

Why So Many Denominations?

Why So Many Denominations?



1

My topic tonight is **Why So Many Denominations?**

Have you ever wondered if there is one God, one Bible, one Jesus, why is it that there are so many different denominations?



2

There are thousands of them around the world!

Indeed...

The average person is bewildered by this confusing array of churches.

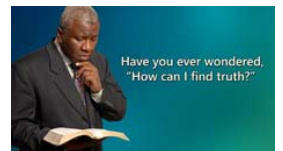
They really don't understand.
One God! One Bible! One Jesus!
But thousands of different churches?
A bigger question about all these churches is which one is right?



3

Have you ever wondered, "How can I find truth?"

Here is a secret: you do not go to the church to find out what truth is.



4

You go to the Bible to find out what truth is, then find a church teaching in harmony with the Bible.

If you had to search the teachings of every church, you would look through these thousands of denominations. That would take a lifetime and at the end you would likely still be confused by all the conflicting statements.



5

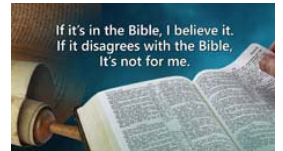
So you never go to a church to discover what the truth is.

Why So Many Denominations?

That is why we chose this theme for our meetings and have sought to follow it in how we present these subjects:

If it's in the Bible, I believe it.

**If it disagrees with the Bible,
It's not for me.**



6

Bible prophecy clearly reveals why there are so many denominations.

God has particularly revealed the answer to our question about why so many denominations in the Book of Revelation.

When you turn in the Bible to Revelation, Chapter 6, there is that marvelous vision of the four horsemen that gallop across the sky.



7

In this vision of the **four horsemen**, God has **revealed** the **history of Christianity** more clearly than any other place in the Bible.

He's revealed the history of Christianity from the first century in the days of Christ down to the 21st century.

He has revealed how Christianity would begin as one movement – one body – then would break up into varying denominations.

He explains why those denominations would emerge.

This is one of the most fascinating, one of the most exciting prophecies in the entire Bible.

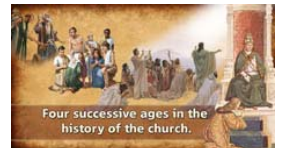
It's found in Revelation, Chapter 6.



8

Revelation's four horsemen represent four successive ages in the history of the church.

And the author of this prophecy, the one that opens the seals of this prophecy is Jesus Christ Himself.



9

Why So Many Denominations?

Revelation 6:1

***“Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals;
Who is this Lamb slain from the foundation of the world?”***



10

Jesus.

Jesus gives us the history of Christianity.



11

Revelation 6 continues—

and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’”



12

Revelation 6:2

“And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.”



13

There are four horses that gallop across the sky, one right after the other.

When Jesus opens the seals He shows church history in phases. The first period is represented by a white horse.

White is a symbol of purity.

And the one riding that horse, wearing a crown is Jesus. He goes out “conquering and to conquer.”



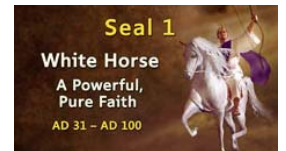
14

The first phase of the Christian church is pictured as a rider on a white horse triumphing and conquering all the forces of evil.

Why So Many Denominations?

The white horse represents a **powerful, pure faith.**

In the New Testament God's Truth triumphed.



15

From **AD 31**, after the death of Christ, to **AD 100** the disciples preached the truth of God's word powerfully. One Roman writer wrote,



16

“You Christians are everywhere. You are in our armies, in our navies, you are in the market place and the shops, you are in our senate and universities. You are everywhere.”

The New Testament church grew rapidly.



17

Nothing could stop the progress of Christianity in the 1st Century.

Like a white horse victorious, like a white horse conquering, the Christian Church galloped across the sky. The power of the gospel could not be stopped.



18

When men and women do not compromise truth in their own life the church has power.

