B:** I respect that Dennis. [I respect his right to do so]

915
 916 **DENNIS:** We base it on points that...

917
 918 **ERIC B:** I respect that, but that doesn't change anything.

919
 920 **DENNIS:** **How do you feel about the Faithful Slave?**

921
 922 **ERIC B:** I already told you if it's in the Bible I believe it.

923
 924 **DENNIS:** **Do believe we're being directed by it right now... Jehovah's Witnesses?**

925
 926 **ERIC B:** The reason that you ask that question Dennis, has no connection with what you just read. You just
 927 read a scripture about, *"As for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah."* And that's what I do. When I
 928 have my children over we pray every morning and every night. We read, we study that's what I do with my
 929 own family. I will never stop serving God. I will never stop letting my light shine. I decided I wasn't going to
 930 try some tricky maneuver. I mean, I could have told you how sorry I was, and I believe everything, I made a
 931 mistake, and try to dodge some sort of a spiritual bullet that you guys were gonna fire at me. I decided I
 932 didn't want to do that.

933
 934 I have to be honest and I have to be true to my conscience. **My conscience, my Christian, Bible-trained**
 935 **conscience disagrees with Dennis and Cosmo and Eric on a few things. Just because I disagree on a few**
 936 **things that's enough to call me an apostate? That's enough to shun me, and say that I'm going to die at**
 937 **Armageddon? That's wrong brothers. That's wrong.**

938
 939 **[All talking at once]**

940

941 ERIC: With Hymenaeus and Philetus it was *one* thing- that's scriptural. You can't argue with it. And the
942 point was... was to shun those men on that one basic difference. *One*.

943

944 ERIC B: That was a completely different thing, it doesn't even apply.

945

946 ERIC: That's an apostate in the congregation Eric.

947

948 ERIC B: Speaking out against Christ, denying Christ...

949

950 ERIC: Whether he came in the flesh or not...

951

952 ERIC B: Yeah, that's pretty major.

953

954 ERIC: **Like it or not this is Jehovah's chosen organization Eric and you still haven't answered that question.**

955

956 ERIC B: We have to be Christian- that's what we have to be. We have to serve God and Christ. There's a lot
957 of people that are doing that. **If you think that you guys are the only ones... that is the height of**
958 **arrogance. Everybody else is going to die? Seven billion people are gonna die, except for us? And we're**
959 **gonna get to pick out their houses?**

960

961 **[All talking at once]**

962

963 ERIC: **We don't believe that!**

964

965 ERIC B: **You all believe that. I believed it every since I was a little kid. There's pictures of it in the**
966 **publications...**

967

968 ERIC: **Only Jehovah's Witnesses? Show us those pictures!**

969

970 ERIC B: **Of course [I can].**

971

972 ERIC: There's going to be a resurrection of the faithful and the unfaithful.

973

974 ERIC B: I'm not talking about a resurrection. Seven billion people are gonna die at Armageddon? But not
975 us!

976

977 COSMO: I don't know who [indcipherable]

978

979 ERIC B: But why do we all believe that and teach it?

980

981 ERIC: We don't.

982

983 COSMO: I don't teach it.

984
985 ERIC B: I did... I did. That's what I was brought up to believe.
986
987 COSMO: Are there others saying that we teach that?
988
989 ERIC B: Of course, if you're not a baptized active Witness you're dead at Armageddon.
990
991 ERIC: Do you think Jehovah's blessing is on other organizations too then?
992
993 ERIC B: Well Jesus said you would know them by their fruits. There's a lot of good fruits from a lot of
994 people, all over the world.
995
996 COSMO: We're not talking individual people it's got to be Jehovah's organization. [indecipherable] It's the
997 only organization on earth.
998
999 ERIC B: And where is there a scripture that says that? Can you show me a scripture that says that?
1000
1001 COSMO: That Christ is the head of the congregation?
1002
1003 ERIC B: No. That...
1004
1005 ERIC: That's what I'm talking the congregation is an organized people.
1006
1007 ERIC B: Yeah there's lots of them, millions of them.
1008
1009 ERIC: **And Christ is the head of that organized people- is that in all religions? Is Christ the head of all**
1010 **religions?**
1011
1012 ERIC B: **You tell me.**
1013
1014 ERIC: **I'm asking you for your opinion.**
1015
1016 ERIC B: **Well see that's just it- you want an opinion. You want me to say something that goes against what**
1017 **you think, and then that way you can justify your course of action. Isn't that what we're talking about?**
1018
1019 ERIC: **We're talking about the truth. [He waves his arm in a sweeping gesture] See you won't answer those**
1020 **questions.**
1021
1022 ERIC B: **I've answered lots of questions but the thing is if you don't get the answer that you want then**
1023 **that's enough... That's enough to spiritually execute me.**
1024
1025 COSMO: You're always assuming a lot of things. You assume a lot of things you are accusing us of. [Talking
1026 at once] We're asking you.

1027
1028 ERIC: People have come forward Eric, with these accusations. We're not making these accusations.
1029
1030 COSMO: I don't hold anything against you personally but I'm [indecipherable]
1031
1032 ERIC B: So you are going to disfellowship me because I have a different opinion than the Watchtower says
1033 we should? ...And you think that's okay?
1034
1035 COSMO: We didn't disfellowship you. [I'm not sure if he said "yet?" at the end of the statement it's very
1036 low volume] Let me ask you something...
1037
1038 ERIC B: [Frustrated] ...Because you don't want to answer that question.
1039
1040 COSMO: Yeah I do.
1041
1042 ERIC B: Okay.
1043
1044 COSMO: Let me tell you something. First off. You can have these other feelings...as one of Jehovah's
1045 Witnesses.
1046
1047 ERIC B: Don't ever say one out loud!
1048
1049 COSMO: There you go. And that's the direction we have about apostatizing. When you start telling other
1050 people, when start putting doubts in everybody...
1051
1052 ERIC B: I'm not trying to put doubts in anybody's mind.
1053
1054 COSMO: Well you have discussed these things with many people.
1055
1056 ERIC B: Many people?
1057
1058 COSMO: Well who have you discussed these with? Have you been talking to different people? Did you talk
1059 to Brother Turner and his [wife] separately about these things?
1060
1061 ERIC B: I never talked to Sandreckia, all we did was text a few times...
1062
1063 COSMO: You discussed your view to her? What about to his brother? Did you talk to him?
1064
1065 ERIC B: Well yeah [I have talked to him] he's a friend of mine but I didn't want to talk about any of that. He
1066 says, "Joe's worried about you." And I said Curtis I don't want to talk about any of that stuff with you. And I
1067 did not talk about anything negative with Curtis. **You see what's interesting is that all of a sudden these**
1068 **people just sorta pop up with these stories about how they're "worried about Eric."**
1069

1070 COSMO: They've been talking.

1071

1072 ERIC B: Curtis was the one that said "Joe says you're talking crazy talk and negative stuff." And I said look
1073 Curtis I don't want to go into that and I steered the conversation away from that. I'm already being
1074 shunned by anybody that sees me around town; they go the other direction. **They've already made up
1075 their minds about me. But yet they'll say, "Oh you need to come back to the meetings!"**

1076

1077 **Well why would I want to come back to the meetings where people already don't love me, don't like me,
1078 and shun me? Why would I want to come back?**

1079

1080 COSMO: You're assuming that all [indecipherable]

1081

1082 ERIC B: **[Frustrated] Have you walked a mile in my moccasins lately Cosmo? Have you had your wife
1083 publicly slander you in court? Sue you for your house, your kids? The car you just paid off? Put away your
1084 mate... all the things she has done.**

1085

1086 COSMO: I'm going to stop you.

1087

1088 ERIC B: But *she's* the victim?

1089

1090 COSMO: I'm going to stop you.

1091

1092 ERIC B: She's the victim?

1093

1094 COSMO: We haven't decided who's the victim, because we were hoping to talk to both of you about it. And
1095 that's what we wanted but you didn't make yourself available.

1096

1097 ERIC B: I tried. Every time it was about to happen she did something to sabotage it.

1098

1099 COSMO: You mean with us?

1100

1101 ERIC B: Yes.

1102

1103 ERIC: You texted me and a said you felt sick that day.

1104

1105 ERIC B: Because of what had happened with her earlier that day.

1106

1107 COSMO: You see, we, [indecipherable]

1108

1109 ERIC B: She dropped the bomb on me.

1110

1111 COSMO: We personally didn't [indecipherable] because that's not why we are here. And that's how it is.
1112 [indecipherable] **We don't know what's best there and it involves the law. But that's not why we're here.**

1113 **We're here, and we need to follow the directives of this organization. That's part of your vow. The**
1114 **meaning of your baptism- with Jehovah.**

1115
1116 **ERIC B:** I have always lived up to my baptism. **I dedicated my life to serve God and from that point forward**
1117 **that has never changed. And it never will change.**

1118
1119 **ERIC:** **Do you admit this to us- that you are a part of that spirit anointed organization here on earth?**
1120 **[Again a 'loyalty question' is asked.]**

1121
1122 **ERIC B:** Now you are wording something real carefully...

1123
1124 **ERIC:** It's the same question, it's part of the same question.

1125
1126 **ERIC B:** I had no idea what those baptism questions were when I stood up there all I heard was do you want
1127 to be a Witness do you want to serve Jehovah forever and I said yes.

1128
1129 **ERIC:** Do you recognize the questions I can look it up and find it...?

1130
1131 **ERIC B:** What's interesting is that in 1983 they when they changed question #2, I know the question I know
1132 it by heart.

1133
1134 **ERIC:** Okay.

1135
1136 **ERIC B:** In 1983 they changed question. Do you know what the question used to be? *"Do you accept Christ*
1137 *as your savior in your life?"* **[I'm paraphrasing]** And then they changed it, and they added in, *"Do you accept*
1138 *the organization?"* And **what has happened brothers is that the organization has become a golden calf.**
1139 **The organization has now become the mediator. [Looking at Eric:] You know Jesus is not your mediator?**
1140 **Jesus is not your mediator either. [I pointed to Dennis then because he was shaking his head back and**
1141 **forth.] Is Jesus your mediator Dennis? I really want to know- Do you think Jesus is your mediator?**

1142
1143 **DENNIS:** **Absolutely, through the Faithful Slave.**

1144
1145 **ERIC B:** Wait hold on- Is Jesus your mediator or is the Faithful Slave your mediator?

1146
1147 **ERIC:** The Slave is a tool that Jesus uses.

1148
1149 **ERIC B:** But who's your mediator? [indecipherable] If you look that up in the publications you'll see that he's
1150 not your mediator, unless you sip the wine and nibble the bread. That's right out of the Watchtower.

1151
1152 **DENNIS:** See now, Eric, without having any witnesses, just you telling me that right now, you're telling me
1153 an apostate thinking- you're saying what I feel. I have a right to feel that way I'm an individual. **[How ironic**
1154 **that he should be offended by being told what he believes is not in line with the Watchtower!]**

1155

1156 ERIC B: But see it says right here...

1157

1158 DENNIS: [Angrily] Did you hear what I said?

1159

1160 ERIC B: Yeah I did.

1161

1162 DENNIS: That's how I figure...that's personal. [Indecipherable] If you told that to anybody else the way you
1163 told it to me, disrupting my peace in Jehovah's Organization. **I believe that Jesus Christ is the mediator, he
1164 uses the faithful and discreet slave to dispense food at the proper time. The Faithful Slave.**

1165

1166 ERIC B: **So you can't say that Jesus is your mediator then?** [Dennis continues to speak loudly underneath
1167 me, saying "I believe it!"] Is he your mediator or not? You're not giving me a straight answer.

1168

1169 DENNIS: I'm not anointed! He doesn't come directly to me- I associate with the anointed.

1170

1171 ERIC B: So that's what I'm saying, that Jesus is the mediator for all men, 1 Timothy 2:5,6 I believe it is, [says]

1172

1173 *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, a man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a
1174 corresponding ransom for all"*

1175

1176 **So Jesus is our mediator. We don't have to go through some mythical governing body. The word
1177 governing body doesn't appear in any Bible.**

1178

1179 COSMO: I don't pray to the Governing Body!

1180

1181 [All talking at once]

1182

1183 ERIC: Is he appearing here on earth, what means does he use? How is he our mediator?

1184

1185 ERIC B: What does that have to do with what we're talking about?

1186

1187 ERIC: That has everything to do with it. **How is he our mediator? How do we take provision of this?**

1188

1189 ERIC B: Well, Romans chapter 10 will give us the answer... Also chapter 8 verse 1. Romans 10:9 says,
1190 [reading:]

1191

1192 *"For if you publicly declare that 'word in your own mouth,' that Jesus is Lord, and exercise faith in your heart
1193 that God raised him up from the dead, you will be saved."*

1194

1195 It's as simple as that, if you publicly declare that Jesus is Lord you'll be saved. And then in chapter 8 verse 1
1196 he said those in union with Christ have no condemnation. If we're in union with Christ, Christ said I am the
1197 way the truth and the life. **If we're in union with him, we don't have to call ourselves anything but Bible
1198 Students or Christians...**

1199
1200 **ERIC: We don't need an organization, or a congregation or anything by those standards.**
1201
1202 **ERIC B:** By whose standards? [There is a pause. I just read a Bible scripture. He clearly does not want to say
1203 the obvious answer to my question, "God", and sees the trap he just fell into.]
1204
1205 **ERIC:** ...By the point that you're making.
1206
1207 **ERIC B:** By the *scriptures* that I just read?
1208
1209 **ERIC:** By making that one point... [indecipherable] There are scriptures that say that Jehovah God is using
1210 them.
1211
1212 **ERIC B:** And you would have a scripture to prove that to me where?
1213
1214 [All three elders talking at once]
1215
1216 **COSMO:** Hebrews 10:24.
1217
1218 **ERIC B:** That says to meet together...I do that. Christians all over the world have been doing that for 2,000
1219 years. In fact **Charles Russell broke away from the Adventists, apostatized from the Adventists, and**
1220 **started his own Bible study group and then started his own sect.**
1221
1222 **DENNIS:** So you're advocating this over the way we believe then?
1223
1224 **ERIC B:** No I'm saying Charles Russell did the same thing. **Was Charles Russell an apostate?**
1225
1226 **ERIC:** Is that what you're doing Eric?
1227
1228 **ERIC B:** No- I'm not.
1229
1230 **ERIC:** Are you following Russell's example? Is that what you're doing?
1231
1232 **ERIC B:** **I'm not trying to start a new religion if that's what you're asking.**
1233
1234 **ERIC:** **I am asking.**
1235
1236 **ERIC B:** **I'm not interested in starting [a new religion] There is no new religion to start.**
1237
1238 **ERIC:** [Talking over the top] **Are you gonna stop supporting this organization?**
1239
1240 **ERIC B:** **I'm looking to support Christ. I have been a Christian in association with Jehovah's Witnesses for**
1241 **30 years. [repeating] I have been a *Christian* in association with Jehovah's Witnesses for 30 years. That's**

1242 **the best way that any of us could ever word it. I knew an elderly brother that worded it that way I always**
 1243 **thought that was kinda cool the way he said it.**

1244

1245 *"I'm a Christian in association with the local Kingdom Hall on such and such a street..."*

1246

1247 So we can be a Christian, if we have a Christian baptism where we're immersed in the name of the Father
 1248 and the Son and the Holy Spirit then that's a valid baptism.

1249

1250 **ERIC:** Well Christ let's these things go on in this congregation.

1251

1252 **ERIC B:** What things?

1253

1254 **ERIC:** All the things you are frustrated [with] that are wrong... If this is Jehovah's... and his Son's
 1255 congregation, if he's leading an organization, you said you associate. **You're a Christian, associating with**
 1256 **Jehovah's Witnesses, and if you believe that he's the head of this congregation, why would he allow all**
 1257 **these negative things that you brought out?**

1258

1259 **ERIC B: Why did he allow all those negative things to happen in the first century? Why did he allow the**
 1260 **nation of Israel, his organization at the time to apostatize for hundreds of years?** What if we were under
 1261 the ten tribe or the two tribe kingdom back then Eric? And Rehoboam said we all need to go and start
 1262 worshipping the Baals and the High Places? It was God's organization? And God was the leader and even
 1263 the high priest said we should go do it. Would we have done it? Would we have said,

1264

1265 *"Well the organization says we should. The king says we should and the prophets say we should."*

1266

1267 **COSMO:** Hold on... [indecipherable] ...can be read out of the Bible.

