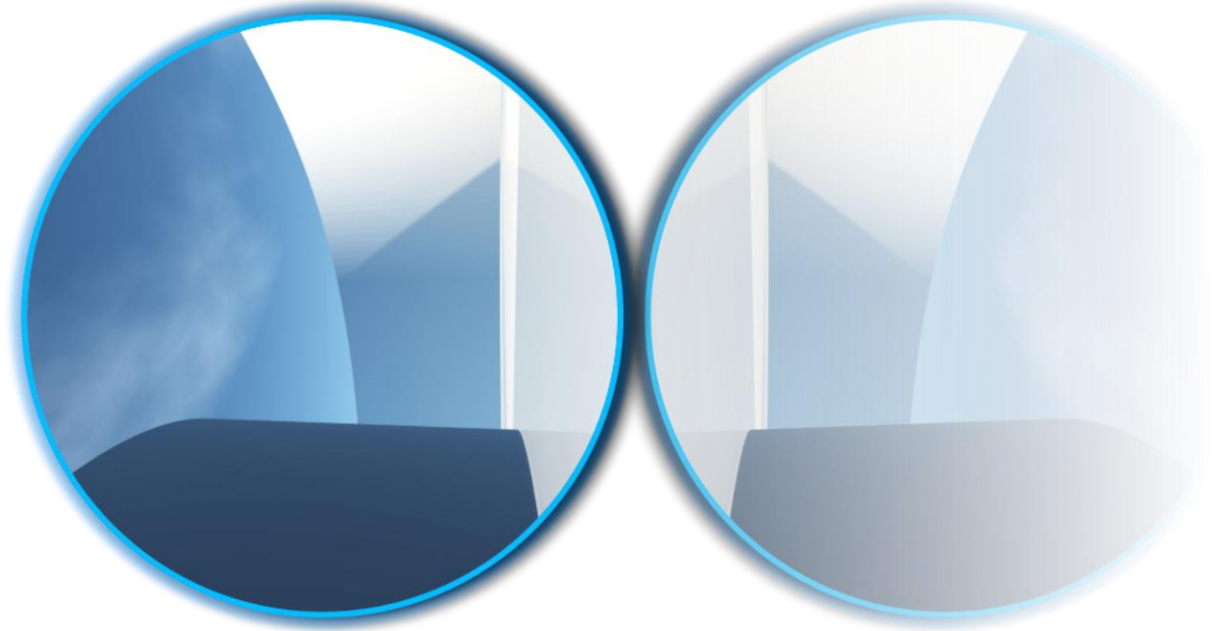


Worldview & Worshippers

Section 3: Christian Sects

SECTION 3: CHRISTIAN SECTS



Lesson 12: Seventh-Day Adventists

The Bible Church of Little Rock
EH FALL 2025

Introduction: Course Definitions of Key Terms

Worldview:

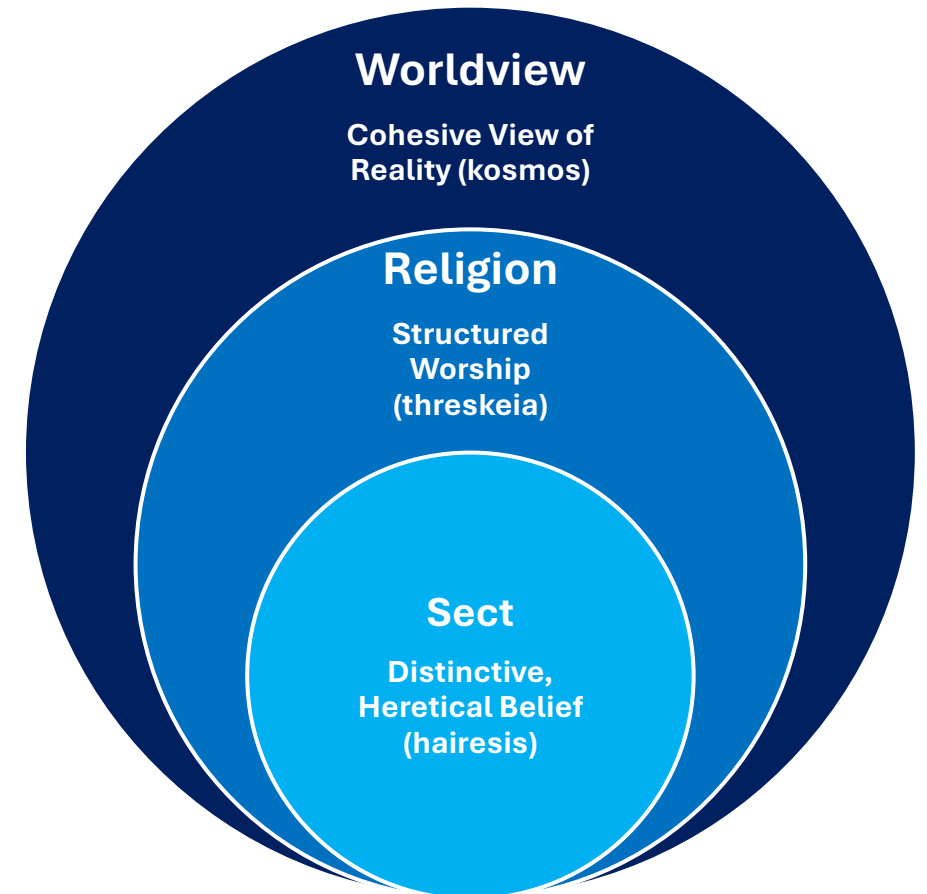
- A Cohesive and Complete Framework of Beliefs that Explains Existence (Creation).