God cannot sanctify error.

The powerful New Testament Church, armed with the truth of God and filled with the Holy Spirit made an impact in the Roman world.



19

The scene changes: The second seal opens. A red horse gallops across the sky.



20

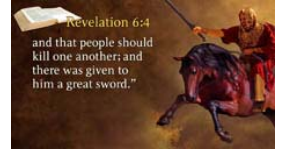
Why So Many Denominations?

Revelation 6:4

“Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth,



and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword.”



Satan saw that he could not stop the church.

It was triumphing everywhere. He had to do something. He began a fierce era of bloody persecution.

He influenced political leaders to viciously persecute the Christians.

The red horse represents a bloody faith.

Christians were thrown to lions.



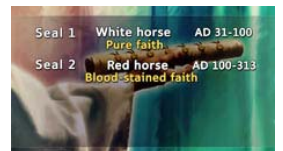
Just as a white horse represents a powerful, pure faith, the **red horse** in the **second seal** represents a **blood stained faith**.



From **AD 100 to AD 313**, the Christians were persecuted terribly in the blood stained faith period.

The **White horse** — apostolic power and purity; the **Red horse** — a blood stained faith.

Where the white horse represents a Church triumphant, the red horse symbolizes a church persecuted.



But the church continued to grow. Satan persecuted it but he couldn't stop it. One early church writer wrote.

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the gospel. The more you persecute us the more we grow.”

So Satan changed the strategy from persecution to

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something else.

A third horse gallops across the sky.

The Black horse period was from
AD 313 to AD 538



26

Revelation 6:5

“When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come and see.’



27

So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand.”



28

After 200 years of persecution, Satan used a different method— His new strategy was to **introduce compromise**.



29

His master strategy brings **pagan practices** into the church.

As the white horse represents purity, the black horse represents **compromise** and error coming in to the church.



30

This black horse period represents the period in church history from **AD 313 to AD 538**

The apostle Paul was concerned about these compromises in his day.



31

In **Acts 20:29, 30**, Paul says to the leaders of the Christian church—

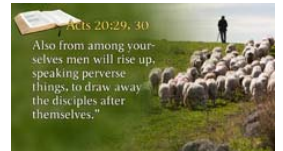
“For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.



32

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Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.”



33

Wolves would attack the church from without during the red horse period, but

The teachings of men would be substituted for the teachings of God.

In this period, religious leaders arose teaching perverse and crooked things. By compromise, the church became large and had political power.



34

Human tradition would take the place of the Bible.

Daniel 8:12

“... and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered.”



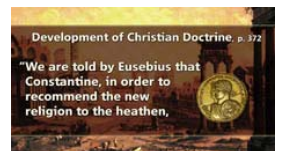
35

Where would truth be cast down? To the ground. In the black horse period, during the fourth and fifth centuries, truth would be cast to the ground.

Church history reveals that this prophecy is true.

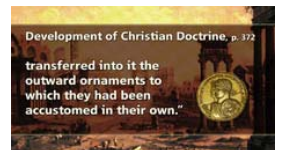
In “The Development of Christian Doctrine,” page 372, the very famed Christian historian said this:

“We are told by Eusebius that Constantine, in order to recommend the new religion to the heathen,



36

transferred into it the outward ornaments to which they had been accustomed in their own.”



37

Now what did Constantine, the pagan Roman Emperor, want to do?

Recommend Christianity to the heathens because he needed their support to strengthen his empire against the

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invading barbarian tribes.

How could he do that?

He “transferred into it the outward ornaments to which they had been accustomed in their own pagan religion.”

The Bible gave way to superstitious traditions, and priests took up the authority of Jesus.

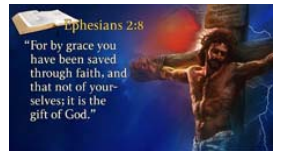
Salvation through Christ was replaced by the requirements of the Church.



