

Dear Pat,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know the identity of the “faithful and discrete slave” mentioned in Matthew 24.

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.” (Mathew 24:45-47)

We believe that Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) filled the office of that faithful and wise servant mentioned in Matthew 24:45-47. After careful study, Russell concluded that our Lord 's second presence began in 1874, which marked the beginning of the end of the Gospel age, during which our Lord has been conducting His great Harvest work of separating true Christians (wheat) from merely those professing to be Christians (tares). The most important “meat in due season” that Russell dispensed was that Jesus died as a ransom for Adam and all his progeny, some receiving the heavenly hope, while others would awaken to receive an opportunity of everlasting life on earth after a period of trial during the Millennial age. Russell refuted the doctrine of the Trinity and the immortality of the soul. He explained the true meaning of the biblical “hell” and why God permits evil to reign for 6000 years. He also determined that Israel, once cast off from God’s favor during Jesus’ first advent, would be restored to favor during Christ’s second advent. Because of Russell’s work along with other students of the Bible, creeds and traditions that dominated Christianity for centuries were eliminated and a pure Christian belief emerged.

After Russell’s death in 1916, an immense and messy struggle for control of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society, an organization he formed in 1881 for the purpose of printing and distributing religious tracts, began. By 1928 over 75% of those associated with the Watchtower Society had left in disgust. These "Bible Students" eventually reformed into smaller groups worldwide, and still exist in significant numbers to this day in the United States, Canada, South America, Europe, India and several nations in Africa. In 1931, those remaining in the Watch Tower Society took the name “Jehovah’s Witnesses” in order to distinguish themselves from the "Bible Students" who wished to remain faithful to the life's work and views of Charles Russell.

Why do we consider Charles Russell to be that faithful and wise servant? Not only did he give us “meat in due season,” but during the 42 years of his ministry he never directly or indirectly solicited money. He had faith that the Lord would supply sufficient money to carry on His work. Russell devoted his private fortune entirely to the cause to which he gave his life and died, leaving no estate whatsoever.

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at christianquestions.net. The service is free without obligation and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio