

Know Your Neighbor's Beliefs



Jehovah's Witness

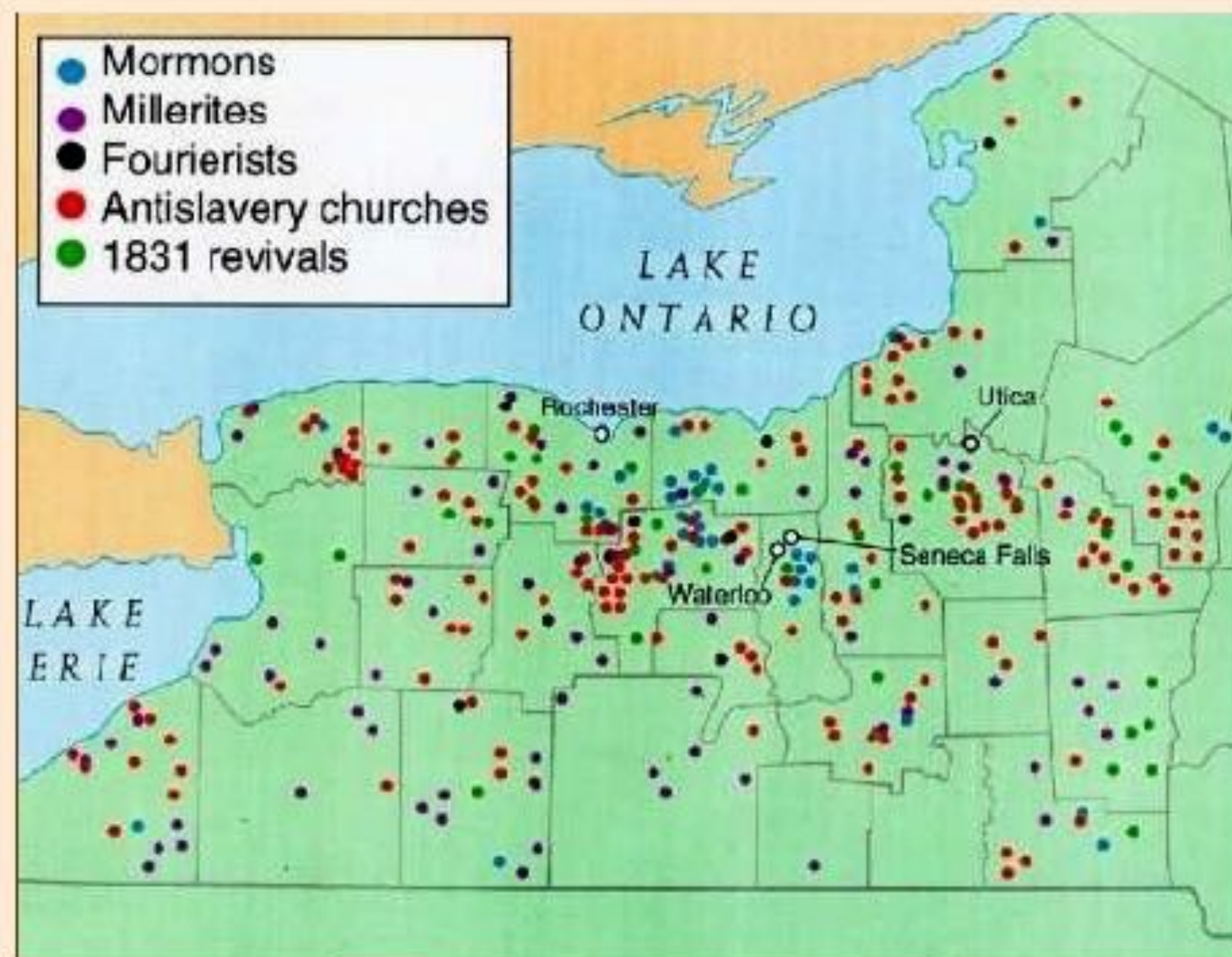
Jehovah's Witness

- ❖ Origins of the Jehovah's Witness
- ❖ Primary sources of theology
- ❖ Key beliefs
- ❖ What to do when they come knocking on your door