1268

1269 **ERIC B:** But what I'm saying is that if you blindly follow... then the same thing happened in Jesus' day. The
 1270 organization was the Jewish faith. And the Pharisees had apostatized, they were binding up all these extra
 1271 burdens upon the people. Jesus, Jesus was disfellowshipped. When he healed the man that was born blind
 1272 he was expelled from the synagogue along with that fellow and from that point forward if the apostles
 1273 would have followed the organization they would not have been allowed to speak with Jesus, associate
 1274 with Jesus in any way because you couldn't even do business with him you could have no dealings with
 1275 someone that was expelled. They chose to disobey the leadership because the leadership was wrong.

1276

1277 **COSMO:** Why can't you word your question this way: If they told us to serve a God other than Jehovah, I
 1278 would say no. [indecipherable] I'm done following you.

1279

1280 **ERIC:** Who do you think has that responsibility to feed the sheep?

1281

1282 **ERIC B:** We all have.

1283

1284 **ERIC:** We both are given that responsibility?

1285
1286 ERIC B: Yeah.
1287
1288 ERIC: So there's shepherds and there's sheep who are the shepherds?
1289
1290 ERIC B: Well there's always been mature ones in the congregation, there's always been older men.
1291
1292 ERIC: Even then ones that are being used by Jesus as head of the congregation would be used?
1293
1294 ERIC B: They can be. He can make the stones cry out.
1295
1296 COSMO: [indecipherable] ...Who is he?
1297
1298 ERIC B: Well why don't you ask that question in the year 1600? Who was he using in the year 1600?
1299
1300 COSMO: Various individuals that served him.
1301
1302 ERIC B: Okay. Who was he using in the 1700s?
1303
1304 COSMO: The same.
1305
1306 ERIC B: Who was he using in the 1400s? ...So nothing's changed.
1307
1308 ERIC: But that was predicted Eric. That was...
1309
1310 ERIC B: **Well when Russell came, why didn't he consult with the faithful slave and get direction from them**
1311 **instead of starting his own movement?**
1312
1313 ERIC: [Again speaking over the top of my last sentence] Well [indecipherable] the beginning of that time
1314 period that was ending, that time of apostasy for the congregation?
1315
1316 ERIC B: What scripture says that there was an end to some certain time period? If you could refer to it-
1317 show it to me.
1318
1319 ERIC: I could look up the scripture but it might take me a couple... [minutes? hours?] You know that very
1320 well... [I believe he is referring to the Watchtower chronology of 1914 with all the math they use.]
1321
1322 ERIC B: In the fourteen hundreds in the thirteen hundreds in the seventeen hundreds... ever since Jesus
1323 came and died for our sins, **people have been meeting together and trying their best to worship God, and**
1324 **honor the son. That's been going on for thousands of years. That hasn't changed, it's still going on right**
1325 **now.**
1326

1327 **So, just because we say we're more right than some other group, doesn't make it so. Just because we're**
1328 **right on a lot of things- We're right about the trinity, we're right about hellfire, all I'm saying is that we**
1329 **don't have it all right. And there's thousands of other brothers and sisters that are sitting in this Kingdom**
1330 **Hall and in Kingdom Halls all over the world that feel the same way.**

1331

1332 COSMO: How do you know if they feel the same way in this Kingdom Hall?

1333

1334 ERIC B: Why would I want to inform on some brother and get him hauled before a judicial committee?

1335

1336 COSMO: [Speaking over the top of my sentence] The very mention of others means you've been talking to
1337 others about your beliefs- contrary to this organization.

1338

1339 ERIC B: That's not how I would characterize it. You can characterize it that way.

1340

1341 ERIC: Is that fair to characterize it that way from our perspective?

1342

1343 ERIC B: No. I don't think it is, but you can call it whatever you want. Christians have been meeting together
1344 and studying together, trying to build one another up for 2,000 years.

1345

1346 DENNIS: But Eric...back up, back up.

1347

1348 ERIC B: Brothers and sisters still call me and ask me for advice.

1349

1350 ERIC: So based on what you just said...

1351

1352 DENNIS: You didn't answer his question. You said [He now uses a sarcastic voice] *"There's thousands of*
1353 *brothers that feel the way you do."*

1354

1355 ERIC B: There are.

1356

1357 DENNIS: In this Kingdom Hall? You just said that...how do you know?

1358

1359 ERIC B: Why do I have to answer that question- are you asking me to give you a list of names?

1360

1361 [All three elders talking at once]

1362

1363 COSMO: I already told you I don't want any names!

1364

1365 ERIC B: I would never give you any names because it's none of my business.

1366

1367 COSMO: Then how do you know, unless you've been talking to them about these things?

1368

1369 ERIC B: Brothers talk all the time. [Cosmo himself said that earlier.] One of the rumors that got back to me
1370 was that I'd been cheating on my wife and that's why she's divorcing me. [Which was patently untrue.]
1371 They talk all the time- on the phone, they talk with text, they have gatherings and they talk.

1372
1373 COSMO: What do you think about somebody that comes up to me and says that what do you think I'm
1374 gonna do?

1375
1376 ERIC B: I don't know, how would I know? I've had over a dozen different brothers over the last ten years
1377 approach me and say, "This generation change makes no sense. I don't understand it, it doesn't make
1378 sense." [In retrospect I would say this is an exaggeration. It was more like three or four that told me that.]

1379
1380 COSMO: So who says [indecipherable]

1381
1382 ERIC: Saying I don't understand it and saying it's wrong?

1383
1384 ERIC B: There's no scripture to support this overlapping generation thing that no one can really understand.

1385
1386 ERIC: [Speaking over the top of my sentence] There's something that you don't understand though- there's
1387 a difference- there's a difference between saying I don't understand something and saying it's wrong.

1388
1389 DENNIS: And see going back to the Insight book again, there's some things we just have to have faith on,
1390 that's one of the distinguishing marks, I mean, they lacked faith. **I don't have answers for a lot of these**
1391 **questions.** [How could he? He has never actually researched both sides of the points being raised.]

1392
1393 ERIC B: But lack faith in who?

1394
1395 DENNIS: **I'm gonna wait till I hear it from the Faithful Slave.**

1396
1397 ERIC B: **So you want to put your faith in the Governing Body, that's who we're talking about when we say**
1398 **"Faithful Slave" we're really only talking about these seven, now eight men.**

1399
1400 DENNIS: **Right.**

1401
1402 ERIC B: So you wanna put you faith in them as opposed to Christ?

1403
1404 DENNIS: No, Christ is leading them!

1405
1406 ERIC: Not "as opposed to".

1407
1408 ERIC B: **Show me evidence that Christ is leading these men.**

1409
1410 DENNIS: **I don't have to. I have faith that that is the way it is. So do millions of others.**

1411

1412 ERIC B: **So is your faith better than my faith?**

1413

1414 DENNIS: **You're dancing around this!**

1415

1416 ERIC B: No. So is my faith any different than yours? What's the difference?

1417

1418 ERIC: Do you believe different things? Or do you believe what Dennis just expressed?

1419

1420 ERIC B: I have just as much faith as anybody else in this room.

1421

1422 ERIC: Do you believe what Dennis just said?

1423

1424 ERIC B: Do *you* believe what Dennis just said?

1425

1426 ERIC: Yes.

1427

1428 ERIC B: Do you believe *everything* that Dennis believes?

1429

1430 ERIC: **[Annoyed]** I said do you believe what Dennis just said.

1431

1432 ERIC B: I think that he's right about faith we have to have faith, and Hymaneus and they didn't faith.

1433

1434 DENNIS: Do we have to have faith when the light comes brighter?

1435

1436 ERIC B: But you're only wanting to talk about putting faith in men. And we got lots of scriptures that talk about that.

1437

1438 DENNIS: **I told you earlier that Christ is directing this organization through the Faithful Slave.**

1439

1440 ERIC B: But "*do not put your trust in Nobles.*" **So you are putting your trust in those men.**

1441

1442 DENNIS: **Yep. Yes.**

1443

1444 ERIC B: That's what you're saying.

1445

1446 **[Dennis and Eric talking fast and at the same time]**

1447

1448 ERIC B: And how do you know he's using those men?

1449

1450 DENNIS: Because I haven't found the truth in any other organization or in any of my apostate former associates.

1451

1452

1453

1454 ERIC: Did you find it online Eric? Did you find it somewhere else that's showing you that this wasn't the way
1455 that... this is the way... you agree with everything that you read?

1456
1457 ERIC B: I found it by looking at our own publications.

1458
1459 ERIC: That is... that is false.

1460
1461 ERIC B: Our own publications show that- for example Russell taught...

1462
1463 DENNIS: We're a progressive organization. Russell was progressive he stayed faithful to his death.

1464
1465 ERIC B: I do have a point though Dennis if I could make it. Russell taught that the superior authorities from
1466 Romans 13 were the government.

1467
1468 DENNIS: We know that.

1469
1470 ERIC B: Oh no...oh no they're not. [I'm about to refer them to the belief of who they were as taught by
1471 Rutherford.]

1472
1473 DENNIS: No! I know he said these things!

1474
1475 ERIC B: **Rutherford, after Russell died Rutherford said oh no that's ridiculous that's absurd. "The superior**
1476 **authorities are Jesus and Jehovah." And that's what every single Jehovah's Witness must believe and had**
1477 **to believe for forty-some years! Then after Rutherford died, all of the sudden they realized that the**
1478 **superior authorities were governments again.** Something that Barnes commentary, Clarke's commentary,
1479 Christian men from the 17 and 18 hundreds that we still refer to today, that are referred to in the
1480 publications all the time, had already figured that out hundreds of years ago.

1481
1482 DENNIS: Uh huh.

1483
1484 ERIC B: **That's not progressive light Dennis. That's a flip flop. Flip it on, flip it off, flip it on, flip it off.**

1485
1486 DENNIS: This is the old organization where you said you don't believe in hellfire, the trinity.

1487
1488 ERIC B: Well there's lots of churches that don't believe in those. Dozens of Christian churches that don't
1489 believe in those.

1490
1491 DENNIS: But that's why we read Joshua.

1492
1493 [There's a knock at the door. Yet again we are being too loud for the flimsy single glass window and thin
1494 wall separating us from the main Hall where a meeting is in progress. I am curious as to how much they
1495 could hear?]

1496

1497 **ERIC:** Eric you gave a very descriptive answer to a basic question. And you're smart guy Eric I know you're
1498 **avoiding answering the question straightforwardly and all that.**

1499
1500 **ERIC B:** Because the question was unclear.

1501
1502 **ERIC:** No that's an easy question. That's an easy question Eric.

1503
1504 **ERIC B:** Why is it that that question is so important to be answered by me? Why is it that you have to
1505 **have that question answered by me?**

1506
1507 **ERIC:** It's just one of the many questions Eric that when we got the answer... we got a very, very, very long
1508 and detailed explanation of it. You did explain yourself and we respect that and your own views. You can
1509 have those. We're not telling you that you can't believe what you want to believe. We're trying to work
1510 with you. And it becomes difficult when you don't answer us [word unintelligible].

1511
1512 **ERIC B:** I have to answer according to my conscience. It's just like when they ask the president some loaded
1513 question: "Is it true that you voted down the bill to protect jobs?" Well the bill also had a bunch of junk in it
1514 about this that and the other, so it's not a fair question to begin with.

1515
1516 **ERIC:** [Speaking over the top of my sentence] Do you find [indecipherable] leave the congregation Eric?

1517
1518 **ERIC B:** See that goes right back to if I don't believe the "right way" and if I don't answer the right way then
1519 that gives you the justification to do what you gotta do.

1520
1521 **ERIC:** Do you want to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses and be in our congregation?

1522
1523 **ERIC B:** See that question is offensive to me.

1524
1525 **ERIC:** [Sarcastic in tone, fawning ignorance] But I don't know the answer Eric I just want a straight answer.

1526
1527 **ERIC B:** But why do you need to know the answer?

1528
1529 **ERIC:** Because I'm confused. [Shaking his head] I'm trying to understand you.

1530
1531 **ERIC B:** You brothers invited me here because you said you had accusations from people that claim I'm
1532 spreading apostate teachings. One night I texted Sandreckia I was in a bad mood because my wife was
1533 divorcing me and I had been ejected from my home by the law. And nothing had ever been done about it
1534 [congregationally] as far as I can tell from her religious leaders- which would be you brothers. So...

1535
1536 **ERIC:** [Very sarcastic in tone] That means we respect the confidentiality., I know that's something you
1537 appreciate.

1538
1539 **ERIC B:** Come on Eric.

1540

1541 **ERIC:** It's true though Eric I mean we're not coming forward telling [indecipherable] because we know
1542 [indecipherable].

1543

1544 **ERIC B:** All I'm saying is, I was having some hard times. So you're gonna say, *"Okay yeah, Eric was texting*
1545 *some trash talk or some divergent opinions on something to Sandreckia one night when he was upset"*. I
1546 poured my heart out to my friend Joe Turner because I was hurting and upset over the things that I had
1547 learned.

1548

1549 When I found out that the Watchtower had been a member of the U.N. for ten years, in bed with the
1550 Scarlet Colored Wild Beast... Research that one if you really want to know what's going on. Now if you are
1551 too afraid to research it because you don't want to see both sides of it that's a problem too.

1552

1553 If you were encouraged to shop for a new car but all you ever did was read the brochures from Ford and
1554 you never read any of the opposing things from Car and Driver magazine... See that's what we're told to do.
1555 We are told to never read an opposing view. Never look at both sides of an issue. Never even address the
1556 concerns that literally thousands of brothers and sisters... thousands of brothers and sisters have had
1557 problems with following man-made doctrines.

1558

1559 **From 1960-something to around 1980-something it was a disfellowshipping offense just to get a liver**
1560 **transplant or a cornea transplant. It was considered cannibalism. What about all the brothers and sisters**
1561 **that died during those years? Was that okay? Was that Holy Spirit that directed that?**

1562

1563 **ERIC:** Don't the scriptures say that those will render an account?

1564

1565 **ERIC B:** Was it God's Holy Spirit that was directing the organization during those years? Calling it
1566 cannibalism? What do you think?

1567

1568 **ERIC:** I don't understand the question though.

1569

1570 **ERIC B:** The question was from the 1960s up until the 1980s the Watchtower said it was cannibalism if you
1571 were to take a liver transplant, a cornea transplant, a kidney transplant it was cannibalism. Brothers died.
1572 Many of them. Other brothers took the transplant and saved their lives and got disfellowshipped. Was it
1573 Jehovah's Holy Spirit that directed the Faithful Slave to write those articles?

1574

1575 **COSMO:** [His voice is sarcastic in tone] Well let me answer you in about a thousand words. I'm gonna jump
1576 all around it like you do with every question we ask you. You want a direct answer when you ask a question
1577 and you don't want to hear the answer.

1578

1579 **ERIC B:** I'm listening.

1580

1581 **COSMO:** But that's what you're doing- you want direct answers out of us. **I believe in Jehovah's Holy Spirit**
1582 **in correcting the organization. And I firmly believe... that mistakes that were made... we all know that**

1583 **Jehovah can undo any mistake that's been made. I have full faith in Jehovah. [I guess he says that to imply**
1584 **that I do not...]**

1585

1586 Do you still recognize Jehovah as your God?

1587

1588 **ERIC B:** Absolutely. I pray...

1589

1590 **COSMO:** I'm glad you do I just wanted to know.

1591

1592 **ERIC B:** I pray to him every day. But you see, I still don't feel like- the question was if you, as a man of
1593 conscience, say look, my grandma needs a liver transplant, and then she gets that done, she gets
1594 disfellowshipped, or she doesn't God forbid and she dies, and then a year later the Watchtower comes out
1595 with "*new light*"... It has nothing to do with new light. It has to do with men writing down their opinions,
1596 printing it on paper.

1597

1598 **Is the Watchtower inspired? Or is the Bible inspired?**

1599

1600 **COSMO:** The Bible is but let me ask you a question...

