

# Apologetics Course

## Lesson Five

### Christian Cults & False Christs

- Why it Matters – the Stakes
  - Counterfeits & the Truth
  - Review of the Departures from Christianity – why they are so DIFFERENT.
  - Labs Workshop
  - Key Scholars – References
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#### SECTION 1 — COUNTERFIET DETECTION

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##### The Counterfeit Bill Illustration

Begin class by holding up a bill (or displaying an image of one). Ask:

**"How does the U.S. Treasury train agents to spot counterfeit money?"**

**TEACHER NOTE:** This is the entire approach of this lesson. We are not going to study every cult in exhaustive detail. We are going to know the real Jesus, the real Gospel, and the real authority of Scripture so well that every counterfeit becomes detectable on contact. The best defense against a false gospel is a deep knowledge of the true one.

Today we are going to look at six major groups that use Christian vocabulary but have fundamentally redefined Christian terms. By the end of tonight, you will know their core errors AND know how to ask the right questions when you meet one of their members.


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#### SECTION 2 — WHO ARE THEY?

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##### Six Groups, Three Fatal Errors

Walk through the comparison chart (see companion reference document). For each group, hit three points: **Origin, Key Error on Jesus, Key Error on Salvation.**

GROUP	FOUNDED BY	JESUS ERROR	SALVATION ERROR
<b>Jehovah's Witnesses</b>	C.T. Russell / J.F. Rutherford	Jesus = created angel (Michael)	Works + Watchtower loyalty
<b>Mormonism (LDS)</b>	Joseph Smith (1830)	Jesus = separate God, not eternal	Grace + law + ordinances
<b>WMSCOG</b>	Ahn Sahng-hong (b.1918, Korea; founded 1964)	Ahn = 2nd coming of Christ (mission began 1948 baptism)	OT feast-keeping required
<b>Christian Science</b>	Mary Baker Eddy (1879)	Jesus didn't truly die; matter = illusion	Right thinking replaces atonement
<b>Scientology</b>	L. Ron Hubbard (1954)	Jesus is irrelevant / not mentioned	Auditing courses for a fee
<b>SDA </b>	Ellen G. White, Joseph Bates, James White & others (1863)	Michael = pre-incarnate title only; deity affirmed	Grace affirmed BUT scapegoat + soul sleep errors

**SDA CLARIFICATION:** SDA occupies a different tier. They affirm the Trinity and Christ's full deity. Their Michael teaching is that 'Michael' is a pre-incarnate title for the Son of God (a Christophany) — not that Jesus is a created being. This is doctrinal error, not heresy about Christ's identity. Their main issues are: scapegoat atonement, soul sleep, Ellen White's authority.