Religion:

- A Structured System of Beliefs that Includes Organized Worship.

Sect:

- A Subset of a Religion with Similar but Distinctive Beliefs which are in error.





Guiding Question, Big Idea, and Course Goals

Overview: Big Idea & Guiding Question

Guiding Question:

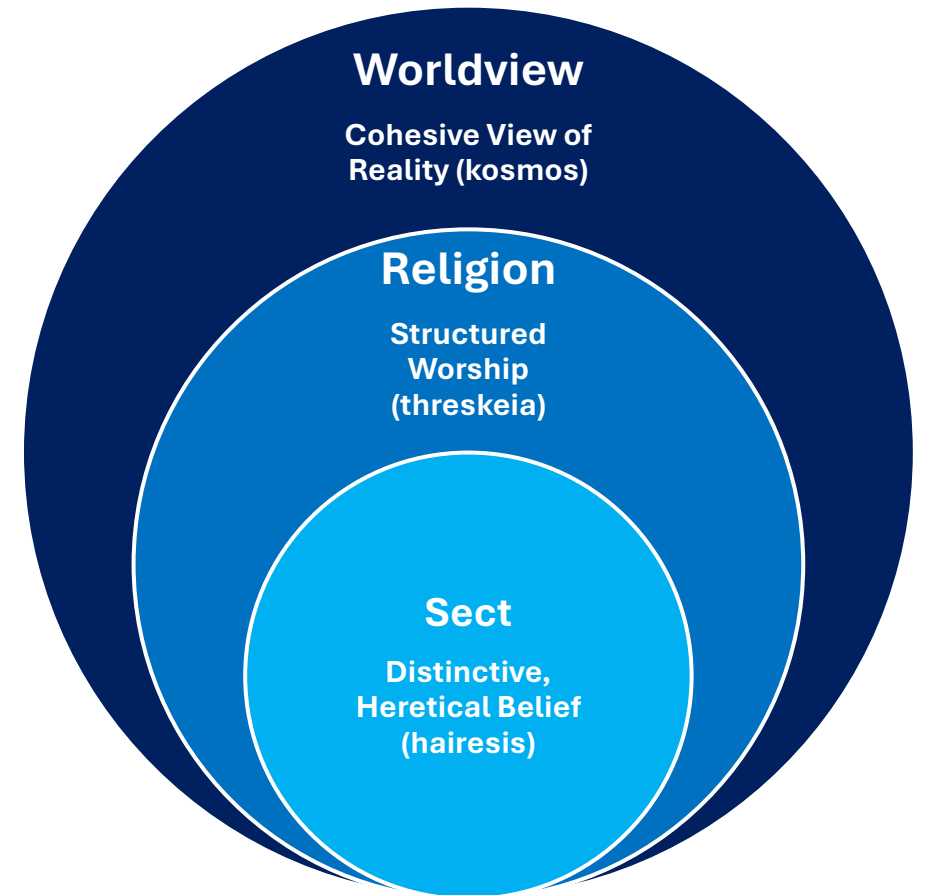
- What do the various worldviews in existence today believe? How does the Christian discern what these worldviews worship?

Big Idea:

- Christians should seek to understand the heart state of other worshippers so they may show the truth of Christ to them and love them rightly.

Primary Scripture:

- John 4:21-26,
“The Father is Seeking True Worshippers”



Seventh-Day Adventists (SDA) Origins

- 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.
- Christ didn't appear in 1844. After this "Great Disappointment," one "little flock" still insisted the date of 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, He began the "Investigative Judgment." This doctrine was received/endorsed by Ellen G. White.
- 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. Many of the remaining "Millerites" coalesced 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.
- **Today, there are approximately 23.5 million members in over 100,000 churches.**



SDA Key Individuals: William Miller

William Miller emerged as a prominent figure in the early 19th century, leading a religious movement that predicted Christ's imminent return based on his interpretation of biblical prophecies, particularly from the book of Daniel (worth noting - it was fairly common).