1601

1602 **ERIC B:** I asked several publishers that. Just casually one time. I said to a brother I said, "*Is the*
1603 *Watchtower inspired or is the Bible inspired?*"

1604

1605 *"Oh they're both inspired!"*

1606 *"Are you sure about?"*

1607 *"Oh yeah, they're both inspired."*

1608

1609 **I asked three different publishers that, just casually I wasn't trying to tear down their faith. All three of**
1610 **them without exception said they're both inspired. We know that the Watchtower itself has said it's not**
1611 **inspired.**

1612

1613 **COSMO:** Yeah.

1614

1615 **ERIC B:** But don't go against it because if you do you'll get disfellowshipped and you'll be called a man
1616 **that doesn't have faith.**

1617

1618 **ERIC:** Why'd you ask that question Eric?

1619

1620 **ERIC B:** Because I was trying to figure out- I've been trying to figure out what's wrong.

1621

1622 **ERIC:** I'm just curious why you asked such a hard question...and I'd like to know who it was.

1623

1624 **ERIC B:** I just told you because I've been trying to figure out what's wrong. **Why is it that there's dozens of**
1625 **elders online posting about every single thing that happens?**

1626

1627 **ERIC:** I don't believe they're out there Eric- you can believe they are I don't believe they are.

1628

1629 [Many talking at once]

1630

1631 **ERIC B:** So somebody that's not an elder got a hold of the Shepherd book and scanned the entire thing
1632 and put it online? And then they went on and posted a story about what happened at the Kingdom
1633 Ministry school too... What I'm saying there are lots of elders that feel the same way Eric- not one.

1634

1635 **COSMO:** [Speaking over my last sentence] I don't really care Eric. I don't really care about these elders.

1636

1637 **ERIC B:** I know you don't care Cosmo- but I care. And thousands of brothers and sisters do care. It's
1638 tearing them up inside.

1639

1640 **ERIC:** There's about seven billion that are a part of this organization and special to Jehovah.

1641

1642 **ERIC B:** Seven million?

1643

1644 **ERIC:** Alright seven million... [sighing]

1645

1646 **ERIC B:** Jesus said he would leave the 99 and try and save the one. Just because there are thousands of
1647 brothers and sisters that realize there's something seriously wrong. **It's the same thing with Martin Luther-**
1648 **he didn't try to leave the Catholic Church, and they tried to execute him. Of course William Tyndell they**
1649 **did execute. All because he disagreed with a handful of their church dogmas. Now I disagree with a**
1650 **handful of Watchtower dogmas, and because of that, my head is next on the chopping block.** There are so
1651 many brothers that are getting disfellowshipped and they haven't done anything wrong. Just because they
1652 disagree...

1653

1654 **ERIC:** But what about Philetus? It was just one issue though.

1655

1656 **ERIC B:** That doesn't apply to those brothers it's a completely different situation.

1657

1658 **ERIC:** [indecipherable] a different thing than what's being taught in the congregation, the apostle said then
1659 remove them from the congregation over that one issue. There just an issue, there's just a different
1660 teaching.

1661

1662 **COSMO:** And the thing is Eric, you can have these thoughts and these feelings... Due to the mere fact that
1663 you say it and the Watchtower disagree [indecipherable] but you can believe those things. I'm not telling
1664 you not to. But when you start witnessing to other people... You're talking about your conscience, but you
1665 don't respect your Joe Turner's conscience. You bothered his conscience. And you bothered Sandreckia's
1666 conscience. And you upset Walter Bell a little bit. And you upset Mike Luque a little bit. What about their
1667 consciences?

1668

1669 ERIC B: I would like to...See that's part of what I said at the very beginning. Matthew 18 tells us to come to
 1670 the brother and give him a chance to apologize. And I would love to have been able to do that. I had a very
 1671 pleasant conversation with Walter and we had lunch a couple months ago. He was very understanding. He
 1672 gave me a hug. If I offended him I would love to have the opportunity to apologize to him. And follow the
 1673 scriptural admonition that we got. One of the things that Walter said was, he said,

1674
 1675 *"You know this is just a private conversation between you and me. I'm never going to tell anybody or any of*
 1676 *the elders what we talked about because it's doesn't really matter and it's none of their business."*

1677

1678

1679

1680

1681 [END OF PART 4 ON THE YOUTUBE VIDEO]

1682

1683

1684

1685

1686 ERIC B: And then he says to me,

1687

1688 *"Even if you were a full-blown apostate according to the scriptures your wife is supposed stay with you*
 1689 *because you're agreeable to staying with her."*

1690

1691 And I said yeah. All I wanted to do was respect her and respect me... go to counseling, try to get help. And
 1692 then she kicks me out. Then he says well even if you were an unbeliever she's supposed to try and stay with
 1693 you and I said I know.

1694

1695 I had already been judged. **See that's what's part of what's built into the fabric of our culture. Our culture**
 1696 **as Jehovah's Witnesses from the cradle to the grave we are taught to judge others based on their works.**
 1697 **They don't get enough hours in. They don't show up to enough meetings. It is inculcated right into our,**
 1698 **into the fabric of the way we think.**

1699

1700 COSMO: **Don't include me in that Eric.** You've been lumping us into how you feel about it. [indecipherable]

1701

1702 ERIC B: I don't have an axe to grind with you brothers but you did that to me on at least two occasions. I can
 1703 mention one if you'd like to hear it? [He nods] I don't have any reason to counsel you brother it's in the
 1704 past, it doesn't hurt my feelings anymore. When everybody was supposed to auxiliary pioneer... and you
 1705 were on your stump telling everybody they should auxiliary pioneer... One of the things that I found
 1706 interesting is you would always come up to me, and shake my hand, and I would try and say hello and you'd
 1707 already be turning to go to the next guy to shake the next guy's hand. At first it bothered me then after that
 1708 I realized Cosmo's just trying to get around to everybody, cause Cosmo's a nice guy and because *you are*
 1709 *a nice guy.* One time when you were trying to get every single servant to auxiliary pioneer because that looks
 1710 good really good when they all do that, you came up to me,

1711

1712 "How you doing Eric, what're doing this month you have any plans?"

1713

1714 Wow. In my mind I thought, Cosmo wants to know what I'm doing this is the first real conversation I've had
1715 with this brother in awhile. As soon as I started to say how we were going on up to Oregon and we were
1716 gonna do this, the very next thing out of your mouth? Was I going to auxiliary pioneer? And then I said,

1717

1718 "Well we're gonna be gone for two weeks so I just don't see how."

1719

1720 And then you immediately turned on your heel... and went to the next guy. It's built into the fabric... It's
1721 built into the thinking... You're a victim of it just like the rest of us are. That's the way you think Cosmo- it's
1722 all about works. It's all about the actions.

1723

1724 As soon as you found out I wasn't on board, [in your mind and on your face] it was, "Oh well another
1725 servant that's flaking out on us." [indecipherable]

1726

1727 [Several talking at the same time]

1728

1729 COSMO: That's fine. I'm not going to dispute that. But you're the one I was talking to you- you were on my
1730 mind. And does it look good? No, it's encouraging to the congregation when we all do it. It's not looking at
1731 it like we have to like its works not that you're judged because of it, it's encouraging to others.

1732

1733 ERIC B: That's when I realized Cosmo that the conversation had nothing to do with me. It had everything to
1734 do with *your* goals. And that's all I'm saying- that's just built right into the way that we all think [in this
1735 organization]. I know because I've been in that my whole life. And now I'm getting more clarity and I'm
1736 seeing... That's not right. It doesn't mean you're a bad person because you're not a bad person.

1737

1738 COSMO: Well we'll leave that up to Jehovah.

1739

1740 ERIC B: Personally I don't think you are a bad person, you are an example- there's one, there's so many of
1741 those. I mean all the years I was an elder, all the people I disfellowshipped. So many of them didn't deserve
1742 to be disfellowshipped- I just went along with the crowd. I was always the youngest guy in the room Eric.
1743 [turning to him] I was always the youngest guy in the room. [Due to being appointed as an elder at 27.]

1744

1745 COSMO: You're saying you *do* want to be disfellowshipped?

1746

1747 ERIC B: I'm not even talking about that. This kid he smoked one [marijuana] joint in his backyard, five
1748 minutes after we dismissed him the two brothers go, "Oh yeah we need to disfellowship this guy." And I'm
1749 like, "Whoa!" but anyway the point is that when we set ourselves up as judges over others it usually doesn't
1750 go that well. Because all we have is man's wisdom. That's one of the things that is a serious problem with
1751 the way the organization is set up right now. It's a serious problem.

1752

1753 ERIC: How **should the organization apply 1 Corinthians 5** then Eric?

1754

1755 ERIC B: You're talking about the scripture that says, *"quit mixing in company with those..."?*

1756

1757 ERIC: Yes.

1758

1759 ERIC B: Well let me give you a good example. Let's say you have a young man his hormones are up he
1760 commits fornication over and over again he's 17, 18, or 19 with his girlfriend. He gets disfellowshipped,
1761 he's got a bad attitude he's not repentant he gets disfellowshipped. A year or two goes by or less, he gets
1762 married. He does the right thing. They're together. He's an upright person he's got a good job he raises
1763 his kids. But FOREVER he will be shunned, treated as a wicked evil disfellowshipped person. Witnesses
1764 will cross the street to go around him and never speak to him again. Even though he's no longer a
1765 fornicator. You see we're taking some situation that happened back in Corinth out of context and
1766 applying it to a status that lasts forever. That shuns people forever. It causes people to commit suicide. It
1767 causes people to lose their livelihood. It's going beyond the things that are written. I'm not the only one
1768 that thinks that.

1769

1770 ERIC: I know Eric... You don't think we need disfellowshipping.

1771

1772 [Talking over each other]

1773

1774 ERIC B: There's a place for it, but the extreme shunning goes way too far.

1775

1776 ERIC: You are here to say what the congregation says [indecipherable] so you know...

1777

1778 ERIC B: Lot's of people have- it's all over lots of publishers have [said it's too harsh].

1779

1780 ERIC: So you think it takes it too...far.

1781

1782 ERIC B: It goes way beyond the things that are written. The Bible only tells us so much. Anything we add to
1783 that is just our idea of how we can keep control over the people. **You know the Baptist church uses Hellfire**
1784 **right? If you don't go to church you're going to burn in hellfire. What we use at the Kingdom Hall, is that**
1785 **if you don't go out in service if you don't go to all the meetings you're gonna die at Armageddon. It's the**
1786 **same idea. To control...**

1787

1788 COSMO: I've never heard that said.

1789

1790 ERIC B: **I have.** [In fact there was a circuit overseer in New York that said word for word, *"If you don't go to*
1791 *the meetings Jehovah is going to kill you."*]

1792

1793 COSMO: I don't really understand [indecipherable]

1794

1795 ERIC B: It's called by inference. Of course you're not going to say it word for word on your next talk. It's all
1796 inferred.

1797

1798 COSMO: We say that the right-hearted are trying to help those that are inactive [indecipherable] [he begins
 1799 mumbling pretty low. I feel in my heart that he is very bothered by the conversation and these notions he's
 1800 never thought of before.] ...Jehovah really cares about us.

1801
 1802 ERIC B: I believe that.

1803
 1804 COSMO: And it's interesting though how people...even like Sandreckia; she's inactive. She heard that, and it
 1805 bothered her. She still believes the way she does or else none of us would be here. And, that's what I'm
 1806 saying if you bother some people's conscience by expressing your views. And that isn't okay, because
 1807 they're your views, which you figured out and some other people figured out but they're still [word
 1808 indecipherable] views by your definition. So when you proselytize and express these views to others then
 1809 what do you do? You're taking...

1810
 1811 ERIC B: You're mischaracterizing what happened. We swapped text messages for...

1812
 1813 ERIC: [Speaking over the top of me] You can use Joe Turner in that example.

1814
 1815 ERIC B: ...We swapped text messages for fifteen minutes one night, when Sandreckia told me she was
 1816 smoking and going out with guys. Which again...

1817
 1818 ERIC: I think it's kinda the same principle that you had brought out.

1819
 1820 ERIC B: With Walter 99% of all we talked about was marital advice.

1821
 1822 ERIC: I think all the conversations started out that way... and we recognized that. ["All the conversations"?
 1823 This was clearly not true and showed me that he did not know much about what was actually said.]

1824
 1825 ERIC B: Is Walter one of my accusers? Is he one of the ones that said I said apostate things?

1826
 1827 COSMO: He said it bothered him or something like that.

1828
 1829 ERIC B: I just find it interesting that Walter came and told you guys this too, when he was the one that [Eric
 1830 speaking over the top, unintelligible] and I didn't ask him, I didn't say, "Don't tell the elders about this
 1831 conversation" I never said that I hadn't said anything...

1832
 1833 [Multiple elders speaking at once]

1834
 1835 COSMO: He never said you said [indecipherable] he just said it bothered him.

1836
 1837 DENNIS: Walter's my nephew. He works right next door to me. I'm going to tell you the gospel of what he
 1838 told me 'cause he's my nephew.

1839
 1840 ERIC B: I'll believe you.

1841

1842 **DENNIS:** He said he went and had coffee with you at Starbucks I guess. He wishes you guys [my wife and I]
 1843 could get back together. We don't want to see any marriage fall apart. We wanna get those cards on the
 1844 table here. That's why we're neutral on this whole situation going on. [referring to my wife kicking me out
 1845 of the house and filing papers on me] [indecipherable] But he did say this:

1846

1847 *"I'm worried about the way Eric's thinking. I wish- I hope you brothers can reach him, and help him get back
 1848 to meetings."*

1849

1850 And that's all he said. Now if you don't think that's love from a brother, I don't know what...

1851

1852 **ERIC B:** I don't have hard feelings towards Walter.

1853

1854 **DENNIS:** We're not saying you do but that's the brotherly love in the organization that we submit to.

1855

1856 **ERIC B:** Well there is brotherly love here I never thought that there wasn't. All I'm saying is that we have
 1857 flaws. **We have problems that aren't any different from any other Christian group.** [Dennis speaking
 1858 underneath, trying to interrupt] You could take any Christian group, you could go to any Christian church. I
 1859 have gone to non-denominational churches as an observer only. And you know what I've observed? Almost
 1860 the identical thing I've observed here. People hug, they embrace, they go out to lunch afterwards, there's
 1861 really not that much difference when it comes to just showing love towards each other, love towards fellow
 1862 Christians.

1863

1864 You know, when you read the Gospel accounts you find that a huge majority, a huge chunk of Jesus and the
 1865 apostles time was taken up in charitable giving. In feeding, in healing, in helping the people. **It wasn't all
 1866 just door knocking all day long. Why don't we engage in charitable works? Why don't we do those
 1867 things?**

1868

1869 **ERIC:** Are we commanded to? **Are we commanded to do those things or are we commanded to preach?**

1870

1871 **ERIC B:** The answer's in James. James chapter 1, and verse 27: [reading]

1872

1873 *"The form of worship that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father is this: to look
 1874 after orphans and widows in their tribulation, and to keep oneself without spot from the world."*

1875

1876 We are commanded to look after orphans and widows in their tribulations. That's one of the main things
 1877 that Jesus [did] that's why they took up the money box, the collection box- **they were feeding the poor.
 1878 They were helping the sick. That was a huge aspect of their ministry. That is being done by millions and
 1879 millions of Christian ministries... all over the world. Not by Jehovah's Witnesses.**

1880

1881 **DENNIS:** I take offense to that.

1882

1883 **ERIC B:** Well it's okay if you take offense to it.

1884

1885 ERIC: What about the [JW] friends in China Eric? [Huh? I never could figure out what he meant by that.]

1886

1887 ERIC B: **It's a drop in the bucket. It's a drop in the bucket compared to what Christianity is doing.**

1888

1889 ERIC: [Sarcastically] **Whatever.**

1890

1891 DENNIS: [Very agitated] **Feeding the belly is more important than trying to fill the Bible truths that give them an opportunity for life? We do both Eric!**

1892

1893 ERIC B: **I didn't say that.**

1894

1895 DENNIS: **We do both!**

1896

1897 ERIC B: I didn't say that.

1898

1899 DENNIS: Yes you did.

1900

1901 ERIC B: **But what did James say? He said that "The form of worship that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their tribulation."**

1902

1903 DENNIS: **We do that. I do it personally.** Cosmo does it personally. I could give you names- I won't- because of confidentiality.