## CHRISTIAN CULTS & COUNTERFEIT GOSPELS

Origins, Key Beliefs & Biblical Responses | Compiled from CARM.org

### PART 1 — BELIEFS & ORIGINS COMPARISON CHART

GROUP	FOUNDED	FOUNDER / ORIGIN	VIEW OF GOD	VIEW OF JESUS	SALVATION	SCRIPTURE / AUTHORITY
Jehovah's Witnesses	1872 / 1931	Charles Taze Russell (1872); renamed by J.F. Rutherford (1931)	Strict monotheism — Jehovah alone. No Trinity. God is not omnipresent or omniscient in the traditional sense.	Jesus is Michael the Archangel made human — a created being, not God. Spiritual resurrection only; no bodily resurrection.	Faith + works + loyalty to the Watchtower org. Only 144,000 go to heaven. Others gain 'everlasting life' on a paradise earth.	New World Translation (altered). Bible only valid through Watchtower interpretation. Multiple false prophecies (1914, 1925, 1975).
Mormonism (LDS)	1830	Joseph Smith Jr. (Vermont). Claimed angelic visits; 'translated' golden plates as the Book of Mormon.	Polytheistic. God was once a man who progressed to godhood. God the Father has a physical body. Heavenly Mother also exists.	Jesus is a separate God, spirit brother of Lucifer. Atonement began in Gethsemane. Jesus visited Americas after resurrection.	Grace + works + obedience to LDS laws, ordinances, and accepting Joseph Smith as prophet. Multiple tiers of heaven.	Bible 'as far as it is translated correctly' (subordinate). Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants, Pearl of Great Price are added scripture.
World Mission Society Church of God (WMSCOG)	1964	Ahn Sahng-hong (b. 1918, South Korea). Born to Buddhist parents; claimed to be Christ's 2nd coming after baptism (1948). <u>Zahng Gil-jah</u> declared 'God the Mother'.	Modalist + <u>bitheist</u> . Father, Son, Spirit are one person. There is a literal female God — 'Heavenly Mother' (God the <u>Mother</u> ).	WMSCOG teaches Ahn Sahng-hong was the Second Coming of Christ (beginning his mission at his 1948 baptism, not his birth). Jesus' true name now revealed through him.	Keeping Old Testament feasts (Passover, Sabbath, etc.) is required for salvation. Grace alone is rejected.	Bible reinterpreted through WMSCOG leadership. Ahn Sahng-hong's writings are authoritative. Heavy control over members.
<u>Seventh-Day Adventism (SDA)</u>	1863	Co-founded by Ellen G. White, Joseph Bates, James White & others. Grew from Millerite movement after failed 1844 'Great Disappointment' prediction.	Trinitarian — affirms Father, Son, Spirit as one God in three persons. More orthodox than most groups here. Does NOT deny the Trinity.	Affirms Jesus as fully God and Savior. Teaches 'Michael' is a pre-incarnate title/role of Christ (a Christophany). NOT that Jesus is a created angel. Christ's deity is affirmed.	Grace + faith affirmed, BUT: Satan will bear our sins at end (scapegoat doctrine). Soul sleep — dead have no consciousness. Possible to lose salvation.	Bible is authoritative, but Ellen G. White's writings treated as prophetic and used to interpret Scripture. Some doctrines derive from her visions.

## PART 2 — BIBLICAL / CHRISTIAN RESPONSE PER GROUP

GROUP	CHRISTIAN RESPONSE & KEY SCRIPTURES
<b>Jehovah's Witnesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus is God (John 1:1 — correctly translated: 'the Word WAS God,' not 'a god');</li> <li>• Thomas confessed 'My Lord and my God' (John 20:28);</li> <li>• Jesus accepted worship (Matt. 28:9).</li> <li>• The physical resurrection is confirmed in Luke 24:39 ('a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have').</li> <li>• The Watchtower's own false prophecies disqualify it as a prophet of God (Deut. 18:22).</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Verses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isaiah 9:6 — the Son is called 'Mighty God, Everlasting Father.'</li> <li>• John 8:58 — 'Before Abraham was, I AM' (echoing Exodus 3:14).</li> </ul>
<b>Mormonism (LDS)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bible teaches only ONE eternal God who was never a man (Ps. 90:2; Isa. 43:10; 44:6, 8; 45:5).</li> <li>• God does not have a physical body (John 4:24; Luke 24:39).</li> <li>• Salvation is by grace through faith alone — not through Mormon law and ordinances (Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:28; Gal. 1:8-9 — 'a different gospel').</li> <li>• The Book of Mormon contradicts itself and the Bible, lacks archaeological support, and was written by a man with documented occult involvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Verse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Galatians 1:8-9 — 'Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse.'</li> </ul>
<b>WMSCOG</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bible never introduces a female deity — God is consistently described as Father and revealed as one (Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:4-6).</li> <li>• Galatians 4:26 ('Jerusalem above is our mother') is an allegory Paul himself labels as such (v. 24) — not a divine being.</li> <li>• Elohim's plural form is used with singular verbs throughout Genesis 1, pointing to the Trinity, not a second god.</li> <li>• No credible prophecy of a 'second coming' from Korea.</li> <li>• Jesus warned: 'False Christs and false prophets will appear' (Matt. 24:24).</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Verse:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isaiah 43:10 — 'Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.'</li> <li>• There is no God the Mother in Scripture.</li> </ul>

## Seventh-Day Adventism

**IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION — SDA & MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL:**

- SDA does NOT teach that Jesus is a created angel (that is the JW error).
- SDA teaches that 'Michael' is a pre-incarnate title/role of the eternal Son of God — a Christophany, similar to how many Reformers understood 'the Angel of the LORD' in the OT as the pre-incarnate Christ.