- **Great Disappointment:** His calculations pointed to October 22, 1844, as the date for Christ's Second Coming, which led to widespread disappointment when this event did not occur, a moment known as the *Great Disappointment*.
- **Transition to Seventh-day Adventism:** Following the Great Disappointment, many followers, including key figures like Hiram Edson and James and Ellen White, reinterpreted the failed prophecy and believed that Christ commenced a new phase of ministry, leading to the formation of the SDA Church.
- **Prophetic Foundation:** Miller's emphasis on prophecy and the Second Coming significantly influenced the foundational beliefs of the church, particularly the doctrines of the Investigative Judgment and the importance of Sabbath observance.
- **Legacy:** Although Miller himself did not establish the church, his teachings and the subsequent movement laid the groundwork for the emergence of SDA as a distinct denomination focused on a return to biblical principles.

SDA Key Individuals: Ellen G. White

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. 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.” 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. This has been thoroughly and indisputably established in several books.

- In official publications, the SDA church continues to defend Ellen White and maintains there was no difference in the degree of inspiration she received from that received by Bible writers. In their June, 2000, General Conference they voted to more aggressively affirm and support the “Spirit of Prophecy through the ministry of Ellen White.



SDA “*Questions on Doctrine* (1957)”

"Questions on Doctrine" is a significant book published by the SDAs. First published in 1957 as a response to theological inquiries and controversies within the church, aimed at clarifying the church's teachings on key doctrinal issues, addressing questions posed by both believers and critics, and reinforcing the church's foundational beliefs.

- **Theological Context:** The publication emerged during a time of desire for greater ecumenical dialogue and understanding, especially as Adventists sought acceptance among other Christian denominations.
- **Key Doctrinal Topics:** Explores topics such as the personality of God, the nature of sin, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the understanding of salvation and grace.
- **Impact on the Church:** The book had a significant influence on SDA theology is used as a reference for church members/leaders discussing doctrinal positions.
- **Criticism and Response:** While it aimed to present a clear theological stance, it also faced criticism from some within the church who felt it compromised traditional beliefs, leading to ongoing discussions about Adventist theology.

SWF Note: In the link to the SDA website I've provided on the final slide of this deck, there is a link to a PDF of 28 SDA statements of belief/doctrine you may wish to review in light of both the age of the original QoD, the “annotated” version in 2003, and my note on the following slide as to alternate SDA viewpoints on how/why the QoD was written.



SDA Factions

By the mid-1970s, according to Walter Martin (see note below), two factions had emerged within SDA: Traditional Adventism and Evangelical Adventism.

- **Evangelical Adventism (about 2/3):** Identify with evangelical theology, while still holding the distinctive persuasions of the denomination. These hold primarily to the views expressed in *Questions on Doctrine*.
- **Traditional Adventism:** hold many positions of control and seem to be bent on making Ellen G. White the infallible interpreter of Scripture and moving away from several positions taken in *Questions on Doctrine*.

SWF Note: These are distinctives assigned by Walter Martin (*The Kingdom of the Cults*). In my further research, I have found some SDA who say that the SDA publication of *Questions on Doctrine* was written specifically in such a way to dissuade Mr. Martin from including SDA as a “cult” by smoothing out some SDA distinctives to make them appear more evangelical mainstream. So, it is worth bearing that possibility in mind. For our purposes today, we will focus on areas of SDA divergence from traditional evangelical Christian teaching/beliefs.



SDA Doctrine: The Spirit of Prophecy

In SDA theology, the "Spirit of Prophecy" refers to the belief in the ongoing guidance of the Holy Spirit through prophetic messages and inspiration. We would classify SDAs as continuationists. This teaching is primarily associated with Ellen G. White, a founding figure of the church, who is considered a prophetess. Her writings are highly regarded for their spiritual guidance and insight.

- **Role of Prophecy:** SDAs believe that the Spirit of Prophecy serves to provide instruction, warning, and encouragement to the church, helping believers to understand God's will and the challenges of the end times.
- **Scriptural Basis:** SDAs appeal to texts such as Revelation 12:17 and 19:10 which affirm the importance of the testimony of Jesus, identified as the spirit of prophecy.
- **Guidance for Church:** The Spirit of Prophecy is viewed as a protective and guiding force, offering counsel on matters of faith, health, education, and lifestyle.
- **Complement to Scripture:** SDAs see Ellen G. White's writings as complementary to the Bible, not as a replacement or additional scripture, and they emphasize the need for biblical authority.
- **Encouragement of Personal Study:** The teachings encourage individuals to engage in personal Bible study while using White's writings as supplementary resources for deeper understanding.



SDA Doctrine: “Soul Sleep”

SDA teaching holds that when a person dies, their soul enters a state of rest, often referred to as "soul sleep," until the resurrection.

