

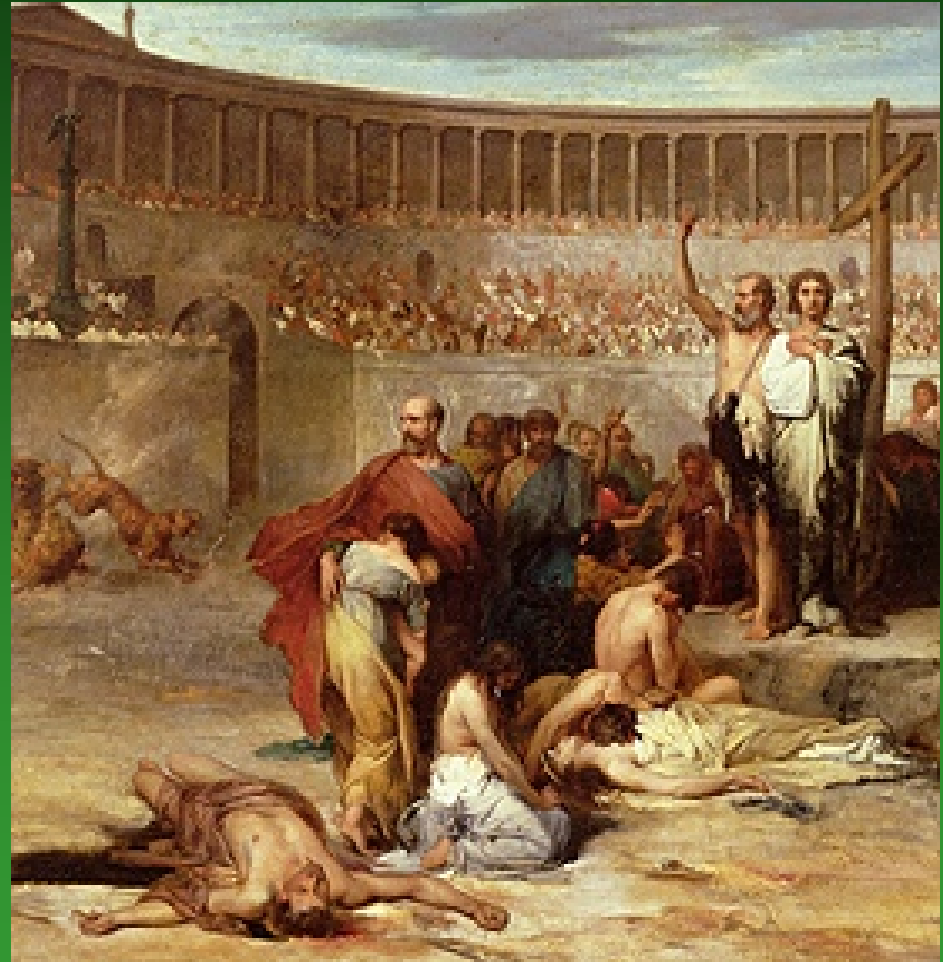
The Rise of Christianity

- Jesus of Nazareth
- Born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea, north part of Palestine an area controlled by Rome
- By age 30 began his public speaking
- Taught by using parables
- His 12 original followers were called disciples or apostles



Christian Teaching Collide with Roman Ideas

- Christians would not fight
- Christians refused to worship the Emperor, worshipped only God and Jesus
- Christians did not attend pagan ceremonies as required by Romans
- Consequently Christians were persecuted by the Romans



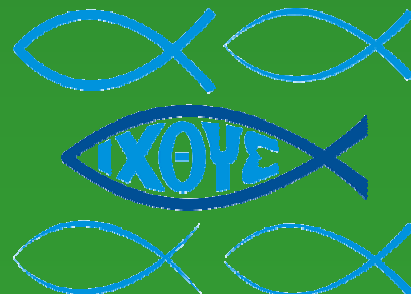
Jesus' Death and Aftermath

- Roman ruler Pontius Pilate accused Jesus of defying the authority of Rome
- Pilate had Jesus arrested and crucified
- After his death Jesus' body was placed in a tomb, and according to the Gospels, three days later Jesus appeared and later ascended into heaven
- Jesus' popularity concerned both Roman and Jewish leaders