**The three views compared:**

(1) Orthodox: 'Angel of the LORD' = pre-incarnate Christ (Christophany) — VALID.

(2) SDA: 'Michael' specifically = pre-incarnate Christ — goes beyond Scripture, but does NOT deny Christ's deity.

(3) JW: Jesus IS Michael, a created being — denies Christ's deity entirely.

**Why the SDA Michael identification is still problematic:**

- Hebrews 1:5-14 is written precisely to show that Christ is categorically above and distinct from all angels.
- Dan. 10:13 calls Michael 'one of the chief princes' — language that does not fit the supreme Son of God.
- In Jude 9, Michael 'did not dare' rebuke Satan but deferred saying 'the Lord rebuke you' — inconsistent with Jesus, who rebuked demons directly with full authority (Mark 1:25; 9:25).

**Other aberrant SDA doctrines:**

- The 'scapegoat' doctrine — that Satan ultimately bears our sins at the end — undermines Christ's complete and final atonement (Heb. 9:12; 10:14).
- Soul sleep denies conscious existence after death (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 5:8).
- Ellen G. White's writings functionally guide doctrine despite not being officially equal to Scripture — a dangerous arrangement (Rev. 22:18-19).

**Key Verse:**

- Hebrews 1:5 — 'For to which of the angels did God ever say, You are My Son?'
- The entire argument of Hebrews 1 is that Jesus is worshipped BY angels — He does not belong to their category.

## PART 3 — THE CORE DEPARTURE: WHY THESE GROUPS ARE NOT TRUE CHRISTIANITY

Every group in this chart departs from authentic Christianity in one or more of three irreducible categories: **CLARIFICATION ON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM:** SDA is included because of aberrant doctrines (Michael/Archangel identification, scapegoat atonement, soul sleep, Ellen G. White's prophetic authority), but it occupies a different tier than the other groups. SDA affirms the Trinity, Christ's full deity, bodily resurrection, and salvation by grace — core essentials the other groups deny. The Michael teaching is a doctrinal error, not a denial of Christ's divinity. Treat SDA as a group requiring correction on specific points, not as a group that has abandoned Christianity's foundation.

#	THE DEPARTURE	WHAT THESE GROUPS TEACH INSTEAD	BIBLICAL ANCHOR
1	<p><b>A FALSE CHRIST</b> — They redefine Jesus as something less than fully God and fully man, stripping him of the divine identity the Bible ascribes to him.</p>	<p>JW: Jesus is a created angel. LDS: Jesus is a separate God, spirit-brother of Lucifer. WMSCOG: Jesus returned as a Korean man (Ahn Sahng-hong). Christian Science: Jesus never actually died. Scientology: Jesus is irrelevant. NOTE: SDA does NOT belong in this category — they affirm Christ's full deity. Their Michael error is a misidentification of a pre-incarnate title, not a denial of who Christ is.</p>	<p>John 1:1,14 — 'The Word was God...and became flesh.' John 8:58 — 'Before Abraham was, I AM.' Colossians 2:9 — 'In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.'</p>
2	<p><b>A FALSE GOSPEL</b> — They add human effort, organizational loyalty, ritual observance, or new revelation as necessary components of salvation — replacing grace alone through faith alone.</p>	<p>JW: Watchtower loyalty + works. LDS: Celestial law + Joseph Smith + ordinances. WMSCOG: Old Testament feasts required. Christian Science: Right understanding replaces atonement. Scientology: Auditing courses earn spiritual progress.</p>	<p>Ephesians 2:8-9 — 'By grace you have been saved through faith — not by works.' Galatians 1:8-9 — Any 'other gospel' is accursed. Romans 3:28 — Justified by faith apart from works of the law.</p>
3	<p><b>A FALSE AUTHORITY</b> — They supplement or supplant Scripture with a founder's writings, an organization's interpretation, new revelation, or additional 'scriptures' — undermining the Bible's sufficiency and finality.</p>	<p>JW: Watchtower controls all biblical interpretation. LDS: Book of Mormon, D&amp;C, and Pearl of Great Price supplement/override the Bible. WMSCOG: Ahn Sahng-hong's writings are authoritative. Christian Science: Eddy's Science and Health reinterprets all Scripture.</p>	<p>2 Timothy 3:16-17 — 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching...' Revelation 22:18 — Do not add to this book. Jude 3 — Contend for 'the faith once for all delivered to the saints.'</p>

