

The Marks of a Cult - A Biblical Analysis

Revised Study Guide

**(To use as an accompaniment to
The Marks of a Cult ©2006 DVD)**

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In today's religiously diverse and relativistic culture, labeling a group a cult may seem extreme to many people, not to mention rude. Even people who believe in absolute Truth and further believe that Jesus is the only way to eternal life can get confused about just what constitutes real Christianity. Just why are Baptists properly considered Christians, but Mormons are not? Or why is the Jehovah's Witness religion classified as an anti-Christian cult while Presbyterians or Wesleyans or Pentecostals are simply seen as denominations within the Christian faith? □□With the explosion of different sects that claim to honor and follow Jesus, how does one differentiate between true Biblical Christianity and an aberrant religious movement? Just what are "the marks of a cult?"

Join us for a journey into the heart of Biblical revelation and the constant struggle of truth against lies, the apostolic faith against the "doctrines of demons." □This new documentary from *The Apologetics Group* does more than simply point fingers. It explains in great detail the absolute essentials of the Faith and just how and why Christians can properly and necessarily refer to certain sects as "cults." Not only a tool for recognizing and understanding false teaching — and for reaching people held captive to it — *The Marks of a Cult* is also a powerful apologetic on the need for Christians to become more rooted in the Biblical historic faith, with its creeds and confessions, and to be better prepared to give "a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you." (1 Peter 3:15)

The accompanying DVD presentation features:
Eric Holmberg, Founder/Producer, The Apologetics Group
Dr. James R. White, Alpha & Omega Ministries
Dr. R. Fowler White, Knox Theological Seminary
Dr. E. Calvin Beisner, Knox Theological Seminary
James Walker, Watchman Fellowship
David Henke, Watchman Fellowship
Dr. Steve Cowan, Apologetics Resource Center
Craig Branch & Clete Hux, Apologetics Resource Center

Some reviews of Marks of a Cult:

“... who are the false prophets of our day? What makes John Calvin, Martin Luther and John Wesley orthodox Christians, but Mary Baker Eddy, my great aunt, a heretic? The latest release from The Apologetics Group – *The Marks of a Cult* (DVD) will give you the tools that will help you, your church, family and friends to know the difference between those who teach the “true faith” and those who are teaching false or cultic doctrine. I strongly recommend it for every Christian and every church.” **Rev. Thomas Eddy – PCA (Great grand nephew of Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science.)**

“Once again, The Apologetics Group has developed a scholarly presentation addressing a vital current issue. This new production not only deals with how to identify *The Marks of a Cult*, but in its own right is a type of “mini-systematic theology” that will greatly benefit any individual or church group. I highly recommend it for a better understanding of cult beliefs and practice, as well as, developing your understanding of historic Christian theology.” **Dr. Kenneth G. Talbot - President, Whitefield Theological Seminary**

“Eric Holmberg and The Apologetics Group staff have done it again! Their latest production, *Marks of a Cult – A Biblical Analysis* (DVD), fills a desperately needed void on the issue of defining what constitutes true Christianity. This is a great tool to equip members of your church with clarity of thought and the knowledge to better evangelize the lost and to fend off the ever-growing pantheon of false teachers.” **John Hendryx, Director of Monergism.com**

“This production by The Apologetics Group gives clear guidelines on how to distinguish truth from error in principle as well as carefully documented instructions on the particular errors of dominant cults. As we have grown to expect from these bretheren, the medium of communication not only overflows with truth articulated by well-informed Christian thinkers, but meets a high standard of production and unfolds in an engaging way from beginning to end. This is excellent for instructional periods in your church.” **Dr. Thomas Nettles, Professor of Historical Theology, Southern Theological Seminary.**

“But in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect...”

1 Peter 3:15 ESV

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.”

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Matthew 5:13-16

What is Apologetics?

The word “apologetics comes from the Greek word “apologia” - pronounced \ a-pə-ˈlɔː-j(ē)-ə\ , and simply means “a defense of”. Christian apologetics deals with answering those who question or oppose orthodox Christian doctrine as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

Some people may reason in their own minds that the study of apologetics should be relegated to those who have degrees from seminary or established ministries, but as Matthew Henry states in his *Commentary on the Whole Bible*:

“Every Christian is bound to answer and apologize for the hope that is in him. Christians should have a reason ready for their Christianity, that it may appear that they are not actuated either by folly or fancy.”

This defense may be necessary more than once or twice, so that Christians should be always prepared to make it, either to the magistrate, if he demand it, or to any inquisitive Christian, who desires to know it for his information or improvement.

Apologetics is the Christian's main defense against apostasy and heresy within the church, and is also the primary way of shining the light of God's truth into the dark culture we live in.

It is our sincere desire that this study will help all who use it to be more empowered to defend their faith with the knowledge of Truth through a systematic study of the orthodox Christian faith, "...rightly dividing the Word of Truth." (2 Timothy 2:15).

Lesson One: Introduction to Add.

DVD running time – 25 minutes.

1. In the opening scene, Joan cites 2 John 10-11, which reads, “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.” How should we interpret the Apostle’s command?

2. Does this verse mean we should not explain the Gospel message to those who come to our door? Why or why not?

3. If a person were to try to share his faith with you, only to tell you they believe that Jesus was a created being from the moon, and that he taught that if a person’s good deeds counted toward their entrance

into heaven, would you believe him? What standard should Christians use to judge this or any other doctrine?

4. What were the three observations Eric made regarding the verse Jude 3?

5. How would a 'new revelation' contradict what Jude wrote in this case. (Discuss.)

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**Refuting Error**  
By David Henke,  
Founder of Watchman Fellowship  
<http://www.watchman.org>

Recently I made a list of scripture texts in the New Testament that warn against, or refute, error. Though the list is not exhaustive by any means it shows that such texts are found in every book of the New Testament except Philemon. In Matthew 7:15 Jesus warns against false prophets. In Mark 13:5,6 and Luke 21:8 Jesus warns us against false Christs.

The New Testament deals with heresy in two ways, negatively and positively. Negatively it warns against, and exposes it. Positively it teaches, explains, and presents the truth as a counter to some error affecting the Church.

This positive tact is taken in the gospel of John versus the negative "Beware." In John 20:31 John says his gospel is written so that we can know Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. However, much of the book is written to answer those who would deny Jesus' deity such as the Gnostics and Sabellians. Many of Jesus' encounters with the Jewish leaders in John focus on His identity (John 5, 8, 10, 18, etc.). The message is that without acceptance of Jesus' deity, salvation is not possible (John 8:24).

Beyond the gospels, whole letters are written for the specific purpose of answering error. In Galatians, Paul answers the Judaizers. II John and Jude deal with false teachers. Elsewhere large portions of other books in the Bible are devoted to correcting error within the churches.

I Corinthians deals with errors regarding spiritual gifts, and the resurrection. Colossians deals with the influence of gnosticism in the church at Colosse. But in every book except Philemon there is some statement, whether positive or negative, about the corruption or neglect of truth.



Because Watchman Fellowship spends its full time countering deception, we could be accused of giving too much attention to the questions of truth versus error. But are we?

Consider some of the statements made recently by Ray Stedman in Decision Magazine . After saying that the mystery of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" is the heart and soul of the Word of God he goes on to say that this "truth is grounded in the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and in the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer.... It should, therefore, be the chief subject in the curriculum of every church, the central theme of most pulpit preaching. What we actually find today is a frightening biblical illiteracy, even in churches where the Bible is regarded as central. We may hear many sermons, yet be taught little truth. We may drown in words, but thirst for reality. How many in the average congregation know the meaning of terms like justification by faith, sanctification, the Kingdom of God, the New Covenant, the walk in the Spirit, or even faith, love and peace?" (December 1989, pp. 23, 24).

When teaching on foundational Christian doctrines I have likened doctrine to the human skeleton whereas its application, exhortation, fellowship, love, etc. are like the flesh on the skeleton. The flesh is warm, soft, comforting, flexible, whereas bones are hard, and inflexible. Yet without the skeletal structure the flesh will go nowhere, and will conform to whatever is pressing on it. There is the need for both, and in balance.

Perhaps the distaste that exists in the Church today for doctrine has resulted from two problems:

- 1) The pluralistic attitude that doctrines exclude those who might disagree; and,
- 2) the dry academic way doctrine has been taught in the past.

However, if it is understood that out of those doctrinal truths flow the dynamic reality of the Christian faith, and if appropriate application is

then made to Christian living then doctrine becomes exciting. This is the desire of Watchman Fellowship and every other counter-cult ministry so that fewer people in the pews will be influenced away from the church to seek reality in the cults.



6. Cite and discuss other scriptural passages that follow along this line of thought.

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7. Do Christians have a responsibility to refute false doctrines? What happens to the truth of the Gospel if we don't refute them?

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8. Obvious perversions of the Gospel, such as the previous moon example, are fairly easy to recognize. How do enemies of Orthodox doctrine normally appear – is their deception blatantly obvious or is it more subtle?