1904

1905 ERIC B: **For seven million... I'm talking about seven billion!**

1906

1907 ERIC: Can we possibly?

1908

1909 ERIC B: Yeah. You know the Watchtower Corporation is worth over two billion dollars.

1910

1911 ERIC: Is that what you're doing?

1912

1913 ERIC B: I'm trying, yes.

1914

1915 ERIC: How?

1916

1917 ERIC B: I give charitably all the time.

1918

1919 ERIC: How?

1920

1921 ERIC B: I stop, and donate. I don't think, "*Oh this is just another worldly organization!*"

1922

1923 ERIC: Is that religious people? Or do you just do what you can?

1924

1927

1928 **ERIC B:** Well everybody does... Your question proves nothing.

1929

1930 **ERIC:** No- it proves we do what we can. We know there's over seven billion people.

1931

1932 **ERIC B:** The Watchtower Corporation is worth over two billion dollars- two billion dollars!

1933

1934 **DENNIS:** Eric you're dancing around something here, you're preaching to the choir when you say take care

1935 of widows and orphans. Some can do more than others... But I don't know how much you, you...

1936

1937 **ERIC B:** **All I'm saying is that Jehovah's Witnesses are not the only ones doing these things. There's**

1938 **Christian ministries all over the world there's millions of them that are feeding the hungry. That are**

1939 **preaching the gospel, that are giving out billions of Bibles to people. How did the Bible get translated into**

1940 **over 2,500 languages? Not by the Watchtower Society. By all these other churches that are a part of**

1941 **Babylon the Great supposedly. They're the ones that are translating the Bible into virtually every**

1942 **language in the world.**

1943

1944 Not us. Not the Witnesses. So all I'm saying is that before we condemn, before we condemn every other

1945 Christian church, we need to look at what's in our own eye. We've got serious problems in this organization

1946 and that's what I've discovered. I'm not out to scratch an itch on somebody that doesn't have it. But if

1947 somebody needs help and encouragement. I'm not waiting outside for the friends to come piling out so I

1948 can get them.

1949

1950 **ERIC:** We know you're not Eric.

1951

1952 **ERIC B:** I'm not actively looking to subvert anyone's faith. I'm not looking to reduce their faith in Christ like

1953 Hymaneus did or whatever. You can't simplify and boil down something that happened in that

1954 congregation two thousand years ago and say that that applies to what we're talking about now.

1955

1956 **ERIC:** It's just a Bible principle that we follow here's the thing Eric: **If you express these doubts to ones in**

1957 **the congregation... See unity glorifies Jehovah, our Jehovah... What do you think that does to the unity of**

1958 **the congregation?**

1959

1960 **ERIC B:** I don't think that the congregation... **Unity depends on different voices.**

1961

1962 **ERIC:** **Oh no, it's working shoulder to shoulder and serving the pure language.**

1963

1964 **ERIC B:** **Yeah, we can all worship God together.**

1965

1966 **ERIC:** It's not just together, but a pure language... a unity. **So what do you think that does to that pure**

1967 **language and that unity?**

1968

1969 **ERIC B:** **I think it strengthens true religion and truth.**

1970

1971 ERIC: Causing doubts in others?

1972

1973 ERIC B: **No. What strengthens faith and what strengthens true religion is when your beliefs can stand up to scrutiny, and when you're not afraid of hard questions.** When you're afraid of saying the wrong thing, or mentioning the particular movie that you happened to see or a particular [music] group that you like to watch.

1976

1977 And being judged because it's different from the conscience of somebody else. The weakest conscience rules- and that's not scriptural either Paul talked about that a lot. Just because we don't all believe the same does not make us disharmonized or disunified. There's lots of examples of ones that...

1981

1982 COSMO: The scripture says that you should all speak in agreement.

1983

1984 ERIC B: Well what was that referring to? It was talking about belief in Christ, looking to him as their savior.

1985

1986 ERIC: Right.

1987

1988 ERIC B: That's what it was about- the Jesus show. Ever since he came, it was The Jesus Show. Everything was about Jesus at that point.

1989

1990 ERIC: So do you think it disrupts the unity of this organization Eric when we spread doubts?

1991

1992 ERIC B: Are you asking me that question because you think I'm spreading doubts?

1993

1994 ERIC: I'm asking you to express your opinion; it's just an honest question. I'm asking that question it's just an honest question. Do you think that it disrupts the unity of the organization? I know there's kind of a hangup [you have] with true Christianity and that this is really Jehovah's organization or it really isn't... But just in this organization, whether you believe in it or not. Don't you think that that would disrupt the unity of the congregation?

1999

2000 ERIC B: No I don't think it does. I don't think it has to. You see, **the organization is a top-down organization, that's in the publications they've said that before. It's ruled from the top, there's a self-appointed group of men that have no checks or balances and they're the ones that decide policy. In fact did you know that the only Jehovah's Witnesses on earth that are allowed to have dissenting views are the men on the governing body? They disagree all the time.**

2006

2007 They don't have to have a unanimous vote; they only have to have a two-thirds majority to pass any policy that affects all seven million of us. They can sit around in a meeting just like this, kick around ideas and decide the policy for seven million Witnesses. And that's what it is. And then when they want to add a new member, as long as it's somebody just like the rest... If you're thinking about making a new elder in the body you gotta make sure, *"Is this guy is gonna rock the boat? Or is he gonna play ball with us and is he gonna go along with the body?"*

2012

2013

2014 That's all they're thinking about. These are not evil men. But what I'm saying is, they're only men. And
 2015 there's lots of evidence that the things they've written in the publications they weren't inspired to write.
 2016 They caused the death of thousands of brothers and sisters.

2017

2018 Look, **back in the seventies we had articles coming out that oral sex was a divorcing... was grounds for**
 2019 **divorce. Brothers and sisters started getting divorces over it.** Then they came back and wrote another
 2020 article, "Er, um, uh, er, well, Brothers [*The Elders*] aren't spiritual policemen." At least not in the bedroom.
 2021 Then they reversed it. Then they came back later and its 1983 and wrote an article and said that it is a
 2022 perverted practice, and if you or your wife are having oral sex that could be grounds for your being
 2023 removed as a servant or an elder. **Now where did that come from? Did it come from a Bible scripture? Or**
 2024 **did it come from the prudish mind of somebody that doesn't like oral sex? It certainly isn't from the**
 2025 **Bible.** There's scriptures from Song of Solomon that'll make you blush real good... and in Proverbs.

2026

2027 So when you have man-made creeds that are written down, not as *suggestions*.. We all know that if it [*The*
 2028 *Watchtower*] says, "It is suggested that we do this or we do that." **We know it's not a suggestion. We know**
 2029 **that we must obey it. And you brothers have to take the lead in obeying any suggestion from your Slave.**

2030

2031 From "The Slave" that appoints itself. **The Slave puts itself up at the top, and you must obey The Slave. If**
 2032 **you don't obey what The Slave says, whether suggestion or not, you're out!** Does that sound...

2033

2034 *COSMO*: If I could have my own way...and I wouldn't say it was right, and I was in doubt, I would only be too
 2035 happy to obey. And that's the [indecipherable]. You can believe how you want. You can't do it! And you're
 2036 worried about getting disfellowshipped...That's what we're worried about.

2037

2038 *ERIC B*: No I'm not. I'm not.

2039

2040 [*Several talking*]

2041

2042 *ERIC B*: I already told you- It would be easier for me (And I had somebody even suggest that to me) "You
 2043 know how you can get out of this?" And I said "I know how I can get out of this." **I'd rather speak up and let**
 2044 **my shine. Jesus said don't put your light under a basket. I'm not going to put my light under a basket ever**
 2045 **again brothers. I have found out that there's some serious problems. I love Jehovah's Witnesses I love**
 2046 **the brothers and sisters that are here. But I cannot go door to door and tell people things that I know are**
 2047 **not truth.**

2048

2049 **There are serious problems; that's why you have elders posting anonymously on the internet.**

2050

2051 *COSMO*: You're gonna keep going back to that?

2052

2053 *ERIC B*: [*I pull out the printout from earlier and point to it and the brothers back away again and actually*
 2054 *raise their hands to 'block' the paper*] There's nothing there- I didn't print anything apostate.

2055

2056 COSMO: I don't believe a word, you keep going back to these elders like they're something special... they're
 2057 men! They're making a mistake in my opinion. So... I mean...

2058
 2059 ERIC B: All I'm saying is that-

2060
 2061 COSMO: [Sounding frustrated] What difference does it make?

2062
 2063 ERIC B: The difference that it makes is that I'm not talking about unbelievers...I'm talking about *believers*.
 2064 I'm not talking about apostates I'm talking about brothers that have consciences and the courage of
 2065 conviction to say, "*Something's not right.*" And...

2066
 2067 ERIC: [Speaking over top of me] **What is an apostate?**

2068
 2069 ERIC B: [Answering Cosmo's question:] ...We need to talk about it.

2070
 2071 **An apostate? You can look it up in the dictionary it's anybody that doesn't believe what they used to**
 2072 **believe.**

2073
 2074 ERIC: [Speaking at the same time] **Is there anybody you consider an apostate?**

2075
 2076 ERIC B: **Charles Russell was an apostate, the apostle Paul was an apostate, he used be Saul of Tarsus.**

2077
 2078 ERIC: [indecipherable] ...So those ones [dissident JW elders that post information online] that you say you
 2079 don't consider them apostates, according to *this organization* would we consider them apostates?

2080
 2081 ERIC B: **The Society has made a special definition for the word "apostate". There's a letter to the bodies**
 2082 **of elders that even says, "You don't have to say a single thing to somebody to be an apostate, if you just**
 2083 **think divergent beliefs, you're an apostate."**

2084
 2085 That's a 1981 letter to the body of elders I have a copy of it at home.

2086
 2087 COSMO: You keep talking about these elders. You said, you're not afraid to speak out but then you said
 2088 earlier that what they're telling the brothers in their Hall because of what happened [indecipherable] So
 2089 take a good look they're not working in the light...

2090
 2091 ERIC B: They want to.

2092
 2093 COSMO: Well why don't they?

2094
 2095 ERIC B: They want to.

2096
 2097 ERIC: I think somebody's pulling the wool over your eyes Eric. I care about you, and honestly, I don't think
 2098 those are elders.

2099

2100 ERIC B: There's lots of them Eric, I've spoken to them.

2101

2102 ERIC: Are you that firm that you know these guys are elders?

2103

2104 ERIC B: I've met a couple and I've talked to several on the phone and I've emailed many of them, and look-
2105 **you can talk for five minutes on the phone to another secretary at another Hall and know whether or not**
2106 **the guys knows his stuff or not.**

2107

2108 It's easy to tell if you've been an elder it's easy to tell if this guy was an elder or if he's faking it.

2109

2110 ERIC: I'm sorry you've been fooled I really do care about you.

2111

2112 ERIC B: Dude I've spent a lot of time.

2113

2114 ERIC: That's what scares me.

2115

2116 ERIC B: No, no, confirming...

2117

2118 ERIC: Okay.

2119

2120 ERIC B: Confirming the thing. I don't just read something... My wife said, *"You just read all this and believe*
2121 *whatever you read!"*

2122

2123 ERIC: And that's the first thing isn't it? You kinda get worked up and...

2124

2125 ERIC B: Look, you don't know... you have no idea who's typing up these Watchtower articles.

2126

2127 ERIC: But we can tell if the Bible says so and see that it's true.

2128

2129 ERIC B: Every Watchtower they're not written by anointed people they're not written by the Governing
2130 Body. There's nobody on the Governing Body [that we know of] that writes articles anymore there used to
2131 be.

2132

2133 DENNIS: I'm curious, you say you talk to elders, and they agree with this?

2134

2135 ERIC B: A number of them.

2136

2137 DENNIS: On what? They agree on what?

2138

2139 ERIC B: That shunning, the extreme shunning in disfellowshipping goes way beyond what's written in the
2140 scriptures. There is a place for it to some degree, and I haven't even delved into all the reasoning because
2141 there's a lot of reasoning.

2142

2143 DENNIS: [Indecipherable] topic of study.

2144

2145 ERIC B: I've talked to elders that have a problem with the way that higher education has been discouraged
2146 for some many years and you have all these brothers that have never saved a dime. Their teeth are falling
2147 out, they're old and broken down.

2148

2149 COSMO: [Smiling broadly] And aren't they happy?

2150

2151 ERIC B: Well, I'm glad that you are Cosmo, but we're not talking about you right now either.

2152

2153 [Multiple voices talking]

2154

2155 ERIC B: [Looking at Cosmo] ...Dennis was asking me a question and I'm answering- he asked me, "Well what
2156 have these elders said?" I'm telling you. **I know at least a dozen of these different that I've talked to that
2157 have serious problems with certain policies. The way that funds are collected at circuit assemblies, the
2158 way that all the Kingdom Halls are no longer owned by the local friends anymore, it all goes back to the
2159 Watchtower Corporations after they've been lent the money and paid it back. They basically pay for the
2160 building twice.**

2161

2162 There's a lot of things that bother brothers of conscience. Not dissenters that are trying- or I should say
2163 rabble-rousers that are trying to stir things up. Brothers that are tormented by things that they see as
2164 blatantly wrong.

2165

2166 There was a brother that researched 607 BCE. A regular pioneer and an elder. His name was Carl Olaf
2167 Jonsson. Brother Jonsson was a regular pioneer and his Bible study said, "*Why is it that every single
2168 archaeologist and secular historian they all say and even the Jews they all say that Jerusalem fell in 586,
2169 587. You guys are the only ones that say 607.*" And of course we have to stick to 607 or 1914 gets all
2170 messed up.

2171

2172 He spent three years trying to prove 607. He met with various individuals that actually wrote the things that
2173 were quoted in the publications about the Nabonidus Chronicle, etc. that's a complicated subject I spent
2174 hundreds of hours trying to figure it out. **This brother spent three years and what he found out is that
2175 there's no support for 607- it can't be right. He sent his research and his findings, he's still an elder, still a
2176 pioneer... He sent his findings to the brothers in Brooklyn.**

2177

2178 He didn't hear anything for several months. He finally got a letter saying we received your information
2179 we're going to look at it, thank you. Please in the meantime do not share this with anyone else, he said no,
2180 no, I'm not going to. This has bothered me it's a crisis in my faith, there's no possible way that 607 is
2181 accurate, and if it's not... then 1914's not right either.

2182

2183 About a year went by. And then all of the sudden they called him to an investigation similar to this one.
2184 And said that he was an apostate. And he said, "*What??*" If I've offended I'll step down I don't have to be

2185 an elder anymore I have a legitimate... this is not right, I know that the brothers are going to sooner or later
 2186 they're gonna do the right thing... They disfellowshipped him. Then he published his findings in a book it's
 2187 called *The Gentile Times Reconsidered*. It's considered an apostate book [by the WT]. And all it is, is a
 2188 scholarly archaeological coverage of why everybody in the whole world except for us doesn't believe in
 2189 Jerusalem falling in 607 they all say it fell in 586, 587. I studied that for hours and hours there's no possible
 2190 way that Jerusalem fell in 607 in my opinion and the opinion of many brothers and sisters that I've talked
 2191 [with]. There's one good example.

2192
 2193 What do you do? You know that it's wrong? But you see the leadership can't..

2194
 2195 ERIC: Can't continue to follow the Slave's viewpoint.

2196
 2197 ERIC B: The Slave can't, the Governing Body is who we're talking about, the Governing Body can't come out
 2198 and say, "Well..." [And admit they were in error on such an enormous doctrine] No. So they have to keep
 2199 trying to find ways to...

2200
 2201 ERIC: They can come out and say, "Well we..."

2202
 2203 ERIC B: It'll all collapse. It'll all fall apart without 1914. Look at archaeology- if you don't have 1914 that
 2204 means that Charles Russell and the Bible Students were not chosen by God in 1918 and so and so on and so
 2205 forth and...

2206
 2207 ERIC: Why?

2208
 2209 ERIC B: Well because that's written right in the Revelation book.

2210
 2211 ERIC: But why? Why does that mean that they weren't chosen by God's Spirit? [He doesn't understand
 2212 what's written in his own literature and he is an elder.]

2213
 2214 ERIC B: Because none of those dates are right they're all wrong.

2215
 2216 ERIC: But if dates are taken out of the equation it doesn't mean that Jehovah's Spirit is taken away.

