

# Why are There so Many Churches?

Part 3

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First Century Church

A.D. 325: Council of Nicea – Catholic Denomination began

A.D. 394: Latin Mass

A.D. 593: Purgatory Doctrine

A.D. 606: The First Official Pope – “God on Earth”

A.D. 1000: Transubstantiation Doctrine

A.D. 1015: Celibacy of Priests Mandated

A.D. 1054: The “Catholic” Schism

A.D. 1192: Indulgences

A.D. 1215: Auricular Confessions – “Confessional Booth”

A.D. 1311: Sprinkling Replaced Immersion for Baptism

A.D. 1521: Anabaptists

(Greek) Orthodox Church (Roman) Catholic Church

1526 Lutheran Church

1534 Church of England: Anglican & Episcopalian

1536 Mennonites

1536 Calvinism

1560 Presbyterian

1609 Baptist Church

1690 Amish

1739 Methodism

1845 Southern Baptist Convention

1820 - 1860 Adventists / 7th Day Adventists

1830 Disciples of Christ

1865 Salvation Army

1870: Pope Declared Infallible

1880 Holiness Movement

1906 Christian Church

1907 Northern Baptist Convention

1968 United Methodist

Ok, so that is the list of when various church denominations began, but which church does God approve? Which church did Christ establish? In Acts 2, we read of the one true church that was established by Jesus Christ and sanctioned by God. Many religious groups have departed from the first century church, splintering into the various churches and denominations we see today. If we seek to be the one true church established by Jesus Christ in the first century, as described in Acts 2, we must follow in the steps of our Lord and savior Jesus and the Holy Spirit as laid down in the New Testament.

As we look at the time line we will see that many of the major churches have their

beginning with some type of disagreement with the Catholic Church deviations from the New Testament church established by Christ himself. The Word of God tells us to into all the world and preach the Gospel. As Christians went out into the world and preached, the gospel churches were established. The question remains, “What church does God approve?”

I want to ask you a question before I go on and answer the real question that we are discussing. **“Are you committed to becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ, or you are just exploring the idea of attending a church?”**

It was unbelievable, for the disciples to fully comprehend what they were getting into when they responded to the call of Jesus. Whatever expectation, curiosity, excitement, doubts or uncertainty they felt, nothing could have prepared them for what lay ahead. (Everything about Jesus – His teaching, His compassion, and wisdom; His life, death, and resurrection; His power, authority, and calling would shape every aspect of their future).

The term "disciple" is derived from the [Koine Greek](#) word *mathetes* which means a pupil (of a teacher) or an [apprentice](#) (to a master craftsman), coming to [English](#) by way of the [Latin](#) *discipulus* meaning a learner while the more common English word is student. A disciple is different from an [apostle](#), which instead means a messenger. While a disciple is one who learns from a teacher, an apostle is one sent to deliver those teachings or a message.

Customarily, disciples left home and moved in with their teacher, who provided their food and lodging. The disciples became his servants and were under his total authority. The emphasis on discipleship was not just on formal school learning, but also included fellowship with the teacher. Disciples derived not only information from their teacher but also inspiration. They lived with their teacher and carried on the tradition of their teacher. After he died, they taught the same things that he did to their own disciples.

Having disciples was the main means of perpetuating teaching in the ancient world since many great teachers wrote no books. This understanding of what a disciple was in ancient times helps us to see that a disciple is not only one who is just a learner but someone who has an intimate relationship with the teacher. They experience life together; they spend time together; and through their interaction the disciple becomes more and more like his teacher.

When Jesus called His first disciples, they may not have understood where Jesus would take them or the impact it would have on their lives, but they knew what it meant to follow. They followed Him everywhere and were doing everything He was doing.

The whole point of being a disciple of Jesus: we imitate Him, carry on his ministry, and become like Him in the process. Yet somehow many take on the name of Christ and are not followers. Many enjoy the status of being called into ministry but were never an apprentice or students of Him. Many Christians miss the concept of desiring to become a disciple of Jesus. Before you can effectively carry out the command to go out and make disciples of everyone you meet, you must first find the time to know our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, so we can imitate Him, carry on His ministry, and become more like Him in the process.

Once you decide to become a disciple of Jesus and follow His commands, the Holy Spirit who Jesus Himself sends to guide and teach us will lead you to a place of worship that acknowledges the foundation that Jesus said He will build His church upon: "You are the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Son of the Living God," and you will follow in the footsteps of the Apostles and the teachings of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

*The following article was penned in August, before the above article was submitted to be published in the Channel. Look at how the Holy Ghost is leading His people in His Church!*