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## SUMMARY — THE IRREDUCIBLE ESSENTIALS OF AUTHENTIC CHRISTIANITY

Historic, biblical Christianity stands on these four non-negotiable pillars that all groups above deny or distort:

ONE TRIUNE GOD	THE DIVINE CHRIST	GRACE ALONE	SCRIPTURE ALONE
Father, Son, Holy Spirit — three persons, one eternal essence. Not three gods, not one person in three modes.  Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; John 10:30	Fully God and fully man. Virgin born, lived sinless, died as substitutionary atonement, rose bodily, will return visibly.  John 1:1,14; Phil. 2:6-8; 1 Cor. 15:3-4	Salvation is entirely a free gift — not earned, not maintained by ritual, not mediated by any organization or living prophet.  Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Rom. 5:1	The 66-book Bible is the final, sufficient, and inerrant word of God. No new revelation, no organizational filter, no competing text.  2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rev. 22:18; Ps. 19:7

"Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." — Jude 1:3

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## SECTION 3 — THE THREE CORE DEPARTURES

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Every group above fails on one or more of these three irreducible tests:

### DEPARTURE 1 — A FALSE CHRIST

**The Error:** They redefine who Jesus is — stripping Him of His full divine identity.

**Pattern:** JW (created angel), LDS (separate god), WMSCOG (Korean man), Christian Science (never died), Scientology (irrelevant)

**John 1:1,14** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God... and the Word became flesh."

**Colossians 2:9** "For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form."

**John 8:58** "Before Abraham was, I AM."

### DEPARTURE 2 — A FALSE GOSPEL

**The Error:** They add human effort, organizational loyalty, or new revelation as requirements for salvation.

**Pattern:** JW (Watchtower works), LDS (celestial law + ordinances), WMSCOG (feast-keeping), Christian Science (right thinking), Scientology (paid auditing)

**Ephesians 2:8-9** "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast."

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**Galatians 1:8** "Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse."

## DEPARTURE 3 — A FALSE AUTHORITY

**The Error:** They supplement or replace Scripture with founder's writings, organizational interpretation, or competing texts.

**Pattern:** JW (Watchtower), LDS (Book of Mormon + D&C + PoGP), WMSCOG (Ahn Sahng-hong's writings), Christian Science (Eddy's Science and Health), SDA (Ellen G. White's visions)

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."

**Revelation 22:18** "I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll."

**Jude 1:3** "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints."

## SECTION 4 — THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS : SDA CLARIFICATION

Use the three-tier chart to show students how to think carefully about spectrum of error:

TIER	TEACHING	ASSESSMENT
<span style="color: green;">✔</span> <b>ORTHODOX</b>	'Angel of the LORD' in OT = pre-incarnate Christ (Christophany). E.g. Exodus 3, Judges 13. Held by Calvin, Luther, many Reformers.	VALID — Scripture supports this. Hebrews 1 does not contradict it since these appear before the incarnation.
<span style="color: orange;">⚠</span> <b>SDA</b>	'Michael the Archangel' specifically = pre-incarnate name/title of Christ. Jesus's deity is fully affirmed.	PROBLEMATIC — Goes beyond Scripture. Heb. 1:5, Dan. 10:13, Jude 9 create difficulties. Ellen White drives this beyond what the text supports.
<span style="color: red;">✘</span> <b>JW</b>	Michael = Jesus, a created being. Jesus is not God. He is the highest angel, but categorically not divine.	HERESY — Denies Christ's deity. Directly contradicts John 1:1, Col. 2:9, Heb. 1. This is a different religion.