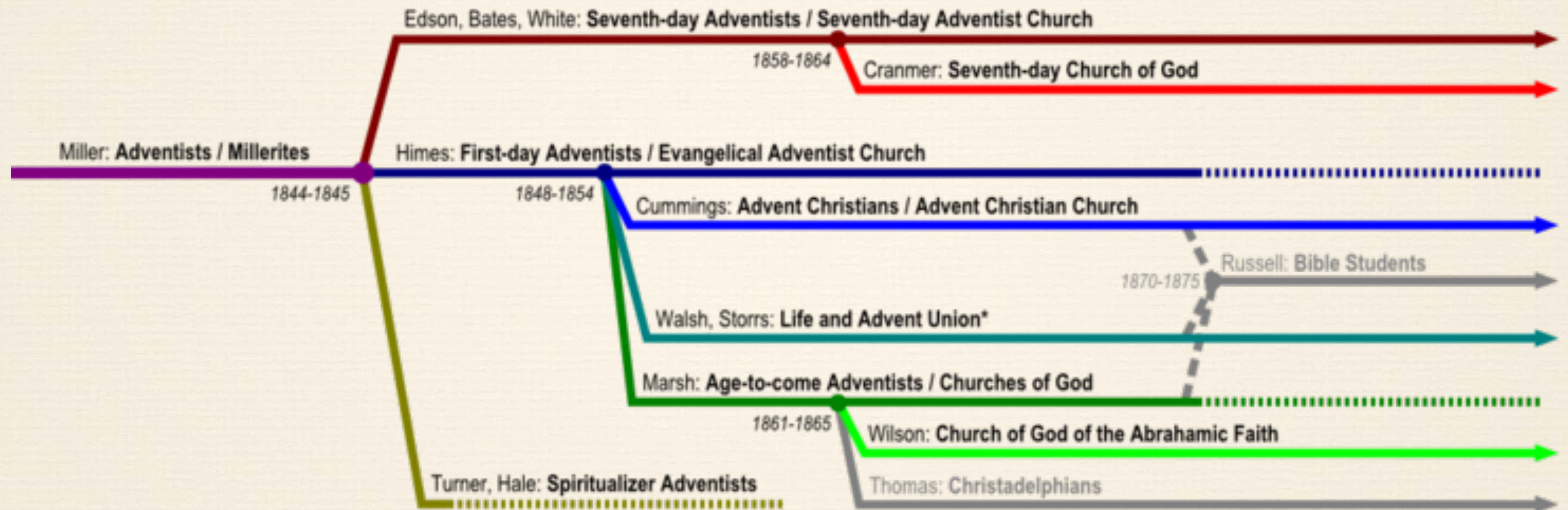




“Burned-Over” District in Upstate New York



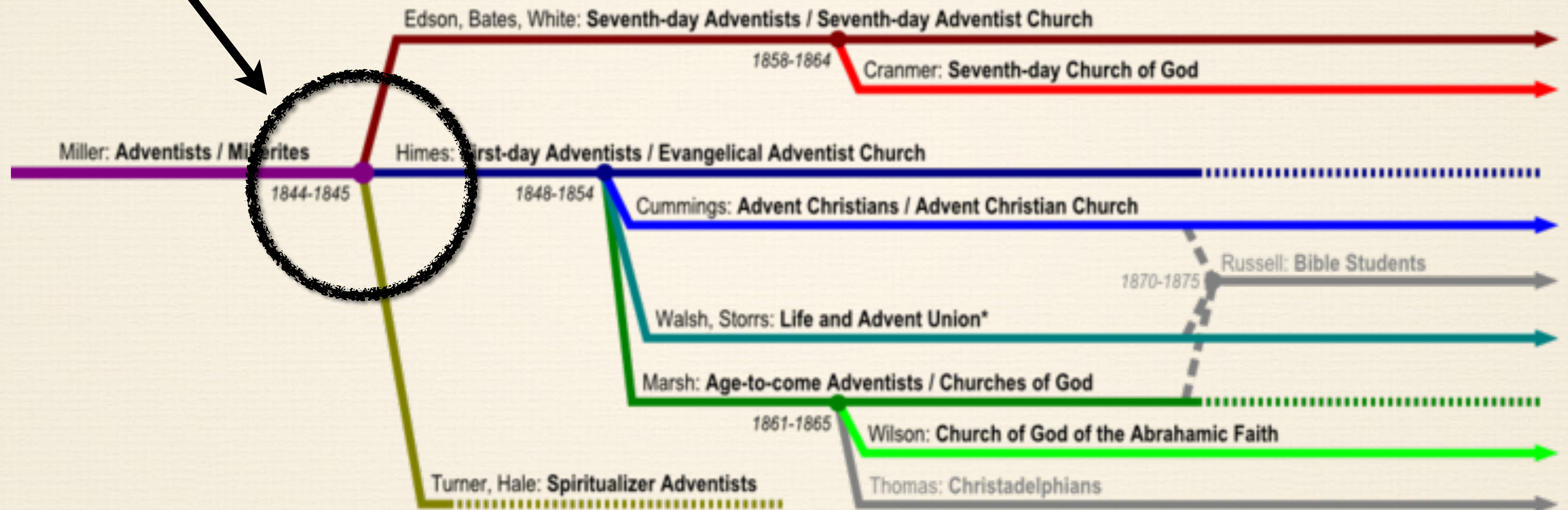
Jehovah's Witness



* incorporated to Advent Christian Church in 1964