Early Christians

- The first followers were Jews
- Followers created a new religion based on his message
- Slowly spread throughout the Roman Empire
- Pax Romana made the spread of Christianity safe for leaders such as Paul
- The common languages of the Roman Empire of Greek and Latin aided the spread of Christianity
- Rome destroyed the Jewish homeland and Jews flee in a dispersal known as the Diaspora
- Christians posed a threat to Rome; consequently thousand of Christians were crucified, burned, imprisoned or executed.



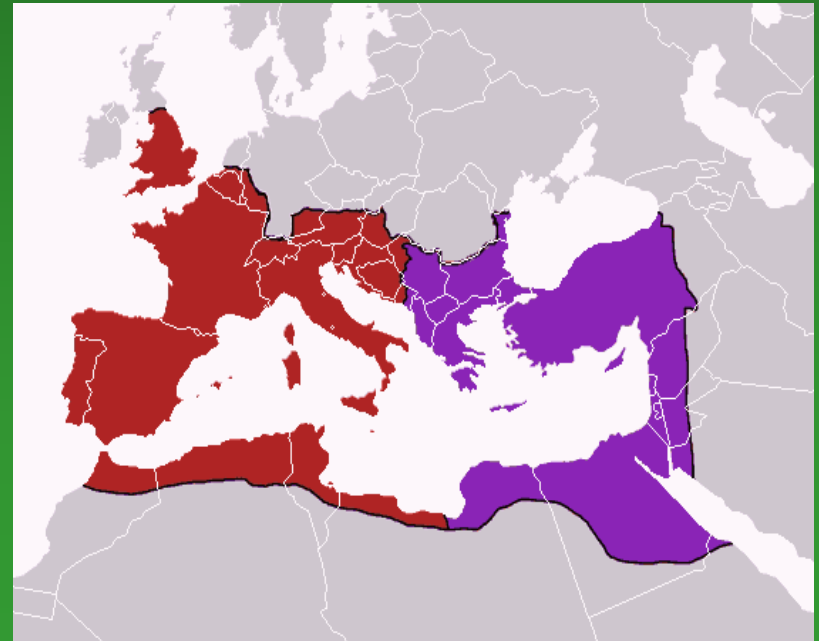
Christianity Grew Within the Roman Empire



- Popular because it embraced all people: male, female, rich, and poor
- Gave power to the powerless
- Appealed to those who rejected the extravagancies of Imperial Rome
- Offered a personal relationship with God
- Promised eternal life after death

Constantine Converts

- 312 AD as Constantine fought for the leadership of the Romans Empire he converted to Christianity
- Ended the persecution of Christians
- Edit of Milan declared Christianity one of the religions approved by the Emperor
- 300 AD Emperor Theodosius makes Christianity the Empire's official religion



Spread of Christianity In Roman Empire



◀ Early Christians were often persecuted by the Romans, who saw them as a threat to the stability of the empire because they refused to acknowledge the divinity of the Roman emperor. By AD 64 Nero used Christians as victims in the imperial arenas, and in the early 4th century Diocletian organized campaigns against them. However, Diocletian's successor Constantine legalized Christianity, and at the first "Ecumenical Council" (held at Nicaea in 325) he brought church and state together. Constantine had converted to Christianity after a key victory over his rivals in 312, a victory he ascribed to the power invested in him as the servant of the Highest Divinity, which he equated with the Christian god.

Many sects emerged during this early spread of Christianity, and councils were periodically held to discuss the doctrinal disagreements raised – with some sects declared heretical as a result.