

The Rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire

Pg 274-279

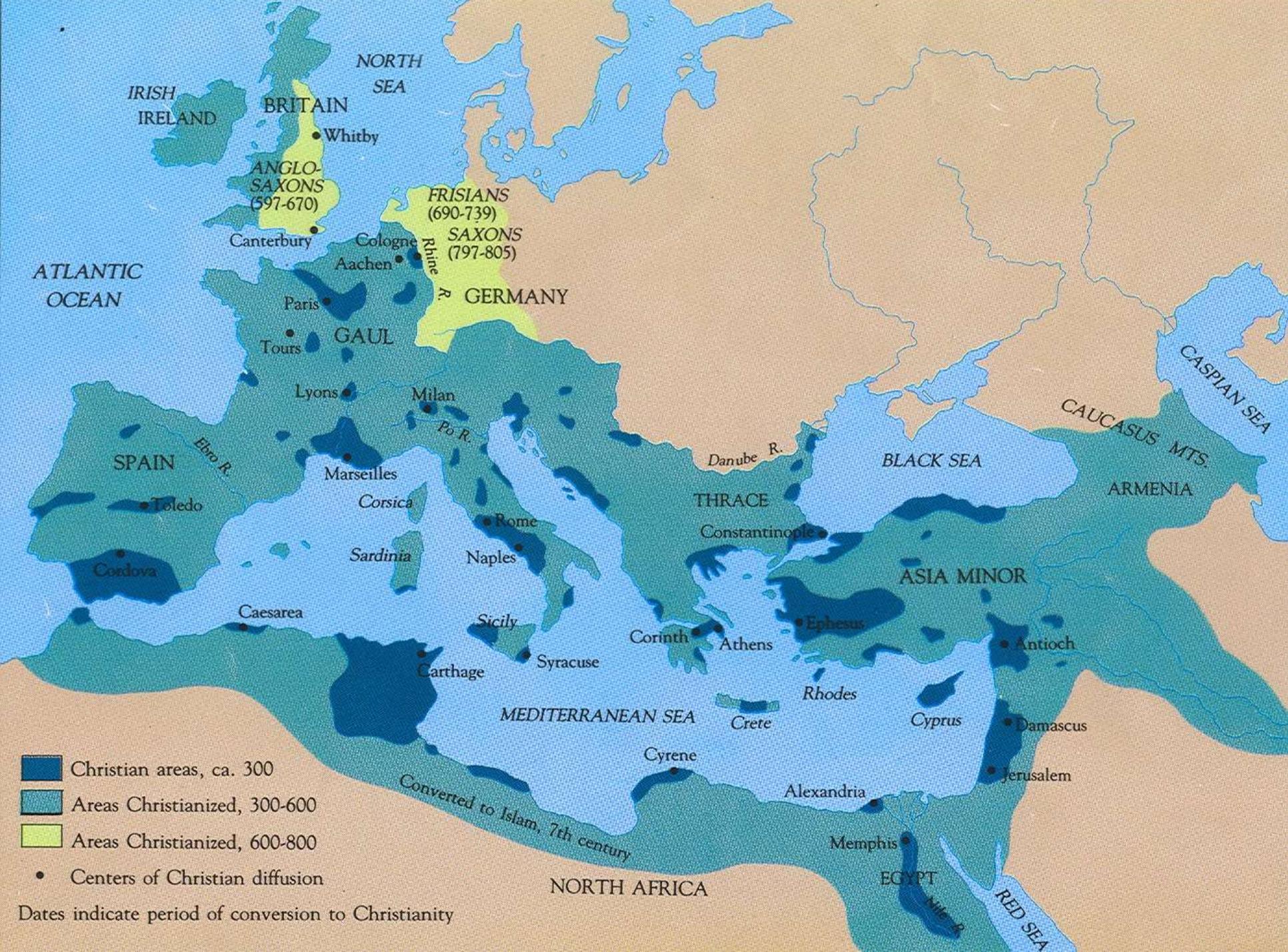


Why did Christianity
spread in the Roman
Empire so quickly?