- **Biblical Foundation:** SDAs use Ecc 9:5, which states that the dead know nothing, and 1 Thess 4:13-14, which speaks of the dead in Christ being raised at His return.
- **Temporary State:** SDAs view death not as an immediate transition to heaven or hell, but a temporary state of unconsciousness/inactivity until the resurrection at Christ's return.
- **Resurrection Hope:** The concept reinforces the belief in a future resurrection, where the righteous will awaken to eternal life, and the wicked will face judgment.
- **Conditional Immortality:** Aligns with the doctrine of conditional immortality, suggesting that only believers are granted eternal life, while the dead are not conscious in any form.
- **God's Justice:** "Soul sleep" underscores the belief in God's justice, emphasizing that the final judgment occurs before individuals experience their eternal destinies.
- **Rejection of Immediate Afterlife:** This contrasts with views that assert an immediate transition to heaven or hell, asserting that such concepts lack biblical support.
- **Focus on Earthly Life:** Encourages believers to focus on their earthly lives and relationship with God, knowing their ultimate destiny will be decided at the resurrection.

SDA Doctrine: Eternal damnation vs destruction

SDA theology distinguishes between the concepts of eternal damnation and eternal destruction as they relate to the fate of the wicked. SDAs teach the annihilation of the wicked (as opposed to conscious torment for eternity).

- **Eternal Damnation:** This concept, often associated with traditional views of hell, suggests ongoing torment and suffering for the wicked forever.
- **Eternal Destruction:** SDAs teach the ultimate fate of the unsaved is not eternal torment but eternal destruction, which means complete annihilation or death.
- **Biblical Justification:** The belief is supported by verses that speak of the destruction of the wicked (Matthew 10:28).
- **Judgment Day:** On Judgment Day, the wicked will be judged and, as a result of their choices, will face the final death rather than ongoing punishment.
- **Conditional Immortality:** SDAs embrace the idea of conditional immortality, meaning that only those who accept Christ receive eternal life, while the wicked face extinction.
- **God's Nature:** SDAs align this with their belief in God's love and justice, rejecting the idea that a loving God would subject individuals to eternal torment.

SDA Doctrine: Sabbath vs Lord's Day

SDAs teach that the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, observed from Friday sunset to Saturday sunset, as a holy day of rest and worship.

- **Biblical Foundation:** The observance of the Sabbath is rooted in the creation narrative (Gen 2:2-3) and the 4th commandment (Exo 20:8-11), emphasizing its importance as a divine institution.
- **Purpose of the Sabbath:** Serves as a reminder of God's creation, a day for physical and spiritual rest, and an opportunity for nurturing one's relationship with God and community.
- **The Lord's Day Debate:** The term "Lord's Day" is associated with Sunday, traditionally observed by most Christian denominations as a day of worship to commemorate Christ's resurrection.
- **Position on the Lord's Day:** SDAs do not recognize Sunday as the Sabbath or the Lord's Day, asserting that the Bible consistently identifies the Sabbath as the seventh day, not the first.
- **Historical Context:** The shift from Sabbath observance to the observance of Sunday as the Lord's Day is viewed by SDAs as influenced by historical and cultural developments rather than biblical mandate.
- **Significance of Sabbath Rest:** SDAs emphasize that Sabbath rest is not only about physical rest but also spiritual rejuvenation, reflecting on God's goodness and grace.
- **End-Time Significance:** The Sabbath is considered a crucial aspect of end-time events, with the belief that it will be a test of faithfulness for believers as the world approaches the final days.

SDA Doctrine: Sabbath vs Lord's Day

Several teachings from Ellen White and historical SDA teaching speak to their stance:

- *“...[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.”*
- 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*.”
- 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.*”
- She also wrote of some Adventists failing to understand that “*Sabbath... observance was of sufficient importance to draw a line between the people of God and unbelievers.*”



SDA Doctrine: The Sanctuary

SDA teaching emphasizes that there is a heavenly sanctuary where Christ serves as High Priest, distinct from the earthly tabernacle described in the Old Testament.

- **Biblical Foundation:** SDAs point to Heb 8:1-2, which describe Jesus as a minister in the true tabernacle, and Rev 11:19, which mentions the temple of God in heaven.
- **Christ's Atoning Work:** SDAs believe Jesus' work in the heavenly sanctuary includes interceding for believers and applying benefits of His sacrifice to those who accept Him.
- **Investigative Judgment:** Since 1844, Christ has been conducting Investigative Judgment, reviewing records of believers' lives to determine their readiness for salvation.
- **Cleansing of the Sanctuary:** The sanctuary needs to be cleansed of the sins accumulated by the people, pointing to both the spiritual process of forgiveness and the prophetic significance of the judgment phase in the last days.
- **Eschatological Significance:** The teaching underscores the urgency of preparation for Christ's second coming, emphasizing that understanding Jesus' work in the heavenly sanctuary is crucial for believers.



SDA Doctrine: The Investigative Judgment

The Investigative Judgment is a unique doctrine in SDA theology, teaching that Christ began a specific phase of judgment in heaven in 1844.

