



# The Church Historically Traced

By Burton W. Barber

UPDATED BY CHARLES DAILEY 2006

**This useful chart by the late Burton Barber is based on an earlier work by John Reese in 1890. That chart was redrawn by S. S. Lappin and published by Standard Publishing Company about 1928.**

**Barber's version of the chart was designed for dual use: to teach church history and the Book of Revelation. In this revision much of the Revelation discussion has been removed, so now the chart belongs to Church History 101.**

**The original chart is available at:**  
<http://CharlesDailey.net/PrintOwn.html#C>

**The following narration, appearing in a different typeface, is the work of Barber. The editor's work is in this typeface.**

In designing this chart, a consistent system has been sought. We believe it to be comprehensive for the close student of church history, yet simple and free from confusing details, so that the "common man" is greatly benefitted by its study.

Attention is called to several helpful features: (1) Each century is clearly marked and numbered, thus enabling the student to know the general date of any given event. (2) The use of dotted lines leading from the "Reformation" to each major denomination has allowed the writer to avoid confusion or complication of design and at the same time indicate that there has been no lapse of time during the extent of the dotted lines. (3) The arrows leading from the major religious bodies to the "Restoration Movement" indicate a movement of people. (4) The dotted and circular line at the end of each religious group shows that said group still exists.

Because of conflicting dates given by the various leading historians, the writer has sought to furnish the student with the most authoritative. This conflict of dates is accounted for when the student keeps in mind that calendars have been changed frequently in past centuries; also, that the sources of church history are often indefinite as to the actual time of occurrence of some events. The difficulty lies in locating the best date to which the events may be assigned, not in determining whether or not they really occurred. Because false doctrines and

innovations have crept in gradually and developed slowly, it is sometimes rather hard to know when one was considered "official."

## THE CHURCH FROM WHICH HERETICS DEPARTED

This chart follows the church from the close of Apostolic days through the vicissitudes of time and brings it to the present.

The church was made to undergo ten major persecutions, inflicted by twelve Roman emperors. These persecution periods are indicated by the twelve crosses located in the upper left-hand corner of the chart. These attacks upon the church served to keep it pure from hypocrites and pretenders.

Following these, a time of prosperity was ushered in through the influence of Constantine, sometimes called the first "Christian" emperor. Approximately 200 years after Constantine, corruption of morals and apostasy from the faith led the church to persecute and excommunicate all who refused to embrace its false doctrines and human ecclesiasticism. For its very existence, it was forced to flee into the "wilderness" of obscurity.

At the close of approximately 1,260 years of obscurity and suppression, the church emerged. Darkness of superstition was dispelled when the light of God's Word was allowed, through the work of the Reformation, to penetrate into the hearts of honest people.

The beginning of this wilderness experience for the church evidently began about 533 when Emperor Justinian issued a decretal letter giving authority and power to the pope to suppress all heresy. It is just as evident that the church commenced to come out of the wilderness when James O'Kelly (1793) began to preach the elements and principles of the Bible church . . . .

## APOSTASY FROM THE CHURCH

The ecclesiastical system of Romanism developed gradually. No one man sat down and planned the apostate developments. Rather, one thing led to another. To grow this monster, unbridled ambitions and undisciplined imaginations became the mother of invention.

By the Third and Fourth centuries, ecclesiasticism was pretty well shaped up. Preachers were called priests. The clergy of a city, territory, or diocese was ruled over by a bishop. By 325, Metropolitans (later known as arch-bishops) were elected. At that time also, the bishops of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch were called super Metropolitans or Patriarchs (later called Cardinals). By the Fifth century, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Constantinople had Patriarchs, but Rome had a Monarchical bishop (later called a Pope).

The rapidity with which apostasy introduced false doctrines even surpassed the development of ecclesiasticism. The Gnostics were the "Knowing Ones". They favored the Sadducees and, like them, corrupted the religion of God with pagan philosophies. The Ebionites, like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, were legalists. They introduced many Jewish elements into Christianity. The Monarchians were a sect that held peculiar ideas about the Godhead. Manichaeism was a little Christianity, stripped of all reference to the Jewish religion, and filled with Persian pagan philosophy. The Montanists, Novationists, and Donatists were reactionary parties against the rest. The Montanists held to visions, dreams, the prophetic office, and exciting religious services. With the Ebionites, they also held to the Premillennial view of a thousand years earthly reign of Christ. The Novationists and Donatists held but one common thing with the Montanists, that of purging the church of worldliness, compromise, and human additions; for this, they were persecuted.

