

ORIGIN OF SOME DENOMINATIONS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Founder</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
Roman Catholic	Boniface III	Rome	606
Lutheran Church	Martin Luther	Augsburg, Germany	1520
Presbyterian Church	John Calvin	Switzerland	1536
Anglican Church	King Henry VIII	England	1535
Baptist Church	John Smythe	Holland	1607
Methodist Church	John Wesley	London, England	1729
Evangelical Church	Jacob Albright	Pennsylvania, U.S.A.	1803
Mormon Church	Joseph Smith, Jr.	New York, U.S.A.	1830
Seventh Day Adventist	Wm. Miller	Massachusetts, U.S.A.	1830
Jehovah's Witnesses	Charles Russell	Pennsylvania, U.S.A.	1872
Pentecostal Holiness	Group	South Carolina, U.S.A.	1898
Assembly of God	Group	Arkansas, U.S.A.	1914
Christian Church	Group	Kansas City, MO., USA	1906
Community Churches			

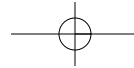
Historically, the Catholic hierarchy branded as heretics those who did not follow their leadership into apostasy. Though the number of Christians and churches of Christ throughout the world was in the minority, there have been faithful Christians since the beginning of the church in AD 33.

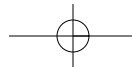
In the late 1700s, men in Europe and America said, "A *reformation* is not enough. We must go back to the Bible and *restore* among us New Testament Christianity in its purity, to be just what Christians were in the first century, to be members of that one church established by Christ." So, dedicated men read the Scriptures, analyzing the differences between what they were reading and the doctrines taught by the denominations of which they were members. They had the honesty to follow the Bible, to be baptized into the body of Christ, and to begin churches of Christ wherever they lived. We continue to make that same plea.

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Do You Know Church History?

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- **What is the church?** “[God]... gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is *His body*” (Ephesians 1:23).
- **How many heads does a body have? How many bodies does a head have?** “There is *one body*” (Ephesians 4:4).
- **What relationship do Christians have with Christ?** *Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.* (1 Corinthians 12:27).

From these questions and biblical answers, we can see that, just as God has only one begotten Son, the Son has only one body, one church, one bride, one kingdom, one family. Reading the New Testament from Matthew to Revelation, you will find only ONE. God’s plan for the church was clear; His plan for birth into the Family was clear; what He desired in worship to Him was written clearly; the kind of fellowship, work, and life He wanted for the church as a whole and for individual Christians was clear. There are no contradictions about these things in His message to us.

- **If God desired oneness in all of these things,** what has happened that there is division,

everywhere we look, among those who claim to be believers in Christ? Why are there so many churches, teaching so many different doctrines, called by so many different names?

Satan is the ever-present adversary of God. He tried to thwart the plan for saving man by bringing about the death of Christ. But, to his surprise, that death itself provided the means for salvation!

So what was Satan’s next plan? To work through men, with their pride, their opinions, their divisiveness, their willingness to please self more than God — and the result was division among those who called themselves Christians.

In the first century, Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, scolding them for calling themselves after the names of men (1 Corinthians 1). Are there churches today that are named after the men who started them?

There were other divisions in the first century, because of doctrinal differences. Some were members of the Gnostic Church; some were Marcionites; others became Montanists; the Arianists had other doctrinal differences. It has always been a challenge for humans to put God’s will above their own opinions and divisiveness.

There are numerous warnings in the New Testament that an apostasy would come that

would take away much of the church (not *all* of it, because the promise had been made by Christ and through prophecy that the church would never be destroyed: Matthew 16:18; Daniel 2:44). In 1 Timothy 4:1-3, Paul listed some of the errors that would be taught: “*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; **Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats....***”

Out of these doctrinal errors and the elevation of bishops to authority over *areas* instead of leadership over *individual congregations*, apostasy grew to the point that a new church came into existence: the Roman Catholic Church named its first “Pope” in 606.

In 1054, doctrinal differences between the Roman branch and the Orthodox branch of Catholicism became so strong they divided.

By the mid-1500s, men in Europe rose up against the corruption and error in Romanism, forming “protestant” churches. These came to be called after their founders or after some distinct doctrine.

Please review the following chart for further information about the denominational groups.

