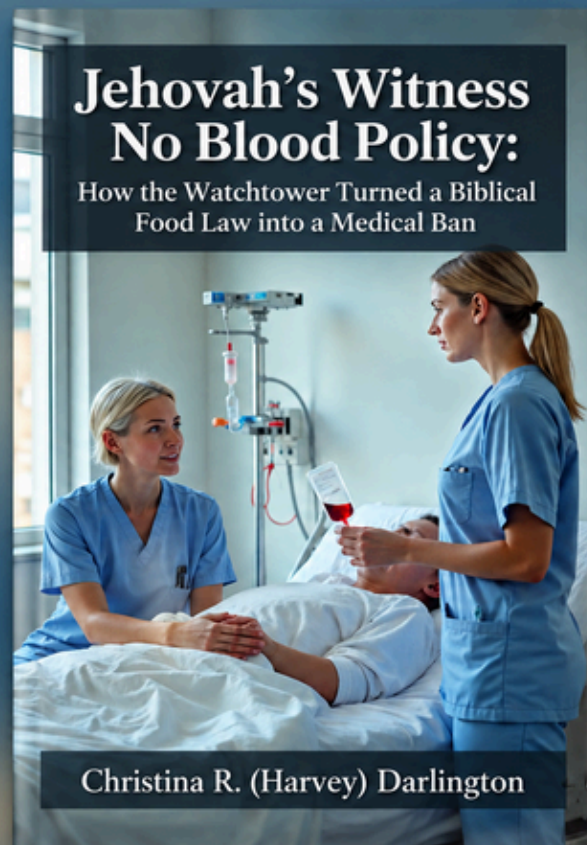


Who Gets to Decide What God Has Forbidden?

**A Complementary Guide
for Jehovah's Witnesses and
Those Who Love Them**



What the Watchtower's Changing Blood Policy Teaches Us About Scripture, Conscience, and Loyalty

For decades, Jehovah's Witnesses were taught that refusing certain uses of blood was not merely organizational policy—it was obedience to God. Sincere Witnesses made life-and-death decisions believing these restrictions reflected Jehovah's unchanging law.

But the rules changed.

The Bible did not change. So what did?

When a religious organization tells us what God requires, does loyalty mean accepting its interpretation—or carefully examining that interpretation against God's Word?

The Bible commends the Bereans for "examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

This guide invites you to do the same.





How to Read This Guide

- The Bible did not change. So what did?

As you consider the Watchtower's changing blood policy, keep one distinction in mind:

God's Word is not the same thing as someone's interpretation.

As you read:

- Ask what the Bible actually says—not what you have been told it means.
- Distinguish unchanging Scripture from changing interpretations and organizational policies.
- Notice when a teaching is called "God's law" even though Scripture never explicitly states it.
- Ask whether God's created order supports the conclusions drawn from Scripture.
- Follow the example of the Bereans: examine the evidence in Scripture for yourself (Acts 17:11).

Loyalty to God should never require us to be afraid of examining whether a teaching is true.

Question 1: Where Does the Bible Say Receiving Blood Is the Same as Eating It?

Read the principal passages used to support the Watchtower's blood prohibition:

- **Genesis 9:3–4** — Noah is told not to eat flesh with its blood.
- **Leviticus 17:10–14** — Israelites are forbidden to eat blood, and the blood of an animal killed for food or sacrifice is to be poured onto the ground.
- **Deuteronomy 12:23–24** — Israel is again commanded not to eat blood but to pour it onto the ground.
- **Acts 15:28–29** — Gentile Christians are told to “abstain from blood,” along with things sacrificed to idols, things strangled, and sexual immorality.

Now ask: Which passage says that replacing blood lost from the human circulatory system is the same thing as eating blood?

What about Acts 15, which tells Christians to “abstain from blood”? Does it identify receiving donated blood as eating or consuming it? No. Yet The Watchtower argued that transfusion was a form of “feeding” on blood. (The Watchtower, September 15, 1961, p. 558.) That comparison came from the Watchtower’s interpretation—not from the words of Scripture itself.



If the Bible forbids eating blood, who decided that receiving a blood transfusion is the same thing?

Blood transfusions did not exist in Bible times, so the Bible does not mention them. But that also means the Bible never equates receiving blood medically with eating blood.

The Watchtower supplied that connection by arguing that receiving blood through the veins was a form of "feeding" on blood. But notice the distinction:

God said: "abstain from blood."

The Watchtower interpreted that to mean receiving blood medically was the same as eating it.

Those are not the same statement.

If Scripture itself never makes that comparison, should a human interpretation be treated as though God Himself said it?



Question 2: If This Is God's Unchanging Law, Why Have the Rules Changed?

The Bible has not changed. But Watchtower teachings about blood and related medical procedures have:

- **1945** — Biblical blood commands were applied to blood transfusions.
- **1961** — Accepting prohibited blood became subject to congregational discipline.
- **1967–1980** — Organ transplants went from being condemned as “cannibalistic” to a matter of conscience.
- **2000** — Many fractions from prohibited blood components became matters of conscience.
- **March 2026** — Use of a patient’s own blood, including blood removed, stored, and returned, became a matter of conscience.
- **September 2026** — Red cells, white cells, plasma, and platelets—previously prohibited—became matters of conscience. Whole-blood transfusion remained prohibited

The Bible did not change. The interpretations did.



What Was Called “God’s Law” Changed

For years, Jehovah’s Witnesses were taught that accepting prohibited blood violated God’s law. Even a patient’s own blood could not be stored for later transfusion.

Then the boundaries changed.