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9. When the “man on the street” interviews were conducted, what were some of the definitions of cults given by the average person? Why were these definitions not totally accurate?

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10. Is the standard dictionary definition for a cult sufficient or not? Make a list of groups that could be called a cult if this definition were the standard.

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11. Think back to the acronym B.I.T.E. What did each letter mean?

**B.** \_\_\_\_\_

**I.** \_\_\_\_\_

**T.** \_\_\_\_\_

**E.** \_\_\_\_\_

12. According to the Christian Church, what is the drawback of the B.I.T.E. acronym?

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13. Explain how the word "cult" will be defined in this presentation and give a brief description of each mark.

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### **WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?**

By Timothy Oliver – <http://www.Watchman.org>  
Vol. 16, No. 1, 1999

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." 2 Corinthians 11:3-4

The apostle Paul was deeply concerned about the Corinthian Christians being led astray from the true faith. In their day, just as in

the last quarter of the twentieth-century, rampant religious pluralism not only called the exclusive claims of Christianity into question,<sup>1</sup> but also presented serious challenges to the maintenance of pure and sound doctrine within the household of faith.<sup>2</sup> Various voices clamored to be heard, no doubt demanding in the name of "tolerance" to be recognized as legitimately Christian. Paul could see in the Corinthians a tendency to be so tolerant that they were in danger of accepting a false Jesus, a false (demonic) spirit, and a false gospel.

Modern culture has fared no better. A great diversity of religious organizations and doctrines vie for acceptance as legitimate Christianity. From the standpoint of logic alone these different views are sufficiently contrary to each other that they cannot possibly all be correct. More importantly, their divergence from the teaching of the Bible concerning Jesus is so great that most must be described as "another Jesus" who differs from the biblical Jesus. This article will examine some of these different Christs, and then present the biblical picture of Christ. Obviously, nothing like a full-blown Christology may be attempted here. That is not necessary, however, to understand the subject sufficiently to recognize the false Christs of alternative religions. □

## **THE MORMON JESUS**

The [Mormon Church](#), calling itself The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, points to its use of Christ's name as proof that they are a Christian church. Critics do not contest the devotion of Mormons to a being they know under the name of Jesus Christ, and can understand the Mormons' consternation at being labeled as a non-Christian, even anti-Christian, church. Christians nevertheless continue to regard Mormonism as such, largely due to its extra-biblical teaching about Christ. Mormons want this teaching to be accepted as "additional information." Christians, who recognize that the additional information also contradicts the biblical witness, cannot accept such extra-biblical teaching.

Some essential aspect of Christ's being is acknowledged by Mormonism to be eternal (on the same basis all humanity is said to be eternal<sup>3</sup>). Christ is nevertheless a created (read, organized) being according to Mormonism. His existence as a self-conscious, organized being having a spirit body entails that he had a beginning, and thus owes his existence as such a being to previously existing beings-his celestial parents. He was their first-born spirit-child,<sup>4</sup> to be followed by the spirits of all the rest of humanity to live on this earth (and other worlds without number).<sup>5</sup>

While Mormonism says Jesus Christ is divine, it recognizes nothing in his ontological nature that would distinguish him from the rest of humanity. That is, Mormonism has so redefined divinity as to grant the divine nature to every human being. Humans and God are of the same species; humans are "Gods in embryo" with the potential of maturing into Gods themselves.<sup>6</sup> Jesus is simply one more of these beings whose performance established a purity deemed worthy to exercise divine power even before acquiring a physical body like that of God the Father.<sup>7</sup> To provide that physical body, God the Father came to earth and had sexual relations with Mary.<sup>8</sup>

Mormonism acknowledges the historical events of Jesus' life as recorded in the Bible, and most of his teachings. They even acknowledge Christ as Jehovah (Yahweh), the God of the Old Testament, and so again, they believe they are following the Jesus of the Bible. However, they fail to adequately apply to Christ the divine attributes portrayed in the Old Testament. The Mormon Jesus is not unique as the one and only God in all eternity,<sup>9</sup> nor truly and fully God from all eternity past.<sup>10</sup>

The Mormon Jesus provides only resurrection and immortality (living forever in a physical body) as a free gift of grace to all humanity, apart from any human effort, works, or virtue. While Mormons believe Jesus made an atonement for sin, they don't believe that atonement by itself saves anyone from sin. But neither do they believe that they can save themselves through their own efforts alone. Final and permanent forgiveness of sins and eternal life with

God require God's grace (provided in Christ's atonement), plus ordinances, human repentance of all sin, and doing good works.[11](#) All these elements are essential; no one of them, without the others, is sufficient for full salvation. Salvation by the Mormon Jesus therefore requires not only faith in Christ, but faith in ordinances, faith in a priesthood, faith in priesthood holders, and reliance on one's own works as sufficiently righteous to induce God to apply all the benefits of the atonement to oneself.[12](#) □

## **THE WATCHTOWER JESUS**

While Mormonism subverts Jesus' divinity by redefining divinity itself, the [Watchtower Bible and Tract Society](#) (whose members are commonly known as Jehovah's Witnesses) simply denies that Jesus is truly divine in the same sense as God the Father.[13](#) This does not stop them from acknowledging that Jesus is in a limited sense divine, and a mighty god. They deny, however, that He is Almighty God, eternal, uncreated, and sharing the nature and substance of the Father as God.[14](#) The Watchtower instead says that Christ was the first creation made by Jehovah God. Notably, he was not known at that time as Christ but as "the Word" (logos) and as Michael the archangel. Then, using Michael (pre-incarnate Christ) as His agent, Jehovah God created all other things.[15](#)

It was not God, then, but Michael the archangel who took on human flesh in Bethlehem.[16](#) Aside from his conception in a virgin, Michael's existence as the man Jesus was not particularly different from other men until his baptism at age thirty when he was anointed with holy spirit to be the Christ (Messiah).[17](#) And it was not God, but the created being Michael who was in Christ reconciling the world to God by his ransom sacrifice on the cross[18](#) (which the Watchtower says was not a cross, but a "torture stake"[19](#)). After Jesus died and was buried, his resurrection consisted in Michael the archangel returning to his former position in the spiritual realm, while the physical body of Jesus "was disposed of by Jehovah God, dissolved into its constituent elements or atoms."[20](#) Michael/Christ now stands as

judge and executioner, ready to inflict Jehovah's wrath on the wicked at the appointed time.[21](#)

Like the Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses profess belief in an atonement, usually referred to as "the ransom sacrifice." Jesus is also referred to as the Mediator. Unfortunately, the covenant of which he is mediator includes only 144,000 "spirit anointed" Christians out of all humanity.[22](#) These are the only people who will ever go to heaven to be with God. But Christ is not the only mediator. In the Watchtower system these 144,000 become mediators themselves, administering to other humans not in the covenant (but who nevertheless are sufficiently obedient and put faith in the merit of the ransom sacrifice of Christ) almost all the blessings of the covenant secured by Christ.[23](#) The one blessing not received by the humans not included in the covenant is life in heaven with God.

The rest of humanity who put faith in the ransom sacrifice and survive Armageddon will receive forgiveness of sins and life everlasting on a paradise earth. Survival of Armageddon, however, is no certainty even for those putting faith in the ransom sacrifice.[24](#) As in Mormonism, more than God's grace is required. Repentance (cessation) of sin, submission to the Watchtower, and wholehearted devotion and service to God are all essential. Instead of being Savior, the Watchtower Jesus will be executioner even to Watchtower members who fail to serve Jehovah and His organization properly.[25](#) □

## **THE NEW AGE JESUS AND CHRIST**

The [New Age Movement](#) itself is so diverse that nothing can be written here which will satisfy every self-consciously New Age person as representative of their beliefs about Jesus Christ. There are a number of points, however, which are generally true of most New Age believers.

Perhaps the first and most important point to note is the usual distinction made by New Agers between Jesus and Christ.[26](#) Jesus, in



himself, is almost invariably regarded as merely a man like any other man, except that He may also be acknowledged as a great or even supreme teacher and example for, and of, humanity.[27](#) Christ, on the other hand, is usually identified more as a divine essence or power, which came upon Jesus, or to which Jesus somehow attuned himself. As such, this same Christ is believed to be accessible by all persons, something like "the Force" (or perhaps the "light side" of the Force) in the Star Wars movies. Anyone can be "a Christ" or tap into "the Christ," given sufficient dedication, knowledge, "technology," and practice.[28](#)

Another distinguishing element of most New Age belief systems is pantheism.[29](#) This is the idea that all is God and God is all. Frequently, then, the New Age Christ is identified as the Divine Consciousness in its essence. Attaining a Christ Consciousness is to experience one's fundamental unity with the Universe and everything in it. It is to become lost in the Divine Consciousness, or better put, to experience oneself as the Divine Consciousness, at one with the Universe as a manifestation of one's self. The New Age Christ is all: he creates, sustains, permeates all - and oneself is Christ.