Early Christians grew rapidly in the Roman Empire because they were...

- 1) Brave in the face of persecution
- 2) Welcomed ALL people – slaves, women, foreigners, poor and rich.
- 3) Gave hope & equality to the powerless
- 4) Promoted simple & generous living
- 5) Offered a personal relationship with a loving God.
- 6) Their teaching promised eternal life after death.



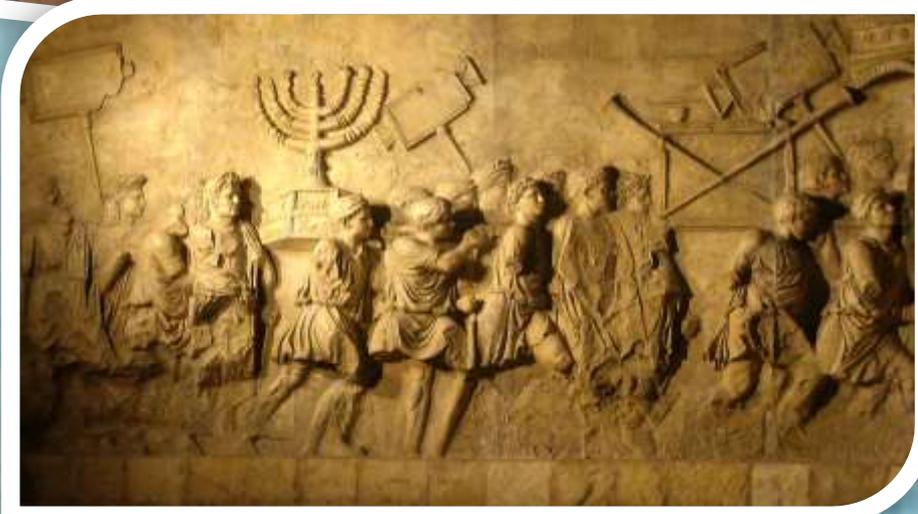
- Christian areas, ca. 300
- Areas Christianized, 300-600
- Areas Christianized, 600-800
- Centers of Christian diffusion

Dates indicate period of conversion to Christianity

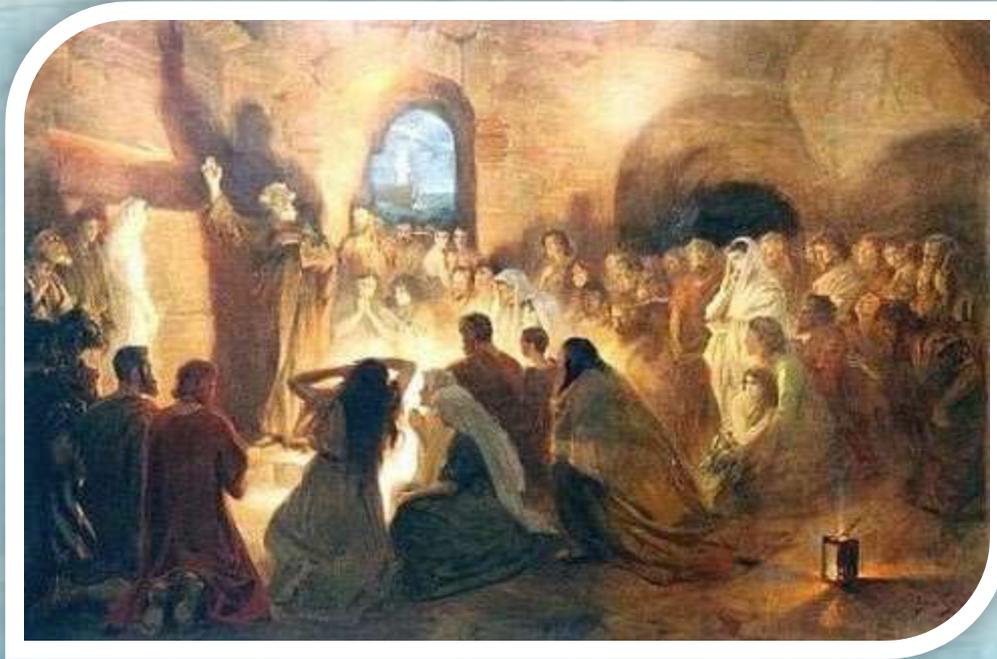
How did Rome react
to the spread of
Christianity?