## SECTION 5 — THE COLUMBO METHOD: Three Question Types

Greg Koukl's Columbo Tactic uses questions to let the other person's worldview defeat itself. Three levels:

TYPE	PURPOSE	TEMPLATE QUESTION
<b>Q1 — OPEN</b>	Understand their position	"What do you mean by that?" / "Help me understand — what exactly does your church teach about Jesus?"
<b>Q2 — PROBE</b>	Expose assumptions and ask for evidence	"How did you come to believe that?" / "What evidence would you give for that claim?" / "Is that what the original text actually says?"
<b>Q3 — POLEMICAL</b>	Expose internal contradiction or self-defeat	"If that's true, how do you account for [contradicting fact]?" / "Does your own scripture actually support that — or does it contradict it?"

**KEY PRINCIPLE:** The goal of Columbo is NOT to win an argument. It is to put a stone in their shoe — a question they cannot easily dismiss that keeps working on them after the conversation ends. Ask, listen, plant. Don't preach.

## SECTION 6 — ROLE-PLAY LAB

Pair students. One plays the cult member, one the Christian. After each round, swap. Instructor calls time at 3-4 minutes per scenario. Debrief after each pair.

### SCENARIO 1 — JEHOVAH'S WITNESS

#### Setup

A JW knocks on your door. They open with: "Did you know that most Christians have been misled about who Jesus really is? The Bible never calls Jesus God — that was added by the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD."

#### Columbo Response Script

SPEAKER	LINE / QUESTION
<b>JW</b>	"The Bible never calls Jesus God. John 1:1 in the original Greek says Jesus is 'a god' — a lesser divine being, not Jehovah himself."
<b>YOU</b>	<b>[Q1 — Open]</b> "That's really interesting. What do you mean by 'a god'? How many gods does your worldview say exist?"
<b>JW</b>	"Well, Jehovah is the only true God. Jesus is a mighty divine being, but subordinate."
<b>YOU</b>	<b>[Q2 — Probe]</b> "So there are two divine beings — one greater, one lesser? Can you show me where the New World Translation supports that from Isaiah 43:10? It says 'before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.' If there's only one God, how is Jesus 'a god'?"
<b>JW</b>	"Jesus is called 'a god' because he reflects Jehovah's qualities..."
<b>YOU</b>	<b>[Q3 — Polemical]</b> "Here's what I'm genuinely puzzled about — in John 20:28, Thomas looks at the risen Jesus and says 'My Lord and my God.' If Jesus were just 'a god,' why didn't Jesus correct him? Every time a human or angel accepted worship in Scripture they immediately said 'Don't do that' (Rev. 22:8-9). But Jesus accepted it. If Jesus isn't Jehovah, doesn't that make Thomas guilty of idolatry — and Jesus guilty of allowing it?"

### Debrief Questions for Class

- **What assumption** in the JW worldview did Q3 expose?
- **Why is the Thomas passage** so difficult for the Watchtower position?
- **What would you do** if they said 'Thomas was just being emotional'?

## SCENARIO 2 — LATTER-DAY SAINTS (MORMON)

### Setup

A Mormon missionary visits your home. They say: "We believe in Jesus too! In fact, we believe in a restored Christianity — the church that was lost after the apostles died and was brought back through Joseph Smith. We just have more scripture than you do."