- **Biblical Basis:** The concept is based on scriptural interpretations, particularly Daniel 8:14, which speaks of the cleansing of the sanctuary, and Revelation 14:7, which calls for judgment.
- **Phase of Christ's Ministry:** It is understood as a part of Christ's high priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, where He intercedes on behalf of believers.
- **Examination of Records:** The Investigative Judgment involves a review of the lives and decisions of those who have accepted Christ, assessing their faith and obedience.
- **Purpose of Judgment:** This judgment serves to demonstrate God's justice and mercy, showing the righteousness involved in His decisions regarding salvation.
- **Pre-Advent Judgment:** It is characterized as a pre-Advent judgment, meaning it occurs before Christ's second coming and determines who among believers will be saved.
- **Significance for Believers:** The doctrine emphasizes the importance of personal accountability, encouraging believers to live righteously and deepen their relationship with Christ.
- **End-Time Events:** SDAs view the Investigative Judgment as integral to eschatology, indicating that Christ is preparing for His return and that believers should be ready.
- **Role in Salvation:** It underscores that salvation is through faith in Christ, while also recognizing the importance of a transformed life as evidence of that faith.

SDA Doctrine: The Investigative Judgment

- *In 1844...[Christ] entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment 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 judgment 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.*
- ***...[O]ur High Priest enters the holy of holies [in 1844]...to perform the work of investigative judgment 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 judgment...** As the books of record are opened in the judgment, 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... 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.*

SDA Doctrine: The Investigative Judgment

- 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 judgment 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 judgment] 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.***



SDA Doctrine: The Investigative Judgment

- The whole concept of the investigative judgment 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 judgment proposes to “vindicate the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus,” by showing they were “loyal,” “penitent,” and “faithful” commandment keepers. 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. White’s 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.

SDA Doctrine: The Scapegoat

In SDA theology, the scapegoat is rooted in the Day of Atonement ritual described in Leviticus 16, signifying the removal of sin from the community.

- **Two Goats:** Ceremony involved two goats: one was sacrificed (representing Christ's atonement for sin) and the other, the scapegoat, symbolized the expulsion of sin.
- **Symbol of Sin Removal:** The scapegoat represents God's act of removing sin from the people, illustrating His mercy and forgiveness.
 - **Role of the High Priest:** Plays a vital role in this ritual, symbolizing Jesus Christ as the ultimate High Priest who intercedes for humanity.
 - **Fulfillment in Christ:** SDAs believe both goats illustrate Christ's redemptive work; His sacrifice for sin and the assurance that sin is completely removed.
 - **Satan's Role:** The scapegoat is often associated with Satan, viewed as the one who ultimately bears the blame for sin. This connection highlights that he will be held accountable for causing sin and suffering in the world.
 - **Significance of the Wilderness:** Symbolizes a desolate place, emphasizing that sin, along with its instigator (Satan), is cast away from believers.
- **Connection to the Investigative Judgment:** The scapegoat relates to the Investigative Judgment doctrine, where Christ reviews believers' records to affirm their acceptance of His sacrifice.
- **Eschatological Implications:** This teaching extends to end-time events, where ultimately, God will eradicate sin and hold Satan accountable, highlighting divine justice.

SDA Doctrine: The “Dual-Law” Theory

Distinguishes between two types of law in the Bible: the moral law and the ceremonial law. “Keeping the law” coupled with the “investigative judgment” in SDA teaching, regardless of their intent/explanation, comes across as a works-based (at least in part) salvation viewpoint.

- **Moral Law:** Represents the Ten Commandments, which are viewed as eternal and unchanging principles guiding human conduct and reflecting God’s character.
 - **Observance of Sabbath:** Advocates the importance of the Sabbath as part of the moral law, which remains relevant and is observed on Saturday.
- **Ceremonial Law:** Encompasses rules and regulations regarding rituals, sacrifices, and ceremonies specific to ancient Israel, which are seen as temporary and fulfilled in Christ.
 - **Dietary Restrictions:** However, many SDAs advocate abstaining from “unclean meats” as set forth in the ceremonial law (and in contradiction to Jesus’ declaration of all foods as “clean”), and some even tout a vegetarian lifestyle (also in contradiction to other NT passages).
- **Purpose of Duality:** The dual-law theory emphasizes that while the moral law remains binding for Christians today, the ceremonial laws were intended for a specific time and context, and are no longer required following Christ's sacrifice.



