

## Church History

- I. Jesus promised to build a church (Mt. 16:18); Jesus prayed for unity (Jn. 17:17, 20-21).
- II. The church was established as promised (Ac. 2:41-47).
- III. Local churches in the first century were based on the same teachings (1 Cor. 4:17; Col. 4:16).
- IV. Local churches in the first century were organized the same way (Ac. 14:23; Tit. 1:5).
- V. Local churches in the first century worshiped the same way (Jn. 4:24; 1 Cor. 10:16-17).
- VI. There was just one body of saved people (Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 12:12-13).
- VII. Division from the pattern was condemned (Rom. 16:17-18; Gal. 1:6-10; 2 Jn. 9).
- VIII. An apostasy foretold (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; 2 Pet. 2:1).
- IX. An overview of denominational history:
  - A. Gradual changes in church organization led to the formation of the Catholic Church in 606 A.D.
    1. Early churches were self-governing (Ac. 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2); shepherded by elders (Ac. 14:23; 20:17).
    2. In time, churches began to elevate one elder over the rest, calling him the "bishop."
    3. Eventually, "country bishops" were appointed to govern an entire area, called a "diocese."
    4. Then, "patriarchs" were appointed to govern an even larger area.
    5. In A.D. 585, the patriarch of Constantinople, John the Faster assumed the title "universal bishop" (over all churches). His position was greatly contested but he maintained his position.
    6. In 606 A.D. Boniface III acquired the title "universal bishop" for himself.
    7. The Nicene Creed was formed in A.D. 325.
  - B. The Catholic Church split in 1054 A.D. leading to the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches.
  - C. This brings us to the Protestant Reformation...
  - D. On October 31, 1517, a Catholic priest named Martin Luther posted his famous "95 Theses" on the door of the cathedral in Wittenberg, Germany after witnessing the "sale of indulgences." By 1530, he was excommunicated, and the Lutheran Denomination was formed. The "Augsburg Confession of Faith" was established as the creed of Lutheranism.
  - D. Henry VIII, the king of England, was married to a woman named Catherine, but he wanted to divorce his wife and marry another. He went to the Pope to request permission to divorce his wife, but the Pope refused. Henry divorced Catherine anyway, and as a result was excommunicated from the Catholic Church. This gave occasion for the Catholic Church in England to break all ties with Rome, and in 1534, Henry VIII declared himself to be the head of the church in England. The name was changed to the "Anglican Church." A man named Drake brought this movement to America in 1578, and in 1783, it was given a new name...the "Protestant Episcopal Church. They adopted as their creed the "Common Book of Prayer."
  - E. John Calvin (the founder of "Calvinism") was instrumental in forming the Presbyterian Church around 1540. The "Westminster Catechism" is the creed of Presbyterianism.
  - F. John Smythe founded the Baptist denomination around 1611. The Baptist movement was brought to America in 1631 by Roger Williams. Since that time, it has undergone numerous divisions: General, Primitive, Free-Will, Northern, Southern, Missionary, Trinity, etc. The "Baptist Manuel" is the creed.
  - G. The Methodist Church began around 1729 in England. The "Methodist Discipline" is the creed.
  - H. Mormon Church (1830); 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventists (1845); Christian Scientists (1879); JW (1884).

X. A seed produces after its own kind (Gen. 1:11); the word of God is the seed (Lk. 8:11).

XI. The word of God produces Christians only (Ac. 11:26; 26:28), not Catholics, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Mormons, etc.

XII. Every plant which God has not planted shall be uprooted (Mt. 15:14; Ps. 127:1).

XIII. Denominationalism is wrong because...

A. You cannot find today's denominations in the pages of God's word (1 Pet. 4:11).

B. Denominationalism is contrary to the purpose and intent of God (Jn. 17:20-21).

C. False doctrines and human traditions form the basis of these human churches (Mk. 7:7-9).

D. Paul condemns denominationalism in 1 Cor. 1:10-13.

E. There is just one body (Eph. 4:4).