Rome gave
conquered peoples
freedom of religion.
They could practice
their own religions,
as long as they did
not rebel against
Rome.

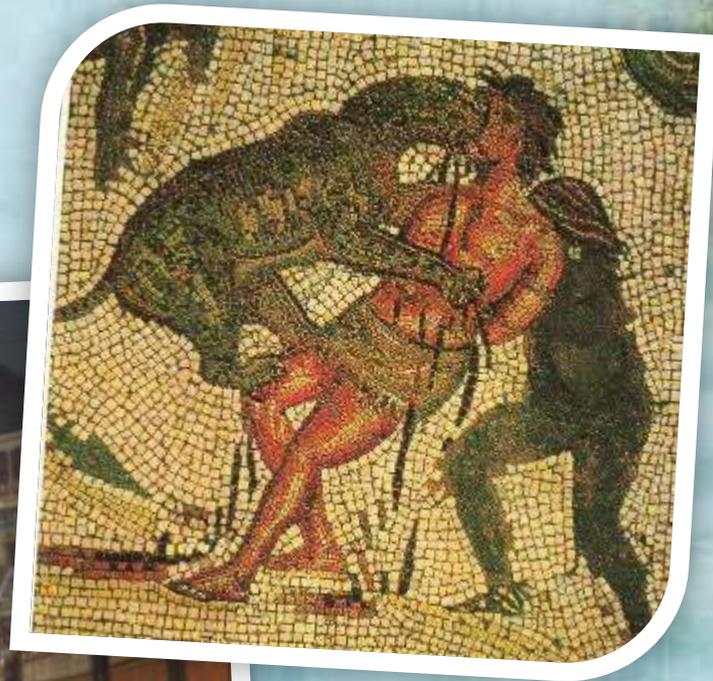


Judaism's Temple
is destroyed in 70
AD after a religious
revolt!



Rome felt that the Christian's refusal to worship the Roman gods was a kind of rebellion. They also felt threatened that Christianity was growing very fast with many slaves & women.

Christians were **persecuted** for their faith or blamed for social problems or crises.



Many Christians became **martyrs**.



Catacombs

In as little as 200 years Christianity grows from 12 Disciples to millions of followers!