Jehovah's Witness

The Great Disappointment

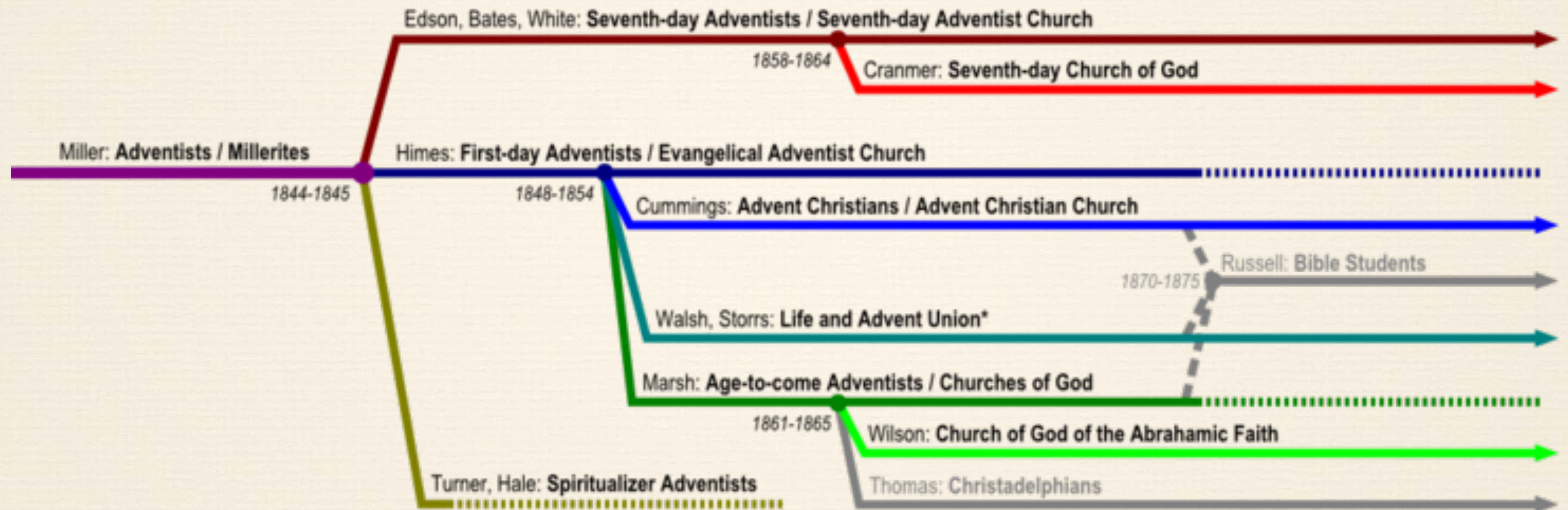


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Beliefs Associated with Adventism