The New Age Jesus makes no claim to save man from sin or the wrath of a Holy God against sin, for the simple reason that there really is no sin, in a moral or culpable sense. He was not so much a savior as a revealer.[30](#) What Christ revealed through Jesus, and through many other adepts today, is simply what works and what does not work - true knowledge vs. ignorance, what promotes and what prevents experiencing oneself as the Divine Consciousness. Faith in Christ, fully realized, will ultimately be seen and understood as faith in Oneself.[31](#) It is to know by experience that I am the I Am.[32](#) □

### **The Christian Science Jesus and Christ**

[Christian Science](#) was perhaps the first modern attempt to blend Christianity and what is referred to today as New Age philosophy or

beliefs. True to form, it distinguishes between the man Jesus and the Christ. For example, the man Jesus suffered on the cross; the Christ did not suffer anything.[33](#)

God, as the only author of man, has a perfect idea of man. Mary, according to Christian Science, was able to give birth to Jesus while a virgin because she was able to conceive of this perfect idea, this divine Principle dwelling in the bosom of God. Fully recognizing that "being is Spirit," Mary understood that the manifestation of God's perfect idea did not require a flesh and blood father. Born out of Mary's "self-conscious communion with God," Jesus was "endowed with the Christ," and was "the offspring of soul" rather than "of material sense."[34](#)

The Christian Science Christ is the Spirit, the Divine Truth, Life, and Love which animated the man Jesus. The Christ is the Way, while Jesus was the "way-shower."[35](#)

Neither the Jesus nor the Christ of Christian Science offers humankind salvation from sin by means of a substitute suffering the penalty of sin in their place.[36](#) Instead, the only hope of pardon and salvation for any person lies in that person eliminating all sin (false beliefs and the behavior they spawn) from his/her life.[37](#) □

### **The Jesus and Christ of the "Jesus Seminar"**

Within "[Liberal Christianity](#)" it has become chic to "search for" (read define) the "historical Jesus." That is, scholars in this tradition seek to separate the man Jesus from all the religious "myth" that has grown up around Him. The Jesus of history was a man. The Jesus of the gospels, the "Christ of faith," is a theological construct - the myths built around and upon the man Jesus by the early Church and its leaders. The scholars mean to deconstruct these myths so that the "real" Jesus may be seen.[38](#)

Whether or not it is the object of such studies, their effect is to justify

any number of other "Christs" or theological constructs that may have been extant in the first centuries after the death of the man Jesus, which were later "suppressed" by the Church fathers.[39](#) Naturally this process denies any ultimate authority or legitimacy to the Christ as understood in historic, biblically orthodox Christianity.[40](#) Moreover, in the pluralistic worldview so common today, it has the added appeal of validating any other "Christ" moderns may choose to believe in, particularly those for whom some first century roots may be found.

Christ, then, does not exist in actual historical fact or even as a metaphysical or spiritual reality,[41](#) but only as various sets of belief about Jesus the man. And the man Jesus appears to be a very ordinary man indeed, in the hands of the Jesus Seminar's scholars, who hold to an entirely "naturalistic" worldview that denies out-of-hand any possibility of the miraculous.[42](#) Thus, any account of the miraculous in connection with Jesus must be stripped away to find Jesus, the real man. Likewise, all statements indicating His divinity or warning of impending judgment fall to the Seminar's shears. All that is left is a vapid and boring little man who never could have gotten himself crucified, much less inspired anyone to start a movement or create "myths" about himself.[43](#) □

### **The Jesus of the Bible**

The Jesus of the Bible was, and is, fully God, and fully human. Put another way, there is no separation between Jesus and Christ in the Bible. Jesus was, and is, the one and only God-Man. Even the gospel of our salvation depends upon this truth. Had Jesus not been both God and man He could not have atoned for the sins of all His people. No righteous being in the universe accepts worship of himself, but always directs worship to God as the only Being worthy of worship.[44](#) Jesus, however, did accept worship of himself on different occasions,[45](#) and taught that this was proper.[46](#) Either He was unrighteous, in doing so, or He really was God in human flesh. Though they refused to believe it, the Jewish leaders rightly

understood Jesus' claim to be God and the revelation of God.[47](#) The deity of Christ is also taught in Acts and various epistles of the New Testament.[48](#) Paul and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews apply to Christ Old Testament scriptures that were explicit references to God.[49](#) And John, who so clearly teaches the divine nature of Jesus,[50](#) nevertheless also makes acknowledgment of His humanity an essential article of the faith.[51](#)

None of the above, however, means that Jesus is the Father. While Jesus claimed a union with the Father indicative of His own divine nature, He also distinguished between Himself and the Father.[52](#) In other words, while They are one Being, one God, together with the Holy Spirit, They are also distinct Persons. Being God Himself, Jesus is co-equal to the Father; He cannot be less and still be God. Nevertheless, Jesus could still say that the Father was "greater" than He.[53](#)

This probably has particular reference to His state while on earth, having humbled Himself to become a human being.[54](#) But it may also refer to the manner in which the First and Second Persons of the Godhead relate to one another, both in eternity and while Christ was incarnate on earth. The Bible makes it clear that men and women are equal in Christ,[55](#) yet the husband is head of the wife,[56](#) and not the reverse. Likewise the First and Second Persons of the Godhead, though equally God in their nature, relate to one another as a loving Father and Son, the Son always submitting to, and doing, the will of the Father.[57](#)

The Jesus of the Bible is also not merely the "way-shower" illuminating the path to God, which all men must likewise tread for themselves. Rather, according to His own claim, He is the way itself.[58](#) He did not simply make salvation a possibility; He accomplished the salvation of His people.[59](#) Of all that the Father has given Him, He loses not one.[60](#) His atoning death cancels forever their debt of sin.[61](#) His perfect righteousness, demonstrated in His sinless life on earth, is credited to the believer as an entirely free

gift.<sup>62</sup> That righteousness, the righteousness of God, lacks nothing; it is sufficient, alone, without any addition or supplement by man, to put its recipient in a completely right relationship with God. In Him the believer is complete.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jack Finegan, *Myth & Mystery: An Introduction to the Pagan Religions of the Biblical World*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1989).

□<sup>2</sup> D.A. Carson, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996): 270-72 and notes.

Gerald Bray, *Creeds, Councils and*

*Christ* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1984). □<sup>3</sup> Doctrine &

*Covenants* 93:29. □<sup>4</sup> Bruce R. McConkie, *Conference Reports*, October 1948: 23. Lowell L. Bennion, *An Introduction to the Gospel*.

(Salt Lake City: The Utah Printing Co., 1959): 129-30. Robert L. Millet, "Jesus Christ: Overview," and Jerry C. Giles, "Jesus Christ: Firstborn In the Spirit," in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992). □<sup>5</sup> Moses 1:33; D&C 76:24.

□<sup>6</sup> Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1988): 21. Discourses delivered by Elder Abraham H. Cannon, in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, Sunday Afternoon, July 1st, 1894, and Orson F. Whitney, at the Y.M.M.I.A. Annual Conference, June 9, 1895, both in Brian H. Stuy, ed. *Collected Discourses*. 5 vols. (Burbank, California, and Woodland Hills, Utah: B.H.S. Publishing, 1987-1992) Vol. 4. □<sup>7</sup> Bruce R. McConkie,

*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*. 3 vols. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1965-1973): 190. □<sup>8</sup> Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 4:218; 8:115. Bruce R. McConkie, *The Promised Messiah*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1978-82): 468. Idem., *Mormon Doctrine*, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966): 546-47, 742.

Larry E Dahl, "The Morning Breaks, the Shadows Flee," *Ensign*, (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April, 1997): 15. □<sup>9</sup> Deuteronomy 4:35, 39; Isaiah 44:6, 8, 24; Psalm 147:5. □<sup>10</sup> Psalm 41:13; 90:2; 93:2; Habakkuk 1:12. □<sup>11</sup> Bruce R.

McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*. 2d ed. (Salt Lake City, Utah: Bookcraft, 1966): 669, 671. Moroni 10:32, 33. □<sup>12</sup> Doctrine & Covenants 14:7; 76:52.