38

Ephesians 2:8

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God”



39

During this period of compromise, simple faith was replaced for certain pagan practices like lighting candles and bowing down before images and worshipping the saints. The church presumed to change God’s laws including the acceptance of idol worship and the neglect of the Sabbath. .

During this age of compromise the Pagan's day of the sun replaced the Bible Sabbath.



40

Many Christian leaders promoted Sunday to make Christianity more acceptable to pagans that were worshipping on the first day of the week — Sunday or the day of the Sun.

Christian history reveals this. You can go to any library and look up these facts.

History of the Eastern Church p. 184

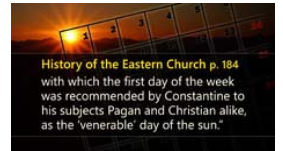
“The retention of the old pagan name of Dies Solis, for Sunday, is in a great measure, owing to the union of Pagan and Christian sentiment



41

Why So Many Denominations?

with which the first day of the week was recommended by Constantine to his subjects Pagan and Christian alike, as the 'venerable' day of the sun."



42

Satan's master strategy was to influence powerful church leaders to unite with powerful state leaders in the black horse period.



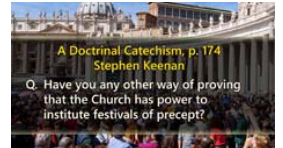
43

And they compromised.

The pagan Roman Emperor Constantine united with the Roman Church in an attempt to unite his empire. Sunday was a vehicle of unity.

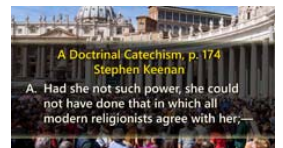
In a Doctrinal Catechism page 174 of the third American edition, Rev. Stephen Keenan, the Catholic author of the Catechism which is written in a question answer format, says:

Q[uestion]. Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?



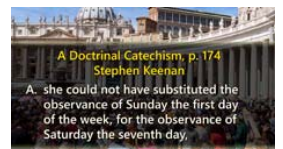
44

A[nswer]. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her;—



45

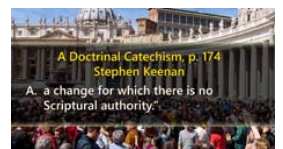
she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day,



46

a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.

Reverend Keenan makes the issue plain. In those early centuries where the church and state united, Sabbath was changed by the church to Sunday.



47

Why So Many Denominations?

The church attempted to change God's law.

It attempted to change the Ten Commandments in a mixture of Christianity with paganism.

Idol worship and Sunday worship were more acceptable to the pagans.

In the black horse period the church grew large but it lost its true power.



48

A fourth seal opens—the **Pale Horse**.

The Bible says—



49

Revelation 6:8

“So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him.



50

Imagine it. A dead rider, riding a horse that looks pale, near death.

And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.”



51

During this period known as the dark ages, from A.D. 538 onward, the church grew large. It built great cathedrals.

But there was a persecution of the true Bible believing Christians.

Church and state united.

The church was spiritually dead.

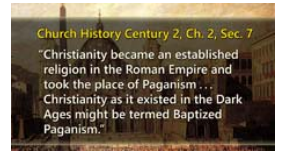
Here is an amazing statement:



52

Why So Many Denominations?

“Christianity became an established religion in the Roman Empire and took the place of Paganism... Christianity as it existed in the Dark Ages might be termed Baptized Paganism.” — Church History Century 2, Ch. 2, Sec. 7



53

You substitute the pagan sun god's day for Sabbath and that's baptized paganism.

Seal 4

A dead faith



54

The white horse — a pure faith; the red horse — a blood stained faith; the black horse — a compromised faith. The pale horse — a dead faith.

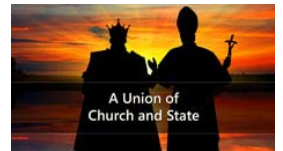


55

The four horsemen of the Book of Revelation.