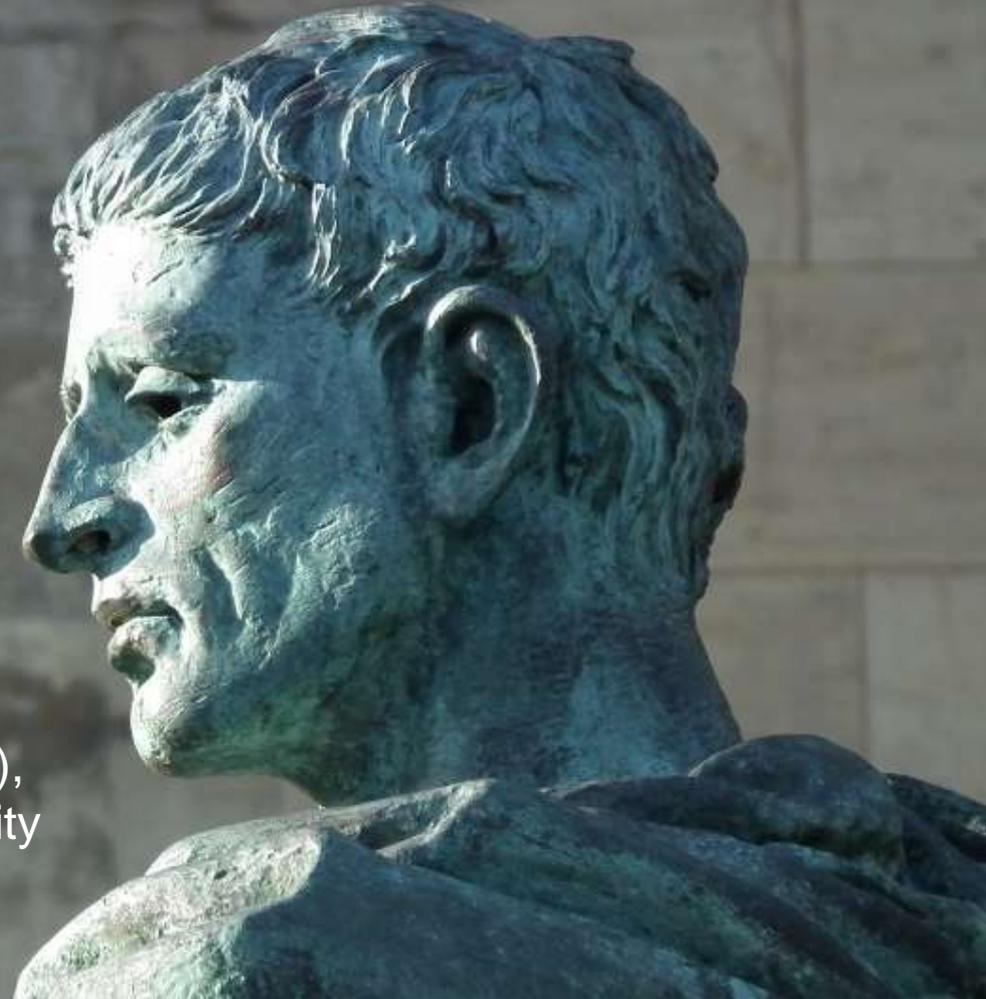


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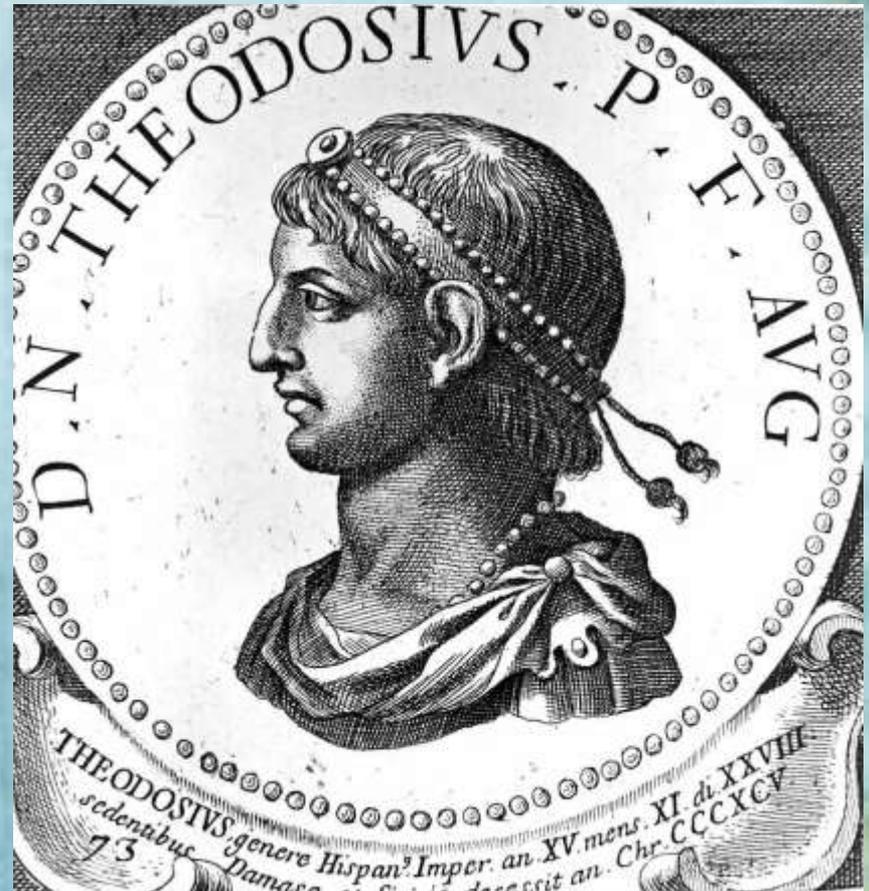
Constantine

280-337 AD

- 306, Persecutes Christians
- “Sign of the Cross” vision
- 312, Legalizes Christianity
- Establishes Constantinople (Istanbul), which will be the center for Christianity for 1000 years!