Joseph Smith Jr., Lectures on Faith. Compiled by Nels B. Lundwall. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, n.d.): 33, 37, 57-59. □<sup>13</sup> Insight on the Scriptures, Vol. 2. (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, 1988): 52.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 54. □<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 52, 393-4. □<sup>16</sup> Micah 5:2. The Watchtower applies Micah 5:2 to Christ, but identifies Christ as Michael the archangel. □<sup>17</sup> Insight, 56, 59, 60. Neither is holy spirit God, according to the Watchtower, but it is the power of God put forth by God for various purposes, as in creation and to empower people for God's service (Insight, 1019-24). □<sup>18</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:19. □<sup>19</sup> Insight, 61, 1116-17. □<sup>20</sup> Watchtower, September 1, 1953, p. 518. □<sup>21</sup> Survival, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1984): 28, 60. Reasoning from the Scriptures, (Brooklyn: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989): 341. Watchtower, November 15, 1995, p. 15. □<sup>22</sup> Insight, 362. □<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 363. Survival, 65. □<sup>24</sup> Survival, 80. □<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 60, 64, 67, 92. □<sup>26</sup> See, e.g., George Trevelyan, Operation Redemption: A Vision of Hope in an Age of Turmoil, (Walpole, NH: Stillpoint, 1985): 37. Mark L. and Elizabeth Clare Prophet, The Lost Teachings of Jesus 1: Missing Texts, Karma and Reincarnation, (Livingston, MT: Summit University Press, 1986): 115-16. □<sup>27</sup> See, e.g., Levi Dowling, The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus Christ, (London: L. N. Fowler & Co., 1947): 54, 97. □<sup>28</sup> David Spangler, Reflections on the Christ, (Forres, Scotland: Findhorn Publications, 1981): 73. □<sup>29</sup> Dowling, 56. □<sup>30</sup> Elaine Pagels, The Gnostic Gospels, (New York: Random House, 1979): xx. □<sup>31</sup> David Spangler, Relationship and Identity, (Forres, Scotland: Findhorn Publications, 1978): 44. □<sup>32</sup> Mark L. and Elizabeth Clare Prophet, The Lost Teachings of Jesus 2: Mysteries of the Higher Self, (Livingston, MT: Summit University Press, 1988): 62. David Spangler, The Laws of Manifestation, (Forres, Scotland: Findhorn Publications, 1983): 23-24. □<sup>33</sup> Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health with

Key to the Scriptures, (Boston: First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1971): 38:21-24. □<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 29:14-30:25 passim. □<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 26:10-33; 30:10. □<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 11:12-20; 22:27-23:7; 25:3-9; 35:30-36:9. □<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 40:8-16. □

<sup>38</sup> Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover, and the Jesus Seminar, *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*, (New York: Polebridge Press, 1993): 1-7. □<sup>39</sup> Gregory Riley, *One Jesus, Many Christs: How Jesus Inspired Not One true Christianity, But Many*, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997). □<sup>40</sup> Funk, et al., 5-7, 24-26. □<sup>41</sup> A possible exception to this general view is: Marcus Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994). Though Borg, a Jesus Seminar member, dismisses the New Testament records, he seems to advocate a spiritual view of Jesus along New Age lines. □<sup>42</sup> Douglas Groothuis, *Searching for the Real Jesus In An Age of Controversy*, (Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 1996): 28-32. □<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 35-36. □<sup>44</sup> See, e.g., Matthew 4:10; Acts 10:25-26; 14:11-18; Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9; cf. Acts 12:21-23. □<sup>45</sup> Matthew 14:33; Luke 24:51-52; John 9:38; 20:28-29. □<sup>46</sup> John 5:22-23. □<sup>47</sup> John 5:18; 8:58-59; 9:40-41; 10:33; 19:7. □<sup>48</sup> E.g., Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20; Colossians 1:16-19; 2:9; Titus 3:4-6. □<sup>49</sup> Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:30 with Isaiah 45:24 and Jeremiah 23:6; 33:16. Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:31 with Jeremiah 9:23-24. Cf. Philippians 2:9-10 with Isaiah 42:8; 45:22-23. Cf. Hebrews 1:6 with Psalm 97:7; Hebrews 1:8-9 with Psalm 45:6-7; Hebrews 1:10-12 with Psalm 102:25-27. □<sup>50</sup> John 1:1-4, 14; 2:19-21; 8:24, 28, {43, 47}, 58; 10:38; 13:19. □<sup>51</sup> 1 John 4:1-3. □<sup>52</sup> John 10:28-30, 38; 12:44-45; 14:9-11; 17:5, 10, 24. □<sup>53</sup> John 10:29; 14:28. □<sup>54</sup> Philippians 2:6-8. □<sup>55</sup> Galatians 3:28. □<sup>56</sup> Ephesians 5:23. □  
<sup>57</sup> Luke 22:42; John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 6:38; 7:16; 8:28-29; 10:37-38; 12:49-50; 14:10, 24, 31; 17:4. □<sup>58</sup> John 14:6. □<sup>59</sup> Matthew 1:21. □<sup>60</sup> John 6:37-40; 10:28-30; Romans 8:29-30. □<sup>61</sup> Colossians 2:13-14; Romans 8:31-39. □<sup>62</sup> Romans 4:4-8, 11, 22-24; 5:17, 19; Philippians 3:8-9; Colossians 1:12:14. □<sup>63</sup> Colossians 2:10; 2 Peter 1:2-4. □

### Comments on John 1:1

“That there be no remaining doubt as to Christ’s divine essence, the Evangelist distinctly asserts that he is God. Now since there is but one God, it follows that Christ is of the same essence with the Father. But of the second clause we have already spoken. As to the unity of the divine essence, Arius showed prodigious wickedness when, to avoid being compelled to acknowledge the eternal divinity of Christ, he prattled about I know not what imaginary Diety; but for our part, when we are informed that the [Word] was God, what right have we any longer to call in question his eternal essence?” **John Calvin**

“ ‘And the Word was God’ lest any should say, What but God can be eternal, or be said to have been and had an existence in the beginning of the world? The evangelist addeth, that the Word was

God: that is, the person or subsistence spoken of and intended by him was the Divine Being, which is but one; though in it there be three distinct subsistences, all make but one in the same Divine Being. The first thing spoken here of Christ attributes to him eternity; the second speaks his relation to the Father; this speaks the oneness and sameness of his essence with

that of the Father. The term God, which in the foregoing words is to be taken personally for God the Father, is here to be taken essentially, as it signifieth the Divine Being.” **Matthew Poole.**

“ And the Word was God (*kai yeov hn o logov*). By exact and careful language John denied Sabellianism by not saying *o yeov hn o logov*. That would mean that all of God was expressed in *o logov*~ and the terms would be interchangeable, each having the article. The subject is made plain by the article (*o logov*) and the predicate without it (*yeov*) just as in Joh 4:24 *pneuma o yeov* can only mean “God is spirit”, not “spirit is God.” So in 1 Jo 4:16 *o yeov agaph*



*estin* can only mean “God is love,” not “love is God” as a so-called Christian scientist would confusedly say. For the article with the

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predicate, see Robertson, Grammar, pp.767f. So in Joh 1:14 *o logov sarx egeneto*, “the Word became flesh,” not “the flesh became Word.” Luther argues that here John disposes of Arianism also because the Logos was eternally God, fellowship of Father and Son, what Origen called the Eternal Generation of the Son (each necessary to the other). Thus in the Trinity we see personal fellowship on an equality.”

**Dr. A. T Robertson**

## Lesson Two: Add to Subtract

DVD running time – 23 minutes.

1. Explain in detail the first mark of a cult. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Why do cultic groups find it necessary to add to God's Word or claim to be it's sole interpreter? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What does the word *canon* mean? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Why must the canon of Scripture remain closed? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What shocking admission does Charles T. Russell, founder of the Watchtower Bible and tract society, make in the following quote?

*“...Furthermore, not only do we find that people cannot see the Divine Plan in studying the Bible by itself, but we see, also, that if anyone lays the Scripture studies aside, even after he has used them, after he has become familiar with the,, after he has read them for ten years – if he lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood his Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness. On the other hand, if he had merely read the Scripture Studies with their references, and had not read a page of the Bible, as such, he would be in the light at the end of the two years, because he would have the light of the Scriptures.” (The Watchtower, 9/15/1910; pp 298)*

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6. If you are a Jehovah’s Witness, what is your authority?

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7. What is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints’ (Mormon) view of the Bible?

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8. According to Clete Hux of the Apologetics Resource Center, what does the Book of Mormon NOT teach?

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(Note: It is estimated that approximately 1/3 of the verses in the Book of Mormon is purloined from the King James Bible.)

9. Name the books considered authoritative by the Latter Day Saints.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

10. What is Sun Myung Moon's view of the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

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11. According to Moon, how should his followers use the Bible when speaking with Christians?