A Union of Church and State

There was a union of church and state during the Middle Ages.



56

The decrees of the Church took the place of the teachings of the Bible.

Faithful Christians were chained during the dark ages and they were marched to the stake where they were burned.



57

During this period the **steps of compromise** led the church downward.



58

Why So Many Denominations?

The **traditions** of man took the place of God's word.



59

Penances took the place of the grace of Jesus Christ.



60

Indulgences were introduced; that is you could pay money and buy your way out of purgatory, a supposed place between hell and heaven.



61

The church developed this idea.

Images

Many compromises came in.



62

The **church hierarchy** substituted the sun's day for the Sabbath.



63

Human dogmas replaced the clear teachings of God's word.



64

For centuries God's truth was cast down.

Would God's truth be trodden down forever?

Would the light of truth ever shine again?



65

Would God's word ever be the foundation of the church again?

Listen to this,

Why So Many Denominations?

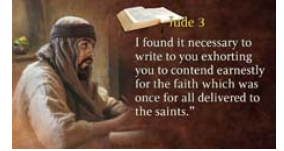
Jude 3

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation,



66

I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”



67

Here the Bible writer says God will raise up men and women to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The light of truth would shine once again.

God would raise up courageous men and women who would be faithful to His word

One of these groups was the **Waldensians**. They were **Bible-believing** Christians who lived in Northern Italy and Southern France.



68

The popular church despised these godly believers. They were brutally persecuted. They fled into the mountains of the Alps.

Here is a hidden Waldensian village. Some of the remnants of those villages are even present today.



69

This is where men and women who stood faithful to God’s word lived years ago.

They said, “Our mind is held captive to the word of God.”

This is a secret Bible school where the Waldensian young people studied God’s word, made copies of it, then were sent out to the countries and cities of Europe as students or peddlers, and as they found opportunity, would leave portions of the scriptures with receptive people.



70

Why So Many Denominations?

The **Waldensians** restored the truth of the **Bible** and the Bible only.



71

They restored that truth that God's word and God's word alone must be obeyed.

God began to raise up a variety of men and women.

There was **John Huss** in Prague Czechoslovakia. He was a Catholic priest.



72

He began to study the Bible and as he studied it he declared, "Obedience to God is my motto, not obedience to man."

As a result Huss was burned at the stake in the town square of Prague.



73

Huss was a courageous hero whose life was dedicated to obeying God.

Ladies and gentlemen, tonight, I believe with the Waldensians that the Bible and the Bible only is our guide to truth. Not the traditions of the church.

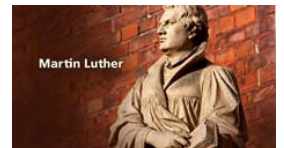


74

I believe with John Huss that obedience to God is our only motto.

What do say?

God raised up another Catholic priest, a mighty man of God in faith — **Martin Luther**. As Martin Luther struggled with issues of faith, he visited Rome.



75

He sensed that guilt was crushing out his life. In an attempt to find peace he did many penances including climbing the famed Pilate's staircase on his knees.



76

He thought if I can only climb the stairs Jesus supposedly climbed when He approached Pilate, I will find peace.

Why So Many Denominations?

When Luther returned home he still felt the oppression of guilt.

All of his pilgrimages and penances hadn't taken away his feeling of unworthiness.

Then he read in **Romans 1:17**—

“The just shall live by faith.”



77

He read in **Acts 4:12**, ***“There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”***

He saw Jesus anew as a mighty Savior.

Luther was amazed.

He experienced a new peace in his life.



78

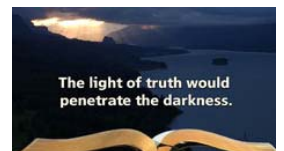
I believe with **Martin Luther** that salvation comes not by the works of our hand, not because of what we have done, but because of what Jesus did for us on the cross.