- ❖ Imminent Second Coming of Christ
- ❖ Sabbath is on Saturday (blame Catholics for the change to Sunday)
- ❖ Soul sleep
- ❖ Annihilationism
- ❖ Looks for fulfillment of apocryphal prophecy

Jehovah's Witness



Charles Taze Russell

- ❖ Born in 1852 in Pittsburgh
- ❖ Worked as a haberdasher
- ❖ Raised Congregationalist (which, depending on the individual church, can mean many different things, theologically speaking)
- ❖ Moved away from Congregationalism, particularly the teaching of eternal torment, and began to rail against “organized religions.”

Charles Taze Russell

- ❖ In 1870, organized a Bible class in Pittsburgh consisting of relatives, close associates, and Adventist pastors.
- ❖ Group dedicated themselves to analytical study of the Bible.
- ❖ Elected “pastor” by the Bible group in 1876.” Discovered "Herald of the Morning" published out of Rochester, New York, published views similar to the views of his Bible group
- ❖ Nelson Barbour, publisher of the magazine, convinced Russell the rapture would occur in April, 1878

Charles Taze Russell

- ❖ Russell subsequently sold his five clothing stores and invested his money in Barbour's publishing ministry
- ❖ Co-authored "Three Worlds; or Plan of Redemption", which stated that Christ would return in spirit
- ❖ 1878 came and went without any rapture and Barbour recanted his positions held in common with Russell
- ❖ Russell, however began his own publication "Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence" in July, 1879