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## **The Baptist Confession of Faith (1689)**

### **Second London Confession**

#### **Chapter 1: Of the Holy Scriptures**

**1. The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience, although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God and his will which is necessary unto salvation. Therefore it pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterward for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan, and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the Holy Scriptures to be most necessary, those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.**

**( 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29, 31; Ephesians 2:20; Romans 1:19-21; Romans 2:14,15; Psalms 19:1-3; Hebrews 1:1; Proverbs 22:19-21; Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:19,20 )**

**2. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these:**

**OF THE OLD TESTAMENT: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra,**

**Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomen, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi**

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**OF THE NEW TESTAMENT: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, To Titus, To Philemon, The Epistle to the Hebrews, Epistle of James, The first and second Epistles of Peter, The first, second, and third Epistles of John, The Epistle of Jude, The Revelation**

**All of which are given by the inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.**

**( 2 Timothy 3:16)**

**3. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon or rule of the Scripture, and, therefore, are of no authority to the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved or made use of than other human writings.**

**( Luke 24:27, 44; Romans 3:2 )**

**4. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof; therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God.**

**( 2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 John 5:9 )**

**5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church of God to an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scriptures; and the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, and the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation,**

**and many other incomparable excellencies, and entire perfections thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly**

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**evidence itself to be the Word of God; yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.**

**( John 16:13,14; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 1 John 2:20, 27)**

**6. The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelation of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word, and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.**

**( 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Galatians 1:8,9; John 6:45; 1 Corinthians 2:9-12; 1 Corinthians 11:13, 14; 1 Corinthians 14:26,40)**

**7. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of ordinary means, may attain to a sufficient understanding of them.**

**( 2 Peter 3:16; Psalms 19:7; Psalms 119:130)**

**8. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and**

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**by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal to them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have a right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded in the fear of God to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and through patience and comfort of the Scriptures may have hope.**

**( Romans 3:2; Isaiah 8:20; Acts 15:15; John 5:39; 1 Corinthians 14:6, 9, 11, 12, 24, 28; Colossians 3:16 )**

**9. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself; and therefore when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched by other places that speak more clearly.**

**( 2 Peter 1:20, 21; Acts 15:15, 16)**

**10. The supreme judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Scripture delivered by the Spirit, into which Scripture so delivered, our faith is finally resolved.**

**( Matthew 22:29, 31, 32; Ephesians 2:20; Acts 28:23)**

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12. According to James Walker, President of Watchman Fellowship, what does Moon put on top of the Bible and what is the inevitable result?

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13. Mary Baker Eddy would say that once you have the key to the Scriptures, you would realize there is no such thing as

\_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_ , and  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

14. What book is the “key” that Mary Baker Eddy claimed unlocked Scripture?

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15. How does the Seventh-Day Adventist Church view Ellen G. White?

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(Note: The testimonies, *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. 1855 – 1909, are the collected writings of Ellen G. White and are viewed by Seventh-Day Adventist leaders as inspired teachings. E.E. Cleveland [1921-2009] was a prominent SDA leader and the first African-American elected to the organizations associate secretary for the Ministerial Association. He also viewed White in this manner, stating,

*“I believe in the Testimonies. Mrs. White’s writings are the world’s only inspired Bible commentary. They constitute the most serious challenge to Christian living that has come to the church since John’s Patmos Revelation...”* (from *Facts and Comments about the Spirit of Prophecy*, p. 14)

In a 1978 SDA publication, White’s writings are seemingly elevated to the level of the canon of Scripture thusly:

*“The Bible and the writings of Ellen White are inerrant ... (Feb. 11, 1978, Sabbath School-Quarterly; teacher’s Edition, p. 112)*

Ellen’s own opinion of her writings was no less confident. She boldly compares obedience to her writings as a non-negotiable issue essential to the faith, saying:

*“If you lessen the confidence of God’s people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan and Abiram.”*  
(EGW, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 66. 1882)

16. According to James Walker, what do Mrs. White’s additions do to the Gospel?

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17. What terms are used to describe the United Pentecostal Church International?

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18. According to the UPCI's statement of faith, in what year did the Bible become a new book?

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19. According to the preamble of their statement of faith, what had been hidden that was now revealed?

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20. What, in your own words, are the consequences of adding to the Word of God?

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## **Lesson Three: Subtract to Multiply**

DVD running time: 25 minutes

1. Explain in detail the second mark of a cult. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter two, Article three, states:

“In the unity (or oneness) of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost: the Father is of none, neither begotten, not proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, the Holy Ghost is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.”

Discuss and then circle the correct answer - Trinitarians believe:

- a. God is one being and one person.
- b. God is three beings and one person.
- c. God is three beings and three persons.
- d. God is a non-being and non-person.
- e. God is one being and three persons.

3. Read Isaiah 48:16.

“*Come near to Me, hear this:*

*I have not spoken in secret from the beginning;*

*From the time that it was, I was there.  
And now the Lord GOD and His Spirit  
Have sent Me.”*

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In this verse, who is the speaker? Why should we believe this is the Lord Jesus before the incarnation?

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In the same passage, what New Testament verse is reflected in the phrase “I have not spoken in secret from the beginning”?

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4. Which person in the Trinity do cults and false teachers tend to focus on? Why do you believe this is true?

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5. The majority of cults subtract from the deity of Jesus. What two forms do these heresies usually take? Explain.

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Read the following passages: John 10:33.

*Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." (John 8:58 NKJV)*

*And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" (Exodus 3:14 NKJV)*

*The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God." (John 10:33 NKJV)*

6. In John 8:58, what was Jesus claiming for himself?

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7. According to these Scriptures, did the Jews understand what he was claiming? How did they view this claim?

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Read Revelation 1:13-18.

*"...and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. 14 His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; 15 His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; 16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me,[a] "Do*

*not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.”*

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8. According to the above passage, who is the speaker and how do we know this?

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9. In verse 17, what words does he use to describe Himself?

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Extra –

Using your Bible’s cross references, find other places where this phrase occurs and compare them to the verse in Revelation. Who is speaking in these other passages?

Write your findings here:

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## **Are Mormons Christians?**

By Jerry Johnson

In the March 1988 issue of "The Ensign", an official Mormon publication, an article appeared which was entitled "Comparing LDS Beliefs With First Century Christianity". The Mormons have always wanted to be defined as just another Christian denomination while blatantly denying the traditional doctrines that are so clearly set forth in the Bible.

In this article, it is evident that the LDS are simply attempting to convince themselves that they are Christians by asking a series of questions and then answering each of them based on their own biased theology instead of the Word of God. This can be compared to a person preparing the questions for an exam, taking the exam and then grading their own answers. How could anyone fail?

The most appropriate method to use in order to decide whether or not the Mormons are truly Christians is to compare what they teach with what the Bible teaches.

This is the first question which they ask: "Is it true that because the LDS reject the doctrine of the Trinity, they are not Christians?"

What is the Biblical definition of the Trinity? There is one God, who is infinite and Holy, and who exists eternally in three, individual divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

How do we know this? Jesus said in John 5:17-23 that God was His Father. He also claimed the name I AM in John 8:58, the same name that God had used in Exodus 3:14.



So here we have Jesus telling us that the Father is God, and that he, as the Son, is also God. In Acts 5:3-4, Peter said that Lying to the Holy Spirit was actually lying to God.

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So do Christians believe in three Gods? No! Isaiah 44:6 tells us that there is only one God. In Isaiah 43:10, the Lord says, “no God was formed before me, neither shall there be after.”

The Conclusion must be that because all three are called God, all three must be God! This is a clear and simple Bible doctrine and to reject it, large portions of the Bible must be ignored. Also, the writers make reference to the Council of Nicea. They state that the council was called to establish the doctrine of the Trinity when in actuality the doctrine had been taught since the first century and the council only reinforced the already taught doctrine in defense of the many heretics of that day.

So, in answer to this question, “Yes, Mormons, you are not Christians because you reject the simple biblical definition of God.”

Following that question we read, “Is it true that because LDS believe that humans can become like God, they are not Christians?”

I am not going to spend much time on this except to reemphasize that there is only one God! Refer to these verses: Deut. 6:4, Isaiah 43:10, Isaiah 44:6-8, I Corin. 8:5-6.

The idea that man can become like God first appeared in Genesis 3:5 and it was this lie that the serpent “Satan” told to Eve that caused the fall of man. When you read the actual account, it is easy to see that the Mormons have accepted “the lie” and in doing so, they have turned their ears from the truth and have turned to fables (II Timothy 4:3-4).

So in answer to this question, “Yes, Mormons, you are not Christians because you endorse the very philosophy which initially separated man from God!”

The next question asked was, “Is it true that because LDS practice baptism for the dead, they are not Christians?”

In the Bible there is only one verse that even mentions the phrase

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“baptism for the dead” and you will find it in I Cor. 15:29. This is the Scripture that Mormons attempt to profess as Biblical support for this doctrine.

In fact, they will often cite this as proof that they are the only true church, because they practice this rite as no other group does.

But when looking at this verse closely, one can see that Paul is not telling Christians to baptize for the dead because in verse 29 he states, “they” baptize for the dead. Who are “they?”

In verses one through 28, Paul uses the personal pronouns “we” and “us” when talking about Christians, but then in verse 29 he uses the word “they.” The only people who practiced baptism for the dead at that time were the pagans and this is who Paul was referring to in verse 29!

So in answer to this question, “Yes, Mormons, you are not Christians because you practice the pagan rite of ‘baptism for the dead.’”

The fourth question stated, “Is it true that because LDS do not accept the Bible as their sole authority, they are not Christians?”