SDA Doctrine: The “Clear Word” paraphrase

| | New American Standard Bible | Clear Word Bible | Comment |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Exodus 16:30 | So the people rested on the seventh day. | So the people rested <u>and worshiped the Lord on the seventh day as they were told to do.</u> | Notice how worship, which hints at church practices on their Saturday Sabbath, is added to their Bible. This is quite an addition. |
| Isaiah 66:24 | “Then they will go forth and look on the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die and <u>their fire will not be quenched</u> ; and they will be an abhorrence to all mankind.” | “They will see the dead bodies of those who have rebelled against me lying outside the city. But just as worms don’t stop until they devour the dead and <u>fire doesn’t stop until it destroys</u> , so the fire of the Lord will destroy and consume the wicked.” | The meaning of the text is changed to say the opposite of the original: from the fire not stopping to the fire will stop. |
| Matt. 10:28 | “ <u>Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul</u> ; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. | Don’t fear that you might be killed. <u>They may kill your body, but they cannot take away your eternal life.</u> God is the only One who has power over eternal life and death. | The original text separates the body and the soul, but this distinction is removed in the CWB. |

SDA Doctrine: The “Clear Word” paraphrase

| | New American Standard Bible | Clear Word Bible | Comment |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Matt. 25:46 | “These will go away into eternal punishment , but the righteous into eternal life.” | I have no choice but to end your lives , because in my kingdom everyone cares about everyone else.’” | This verse is so severely altered that it bears very little resemblance to the original. |
| Eph. 1:4-5 | just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world , that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, | Before this world was created, God determined that all who believed on His Son should be saved , and that we should be holy and blameless in His sight. 5 Because of His love, God decided to secure our destiny by adopting us as His children through Jesus Christ, according to His good pleasure and will. | In the original, God does the choosing regarding salvation. But in the CWB, God’s choice to save is based on his apparent foreknowledge of their choices. This is heretical since it means God looks in the future to learn and then makes choices based upon people’s choices rather than his own and independent sovereign will to predestine. |





Worldview Analysis & Heart Discernment

Worldview Questions: God, Man, & Identity

Question 1:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe about the nature of God?

- **Answers: Who or What is God?**

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|---|--|
| God as Father; part of Trinity; only God | SDAs hold a traditional Christian/biblical view of God; although there are some SDA teachings that point to <i>Arianism</i> (Arianism puts forth that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is not co-eternal with the Father and is a created being, thus denying the full divinity of Christ. The central tenet of Arianism is that there was a time when Christ did not exist ("there was a time when He was not"), suggesting that He is subordinate to the Father. This comes from some SDA teaching that in the OT, Jesus was Michael the archangel) |



Worldview Questions: God, Man, & Identity

Question 2:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe about the nature of Man?

- **Answers:** Who am I?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|---|---|
| Created in the image of God | Mostly in accordance with Scripture, although some teach man was created in the physical likeness of God as well as communicable attributes |
| Sinful and in need of salvation | Since the fall, born with a proclivity towards sin |
| Mortal vs immortal | Only redeemed man, in salvation, will be granted immortality. The unredeemed will face annihilation after punishment |
| Free will is the determining choice in salvation | Humans are given the ability to choose between good and evil. This capacity for choice is central to their understanding of moral accountability. Men choose to either accept or reject Christ via their usage of their free will |



Worldview Questions: God, Man, & Identity

Question 3:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe about the relationship between Man and God?

- **Answers:** Who am I (“We”) in relation to God?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Sinful and in need of a Savior | Separation occurred at the Fall, and mankind is in need of salvation to have a right relationship with God |



Worldview Questions: God, Man, & Identity

Question 4:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe is the collective identity of its adherents?

- **Answers:** Who are “We”? Who are “We” in relation to God?



| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|----------------------|--|
| Remnant Theology | SDAs believe that their church represents God’s remnant people, who remain faithful to His commandments and the teachings of Jesus during the end times. <i>“but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”</i> |
| Sabbath Observance | SDAs believe keeping the Sabbath (the 7 th day of the week - Saturday) is crucial in their relationship with God, serving as both a sign of loyalty and a means of spiritual renewal. |
| Called to Mission | They see themselves as commissioned to spread the gospel and prepare the world for the Second Coming of Christ, fulfilling the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20. |
| Continuationists | Believe in all the spiritual gifts, including prophecy, healing, etc. |
| Stewardship | Tithing is mandatory |
| Dietary restrictions | Abstinence from “unclean foods” as identified in the Old Testament, along with alcohol, tobacco, drugs |

Worldview Questions: Problem, Solution & Value

Question 5:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe is wrong with the world?

- **Answers:** What is the problem?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Sin | SDAs believe that the fundamental problem in the world is sin, which separates humanity from God. The pervasive nature of sin affects every aspect of life and relationships, leading to suffering, conflict, and death. |
| Loss of Moral Values | They see society's increasing disregard for biblical principles and ethical standards as a significant contributor to moral decline. Issues such as dishonesty, corruption, and injustice proliferate in a world that strays from God's commandments. |
| Poverty and Inequality | The church believes that systemic issues like poverty and income inequality contribute to societal strife. SDAs are committed to helping those in need and promoting social justice as an expression of God's love. |
| Environmental Degradation | SDAs are increasingly aware of the environmental crises facing the planet, such as climate change and resource depletion. They advocate for stewardship of God's creation and sustainable practices. |
| Health Crises | The church recognizes that many health issues, including lifestyle diseases, are prevalent due to poor choices and a lack of understanding of God's health principles. They promote a wholistic approach to health that includes physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. |
| Eschatological Concerns | SDAs believe that many of these world problems are part of a larger cosmic struggle between good and evil, culminating in the end times. They see signs of this struggle manifesting in the increasing turmoil of the world. |

Worldview Questions: Problem, Solution & Value

Question 6:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe is the solution to what's wrong?