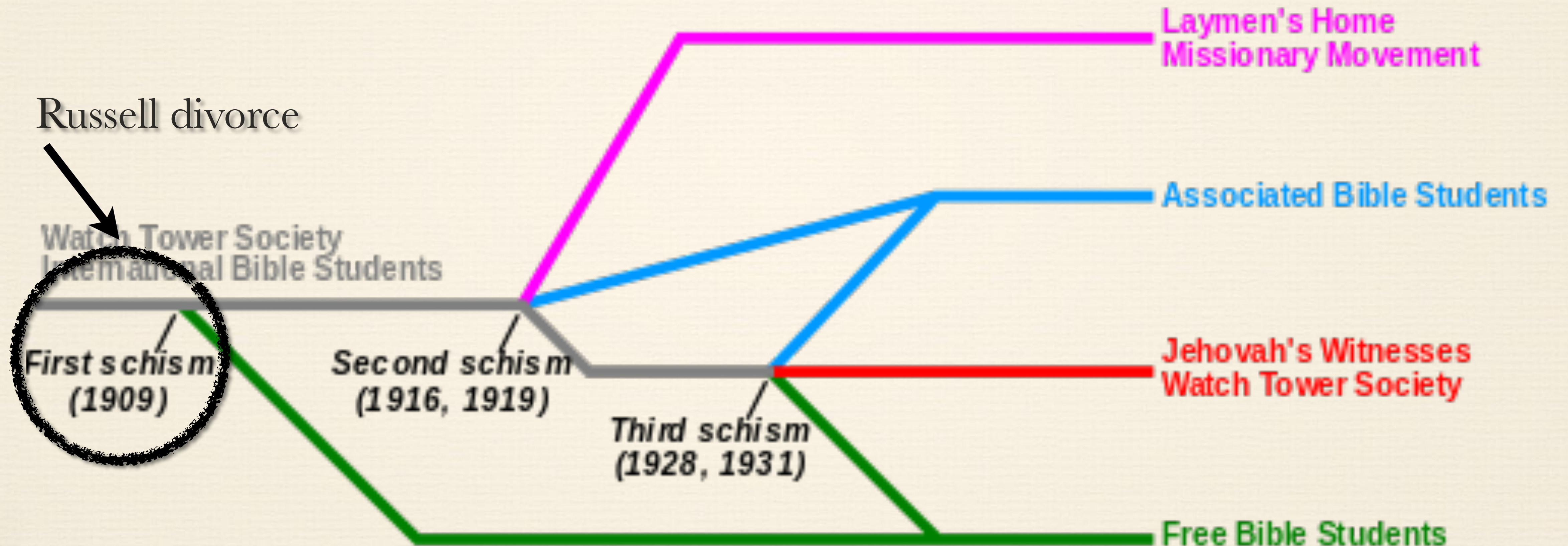
Charles Taze Russell

- ❖ Russell decreed that he had been called to restore the Gospel from the false creeds and man-made traditions
- ❖ Married Maria Ackley in 1879 in a celibate partnership; separated in 1897 over her management of the magazine
- ❖ Founded “Zion’s Watch Tower Tract Society” in 1881
- ❖ By 1903, newspapers worldwide began printing Russell’s sermons

What Did Russell Preach?

- ❖ Non-existence of Hell and annihilationism
- ❖ Non-existence of the Trinity
- ❖ Jesus and Michael the Archangel are the same
- ❖ The non-deity of Christ (Arianism)
- ❖ Holy Spirit is a force only
- ❖ Return of Jesus in 1914 (after 1914, it was claimed he came invisible to man)