The Mormons like to claim three other writings as holy scripture: The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price.

The basic problem is that although it is estimated that one out of every three verse in the Book of Mormon was directly copied from the Bible, none of these books agree with the Bible and furthermore, they do not even agree with one another.

(For more advanced study, purchase the audio cassette and study guide titled “Witnessing With the Book of Mormon”)

From Genesis 1 to Revelation 22, the Bible does not contradict itself. There is complete harmony between the Old and New Testaments. The 66 books of the Bible have served the Christian church extremely

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well for nearly 2,000 years and any new revelations which add to, take from, or contradict it cannot and must not be accepted.

So in answer to this question, "Yes, Mormons, you are not Christians because you have come with another gospel!" (II Cor. 11:4).

The last question asks, "Is it true that because LDS reject the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, they are not Christians?"

The first mark of a cult is any group that multiplies works to salvation. Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: Not of works."

This verse of Scripture leaves no room for debate. You are saved only because of God's love (grace) for you. Paul adds in Galatians 2:21, "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

When we answer this question using the Bible as the sole point of reference, we must say, "Yes, Mormons, you are not Christians, because you teach that Jesus, the cornerstone of the Christian faith, did not fully atone for our sins with His vicarious death on the cross."

"For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears." Acts 20:28

The material for this article was taken from Jerry Johnson's radio interview with Dick Baer in 1991 on the Cult Awareness Program.

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11. Discuss other passages that you think of that explicitly or implicitly teach that Jesus is God coequal with the Father and the Spirit and then circle the proper answer. Christians believe:

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- a. Jesus is a creation of God the Father.
- b. Jesus became God after the resurrection.
- c. Jesus is not God and never will be.
- d. Jesus is God; He is eternal and therefore had no beginning.

12. Read Acts 5:3-4. Answer these questions: Lying to the Holy Spirit is equal to lying to whom? Therefore, what is the nature of the Holy Spirit?

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13. What do the Jehovah Witnesses teach about Jesus?

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14. According to the Jehovah's Witnesses interpretation of John 1:1, how many Gods must there be?

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15. What do the Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) teach about:

A. God the Father \_\_\_\_\_

B. Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. Satan \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reverend Moon says, "Jesus, being one body with God, may be called a second God (image of God), but he can by no means be God himself." (Sun Myung Moon Divine Principles, p. 211)

16. According to Moon, in what way did Jesus fail to complete His mission?

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17. In Moonie theology, who is the Christ and what is his true mission?

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18. According to Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, why did it make no difference to her if Jesus had never been born?

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18. (Cont'd) \_\_\_\_\_

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19. Early in the history of the Seventh-Day Adventists, what view of Jesus was taught? What heresy in antiquity does this resemble?

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20. If Jesus is not infinite and eternal, then what type of payment was made at Calvary?

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21. What is the view of The United Pentecostal Church International (or any oneness group) concerning God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

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22. What is the historical name of the heresy that Oneness Pentecostals have embraced?

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23. What or who in creation can be compared to God? If you cannot think of anything, discuss why.

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## Who Has The Biblical Jesus: Christians or Jehovah's Witnesses?

By Jerry Johnson

The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society (WT), headquartered in Brooklyn, New York, teaches that Jesus has not always existed, but was himself a created being originally named Michael, the Archangel. Below are statements from their publication *Aid to Bible Understanding*, one of their foremost books that explain who Christ is.

**WT** denotes Watchtower and **CR** denotes Christian response.

**WT:** "Scriptural evidence indicates that the name Michael applied to God's Son before he left heaven to become Jesus Christ and also after his return. Michael is the only one said to be the 'archangel', meaning 'chief angel' or 'principle angel' " (p. 1152).

**CR:** The Watchtower gives no proof for this conclusion. In fact, there is not a single passage in the Bible (or in their Bible version called the New World Translation) that calls Jesus the Archangel Michael.

Further, Jehovah's Witnesses claim that Michael is unique when they write that he is the only one said to be the chief angel. But Daniel 10:13 states, "...*But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia.*" The phrase by Daniel that Michael is "one of the chief..." indicates that Michael is not unique, whereas the Lord Jesus is.



In the gospels, we often find Jesus rebuking and casting out devils. But Jude 9 records that, "...*Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"*"

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**WT:** "Thus the scriptures identify the Word (Jesus in his pre-human existence) as God's first creation, his firstborn Son... this son was actually a creature of God..." (p. 918).

**CR:** The WT quotes John 1:1 and totally ignores that Greek and the grammar; not to mention verses 2 and 3.

"*In the beginning was the Word...*" the word "was" is the imperfect of *eimi* and conveys no idea of the origin of God or the Logos. It simply means continuous existence and conveys eternity. God and the Logos did not have a beginning.

"*...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" The WT, in their New World Translation, cannot overcome the implication of this passage. In order to arrive at their belief they insert an "a" between the words "was" and "God" so that it reads "and the word was a god."

"*He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*" If this is true, then who or what created the Logos? If all things were made by Him, did he create Himself?

**WT:** Jehovah's Witnesses also teach that this archangel was transformed into a human at Bethlehem and was named Jesus – but he was not yet the Christ. The Society's book, *Things in Which It Is Impossible For God To Lie*, teaches: "Not at birth, but at thirty years of age Jesus became Christ or 'Anointed One,' " (p. 211).

**CR:** In contradistinction to this, Psalms 2:1-2 states, "*Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed...*" It is clear from the context that the one who is the anointed is the Son.

Also, Heb. 13:8 tells us that, “*Jesus Christ (Christ meaning Anointed) the same yesterday, and to day, and forever,*” strongly inferring that He has always been the Christ or Anointed.

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**WT:** Jehovah’s Witnesses are also told that Christ did not die on a cross, which is considered to be a symbol of apostate Christianity. Instead, they believe that, “On Nisan 14 of the year 33 C.E. Jesus’ enemies put him to death on a torture stake [a single upright pole],” (The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life, p. 51). By this method only one nail would have been used to secure Jesus’ hands. The Witnesses have published pictures depicting such a “torture stake,” (Awake!, April 1, 1974, p. 14).

**CR:** However, Thomas, when responding to the report that Jesus had been raised from the dead used the plural “nails” in John 20:25, “*The other disciples therefore said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ So he said to them, ‘Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.’*”

**WT:** Jesus never rose bodily from the dead according to Jehovah’s Witnesses. In *The Kingdom Is At Hand* they explain: “At death he laid aside the human organism in which he ministered as a new creature for three and a half years; and in his resurrection he was no more human. He was raised as a spirit creature...” (p. 258).

**CR:** But in John 2:19-20, Jesus foretells the Jews of His resurrection when He “*answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ Then the Jews said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body.*”

Notice that He says “destroy this temple” or “this body” and in three days I will raise up “this temple or body.” If Jehovah’s Witnesses are correct, then Jesus was wrong and would be guilty of false prophecy. They have Him being raised, not in the body He was in when He made this prediction, but an entirely different recreated body.



## **The Apostles' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, □ the Maker of heaven and earth, □ and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, □ born of the virgin Mary, □ suffered under Pontius Pilate, □ was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; □ from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic\* church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; □ and the life everlasting. Amen.

\*This means universal not Roman Catholic.

## **The Nicene Creed**

**A.D. 325**

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven

and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God,

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Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

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NOTES

## Lesson Four: Multiply to Divide

DVD running time: 24 minutes

1. Explain in detail the third mark of a cult. \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Word of Wisdom from Dr. Walter Martin

“The average non-Christian cult owes its very existence to the fact that it has utilized the terminology of Christianity, has borrowed liberally from the Bible, almost always out of context, and sprinkled its format with evangelical clichés and terms whenever possible or advantageous. Up to now this has been a highly successful attempt to represent their respective systems of thought as ‘Christian.’ On encountering a cultist then, always remember that you are dealing with a person who is familiar with Christian terminology, and who has carefully redefined it to fit the system of thought he or she now embraces.” (The Kingdom of the Cults, Bethany House, 1985, pg. 20.)

2. What does the word ‘soteriology’ refer to? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. How is a fallen, fallible and finite sinner saved? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Read and discuss Ephesians 4:8-9, then circle the correct answer.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

As Christians we believe:

- a. The death of Christ on Calvary made salvation possible.
- b. On Calvary, Christ paid for most of our sins.
- c. Salvation is by grace and just a teensy weensy bit of works.
- d. Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, apart from any works, save those done by the Lord Jesus.

5. How are cults' false views of soteriology connected to their errant understanding of the person and nature of Christ?

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6. According to Jehovah's Witnesses what does ultimate salvation depend upon? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What are some of the "salvation events" according to the Watchtower?

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8. Fill in the blanks of this quote by Mormon apostle Bruce R. McConkie.