- **Answers:** What is the solution?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Salvation through Jesus Christ | SDAs hold that accepting Jesus Christ as Savior is the fundamental solution to the problem of sin. This provides redemption, reconciliation with God, and hope for eternal life. |
| Moral Restoration | SDAs advocate for a return to biblical morals and values, believing that living according to God's commandments leads to a more just, compassionate, and ethical society. They emphasize the importance of a lifestyle that reflects a commitment to God, including honesty, integrity, and compassion towards others. |
| Social Justice and Charity | Adventists are encouraged to engage in acts of service, charity, and advocacy for social justice. They believe that helping those in need and addressing systemic issues like poverty can significantly improve societal conditions. |
| Environmental Stewardship | Creation Care: The church emphasizes the importance of environmental stewardship, encouraging practices that protect and preserve the earth. They believe that caring for creation is part of fulfilling God's mandates to humanity. |
| Wholistic Health Approaches | SDAs promote healthy living as part of God's plan for humanity, advocating for well-balanced diets, exercise, and a healthy lifestyle. Their health message aims to reduce lifestyle-related diseases and improve quality of life. |
| Eschatological Perspective | Adventists believe in a future hope where Christ will return to fully restore the world and eradicate sin, injustice, and suffering (Revelation 21:1-4). This hope inspires them to work diligently for positive change in the present. |

Worldview Questions: Problem, Solution & Value

Question 7:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** teach is the way to live in the world based on ‘the time’?

- **Answers:** How should I (“We”) live today, given ‘the time’? (*kairos**)?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Personal Relationship with God | SDAs encourage individuals to cultivate a personal relationship with God through prayer, Bible study, and worship. This relationship serves as the foundation for making decisions and facing challenges. |
| Adherence to Scripture | Living according to biblical teachings is vital. SDAs emphasize keeping God’s commandments, including the observance of the Sabbath, and following Christ’s example in daily life. |
| Physical and Mental Health | SDAs promote a holistic approach to health, which includes a balanced diet, regular exercise, and mental well-being. This encouragement stems from the belief that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. |
| Service and Compassion | Adventists are called to engage in their communities through acts of service, charity, and social justice initiatives. They emphasize the importance of helping those in need and addressing societal issues. |
| Sharing the Gospel | SDAs teach believers have a responsibility to share their faith with others. This involves both personal witness and organized evangelistic efforts to spread the message of Christ’s love and the imminent Second Coming. |
| Awareness of Times | Adventists teach that believers should be aware of the signs of the times as noted in Scripture. This awareness includes understanding the moral and spiritual challenges of the current age and preparing for Christ’s return. |

Worldview Questions: Problem, Solution & Value

Question 8:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** teach its adherents to value most in life?

- **Answers:** What shall I (“We”) desire, pursue, and love?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Faith and Spiritual Growth | The foremost value is cultivating a deep, personal relationship with God through prayer, Scripture study, and worship. Spiritual growth is essential for living a blessed and fulfilling life. |
| Compassion for Others | Loving one’s neighbor is a central teaching. SDAs advocate for acts of kindness, service, and charity as expressions of God’s love, reflecting Christ’s example. |
| Holistic Health | A commitment to physical, mental, and spiritual health is highly valued. SDAs teach the importance of a balanced diet, regular exercise, and maintaining emotional well-being as part of honoring God with one's body. |
| Eternal Perspective | The belief in salvation through Jesus Christ and the hope of eternal life are central to SDA teachings. This future hope encourages adherents to live purposefully and maintain focus on the promises of God. |

Worldview Questions: Direction, End & Heart

Question 9:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe is the end purpose of Man?

- **Answers:** Where am I (“We”) going (telos*)?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|--------------------|--|
| For the redeemed | After “soul sleep”, eternal life (immortality) with the Lord |
| For the unredeemed | After “soul sleep”, punishment culminating in annihilation / destruction (mortality) |



Worldview Questions: Direction, End & Heart

Question 10:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe is the end purpose of the Existence?

