

- **Purpose of the Study**

- Equipping believers to lovingly speak to people of other beliefs
 - Role of the Holy Spirit and our role in sharing the gospel
 - Standing on the authority and preservation of Scripture
 - Presenting the gospel as the power of God for salvation
 - Cults share a common desire to be accepted by God
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- **The Doctrine of the Trinity**

- Why it matters: cults deny the Trinity, resulting in a different Jesus
- Distinction between a being and a person
 - A being is what you are; a person is who you are
 - God is one being with three equal, distinct persons sharing the same substance

- **The Bible Teaches There Is One God**

- Deuteronomy 6:4
- Isaiah 45:5
- 1 Timothy 2:5

- **The Father Is God**

- John 6:27
- 1 Corinthians 8:6

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- **Jesus (the Son) Is God**

- Direct statements: John 1:1; John 20:28; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8
- Divine attributes
 - Eternal: John 8:58
 - Creator: Colossians 1:16
 - Receives worship: Matthew 14:33; Hebrews 1:6
 - Omnipresent: Psalm 139:7-8

- **The Holy Spirit Is God**

- Direct statements: Acts 5:3-4
- Divine attributes
 - Eternal: Hebrews 9:14
 - Omniscient: 1 Corinthians 2:10-11
 - Creator: Job 33:4; Genesis 1:2
- The Spirit speaks, teaches, and guides — not an impersonal force

- **The Father, Son, and Spirit Are Distinct Persons**

- Not the same person playing different roles
- All three appear together at the baptism of Jesus: Matthew 3:16-17
- Baptismal formula uses singular "name": Matthew 28:19
- Paul's benediction: 2 Corinthians 13:14
- Jesus prays to the Father: John 17 — they cannot be the same person
- The Spirit is "another Helper": John 14:16 — a distinct person

- **Summary: One God, Three Persons**
 - The word "Trinity" is not in Scripture, but the reality is
 - One "What" (God), three "Who's" (Father, Son, Spirit)
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- **The Trinity in the Old Testament**

- **Plurality Within God**
 - Genesis 1:26 — "Let us make man in our image"
 - Cannot refer to angels: we are not made in the image of angels; God alone creates
 - Genesis 3:22; Genesis 11:7; Isaiah 6:8 — plural pronouns used by God
 - "Us" does not refer to many gods; context confirms one LORD acting
 - **The Angel of the LORD**
 - A divine person distinct from God yet identified as God
 - Exodus 3:2-6 — Angel of the LORD appears; God speaks from the bush
 - **The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament**
 - Genesis 1:2 — Spirit active in creation
 - Isaiah 63:10 — the Spirit can be grieved
 - Psalm 51:11 — David prays for the Spirit's presence
 - **Isaiah 48:16 — A Trinitarian Verse**
 - A divine speaker says: "The Lord GOD has sent Me, and His Spirit"
 - Three persons visible: the Father, the Son (Me), the Holy Spirit
 - Context: Isaiah 48:12-13 — God declares He is the First and the Last and the Creator
 - **Connection to Revelation**
 - Revelation 1:17-18 — the glorified Christ declares "I am the First and the Last"
 - Revelation 2:8; Revelation 22:13 — Christ repeats this title
 - Isaiah 44:6 — the LORD alone is the First and the Last
 - Significance for responding to Jehovah's Witnesses who deny Christ's eternal deity
 - **Reverence and Awe of God**
 - John's response at the feet of Christ: Revelation 1:17
 - Peter's response at the miraculous catch of fish
 - Paul's humbling on the road to Damascus
 - A call to kneel rather than stand on our own strength
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- **A Simple Way to Explain the Trinity**

- Truth 1 — There is one God: Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5
- Truth 2 — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are each God
 - Father: 1 Peter 1:2
 - Son: John 1:1; Hebrews 1:8
 - Holy Spirit: Acts 5:3-4

- Truth 3 — They are distinct persons: Matthew 3:16-17; John 14:16; John 17
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- **Responding to Jehovah's Witness Objections**

