

His-Story

Church history and why it matters to me

WHY ARE THERE SO MANY DENOMINATIONS?

John 17:20-23 (ESV)

²⁰ “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

John 17:20-23 (*The Message*)

I’m praying not only for them but also for those who will believe in me because of them and their witness about me. The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you, so they might be one heart and mind with us. Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me. The same glory you gave me, I gave them, so they’ll be as unified and together as we are—I in them and you in me. Then they’ll be mature in this oneness, and give the godless world evidence that you’ve sent me and loved them in the same way you’ve loved me.

I. The “WHY?” question

- A. **Why?** as in reason, logic, or explanation
- B. **Why?** as in motive

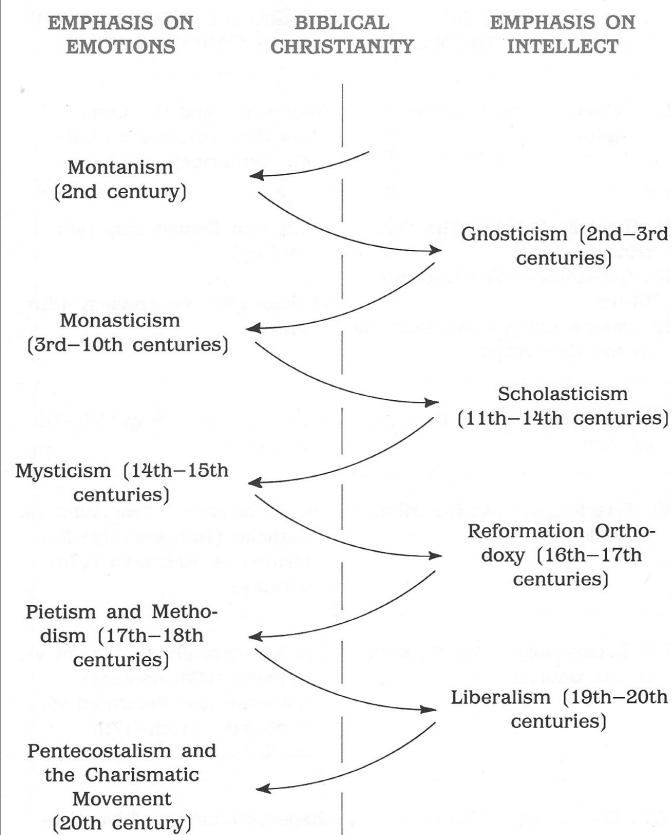
II. Why so many denominations: by way of reason, logic, or explanation

- A. **The Pendulum Effect** (see chart* to right)

B. Language and Geography

1. In Europe and Asia Minor
 - a. Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestants (much “regional” religion)
 - b. Individual countries established “official” denominations
 - c. Tolerance, civil war, or exodus
2. In South America: religion determined by the settling countries of Spain and Portugal (Roman Catholicism)
3. In North America: colonists tended to travel and settle in homogenized groups (see *Thirteen Colonies* chart on page 2)
 - a. Presbyterianism in the United States (see *American Presbyterian Family Tree* chart on page 2)
 - b. Baptists (see *American Baptist Family Tree* chart on page 3)
 - c. Methodists, Lutherans, and Episcopalians