Beginning with the theory of "Holy Ghost Baptism," prophets, visions, seasons of ecstasy, premillennialism, infant baptism, etc., many human doctrines were introduced, of which we have given a partial list of the most prominent ones (lower left-hand corner of the chart). Also, we have given the accepted dates of their "official" introduction or acceptance.

Most of these doctrines were introduced during the period entitled "Formation of Catholic Doctrine." The seven circles within that period indicate the seven General Councils recognized by both the Roman and the Greek Catholic Churches. The doctrines formed at this period are for the most part accepted by both Catholic bodies (The Roman or Western and Greek or Eastern), The Romish church recognizes twelve more Councils that were held throughout the years, of which the Council of Trent is the most significant, because it was at this council that

most of the doctrines now practiced by the Roman Catholic Church were formulated into crystalized dogmas and made "official" and binding.

The development of the Papal (political-religious) power kept pace with the growth of the ecclesiastical element and the introduction of heretical teaching. As early as the middle of the Third century, Cyprian advocated Papal primacy, which means Roman control of religion by political policies. By the Fourth century, the clergy of Constantinople, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome sought control of the remaining churches. In the fifth century, Augustine dreamed up the Papacy, which was developed during the later centuries; his "brain-storm" was published in a set of books called "City of God". In the middle of the Fifth century, Leo claimed authority over other Patriarchs. In 533, Emperor Justinian declared John II to be "Lord of the Church". In 600, Gregory I (first real pope, though not so called) organized his papal army and fought wars on behalf of the church. In 607, Emperor Phocas made Pope Boniface III "Head of all the churches".

The Papal States were organized when Pepin (in 756) and Charlemagne (in 774) made contributions of land to the Popes. These continued in the power of Popedom until taken away in 1870 by Victor Emmanuel and Garibaldi, and returned to Italy.

The Papacy, unable to prove Papal authority by the Bible, forged two documents. By these, they attempted to prove that Roman emperors gave temporal authority, as well as religious, to the pope. These two were "Donation's of Constantine" and "Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals". However, even the Catholics now confess that they were frauds and not authentic . . . .

Nicholas I (858-867) first used these to great advantage in gaining for the Papacy great political power and prestige. The Cluniac Reform, launched from the Cluny monastery, used these forgeries to enhance the Papacy. Hildebrand and Humbert, two Cardinals, also used Popes Leo IX, Nicholas II, and Alexander II as tools to develop the Papacy along the lines advocated in these documents. This led to the organization of the College of Cardinals, the purpose of which was to select the popes. Prior to this, popes had been placed in power by emperors.

Innocent III, using all of these advantages, developed the Papacy to its height (1198-1215).

The decline of the Papacy came when Boniface VIII undertook to maneuver political measures that he could not handle. As a result, he was dethroned and

sent into exile by the king of France (Phillip the Fair). This led to the “Babylonian Captivity”, so styled because the popes for seventy years ruled from Avignon, France. This in turn led to three different men claiming to be popes, two in Rome and one in France. This is called the “Papal Schism”. This embarrassing situation was remedied only when the Council of Constance was called to depose the three contending popes and to install Martin V. By this time, the Papacy was so weakened that it could scarcely resist the oncoming Reformation.

At the beginning of the Tenth century, there was an element in the Roman Catholic Church objecting to its policies and practices. The Albigenses broke from it because of doctrinal differences. Later, the Waldenses broke from it because of both doctrinal and practical differences. A crusade launched against the Albigenses by the Papacy annihilated them. Great persecution waged against the Waldenses rendered them almost extinct.