- **Answers:** Where is the whole world going?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Great Controversy | SDAs view history as a cosmic struggle between good and evil, often referred to as the “Great Controversy.” This conflict will culminate in God's ultimate victory over sin and evil, demonstrating His love and justice. |
| Judgment Day | SDAs believe that the world is heading towards a final judgment where every individual will be held accountable for their choices and actions (Revelation 20:11-15). This judgment will confirm God's justice and mercy. |
| New Earth | Following the final judgment, SDAs hold that God will recreate the world as a new earth free from sin, death, and suffering (Revelation 21:1-4). This new creation will allow for the fulfillment of God’s original intentions for humanity. |
| Eternal Life for the Righteous | Those who accept Christ and live according to His teachings will receive eternal life in the newly created world. They will enjoy a direct relationship with God and experience the fullness of joy (John 3:16; Revelation 22:3-5). |
| Eradication of Evil | Adventists believe that all evil will be eradicated. Following the final judgment, Satan and his followers will be destroyed, ensuring that sin will never arise again (Revelation 20:9-10). |



Worldview Questions: Direction, End & Heart

Question 11:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** reveal about the heart state of its adherents?

- **Answers:** Where is their heart? How do I as a believer discern their heart?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|--------------------------|---|
| Eschatological Focus | A belief in the imminent return of Christ and the ultimate restoration of the world reflects a heart that is oriented toward future hope. This perspective instills purpose in daily living, encouraging adherence to faith and missions. |
| Desire for Connection | SDAs emphasize the importance of cultivating a personal relationship with God. This reflects a heart that seeks communion, guidance, and spiritual nourishment through prayer, Bible study, and worship. |
| Keeping the Commandments | Keeping the commandments (especially the 4 th commandment (Sabbath)) is seen as paramount. |



Worldview Questions: Christ, Gospel & Witness

Question 12:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** believe about the nature, work, and person of Christ?

- **Answers:** What do they *think* about Christ? What do they *do* with Him?

| Aspect | SDA Perspective |
|--|--|
| Michael of the Old Testament | Some SDA teachings include a view that Jesus in the Old Testament was Michael the Archangel |
| Fully Divine and Fully Human | SDAs affirm the doctrine of the Incarnation, believing that Jesus is both fully God and fully man. He is part of the Trinity, co-eternal and co-equal with God the Father and the Holy Spirit. |
| Redemption and Salvation | Central to SDA belief is that Christ's purpose was to redeem humanity from sin. This is accomplished through His life, death, and resurrection. His sacrificial death is seen as the pivotal event for salvation. |
| Ministry in the Heavenly Sanctuary (Investigative Judgment) | Jesus is currently conducting the investigative judgment, which reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. 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. |
| Example of Righteous Living | Jesus is viewed as the ultimate example of a faithful life. SDAs strive to follow His teachings and model their behavior after His character, embodying love, compassion, and humility. |
| Imminent Return | SDAs place significant emphasis on the Second Coming of Christ, believing that He will return literally and visibly to gather His followers, judge the world, and establish His eternal kingdom. |

Worldview Questions: Christ, Gospel & Witness

Question 13:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** reveal about how Christians can/should evangelize them?

- **Answers:** How do I as a believer share the Gospel and teach them Christ?
- This is “Speaking the truth in love”.

A difficulty here is determining if the SDA needs to be witnessed to, in the traditional sense – are they trusting in Christ alone for salvation, or are they trusting in Jesus + their own works of righteousness (i.e., keeping all the commandments). If their view is “both/and”, then yes, they need to be witnessed to from the true Gospel – that it is through Christ Alone that we are saved; it is of the grace of God, not keeping the law, that we are saved.

- Ephesians 2:8-9
- Titus 3:5-7
- James 2:10
- Romans ch. 3-8



Worldview Questions: Christ, Gospel & Witness

Question 14:

What do **Seventh-Day Adventists** reveal about how Christians can minister to them?

- **Answers:** How do I as a believer show them Christ and reflect Him rightly?
- This is “Loving my neighbor as myself”

There are numerous Scriptural principles that guide how we as Christians can interact with Mormons just as we should with everyone who doesn't know Jesus Savior and Lord.

- **1 Peter 3:15** – “But sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, *always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you*, yet with gentleness and fear,”
- **Ephesians 4:15** – “But *speaking the truth in love*, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, that is Christ.”
- **Galatians 6:10** – “So then, *while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people*, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”
- **1 Thessalonians 5:15** – “See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but *always seek after that which is good* for one another and *for all men*.”
- **Colossians 3:12** – “So, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, *put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience*.”



Suggested Resources for Further Study

The Kingdom of the Cults by Walter Martin (Bethany House)

<https://www.amazon.com/Kingdom-Cults-Definitive-Work-Subject/dp/0764232657/>

Seventh Day Adventists (official SDA website)

<https://adventist.org/>

Questions on Doctrine (1957)

<https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Books/QOD19570101.pdf>

Seventh Day Adventists Profile (Watchman Fellowship)

<https://www.watchman.org/profiles/pdf/adventismprofile.pdf>

Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry (CARM)

<https://carm.org/seventh-day-adventism/the-clear-word-bible/>

