**The Lord’s Church**

* **Established by Jesus (Matthew 16:18)**
* **Established in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2)**
* **Early indications of Apostasy**
  + Cautions against (Hebrews 3:12; 2 Pet. 3:17)
  + Paul’s admonition (Acts 20:27-30)
  + Man of Perdition (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12)
  + Some will depart (1 Timothy 4:1-3)
  + False teachers (2 Peter 2; Jude)
* **Causes of Apostasy**
  + Doctrinal error (cf. Galatians 1:6-9)
  + Alterations of worship (cf. John 4:19-24)
  + Institutional changes (cf. Acts 20:28)
  + Unauthorized works (cf. 1 Timothy 5:16)
  + Moral impurities (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:7-11)
  + Inept preaching (2 Timothy 4:3-4)
* **Early Apostasy**
  + *Gnosticism* – Seems to have existed in an incipient form in the first century. Peter, Jude and John all seem to admonish against major tenets of Gnostic thought. (Sensualism, Denial of Christ’s humanity)
  + *Roman Influences* – As time progressed, the local, autonomous nature of congregations was disregarded. This coincided with the acceptance of Christianity by Rome, and ultimately led to the establishment of what can be referred to as the first denomination (apostate institution) the Catholic church.

**Catholicism**

* The first pope (an office unknown to the New Testament), Boniface III, was appointed in 606 A.D. (600 years after the Lord’s church began). This was a culmination of many departures from truth.
* Note the following traditions of men that led to the beginning of Roman Catholicism: church councils; hierarchy (diocesan bishops, cardinals, popes, synods, monks, nuns, convents, monasteries, etc.
* Holy water (about 120 A.D.)
* Doctrine of penance (about 157 A.D.)
* Worship of Mary (about the 4th century)
* Doctrine of Purgatory (5-6th century)
* Extreme unction (6th century)
* Celibacy of priests and nuns (11th century)
* Sale of indulgences (12th century)
* Instruments of music in worship (666 A.D.)
* Sprinkling for baptism (introduced in 3rd century, but fully adopted in 1311)
* Plus the use of the Rosary, lighting of candles, burning of incense, sacramental system, Christmas, Easter, Lent, prayers to dead saints, etc.

**Protestant Reformation**

In the 16th century, due to the authoritarian nature and long standing abuses of the Catholic church, many rebelled against Papal authority, and sought to reform Catholicism.

* Lutheran (1520), Germany, Martin Luther
* Episcopalian (1534), England, Henry VIII
* Presbyterian (1536), Switzerland, John Calvin
* Congregational (1550) England, Robert Browne
* Baptist (1607), Holland, John Smythe
* Methodist (1739), England, John Wesley
* Latter Day Saints (Mormons) (1830), Joseph Smith
* Adventists (1830), America, William Miller
* Christian Scientist (1860), America, Mary Baker Eddy
* Jehovah’s Witnesses (1872), America, Charles T. Russell

**Restoration Movement (19th Century)**

* **Different** from Catholicism and the reformation movement, in that an attempt was made to return to 1st century Christianity, as revealed in the New Testament
* Motto: “Speak where the Bible speaks, be silent where the Bible is silent.”
* Seed principle – (cf. 2 Corinthians 13:5)