Jehovah's Witness



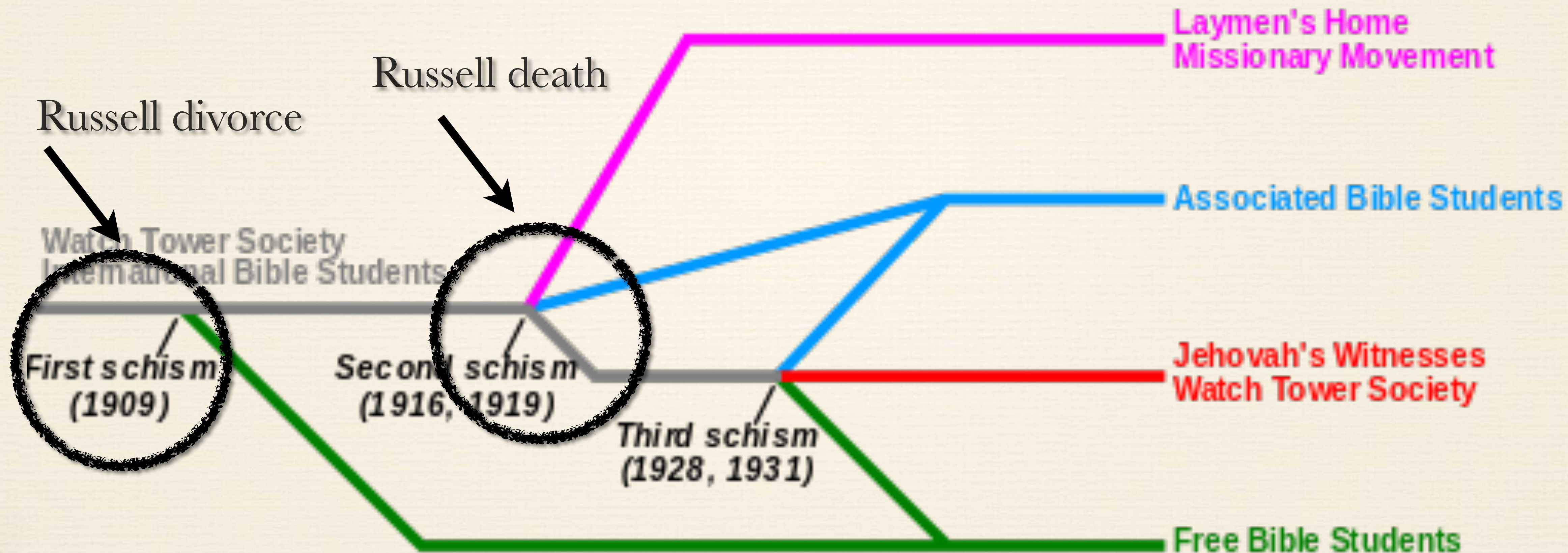
First Schism

- ❖ It was revealed that Russell held \$990 of the \$1000 capital in the holding company that funded the various Bible societies
- ❖ It was also revealed that he was selling Miracle Wheat that would grow 5x faster than regular wheat
- ❖ These and other revelations of Russell were made known during the very public legal hearings in 1912 and 1916.

Russell on Trial

- ❖ Russell sued Rev. J.J. Ross for defamatory libel
- ❖ During the trial, it was established that Russell-
 - ❖ Left school at 14
 - ❖ Admitted, then denied he knew Greek
 - ❖ Was never ordained by any recognized council of clergy

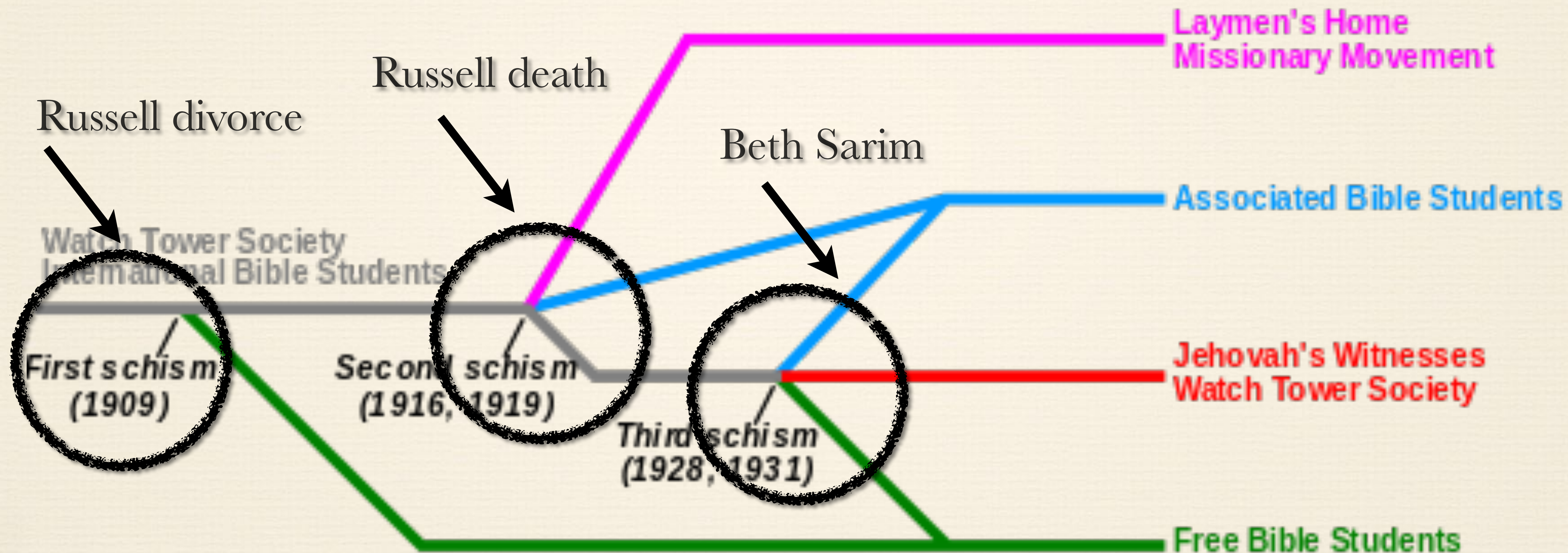
Jehovah's Witness



J.F. Rutherford

- ❖ Born in 1869, brought up as a Baptist and became legal advisor to Watch Tower
- ❖ Took over Watch Tower in 1916 upon Russell's death
- ❖ Fervently published anti-Catholic propaganda and literature
- ❖ Self-proclaimed Jehovah's spokesperson
- ❖ Adopted "Jehovah's Witness" moniker to distinguish movement from splinter groups