I believe salvation comes only by **grace**.



79

The light of truth would penetrate the darkness.



80

Just as it took **500 years** for the church to go from the white horse of pure apostolic faith to the pale horse of spiritual deadness, it took time for God's faithful followers to grasp glimpses of truth lost sight of down through the ages.

God would not switch on a light and have truth come down on our minds all at once.



81

Why So Many Denominations?

God gradually began restoring truth. In the 1300 & 1400's, with the Waldensian people, John Huss, and Martin Luther each bringing more understanding of the Bible to the people of God.



82

Do you know why there are so many denominations?

Because the Waldensians stopped where they were. They said, "The Bible and the Bible only is truth."

But they didn't keep studying the doctrines of the Bible.

The Hussites said, "Obedience to God" but they didn't keep going.

The Lutherans said, "Salvation by faith. Martin Luther has it all." But they didn't keep going.

God raised up these "good and great men" who had partial light but not one of them had complete truth.

Then God raised up another man, **John Calvin** in Geneva Switzerland.



83

Calvin emphasized the importance of Christian discipline and growth in grace.

His followers became known as Presbyterians. Once again a church is built around the teachings of a man God raised up. What each group failed to recognize was that God was using different church leaders to restore varying aspects of truth.



84

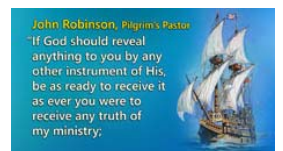
John Robinson understood this principle. He was the pastor to the Puritan Pilgrims who sailed the Mayflower to the New World.



85

Unable to make the journey himself, he admonished them—

"If God should reveal anything to you by any other instrument of His [that is any other true reform movement], be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any



86

Why So Many Denominations?

truth of my ministry;

for I am very confident the Lord hath more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy word.”

God was leading the church over a period of centuries until further truth would be restored by a final body of believers at end-time.

This movement would build on the shoulders of the reformers.

But it would go beyond the reformers and restore the entire truth lost site of by a compromised church. Do you know that Martin Luther still believed in sprinkling babies? Infant baptism, contrary to the Bible, was part of Luther’s creed.

Now ladies and gentlemen, is sprinkling babies in the Bible? That’s not in the Bible.

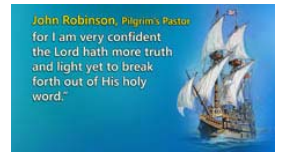
It took the Baptists or the **“Anabaptist movement”**

—to understand Christ’s words about baptism—

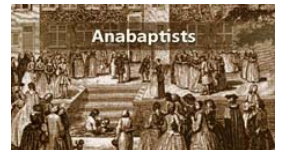
Matthew 28:19, 20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”



87



88



89



90



91

Why So Many Denominations?

Jesus said go teach men and women the gospel. When they accept Christ, when they accept the teachings of His word, baptize them.

God raised up another man by the name of **John Wesley**.

Wesley saw that the standards of the church were decaying. He saw that the amusements, pleasures and practices of the world were entering the Church.



92

So God raised up John **Wesley** and showed him that when men and women study the Bible that they were to live holy and righteous lives.



93

I believe in **holiness**.

I believe the church should be separate from the world. I believe that if you are a Christian you should look like a Christian, eat like a Christian, go places that Christians go.

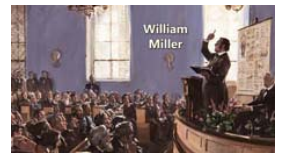


94

Claiming to be a Christian but drinking alcohol, indulging worldly entertainment and dress, is not Christianity. It is self deception.

There was another long lost sight of truth that needed to be restored – the truth of the second coming of Christ.

God raised up a powerful preacher named **William Miller** to proclaim the truth of the second coming of our Lord.



95

At this time the church had largely neglected the truth of our Lord's return.