- **1961:** The Watchtower said the divine law applied whether blood was “whole or fractional,” and whether it came from oneself or another person.
- **2000:** Many blood fractions became matters of personal conscience.
- **March 2026:** A patient’s own blood—including blood removed, stored, and later returned—became a matter of conscience.
- **September 2026:** Red cells, white cells, plasma, and platelets from another person’s blood also became matters of conscience. Only whole-blood transfusion remained prohibited.

God’s Word did not change between 1961 and 2026. So were all of those earlier restrictions really God’s unchanging law—or were they interpretations of God’s law?



Question 3: Who Drew the Lines That the Bible Never Drew?

For years, Watchtower policy divided blood into categories:

- Whole blood — prohibited
- Red cells — prohibited
- White cells — prohibited
- Platelets — prohibited
- Plasma — prohibited
- Many smaller blood fractions — matters of conscience

In September 2026, red cells, white cells, platelets, and plasma became matters of personal conscience. Only whole-blood transfusion remained prohibited.

Why did the lines change?

The Watchtower now acknowledges that Scripture does not address the various products derived from blood and that the Governing Body should not “go beyond the things that are written.”

If Scripture never established these medical categories, who had the authority to make them binding on Christians in the first place?



Question 4: Does God's Created Order Draw the Same Lines?

For decades, Watchtower policy prohibited receiving white blood cells medically while God's created order naturally allows maternal cells to pass from mother to child.

This raises an important question:

If God intended the medical transfer of these cells to violate His blood law, why does the human body naturally transfer them from mother to child?

During pregnancy, maternal cells can cross the placenta and enter the developing child. After birth, breast milk contains living maternal cells—including white blood cells.

These are not medical transfusions. They are natural biological processes built into human reproduction and nourishment.

Would God give a blood law that contradicts the way He designed the human body to work?



Question 5: Does Loyalty to God Mean We Should Not Question an Interpretation?

The question is not: "Am I loyal to an organization?"

The question is: "Am I loyal enough to God to make sure that what I am being told really comes from Him?"

Jehovah's Witnesses are taught to value loyalty. Loyalty to God is important. But loyalty to God and unquestioning acceptance of a human interpretation are not the same thing.

Consider the Bereans. They listened eagerly to the apostle Paul—yet they still checked what he taught against Scripture.

They were commended for "examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

The Bible also says:

"But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

If the Bereans were praised for examining even the apostle Paul's teaching, Christians today should not be afraid to examine religious teachings against Scripture.



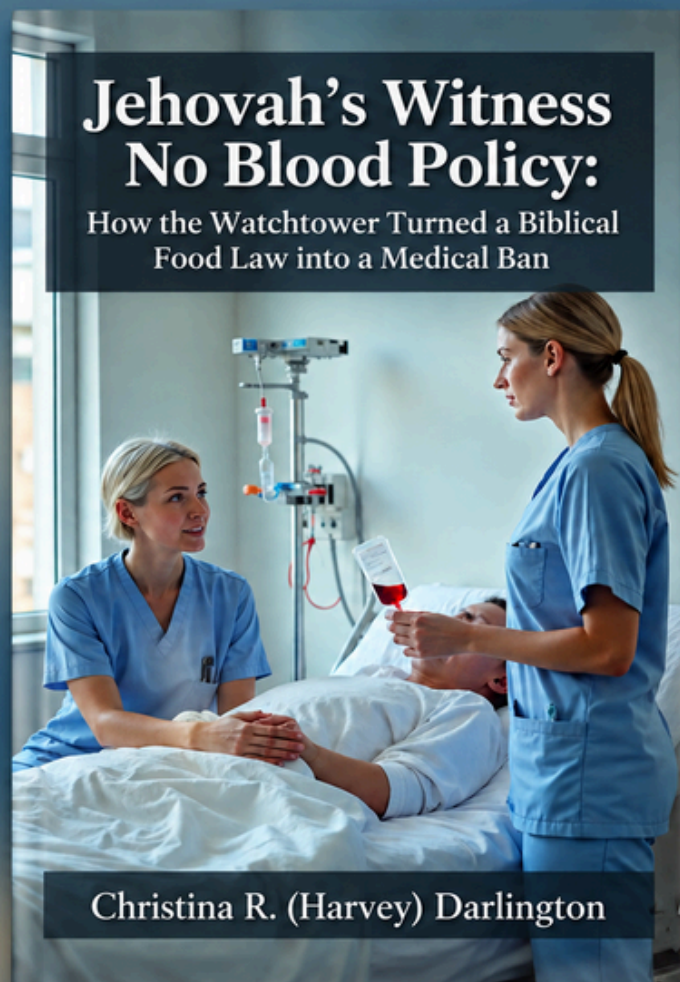
Don't Stop Here. Examine the Evidence for Yourself.

This short guide raises questions that deserve more than a few pages. My book, ***Jehovah's Witness No Blood Policy: How the Watchtower Turned a Biblical Food Law into a Medical Ban***, documents the history behind these changes using Watchtower publications, Scripture, medical research, and the organization's own statements.

There you can examine the evidence for yourself—including teachings once presented as God's law and the changes announced in 2026.

Learn more at: Blood.4Jehovah.org

PO Box 50911 Colorado Springs, CO 80949 USA



Religious leaders may revise an interpretation. A publication may be rewritten. A policy may be adjusted when new light is announced.

But the person who died under yesterday's interpretation does not get tomorrow's correction.

A doctrine can change. A death cannot.

When an organization's interpretation changes but God's Word does not, which one should determine what you believe God has forbidden?

"We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

