

Overview- Day 1

- **Part 1 33AD -313 (The Growth of the Church)**
 - How does a small band of followers spread through out the known world
- **Part 2- 313-476 The Church “conquerors” the Roman world**
 - How does Christianity become the religion of the Empire and the implications

Part 1- 33-313 (Growth of the Church)

- Let us read aloud the second chapter of Acts of the Apostles
- This descent of the Holy Spirit can be considered the birthday of the Church
- It also connects us to our Jewish roots: Pentecost is a celebration that occurs fifty days after Passover and celebrates the giving of the Law to Moses

Part 1- 33-313 (Growth of the Church)

- We know that the first follows of Jesus, who called themselves “the Way”, told stories about Jesus and His teachings.
- There was a sense among the early Christians that He would return very soon.
- As more of the original follows of Jesus died; various authors begun to write down these oral stories and traditions.

Part 1- 33-313 (Growth of the Church)

- Most scholars believe that the Pauline Epistles were the first books of the Christian Scriptures; written during the 50's and early 60's.
- There were then followed by the Gospels-
 - Mark in 62-69
 - Matthew and Luke-Acts 70-75
 - John 85-95

Part 1- 33-313 (Growth of the Church)

- At first, the Church was considered to be a subset of Judaism, this afforded it early protection in the Empire.
- Early Christians would go to synagogue on Saturdays to hear the Jewish Scriptures preached.
- Then on Sundays they would gather for the Eucharistic feast. This meal was an actual meal where people came to eat, especially the poor (1 Corinthians 11:17-22) at someone's house.
- The community combined this worship into one day and it forms the basis of the Mass.

Part 1- 33-313 (Growth of the Church)

- This recognition of Christians as a subset of Judaism ended in 70 AD.
- The temple was destroyed by the Romans in response to a Jewish uprising. The city was burned to the ground and thousands were killed.
- From this point on, followers of Jesus were not welcomed in synagogues.
- Soon thereafter persecutions began to happen. The first is in Rome and then it spreads, but they are not as wide spread as is commonly assumed.
- By and large, Christians were left alone and were an un-respected minority that served in the army, paid their taxes, run businesses and were good citizens of the Empire that killed the Lord.

Part 1- 33-313 (Growth of the Church)

- In 312 Emperor Constantine sees a miracle in the sky and attributed it to Christ. He then won a battle the next day.
- In 313, a proclamation was issued: the Edict of Milan. This edict allowed Christians to practice freely; it did not make Christianity the religion of the empire
- Constantine was instrumental in two other acts that would forever change Christianity: he called the Council of Nicaea in 325 and founded a new capitol of the Roman Empire: Constantinople in 330.

Part 2 313- 476 (Christianity Conquers Rome)

- Arius was a priest in the Alexandria diocese who taught the second person of the Trinity (or Logos) was not divine.
- He taught “there was a time when he was not”, “The Logos was the first and highest creature created by God” and “Therefore, the Logos is not God”
- A council was called in Nicaea in 325 to settle the issue of the divinity of Jesus Christ.
- A creed was formed, the basis of which we say in Church today.

Part 2 313- 476 (Christianity Conquers Rome)



- The founding of Constantinople made concrete a reality in the Roman Empire; that there are two halves one East and one West and they are not equal.

Part 2 313- 476 (Christianity Conquers Rome)



- Language: West used Latin
- Barbarians: Invaded and Repeatedly Attacked
- Cities not as well established

- East used Greek
- Barbarians repelled due to stronger military
- Ancient cities that were wealthier

Part 2 313- 476 (Christianity Conquers Rome)

- In 380 Christianity was made the official religion of the Rome Empire
- Another council is held in 381 mainly dealing with the belief in the Holy Spirit.
- There is also the growth of the monastic movement in Egypt as people emulate Jesus and flee to the desert.
- Another council is held in 431 and deals with the hypostatic union of Christ.
- Another council is held in 451 to try and answer questions raised by the previous council.

Part 2 313- 476 (Christianity Conquers Rome)

- The Western Empire finally “fell” in 476 due to many reasons.
- As the Roman civilian authorities collapsed over time, it was the Christian leaders (bishops and other clergymen) that assumed more and more temporal authority. For example, the Romans left Britain to their own defenses; and over time the British saw their Christianity as separate from the rest of Europe.
- Specifically, the Bishop of Rome (as the former capitol of the Empire) began to exercise more and more temporal authority. It is about this time that he begins to be known as the Pope.