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Indiana Pastor Christian Smith Turns to Film to Answer What Seventh-day Adventists Believe

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"What Do Seventh-day Adventists Believe?"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

Fort Wayne pastor Christian Smith has turned to film to answer questions about what Seventh-day Adventists believe, producing a 10-part video series after seeing online videos claiming his church is a cult. The series, titled "What Do Seventh-day Adventists Believe?", Was presented at his Indiana church over 10 Sabbaths and concluded in October 2026 with eight baptisms on the final Sabbath, according to the Lake Union Herald and the Inter-American Division.

Smith did not set out to make movies. He is a pastor in the Indiana Conference, and his concern started the way so many pastoral worries start now - on a phone screen. He kept running into videos that called Seventh-day Adventists a cult, and he watched the misinformation spread while the people it was about had nowhere simple to send their friends and neighbours for an honest answer.

So he decided to give them one. The project began as part of Pentecost 2025, an evangelism initiative of the Indiana Conference, and Smith approached it in a creative manner: instead of another pamphlet or sermon series, he would make films - short, clear, cinema-quality videos that anyone could watch in a few minutes and share with a single link.

He wrote all 10 scripts himself in September 2025. Then he enlisted his professional filmmaker friend Shadai Perez, and the team travelled to Texas, where they filmed the entire series in one intensive week using professional cinema cameras. Each episode runs about seven to 10 minutes and explores a core Adventist teaching, beginning deliberately with the gospel so that later episodes on the Sabbath, the rapture, death and the judgment build on that foundation.

Christian Smith Adventist Film Series: Ten Episodes Filmed In One Week In Texas

The choice to start with the gospel was not an accident. Smith wanted viewers to meet Jesus before they met the doctrines, so that everything else in the series would be read through the good news rather than through the arguments. A viewer who starts with the gospel hears the Sabbath as a gift, not a rule, and hears the teaching on death and judgment as part of a rescue story, not a threat.

That instinct - answer the question behind the question - is what separates a good explainer from a lecture. The videos Smith kept seeing online did not really ask what Adventists believe. They told people what to fear about them. His series does the opposite: it invites the curious in, one short episode at a time, and lets the teaching speak for itself.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

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