In the fourteenth century, John Wycliff translated the Bible into the common tongue (**English**) and instituted an era of learning. This “Morning Star of the Reformation” was followed by John Huss and Savonarola who taught the Bible and freely exposed much Catholic doctrine. Though martyred, their work resulted in a great discontentment against Catholicism. When, in 1517, Luther tacked his ninety-five theses on the Wittenberg, Germany Catholic Church door, all Germany, and later all the religious world, was set aflame either for or against Catholicism. Great efforts at reform were undertaken by such men as Luther and Melancthon in Germany, Zwingli and John Calvin in Switzerland, John Knox in Scotland, and Thomas Cranmer, Cromwell, and others in England.

From this Reformation, the Lutheran church of Germany resulted. In England, the Church of England came into being which in turn produced the Episcopal Church of America. The Congregational Church, called “Dissenters” and “Independents”, broke from the Church of England as a result of the Puritan Movement. Due to a bogging-down of the religious life in the Church of England, the Wesley brothers produced the Methodist Church. Because of a formalizing of that denomination, the Holiness Agitation (a revival movement started by Finney, Moody, and others) produced the various Pentecostal and Holiness bodies.

The Presbyterian group was started in Switzerland by John Calvin and in Scotland by John

Knox. A desire for union on the part of the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists led to the formation of the United Brethren – the union failed. The Baptist bodies resulted from the Anabaptists (a word which means “re-baptizers”).

Before leaving this period of church history, let us call attention of several additional facts: (1) There have been four successive divisions and healings of breaches between the Roman and Greek Catholics. The fifth division occurred in 1054 and has never been healed – nor is it likely that it will ever be. The main cause of it was over religious authority. (2) The Roman Catholic Church boasts that it is not divided like the rest of the religious bodies. That is both true and false. True, because when people differ from it, they are excommunicated (“boot them out”). And false, because there are exactly eleven other Catholic groups not including the Greek Catholics. The largest is called the “Old Catholics” and will be located at the lower right hand corner of the chart. (3) The crusades, ten in all, but seven Holy Land crusades, were mainly sponsored by and in the interest of the Catholic Church of Rome. They were designed for their own exploiting. (4) Against the Reformation, the Catholics warred with a Counter Reformation. They called the Council of Trent in order to affect a reformation in their own ranks and to systematize their doctrines in order to know what they did believe and teach. Ignatius Loyola organized the Jesuits, who soon gained control of educational centers, proselyted new members in other lands, instituted the terrible inquisition called the “Reign of Terror”, and laid far-reaching plans in behalf of the Apostate Rome. (5) Between the Congregational and Presbyterian churches and below the United Brethren, you will notice five groups, all somewhat disconnected from other groups. There are many differences between the Russelites and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, so we have listed them separately.

#### **MAJOR MOVEMENTS IN THE U. S. SINCE 1900**

**These descriptions belong to the American scene. In other nations, the same groups may have different names or hold to different teachings and practices.**

**LUTHERAN. The Lutheran movement now consists of more than 20 religious bodies, the largest being the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). A controlling document is the *Book of Concord*. Some Lutheran groups accept this creed**

totally, while others take exception to some of its teachings.

Some Lutheran church bodies believe that the Bible *is* the Word of God while others believe that it only *contains* the Word of God. About one in five Protestants are member of some Lutheran body. More information is available at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lutheran\\_church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lutheran_church).

**EPISCOPAL.** Properly known as the Episcopal Church in the USA (ECUSA), the church has a membership of approximately 2.3 million. It is the American segment of the Anglican Church. ECUSA is now in full fellowship with the ELCA (above). The guiding document is the most recent edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*, revised in 1979.

More information is available at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Episcopal\\_Church\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_of\\_America](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Episcopal_Church_in_the_United_States_of_America)

**METHODIST.** The largest Methodist group is now the United Methodist Church. It resulted from a merger of the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren in 1968. There were approximately nine million Methodists in the late 1990s, but the membership is declining.

At their website, the church affirms that it is still guided by the *Methodist Book of Discipline*.

[http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?](http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=1&mid=518)

[ptid=1&mid=518](http://archives.umc.org/interior.asp?ptid=1&mid=518) For more information:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodist\\_Church#Methodism\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodist_Church#Methodism_in_the_United_States)

**CONGREGATIONAL.** In 1957 the Congregational Christian Churches merged with the Evangelical and Reformed Church to form the United Church of Christ (UCC). This resulting group has about 1.3 million members in the United States. A primary focus is union with other religious bodies. The group maintains close ties to the Disciples wing of the Restoration Movement, but not the other wings. There is no connection between the United Church of Christ and the Churches of Christ.