- **Objection: "The Father is greater than Jesus" (John 14:28)**
 - Answer: Jesus speaks from His incarnation, having humbled Himself (Philippians 2:6-8); His nature did not change
 - **Objection: "Jesus is the firstborn of creation" (Colossians 1:15)**
 - Answer: "Firstborn" means preeminent, not created; refers to position, not birth order (Psalm 89:27)
 - **Objection: "Jesus is God's Son, not God"**
 - Answer: John 5:18 — the Jews sought to kill Jesus for making Himself equal with God
 - **Objection: "The Trinity is not in the Bible"**
 - Answer: The word "Bible" is not in the Bible either; the teaching is clearly present (Matthew 28:19)
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- **JW Failed Prophecies**

- **Predictions About 1874**
 - Charles Taze Russell taught Christ returned invisibly in 1874
 - The date was later changed to 1914
- **Predictions About 1914**
 - End of the Gentile Times expected to bring visible destruction or Armageddon
 - Nothing visible occurred; the organization reinterpreted the date
- **Predictions About 1925**
 - Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other patriarchs expected to be resurrected
 - Beth-Sarim mansion built in San Diego for their anticipated arrival
 - 1925 passed without fulfillment; the Society admitted being "overly enthusiastic"
- **Predictions About 1975**
 - End of 6,000 years of human history expected to usher in the Millennial Reign
 - 1975 passed without event; the organization acknowledged members were "disappointed"
- **Scripture's Standard for False Prophecy**
 - Deuteronomy 18:20-22 — a prophet whose word does not come to pass has not spoken for God
 - 1 John 4:1 — test the spirits
 - Acts 17:11 — examine the Scriptures
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:21 — test all things
 - Matthew 7:15-20 — false prophets known by their fruits
 - Isaiah 46:9-10 — God's prophecy is always 100% accurate

- **JW Beliefs vs. Scripture**

- **Do Christians and JWs Read the Same Bible?**
 - No — JWs reject the Trinity and teach Jesus is a created being
- **Isaiah 9:6**
 - The Son is called "Mighty God" (Hebrew: El Gibbor) — a name for Jehovah
 - Isaiah 10:21 uses the same Hebrew term for Jehovah
- **Key Passages JWs Reinterpret**
 - Colossians 1:15-17 — JWs deny Jesus is eternal
 - Philippians 2:5-11 — JWs deny Jesus is equal to Jehovah
 - Hebrews 1:6-8 — JWs deny the worship of Jesus
 - John 8:58 — JWs minimize the "I AM" statement
 - John 10:30-33 — JWs limit "one" to unity of purpose
 - Luke 23:43 — JWs reinterpret "today" as referring to the future
- **Establishing Who God Is as the Standard**
 - Isaiah 43:10-11 — before God there was no other; besides Him there is no savior
 - John 14:6 — Jesus is the only way to the Father
- **Are JWs Saved?**
 - Only the Lord can judge
 - Relevant passages: John 14:6; Romans 10:9; Acts 4:12

- **Summary of JW Core Beliefs**

- Armageddon will destroy all except Jehovah's Witnesses
- Birthdays strictly forbidden; violations can result in disfellowship
- Blood transfusions absolutely forbidden
- True Christianity vanished after the apostles; restored only through the Watchtower organization
- Christ returned invisibly in 1914 and rules through the Watchtower Society
- The cross is considered a pagan symbol; Witnesses expected to destroy any cross they own
- God the Father alone is God; Jesus is Michael the archangel in human form; the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force
- Only 144,000 go to heaven; the rest hope to live on earth forever
- Hell annihilates its victims; no conscious existence after death until resurrection
- All major holidays strictly forbidden
- God stopped calling people to a heavenly hope in 1935
- Jesus is Michael the archangel, the first being created by God
- The Watchtower is God's channel of communication for salvation
- Jesus was raised as a spirit, denying bodily resurrection
- Salvation requires full obedience to the Watchtower and its work programs

- **Freedom from Sin**

- Romans 6:23 — the wages of sin is death; the gift of God is eternal life in Christ
 - Justification through Christ's sacrifice — declared righteous before God
 - John 8:36 — true freedom comes through the Son
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