



SAVED TO SERVE

Pastor Andrew Henriques

www.prophecyagain.com

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY DENOMINATIONS?

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will answer the question from scripture and sacred history, “why are there so many denominations?”
2. Does God have a church? How does Paul describe the church? 1 Timothy 3:15

3. How is the gospel described in Revelation 14:6-7? Who will this gospel reach?

4. What does the second angel’s message say in Revelation 14:8?

5. **Note:** While the everlasting gospel goes forth to all the people and nations, the false system of Babylon will be infecting people of all nations with her wine (false doctrines - Proverbs 20:1; Ephesians 4:14).
6. Read Revelation 17:1-5. What does a woman represent in Bible prophecy? Ephesians 5:23; Jeremiah 6:2; 2 Corinthians 11:2

7. What is upon the forehead of the woman, this church, in Revelation 17:5?

8. Read Revelation 17:4-6. Which church has its leaders dressed in purple and scarlet (bishops in purple; cardinals in red), is guilty of murdering God’s saints, and calls itself the “Mother Church”? **Answer:** None other than the Papacy or the Roman Catholic Church.

Article: Why the Catholic Church is Your Mother

“The Fourth Lateran Council, in 1215, called the Church “the mother of all the faithful.” In his 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII spoke of the Church as “the common Mother of us all.”
<https://www.goodcatholic.com/why-the-catholic-church-is-your-mother/#:~:text=The Fourth Lateran Council, in,common Mother of us all.>”

9. **Note:** It is clear from scripture that Babylon is not an entity beloved of God and not considered God’s church. Since the Papacy considers itself the “Mother Church”, it also has daughters or other churches which teach erroneous doctrines. We will now discover some of the “harlot” churches of Babylon.
10. What was the movement called during the reign of the Papacy (538 A.D. - 1798 A.D.), that sought to bring about spiritual reform, to liberate from the erroneous teachings of the Catholic Church, and to translate the Bible into various languages spoken by the common man?

11. Who was the “morning star” of the Protestant Reformation? Also write down the three things that were to be emancipated by the protest against Rome. See quotation below.

“Except among the Waldenses, the word of God had for ages been locked up in languages known only to the learned; but the time had come for the Scriptures to be translated and given to the people of different lands in their native tongue. The world had passed its midnight. The hours of darkness were wearing away, and in many lands appeared tokens of the coming dawn.” {GC 79.2}

“In the fourteenth century arose in England the “morning star of the Reformation.” John Wycliffe was the herald of reform, not for England alone, but for all Christendom. The great protest against Rome which it was permitted him to utter

was never to be silenced. That protest opened the struggle which was to result in the emancipation of individuals, of churches, and of nations." {GC 80.1}

12. As we shall see, the protest against Rome, which began with John Wycliffe, set free individuals, nations, and churches. Many churches formed as a result of the Protestant Reformation. What is the name of the man who is widely known for rekindling the protest against Catholicism when he nailed his 95 thesis to the church door of Wittenberg, Germany? What church today is named after him? See quotations below.

"As Tetzel continued his traffic and his impious pretensions, **Luther determined upon a more effectual protest against these crying abuses.** An occasion soon offered. **The castle church of Wittenberg possessed many relics, which on certain holy days were exhibited to the people, and full remission of sins was granted to all who then visited the church and made confession.** Accordingly on these days the people in great numbers resorted thither. One of the most important of these occasions, the festival of All Saints, was approaching. **On the preceding day, Luther, joining the crowds that were already making their way to the church, posted on its door a paper containing ninety-five propositions against the doctrine of indulgences.** He declared his willingness to defend these theses next day at the university, against all who should see fit to attack them." {GC 129.2}

13. What was one truth which God revealed to Martin Luther as he was climbing Pilate's staircase on his knees? Romans 1:17; 1 John 1:9

