

RISE OF CHRISTIANITY

☐ Birth of Jesus

- Mary and Joseph / Bethlehem

☐ Teacher/ Preacher / “Social Prophet”

- challenged social barriers...”hung out” w/ sinners

☐ New Testament

- **Gospels** -- “Good News”

- “invitational style of teaching”
- miracles
- parables
- “Jesus lived his teachings” (sinless, humble, selfless, loving,)

- **“Sermon on the Mount”**

- Love, Mercy, Forgiveness, Compassion

- **Golden Rule**

- Eternal Salvation

CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

KEY PLAYERS

Judas Iscariot

- “kiss” on the cheek

Pharisees

- Feared growing popularity of Jesus

Caiphas

- High Priest

Pontius Pilate

- Roman Governor

- 1) BLASPHEMY**
- 2) PLOTTING TO BECOME KING**
- 3) FEAR OF INCITING REVOLT**
- 4) POWER**

RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Jesus arose **3** days later

EASTER

Christians

- believers in the resurrection of Jesus

Jesus = **MESSIAH**

**Resurrection
is central focus of Christianity**

THE 12 APOSTLES



THE 12 APOSTLES

Name of Apostle	Cause of Death
Simon Peter	crucified upside down
Andrew, Peter's brother	crucified
James, the son of Zebedee	beheaded by Herod Agrippa I
John	exiled, died of old age (brother of James)
Matthew	died a martyr in Ethiopia
Bartholomew	beaten then crucified. (aka Nathanael)
Philip	crucified
Thomas	speared to death
Simon, the zealot	crucified
James	stoned to death
Thaddaeus	stoned to death. (aka Judas son of James)
Judas Iscariot	suicide by hanging
	--> Matthias replaced Judas (Acts 1:26)

PETER

Peter spread Christianity to **Rome**

☐ recognized as 1st **Pope** of Christian Church

PETRINE DOCTRINE (Matthew 16:18)

☐ *“You are Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”*

☐ Catholicism used to validate **Apostolic Succession** and **Papal Supremacy**

Rise of “**Catholic Christianity**”

▪ Catholic = “**Universal**”

Crucified upside down during reign of **Nero**

ST. PETER'S BASILICA in VATICAN CITY



THE VATICAN



PAUL – “13th Apostle”

- ❑ persecuted followers of Jesus
- ❑ blinded by God on road to Damascus – Jesus asked “why are you persecuting me?”
- ❑ becomes **Paul**
- ❑ Roman citizen
 - could travel freely throughout the empire
- ❑ Spread to **Gentiles**
- ❑ **Christianity growing rapidly**

PAUL – “13th Apostle”



ROMANS DISLIKE OF CHRISTIANITY

- 1) Did not worship Roman Emperor as a god
- 2) Did not worship Roman gods
- 3) Secret meetings

**Roman gods were punishing the
empire for Christian impiety**

**CHRISTIANS BECAME THE
"SCAPEGOAT" FOR ROME'S PROBLEMS**

ROMAN EMPIRE HELPED CHRISTIANITY GROW

1. **Security** of the Roman Empire allowed citizens and ideas to “freely” move around
2. **Common language of Greek** (Alexander the Great)
3. **Road system**
4. **Fatalism** of Roman Religion
 - Hope** of Christianity
 - “heavenly” afterlife
5. **Persecution** of Christians
 - 64 Nero
 - 249 Emperor Decius
 - “*blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christianity*”

APPEAL OF CHRISTIANITY

I. Unconditional / Visible Love of Christians

- Julian the Apostate (**ironically followed Constantine**)
 - Pagan emperor – wanted to end Christianity
 - “Christianity has been specifically advanced thru the loving treatment rendered to strangers...there is not a single Jew who is a beggar...they care not only for their poor, but ours as well.”

2. Radiant Joy

- inner peace in the midst of their trials / persecutions
- “if at every moment both present and future I were certain that nothing has happened or can ever happen that would separate us from the infinite love of the Infinite, that would be the reason for joy.” -- Kierkegaard

APPEAL OF CHRISTIANITY

3. Universal offer of Salvation

- Open to anyone

4. PROVIDED A PURPOSE TO LIFE

- Paganism could not show you a moral base of righteousness
- Paganism gave no absolute sense of right and wrong
- Paganism did not deal with the Dignity of man?
- Paganism did not deal with “How to get rid of sin?”

CHRISTIANITY REPLACES ROMAN PAGANISM

312 **Constantine** becomes 1st Christian Emperor

- ❑ Battle of Milvian Bridge
 - ❑ “in this sign conquer”

❑ **Edict of Milan**

Constantine granted:

- 1) tax exemptions to church leaders**
- 2) abolished crucifixion/gladiator games as capital punishment**
- 3) established Sunday as a holiday**
- 4) allowed Christians to meet in Churches no longer in catacombs**

CHRISTIANITY REPLACES ROMAN PAGANISM

380 **Theodosius** makes Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire

476 Western Roman Empire falls

Christian Church will become the main uniting and stabilizing force in Western Europe