2217
 2218 ERIC B: I know you're trying Eric, but you gotta study that stuff-

2219
 2220 ERIC: I'm trying to understand it.

2221
 2222 ERIC B: ...Because your question doesn't make sense.

2223
 2224 ERIC: I really am I'm trying to understand... Because how can Jehovah how can he give them his Holy Spirit
 2225 then?

2226

2227 ERIC B: What I'm saying is, that this brother of principle, is yet another spiritual martyr, executed by the
 2228 leadership- by the Watchtower Society. Because of what he discovered. And what his conscience after
 2229 years of study and prayer and agony told him. He was smeared he was called they said he was lacking faith
 2230 in The Slave. He wasn't lacking faith he'd been waiting on Jehovah for three years.

2231

2232 DENNIS: Eric I was just quoting you I wasn't saying you were lacking faith.

2233

2234 ERIC B: I know.

2235

2236 DENNIS: You looked at me like I was saying *you* were lacking in faith.

2237

2238 ERIC B: Alright.

2239

2240 COSMO: One thing that kind of perplexes me in everything, is that if these people were so disgruntled...
 2241 [indecipherable] ...**I just don't understand it. Why are they talking to other people about it? What do they**
 2242 **think they're gonna do? I mean nobody's gonna stop me from doing what I want to do. I just don't**
 2243 **understand it.**

2244

2245 ERIC B: I do have an answer for that.

2246

2247 COSMO: [indecipherable] That's not their responsibility.

2248

2249 ERIC B: **Everybody needs somebody to talk to. When every single family member and every single friend**
 2250 **and even your employer are all Jehovah's Witnesses and your conscience is in agony because you've**
 2251 **figured out something...** that the Watchtower Society was a member of the UN for ten years- the height of
 2252 hypocrisy, part of the Scarlet Colored Wild Beast for ten years,

2253

2254 [Sarcastically] *"Oh well er um uh we we we just wanted a library card that's why we did it!"*

2255

2256 Maybe you've read the letter I don't know if you've done the digging on that or not. It's in the file. That was
 2257 the excuse. **When people find out about these things they have nowhere to go. They turn to drinking,**
 2258 **they turn to anti-depressants, we've got lots and lots of those brothers and sisters in every congregation**
 2259 **I've ever been in. Lots of them, because they don't have anyone they can't talk to about it, they have to**
 2260 **keep it all bottled up inside. They have no support and their entire life has been isolated from anybody**
 2261 **that's not a Witness.** So who they gonna talk to when they find out some of these things?

2262

2263 It's easy to say, *"Oh they should just leave!"* Nobody's holding a gun to your head...

2264

2265 COSMO: What I'm talking about is why they don't step aside as elders?

2266

2267 ERIC B: A lot of them have; most of them have.

2268

2269 COSMO: Or they're anonymous.

2270

2271 ERIC B: But some of them stay on.

2272

2273 COSMO: I'm aware that they stay on, I don't understand why they don't just step aside.

2274

2275 ERIC B: Well we've already answered that- they're staying on because they feel it's so important to get out,
2276 to shine a light on all the secret stuff. The secret elder's handbook, the loopholes that are in that book.

2277

2278 [Both talking at the same time]

2279

2280 COSMO: What I don't understand is how is that a positive thing in subverting other people's faith?

2281

2282 ERIC B: Who said they're subverting someone's faith?

2283

2284 ERIC: Well whatever they [indecipherable] online, they're subverting...

2285

2286 ERIC B: **You guys got a letter from the Governing Body about all the varying degrees of pornography**
2287 **recently. [See letter to the bodies of elders dated April 10, 2012] That was the most bizarre letter...** All
2288 these different rankings and what kind of porn is okay, and this kind of porn isn't as okay, and that kind of
2289 porn is really bad... this kind of porn is not so bad. And if it's only this kind of porn then the brother can just
2290 get a slap on the wrist but if it's that kind of porn then oh he's in much more trouble...

2291

2292 **Where does this stuff come from? Does it come from the Bible? Or does it just come from some old guy's**
2293 **mind? Do you see the problem?**

2294

2295 ERIC: But where did you get this from? A website?

2296

2297 ERIC B: The elders that are dissidents... the conscious class... Google "*conscious class*". You'll find lots of
2298 brothers that call themselves that. They're part of the conscious class they've awakened to the problems.
2299 Google that. We're terrified, Witnesses are terrified of googling anything and reading anything that's
2300 against the Witnesses. They've been told it's poison. That's a bunch of baloney.

2301

2302 ERIC: It's not. I think [indecipherable] spiritually.

2303

2304 ERIC B: You have a right to your opinion.

2305

2306 [Many talking at the same time]

2307

2308 ERIC B: There's lot of brothers that because of their conscience, they have the courage of conviction to say
2309 this is nuts... this is wrong to exert and to say this kind of sex is okay and that kind of sex isn't okay.
2310 Divorces... disfellowshippings... **Back in the 70s you could have relations with a sheep and the wife was**
2311 **not allowed to divorce her husband. And then they went and changed it a few years later.**

2312

2313 ERIC: I like the humility that's shown you know by the governing [body] that's something I really I
2314 appreciate. You bring up these points of way back when, and now it's different.

2315

2316 ERIC B: It's not different. It's still going on. I know more about what's going on in the organization than
2317 any of you brothers do. Because it's all out there online. You're just afraid to look at any of it. You're
2318 terrified to look at it.

2319

2320 COSMO: Where do they get their information from?

2321

2322 ERIC B: Where does the New York Times get it's information from?

2323

2324 COSMO: What I'm saying is, why do you target [tarnish?] something- they're working in darkness.

2325

2326 ERIC B: How would you know that?

2327

2328 COSMO: Well because, they're not being honest in telling the brothers how they feel.

2329

2330 ERIC B: They are being honest.

2331

2332 COSMO: Well they're telling you. And you're saying some are still serving but they're serving by their rules...

2333

2334 ERIC B: Most of the ones I've made friends with have stepped down because of their conscience just like I
2335 did.

2336

2337 COSMO: Now that I understand.

2338

2339 ERIC B: I couldn't stomach it anymore. I love the friends...

2340

2341 ERIC: [Sarcastically] I thought you had "health problems"? [Spoken in reference to when I stepped down
2342 from the body I cited health problems as a reason.]

2343

2344 ERIC B: Well I do have health problems.

2345

2346 ERIC: I know.

2347

2348 ERIC B: But that was the easiest way to do it without rocking the boat and causing all sorts of problems.
2349 Because I was Asaph for two years. [See Psalms 73] I didn't want to talk about it because I didn't want to
2350 discourage somebody else. I knew that there were serious problems. I didn't realize how bad it was until I
2351 did more research.

2352

2353 I've read court transcripts [about] Rutherford. He was sued more than one time. Rutherford was an
2354 alcoholic the entire time he was president of the Watchtower Society... everywhere that Rutherford went,
2355 he had one of two young female secretaries that stayed with him wherever he went. His wife and son

2356 never traveled with him and were in California the whole time. Rutherford was not a man of God. All you
2357 need to do is look at what's on record with the court and the libel and slander and all the stories on
2358 Rutherford, it's shocking.

2359
2360 ERIC: You gotta [indecipherable] that's not slander too.

2361
2362 COSMO: Rutherford...if he did those things that's on him.

2363
2364 ERIC B: But that's what I'm saying. To perpetuate this myth that the Watchtower Society is a *"perfect*
2365 *organization run by imperfect people"*... I've heard that ever since I was a little kid- it's not true. I was there.
2366 Multiple times I saw Governing Body members acting like they were kings of the castle...yelling at people.
2367 Barking orders at people. I never talked about it, because it wasn't encouraging.

2368
2369 DENNIS: Can I say something real quick?

2370
2371 ERIC B: It was discouraging.

2372
2373 DENNIS: **The organization is not perfect Eric. You just said it is.**

2374
2375 ERIC B: **That's what I'd been taught for years...**

2376
2377 DENNIS: **Who says that?**

2378
2379 ERIC B: **The friends do.** I can't even tell you how many times I've heard it.

2380
2381 ERIC: I don't think we're a perfect organization.

2382
2383 DENNIS: **Can you accept the fact that it's wrong?**

2384
2385 ERIC B: **Well that's what I'm saying- can you accept the fact?**

2386
2387 DENNIS: **Absolutely!** But the organization run by Christ Jesus is perfect...

2388
2389 ERIC B: The organization isn't perfect.

2390
2391 DENNIS: [indecipherable]

2392
2393 ERIC: So does that mean you're not gonna follow the lead of Jehovah- I mean Jesus, as head of the
2394 congregation?

2395
2396 ERIC B: I appreciate you saying that [ignoring Eric's nonsense question] all I'm saying Dennis is that I've
2397 heard that probably a hundred times over all the years I've been to the Kingdom Hall that it's a *"perfect*
2398 *organization run by imperfect people."*

2399
2400 DENNIS: It's about as close as we can get at being perfect...
2401
2402 ERIC B: But it's not.
2403
2404 ERIC: I've heard it called a spiritual paradise...
2405
2406 ERIC B: I heard that phrase a zillion times maybe it was just a phrase they used in the congregation I was in.
2407 That's all I'm saying.
2408
2409 ERIC: **It can still bother you but you can't let that cause you to doubt the whole body of truth that's**
2410 **presented by Jehovah's organization.**
2411
2412 ERIC B: **But I don't doubt the body of truth that's presented by the Bible.**
2413
2414 ERIC: Yeah.
2415
2416 ERIC B: From the Bible. As soon as you start adding to this [pointing to the Bible] then you are made a fool
2417 then you are made a liar... **when you start writing letters about what kinds of porn is okay, and what kind**
2418 **of porn isn't okay, you've already gone beyond.** When you start making all these rules, that's what the
2419 Pharisees did- they added hundreds and hundreds of rules on to the people.
2420
2421 They couldn't just read the text of the law- that you couldn't work on the Sabbath. They had to make
2422 hundreds of rules about what you could and couldn't do on the Sabbath.
2423
2424 We've done the same thing with blood transfusions. [There are] hundreds of exceptions- you can take
2425 cow's blood now- Hemopure that's all it is... purified cow's blood. A few years ago you couldn't, but now
2426 you can. **So the brothers and sisters that didn't take that and it was the only thing that might have helped**
2427 **them, died.** But now it's okay, because the HLC [The Hospital Liaison Committee] has changed their stance
2428 on that one.
2429
2430 ERIC: **Well what Jehovah is gonna do is resurrect the person and that's what matters.**
2431
2432 ERIC B: **It sure matters to the people that lost their loved one that died.**
2433
2434 ERIC: Sure. But Jehovah can fix it. And those ones that stayed faithful to the rule of Jehovah...sure those
2435 ones have lost loved ones...they know there's a resurrection. But they're staying loyal to Jehovah.
2436
2437 ERIC B: Well I'm loyal to Jehovah.
2438
2439 ERIC: I hope you didn't hear that in the way that it sounded... Loyal to Jehovah and to the Organization.
2440 [Here he ties together these mutually exclusive loyalties in the JW mindset- Jehovah and the Watchtower,
2441 connected at the hip.]

2442

2443 ERIC B: So where in the Bible does it say we have to be loyal to a man-made organization?

2444

2445 ERIC: I'm just... That's a totally different subject now Eric.

2446

2447 ERIC B: But that's what you're talking about.

2448

2449 ERIC: No, no. I'm just saying that a lot of people experience that and remain loyal to Jehovah's
2450 Organization... [His voice trails off to a mumble as he finishes the sentence and it's obvious he knows he
2451 screwed up on this one.]

2452

2453 ERIC B: Right. Yeah. That's too bad- that they are gonna be loyal to a man, that they are gonna put a man
2454 above Christ. They're gonna put a man above the Bible.

2455

2456 ERIC: [Speaking over me] There might be a prevailing spirit of independence there [on the internet]
2457 ...because a lot of complaints that you expressed from others...

2458

2459 ERIC B: Uh huh.

2460

2461 ERIC: It seems like there might be the spirit of, "*Nobody should tell us what to do.*"

2462

2463 ERIC B: Have you been to any of those?

2464

2465 ERIC: No.

2466

2467 ERIC B: Well you really wouldn't know then right?

2468

2469 ERIC: I know what you told me.

2470

2471 ERIC B: It just depends- I'm not *consumed* with going to websites. I don't need to go to that many websites
2472 anymore, to try to figure out the truth about the truth. I know The Truth About The Truth. [TTATT]

2473

2474 ERIC: Do you currently go to some websites?

2475

2476 ERIC B: Well sure.

2477

2478 ERIC: You just said you don't.

2479

2480 ERIC B: Knowledge is power. I said I don't go to apostate websites. And I don't.

2481

2482 ERIC: Do you consider them apostate websites?

2483

2484 ERIC B: I don't know- do you want me to give you a list and then you go to them?

2485
2486 ERIC: No because there's only one website we go to and you know that.
2487
2488 ERIC B: Don't you go to CNN.com?
2489
2490 ERIC: *[Speaking over me]* You know where we go Eric... as smart as you are...
2491
2492 ERIC B: Do you go to Yahoo.com?
2493
2494 *[Cosmo joins in, all are talking at once]*
2495
2496 ERIC B: What's wrong with doing research on a public talk and typing into Wikipedia about land mines
2497 because you want a statistic about war?
2498
2499 COSMO: That's different.
2500
2501 ERIC: We're talking about doctrinal things. *"Well Jehovah's Witnesses teach this..."* I don't need to go and
2502 look at those things, to try and defend the truth.
2503
2504 ERIC B: If I had a friend that was a Mormon- a devout Mormon, and they were convinced that Joseph Smith
2505 got those golden plates and that it had really happened. If I said to my friend, *"Just research it. Please*
2506 *research it with an open mind."* and they said, *"You know what I'll do it."*
2507
2508 And then they read every piece of literature they could from the Mormon Church about it. They talked to a
2509 Mormon elder in their congregation and they came back and said they said, *"Look I did a bunch of research*
2510 *and it is true!"*
2511
2512 And then I'd say well did you read anything written by secular *[non-Mormon]* sources? Did you read
2513 anything by former Mormons?
2514
2515 *"Well no, no I would never do that."*
2516
2517 So did they even really get the whole story?
2518
2519 ERIC: I don't see the point.
2520
2521 ERIC B: Well hold on, I'm talking about my Mormon friend, did he really get the full story of whether that
2522 story is true or not? **By only reading Mormon literature is he really gonna get the whole story of whether**
2523 **the golden plates are true or not?**
2524
2525 ERIC: **Do you need to talk to a person's enemy to find out the true story?**
2526
2527 ERIC B: **You didn't answer my question.**

2528

2529 **ERIC:** Because I don't understand it. [He's being combative and disingenuous at this point IMO. It's
2530 "Theocratic War Strategy" where he feels he must prevaricate in order to not give an embarrassing
2531 answer.]

2532

2533 **ERIC B:** Did he get the full story?

2534

2535 **ERIC:** If it's all he was able to read then sure.

2536

2537 **ERIC B:** No. If I said look research it, the feasibility... did he really get these solid gold plates and were they
2538 written on by the Angel Moroni and he took them up in a flaming fire and took them away? It's a ridiculous
2539 story we know it didn't happen in real life.

2540

2541 What I'm saying is a sincere believer in that religion if all he ever knew was to read that religion's books he
2542 would never have a chance of seeing both sides of the story. If all you ever do is read one side of
2543 something, and you're never willing to entertain both...

2544

2545 **The Watchtower makes reference to apostates attack this or tear down that, but they never actually**
2546 **address what anybody that's a dissenter what their actual complaint is. What is it? Why is it such a big**
2547 **secret? Let's get it out in the open! The truth can withstand up to any examination. The truth can stand**
2548 **anything that we throw at it. If it's not the truth then it's gonna fail [under the weight of] a lot of**
2549 **knowledge. Not just one side of the story.**

2550

2551 That's all you get when you read the Watchtower on a certain topic, like 607. You're never going to get any
2552 of the other side of the story. You're only gonna get the side that reinforces the vital importance of the
2553 number 607, without which 1914 collapses.

2554

2555 Now, maybe you don't think 1914 is that important... but you look in the publications that's a pivotal year
2556 everything hinges on that. If 1914 isn't accurate, then that means that the Gentile Times might not be over
2557 and we might not even be in the last days yet.