In 380 AD, Emperor Theodosius makes Christianity the official religion of Rom. He bans all of the non-Christian temples.



How did the Roman Catholic Church begin?





The **Roman Catholic Church** was the organizing of many Christian communities centered around Rome.
Catholic = 'universal'

How was the Roman Catholic Church organized?

The churches were lead by **Priests**.
They followed the leading of local
Bishops. They in turn obeyed the
bishop of Rome – **the Pope**.



Early Church leaders developed...

Creeds = commonly held statement of belief



Trinity – the union of divine Father, Son, Holy Spirit

Sacraments = rituals that symbolized spiritual steps



Eucharist (Holy Communion) & Baptism

In time the Roman
Empire divides and falls.
Christianity still remains!





Legend

- Major Cities
- Orange Western Empire
- Purple Eastern Empire

Atlantic Ocean

Black Sea

Rome

Constantinople



Byzantine Empire

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The Byzantine Empire lasted 100 years longer than Western Rome.

Justinian was an **absolute ruler** in 527 BC. He expanded the Empire, rebuilt Constantinople, established schools & hospitals, and built the largest church – Hagia Sophia ‘Holy Wisdom.’

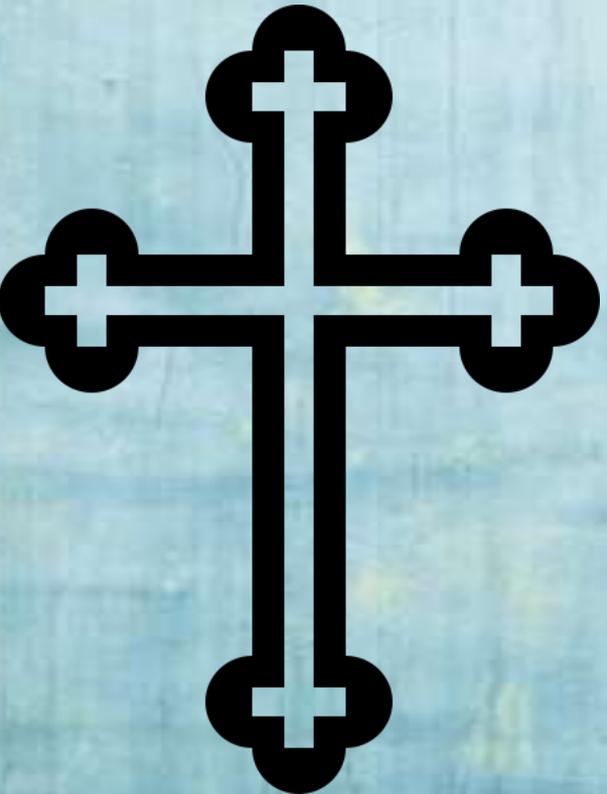
Justinian created the **Justinian Code** – a set of uniform, clear laws about social rights, property, and criminal justice.

Byzantines spoke Greek and borrowed many ideas from the Greek & Roman cultures.



Eastern Orthodox

The Church splits!



Roman Catholic

Two Branches of Christianity in the 11th Century

Roman Catholic

- The leader, called the pope, has authority over the bishops.
- Pope has authority over all kings and emperors.
- Priests may not be married.
- Latin is used in services.

Similarities

- Faith is based on Jesus and the Bible.
- Leaders are priests and bishops.
- Both want to convert people to Christianity.

Eastern Orthodox

- The leader, called the patriarch, and the bishops run the church as a group.
- Emperor has authority over officials of the church.
- Priests may be married.
- Local languages such as Greek and Russian are used in services.