Jehovah's Witness



Beth Sarim (House of Princes)

- ❖ In 1925, Rutherford declared that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets would return to Earth and had a mansion built for them in San Diego
- ❖ Of course, Rutherford moved into the mansion and purchased an automobile to transport the guest prophets upon their arrival
- ❖ Rutherford died in Beth Sarim in 1942
- ❖ The Watch Tower Society sold Beth Sarim years later...quietly

Jehovah's Witness

- ❖ Origins of the Jehovah's Witness
- ❖ **Primary sources of theology**
- ❖ Key beliefs
- ❖ What to do when they come knocking on your door

The New World Translation Bible

- ❖ Appeared in 1950, originally as translated by an anonymous group, later identified as Nathan Knorr, Frederick Franz, George Gangas, Albert Schroeder
- ❖ The primary translator was Franz who, under oath, admitted in 1954 that he could not translate a simple passage found in Genesis
- ❖ There are many wholesale aberrations of translation throughout the NWT that serve only to perpetuate the JW's theology

The Watchtower Literature

- ❖ Bible study literature is nothing more than an exposition of JW doctrine
- ❖ Bible studies are strictly controlled via the literature from Watchtower in Brooklyn
- ❖ Bible studies are predominantly structured to train the student to refute orthodox Christianity
- ❖ Only through the Watchtower literature can a student grasp God's Word

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Key Beliefs

- ❖ There is no Trinity
- ❖ Jesus is not God, nor does he ever claim to be
- ❖ Holy Spirit is a force only
- ❖ They worship one God, Jehovah
- ❖ Works prove faith is alive
- ❖ Salvation cannot be earned, but comes through the “undeserved kindness of God” (Gal. 2:16)

Key Beliefs

- ❖ 144,000 will be resurrected to life in heaven to rule with Jesus in the Kingdom; the rest of the JW's will reside on earth in service
- ❖ There is no Hell
- ❖ Sexual immorality is the only valid basis for divorce
- ❖ Iconoclasts
- ❖ There is no tithing or collection of monies

Key Beliefs

- ❖ No celebration of any national holidays or birthdays
- ❖ Conscientious baptism (no paedobaptism)
- ❖ Satan and his demons were cast down from earth after 1914, which is the beginning of the end times
- ❖ Celebrate the Memorial of Christ's Death on Passover
- ❖ Governing Body consists of 11 men who dictate and have final authority on Scriptural interpretation and theology

Key Beliefs

- ❖ They are politically neutral and will not hold public office
- ❖ They do not serve in the military, nor sing the National Anthem, nor recite the Pledge of Allegiance
- ❖ Members are guided to refuse blood transfusions
- ❖ Heavily invested in finding fulfillment of apocryphal prophecies

Key Beliefs

- 2 *John* 10 says not to greet the Antichrist. The Watchtower uses this *single* scripture to support not saying hello to a disfellowshipped person.
- At Scriptures such as *1 Corinthians* 5, Paul outlined *limiting* association with Christians that practice wrongdoing, not strict shunning.
- Disfellowshipping is extended to prevent immediate family members associating with their disfellowshipped relatives.
- The punishment applies forever, or until the Watchtower Society formally reinstates the person. It is considered irrelevant whether the person no longer practices the wrongdoing they were disfellowshipped for.



Key Beliefs

Tetragrammaton

Tetragrammaton

- ❖ Not a single ancient New Testament manuscript has been found containing the Tetragrammaton (YHWH). Inclusion of the word Jehovah in the New Testament of the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures (NWT) is one of the most important errors in Watchtower theology.
- ❖ Rather, the New Testament shows that Jesus is the name through which salvation comes.
- ❖ Jesus words show that God is to be addressed as Lord or Father.