For more information: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregational\\_Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congregational_Church).

**UNITED BRETHREN.** The name has been popular and several distinctively different groups have used it at the same time making the links hard to trace. More information at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical\\_United\\_Brethren](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_United_Brethren)

Burton Barber lists the United Brethren - Old Constitution group and they are listed in the article cited.

**PRESBYTERIAN.** The largest Presbyterian denomination in the United States is the Presbyterian Church (USA) (PCUSA). Other Presbyterian bodies include the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), the Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Bible Presbyterian Church (BPC), the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARP Synod), the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, and the Reformed Presbyterian Church in the United States (RPCUS). Some, but not all, of these groups are governed by the *Westminster Confession of Faith*.

More information is available at:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presbyterian\\_Church](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presbyterian_Church)

**BAPTIST.** Baptists uniformly practice the immersion of believers (not infants) following a profession of faith in Christ. Immersion is an act of obedience, but is not part of the initial salvation process. The largest concentration of Baptist Churches range from Texas to the Atlantic coast and south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

The Baptist World Alliance website claims there are presently 214 Baptist Unions and Conventions in the world. The largest convention in the United States is the Southern Baptist Convention with 16 million members. This group subscribes to the *2000 Baptist Faith and Message* document as listed on their web site.

More about the Baptist Churches can be learned from: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptist>

## RETURN FROM APOSTASY TO THE SIMPLE, BIBLICAL CHURCH

Many members of the denominations wanted to return to the original church. This "Restoration Movement" resulted in many people forming congregations patterned after the New Testament order. Creeds as tests of faithfulness and fellowship were rejected. The first hint of this movement back to the original church was seen in the work of James O'Kelly in 1793.

Some historians have named the Restoration Movement the Stone-Campbell Movement after two of its early leaders. This is simply to distinguish it from other restorations such as one within the Latter Day Saints Church. However, we are using Restoration Movement in this discussion.

Many thousands of individuals and hundreds of congregations dropped their denominational creeds and became "Christians only," guided simply by the Bible. The exciting movement caught hold especially in rural America including the far west, as well as Australia, England and in other western nations.

Two distinctive teachings have been the requirement for immersion in water to complete the initial salvation process and the weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. The congregations were usually called Christian Churches or Churches of Christ.

**DISCIPLES.** Oddly, some of those leaving organized denominations sought to organized themselves. Many congregations of the Restoration in the United States formed state societies. Most of these were organized between 1839 and 1850. In 1849 a national convention was formed as the American Christian Missionary Society.

Other emerging organizations were the Christian Women's Board of Missions, Foreign Christian Missionary Society, National Benevolent Association, Board of Church Extension and the Board of Ministerial Relief. These are abbreviated on the chart.

In 1919, the organizations merged into the United Christian Missionary Society. This grouping of congregations is identified today as the Disciples of Christ. Nearly all use the name Christian Church (Disciples). The current emphasis of this group is now on union rather than the restoration principle.

**INDEPENDENTS.** As the Disciples came to look more and more like some of the denominations they had left, both individuals and congregations formed independent congregations with much less emphasis on central organizations. If there were small organizations outside of the church, they were used for enabling the congregations to accomplish its purposes and not for controlling the congregations.

Large meetings such as conventions were only for fellowship and did not have authority over the participating churches. The emphasis was to combine both restoration and unity where possible. They have used both the name Christian Church and Churches of Christ. In the early and mid-1800s, the churches did not use instruments of music in the public worship. These were intro-

duced, especially in the northern cities, in the late 1800s.

**A CAPELLA.** In the 1890s, the use of instruments and participation in missionary societies became flash points. Congregations even divided and the a capella (non-instrument using) churches took on a separate identity by the time of the 1906 Religious Census. This group used only the name Church of Christ.

For a detailed analysis of the causes of division, see the presentation by Victor Knowles at: <http://www.poeministries.org/Pages/Lectures.html> Select the lecture "Going Separate Ways."