"By a recent decretal **an indulgence had been promised by the pope to all who should ascend upon their knees "Pilate's staircase," said to have been descended by our Saviour on leaving the Roman judgment hall and to have been miraculously conveyed from Jerusalem to Rome. Luther was one day devoutly climbing these steps, when suddenly a voice like thunder seemed to say to him: "The just shall live by faith." Romans 1:17.** He sprang to his feet and hastened from the place in shame and horror. That text never lost its power upon his soul. **From that time he saw more clearly than ever before the fallacy of trusting to human works for salvation, and the necessity of constant faith in the merits of Christ.** His eyes had been opened, and were never again to be closed, to the delusions of the papacy. When he turned his face from Rome he had turned away also in heart, and from that time the separation grew wider, until he severed all connection with the papal church." {GC 125.1}

14. What other man was raised up to preach and teach against the errors held by Rome? Although he was not free from errors himself, what principles of truth did he teach? Matthew 5:8; Philipians 4:8

"God was still preparing workers to extend His cause. In one of the schools of Paris was a thoughtful, quiet youth, already giving evidence of a powerful and penetrating mind, and no less marked for the blamelessness of his life than for intellectual ardor and religious devotion. His genius and application soon made him the pride of the college, and **it was confidently anticipated that John Calvin would become one of the ablest and most honored defenders of the church.** But a ray of divine light penetrated even within the walls of scholasticism and superstition by which Calvin was enclosed. He heard of the new doctrines with a shudder, nothing doubting that the heretics deserved the fire to which they were given. Yet all unwittingly he was brought face to face with the heresy and forced to test the power of Romish theology to combat the Protestant teaching." {GC 219.3}

"For nearly thirty years Calvin labored at Geneva, **first to establish there a church adhering to the morality of the Bible,** and then for the advancement of the Reformation throughout Europe. His course as a public leader was not faultless, nor were his doctrines free from error. But he was instrumental in promulgating truths that were of special importance in his time, in maintaining the principles of Protestantism against the fast-returning tide of popery, and in **promoting in the reformed churches simplicity and purity of life, in place of the pride and corruption fostered under the Romish teaching.**" {GC 236.1}

- a) **Trivia:** What is the name of the church today that was founded by John Calvin?

-
15. What two brothers were led by God to renounce certain false doctrines of the Catholic Church? See quotations below.

"**John and Charles Wesley, after being ordained to the ministry, were sent on a mission to America.** On board the ship was a company of Moravians. Violent storms were encountered on the passage, and John Wesley, brought face to face with death, felt that he had not the assurance of peace with God. The Germans, on the contrary, manifested a calmness and trust to which he was a stranger." {GC 254.3}

"**On his return to England, Wesley, under the instruction of a Moravian preacher, arrived at a clearer understanding of Bible faith. He was convinced that he must renounce all dependence upon his own works for salvation and must trust wholly to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."** At a meeting of the Moravian society in London a statement was

read from Luther, describing the change which the Spirit of God works in the heart of the believer. As Wesley listened, faith was kindled in his soul. "I felt my heart strangely warmed," he says. "I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation: and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."—Ibid., page 52. {GC 255.3}

16. What were the followers of John and Charles Wesley called? See quotations below.

"Whitefield and the Wesleys had been prepared for their work by long and sharp personal convictions of their own lost condition; and that they might be able to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ, they had been subjected to the fiery ordeal of scorn, derision, and persecution, both in the university and as they were entering the ministry. **They and a few others who sympathized with them were contemptuously called Methodists by their ungodly fellow students—a name which is at the present time regarded as honorable by one of the largest denominations in England and America.**" {GC 256.4}

"As members of the Church of England they were strongly attached to her forms of worship, but the Lord had presented before them in His word a higher standard. The Holy Spirit urged them to preach Christ and Him crucified. The power of the Highest attended their labors. Thousands were convicted and truly converted. **It was necessary that these sheep be protected from ravening wolves. Wesley had no thought of forming a new denomination, but he organized them under what was called the Methodist Connection.**" {GC 257.1}

17. Which man also withdrew from the Roman Church and fought against false fanatical movements? What church today bears his name? See quotation below.

"Menno withdrew from the Roman Church and devoted his life to teaching the truths which he had received. In both Germany and the Netherlands a class of fanatics had risen, advocating absurd and seditious doctrines, outraging order and decency, and proceeding to violence and insurrection. Menno saw the horrible results to which these movements would inevitably lead, and he strenuously opposed the erroneous teachings and wild schemes of the fanatics. **There were many, however, who had been misled by these fanatics, but who had renounced their pernicious doctrines; and there were still remaining many descendants of the ancient Christians, the fruits of the Waldensian teaching.** Among these classes Menno labored with great zeal and success." {GC 239.1}

18. Which denomination separated from Rome on the belief that baptism should only be done by immersion and that the sprinkling of infants was unscriptural? See quotations below.