God raised up a whole new movement called the "Adventists." And the Adventists were called Adventists because they believed Christ's coming, or "advent" was soon.



96

Why So Many Denominations?

Do you believe Jesus is coming soon? I believe that too, so I am an Adventist.

But there was one important Biblical truth that was not yet restored.

The truth that faith leads to obedience to the **commandments** of God and the special truth regarding the **Sabbath** as a symbol of Christ's creative authority.



97

Christ would raise up a last day movement that would finally restore the truth about God's 10 commandments in a time of commandment breaking.

A last day movement that would take seriously God's instructions through Jesus.



98

John 14:15

"If you love Me, keep My commandments."



99

Jesus would have a last day movement outlined in the Book of Revelation.



100

God would call all humanity back to— . . . ***worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.***”

God would call all humanity back to worship the creator.
God would call all humanity back to all the truths of the Bible.
God would call all humanity back to accept the Sabbath as a symbol of His creative power.



101

In an age of evolution, God would restore the truth about creation and the Bible Sabbath.

God would have a group of people that restored the truths lost since of in the Dark Ages. The Bible's last book, Revelation, identifies this group of people.
Where are God's people?



102

Why So Many Denominations?

Revelation 14:12

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.”



103

God would have a group of people that had total faith in Jesus and accepted the whole Bible as His word of truth in these last days.

He would have a group of people that keep His commandments because they love Him, and are faithfully worshipping the creator each Bible Sabbath.

God would have a **called-out people**. Men and women from every nation, from every race.

Men and women of every language group.
A called-out people.



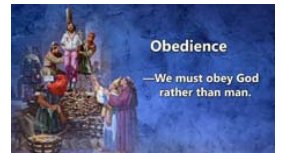
104

I am a Waldensian because I believe in— **The Bible and the Bible only.**



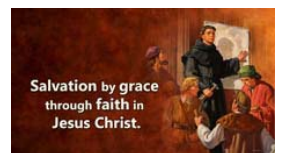
105

In a sense, I am a Hussite because I believe in— **Obedience** to God as our only motto.



106

In a sense, I am a Lutheran because I believe in— **Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.**



107

In a sense, I am a Presbyterian because I believe in— **The organization of the church as taught by the Bible.**



108

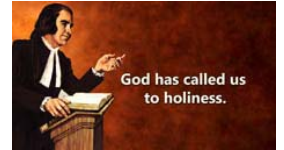
Why So Many Denominations?

In a sense, I am a Baptist because I believe in— **Baptism by immersion.**



109

In a sense, I am a Methodist because I believe that— **God has called us to holiness.**



110

I am an Adventist because I believe in **the second coming of Christ.**



111

And I am a Seventh-day Adventist because I believe in **the Bible Sabbath** of the seventh day.



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And I believe God has a movement in the Book of Revelation to which He is calling men and women. Tonight, God is doing something unusual. He is gathering people in His last day movement around the world,

Hundreds and thousands of people sense that this is God's time to restore all of the truths that have been lost sight of down through the ages.

They are accepting God's truth.
They are walking into the water to be baptized.

They are following Jesus Christ.
They do not want a denomination that is based on man, that only comes part way out of the error and traditions of the past.

Go all the way with Jesus, walk into His truth.
Ladies and gentlemen, I believe that God brought you to these meetings for a purpose.



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I believe that God had truth walk into your life and tonight, God is saying to you,
"My child, this is your moment of destiny, this is your time of

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opportunity —follow that truth.”

Would you like to say to Jesus tonight, “Lord thank you.

Lord, I want to follow that truth.”

Let me share with you my own personal testimony.

Tonight would you like to open your heart to Jesus and say Lord, I want to follow your truth. I believe You have guided me. I’ve heard your voice and commit my life to You.

Tonight would you like to say, by raising your hand, “Lord I am going all the way with you. Lord, I will follow your truth wherever you lead.”

Why not raise your hand right now as we pray?