2558

2559 **ERIC:** And then what?

2560

2561 **ERIC B:** I don't know you tell me. All I'm saying is...

2562

2563 **ERIC:** That's what I'm saying serve Jehovah not because of a date but because he's Jehovah.

2564

2565 **ERIC B:** That's my point. So why...

2566

2567 **COSMO:** It never bothered me about 1975. [At least from 1968 onward Watchtower literature and its
2568 representatives had predicted the world would end in 1975.]

2569

2570 **ERIC B:** A lot of people did. They sold their houses.

2571

2572 COSMO: [indecipherable]

2573

2574 ERIC: So if I wanted to get to know a person, I wouldn't talk to their enemies...to be honest with you. I
2575 would talk to... I would come to you.

2576

2577 ERIC B: I'm talking about a doctrine or a teaching.

2578

2579 ERIC: There's a lot of negative things out there about the Mormon Church and I could go that route if I
2580 wanted to know what Mormons believe. I wouldn't I would just go to them to find out what they believe. I
2581 don't need to know if this is or isn't the organization... I'm looking at what the enemies are doing.

2582

2583 ERIC B: I'm not talking about enemies of the organization I'm talking about a doctrine or a teaching. Is that
2584 teaching true is it really in the Bible or not?

2585

2586 ERIC: Then you can do research on that.

2587

2588 ERIC B: Yeah...that's what I've been doing.

2589

2590 ERIC: You don't need to go on the internet and see what other people believe.

2591

2592 ERIC B: Well you can go to the library too. I've been to the library too.

2593

2594 ERIC: What I'm saying is that you can become a little overcome by it. It can prove the Faithful and Discreet
2595 Slave right but then it could be somebody online.

2596

2597 ERIC B: You can go to the library and look up and find *Crisis of Conscience*. Have you ever heard of *Crisis of*
2598 *Conscience*?

2599

2600 ERIC: No.

2601

2602

2603

2604 -----

2605 [END OF PART 5 ON THE YOUTUBE VIDEO]

2606 -----

2607

2608

2609

2610 ERIC B: You don't know what that book is?

2611

2612 ERIC: No.

2613

2614 ERIC B: That's the book written by Ray Franz, he was a member of the Governing Body.

2615

2616 ERIC: Wasn't he disfellowshipped though?

2617

2618 ERIC B: Not for anything he did. It's because they needed to get rid of him. That's what I'm saying.

2619

2620 ERIC: It wasn't a smart question...

2621

2622 COSMO: You talk to him personally?

2623

2624 ERIC B: No he passed away a couple years ago. [Cosmo looks visibly relieved at hearing this] ...Why do we
2625 have books that are banned? I thought we were living in America but yet there's books that we're not
2626 allowed to read. Websites we're not allowed to go...

2627

2628 [All talking at once]

2629

2630 ERIC: Not from ones that are disfellowshipped...

2631

2632 ERIC B: King Solomon became an apostate; we shouldn't read anything he wrote in Ecclesiastes.

2633

2634 ERIC: But Jehovah inspired him to write it. Franz's book isn't.

2635

2636 ERIC B: It's still there for us to read.

2637

2638 ERIC: That you've been overcome by. So we are slaves to whomever we are overcome by.

2639

2640 ERIC B: I'm not overcome by anybody...by any man. I don't worship any men, I don't put my faith in any
2641 men.

2642

2643 ERIC: Franz hasn't influenced [you]?

2644

2645 ERIC B: There's a lot of people that have influenced me, Martin Luther influenced me a lot he stood up to
2646 the Catholic Church he helped start the reformation. There's a lot of Witnesses that hope and pray that
2647 there'll be a reformation because our policies are way too strict, they're harsh. They're legalistic...

2648

2649 ERIC: I don't buy it. And I'm not taking that [indecipherable] I don't buy into that. To me that is the spirit of
2650 independence.

2651

2652 [About 6 seconds goes by and no one says anything...]

2653

2654 ERIC: The awkward silence...

2655

2656 [All laugh]

2657

2658 **COSMO:** I'm thinking about some things... and no one is gonna tell me different. I wouldn't want to be a
 2659 part of something that I didn't believe in. **I just don't understand why all these people want to hang on to**
 2660 **this organization... if they're so...** I think...

2661

2662 **ERIC B:** **Well they're trapped.** And if you'd read their stories you would understand, they'll make you cry
 2663 they're so sad. There are brothers and sisters that desperately want to have Christian freedom but they
 2664 can't. **They desperately want to worship God without having all these man-made creeds imposed upon**
 2665 **them. They can't.**

2666

2667 **COSMO:** They can't?

2668

2669 **ERIC B:** **They'll lose everything they have. They'll never get to see their grandbabies again. How would**
 2670 **you like it if you were never allowed to see your grandkids again? How would you like it if your wife**
 2671 **wouldn't talk to you and divorced you? How would you like it if you lost your job... All these things**
 2672 **happen. All of a sudden you could just say one or two things that goes against what [sarcastically] "The**
 2673 **Truth" is...**

2674

2675 Well no one has a corner on the market on the truth. But if you go against it, that's it. You're executed.
 2676 you're spiritually executed you're cut off...

2677

2678 **ERIC:** Christians are killed all the time and they are literally executed, even faithful servants of Jehovah.

2679

2680 **ERIC B:** Lots of faithful Christians are executed.

2681

2682 **ERIC:** It shouldn't stop a person from expressing the truth. Like Cosmo brought out light doesn't dwell in
 2683 darkness-

2684

2685 **ERIC B:** Tell that to the elderly sister that doesn't believe in 1914 and wants to see her grandchildren...
 2686 there's lots of them. There's lots of brothers and sisters that are trapped they cannot get out. Because if
 2687 they do they'll never see their loved ones again, their grandkids will be taken away, their families will be
 2688 taken away. Some people will instantly lose their job, that's why they can't leave. ...And they occupy a seat
 2689 **[at the Kingdom Hall.]** And you can tell they really don't want to be here, and it's sad.

2690

2691 **COSMO:** I just don't understand it. I just...don't understand it because I gave up my family when I came into
 2692 the truth... fifteen years they wouldn't talk to me. But I knew this was the truth. And I just don't understand
 2693 it.

2694

2695 [indecipherable] If you really believe what you believe, you will stand up for it regardless the cost. I would
 2696 never put my thinking about a matter online, for other people to be influenced by it- that's my thinking, I've
 2697 come to that conclusion myself personally. And when you put that up it is influencing other people. And
 2698 when you put that up believe it or not it does influence other people.

2699

2700 ERIC B: Uh huh.

2701

2702 COSMO: There's a lot of people not as strong as you Eric and maybe they're influenced to believe
2703 something that they wouldn't have. And you hear my point?

2704

2705 ERIC B: And that's your opinion and I respect your opinion.

2706

2707 COSMO: I just don't understand... [Poor Cosmo he seems sincere and is just so "caught up in a loop" so to
2708 speak at this point]

2709

2710 ERIC B: **The problem is when somebody doesn't respect the opinion back, it's not reciprocated. See, if
2711 somebody says to me, "Well, I think it's okay to pray to Jesus, or I think it's okay to worship Jesus." You
2712 know what, Charles Russell believed the same thing. Russell's writings, if you go back to the 1800s and
2713 the early 1900s all the Bible Students prayed to Jesus.**

2714

2715 COSMO: **I'm not a Russellite- you keep bringing that up!**

2716

2717 ERIC B: I know because there's a reason. The reason is, you have your conscience, and I respect it. **What if I
2718 said, "I think it's okay to pray to Jesus, that we could pray to Jesus right now..."** You'd think that I'm a
2719 Trinitarian, even though I'm not.

2720

2721 ERIC: **We wouldn't share the same faith- they're totally different things.**

2722

2723 ERIC B: **No, we would share the same faith.**

2724

2725 ERIC: **No.**

2726

2727 ERIC B: **Christian.**

2728

2729 ERIC: No it's totally different.

2730

2731 ERIC B: A Christian is someone that loves Christ, that is following Christ.

2732

2733 ERIC: A *true* Christian.

2734

2735 ERIC B: Okay so if somebody prays to Jesus and they feel that that's okay... you know Paul prayed to Jesus
2736 three times. And Stephen prayed to Jesus right? In Acts chapter 7?

2737

2738 ERIC: I'd have to do research on that Eric. [He means lookup what the WATCHTOWER stance is on it of
2739 course.]

2740

2741 ERIC B: I could read it to you...

2742

2743 ERIC: You don't have to read it to me.

2744

2745 ERIC B: You don't have to do very much it's right there, as they were stoning Stephen: [looking it up and
2746 reading it]

2747

2748 *"Stephen being full of Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven, caught sight of God's glory and Jesus standing at God's*
2749 *right hand...and then he said Lord Jesus receive my Spirit."* He cried out with a strong voice.

2750

2751 The apostle Paul prayed to Jesus three times for that thorn in the flesh to be taken away. And I didn't get
2752 this from my own idea, I got it from the Watchtower- Russell wrote about it years ago. And it made a lot of
2753 sense. And I'll be honest with you, what I'm saying is, why judge Russell, or me or anybody that says that,
2754 because it's slightly different from what you think is right?

2755

2756 DENNIS: Back up Eric, you're still going back to Russell. I mean, Russell celebrated Christmas.

2757

2758 ERIC B: Sure he did.

2759

2760 DENNIS: Is that okay?

2761

2762 ERIC B: I don't know... I've never celebrated Christmas before.

2763

2764 [Both talking at once]

2765

2766 DENNIS: Well I don't know because you're telling me it's okay because Russell prayed to Jesus. But we can't
2767 celebrate Christmas because he did.

2768

2769 ERIC B: I didn't say everything that Russell did... [Dennis still talking] Russell might have been a pedophile
2770 for all I know, but I don't think he was.

2771

2772 ERIC: It's a Christian holiday isn't it?

2773

2774 ERIC B: I don't know if it's a Christian holiday...

2775

2776 [Dennis still talking in the background]

2777

2778 ERIC: [Eric talking over him] If a person expressed that Christmas was okay would you say we shared the
2779 same faith?

2780

2781 ERIC B: That's false logic that has nothing to do with what I'm talking about.

2782

2783 ERIC: Well, no, it's, it's...part of being a Christian right according to people that celebrate Christmas.

2784

2785 ERIC B: No. I don't know where "Christmas" came from [in the discussion] all I was saying that just because
2786 one believes something slightly different than another, is that enough to say he's a false Christian? Because
2787 that's just what you said a minute ago, that if somebody feels that because Paul prayed to Jesus and
2788 Stephen prayed to Jesus then if they feel it's okay to pray Jesus in certain situations, then they're not a
2789 "true Christian"...

2790
2791 ERIC: [Talking over the top] Because that's what we believe, yeah.

2792
2793 ERIC B: That's your opinion, but you're not respecting their belief. And you're condemning that person
2794 saying they're a false Christian.

2795
2796 ERIC: [Sarcastically] We don't condemn them by not believing them Eric. We don't condemn people.

2797
2798 ERIC B: But if you call somebody a false Christian aren't you condemning them?

2799
2800 DENNIS: Who said a false Christian here?

2801
2802 ERIC: Well I didn't...I said true Christian...I said true Christian.

2803
2804 ERIC B: Well yeah that's the implication then they are not a true Christian.

2805
2806 ERIC: [Agreeing] Right, right.

2807
2808 ERIC B: I'm not a true Christian if I don't go the Kingdom Hall?

2809
2810 ERIC: Well is there true Christianity and false Christianity?

2811
2812 ERIC B: There's lots of true Christians, they're in every church...

2813
2814 [Multiple voices talking at once]

2815
2816 DENNIS: But aren't there some false Christians?

2817
2818 ERIC B: I mean I guess if they're robbing banks on the weekends?

2819
2820 ERIC: If there's a true Christian there's a false Christian.

2821
2822 DENNIS: [Frustrated] So a true Christian can believe in hellfire and the trinity and eternal torment? That's
2823 okay? That's a true Christian?

2824
2825 ERIC B: If you think it is I guess, I didn't say that.

2826
2827 [Multiple voices talking at once]

2828

2829 **ERIC B:** All I'm saying is that when you start... when *Dennis* starts deciding what a true and a false Christian
2830 is, then we're already in a pitfall... you are taking your conscience and exerting it upon your brother.

2831

2832 **ERIC:** If we express it to them. They can already tell you're a false prophet.

2833

2834 **ERIC B:** Or if you do something like kicking them out of the congregation and shun them right?

2835

2836 [There's a long pause]

2837

2838 **ERIC:** Express that again...

2839

2840 **ERIC B:** If you want to make creeds and doctrines, and you want to force everyone to believe those creeds
2841 and doctrines, and if they don't believe them, you kick them out and you shun them and excommunicate
2842 them, or disfellowship them...

2843

2844 **COSMO:** If they share those views with others. If they subvert other people's faith.

2845

2846 **ERIC B:** I've never subverted anyone's faith.

2847

2848 **COSMO:** You came into the congregation and you told people things they didn't want to hear...quite
2849 frankly.

2850

2851 **ERIC B:** Then I want to apologize and stop and not do that again to that individual. I'm not out to try and
2852 hold up a picket sign in front of the District Convention or something that's the worst thing in the world
2853 because all it does is just confirm that you're a judgmental person if you're doing that, I don't believe in
2854 that.

2855

2856 **ERIC:** You have to understand our position and that's to protect the unity of the congregation.

2857

2858 **ERIC B:** There's nothing to protect if you're talking about me.

2859

2860 **ERIC:** We're talking about protecting the unity of the congregation as the three men sitting here that is our
2861 concern.

2862

2863 **ERIC B:** Right. I don't attend this congregation anymore I haven't been here in over a year.

2864

2865 **ERIC:** You still associate with ones in the congregation.

2866

2867 **ERIC B:** No.

2868

2869 **ERIC:** Like Walter.

2870

2871 ERIC B: No.

2872

2873 ERIC: You guys talked together?

2874

2875 ERIC B: I asked Walter how he was doing. [He had recently stopped serving as an elder, why I do not know
2876 and I sent him a text letting him know I was thinking of him]

2877

2878 ERIC: Right and that's what I'm talking about.

2879

2880 ERIC B: Wow...

2881

2882 ERIC: You are carrying on association with ones in the congregation.

2883

2884 COSMO: You said you talked with Walter... [indecipherable] you already told us that.

2885

2886 ERIC B: I was speaking in a general sense...

2887

2888 [Multiple voices talking at once]

2889

2890 ERIC B: I don't consider that associating.

2891

2892 ERIC: It's all the same in my mind.

2893

2894 ERIC B: I don't find that associating. I haven't attended in over a year.

2895

2896 [indecipherable]

2897

2898 ERIC B: I've already had publishers that I've seen at the store walk right past me and refuse to even talk
2899 to me, and I've never been judicially accused of anything my whole life.

2900

2901 ERIC: I'm sorry Eric, but that happens you know.

2902

2903 ERIC B: Well it's a systemic problem that's what I'm saying. It's part of the way we've been taught. We've
2904 been taught to judge anybody that's different... by outward appearance... it's part of the way we're
2905 taught. It's built right into everything it's built right into Bethel I saw it over and over when I was there.

2906

2907 ERIC: Well again I'm sorry for the imperfections Eric, you know it's in [indecipherable] organization.

2908

2909 ERIC B: I'm not talking about imperfections. I'm talking about a policy.

2910

2911 ERIC: But that stems from human imperfection.

2912

2913 ERIC B: Everything can't be reduced to imperfection that doesn't cut it.

2914
 2915 ERIC: So what do you do with it then? What do you do with it? What do you let it do to you?

2916
 2917 ERIC B: Honestly the last six months or so I've been doing better and better- my prayer, my study, my
 2918 mental health. I've felt great. The most stress that I've experienced has really come from dealing with being
 2919 invited to this meeting, dealing with my wife who is suing me for everything that I've got and is trying to
 2920 restrict me from even seeing my own children. That's the only stress I have in my life. My mental health and
 2921 my happiness has gotten radically better. The only source of stress has been this stuff basically.

2922
 2923 ERIC: We don't want to do that Eric. You know, and if you look back to the past few months... Hopefully you
 2924 can appreciate our love for you. I talked to you on the phone and I said let's put all this aside and we only
 2925 care about your marriage and helping you and Michelle. And that's when we were gonna meet and
 2926 something happened that day and we were unable to. But I do hope that you appreciate that there is a love
 2927 on our part for you and a concern for you.