"Baptist, member of a group of Protestant Christians who share the basic beliefs of most Protestants but who insist that only believers should be baptized and that it should be done by immersion rather than by the sprinkling or pouring of water."

"Some Baptists believe that there has been an unbroken succession of Baptist churches from the days of John the Baptist and the Apostles of Jesus Christ. Others trace their origin to the Anabaptists, a 16th-century Protestant movement on the European continent. Most scholars, however, agree that Baptists, as an English-speaking denomination, originated within 17th-century Puritanism as an offshoot of Congregationalism."

Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Baptist>

19. What does Proverbs 4:18 tell us about the path of a just person?

20. **Note:** Jesus is the truth (John 14:6) and He is just (1 John 1:7, 9). We are counseled in scripture to follow the Lamb or Jesus whithersoever he goeth (Revelation 14:1, 4). The Protestant Churches that came out of the Reformation, held onto the beliefs that their founders understood. Unfortunately, many in the succeeding generations did not continue to prayerfully seek the Bible to find new light which would expose further errors which they held so that they could be led into all of God's truth.

21. What are the two principal false doctrines which bond many Protestant churches with the Roman Catholic Church? Genesis 3:4-5; Ezekiel 8:16

"Through the **two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness**, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. **The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism;**

they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience." {GC 588.1}

22. In what year were these Protestant churches considered Babylon? What messages did they reject? Revelation 14:6-8; Revelation 22:12
-

"The second angel's message of Revelation 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that "Babylon is fallen,... because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." She has not yet made all nations do this. The spirit of world conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in churches of the Protestant faith in all the countries of Christendom; and these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel. But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination." {GC 389.2}

23. What characteristics does Bible prophecy say would be found in God's true church? Revelation 12:17; 19:10
-

24. What final call will be proclaimed to those in the fallen churches of Babylon by the converted individuals of God's true church? Revelation 18:1, 2, 4
-

25. **Note:** While this is not an exhaustive study on God's true church, the Bible is clear that God's true church would keep ALL Ten Commandments (including the 7th-day Sabbath), and would be endowed with the prophetic gift of prophecy. Furthermore, according to Revelation chapters 12, 13, 14, this church movement would begin on the shores of The United States of America and would become a world-wide movement that proclaims the Three Angels' Messages to the whole world. No other church perfectly fits these qualifications except the Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, as individuals and as a movement, God desires that we return to the "old paths" and revive the faith and power of the early church in apostolic times. Let us examine ourselves through the lenses of the counsels to the seven churches in Revelation.

26. What message of rebuke was given by God to the church of Sardis which also applies to God's professed people today? Revelation 3:1; Exodus 20:7
-

27. What message of rebuke was given by God to the church of Ephesus which also applies to God's professed people today? Revelation 2:1, 4
-

- a) What things have crowded out the love for God in our hearts? 1 John 2:15-17
-

28. What counsel is given to make us right with God?

- a) Revelation 3:2
-

- b) Revelation 2:5
-

29. What will God do if we fail to repent of our backsliding and remain spiritually dead? Revelation 3:3
-

30. **Note:** If we fail to experience a revival of primitive godliness, Jesus will come upon us like a thief which means He will come to our names in judgment while we are unprepared, and the last day events, including His second coming, will catch us by surprise.

31. Meditate on your experience when you first accepted Jesus and His truth. Also, meditate on the spiritual works that were done in the time of the apostolic church.

a) Acts 17:10-11; Matthew 4:4 - They studied the scriptures for themselves to see if the preacher's words lined up with the Bible.

b) Acts 2:4-8, 38 - They were actively engaged in the work of evangelism.

c) Acts 1:14; Matthew 6:16-18 - They united in prayer and fasting.

d) Acts 1:13-14; Acts 2:1 - They put away their sins and differences to be on one accord.