### Columbo Response Script

SPEAKER	LINE / QUESTION
LDS	"We believe in Jesus. Our Jesus is the same Jesus of the Bible. We just have the fullness of the gospel through the Book of Mormon and living prophets."
YOU	<b>[Q1 — Open]</b> "I appreciate that. Help me understand — is the Jesus you believe in the same being as God the Father, or a separate being?"
LDS	"They're separate beings. The Father has a body of flesh and bones. Jesus is His son, a separate God."
YOU	<b>[Q2 — Probe]</b> "How does that fit with Isaiah 44:6 where God says 'I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God'? Or with Jesus saying in John 10:30 'I and the Father are one'? If they're separate Gods, how many Gods exist in your worldview?"
LDS	"There are three separate Gods — the Father, Son and Spirit — who are unified in purpose."
YOU	<b>[Q3 — Polemical]</b> "I want to be fair here, so I'm going to ask directly: Joseph Smith taught that God the Father was once a man who progressed to godhood — and that faithful Mormons can also become gods. If that's the case, isn't your God a created being at some point in his past? And if God was once created, who created him? Doesn't that lead to an infinite regress of gods — which Galatians 1:8-9 calls a different gospel?"

### Debrief Questions for Class

- **What is the logical problem** with a God who was once a man?
- **How does the Mormon view** of God contradict Psalm 90:2 ('from everlasting to everlasting, you are God')?
- **Is 'unified in purpose'** the same thing as 'one' in John 10:30? What other passages clarify?

## SCENARIO 3 — WORLD MISSION SOCIETY CHURCH OF GOD (WMSCOG)

## Setup

Two WMSCOG members approach you at a coffee shop: "Did you know the Bible actually reveals that God has a mother? Genesis 1:26 says 'Let us make man in our image' — that 'us' includes both Father and Mother. We call her Heavenly Mother, and she is here today as Zahng Gil-jah."

## Columbo Response Script

SPEAKER	LINE / QUESTION
WMSCOG	"The Bible reveals Heavenly Mother. Galatians 4:26 says 'the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.' That's God the Mother."
YOU	<b>[Q1 — Open]</b> "That's a striking claim. I've never heard that before — can you walk me through that passage in context?"
WMSCOG	"Paul is showing that just as there's a physical mother, there's a spiritual Heavenly Mother — and she is the source of eternal life."
YOU	<b>[Q2 — Probe]</b> "If I read Galatians 4:24 — just two verses earlier — Paul says 'these things are being taken figuratively.' He calls it an allegory. If Paul himself labels it as figurative, how does it become a literal divine being?"
WMSCOG	"There are many passages — the Spirit and the Bride in Revelation 22 also points to Heavenly Mother..."
YOU	<b>[Q3 — Polemical]</b> "I want to understand something that's important to me. You said Zahng Gil-jah IS Heavenly Mother — a living God on earth today. Can I ask: Isaiah 43:10 says 'Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.' If God cannot be 'formed,' how can a woman born in 1943 in South Korea become God? Doesn't your own doctrine contradict the verse you use to prove it?"

## Debrief Questions for Class

- **What is the danger** of pulling a verse out of context without reading the surrounding passage?
- **How would you respond** if they say 'You're reading the Bible with Western eyes'?
- Isaiah 43:10 says God cannot be 'formed.' **How does this verse** answer almost every false god claim at once?

## SCENARIO 6 — SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST (NUANCED)

### Setup

An SDA friend says: "I think you're wrong to group us with cults like JW's. We believe in the Trinity, salvation by grace, and Christ's full deity. Our teaching that Michael is a name for Christ before the incarnation is no different than saying Christ appeared as the Angel of the LORD in the Old Testament."

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** This scenario is deliberately more challenging. The SDA member makes some valid points. The goal here is NOT to demolish them as a cult — it's to distinguish valid from invalid claims, model careful thinking, and still plant a question about their doctrinal problems (scapegoat atonement + Ellen White).