"As with all other doctrines of salvation, justification is \_\_\_\_\_ because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ, but it becomes \_\_\_\_\_ in the life of an individual only on the \_\_\_\_\_ of personal righteousness." (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, pg. 230)

9. If our salvation has "conditions", then is it by grace? Why or why not?

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## **Seventh-Day Adventist Profile**

By Timothy Oliver, Director, Watchman Fellowship Utah Office

<http://www.watchman.org/ut/>

**Organization Structure:** Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Organized as representative democracy. Lower echelons elect representatives to higher units; determination and administration of policy, enforcement of doctrinal orthodoxy, imposed from top down. President, and Executive Committee of General Conference are standing chief administrative offices. Lower administrative units are the General Conference, Divisions (over continents), Union Conferences, local Conferences, and congregations. Several small Universities and Colleges and numerous well respected hospitals are maintained worldwide.

**Unique Terms:** "Investigative Judgement," "Spirit of Prophecy," "Coming into the Truth" (believing and living the full SDA message and lifestyle), "Remnant Church."

### **History**

The world was predicted to end in 1844 with the Second Coming of [Christ](#), by William Miller, a New England Baptist itinerant preacher. Miller's followers condemned all the churches of the day as apostate and "Babylon," and warned

Christians to come out of them. A great many did, and the "adventist" movement was born and grew rapidly (Melton, J. Gordon, *Encyclopedia of American Religions*, Vol. 2, pp. 21–22). Christ did not appear in 1844. After this "Great Disappointment," one "little flock" still insisted the date of

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their original predictions had been correct. They decided the event marked by 1844 was not the Second Coming, but the entrance of Christ into the Holy of Holies in the Heavenly Sanctuary. There, they said, He began the "Investigative Judgement." This doctrine was received and endorsed by Ellen G. White (*Ibid.*, p. 680).

From 1844 to 1851 the group taught the "shut door" doctrine, based on Jesus' parable of the ten virgins. Anyone who had not accepted the Adventist message by the time Jesus entered the Holy of Holies was to be shut out permanently, as were the five foolish virgins. Cut off from the Bridegroom, they could not join the Adventists or have any hope of eternal life. Ellen White not only approved and taught this doctrine, but her first vision experience was largely responsible for its being received by the Adventist group (Brinsmead, Robert, D., *Judged by the Gospel: A Review of Adventism*, pp. 130–33).

By 1846 the group had adopted the Seventh-day Baptists' view that the Saturday Sabbath must be observed by Christians. A highly elevated form of this doctrine, together with the doctrine of the Investigative Judgment, became the hallmarks of Seventh-day Adventism. In 1850 James and Ellen White began publishing a magazine, *The Review & Herald*, to disseminate adventist and sabbatarian doctrines. This helped many of the remaining "Millerites" to coalesce

into a distinctive body which adopted the name of Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1860, and formally incorporated in 1863, with approximately 3,500 members in 125 congregations (Encyclopedia of American Religion, Vol. 2, p. 681).

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Ellen White never held official title as the head of the church, but was one of its founders and acknowledged spiritual leader. She rather disingenuously declined to claim the title of "prophet," calling herself a "messenger" instead (Damsteegt, P.G., et. al., *Seventh-day Adventists Believe. . .*, p. 224). But she claimed to have the "spirit of prophecy," and that her messages were direct from God for the guidance and instruction of the church. With her knowledge and consent others called her a prophet, and even "the Spirit of Prophecy" (Barnett, Maurice, *Ellen G. White & Inspiration*, pp. 5–17). Having only a third grade education, Ellen White said for years she was unable to read, bolstering the claim that her beautiful prose was inspired by God. However, it has been discovered that she not only read, but plagiarized other Christian authors throughout virtually all her writings. The sad facts of this matter have been thoroughly and indisputably established in several books. (e.g., see; Rea, Walter, *The White Lie*; and *Judged by the Gospel*, pp. 361–83). Ellen White died in 1915 at age eighty-eight.

Historically, evangelicals have had difficulty defining and categorizing SDA. Much SDA doctrine is biblically orthodox. Within its ranks are many true Christians, some even in positions of prominence. At various points in its history, most notably in the 1888 General Conference, the SDA church has

been shaken by the biblical gospel. In the 1970s this became quite intense (See: Paxton, Geoffrey, J., *The Shaking of Adventism*). Unfortunately, it produced a polarization. The church administrators generally became more entrenched in the unorthodox positions of traditional SDA, while some

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pastors and even whole congregations left or were asked to leave the SDA church ("From Controversy to Crisis," *CRI Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 9–14). In official publications the SDA church continues to defend Ellen White legends, and maintain there was no difference in the degree of inspiration she received from that received by Bible writers (*Review & Herald*, 4 October 1928, p. 11; "Source of Final Appeal," *Adventist Review*, 3 June 1971, pp. 4–6; G. A. Irwin, *Mark of the Beast*, p. 1; "The Inspiration and Authority of the Ellen G. White Writings," *Adventist Review*, 15 July 1982, p. 3; *Ministry*, October 1981, p. 8; see also, *Judged by the Gospel*, pp. 125–30). In their June, 2000, General Conference they voted to more aggressively affirm and support the "Spirit of Prophecy through the ministry of Ellen White" ([Adventist Today, \[online: July 2000\]](#) ). They also teach a number of other doctrines clearly irreconcilable with the biblical gospel (see "Doctrine," below). So long as these things continue, evangelicals must persist in questioning the status of the SDA church organization in [Christianity](#), and much more, her claim to be God's only true, end-time "Remnant Church."

## **Doctrine**

SDA teachings most clearly contrary to the gospel and

unorthodox in nature are its insistence on water baptism as an essential prerequisite to salvation, its teaching about the end time significance of sabbath observance to identification of true believers, and its doctrine of the Investigative Judgement.

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**Baptism:** "...Christ made it clear that He required baptism of those who wished to become part of his church, His spiritual kingdom." "In baptism believers enter into the passion experience of our Lord." "...[B]aptism also marks [a] person's entrance into Christ's spiritual kingdom....it unites the new believer to Christ.... Through baptism the Lord adds the new disciples to the body of believers — His body, the church.... Then they are members of God's family" (SDA's Believe..., pp. 182, 184, 187).

**The Sabbath:** "...[T]he divine institution of the Sabbath is to be restored... The delivering of this message will precipitate a conflict that will involve the whole world. The central issue will be obedience to God's law and the observance of the Sabbath....Those who reject it will eventually receive the mark of the beast" (Ibid., pp. 262–63).

In one of her most revered works, Ellen White wrote that Sabbath observance would be the "line of distinction" in the "final test" that will separate God's end-time people who "receive the seal of God" and are saved, from those who "receive the mark of the beast" (The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, p. 605).

Describing a supposed vision direct from God, Ellen White

wrote, "I saw that the Holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers" (Early Writings, p. 33; emphasis added). She also wrote of some Adventists failing to understand that "Sabbath... observance was of sufficient importance to draw

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a line between the people of God and unbelievers" (Ibid., p. 85).

**The Investigative Judgement:** "In 1844...[Christ] entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgement which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin... It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgement vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom" (SDA's Believe..., p. 312; emphasis added).

"...[O]ur High Priest enters the holy of holies [in 1844]...to perform the work of investigative judgement and to make an atonement for all who are shown to be entitled to its benefits... Every man's work passes in review before God and is registered for faithfulness or unfaithfulness... The law of God is the standard by which the characters and the lives of men will be tested in the judgement... As the books of record are opened in the judgement, the lives of all those who have believed on Jesus come in review before God... Names are accepted, names rejected... as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters

are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life... Jesus does not excuse their sins, but shows their penitence and faith, and, claiming for them forgiveness, He lifts His wounded hands before the Father...

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Sins that have not been repented of and forsaken will not be pardoned and blotted out of the books of record, but will stand to witness against the sinner... [Christ] had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him... this is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble" (Great Controversy, pp. 480, 482-84, 486, 623).

According to Ellen White one must believe this doctrine to be saved. "Those who would share the benefits of the Savior's mediation should permit nothing to interfere with their duty to perfect holiness in the fear of God... The subject of the sanctuary and the investigative judgement should be clearly understood by the people of God. All need a knowledge for themselves of the position [in the Holy of Holies] and work [investigative judgement] of their great High Priest. Otherwise it will be impossible for them to exercise the faith which is essential at this time or to occupy the position which God designs for them to fill. Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God... All who have received the light on these subjects are to bear testimony of the great truths which God has committed to them. The sanctuary in heaven is the very center of Christ's work in behalf of men... It is of the utmost importance that all should thoroughly investigate these subjects... The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the

sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon a cross. By His death He began that work which after his resurrection He ascended to complete in Heaven" (Ibid., pp. 488–89; emphasis added).

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**Other distinctive SDA teachings** include vegetarianism and other "health" issues; the doctrine of "soul sleep," a misnomer for the belief that between death and resurrection one is essentially non-existent except in the memory of God; the annihilation of the wicked (as opposed to conscious torment for eternity).