78. The Pendulum Effect in Church History

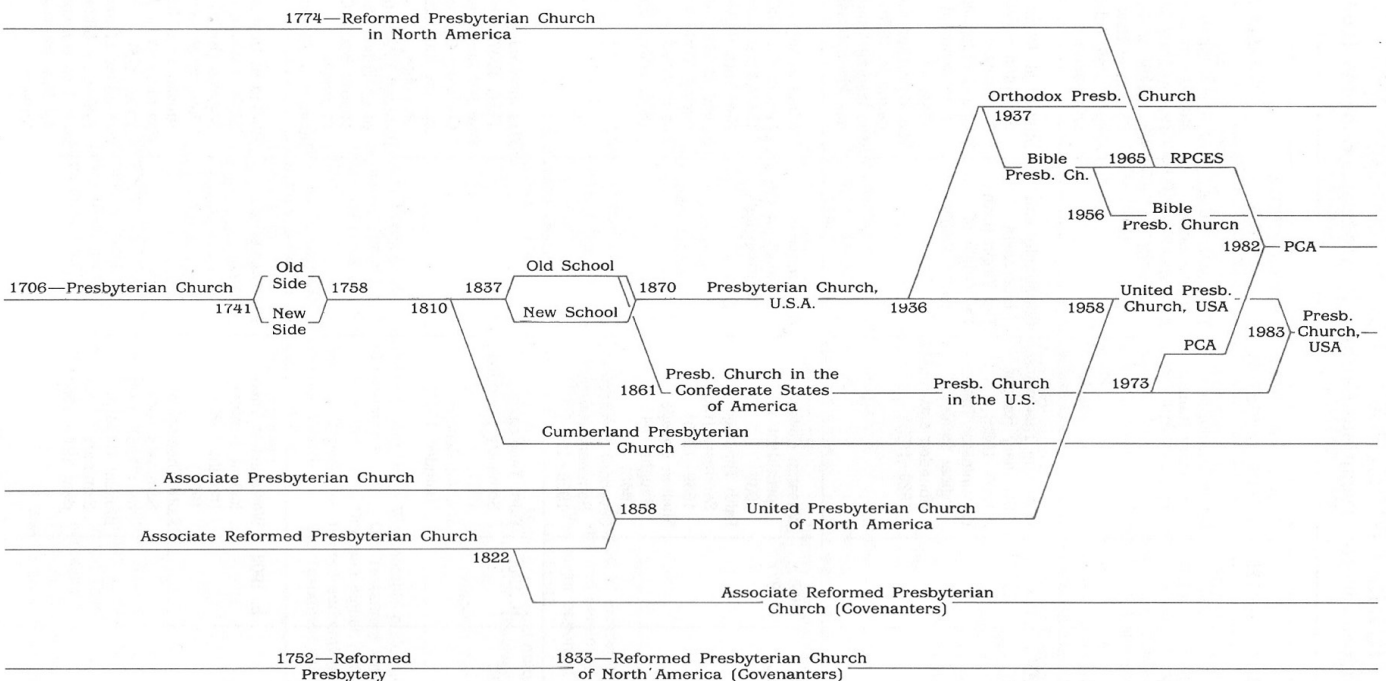


* All charts in this lesson are taken from Robert C. Walton’s *Chronological and Background Charts of Church History*. © 1986 Academic Books. Grand Rapids, MI. Zondervan Publishing House.

53. Religion in the Thirteen Colonies

COLONY	CHARTER DATE	CHARTER RECIPIENT	FIRST SETTLED	SETTLERS	MAIN REASON FOR COMING	RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION	ESTABLISHED CHURCH	
VIRGINIA	1606	Virginia Company	1607	English	Economic gain	Anglican	Church of England	
	1624	Royal Colony						
MASSACHUSETTS	1619	Pilgrims	1620	Pilgrims	Religious freedom	Separatists	Congregational	
	1629	Mass. Bay Co.		Puritans	Establish theocracy	Congregationalist		
	1684	Royal Colony						
NEW HAMPSHIRE	1679	Royal Colony	1623	Puritans	Expansion from Massachusetts Bay	Congregationalist	Congregational	
NEW YORK	1664	Royal Colony	1624	Dutch	Economic gain	Dutch Reformed	Church of England (1692)	
MARYLAND	1632	Lord Baltimore	1634	English	Refuge for Roman Catholics	Roman Catholic and other	Church of England (1691)	
	1691	Royal Colony						
CONNECTICUT	1662	John Winthrop, Jr. (Royal Colony)	1634	Puritans	Expansion from Massachusetts Bay	Congregationalist	Congregational	
RHODE ISLAND	1644	Roger Williams	1636	English	Radicals fleeing Massachusetts Bay	Congregationalist	None	
	1663	Renewed						
NEW JERSEY	1664	John Berkeley George Carteret	1638	Swedish	Economic gain	Lutheran	None	
	1702	Royal Colony		Dutch	Expansion from N.Y.	Dutch Reformed		
				English	Religious freedom	Quaker		
DELAWARE	1683	Duke of York	1638	Swedish	Economic gain	Lutheran	None	
	1693	Part of Pa.		Dutch		Dutch Reformed		
	1704	Separate gov't		English		Anglican		
NORTH CAROLINA	1712	Separate gov't from S.C.	1653	English	Economic gain	Anglican	Church of England	
	1729	Royal Colony						
SOUTH CAROLINA	1663	Carolina Company	1670	English	Economic gain	Anglican	Church of England (1704)	
				French	Religious freedom	Huguenots		
				English	Religious freedom	Quaker		
PENNSYLVANIA	1681	William Penn	1681	English	Religious freedom	Quaker	None	
				German	Fleeing Thirty Years' War	Lutheran		
						Religious freedom		Mennonite Brethren Amish Schwenkfelder Moravian
GEORGIA	1732	James Oglethorpe	1733	English	Relief for those in debtors' prisons	Anglican	Church of England (1758)	
	1752	Royal Colony		German	Religious freedom	Moravian		

68. An American Presbyterian Family Tree



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A. Interpretation and doctrine

- ## Notes

- b. Ecclesiology: independent, hierarchy, or councils
 - c. Theological issues
 - Original sin
 - Human will
 - Predestination/election
 - Scope and range of the atonement
 - *Ordo salutis* (order of salvation)
 - Perseverance of the saints
 - d. 19th-20th Century social and moral issues
 - Abolition of slavery
 - Prohibition (or allowance) of alcoholic beverages
 - Women's rights (in society and in the church)
 - Homosexuality
 - *Other*
3. Cults
- a. Mormons: Joseph Smith (1830)
 - b. Christian Science: Mary Baker Eddy (1879)
 - c. Jehovah's Witnesses (1884)

B. Higher Criticism

1. Principles of Darwin's *Origin of the Species* grew in application to affect all studies
 - a. "Evolution" and deconstruction of the Bible
 - b. Liberal interpretation of the Bible
 - c. Influence of logic and science
2. Subjectivism
 - a. Neo-orthodoxy
 - b. Cultural interpretation (or rejection)

