Why So Many Churches?
1 Cor. 12:20

Introduction:
A. It is clear that the Bible speaks of one body or church (cf. Eph. 4:4; 1:22,23).
B. It is also clear that we see many churches in our neighborhoods – Why?
C. To help us understand why, we need to make some observations:

Discussion:
I. How it Was.
A. The singular nature of the New Testament Church.
   2. “One body” (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13,20; Eph. 2:16; 4:4).
B. The plural form of “church” did not signify different kinds of churches as it does today.
   1. “Churches” – plural (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 14:33; Rev. 1:4,11,20).
   2. Local churches with same doctrine and structure (Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17).

II. How it Became.
A. Seeds of apostasy sown by end of first century. (Cf. 2 Thess 2:3-7).
B. The development and dominance of Catholicism over the next 1400 years.
   2. The development into a world-wide religious and political power.
   3. The divisions between the east and west (about 1000 A.D).
C. The development of the Protestant movement – result many churches and creeds.
   1. 1500's - Lutheran, Presbyterian (Knox), Episcopal
   2. 1600's - Baptists.
   3. 1700's - Methodists
   4. 1800's - Adventists, Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses
   5. Present day proliferation.

III. How it Can Be.
A. Accept Scriptures as sole authority. (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Pet. 1:3).
B. Word of God is seed of kingdom (Lk. 8:11).
   2. Produces Christians in same church as first century. (Cf. Acts 2:38, 47)
   3. Produces local churches just like first century.

Conclusion:
A. Why so many churches? Man corrupted first one.
B. Can there be one church today? Just preach and practice the word.