## **Biblical Response**

**Baptism:** Rom. 3:21–26, 28; 4:4–6, 23–24; 5:1; Gal. 2:16; 3:26; 5:1–6; Eph. 2:4–10; Col. 1:13–14; 2:13–14. These passages make it clear that salvation is entirely by God's grace alone, apart from any works, and laid hold of by faith alone. Baptism is mentioned in close proximity to some of these passages, but the New Testament uses the word baptism in various ways. Clearly, the "one baptism" (Eph. 4:4–5) that is essential is the baptism of the Spirit. If a passage makes baptism essential to salvation it can only refer to the baptism of the Spirit, or it would conflict with other Scriptures which plainly teach salvation is apart from any human work.

**The Sabbath:** The quoted statements above, particularly Ellen White's, are crystal clear. Sabbath observance, not trust in Christ alone for complete forgiveness of sins and



eternal life, is to be the dividing line between the saved and the lost in the end time. This is certainly antithetical to the gospel defined by the passages above. See also, Rom. 14:5–6; Col. 2:16–17. The Old Testament Sabbath was never anything more than a shadow of the substance. The reality of the New Testament Sabbath rest of God, which Paul and

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the writer of Hebrews make clear, is Christ Himself, and the rest one experiences from one's own works when one enters into Christ (Heb. 4:1–10).

**The Investigative Judgement:** the whole concept of the investigative judgement is antithetical to the Gospel. Jesus did not wait until 1844 to enter the Holy of Holies in heaven (Heb. 1:3; 6:19–20; 8:1; 9:6–12, 24; 12:2). Neither is he still making an atonement in heaven (Heb. 9:25–26; 10:11–14). The investigative judgement proposes to “vindicate the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus,” by showing they were “loyal,” “penitent,” and “faithful” commandment keepers. This is an outrage. God's justice in saving sinners is vindicated by Christ's death on the cross, period (Rom. 3:24–26).

Even when speaking of being saved by the righteousness of Christ, Adventist writers refer to imparted righteousness, seldom to the biblical concept of imputed righteousness. Calling it “Christ's righteousness,” while insisting on the believer's perfection of character as a prerequisite to salvation, is at worst a thinly veiled works salvation, or at best an attempt to mix grace and works, something the Bible says is impossible to do (Rom. 11:6). Mrs. Whites words are crystal clear—one will not be forgiven until all sins

are eradicated from one's life and one's character is perfected. Precisely the same heresy is found (besides many others) in Mormonism. It is not the salvation by grace alone through faith alone offered in the Bible.

The error is compounded by the teaching that this latter day 1844 event must be believed in to exercise the proper faith

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necessary to be saved. When Jesus said on the cross, "It is finished," i.e. completed, paid in full, it cannot be that there is yet another salvation event more than 1800 years later, just as essential to salvation as Christ's death on the cross, in which one must believe in order to be saved. This is clearly "another gospel" (Gal. 1:6–9).

**Other doctrines:** Some of the SDA health message may actually be helpful, and it does not conflict with the gospel except when, as is often the case, spiritual stigma is attached to non-observance of its asceticism (Gal. 2:11-16). The soul-sleep doctrine conflicts with the gospel because, closely examined and fully understood, it actually constitutes a denial of the resurrection (though it is doubtful any SDA understands it to be so). Notwithstanding a smattering of "proof-texts," the annihilation doctrine is definitely aberrant from the teaching of the [Bible](#). It leaves the sinner facing no eternal consequences for his sin; angst over annihilation will not survive annihilation. Indeed, many people today think annihilation preferable to even this life. They live on only because they cannot shake the conviction that there is "hell to pay." God has set eternity in their hearts (Eccl. 3:11).

10. What is Salvation according to the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

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11. What is salvation according to the Church of Jesus Christ is Latter-Day Saints?

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(Note: In keeping with Joseph Smith’s view that some may need to have their own blood spilled to atone for sins, the state of Utah still offers a firing squad to those convicted of a capital crime.

12. According to Moon, “God is constantly urging and inspiring man to pay off his debt quickly so that man can return to Him.” (Page 48) Even though Moon teaches that the payment goes to God, to whom is this payment actually being made?

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13. According to Dr. R. Fowler White, why is it impossible for man to pay off his debt through his good works?

14. In what way does Mary Baker Eddy deny the vicarious atonement?

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15. In the Christian Science religion, who is primarily responsible for your salvation?

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16. What are some of the things a member of the United Pentecostal Church or any Apostolic church must do in order to be saved?

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Read the statement below:

“Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above, are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless; their characters must be purified from sin by the

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blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort, they must be conquerors in the battle with evil”.  
(*The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, pg. 425)

17. According to the preceding statement by Ellen G. White, founder of Seventh-Day Adventists, what phrase indicates that she did not teach justification through faith alone?

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18. What does the Bible and each true Christian teach about God’s view of our good works?

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NOTES

## Lesson Five: Divide to End

DVD running time – 24 minutes

1. Explain in detail the fourth mark of a cult. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Fill in the blanks.

By \_\_\_\_\_ new revelations to the Word of God  
and then \_\_\_\_\_ from the deity of Christ,  
cults are forced to \_\_\_\_\_ the  
works necessary for salvation. And because their group is the  
only one that understands these things, it logically follows that  
true and complete salvation can be found no where else.

3. According to these groups, who alone has the truth? \_\_\_\_\_







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9. In what way do Moonies echo the sentiments of Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders?

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10. What is the logical conclusion of this statement by the United Pentecostal Church International?

“The Oneness doctrine is important because it upholds biblical Christianity...” (Meet the United Pentecostal Church International, pg. 58)

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11. What is the difference between the Bible’s exclusive claims and those made by most cultic groups?

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12. According to Ellen G. White, what is the “highest authority on earth?”

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13. Read and discuss 2 Timothy 3:16-17, then circle the correct answer.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

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that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

- a. A church body or denomination is the highest authority on earth.
- b. The Supreme Court is the highest authority on earth.
- c. Congress and the President are the highest authority on earth.
- d. God’s Word, the Bible, is the highest authority on earth.

14. Can you think of other passages that speak of the Bible’s authority?

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15. Can you think of any other marks of a cult besides add, subtract, multiply and divide?



churches, they go even further by insisting that the one who is baptized must understand that the water is literally washing away his sins in order for the baptism to be effective.

This contradicts the clear Biblical teaching that salvation is by grace through faith and that our faith is a gift from God. In the final analysis, Restoration churches make salvation a work.

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One of the passages most often cited to prove their doctrine on baptism is Acts 2:38,

“Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Restoration churches teach that baptism is “for” (or read thusly – in order to receive) remission of sin. They may use the example that a person may exercise for good health, i.e. “in order to obtain” good health.

Though this is a proper use of the word “for”, it can also mean “because.” For instance, a person may take an aspirin “for” a headache. This does not mean that they are taking an aspirin “in order to obtain” a headache, but “because” of a headache, i.e. because they already have a headache.

This is how Baptists would understand the word “for” in Acts 2:38. They are not baptized to receive forgiveness of sins, but because they already have forgiveness of sin. On the other hand, Presbyterians understand the word “for” to mean “with a view to” which is why they baptize their children.

Though Baptists and Presbyterians have different beliefs as to what baptism is and to whom it is to be administered, both believe that a person is saved by grace through faith apart for any outward work such as baptism.



18. Name some of the unorthodox groups that laid the groundwork for the proliferation of the later cultic groups.

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19. How did one historian characterize America during the 19<sup>th</sup> century?

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20. Discuss the primary way Christians and churches can be prepared to “contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints.”

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Notes

## **The American Hour – The Evangelical Moment** □

The present moment is one of those great times of reckoning in the history of redemption, on which the future of our culture and Church will hinge. It can no longer be evaded or ignored. The present Kairos moment is a critical point in the American century – The American Hour.

The effective remedy is ultimately not the province of Rush Limbaugh or the Republican Party. Biblically it is the responsibility, the time and the mandate for the Church, the People of God, to examine the integrity and effectiveness of its own character and witness. We need to also evaluate what will be our response to the decreasing lack of influence of the Christian faith on our culture – as well as the growing influence of our culture on the Christian faith.

Respected Christian pollster and commentator George Barna observes that much of the responsibility for the decline lies at the feet of the church. He writes, "The vast majority of Christians do not behave differently because we do not think differently, and we do not think differently because we have never trained or equipped ourselves, or held one another accountable to do so."

Guinness and Seel challenge us, "At the momentous chapter in the ongoing story of the Christian Church and the modern world, one of America's greatest spiritual movements is in danger of losing its way or missing its moment. To be a nominal Christian is a contradiction in terms. Therefore to be an evangelical Christian at the close of the second millennium is a high privilege and a solemn responsibility."

Now is the time for us to learn what it means to deeply understand and radically participate in the life of the Church and the world with all the perspectives, powers, and passion of the truth and life of the Scriptures, of Christ, and the gospel.

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Additional Notes