Key Beliefs-Directly from JWs

- ❖ The Bible says that Jesus “was put to death in the flesh but made alive [resurrected] in the spirit.”—1 Peter 3:18; Acts 13:34; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 2 Corinthians 5:16.
- ❖ Jesus’ own words showed that he would not be resurrected with his flesh-and-blood body. He said that he would give his “flesh in behalf of the life of the world,” as a ransom for mankind. (John 6:51; Matthew 20:28) If he had taken back his flesh when he was resurrected, he would have canceled that ransom sacrifice. This could not have happened, though, for the Bible says that he sacrificed his flesh and blood “once for all time.”—Hebrews 9:11, 12.

Key Beliefs-Directly from JW's

- ❖ Spirit creatures can take on human form. For example, angels who did this in the past even ate and drank with humans. (Genesis 18:1-8; 19:1-3) However, they still were spirit creatures and could leave the physical realm.—Judges 13:15-21.
- ❖ After his resurrection, Jesus also assumed human form temporarily, just as angels had previously done. As a spirit creature, though, he was able to appear and disappear suddenly. (Luke 24:31; John 20:19, 26) The fleshly bodies that he materialized were not identical from one appearance to the next. Thus, even Jesus' close friends recognized him only by what he said or did.—Luke 24:30, 31, 35; John 20:14-16; 21:6, 7.

Jehovah's Witness

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When They Come Knocking...

- ❖ Remember 1 Peter 3:15-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.
- ❖ Remember that the JW's that come to your door will be well-prepared and well-rehearsed. They spend most of their time in their Kingdom Halls preparing for encounters with non-JW's.

When They Come Knocking...

- ❖ They will almost always arrive at your door in pairs, will be nicely dressed, and will be very polite.
- ❖ If you want to engage them, don't invite them into your house immediately. Show interest and curiosity in what they are presenting.
- ❖ They will probably hand you a pamphlet or booklet. Look it over. Look for Watch Tower Publications on the back.
- ❖ Say, "This is interesting. I have some questions, though. Would you like to come in for a few minutes?"

When They Come Knocking...

- ❖ Ask them about who Jesus is.
- ❖ Ask them if Jesus ever claimed to be God.
- ❖ Ask them to look at Mark 14:53-65 in their Bible. This is one of the very few passages they have largely left alone.
- ❖ They will probably counter with saying that the Jewish leaders misunderstood him or did not like that that Jesus was even stating he was a son of God.

When They Come Knocking...

- ❖ Then ask them why it is that when other Jewish men who either declared themselves Messiah or were proclaimed as such were followed (Vespasian-70 AD; Simon bar Kokhba-135 AD).
- ❖ Only someone equating themselves to God would be subject to punishment by stoning (Leviticus 24:16).
- ❖ Ask them if only God could correct the Scriptures.
- ❖ Then ask them how could Jesus speak authoritatively in redefining the Law as we find in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5 ff) if he was not God.

The key is to get them to
question their own teaching,
not to argue them into
submission.



*Be sympathetic to their struggling. Compliment them on
their diligence. But, do not let them compromise the Deity
of Christ.*



Key Things to Remember About JW's

- ❖ Came out of the Millerites and then the Adventists in the 19th century
Burned-over District of upstate New York
- ❖ Founded by Charles Taze Russell, then exponentially expanded by J.F. Rutherford
- ❖ They follow the ancient heresy of Arianism that denies the Deity of Christ, the Holy Spirit as a person, and, thus, the Trinity
- ❖ They do not celebrate birthdays, national holidays, Christmas, or Easter

Key Things to Remember About JW's

- ❖ They use the New World Translation Bible, which is an aberrant translation of the original Greek and Hebrew texts
- ❖ They must use Watch Tower publications for Bible study
- ❖ They are iconoclasts
- ❖ They are very well-studied in apologetics