The a capella churches have emphasized higher education in a Christian setting and have a number of colleges and universities, especially in the south. Among the best-known are Abilene Christian University in Texas and Pepperdine University in southern California. The emphasis here has been totally on restoration until the past few decades where the unity theme has received renewed attention.

For a heart-warming report on progress toward unity between the A capella Churches and the Independent Churches, see: <http://www.poeministries.org/Pages/Lectures.html> The lecture is "Restoring Family Ties."

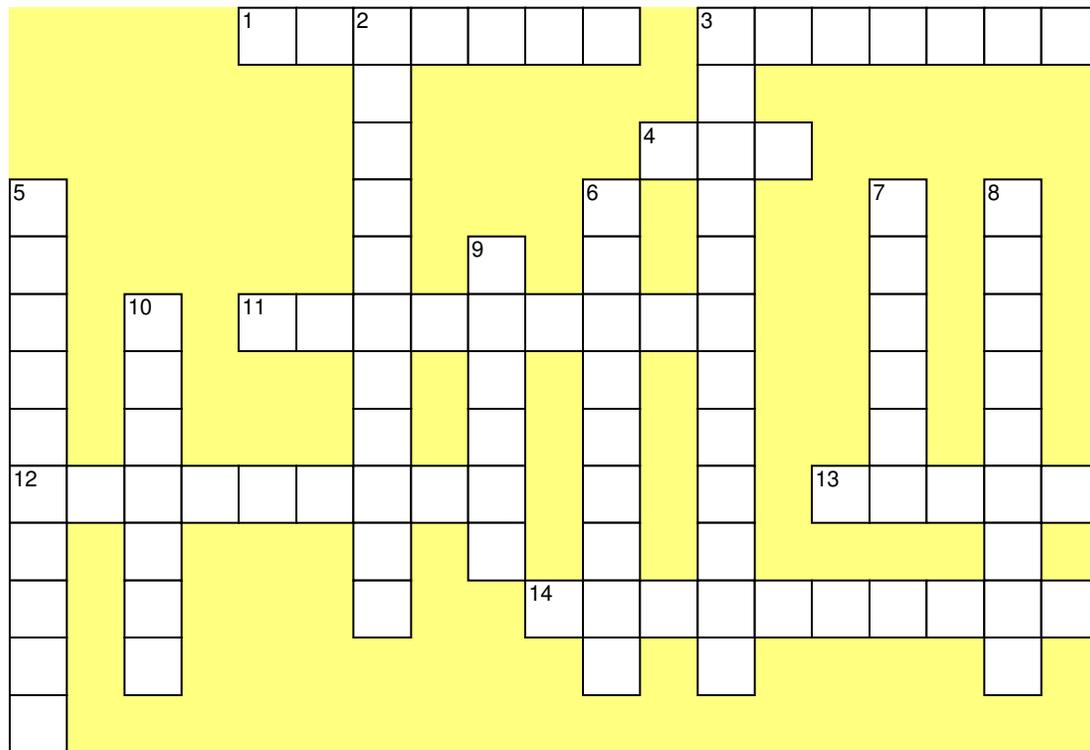
Edited and updated by  
Charles Dailey – 2006  
*Northwest College of the Bible*  
Portland, Oregon  
<http://NCBible.org>

Addition copies of this updated version, along with the original version, are available on the Internet at:

<http://CharlesDailey.net/PrintOwn.html#C>

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www.CrosswordWeaver.com

## ACROSS

- 1 Fourteenth century Bible translator.
- 3 By the 3rd century, preachers were called \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 There were \_\_\_\_\_ major persecutions of the church by Roman Emperors.
- 11 The system of Romanism developed \_\_\_\_\_.
- 12 He dreamed up the Papacy.
- 13 The current emphasis of the Disciples of Christ.
- 14 Rome had a \_\_\_\_\_ bishop.

## DOWN

- 2 The first "Christian" emperor.
- 3 A church governed by the Westminster Confession of Faith.
- 5 The chart was once used to teach it.
- 6 Among "Christian Only" immersion is a step in \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 A founder of the Presbyterian Church.
- 8 The American segment of the Anglican Church.
- 9 Nailed 95 theses to a church door.
- 10 The first real pope.