2928
 2929 ERIC B: The reason we didn't meet?

2930
 2931 ERIC: No that's okay I'm not talking about that- that's my fault... [At this point they DO NOT want to talk
 2932 about my marriage, as they had likely not counseled my JW wife on all the rules she was breaking which the
 2933 elders were well aware of.]

2934
 2935 My point is that I want you to be able to see that we care about you, that's my only point.

2936
 2937 ERIC B: Well I know you do. I never thought those guys don't like me, they're out to get me. **I know that**
 2938 **you guys have affection for me, that you love me...but I also know that you must follow the Watchtower**
 2939 **playbook.**

2940
 2941 ERIC: **We follow the direction of the Faithful and Discreet Slave.**

2942
 2943 ERIC B: **You follow the creeds and policies of the Watchtower. You must. You have to.**

2944
 2945 ERIC: **We do. You're right.**

2946
 2947 ERIC B: You have to.

2948
 2949 ERIC: We've chosen to.

2950
 2951 ERIC B: Yeah. And I think the Bible supersedes that. I think that if you start hunting every single tiny little
 2952 thing [indecipherable] and this kind of porn is okay but that kind is worse, you've already shown that
 2953 something's not right. Something's out of whack. That's pharisaical. They had hundreds of rules about the
 2954 Sabbath. Hundreds! [indecipherable] So that's what has happened. The Watchtower Society has generated
 2955 hundreds and hundreds of rules of what we can and can't do, and it's not right. It's going beyond what's
 2956 been written. As soon as you add something to the scriptures, you're out of... you've already gone too far.

2957

2958 ERIC: I appreciate what you're saying Eric, and I understand. I just want you to go away knowing that the
2959 cong...you are missed here.

2960

2961 ERIC B: I know that I am.

2962

2963 ERIC: We care about you deeply. And I want to make sure because we've had a lot of discussion tonight.

2964

2965 ERIC B: I appreciate that.

2966

2967 COSMO: We're going to dismiss you for a little bit...

2968

2969 [I left the Kingdom Hall and went out into the parking lot. My friend, a former JW himself was out in his
2970 vehicle waiting, for moral support. We had talked for only about three minutes when the elders came back
2971 out into the parking lot to speak to me.]

2972

2973 [In the parking lot]

2974

2975 ERIC B: I was just talking to my friend... I didn't expect you to be done so soon.

2976

2977 ERIC: [Sounding quite nervous, his voice shaking] We did not give you a chance like we promised you, to
2978 talk to your witnesses and we want to make sure that you have that opportunity.

2979

2980 COSMO: You pretty much... you pretty much qualify for that.

2981

2982 [I had a choice to make at this point. I could go back inside, they make a conference call to my friend Joe
2983 Turner and then we go over all that same ground. I would have a chance to ask him questions, like, "Did I
2984 subvert your faith Joe? Is your faith in Jehovah damaged?" I knew I could make a strong point, but I did not
2985 want to make Joe uncomfortable over it all. Even though he had abandoned the friendship with me and
2986 turned me in, I didn't want to cause him additional stress. The same goes for his estranged wife,
2987 Sandreckia. I knew what they were going to do regardless of the additional testimony and drama of calling
2988 them, as I had already incriminated myself in their eyes as a dissident thinker.]

2989

2990 ERIC B: I wasn't trying to fake you out...

2991

2992 COSMO: We know.

2993

2994 ERIC: We promised you an opportunity to do that and we want to make sure that you can do that.

2995

2996 ERIC B: You mean like call them up right now or something?

2997

2998 ERIC: Yes.

2999

3000 ERIC B: No I don't want to put...look I love Joe and Sandreckia. Especially Joe, I mean I've been friends with
3001 Joe for over 20 years. I don't want to put them through undue stress. Right? It's not going to change
3002 anything.

3003
3004 ERIC: It's no different than what you expressed Eric but we didn't want to... we didn't want to...

3005
3006 ERIC B: **That's fine. No loopholes for me to wiggle through I understand.** [They know that they must
3007 follow Watchtower procedures very strictly and to the letter, since I know them as well as they do, possibly
3008 better. They also have been advised by the Watchtower Legal Department in New York to do everything by
3009 the book and report back to them once the problem is stitched up. This is making them extra careful.]

3010
3011 ERIC: **We want to make sure you are respected.**

3012
3013 ERIC B: [Smiling] **Yeah... Just get it done so you can get back to your wives and your families bros. I know**
3014 **what's happening next. Just go ahead and figure it out and I'll be waiting.**

3015
3016 [The elders walk back into the Kingdom Hall]

3017
3018 [My friend and I talk about the situation it in the parking lot for several more minutes. I will include a small
3019 portion of this conversation]

3020
3021 My Friend: So what do they want you to do now?

3022
3023 ERIC B: I'm waiting for them to deliberate so they can come back and tell me that they are going to DF me.

3024
3025 My Friend: [Laughing]

3026
3027 [After only about 15 minutes the elders ask me to come back into the Kingdom Hall. I walk in and sit down
3028 again.]

3029
3030 COSMO: **Eric... we didn't come to a decision this evening.**

3031
3032 ERIC B: **You didn't?** [I was very surprised]

3033
3034 COSMO: We didn't. We want more time to think about this. We're gonna meet together.

3035
3036 ERIC B: Okay.

3037
3038 COSMO: And uh...we will try to resolve...uh... this as soon as possible. But we will contact you as soon as it's
3039 come to it's conclusion. We've got some things to think about.

3040
3041 ERIC B: Well we've gone a long time...

3042

3043 COSMO: Well we want to do the right thing. We don't, we're not quick to... just to develop things. So, so,
3044 and you could have some patience with us? And we'll try to resolve this as soon as we can. But I will contact
3045 you if that's okay with you.

3046
3047 ERIC B: Okay. Yeah.

3048
3049 COSMO: Before we go can we say prayer?

3050
3051 ERIC B: Sure.

3052
3053 COSMO: [Praying] Jehovah our Father we are grateful that we can come to you and talk to you. We
3054 appreciate the time we have spent this evening. We understand that there are many things to consider, we
3055 are dealing with important matters. We pray that you give us the wisdom and strength to do it correctly.
3056 We ask that you help not only Eric but all of us to see clearly your way and the things we must appreciate
3057 and value in life.

3058
3059 We know that we make many mistakes, [indecipherable] and we do Father pray that you help us to
3060 [indecipherable] So we thank you for the willing spirit tonight, and we do come to you through your Son our
3061 King, Jesus Christ, Amen.

3062
3063 [All say Amen]

3064
3065 [I went back to the parking lot again, and felt relieved that it was over, but yet it really wasn't. I was
3066 dumbstruck as to why they had not arrived at a verdict that night.

3067
3068 Upon reflection I feel it was because they wanted to call the legal department and ask if they dotted all
3069 their "I"s and crossed all their "T"s but I will never know. I was called back to the Kingdom Hall two days
3070 later, right after I got off of work.]

3071
3072 [Kingdom Hall back room, two days later]

3073
3074 ERIC B: I'm sorry I'm not dressed I had to dash here straight from work.

3075
3076 COSMO: Sorry for keeping you waiting, it took a little longer. Why don't we open up with prayer. [Nods to
3077 Eric]

3078
3079 ERIC: Our heavenly Father we certainly want to thank you for the provision you have given us to be guided
3080 by you. Tonight we want to ask that your spirit be with us as we deal with this matter. Hopefully we can
3081 have a good heart towards one another and you. We ask that your spirit be with us and we be open and
3082 honest and truthful with one another and give honor and glory to you. We love you very much Father and
3083 express this prayer through your Son Jesus Christ, Amen.

3084
3085 [All say Amen]

3086

3087 **COSMO: Again thank you for coming back tonight. Our decision is to disfellowship you Eric. If you feel**
 3088 **there's been a serious judgment in error...I mean a serious error in judgment, then you have the right to**
 3089 **appeal and you have seven days.** Put it in writing, and address it to the judicial committee.

3090

3091 **ERIC B:** I understand.

3092

3093 **COSMO:** Eric did you have a scripture you wanted to share?

3094

3095 **ERIC:** Yeah. Hebrews chapter 12:5-7...I like the way this puts it:

3096

3097 *"My son, do not belittle [the] discipline from Jehovah, neither give out when you are corrected by him; for*
 3098 *whom Jehovah loves he disciplines; in fact, he scourges every one whom he receives as a son. It is for*
 3099 *discipline YOU are enduring. God is dealing with YOU as with sons. For what son is he that a father does not*
 3100 *discipline?"*

3101

3102 And so Eric, what you said the other night about a spiritual stoning...**this is not a spiritual stoning, you**
 3103 **don't come back from a stoning. You don't come back from a stoning.** This you can come back from, and
 3104 we want you to come back from this. This is just discipline from Jehovah. Maybe in the old days we used to
 3105 have to stone people. But Jehovah sacrificed his son, so that we don't have to do that anymore now you
 3106 have the opportunity for forgiveness of sins.

3107

3108 **If you truly repent Eric, and turn around, you can have that.** So don't look at it like this is a spiritual stoning
 3109 it's not you can come back from this. I speak on behalf of all the brothers, even the congregation, who want
 3110 you to.

3111

3112 **ERIC B:** You know if I could, I'd like to share something that just happened last night that relates to that. A
 3113 friend of mine gave me a couple of tickets to a Toto concert. So I went to the Toto concert with a friend,
 3114 and it was unbelievable, almost in the front row. And I look over my shoulder about five rows back it's Dave
 3115 and Sheila Ingram. So I went up to them and said, *"Hey how are you guys doing?"* And they like looked off
 3116 in the other direction. So I sat down **[in an empty seat near them]** and I just didn't get it at first, because I'm
 3117 still not disfellowshipped until it's announced, and I would hope that they don't know about these
 3118 proceedings...

3119

3120 But obviously they knew something because they proceeded to shun me. And I said, *"Is this the first time*
 3121 *you've been to Toto before?"* And Dave refused to look at me and he was doing this... **[Showing them how**
 3122 **he was turning his head away looking off into the distance as if I wasn't in front of him]** **And at that point- I**
 3123 **wasn't trying to be annoying or rude- it sort of dawned on me and I thought to myself, "They're shunning**
 3124 **me." ...And there hadn't even been a decision made yet but obviously they've heard something.**

3125

3126 **ERIC:** Well we hadn't made a decision yet... [indecipherable]

3127

3128 ERIC B: The last time I've spoken to Dave and Sheila was only about positive things, they've been over to my
 3129 home for dinner I've been to their home for dinner. **So I looked at Sheila and I said "Sheila what's wrong?
 3130 Is everything okay?"**

3131
 3132 **And the anger, and the hate in her face was so sad. And she said, [Angrily] "Don't even talk to me! I don't
 3133 even wanna see you!"**

3134
 3135 **So I stood up, and I said to her, "I just want you to know that I don't have any hatred in my heart for you.
 3136 Goodbye." And then I walked away. But you see brothers, it goes right back to what we talked about a
 3137 couple nights ago. There is a problem, with this veneer of love. This little thin veneer of love that
 3138 Jehovah's Witnesses have is not very deep, and it's based on conditions. IF you do these things...and IF
 3139 you show up at the Hall, I'll be your friend. But if you don't...I'm not going to love you anymore. I'm going
 3140 to shun you now.**

3141
 3142 Even though nothing has been announced. Now obviously there's been something whispered into their
 3143 ears from someone. [Of course Sheila is friends with my ex-wife so we know where they got their
 3144 information from.]

3145
 3146 ERIC: [Feigning ignorance] Well who would it be?

3147
 3148 ERIC B: What I'm saying is that it's not just Dave and Sheila. There's "Dave and Sheilas" all over the place in
 3149 the organization. And you know 2/3 of the people that are disfellowshipped don't come back.

3150
 3151 ERIC: Well I'm glad that you said that Eric. Because **I want you to still think of yourself as having that desire
 3152 to be part of Jehovah's organization. We want you to be Eric.**

3153
 3154 ERIC B: **Yeah I appreciate that you want that. I don't want anything to do with a man-made organization
 3155 that shows conditional love. Love that's based on pioneering, love that's based on only what you do.** And
 3156 that's what I have seen. And not just here. I've seen it in New York, I've seen it all the different places I've
 3157 lived.

3158
 3159 And that's why I'm telling you brothers this is a problem that you three brothers can't solve here locally. I
 3160 certainly can't solve it locally it goes all the way to the top. And there's a serious problem that's my point.

3161
 3162 ERIC: We can't deny imperfection Eric. And what Dave and Sheila did to you we can't justify that either.

3163
 3164 ERIC B: It goes beyond Dave and Sheila.

3165
 3166 ERIC: There was probably a reason why...you know, I'm sure. And I don't know. Who knows?

3167
 3168 COSMO: [Indecipherable] ...We understand exactly what you're saying. [Indecipherable] ...We know how it
 3169 feels.

3170

3171 DENNIS: You know that's the hardest thing there is to deal with Eric. I was removed as an elder. And about
3172 a year later I had a brother ask me, he saw at assembly, and he said, *"Oh I see you've been reinstated."*

3173
3174 ERIC B: Yeah.

3175
3176 DENNIS: You know my mother, bless her heart, she taught me The Truth when I was five. My dad hated The
3177 Truth. He beat her... you know the typical scenario. And it wasn't because of that, I just thought there has
3178 to be some substance to this because people talked [gossiped] about my mom in the congregation...

3179
3180 She should have done this, she should have done that. She should have left him but she stayed. The whole
3181 point was I remember when I was a young teenager and I said, *"How in the daylights did you put up with
3182 this garbage?"*

3183
3184 And she said, *"Just remember one thing if you ever get baptized and I hope you do..."* I didn't get baptized
3185 till I was 15, my dad burned the books and everything else, as far as he was concerned I was never going to
3186 be a Witness.

3187
3188 **Just remember that 50% of the friends are in The Truth to test the other 50%.** Now I know you've
3189 probably heard that a zillion times but you know I've had to live by that because there is never going to be a
3190 day when there is going to be no Sheila and Daves and all people that just come up and love us... at least
3191 this side of Armageddon and I hope I can convey this to you again you've been on this side before.

3192
3193 ERIC B: I have.

3194
3195 DENNIS: Yes you have. And you know words are easily spoken, but I'm going to speak in behalf of these
3196 brothers... We have agonized over this. Over trying to help. If you don't think...

3197
3198 ERIC B: I believe it.

3199
3200 DENNIS: **I'm trying to hold back tears right now. If you don't think this is Christian love I don't know what
3201 to tell you. And I'm not saying this is as good as it gets but there are those in the organization that truly
3202 do try to apply the principles of Christ-like love.**

3203
3204 ERIC B: **I believe that too. And I guess my agreement but also my slight differences is that there are
3205 millions of wonderful organizations of Christian people that do the same thing.** And I'm starting to see
3206 that just because everybody doesn't quite believe the same, the love is there. 50% test the other 50% in a
3207 lot of Christian churches.

3208
3209 **The myth that we're the only ones that have love- is just that. And now I know because I've explored, I've
3210 researched with an open mind, not a closed one that refuse to go anywhere but JW.org. If you think
3211 you're getting all the facts- you're not Eric. If you think you can read only Watchtower publications and
3212 learn The Truth About The Truth you can't- it's impossible.**

3213

3214 COSMO: Before we close do you have any questions.

3215

3216 ERIC B: No. I'm quite familiar with [all of] this. I have one scripture I wanted to share and then I think we're
3217 done?

3218

3219 COSMO: I just wanted to make sure you don't have any questions about anything.

3220

3221 ERIC B: Okay. The scripture that I had in mind is in John 16. I read this to you brothers not in a spirit of
3222 anger, not in a spirit of accusation, because that's not what I mean when I read this to you. But I feel there
3223 is a parallel here.