## Columbo Response Script

SPEAKER	LINE / QUESTION
SDA	"We're not like JW's. We affirm the Trinity and Christ's deity. 'Michael' is just a pre-incarnate name for the Son of God — many Reformers held a similar view of the Angel of the LORD."
YOU	<b>[Q1 — Open]</b> "You're right that I need to be careful not to lump everyone together. Help me understand the difference — what exactly does SDA teach about Michael, and how is it different from what JW's teach?"
SDA	"JW's say Jesus IS Michael, a created angel. We say 'Michael' is a title the pre-incarnate Son used before His incarnation. He's still fully God — just revealed in an angelic role in the OT."
YOU	<b>[Q2 — Probe]</b> "That's a fair distinction, and I appreciate it. But I'm trying to understand one thing: Hebrews 1 goes out of its way to say Jesus is superior to all angels — He is worshipped BY them, not among them. Dan. 10:13 calls Michael 'one of the chief princes' — not THE supreme prince. Does placing Christ in the 'archangel' category, even as a pre-incarnate title, fit what Hebrews 1 is actually arguing?"
SDA	"Hebrews 1 is about the incarnate Christ. In his pre-incarnate state, Christ operated in angelic roles..."
YOU	<b>[Q3 — Polemical]</b> "I respect the distinction you're making. But let me ask about something separate — your doctrine of the scapegoat. Ellen White taught that at the end, Satan bears our sins as the antitypical scapegoat. Hebrews 9:12 says Christ 'entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.' If Christ's atonement is eternal and complete, what role does Satan play in bearing sin? Doesn't adding Satan to the atonement picture subtract from the sufficiency of the cross?"

### Debrief Questions for Class

- **How should we treat SDA members differently** than JW or LDS members in a conversation?
- **Why is the scapegoat doctrine** more theologically dangerous than the Michael question?
- **What does Hebrews 10:14 teach** ('by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy') about the completeness of Christ's atonement?

## SECTION 7 — DEBRIEF & SUMMARY (8 Minutes)

### The One Question That Cuts Through All of Them

**"Across all six scenarios, what was the one category of question that produced the most traction?"**

Drive toward this answer: the Q3 Polemical question — the one that exposes the **internal contradiction** within the other person's own system. You didn't have to prove Christianity. You simply showed that their system cannot sustain itself. That is the power of Columbo.

# The Real Jesus — Summary Statement

Read it together as a class:

The Jesus of Scripture is eternally God (John 1:1), became fully human (Phil. 2:6-8), died as our substitutionary atonement (1 Cor. 15:3-4), rose bodily (Luke 24:39), and is the ONLY way to the Father (John 14:6)

**No organization mediates this. No works earn it. No new prophet changes it.**

## ASSIGNMENT (TAKE HOME)

1. **Scripture Memory:** Memorize Galatians 1:8-9. Be ready to quote it next week.
2. **Conversation Log:** This week, initiate one conversation with someone outside the faith OR identify someone you know from one of these groups. Don't argue — just ask one Columbo Q1 question and write down what they said.
3. **Reading:** Greg Koukl, Tactics — Chapters 5-7 if available.
4. **Reflection Question:** "If a friend told you they were 'checking out' the WMSCOG because it 'seemed like Christianity,' what is the one thing you would most want them to know first — and how would you say it as a question rather than a statement?"

## QUICK REFERENCE: Polemical Q3 Questions by Group

Keep these in your back pocket for each group:

GROUP	POLEMICAL Q3 — THE STONE IN THE SHOE
JW	"In John 20:28, Thomas called Jesus 'My Lord and my God.' If Jesus is just 'a god,' not Jehovah, then why didn't Jesus correct Thomas — and why doesn't the New World Translation footnote that as idolatry?"
LDS	"Joseph Smith taught God was once a man who progressed to godhood. If that's true, then God was at some point created — so who created God? And if gods can be created, doesn't Galatians 1:8-9 — 'even if an angel from heaven preaches another gospel' — describe exactly what Joseph Smith claimed happened?"
WMSCOG	"Isaiah 43:10 says 'before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.' If Zahng Gil-jah became God the Mother, she was 'formed' in 1943. How do you reconcile a 'formed' God with a God who says no God can be formed?"
SDA	"Your scapegoat doctrine says Satan bears our sins at the end. But Hebrews 9:12 says Christ obtained 'eternal redemption' by his own blood 'once for all.' If Christ's atonement is eternal and complete, what sin is left for Satan to bear — and doesn't adding Satan to the atonement imply Christ's sacrifice was insufficient?"

Resource Follow Up: [www.onecalling.com](http://www.onecalling.com) (Pastor Mark Fineman)