
How Did We Get All The Denominations?

Lesson Eleven

Acts 2:42-47

How Bible Churches Were Organized:

- ❑ **Read Philippians 1:1.** Who composed a local church?

- ❑ **Read Acts 20:17, 18, 1 Peter 5:1-4.** The leaders of Bible churches were called by three different names. What were they?

- ❑ **Read Acts 14:23.** Paul appointed a) an elder or b) elders in every church.

- ❑ **Read 1 Peter 5:2.** Which flock were elders appointed to shepherd?

How Man Changed This Organization:

- ❑ In order to fight a heresy that was creeping into the churches called gnosticism, churches began choosing a Chief Bishop among the Elders.

- ❑ Chief Bishops with connections to the apostles had great power and authority, and were a powerful weapon against gnosticism.

- ❑ By 200, bishops in large cities increased in power & took authority over smaller churches.
- ❑ Using this unauthorized system, churches rid themselves of gnosticism, but created another problem.
 - **Read 2 Cor. 10:3-5.** How should we fight against false teachings in local churches?
- ❑ The Roman Emperor Constantine used Chief Bishops to unify his empire by calling them together in “Councils” and requiring them to decree what Christians must and must not believe.
 - The first great council is known as the ***Council at Nicea***.
 - Doctrinal principles were established on the basis of decree instead of study and discussion on the local church level.
- ❑ In the next three centuries the Roman bishop increased in power & eventually was appointed Pope in 606 AD, though not without dispute.
 - Which other cities had Bishops who were being considered potential Popes?
 - What does “Pope” mean?

- If Doctrine was decided by Bishops, did the average Christian need to study the Bible?
- Since the average Christian couldn't read, most people had to rely on the word of church leaders to follow God.

DARK AGES: 600 ñ 1300 A.D. The Catholic Church controlled all political power and had absolute power over an individual's personal life. At the peak, only 1 in 10,000 could read or write.

Evolution Of Doctrine Pertaining To Salvation

- By the end of the 2nd century some were teaching all men shared in Adam's guilt. In 250, Cyprian recommended child baptism.
- Baptism began to take on magical powers. The clergy were the only ones allowed to administer baptism.
- By the end of the 4th century the controversy over human freewill intensified & centered around two men: Pelagius & Augustine (See next section).
- **The Two Primary Doctrinal Choices Of The Average Person During This Time:**
Next to the following teachings, indicate which you believe are true or false. Do you know Bible Scriptures to support your answers?
 - **The Teachings Of Pelagius. Pelagius Taught:**
 - That man was born with the freedom to choose good or evil.
 - That it is possible to live without sin, and some have.
 - That sin is not transmitted through heredity.
 - That each soul is created sinless at the time of birth.
 - That children are saved & do not need baptism.
 - That baptism is for believers & necessary for salvation.
 - That a person can be saved by good works alone, and grace is available for those worthy of it.

Next to the following teachings, indicate which you believe are true or false. Do you know Bible Scriptures to support your answers?

- ❑ **The Teachings Of Augustine. Augustine Taught:**
 - That before sin, Adam had a choice of good or evil, but after his sin, he could no longer choose (called *depravity*).
 - That depravity is transferred by heredity & every child is born with the curse of Adam's sin.
 - That salvation is a result of God's direct intervention that causes a man to want to be saved (no freewill).
 - That past sins are forgiven in baptism.

The Reformation Movement

- **Began as a reaction to the sale of "indulgences" in the early 1500's by the Catholic Church.**
 - ❑ ***Indulgence*** ñ the relaxing of the temporal punishment deserved by the sinner.
 - ❑ Catholics believe that Christ, Mary, & the saints have a treasury of merits that can be accessed and used to counteract their own sins.
 - ❑ People bought indulgences for their dead friends and for sins they hadn't yet committed.
 - ❑ On October 31, 1517 Martin Luther, a Catholic monk, nailed a list of his 95 objections against such church practices to the front door of the Castle Church in Whittenburg Gerny, thus officially beginning the Reformation Movement.

Indicate whether or not you agree with the following teachings (Use Bible Verses):

- **The Teachings Of John Calvin, A Key Reformation Leader:**
 - ❑ **Total Hereditary Depravity** ñ inability to choose good is inherited from Adam
 - ❑ **Unconditional Election** ñ Man can't choose God, so God has chosen those He will save.
 - ❑ **Limited Atonement** ñ Christ only died for those God chose.
 - ❑ **Irresistible Grace** ñ The Holy Spirit irresistibly brings a person to Christ of his own freewill.
 - ❑ **Perseverance of the Saints** ñ Christians cannot be lost