3224

3225 John 16 Jesus is speaking to his followers. [Starting with] verse 2 he says:

3226

3227 *"Men will expel you from the synagogue. In fact, the hour is coming when everyone that kills you will*
3228 *imagine he has rendered a sacred service to God. But they will do these things because they have not come*
3229 *to know either the Father or me. Nevertheless, I have spoken these things to you that, when the hour for*
3230 *them arrives, you may remember I told them to you."*

3231

3232 So I do feel that this is a spiritual execution. And I do feel that it's definitely going beyond the things that
3233 are written. I didn't used to feel that way in the past. **And so to me, what's appropriate to do right now is**
3234 **for me to pray. And that's what I'm going to do right now. [I bow my head and begin to pray]**

3235

3236 *"Heavenly Father please be with Dennis..."*

3237

3238 COSMO: Eric! [Cosmo tries to break in, then decides not to. The rest of them are stunned and silent as I
3239 continue to pray and I can feel their eyes on me as I continue the prayer:]

3240

3241 ERIC B: *"Please be with Cosmo and be with Eric. Forgive them for the sins they are committing. Don't charge*
3242 *it against them. We know that when they stoned Stephen he said the same thing. And Father I know that*
3243 *these men are sincere but I know they are misled and that one day [hopefully] they will open their eyes to*
3244 *The Truth About The Truth. Please help me not to have anger in my heart or resentment towards these men*
3245 *because I know that they are just trying to do what they think is right, and they are under the control of the*
3246 *Watchtower and its corporations.*

3247

3248 *This is what I feel from my heart Heavenly Father, and I know that you are listening to our prayers, and that*
3249 *you love me, and you love these men as well. And I say this prayer in Jesus' name, Amen."*

3250

3251 [There is a stunned silence. The elders do not say Amen of course.]

3252

3253 ERIC: ...Well...I think there is just one last scripture that you wanted to share Dennis? Or not...

3254

3255 ERIC B: I don't think it's necessary brothers. I really need to get going.

3256

3257 COSMO: That's fine.

3258

3259 ERIC B: I know that you may have not wanted to share in that prayer but I felt that I needed to say it. And
3260 I'll continue to...

3261

3262 COSMO: We're not a master over you Eric.

3263

3264

3265 [The judicial meeting is adjourned... and I am free!]

3266

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3300 **APPENDIX:**

3301

3302 **LETTER SENT TO THE ELDERS ON 6/3/2012 EXPLAINING THE SITUATION THAT I WAS UNDERGOING:**

3303 [Certain sections and names have been redacted]

3304

3305 6/3/2012

3306 To: Eric [last name removed] and Dennis [last name removed]

3307 From: Eric Bottorff

3308 Re: My situation and my wife

3309

3310 To begin, I ask that this letter be kept confidential and not passed from elder to elder as is sometimes done
3311 unnecessarily as you know. **Please restrict this information to the men assigned to handle the case.** I ask
3312 that you agree to honor this request before reading further. There is a very specific reason I ask this, which I
3313 think you brothers are aware of since it was addressed in the recent past. If this letter has been handed to
3314 someone other than the ones listed above, I ask that you please respect confidentiality and my wishes as your
3315 Christian brother and stop reading any further.

3316 After letting my wife know a couple nights ago that I was planning on speaking with you two brothers, I
3317 asked her if there was anything that I needed to know about. She then told me that she spoke to Eric [last
3318 name removed] on 5/27/2012 and told him about my "secretive ways". I asked her what she said but she
3319 would not elaborate, and I left it alone at that point to keep peace. Brothers I have been under a tremendous
3320 amount of stress and pressure in the last few years, more so than any other time in my life. This has caused
3321 me to get under the care of a Dr. and be put on anxiety medication, which has helped. During this time I was
3322 doing much deep study of the Proclaimer's book and the older publications referenced in it, ones written in
3323 the late 1800s and early 1900s. The more I studied, the more questions I came to have, questions that I
3324 realized I could not answer if someone raised them. One example from recent times is what has been
3325 published about the "generation." While I found the explanation about the generation (first published in
3326 1995) confusing, I am even more confused about the "overlapping generation" explanation.

3327 But the main purpose for this letter is so that you can understand what I have been going through, and what I
3328 am dealing with at home regarding my wife. On at least four occasions in the last year Michelle has said she
3329 wants a separation or wants to leave me, and once she said she was considering a divorce, even though she
3330 knew she had no scriptural grounds but was okay with that. Each time I told her that I loved her, and wanted
3331 to work it out and that I would never leave her or be unfaithful to her. I read her scriptures and we studied
3332 articles about how Jehovah hates a divorcing and how the Bible says we should stay together. I have tried
3333 very hard to work with my wife and show her love and respect, as the weaker vessel.

3334 But there now appears to be a pattern developing that is quite disheartening, and at first I did not want to
3335 believe it. My wife has denied rendering the marital due in any measurable way for over two years. Even
3336 kissing or embracing is often denied. About two months ago I put my hand on her shoulder and told her I
3337 thought she looked pretty, and she pushed me back and said, "why don't you just use your hand tonight?",
3338 implying that I should masturbate on my own. It has been difficult living in a relationship where I love my
3339 wife and she does not appear to return those same feelings. I have tried to give her time, bought her flowers

3340 many times, rubbed her feet, on and on, but she is not interested in giving me marital intimacy. Once when in
3341 frustration I said that it wasn't good for me to have these unfulfilled desires, she stated that I should "go out
3342 and find a woman that will do all the things I won't do for you". I couldn't understand why she would goad
3343 me in this way; it didn't make sense for her to dare me to do such a terrible thing. And now there are these
3344 "charges" she has fed you. I do not know exactly what she told you, but for reasons that are apparent to me I
3345 feel they should be taken with a grain of salt. As you know, there are two sides to every story. I want you to
3346 understand the atmosphere in our home as that will make it clearer.

3347 For the last 2 1/2 to 3 years it has also been quite a challenge to get my wife's support when conducting the
3348 family Bible study. At times she would get up and literally leave while it was in progress, as I struggled to
3349 get the children to sit still. Often she would send and receive text messages in her lap during the study, sit as
3350 quietly as a stone and not make any comments, or complain that she was tired and ask if we were almost
3351 finished. After it got particularly bad, I spoke to her in private. She said that she did not respect me and found
3352 it hard to accept me as her head, attributing it to her upbringing and the fact that she takes after her father. I
3353 asked her what she thought her dad would say to her about this behavior, and she admitted that he would
3354 want her to respect the headship arrangement. I continue to take the lead with my family, but it is apparent
3355 that she chafes at any family decisions made that do not coincide with what she feels should be done.

3356 As for what she told you, I cannot say with certainty. [redacted sentence] ...My goal is to regain my spiritual
3357 balance, to fight off negative feelings and thoughts and improve my relationship with Jehovah and with my
3358 wife. This is my complete focus lately. The last few months had actually been getting better, or so I
3359 thought...and now this situation has arisen, and it makes me long for the day when I can just fall asleep and
3360 wake up in paradise.

3361 I study the Bible *every* day, and I pray often. Here is my day to day life: I work, come straight home, cook
3362 dinner three times or more per week, spend time with the children, help with their homework, etc. I do not
3363 yell, do not swear or raise my hand against my family, and my entire paycheck goes to buy things for my
3364 wife and daughters. Yet sadly, I have come to the realization that some part of my wife wants out of the
3365 marriage, to the point that she may be willing to "put away" her mate using whatever means she can. She has
3366 withdrawn the marital due, show little respect for headship, and now apparently is seeking to get me thrown
3367 out of the Christian congregation since I have not been unfaithful to her as I suspect she had hoped. It is a
3368 terrible, terrible realization but all the signs and clues she has left me points to this. (Malachi 2:13-16)

3369 I know that I am not a leavening influence in the congregation, as I really have no dealings with anyone in
3370 the congregation at this time. No one calls me or texts me. No one comes over. I do not wish to discourage
3371 anyone, or spread any untruths of any kind (Psalms 73; Psalms 1:1) and have love for all the brothers in our
3372 area and am not aware of anyone that has something against me. If someone does, I would want to settle it
3373 quickly and speak to them directly. (Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15-17)

3374 More than ever I want to be found acceptable to Jehovah, and his judgment counts, for the passage in Isaiah
3375 quotes Jehovah as saying, "You are my witnesses." Claiming to be a Christian does not make one a
3376 Christian, and simply claiming to be one of Jehovah's witnesses does not mean that Jehovah recognizes one
3377 as being such. I am open to receiving counsel and discipline from my Heavenly Father and from any brother
3378 that feels I need it. I love the truth and I love the scriptures. Please believe that.

3379 I have ceased attending meetings for my own mental and emotional health at this time. My goal is to meet
3380 with my brothers and sisters again when I can safely do so; I know it is very important. Paul said in 1

3381 Corinthians 4:4: *“For I am not conscious of anything against myself. Yet by this I am not proved righteous,*
3382 *but he that examines me is Jehovah.”* This is quoted so you will know that I am not engaged in any secret
3383 sins or a double life, and feel close to Jehovah God on a daily basis. He examines me, and I will stand before
3384 him and his judge Christ someday, probably soon. (John 5:22-24) Please understand that one of the reasons
3385 that I am reacting this way has to do with several negative rumors that have come back to me and which
3386 appear to have escalated to slander of my name and reputation. One rumor was that I was disgruntled due to
3387 being “passed over” and not made an elder again, which is patently false as you know. This was told to me
3388 by a brother who said it was a topic of discussion in his car group in field service. The other slanderous
3389 rumor was told to me by my wife- she said that at least two sisters approached her, asking her “Are you and
3390 Eric going to try and stay together despite what happened?” When pressed she was told that they heard I had
3391 cheated on her, which is of course untrue, and that was why I was “deleted”.

3392 Since gossip is a recent topic of a local needs part, and Eric, you yourself told me that it was a problem in the
3393 congregation lately, it seems apparent that part of the rumor mill was cranked up due to the incorrect
3394 announcement from the platform last year that “Brother Bottorff has been deleted.” You know and have read
3395 my letter explaining why I stepped down. I have never committed any gross sins since dedicating my life to
3396 serve Jehovah, and have never been judicially reprovved for anything. For many years now the Society’s
3397 instructions to elders is that when a person is deleted or steps down, the announcement is always the same
3398 regardless: *“Brother [name of person] is no longer serving as an elder [or ministerial servant].”*

3399 Yet no retraction or correction was ever made- the botched announcement that I had been “deleted” even
3400 though I simply stepped down and resigned stood for all to hear, impugning my reputation and fueling the
3401 gossip fires. Would that cause you emotional pain if it happened to you? Unfortunately my wife and
3402 daughters have already felt the sting of some that feel that *they* are now “bad association” due only to the fact
3403 that I no longer attend meetings. Recently I told my wife that she should invite the [family name removed] or
3404 [family name removed] or another family in the congregation over for dinner. She said that they likely would
3405 not come, and that she had tried to invite some over already, but they felt uncomfortable due to the fact that I
3406 might be bad association. Even a sister that has an unbelieving mate would not receive this type of snubbing.
3407 So in that way I am now treated as less than a person who does not even know the true God. The [name
3408 removed] family has greatly curtailed their “friendship” with our family and now limit association between
3409 their daughter and mine, applying a “guilt by association” rule to her, as [my daughter] is no longer welcome
3410 to sleep over at their home, and [their daughter] is not allowed to come over to our home to play anymore. I
3411 have spoken with my wife about it, and she said it has caused her hurt and distress. Has the [name removed]
3412 family personally “marked” me? Their actions indicate they may have. My understanding is that marking is
3413 an elder body decision and not to be done by individuals. At any rate, I explained to her that we are all at
3414 different levels in our spiritual maturity and hopefully someday the judgmental attitudes harbored by some
3415 will be rooted out of their personality.

3416 To recap, I am not in good health at all at this time, but am still willing to meet with you in the future and get
3417 whatever counsel and assistance Jehovah wants to give me. I ask that I have time to regain a “calm heart”
3418 (Proverbs 14:30a) and try and work on some of the problems that exist in my marriage. I will not and do not
3419 speak negatively about you brothers or any of the friends, as that is not my way and never has been. Thank
3420 you for your help and your kind consideration of this lengthy letter. I also thank you for honoring my request
3421 that this information be kept confidential with you brothers.

3422 With Agape Love, Eric

3423 ORIGINAL LETTER RECEIVED FROM ELDERS VIA REGISTERED MAIL, DATED AUGUST 19, 2012:
3424 [Portions Redacted]
3425

ENGLISH CONGREGATION OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

August 19, 2012

Dear [REDACTED]

The body of elders of the English [REDACTED] Congregation has appointed a judicial committee to meet with you concerning allegations of wrongdoing involving Apostasy: Deliberately spreading teachings contrary to Bible truth as taught by Jehovahs Witnesses (Acts 21:21 ; 2John 9,10) . We want to assure you of our genuine interest in your spiritual welfare and our heartfelt desire to provide you with assistance in this matter. (Isaiah 1:18,19 ; James 5:12-14) You are also aware that these sins are serious, and if a person were guilty of such practices and found unrepentant, he would be subject to disfellowshipping. It is for these reasons that the judicial committee encourages you to meet with them on August 30, 2012 at 6:30 pm at the Kingdom Hall located at [REDACTED]

If the date or time for this meeting would be a hardship for you, please feel free to contact me at [REDACTED] so that we can select a date and time when you would be available. If we do not hear from you or you choose not to be present for this meeting, the judicial committee will then consider the available facts and reach a decision. Nevertheless, we sincerely hope that you will choose to attend this meeting to benefit from this Bible-based arrangement to shepherd those who are in need of assistance.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Judicial committee chairman
[REDACTED]

3426

3427 **MY REPONSE TO THE "INVITATION" TO MEET WITH THE ELDERS:**

3428

3429

3430 August 23, 2012

3431 Cosmo, Eric, Dennis, and other elders who may be reading this:

3432

3433 I recently received your letter dated 8/19/2012. I want very much to meet with the
3434 three of you brothers to discuss these allegations and find out who is saying these
3435 things about me so I can follow Matthew 5:23-24 if at all possible. I also want to be
3436 right with Jehovah and live up to my dedication to him and to his Son by doing this.

3437 As you can probably imagine this has been a very painful time in my life. To have
3438 my wife sue me in a public court, with my name listed as the "respondent" and her
3439 name listed as "petitioner" in these divorce proceedings is a horrible experience
3440 that I do not wish on any one of you. Michelle is suing me for child support,
3441 alimony, the house, our Luxury SUV which was just recently paid off, as well as
3442 suing me for all her legal fees even though I do not want a lawyer and begged her
3443 to get counseling with me. And this of course does not even touch on the fact that I
3444 was kicked out of my home some two months ago based on false accusations
3445 presented to the court that I was a violent husband, something that is patently
3446 false. I am anxious to know what has been or is being done to protect my name
3447 and reputation from this ongoing slander.

3448 At any rate, the only problem is that the August 30th date is indeed a hardship and
3449 impossible for me to attend. Could we please reschedule for September the 5th at
3450 that same time of 6:30pm? I am sincere in my desire to meet with the committee. I
3451 await your acknowledgement of the requested date change. When you respond, I
3452 wonder if you could please answer this question for me:

3453 *Do I have the right to face my accuser, and hear what it is that bothered them? Will*
3454 *that person (or persons?) be there to give testimony so that I can finally find out*
3455 *what it is that I have done or said that has precipitated this judicial trial?*

3456 I do not want to gloss over or go around Matthew chapter 18 or Matthew 5:23-24.
3457 When we meet on 9/5 please allow me to follow these scriptural admonitions that
3458 Jesus gave to all of us- that is very important to me.

3459

3460 With Respect and Agape Love,

3461 Brother Eric Bottorff

3462 **IN CONCLUSION, SOME FACTS ABOUT THE TRANSCRIPTION THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST:**

3463

3464 • There were about 29,000 words spoken spanning about 79 pages in Microsoft Word format on standard
3465 8.5" x 11" pages.

3466

3467 • The first meeting lasted about 2 hours and 50 minutes and the second follow-up meeting to give me their
3468 decision lasted about 20 minutes.

3469

3470 • The youngest Elder named Eric spoke 256 times. Cosmo (the chairman) spoke 156 times. Dennis spoke 80
3471 times.

3472

3473 • In the course of the meeting I spoke 452 times.

3474

3475 • The name Jehovah was used 91 times. The name Jesus was used 61 times.

3476

3477 • The Watchtower Organization was mentioned 124 times and "The Faithful Slave" or Governing Body was
3478 mentioned 47 times, for a total of 171 times which is more than the use of "Jehovah" and "Jesus"
3479 combined.